

# THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING GRAMMAR

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**Abstract:** *this article makes certain that grammar teaching is not an easy process as it is perceived by the great auditory. Authors gave bright examples that make the reader think. And this process is also confused. It's because authors' ability to use lively instances referring to teachers' methodology. The terms which are under stress throughout the article are inseparable units in every teaching aspect.*

**Keywords:** *syllabus, grammar, text, sounds, sentences, pattern, chain and slot.*

Grammar teaching has always been one of the most controversial and least understood aspects of language teaching. Few teachers remain indifferent to grammar and many teachers become obsessed by it. Generally whether we know the grammar, question “What is the grammar?” is still dynamic. In short grammar is everything related to language use. And of course language use involves the units such as: text, sentences, words, sounds, meaning, function, syllabus, rules and etc, all of which simply refer to grammar. These notions can also be used both inside and outside of the classroom.

Here is an example of language use:

*This is 2680239. We are not at home right now. Please leave a message after the beep.*

You will recognize it as an answer phone message. That is the kind of **text**. It consists of three **sentences**, which themselves consist of **words**, and the words (when spoken) containing the **sounds**. All language in use can be analyzed at each of these four levels: text, sentence, word and sound. These are the forms that language takes in constructing communication. The study of grammar consists, in part, of looking at the way these forms are arranged and patterned [1].

For example, if you change the order of the sentences you no longer have a well-formed answer phone message:

*Please leave a message after the beep. This is 2680239. We are not at home right now.*

Likewise, the order of words in each sentence is fairly fixed:

*Beep after a leave the please message.*

The same applies to the order of sounds in a word:

*Peeb*

Grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. Traditionally, grammar has been concerned almost exclusively with analysis at the level of the sentence. Thus a grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed. Grammar attempts to explain why the following sentences are acceptable:

*We are not at home right now.*

*Right now we are not at home.*

But why this one is not:

*Not we at right home now are.*

Nor this one:

*We is not at home right now.*

The system of rules that cover the order of words in a sentence is called **syntax**.

Syntax rules disallow:

*Not we at right home now are.*

The system of rules that cover the formation of words is called **morphology**.

Morphology rules disallow:

*We is not at home right now.*

Grammar is conventionally seen as the study of the syntax and morphology of sentences. Put another way, it is the study of linguistic **chains** and **slots** [2]. That is, it is the study both of the way words are chained together in a particular order, and also of what kinds of words can slot into any one link in the chain. These two kinds of relation can be shown diagrammatically:

*Table 1. Sentence structure*

1	2	3	4	5
We	are	not	at	home.
They	Are		at	work.
Dad	is		in	hospital.
I	am		In	bed.

Notice that the order of elements on the horizontal axis is fairly fixed. The effect of switching the first two columns has a major effect on meaning: it turns the sentence into a question: Are we not at home? Is Dad in bed? Switching columns two and three, or four and five, is simply not possible. Similarly, it should be clear that the elements in the first column share a noun-like function, those in the second column fill the verb slot and those in the fourth column are prepositions. Again, it is not possible to take slot-filling elements and make chains of them. *We are not at home work bed* does not work as an English sentence.

It is the capacity to recognize the constraints on how sentence elements are chained and on how sentence slots are filled that makes a good amateur grammarian. For example, different languages have different constraints on the way chains are ordered and slots are filled. Many second language learner errors result from over generalizing rules from their own language.

So in: *I want that your agency return me the money.*

the learner has selected the wrong kind of chain to follow the verb *want*.

While in: *I have chosen to describe Stephen Hawking, a notorious scientific of our century.*

the chain is all right, but the words chosen to fill certain slots don't fit. *Notorious* has the wrong shade of meaning, while *scientific* is an adjective wrongly inserted into a noun slot [2].

From a learner's perspective, the ability both to recognize and to produce well-formed sentences is an essential part of learning a second language. But there are a number of problems. First, as we shall see, there is a great deal of debate as to how this ability is best developed. Second, it is not entirely clear what 'well-formed' really means, when a lot of naturally occurring speech seems to violate strict grammatical rules. For example, in many English-speaking contexts *We ain't at home* would be preferred to *We are not at home* yet only the latter has made it into the grammar books.

Third, an exclusive focus on sentences, rather than on texts or words, risks under-equipping the learner for real language use. There is more to language learning than the ability to produce well-formed sentences. Texts and words also have grammar, in the sense that there are rules governing how both texts and words are organized, but it is not always clear where sentence grammar ends and either word grammar or text grammar begins. But, since most language teaching course books and grammars are still firmly grounded in the sentence grammar tradition, for the purposes of this article we will assume grammar to mean grammar at the level of the sentence.

In short above we highlighted some illustrations that would be taken into consideration while teaching the grammar. This approach seems to be partial. Because, in grammar teaching teacher will not limit his possibilities with the particular area. Therefore it is important to be aware of structural and functional peculiarities of grammar. Of course if the teacher wants to have a progress.

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