

EFFECTIVE GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION THROUGH CONTEXTUALIZED LEARNING

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Abstract: This paper explores how teaching grammar in context, rather than through isolated rules, supports better understanding and use of grammar among language learners. It argues that using real-life communication and meaningful activities in grammar instruction leads to more effective and lasting learning.

Keywords: grammar in context, ESL teaching, grammar instruction, language learning, functional grammar

ЭФФЕКТИВНОЕ ОБУЧЕНИЕ ГРАММАТИКЕ ЧЕРЕЗ КОНТЕКСТНОЕ ОБУЧЕНИЕ

Аннотация: В статье рассматривается, как изучение грамматики в контексте, а не через отдельные правила, помогает учащимся лучше понимать и использовать язык. Подход основан на том, что использование живого общения и практических упражнений делает процесс изучения грамматики более эффективным и долгосрочным.

Ключевые слова: грамматика в контексте, изучение английского языка, преподавание грамматики, языковое обучение, функциональная грамматика.

In traditional language teaching, grammar was often taught by focusing on rules and sentence structures without using real-life examples. Students learned how to form sentences but often struggled to use grammar correctly in everyday situations. In recent years, researchers and teachers have started to change this method. They now believe that grammar is best learned when it is used in context—through stories, conversations, or tasks that have real meaning. This method helps learners understand not just how grammar works, but also when and why to use it.

Jones and Lock (2011) argue that grammar should be seen as a tool for communication. They support the idea of “functional grammar,” which means that grammar helps people express different meanings in different situations. For example, using the passive voice in English (“The book was read by many people”) shifts the focus from the person doing the action to the action itself. This is common in scientific writing or news reports. By teaching grammar through real examples like these, students learn how grammar choices change meaning.

Larsen-Freeman (2003) introduced the idea of “grammaring,” which means that learning grammar is not just about knowing rules. It is about learning how to use grammar correctly and meaningfully in different situations. She explains that teachers should focus on three parts of grammar: form (what the grammar looks like), meaning (what the grammar means), and use (when and why we use it). For example, when teaching the present perfect tense (“I have lived here for five years”), it is important to explain not only how to form the tense, but also what it means (an action that started in the past and continues) and when to use it (such as when describing life experiences).

In her later work with Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman (2016) continued to support grammar teaching as part of broader communication. They recommend teaching grammar through activities that involve real communication, such as storytelling, writing emails, or participating in group projects. This approach helps learners use grammar in meaningful and practical ways.

Mart (2013) also supports teaching grammar in context. He explains that using real texts—like newspaper articles or short stories—helps students see how grammar is used naturally. For example, a teacher could use a news article to show how the past tense is used to describe events. After reading the article, students could talk about the events using the same grammar. This helps them understand grammar as part of communication, not just as rules to memorize.

Thornbury (2005) emphasizes the concept of “noticing.” He argues that students learn more effectively when they are encouraged to closely examine how grammar functions in authentic texts. For instance, after reading a dialogue, a teacher might ask students to identify all the questions and discuss how they are formed. This process helps students develop greater grammatical awareness and understand how grammar operates in real-life contexts.

Task-based learning is another method that supports grammar in context. When students do tasks like planning a trip, writing a letter, or preparing a presentation, they use grammar naturally as they try to complete the task. For example, if students are working on a travel plan, they might use future forms (“We will go to Paris on Monday”) without needing to memorize rules first. As they use the grammar, teachers can help correct mistakes and explain rules when needed. This way, grammar learning happens as part of real communication.

Teaching grammar in context has many benefits. First, it helps students remember grammar better because they see how it works in real life. Second, it helps them use grammar more accurately and fluently. Third, it makes learning more interesting and useful, because students see the connection between grammar and communication. Finally, it helps students become more confident, as they use grammar to express their own ideas and understand others.

In conclusion, teaching grammar in context is a powerful method that helps learners use grammar meaningfully and effectively. Instead of focusing only on rules, this approach uses stories, tasks, and real communication to help students understand and use grammar in real situations. Research by Jones and Lock, Larsen-Freeman, Thornbury, and Mart supports this approach and shows that it leads to better learning outcomes. Teachers are encouraged to include grammar in their reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities so that students can learn grammar as part of communication, not apart from it.

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