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Grammar Consciousness-Raising Tasks: Inductive vs. Deductive Learning

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Research shows that grammar consciousness-raising tasks (GCT) can foster L2 grammar uptake and retention. However, no research has compared the relative effects of two typical learning processes in GCT –inductive and deductive learning. The present study aims to fill this gap. To this end, it employed a counter-balanced classroom-based pretest-posttest-delayed-posttest research design to gauge the learning gain of declarative knowledge about the difference in the form, meaning and use between "there isn't any⋯"and "there is no⋯" and between active and passive voice. In their intact classes, two groups of upper-intermediate EFL learners in a high school in Vietnam (N = 109) took turns either to use an inductive GCT to unpack the difference between "there isn't any⋯"and "there is no⋯"and then use a deductive GCT to do the same, but for active and passive voice or the other way around. A control group (n = 53) was also incorporated in this experiment to gauge test-taking effects. Grammar gain was measured by a self-report test conducted right after each task (grammar uptake) and one month later (grammar retention). Each report was then rated by two independent raters using the same marking rubric. Their agreement rate was very high (k = .99, p < .0001). The inductive GCT was consistently found to yield far better grammar uptake and retention than the deductive one. Post-treatment focus-group interviews also indicated learner preference of the former over and above the latter. These findings together provide useful implications for instructional practice.

Online Profile

Biography

Primary authors: NGUYEN, Chi Duc (VNU University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University, Hanoi); PHAM, Xuan Tho (University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University - Hanoi)

Presenters: NGUYEN, Chi Duc (VNU University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University, Hanoi); PHAM, Xuan Tho (University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University - Hanoi)

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