

La grammatica e la sindrome del pendolo

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Abstract

The Teaching of Grammar and the Pendulum Syndrome

The “pendulum syndrome” is a metaphor used in American educational linguistics to describe the way the focus on language use or language analysis switches over time. The first part of the essay is diachronic and follows the pendulum from classical times to today. The second section focuses on the “Copernican Revolution” of the 1960s and 1970s; in those years the very idea of “grammar” changed, and the effects of that (r)evolution are still present in today’s non-native language teaching approaches, aimed at communicative competence.

Keywords: grammar teaching; use vs. analysis; modern language project; communicative competence; pendulum syndrome.