THE EFFECT OF USING GRAMMATICALITY JUDGEMENT TASKS ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' KNOWLEDGE OF GRAMMATICAL PATTERNS

Ramin Rahimy , Neda Moradkhani

Department of English Language,
Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon Branch,
IRAN
Rahimy49@yahoo.com , neda.moradkhani85@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to investigate the effect of GJ (Grammaticality Judgement) tasks as a classroom activity on Iranian EFL learners' grammatical patterns. The main question this study tried to answer were whether using GJ tasks might enhance higher knowledge of grammatical patterns in Iranian learners of English at university level. To answer the questions, 60 junior undergraduate translator trainees participated in the experiment of the study. They were randomly selected from among a population of translator trainees via an OPT test score of at least one standard deviation below the mean. They were then divided into two groups of 30 and were randomly assigned to an experimental and a control group. A pretest of English grammatical patterns (sentence word order) was administered to both groups, then, they were taught grammatical patterns for 10 sessions but with different methodologies: the experimental group received a treatment of GJ tasks while the control group received a placebo. A posttest of English grammatical patterns (sentence word order) was then administered to both groups. The data of the study were analysed using the t-test to indicate the groups mean difference, and the degree of progress from the pretest to the posttest of the study in the experimental group was indicated by calculating the ANCOVA coefficient. The results indicated that the Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group received higher scores in grammatical patterns after being treated with 10 sessions of GJ tasks.

Keywords: GJ Tasks, Grammatical Patterns, Sentence Word Order, Iranian EFL Learners, OPT, Methodology

INTRODUCTION

Developing L2 learners' grammar has always been a controversial issue (Sarahian, 1995: 1). As is evident, some methods of teaching such a skill prescribe deductive and some recommend inductive instruction of grammatical patterns and rules. Some use traditional approaches of teaching grammatical points and some use new and updated approaches of teaching such a basic skill. Saeidi (2004) quoting from Larsen-Freeman (1997) mentioned, since grammar is considered as a collection of arbitrary rules about static structures in the language, it is often misunderstood in language teaching. She further pointed out that this myth about grammar may be the result of the fact that many people associate the term grammar with verb paradigms and rules about linguistic forms. However, grammar represents and embodies the three dimensions of morphosyntax (form), semantic (meaning), and pragmatics (use).

The purpose of this study was to explore the effect of applying grammaticality judgment tasks in grammar instruction as an independent variable on the students' knowledge of grammatical patterns (word order) as a dependent variable. In other words, the researcher intended to see

whether teaching grammar through employing GJ tasks might enhance a better knowledge of grammatical patterns (here, sentence structure).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

One of the first notions highlighted in this paper was the notion of syntax along with the concepts such as grammar, grammatical patterns of sentences and word order which are deemed to be the subcategories of the broad notion of syntax. The syntax of English language has several interesting properties which have often been discussed in many works of research. Syntactic theories are commonly grouped into two broad types, formal and functional. Formal theories of syntax focus on linguistic form, relegating meaning to a peripheral position. Functional theories by contrast, tend to focus on the functions language serves, and the ways that syntax is organized to serve these functions; meaning plays a central role.

Within both camps can be found an enormous range of variation in the extent to which theories are formal or functional. In extreme versions of formal syntax, grammar tends to be conceptualized as an abstract algebraic system specifying the acceptable strings of symbols making up a language. Meaning is considered irrelevant, and syntax (in whole or part) is seen as constituting an autonomous system. Extreme functional syntaxes by contrast, recognize only meaning or functions, and deny the existence of structure in syntax. The majority of theories fall in somewhere between the two poles.

The other factor taken into consideration in this paper was the notion of 'grammaticality' of a sentence and the concept of 'task' especially 'grammaticality judgment task' as well. Linguistic theory is built on an empirical foundation consisting largely of sentence acceptability judgments, deemed to reflect underlying grammaticality. For a discussion of data obtained from grammaticality problems of second language acquisition theory, there is not yet adequate knowledge of how to interpret those data within a coherent model of performance of the tasks.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to Fotos (1998) the reason that any grammar instruction figures heavily in the EFL curriculum is manifested by the particular characteristics of EFL settings. However, learners of English as a foreign language are well aware of the fact that, despite years of study, they are still unable to use the English language communicatively. It is evident that by having a good knowledge of L2 grammar system L2 learning would be accelerated as well. However, the question raised is 'how and by which methods and techniques we can achieve such an aim'. Since learning English as a second language is considered as an essential need nowadays and the performance of students in grammar learning has not been that much satisfying so far, the application of efficient methods and techniques to promote their output is quite significant. The reasons for such failure should be traced but certainly most of them will remain out of scope of this study.

According to Campbell (1970), 'to learn to speak and understand a foreign language is to acquire native-speaker competence in that language'. How do we explain native-speaker competence? He believes that the best answer to this question seems to be the fact that, native speakers possess and utilize a finite number of rules to produce and interpret an infinite number of sentences (Campbell, 1970, p.37).

Research Question of the Study

Based on the problem and the related literature explained above, the current study tried to answer the following question:

RQ: Does using grammaticality judgment (GJ) tasks affect Iranian EFL students' grammatical knowledge?

Hypothesis of the Study

In keeping with the above research question, the following null hypothesis, accordingly, was formulated:

H: Using grammaticality judgment (GJ) tasks does not affect Iranian EFL students' knowledge of grammatical patterns (SWO).

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The prominent role of grammar, as one of the basic skills of L2 learning, is widely recognized by teachers and learners. As a matter of fact, there are kinds of controversy between scholars regarding grammar teaching. Fotos and Ellis (1991) bring up a worth-noticing idea by asserting that a continuing controversy in the field of second language pedagogy is whether grammar should be taught at all. Some language teachers adopt a 'zero position'. They maintain that teaching grammar has only a minimal effect on the acquisition of linguistic competence in a second language. Krashen (1985) cited in Fotos and Ellis (1991), for instance believes that acquisition only takes place when learners are exposed to roughly tuned input which they are able to comprehend and that learning is limited to a few simple portable rules. On the contrary, there are some scholars who argue for grammar teaching. Since grammar is one of the basic foundations of language learning, there have been different definitions of it by different schools of thought. As Radford (2004) states, grammar is traditionally subdivided into two different but inter-related areas of study, morphology and syntax. The former is the study of how words are formed out of smaller units and the later is the study of the way in which phrases and sentences are structured out of words (Radford, 2004, p.1). Birjandi et al (2006) maintain that 'grammar is a systematic analysis of the structure of language' (Birjandi et al, 2006, p. 220).

Richards , Platt and Weber (1985) cited in Nunan (2001) claim that 'grammar is a description of the structure of a language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language' (Richards, Platt and Weber, 1985, p. 97). Further, Nunan (2001) believes that for most people, the essence of language lies in grammar. It is therefore fitting this exploration of language should begin with an examinations of the notions of grammar and grammaticality (Nunan, 2001, p. 96). Crystal (1992) cited in Nunan (2001) defines grammaticality as the 'conformity of a sentence or part of a sentence to the rules defined by a particular grammar of the 'language' (Nunan, 2001, pp. 35-36).

According to Carter and McCarthy (2006), English grammar is the body of rules that describe the structure of expressions in the English language. This includes the structure of words, phrases, clauses and sentences. A text that contains more than one sentence is no longer in the realm of grammar but of discourse. The grammar of a language is approached in two ways: descriptive grammar is based on analysis of text corpora and describes grammatical structures thereof, whereas prescriptive grammar attempts to use the identified rules of a given language as a tool to govern the linguistic behavior of speakers. Grammar is divided into morphology, which

describes the formation of words, and syntax, which describes the construction of meaningful phrases, clauses, and sentences out of words (Carter and McCarthy, 2006, p.486).

Many kinds of SLA research have been interested in grammaticality. For example, researchers studying how learners master the article system of English, and what uses of the articles are more difficult than others will investigate grammaticality. Researchers interested in global proficiency may want to determine the degree to which the learner's grammar corresponds to the target language grammar—perhaps correlating a general correctness score with some other variable of interest.

Bley-Vroman (1989, pp. 3-4) and Masterson (1988) argue that a fortunate and rather surprising fact is that some (though not all) native speakers of a language often (though not in every case) have the ability to say, directly, whether a sentence is possible, ambiguous, possible under a certain interpretation, and so on. Linguists rightly take advantage of this ability when it is found. However, it must be emphasized that the existence of this ability is not an a priori necessary part of a linguistic system: It is quite easy to imagine systematic grammar-based communication systems which are very poorly designed for the task of making grammaticality judgments on arbitrary strings of words. In the case of human language (viewed as an idea-expressing and communicating system), it is hard even to see what particular (evolutionary?) functionality this ability might have. Thus, its existence is might be considered a fortunate accident (fortunate for linguists). It is perhaps not surprising that not all native speakers seem to have developed this ability to the same degree, and this variation is by itself no reason to doubt about the existence of grammatical systems.

Judgment giving seems in part to be a trainable skill. This is especially true in the case of determining whether a sentence is grammatical under a certain interpretation or in the closely related case of deciding whether a sentence is ambiguous. For example, beginning linguistics students often have difficulty seeing the ambiguity even of such completely uncontroversial examples as The chickens are ready to eat; yet by the end of the semester, such examples and others involving the interpretation of the grammatical functions of understood elements are easy for the students to evaluate. Perhaps they have learned what to look for. It would be absurd to say that their mental grammars had somehow changed during the semester.

Judgment giving also seems to be degraded by various factors, even among the most skilled performers. For example, linguists sometimes report that it is hard to give reliable judgments if they are tired, if there are many distractions, and especially if they have been thinking intensively about a large number of closely related examples for some time.

In summary, judgment-giving is a skill, and judgments themselves are a kind of performance data. The ability to judge grammaticality is not a logically necessary part of grammatical competence, and even native speakers differ greatly in their skill in giving consistent judgments, especially in subtle cases.

METHODOLOGY

The Pilot Study

There have been a number of reasons why a pilot study appeared necessary in this study. First, to come to a clearer understanding of how to approach the research question and the hypothesis of the study reported here; second, to gain support to indicate the existence of the problem stated;

and third, to compensate for the lack of supporting empirical studies regarding authentic texts, considering the current paucity of research evidence about the factors influencing EFL word order knowledge in Iranian context especially.

The pilot study consisted of a test of 15 word order multiple choice questions to be answered by the participants. It was conducted on 15 junior translator trainees in the Islamic Azad University at Tonekabon. The reliability of the pilot study test was determined through calculating the Chronbach α (R=0.6) and scoring through inter-rater reliability of three testing professors. The 15 participants were asked to participate in a paper and pencil test of word order: each participant was asked to answer the questions in an answer sheet. The participants' answers were then scored by the researcher out of 15 (the criterion).

The results of the pilot study indicated that 9 out of the 15 participants showed significant deficiency in their word order knowledge (with the average mean of 5.5 out of 15 marks) in spite of the fact that they were expected to have an acceptable performance. This result could help the researcher attain supporting evidence for the existence of the problem that the participants had in their sentence word order knowledge. The results of the pilot study have been indicated in table 1.

Table1: Descriptive Statistics for the Pilot Study, Word Order Knowledge Scores

Score	Total No.	No. Upper the Mean	No. Lower the Mean	Total Mean	The Average Upper the Mean	The Average Lower the Mean
Pilot Study Word Order Knowledge	15	6	9	8.12	11.2	5.5

As table1 shows, 15 participants participated in the pilot study of the English word order knowledge and they received the scores indicated in the table. Their English word order knowledge was scored on the basis of a number of criteria including using correct grammatical structure, having correct understanding of different parts of speech in a sentence and using appropriate order.

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 Iranian EFL learners of English language majoring in translation. They were junior translator trainees, with the age range of 24-27, and with no control of sex, who were selected randomly from among the trainees in the Islamic Azad University at Tonekabon-Iran based on the results of an OPT administered. Since the problem of sentence word order was targeted, the 60 participants had to be representative of the weak trainees, thus, they were the students with the scores that were at least one standard deviation below the mean of the class. The 60 participants were then divided into two groups and were randomly assigned to the experimental (GJ Task) group as well as the control (existing- method) group.

Materials

The materials used in the current study were of four sorts: the OPT material for proficiency, the material for the pretest of the study, the material for the treatment of the study and finally, the material for the posttest of the study. The OPT used in this study consisted of several sections including vocabulary, grammar and sentence recognition. For each section, the participants were

asked to answer the questions in the specified answer sheet. The answers were then collected and scored by the researcher.

The pretest of the study consisted of a test of sentence word order. This was a test of word order including 15 questions selected from the book 'Objective Tests'. The final version of the pretest was made after it was judged by three professors (inter-rater reliability), also, after it was administered to a pilot group of students for its reliability using the Kurder/Richardson-21 formula (r=7.2).

The material for the treatment of the study contained 10 sentences (each session) for the GJ practice in the experimental group of the study. Also, word order was taught to them via giving them unsorted words and asking them to arrange them into grammatical order. The GJ practice contained a combination of grammatical and ungrammatical sentences adopted from Hawkins's GJ Data Collecting Exercise (Hawkins, 2001, p. 28). Each sentence was characterized with 5 ranks (1= Completely Ungrammatical; 2= Almost but not Quite Ungrammatical; 3= Unsure; 4= Almost but not Quite Grammatical; 5= Completely Grammatical).

The material for the posttest of the study consisted of the sentence word order questions used in the pretest of the study. Since the study here aimed at indicating the degree of progress from the pretest to the posttest in the experimental group of the study in which GJ tasks were being applied, the same test was administered as the sentence word order test in both the experimental and the control groups, and any other parallel tests of sentence word order were ignored to rule out the possibility of the effects of test differences.

Procedures

The OPT of the study administered for measuring the degree of the participants' proficiency was a paper-and-pencil test. Hence, the participants' had to answer the questions in specified answer sheets. The time allowed was 70 minutes as had been determined in the OPT. The pretest of the study was a sentence word order test with the characteristics explained. The time allocation for the sentence word order pretest was about 15 minutes. The treatment of the study included 5 sessions of teaching sentence word order to both groups as well as 15 minutes of treating the experimental group with GJ task. During the GJ task treatment, the participants were asked to specify the scale (1-5) related to the grammaticality of the sentence in the task. Finally, the posttest of sentence word order consisted of the test used in the pretest of the study and resembled to it in terms of time allocation and test characteristics.

Scoring

The OPT that was used in this study was scored on the basis of the standard criteria introduced by the test itself. The criterion for scoring the pretest and the posttest of the study was the maximum of 15.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from testing the hypothesis of the study were analyzed via calculating a t-test between the posttest sentence word order scores of the experimental and the control groups of the study and the one-way ANCOVA (Analysis of Covariance) between the pretest and the posttests of the experimental and the control group of the study.

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DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The Descriptive Analysis of the Data

This section focuses on the descriptive analysis of the obtained data in this study. Such analysis was done using the SPSS software. Table (4.1) shows the descriptive analysis for the pretest and the posttest of sentence word order in the experimental group of the study:

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of the data of the Experimental Group of the study

Tests	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Missing Value
PRSWOE	30	3.4667	2.12916	4.533	0.00
POSWOE	30	15.5333	1.97804	3.912	0.00
Valid N (listwise)	30				

As is indicated in table2, the number of participants has been 30 in each experiment (NPRE = 30; NPOE = 30), and there has been no missing value (Missing Value = 0.00) which means that all selected participants participated in the experiments of the study. The mean for the PRSWO (pretest of sentence word order) scores was shown to be 3.4667 ($\overline{X}_{PRE}$= 3.4667) as compared to the mean for the POSWO (posttest of sentence word order) scores which was 15.5333 ($\overline{X}_{POE}$= 15. 5333). As for the standard deviations obtained for the experimental group, there seems to be more variability among the PRSWO scores than the scores in the POSWO. This may give an image of the participants' posttest scores being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (treating with GJ tasks).

Similarly, the descriptive analysis for the pretest and the posttest of SWO in the control group of the study has been indicated in table3 below:

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of the data of the Control Group of the study

Tests	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Missing Value
PRSWOC	30	8.70	1.442	2.079	0.00
POSWOC	30	7.8667	1.69651	2.878	0.00
Valid N (listwise)	30				

As is indicated in table (3), the number of participants has been 30 in each experiment (NPRC = 30; NPOC = 30), and there has been no missing value (Missing Value = 0.00) which means that all selected participants participated in the experiments of the study. The mean for the PRSWO (pretest of sentence word order) scores was shown to be 8.70 ($\overline{X}_{PRC}$= 8.70) as compared to the mean for the POSWO (posttest of sentence word order) scores which was 7.8667 ($\overline{X}_{POC}$= 7.8667). As for the standard deviations obtained for the control group, there seems to be more variability among the PRSWO scores than the scores in the POSWO. This may give an image of the participants' posttest scores being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (using GJ tasks).

The Inferential Analysis of the Data

This section focuses of the inferential analysis of the obtained data of this study. Such analysis was done using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) from which the 'Compare Means', 'Independent Samples Test' for calculating the t value, also, 'Regression' and 'Linear' windows for calculating the Covariance.

T-Test Results	Observed t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Between the Posttest Scores of the Experimental and the Control Groups of the Study	16.114	56.685	0.000
(Equal variances not assumed)			

Table 4: The T-test results of the study

As is indicated in table (4), the t-value of the study was calculated between the posttests of sentence word order the participant in the experimental and the control groups. The observed t value was calculated as to be 16.114 (tobs= 16.114) and the degree of freedom was 56.685 (df = 56.685). The reason why the degree of freedom here was not calculated based on the common formula of df = N-1 was that the SPSS calculated the degree of freedom while considering the variances of the participant posttest groups as unequal instead of equal (VE= 3.912 Vs. VC= 2.878) see tables (2) and (3). Finally, the level of significance was calculated as to be 0.00 (p = 0.00) which has been used in interpreting the data for the rejection or support of the first hypothesis of the study in the next section.

The next inferential analysis of the data of this study was related to the degree of relationship between the pretest and the posttest of sentence word order in each participant group. This was indicated by calculating the Covariance coefficient between the pretest and the posttest scores in each group of the study. The results have been illustrated in the Covariance Matrix in table (5):

Table 5: The Covariance Matrix for the pretest and the posttest Scores of the experimental and the control groups

Matrix	Between the Pretest and the Posttest of the Experimental Group	Between the Pretest and the Posttest of the Control Group
Covariance	0.031	0.035

According to table5, the covariance between the two sets of pretest and posttest scores in the experimental group is 0.31 (CovPRE POE = 0.31) while it is 0.035 (CovPRC POC = 0.035) in the control group of study. This means that the degree of statistical distance between the pretest and posttest scores in the experimental group is lower than the control group which is representative of the closeness of the scores in the control group; thus, it can be concluded that the control group of the study has undergone no significant change as a result of being treated without GJ tasks.

Results of Hypotheses Testing

In this section, the results of testing the hypotheses of the study have been presented and elaborated. In order to give a detailed analysis, attempts were made to take advantage of the results of the study (see section 4.1 here) as evidence to determine the rejection or support of the hypothesis. In addition, the rejection or support of the hypothesis was justified by explaining the consequences of such rejection or support, i.e. what would happen if the hypothesis of the current study was rejected or supported. Before analyzing the hypothesis, it will be repeated below:

H0: Applying (GJ) tasks does not affect Iranian EFL students' knowledge.

The hypothesis of the study which targeted the effect of using GJ tasks on Iranian EFL learners' knowledge of grammatical patterns was rejected. Evidence from various sources of data could help to verify the rejection. The results of the T-Test of the study (see table 4) could be employed to confirm this analysis, accordingly, the observed t value calculated by the SPSS was 16.114 (t_{obs} = 16.114) while the critical value of t determined on the basis of considering the 2-tailed significance level of 0.05 (P = 0.05) was 2.000 (t_{crit} = 2.000). Thus, the observed t was higher than the critical t and high enough to reject the null hypothesis of this study.

The second evidence to verify the rejection of the hypothesis was the value of the level of significance calculated by the SPSS to be 0.000 (Significance 2-tailed = 0.000). Since this value was lower than 0.05 (based on the SPSS regulations), the difference between the means of the posttests of the study could not be by chance, and thus, the rejection of the first hypothesis of the study indicated that using GJ tasks would enhance the higher knowledge of grammatical patterns of the participants in the experimental group of the study.

The rejection of the hypothesis of the study could also be supported by showing the experimental group participants' progress from the pretest to the posttest. Table5 provided the evidence for this support. According to the Covariance Matrix illustrated in table5, the covariance value between the pretest and the posttest scores in the experimental group was lower than that of the control group. This meant that the posttest scores of SWO were distant from the pretest scores in the experimental group and indicated that using GJ tasks affected the participants' knowledge of grammatical patterns and caused the posttest scores to stand higher.

A further evidence for the rejection of the hypothesis of the study was the control group participants' lack of progress of from the pretest to the posttest. Table5 provided the evidence for this support. According to the Covariance Matrix illustrated in table5, the covariance value between the pretest and the posttest scores in the control group was higher than that of the experimental group. This meant that the posttest scores of sentence word order were close to the pretest scores in the control group and indicated that not using GJ tasks did not affect the participants' knowledge of grammatical patterns and caused the posttest scores to stand as close as possible.

DISCUSSION

General Discussion

The findings of the current study indicated that using GJ (Grammaticality Judgement) tasks in teaching grammar could result in a better performance of language learners in a test of grammatical patterns. These findings seem to be compatible with the findings of the research study made by Lightbown (1998) as cited in Saeidi (2004) that traditional approaches to form-

based instruction leads to treat language instruction as separate from language use; thus, the results of this study can have contributions towards establishing a relationship between language instruction and language use because of focusing on grammatical patterns instead of pure instruction of rules.

Accordingly, further, the results of this study is in line with Larsen-Freeman (1997) who has also pointed out that instead of viewing grammar as a static system of arbitrary rules, it should be seen as a rational, dynamic system that consists of structures characterized by the three dimensions of form, meaning, and use. Consequently, using GJ tasks will redirect teaching grammar towards a dynamic, rational process in which form, meaning and use are interrelated.

Finally, this study confirms the remarks made by Dickins and Woods (1988) that '*English grammar is chiefly a system of syntax that decides the order and patterns in which words are arranged in sentences, but in many cases all these definitions raise more questions than they answer: what is a sentence? How does position determine meaning? If grammar is concerned only with sentences, does this mean that in any given text there is no grammatical relationships between sentences? To determine what grammar means to us, it is probably better to look at the relationship between linguistic competence and communicative competence and at what we expect grammar to tell us.*' Such remarks emphasize the significance of grammatical relations that cannot be attained unless learners are given the opportunity to upgrade their knowledge of grammatical patterns with the use of GJ tasks while grammatical patterns are being taught to them.

Suggesting the GJTT Model in Teaching Grammar

Based on the results of the study which confirmed the positive effect of using GJ tasks on Iranian EFL learners' knowledge of grammatical patterns, and adopting from Hawkins's (2001, p. 28) Collecting Data Exercise, it is now possible to introduce and present a model to teach sentence word order to Iranian foreign language learners. The rationale behind the attempt to suggest a model here lies in the fact that the suggestion can be taken into account as the researcher main contribution in addition to the experimentation conducted in the current study. However, before discussing the GJTT (Grammaticality Judgement as Teaching Task) model, Hawkins's (2001, p. 28) Collecting Data Exercise should be focused briefly.

According to Hawkins (2001), the Collecting Data Exercise gives learners the chance to be experimental subjects in a grammaticality judgement task, and then to think about the kind of syntactic knowledge the task is aiming to elicit from L2 learners of English. In the exercise, the learners are asked to do the tests first and then discover the syntactic property the investigator is interested in. The schematic illustration of Hawkins's Collecting Data Exercise is as follows:
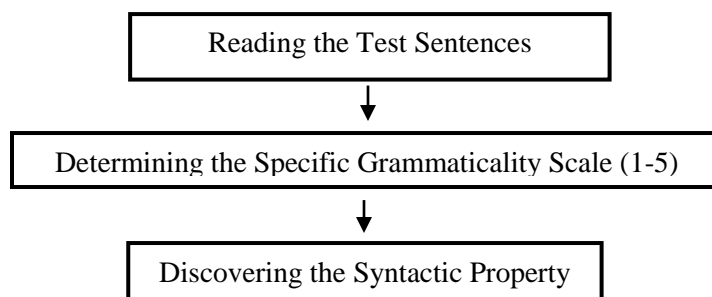
Reading the Test Sentences

↓

Determining the Specific Grammaticality Scale (1-5)

↓

Discovering the Syntactic Property

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Figure1: Hawkins's (2001) GJ Data Collecting Exercise for L2 Learners

As has been shown in figure1, the GJ Data Collecting Exercise contains three succeeding stages: first, the L2 learner is asked to read carefully the sentences in the exercise, second, the learner should decide on the scale assigned to the sentence to determine its degree of grammaticality, and finally, the L2 learner should discover the syntactic property that has caused that specific sort of ungrammaticality.

Now adopting from Hawkins's model, a modifying new model is presented which can contribute to linguistic approaches of teaching grammar. The model has been named the GJTT (Grammaticality Judgement as Teaching Task) model. The schematic representation of the model has been illustrated in figure2 below:
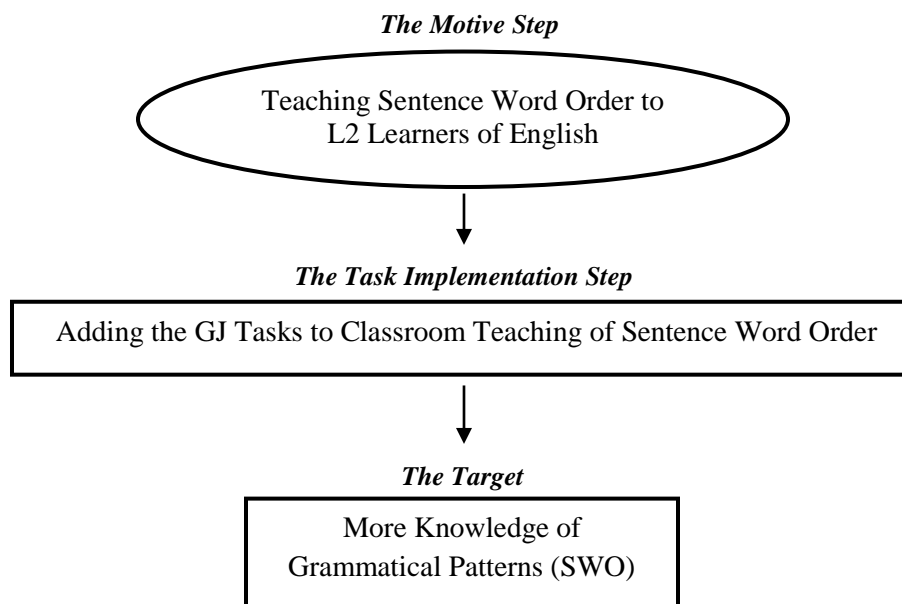
The Motive Step

Teaching Sentence Word Order to
L2 Learners of English

The Task Implementation Step

Adding the GJ Tasks to Classroom Teaching of Sentence Word Order

The Target

More Knowledge of
Grammatical Patterns (SWO)

Figure 2. The Grammaticality Judgement as Teaching Task (GJTT) Model

This model contains two steps as well as a target. Accordingly, the first step is the Motive step whereby the motive for adding to knowledge of grammatical patterns should be determined. Figure2 indicates that the base motive for this model is teaching sentence word order (SWO) (here, to target Iranian EFL learners), thus, any other decisions or processes involved must be in line with the principles and fundamentals of that decision or process.

The second step of the GJTT model is called the Task Implementation step whereby the GJ tasks are added to the process of teaching grammatical patterns. Additionally, selecting class activities to teach grammatical patterns should be done while taking this principle into account.

Finally, the model is completed by the predefined target regarding teaching grammatical patterns (here, sentence word order), which is more knowledge of grammatical patterns in Iranian EFL learners. If the previous steps included in the model are satisfactorily implemented in the classroom via the appropriate approaches, methods and techniques used during teaching the grammatical patterns, it can be expected that the determined target be achieved and the problem of foreign language learners' (here Iranian EFL learners) knowledge of sentence word order be lessened if not removed totally.

Suggestions for further Research

Some ideas may be helpful for the improvement of the issue as future attempts in using GJ tasks in teaching sentence word order. The fact is that research in general and research in language grammar are not limited fields. There are numerous topics to be worked on at least in terms of the variables discussed in this thesis.

The first point to consider is the issue of population of the study. It seems possible to go beyond the sample-population limitations of the study and to elicit information from a larger population. This was not practical in this research since there was the problem of distance: it was not practical to have samples from all parts within the short period of the time allocated to writing this work; however, this is possible and the future researchers are advised to take the time and replicate the study from this point of view.

As the second point, the future researchers are advised to expand the replications of this study to other language teaching situations in Iran such as high schools. Despite all attempts made in this study to see the possible effect of using GJ tasks on the participants' knowledge of grammatical patterns, the results seemed to be applicable to university levels. The sole information elicited in this study contained the data taken from the OPT as well as the oral proficiency tests used here, however, future researchers are advised to conduct qualitative research studies as well as quantitative ones to elicit information about the teachers/learners positive or negative views about the treatment and the results of the study. Finally, it is proposed that judgments of grammaticality be viewed not as behaviors proprietary to the field of linguistics, but as one type of decision-making or judgment making behavior among many other behaviors.

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