



THE CONCEPTS OF TEACHERS: A KEY AXIS FOR GRAMMAR IN THE CLASSROOM

Right from the beginning, the Greal group has incorporated the practitioners' contributions to its research. In recent years, the group has inquired about the in-service and pre-service teachers' thinking in relation to the teaching of writing and grammar. We believe that the knowledge that this line of research contributes (widely explored also on the international arena) is crucial when proposing changes in classrooms.

[The results of our studies] indicate that teachers in compulsory education are well familiar with theoretical knowledge. They know in a general and declarative way what academic papers and good experiences suggest about the teaching of grammar. However, teaching practices are not always consistent with such declared knowledge since it often lacks of a coherent rationale.

Durán, C. and Ribas, T. (2019-in the press). Dues mirades a l'ensenyament de la gramàtica a l'escola obligatòria: la perspectiva dels docents i la dels alumnes [Two looks at the teaching of grammar in compulsory school: the perspective of teachers and students]. *Revista Catalana de Pedagogia*.

From their narratives [about personal and professional experience], it follows that students of the Kindergarten and Primary Education grades have an idea of writing competence that refers to the ability of writing correctly, narrowing it down to spelling aspects and without considering morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic issues. They also have a very superficial concept of competence, understood as the ability to express their ideas without ever referring to the recipient of their writings, as if it were an intimate writing, in which they themselves are the recipients. [...] One of the beliefs that these students express is the need for the school [...] to relate reading and writing, but there is no explicit reference to the grammatical contents in relation to the learning of writing.

Birello, M. and Gil, R. (2014). Creencias sobre la enseñanza de la composición escrita y de la gramática de estudiantes de grado de Educación Primaria y de Educación Infantil [Beliefs on the teaching of written composition and grammar of students at Kindergarten and Primary Grades]. *Tejuelo* 10, 11-26.

[We consider the importance of studies on teachers' beliefs] for several professionals. First, the teachers themselves, because thinking and reflecting on one's own teaching practice and being aware of it is itself a first step towards training. Secondly, it is of fundamental importance for the trainers of Language Arts teachers, since it will allow them to think of a training that really responds to the needs of practitioners. Finally, it can be useful for the authors of pedagogic materials.

Birello, M. and Fontich, X. (2015). Tendencias del profesorado y desarrollo de un modelo de enseñanza de la gramática y la escritura [Teaching trends and development of a model of grammar and writing instruction]. In L.P. Cancelas and S. Sánchez-Rodríguez (coords.), *Tendencias en educación lingüística [Trends in language education]* (pp.103-120). Granada: GEU.

Sara finds it difficult to relate the grammatical knowledge with the learning of uses (375. I have not found the way to link grammar and use, in some issues I see it, but in some others I struggle with it) and considers that there is no other choice than sometimes to teach grammatical concepts in a decontextualized way. Even so, she has developed ways to make the students see how grammar mechanisms work in certain texts, such as songs, analysing aspects such as subordination, nexus, connectives or adjectives (381. I ask them to bring songs they like: we look at the lyrics, right?, because well, that is more or less in relation [with grammar issues] (...) and there we analyse). She considers, in any case, that grammar is useful for learning to reason:

789. Sara: Maybe for their future work they will not need to know if that is an attribute, whether the verb is copulative or not, but this form of...

790. Interviewer: yes

791. Sara: to analyse, to reason, that is useful because they will have to apply it to other areas, to other things, in other jobs, right? They draw on the mechanisms of justification

792. Interviewer: ok

793. Sara: to me that was useful, of course, and what I felt useful... I intend to, well, maybe it will be useful to them too

Fontich, X. & Camps, A. (2015). Gramàtica y escritura en la educación secundaria: Estudio de caso sobre los conceptos de los profesores [Grammar and writing in secondary education: Case study on teachers' concepts]. *Tejuelo - Didáctica de la Lengua y la Literatura* 22, 11-27.

Dichotomic concepts in the speech of Carla, secondary education teacher

Implicit grammar: unconscious ("linguistic competence").	Explicit grammar: concepts, rules and norms.
Writing as an expression of "what you have inside".	Writing as a process of adjusting one's text to normative principles.
Impregnation learning through reading activity.	Learning through lessons and writing corrections.

Carla's awareness of the relevance of metalinguistic activity

When I was a girl, there was a garage near where I lived with a shop-sign stating "lavado y engrase" [washing and oiling] and I always used to think why do they write "engrase"?, because I should think they were meant to say "engrasado" instead.

And I remember that my mother bought me a story, a book of stories that was called "The one thousand and one nights" ["Las mil y una noches", i.e., The Arabian Nights] and I used to ask my mother why is it called "the one thousand and one nights", and my mother did not understand the question (...) and I wanted to ask her why do they write "one nights"? I could notice that there was something in there.

Camps, A. & Fontich, X. (2019-in press). Teachers' concepts on the teaching of grammar in relation to the teaching of writing in Spain: A case study. *L1 - Educational Studies in Language and Literature*, p. 1-39. Special issue on grammar instruction across borders, edited by K. Rättyä, E. Awramiuk, X. Fontich, and J. van Rijt.



Teachers' concepts on the teaching of grammar in relation to the teaching of writing in Spain
Camps and Fontich

The route presented to date is based on close collaboration between researchers and teachers (in a theory-practice or "praxis" relationship), from periodic exchanges, reflection and proposals.

We wonder now how to disseminate the results of the research and expand the foundations and procedures that we have described in a wider and more diverse group of teachers. We consider studying how the teachers represent the task of teaching written composition and grammar, and to what extent they can integrate the ideas discussed in formative seminars in their practices.

A series of actions are carried out (such as Likert questionnaires, collaborative design of pedagogic material, seminars, etc.) in order to study to what extent teachers joining and taking part in discussion seminars modify their conceptualization of writing and teaching grammar.

After analysing interviews, Likert responses, seminars, classroom observation notes, etc. we can identify a number of issues: a) different teaching profiles in regard to the practices declared; b) some differences between primary teachers (worried about procedures in the classroom) and secondary (more sensitive to the complexity of the contents and the difficulties they present); c) in the context of a rich discussion and sustained over time, points a) and b) blur and teachers agree to change their perception of some aspects (the importance interaction has when learning, for example);

How to advance towards the development and dissemination of a new teaching model that incorporates more scaffolding and more instances of discussion with classroom teachers?

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Grup de Recerca sobre Ensenyament i Aprenentatge de Llengües



CONGRÉS INTERNACIONAL SOBRE

L'ENSENYAMENT DE LA GRAMÀTICA

III INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TEACHING GRAMMAR