

## **The Effect of Explicit Instruction on Grammar Achievement in Acquiring Prepositions in English**

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### **Abstract**

The role of teaching grammar has long been debated in the field of second language teaching. The debate regarding whether grammar should be taught explicitly has been a constant one ever since the introduction of the Direct Method in the late-nineteenth century (Richards and Rogers, 1986), which questioned its effectiveness. Despite this questioning, explicit grammar instruction persisted in various forms throughout the twentieth century even though pedagogies of the 1980s and 1990s continued to view explicit grammar teaching with some caution. A convincing argument in favor of explicit grammar teaching (Larsen-Freeman 2014), is that while some learners may be able to acquire grammatical competence incidentally, not every learner is capable of this, especially in an EFL context in which their exposure to the language is primarily limited to the classroom. The case is also argued that explicit instruction is desirable in learning an L2 when the learners are older. This study aims at appraising the effect of explicit grammar instruction and incidental learning on grammar achievement in acquiring prepositions in the English language. Participants in this study were 80 students studying English as a general English syllabus at undergraduate level in an ESL context. The sample was randomly divided into two groups, as experimental and controlled, of 40 each. A pre-test was conducted in order to assure the criterion of homogeneity and to assess their current level of knowledge regarding the preposition constructions being considered. An experimental design was used for the study where the experimental group was taught grammar explicitly with overt explanation while the controlled group received general reading instruction. A post-test, which was identical with the pre-test consisting discrete point grammar tests, testing the dependent prepositions focused on the study was conducted at the end of the teaching course. The results gained out of statistical procedure such as t-test shows that the experimental group performed better than the controlled one, and, highlight explicit grammar instruction as a method that can provide a fertile ground for students to improve their language competence.

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