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ANALYZING CURRENT TEACHING METHODS: A STUDY OF GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION IN THE PREVAILING EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract

This abstract centers on a critical analysis of the current teaching methods of grammar in the existing education system, particularly in middle school language instruction. It investigates the effectiveness of traditional approaches such as rote memorization, direct instruction, and rule-based learning compared to modern approaches such as communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning (TBL). This chapter points out a few of the strengths and weaknesses of such strategies by examining their influence on students' engagement, retention, and the ways in which knowledge of grammatical practice can be effectively applied. Moreover, this chapter indicates areas where a gap between theory and actual classroom practices might be minimized. Case studies and empirical data from middle school classrooms would give a holistic view of how grammar is taught across different contexts, and such outcomes are shaped by the role of teacher training and the availability of resources. In addition, the discussion has been on the challenges facing educators in aligning the instruction of grammar with diverse student needs and varying proficiency levels. The purpose of this chapter is to help educators and curriculum designers understand the most appropriate ways of teaching through several instructional methods, ultimately promoting a deeper understanding of grammar by learners for better acquisition of language and communication.

Keywords: Grammar Teaching Methods, Communicative Language, Task-Based Learning, Student Engagement, Classroom Practices and Instructional Efficacy.

1. Introduction

Grammar instruction had been part of the basis for educational systems around the world, serving as an anchor for proper communication and understanding. It is always an integral part of learning the language, which contributes not only to the students' proficiency in their native languages but also to their competence in acquiring other languages. The teaching approaches to grammar in the mainstream education system have undergone tremendous variations because of changes in educational theories, technology, and differing priorities in



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education. Despite all these changes, there still remain several concerns regarding the effectiveness of such methods currently in use for inducing deeper grammar knowledge and their compatibility with the modern learner's needs. In the earlier times, there used to be a number of methods used in grammar instruction, for example, rote memorization, the direct teaching of rules, and practice repetition. Critics view such approaches as boring and not very communicative when applied. For example, the old grammar-translation method has been criticized for its uninteresting and not very relevant approach to the real application of the material. The method emphasizes rigid rule-based instruction and translation of sentences, ignoring the communicative aspect of competence. On the contrary, methods like CLT and TBL are devised to add grammar to meaningful contexts only to encourage functional use and develop critical thinking skills of the learners. Therefore, the move from traditional towards more contemporary approaches represents an open debate over the balance between explicit grammar teaching and contextual exposure as a way of acquiring grammar.

Technologies, more crucial than not, change teaching approaches with grammar. There are digital means, for example, starting from grammar-checking programs to gamified interactive tools for learning and practicing. The digital tool applications would provide tailored feedback, turn learning fun by incorporating a gamified feature, or develop adaptive paths tailored to different students' needs. This integration of technology also poses challenges to grammar instruction in terms of access equity, teacher preparedness, and issues of overreliance on automated systems.

There is sociocultural context of teaching grammar; aside from pedagogical and technological considerations, which forms part of the teaching method, pedagogy influences methods as developed through different education systems where attitudes in learning cultures, policies for education, and linguistic demands all present reasons for prioritizing teaching of grammar. For instance, in a multilingual environment [1], the teaching of grammar might seek to connect between learners' mother tongues and the language of instruction but perhaps target more at standardization usage in a monolingual society. Therefore, there is a basis to adapt the instruction on grammar for the learners in the contexts because the language use widely varies due to the difference in cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Although the new approaches to grammar teaching are student-centered and interactive, their implementation may be very difficult in real practice. For instance, large classes, time pressures, and standardized testing requirements discourage the application of innovative approaches. Moreover, teachers have to address how to reconcile explicit grammar instruction with the imperative of encouraging communicative competence. Besides, effectiveness in teaching grammar depends on the motivation, prior knowledge, and cognitive abilities of the students. Teachers, therefore, have to adopt flexible and differentiated teaching strategies.

The present study aims at studying the contemporary methods of teaching grammar in the existing education system, discussing strengths and weaknesses, as well as consistency with the educational goal. Thus, this paper will study the traditional teaching methods as well as those modern methods to find better practices on improving students' grammatical competence in general language skill. This research also examines the role of technology,



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teacher training, and sociocultural factors in the process of grammar instruction and, therefore, provides insights into how these elements can be used to build effective and inclusive learning environments [2].

Of prime importance for this paper will be the way theoretical approaches to grammar instruction are related to practice in the classroom. It focuses on whether current methodologies in grammar instruction align with certain theories like constructivism and behaviorism, and it also reflects on how the contemporary methodology would respond to the challenges brought about by learner diversity. In it, it would consider broader educational goals such as those of critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy regarding the implications of grammar instruction. Part of the talk about the future of teaching grammar is to analyze existing pedagogies [3]. Its message would be the balanced integration between the traditional and modern methods; rigid traditional methods integrated into fun and flexibility of modern techniques. Finally, it attempts to steer the efforts of the teachers, policymakers, and curriculum designers toward streamlining the teaching of grammar to suit the changing needs of the learner and community.

2. Methodologies of Teaching Grammar

This chapter provides relevant literature and studies relevant to the scope of the proposed study. It gives a concise summary of the principles underlying the methods employed in teaching grammar and closely examines previous research closely connected or bearing resemblances to the present study.

As such, [4] stipulates that teaching grammar should be done in the most effective way possible, given that time is limited and it is a responsibility that the instructor undertakes. Often, justifying an extensive concentration on grammar is very challenging. [5] point out that the study of grammar helps a person understand the patterns and avoid making errors in his or her communication process in both writing and speech. Some instructors favor a structural approach to grammar teaching, believing it is the best way to improve the language skills of students. Others, however, suggest that a communicative method is more appropriate and that teaching grammar should be done in a way that fosters communication and avoids the drudgery that has long been associated with traditional language learning. According to [6], these approaches are manifest in the form and the delivery of instruction, which influences learners' understanding of language.



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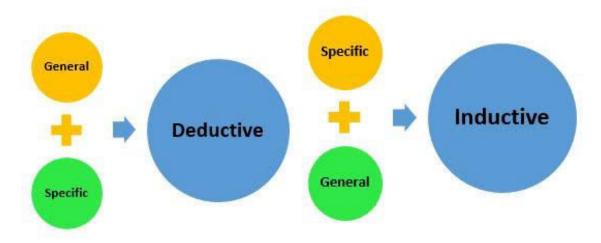


Figure 1: Deductive vs Inductive Strategy

2.1 The Deductive Method as Grammar Teaching Approach

The deductive method is one of the most widely used approaches as in figure 1 that are applied in grammar learning. It is sometimes considered to be "rule-driven learning" and has been linked closely to academies that teach classical languages, especially Latin and Greek [7]. The deductive method approaches teaching by first giving grammar rules, then examples of their use, and ultimately some practical application. Teachers usually give an elaborate explanation of a grammatical principle, which may be in the native language of the students, with metalinguistic terms. Students then use the rule in oral and written exercises, focusing on the comparison of the native language with the target language. This methodology is inherently cognitive in nature since it makes learners reflect upon the rules and then weigh their options before producing in the target language. However, this method often fails to notice the communicative intent of language.

The deductive approach is the same as deductive reasoning, moving from general principles to specific applications. Often associated with the Grammar Translation Method, this approach stresses explicit grammar instruction and translation exercises. The focus is on reading and writing with little time devoted to speaking and pronunciation. Implementing this method effectively requires teachers to have high proficiency in both the native and target languages, which creates challenges in multilingual classrooms. [8] describe the deductive approach as the traditional or explicit method for teaching grammar, focusing on basic skills through repetition. Teachers in this approach act as authorities, directly transferring knowledge to students who study from textbooks or workbooks independently. Testing is mostly declarative, requiring students to provide a precise and accurate response for each question. This is known today as the "overt" approach, which involves direct instruction of grammatical rules without modification. [9] note that this method introduces speech components in smaller units systematically, allowing students to build up comprehensive linguistic understanding progressively.



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Explicit instruction in this methodology has also been researched in higher education environments. [10] indicated that explicit training in academic literacy entailed giving students criteria for evaluation and oral feedback on their work at different stages of the drafting process. This approach promotes language acquisition through a controlled feedback process, with oral feedback often more effective than written feedback to meet the standards of higher education.

2.2 Focus on Forms and the Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) Framework

The Focus on Forms method is another deductive approach to teaching grammar. According to [11], the technique has focused on explicit grammar instruction, particularly through direct teaching of forms. It is generally taught in a PPP format: Presentation-Practice-Production as in figure 2. During the presentation, learners are introduced to the specific forms of grammar with their uses. Targeted exercises on understanding are incorporated during the practice phase, while communicative tasks form the main component of the production phase. Even though this framework is very structured, many students, even after participating in sessions based on PPP, face difficulties with effective communication, according to [12]. Some students find grammar instruction to be a demotivating factor in language learning, which further complicates its implementation.

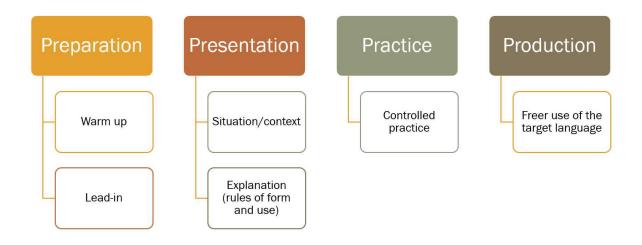


Figure 2: PPP framework

The deductive approach and similar approaches like Focus on Forms show that explicit instruction in grammar teaching is important. While the approaches work well in building a sound base in grammatical knowledge, they have been criticized for lacking emphasis on communicative competence. As the approach in teaching grammar continues to change, there is a need for balancing explicit instruction with more interactive and engaging approaches that make sense of meaningful language use.

2.3 Inductive Approach in Grammar Teaching



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The inductive approach, or "rule-developing learning," begins with examples which pupils deduce general rules. Such a method is close to how language is acquired naturally-to be able to see the patterns and deduce principles of grammar from experience.

The points to the inductive method as one of the fundamental components of Direct and Natural Approaches. These approaches provide immersion through the use of contextualized examples and also make it easier for the learners to interact with the grammar in a communicative setting, hence more fun and discovery. As such, [13] states, "It is only through experience that learners can internalize knowledge and develop their own rules".

The covert method, which is one of the inductive learning methods, requires learners to use the language without explicit grammar explanation. In communicative activities, learners use grammar intuitively, and the teacher only intervenes to clarify a point or correct errors if necessary. This promotes fluency and contextual meaning but may not be able to provide the accuracy required for the higher levels of grammatical mastery.

2.4 Eclectic Method of Teaching Grammar

The eclectic method utilizes a number of teaching approaches to accommodate the learner's different needs. According to [14], eclectic is defined as a flexible and dynamic approach that involves listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Teachers use methods and activities that fit the learners' specific needs, instructional objectives, and real-world applications.

[15] emphasizes "principled eclecticism," which involves tailoring teaching strategies by drawing from multiple pedagogical theories and practices. This approach combines theoretical knowledge and practical application to make learning relevant and engaging. For example, a teacher can put deductive rule explanations in tandem with inductive discovery activities, thereby balancing explicit teaching with experiential learning. The eclectic approach also works best in the diverse classroom setting where the one-size-fits-all may not be as effective in accommodating the different proficiencies and learner preferences. Argues that this method fosters meaningful relationships between language concepts and everyday experience and thus promotes both understanding and memory. Conclusion Summary While the deductive and inductive approaches represent two extremes of the instructional spectrum, the eclectic approach represents a balanced, flexible framework that addresses the limitations of singular methodologies.

2.5. Behavioral Theory in Teaching Grammar:

Behaviorism, as propounded by John B. Watson in the early 20th century, emphasizes observable behaviors and effects of external stimuli on learning. The basis of this theory lies in repetition and reinforcement for acquiring desired learning behaviors. Famous contributors to the field are Ivan Pavlov, B.F. Skinner, and Edward Thorndike, who set the framework for implementing Behaviorism in classrooms and grammar teaching. Skinner's operant conditioning has introduced the use of rewards and punishments to encourage the desired



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behavior, a principle which has been influencing classroom practices for decades. The nature of behaviorism in teaching grammar is activities that reinforce correct grammatical patterns, including drills, repetition, and rote memorization. The following are some examples. For example, students would be given a substitution drill where they will replace the subject of one sentence with another but in such a way that maintains the proper grammatical structure. It should be understood that this creates habitual use of grammatical rules through constant repetition, an attempt to achieve automaticity in the use of language.

One of the most recognizable behaviorist approaches to grammar teaching is the Audio-Lingual Method, which utilizes repetition, dialogue drills, and pattern practice. In an ALM activity, for instance, a teacher may ask students to repeat sentences in various tenses until they commit them to memory. The teacher offers immediate feedback in which they correct errors on the spot, encouraging proper usage. Positive reinforcement, which includes verbal praise, is often employed to motivate students, whereas negative reinforcement, such as underlining of wrong answers, prevents a student from repeating the same mistakes again and again. Although the method of teaching grammar using Behaviorism follows a well-structured model, there have been severe criticisms. Its excessive concentration on repetition and memorization has made it overlook high-order thinking and creativity of language use. Furthermore, the approach fails to consider the cognitive process of language acquisition, for example, contextual understanding or the application of rules in new situations. However, Behaviorist techniques are applicable in certain contexts, like for beginners or in the digital language learning tool called Duolingo, where repetition and immediate feedback work to reinforce grammar learning.

Modern classrooms usually use Behaviorism as a complementary approach to counterbalance its strength and weakness. For instance, combining the behaviorist drills with communicative tasks allows students to practice grammar in meaningful contexts while gaining the benefits of structured reinforcement. By including insights from cognitive and communicative theories, educators can develop a more holistic approach to teaching grammar.

2.6 Cognitivism and Grammar Teaching

Cognitivism emerged as a response to the inadequacy of Behaviorism. Cognitivism shifted the emphasis of research from observable behaviors toward internal processes that are within learning. Cognitive theorists such as Noam Chomsky and Jean Piaget greatly put an emphasis on internal cognitive structures as the essence of knowing and learning. It is with the discovery of the LAD that Chomsky went on to postulate that a child is biologically enabled to learn grammar, which goes contrary to the postulates of the behaviorists who insisted that language is learned based on stimulus in the environment.

In grammar teaching, Cognitivism emphasizes understanding how students process, store, and retrieve grammatical rules. Since this doesn't depend on mere rote memorization as does Behaviorism, the cognitivist encourages the learner to explore more actively. Thus, there are techniques in which discovery learning is facilitated and, for instance, allows a student to deduce the rules of grammar from sentences produced by the teacher and on which patterns are recognized for each of the different tenses. Another scaffolding technique used in



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Cognitivist grammar instruction is that the teacher first provides primary support such as visual or structured exercises and then fades out when the child becomes confident. For example, while teaching conditional sentences, she can start by providing them with sentence starters ("If I were rich, I would.") and then leave it to them to find their own examples. Scaffolding fits in with the Piagetian theory about developmental stages; hence it ensures that instruction is related to the learner's cognitive maturity.

Another emphasis that cognitivism puts is on metacognition—that is, considering how one is learning. Inviting the students to critically look into their grammar mistake and what caused it lets them work on self-regulation skills. Tools such as error analysis charts or grammar journals will enable the reflective activity for them to take ownership over the process of learning. The strengths of Cognitivism in grammar teaching are meaningful learning and long-term retention. In other words, through active engagement with grammar rules, students learn more than mere memorization. However, the approaches of Cognitivism have limitations. Guided discovery and scaffolding techniques are hard to implement in large classrooms or under-resourced schools. Additionally, the time required for reflective practices and active learning may not always be aligned with curriculum constraints.

Despite these drawbacks, Cognitivism continues to provide a strong, helpful approach to grammar teaching. The more that is incorporated in addition to the approach-the other approach being communicative-the greater will be the effectiveness both in comprehension and usage.

2.7 Direct Method in Grammar Teaching

The Direct Method, also called the Natural Method, is an approach that teaches grammar implicitly by immersing the learner in the target language. It is different from traditional approaches that rely on translation and explicit rule explanations. Instead, the Direct Method focuses on developing oral proficiency and intuitive understanding of grammar through conversation, role-playing, and visual aids.

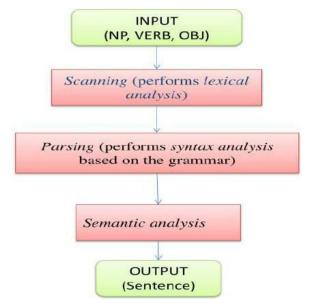


Figure 3: Lexical analysis in grammar teaching



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Grammar is taught in the Direct Method classroom through context as in figure 3 rather than direct explanation. For example, instead of teaching the rules of the past tense, a teacher might tell a story in the past tense, accompanied by gestures or other visual aids to explain the meaning. The students are left to infer grammatical rules through the language they hear in meaningful contexts. Such an approach is consistent with the SLA principles, which hold that learners acquire grammar better in natural interaction.

The Direct Method centers around role-playing and dialogues, during which students engage in conversations involving real-life situations, like asking for directions or ordering food in a restaurant. Not only do these activities make grammatical structures stick but also give the students the courage to use the language to communicate their ideas. Flashcards and images are commonly used for comprehension and contextualization.

The strengths of the Direct Method are based on the emphasis on oral proficiency and the use of natural language. The immersion in the target language allows for intuitive grammatical knowledge and communicative competence. However, the method also has several limitations: explicit grammar instruction is not present, which is a significant disadvantage for students who like clear explanations or need to prepare for exams that test their knowledge of grammar. It is not realistic for those who have no exposure to the target language before teaching by this method. Despite its weaknesses, the Direct Method still applies in modern times and continues to be highly applied in foreign language teaching nowadays. Even if explicit grammar instructions are present, the Direct Method can complement these easily so as not to lose fluency but achieve accuracy too.

3. Comparative Analysis of Grammar Teaching Methods

This section is going to dive deeper into a comparative analysis of traditional and contemporary grammar teaching methods, including their pedagogical effectiveness, practical feasibility, and alignment with the current goals of education. Based on empirical research, case studies, and theoretical frameworks, this analysis draws on the critical insights of how different methods affect language acquisition and learning outcomes.

3.1 Traditional Methods: Rote Memorization and Direct Instruction

Traditional methods of teaching grammar, such as rote memorization and direct rule-based teaching, focus on structural knowledge and precision. These methods are very effective in helping students internalize grammatical forms and rules through repetition and drills. For example, rote memorization ensures retention of foundational concepts, making it easier for students to recall rules during assessments or structured writing tasks.

However, these methods do not often have contextual appropriacy [16-18] and do not appeal meaningfully to students. Too much focus on accuracy without fluency can sometimes mean that the theoretical ability cannot be translated into the actual application. Students could master grammar tests but have very little use of grammar when speaking or writing. These



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methods may become too monotonous to be interesting and keep interest and motivation low when trying to learn a new language.

3.2 Contemporary Methods: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Learning (TBL)

Contemporary approaches such as CLT and TBL alleviate many of the shortcomings attributed to traditional methods by linking grammar instruction to meaningful contexts and interactive settings. As such, these approaches consider communicative competence and will have students use grammatical knowledge in real-life conditions. For instance, students can write a letter or engage in a debate under TBL, which naturally incorporates the grammatical structures into it. While these approaches promote learner engagement and fluency, they also have drawbacks. Teachers need to balance the implicit nature of grammar acquisition with explicit instruction to make sure that students understand the underlying rules. Moreover, the implementation of CLT and TBL requires extensive teacher training, smaller class sizes, and adequate resources, which are not always possible in underfunded or overcrowded educational settings.

3.3 Technology in Grammar Instruction

The evolution of digital tools transformed grammar teaching. It brings along new ways of teaching and learning. Grammar-checking software, gamified learning platforms, and adaptive learning technologies are a few of the examples through which a student can get a specific type of feedback so he learns grammar in a interesting and efficient manner. Examples of such software or application are Duolingo, which offers gamification with real-time error correction; and Grammarly, for better user experience.

With these developments aside, overdependence on technology may hinder the building of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. More than that, accessibility and equity issues are significant barriers, especially in the underprivileged areas where digital tools have limited access. Teachers also need to be trained to effectively integrate technology into their pedagogy.

3.4 Sociocultural Implications

Socio-cultural contexts have much influence on teaching grammar. In multilingual societies, grammatical teaching bridges linguistic gaps between native languages and the target language for the students. For example, in India, instruction in grammar for English tends to compare it with other languages used locally.

On the other hand, in mono-lingual communities, the teaching of grammar is standardized usage and linguistic precision. Culture attitudes toward learning languages and policies regarding educational institutions also influence the teaching of grammar. For this reason, it is very important to be aware of such sociocultural factors in developing a grammar instruction methodology that will be both inclusive and effective.



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3.5 Learner Diversity

Diverse learner profiles in modern classrooms include the difference in their proficiency level, learning styles, and cognitive abilities. Good grammar teaching needs to be adaptive to meet all these diverse needs. The major strategies for teaching to cater to learner diversity are differentiated instruction, scaffolding, and personalized feedback. For instance, more advanced students might need more inductive approaches that make learners discover and think critically, whereas beginners might require explicit instructions and practice. Thus, the teaching approach could vary depending on individual needs so that both comprehension and retention of grammatical knowledge increase.

4. Gap between Theory and Practice

A persistent problem in grammar instruction is the gap between theory and practice. Theories now are very much student-centered and interactive. However, in the face of practical limitations, the practices are different. High classroom numbers, rigid curricula, and standardized testing pressures discourage innovative approaches.

4.1 Teacher Professional Development

One of the most critical factors that will help fill this gap is teacher training. Professional development programs must be created to enable teachers to utilize a variety of teaching methodologies effectively. Teachers can gain pedagogical competence and confidence through workshops, peer mentoring, and access to teaching resources.

4.2 Curriculum Design and Assessment

Curriculum developers should come up with frameworks that can be applied by teachers in either traditional or modern approaches. Assessment techniques must also be adapted to ensure that it is no longer just an assessment of grammatical correctness but rather a test of communicative ability and critical thinking as well. For instance, project-based assessment and portfolio assessment can complement the traditional grammar tests.

5. Future Research Recommendations

This study opens several avenues for further research:

- Longitudinal Studies: Explore the long-term effects of different grammar teaching methods on language acquisition and proficiency.
- Role of Technology: Investigate the use of new technologies, such as AI-driven learning platforms, in the improvement of grammar instruction.
- Cultural Perspectives: Explore the impact of cultural attitudes and linguistic diversity on grammar teaching practices in various contexts.
- Teacher Training Models: Design and test new professional development models related to grammar instruction.



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• Learner-Centered Approaches: Analyze the effectiveness of personalized and differentiated instruction in enhancing grammatical competency.

Grammar teaching is the core part of language learning. However, the approach and method of grammar teaching changes according to the new goals of education and technological improvements. Though traditional methods ensure a structure and accuracy, the contemporary methods focus on relevance and practicality. A versatile, flexible, and resource-frugal structure could encompass both these approaches in fulfilling the different needs of today's learners. Therefore, by closing the gap between theory and practice, applying technology, and improving teachers' competence, a more dynamic environment for learning could be produced to boost grammatical skills and linguistic competency. It emphasizes how balancing tradition with innovation can provide grammar education with an impact within the new system of 21st-century education.

Method	Engagement Level	Retention Level	Practical Application
Deductive Approach	Low	Moderate	Low
Inductive Approach	High	High	High
Eclectic Method	High	High	Moderate
Behaviorist Approach	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Cognitive Approach	Moderate	High	Moderate
Direct Method	High	Moderate	High
Technology-Based Methods	High	High	High

Table 1: Comparative Analysis

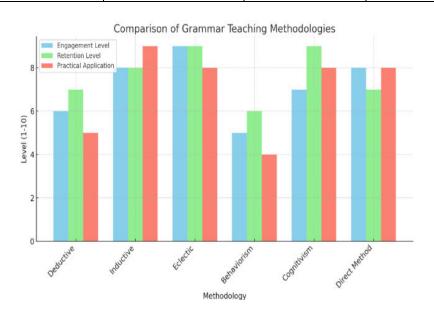


Figure 4: Comparison chart of various methods

The table 1 compares different methods of teaching grammar based on engagement, retention, and practical application. The inductive approach, eclectic method, and technology-



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based methods score the highest overall as they promote high engagement, retention, and practical application through discovery, adaptability, and interactive learning. The deductive approach and behaviourist approach, though systematic, score lower in engagement and practical application because they are based on rote learning and repetition. The cognitive approach is strong on long-term retention and reflective learning but not so practical for immediate application. The direct method is excellent in terms of engagement and practical application because it places learners into the actual context of life, though it is weak on structured retention for exams. Generally, methods that incorporate interaction, adaptability, and contextual learning tend to score better across all criteria.

6. Conclusion

This analysis of modern approaches to teaching grammar in the middle school setting underlines dynamic interaction between traditional and more contemporary approaches. Traditional methods, like rote memorization and rule-based instruction, provide structured frameworks for the systematic learning and exam preparation process. However, in these approaches, it lacks the element of engagement or practical application that is vital to meaningful language acquisition. On the contrary, the modern approaches, such as CLT and TBL, involve more student involvement, interaction, and application of grammar in real life. Therefore, they are more efficient in terms of long-term retention and communication skills. One of the most important observations made from this study is the gap between theoretical frameworks and their application in classrooms. Most teachers do agree that modern methods work; however, in most cases, it has been stifled by poor training for the teacher, limited resources, and varying degrees of student preparedness. Case studies show that classrooms with a combination of traditional and modern approaches perform better because such an approach exploits the strengths of both while mitigating the weaknesses. This research underscores the fact that the effectiveness of educators could be significantly enhanced through effective teacher training, whereby capable educators would be flexible and accommodating to different students. Another crucial factor for amplifying instructional effectiveness is availability of technological tools and tools and resources. Future developments in education systems need a balance, integrating both methods- fun, studentinclusive approaches and the organized, tried-and-tested traditional ones. By aligning instructional practices with the needs and contextual realities of students, grammar teaching can change to better facilitate deeper understanding, improved retention, and enhanced communication skills among learners.

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