

Students as “Grammarians”: Discovering Grammatical Rules Lesson on Reduced Clauses of Reason

(*Present Participle Constructions*)

Lead-in

Exercise 1

In pairs, use your imagination and **write answers** to the following questions. All the questions are about Vincent, a very good student, who had an interesting plan.

- a. *Why does Vincent like to study English grammar?*

- b. *Why does he always have a dictionary in his bag?*

- c. *Why did he decide to study articles and prepositions until midnight on weekends?*

Exercise 2

The following sentences are about Patricia, not a very diligent student, who decided to take her studies more seriously. In pairs, **read the sentences and underline the clauses that inform you about reasons for her actions.**

Patricia didn't like studying English grammar because she thought it was too complicated. She didn't have a dictionary so she always had to borrow one from her classmates. Because she wanted make fewer mistakes, she decided to do more grammar exercises at home. She now brings a dictionary to class because she knows that it is a very helpful tool.

Presentation: Discovering the Topic

Exercise 1

Work in small groups. **Read** the following sentences and focus on the underlined parts. What, do you think, is **indicated here**?

- a. *Patricia didn't like studying English grammar because she thought it was too complicated.*
- b. *She didn't have a dictionary so she always had to borrow one from her classmates.*
- c. *Because she wanted to make fewer mistakes, she decided to do more grammar exercises at home.*
- d. *She now brings a dictionary to class because she knows that it is a very helpful tool.*

Exercise 2

Now, in small groups, look at the following sentences and **compare** them with sentences from the previous exercise. Use the guiding questions below.

- a. *Patricia didn't like studying English grammar, thinking it was too complicated.*
- b. *Not having a dictionary, she always had to borrow one from her classmates.*
- c. *Wanting to make fewer mistakes, she decided to do more grammar exercises at home.*
- d. *She now brings a dictionary to class, knowing that it is a very helpful tool.*

- Which words are not used in this **reduced** version?
- How has the form of the verbs “think”, “assume”, and “want” changed?

Presentation: Discovering the Rule

Once you have discussed the sentences in Exercise 1 and 2, **complete** the following summary.

Some clauses, such as clauses expressing _____ can be made shorter; in other words, they can be reduced. We can reduce those clauses only if the _____ is the same in both parts of the sentence (look at Exercise 1 in Presentation). In order to reduce a clause of reason, we omit the _____, and change the form of the verb to _____ form (gerund).

Practice

Exercise 1

Read the sentences you wrote about Vincent and **answer** these questions:

- Can they be reduced?
- Which words will you omit?
- Which words will change their form?

Now, if possible, **reduce** the first three sentences that you wrote about Vincent.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

When you are ready, **exchange** your answers with another pair. **Read** their sentences and **check** if they are correct. **Share** comments with your classmates.

Production

Write brief answers the following questions:

- a. *Why do you like or dislike studying English grammar?*

- b. *Why do you use (or why don't you use) certain materials?*

- c. *Why did you decide to have (or not to have) some study plan?*

Now, **check** if you can reduce all your clauses of reason. If so, **write** their reduced versions below.

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

Share your answers with your partner. **Exchange** comments on each other's sentences.