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*A Comparative Look at Best Instructional Practices in Teaching English and Spanish at the Secondary Level*

Imagine yourself in a perfect world where all grammar and its rules implicit were understood by the entirety of its users. Now imagine yourself waking up from that dream and realizing that you are the one that has to do all the explaining. That's what it is like for teachers of English and other languages. This paper proposes that, although grammar is grammar, teaching grammar as pedagogy is a great deal different in teaching a native tongue and a second language.

“Secondary English instruction often focuses on literature and writing. In order to make the most of instructional minutes, focusing on grammar as scholarship has been thrown by the wayside. However, things are relatively different in the instruction of Spanish at the secondary level due to a phenomenon known as linguistic plasticity.”

“Unless instruction begins as early as age eight (in a second language), the new language will not be merely absorbed and assimilated, as was the case with the person's first language, but rather it must be learned through logical sequencing, the verboten grammar lesson, often considered the bane of good language instruction.”

“The implicit instruction of grammar is not only a good idea, but rather, completely necessary when teaching language structure and writing in Spanish as a second language. This falls contrary to the best practices approach of teaching English in the secondary classroom.”

As a seasoned English and Spanish teacher, what this tells me is that I can effectively teach both languages but I have to do it quite differently. Don't throw away your grammar book, because for a good language arts or second language teacher, the pedagogy of grammar is here to stay.