

The presentation of grammar material

When we present grammar through structural patterns we tend to give students tidy pieces of language to work with. We introduce grammar, which can easily be explained and presented. There are many different ways of doing this, which do not involve the transmission of grammar rules.

It is certainly possible to teach aspects of grammar – indeed that is what language teachers have been doing for centuries – but language is a difficult business and it is often used very inventively by its speakers.

As teachers we should be prepared to use a variety of techniques to help our students learn and acquire grammar. Sometimes this involves teaching grammar rules. Sometimes it means allowing students to discover the rules for themselves.

Our job at this stage of the lesson is to present the students with clear information about the language they are learning. Students should also be shown what the language means and how it is used; what the grammatical form of the language is, and how it is said and how it is written.

All the mentioned above means that students need to get an idea of how this new language is used by native speakers and that the best way of doing this is to present the language in context.

The context for introducing a new language should have a number of characteristics. It should show what the new language means and how it is used, for example. That is why many useful contexts present the new language in the form of a written text or a dialogue.

A good context should be interesting for the listeners. This does not mean that all the subject matter we use for presentation should be wildly funny or inventive all of the time. But the students should at least want to see or hear the information.

Finally, a good context will provide the background for many examples of language use so that students could use the information obtained not only for the repetition of a model sentence but also for making their own sentences.