

*Reflection on Grammar Teaching Textbooks and the Underlining Approaches for
Further Development: The Case of Teaching English as a Foreign Language*

Jirapa Abhakorn

National Institute of Development Administration, Thailand

0686

The Asian Conference on the Social Sciences 2013

Official Conference Proceedings 2013

Abstract

Although a wide range of theories and approaches for teaching grammatical rules of English have been extensively discussed in the research on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy, the most convenient approach applied by the language teachers seems to be textbook-based. Yet, little has been done to analyze grammar textbooks and their underlying pedagogical theories. In addition, studies on teacher cognition and reflection on grammar teaching materials have had little attention from the researchers in this field. This paper, therefore, has its main aim to demonstrate a critically reflection on the teaching materials of English grammar from a focus group discussion of Thai EFL teachers. The study investigated the extent to which the teaching materials suit the grammar teaching in the Thai EFL classroom context, and developed a revised version of the sample material. The revised activities allow the students to approach learning of grammar explicitly before practicing with repeated data input, individual tasks, and pair-discussion exercises. The results contribute to reflective thinking and material development skills in teacher training programs.

Keywords: Reflective thinking, English as a foreign language, Grammar teaching, Textbook analysis, Materials development

1. Introduction

The theories which explain the nature of language and language learning have changed in their core beliefs over the past few decades. This change has also reflected changes in the aims of language teaching and learning, the roles of teacher and learner, the classroom activities, the concept of grammar, and the role of grammar in English as a foreign language (EFL) instruction. Since each of the approaches to grammar teaching has its advantages and disadvantages, the effectiveness of implementing the teaching approaches depends on how well the teacher can organize the teaching to suit the learner and the classroom context. However, most EFL teachers generally organize their teaching approaches following the textbooks developed by native speakers of English. Instead of only teaching by the textbook, EFL teachers should be able to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of the textbook activities and develop a revised version to suit their classroom contexts. The aims of this article are: (1) to demonstrate teachers' critical reflection on the English grammar teaching materials and ways to develop new version of the material, (2) to examine the theoretical approaches underlying the textbook and their advantages and disadvantages for teaching EFL to Thai learners; and (3) to propose a revised version of the sample material to suit the nature of the Thai EFL classroom context.

2. Literature Review

Grammar instruction has been an aspect of English language teaching (ELT) research since before the 19th century. In the 18th century, there was no empirical theory about language and language learning. English language was taught using the same basic procedures that were used for teaching Latin. Grammar was viewed as prescriptive. In other words, the theorists prescribe what language ought to be. This approach to grammar is called traditional grammar (TG) and an example of the TG teaching methodology is called the Grammar Translation Method. A typical textbook in the mid-19th century thus consisted of chapters or lessons organized around grammar points. Each grammar point was listed, rules on its use were explained, and it was illustrated by sample sentences (Richards and Rogers, 2001: 4).

During the first half of the 20th century, behaviorism dominated education including the theory of foreign or second language (FL/SL) teaching. Grammar was viewed as a collection of language structures. Grammar learning was treated merely as imitation and memorization of the collections of grammar. The instruction took place through the process of imitation, practice, reinforcement, and habit formation. Language use was also tightly controlled in order to prevent students from making errors that could lead to the formation of bad habits. These instruction methods represent a prescriptive view of language. This approach to grammar is called structural grammar (SG). One of the examples of the SG teaching methodology is called the Audio-lingual Method.

By mid-20th century, Chomsky's (1967; cited in Stern, 1983) Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) and his theory of Universal Grammar (UG) were being expounded. The TGG, in contrast to the behaviorist view and TG, recognizes language as a system governed by abstract rules. It emphasized the productive or creative character of language and saw language as non-static. Chomsky's UG perspective believed that 'target input alone or input with negative evidence, that is, evidence that a particular form is ungrammatical, might be sufficient to have learners reset the parameters of UG principles in order to reflect the differences between the native language and the target language grammars' (White, 1987; cited in DeCarrico and Freeman, 2002: 28). Thus, grammar learning, from the theories of Chomsky's TGG and UG, was seen to take place through a process of rule formation. Rule formation is the process through which students formulated, tested, and revised hypotheses about grammatical structures in the target language. Grammar teaching according to Chomsky's theories was conducted in the form

of repeated exposure to the natural target language. Explicit grammar teaching was diminished because fluency was deemed more important than grammatical accuracy. Some examples of this teaching approach are Krashen's (1982) comprehensible input hypothesis, and a strong version of communicative approach to language teaching.

Hymes in 1972 developed a functional model of grammar which focused mainly on appropriate use of language, that is, how language functions in discourse. In other words, while Chomsky focused on the form of grammar, Hymes focused on the function of grammar. Hymes suggested that Chomsky's generative grammar was not complete since grammar use in real life situations also needed to be considered. A central concern of functional grammar (FG) is the notion of Hymes' (ibid.) communicative competence, which emphasizes language as meaningful communication, including the appropriate use of language in particular social contexts. In other words, communicative competence includes not only knowledge of the language forms in Chomsky's sense, but also the ability to use language in various contexts (i.e., pragmatic competence). The teaching approach evolved from the FG perspective is still in the form of communicative language teaching which views language as a communication tool and tends to promote fluency over accuracy.

Current research in second-language acquisition (SLA), led to a reconsideration of the role of explicit grammar instruction in FL/SL teaching since the communicative language teaching by itself was found to be inadequate for teaching FL/SL skills. Communicative language learning alone does not help the learners to achieve accuracy in certain grammatical forms but it could lead to learners' lack of grammatical competence. Many researchers (see Ellis, 1990, 1997, 2002a; Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991; Nassaji and Fotos, 2004) also suggested that, though explicit teaching of grammar may not have major effects on sequences of a FL/SL acquisition, it helps hasten the acquisition process development. Therefore, current approaches to grammar teaching emphasize both language form and meaning or functions. For example, Fotos (1994) introduced the task-based activity type which is called grammar consciousness-raising tasks. To complete these tasks, the learners are required to solve grammar problems through meaning focused interaction activities. The learners are given chances to discuss in FL/SL about grammar problems. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) proposed a grammar teaching approach which emphasizes the three dimensions of grammar which are form, meaning, and use. Some of these multitask-based activities are textual enhancement, structure-based production tasks, dictogloss, jigsaw tasks, and the grammar teaching *focusing on form* (Long, 1991), as opposed to the *focusing on forms*. In textbooks, however, grammar is generally presented without context. Therefore, students are not given the opportunity to see the systematic relation that exists between language form and meaning (Nunan, 1991). Since various approaches to language and grammar teaching have been proposed, teachers as active thinkers need reflective skills to critically evaluate textbooks and to develop materials that are suitable to their teaching and learning contexts.

3. The Study

This descriptive and interpretative research studies a sample of grammar teaching material through a text-based analysis and a focus group discussion. The teaching material was selected by the Thai Government to use for teaching EFL in Thai public high-schools nationwide. The group of three Thai EFL teachers was intentionally selected based on shared background of teaching experiences. All of them are now teaching first year secondary-school student in Thai schools. The research not only analyzes what the teaching material actually present for grammar teaching, but also explores the theoretical bases underlying the presentation of the teaching and learning activities. It also demonstrates teacher's reflective thinking on the teaching material and suggests

options for developing more appropriate materials for the Thai EFL learners. First, the textbook was critically analyzed in terms of: (a) presentation of grammar; (b) underlying pedagogical approaches described in the textbook; and (c) its advantages and disadvantages for teaching EFL to Thai learners. Then the revised version of the sample material which was believed to be more suitable for teaching grammar in the Thai EFL classroom context was developed and discussed.

3.1 The Textbook

A sample of grammar teaching material is chosen from *Postcards 1* (Abbs, Baker, Freebairn, and Reilly, 2005). This textbook is one of the set materials, that is, *Postcards 1-3*, *Postcards Workbook 1-3*, audio CDs for *Postcards 1-3*, which has been reviewed and selected by the Bureau of Academic Affair Education Standards of Thailand to be used for teaching English language to secondary school students in public schools of Thailand. The main aim of the textbook is to improve the ability to use English language in real life. Therefore, each unit of the book includes subunits or activities which aim to develop listening, speaking, reading, writing, communication, and cognitive skills, as well as activities that aim to teach vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. For this paper with its limited space, the author will only focus on the analysis of the grammar activities in unit 1 of the textbook.

3.2 The Selected Grammar Activities for the Article Presentation

For the grammar activities of unit 1, the grammatical features to be taught are subject pronouns and present simple tense of the verb *be* and its structures of affirmative statements, negative statements, and yes/no questions. The organization of this subunit consists of grammar focus boxes to describe the grammatical features, followed by the focused exercises to practice working with the grammatical features both individually and in pair. Appendix 1 illustrates the selected grammar activities.

3.3 The Target Learner

Postcards 1 is a textbook used for teaching first year secondary school student, who are 12 to 13 years old. In the Thai basic education system, English is a compulsory foreign language subject for Thai students ranging from elementary to secondary levels. English teaching and learning for Thai students according to the 1999-2010 National Educational Act is divided into four sublevels as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Level of English Teaching and Learning for Thai Students

Basic Educational Level	English Teaching/Learning Level
Level 1: Elementary years 1-3	Preparatory level
Level 2 : Elementary years 4-6	Beginning level
Level 3 : Secondary years 1-3	Expanding level
Level : Secondary years 4-6	Progressive level

According to the Thai basic educational system, the English proficiency level of the target learner (Level 3) is a little higher than beginner. At this level, the students are starting to study basic grammatical features as well as basic vocabularies, pronunciation, and skills development.

The nature of the English classroom in secondary schools in Thailand is a large class with 40-50 students per class. The students share the same first language which is Thai, and the teachers use Thai almost 80-90% of the time in the classrooms (Foley, 2005: 231). At present, the Thai Government is trying to encourage the development of students' language proficiency to fulfill a number of purposes, such as communication, acquisition of knowledge, use of English in tertiary level studies, career advancement, and so on (Foley, 2005). As a result, the Government is trying to promote learner-centered teaching and learning as an approach to develop the students' critical thinking skills, and the ability to communicate in English effectively. However, the teaching and learning in many Thai EFL classes, as Jantrasakul (2004: 36) noted, predominantly emphasizes cognitive learning of grammatical rules with meaningless oral drill skills. Learning by memorization is strongly favored in the Thai context. The students believe that repeated practice automatically translates into learning and understanding. They are preoccupied with examinations and scores (i.e., instrumental motivations), but not personal preferences (i.e., intrinsic motivations) or willingness to communicate in English (i.e., integrative motivations).

4. Results: Teachers' Critical Reflections on the Sample Material

4.1 The Grammatical Feature Taught: Subject Pronouns, and Present Simple Tense of Verb to Be

In the selected sample unit of activities (see Appendix 1), the grammatical features planned for delivery to the students is the basic form of a present simple sentence. A sentence is generally divided into two main constituents: subject and predicate. The predicate consists of the verb and any other elements of the sentence apart from the subject (Greenbaum, 1991: 19). The main focus is only on the two constituents, which are subject pronoun, and verb *be*.

Subject pronoun + Verb <i>be</i>

The present simple sentence form is presented in three different functions of statement: affirmative statements, negative statements, and yes/no questions. The affirmative statement is used to convey positive information, while the negative statement is used to transfer negative information. The yes/no question begin with a verb and it is used to elicit yes or no response. This requires what Greenbaum (ibid.: 101) called knowledge of subject-operator inversion, that is, the understanding of a reversal of the order of subject and verb (which is the normal order in the affirmative and negative statements). Table 2 shows the forms of present simple sentences to be presented to the target learners:

Table 2. Forms of Present Simple Sentences to be Presented to the Target Learners

Affirmative Statements	Negative Statements	Yes/No Questions
Subj pronoun + Verb <i>be</i>	Subj pronoun + Verb <i>be</i> + not	Verb <i>be</i> + Subj pronoun
I am (I'm) He } (He's) She } (She's) It } (It's) We } (We're) You } (You're) They } (They're)	I am He } is She } is It } is We } are You } are They } are } not	am I is { He { She { It are { We { You { They

Note: Subj = subject

4.2 Underlying Pedagogical Approach of the Textbook

The original grammar activities, as shown in Appendix 1, start with the explicit description of the grammar rules. The students are required to memorize these rules first before moving onto the exercises. This means that the textbook follows the perspective of TG, which views grammar as prescriptive form. Grammar is also seen as consisting of constituent elements of sentence which the students have to learn and produce in an accurate form. The grammar rules are taught explicitly and deductively in a de-contextualized manner, and the students are expected to learn by memorizing these rules.

Following the grammar box are exercises 1 and 3. In these exercises the students are required to produce the instructed grammatical features in a written form at the sentence-based level. Some teacher participants agree that Exercise 2 gives students a chance to discuss with a partner and to answer the question. The focus here is on meaning, as well as forms, therefore, this activity has a characteristic of communicative activity to language learning. However, it is a controlled communicative activity. In other words, it ‘provides students with a text or some sort of discrete sentences and require them to operate on it in a way that involves producing the target form’ (Ellis, 2002b: 159).

Following the exercises, there are the less controlled communication activities. Activity 4(a) allows the students to have exposure to comprehensible input by listening to short dialogues containing the instructed grammatical features. All of the teacher participants notice that the activities are arranged from the more to the less controlled communication activities. As shown in the Activity 4(b) which asks the students to perform a role-playing task, this activity aims to encourage the students to practice using the features learnt to communicate orally, yet at the sentence-based level. Activity 5 shows that a somewhat higher level of communicative skills is required. It is more challenging for the students to produce the language orally because there are no clues provided and the students are expected to produce the structures learnt to answer to the questioning forms that they may not have learnt before, such as ‘What’s your favorite movie?’, and ‘Who’s your favorite movie star?’

In summary, this selected sample grammar teaching material relies on the combination of first, traditional grammar approach and explicit grammar teaching, then functional grammar approach

and task-based activities. The organization of the activity is similar to Ellis's *et al.*'s (2002) *planned focus on form*. In such activities, they involve the use of focused task or communicative tasks that have been designed to elicit the use of a specific linguistic form in the context of meaning-centered language use (in Activities 4(b) and 5). The only different is that, rather than attending to the grammatical features incidentally, the students learnt about the grammar explicitly prior to using it into practice during the communicative activities.

4.3 Critical Analysis of the Sample Material and the Underlying Pedagogical Approaches

There are advantages and disadvantages that most of the teachers are agree and disagree on which can be grouped into separate paragraphs as shown below.

The advantages: The explicit instruction of grammar is suitable for the Thai EFL classroom context where both teachers and students have learnt English through the traditional way of teaching pre-specified language features explicitly, and communicative language teaching is just beginning to become an instructional option. This is similar to Fotos (1998) when the author suggested that, 'whereas a focus-on-form approach is used to position grammar instruction within an existing communicative framework, in the EFL context it provides a strong rationale for introducing communicative language activities into the grammar classroom' (304).

Since the target learners are young learners and their level of English proficiency is slightly higher than beginner, and since the present simple sentence form and application is not complex, explicit grammar teaching can help them understand the grammar rules easily and is less time consuming in comparison to the implicit type of teaching. In addition, since one of the goals for EFL learning is to pass the examination, explicit grammar teaching is believed to be one of the efficient methods for teaching EFL for Thai learners. This is because the teacher can organize the grammatical content that is suitable for the students' level of accessibility, and plan an appropriate path of progress for the students. This follows Pienemann's (1984; cited in Ellis, 1997) teachability hypothesis of SLA, or 'the hypothesis that teaching learners a grammatical structure will only be successful if they are developmentally ready to learn it' (144).

The communicative activities in a form of *focused-tasks* (Ellis *et al.*, 2002) help fulfill the Thai Government's need to develop Thai EFL learners' ability to communicate in English effectively. Thai students have limited opportunity for communicative use of the target language outside of the classroom, or even inside the classroom where the teacher uses the first language (L1) as a medium of instruction. Therefore, these communicative activities provide opportunities for the students to speak English in the classroom, and to engage in meaning-focused interaction where they must both comprehend and produce the target language.

When the student performs the focused tasks, the language forms are expected to be noticed and learnt through interaction, while the primary focus is on communication for meanings. The controlled communication task is aimed to ensure that students practice new language structures in a variety of contexts to help them internalize and master language features and, in particular, to ensure that there are plenty of opportunities to use the features in communicative activities (Ellis, 2002b: 163). The learners are, therefore, expected to function primarily as language user rather than as learners when they perform the tasks.

Richards (2002) noted that 'it is appear to be a real danger of leading students too rapidly into the creative aspects of language use such as the pure communicative language teaching' (38) or an unstructured or 'free' conversational setting before certain fundamental linguistic structures are more or less in place. Therefore, the combination of explicit grammar instruction with communicative activities provides advantages to the learners in many ways. As Fotos (1998)

states, explicit instruction, prior to performing the activity, helps activate learners' previous knowledge of the target structures or, if none exists, to facilitate awareness of the forms they will encounter. Schmidt (1990; cited in Fotos, 1998) also pointed out the positive relationship between formal instruction and language acquisition, that after awareness of grammatical structures (i.e., explicit knowledge) has been developed by formal instruction, many learners tend to notice the target structures in subsequent communicative input. The repeated act of noticing tends to help learners to bridge the gap between their inter-language forms and the correct forms, and restructure their internal linguistics system, and thus facilitate acquisition (i.e., implicit knowledge)

The disadvantages: There are only few limitations of this sample material to teaching grammar to Thai EFL learners. In the first part of the unit, it contains somewhat little repeated meaning-focused exposure to input containing the instructed grammatical features, and the pictures included may be unauthentic or irrelevant to the Thai students.

However, it can be improved in a number of ways to make it more effective and interesting for grammar teaching. First, comprehensible input (e.g., dialogues with clues) and enhanced input (e.g., boldfacing) can be putted before the description of grammatical features, to give opportunities for the student to notice language structures and applications for themselves.

Second, the pictures (in activity 2) should be changed to include pictures that students are more familiar with and interested in, so that they would have some motivations to perform the activity. Third, in activity 3, the teacher should ask the learners to work with a partner to solve grammatical features problems. Although Thai learners may be confrontation avoidance, according to Jantrasakul (2004), they have a strong inclination to work towards common goals and value cooperative learning in which they help and support each other. As mentioned earlier, discussion about language form with the partner can help create opportunity for negotiation of form (Ellis, 1997). Fourth, since more than one grammatical features are presented in the selected activity, the teacher should teach them to the students together with teaching the knowledge that 'different forms enable them to express different meanings, that grammar allows them to make meanings of increasingly sophisticated kinds' (Nunan, 1998: 103).

This method of teaching the form and the use of form is similar to Freeman's focus on form (Larsen-Freeman, 1991: 280) as shown in Figure 1. There are three dimensions of language that must be dealt with: the form, the meaning, and the pragmatic conditions governing their use. Different forms are used in different conditions and convey different meanings.

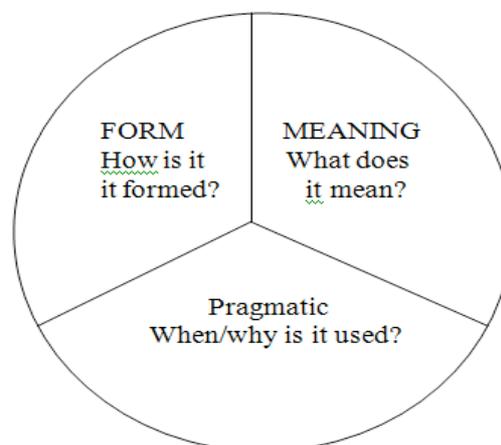


Figure 1. Larsen-Freeman's Three-Dimensional Grammar Framework

In the selected grammar teaching material, the forms, meanings and pragmatics of the instructed grammatical features should be explained as follow:

1. The forms describe subject pronouns and present simple tense *be*: (a) short form and (b) long form.
2. The meanings explain affirmative, negative, yes/no question, affirmative and negative answers.
3. The pragmatics emphasize (a) the subject pronoun I is always a capital letter, (b) the long-form is used in a formal situation, while short-form is used in an informal situation, (c) when answer a yes/no question with a negative answer, it is polite to offer additional information, (e) do not use short-form with an affirmative answer.

To improve the material, authentic pictures or dialogues can be used to relate forms and meanings. The caution boxes can be added to emphasize the right form of a grammatical feature to convey the right meaning in a particular context. The revised version of the selected unit activity was developed based on these comments and the discussed theories.

5. Discussion

5.1 The Revised Version of the Sample Material

This section discusses the revised version of the grammar teaching activities in the selected textbook, as shown in Appendix 2. This version consists of the following activities. First, (activity 1 and 2) the students listen to a dialogue which includes the planned grammatical features to be taught, followed by the comprehension activity which includes enhanced-input, such as boldfacing of the grammatical features (e.g., *is*, *are*). These activities aim to promote learners' motivation and language structures noticing. Motivating learners noticing of structural regularities and formal properties of the target language will greatly increase the rate of language attainment. The cartoon in the dialogue can also be useful as noted by Celce-Murcia and Hilles (1988; cited in Larsen-Freeman, 1991), who stated that when dealing with the semantic dimension, pictures are very useful.

Second, learners' noticing is enhanced by the teacher's explicit teaching of the language features or grammar focused activities. The explicit teaching of language forms is necessary for language learning because implicit exposure alone may not be enough for acquisition to take place, especially for beginners. Learners also need to pay conscious attention to notice the grammatical features in the input in order to make progress in the acquisition developmental process.

Third, (activity 3) learners listen to the same dialogue again, this time for repeated noticing of the instructed language structures. Then, they work individually to fill in the structures learnt, which are short forms of subject pronouns and the verb of *be*.

Fourth, (activity 4) learners are moving up the level of task difficulty, and work with their partners to finish the task. This task is left unedited from the original textbook, except for the pictures which are changed to include pictures of people from different professions. The new pictures are expected to gain the attention of students through different styles and preferences, and hence to motivate them to do the task. Above activities 3, 4, and 5, there are the caution boxes which aim to highlight correct ways of using the language structures to the student.

Fifth, (activity 5) the students are still required to work with their partner. Yet, in this revised version, it aims to achieve the focus on the form (Ellis, 1997). The taught grammatical structures are the content of the discussion task. The learners must use the target language meaningfully to complete the activity and to solve the grammar problems. Fotos (1998) suggested that 'the necessity to write English sentences and agree upon grammar rules helps promote communicative use of the target language, even though the learners speak the same L1' (306).

Sixth, activity 6 and 7 are kept unchanged from the original textbook, as they are already useful in terms of developing meaningful and challenging practice without using verbatim repetition of the language structures. Thus, the students would receive abundant practice in forming the questions and the questions they produce are meaningful. However, the author would suggest that, in the practice of teaching EFL in Thai classroom context with its large class sizes, the teacher should work closely with each group of students to enable them to use English, and to use it in the accurate form. Williams (1999, cited in Ellis, 2002a) also found little evidence of attention to form during the communicative group work in elementary and intermediate level learners, except when the teacher joined a group. Therefore, the intervention of the teacher is suggested. Perhaps at later time a remedial lesson could be prepared to address common errors that a teacher notes during the communicative group work (Nassaji and Fotos, 2004).

5.2 The Underlying Pedagogical Approach of the Revised Version

The theory underlying the improved version is still a combination of the traditional approach to grammar teaching and the task-based method. However, the material is revised by adding the dialogue and cartoon (activity 1) which contains the target structures at the beginning of the taught unit. The author names this activity a semi-inductive teaching activity. This name is given because the main aim of this activity is not to purely encourage the learners to induce the grammar rules. Instead, it aims to promote learners' motivation and noticing of the target structures, prior to the explicit instruction. According to Ellis (2002b), there are a number of advantages of inductive teaching: (1) it is potentially motivating than simply being told a grammatical rule and, for this reason, students may be more likely to remember what they learn; (2) it can encourage students to form and test hypotheses about the grammar; (3) it can lead to powerful insights about the grammar of a language that cannot be found in any published descriptions; and (4) it helps facilitate learning-training (learning how to learn) as they help to develop the skills learners need to investigate language autonomously (165). The semi-inductive teaching is the inductive approach of teaching followed by deductive approach or explicit teaching of the grammatical features.

In the revised version, the learners will have a chance to listen to the dialogue again, as I believe, similar to what Hinkel and Fotos (2002) suggested, that 'once a learner's consciousness of a target feature has been raised through formal instruction..., the learner often tends to notice the feature in subsequent input' (7). Such enhanced noticing or continued awareness of the feature is suggested to be important because it appears to initiate the restructuring of the learner's implicit knowledge, and language acquisition development. In addition, some students may like to work individually while some may like to work in group or pair. Variety of task types is therefore suggested in order to meet learners' differences as well.

6. Conclusions

The selected materials teaching approach is based on a combination of a traditional means of grammar teaching and communicative language teaching. This combination of approaches for teaching Thai EFL learners considering their cultural, political, and learning experience

backgrounds is already well established. However, it is necessary for the teacher to be able to reflect on and improve the teaching material to suit their particular students and classroom context. This article has demonstrated the value of reflective thinking on the grammar textbook and provided suggestions on how to revise the material to fulfill the goal of teaching EFL. The revised version suggests that the selected teaching material would be used more effectively to teach grammar to Thai EFL learners by adding comprehensible inputs, following the semi-inductive learning approach, and using authentic pictures. The approach to revise the textbook has its root from Ellis's (2002b: 176) proposition that grammatical materials might include: (1) discovery-type grammar tasks for raising learner's consciousness about grammar; (2) data in form of structured input to induce noticing of target structures; and (3) input-processing tasks. While the sequence of the original version consists of:

Explicit rule → individual and pair-discussion exercises

The improved version sequenced in the following way:

Data input explicit rule → repeated data input → individual tasks, and
Pair-discussion exercises

References

- Abbs B, Barker, C and Freebairn I (2005) *Postcard 1 (Thailand reprinted)*. Bangkok: Wattanapanish Publishers.
- Celce-Murcia M (1997) Direct approaches in L2 instruction: a turning point in communicative language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly* 31(1): 141-152.
- Celce-Murcia M and Larsen-Freeman D (1999) *The Grammar Book: An ESL/EFL Teacher's Course*. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle Publishing Company.
- Chomsky N (1968) *Language and Mind*. New York, Harcourt: Brace & World.
- DeCarrico J and Larsen-Freeman D (2002) Grammar. In: Schmitt N (ed.) *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics*. London: Arnold.
- Ellis R (1991) *Instructed Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Ellis R (1997). *Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis R (2002a) The place of grammar instruction in the second and foreign language curriculum. In: Hinkel E and Fotos S (eds) *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Ellis R (2002b) Methodological options in grammar teaching. In: Hinkel E and Fotos S (eds) *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Ellis R, Basturkmen H and Loewen S (2002) Doing focus-on-form. *System* 30: 419-432.
- Foley JA (2005) English in Thailand. *RELC*: 36(2). Available at: <http://rel.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/36/2/223>.
- Fotos S (1994) Integrating grammar instruction and communicative language use through grammar consciousness raising tasks. *TESOL Quarterly* 28(2): 323-351.
- Fotos S (1998) Shifting the focus from forms to form in the EFL classroom. *ELT Journal* 52(4): 301-307.
- Fotos S (2002) Structure-based interactive tasks for the EFL grammar learner. In: Hinkel E and Fotos S (eds) *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Greenbaum S (1991) *An Introduction to English Grammar*. Longman.

- Hymes D (1972) Models of the interaction of language and social life. In: Gumperz J and Hymes D (eds) *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*. New York, Holt: Reinhart Winston.
- Jantrasakul P (2004) *School Reform and Critical Thinking: Policy and Practice in Thai EFL Classrooms*. Doctoral Thesis, Indiana University. Available at: <http://wwwlib.umi.com/dissertations/fullcit/3134022>.
- Krashen SD (1982) *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Pergamon.
- Larsen-Freeman D (1991) Teaching grammar. In: Celce-Murcia M (ed) *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Heinle & Heinle.
- Larsen-Freeman D and Long MH (1991) *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research*. New York: Longman.
- Long M (1991) Focus on form: a design feature in language teaching methodology. In: Debot K, Ginberg R, and Kramsch C (eds) *Foreign Language Research in Cross Cultural Perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Nassaji H and Fotos S (2004) Current developments in research on the teaching of grammar. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 24: 126–145.
- Nunan D (1998) Teaching grammar in context. *ELT Journal* 52(2): 101–109.
- Richards J (2002) Accuracy and fluency revisited. In: Hinkel E and Fotos S (eds) *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Richards J and Rodgers TS (2001) *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching 2nd ed.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sheen R (2002) 'Focus on form' and 'focus on forms'. *ELT Journal* 56(3): 303–305.
- Spada N and Lightbown PM (2002). In: Schmitt N (ed) *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics*. London: Arnold.
- Stern HH (1983) *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Appendix 1: The Original Version of the Grammar Activities

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Simple present tense of *be*

Yes/No questions	Affirmative answers	Negative answers
Am I OK?	Yes, you are.	No, you aren't.
Are you OK?	Yes, I am.	No, I'm not.
Is he OK?	Yes, he is.	No, he's not.
Is she OK?	Yes, she is.	No, she isn't.
Is it OK?	Yes, it is.	No, it isn't.
Are we OK?	Yes, we are.	No, we aren't.
Are they OK?	Yes, they are.	No, they aren't.

3 Practice

Unscramble the words and write questions. Then answer the questions.

1. you / Are / student / a
Q: Are you a student?
A: Yes, I am.

2. today / at school / your friends / Are
Q: Are your friends at school today?
A: _____

3. you / years / Are / old / 10
Q: _____
A: _____

4. your English teacher / Is / American
Q: _____
A: _____

5 Your Turn

Work with a partner. Ask each other these questions and answer them.

What's your name?
How old are you?
What's your favorite movie?
Who's your favorite movie star?

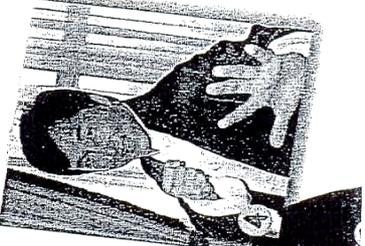
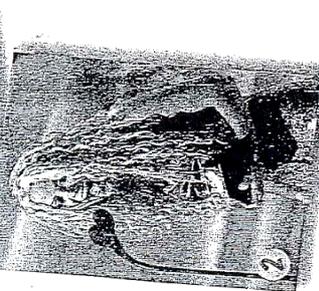
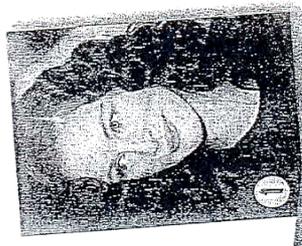
4 Communication

A. Listen to the dialogues.

1. A: Hi. Are you Tim Benson?
B: Yes, I am. I'm Tim Benson.
A: Hello, Tim. I'm Maria Garcia.
2. A: Excuse me. Are you Sue Stevens?
B: No, I'm not. I'm Jane Carlson.

B. Role-play the dialogues with a partner. Replace the names as shown.

1. Tim Benson → Brad Pitt
Maria Garcia → Your name
2. Sue Stevens → Jennifer Aniston
Jane Carlson → Your name



GRAMMAR FOCUS

Simple present tense of *be*/Subject pronouns

Affirmative statements	Negative statements
I am 15 years old.	I am not 15 years old.
He is 15 years old.	He is not 15 years old.
She is 15 years old.	She is not 15 years old.
It is 15 years old.	It is not 15 years old.
We are 15 years old.	We are not 15 years old.
You are 15 years old.	You are not 15 years old.
They are 15 years old.	They are not 15 years old.

Long form	Short form
I am → I'm	He is → He's
He is → He's	She is → She's
She is → She's	It is → It's
It is → It's	We are → We're
We are → We're	You are → You're
You are → You're	They are → They're
They are → They're	

1 Practice

Write the short forms (contractions).

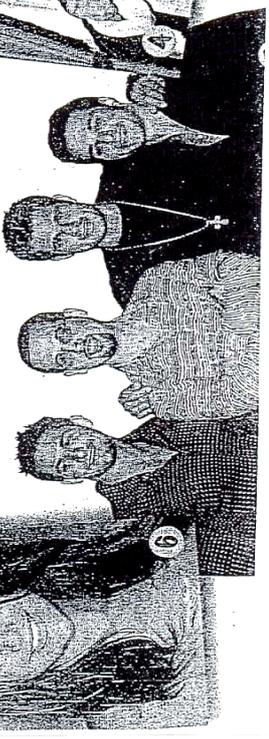
1. (You are) You're my friend.
2. (I am) I'm 12 years old.
3. (She is) She's my classmate.
4. (He is) He's 40 years old.
5. (They are) They're pen pals.
6. (It is) It's my English homework.

2 Practice

Work with a partner. Identify the people in the pictures. Write sentences using contractions.

Tom Cruise	Shakira
Julia Roberts	Jackie Chan
98 Degrees	Jennifer Lopez

1. She's Julia Roberts.
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____



Appendix 2: The Revised Version of the Grammar Activities

1 Dialogue

Listen and read.

1. Hi. My name is Ted. **I'm** fifteen years old.

2. This is my sister, Kate. **She's** sixteen.

3. That's Mark. **He's** six.

4. Are **you** okay, Mark? Yes, **I'm** okay.

5. Look **it's** my school! **They're** my classmates!

6. Let's go, Mark! **We're** here.

Learning Goals

Grammar
Subject pronouns
Simple present tense: be

2 Comprehension

Write the information.

Ted is fifteen years old. _____ is his sister. She is _____ years old. _____ is his brother. He is _____ years old. They are going to _____.

Remember: the subject pronoun / is always a capital letter.

3 Practice

Listen to the dialogue again and complete the sentences below with the short forms (contractions) of *subject pronoun* and the verb of *be*.

- Hi, (I am) I'm Ted.
- (You are) _____ my friend.
- (She is) _____ my sister.
- (He is) _____ my brother.
- (They are) _____ my classmates.
- (It is) _____ my school.



GRAMMAR FOCUS

Simple present tense of *be*/Subject pronouns

Affirmative statements

I am 15 years old.
He is 15 years old.
She is 15 years old.
It is 15 years old.
We are 15 years old.
You are 15 years old.
They are 15 years old.

Negative statements

I am not 15 years old.
He is not 15 years old.
She is not 15 years old.
It is not 15 years old.
We are not 15 years old.
You are not 15 years old.
They are not 15 years old.

Long form

I am →
He is →
She is →
It is →
We are →
You are →
They are →

Short form

I'm
He's
She's
It's
We're
You're
They're

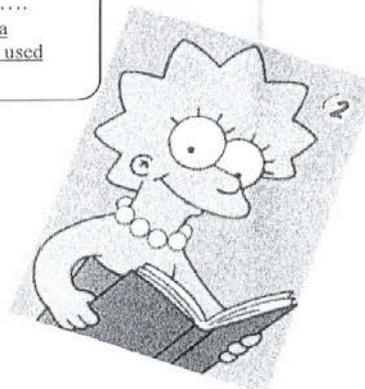
Remember: Long form is used in a formal situation, while short form is used in an informal situation.

4 Moving Up

Work with a partner. Identify the people in the pictures. Write sentences using contractions.

Julia Roberts, Jacky Chan, Tiger Woods, Lisa Simpson, Football players

- She's Julia Roberts.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



GRAMMAR FOCUS

Simple present tense of be

<p>Yes/No questions</p> <p>Am I OK?</p> <p>Are you OK?</p> <p>Is $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{he} \\ \text{she} \\ \text{it} \end{array} \right\}$ OK?</p> <p>Are $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{we} \\ \text{they} \end{array} \right\}$ OK?</p>	<p>Affirmative answers</p> <p>Yes, you are.</p> <p>Yes, I am.</p> <p>Yes, $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{he} \\ \text{she} \\ \text{it} \end{array} \right\}$ is.</p> <p>Yes, $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{we} \\ \text{they} \end{array} \right\}$ are.</p>	<p>Negative answers</p> <p>No, you're not. (No, you aren't.)</p> <p>No, I'm not. (No, I am not.)</p> <p>No, he's not. (No, he isn't.)</p> <p>No, she's not. (No, she isn't.)</p> <p>No, it's not. (No, it isn't.)</p> <p>No, we're not. (No, we aren't.)</p> <p>No, they're not. (No, they aren't.)</p>
--	---	--

.....

Remember: When you answer a Yes/No question with a negative answer, it is polite to offer additional information.

A: Is your sister at school?
B: No, she's not. She's at home.

.....

Remember: Do not use contraction with an affirmative answer.

A: Is your sister at school?
B: Yes, She is Not Yes, she's

Communication

A. Listen to the dialogues.

1. A: Hi, Are you Tim Benson?
B: Yes, I am. I'm Time Benson.
A: Hello, Tim. I'm Maria Garcia.
2. A: Excuse me. Are you Sue Stevens?
B: No, I'm not. I'm Jane Carlson.

B. Role-play the dialogues with a partner. Replace the names as shown.

1. Tim Benson → Brad Pitt
Maria Garcia → Your name
2. Sue Stevens → Jennifer Aniston
Jane Carlson → Your name

Practice Work with a partner.

Unscramble the words and write questions. Then answer the questions.

1. you/Are/ student/ a
Q: Are you a student?
A: Yes, I am.
2. today/ at school/ your friends/ Are
Q: _____
A: _____
3. you/ years/ Are/ old/ 10
Q: _____
A: _____
4. your English teacher/ Is/ American
Q: _____
A: _____

Moving Up

Your turn!
Work with a partner. Ask each other these questions and answer them.

- What's your name?
How old are you?
What's your favourite movie?
Who's your favourite movie star?

