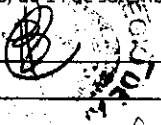


1) There has been a lot of discussion about the teaching of grammar, specially regarding how much we should focus on it. There is a stigma that a grammar focused approach is not only boring, but also based on memorization of rules only, which does not necessarily lead to an ability to actually express oneself in a foreign language. The question then is, should we teach grammar, and why?

First of all, the students' 1st language may be extremally different from English, following different grammar structures (like word order), and showing your students how the language works in a structural sense may help them avoid thinking about their mother language when trying to produce output in English. This does not mean that the teacher should simply spew rules on the board. Ideally, all grammar points should be taught in context, and taking into consideration the students level and current knowledge of the language (for example: when teaching the present tense for a new students you do not need to mention right away that it can be used to talk about times other than the present). When students start developing a better understanding of the language, teachers may also try a more intuitive approach, in which students try themselves to understand the structures while/after seeing them in use.

Other aspects that should be taken into consideration are the students goals when learning EFL. Students who wish to learn to speak in order to travel do not need to focus so much on the minor details of language structure, because even if a correct use of grammar can be helpful to make you be understood easier, it is not the most important thing when trying to achieve communication. However, students learning for work purposes, and who may be required to fill reports and other form of paperwork in English, will need to have a better domain of grammar and of the more formal uses of English. The different uses and



models of a language should also be considered and shown to students: grammar is not something static, frozen in time, and in their day-to-day lives native speakers not only make mistakes, but also use structures that are easily accepted by other native speakers, even if they are not what deemed correct in grammar books (and the same happens in Portuguese and in other languages). Even if we cannot exactly teach all variations to our students, we can at least talk about them and show that they exist, which may also help our students be less confused when, on their own, they come across other regional variations or hear native speakers use structures that their teachers told them to avoid.

2) According to MEC, the teaching of CFL in Brazil should focus on all four skills. A teaching of grammar that focus not on the memorization of ~~stuc~~ structures, but in understanding and internalizing them may help students develop all these skills: knowing how to use structures helps when creating output (written or oral) and knowing how to recognize them helps to increase understanding and to identify context when reading and listening. ~~Seeing as~~ ~~at~~ Seeing as not all students may be on the same level (specially in the context of our public schools), teaching grammar can be used to try to level the differences in ~~know~~ knowledge. It is important, then, to show grammar in use, so students get used to ~~seeing~~ the structures in context. If we combine this with the need to teach the 4 skills, in ~~a~~ Brazilian public schools, a way to teach linguistic elements items is, (taking into account the material limitations) whenever possible, to bring texts or video/audios to show the students, if possible, authentic or edited authentic material. Another way, which can actually be a follow up of the first, is to make

students use the structures they learned, creating dialogs, small plays or writing their own texts. This is also a way to check the students grasp of the items and may help teachers ~~to~~ evaluate if they actually understood, or just memorized.

3) Teaching point: review simple present tense and introduce ~~to~~ the simple past

- Hand out the texts and read with the students - select one or two to read aloud.
- Ask them for words they do not understand and write them on the board - go over them in context and try to have them infer the meanings. - leave the verbs for later
- Discuss the topic of the text - check general understanding and talk about the topic.
- Try to ~~bring~~ bring the conversation to their schools and its problems - were they solved, and how?
- Ask them for the solution of the texts problems. Go back to the last paragraph and try to have them identify what is different in the verbs.
- Go back to the 1st and 2nd paragraph - show the verbs they know and give a brief review of the simple present tense
- Point out again that the verbs in the last paragraph are different - Tell them ~~to~~ it is the past tense, in two forms, regular and irregular verbs (to create / to come) talk about why these verbs are in the past and the others in the present - tell them this will be the topic of the next class
- If they ask about "would create" tell them that the verb tense is in the past, but that we will talk about this latter