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Using Educational Technology in the English Language Classroom

Week 3: Technology for Teaching Grammar

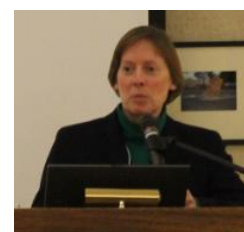
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Carol A. Chapelle

Part 1

Slide 1. Welcome to week 3 of Using Educational Technology in the English Language Classroom. Our topic this week is the use of technology for teaching grammar.

Slide 2. In this Lecture. In this lecture, we'll talk about the connection between technology and grammar. Then we'll meet our grammar expert, Professor Bethany Gray. We'll ask Professor Gray why grammar is so important for students, what teachers should know about grammar, and then what advice she would have for teachers.

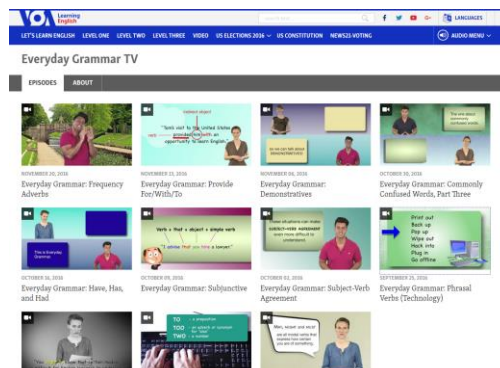


Prof. Carol Chapelle

Slide 3. The Technology-Grammar Connection. There are important connections between technology and grammar. Technology provides access to many different ways for students to study grammar. Also, technology has changed the way that linguists study grammar; we talked about corpus linguistics in the first lesson. Teachers can find many resources to help teach grammar on the Internet. We'll take a quick look at two examples for grammar teaching: Everyday Grammar from Voice of America and Corpus of Contemporary American English that you've already been introduced to.

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Slide 4. This is an example of Everyday Grammar TV on the Voice of America website. It has a number of lessons on specific grammatical points; such as adverbs, prepositions (such as *for*, *with* and *to*), demonstratives and so on. Each one of these lessons has an explanation and lots of examples for students to see and work with.



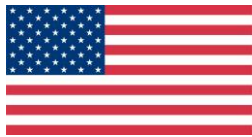
Everyday Grammar page

Slide 5. In this example in Everyday Grammar on the Voice of America website we see this explanation of reported speech. The speaker gives an example of what reported speech is

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
and the student can listen to the explanation of how reported speech is used and how it's formed grammatically.



Everyday Grammar video

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Slide 6. Students and teachers can complement that explanation of reported speech by taking a look at how reported speech, using "said that", is used in actual everyday English language. This is an example of what we find in the Corpus of Contemporary American English if we do a search for the phrase "said that". There are lots of examples here to look at how this expression is used and so it gives students an idea of how reported speech works in everyday language.

new Corpus of Contemporary American English				   			
SEARCH		FREQUENCY		CONTEXT		HELP	
FIND SAMPLE: 100 200 500 1000							
PAGE: << < 1 / 560 > >>							
CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT .  							
1	1996	SPOK	CNN_King	A	B	C	that very hard to believe. KING: You don't think Haley would have said that ? DOLE: No, no. Uh-huh. I do not. Haley
2	1999	NEWS	Houston	A	B	C	death. Anderson was not sure Wednesday how the Dominguez case would be handled and said that Holmes would decide. # NOTES: Chronicle repo
3	1992	SPOK	Fox_Crier	A	B	C	regard to the Supreme Court, I don't know CRIER And Doctor, you said that you are, in fact, pro-choice at this point, despite choosing not
4	2013	SPOK	ABC	A	B	C	It just right. It turns out not to be right. The President essentially said that when he was in the briefing room the other day, he can't
5	1992	NEWS	CSMonitor	A	B	C	with students at the Detroit Business Institute, a 142-year-old proprietary school, several students said that they had enrolled because they had beco
6	1992	ACAD	Environment	A	B	C	conventions, with mixed success so far. It can, of course, be said that the World Heritage Fund is far too small given the magnitude of the tasks
7	1997	NEWS	SanFranChron	A	B	C	a depression, like William Styron. Nor will I. # KB: You've said that you found the experience of therapy fascinating. # RH: I did.
8	2005	SPOK	CBS_Rather	A	B	C	that the United States is getting ready to attack Iran is simply ridiculous. Having said that , all options are on the table. ROBERTS: Mr. Bush insists he
9	1996	NEWS	AssocPress	A	B	C	"Inside Edition" statement defended the conduct of the two journalists. # It: said that retired Newsday assistant managing editor Bob Greene, a two
10	2015	NEWS	Atlanta	A	B	C	through drug stores and discount pharmacies that get them from mail-order firms. The law said that only licensed eye specialists could sell replacem
11	2000	SPOK	CNN_Talkback	A	B	C	impugn the integrity of young black people. A report came out in April that said that young black and Latino men... (CROSSTALK) BATTISTA: I've got
12	1996	MAG	Newsweek	A	B	C	winters ago, but sporadic uprisings continued in 1996. For years, technocrats have said that Latin America's economic reforms, designed to make thi
13	2000	NEWS	Houston	A	B	C	him as a "plastic man." Don Meredith, the devil-may-care quarterback once said that if Landry were in a personality contest with Bud Grant, the Mir
14	2010	FIC	BkAnunnakiLegacy	A	B	C	of Slog's life-forms. " " Really? Up on the ship, you said that was just a theory. " " True, but while you were out
15	1993	NEWS	WashPost	A	B	C	A. Thurber, director of American University's center for congressional and presidential studies, said that " a president who can go over the heads of t
16	2000	NEWS	NYTimes	A	B	C	, building code violations and students who were missing or unaccounted for. The report said that the school, housed in trailers, " appeared to be ve
17	1990	NEWS	AssocPress	A	B	C	weekend we'll be happy by what we've accomplished. " # Ozolas also said that before Gorbachev's ultimatum, the United States had been reluctant i
18	2008	SPOK	Fox_HC	A	B	C	capital gains taxes to 20 percent. Wouldn't go higher. And they then said that I made a, quote, " false charge " that he was going
19	1995	FIC	LiteraryRev	A	B	C	yet, Maida. We haven't come to any conclusion. The funeral man said that he's never seen anything like it. He wanted to tie it to
20	2010	NEWS	Denver	A	B	C	would have loved to be my size as a sophomore in high school. He said that I had a really good opportunity, that if I grab onto it,
21	2014	SPOK	CNN	A	B	C	who weren't exactly emotionally present, so he -- he always -- he even said that he had the " love me syndrome " because he thought if he could

COCA search results for "said that"

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Slide 7. Meet our Grammar Expert. But grammar is really a difficult topic, it's very complex and somewhat mysterious how students actually acquire grammar so that they can actually use it. We'll now turn to meeting our expert on grammar, Professor Bethany Gray. Professor Gray teaches and researches English grammar. Her research uses large samples of language to find out how people really use grammar when they speak and write. I asked Professor Gray how she became interested in grammar, and this is what she said:

Slide 8. Prof. Chapelle: How did you get interested in grammar?



Prof. Bethany Gray

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Prof. Gray: Well, I became interested in grammar and linguistics when I was in high school as a first year high school student, I started to learn Spanish. And I was really bad at it, I kept getting low scores on my tests and I couldn't figure out why. And one day all of a sudden everything just clicked. I realized why I should use a particular form of a verb instead of a different form. After that point I started to notice lots of patterns in the language that I was learning. It became sort of an obsession of mine to look for these patterns in Spanish.

I continued and when I studied Spanish in high school, as a senior I got to choose my final project. My teacher said: find any kind of project related to the Spanish language. I decided to write a grammar. It was a really bad grammar. I

didn't know much grammar of Spanish at that point but it reinforced my interest in language structure and in explaining and presenting that structure formally. As I went on to college and begin studying linguistics I was fascinated by all those language problems where you have to decide on the structure of a language example and explain it.

When I started to teach, and I started to teach ESL grammar and ESL writing, I realized that it was something that I really enjoyed doing. As I went forward and actually started teaching grammar to native speakers and teaching them how to analyze their own language, I realized that it's a really good topic to teach because every language user can connect to it. They all use grammar and now it's just about making them interested in being able to explain the grammar that they use or why they use that grammar. So it's a way for me to make explicit connections between what we do every day in our life with how we can describe that in terms of structure.

Slide 9. Have you ever meet anyone that decided to "write a grammar?" Well, professor Gray did! She said when she was studying Spanish, she decided to "write a grammar". And this, she said, is what made her interested in the structure of language. What did Professor Gray mean when she said that she wanted to "write a grammar?"

Slide 10. When Professor Gray said she wrote a grammar, she meant that she discovered the rules of the language and wrote them down. For example, in English you could start with examples like this: I bought a chocolate cake. The clerk put it in a big box. We ate it at the birthday party. These are examples of sentences in English, and so how can we write a grammar that describes those sentences?



Slide 11. To write a grammar describing these sentences, you would look at their structure. You find some things that are the same in all the sentences. In our example sentences we identify 3 things that are similar the first one I put in red and that is that there is a person at the beginning of the sentence. “I” refers to the speaker in the first sentence. “Clerk” refers to the person in the store. “We” refers to me and somebody else in the third.

– *I bought a chocolate cake.*

– *The clerk put it in a big box.*

– *We ate it at the birthday party.*

Example sentences

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The second thing that I find in common is that each one has a verb. There’s a word that says we did something: “bought,” “put,” and “ate,” the verbs, are in blue. And the third thing that I found in common is that at the end of a sentence there is a complex of 3 words and those are a noun phrase. That contains a noun and an adjective and a determiner or an article, as we call it sometimes. So each one of the sentences has a person or subject at the beginning. In the middle there’s a verb that indicates some action. Then at the end, there’s a noun phrase that has 3 parts: a noun, an adjective and an article or a determiner.

Slide 12. To write the grammar then, we have to write a description of what the sentences have in common. And we can do it as I’ve shown here; with a PERSON, a VERB and a NOUN PHRASE. That description is for those 3 sentences and that description is what we would call the grammar. And obviously it’s a simple grammar and it doesn’t even account for all the words in all of those sentences but it’s a start. It’s a type of description and so it would count as a grammar.

– **PERSON + VERB + NOUN PHRASE**

Example grammar

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Slide 13. This gives us a better idea of what we mean by writing a grammar. When you write a grammar, you create rules that are based on specific examples. Figuring out grammar rules from examples is one way to learn a language. Figuring out grammar rules is also important for teaching language. So, in fact, writing grammars is something that both, we as English teachers and our students as English learners need to be able to do.



Slide 14. An Example from *English Teaching Forum*. Let's take a look at another example. This one comes from an article in the *English Teaching Forum* and it shows how important it is for teachers to be able to write grammars, or in other words, analyze real examples of language in order to identify the grammar rules.

Slide 15. Present Perfect Progressive. In that article the authors talk about their analysis of the English verb tense and aspect called the present perfect progressive. I've got a couple of examples from their article. In their article they show lots of examples of sentences that they obtained from a corpus and here are just a couple of them:

I've been hearing a lot about the Internet collapse since 1977.

Good afternoon, Dr. Smith. I'm Lucy and I'm 59. I'd like to share a positive thing that I have found in the last year or so. I've been hiking and find that this is a wonderful way to keep your weight down and meet some people and just really feel good.

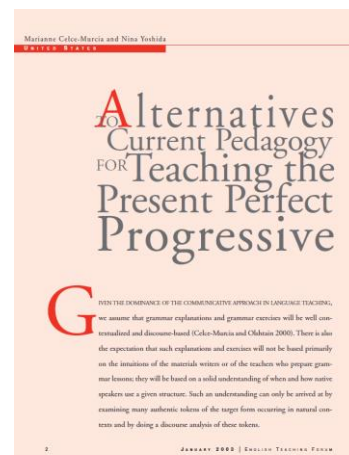
These sentences use the present perfect progressive which has the "I have." "Have" is an auxiliary, the verb "be" as the following auxiliary and "ing" at the end of the verb. The second example comes from a radio talk show where the speaker says: Ok, so again in that second example, "I've been hiking," is the use of the present perfect progressive. In these examples and the ones they show in the article the question is when is this tense and aspect chosen by writers in the course of English?

Slide 16. Figuring Out Grammar Rules. The authors explain why it's so important for teacher to be able to figure out the grammar rules. They first point out that grammar books focus on describing the form of the grammar. For example, "I've been hearing" is have + been + the verb in "ing." So that tells you how to construct that grammatical form but it doesn't tell you when to use that grammatical form. Then the second issue is that many grammar books are based on intuition. A lot of the grammar rules that we find in those books are either wrong or they're just incomplete. They don't really provide detail to help somebody figure out the tense and aspect to use in their own language.

Slide 17. The authors show how they figured out better rules than what they could find in any grammar books.

Slide 18. They conducted their analysis by looking at real language in a corpus

Slide 19. Grammar books can be wrong. By looking at real language use in a corpus they were able to find a good example that shows how grammar books can be wrong. The grammar books reported that stative or non-action verbs such as know, hear, mean, see, and want cannot occur with the present perfect progressive. So the word "hear," according to the grammar books, is never used with the present perfect progressive. If you look at the real language in the corpus, as we saw on the previous



English Teaching Forum

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slide, we find that there are 648 instances of present perfect progressive in real language use with the verb “hear!” This type of discrepancy between the intuition-based grammar books and the language-based analysis that comes from the corpus has been a very interesting and revealing development in the

, Al. Thank you very much. Coming up next, we **'ve been hearing** lately a lot about a rebound in the housing market and she's just one of the many incredible stories from survivors that we **'ve been hearing** this morning. AL ROKER: And incredible to help someone else is just amazing. ANTHONY-MASON# Holly, we **'ve been hearing** about these donor chains

Examples in COCA

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study of grammar in our field.

Slide 20. Why Grammar is important. I asked Professor Gray to tell us why she thinks that grammar is so important for English learners to control. She said that grammar allows us to express complex ideas. Let's listen.

Slide 21. Prof. Chapelle: Why do you think it's important to teach grammar to students?



Prof. Bethany Gray

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Prof. Gray: Well grammar is one part of language that allows us to convey complex ideas. When we have vocabulary items we can convey a single idea or a simple item. And we can convey a lot of with vocabulary items. For sure we need to have a lot of vocabulary in order to use grammar effectively but grammar allows us to express ideas that are larger than a single concept or a single item that we want to convey. Grammar is about how we combine words into these larger meaningful units. It is how we combine words into phrases. It is how we combine phrases into clauses or sentences.

When we do that, we can do things like talk about what happened yesterday or what will happen tomorrow. It is how we can indicate that we're stating something instead of asking a question, or that we're making a request. So when we study grammar, we're looking at how words relate to other words in our clauses and how it relates to the meaning that we want to convey. So we use grammar in order to communicate these complex ideas and we also use grammar to understand complex ideas. In an educational study in particular our goal is to learn. We can't learn information that is conveyed to us unless we understand the ideas, the complex ideas, that are being represented in language either in writing or speaking.

Slide 22. Professor Gray said that grammar lets us combine words to make phrases, phrases to make clauses, and clauses to make sentences. She pointed out that vocabulary provides the building blocks but those blocks get put together to say things by using the rules of grammar. We need to be able to build complex sentences to understand and learn complex things.



Slide 23. So words name things. We can say “cake” and we know we refer to that cake in the picture. There’s a “clerk” that refers to the clerk standing there. When we say “party” we might have an image like a birthday party that we see in the other picture. Each of these words mean something and so in that sense words have a very important role to play in conveying meaning.



Cake

[“White Round Cake Topped With Yellow Slice Fruit”](#) by [Jasmine Lew](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)



Clerk

[“160301-F-SE307-060.JPG”](#) by Airman Donald Knechtel is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)



Party

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Slide 24. We need sentences to convey what’s going on. For example; “I bought a chocolate cake,” “The clerk put it in a big box,” and “We ate it at the birthday party.” That tells what’s happening in a way that naming things just can’t do. It takes grammar in order to put the words together in order to convey what’s happening, something that’s going on, and, as professor Gray pointed out, to convey anything that’s complex.