

From the editors

Greetings,

We are pleased to offer this, our most recent special issue, edited by TESL-EJ Editor, Maggie Sokolik. It reflects some of the best discussion you will see about grammar in all areas—not just in the main articles, but also the columns and reviews. I think this one bears reading "cover to cover."

Also with this issue, we are experimenting with a new commenting feature, which we hope you will use once you have read an article, review, or column that interests you. At the end of the web version of each article, you will see a link that allows you to post or read posts left by others concerning each item found in the journal. Reader posts will be monitored for relevance and fairness. Readers can also indicate which comments they felt were useful. We hope you enjoy this new feature, and look forward to learning how you think it contributes to discussion of important issues. We look forward to hearing from you.

Enjoy this special issue of TESL-EJ.

Our next special issue will be edited by Elizabeth Hanson-Smith and TESL-EJ "On the Internet" Editor, Vance Stevens. Watch TESL-EJ for more information.

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From the Special Issue Editor: The Current Status and Standards of English Grammar Teaching

In a personal e-mail from Betty Azar, the author of the first article in this special issue, Azar states: "This issue of TESL-EJ . . . say[s] boldly and broadly that the question is no longer *whether* to teach grammar, but *how*" [emphasis mine]. I am pleased that this intent was so well executed by the authors represented here.

The topic of this special issue arose from what some see as a renewed interest in the effective teaching of grammar (or, as the bottles of chili sauce distributed by a publisher at a recent TESOL Conference said, "Grammar is Hot!"). The articles in this volume, in fact, speak to the hotness of this issue. The names of many of the authors will be familiar—Betty Azar, as mentioned, Marianne Celce-Murcia, and Michael Swan have all been important contributors to

ESL grammar materials over the years. Their articles, along with a response by Kent Hill to Azar's thesis, and a research-based article by Karen Andrews, contribute to a rich look at how we could, and should, be presenting grammar in our classrooms.

The collection may be seen to take a turn (some might say a left turn) with my contribution, the last of the main articles in this volume. This article arose from a long-standing interest in the content of grammar books, and the fact that I have been co-editing a grammar series with Marianne Celce-Murcia over the past couple of years. In working on this series, along with finding the inevitable typos and inconsistencies in the authors' work, more and more I found my attention being drawn to the content of the example sentences. Thus, my article concerns more the subtext we are teaching through grammatical examples, rather than the method or methods of teaching grammar itself.

It has been a pleasure putting this special issue together. Through the act of editing, I have found my own practices and beliefs in the teaching of grammar challenged and expanded. I trust it will do the same for you.

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