

# ACTIVE GRAMMAR FOR CHILDREN

In the past, language was viewed purely as grammar, and "grammar" was subject in its own right. Now grammar is taught as the means of creating and understanding language- in short, it is used for communicating. To make grammar relevant for learners, it needs to be presented or discovered in a context where it makes sense and the learners are much more likely to be motivated and involved.

Nobody doubts one aspect of KRASHEN'S ACQUISITION THEORY - that "we acquire language when we understand messages". To make grammar comprehensible, we need to make sure that the messages are clear and simple, that the manner of learning is within the cognitive grasp of the learner, and that it is presented in digestible chunks.

It is hard to remember things which are abstract, irrelevant to us or which do not have links and association to things we already understand.

This article shows my experience in teaching English grammar to children eight years old and up.

In planning lessons we must take motivation into account if we want to be successful in teaching.

First we must find out what the learners interest are, because children at this age will not pay attention if they are not motivated or do not understand what their teacher is talking about.

I have found the following techniques useful. From the very beginning I use the word "AUTITO MOVIL" which translated into English is a "MOBILE CAR". The children enjoy using the mobile car to identify different structures.

MOBILE: gives the idea of something that can be moved easily from place to place. To give them the idea, the teacher uses the mobile car in this way.



EXAMPLE: Anna  a student.

If the teacher drives the car ahead the sentence becomes a question.

EXAMPLE :  Anna a student ?

When the answer is affirmatively we must take into account the person and the mobile car.

EXAMPLE: Yes, she .

If we reply negatively, we must still consider the person, the mobile car and a caravan, which has the word "not" inside and goes behind the mobile car.

EXAMPLE: No, she  .

And if we want to expose a negative sentence, we must add the caravan behind the mobile car.

EXAMPLE: Anna   a student.

Then the teacher can add the rest of the so called "autitos moviles" : " am - is - are, can, could, have got- has got, was - were, Must, should" ( in each case, we must teach the uses, the meaning, and the kind of verb that can follow behind the mobile car).

And this is a good way of practising the language, in both oral and written forms.

Experience of using language puts grammar in its proper place as a tool for good communication ... and that is active grammar.

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