Pedagogical Grammar in an Indonesian ELT Textbook: Features, Approaches, and Design Criteria Analysis

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Abstract

Numerous researchers have delved into the intricacies of grammar, yet the analysis of pedagogical grammar in EFL textbooks has been sorely neglected. This study aims to examine the pedagogical grammar features of an Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook intended for seventh-graders, the teaching approaches employed to convey those features, and the criteria used to design the pedagogical language rules incorporated in the pedagogical grammar features. This mixed-method research used an EFL textbook for seventh-graders in Indonesia as the source of data that were collected using observation sheets and a checklist based on Swan's theory regarding design criteria for pedagogical language rules. The data were analyzed qualitatively (descriptive qualitative technique) and quantitatively (descriptive statistics). This study found that the Indonesian EFL textbook contained simple present tense and 14 pedagogical grammar features. The textbook utilized both inductive and deductive approaches to deliver pedagogical grammar features, with the deductive approach being the most used. The design criterion of pedagogical language in the textbook was evaluated to be of high quality. Thus, it can be concluded that the analyzed textbook is a suitable learning resource for Indonesian EFL teachers, especially those who wish to focus on pedagogical grammar.

Keywords: design criteria, approaches to teaching grammar, grammatical features, EFL textbook, pedagogical grammar

Introduction

Language educators and linguists have long emphasized the significance of pedagogical grammar or achieving success in learning a second or foreign language. However, several studies have reported that language learners, especially those using textbooks, are limited in their ability to learn the various pedagogical grammar features. These studies conducted by Aski (2008), Ellis (2002), Fernández (2011), and Haukås et al. (2016) have shed light on the restricted scope of pedagogical grammar features that can be effectively taught and learned by language learners. It shows that the existence of pedagogical grammar in teaching and learning English as a second or a foreign language is still controversial (Ellis, 2002). This is because pedagogical grammar is claimed as a basis in linguistic theory, learning psychology, and language pedagogy. Hudson (1998)considers whether grammar can be taught easily to language learners so it has been stopped by the 1960s, such as in England, due to the death of research in grammar teaching (Hudson & Walmsley, 2005). It is because grammar

teaching is different from the basic history of language teaching (Thornbury, 1999). Furthermore, consensus on teaching grammar in the classroom is still lacking because grammar is difficult to articulate (Almazloum, 2018; Jasrial et al., 2024). These reasons may cause the limited pedagogical grammar features in the textbook.

In contrast, Jufrizal (2014) argues that language teaching and learning processes are intertwined with linguistic theories and grammatical features of specific languages. Valid linguistic theory resulting from studies by linguists provides data and knowledge for language educators that can be used in designing teaching materials, curriculum development, and teaching (Valdman, 1966; Corder, 1973; as cited in Stern, 1992). It means that these two mutually support each other in language study and language teaching.

The perspective above highlights the importance of pedagogical grammar in the success of second and foreign language learning. This is because pedagogical grammar is an approach to teaching grammar and is designed for language learners and teachers. This pedagogical grammar aims to 1) increase learners' second (L2) or foreign language acquisition, 2) solve problems they face while learning a language (Omar, 2019), 3) help them gain a consistent understanding of important language rules in various classes and schools (Almazloum, 2018), and 4) help identify optimal ways for teaching and learning the L2 language in a classroom (Ellis, 2002). Therefore, pedagogical grammar is included in textbooks, which are adjusted based on the student's grades. The inclusion of pedagogical grammar in textbooks helps maintain the consistency and quality of grammar learning across the education system, ensuring that language learners have a solid foundation to communicate effectively in the language they are learning.

The pedagogical grammar in the textbook provides the basic structure and systematic for learners to understand language structures. In learning pedagogical grammar, the textbook presents grammatical structures, syntaxis, and language rules that help learners understand and internalize basic principles of grammar. Moreover, the textbook provides concrete examples, practical tasks, and illustrations that clarify the concepts of grammar (Funk, 2012). Also, the textbook provides learners with clear guidelines to develop better speaking and writing skills. Thus, textbooks are an important guide for teachers in planning and teaching effective grammar lessons, as well as a critical reference source for learners who understand the principles of grammar.

In addition to language structures, the approach to teaching grammar is very important in mastering pedagogical grammar for learners of English as a foreign language. Thornbury (1999) emphasizes three main approaches to teaching grammar: teaching grammar based on rules, examples, and through text. First, teaching grammar from rules involves a deductive or rule-based approach. This approach begins with an introduction to a grammatical rule, followed by examples that apply the rule (Liu, 2020). Second, teaching grammar from examples involves an inductive or rule-discovery approach. This approach begins with several examples on which to base the rule's conclusions, followed by an explanation of the rules (Shirav & Nagai, 2022). Lastly, teaching grammar through texts is based on the principle that language is sensitive to context, that is, it is difficult to determine the intended meaning of a word or phrase without context (Benitez-Correa et al., 2019). This approach teaches learners the context of the text used to understand the grammar being studied. However, this approach is likely more emphasized in higher level learners because they understand the grammar of the text by words, sentences, and text out of context. Meanwhile, the inductive approach is better used for young learners because grammar is complicated for them to understand, and deductive approaches are more emphasized for adult learners because they have competency in thinking abstract items when understanding the rules of grammar (Brown, 2001).

No less importantly, pedagogical grammar must-have criteria in its design and implementation. Swan (1994) made six pedagogical language criteria into six, but these criteria can be grouped into two parts, namely three general criteria (correctness, demarcation, and clarity) and three pedagogical

grammar criteria (simplicity, conceptual economy, and relevance). The three criteria that focus on pedagogical grammar have a great influence on learners' understanding of language learning, especially language structure so that they can communicate effectively in the language being studied. Three general criteria provide learners with an understanding of the concepts and terminology of pedagogical grammar.

Some researchers have reported the studies of pedagogical grammar in the language teaching context. Omar (2019) investigated English language learners (ELLs) encountered challenges when they wrote an academic paper. The results revealed that learners lacked pedagogical grammar in writing an academic paper. Fitrawati and Safitri (2021) examined learners' grammatical errors in essays made by college EFL learners and the pedagogical implications viewed from those errors. The results showed that learners' errors in grammar were quite high, particularly in verb use.

In addition, in terms of textbooks, Otsuki and Takase (2012) compared pedagogical grammar in picture books and English textbooks for EFL learners in Japan. This study revealed that English textbooks provided an inductive approach to grammar features. Furthermore, Aqsati (2017) investigated Indonesian language grammar materials and their learning in a textbook for eighth-graders of junior high school that focused on approaches used and the grammar material scopes. The results showed that this textbook the delivery of the grammar content used inductive and deductive approaches. The range of grammar material contained was material morphology and syntax. Lastly, in his analysis, Garth (2022) examined the grammar practice activities featured in English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks. The findings indicated that pre-communicative grammar activities were the most widely utilized, constituting approximately 40% of all grammar practice activities. Moreover, the grammar activities progressed from form-focused practice to meaning-focused exercises. Overall, these results shed light on the most prevalent grammar practice activities employed in ELT textbooks.

According to previous studies and explanations, there is still a lack of research on pedagogical grammar in EFL textbooks, with previous studies focusing on 1) the grammar features and approaches used in Indonesian language grammar textbooks, 2) the grammar activities and approaches in EFL textbooks, and 3) grammar errors and challenges in writing. This present study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the pedagogical grammar features, approaches used in delivering these features, and design criteria used in an Indonesian EFL textbook. Conducting this study is important to understanding the roles and importance of pedagogical grammar in learning English, as provided by textbook designers for junior high school learners in the EFL context. Additionally, this study provides new insights into the suitability of pedagogical grammar principles for designing grammar learning materials for EFL learners. Thus, to address the issues, the research questions are addressed as follows;

1. What are pedagogical grammar features found in an Indonesian EFL textbook for seventh-graders?
2. What approaches are used in delivering pedagogical grammar features in an Indonesian EFL textbook for seventh-graders?
3. What are the design criteria of pedagogical grammar features in an Indonesian EFL textbook for seventh-graders based on Swan's (1994) theory?

Methods

This study was a content analysis that a used mixed method approach by following Cresswell (2017). This mixed method was used because this study had qualitative dan quantitative data. The qualitative data were obtained from pedagogical grammar features and approaches in delivering pedagogical grammar features. The quantitative data were obtained from the design criteria of pedagogical language rules in the grammar features based on the experts' rating score in an Indonesian EFL textbook. The textbook analyzed in this study was used for seventh-graders of Junior High

Schools. The reason for choosing this textbook was because it was dominantly used in Indonesia and it was published by the leading book publisher for the educational sector in Indonesia.

The textbook analyzed in this study was designed based on the 2013 curriculum. Indonesia is now implementing a new curriculum, called the Merdeka Belajar curriculum or the Independent Learning curriculum that was established in 2022 (Jasrial et al., 2023). However, the 2013 curriculum is still implemented in some schools because many schools are making preparations for the implementation of the new curriculum (Lestari, 2023). Since not all schools in Indonesia implement the independent learning curriculum, the latest version of EFL textbooks based on the independent learning curriculum, particularly for seventh-graders has not been established yet. Consequently, EFL teachers still use the textbooks that are designed based on the 2013 curriculum because the latest curriculum is the features, including the textbook that is analyzed in this study. These reasons were the consideration for choosing this textbook as an object of this study to investigate the pedagogical grammar features, approaches used to deliver the pedagogical grammar features, and design criteria for pedagogical language rules of the pedagogical grammar features.

To obtain the data, observation sheets and a checklist were utilized. The observation sheets were used to capture the pedagogical grammar features and approaches employed in delivering the pedagogical grammar features. The checklist was used to rate the design criteria of the pedagogical grammar features in the textbook. This checklist was built based on the theory of Swan (1994) concerning design criteria for language pedagogy rules in terms of the Likert scale with four judgment options; Very Fulfilled (Score 4), Fulfilled (Score 3), Slightly Fulfilled (Score 2), and Not Fulfilled (Score 1). The rules included truth, demarcation, clarity, simplicity, conceptual parsimony, and relevance. There are twelve criteria statements provided in the checklist instrument to rate the quality of the design criteria of pedagogical language rules in the pedagogical grammar features of the textbook.

The qualitative data that had been collected by using the descriptive qualitative technique. 1) The data observed in the textbook were selected by focusing on the pedagogical grammar features that were available in the textbook. 2) The selected data were presented in the form of tables that contained lists of the pedagogical grammar features and types of approaches in delivering the pedagogical grammar features. 3) The conclusions were drawn after the two stages above had been completed.

The quantitative data were analyzed quantitatively by using the simple statistics method. It was carried out by counting the mean score of the given judgments by experts concerning the design criteria for pedagogical language rules. Lastly, the mean score of the judgment result was interpreted based on the interval range; 1.00 – 1.75 (Very Poor), 1.76 – 2.50 (Poor), 2.50 – 3.25 Good), and 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Good).

The experts involved in rating the design criteria of pedagogical language rules in the pedagogical grammar features presented in the textbook consisted of ten experts. They were lecturers, public junior high school teachers, and international school teachers, and translators who had expertise in English grammar teaching, applied linguistics, vocabulary, English language education, and linguistics. They graduated from home and foreign leading universities and had finished master's degree and doctoral degree programs.

Result and Discussion

Based on the research questions addressed in this study, there were three findings in this study. Each finding is presented in the following sub-sections;

Pedagogical Grammar Features in an Indonesian EFL Textbook

After analyzing the data, some pedagogical grammar features were found in the Indonesian EFL textbook. The results are presented in the following table;

Table 1. Pedagogical Grammar Features in an Indonesian EFL Textbook

No	Tenses	Aspects	Sub-Aspects
1	Present Tense	Simple Present Tense	Using to be (is/am/are)
2			Telling the time: Using a.m. and p.m
3			Using have/has
4			Singular and Plural Nouns
5			Using which one
6			Using how much and how many
7			Using preposition (for place and date)
8			Using articles, a/an and the
9			Countable and uncountable nouns
10			Subject and Object Pronouns
11			Question with whose and Possessive Pronouns
12			Using one and ones to substitute nouns
13			Adverbs of frequency
14			Question Words (where, when, and how often)

As shown in Table 1, this textbook only presents one tense type (present tense) and one aspect of tenses (simple present tense) for seventh-grade learners of junior high school. However, this textbook provides 14 sub-aspects of the simple present tense that learners will learn.

The results revealed that the textbook only presents the simple present tense and 14 features of the simple present tense that learners will learn. These sub-aspects are likely aimed to enrich learners' knowledge of the simple present tense that is used to explain and inform daily routines, facts, and general truth. In other words, these sub-aspects meet the learners' needs in learning English based on their grades. Swan's (2013) suggests that pedagogical grammar materials should be made as selective as possible by considering what learners have not yet learned. The pedagogical grammar features in this textbook are the basic English grammar that seventh-graders may have not known yet because Indonesian learners commonly learn English starting from elementary schools that focus on enriching their vocabulary mastery. In this seventh grade, they learn basic English grammar to construct simple expressions or sentences by using vocabulary that they learn in elementary schools for daily activities.

This result is in line with the study of Aqsati (2017) which also found that grammar materials in Indonesian language textbooks are suitable for the needs of learners in learning Indonesian grammar. It shows that the grammar materials in textbooks should meet learners' needs and learners' level of language proficiency.

Based on the results of the study, this finding is in line with the goals of learning English for Indonesian seventh-graders. English is learned to develop student's abilities to communicate in English orally in simple conversation and writing for short monologue texts such as short message service, descriptive text, personal information form, and pen pal letters (Andriani et al., 2021; Malaikosa & Taopan, 2020). To achieve this goal, understanding basic English grammar is the basic foundation that helps language learners write sentences correctly and helps them improve their productive skills (writing and speaking skills) more easily (Yunus & Abdollah, 2020). The goal of

learning English for seventh grade likely has been covered by the pedagogical grammar features in this textbook.

The Approaches Used in Presenting Pedagogical Grammar Features in an Indonesian EFL Textbook

This part focused on analyzing the approaches used in presenting pedagogical grammar features in the textbook for seventh-graders. After analyzing data, there were two approaches used in this textbook in delivering the pedagogical grammar features. The results are presented in the following table;

Table 2. Approaches Used in Presenting Pedagogical Grammar Features

No	Aspect and Sub-Aspects	Inductive Approach	Deductive Approach
1	Using to be (is/am/are)		V
2	Telling the time: Using a.m. and p.m, past, to, and o'clock	V	
3	Using have/has		V
4	Singular and Plural Nouns		V
5	Using which one		V
6	Using how much and how many		V
7	Using prepositions for (place and date)		V
8	Using articles, a/an and the	V	
9	Countable and uncountable		V
10	Subject and Object Pronouns		V
11	Question with whose and Possessive Pronouns		V
12	Using one and ones to substitute nouns	V	
13	Simple Present Tense (Affirmative, negative, and interrogative sentences)		V
14	Adverbs of frequency		V
15	Question Words (where, when, and how often)		V
Total		2	13

As shown in Table 2, this textbook dominantly used a deductive approach in delivering pedagogical grammar features in the Indonesian EFL textbook for seventh-graders. The deductive approach consisted of thirteen contents and the inductive approach consisted of two contents. The following are the examples are as follows;
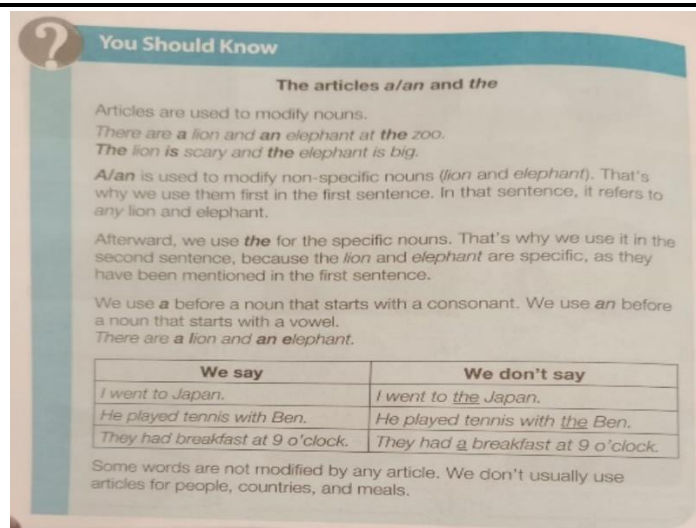
Figure 1. Inductive Approach

As shown in Figure 1, the sub-aspect material in terms of the articles a/an and the is delivered using an inductive approach. The writer provided examples of the use of English articles followed by the definition and explanation of each article. In addition, the deductive approach is shown in the figure below;

Figure 2 Deductive Approach

As shown in Figure 2, the writer provided a deductive approach in delivering a pedagogical grammar aspect in terms of the simple present tense. The writer provided an explanation of the simple present tense followed by examples of the statements (affirmative, negative, and interrogative) based on each type of subject

The result of the analysis shows that the textbook used two approaches in presenting pedagogical grammar materials; inductive and deductive approaches. Using a combination of both inductive and deductive approaches in teaching grammar features in EFL textbooks has a positive impact on junior high school EFL learners. Abdukarimova and Zubaydova (2021) suggest that this combination is best suited for the EFL classroom for understanding and acquiring English as a foreign language. These approaches will address the weaknesses of each other and provide a more complete learning experience.

In addition, the results of this study also show that the deductive approach was dominantly used in the presentation of the pedagogical grammar features in this Indonesian EFL textbook for seventh-graders. This finding contradicts Brown's theory (2001). He suggests that the presentation of the grammar rules first in the deductive approach is not suitable for junior high school learners who are still beginners. They will have difficulty understanding the grammar rules because their mentality seems unable to think of the rules of grammar in the abstract. However, Benitez-Correa et al (2019) argue that the deductive approach teaches EFL learners to understand the terminology and the rules of the grammar items first before they try to use them (Benitez-Correa et al., 2019). In other words, the deductive approach in foreign language acquisition requires learners to engage in cognitive processing, which in turn allows for greater practice time with language rules (Liu, 2020). However, the Indonesian curriculum has been incorporating critical thinking skills into its teaching methods since the 2013 curriculum. This approach has allowed learners to develop critical thinking skills and better understand the rules of grammar and abstract concepts. The deductive approach has proven to be effective in helping learners acquire and correctly apply English grammar, leading to the desired outcomes of learning English as a foreign language.

This finding is in line with Aqsati (2017) who found that the delivery of Indonesian language grammar dominantly used a deductive approach used deductive approach in the textbook that she analyzed. This finding is in contrast with Otsuki and Takase's (2012) study, which found that EFL textbooks in Japan dominantly used an inductive approach. The findings imply that the different and similar contexts of language teaching may influence the use of approaches in pedagogical grammar presentation in textbooks. The textbooks analyzed by Aqsati (2017) and the researcher in this present study are used in Indonesia while the textbooks analyzed by Otsuki and Takase's (2012) were in Japan. Besides, the characteristics of learners also may influence the use of approaches in teaching and learning a second or foreign language and in the presentation of grammar materials in the textbook.

The Design Criteria of Pedagogical Grammar Features in an Indonesian EFL Textbook for Seventh-Graders based on Swan's (1994) Theory

This third research question aimed to investigate the design criteria of pedagogical grammar features in the textbook based on Swan's (1994) theory. Ten experts (lecturers and teachers) who had expertise in grammar, applied linguistics, linguistics, English language education, translation, and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) were involved in rating the criteria items. The results of the rating are presented in the following table;

Table 3. The Design Criteria of Pedagogical Grammar Features

Design Criteria	No	Design Criteria Items	VF	F	SF	NF	Mean
	1	The clearness of rules of grammar content	8	2	0	0	3.80
Truth	2	The suitability between the rules of language of the grammar features and the facts of linguistics	10	0	0	0	4.00
	3	The demarcation of pedagogical rules of grammar content in the form that is used	9	1	0	0	3.90
Demar-cation	4	The demarcation used in this grammar content helps learners to know when the form is used	8	1	1	0	3.70

	5	The clarity in delivering the terminology used in the grammar content	8	2	0	0	3.80
Clarity	6	The clarity of language structure provided in the grammar content	10	0	0	0	4.00
	7	The simplicity of the definition of the terminology in the grammar content	10	0	0	0	4.00
Simpli-city	8	The simplicity and the meaningfulness of examples provided in the grammar content	7	2	1	0	3.60
	9	The adjustment between the terminology delivered in the grammar content and the level of the learners	10	0	0	0	4.00
Concep-tual Parsimony	10	The familiarity of chosen terminology delivered in the grammar content	10	0	0	0	4.00
	11	The easiness of rules delivered in the grammar content to be remembered by learners	8	1	1	0	3.80
Releva-nce	12	The presentation of rules delivered in the grammar content based on the correct structure of English grammar is not similar to learners' first language rules	10	0	0	0	4.00
		Average Mean Score					3.88
		Interpretation					Very Good

As shown in Table 3, the pedagogical grammar features in this Indonesian EFL textbook achieved the design criteria of pedagogical language based on the theory of Swan (1994). The criteria were in a very good category with an average mean score of 3.88 which included truth, demarcation, clarity, simplicity, conceptual parsimony, and relevance.

The results of the analysis show that the pedagogical grammar features in this Indonesian EFL textbook meet the design criteria of pedagogical language rules based on the theory of Swan (1994), which was in a very good category. It implies that a very good criterion of pedagogical language in presenting pedagogical grammar materials in this textbook may be able to expose learners to language situations that reflect natural communicative ones. Incorporating pedagogical language in presenting grammar materials in textbooks can help learners develop a better understanding of grammar for communicative purposes (Kafipour et al., 2018).

The findings of the analysis suggest that this particular textbook consistently presents pertinent subject matter, employs unambiguous learning frameworks, and utilizes language that is easily comprehensible. Burton (2019) asserts that good pedagogical grammar is the grammar that can tell learners how to understand and form correct sentence structures according to the rules of the language being studied, not just arranging several words. He further explains that rules must be proceduralized in the sense that they must be designed in such a way that the language the teacher teaches can ultimately be produced by the learner automatically, without consciously paying attention to the rules. Moreover, because of the good pedagogical grammar and pedagogical language rules designed by designers, this textbook can incorporate information that promotes the enhancement of language

proficiencies, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As a result, this textbook has the potential to establish a highly effective learning setting that can support learners in their endeavor to comprehend and master language.

Based on the study's results, it can be concluded that the Indonesian EFL textbook for seventh-graders meets the goals of teaching English to EFL learners in this grade level, as well as the principles of pedagogical grammar and design criteria for pedagogical language. The textbook provides learners in the seventh grade with a solid understanding of basic English grammar for effective communication in everyday situations. The textbook's pedagogical grammar and pedagogical language principles make it easier for learners to comprehend the grammar materials and practice the grammar rules that they have learned.

Conclusion

This study has analyzed the pedagogical grammar features present in an Indonesian EFL textbook designed for seventh-graders in junior high school. The investigation revealed that this Indonesian EFL textbook covers basic English grammar, focusing on simple present tense. It provides learners with the necessary elements of this aspect to be acquired and used in their daily communication. The elements are presented through inductive and deductive approaches, although the latter is used more frequently. These approaches make it easy for learners to understand the rules of grammar and use them correctly, especially in productive skills such as speaking and writing. Additionally, based on this theory of Swan, the design of the pedagogical grammar features in the textbook is in a good category, thus meeting the criteria of pedagogical language.

According to the aforementioned conclusion, the textbook analyzed in this study is deemed suitable for Indonesian EFL teachers to utilize as a learning resource. The textbook is rich in pedagogical grammar features that cater to learners' needs in acquiring fundamental English skills and has met the criteria for excellent pedagogical language that can impact learners' learning of pedagogical grammar. However, further research is recommended to investigate other aspects of pedagogical grammar in this textbook, as the present study only focused on analyzing pedagogical grammar features, approaches employed in delivering pedagogical grammar features, and pedagogical grammar design based on Swan's theory.

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