

Grammar practice activities in a Swedish ELT textbook for year 9

Grammatiska övningar I ett svenskt basläromedel för årskurs 9

Jimmy Rosberg

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

English

English II: Degree project

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Supervisor: Ying Wang

Examiner: Andrea Schalley

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Abstract

This study investigates the prevalence and proportion of explicit grammar practice activities in relation to a present, practice, and produce structure to find out if it is possible to derive an approach to grammar teaching that is used in the English language learning material Magic! 9. Current SLA research suggests that explicit grammar teaching facilitates L2 acquisition if grammatical activities focus on meaning over decontextualized form-focused drills. Additionally, researchers have not reached a conclusive answer on whether the inductive or deductive presentation of grammar is the most effective. By linking teaching approaches to the presentation, practice, and produce structure and the connected grammar activities, this study found that Magic! 9 favors explicit presentation of grammatical elements by name, while inductively presenting the grammatical rules of the elements in preceding non-grammar focused activities. Additionally, the explicit grammatical activities in Magic! 9 are primarily focused on form, and meaning is the secondary focus. Although not conclusive, the findings suggest that there are two possible answers as to which approach is used to teach grammar. The primary focus on form and drilling nature of the activities suggests that the audio-lingual approach is the most prevalent. On the other hand, the mixing of several approaches suggests that the post-communicative approach is the most prevalent.

Keywords: grammar practice activity, present practice produce, ELT material, SLA

Sammanfattning på svenska

Denna studie undersöker förekomsten och fördelningen av explicita grammatiska övningar i relation till strukturen presentation, övning, och produktion för att ta reda på om det är möjligt att dra en slutsats gällande vilken ansats som används för att lära ut engelsk grammatik i basläromedlet Magic! 9. Nuvarande SLA-forskning antyder att explicita ansatser främjar andraspråksinläring om de grammatiska övningarna är fokuserade på innebörd före kontextuellt fränkopplade och formfokuserade övningar. Dessutom har forskare inte nått ett avgörande svar gällande om induktiva eller deduktiva presentationer av grammatik är mest effektiva. Genom att binda samman ansatser till lärande till strukturen presentation, övning, och produktion samt de anslutna grammatiska övningarna, fann denna studie att Magic! 9 gynnar explicit presentation av grammatiska objekt till namn medan reglerna presenteras induktivt genom föregående icke grammatisk fokuserade övningar. Vidare är the explicit grammatiska övningarna i Magic! 9 primärt fokuserade på form, och innebörd är en sekundär fokus. Fastän inte slutgiltiga, pekar denna studie på två möjliga svar gällande vilken ansats till grammatiskt lärande som används. Det primära fokuset på form och övningarnas repetitiva natur pekar på att audio-lingual ansatsen är främst förekommande. Å andra sidan, blandningen av flera ansatser pekar på att post-communicative ansatsen är främst förekommande.

Nyckelord: grammatiska övningsaktiviteter, presentera öva producera, basläromedel, SLA

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1. Introduction and aims

Grammar has a bad name in the eyes of many. Quite often grammarians point this out, followed by an argument that grammar can be fun and meaningful (Estling Vannestål, 2015). Grammar-specific textbooks also include arguments about why grammar is important. The argument that, to my mind, best argues why grammar should be taught is this: “A poor knowledge of grammar may, especially in writing, where you cannot use non-verbal signals like gestures and facial expressions, lead to misunderstandings, irritation and sometimes communication breakdown” (Estling Vannestål, 2015:19). In other words, grammar matters for accurate communication. In light of contemporary second language acquisition (SLA) research, grammar definitely has a place in the teaching of English (Ellis, 2006). The current question, regarding grammar in the teaching of English, is about how it should be taught and what should be taught, rather than if it should be taught at all (Ellis, 2006).

Teachers of English often look to different teaching materials for inspiration or guides to plan and execute lessons on a variety of aspects of English. One such aspect is grammar and all that it entails (Han, 2013; Garth, 2022). Despite the common use of English language teaching (ELT) materials in L2 classrooms, few studies have been conducted on activities designed to teach and practice grammatical elements (Garth, 2022). According to Garth (2022), the approaches to presenting grammar have been vastly researched in the past, while the subsequent Grammar Practice Activity (GPA) has been left relatively untouched. Not counting student research, few studies have been conducted that investigate the types of GPA in ELT materials (Garth, 2022). Only the most recent study by Garth (2022) sought to investigate the prevalence and composition of series of GPAs in ELT materials. Additionally, Garth (2022) sought a deeper understanding of the order of GPAs.

The importance of studying GPAs in ELT materials is to see how ELT authors intend for learners to practice and learn English grammar. What previous studies show is that GPAs have a different quality in relation to current SLA research. For example, a mechanical activity that is strictly focused on form and lacks the requirement to understand the meaning of the content to practice the grammatical element is considered less desirable than communicative activities that attend to the meaning of the content while immersing the learner in the target L2 (Garth, 2022).

To my knowledge, GPA research is an unexplored area in the context of ELT materials targeted at students in Swedish schools. This study aims to begin filling that gap and investigate what approach to teaching English grammar is prevalent in one ELT material targeted for Swedish

secondary schools by investigating the prevalence and composition of GPA types and how they are presented in Magic! 9 (see Section 3.1 for further details on Magic! 9).

2. Background

The background section of the study is structured as follows. Section 2.1 provides an overview of the prevalence of grammar in the English syllabus of LGR22. Section 2.2 provides an overview of the SLA research that was considered relevant for this study. Section 2.3 provides an overview of relevant approaches to teaching English grammar. Section 2.4 provides an overview of previous GPA studies and section 2.5 provide an overview on GPA types.

2.1 English syllabus in LGR22

Since this study investigates which approach to teaching grammar is prevalent in Magic! 9, it is important to see the material in light of the context for which it is intended to be used. In this case, according to Hedencrona et al. (2014), the context is the English syllabus of LGR22¹ (Skolverket, 2022).

In the current English syllabus in Swedish secondary school years 7-9, grammar is only explicitly mentioned twice (Skolverket, 2022). When it is mentioned, it is not very clear to what extent grammar is meant to be taught. In the core content section of the syllabus, it is stated that students must learn “grammatical structures and sentence construction... /...and spelling” (My translation, Skolverket, 2022). However, it is not clear which grammatical structures are referred to, or to what extent a teacher should teach sentence construction. It is up to the teacher’s own judgement to determine which grammatical structures to teach and to what extent to teach sentence construction. By looking at the purpose section of the syllabus, a teacher could figure out which elements of grammar are desirable to teach. It seems that communicative ability is the most important aspect of the English language in LGR22. The syllabus aims for students to develop confidence in their use of English in various situations and for different purposes. Furthermore, it aims to ensure that students have a broad communicative competence. This competency includes adaptability, language accuracy, and strategies to alleviate any difficulties that may arise during communication (Skolverket, 2022).

¹ A digital version of the ELT material was used in this study. The current syllabus has been digitally added and the older syllabus LGR11 has been removed. This note will hopefully clear up any potential confusion that may arise regarding how a 2014 ELT material is using a syllabus released during 2022.

A communicative approach to teaching English seems to be promoted when we consider the abundance of keywords for communication and the lack of keywords for grammar. The introduction to the syllabus states “Language is humans’ primary tool for thinking, communicating, and learning” (My translation, Skolverket, 2022). Later in the core content section of the syllabus there are three main categories, “Content of the communication”, “Listen and read – reception”, and “Speak, write, and conversation – production and interaction” (My translation, Skolverket, 2022). These categories each have bulleted lists of what is meant to be included throughout years 7-9. There are 16 bullet points, and grammatical keywords are only mentioned in 2 of them. Communication keywords are mentioned in 8 of the 16 points.

2.2 Second Language Acquisition

The current question regarding grammar in the teaching of English is about how it should be taught and what should be taught, rather than if it should be taught at all according to Ellis (2006). There are, of course, voices in the field of SLA that claim grammar has no place at all in the teaching of an L2 (Ellis, 2006). Explicit knowledge of L2 grammar is argued to be less desirable, since its counterpart implicit knowledge is what an L2 user uses for fluent communication (Ellis, 2006). However, there is ample evidence that the teaching of grammar can be beneficial so long as it is tied to communicative ability, rather than just learned knowledge of form, since it enables the L2 user to comprehend the rules of the L2 and thus aids accuracy in communication (Ellis, 2006).

Assuming that there is value in explicit knowledge of grammar, there is the question of whether to teach it inductively or deductively. Previous studies have had mixed results on this question. Herron and Tomosello (1992) found that inductive teaching of grammar was advantageous, Robinson (1996) found that deductive teaching of grammar was to be preferred, Rosa and O’Neill (1999) found no advantage for either approach, while Erlam (2003) found deductive teaching of grammar to be most effective. From these four studies, Ellis (2006) concluded that each approach is likely to be the most effective depending on the context in which it is used. For example, beginners may benefit from a deductive approach, while more advanced learners may benefit from the inductive approach. These mixed results are still much the same in 2023. Benitez-Correa et al. (2019) found that the inductive approach is more effective in grammar instructions. They reached this conclusion after analyzing the data collected in an experiment with two separate classes. One class was taught by deductive means and the other by inductive means. Each class received a pre-test at the start of the experiment and a post-test at the end (Benitez-Correa et al., 2019). Shirav and Nagai (2022) performed a similar study with a pre-

test and a post-test. They found that both approaches are beneficial, although inductive teaching proved to be more effective than deductive teaching. They concluded that inductive teaching is the most effective for simpler grammar and the deductive approach is more effective for complex grammar, which is the opposite of Ellis' (2006) conclusion. While Ellis (2006) reached his conclusion by looking at previous studies, Shiray and Nagai (2022) reached their conclusion from their own study centered around students in Japan. Shiray and Nagai (2022) also took the students' potential preferences into account when analyzing the data. This consideration of cultural preference could explain the conflicting conclusions.

Regardless of the approach to teaching grammar, the learner needs to do some sort of activity to acquire explicit or implicit knowledge of grammar. These activities known as GPAs have previously been investigated to find out if ELT materials are keeping up with SLA research by looking at each explicit GPA and classifying them into categories ranging from focused on form to focused on meaning (Nitta and Gardner, 2005; Han, 2013; Garth, 2022; see Section 2.4 for further details). In studies related to GPAs, one of the important questions is if GPAs focus on meaning and communication, as contemporary SLA research suggests that learners reach higher levels of achievement when GPAs focus on those two aspects (Aski, 2003; Fernández, 2011). According to Garth (2022), most researchers agree that deductive presentation and practice facilitate grammar learning. Additionally, Fernández (2011) points out the importance for practice and production to be focused on meaning and not decontextualized drills for GPAs to facilitate grammar learning.

2.3 Approaches to teaching grammar

2.3.1 Grammar-translation approach

The grammar-translation approach to teaching English grammar is perhaps the most straightforward approach available to teachers. The approach typically begins with a grammar-focused syllabus. The lessons then explicitly explain the rules of the targeted grammatical element, followed by translation of a text into and out of the targeted language (Thornbury, 1999:21). The rules for the element are explained in L1. This approach does not include much oral communication in the targeted L2 (Ur, 2012).

2.3.2 The direct method approach

The direct method emerged as a response to the grammar-translation approach (Ur, 2012). This approach focuses on oral communication and complete immersion in the targeted L2 by practicing oral skills over writing skills. The direct method claims to be a natural method to acquire an L2. The idea is that learners acquire an L2 the same way as one acquires an L1, and consequently this method rejects any explicit grammar teaching (Thornbury, 1999). As such,

this method is not technically a grammar teaching method, at least not explicitly. Although it is focused on fluency over accuracy, it still teaches implicit knowledge of grammar structures through immersive communication and repetition.

2.3.3 Audio-lingual approach

The audio-lingual approach to teaching L2 rejects an explicit instruction of grammar even more strongly than the direct method, according to Thornbury (1999). And, as such, this approach could also be seen as not technically an approach to teaching grammar. However, the audio-lingual approach is focused on accuracy rather than fluency (Ur, 2012). Additionally, the audio-lingual approach uses a distinguished style of pattern practice and repetitive structured activities. These activities are often referred to as drills (Thornbury, 1999; Richard & Rodgers, 2001; Ur, 2012). These drills are grammatical in origin (Thornbury, 1999). This suggests that the audio-lingual approach teaches implicit grammar knowledge by focusing on accuracy over fluency.

2.3.4 The communicative approach

The communicative approach shares some key similarities with both the direct method and the audio-lingual approach. All three share that there is no explicit teaching of grammar. They also share that the acquisition of an L2 comes from oral usage (Ur, 2012; Thornbury, 1999). However, the focus is not necessarily on form in the communicative approach, since meaning is more important than accuracy. There are several methodologies based on the communicative approach, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). CLIL focuses on communicative tasks and problem solving to acquire L2 naturally by understanding and negotiating meaning in the context where the learner is (Ur, 2012). Furthermore, CLIL also focuses on teaching other subjects in the targeted L2 to not only teach the language, but also to teach subject-specific content in other subjects in the targeted L2 (Ur, 2012). Communicative language teaching (CLT) is another method under the flag of the communicative approach. CLT is much the same as CLIL, except that the targeted L2 is not transferred to other subjects (Thornbury, 1999). However, according to Thornbury, there are two ends to CLT. Thornbury (1999) calls one the 'shallow end' and the other the 'deep end'. In the deep end of CLT, there is no emphasis on grammar, and in the shallow end there is a slightly heavier emphasis on grammar than in audio-lingual and the direct method, but not as heavily emphasized as in the grammar-translation approach.

2.3.5 The post-communicative approach

The post-communicative approach is perhaps the most modern approach to teaching an L2. This approach is focused heavily on acquiring L2 through communication in meaningful contexts. However, explicit grammar teaching is not completely rejected. In addition, certain

exercises from other approaches are not completely banned or frowned upon. Form-focused translations or drills can still be useful if used in a meaningful way. In essence, this approach is quite inclusive for different learning styles (Ur, 2012). Additionally, Ur (2012) states that this approach is what most teachers and coursebooks are using.

Interestingly, beside Ur (2012) it is difficult to find any extensive information that explains the post-communicative approach further than the above information. However, there is a possible explanation for this. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 244) presents the “post methods era”. This is not to be confused with an approach or method that is based on a set of rules. It is more a mindset or a philosophy. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 250) states the following “Mainstream approaches and methods draw on a large amount of collective experience and practice from which much can be learned. Approaches and methods can therefore be usefully studied and selectively mastered”. What this means is that new teachers have the ability to study and use whichever approach that is best suited for their current needs. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:250), teachers should be “encouraged to transform and adapt the methods they use and make them their own”. With that in mind, it is likely that the philosophy of adaptability and flexibility is what Ur (2012) refers to with the post-communicative approach.

2.3.6 Deductive and inductive teaching

Deductive and inductive teaching are the two main approaches to teaching grammar (Shirav & Nagai, 2022). As their names suggest, there is a distinct difference between a deductive approach and an inductive approach to teaching. In deductive teaching, the rule of the target grammatical element is explicitly presented to the learner. Then there are examples that put the rule and the element in context. In contrast, inductive teaching presents examples that include the targeted grammatical element and its rule is implicitly inferred (Thornbury, 1999). They are opposites to each other.

Both approaches have their own advantages and disadvantages. The deductive approach is straightforward and time-saving. Rather than eliciting the rules from an example, the deductive approach can explain the rules in a timely and efficient way, saving time. However, this could be seen as a disadvantage from a motivational point of view. Younger learners could be demotivated by a metalanguage that they may not understand. At the same time, it could also be seen as an advantage for older learners, as, for example, their cognitive ability and maturity are respected (Thornbury, 1999). Furthermore, the deductive approach encourages a lecture-focused transmission style that often comes at the expense of student interaction and communication. And this could be seen as an advantage or a disadvantage depending on the

teacher's teaching style or the preferred learning style of the student (Thornbury, 1999). However, according to Thornbury (1999), these advantages and disadvantages depend on the quality of the explicit presentation itself. The explicit presentation relies on the context in which it is located, rather than on the given explanation. Linguists' explanation of tenses can very well differ from the teacher's explanation. The first is descriptive and the second is pedagogical.

In inductive teaching, as mentioned above, the rules of the grammatical element are not explicitly presented. In contrast to deductive teaching, inductive teaching presents examples of texts that the learner can study in order to derive the rules from the studied element (Thornbury, 1999: 49). An example of how inductive teaching can be done is to give the learner a set of sentences with the targeted grammatical element included. Sentences such as "Joe likes to eat apples", "Joe and Anna like to eat apples", "They like apples", "Joe likes apples" could then be followed by a prompt to explain the difference in sentences. The answer here is related to subject-verb agreement.

The appropriate approach to use is debatable (Fernández, 2011). There are scholars who promote the use of deductive instruction to make the learner aware of forms. If a learner is aware of a grammatical form, he or she can then notice the form of a grammatical element and more easily connect meaning to it (Fernández, 2011). In contrast, there are voices that express the opposite. These voices warn that deductive instruction can obstruct communicative ability and promote that the learner needs to experience meaning before form is presented (Fernández, 2011). Doughty (2005; referenced by Fernández, 2011), while not rejecting deductive instruction, warns that inadequate deductive instruction may not be the type of knowledge the learner needs to develop their communicative abilities. Regardless of these voices that either promote, reject, or are in between; results of previous studies show that the effectiveness of deductive instructions depends on several factors and that some activities are more effective than others when the activity is accompanied by deductive instructions (Fernández, 2011).

2.3.7 Present-Practice-Produce

Unlike the approaches previously presented, PPP is not an approach in itself. It is a structure that is incorporated into approaches to teaching a second language (Ur, 2012). The PPP structure is closely related to the approach to teaching grammar and is therefore included as a subsection. In grammar teaching, the common PPP structure is to deductively present the grammatical element, its rules, and conventions. It is then followed by practice, which could be activities that require the students to fill in blanks with the correct word, and then an activity

that requires the learner to produce strings of text or oral communication that focus on the grammatical element (Thornsbury, 1999). That said, PPP structures do not have inherent rules. Even if the common way is to deductively present, practice, and produce (Thornsbury, 1999; Shirav & Nagai, 2022), it is equally correct to reverse the structure to produce, practice, and present (Thornsbury, 1999), which would be more in line with inductive teaching (see Section 2.3.6). It is also possible to use only one or two parts of the PPP structure in teaching as well (Ellis, 2006). Furthermore, what is considered practice or production is debatable. If an activity is structured around the practice of a grammatical element by producing original content, the line between practice and production becomes blurred. See Section 4.2 for further discussion.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), the classic PPP structure of present, practice, and produce does not reflect the principles of SLA, and the underlying theory of PPP has been discredited. This statement refers to language learning as a whole and not to any specific aspect of language. Despite this, in grammar teaching, the PPP structure is still seemingly widely used (Garth, 2022). In this study, the interest in the structure of PPP is to see how the learner is intended to progress in their learning. If the intended progression follows the classic PPP structure, it could indicate an outdated approach, such as the grammar-translation method. If a different structure or no structure at all is used, it could indicate a more modern approach, such as the post-communicative approach. To determine whether or not there is a PPP structure in Magic! 9, I look at the series of GPAs and see if the grammatical element is presented deductively or inductively (see Section 3.2.1 for further details on this process). Further details about GPAs in this study are found in Section 2.5.

2.4 Previous research on grammar practice activities

Grammar practice activities (GPAs) are somewhat ambiguous at times. The ambiguity arises from the different definitions and classifications that exist in previous research. Aski (2003) uses the word “drill” as an umbrella term for all kinds of activities, with one exception: Aski identifies four different categories of GPAs, mechanical drills (MechD), meaningful drills (MeanD), communicative drills (CD), and communicative language practice (CLP). Communicative language practice is the exception to the umbrella term. Furthermore, these GPA categories are, according to Aski (2003:59), “points on a continuum ranging from the most mechanical, in which the learner simply manipulates the form without any regard for meaning, to the most communicative, in which the main thrust of the exercise is to generate meaning in the context”. Nitta and Gardner (2005) use Ur’s (referenced by Nitta & Gardner, 2005) classification. The classification specifies that GPAs are a communicative kind of grammar practice (GP). This means that unless there is communication involved, it is not a

GPA, it is a grammar exercise (GEx). Furthermore, Nitta and Gardner classify some GPAs as conscious-raising tasks (C-R), interpretation tasks (IT), focused communication tasks (FCT), and other tasks (O). Apart from GExs, they are form-focused communicative grammar activities. There are other researchers who have investigated GPAs. Han (2013), for example, uses the Nitta and Gardner's (2005) classifications, while Gomez-Rodriguez (2010) uses Aski's (2003) classifications. Garth (2022) tries to synthesize the existing classifications into a more comprehensive list of four types of GPAs, which are mainly adopted from Aski's (2003) study.

GPAs in ELT material are central in all of the mentioned studies, and all of the studies seek to better understand the role of GPAs in their targeted textbooks for various reasons. Aski (2003) investigated elementary textbooks to investigate if they are keeping pace with SLA research regarding the teaching of grammar. Aski (2003) established a typology of GPAs derived from Lee and VanPatten (1995; referenced by Aski, 2003) and Paulston (1972; referenced by Aski, 2003), to collect data and analyze the current state of elementary ELT books. Gómez-Rodriguez (2010) conducted a similar study to Aski and used her established typology of GPAs to investigate to what extent five ELT materials incorporate communicative GPAs to facilitate communicative competence. Nitta and Gardner (2005) investigated the occurrence of C-R activities and form-focused activities and highlighted the differences between them to help teachers and authors evaluate their choices of GPAs. Nitta and Gardner (2005) also noted that each of the nine investigated books is essentially based on a present-practice structure with a variation of inductive and deductive presentation approach. By looking at GPAs using Nitta and Gardner's (2005) classification, Han (2013) investigated four ELT materials and what methodological options they employ to teach grammar. Han (2013) found that there are several methods incorporated in these materials, although the characteristics of traditional methods to grammar teaching prevailed.

Garth (2022) saw several gaps in these previous GPA studies. The two most relevant gaps to this study are the lack of understanding of the order of GPAs, and the prevalence and composition of GPAs in ELT material. To investigate these gaps, Garth (2022) collected data from 14 ELT textbooks ranging from 2013 to 2020. The collection process included identifying the types of GPAs, their prevalence, and if they are connected in a series of GPAs. Garth (2022) found that several ELT textbooks can vary greatly in terms of the types of GPAs used and their prevalence. However, on average, meaning-focused GPAs are the most prevalent. All ELT textbooks had series of GPAs that followed a pattern of beginning with form-focused GPAs and ending with more meaning-focused GPAs. Garth (2022) concluded that mechanical activities (see Section 2.5.1) could easily be converted into a meaningful activity (see Section 2.5.1) to facilitate better learning. Furthermore, Garth (2022) recommends that standalone GPAs be incorporated into a series of GPAs to increase the meaningfulness of the learning process.

All four of these studies share one flaw. Although all of them explain the classification of GPAs they look at and give examples of how a GPA can be designed, none of them explain how they identified the included GPAs. It is not clear if all activities are deemed as a potential GPA and then analyzed, or if the GPAs are explicitly presented as grammar practice. The exception is Garth (2022), who is clear on including explicit and implicit GPAs. Garth (2022) also motivates when an implicit GPA is included in a series of GPAs. For example, in a hypothetical activity 1, the students are tasked with answering questions by using a specific grammatical element. The activity is then an explicit grammar activity. In the subsequent hypothetical activity, students are tasked with discussing the previous questions. There is no explicit explanation that grammar practice is the goal, but Garth (2022) includes this activity as a GPA. However, it could be argued that Garth’s (2022) inclusion of implicit GPAs is also a flaw. By including implicit GPAs, the statistical prevalence of GPAs can be skewed in favor of one type of GPA over the others. See Section 3.2.2 for further details on which GPAs are included in this study.

2.5 Grammar practice activities

There is undoubtedly an excess of GPA type names, which adds unnecessary complexity for the purpose of this study. Garth (2022:5) presents a table that provides an overview of the identified characteristics of GPAs (see Appendix 1). This study will adopt that overview of characteristics with one minor modification to better fit this study. Instead of using “authentic” as a characteristic of communicative activities (CAs) to distinguish CAs from pre-communicative activities (PCAs), this study will use “communicative” instead. See Section 2.5.4 for a further detailed discussion.

Table 1. Illustration of GPA characteristics

Characteristics		GPA types			
		Mechanical activity	Meaningful activity	Pre communicative activity	Communicative activity
Focus	On form	Completely	Primary	From primary to balanced	Secondary
	On meaning		Secondary		Primary
Meaningful	Meaningless	Yes			

	Meaningful		Yes	Yes	Yes
Controlled	Completely	Yes	Yes		
	Partially			Yes	
	Uncontrolled				Yes
Original content	Yes			Yes	Yes
	No	No	No		
Communicative	Yes			Yes	Yes
	No	No	No		

In Sections 2.5.1-2.5.4 we have an overview of the GPA types adopted from Garth’s (2022) study.

2.5.1 Mechanical activity and meaningful activity

A mechanical activity (MecA) is strictly focused on form and correctness. Learners who participate in MecAs are not required to understand the meaning of the context in which the grammatical element is in. A learner simply needs to alter the word or words in question to its targeted form without understanding the context. Therefore, MecAs are considered meaningless (Garth, 2022). Other features of MecAs are that these activities are completely controlled, which means that there is only one correct answer, and that they do not allow the learner to produce new information (Garth, 2022). MecAs are commonly fill-in-the-blanks with the target item in brackets, type of activity (Garth, 2022). “My brother_____ (lagade mat) a fantastic meal for us last night. It was a recipe from the new Jamie Oliver cookbook.” The learner does not need to know anything more than that the target item in the brackets is past tense. Everything else is useless information that the learner does not need to understand to complete the activity.

Meaningful Activities (MeaA) are closely related to MecAs. They share several features, such as being completely controlled, and the learner does not produce or communicate any new information. However, to complete a MeaA, the learner must understand the context to correctly complete it. Therefore, the focus is on both form and meaning, which means that the

activity is meaningful (Garth, 2022). MeaAs are also commonly fill-in-the-blanks type of activities (Garth, 2022). However, the target word or words are not revealed in brackets. The learner must understand the entire context to decide which word is the correct one to use. Using the same example as before, but without brackets, we use: “My brother_____ a fantastic meal for us last night. It was a recipe from the new Jamie Oliver cookbook” becomes meaningful because there are several words that are grammatically correct in the blank. Words such as *bought* or *purchased*, *found*, *stole*, and many more could technically be correct. However, by looking at the context, the correct answer is most likely *cooked*. In addition to such an activity, translation and dialogue completion activities are also considered MeaAs by default according to Garth (2022).

These GPAs are, in other words, using the drilling method to learn grammar. Therefore, MecAs and MeaAs are reminiscent of both the grammar-translation method and the audio-lingual method (see Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.3). Granted that the Audio-lingual method rejects the explicit teaching of grammar, and activities are done orally, unlike the grammar-translation approach (Thornbury, 1999). However, MecAs and MeaAs could be completed as easily orally as they could be completed in writing. Since it is suggested by Thornbury (1999) that the audio-lingual method uses implicit grammar practice, it is likely that MecAs and MeaAs belong to the audio-lingual approach over grammar-translation. However, there is still a prevalent element of the grammar-translation approach in MeaAs, since translation activities are MeaAs by default.

2.5.2 Pre-communicative activity

Unlike MecAs and MeaAs, which are completely controlled, PCAs are only partially controlled. This means that there are no correct or incorrect answers, but the learner is still prompted to produce an answer, either orally or in writing, that targets a specific grammatical element. According to Garth (2022), this prompt can manifest itself in three different ways, ranging from mostly form-focused to a relative balance between form and meaning. The type of PCA with the greatest emphasis on form is when the learner is, for example, prompted to change the proper noun to a relative’s name in a set pattern, for example, “*Hamburgers’ wedding was very nice, and Bentley’s suit looked amazing” followed by a string of other sentences that require the change of nouns. The correct answer is to change hamburgers into a name with a correctly placed apostrophe. The second type is when the learner is asked to write sentences based on a specific set of prompts that elicit the use of the targeted grammatical element, for example, “What did you eat yesterday?” The targeted grammatical element is verbs in the past tense. The third type has the learner describing a visual prompt that elicits the targeted grammatical element (Garth, 2022).

PCAs are flexible in the sense that they can range from form-focused to a balance between form and meaning. New content is produced to practice the grammatical element in oral or written form. PCAs are, as mentioned above, partially controlled. The learner is guided to produce the targeted grammatical element. Due to this partial control over what is produced, Garth (2022) defines the communication as “inauthentic”. Although I agree that the most form-focused PCAs are indeed communicatively inauthentic, I disagree that the element of communication is inauthentic in all PCAs. The keyword in relation to PCAs here is balance. There simply is no total focus on either aspect, such as form or meaning, communicative or individual, etc. in regard to the question of which approach PCAs belong. As mentioned above, the post-communicative approach also promotes a relative balance between several approaches to teaching English (see Section 2.3.5). It is possible to argue that the constituents of a PCA belong to a specific approach, but it is not possible to argue that the entire GPA belongs to one approach alone. Therefore, I consider PCAs to belong to the post-communicative approach.

2.5.3 Communicative activity

The fourth and final type of GPA is Communicative Activity (CA). Although CAs are similar to PCAs, there are some key differences. Unlike PCAs, which have a relative balance of focus on form and focus on meaning, CAs are constructed in a way that forces the learner to attend to the meaning in order to generate the correct form. CAs do not use prompts to elicit the targeted grammatical element. Instead, CAs provide a context in which learners naturally use the targeted grammar in meaningful interactions (Garth, 2022). Lastly, CAs attempt to simulate authentic communication, or, in other words, real-life language use. Activities that ask learners to discuss a topic, role-play a scenario, or provide information and opinions gaps are examples of CAs. Discussions or role-play activities could be considered PCAs. If, for example, a discussion activity is partially controlled by instructions such as “discuss possible outcomes of climate change for the future” to guide the learner into using the future tense when producing sentences, it would be considered a PCA. A CA version would be to simply ask the students to “discuss climate change” which does not elicit any specific grammatical element and therefore is uncontrolled. It is the setup of the activity and how it is presented that can determine if the GPA is a PCA or CA (Garth, 2022).

In essence, a CA immerses the learner in L2 by presenting a context in which the learner can freely produce the target grammatical element. Aski (2003) refers to this as “immerse the learner in a meaningful context in which he or she is motivated to interact”. Garth (2022) refers to this as “authentic communication”. As far as which approach this GPA likely belongs to, it is a communicative one. Similarly to the direct method, CAs aim to immerse the learner in the

targeted L2. CAs could also be related to the communicative approach, in which the focus is naturalistic acquisition. To my mind, immersion and naturalistic acquisition are synonymous. And since the direct method rejects the teaching of grammar and the communicative approach does not, CAs are likely to belong to the communicative approach over the direct method rather than being influenced by several approaches, such as the MecAs and MeaAs are suggested to be.

2.5.4 About authentic communication

Garth's (2022) GPA classification is well thought out. However, there is one characteristic that I disagree with. To differentiate PCAs and CAs, Garth (2022) considers that CAs have "authentic communication" while PCAs, because they are partially controlled, do not have authentic communication. If the communication does not spontaneously trigger the use of the target grammatical element in a completely uncontrolled environment, Garth (2022) does not consider the communication to be authentic. Additionally, authentic communication is used synonymously with the language used in a real-life situation outside of the classroom. To my mind, this is too restrictive and discriminatory. For example, a partially controlled prompt to trigger the use of a specific grammatical element does not remove the possibility that the proceeding communication is completely authentic. Learners must still communicate using their current ability and knowledge as they would have done in a real-life situation.

From now on, this study will change the characteristic "authentic" to "communicative". This will not alter the amount of PCAs or CAs found in the ELT material, as the characteristic that separates the two is the level of control. This change will eliminate unnecessary complexity during the identification of GPAs and subsequent analysis.

2.6 Research questions

To reach the aim of this study, the following research questions have been designed.

1. What is the GPA composition in Magic! 9?
2. Which structure is used to present, practice, and produce English grammar in Magic! 9?
3. What approach to teaching grammar can be derived from the GPA composition, the PPP structure, and its related series of GPA?

3. Methods and Materials

To answer the research questions, this study begins by collecting data regarding GPAs in Magic! 9. However, to begin collecting data, a set of factors had to be determined.

3.1 Materials – Magic! 9 digital version

Magic! 9 (Hedencrona et al., 2014) was chosen for this study, since it is marketed as an ELT material designed for Swedish secondary school year 9 that follows the current LGR22 syllabus (Studentlitteratur, 2023). Magic! 9 (Hedencrona et al., 2014) has two separate parts. If a student uses the physical version of the learning material, there is an additional learning material that is only digital. This extra learning material is not related to the primary learning material and is considered a secondary learning material. In this study, I am using the digital version of the primary physical learning material. Any differences between the digital version and the physical version are unknown to me.

The primary learning material has two parts. The first is a book called *classbook* and the second is a book called *workbook*. The classbook has 24 chapters divided into 6 units, and each unit is focused on a theme, such as interaction, writing, or telling stories. In the table of contents, it is explicitly shown which chapter has a focus on a grammatical element. Chapters 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, and 22 contain explicit grammar teaching. The remaining chapters focus on other aspects of language. Also, there are no grammatical activities in the classbook; these are reserved for the workbook. In fact, the only activities in the classbook are reading, listening, and word memorization.

The Workbook is, as the name suggests, a book with activities that focus on different aspects of language. GPAs are explicitly presented as grammatical activities in the workbook. This study investigates the workbook since there are no grammatical activities in the classbook.

3.2 Methods

This study uses content analysis to answer the research questions. Content analysis can be used with any kind of text, whether it is a speech transcript or a book (Denscombe, 2010). Additionally, a content analysis has the “potential to disclose many ‘hidden’ aspects of what is being communicated” (Denscombe, 2010:282). Considering the aim of the study and its research questions, it was deemed that content analysis is the appropriate research method to use. Section 3.2.1 explains the data and analysis process to clarify how the content analysis is performed in this study. Section 3.2.2 explains the limitations of this study.

3.2.1 Data and analysis

Step 1 of this study is to identify the types of individual GPAs that are prevalent in each of the chapters that contain GPAs. This step is done to find the composition of GPAs, which in turn partially reveals which approach, or approaches, is used to teach grammar. The composition also reveals if the focus is on form, meaning, or if there is a relative balance. Garth (2022) used his table (see Appendix 1) of the GPA characteristics to identify the GPAs. I used my re-worked version (see Table 1) and created a set of yes/no questions. The questions were constructed around the distinguishing characteristics of the GPAs.

1. Can the activity be completed without understanding the meaning? Yes/No
 - a. Yes = MecA
 - b. No = MeaA, PCA, CA – Go to question 2.
2. Is the focus on form? - Yes/No
 - a. Yes = MeaA, PCA – Go to question 3
 - b. No = CA, PCA – Go to question 4
3. Is there a correct answer in the activity?
 - a. Yes = MeaA
 - b. No = PCA, CA – Go to question 4
4. Is the activity controlled? Yes/No
 - a. Yes = PCA
 - b. No = CA

In Figure 1, is a GPA. This activity is part of a series of GPAs. In this case, it is the second activity in the series. The grammatical element *verbs followed by 'to' and verbs followed by 'the ing-form'* (Terminology used by Hedencrona et al. 2014) was presented in the first activity of this series. To determine the classification of this GPA we ask the questions mentioned above. Can this activity be completed without understanding the meaning? No, it cannot, since one must understand what the activity asks of the learner. Is the focus on form? Yes, there is some focus on form since there is a reminder to only use either *to + infinitive* or the *ing-form*. Is there a correct answer in the activity? - No, the sentences have many possible solutions. Is the activity controlled? Yes, since there is both a prompt to use specific grammatical elements and each sentence is partly pre-constructed for the learner. This concludes that the GPA is a PCA.

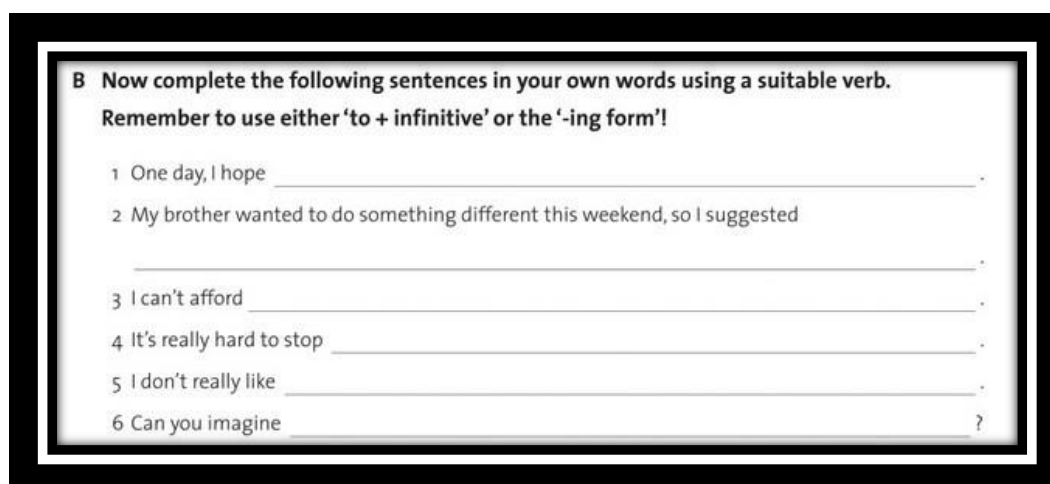


Figure 1. PCA in Unit 3

As previously mentioned, translation activities are always considered as MeaAs according to Garth (2022). These questions hinge on understanding the GPA classifications. For example, translation activities could be seen as MecAs, since it does not really require the learner to understand the meaning of a text to translate it. The learner only needs to translate each word into a target language and manipulate the word order when necessary for the accuracy of the translation, without understanding the meaning itself to be correct. For example, the randomly generated sentence “The multifaceted confluence of abstract ideologies within the contemporary cultural zeitgeist eludes simplistic categorization”, makes little sense to me, and out of context even more so. However, translating the sentence into Swedish is fairly easy without understanding the meaning. “Det mångfacetterade sammanflödet av abstrakta ideologier inom den samtida kulturella tidsandan gäcker simpel kategorisering.”. Therefore, a translation activity could be answered as yes to Question 1 and thus be listed as a MecA, which would be an incorrect answer if Garth’s (2022) classification was followed.

By following the question list and understanding Garth’s (2022) classification, another researcher should be able to replicate the data collection process and receive the same, or close to the same, GPA identification as this study. By extension, it should also be possible to use the question list in other ELT books to investigate which GPAs are prevalent in those.

The second step is to determine the PPP structure. To do this, I look at how the grammatical element is presented and if the subsequent GPAs are practicing or production GPAs in relation to a PPP structure. In this study, MecAs and MeaAs are considered practice in a PPP structure, while PCAs and CAs are considered as production. In contrast to step 1 which looks for individual GPAs, step 2 looks at series of GPAs. The process of identifying a series of GPA is not complicated since this study is investigating explicit GPAs (see Section 3.2.2 for more details). In Figures 2-4 is a series of GPAs. In this case, three GPAs are connected in a series to

practice and produce the grammatical element *conditionals*. For a series of GPAs to be identified as such, the requirement is that a grammatical element is presented and followed by a minimum of two GPAs before coming to a complete stop. In Figures 2-4, the series of GPAs are MeaA -> MecA -> PCA, or practice -> practice -> produce when converted into a PPP structure. The progress, or curve, begins with a primary focus on form, while meaning is secondary. The focus then shifts to completely form-focused, and in the last activity the series ends with a focus on meaning.

4 Grammar: Conditionals

A Match the openings 1–8 with the correct endings a–h. Need help? See Classbook p. 126.

___ 1 If I ask you to marry me	a) we'd have gone to the beach.
___ 2 If I won £1 million on the National Lottery	b) they'll be top of the Premier League.
___ 3 If you don't work harder	c) you'll damage your ears.
___ 4 If the sun had come out,	d) will you say yes?
___ 5 If you listen to music too loudly with headphones	e) you'll get wet.
___ 6 If everybody in the world spoke English	f) you'll fail your exam.
___ 7 If Chelsea beat Liverpool	g) I'd stop working.
___ 8 If you don't take an umbrella with you	h) things would be a lot easier.

Figure 2. MeaA in Unit 4

B Now fill in the correct tense of the verbs in these sentences.

- 1 If Steven asks Julie to go out with him, I think she _____ (say) yes.
- 2 If Mary applied for the job I think she _____ (get) it.
- 3 If the jacket had been a bit cheaper I _____ (buy) it.
- 4 If you're nice to me I _____ (make) you a cup of coffee.
- 5 They would have arrived on time if their train _____ (not be) delayed.
- 6 I _____ (not speak) to him again if he doesn't say he's sorry.
- 7 In this country, if you rob a bank and get caught, you _____ (go) to prison.
- 8 If I _____ (know) the answer to that question, I would tell you.

Figure 3. MecA in Unit 4

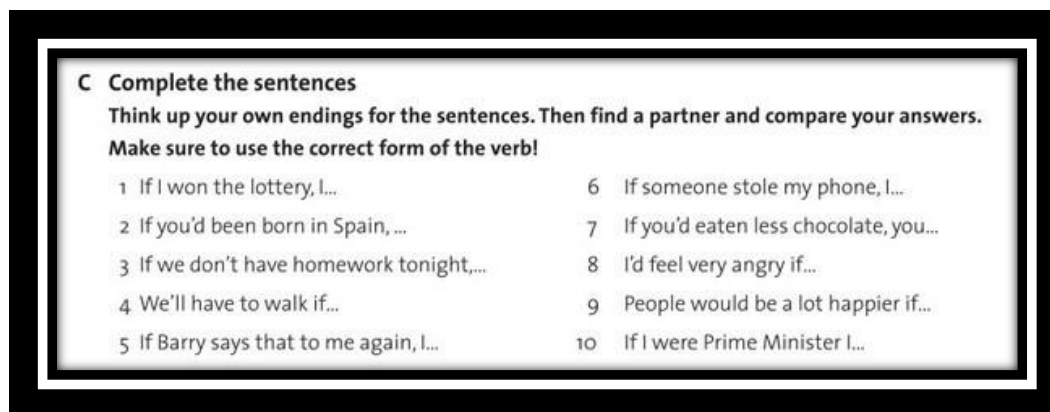


Figure 4. PCA in Unit 4

The third step is to analyze the results from steps 1 and 2 and bring them all together in a conclusion. In this study, every aspect is considered important. To explain what is meant by this; Each GPA has been linked to an approach, and the numbers showing the proportion of GPAs can be a good indication. However, the PPP structure is part of the approach and must also be considered in relation to the GPAs. Additionally, the series of GPAs could also be an indication on which grammar teaching approach is used in the ELT material. For example, if the composition is 80% MecAs it would be logical to conclude that the audio-lingual approach is the grammar teaching method in Magic! 9. If we also consider the presentation of the grammatical rules and if the remaining 20% of GPAs belong to an opposite approach, then the answer is no longer conclusive. Therefore, each constituent needs consideration and be analyzed as a unit rather than majority of proportion rules.

3.2.2 Limitations

This study is limited by a few factors. The most prominent factor is the time constraints. This is a degree paper, and thus this study is carried out by a student with limited resources. For that reason, only one of the books in the Magic! series is investigated, namely, Magic! 9. Time constraints further limit the amount of data that can be collected. Magic! 9 contains a total of 240 language learning activities in which various aspects of language are focused. Of these activities, 36 are labeled grammar-focused activities. This study excludes all activities that are not labeled as grammar-focused activities. Since grammar is part of language whenever it is used, it could be argued that every language activity is a GPA to some extent.



Figure 5. Discussion activity in Unit 1, Chapter 1

For example, in Figure 5, activity 4 question 3, which does not have a prompt or indication that it is a GPA, the learners are prompted to discuss an opinion and a scenario. It could be argued that the target grammatical element is the conditional. To participate, the learner must understand the meaning of the question, the focus is on meaning, there is no correct answer, and the activity is uncontrolled. By definition, the activity is a CA. However, since there is no explicit presentation that the focus is a grammatical element, it was excluded and not recognized as a GPA in this study. Since Magic! 9 is an ELT material which focuses on several aspects of language, it could be argued that if the focus is on something other than grammar, the activity is by default not a GPA and cannot be included in this study. Furthermore, to be clear, this study investigates the intended approach to teaching grammar in Magic! 9. Therefore, variables such as the opinions of teachers and what they possibly can do differently than the material are not relevant in this study.

3.2.3 Ethical considerations

No humans participated in this study. Therefore, no ethical issues were identified.

4. Results and analysis

In this section, the results of the study are presented and analyzed. Each research question will be presented and analyzed individually and consolidated in Section 5.

4.1 What is the GPA composition in Magic! 9?

Table 2 presents the composition of explicit GPAs in the workbook.

Table 2. Amount of GPA per unit in Magic! 9.

GPA types				
Location	MeaA	MecA	PCA	CA

Unit 1	4	1	0	0
Unit 2	6	0	1	1
Unit 3	3	1	1	0
Unit 4	6	1	1	0
Unit 5	6	0	1	0
Unit 6	2	0	1	0
Total	27	3	5	1
Total GPA	36			
Total GPA%	75,00%	8,33%	13,89%	2,78%

75% of the GPAs are MeaAs. MecAs make up 8,33%, PCAs 13,89%, and CAs are low at 2,78%. At a first glance, it was surprising to see that MeaAs make up 75% of all the explicit GPAs when compared to Garth's (2022) results (see Appendix 2). Across 14 analyzed books, Garth (2022) found the following composition of explicit GPAs: MecAs = 9,3%, MeaAs = 32,9%, PCAs = 37,4%, and CAs = 20,3%. Gómez-Rodríguez (2010) found a different composition across 5 analyzed books (see Appendix 3). Gómez-Rodríguez (2010) found the following composition: MecAs = 34,88%, MeaAs = 44,44%, and PCAs/CAs = 20,66%. Gómez-Rodríguez (2010) did not differentiate between PCAs and CAs and instead merged the two into "communicative category". Additionally, the composition of GPAs in this study is less surprising when one looks at individual books from Garth's (2022) results (see appendix 1). Book 1 in Garth's (2022; see appendix 1)) study has 33,33% MeaAs, book 6 has 50% MeaAs, and book 12 has 100% MeaAs. This comparison does not eliminate the weakness of the limitation of this study, but it shows that the composition of GPAs can vary greatly from book to book.

Considering the emphasis on communication and meaning as facilitators for acquisition in GPAs (Aski, 2003), and the emphasis on communicative competence in the LGR22 syllabus, one would assume that the GPA composition would reflect that to a greater extent than it does. PCAs and CAs are the two GPAs that are considered communicative, which means that in terms of percent only 16,67% of the GPAs are communicative and 83,33% are not communicative. By numbers alone, the composition of GPAs suggests that the primary approach to teaching grammar is through the audio-lingual and grammar-translation approach. However, as mentioned in section 3.2.1, a conclusive answer cannot be reached by looking at the GPAs in an isolated environment. The numbers presented here are an indication, but do not give a complete picture.

4.2 What structure is used to present, practice, and produce English grammar?

The presentation of grammatical elements does not follow a classic pattern. The classic pattern is to explicitly present the element, the rules of the element, and then give one or more examples (Thornbury, 1999; Fernández, 2011). In *Magic! 9*, grammatical elements are indeed explicitly presented, but no rules are explained. The learner is left to implicitly work out the rules by themselves using the context available in the GPA. Before the grammatical element is presented, there are several other non-GPAs in which the learner is presumably exposed to the targeted grammatical element. However, it is not explicitly explained to the learner that these activities contain implicit grammatical practice. If the learner cannot work out the rule, he or she is referred to the section “Magic pages” for an explanation of the rules of the grammatical element. The rules in that section are explained in the learners L1. This suggests that, even though the grammatical element is explicitly presented by name, the approach is to inductively teach the grammatical rules by having a series of activities to prime the learner for the targeted element. If this fails, the approach shifts to a deductive approach with an element of the grammar-translation method to help the learner understand how to complete the GPA. When we consider the mixed results from studies regarding deductive and inductive teaching (see Section 2.2), the chosen approach to use a semi-deductive and inductive approach is an interesting method of presentation. This choice of mixing deductive and inductive could very well be an indication that the authors agree with SLA research that favors the inductive approach by not explaining the grammatical rules, while still taking the opposite voices in consideration by deductively presenting which element that is in focus.

The practice phase of the PPP structure is what I expected to see. This part of the structure is after all intended for a learner to practice and internalize the rule (Thornbury, 1999), which is exactly what is happening in the series of GPAs in *Magic! 9*. Furthermore, the producing segment is not surprising either. As hypothesized, PCAs and CAs should logically be placed after a MeaA or MecA, and in the identified series of GPAs these communicative inclined GPAs are, in fact, placed after MeaAs and MecAs. However, there are some discrepancies in the expected structure of the related series of GPAs, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Series of GPAs in each unit. Series of GPAs separated by ‘//’ indicates two separate grammatical elements.

Series of GPA per unit	
Unit 1	MeaA -> MecA -> MeaA
Unit 2	MeaA -> PCA -> CA // MeaA -> MeaA -> MeaA
Unit 3	MeaA -> PCA -> MeaA
Unit 4	MeaA -> MecA -> PCA

Unit 5	MeaA -> MeaA // MeaA -> PCA -> MeaA			
Unit 6	MeaA -> MeaA -> PCA			
Total				8

All series of GPAs begin with a MeaA (see Table 3). Of the eight series of GPAs, three of them do not contain production. In two of the units without a producing segment in a series of GPA, there are two separate series of GPA. Unit 2 and Unit 5 contain one series of GPA with and one without a producing segment. Unit 1 is the only unit that lacks a producing segment of the six units. Of the five series with production included, only Unit 2 has an uncontrolled production segment. Furthermore, of these five series of GPAs with production included, two of them have the production segment in the penultimate position.

Table 4 presents the series of GPAs converted into the PPP structure in which they are in.

Table 4. Series of GPAs converted into PPP. Series of PPP separated by ‘//’ indicates two separate grammatical elements.

PPP structure in Magic! 9				
Unit 1	Present -> Practice -> Practice -> Practice			
Unit 2	Present -> Practice -> Produce -> Produce // Present -> Practice -> Practice -> Practice			
Unit 3	Present -> Practice -> Produce -> Practice			
Unit 4	Present -> Practice -> Practice -> Produce			
Unit 5	Present -> Practice -> Practice // Present -> Practice -> Produce -> Practice			
Unit 6	Present -> Practice -> Practice -> Produce			
Total				8

When we consider how common the standard PPP structure is thought to be by other researchers (Thornbury, 1999; Fernández, 2011; Garth, 2022), the structure is irregular in the sense that none of the series of GPAs follow a predictable pattern. A possible answer to why this is the case in Magic! 9 could be that the authors do not differentiate what is practice and what is production to the same extent as this study does. It is entirely possible that Hedencrona et al. (2014) simply do not recognize PCAs and CAs as production GPAs and consider them to be practice. As mentioned in Section 2.3.7, a PPP structure could very well only use one or two parts of the standard PPP structure in any given order. If Hedencrona et al. (2014) consider all GPAs as practice, the structure would be present -> practice -> practice and thus it would not be irregular. Whether the prevalent structure is intentional by the authors or a coincidence is unfortunately difficult to say, with only one sample to analyze. With that said, the results in this study indicate that the series of GPAs transition from attention to form to attention to meaning in several cases, which is also what Garth (2022) found in his study regarding the

order of GPAs. Furthermore, in the identified series of GPAs, there are only two instances where the attention shifts to a complete focus on form. In Units 1 and 4 are the only two MecAs present in all the series of GPAs (see Table 3), which means that although focus on form is indeed primary, meaning is still prevalent throughout the series of GPAs.

4.3 What approach to teaching grammar can be derived from the GPA composition, the PPP structure, and its related series of GPAs?

Thus far, we know that the targeted grammatical elements of GPAs are explicitly presented by name. The rules of the elements are possibly presented inductively through preceding non-GPAs and meant to be worked out implicitly by the learner, and if the inductive approach fails there is a deductive explanation of rules in the section *Magic pages*. This deductive explanation is in the learner's L1. The practice segment of the GPA structure is primarily focused on form through MeaAs completed individually. To practice producing the grammatical elements, the learners are prompted to work together in activities focused primarily on meaning from a partially controlled to completely uncontrolled setting by communicative means. Everything involved in this process is also completed in English. L1 is not used in the GPAs.

With the given results and subsequent analysis in steps 1 and 2, it is unfortunately difficult to present a definitive answer to the third research question. The results suggest two possible approaches to teaching English grammar. By looking at the presentation of the grammatical elements, the approach is to inductively explain the rules of the grammatical elements, followed by practicing the grammar using audio-lingual methods of drilling. MecAs and MeaAs are completed in writing in the ELT material, but as stated in Section 2.5.1, these GPAs could just as easily be performed orally. The second possible conclusion is to claim that the post-communicative approach is used to teach grammar in Magic! 9. Primarily, the rules of the grammatical elements are still explained inductively. There are also the deductive L1 explanations of these rules in the *Magic pages*. 13,89% of the GPAs belong to the post-communicative approach and 2,78% belong to the communicative approach. If translation GPAs are separated from non-translation MeaAs and treated as truly belonging to the grammar-translation approach, the audio-lingual GPAs drop to 69,4%. This means that approximately 1/3 of the GPAs are not audio-lingual. This suggests that there is enough prevalence of other approaches to argue that there is enough blending of approaches to conclude that the intended way of teaching grammar in Magic! 9 is the post-communicative approach.

With that said, the final answer to the third question is that many approaches to teaching grammar coexist in Magic! 9 and that it is likely not possible to give the approach a proper naming other than the post-communicative approach, or a post-methods era approach (see

Section 2.3.5). In other words, the analyzed data suggest that the authors' teaching of grammar is centered on using what each prevalent approach has to offer that can be deemed as appropriate for learning grammar. To be clear, this answer is to be seen as suggestive rather than definitive.

5. Conclusions

During this study, I investigated the workbook in Magic! 9 with the aim of determining which approach is used to teach English grammar in this ELT material. To do this, I used the research method content analysis in three steps and looked at the explicit GPAs and which types are prevalent. I proceeded by investigating what PPP structure is used and related this structure to series of GPAs that are meant to practice and produce a grammatical element. Steps 1 and 2 provided constituent information about the intended approach to teach grammar in Magic! 9. In the third step, this information was analyzed and consolidated into the suggestive answer that there are many approaches in Magic! 9. Therefore, the conclusion was that the authors are likely to be influenced by the post-communicative approach, also known as the post-methods era.

The results and analysis of this study suggest that it is possible to derive an intended grammar teaching approach in ELT material by looking at individual GPAs and at series of GPAs in relation to a PPP structure. This study is primarily useful for teachers looking for a way to decide which ELT material is best suited to their pedagogical preferences or which material is best suited for their students. This study is likely not useful for SLA researchers looking for answers on how ELT materials in a Swedish context are currently designed for grammar teaching. The reason for this is simple. This study is not extensive enough. There are simply not enough samples, which is due to the limitations explained in Section 3.2.2. However, this study could help other SLA researchers understand GPAs and how series of GPAs can potentially be used in other ELT materials. To that end, I suggest a follow-up study that extends this study by including more ELT materials. Alternatively, a GPA focused study could investigate how non-GPAs can be, or are incorporated into grammar teaching.

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Appendix 1 – GPA characteristics by Garth (2022: 5)

TABLE 1
Grammar Practice Activity Types and Characteristics

Characteristic	GPA Type				
	MecA	MeaA	PCA	CA	
Focus	On Form	Complete	Primary	From Primarily Focused on Form to Balanced	Secondary
	On Meaning	Absent	Secondary		Primary
Meaningful	Meaningless	✓		✓	
	Meaningful		✓	✓	✓
Level of Control		Completely Controlled	Completely Controlled	Prompted	Uncontrolled
New Info Generation	No New Info Generated	✓	✓		
	New Info Generated			✓	✓
Authenticity	Inauthentic	✓	✓	✓	
	Authentic				✓

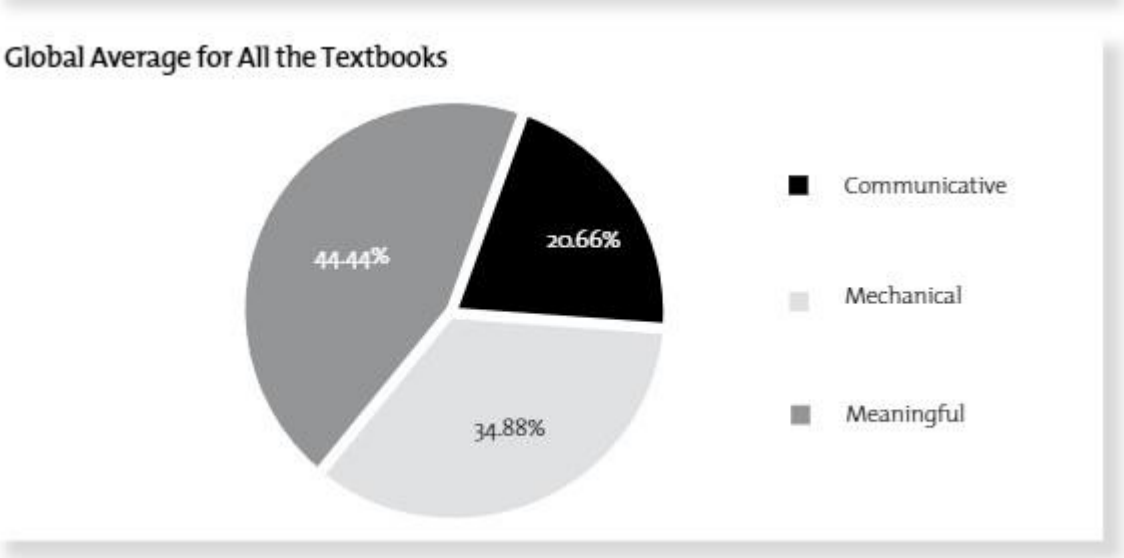
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Appendix 2 – GPA composition by Garth (2022: 13)

TABLE 4
Tally of Activities by GPA Type

Book	MecA	MeaA	PCA	CA	Total
1	3	6	4	5	18
2	4	7	4	1	16
3	1	3	7	7	18
4	0	4	15	7	26
5	0	2	7	6	15
6	1	5	1	3	10
7	4	4	4	5	16
8	1	11	11	4	27
9	4	10	7	1	22
10	2	7	3	2	14
11	1	3	12	5	21
12	0	6	0	0	6
13	0	8	10	0	18
14	2	5	7	4	18
Total (%)	23 (9.3%)	81 (32.9%)	92 (37.4%)	50(20.3%)	246

Appendix 3 – GPA composition by Gómez-Rodríguez (2010: 344)





Faculty of Arts and Education
English Department

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Course: ENGB75, VT23

Teacher: Marika Kjellén

Date submitted: 2023-08-13

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