



Teacher Cognition and Its Role in English Grammar Teaching Practices and Learner Development in Iraqi EFL Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

Original Research Article

This research explores teacher cognition and its impact on grammar instruction practices and learner development in EFL classes in Iraq. Teacher cognition refers to teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and experience and plays an important role in the processes of decision making and implementation of teaching strategies. Even though a great deal of emphasis has been laid upon the adoption of communicative approaches in language teaching practices, teaching of grammar still persists as being mostly based on traditional approaches.

To examine the interrelation between teacher cognition, teaching practices, and learner development, a conceptual analysis approach was used in this research study. The focus was placed on the role of teacher cognition in the choice of teaching strategies and their implications for learners' development. The results of the study prove that teacher cognition and teaching practices have close ties. However, this relationship is often influenced by context and shaped by the need to satisfy the demands of examination systems.

It becomes apparent that grammar teaching involves the combination of form-focused instruction and communicative language use. Only when teaching strategies correspond to the principles of communicative teaching and take into account learners' needs, learners' grammatical proficiency improves. Thus, a better understanding of teacher cognition and reflective practice can contribute to the improvement of grammar teaching practices and, thus, lead to learners' success.

Keywords: Teacher Cognition, Grammar Teaching, EFL Classrooms, Instructional Practices.

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Introduction

The teaching of English has become an integral part of today's education because of the global nature of the English language as a medium of communication and academic and professional interaction. In the case of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), such as in Iraq, the success of English instruction does not depend merely on curriculum, but also on instructional methods applied by teachers. The teaching of grammar constitutes a major aspect of language instruction because it supplies students with a systematic structure for accurate language use and communication. It

should be noted, however, that modern views emphasize the importance of approaching grammar not as a collection of rules, but as a dynamic linguistic system used in communicative practice (Larsen-Freeman, 2014).

Despite the aforementioned paradigmatic shift in the approach to grammar teaching, there are significant differences among the practices of TEFL grammar teachers in relation to instruction. The variability in instructional styles used by different teachers is determined by the thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs of each particular teacher about teaching and learning languages. This internal factor, called

teacher cognition, serves as a basis for teachers' interpretation of teaching situations and subsequent implementation of instructional styles (Borg, 2003).

Although grammar remains a major component of TEFL in Iraqi EFL classrooms, it is mostly approached through rule-based methods. Such teaching styles can limit learner development and improvement of language skills. This is why the examination of the connection between teacher cognition and teaching practices can lead to important conclusions.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to analyze the connections between teacher cognition and teaching practices and learner development in English grammar instruction at Iraqi EFL classrooms.

Background of the Study

English has become an important language in different spheres like education, technology, and business, and hence teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) has become a relevant topic in many countries. This means that learners depend on what is taught in class and therefore there is a need for EFL teachers to employ teaching strategies that promote meaningful learning among learners. Among the components of language, grammar is the most important aspect that helps learners in formulating accurate sentences. Grammar is the system which dictates how words can be structured in order to convey meaning effectively. In recent days, there have been changes in the approach used in teaching languages and learners are expected to learn how to apply grammatical rules through communicative use (Ellis, 2006).

Teacher cognition can refer to the knowledge, beliefs, and other thoughts held by teachers when it comes to learning and teaching. It is an important concept because it dictates how the teaching process takes place and therefore can determine learner development. The term 'teacher cognition' depends on the educational background and professional experience of the particular teacher, as well as his/her teaching context. Several studies conducted by researchers show that the concept of teacher cognition plays an important role in determining how the teaching process takes place (Borg, 2006). Hence, teacher cognition is important when discussing various language teaching methods.

It is true to say that there has been a change in the approach towards teaching grammar since there is a shift from the conventional one based on learning the rules of the language to the communicative one where learning grammar becomes part of communication. However, this is not the case in many countries where the conventional approach is applied. One of these countries is Iraq where teachers focus on grammar rules through the process of explicit explanation and memorizing. Learners, on the other hand, find it difficult to learn and apply these grammatical rules. This is one of the reasons why the

issue discussed in this paper is relevant in the EFL Iraqi classroom environment.

Therefore, this research focuses on language teaching and learning within the EFL Iraqi classroom environment, and specifically, teacher cognition's role in English grammar instruction.

Problem Statement

Despite the adoption of the communicative approach to teaching English language, the grammar lessons in EFL classes in Iraq continue to be taught using traditional methods that focus primarily on rule-based learning and written activities. This kind of approach may not necessarily promote the development of meaning and learner growth (Ellis, 2006).

The above problem can be attributed to a mismatch between teacher beliefs and actual practice in the process of teaching a foreign language. There is enough evidence that teacher cognition has a substantial impact on pedagogical choices; nonetheless, few studies have been conducted in Iraq concerning the impact of teacher cognition on grammar teaching practice and development of learners (Borg, 2003).

Thus, an investigation into the relationship between teacher cognition and grammar teaching and learner development is justified.

Therefore, there is a need to investigate the relationship between teacher cognition, grammar teaching practices, and learner development in Iraqi EFL classrooms in order to improve the effectiveness of grammar instruction.

Research Objectives

This research intends to:

1. Study the cognition of Iraqi EFL teachers about teaching English grammar.
2. Investigate the grammar-teaching procedures used by Iraqi EFL teachers in their classrooms.
3. Analyze the connection between teacher cognition and grammar-teaching procedures.
4. Examine the effect of grammar-teaching procedures on learners' development.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are Iraqi EFL teachers' beliefs and knowledge regarding English grammar teaching?
2. How is English grammar taught in Iraqi EFL classrooms?
3. What is the relationship between teacher cognition and grammar teaching practices?
4. How do grammar teaching practices influence learner development?

Significance of the Study

This study will make a substantial contribution to our knowledge concerning the interconnection between the

cognition of teachers and grammar instruction practice used in Iraqi EFL classes.

The present study will shed light on ways of developing more efficient teaching strategies that could be utilized in grammar instruction. In addition, the findings will be helpful for teacher training programs since they focus on the role played by teacher cognition in language teaching practice.

Additionally, this study is important because it fills the research gap associated with the topic as it examines the connection among teacher cognition, grammar instruction, and learning outcomes in the Iraqi EFL classroom setting.

Conceptualizing Teacher Cognition in English Grammar Instruction

Teacher cognition can be defined as the belief systems, knowledge, and mental processes that teachers utilize during lesson delivery. It influences how teachers make sense of teaching and choose appropriate actions to implement in different situations (especially when it comes to teaching and learning domains where pedagogical knowledge and linguistic knowledge intersect, such as grammar teaching) (Borg, 2006).

Specifically, in English grammar teaching, teacher cognition relates to linguistic awareness and understanding of the functional role of grammar in communicative interactions. Grammar should no longer be regarded as an independent set of rules, rather than a dynamic system, which serves as a foundation for communication. Such perception of grammar implies a synthesis of linguistic knowledge and effective instructional approaches that foster accuracy and fluency (Larsen-Freeman, 2014).

Regarding language acquisition, grammar development is not attained only through the memorization of rules but due to gradual exposure to language and practice with its elements. As learners acquire language gradually and build up their linguistic competence through interaction with language, instructors' responsibilities become even greater because they have to implement effective teaching techniques that support language acquisition (Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

Finally, in English grammar teaching in the context of EFL (such as Iraq), traditional practices and examination-oriented approaches can play a significant role in influencing the process of translating beliefs into classroom practice. Furthermore, English grammar is considered to be one of the most challenging topics for learners (as well as teachers). It is crucial to understand the nature of teacher cognition in the area.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The current study relies on the conceptual framework, which describes the connection between teacher cognition, grammar teaching practices, and learner development in Iraqi EFL

classes. Teacher cognition refers to the beliefs, knowledge, and experience that motivate teachers in their instructional decisions. The cognitive variables impact grammar instruction in class, which results in the adoption of specific teaching practices by teachers.

Moreover, teaching practices have a direct effect on learner development through enhancing their capacity for understanding and utilizing grammatical structures. Hence, learner development is regarded as the output of the interplay between teacher cognition and instructional practices.

Thus, the conceptual framework of the current study can be depicted as a sequence where teacher cognition impacts teaching practices, while teaching practices impact learner development.

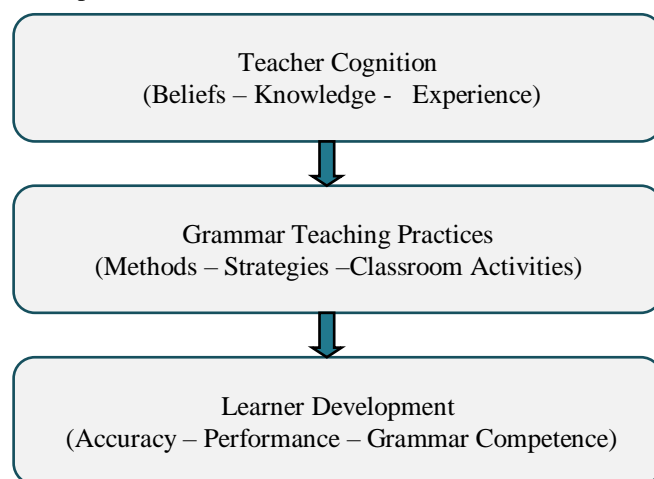


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Nature of Teacher Cognition in EFL Contexts

The cognition of English teachers in EFL contexts comprises the set of beliefs, knowledge, and experiences formed throughout teachers' lives and used in interpreting the situations and making decisions during the process of instruction. The system is characterized by flexibility as the result of educational background, professional experience, and experiences in the classroom of English teachers. It means that teacher cognition is a dynamic system that determines the perceptions of teaching English and behavior in the classroom (Borg, 2003).

When referring to foreign language contexts, teacher cognition becomes affected by the context of learning and teaching, including the requirements to curriculum and assessment as well as the institutional environment. As a result, the discrepancy may occur between the views on the teaching process held by teachers and the way this process proceeds in the classrooms of these same teachers. For example, the research has shown that the views on the communicative approach among teachers were not reflected in their practices because of contextual factors (Başar, 2020).

Finally, teacher cognition related to English language instruction is associated with teachers' views on the language. In particular, teacher cognition is affected by linguistic

competence, which includes the knowledge of grammatical structure (Andrews, 2007). As such, this element also contributes to the dynamics of cognition.

Thus, considering the definition of teacher cognition provided above, it can be seen that it is a combination of internal cognitive factors and external contextual ones.

English Grammar Teaching within Iraqi Classrooms

Grammar teaching is at the core of English language teaching in the Iraqi EFL classrooms. It plays an important role in achieving accuracy in the written and oral language expression. In most cases, the explicit teaching of grammar entails explanations of grammatical rules, translation, and drilling exercises. This approach is characteristic of traditional language education when grammatical correctness is preferred to language usage (Ellis, 2006).

Exam-oriented school systems are dominant in Iraq. For this reason, teachers often concentrate on teaching students how to perform successfully in the exams. Consequently, there is little room left for language practice through interaction. Grammar teaching is based primarily on rote learning and repetition. These practices do not provide sufficient opportunities for learners to utilize their grammatical skills.

The perception of English grammar as a difficult aspect of language acquisition has been found among Iraqi EFL learners. They perceive English grammar as hard to learn, which influences the quality of their language performance negatively (Kanaan et al., 2022). Learners' difficulties with mastering English grammar might stem from its complexity but also from the way it is being taught. In most cases, grammar is taught out of context.

Grammar teaching in the Iraqi context implies certain practices and beliefs. Teachers have particular views concerning grammatical rules and language usage in general. These factors shape grammar teaching practices in a particular manner. Therefore, analyzing English grammar teaching requires considering pedagogical approaches and cognitive issues related to it simultaneously.

Learner Development in Grammar Learning

The process of learner development in grammar learning can be described as the development process through which learners gradually gain the ability to correctly and purposefully use the grammatical rules of language. Such development does not rely merely on memorizing the rules. Learners' grammar development is the result of constant exposure to language in the process of its meaningful use. It means that learners construct their grammatical abilities gradually (Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

Second language acquisition theory claims that the quality of language input and opportunities for using it in real

communicative activities affect learners' grammar development. In such a case, students' development is facilitated by comprehensible input and communication opportunities. It should be emphasized that according to the second language acquisition theory, language acquisition process is based on learners' natural ability and is not dependent on rule-based approaches (Krashen, 1982).

Nevertheless, learner development is affected by class room conditions as well. Grammar lessons might either facilitate or hinder language acquisition because the ways in which grammar lessons are organized influence learners' grammatical development. Thus, if grammar is explained and taught in an artificial manner without engaging learners into real communication activities, their skills in using grammar will be limited. In contrast, effective grammar instruction involves meaningful communication practice.

Consequently, learners' development process during grammar instruction in a classroom is closely connected with instructional practices. Teacher decisions play an important role in it.

Investigating Teacher Cognition and Grammar Teaching Practices

The study of teacher cognition in relation to the practice of teaching grammar is of particular importance for identifying how instructors' decisions are put into practice. Teacher cognition does not only comprise theoretical beliefs but is also reflected in teaching practices, where teachers implement their knowledge and beliefs about language learning. In recent times, researchers have highlighted that teachers' cognitive systems directly affect their approach to designing tasks, explaining grammatical points, and organizing interaction in the classroom (Li, 2020).

Within the context of grammar teaching, teachers' cognition is closely connected with their perception of grammar as a system of rules or as a communicative tool. The choice that teachers make directly affects their approaches to grammar instruction. Namely, teachers with a more form-based attitude to grammar are likely to implement explicit instruction and controlled exercises, whereas communicatively oriented teachers prefer incorporating grammar into communication situations (Andrews, 2007).

However, teachers' cognition does not always correlate with their practice because external factors might play a significant role. In other words, teachers' decisions might be impacted by contextual issues, such as the requirements for the use of grammar that come from institutional authorities or from assessments. As a result, teachers sometimes implement approaches to teaching that differ from what they planned at first (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

Moreover, according to modern studies, it is important to analyze teachers' cognition in combination with contextual

and experiential factors because they affect teacher cognition. Indeed, in class, teachers must negotiate among their beliefs, knowledge, and contextual elements when applying their knowledge. This process results in specific practices of grammar teaching that can positively affect learners.

Iraqi EFL Teachers' Cognition towards English Grammar

Teacher cognition in Iraqi EFL education regarding grammar teaching can be seen through Iraqi EFL teachers' prior experiences, training, and sociocultural contexts. The beliefs that EFL Iraqi teachers hold about teaching grammar are influenced by the way grammar was taught to them when they were students. Consequently, many teachers' beliefs result in the perpetuation of traditional approaches focused mainly on form rather than function in the teaching of English grammar (Basturkmen, 2012).

Additionally, it should be noted that teacher cognition among Iraqi EFL teachers is highly shaped by various institutional and educational factors. Specifically, it appears that teachers adopt traditional teaching techniques due to the needs of curriculum and exams that emphasize grammatical accuracy (Farrell & Ives, 2015). As a result, such factors shape Iraqi EFL teachers' beliefs and preferences.

Moreover, it is important to pay attention to one more characteristic of language teacher cognition. Namely, it is worth noting that teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching are not constant and fixed but are, instead, changing and evolving in the course of time. In other words, teachers continually negotiate their beliefs with regard to grammar with their knowledge of this subject and realities of the classroom (Johnson, 2009).

Notably, there is one more point that should be made. Specifically, research conducted in the field of language teacher cognition suggests that teachers' cognition is strongly related to their practices and beliefs, namely, what they know and believe affects their instructional practices (Borg, 2006).

Thus, it becomes evident that exploring teacher cognition among Iraqi EFL teachers in relation to grammar can shed light on the reasons for adopting particular teaching approaches and the way grammar is actually taught in classes.

Enactment of Grammar Teaching Practices in Classrooms

Grammar teaching practices enactment in a classroom setting is defined as the implementation of teachers' knowledge about grammar and their attitudes toward grammar. Therefore, grammar instruction in a classroom setting cannot be explained simply by theoretical knowledge, but it can be described in terms of organization and arrangement of activities in class, as well as how the teachers introduce and teach the grammatical structures. In other words, it represents

the combination of teachers' cognition and their practical experience in class (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

There are numerous approaches to grammar instruction practiced by teachers in EFL classroom settings. The form-focused approach is associated with explicit explanation of rules and structured practice, while the communicative approach involves communicative activities in which the students use language for meaning. Thus, one can say that the approach to instruction is based on teachers' beliefs and cognition of grammar.

In addition to teachers' beliefs, there is an array of factors that affects the process of grammar teaching in EFL classroom settings. The teachers are constrained by various contextual factors, for example, limited time, curriculum requirements, testing system, etc. Such constraining context forces teachers to change their instructional intentions and adopt simplified methods of grammar teaching, which leads to misalignment between their beliefs and actual practices (Borg & Burns, 2008).

Recent studies have also shown that successful grammar teaching involves both meaning and form-based focus. Therefore, teachers need to combine these two elements. In this regard, one can conclude that high-quality grammar teaching requires not only teachers' ability to implement certain techniques but also their adaptation of beliefs for classroom practice (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

Thus, one can see that grammar teaching practices enactment in EFL classroom settings sheds light on how the cognitive beliefs and attitudes are implemented in practice.

Factors Shaping Teacher Cognition in Iraq

Teacher cognition is the product of multiple interdependent factors influencing teachers' thinking about language teaching and implementation of instructional practices. As for the context of an EFL country like Iraq, these factors include previous experience of teachers' own learning, their training, and the educational setting they are involved in. One's experience as a language learner is considered to affect teachers' attitudes to grammar instruction and learning to a high degree (Basturkmen, 2012).

One of the most important and impactful factors that shapes teacher cognition in an Iraqi setting is related to the examination nature of the educational system. Practices of assessing students' grammatical competence promote focusing on the rules, drill work, etc. Thus, the existing focus on grammar rules can limit the implementation of alternative approaches even despite recognizing their necessity (Kirkpatrick & Zang, 2011).

Teacher cognition can also be affected by professional development and teacher education. Teachers who attend relevant training sessions are more likely to develop flexible attitudes to instruction. On the contrary, lack of opportunities

for further professional development can result in the inability to shift from one's current attitudes to another.

Moreover, such contextual factors as large classes, lack of material and time resources can affect how teacher cognition affects practice in the classroom. Teachers in Iraq may be forced to adapt their practices in a way that does not align with their beliefs because of these issues. Recent literature emphasizes the sociocultural approach to analyzing teachers' cognition, implying that it results from multiple influences (Li, 2020).

Therefore, teacher cognition in the Iraqi context cannot be solely explained by intrinsic factors but rather shaped and transformed continuously under their impact.

Linking Teacher Cognition to Learner Development in English Grammar

The connection between teacher cognition and development of the learners in English grammar studies proves to be an important area in the domain of language education. Teacher cognition determines the way grammar is taught, and, consequently, the way learners acquire it and develop grammar skills. Thus, in studying the topic, it is necessary to pay attention not only to teaching practices but also to the cognitive processes that drive them (Borg, 2003).

The effectiveness of learners' development depends greatly on the practices that teachers adopt to instruct their students. If learners receive quality instruction that promotes communication with grammar being its part, they will be able to learn to use grammatical structures correctly and effectively. However, grammar-focused instruction that is oriented at rules' learning will fail to develop necessary communication skills in the learners (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

Furthermore, grammar development is affected by teaching practices in the sense that they should correspond to the needs of language acquisition process. The practice-based study of grammar promotes noticing, practicing, and using particular forms in communicative settings that help learners develop linguistic competence in the context of their grammar learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

However, teaching practices affect learners' development indirectly as they do it through various mediators such as motivation, prior knowledge, and environmental conditions. Accordingly, exploring the topic under consideration involves the discussion of multiple issues.

In conclusion, linking teacher cognition to learner development allows for the deeper comprehension of the factors that affect learning outcomes in the context of EFL education.

Impact of Teaching Practices on Learner Development

Teaching practices influence learner development in English grammar in a significant way. Learner development will

depend on how learners encounter language in class as part of instructional practices. If the language is provided in such a way that enables meaningful encounters of language with learners, then learner development will be promoted accordingly (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

Teaching practices that focus on rule explanations and the mechanical aspect of instruction, however, might not facilitate optimal learning processes. Such practices might make it easier for learners to recognize grammatical structures and even know about them, but they will not facilitate the effective use of the language in communication. In essence, learners will be able to know about grammatical rules without knowing how to use them effectively. The research indicates that explicit instructions can only go a long way in facilitating learning if they are supplemented by opportunities for practice (Ellis, 2006).

Learner development will depend, among other things, on whether the learner is engaged and motivated to learn. Learning will be enhanced if there is active participation and opportunities to interact with language content, and such involvement will promote cognitive development and increase linguistic abilities. Teaching practices that enable active participation will also help to achieve contemporary beliefs about how language should be learned (Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

Current findings have revealed that there should be an effort to combine form-focused instructions with communicative activities because the integration of the two has proven successful in enhancing learner performance. When instructors manage to attract the attention of learners to grammatical structures within meaningful contexts, better learner development can be facilitated (Spada & Tomita, 2010).

Analysis of Learner Performance in Grammar

The analysis of the learner performance in terms of grammar is important to assess how effective particular teaching practices have been. It should be mentioned that learner performance includes not only the acquisition of knowledge as a result of learning processes but also its utilization. For that reason, it would be reasonable to say that performance analysis could shed light on the efficacy of instruction.

Typically, the learner performance is assessed via written tasks, tests, and other classroom activities where students are expected to utilize grammatical knowledge and use grammatical rules. In case of EFL teaching, the emphasis is made not only on learning processes but also on communication. That is why, the analysis of performance is important since it could be used as a way to assess whether teaching practices are appropriate for helping learners become grammatically competent.

It is evident that various elements could affect the performance of EFL learners. For instance, teaching practices could affect learning results while different types of input could impact learner performance as well. Moreover, learners who use interactive language could display better results than those who try to remember rules rather than communicate. For that reason, teaching practices play a crucial role in shaping learner performance (Ellis, 2008).

Furthermore, nowadays, there is an increasing tendency toward combining various assessment practices to assess grammar learning. Tests are combined with the assessment of performance in order to obtain a more accurate picture of what a learner is actually able to do when communicating. As a result, there is no need to focus solely on explicit knowledge (Chapelle & Plakans, 2013).

Summing up the above-mentioned statements, it should be admitted that the analysis of performance is important to find out how effective particular instructional practices are. Besides, the analysis could help detect some deficiencies in learners' grammar usage.

Relationship between Cognition, Teaching, and Learning Outcomes

The interaction between teacher cognition, teaching practices, and learning outcomes constitutes the basic framework of consideration of the ways language instruction affects learner development. Specifically, teacher cognition determines how decisions regarding language instruction are being made, thus affecting practices that in turn determine the quality of learning outcomes, including grammatical proficiency. This chain of relationships demonstrates interdependencies existing between cognition, teaching, and learning in language instruction (Borg, 2006).

According to recent literature devoted to language education, efficient learning outcomes are reached if an alignment is observed between instructors' beliefs and instructional practices. As a result, the combination of teacher cognition that encourages communicative and learner-oriented practices allows providing students with better opportunities to develop their grammatical skills. On the other hand, mismatches between beliefs and practices may negatively affect the effectiveness of learning (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

Moreover, learning outcomes depend not only on the type of practice applied by the teacher but also on learners' participation in the educational process. Practices that promote reflection and interaction make learners capable of effectively processing grammar through explicit and implicit ways (Ellis, 2008). Hence, the learning of grammar requires not only the appropriate teaching practices from the part of the instructor but also active engagement in the instruction.

It is important to add that the above-stated model of interactions between cognition, teaching, and learning is seen as dynamic rather than static by current research. Teachers

change their practice based on experience, while the responses of the students to certain practices differ greatly according to individual characteristics. Thus, teacher practices and learning outcomes may affect teacher cognition in the end (Li, 2020).

In conclusion, it can be stated that the analysis of the discussed relationship provides an excellent framework for assessing grammar instruction.

Pedagogical Implications and Conclusions

The results of the study reveal the significance of the role of teacher cognition as one of the major factors affecting grammar instruction and learning in Iraqi EFL classes. Recognizing the impact of the teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and experience on their decision-making will help understand how to enhance the quality of grammar instruction. This chapter will discuss the implications of the study in terms of its pedagogy.

Pedagogical Implications for Grammar Teaching

The research indicates that an effective process of grammar teaching involves congruence between the cognitive perspective of teachers and modern approaches to instruction. Teachers need to be urged to shift from rote instruction to grammar teaching through meaningful discourse, which incorporates contextualizing of rules, use of interactive exercises and activities aimed at achieving both accuracy and fluency.

In addition, teacher education and training programs should involve informing teachers about the significance of teacher cognition in the process of instruction, helping them to become aware of how their cognition shapes their instruction. Teacher cognition is critical in promoting balanced instruction in which form-focused instruction is combined with language use for communication purposes.

Moreover, in order to encourage flexible instruction, the curriculum should be designed in such a way as to allow the teachers to use diverse approaches while teaching grammar. The emphasis on testing can be shifted to make teachers adopt more effective strategies in teaching grammar.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is clear from the study that teacher cognition influences grammar instruction significantly in the context of Iraqi EFL classes. Cognition includes teachers' beliefs and knowledge, both of which determine how grammar is taught. Consequently, the manner in which grammar is taught determines whether learners will develop in the process. The results also show that there exists a disparity between teachers' beliefs and practice, mostly because of contextual factors.

Additionally, the study shows that for grammar instruction to be successful, the two forms of knowledge should be integrated. That means that form-focused and communicative instruction must work together to foster meaningful development among the learners.

Recommendations

1. Teacher education courses should be designed in such a way as to develop teachers' cognitive awareness and its role in teaching methodology.
2. Teachers should make use of communicative and contextual methods of grammar instruction.
3. Educational institutions should facilitate professional development of EFL teachers.
4. Curriculum designers should consider balanced approaches combining grammar and communicative skills.
5. Additional research in this area is needed to study the correlation between teacher cognition and other aspects of language learning.

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