



This is a graded discussion: 10 points possible

due Feb 28

Week 5 Questions and Graded Discussion

29 90

Week 5 Questions:

Choose two questions to answer:

1. Survey several people. Ask them what they think grammar means. How do their definitions match up with Weaver’s list? How do their answers match your view on grammar?
2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you’ve taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?
3. Specify a grammatical principle that you believe you follow in your own speech and writing, and whose violation sounds wrong to you in the speech and writing of others. For example, some people feel very strongly about the use of “can” to ask for permission, or the use of “real” as an adverb etc.?
4. What are the two best websites for teaching grammar, and how would you use them in your classes? Please, be specific.

Due date: [February 28, 2021](#).

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<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203> **Christian Aguiar (He/Him/His)** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203>)

Feb 22, 2021



1. *Survey several people. Ask them what they think grammar means. How do their definitions match up with Weaver’s list? How do their answers match your view on grammar?*

I asked a few people with different backgrounds and language experiences- here are their responses.

- My colleague, an ESL/EFL teacher of 3-4 decades: Grammar is the structural framework of communication.
- My colleague, a literature prof and writer: Grammar is the eight parts of speech that act as the living foundation of writing even as our language shifts. Grammar changes and bends to the will of the people.
- My wife, a former ESL teacher: The small rules that support the pillars of functionally using language
- My friend, a warehouse/logistics guy: Hmmm - proper spelling and grammar? The correct way to word a sentence?

I also ask my students this question on day one of my developmental writing courses (sometimes day two or week two), and their responses are usually most like my friend's, often emphasizing spelling or punctuation, but also dealing with meaning. All of them align at least in part with what Weaver offers - the idea that grammar supports function, for example, or that some parts remain consistent as the language shifts.

2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

I learned a little bit of grammar in English classes, primarily because I had two teachers - one in fifth grade, one in ninth - who were old school and felt we needed to understand the rules of grammar to be effective writers. We knew they were old school because they taught grammar using books they dug out of the storage closets for a few weeks each year, 70s-era grammars with yellowed pages. I remembered very little of the English grammar I learned; I could write grammatically-correct sentences without learning the rules explicitly because I read a lot, so why study it? I only started to learn English grammar as such when I had to teach it.

I actually learned some grammar that stuck in Latin. Latin requires you to really understand what each word does in a sentence, because the declensions of all the non-verbs (and the conjugations of verbs, though that was not new) is what gives the sentence meaning. The approach that I had implicitly taken to learning Portuguese and some Spanish - learn a lot of vocabulary and then piece the sentences together based on the patterns I heard - didn't work in Latin because inflection of each word, not word order, is the primary marker of meaning.

I've been teaching grammar in some form for about ten years, and I'm still not entirely sure what's best. I focus on about a half-dozen pattern errors and try to teach them embedded in context. I've made a few shifts already this semester, though, based on what I've been learning in this class.

Edited by [Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203) on Feb 22 at 10:04am

← [Reply](#)



Chiaki (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607>)

Feb 23, 2021



Hi Christian,

I don't know anything about Latin, but it seems you need to know grammar well to master it. I think learning an entirely different language would be beneficial for ESL teachers as you can imagine what your students are going through.

I'm a world language teacher and I teach grammar every day, but I've been continuously changing the way I teach grammar and not sure what is the best approach yet either. I choose the method that I believe is better than others, but it may depend on students' language level, ages, language background, their L1, their purpose of learning English, and their goals.

[← Reply](#)



Christian Aguiar (He/Him/His) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203>)

Feb 24, 2021



Thanks for sharing that, Chiaki. I'm glad I'm not the only one! I think you're right: we have to pick what seems best, but there's not a perfect approach.

[← Reply](#)



Diana Burga (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042>)

Feb 24, 2021



Hey Christian,

That's pretty funny how you described learning grammar from old school grammarians using yellow books! In my experience grammar wasn't really taught in school (or anything that really sticks out). I teach Spanish as a second language and there's way more emphasize on teaching grammar and structures--- sort of similar to how you're describing your Latin experience. Grammar is such a conundrum in my opinion! I feel like I need to take an English grammar class now, as an adult!

[← Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 26, 2021



I hear you, Diana. I have often been just one step ahead of the grammar content. I need to explain modals to students on Friday? Guess I'm learning what a modal is on Wednesday.

[← Reply](#)



[Silver Park](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686)

Feb 26, 2021



Hello Christian, I appreciate all the meanings of grammar your friends and family responded. I would also like to add on to the comment that grammar is a structural framework of communication. I also think it is a structural framework of writing. Grammars should be right in speaking, but I believe it becomes a lot more official and important when it comes to writing. You can deliver a message without a correct grammar in speaking, but in writing especially when it comes to graded papers, grammar becomes a huge part of the language.

[← Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 26, 2021



I agree with you 100%, Silver! I often think about this in terms of how we distinguish between clauses when talking: we modulate our voice, we pause, we use hand gestures (maybe a bit too often in my case). We can't do any of that in writing, so we have to make sure structure, syntax, and punctuation do that for us.

[← Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 28, 2021



Hi Silver and Christian,

It's so true that verbal communication is very high-context. Your comments about grammar being a structural framework of communication for writing (because of the lack of the contextual markers you would have in speech) are interesting. It

reminded me of the difference between having an impersonal, misleading tone in email vs. talking even when you're delivering the same message.

Christian, I have no idea about how Latin works, but when you are talking about its non-verb declensions, do you have an example of "because inflection of each word, not word order, is the primary marker of meaning"?

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\)](#) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203>)

Mar 1, 2021



Sure, Yoko. It's been years since I've studied, but every noun and adjective has a case. The subject of the sentence is in the nominative case, a possessive word is in the genitive case, etc. You need to know the endings for these cases and identify which case the word takes - what its inflection is - in order to know what its role is in the sentence. Latin verbs have the familiar conjugation by person and number; nouns have their declensions by number, but not by person.

There's something like a traditional word order in sentences, so they do follow some pattern, but the syntax itself doesn't carry meaning, since the cases of the nouns and adjectives do.

I hope this makes some sense. Like I said, it's been about 15 years since I studied Latin.

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan](#) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731>)

Feb 27, 2021



Christian, Your experience reflects how approaches to grammar have been changing - it was everything, only to become completely unimportant. It is unrealistic to believe that students will learn grammar on their own or by reading a lot because there are many who don't read. Also, if someone's incorrect language patterns have already fossilized, students will need someone to show what the correct patterns are. Students need to be taught patterns that are encountered exclusively in academic genres. I agree with you

that Latin can be very useful for understanding how grammar works. However, I believe, it's only taught in select private schools.

← [Reply](#)



[Juan Ochoa \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772)

Feb 22, 2021

4) The first website that I would recommend and that some people might find strange is YouTube. YouTube has a wealth of content from all over the world and it would be strange not to find a language whose grammar you could not study. Not only that you could find media from countries such as cartoons and news broadcast. I have recently seen channels that dedicate asking questions to native speakers on the street. Instead of using prerecording lessons from a text book all the time I would also implement a video that has native speakers speaking the target language. I believe it can promote listening skills as natives tend to speak faster and pronunciation. For more advance students I would slowly begin to introduce dialects from different regions. Students often only hear the spoken standard of a language and are confused when they visit a countries such as Italy who has over 30 dialects.

The second recommendation I would give are websites that engage students. Personally I like the website Mad Libs because it allows students to make sentences with the grammar they have learned, for example "There are many [Adjective] ways to choose a/an [Noun] to read. Another one I would choose would be Quizlet because there you can create games and tests and make them be about your lessons.

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 23, 2021

Your point about using YT to expose more advanced speakers to different dialects and types of English is such a good idea, Juan. I used a YT clip with Chimamanda Adichie earlier this semester, and a good number of the ESL students in the course noted that it was challenging to follow her very precise, but very non-DC accent, but also very helpful practice. Which dialects or accents do you think you'd want to expose learners to?

← [Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 23, 2021

Hi Juan,

I teach Japanese, not English, but I agree that YouTube is useful. I use it in my lesson every week. When I first started teaching online in March last year, I had to create video lessons, but I had never made a lesson video. So I watched a lot of grammar lessons on YouTube and created my own for my classes. Songs, skits, listening materials, videos about different dialects and cultures are available, so I cannot imagine teaching without using YouTube.

I like Quizlet as well. My students enjoy playing Quizlet Live, and other online games and products such as Kahoot and Edpuzzle. I've never used Mad Libs, but it must be good for grammar review.

Thank you for sharing great ideas!

← Reply



Russell Fung (He/Him/His) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480>)

Feb 28, 2021

Chiaki, thank you for your input on the use of YouTube. I'm kind of a stickler for proper and legitimate sources, and whenever I see the word "YouTube" used as a resource, I react with a recoil. I'm not a teacher yet, and I do see myself in the future scrambling for ideas on lessons using YouTube. There's also Tiktok, and I've seen teachers use that platform to teach students on topics such as math, science, history, and English.

← Reply



Diana Burga (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042>)

Feb 24, 2021

Hi Juan,

I agree that using Youtube is so useful. There are so many grammar lessons on there (in every language) but obviously it's like anything else. you need to find the good channels because they aren't all made the same! I like using them in my Spanish classes as well. Mad libs is fun for students and I also use quizlet. Thanks for the reminders!

Diana

← Reply



Michelle Akamine (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411>)

Feb 24, 2021

Hi Juan,

I think the idea of using youtube to introduce dialects for more advanced students is a great suggestion. I met a lot of Japanese and Korean people who come to Hawaii to study but are surprised and confused when they cannot understand Pidgin (Hawaii Creole English). It helps if students recognize the existence of World Englishes outside of American or British English. I also like the idea of using Mad Libs. I think it is a fun and creative activity that beginning students would enjoy doing.

[← Reply](#)



Viktorija Lejko-Lacan (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731>)

Feb 27, 2021

Juan, I agree with you about the usefulness of YT. However, whatever is on YT should be approached with caution. Finding authentic materials is great, but there are sloppy and incorrect grammar lesson among the multitude available.

I've recently heard about [bamboozle](https://www.baamboozle.com/games) as a fun and useful website for grammar and vocabulary.

[← Reply](#)



Russell Fung (He/Him/His) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480>)

Feb 28, 2021

I definitely would use YouTube with great caution. It may take a while to find a channel or person that is consistent with quality. For every good, there are dozens of sloppy and incorrect lessons. I totally feel you on that.

Thank you for sharing bamboozle. I will check this out!

[← Reply](#)



Juan Ochoa (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772>)

Feb 28, 2021

thankyou so much for the warning. I agree, I feel that before I show anything whether its a youtube video or a video from another website, I would first have to watch it and be 100 percent sure that its relevant and helpful to what I am teaching in class. Thankyou for the website recommendation.

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480>)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Juan,

I agree that YouTube is a great resource to learn English. It is best used to complement other sources, and not as a primary source. TikTok is another platform that people might find strange or not legit. However, it's gaining popularity and the potential for English-learning is enormous. Again, I wouldn't recommend Tiktok as a primary resource, but rather something that supplements other forms of learning.

← [Reply](#)



[Simiry Cuadra](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594>)

Feb 28, 2021

Hello Juan,

YouTube is a great website for find many things! I think of YouTube as a form of showing a short video to students and then adding to it for the lesson of the day. I think longer videos may have students lose focus. Mab Libs is a great website to keep students engaged and show a type of participation. I think this will work well with any student because it doesn't involve speaking in front of others.

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025>)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Juan,

YouTube is definitely useful for ease of access/broader reach and variety. While it also houses a lot of questionable content as well, there are great people out there willing to share their knowledge in an engaging way, and for free (at least to the content consumers). It's definitely helpful if you can find reliable, engaging channels. It's

obviously also helpful for teachers to post something to share with their students and send them the link.

However, (while this is off the purpose of question#4), while YouTube truly democratizes education, providing access to so much "free" content for content *consumers*, it is not the same for content *producers* in a professional setting. Unless you are a volunteer teacher willing to share your knowledge with anyone around the world, or you are using it to showcase the example of your expertise to direct them to your own site/business, and/or you are trying to create enough buzz to be able to start monetizing from your channel (1,000+ followers, X number of replays per a certain period of time, etc.), you will be offering your expertise to random people for the taking, so from the professional teacher perspective, I would use more professional teaching/learning platforms such as Udemy, which offers fair (still democratic enough) pricing for both teachers and learners. You can teach a longer lesson but the lessons are chunked in Udemy courses, so it's easier for both teachers and learners to follow.

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Mar 3, 2021

Thank you, Yoko. This is true - teacher are very generous and ready to share, and once their work is out there it's out of their hands. Which professional channel are you using?

← [Reply](#)



[MaryAnn Wilson \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)

Feb 23, 2021

2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

In the article, "Teaching Grammar - Does Grammar Teaching Work?," Michael Swan states: "A singular Russian noun can have up to six different endings depending on its grammatical role," "Russian noun inflections are a learners' nightmare, and conscious learning and practice of these forms may well not enable students to get them right."

I disagree. In learning Russian, I found that learning the declension of Russian nouns was effective and helpful. It doesn't make sense to integrate learning them into other

communicative activities because unlike English, you have to recognize endings to make sense of the sentence. Declensions make a specific word order unnecessary.

However, as Swan states: What use is it to recite long lists of irregular verbs but not be able to ask for a cup of coffee? This sentiment is further developed by “the post-Krashen view that, while conscious attention to language form may, after all, be necessary, this will only lead to acquisition if it coincides with communicative use of language, so that the separate study of grammar, decoupled from communication, is ineffective.”

Swan makes the point that the reason we learn a language is to communicate, so grammar and the rules that go with it should be taught as a sub-category of communication. This means it doesn't help to memorize 50 irregular verbs in Spanish (which is torture) for a mid-term. Instead, we should learn an irregular verb, especially if it's widely used, that comes up in a text or classroom conversation.

Still, sometimes it's necessary for students, depending on their level, to memorize grammar rules that have a wide ride of applicability. I would not introduce exceptions except for widely used ones, to give beginning students a sense of accomplishment.

3. Specify a grammatical principle that you believe you follow in your own speech and writing, and whose violation sounds wrong to you in the speech and writing of others. For example, some people feel very strongly about the use of “can” to ask for permission, or the use of “real” as an adverb, etc.?

I correct people under my breath all the time when they use the word, further, incorrectly. It seems interchangeable at this point, but farther is the superlative of far, while further means: to a greater extent or moreover.

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Feb 27, 2021



Mary Ann, Excellent analysis of Swan's article. he only issue I see is the limited time students are in contact with a language if they study it only in class - some memorization may help since may be a while till students come across another irregular form in reading, but they may want to use it speaking or writing. I just think that creating a schema of irregular verbs and their patterns might help. However, I would not rely on endless tests to achieve that; I would prefer examples in context.

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Mary Ann,

I like how you said you would not introduce exceptions except for widely used ones, "to give beginning students a sense of accomplishment." While I think they will later need them, I do think it's a good strategy for beginners to feel a sense of accomplishment like you said. However, for some reason, I feel the most oft-used words tend to be the irregular verbs in many languages...?

By the way, I can't believe you studied Russian and found Spanish irregular verbs torture? While I didn't struggle with Spanish that much, I couldn't even get past beyond the Cyrillic letter with Russian :)

[← Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 23, 2021

Hello Everyone,

1. Survey several people. Ask them what they think grammar means. How do their definitions match up with Weaver's list? How do their answers match your view on grammar?

One of the responses I received was that grammar means "rules that construct a sentence." Another is that grammar shows how the language is supposed to be used. Grammar is the rules to make language comprehensible, but people do not necessarily follow them depending on the situation. It is a system as people acquire a language and a guide to acquiring a language.

The responses to what the definition of grammar is were similar to Weaver's list in terms of a description of syntactic structures and prescriptions for how to use structures and words.

I agree with the responses in that grammar is made up of rules to form a sentence and to be comprehensible to others. Through my experience, I think learning grammar is an inevitable

aspect of learning a second language as it is impossible to acquire English without learning the syntax of English.

2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

I think learning grammar helped me learn English, and I believe it is an indispensable factor in acquiring a second language for an adult language learner like me. In addition, there should be an opportunity to actually use the grammar introduced in a real-life context that is relevant to learners. For very young language learners, it would be different, but if a learner starts learning L2 after puberty, I believe grammar instruction is essential.

The grammar instruction I received in middle and high school in Japan was mostly reading rules of English grammar out of context and answering worksheets. It was not adequate to be able to use the language in real communication, but the knowledge helped me in reading and writing as well as in a conversation class.

I also learned English at Berlitz and other English conversation schools. I was learning grammar at the same time, so I was able to practice what I learned in those schools, but adult learners wouldn't be able to master English by solely taking a conversation class without explicit grammar instruction. I learned in the TPRS style as well, in which a teacher teaches the target language through storytelling without explicit grammar instruction, but I couldn't learn at all. This experience made me believe that explicit grammar instruction is crucial when teaching L2 to adult learners.

The best way to teach grammar would be different for each age level, language environment, and the amount of instructional time students get, but for learners who are high school age or above, I would first present the target grammar structure explicitly in their L1 if possible. Then, students will practice the structure through games or exercises in speaking and writing, focusing on a correct grammar structure. Then, I will provide them with a situation that is relevant to their lives and have them practice using the target grammar structure. As a culmination of the lesson, I would use a communicative activity, which has a real-life purpose and in which students can use the target structure, but the focus is more on being able to communicate or task completion. I think it is important to teach grammar in context, as Weaver's rhetorically effective use of syntactic structures.

[← Reply](#)





[MaryAnn Wilson \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)



Feb 24, 2021

Hi Chiaki,

Thanks for sharing your personal experience about the importance of learning grammar. What do you think a teacher should do if presenting the target grammar explicitly in their L1 isn't possible? I would assume that if grammar is being taught at the high school age or above, then teaching it using the vocabulary they know would be OK. But coming from a background of learning ESL, do you think that would work?

[← Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)



Feb 27, 2021

Hi Mary Ann,

If presenting the target grammar in students' L1 isn't possible, I think using simple English that they already know with visual aids and scaffolding activities would be fine. I was learning English in my L1 until I started living in this country, so it's hard to imagine, but it would be possible to learn English grammar in English once students acquired the basic English skills.

[← Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)



Feb 27, 2021

Chiaki, Thank you for sharing your experience and ideas about learning grammar. Since I've worked with multilingual groups here in Los Angeles, I will say that it is possible to teach grammar without an explanation in L1. In very beginning classes, grammar explanations are simple or not necessary, and later on students can understand explanations in English with the help of charts and visuals. It may take a little longer, but students learn the language this way, too. If you are fortunate to share your students' L1, they may expect there will be some use of it. Sometimes, you will use it as a shortcut to clarify a grammar point.

[← Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Mar 7, 2021



Hi Professor Lejko-Lacan,

Thank you for your response. It's true that teaching grammar without using students' L1 is possible as teachers don't speak students' L1 in most cases, but students can learn through English-only instruction. Also, EL students' L1 is not the same when you teach ESL classes in the U.S., so using students' L1 is not realistic.

[← Reply](#)



[Diana Burga \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042)

Feb 24, 2021



Hi Chiaki,

Thanks for your thoughtful response on how to best learn grammar. I think something you wrote makes a lot of sense to me, and that is that it really depends on the age in which one is learning the language and therefore there's not one "right" way. Thanks for sharing your experience!

Diana

[← Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 27, 2021



Hi Diana,

Thank you for your response! As you mentioned, language learner's age is a big factor and there is no one right way. I'm not quite sure the best way to teach grammar yet, and I think I will keep on changing and adjusting the way I teach.

← [Reply](#)



Michelle Akamine (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411>)

Feb 24, 2021

Hi Gomyo Sensei,

I agree with you that grammar should be taught differently according to the students that you are teaching. Kind of going off of what Mary Ann said, perhaps teaching grammar in the target language would be beneficial, even for beginners. I realize that by teaching in the L1, students can have a full understanding of the point you are trying to get across. At the same time, I think that speaking in the target language to teach grammar can help students to get more exposure to the language and improve listening skills, especially in a FL environment. The communicative activities that you mentioned, although geared towards speaking, would then also boost listening skills even further.

← [Reply](#)



Chiaki (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607>)

Feb 27, 2021

Hi Michelle,

Thank you for your response. I agree with your point that speaking in the target language to teach grammar can help students to get more exposure to the language and improve listening skills. I'm not sure the best way to teach grammar yet, and I would like to learn more and keep on changing the way I teach.

P.S. When I saw your name, I thought it sounds familiar, but I was not sure and didn't ask. Did you go to CCHS? You are writing sensei, so I guess you are probably in my class before..... If I'm wrong, please disregard this.

← [Reply](#)



Michelle Akamine (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411>)

Feb 27, 2021

Yes, I was in your immersion class for one year before taking AP. My sister also took Japanese with you for J2 and J4. I was surprised when I saw your name in this class too.

Edited by [Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411) on Feb 27 at 4:02pm

← [Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Michelle!

Thank you for letting me know! I remember you and your sister as you were both amazing students and fluent in Japanese! I'm glad that we are in the same class now!

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Chiaki,

I grew up in Japan as well and came to the U.S. as an adult as well, so we both experienced the dry reading-rules-out-of-context approach in middle and high schools :)

You mentioned the TPRS style in which a teacher teaches the target language through storytelling without explicit grammar instruction, and that you couldn't learn at all. What kind of stories did they use? Was it an immersion-simulation attempt, or did they facilitate interaction? It does sound interesting so too bad it doesn't actually work!

You mentioned that you would first present the target grammar structure explicitly in their L1 if possible, but seems like most ESL classes in the U.S. are for mixed-L1 students. I think it also depends on the relationship of L2 to the target language in terms of language families, as English is so much easier to learn for other Germanic language speakers, and Romance languages speakers who all have Latin influence at varying degrees, compared to someone whose L1 is a non-Western alphabet-based language. When I first moved to Europe, I was surprised and almost intimidated by meeting so many Continental Europeans who could speak not only two but three, four, five languages. However, after I learned English and a Romance language myself, I found it was simply not so difficult to learn other Romance languages (and probably German though I haven't tried) if you spoke

one of those languages (speaking relatively in comparison to say, vs. a Japanese person trying to learn a Western-European language for the first time).

← [Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411)

Feb 23, 2021

1. Survey several people. Ask them what they think grammar means. How do their definitions match up with Weaver's list? How do their answers match your view on grammar?

Here are some of the responses I got:

- The organizational structure of a language
- How to structure English a certain way? Rules on how to speak and write
- A system of rules for the language

Most of these responses aligned with prescriptions for how to use structures and rules. When elaborating on their answer, they add more about the functionality. I agree with these answers, since I think that grammar helps with organization and structure of a language. I also believe that the other parts of Weavers list are just as important to keep in mind when it comes to learning and teaching.

2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

The Folse article states that "most teachers cannot explain the errors, and because teachers teach what they know, they therefore never teach ELLs about pertinent grammar issues. After making these mistakes repeatedly, ELLs who get no negative feedback or effective error correction will eventually assimilate, or fossilize (Ellis, 1994)." I find this to be true based on my own experience with Japanese. Learning from a young age does have its benefits but, this is one of the downsides that I experienced. Some grammatical points that I consider to 'sound right' are actually incorrect. It is difficult for me to correct them, even after studying grammar, because they have already fossilized. My experience led me to think about the importance of explicitly teaching grammar and giving feedback to students.

On the other hand, the class I took on the Okinawan language heavily revolved around grammar. It could be due to the fact that this is an endangered language and that there are

little outside resources to rely on, but I felt that it was difficult to learn. I had limited vocabulary and having to memorize tons of grammar points in a short time, put a lot of pressure on me (we had a mini quiz every class). Michael Swan warns about teaching too much grammar, saying that it may cause students to learn more grammar rather than the language. He also describes how misguided perfectionism can put pressure on non-native teachers. After this class, I realized that there should be a balance. Teachers should include lessons on grammar but also leave room for building other skills, especially for beginners.

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203) <https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203>

Feb 24, 2021

I feel your point about what "sounds right," Michelle! I was working with some students on subject vs. object pronouns last week, and for the L1 speakers, the incorrect pronoun choice sounded right in many instances. Frankly, they sound right to me, too! Before I knew the difference between the types of pronouns, I never would have been able to *identify* the right option, never mind explain it.

← [Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473) <https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473>

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Michelle,

Great point on the balance of teaching grammar. I have been developing a small teaching curriculum on my own. And, since I don't teach in a formal school, I'm able to concentrate on teaching grammar through a lot of contexts using small articles and audiotapes – resources that better replicate the immediate needs of a student learning English as a Second Language. I think hiding a small grammatical point every single class through a different background topic (suited to the learner's age) and helping each student develop lots of vocabulary along the way through reading and oral comprehension exercises is an excellent way to expose them to a broader range of skills in the language.

← [Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411) <https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411>

Mar 1, 2021

Hi Valeria,

That sounds great to be able to choose your own curriculum! I agree, you can get two birds with one stone that way. I think it would also make the lesson more interesting and fun for students. I know I would like to be taught that way!

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Michelle,

Thank you for introducing your personal experience with the incorrect grammar rules fossilizing. It's also tricky for a language like Japanese, with which declensions are not based on verb tenses, numbers, etc. so much, but on honorifics or social relationships between the speaker and addressee.

Also, Japanese has masculine and feminine ways of speech (different from the masculine and feminine nouns and adjectives etc. you see in many languages, but men and women tend to use different vocabulary and even the word "I" alone has more than 10 ways to say in Japanese, depending on your gender, politeness, etc.), making it harder to "sound natural." For instance, a male heritage speaker raised by a Japanese mother and non-Japanese father can end up speaking "like a woman," which will sound unnatural to the native speakers even though that person speaks perfectly fluent (women's) Japanese!

← [Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411)

Mar 1, 2021

Hello Yoko,

Thank you for your input. I know my Japanese is unique based on my experiences too. After going on an exchange program to Osaka a couple times, I started incorporating some Kansai dialect (unintentionally). I think that I tend to speak more masculine too, while I noticed that when my dad speaks Japanese, he sounds feminine (he's not a heritage speaker either but I'm guessing many of his teachers were women)! Good point!

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Mar 3, 2021

Since you mentioned Keith Folse, here one of his useful books for ESL teachers - [Keys to Teaching Grammar to English Language Learners](https://www.press.umich.edu/8882354/keys_to_teaching_grammar_to_english_language_learners_second_ed) (https://www.press.umich.edu/8882354/keys_to_teaching_grammar_to_english_language_learners_second_ed).

← [Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473)

Feb 24, 2021

2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

While growing up in El Salvador, my siblings and I were required to learn and speak English from a very young age –my parent's ideology. I had an English lesson every day at school and, in addition, I received 4 hours of English on Saturdays every week. I started those Saturday classes when I was 6 years old. I've always believed that learning a language as a foreigner gives you the advantage of being able to *really* focus on grammar and understand the "why" and "how" of the language. After all, you're paying to learn it. However, when I was 6 years old, I couldn't grasp the concept of grammar –even of my own native language. So, slowly, I picked up structured phrases that allowed me to speak English rather fluently until I was old enough (maybe 12?) to understand why and how those phrases worked so well. At this older age, I clearly remember sitting down in class and repeating past, present, and past participle verb charts incessantly; learning how to deconstruct and rearrange a sentence to form a question, and learning the different affixes throughout an entire month (16 hours) in order to discover the many ways they altered morphemes.

Having said this, it wasn't until I attended an American high school that I truly understood the advantages of a structured grammar curriculum. My peers were using incorrect vocabulary, syntax, and conjugation that were commonly used throughout their childhood and were now being challenged by our English teacher. Even though every single grammatical rule was not fresh in my mind, I fared well in my regular level English classes. Part of my success was due to the amount of time I spent (7 years total) in formal English classes every Saturday morning in El Salvador.

Although I understand that every single person favors a different learning style, I firmly believe that grammar should be taught under a "traditional" curriculum when learning a second language. Through exposure and varied experiences with the target language, each student will develop their own rules that may alter the grammar rules they were first imposed.

4. What are the two best websites for teaching grammar, and how would you use them in your classes? Please, be specific.

My college English teacher would be very disappointed if at first, I didn't mention what he called the "Bible" of English grammar: Elements of Style by William Strunk and E.B White. Although not a website, this book was a tactile guidebook for English grammar. Any doubt you had, you could pull out the small book and consult it.*

*While I typed this, I checked its availability on Amazon and I'm leaving the link right here:

https://www.amazon.com/Elements-Style-William-Strunk-Jr/dp/1989862004/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=elements+of+style&qid=1614200008&sr=8-1
(https://www.amazon.com/Elements-Style-William-Strunk-Jr/dp/1989862004/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=elements+of+style&qid=1614200008&sr=8-1)

Here are the two websites I use often:

The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)

The Purdue Online Writing Lab is an excellent resource for any teacher, ESL or non-ESL. It's also a helpful starting point for many other teaching resources.

I have previously used this website for writing exercises –depending on the subject. And, not to panic (!), they also have the answers for you.

I'm including the link that takes you directly to the grammar section:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/index.html
(https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/index.html)

The English Club

This is a website I've been using recently and I love it for its simplicity.

As a new English teacher, I worry I may not know how to build a proper lesson plan for my students. Because I don't have a book to follow, I let each student guide me through their needs every week. The English Club has been particularly helpful to search and find every specific topic of grammar.

Just today, I was teaching a student about the various "means of transportation" and one of my lesson plan goals was teaching the use of the preposition "by". I have included the link directly to this topic and you'll be able to see how uncomplicated their explanations are.

<https://www.englishclub.com/efl/articles/8-ways-to-use-the-preposition-by/>
(<https://www.englishclub.com/efl/articles/8-ways-to-use-the-preposition-by/>)

← Reply



[Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222)

Feb 25, 2021

Hi Valeria, thanks for sharing useful websites. Especially **The English Club** looks good. Prepositions are tricky, so I want to use this website in my class later. This website also has other helpful resources such as grammar quizzes or phrasal verbs lists. I think this website will be suitable for adult ESL/EFL learners. Thanks for the good information!

Edited by [Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222) on Feb 25 at 2:35am

[← Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473)

Feb 27, 2021

Hi Yoon-Jung,

Prepositions are so tricky! I've been going over them one by one with my students so that nobody feels overwhelmed (including me!). I hadn't seen their grammar quizzes... I'll have to start using those, too. I'm glad you're able to find some good resources to use in the classroom. Happy teaching!

[← Reply](#)



[MaryAnn Wilson \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)

Feb 25, 2021

Hi Valeria,

You make the best argument for teaching a structured grammar curriculum. To think that as an ELL, you fared better in your high school English classes than native speakers speaks volumes! You have convinced me to integrate structured grammar; however, as Michelle said, "There should be a balance. Teachers should include lessons on grammar but also leave room for building other skills, especially for beginners."

[← Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473)

Feb 27, 2021

Hi Mary Ann,

I absolutely agree with you and Michelle. After all, I may be all for a grammar-oriented curriculum but I learned how to speak by using more common phrases without any knowledge of grammar. That "speaks" for itself! (Hah! at the pun)

← [Reply](#)



[Lisa Bradbury \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949)

Feb 27, 2021

Hi Valeria,

It is commendable of your parents to start you so young at learning a second language. I wish more parents would do that and that the schools would start language learning sooner than middle school. I remember my first experience in learning a language was Latin in seventh grade. The black board had lists of conjugations and we would sit there for forty-five minutes reading down the lines of conjugations. It was extremely boring and I absolutely hated it. I would have much rather learned conversational Latin.

Thanks for the great ideas for websites and for the 'Bible' of English grammar!

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Mar 1, 2021

Hi Valeria,

Wow, Saturday classes since when you were 6 years old! While you were lucky to be given an opportunity to start in the "crucial period," that must've required endurance. Any techniques your parents used to keep motivating you and your siblings? Or maybe you actually enjoyed the learning?

How is English education like in El Salvador at regular public schools- is it a mandatory subject taught by native speakers?

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Mar 3, 2021

Thank you, Valeria. I am surprised that Purdue OWL Writing Lab was not mentioned more frequently - great resource for everyone, native and non-native speakers. Teaching and learning prepositions is never easy. Thank you for including English Club.

← Reply



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042>

Feb 24, 2021



1. Survey several people. Ask them what they think grammar means. How do their definitions match up with Weaver's list? How do their answers match your view on grammar?

1. Friend and French teacher: "I'd define grammar as a set of rules and patterns that language follows"
2. Friend and English (non ell) teacher: "Grammar is a way of speech and writing linked into groups and generations of people"
3. Boyfriend, not an educator: "Grammar is an agreed upon set of guidances and rules for how we construct modern written and verbal communication"

I do this they line up with Weaver's list. In my own definition I also think of universal grammar and innate debates in first language acquisition.

2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

I was taught through a more deductive approach. As a teacher now I teach with a kind of combination of inductive and deductive. I do think it's important to bring some attention to grammar but also find it equally (if not more) important to allow students to discover the rules through real world contexts, like task based learning. Personally, I don't think I could learn solely through inductive teaching. However, I think a purely deductive approach lacks real application. A mix of both is essential.

← Reply



[Silver Park \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686)

Feb 26, 2021

Hi Diana, I like this meaning of grammar, "a set of rules and patterns that language follows". It is very true that there are certain rules and patterns we follow in language that are not supposed to be compromised. I would say the best way for students to learn grammar is to learn the rules by books and follow the patterns by life-approach learning how you've said it's important to allow students to discover the rules through real world contexts.

[← Reply](#)



[Diana Burga \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Silver, yeah I agree that That definition is a good one and like how you incorporate the book aspect of it as well as real world experience.

[← Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Mar 4, 2021

Diana, I've also found that task-based learning is very motivating; however it has to be designed carefully, so that students have the need to collaborate which creates the need for authentic communication. It is great that you combine deductive and inductive approach. Deductive approach sometimes takes too much time, and may not work for everyone in the class.

[← Reply](#)



[Juan Ochoa \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772)

Feb 24, 2021

1) Survey several people. Ask them what they think grammar means. How do their definitions match up with Weaver's list? How do their answers match your view on grammar?

- o My Younger sister who is in middle school: She says grammar are language rules that make you a better writer. When asked if it makes you a better speaker she answered with no only writer.

- My Mother who is currently taking ESL classes: She says grammar are language rules that you need to know in order to be a good writer and be able to communicate with people but in practical use people tend to not follow some grammar rules when speaking.
- My friend who is currently attending UCLA: Grammar is the structure of language. It describes the relationship between words in a sentence and how they interact.

the first two participants talked about how they can make you a better writer but not speakers. This is similar to perceptions of structure and words where if you know about it you can apply it into writing and speech. The third participant explained more like " description of syntactic structure" explaining that grammar are the rules and how those rules interact in a sentence.

← [Reply](#)

○



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025>



Feb 24, 2021

2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

I think that grammar is an essential part of learning a target language, and a well-blended teaching method that uses both grammatical explanations and practical applications would be ideal. However, it can also depend on the student's native language, their exposure to the target language, whether it's their first FL or not (if the latter, the student may have developed an understanding of universal grammar), if the target language has any similarities to the native language (alphabet-based? Latin-based?, etc.), if the target language's grammar is relatively simple or complex, the student's age, and other factors.

For instance, it is an entirely different experience to teach Spanish grammar to Portuguese speakers, as opposed to teaching Arabic grammar to Chinese speakers, or teaching any language to speakers from various backgrounds at the same time.

In my personal experience,

L1 = Japanese. Never paid attention to grammar, acquired naturally as a native speaker.

L2 = English, studied as a mandatory subject in public schools in Japan. The teaching method in public schools was the traditional grammar-translation method, with a heavy emphasis on grammar, translation from the target language to the native language (but not the other way), and vocabulary, but not on communication and application. We were made to break down sentences into lexical categories (noun, verb, adjective, adverb), make vocabulary cards and do grammar drills.

From an exam taker's point of view, this method was easy to study as grammar is mostly logical and you can get high exam scores by just drilling it to the rules, and it definitely helped me gain reading comprehension skills. However, it did not help me develop communication skills (listening comprehension and composition), as we were not given sufficient opportunities to put grammar into practice and be creative with the tool.

Apparently, a more balanced approach with more communicative practices would have been better. However, looking back now, English classes in Japanese schools were taught by Japanese teachers who had no or very little contact with native speakers themselves (and no YouTube), so I think this grammar-heavy method was probably an optimal way at the time for teachers who were not native speakers and lacked the sufficient native-like proficiency to teach the target language.

Once I left Japan for the U.K. and then the U.S., I didn't take ESL classes but picked up oral and written communication skills fairly quickly, out of necessity as I worked for American companies that had nothing to do with Japan. I believe my internalized knowledge of grammar did provide a framework and helped me once I started using it as a tool to compose my own sentences and communicate with native speakers in my adulthood.

L3 = French, as a FL elective in college in Japan. It was my first Romance language to learn and I found French grammar more complicated and difficult than English, but because I already had "universal grammar" of a sort from having learnt English, it was not a struggle.

Since this was in an academic setting, the teaching method was again heavily focused on grammar and vocabulary, but we did have classes taught by native speaker professors as well so had more opportunities to put grammar into conversational practice, providing a nice balance.

I later moved to the U.K. and had frequent business trips to France so took classes at Alliance Francaise to "revive" my college French. While they used the traditional grammar-focused method as well, the classes were taught by qualified native speakers only and the class sizes were small, so their teaching method was well blended with grammar, conversation, reading, and composition. If a grammar skill was taught, we were given the opportunity to put it to practice immediately in the classroom through pair exercises with classmates and oral presentations to the class. It was effective and I became proficient enough to be able to use only French while on a business trip to France. (Though this was lost later-it's currently at an immediate level)

L4 = Spanish and L5 = Portuguese were self-initiated because of my love of certain music genres in those languages and frequent travel to Latin America after I moved to the U.S. Since I already had a foundation in a Romance language from learning French, learning grammar for those languages was not too difficult. However, the verb conjugation charts were very helpful at the beginning as those languages have much more complicated conjugations than the others. I did complement my study of Spanish with formal education through UCLAX

to the advanced level, which probably explains the difference in the proficiency levels between Spanish (advanced) and Portuguese (lower intermediate), as well as the fact that there are so many friendly native Spanish speakers out there that I never even had to look for Spanish speakers to "practice" with.

L6 = Mandarin Chinese. While mastering Chinese pronunciation and written characters is very difficult, its grammar is somewhat similar to English and is even simpler. I mainly studied Chinese through Duolingo, which teaches grammar only in a more implied way (without a lengthy section to explain it, but only through chunked, repetitive practices so that learners will "discover" grammar rules themselves, so to speak).

Because of the simplicity of grammar itself and familiarity with many of the written Chinese characters as a Japanese speaker (writer), I was able to finish the entire Chinese tree (course) in a short time. Duolingo is a great tool that provides a good basic foundation of the target language for free of charge, and I love Duolingo for its genius strategy with gamification and chunking, but it doesn't make you fluent (only to the intermediate level). I was not expecting much but was surprised to find that I was able to travel around in China and get by for a couple of weeks only speaking Chinese just with what I learned from Duolingo. Though I attribute this to the relative simplicity of Chinese grammar itself (as there are other languages I tried starting on Duolingo and gave up on immediately like Russian and Arabic), I felt the power of learning grammar in this implied way can't be underestimated either.

← [Reply](#)



[Lisa Bradbury \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Yoko,

I am really impressed, six languages! Wow! I was surprised to see that you gave up on Arabic. I found Arabic to be much easier than learning Chinese which is a tonal language. I also found Japanese to be somewhat difficult, too.

I agree that grammar is a necessity but there must be a balance between that and conversational practice. Grammar learning can be boring and as teachers it is our job to make learning fun through games, music and art.

← [Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Yoko,

Wow! Your dedication to languages is commendable. I'm sure your experience in diverse learning settings has helped you form a more holistic approach to grammar teaching.

I also learned French with the Alliance Française. Their approach to language learning was effective because they truly tried to wrap you in "la francophonie" and would incorporate cultural gatherings and activities as part of their curriculum.

I'm motivated to try Duolingo after you shared your successful experience with it. Would you be more willing to try this chunked, gamified teaching strategy in your own lessons?

← [Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594>

Feb 24, 2021

3. Specify a grammatical principle that you believe you follow in your own speech and writing, and whose violation sounds wrong to you in the speech and writing of others. For example, some people feel very strongly about the use of "can" to ask for permission, or the use of "real" as an adverb etc.?

One grammatical principle that I can think of is when people confuse the words: your, yours, and you're. I think this is very common among ELLs because they do not quite know the difference between the three. I believe that with enough practice and time, they will be able to determine which is which.

4. What are the two best websites for teaching grammar, and how would you use them in your classes? Please, be specific.

One website that is good for teaching grammar is Quill. As a teacher, it has the option to create a class and is also compatible with Nearpod. It is a great source to use that allows students to create sentences with the appropriate topic or subject you are teaching. For example, it has different concepts such as parts of speech, compounds, punctuation, and more. It also allows you to select your grade, and subjects.

Another website that is good for teaching grammar is FluentU. This website allows the ELL to explore different topics and listen to conversations in English. They not only have the option to listen to a conversation, but they can also read it. I believe that with more reading practice, then writing will develop faster, and an increase in vocabulary and grammar will show.

← [Reply](#)



[Melinda Cavalletto \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435)

Feb 28, 2021



Hello Simiry,

Quill is a great tool for teaching grammar! The site is extremely organized and user-friendly.

[← Reply](#)



[Juan Ochoa \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772)

Feb 28, 2021



thankyou for the recommendations! I definitely found both of those websites really helpful!

[← Reply](#)



[Melinda Cavalletto \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435)

Feb 24, 2021



3. Specify a grammatical principle that you believe you follow in your own speech and writing, and whose violation sounds wrong to you in the speech and writing of others. For example, some people feel very strongly about using "can" to ask for permission, or the use of "real" as an adverb, etc.?

I find myself correcting people's grammar in my head. When I hear poorly structured sentences or grammatical errors, I silently repeat the sentence correctly to not stick in my brain. Last week, I wrote about my ex-in-laws from the South and how I had difficulty understanding their accent. Not only did I consistently ask them to repeat themselves, but I also had to repeat our conversations in my head, correcting grammar along the way. My pet peeve is the mistake of using the words "few" and "less." My trick is when using "few," ask yourself if you can count the subject such as, "There are fewer dogs at the beach today," not, "There are less dogs at the beach today." If you cannot count the subject, then use "less."

[← Reply](#)



[Lisa Bradbury \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949)

Feb 24, 2021



3. Specify a grammatical principle that you believe you follow in your own speech and writing, and whose violation sounds wrong to you in the speech and writing of others. For example, some people feel very strongly about the use of "can" to ask for permission, or the use of "real" as an adverb etc.?

I remember when I was in high school and I asked my teacher, "Can I go to the bathroom?" He would retort back to anyone who used 'can', with, "I don't know, can you?". Then, he would proceed to tell us that the proper word was 'May'. To this day, I have not forgotten that and all through my teaching years would correct my students as well. The word 'may' also sounds more polite. Most people still use the word 'can' when they should use 'may' and it just sounds so wrong to me.

4. What are the two best websites for teaching grammar, and how would you use them in your classes? Please, be specific.

I really like the website ESLgamesplus.com [_\(http://ESLgamesworld.com\)](http://ESLgamesworld.com) for a beginning/intermediate ESL learner. It makes grammar fun and more enjoyable. For example, there is an 'articles and nouns' game called Monkey Isle. Students have three choices to pick from and if they get it right the monkey laughs but if they choose the wrong answer, a rock falls on his head. It is very animated and would keep their attention. Whatever grammar concept is being taught that day can be reinforced with a game to practice. I would probably send students to the computer by twos to play the games for 10-15 minutes and then keep rotating students until everyone had a chance to practice.

Another great one is IXL.com [_\(http://IXL.com\)](http://IXL.com) where students can practice grammar by playing games. It keeps track of each student and their scores. This way, I can go back into the website and see how each student did and keep a record of it. It comes with audio and visuals. For example, if I was teaching adjectives, I would have the students go to the adjective games and practice choosing the correct adjective. If they make a mistake, the correct answer is given right away with audio of the correct pronunciation of the words.

← [Reply](#)



[Simiry Cuadra \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594)

Feb 28, 2021



Hello Lisa,

I also used "can" instead of "may", and with the same response, my teachers would say "I don't know, can you?"

Thank you for sharing your websites. I haven't tried them before but they look very useful. Implementing games into teaching keeps the students engaged and motivated. I have also noticed that it can be a way for students to continue their learning without feeling stressed out. I love how IXL.com is categorized! It is well organized and very easy to access things. I will love to use these in my teaching.

← [Reply](#)



[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 24, 2021

3. Specify a grammatical principle that you believe you follow in your own speech and writing, and whose violation sounds wrong to you in the speech and writing of others. For example, some people feel very strongly about the use of “can” to ask for permission, or the use of “real” as an adverb etc.?

I use “who” (subjective pronoun) when referring to the subject of a sentence or the person who does the action as in “Who ate my chocolate?” or “She is the one who ate my chocolate”, and “whom” (objective pronoun) for the object of action by someone else as in “Whom did you see yesterday?” or “She is the girl whom I saw yesterday.” Likewise, “whom” is used after a preposition, as in “To whom did you give my chocolate (Whom did you give my chocolate to)?” or “She is the one to whom you gave my chocolate (She is the one whom you gave my chocolate to).” It is the same as the difference between “she” and “her.”

However, most native speakers no longer use “whom” and just use “who” for “whom,” especially “for who,” “with who,” and “to who,” so I feel almost too formal when I use “whom” in my own writing.

← [Reply](#)



[http](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222) [Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222)

Feb 25, 2021

Hi Yoko, so do I. "who vs. whom" debate often makes me awkward. When I write papers in English, I feel like I should be strict with grammar, but nobody says "whom" anymore. I use "whom" anyway because I do not want English-speaking reviewers to correct my paper too many, but I sometimes do not know what to do. Do native speakers use "whom" in academic papers? Please someone tell me.

← [Reply](#)



Christian Aguiar (He/Him/His) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203>)

Feb 26, 2021



I sure don't. I use "whom" in exactly one phrase: "to whom it may concern."

[← Reply](#)



MaryAnn Wilson (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764>)

Feb 26, 2021



I would definitely use whom if it were warranted, but more so in writing than in speaking.

[← Reply](#)



Yoon-Jung Cho (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222>)

Feb 27, 2021



Okay, thanks Christian and Mary! :)

[← Reply](#)



Viktorija Lejko-Lacan (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731>)

Mar 4, 2021



Yoon-Jung, The situation with "who" and "whom" got complicated since, as you've noticed, you rarely hear it in spoken English; however you will be expected to use it in academic writing. A useful practical guide is the OWL Purdue website https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/relative_pronouns/index.html (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/relative_pronouns/index.html)

Instant practical help.

[← Reply](#)



Melinda Cavalletto (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435>)

Feb 28, 2021



Hello Yoko,

I get confused with "who" and "whom" as well. I was taught to use "whom" if I could replace it with "her" "him" and use "who" if I can replace it with "he" or "she." Either way, I agree with you that "whom" can sound too formal, but I try to use the correct form when I can.

← [Reply](#)

○



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028>

Feb 24, 2021



1. Survey several people. Ask them what they think grammar means. How do their definitions match up with Weaver's list? How do their answers match your view on grammar?

High School Student: *"Grammar is the study of words, how they are used in sentences, and how they change in different situations and settings"*

College Student: *Grammar is the structure and system -not to be confused with the rules- of a language, or of languages in general, usually considered to consist of syntax and morphology"*

64-year-old male: *Grammar is a list of rules imposed on the English language for speaking and writing it.*

How do they match up Weaver's (1996) lists four meanings of grammar?

-a description of syntactic structures – as studied by linguists

-prescriptions for how to use structures and words – teachers used to believe that if students learned about the language (the labels and the rules), they could apply them to their speaking and writing. This belief was not confirmed by research.

-rhetorically effective use of syntactic structures – grammar taught in context. Students are taught grammar in the context of writing assignments, not in isolation.

-functional command of sentence structure that makes it possible for us to understand and produce language – through exposure to language in meaningful contexts , people are able to internalize language rules. These are not traditional prescriptive rules, but a set of subconscious notions that match the norms of the speaker's language community.

The 64-year-old person's response made me immediately think of Weaver's 2nd meaning where he describes the unconfirmed belief of teachers that if students learn the labels and rules of a language they could apply it to different forms of communication with ease. I guess just like learning the rules of basketball from a book, does not make a person a worthy opponent in a basketball game. But based on how I learned grammar when learning English (L2), I probably would have answered in a similar manner.

3. Specify a grammatical principle that you believe you follow in your own speech and writing, and whose violation sounds wrong to you in the speech and writing of others. For example, some people feel very strongly about the use of “can” to ask for permission, or the use of “real” as an adverb etc.?

In writing, it boggles my mind how often people mix up possessives and plurals. For example, captioning a photo on Instagram: "I love my Baby's!" --I always want to ask, "You love your baby's what?! Don't leave us in suspense!" But I know that they most likely meant "babies" plural. In speaking, I quietly cringe when people ask, "where are you at?". As a learner of English as a second language, I never understood why people would at the "at" at the end since "where are you?" clearly and completely asks the question.

Edited by [Raquel Armendariz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028) on Mar 3 at 3:16pm

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Raquel,

I liked how each people you surveyed represented a different age range. I could see a huge difference between the high school student and college student, even if their ages differ by 1-7 years. Whereas the 64-year-old male is probably 44 years older than a college student, and simplistically says that grammar is just rules.

I do agree that just because you learn grammar rules in a book or in school, it doesn't mean you can easily apply it to a target language. In the world of English learning, I can see native learners using grammar studies to complement their English language skills. Whereas with second language learners, it may not complement so well.

← [Reply](#)



[Raquel Armendariz \(She/Her/Hers\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028)

Mar 3, 2021

Thank you. I purposely sought the help of persons of different backgrounds for the survey. It was as interesting as I had thought.

[← Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Mar 3, 2021

Raquel, It is interesting how different generations have different ideas of grammar. The way a 64-year old phrased it sounds almost like grammar being a constraint imposed on English. In a way, he is right. ✕

[← Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480)

Feb 24, 2021

Studying grammar helped my language learning by establishing structure and giving me tools to facilitate how best to express myself. To know the rules of grammar is to bring order to the chaos of language. I liked being able to see how words are spelled and where they belong in a phrase. Structure brings comfort to me, and therefore helps me absorb new information. By studying grammar, I can see the inner workings of the target language, much like seeing the inside of a clock.

In the classes I've taken in my formative years, grammar was taught through text books accompanied by workbooks. The teacher used a blackboard, or projector to write sentences in real time. The lessons from the text book were clearly written out, while various practice exercises were offered in a workbook. The most effective way to learn grammar is by doing. By writing words, phrases, and paragraphs in a workbook, I was able to apply what I learned. I think the best way to teach grammar is by taking students' written assignments and correct mistakes as a class activity. Learn by doing. Learn from mistakes. Work together as a class to investigate the errors in everyday student work.

A specific grammatical principle that I follow is the use of the word "anyway" in the singular. Just like how we don't say, "Hey, that is mines," we don't say, "anyways." I've heard the argument that enough people say "anyways" to a point where it becomes correct. To me, the

word, "anyway" is an either/or, and therefore singular. I sometimes have to pick my battles, depending on the situation, and correcting the use of "anyways" can get exhausting. It can also make me out to be a grammar snob.

← [Reply](#)



[MaryAnn Wilson \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)

Feb 27, 2021

I prefer anywho to anyways. Or is that anyhoo? I actually looked it up and found this at [wikidiff.com](https://wikidiff.com/anyhoo/anywho): [_\(https://wikidiff.com/anyhoo/anywho\)](https://wikidiff.com/anyhoo/anywho)

Anyhoo is an alternative form of anywho.

As adverbs the difference between anyhoo and anywho is that anyhoo is (conjunctive|informal) anyhow while anywho is (informal) anyhow.

I don't get that. If anyhoo is an alternative form of anywho and [anywho is an alternative form of anyway](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anyhoo) [_\(https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anyhoo\)](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anyhoo), then why aren't they both conjunctive?

Whatever. But wikidiff.com did say what the origin of anywho was:

2006 Scott Philip Stewart - *The Calling of Jujubee Forthright*: "You know—well, I don't know if you do know—but anywho even if you don't I don't reckon it's like it's top-secret. "

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Mary Ann, thanks for that clever anecdote! I would've cheekily replied with, "Don't you mean 'anyhow?'" Perhaps I'll add "anywho" to my repertoire and see if it'll stick. That's the great thing about learning grammar first, and then adapting new (maybe freer) ways to express myself. Thank you for that link, too!

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Feb 28, 2021

Very creative, Mary Ann. And of course, very informal.

← Reply



[Raquel Armendariz \(She/Her/Hers\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028>)

Mar 3, 2021



Russell,

YES! My sisters and I would say, "anyways" to make fun of people who'd say it instead of "anyway". But we'd spell it via text, as "anywayz" to make the distinction that we were saying it as a jest. Anyway, long story, long anyway, we'd sound annoying and ignorant when we would kid around and say it out loud to interrupt each other (there are 5 siblings usually in a conversation competing for air time) in public. When you say instead of writing it in the group chat, others can't tell you're spelling it with a "z" and saying it sarcastically. - We stopped.

← Reply



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480>)

Mar 3, 2021



Raquel, I totally do the same with "lolz." I hate the excessive use of "lol" in texting, but found that I get into less trouble when I add it at the end of the message. If I don't add "lol," people get mad for no reason, and can't tell I'm speaking lightly. So I add the z at the end of lol to indicate I use it begrudgingly. Lolz.

← Reply



[Yoon-Jung Cho](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222>)

Feb 25, 2021



2. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

In my case, the best grammar class was TOEFL grammar class in Korea. It made me memorize many rules and exceptions, and it was not that enjoyable but effective. (For instance, I had to memorize the list of verbs that can only be followed by a gerund: enjoy, keep, quit, finish, consider, imagine, suggest, recommend, postpone, deny, mind, avoid, admit, risk, miss ...) Because I am an adult ESL student, I needed this kind of traditional grammar class. Nowadays, in Korea, people say “grammar does not matter anymore, speaking is important” something like that. From my perspective, however, grammar is basic. Without basic knowledge, nobody can say or write anything. Now I can speak and write in English, thanks to the traditional grammar class. Of course, it will be much better if someone can acquire grammar rules in conversations naturally like L1, but an old-fashioned grammar lesson can be the second-best plan.

4. What are the two best websites for teaching grammar, and how would you use them in your classes? Please, be specific.

A. Teacher Oliver’s English tips:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAFrxqyBNmxXAomCiJ0FQjKQQiuCHs0PW>
(<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAFrxqyBNmxXAomCiJ0FQjKQQiuCHs0PW>)

This channel is really useful for Korean intermediate students because it is full of typically misused grammar and expressions Koreans make. Its grammars and phrases are easy and simple, so for instance, I can use this channel in my class like this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byiohSORZ7I&list=PLAFrxqyBNmxXAomCiJ0FQjKQQiuCHs0PW&index=77>
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byiohSORZ7I&list=PLAFrxqyBNmxXAomCiJ0FQjKQQiuCHs0PW&index=77>)



(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byiohSORZ7I&list=PLAFrxqyBNmxXAomCiJ0FQjKQQiuCHs0PW&index=77>)

- Topic: I could use ≠ I was able to use / I could use = I need, I want
- Let’s make a simple dialogue using “I could use”.

B. Websites for grammar games

<https://www.education.com/games/grammar/>

(<https://www.education.com/games/grammar/>)

<http://www.eslgamesworld.com/members/games/grammar/index.html>

(<http://www.eslgamesworld.com/members/games/grammar/index.html>)

I love these websites because tons of cute grammar games are free. When I teach kids, I can make my little students do the games and quizzes. Children may acquire English grammar rules and expressions unconsciously while just having fun.

Edited by [Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222) on Feb 25 at 1:15am

← [Reply](#)

○



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686>

[Silver Park \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686)

Feb 26, 2021



1. How has studying grammar helped your language learning? How was grammar taught in the classes you've taken? Do you believe it was effective? What is the best way to teach grammar?

Studying grammar has definitely helped me in my language learning. I was taught in many different levels of English which led me to different levels of grammar. One particular grammar I remember learning and is still useful today is (Of course all the other simple grammars are still effective in my language today like am, is, and are.) should have, would have, could have. These three might sound similar but they deliver very different meanings from each other. I learned how to express myself a lot more using these three grammars in my writing and speaking. The best way to teach grammar is I believe to teach students the grammar structures first and have them speak repetitively to figure out the patterns in English sentences.

2. What are the two best websites for teaching grammar, and how would you use them in your classes? Please be specific.

I find the app Grammarly useful for a grammar correcting tool and also a great way to learn what kind of grammar errors you are making. I was recommended to use this website from one of the TESOL classes. It can accurately correct your grammar while you're typing out for emails or any essays as well. I would recommend this to my students to use it while they write their papers and get help from it for clear and correct grammar.

GRAMMARLY: https://www.grammarly.com/p/fluency?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=12183624150&utm_content=494749030235&utm_term=%2Benglish%20%2Bgrammar&matchtype=b&placement=&network=g&gclid=Cj0KCQiAst2BBhDJARIsAGo2ldX2TeYBPq7IINRvV2oPX352PqEqgPSqXtAnxBo89qmQZXh_dex79eYaAggqEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds

[_ \(https://www.grammarly.com/p/fluency?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=12183624150&utm_content=494749030235&utm_term=%2Benglish%20%2Bgrammar&matchtype=b&placement=&network=g&gclid=Cj0KCQiAst2BBhDJARIsAGo2ldX2TeYBPq7IINRvV2oPX352PqEqgPSqXtAnxBo89qmQZXh_dex79eYaAggqEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds\)](https://www.grammarly.com/p/fluency?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=12183624150&utm_content=494749030235&utm_term=%2Benglish%20%2Bgrammar&matchtype=b&placement=&network=g&gclid=Cj0KCQiAst2BBhDJARIsAGo2ldX2TeYBPq7IINRvV2oPX352PqEqgPSqXtAnxBo89qmQZXh_dex79eYaAggqEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds) Second one I found was the IXL website. It has a variety of choices, categories, topics, and skills you can study from like language arts, math, science and more. You can find a grammar section there to play grammar games with your students and teach different topics with them. It is based on subscriptions if you want to continue to use it. It's \$10 per month as a family member, but it's worth it to have as an equipment to use it for activities and games in classes.

IXL: <https://www.ixl.com/ela/grammar> [_ \(https://www.ixl.com/ela/grammar\)](https://www.ixl.com/ela/grammar)

← [Reply](#)



Russell Fung (He/Him/His) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480>)

Feb 28, 2021

Hi Silver,

Wow, that very last link you posted was beautiful to my eyes! An overview of all the topics, categorized by grade, on a single sheet. That is very useful and tidy. Thank you for posting this. I just saved this on my bookmarks tab in my browser.

← [Reply](#)



Melinda Cavalletto (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435>)

Feb 28, 2021

4. What are the two best websites for teaching grammar, and how would you use them in your classes? Please, be specific.

A great website I would recommend for help in teaching grammar is Grammarly; I am using it right now. I intentionally made a mistake in the first sentence of my answer by not adding an appropriate semicolon. Grammarly immediately highlighted my mistake. If Grammarly helps me as a native speaker of English, it will certainly help ESL students.

← Reply



Juan Ochoa (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772>)

Feb 28, 2021



Hi Melinda, I agree that grammarly could be useful, it even tells you what your mistakes are and how you could fix them

← Reply



Viktorija Lejko-Lacan (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731>)

Mar 10, 2021



Here's an article from the MLA Journal about the use of who or whom.

https://style.mla.org/who-versus-whom/?utm_campaign=sourcemar21&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mlaoutreach
(https://style.mla.org/who-versus-whom/?utm_campaign=sourcemar21&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mlaoutreach)

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