Learning a foreign language is a process which requires the development of multiple abilities such as writing, speaking, listening and reading. Most second language learners tend to develop one skill better than another. Other learners rank their skills for instance, in some South American countries second language students focus on their speaking and/or listening ability more than the others.

The idea of focusing on speaking probably comes from a cognitive theory which indicates that native speakers learn to speak before writing or studying grammar, therefore there is a large number of second language learners who consider that learning a foreign language should focus on speaking and/or writing more than grammar. However I personally believe learning grammar is as important as developing other skills when acquiring a second language. The reason I believe this is that it isn’t clear if students of a second language are like children or not. Do we learn a new language the same way we learned our native language? No one knows for sure. So I can’t agree that learning speaking should come before grammar.

Opponents of learning grammar claim that teaching grammar is unnecessary because there is hardly enough time for speaking. Even though some educators and learners agree with the previous statement, it is important to take into consideration one of the bases of cognitive learning to rebut that idea. According to Jean Piaget, one of the most important influences in Education and Psychology, the process of learning involves several stages which go from the essentials to the complex. In language learning one of the essentials abilities a student has to learn in order to get a good command of a foreign language is learning grammar. It is impossible to get a good command of speaking, one of the most complex stages, if learners do not have a good command of the basics: the grammar.

Some language learners also agree with the following statement that “writing is a representation of the speaking”, therefore, most of them consider that speaking is the “real language”. For that reason, they believe that it is only necessary to learn a small percentage of grammar in order to speak/write a foreign language fluently. On the other hand, opponents of grammar do not take into consideration that speaking is full of slangs and false grammar that cannot be used in academic and labor contexts. Consequently, learning proper grammar is not only essential to improve a foreign language but also to succeed in different personal areas.

The final argument advanced by opponents of learning grammar is that it is unnecessary to focus on grammar because native speakers do not use it correctly when they speak and write. Nevertheless, opponents do not take into consideration that speaking and writing imply the good command of grammar in order to improve it upon to get a better command of the language. What is more, a grammatical error could change the meaning and create a bad impression in daily situations.

It is evident that opponents of learning grammar do not have strong arguments because, as shown by my earlier arguments, it is obvious that grammar is important in itself and is critical for developing other language skills such as speaking, listening, writing and reading. Therefore, in order to get a perfect command of a foreign language, learning grammar should be considered essential in language acquisition.

1) Underline the thesis statement of this essay with one color.
2) Underline each opposing argument with another color. Make sure you get every part of the opposing argument.
3) With a pen circle key words that told you this is the opposing argument.
4) Underline each rebuttal with yet another color. Make sure to get the whole rebuttal.
5) Circle the words that begin the rebuttal. Why does the author use these words?
6) Is this essay convincing to you?