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THE USE OF DEDUCTIVE AND INDUCTIVE TEACHING METHODS TO TEACH GRAMMAR IN BENIN EFL CLASSES

L'UTILISATION DE MÉTHODES D'ENSEIGNEMENT DÉDUCTIVE ET INDUCTIVE POUR ENSEIGNER LA GRAMMAIRE DANS LES CLASSES D'ANGLAIS LANGUE ÉTRANGÈRE AU BÉNIN

Arlette Joséline Viviane **HOUNHANOU**

ABSTRACT

This research explores the intricacies of teaching grammar in Benin's English as Foreign Language (EFL) classes, focusing on the comparative effectiveness of deductive and inductive methods. The study used a mixed method incorporating questionnaires addressed to ten (10) EFL teachers and one hundred and fifty (150) learners, two (02) interviews were directed to head teachers, and six (06) classroom observations in two secondary schools. Findings reveal nuanced challenges, such as limited English proficiency and inadequate resources, underscoring the need for tailored approaches. Deductive methods, characterized by explicit rule presentation, offer foundational knowledge and clarity, while inductive

methods, emphasizing discovery learning, foster active engagement and critical thinking. The dynamic relationship between these methods, balancing structure and exploration, proves essential for optimizing language instruction and learners' performances. The research work concludes with suggestions for educational authorities, EFL teachers, and learners, emphasizing the importance of flexible integration to address diverse learning styles.

Keywords : deductive method – Grammar – inductive method – english – foreign language

RÉSUMÉ

Cette recherche explore les complexités de l'enseignement de la grammaire dans les classes d'Anglais, langue étrangère au Bénin, en se focalisant sur l'efficacité comparative des méthodes Déductives et Inductives. L'étude intègre diverses méthodologies de recherche, notamment des questionnaires étaient adressés à dix (10)

enseignants de la langue anglaise, et à cent cinquante apprenants. Les professeurs principaux ont été soumis à deux entretiens. Au total six (06) observations de classes ont eu lieu dans deux établissements secondaires. Les résultats ont révélé que des défis nuancés, tels que la maîtrise limitée de l'anglais et des ressources insuffisantes,

soulignant la nécessité d’approches sur mesure. Les résultats ont aussi indiqué que les méthodes déductives, qui caractérisées par une présentation explicite des règles, offrent des connaissances fondamentales et de la clarté, tandis que les méthodes inductives, qui mettent l’accent sur l’apprentissage par la découverte, favorisent l’engagement actif et la pensée critique. La relation dynamique entre ces méthodes, équilibrant structure et exploration, s’avère essentielle pour

optimiser l’enseignement des langues. Ce travail de recherche propose des suggestions aux autorités éducatives, aux enseignants de la langue anglaise, et aux apprenants, tout en soulignant l’importance de l’intégration flexible pour faire face aux divers styles d’apprentissage.

Mots-clés : méthode déductive – grammaire – méthode inductive – anglais - langue étrangère

INTRODUCTION

Teaching-learning language within an educational system is really demanding as far as the selection of teaching methods is concerned. This carries substantial significance, particularly in the context of EFL. Within the educational framework of Benin, the utilization of teaching methods, specifically the choice between deductive and inductive approaches, emerges as a focal point deserving in-depth exploration. Understanding and assessing these methods extends beyond mere matters of pedagogical preference. It delves into the core of language, teacher beliefs, and the quality of EFL education. This study embarks on a journey into the heart of EFL grammar instruction in Benin, with a particular focus on the secondary education levels, specifically EFL intermediate classes.

The choice between Deductive and Inductive methods in grammar teaching in Benin. In EFL grammar instruction, the lack of consensus regarding the approach preference raises concerns about the quality of teaching grammar and education. The disconnection between pedagogical theory and classroom practices necessitates an in-depth inquiry. When teachers apply methods of teaching that do not align with best practices, learners’ language learning can be significantly hindered. In addition to the issue of method of selection, teachers’ beliefs and practices become pivotal factors. Teachers’ convictions about approach effectiveness impact their instructional

methods. Teachers’ personal beliefs strongly shape their teaching methods, affecting the quality of education. about method effectiveness. Investigating the alignment between beliefs and practices in Benin EFL classes is then crucial to comprehend why certain methods are favored in teaching grammar. It is hoped that the results of the investigation will have the potential not only to inform best practices within Benin’s EFL classrooms but also contribute to the broader understanding of language education in diverse international contexts.

This research seeks to shed light on the prevailing teaching methods, it focuses on deductive and inductive methods. The research aims to comprehensively understand the current methodologies employed and assess their alignment with established pedagogical principles. The exploration of deductive and inductive approaches, teachers’ beliefs, challenges faced by teachers and the tangible impact on students’ language learning outcomes are guided by the following questions :

1. What are the challenges in teaching Grammar in the Benin EFL context ?
2. What teaching methods are predominantly employed in EFL grammar instruction in Benin?
3. What is the impact of deductive and inductive methods on students’ language learning outcomes in the Benin educational system?

1. MATERIEL ET METHODES DE TRAVAIL

1.1. Literature review

This section reviews the previous research works which have initiated an exploration of the deductive

and inductive methods in the teaching of grammar, which constitute pivotal components of effective language pedagogy

1.1.1. Issues in Teaching in Benin

Navigating the terrain of teaching methods in Benin's English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms brings forth a set of distinctive issues. These issues are intricately interwoven with cultural, pedagogical, and contextual nuances. They influence the effectiveness of instructional strategies. From the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students to the need for culturally responsive methodologies, this exploration unravels the hurdles educators encounter when implementing teaching methods in the Beninese EFL landscape. Limited English Proficiency, lack of resources, the size of the classes and their heterogeneity, lack of training, assessment practices, language code-switching and socioeconomic factors are some challenges that need to be addressed. In the context of English language learning materials, their impact on teaching methods has been critically evaluated (Tomlinson, 2008:6). However, within the Benin EFL context, a significant lack of materials poses a hindrance. Additionally, exploring nuanced insights into instructional strategies is essential. The importance of teaching methods that can adapt to varying class sizes and compositions, along with flexible methodologies ensuring effective learning experiences for all students, regardless of classroom dynamics, cannot be overstated (Harmer 2012 :132). Unfortunately, in Benin, where many teachers hold academic certifications, the absence of competent educators equipped with diverse pedagogical approaches persists due to inadequate ongoing training. Addressing this gap is crucial for enriching English language instruction in the country.

1.1.2. Deductive Method vs Inductive Method

Deductive and inductive methods are widely used in grammar teaching in Benin. This section provides an extensive examination of the deductive and inductive methods, including definitions according to some contributors from the recent work, characteristics, and effectiveness of each method.

Conceptual Clarification

The deductive approach is characterized by the explicit presentation of grammar rules and principles

to learners before engaging them in practical application. The deductive method involves the teacher explaining grammar rules to the learners and providing structured practice activities (Lightbown and Spada 2013 : 82). In the same trend, the deductive method is defined as a traditional pedagogical approach in which grammar rules and principles are explicitly presented by the teacher at the outset of the lesson. It involves providing learners with clear, rule-based explanations followed by practice activities (Ellis 2002 : 169). This highlights the fact that the deductive method is teacher-centered and grammar rules are offered at the beginning of the lesson. Conversely, the inductive method is learner-centered and students discover the rules by themselves. It is an instructional approach that encourages learners to discover and understand the rules and patterns of a language through context, examples, and guided exploration. The inductive method is a learner-centered approach where students are exposed to real-life examples and contexts before being introduced to general grammar rules. This approach promotes a bottom-up understanding of language, allowing learners to actively engage with authentic language use (Thornbury 2006 : 67). It is a method which relies on exposing learners to language in use. It involves presenting learners with authentic examples, often in the form of texts or dialogues, and allowing them to deduce rules (Larsen-Freeman 2011 : 179). In a similar direction, the inductive approach fosters a deeper understanding of language structures through learner-driven exploration. It encourages learners to actively engage in the discovery of grammar rules. (Schulz 2006 : 12). This means that the inductive method better matches the principles of the current curriculum of Benin, the competency-based approach (CBA).

Key Features of Deductive and Inductive Methods

Embarking on the exploration of teaching methodologies in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the deductive and inductive methods emerge as the most used pedagogical approaches by educators. Below are their key features in a comparative table.

Tabl 1: Deductive and Inductive Methods’ Key Features

KEY FEATURES	DEDUCTIVE METHOD	INDUCTIVE METHOD
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Presentation • Explicit Explanation • Use of Examples • Guided Practice • Teacher-centered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovery Learning • Examples and Context Active Engagement • Problem-solving • Contextual Learning • Gradual Complexity • Student-Centered • Peers Error Correction • Application and Practice • Variety of Materials • Communicative Competence
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundational Knowledge • Clear Explanation • Confidence Building • Logical Structure • Transferability • Teacher Guidance • Problem-Solving Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active involvement • Critical Thinking • Contextual Understanding • Independence • Meaningful Learning • Increasing Students’ Talking Time
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Student Engagement • Overemphasis on Rules • Lack of Contextualization • Variability in Student Proficiency • Inhibition of Creativity • Teacher-Centeredness • Depersonalization of Learning • Ineffectiveness for Certain Grammar Concepts • Limited Practical Application • Assessment and Testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Explicit Rule • Knowledge • Time-Consuming • Possible Misinterpretation • Not Ideal for all Learners • Language Variety

Source: Arlette Hounhanou (2024)

Educators often find a balance between these approaches, recognizing that a flexible integration can cater to diverse learning styles and enhance overall comprehension. The strategic use of deductive and inductive elements can create a synergistic effect, optimizing the effectiveness of language instruction. This table shows that the deductive method, rooted in explicit rule presentation, offers structured guidance but may

limit active engagement. In contrast, the inductive method fosters critical thinking and contextual understanding, even though with challenges. Educators must maintain flexibility in their teaching strategies, finding a balance between structured instruction and active discovery, tailored to their students’ unique needs. The next chapter of this research work deals with the methodology, the data collection instruments and data

1.1.3. Review of Related Studies

Several researches have been conducted on the inductive method at the school level., a quasi-experimental study was conducted to establish a comparison of the effectiveness of deductive and inductive methods of teaching grammar (Tammenga Helmantel 2014 : 208). The sample consists of 981 Dutch students in lower

secondary education learning German, English or Spanish as a second language. At the end of his experiment, he concluded that there was a significant difference in students' test scores between instruction forms and he proceeded to examine the scores. Moreover, previous studies have concluded that in some areas teachers are still teaching by using the Grammar Translation Method

(GTM). The investigations on the current trend in teaching grammar in Indonesian secondary schools proved that the majority of EFL teachers were using the GTM, which was based exclusively on the deductive method (Milawati 2019 : 187). In the same year, the deductive method was concluded to be effective because the scores he obtained from his studies were significant in the same setting (Benitez et al. 2019 : 231). Contrary to those results, it was found that low-level students obtained better scores with the deductive approach after a survey (Yoon and Lee 2020 : 597). In Benin, in 1990, with the introduction and the implementation of the Competency-Based Approach (CBA) programs, several EFL teachers through class visits of Pedagogical and Inspectors on the ground discovered an increased number of EFL teachers trying to adapt themselves to the new approach of teaching, that is the inductive method. I do share the report of all Pedagogical Advisors, and Inspectors through their analysis due to the main challenge at that time. The objective was to break with the traditional method and put students at the centre of learning.

1.2. Methodology

The present chapter developed the methodological procedures used to undertake this research work. It

involves the description of the target population and the sample; the instruments used for data collection, the data collection procedures and the methods of data analysis.

1.2.1. Research design and sampling

A mixed method was adopted to provide a comprehensive understanding of teachers’ EFL beliefs and their use of deductive and inductive teaching methods in grammar instruction in Benin secondary schools. This approach incorporated both quantitative and qualitative components, ensuring a holistic perspective on the research topic. It involved the administration of structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations conducted in two schools.

Tabl. 2 : Sampling

The target population of this study comprises EFL teachers at two main schools. To ensure the representativeness and reliability of the results, a systematic method is employed. A rural school and an urban one were involved, ten (10) EFL teachers participated and a hundred and fifty learners took part in the survey.

Schools	Locations	Teachers	Students
School 1	Rural area	05	75
School 2	Urban area	05	75
Total		10	150

Source: Arlette Hounhanou (202

1.2.2. Data Collection Instruments

Each data collection instrument composed of the questionnaires, the interviews and the classroom observations were meticulously designed to align with the research objectives and to ensure a comprehensive exploration of teachers’ EFL beliefs and their utilization of deductive and inductive teaching methods.

Questionnaires

The questionnaires consisted of a series of ten (10) structured, close-ended questions. They were distributed to the selected sample of students. These questionnaires were specifically designed to

capture quantitative data on learners’ involvement, preferences, and practices in grammar instruction. They included multiple-choice items to gauge the degree of agreement or disagreement with statements related to grammar teaching methods. The questionnaires were administered in a standardized manner to facilitate the collection of consistent and quantifiable data.

Interviews

The interviews were semi-structured and consisted of six (06) questions and were conducted with a subset of teachers selected from the sample. These interviews allowed for in-depth conversations with open-ended questions. Teachers were encouraged

to express their beliefs, experiences, and challenges related to grammar instruction. The semi-structured format provided flexibility for teachers to elaborate on their responses, share their insights, and offer context-specific information. Interviews were conducted in a private and comfortable setting to promote candid and detailed responses.

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations involved the systematic and unobtrusive observation of teachers’ actual instructional practices during grammar instruction

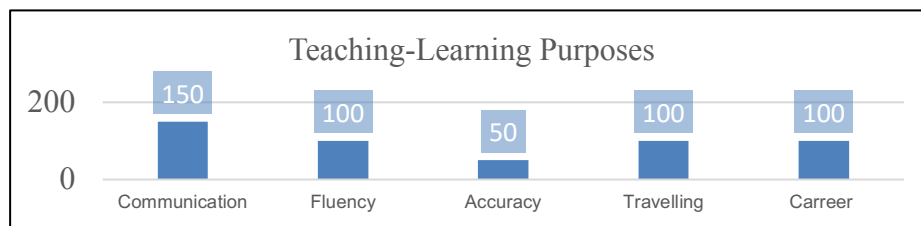
sessions. This method allowed to gain real-time insights into the implementation of deductive and inductive teaching methods. A predefined checklist was employed to document various aspects of teaching, such as the methodological choices made by teachers, their interaction with students, the use of teaching materials, and their classroom management strategies. These observations were conducted with the informed consent of the teachers to minimize disruption to their regular teaching activities.

2. RESULTS

This segment of the study incorporated the presentation and the analysis of data collected through the different instruments.

2.1. Results from Questionnaires

Fig. 1 : Purpose of Teaching-learning EFL

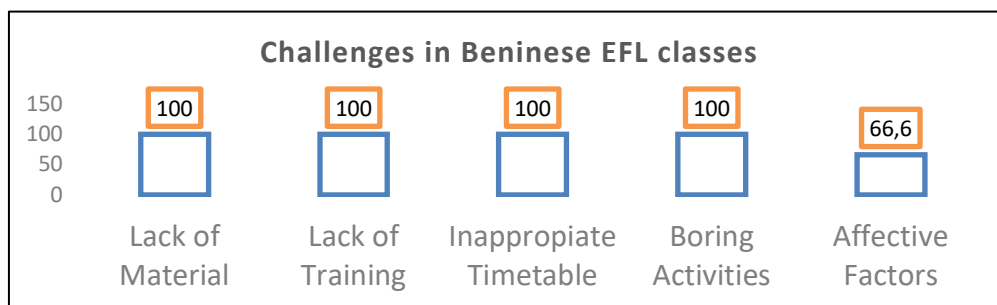


Source: Arlette Hounhanou (2024)

Fig. 1 showed that hundred percent (100 %) of the respondents are learning English for communicative purposes. However, the performance was not true

to expectation due to some hindrances revealed in fig. 2.

Fig. 2 : Challenges in EFL Classes while Developing Communicative Skills

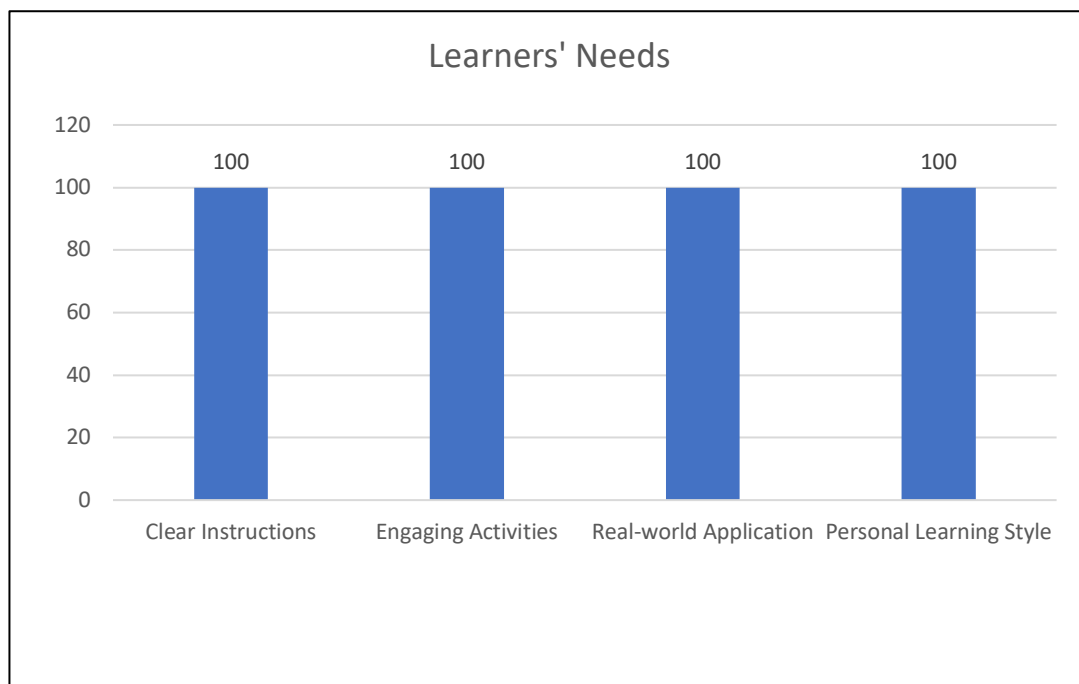


Source: Arlette Hounhanou (2024)

Fig. 2 displays the challenges in Beninese EFL classes. It was noticeable that the lack of material, the lack of training, the inappropriateness of the timetable and the poor quality of activities were the main problems in language classes. Additionally, affective factors

(66.66%) stood as hindrances in developing communicative skills in an EFL context like Benin. To overcome those challenges, learners’ needs should be considered.

Fig. 3 : Factors Influencing EFL Learners' Preferences



Source: Arlette Hounhanou (2024)

A hundred percent (100%) of students wanted clear instructions with engaging activities in line with their real world. Their learning style should also be taken into account.

2.2. Results from the Interviews

Interviews with experienced English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators unveil a nuanced exploration of teaching philosophies, methodologies, and challenges faced with grammar instruction.

- Teachers acknowledged challenges and demonstrated proactive strategies for addressing

- Interviewees acknowledged the efficiency of deductive methods but expressed concerns about potential drawbacks, demonstrating a nuanced understanding.
 - They recognized the critical benefits of inductive methods but highlighted potential challenges, such as confusion and time constraints.
 - Teachers showcased effective activities tailored to different proficiency levels, demonstrating versatility in instructional strategies.
 - Teachers provided context-specific insights, recognizing the strengths of each method based on the complexity of grammar topics.
- them, showcasing a reflective and adaptive approach.

2.3. Results from Classroom Observation

The focus during these observations was placed on strategies used by teachers to teach grammar. At that point, classroom observations shed light on instructions, students' engagement, and the dynamic interplay between educators and learners. Dive into the detailed examination of each method's implementation,

highlighting key aspects that contributed to the effectiveness of grammar teaching. Some teachers emphasized the introduction of new concepts, use of real-life examples, student participation, discussion and analysis, application of rules, and encouragement of critical thinking while many others highlighted the clear presentation of rules.

Fig. 4 : Learning environment organization

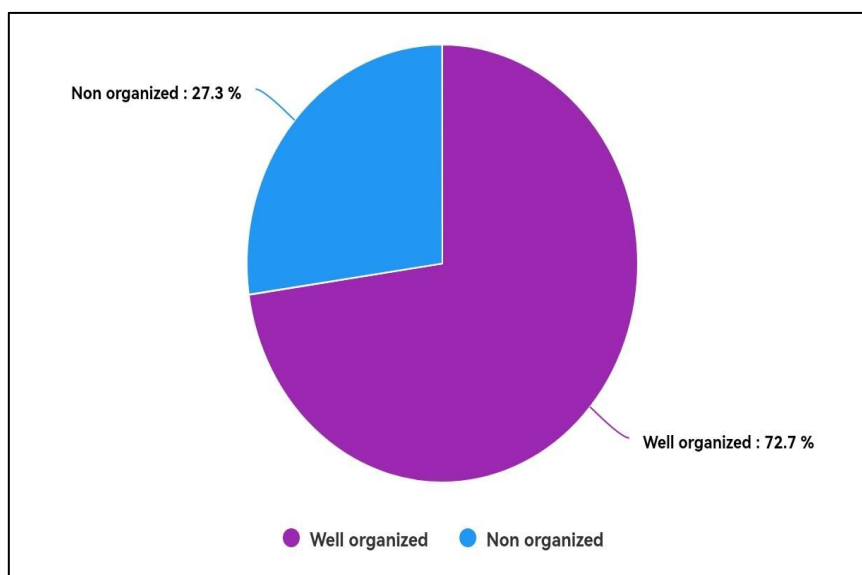


Fig. 4 portrayed the observation results regarding the organization of the classroom environment. A significant majority, constituting seventy-two-point seven percent (72.7%), indicates that the observed learning environment is organized. This indicated a positive aspect of the educational setting, suggesting that the physical arrangement and orderliness within the classroom contributed to a conducive atmosphere for effective grammar teaching. Conversely, twenty-seven-point three percent (27.3%) of the observation reported suggested a perception of non-organization.

3. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, REFERENCES BIBLIOGRAPHIQUES

3.1. Discussion of the results

The findings of the study are discussed in this section around two main points. This discussion takes into account the teaching methodologies in Benin's EFL classrooms, the challenges, and the interplay between pedagogical approaches and diverse learners' performances in education.

3.1.1. Challenges in Teaching Grammar

As revealed by this study through Fig. 1, the main purpose of EFL learners is communication. It is shown that a hundred percent (100 %) of the respondents are learning English for communicative purposes. However, the

performance is not true to expectation due to some hindrances revealed in Fig. 2. In fact, interviewees as well as questionnaire respondents, complained about the same problems. Fig. 2 displays the challenges in Beninese EFL classes. The lack of material, the lack of training, the inappropriateness of the timetable and the poor quality of activities are cited as impediments by the sampled population. Additionally, affective factors (66.66%) stand as hindrances in developing communicative skills in an EFL context like Benin.

These data corroborate the work of Krashen who stated that In essence, when feelings or emotions such as anxiety, fear or embarrassment are elevated, it becomes difficult for language acquisition to occur. In opposition, when the affective filter is lowered, the feeling of safety is high, and language acquisition occurs (Valentina Gonzalez 2020:48). It means that social and emotional aspects should be taken into consideration in any language class to create a conducive learning atmosphere.

Comparing the two methods, it happened to observe some EFL teachers working with students and displaying the deductive methods. This was successful when the teacher has to insist with some rules of memorization to make learners succeed with practices on rephrasing. This means that the deductive method, despite its critics has that positive aspect. The examination of teaching methodologies in Benin's EFL classrooms, reveals challenges, prevalent methods, and their impact on

language learning. Those challenges increase while teaching grammar in Benin's language instruction because of limited English proficiency, resource constraints, and dynamic class compositions. These underscore the importance of effective teaching methods in overcoming linguistic barriers, optimizing resources, and accommodating diverse learning environments.

3.1.2. Teaching Methods and learners' Outcomes

This study reveals that Benin's EFL educators employ both deductive and inductive methods, reflecting diverse pedagogical preferences. The deductive method, with its structured presentation, aligns with some educators' preferences, while the inductive method resonates with the learner-centred approach, emphasizing discovery learning and active engagement (Thornbury 2006:25).

The influence of teaching methods on language learning outcomes, reveals a complex interplay between deductive and inductive approaches (Thornbury 2002:29). Learners' preference for the inductive method underscores its perceived effectiveness in fostering a learner-centred approach. When the students' learning style is considered, hundred percent (100%) of them want clear instructions with engaging activities in line with their real world. As shown by the collected data, the reasons influencing learners' preference lay in the characteristics of the given methods. Learners show interest, motivation and engagement when the teaching method puts them as the conner's stone. Indeed, students often excel when they are allowed to discover rules independently and construct their own knowledge. This active learning process can lead to deeper understanding and better retention of information. Recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of both deductive and inductive teaching methods highlights the importance of a balanced and adaptive pedagogical approach. Such an approach allows for flexibility in instruction, catering to the diverse learning styles and needs of students, and fostering a more engaging and effective learning environment. It's about finding the right balance between guiding students and allowing them the freedom to explore, thereby facilitating a more holistic and enriching learning experience.

3.1.3. Suggestions

Standing at the crossroads of theory and practice, the following suggestions aimed at fostering an effective English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy in the context of Benin. Suggestions to Educational authorities include investing in teachers' professional development programs that incorporate both deductive and inductive teaching methodologies. Additionally, prioritizing the allocation of resources for diversified teaching materials, technological integration, and classroom infrastructure can significantly elevate the quality of EFL education. Suggesting strategies involve honing both deductive and inductive methods in lesson planning, fostering a dynamic and inclusive classroom environment. Also, continuous professional development opportunities, including workshops, peer collaborations, and online courses should be grabbed by all teachers.

Empowering EFL learners involves recognizing their diverse needs and preferences. Promoting active engagement through participatory. Moreover, it is important to encourage self-directed learning and leveraging technology as an additional learning resource. This may enhance the autonomy and efficacy of EFL learners.

CONCLUSION

A retrospective examination of the challenges highlighted the multifaceted nature of EFL education in Benin. Limited English proficiency, resource constraints, class size dynamics, and the need for cultural relevance collectively shape the contours of the educational landscape. Finding ways to overcome those challenges, is the main goal assigned to this research. Then a mixed-method helped to understand the juxtaposition of deductive and inductive teaching methods in language instruction in Benin. This study revealed that the deductive method, with its structured clarity, complements the inductive approach, fostering critical thinking and active engagement. Then, based on the link between these methods, instead of undervaluing one at the detriment of the other one, the research suggests a balanced pedagogical approach that addresses the diverse needs of learners.

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