

Title: Revitalization of Grammar Teaching in the Digital Age: Grammar Pedagogy

Technology is reshaping the teacher's role in various ways, and new learning approaches that are in accordance with the affordances of this digital age (e.g., blended learning, flipped classroom; etc.) have been proposed. However, not many studies have discussed the question of how we can improve or reshape grammar explanation, so that our students can become more robust language learners, able to deal with new materials accessible on the Internet.

This paper aims to revitalize the importance of teaching grammar and promote the notion of “grammar pedagogy.” I particularly argue that “right grammar explanation” can lead students to higher linguistic aptitude, so that they can explore new materials on the Internet, going beyond the textbook. Such grammar pedagogy can provide students with the versatility that allows them to deal with newly exposed grammar patterns or materials by themselves.

To see what I mean by right grammar explanation, let us consider the explanation of the permission (V-てもいい) form in (1), which is taken from the textbook *Genki I*.

(1) A verbal *te*-form plus *もいいです* means “you may do...”, which describes an activity that is permitted.[*Genki I*, p. 152]

There is nothing wrong with the explanation in (1), but it fails to explain the more general function of V-ても in Japanese; that is, V-ても carries the meaning of “even if”. If a teacher goes beyond the textbook explanation and provides this function of V-ても, the pattern, V-てもいいです, would make much more sense to students; it literally means, “even if you do such-and-such, it would be fine”, which is logically equivalent to saying, “you may do such-and-such”. Thus, students can understand the logic behind the pattern, rather than simply memorizing it.

The additional explanation of V-ても above can provide students with more robust linguistic competence in dealing with new sentences that contains V-ても. For instance, let us consider sentences like (2) and (3) below.

(2) そのパーティーは、行ってもつまらないよ。(“As for that party, even if you go (there), it would be boring.”)

(3) 雨が降っても、行きますよ。(“Even if it rains, I will go.”)

With the knowledge about the function of V-ても, students can parse (2) and (3), but those who just received the explanation in (1) will most likely fail to do so. This demonstrates the difference between good and poor grammar pedagogy.

The above example is simply the tip of the iceberg; there are many more cases where teacher's extra linguistic advice can enhance students' linguistic aptitude, so that they can be better equipped to explore new materials by themselves. The paper provides more examples of such cases, and it argues that good grammar pedagogy is a key to the success of student-centered learning in this digital.