

Redesigning ELT
in the 21st Century
TESOL Italy 2019



Grappling with grammar in the Young Learner Classroom

Lisa Kester-Dodgson



1 The Great Grammar Debate

2 When?

3 How?

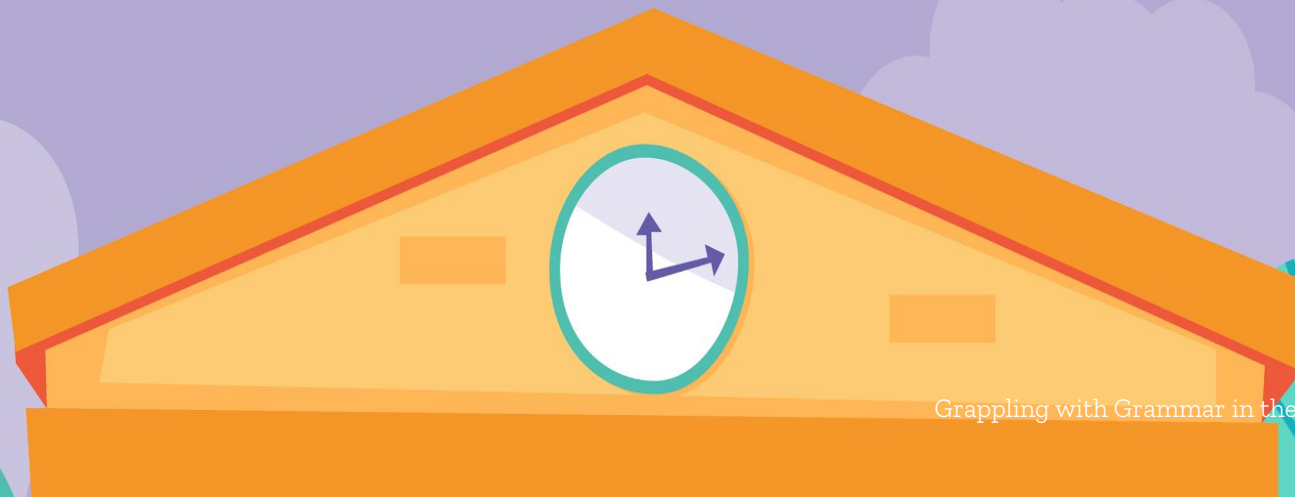
4 How much?

Overview



1 The Great Grammar Debate

Should *grammar* be taught in the
Young Learner EFL class?



Possible reasons

**promote
accuracy**

**help children
use language
creatively**

**'Indicazioni
Nazionali'**

**meet exam
requirements**

**prepare for
secondary
school learning**

**fits with
teachers own
experiences**

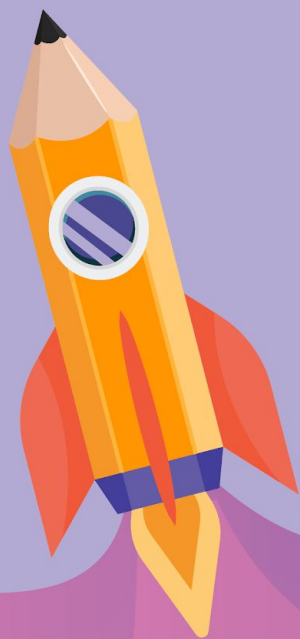
2 When?

Can grammar be taught to
Young Learners of *all* ages?



What age?

- **children aged 8 or 9 (although not fixed)**
- **analyse the language**
- **divide into components**
- **form new expressions**
- **create meaning from context**



3 How?

**How can we include grammar
in a young learner classroom?**

How do children learn?

- take part in meaningful activities
- learn by doing
- lots of practice
- learn by discovery



Sentence Making Machine

Crazy Sentences

--	--	--	--	--

1	2	3	4	5
The	orange	wizard	is playing	the guitar.
A	clever	cat	is living	in the shower.
An	crazy	martian	is eating	on a chariot.
The	funny	princess	is singing	tuna pizza.
A	scary	snake	is dancing	on a hill.

Crazy Sentences

--	--	--	--	--

Articolo

The

A

The

An

The

Aggettivo

orange

clever

crazy

funny

scary

Sostantivo

wizard

cat

martian

princess

snake

Verbo

is playing

is living

is eating

is singing

is dancing

**Complemento
oggetto**

the guitar.

in the shower.

on a chariot.

tuna pizza.

on a hill.

Crazy sentences

DASHA'S WORKSHEET

CRAZY SENTENCES - WRITE AND DRAW

	
1 _____ _____	2 _____ _____
	
3 _____ _____	4 _____ _____
	5 _____ _____

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A discovery approach

- the grammar 'sticks' in the children's minds
- notice the grammar
- active thinkers and learners
- make connections
- understand small changes



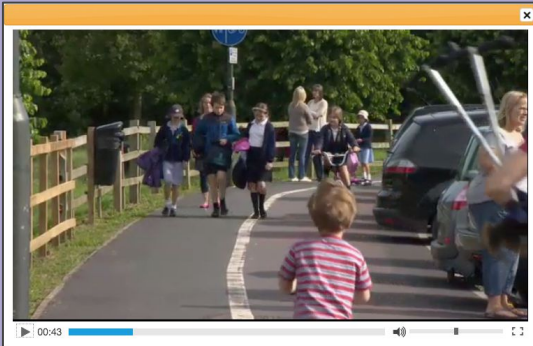


“If learners are not given opportunities to explore grammar in context, it will be difficult for them to see how and why alternative forms exist to express different communicative meanings.”

Nunan (1998)

Providing contexts

Videos



3 Sing the I Love My Bedroom Song. 2:25-2:26

*I love my bedroom, it's so cool.
I can play with my toys after school.
I sleep in my bed, and I sit on my chair.
I play my guitar and dance everywhere!*

*There's a desk, in my room.
It's so cool there's a desk in my room.
I've got a lamp, in my room.
It's so cool I've got a lamp in my room.
I've got a wardrobe in my room.
Oh yeah, oh yeah.*

2 Lesson 3 The windy day!

1 Think Listen. Where's the story? **1:11** See Manual.

2 Now watch or listen. **1:11**

1 Oh! It's windy!

2 My book!

3 What's this?

4 No, it isn't. It's a book.

5 Come here, Dickin!

6 Thank you, Dickin.

16 What's this? Is it a bag? No, it isn't. It's a book. **page**

Stories

5 Activities Lesson 1

1 Listen and read. **2:19**

2 Read and write Yes or No.

1 Does Anna like Sienna's holiday photos?

2 Are the photos of Sienna's family?

3 Is Sienna on a beach in the UK?

4 Is Sienna swimming in the sea?

5 Is the necklace a souvenir from Italy?

Anna: I love your photos.
Sienna: Thanks. They're my holiday photos.
Anna: Where are you in this photo?
Sienna: I'm in Italy.
Anna: I'm swimming with my friends.
Sienna: Cool! What are you doing in that photo?
Anna: I'm windsurfing. It's great fun!
Sienna: What's that?
Anna: It's a souvenir from Italy.
Sienna: It's a necklace made of shells.
Anna: It's really pretty.
Sienna: Thanks.

64

Songs

Dialogues

Form in context

1 Listen and read. Repeat.  0.0



- provide a model
- colour coded structures



Civitas!

Briana and Dylan meet Ross, a man from the Celtic village.

He is on his way to a Roman city, Civitas.

Briana and Dylan want to go to Civitas and they climb into the back of his cart.

It is a long journey and after three hours they arrive in Civitas.

They are in the city centre. Dylan sees a chef.

He is hungry. He jumps out of the cart!

Two Roman soldiers see him and run after him.

Mina helps Briana hide in the market.

But it is too late for Dylan! The Roman soldiers take him away.

Poor Dylan!



Civitas!

Briana and Dylan ¹ _____ Ross, a man from the Celtic village.

He ² _____ on his way to a Roman city, Civitas.

Briana and Dylan ³ _____ to go to Civitas and they ⁴ _____ into the back of his cart.

It ⁵ _____ a long journey and after three hours they ⁶ _____ in Civitas.

They ⁷ _____ in the city centre. Dylan ⁸ _____ a chef.

He ⁹ _____ hungry. He ¹⁰ _____ out of the cart!

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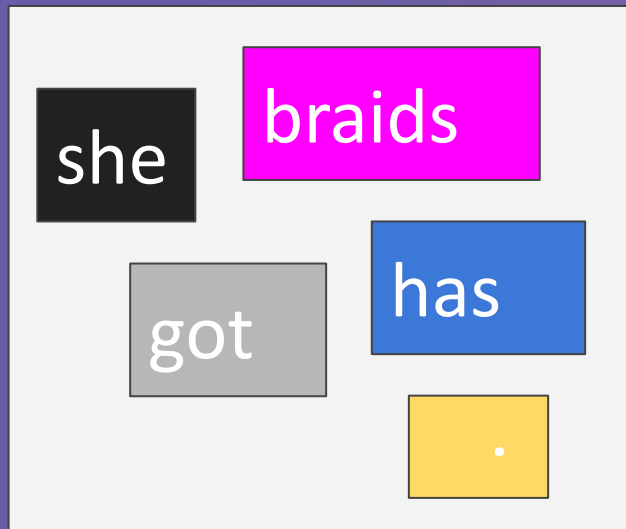
Poor Dylan!

is take climb see jumps hide is
want sees is run arrive meet are

Grammar games

- fun language learning experience
- authentic language
- aid retention
- internalize structures effectively

Stretching sentences



'Soft' Grammar Rules

2 Look and write questions and answers.

1 he / wavy hair ✓

Has he got wavy hair?

Yes, he has.

2 she / brown eyes ✗

Has she got brown eyes?

No, she hasn't.

3 she / braids ✓

4 he / long hair ✗

He's got short hair.

Has he got short hair?

Has he got short hair?

Yes, he has. /

No, he hasn't.

hasn't = has not

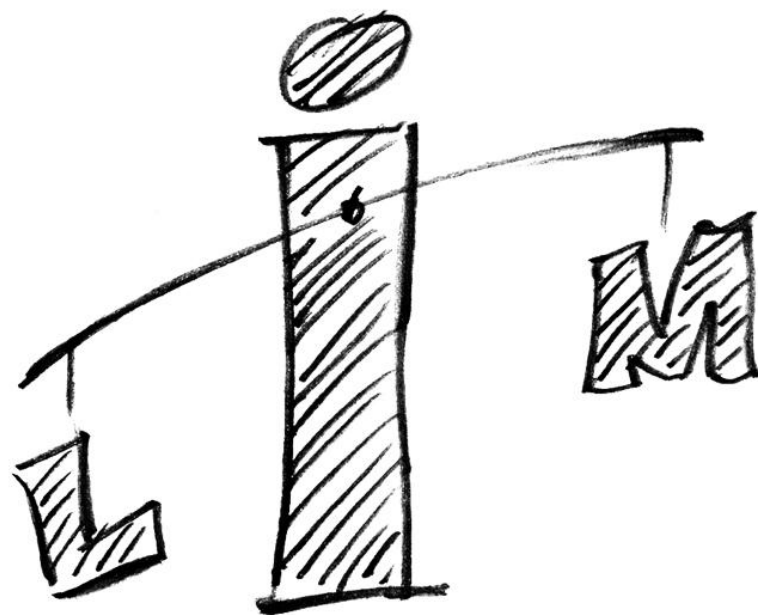
A photograph showing a child's hands placing cards on a white table. The cards are arranged in a path, with some cards showing phrases like "How old...", "What's...", and "Where are...". The child is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. The background is a plain wall with a light switch.

Question & answer chain (Dominoes)

...your name?	My name's...	...Poppy.	Where are...
...you from?	I'm from...	...Bridge Town.	How old...
...are you?	I'm...	..9.	Where are...
...you from?	I'm from...	...Oxford.	What's...
...your name?	My name's...	..Rowan.	How old...
...are you?	I'm...	...12.	Where are...
...you from?	I'm from...	...London.	How old...
...are you?	I'm...	...14.	What's

4 What?

**How much grammar
should we focus on ?**

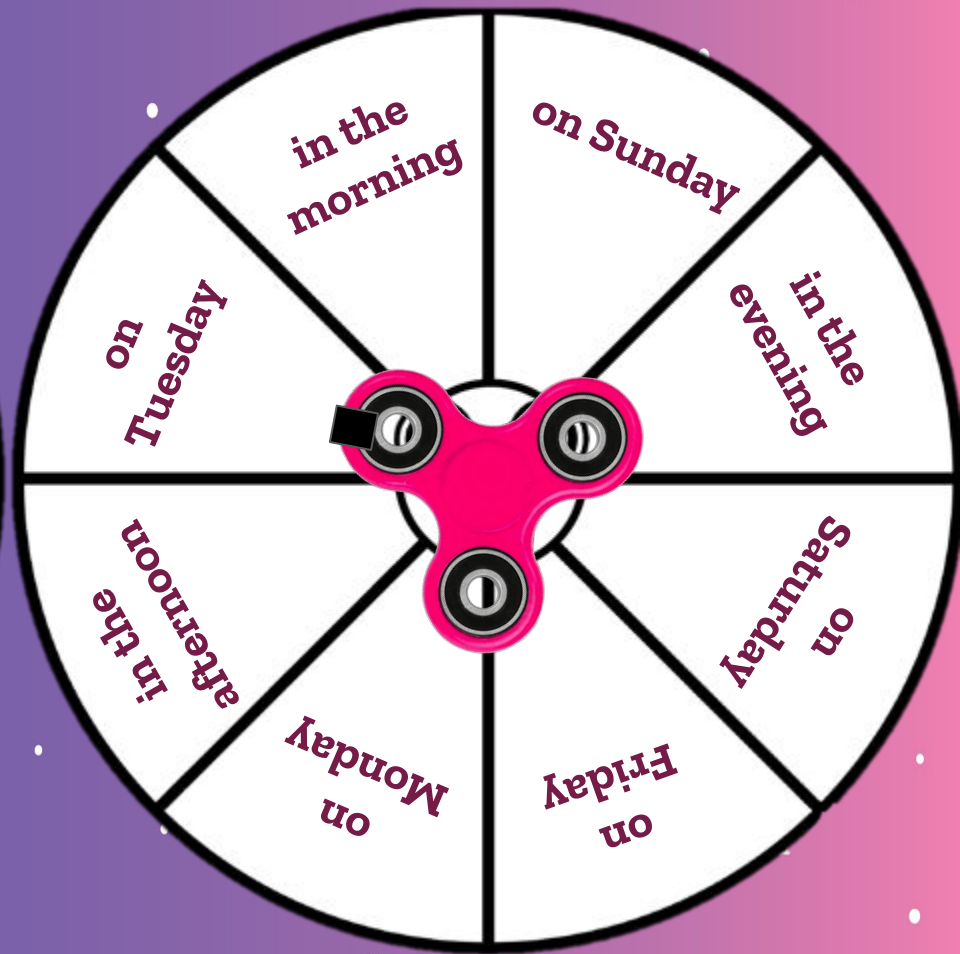
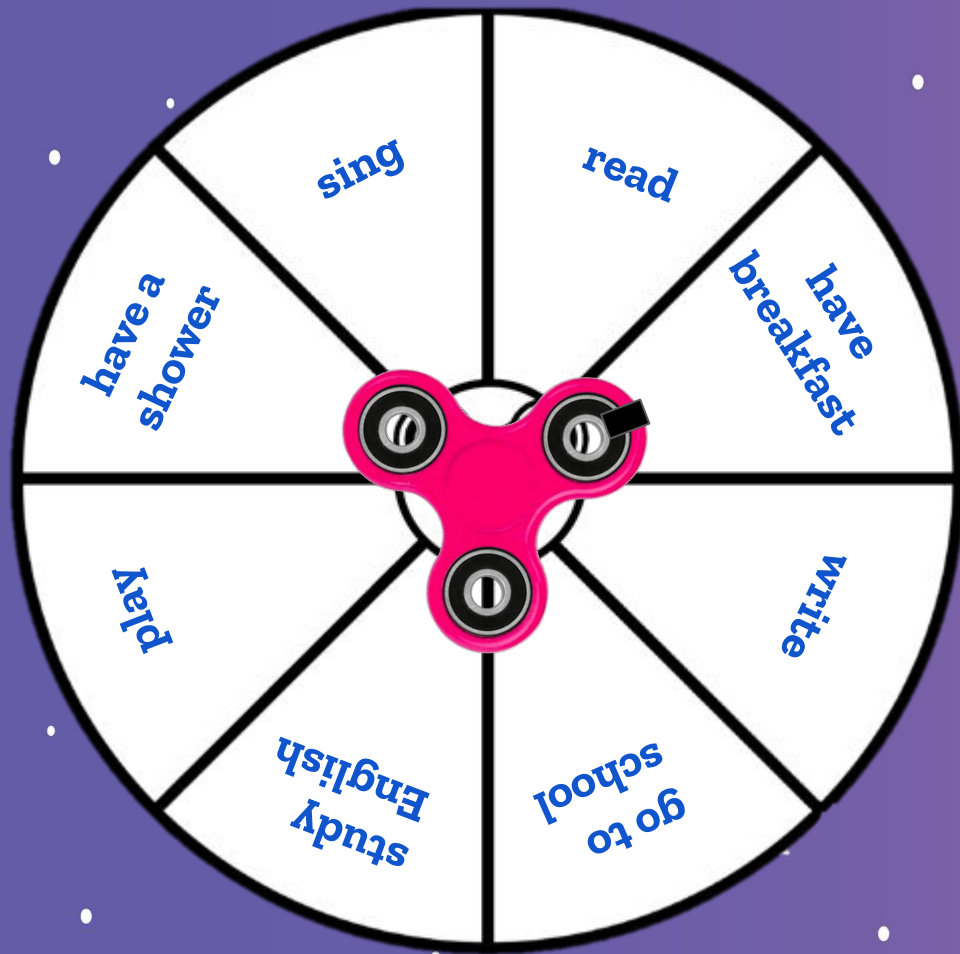


LESS IS MORE

Today – Yesterday



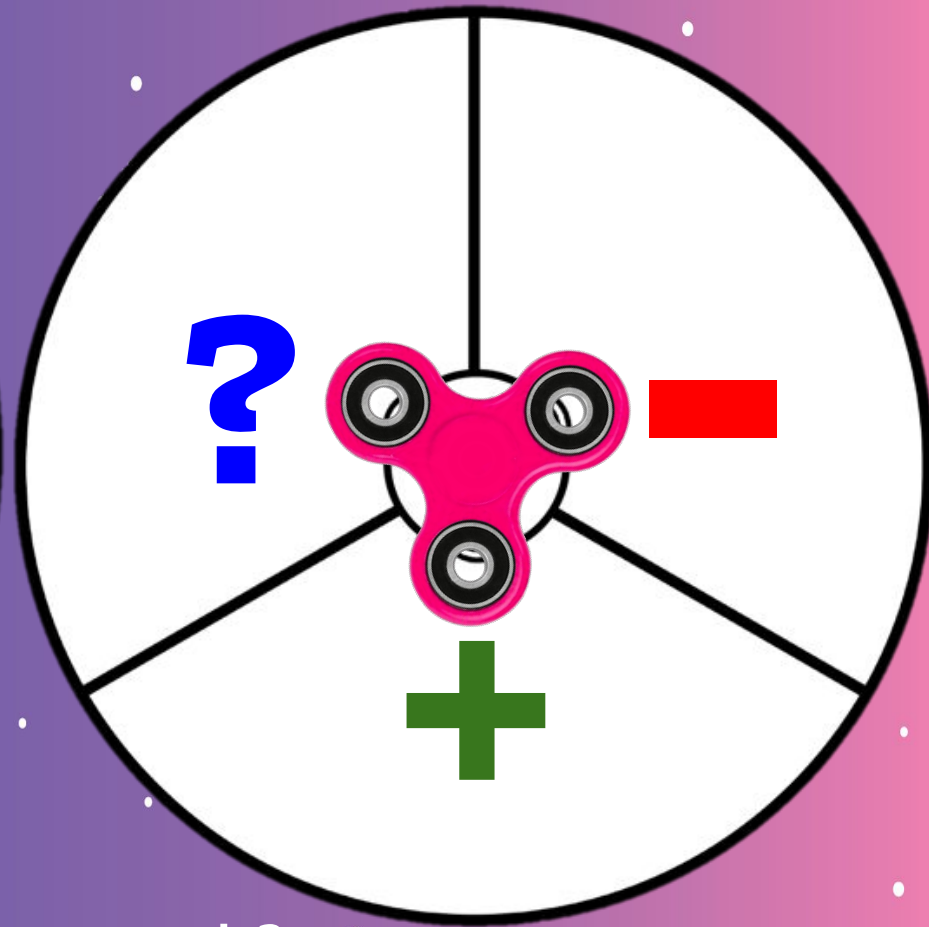
Spinner



Do you...?

Yes, I do. / No I don't.

Spinner



Is he listening to music?
He's playing football.
She isn't swimming.

successful grammar lessons...

- offer a variety of models in different contexts
- encourage cooperative learning (groups)
- stimulate discovery through *noticing*
- develop thinking skills
- facilitate creative uses of language

"Let's eat Grandma!"



"Let's eat, Grandma!"

**GRAMMAR
SAVES LIVES.**

Thank you!



Sarah and Lisa's English for Young Learners Page

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