ESL Beginning Textbook Analysis

Tristan Weinmaster
Research Question

Which textbook or textbooks can be recommended as a solid textbook for grammar instruction for beginning English learners in a middle school?
Why I Chose This Methods & Data Recommendation Limitations Future Research
Why Textbooks and Grammar?

➢ Piecemealed materials in volunteer and paraprofessional experiences

➢ Creating my own materials and more preps for newcomer teachers

➢ Unhappy with results from past curriculum choices

➢ How other departments choose curriculum
Three Textbooks for Beginning Middle School ELs


Two Tools for Analysis of Grammar

1) Instructional Approaches to Grammar
   - Present Progressive Tense
     Ex. She is running. They are studying.

2) Scope of Grammar Concepts Taught
   - Beginning to Advanced Grammar Topics
Instructional Features Utilized to Teach Grammar
(Fernandez, 2011, p. 161)
### ELD Matrix of Grammatical Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Early Intermediate</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Early Advanced</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding</strong></td>
<td>Learn to understand and produce observable actions and descriptions.</td>
<td>Learn to understand and produce regular &amp; irregular past tense verbs in:</td>
<td>Learn to understand and produce verb tenses appropriate to the situation:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present tense</strong></td>
<td>Present tense: He is, does, are, has, had.</td>
<td>Present &amp; past perfect: I had seen the movie.</td>
<td>Progressive, future and conditional perfect tenses: She had been studying.</td>
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<td>Progressive, future and conditional perfect tenses: They had been studying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative present and past progressive</strong></td>
<td>Can't, didn't, wasn't, hadn't, not was, not were.</td>
<td>Present perfect: They have seen the movie.</td>
<td>Present perfect: She had seen the movie.</td>
<td>Present perfect: We had seen the movie.</td>
<td>Present perfect: They had seen the movie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questions</strong></td>
<td>How old are you? Where is she?</td>
<td>Who, what, where, when, why.</td>
<td>Formulating Questions: Have you seen the movie?</td>
<td>Formulating Questions: Did you see the movie?</td>
<td>Formulating Questions: Will you see the movie?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past progressive statements</strong></td>
<td>He was walking, she was reading.</td>
<td>Past progressive statements: He was walking, she was reading.</td>
<td>Past progressive statements: She was walking, he was reading.</td>
<td>Past progressive statements: We were walking, you were reading.</td>
<td>Past progressive statements: They were walking, I was reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future</strong></td>
<td>Future tense statements: He will walk, she will read.</td>
<td>Future perfect tense statements: She will have seen the movie.</td>
<td>Future perfect tense statements: He will have seen the movie.</td>
<td>Future perfect tense statements: We will have seen the movie.</td>
<td>Future perfect tense statements: They will have seen the movie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impersonal verbs</strong></td>
<td>It is raining.</td>
<td>Impersonal verbs: It is raining, it is snowing.</td>
<td>Impersonal verbs: It is raining, it is snowing.</td>
<td>Impersonal verbs: They are raining, they are snowing.</td>
<td>Impersonal verbs: They are raining, they are snowing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auxiliary verbs</strong></td>
<td>Can, could, must, should.</td>
<td>Auxiliary verbs: Can you help me?</td>
<td>Auxiliary verbs: Must you tell me?</td>
<td>Auxiliary verbs: Should you do that?</td>
<td>Auxiliary verbs: Would you like to go to the movies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simple tenses</strong></td>
<td>Simple tenses: I can read, he can fly.</td>
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### ELD Matrix of Grammatical Forms for Verbs
*(Dutro et al., 2005, p. 2)*
Instructional Features Utilized to Teach Grammar
(Fernandez, 2011, p. 161)
Explicit Information

Any explicit description of the grammar feature and how it works.
Total Number of Explicit Information Descriptions

Explicit descriptions of Present Progressive Tense and how it works.
Samples of Language

Discrete = One sentence or less
Continuous = More than one sentence
Aural = Listening (Audio)
Written = Text only
Total Samples of Language

Examples of the grammar feature. These samples do not include an accompanying activity, meaning that students are not asked to do anything with the sample.
Samples of Language

Written

Aural= Audio
Samples of Language

Discrete = one sentence or less

Continuous = more than one sentence
Total Number of Activities

![Bar chart showing number of activities for different categories: ACCESS Newcomers, Connect 1 and 2, inside Fundamentals.]

![Tree diagram showing the categorization of activities: input-based, production-based, online, controlled, free, controlled.]
Input-Based Activities

**Input-based** = Students have to recognize a grammatical form, but do not have to produce it.

**Online** = Students must recognize the form in the moment (listening activity)

**Controlled** = Students have time to process the form (reading activity)
Total Number of Input-Based Activities

Students must attend to a grammatical form, but do not need to produce it.
Input-Based Activities

Online= Students must recognize the form in the moment (listening activity)

Controlled= students have time to process the form they need to recognize (reading activity)
Production-Based Activities

Production-based: Students have to produce the target form

Free: Students produce the target form on their own without a word bank

Controlled: Students produce the target form using a word bank
Total Number of Production-Based Activities

Students must produce the target form.
Production-Based Activities

Controlled = Word bank is provided to produce the target form

Free = No word bank is provided to produce the target form
### ELD Matrix of Grammatical Forms for Verbs

(Dutro et al, 2005, p. 2)
Tschirner (1996) found that German language textbooks attempted to cover the entirety of the German language in one year, and then repeated the same process each year. He says teachers should carefully select their scope because not everything can be taught in the first year. He proposed that it is more beneficial to teach fewer concepts well than to try to teach everything at a shallow level.
Beginning Stage of Acquisition

Present Tense (be, have, like, need, want)

Respond to Yes/No Questions (Can I help you? Does a square have three sides?)

Present Progressive statements (She is running. You are reading.)

Imperative Receptive (Point to, Pick up, Stand up)

Auxiliary can (She can read. Birds can fly.)
Beginning Stage of Acquisition

ACCESS Newcomers: 100%

Connect 1 and 2: 80%

INSIDE Fundamentals: 100%
**Early Intermediate Stage of Acquisition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Tense (be, do, have, need, see, know, run, draw, make)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present Progressive Statements and Questions (Is she reading? She is laughing.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine Statements and Questions with Who, What, When, Where, and How</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements and Questions with There is/There are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future tense Statements and Questions (going to, will)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperatives such as: (Please be quiet. Play soccer with me. Bring your book.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary do and can (Do you need a pencil? Can you help me? I can help you.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early Intermediate Stage of Acquisition

ACCESS Newcomers: 87.5%

Connect 1 and 2: 75%

INSIDE Fundamentals: 75%
Beginning and Early Intermediate Stages Combined

ACCESS Newcomers: 92%

Connect 1 and 2: 77%

INSIDE Fundamentals: 85%
Intermediate Stage of Acquisition

Regular and Irregular Past Tense (He talked on the phone. She saw her friend yesterday.)
Positive and Negative Questions in the Past Tense (Did/Didn’t, Was/Wasn’t)
Contractions (I’m, She’s, I’ll, Can’t, Weren’t)
Present Perfect Tense (She has been in my group since November.)
Statements and Questions with There was/There were
Imperatives such as: Stop doing that, please. Let’s play soccer now.
Auxiliary verbs (may, might, must, should, could, would)
Exclamations such as: That’s not fair! What a great idea!
Simple idioms such as: Give me a break. It’s raining cats and dogs.
Intermediate Stage of Acquisition

ACCESS Newcomers: 55%

Connect 1 and 2: 18%

INSIDE Fundamentals: 45%
Beginning, Early Intermediate and Intermediate Stages Combined

ACCESS Newcomers: 75%

Connect 1 and 2: 50%

INSIDE Fundamentals: 67%
Early Advanced Stage of Acquisition

Present and Past Perfect (have/has/had + past participle)
Positive/Negative Statements (I have studied ballet since I was six. Kennedy hadn’t been president long.)
Questions (How long have you ___?)
Phrasal verbs (Turn on the light. Clear your desks off.)
Statements and Questions with There will be/There has been
Conditional statements and questions using if and auxiliary verbs (If we left now, we would be on time.)
Synonyms (responded/cried, stroll/hike/march)
Exclamations such as: You have got to be kidding! That’s unbelievable!
Less obvious idioms such as: scared silly, lend me a hand
Early Advanced Stage of Acquisition

ACCESS Newcomers: 11%

Connect 1 and 2: 11%

INSIDE Fundamentals: 0%
## Advanced Stage of Acquisition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progressive, Future and Conditional Perfect Tenses</td>
<td>(She has been studying. She will have been studying. If she had studied, she would have done better.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrasal verbs with multiple meanings (often idiomatic)</td>
<td>such as: make up your mind, make up a story, make up the class, make up with a friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive voice</td>
<td>(It was written by...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional statements using <em>unless</em></td>
<td>(Unless I turn in my essay, I won’t be able to go to recess)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary (ought, will/shall)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclamation</td>
<td>such as: That’s beyond belief!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advanced Stage of Acquisition

ACCESS Newcomers: 17%

Connect 1 and 2: 0%

INSIDE Fundamentals: 0%
All Stages Combined

ACCESS Newcomers: 51%
Connect 1 and 2: 33%
INSIDE Fundamentals: 41%
Research Question

Which textbook or textbooks can be recommended as a solid textbook for grammar instruction for beginning English learners in a middle school?
After analyzing the three textbooks, I would recommend the *Connect* series as a solid textbook for beginning English learners in middle school, due to the variety in samples of language and activity types. If one type of activity does not work for a student, another one could. Also, the *Connect* series does not attempt to cover the entire English language in one year, but rather focuses deeply on the beginning and early intermediate topics to form a solid foundation. Finally, *Connect* includes the most free production-based activities, which is the ultimate goal for ESL instruction. We want students to be able to produce grammatical forms on their own, without a word bank.
Limitations

- Research shows that textbooks are good for adults, but are they a good choice for middle schoolers?

- Grammar is not the only important factor when choosing a textbook. This project did not look at vocabulary instruction, relevance and authenticity, visual appeal, multicultural stories, number of pages, weeks of material provided, cost, or many other possible factors.

- I only analyzed three books, and I did not analyze Connect 3 and 4 or INSIDE A which are meant for the 2nd half of the first year.
Future Research

- Why are there so few textbooks marketed for beginning level English learners in middle school? Why did publishers that previously published books for this population discontinue their textbooks?

- What are the benefits and downfalls of using textbooks in middle school?

- How many courses do teachers of beginners prepare for vs. a content teacher?

- How much explicit instruction is just the right amount for beginning English learners to be able to independently produce grammatical forms over time? What are the best ways to deliver grammar explicit instruction? What is the best amount of time to spend on a topic?
Questions?