

Developing language systems

Language systems: vocabulary (lexis), Phonetics (pronunciation, segmental + suprasegmental features), grammar (text), discourse (Pragmatics).

Language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing + interpretation, translation + intercultural competence

HOW

Inductive approach X Deductive approach

PPP model (presentation – practice – production)

WHAT TO ASSESS

Mistake (covert mistake)

Slip

Error

HOW TO ASSESS

Intelligibility

Immediate correction X Delayed correction

Fluency

- Noting the mistakes
- Hot cards
- Invoice books
- Recall and correct
- Recordings
- Remedial sessions

Accuracy:

- Gestures
- Pretending to misunderstand
- Repeating in context
- Echoing
- Reformulating
- Automatic correction

Practicing of a (new) grammar structure/item:

- activities X exercises
- **exercises:** gap-filling, ordering, categorizing, matching, multiple choice, transformation, substitution (+ substitution table), true-false, definition, word-formation, cloze, open questions, error correction, do and say (TPR), completion, paraphrase

Production:

- communicative language teaching
- task-based/activity-based approach
- project-based approach
- problem-solving, scaffolding

Mistake vs Error

How many times have you been speaking in English, and you make a silly mistake? For instance, "Yesterday, I go to work." You know you should have said, "went." You just made a **mistake**.

Mistakes are an accident. You know it's wrong, but the wrong word slips out.

An **error**, on the other hand, is something you don't know. It's grammar you haven't learned yet or vocabulary you haven't learned the nuance of yet. Errors are interesting because it gives you a chance to learn something for the first time.

Many people find mistakes boring. "Yesterday, I *went* to work, Yea, yea, yea. I got it." It's not fun to re-study basic points. But it is very important.

When you make a mistake, the listener doesn't know it's just a mistake. If you are speaking in a business situation, you'll lose a little of the listener's respect. If you make mistakes in speaking tests, you will get a very poor score.

If you ignore your mistakes, your English will not improve.

What should you do?

There are two steps: 1) **now**, and 2) **later**.

1. **NOW**: When your mistake is corrected, pay attention. **Repeat the correction** with variation, "Yesterday, I went... right, I went yesterday, went yesterday." Make a note to review later.

2. **LATER**: **Review** the note you made of the correction. You will forget most things quickly, so notes and review are vital.

So, what's the difference between an error and a mistake? For a speaking test assessor, nothing. They are the same. So, take both seriously.

Inductive and deductive grammar teaching: what is it, and does it work?

There are two main ways that we tend to teach grammar: deductively and inductively. Both deductive and inductive teaching have their pros and cons and which approach we use when can depend on a number of factors, such as the nature of the language being taught and the preferences of the teacher and learners. It is, however, perhaps generally accepted that a combination of both approaches is best suited for the EFL classroom.

So what is deductive and inductive grammar teaching? In this blog, we will first take a look at the underlying principles of inductive and deductive reasoning and then look at how this applies to grammar teaching and learning. We will then briefly consider some of the pros and cons.

Deductive and inductive grammar learning

These two approaches have been applied to grammar teaching and learning. A deductive approach involves the learners being given a general rule, which is then applied to specific language examples and honed through practice exercises. An inductive approach involves the learners detecting, or noticing, patterns and working out a 'rule' for themselves before they practise the language.

A deductive approach (rule-driven) starts with the presentation of a rule and is followed by examples in which the rule is applied.

An inductive approach (rule-discovery) starts with some examples from which a rule is inferred.

Both approaches are commonplace in published materials. Some course books may adhere to one approach or the other as series style, whereas some may be more flexible and employ both approaches according to what the language being taught lends itself to. Most inductive learning presented in course books is guided or scaffolded. In other words, exercises and questions guide the learner to work out the grammar rule. The following course book extracts illustrate the two different approaches. The subsequent practice exercises are similar in both course books.