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THE USES—AND LIMITS—OF GRAMMAR

INTRODUCTION

One of the more dispiriting discoveries of the Basic Writing teacher is that the study of grammar has been shown to have rather negligible effects upon student writing. The results with traditional grammar are uniformly discouraging, and the somewhat better results with structural and transformational grammars seem to depend less on any superiority in the grammatical analysis than on the fact that these grammars encourage students to manipulate the language as well as analyze it. Wherever it has been seriously researched, the analytical study of grammar has failed to produce significant results in student writing across the board—whether the result sought was improvement in the control of errors, increased sentence length, or increased variety of sentence structure; whether the students were in junior high school, high school, or college; whether they came from privileged or under-privileged backgrounds; whether the grammar studied was traditional, structural, or transformational generative. If there is one conclusion to be drawn which cuts across all the studies, it is this: the more time spent analyzing grammar as grammar, the less time spent writing; the less time spent writing, the less the improvement in the written product.

These hard facts cause many Basic Writing instructors to abandon the attempt to teach any grammar systematically. They hope, by emphasizing for the student the development of his unique voice and a number of strategies for finding and organizing better content, to foster simultaneously an improved self image, a confidence and pride in the act of writing, a desire to make it perfect on every level. They hope to avoid a psychologically debilitating, boring, and futile preoccupation with grammar and error, in the belief that the student can get it right readily enough when he genuinely has the motivation to do so and in the belief that repeated exposure to the written standard will enable the student to acquire standard forms by osmosis, much as his instructor acquired them.

These same hard facts leave other instructors with lingering doubts and suspicions. They are persuaded they became more astute observers

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of the language and better writers partly as a result of rigorous grammatical study, sometimes of English, sometimes of a foreign language. Resisting, in disbelief, the clear enough results of dozens of studies, they suspect that something was radically wrong with the research design or the instruction in grammar itself. They suspect, for example, that it takes longer than a single quarter, semester or even year for the study of grammar to manifest itself in improved fluency or correctness. They suspect that the study of grammar was boring: too deductive, facts-oriented, and passive, rather than inductive, actively analytical, stimulating, and discovery-laden. They suspect that the study of grammar was divorced from rather than thoroughly integrated into the process of writing, and perhaps intentionally, as a test of automatic rather than carefully mediated transference. They cannot bring themselves to believe that units combining the analysis of a grammatical principle with well-structured proofreading, imitation, paraphrase, and sentence consolidation exercises, and with directed writing assignments could fail to produce more significant results in both fluency and error control.

They suspect, in addition, that the research design did not take into account, nor teach across, first, the difference between the mental operations activated by reading for meaning, where one blocks out the interference of errors and miscues, and proofreading, in which one blocks out all but that meaning necessary to parse for errors and miscues, nor secondly, the difference between the parsing skills necessary for handbook exercises and the additional skill of psychological distancing necessary for proofing one's own work. Worst of all, they distrust the efficacy of linguistic osmosis, seeing the student's non-standard forms as a semi-permeable membrane across which new concepts and meanings—but not new linguistic patterns—will move with ease; they suspect that there are some errors, perhaps many, over which the student will have neither proofreading nor productive control until he has an analytical and conceptual control of the grammar of the standard dialect.

CATEGORIES OF GRAMMAR BASED ERRORS

The grammatical errors of beginning adult writers that one might hope to address through grammar are legion. They fall into several broad groups.

There are the inflectional omissions, redundancies, and leveling errors of the nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives and adverbs, involving

plurality, possession, agreement, tense, case and degree which arise from different phonological and grammatical rules in the student's home dialect. (Omission: *two boy, John coat;* redundancy: *more better;* extension: *hisself, theirself(ves)*—like *myself, yourself, herself, ourselves;* I *seen* him do it—shared preterite and perfective form, as in *taught, bought, caught, slept, kept.*)

There are other less common forms derived from the more familiar spoken language which involve not so much the inflections of words but the choice, form, order, even the omission of words. These errors include the omitted ("zero") present tense copula; the omission of any contractable first auxiliary as in *he go* for *he will/would go;* the use of *-en* for *-ing* on participles where pronunciations are similar, as in *He is eaten his dinner;* durative *be; ain't* as a negative auxiliary before the unmarked (*go*), progressive (*going*), and perfective verb forms (variously *went* or *gone*); *done* or *been* as the perfective auxiliary; the reduced purposive future (I'm *gonna/gon/on/a/* put the cat out); the reduced conditional perfect (I(woul)d *of/a* done it myself); multiple negatives (John could*n't* do *nothing* for her. Could*n't nobody* do *nothing* for her. *Ain't nobody* can(*'t*) do *nothing* for her.); and the indirect question (I asked him whose turn *was it.* I asked him *is it* his turn.)

There are the hypercorrect forms like *can walks, could walked, to finished, to be abled, he walk's,* forms which do not belong in either dialect, but which result from the student's attempt to produce standard inflections. In the absence of a pronunciation clue in his own dialect and in the absence of an abstract grasp of standard inflections, he must simply guess where *-s-'s,-s'* and *-ed* go.

On the one hand, there are the words lacking derivational affixes, like *courage* for *courageous* or *astonish* for *astonishment,* which bespeak the student's lack of familiarity with the system of derivational affixes that turn nouns to adjectives, verbs to nouns, and so on. In contrast, there are the coined words, many of them marvelously inventive, such as *enbodyness* for *embodiment,* which bespeak the student's attempt to manipulate a system he partially understands and the linguistic fact that the forms of many words are arbitrary. Here the student senses that he has heard the word he needs or that such a word ought to exist: he lacks familiarity with the specific word he needs.

There are the syntactically tangled sentences which result from the student's attempt to extend his syntactic control over longer stretches of related ideas, in order to show within a single sentence the complex patterns of logical and grammatical subordination, differential relation, and equivalence. Tangles increase with abstract topics because the student must perceive, consolidate, and clarify the complex relations

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between the observable facts and his conclusions. Thus the more perceptive and far-reaching a student's insights, the more difficulty he will have parcelling them out into sentences that properly order and relate them; the more inexperienced the student is as a writer, the less he will know how to start and, if off on the wrong foot, how to start over again. These syntactically tangled sentences may be classified according to the structures involved in the production of the tangle.[1]

In some cases, the student's problem seems to be a lack of familiarity with a particular structure, for example, the inverted subject verb and divided *but . . . also* of the co-ordinated clauses beginning *"Not only . . ."*. In other cases, it seems clear enough that the student can produce well-formed subordinate clauses of cause, condition, concession, and so on most of the time, but that he may mismanage them when he is trying to handle a number of subordinations simultaneously, with the result that his sentence contains peculiar redundancies and lapses. In some cases, it appears that the student has access to a multiplicity of options for expressing his idea, but that having settled on an option as he begins, he is unable to keep other options from impinging as he continues. In other cases one suspects that the student is limited to specific options for handling various parts of his sentence, and that these options do not mesh with each other and cannot be made to, without resort to a total recasting which exploits an option to which he has no productive, though perhaps passive, access.

Last of all there are the fragments, run-ons, and comma splices. These are of course errors of punctuation rather than grammar, yet they arise because the student cannot co-ordinate conventional punctuation with anything more specific than length in number of words or pauses in speech or his sense that some parts of what he has written "are related" or "refer to each other" or "belong together" in some way. Thus a student may punctuate a long introductory prepositional phrase with a period because he pauses there and because "it's so long it has to be a sentence," or he may punctuate sentences like "The movie star Bruce Lee was a remarkable person, he didn't let his success go to his head" with a comma, and explain that the comma is used because *he* "refers back to"

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[1]See Mina Shaughnessy's *Errors and Expectations*, Chapter 3, "Syntax," for an illuminating discrimination between Accidental Errors (inadvertant word omissions or misspellings which miscue the reader), Blurred Patterns (a syntactically dissonant mixture of two or more patterns, as in "By going to college a young person could *get an increase his knowledge* about the world he lived in."), Consolidation Errors involving subordination, coordination, and juxtaposition, and Inversions (errors resulting from imperfect control of all departures from the most normal word order whether in simple sentences, relative clause structures, extraposed noun clauses, or unusual sentence patterns such as *the more, the merrier*).

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Bruce Lee. Compare *who*). These errors arise because the student is unable to establish sentence boundaries by distinguishing independent clauses from all the other structures which can attach to them and which often closely resemble them.

The question is, which of these problems will yield to the study of grammar? And how much grammar should a student be taught? How much does he need to know? Traditional, structural, transformational generative? What, in short, are the uses—and limits—of grammar?

USES OF GRAMMAR FOR TEACHERS

There are a number of benefits that can accrue to the instructor who has immersed himself in such works as Otto Jesperson's *Philosophy of Grammar* and *Essentials of English Grammar* or Labov's *Language in the Inner City* or a bone crunching graduate course in transformational generative grammar or, better yet, comparative approaches to English grammar. These activities, apart from the hard information they impart, suggest alternative ways of viewing the world of language, and have the salutory effect of making one aware that very different kinds of rules are possible and valid, that there are constraints on the operation of "rules" which appear to defy explanation—aware of something he may have forgotten: what it feels like to be a student awash in a subject he does not comprehend. So important is it for the instructor to keep before himself a feeling for what it is not to know, a model of how it is he himself learns, and how the process of coming into knowledge works, that my gutsy high school geometry teacher spent some of her summers taking advanced graduate courses out of her field, without the proper prerequisites. Otherwise, she forgot, she said, why it was her students could not understand what was obvious to her; otherwise she could not teach. Otherwise she could only be impatient with our perverse stupidity. If, however, she had been recently confused herself, she could spot the likely sources of our confusion, though in subject matter intimately familiar to her, and move us past our confusions in a sensible order.

No capacity will better serve the Basic Writing teacher than this capacity to probe for the student's perspective on a particular problem. This capacity to imagine and project oneself into solutions, alternatives, world views other than one's own is, after all, just what we are asking of the student, in our classes and in the liberal arts curriculum. We can strengthen our pedagogy by consciously exercising it ourselves. By doing so, we discover more exactly the kinds of knowledge that separate

us from the student. It is not enough to know that he is wrong, but that he is wrong for a reason.

There are a number of ways the Basic Writing instructor can serve the student better by having grammatical expertise. If he reads the available literature on non-standard dialects and second language interference patterns, he will more readily see the sources of many of his student's errors, and what before seemed chaotic or careless mistakes will have explanations and often prove to have rules of their own.

If the instructor is familiar with several schools of grammar, he will be better able to practice an informed eclecticism, picking and choosing from a variety of explanations, possible presentations, and "discovery procedures" those that are most likely to shed light for the student on his error, to tell him exactly what to do exactly where in order to be correct, to give him a "mechanical" way both to produce correct forms and to proofread for correctness. Grammatical expertise will give him a sense for the times when he can simply explain a principle and for the other times when the principle to be explained is sufficiently complicated that it is better, though much more time-consuming, to lead the student inductively to a grasp of the principle, with the student drawing the increasingly complex generalizations from increasingly complex facts of standard grammar. It will give him a better perception of what it is the student has to "discover" and how this "discovery" can be "arranged."

Grammatical expertise will help him improve his exercises in a variety of other ways. He will improve his intuitions about the natural sequences in his instruction and have a means of thinking about areas of uncertainty. It will help him decide how to pull together all the forms which the student finds distractingly similar or distressingly contradictory, such as the base word ending with -s, the noun plural -s, the verb singular -s, the contraction 's, and the possessives (-'s, -s'),[2] and how to begin with unrealistically simplified material, in order to establish the principle, and then add increasingly complicating distractors, as in teaching the recognition of sentence boundaries. It will help him reason in advance about which distractors are likely to be most distracting for his students, or if he simply stumbles across an extremely discriminating test item, he will be able to understand and generalize the principle he has hit upon. In either case, he can better focus practice and measures of mastery in the areas where confusions or perceptual blocks are greatest. It will help him know why certain errors prove most recalcitrant, long after the student masters the principle, and it will suggest

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[2]See Patricia Lawrence, "Error's Endless Train," *Journal of Basic Writing*, I (Spring 1975), pp. 35-37, for a set of graduated perceptual exercises in recognizing the inflection -s.

ways to use language forms and competencies the student already has in order to elicit and foster those he does not.

Grammatical expertise will replace the teacher's tendency to mark errors and supply the correct forms with a tendency to think in terms of interrelated systems which comprehend and address the sources of student error. It will give him the tools to address all of the kinds of error enumerated above. Indeed, the more standard and non-standard grammar the teacher knows, the more he may economize in his instruction to the student, out of knowing what is relevant and for what purposes.

None of the benefits I have mentioned accrue inevitably to the person who studies grammars. Pedants can become more pedantic. But the person who is familiar with some of the methods and results of linguistic analysis is likely to improve his grasp of various productive techniques of grammatical study, and to see that different grammars can be put to productive use in a variety of ways.

USES OF GRAMMAR FOR STUDENTS

Orientation toward error. Given our course objectives, that a student learn to write, and to write more fluently and more cogently, as well as more correctly, it follows that all grammatical study should be subordinated to the elimination of error, so that grammatical study will take away as little time as possible from actual practice writing. I would argue that the rigorous study of the grammatical subtleties of the language will, like the rigorous study of algebra, calculus, chemistry, Shakespeare, and symbolic logic, sharpen the critical faculties and "improve" the mind. The most significant question is, however, not whether students would profit in some general abstract way from rigorous grammatical study or whether this sort of study would not, in time, lead to a more sensitive and more correct use of the standard language, but whether, given the two or three semesters the student has in which to prove he can pass muster, it is the most gainful use he can make of his time, given his urgent need to write better and in the standard dialect. While it is necessary to address ourselves directly to the grammatical difficulties that make our student population different from "traditional" students, it would be folly to ignore the avalanche of studies that point to minimal connection between the ability to parse, label, diagram, and correct exercises and a more generalized correctness, fluency and elegance in writing.

From this general principle, two more follow. First, grammatical

instruction should proceed with a minimum of terminology and the simplest terminology possible. In practice, this seems to mean using the traditional terms which many of our students have heard and to which they are attached, but supplementing them with the visible forms which we want our students to produce. Where our students have not learned a label—"gerund" is a case in point for most—"the *-ing* form in a noun position" will do. Whole sets of constructions can be handled in this manner. Exercises practicing transformational paraphrases can describe the paraphrases to be produced as the *-'s-ing* paraphrase, the *-'s* *-xxx* (special ending) paraphrase, the *for . . . to . . .* paraphrase, and the *it . . . that* paraphrase, for example, in an exercise of this sort:

Convert the underlined *the fact that* clause to the following paraphrases as in the example below:

The fact that his best student failed the exam surprised Prof. Helton.

's-ing
  His best student's failing the exam surprised Prof. Helton.

-'s -xxx
  His best student's failure of the exam surprised Prof. Helton.

for . . . to . . .
  For his best student to fail the exam surprised Prof. Helton.

It . . . that . . .
  It surprised Prof. Helton that his best student failed the exam.

One need not refer to "gerund phrases," "infinitive phrases," "extraposition" and the like, for these terms simply divert attention from the operations to be accomplished and from the visible forms by which they are accomplished. Nothing is to be gained, when the objective is error reduction, by covering the grammatical ground, in order to round out the grammar, unless the constructions being discussed are not readily accessible to the student or are a source of error, and in a way clear to the instructor.

Second, at the same time that the instructor is attempting to minimize the time devoted to grammar, he must be careful to teach whatever makes standard English predictable for the student—not only what is necessary, but also, *all* that is necessary. Otherwise his instruction in grammar falls short of its objective, the elimination of error. The standard dialect remains intractable and unruly for our students until they can impose the right rules. The student who is told that all verb phrases are marked for present or past tense is likely to produce forms

like *can walks* and *could walked,* unless he is also led to see that a first auxiliary, if present, bears the only tense marking, and that other endings have other sources.

Integration of grammar study and writing. The instructor should integrate the study of a grammatical concept into the process of writing as thoroughly as he can contrive the mix, so that the student transfers an abstract grasp of grammatical principles to correct production, and so that he addresses matters of fluency, maturity, cogency, and correctness simultaneously. Integrating grammatical study and actual writing is not so difficult a task as may first appear, once one has this in mind as an important objective and once one has a repertoire of techniques at his disposal. The two may be integrated in a variety of ways, but the objective is always to integrate the actual production of forms with an understanding of the forms to be produced and with actual proofreading for those forms. Four strategies are discussed below.

1. Dictation. One highly productive way to integrate production and proofreading is old-fashioned dictation. The instructor can write and dictate short passages heavily laden with troublesome forms, let us say present and past perfectives of regular verbs ending in consonant clusters, where the student is least likely to pronounce or hear the terminal *-ed.* The practice is most beneficial if it follows by one class hour the study of the construction of the tenses at hand but if the structural point of the dictation is at first unremarked. The student, having taken down the passage, is then told the "real" content, and told to go back and supply and circle every *-ed* he missed. This dictation can be followed by another immediately, of like kind. The point is to make the student aware of his aural perceptual block and aware of the fact that he has the analytical skill to overcome it, by matching up *have's* with perfective endings, and to give him chances to practice overcoming his perceptual resistance to the correct form, at the point where that resistance is highest, by applying his analytical knowledge of the construction of these phrases.

2. Grammatical follow-ups to writing assignments. The sort of practice in simultaneous production and proofreading that occurs in dictation can be supplemented by another in which production and proofreading are more discrete. The student may be instructed to write an essay using one of several topic sentences establishing a present perfect frame ("My parents have (not) had a lot of influence on my beliefs and values," "The person who has had the most influence on my present beliefs and values is . . ." "I have had to reject (come to accept) a lot of the things I was taught by my family."). He is also instructed, as a part of his

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proofreading, to sunburst ⟨ ⟩ every use of *have, has,* or *had* as a simple, one-word verb, and to box every *have* which appears as an auxiliary, and to box the past participle form of the verb that occurs with it, making sure he has used the past participle form. This sort of grammatical follow up to the writing assignment forces the student to reread his paper, and to proofread it for one kind of error. It encourages him to transfer the skills he uses to correct workbook exercises to his own writing and to develop the psychological distance toward his own work that proofreading, and more importantly, rewriting, require.

Other grammatically oriented follow-ups appropriate to other grammatical lessons would include such exercises as using a slash to divide every complete subject from every complete verb in every sentence; circling every dependent clause marker, to be sure every dependent clause is punctuated to tie it to its main clause; underlining every tense marked verb and verb phrase in the paper; and underlining every present tense verb and its subject, having first had the student write an essay using a topic sentence which established a third person singular topic (and potential subject for the sentences) and a clearly present time frame ("My father always encourages me to. . . ." "Aunt Emma is always telling me. . . .").

3. Paraphrases and conversions. Yet another way to integrate writing and grammatical practice is to construct grammatical exercises so that they require considerable rewriting and recasting rather than simply picking the correct option or marking the error and supplying the correct form. While the latter kinds of exercises are useful for determining quickly whether the student has mastered the principle involved, they do not reveal the extent to which the student has moved from a conceptual grasp of the principle to an internalized operational knowledge of the principle, that is, to the ability to produce the correct forms under the stresses and distractions of writing. Nor do they give the student the opportunity to internalize the operation of the principle by practicing the production of the correct forms in the context of a modified form of actual composition.

Exercises of this sort may require the student to convert sentences or entire passages from *of-plus-noun* prepositional phrases to possessives thereof, and vice versa; from the third person singular to the plural, and vice versa, picking up pronoun and subject verb agreement; from the present to the past, and vice versa; from the active voice to the passive and vice versa; from sets of simple sentences to "combined" sentences, and vice versa; from full noun clauses to phrasal equivalents and vice versa; from direct discourse, especially questions, to indirect discourse and vice versa; and so on. There is a natural sequence to many of these exercises,

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later exercises assuming previous exposure to some grammatical fact. The student who had trouble with simple noun and pronoun possessives will have an opportunity for review in sentence combining or imitation exercises requiring nominalized structures, including the -'s -ing, -'s -xxx (special ending) paraphrases mentioned above, as for example, in sentence combining exercises of this sort:

Combine the two sentences below, using *is -ing* and -'s -xxx to convert the second sentence to a phrase replacing SOMETHING, as in the example:

I was worried about SOMETHING.
My parents had disappeared mysteriously.

-s -ing
       I was worried about my parents' disappearing mysteriously.

-s -xxx
       I was worried about my parents' mysterious disappearance.

4. Imitation. Still another way to integrate writing and grammatical practice is through imitation exercises of various sorts. In one kind of close imitation, emphasizing function words and word endings, the student matches one sentence with another of his own, by filling in the blanks appropriately. It is sometimes helpful to suggest the topic of the new sentence, especially in the early exercises (see B below), lest students inadvertently pick a topic, like the abstract word *aspect,* that makes parallelism difficult. Thus: ·

Match these sentences with three of your own:

A. I *was* worried *about* my parents' disappear*ing* mysterious*ly.*

    1. _____ was _____ ed about _____ _____s'
        _____ing _____ ly.

    2. _____ was _____ ed about _____ _____ s'
        _____ ing _____ ly.

    3. _____ was _____ ed about _____ _____ s'
        _____ing _____ ly.

Now write a sentence of your own, making it structurally identical to the three you have already produced.

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1. _____

    _____

B. *The* gent*ly* fall*ing* snow sift*ed through the* denud*ed* branch*es of the* tree.

    1. The _____ ly _____ ing man _____ ed

       through the _____ ed _____ (e)s of the _____ .

    2. The _____ ly _____ ing snob _____ ed

       through the _____ ed _____ (e)s of the _____ .

    3. The _____ ly _____ ing face _____ ed

       through the _____ ed _____ (e)s of the _____ .

    Now write two sentences of your own, making them structurally identical to the three you have already produced.

    1. _____

       _____

    2. _____

       _____

Sentences with multiple "levels" or "layers" of co-ordination and modification impose their own semantic constraints, and with this sort of sentence it is best to use a much looser kind of imitation which emphasizes these larger structural relations, and to preface "pure" imitation with practice combining short sentences where these larger relations have been worked out. Sentence combining has already been shown to increase the maturity of student sentences as measured in T-units (essentially all main clauses with all their modifiers, even if mispunctuated as fragments).[3] Combining "canned" sentences appears to be less effective than combining student-generated sentences, at least with some remedial students.[4] Preliminary investigation suggests that

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[3] See John C. Mellon's *Transformational Sentence Combining*, Research Report No. 6 (Champaign, Ill: NCTE, 1966) and Frank O'Hare's *Sentence Combining*, Research Report No. 15 (Champaign, Ill.: NCTE, 1971).

[4] Studies of sentence combining with remedial students include James Wesley Howell's "A Comparison of Achievement of Students in Remedial English Using a Linguistic and a Traditional Approach" (Diss. New York Univ., 1973), Andrea Lunsford's "An Historical, Descriptive, and Evaluative Study of Remedial English in American Colleges and Universities" (Diss. Ohio State Univ., 1974), and Leslie Freede's, "The Impact of Sentence Combining on the Syntactic Maturity of College Students at the Remedial Level (Master's Thesis, City College, 1976).

imitation exercises have a greater effect than sentence combining.[5]

It seems likely that a combination of sentence combining and sentence imitation will prove as or more effective than either strategy alone. Neither sentence combining nor sentence imitation is exactly comparable to the process of composing, where the writer simultaneously generates ideas and wrestles with the various structural options for setting them forth. But sentence combining allows a student to practice using an option he underexploits in a context that is right, by supplying ready-made content, and sentence imitation encourages him to generate both the structure he underexploits as well as a semantically appropriate context for it. Of the two, imitation is the more difficult and the more similar to actual composition, unlike it in imposing sharp restrictions on both content and form that are absent in ordinary spontaneous composition. But these restrictions may channel thought productively, actually suggesting lines of development as well as limiting them.

An exercise combining the techniques of sentence generation, sentence combining and imitation generally needs four components of incremental difficulty: (1) an example showing shorter separate sentences and how they might be combined according to a specific structural pattern, (2) a structurally parallel group of sentences which the student is to combine using the specified pattern, (3) an incomplete group of sentences with the most difficult parts of the content and the structurally crucial elements given, which the student is to complete and then combine according to the same pattern, (4) space for the student to work out his own sentences and his own combination of them, with the structurally crucial elements given. If the student is likely to become stalled because he cannot find appropriate content, the instructor may want to give the sentence(s) or suggest topics suitable to parallel development. These four stages are isolated at steps A through D in two sample exercises given at Appendix A. The first exercise results in single descriptive sentences of some complexity, the second in expository paragraphs of four sentences. As a finale for the second exercise, the student is given strategies for doubling the length—and substance—of these paragraphs, and opportunity to practice these strategies.

These sorts of exercises are turned to best use when they move from narrative and descriptive passages to the exposition we want our students to learn to produce. Then they can be used to teach the student to develop and order kinds of content such as different examples,

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[5]Rosemary Hake (Chicago State) and Joseph Williams (University of Chicago) have noted these results in carefully matched sentence combining and imitation exercises.

different reasons for coming to the same conclusion, different results and their place in the cause-effect chain. We can also use them to teach the student to recognize and exploit the semantic equivalence and syntactic differences of the words and phrases that specify the relationships between clauses such as *but, however,* and *although,* and *as a result, with the result that* and *so that* in the second sample exercise.

A final word about imitation exercises. They can and should be turned to rhetorical questions. The necessity of imitating may lead a student to omit ideas or to raise his points in an infelicitous order. Students may discuss, for example, whether the three reasons given for opposing gun control in Exercise 2 in the Appendix are raised in the most effective order, moving as they do from large matters of political wisdom in governance to matters of private inconvenience or private sacrifice. Are there different effective orders? One for arguing the case, another for rebutting it? Imitation exercises may well conclude with the suggestion that the student start over with the same topic from scratch, free of the restrictions that imitation imposed on the development of his ideas.

The discovery approach. I have argued that it is most productive for Basic Writing students if their instructors teach only that grammar necessary for the student to address error, and even *that* grammar as economically and as thoroughly integrated into the process of writing as possible.

I would argue further that what turns out to be economical in the long run is often time-consuming over the short haul. The paradoxical economy of the longer explanation arises for two reasons. First, some phenomena, such as the construction of verb phrases, are so complex that nothing other than a long drawn out analysis makes the total system comprehensible. Second, almost any grammatical point is more interesting to the student when he himself discovers the "rule" or "convention" from examples of its operation, instead of the more customary handbook method of stating the rule and giving examples. For any point of instruction, the instructor must weigh the complexity of the point and gains in student interest against the inevitable expenditure of extra time lost to other purposes.

The inductive or discovery approach has three further advantages. The student tends to remember the conclusion he has drawn himself better than one he has been given, and if his memory begins to slip, he has access to a method for recovering the rule. In addition, the approach fosters an exploratory, open classroom tone which encourages the student to interact with, challenge, and one-up his classmates in a spirit of friendly competitiveness and mutual inquiry. Finally, it respects the

student's intelligence, treating the student as the teacher's equal, not in acquired knowledge, certainly, but in insight and perceptiveness.

1. Sharp focus on significant differences. The success of the discovery method depends upon the instructor's skill with two strategies. The first of these is the strategy of pulling together, into one place, all the structures the student finds confusing. Sometimes these structures are closely related in meaning but significantly different in form, as with the phrase and dependent clause variants of an independent clause; sometimes the structures are essentially unrelated, but superficially similar, as in the case of the -*s*'s ending words. In either case, the student experiences the structures as an imperfectly discriminated, only partially articulated whole. Thus, the instructor should operate out of a strictly conceived contrastive approach, which excludes, at first, all of the distracting variables which are the actuality of real language use but off the structural point at hand. By the term "strictly conceived contrastive approach," I do not mean the method of foreign language teaching based upon "contrastive analysis" of the structures of the native language and the foreign language, though I do not recommend against this approach for students with many deeply-seated native language or dialect differences for whom relatively few standard inflections come easily, even in conferences, and for whom the overt translation may be productive. What I have in mind is the simultaneous presentation of the structural variants for essentially identical kinds of logical relation or semantic content in the target dialect. This strategy not only emphasizes the resourcefulness and variety of the language; it forces the student to focus on those function words and inflectional endings by which structural differences are signalled—precisely those words and endings which escape or bedevil him in proofreading.

For example, in introducing the sentence, it has proven illuminating and economical to give the student lists of semantically related structures like these, asking him to identify the *one* complete sentence in each group by giving it a capital and period:

> for the child to sing sweetly
> the child's sweet song
> the sweetly singing child
> the child singing sweetly
> the child is singing sweetly
> that the child is singing sweetly
> if the child is singing sweetly
> whenever the child is singing sweetly

for the woman to smile knowingly
the woman's knowing smile
the knowingly smiling woman
the woman smiling knowingly
the woman was smiling knowingly
that the woman was smiling knowingly
because the woman was smiling knowingly
so that the woman was smiling knowingly

for the bomb to explode suddenly
the bomb's sudden explosion
the suddenly exploding bomb
the bomb exploding suddenly
the bomb exploded suddenly
that the bomb exploded suddenly
when the bomb exploded suddenly
unless the bomb exploded suddenly

for the student to be genuinely astonished
the student's genuine astonishment
the genuinely astonished student
the student being genuinely astonished
the student was genuinely astonished
that the student was genuinely astonished
since the student was genuinely astonished
although the student was genuinely astonished

The students are then asked to try to define a sentence—not as a complete idea—but in terms of its structural parts: what it must have and what it must lack. The instructor leads the class at the board in identifying all the things that change from line to line with circles, underlining the things that do not change; for example, in the first group, *the, child, sing, sweet* would be underlined, and *for, to, -ly, -ing, is, that, if, whenever* circled. When the instructor reaches the addition of the word *is,* he makes the point that this word marks the noun verb relationship for time, as one can tell by substituting another time-marked word, *was.* None of the earlier word groups were marked for time. The time of the action expressed by these verbs will vary according to the time expressed in the verbs that must be added to turn these word groups into sentences: "The child's sweet song *is bringing/ brought/ will bring* tears to my eyes." As the instructor moves through the dependent clauses, he leads students to note that they are identical to the complete sentence, except that they contain an extra word which marks the clause

as a part of some other sentence. The students are led to the conclusion that a sentence must have a subject and a tense-marked verb and must lack a dependent clause marker. The teacher should work through one or two sets of sentences on the board, then have the students do the circles and underlinings for another one or two independently at their desks.

At the next stage, the instructor has the class give the non-sentence equivalents of *Flight 110 is arriving promptly; The infant whimpered weakly, Gus laughs easily* and *My mother was truly pleased;* the first one or two as board work, the last independently. Students then use the same system of circling the variables and underlining the constants, to be sure they got their versions right.

Last of all the students look at three structures which are ambiguous grammatically: they can be sentences or not, depending on context: *which woman was smiling knowingly* (as direct question or noun clause), *the student genuinely astonished* (as nominative absolute, as noun with non-restrictive participle, as direct object noun with direct object participial complement, as sentence with an omitted, context-clear object) and *the child's singing sweetly* (as gerund phrase paraphrasable as *the child's sweet singing* and as a sentence with a contracted *is*). Obviously the students do not struggle with labels; they simply produce sentence and non-sentence examples, by adding words, paraphrasing, changing intonation, and supplying the situational context to illustrate their insights. From this point the class can move in one of several directions—for example, to a discussion of the different kinds of -s, all of which they have had to use in these paraphrases, or to sentence expansion and contraction exercises.

2. Incrementation. The second strategy necessary for a successful discovery process, especially for the weaker students, is a very careful and purposeful incrementation, moving from the state of extremely simplified contrasts of bare-bones structures through the stages by which increasingly complex variables and distracting items are added, in the order which will prove most helpful to the students. For instance, familiar words are easier than unfamiliar words, short words are easier than long ones, verbs which require no derivational ending when converted to noun function *(smile)* are easier than those that do *(astonishment)*, active voice verbs are easier than passives, common derivational patterns *(astonish/astonishment)* are easier than less common ones *(demean, demeanor)*, unambiguous structures are easier than ambiguous ones. The purpose of incrementation is to avoid overwhelming the less confident or weaker student with more information than he can process simultaneously. Like the llama bearing

only one stick too many, the student may be unable to rise. In the exercise just above, for example, it may be a good idea to eliminate the adjective to adverb conversion (*sweet, sweetly*) for some or all of the groups of sentences, depending upon the entry level of the students and the rate at which they are mastering the phrase and dependent clause variants of the simple sentence. Similarly, the common adjective to adverb conversion should be practiced before flat adverbs like *early* and *fast*, or irregular conversions like *good/well*, or converted prepositional phrases (*arriving at noon/noon arrival*); and intransitive complete verbs before intransitive linking verbs and transitive verbs taking direct objects. In sentences with both indirect and direct objects, or direct objects and direct object complements, some of the phrase variants are so clumsy that a few examples serve as an admonishment to avoid them, and students should be encouraged to develop ugliness scales for such structures as *my giving Mary a little help* and *my gift to Mary of a little help*, and *the gift to Mary from me of a little help*.

Finally, at the same time the instructor laboriously learns how, like a slow-motion instant-replay camera, to delay and replay the flow of language events, he must also be able to fast-forward through them as rapidly as progress admits, even to drop all his painstakingly developed exercises as soon as it becomes apparent the exercises address problems the students do not or no longer have.

THE LIMITS OF GRAMMARS

Every grammatical approach is limited. Each has a bias growing out of some central assumption, some central problem to be solved, some central question to be answered. Each has, as a result, strengths of a certain kind and weaknesses of other kinds. Traditional grammar, with its emphasis on words and meanings and its assumption that Latin was the model, tends to be prescriptive, even inaccurate, and often about matters of little moment, has little to say useful on word order, and gives a static rather than dynamic view of language. But much is of value: the labels for parts of speech and their functions, and much of the semantic subcategorization of the parts of speech, such as the subclassification of nouns as concrete or abstract, count or mass, common or proper, has been incorporated into subsequent grammars. Structural grammar, with its emphasis on the linearity of language and on discovery procedures that would reveal the internal structures of that linear sequence, has much more to say that is useful about the discovery process, about defining the parts of speech by function word signals, inflections and derivational affixes rather than meaning, and about the

order of syntactic elements. But it has relatively little to say about the kinds of relations that undergird, cut across, or transcend word order. Transformational generative grammar, with its emphasis on these transformational relations between structures and its disputes about what should be regarded as transforms, has much to say of use about these relations and suggests many useful strategies such as sentence combining and transformational paraphrasing, but in a language of symbols and diagrams so foreign and technical that it remains inaccessible to most.

There appear to be, regrettably, limits upon every attempt to deal with the full range of possibilities in the language in a simple way. The extremely elegant transformation rule for verb phrase structure which I take up below does not tidily account for the way *ought to* lacks a present equivalent (*owe* is obsolete), or the way *must go* is the present equivalent of *had to go*, nor the behavior of other modal like structures. Fortunately, these structures are not the source of written errors for many students. Similarly, the x-word grammar strategy of having students turn declarative sentences to questions, is extremely useful in teaching subject-verb agreement, tense-marking, subject location and in overcoming the sentence fragment. Instructors will be delighted to discover that the question technique will locate the subject of "There's the book you wanted me to read" by normalizing the order: 'Is the book you wanted me to read there?" Many will be dismayed to find the word *there* identified as the subject in sentences like "There are things I can do to help" when the sentence is converted: "Are there things I can do to help?" This same strategy will help students who write frequent fragments find most of them: long introductory phrases, subjects divided from verbs, verbs separated from subjects, and adverb clauses simply will not convert. Neither will a few other structures which are, nonetheless, complete sentences. Sentences with subject infinitives such as "For Nixon to deny involvement angered the public" do not convert as "Did for Nixon to deny involvement anger the public?" but as "Did it anger the public for Nixon to deny involvement?" and sentences with comparisons on the pattern of *the more, the merrier*, such as "The less the student writes, the less he improves" do not convert gracefully to "Is the less the student writes, the less he improves?" Something like "Is it true that the less the student writes, the less he improves?" is the grammatical paraphrase. Furthermore, some fragments can be converted to questions: The author's intent can escape the strategic net if the author intends a single sentence in such constructions as "I didn't know. Which waitress would come to my table" and "I hadn't realized. That was the book. She wanted me to read." Every system has the painful

exceptions that require elaboration of the "simple" rule.

Beyond the conceptual limitations of any given grammar, and the limitations imposed by the complexity of language itself, there is the fact that no grammar that is taught to Basic Writing students as it would be taught to upperclassmen or graduate students, that is, largely divorced from practice in perception, intensive writing, and enforced proofreading, will have a significant effect on the writing of these students. As suggested earlier, the better results obtained with structural and generative grammars as theoretical bases seem to depend upon the fact that they suggested exercises which involved actually operating the language rather than merely dissecting it. A further limit upon the effectiveness of grammatical instruction is the human limitation of the instructor: limited time, limited information, and limited imagination in addressing the problems of perception, production, and proofreading. We can do a great deal to overcome the weaknesses of individual grammars, to expand our knowledge, and to stimulate our imaginations by reading widely and by consciously mediating between grammatical analysis and the synthesis of writing. For the chief limit of grammar is that grammatical analysis has no necessary connection to the synthetic process of writing. Perception is not production. Production is not proofreading. By whatever system the instruction is done, diagraming and parsing are about as similar to writing as admiring the dance and executing it, watching pro ball and playing it. We minimize our effectiveness anytime we lose sight of this first principle.

A SYLLABUS FOR TEACHING THE VERB PHRASE

The remainder of this article is a discursive account of how I teach the verb phrase system, chosen because it is a part of the language about which many errors center and because I believe the single most powerful tool for getting the endings right remains inaccessible to most Basic Writing teachers and their students.

In the paragraphs written below, I have assumed that my reader is a beginning Basic Writing teacher working with classes in which there are large numbers of students with very strong dialect interference. Thus I have laid out, in considerable detail, the steps by which principles can be introduced, re-inforced, elaborated, re-inforced again, and so on, on the assumption that something like a syllabus would be most useful and most illustrative of the pedagogical principles and grammatical eclecticism of which I have written. I try to forestall the procedural pitfalls into which I have fallen. Many suggested strategies below begin,

"If the class needs additional practice...." Obviously, the instructor must gauge what suits each class at its level out of all that is suggested, what is suitable for the total class, what is suitable for selected students. He must also decide the balance between work in class and work out of class.

The most useful description of the verb for the Basic Writing student is probably a rather formidable-looking transformational-generative phrase structure rule, slightly adapted, which the student can use for proofreading:

VP→-T (modal -ϕ) (have -en) (be -ing) (be -en) MV.

Fortunately, the rule looks a lot more formidable than it is, and the statement of the rule can be postponed until all the groundwork has been laid. The process of arriving at the rule leaves the student with a vivid image of the structure of the verb phrase as a set of interlocking relations, rather like a set of interlocking, elongated U's:

⌣⌣⌣⌣⌣⌣⌣⌣⌣⌣. The special appropriateness of this formulation for the Basic Writing student, characteristically plagued by inflectional omissions, is that it makes the point that it takes a tense-marked verb to predicate and that it calls attention to the endings, always indicated by hyphens, which must be attached and to the auxiliaries with which they pair up or "co-occur." It simultaneously lays the base for two important rules that cover the hypercorrections: predicating verbs are never marked for tense more than once, and infinitive phrases are never marked for tense at all. One rule will cover this field. A teacher who works through the exercise below—the same one to be done by the student—knows enough to teach the rule.

Before teaching the phrase structure rule itself, it is helpful to get the students well-grounded in a number of preliminary concepts, so that the rule functions as a summation of what they have already learned. These grammatical concepts include the sentence, person, subject-verb agreement, the present and past progressive, the present and past perfect, and the simple past.

I have already discussed my strategies for teaching sentence recognition by phrase and dependent clause equivalents of simple sentences.

With regard to person, all the student needs to see is that the personal pronouns are a system of shorthand for relating the speaker and listener to the fact reported in a sentence. Students almost never have trouble with the concept of person in actual practice: They find it very easy to draw the distinction between the person(s) speaking, the person(s) spoken to, and the person(s) spoken about. They may enjoy demonstrating their facility in short oral exercises. Names of students in

any class can be substituted in the two sentences below:

Vanessa sold Carlos' dictionary to Susan and Tony.

Robert and Mary bought Sandra's dictionary from Paula.

Each person named is asked to report the fact to each of the other persons named, replacing each proper name with a pronoun, and last of all to report the fact to someone not named. This brief exercise should end with the traditional paradigm of first, second, and third persons, singular and plural, and with the observation that, while personal pronouns can be all three persons, nouns are always third person, either singular or plural. Thus, Vanessa would say to Carlos, "I sold your dictionary to her and him (or them)." To Susan she would say, "I sold his dictionary to you and him." To Tony she would say, "I sold his dictionary to her and you." And so on, with Carlos, Susan and Tony speaking in turn.

Having established the paradigm of the personal pronouns, the instructor can easily turn to the problem of subject-verb agreement, by having students convert sentences in the simple past to the present. Here the instructor can anticipate points he will want to work with in more detail later by using a regular verb like *kiss, crash, smash*, an irregular verb like *drive, choose, break*, as well as *do, have*, and *be*, which are potentially auxiliaries. The student should work through five paradigms of eight sentences (one each for *I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they*, including separate practice for the singular and plural *you*) beginning *I kissed the baby, I took special classes, I did the work well, I had a high fever, I was quite old-fashioned*. The student should answer the following questions about each of the past paradigms before shifting it to the present:

(1)   How many different forms of the verb are used to convey the simple past tense of the verb *kiss?* _____

(2)   What is this form? _____

(3)   How does this form differ from the base form *kiss?* _____

For the verb *be*, question (2) should read

(2)   What are these forms? _____

and question (3) should have several parts:

(3)   How do these forms differ from the base form *be?* _____
        Which pronouns use *was?* _____
        Which pronouns use *were?* _____
        Can the language be consistent about using *were* with both *you*'s singular and plural, and about using *was* with singular

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forms?_____All languages are full of such inconsistencies.

After shifting each paradigm to the present, the student should answer the questions given below. Notice that the concept of the "zero" ending is introduced, a concept that proves very helpful to students who tend to generalize the -s. These questions should be answered the first time, after the first paradigm, by the class as a whole, to insure that students do not practice incorrect forms, and the paradigms should themselves be checked as work is in progress, so that the instructor can begin to tell who is confused in principle as well as in practice, who tends to omit endings, who is prone to hyper-corrections.

(1)   How many different forms of the base verb *kiss* are used to convey the simple present tense? _____

(2)   What are these two forms? _____

(3)   What ending is added to the base form *kiss* in the third person singular?
       How do you explain the extra *e*? _____

(4)   What ending is added everywhere else? _____

       (Here it is important to play up the importance of "no ending at all," "nothing," "a zero," and to introduce the symbol -Ø as a symbol that will be used for "zero" endings.)

(5)   Thus we can say that the present tense is signalled by using two endings:_____ on the verbs used with third person singular subjects and _____ on the verbs used with all other subjects.

The questions asked about the present forms of *be* have to be modified to reflect the paradigm.

(1)   How many different forms of the base verb *be* are used to convey the simple present tense?_____

(2)   What are these three forms?_____

(3)   Which pronoun is used with *am*? _____

(4)   Which pronouns are used with *is*?_____

(5)   Which pronouns are used with *are*?_____

After the student has completed all five paradigms in the present, he is led to draw three conclusions:

(1)   Except for the verb *be,* all verbs show subject-verb agreement in the present by adding -s or -es to the base form of the verb for third person singular subjects and zero or -Ø endings everywhere else.

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(2)   Except for the verb *be*, past tense forms do not vary to agree with the subject. One common form covers all subjects. In the verbs examined, the past was shown by an *-ed* ending, a vowel change, and a combination of a vowel change and *-d* ending (*did*).

(3)   The verb *be* must be memorized separately.

While the instructor is on the subject of subject-verb agreement, he can make the point that the verbs *do*, *have*, and *be* behave exactly the same way, whether they are main verbs or "helpers." This principle can be demonstrated first by having the students turn some or all of their paradigms, five past and five present, into questions, emphatics (as if denying an assertion to the contrary), negatives, and negative questions. (This is a strategy suggested by sector analysis or tagmemic grammar and its teaching version, x-word grammar). In these conversions, students focus on agreement in the present, and on contractions in the negative.

Next in order of difficulty, the student can turn up to eight of his paradigms to past and present progressives (progressives of *I have/had a fever* are semantically awkward). As a first step, the student double checks the accuracy of his subject-verb agreements with all forms of *be*. Next, in anticipation of the transformational generative phrase structure rule, where the principle operates on a grander scale, the instructor has the student (1) circle all forms of *be*, (2) circle whatever ending pairs up with it *-ing*, attached to the main verb, (3) connect the two with a line, as in this example:

I am kissing the *baby*.

and (4) conclude that progressive tenses require both a form of the verb *be* and the *-ing* ending. If further drill on agreement seems necessary, the progressives may be converted to questions, negatives, negative questions, and contracted affirmatives. Again, the student first double-checks his agreement, optionally circles the forms of *be* and the *-ing* endings if further re-inforcement seems necessary.

Last of all, because of the irregularity of the past participle forms, the student practices subject-verb agreement with auxiliary *have*, by converting *all* of the paradigms to the past and present perfect, in that order. Again, the student first double checks the accuracy of his subject-verb agreements in the present perfect forms. Then the class can turn its attention to the range of endings that pair up with *have*. In anticipation of the system to be used in explaining the phrase structure rule, toward which the class is close approaching, students are led to (1) box all forms of *have*, (2) box all endings on the main verb which are different from the root form (3) connect the two with a line, as in the example:

I have kissed the baby.

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and (4) conclude that the perfective tenses require a form of the verb *have* and a variant of the base form: *-ed* for regular verbs like *kiss*, and a lot of different forms for irregular verbs; *-en* for verbs like *take, be* and even *do* (and *go*) where the *-en* is reversed to *-ne*, and many other differently marked forms, for example, vowel shifts (*rung*), vowel shifts with final *-t* and *-d* (*brought/sold*) and even *-ϕ* forms (*let*). If subject-verb agreement errors persist, the class or individual students may, as before, practice further by converting their present perfect paradigms to questions, negations, negative questions, and contracted affirmatives.

This is the time to give the students a take-home diagnostic exercise in which they are to convert present tense sentences (most of them with third person singular subjects) using the irregular verbs to the simple past and present perfect, which they are to complete without reference to their grammar books. They should be told that the exercise is intended to help them pin-point the verbs that give them trouble. Although I go over this exercise in class, I do not spend additional class time drilling the irregular verbs. I give the students a list of the common ones, tell them to mark the verbs that tripped them, to drill themselves, and to consult the list when in doubt.

The last topic covered before the phrase structure rule is the simple past. Students are given ten sentences in the present, containing five regular verbs and five irregular verbs which suggest the range of past tense marking: for example *let, hit,* or *put* for *-ϕ*; *ring, drive,* or *take* for vowel shift; *sleep, catch,* or *buy* for vowel shift and final *-t*; *do, ride,* or *say* for shift and *-d*; and *go* for a totally anomalous form. Few students will have difficulty getting all the pasts correct in an exercise of this sort, where the task is simple and their attention is focused, even though many of them will not pronounce many regular past endings and will omit them in free writing. Here the point of the exercise is that the system for the irregular verbs is so complex that it is a mercy that there are relatively few of them and that the vast majority of verbs take a past with *-d* or *-ed*.

The last activity before taking up the verb phrase rule is an oral dictation and proofreading exercise. The passage used pulls together all the verb forms where the students are most likely to make mistakes because of systematic differences in the phonological rules of their dialects: the omitted third person singular *-s* and regular past, *-ed*, especially where their addition would create a consonant cluster, confusion of *-en* and *-ing*, especially in complex verb phrases using *eat, take, shake, be, fall* and *give* where the present and past participles are identical in casual speech (*been* and *being* almost so for Spanish

speakers), *of* for the contraction of *have*, and the hypercorrect infinitives and modals with *-ed*, the over-generalized third person singular *-s*.

In dictating the passage, the ground rules are that the instructor will dictate all punctuation and capitalization where it belongs but take no questions on spelling. In dictating the passage, the instructor should avoid over-pronouncing the terminal endings, but carefully break into syllables the polysyllabic words like *momentarily*, in order to provide some distraction from what is really being tested. Or, in order to maximize the effects of dialect interference, the instructor can have a student with strong dialect persistence in careful speech dictate the passage, giving only sentence-beginning capitals, commas and periods, having given the student several minutes to practice reading the passage over and to ask questions about pronunciation. Here is a passage suitable for dictation. The italicized elements are the anticipated trouble spots with the verb phrases.

Late yesterday afternoon, President Jimmy Carter talk*ed* at length with key advisors about his new energy program. NBC's be*en* advis*ed* that President Carter would'*ve* reconven*ed* the meeting tonight, had he not realiz*ed* that he had already arrang*ed* an early morning meeting with Mr. Jody Powell, his press secretary, to confirm the details to be releas*ed* at a noon press conference today. Though the President apparently felt press*ed* for time at the end, his comprehensive twelve point program comes several weeks earlier than initially plann*ed*. Working out details could'*ve* tak*en* much longer, if a small army of staff people had not bee*en* giv*ing* weeks to developing the program during the transition period. Mr. Powell has just announc*ed* the details of the policy, and we'*ll* be giv*ing* you those details momentarily.

After the students have been given several minutes to proofread their papers individually, the instructor collects them, and gives out the following passage to be proofread. Here students may work productively in teams.

Late yesterday afternoon, President Jimmy Carter talk at length with key advisors about his new energy program. NBC is been advise that President Carter would of reconvene the meeting tonight, had he not realize that he had already arrange an early morning meeting with Mr. Jody Powell, his press secretary, to confirmed the details to be release at a noon press conference today. Though the President apparently felt press for time at the end, his comprehensive twelve-point program come several weeks earlier than initially plan. Working out details could of taking much longer, if a small army of

staff people had not being given weeks to developing the program during the transition period. Mr. Powell is just announce the details of the policy, and we be given you those details momentarily.

At the end of the hour, the instructor re-reads the initial passage, having the class dictate the forms that he transcribes on the board. The instructor concludes the hour by announcing that the class will take up a rule for getting all verb forms right during the next class hour.

The student is now ready to take on the phrase structure rule itself. I have found it most effective to combine work on the blackboard with mimeographed sheets covering the same materials, which the student can consult and work from later.

Step 1. (One class hour) The instructor hands out a list of the following verb phrases and puts an identical set on the board. A single column is best, but it is here divided for reasons of space. The instructor asks for suggestions for grouping the verb phrases in some systematic way that will point to the similarities and differences between them. He then allows students five to ten minutes to try drawing lines between what belongs together, each pursuing his own scheme.

He *drives.*	He *would have driven.*
He *was driving.*	He *has been driving.*
He *has driven.*	He *will be driving.*
He *drove.*	He *will have been driving.*
He *had driven.*	He *would have been driving.*
He *will drive.*	He *had been driving.*
He *would drive.*	He *will have driven.*
He *is driving.*	He *would be driving.*

The instructor asks several students what they connected, what the similarity was they saw, and what they had left over. He then suggests that they match the verb phrases into pairs, working from the shortest and simplest verb phrases with fewest words, to the longest and most complex, and pairing the verb phrases so that there is only one difference between the two items in a pair. Students then examine, in turn, one-word verb phrases, two-word verb phrases, three-word verb phrases, and four-word verb phrases. As the students pair up the verb phrases, the instructor uses the remaining board space to arrange the matched pairs into two columns. He should elicit comments from the students on the differences in the meanings between the two items in the matched pair, but not, of course, in technical language. This difference will always be to mark the two verb phrases differently for time, with regard to

presentness and pastness, an opposition the instructor will want to emphasize in his rephrasing of student responses. The nature of the present-past opposition is, however, sometimes rather oblique. For example, the difference between "He *will have been driving* a school bus for forty years come next September 1" and "He *would have been driving* a school bus for for forty years come next September 1" is that the former refers to a state of affairs the speaker *now* believes to be possible of future attainment, and the latter refers to a state of affairs whose possibility of attainment the speaker believes to be already in the *past*, no longer possible because of some event already in the *past*. Similarly, the difference between *will go* and *would go* is that the former refers to an action the speaker believes to be the present intention of the subject, for future action; and the latter refers, in informal use, to habitual action in the past (John *would* always *go*) or, more formally, to some possible action the speaker believes to be contingent upon another action itself judged to be, not so much past, as not present, not now actual, and not likely. The resulting two columns on the board look like this:

PRESENT   *PAST*

He *drives*.   *He drove.*
He *is driving*.   He *was driving*.
He *has driven*.   He *had driven*.
He *will drive*.   He *would drive*.
He *will be driving*.   He *would be driving*.
He *has been driving*.   He *had been driving*.
He *will have driven*.   He *would have driven*.
He *will have been driving*. He *would have been driving*.

Step 2. (Homework) The student takes a list of 16 verb phrases using the verb *eat*, and classifies them into 8 matched pairs.

Step 3. (Two class hours. Don't rush). The instructor then leads the students to see that some of the auxiliaries pair up with endings which are attached "one word over" that is, to the next or adjacent word in the verb phrase. He hands out a second sheet, identical to the two columns at Step 1 above except with double or triple spacing between the entries and the following 20 questions. Students carry out the following set of instructions, individually, in small groups, or following the work on the board, as the teacher judges best. I prefer small teams of 2 or 3 working together, on subsets of questions (1-5, 6-10, 11-13, 14-16, 17, 18-20) with board work in between. Answers are given in parentheses.

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1. Circle all forms of the verb *be*. Forms of *be* include *am, is, are, was, were, been, be*.

2. What ending do you find occurring in the verb phrase *every* time that a form of *be* occurs (*-ing*) _____

3. Where is this ending found? (on the next word)_____

4. Circle this ending, and draw a line to connect the ending to the form of *be* with which it pairs up, for example

   He (is) dri(ving.)

5. Since the helping verb *be* and its co-occurring ending *-ing* do not occur in every verb phrase, but in only 8 of our 16 examples, we will put both *be* and *-ing* in parentheses ( ), to show it is an optional, not necessary component of the verb phrase. From now on we will usually refer to (be -ing) to indicate that *be* as a helping verb will signal an *-ing* on the word in the verb phrase one word over. If one occurs, both will occur. But both may be absent.

6. Box all forms of the verb *have*. Forms of *have* include *have, has, had*.

7. What ending do you find occurring in every verb phrase which contains the helping verb *have*? (*-en*) _____

8. Where is this ending found? (on the next word)_____

9. Box this ending, and draw a line to connect the ending to the form of *have* with which it pairs up, for example:

   He [has] driv[en.]

10. Since the helping verb *have* and its co-occurring ending *-en* do not occur in every verb phrase, but in only 8 of our 16 examples, we will put it in parentheses ( ), as we did with (be -ing). From now on we will usually refer to (have -en) to indicate that *have* as a helping verb will signal the *-en* ending on the word in the verb phrase located next. If *have* occurs as a helper, the *-en* ending will also occur. Both, however, may be omitted. The *-en* will stand for all the endings which co-occur with *have* such as *-ed* (I have kissed) and *-ø*(I have hit).

11. Underline any other helping verbs which occur in the verb phrase.

12. *-ing* and *-en* endings have already been accounted for. Is there any remaining ending which co-occurs with a modal helper like *will*

and *would* (no) _____. Modals put a "zero" or -ϕ ending on the word one to the right.

13. Since modal helpers like *will* and *would* do not occur in every verb phrase, but in only 8 of our 16 examples, we will put the word *modal* in parentheses, to show that it, like (have -en) and (be -ing) is an optional rather than necessary part of the verb phrase. From now on we will refer to (modal -ϕ). Other modals include *can, could, shall, should, may, might*.

14. In pairing up our verb phrases, we discovered that there was a time or tense distinction between the item in the left hand column and its mate in the right hand column. Go back now and put a sunburst ⌇⌇⌇⌇⌇ around the word which carries this time distinction.
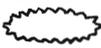
15. The word which carries the time distinctions is always found in the same position or order in the words in the verb phrase. What is this position? *(the first word in the verb phrase)* _____

16. We noted earlier that (be -ing), (have -en), and (modal -ϕ) were not present in all verb phrases, and were therefore "optional" components of the verb phrases, sometimes present, sometimes absent. Every verb phrase has at least two components, however, even the simplest one word predicating verbs, like *drives* and *drove*. Every verb phrase contains a main verb, MV, and a second kind of meaning. What is that meaning? *(time, or tense)*. _____ From now on, we will refer to tense marking by the symbol -T, with a hyphen to show it is always attached to some other word, and without parentheses, to show that it *always* occurs.

17. Let us now look at the way the tense difference is marked in our verb phrases. If we look down our left-hand PRESENT column of verb phrases, noting the words with the sunbursts around them, we see two patterns. When the verb is a one word verb like *drives*, or when the first helping verb is *is* or *has* (*is driving, has driven, has been driving*), the present tense is marked by the use of a form which contains the final letter (-s). Note that the subject is third person singular. Other persons use -ϕ endings.

When the first helping verb in the verb phrase is a modal, like *will*, or like *can, may, shall*, there is no extra ending. Modals do not show subject-verb agreement in the present tense. All modals are -ϕ marked in the present.

When we look at our right hand column of PAST tenses, we see many patterns. In a one word verb like *drove*, the pastness of the

verb is shown not by adding an ending, but by changing a vowel in the middle of the word. The vowel that makes *drive* past is the letter (o). Some past tenses are formed by changing a vowel in the middle of the word.

When the first helping verb is the past form of *be*, it has a unique form; *was* for the first and third persons, *were* everywhere else.

When the first helping verb is the past of *have*, the past is indicated by a new ending, the letter (-*d*), which replaces the -*ve*.

When the first helping verb is a modal like *will, can, may, shall*, the past form is indicated by combining a vowel change in the middle with different endings of (-*t*) and (-*d*) to produce *would, could, might, should*.

By far the most common past ending is the regular verb -*ed*. We will use -*ed* as a symbol for the full range of past endings.

As a kind of shorthand, we can say:
Tense is either present or past:

   -T ⟶ pres./past

Present tense is marked by -*s* or -ϕ:

   -pres ⟶ -s/-ϕ

Past tense is marked by -*ed*:

   -past ⟶ -ed.

18. We are now in a position to reach some important conclusions about the verb phrase. One of these conclusions is that every verb phrase consists of, at the minimum, present or past tense or time marking, -T, and a main verb MV. As a kind of shorthand we can say:

   VP⟶-T MV

or a verb phrase consists of tense marking grafted onto a main verb.

But we have already discovered that a number of auxiliary verbs, some of which require co-occurring endings, can also occur. These auxiliaries occur in a definite order. Fill in the optional elements that can intervene between tense marking and the main verb. There are, you remember, three of them: (be -ing) (have -en) (modal). There is one fixed order that accounts for all verb phrases. Can you figure out what it is? What, if present at all, always comes first? (modal - ϕ). Which comes first, (have -en) or (be -ing)? (have -en). Now try to get all three in the right order.

   VP⟶-T (   ) (   ) (   ) MV

19. Bravo! You have arrived at a simple description of the structure of the verb phrase it took grammarians hundreds of years to discover. You can use it to proofread for the accuracy of every verb phrase you write. But you must remember the rule, and remember to use it. If you remember to use the rule as you proofread your papers, you will be able to correct almost all of your verb form errors. You must remember to tense mark the first word in every verb phrase, and to attach the endings that co-occur with *have* and *be*.

Without looking back, can you state the rule? Try it:

VP ⟶

20. Practice several more times until you are sure you have it etched in your memory.

VP ⟶
VP ⟶
VP ⟶

Step 4. (Homework). Part 1. Students take a list of verb phrases identical to the second list in Step 2, except using the verb *eat* instead of *drive*, and these directions: (1) Circle every *be* and co-occurring -*ing* which pairs up with it, drawing a line to connect the circles. (2) Box every *have* and co-occurring -*en*, drawing a line to connect the boxes. (3) Underline every modal. (4) Draw a sunburst around the one word in each verb phrase which carries the tense or time marking. (5) State the rule for the structure of the English verb phrase: VP⟶
Practice writing this rule for the verb phrase until you can produce it easily. Review the classwork questions 1-20 if you do not understand why we use this rule with these parts in this order. Then, if you should forget the rule, you can reconstruct it.

Part 2. Here are 7 sentences with some necessary part of the verb phrase omitted. Add the missing element. Use your verb phrase rule to decide what is missing. Use connected circles to join *be* and its co-occurring ending -*ing* and connected boxes to join *have* and its co-occurring ending -*en*. Put a sunburst around the tense-marked word in the verb phrase.

1. The chicken is eat the contaminated grain.
2. The chicken has eat the contaminated grain.
3. The chicken has be eat the contaminated grain.
4. The chicken would have eat the contaminated grain.
5. The chicken would have be eat the contaminated grain.
6. The chicken eating the contaminated grain.
7. The chicken eaten the contaminated grain.

Step 5. (One class hour). The instructor hands out and goes over the following exercise.

Part I. All of the verb phrases we have looked at so far have been in the active voice. The subject of the sentence has been the agent of the action expressed by the verb. For example, John is the agent of the action of *driving* in the sentence below, and the word *bus* is the object of the action:

subject
and
agent   action   object

John   drives   a yellow school bus.
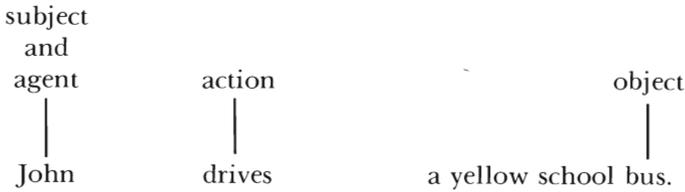
Verbs which have both subjects and objects also have passive voices. There the subject of the sentence is not the agent of the action, but somehow the recipient or object of the action. Notice that the agent now appears in a *by* phrase.

agent
of
subject   action   action

A yellow school bus   is driven   by John
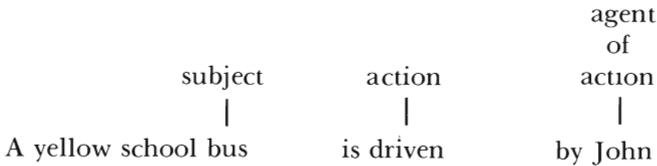
Here are four passive voice sentences about the school bus, each using a different passive voice tense. Answer the questions below about them.

A.   The big yellow school bus is driven by John.

B.   The big yellow school bus has been driven by John.

C.   The big yellow school bus is being driven by John.

D.   The big yellow school bus would have been being driven by John.

1.   In sentence A, what helping verb occurs?_____. What ending on the main verb co-occurs with it?_____. Go back, circling the helper and its co-occurring ending, and connecting the two circles with a line.

2.   In Sentence B. what is the first helping verb?_____. What ending co-occurs with it?_____. Box this helper and its co-occurring ending, and connect the two boxes with a line.

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3.   In sentence C, what is the first helping verb?_____. What ending co-occurs with it?_____. Circle this helper and its co-occurring ending, and connect the circles with a line. What is the second helper in the verb phrase?_____. What ending co-occurs with it?_____. Circle this helper and its co-occurring ending, and connect these two circles with a line also. Now you are ready to draw two important conclusions. (1) When the helping verb *be* occurs, it may be followed by either of two endings, either _____ or _____. (2) When two forms of the helping verb *be* occur in the same verb phrase, the _____ (or progressive) ending precedes the _____ (or passive voice) ending.

4.   In sentence D, what is the first helping verb?_____. Is it tense-marked present or past?_____. What is the second helping verb?_____. What ending co-occurs with it?_____. Box these two forms and connect them with a line. What is the third helping verb?_____. What ending co-occurs with it?_____. Circle these two forms and connect them with a line. What is the fourth helping verb?_____. What ending co-occurs with it?_____. Circle these two endings and connect them with a line. Does the helping verb *be* taking an *-ing* still occur before a helping *be* taking the passive *-en* ending?_____. Here is a restatement of our original verb phrase rule, given in shorthand, with spaces left for you to fill in the order of these two helping verbs and their co-occurring endings.

   VP→-T (modal -$\emptyset$) (have -en) (   ) (   ) MV

Part 2. The instructor distributes the passive voice equivalents of the seven sentences in Part 2 of Step 4, with the endings omitted. Students follow the same instructions, which are modified to incorporate the passive: "Use connected circles to join *be* and its co-occurring endings *-ing* and *-en*."

Step 6. (Homework) Part 1. The instructor gives out sixteen passive voice sentences using the verbs *give*, *shake*, *eat*, *take*, illustrating each of the sixteen verb phrase possibilities. The student is told to convert each sentence to its exact active voice equivalent, and to check the accuracy of his work by using the system of circles, boxes, and sunbursts. At the end of the conversion process, the student is asked to identify the helping verb and co-occurring ending that must always be removed from the verb phrase in converting it from the passive voice to the active voice. Part 2 consists of sixteen different active voice sentences using the same verbs, again illustrating the full range of verb phrase possibilities. The student

is told to convert these sentences to their exact passive voice equivalents, using the system of circles, boxes, and sunbursts to check the accuracy of his work. The instructions should remind the student that the passive voice equivalents of active voice tenses contain all the helping verbs (if any) found in the active voice, and an extra helping verb *be* and its co-occurring *-en* ending.

Step 7. Students work on converting passive voice sentences using regular verbs to the active voice, and active voice sentences to the passive voice. The student is reminded that the symbol *-en*, used for co-occurrence with *have* and *be,* stands for the full range of possibilities, including the *-ed*, which is very common and often hard to hear, thus hard to keep up with. In order to determine where interference is strongest for students, the exercises should include a few verbs like *pat, activate*, etc., where the *-ed*, if added, creates an extra syllable, a few like *slow*, where it would constitute a final consonant, and a great many like *push, shove, nab* where the ending, if added and pronounced, would produce a consonant cluster. As before, the student should use the verb phrase rule as a means of checking the accuracy of his conversions.

Step 8. Next comes oral dictation and proofreading of a passage containing *-ed* endings in the simple past, the present and past perfect, the future and conditional perfect, participial phrases using the past participle, and a variety of the passive voice tenses. Here again, regular verbs should be selected so that the terminal ending is realized in pronunciation, if pronounced, as *-ed*, *-d* and *-t*. The verb phrase rule is again used, and the past participles are analyzed as elliptical clauses, where the subject has sometimes been omitted and the first auxiliary either omitted or de-tensed by conversion to the *-ing* form. This is an opportune time for students to practice or review combining sentences that rewrite at least one sentence as a participial phrase, and to imitate sentences containing one or more.

Step 9. The instructor returns the original dictation passage concerning President Carter's energy policy with the number of errors in verb phrases indicated. The student is instructed to use the verb phrase rule to find all of his mistakes.

Step 10. The instructor dictates another passage, containing verb phrases with exactly the same potential sound confusions as the previous passage, i.e., *balked, stalked, walked*, for *talked* in the first sentence. The passage should be on a totally different subject with different sentence rhythms: "The aging lion stalked his prey patiently." After individual proofreading, the class dictates the passage for the

board, and students assess their progress from the first exercise.

Step 11. The student is instructed to proofread every paper specifically for verb phrase errors. For a few papers, the essays should actually be marked up according to the verb phrase system of circles, boxes, underlinings and sunbursts. For the past participles of irregular verbs, students should box the terminal *-t*, *-d*, *-ed*, *-en*, and *-ne* endings or the constant - $\emptyset$ marked vowel (*put, let, hit*).

APPENDIX A

Exercise I. Students may benefit from repeated practice at steps B and C, before moving on to D, depending on the difficulty they have with these constructions. In this exercise, the student must negotiate the *as... as* comparison, proper reference for the final *that* clause, and the semantic constraints of *-ly* adverbs co-ordinated with *but*, as well as two other easier internal co-ordinations. Notice that the student is given hints and procedural advice at C 1 and D 2, where he is most likely to make his mistakes.

A 1. Here are six sentences. Study them until you think you see the relationships between them.

> A direct message from malevolent gods is cruel.
> The gently falling snow was as cruel as that.
> The snow sifted through the branches of the tree.
> It settled upon the woman and her child.
> It slowly but relentlessly filled any tracks.
> The tracks might have led rescuers to them.

A 2. Here are the six sentences combined, with the key structural words and endings italicized. Compare this sentence with the six sentences above.

> (2) *As* cruel *as* a direct message from malevolent gods,
> (1) the gently falling snow sifted through the branches of the tree,
> (2) settl*ing* upon the woman *and* her child,
> (2) slow*ly* *but* relentless*ly* fill*ing* any tracks
> (3) *that* might have led rescuers to them.

B 1. Here are six more sentences, similar to the six you started with.

> The bawl of a calf is loud.
> The cry of the child was as loud as that.
> The cry of the child pierced the dark silence.
> It startled the cows and cow pony.

It distantly but repeatedly echoed from the cliffs.
The cliffs rose from the canyon floor.

B 2. Combine these six sentences, using the same key structural elements, in the space below.

(2) As _____ as_____.
(1) _____,
(2) _____ ly but _____ly _____ing _____
(3) that _____.

C 1. Here are two more sentences with blanks left for you to create sentences of your own. Make the sentences you add structurally similar to those at A 1 and B 1. Pay close attention to your sixth sentence. The subject of your sixth sentence must be taken from the *end* of your fifth sentence.

Any schoolboy is restless on the first beautiful day of spring.

_____ as _____ as that.

John sat at the desk in his bedroom.

He _____ and _____.

He _____ ly but _____ ly _____.

_____.

C 2. Here is a frame for combining your sentences according to the pattern you saw at A 2 and B 2.

(2) As _____ as _____.
(1) _____,
(2) _____ ing _____ and_____,
(2) _____ ly but _____ ly _____,
(3) that _____.

D 1. Here are lines for six sentences, this time of your own composition entirely. Make them structurally similar to the sentences A 1, B 1, and C 1 by using the specified words. Write your third sentence *first*. Otherwise you may have difficulty deciding what two things you are comparing, and with regard to what common characteristic.

_____ is _____.
_____ as _____ as that.
_____.
_____ and _____.
_____ ly but _____ ly _____ *ing* _____.
_____.

D 2. Here is a frame for combining your sentences according to the pattern you have been using throughout this exercise.

      (2) As _____ as _____,
(1) _____.
      (2) _____ ing _____ and _____,
      (2) _____ ly but _____ ly _____ ing_____,
        (3) that _____.

Exercise II. Note that the usual order of composing simpler sentences before combining them is reversed in the D part of this exercise, with the result that the student imitates the more complex structure first. Composing a sensible introductory adverbial clause of concession requires fore-knowledge of the content of the main clause which follows it. If the simpler sentences are done first, the first sentence the student thinks of may well be the idea that belongs in the main clause (sentence 3, beginning *But...*), but he will have written it in the targeted concession position (sentence 2).

A 1. Here is a list of twelve sentences. Study them until you think you see the relationships between them and how you might want to combine them. Use braces { } to group the sentences you would want to combine.

1. People oppose standardized tests for three major reasons.
2. The tests are supposed to measure mathematical and verbal skills.
3. But they also measure test-taking skills.
4. They also measure kinds of cultural knowledge.
5. These kinds of cultural knowledge are not at all related to intelligence.
6. These kinds of cultural knowledge discriminate against lower-class and minority students.
7. Many test items are reasonable.
8. However, a significant number are demonstrably misleading, confusing, or ambiguous.
9. As a result, no one can answer them intelligently.
10. Standardized testing encourages invidious comparisons of teachers.
11. It encourages invidious comparisons of the school systems.
12. Worst of all, it encourages invidious comparisons of the students by their parents, their teachers, and the students themselves.

A 2. Here is one way the twelve sentences might be grouped and combined, with the key structural words underlined. Compare this set of four sentences with the twelve sentences above. Notice that a number of new words have been added, to clarify the relationships between ideas, and that a number of other words have been dropped. Circle two words and one phrase that appear in the sentences in A 1, but nowhere in A 2. Then circle 7 words and 1 word group that appear in A 2, but nowhere in A 1.

(1)   People oppose standardized testing for three reasons.

First,

(2)   *although* the tests are supposed to measure mathematical and verbal skills,

(1)   they also measure test-taking skills *and* kinds of cultural knowledge

(2)   *that* are not at all related to intelligence

(2)   and that discriminate against lower-class and minority students.

Second,

(2)   *although* many test items are reasonable,

(1)   a significant number are demonstrably misleading, confusing, or ambiguous

(2)   *so that* no one can answer them intelligently.

Third,

(1)   standardized testing encourages invidious comparisons of the teachers, the school systems, *and*, worst of all, the students, by their parents, their teachers, and the students themselves.

B 1. Here are twelve more sentences, similar to the twelve you just examined in A 1. As before, study the sentences until you see the relationships between them. Use braces to group the sentences you want to combine.

1.   People support standardized tests for three major reasons.
2.   It is probably impossible to design an entirely culture-free test.
3.   But standardized tests measure mainly mathematical and verbal skills.
4.   Standardized tests measure secondarily a number of important personality traits.
5.   These skills and traits are strong predictors of future success in an academic environment.

6. These skills and traits are much needed in almost all white collar occupations.
7. A few test items are undeniably poor.
8. However, openly published practice tests would encourage professional discussion and wider consensus about what students should know.
9. As a result, teachers could teach the appropriate skills and information.
10. Standardized testing provides valuable information about student performance.
11. It provides valuable information about the effectiveness of specific teachers and teaching methods.
12. It provides valuable information about the success or failure of entire school systems in imparting the skills and information they should be teaching.

B 2. Here is a frame for combining the twelve sentences given at **B** 1 according to the model that appears at A 2. The key structural words are given. Notice that you will have to omit some words from the original sentences.

(1) People support standardized tests for three major reasons.

First,

(2) although _____
_____ ,

(1) _____
_____

(2) that_____
_____

(2) and that_____
_____ .

Second,

(2) although _____
_____ ,

(1) _____
_____

(2) so that _____
_____ .

Third,

(1) _____
_____ ,

_____

_____ ,

and _____

_____ .

C 1. Here is another group of 12 sentences, or sentence parts, parallel to
      those you worked with at A 1 and B 1. Here the topic is gun control
      and three reasons why some people oppose it. Study the sentences
      you are given, and complete the missing sentences in a way that
      makes good sense.

      1.   People raise three objections to gun control.
      2.   They admit that some lives are needlessly lost through
            accident or homicides.
      3.   But they argue that the right to own and bear arms is ___
            _____ .
      4.   The right to bear arms is also a second amendment
            constitutional guarantee.
      5.   This guarantee _____
            _____ .
      6.   This guarantee _____
            _____ .
      7.   Gun control doesn't sound like gun confiscation.
      8.   However, the registration of firearms _____
            _____ .
      9.   As a result_____
            _____ .
      10.   Gun control punishes the lawful sportsman and gun owner
            instead of the dealer in illegally-imported foreign-made
            handguns.
      11.   Gun control punishes the lawful sportsman and gun owner
            instead of the _____
            _____ .
      12.   Gun control punishes the lawful sportsman and gun owner
            instead of the _____
            _____ .

C 2. Here is a frame for combining your twelve sentences according to
      the model you have already used at B 2.

      (1) People raise three objections to gun control.
      First,
            (2) although _____
            _____ ,

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(1) _____
_____

    (2) that_____
_____

    (2) and that_____
_____ .

Second,
    (2) although _____
_____ ,

(1) _____
_____

    (2) so that _____
_____ .

Third,
(1) _____
_____
_____ ,
_____ ,

and _____
_____ .

D 1. Here is another frame, identical to the one you just filled in C 2. Fill it with content of your own, picking from among the following topic sentences.

> Supporters of gun control advance three major reasons.
> People favor busing to achieve racial integration for three major reasons.
> People oppose busing to achieve racial integration for three major reasons.
> The right-to-life opponents of abortion advance three strong reasons in support of their position.
> Advocates of abortion-on-demand give three strong arguments for their position.

(1) _____
_____ .

First,
    (2) although _____
_____ ,

(1) _____
_____

(2) that_____

_____

(2) and that_____

_____ .

Second,
(2) although _____

_____ ,

(1) _____

_____

(2) so that _____

_____ .

Third,
(1) _____

_____

_____ ,

_____ ,

and _____

_____ .

D 2. Here is space for twelve sentences, parallel to those you worked
with in A 1, B 1, and C 1. Take the combined sentences you wrote in
the frame at D 1, and rewrite them to be simpler, shorter sentences,
with the specified structural words given.

1. _____ .
2. _____

_____ .

3. But _____

_____ .

4. _____

_____ .

5. _____

_____ .

6. _____

_____ .

7. _____

_____ .

8. However, _____

_____ .

9. As a result, _____

_____ .

10. _____

_____ .

11. _____
    _____ .
12. _____
    _____ .

E. 1. As the final part of this exercise, you will learn a method for doubling the length and substance of any essay you write. You will learn how to turn a single paragraph into an essay of several paragraphs. In order to develop a good essay, you need to produce more real content, not extra empty words or mere repetitions of what you have already said. To produce more real content, you need strategies for finding more things to say.

One way of saying more is adding qualifying, descriptive detail. This detail often influences the reader's perceptions and judgments in subtle ways, by revealing what the author considered noteworthy, or by revealing the author's attitudes and judgments. Here are the first two sentences of the passage on standardized tests with some qualifying details added. The new details are italicized.

(1) *Many thoughtful* people *who have studied both sides of the question carefully* oppose standardized tests for three major reasons, *all of them valid.*

(2) The tests, *which are used for tracking, promotion, graduation, college entrance, and job qualification,* are supposed to measure mathematical and verbal skills.

Another way to generate content is to give concrete examples of illustrations that are very exact and specific. Here are the third and fourth sentences expanded in this way:

(2) But they also measure other test-taking skills, *such as penmanship, neatness, familiarity with specific test formats, self-confidence and calmness under stress.*

(4) They also measure kinds of cultural knowledge, *such as familiarity with the traditions of classical music, British and American literary classics, and elitist sports like squash, polo, and boating.*

Another way to expand the essay is by restating the same idea in different words, from a different angle, or with different emphasis. In pursuing this strategy, you must be careful to avoid being simply repetitious. Here are the fifth and sixth sentences followed by a clarifying restatement:

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(5)   These kinds of cultural knowledge are not at all related to intelligence. *They are only measures of exposure to parts of our culture which enjoy prestige among the upper classes.*

(6)   These kinds of cultural knowledge discriminate against lower class and minority students. *Test items about the musical achievements of Coleman Hawkins, the rules of stick ball, and the dirty dozens would discriminate against most students attending prep schools in the same way.*

Yet another way to expand the original paragraph is by laying out in further detail the process you are analyzing, for example, by giving additional reasons for coming to the same conclusion. Here are sentences raising one objection to test items, followed by other reasons for finding some test items objectionable.

(7)   Many test items are reasonable. (8) However, a significant number are demonstrably misleading, confusing, or ambiguous. (9) As a result, no one can answer them intelligently. *Others test trivial and disputed points of information, such as whether good usage permits split infinitives. Others cover areas in which there are on-going breakthroughs, so that an item inevitably penalizes the student who keeps abreast or the student taught the recently outdated "fact."*

Here is sentence 6 followed by an analysis of further results that flow from culturally biased questions on standardized tests:

(6)   These kinds of cultural knowledge discriminate against lower class and minority students. *Because these test results are used for tracking, promotion, graduation, college entrance and admission to graduate professional schools, very able but culturally disadvantaged students are cut off from the quality education that would give them economic and social mobility. Meanwhile, less able but luckier middle and upper class students automatically reap the social and economic benefits of better birth and superior education. Standardized testing reinforces and perpetuates the inequities in our society.*

You will find two essays below which take the original sentences, already developed, and a little more additional information. The first essay presents the information in the order suggested by the twelve sentences we started with.

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Many thoughtful people *who have studied both sides of the question carefully oppose standardized tests for three major reasons, all of them valid.*

First, the tests, *which are used for tracking, promotion, graduation, college entrance, and job qualification,* are supposed to measure mathematical and verbal skills. But they also measure other test-taking skills, *such as penmanship, neatness, familiarity with specific test formats, self-confidence, and calmness under stress.* They also measure kinds of cultural knowledge, *such as familiarity with the traditions of classical music, British and American literary classics, and elitist sports like squash, polo, and boating.* These kinds of cultural knowledge are not at all related to intelligence. *They are only measures of exposure to parts of our culture which enjoy prestige among the upper classes.* These kinds of cultural knowledge *obviously* discriminate against lower-class and minority students. *Test items about the musical achievements of Coleman Hawkins, the rules of stick ball, and the dirty dozens would discriminate against most students attending prep schools in the same way. Because these test results are used for tracking, promotion, graduation, college entrance, admission to graduate professional schools, and so on, very able but culturally disadvantaged students are cut off from the quality education that would give them economic and social mobility. Meanwhile, less able but luckier middle and upper-class students automatically reap the social and economic benefits of better birth and superior education. Standardized testing reinforces and perpetuates the inequities of our society.*

Second, although many test items are reasonable, *objections can be raised* to a significant number of them. *Some* are demonstrably misleading, confusing, or ambiguous. As a result no one can answer them intelligently. *Others test trivial and disputed points of information, such as whether good usage permits split infinitives. Others cover areas in which there are on-going break-throughs, so that an item inevitably penalizes the student who keeps abreast or the student taught the out-dated "fact."*

Third, standardized testing encourages invidious comparisons of teachers, of school systems, and worst of all, of the

students themselves, by their parents, their teachers and by the students themselves. *Everyone accepts the results as accurate representations of ability. Teachers expect less of themselves and of their students when they believe they are working with low ability students. Central administrations become demoralized, accepting the poor showing as normal, natural, and inevitable. The worst damage, however, is done to the individual student. Tracked into a slow class, persuaded he is a dummy, he allows a test score, inaccurate and inadequate to begin with, to become a self-fulfilling prophecy of his achievement in life.*

The second essay rearranges the order of the original sentences, alters some of them slightly, and adds a little more information. Which of the essays do you prefer? Why? Do you have reservations about both?

Many thoughtful people *who have studied both sides* of the question carefully oppose standardized tests for two major reasons, *both of them valid.*

First, they raise objections to a significant number of the test items *and to the testing process itself. Although* many test items are reasonable, *some* are demonstrably misleading, confusing, or ambiguous, *so that* no one can answer them intelligently. *Others test trivial and disputed points of information, such as whether good usage permits split infinitives. Others cover areas in which there are on-going break-throughs, so that an item inevitably penalizes the student who keeps abreast or the student taught the recently out-dated "fact."* Some questions measure kinds of cultural *knowledge, such as familiarity with the traditions of classical music, British and American literary classics, and elitist sports like squash, polo, and boating.* These kinds of cultural knowledge are not at all related to intelligence, *and such test items obviously* discriminate against lower-class and minority students, *who lack exposure to many parts of our culture which enjoy prestige among the upper classes, just as questions about the musical achievements of Coleman Hawkins, the rules of stick ball, and the dirty dozens would discriminate against most students attending prep schools.* Even when the test items measure the mathematical and verbal skills they are supposed to, they measure test-taking skills *such as penmanship, neatness, familiarity with specific test formats, self-confidence, and calmness under stress.*

This indirect measurement of test-taking skills is also likely to penalize the disadvantaged student.

Their second objection is to all the harmful effects of standardized testing. It encourages invidious comparisons of teachers, of school systems, and worst of all, of the students themselves, by their parents, their teachers, and by *each other. Everyone accepts the results as accurate representations of ability. Teachers expect less of themselves and of their students when they believe they are working with low ability students. Central administrations become demoralized, accepting the poor showing as normal, natural, and inevitable. The worst damage, however, is done to the individual student. Tracked into a slow class, persuaded he is a dummy, he allows a test score, inaccurate and inadequate to begin with, to become a self-fulfilling prophecy of his achievement in life. Unfortunately, the harmful results reach beyond the individual. Because these test results are used everywhere—for tracking, promotion, graduation, college entrance, admission to graduate professional schools, and job qualification—very able but culturally disadvantaged students are cut off at every turn from the quality education that would give them economic and social mobility, while less able but luckier middle and upper-class students automatically reap the social and economic benefits of better birth and superior education. Standardized testing reinforces and perpetuates the inequities of our society.*

Now take the twelve sentences at B 1, C 1, or D 2 and see if you can generate additional content for six or more of them. After you have generated the additional content, decide whether you need to rearrange the order of the original sentences and to restructure the essay generally.