

**Implementing
Communicative Tasks in
Foreign Language
Grammar Teaching**

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Abstract

This article attempts to investigate the use of communicative grammar tasks as an alternative to traditional grammar lessons and exercises in current practical grammar books. The final analysis allows us to identify eight types of communicative tasks used in grammar course-books. These innovative packets of instruction are found to promote linguistic competence as well as communicative competence.

Introduction

A compelling body of evidence has accumulated recently supporting the view that the teaching of grammar on its own is not enough and that Task-Based Language Teaching on its own is not enough either. This article shows how current research attempts to integrate the teaching of grammar and Task-Based Language Teaching through the use of communicative grammar tasks in order to enhance accuracy, fluency as well as autonomy and motivation.

ملخص

يسعى هذا المقال إلى الكشف عن استعمال المهام النحوية التواصلية كبديل للدروس والتمارين النحوية التقليدية. و يكشف لنا التحليل عن تشخيص ثمانية أنواع من المهام التواصلية من الكتب النحوية التعليمية تساعد الطلبة على تحسين الكفاءة اللغوية والكفاءة التواصلية.

Rationale for Integration

Although Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is reported to yield promising results in promoting language acquisition, it is not without problems of its own at all. Learners following this approach are generally found to be good but inaccurate communicators as fluency has been emphasized to the detriment of accuracy. To solve this problem, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers propose espousing TBLT with some kind of form-focused instruction to allow learners to achieve both accuracy and fluency. Grammar and communication were separated for a long time and regarded as two independent disciplines rather than as two complementary integrated components necessary for meaningful interactive language use. To date, with the development of language pedagogy, emphasis has been put on communication, and grammar has been overlooked. A few researchers have explored the question of marrying grammar and task-based methodology through the use of task-based activities.

There are two contrasting approaches to implementing tasks: the pure communicative-driven tasks and the structure-driven tasks, or as in the words of Nobuyoshi and Ellis (1993) ‘unfocused communication tasks’ and ‘focused communication tasks’. The first approach claims that communicative tasks alone without any reliance on form will enhance L2 development, but this claim has undergone severe criticism on several grounds. The second approach holds that forms or structures are quite necessary for developing grammatical competence, and therefore should be incorporated through the task design. This category of tasks has been recommended by some researchers and put forward in different formats under different headings. A deep survey of recent literature enables us to identify eight types of CR communicative tasks from practical grammar books where sometimes the term ‘task’ is not mentioned at all as illustrated below.

1. Communicative Grammar Tasks

Ur (1988) proposes the use of “communicative grammar tasks” in order to promote the accurate production of targeted grammatical features. She postulates that the task may be “language-based” such as yes/no questions or “non-linguistic” such as “Guess what I’m thinking of”. She explains that the language-based task results in mechanical, boring language manipulation like transforming some sentences in the

simple past; but the non-linguistic task proves to be more interesting, and yields better learning outcomes if it involves some targeted grammatical features and the objective is, for example, solving a problem or getting someone to do something,...etc. The most successful grammar task, in her opinion, is the one which combines the non-linguistic aspect as the most essential focus and the linguistic one as a secondary aspect though learners are aware of it such as: “ I want you to guess what I’m thinking of – and use ‘yes/no questions’ as you do so” (Ur,1988: 17-18). She goes on to say that the function of a grammar task is to activate language use through the “actual production of instances of the structure on the part of learners themselves”, or to enable learners to engage in mental activities such as “perceiving, discriminating, understanding, or interpreting” (17).

These mental processes are provided by Ur in the presentation stage of a lesson. She suggests four stages for teaching communicative grammar tasks: (a) presentation, (b) isolation and explanation, (c) practice, and (d) test. The objective of the presentation stage is to allow learners to ‘*perceive*’ the form and meaning of the structure which appears in a story, a dialogue, or just a sample sentence if it is very simple, and to ‘take it into short-term memory’ through reading aloud, repeating, reproducing from memory or copying out. At the second stage, focus will be on the grammatical structures isolated from context and the explanation of the rules that govern them in order to help learners ‘*understand*’ the form and meaning of these structures. The practice stage includes a range of exercises and aims at getting the learners to “*absorb* the structure thoroughly” –“to transform what they know from short-term to long-term memory” (7). The exercises are of three categories: (1) those which focus on the manipulation of forms without relating to meaning such as slot fillers (for example, inserting the appropriate article and transformations as in: This is a man → These are men); (2) those which focus on form as well as meaning but not linked yet to actual situations such as translation, matching, multiple choice, and slot filling with choice of answers not provided, and; (3) those which stress the production and comprehension of meanings for non linguistic purposes “while keeping an eye, as it were, on the way the structures are being manipulated in the process” (8-9) such as information or opinion-gap communication techniques and production-based entertaining activities (for example, a dilemma situation using modals and making up stories cooperatively to practise

the past tense. The move from one type of practice to another depends on the mastery of the structure in question. If students commit mistakes in a particular structure they have to return to the type of focus-form exercises (9). Finally, learners will do tests not only to show how well they have mastered the grammatical activities but also to get feedback to progress further on as the correction of mistakes is deemed to be necessary for promoting conscious language learning (9-10).

It can be deduced that Ur's communicative grammar tasks are somewhat identical to traditional grammar teaching. It is true to say that the presentation stage is comparable to 'consciousness-raising' about target grammatical structures, but practice does not seem to be the most important stage, as Ur claims, for the material to be "most thoroughly and permanently learnt" (10). Other grammar tasks that do not target production but aim at heightening comprehension and promoting to a great extent input processing are also considered efficient means for language acquisition as will be seen later.

Dickins and Woods (1988) recommend the use of 'communicative grammar tasks' to bridge the gap between grammar and communication which have been considered for a long time as two independent features. Their criteria for the development of such tasks are the creation of interaction among learners, the development of grammatical awareness, and the promotion of learners' ability to make appropriate contextual choices. In short, to allow learners to comprehend how grammar functions in the transmission and interpretation of meaning as in the 'consciousness-raising approach' expounded by Rutherford (1987) and Rutherford and Sharwood-Smith (1985). Eventually, Dickins and Woods (636) contend that many existing grammatical exercises need not be rejected because they may reflect some of the criteria of 'communicative grammar tasks'; yet, the problem is that "the baby has been thrown out with the bath water". Communicative grammar tasks, according to Dickins and Woods, must include the following criteria: Firstly, they are required to demonstrate both 'content' and 'construct' validity. Secondly, structure and form should not be presented as ends in themselves but as a means towards furthering the communication of ideas, beliefs, feelings, and so on. Thirdly, they should promote interaction among learners and encourage them to work in dyads and groups. Additionally, they should allow learners to develop an "awareness of

grammatical choice” as well as the ability “to make the appropriate choices according to given contextual constraints” (636.). In the “communicative grammar tasks”, learners are also invited to talk about grammar, to make decisions about language use and appropriateness of grammatical forms and cooperate through the problem-solving dimension of tasks. Furthermore, learners should be provided not only with contexts and situations where the application of grammatical rules may be demonstrated but also with some explicit information about how the grammatical elements of language work. Getting learners involved in the complexes of language is believed to promote their “cognitive recognition and processing of grammatical rules” (636).

2. Structure-Based Communication Tasks

The use of tasks in language teaching has received a great support from researchers and educationalists, but the use of communication tasks to teach L2 grammar is not yet well-known, and little work has been done in combining grammar pedagogy and task-based language methodology. Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1993: 140-143) propose the use of ‘structure-based communication tasks’. They argue that since L2 learning is, in part, a process of hypothesis formation and testing, restructuring and automatization, the best way to teach grammar is not through the use of grammar drills and exercises but through the use of consciousness-raising activities. They distinguish between ‘comprehension tasks’ and ‘production tasks’ and argue that both types involve ‘structure-based communication tasks’ or focus on form while learners are principally concerned with message conveyance. Learners are required to produce a particular target structure in completing the task content which is non-grammatical in essence. Loschky and Bley-Vroman’s (1993) approach to task design allows grammatical features to develop incidentally rather than providing formal instruction in conjunction with such tasks without ruling out this form of instruction. They suggest that production tasks should be used for automatizing structures which have been correctly hypothesised in comprehension tasks and maintain that comprehension tasks should precede production tasks. More specifically, Loschky and Bley-Vroman (132-139) distinguish three types of involvement of a grammatical structure in a task: ‘task naturalness’, ‘task utility’ and ‘task essentialness’; that is to say, (1) tasks which make the

performance of a grammatical structure ‘natural’; (2) tasks which can be completed without the structure; and (3) tasks which make the use of a certain structure quite ‘essential’, and without it the task cannot be successfully completed. Furthermore, they point out that tasks in which a particular structure is ‘essential’ are harder to design than those in which the target structure is ‘natural’ or ‘useful’ (139). Finally, ‘structure-based communicative tasks’ are required to meet two criteria: (1) structural accuracy in both comprehension and production tasks should be ‘essential’ for the meaningful completion of the task, and (2) communicative feedback on structural accuracy for allowing learners to confirm or disconfirm their interlanguage hypotheses should be incorporated into the creation of the task (131-132).

3. Magic Interactive Tasks

Some books on magic offer new ideas about classroom interactive activities for the development of reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar. Hassal’s *English by Magic* (1985), for example, contains a selection of magic activities to invite learners to acquire English morpho-syntactic structures while performing and learning about magic. The writer opts for magic because it is novel, motivating and can be easily adapted with everyday English lessons that suit learners’ styles. In a description of this method, Hassal (1985: 2) says:

Magic is well suited to the Presentation Stage. It provides a framework involving limited lexis, structures and functions combined with an abundance of gesture which lends itself to the presentation of new linguistic items. A context is created which may also help to establish grammatical or functional words such as the articles, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, negative and comparative particles, without which little progress can be made.

Hassal’s justification of this kind of learning by magic lies in what he calls Wilkins’ interpretation of the ‘essential truth’ of Behaviourism: “we learn what we do, thus – we learn something roughly in proportion to the degree of experience that we have of it” (9).

4. Grammar in Action Tasks

Frank and Rinvoluceri (1983) set out their introduction with Stevick’s remark: “though a student may repeat over and over the

forms of the language, in doing so he may not be using the language”. This feeling of dissatisfaction with the poor results in FL classes led them to emphasize ‘communicative competence’ rather than ‘linguistic competence’, “language in action and use rather than language as a system of symbols”, “mastering a tool rather than looking at it”, and “ability and command rather than knowledge” (6). It is a kind of learning not through practice, but through interaction in order to keep or ‘break off’ social relationships. It is also a type of learning which and Rinvoluti, 1983: 7, “[a]n awareness activity can be seen as a guided exercise where there is still certain control over the students’ responses insofar as they cannot do the task without having understood the structure being practised. ”

The authors advocate some form of focused communication tasks and stress the use of language and not its mere repetition in practice. They insist that real communication should offer a relaxed environment of natural trust and confidence where the teacher plays the role of a partner, advisor or counsellor, and not the role of the powerful judge or master who knows, controls, and corrects everything (9).

5. Input Enrichment Tasks

'Input enrichment' consists of inundating learners with rich variegated input in order to enhance their communicative competence. White (1991) uses what he calls an “input flood” which consists of great quantities of the target structure to teach learners adverb placement in SLA. She shows that input flood is effective for allowing learners to acquire new target structures, but is not efficient for helping them to get rid of some fossilized features of language.

Tomlin and Villa (1994: 186) argue that the enhancement of targeted structures can be done through “input flooding, in which the learner is exposed to a great number of exemplars”. This type of grammar communicative tasks is quite similar to Ellis’s 'input enrichment'. After reviewing current literature on this issue, Ellis (1997) identifies three types of 'enriched input' studies: (1) those investigating whether the targeted forms in enriched input are noticed by learners; (2) those investigating whether enriched input enhances language acquisition, and (3) those comparing the effects of enriched input with other teaching techniques (68). As the number of studies on this issue is limited, Ellis comes to some tentative conclusions: enriched input with

highlighting induces noticing, can help learners acquire new structures, but does not help them eliminate established errors, and is as, or more, effective than explicit teaching in fostering acquisition of complex structures (70).

In another place, 'input enrichment' and 'input flood' have been largely used by Ellis to present learners with a rich input; that is, an input where the targeted feature is frequent and/or salient (Ellis, 2003: 158). In the case of grammar teaching, one may teach the present simple tense through the presentation of a text where many sentences use this tense. Learners are required to read the text, underline all the verbs in the present simple, and understand their meaning. Students may also be presented with a text where some modal verbs are used. They will be then required to sort out all the modal verbs and to find out their respective uses. Input enrichment may be also provided through oral or written texts that students may simply listen to or read carefully, or through written texts where the targeted structure is "graphologically highlighted through the use of underlining or bold print" (158). It should be mentioned that this type of grammar instruction is quite similar to input enhancement advanced by Sharwood Smith (1993: 177) where various degrees of elaboration such as colour coding, boldfacing, and paralinguistic features are commonly used.

Finally, it must be said that input enrichment, enriched input, input flood and input flooding are used in current literature to mean the same thing. These tasks push learners to work diligently and autonomously in order to notice the grammatical structures and to discover the appropriate rules. Input enrichment may be more effective than traditional grammar in a sense that learners take responsibility for their learning in the former, and may play a passive role in the latter where they are customarily expecting some spoon-feeding from their teacher.

6. Grammar Game Tasks

Some grammar course books present different types of games to teach L2 or FL forms and structures through the use of meaningful tasks. Rinvolucri (1984), for example, comes up with his famous *Grammar Games* which consists of a multitude of cognitive, affective and grammar activities for EFL students. The author holds that internalising the FL grammar is not only an intelligent cognitive act

but also a highly affective one as well; that is to say, there are structures that learners like and structures that they dislike. He also points out that little work is done on learners' attitudes towards particular grammatical structures, and that there is a change in these attitudes as learners pass from one stage of language command to another (5). According to Rinvolutri, these activities could be easily adopted to teach any grammar under the sun. Some activities involve students to think consciously about what is correct and incorrect; others allow them to construct sentences and paragraphs in warm co-operation rather than competition, and thus reducing teacher-talk to less than 5% of the allocated time (1). Some other activities allow students to practise grammar while talking about human relationships, to focus on what they say and not on the form they use; that is, the students control the content and the teacher the structures. Furthermore, the use of grammar through drama gets the students move from their chairs and use "grammar through movement, shouting, and writing on each others' backs (1-2). Eventually, we think that this kind of grammar may create chaos rather than order and discipline in the classroom, especially if it is designed for beginners. Adults, however, are not generally inclined to perform such games in their serious attempt to learn the structural intricacies of the FL.

7. Input Processing Tasks

Some researchers have been interested in assessing the comparative relevance of process and product approaches for the teaching of grammar. VanPatten and Cadierno (1993a) carry out an experiment in explicit instruction that compares traditional production-based instruction and input processing instruction for teaching Spanish word order rules and the use of clitic direct object pronouns to second-year university L2 learners. The traditional production-based instruction involves the conventional stages: presentation and practice where the students are first provided with explanations concerning the form and position of direct object pronouns within the sentence, a paradigmatic chart that includes all persons (both singular and plural) and an explanation of what objects and object pronouns are as well as a description with examples of correct placement of object pronouns within a sentence (230), and then the students are shown how to construct sentences with those pronouns. The operation involves moving the subjects from mechanical form-oriented practice (oral and

written transformation and substitution drills) to meaningful practice (oral and written questions, simple sentence formation), and finally, to more open-ended communicative practice (oral and written question and answer, conversation (230). The input processing instruction involves a presentation stage which explains, illustrates and contrasts the grammatical concepts of the subject and object of a verb with subject and object pronouns, the explanation where important points are provided to help learners understand the position of object pronouns in Spanish (231) and two types of activities which may be regarded as practice. The first type of activity gets students to read or listen to sentences and demonstrate their comprehension of the argument structure through the selection of the appropriate drawing or the best English translation of the Spanish sentence. The second type of activity requires students to express their attitudes towards sentences and utterances by indicating “agree” or “disagree”, “true for me”, or “not true for me” ... etc (231).

The comparison of these instructional packets reveals that both production-based and input processing instruction provide *explanation* for explicit knowledge about object pronouns as well as *practice* with the use of the same vocabulary. The main difference involves the type of practice. Production-based instruction is orientated towards output practice, sentence production, error avoiding, text-manipulation, and text creation. Yet, input processing instruction is directed at input practice and input enhancement. The two types of instruction provide the same overt feedback. VanPatten and Cadierno's results show that: Instruction is apparently more beneficial when it is directed at how learners perceive and process input rather than when it is focused on practice via output. Learners who receive instruction that attempts to alter input processing receive a double bonus: better processing of input and knowledge that is apparently also available for production. (1993a: 240)

VanPatten and Cadierno (1993b) consider SLA as a matter of input processing and define input as “language that encodes meaning” (46). They examine the impact of explicit instruction in processing input and strive to alter the strategy used by learners in making form-meaning connections from a given input. In this experiment, three second-year university level Spanish students at the University of Illinois were randomly selected. The first received ‘traditional explicit instruction’. The second received ‘processing instruction’. The third

received no explicit instruction at all. The instruction was about object pronouns for all the three groups. The results of the study corroborate the (1993a) article; that is, instruction is actually found to be more favourable when it is orientated towards making learners perceive and process input rather than having them practice the language through production activities. The gains consist of better processing, comprehension and production (VanPatten and Cadierno, 1993b: 54)

Another study by Cadierno (1995) extends the above research conducted by VanPatten and Cadierno (1993a; 1993b) and compares two types of instructional approaches: traditional instruction and processing instruction on the acquisition of Spanish past tense morphology. The first approach involves presentation and practice where presentation is organized as (a) presentation of all person forms for the preterit of regular verbs and (b) presentation of all person forms for the preterit of stem-changing verbs (183) and practice consisting of (a) sentence rewriting from the present into the preterit, (b) sentence completion by supplying preterit verb form, and (c) question-answer activities using preterit verb forms. The second approach (or 'processing instruction') begins with the presentation which helps learners to "interpret and comprehend" the targeted points without any attempt at producing them. It consists of presenting regular and irregular preterit verb forms starting with the first and second person singular, then third person singular, and finally the third person plural. For each of these groups of persons, the following procedures are used: (a) presentation of the preterit verb forms and explanation of the ways that allow learners to recognize them, (b) activities on input that involve "decoding and interpreting" preterit verb forms first through written and then oral forms, and (c) summaries of the main point in each stage. The presentation stage also involves contrasting the preterit with the present verb forms and helping learners to recognize the past tense without relying on adverbs which are not always present. After the presentation and explanations, three types of activities are designed to practise correct interpretations of the preterit. In the first type, students are presented with sentences and asked to identify the time of the action or the subject of the sentence. In the second type, students are presented with sentences or discourse and required to perform different types of tasks based on the informational content of the input. In the third type, students are presented with visual and/or natural

language use (e.g., cartoon) where the learners' attention was directed to the targeted items (183).

It must be recalled that while traditional instruction is "paradigmatic"; that is, it presents all preterit verb forms at the beginning and then exercises follow, processing instruction is "non-paradigmatic"; that is, it does not present all preterit verb forms simultaneously. The latter is thought to help learners to match better meaning-form connections (183-184). For both types of instruction, many factors are the same: vocabulary, amount of practice, time on task, and visual aids. As for the pedagogical implications, Cadierno's investigation suggests that the question that should be addressed is not whether grammar should be taught or not but how it should be taught, and that an input-orientated approach to grammar such as processing instruction provided here is more in tune with input-based communicative approaches such as the Natural Approach, Total Physical Response and content-based instruction than are traditional output-based approaches (Cadierno, 1995: 190). The final results reveal "significant gains in both comprehension and production for subjects in processing instruction, while subjects in traditional instruction had significant gains only in production" (179).

In their attempt to examine whether or not explicit instruction presented to subjects receiving processing instruction is the cause of the beneficial effects of instruction, VanPatten and Oikkenon (1996) replicate VanPatten and Cadierno (1993a) experiment on three groups: (1) one receiving 'processing instruction' in object pronouns and word order in Spanish; (2) another receiving only 'explanation' with no activity or practice; and (3) another receiving only 'structured input activities' with no explanation. Their findings reveal that "the beneficial effects of instruction were due to the structured input activities and not to the explicit information (explanation) provided to learners" (VanPatten and Oikkenon, 495). In other words, comprehension-based instruction (input processing instruction) without any explicit explanation is said to yield positive results which are quite similar to those provided by VanPatten and Cadierno (1993a).

In a similar vein, Benati (2001) carries out an experiment investigating the effects of input processing instruction and output-based instruction on the acquisition of the Italian future tense. The first treatment includes grammar explanation and comprehension practice

and aims at altering the way the learners process input and make correct meaning-form connections. The second treatment involves explanations of grammatical rules as well as written and oral practice and seeks to alter the way learners produce the TL. The results show that “processing instruction has positive effects on the acquisition of Italian verbal morphology, and greater effects on the developing system of beginner L2 learners than instruction of the output-based type” (95).

8. Ellis's Interpretation Tasks

Ellis (1997: 82-95) shows that the input-oriented instruction has received psycholinguistic and empirical support from SLA theories which hypothesise the effectiveness of teaching grammatical structures through the manipulation of input for comprehension rather than the manipulation of output for production. Ellis alleges that ‘output oriented options’ are of two types: the error-inducing options and the error-avoiding options and that ‘input-oriented options’ are of two types: ‘consciousness-raising tasks’ and ‘interpretation tasks’. The last two options are regarded as “acquisition-compatible grammar tasks” (Ellis, 1994, 1997). Interpretation tasks expose learners to various exemplars of the TL in order to drive forward interlanguage development, and the input may be presented in two options: *flooding* where learners are exposed to ample linguistic data without drawing their attention to them, and *input enhancement* where the target structures are made more salient through ‘doctoring’ (bolding), or pushing learners to focus on form (1994: 88).

Ellis (1995: 90-91) advances a model of grammar acquisition based on three processes: (1) “interpretation” which lies in the attempt to comprehend and attend to grammatical features and involves noticing and comparison; (2) “integration”, accommodation, or incorporation of intake into interlanguage, and may be followed by restructuring; and (3) “production” which is based on implicit knowledge, but which may be provided by explicit knowledge. Ellis (1995) comes up with ten general principles for designing interpretation tasks. Because of their relevance to foreign grammar pedagogy, they will be cited below:

1. Learners should be required to process the target structure, not to produce it.
2. An interpretation activity consists of a stimulus to which learners must make some kind of

response.

3. The stimulus can take the form of spoken or written input.
 4. The response can take various forms (e.g., indicate true-false, check a box, select the correct picture, draw a diagram, perform an action) but in each case the response will be either completely nonverbal or minimally nonverbal.
 5. The activities in the task can be sequenced to require first attention to meaning, then noticing the form and function of the grammatical structure, and finally error identification.
 6. As a result of completing the task, the learners should have arrived at an understanding of how the target form is used to perform a particular function or functions in communication (i.e., they must have undertaken a form-function mapping).
 7. Learners can benefit from the opportunity to negotiate the input they hear or read.
 8. Interpretation tasks should require learners to make a personal sequence (i.e., relate the input to their own lives) as well as a referential reference.
 9. As a result of completing the task, learners should have been made aware of common learner errors involving the target structure as well as correct usage.
 10. Interpretation grammar teaching requires the provision of immediate and explicit feedback on the correctness of the students' responses.
- (Ellis, 1995: 98-99)

According to Ellis (1997: 150), 'interpretation tasks' have been empirically supported by the Comprehension Approach where learners receiving input comprehension outperform those receiving output production in the four language skills, and by the Total Physical response Method where production is not involved in the early stages, and where learners are to perform actions following some commands designed purposefully to teach grammatical structures. Total Physical Response is said to provide better comprehension and production and to enhance more motivation and language learning persistence. Generally, comprehension-based approaches are said to offer four

advantages: a ‘cognitive advantage’ (better learning), an ‘affective advantage’ (avoidance of stress and embarrassment), an ‘efficiency advantage’ (for both low and high aptitude learners) and a ‘utility advantage’ (allowing functional L2 use and autodidactic learning) (Ellis, 150).

Interpretation tasks seek three main objectives: (1) to allow learners to match form-meaning connections through grammar comprehension and focus on form; (2) to enhance input so as to induce learners to notice grammar points; and (3) to enable learners to compare and notice the gap between the correct grammatical points and their erroneous productions (152-53). Put in another way, this approach attempts to help learners “*notice* grammatical structures in the input, *comprehend* their meanings, and *compare* the forms present in the input with those occurring in the learner output” (87, italics the author’s).

Conclusion

We have shed light on eight types of communicative grammar tasks which are designed to enhance communication and grammatical development. Though there are some differences between them, their common denominator is to raise the learners’ consciousness about specific grammatical features through input manipulation and communication. We think that it is high time to use such communicative grammar tasks in language classrooms and to cease inculcating learners’ heads with the reviled traditional grammar instruction which has proved to be a futile undertaking. The option for the former is made on the basis of some theoretical, empirical and pedagogical justifications which have a direct bearing on real classroom language learning and teaching. We believe that there is an urgent need to integrate grammar instruction and task based instruction. The communicative grammar tasks are found to be very beneficial for learners to process input, to build up explicit knowledge, to maximize fluent and accurate production and to promote motivation.

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