



وقائع المؤتمر العلمي لكلية التربية الأساسية في مجال العلوم الانسانية  
والتربوية والنفسية وتحت شعار  
(الاتجاهات الحديثة للعلوم الانسانية والتربوية والنفسية في التنمية المستدامة)  
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## The Preference and Use of the Deductive and Inductive Approaches to Teaching Grammar by EFL College Instructors

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### Abstract

The English language has its own distinctive grammatical rules, which form the foundation of the language in real use. Thus, teaching grammar is so important for EFL teachers. Mainly, there are two approaches for teaching grammar; deductive and inductive. Teachers adopt either the deductive approach which is rule- given, or the inductive approach which refers to rule-driven. The study aims to explore the EFL college instructors' preference and use of deductive and inductive approaches for teaching grammar. Two questionnaires were adopted and answered by the sample. The sample consists of 24 instructors who teach college students. The results revealed that the majority EFL college instructors were concentrating on using a deductive rather than an inductive approach to teaching grammar and they believe in the effectiveness of the deductive approach in teaching grammar.

In conclusion, TEFL is in rapid development and many new trends and methods appear, so college instructors should be aware of them and they should also vary the method of teaching used in the lecture to break boredom , to stimulate critical thinking, and to raise enthusiasm .

**Keywords:** Deductive , Inductive, Teaching Grammar

### 1-Introduction

#### 1.1 The problem of the research

Teaching English is so demanded by many colleges and that one of the main and essential component of English language is grammar due to the fact that it is the source of structure which is required to organize words as well as ideas. Thus, teaching grammar is a cornerstone in TEFL. Widodo (2006) regards grammar as the basis for the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, since grammar is basic in producing acceptable and correct utterances and in comprehending sentences interconnection in a text. Moreover, grammar allows learners to put their thoughts in comprehensible sentences. Ismail et al(2019) regard grammar as a challenging topic and the debate about it developed by time and focus on the way of teaching grammar to learners explicitly or implicitly, i.e., deductively or inductively. There are two dominant approaches—deductive and inductive—that present

contradicting ways of understanding grammatical structures. While the deductive method presents the rules explicitly, the inductive method stimulates learners to infer the rules through context.

Azizjonovna. (2024) explains that "Both methods have distinct advantages and drawbacks, and research suggests that their effectiveness may depend on the learners' proficiency level, cognitive styles, and the teaching context".

### **1.2 Aim of the research:**

The aims of the research are

1-to explore the EFL college instructors' preference of deductive and inductive approaches for teaching grammar.

2- to evaluate the EFL college instructors' actual use of deductive and inductive approaches for teaching grammar.

### **1.3 Limits of the research:**

The research is limited to EFL college instructors at Mustansiriyah University, College of Basic Education, Department of English, in the academic year 2024-2025.

### **1.4 Hypotheses**

The research issues the following hypotheses:

1- Iraqi EFL college instructors do not show a preference for either the deductive or inductive approaches for teaching grammar

2- Iraqi EFL college instructors use both deductive and inductive approaches for teaching grammar at the same level.

### **1.4 Definitions of Basic Terms:**

#### **1.4.1 Deductive**

Deductive is a traditional way of teaching in which the grammatical rules are presented to the learners first, then they apply them( Kolat,2009)

Deductive refers "to teaching language starts by giving learners rules, then examples, then practice. It is a teacher-centered approach to presenting new content"(British Council, 2025).

#### **1.4.2 Inductive**

Inductive: "is a discovery learning approach in which teachers don't teach the grammatical rules directly but let students discover them through a learning experience in terms of using the target language"

(teachingutopians, 2021) Inductive starts with examples in the context, and the learners should discover and notice the rules being followed.(Dennis,2025)

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Deductive Approach

Teaching grammar is crucial in TEFL, yet educators usually debate about which one is better and results in remarkable outcomes; the deductive approach ( explicit rule) or the inductive approach ( implicit rule)( Ellis, 2015). The deductive approach is a traditional approach to teaching English grammar in which the teacher introduces the rule or the content and reinforces with examples and exercises. It is a teacher-centered approach( Sanako, 2023). Widodo (2006) clarifies that " the deductive approach is derived from the notion that deductive reasoning works from the general to the specific. "

According to deductive teaching, the lesson starts with presenting the rules, then providing examples and related exercises. It is a top- down way in which the learners can apply the already given rules to a new context( Thornbury,1999). He adds some guidelines for presenting the rules: the rules must be true and simple, clearly show the given forms, make use of familiar concepts to the learners, and be relevant.

Navaz (2017) states that this approach consists of three stages: presentation, practice, and production. In the first stage, the grammatical rules are introduced to the learners through text. In the practice stage, any exercises and tasks are given to the learners to repeat or reproduce the rules. Followed by the production stage, in which the learners are encouraged to apply and use freely. Nassaji and Fotos (2011) clarify that the purpose of the first stage ( presentation) is to assist learners to be familiar with the new structure and store it in their short-term memory, whereas the practice stage aims at gaining control of the structure introduced in the presentation stage. The aim of the production stage is to enable learners to use and internalize the rules.

#### 2.1.2 The Steps of the Deductive Approach

Rohim and Gunawan(2021) state three systematic sequence steps for teaching according to the deductive approach:

- 1-Rule: The teacher formulates, presents, and clarifies the rules explicitly.
- 2-Example:The teacher provides the students with examples to apply a specific rule in the real use of the language.
- 3-Practice: The teacher sets and assigns a new task for the students to do, depending on the previous teacher's clarification and interpretation.

#### 2.1.3 Advantages of the Deductive Approach

- 1- Teachers can easily maintain control of the class when presenting the lesson and cover all the planned content in each lesson(Sanako, 2023).

2-Students gain a clear and comprehensive understanding of the materials being presented with good opportunities to practice(Ibid).

3-The teacher starts straightforward with the main point, so it saves time(Widodo, 2006).

#### **2.1.4 Disadvantages of the Deductive Approach**

1-Starting the lesson with the grammatical rules may annoy some students and indicate that learning a language is merely knowing the rules (Nur, 2020).

2- Little attention is given to meaning, involvement and interaction( Ibid).

3- The focus is only on the receptive skills, and students are unable to use the grammatical rules in a new productive context( Uddin,2012).

4- It relies on memorization of the rules, which leads to passive learning and reduces students' participation and motivation(Ibid).

#### **2.2 Inductive approach**

It is a student -centered approach by which the teacher presents authentic materials to the students by creating a situation and asking students to observe, think, analyze, and summarize the rules (Huang, 2022). It is rule-driven or rule-discovery learning. In the beginning, the teacher tries to highlight the grammatical rules implicitly by giving examples. Then, the learners are encouraged to think critically, manipulate their previous language knowledge, and use the learning strategies to analyze the examples and formulate a rule by themselves ( Shirav& Nagai,2022). Teachers can present the materials through many activities like; games, songs, stories, videos, flashcards, and worksheets (Parker, 2025).

##### **2.2.1 Steps of the Inductive Approach**

Rohim and Gunawan(2021) write four steps in applying the inductive approach for teaching grammar :

1-Presentation: The teacher presents many examples

2-Observation: Students are asked to detect, observe, and solve the examples to reach the conclusion of the grammatical rule.

3-Generalization: After stating the rule, teacher and the students engage in logical shared discussion of the rule to develop common perception of the content.

4-Testing: Students are tested to confirm the correct use of the rules by using additional relevant examples.

##### **2.2.2 Advantages of the Inductive Approach**

1-It enhances students' engagement and " tend to be more fun for students and can spark their curiosity and interest" (Parker, 2025)

2- It results in good retention of the material (Ibid).

3-Students play more active roles in learning rather than merely receiving information passively, which results in staying more motivated and tentative (Samanta, 2021)

4- The required mental efforts foster deep understanding and promote memorability( Ibid).

5-It promotes learning grammar through context, which helps learners to grasp how the rules are used in real context. Consequently, it fosters communicative competence (Azizjonovna,2024).

### 2.2.3 Disadvantages of the Inductive Approach

1-It is time -consuming because the teacher has to prepare examples to clearly demonstrate the rule and students may take a long time to discover the rule (Ibid).

2- Students may wrongly resume the rules, which will lead to misunderstanding and incorrect knowledge(Ibid).

3- Students who are acquainted with the traditional styles may find it difficult to deduce the rule from the text (International Teacher Training Organization, 2001)

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Population and Sample

The population of the research consists of EFL college instructors at Mustansiriyah University during the academic year 2024-2025.

The sample consists of 24 EFL college instructors, all of them from Mustansiriyah University, College of Basic Education, Department of English.

Two questionnaires were employed to enhance the aims, which were exploring the EFL college instructors' preference and actual use of deductive and inductive approaches for teaching grammar. The questionnaires were adopted from(Nesic & Hamidovic,2015) ( Ismail et al,2023)(Nur,2020) . They were preset to be answered in accordance with a three-point grading scale: agree 3 marks, neutral 2, and disagree 1 mark. The results are evaluated by using the percentage and Fisher's model formula. ( See Appendix 1,2).

### 3.2 The Validity, Reliability, and Administration of the Questionnaires

The questionnaires were exposed to experts in the fields of linguistics and TEFL to make sure of the suitability and acceptability of the items and to add or revise items. The experts approved the validity of all the items. Then, a pilot administration was conducted to ensure the reliability of the questionnaires. A test-retest was carried out here to attain reliability of the

questionnaire, which revealed the consistency of the scores with time .Then, the questionnaires were administered to the sample on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2025.

#### **4-The Results and Interpretations:**

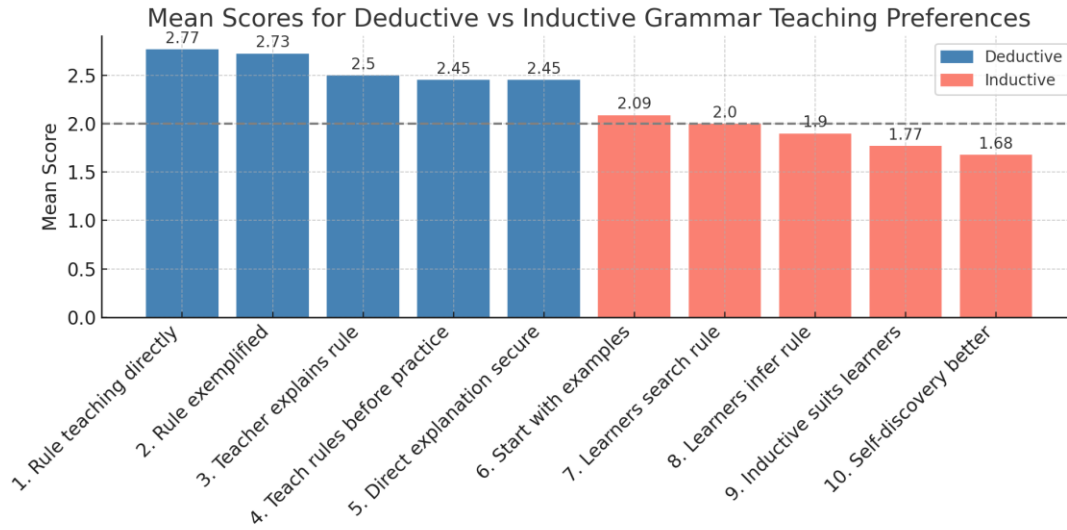
##### **4.1 Presentation of the Results:**

To achieve the first aim , the Fisher formula was manipulated here to account for the weighted mean of the items of the questionnaire and then compare it to the theoretical mean, which is ( 1.5) as the responses were scored on a 3-point Likert scale. It is perceived from (table 1) that all the items are of good preference because their weighted means are higher the theoretical mean (1.5), and that item 2 stands as the most acceptable as its weighted mean is (2.772). Additionally, the first five ranks' items ( 2,3, 1,5, 4) are about the preference for the deductive approach, whereas the last five ones (7,8,10, 6,9) are about the preference for the inductive approach (See Table1)(See Chart 1).

**Table 1: The Weighted Mean and the Rank Order of the EFL instructors' Preference of Deductive and Inductive Approaches**

Rank	No. of item	Scale			Weighted Mean	Percentile Mean
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree		
1	2	18	3	1	2.772	92.424
2	3	18	2	2	2.727	90.90
3	1	14	5	3	2.5	83.333
4.5	5	15	4	1	2.454	81.818
4.5	4	15	3	3	2.454	81.818
6	7	7	10	5	2.09	69.696
7	8	7	8	7	2	66.666
8	10	5	10	7	1.90	63.636
9	6	3	11	8	1.772	59.09
10	9	6	9	7	1.681	56.06

**Chart 1: The weighted mean scores of EFL instructors' responses about the preference of the deductive and inductive approach**

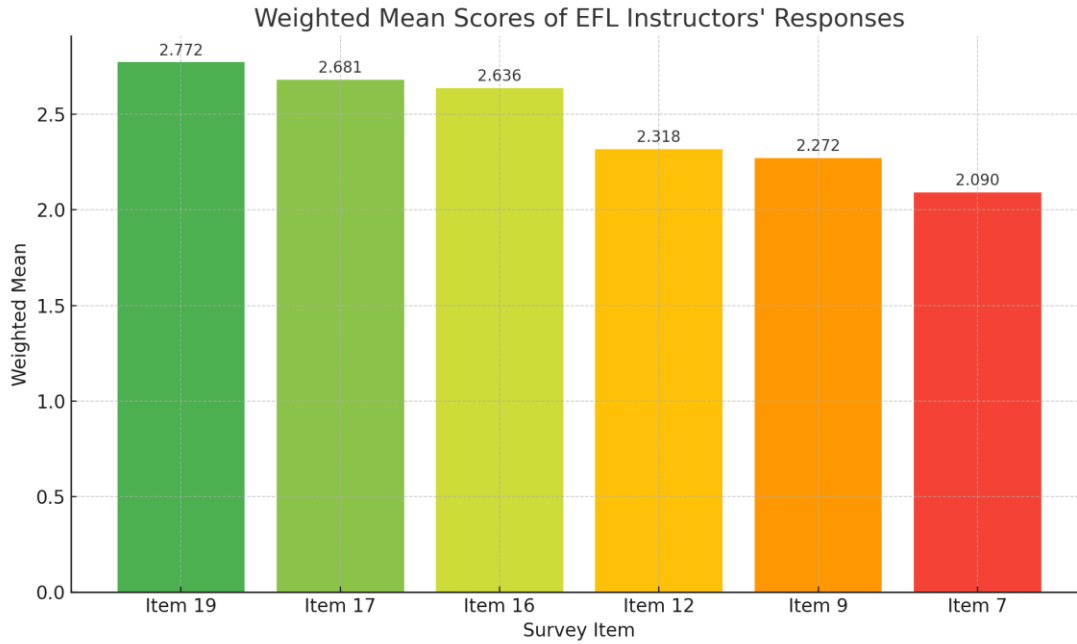


To examine the second aim, also Fisher formula used here to compute the weighted mean of the items in the questionnaire and to draw comparison with the theoretical mean (1.5). It is noticed that all the items got weighted mean higher than the theoretical mean (1.5) and that item 3 has the highest weighted mean ( 2.772). (See table 2) (See Chart 2)

**Table 2: The Weighted Mean and the Rank Order of the EFL instructors' Use of Deductive and Inductive Approaches**

Rank	No. of item	Scale			Weighted Mean	Percentile Mean
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree		
1	3	19	1	2	2.772	92.424
2	5	17	3	2	2.681	89.393
3	2	16	4	2	2.636	87.878
4	4	12	5	5	2.318	77.272
5	6	9	10	3	2.272	75.757
6	1	7	10	5	2.09	69.696
					2.4615	82.159

**Chart 2: The weighted mean scores of EFL instructors' responses about the use of the deductive and inductive approach**



## 4.2 Interpretation of the Results

Concerning the first aim, the results showed that EFL college instructors noticeably prefer the deductive approach to teaching grammar and that they significantly value the explicit and direct explanation of the grammatical rules rather than the inductive approach, which requires discovering the rules. So by comparison, it seems that the inductive approach is less preferable than the deductive approach. Consequently, the first hypothesis is rejected because EFL college instructors show a higher preference for the deductive approach than the inductive approach.

According to the second aim, the results revealed that the first three items about the deductive approach usage gained the highest scores, in which the instructors start with the explanation of the grammatical rules and followed by examples and practice. The last three items, which represent the use of the inductive approach, gain relatively lower scores. Although some instructors show moderate use of these items. Hence, the second hypothesis is also rejected as the EFL instructors use a deductive approach more than an inductive approach in teaching grammar.

## 5- Conclusion, Recommendations, and Suggestions

### 5.1 Conclusions

In conclusion, the analysis of the results demonstrates that instructors prefer teaching grammar by a deductive approach ,i.e., they appreciate direct explanation and explicit rules rather than implicit rules.

Furthermore, the results show the dominant use of the deductive approach by EFL instructors and also the application of inductive approach strategies, but to a lesser extent. Comparatively speaking, instructors thought that the inductive approach is thought to be less suitable or efficient.

Ultimately, the deductive approach is effective but may lack students' engagement, and the inductive approach results in deep understanding, but it is time-consuming. So, it is better to make a reasonable combination between the two approaches (blended approach) depending on the students' needs, their level of proficiency, and the complexity of the grammatical rules.

### 5.2 Recommendations

In light of the research's findings, the researcher suggests the following .:

- 1- It is important that syllabus designers revise the syllabus to embody both deductive and inductive approaches..
- 2- There is a need to shift from a deductive approach to an inductive approach as it results in a deep understanding specially for advanced level.
- 3- Sometimes, it is better to start with an inductive approach to stimulate thinking and discovery and end with a deductive explanation of the rules.

### 5.3 Suggestions

As inspiring from the research's findings, the following studies are recommended:

- 1- A study of the students' preference for deductive and inductive approaches to teaching grammar.
- 2- A study of the students' motivation towards deductive and inductive approaches to teaching grammar
- 3- An experimental study to explore the effect of deductive and inductive approaches on students' achievement in grammar.
- 4-A study about the effect of the deductive and inductive approaches on the students' retention.
- 5-A study about the impact of the inductive approach on the learners' motivation.

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### Appendix 1

	Item	agree	Neutral	Disagree
1	I prefer to start with presenting and teaching the rule directly			
2	I prefer to exemplify the rule			
3	I believe in explaining the rule by the teacher			
4	I believe grammar rules should be taught clearly before the practice.			
5	I adapt direct explanation of grammar as it is more secure and straight-forward to ensure students' understanding.			
6	I prefer to start with examples from which to extract a rule			
7	I think learners should search for the rule			
8	It is better to let learners infer the rule themselves.			
9	I think the inductive way suits my learners' learning style			
10	I think students' self –discovery results in better understanding and learning.			

### Appendix 2

	Item	agree	Neutral	Disagree
1	I explicitly start teaching grammar with a focus on individual rules and structure			
2	I give them examples to apply the rule .			
3	I assign tasks and exercises to the learners to manipulate the rules.			
4	I start with examples or texts to introduce the subject implicitly without giving the rules			
5	I help the learners to work out the rules for themselves			
6	I ask learners to check, test, and revise the grammatical rules to new sentences.			

تفضيل واستخدام الاساليب الاستنتاجية والاستقرائية لتدريس القواعد من قبل اساتذة  
اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية

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مستخلص البحث:

تمتلك اللغة الانكليزية قواعدها النحوية المميزة، و التي تشكل اساس اللغة في الاستخدام الفعلي. وبالتالي فإن تدريس القواعد مهم للغاية لمعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية. هناك طريقتان لتدريس القواعد: الاستنتاجي و الاستقرائي. يتبنى المعلمون اما المنهج الاستنتاجي الذي يعتمد اعطاء القواعد او النهج الاستنتاجي الذي يعتمد على استخلاص القواعد. تهدف الدراسة الى استكشاف تفضيلات و استخدام مدرسي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في الكليات حول النهجين الاستنتاجي و الاستقرائي لتدريس القواعد. تتكون العينة من 24 تدريسي يدرسون طلاب الجامعات. تم اعتماد استبيانين و الاجابة عليهما من قبل العينة. كشفت النتائج ان غالبية تدريسي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في الكليات يركزون على استخدام النهج الاستنتاجي بدلا من النهج الاستقرائي في و يعتقدون بفعالية النهج الاستنتاجي في تدريس القواعد. في الخاتمة، فان تدريس اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في تطور سريع ظهرت العديد من الاتجاهات و الاساليب الجديدة، لذلك يجب على تدريسي الكليات ان يكونوا على دراية بها وكما يجب عليهم تنويع اسلوب التدريس المستخدم في المحاضرة لكسر الملل و تحفيز التفكير الناقد و اثاره الحماس.

الكلمات المفتاحية: استنتاجي، استقرائي، تدريس القواعد.