

Grammar Activity Set

Target students: 3rd semester Chinese learners in U.S. high school settings

Objectives: Students will be able to conclude the function and structure of a special sentence pattern 把-sentence¹. They will be able to use 把-sentence to describe how to work out certain tangram puzzles.

Activities

1. Steps of making dumplings. In this activity the students will watch a video clip from youtube about the steps to make dumplings (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTMxU3ACQAE>).

Step 1: Students will watch the video for the first time, and their task is to figure out how many steps are needed to make a dumpling according to the video.

Step 2. Students will watch the video for the second time. This time they need to take notes on what these steps are.

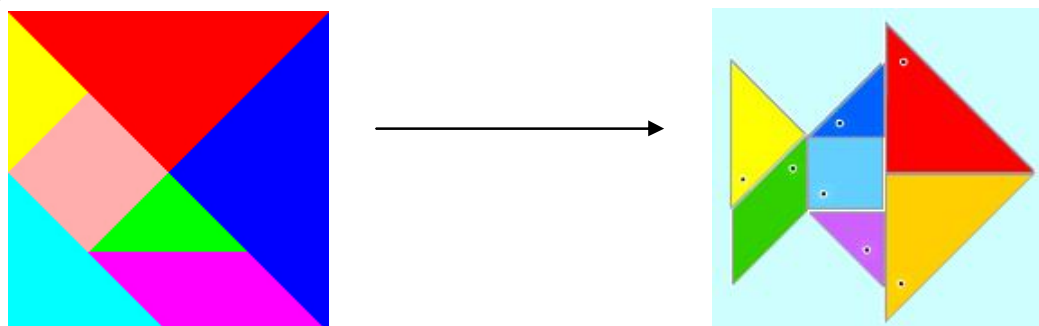
Step 3. Students will work in groups to compare their notes with others. They will be presented to the video for the third time. In groups they will provide the details of the steps mentioned in the video as detailed as possible.

Step 4. The teacher will present the script of the steps mentioned in the video, and ask the students to compare the script with the steps they have worked out.

2. Induction of the function and the structure of 把- sentence. The students will be led by the instructor to notice that the speaker in the video gives all the steps of making a dumpling by using the same sentence structure. As they all have the word 把, they are called 把- sentence. In this activity, the students will be asked to make induction about the rules that govern the 把- sentence, based on the 把-sentences they have got from the video, as well as the extra example sentences provided by the instructor. They will be guided by some questions on their handouts to do this task. (See Handout 1 for details)

3. Tangram puzzle activity. In this activity, students will practice using 把-sentences to describe to other students how to work out the tangram puzzles that they are assigned.

Step 1. Students will be put into groups of 4. Each group will be given a set of tangram pieces. The whole class will work together with the instructor to use the seven pieces they have to make a fish as shown in the picture below. In this process, the instructor will model using 把-sentence to describe the steps of working out this puzzle.



Step 2. Each group will be assigned one puzzle to work out. They are encouraged to use 把-sentence when they discuss with their partners to work out the puzzle. They

also need to get prepared to choose one person to present the steps of working out the puzzle they are assigned to the rest of the class. They will be provided models of 把-sentence to facilitate them to do this task. (See Handout 2 for details)

Step 3. Each group will choose one person to present to the rest of the class the steps of working out the puzzle they are assigned. The rest of groups need to follow the steps and try to make the pattern using their tangram pieces.

Extension Activity/homework

Students will choose one pattern other than the one their group works on in class to work out. They need to give instructions on how to make this pattern using 把-sentence, and record the answer.

Note:

1. 把(ba) sentence is a sentence with a verb predicate modified by the preposition 把; and its object is called the 把-sentence. It indicates that an action is applied to somebody or something with the emphasis that the action will bring about a result or influence.

Self-reflection

Grammar has been treated as an important component of language learning. A lot of language curricula are built upon grammar, and grammar instruction is often the main focus of language classroom.

When talking about grammar teaching/learning, I can't help think of the way that I learnt English grammar. I learnt English in grammar-translation dominated classrooms. All the grammar rules were presented by the teachers explicitly, and we needed to do tons of exercises to internalize those grammar rules. Grammar for me at that time was all about rules that I needed to memorize. A noticeable problem to the people who learn grammar as I did is that we may be able to state the grammar rules accurately, but we may not be able to apply these rules correctly to different language using situations.

As a language teacher, I think we need to have broader conceptualization of grammar. We need to perceive grammar not only as those official written rules but also those unwritten common knowledge rules that guide both written and spoken language. Besides, we also need to be clear that grammar is not about the rules standing there alone. Instead, they are indistinctive, in many cases, from other components of language, such as vocabulary and pragmatics.

In terms of grammar teaching, guided inductive approaches, whether explicit or implicit, are specifically addressed in today's lecture. I, in person, believe that these approaches are better than the traditional deductive approach, because when applying these approaches to teaching, learners are treated as active agents, and are encouraged to produce hypothesis, and test them. Besides, inductive learning is often contextualized. Therefore, learning happens under such approaches is active, effective and interesting as well.

Handout 1

Study with your partners the 把-sentences from the video, as well as the extra examples provided on this handout . Try to give answers to the following questions.

把-sentence from the video

- 把皮放在手上。
- 把馅儿放在皮中间。
- 把中间粘上。
- 把后面的皮一点一点往前面粘，把它粘牢。
- 把他们全部粘结实。

Extra examples for 把-sentence

- 她把那本书拿走了。
- * 她把一本书拿走了。

- 他把瓶子里的水喝了。
- * 他把瓶子里的水喝。

- 他把客人送出去了。
- * 他把客人送。

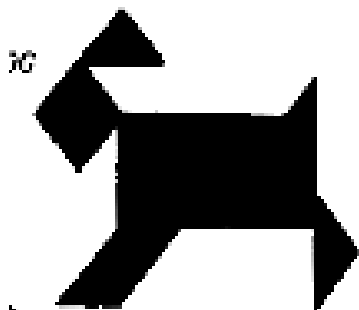
(Note: A sentence with a * indicate the sentence is wrong)

Questions:

1. Can you try to summarize the structure of 把-sentence?
Model: The structure of a 是-sentence can be represented like this
主语(subject) + 是+ 宾语 (object)
2. What does a 把-sentence indicate?
3. What's the restriction on the noun right after 把?
4. What are the restrictions on the verbs that can be used in a 把-sentence? (Think of the relationship between the verb and the noun right after 把, as well as the component after the verb.)

Handout 2

Your group needs to use the tangram pieces to make a dog like this:



Here are the samples of 把-sentence you may use to describe the process of making this pattern:

把红色的放在最上面。(Put the red one on the very top.)

把黄色的放在红色的下面。(Put the yellow one below the red one.)

把蓝色的放在黄色的旁边。(Put the blue one next to the yellow one.)

把粉色的放在蓝色的左边。(Put the pink one to left of the blue one.)

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Your group needs to use the tangram pieces to make a polar bear like this:



Here are the samples of 把-sentence you may use to describe the process of making this pattern:

把红色的放在最上面。(Put the red one on the very top.)

把黄色的放在红色的下面。(Put the yellow one below the red one.)

把蓝色的放在黄色的旁边。(Put the blue one next to the yellow one.)

把粉色的放在蓝色的左边。(Put the pink one to left of the blue one.)

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Your group needs to use the tangram pieces to make a camel like this:



Here are the samples of 把-sentence you may use to describe the process of making this pattern:

把红色的放在最上面。(Put the red one on the very top.)

把黄色的放在红色的下面。(Put the yellow one below the red one.)

把蓝色的放在黄色的旁边。(Put the blue one next to the yellow one.)

把粉色的放在蓝色的左边。(Put the pink one to left of the blue one.)

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Your group needs to use the tangram pieces to make a goat like this:



Here are the samples of 把-sentence you may use to describe the process of making this pattern:

把红色的放在最上面。(Put the red one on the very top.)

把黄色的放在红色的下面。(Put the yellow one below the red one.)

把蓝色的放在黄色的旁边。(Put the blue one next to the yellow one.)

把粉色的放在蓝色的左边。(Put the pink one to left of the blue one.)

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