
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Form Without Function: The Missing Creative Element in Telangana's Grammar Pedagogy

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| ABSTRACT

Grammar instruction plays a crucial role in language learning, serving as a fundamental component of English language education in schools worldwide. Despite the acknowledged importance of balanced language teaching approaches, the methods and activities used to teach grammar remain a subject of ongoing pedagogical research and debate. In the context of Telangana's government school system, understanding the nature and distribution of grammar activities within English textbooks becomes particularly significant for evaluating the effectiveness of current language teaching strategies. This study examined grammar activities in English textbooks prescribed for Classes I–X in government schools of Telangana, India. Using Baleghizadeh's (2012) framework—which categorizes grammar activities based on accuracy/fluency orientation and reproductive/creative characteristics—the research analyzed 177 grammar activities across ten textbooks. Results revealed a significant imbalance, with 89.3% of activities classified as accuracy-centered reproductive activities, 10.7% as fluency-centered reproductive activities, and a complete absence of creative grammar activities. This skewed distribution contradicts contemporary language teaching approaches that advocate for a balance between explicit grammar instruction and communicative, task-based practice. The study concludes with recommendations for textbook developers to integrate more fluency-centered and creative activities to enhance learners' grammatical competence in authentic communicative contexts.

| KEYWORDS

Grammar, textbooks, activities, fluency, accuracy, reproductive, creative

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Instruction in the language classroom, particularly grammar teaching, has long been a controversial topic among researchers and practitioners in English language teaching (ELT). While some argue in favor of explicit grammar instruction, others challenge its necessity. This debate extends across various areas, including teaching materials development and corpus-based studies. Notably, the Santa Barbara Corpus has facilitated examination of grammar in relation to language acquisition, and the impact of grammar teaching on language learning continues to influence materials development.

Despite extensive debate on the role of explicit grammar instruction, there remains a critical need to integrate formal grammar teaching with communicative methodologies—particularly in developing course materials that balance accuracy and fluency. Some researchers, such as Krashen (1981) and Corder (1967), contend that formal grammar instruction is unnecessary, positing that learners can acquire grammatical structures incidentally through comprehensible input. Universal Grammar (UG) theory supports this view by asserting that second language learners can process grammar similarly to first language learners (Cook, 1991; Schwartz, 1993). The rise of the communicative approach (Richards, 2002) shifted the focus toward fluency-oriented exercises, emphasizing meaning negotiation over explicit grammar practice. Truscott (1996, 1998) further argued that traditional grammar instruction fosters metalinguistic awareness rather than immediate application.

In contrast, contemporary research underscores the role of formal grammar instruction. Studies on form-focused instruction (Bygate, Skehan, & Swain, 2001; Bialystok, 1990, 1994; DeKeyser, 1998) suggest that explicit grammar teaching significantly enhances language acquisition. Nassaji and Fotos (2011) emphasize the pivotal role of grammar in instructional contexts, and Schmidt (2001) contends that conscious attention to grammatical form is critical for successful learning. These perspectives have prompted a growing interest in pedagogical approaches that integrate both implicit immersion and explicit instruction.

However, while numerous studies have evaluated explicit versus implicit grammar teaching, less attention has been paid to how these approaches are operationalized in textbooks. It remains unclear how best to balance formal grammar instruction with communicative activities to foster both accuracy and fluency. Addressing this gap can inform evidence-based improvements in ELT materials.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Grammar instruction in ELT has evolved over decades, shaped by both traditional methods and emerging communicative approaches. Early pedagogical models—such as the Grammar-Translation Method and Structural Approaches—emphasized rote memorization and controlled practice of grammatical forms (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). These models, focused on achieving accuracy through repetitive drills, largely neglected the development of communicative competence.

The debate intensified with the advent of naturalistic theories of language acquisition. Pioneers like Krashen (1981) and Corder (1967) argued that language learning can occur incidentally through exposure, thus reducing the need for explicit grammar instruction. Yet, subsequent studies by Ellis (2006) and Nassaji and Fotos (2011) demonstrated that explicit, form-focused instruction—when integrated with communicative tasks—enhances language acquisition. This balance of explicit explanation with contextualized practice offers a more comprehensive approach to grammar instruction.

Recent research further complicates the picture. Smith and Lee (2023) note that modern ESL textbooks are beginning to integrate communicative tasks with explicit grammar instruction; however, many still favor traditional, accuracy-centered reproductive activities. Jones (2024) argues that task-based approaches, which involve creative language production and real-life problem solving, provide promising alternatives to conventional drills. Patel and Nguyen (2023) highlight that exam-oriented systems reinforce structured, accuracy-focused tasks, while digital learning environments (Chen & Martinez, 2024) offer innovative possibilities for discovery-based grammar instruction. Meta-analyses by Kim (2023) and evaluations by Gonzalez and Schmidt (2024) underscore the need to balance controlled practice with creative, communicative activities.

Overall, the literature reveals a persistent overemphasis on accuracy-centered reproductive activities, driven by historical practices, institutional pressures, and the ease of standardization. This imbalance stands in stark contrast to contemporary pedagogical theories, which advocate for a harmonious blend of explicit and communicative, task-based instruction.

2.1 The Importance of Grammar in ESL

Grammar forms the basic building block of any language structure, essential for effective communication. It enables learners to construct meaningful sentences and convey messages clearly (Richards & Reppen, 2014). Grammar also plays a critical role in writing, facilitating effective professional and academic communication (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). Moreover, a sound grasp of grammar instills confidence, reducing hesitation and errors in speaking and writing (Ellis, 2006; Thornbury, 1999).

For ESL learners, textbooks are instrumental in developing grammatical competence by providing systematic instruction. They offer explicit explanations, demonstration, and practice through activities such as dialogues, readings, and writing exercises (Ur, 2012; Richards & Renandya, 2002). However, excessive reliance on textbooks can lead to mechanical learning, limiting the practical application of grammar in authentic communication (Larsen-Freeman, 2015). Thus, while textbooks are vital, they must be supplemented with contextualized and interactive practice.

2.2 Materials for the Development of Grammatical Competency: Historical Perspectives

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Grammar-Translation Method dominated. This approach, focused on Latin and Greek, relied heavily on memorization, sentence parsing, and formal rule learning (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). Textbooks were replete with translation exercises and rulebooks, emphasizing prescriptive grammar and correctness. Although this method deepened understanding of grammatical forms, it was widely criticized for its mechanical nature and neglect of oral communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Celce-Murcia, 2001). In response to this, the Direct Method emerged, shifting focus from rote memorization to immersion. Using dialogues, visual drills, and oral communication, the Direct Method promoted inductive grammar learning (Gouin, 1880; Sweet, 1899). However, its reliance on native-speaker teachers and a narrow focus on

oral skills limited its scope, leaving gaps in the teaching of complex grammatical structures (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

2.3 Mid-20th Century to Present

The mid-20th century introduced the Structural and Audiolingual Approaches, heavily influenced by Behaviorism. These approaches used pattern drills, repetition, and controlled dialogues to develop accuracy (Skinner, 1957; Fries, 1945). Yet, such methods often resulted in rigid, context-insensitive language use (Chomsky, 1959; Celce-Murcia, 2001).

With the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 1970s, textbooks began to incorporate task-based learning and authentic materials, fostering grammar use in real communicative contexts (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Despite these innovations, a gap remains: many textbooks still favor accuracy-centered reproductive exercises, neglecting the integration of fluency-centered and creative tasks.

Recent studies highlight this imbalance. Smith and Lee (2023) and Jones (2024) advocate for integrating communicative tasks with explicit instruction to foster both implicit and explicit knowledge. Digital learning environments (Chen & Martinez, 2024) offer adaptive, discovery-based tasks that bridge rigid drills and meaningful communication. Meanwhile, meta-analyses by Kim (2023) and evaluations by Gonzalez and Schmidt (2024) stress the importance of balancing controlled practice with creative activities.

From a learner's perspective, while structured drills provide a foundation in accuracy, they often fall short in preparing students for real-world communication. Patel and Nguyen (2023) argue that exam-oriented systems favor standardized, accuracy-focused tasks, limiting opportunities for creative language use. This disconnect between traditional practices and modern pedagogical theories underscores the urgent need for innovative textbook design.

2.4 Assessing Grammar Exercises in Textbooks

Textbooks play a pivotal role in shaping grammar instruction by influencing how grammar is introduced and practiced (Ellis, 2006; Larsen-Freeman, 2003). However, research reveals that most textbooks predominantly feature accuracy-centered reproductive activities. Recent studies (Smith & Lee, 2023; Patel & Nguyen, 2023) indicate that despite the acknowledged need for a balanced approach, textbooks still rely heavily on structured drills, often at the expense of communicative, fluency-centered tasks.

Analyses by Nitta and Gardner (2005) found that while most coursebooks use a presentation-practice (PPP) model for grammar instruction, they lack communicative activities that promote practical language use. Similarly, Ellis (2009) and Ur (2012) criticize these exercises as being decontextualized, often in the form of gap-fills, multiple-choice questions, and matching exercises. Although these activities emphasize accuracy, they do not necessarily support meaningful, real-life grammar application. To address these shortcomings, Ellis (1993) and Ellis and Gaies (1998) recommend replacing conventional drills with consciousness-raising (CR) activities that encourage discovery and experimentation. Baleghizadeh (2012) further asserts that CR tasks engage learners as active participants rather than passive recipients. Supporting this, Jones (2024) demonstrates that even minor shifts toward guided discovery can significantly enhance learners' ability to apply grammar flexibly.

Various models have been proposed to evaluate the quality of grammar exercises. Tomlinson (2012) suggests that an effective "grammar page" should be transparent, engaging, and aligned with learners' proficiency. Key criteria include:

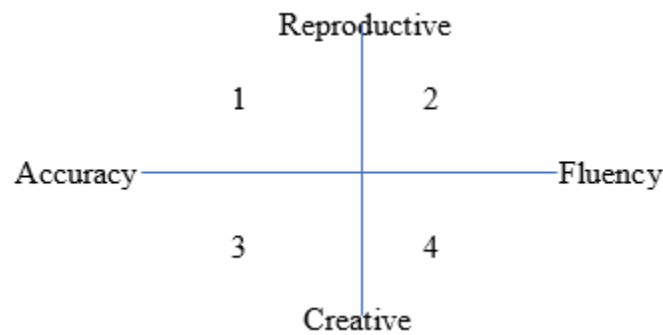
- **Linguistic Precision:** Grammar explanations must be accurate and follow standard structures (Ur, 2012).
- **Pedagogical Effectiveness:** Presentations should reflect cognitive theories and incorporate scaffolding (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).
- **Cultural Relevance:** Examples should be contextually representative and culturally sensitive (Byram, 1997).
- **Curriculum Alignment:** Content must meet standards such as the CEFR or Common Core (Council of Europe, 2001).

Research by Sheldon (1988), Harwood (2010), and Nation and Macalister (2010) further emphasizes the importance of engaging, varied activities for effective grammar instruction. More recent studies, such as those by Chen and Martinez (2024), illustrate how digital textbooks can incorporate adaptive tasks that balance explicit instruction with real-world use.

2.5 Framework for Analyzing Grammar Activities in Textbooks of Telangana

Based on the discussions presented in the above sections, this study analyzed grammar activities in textbooks prescribed for Classes I–X in Telangana. Using Baleghizadeh's (2012) framework, the researcher investigated which grammatical elements received the greatest attention and whether certain components were over- or under-represented. Baleghizadeh's framework distinguishes activities by the dimensions of accuracy versus fluency and reproductive versus creative tasks (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Framework for Developing Grammar Materials (adapted from Baleghizadeh, 2012)



The grid depicts Nunan's (1999) model that demonstrates that it is language performance, which distinguishes creativity and accuracy and reproductive and creative tasks. Fluency is to speak naturally with minimal hesitation or correction; accuracy is grammatical correctness. Still outstanding in the inquiry of language teaching is the controversy of which of the two to give more importance to. Additionally, grammar exercises can either be reproductive—i.e., where learners are practicing language—or creative—i.e., where they assemble familiar things in innovative ways. Nunan (1999) opposes the traditional 3P (Presentation, Practice, Production) teaching cycle, claiming that while it facilitates phonological and syntactic form, it must also include scope for creative language use.

Baleghizadeh's model is divided into four categories: accuracy-centered creative activities, fluency-centered creative activities, accuracy-centered reproductive activities, and fluency-centered reproductive activities. The model serves as a guide for balancing a range of language teaching dimensions. Details of the four categories are given below.

1. Accuracy-centered reproductive activities

Ellis (2009) has referred to these activities as 'situational grammar activities' because they compel the learners to skillfully use the focus patterns in non-communicative situations by choosing a set of sentences given. Common activities that fall under this category along with all the editing exercises are substitution drills, sentence transformation, and sentence-combination exercises.

Most exercises in textbooks fall under this category of grammar. Researchers such as Ellis, (2009) and Ur, (2012) believe that these are out-of-context grammar exercises because they don't promote students' application of any real-life communication. Furthermore, they are scripted grammatical structures. Some examples of such activities, as pointed out by Ur (2012), are discrete-point mechanical gap-fill, multiple choice, sentence completion, and matching exercises.

Ur (2012) employs the following exercise as an illustration of a discrete item gap-fill.

1. A car is _____ than a bicycle. (fast)
2. She _____ (to go) to the store yesterday.

2. Fluency-centered reproductive activities

Nunan (2004) contends that conventional grammar exercises bear some resemblance with communicative tasks but are different in other aspects. They offer rigid practice of specific grammatical features such as grammar drills. However, they also differ with regard to the extent that they incorporate meaningful communication aspect. Ellis (2009) also contends that these are focused exercises designed to provide learners with the opportunity to exercise a specific grammatical structure in their discussion.

A sample activity belonging to this cell could be:

Discuss what you would do in the following situations:

1. What would you do if you were kidnapped?
2. What would you do if you were a millionaire?
3. What would you do if you were handicapped? (Baleghizadeh, 2012)

3. Accuracy-centered creative activities

According to Baleghizadeh, (2012), '...these are activities which take accurate production of learners through creative activities as their primary goal.' Grammaticization tasks and grammar dictations belong to this category. Here learners must apply grammar to a given level of lexis in order to provide the language (Batstone, 1994). Thus, they are creative exercises since students have nothing to model on and stress correctness since they challenge students to generate a series of correct written sentences. One grammaticizing exercise is where students are presented with a series of newspaper headlines and are directed to construct complete sentences from them. This task is also practiced in another mode where some stories are provided to the students and they have to write headings so that they won't miss out on the meanings of the stories Baleghizadeh, (2012).

Yet another stimulating accuracy-centered creative exercise is grammar dictation or dictogloss. Dictogloss has been described by Wajnryb (1990) as "a task-based procedure designed to help language-learning students towards a better understanding of how grammar works on a text basis." It is designed to uncover where their language-learning weakness (and requirement) is so that teaching can be more directly centered on those areas. As Baleghizadeh (2012a) argues, dictogloss is a teaching activity where the students repeat a text while it is read to them in an attempt to generate an exact version. The nature of this activity is different from reconstructive activities where the students must deal with an assortment of grammatical sentences. As Nunan (1999) maintains, the learners in such accuracy-based creative activity must generate their own sentences and language in a new and foreign manner.

4. Fluency-centered creative activities

These are focused tasks where students need to produce language with a specific grammatical feature. Focused tasks are one-way fluency since they allow learners to use their language in order to communicate (e. g. solve a problem or buy a series of items provided) and creative on another side since they do not tell learners directly how to use a specific grammatical feature. Thus, students must independently select the language devices they will use to complete a project. Conversely, these exercises are unique and vary from cell 2 in that they are creative, and as Baleghizadeh (2012) states, they do not specifically ask students to use a specific grammatical structure, but rather the students themselves determine which linguistic feature to use. Conversely, they are fluency-centered since they inspire students to use language communicationally.

The following activity requires learners to use the comparative structure and clauses of reason:

Look at the list below. Work with a partner and decide which ones are the five most exciting sports. Be ready to explain why.

Swimming Soccer Tennis
Basketball Wrestling Volleyball
Fencing Hockey Diving (Baleghizadeh, 2012a, p.64)

3. Methodology

Using Baleghizadeh's (2012) framework, textbooks of government schools in Telangana, published by the Government of Telangana, were analyzed. These textbooks, designed by practicing teachers and distributed free of cost, integrate multiple components (Main Reader, Supplementary Reader, and Workbook) and are aligned with the State Curriculum Framework-2011. Textbooks were accessed via QR codes on the Diksha portal, introduced from the 2021–22 academic year.

All activities that aimed at developing grammatical competency were examined. An activity was counted if learners were required to produce a string of grammatically correct sentences, either through reproduction or creative generation. Content analysis was selected for its ability to quantitatively and qualitatively assess instructional materials. Following Baleghizadeh's framework, activities were categorized into the four groups as described above. Two trained coders independently reviewed each grammar exercise, with discrepancies resolved through discussion, achieving high inter-rater reliability ($r = 0.89$). Certain exercises not directly related to grammar were excluded from the analysis, and multi-step activities were assigned to two categories as appropriate.

The following table provides examples of grammar activities from the textbooks.

Class and page number	Sample grammar activity	Activity type as per the framework
II (pg45)	Ask questions with 'Can you?' Use the words from the box. Your partner will reply by saying either "Yes, I can." or "No, I can't."	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity
III (pg47)	Complete the sentences using the words given. (red, fresh, big, one, yellow)	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity
III (pg35)	Make your own sentences using 'on, in, under'.	Fluency-centered reproductive activity
IV (pg12)	Replace the underlined words with the suitable pronouns. (I, we, they, he, she)	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity
IV (pg)	Look at the picture given below. Write 3-4 sentences using on, in, under, beside etc.	Fluency-centered reproductive activity
V (pg14)	Fill in the blanks with the correct form of underlined word.	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity
V (pg29)	What do you say in the following situations?	Fluency-centered reproductive activity
VI (pg24)	Rewrite the following using the linkers given in brackets.	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity
VI (pg83)	Write as many sentences as you can about yourself using the following adverbs of frequency.	Fluency-centered reproductive activity
VII (pg13)	Fill in the blanks with 'in' or 'on' or 'at'.	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity
VII (pg79)	Narrate what your family members were doing yesterday when you reached home after school.	Fluency-centered reproductive activity
VIII (pg24)	Read the following passage. Every numbered sentence has an error. Identify and edit it.	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity
VIII (pg80)	Tell your friends what you did normally when you were in class VII.	Fluency-centered reproductive activity
IX, (pg95)	Combine the following sentences using the expressions "No sooner... than, scarcely... when, hardly... when."	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity

X (pg56)	Fill in the blanks with the right Words gives in brackets against each blanks.	Accuracy-centered reproductive activity
X (pg61)	Read the following sentences. Complete the conversations with the appropriate forms of the verbs. Then say why you chose simple past/present perfect forms.	Fluency-centered reproductive activity

4. Results and Discussion

The following table presents the percentage and number of activities belonging to each of the four cells of Baleghizadeh's (2012) model.

Class	Productive activities			Creative activities				Total
	Cell 1	%	Cell 2	Cell 3	Cell 4			
Class I	There are no specific grammar exercises.							
Class II	02	100	0	0	0	0	0	02
Class III	14	82.35	3	0	0	0	0	17
Class IV	17	89.47	2	0	0	0	0	19
Class V	22	96.65	1	0	0	0	0	23
Class VI	23	85.19	4	0	0	0	0	27
Class VII	20	90.91	2	0	0	0	0	22
Class VIII	15	83.33	3	0	0	0	0	18
Class IX	17	100	0	0	0	0	0	17
Class X	28	87.5	4	0	0	0	0	32
Total	158		19					177

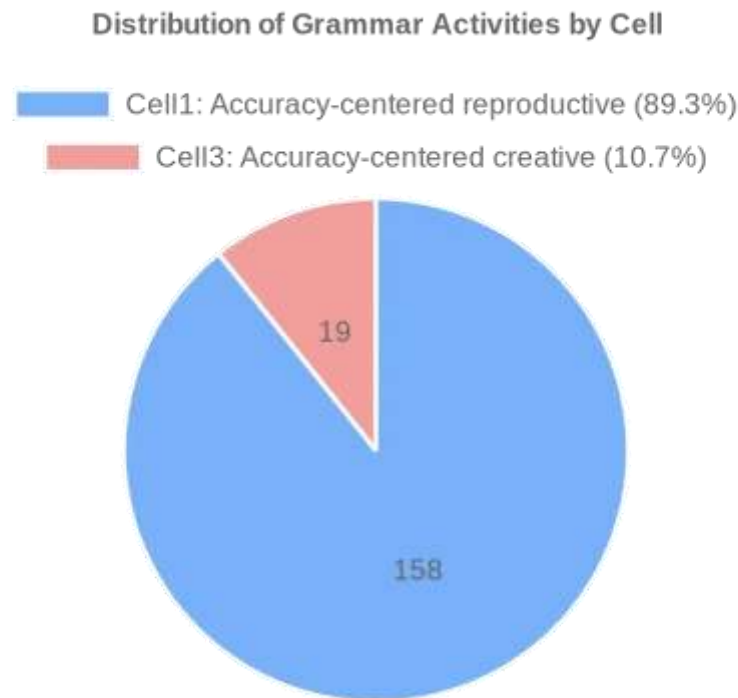
Cell1-Accuracy-centered productive activities; Cell 2-Fluency-centered productive activities; Cell 3-Accuracy-centered creative activities; Cell 4-Fluency-centered creative activities

Table 1: Distribution of Grammar Activities in ESL Textbooks According to Baleghizadeh's (2012) Model

The data show that the highest number of exercises appears in the Class X textbook (32), followed by Classes VI, V, and VII. Across all textbooks, accuracy-centered reproductive activities dominate, while fluency-centered reproductive activities are scarce, and creative activities are absent. The chi-square statistic ($\chi^2 = 6.54$) confirms a significant predominance of accuracy-centered activities.

A notable trend is observed here. The number of accuracy-centered reproductive activities increases from 2 in Class II to 23 in Class VI, then declines in Classes VII, VIII, and IX before rising again in Class X. This pattern suggests that textbook developers

believe ESL learners require extensive practice in accuracy at certain levels. However, the unexpected increase in Class X indicates a renewed emphasis on accuracy that departs from earlier trends.



The pie chart further confirms that accuracy-centered activities overwhelmingly dominate the textbooks, suggesting that modern language learning principles are not fully considered in the design of the exercises. Pennington (2002) argues that traditional grammar instruction emphasizes language structure over communicative skills, rendering it “entirely inappropriate to the practical communicative needs of today’s language students” (p. 77). Similarly, Ellis (2009) stresses that while explicit knowledge is necessary, the primary goal should be developing implicit knowledge through communicative tasks. Yet, the current materials heavily promote accuracy, with fluency-centered and creative activities being entirely absent.

It is therefore unsurprising that none of the examined textbooks contained activities aimed at encouraging creative production. While it is undoubtedly beneficial for learners to identify grammatical structures to be used in various contexts, this aspect was entirely absent. Furthermore, the structured nature of the units made it explicitly clear which grammatical forms students were expected to use.

The analysis also revealed a notable absence of accuracy-centered creative grammar activities. As previously noted, this lack of emphasis on creativity is problematic. Ellis (2009) underscores the importance of incorporating both free and controlled production into language learning, aligning with key principles of successful acquisition. Likewise, Norris and Ortega (2000) identified four measures of instructional effectiveness, one of which focuses on free constructed responses—highlighting the need for a more balanced approach. Such free production is most effectively cultivated through task-based activities that mirror real-world language use. Nonetheless, this study found no exercises classified under Cell 4, reinforcing the need to introduce more creative tasks that encourage independent language production rather than strictly prescribed usage.

As emphasized earlier, fluency-centered activities situated in meaningful contexts warrant considerable attention. Learners benefit from engaging with grammatical features in rich, communicative environments. According to Richards (2002), when learners participate in communicative tasks, they use strategies such as “comprehension checks, confirmation checks, and clarification requests,” which gradually refine their output until it becomes more target-like (p. 37). Despite compelling evidence in favor of these practices, the textbooks analyzed maintain a predominantly accuracy-centered approach to grammar instruction. Moreover, no significant difference emerged between recently published and older series; both prioritize out-of-context, accuracy-focused exercises over the communicative, fluency-oriented tasks advocated by current research.

The literature review highlighted that earlier methods, such as the Grammar-Translation Method and Structural Approaches, have historically prioritized correctness through repetitive drills and controlled practice (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004; Celce-Murcia, 2001). These approaches are designed to ensure that learners accurately reproduce grammatical structures, which explains why textbooks continue to favor accuracy-centered reproductive activities. This traditional focus is reinforced by the findings that most activities are geared toward drilling pre-determined grammatical forms rather than encouraging independent, creative language use.

Several researchers, including Penny Ur (2013) and Harmer (2007), have noted that many coursebooks are developed under an exam-oriented paradigm, where correctness and the ability to recall specific grammatical rules are highly valued. The data showing a heavy emphasis on accuracy suggests that textbook developers may be responding to institutional pressures and assessment practices that reward rote learning. In this context, textbooks are designed primarily as tools for reinforcing grammatical accuracy rather than for facilitating communicative competence.

While scholars like Krashen (1981) and Corder (1967) advocate for incidental learning through exposure, more recent research (e.g., Ellis, 2006; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011) has argued for the benefits of explicit grammar instruction when integrated with communicative activities. However, the current textbooks seem to have not fully embraced this balanced approach. While it is beneficial for learners to understand which grammatical structures to apply in different contexts, the textbooks fail to provide opportunities for learners to generate language independently. As Ellis (2009) and Norris and Ortega (2000) note, free production tasks are critical for reflecting real-world language use and enhancing communicative competence.

The lack of creative production activities is particularly concerning. The under-representation of fluency-centered and creative activities suggests that the potential for task-based, discovery-oriented learning—which has been shown to develop implicit knowledge—is not being realized in these materials. This gap indicates a disconnect between contemporary second language acquisition research and textbook development practices.

The analysis also suggests that the local educational context and cultural factors may influence textbook design. In settings where there is a strong emphasis on structured, exam-based learning, educators and curriculum developers might prefer reliability and clarity over innovative methods. This environment can lead to an overreliance on accuracy-centered reproductive tasks, which are easier to standardize and assess, even if they do not fully support communicative competence.

5. Conclusion

The evolution of materials for grammatical competency reflects a continuous struggle to balance accuracy and fluency. While historical methods emphasized form and correctness, contemporary approaches advocate for integrating both explicit instruction and communicative, task-based activities. Understanding these trends is crucial for material developers who aim to design resources that not only reinforce grammatical accuracy but also promote meaningful, creative language use. Hence it is strongly recommended that there has to be a balance between communicative-and form-focused instruction, which is the best approach, resulting in contemporary materials with interactive activities, technology, and explicit grammar explanation (Ellis, 2006; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

Building on these insights, future research should explore how emerging digital tools and innovative pedagogical strategies can further bridge the gap between traditional and contemporary grammar instruction. This study reveals a persistent imbalance in grammar instruction within Telangana's ESL textbooks, with a heavy emphasis on accuracy-centered reproductive activities. While these exercises provide a foundational level of grammatical accuracy, they fall short in fostering the communicative and creative language skills that are critical for real-world proficiency. To bridge this gap, textbook developers should consider the following actionable recommendations:

- i) Incorporate activities that require learners to apply grammatical rules in authentic, communicative contexts. For example, include task-based activities where learners must negotiate meaning, engage in problem-solving, or simulate real-life scenarios.
- ii) Design exercises that encourage free production of language instead of solely relying on gap-filling and multiple-choice questions, introduce open-ended tasks—such as role-plays, debates, or creative writing assignments—that require learners to generate their own sentences and ideas.
- iii) Utilize digital platforms and adaptive learning environments to create interactive exercises. Digital tools can offer dynamic feedback, allow for personalized practice, and integrate multimedia resources that appeal to diverse learning styles.

iv) Ensure that textbooks provide a balanced mix of activities targeting both accuracy and fluency. This can be achieved by aligning exercises with communicative objectives, thereby reinforcing grammatical structures while also promoting natural language use.

v) Develop content that reflects real-world contexts and cultural diversity, enabling learners to see the practical application of grammar in various communicative settings.

vi) Incorporate regular opportunities for formative assessment and feedback within the textbooks. This will help learners monitor their progress and allow educators to adjust instruction as needed.

By implementing these strategies, textbook developers can move toward a more balanced and effective approach to grammar instruction—one that not only reinforces accuracy but also cultivates the communicative and creative competencies essential for language proficiency.

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