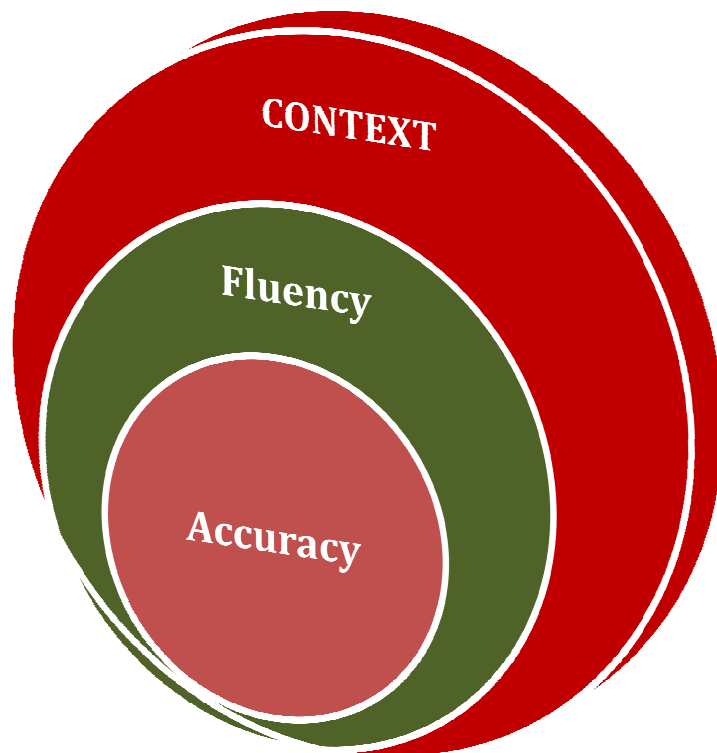


Put Context and Meaning in your Grammar Instruction

CATESOL 2012
Oakland, California



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For handouts, PowerPoints and more: <http://esl-teacher.net>

5 Principles to *LEARNING* Grammar

1. Students learn better within a context.
2. Students learn differently.
3. Students learn better in manageable chunks.
4. Students learn better by doing activities that move from controlled to open-ended.
5. If students learn how to learn, they will acquire grammar better.

Grammar Instruction

The purpose of grammar instruction should be to help learners communicate effectively. Therefore grammar instruction might include the following:

audience:

Learners consider the people they are communicating with when choosing appropriate language.

authentic communication:

Learners can communicate effectively in real-life situations.

purpose:

Learners communicate appropriately with a desired objective in mind.

pronunciation (segmentals):

Learners produce correct sounds of the language and are able to distinguish between them (ship/sheep).

pronunciation (suprasegmentals):

Learners recognize and produce language with correct intonation, rhythm, pitch, etc

skill development:

Learners can communicate effectively while listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

structure:

Learners form words or parts of words and combined them with other words and parts of words correctly in the language.

syntax:

Learners produce appropriate sentence structure recognizing time and aspect.

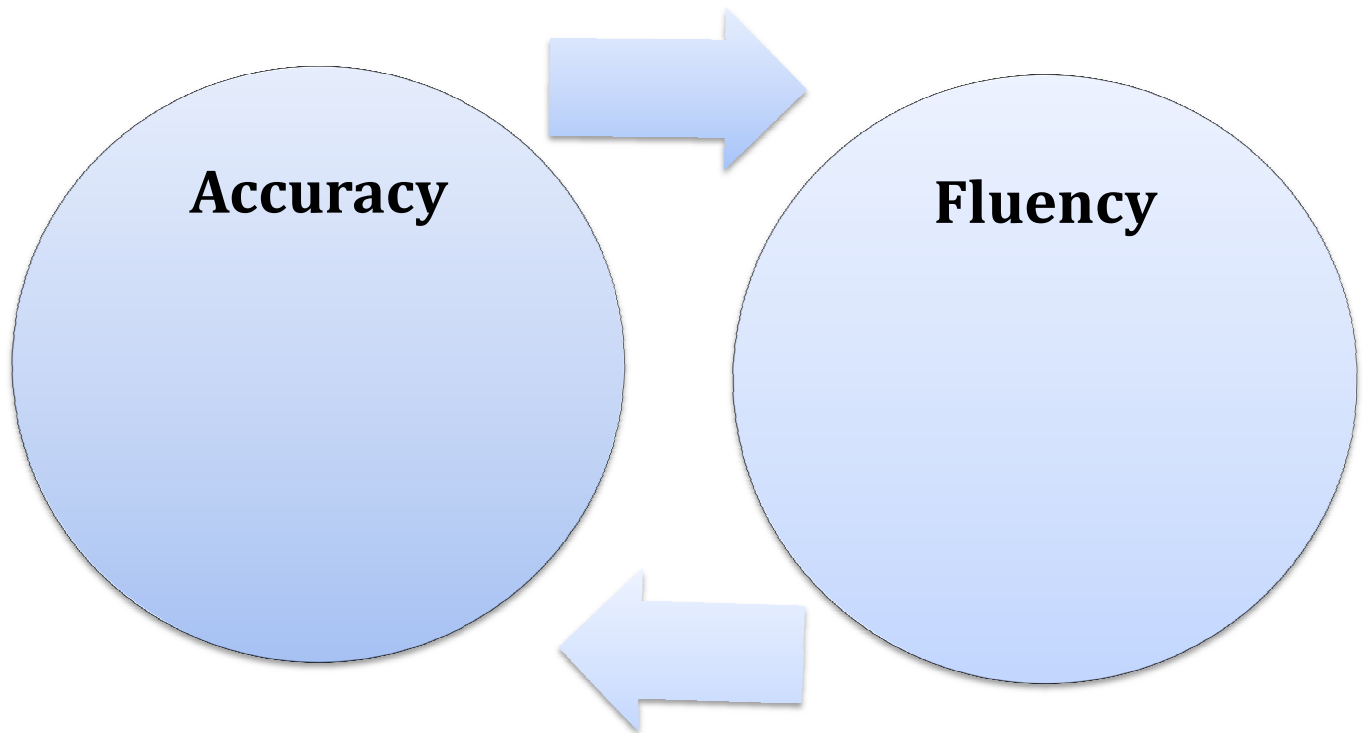
writing standards:

Learners write using correct punctuation and spelling.

Are there other areas you might add?

Accuracy and Fluency

DIRECTIONS: Categorize the nine areas on the previous page that relate to grammar instruction by writing each one in the correct circle.



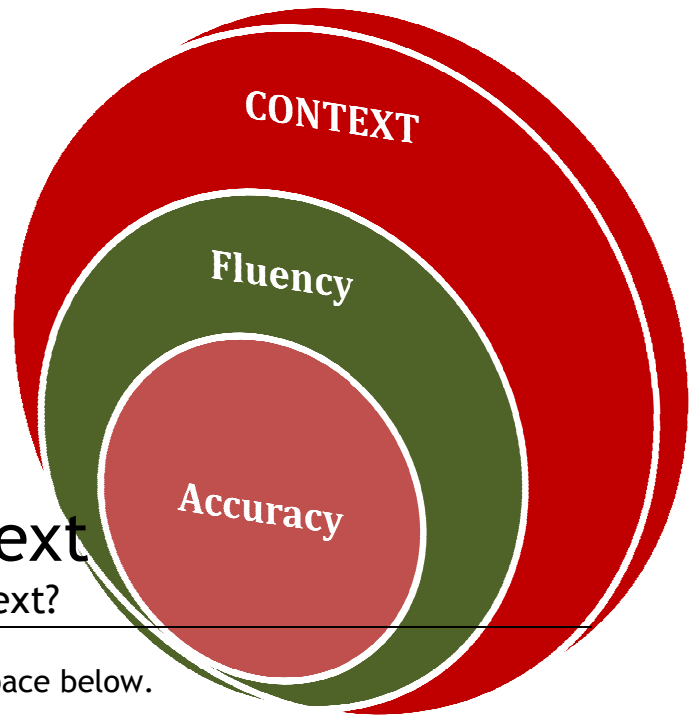
DIRECTIONS: Work with a small group to rank each area based on the time spent on each....number 1 being the language area you spend the most time on.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

Context Provides

- Purpose
- Motivation
- Relevancy
- Interest
- Usefulness



Examples of Context

How could you introduce context?

1. Write your own ideas here in the space below.

Use pictures

2. Write **new** ideas from participants below.

Grammar Lesson Plan

- ✓ Establish context
- ✓ Present limited concepts (chunks)
- ✓ Practice each concept *mechanically*
- ✓ Practice concepts together *meaningfully*
- ✓ Practice concepts together *communicatively*
- ✓ Check for understanding in preparation for application
- ✓ Apply to the students' lives

Establish Context

In the following clip, we will learn how monkeys are trained to pick coconuts.



DIRECTIONS: In pairs, guess at the order *on the handout* and then watch the video and see if the order is correct. (third person singular “s”)

- ___ He holds the monkey’s hand.
- ___ He uses a rope to control the monkey.
- 1 He lets the monkey play.
- ___ He shows him how to spin a coconut in a box
- ___ He brings the monkey to a tree.
- ___ He encourages the monkey to twist the coconut itself.

Meaning Progression

DIRECTIONS: Match. Write the correct number in front of the activity described.

PROGRESSION OF MEANING	ACTIVITY
1. Mechanical (no meaning necessary)	_____ Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the simple present.
2. Mostly Mechanical (little to no meaning necessary)	_____ Describe the video about Monkey College to a partner.
3. Mostly Meaningful	_____ Complete the sentences based on information from the chart about <i>Animal Training</i> .
4. Meaningful	_____ Circle the correct spelling of the 3 rd person singular form of the verb.

Practice in Context

DIRECTIONS: Think of one or two examples of activities that could be done for each type of practice listed below.

Mechanical (no meaning necessary)

- 1.
- 2.

Mostly Mechanical (little to no meaning necessary)

- 1.
- 2.

Mostly Meaningful

- 1.
- 2.

Meaningful

- 1.
- 2.

Apply Context

DIRECTIONS: In groups, list “how -to” steps to train an animal to do something you want done. Use a real example if someone in your group has one. Share your steps with another group.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Appendix: ESL Grammar Activity Types

MECHANICAL

Notes: Not every activity type works well with every structure.

Defined: No meaning or very minimal meaning is required to do these activities. Sometimes meaning is built into the structure, in which case, this meaning will be required, but nothing else.

Activity Structure:

- One line independent exercises (most common for mechanical)
- Dialogs*
- Paragraphs*

1. Underline or Circle

1. Underline the time clause.

I will eat dinner after I do my homework.

2. Underline the correct form of the verb (can be considered multiple choice).

She (live/lives) in Pennsylvania.

3. Circle the prepositions in the paragraph.

4. Circle the present tense verbs and underline the present progressive in the paragraph.

2. Identifying

1. Put the subjects and verbs in the chart.

2. Identify if it is a question or a statement?

3. Multiple Choice

She ____ in Pennsylvania. a. live b. is live c. lives

She ____ in Pennsylvania.

 a. live b. is live c. lives

She ____ in Pennsylvania.

 a. live
 b. is live
 c. lives

4. Word Order

in / he / the classroom / is _____

5. Completion or fill-in without word bank.

1. Use the verb *be* to complete the sentences.

She ____ from China.

2. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb.

(play) They ____ musical instruments.

6. Substitution and Transformation (Can also be done orally as a dialog...substitution dialogs)

I live in California. She lives in California.

She lives in Cuba. She doesn't live in Cuba.

1. Write the statements as *yes/no* questions.

She lives in Cuba. Does she live in Cuba?

MEANINGFUL

Notes: Not every activity type works well with every structure.

Defined: Meaning is necessary to do the activity. The student must think about and understand the context or refer to the context to do the activity. Meaning can come from several different types of sources for example:

- logical conclusions based on context of the exercise (least meaningful).
- the lesson opener
- outside sources of facts like charts and graphs
- illustrations or photos
- other sources like magazines with permissions
- author/teacher generated information in various forms
- student-generated information
- personal information

Source Structure: The sources can take the following forms for example:

- listenings
- pictures, photos, and other illustrations
- dialogs
- paragraphs
- expository text
- magazine articles
- online information
- student writing
- letters
- emails
- interviews
- FAQ's

Exercise Structure: The exercises can take the following forms for example:

- one line independent exercises (statements about source, questions, etc.)
- one line dependent exercise where each line relates to the previous.
- statements under pictures
- lists
- dialogs
- paragraphs
- letters
- emails
- other student writing
- graphic organizers
- discussions
- role-plays, simulations, and projects
- games
- round-robins (tables)

MEANINGFUL *continued...*

1. Multiple Choice and True/False

1. Write questions with the nouns given. Then look at the picture and choose the best answer.

(fountain) A: *Where is the fountain?*

B. In front of the bridge / On the staircase

2. Completion or fill-in *with or without word bank*. (The word bank can be the entire source when structure allows it.)

1. Look at the picture. Fill in the blanks with the correct preposition.

3. Matching

1. Look at the picture. Match the questions and the answers.

(template)

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| <u>f</u> | 1. Is the door open? | a. |
| _____ | 2. Is it ten o'clock on September 1? | b. |
| _____ | 3. | c. Yes, it is. |
| _____ | 4. | d. |
| _____ | 5. | e. |
| _____ | 6. | f. No, it's not. |

4. Controlled and Semi-Controlled Sentences

1. Look at the advertisements. Complete the conversations

2. Read the paragraph about the people in the village. Write 8 sentences to describe the people. Use each adjective only once. (word bank)

3. You look at A and your partner looks at B. Ask and answer questions about the information (Info gap)

5. Write from a model

1. Write a short email to respond to the email from Katherine above (personalized).

2. Write a paragraph about a place you have visited. Use the paragraph above as a model (personalized).

3. Write an autobiography (personalized).

6. Prompts for controlled discussions This should not have a sample dialog to follow. That would make it a substitution drill and too much like a mechanical activity.

1. Look at the graph. Ask your partner which items are more expensive than other items.

7. Prompts for free discussions

1. Discuss the two pictures. Tell your partner what is different and what is the same.

2. Discuss the two pictures. Tell your partner what you like and don't like about them (personalized).

3. Give your partner directions to your home from the school (personalized).

4. Discuss a solution to the three problems below. Use the modal *should* when appropriate (open-ended).

5. The teacher will label the corners of the room with general student interests. Go to the corner that best describes you and discuss your interests with the others there (corners).

MEANINGFUL *continued...*

8. Writer-Generated Graphic Organizers. (Students read VENN diagrams, mind maps, Johari squares, classification charts, etc. as Part A of an activity and then Part B is to create their own from the model (personalized)).

9. Student-Completed Graphic Organizers (Students complete VENN diagrams, mind maps, Johari squares, classification charts, etc. as part A of an activity and then Part B is to discuss them with classmates (personalized)).

10. Round Robins and Round Tables (round table-writing; round robin-speaking)

1. Write one sentence to start a story about the picture. Then give your paper to another student in your group to add to the story. Continue passing it to students in your group until the teacher stops you.
2. Write one sentence about what you remember from the sample lecture. Then pass the paper to the next student in your group to add to your list. Pass the paper to all members of your group until the teacher stops you.

11. Role-plays, Simulations, Projects

1. In a group, imagine that you are at the doctor's office. Create a little play to perform for the class. You have the following roles:

Student 1: Receptionist

Student 2: Doctor

Student 3: Nurse

Student 4: Patient

2. As a group, hire someone for your business.

- 1) Choose a business. What is the name? What do you do?
- 2) Choose a position you want to hire for.
- 3). What are the requirements?
- 4) Write 10 questions to ask applicants.
- 5) Interview 3 students from other groups.

12. Games

1. Write down something you can do on a piece of paper that may not be common knowledge and give it to the teacher. The teacher will give a paper about another student to you. Guess whose paper you now have. Walk around the room and see if you are right.