Written and Spoken English Grammar Usage in Communicative Language Teaching Materials

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要　旨

　教師は，コミュニカティブ英語教科書のダイアログが，典型的な会話パターンを反映していないため，不自然に感じるかもしれない。書き言葉と話し言葉には多くの違いがある。話し言葉の文法は書き言葉の文法から派生したものではなく，学習者が書き言葉と話し言葉の両方に触れることは有益である。本稿では，教科書の対話文と YouTube 動画の会話文の分析に基づき，書き言葉と話し言葉の文法の違いを明らかにし，コミュニケーション英語の授業に両方の文法を取り入れる方法について提案する。コミュニカティブ・ランゲージ・ティーチング（CLT）の授業のために作られた現代の教科書は，ダイアログやリスニング・アクティビティでさえも，一般的に書き言葉の文法形式を提示しているため，教師は可能な限り本物のインタラクションを紹介する教材を補足することが重要である。コースの目的がスピーキング能力の向上である場合，実際の会話パターンの例を盛り込み，生徒がスクリプト化された書き言葉だけでなく，すでに習得している形式を使ってコミュニケーションできるようにすることは有益である。

キーワード：話し言葉文法，書き言葉文法，コミュニケーション言語教育
　　　　　　　（CLT），英語教育，外国語教育

1　Introduction

There are many differences between the way we speak and the way we write. Spoken language is not derivative of the written form, as spoken language develops before its writing system does. There are even some languages that exist today that still do not have a written form. In the classroom, we tend to focus on the written form of a language. It can be challenging for language teachers to assess students when there are multiple ways to express what they are thinking. Typical grammar instruction focuses on structure and form and may not acknowledge the choices of language patterns that users must make or encounter when they are confronted with using the language (Biber et al., 2002).

Language learners, and even fluent or "native" speakers may get confused and discouraged if they are always told to speak "properly" (i.e., the way they would write), especially if they have heard speakers talk a certain way in movies, music, or if they have had the chance to interact with speakers of the language they are learning in real life. The importance of spoken grammar will depend on the course, the goals of the students, and their levels, but many language learners would benefit from exposure to the way people naturally speak and interact. Having an awareness of the differences between spoken and written grammar can help teachers and learners recognize patterns of both and identify when it is appropriate to use certain forms.

If the intended outcome is improving speaking skills, then spoken grammar instruction may be necessary at times. This paper will discuss the differences between written and spoken language regarding grammatical differences, the interactive purpose of spoken grammar, and compare written grammar to spoken grammar. It will also address textbooks used in communicative language classrooms and their tendency to utilize formal written grammar in example dialogues. This study will discuss to what extent and in what circumstances spoken language rules could be taught and the implementation of utilizing spoken and written grammar rules and patterns.

2　Literature Review

When teaching a writing course, instructors would probably focus on formal written grammar. For a course that focuses on speaking output, it may not make sense to use the

same formal written grammar in speaking and listening activities (McCarthy & Carter, 1995). There are many differences between the way we speak and the way we write, from the way we interact to the forms we tend to use more often when speaking. The following section will discuss some of the differences between written and spoken grammar.

2.1. Grammatical Differences Between Spoken and Written Grammar

There are various grammatical differences found in spoken grammar that are not found as often in written grammar. Written excerpts of authentic spoken dialogue usually appear "untidy" and even "ungrammatical" to some (Willis, 2003: 191). This is due to spoken grammar having less structure (Brown & Yule, 1983) or being considered to have its own structure (McCarthy & Carter, 1995).

When language is spoken casually, speakers often use incomplete sentences. Spoken grammar uses situational ellipsis, where words are left out but are still understood depending on the situation (McCarthy & Carter, 1995: 145). Pronouns and articles may be dropped or barely uttered (e.g., "[I] Need to go to the store. [There]'s no milk or bread."). Certain points of conversation may not be said because what or who is being referred to is obvious to the speakers, whether it is a person, an object, or a past or present situation. Speakers tend to omit certain words and simplify more when talking to others (Willis, 2003) if it can be easily understood by the person being spoken to (e.g., "Coffee?" [In this case it is understood from the situation that coffee is being offered to you]).

Another grammatical difference is the use of "and" and "but" at the beginning of a sentence. Putting "and" or "but" at the beginning of a sentence when there are two coordinating clauses looks strange in written grammar (e.g., "Playing the piano is difficult. But I enjoy it."). However, when speaking, this may sound fine, as subordination between sentence clauses is found less frequently (Brown & Yule, 1983). Speakers may also use these connectors to add on to or contradict what someone has just said (e.g., "But that's not what I heard.") Less variety of connective words are used in spoken grammar as well (Brown & Yule, 1983). Whereas in writing writers try to vary up language by using many different connectors, in speech speakers tend to utilize simple ones like "and", "but" or "or".

Passive voice is less often found in spoken grammar (e.g., "That was given to her by her grandmother.") and emphasizing the object of the sentence instead of the subject is more often found in spoken grammar (e.g., "That's mine.") (Willis, 2003). Speakers may

not use complete sentences, but rather coordinating sentence clauses (e.g., "It suddenly started raining super hard – we didn't have our umbrellas – we left them at the hotel – which was a 20-minute walk away…") (Brown & Yule, 1983).

Written grammar uses typical subject/predicate forms more often (e.g., "The cat is purring softly."), but it is rare to find topic/comment forms (e.g., "The game last night – Unbelievable!") (Willis, 2003). In spoken English speakers often state the topic and then comment on it (e.g., "Remember that cheese I bought – I don't like it."), yet it is rare to find this type of grammar in textbooks, even though it is often used when speaking (Willis, 2003). There are many differences grammatically between written and spoken language, and both are valid for usage in language learning classrooms. In addition to specific grammar differences, spoken grammar has interactive qualities that separate it from the written form.

2.1.1 Spoken Grammar is Interactive

There are several features of spoken language that occur less frequently or are rarely found in written grammar. Speaking tends to be additive (Willis, 2003), as utterances in casual speech often add on to or build upon what someone previously said. When telling someone a story, speakers often build the narrative as they go and give details as they become important. This also helps the listener remember details about the story as it continues (e.g., "So, my cousin, the one you met, remember? At that festival we went to? Yeah, anyway, she's getting married."). Speakers also utilize orienting moves (McCarthy & Carter, 1995) where they establish common ground with the person they are talking to (e.g., "The one you met, remember?").

Similarly, speakers tend to put the topic at the beginning of a sentence when speaking (McCarthy & Carter, 1995) (e.g., "My mum, her friend, well, her friend's sister's daughter, got into Harvard"). In written form this may look unorganized and could possibly be difficult to comprehend, as if it is a list of people and not showing the relationship between each. Spoken grammar uses less complex noun phrases (Willis, 2003: 193). Writers are more likely to write something like, "My mother has a friend whose sister's daughter got into Harvard".

Spoken grammar often sounds repetitive (Willis, 2003), which makes it easier for the listener to grasp. Speakers often refine what they want to say as they continue speaking (Brown & Yule, 1983). Written grammar is often well thought-out and edited

to be succinct. If someone were to talk to a friend in a casual setting in an overly formal, concise way, the friend may have trouble comprehending everything being said (Brown & Yule, 1983), and the formal speaker may risk coming across as cold or unfriendly. Rather, spoken language tends to be as precise as needed depending on the situation (Willis, 2003).

Reported speech occurs more frequently in spoken grammar (McCarthy & Carter, 1995). Reporting verbs such as "tell" or "say" are more often found in spoken English, being used in simple past tense, but are often found in past continuous as well (e.g., "She was saying we should drive instead of taking the train"). McCarthy and Carter (1995) say this usage of "say" or "tell" using past continuous is not often found in grammar books, even though it is frequently used when speaking.

Spoken dialogue is often vague (Willis, 2003) and indirect, and requires interpretation on the part of the listener. Willis says the word "vague" is also misleading as speakers say what is necessary to be understood depending on the situation. Speakers may use words or phrases like "stuff", "kind of", or "thing" when they know what they want to say but cannot think of the word (Willis, 2003). The vocabulary of a language may have different connotations that cannot always be described in a dictionary (Littlemore, 2009). Conversations are often formulaic and routine (e.g., A: "Thank you so much!" B: "Anytime!"). There are clearly many differences in spoken and written grammar that should be addressed in communicative language teaching (CLT) classrooms. Yet, many dialogues found in CLT textbooks utilize formal written grammar forms. The next section will focus on the differences between written and spoken grammar in written dialogues as well as dialogues used in textbooks.

3   Spoken Dialogue Versus Written Dialogue

There are four types of spoken dialogue: casual conversation, narratives, service encounters, and "language-in-action" which is language used to perform tasks (McCarthy and Carter, 1995: 144). Speeches and lectures fall somewhere between spoken and written grammar (Willis, 2003), as they may be scripted or practiced for a formal purpose. To illustrate the "messiness" of spoken grammar, Table 1 contains a transcribed excerpt from a live stream recording of two American YouTubers (Safiya & Tyler, 2021) trying to use a popular cooking toy. This falls under a mix of casual conversation and "language-

Table 1: Excerpt of spoken dialogue compared to an interpretation using "written grammar"

	Transcription (Original Conversation)		Interpretation (Written Grammar)
1	T:	What now, what about the chee- what about the frosting Safiya?	T:	What should we do now? What should we do about the cheese? Sorry, I meant the frosting. Shall we start making the frosting, Safiya?
	S:	I know. We can make the frosting for the –	S:	Yes, we should. We can make frosting for one of the cakes, but I am not sure which one.
	P:	And spread it on – that one?	P:	You can make the frosting and then spread it on the layer of the cake that you have finished baking.
	S/T:	Yeah!	S/T:	Good idea!
	T:	Look at us.	T:	We are doing a good job.
2	S:	Um, we are running low on containers.	S:	We are running low on containers.
	T:	Um, no, we have one, no, two.	T:	We have one container. Oh, we have two containers.
	S:	We have two [T: We have two] containers left.	S:	I see. We have two containers left.
	S:	But do we have any spoons left?	S:	Do we have any spoons?
	S:	Oh, we have one here.	S:	Here is a spoon.
	T:	We have a spoon.	T:	You found a spoon.
	S:	*A* spoon.	S:	There is only one spoon.
	T:	We can double up the spoons for the frostings though.	T:	We can use the spoon to stir more than one frosting.
	S:	That's true.	S:	That's a good point.
	T:	Yeah! Come on!	T:	Yes, I think that would be fine. Let us continue!
3	S:	Alright, so we have to make now… vanilla frosting and pink frosting.	S:	Next, we must make vanilla and pink frosting.
	T:	OK.	T:	OK.
	S:	Alright. This is pink frosting. Vanilla frosting mix for Tyler.	S:	I will make the pink frosting. Please make the vanilla frosting, Tyler.
	T:	OK, so is one of them, uh, so what, what flavor is the pink frosting?	T:	OK. I think there are a few flavors. What flavor is the pink frosting?
	S:	So, I think, based off the picture, the pink frosting goes in the middle and the white frosting goes on top.	S:	I am not sure. Based on the picture on the box, the pink frosting goes in the middle of the two layers of cake and the white frosting is to be put on top of the cake.
	T:	Cool.	T:	I understand.
	S:	Yeah…	S:	I believe that is what we are supposed to do. I just finished stirring up the white frosting. Have a look.
	T:	Nice. Look at that.	T:	It looks great.
	S:	Wow.	S:	I think so, too.

in-action". To the right of the transcription is an interpretation of the spoken version using "written grammar" rules, but I have left some repetition in for comparison purposes, as well as divided this continuous conversation into three sections for clarity.

Because it is a transcription of two people talking (see Table 1), the reader does not have the benefit of viewing the video and understanding what is going on based on the situational context, so some of the actions must be explained in the written grammar interpretation. This may be one reason why written dialogues in communicative textbooks seem "clunky" and unnatural (see section 3.1), because they must be easily understood contextually, while also sounding natural.

There are a lot of conversational elements that are hard to duplicate in textbooks in the conversation shown in Table 1. There are short interactions in the original version (e.g., "OK.", "Alright."). The speakers give themselves time to think by saying "uh" or "um", but also by elongating a sound in a word, such as when "S" says, "We can make the frosting for the –". Here she holds the long /i/ sound for a second until the next person can help her finish her thought. Another way they give themselves time to think is by saying the same word twice or changing how they want to express what they want to say mid-sentence (e.g., "So what, what flavor…?"). Giving language learners the same patience and tools to show that they are thinking or listening during conversations could be beneficial during activities where spoken output is the focus.

There is a lot of repetition, with the two people repeating or confirming what the other has said. "Now", "OK", or "alright" is often used to move on to the next topic or thought. In the Table 1 conversation you can see an instance of overlapping (e.g., "We have two."). Textbooks are generally unable to duplicate our natural speaking tendency towards overlapping and turn-taking (McCarthy, 1991). It may be hard to duplicate these kinds of conversational attributes in the classroom without the assistance of videos and other kinds of realia to demonstrate authentic interactions.

3.1. Spoken Dialogue in Communicative Textbooks

The written grammar interpretation in Table 1 is reminiscent of conversations in many communicative textbooks. Written and spoken dialogues in textbooks often aim to elicit and practice a specific grammar point, but they can feel stilted and unnatural. Table 2 has an excerpt from a textbook called *Smart Choice 2* (2016) used in some high schools in Japan. In the most recent edition of this textbook series (2020), this dialogue has been

changed slightly, but this was a memorable dialogue to exemplify the points made in this paper. The aim of the lesson where this dialogue was featured was learning movie and music genre vocabulary, and describing movies and music by expressing likes and dislikes.

Table 2: Example textbook dialogue from Smart Choice 2 (2016)

Anita:	What's that noise?
Kurt:	I'm watching a horror movie.
Anita:	Oh, I can't stand those movies!
Kurt:	Why? They're fun. And they're really exciting!
Anita:	I disagree. I think they're terrible.
Kurt:	So, what kinds of movies do you like?
Anita:	Well, I'm not really a movie fan. I prefer listening to music.
Kurt:	What kind of music?
Anita:	I love classical music. I think it's very relaxing.
Kurt:	I don't. I think it's boring.

There are various reasons why this conversation sounds unnatural. This conversation has an unnatural flow, describing horror movies with two similar adjectives (i.e., "fun" and "really exciting"). It also has an odd opposing association between movies and music (e.g., "I'm not really a movie fan. I prefer listening to music."). Most of the sentences are complete sentences, making it sound stiff and unfriendly. This dialogue can be a useful tool to point out how forms are used but students may benefit from additional exposure to real conversations and tasks where they can use the new vocabulary and forms.

Students may notice the unnaturalness of typical textbook dialogues, especially if they are returnees or have had chances to interact with speakers of the language they are learning, or learners who enjoy music of other types of media that use the language being studied. Students are more exposed than ever to content from other countries through social networks and streaming services and they sometimes have questions about or want to test out new words and phrases they have learned. Students are interested in real spoken language, and as teachers we should take advantage of this interest. This means we should rethink how we teach grammar, instead of relying on the written form.

4   Teaching Spoken Grammar

There may not be enough data or resources to support teaching explicit spoken grammar (McCarthy, 2017: video). One factor is that the way people speak varies widely from place to place, and therefore it is impossible to record all the ways we speak and the words we use. Written language is much easier to quantify and record (McCarthy & Carter, 1995), which may be a reason why written grammar forms are taught most often. Trying to rectify the differences between the way we speak and the way we write in a way that does not confuse students may not be straightforward.

One issue with teaching written grammar in lessons with a communicative aim is highlighting forms that are more often found in written grammar as if they are no different from the spoken variant. In a study by Fuyuno (2013), spoken data was analyzed and compared to grammar found in secondary English textbooks in Japan, specifically prepositions, *to*-infinitives, *that* clauses, and full-stops (e.g., "*I was so surprised*, and then I…). Her results showed that even though English education in Japan aims to be more communicative (MEXT, 2013), many textbooks still lean more towards written grammar forms. Teaching only the written form, which tends to be more formal and "complete", may discourage learners, because they may feel they have to speak with long, complete sentences, when this is not necessarily how fluent speakers speak, nor is it normal to expect perfect complete sentences from beginners. Exposure to how people speak naturally is beneficial for this reason.

The way people interact often depends on their culture and language, and this will affect instruction. For example, teachers teaching in mostly monolingual settings should be aware of differences between the first and second language, from typical usage to how people interact in their first language. For example, native Japanese speakers tend to pause longer than English speakers (McCarthy, 1991). "Native" speakers of any language tend to speak less "perfectly" (Brown and Yule, 1983). When fluent speakers speak casually, there is often less structure, and they sometimes make mistakes while speaking as they stumble over words trying to think of what to say. Teaching only written grammar and teaching students to speak like they write ignores the way people communicate in real life, as if the way people speak is somehow "wrong" (McCarthy & Carter, 1995: 142).

Language is not neutral, and the way we see the world will affect the way we describe things (Littlemore, 2009). A syllabus that gives students chances to make

meaning of what they are learning would be beneficial, and teachers should be aware of the process involved in learning new forms. Odlin (1994) cites Coppetiers (1987) when suggesting that learners who can use another language successfully require ample time to master difficult points. He also suggests that students who study language from an instructor can "minimalize fossilization" compared to learners who learn on their own without instruction. Therefore, proper instruction is still one of the best ways to improve language skills, including speaking.

Didactic or applied grammar (spoken), as opposed to linguistic (written) grammar, would be beneficial in communicative classrooms. There have been many studies about which "grammar" should be taught (Römer, 2005). Approaches to teaching grammar should be based on the frequency certain forms are found within a corpus of the language to help with the selection of language items (Römer, 2005). This selection could help determine the refinement of current teaching methods and approaches and how spoken grammar should be taught to students.

4.1. Implementing CLT Instruction

Sakui (2004) conducted a study interviewing Japanese teachers of English about the difficulties of implementing communicative language lessons as recommended by the Ministry of Education. The result of her study concluded that more training is needed for teachers, as putting communicative language teaching into practice presents some challenges. She found that English classrooms still mostly focus on form, and communicative activities are only a small portion of the lessons for most of the teachers she interviewed. In theory, communicative language teaching has a lot of merit, but in practice, it can be hard for teachers to manage their classes or change their teaching style. Teachers also must deal with the pressure of exams, as ultimately the goal of most junior high and high schools is to pass entrance exams, where the need for more "natural" sounding spoken English is not as important (Guest, 2000). Even spoken components of these tests, such as EIKEN (a widely used English testing program in Japan), use and expect formal written grammar usage (based on personal experience).

Willis (2003) proposed that people learn in stages: recognition, system building, exploration, and rehearsal. Students need to recognize what needs to be learnt, and with the help of teachers, build a system to understand new concepts and assimilate them with prior knowledge (Willis, 2003). To build systems, teachers should combine focusing on

form, focusing on meaning, and providing opportunities to use the language (Brown & Nation, 1997). Activities that allow students to explore making meaning on their own and with others will result in students remembering what they have learned more easily (Willis, 2007). We can recreate "spontaneous" interactions in the classroom by creating activities centered around topics of discussion that are interesting and creating tasks that allow for this spontaneity.

4.2. How Much Spoken Grammar Instruction Is Needed?

The extent to which it is appropriate to teach spoken grammar will depend on the objectives of the course. An understanding of how spoken and written grammar looks and sounds is important, especially when the goal is communicative (McCarthy, 1991). Communicative courses which aim to improve speaking would benefit from highlighting and presenting authentic examples of spoken grammar. It would also depend on the level, age, and motivation of the students. Input to younger learners or beginners should be simpler so as not to overwhelm them (Willis, 2007), but teachers can find content that suits their ages and abilities.

When we teach spoken language, we should consider the following factors: our students' abilities, the familiarity of the activities we give, the ease and interest of the topics we discuss, and how to give examples of spoken grammar (McCarthy, 2017). Using approaches like task-based teaching to produce spoken language naturally may be effective as learners develop their own way of making themselves understood by completing tasks while using what they are intended to be learning. Task-based learning is one way to rectify teaching written and spoken grammar.

McCarthy and Carter (1995: 217) present an "Illustration-Interaction-Induction" process to examine spoken language. "Illustration" is where students can examine real spoken data. "Interaction" is where students are given chances to negotiate the meaning of the data through tasks, class discussions, and observations. "Induction" is where students are given chances to use and internalize what they have learned. Task-based learning (TBL) allows students to use language they have already learned as they progress through the task cycles. Giving them authentic examples of spoken language and chances to use what they are learning is the most effective way for learners to retain what they are learning.

4.3. Appropriate Circumstances for the Teaching of Spoken Grammar

The circumstances in which it is appropriate to teach spoken grammar will depend on the aims of the students and their levels. Learners are often "penalized" for using grammar that could be considered normal spoken grammar (Ranta, 2009). Japanese learners of English often respond in complete sentences based on written grammar rules (Guest, 1998). If spoken grammar is not taught, students risk coming across as possibly rude or standoffish. For example, if they wanted to speak to someone, they may say, "I want to talk to you." Even though this is easy to understand, this could come across as demanding or rude to a fluent speaker (Guest, 1998).

Overall, grammar instruction is likely more effective in classrooms where learners are exposed to authentic samples of language, and where students are not assumed to have learned a form just because it has been drilled. Spoken language is not an imitation of written language, therefore grammar patterns from both should be acknowledged (McCarthy, 1998). Students need opportunities to use language they have already acquired and develop their own understanding, and over time encounter the target language repeatedly (Nunan, 2001). This is an ideal learning environment to acquire spoken language forms.

5　Conclusion

Understanding the differences between spoken and written grammar will greatly influence how we view the language we are teaching and how we teach it. Whether spoken grammar should be taught will depend on the teacher and on the level and interest of students. It would benefit communicative teaching environment to introduce realia and real situations of communication and get students to notice differences and point out said differences. It would also benefit students and teachers to recognize that when we speak, it will never sound as "tidy" as when we write, and that the written form and spoken form of any language will have marked differences. We should avoid discouraging students by allowing them to speak in short sentences or utterances, as this is how we naturally speak. We should also encourage them to speak even if they make mistakes, as this is part of how we process language and begin to understand it more deeply. We can make corrections in a positive manner.

Textbooks have limits and may not always contain dialogues that represent natural

spoken grammar forms, as the aim may be to emphasize a grammar point or show an example of the grammar in use. If the goal of the lesson or course is improving speaking and listening ability, it may be necessary for instructors to supplement videos, songs, or other authentic language sources. Giving learners the opportunity to communicate using what they know without the expectation that they speak using scripted written grammar forms can help them develop communicative confidence.

As teachers, we cannot control what students learn from our lessons, but we can create an environment where they are exposed to real language use and can learn more efficiently than they would on their own. We can use effective teaching methods and approaches to help students notice and understand new concepts. If the aim of a syllabus is to improve speaking, then it is vital to expose students to the way speakers of the language speak and give them ample opportunities to use the language to complete speaking tasks.

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