

Chapter 1 : Understanding and Using English Grammar (with Answer Key and Audio CDs) (4th Edition)[A4

Basic English Grammar, Second Edition (Full Student Textbook) Betty Schramper Azar. out of 5 stars Paperback. 49 offers from \$

What is your main ESL activity now? What are your principal projects, and what is on the back burner? I am a teacher become materials writer. The first half of my career was spent in the ESL classroom and the second half at a keyboard beginning with a Smith-Corona portable typewriter--with manuscript submissions in carbon copy! So my main ESL activity now is materials production. I call all my books "my works in progress," for I rework and change them with every new edition as I learn more about pedagogy, am influenced by currents in the field, and hone my craft. Writing materials for the ESL classroom is a great job. A revised edition, at least the way I do it, demands practically as much time and effort as an original edition, but luckily I work with a great team of professionals who make my job easy and fun. At present, we are finishing up the third edition the swallow edition of Fundamentals of English Grammar black , which will be published this summer Next on my schedule comes the third edition of Basic English Grammar red. The old one, Azar Interactive, had some unfixable technical glitches and needed pedagogical improvement. How did you start your ESL career? Who influenced your decision? What were some important formative experiences in the early stages of your development? I got into ESL by serendipity. I was in my first year of teaching freshman composition in the English Department at Iowa State University. One morning between classes I was with a colleague who taught the only ESL course offered at the university at that time As she and I were walking down the hall of the classroom building, we ran into the head of the English Department, who said to my colleague, "We need to open another section of the English for Foreign Students class. Who can we get to teach it? That very afternoon at 1: I returned compositions that the other instructor had corrected before the sections were divided and walked around the class answering questions. One student, a tall, thin, balding man from Colombia, had a question. He had written "waters" as in "I was thirsty, so I drank some waters" , and it had been marked incorrect. He wanted to know why "waters" was incorrect. I had no idea. But I said to myself, "Wow, what an interesting question! That was my introduction to ESL. And the next day, after some somewhat frantic scrambling, I came back to class with a handout of explanations and exercises on count vs. My ESL career has been largely focused on the creation of grammar-based materials, and that started the first day I taught. A pattern began that first week of teaching that continued: I found out what my students wanted from their English class and provided materials and activities to meet their needs as best I could. I have always said that I am most indebted of all to my students, that they had the greatest influence on my development as a teacher and a writer. I was constantly in search of what it was they needed from me to help them achieve their goals. And I was constantly inventing materials, as many ESL teachers do. Your younger audience might not quite know what it was like teaching ESL at a university in the mids. The available teaching materials in total could fit on two medium-length bookshelves. Forty years ago ESL was just beginning to develop as a professional field. Publishers were not paying much attention to ESL. In those early days, I was influenced most by text writers, in particular: Just now getting those books off my shelf to look up copyright dates was like having a reunion with old, old friends. In addition, I suppose you could count as influences the texts and approaches that I found ineffectual or unsuitable for my students. One that I might mention is the Lado-Fries series. In the summer of my first year of teaching, I got a job at a brand-new intensive program at the university with a brand-new director who had just graduated from the University of Michigan and instituted the Lado-Fries program. My role was to teach the Pattern Practice classes that was their red book, for those who recall. Both my students and I found it deadly -- so I let my students ask questions about the patterns that was not permitted in this class and I prepared handouts and other activities. We had to return to the oral drill book. I knew how much my students appreciated the grammar handouts and activities, so I asked him if I could teach a tutorial after institute hours. To make a long story short, practically every student in the program ended up in "Mrs. One day as I looked about the room full of these students, I said to myself, "Hmmm. I must be doing something right. Materials writers, I feel, have a tremendous and possibly somewhat under-recognized?

Certainly in my own experience I can see how various textbooks I used shaped my approaches and my teaching. In addition to teaching students, textbooks often teach teachers, too -- by introducing new or variations in methodologies or refining their understandings of content. For example, the new editions of my texts are influenced by communicative methodologies. And I know I have, through my textbooks, taught a lot of teachers a lot about grammar in general and the teaching of ESL grammar in particular. In other words, material writers often function as the "middlemen" "middlepeople"? The new corpus-based research is going to have a substantial effect on materials developers, and this in turn will affect what teachers present in the classroom. I can clearly see influences in my own work through the years -- from Lado-Fries Audio-Lingual whose influence is clear in my early work, despite my not finding their teaching program satisfactory for my particular students through, to mention a few that come to mind, the Silent Way, Total Physical Response, Suggestopedia, Peer Counseling, Notional-Functional, and Communicative theories and methodologies. And in turn, I feel my work influences how some teachers teach and certainly the content of their classes. That is a humbling responsibility that all materials developers understand. One last word on early influences: In addition to my students and other materials writers, a third principal influence during my early days was Earl Stevick. At that time as at all times it seems, actually, the teaching of grammar was highly and vocally disparaged in some quarters. His validation of my own perceptions helped tip the balance in my deciding to rev up my courage to pursue writing a grammar textbook. If you had to give three pieces of advice to a new ESL teacher, what would they be? We are indeed a positive force for change in the world. Make your classroom as friendly, unstressful and non-threatening as you possibly can, but at the same time be demanding by having high expectations for your students. Enjoy your classes and students. Teaching ESL is just plain a real kick!

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