



Question 1:

The teaching of grammar has been discussed lately due to its complexity and recent/contemporary issues around this topic. As research on the EFL teaching develops, teachers may get in contact with different points of view concerning this issue.

Conventional methods of English teaching used to pre-select ~~about~~ linguistic items and develop ^{the} syllabus in which they were considered central. The concept of teaching a language was based on the teaching of the system of that language, its structure, developing syntactic, semantic, and lexical knowledge.

However, researchers, such as the ones quoted (Lin and Nelson) question this pre-selection of linguistic input to learners since we cannot fully choose ~~and~~ or decide which linguistic repertoire is most meaningful and useful for learners.

I believe we should "put learners fully at centre-stage, alongside teachers" (Allwright & Hanks, 2009, p. 1) and be sensitive to their needs, goals and desires. Learners can signal their academic background and help us select appropriate linguistic items and/or develop adequate approaches to teaching grammar topics. That should not be a teacher-centered decision, but a shared decision with the learners, who should be viewed as ^{developing} practitioners of learning (Allwright & Hanks).

Doing that is not a simple task, once it involves an ~~an~~ investigative posture of ^{both} teachers and learners. They should be involved in a work for understanding the learning context and learners' needs and goals.

"Learners are social beings who learn and develop best in a mutually supportive environment" (Allwright & Hanks, 2009) and so it is expected that teachers should develop a critical appraisal in relation to the teaching of grammar so that they can provide ~~opportunities~~ opportunities to learners, concerning the value of their previous linguistic background, for instance.

According to Prabhu's "sense of plausibility" (1990), teachers should be sensitive and aware of the teaching they do. That is the reason why teachers find it hard to determine what is meaningful and useful for the learner. They should rely on their sense of plausibility to understand and approach their learners' backgrounds and needs.

Kumaravadivelu (1994) calls attention to the fact that teaching isolated items (without contextualizing them) may render the process of meaning construction harder. So, it is the teacher's job to contextualize items, and make them meaningful to learners.

It is also crucial to assume a social-historical-interactional approach to language, which poses language as a product of ^{social} interaction, in social-historical conditions (Daniels, 2002). This is to say that one cannot isolate the teaching of language from the development of the social being. The process of teaching/learning ~~process~~ a language involves human beings who carry their social, cultural and historical backgrounds (Vygotsky) and it does not match with an approach to teaching linguistic input in isolation without considering so relevant issues.

Question 2:

Focusing on Brazilian learners in the process of learning-teaching of English is to give special attention to a very diverse context and group of learners.

Teachers have to develop alternative ideas to teaching grammar to Brazilian learners, once this is a context of cultural diversity and interaction.

According to Kumaravadivelu (1994), the teaching of grammar should be contextualized so that learner can see language as a whole (words, phrases, sentences, texts and interaction). Teaching materials nowadays ~~present~~ propose activities which ~~are~~ intend to present grammar topics through genres; providing learners with the opportunities to see language as discourse.

This concept of language is also highlighted by Vygotsky, who states that kids learn through discourse about the causality of things (Daniels, 2002). Learning a language ~~from~~ through discourse implies raising awareness about the way language items and functions integrate to make meaning in social interaction.

~~Learning~~ Learning a language is to learn about ourselves, the way we act in the social world (Vygotsky, 1981). Therefore, it should be contextualized and interactional.

The first example I can use to illustrate this point is the teaching of imperative mood to students of Ensino Fundamental (6° ano). Learners at this age are normally involved in playing games and this could be a good start. The use of games instructions could be a good opportunity to make instructions meaningful.



and learners would probably understand the relevance of such a grammar topic inside this context. This should be explored and practiced throughout the classes, focusing on meaning ~~and~~ making and on the human activity they are used to - playing. The language items come naturally because they are part of the process of understanding ~~to~~ "how to play something".

Another example of the teaching of grammar items could be the teaching of the Past Simple Tense by means of using biographies as a genre. Learners at the stage of 8th grade, for instance, are familiar with biographies and it could be appropriate to explore this genre with them, raising their awareness about the characteristics of the genre, such as the use of verbs in the past. This resource shows ~~that~~ learners that verbs are not being taught in isolation and that they are supposed to be memorized, but they are important and adequate when one has to talk about someone else's life.

Question 3

Lesson Plan

Level: 7º ano / Ensino Fundamental

Duration: 50 minutes

General aims: Have students think about the hard life students in India may have.

Specific aims: Have students understand the use of the Present Simple Tense for descriptions.

Skills to be developed: Reading

1. Step: Activating background knowledge -10'

(5')

(A) I would hand in or show to the whole group different pictures of students all over the world, in which they could see different classroom organization, material and students.

At this stage, the teacher asks students questions about the pictures, such as:

- What can you see in the pictures?

- How are they similar or different?

- Can you identify where these students come from? Why?

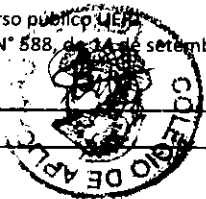
- Do you know anything about the way people study in a different culture?

- Do you think Brazilian conditions of schools are similar or different from schools all over the world?

(B) (5')

Now, the teacher shows the picture of the text and the title "The Foldable Desk".

The teacher asks students questions, such as the following:



- Where do you think this boy is from?
- Look at his expression. Is he happy? Why (not)?
- What does he carry at his back?
- What is the relationship between this and the title "The Foldable Desk"?
- Do you know what this is?

2. Step: Reading 20'

(A) The teacher hands in the text.

(B) The teacher asks ^{students} the following questions:

- Take a look at the first paragraph of the text and point out the words related to "school".

- What does the author ~~mean~~ mean ~~with~~ with "In some parts of the world, every day is a struggle"?

- The first paragraph describes a situation. What kind of situation is being described?

- Read the sentences below and identify the relationship between them:

"School is not always easy".

"School can be even harder".

- Try to infer the meaning of "afford" in "Many students in India cannot afford a backpack".

- In the sentences "they carry their books in their arms or in bags" and "they sit on the floor", what do the pronouns "they" and "their" refer to in the text?

- Is the situation described in the first paragraph common in India?

- Point out from this paragraph the words which show ~~show~~ or describe this situation.

(C) Teacher writes students' contribution on the board, highlighting the verb forms in the present to call their attention.

(D) Teacher asks what these forms have in common and what kind of event they refer to.

(E) Teacher elicits from students the name of this form and if students do not come up with this, the teacher presents the Present Simple and shows its function in this particular context.

(F) ~~Next~~

(F) Next, ~~the~~ teacher explores the last two paragraphs of the text, which present the importance of Aarambh, by means of asking the following:

• Fill in with information from the text:

- Aarambh -
- ~~their~~ Their focus -
- Its founder -
- Their creation -



(3) Step: Practice 10'

The teacher asks students to think about the Brazilian setting and write down some sentences to describe the way they see Brazilian schools and students. The teacher ~~on~~ elicits some examples from students and helps them try to use the Present Simple Tense for the descriptions.

The teacher writes their contributions on the board, commenting on the use of the Present to describe such setting.

(4) Step: Post-reading - 10'

The teacher tries to create an ~~reflect~~ environment for reflection. Learners have the opportunity to think about the issues raised from the text, such as the poor conditions Indian students have to face the struggle to study.

The teacher opens the discussion with the whole group by means of asking questions such as the following:

- How do you feel about the situation presented in the text?

- If you could do anything to help those students, what would you do?

- Do you think the idea presented by Aaxambh may help them?

- How is ~~your~~ the school of your dreams?