

The "Teachability" of Grammar in University English Classes

英文法の教授法：その現状とあり方をめぐって

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SLA theories have had an extreme impact on the teaching of grammar in the second language classroom. These theories have changed and developed over the past forty years, swinging from Behaviorism and the Audio-Lingual Method to Krashen's theories and the demise of grammar teaching in the classroom to more modern techniques such as Consciousness Raising, Data Driven Learning and Task Based Learning, where grammar once again plays an important role. So, after several years out in the cold in both L1 and L2 classrooms, grammar has once again become the subject of renewed interest over the past fifteen years.

Grammar became unfashionable for several good reasons, so it would be a mistake to return the teaching styles of thirty or forty years ago. We have to examine the role of grammar in relation to how languages are learned if we plan to make grammar an important part of the language syllabus. Finally, if we decided to explicitly teach grammar then we also have to study the role of grammar books in the classroom – how and if they should be used.

The body of this paper is divided into three sections;

Section 1 discusses the downfall traditional L2 teaching/learning methods and the rise of the communicative approach with consequent reduction of grammar as the main focus in the classroom. The main theories examined are Corder's Interlanguage Theory and Students' Syllabus, Ausubel's Cognitive Theory and Krashen's Monitor Theory.

Section 2 discusses the lack of grammar teaching in the Communicative Approach and the return to grammar to the syllabus. Newer methods such as Consciousness Raising, Data Driven Learning and Task Based Learning are examined.

Section 3 discusses the relationship between these theories, the teaching of grammar and the role of grammar books in the classroom.

Section 1

What is now known as the Grammar Translation method of learning a second language seems to have developed out of the practice of scribes translating mainly religious texts very carefully from one language into another in the Middle Ages. As the languages concerned, (Latin and classical Greek), were no longer

spoken as lingua franca widely by that stage, and due to the fact that the goal was the *translation* of texts, ultimately to be read, it was a method that placed no focus on spoken communication per se.

In the nineteenth century, what is now known as the Grammar Translation method developed out of this method of translation and was used to teach modern (i. e., spoken) European languages. The emphasis was on piece by piece-meal graded introduction of selected points of grammar, which were presented in the native language, and then practiced by means of translation exercises followed by correction by the instructor. This methodology of grammar instruction dominated the majority of SLA classes in the twentieth century. One reason also is that such texts or exercises are easy for teachers to mark, whereas tasks involving communicative ability and/or competence require much more finesse.

One criticism of this method was that it allowed no room for any communicative input. Conversations in the text, as they were, were largely generated to demonstrate an array of grammatical points rather than with any real world communicative tasks in mind. One does not need to be able to ask the way from the station to the hotel in Latin, but in French, if you go to France, many people realized, it may be a good idea!

As a result of this criticism, second language teaching developed other methodologies aimed at improving this lack of training in real world language skills.

As a student of French, German, Spanish and Japanese in the late 1970s and early 1980s, one of the author's classes were all GTM classes. As a learner who enjoys picky detail, he enjoyed the classes, but alas, was dismayed to discover his lack of real spoken skills when encountering any native speakers! It was this type of experience that proved the starting point for the development of other theories of SLA and teaching styles.

As a base in training of the grammar of a second language, the general consensus is that GMT has its place among the other SLA methodologies, but its overwhelming command of the field has finished.

Many traditional teaching methods are based on the theory that learning does become acquisition through production and feedback (i.e., practice and error correction). This belief was due to the influence of behaviorism on second language acquisition (SLA).

The major teaching method that grew out of behaviorism was the Audiolingual Method "ALM". ALM was the dominant teaching method through to the 1970s and sometimes into the 1980s. ALM was characterized by practice, presentation and production, commonly referred to as PPP. In the ALM accuracy and conformity were valued above communication and creative thinking. The presentation process was aimed at habit formation and therefore language was broken down into manageable parts, largely based on the noun and verb systems. The role of the learner was to memorize sections of language and to reproduce them when given the correct stimulation. Although ALM stressed habit formation through drills, substitution tables, structured dialogues etc., some ALM materials did not contain any explicit treatment of rules. The method was characterized by over-learning and the belief that errors were to be avoided at all costs.

With the demise of behaviorism, ALM came in for some very harsh criticism, mainly from Ausubel and Corder in the late 1960s and also from Krashen in the 1970s and 1980s. These researchers believed

that language was not learned by rote memorization and that errors were an important part of the language learning process.

Cognitive Theory developed by David Ausubel is best known for contrasting rote and meaningful learning. Ausubel described rote learning as the "process of acquiring material as discrete relatively isolated entities that are relatable to cognitive structure only in an arbitrary and verbatim fashion, not permitting the establishment of (meaningful) relationships" (Ausubel,1968:108). Rote learning involves almost no association with existing cognitive structures and consequently is easily forgotten. Material learned in this fashion does not alter existing cognitive structures and Ausubel believes it does not lead to acquisition of new language. This contrasts with meaningful learning which interacts and causes some adjustment to existing cognitive systems. This adjustment to existing cognitive systems (Subsumption Theory) is one of the main arguments against rote learning as a means of language acquisition.

Ausubel went on to develop a theory of systematic forgetting (Ausubel,1963) or "cognitive pruning" (Brown,1972). He argues that language that is meaningfully learned is forgotten but that this forgetting is "really a second or "obliterative" stage of subsumption theory (Ausubel, 1963:218), characterized by "memorial reduction to the least common denominator". This forgetting is not arbitrary but systematic and Ausubel's solution lies in the initial learning process — we should favor meaningful learning over rote learning. By this he suggests that too much rote learning is not beneficial to language acquisition, rather the opposite in fact.

In 1967 Corder developed a theory called "interlanguage" or "transitional competence" to try to explain student errors. Interlanguage describes the stage where learners have become aware of some part of the system, but have not yet "internalized" it well enough to be able to use it correctly or accurately. It is therefore counter-productive to view errors as evidence of the students' failure to learn but rather errors provide evidence of the students' intelligence and efforts to use language creatively.

Corder goes on to discuss the cyclical nature of language learning. Many teachers feel that students should show steady progress towards the normal use of structure, but this has been shown to be not true. Kellerman (1987:40) describes a "u-shaped" learning curve where students initially use a structure correctly (perhaps unanalyzed) then regress to ungrammatical usage and finally to normal use again. The incorrect use of the structure is evidence of the students' interlanguage as they try to analyze language and relate it to their existing knowledge.

The effects of interlanguage theory are commonly seen in today's classrooms — mainly there is much less concern with error avoidance than in the days of ALM, courses and textbooks are much more concerned with producing natural sounding reading and listening passages and finally there is a strong emphasis on exposing students to larger amounts of 'real-world' language in the SL classroom today.

Corder believes that language acquisition is underpinned by a learners' syllabus that follows a natural order of progression (similar to Krashen's Natural Order Hypothesis which states that language is acquired in natural order, not determined by linguistic difficulty or complexity and not in the order that linguistic items are found in textbooks or grammar books). However there are a number of problems with a students' syllabus and natural order.

First, the evidence of the existence of this syllabus is based on the studies of morphemes and simple patterns observed during the very early stages of language learning (Larsen-Freeman, D. and Long, M.L., 1991). These results have been criticized mainly due to the small number of studies, the grammatical items examined were not common to all studies, and therefore any claims concerning common orders of natural orders were based on a very small portion of English grammar and also the “weak” nature of the inferential statistical texts used.

More recently during the 1980s additional studies were done (Lightbrown 1985, Pica 1985) which also suggest that some orders do exist. Studies into learner’s syllabus in other languages have also suggested that a natural progression does exist and now that a larger number of studies have been carried out, there seems to be some truth in the natural progression, at least in the early stages of language learning.

However, there are still a number of problems to be addressed, mainly we have no idea yet what causes this natural order or input can trigger these sequences. Consequently it is very difficult to design a course around a phenomenon which we don’t yet understand.

The downfall of ALM led to the ‘designer’ methods of the 1970s. These are Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, the Silent Way, Total Physical Response, and the Natural Approach. It is the final of these developed by Stephen Krashen, and his underlying theories of language acquisition that has fueled a fiercely heated debate over the past twenty-plus years.

Krashen (1982, 1985) is famous for developing the “Monitor Theory” which became one of the most influential theories of SLA. Krashen claimed that when learning a language we employ two separate knowledge systems — the acquired system and the learned system. Krashen believes that the acquired system is the result of the application of the subconscious knowledge of SL grammar, similar to the language learning of children in L1 acquisition and similar to the subconscious knowledge we have of our own L1. The second knowledge system, the learned system, is according to Krashen less important and is the product of formal language teaching. This system is composed of easily remembered rules and used only when the student knows the rule, when the student is focused on the target structure and when there is no time pressure on the student.

The Monitor Hypothesis defines the relationship between the acquired system and the learned system. Krashen claims that the acquired system is the initiator and the learned system acts as an editor or monitor, correcting and editing when necessary. Krashen claims that the monitor process is not used when the student is speaking under normal conditions when the student is focused on meaning rather than form.

One of the most influential sections of Krashen’s theory is the Input Hypothesis. This attempts to explain how a learner acquires a second language. Krashen maintains that language is learned by comprehensible input, i.e., language that is understood either by reading or listening. Language that is too easy or too difficult does not help a learner acquire a language. Students need language that is one level above their acquired knowledge ($i + 1$). These unknown structures are understood with the help of the students’ acquired language, world knowledge and in the classroom. The result of this theory was the reduction of explicit grammar teaching in the classroom and an emphasis on language exposure.

When this hypothesis was taken together with Krashen's Natural Order hypothesis they formed a strong attack on the formal teaching of grammar. It would appear more valuable to the student if SL teaching methods focused conscious raising and exposure to language at the right level for the students rather than on grammatical rules and controlled output.

Monitor Theory has been widely criticized and this criticism has generally been scientifically motivated. McLaughlin (1990) criticized the learning/acquisition distinction in that this "distinction depended on the conscious/unconscious process". McLaughlin questioned the reliability of asking students which they used when making grammatical statements — rules or feelings. He believed that students may have been biased towards answering "feelings" as it was the easier option. Krashen himself admitted that "we have no physiological measure that shows an acquisition/learning difference". Monitor Theory's input hypothesis and affective filter have also proven to be untestable. The $i+1$ concept was recognized by Krashen (Krashen, 1985) as being un-useable due to our present state of knowledge.

In brief MT is on the surface very attractive due to its simplicity and comprehensiveness but is beset by problems. It did generate a lot of research in SLA and served us by identifying relevant issues and forcing us to seek alternatives.

One of the results of Corder's "student syllabus" and Krashen's "natural order hypothesis" was that the explicit teaching of grammar declined with the rise of alternative syllabuses in the 1970s and the Communicative Approach in the late 1970s and 1980s. Krashen's claim that comprehensible input is both necessary and sufficient of the successful acquisition of language, implying that learning grammar is both unnecessary and perhaps in some cases could prove very inhibiting led to the decline in the teaching of grammar in both L1 and L2 classrooms. Similar research carried out by a number of other researchers at the time who discussed the problems explicit grammar teaching had on the motivation of learners (perhaps similar to Krashen's filter barriers and mental blocks).

During this time it was noted that in L2 classrooms people were able to communicate even if they made errors. Thus there was no need to focus on grammar which was seen as possibly harmful to L2 learners. Attention therefore shifted away from ways of teaching grammar to ways of getting learners to communicate. In the process grammar was left to survive on its own. It almost seemed since that all possible ways of teaching grammar had been investigated and had not worked, grammar should cease to play an important role in L1 and L2 classrooms.

When discussing Krashen's theories, we must also bear in mind the role that Krashen played in formulating the teaching styles and curricula for teaching Spanish-speaking children, mainly of Mexican immigrants in California. It was in these classrooms that a lot of the 'battles' were fought.

Section 2

Whilst none would argue that motivation, confidence and other personal factors, in addition to a more communicative style of teaching with a focus on more authentic material help learners learn a second language, the idea that we should abandon a grammar syllabus was seen as problematic by some. Research

studies suggested that consciousness raising was necessary but not sufficient to help students achieve fluency and accuracy. In addition, many L2 teachers and learners have been very wary of giving up some kind of system that organizes language as noted above. Despite the impact of communicative teaching on teaching methodologies, the bulk of the world's second and foreign language learners continue to learn from material in which the principles of organization and presentation are grammatically based. It should also be noted that the requirements of examinations, more often than not testing grammatical accuracy, are crucial in the real world and may play a role in this reluctance of teachers and learners to move away from a grammar based syllabus.

Therefore, in spite of many attempts to develop alternative syllabuses, there has always been support for structural syllabuses in L2 teaching. Johnson (1986) felt that there was a way of using a structural syllabus within a communicative approach and more recently Ellis (1990) said that the structural syllabus is useful as a way into the acquisition of grammar. Research by Ellis, Long and others have shown that explicit instruction in grammar has a role on improving the rate of acquisition and avoiding fossilization. Additionally Rutherford has identified a structural syllabus as having a positive role in the development of consciousness raising which he has identified as important for internalizing and using language accurately and fluently.

In 1981, Sharwood-Smith suggested that approaches to grammatical instruction can be considered and compared in terms of degrees of explicitness and elaboration. The L2 grammar syllabus was (and in many cases still is) almost mathematical in its structural progression and the technical terms were memorized akin to theorems in mathematics. Consciousness Raising (CR) as described by Rutherford (1994) is a midway or a compromise between the "mathematical approach" and the "no grammar approach" to L2 acquisition. CR does focus on grammar but without using explicit rules or technical vocabulary. CR aims to help learners discover rules by focusing on aspects of the target structure, but unlike the communicative approach, by telling learners which structures are wrong and providing correct alternatives.

Learnability Theory developed by Rutherford (1987) rejected the belief that language is an "assemblage of hierarchically arranged constructs and that the "teaching/learning is the direct imparting of these constructs by the teacher to the learner". Instead Rutherford suggests a grammar-centered curriculum that would allow students to progress at their own pace. This would recognize the "nature of language learning as a process of organic growth" and allow learners to progressively convert language chunks into analyzed language and thereby extend his range of language competency.

Learnability is concerned with the mechanism of progression from one state of knowledge to the next. One of the central questions is what causes or triggers this progression. It has been found that input alone is not enough as there is nothing to tell the student when something is wrong. This is especially the case when a student overuses a rule or construction. One of the central ideas of CR is that the students need "negative evidence".

CR aims at explicit knowledge — learners are given data illustrating the target form and in some cases are given an explicit rule. The learners are expected to "provide intellectual effort", and formulate a rule describing the target structure. The approach favored by CR is problem-solving or "learning

by discovery" (Ellis, 1992). CR cannot be separated from lexis and the use of authentic material is an important part of CR. This allows teachers to treat lexico-grammatical items in a single lesson, allowing the students who have already mastered the structure to focus on the lexis, while students who have yet to master the structure are able to focus on it. The problem solving approach encourages students to think for themselves and not rely on the teacher or grammar books for an explanation. The case study by Vip (1994), illustrates how CR can be used to help students understand areas that students have problems with and that grammar books fail to explain adequately (in this case the differences between passives and ergative structures). The differences between these frequently cause students a lot of problems and most grammar books ignore them (COBUILD English Grammar is one of the exceptions and does include a section on such verbs).

However, CR has been criticized mainly by supporters of Natural Order and Student Syllabus theories. If these theories are correct, then CR is an exercise in futility as students can only acquire a structure at a given time and in a certain natural progression. But as has already been discussed there are a lot of problems supporting these theories and the mechanisms behind them are not fully understood.

In addition, it can be argued that CR is not for everyone, especially if students are more used to a traditional approach. Students may feel that it is a teacher's job to teach them grammar, to give concrete rules and to give exercises that promote the retention of structures. They may feel that it is a waste of time and money if they have to work things out for themselves. There may be a midway position with the teacher giving a rule, learners finding evidence and then the opposite with the teacher giving evidence and the students formulating their own rules. This may be satisfactory to students who want a more traditional approach. One additional problem with a CR approach is that it is difficult to measure progress with such a method. Students may lose motivation and it may be necessary for the teacher to resort to drills or using a grammar textbook to give them a sense of mastering something.

A more modern alternative to the structural syllabus is Willis' Lexical Syllabus. In setting out his proposals for this he states:

"The process of syllabus design involves itemizing language to identify what is to be learned. Communicative methodology involves exposure to natural language use to enable learners to apply their innate faculties to recreate language systems. There is an obvious contradiction between the two. An approach which itemizes language seems to imply that items can be learned discreetly and the language can be built from an accretion of these items. Communicative methodology is holistic in that it relies on the ability of the learners to abstract from the language to which they are exposed, in order to recreate a picture of the target language. The lexical approach is an attempt to reconcile this contradiction." (Willis 1990:viii)

The lexical syllabus does not ignore grammar but looks at it from a different standpoint. Willis believes that by taking lexis as a starting point it assures that attention is drawn to the most frequent words,

their meaning and patterns. Willis feels that rather than ignoring grammar, grammar is now more complete than in traditional grammar books. Willis goes on to discuss how it is possible to construct a students' corpus based on written and spoken texts. Students are exposed to this in a series of task-based, problem solving activities in the classroom. Having experienced this the students do exercises which focus their attention on the common word patterns.

A development of the lexical approach is Data Driven Learning (DDL). This is a computer based teaching method that offers an alternative to the rule based approaches. In DDL students are exposed to computer generated concordances. These concordances often reveal that real language does not coincide with the simplified and idealized version that teachers and textbooks use. One of the main effects of DDL is the reevaluation of the place of grammar. Traditionally grammar methods make assumptions about what is to be learned and how it is to be learned. Usually students are presented with a set of rules which are then reconstructed into the text. DDL tries to raise the students' awareness of the language by placing learners' own discovery of grammar at the center and by making it possible for that discovery to be based on evidence from authentic language use (Johns 1991).

By using authentic materials and by students drawing their own conclusions Willis and Johns feel that "this method goes a long way towards dispelling the myths and distortions associated with the more traditional grammar teaching methods (Johns 1991a, 1991b). They argue that by focusing on the meaning (i.e., lexical item) rather on the verb form the syllabus becomes much more semantically orientated.

DDL is a rather new method, and so far, seems to offer students several advantages. One of the main advantages of DDL is that it can react to the students needs. One of the big dangers of a structural approach is that it has become stagnant and often the needs of individual students are ignored. However, there are a number of issues that still need to be addressed, mainly the use of DDL with lower level students. Johns suggests that DDL may be used in conjunction with CR or may borrow techniques from it (Johns 1991a:311).

Another modern method that focuses on the use of authentic that is becoming very popular for developing target language fluency and student confidence is Task Based Language Learning. TBL was initially developed by Prabhu (1987) and has been further developed by Dave and Jane Willis (1996,1998), David Nunan (1988,2006) and Rod Ellis (1990,1992) etc. TBL focuses on students using authentic language and doing meaningful tasks using the target language. All parts of language used are deemphasized during the actual task itself, in order to get students to focus on the task. Jane Willis (1996, 2008) developed a rather comprehensive framework breaking the lesson into several stages.

These stages (pre-task, task, planning report, analysis, practice) can be removed or added to as the instructor sees fit. In the pre-task stage the teacher presents what will be expected of the students in the task phase. The teacher may also present language or structures that may prove useful to the students but often these will be presented as suggestions and the students encouraged to use what ever language or structures they feel comfortable with in order to complete the task. In the task phase the students perform the task in small groups with the teacher limited to the role of observer or counselor. During the planning stage students "polish" their language in preparation for the next stage, the presentation or report stage.

Here the students give a public performance of the task to their fellow students. In planning for this, the students' focus is on accuracy and considerable improvement in terms of accuracy and complexity when compared with the task stage have been noted (McCrohan, 2000).

In the analysis stage, the focus returns to the teacher who now reviews what happened during the task. The teacher may include language forms the students used or problems they had. The final stage or practice stage is used to cover material mentioned by the student in the analysis stage. It is an opportunity for the teacher to emphasize certain lexical terms or grammatical structures.

The major advantages of this method are that it is a student-centered teaching method that allows for meaningful communication, provides encouragement for grammatical accuracy during the various stages of the lesson. The major criticism of this method has been in the difficulty in defining what a task actually is (Nunan, 2006) and adapting this method for low-level learners.

Section 3

Having briefly reviewed a number of SLA theories in addition to three modern approaches to second language teaching, we are still left with the question "What is the role, if any, of grammar books in the second language classroom?"

If we agree with Corder's student syllabus theory or Krashen's Natural Order Hypothesis the grammar books have no role whatsoever in the classroom. In fact it could be argued that using a grammar book would be counterproductive. The same is true if we feel that Krashen's claim that comprehensible input is both necessary and sufficient for successful language acquisition, then again grammar books have no role to play in language learning. However, as has already been shown, there are a number of considerable problems with Krashen's natural order and Corder's student syllabus theories and in addition, recent research has shown that leaving grammar out of the classroom is not sufficient for accurate language classroom. Consequently the pendulum has swung back and explicit grammar teaching is once more found in our language classrooms albeit in a different form.

With the return of grammar to the classroom we were inundated with newly published grammar books such as *English Grammar in Use* (Murphy, 1989) or *COBUILD Student's English Grammar* (1990, Thompson Learning). In recent years, a new generation of grammar books have appeared on the market, often focusing on conscious raising activities for students using authentic materials rather than on exercises focusing on the comprehension of one point of grammar. Books that fall under this category are *Grammar for English Language Teachers* (Parrott, 2000 CUP) and *Exploring Grammar in Context* (Carter et al, 2000 CUP). Not only has there been an increase in the number of books focusing exclusively on grammar but newer course books also incorporate a considerable amount of grammar teaching. One of the earliest and most popular of these textbooks is the *Headway* Series of textbooks with the earliest being produced in 1983 and newer updated editions published from 2000 onwards. These newer textbooks usually focus on grammar in context using authentic material as much as possible.

For many students, the learning of grammar is central to their idea of what language learning is about.

They want and expect to be taught grammar and that some sort of grammar book will be used in their language classes. Teachers are often under a lot of pressure to meet these expectations and feel obliged to produce a grammar book at some stage of the course.

Over the past roughly twenty years living in Japan, the authors have worked in all possible situations from kindergarten to university to community English classes. Over the years the main books used in the schools we have worked for are the *Streamline* series, the *Headway* series and a selection of university level writing and communication books. *Streamline* is a series of structural/functional course books for elementary to advanced students. These books are finely rooted in memorizations of structures and grammatical explanations are kept to a minimum. The units as listed in the index in the students books, do not indicate which structures are to be studied and many of the examples in the book are misleading and too simplistic. For example, countable/non-countable nouns that can be both depending on the context are ignored as are articles, transitive and intransitive verbs and many more items. All exercises in the book and workbook closely follow the dialogues in the textbooks with little or no variation. Students are mostly restricted to these tightly controlled exercises.

In contrast, the *Headway* series is a range of books from elementary to advanced with each book divided into units that are clearly structured, with headings that clarify the aim and nature of each activity. Grammatical structures are introduced in context, with exercises that encourage students to work out the rules for themselves. The "Language review" section in each unit gives a short summary of the target structure and its uses, and is cross-referenced to the comprehensive "Grammar section" at the back of the book.

Headway provides a wide variety of practice activities. These range from controlled practice such as sentence transformation to free practice such as information gap and role play. These activities practice accurate language use in all four language skills. The reading comprehension and grammar exercise texts are taken from a wide range of different sources, such as newspapers, interviews, magazines, classical and modern literature. All level books have authentic sources but many have been adapted to suit the language aims and the level, especially at lower levels.

The main grammar books used with the Educational Faculty students' grammar class and as supplementary materials in the general English classes are *English Grammar in Use* by Raymond Murphy, and *English Grammar for Language Teachers* by Michael Parrott. The *English Grammar in Use* books are now available for different level students and are very popular with both teachers and students. The grammar is presented in easy "chunks" with clear examples and exercises on the corresponding page. The answers are also included so can be used as a self-study book. However, the grammar is often too simplistic. For example, the use of modal verbs when making a hypothesis or in conditional sentences is largely ignored and transitive verbs are left out entirely.

Grammar for English language teachers is a book on the methodology of teaching grammar, and is a reference book for teachers and teachers in training who need to know more about the nature of English grammar. An educated language teaching professional or students at an advanced level need to have a clear understanding of how English works at the level of grammar. The book sets out to help teachers

and advanced students develop their understanding of English grammar, provides a reference for planning lessons and clarifying learner's problems, and examines typical difficulties learners have with various different areas of English grammar.

This is an outstanding teacher resource book on several counts:

1. it is very user friendly — extremely clear explanations and organization
2. it is well-researched and accurate — Parrott clears away some common misconceptions about many aspects of grammar and presents the results of recent research on grammar
3. it has exercises to help consolidate the information it presents

Since it contains an answer key it constitutes an excellent self study course that can be completed on one's own.

One of the biggest problems with using grammar books is that the examples are often oversimplified and taken out of context as in the *English Grammar in Use* series. While this does make it easier for the students, especially at lower levels, if we feel that CR and DDL are relevant to the teaching of grammar then we must realize that structures must be presented in context and if possible, from authentic sources. As DDL highlights, lexis and structure are all part of the same thing and that to separate them gives only partial information to the student. Both conscious raising and DDL encourage the student to use their intelligence to discover the answers for themselves using authentic materials, in DDL, computer generated sentences showing a certain relevant feature and in CR as article of some other authentic source are used. As pointed out earlier many examples in even popular grammar books are specially formulated to show clear and easy but unrealistic examples, we have to ask how useful these are to students in real life away from the classroom.

Additionally, in many grammar books the rules are printed alongside the examples and the exercise often so closely follow the examples that all a student has to do is a slot filling exercise. As it can be imagined such exercise are easy and do give the students a feeling of mastering the structure but such techniques involve little effort on the part of the student and are probably quickly forgotten.

It therefore could be argued that when presenting a new grammatical point to students the point should be introduced from authentic sources if possible or if not, then from a grammar book that uses authentic sources in its presentation and exercises. Students should be involved in the understanding of the structure and the structure should be introduced in a fashion where by the students know how, when and where to use it and not only how to form the structure but to also be aware of its commonly found collocations and if relevant, social register.

Certain students would certainly benefit from this approach rather than the more traditional methods found in many grammar books. Returnees, (either children or adults who return to their home country after many years abroad and using English daily) often have gaps in their grammatical knowledge. Frequently they misuse the past perfect, passives and ergative structures, article and prepositions and do not respond well to traditional approaches. CR and/or DDL would benefit these students as it would actively involve the students in the learning process.

Conversely, grammar books that convey points followed by closely connected exercises may be of benefit to students who lack confidence such as false-beginners frequently found in lower level classes here in Japan. The simplicity and lack of detail may be to these students' advantage as they can easily see progress, feel as if they are in control of their learning and do not feel overwhelmed by detail as may be the case with CR or DDL.

Additionally by focusing on public presentations as we do in the general education SW speaking classes, students are encouraged to move from a focus on fluency when preparing their presentations to a more controlled form of language when actually giving public presentations. This shift in focus is one of the underlying theories behind TBL, (Willis, J., 1996). During the SW course students are exposed to a wide range of language as they learn to give different kinds of presentations and also as they focus on the different sections of the presentation. Students observe and/or listen to similar presentations before practicing themselves. By observing and doing similar tasks allows the learner to draw more, during the actual completion of the task, on planned discourse (Ellis, 1987). Less time is therefore spent wondering what the task (presentation) requirements are or how the task may need to be structured. As a result, attention can be directed to the more micro-activity of the detail of the language which is being used. This increases the fluency and accuracy of the language used by students (McCrohan, 2000).

Students learn language primarily through exposure to language, by using language and by making mistakes. Grammar books can be used as a "tool" that can help them make sense of the language they have experienced and if the grammar book uses authentic materials and actively engages the student in learning and processing new "rules" may also be used to teach new material.

Conclusion

Over the past thirty years language teaching has come full circle, from an emphasis on grammar and rote memorization through to an absence of grammar during the strongest years of the communicative method to the situation today where once more "grammar is back".

Grammar teaching fell out of use for a number of good reasons and Ausubel, Corder and Krashen developed theories that suggest that rote memorization was not the best way to learn a language. Krashen's Monitor Theory was one of the SLA theories during the late 1970s and 1980s. These researchers caused teachers of English in both L1 and L2 classrooms to re-evaluate the place of grammar, what was taught and how it was taught.

Since then Monitor Theory has been attacked on a number of fronts but we have retained many features of it — mainly that people can acquire a language but for most people simple exposure to language isn't enough.

In today's classrooms we are tending more towards a middle ground, where we realize that exposure to real English is an important part of language learning and that grammar is best taught from authentic sources and not in isolation but in connection with lexis.

CR, DDL and TBL take this approach and perhaps these methods or combinations of them hold the

greatest promise for the future.

Grammar books play a role in helping students consolidate what they have learned in the classroom and give students confidence and motivation (by seeing progress) but they are not designed to stand alone but to be used in conjunction with authentic material.

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