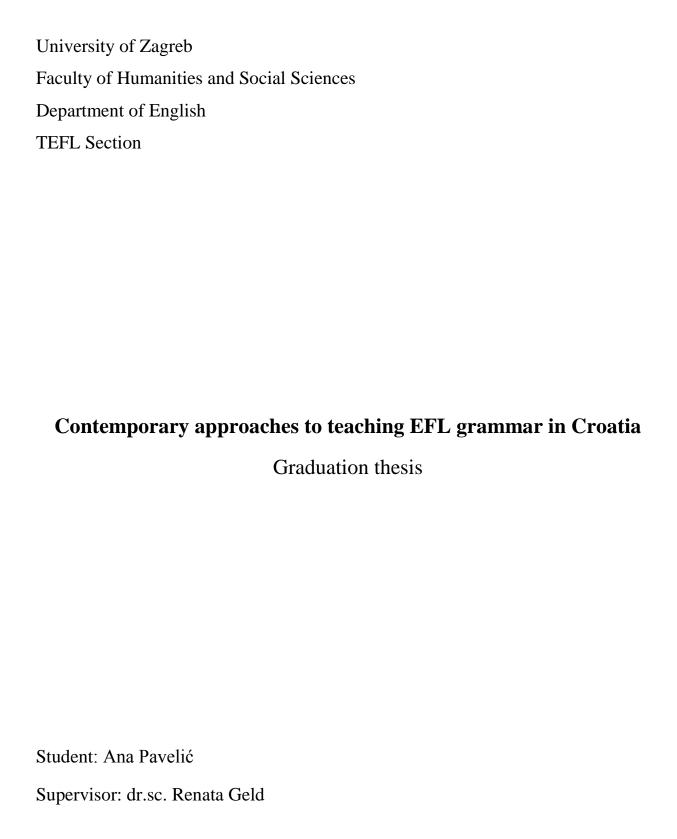
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# Contemporary approaches to teaching EFL grammar in Croatia Diplomski rad

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Zagreb, srpanj, 2014.



## **ABSTRACT**

This study deals with the issues related to English grammar. The purpose of this study was to provide an insight into the current situation of teaching EFL grammar in Croatia and describe possible new trends reflected in the approach that is present in Croatian schools. More precisely, this study investigates the types of presentation and practice of grammatical structures that are available to Croatian teachers and learners in English textbooks. It is based on a qualitative study of grammar-based textbooks used in the majority of high schools in Croatia. The textbooks used for the study are New Headway Intermediate the second edition published in 1996 and New Headway Intermediate the fourth edition published in 2009. In order to collect the necessary data, we formed 6 research questions. The first two referred to the type of presentation in order to determine if there is a balance between inductive, deductive and focus-on-form presentation and if the presentation provides contextualized and authentic examples of grammatical structures. The rest of the questions referred to the types of practice in order to determine if the textbooks provide practice that fosters development of all four skills and balances accuracy and fluency so learners can acquire grammar structures and the ability to use that knowledge for communicative purposes. The analysis has shown that both editions foster contextualized presentation and practice and development of all four skills. However, the fourth edition published in 2009 shows higher percentage of balance of different types of introduction, especially focus on form. There is also a higher percentage of balance of individual, pair and group work and balance between accuracy and fluency. The results show that editions differ in the way they present grammar. The second edition deals with grammar in a way that is more isolated when compared to presentation and practice in the fourth edition. Furthermore, the fourth edition reflects the latest ideas suggested by researchers and CEFR by focusing on form within communicative contexts. This shows that the textbook used by the majority of Croatian high schools keeps up with the changes in the field of teaching foreign languages and fosters an eclectic approach that balances different modes of teaching EFL grammar. This means that a high percentage of both teachers and learners have the opportunity to teach and learn according to their personal styles and strategies.

**Key words:** grammar, textbooks, focus on form, accuracy, fluency

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Grammar has always been a problematic subject in language teaching and learning. The "swinging pendulum", as Larsen-Freeman (1991) called grammar, swung from one extreme to another creating different opinions and attitudes toward grammar teaching. Grammar was defined in many different ways and for that reason it was hard to put an end to "the swinging" and find a solution that satisfied everyone; linguists, teachers and learners.

For a very long time, methods used for teaching ancient Greek and Latin were applied to teaching of modern languages. Thus, learning a foreign language consisted of memorizing grammar rules and translating, without any oral use of the target language. This situation started changing when this type of teaching did not meet learners' needs. Very soon it became clear that learners had great difficulties when they had to apply their knowledge and use the target language in real-life communication. This triggered the creation of new methods and the pendulum was pushed to the other extreme where languages were learnt without grammar instruction focusing only on language speaking. However, the goal of fluent and successful communication was not reached and a new approach was needed.

Contemporary theories in language teaching try to incorporate the knowledge of grammatical rules as well as the competence to use that knowledge in real-life communication. Since it is agreed that the goal of language teaching and learning is learners' communicative competence, it is important to teach learners to use target languages fluently, appropriately and accurately. Therefore, grammar teaching is seen as a means to an end where formal instruction helps learners to progress from internalizing forms and structures to their meaningful and accurate use in real-life communication. The issue is no longer whether grammar should be taught or not, but how it should be taught in order to achieve learners' communicative competence.

This work analyzes contemporary approaches to teaching English grammar in Croatia. It is based on a qualitative study of *New Headway Intermediate*, a textbook used in more than half Croatian schools. More precisely, it is a study of the second and fourth editions of that textbook. We analyzed textbooks' presentations, quantity and type of grammatical items and types of activities, to establish what kind of approach to teaching grammar they offer. The aim was to see if the structure and content of textbooks had changed according to new and relevant findings and trends.

# 2. AN OVERVIEW OF TEACHING APPROACHES

Different conceptions of grammar affected the ways foreign languages have been taught. In other words, different linguistic and psycholinguistic theories encouraged creation and development of different approaches in teaching foreign languages. In order to be able to understand and evaluate the current situation concerning contemporary approaches to teaching grammar of English as a foreign language (EFL), it is important to know how grammar teaching developed and how attitude towards grammar has changed over time. Thus, in the next section, we will present a short overview of approaches to teaching foreign languages.

#### 2.1. About the concept of grammar

Tonkyn (1994) saw grammar as multidimensional. It can be defined as descriptive, referring to "the stuff of reference grammars and linguistic theory", or pedagogical, referring to "the stuff of lessons and textbooks" (Tonkyn, 1994, p. 1). A similar, but more elaborate description of grammar was given by Larsen-Freeman (2009). She explains that grammar is an ambiguous term in language teaching and it has been used to mean several different concepts. In addition to descriptive grammar, which she explains as a description of language behavior by proficient users of a language, the author adds another presentation of grammar; a set of proscriptions and prescriptions about language forms and their use, which refers to prescriptive grammar (Larsen-Freeman, 2009, p. 518). The author also adds teacher's grammar to pedagogical grammar. Both of these concepts refer to structures and rules compiled for instructional and assessment purposes with the exception that teacher's grammar is more detailed and comprehensive.

Therefore, in order to compile structures and rules to be taught, those structures and rules need to be described. As Tonkyn (1994) explained, these descriptions are related to linguistic theories which later influenced the development of teaching approaches. Furthermore, Larsen-Freeman (2001) explained that linguists differentiate between two types of descriptive grammars. The first type refers to formal grammars which base their descriptions on forms of language without focusing on meaning or use of language. Therefore, formalists see grammar through morphology or word formation and syntax or word combination. On the other hand, the second type, functional grammars, sees language as a "social interaction" (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, p. 34). Functionalists claim that language has a communicative function so they describe

language through semantics, or meaning of words, and pragmatics or use of language. Therefore, they try to explain which structure is and why more appropriate in a particular context.

In the first half of the twentieth century, structuralism was the dominant theory in linguistics. Structuralists saw language as system whose elements are related to each other. Furthermore, they believed that grammatical categories should be based on syntax and not on semantics (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, p. 34). Along with structuralism, there was a psychological theory called behaviorism and it was very influential in describing language. According to behaviorism, language was a verbal behavior (Skinner, 1957, in Larsen-Freeman, 2001, p. 35). Therefore, language learning was seen as a habit formation that is conducted through stimulus-response conditioning by imitation and repetition of patterns.

These ideas were criticizes in the second half of the twentieth century by Chomsky. He presented generative grammar and the concept of Universal Grammar. This concept referred to innate language faculty that every human has. This faculty includes a set of universal principles that allow every human to acquire any language. These principles are "general enough so they can account for what all languages have in common" (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, p. 35). Therefore, according to Larsen-Freeman (2001), Chomsky focused on grammatical competence. He defined it as speakers' knowledge of a finite system of rules that enables them to generate infinite number of sentences. When it comes to learning, Chomsky claimed that learners can abstract the rules from language they hear through hypothesis formation and testing.

Contrary to formalists, functionalists stress pragmatics as more important than morphology and syntax. Furthermore, since it is meaning and communication that are in focus, functionalists expand their explanations of grammatical structures from sentence level to level of discourse. Thus, language is not an autonomous set of norms. Furthermore, Chomsky's concept of grammatical competence is broadened by Hymes who added sociolinguistic perspective to this concept (Cenoz Iragui, 2004). For Chomsky, it was grammatical knowledge in form of mental state which does not have to be put into function, whereas for Hymes it presented not only grammatically correct but also socially appropriate language production.

All these theories influenced developments of different approaches to language teaching. Contemporary theories related to language teaching try to integrate both aspects of grammatical knowledge and competence; rules of language system and rules of their use in social contexts. Also, contemporary approaches try to integrate all language levels, morphology and syntax as

well as phonetics, phonology, semantics and pragmatics, into pedagogical treatment of languages.

## 2.2. Grammar-translation approach

We have previously mentioned that methods for teaching classical languages were also applied to teaching modern languages. That approach was called Grammar-translation approach or the Traditional Method and it was at its peak in 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to this approach, the basis for teaching a foreign language was grammar teaching and translation. There was very little use of the target language and the only two skills that were developed were reading and writing.

Instruction entailed explicit and deductive presentation of grammar rules and items which were sequenced; they were taught from simple to more complex ones. The teacher used learners' L1 to present the rules that learners had to memorize. Formal instruction was provided only by the teacher so there were no specific textbooks containing any kind of grammar rules presentation. After the presentation, learners practiced grammatical rules by translating sentences from L2 to L1 and reading difficult classical texts (Celce-Murcia, 1991). The only materials used for this type of teaching were a reader, which contained classical texts and a bilingual dictionary for translations. Learners did not communicate with each other so there were no activities where learners could negotiate for meaning and spontaneously learn the foreign language. When asked, learners were expected to immediately produce correct answers and their errors were corrected on the spot.

#### 2.3. Direct approach

During the 1880s, learners who were taught according to Grammar-translation approach, failed to use the foreign language in communication (Gurrey, 1961; Larsen-Freeman, 2009), so a new approach was established. Direct approach was the opposite extreme of the previous one because its focus was entirely on the spoken language, inductive instruction and omission of L1. It was the result of a strong rebellion by a great number of phoneticians that were convinced language learning should occur through speech (Harding, 1967).

Supporters of this approach believed that the right way to teach and learn grammar is inductively through repeated use of foreign language, and explicit rules were forbidden. The entire lesson was conducted through dialogues so formal instruction was practically omitted. In

that way, learners had the opportunity to discover rules for themselves through interaction with other learners and the teacher. Language used in this type of teaching is only L2 and activities are mostly interactive so the skills were developed in this order: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Materials used for those activities were mostly handbooks that served only as referential points for most activities because it was the teacher who was responsible for initiating a communicative activity. Grammatical items, therefore, were not marked in any special sections in textbooks but sequenced throughout instruction.

#### 2.4. Audio-lingual approach

Alongside Direct approach, another one was developing; the Audio-lingual approach. It had similarities with the previous one in terms of sequencing grammatical items and using mostly spoken language during instruction. However, at that time, during the 1940s, behavioral psychology was very influential and, combined with structural linguistics, it influenced approaches to language teaching. Advocates of this approach believed that learning a language was a process of habit formation (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

Instruction of grammar rules was conducted inductively and grammatical items were sequenced. During this type of instruction, the language that was used was mostly L2 and the translation to L1 was omitted. Typical activities were, therefore, dialogues and pattern drills where the goal was memorization and mimicry of sentence patterns. Activities of that kind prevented learners' errors which were considered to be bad habits and, if they did occur, they were corrected immediately (Celce-Murcia, 1991). This shows that accuracy and pronunciation were very important so skills were sequenced like this: listening, speaking and reading, and writing at the very end. Therefore, textbooks used in this approach had no specific grammar summaries in any part. They were accompanied with additional materials, mostly sound materials that learners had to listen, memorize and imitate. These materials were useful if the teacher was not a native speaker or could not provide the correct model of pronunciation which was considered very important.

#### 2.5. Cognitive code approach

After being swung from only-grammar instruction to no-grammar instruction, the pendulum returned to grammar instruction but with a new and improved vision. This innovation was brought by linguists and psycholinguists who proposed that language learning was not a habit formation but formation of hypothesis about language and rule acquisition. However, there was still more focus on form than on meaning (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

Unlike in the previous approaches, in Cognitive code approach grammar was taught either inductively or deductively depending on learners' inclinations, which was a big change in grammar pedagogy. Nevertheless, descriptions of rules were done in learners' L1 (Krashen, 1982). Another big change that this approach brought was the vision of learners' errors. They were not to be eradicated immediately as a negative aspect of the learning process. They were seen as useful indicators in the process that showed progress and stages of development each learner goes through. Therefore, activities that were applied in this approach were error correction and their analysis (Celce-Murcia, 1991). Materials used for instruction were based mostly on Chomsky's ideas in generative grammar. They contained grammar summaries that assisted those learners who did not benefit from inductive approach and needed specific description of a grammar rule.

#### 2.6. Comprehension approach

The 'pendulum' again altered its direction in 1970s when, in the USA, language methodologists suggested that first language and second language learning were two very similar processes. These changes were influenced by Krashen's theory on second language acquisition. According to that theory, it is enough for the learner to be exposed to sufficient comprehensible input in order to acquire the foreign language in the same way that a child acquires its mother tongue. Learners should, therefore, be exposed to the target language and respond to it nonverbally in the beginning, and afterwards, when they felt ready, they could produce in the target language.

The input that learners were exposed to, during the instruction, was in the target language and was one step beyond their level of competence (Celce-Murcia, 1991). However, learners could choose which language they would use (Krashen, 1982). If any grammar was to be learnt in class it was done inductively, but most of the grammar work served only for monitoring the

production when the learners have the time to consciously think about grammatical rules; during homework assignments. According to Krashen (1982), activities like dialogue may have included some structures, but the aim of the activities was only "to enable students to talk about ideas, perform tasks, and solve problems" (p. 138). Materials used for this grammarless instruction were pictures, realia and learners' background knowledge. These materials again omitted any specific presentation of a grammatical item or the explanation of a grammar rule.

#### 2.7. Communicative approach

In the 1970s, a new goal was set for second language teaching. It was based on the works of anthropological linguists such as Hymes and functional linguists like Halliday. After being defined as a set of grammatical rules that ought to be mastered, and a habit formation, and finally as a cognitive presentation governed by rules, language was defined as "an instrument of communication" (Celce-Murcia, 1991, p. 461). Unlike in the Comprehension approach, where the focus is on the understanding of the language, Communicative approach emphasized language use and production. This new definition of the content of learning, defined the process of teaching and its goal; learners' communicative competence. This approach is currently present in the majority of schools. Nevertheless, this new approach did not entirely bring peace because there are still debates on the way grammar should be introduced and practiced.

Supporters of this approach claim that the subject of the language instruction should be meaningful, content- and discourse-based so it would promote real-life communication that learners encounter on a daily basis outside of school. For that reason, learners engage in activities where they negotiate for meaning through dialogues, role-plays and dramatizations. This instruction also includes social functions and semantic notions as well as linguistic forms in order to accomplish its goal; learner's ability to express him or herself accurately, meaningfully and appropriately in the target language (Celce-Murcia, 1991). The teacher, during the instruction, guides learners to communicate and use the language, and corrects and provides feedback on learners' production only if it is necessary for communication to continue. Most of the used materials, therefore, replicate authentic communicative situations from everyday life and provide exercises that "take into account [...] the inexplicit nature of much naturally-occurring conversation" and "practice in turn-taking and in interruption techniques" (Cunningsworth, 1987, p. 48). Since formal instruction is present in either inductive or deductive

manner, textbooks contain certain grammar summaries for the sake of accurate and appropriate learners' production.

Compared to one another, each of the approaches seems one-dimensional and created only to contradict the previous one. In order to make use of them, it is important to understand them as suggestions for conducting a lesson. They can be altered and their features balanced in order to adapt them to our styles of teaching and to learners' needs so we can facilitate learning processes keeping in mind personal characteristics of our learners (Gurrey, 1961; Ur, 1988). Today there is a little bit of both extremes of grammar teaching; grammar is considered to be an important part of language instruction and it is implemented into meaningful use of the target language in communication. The pendulum seems to have slowed down, but it is not fixed in one place. Numerous varieties of textbooks still reflect these small fluctuations and disagreements so, in order to have an insight of the current situation, it is important to investigate the characteristics of textbooks used in our classrooms.

# 3. GRAMMAR PEDAGOGY IN TEXTBOOKS

Much research has been done about the instruction of grammar items, and as we know there is still no unified satisfactory answer to how grammar should be taught. However, there is an agreement that grammar should be taught in a meaningful context where learners can connect the form with the meaning and its appropriate use in social interaction (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Gurrey, 1961; Larsen-Freeman, 1991; Ur, 1996). It is important to investigate how much of those newer perspectives and instructions are reflected in an important element of teaching process present in every classroom; the textbook. Even though it is not the only source and material teachers can use, the textbook is still seen as a basis for syllabus design and lesion plans and it is a source of activities and tasks (Fernández, 2011). It is not only useful to teachers in planning the teaching process, but it is also useful to learners. Having a textbook during their learning process, they are able to observe and measure for themselves the progress they have made (Chalker, 1994; Haycroft, 1998). A textbook is a structured container of the knowledge learners must acquire so it is easier for both learners and teachers to evaluate the development of learners' knowledge. This organization is the primary characteristic of any textbook and "even traditional materials may have a primary organizing principle (structures) and a secondary one (topic or situations)" (McDonough, Shaw, & Masuhara, 1997, p. 34).

There is a vast variety of textbooks published today. The reason to that is twofold; the textbook is still seen as an indispensible help for carrying out lessons, and, there are still differences in opinions about the ways of teaching grammar. This is why it is important to evaluate the textbooks we are using in our classrooms in order to obtain an insight into the possibilities and options for teaching grammar. It is important to make sure "that careful selection is made, and that materials selected closely reflect [the needs of the learners and] the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program" (Cunnungsworth, 1995, p. 7).

#### 3.1. Previous studies on second language textbooks

Grammar instruction in EFL textbooks was investigated by a number of researchers. Fortune (1998) investigated activities found in several EFL textbooks trying to establish the type of methods for teaching grammar that those textbooks fostered. Typical characteristics of examined exercises were that they were mechanical and decontextualized. Activities were mostly the drill types like filling-in the gaps with the appropriate form. This was an explicit and deductive

instruction very similar to the Traditional approach. This is in accordance with what Ellis (2002) claimed; traditional methodology still remained in the newer days because grammar instruction was conducted through explicit descriptions and the practice was still controlled and mechanical. Nevertheless, Islam (2003) discovered some changes in EFL textbook activities. They were mostly oral activities where, as in audio-lingual approach, learners had to listen and repeat structures.

Similar investigations were conducted on French, Italian and Spanish textbooks. Walz (1989) reported that there was an attempt of contextualizing drills in French collage textbooks for the purpose of communicative teaching. Nevertheless, those attempts were far from real communication where context determines the meaning and the form required for communication. Lally (1998) repeated this investigation and concluded that there was a small change in terms of mechanical drills and communicative activities; drills slowly made way for communication to enter.

In Italian textbooks, Aski (2003) evaluated activities in seven elementary textbooks. She found that the majority of exercises were drills. Even dough those involved drills that were communicative and meaningful, there was only a few activities that tried to practice real communication. Aski concluded, similar to Lally (1998), that the change and incorporation of the new SLA findings into textbooks was a very slow process. She added that it was necessary to evaluate materials used in classrooms and cooperate with publishers in order to update foreign language textbooks.

Fernández (2011) investigated six college-level, beginning Spanish textbooks to evaluate presentation and practice of grammatical items. Like many before her, she found that traditional ideas still linger and that explicit and deductive instruction is present in the majority of investigated textbooks. Fernández (2011) also found that production practice was still very controlled. In addition, the textbooks offered "limited opportunities for students to process target form through written input" (p. 165). Thus, according to the author, the importance of input in learning process in almost completely neglected. However, there are some small indications of higher percentage of input-based activities and more free communicative production activities in a few textbooks. This shows that some textbooks are exhibiting small advancement in terms of incorporating contemporary knowledge on L2 grammar instruction.

It can be concluded that research results and new ideas and attitudes toward teaching grammar did not immediately enter textbooks. In other words, there is still large percentage of deductive explicit instruction that is characteristic of early methods. Nevertheless, a progress can be seen, so it is important to analyze current textbooks to have an insight into possible ways of teaching and problems that may occur.

# 3.2. Implicit and explicit instruction

In the previous sections, we presented different approaches to teaching grammar and investigations that tried to determine how textbooks reflect those approaches and if they integrate new findings. It is now obvious that of all the possible debates that are still open, the one on explicit and implicit instruction is the one that seems to be most problematic. Implicit instruction has no reference to rules and structures (DeKeyser, 2003; Larsen-Freeman, 2009; Scott, 1990). Therefore, learners need only to be exposed to grammatical items within a context that is meaningful and comprehensible to them. In that way learners acquire grammatical structures of the target language. This is based on Krashen's theory on comprehensible input and natural approach. On the other hand, explicit instruction presents grammar rules that were stated by either teachers or learners. In this case, learners "develop conscious mental representation of them" and they are aware what they are supposed to learn (Ellis, 2012, p. 275).

A number of investigations has been done on this subject in order to determine which instruction type is best for teaching and learning foreign language grammar. In his article, Ellis (2006) presents several studies that tried to determine if grammar should be taught at all. According to the author, Corder and Krashen claimed that instruction was unnecessary because each learner possesses a built-in-syllabus that enables him or her to process comprehensible input and acquire language structures in a natural way (as cited in Ellis, 2006, p. 85). In this sense, according to Krashen (1982), rule instruction has no place in language instruction because it provides conscious knowledge that is not connected with fluency and it is not responsible for creating expressions. This conscious knowledge can be useful only as "an editor, as a Monitor, 'correcting' the errors" (Krashen, 1982, p. 83) because there is no time for learners to be focused on both the message and its correct form during a communicative act; it can be achieved only in exercises done at home where learners have enough time to 'monitor' their production and correct it. Similar points were presented by Nassaji and Fotos (2004) stating that formal grammar

lessons were believed to provide only declarative knowledge of rules, but not the practical skill to use forms correctly. Therefore, foreign language learning was compared to first language learning and it was only necessary to be exposed to a great amount of comprehensible input in order to, eventually, be able to use the foreign language meaningfully and properly (Krashen, 1981; Schwartz, 1993; Zobl, 1995 as cited in Nassaji and Fotos, 2004).

These claims triggered several empirical studies, such as Pica (1983), Long (1983), and White, Spada, Lightbown & Ranta, (1991), that compared the order of acquisition and the success of naturalistic and instructed learners. All the authors came to the same conclusion; instructed learners progressed at a quicker pace to high levels of proficiency and the order of acquisition is almost completely the same for those who were instructed and for those who acquired it in a natural way. Another researcher reached the same conclusion. Scott (1990), in her article on explicit and implicit instruction, reports on an empirical study where two groups of learners received explicit and implicit instruction of a specific grammar structure. The same study was repeated after some time and in both cases results were the same; the group that received explicit instruction had performed better than the group that received implicit instruction. This indicates that explicit instruction provides for organized insight into foreign language grammar which enables learners to acquire it at a quicker pace providing more time to practice the use of those structures (Scott, 1990). Furthermore, Skehan (1998) and Tomasello (1998) have reached the conclusion that learners are not able to "process target language input for both meaning and form at the same time" (Nassaji and Fotos, 2004, p. 128). This means that it is most probable that learners will attend only to the meaning of the input and fail to notice the structure which would lead to failure in acquiring and producing that structure. This point was proven to be true in the research done by Swain and her colleagues on French immersion program. In this program, learners, after being exposed to great amount of meaningful input, "achieve accuracy in certain grammatical forms" (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004, p. 128). confirmation of that statement was presented by Norris and Ortega who, based on their research, reached the conclusion that explicit instruction, either inductive or deductive, has better outcomes in learners' performance than implicit instruction and that these better outcomes are long-lasting (as cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2009, p. 528).

#### **3.2.1.** Inductive and deductive instruction

When most researchers agreed that it is better to apply explicit instruction, another debate emerged; which is better – inductive or deductive presentation of grammatical rules? In cases where learners are presented with the rule, its description and application, we are talking about deductive explicit instruction. The other possibility is inductive explicit instruction where learners are led to induce the rule after being exposed to an input that contains numerous examples of grammatical structures. Ellis (1998) reported that there are reasons which favor inductive learning. One of those reasons is that learners could be highly motivated if they are allowed to hypothesize and investigate the target language on their own. He stressed that they are more likely to remember what they discover for themselves. This can be related to the ability to learn that CEFR (2001) presents as one of the competences that learners should develop. It is the ability to perceive and play a part in new experience by incorporating new knowledge with the current one so the learners can deal with new language learning difficulties more successfully and independently (CEFR, 2001). Furthermore, if learners are engaged in group activities where they would use the target language, it would also be a communicative activity where they would negotiate for meaning and use the target language actively.

In his later work, Ellis (2006) advocated for explicit formal instruction. "Explicit knowledge of a grammatical structure makes it more likely that learners will attend to the structure in the input and carry out the cognitive comparison between what they observe in the input and in their output" (Ellis, 2006, p. 97). If a foreign language is learnt within a classroom, there are time limitations like duration of lessons. During that relatively short time in classrooms, for most learners is necessary to be guided or instructed. It is possible they do not have enough time or language proficiency to notice particular structures in the input. In that way, learners would not be aware of their own production and, therefore, would not be able to progress in foreign language learning. Ur (2009) concluded that even if the goal of grammar instruction is "implicit knowledge of grammar [...] it does not necessarily follow that grammar should be *taught* implicitly" (p. 3).

However, Ellis (2006) concludes that results are mixed. Investigations by Herron and Tomasello (1992) presented results in favor of inductive instruction, while Robinson (1996) reported that deductive instruction has more positive effect on learners' language development, and there are those who found that there was no major difference when it came to the

effectiveness of the two types of instruction (as discussed in Ellis, 2006, p. 98). Nevertheless, it has been agreed that there are some rules that are more complex than others so it is possible to teach them in a different way than the simpler ones. Several researchers concluded that explicit instruction is extremely useful for instruction of simpler rules (Hammerley, 1975; Selinger, 1975 as cited in Ellis, 1998, p. 49). Larsen-Freeman (2009) agreed by stating that inductive instruction can be very suitable for rules that are hard to express and internalize due to their complexity.

In textbooks, inductive instruction is conducted through texts, pictures and communicative contexts that are presented by either authentic or fabricated material. Authentic material refers to, according to CEFR (2001), "untreated authentic texts [...] (daily newspapers, magazines, broadcasts, etc.); selected, graded and/or edited so as to be judged appropriate to the learner's experience, interests and characteristics" (p. 146). On the other hand, fabricated materials are "texts composed for use in language teaching [...] to give contextualized examples of linguistic content or they are isolated sentences for exercise purposes" (CEFR, 2001, p. 146). In inductive instruction, learners would first be presented with a task in a form of a text which they would analyze. They would be instructed to notice something particular or simply a new structure that they had not worked before. After that, the teacher would guide learners with questions and examples from the text in order for learners to induce the rule. On the other hand, deductive instruction can be recognized by specially marked sections entitled, for example, grammar corner, grammar spot, etc. There would be a description of a rule accompanied by a sentence where the use of the rule would be exemplified. After the description of the rule, there would be a series of exercises for learners to apply knowledge of that rule. Every teacher who worked with a textbook always had to worry, given the heterogeneity of textbook users, about the insufficiency of the presentation of grammar rules, level and amount of detail that grammar is explained.

Having analyzed research results and related them to any classroom situation, the best solution to all these debates would be a compromise. An interesting attitude towards this idea was presented by Borg (1998) who investigated teachers' pedagogical systems that influenced teachers' choice of the approach to grammar teaching. When the author investigated inductive and deductive teaching, he reported that inductive learning was applied in most cases but as a 'plan A'. This meant that teachers kept in mind the possibility of providing their learners with rule descriptions if learners found themselves unable to induce rules on their own. One teacher in

the research concluded: "Yes, that's all part of providing knowledge. Whether they discover it for themselves through tasks I've designed, or whether I explain the grammar to them, I think it amounts to the same thing, I'm providing knowledge" (Borg, 1998, p. 23). According to CEFR (2001), "learners may (be expected/required to) develop their grammatical competence" (p. 152) inductively by being exposed to new grammatical structures in authentic texts or in texts specially composed to demonstrate the form, function and meaning of particular structures, or deductively by the presentation and explanation of formal paradigms and tables of forms followed by formal exercises. Therefore, in order to create a balance between different attitudes and approaches to grammar instruction, it is reasonable to assume that teachers are the ones who should combine the two types due to the learners' different characteristics, preferences and styles. Finally, Larsen-Freeman (2009) concludes that "students who receive a blend of implicit and explicit grammar instruction are likely to be well served" (p. 529).

#### 3.2.2. Focus on form

As ideas on language teaching progress towards learners' ability to communicate and to articulate themselves properly in the target language, it becomes clear that it is necessary to address both grammar structure and its proper use in communicative acts. Long (1991) proposed a form of instruction within explicit instruction which he called focus on form opposing it to focus on forms. The latter instruction refers to isolated presentation of separated grammatical structures, where learners' focus was on accuracy of the form, followed by activities directed at only one grammatical structure (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004; Ellis R., 2006). In focus on form, learners are guided to notice and understand several grammatical structures within communicative contexts. The author claimed that systematic focus on form, which is implemented into communicative tasks, creates a quicker rate of learning and advanced levels of final second language achievement than the instruction that has no references to grammatical form. Furthermore, Ellis (2006) differentiates two types of focus; planned and incidental. The former refers to instruction "where a focused task is required to elicit occasion for using a predetermined grammatical structure" (p. 100). Incidental focus on form, on the other hand, contains a communicative activity in which there is no predetermined structure to focus on and the focus is on every structure that shows to be problematic to learners during communicative

activity. This type of instruction, however, does not separate grammar instruction from communicative-based curriculum (Ellis, 2006).

Research, such as Spada and Lightbown (1993) and Lightbown (1998) confirm this efficiency of instruction that fosters the combination of communicative interaction and focus on grammar structure (as discussed in Larsen-Freeman 1991, p. 251). Furthermore, Ellis (2006) claims that there are some discussions on how this approach effects development of implicit knowledge. Long and Doughty hold that focus on form allows learners to acquire implicit knowledge because, while "attending to the linguistic form", they are also "engaged with understanding and producing meaningful message" (as cited in Ellis, 2006, p. 101). On the other hand, DeKeyser claims that grammar structures can be learnt "through automatization of explicit knowledge" (p. 101) what is achievable only through activities, such as drills, that are focused directly at a single grammatical structure in a series of separate lessons (as cited in Ellis, 2006, p. 101).

Nevertheless, it has been concluded that the aim of foreign language teaching is development of learners' communicative competence so they would be able to "accurately convey meaning in the manner they deem appropriate" (Larsen-Freeman, 1991, p. 255). For that reason it is necessary to integrate both grammar structures and meaningful communication into foreign language teaching. Nassaji and Fotos (2004) confirm this stating that contemporary studies support the provision of communicative opportunities that have form focused instruction and meaningful communication combined. Therefore, learners require occasions to encounter, internalize, and apply instructed forms connecting form and meaning "so that the forms can become part of their interlanguage behavior" (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004, p. 130). In other words, it is necessary to provide learners with exercises where they will have opportunities to relate grammatical structures with their meanings in socially acceptable contexts. In the following section, we will describe several types of grammar practice that can be found in textbooks.

#### 3.3. Types of grammar practice

After establishing that grammar instruction has a place in foreign language teaching, it is important to evaluate learners' ability to use explicit knowledge of grammatical forms in real performance. This means that, as DeKeyser explained, "fluency or proceduralization of declarative knowledge requires practice in which students use the target language point

meaningfully while keeping the declarative knowledge in working memory" (as cited in Larsen-Freeman, 1991, p. 258). Therefore, no matter if it was introduced by teachers or if it was induced by learners, it is necessary to put all grammatical rules into use. Moreover, Gurrey (1961) explained that study of grammar is a type of a scientific study and every idea or hypothesis in this kind of study ought to be put through a series of tests in order to be either verified or dismissed. In case of grammar teaching and learning, to be tested means to be applied through a series of exercises and tasks. This means we should investigate what type of tasks and activities best promote and put into efficient use the knowledge acquired during grammar introduction.

"Continued practice atomizes the use of the rule so the students do not have to think about it consciously any longer" (Larsen-Freeman, 2009, p. 523). The goal of grammar practice, therefore, is learners' ability to produce grammatical structures properly on their own without strictly focusing on the form. For that matter, during learning process, teachers supply learners' with a variety of exercises that allow learners to progress from internalizing a form to connecting it with its possible meanings in different contexts. According to CEFR (2001), planning of these activities involves "selection, ordering and step-by-step presentation and drilling of new material" starting with short fragments and finishing with elaborated productions in the target language (p. 151). This would result in learners' fluent production of meaningful, accurate and appropriate output.

Ur (1988) claims that there are several factors that influence the effectiveness of grammar practice. Very important factors to consider are volume and repetition when a structure's form and meaning are repeatedly received and produced through a variety of exercises in different contexts. This leads to another factor; heterogeneity. This is conditioned by the fact that our class consists of a heterogeneous group where each individual has its personal styles and strategies for learning so, by making practice diverse developing all four skills, we make sure that "a higher proportion of the class get learning value out of the practice" (Ur, 1988, p. 14).

"The application of grammar learned can take various forms; but most application exercises should increase the pupils' awareness of meanings and the way these are expressed, should sharpen understanding, or throw light on what has to be expressed and the way to express it" (Gurrey, 1961, p. 26)

This means that it is necessary to provide learners with exercises of grammatical forms imbedded into different authentic contexts so they would be aware of different meanings one

form can have. In that way a learner establishes form-meaning relationship and acquires better understanding of forms and their use. Furthermore, when considering conditions influencing the authenticity of real life tasks involving interaction, it is important to include factors related to interlocutors. Therefore, practice has to have different dynamics ranging from individual to group interaction (CEFR, 2001).

Teachers are able to provide practice for learners by combining a variety of exercises; "from highly controlled text-manipulation exercises to much freer text-creation tasks" (Ellis, 1998, p. 50). This is why a textbook is an important tool in teaching. It provides numerous different exercises that both teachers and learners can use. Ur (1996) supported this idea by presenting seven types of grammar practice. This practice starts with controlled practice of a certain grammatical structure, where learners familiarize with forms of grammatical structures. This is then followed by exercises that gradually become freer. This kind of sequencing leads to independent, meaningful and appropriate production of grammatical structures. According to CEFR (2001), "a changing balance needs to be established between attention to meaning and form, fluency and accuracy" while conducting teaching process so that language learning process and task performance are both enabled and recognized (p. 158).

The first type of grammar practice presented by Ur (1996) immediately follows the introduction of a grammatical structure. It is called *awareness exercise*. Here learners are presented with the structure within a simple context in order to pay attention to its form and, possibly, to relate it to its meaning in the given context. An example of such an exercise is when learners have to recognize and mark in some way a certain structure in short texts in the target language (e.g. choose the correct form to complete the text).

The second type is called *controlled drill*. After encountering the structure in a context mostly in written form, learners are instructed to produce the structure, first in written form, according to a given example. An example of this type of exercise would be *slot-fillers*, where learners insert appropriate form or *substitution*, altering the structure in a predetermined way, for example changing singular into plural or active into passive voice (CEFR, 2001).

According to Ur (1996), practice should continue with the third type entitled *meaningful drills*. In a task of this kind, leaners are allowed to elaborate their answers in the sense of vocabulary alterations. Even though learners' answers are still controlled and their elaborations are limited, learners' attention is slowly shifted from form to meaning and message the form is

related to. An example of this type is an exercise where learners have to, according to a set grammatical pattern, write sentences about themselves. In that way they can choose vocabulary and but also stay within determined parameters. A very similar intention can be seen in the fourth type called *guided and meaningful practice*. In this case production goes one step further and allows learners to form sentences in which, even though there is a predetermined pattern, they are entirely free to choose vocabulary to express themselves. An example of this type is when learners are instructed to form a conditional clause where the condition is predetermined.

Since the author believes that forming practice through several steps that lead from accuracy to fluency in production, last three types that she presents are moving away from controlled and semi-controlled practice and, based on the knowledge acquired through previous exercise, learners are allowed to freely progress toward independent communicative production. Unlike exercises focusing specifically on decontextualized practice of grammar structures, communicative activities, whether they reflect real-life use of the target language or educational purpose, aim to actively include learners in meaningful communication to the extent that they require learners to understand, negotiate and express meaning in order to reach a communicative aim (CEFR, 2001).

The fifth type is entitled (*structure-based*) *free sentence composition*. In this case, learners have the opportunity to form personal sentences as a response to a prompt, either visual or situational. Composed sentences have to contain a particular structure that is to be learnt. It is mostly from this step forward that the production entails both writing and speaking skills, whereas at the beginning it is mostly written production. A typical example would be a picture of people involved in different activities for learners to describe using predetermined grammar structure.

The sixth type, (structure-based) discourse composition, expands the production from sentence level to discourse level. After being instructed to include the structure as much as possible in their production, learners either open a debate or write down their opinion on a given topic. An example of this type could be a task where learners would have to provide a solution for a problematic situation using, for example, modal verbs. The last, seventh type, free discourse, is very similar to the previous type, only without any explicit instruction to use the particular structure. However, there is a probability that the task is constructed in a way that it is possible for the structure to appear.

Each of these types contributes to the development of effectiveness, clarity and precision of the target language use. It is important that learners practice grammar structures in such a progressive way in order to gain "a more conscious control of language in speaking and writing, and a quicker and more exact comprehension of what is heard and read" (Gurrey, 1961, p. 81). The progress to freer exercises is crucial because "rules and forms learned in isolated meaningless drills may be harder to retrieve in the context of communicative interaction" (Larsen-Freeman, 1991, p. 258). That is why Ur (1988) advises that after exercises where grammar is seen as the key learning objective (e.g. controlled drills), learners should soon move on to exercises that allow meaningful use of grammar structures for "acquiring a thorough mastery of the language as a whole" (Ur, 1988, p. 5). This author also stated that some teachers and textbooks tend to focus only on one aspect like accuracy over fluent use or on written over oral exercises, so it is very important to create a balance keeping in mind different needs of a particular class (Ur, 1988).

The old approaches, as we said earlier, still linger in contemporary approaches and materials. Many of them are neglecting the importance of communicative contexts in language instruction and production. Thus, current SLA views do not support old-style production practice with very limiting exercises that do not combine form and meaning expressed through communication. These types of activities lack the opportunities for learners to have meaningful and purposeful interaction that stimulate language awareness, hypothesis testing and consolidation of connections between form and meaning. In the following section, we will analyze this situation in Croatian contexts.

# 4. THE STUDY

This investigation is a qualitative study of *New Headway Intermediate*. More precisely, the study involves two editions; the second edition published in 1996 and the fourth edition published in 2009. We have evaluated types of presentation that each edition offers and types of exercises and activities throughout those editions of the textbook. The goal of the analysis was to provide an insight into the current situation in teaching EFL grammar in Croatia. More precisely, our aim was to investigate if there has been a change concerning presentation and practice of grammatical structures in two editions of the same textbook. We also tried to determine if new revelations and contemporary research findings were reflected in the approach that the textbook fosters.

# 4.1. New Headway Intermediate

Authors Liz and John Soars published the first edition of *New Headway* in 1984. According to information we obtained from Oxford University Press Croatia<sup>1</sup>, it was officially approved by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia in Croatian schools in 1999. Furthermore, according to the same source, *Intermediate* level is used in over 50% of high schools in Croatia.

New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition was published in 1996 and approved by the Ministry in Croatia in 2001. According to the authors' statements on the cover of the textbook, it combines the best of traditional methods with more recent approaches in order to teach learners to use English both accurately and fluently. It is also stated on the cover that grammar is presented inductively through contextualized examples and controlled and freer tasks developing all four skills. This edition contains 12 lessons. Each lesson starts with grammar section that contains two parts; Presentation and Practice and in most lessons there is two of each of those parts. Each Presentation contains Grammar Questions directed to learners for induction or deduction of grammar rules. After Presentation and Practice, there is a short explicit presentation of grammar rules from particular lesson called Language Review. After that short overview of grammar rules, there are segments entitled Reading, Speaking, Writing and Listening. Those segments contain different exercises and activities where learners practice different aspects of English including grammar. At the end of the textbook there are lists of tape

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Oxford University Press, Predstavništvo u Republici Hrvatskoj, Maksimirska cesta 98, 10000 Zagreb

scripts from each lesson and a section called *Grammar Reference* with deductive presentation and examples of grammar done throughout the textbook.

New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition was published in the 2009 and approved by the Ministry in 2009. It is stated on the cover that this edition is updated when it comes to topics and graphic design and fosters a direct approach to grammar. Furthermore, it is highlighted that the textbook possesses the latest classroom technology and combines traditional methodology with the communicative approach through role plays and personalization. Therefore, even though it develops all four skills, this edition accentuates speaking and practice of spoken English. General outline of this edition is very similar to the outline of the second edition. However, the fourth edition has shorter lessons. This is so because each lesson has only one *Presentation* and one *Practice*. Also, it is because several writing exercises and tasks are extracted from lessons and placed at the end of the textbook. Another difference is in *Presentation* where questions for inducing grammar rules are in a section called *Grammar Spot* which is placed within *Presentation*, and not at the end like in the second edition. There is a new section at the end of each lesson called *Everyday English*. This edition also ends with *Grammar Reference*, a deductive presentation of grammar from the textbook. Also, it is the only explicit deductive presentation of grammar rules in the textbook.

#### 4.2. Research questions and procedure

We have based our analysis on the criteria offered by Cunningsworth (1995), Ur (1996) and CEFR (2001) concerning the instruction of grammar structures and their presentation in the textbook. In order to have an insight into what kind of approach to teaching grammar the textbook fosters, we have analyzed the following two aspects of the process of teaching EFL grammar; presentation of grammar structures and their practice. In order to establish the way each grammar structure is introduced and presented in each lesson, we have formed two research questions (RQ) to analyze the presentation;

- 1. Does the textbook foster inductive, deductive or balanced presentation with focus on form (FOF)?
  - 2. Does the textbook provide contextualized examples of the structure in presentation?

The second part of the analysis refers to the practice of grammar structures that the textbook provides. We wished to establish if the textbook fosters balance between developing fluency and accuracy by progressing from controlled and semi-controlled exercises to free communicative exercises and by integrating grammar practice into meaningful and real-life communication in order for learners to establish form-meaning relationship. In order to accomplish that balance it is also necessary to combine the four skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking) and different work dynamics (individual, pair and group work) during practice. Therefore, we have formed the following four research questions to get an insight into the type of the practice the textbook offers:

- 3. Does practice develop all four skills?
- 4. What kind of work dynamics does the textbook foster?
- 5. Does the textbook offer practice within a meaningful and real-life context?
- 6. Does the textbook foster balance between developing accuracy and fluency?

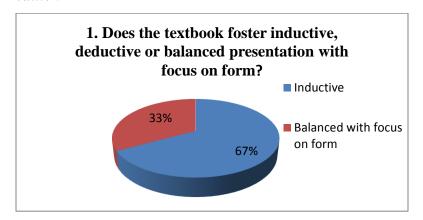
#### 4.3. RESULTS

We will present the results of our analysis in form of percentages in (pie) charts. We start by presenting the results based on the analysis of the second edition. First we describe the presentation of structures and then their practice. The same procedure will be followed for the fourth edition.

#### 4.3.1. NEW HEADWAY INTERMEDIATE – THE SECOND EDITION

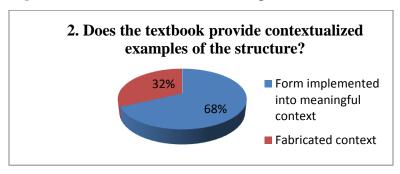
#### **PRESENTATION**

**Figure 1** – The ratio of deductive and inductive presentation in *New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition* 



New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition fosters inductive presentation. It accounts for 67% of Presentation. This kind of presentation involves reading and listening to dialogues in which target structures are used. This is followed by short controlled exercises for comprehension check without particular attention to the form. Exercises are followed by Grammar Questions about target structures previously introduced in order to guide learners to induce when and why particular structures are used (see Appendix 1). The balance between inductive and deductive presentation with focus on form (FOF) accounts for 33% of Presentation. This type of presentation involves reading and listening to texts with target structures written in italics or left out in order for learner to write them in during listening. The texts are also followed by Grammar Questions that guide learners to induce the rule (see Appendix 1). There is not a single lesson that presents grammar structures in a deductive way (see Figure 1).

**Figure 2** – The ratio of contextualized presentation in *New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition* 



This edition offers contextualized presentation of grammar structures in 68% of *Presentation* (see **Figure 2**). Contextualized examples refer to authentic texts or dialogues where the target structure is used in a meaningful and real-life context (see Appendix 1). When it comes to contexts fabricated for educational purposes, 32% of *Presentation* in the textbook consists of very short dialogues which contain the structure in question without sufficient meaningful context (see Appendix 1).

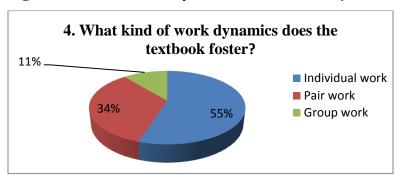
# **PRACTICE**

Figure 3 – The ratio of practice of four skills in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition



New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition fosters balance between the four skills in Practice. When it comes to receptive skills, reading is present in 29% and listening is present in 20% of Practice. On the other hand, writing accounts for 23% and speaking accounts for 28% of the exercises in this edition (see **Figure 3**). The textbook offers tape scripts where learners can listen to different dialogues or monologues and it also provides learners with texts to read during

or after listening. Exercises that develop speaking skills include dialogues in pair or group discussions where learners share their opinions on given subjects. Writing is developed through exercises where learners have to take notes or fill in the blanks while listening and writing short essays on a given topic or according to a given example (see Appendix 1).



**Figure 4** – Ratio of work dynamics in *New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition* 

This edition does not foster balance when it comes to work dynamics in *Practice*. The ratio of work dynamics is the following: 55% of activities are structured for individual work, 34% exercises foster pair work and 11% of the practice is designed for group work (see **Figure 4**). Exercises that encourage individual work include exercises with blanks and answering reading comprehension questions. Exercises that foster pair work include forming, asking and answering questions on a given topic and comparing notes after a listening task. Group work is present in exercises where learners discuss certain topics in small groups or read and present different texts on given topics (see Appendix 1).

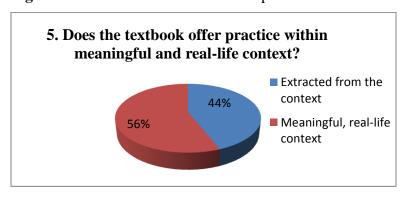


Figure 5 – The ratio of contextualized practice in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

In *New Headway Intermediate* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 56% of the practice is within a meaningful and real-life communicative context and 44% of the exercises are extracted from a communicative context (see **Figure 5**). Exercises that are placed within meaningful and real-life contexts involve asking and answering questions or having debates on given topics and the target structure appears constantly. On the other hand, exercises that are extracted from the context are presented as a list of sentences and learners have to fill in the blanks or match parts of the sentences (see Appendix 1).

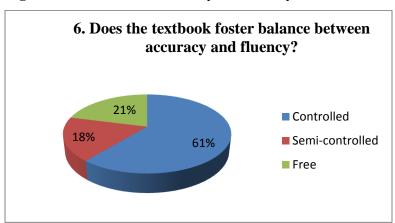


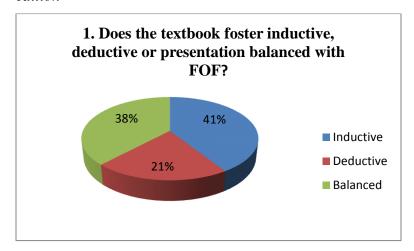
Figure 6 – The ratio of accuracy and fluency in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

This edition provides mostly controlled types of exercises. The ratio of accuracy and fluency is the following: 61% of the exercises are controlled, 21% are free and 18% percent are semi-controlled (see **Figure 6**). Controlled exercises refer to exercises where learners have to fill in the blanks with target structures in either isolated sentences or whole texts, and form questions and statements according to a given example. In the semi-controlled practice, exercises include answering personal questions or giving advice where learners are free to choose which vocabulary they wish to use. Finally, free practice involves tasks and activities where learners have to produce, either in written or oral form, a larger text on a given topic and they choose lexical and grammatical structures they wish to use (see Appendix 1).

#### 4.3.2. NEW HEADWAY INTERMEDIATE – THE FOURTH EDITION

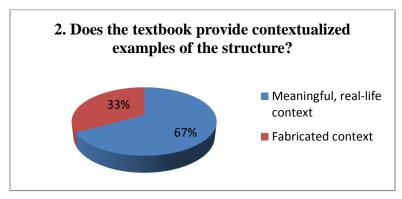
## **PRESENTATION**

**Figure 7** – The ratio of deductive and inductive presentation in *New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition* 



New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition fosters balance in Presentation of grammatical structures. The ratio of deductive and inductive presentation is the following: 41% is inductive, 21% is deductive and 38% of Presentation includes focus on form (see Figure 7). Inductive presentation involves texts or dialogues where the target structure is presented. This is followed by a controlled exercise and a Grammar Spot with questions formed to guide learners to induce rules. On the other hand, deductive presentation includes explanations of target structures. This is followed by several controlled exercises. Finally, balanced instruction involves texts and activities with graphically stressed target structures within authentic contexts. (see Appendix 2)

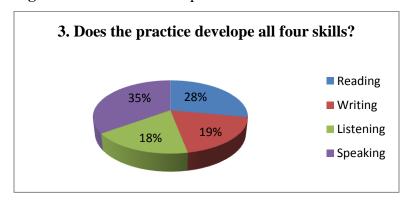
Figure 8 – The ratio of contextualized presentation in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition



The majority of *Presentation* is given within a meaningful context. *New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition* provides 67% of *Presentation* that contains meaningful and real-life communicative contexts. The ratio of *Presentation* that has context fabricated for educational purposes is 33% (see **Figure 8**). Presentation within meaningful contexts refers to authentic texts that contain target structures. These texts are accompanied with photographs. On the other hand, fabricated contexts refer to short dialogues or drawings for learners to describe. (see Appendix 2)

## **PRACTICE**

Figure 9 – The ratio of the practice of four skills in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition



New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition fosters balance between the four skills in Practice. The ratio of receptive skills is the following: reading accounts for 28% and listening accounts for 18% of Practice. On the other hand, the ratio of productive skills is the following: writing accounts for 19% and speaking accounts for 35% of Practice (see **Figure 9**). Learners are

presented with different dialogues or monologues recorded on CDs and with texts to read during or after listening. Exercises that develop speaking skills include dialogues in pairs or group discussions where learners share their opinions on given subjects or role plays that are performed in front of the class. Writing is developed through exercises where learners have to take notes or fill in the blanks while listening and writing different compositions on a given topic (see Appendix 1).

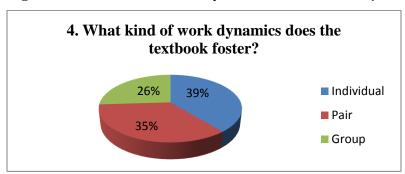
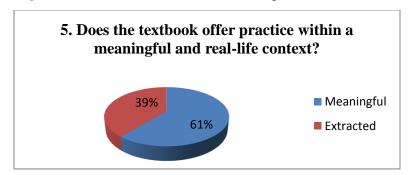


Figure 10 – The ratio of work dynamics in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition

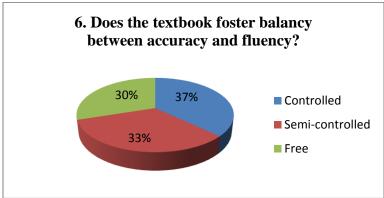
This edition fosters balance in work dynamics. The ratio is the following: 39% of *Practice* fosters individual work, 35% fosters pair work and 26% of the exercises foster group work (see **Figure 10**). Individual work refers to exercises where learners have to connect certain forms or fill in the blanks in sentences. Pair work refers to dialogues, role plays and short discussions on grammar structures. Group work is connected to longer discussions, group reading and presenting different texts. (see Appendix 2)



**Figure 11** – The ratio of contextualized practice in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition

The majority of practice in this edition is contextualized within communicative contexts. Contextualized and meaningful practice accounts for 61% of *Practice* in this textbook. Exercises that are extracted from contexts account for 39% of *Practice* (see **Figure 11**). Contextualized practice refers to tasks and activities where learners use target structures within authentic texts or communicative acts like debates or class discussion on a given subject. Exercises which are not contextualized refer to activities where sentences are isolated and learners have to connect parts of the sentences or choose the correct form to fill in the sentence. (see Appendix 2)

**Figure 12** – The ratio of accuracy and fluency in *New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition* 



New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition fosters balance between developing accuracy and fluency in Practice. Controlled exercises account for 37% of the exercises, semi-controlled exercises account for 35% and free exercises account for 28% of Practice (see Figure 12). Controlled exercises refer to multiple choices, retelling a story and fill-in the gaps. Semi-controlled exercises involve answering personal questions, role plays with given prompts or writing about a given topic according to given questions. Finally, free exercises refer to class discussions on a given topic, projects where learners have to prepare a speech or write a longer essay on a given topic. (see Appendix 2)

#### 4.4. DISCUSSION

Our first research question referred to the type of presentation that the textbooks foster. As we have previously presented, numerous researchers have found explicit instruction better than implicit. Furthermore, many have concluded that inductive way has been proved to be more motivating. It is believed to prompt the use of the target language and the development of the ability to learn. However, not all learners learn at the same pace and there is a time limit for each lesson, so the need for deductive presentation must not be neglected. Thus, a number of researchers have proposed a blend of both, in other words, an eclectic approach. Having that in mind, results of our study show that *New Headway Intermediate the second edition* lacks balance between two these modes of presentation. It fosters inductive instruction more than instruction which includes focus on form. On the other hand, the fourth edition shows balance by combining the two modes. It offers inductive presentation but also, in sections like *grammar spot* and with bolded grammatical forms in texts, it ensures that learners who prefer deduction receive instruction that suits best their learning styles.

Therefore, even though the fourth edition keeps inductive presentation as the main way of presenting grammatical structures, it includes higher percentage of focus on form than the second edition. This means that is presents several different grammatical structures inductively within one lesson. Furthermore, this kind of presentation is supported with graphic design of the lessons. The section with questions for inducing grammatical rules is placed on the first two pages of *Presentation* next to the texts and short exercises with graphically stressed grammatical structures. In that way, learners are more aware of grammar structures but they are still within an authentic and communicative context. This allows teachers to keep a certain pace of lessons and still allow learners to explore and form hypothesis about the language. Contrary to this, the second edition places questions for inducing on the third or fourth page of Presentation without graphically stressing grammatical structures in any way. In that way learners' awareness of grammatical structures is very low. Learners are more focused on the messages in texts and exercises in *Presentation* than they are focused on the forms that convey those meanings. In this way more time is needed to raise learners' awareness of the target structures. In other words, it takes more time to make sure learners have understood target structures, which leaves less time for practice.

Our second research question referred to the context of presentation of grammatical structures. It is connected to the previous RQ in terms of the communicative context required by the FOF. It refers to the context where learners encounter and internalize grammatical structures in order to understand and become aware of the relationship between grammatical structures and meanings they convey. Therefore, contextualized presentation refers to the implementation of grammatical structures into meaningful and real-life contexts like short stories or dialogues in newspaper articles or broadcasts. In that way learners can encounter and internalize the connection between grammatical structures and meanings they can convey. Both editions have high percentage of contextualized and authentic materials in presentation of grammatical structures. Therefore, in both editions, grammar is seen as one of the important pillars in teaching and learning. Thus, grammar helps in reaching the final goal; the ability to communicate appropriately and meaningfully. The difference between the two editions is in graphic presentation. The fourth edition fosters FOF and, therefore, has graphically stressed grammatical structures in texts in *Presentation*. This kind of presentation embodies the three-dimensional grammar framework presented by Larsen-Freeman (2009) where there is balance between form, meaning and context. Moreover, the fourth edition presents bolded or underlined structures so learners could notice the way these structures are formed. Also, this is done in many different contexts so learners can connect target structures with different meanings and social situations. In that way learners are aware of the appropriateness of particular grammatical forms (e.g. modal verbs for asking permission or giving advice).

Presentation in both editions fosters inductive way of introducing grammatical structures within real-life and meaningful contexts. However, the fact that the fourth edition fosters FOF shows the swinging of the grammatical pendulum. Even though it is grammar based, the second edition published in 1996 shows certain doubts in the role of grammar. Therefore, it placed grammar in the background by placing grammar questions for inducing grammar rules on the latter pages of Presentation without any particular graphical markings. The section Language Review is placed after Presentation and Practice and it presents a deductive summary of grammatical structures in each lesson. On the other hand, the fourth edition published in 2009 places grammar spot, questions and examples for inducing grammar rules, in Presentation on the second page. With underlined or bolded target forms, Grammar Spot raises learners' awareness and puts grammar forward acknowledging its important role in the concept of learners'

communicative competence. Therefore, when it comes to presentation of grammar rules and forms, it is the fourth edition that reflects the latest findings and serves both teachers and learners in an effective and balanced way.

Our third research question related to the type of practice fostered in the textbook. We investigated if the textbook's *Practice* enables the development of the four skills through its exercises and activities. As Ur (1988) stated, an eclectic approach would serve best due to the heterogeneity of the group. This awareness of the learners' characteristic, as we previously presented, was not present in earlier approaches to teaching a foreign language. In grammar-translation approach, neglecting the oral production, reading and writing were the only skills developed. This brought a strong reaction of the phoneticians so, in approaches following grammar-translation, oral production became the only skill developed. Communicative approach brought balance because communication was to be conducted in both written and oral form. Therefore, materials that provide communicative practice had to foster both of those skills. Also, in order to establish a successful communication between two or more interlocutors, one had to be able to perceive and understand the communicative intentions of other interlocutors.

Both of these textbooks offer balance between the four skills. However, the fourth edition published in 2009 accentuates more speaking skill combining it with each of the other skills. This fact reflects characteristics of communicative approach that authors of the textbook claimed to foster. This edition, therefore, takes into account the ambiguous nature of much conversation that occurs in real life and provides practice in negotiation for meaning; turn-taking and interruption techniques. The fourth edition also practices communication in the written form with tasks where learners have to prepare an interview, write a speech or a letter to a friend or even a job application. Also, in order to practice the four skills, it is necessary to balance the work dynamics and controlled and free tasks. We will discuss that in more details later in referring to RQ5 and RQ 6.

Our fourth research question was connected to the previous question because, in order to develop receptive and production skills, it is necessary to negotiate for meaning with other interlocutors keeping in mind their characteristics. Therefore, it is important to vary work dynamics so learners can practice real-life use of grammatical structures. Individual work allows learners to apply personal styles and strategies to internalize the target structures. After that it is important to practice those structures in communicative use. This is done by including in

exercises negotiation for meaning and natural characteristics of communicative acts and of the interlocutors. Pair work allows learners to practice in a more 'private' and controlled surrounding in order to gain confidence in their production. This is followed by group work that involves discussions or debates where learners engage in a freer communication practicing of several different grammatical structures.

The second edition fosters more individual work and less group discussions. This shows that grammar is seen and practiced more as a separated concept in the background than as a part of communication act. On the other hand, the fourth edition introduces more group work where learners practice communicative use of different grammatical structures. This confirms what we have stated before; the fourth edition stresses grammar as an important constituent in language teaching and learning by fostering FOF and keeping in mind characteristics of contemporary communicative approach to teaching foreign languages. The fourth edition has also taken into consideration the idea suggested by the CEFR (2001) that the characteristic of the interlocutors affect the communication, so practicing it in pairs and groups enables meaningful and authentic exercises.

Our fifth research question referred to contextualized exercises. This relates to learners' practice of establishing relationship between form and meaning of different grammatical structures. It is necessary for learners to encounter, internalize and practice the use of grammatical structures within different contexts. In that way, learners can internalize the formmeaning relationship and automatize the use of grammatical structures. Both editions that we have analyzed show more contextualized exercises and tasks than those fabricated for pedagogical reasons. However, the fourth edition shows higher percentage of contextualized practice accompanied with photographs than the second edition, which has numerous drawings that lack the element of authenticity. Fabricated exercises and tasks, as explained in CEFR (2001), serve as examples of linguistic content that is to be taught in a particular course unit. These exercises and tasks are mostly in forms of isolated sentences. With this type of practice learners are introduced to basic uses of target structures. That is why it is necessary to move forward to contextualized exercises and activities. In that way, learners have the opportunity to pay attention to both forms and meanings during communicative activities. The fourth edition offers more contextualized practice than the second edition because it fosters FOF and provides practice of grammatical structures within different social contexts. In that way, the fourth edition

also puts into use the three-dimensional framework by Larsen-Freeman (2009). This confirms the fact that this edition grammar stresses the importance of grammar by giving it a place within different social and communicative contexts.

Our sixth research question referred to the balance between accuracy and fluency. In order to obtain the ratio of balance between accuracy and fluency, we analyzed how many exercises are controlled, semi-controlled or free for learners to practice communicative use of grammatical structures. We have explained that this kind of sequencing enables learners to express themselves fluently and appropriately within a social context but also accurately in the sense of grammatical correctness. The second edition shows higher percentage in controlled exercises than in any other type of exercises. In that way it confirms what we have found in previous research questions; in the second edition the role of grammar is minimalized and placed in the background and, therefore practiced through mostly controlled drills for automatization. This is related to what Larsen-Freeman (2009) said about continued practice which automatizes the use of rules. This automatization enables learners to communicate adequately and correctly without consciously focusing on grammatical structures during the production. Furthermore, both editions show what is stated in CEFR (2001); selection, ordering and step-by-step presentation and drilling of the new material. Nevertheless, it is the fourth edition that contains in higher percentage of balance between focus on form, meaning, accuracy and fluency as stated in the CEFR (2001).

Therefore, the fourth edition reflects the ideas of Ur (1996) and Ellis (1998) about the practice that starts with controlled text-manipulation exercises and continues gradually to freer text-creation tasks. This can be seen in balanced percentage and the order of controlled, semi-controlled and free exercises and tasks in the fourth edition of the textbook. The second edition has higher percentage of free tasks than semi-controlled exercises. Also, those free tasks mostly come immediately after the controlled drills. However, the fourth edition shows gradual development. Its *Practice* starts with controlled and isolated drilling of the new material. Those exercises are followed by semi-controlled exercises which expand context for practicing grammatical structures (e.g. giving an example from their personal life where they follow the pattern of the utterance but choose vocabulary to express themselves). *Practice* in the fourth edition finishes with free text-creation task (e.g. class debate on a social problem or writing a letter to a friend in a foreign country). This kind of task development enables learners to be aware of their progress and personal styles and strategies in learning grammatical structures. This

sequencing also develops learners' ability to learn on their own, as advised by the CEFR (2001). In that way, learners gain confidence in their performance. This fact can be connected with RQ4 on work dynamics where learners first start with individual and more controlled exercises and progress toward freer class discussions where they use grammatical structures in meaningful and communicative social context.

Practice in both editions fosters development of the four skills within contextualized exercises providing enough volume and repetition, as Ur (1988) recommended. However, the fourth edition published in 2009 reflects characteristics of contemporary communicative approach by accentuating speaking skill and incorporating ideas proposed by CEFR (2001). The fourth edition also fosters FOF instruction by practicing several grammatical structures within numerous different real-life contexts in higher percentage than the second edition published in 1996. Even though both editions start *Practice* with controlled drills of the new material, the fourth edition fosters greater balance between controlled, semi-controlled and free exercises. Therefore, due to the incorporation of, as authors claimed, the best of the previous approaches and the latest findings of communicative approach, the fourth edition also fosters practice with more pair and group work, what enables learners to practice active and communicative use of target structures. In that way, learners balance accuracy and fluency in their language production.

The results of our analysis show that both editions are grammar-based but that they place grammar in different focus. The second edition reflects the fluctuation in the role that grammar had in teaching of EFL by placing it in the background in *Presentation* and *Practice* focusing more on meaning and communication. On the other hand, the fourth edition brings grammar back focusing on both form and meaning within meaningful and real-life contexts. This is influenced by the CEFR (2001) which formally presented the concept of communicative competence and its constituents as the final goal of the process of teaching foreign languages. The fourth edition reflects ideas suggested not just by the CEFR (2001), but by many researchers that enabled the creation of that document. It uses graphics, like colors, to stress sections related to grammar and raise learners' awareness. Also, there are photographs instead of drawings for more authentic contextualization in *Presentation* and *Practice*. The fourth edition also has shorter lessons that give both learners and teachers the sense of progress especially when the institutional instruction has time limits. For that reason, the fourth edition has tasks in forms of mini-projects at the end. These tasks enable teachers to spiral the syllabus and repeat

presentation and practice of grammatical structures in different contexts at latter points in teaching. In that way learners with different learning styles and pace can be well served.

# 5. CONCLUSION

Grammar teaching has been influenced by definitions of grammar and definitions of the goals of the learning process. As we have presented, various approaches were developed and grammar has been changing its position in the teaching process. All these approaches and attitudes towards the role of grammar were influenced by the developments in different areas; from psychology to anthropological linguistic. Every new approach to teaching needed different materials and textbooks that reflected their ideas on grammar teaching. Different studies have shown that many textbooks did not in fact reflect new ideas and scientific findings. Actually, only a few textbooks have shown progress towards an eclectic grammar teaching where grammar is a tool for effective communication.

Our analysis has shown that *New Headway Intermediate* is a textbook that, even though grammar based, reflects the changes in the field of teaching EFL grammar. The two editions that were analyzed are 13 years apart. This time difference allowed us to notice the swinging of the 'grammatical pendulum'. The earlier edition placed grammar in the background focusing more on meanings than on forms. The latter edition returned the focus on grammatical forms but within communicative contexts. In that way, this edition incorporated both older and newer findings. Both editions foster contextualized presentation and practice and develop all four skills. However, it is the fourth edition that incorporates different ideas on grammar teaching and takes into consideration contemporary suggestions of the CEFR (2001). The fourth edition fosters an eclectic approach to grammar teaching and balances different types of presentation and practice.

This means that Croatian learners whose teachers adhere to the approaches fostered by this textbook are well served and acquainted with the old and the new ways of teaching and learning EFL grammar. Therefore, if it is to be judged by the textbook that is present in more than half of Croatian schools, the contemporary approach to teaching EFL grammar in Croatia is an eclectic approach. Nevertheless, it is up to teachers to observe their learners and adapt their teaching and materials used to serve the needs of learners.

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# **APPENDIX**

Appendix 1- Examples of types of presentation and practice from analyzed textbooks

**Figure 1** - Inductive, deductive and FOF presentation in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

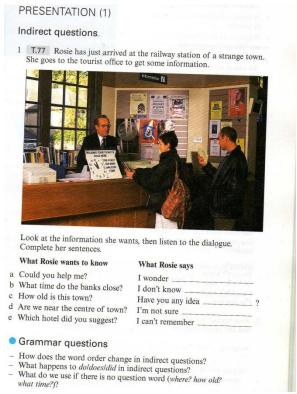




Figure 2 - Contextualized presentation in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

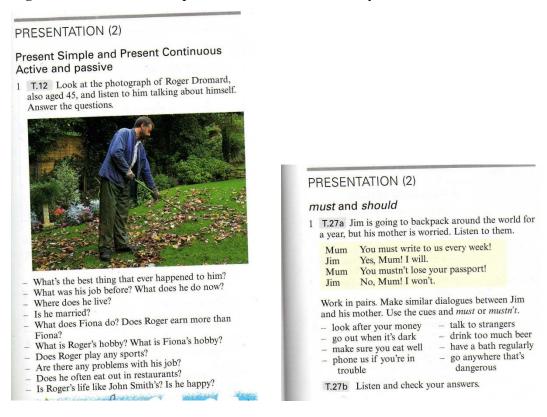


Figure 3 - Practice of the four skills in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

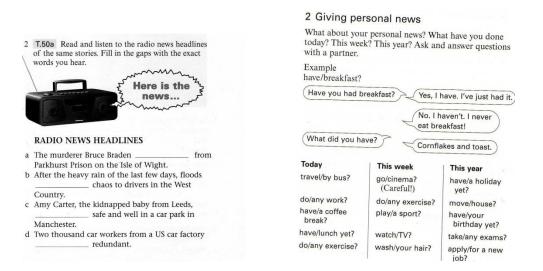


Figure 4 - Practice and work dynamics in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

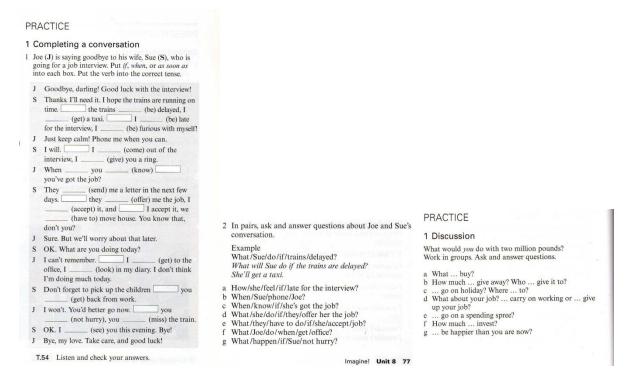


Figure 5 - Contextualized practice in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

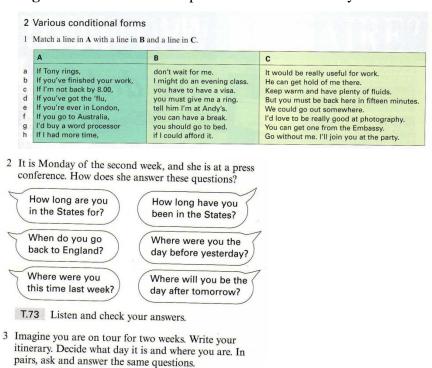


Figure 6 - Practice of accuracy and fluency in New Headway Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

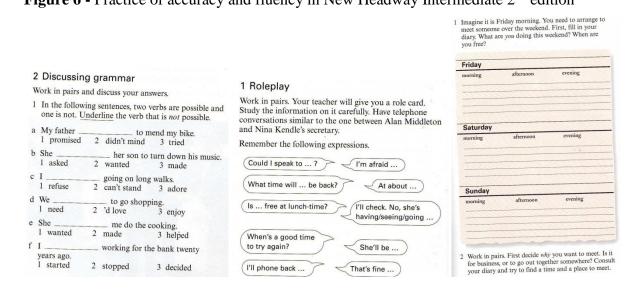


Figure 7 – Inductive, deductive and FOF presentation in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> ed.



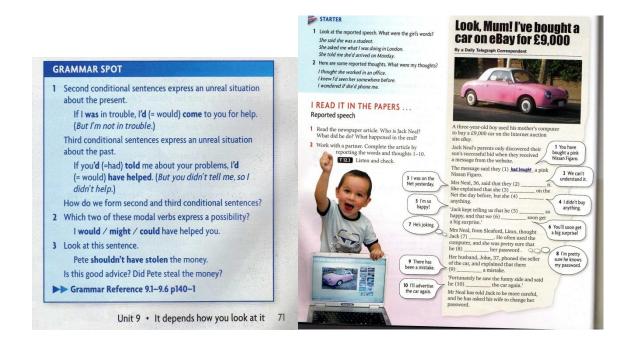
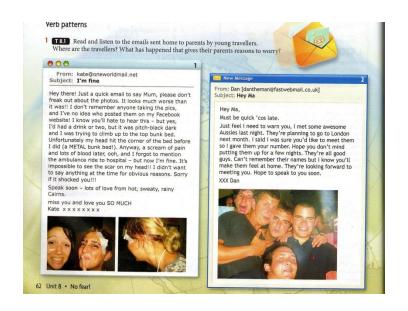


Figure 8 – Contextualized presentation in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition



Figure 9 – Practice of the four skills in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition



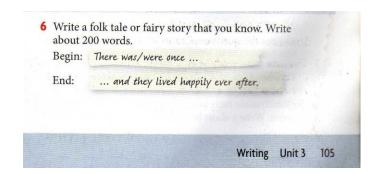
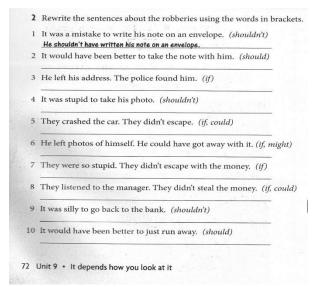


Figure 10 – Practice and work dynamics in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition



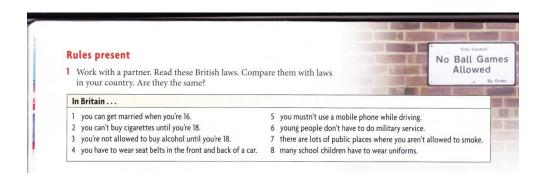
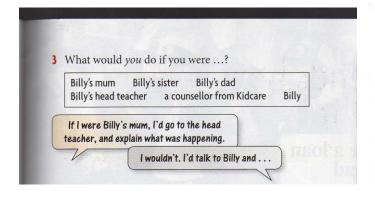


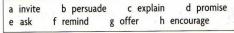


Figure 11 – Contextualized practice in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition



### Reporting verbs

4 Match the reporting verbs in the box with the direct speech.



- 1 e 'Can you help me?' she said to me.
- 2 \_\_ 'Don't forget to post the letter,' he said to her.
- 3 \_\_ 'I really will work hard for my exams,' she said.
- 4 \_ 'Come to my party,' he said to me.
- 5 \_\_ 'You really must go travelling. You'd love it,' she said to me.
- 6 \_\_'î'll give you a lift to the airport,' he said to me.
- 7 \_ 'I'm not sure about this job.' 'Go on! Apply for it You'd be good at it,' he said. 'OK, I will,' I replied
- 8 \_ 'I've been very busy,' she said.

Figure 12 – Practice of accuracy and fluency in New Headway Intermediate 4<sup>th</sup> edition

## **PRACTICE**

### Discussing grammar

- 1 Choose the correct verb to complete the sentences.
  - 1 I don't get on with my boss. Do you think I should / must look for another job?
  - 2 We're giving Tom a surprise birthday party. You *shouldn't / mustn't* tell him about it.
  - 3 Please Dad, can / must I go to Tom's party? It'll be great.
  - 4 You should / have to drive on the left in Britain.
  - 5 Do you must / have to wear a uniform in your job?
  - 6 Are you can / allowed to take mobile phones to school?
  - 7 I must / had to go to bed early when I was a child.
  - 8 You *mustn't / don't have to* go to England to learn English, but it's a good idea.

T4.1 Listen and check.

- **5** With your partner, write a conversation that illustrates some of the verbs on this page. Act it out to the class.
  - A Have you been out spending money again? We just can't afford it!
  - B Don't be so mean! It's only a few pounds!

The others must say who the people are and what they're talking about.

It's a husband and wife. They're arguing. He's complaining that she spends too much money. She accuses him of being mean.

### What do you think?

- Think of someone from your country who changed people's ideas.
- What did he/she do?
- · How did other people react?

98 Unit 12 • Telling it how it is

# **SAŽETAK**

Cilj ovoga rada je dobivanje uvida u načine poučavanja gramatike engleskog jezika kao stranog jezika u hrvatskim srednjim školama. Podaci na temelju kojih smo donijeli zaključke dobiveni su kvantitativnom analizom udžbenik kojeg koristi više od polovice srednjih škola u Republici Hrvatskoj; New Headway Intermediate. Nakon što smo predstavili relevantnu literaturu o poučavanju gramatike i udžbenicima, postavili smo šest istraživačkih pitanja o prezentiranja i uvježbavanja gramatičkih struktura kako bismo utvrdili reflektiraju li udžbenici suvremena otkrića te kakva pristup poučavanju gramatike potiču analiziran udžbenici. Rezultati pokazuju da su udžbenici u skladu sa suvremenim istraživanjima i otkrićima te da se gramatika usvaja kao dio komunikcijske kompetencije.

Ključne riječi: gramatika, udžbenici, komunikacijska kompetencija