

Analysis on Grammar Patterns of English Textbooks for Middle School Juniors According to Revised Curriculum in 2009

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Abstract

This study aims to discover whether language form is appropriately reflected in English textbooks for middle school juniors through comparing and analyzing the grammar type of the textbooks. 5 textbooks which are usually used are selected and analyzed. The results are as follows. First, 5 textbooks commonly allocate the grammar part in isolation after 'after-reading activities' and have the similar number of grammatical items, which is from 19 to 22. Second, the textbooks introduce grammatical items in an inductive way where students comprehend examples first and discover the grammatical rules in common. Last, most of the textbooks introduce appropriate content on the basis of students' level but its order appears different respectively.

Keywords: Revised curriculum in 2009, Language form, English textbook, Middle school junior, Grammar pattern

1. Introduction

English becomes more important as people have more opportunities to go abroad and to communicate in English in this globalized situation. Accordingly, English education started focusing on communicative competence and suggesting that traditional grammar-based instruction can hinder students from acquiring fluency, whereby communicative language teaching curriculum was introduced in Korean Sixth curriculum at first. However, immersing in solely one part of language is likely to produce side effect at the same time. No one has had a satisfactory answer for the question: is it appropriate to neglect accuracy but to emphasize fluency for Korea, EFL context? As a result, target language acquisition without precise grammatical knowledge did not seem so feasible that communicative function and language form are classified and introduced in the Seventh curriculum.

This study aims to treat 2 inquires. First, what kind of form-focused activity is suggested in the textbook based on the revised curriculum in 2009 and does it accord with the evaluation criterion? Second, do the activities reflect linguistic form suggested in the curriculum in a reliable way? Besides, there remain 2 following limits in this study. First, it might seem implausible to generalize the results due to the fact that it is based on only 5 textbooks for juniors. Second, it doesn't analyze all the content and sentences of each textbook but the linguistic form parts.

2. Theoretical backgrounds

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2.1. Evaluation criteria of English textbooks

According to Rivers (1981), a textbook decides the core of instruction and what and how to learn, which means that it is essential for teachers to investigate its quality. Also, the criteria teachers can utilize when they choose the suitable textbook. Skierso (1991) categorized the criteria for textbook evaluation into 7 parts with detailed information; they appear as [Figure 1] pertained to grammar.

No.	Contents
1	How is a kernel sentence categorized and emphasized?
2	How are grammatical rules introduced: deductive or inductive?
3	Is verbal conjugation summarized in the textbook?
4	Are linguistic features introduced in the meaningful situation?

Figure 1. Skierso's criteria for textbook selection and evaluation (grammar)

2.2. Necessity of grammar in an English textbook

One of the Korean public education characteristics is that only officially approved textbooks are allowed to use. It means that foreign data or reference book published in Korea cannot be used, except several autonomous private schools. In other words, students are provided with only textbooks as linguistic inputs from English education. Hence, how textbooks are organized decides whether language learning appears successful or not. Communicative competence in an authentic sense must be the integration of fluency and accuracy. In this light, the textbook, the core of English education, should consist of its factors which prompt not only fluency but also accuracy. Accuracy can be cultivated through learning grammar, which means the textbook has to treat it in a systematic and explicit way.

3. Content

3.1. Subjects

5 textbooks are analyzed on the basis of grammar parts' items and methods; they are randomly chosen out of the textbooks for middle school juniors based on the revised curriculum in 2009. The subject textbooks' publisher and name of grammar parts appear as [Figure 2] and they are classified with sign A, B, C, D, and E.

Class sign	Publisher	Name of grammar parts
A	Neung-Yule	Language Focus
B	Dong-A Publilshing	Language in Use
C	Mirae-N	Grammar Cinema
D	Chun-Jae	Build up
E	YBM	Language in Use

Figure 2. English textbooks' publisher and name of grammar parts

3.2. Methods and criteria

This study discovers how much 5 subject textbooks reflect 'language form required to communicate' suggested in the revised curriculum in 2009 and what sequence they appear and emphasize in via clarifying the construction of grammar parts and grammatical items and

their frequency. In addition, it is supposed to ascertain whether they accord with Skierso's criteria (1991) and whether they introduce grammar in a deductive way or in an inductive way. [Figure 3] is the table where each example of 'language form required communicating' and the target item are categorized and demonstrated.

No.	Grammatical items	Example
1	Noun	Sean and Kate are from London.
2	Determinative	You can choose any color you like.
3	Tense	They met in the school yesterday.
4	Pronoun	Which do you like the better, this or that?
5	Indefinite pronoun	I have three books. One is mine. The others are yours.
6	Impersonal subject	It's Wednesday.
7	Tense	She is going to go abroad next year.
8	Progressive	I'm thinking about the solution.
9	Perfect	Have you ever been to Florida?
10	Sentence pattern	The baby cried. [SV]
11	Preposition	Bill is good at swimming.
12	Positive degree	She is as tall as her mother.
13	Comparative	You are a better singer than I am.
14	Superlative	Kate is the shortest of the three.
15	Causative verb	I made him carry the box.
16	To infinitive	I have a book to read.
17	To infinitive	Ron is furious to hear it.
18	Gerund	Playing baseball is fun.
19	Exclamatory sentence	How beautiful she is!
20	Negation	We didn't enjoy the holiday very much.
21	Interrogative	Who can answer that question?
22	Direct narration	He said to me, "Please come at once."
23	Interrogative + to infinitive	Tell me how to make pizza.
24	Conditional sentence	If oil is mixed with water, it floats.
25	Subjunctive mood	If joe had the time, he would go to Spain.
26	Auxiliary verb	May I borrow your book?
27	Cooperative conjunction	John plays the guitar, and his sister plays the piano.
28	Subordinate conjunction	When we arrived, she was talking on the phone.
29	Conjunction	Ted didn't study at all. Therefore, he failed the test again.
30	Relative pronoun	The girl who is playing the piano is called Ann.
31	Post-modifier	Something strange happened last night.
32	Participle	Walking along the street, I met an old friend.
33	Absolute participle	Frankly speaking, I failed the test.
34	Noun phrase	I believe (that) you are mistaken.
35	Inversion	Not a word did he say.
36	Existential there	There is a cat.
37	Discourse	Won't you try again? - Yes, I will try again.
38	Placeholder	It is cruel to tease animals.
39	Appositive clause	The fact that Mary was late didn't surprise me.

40	Passive	A prize was given to Jane.
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Figure 3. Language form required to communicate (Education Ministry, 2011)

4. Analysis

4.1. Grammar item construction

All of them include 10 chapters originally, but there are 2 more special chapters in E. But, grammatical items are not introduced in special chapters, thereby not existing in the table.

The number of grammatical items appears from 19 to 22, which means there lies no significant differences among them.

Besides, grammar parts are allocated after ‘after-reading’ activities in all of the subject textbooks.

4.2. Grammatical items of each textbook

4.2.1. Textbook ‘A’

11 items are illustrated; ‘to infinitive’ is introduced six times, which is excessive; three times of ‘sentence pattern’; twice of ‘relative pronoun’ and ‘present perfect’. But ‘gerund’, ‘relative adverb’, ‘conjunction’, ‘auxiliary verb’, ‘positive degree’, and ‘comparative’ are introduced only once, which seems insufficient compared to the most frequent 2 items.

4.2.2. Textbook ‘B’

13 items are illustrated; ‘to infinitive’ is introduced four times, which is the most frequent; three times of ‘conjunction’; twice of ‘sentence pattern’, ‘relative pronoun’, ‘auxiliary verb’, and ‘indefinite pronoun’; once of ‘imperative sentence’, ‘passive’, ‘present perfect’, ‘indirect question’, ‘conditional sentence’, ‘preposition phrase’, and ‘impersonal subject’.

4.2.3. Textbook ‘C’

12 items are illustrated; ‘conjunction’ is introduced four times, which is the most frequent; three times of ‘sentence pattern’ and ‘to infinitive’; twice of ‘relative pronoun’; once of ‘gerund’, ‘auxiliary verb’, ‘present perfect’, ‘positive degree’, ‘imperative sentence’, ‘passive’, ‘conditional sentence’ and ‘preposition’, which seem insufficient.

4.2.4. Textbook ‘D’

12 items are illustrated; ‘to infinitive’ is introduced four times, which is the most frequent; three times of ‘sentence pattern’ twice of ‘gerund’ and ‘present perfect’; once of ‘tag question’, ‘conjunction’, ‘present participle’, ‘comparative’, ‘superlative’, ‘relative pronoun’, ‘passive’, and ‘conditional sentence’.

4.2.5. Textbook ‘E’

12 items are illustrated; ‘to infinitive’ and ‘conjunction’ are introduced four times, which is the most frequent; twice of ‘sentence pattern’ and ‘relative pronoun’; once of ‘superlative’, ‘material noun’, ‘comparative’, ‘present perfect’, ‘exclamatory sentence’, ‘passive’, ‘conditional sentence’, and ‘linking verb’.

4.3. Consequences

Features of grammatical items introduced in the 5 textbooks are as follows. They include 10 chapters in common. The number of grammatical items vary from 19 to 22: 19 of D, 22 of B, and 20 of A, C, and E. All of them are allocated after 'after-reading' activities. Also, grammar instruction is performed in the same way: discover learning where they attempt to find out a grammatical rule after studying some examples of target structure. In this way, learners discover the rule on their own and participate in it actively. But, the number of examples appears insufficient; three sentences at most. It can be criticized in that learners might waste their time when they discover the grammatical rule on their own.

5. Conclusion and suggestion

This study aims to discover whether language form is appropriately reflected in English textbooks for middle school juniors through comparing and analyzing the grammar type of the textbooks. The consequences are as follows.

First, grammar parts are allocated after 'after-reading' activities in all of the subject textbooks. The number of grammatical items appears from 19 to 22, which means there lies no significant differences among them. Students are likely to learn 2 grammatical items per 1 chapter, which is not that much stressful.

Second, grammar instruction is performed in the same way: discover learning where they attempt to find out a grammatical rule after studying some examples of target structure. In this way, learners discover the rule on their own and participate in it actively. But, the number of examples appears insufficient; three sentences at most. It can be criticized in that learners might waste their time when they discover the grammatical rule on their own.

Third, most of the textbooks introduce target structure according to the students' level. But, when it comes to sequence, it is supposed to be revised. For example, a relatively difficult item such as 'relative pronoun' is introduced in chapter 2 of textbook 'A' and 'b' and in chapter 5 of textbook 'C' and 'E' before other items. Also, 'passive' is located in chapter 3 of textbook 'A' and in chapter 4 of textbook 'B'.

Based on the consequences mentioned above, suggestions to set the right direction for development of English textbook are as follows. To begin, it is essential to introduce various language form, not overlapping items, which are included in curriculum because students are likely to develop their cognitive competence and learning strategies through attempting to complete various grammar tasks. Also, sufficient examples including language form should be provided so that learners can infer and acquire it without explanation in mother language. It affords for learners to study efficiently compared to the existing surroundings where they have to do so with solely few examples. Last, grammatical items should be taught in order: from easy items to difficult ones, even though it is not definitely classified. It is expected to unburden learners in studying grammar. Therefore, reasonable criteria for setting its sequence should be prepared.

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