

The Effectiveness of Eclectic Approach in Teaching English Pronouns in Elementary Schools in Benghazi

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ملخص البحث

تعتبر هذه الدراسة معنية بشكل أساسي بمجال نحوي مهم للغاية، وهو الضمائر في اللغة الإنجليزية من حيث تعليمهم بشكل فعال عن طريق اختبار طرق وتقنيات تدريس مختلفة. أظهرت العديد من الدراسات نتائج مختلفة فيما يتعلق بفعالية بعض طرق وتقنيات التدريس في تعليم قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية. ساهمت هذه الدراسة مع بقية الدراسات حيث اختبرت بعض طرق التدريس لمعرفة أي منها يساعد طلاب المرحلة الابتدائية في تحسين تعلم الضمائر في اللغة الإنجليزية. طرق التدريس التي استخدمتها هذه الدراسة هي: التدريس الانتقائي والتعليم الاستنتاجي. تكونت عينة الدراسة من عشرين طالباً في المرحلة الابتدائية من مركز الرؤية للتدريب في بنغازي. تم تقسيم العينات إلى مجموعتين (المجموعة الضابطة والمجموعة التجريبية). احتوت كل مجموعة على عشرة طلاب. تم جمع البيانات باستخدام البرنامج الإحصائي SPSS. قبل القيام بتدريس الطلاب، تم توزيع اختبار مسبق بين المشاركين لمعرفة مستواهم قبل الدراسة. تم استخدام الاختبار البعدي مباشرة بعد الانتهاء من التدريس. أظهرت البيانات التي تم جمعها أن الطلاب في المجموعة التجريبية حصلوا على درجات أعلى في الاختبار البعدي وكانوا أفضل من الطلاب في المجموعة الضابطة من حيث القواعد والمحادثة.

Abstract

The present study was mainly concerned with a vital area of grammar, which is teaching English pronouns effectively by testing different teaching methods and techniques. A number of studies in the literature showed different results regarding the effectiveness of some teaching methods and techniques in teaching English grammar. This study is a contribution to these studies where it tested some teaching methods in order to figure out which one assists elementary students improving their learning of English pronouns. These methods are Eclectic Teaching and Deductive Teaching. The population of this study consisted of twenty elementary students from Vision Training Center in Benghazi. The samples were divided into two groups (control group and experimental group). There were ten students in each group. The data was obtained by using the statistical program SPSS. Before conducting the treatment, a pretest was distributed among the participants. The posttest was used immediately after the treatment. The analysis of the collected data revealed that the students in the experimental group obtained higher scores in the posttest and were better than the students in the control group in terms of both grammar and speaking.

Keywords: eclectic approach, direct method, structural-situational approach, deductive teaching.

1. Introduction

Teaching English has become one of the most important and fundamental requirements in schools and universities around the world as it is a language used all over the world. A number of studies have examined several teaching methods and techniques to figure out their effectiveness in teaching and learning English. There were different results in the literature with regard to the influence of teaching methods. For instance, some studies (e.g. Abdul Bari, 2018; Farahani, 2018) were in favour of traditional teaching methods such as grammar translation method and deductive teaching. Some others (e.g. Elwerfalli, et al. 2019; Mohamed, 2015) showed the effectiveness of teaching methods such as inductive teaching and communicative teaching techniques. Consequently, this study was conducted to contribute to the literature and to show which teaching methods may affect and accelerate the process of learning English pronouns. It tested some teaching methods; namely, eclectic teaching (e.g. direct method and structural-situational teaching) and deductive teaching.

Eclectic Teaching

Eclectic approach of teaching is a kind of teaching which allows adopting several teaching methods to teach language depending on lesson objectives as well as learners' abilities. It incorporates a variety of teaching skills in order to create the ideal learning program to meet the needs of learners (Mellow, 2002). It is named interchangeably as "disciplined "informed eclecticism" (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) and eclecticism" (Rodgers, 2001).

In eclectic teaching, instructors are allowed, "to absorb the best techniques of all the well – known language – teaching methods into their classroom procedures, using them for the purposes for which they are most appropriate." (Jebiwot, 2016, p. 266). In addition, this approach is mostly preferred by teachers because every teaching/learning theory has strengths and limitations and this kind of teaching allows teachers to choose and combine the strength sides of some theories to assist students obtain better learning.

Eclectic teaching includes different methods and approaches such as Direct Method, Structural-situational Approach, Audio-lingual/Audio-visual Method, and Bilingual Method. For the purpose of this study, only two eclectic teaching methods are utilized. These are direct method and structural-situational teaching techniques.

The Direct Method

It was originated in the 1900s. It is also known as "natural method, reform method and anti-grammatical method". It is a teaching method in which language is not taught in a decontextualized manner. Instead, it is taught in context. It is named direct method because the meaning is directly connected with the target language without any translation into learners' first language. The proponents of this method state that speaking a language is more vital than writing it. Hence, the focus is on pronunciation and oral skills. Moreover, in this method, language is taught naturally in the same way first language is acquired. This means that language is learned without the interference of any other languages.

The key objective of the direct method is to teach and show language learners how to use language for communication purposes. The main principles of this method are: (1)

learners should be taught in the target language; (2) translation is not allowed; (3) teach grammar inductively; oral and listening skills are the focus of instruction.

An instructor who adapts direct method of teaching does not follow analytical procedures in explaining grammatical rules in class. Instead, he/she encourages their students to use language in a natural and spontaneous manner so that students induce and infer grammatical rules by themselves. In other words, instructors should demonstrate not explain grammar (Cagri, 2013).

Structural-situational Teaching

This method is not widely used recently. It was developed in the 1930s by some British linguists such as Harold Palmer and Hornby (1949), Michael West (1953) (Hussain and Sajid, 2015). In this method, both speech and structures are the basis of language teaching. Structural-situational Teaching Method leads to improvement in performance rather than the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The belief in this method is that instructors begin teaching with the spoken language. That is, teachers teach language orally before they present it in a written form.

According to Hussain and Sajid (2015, p. 198), in structural situational teaching method “‘speech’ was the basis of language and ‘structure’ was considered as the heart of speaking ability. Hence, it was an oral practice of situational structure”. Similar to the direct method, in structural situational method, grammar is taught inductively and meaning can be derived through situation and not through translation. Learners are expected to deduce the meaning of words and sentences from the situation in which they are presented. As a result, learners use what they practice in classrooms in situations outside their classes.

Deductive Teaching

Deductive teaching requires instructors to explain grammatical rules directly, provide examples and then these rules are practiced (Akar, 2005). The flow of information in this kind of teaching is from general to specific. It is, also, called “top down approach” because when applying deductive approach in classrooms, instructors work from the more general to the more specific. In other words, teachers explain grammatical rules first, students apply these rules and practice them afterwards. This method is considered teacher-centered as teachers explain grammatical rules explicitly and then test their students by providing exercises in order for students to become familiar with linguistic patterns. Larsen-freeman (2000) stated that in deductive teaching, the instructor is the authority in the classroom and the students do what their instructor asks them to do in order to learn.

Generally, in the literature, there are numerous teaching methods and techniques. They were tested in order to show their effectiveness in teaching English as a second language. This study also aims to test *Eclectic teaching* (through adopting *direct teaching* method and *structural-situational teaching* method) and *deductive teaching* method (i.e. traditional teaching) in order to figure out which one may assist Libyan students in learning and acquiring English pronouns and which one may develop their speaking skills in using English.

Methodology

This study was based on a quantitative research design. It took place in the spring term of the 2019 academic year in Vision Training Center in Benghazi. The participants of this study were 20 elementary school students. They were chosen randomly from among 45 students in the class. In fact, randomization is used to make an experimental group and a control group similar at the beginning of the treatment (Aston and Antonio, 2012). Participants can be sorted into two groups by using some chance procedure. In this study, they were chosen by pulling over their names out of a box. This means that neither the participants nor the researcher were free to be in whatever group they want. Moreover, the participants' level of English was closely related to their grades in the previous semester English exams. Their ages varied from 12 to 14. They were divided into two groups: experimental and control group.

A pretest regarding English pronouns was provided before teaching in order to eliminate the effects of previous knowledge on pronouns and to figure out if their English level was close to one another before the treatment. The control group was taught through deductive teaching method and the experimental group through eclectic method. The instruction lasted for two weeks. At the end of the two week-period, a post-test was administered to learners. Both pre-test and post-test included 40 questions: 20 *multiple-choice* questions and 20 *fill in the gaps* questions. In both tests, the same questions were used; though, the order of test items and the options were mixed in order for learners not to remember the choices.

Procedures and Data Collection Tools

The Control Group

As previously mentioned, this group was taught English pronouns deductively. For the first week, the main topics of instruction were personal pronouns and possessive pronouns. Both types of pronouns were explained by the teacher followed by examples and then the students practiced them. Upon the completion of these lessons, learners were able to distinguish subject pronouns, object pronouns and possessive pronouns as well as when and how to use them appropriately in a sentence. In the second week, indefinite pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and reflexive pronouns were taught. The instructor ensured that her learners understood the differences between demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative adjectives, the difference between the use of *who* and *whom*.

The Experimental Group

The teaching of this group was based on the eclectic approach in which an instructor can adopt more than one teaching method. Consequently, two teaching methods, namely, direct method and structural-situational teaching techniques were utilized in order for students to be aware of the uses and the correct pronunciations of the English pronouns. These techniques were chosen as they both follow an inductive approach to teach grammar.

First, the direct method was utilized where pictures and physical objects of famous places were selected to help the students to understand the meaning of all kinds of English pronouns. The students were asked to name the items and cities they see in the pictures.

They have to say what the pictures represent. Moreover, the structural situational teaching was applied by preparing planned lessons about English pronouns and visual aids such as flashcards and wall charts. With this group, the instructor focused mainly on pronunciation and oral practice. Because the instructor followed structural situational approach, pronouns were taught orally before they were presented in written forms.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process of this study was through the design of pre-test and post-test. A pre-test was administered to all participants in both groups. It was used to display the levels of the participants before the instruction. The post-test was administered immediately after the treatment is finished. Each test included 40 questions. 20 items were *multiple-choice* questions and the other 20 were *fill in the gaps* questions. After scoring the tests, they were analyzed using SPSS statistics program. The same test items were used for both tests, but the order of the questions and choices were changed to confirm accurate findings.

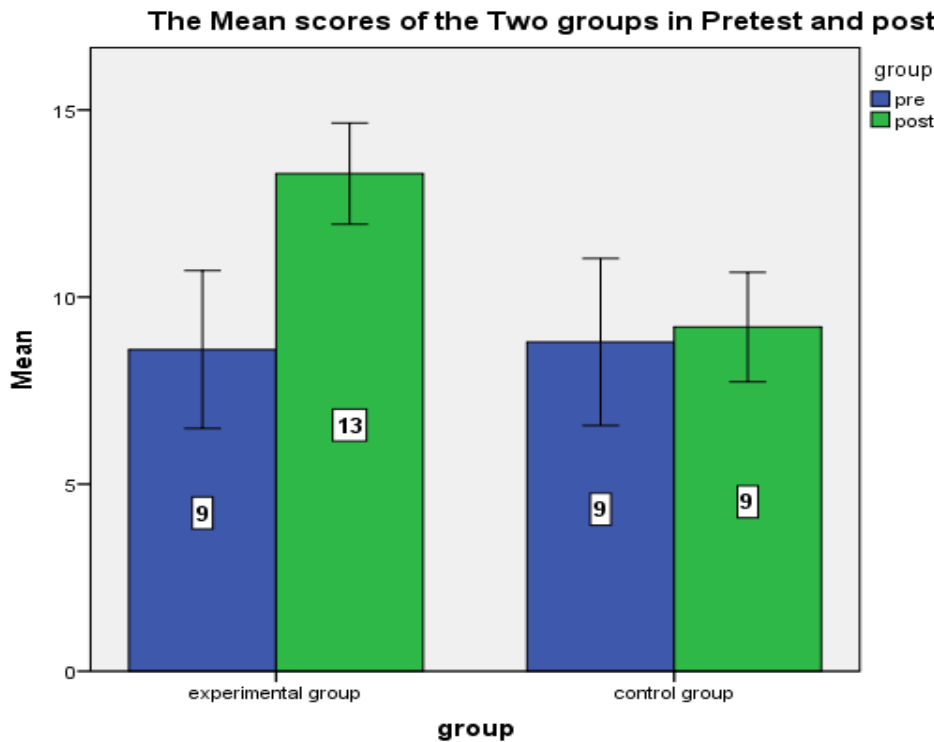
Findings

Descriptive Statistics

The results showed that the level of the two groups was very close before conducting the treatment. However, the experimental group outperformed the control group in posttest.

Descriptive Statistics

Group		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental group	pre	10	5	15	8.81	2.951
	post	10	11	15	13.30	1.889
control group	pre	10	4	14	8.80	3.120
	post	10	5	13	8.88	2.201



More specifically, in order to figure out whether there were significant differences between the two groups before initiating instruction, the one-way ANOVA was performed. The findings showed that no significant differences between the two groups were obtained: $F(1, 18) = .022, p = .885$. In other words, at the outset, the two groups did not have any individual advantages over each other in the pre-test results.

Dennis and Cramer (2008) stated that in order to locate differences among groups in SPSS, independent sample t-test can be performed to point where such differences lay. Hence, independent sample t-test was conducted and the results are as follows.

The results showed that there are significant differences between the two groups: $t(18) = 7.678, p < 0.001$. This result suggests that the experimental group outperformed the control group. Put another way, the group which received instruction based on eclectic approach improved significantly more than the group which was taught using deductive teaching.

Moreover, a paired-sample t-test analysis was conducted for each group. In this kind of analysis, the pre-test and post-test in each group were compared to figure if the group improved before and after instruction. Regarding the experimental group, the results showed that it is improved significantly: $t(9) = -10.944, p < .001$.

With reference to the control group, the findings revealed that the group improved slightly from pre-test to post-test, but the improvement was not significant: $t(9) = -402, p = .697$.

Based on the above-mentioned results, it can be concluded that there were significant differences lay between the two groups. The Experimental group gained more scores in the post-test than the control group.

Conclusion

This study was conducted in order to figure out the influence of the eclectic approach on teaching English pronouns in elementary schools in Benghazi. Two groups of students were selected and taught by the same instructor. One group (the experimental group) was taught using *Eclectic Teaching* (through direct method and structural-situational teaching techniques) whereas the other group (the control group) received techniques based on deductive teaching. The findings showed that the experimental group made more significant progress than the control group. This means that the teaching techniques which were used with the experimental group facilitated and accelerated the process of learning and acquiring grammatical rules. Moreover, the results showed that the experimental group improved their speaking skill at the end of the treatment. This is due to the fact that the teaching techniques which were used with them developed their speaking skills which was observed during their participations in class. It can be concluded that this study indicated that eclectic teaching was effective and led students to learn English pronouns and to improve their speaking skills. Hence, it can be concluded that adopting some teaching techniques can be beneficial and affect the process of learning in that they assist students learning and acquiring more than one language skill.

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Appendix

Sample Questions of the Pre-test and Post-test

1. Pre-test

Q1. Choose the correct answer for the following questions

1. This car is.....

- she
- herself
- her
- hers

2. brother is a teacher.

- He
- Himself
- His
- Him

3. We don't want to go by.....

- Ourselves
- We
- Our
- Us

4. My name is Laila, but they call.....Lily.

- my
- me
- myself
- I

Q 2. Fill in the gaps with the suitable pronouns from the table below.

she	me	it	her	them	we	yourself
his	your	my	him	they	its	you
our	he	I	himself	their	herself	us

1. Can you introduceto your new friend? I'd like to meet him.
2. She should be ashamed of What she did was very wrong.
3. Don't tell.....what happened. They will be informed later.
4. Please, don't hurt..... He hasn't done anything wrong.

2. Post-test

1. We don't want to go by ____.

- us
 our
 ourselves
 we

2.brother is a teacher.

- him
 his
 himself
 he

3. This car is.....

- hers
 she
 herself
 her

4. My name is Laila, but they call.....Lily.

- I
 myself
 me
 my

Q 2. Fill in the gaps with the suitable pronouns from the table below.

me	she	him	her	them	we	they
he	your	my	it	yourself	its	you
our	his	I	himself	their	herself	us

1. Don't tell.....what happened. They will be informed later.
2. Please, don't hurt..... He hasn't done anything wrong.
3. Can you introduceto your new friend? I'd like to meet him.
4. She should be ashamed of What she did was very wrong.