

Transitioning Immigrant Students into Academic ESL Writing Coursework: A Non-Traditional Approach to Grammar Instruction

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Project Background

A growing number of ABE/ESL students indicate a goal of obtaining a college degree. To help them meet that goal as well as to enhance their employment opportunities in the future, ESL instructors at Whatcom Community College have been trying to facilitate their transition into the Academic ESL composition program there, which functions as a bridge to English 101 and other college-level courses. However, unfortunately few make the transition from ABE/ESL to Academic ESL. There are a number of possible reasons for this, among them, insufficient financial resources, a lack of awareness of options, cultural barriers, and fear.

Many students never even attempt to transition to Academic ESL. Among the few who do apply, a considerable number do not meet the minimum standards for writing and are thus not accepted into the program.

The reasons why immigrant ESL students are not prepared for Academic ESL have not been clear, so the original question for this research project was “What is lacking in our ABE/ESL students’ knowledge base that is needed for them to significantly improve their writing?” The students in this study were all placed at Level 5 or Level 6 on the CASAS placement, and the Washington State ESL competencies for writing had been used as a basis for the writing curriculum. Yet these competencies did not seem to match the actual abilities of the students. Furthermore, the available resources for teaching writing and grammar were not a good match either. In the end, therefore, the goals of this project became to identify specific problems in ABE/ESL students writing, employ an alternative approach to teaching grammatical skills in writing, and ultimately, to see sufficient improvement in their writing so that those with academic/job-training goals would successfully make the transition to the academic ESL program.

The Students

The first consideration was to explore how immigrant ESL students at WCC differed from other non-native speakers (NNS) who come to the U.S. with an interest in enrolling in pre-college and college courses.

Student profiles: Immigrant students v. international students

Immigrant students

As a group, immigrant students share some common characteristics. When at home—or with friends, either on or off campus—they generally speak a language other than English (Rodby,

1999). They also tend to have learned what English they know *by ear*, i.e. through input from listening to the media, friends, salespeople, teachers, and work colleagues. Because their English world has been, to a great extent, an aural one, many of them manage well in situations where they can rely on their fairly well-honed skill of listening. However, the English input that they have been “hearing” is likely to have been informal in nature. In turn, written work that they produce for their courses may have a conversational quality to it. Add to that the fact that each individual is likely to have developed his/her own set of “rules” about how English is structured—rules that are frequently mistaken (Reid, 1998).

In sum, many immigrant students tend to be aurally-oriented learners of English who interact in their native language on a regular basis, who have absorbed a particularly informal version of English, and who are likely to have developed their own system of rules that govern how they structure the English that they generate.

International students

International students comprise another large group of language-learners enrolled in pre-college and college coursework. In contrast to many immigrant students, however, international students are likely to have studied English in their home countries before coming to the U.S. As such, before they arrive here, they are already familiar with both the terminology and the grammatical rules of English.

The importance of the distinction made above, between immigrant students and international students, will be discussed later in this report.

Insights shared by one (real) student, Mimi

Last year, Mimi, an immigrant student from Taiwan, enrolled in a top-level, pre-college writing course that was taught by one of the ESL instructors at Whatcom Community College (WCC). In many ways, Mimi's story was a typical one. Her family moved to Washington state where, despite the fact that her English skills were limited, she was enrolled in middle school, and throughout middle school and high school, she attended regular classes with the American students. After graduating, Mimi placed into the ESL reading-writing program at WCC. It was quickly evident to her instructors there that she was bright and motivated. Her classmates were international students, who, unlike Mimi, had studied the terminology and grammatical structure of English before coming to WCC. Nevertheless, Mimi was a better reader than them; she also put more effort into editing her written work than did most of the others. However, while the written work of her classmates improved, Mimi's showed little or no progress. She was diligent and thorough in every assignment, but she was getting nowhere; the same mistakes resurfaced again and again, and this confounded her teachers.

One day, halfway through that pre-college course, while working with Mimi, the instructor altered slightly the nature of their grammar discussion, and, in so doing, discovered some revealing insights into how she thought.

She and the instructor were focused on this sentence, which she had written in her assignment that day:

- *He didn't found his money yesterday.*

Rather than remind Mimi of what grammar rule applies when forming the simple past tense, that day, the instructor asked her *why* she had chosen to use the past form, *found*, in “didn't found.” She explained that she had, in fact, spent a long time thinking about it before opting for “found.” She added that, at first, she had thought the verb should be *didn't finds* since the subject was *he*. However, in the end, she said she had decided to use *found* because the event happened in the past. Obviously, she had assumed that the rule was: When writing about the past, all verbs should be formed in the past—not only auxiliary verbs but base verbs as well. In this instance, Mimi displayed a characteristic described by Reid, above, of the typical immigrant student; she had developed a grammar rule of her own, and it was wrong.

Then, on another assignment, Mimi revealed an additional characteristic of the immigrant-student population; she made a grammar mistake because she had learned the language *by ear* and, consequently, didn't recognize her own mistake because, to her, it “sounded right.”

In this case, Mimi wrote:

- *He avoided drive at night.*

She was unaware that the gerund form, *driving*, should follow the verb “avoid” because she had never heard the *-ing* pronounced by those around her. In fact, when the instructor explained that she needed “driving,” she was surprised because, she said, “avoided driving” sounded strange. For many of these aural learners, as time passes, errors such as this one can become fossilized, i.e. internalized permanently as “their version” of how English is structured. This probably

results from the fact that they have been able to navigate successfully through everyday life via their own “non-standard” English system, and this has led them to assume that it is correct (Reid, 1998). Unfortunately, these engrained misassumptions of how English is formed can lead to difficulties once they enroll in college.

Dilemma for colleges

Harklau (2000) points out that, due to their social and oral skills, immigrant students can appear to be native English speakers. However, these students frequently lack the *academic* language skills needed to be successful in college courses, especially those that require written work.

At most colleges, students who lack the language proficiency to enter mainstream coursework are routed to either Option One or Option Two, below:

1) Option One: Students are placed in mainstream freshman composition or remedial writing courses. *A drawback of this option:* Teachers in these courses may lack the training to work with NNS. According to Hartman and Tarone (1999), mainstream instructors assume that NNS entering their classes already have the language skills needed to perform at a level that is similar to their native English-speaking peers. Thus, these instructors consider it their job to help students develop organization and critical thinking skills, rather than grammatical skills.

2) Option Two: Students are placed in academic ESL courses. *A drawback of this option:* With international students commonly in the majority in academic ESL programs, lessons, texts and curricula are designed for them—not for immigrant students, who are likely to lack a background in the meta-language and structural conventions of English. Furthermore, unlike immigrant students, who are ear-learners, international students have primarily learned through sight, i.e. via a formal classroom study of the language. Thus, in these academic ESL settings, immigrant students are apt to find themselves at a disadvantage (Harklau, Siegal, and Losey, 1999).

While Option Two would seem preferable to Option One, since, as Hartman and Tarone (1999) found, unlike mainstream instructors, those in academic ESL were willing to focus on grammar and structure as tools for helping students improve their writing.

However, this study explored the following Option Three, as an alternative that might benefit immigrant students to an even greater degree than Option Two:

Option Three: Students study English meta-language and grammatical structures before enrolling in academic ESL courses. Immigrant students who have developed their own system of English rules risk failure in academic ESL coursework unless they have acquired a foundation in the conventions of the language. Option One, as Hartman and Tarone (1999) pointed out above, would have little to offer in this regard. Option Two, that of enrolling in academic ESL courses, would be preferable to Option One. Obstacles, though, might still exist because lessons, texts and curricula are designed for international students.

However, Ferris (1999) found that immigrant students are able to gain from instruction that is focused on terminology and the rules of syntax that govern English. And this present study, inspired by the optimism in Ferris's claim, applied a non-traditional yet explicit method for providing immigrant students with the opportunity to work with the meta-language and grammatical conventions of English.

It was hoped that the writing skills of our immigrant students would improve to a significant degree after they had experienced instruction via this novel approach.

Preparing immigrant students for success in academic ESL classes

Regarding immigrant students, to sum up the literature cited above, it is assumed that:

- 1) ESL writing courses are more likely than mainstream English courses to supply these students with grammar support.
- 2) Since academic ESL texts and curricula are generally designed with international students in mind, immigrant students would benefit from building a foundation in the terminology and grammatical structures of English that international students, as a whole, have already acquired.
- 3) Immigrant students can benefit from explicit instruction in grammar.

The study's hypothesis

For this study, it was hypothesized that immigrant students can gain an understanding of English terminology and structure. And they can then apply that knowledge to improving their writing skills to a level that would allow them to qualify for the Academic ESL Program at WCC. (The entry point for the WCC program is at the upper-intermediate level. There are 3 levels in the academic ESL course sequence. Upon completion of the 3rd course, students are eligible for freshman English Composition.)

The need for a new approach

Many writing instructors can relate to one mainstream instructor's observation that immigrant students can fill in grammar worksheets with ease. This may be because these students are good at detecting the patterns involved, which opens up the risk that exercises of this nature could be done in a mindless manner. However, grammar rules that students apparently "knew well" when doing exercises don't transfer to their longer, written work, where mistakes surface that didn't appear in their exercises (Hartman and Tarone, 1999).

In contrast, the material utilized in this study was designed to *actively* involve students' analytical skills; this was *not material to be done mindlessly*.

Aspects of the study's approach to teaching English terminology and syntax:

Aspect 1 Inductive rather than deductive thinking: Most ESL grammar books approach instruction in a deductive manner. That is to say, a rule is given and students apply it to exercises. However, for immigrant students, who, as ear-learners, have learned English intuitively (Harklau, Siegal and Losey, 1999), an inductive approach could be more effective. The materials used in this study provided examples and exercises that, through a progression of steps, led students to intuit for themselves the rules that govern those examples. *This aspect is based on the beliefs (1) that students will internalize a rule more efficiently if they have intuited (or formed) it themselves; and (2) that students who have established their own understanding of a rule are more apt to later apply it to what they write.*

Aspect 2 Analytical rather than pattern practice: As was noted above from Hartman and Tarone, students who can follow patterns and fill in grammar exercises may still not be able to apply rules that they have practiced when asked to do longer written assignments. The material used in this study was created in a way that would encourage students to approach their study of English in a meaningful (analytical), not mindless, manner. *For this aspect, it is theorized that, to help students internalize a grammar rule, they should be given the opportunity to analyze and explain on their own why a specific grammar rule would apply in a certain case.*

Aspect 3 Multi-sensory rather than visual only: As ear-learners, immigrants have acquired much of what English they know by listening and speaking. The grammar instruction for this study included oral / aural components. *It is assumed that this type of student will find grammar tasks that include oral / aural components to be particularly helpful and meaningful.*

Aspect 4 Paragraph-level, rather than just sentence-level, application: Each lesson in the study culminated with an assignment to write a paragraph. *The underpinning here is that students will benefit from generating, not only at the sentence level, but at the paragraph level as well.*

The Subjects

The class consisted of 20 students, all of whom placed in Level 5 or Level 6 on the CASAS Reading Test during winter term 2005. In a questionnaire that asked students to identify their reasons for taking the course, 13 out of 20 indicated that they wanted to eventually enroll in regular college coursework. At the start of the term, two other students indicated that their intention was merely to improve their English skills—but by the end of the quarter, both of them expressed an interest in attending academic classes. Four of the 13 students who listed attending college coursework as a goal were not included in this study as they were already writing at a level that would qualify them for the academic ESL program. Based on the criteria listed under “Method” below, the following 8 students did qualify for this study. Their respective characteristics were as follows:

Subject's (coded) Names	Approximate Age	Country of Origin	Educational Background	CASAS score at Start of Study
S.	Mid 20s	Mexico	High school	240/36R
H.	Late 30s	China	High school	232/37R
X.	Early 40s	China	4-yr degree	221/35R
M.	Mid 60s	Iran	4-yr degree	236/36R
A.	Early 30s	Taiwan	High school	235/37R
T.	Early 40s	Ukraine	College	230/36R
L.	Mid 30s	Mexico	No high school	229/35R
R.	Early 20s	Mexico	High school	226/36R

Method

. To qualify as subjects for the study, the following criteria had to be met:

- The students had not studied English for more than 6 months before coming to the U.S. (This would distinguish these subjects from international students, most of whom had spent considerable time studying English as a foreign language before coming to the U.S.)
- Their writing ability lacked the proficiency necessary for placement in the academic ESL program at WCC.
- They were interested in pursuing an academic degree.

Data Collection: For evaluative purposes, at the start and end of the course, three types of data were collected. (See Appendices for samples of the instruments used.)

“Pre-test”

- 1) “*Grammar Terms*” *Confidence Survey*: The purpose of this 15-question survey was to determine how well students felt that they already understood grammatical terms. Each question asked students to self-assess the level of their familiarity with a certain grammatical term. (See Appendix A.)
- 2) *Grammar Quiz*: This consisted of a 67-item (100-point) test of students’ ability to identify and work with nouns, verbs, prepositions, subjects, punctuation, and complete and incomplete sentences. (See Appendix B.)
- 3) *Pre-essay*: Students wrote an essay in one hour without assistance. Each essay was scored by two readers, who used a slightly modified version of the Composition Correctness Score procedure (Brodkey and Young, 1981). The procedure of evaluation consisted of the following three steps:
 - (1) The first 250 words were counted and used for scoring purposes.
 - (2) Errors were identified. Each error was given a score of three, two, or one, depending upon the gravity of the error. A score of three was given to the most grave errors—those that distorted the readability of the message; two was given to less serious distortions, and one was assigned for minor errors, i.e. those that did not affect the readability of the message at all yet did not sound “native speaker”-like. (Unlike the procedure used by Brodkey and Young, for this study, incorrect spelling was not counted as an error.)

(3) A correctness score was then calculated by dividing the total number of errors into the total number of words (up to 250).

The following sample sentence is included here to show how scores of three, two, and one were determined:

It is convenient ___ read and write English because to <u>can be</u> live in America	
1 pt.	2 pts.
<u>easy</u> , we must be <u>enrolled with the people</u> .	
1	3 pts.

“Post-test”

At the end of the course, the same “*Grammar Terms*” *Confidence Survey* and *Grammar Diagnostic Test* were administered. Students also wrote a *Post-essay*, but on a different topic from that used for the *Pre-essay*. All components of the “Post-test” were scored and calculated in the same manner as was done on the ‘Pre-test.’

Grammar Lessons

The students met five hours per week in a Reading/Writing/Grammar course for 10 to 15 weeks (depending upon the student). On the first class-day of the study, students were given a 24-unit textbook (Kehe & Kehe, 2004), and they were asked whether they preferred to work individually on the textbook (i.e. each, at his/her own speed) or whether they preferred to work together (at the same speed and in small groups). The class voted to progress through the text together, beginning with Unit 1.

During each class period, while working with the material, the students were either randomly assigned to small groups, or they formed their own groups. The instructor did not present the grammar units through any organized type of “lesson.” Only the unit title and quick review of the typical writing and grammar problem covered in each unit were presented. Most of the unit exercises were completed in the small groups during class time, with the instructor and an assistant circulating to check work and answer questions. The paragraph-writing assignment, which was the culmination of each unit, was assigned to be completed at home and turned in during the following class. The instructor read, corrected and commented on each homework assignment. Typically, 30 minutes per class-day were spent on a grammar unit. (See Appendix C for the complete Table of Contents for the units and Appendix D for a sample of one complete unit.).

The exercises and assignments in the textbook incorporated the four aspects described above; those aspects are elaborated on here:

Aspect 1: Inductive rather than deductive thinking.

For example:

Exercise 1: Draw a box around the clauses.

1. I bought an airline ticket **because** I want to visit my uncle.
 2. We took our dog to the vet **since** it was sick.
 3. **Since** Mari didn't speak English, she spoke in French to the shopkeeper.
 4. ...
 5. ...
- (etc.)

Exercise 2: Choose the correct answer for the rule.

Rule: According to the sentences in Exercise 1, when we use *because* or *since* in a sentence, we have ____.

a) one clause b) two clauses

Aspect 2: Analytical rather than pattern practice

For example:

Exercise 1: Read the sentences. Choose the correct grammar explanation for each.

1. I went to the library because I needed a book for my report.
 - a) This sentence is grammatically correct because it has two clauses with "because."
 - b) This sentence is grammatically incorrect because it has only one clause with "because."
 2. Since I was very lucky.
 - a) This sentence is grammatically correct because it has two clauses with "since."
 - b) This sentence is grammatically incorrect because it has only one clause with "since."
 3. ...
 4. ...
- (etc.)

Exercise 2

- 1) Write **OK** if the sentences are grammatically correct. (Hint: In total, two sentences are OK.)
 2) Correct the mistakes if they are grammatically incorrect.

- OK 1. Ken didn't have many friends in elementary school because he was shy.
- ___ 2. My parents bought me a new computer. ^{because} ~~Because~~ I passed my math class.
- ___ 3. We moved to the city because my father found a great job there.
- ___ 4. Dr. Wilson came to my house. Since my brother was sick.
5. ...
6. ...
- (etc.)

Exercise 3

- 1) Write **OK** if the sentences are grammatically correct.
 2) If the sentences are grammatically incorrect, write **NOT OK** and explain the problem.

Not OK 1) They celebrated all night long. Because they won the match.

Explanation: There is only one clause with "because." There should be two.

OK 2) I love to spend the summer near a lake, since the evenings are cool there.

Explanation: _____

_____ 3) Because the newspaper had my picture in it. I bought several copies to show my friends. Explanation: _____

Aspect 3: Multi-sensory rather than visual only

For example:

Dictation Exercise X: Listen to the sentences and write them. Use punctuation and capitalization.

1. _____
2. _____

Instructor's Listening Script for Exercise X:

1. They built a new school because the old one was too small.
2. Because the letter arrived late, I didn't know about the party.

(Also, see Appendix E for "Grammar Groups Review," exercises which involve group discussions.)

Aspect 4: Paragraph-level, rather than just sentence-level, application

For example:

Exercise Y: On the topic below, write a paragraph with about five sentences. In at least three of the sentences, use the word "*because*" or "*since*."

Topic: Tell about what you did last weekend and why you did it, **or** tell about your plans for next weekend and why you will do them.

Study Results

Name (coded) /number of weeks instruction	Pre- essay*	Post- essay	Pre- grammar Quiz	Post- grammar Quiz	Pre-gram. Confidence Survey	Post-gram. Confidence Survey
S./10 wks	9.74	26.88	73	72	83	93
H./15 wks.	9.00	11.36	88	86	70	50
X./15 wks.	6.25	9.62	76	84	50	67
M./10 wks.**	5.10	13.41	81	xxx	76	xxx
A./15 wks.	5.19	9.62	69	80	60	83
T./15 wks.	4.78	11.05	86	94	70	97
L./15 wks.	4.39	5.33	60	61	50	93

R./15 wks.	4.32	8.25	75	72	63	73
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* See section above on Data Collection, “Pre-test” for information on how scores for the essays were calculated.

** Student “M.” left the course before the Post-grammar Quiz and Post-grammar Confidence Survey were administered, so those scores for this student are missing.

Statistical Results

The statistical results indicate that this non-traditional approach to the teaching of grammar and writing met with some success. T-test results showed that the difference between the **Pre-essay** and **Post-essay scores** for this group was significant at the $p < .05$ level. Furthermore, 4 of the 8 students improved sufficiently on their essays to be admitted to the academic ESL program. (A score of 11 on an essay is the entry-level score for admittance to that program, and, as can be seen in the “Study Results” chart above, students “S,” “H,” “M,” and “T” improved to that degree.)

From the Grammar Confidence scores above, we can see that all but one student felt that they had developed a better grasp of the grammatical terms by the end of the term. The difference between the scores for their **Pre-grammar Confidence Survey** and **Post-grammar Confidence Survey** were significant at the $p < .05$ level.

However, there was no significant difference between the scores on the **Pre-grammar Quiz** and **Post-grammar Quiz**. With regard to the fact those scores resulted in no significant improvement, the instructor observed that it was evident to her that the students did not exude a fervent motivation to do well on the Post-grammar Quiz since they were aware, by that point in the term, that it would not be a factor in determining whether or not they would qualify for entry into the academic ESL program.

Additional Observations

The instructor reported that, perhaps because of the fact that students had been given a complete text at the beginning of the course and because of their positive reaction to the approach that the text took to grammar instruction, they remained remarkably motivated throughout the course. For example, class attendance improved, students turned in homework assignments more regularly than had been the case with previous groups of students, and small-group discussions were lively as the students worked together to problem-solve as they progressed through the material.

At the start of the study, there was some concern that the grammar level of the material would be too low for the students in the class. The materials began with simple lessons that asked them to identify nouns, verbs, and subjects and continued from there with basic practice with verb tenses and forms. The ESL competencies indicate that students at this level should be working toward proficiency using present perfect tense, passive voice, conditionals, and complex sentence structures. It was clear after completing the initial units of the text that the students had many

gaps and misconceptions about even some very basic grammar rules. (It should be noted that even the students whose writing level was too high at the start of the course to qualify them for this study chose to complete the grammar work with the rest of the class. This was another indication that the approach must have been engaging.) Even before the midpoint of the course students began observing that they were seeing improvement in their own writing. They often commented that, in the past, although they felt that they could successfully fill in grammar worksheets, either they still had misunderstood some grammar rules or they had never known what they were at all.

It should also be noted that three students (two of whom were subjects in the study) who had previously expressed no interest in attending academic classes changed their minds during the course. In fact, two of them began academic coursework in the spring of 2005, and the third will start in summer. The instructor felt convinced that a firmer grasp of grammar may have bolstered their self-confidence and inspired them to enroll.

A Suggestion

The primary purpose of this study was to explore a way to help immigrant ESL students transition into college-level coursework. More specifically, this study was concerned with helping students improve their writing skills *to a degree that would allow them to qualify for entry into academic ESL coursework*. In the end, there were some success stories since four of the eight subjects have qualified for enrollment in ESLA 97, the upper-intermediate (and entry-level) course in the Academic ESL program at WCC. Equally exciting is the fact that three students who were not subjects of this study but who did work through the study's material, will skip ESLA 97 entirely because they have qualified to enroll in the (low-advanced level) ESLA 115, the second of the three courses in the WCC academic program.

As a result of this study, the authors suggest that instructors of immigrant students at the upper levels of ESL carefully analyze their students' writing skills, especially for those students who consider college coursework to be a goal; they may appear on traditional grammar tests to have a firmer grammatical foundation than is, in fact, the case. As can be noted from the subjects' characteristics, a **high CASAS reading score does not necessarily correspond to proficiency in writing** (although it does appear that those with higher CASAS scores did make more gains in their writing scores after working through the material in this study). It is often assumed that students at the upper levels of ESL do not need practice in basic sentence structure or verb forms. However, the results of this study seem to indicate that even apparently proficient students at the highest levels would still benefit from review and practice with basic grammatical functions, i.e. identifying subjects, verbs, and prepositions and working with sentence boundaries.

Plans for Sharing Study Results

Results of the study will be shared with ABE and ESL faculty at Whatcom Community College, as well as with the administration. The authors also plan to submit proposals to both TESOL and COABE.

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Appendix A

Name _____

“Grammar Terms” Confidence Survey**Exercise 1:** Circle your opinion.1. Do you know what a **noun** is?

- a. I learned about this word, and I understand it well.
- b. I learned about this word, but I don't understand it well.
- c. I don't know this word.

2. Do you know what a **verb** is?

- a. I learned about this word, and I understand it well.
- b. I learned about this word, but I don't understand it well.
- c. I don't know this word.

3. Do you know what **an auxiliary verb** is?

- a. I learned about this word, and I understand it well.
- b. I learned about this word, but I don't understand it well.
- c. I don't know this word.

4. Can you find **subjects of sentences**?

- a. Yes, I can do this easily.
- b. Sometimes I can do this, but sometimes it's difficult for me.
- c. I don't know how to do this.

5. Do you know what a **verb tense** is?

- a. I learned about this expression, and I understand it well.
- b. I learned about this expression, but I don't understand it well.
- c. I don't know this word.

6. Do you know what a **preposition** is?

- a. I learned about this word, and I understand it well.
- b. I learned about this word, but I don't understand it well.
- c. I don't know this word.

7. Do you know how to use **and, but, so, and or** in sentences?

- a. Yes, I can do this easily.
- b. Sometimes I can do this, but sometimes I make mistakes.
- c. I don't know how to use them.

8. Do you know how to use, **although** in sentences?

- a. Yes, I can do this easily.
- b. Sometimes I can do this, but sometimes I make mistakes.
- c. I don't know how to use it.

Appendix A (cont.)

9. Do you know how to use **can**, **could**, **will**, **would**, and **should** in sentences?

- a. Yes, I can do this easily.
- b. Sometimes I can do this, but sometimes I make mistakes.
- c. I don't know how to use them.

10. Do you know where to put **periods**?

- a. Yes, I can do this easily.
- b. Sometimes I can do this, but sometimes I make mistakes.
- c. I don't know how to use them.

11. Do you know what a **clause** is?

- a. I learned about this word, and I understand it well.
- b. I learned about this word, but I don't understand it well.
- c. I don't know this word.

12. Do you know how to use **who** in sentences?

- a. Yes, I can do this easily.
- b. Sometimes I can do this, but sometimes I make mistakes.
- c. I don't know how to use it.

13. Do you know the difference between **there** and **their**.

- a. I learned about these words, and I understand them well.
- b. I learned about these words, but I don't understand them well.
- c. I don't know these words.

14. Do you know how to use **because** and **since** in sentences?

- a. Yes, I can do this easily.
- b. Sometimes I can do this, but sometimes I make mistakes.
- c. I don't know how to use them.

15. Do you know what a **gerund** is?

- a. I learned about this word, and I understand it well.
- b. I learned about this word, but I don't understand it well.
- c. I don't know this word.

Appendix B

Grammar Test

Exercise 1: Identify terms

- 1) Write **N** next to the nouns.
- 2) Write **V** next to the verbs.
- 3) Write **P** next to the prepositions.
- 4) Write **?** next to the words if you are not sure.

N desk ___ go ___ car ___ ocean ___ at
 ___ lose ___ hair ___ summer ___ see ___ enjoy
 ___ under ___ from ___ clock ___ gave ___ John

Exercise 2: Circle the subjects in these sentences. Write ? if you do not know. (Ignore the numbers at the ends of the sentences.)

1. She wrote a book about her grandmother.
2. My brother went to the hospital yesterday.
3. In the morning, we usually make our own breakfast. ¹²
4. Sara, who works in a law office, recently got a scholarship. ²¹
5. Jim plans to go to Hawaii, and Tom hopes to go with him. ⁸
6. Because I don't work on Saturday, I will go skiing then. ¹⁸
7. They wanted to go to the museum today, but it was closed. ⁸
8. The store where I bought my computer has a sale now, so you should go there and see if you can get a good price for a new printer.
9. Eating in a restaurant can be expensive. ¹³

Exercise 3: Circle the verbs in these sentences. Write ? if you do not know.

1. She wrote a book about her grandmother.
2. My brother went to the hospital yesterday.
3. In the morning, we usually make our own breakfasts.
4. Sara, who works in a law office, recently got a scholarship.
5. Jim plans to go to Hawaii, and Tom hopes to go with him.
6. Because I don't have work on Saturday, I will go skiing then.
7. They wanted to go to the museum today, but it was closed.
8. The store where I bought my computer has a sale now, so you should go there and see if you can get a good price for a new printer.

Appendix B (cont.)

Exercise 4: Put in capitals and periods. Write ? if you do not know.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| A | S |
|----------|----------|
1. Ann took a bus to work. she arrive on time.
 2. that was a great movie
 3. my brother needs a new watch because his old one stopped ¹⁸
 4. although it is late I need to finish this work ¹⁹
 5. ken went to the movies tom stayed home ¹¹
 6. the baby was crying all night so his mother took him to the doctor's office ⁸
 7. the actor who plays the hero in the movie is from my hometown ²¹
 8. after the rain stopped we decided to play tennis however the court was still wet
 9. he stayed late at work this is because his boss asked him to do that ¹⁸
 10. it is dangerous to drive fast while it is raining
 11. i made a lot of money by working hard ¹⁴

Exercise 5

- 1) Write **OK** if the sentence is grammatically correct.
- 2) Write **NOT** if the sentence is not grammatically correct.
- 3) Write **?** if you do not know.

- ___ 1. She sleep until noon every day. ⁷
- ___ 2. Their friends are coming to the party. ⁶
- ___ 3. Tom doesn't wants any cake. ⁷
- ___ 4. We stayed home. Because we were tired. ¹⁸
- ___ 5. The man he is my teacher. ²²
- ___ 6. Although Sara likes to drive, but she doesn't have a car. ¹⁹
- ___ 7. Yesterday, Ken didn't went to work. ⁷
- ___ 8. My brother likes basketball, but he doesn't enjoy tennis. ⁸
- ___ 9. In the morning is quiet outside. ¹²
- ___ 10. Sara went to town and buys some food for dinner. ⁴
- ___ 11. I don't like there dog. ¹⁶
- ___ 12. After getting glasses, I could read better. ²³
- ___ 13. Ann went to school. Although she was tired. ¹⁹
- ___ 14. Tom is good at building bird-houses. ¹⁴

Appendix B (cont.)

- ___ 15. We have already finished our homework. ¹⁷
- ___ 16. They turned on their lights since it was dark outside. ¹⁸
- ___ 17. Tami should going home soon. ²³
- ___ 18 It was very cold there. ¹⁶
- ___ 19. He stopped me from make a mistake. ¹⁴
- ___ 20. She not left home yet. ¹⁷
- ___ 21. His boss who is a wonderful man. ²¹
- ___ 22. He didn't need a hat. ⁷
- ___ 23. You can come. If you want to help us.
- ___ 24. People who are rich they can buy many nice things.

Appendix C

The Grammar Review Book Table of Contents

	Unit	Mistake
1	1. Nouns	(No specific mistakes. This is an identification unit.)
2	2. More on subjects (pronouns) and verbs (non-action)	(No specific mistakes. This is an identification unit.)
3	Subjects and Verbs	My sister her boss a present. A book it is important for us.
4	Present and past tense	He went to the library and borrow s a book.
5	Grammar Groups	
6	Main verb & auxiliary verb: am, is, are, was, were	He is wants a dog. They working too hard.
7	Verb Forms	She go to work. He didn't likes the movie. He didn't liked the movie.
8	Compound Sentences	He felt ill he went to the doctor. He felt ill, he went to the doctor.
9	Prepositions	In the morning is quiet outside. The man near the cars are my neighbors.
10	Grammar Groups	
11	Run on (pt 1)	He went to the movie he fell asleep after 30 minutes.
12	Start with Preposition	In the city find good jobs.
13	Gerunds	I finished read that book.
14	Preposition + Gerund	He made some money by work hard.
15	Grammar Groups	
16	there, their, there's	I like there house . Their is some water in our basement.

Appendix C (cont.)

17	Main verb & auxiliary verb: has, have, had	He have a new suit. They not finished yet.
18	Because and Since	Because it was raining. Since I'm late, so I'll take a taxi.
19	Although	Although he was late. Although I'm hungry, but I won't eat anything.
20	Grammar Groups	
21	who	The man who is sitting there. The woman lives near my house is wonderful.
22	S + prep. + V	The car in front of us it is noisy.
23	can, could, should, must	They could saw very well out the window. I should going home soon.
24	Non-Referential or Dummy "it"	Is beautiful today. He is easy to do math.

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Appendix D

Sample Unit

Unit 8: Compound Sentences

Mistakes: He felt ill he went to the doctor. // He felt ill, he went to the doctor.

It is important to understand subjects and verbs to do this unit. (For practice with subjects and verbs, see Unit 1.)

Part 1: Identify sentences and clauses

Exercise 1: Draw a box around the groups of words that can be complete sentences. (Hint: you should have a total of 8 boxes.)

1. he turned off the light he went to bed
2. we took a tour of the castle it was very scary
3. Carrie parked the car she put money in the meter
4. the train was late we got home after midnight

Exercise 2: Choose the correct answer for the definition.

Definition: The eight boxed groups of words in Ex. 1 above can be sentences.

Groups of words that can be sentences are called:

- a) formulas b) clauses c) subsets

Exercise 3: Circle the number of the groups of words that are **clauses**. Remember, a clause has a subject and verb. (Hint: 3 are clauses.)

1. in the morning
2. he bought a new computer
3. my best friend from Europe
4. loud music hurts my ears
5. she feels homesick
6. a wonderful and beautiful picture

Appendix D (cont.)

Exercise 4

- 1) Draw boxes around the clauses.
- 2) Write **S** above the subjects and **V** above the verbs in these clauses.
- 3) Draw a box around the letter of the sentence in each pair that has correct punctuation.

1. a. $\begin{array}{cc} \text{S} & \text{V} \\ \boxed{\text{I talked to my friend for an hour}} & \boxed{\text{we laughed a lot.}} \end{array}$
- b. $\begin{array}{cc} \text{S} & \text{V} \\ \boxed{\text{I talked to my friend for an hour.}} & \boxed{\text{We laughed a lot.}} \end{array}$

2. a. It was snowing. We drove slowly.
- b. It was snowing we drove slowly.
3. a. Sara speaks French she doesn't understand Chinese.
- b. Sara speaks French. She doesn't understand Chinese.
4. a. The lion chased the deer, he didn't catch him.
- b. The lion chased the deer. He didn't catch him.

Part 2: Combine clauses with conjunctions**Exercise 5**

- 1) Draw boxes around the clauses.
- 2) Write **S** above the subjects and **V** above the verbs in these clauses.
- 3) Draw a box around the letters of the sentences that are grammatically correct. (Hint: there are a total of 7 correct ones.)

1. a. $\begin{array}{cc} \text{S} & \text{V} \\ \boxed{\text{My father paid the bill}} & \boxed{\text{we went home.}} \end{array}$
- b. $\begin{array}{cc} \text{S} & \text{V} \\ \boxed{\text{My father paid the bill, and we went home.}} \end{array}$
2. a. Steve needs to save money, he doesn't have a job.
 - b. Steve needs to save money, but he doesn't have a job.
 3. a. I gave a speech yesterday, and it was fun.
 - b. I gave a speech yesterday it was fun.

Appendix D (cont.)

4.
 - a. The movie ended at midnight, so we got home late.
 - b. The movie ended at midnight. We got home late.
 - c. The movie ended at midnight, we got home late.

5.
 - a. Jay's favorite actor made a new movie. He plans to see it soon.
 - b. Jay's favorite actor made a new movie he plans to see it soon.
 - c. Jay's favorite actor made a new movie, and he plans to see it soon.

Exercise 6: Circle the correct answer for this definition and rule.

Definition: The words *and*, *but* and *so* are called:

- a) conjunctions b) clauses c) subjects

Rule: We use the words *and*, *but* and *so* to connect two:

- a) conjunctions b) clauses c) subjects

Exercise 7: Read the sentences. Then choose **all** the correct grammar explanations. (Hint: There are 6 correct ones.)

1. He had an appointment, so he left school early.
 - a) This sentence is correct because we connected 2 clauses with "so."
 - b) This sentence is incorrect because we need a period before "so."

2. They were invited to a party, but they didn't go.
 - a) This sentence is correct because we connected 2 clauses with "but."
 - b) This sentence is incorrect because we need a period before "but."

3. We will eat lunch at noon. We'll have dinner at eight.
 - a) These sentences are grammatically correct.
 - b) These sentences are grammatically correct, but we could combine them by adding "and" between them.
 - c) These sentences are grammatically incorrect. We should take out the period and put a small "w" on "We'll."

4. This thing doesn't work he needs a new one.
 - a) This sentence is grammatically correct.
 - b) This sentence is incorrect. We should put a period after "work" and capitalize "he."
 - c) This sentence is incorrect. We should put a comma after "work" and add "so."

Appendix D (cont.)

Exercise 8

- 1) Write **OK** if the sentences are grammatically correct. (Hint: There are two correct ones.)
- 2) Add periods and capitals, or add conjunctions (**and, but, so**) in order to make correct sentences.

- ___ 1. I like birds I want to fly like one.
- ___ 2. Ann had to give a speech, so she was nervous.
- ___ 3. We went to the beach the water was too cold to swim.
- ___ 4. My guitar string broke. Ken gave me his guitar to use.
- ___ 5. Sara is coming after work Tami will arrive as soon as possible.

Exercise 9 (Dictation): Listen to the sentences and write them with the correct punctuation and capitalization.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Ex. 9 Listening Script

1. Tom left class. He went home.
2. My boss starts work at 7 a.m., but I start at 8 a.m.
3. I felt sad, so I called my good friend.
4. It started to rain. My hair got wet.
5. I dropped the plate, and it broke.

Exercise 10

- 1) Write a paragraph with at least 5 sentences.
- 2) In at least 2 of the sentences, use a conjunction (**and, but, so**).

Topic: Write about things that you did as a child (7-12 years old). You can include things that you enjoyed and did not enjoy.

Appendix E**Sample Unit****Unit 5: Grammar Groups Review Units 1-4****Student A**

Directions: These sentences and questions are about the Worksheet in the box below. Read your sentences and questions to your partners.

1. Look at Sentence A. Circle the nouns.
4. Look at Sentence B. Write V above the verb.
7. Look at Sentence D. Write S above the subject.
10. Look at Sentence F. Should we write the word “he” after the word “brother”? Why or why not?
13. Look at Sentence H. What is the subject?
16. Look at Sentence J. Look at the word “was”. Is it an auxiliary or main verb?
19. Is “didn’t know” present or past tense?

Worksheet

- A. My apartment is near a park.
- B. I have a problem with money.
- C. There is sadness in some countries now.
- D. We were happy during the vacation.
- E. Have nice weather in summer.
- F. My brother quit his job.
- G. Cell phones very helpful for police.
- H. We were laughing about the joke.
- I. I called my friend on the phone and meet her at the mall.
- J. Ken was in the same school as me, but we didn’t know each other.

Appendix E (cont.)

Unit 5: Grammar Groups Review Units 1-4**Student B**

Directions: These sentences and questions are about the Worksheet in the box below. Read your sentences and questions to your partners.

2. Look at Sentence B. Circle the nouns.
5. Look at Sentence C. Circle the nouns.
8. In Sentence D, write V above the verb.
11. Look at Sentence G. Is there a problem with this sentence? Explain.
14. Look at Sentence I. Circle the verbs.
17. In Sentence J, what verb tense is the word “was”?
20. In Sentence J, are the verb tenses correct?

Worksheet

- A. My apartment is near a park.
- B. I have a problem with money.
- C. There is sadness in some countries now.
- D. We were happy during the vacation.
- E. Have nice weather in summer.
- F. My brother quit his job.
- G. Cell phones very helpful for police.
- H. We were laughing about the joke.
- I. I called my friend on the phone and meet her at the mall.
- J. Ken was in the same school as me, but we didn't know each other.

Unit 5: Grammar Groups Review Units 1-4**Student C**

Directions: These sentences and questions are about the Worksheet in the box below. Read your sentences and questions to your partners.

3. In Sentence B, write S above the subject.
6. Did you circle 2 words?
9. Look at Sentence E, is there a problem? If so, how can we correct it?
12. Look at Sentence H. Is the word “were” an auxiliary or main verb?
15. In Sentence I, is there are problem with one of the verbs? Explain.
18. In Sentence J, look at the words “didn’t know”. Which is an auxiliary verb and which is a main verb?

Worksheet

- A. My apartment is near a park.
- B. I have a problem with money.
- C. There is sadness in some countries now.
- D. We were happy during the vacation.
- E. Have nice weather in summer.
- F. My brother quit his job.
- G. Cell phones very helpful for police.
- H. We were laughing about the joke.
- I. I called my friend on the phone and meet her at the mall.
- J. Ken was in the same school as me, but we didn’t know each other.