Week 10

Journal Writing
- Journal writing until 4:30
- Have YOU ever been the victim of a “social tax”—a negative judgment by others because of your non-conventional language use? Tell the story.

Agenda
- Rosen article discussion; hand in admit tickets
- Grammar surveys
- Grammar and Grammar Instruction
- Language and Style
- High Heeled words
- Parallel Structure and Zeugma
- Loose and Periodic Sentences
- Sentence Combining
- Language Has Tone
- Imitation

Rosen: “Developing Correctness”
- Which two or three ideas were most important to you?
- Were there any ideas that you felt were unrealistic or wrong-headed?
- What ideas will you apply to your practice?
- Hand in Admit Ticket.

Surveys
- Who did you survey?
- What did you learn?
- What surprises were there?
Questions and Answers about GRAMMAR and USAGE

Based on Work From
NCTE's Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar
And
More than 150 YEARS of Research!
Kathleen Rowlands

What’s your experience with grammar instruction?

- Briefly sketch one or two memorable moments with grammar instruction—as a student or as an instructor. Be ready to share.
- Positive experiences?
- Negative experiences?

Keep in mind…

- All native speakers of a language have more grammar in their heads than any grammar book will ever contain. Part of our goal as teachers is to help students discover that knowledge.

Grammar? Or Conventional Usage?

Instructional Goal

- Helping students improve their conventional use of language—speaking and writing!
Usage Errors

- Teaching grammar out of context will not make writing usage errors go away.
- Students make errors in the process of learning.
- As they develop as writers, they often make new errors, not necessarily fewer ones.

Discussion of Readings

- Hartwell: “Grammar, Grammar and the Teaching of Grammar”
- Murdick: “What English Teachers Need to Know about Grammar”
- Gibbin: “The Role of Generalization”
- Meyer: “Competing Goals”

What kinds of grammar exercises help students write—not just correct sentences—but better, more expressive ones?

- Students find grammar most interesting when they apply it to authentic texts. Try using texts of different kinds, such as newspapers and the students’ own writing, as sources for usage examples and exercises. This approach helps make usage and grammar relevant and alive.

What topics in grammar help students?

- The traditional definitions of the parts of speech can be difficult to apply. Students recognize the basic parts of speech more reliably and quickly by looking at the form of a word and by using sentence “frames.”

What topics in grammar help students?

- If a word can be made plural or possessive, or if it fits in the sentence “The ________ went there,” it is a noun.
- If a word can be made to show past time, or can take an -ing ending, it is a verb.

Use word and language play

Tom Swifties

“I’m back again,” returned Tom swiftly.

1. Tell what someone said.
2. Use an adverb to describe how it was said.
3. The adverb should have something to do with what the person said.
Tom Swifties

Some Student Examples

- “Did you ever slide down a waterfall?” he said rapidly?
- “When I die, I’ll give you the money,” he said willingly.
- “I like spices,” he said gingerly.
- “Button up,” he said openly.

Student Examples

- “I’m sentenced to 50 years in prison,” he said guardedly.
- “I love you,” she said wholeheartedly.
- “These scissors are dull,” she said bluntly.
- “I just met the Fruit of the Loom,” she said briefly.

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

Mini Lesson: High-heeled Words

When I wear high heels I have a great vocabulary and I speak in paragraphs. I’m more eloquent. I plan to wear them more often.

-Meg Ryan

Sentence Development Strategies

- Parallel structure and zeugma
- Loose and periodic sentence activities
- Sentence Combining

Parallel Structure
Mini-lesson: Zeugma

- He was full of roast beef and good will.
- She drove off in a hot temper and a dusty Ford.
- He was deep in thought and debt.
- She entered the room in a white dress and a red rage.

Loose and Periodic Sentences

Sentence Combining

From Talk to Writing
Based on the Work of
William Strong

True ease in writing comes from Art, not Chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.

-Alexander Pope
An Essay on Criticism

Theoretical Background

- Builds on learners' oral language skills to extend their written skills.
- A systematic way of teaching writers to use more complex sentence patterns in their writing.
- Teaches learners how to listen to various ways of saying the same thing.

“While process pedagogies have been successful in accomplishing some important things in teaching writing, they cannot do everything for us.”

-Paul Butler
"Imitation as Freedom: (Re)Forming Student Writing"
Theoretical Background con’t.

- Gives learners practice making choices among similar sentences.
- Is a skill builder for real writing.

An example

Sentence combining builds skills.
The skills are for writing.
The building is systematic.

How many different ways can these sentences be combined?

Sentence Combining “How-To’s”

- Keep it oral!
- Keep it experimental!
- Keep it non-threatening!
- Keep it fun!

Sentence Combining “How-To’s”

- Talk about the various combinations:
  - How does the emphasis in the sentence change in this version?
  - Which version is more pleasing to the ear?
  - Which version is the strongest? The weakest? Why?

Terminology

- Base or kernal sentence: a short, unmodified sentence
- Sentence cluster: a group of related sentences that can be combined into one
- Embedding: putting cluster sentences into a kernal sentence
- Writeout: a combined sentence

Practice Clusters

The clusters are short.
The clusters are simple.
The clusters are easy to combine.
This happens at first.

How might we combine these?
Practice Clusters
This approach transfers power.
The transfer is from speech.
The transfer is to writing.
This approach increases options.
The options are related to style.

Practice Clusters
The photographer took the picture.
The photographer shuddered.

Practice Clusters
The funeral director has doubts.
The doubts are grave.
The doubts are about Mortimer.

Practice Clusters
- The students wired the skeleton together.
- They called the skeleton Bonaparte.

Practice Clusters
The dentist testified in a suit.
The dentist was nicely dressed.
The suit was for malpractice.
She swore to tell the whole tooth.
She swore to tell nothing but the tooth.

Practice Clusters
Our burly coach is not too intelligent.
He was named Throwback of the Year.
A puny sportswriter named him.
Practice Clusters

Tucker was stuck. Tucker was stuck in Winnemucca. Tucker was a trucker. The trucker was out of luck.

Language Has Tone

- May I have your attention, please?
- Please quiet down.
- Shut up!

- What is the purpose of this statement?
- Discuss the probable relationship between the speaker and audience.

Language Has Tone

- She is slender.
- She is thin.
- She is skinny.

- What is the purpose of this statement?
- Discuss the probable attitude the speaker has toward the subject.

Language Has Tone

- Good Evening, Dr. Rowlands.
- Hi Dr. Rowlands.
- Hi Kathy.
- Hi Doc!
- Hi Teach!

- What is the purpose of this statement?
- Discuss the probable relationship between the speaker and audience.

What Is Imitation?

Imitation writing is taking the writing of a 'master' and using the structure and patterns as a form to work and learn from.

Apprenticeship
Imitation: Prose Examples

Model:
“Here it was motels and billboards and the hot jangle of neon bursting red over four lanes of concrete.”
- Ellington White

Now YOU try it...

Imitation: Student Samples

Here it was calculus books and term papers and the confining rules of behavior boiling up in students.

Here it was umbrellas and towels and the suffocating heat blanketing the granules of sand.

Imitation: Prose Examples

Another Model:
A man on a horse passes slowly, accompanied by a boy on foot who carries a willow branch.
-Joan Colebrook

Now YOU try it...

Imitation: Student Samples

A man in a Mercedes flies by, accompanied by a woman who has a Louis Vuitton handbag.

A princess on a horse passes slowly, accompanied by a prince on foot who carries a jeweled staff.

Imitation: Poetry

Students choose an interesting poem and steal its shape, plugging their own thoughts and images into its form. They acknowledge the borrowing by writing, “Thanks to…” at the end of their poem.

Imitation: Poetry

Separation
Your absence has gone through me
Like thread through a needle.
Everything I do is stitched with its color.

-W.S. Merwin
Student Sample

This assignment has filled me
With yesterday's garbage.
Everything I do is touched with
my boredom.

Imitation: Poetry

Image
Old houses were scaffolding
once
And workmen whistling.
-T.W. Hulme

Student Samples

Old teachers were happier
once
With students smiling.

Old runners were faster once
With spectators cheering.

Student Samples

These poems were ideas
once
And a poet struggling.

Why Does Imitation Work?

- Vygotsky's “zone of proximal
development”
- Imitation scaffolds student writing and expands student capabilities

Why Does Imitation Work?

- Unskilled writers do not have a clear sense of form.
- Imitation allows unskilled writers to develop form and structure while generating and finding expression for their own ideas.
Why Does Imitation Work?

- Imitation allows inexperienced writers to learn from those who are more experienced.

Why Do Students Enjoy Imitation?

- Asking students to imitate treats them as writers and collapses the distance between themselves and a text.
- Imitation gives students a view of themselves as “real writers.”

Imitation is thought to be one of the two most effective ways of helping students expand their repertoire of sentence patterns in their own writing.

Imitation: A Flexible Pedagogy

- Students can imitate transactional texts (non-fiction prose) or poetic texts (prose fiction, poetry, and drama).