Ellis, R. (2002). **The Place of Grammar Instruction in the Second/Foreign Language Curriculum**. In E. Hinkel & S. Fotos ***New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*** (pages 14-34). Routledge: London.

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Directions: Answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper. I will collect them next week.

1. What are the four reasons that the author gives for learners' failure to achieve a high level of grammatical competence?
2. Summarize the six aspects of SLA research that support grammar instruction?
3. Where and when should grammar be taught in the EFL/ESL curriculum? Why?
4. The author describes the kind of activities that need to be present in a unit to support grammar acquisition; what are these activities?

The place of grammar instruction in the second/foreign language curriculum has been strongly debated in the past 30 years. In teaching methods reliant on a structural syllabus (e.g., grammar translation, audiolingualism, Total Physical Response, situational language teaching), grammar held pride of place. However, with the advent of communicative language teaching (see, e.g., Allwright, 1979) and "natural" methods (e.g., Krashen & Terrell, 1983), this place has been challenged and in some cases, a "zero position" has been advocated (e.g., Krashen, 1982) on the grounds that teaching grammar does not correlate with acquiring grammar. More recently, various arguments have been advanced for incorporating a ''focus on form"[1] into the language curriculum (e.g., Doughty & Williams, 1998), motivated by research findings that suggest that "natural" language learning does not lead to high levels of grammatical and sociolinguistic competence (e.g., Swain, 1985). The purpose of this chapter is to consider a number of reasons why grammar should be included in a second language (L2) curriculum. The chapter also addresses how a grammar component might be incorporated into a communicative curriculum. Finally, it outlines an approach to the teaching of grammar that is compatible with the curricular framework being proposed.

THE CASE FOR TEACHING GRAMMAR

A case for teaching grammar can be mounted from different perspectives: (1) acquisition theory, (2) the learner, and (3) language pedagogy. Taken together,

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[1]Long (1988) distinguishes between a "focus on forms" and a "focus on form." The former refers to traditional approaches to grammar teaching based on a structure-of- the-day approach. The latter refers to drawing learners' attention to linguistic forms (and the meanings they realize) in the context of activities in which the learner's primary focus of attention is on meaning.

arguments based on these perspectives provide a compelling argument in favor of teaching grammar.

Acquisition Theory

It is now widely acknowledged that L2 learners, particularly adults, fail to achieve high levels of grammatical competence even if they have ample opportunity to learn the language naturally. Hammerly (1991) indicates that many naturalistic learners, even after years of exposure to the L2, often fail to proceed beyond the second level on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) scale of language proficiency. Kowal and Swain (1997) and Swain (1985) point out that learners in Canadian immersion programs (i.e., programs in which the target language serves as the medium of instruction for teaching subject content) achieve high levels of discourse and strategic competence but frequently fail to acquire even basic grammatical distinctions, such as passé composé and imparfait in French.
There are many possible reasons for learners' failure to achieve high levels of grammatical competence, including the following:

1. Age: Once learners have passed a "critical period" (about 15 years of age in the case of grammar) the acquisition of full grammatical competence is no longer possible.
2. Communicative sufficiency: Learners may be able to satisfy their communicative needs without acquiring target language norms.
3. Limited opportunities for pushed output: Research (e.g., Allen, Swain, Harley, & Cummins, 1990) has demonstrated that the linguistic environment to which learners are exposed in the classroom may indeed be limited in quite significant ways.
4. Lack of negative feedback: It has been suggested that some grammatical structures cannot be acquired from positive input, which is all that is typically available to learners learning an L2 "naturally" (see White, 1987).

If (1) is the reason, not much can be done to alleviate the problem pedagogically, as teachers are clearly powerless to alter the age of their learners. However, there is growing doubt concerning the validity of the critical period hypothesis where grammar is concerned; it is becoming clear that there are large numbers of learners who, given sufficient time and motivation, are successful in acquiring target language norms even if they start learning the L2 after the age of 15. If (2) and (3) are the reasons, two possible solutions suggest themselves. One is improving the quality of the interactional opportunities learners experience, for example, by ensuring that learners' communicative needs are enhanced by requiring them to produce "pushed output." One way of achieving this is by devising a curriculum of communicative tasks that are linguistically demanding (e.g., call for learners to activate their rule-based as opposed to lexical competence - see Skehan, 1998). The other solution is to focus learners' attention on grammatical form (and, of course, the meanings they realize) through some kind of grammar teaching. Point (4) also indicates the need for grammar teaching, as this serves as one of the more obvious ways in which learners can obtain the negative feedback needed to acquire "difficult'' structures.

Given that the possible reasons for learners' failing to achieve target language norms vary in the kind of solution they point to, it is obviously important to establish

whether the "teach grammar" solution is, in fact, effective. Earlier (see Fotos & Ellis, 1991), I summarized the main findings of what is now a substantial body of empirical research that has investigated the effects of form-focused instruction on interlanguage development. This summary, I would claim, remains valid today. It states:

1. Formal instruction helps to promote more rapid L2 acquisition and also contributes to higher levels of ultimate achievement (Long, 1988).
2. There are psycholinguistic constraints which govern whether attempts to teach learners specific grammatical rules result in their acquisition. Formal instruction may succeed if the learners have reached a stage in the developmental sequence that enables them to process the target structure (Pienemann, 1984). Conversely, it will not succeed if learners have not reached the requisite developmental stage.[2]
3. Production practice is not sufficient to overcome these constraints. There is now clear evidence to suggest that having learners produce sentences that model the target structure is not sufficient to guarantee its acquisition as implicit knowledge. Studies by Schumann (1978), R. Ellis (1984), and Kadia (1988), among others, suggest that formal instruction directed at developmental or difficult grammatical structures has little effect on performance in spontaneous language use. (The term developmental refers here to structures that are acquired in stages and involve the learner passing through a series of transitional phases before mastering the target structure. Examples of developmental structures are negatives and interrogatives.)
4. It is possible, however, that formal instruction directed at relatively simple grammatical rules (such as plural or copula be) will be successful in developing implicit knowledge, as such forms do not require the mastery of complex processing operations (Pica, 1983; Pienemann, 1984).
5. Formal instruction is effective in developing explicit knowledge of grammatical features. There is substantial evidence to suggest that formal instruction is successful if the learning outcomes are measured by means of an instrument that allows for controlled, planned, language use (e.g., an imitation test, a sentence-joining task, or a grammaticality judgment task). It is in this kind of language use that learners are able to draw on their explicit knowledge. Studies by Kadia (1988); Lightbown, Spada, and Wallace (1980); Schumann (1978); and Zobl (1985) all support such a conclusion.
6. Formal instruction may work best in promoting acquisition when it is linked with opportunities for natural communication (Spada, 1986).

In short, although there are constraints that govern both when and what type of grammar teaching is likely to work, there is clear evidence that, providing these constraints are taken into account, teaching grammar can have a beneficial effect on learners' interlanguage development. This conclusion is now widely accepted by Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers (see Doughty and Williams, 1998).

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[2] A recent article by Spada and Lightbown (1999) does cast some doubt on the claim that developmental sequences are inviolable. This study found that learners who were at an early stage in the acquisition of question forms were able to learn question forms at an advanced stage as a result of formal instruction, suggesting they were not constrained by the kind of psycholinguistic constraints on acquisition proposed by Pienemann. Spada and Lightbown suggest that the effectiveness of instruction may depend less on the learners' stage of development than on the type of instruction.

The Learner's Perspective

An equally strong reason for including grammar in the L2 curriculum is that many learners expect it. Adult learners typically view "grammar" as the central component of language and, irrespective of the type of instruction they experience, are likely to make strenuous efforts to understand the grammatical features they notice. In an analysis of the diaries written by ab initio learners of German in an intensive foreign language course at a university in London (Ellis, R., unpublished manuscript), I was struck by the depth of the learners' concern to make sense of the grammar of German. Their diaries are full of references to grammar—of their struggle to understand particular rules and their sense of achievement when a rule finally "clicked." It should be noted, too, that "grammar" for these learners consisted of explicit rules that they could understand; it was not the kind of implicit grammar that comprises interlanguage.

Of course, not all learners will orientate so strongly to studying grammar. Some, younger learners for example, may be more inclined to view language functionally - as a tool for communicating - and may be less able to benefit from grammar instruction. Nevertheless, it is my contention that many successful learners are not only prepared to focus on form but actively seek to do so (see Reiss, 1985). For such learners, a "communicative" syllabus that eschews a focus on grammar may be missing the mark.

A Pedagogical Perspective

One of the arguments that was advanced against the kind of notional/functional syllabus that appeared in the late 1970s and early 1980s was that ‘‘notions" and "functions" do not provide a basis for the systematic coverage of the language to be taught (see Brumfit, 1981). Examples of notions are possibility and past time, whereas examples of functions are requests and apologies. The problem with such constructs is that they are not generative in the way grammar is. A similar criticism can be leveled at the current fashion for task-based or thematically based syllabuses. There can be no guarantee that the teaching activities that are based on such syllabuses provide a full and systematic coverage of the grammar of the L2. To some extent, tasks can be devised so that they require learners to use specific grammatical features, but, at least where production tasks are concerned, there are limits on the extent to which these features are essential in performing the tasks (see the comments later in this chapter) as learners are adept at avoiding the use of structures that they find difficult. Arguably, the only way to ensure a systematic coverage of the grammar of the L2, then, is by means of a structural syllabus. Such a syllabus provides teachers and learners with a clear sense of progression—something that I think is missing from both notional and task-based syllabuses. However, this does not mean the abandonment of meaning-based syllabuses and a straight return to the structural syllabus. Rather, I see a need for both. This involves a curriculum that incorporates both types of syllabus. We will now turn to the question of how grammar can be incorporated into a language curriculum.

THE PLACE OF GRAMMAR IN THE CURRICULUM

Deciding the place of grammar in the language curriculum involves seeking answers to the following questions:

1. At what stage of learners' general L2 development should grammar be taught?
2. With what intensity should grammar be taught?
3. Can the teaching of grammar be integrated into meaning-focused instruction?

The first question concerns the general timing of the grammar instruction. The second deals with whether grammar instruction should be intense or spread over a period of time. The third concerns the crucial matter of the relationship between the grammar and the communicative components of a syllabus.

The Timing of Grammar Instruction

An assumption of traditional approaches to grammar is that it should be taught from the very beginning stages of a language course. This assumption derives from behaviorist learning theory, according to which learning consists of habit formation. Learners must be taught correct habits from the start to avoid the unnecessary labor of having to unlearn wrong habits in order to learn the correct ones later. As Brooks (1960) put it, "Error, like sin, is to be avoided at all cost." Such a view is not supported by current theories of L2 acquisition. Interlanguage development is seen as a process of hypothesis-testing and errors as a means of carrying this out (Corder, 1967). Learners follow their own built-in syllabus. Thus, it is now widely accepted that errors are both a natural and inevitable consequence of the processes of acquisition. In other words, there is no longer a theoretical basis for teaching grammar to prevent errors.

There are, in fact, some fairly obvious reasons for not teaching grammar to beginners. First, as the immersion studies have shown (see Johnson & Swain, 1997), learners do not need grammar instruction to acquire considerable grammatical competence. Learners with plentiful opportunities to interact in the L2 are likely to acquire basic word order rules and salient inflections without assistance. For example, L2 learners who have never received instruction are able to acquire the rules for ordering elements in the English noun phrase; they do not put the adjective after the noun, even when this is the ordering in their L1 (Hughes, 1979). They are also able to acquire the English auxiliary system and, over time, use this in a target-like manner in interrogatives and negatives. Probably, they will also acquire at least some complex structures such as simple relative clauses in which the relative pronoun functions as subject (as in "Mary married the man who lived next door"). Of course, not all learners will acquire these grammatical features; some learners, like Schumann's Alberto (Schumann, 1978), will fossilize early. But many learners will go quite a long way without any attempt to teach them grammar. In other words, up to a point, the acquisition of a grammar takes place naturally and inevitably, providing learners experience appropriate opportunities for hearing and using the L2.

A second, more powerful reason for not teaching grammar to beginners is that the early stage of L2 acquisition (like the early stage of L1 acquisition) is naturally agrammatical. Language learners begin by learning items—words or formulaic chunks. They communicate by concatenating these, stringing them together into

sequences that convey meaning contextually, as shown in these examples from Ellis (1984):

> Me no (= I don't have any crayons)
> Me milkman (= I want to be the milkman)
> Dinner time you out (= It is dinner time so you have to go out)
> Me no school (= I am not coming to school on Monday)

Such utterances are ubiquitous in the spontaneous, communicative speech of beginner L2 learners, both child and adult. It is only later that learners begin to grammaticalize their speech. According to N. Ellis (1996), they do this by extracting rules from the items they have learned—bootstrapping their way to grammar. It would seem, then, that the early stages of language acquisition are lexical rather than grammatical (see also Klein & Perdue, 1992; Lewis, 1993).

If grammar teaching is to accord with how learners learn, then, it should not be directed at beginners. Rather, it should await the time when learners have developed a sufficiently varied lexis to provide a basis for the process of rule extraction. In crude terms, this is likely to be at the intermediate-plus stages of development. There is a case, therefore, for reversing the traditional sequence of instruction, focusing initially on the development of vocabulary and the activation of the strategies for using lexis in context to make meaning and only later seeking to draw learners' attention to the rule-governed nature of language.

The Intensity of Grammar Instruction

Independent of when grammar should be taught is the question of how intense the instruction should be once it starts. Is it better, for example, to spend substantial periods of time focusing on a relatively few (albeit problematic) grammatical structures, or is it better to deal less intensively with a broad range of structures?

There are now a number of studies that demonstrate that when problematic grammatical structures are taught intensively learners acquire them. Harley (1989), for example, describes an instructional treatment for dealing with the distinction between passé composé and imparfait that lasted eight weeks! Thankfully, this resulted in marked gains in the accuracy of these verb forms that were sustained over time. One wonders, however, how feasible such intense treatments are in the context of the complete language curriculum. If such lengthy periods of time are devoted to a single grammatical structure there will be little time left to focus on the numerous other grammatical problems the learners experience.

Underlying this question of the intensity of the instruction is another question. What is the goal of grammar instruction? Is it to lead learners to full control of the targeted structures? Or is it to make them aware of the structures and, perhaps, of the gap between their own interlanguage rule and the target language rule? Grammar instruction, again influenced by behaviorist learning theory, has assumed that the goal of grammar instruction is complete accuracy. It is this assumption that appears to motivate the call for intense doses of instruction of the kind Harley provided. However, a more cognitive view of L2 learning suggests that acquisition begins with awareness, and that once this has been triggered learners will achieve full control

through their own resources in due time. Such a view supports a less intense, broader-based grammar curriculum.

The Relationship Between Code-Focused and Message-Focused Instruction

Traditional language teaching was code-focused, although there were probably always some opportunities for message-focused activity, even in the most audiolingual of courses. With the advent of communicative language teaching, however, more importance, quite rightly, has been given to message-focused language activity, not just because this is seen as needed to develop communicative skills in an L2, but also because it caters to the natural acquisition of grammar and other aspects of the code (see, e.g., Prabhu, 1987). Perhaps the key issue facing designers of language curricula is how to relate the code-focused and the message-focused components. There are two basic options.

The first is the integrated option. Integration can be achieved in two ways:

1. Communicative tasks that have been designed to focus attention on specific properties of the code. I have referred to these elsewhere as "focused communicative tasks." Such an approach represents a proactive approach toward integration; it takes place at the level of the curriculum content.
2. Teachers' feedback on learners' attempts to perform communicative tasks. Such feedback can focus on specific errors that learners make. This approach is reactive in nature; it takes place, not at the level of content, but methodologically. The feedback can be instant (i.e., can occur as an immediate response to a learner error) or it can be delayed (i.e., take place after the communicative task has been completed).[3]

There are enormous problems in designing focused communicative tasks (see Loschky & Bley-Vroman, 1993) that preclude using them as a means of achieving curricular integration. As I have already noted, learners are adept at sidestepping the grammatical focus while performing a communicative task, unless of course they are told what the focus is; in which case, it can be argued that the task ceases to be communicative and becomes a situational grammar exercise. Integration is more likely to be achieved reactively rather than proactively, although there are some obvious problems here, not least concerning the nature of the feedback; should it be explicit, which potentially endangers the communicative nature of the task, or implicit, when it might not be noticed? Currently, however, strong arguments have been advanced for what Long (1991) has called ''a focus on form" (i.e., reactive feedback while learners' primary attention is on message). The claim is that drawing learners' attention to form in the context of ongoing communicative endeavor is compatible with the type of input processing that is needed for interlanguage development.

The second approach for relating the two elements of a language curriculum is the parallel option. Here no attempt is made to integrate a focus on code and message;

[3] Little is currently known about the relative efficacy of immediate and delayed negative feedback on learners' acquisition of grammatical features. Most studies of negative feedback have focused on the type of feedback (e.g., whether it is implicit or explicit) rather than the timing. This is clearly an area that needs to be investigated.

instead, these are entirely separate components. In such a syllabus, the main component would consist of communicative tasks, designed to engage learners in the receptive and productive processes involved in using language to convey messages. A second, smaller component would consist of a list of grammatical structures to be systematically taught. There would be no attempt to create any links between the two components. The time allocated to the two components would vary according to the learners' general level of proficiency. Thus, at the elementary level there would be only communicative tasks (receptive rather than productive in the first instance). At the intermediate stage, once learners had established a lexical basis for the acquisition of grammar, the focus on code (which could include pronunciation and discourse as well as grammar) would kick in, growing progressively larger as time passed, until it occupied close to half of the total time available with advanced learners. This proportional curriculum model (Yalden, 1983) is shown in Fig. 2.1.

Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced
Communication tasks	→	→
	Code-focused tasks	→

FIG. 2.1 *The relationship between the communicative and code components of a syllabus.*

This proposal flies in the face of what is generally considered to be good practice in language pedagogy—namely, that the curriculum should be carefully constructed to ensure an integration of skills, with tasks carefully sequenced to ensure a systematic and graded progression. However, such syllabuses, although superficially sensible, ignore the essential fact that skill integration is not something that is achieved externally by the curriculum designer (or teacher) but must be achieved internally by the learners themselves, in accordance with their built-in syllabuses and their particular learning goals. Curriculum designers have hung themselves quite needlessly on the gallows of the integrated syllabus.

There are strong arguments to support the view that the goal of the code-oriented component of the syllabus should be awareness rather than performance; that is, the syllabus should be directed at developing learners' conscious understanding of how particular code features work, not at ensuring that learners are able to perform them accurately and fluently. In more technical terms, this entails a syllabus directed at explicit rather than implicit knowledge of the L2. As I have argued elsewhere (see Ellis, R., 1991a, 1993, 1997), it is unrealistic to try to intervene directly in interlanguage development by teaching implicit knowledge, as this constitutes a highly complex process, involving intake and gradual restructuring, which we still understand quite poorly and which is not amenable to one-shot (or even to several-shot) pedagogic ministrations. In contrast, explicit knowledge can be taught relatively easily in the same way that history dates or mathematical formulae can be taught.[4] Of course, explicit knowledge constitutes a lesser goal than implicit knowledge, as

[4] This assumes that many L2 learners are capable of learning a wide range of explicit rules. Such an assumption is controversial, however. Krashen (1982) claims that learners are only capable of learning simple rules (e.g., third-person -s). However, there is research evidence to suggest that Krashen seriously underestimates learners' capacity for explicit knowledge (see, e.g., Green & Hecht, 1992).

effective communication activity requires the latter type of knowledge. This limitation, however, is less severe if it can be shown that explicit knowledge plays an important facilitating role in helping learners acquire implicit knowledge by encouraging "noticing" and "noticing the gap" (Schmidt & Frota, 1986). If learners know about a grammatical feature they are more likely to heed it when they come across it in the input and also to attend to how it differs from the current interlanguage rule that underlies their own performance in the L2. In other words, the goal of a grammar syllabus becomes not that of teaching learners to use grammar but of helping them to understand how grammar works. In this respect, but not others, this position is closer to that of the cognitive code method than to behaviorism.

A crucial issue is the content of the code-oriented component of the syllabus. Clearly, this will have to go beyond grammar, to include pronunciation (perhaps) and discourse features. Here, however, I will consider only the question of grammar content. Clearly, this content should be derived from our understanding of the learning problems that learners experience; that is, the content should be remedial in nature, focusing on areas of grammar where learners are known to make errors. There are, in fact, many such areas that are common to all learners. The so-called developmental errors reflect learning problems that are universal. Examples are as follows:

- omission of plural *-s*
- omission of third person *-s*
- overuse of the article *the* (and corresponding under-use of *a*)
- the double comparative (e.g., "more faster")
- resumptive pronouns in relative clauses (e.g., "The man who my sister had married *him* …")
- process verbs (e.g., "The size was increased greatly.'')

Our knowledge of such problem areas of grammar provides a solid base for the development of a general grammar syllabus, applicable to all language learners. Of course, syllabuses designed for specific groups of learners will need to take account of the fact that there are also some errors directly traceable to first language influence. Probably, though, the transfer errors are less numerous than the developmental errors (see Ellis, R., 1994).[5]

Curriculum designers also need to consider how this grammatical content can be graded. There is a growing and somewhat confused literature dealing with this issue. Although there is general agreement that grading should proceed in accordance with difficulty, there is much less agreement regarding what this actually involves. This results, in part, from the failure to recognize that what is difficult with regard to implicit knowledge may not be difficult in terms of explicit knowledge. For example, teaching learners to understand the rule for third-person *-s* (explicit knowledge) is relatively easy, but teaching them to use this feature accurately and fluently (implicit

[5] Many errors, of course, are the result of both developmental and transfer processes. Thus, whereas all L2 learners seem to have problems distinguishing the use of the and a learners whose L1 does not include an article system (e.g., Japanese or Korean learners) are likely to experience the problems for longer, often failing to completely overcome them, even though they achieve a very advanced level of overall proficiency.

knowledge) is problematic. Thus, third-person *-s* can be thought of as an easy explicit feature but a difficult implicit feature. The question that needs to be addressed, then, is what criteria influence the level of difficulty learners are likely to experience in acquiring grammatical features as explicit knowledge? Table 2.1 suggests some of the criteria. At this juncture, it is not possible to apply these criteria in a systematic fashion, although it might be argued that these are the very criteria that have been traditionally applied in the development of structural syllabuses. Thus, designers of grammatical structures can call on this tradition with some confidence.

TABLE 2.1

Criteria for determining the difficulty of grammatical structures as explicit knowledge approach for teaching grammar

Criteria	Definition	Example
1. Formal complexity	The extent to which the structure involves just a single or many elements.	Plural *-s* is formally simple; relative clauses involve many elements.
2. Functional complexity	The extent to which the meanings realized by a structure are transparent	Plural *-s* is transparent; articles are opaque
3. Reliability	The extent to which the rule has exceptions.	Third-person *-s* is very reliable; the rule for periphrastic genitives is much less reliable.
4. Scope	The extent to which the rule has a broad or narrow coverage.	The Present Simple Tense has broad scope; the Future Perfect Tense has narrow scope.
5. Metalanguage	The extent to which the rule can be provided simply with minimum metalanguage.	Plural *-s* is simple; reflexive pronouns are more difficult; subject verb inversion is even more difficult.
6. L1/L2 contrast	A feature that corresponds to an L1 feature is easier than a feature that does not.	For French learners of English, the position of adverbs in sentences is difficult.

Finally, it should be noted that the two principal curricula options—integrated and parallel—are not, in fact, mutually exclusive. It would be perfectly possible to complement a parallel syllabus that includes a nonintegrated grammar component with Long's "focus on form" through reactive feedback to errors that learners make when performing tasks from the communicative component of the syllabus. There are considerable strengths in such a proposal as a focus on form. It may be one way in which teachers can encourage learners to make use of their explicit knowledge to "notice" features in the input. This raises the intriguing possibility of forging a link between the focus on form and the teaching of explicit knowledge (i.e., by teachers directing feedback on features that have recently been explicitly taught). It is doubtful, however, if such a link can ever be anything other than opportunistic. In general, the focus of teachers' feedback in the communicative strand of the curriculum will not

match the focus in the grammar component. Nor do I see this as something for which to strive for the reasons I have already given.

AN APPROACH FOR TEACHING GRAMMAR

The approach for teaching grammar that will now be outlined is premised on the assumption that the focus of the instruction should be awareness rather than performance. There are, in fact, two senses of awareness. First, learners can be made aware of the formal properties of the language as they experience these in input; that is, they can be made to consciously "notice'' them. Second, learners can be made aware in the sense of forming some kind of explicit representation of a target form (i.e., developing explicit knowledge). Figure 2.2 shows these two senses of awareness. The particular approach to teaching grammar that I will now describe involves attempts to induce both kinds of awareness.

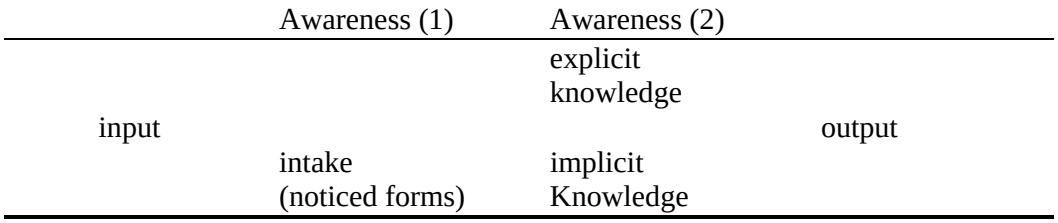

FIG. 2.2 *Two types of awareness in L2 acquisition.*

The materials (Ellis & Gaies, 1998) consist of a series of units, each directed at a single grammatical problem. The approach is remedial, with the error targeted in a unit indicated in an "error box." By asking "Do my students make this error?" the teacher is able to determine whether to teach the unit.

A unit consists of five kinds of activities:

1. Listening to comprehend: Here students listen to a continuous text that has been contrived to contain several examples of the target structure. On this occasion, however, they are required to focus on the message-content of the text.
2. Listening to notice: In this activity the students listen to the text a second time (and if necessary a third or fourth time) to identify the target structure. To assist the process of noticing the structure, they are asked to complete a gapped version of the text. It should be noted, however, that this fill-in-the-gap activity differs from traditional grammar exercises in that students do not have to rely on their competence to complete the text; they can obtain the missing words by listening carefully.
3. "Listening to Notice" is intended to raise the first type of awareness in the students. Oral rather than written texts have been chosen to induce real-time input processing.
4. Understanding the grammar point: This activity is directed at helping learners develop explicit knowledge of the grammar point (i.e., awareness). They are helped to analyze the "data" provided by the text, which they have now completed, and to "discover'' the rule. A discovery approach to teaching explicit knowledge is favored on the grounds that it is more motivating and that it also serves a learner-training function. By completing such tasks,

learners can develop the skills needed to analyze language data for themselves and so build their own explicit grammars of English. However, there is a grammar reference section (at the back of the book) to which students can refer to check the accuracy of the explicit rule they have formed.

5. Checking: The students are given a further text (this time, written) containing errors. They are asked to identify the errors and correct them. This kind of grammaticality judgment task is chosen because it lends itself to the use of explicit knowledge (see Ellis, R., 1991b). It also fosters the skill of monitoring, which, as Krashen (1982) has pointed out, draws on explicit knowledge.
6. Trying it: Finally, there is an opportunity for students to try out their understanding of the target structure in a short production activity. The emphasis here is not so much on practicing the structure as on proceduralizing students' declarative knowledge, a step DeKeyser (1998) considers to be necessarily intermediate between the teaching of explicit knowledge and its full automatization as implicit knowledge.[6]

These materials are not designed to develop implicit knowledge. Indeed, this can hardly be achieved in a single hour, the typical length of time needed to complete a unit. They are directed at developing students' awareness of grammar. As such, the materials do not constitute a complete curriculum but rather the kind of grammar component I have described in the previous section. They will need to be complemented with task-based materials of a communicative nature.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has sought to make a case for teaching grammar. However, the case is a circumscribed one, and it is perhaps useful to conclude by saying what is not being proposed as well as what is.

It is NOT being proposed that:

- We revert back completely to a structural syllabus.
- We teach beginners grammar.
- We attempt to teach learners to use grammatical features accurately and fluently through intensive practice exercises.
- We teach grammar communicatively (e.g., by embedding a grammar focus into communicative tasks).

It is being proposed that:

- We include a grammar component in the language curriculum, to be used alongside a communicative task-based component.

[6] DeKeyser's claim that explicit knowledge can be converted into implicit knowledge by means of automatizating practice can be challenged for the reasons explained earlier in this chapter. However, his idea of "proceduralizing declarative knowledge" seems a useful one. Thus, the materials stop at this stage and make no attempt to supply the kind and amount of practice that DeKeyser acknowledges is needed for automatization.

- We teach grammar only to learners who have already developed a substantial lexical base and are able to engage in message-focused tasks, albeit with language that is grammatically inaccurate.
- We teach grammar separately, making no attempt to integrate it with the task-based component (except, perhaps, methodologically through feedback).
- We focus on areas of grammar known to cause problems to learners.
- We aim to teach grammar as awareness, focusing on helping learners develop explicit knowledge.

These proposals are theoretically based and, as such, provide a solid foundation for the teaching of grammar. However, it needs to be acknowledged that there is more than one theory of L2 acquisition and that somewhat different proposals based on alternative theories are possible (see DeKeyser, 1998, for example). This is likely to ensure that the place of grammar in the curriculum and the nature of grammar teaching will be hotly debated in the years ahead.

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