

## CREATING CRITERIA TO TEACHING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' PROFICIENCY IN GRAMMAR

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**Abstract.** *The proficiency of elementary school students in grammar is essential for developing their language skills, both in written and spoken communication. However, teaching students' grammatical competence at this early stage presents challenges, as traditional methods often fail to capture the nuances of their developing understanding. This article discusses the importance of designing effective criteria for evaluating grammar proficiency in elementary school students, providing a framework for understanding the key components of grammar that should be taught. It emphasizes the role of formative teaching and practical evaluation tools in monitoring students' progress while focusing on how these criteria can guide instructional strategies. The article concludes with recommendations for designing more comprehensive and age-appropriate teaching criteria, ensuring a holistic approach to evaluating grammar proficiency in young learners.*

**Keywords:** *Grammar proficiency, elementary education, teaching criteria, language development, formative teaching.*

**Introduction.** Grammar is the backbone of any language, serving as the structure upon which communication is built. For elementary school students, developing grammatical competence is a vital aspect of their language acquisition process. While grammar instruction traditionally focuses on the memorization of rules and structures, a more comprehensive approach that integrates teaching tools and criteria for evaluating grammar proficiency is needed.

Teaching grammar proficiency in young learners is particularly challenging due to the complexity of grammatical structures and the variation in language development among students. At the elementary level, students are still in the process of internalizing the rules and conventions of the language. As such, traditional teaching methods—such as grammar tests that focus solely on rote

memorization or error identification—may not provide a full picture of students' grammatical understanding.[1, p 58]

In designing criteria for evaluating grammar proficiency, it is important to ground the evaluation framework in the theoretical understanding of how children acquire language. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) emphasizes that language development is a social process, suggesting that grammar skills are best developed through interaction and guided learning. [2, p 86]

Piaget's cognitive theory (1972), which highlights the role of developmental stages in learning, also suggests that younger learners progress through stages in their grammatical understanding. As a result, teaching should be age-appropriate, reflecting the cognitive capacities of elementary students and the developmental nature of grammar acquisition.

A balanced approach to grammar teaching should, therefore, include both formal (test-based) and informal (application-based) measures. Grammar tests should teach knowledge of rules and structures, while application tasks should teach students' ability to use grammar in speaking and writing. [3, p 162]

Grammar proficiency in elementary school students should encompass a range of elements that reflect both structural knowledge and practical application. These elements include:

Understanding and using nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, and other parts of speech is a foundational aspect of grammar at the elementary level. Teaching criteria should include students' ability to identify and use different parts of speech correctly. Knowledge of sentence formation, including subject-verb agreement, proper word order, and the use of conjunctions, is essential. Students should demonstrate the ability to construct simple and compound sentences.

Students need to understand how to use different verb tenses appropriately. Teaching criteria should focus on whether students use present, past, and future tenses correctly in context. [4, p 102]

Proper use of punctuation marks (e.g., periods, commas, question marks) and capitalization is a key component of grammar proficiency. Students should be able to punctuate sentences correctly in both written and spoken language.

Designing effective criteria for teaching grammar proficiency in elementary students presents several challenges. First, there is the issue of developmental appropriateness—grammar teaching must be aligned with the cognitive and linguistic capabilities of students at different grade levels. Additionally, there is a risk of overemphasizing rote memorization of grammar rules rather than teaching practical application. [5, p 66]

Another challenge is ensuring fairness in teaching. Students come from diverse linguistic backgrounds, and factors such as dialect differences, language interference, or individual learning styles may influence their grammar proficiency. Therefore, teaching criteria should account for these variations while ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to demonstrate their grammar skills.

**Conclusion.** Creating criteria to teach elementary school students' proficiency in grammar is a crucial step in promoting language development. A well-designed teaching framework should consider the developmental stages of students, the key components of grammar, and the tools that best measure grammar usage in both formal and real-world contexts. Incorporating diverse teaching methods such as formative teaching, rubrics, and peer evaluations allows teachers to gain a comprehensive understanding of their students' grammar proficiency.

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