

## **Critical analysis of the grammar activities.**

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**Abstract:** The article analyses three different grammar activities and their efficiency in teaching grammar. Moreover in order to achieve higher efficiency some suggestions are given concerning the use of those activities which will be helpful for EFL teachers to employ the activities in similar form during their classes.

**Key words:** grammar as a product, grammar as a process, grammar as a skill, EFL teachers, dictagloss.

### **Grammar as product.**

As teaching grammar as product refers focusing the students' attention on the form of the grammar structures (Rob Btastone, 1994) to make the student aware of the formation and usage of them in different contexts. The first activity aims to inform the students the forms of present simple and present continuous which is considered to be its "noticing" feature of the activity and helps the students to figure out their understanding about the use of the tenses in various meaning by which the students will be able to differentiate the usage of the tenses. While doing the activity the students have to compare the two tenses not only their forms but also their adverbial modifier of time and possible situations in which the actions happen accordingly they will be able to differentiate the tenses. The activity makes the students to fortify their knowledge about the tenses yet do not urge them discover some rules by themselves. The activity can be implemented while teaching grammar by the use of deductive approach that is not time consuming and involves the student to consider the forms and meaning of the tenses which can be said advantage side of the activity.

The activity (Appendix 1) is effective to imply while teaching tenses yet if the student' proficiency level is a bit higher self discovery is suggested within the activity. Here the students have to discover the rule of usage for each tense in the given sentences rather matching the sentences to the given rules.

The second activity is closely connected with the use of modals "can, could" for offering and requesting according to the register. In the activity the students will be able to discover the rule of usage for the modals considering the register and

politeness. The form of the modals followed with subject is given explicitly so the only thing the students have to do is to notice the appropriate situation in which the modals can be used and choose appropriate subject according to the meaning whether it is offer or request. The activity engages the students to interact with each other that improves their communicative skill which is its overweighing advantage. The activity can be used as role plays to be more practical instead of just completing and writing answer.

### **Teaching grammar as process.**

Teaching grammar as process means involving the language learners to express their thoughts using the language (Rob Btastone, 1994) by creating necessary opportunity for language use and facilitating them with enough knowledge about the grammar structure to be implemented for self expression. So the first activity for process teaching provides the students with enough opportunity for language use because of the given example. Here the students are first asked to read the text and be attentive to the words in bold as there are some mistakes and correct them when they have found which makes them be alert and attentive to the grammar because in the next step the students should implement the grammar point in their production. So the first step of the activity can serve as warning to use the grammar point correctly in their production which is considered to be significantly supportive for the learners: first they practice the grammar point and then use it in their discourse a bit independently.

The advantage of process teaching using the activity (Appendix 2) is that the activity makes the students revise the grammar first, consider its usage in the context and then engages the students to reflect it in their production which prevents the students from making possible mistakes.

I would suggest adding third stage to the activity that when the student finished their writing I would ask them to work in pairs, exchange their writing and check each other's work then give feedback about the mistakes and language use.

The second activity is directed to practice present perfect and past simple and involves the students use these tenses in their conversation in meaningful context. By the way the students will be able to use these tenses appropriately in interaction by asking some questions about the events that have ever happened in their life and asking and giving additional information about the events using past which is a good opportunity for the students to differentiate the tenses in their language use.

The next step of the activity is not so supportive for the students because firstly question should be asked in present perfect and additional information should be

asked in past and the answer about event when it happened how and why all of which should be in past tense so the students may need some support from the teacher to continue the interaction if their level is a bit lower or they have not acquired the tenses enough. Here the teacher should give additional instruction to continue the conversation.

The activity makes the student enter into spoken discourse and negotiate with each other about the same topic and by the way helps the students to improve their communicative ability all of which are the advantages of the activity using the approach.

The activity can be used in narrative form. For example the teacher writes the questions in cards like “Have you ever broken your arms or legs?” and so on and then puts the cards with backside on the desk. The students are asked to choose the cards one by one and who answers “Yes, I have” the student should tell how the event happened, when, where, why and so on as a story which makes the students arrange their thoughts with coherence and cohesion.

### **Teaching grammar as a skill.**

While teaching grammar as skill the teacher should take into consideration that how reading and listening activities draw the students attention to grammar structure (Rob Btastone, 1994) and according to which the activities should be organized. The first activity engages the learners think about the topic they are going to deal with by answering the questions looking at the given picture. It is somehow effective for them to catch the meaning of the tape script while listening and completing the table. By doing the activity the students reflect their awareness of grammar which contribute their listening comprehension. Because being able to differentiate present simple, past simple and future simple the students will be able to understand which event occurred when, in what situations the actions were happening that is important to build the meaning of the listening material.

The advantage of the activity (Appendix 3) is its contribution to improve the students’ listening comprehension through grammar and their grammar through listening.

The activity itself is helpful to imply. However it can be used as dictagloss in which the student listen to the story write down some important notes and create their own story.

The next activity helps the students to differentiate the future tenses using the context. It is an example of learning grammar in context (Cagri Tugrul Mart, 2013)

which informs the students with appropriate situations to each future tense. Through the context the students will be able to discover some rules of usage of future tenses for themselves. Through matching the halves of the sentences the students can better understand the grammar structure and at the same time the tenses help the learners to comprehend the meaning of the reading passage all of which are the advantage of teaching grammar as skill.

To improve activity I would ask my students to write the formulas for each tense and discover the meaning of each tense: which future form should be used in which situation.

## Appendix 1.

### Present Continuous and Present Simple **G3.3**

#### **2** a) Choose the correct words.

- 1 Miguel never works / *is never working* at weekends.
- 2 Mandy *is/is being* unemployed at the moment.
- 3 I *still learn/'m still learning* a lot in my job.
- 4 We *watch/'re watching* a film at the moment.
- 5 I *live/'m living* in France at the moment.
- 6 My parents *usually go/are usually going* on holiday in winter.
- 7 My brother *wants/is wanting* to live abroad.
- 8 What's wrong? Why *do you cry/are you crying*?

#### b) Match the sentences in 2a) to their meanings.

a) Present Simple for routines: *1* and *.....*.

b) Present Simple for states: *.....* and *.....*.

c) Present Continuous for things that are happening at the moment of speaking: *.....* and *.....*.

d) Present Continuous for things that are temporary or are happening around now: *.....* and *.....*.

## Appendix 2.

### **3** Complete the requests with *Can/Could I ...?* or *Can/Could you ...?*

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ have some apple juice, please?
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ tell me where Market Street is, please?
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ see the menu, please?
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ use your iPad for a few minutes, please?
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ lend me £20, please?
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ take me to school, please?
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_ help me with my homework, please?
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ give me a lift to the station, please?

Practise the requests with a partner. Give an answer for each request.

Can I have some apple juice, please?

Sorry, we ...

Yes, of course.  
Would you like ...?

**T411** Listen and compare.

### Appendix 3.

**Underline the examples of the future forms in the following text.**

#### **The Rise of Online Shopping**

In the late 1990s experts predicted that online shopping would not be able to compete with in-store shopping yet the recent rise in online sales figures suggests that their predictions were wrong. In fact all evidence points to the fact that online shopping will have outstripped in-store shopping within the next five years. This rapid increase has been driven by a number of factors including price, convenience and choice. Most online retailers use a delivery service and as a result of tracking retailers shopping habits, many will soon be introducing specific delivery timings so that customers can ensure their goods are delivered when they are at home. Online companies are already working on innovative ways to attract customers. For example, later this year one of the country's largest electronics retailers, Browns, is launching a 24-hour replacement products service for customers who need to return faulty goods. Browns hopes that by 2015 over 90% of its customer base will have graduated to online purchasing.

As well as consumer goods another growth area is the travel industry. Travel experts estimate that in as little as five years' time travel agencies will have disappeared from our shopping centres and almost all travellers will be buying hotels and flights from online agencies.

**Look at the previous text again and match the sentence halves below using the grammatical forms to help you understand when the actions happen.**

- 1** Browns will be
  - 2** In 5 years, travel agencies will have
  - 3** Browns claims that by 2015 customers will have
  - 4** In the future the majority of customers will be
  - 5** In 5 years' time, shopping on computers will have
- A** moved to online shopping.
  - B** shopping online for holidays.
  - C** launching a returns service.
  - D** overtaken physical shopping.
  - E** disappeared from shopping centres.

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