

Rules of Language



Bernadette Challinor

Teaching grammar & teaching languages

Craftsmen do not hold their apprentices down to theories; they put them to work without delay...

Therefore in schools let the pupils learn to write by writing, to speak by speaking, to sing by singing, to reason by reasoning, etc.,

All languages are easier to learn by practice than from rules; that is to say by hearing, reading, re-reading, copying, imitating with hand and tongue and doing all these as frequently as is possible.

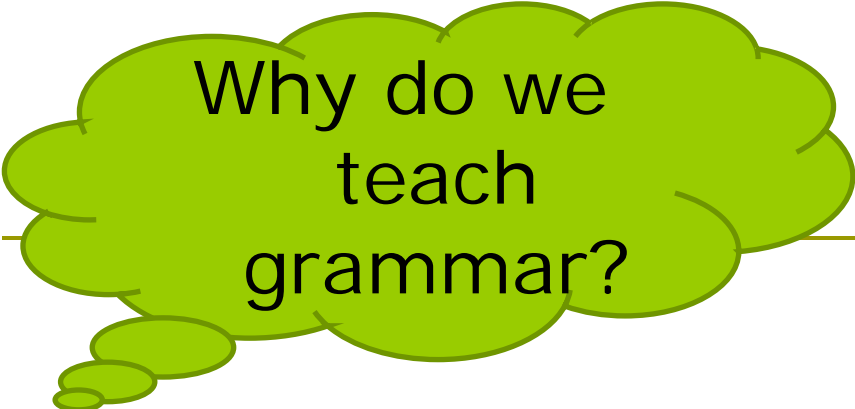
The Great Didactic

Jan Comenius (1592-1670)



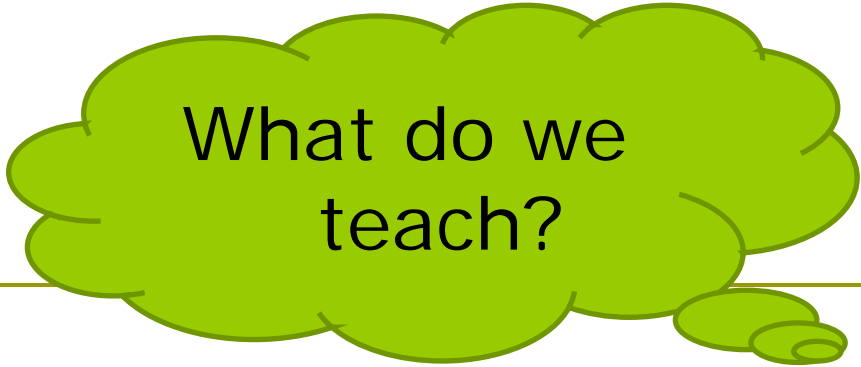
Focus

- ❑ The place of grammar in language teaching;
- ❑ what “communicative grammar” looks like in the classroom;
- ❑ developing teachers’ practice;
- ❑ using multi skill tasks to develop learners’ control and range.



Why do we
teach
grammar?

- ❑ Underpins effective communication
- ❑ Understanding of rules increases our capacity to use language independently and spontaneously



What do we teach?

- Grammar as defined by content in a textbook/specification
- Functions
- Hierarchy/perception of difficulty
- Teacher expectations
- Terminology – yes/no? Target language/English?

What does it
look like ?

visuals
sounds

gesture
mime

context

establishing
meaning of TL

L1

practice

application
same
context

application
another
context

revisit

fluency, pronunciation,
interaction, tone, expression

rules

rules

independence

Developing Practice

- Ensuring meanings and relationships are clearly established:
 - e.g. the meaning of, and relationship between, articles and pronouns e.g. *un(e) / le/la/les / du/ de la/des / il(s)/elle(s)*.
- Introducing new language more often in the 3rd person (*apart from transactional language*)
- *"There's more to language than tenses!"*

Developing practice

- ❑ Clear linguistic objectives as well as learning outcomes
- ❑ Modelling – use of target language
- ❑ Questioning: learners and teachers
- ❑ Pair & group work – different contexts, information gaps, accountability
- ❑ Narrative – reporting
- ❑ Resources and activities to develop thinking skills

Developing practice

- ❑ “rich” contexts: cross curricular and cultural
- ❑ harness available technology
- ❑ games which require more than word level understanding and responses
- ❑ mnemonics, colour coding, learning strategies to help recall
- ❑ effective oral and written feedback
- ❑ peer and self assessment to check for progress on specific areas
- ❑ multi skill tasks

Multi skill tasks

- Questions
- Linking & adding value
 - reading and speaking
 - listening and speaking
 - listening and writing
 - speaking and writing
 - reading and writing

Multi skill tasks



Jo-Wilfried Tsonga

Pays	France
Date de naissance	17 avril 1985
Lieu de naissance	Le Mans
Taille	188 cm
Poids	91 kg
Famille	Parents : Didier et Evelyne Frère Enzo - basketteur
Domicile	La Rippe, Suisse
Surnom	Ali ou Mohamed Ali
Prise de raquette	Droitier, revers à deux mains
Gains en tournois	8 478 346 US \$

Back to the future...?

"Theories may pass away, but problems endure."

Jean Piaget commenting on the work of Jan Comenius (1592-1670)

