Faculty of Humanities Sharing Session

Enriching the Student Learning Experience - Grammar Teaching & Learning

Jackie Lee

30 October 2013
What are my students’ needs?

• Grammar knowledge development

• Teaching grammar in schools

• For BEd (EL) Year 3 & 4 students: Passing ITEL/ LPAT (Error Correction and Explanation) to graduate
Challenges

1. What is grammar?

2. What materials should I use?

3. How should I deliver the content so that my students can translate their learning into classroom practice in their future teaching?
What is grammar?
Do you like grammar?
The Comparative & The Superlative

Here are a few basic rules for forming the comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives and adverbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) one-syllable adjectives and adverbs:</td>
<td>(i) fast faster fastest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>add ... er to form the comparative</td>
<td>(ii) hard harder hardest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>add ... est to form the superlative</td>
<td>(iii) soft softer softest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) adjectives and adverbs ending in ... e:</td>
<td>(iv) brave braver bravest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>add ... r to form the comparative</td>
<td>(v) cute cuter cutest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>add ... st to form the superlative</td>
<td>(vi) late later latest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Words ending in ... y, change the ... y to ... i and then add ... er or ... est.</td>
<td>(vii) early earlier earliest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(viii) pretty prettier prettiest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bad</td>
<td>worse</td>
<td>worst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>badly</td>
<td>worse</td>
<td>worst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>better</td>
<td>best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>less</td>
<td>least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>most</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(e) The adjective **bad** means: —
   (i) morally unacceptable
   (ii) in an unsatisfactory manner
   (iii) poor in quality
   (iv) harmful / injurious

(i) It is **bad** to steal from other people.
(ii) The grain harvest was **bad** this year.
(iii) This rotten carcass is giving off a very **bad** smell.
(iv) Smoking is **bad** for your health.

(f) The adverb **badly** means:
   (i) needed urgently
   (ii) in or into poorer health

(i) My grand nephew is doing rather **badly** at school.
(ii) That leaking faucet is **badly** in need of repair.

(g) The adjective **worse** means:
   (i) of a less desirable kind
   (ii) in or into poorer health

(i) The typhoon got **worse** as it swept across Hong Kong.
(ii) If the child gets any **worse**, I’ll send for a doctor.

(h) The adverb **worse** means:
   (i) more badly
   (ii) more intensely than before

(i) That unruly student is acting **worse** this year than he did last year.
(ii) It’s snowing **worse** this winter than it did last winter.

(i) The adjective **worst** means: —
   (i) of the least suitable or the least desirable kind
   (ii) of the least suitable or the least desirable kind

* That has to be the **worst** plane crash in aviation history.
* What you have just said, confirms my **worst** fears.
Name: __________ (   ) Class: ______ Date: __________

Unit 8 – Super Animals
Comparative forms of Adjectives (2)

A. Change the following adjectives into comparative forms:

Part 1
1. hot → ______________
2. fit → _____________
3. long → _____________
4. weak → _____________
5. ugly → ______________
6. slow → _____________
7. heavy → ______________
8. large → ______________

Part 2
1. polite → ______________
2. careful → _____________
3. naughty → _____________
4. beautiful → _____________
5. hard-working → _____________
6. good-looking → _____________

B. Fill in the blanks with the suitable Comparatives of Adjectives.

1. The girl’s pear is ______________ the boy’s. (big)
2. The girl’s ham is ______________ the boy’s. (thick)
3. ______________ the girl’s. (thin)

C. Fill in the blanks with the comparatives of Adjectives.

1. A hippo is ____________ than a rabbit. (large)
2. A rabbit ______________. (small)
3. Mary is eating quietly. Beeno is eating noisily.
   Mary is ______________ Beeno. (polite)
4. Ann is 55kg. Ben is 35kg.
   Ann is ______________ Ben. (light)
   Ben is ______________ Ann. (heavy)
What does grammar teaching involve?

1. Grammar is a **means to an end**, but not an end.
2. Grammar teaching needs to be **integrated** into the teaching of speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills.
3. Grammar needs to be taught through **engaging learners** in meaningful and motivating activities.
4. Teaching needs to be informed by descriptions of grammar which accurately reflect **authentic** language and show how grammar is a resource for **making and exchanging meanings in context**.
How to engage learners and enhance learning experience

1. Use of authentic materials relevant to real life context
2. Community issues
3. Inductive discovery approach
4. Use of songs and games
5. Assessment /student tasks
6. Teaching, FE supervision and research loop
1. Use of authentic texts

Advantages:

• Increase the learners’ interest and hold their attention.

  More interesting than textbook materials because they are characterised by the “genuineness of time, location, and people” (Wong, Kwok & Choi, 1995: 318).
1. Use of authentic texts - End weight

[A total of 120 secondary students from four different secondary schools and 30 university students from two different universities in Hong Kong, all ethnic Chinese learning English as a second language with Cantonese as their mother tongue, were involved.

The field test involved a total of 120 secondary students from four different secondary schools and 30 university students from two different universities in Hong Kong, all ethnic Chinese learning English as a second language with Cantonese as their mother tongue.}
2. Use of community issues

- Design lessons that couple grammar-focus with local concerns
  - Give students space to explore issues directly relevant to their own lives
  - Help students understand some of the ideological implications of grammar in authentic discourse contexts
Text 1: Multi-entry permits help thousands of parallel traders cross into HK daily

More than 3,000 parallel traders are crossing the border every day and over half of them are Shenzhen residents with multi-entry visit permits, according to government sources.

Hundreds of people protested at Sheung Shui MTR station over the weekend, resulting in ugly scenes and scuffles with parallel traders.

"At least 3,000 to 4,000 parallel traders are in operation every day. More than half are mainlanders who carry multiple-entry permits," the source said.

"They make at least two return trips a day, but some can make four to five."
2. Use of community issues - Passive voice (text comparison)

Text 2: Heart sufferer dies in hospital oxygen gaffe

A patient critically ill with flu and heart infection has died in Queen Mary Hospital after an oxygen tube was disconnected from a life support machine.

Doctors and nurses are usually responsible for ensuring the proper connection of an oxygen tube to the machine, but a hospital spokeswoman said yesterday no one has yet been disciplined.

The patient was transferred from Caritas Medical Centre in Sham Shui Po on August 22 for treatment for acute myocarditis - infection of the heart muscle - and a slow heart rate.

The hospital said the patient, whose gender and age are not being disclosed, was diagnosed with "parainfluenza infection and rapid decline of heart function."
2. Use of community issues - Subordination

Construction of experiential meaning

Crazy Woman Misses Flight
2. Use of community issues - Subordination

Cathay apologises over YouTube clip of tantrum
A woman passenger whose astonishing temper tantrum has been watched by more than 5 million YouTube viewers (when she missed a flight from Hong Kong) was given an apology and upgrade after complaining about the embarrassment the video caused her.

The airline employee who filmed the middle-aged woman throwing herself on the floor in a three-minute screaming fit (when she arrived at the gate too late to board a flight to San Francisco) has also been disciplined, Cathay Pacific said last night.
2. Use of community issues - Subordination

Cathay apologises over YouTube clip of tantrum
"She was surprisingly quiet and dignified in the meeting," an airport source said. "She didn't raise her voice once and kept very calm as she explained (how much embarrassment the YouTube video had caused her). She said that all her friends and family had seen it."
Hong Kong girl slaps her kneeling boyfriend 14 times on street

1. Clearly agitated, the man's girlfriend shouts: "Why did you ask her to go home with you? Your girlfriend is right here and you want to bring another girl home with you!"

2. More than once, he can be seen turning to the cousin pleading for her to say something. At one point, he shouted: "Why don't you say something? I didn't do anything. Why are you maligning me?!"

3. A male voice can be heard commenting throughout the video: "...at least break up with her if you're not fighting back... Taking more than 10 slaps, not enough? Still want more? Does he need to kneel on broken glass?"
HK reporters kicked out of APEC summit

Male HK reporter: Have you met CY Leung?
Female HK reporter: Will you apologize to Hong Kong people for the Manila tragedy?
Female HK reporter: Can you give us the answer?
Male HK reporter: So you’re ignoring Hong Kong people, right?
Female HK reporter: It’s been a few years. Can you give us an answer?
Female APEC Staff: You know that decency is including not screaming! You do understand that!
Male HK reporter: Well, I’m just questioning. I’m not screaming, OK?
Female APEC Staff: That’s OK! You know that is not at all the level of decency! Now out!
Male APEC staff 1: You ambushed one of our visitors …
Male APEC Staff 2: I’m not happy the way you did it. That’s not the way, that’s not the way. This is about the economy. Get out now!
Female HK reporter: Why? Wait!
Male APEC Staff 1: I need security to help escort these people out please when you need to take their badges back. Thank you.
Use of community issues – Information packaging

**Edison Chen’s photo scandal apology** - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnsJB1ZVs_A

Discussion -
Many people think that Edison Chen’s apology was well-written. How did he/his lawyer structure it to seek forgiveness from the public?
I admit that most of the photos being circulated on the Internet were taken by me. But these photos were very private and have not been shown to people and were never intended to be shown to anyone. These photos were stolen from me illegally and distributed without my consent.

There is no doubt whoever obtained these photos have been uploading them on the Internet with malicious and deliberate intent. This matter has deteriorated to the extent that society as a whole has been affected by this, and in this regard, I am deeply saddened. I would like now to apologise to all the people for all the suffering that has been caused and the problems that have arisen from this. I would like to apologise to all the ladies and to all their families for any harm or hurt that they have been feeling. I am sorry. I would like to also apologise to my mother and my father for the pain and the suffering I have caused them during these past few weeks. Most importantly, I would like to say sorry to all the people of Hong Kong. I give my apology sincerely to you all, unreservedly and with my heart.
3. Inductive discovery approach

“Tell me and I’ll forget. Show me and I may not remember. Let me try and I’ll understand!”
A scary team of ghouls, goblins and ghosts are on the hunt for apprentices to join them for some mischief-making in Hong Kong this Halloween! There are costume parties, decked-out shopping malls and gruesome edibles that are sure to put you in a party mood to celebrate All Hallows’ Eve. So get your freaky frocks and outlandish outfits on for one hell of a bash in the Halloween party capital of Asia.
A **scary** team of ghouls, goblins and ghosts are on the hunt for apprentices to join them for some mischief-making in Hong Kong this Halloween! There are costume parties, **decked-out** shopping malls and **gruesome** edibles that are **sure** to put you in a party mood to celebrate All Hallows’ Eve. So get your **freaky** frocks and **outlandish** outfits on for one hell of a bash in the Halloween party capital of Asia.
3. Inductive discovery approach - Comparison

Comparative?
Superlative?

great
big
scary
gruesome

sure
freaky
outlandish
3. Inductive discovery approach - Comparison

Corpus Search: http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/
3. Inductive discovery approach - Comparison

2-syllable adjectives

Find out the **comparative** forms of the following adjectives.

- **Do they have** inflected forms (**-er**) or analytic forms (**more + Adj**)?

- **If they have both**, which form is more commonly used?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inflected ‘-er’</th>
<th>Analytic ‘more’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sure</td>
<td>surer (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gruesome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freaky</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gentle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clever</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quiet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deadly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friendly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fruitful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Use of songs and games

- Integrating songs and games into the language learning sequence so that students can ‘learn’ and have ‘fun’ at the same time.

- Songs can be used with students of various levels, from beginners to university students.
4. Use of songs and games-
Pseudo-cleft & existential structures

*What the world needs now is love*

What the world needs now is love, sweet love
it's the only thing that there's just too little of

What the world needs now is love, sweet love,
no not just for some but for everyone.
Lord, we don't need another mountain,

*there are mountains and hillsides enough to climb*
There are oceans and rivers enough to cross,
enough to last 'til the end of time.
The Mum Song

What a mum says in 24 hours is condensed into this song.

Get up now
Get up now
Get up out of bed
Wash your face
Brush your teeth
Comb your sleepy head
Here's your clothes
And your shoes
Hear the words I said
Get up now
Get up and make your bed
Are you hot?
Are you cold?
Are you wearing that?
Where's your books and your lunch and your homework at?
## 4. Use of songs and games

### 12 CONJUNCTIONS BINGO (students’ cards)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARD 1</th>
<th>CARD 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. We still went to the beach _______ the sun wasn’t shining.</td>
<td>1. He got the sack _______ he kept turning up late for work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. We decided to go home _______ it was getting very late.</td>
<td>2. _______ he’d asked me I wouldn’t have gone. I hate opera!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I phoned her _______ I found her telephone number.</td>
<td>3. She’ll be very attractive _______ she’s lost all that weight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I’ll lend you the money _______ you pay me back soon.</td>
<td>4. We’ll go to the beach _______ the weather stays fine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I wouldn’t marry him _______ he was the last man on Earth!</td>
<td>5. She arrived early _______ she could help me prepare the meal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARD 3</th>
<th>CARD 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. She was late for work _______ her car broke down.</td>
<td>1. She was so upset _______ she burst into tears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. He bought it _______ it was more than he could really afford.</td>
<td>2. I won’t come _______ David and Peter come too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Take an umbrella with you _______ it rains.</td>
<td>3. We waited patiently _______ the taxi arrived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Beethoven composed great music _______ being deaf.</td>
<td>4. _______ you do, James, don’t mention the party. It’s a secret.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. You’ll be able to play the guitar _______ you have a few lessons.</td>
<td>5. Some people like classical music _______ others prefer pop music.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARD 5</th>
<th>CARD 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I’ll lend you my car _______ you fill it up with petrol.</td>
<td>1. _______ she was very bored, she tried to look interested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. He put on his glasses _______ he could see the board better.</td>
<td>2. There was a loud explosion _______ the bomb went off.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The film was so boring _______ I fell asleep.</td>
<td>3. We’ll book a holiday _______ the new brochure arrives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The company will go bankrupt _______ we get a big order soon.</td>
<td>4. I’ll babysit for you _______ you’re back by midnight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. She was very happy _______ she met Robert Baker.</td>
<td>5. I’ll take some sandwiches with me _______ I get hungry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Use of songs and games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wise</th>
<th>-dom</th>
<th>depart</th>
<th>-ure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wise</td>
<td></td>
<td>depart</td>
<td>-ure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interview</td>
<td>-ee</td>
<td>exist</td>
<td>-ence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interview</td>
<td>-ee</td>
<td>exist</td>
<td>-ence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respond</td>
<td>-ent</td>
<td>coordinate</td>
<td>-or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respond</td>
<td>-ent</td>
<td>coordinate</td>
<td>-or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>photograph</td>
<td>-er</td>
<td>bribe</td>
<td>-ery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>photograph</td>
<td>-er</td>
<td>bribe</td>
<td>-ery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Use of songs and games

Locate pairs – irregular nouns

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lily</td>
<td>lilies</td>
<td>sheep</td>
<td>sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knife</td>
<td>knives</td>
<td>fork</td>
<td>forks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flower</td>
<td>flowers</td>
<td>wolf</td>
<td>wolves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mouse</td>
<td>mice</td>
<td>soil</td>
<td>soil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guessing Game - Big TV (超級無敵大電視) (relative clause)

Leung Chun Ying (who/whom)
5. Assessment / Student Tasks

Parents want is that their children are taken care of.

There is one error in this item. One possible way to correct the error is that the writer can add the pronoun / question word / wh-word ‘What’ at the beginning, before the noun ‘parents’, and ‘What parents want’ is then the subject of the sentence.
5. Assessment / Student Tasks
Group project on Error Correction and Explanation

What do you think of your new teacher?

In this year, I have too many new teachers. My new teacher, Miss Ng, is an English teacher. I like the way she wears but her clothes are simple and look comfortable. She teach us patient.

She has long hairs and is tall. I think Miss Ng is very supportive and caring because she wants to know us more through reading our journals. She is nice and helpful. She should play piano too. When we are having lessons, She always tells us funny jokes. I enjoy learning in her lessons as it is easily to follow.
5. Assessment / Student Tasks

Item 3    She teach us patient

Explanation:
There are two problems in this item. The first error is subject-verb agreement. The writer needs to replace ‘teach’ by ‘teaches’ to agree with ‘She’ because the subject ‘She’ is a third person singular subject pronoun. The second problem in the item is the word class. The writer should replace the adjective ‘patient’ with the adverb ‘patiently’ to modify the verb ‘teaches’.
6. Teaching-FE Supervision-Research Loop
6. **Teaching-FE Supervision-Research Loop**

Table 1  *Wh*-words – correct responses (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What will you do this Saturday?</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>92.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How long is the river?</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Where do you live?</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>97.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often do you exercise?</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Who broke the window?</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Why are you happy?</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How many books did you buy?</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How much did they cost?</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. When did you call me?</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>92.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Which is your watch?</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How far is your home from …?</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Whose are these bags?</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. How did you go there?</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. How old is your cousin?</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>84.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. How tall is your dad?</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Teaching-FE Supervision-Research Loop

• FE supervision
  ▫ A pre-service student taught ‘Pronouns’ to a Secondary 1 class
## Personal Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject pronouns</th>
<th>Object pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I miss home.</td>
<td>Please go with <strong>me</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>You</strong> are a good boy.</td>
<td>I like <strong>you</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>We</strong> went to the party.</td>
<td>Wong lied to <strong>us</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>They</strong> had been tired</td>
<td>The staff talked to <strong>them</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>He</strong> is a good boy.</td>
<td>Jane invited <strong>him</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>She</strong> loves painting.</td>
<td>Did you see <strong>her</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>It</strong> is so cute.</td>
<td>John broke <strong>it</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Possessive Pronouns

- Yours
- Mine
- His
- Hers
- Ours
- Theirs

POSSESSIVE → POSSESS → OWN

- e.g. That’s my pen.
  *(The pen belongs to me)*

Possessive Adjectives

- Your
- My
- His
- Her
- Our
- Their

Difference?

- yours = pronoun?
- It’s not our car.
- Ours = Our car

Possessive Pronoun = Possessive Adjective + Noun

- Ours = Our car
- Ours = Our car

Take your feet off the table.
How can we teach pronouns more effectively?
Pick up a pronoun

Jackie Lee discusses effective methods to teach an often neglected grammar point.

Recent observation of a trainee teacher's lesson on personal pronouns has made me feel the need to explore ways to teach and learn this basic grammatical concept effectively. To some people, the forms and meanings of pronouns are not difficult to master. Owing to this, perhaps, not many coursebook writers have put much effort into the design of effective and interesting language activities on this topic. The exercises found in many coursebooks and grammar exercise books usually include traditional blank-filling or multiple-choice questions, as in these examples:

Fill in each blank with a suitable personal pronoun.

Susan is a teacher. ___________ teaches Puxonghua.

David and Tom are brothers. ___________ live in Kowloon Bay.

Read the following conversation between Susan and Jane. Circle the appropriate pronouns.

Susan: Jane, I bought a new hat yesterday. Let (I / me / mine) show (it / its / her) to you.

Nevertheless, there are students who have problems with pronouns, and we need to find more engaging ways of teaching them these structures and helping them to use them accurately.

Discussing the problem

According to Michael Swan, students often need to get used to building a structure before they are ready to use it more freely. Learners can benefit from some undemanding 'mechanical' exercises, which enable them to concentrate on one thing at a time. However, the weakness of drills is that they cannot keep the students' interest and attention for long, and that they usually focus only on forms (eg he is a subject pronoun and him is an object pronoun) and meanings (eg he and her are used for girls and women), but not often on the use of the particular language expression (eg pronouns are a kind of substitution which makes writing and speech concise and coherent). I examined several grammar activity books to see what advice ELT experts give to teachers on the presentation and practice of personal pronouns. Surprisingly, it is hard to find a discussion of this topic. This suggests that the teaching of personal pronouns is an under-emphasized area, despite the fact that many learners have problems with their use. According to Gao and Ko, although pupils in Hong Kong are taught about pronouns in primary school grades 3 or 4, teachers are often troubled by the fact that a number of learners, including those at the secondary level, are still confused about the English pronoun system. As part of their research, with a group of primary grade 5 teachers, Gao and Ko conducted pilot interviews and pre-tests with four classes of students and found that most of them had an
sentence by going down a grid and choosing the word only in each row. (For example: This box is ours. This dog is ours.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This</th>
<th>Her</th>
<th>He</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dog</td>
<td>box</td>
<td>is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>called</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>died</td>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>ours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alternatively, more advanced students can be provided with a grid with several pronouns interspersed with blank squares and encouraged to write in words to form their own sentences (e.g. I didn’t buy my bag in London) to complete a grid, as below. The completed grid can then be given to their classmates for the Down the Ladder game.

Instead of traditional teacher-fronted lessons with a lot of teacher talk and mechanical drills, teachers should consider creating a more relaxing learning environment with learner-centred discovery activities. Grammar teaching should not just focus on form and meanings; students should also be guided to understand the use of different structures. It is hoped that the above discussion of how to teach personal pronouns may give teachers and coursebook writers insights into how to design new ways of teaching old topics.

* This idea is adapted from "Sentence Drop" at http://www.linguisticsstuff.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/untitled-49.jpg.

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Jackie F K Lee is an associate professor in the Department of English Education at the Institute of Education, Hong Kong University. She is responsible for teaching grammar to pre-service and in-service student teachers. Her research interests include language variation and classroom discourse.

jflee@ied.edu.hk

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Playing with Words
Using Grammar Games in the Classroom

Introduction
In recent years grammar teaching has come back into prominence. Some ESL theorists (e.g. White, 1987; Ur, 1988; Tsui, 1991; Ellis, 2005) have expressed the view that there are some grammatical forms that cannot be learnt merely on the basis of comprehensible input and that formal instruction is necessary for second language learners to master them. Now the issue is how grammar should be taught. A number of English language teaching scholars have highlighted the importance of contextualising grammar so that not only the structure is taken into account, but also the meaning and use. However, it seems that traditional grammar teaching through habit formation in the 60s and the 70s is still prevalent nowadays. A number of grammar practice books still present learners with drills and decontextualised isolated words and sentences. They are asked to repeat and use forms in a “mechanical” and “monotonous” way. To many language students, learning grammar rules is a painful activity. They find English lessons boring and are not motivated to learn the target language.

How to prevent grammar teaching from repeating its past failures is the concern of this paper. A number of writers have written books on how to use games in the classroom (e.g. Rinvoluci, 1984; Clark, 1993; Lewis and Bedoan, 1999; Saxon and Saxton, 1999). This article presents some practical ideas to help teachers sustain their students’ interest in learning grammar.

To generate stimulating exercises in class does not mean that we have to reject drills or substitution tables completely. What we need to do is to take a new look at these traditional exercises and put them within a context that encourages interaction between students. As for drills, many language games provide learners with the repeated use of a language form during a limited period of time. However, what traditional drills lack but language games can offer are the elements of challenge, amusement, surprise and meaningfulness in language learning.

In the following section, four grammar games are introduced. This article ends with a discussion of some frequently asked questions (FAQs) concerning language games.
Design Puzzles
It used to take a long time and a lot of effort to design a puzzle. However, with access to free software on the internet nowadays, creating a puzzle just takes a few simple steps. The following puzzles were created by using the software at www.puzzlemaker.com.

Language Target: Relative clauses
Learner Level: Intermediate to upper intermediate
Materials: None

Procedure:
1. Ask students to design their own puzzles using a particular language structure to write the clues. The example presented in Appendix 4 was designed by a student of the writer's. The language item practised is the restrictive relative clause.

2. All about PLACES

4. Across
5. 2. A fun place where children love to go and play
6. 4. A place where people can acquire knowledge
7. 6. A big place where planes land and take off
8. Down
9. 1. A private place where you can take a rest at night
10. 3. A dangerous place where food is cooked and where children should not go
11. 5. A quiet place where you can read and borrow books

1. I would like to thank Ms Peggy Yat-ying Lee for allowing me to use her design in this paper.
Students’ Feedback

- I love attending your lectures and tutorials since I love those songs. I remembered a lot of songs that you used in the lectures, like The Mom Song, Tell Laura I Love Her, A Tin Soldier, Torn Between Two Lovers and so on.

- I know you prepared a lot before our lessons. I like all your lectures and tutorials. I love the songs, videos, games... all the useful materials you prepared for us. (especially I appreciate a lot of your effort and time of making the extra LPATE / individual exercises for us. ) Because of you I start to love grammar. Learning grammar is so useful for me to analyse a complex text. I can understand the newspaper much better now. It is all because of you.