Practical Grammar Teaching for the Second Language Classroom

Eli Hinkel (Ed.)

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Teaching the grammar of a target language can be a daunting task for any language teacher (Thornbury, 1999; Swan, 2005), regardless of the language in question, the educational context in which grammar is taught and learned, or the teacher's years of training (Kumayas & Lengkoan, 2023). This is mainly because teaching grammar demands a significant personal effort from the teacher, as it requires them to bridge prescriptive grammar rules and their practical application, manage student engagement, and present complex information on grammar in accessible and context-rich ways. Learners, on the other hand, must not only learn grammar rules but also internalize them to reach fluency and accuracy in terms of their usage. The teacher has to facilitate this process, and it takes time, often longer than expected. With the increased integration of technology into the language classroom, teachers are now being confronted with a new challenge: using technology for teaching grammar. Teaching grammar while facilitating effective grammar learning can be exhausting, particularly in contexts where grammar is taught and learned as a second language (Frodesen & Holten, 2003; Nanquil, 2021). A fresh perspective to approaching pedagogical grammar in the modern second language classroom, therefore, can benefit those teachers genuinely seeking practical advice. For this purpose, *Practical Grammar Teaching for the Second Language Classroom* can be an ideal choice.

The text is divided into three thematic sections: Section 1: Grammar for Language Teaching; Section 2: Grammar for Writing; and Section 3: Grammar and Technology. This tripartite structure enables the text to explore three important aspects of teaching and learning grammar in the modern second language classroom: how to, and the best ways to, teach grammar; how to teach and learn to write better using accurate grammatical constructions; and how grammar can be taught and learned with the aid of new technologies.

Section 1 comprises four chapters: "Juggling and Keeping Your Balance: Models of Grammar Teaching" by Penny Ur; "Grammar in Use" by Brain Tomlinson; "How is Grammar Learned? A Vocabulary Learning Perspective" by Paul Nation; "Developing Multilingual Students' Grammar Knowledge and Use through Content-Based Instruction" by Jan Frodesen. The text begins with an exploration of some of the models that can be employed to map target grammar lessons. In addition, the expert authorship of the section draws the reader's attention to the importance of prioritizing the grammar rules currently in use while exemplifying their usage when teaching and getting the learners to use the learned grammar for meaningful tasks. The section also explores learning grammar from a vocabulary learning perspective and discusses developing the grammatical competency of multilingual learners through content-based teaching.

Section 2 features four chapters: "Teaching Grammar in the L2 Writing Class: Why, How, and When" by Dana Ferris; "How to Select Grammar for Teaching (or Not): Based on Research" by Eli Hinkel; "Functional Grammar: A Commonsense Approach for Effective Writing Instruction" by María Estela Brisk; "Engaging with Noun Phrases in EAP: The Missing Grammatical Link" by Averil Coxhead and Oliver James Ballance. As this section is devoted to connecting grammar teaching with writing instruction, the chapters explore the best practices for integrating grammar instruction into writing activities. By emphasizing the relationship between grammatical knowledge and effective writing, these chapters aim to equip the reader with strategies that enhance students' writing skills while reinforcing their contextual understanding of second language grammar.

Section 3 contains three chapters: "Using Technology to Teach Difficult Grammar" by Maggie Sokolik; "Using Technology to Improve Language Learners' Accuracy" by Greg Kessler; "Using Corpora for Teaching Grammar" by Dilin Liu, Yaochen Deng, and Shuqiong Wu. The three chapters featured in this final section connect the reader with some of the recent developments in the field of second language teaching and learning. This includes the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools such as ChatGPT and data-driven learning

approaches such as language corpora to teach target grammar rules implicitly by meaningfully contextualizing them with genuine examples on their usage, helping learners reach fluency and accuracy.

This practical guide is written in an accessible style. The reader-friendly and jargon-free language used throughout the text make the instructions directed at the reader comprehensible and, most importantly, actionable. It will be particularly useful for novice teachers seeking genuine and evidence-based advice on approaching teaching grammar in the ESL classroom with a fresh perspective. Even for seasoned teachers, this text could be a potential resource for refreshing their strategies and enhancing their teaching practice by finding and experimenting with innovative ways to present grammar content and engage students.

The collective efforts of the contributors to the text in making this practical guide available to teachers lacking prior experience in teaching grammar but seeking a fresh start are commendable. Their expert authorship has made the text not only a pedagogically valuable and informative resource but also an engaging and accessible tool for teachers. The accessible manner in which it is written is the key to providing readers with clear explanations, practical examples, and innovative approaches to build confidence in teachers before they undertake teaching grammar in the second language classroom. This practical value of the book is further enhanced by theoretical and empirical support, which is evident in virtually all the chapters. It is a restatement of the crucial role of teaching practices that are theoretically informed and research-based, while, at the same time, it highlights why it is important that recent developments such as the increasing use of technology are incorporated into teaching practice appropriately. This alignment between theory, research evidence, and current practice complements the book's ability to appeal to an international audience of TESL professionals.

This edited volume is one of the recent additions in the *ESL and Applied Linguistics Professional Series* published by Routledge. Monographs and edited volumes in this series provide essential texts on TESL and applied linguistics. This text can be recommended as a key pedagogical resource for pre-service and practicing ESL teachers, teacher educators, and teaching faculty. It could also be added to the recommended reading lists of course modules such as pedagogical grammar in TESL undergraduate degree programs. *Practical Grammar Teaching for the Second Language Classroom* also contributes to the current and growing body of knowledge in second language teaching and applied linguistics by prompting current TESL professionals to rethink their approach to teaching grammar in the modern classroom.

The Reviewer

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