

# **Why Teachers of ELLs Need to Know about ESL Grammar Issues and How to Address Them**

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**Rhode Island Teachers  
of English Language Learners**

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# THANKS . . .

- ***RITELL***

- ***University of Michigan Press***

THANKS . . .

- ***RITELL -- Can you volunteer?***
- ***University of Michigan Press***

# Today's Talk

- ① ***What is “ESL Grammar”?***
- ② ***Why do YOU need to know something about ESL grammar?***
- ③ ***What is the LEAST grammar an ESL teacher should know?***
- ④ ***What are 3 of the hardest parts of ESL grammar?***

# A **TEST** of Native English Ability: **WOW!**

A **TEST** of Native English Ability:  
**WOW!**

***TO GO***

***GOING***

***GO***

# 1 Example of Native English Ability: **WOW!**

**I need \_\_\_\_\_**

**I should \_\_\_\_\_**

**I hope \_\_\_\_\_**

**I enjoy \_\_\_\_\_**

**I can \_\_\_\_\_**

**I might \_\_\_\_\_**

**I might postpone \_\_\_\_\_**

# 1 Example of Native English Ability: **WOW!**

**I need TO GO**

**I should GO**

**I hope TO GO**

**I enjoy GOING**

**I can GO**

**I might GO**

**I might postpone GOING**



*Once you know some ESL grammar, what can/should/could you do with it?*

<b>NATURAL APPROACH</b>	<b>INTERVENE with GRAMMAR</b>
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*Once you know some ESL grammar, what can/should/could you do with it?*

<b>NATURAL APPROACH</b>	<b>INTERVENE with GRAMMAR</b>
<b>1. Students hear the language naturally and acquire English</b>  <b>2. LOTS OF TIME</b>  <b>3. LOTS OF INPUT</b>  <b>4. Ooops... Teacher should know something about ESL grammar</b>	<b>1. Students receive instruction of some kind</b>  <b>2. Feedback from the teacher</b>  <b>3. Which Grammar??? Only the COMMON &amp; PROBLEMATIC</b>  <b>4. Teacher needs to know ESL grammar</b>

# What is ESL Grammar?

◆ Native Speaker jr. high (elem. school?)  
grammar:

-- **8 parts of speech**

◆ ESL grammar:

-- **negating**

# **Habla español ???**

## **How much Spanish do you know?**

## **On a scale of 1 to 10 ..... where is YOUR Spanish?**

# Negating...

- 1. Maria está en el banco.**
- 2. Pablo estudia matemática.**
- 3. Pablo está estudiando ahora.**
- 4. Ud. me hubiera dicho!**
- 5. El valor del dólar ha estado aumentando ....**

# Negating...

1. Maria está en el banco.
2. Pablo estudia matemática.
3. Pablo está estudiando ahora.
4. Ud. me hubiera dicho!
5. El valor del dólar ha estado aumentando ....

# **Negating in Spanish...**

## **What is the grammar rule?**

1. Maria **NO** esta en el banco.
2. Pablo **NO** estudia matematica.
3. Pablo **NO** esta estudiando ahora.
4. Ud. **NO** me hubiera dicho!
5. El valor del dolar **NO** ha estado aumentando ....

# Negating in English

????????????????????????????????

1. I work there.
2. I worked there.
3. She goes to school.
4. She went to school.
5. I have a car.
6. I have eaten sushi.
7. I can play cards.
8. She has been practicing.
9. They should call a doctor.
10. He is here.



# Negating...

1. I work there.
2. I worked there.
3. She goes to school.
4. She went to school.
5. I have a car.
6. I have eaten sushi.
7. I can play cards.
8. She has been practicing.
9. They should call a doctor.
10. He is here.

# Negating in English...

## What is the grammar rule?

1. I **DO NOT work** there.
2. I **DID NOT work** there.    (**worked**)
3. She **DOES NOT go** to school.    (**goes**)
4. She **DID NOT go** to school.    (**went**)
5. I **DO NOT have** a car.
6. I **have NOT eaten** sushi.
7. I **should NOT play** video games.
8. She **has NOT been practicing**.
9. They **should NOT call** a doctor..
10. He **is NOT** here.

# ENGLISH RULE: A negative verb needs at least TWO VERBS. If only one, add DO/DOES/DID. (*exception: BE*)

1. I **DO NOT** work there.
2. I **DID NOT** work there.
3. She **DOES NOT** go to school.
4. She **DID NOT** go to school.
5. I **DO NOT** have a car.
6. I have **NOT** eaten sushi.
7. I should **NOT** play video games.
8. She has **NOT** been practicing.
9. They should **NOT** call a doctor..
10. He is **NOT** here.

# Native Speakers : FORM vs USAGE

## Natives make certain mistakes in FORM:

\*He don't

\*She ain't got

\*You should have went

\*I seen

## Native speakers NEVER make a mistake with which verb tense to use at a certain time (USAGE):

\*Yesterday I go to the mall

\*We are studying these verbs two weeks ago

# Non-Native Speakers: FORM vs USAGE

## ELLs make certain mistakes in FORM:

- \*He no live there now
- \*She is take the bus always
- \*I am really like this cake
- \*You should to have gone there

## ELLs make many mistakes with verb tense USAGE:

- \*I am here since 2005.
- \*How many countries do you visit in your life?
- \*I have seen the tornado yesterday.
- \*When you called me last night, I watched TV.

Who needs to know ESL grammar?

**ALL**  
**TEACHERS**  
who work with English  
Language Learners (ELLs)

# Who needs to know ESL grammar?

- **A kindergarten teacher?**

\*

---

- **A science teacher?**

\*

---

- **A reading teacher?**

\*

---

# Who needs to know ESL grammar?

- A kindergarten teacher?

*\* **Old MacDonald Had a Farm**  
(repetition, lexical chunks, word order, etc.)*

- A science teacher?

*\* **Science problem (Rhode Island 5<sup>th</sup> grade science test)***

- A reading teacher?

*\* **Determining readability***



# KINDERGARTEN

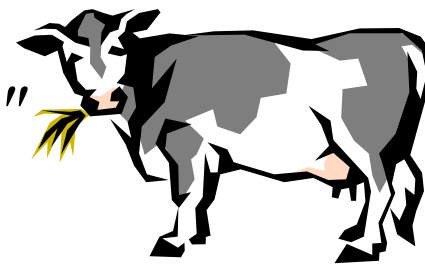


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# KINDERGARTEN SONG

*Old Macdonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.  
And on his farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O.  
With a "moo-moo" here  
and a "moo-moo" there,  
Here a "moo," there a "moo,"  
Everywhere a "moo-moo."  
Old Macdonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*



16 (43) words:

1.a 2.And 3.cow 4.E-I-E-I-O 5.Everywhere 6.farm 7.had 8.he 9.here 10.his  
11."moo" 12."moo-moo" 13.Old Macdonald 14.on 15.there 16.With

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**A. Old Macdonald was male. Underline the two grammar items that show this grammar point.**

Old Macdonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O  
And on his farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O  
With a "moo-moo" here  
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**B. The basic sentence pattern in English is subject-verb-object.  
Underline the three examples of this grammar point.**

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**C. In English, singular count nouns need something in front of them, such as a, an, the my, your, his, this, that, etc. Underline the nine examples of this grammar point.**

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**D. In English, most places are preceded by *at*, *on*, or *in*. Underline the prepositional phrase of place.**

Old Macdonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O  
And on his farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O  
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**E. The past tense of have is *had*, not *\*haved*. Underline the three examples of this grammar point.**

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And on his farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O  
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# SCIENCE PROBLEM



# SCIENCE PROBLEM

**A student wants to find out the kind of soil that can hold the most water. She buys four identical pots with small holes in the bottom of each. She then fills each pot with a different kind of soil and waters the pots with the exact same amount of water. How can she determine the amount of water that stays in the soil in each pot?**

- A. By putting cotton in each pot to see how much water it absorbs.**
- B. By carefully examining the growth of flowers in each of the pots.**
- C. By covering only three of the pots with a plastic bag.**
- D. By measuring how much water drains from each pot.**

**A. In simple present tense, the verb after 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular (he/she/it) ends in –s. Underline the seven examples of this grammar point.**

**A student wants to find out the kind of soil that can hold the most water. She buys four identical pots with small holes in the bottom of each. She then fills each pot with a different kind of soil and waters the pots with the exact same amount of water. How can she determine the amount of water that stays in the soil in each pot?**

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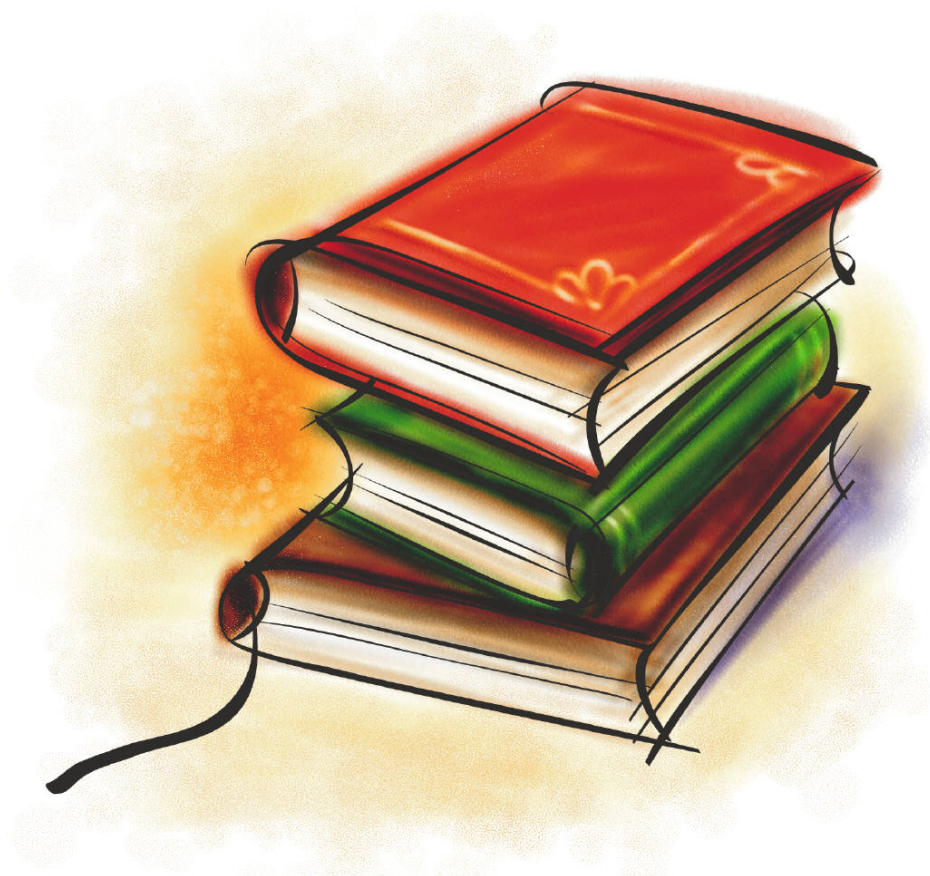
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# READING



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# O'Henry: *The Gift of the Magi*

C  
And s  
one a  
the v  
burne  
such  
count  
the n



s all.  
ved  
and  
eeks  
/ that  
  
And

**–ed is for past tense, but which one of these –ed words is NOT past tense?**

One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. Pennies **saved** one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the baker until one's cheeks **burned** with the silent imputation of parsimony that such close dealing **implied**. Three times Della **counted** it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. And the next day would be Christmas.

–ed is for past tense, but which one of these –ed words is NOT past tense?

One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. Pennies {that were saved} one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the baker until one's cheeks burned with the silent imputation of parsimony that such close dealing implied. Three times Della counted it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. And the next day would be Christmas.

**Where is THE verb?**

Coins minted in Denver bear the letter D.

Where is **THE** verb?

Coins minted in Denver **bear** the letter D.

## Where is THE verb?

Coins **minted** in Denver **bear** the letter D.

Coins ( **that are** ) **minted** in Denver bear ...

## Where is THE verb?

Coins **minted** in Denver **bear** the letter D.

Coins ( **that are** ) **minted** in Denver bear ...

Google: ***reduced adjective clause***



# The **Least** Grammar You Should Know in order to be able to help your ELLs

# The **Least** Grammar You Should Know

- 1. To be**
- 2. Verbs: present time**
- 3. Verbs: past time**
- 4. Verbs: future time**
- 5. Count/noncount nouns**
- 6. Prepositions**
- 7. Articles**
- 8. Pronunciation –s / -ed**
- 9. Adjective clause / reductions**
- 10. Infinitive / gerund**
- 11. Phrasal verbs**
- 12. Modals**
- 13. Word forms**
- 14. Passive voice**
- 15. Conditionals (if)**
- 16. Negation**

**Source: *Keys to Teaching Grammar to ELLs* (Folse, 2016)**

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# The **Least** Grammar You Should Know

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# Common ELL Errors with PREPOSITIONS

What is a **preposition**?

# Common ELL Errors with PREPOSITIONS

What is a preposition?

A word that shows the relationship between its object and another word in the sentence. ?????

# Common ELL Errors with PREPOSITIONS

What is a preposition?

A word that shows the relationship between its object and another word in the sentence. ?????

one-word: at, on, in, under, below

two-word: due to, according to

three-word: in spite of, in lieu of

# Common ELL Errors with PREPOSITIONS

1. Do you want sugar \_\_\_\_ your coffee?
2. The painting is \_\_\_\_ the left wall.
3. The accident happened \_\_\_\_ Monday.
4. The dog was barking \_\_\_\_ midnight.
5. He is really interested \_\_\_\_ sports.
6. She is very dedicated \_\_\_\_ her new job.
7. New Orleans is famous \_\_\_\_ its Cajun food.
8. In some ways, Portuguese is similar \_\_\_\_ Spanish.



# Common ELL Errors with PREPOSITIONS

1. Do you want sugar **on** your coffee?
2. The painting is **in** the left wall.
3. The accident happened **at** Monday.
4. The dog was barking **on** midnight.
5. He is really interested **for** sports.
6. She is very dedicated **in** her new job.
7. New Orleans is famous **of** its Cajun food.
8. In some ways, Portuguese is similar **with** Spanish.

# PREPOSITIONS

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**1-4      and      5-8**

**?????**

Some prepositions are based on  
what comes **AFTER** the PREP:

1. Do you want sugar in your **coffee**?
2. The painting is on the left **wall**.
3. The accident happened on **Monday**.
4. The dog was barking at **midnight**.

Some prepositions are based on  
what comes **AFTER** the PREP:

Do you want sugar in your **coffee**?  
on your **pancakes**?  
at **midnight**?

The accident happened on **Monday**.  
at **8:47**.  
in **June**.

Some prepositions are based on what comes **BEFORE** the PREP:

5. He is really **interested** in sports.
6. She is very **dedicated** to her new job.
7. New Orleans is **famous** for its Cajun food.
8. In some ways, Portuguese is **similar** to Spanish.

Some prepositions are based on  
what comes **BEFORE** the PREP:

- 5 He is really **interested** **in** sports.  
**interested** **in** politics  
**interested** **in** that show  
**interested** **in** cloud formation
7. New Orleans is **famous** **for** its Cajun food.  
**famous** **for** its history  
**famous** **for** Mardi Gras

**Google: adjective + preposition combinations**

What is  
a **hot seat** question?



# What is a **hot seat** question?

**You plan your lesson.**

**You look up grammar/etc. you don't know.**

**You get your activities, pages, etc.**

**You teach.**

**You ask (naively), “ANY QUESTIONS?”**

**Problem: The question is NOT about your lesson. Not really. Kind of. Sort of. Really?**

# What is a HOT SEAT QUESTION?

- **it originates from a student (the famous TEACHABLE moment...)**
- **it is often not connected to the actual lesson you're planned for**
- **the teacher does not know the answer (or maybe even understand the point of the question)**

# my early teaching

# my early teaching

- 1. I was nervous.**
  - 2. I didn't REALLY know my material (yet)**
  - 3. I had seen only 3 or 4 ESL teachers in action**
  - 4. I felt the need to plan out EVERYTHING**
- example: “What is the 1<sup>st</sup> thing you say in a class?”**

my early teaching

**my first class ever by myself (1978? 79?)**

**English Language Institute**

**University of Southern Mississippi**

**•those 2 Venezuelan women ...**

# Example 1

## Lesson: IS/ARE

**16. Manila ( is , are ) a city in the Philippines.**

**17. Bolivia and Peru ( is , are ) in South America.**

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**TEACHER: “Any questions?”**



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**Lesson: IS/ARE**

**16. Manila (  , are ) a city in the Philippines.**

**17. Bolivia and Peru ( is ,  ) in South America.**

**STUDENT: “Why does Philippines have THE? Bolivia and Peru are countries, so where is THE?”**

# Example 1

**Lesson: IS/ARE**

**16. Manila ( is are ) a city in the Philippines.**

**17. Bolivia and Peru ( is , are ) in South America.**

**TEACHER: ??? ...**

***THINKING: the Philippines...the U.S. ... the Bolivia???  
the United Kingdom... the Korea??? the China??? the  
Canada??? the Costa Rica???***

# Example 1

**Lesson: IS/ARE**

**16. Manila (  , are ) a city in the Philippines.**

**17. Bolivia and Peru ( is ,  ) in South America.**

**[your answers?](#)**

# Example 1: ANSWERS

**Most countries do not use THE.**

**Use THE with countries when:**

- a. the name ends in –s: *the Philippines, the Netherlands***
- b. the name sounds like a group: *the United States, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Soviet Union, the Republic of Korea***

## Example 2

### **Lesson: PRESENT vs PAST TENSES**

**16. Last week I ( have , had ) a test on Monday.**

**17. Christmas ( is , was ) in December.**

## Example 2

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TEACHER: “Any questions?”

## Example 2

### Lesson: PRESENT vs PAST TENSES

16. Last week I ( have , **had** ) a test on Monday.

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**STUDENT: “Can I say ON DECEMBER? Can I say IN MONDAY? I’m confused by AT/ON/IN.”**



## Example 2

### Lesson: PRESENT vs PAST TENSES

16. Last week I ( have , **had** ) a test on Monday.

17. Christmas ( **is** , was ) in December.

TEACHER: ??? ...

*THINKING: on Monday? in Monday? in December?  
on December? on December 25<sup>th</sup>? in December 25<sup>th</sup>?  
in noon? at noon?*

## Example 2

### Lesson: PRESENT vs PAST TENSES

16. Last week I ( have , **had** ) a test on Monday.

17. Christmas ( **is** , was ) in December.

**your answers ?**

# Example 2

## SEE YOUR HANDOUT

AT

5:00, noon, this moment

ON

Monday, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>,  
my birthday

IN

July, summer, 1996,  
the 80s, the 20<sup>th</sup> century

**pronouncing ED**  
**sneezed /d/; coughed /t/**

# pronouncing ED sneezed /d/; coughed /t/

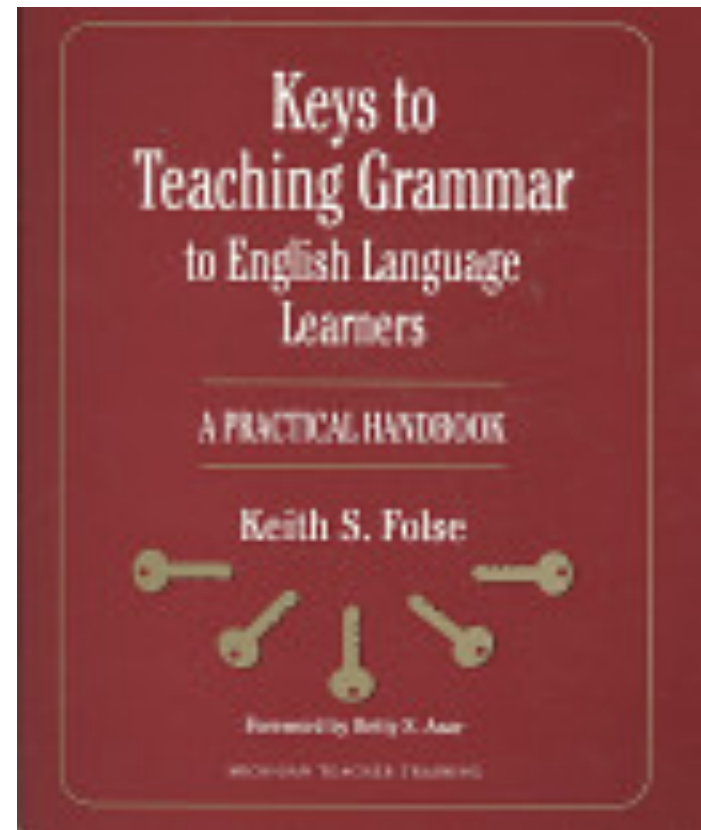
- words that end in /d/ or /t/ take a whole new syllable **/Id/**
- words that end in /s/ /f/ /p/ /k/ /ch/ /sh/  
(a voiceless sound) take **/t/**
- words that end in ALL OTHER SOUNDS (a voiced sound) take **/d/**

Carolina TESOL: “Is this info written down anywhere?”

***KEYS TO TEACHING  
GRAMMAR***

**Univ. of Michigan Press**

A reference book for teachers of all levels of students; covers the most common ESL language errors and why they occur

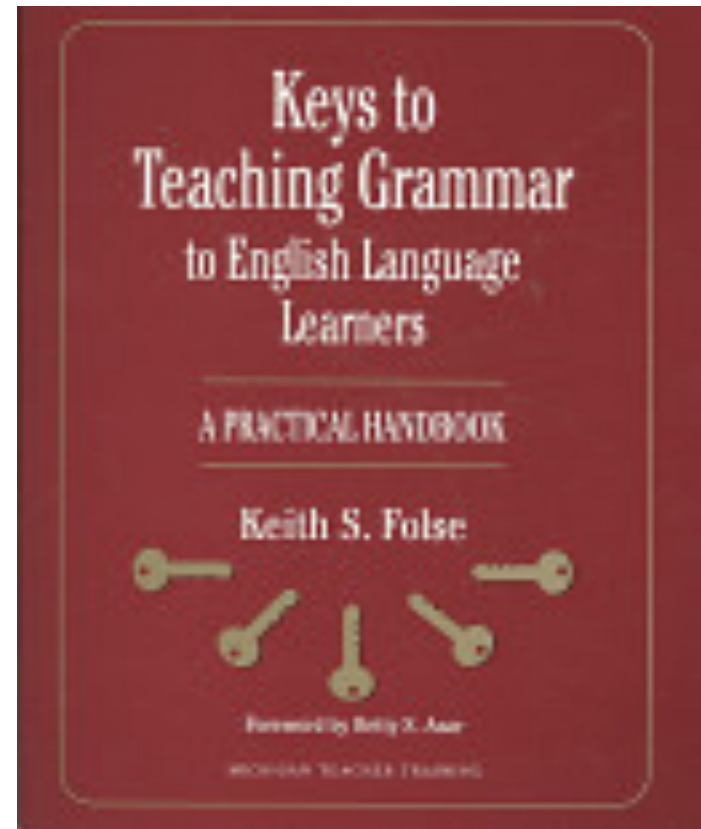


# Do you have English questions ???

If you have a question (or your students have a question), please send me the question.

I'd like to try it out with my teachers in training at UCF.

**keith.folse@gmail.com**



# **Why Teachers of ELLs Need to Know about ESL Grammar Issues and How to Address Them**

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**University of Central Florida**

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