

Individual Paper Session 4

Classroom

Tuesday, July 4

1:45-2:15pm

The Effect of Two Teaching Methodologies on the Acquisition of Restrictive Relative Clauses Among Taiwanese Tenth Graders

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of two differing grammar teaching approaches—forms-focused instruction vs. the integration of forms-focused instruction and communicative language teaching—on the learning of English restrictive relative clause construction for one hundred and fifty tenth graders in a private boarding high school in the northeast of Taiwan. A six-week quasi-experimental design and three kinds of grammar tests (a grammaticality completion test, a sentence combining test, and a sentence rearrangement test) were employed in the study. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 12.0 was used to analyze the quantitative data (the significance level was set at .05).

The major findings of this study were as follows. First, the proportion of correct answers for relative clauses without prepositions was significantly higher than that for relative clauses with prepositions, in both pre- and post-tests. These results corresponded with Keenan and Comrie's Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy (1977), in which the positions at the bottom of the hierarchy (e.g., objects of prepositions) are more marked and difficult. Second, students receiving forms-focused instruction combined with communicative language teaching significantly outperformed those who received forms-focused instruction alone, in both the grammaticality completion and written production (the sentence combining and rearrangement) tests with English relative clauses, which agreed with Lightbown and Spada's (1990) study. Based on the findings of this study, several pedagogical implications and recommendations for future study are discussed.

This study aimed to investigate the effects of two differing grammar teaching approaches on the learning of English restrictive relative clause construction for EFL learners. The results agreed with Keenan and Comrie's Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy (1977) and Lightbown and Spada's (1990) study.