Compatible bedfellows: Enriching grammar pedagogical tasks with cognitive linguistics to teach present simple vs. progressive

Mojtaba Maghsoudi* ⓘD
Department of English Language Teaching, Farhangian University, Tehran, Iran
maghsudi@cfu.ac.ir

Abolfazl Khodamoradi ⓘD
Department of English Language Teaching, Farhangian University, Tehran, Iran
khodamoradi@cfu.ac.ir

Abstract
While many English language learning textbooks provide exercises on the difference between present simple and present progressive tenses, they often lack meticulous explanations regarding their meaning and contextual usage. Having been inspired by cognitive linguistic studies on English present tense and the theory of Cognitive Grammar, an empirical study was devised to incorporate the elements of cognitive linguistics analysis of English present progressive tense into EFL grammar teaching material. This quasi-experimental study included 53 adult EFL learners being homogenized in terms of their English proficiency based on their scores on Quick Oxford Placement Test, and randomly assigned to three groups. The course of instruction lasted for three weeks during which the groups met 6 times. The cognitive group ($N = 18$) received cognitive linguistic explanations followed by examples indicating inherited epistemic contingency in English present progressive tense (including, current ongoingness, historical present progressive, future present progressive, temporary validity, duration, iteration, repetition, and modality) and structural construal indicated by present simple. The task-based group ($N = 16$) received conscious-raising tasks lacking cognitive linguistic explanations. The control group ($N = 19$) did not receive any explicit instruction. Pretest and posttest scores were used to measure the effectiveness of the types of instruction. The results of paired samples t-test and one-way ANOVA revealed that the cognitive group outperformed the task-based group and the control group showing a higher level of construing usage context of present simple and present progressive tense.
Keywords: Cognitive Linguistics, Grammar Teaching, Present Progressive, Present Simple, Task-Based Instruction

1- Introduction

In recent decades, usage-based approaches to English language teaching (ELT), especially the ones employing the cognitive linguistic theory, have been increasingly acknowledged by researchers in this field (Littlemore, 2023). According to cognitive linguistics (CLs), language consists of form-meaning combinations known as 'symbolic units'. In this view, morphology and syntax are not separate from vocabulary; instead, all language units convey meaning (Achard & Niemeier, 2008). Examining the meaning of symbolic units is akin to understanding conceptualization. The ways in which a given event or concept is conceptualized, and hence its message conveyed, are not objective and change based upon the choice of focus, background knowledge on the part of the speaker, and the perspective of the listener (Hijazo-Gascón & Llopis-García, 2019). Therefore, to understand what a language expression means, the standard options, the context of speech, and the schemata it activates need to be considered.

The CL perspective on language allows for the identification of the underlying reasons for certain morphological, grammatical, or syntactic patterns (Littlemore & Juchem-Grundmann, 2010). By incorporating judiciously selected and modified CL concepts into second language (L2) instruction, educators can help L2 learners gain insight into a native

---

speaker's viewpoint and better understand the connections between form and meaning (Tyler et al., 2010). The foundational conceptual aspects of CL make it a promising candidate for offering a comprehensive framework that can effectively support L2 teaching.

Several researchers (e.g., Achard, 2018; Csábi, 2004) have utilized CL to enhance English instruction. Such an approach has been efficaciously employed in teaching two-word and three-word phrasal verbs, metaphorical/idiomatic language, and grammar (including prepositions, tense, and aspect). However, while there is qualitative support for integrating CL into ELT, the body of quantitative and (quasi)experimental research at hand is insufficient and does not deliver robust empirical evidence of the benefits associated with CL approaches. Some studies lacked rigorous research designs or statistical analyses necessary for generalizability.

Moreover, there exists a scarcity of research on the way through which CL be integrated with L2 instruction and best instructional practices can be pedagogically established in ELT (Littlemore, 2023). While some studies have explored combining CL with pedagogical methods such as the Natural Approach or Total Physical Response (TPR), challenges remain in applying these approaches universally across all language-teaching contexts. As far as teaching figurative language is concerned, the success of CL has been shown to be promising, but further research is needed to address learner recognition and retention of new structures, as well as individual differences among learners such as learning styles, motivation, and proficiency.

Overall, while CL holds potential advantages for L2 instruction, its generalizability remains limited, and additional research is required to validate and potentially refine the perceived benefits identified thus far. This study intended to weigh the significance of CL for English grammar teaching by focusing on the above-mentioned gaps as much as possible. It dealt with the effectiveness of putting into operation a CL analysis of English present simple tense and present continuous tense to EFL grammar instruction, and harnessed a quasi-experimental design to apply CL-oriented approach in association with task-based instruction. The results of this study would contribute to practical teaching courses for both would-be and practicing English teachers so that they can extend this innovative view to grammar instruction to other grammatical points covered in their classes. Also, material developers are expected to benefit from the results and renovate the forthcoming material via merging task-based instruction with CL-oriented instruction. It is worth mentioning that the focus on simple present and present continuous forms was predicated on two points; first, the lack of research on these two tenses in the literature on employing cognitive principles in ELT courses; and second, these tenses have been reportedly been obstinate to be picked up by EFL learners.

2- Research Background

Grammar instruction plays a vital role in language education, giving learners with the auxiliary system vital for successful communication. Understanding grammar can enhance students' receptive and productive skills. It can also improve their critical thinking skills. Various instructional approaches, including explicit teaching and integrated techniques within context, can optimize grammar learning. Recent trends emphasize the importance of communicative competence, suggesting that grammar instruction should be contextualized and interactive, and allowing students to apply grammatical concepts in real-life situations.

2-1- Approaches to Grammar Instruction

CL theory has evinced to be effectively fused into educational settings via explicit instructional methods, as supported by empirical research findings (Littlemore, 2023). Central to this integration are core principles such as focus on form, noticing, and consciousness-raising, which emphasize the critical role of facilitating learners' understanding and appreciation of the underlying semantic motivations driving the usage of target language forms (Holme, 2012). Particularly noteworthy is the pivotal function of focus on form and consciousness-raising in assisting learners in discerning linguistic cues, especially in contexts involving intricate, polysemous, or potentially ambiguous linguistic structures. Advocates of CL theory advocate for a synergistic approach that combines CL principles with a targeted focus on form.

Nevertheless, the translational application of these innovative theoretical insights into pedagogical practice necessitates the development of pragmatic instructional strategies that render these concepts accessible to learners (Ellis, 2003). Task-based language teaching (TBLT) emerges as a pedagogical agenda that aligns harmoniously with the foundational tenets of CL theory, offering a conducive platform for further collaborative exploration. Over the past two decades, TBLT has garnered increasing prominence, representing an evolution from traditional communicative language teaching towards an instructional paradigm that prioritizes meaning-oriented and learner-centered approaches (Dolgova Jacobsen, 2018).

Within this instructional framework, tasks are construed as structured workplans that task learners with processing language in a pragmatic manner to achieve predefined outcomes, thereby directing their attention towards prioritizing meaning while leveraging their own linguistic resources, albeit influenced by the task's design in shaping their language form choices (Dolgova Jacobsen, 2018). Tasks afford learners the opportunity to engage in language production within simulated or authentic language acquisition contexts. While communication and meaning retention serve as central pillars in TBLT, scholarly consensus underscores the indispensable role of integrating form-focused instruction tailored to learners' developmental needs in fostering enhanced second language acquisition outcomes.

The utilization of task-based methodology alongside CL concepts has been explicitly discussed in Cadierno's (2008)

work. Additionally, Cadierno and Robinson (2009) employed pedagogical tasks to assess how manipulating cognitive complexity can aid in the formation of second language construal patterns. Moder (2010) utilized specific pedagogical tasks, informed by previous corpus-based research, to instruct learners on the usage patterns of English 'like' constructions. Moreover, Tyler (2012) detailed a series of experiments at Georgetown University that employed various forms of pedagogical tasks to impart CL insights to students.

Despite the promising prospects of this approach, the inadequate number of studies currently available averts us from reaching comprehensive verdict regarding the most effective way to integrate task-based instruction with CL principles. This research endeavor seeks to bridge the existing gap by merging CLs into TBLT.

2-2- The Value of Conscious-raising in Grammar Instruction

The educational setting of this study aligns more closely with task-supported approach instead of a "task-based" approach. In such an environment, as outlined by Ellis (2003), tasks serve as an integral component of the curriculum design, offering learners semi-authentic opportunities to practice specific language structures (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). Given the constraints within an ELT program, a complete restructuring of the curriculum to adopt a fully TBLT method was not feasible. Therefore, integrating tasks as a supportive mechanism rather than the central instructional focus was deemed more pragmatic within the existing pedagogical framework.

Task-supported approach, in this study, took the procedure of tasks which mainly relied on consciousness-raising. Defined by Eckerth (2008a, p. 92) as "form-focused tasks," consciousness-raising tasks are utilized as pedagogical tools to help or encourage learners' to pat attention towards definite target language forms once they engage in language communication. The primary objective of raising learners' consciousness in TBLT is to enable learners to discover designated features of the target language within a defined context as they adhere to grammar task requirements.

The efficacy of tasks which rely on consciousness-raising has been evidenced across various L2 learning settings, as reported by De la Fuente (2006), Eckerth (2008a, 2008b), and Fotos (1994). For instance, Fotos (1994) investigated the impact of consciousness-raising grammar tasks on L2 proficiency development, in word order, L2 acquisition, demonstrating their superior effectiveness compared to formal instruction. Similarly, De la Fuente (2006) reporting his study on consciousness-raising task for vocabulary enhancement revealed that participants in the TBLT group exhibited significantly improved performance on delayed L2 vocabulary assessments in contrast to those in traditional instruction groups, indicating enduring positive effects associated with consciousness-raising tasks. Eckerth (2008a) underscored the importance of learners' scaffolding skills for desired accomplishment of a consciousness-raising task. Additionally, Eckerth's (2008b) exploration of the impacts of dialogic tasks upon certain learning outcomes and task completion processes indicated substantial immediate and long-term gains through task engagement. As well, consciousness-raising task is believed to be linked to heightened linguistic complexity with regard to production and perception.

These results lend credence to the utility of consciousness-raising task use as a strategy for facilitating targeted form-focused instruction in L2 educational settings, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of CL principles within authentic language usage environments.

2-3- Cognitive Linguistic Approach to Grammar Instruction

While traditional approaches to teaching grammar often focus on rote memorization of rules and structures, with limited emphasis on how these elements function within the broader context of language use, the CL approach to grammar instruction offers a more holistic and dynamic perspective, aligning with current research in cognitive psychology and linguistics. The CL approach posits that language is inherently linked to cognitive processes, and therefore, grammar instruction should reflect this interconnectedness by emphasizing the cognitive mechanisms underlying language acquisition (Takimoto, 2020). Central to this approach is the idea that language structures emerge from cognitive processes such as categorization, conceptualization, and metaphorical reasoning (Diessel, 2019). Rather than viewing grammar as a set of rigid rules, the CL approach sees grammar as a dynamic system that reflects the cognitive and conceptual organization of language users (Diessel, 2023).

One key aspect of the CL approach to grammar instruction is its focus on usage-based learning. According to this perspective, learners acquire grammar through exposure to authentic language use in meaningful contexts (Littelmore, 2023). By engaging in communicative activities and analyzing real-world texts, learners develop an intuitive understanding of how grammar functions in different linguistic contexts (van Rijt & Coppen,, 2021). This approach encourages active engagement with language and promotes the internalization of grammatical structures through repeated exposure and usage (Doughty & Long, 2003).

Furthermore, the CL approach emphasizes the importance of conceptual metaphor theory in understanding grammar and language usage (van Rijt & Coppen,, 2021). According to this theory, abstract concepts are often understood and expressed through metaphorical mappings onto more concrete domains (Takimoto, 2020). For example, the metaphorical concept of "time as space" underlies expressions such as "looking forward to the future" or "reflecting back on the past." By exploring these metaphorical mappings, learners gain insight into the underlying conceptual structures that shape language use and grammar (Littlemore, 2023).

Another key principle of the CL approach is its focus on construction grammar, which posits that grammar is best understood as a network of form-meaning pairings, or constructions (van Rijt & Coppen,, 2021). Constructions represent abstract templates that encapsulate patterns of meaning and usage across different linguistic contexts (Littlemmore, 2023). By teaching grammar in terms of constructions rather than isolated rules, instructors help learners develop a more

flexible and nuanced understanding of how grammar operates in natural language use (Diessel, 2019, 2023).

In conclusion, the cognitive linguistic approach to grammar instruction offers a comprehensive and theoretically grounded framework for teaching grammar in language education. By emphasizing the cognitive processes underlying language acquisition, usage-based learning, conceptual metaphor theory, and construction grammar, this approach provides learners with the tools to develop a deep understanding of grammar and its role in communication. As language educators continue to explore innovative approaches to grammar instruction, the cognitive linguistic approach stands out as a promising avenue for fostering meaningful language learning experiences.

2-4- Cognitive Approach to Teaching Present Progressive

The approach adopted to teaching present progressive in this research was based on the cognitive linguistic analysis of the tense provided by De Wit and Brisaed (2014) who delved into a CL perspective on the semantics of the English present progressive tense. They scrutinized how this grammatical structure is utilized and interpreted within the framework of CL and explored the nuanced meanings conveyed by the present progressive tense beyond its traditional temporal implications, especially in terms of conceptualizing ongoing events, dynamicity, and immediacy in language usage. Through their study, they shed light on the cognitive mechanisms underlying the interpretation of the present progressive tense, emphasizing its role in construing events as unfolding in real-time. They highlight the interplay between grammatical structure, conceptualization, and communicative intent in shaping linguistic meaning.

Operationally, this study devised the principles emphasized in the previous section. It is noteworthy that not a single principle discussed above distinguishes CL-based approach to present progressive instruction from other methods like TBLT approach, but a balanced integration of these principles form a cohort instructional procedure.

To improve contextualized learning, rather than presenting the present progressive tense as an isolated grammar rule, it was introduced within meaningful contexts that resonate with learners' personal experiences. For example, real-life situations such as describing ongoing actions or events happening around them was used, like "She is reading a book." To promote usage-based learning, ample opportunities for students to encounter the present progressive tense in authentic language use were provided, especially through role-plays and storytelling based on a given scenario, such as a typical day at work. Conceptual metaphor theory was also introduced the concept of metaphorical mappings to help students understand the underlying conceptual structures behind the present progressive tense time, motion, and continuity. Moreover, meaning-centered approach was adopted to explore the semantic nuances of the present progressive tense beyond its temporal implications with a special focus on immediacy, ongoingness, and dynamicity. This was operationally achieved through contrasting sentences in present progressive with simple present tense to highlight the differences in meaning and usage. "She sings" (habitual action) vs. "She is singing" (action in progress).

3- Method

This study sought to inspect the overall effect of form-focus "task-supported" English teaching on learning present simple and present continuous tenses and the importance of incorporating CL principles into ELT approaches. The study posed the following research questions:

RQ$_1$: Does teaching present simple and present continuous tenses using form-focused conscious-raising tasks lead to the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms?

RQ$_2$: Does teaching present simple and present continuous tenses using form-focused conscious-raising tasks enriched with CL findings lead to the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms?

RQ$_3$: Is there a significant difference among the groups in terms of the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms?

3-1- Participants and Context of the Study

The required test scores were gathered in a prominent institute for ELT in Arak via convenience sampling. All the participants were adult EFL learners taking part in a pre-intermediate course covering Interchange 2 while participating in this research. It is worth mentioning that all of the learners taking part in the classes previously had already studied English in high schools and university prior to taking up the classes in the institute.

Three groups were involved in this research. They were labelled as the cognitive linguistic group (CLG), task-based group (TBG), and control group (CG) whose participants were selected from intact classes. The CLG was taught the target forms via facilitated presentations together with pedagogic tasks which were supported by CL clarifications. The TBG received target forms via traditional teacher clarification and pedagogic tasks without any CL explanations. The CG did not receive any explicit instruction on present simple and present continuous tenses and only took the tests. They included both male and female Iranian EFL adult learners in their twenties. In total, there were 53 participants, including 31 female and 22 male learners whose first language was Persian.

To make sure that disparities did not exist among the groups with regard to their baseline proficiency in English, a placement test, Quick Oxford Placement Test (QOPT), was conducted to homogenize the participants. In addition, their pretest scores were compared to warrant their homogeneity in terms of their knowledge of the targeted tenses. Table 1 depicts the details of the sample. Their proficiency, as measured via QOPT, fell in A2 range, in accordance with Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Those who gained score between 20 and 29 were admitted for the purpose of this research.

<div align="center">Table 1- The demographic details of the sample of this research</div>

	CLG	TBG	CG
Number	18	16	19
Age (Mean)	26.5 (SD = 3.6)	24 (SD = 4.7)	26 (SD = 4.2)
Gender			
Male	12	12	14
Female	6	4	5

3-2- Research Design

Considering the fact that the participants were non-randomly selected via convenient sampling, a quasi-experimental design was used to fulfill the goal of the study. Grammar instruction method was the independent variable of the study and learning English simple vs. continuous present tense was the dependent variable measured on an interval scale. The participants proficiency in English was the controlled variable in this research.

3-3 Materials

Each experimental group received explanations and pedagogical tasks during the six-session course. Each week (a pair of sessions) included a teacher presentation and two tasks per week. Each presentation lasted approximately 25 minutes, totaling 75 minutes of explicit instructional time divided equally among the sessions for both groups. While both groups focused on metalinguistic aspects of language, their approaches differed in terms of content specificity related to the tenses.

In the CLG, all class presentations were centered around a unified Cognitive Linguistics (CL) perspective on present simple and present continuous tenses, adapted from De Wit and Brisard (2014). The purpose was to convey CL concepts as simply as possible. They began by highlighting the meaning-centered and compositional aspects of language structures, guiding students on the mental steps required to use the tenses correctly. These steps were as follows:

1. Consider the background knowledge at hand.
2. Determine the contingency of the meaning to be conveyed via thinking about its epistemic aspect.
3. Select the appropriate tenses to make or complete the sentence
4. Verify the coherence of the sentence within the context.

The first presentation in the CLG offered a reference tool to assist participants in understanding the cognitive processes involved in constructing appropriate sentences. Although encouraged to use this tool during instruction and tasks, not all participants actively utilized it. The second presentation focused on exploring the meanings behind the target tenses and their applications in conveying diverse semantic structures. The third presentation aimed to demonstrate how these tenses are formed within specific contextual frameworks and how contextual cues can influence tense choices within each clause.

The cognitive presentations in the CLG highlighted the fundamental principles of tenses, stressing the importance of considering meaning and implications related to each grammatical form within its specific context of use. The participants were prompted to consider aspects such as tense consistency across sentences, narrative perspective alignment with the character, temporal markers like adverbs indicating referenced time, and suitability of forms within the discourse context.

The group receiving task support was presented with a conventional explanation of the English tenses based on their textbook (Top Notch 2B) by Saslow and Ascher (2015). In sessions 1 and 2, learners were introduced to the tenses along with their types as outlined by De Wit and Brisard (2014) detailed cataloging like current ongoingness, future present continuous, etc. In sessions 3 and 4, contrasting the tenses in accordance with the intended meaning was in focus. In sessions 5 and 6, learners practiced applying the tenses in a variety of contexts as prescribed by the practice tasks.

While TBG received a thorough explanation of the target tenses, they were not explicitly guided to delve deeply into the meanings conveyed by different categories of epistemic contingency. This exploration went beyond what was provided in the textbook and the contexts offered by the practice tasks.

Both experimental groups engaged in numerous pedagogic practice tasks, which aimed to complement the teacher's explanations. These tasks were designed to mimic real-life language usage scenarios as closely as possible. The primary objective was to enhance learners' awareness of tense usage. Successfully completing these tasks relied on a strong understanding and proper application of present simple and present continuous structures.

3-4- Instruments
3-4-1- Quick Oxford Placement Test (QOPT):

It is a standard test of English language proficiency developed by Oxford University Press to determine learners' English proficiency level. The basic purpose of applying this test was to enable the researcher to recognize the learners with the same levels of language proficiency (i.e., A2) based on their test scores. It encompasses sixty questions in two general sections as multiple-choice items and cloze passages. Moreover, this test was divided into three specific sections: reading, vocabulary, and grammar.

3-4-2- Tests of Present Simple and Present Continuous Tenses:

These grammar tests developed for the research aimed at assessing both explicit and implicit knowledge, covering both comprehension and production aspects of present simple and present continuous tenses. They were developed based on a single table of specifications and included 40 items which were divided into four sections: grammaticality judgment (pictures) (4 points), grammaticality judgment (sentences) (8 points), production (controlled) (20 points), and production (free) (8 points).

The production sections, consisting of gap-fill and picture description exercises, primarily targeted implicit knowledge, following Norris and Ortega (2000) and Ellis (2009). In contrast, the grammaticality judgment sections, inspired by Ellis (2004), Han and Ellis (1998), and Fotos (1994), along with other researchers, aimed to assess both explicit and implicit knowledge of English learners through grammaticality judgment tasks. Each test had a maximum score of 40. To ensure test validity, the researchers consulted two other ELT experts, Ph.D. holder who had several years of experiencing in teaching grammar courses. They approved the content validity of the tests. Additionally, to ensure the reliability of the tests, KR-21 indices of Form A (pretest), Form B (posttest), and Form C (delayed posttest) were calculated (see Table 2). What is more, to ensure that the tests functioned well as parallel forms, a Pearson correlation test was run to check parallel-form reliability of each pair of pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest during the pilot phase. Test items were piloted with a group of learners to not only remove or repair malfunctioning items but also confirm the reliability of the grammar tests. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2- Reliability of grammar tests

	Form A (Pretest)		Form B (Posttest)		Form C (Delated Posttest)	
	KR-21	r	KR-21	R	KR-21	R
Form A (Pretest)	.68			.73*		.77*
Form B (Posttest)			.74			.89**
Form C (Delated Posttest)					.80	

*. Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.05$ level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3-5- Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process spanned twelve sessions, following a one-hour session dedicated to QOPT administration and an extra forty minutes allocated for the pretest administration. Having been divided to the three group, the CLG, TBG, and CG, randomly, the intervention for the groups began and spanned three weeks. Subsequently, immediate and delayed post-tests were conducted in two subsequent weeks to assess any improvements that occurred during the intervention period. The learners had forty minutes to finish each test. Subsequently, the scores from the tests were used to answer the aforementioned research questions. As shown in the next section, a one-way ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses pertaining to each research question.

3-6- Data Analysis

The OPT scores and grammar test scores were inserted in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 26.0. Descriptive statistics together with the tests of normality, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk were run to make sure that the assumptions of parametric tests were met. Then, Pearson correlation test was run to check the reliability of the grammar test. Finally, one-way ANOVA as well as Tukey Post Hoc test were administered to test the hypotheses of the study.

4. Results

In this section, the research questions mentioned above are addressed one by one. The first research questions was:

RQ_1: Does teaching present simple and present continuous tenses using form-focused conscious-raising tasks lead to the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms?

Accordingly, the following null hypothesis was tested:

H_{01}: Teaching present simple and present continuous tenses using form-focused conscious-raising tasks does not lead to the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms.

In order to test the first null hypothesis of the study, the observed means of the scores collected on the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest from the TBG were compared. The results are shown below.

Table 3- The results of one-way ANOVA for TBG

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test			One-way ANOVA		
				F	df	p	F	Df	p
Pretest	16	16.87	1.96	.28	45	.75	117.35	45	.00
Posttest	16	28.37	2.41						
Delayed Posttest	16	25.62	2.24						

Based on the results tabulated in Table 3, it was argued that the first null hypothesis of the study was rejected ($F=$ 117.35, $p=$ .00 < .05) and that teaching present simple and present continuous tenses using form-focused conscious-raising tasks led to the EFL learners' significant improvement after the course. It is also illustrated in Figure 1.
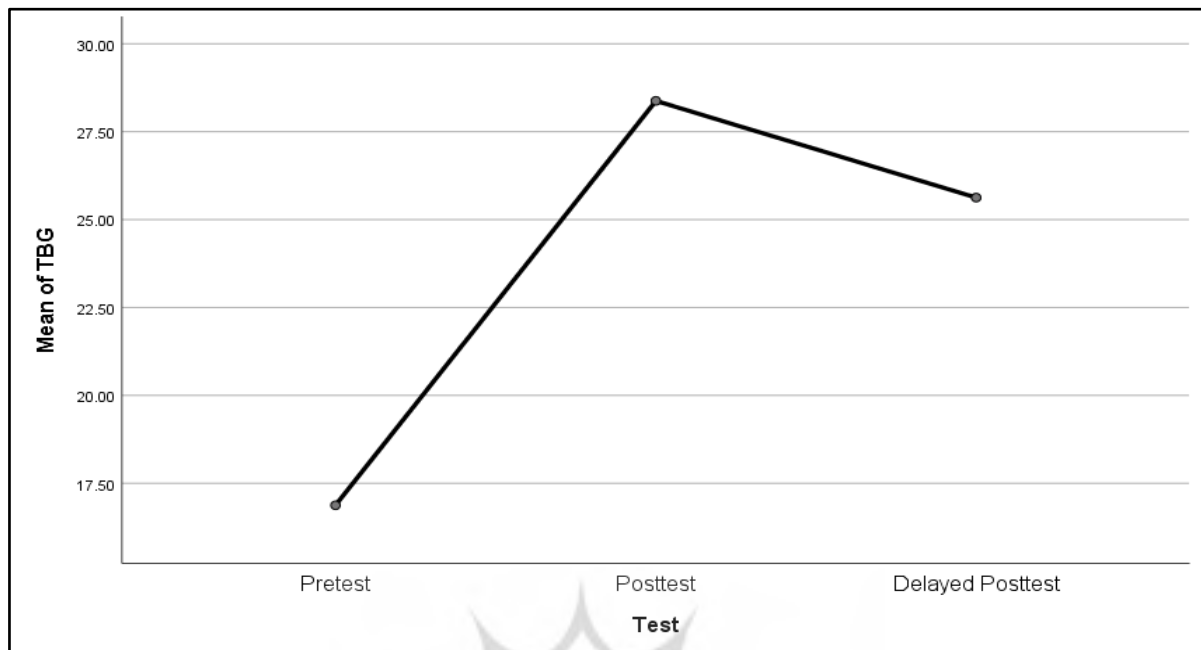

Figure 1- The observed pretest means for the TBG

Further analysis of the scores using Tukey post hoc test demonstrated that the learners in the TBG had their best performance on the immediate posttest which was significantly higher than both pretest and delayed posttest, as shown in Table 4. Moreover, the TBG learners' performance decreased significantly on the delated posttest in comparison to the posttest.

Table 4 - The results of tukey post hoc test for TBG

	Test	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
			1	**2**	**3**
Tukey HSD[a]	Pretest	16	16.87		
	Delayed Posttest	16		25.62	
	Posttest	16			28.37
	Sig.		1.00	1.00	1.00

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 16.00.

The second research question of the study was:

RQ_2: Does teaching present simple and present continuous tenses using form-focused conscious-raising tasks enriched with CL findings lead to the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms?

The following null hypothesis was formulated to answer this research question:

H_{02}: Teaching present simple and present continuous tenses using form-focused conscious-raising tasks enriched with CL findings does not lead to the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms.

The same procedure as the one used to test the first null hypothesis of the study was applied to compare the observed means of the scores collected on the pretest, posttest and delayed posttest from the CLG. The results are shown below.

Table 5- The Results of One-way ANOVA for CLG

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test			One-way ANOVA		
				F	*df*	*p*	*F*	*Df*	*p*
Pretest	18	16.88	1.843	.26	51	.77	293.45	51	.00
Posttest	18	31.00	2.00						
Delayed Posttest	18	29.27	1.87						

As tabulated in Table 4, it was concluded that the second null hypothesis of the study was rejected (F= 293.45, p= .00 < .05) and that teaching present simple and present continuous tenses using form-focused conscious-raising tasks enriched with CL findings led to the EFL learners' significant improvement after the course. It is also illustrated in Figure 2.
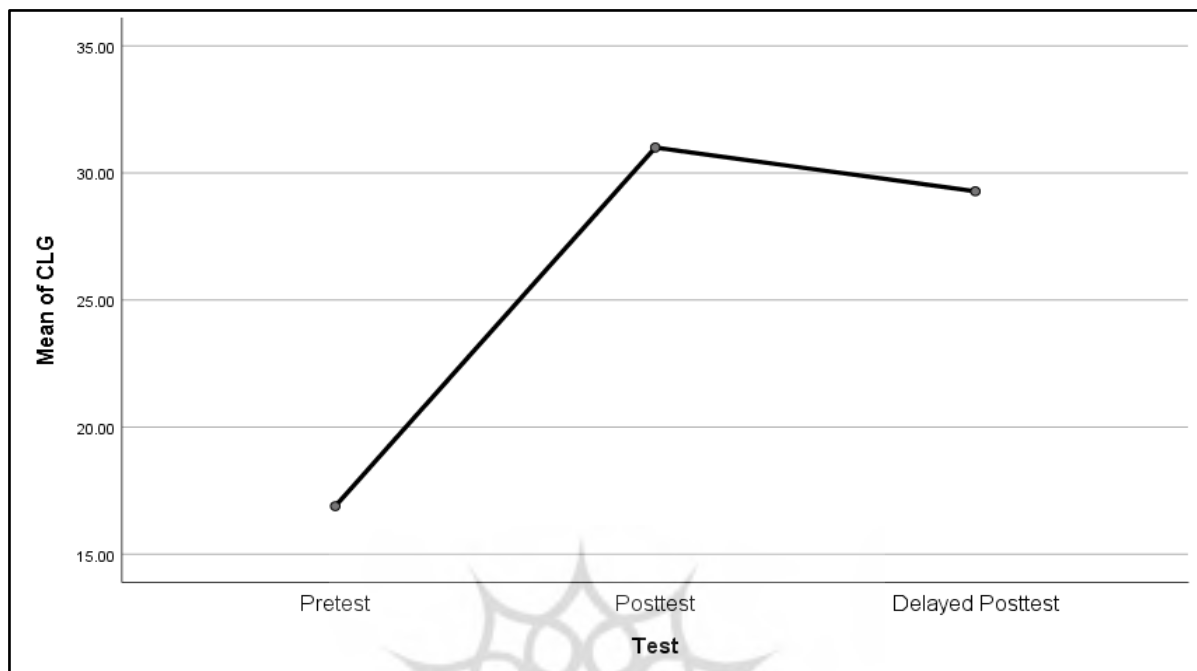

Figure 2- The observed pretest means for CLG

Tukey post hoc test was run and it was evinced that the learners in CLG had their best performance on the immediate posttest which was significantly higher than both pretest and delayed posttest, as shown in Table 6. What is more, CLG learners' performance plummeted significantly on the delated posttest in comparison to the posttest. The same trend was observed for TBG group.

Table 6- The Results of Tukey Post Hoc Test for CLG

	Test	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
			1	2	3
Tukey HSD[a]	Pretest	18	16.88		
	Delayed Posttest	18		29.27	
	Posttest	18			31.00
	Sig.		1.00	1.00	1.00

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 16.00.

The third research question of the study was:

RQ_3: Is there a significant difference among the groups in terms of the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms?

The following null hypothesis was formulated according to this research question:

H_{03}: There is not a significant difference among the groups in terms of the EFL learners' significant gains in using the targeted forms.

To test the third hypothesis, the insignificance of difference among the observed pretest means collected from the three groups was confirmed by running one-way ANOVA, the results of which are shown in Table 7.

Table 7- The results of one-way ANOVA for the pretest scores

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test			One-way ANOVA		
				F	df	p	F	df	p
CLG	18	16.88	1.84	.30	50	.74	.03	50	.96
TBG	16	16.87	1.96						
CG	19	16.73	1.86						

Based on what is reported in Table 7, it was confirmed that the three groups of the learners were similar before the three-week course in terms of their knowledge of present simple and present continuous tenses (*F*= .03, *p*= .96 > .05). In other words, any difference observed after the course could be attributed to the interventions delivered in the study, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8 - **The results of one-way ANOVA for the posttest and delayed posttest scores**

Test	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test			One-way ANOVA		
					F	df	P	F	df	p
Posttest	CLG	18	31.00	2.00	.69	50	.50	200.88	50	.00
	TBG	16	28.37	2.41						
	CG	19	17.42	2.14						
Delayed Posttest	CLG	18	29.27	1.87	.70	50	.49	185.01	50	.00
	TBG	16	25.62	2.24						
	CG	19	16.31	2.21						

What is shown in Table 8 confirmed the rejection of the third null hypothesis of the study on the posttest (*F*= 200.88, *p*= .00 < .05), and on the delayed posttest (*F*= 185.01, *p*= .00 < .05). That is, it was concluded that the observed differences among the groups in terms of the EFL learners were significant in using the targeted forms after the three-week course, as depicted in Figure 3.
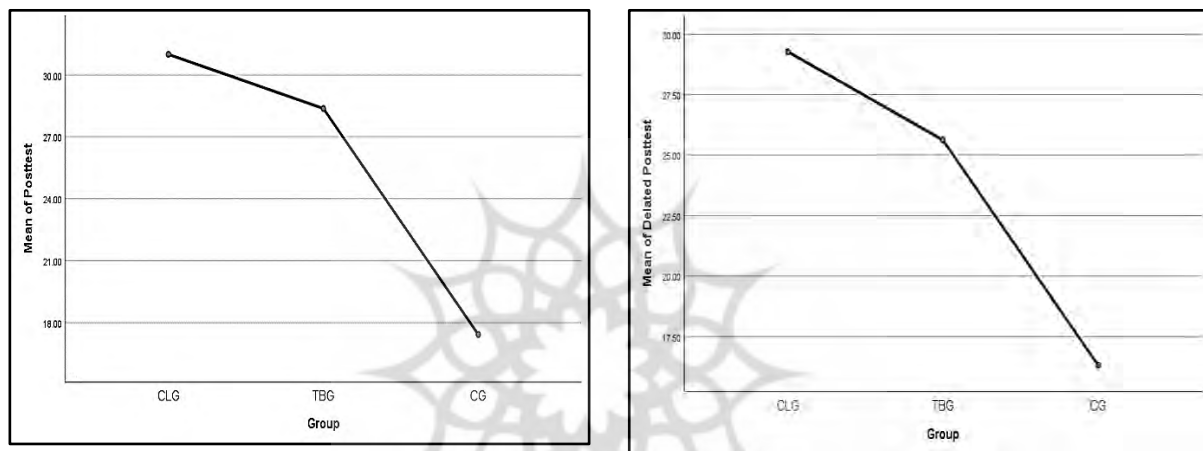

Figure 3 - **The observed means of the posttest and delayed posttest scores**

Further analysis of the posttest and delayed posttest scores are shown below in Table 9 which depicts the statistics of Tukey post hoc test run to contrast the groups' performance after the course. Accordingly, it was argued that the intervention delivered to the CLG made the most prominent contribution to the learners' acquisition of present continuous and present simple tenses since this group outperformed the other two. Moreover, the TBG outdid the control group which proved supporting grammar teaching with tasks could boost learners' gain after the course.

Table 9- **The results of tukey post hoc test for the posttest and delayed posttest scores**

	Group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
			1	2	3
Posttest	CG	19	17.42		
	TBG	16		28.37	
	CLG	18			31.00
Delayed Posttest	CG	19	16.31		
	TBG	16		25.62	
	CLG	18			29.27
	Sig.		1.00	1.00	1.00

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 17.576.
b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error
levels are not guaranteed.

5. Discussion

The results of the study reported in the previous section indicated that the CLG, similar to the TBG, made a significant progress after the course of three weeks as well as on the delayed posttest administered a week later. More importantly, the CLG outdid the TBG on both tests given after the course. This indicated the explanations which did not consist of CL terms, but classified into separate "usage tips" embracing simple description, examples and relevant context-based exercises were effective when supplemented the pedagogical grammar tasks delivered to the CLG. Additionally, the

study found that incorporating tasks and guiding learners through inductive instruction, where they encountered parallel examples contrasting simple and progressive present tenses, was also effective. It is noteworthy that TBG members participated in focused tasks, requiring them to identify the correct forms. In the concluding step, they engaged in a speaking task, describing their own activities using the appropriate forms of present simple or progressive.

The CLG was evidently delivered more meaningful and coherent presentations of present simple and present continuous tenses because they consistently based their approach on CL principles. This focus on CL insights and meaning, highlighting the importance of context and the learners' background knowledge in forming sentences containing present simple and present continuous tenses, contributed to the CLG's performance. The emphasis on meaning was also supported by the scores collected from the participants in the CLG the posttest and delayed posttest.

From a theoretical perspective, it is essential to highlight that the form-focused approach in the TBG group, although significant, was not as effective as combining it with form-focused instruction of target structures (tenses) and explanations inspired by communicative approaches (Dolgova Jacobsen, 2018; Ellis, 2003; Tyler et al., 2010), as explained in 2-1. Although consciousness-raising tasks contributed to improvements in both experimental groups, the teacher explanations inspired by CL description of present simple and present continuous tenses also played a role in facilitating learning for the learners in the CLG group. This echoes what was emphasized in previous research on using CL for grammar instruction (Diessel, 2019, 2023, Littlemore, 2023, Takimoto, 2020), as discussed in 2-3. Tasks seemed to help contextualize and consolidate the meaning provided through CL explanations, which likely enhanced CLG's performance on both post-test and delayed post-test. However, it is worth mentioning that this study did not involve a group that received CL explanations only without tasks, which could have provided further insights into the effectiveness of each approach separately. Consequently, the precise interaction between task implementation and CL explanation cannot be thoroughly discussed in this context. Nevertheless, the findings from the current study strongly support the combination of pedagogical grammar tasks with CL-informed instruction, as emphasized by Dolgova Jacobsen (2018). The better performance of the CLG group compared to the TBG group in this study suggests that CL approaches have the potential to elevate effective language teaching beyond its current state.

Moreover, both experimental groups, CLG and TBG, displayed progress in their posttest and delayed posttest scores. It is intriguing to note that, despite tasks being a shared instructional component for both groups from the pretest to the post-tests, the learners experienced substantial progress. This suggests that tasks played a significant role in the acquisition of the present simple and present continuous tenses compared to the control group. Such improvement can be attributed to the inherent features of pedagogical tasks; that is, since the learners in the experimental groups, both the CLG and TBG, in comparison with the CG, were involved in more complex tasks that required cognitive effort, included more fertile context for using their knowledge of tenses, and involved collaboration and production, they had more chances to indulge themselves in more authentic meaningful use of present simple and present continuous tenses. This line of argument was also adopted by Dolgova Jacobsen (2018) and Littlemore (2023). Although this study did not directly investigate the impact of task complexity on learning the target tenses among the learners, this finding aligns with what Robinson (2005, 2011) reported on influence of cognitive task complexity on L2 development.

6. Conclusion

This study sought to assess the feasibility of implementing CL theory in teaching present simple and present continuous tenses within a quasi-experimental framework, utilizing pedagogical tasks to support teaching. Both types of teaching methods – the one included CL explanations and the one supported by tasks - effectively facilitated the acquisition of the target tenses in English, as evidenced by the posttest and delayed posttest test scores. Consistent with the meta-analysis results by DeKeyser and Prieto Botana (2015) endorsing the efficacy of explicit instruction for intricate forms, the present study demonstrated the benefits of a focused emphasis on form in teaching present simple and present continuous tenses in educational settings. Exploring the interplay between instructional approaches inspired by CLs and the cultivation of metalinguistic awareness is crucial, as shown in this study by tying CL explanations with pedagogical tasks. The Roehr-Brackin' (2014) report indicates explicit grammar knowledge together with learners' utilization of metalinguistic awareness can significantly enhance L2 acquisition and usage. When tailored to the learners' proficiency levels, CLs provides a systematic agenda for nurturing metalinguistic awareness, a notable advantage of integrating CL principles into ELT.

Moreover, the integration of CL explanations and pedagogical grammar tasks resulted in more favorable outcomes than using tasks alone. In other words, this study supports complementing CL-oriented instruction with a well-defined pedagogical practice in SLA. Pedagogical tasks were found to be more effective in immersing learners in authentic language contexts. CL offers a more comprehensive language theory compared to traditional formal and structural language analysis approaches. As a usage-based language theory, CL aligns well with TBLT research found in related literature, emphasizing the importance of meaningful content in ELT through contextualized language use. Combining grammar instruction with tasks can be considered a complementary pedagogical approach for integrating CL theory into language classrooms. In light of the findings in the current study and related literature (e.g., Jacobsen, 2018), the researcher strongly agrees that focusing on a blend of usage-based patterns and meaning-supported grammar teaching has positive effects on participants' acquisition of target forms. Despite the fact that a pedagogical task enhances the teaching as mirrored in test scores, an isolated teaching technique alone may not improve learners' acquisition of a target form. A more insightful and precise language theory is imperative to augment the overall effectiveness of

language instruction.

The study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. Firstly, the sample size of 53 learners was relatively small, which may limit the study's generalizability. The findings might be influenced by the specific teaching context, such as the private language institute ELT program for adults and the cultural and educational backgrounds of the participants. To ascertain broader applicability, it is crucial to replicate the study with learners from diverse backgrounds, considering their prior educational experiences. Another limitation is the inability to account for individual differences among participants. As noted in prior research (e.g., Boers, 2013), collecting more data on learner variables like working memory and specific aptitudes could help understand the impact of potential intervening variables. By the same token, it can be argued that the differences between bilingual and monolingual learners and the language family their L1 may also be of significance. Moreover, the role of language transfer seen as a broader concept of cognitive transfer has to be researched with reference to pedagogical settings.

Moreover, the impact of participants' native language on their previous understanding of present continuous and present simple was not evaluated due to logistical constraints. Addressing this aspect would require further research. However, an error-analysis in learner texts showed that individuals from various language backgrounds face challenges in constructing grammatically correct sentences and using contextually appropriate expressions for conveying intended meanings. Furthermore, while the instructional intervention lasted three weeks, given the novelty CL methods in classroom teaching, assessing the enduring impacts of similar interventions is a must. Previous research recommendations (e.g., Holme 2012; Tyler 2012) have suggested exploring the specific outcomes of prolonged and methodical exposure to CL explanations within classroom environments. Teacher acceptance and adequate training are vital prerequisites for the successful replication of applied CL research initiatives. A notable constraint lies in the requirement that CL educational content is more likely to be effectively utilized by those who have had formally mentored to apply CL and acknowledge its significance in language pedagogy. The advocacy for CL to be established as a foundational element within English language teaching frameworks necessitates widespread recognition of CL within teacher training programs and a transition towards curricula that prioritize CL-focused language educator preparation. Until CL attains greater integration into language teaching methodologies, it remains premature to propose concrete use of CLs in ELT classes.

In summation, although this study advocates for the adaptation of CL within educational settings, the current research is not sufficient to establish the unquestionable superiority of CL-supported language teaching methods over traditional instructional practices. To advance our understanding, future research should explore how CL, combined with systematic teaching methods, can be effectively utilized to teach various grammatical structures with efficiency.

References

Achard, M. (2018). Teaching usage and concepts: Toward a cognitive pedagogical grammar. In A. Tyler, L. Huang & H. Jan (Ed.), *What is Applied Cognitive Linguistics?: Answers From Current SLA Research* (pp. 37-62). De Gruyter Mouton. doi: 10.1515/9783110572186-002

Achard, M., & Niemeier, S. (Eds.). (2008). *Cognitive linguistics, second language acquisition, and foreign language teaching*. Walter de Gruyter.

Boers, F. (2013). Cognitive Semantic ways of teaching figurative phrases. An assessment. In F. Gonza´lvez-Garc´ia, M. S. Pen˜a Cervel, & L. Pe´rez Herna´ndez (Eds). *Metaphor and Metonymy Revisited Beyond the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor.* John Benjamins.

Cadierno, T., & Robinson, P. (2009). Language typology, task complexity and the development of L2 lexicalization patterns for describing motion events. *Annual Review of Cognitive Linguistics 6*, 245–77. doi: 10.1075/arcl.7.10cad

Cadierno, T. (2008). Learning to talk about motion in a foreign language. In T. Cadierno (Ed.), *Handbook of cognitive linguistics and second language acquisition* (pp. 249-285). Routledge.

Csábi, S. (2004). A Cognitive Linguistic View of Polysemy in English and its Implications for Teaching. In M. Achard & S. Niemeier (Ed.), *Cognitive Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition, and Foreign Language Teaching* (pp. 233-256). De Gruyter Mouton. doi: 10.1515/9783110199857.233

De la Fuente, M. (2006). Classroom L2 vocabulary acquisition: Investigating the role of pedagogical tasks and form-focused instruction. *Language Teaching Research 10*, 263–95. doi: 10.1191/1362168806lr196oa

De Wit, A., & Brisaed, F. (2014). A Cognitive Grammar account of the semantics of the English present progressive. *Journal of Linguistics, 50*(1), 49–90. doi:10.1017/S0022226713000169

DeKeyser, R., & Prieto Botana, G. (2015). The effectiveness of processing instruction in L2 grammar acquisition: A narrative review. *Applied Linguistics 36*(3), 290–305. doi: 10.1093/applin/amu071

Diessel, H. (2019). *The grammar network*. Cambridge University Press.

Diessel, H. (2023). *The constructicon: Taxonomies and networks*. Cambridge University Press.

Dolgova Jacobsen, N. (2018). The best of both worlds: Combining cognitive linguistics and pedagogic tasks to teach English conditionals. *Applied Linguistics, 39*(5), 668-693. doi: 10.1093/applin/amw030

Doughty, C., & Long, M. H. (2003). Optimal psycholinguistic environments for distance foreign language learning. *Language Learning & Technology, 7*(3), 50-80.

Eckerth, J. (2008a). Investigating consciousness raising tasks: Pedagogically-targeted and nontargeted learning gains. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics 18*, 119–45. doi: 10.1111/j.1473-4192.2008.00188.x

Eckerth, J. (2008b). Task-based learner-learner interaction. In J. Eckerth & S. Siekmann (Eds). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching: Theoretical, Methodological, and Pedagogical Perspectives.* Peter Lang.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (2004). The definition and measurement of L2 explicit knowledge. *Language Learning 54*, 227–75. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9922.2004.00255.x

Ellis, R. (2009). Task-based language teaching: Sorting out the misunderstandings. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics 19*, 222–46. doi: 10.1111/j.1473-4192.2009.00231.x

Fotos, S. (1994). Integrating grammar instruction and communicative language use through grammar consciousness-raising tasks. T*ESOL Quarterly 28,* 323–351. doi: 10.2307/3587436

Han, Y., & Ellis, R. (1998). Implicit knowledge, explicit knowledge and general language proficiency. *Language Teaching Research 2*, 1–23. doi: 10.1177/136216889800200102

Hijazo-Gascón, A., & Llopis-García, R. (2019). Applied cognitive linguistics and foreign language learning. Introduction to the special issue. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 57*(1), 1-20. doi: 10.1515/iral-2018-2004

Holme, R. (2012). Cognitive linguistics and the second language classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, *46*(1), 6–29.

Langacker, R. W. (1987). *Foundations of cognitive gramma: Descriptive application.* Stanford University Press.

Langacker, R. W. (1991). *Cognitive linguistics research.* de Gruyter.

Littlemore, J. (2023). *Applying cognitive linguistics to second language learning and teaching*. Springer Nature.

Littlemore, J., & Juchem-Grundmann, C. (2010). Introduction to the interplay between cognitive linguistics and second language learning and teaching. *AILA Review, 23*(1), 1-6. doi: 10.1075/aila.23.01lit

Moder, C. L. (2010). *To learn effectively: Grammatical constructions for second language grammar instruction*. Paper presented at AAAL, Atlanta, GA.

Norris, J., & Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning 50*, 417–528. doi: 10.1111/0023-8333.00136

Robinson, P. (2005). Cognitive Complexity and Task Sequencing: Studies in a Componential Framework for Second Language Task Design. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, *43*(1), 1-32. doi: 10.1515/iral.2005.43.1.1

Robinson, P. (2011). Task-based language learning: A review of issues. *Language Learning 61,* 1–36. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9922.2011.00641.x

Roehr-Brackin, K. (2014). Explicit knowledge and processes from a usage-based perspective: The developmental trajectory of an instructed L2 learner. *Language Learning 64*, 771-808. doi: 10.1111/lang.12081

Samuda, V., & Bygate, M. (2008). *Tasks in second language learning*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Saslow, J., & Ascher, A. (2015). *Top notch* (3rd Edition). Longman.

Takimoto, M. (2020). Investigating the effects of cognitive linguistic approach in developing EFL learners' pragmatic proficiency. *System 89,* 102213. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102213

Tyler, A. (2012). *Cognitive linguistics and second language learning: Theoretical basics and experimental evidence*. Routledge

Tyler, A., Mueller, C. M., & Ho, V. (2010). Applying cognitive linguistics to instructed L2 learning: The English modals. *AILA Review, 23*(1), 30-49. doi: 10.1075/aila.23.03tyl

van Rijt, J. H., & Coppen, P. A. J. (2021). The conceptual importance of grammar: Knowledge-related rationales for grammar teaching. *Pedagogical Linguistics*, *2*(2), 175-199.