CURRICULAR APPROACHES TO LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY:
CODE-SWITCHING, REGISTER-SHIFTING AND ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

by

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ABSTRACT

For several decades, some sociolinguists have argued that students—particularly those students who speak nonstandard varieties of English—would benefit from educational approaches grounded in linguistic principles. While studies have supported the claims that linguistically informed curricula can be educationally beneficial, such curricula have not yet been routinely adopted by educators, with a few exceptions. In order for a linguistically informed curriculum to be more generally implementable, it must articulate a coherent approach to dialect and academic language issues. Such articulation requires attention to existing educational processes and goals, which includes attention to the register features of academic writing. The distinctions among dialects and registers need to be made so that teachers and students can more clearly appreciate the language tasks they are asked to explain, perform and evaluate. Additionally, a curriculum, through its design, must mitigate teachers' lack of experience with linguistic content and a common ambivalence toward grammar. A linguistically informed curriculum, therefore, must be accessible to teachers and students, relevant to their learning objectives and integrable into an existing classroom ecology. This study addresses these issues, first, by designing a secondary-level curriculum that combines techniques of contrastive analysis, which compare the grammatical features of one language variety to another, and systemic functional linguistics, which explicate the syntactic and rhetorical structures of specific linguistic practices—in this case, of academic registers. The study also addresses some of the barriers to adoption and scalability by designing a curriculum that provides teachers with the necessary information and resources to be managed by non-experts. The curriculum was implemented in a high school over the course of a school year, and the class sessions were videotaped. The qualitative analysis of the curricular implementation demonstrates how the participating teacher and her students are able to negotiate content that introduces them to new ways of understanding and making meaning with language. The study also evidences important changes in the metalinguistic awareness of the teacher and her students—development that can promote students' academic achievement. In addition, the study debunks the oft-repeated claim that grammar is boring. The high levels of student participation during the lessons illustrate the curiosity that many students have about language. Furthermore, the participating teacher sees the linguistic content as relevant to established goals and presents it to students that way. The study, therefore, demonstrates both the challenges and the possibilities of fashioning linguistic content into usable, accessible and relevant curricula and provides a curriculum that can be implemented, adapted, transported and scaled.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For several decades, members of the sociolinguistic community have observed

that educational practices in the United States do not represent the current state of

knowledge in the linguistic field, that most classroom instruction does little to explicate

the structures of academic language and that some practices, in fact, subvert what we

know about language and can function as a de facto form of discrimination against

speakers of nonstandard varieties of English. Some have further argued that educational

attitudes and approaches toward language can function as a barrier to nonstandard

English-speaking students' engagement and achievement. As a remedy to instructional

practices that they see as both unjust and ineffective, they have endorsed approaches

informed by linguistic scholarship and research. Yet, even as researchers have produced

a number of studies that seem to support the claims of reform-minded linguists and even

as political and economic pressures have mounted on educators to find new ways to

improve the achievement of chronically underserved and underperforming students,

teachers and schools have been slow to adopt linguistically informed instruction. The

lack of enthusiasm for linguistically informed approaches has been due, in part, to wide-

spread ambivalence toward grammar instruction in the educational community, a

perceived antagonism between the methods and goals of grammar instruction and those

of process writing and literary analysis, which have dominated English classroom

practice in recent years, linguists' inability to articulate a coherent approach to dialect and academic language issues, the inattention to the importance of register in curricula designed to develop students' facility with standard English and, finally, a broad lack of teacher-training in the content knowledge necessary to implement the kinds of reforms for which linguists have argued.

This study aims to address the preceding concerns and contribute to the body of research in language education in a number of ways. First, this study undertakes a curricular design that integrates instruction in both the morphosyntax of dialects and the lexicogrammar of registers. Such integration is necessary if a language/grammar curriculum is to adequately explicate the structures and functions of academic language and meet the educational needs of students and teachers and to be linked to the goals of writing instruction. Second, it endeavors to create a curriculum that teachers can implement without extensive training or intervention from researchers or linguistic experts, thus making it transportable and scalable. Third, it represents an effort to document a code-switching curriculum at the secondary level, including a complete record of the lesson-design. As of yet, no such record exists, and this study provides a model from which others can build. Finally, the qualitative methods used in this study— like the use of video data-mining software—establish an approach for assessing the implementation of a linguistically informed curriculum that can be used in combination with other, more traditional assessment tools like token-counting to provide a robust account of how students and their teacher negotiate and make meaning from new linguistic content.

1.1   SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND THE CALL FOR LINGUISTICALLY INFORMED INSTRUCTION

The publication of William Labov's (1969) "The Logic of Nonstandard English" was a landmark in the field of linguistics. Together with his earlier study of Martha's Vineyard (Labov 1963), it marked a watershed in the development of sociolinguistics. It also marked the beginning of a new relationship between some linguists in academe and public education in the United States. In his article, Labov argued that one dialect is just as grammatically, morphosyntactically and lexically systematic as any other. The hierarchical valuing of language varieties, then, is a social and political ordering and not a linguistic one. In the emerging field of sociolinguistics, the social and political ordering of dialects—one that privileges Standard English (StE) on the grounds that it is the most logical, clear, proper, correct, etc.—was regarded as both observably false in linguistic terms as well as socially unjust. And, in the minds of some, schools were one place where those fallacies and injustices were perpetrated and reinforced.

Schools, after all, without exception, emphasize the primacy of StE, implicitly and explicitly equate StE with correctness, and sort students, in part, on their facility with StE. Linguists like Labov (e.g., Labov 1966b; Labov and Cohen 1967) and Walt Wolfram (e.g., Fasold and Wolfram 1969; Wolfram 1970) argued that language education would benefit from the new discoveries being made in sociolinguistics. Linguistics, they suggested, could help demonstrate how a student's nonstandard fluency might "interfere" with the language tasks demanded by school like reading (e.g., Kleederman 1975; Laffey and Shuy 1973), writing (e.g., Wolfram and Whiteman 1971) and testing (e.g., Bailey 1970; McPhail 1975; Wolfram 1976a, 1976b). Furthermore, they maintained that pedagogy informed by such new understandings could boost the

educational engagement and achievement of students who spoke nonstandard dialects in their homes and communities—populations that tended to be endemically underserved and underperforming.

As the field of sociolinguistics matured, the early models of dialect "interference" were challenged, modified and complicated. The relationship between students' language use and their orientation to schooling began to be viewed through prisms of identity, culture and politics. Germinal studies in linguistic anthropology by Shirley Brice Heath (1983) and variationist linguistics by Penelope Eckert (1989) illustrated how the language practices of different communities were more or less aligned with educational practices and how language practices important to community members' identity might complicate their participation in school. Such field studies were bolstered by the theories of influential continental philosophers Bakhtin (1981, 1986), Bourdieu (1982, 1983) and Foucault (1973, 1977, 1984) that demonstrated language's power as an instrument of social and political control as well as education's complicit role in upholding the ideologies that privilege a standard language and its speakers.

In addition to the consistent advocacy of Wolfram, influential supporters of linguistically informed pedagogy in recent years have included two of Labov's former students, John Baugh and John Rickford, as well as a sociolinguist who began her career in education, Geneva Smitherman. Baugh (1995, 1999, 2000) has examined the historical role of language and language attitudes in the educational experiences of African Americans and chronicled instances in which language attitudes and ideology have functioned as a vehicle for discrimination, even rage, directed at the African American community. His calls for education reform have been locally oriented and

nonprogrammatic. He suggests that individual schools and districts can find ways to teach students the history, variety and grammatical systematicity of dialects in the U.S. Such an approach, he believes, would be more accurate and would assist students in gaining standard English fluency (Baugh 2000). Rickford (2000; Rickford and Rickford 2000) shares Baugh's goals for instructional honesty and student literacy but is far more specific in arguing for the widespread use of dialect readers and contrastive analysis.

In contrast to Rickford, Smitherman (1977) is skeptical of bidialectal approaches like contrastive analysis as being too accommodationist: nonstandard speakers are forced to change, but standard speakers are not, implying that the nonstandard dialect is somehow inferior. She argues for flexible "communicative competencies," which include the awareness of audience, mode (speaking or writing) and rhetorical context and the appropriate marshalling of "content and message, style, choice of words, logical development, analysis and arrangement, originality of thought and expression, and so forth" (Smitherman 1977: 229). In addition, Smitherman advocates for greater teacher knowledge of nonstandard dialects, direct instruction in bureaucratic communication, multicultural and multilinguistic education and a decreased reliance on standardized testing.

Built on the foundational work of linguists like Labov, Wolfram, Baugh, Rickford and Smitherman, scholars have continued to champion the cause of linguistically informed educational practices (e.g., Alim and Baugh 2007; Denham and Lobeck 2005, Wheeler and Swords 2006). In addition to advocating through published research, linguists in professional organizations like the Linguistic Society of America have sponsored initiatives such as the Committee on Language in the School Curriculum to

provide outreach and support to schools. Since the publication of "The Logic of Nonstandard English," then, there have been nearly forty years of appeals for curricular reform motivated by advances in linguistic research.[1] In spite of these appeals, however, actual pedagogical change has been slow, and linguistics has had difficulty gaining traction in the educational community. At the same time, disparities in student achievement across income and racial lines stubbornly persist in spite of the pressures exerted by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to close the "achievement gap" (Campbell, Hombo, and Mazzeo 2000; Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning 2006; Cronin *et al.* 2005; Lutkus, Weiner, Daane, and Jin 2003; Lutkus, Weiner, Daane, Jin *et al.* 2003; Nettles, Millett, and Oh 2006; Wirt *et al.* 2004). Such conditions would seem to favor the implementation of strategies like those promoted by Baugh, Rickford and Smitherman, which promise to address those very same pressing and seemingly intractable disparities. And yet (with some notable exceptions like DeKalb, Georgia and Los Angeles, California) adoption of linguistically informed instructional approaches has not been a particularly popular option for schools seeking strategies to boost student achievement.

1.2   THE RISE OF PROCESS AND THE DECLINE OF GRAMMAR

Just as sociolinguistics was beginning to emerge and its early practitioners were urging new directions for language education, an entirely different revolution in writing instruction was being sparked by the publication of Janet Emig's *The Writing Processes of Twelfth Graders* (1971). Emig set out to describe how students actually go about completing writing tasks. What she produced was a picture of a staged process that many viewed as a more humane, student-centered and authentic representation than what they saw as a long-standing focus on "product" (e.g., Elbow 1973; Elbow 1981). "Process"

evolved from a description to an approach to writing instruction and assessment that eventually became the dominant model in the English classroom.

The rise of process coincided with a decline in grammar instruction. This decline was precipitated, in part, by research articles like the one authored by Richard Braddock and his partners (1963), which purported to show the absolute inefficacy of grammar instruction as a means for improving students' writing, and Mina Shaughnessy's *Errors and Expectations* (1977), which demonstrated how teachers' focus on grammatical error can inhibit their students' engagement and success with academic writing. In addition, grammar instruction was usually conceived of as "traditional grammar" and equated with particular classroom practices like sentence diagramming, part of speech identification, recognition and correction of various usage conventions like split infinitives, dangling participles, etc. Thus, grammar became associated with product-oriented pedagogies that the advocates of process sought to supplant. This adversarial posture was further cemented as grammar instruction became linked with "back to basics" movements. As one commentator at the time observed:

> Proponents of the basics extol teacher-centered, authoritarian, lecture methods; rote memory; drill; recitation; and homework. Some feel that the way to teach writing is through drills on grammar, usage, and vocabulary. The focus is on form and mechanics. (Leininger 1979: 168)

The perceived divide between process and grammar was as much about politics and ideology as it was about effective curricular design. While process became linked with progressive and student-centered learning, "back to basics" and, by association, grammar were proxies for a return to "discipline, morality and patriotism" (Leininger 1979: 167). In light of English-speaking culture's 200-year or so history of equating language practices with propriety, intelligence and nationalism, grammar's alignment with such

attitudes is, perhaps, not surprising (see Bailey 1991; Cameron 1995). Nonetheless, these antagonistic positions had a chilling effect on the efforts of sociolinguists to influence education.

Sociolinguistics, as "The Logic of Nonstandard English" makes clear, understands *grammar* differently from the grammar advocated by "back to basics" or commonly practiced in the classroom. As has been noted, part of the common conception of "school grammar" or "traditional grammar" is the conflation of a set of instructional practices with instructional content, but another ingredient of the typical conception of grammar is that it frequently focuses on correctness and propriety. This focus on correctness is what sociolinguists call prescriptive grammar. That is, it outlines a set of rules that stipulate how language *should* be used. Generally, such rules reference conventions of written language. Some prescriptive rules are the legacy of earlier efforts to discipline English stylistically to be more like Latin (that, for example, you should not split an infinitive because in Latin the infinitive form of a verb is one word and, thus, can not be split, while in English the infinitive is phrasal and can). Other prescriptive rules reference StE usage (that, for example, a verb in the present tense takes an –*s* to agree with a third person singular subject, which is true of StE but not all varieties). In contrast, the grammar of sociolinguistics is descriptive. That is, it explains how language *is* used. *Rule*, in this sense, is not used as it is in etiquette to refer to a recommended behavior. Rather, *rule* is used more as it is in physics to explain the behavior of a phenomenon or as it is in chemistry to predict how materials will interact based on their properties. Descriptive grammar seeks to record the morphological, lexical and syntactic rules that structure any language variety and allow speakers to communicate with each

other. The splitting of an infinitive, therefore, might be a stylistic choice but would not be a rule since the language allows for split infinitives, and when people use them they are able to communicate perfectly well (we all understand what it means *to boldly go*). In contrast, the *–s* inflection on a third person singular verb in the present tense would be a rule that describes part of a regular verb paradigm for some varieties of present-day English. Equally valid, however, would be the rule that other varieties use an uninflected form. Importantly, from a descriptivist perspective, both paradigms are rule-governed and systematic.

Though different from a traditional approach, sociolinguistics' view of grammar and its instructional possibilities still has had little success in changing educational practices in schools. That lack of success can be partly attributed to the ambivalence of many English educators toward grammar generally, but it also follows from linguists' lack of serious engagement with the actual practices and contexts of schools (contributing factors that are explored in following sections). Certainly, the arguments made by linguists have had some influence—particularly those regarding the validity and social value of dialects. The Conference on College Composition and Communication (1974) authored "Students' Right to Their Own Language," which stated that schools should respect any nonstandard language practices of students even as they are taught proficiency in the standard. In addition, some have sought ways to accommodate language diversity within the process framework (e.g., Elbow 2002), even as such well-intentioned efforts have been linguistically misguided (see Brown 2006b). Such recognitions of language diversity, while perhaps sympathetic to some of the social justice goals of linguists' reform efforts, have not furthered the goal of linguists like

Labov, Wolfram, Rickford, Baugh and Smitherman of making language and grammar a

subject of classroom study in order to improve students' engagement and outcomes; there

has been little impact on teaching and learning practices in schools.

1.3   TEACHERS' CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR

Indeed, as the traditional approach to grammar fell out of favor, most educators

did not seek out a different approach to replace it. As has been argued, one reason for the

lack of enthusiasm for grammar, in general, was the rise of process and the perceived

conflict between grammar instruction of any kind and the methods and objectives of the

process approach. The indifference, even occasional hostility, to grammar has affected

preparation of preservice teachers. New generations of teachers have entered the

profession with little experience as students in working with language or grammar, and

rarely do teacher education programs attempt to fill that content-knowledge gap.

Commenting on the need for better teacher-training in language and grammar, one report

notes rather pessimistically:

> A complicating factor here is that English majors in teacher-education programs
> are themselves ignorant of grammar and usage in alarming numbers. Many of
> these students, who were attracted to English because of literature and not
> language study or writing, are all too eager to abandon not just the traditional,
> drill-based teaching of grammar, but any teaching of grammar, not because
> traditional methods are useless, but because "grammar is boring" or "kids need to
> express themselves creatively," etc. These rationalizations, perhaps related to
> new teachers' lack of knowledge of grammar, hinder the credibility of new
> teachers attempting to introduce more effective ways of teaching grammar, which
> few attempt to do anyway. (Ganser *et al.* 2000: 7-8)

There are, then, interrelated obstacles that have inhibited the widespread adoption

of the kinds of curricular reforms that some sociolinguists have sought for decades.

Grammar has been viewed as incompatible with the principal work of English

classrooms, whether that is learning to write via process methods or reading and analyzing literature. In addition, a cycle has been established wherein students are not given much exposure to language study or grammar in their schooling. Those former students, then, enter the teaching profession without the expertise or inclination to implement linguistically informed teaching strategies, which demand some technical knowledge and vocabulary.

1.4   OAKLAND AND THE EBONICS CONTROVERSY

When attempts have been made to put linguistic theory into practice, those attempts have not always met with success. The most publicized, recent example of an effort to employ linguistically informed instruction began in Oakland, California in late 1996 and erupted into a national controversy early in 1997.[2] The controversy arose when the school board adopted a resolution that called for the recognition of the home language of the district's African American students (which they called *Ebonics*, a term they adopted from social psychology rather than linguistics), "imparting instruction" to African American students in Ebonics and facilitating their acquisition of standard English. Some construed the resolution to mean that teachers and students would be conducting classes and doing schoolwork in "broken, inner-city English," "street talk" or "urban slang" (Staples 1997). The resolution, these critics believed, was a manifestation of multiculturalism run amok, an effort by educators to eliminate standards and achievement in the name of self-esteem and the latest evidence of public education's long descent into relativism and ineptitude. Other critics seized on the resolution's assertion that Ebonics was "genetically" an African language and not a dialect of English. In this assertion, they saw a cynical attempt to secure second language funding from a state

system already struggling to meet the needs of its large Spanish-speaking immigrant population.

Certainly, the school board, in its arguably injudicious wording of the original resolution and lack of clarity about its goals, bears some of the responsibility for the ensuing backlash. However, the scope and intensity of the vitriol against the resolution speak to persistent stereotypes of race, the power of folk beliefs about language and a tradition of rhetoric decrying the decline of public education. The publicity and outrage surrounding Oakland have been enough to give anyone—district, school, teacher or researcher—pause when considering the implementation of a curriculum, like contrastive analysis, that compares grammars of nonstandard dialects to a standard one. Indeed, a full ten years after Oakland, Wheeler and Swords (2006) advise anyone discussing their code-switching curriculum to tell would-be questioners that code-switching "has nothing to do with Ebonics" (161). Undoubtedly, the fallout from Oakland has made curricular reform guided by linguistic research a more politically fraught process.

1.5   THEORY INTO PRACTICE AND CURRICULAR MODELS

The slow pace of reform should not, however, be attributed solely to forces outside the linguistics community and beyond its control. While linguists have urged English educators to make changes in their pedagogy, only a few have attempted to put theory into practice in the form of curricular studies and fewer still in the form of curricular models and materials. Studies in linguistically informed curricula in the U.S. have investigated the effectiveness of dialect readers, which are intended to build students' literacy by having them first learn to read in their home language variety and then the standard (Rickford and Rickford 1995; Simpkins 2002; Simpkins and Simpkins

1981); the effectiveness of dialect awareness programs, which seek to instruct students in the systematicity and social import of language variety (Reaser 2006); the influence of culturally salient rhetorical patterns on the academic literacy of students who speak Hawaiʻi Creole English (HCE) (Rynkofs 1993), Gullah (Van Sickle, Aina, and Blake 2002) and African American English (AAE) (Ball 1992, 1995, 1996; Smitherman 1993; Smitherman and Wright 1984); and the effectiveness of contrastive analysis with students who speak HCE (Actouka and Lai 1989; Afaga and Lai 1994; Day 1979), Gullah-influenced AAE (Blake and Van Sickle 2001) and AAE (Ai 2002; Fogel 1996; Fogel and Ehri 2000; Harris-Wright 1999; Hollie 2000, 2001; Maddahian and Sandamela 2000; Sweetland 2006; Taylor 1989; Wheeler and Swords 2004, 2006). Though the studies cover wide-ranging issues affecting students' academic literacy (outcomes for reading versus writing, the influence of dialect versus creole, the impact in the mathematics versus English classroom, etc.) and though the studies apply descriptive grammar to varying degrees (from having students analyze clausal and sub-clausal linguistic features to having students and teachers become more aware of supra-clausal rhetorical structures), their results are remarkably consistent. All find educational outcomes for students improve when the students are made more explicitly aware of the social and grammatical expectations for academic language.

In spite of these generally positive results, this research has translated into only limited partnerships with schools and sparse development of curricular materials that are readily implementable by teachers who are nonexperts. This is not to say that nothing has been accomplished. Linguists as part of a group called Da Pidgin Coup in Hawaiʻi have begun working with schools and teachers to raise awareness of HCE.[3] In secondary

education, Taylor (1989) provides descriptions of a few lessons that she taught as part of her study. Reaser (2006) supplies most of the high school curriculum he implemented, and the outline of the curriculum he used is publicly available online (Adger, Hoyle, and Reaser 2004), an awareness program that is similar to an earlier one authored by Wolfram, Adger and Christian (1999). In elementary education, Sweetland (2006) includes curricular descriptions and instructional details in her study. Also, some curricular materials were published as an outgrowth of the programs directed by Noma LeMoine in the Los Angeles School District (LeMoine 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d, 1999e). Finally, Wheeler and Swords (2006) have taken a significant step in publishing a theoretical explanation of code-switching and numerous descriptions of lessons with accompanying sample handouts, all targeted specifically for classroom teachers. Likewise, Reaser and Wolfram (2008) have developed linguistically informed classroom materials that are available online.

These efforts and accomplishments are noteworthy, yet there are important ways in which they can be extended. First, as of yet, there is no complete record of the lesson designs of a linguistically informed curriculum. Wheeler and Swords (2006) come closest to providing such a look for the elementary level. Their study (Wheeler and Swords 2004), however, highlights a different issue. Their research, like almost all of the existing research on linguistically informed curricula, could be termed highly interventionist. That is, the curricula have been implemented either by the researchers themselves or with a great deal of guidance from the researchers. There certainly are good reasons for this, the foremost being teachers' general lack of linguistic content knowledge. While expedient, perhaps even necessary to ensure the validity of these

studies, such interventionism raises important questions as to the scalability of linguistically informed curricula. Indeed, researchers examining larger scale applications of linguistically informed approaches like that in the Los Angeles School District's Academic English Mastery Program have found that teachers' knowledge and their level of implementation are significant barriers to the program's success (Ai 2002; Hollie 2000; Maddahian and Sandamela 2000). In order to facilitate the expansion of linguistically informed instruction it is important to develop curricular materials that teachers can use effectively with a minimum of intervention from linguistic experts.

The usability of materials can not, however, be measured only by their understandability to teachers. Materials must also be aligned with their current objectives and integrable with existing classroom practices. It is by these criteria that awareness approaches like Wolfram *et al.*'s (1999), which attempt to survey linguistic variety from historical, cultural and grammatical perspectives, may be too wide-ranging for the typical secondary English classroom driven by literary analysis, expository composition and standardized testing. If linguistic programs are to reintroduce grammar as a salient component of English pedagogy on a large scale, those programs must support generally accepted content and learning targets.[4]

1.6   DIALECT VERSUS REGISTER

One obvious way that a grammar curriculum can support the needs of students and teachers is to clarify for them the nature and structure of the language that they are asked to use and evaluate in school. Certainly, this is the goal of many bidialectal and code-switching programs.[5] Whether contrasting the grammars of Standard and Nonstandard English (Taylor 1989), Formal and Informal English (Wheeler and Swords

2006) or Everyday and Standard English (Sweetland 2006), code-switching curricula are designed to develop students' facility with the language of school. There is, however, more to the language of school than the verb paradigms, pronoun paradigms and case inflections that are typically studied in these curricula. Certainly, such features are educationally salient and are productive elements in a grammar curriculum. Yet, the grammatical patterns of academic language encompass many additional features including information structure, conjunctive resources and verb process types. These kinds of features are generally identified as part of the grammar of register rather than dialect. The distinction between dialect and register is often made between the language variety of users (dialect) and that of use (register) (Halliday 1965). That is, a dialect describes the language variety of a community (Gullah, Appalachian English, Lumbee, African American English, etc.), whereas a register describes a constellation of linguistic features customarily exploited for a particular rhetorical practice (Legal English, Hip Hop English, Academic English, IM English, etc.). Thus, fluency in a dialect accords a speaker an array of lexicogrammatical resources, while fluency in a register allows for the situationally specific deployment of those resources. The relationship between dialect and register has implications for any potential curriculum ostensibly designed to explicate academic language.

Because the writing tasks typically privileged in English classrooms require facility with features not just of a standard dialect but also of academic registers, teaching students to code-switch between dialects does not fully prepare students to be successful with those tasks. Code-switching curricula provide students with only a part—albeit an important part—of the grammatical picture. However, just as it is useful for students

who are speakers of nonstandard varieties to develop awareness of standard dialect features like pronoun paradigms, verb inflections and aspectual markers, it is also useful for students to develop facility with register features like conjunctive resources, verb processes and nominalization that are not part of their everyday linguistic repertoire. A focus on the grammatical features of academic registers has, in fact, been a part of some approaches grounded in the theories of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and pioneered and developed in Australia. The most recent iterations of SFL curricula have shown great promise in improving students' learning outcomes (Carbines, Wyatt, and Robb 2005; Culican 2006; McRae *et al.* 2000; Rose 2006; Rose *et al.* 2007). As of yet, however, no attempt has been made to integrate the approaches of SFL-based and code-switching instruction into a more comprehensive grammar curriculum.

1.7   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research into linguistically informed curricula has tended to focus on one of two outcomes: the appearance of contrastive features of dialects (usually AAE and StE) in either students' writing or their speech, or the metalinguistic awareness of students, specifically regarding the contrastive features of dialects (again, usually AAE and StE). These abiding interests are not surprising given that most of the research has come out of sociolinguistics, a field which routinely analyzes the social saliencies of discrete linguistic variables. Up until now, however, little attention has been paid either to the specific mechanisms of teaching and learning that are necessary for any curriculum to be implementable by teachers who are non-experts and integrable with existing teaching practices and learning objectives or to language development that goes beyond dialect and challenges students in the addition of whole new registers.

In light of this gap, one of the central goals of this study is to author a linguistically informed curriculum that balances both the theoretical exigencies of content and the pragmatic needs of teachers, students and schools. Linked to this goal are a series of important questions:

1. How can the absence of teachers' technical knowledge be negotiated?
2. How can grammatical/linguistic knowledge that positively affects students' writing and academic engagement be most effectively promoted though curricular design?
3. How can the instructional concerns of dialect, register and social awareness be not only balanced among each other but also coherently integrated?
4. How can the curriculum be integrated with the current objectives of the school and its language arts program?
5. How can the curriculum reflect the students' own objectives for their learning?
6. How do teachers and students negotiate the curricular content and the new ways of making meaning that it allows for or invites?

This research study, then, focuses on the development of a curriculum and an analysis of the implementation of that curriculum. The research site, Capitol High, is in the Washington, D.C. area, and the study was conducted with a twelfth-grade English class over the course of a school year.[6] In order to assess the implementability of the curriculum, the classroom was videotaped as the lessons were taught. Data were mined from these tapes by importing them into qualitative analysis software, creating two synchronized transcripts (one narrative and the other Jeffersonian), then coding events and interactions where linguistic content and knowledge are being represented and co-constructed either in furthering the curricular objectives or in impeding those objectives. Analysis of the data evidences how well the teacher was able to manage the content of the lessons without any training or preparation outside of the guidance provided by the curricular materials, as well as provides insight into those places in the curriculum where

content knowledge was actively co-constructed, where such knowledge was resisted and where it was ignored or misrepresented.

In addition to the videotapes, two other data sources were collected: 1) intake and outtake interviews with the participating teacher and students and 2) student writing samples from before and after the implementation phase of the study. The interviews and the writing samples serve multiple functions in the research. They are used as a secondary resource to frame some of the educational and social issues that face linguistically aware approaches like code-switching and SFL-based curricula, as well as to bolster the analysis of the video and provide more robust ethnographic detail of the classroom. Furthermore, interviews and writing samples influenced the development of the curriculum by highlighting significant linguistic and pedagogical issues that rarely enter into discussions of linguistically informed instruction: in particular, the importance of distinguishing dialect from register variation.

This research, then, is composed of two integrated halves. The first is the presentation of a language curriculum: its theoretical framework, its pragmatic concerns, its development process and resultant product. The presentation of the curriculum as an integrated part of, rather than an adjunct to, the research is done here both because researchers have long argued that such a curriculum is useful, yet none has been published, and because "fostering a vital interplay between curriculum theory and curriculum practice is a key to advancing the field" (Wraga and Hlebowitsh 2003: 434). Although "the field" to which Wranga and Hlebowitsh are referring is curriculum studies (which is certainly relevant here), I would argue that such a "vital interplay" is also key to advancing the role of linguistic theory in educational practice.

The second half of the research proceeds to give a detailed, qualitative analysis of the curriculum's implementation through the examination of "content events" or "content interactions"—discursive moments in the classroom when the linguistic content of the curriculum is being negotiated by the teacher and her students either in advancing or opposing the curricular objectives. The analysis reveals a great deal of promise for linguistically informed instruction to be implemented with a minimum of support or intervention and, thus, be transportable and scalable, though it highlights some challenges, as well. The analysis, further, illustrates the possibilities of linguistically informed instruction to engage students with grammatical content and the need to continue to develop applied materials that advance students' facility with academic language.

1.8   TEACHING CHANGE OR TEACHING CONFORMITY?

There is one particular critique of linguistically informed instruction that needs to be addressed because it is both important and problematic. Alim (2005) argues that some sociolinguistic approaches run the risk of lapsing into a difference model of language that does not critically confront the social, economic and political structures of power indexed and replicated by and through language. Indeed, an assumption that there is value in students learning the standard dialect motivates the approaches and objectives of most linguistically informed instruction. That value resides in a belief that facility with the privileged dialect and registers affords students increased access to social, economic and political domains and to deny students access to the standard is to deny students access to the codes of power (Delpit 1995). Yet, as Alim (2005) and Curzan (2002) observe, a language pedagogy should neither deny the power of students' own language nor

constitute the standard as stable and unassailable. Thus, we are made to walk a fine line between teaching the standard and critiquing it, recognizing social power and reifying it. This is no easy line to walk. In developing the curriculum for this study, I hope that students and teachers are encouraged to think about the systematicity of all language and challenge notions of standard language as "proper" or "correct" and nonstandard as "broken," "sloppy" or "slanguage." In fact, the curriculum was designed to afford students and teachers opportunities to discuss the social values assigned to language varieties as well as the causes and effects of those assignations. The ability (or inability) of the teacher and her students to take advantage of these opportunities and any changes in their awareness of and attitudes toward language are assessed through the analysis of both the video and interview data.

1.9   THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1 has introduced some of the background research that both prefaces and motivates this study. It has also presented the research questions that frame the study and made a case for increased attention to curricular development and teacher training in the research of linguistically informed instruction.

Chapter 2 reviews the relevant research in three areas of instruction: 1) traditional grammar, 2) code-switching and contrastive analysis and 3) register-sensitive approaches based in systemic functional linguistics. The research shows promise for both code-switching and functional approaches, and the chapter concludes that a pedagogy that integrates both dialect and register instruction would be the most beneficial for students and teachers alike.

Chapter 3 describes the research context including the participating school, teacher and students. Also, two separate methodologies are discussed in this chapter: first, the theoretical and pragmatic methods for selecting and organizing the curriculum and, second, the research methods for the collection of data sources, mining those sources for data and finally analyzing that data.

The results of the study are divided between Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. Chapter 4 discusses the curriculum and the process of its development. Particular attention is paid to students' metalinguistic awareness of dialect and register variation, the influence of the two kinds of variation on their academic writing and the need to distinguish them in instruction.

Chapter 5 examines the teacher's and students' experiences with the curriculum. It describes the implementation of the curriculum and documents, through the analysis of videotaped classroom sessions, events and interactions that both advanced the objectives of the curriculum and impeded those objectives. Analysis is additionally supported through analysis of students' writing samples and interviews with the teacher and her students.

Chapter 6 examines some the implications for this study and discusses the revision of the curriculum after the completion of the study, as well as the need for such reflective practice as part of the instructional design process.

Appendix A includes the draft of the curriculum that was used during the implementation phase of the study in its entirety. Appendix B presents the raw data generated in Transana—the software used for the qualitative analysis of the video.

CHAPTER 1 NOTES

[1] While support for educational reform guided by linguistic principles is widespread in the community of linguistic scholars, generally, and by sociolinguists, in particular, such support is not universal. Perhaps the most prominent critic of linguistically informed curricula is John McWhorter. McWhorter (1998, 2000) contends that research does not support the positive assessments of strategies like dialect readers and contrastive analysis. Instead, he contends that immersion is the only effective strategy for teaching standard English to nonstandard speakers. In contradicting McWhorter, some scholars have argued that he misapplies study results to bolster his position (e.g., Siegel 2007). My critique would be somewhat more direct. In arguing that immersion is the only path to standard English fluency, McWhorter is arguing for the status quo. His argument ignores, most obviously, that the status quo is not working as well as it should. Second, his argument ignores that nonstandard-speaking students are already immersed in the standard language. It is all around them, on TV, at school, etc. Yet, while students may be aware that their language variety is different from standard English, few are consciously aware of how their language is different. McWhorter would have teachers willfully withhold such knowledge. Why? He suggests that it would be too "distracting" (McWhorter 1998). The best teaching practices make clear to students why they need to learn something and then show them how to achieve success. McWhorter's argument seems to ignore these rather commonsense principles.

[2] There is no need for a full accounting of the Oakland Ebonics controversy here. For an in depth examination of the events surrounding Oakland see Baugh (2000). See also Smitherman (1998), Wolfram (1998) or any of the articles in the June 1998 issue of the *Journal of English Linguistics*, which is dedicated to the controversy and includes copies of both the original and amended board resolutions.

[3] For a description of the interventions linguists are making in Hawai'i schools see Siegel (1999, 2007). Da Pidgin Coup's position paper is available online at http://www.hawaii.edu/sls/pidgin.html.

[4] One potential solution to the difficulties of aligning linguistically informed instruction with the generally accepted practices and content of English classrooms would be to insert linguistics into a different discipline altogether, like social studies or, as Kirk Hazen (2000) suggests, science. Such proposals, however, present their own difficulties. While, for example, it is true that students could learn some of the basic principles of the scientific method and computational instruments like statistics by engaging in a linguistic field study, science teachers would have to be trained in linguistics (since it would be highly unlikely that any school could afford to hire a teacher solely to teach linguistics classes). In addition, students, teachers and educational bureaucracies would have to accept language as "scientific" content and equate language study with the likes of cellular biology, genetics, classical physics and chemistry. Gaining such recognition would appear to be a social, political and cultural task far greater than making the objectives of linguistically informed instruction congruent with other widely accepted educational targets.

[5] *Code-switching* is something of a contentious term, and I would like to acknowledge the objections of scholars like Baugh (1999, 2001) who prefer the term *style-shifting*. Their argument is that *code-switching* describes a phenomenon of switching between languages, and that original definition is being misapplied through analogy to a phenomenon of switching between dialects. They contend that *style-shifting* is a more accurate term, and one that does not dilute the meaning of *code-switching*. I concede their point that the dual application of *code-switching* lacks a certain rigor. I am, however, going to use *code-switching* to describe bidialectalism for two reasons. First, *code-switching* is the term of choice in the educational community; using *style-shifting* would complicate explanations to teachers who have difficulty enough with linguistic concepts. Second, I like *code-switching* because it connotes systematicity. Students, as we shall see, can style-switch into greater formality without switching into standard English. *Code-switching* emphasizes the change into a different grammatical system.

[6] The names of the school and the study participants have all been changed to protect their anonymity.

CHAPTER 2

RELATED RESEARCH IN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION
AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

The conceptual frame for this study is at the intersection of three areas of

scholarship: 1) research in grammar instruction; 2) research in bidialectal education,

particularly that concerning AAE-speakers; and 3) research in systemic functional

linguistic (SFL) approaches to language instruction. All three areas are concerned with

grammar in that they investigate the effects of teaching linguistic structures and

promoting metalinguistic awareness on student achievement, yet the bodies of research

seem to support contradictory conclusions. On the one hand, studies investigating direct

instruction of grammar have tended to conclude that such instruction is unbeneficial, if

not harmful to students' success. On the other hand, studies investigating direct

instruction in code-switching and register conventions have generally shown that such

strategies positively influence academic engagement and outcomes.

Discrepancies in the results of studies can be explained by differences in how

grammar instruction is conceived and defined. Research in grammar instruction has most

often equated grammar with prescriptive usage conventions and its teaching with

traditional classroom practices (Kolln and Hancock 2005).   Thus while a drill in

eliminating comma splices would be viewed as grammar instruction, an exercise in

sentence combining would not. A concomitant focus has been on the reduced production

of usage error as an evaluation of students' writing. The claims against the teaching of

grammar, thus, have been based on the findings that skill-and-drill instruction in usage conventions has little or no impact on the increased use of such conventions by students.

In contrast, research in bidialectal education has tended to frame grammar as variable—as speaker- and context-dependent. This descriptive approach, however, has not always led to a concomitant change in assessment. Indeed, code-switching studies often rely on the counting of dialect features as an assessment—a kind of token counting that is akin to the error reduction measures used in assessments of traditional grammar. The reliability of token counting as a measure of improved academic performance is suspect because students who speak nonstandard dialects do not predictably produce features of those dialects in their writing and because it is not clear that the appearance of dialect features (or usage error, for that matter) correlate with teachers' negative evaluations of students' writing.

Yet another approach to grammar instruction has been informed by the theoretical framework of SFL proposed by Halliday (1994). Like bidialectal pedagogies, SFL-based approaches are descriptively oriented, opting to focus on the meaning-making potential of language and the linguistic choices facing every writer as she or he composes a text. Unlike bidialectal pedagogies, however, those taking up SFL tend not to focus on specific morphological features (such as the verb inflections of a particular language variety). Instead, SFL examines how meaning unfolds at the clausal level, and how clauses inform one another and cohere to create textual-level meanings. In describing how meaning is made in different texts, SFL research has demonstrated how texts are patterned by use and how a given use informs larger patterns. A business prospectus, then, is linguistically distinct from a scientific report, which is distinct from a legal brief, etc. A

text can be identified by its functional purpose, or *genre*, and each genre or genre-situation is marked by a constellation of grammatical features, or *register*. Thus, SFL could describe a business register or a legal register. This is particularly significant finding for teachers and students because it demonstrates how language varies not just by dialect but also by use or register. Thus grammar instruction might be envisioned as not only helping students developing awareness of and fluency in a standard dialect, but also developing increased facility with the grammars of academic registers.

Past research in grammar instruction, bidialectal education and SFL-based pedagogies will be examined in successive sections in an effort to support the following claims: 1) the conception of "grammar" in many influential studies of grammar instruction has been so narrow that these studies' conclusions are often overstated and even contradictory; 2) proposals for bidialectal approaches are a significant improvement on dominant perceptions of usage and correctness but do not present a complete enough model of either academic language or increased facility with academic language; and 3) while SFL does not provide a means for examining the differences between dialects, it provides a method for explaining some of the specific grammatical features of academic language. The argument here is for an approach that integrates the strengths of bidialectal and SFL-based instruction, one that broadens our understanding of grammar and affirms language as a relevant and important subject of study in the secondary English classroom.

2.1   RESEARCH IN GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

Strong claims have been made regarding the ineffectiveness of grammar instruction to produce improvements in students' writing. It has been asserted

unequivocally that teaching formal grammar wastes valuable instructional time and is even detrimental to students' academic engagement (Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer 1963; Elley *et al.* 1976; Hillocks and Smith 1986; McQuade 1980; Wyse 2001). These assertions, in part, have led to a widely held belief that formal grammar does not need to be—perhaps should not be—taught in any systematic way. But among some researchers, teachers and members of the public alike, there have been persistent voices that have called for a renewed role for grammar in English curricula. Some have acknowledged the findings of prior critiques as they have sought to methodologically modify grammar instruction (e.g., Weaver 1996, 1998). Others have questioned the studies upon which the critiques are based (e.g., Kolln 1981; Tomlinson 1994).

Studies investigating grammar instruction have largely been motivated by questions of grammar's benefit: Does teaching grammar improve students' writing? As Kolln (1981) and Wyse (2001) have observed, such queries lead to problems of definition: What exactly do we mean by *grammar instruction*? In most cases, the routine response has been to conceptualize *grammar* as "traditional grammar," as a conflation of prescriptive usage rules and skill-and-drill instructional practices (the notable exception being Elley *et al.* (1976) who also evaluate a transformational grammar strand in their study). The construal of grammar in this way leads to some uncertainty regarding these studies' results. Specifically, it begs the question of whether it is grammar as a subject of study or its particular operationalization as "traditional" that produces little measurable impact on students' compositions. In other words, what is inconsequential to improved academic writing, grammatical knowledge or a set of instructional practices? Reviews of the research tend to claim the former (Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer 1963; Hillocks

and Smith 1986; Wyse 2001), even as those reviews commend teaching practices

(inductive reasoning from language use in Braddock *et al.*, sentence combining and

generative rhetoric in Hillocks and Smith) that could be construed as grammar

instruction. In a clear example of this definitional problem, Hillocks and Smith (1986)

begin their review with an unqualified rebuke of grammar instruction, yet conclude with

a call for increasing students' syntactic fluency:

> None of the studies reviewed for the present report provides any support for teaching grammar as a means of improving composition skills. If schools insist upon teaching the identification of parts of speech, the parsing or diagramming of sentences, or other concepts of traditional school grammar (as many still do), they cannot defend it as a means of improving the quality of writing. (Hillocks and Smith 1986: 138)

> Perhaps a more useful emphasis would be on *facility*. Facility would appear to involve an expanded repertoire of syntactic structures, the ability to sort through the available structures to select and text those which are feasible, and finally the judgment to select effective structures for a given rhetorical context. (Hillocks and Smith 1986: 150)

The first excerpt restricts the learning of grammar to declarative knowledge about parts

of speech and sentence structure and instructional activities to "identification" and

"parsing." Though the second excerpt proposes the unmodified term "facility," the

subsequent characterization of such facility as "an expanded repertoire of syntactic

structures" would unequivocally make it *grammatical* facility within a bidialectal,

functional or other descriptive framework and, even more significantly, would be the

primary objective of grammar instruction. The combined effect of these excerpts could

be summed up thus: Grammar instruction is of no use, but grammatical facility is crucial.

Such paradoxes depend on one's understanding of grammar—as a set of prescriptive

rules or descriptive ones; as pertaining to a standard dialect or all dialects; as a set of

sentential and sub-sentential conventions or an array of choices, sentential and sub-

sentential but also supra-sentential and rhetorical—and such definitional paradoxes can be found in much of the research on grammar instruction and the recounting of that research.

Like Hillocks and Smith (1986), Braddock *et al.* produced a review that has been influential and frequently cited. The comments of Hillocks and Smith quoted above were presaged by Braddock *et al.* (1963: 37-38) who write:

> In view of the widespread agreement of research studies based upon many types of students and teachers, the conclusion can be stated in strong and unqualified terms: the teaching of formal grammar has a negligible or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in actual composition, even a harmful effect on the improvement of writing.

Despite the appeal here to "widespread agreement," these claims rely upon one crucial study—Harris' (1962) dissertation that followed students in London schools. While Hillocks and Smith cite varied studies in their review, their most zealous declarations, too, rely upon a pivotal example, which is the study conducted in New Zealand by Elley *et al.* (1976). In light of the weight accorded the Harris and Elley *et al.* studies, it is important to examine them briefly. Together they demonstrate how grammar instruction is often operationalized in research, how the effectiveness of grammar instruction is evaluated and why conclusions about the ineffectiveness of grammar instruction are so frequently represented as absolute.

Harris (1962) studied two groups of students in five different schools. One group in each school was given instruction in traditional grammar; the other, in lieu of grammar instruction, was provided that time to practice writing. This design feature is the displacement to which Braddock *et al.* (1963) refer in the preceding quotation and raises some questions about the execution of this particular study and some underlying

assumptions about teaching grammar in general. Harris posits a zero-sum relationship

between teaching grammar and teaching writing—as does Braddock *et al.* This claim

assumes, first, that these two activities can not be accomplished simultaneously. Second,

it suggests that these are entirely dissociated enterprises. By this logic, doing anything in

the classroom other than writing—studying literature, say—could be dismissed as *not*

writing. The inverse of this dissociative relationship (i.e., that the teaching of writing is,

at all times, completely divorced from the teaching of grammar) could also be critiqued.

One oft-disputed example of this problematic separation comes from a teacher-student

interaction in the non-grammar group described by Harris (1962) and reported in

Braddock *et al.* (1963: 71) in which a class discusses the sentence "Jim and me was going

into the cave":

> *Teacher:* "Would you say 'We was going into the cave?"
>
> General dissent—one or two brave individuals aver that they would or might, and why not sir? But the vast majority of the class bring home to them the weight of convention. They admit to being wrong, which was more than was asked of them.
>
> *Teacher:* "What would you say then?"
>
> *Class:* "We were going into the cave."
>
> *Teacher:* "How many is 'we'?"
>
> *Class:* "Depends upon how many there are. More than one, anyway."
>
> *Teacher:* "Well, 'Jim and me' means more than one. So they must be followed by 'were.' Let's try some more examples..." [1]

Braddock *et al.* include the quotation in their report as evidence of the clear distinction

between what Harris calls the grammar and non-grammar forms (classes) in his study.

They include the quotation with little discussion and offer no skepticism of Harris' choice

"non-grammar" as descriptor. In addition, Harris notes that the students in the non-

grammar forms had more time than the grammar forms not only to practice writing more,

but also to work through usage rules as in the example above because of the nature of the instructional methods. In their commentaries on the "Jim and me was going into the cave" exchange, both Kolln (1981) and Tomlinson (1994) view it as an unambiguous lesson in grammar, one in which students are asked to use their instincts about language use to induce a rule about compound subjects and verb agreement (though the dissent of those "one or two brave individuals" might suggest that the rule being induced varies across dialects, an issue with important implications, which will be discussed shortly). They also assert that displacement of writing practice in the grammar forms produced a predictable result—those students who wrote more showed greater improvement in their writing, a conclusion that cannot be extrapolated to the kind of generalized claim about the ineffectiveness of grammar instruction that Braddock *et al.* (1963) as well as Wyse (2001) make.

This disagreement begs the question, "What does it mean to teach grammar?" If, as in the above example, a teacher explores usage with students by exploiting their knowledge as English speakers, is she or he teaching grammar or not? For Harris (1962) as for Braddock *et al.* (1963), the interaction is not grammar instruction because grammar instruction is equated with textbook-based skill-and-drill teaching strategies. In the Harris study, for example, the grammar group used *Active English Course, Book 1* to study parts of speech, clause and sentence structures, while the non-grammar group wrote a short story that was used as the basis for discussion about sentence structures. A similar bias is evident in Elley *et al.* (1976: 18) when the authors describe how a group of students studying transformational grammar were "disenchanted with the degree of repetitiousness in their grammar study," their disaffection the apparent result of the rote

nature of grammar exercises in the Oregon Curriculum used for the study. Yet, it is not

the instructional approach that gets criticized: "It is difficult to escape the conclusion that

English grammar, whether traditional or transformational, has virtually no influence on

the language growth of secondary school students" (Elley *et al.* 1976: 18, my emphasis).

These studies, then, conflate content with method resulting in censures of grammar when,

in fact, it may well be the instruction that is wanting.

The Harris study, in particular, also suffers from problematic evaluation methods.

The conclusions of the study are based on a single essay written by each student at the

end of the two-year experiment. Harris assessed the essays by calculating the following:

1. Average length of each correct sentence.
2. Instances of mispunctuated independent, hypotactic and coordinated clauses.
3. Number of words per error.
4. Number of sentence patterns.
5. Number of non-simple sentences.
6. Number of subordinate clauses.
7. Total words.
8. Number of incorrect simple sentences subtracted from the number of correct ones.
9. Number of correct simple sentences modified by two or more phrases longer than three words.
10. Number of incorrect sentences subtracted from the number of correct ones.

The counting of tokens can certainly be a useful assessment tool, but the correlative

reliability between these particular tokens and students' increased facility with academic

writing is, at best, questionable. The first, and perhaps most obvious, aspect of Harris'

rubric is its focus on error—in particular, a conviction that errors can unambiguously be

identified and that the reduction of error is evidence of improved writing and student

learning. While it is certainly true that teachers respond to sentence-level grammatical

conventions in their evaluations, the relationship between students' error production and

their academic literacy is dubious (Shaughnessy 1977). Furthermore, the essays in

Harris' study were produced under timed conditions, raising additional doubts as to whether students in the grammar group could, under pressure, be expected to outperform the non-grammar one, even if they were better practiced in conventional usage. A second assumption underlying Harris' rubric is that varied and complex sentences (two qualities that might be contradictory since variation could be achieved though alternation of both simple and complex sentences) demonstrate writing proficiency. Although Harris does not provide the actual topic to which the students responded in his report, he does note that it was in the descriptive and narrative mode. Harris, however, does not consider whether narrative genres prompt the generation of highly various structures or prefer certain kinds of structures—and if, indeed, those preferred structures are of the kind he is counting.

The Elley *et al.* (1976) study uses a different evaluative methodology. To measure students' progress, it relies on holistic assessments of students' essays, standardized tests of reading comprehension, of vocabulary, of usage and of literature "understanding and appreciation," and a questionnaire of attitudes. The methods of Elley *et al.* seem a good deal more convincing than Harris', and it is clear why Braddock and Smith are so persuaded by them (though the assessment of attitudes was done using semantic pairs like easy/difficult, straightforward/complicated—evidence that severely restricts the range of possible responses and limits the conclusions that can be drawn about the students' motivations that they posit as important). Ultimately, however, the greatest weakness of the study is the one identified previously—the conflation of content and instruction. Although the authors state their central finding as confirmation of the

ineffectiveness of teaching grammar, a more sustainable conclusion might be one that

they identify secondarily:

> It was noticeable, however, that those students whose writing was highly rated in the third form, were still the best writers in the fifth form. When a comparative analysis was made of third- and fifth-form essays, written on the same topics, and marked 'blind' by experienced English teachers, the correlation between the marks on both occasions was 0.5, a relatively high figure considering the unreliability of essay marking. The good writers stayed good; the poor did not improve. More important, they all showed only a modest growth in written composition skills over the two year period. (Elley *et al.* 1976: 20)

That is, for all three groups Elley *et al.* followed—those who studied transformational

grammar, those who studied traditional grammar and those who studied rhetoric and

literature—not only was there little evidence of difference between groups, but also

within groups there was little evidence of individual progress. This finding suggests not

that grammar instruction is ineffective, but that *none* of the instructional approaches that

were studied encouraged the development of students' facility with academic language.

This overall lack of success would seem to warrant a call to find new approaches to

teaching academic language rather than one to eliminate grammar as a subject of study.

2.2   RESEARCH IN CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS AND BIDIALECTAL
       EDUCATION

Contrastive analysis presents one alternative approach to "traditional" grammar

that is the subject of the studies discussed in the previous section. Contrastive analysis

was originally developed for second language teaching and involves the comparison of

the grammar of one language to that of another (see James 1980). Using second language

acquisition as an analogue for second dialect acquisition, contrastive analysis has been

proposed as a method that can be adapted for use in the first-language classroom,

specifically in working with those students who speak English varieties other than the

standard (Rickford 2000; Sweetland 2006; Taylor 1989; Wheeler and Swords 2004, 2006). In this latter application, contrastive analysis entails comparing the grammar of one language variety to that of another, usually AAE to standard English, in order to promote bidialectalism. Contrastive analysis, then, seeks to be more descriptive than the typical usage-oriented grammar instruction by encouraging students to view both the language of their communities and the language of school as systematic. And students' knowledge of grammar is demonstrated though their ability to choose and apply the grammatical system most appropriate to any given communicative situation—whether interviewing for a job, for example, or going out with friends.

On a large scale, the technique has been an important component of language programs in DeKalb, Georgia and Los Angeles, California, which have claimed success in raising verbal test scores district-wide (Ai 2002; Harris-Wright 1999; Hollie 2000, 2001; Maddahian and Sandamela 2000). DeKalb has implemented its program in elementary schools—one that is focused on both oral and written language production. The Los Angeles program (the Academic English Mastery Program, or what Hollie (2000, 2001) calls the Language Awareness Program) is similarly targeted at students in elementary through middle school and their oral as well as written language practices. In her discussion of the DeKalb program, Harris-Wright (1999: 58) provides no specific data but broadly suggests that the gains made by students participating in the program are "impressive" and that "[r]eading comprehension normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills show higher gains for students in this program than for comparable Title I students who are not in the program." In his study of the Los Angeles program, Hollie (2000) makes similar assertions about that program's success. He finds

that students who participated in the Language Awareness Program (LAP) improved

from a mean score of 10.8 to 13.3 (+2.5) on a district writing assessment, while non-LAP

students improved from a mean of 9.1 to 9.7 (+1.7).[2] The sustainability of such gains,

however, is called into question by a later study, which finds:

> Controlling for various student (e.g., ELD level) and teacher/classroom
> characteristics (e.g., teacher ethnicity), AEMP [Academic English Mastery
> Program] students, on the average, did not perform better than comparison
> students on any of the achievement indicators except for the SAT/9 math gain,
> which favored AEMP students. (Ai 2002)

In addition to the lack of sustained assessment gains, the overall effectiveness of the Los

Angeles Program in general, and of contrastive analysis in particular, is difficult to

determine because of a low level of implementation. While Hollie (2000) finds an

overall level of implementation instructional strategies to be "medium," the

implementation of specific strategies related to contrastive analysis is much lower. He

finds a high level of contrastive analysis instruction in only 10% of classrooms and 0% of

teachers who demonstrate a high level of knowledge about the grammatical rules of

nonstandard languages. Similarly, in her evaluation of the Los Angeles program, Ai

(2002) observes that 82.9% of all AEMP classrooms did not include instruction in

contrastive analysis.

Teachers' knowledge of language and grammar, then, is a significant factor

influencing the success of scaled-up, district-level adoptions of contrastive analysis. A

general lack of teacher training in linguistics and grammar negatively impacts the

implementability of these contrastive analysis programs and makes the potential

effectiveness of such programs difficult to assess. Smaller scale studies are less

complicated by low-level implementation as they are conducted by teachers or under the

guidance of researchers with specific interest and expertise in the systematicity of

dialects, standard and nonstandard. These smaller-scale studies make claims similar to

the larger-scale ones—that contrastive analysis can help students improve their academic

literacy and can do so without marginalizing the language variety that students speak in

their communities (Fogel 1996; Fogel and Ehri 2000; Sweetland 2006; Taylor 1989;

Wheeler and Swords 2004). Broadly, these studies evidence support for the effectiveness

of contrastive analysis. The results of some, however, are clouded by questions of what

counts as improved academic literacy and how such improvement is measured.

Taylor's (1989) work, in particular, has been germinal in the field. She begins by

identifying a list of features that she believes originate in her students' home language (in

this case, AAE) and manifest in their writing (see Table 2.1). These features, then,

become the focus of her instruction with contrastive analysis. The texts Taylor uses as

examples of AAE are culled from literary sources (e.g., *A Raisin in the Sun*). Initially,

she has the students participate in exercises that develop their recognition of features of

AAE and standard English. Then, Taylor (1989: 118) has the students move to

translation and editing exercises (in which students render passages written in AAE into

standard English) in order to move "from passive control of standard English features to

active production of standard English features." As a result of such instruction, Taylor

claims that the appearance of AAE features in students' writing was reduced by 59.3%.

The most dramatic reductions were in the appearance of feature 1 (91.7%) and feature 10

(66.7%).[3] This decrease was in contrast to her control group, which did not receive any

instruction in contrastive analysis and showed an 8.5% increase in the appearance of

AAE features.

Recent studies have supported Taylor's findings (Fogel 1996; Fogel and Ehri 2000; Sweetland 2006; Wheeler and Swords 2004). While it is difficult to compare the success reported by Wheeler and Swords (2004) to other studies because theirs is measured only anecdotally, Fogel (1996; Fogel and Ehri 2000) and Sweetland (2006), like Taylor, target specific features of AAE in their studies (see Table 2.1).

Feature	Taylor		Fogel		Sweetland	
	counted	% decline	counted	% decline	counted	% decline
1. unmarked third person singular verbs	✓	91.7	✓	-	✓	6.6
2. unmarked possessive case	✓	slight	✓	-	✓	16.2
3. unmarked plural nouns	✓	slight	✓	-	✓	0.0
4. zero copula	✓	slight			✓	5.9
5. multiple negation	✓	slight				
6. habitual *be*	✓	slight				
7. word-final consonant cluster reduction	✓	slight				
8. unmarked past tense regular verbs	✓	slight	✓	-	✓	1.0
9. subject/verb agreement	✓	slight	✓	-	✓	4.8
10. hypercorrection	✓	66.7				
11. indefinite article			✓	-		
aggregate AAE features		59.3		-		5.2

Table 2.1. AAE features counted in students' writing and the percentage decline in those features after curricular intervention using contrastive analysis in studies by Taylor (1989), Fogel (1996; Fogel and Ehri 2000) and Sweetland (2006).

Of the three studies, Fogel's is the most difficult from which to glean any comparative information. In part, this is because he did not administer any pre-intervention assessment. He reports that students who were in the study group that received instruction in and practiced contrastive analysis produced StE features (at least of those examined) in 74% of the opportunities in their writing, in contrast to 59% for those students in the control groups (those students who received passive exposure to StE features in stories and those who were exposed to StE features and given explanations of StE rules but did not practice contrastive analysis). He uses the higher percentage of the first group as evidence of the effectiveness of the curricular intervention. Despite his

claim that there is no reason to suspect that there should be any deviation in the relative performance of the three groups (i.e., that the group that received instruction in contrastive analysis was academically higher performing than the other two groups), Fogel does not present any data to sustain such a claim. In addition, his method for calculating "correct" StE features is apparently flawed. Fogel (1996) provides the following essay as an example of how features were scored:

> One day my friend took me to a hockey game for his birthday. It was the greatest. We had popcorn and ice-cream. I bet ten dollars about my team winning, he bet ten dollars about his team. First his team scored two goals then my team scored five. Then he scored two and it turned out to be a tie five to five. So we split it on one ten dollar bill. We got five dollars. (116)

The underlined portions are scored features, and this essay received a 9/9. Yet, the first underline is not an environment that would generate a contrastive feature for StE and AAE. An AAE-speaker would not say *It were the greatest*. The effect of the curriculum on students' writing is, therefore, very difficult to assess.

Even in the studies with more reliable data, the question of contrastive analysis' effect on students' writing is difficult to measure. Sweetland (2006), for example, combines token counting (see Table 2.1) with more holistic measures. Sweetland scored three groups of students (those receiving No Treatment, those instructed in a Process Approach and those studying contrastive analysis using what she calls a Sociolinguistic Approach) on a Six Traits rubric.[4] She found that the Sociolinguistic Approach (SA) and No Treatment (NT) students showed similar, small gains in their overall mean scores (2.79 to 3.05 and 2.60 to 2.88, respectively), while the Process Approach students showed a slight, but statistically insignificant, improvement (2.89 to 3.05). In comparing the performance of the SA and NT students on specific traits, the students receiving

training in contrastive analysis (SA students) significantly outperformed the students

receiving a traditional English curriculum (NT students) in sentence fluency and

conventions (see Table 2.2). The SA students lagged, however, in their gains on

organization, voice and word choice.

Trait	Sociolinguistic Approach			No Treatment		
	Pre	Post	Gain	Pre	Post	Gain
Ideas/Content	2.87	3.07	0.20	2.82	2.92	0.10
Organization	2.54	2.84	0.30	2.25	2.61	0.36
Voice	2.86	3.16	0.30	2.62	3.05	0.43
Word Choice	3.11	3.11	0.00	2.86	3.09	0.23
Sentence Fluency	2.64	3.02	0.39	2.61	2.65	0.04
Conventions	2.79	3.09	0.30	2.68	2.88	0.20

Table 2.2. A comparison of gains made by SA students and NT students for each of the Six Traits in Sweetland (2006).

The increased scores by students in the SA group counter at least some of the more

extreme claims that grammar instruction, in and of itself, is detrimental to the

development of students' writing. The fact that the SA group as a whole did not

outperform the NT group, however, attests to the difficulty in demonstrably improving

students' writing over the course of a short-term study. Furthermore, the specific traits in

which the SA students were outperformed might be areas for which contrastive analysis

is not particularly well suited and need to be addressed using other, complementary

approaches.

As promising as the results of all of these studies appear to trend, they also

illustrate the complexities of researching the relationship between dialect and written

academic performance. In particular, they point to the limited usefulness of counting of

dialect tokens as an assessment of improved academic literacy, in part, because the

relationship between oral and written language practices is not particularly clear.

Research has demonstrated that while dialect undoubtedly influences written language

production, features of students' spoken language variety do not predictably manifest in students' compositions (Cronnell 1984; DeStefano 1972; Groff 1978, 1979; Smitherman 1993; Smitherman and Wright 1984; Sweetland 2006; Wheeler and Swords 2006). Thus, while one spoken feature, like habitual *be* in AAE, may rarely arise in students' writing, another feature, like uninflected regular past tense verbs, may be frequently represented in composition (Cronnell 1984; Groff 1978; Sweetland 2006; Wheeler and Swords 2006).[5] This uneven manifestation suggests that whatever the specific relationship between oral and written modes it is far more intricate than a model of "interference" (e.g., Shuy 1968; Wolfram and Whiteman 1971).[6] Furthermore, it makes the cause and effect relationship between contrastive analysis instruction and the reduction of dialectal features uncertain. The question of how oral language influences written production arises, for example, in the evaluative methods of the dialect program in DeKalb, which monitors the relative use of standard and vernacular features in oral performance by videotaping students at the beginning of the year and comparing that to a presentation at the end of the year (Harris-Wright 1999). The effect of the DeKalb curriculum on the students' written performance is not addressed, though improved test scores, which assess reading and writing rather than oral facility, are used as evidence of the program's success.

Additionally, not only is it unpredictable when and why particular dialect features occur in students' writing, it is similarly unclear whether the appearance of dialect features negatively influence teachers' assessments of students' writing (Piché *et al.* 1978; Smitherman 1993). Smitherman (1993) goes so far as to contend that students who wrote with what she calls a "Black expressive discourse style" received higher

evaluations than those who did not. In contrast, Piché *et al.* (1978) found that while there was no overall correlation between negative teacher assessments and the occurrence of dialect features in students' writing, those compositions attributed to African American writers were judged disproportionately lower. Further complicating any understanding of the relationship among dialect, composition and assessment, it has been demonstrated that teachers do respond significantly to what they perceive as grammatical error (which would include any sort of nonstandard dialect feature as well as many other features unrelated to dialect) in their students' compositions (Connors and Lunsford 1993).

The lack of a clear relationship among dialect, composition and assessment does not mean that the appearance of dialect features tells us nothing and should be ignored; it simply suggests that the counting of tokens does not reliably measure some of the outcomes that have been claimed. But the uncertain influence of verbal practices on written ones has an implication far more consequential than how best to assess students' academic literacy. It could be seen to throw the purpose of contrastive analysis and bidialectal education into doubt (e.g., Hartwell 1980). If speaking a nonstandard dialect does not inhibit the development of fluency in the standard, why not just teach the standard? What is the point of teaching students to code-switch? Hazen (2001) furthers this critique by arguing that bidialectalism itself is poorly defined as an educational objective. What is the measure of bidialectalism? Wouldn't fluencies in two dialects mutually influence each other, thus making the assumed distinction (that the standard can be taught without affecting the home variety) at the heart of bidialectal education rather blurry?[7]

Despite the theoretical and methodological questions that can and have been raised about bidialectal education, those studies that have examined the implementation of contrastive analysis and related strategies have demonstrated positive outcomes, even if those outcomes are difficult to tie directly to improvements in students' academic writing. One consistent result of these studies is an increased appreciation by both students and teachers of students' home/community language as rule-governed and not "broken" (Fogel 1996; Hollie 2000; Sweetland 2006; Taylor 1989). In addition, despite the difficulties in demonstrating a cause and effect between contrastive analysis instruction and improved student writing, the aggregate results of existing studies at least suggest a correlative relationship.

2.3   RESEARCH IN SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS

A third approach to grammar is grounded in the work of Halliday (1985, 1994) and SFL. An SFL view of grammar focuses on the meaning-making potential of language. From this perspective, grammar can be defined as "the *systems* of English from which writers [or speakers] make choices" (Schleppegrell Forthcoming: 2, author's emphasis). Such a definition shares a common emphasis with the definition undergirding code-switching curricula—that is, a focus on systematicity and the notion of language use as an exercise of choice. There are, however, important theoretical distinctions, the most important of which is the relative focus of contrastive analysis on the systems of dialects and SFL on the systems of registers. Halliday (1965) identifies the difference between dialect and register as that between user and use—dialect being characteristic of users in a community and register being characteristic of a particular use of language. More specifically, a dialect is a grammatically and phonologically systematic language variety

that enables all the linguistic practices of a community; a register is a constellation of linguistic features customarily exploited for a particular rhetorical practice. Thus, fluency in a dialect accords a speaker an array of lexicogrammatical resources, while fluency in a register allows for the situationally specific deployment of those resources.

Another concept related to register that emerged from SFL, and which has had significant influence on educators, is *genre*. Genre, as a linguistic and educational theory, was developed in work by Martin, Rothery, Christie, Hasan and others of the so-called Sydney School in Australia, as well as in related work by Kress.[8] Martin (1984: 25) describes genre as "a staged, goal oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture." Genre encompasses both the social ecology of a text (who is speaking, the speaker's relationship to his or her audience, the speaker's desired goal, the social expectations for the text, etc.) and the structure of a text (the types of verbs that populate the text, the ways in which sentences are formed, the cohesive devices that bind the text, the organization or schematic stages of the text, etc.). Genre describes both what a text *is* and what it *does*. This is different from a text-type, which describes only what a text is (though the two terms, *genre* and *text-type,* are often conflated). Thus, a recipe is distinct from a business prospectus in its form because that form is an expression of its distinct purpose and context.

The relationship between genre and register has been represented in a variety of ways. For Halliday and Hasan, (1985) they are essentially synonymous. But for Martin, register is a semiotic constituent of genre:
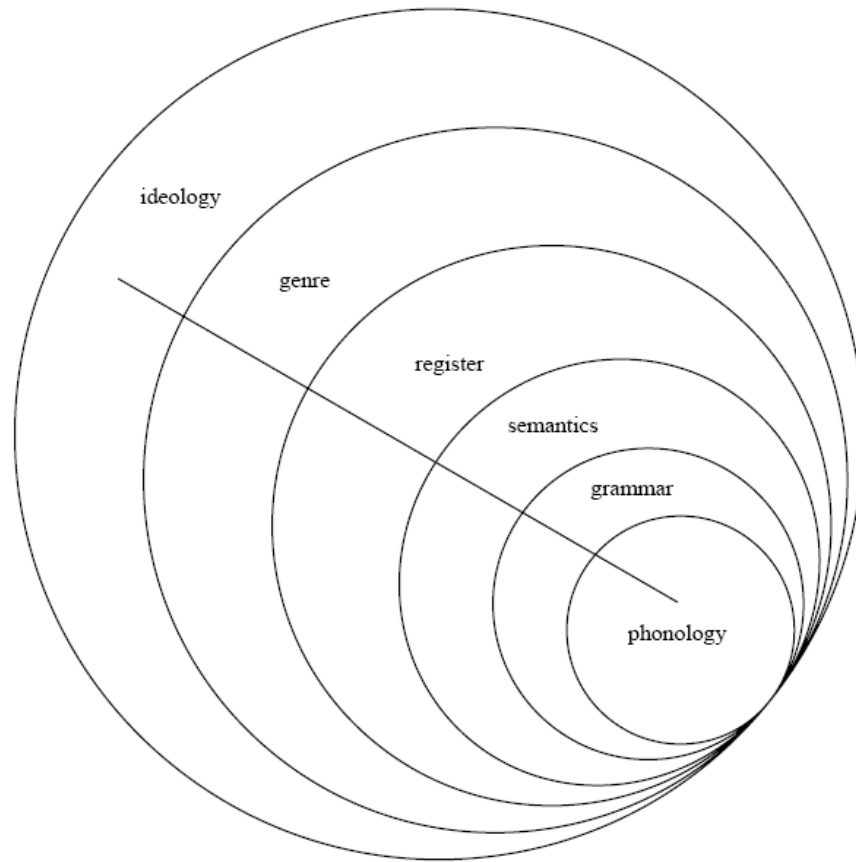
Figure 2.1. A projection representing the constituents of language and context from Martin (1993: 132).

This theoretical perspective draws on the work of Halliday and Hasan (1976, 1985) in viewing register as composed of three variables: *field*, *tenor* and *mode*. The field describes what is being discussed. The tenor describes the participants and their social relationships. And the mode describes the role and expectations of language. Taken together they "define the context of situation of a text" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 22). For Halliday and Hasan, the "context of situation," or register, is inseparable from the text itself. From the perspective of genre theory, however, the context of situation comprises only a part of a text's social purpose, or genre. Put another way, genre theorists tend to see genre as a more robust framework for analyzing texts than register.

The relative emphasis of genre theory on the larger-scale socio-rhetorical structures that organize texts as opposed to smaller-scale sentential or sub-sentential patterns of meaning does not imply that genre theory is uninterested in register features or grammar. On the contrary, as an application of SFL, genre theory proposes a strong correlation between register and metafunction, between organization of context and organization of grammar. Each register variable is associated with a metafunction: field with ideational meaning, tenor with interpersonal meaning and mode with textual meaning. In turn, each metafunction finds expression in particular grammatical features (see Table 2.3).

Contextual Variable	Linguistic Realization

Field (Presenting ideas)	Ideational Choices
	    Noun phrases/nominal groups (participants)
	    Verbs (process types)
	    Prepositional phrases, adverbial adjuncts, and other resources for information about time, place, manner, etc. (circumstances)
	    Resources for making logical relationships

Tenor (Taking a stance)	Interpersonal Choices
	    Mood (statements, questions, demands)
	    Modality (modal verbs and adverbs)
	    Intonation
	    Other resources for evaluative and attitudinal meaning (e.g., resources for appraisal)

Mode (Structuring a text)	Textual Choices
	    Cohesive devices, including conjunctions and connectors
	    Clause-combining strategies
	    Thematic organization

Table 2.3. Grammar and the context of situation or the relationship between register, metafunction and grammatical expression from Schleppegrell (2004: 47).

This interrelationship, then, has implications for teaching and learning:

> If we know something about a text's context, we can make predictions about its grammar; and conversely if we analyse a text's grammar, we can recover information about its context. It is this solidarity relationship between register variables and metafunctions that makes systemic functional linguistics such a valuable model for teachers. (Martin and Rothery 1993: 144)

In other words, if students and teachers understand something of the grammatical patterns that govern the privileged genres in school, in theory teachers will be able to more

accurately explain the expectations for academic language and students will be better equipped to meet those expectations.

Such arguments, in fact, have been crucial in getting SFL-based approaches into school curricula first in the genre pedagogy that emerged from the Sydney School and later in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP).[9] As instructional practice, genre pedagogy is intended to make explicit for students the often implicit grammatical structures of texts. Originally, this insistence on explicitness had a social justice motivation. Genre approaches could meet some of the instructional challenges of linguistic and cultural diversity by making the expectations of academic writing more accessible to *all* students, especially those students historically marginalized in schools (Feez 2002; Gadd and Arnold 1998). Genre pedagogy received widespread attention in Australia in the late 1980s and early 1990s and was particularly influential in New South Wales. This influence, however, has been controversial. Some, for example, have argued that explicit teaching of genres is of limited utility because students learn genre structures implicitly as they interact with texts, as they speak, read and write (Freedman 1993). Others have argued that genre pedagogy fossilizes genres and makes students' writing formulaic (Dixon 1987; Rosen 1992; Stratta and Dixon 1994), that it is overly prescriptive (Barrs 1994; Sawyer 1995) and that genre learning in the classroom can not be applied outside of school because such learning is never authentic (Hill and Resnick 1995).

The dominant focus of research in educational applications of SFL has been the identification and description of academic and professional genres. The pioneering work in this regard was done by Martin and Rothery (1986) in which they identify six

categories of factual genres significant in schooling: reports, expositions, discussions, recounts, explanations and procedures. Since then, a great deal of research has been done in analyzing the genres—their socio-rhetorical functions, schematic stages and grammatical features—in contexts related to both professional and general education including business (Bhatia 1993; dos Santos 2002; Gimenez 2006; Lagerwerf and Bossers 2002; Yeung 2007), journalism (Hartnett 1994), law (Badger 2003; Bhatia 1993; Weber 2001), medicine (Anderson and Maclean 1997; Nwogu 1991, 1997; Salter 1999), science (Bazerman 1998; Bazerman and Kelly 2003; Halliday and Martin 1993; Lemke 1990; Martin and Veel 1998; Swales 1985; Vande Kopple 2002), academic research and post-baccalaureate education (Swales 1990, 2000, 2004; Swales and Lindemann 2002) and primary and secondary education (Christie 1990a, 1990b, 1990c, 1992, 2002a; Macken-Horarik 2002; Martin 1989; Schleppegrell 2004).

In specifically looking at the language practices of secondary English classrooms, researchers have used the theoretical orientation of SFL to demonstrate both the kinds of knowledge that tend to be privileged in that context and some salient grammatical features (like those listed in table 2.3) of highly regarded, student-produced texts that represent such knowledge. Researchers claim that while teachers of secondary English often profess that their cognitive, social and pedagogical goal is to help their students become independent thinkers, the knowledge that is frequently privileged is orthodox moral and ethical judgments manifest through teacher-sanctioned readings of literary texts (Christie 1999, 2002b; Rothery and Stenglin 2000). Students, for example, in writing an essay on *Of Mice and Men* might be invited to comment on George's killing of Lennie. A reading that interprets that climactic act as evidence of George's compassion

and society's cruel ostracism of perceived outsiders is likely to be rewarded, while one

that interprets the killing as cosmic justice for Lennie's immoral lust of Curley's wife is

likely to be penalized. Additionally, the lexicogrammatical rendering of students'

judgments influences teachers' evaluations of their written work. Christie (2002b)

identifies six grammatical features of writing in secondary English that exemplify

preferred literacy practices in the discipline:

1. Controlled use of reference, particularly endophoric reference
2. Genre-appropriate configuration of Themes
3. Facility with grammatical metaphor
4. Extensive use of Relational Process verbs, particularly *to be*
5. Elaboration of nominal groups
6. Exploitation of circumstantial resources like prepositional phrases and adverbs

The emphasis on ethical judgment in English composition results in a problem: a

general lack of technical knowledge among teachers of English (Christie 1999, 2002b;

Rothery 1996). Rather than examining with students the techniques of meaning-making

within texts, many teachers, instead, use texts as objects of moral instruction. The

analysis of texts for their moral import can be a default practice because, often, teachers

do not possess the metalanguage to instruct students in how meaning gets made. The role

of texts and the language used to talk about them, therefore, is less technical in English

than it is in other disciplines. The absence of overt technicality is a two-pronged

obstacle. First, the prominence of ethical judgment in English may appear to invite the

use of registers—less formal, even spoken—that are, in fact, dispreferred in students'

compositions. Second, teachers may not have access to tools that would help explicate

the features of preferred registers for their students.

The interaction between academic and nonacademic registers is evident, for

example, in Syrquin's (2006) study of African American first-year college students'

writing. In her analysis of their essays, she finds frequent use of "indirection"—discourse strategies that include circumlocution and call and response—which are typical of registers used in speech events like preaching in some African American communities. One particular lexicogrammatical realization of indirection that Syrquin identifies is the frequent use of paratactic *because*. For example, in the following excerpt the writer uses *because* as a link to a larger segment of discourse, but not to link a subordinating clause to a proposition:

> People are praising you when you are doing well, but as soon as you do something bad they're praise any more. I can agree with this line in this poem *because* it's like people are on the bandwagon. (Syrquin 2006: 81)

Nonsubordinating uses of *because* are common in oral registers (Schleppegrell 1989, 1991), and Syrquin finds that students who come from low socioeconomic status households are particularly prone to exploiting *because* paratactically. This tendency is at least partly a result, she theorizes, of their less frequent exposure to academic genres and can complicate their mastery of academic writing.

Despite these complications, the research also suggests some promise. One potentially productive finding relates to the six linguistic features identified by Christie. Those features not only are salient to writing in English, but also have varying degrees of importance to writing in other disciplines like science and history (MacDonald 1992, 2002; Martin 1989; Schleppegrell 2004; Schleppegrell and Achugar 2003; Vande Kopple 2002). The mere presence of similarities does not imply that the meaning-making practices in these various disciplines are equivalent. Certainly, the work of English is not the same as the work of science, for example, and their representations of knowledge reflect those differences. However, the recurrence of register features across disciplines

suggests that there is a macroregister of academic writing, or that they form a macrogenre or genre colony (Bhatia 2002; Grabe 2002). Furthermore, and most importantly for teaching in English, that imbrication of registers indicates that students' increased facility in English composition can have positive consequences for their writing in other domains.

In light of this positive potential, the broad implementation of SFL-based approaches in Australia and world-wide ESL programs, as well as the controversy sparked by genre pedagogy, it is somewhat strange that there is limited available research on the relative effectiveness of SFL-based approaches to grammar and composition. Juzwik *et al.* (2006) observe in their review of research on composition from 1999-2004 that genre approaches are vastly under-studied, and Hyon (2001), in the introduction to her own study, notes, "Amidst the enthusiasm over genre as a teaching tool... few studies have evaluated the effects of genre-based pedagogy on students' language and literacy development" (418). In addition to a limited number of studies, assessing the effectiveness of SFL as a teaching tool is complicated by the sometimes varying applications of genre as a theoretical construct in teaching practice. As genre pedagogy has evolved and been applied in a wide variety of educational contexts—everything from first-language, elementary school classrooms to second-language, graduate school, technical communication seminars—its focus is not always consistent, and its relationship to SFL not always obvious. Some pedagogical applications of genre are more focused on the social and rhetorical contexts that situate texts, others with macrostructure or structural moves. Certainly, not all applications investigate register or zero in on specific functional features that distinguish one register from another. The

instructional content of these pedagogies is, therefore, not always consistent. While admittedly disparate and somewhat limited, there are, however, two emerging bodies of research that assess the effectiveness of SFL-based instruction: those evaluating ESP/EAP programs in second language (L2) settings (Clynes and Henry 2004; Henry and Roseberry 1998; Hyon 2001; Mustafa 1995) and those evaluating genre programs for Indigenous and educationally disadvantaged students in Australia (Carbines, Wyatt, and Robb 2005; Culican 2006; McRae *et al.* 2000; Rose 2006; Rose *et al.* 2007).

The studies of ESP/EAP programs focus on questions of how to teach genre analysis and whether student learning in one context and one genre is transferable to other contexts and other genres, and the results are generally positive. Mustafa (1995), for example, reports on students at a university in Jordan enrolled in an English writing course. Students in that course were given instruction in the genre conventions of term papers in English, their L2. She, then, compares the genre awareness of those students and their success in writing term papers in Arabic, their L1, with the awareness and success of students who were not given genre instruction. She finds that the specialized instruction was successful in raising students' awareness of genre macrostructures and improving their writing. She also finds, however, that the expectations of teachers for certain genre conventions were not consistent and, furthermore, that many student papers in both languages were marked by problems with layout conventions, content, information organization and plagiarism (Mustafa 1995: 253-254).

Henry and Roseberry's (1998) study examines the effectiveness of genre instruction in helping students to write tourist information texts in an EAP management class at a university in Brunei. They compare data from a class using a genre approach

and one using a nongenre, "traditional" approach. They find that the writing of genre

students improved significantly in two of the three measures ("motivation," which

evaluates a text's overall effectiveness and "texture," which evaluates a text's sentential

and sub-sentential features), while the writing of the nongenre students did not improve at

all. They conclude "that a teaching approach focusing on rhetorical organization can be

successful in an EAP/ESP teaching situation with reasonably advanced learners" (Henry

and Roseberry 1998: 154). It is interesting to note, however, that the one measure in

which the genre students exhibited only limited improvement was their "move score," the

score that assesses their conformity to the organization of larger rhetorical patterns.

Two additional studies examine the applications of student's genre knowledge,

one across languages (Clynes and Henry 2004) and the other over time (Hyon 2001).

Clynes and Henry (2004) evaluate the effectiveness of using a "homely" genre in the

students' L1 like wedding invitations to introduce the principles of genre analysis to

university students in an English class in Brunei. In their study, students were very

successful in identifying the schematic move structure of the texts. Students were less

successful, however, in explaining how the language of the genre related to those moves

and the genre's larger rhetorical purpose. They observe:

> Too frequent were bald statements of the type, 'the function of the Formal
> Invitation move is to formally invite the reader,' with no further details about the
> linguistic and other semiotic content of the move, or the reasons for that content.
> (Clynes and Henry 2004: 240)

Hyon (2001) examines the impact of genre instruction on students one year after they

completed an EAP course at the University of Michigan. And the students she

researched did, in fact, retain much of their ability to apply genre theory. This retention

"demonstrate[s] that EAP students can remember, over an extended period of time, at

least some genre features learned through instruction and may recognize those features in new texts" (Hyon 2001: 432). Hyon warns, however, that some students were prone to overgeneralize genres and misapply the schema of one genre to another. Also, echoing Clynes and Henry (2004), she observes that students were more adept at describing the structures of genres than explicating their social purposes.

There is one related study that is also worth mentioning. The study was conducted with deaf students in a college composition course (Anderson 1993). Though not an EAP/ESP setting per se, the L1 for many of the students in the study was American Sign Language (ASL), and written StE was an L2. In much of her study, Anderson uses SFL as an instrument to analyze the writing of the students. But she also uses SFL as pedagogical tool to teach information management, Theme/Rheme structure and logical relationships. Her results, while anecdotal, suggest that SFL can help teachers identify what is working and what is not in a student's composition as well as help students to work more comfortably and successfully in academic genres.

Taken together, research of SFL-based pedagogy in EAP/ESP settings covers a range of issues related to implementation and application. The results indicate that students are able to apply their knowledge acquired in one genre to another, even across languages, and that their genre awareness can also be applied over time. Students, however, may overgeneralize or misapply their knowledge of particular genre structures, which affirms some critiques of genre (see Freedman 1994). In addition, students seem most adept working with the schematic move structures of texts and less comfortable connecting those moves to either larger rhetorical purposes or smaller grammatical features. The strengths and weaknesses of students' performance may well reflect those

of teachers who, as Thwaite (2006) notes in her observations of teachers' implementation of genre pedagogy, tend to stress organizational patterns over purpose or grammar. Finally, genre instruction seems to have a beneficial influence on students' writing; however, the evidence related to this critical issue is largely anecdotal and rather limited.

In fact, a larger body of research examining the effectiveness of genre in facilitating students' writing development is emerging in Australia. Three of these studies examine the implementation and effectiveness of an SFL-oriented program (*Learning to Read: Reading to Learn*) in secondary schools (Carbines, Wyatt, and Robb 2005; Culican 2006; McRae *et al.* 2000; Rose 2006), and a fourth examines the effectiveness of a similar program (*Scaffolding Academic Literacy*) with health science students (Rose *et al.* 2007). The researchers describe *Learning to Read: Reading to Learn* (LRRL) as emphasizing explicitness and SFL-based grammar:

> The approach employs a sequence of strategies that provide scaffolding support for students to read complex texts fluently and accurately, and then to use the features of literate language that they are learning to read in their own writing. (McRae *et al.* 2000: 68)

The studies evaluating LRRL consistently find that participating students increased their academic performance according to nationally recognized benchmarks (called English Profiles). The first of these reports describes a case study involving Indigenous students at a high school in Adelaide (McRae *et al.* 2000). At the conclusion of the study, the students had improved an average of 2.5 Profiles, which, even recognizing that the students began with relatively low levels of academic literacy, represents significant improvement.[10] This progress is echoed in a larger study of Indigenous students using the same program, this time at five participating schools (Carbines, Wyatt, and Robb 2005; Rose 2006). Over the course of the three-term implementation, the students

improved by an average of two to three years of literacy development. However, the researchers note:

> [A]ccelerating these students' literacy learning at over twice the expected rate of improvement resulted in average writing outcomes at upper primary level. This is still short of the level these students need to independently succeed in secondary school. (Rose 2006: 21)

The largest of the studies examines the effects of LRRL on both mainstream and disadvantaged students in more than twenty private, Catholic schools (Culican 2006). Here, again, the results are consistent. According to Curriculum and Standard Framework (CSF) and Developmental Assessment Resource for Teachers (DART) tests that correspond to the national Profiles, all students on average improved at least one CSF level over the three-term implementation (twice the expected rate), and twenty percent improved two or more CSF levels. Furthermore, the researchers deem LRRL "highly successful" at accelerating the literacy development of more than ninety-five percent of underachieving students (Culican 2006: 57).

Finally, Rose *et al.* (2007) evaluate a curriculum based on similar principles to LRRL but put into practice with Indigenous university students in the heath sciences. The study followed students enrolled in three courses—a preparatory class, a first-year bachelor course and second-year bachelor course. Throughout the term, students' writings were collected and assessed according to a rubric that assigns points to each of eleven different attributes.[11] A score below ten roughly corresponds to the expectations of middle primary grades, ten to twenty to upper primary, between twenty and thirty to early secondary, thirty to forty to middle secondary, forty to fifty to upper secondary and fifty points to a graduation standard for secondary. At the conclusion of the term, the first-year students had improved from a mean of below thirty, to above fifty; the second-

year students improved from a mean of below forty to seventy and the preparatory students from a mean of below ten to above twenty. The authors attribute the slower progress of the preparatory class to less consistent implementation and a syllabus that included reading and writing in a variety of subfields (Rose *et al.* 2007: 16).

Rose *et al.* illustrate their approach and distinguish it from traditional approaches using curriculum cycles—the processes by and through which instructors and students engage in teaching and learning (see Figure 2.2 below). Both the Scaffolding Academic Literacy (SAL) program described here and LRRL are predicated on cycles designed to foreground the purposes and expectations for academic or professional language. The results of the studies evaluating this approach to language and grammar clearly demonstrate that it can be effective in helping students to develop academic literacies and improve their writing performance.
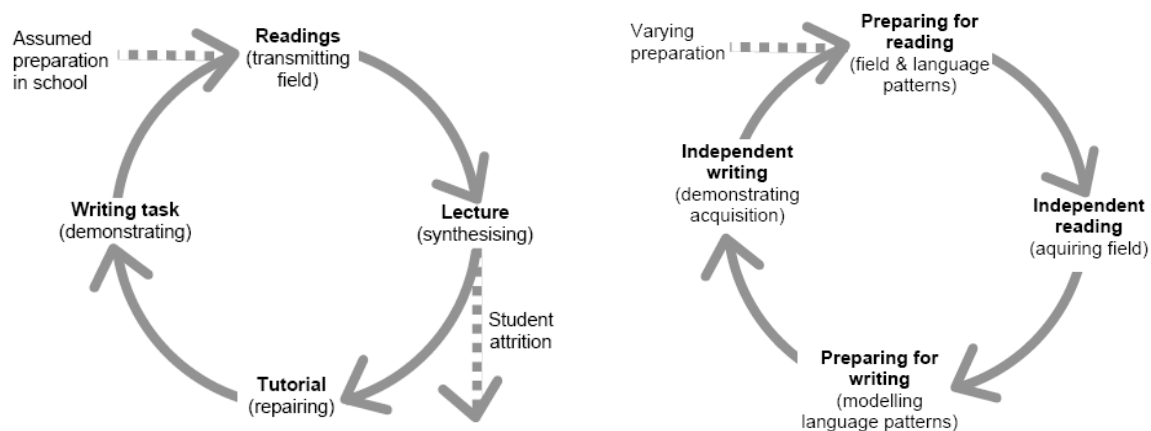
Figure 2.2. The curriculum cycle on the left represents the traditional progress of teaching and learning. The curriculum cycle on the right represents the scaffolding cycle using an SFL-based approach to language (Rose *et al.* 2007: 5).

2.4   THE NEED FOR AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Each of the previous sections describes a different definition of and approach to grammar: the first traditional, the second contrastive and the third functional. Each

approach focuses on a different linguistic domain and different sets of features (see Table

2.4 below). Successful writers who are speakers of nonstandard dialects, of course, have

control of all three grammars, even if such control is not conscious. In the past, however,

research in grammar instruction, particularly in the U.S., has tended to concentrate on

only one kind of grammar, traditional grammar, and the results of that research have been

less than favorable. Unfortunately, traditional grammar is popularly a proxy for

grammar, in general; thus, the inefficacy of traditional grammar has cast a shadow over

any kind of grammar or language study in the classroom. As a consequence, two

generations of teachers have had little language study as a part of their schooling or

teacher training experiences.

Type	Domain	Concern	Some Features of Interest
traditional	Standard English	usage conventions	punctuation spelling pronoun agreement pronoun case subject/verb agreement
contrastive	dialect	variation by user	pronoun paradigms verb paradigms morphosyntax lexicon
functional	register	variation by use	verb process types modality nominal groups conjunctive resources Thematic organization

Table 2.4. Three different types of grammar and their contrasting foci.

For the past thirty years, English pedagogy in secondary school has benefited

from concern about students' writing and advances in composition studies. English

teachers are routinely trained in discourses that facilitate their understanding of the

writing process and the patterning of supra-sentential structures in academic essays (like

introductions, body paragraphs, etc.). What many teachers still lack, however, are

discourses that allow them to discuss sentence-level or phrasal-level features, the

differences between academic language and other varieties of language students use everyday, or the variation in academic language itself. Even small developments in these areas can positively influence students' success (Blake and Cutler 2003). Yet, such discourses remain excluded from most teachers' training and, as a result, not a part of most classrooms. If a teacher is at all interested in teaching about language, in the absence of other alternatives, she or he is likely to rely on the tools of traditional grammar, which, as we have seen, are limited in their power to explicate the exigencies of academic language.

In order to expand the efficacy of grammar curriculum, teachers, instead, need a metalanguage to allow them to explore academic English with students—how it structures meaning, how it differs from other language varieties students use, how features can recur or vary across disciplines and how students, themselves, can gain facility with its resources. Sweetland's (2006) results, in fact, point toward the need for integrating sub-sentential, sentential and supra-sentential grammars. Because contrastive analysis focuses on sub-sentential linguistic features—constituent features of sentences— it is perhaps not surprising that the Sociolinguistic Approach students showed, in the Six Traits analysis, the greatest gains on sentence fluency. Traits like organization and voice, however, depend on larger rhetorical structures, cohesion, conjunctive resources and the use of vocabulary—textual features that are not generally addressed using contrastive analysis. Such textual features, though, are often the subject of SFL-based curricula that attend to register. In addition, the Sociolinguistic Approach students outperformed the No Treatment students substantially on conventions. It would seem, therefore, that the

usage conventions of traditional grammar can be taught and learned effectively using a nontraditional approach to grammar.

Finally, there is both growing and clear evidence that instruction in contrastive and functional grammar has a positive, and in some cases dramatic, influence on students' academic literacies and writing, and an integrated approach could be a productive future model. It is equally clear that these benefits can be reaped by some of the most underserved and underperforming student populations and that gains by such populations need not come at the expense of mainstream students. Indeed, all students profit from a well-conceived and well-implemented linguistically-oriented curriculum. The primary stumbling block seems not to be the students, at all. Rather, it seems to be devising a curriculum that teachers see as both relevant and useable.

CHAPTER 2 NOTES

[1] The example of "Jim and me was going in the cave" would seem to invite comment about both subject/verb agreement and the subject/object pronouns. The teacher, however, singles out subject/verb agreement for discussion. Harris explains, "With a group that needed this sort of practice, it was unwise to try to correct the pronoun error in the same lesson. One has to decide on priorities" (qtd. in Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer 1963: 71).

[2] Hollie provides no information about the assessment (how it was proctored, what the prompt was, how it was scored, etc.) other than the mean scores cited here.

[3] Taylor does not speculate why these particular features were reduced significantly while others were not. It is, however, a question that I think is worth considering. One possibility is that her sample size skewed the results: because the number of subjects in the study was small, the practices of a few students could dramatically influence the results. But another explanation would be that the instructional method did not address the modification of some features as effectively as others.

[4] Six Traits is a common assessment rubric for elementary and secondary academic writing. It separates the evaluation of a composition into six distinct components: ideas and content; organization; voice; word choice; fluency; and conventions.

[5] One explanation for such a discrepancy might be that habitual *be* is a strongly marked feature. Therefore, like similarly marked features (e.g., multiple negation), students would be highly conscious of it and would be unlikely to use it in their writing. The point here is not that dialect features can not be identified and explained in students' writing. It is rather that just because a student is a speaker of a nonstandard dialect, one can not predict what dialect features will emerge in her or his writing, if they emerge at all.

[6] The "interference" model suggests that speaking a nonstandard dialect inhibits or interferes with the acquisition of reading and writing—a model that has received widespread critique (e.g., Hartwell 1980; Schwartz 1981).

[7] Many of the questions raised about the validity of code-switching as an educational objective often, though not always, presume code-switching as an oral process. Students' spoken-language practices can and certainly are the targets of some bidialectal programs (like DeKalb's, for example). Code-switching curricula, however, can also be directed only at students' written production, as it is in this study. A focus on code-switching as a written rather than an oral process, I believe, deflects at least some of the more pointed criticism.

[8] For a full account of genre theory's development, see Cope, Kalantzis, Krress and Martin (1993).

[9] EAP and ESP are used extensively in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, often in the teaching of adults and often for the purpose of assisting second language (L2) students to write academic or technical genres like, for example a literature review. Hyon (1996) provides an extensive analysis of genre theory's influence on these educational approaches as well as its influence on New Rhetoric.

[10] As a point of reference, Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority lists six Profiles spanning grades P-10. They are posted on their website: http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/essential/discipline/english/index.html.

[11] The rubric is as follows:

Genre		Is the genre appropriate for the writing task? Does it go through appropriate stages?
Register	FIELD	Does the writer understand, interpret and/or explain the topic coherently?
	TENOR	Are evaluations appropriately objective?
	MODE	Is there an appropriate use of technical and/or abstract language?
	PHASES	Is the text organized in an appropriate sequence of phases?
	LEXIS	Is the field well constructed by technical lexis and sequences of lexical relations?
	CONJUNCTION	Are logical relations coherently constructed between sentences and phases?
	REFERENCE	Is it clear who or what is being referred to at each step of the text?
	APPRAISAL	Is appraisal used judiciously to evaluate ideas, arguments, people, things and texts?
Grammar		Are sentences organized to present information coherently? Are written grammatical conventions used appropriately?
Graphic Features		Is the layout clear, including paragraphs and sections? Are illustrations used appropriately and clearly? Is spelling accurate? Is punctuation used appropriately?

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODS

This study explores the design of a linguistically informed curriculum and analyzes its implementation. The participants were a teacher and her twelfth-grade English class, with an enrollment of twelve students. Preliminary data collection began in the spring of 2006; the curriculum was implemented in the fall of 2006; and the implementation phase concluded in the spring of 2007. Three different sources of data were collected over the course of the research project: 1) intake and outtake interviews with students and teachers, 2) student writing samples from before and after the implementation of the curriculum and 3) videotapes of the classroom as the curriculum was being taught. Of these three, the videotapes are the primary resource for the analysis and evaluation of the curricular implementation. The interviews and the writing samples are used as a secondary resource to frame some of the educational and social issues that face linguistically aware approaches like code-switching and SFL-based curricula, as well as to bolster the analysis of the video and provide more robust ethnographic detail of the classroom. That additional detail should broaden some of the "tunnel vision" that Erickson (2006) warns is common in coding for content-related events in classrooms.

The interviews and writing samples provided an additional and equally important function in the evolution of the research project. They were significant informants in the process of curricular development by shedding light on some salient theoretical issues,

particularly the importance of distinguishing dialect from register variation. A short

discussion of the methods framing the curricular development process will be presented

here, before a full discussion of the curriculum is presented in Chapter 4. Such a

discussion is warranted not only because the curriculum is a significant product of this

research, but also because instructional design has had a sometimes uneasy relationship

with curriculum theory. It is important, then, to frame how design and theory were

integrated for this project, or, as Petrina (2004: 81) expresses it, how the questions of

"What should be learned?" and "How should it be organized for teaching?" were

assimilated.

Thus, two separate methodologies will be discussed in this chapter: first, the

theoretical and pragmatic methods for selecting and organizing the curriculum and,

second, the research methods for collecting data sources, mining those sources for data

and finally analyzing that data. Before introducing methodological specifics, however, it

is necessary to provide some background on the research context—the participants and

existing pedagogical conditions.

3.1   CAPITOL HIGH

The participating site for the research project, Capitol High, is a charter school in

Washington, D.C. The foundation that operates the school opened its first campus in

1998 and a second one, Capitol High, in 2004. Capitol High is located in a working class

neighborhood with an African American population that grew steadily after World War II

and, according to the most recent census data, now stands at 97%. Although the school

does not draw its students exclusively from the surrounding area, its ethnic make-up

mirrors that of its neighborhood. In fact, in 2006, all of Capitol High's students were

African American. The demographics of the school and those of the neighborhood differ

significantly, however, in at least one respect. While the poverty rate in the area around

the school is 25%, 93% of Capitol High's students were from low income households in

2006 (District of Columbia Public Charter School Board 2006b).

Both Capitol High and the foundation's original campus focus on students who

have been in the juvenile justice system or have been identified as "at-risk" by public

schools. To support its students, the schools have implemented an extended academic

day and provide tutoring, counseling, meals as well as career internships. This extensive

support has led to dramatically improved outcomes. In an appearance before an

appropriations subcommittee, one of the founders of the school testified:

> At our school, they [the students] go from attending school 50 percent of the time
> to 90 percent of the time. They improve their GPAs from a low D to about a B.
> They increase their SAT scores by over 15 percent, on average, and over 70
> percent of them are now going on to college. (Public Charter Schools in the
> District of Columbia 2004: 49)

These successes have coincided with increased enrollments. Capitol High enrolled 76

freshmen and sophomores for the 2004-2005 school-year. By 2006-2007, the period of

the study, that enrollment grew to 161 as the school expanded to include all grades.

Though the school and its students have accomplished a great deal, some

problems have proved more intractable. In particular, outcomes on standardized tests

(like those mandated under NCLB) have remained stubbornly low. The mean score for

reading on the NCE (National Curve Equivalent) in the spring of 2005, the school's first

year of operation, was 26.7%; only 3.2% of students scored above the national average

(District of Columbia Public Charter School Board 2005). None of the school's students

measured proficient for reading under NCLB. Capitol High raised its reading scores in

2006—14% measured proficient under NCLB and 2% advanced—though it still did not meet its Annual Yearly Progress benchmarks (District of Columbia Public Charter School Board 2006a). These scores are nearly identical to those of the nearest public high school, which had 17% of its students score proficient in reading and 0.04% score advanced in 2006.

3.2   THE TEACHER AND HER CLASS

The participating teacher has been at Capitol High since it opened in 2004-2005. Before joining Capitol High, she was a teacher for twelve years, first at a suburban high school in the South and then at a private school in the Washington, D.C. area. She also served as the school's curriculum coordinator. Prior to the study, she was familiar with code-switching as a general concept but had no specific training in the morphosyntactic features of different English varieties or in general grammatical systems. She rather self-deprecatingly describes herself as "not very good" at grammar.

As previously noted, there are many support systems in place at the school (counseling, tutoring, job training, etc.), so many demands are placed on the time of teachers and students alike. In addition, because the students at Capitol High have struggled in other educational settings and many have been through the judicial system, much of the school's population has had an inconsistent schooling. Thus, there is a great disparity in the reading and writing facilities of the students. For example, the reading scores of the students range from second-grade to at-grade level. The twin demands of programming and student needs contribute to the bustling atmosphere in the classroom. During a typical class period, the teacher will lead the class through an activity or discussion for part of the time, and then have the students work individually as she

circulates and counsels students on their various assignments. Some students may compose at one of the four computer terminals in the room; others may work on handouts at a table or catch up on reading. When an assignment is completed, it is logged into a portfolio that is kept in the classroom. Thus, the progress and grade of a student is monitored at all times by that student and the teacher.

The individual work-time allotted to students is a necessary consequence of their disparate needs and lives outside of school that inhibit their ability to do work at home (many have jobs, few have computers, some lack self-motivation), but that time can occasionally be lively. On such days, students may irrepressibly gossip about their social lives, even as they intermittently attend to their classwork. The teacher handles these outbursts with good-natured patience. On rarer occasions, a student may be more aggressively disruptive. Rarer still, such a disruption becomes racialized (the teacher is white and all of the students are African American). A student, for example, may challenge the teacher's authority on the basis that she is white. On these occasions, the teacher calls in a counselor to help the student.

In general, race is an open topic in the classroom. Students are not shy about discussing racial politics, their own ethnic identities or the ethnicity of their teacher, who openly acknowledges her whiteness. As is evident in the following section, much of the literature that is read in the school engages issues related to race and ethnicity. There is, then, precedence for these kinds of discussions and an evident degree of trust.

The environment of the participating class is a challenging one. However, most of the students want to use their experiences at Capitol High as a springboard for college and most have career goals. One student, for example, wants to be an accountant,

another wants to be a lawyer and another wants to manage a large kitchen. Therefore, in spite of the social and educational challenges that face them, the students and their teacher determinedly work through those challenges every day.

3.3   THE EXISTING CURRICULUM

The school's English curriculum is literature-based. Texts that have been used recently include Frederick Douglass' *The Narrative Life of Frederick Douglass*, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes*, Homer's *The Odyssey*, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Ken Wiwa's *In the Shadow of a Saint*, and Pablo Neruda's *Odes*. Students' writing responds to this literature in the mode of ethical judgment described by Christie (1999, 2002b) and Rothery and Stenglin (2000). Here, for example, are two prompts that were assigned to students:

- Explain Iago's motivation for manipulating Othello and compare him with another character from a work of literary merit.
- Explain the pilot's dilemma in "The Cold Equations," then evaluate his final choice.

The composition curriculum is organized under the title of "The College-Level Writing Project." Students' progress in the program is demonstrated by the completion of six benchmarks conceptualized as a sequence of ascending steps:
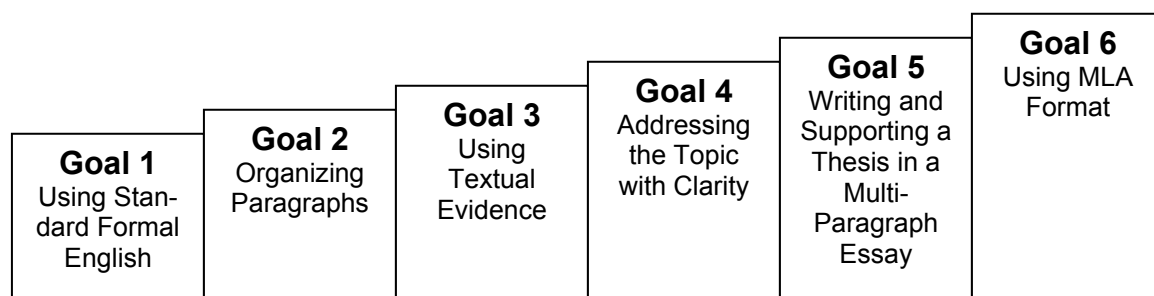
Figure 3.1. Capitol High's instructional targets for English.

Students are to meet Goal 3 at the end of ninth grade and Goal 5 at the end of tenth grade.

They achieve a goal by scoring a 4 on an assessment rubric. The criteria for a 4 on each

goal are as follows:

Goal 1: Language and tone is precise for audience, mastery in grammar, usage and spelling is evident.

Goal 2: Paragraphs are clearly organized and flow evenly between topic, details, and transitions. Information is presented in a clear, logical order.

Goal 3: Writing includes several quotes that support and build a clear argument, including commentary on text's deeper implications.

Goal 4: Writing addresses the intent of the topic in a clear, focused and skillful way. Information is presented logically.

Goal 5: Thesis is original, clear, and provides a deep look into literature. The thesis is supported with an organized, even argument that flows well.

Goal 6: Written piece adheres strictly to MLA guidelines. No errors are noticeable.

These goals illustrate a curricular focus on fairly orthodox objectives. The school's basic

approach, at least in English, is to have formerly marginalized or underserved students

participate in a mainstream curricular framework and support that participation with a

variety of supplemental programs. These support mechanisms, then, are the site of more

strategic innovation than the goals of the curriculum itself—an understandable tactic

since one objective of the school is to enhance students' future career and academic

choices, which are partly subject to their ability to negotiate normative social and

educational environments.

3.4   THE PROCESS OF SELECTING AND ORGANIZING CONTENT

One of the primary goals for this study was to author a curriculum that could be

integrated into this educational ecology, which includes the teacher and her students, as

well as the existing curriculum, learning targets and classroom practices. Curriculum

development began by posing two fundamental questions: "What should be learned?"

and "How should it be organized for teaching?" Answering these questions is a

deceptively complex task, and there are a variety of models for schematizing the process

of curriculum development, a process that generally falls under the purview of

instructional design (ID). Tyler (1950) proposed a germinal model in which he theorized

the process in four stages: 1) identification of objectives, 2) selection of appropriate

learning experiences, 3) organization of learning experiences and 4) evaluation of

learning. This rather spare, four-part model has been expanded in a variety of ways in

order to accommodate analyzing individual learners and the conditions of instruction

(Gagné and Briggs 1974), needs and task analyses (Dick and Carey 1977; Reiser and

Dick 1996) and the inclusion of context analysis and formative evaluations (Smith and

Ragan 1999). In general, these models are represented by a taxonomic schema (see, for

example, the Reiser and Dick ID model in Figure 3.2 below) representing the sequential

components of a development system. However, theorists like Smith and Regan (1999)

take great pains to point out the recursive and iterative nature of their model, and theorists

have proposed nonlinear, nested models (e.g., Morrison, Ross, and Kemp 2004).

Regardless of any model's precise constituent structure, as Magliaro and Shambaughk

(2006: 88) observe, "The value of ID is to keep important issues of learning at the

forefront of the development effort."
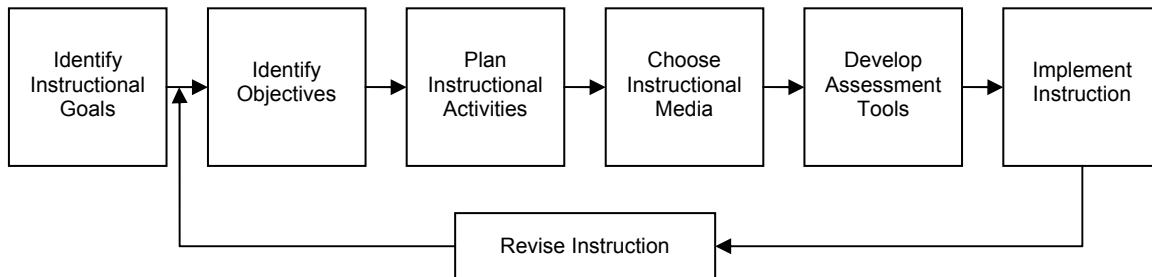
Figure 3.2. The Reiser and Dick model of ID (1996).

For this study, curriculum development followed the ADDIE model of ID

(Gustafson 2002; Gustafson and Branch 1997; McGriff 2000):

- **Analysis:** the process of defining what is to be learned
- **Design:** the process of specifying how it is to be learned
- **Development:** the process of authoring and producing materials
- **Implementation:** the process of installing the project in the real world context
- **Evaluation:** the process of determining the adequacy of the instruction

The ADDIE model is an appropriate frame for this study, first, because the model

emphasizes the *development* of content within the context of a learning ecology, rather

than, say, the *identification* of content prior to any evaluations of learners, their needs or

their environment (e.g., Gerlach and Ely 1980). For this study, the analysis and design

phases (see Table 3:1 below for a description) were required to integrate the curriculum

with existing teaching practices and learning targets and to align the curriculum with the

needs and desires of the students it was designed to serve. The importance of these

phases, in fact, is borne out by their effect on the development of the curriculum (as will

be described in Chapter 4). The ADDIE model is an appropriate frame, also, because it is

iterative and flexible. At any stage, a formative evaluation may prompt the designer to

revisit any phase and make critical adjustments. Such evaluations and adjustments were

ongoing throughout the development of the curriculum for this study.

While the ADDIE model describes this study's systemic approach to curriculum

development, it does not describe the methodological approach used to design the

curriculum itself. That is, the model informs the logic used to answer "What should be

learned?" but not "How should it be organized for teaching?" The logic used to answer

this latter question comes from the elaboration theory of instruction (ETI), which focuses

specifically on the structural organization of content and related learning tasks and has

been developed by Reigeluth and his colleagues (English and Reigeluth 1996; Reigeluth 1979, 1987, 1992, 1999; Reigeluth *et al.* 1980; Reigeluth and Rodgers 1980). ETI proposes to organize learning in holistic sequences that make learning experiences coherent and aligned with state-of-the-art research in cognitive processes, and make learners more motivated and self-directed. The criteria guiding these sequences are determined by the type of the targeted learning, whether it is conceptual, theoretical or procedural. Complex sequences may contain strands of more than one type. English and Reigeluth (1996), for example, describe a lesson sequence involving some rudimentary electrical engineering. The sequence requires both theoretical learning (e.g., understanding natural processes and axioms like Ohm's Law) and procedural learning (e.g., being able to problem-solve some basic circuitry).

The lesson sequence for this study is, likewise, complex, requiring an understanding of related concepts (e.g., the various functions of words and word-groupings) and principles (e.g., the rules governing the systematicity of a language variety) and the application of those concepts and principles to challenging tasks (e.g., code-switching a piece of text or composing a piece of text appropriate to a particular situation). It, thus, combines learning of all three types. While weaving these strands together is clearly demanding and ETI recommends not only global sequencing approaches but also specific strategies for activating, summarizing and synthesizing knowledge, using ETI to inform design decisions was made somewhat simpler by adhering to a few of ETI's core tenets (Reigeluth 1987, 1999):

- presenting more familiar concepts before unfamiliar ones
- organizing theoretical principles from the simple to the complex
- beginning the sequence with a set of *epitome* lessons that captures the most fundamental and inclusive principles of the curriculum

There have been a number of critiques leveled against ETI and two are relevant to the design process of this curriculum: 1) that ETI does not make allowances for situated learning and 2) that ETI does not account for students' prior knowledge (Wilson and Cole 1992). It is true that ETI does not actively make provisions for either of these conditions; it is equally true, however, that nothing about ETI obstructs their consideration. Rather, it is incumbent on the curriculum designer, being aware of ETI's limitations, to make adjustments for salient conditions that are outside of ETI's purview. In the case of this study, both situated learning and students' prior knowledge are critical concerns because one of the study's stated goals is to build from students' existing linguistic facilities toward advanced academic literacies. Obviously, such an enterprise requires accounting for students' prior knowledge. Less obviously, perhaps, it also requires bridging the competencies of one "community of practice" to those of another.[1] In so doing, the curriculum must allow for multiple contexts—the linguistic learning situated in communities of practice outside of the classroom and the linguistic learning situated in the community of practice that is the classroom. In order to adapt ETI to these particular exigencies, ETI is neither conceived of nor practiced as a standalone ID methodology. It is, instead, a contingent methodology, one embedded within the larger ADDIE structure (see Table 3.1 below). As a constituent of the ADDIE process, ETI is applied within the context of a larger method that accounts for learners, their needs and their environment, and an elaboration sequence can be designed to respond to and integrate with that learning ecology.

		Tasks	Output
Analysis		• Interview students and teachers • Review current curriculum • Review current research	• Description of student needs • Description of teacher needs • Description of constraints • Task analysis
ETI	**Design**	• Write objectives • Plan instruction • Identify resources	• Measurable objectives • Application of ETI strategy • Scope and sequence
	Development	• Author lessons • Author background materials	• Sequenced lesson plans • Background explanations • Exercises
Implementation		• Tryout	• Classroom videotapes • Teacher comments • Student comments
Evaluation		• Interpret data • Survey teacher and students • Revise materials	• Revised curriculum

Table 3.1. The ADDIE model with embedded ETI as it was implemented for this study.

3.5   SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data for this study were collected from three different sources: interviews, student

writing samples and video. The first interviews were conducted in the spring of the

2005-2006 school-year—prior to the development of the curriculum—with the

participating teacher, a sampling of her students and two additional English teachers at

Capitol High. These interviews probed the metalinguistic awareness of the students and

teachers and asked the participants to comment on areas of language-related

accomplishments and struggles in school. Also at this time, two writing samples were

collected from each student. The samples were recently completed classroom

assignments. Both these samples and interviews were applied in the analysis phase of the

instructional design and helped in determining learning targets, in analyzing tasks and

needs and in assessing the classroom environment.

The implementation of the curriculum began in the fall of 2006 and finished in the

spring of 2007. During the implementation, the instruction was videotaped. After the

implementation was completed, the tapes were digitized and imported into qualitative analysis software for transcription and coding. The coding and subsequent analysis focus on events and interactions in which the teacher and students negotiate the curricular content and the new ways of making meaning that it allows for or invites.

Finally, after the implementation was completed in the spring of 2007, the participating teacher and a sampling of students were again interviewed. Like the intake interviews, these outtake interviews investigated the participants' attitudes toward and understandings of language. In addition, the interviews asked the participants to reflect on their experiences with the curriculum. Also, at the end of the school-year, a writing sample was collected from each student. These samples were compositions written for their final classroom assignment. All of the outtake data were applied in Evaluation phase of the instructional design; they were used in the assessment of materials, instruction and learning and guided the revision of the curriculum.

3.6   METALINGUISTIC INTERVIEWS

The intake and outtake interviews were semi-structured and designed to investigate participants' metalinguistic awareness. Investigating perceptions of language, its uses and its users, is a productive analytic tool in identifying some of the morphosyntactic features to which speakers aspire (Labov 1966a), as well as the ideologies and identities that speakers attribute to language varieties or particular linguistic features (Brown 2006a; Trudgill 1983). Identity and ideological orientations related to language are particularly salient data in the design and evaluation of a language curriculum since language attitudes can negatively influence students' academic

engagement (Fordham 1999; Fordham and Ogbu 1986) or, conversely, positively influence their academic outcomes (Blake and Cutler 2003).

For the intake interviews, three English teachers (one of whom was the participating teacher for the length of the study and one of whom also served as an administrator) and four of the twelve students took part. Of the participating students, one was high-achieving, two middle-achieving and one low-achieving, according to their outcomes for the school-year and their teacher's observations. The questions posed in both the teachers' and students' interviews were generally descriptive. Teachers were asked for their perceptions of their students' language, and students were asked for their understandings of their language use in their social and academic lives, as well as their academic successes, struggles and goals related to language.

The outtake interviews followed a similar protocol. For those interviews, the participating teacher and four students took part. The students participating in the outtake interview were not the same students who participated in the intake interview. As in the intake interviews, of the participating students, one was high-achieving, two middle-achieving and one low-achieving. Also similar to the intake interviews, the outtake interviews posed questions related to metalinguistic awareness in order to compare these post-intervention responses to the pre-intervention responses from the previous spring. Additionally, the participants were asked to describe and evaluate their experiences with the curriculum.

Taken together, approximately two hours of interviews were conducted and then transcribed according to Jeffersonian conventions. The role of these interviews in the overall research design is to provide data that can be applied to the following questions:

- How do students construe their language use at school?
- How do teachers construe the language use of their students?
- What are the students' goals for their own learning?
- What are the teachers' goals for their students' learning?
- What are the perceived areas of language-related success and struggle in the classroom?

It is important to note that the reported perceptions of language practices are not taken here as reliably predictive of actual language use. Simply because a student or teacher reports a particular linguistic phenomenon, it does not mean that such a phenomenon is occurring in actual practice. However, as previously observed, language attitudes themselves can influence academic engagement and achievement. Moreover, a language curriculum must account for the ways in which its users experience language if it is to help speakers better understand their existing linguistic facilities and build from those facilities to expanded repertoires (Brown 2006b).

Finally, although the interviews were not designed to elicit particular linguistic features, they did yield salient phonological and morphosyntactic data. These data come specifically from the intake interviews with students. While the particular context of the interviews limits the scope of the data (i.e., the available data do not represent the full scope of the students' linguistic resources), it does suggest how some AAE-speaking students respond to the perceived sociolinguistic demands of school by register-shifting in AAE rather than code-switching into a standard dialect. This is a potentially significant finding, and the data from the interviews are corroborated by another data source—namely the students' academic writing.

3.7   STUDENT WRITING SAMPLES

Writing samples were collected on the same time schedule as the interviews were conducted. Two samples were collected from each student in the spring of 2006, prior to any curricular intervention. One of these samples is an unedited piece of in-class writing responding to a piece of poetry. The other is a more sustained, edited composition debating national immigration policy. In the spring of 2007, after the curricular intervention, one more writing sample was collected from each student. This final sample was a research paper that was written as the culminating assignment for the class.

All of the collected student texts were classroom assignments. Compositions organic to the classroom (as opposed to assessment instruments designed and implemented independently of the ongoing work of school) reveal the specific nature of linguistic tasks demanded of students and how students respond to and negotiate those tasks. Such data fulfill the need in this study to identify areas of academic literacy appropriate for curricular intervention and to demonstrate how the teacher and her students respond to those interventions.

The analysis of the texts makes use of both variationist and functional methods. Contrastive features of AAE and StE are examined, not to measure writing quality but to determine whether or not students are code-switching in their academic writing and to describe their compositional use of linguistic variables. The morphosyntactic variables that are examined are those that have been recognized in previous studies:

- third person present tense inflections
- regular past tense inflections
- possessive markers
- plural noun markers
- multiple negation
- existential *it* vs. *there*

- verb aspect like habitual *be*
- copular *be*

As noted earlier, the identification of contrastive features in writing is not always straightforward. For instance, in a writing sample discussed in a later chapter, there appears the phrase "use to." Is this an example of an unmarked past tense? An oral artifact of the reduction all speakers make when two stops are present back-to-back? Or the simple result of the student not hitting the "D" on the keyboard? When such ambiguities arise, they are acknowledged, and an emphasis is placed on grammatical patterns in the writing samples. Students' relative use of contrastive features is especially important as weighed against the data gathered from the interviews. In combination, the written and interview data can establish whether the perceptions of students' academic language practices—by both the teachers and the students, themselves—match the academic language practices evidenced in the essays. Any disparities between perceived and extant practices are potential areas of disruption in developing students' academic literacies and are potential targets for curricular intervention.

In addition to the examination of contrastive, dialect features, the analysis of the students' essays also considers SFL-related register features. In particular, the analysis focuses on, though is limited to, Theme/Rheme structure. The constituent structure of a text can be broken down into any number of different units: sentences, phrases, words, morphemes, letters, etc. In SFL, the basic constituent unit is the clause because it is seen as the rank at which meaning is made. Theme/Rheme structure organizes the clause's meaning, its message. Facility with Theme/Rheme structure is a critical marker of students' facility with academic registers because it illustrates the development of

abstraction, the construction of logical reasoning and the organization of information (Anderson 1993; Christie 2002b; Schleppegrell Forthcoming).

The Theme has initial position in a clause but is defined by its functional purpose which is to serve "as the point of departure of the [clause's] message" (Halliday 1985: 38). The Rheme, then, is the "remainder of the message" (Halliday 1985: 38). Figure 3.3 below illustrates the basic Theme + Rheme structure of a clause:

Her ambiguity	is essential to the novel.
Theme	**Rheme**

Figure 3.3. Theme + Rheme.

While Theme + Rheme is manifest by structural order, it functions to organize meaning. The Theme initiates the message, and the Rheme moves it.

The Theme in Figure 3.3 is an example of an *ideational* (or topical) Theme. Ideational Themes function in the transitivity structure of the clause; they are related to the process of the clause either as actors in the process, circumstances of the process, or the process itself. Put less technically: they are the clause's topic, the thing the clause is about. Themes, however, may also have *interpersonal* or *textual* elements. Interpersonal Themes, more common in spoken than written registers, involve the direct affecting of listener by speaker through language, as with names and vocatives, but also indicate an author's stance or perspective (e.g., *unfortunately*, *usually* or other modality markers). Textual Themes serve linking functions in academic writing and are important in establishing the relational context of one clause to another. Textual and topical Themes can be seen in Figure 3.4:

Though	Holden	is angry and disappointed at the world
Textual	**Topical**	**Rheme**
Theme		

Figure 3.4. Textual and topical Themes.

In addition to realizing these three metafunctions, Themes can be characterized as either marked or unmarked. In a declarative clause, when the first topical element of that clause is also its subject, the clause is unmarked (as in the case with the clauses in both Figures 3.3 and 3.4). When the subject and topical Theme are not co-positional, the Theme is marked, as in Figure 3.5:

In the final moment of Kurtz's life	he	is described as "experiencing a moment of extreme knowledge."
Marked Theme	**Subject**	
	Rheme	

Figure 3.5. A marked Theme.

One final type of Thematic structure to consider is the predicated Theme. Predicated Themes usually follow the pattern of *it + be + … ,* where the pronoun has no subject value. This is the case in following clause:

It is apparent that Kurtz ultimately succumbs to the "heart of darkness."

While the initial pronoun is in Theme position, it has little Thematic force. What is "*it*" exactly? Something else is predicated that has Thematic salience in the structure of the clause. The Theme/Rheme structure could be analyzed as follows:

It	is apparent	that	Kurtz ultimately succumbs to the "heart of darkness."
Theme	**Rheme**	**Theme**	**Rheme**
Theme		**Rheme**	

Figure 3.6. A predicated Theme.

Themes are often predicated in this way to serve the needs of the Given/New structure.

Given/New operates at the level of the clause much like Theme/Rheme, so much so that Given is often mapped onto Theme and New onto Rheme. They are not, however, equivalent. Given and New are constituent structures of information. The Given is the information that is known, and the New is the information that is supplied by the message. Because there is a strong preference to have Given precede New, Given is

often, though certainly not always, in Thematic position. The preferred order of Given +

New is also why some Themes are predicated. In order to avoid presenting New

information as Theme, an empty subject can take its place so New can be co-positioned

with the Rheme.

Both information and Thematic structure work relationally to organize the

meaning of texts. These structures, in fact, are critical in describing the differences

between more and less successful essays in the English classroom. The method used in

this study to analyze students' compositions is, perhaps, easiest to demonstrate by

example. Consider the following sample paragraph from an essay on *King Lear*:

> Lear loved all his daughters, but the youngest, Cordelia, was the apple of his eye.
> She was much different from her sister but Lear never realized how much until
> she was gone and he had to deal with their cruelty. When he asked how much
> each loved him when dividing his kingdom, he never contemplated the true
> meaning of Cordelia's answer of "nothing" until she was dismissed. It wasn't
> until after his stay with his older daughter that he even discovered they had any
> dislike for him. It was only after going mad and nearly dying that he could find
> that he may have been the cause for all the havoc. He was a proud man and the
> sickening and false flattery of his two other daughters clouded the clarity of
> Cordelia's answer and he could only blame himself. The irony behind his stay in
> the wilderness was his main companion was the fool but the king was actually the
> fool and the fool was wise. Lear overcomes his insolence too late and realizes
> that "nothing" Cordelia could say would change the love he had for her and he
> already knew was there.

In order to analyze its Thematic and information structure, the text can be broken down

into clauses, and the Themes identified:

Figure 3.7. A sample text broken down into clauses. The Themes of the clauses are identified as follows: ☐ = Theme; ☐ = marked Theme; underline = predicated Theme; *italics* = textual Theme; [[   ]] = rankshifted clause (i.e., a clause that is functioning as something other than a clause, one that has changed rank).

1 ☐Lear☐ loved all his daughters,

2 *but* ☐the youngest, Cordelia,☐ was the apple of his eye.

3 ☐She☐ was much different from her sister

4 *but* ☐Lear☐ never realized how much

5   *until* she was gone

6   *and* he had to deal with their cruelty.

7   *When* he asked

8   how much each loved him when dividing his kingdom,

9   he never contemplated the true meaning of Cordelia's answer of "nothing"

10 *until* she was dismissed.

11 It wasn't until after his stay with his older daughter

12 *that* he even discovered

13 they had any dislike for him.

14 It was only after going mad and nearly dying

15 *that* he could find

16 *that* he may have been the cause for all the havoc.

17 He was a proud man

18 *and* the sickening and false flattery of his two other daughters clouded the clarity of Cordelia's answer

19 *and* he could only blame himself.

20 The irony behind his stay in the wilderness was [[his main companion was the fool]],

21 *but* the king was actually the fool

22 *and* the fool was wise.

23 Lear overcomes his insolence too late

24 *and* realizes

25 *that* "nothing" [[Cordelia could say]] would change the love [[he had for her and he already knew was there.]]

Graphically presented in this way, one feature of the text becomes readily apparent: its Thematic pattern is largely constant. Either Lear or Cordelia (or their representative pronouns) appear as Themes in 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 24 (where it is ellipsed).

This kind of Thematic pattern is common in other genres like descriptions and reports but does not effectively serve the demands of an expository genre like literary analysis. This is because literary analysis requires the marshalling of an argument. If we consider information structure, it is clear how difficult it is to develop an argument with a

constant pattern. In a constant pattern, what tend to be expressed are qualities about the

subject that is thematically prominent (in this case Lear and Cordelia). The Given is,

therefore, mostly static, and New information is systematically added to it. Represented

in another way, we can see the information presented about Lear and Cordelia in Figure

3.7 as:

Lear	Cordelia
• loved all his daughters • never realized how much [he loved them] • had to deal with their [his daughters'] cruelty • asked how much each loved him when dividing his kingdom • never contemplated the true meaning of Cordelia's answer of "nothing" • was a proud man • could only blame himself • was actually the fool • overcomes his insolence too late • realizes that "nothing" Cordelia could say would change the love he had for her • already knew [her love for him] was there	• was the apple of his eye • was much different from her sister • was gone • was dismissed

Table 3.2. New information presented in clausal Rhemes.

It needs to be stressed here that there is nothing flawed about this kind of pattern.

It is grammatically cohesive and coherent. And, as stated above, it is the norm for certain

genres. Additionally, this pattern is present in limited clusters in most writing.

Successful literary analysis, however, also utilizes other patterns. In particular, a

Rhematic element may be picked up as a Theme in a following clause as happens several

times in the example below (Figure 3.8). This kind of Rheme-to-Theme pattern (e.g.,

clause 1 Rhematic *Marlow* (sic) → clause 2 Thematic *he*; clause 2 Rhematic *Intended* →

clause 3 Thematic *she*; etc.) is obviously not applied rigidly or mechanistically. It does,

however, illustrate how such patterns help strands of an argument develop and cohere.

1   Misery, depression, and horror consume Marlow

2   *until* he makes his final journey to visit the Intended of Kurtz.

3   *When* she asks Marlow

4   what Kurtz's dying words were,

5   he lies.

6   The lie is important

7   *because* Marlow, before the investigation of Kurtz had remarked

8   *that* lies possessed "a taint of death and a flavor of mortality."

Figure 3.8. A sample text broken down into clauses illustrating a Theme-to-Rheme pattern. The Themes of the clauses are identified as follows: [   ] = Theme; [   ] = marked Theme; underline = predicated Theme; *italics* = textual Theme; [[   ]] = rankshifted clause (i.e., a clause that is functioning as something other than a clause, one that has changed rank).

If we think about information structure, the reasons for this are clear. As in the linear pattern, when Theme + Rheme function in progressive reciprocation, Given + New are similarly transformed though the succession of clauses:

$$Given_1 \quad + \quad New_1$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$Given_2 \quad + \quad New_2$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$Given_3 \quad + \quad New_3$$
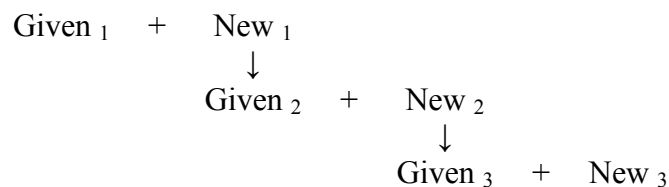
Whatever argument the writer is making can be carried forward fairly efficiently in this way. When the Theme and, likewise, Given are constant, however, New information is not regenerated but is stacked clause by clause as part of the Rheme. As previously stated, this is a useful organizational principle for genres that are intensively descriptive. And as also mentioned, most writing has a series of clauses with constant Themes. However, literary essays that have a constant Theme progression as the dominant structural pattern are far more likely to be judged as repetitive or reductive.

In addition to the Thematic pattern—the ways in which Themes relate to one another in order to structure information or develop arguments—the very nature of the Themes themselves also distinguishes more successful analytical essays from less

successful ones. In the sample paragraph, most of the Themes are simple and concrete; they primarily refer to characters in the play—Lear and Cordelia. In literary analysis, it is certainly common to have characters appear as Themes or sentence subjects. However, it is important for student writers to develop facility with complex, abstract and marked Themes, as well as lexically dense sentence subjects (Anderson 1993; Christie 2002b; MacDonald 1992, 2002). Abstraction is necessary in order to write about ideas, a critical component of literary analysis and other academic genres; complexity and lexical density allow the writer to compact a great deal of information into a single clause; and markedness "foreground[s] the writer's attitude toward the subject under consideration" and conveys "the emotive characteristics of a text" (Anderson 1993: 156). In the sample essay, there are no marked Themes. However, the writer has composed two Themes that are more abstract, complex and lexically dense than the others, the Themes of clauses 13 and 15:

> 13 The irony behind his stay in the wilderness...
> 15 ...and the sickening and false flattery of his two other daughters...

These two Themes indicate the writer of this paragraph has an, at least, inchoate sense of this feature and is making an attempt at mimicking it.

One last Thematic feature that is indicative of the writer's facility with academic registers is the sample essay's use of conjunctive resources, which manifests in the textual Themes. Conjunctive resources function to logically link segments of discourse as chronological events, contrastive examples, additive series, cause-and-effect sequences, etc. (Martin and Rose 2007). The predominant conjunctive resource used in the sample paragraph is *and*, which appears as a textual Theme six times. *And*, generally, serves an additive function (though it can also serve to chronologically sequence events, primarily

in spoken registers). It is a very common and useful conjunctive resource, and, certainly, there is nothing surprising about finding it in an academic essay. However, its frequency in this example, particularly in combination with the prevalence of the constant Theme pattern, reinforces the overall impression of this paragraph as largely descriptive and its information aggregated rather than sequenced. Other conjunctive resources that the writer uses are chronological like *when* and *until*. Like the use of *and*, there is nothing unusual about finding conjunctions of time in a literary analysis essay, since literary analysis sometimes necessitates the retelling of plot events. However, the appearance of these resources together with the absence of consequential conjunctions (e.g., *because*, *therefore*, *nevertheless*, *in conclusion*) and the very limited use of comparative conjunctions (three uses of the contrastive *but*, but no others like *for example*, *similarly*, *rather than*, etc.) again illustrate the sample's tendency toward recounting and away from analyzing or arguing.

As the above example demonstrates, the examination of register features like conjunctive resources, information structure, and Thematic patterns, markedness and complexity can yield significant information about students' academic writing— describing how a text navigates academic language and how a text adheres to or breaks with the practices that facilitate meaning-making in particular writing situations. As part of this study, examples of students' written work are analyzed for both contrastive and register features. This analysis shows how students respond to the exigencies of StE, in general, and academic writing, in particular. Together with the interview data, the textual data provide a robust picture of students' linguistic negotiations in school. The analysis of these data sources guides some of the decisions in the design and evaluation phases of

the curricular development, informing, therefore, both the original authoring of the curriculum and the eventual revision of the curriculum, as well.

3.8   VIDEO DATA

During the implementation of the curriculum, the classroom was videotaped. The taping was done by a single, stationary camera with a wide-angle lens in the back of the room. This set-up precluded the need for a dedicated camera operator. The teacher or a student simply turned the camera on at the beginning of a lesson and off when the lesson concluded. Thus, I was not present during most of the tapings, which allowed the class to proceed more organically without the outside presence of a researcher. The center of the camera's focus was predominantly the teacher; however, the broad perspective of the lens captured all of the students in most cases. The desks in the classroom were configured in a horseshoe, so some students are filmed from the side, while others from the back. Because there was no fixed seating arrangement, and because the lessons sometimes take place in different rooms, the visibility of individual students varies. At least once a month, the tapes were collected and digitized. During the digitization process, the tapes were also viewed for the first time and the first analytical notes were taken. After all the tapes were collected and digitized, they were imported into qualitative analysis software for coding.

The software used for the coding and transcription of data is Transana. Transana enables a researcher to manage a large video corpus and to simultaneously work with audio, video and text. After video has been imported into Transana, clips can be created and coded. In addition, multiple transcripts can be recorded and synchronized to the relevant audio and video. Thus, one transcript can be written describing the physical and

gestural events taking place in a classroom, while another can record synchronous

discourse events, for example, as Mavrou, Douglas and Lewis (2007) do in their study.

Like the Mavrou, Douglas and Lewis study, this one takes advantage of Transana's

multiple transcript capabilities. One transcript is a narrative summary; it simply

describes events as they take place in the classroom. It is from this transcript that

relevant interactions are identified, clips created and codes assigned. Then, a second

rendering of a coded clip is authored, this one transcribing the discourse according to

Jeffersonian conventions.[2] Each coded clip, therefore, is synchronized to two transcripts,

as the sample shows in Table 3.3.

Narrative Summary	Discourse Transcript

	Teacher: What's number two?
	Student A: [Don't.]
	Student B: [Don't.]
	Student C: Didn't=
	Student D: =Didn't.
	Student A: I put don't=
	Student E: =I didn't want to rap [for you anyway.]
	Student C: [I put didn't]
	Student F: Yeah.
	The class reviews the answer to (2.0)
	the second question. Some Student E: Oh it could be [don't]
	students think that *don't* should Student G: [Didn't.]
	substitute for *ain't*, while others Student C: Or didn't.
	argue that *didn't* should Student F: I- uh- oh yeah (#) I put- I put didn't=
	substitute. The teacher settles Student G: =Didn't sound better.
	on both as appropriate answers. Student C: Yeah.
	   Teacher: I ain't want to rap for you anywa::y.
	   Student D: Ain't don't [xxx.]
	   Student E: [I] *don't* want to rap for you anyway=
	   Student F: =But that=
	   Student A: =I don't want to rap for you anyway ((voice
	                  rising)).
	   Student H: That's how he [didn't.]
	   Student F: [Yeah.]
	   Teacher: Right. I don't or I didn't. (1.9) Either one?

Table 3.3. An example of the two transcripts synchronized to a single, coded video clip.

The coding and analysis of the video adheres to two basic principles: 1) that video

is not in itself data but a source of data, which necessitates a selection framework and

process and 2) that the process of data selection and analysis is an emergent one requiring

multiple viewings and choices informed by the guiding research questions and patterns of

events determined to be salient by virtue of their illustrative or explanatory power (Derry

et al. 2007; Erickson 2006). As one of its central questions, this research proposes to

examine the teacher's management of curricular content—how she negotiates the

curricular implementation without any specific in-service training or intervention.

During the data mining process, a pattern of events shedding light on this question

emerged that is particularly informative and rich: events in which the teacher and

students interact with the curricular content and wrestle with new ways of understanding

and making meaning with language. Some of these interactions further the goals of the

curriculum, while other work against them. A coding scheme, then, was developed that

divides the coded events into two groups, Curricular Achievements and Curricular

Impediments:

Table 3.4. A list of the codes used in the discovery and analysis of video data.

Curricular Achievements	Description	Example
Clarifying	Teacher talks explicitly about code-switching.	During a lesson, the teacher repeatedly refers to a nonstandard pronoun paradigm as a "pattern," and encourages the students to "switch patterns."
Extending	Teacher connects the lesson content to the students' own practices.	In the discussion of habitual *be*, a student states that he uses it. The teacher responds that she heard him use it at the beginning of class and asks him to recall what he was saying and why he used habitual *be*.
Scaffolding	Teacher connects the lesson content to earlier lessons.	The teacher asks students to remember their work with verb paradigms when they begin work on pronouns.
Weaving	Teacher connects the lesson content to other school work.	The teacher uses examples from their last writing assignment to exemplify the need for conjunctive resources.

Curricular Impediments	Description	Example
Countering	Teacher reinforces prescriptive attitudes.	The teacher refers to the dialogue in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* as "not proper."
Forestalling	Teacher closes off potentially productive talk.	A study brings up "y'all" in their discussion of second person pronouns, but the teacher does not respond.
Misinterpreting	Teacher misrepresents or misunderstands content in the curriculum.	The teacher misidentifies the Theme as the sentence subject.
Overlooking	Teacher misses an opportunity to reinforce or extend the content of the lesson.	The students talk about "don't" and "didn't" as substitutes for "ain't." However, the teacher fails to clarify the difference.

This coding system is related to the "manifest content" approach of discovering and analyzing video data—an approach that looks primarily at subject matter content as it is manifest in classroom talk (Erickson 2006). Although as Erickson notes (2006), manifest content can, in certain instances, seemingly ignore some of the complexities of sociolinguistic interaction, because this portion of the study is using the video-derived data to focus narrowly on the teacher's management of content and some of the implications of that management, there is a clear theoretical warrant to employ a manifest-content-oriented method. It is additionally important to note that the coding system used here is not a strict manifest-content approach, per se, but is an adaptation. That is the coding system is designed to look not at all content-related events, but only at particular ones. Specifically, it codes events in which the teacher, in interactions with her students, is trying to understand, represent or make meaning with the new tools and approaches of the curriculum. This coding would pass over, for example, moments in which the teacher is reading directions or presenting declarative information, but would include events in which the class tries to work out pronoun paradigms or determine whether or not a speaker who uses *ain't* sounds uneducated. Finally, the system codes

not only events (content that is manifest) but also some *non*events (content that fails to manifest). Two of the Curricular Impediments, Forestalling and Overlooking, code, in essence, lost teaching and learning opportunities—in the first case because the teacher actively halts or obstructs classroom talk and in the second because the teacher does not productively guide a topic initiated by students.

In the data discovery and analysis process, each relevant event is assigned only one code. The main purpose in designating a single code, rather than multiple ones, is to clarify the presentation and discussion of the results. Transana enables different representations of data. For example, it can tabulate a simple frequency count of coded events occurring during a lesson:

Curricular Achievements	Occurrences
Clarifying	5
Extending	2
Scaffolding	1
Weaving	2
Total	10

Curricular Impediments	Occurrences
Countering	1
Forestalling	1
Misinterpreting	1
Overlooking	2
Total	5

Table 3.5. A sample of coded event frequency during a lesson.

Transana can also generate maps illustrating the occurrence of coded events across the timeline of an instructional period (see Figure 3.9 below). In the discussion of the results, both of these representations, the tabulation and the map, provide important information about trends and patterns of events. If, however, multiple codes were to be assigned to a single event, these patterns and trends could be distorted, giving a more optimistic or pessimistic picture of the curricular implementation.
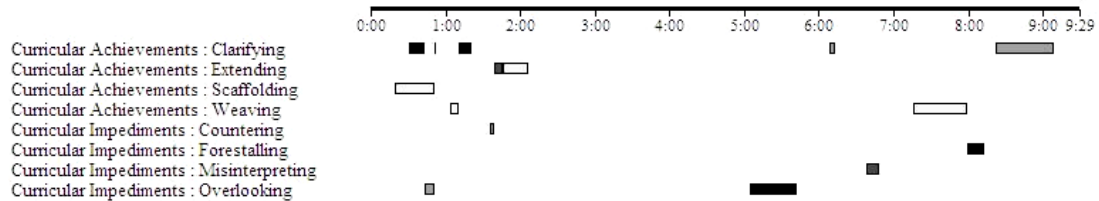
Figure 3.9. A sample of a coded event map illustrating interactions as they occur during the implementation of a lesson.

Trends and patterns must, however, be interpreted with some caution. Simply because Achievements may outnumber Impediments (as they do in the above example) or Impediments may outnumber Achievements, tallies by themselves can not be taken as evidence that the curricular implementation was either a success or a failure. In fact, the very names of the two analytical categories (Achievements and Impediments) were selected in lieu of names like "Successes" or "Failures" because an event that is identified as an Impediment suggests that the coded event impeded the furtherance of the curricular goals but not that the teacher and students "failed" or that no productive learning was taking place. Conversely, an event coded as an Achievement suggests that the teacher and students interacted in such a way that furthers the goals of the curriculum but not that everyone in the classroom learned the targeted material or that the lesson was a "success."

Consider, for example, the event presented in Table 3.3, which is summarized:

The class reviews the answer to the second question. Some students think that *don't* should substitute for *ain't*, while others argue that *didn't* should substitute. The teacher settles on both as appropriate answers.

The interaction takes place when the students are reviewing their answers to an activity that has asked them to code-switch "ain't" in the example "I ain't want to rap for you anyway" (which is from a song lyric). The students debate rather vigorously whether "don't" or "didn't" is the correct answer. The event is coded as Overlooking because the

teacher does not attempt to help the students unpack the difference between the two proposed answers. How would one answer versus the other change the meaning of the sentence? Is there a way that they could figure out what the answer is by looking at more of the song? Why do some students think that *didn't* should substitute and others *don't*? The debate, in fact, is probably arising because not all the students in the classroom are users of the same variant. The teacher, however, does not do anything to facilitate the conversation, and, in the end, the students do not seem satisfied with the teacher's final decision that both answers are acceptable. Thus, this interaction represents a Curricular Impediment. However, this identification does not mean that the teacher's response was wholly inapt or that the interaction was not pedagogically productive. If, as it appears in this case, the teacher does not have the expertise to clarify a linguistic variable, it is the practical, even preferred, strategy to allow students to assume the role of experts. In this particular interaction, students take up that role rather enthusiastically. During this class period, eleven students were present and eight of those weigh in on the debate— indicating a high level of engagement. It should not be overlooked, too, that the answer the teacher ultimately settles on is a correct one.

As the preceding example illustrates, the coding of events, the frequency of events and the chronological mapping of events can suggest salient trends but conclusions based on those trends must be supported by careful analysis of the discourse. Thus, the discussion of the video data includes not just the presentation of tabulations and frequency maps, but also the discourse analysis of illustrative interactions. This analysis examines how the teacher and her students negotiate the new ways they are being encouraged to think about language and make meaning. In addition, the other data

sources, the interviews and compositions, are also included in the discussion of the implementation phase to further warrant claims prompted by the video data. Together, the coded data supported by the discourse analysis of representative events, the interviews and the compositions provide a robust qualitative account of the curricular implementation.

3.9   STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY DESIGN

This research investigates several understudied areas in educational linguistics. First, it provides a detailed look at a grammar/language curriculum that adopts a sociolinguistic orientation. Second, it represents an attempt to integrate dialect and register instruction into a single curriculum. Finally, it presents a detailed qualitative analysis of the implementation of a language curriculum, focusing on the teacher's negotiation of unfamiliar content and the ways in which she and her students make meaning in relation with that content. This qualitative analysis provides a possible model for other research at the intersection of linguistics and education.

The array of data sources—interviews, students' compositions and video—amply informs the curricular design process and the analysis of the curricular implementation. In particular, the scheme of discovering and coding video data, enhanced by the Transana's analytical tools, is tailored to precisely describe and explicate the processes, challenges and accomplishments of teaching and learning within the framework of linguistically informed instruction. The picture that emerges from the analysis will be useful for any future initiatives or interventions that propose greater attention to grammar and language in schools in order to improve the educational outcomes for speakers of nonstandard varieties of English.

What this study does not provide is any statistical measure of students' writing. One logistical hurdle complicating the pursuit of statistical measures was the existence of only one senior class at the research site and, thus, no available control group. Other, theoretical considerations, however, also motivated a qualitative, versus quantitative, approach to the research questions. First, as noted in the previous chapter, the measure typically used to assess progress in student writing (i.e., token counting) is not particularly reliable. In addition, the length of study (one school-year) is a rather short period of time in the development of student writers. Therefore, rather than measuring success in decreasing dialect features, this study demonstrates the success of the curriculum in other ways: in its implementability, in the engagement of the students, in the changing linguistic attitudes of the teacher and her students and in the students' evolving facility with academic language. The next two chapters now turn to the design of the curriculum and the analysis of its implementation.

CHAPTER 3 NOTES

[1] A community of practice is a social grouping formed around a purpose or performing a particular kind of work (whether social, economic, political, etc.). Lave and Wenger (1991) propose that situated learning occurs in the context of a community of practice. Novice learners begin at the periphery of a community of practice. Then, as they engage the culture of the community and gain experience with its knowledge and procedures, they move to the center and assume the role of experts.

[2] The conventions are as follows:

[It's actually]	Brackets indicate overlap
=Well, she's, okay.	Equals sign indicates latching
°She likes being different	Degree sign indicates quieter speech
It's not *bad*	Italics indicates emphasis
.,	Period or comma indicates falling intonation
?	Question mark indicates rising intonation
(#)	Number sign indicates a pause of less than a second
(1.3)	Numbers in parentheses indicate length of pause longer than a second
pro::ve	Colon(s) indicates lengthening of the previous sound

CHAPTER 4

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GRAMMAR CURRICULUM
FOR CODE-SWITCHING, COMPOSITION AND LANGUAGE STUDY

The development of the curriculum followed the ADDIE model of instructional

design. This chapter discusses the first three phases of this process (analysis, design and

development) while Chapter 5 analyzes the final two phases (implementation and

evaluation). In this chapter, the discussion will cover the design considerations and

features of the curriculum including those intended to facilitate implementability (e.g.,

the length of the lesson modules and the inclusion of background materials for teachers),

heighten student engagement (e.g., the use of real-world textual examples) and integrate

the curriculum with the existing work of the classroom (e.g., the use of literary examples

and the focus on academic writing). Prior to an examination of these features, it is useful

to discuss first the most significant innovation of the curriculum—the attempt to integrate

dialect and register instruction—as well as how and why such integration became a

central concern of the research.

4.1   ISSUES OF DIALECT AND REGISTER IN THE EXISTING CURRICULUM

The first step I took in the analysis phase of the instructional design was to review

the existing English curriculum at Capitol High. As noted in the previous chapter, much

of the curriculum is conventionally focused on literature and literary analysis. The one

noteworthy departure from traditional curricular design is stated in the first of the

school's six goals: Using Standard Formal English. It is a departure not in its aim—

certainly English classrooms as a rule privilege standard English—but in its explication

of that aim. The module that was developed for realizing this goal is titled "The Art of

Language" and has two strands. One strand has students eliminate the use of the first

person in their academic writing. The other has students situationally adapt their

linguistic style. In this second strand, style is presented to students as varying in its

degree of formality. Students, then, are asked to judge the level of formality of particular

social situations and modify their language accordingly. For example, the Goal 1

assessment presents the following segment of dialogue between a job candidate and an

interviewer:

> Candidate: Good morning, Mr. Black. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to interview for this position.
>
> *Interviewer: Yo, yo, yo, homie. I'm straight crunked-up 'dat you here, dog!*
>
> Candidate: Great.
>
> *Interviewer: A'ight then. Les' git on it. Why you want 'dis gig? Nah'mean? Son real edumacated and e'rything, but fo'real do' what you got 'dat we need?*

First, students are to identify the language of the italicized speaker as extremely informal,

informal, neutral, formal, or extremely formal. Second, they are to determine if the

language of the italicized speaker is appropriate for the given situation and explain their

response. Finally, if they deem the speaker's language inappropriate, they are to rewrite

it to a suitable level of formality.

Clearly, the language of the Interviewer is intended to be identified as extremely

informal. The representation of the Interviewer's language, however, is a mixture of

orthographic approximations of AAE phonology (e.g., *dat*), phonological insertion (e.g.,

edumacated), lexical items particular to the hip hop register (e.g., *crunked-up*) and

grammatical features of AAE (e.g., the zero copula in "you here"). By this model, then, the movement from "informality" to "formality" involves both a shift in dialect and a shift in register. The mechanics of these concomitant shifts are not explained at all, however; thus, performing them is left to the students' own instincts. In this particular case, performing the necessary transformations may seem trivial. Students are unlikely to perceive *dat*, *edumacated* or *crunked-up* as part of either the standard dialect or the academic register (though the zero copula in "you here" and the interrogative form in "Why you want..." may be less obvious).

The only linguistic feature that is considered explicitly as part of Capitol High's language unit (which is not to say that individual teachers do not consider others independently) is the use of the first person pronoun. Students are taught to avoid the first person pronoun in their compositions. There certainly is not anything unusual about such an admonition as it is standard practice in the teaching of composition in secondary schools.

Original Paragraph	Suggested Revision
I really like this poem for a few reasons. One reason I enjoy "When I Die" is because Nikki Giovanni deals with death, a topic some people are so afraid of. Another reason I like this poem is because she is really hones about her feelings. When she says, "I hope no one who ever hurt me cries," I can understand and appreciate her feelings. It seems like people sometimes treat others badly while they are living, but when they are no longer here, they are sad, crying and sorrowful. I think love and joy should be shared while people are alive. This is one of the lessons I am trying to follow.	This poem is likeable for a few reasons. One reason is because "When I die" deals with death, something people are afraid of. Another reason this poem is likeable is because the poet's feelings seem honest. The line "I hope no one who ever hurt me cries" shows the poet's feelings. It seems like people treat others badly while they are living, but when they are no longer here, they are sad, crying, and sorrowful. Love and joy should be shared while people are alive. That is an important life lesson.

Figure 4.1. A guide suggesting stylistic revisions so that students might avoid using the first person in their writing.

The use (or non-use) of the first person in academic writing is clearly not a dialect feature; it could, however, be considered as a register feature (because it is related to tenor). And as it is something of a flexible convention, it might even seem a little odd that its elimination warrants such a prominent role in the school's curriculum. Some of the assignments related to this part of the language module suggest that, much like the style-switching strand discussed previously, the teachers are attempting to prompt the students to do multiple linguistic tasks in encouraging the students to eliminate the use of the first person. The scoring guide for the assessment on avoiding the first person illustrates this range of manipulations (see Figure 4.1 above). One manipulation that the students must master to successfully accomplish this revision is changing verb types and subjects. The first three sentences all require transforming Mental Processes into Relational ones (note that the latter is one of Christie's (2002b) six features). The first sentence also requires making a verb object its subject (as one would do in making a passive construction), which also changes the clause's Theme from *I* to *This poem*, a logical point of departure for both the clause and the paragraph given the focus of literary analysis. Students also must have some control over endophoric reference. The final sentence, for example, invites students to use an appropriate demonstrative pronoun. Such manipulations suggest that the elimination of the first person is being used as a proxy for a variety of concomitant alterations. It is worth noting, too, that this sample clearly exhibits the sort of ethical judgment that is so common to writing about literature in secondary schools. The register features of ethical judgment in academic writing may be puzzling to some students since they conduct ethical judgments in other, spoken registers.

From the analysis of the existing curriculum at Capitol High, then, it became clear that the school in its instruction was attempting to prompt students to use features of both a preferred dialect and a preferred register. Yet, none of the instructional materials directly explained to students how to perform the linguistic manipulations that they were being asked to make. If anything, the existing materials made the desired performance confusing by conflating features or providing an incomplete picture of what was actually being asked of students.

4.2   CODE-SWITCHING AT CAPITOL HIGH

In the analysis phase of the instructional design, the next step was conducting interviews with teachers and students in order to understand teachers' perceptions of students' language use, their goals for students' linguistic outcomes, students' perceptions of their own language practices and their goals for themselves. One of the interviewees, an African American woman in her late twenties, was an administrator who had been at the Capitol High campus since in opened in 2004 and also served as a teacher in the English department. Early in the interview I ask about her students' strengths as users of language in school. Her response is both specific and somewhat surprising:

> Well, I do think our students are able to code-switch. (#) Um, (#) and they'll do it when pushed or made to. They won't do it (#) without being asked to.

Her assertion calls into question the need for any linguistically informed curriculum. If, indeed, students have the ability to code-switch, then grammatical facility is not at issue. The questions, instead, would be related to the tension between the privileging of standard English in the school and the students' linguistic autonomy: why might students want to code-switch other than to appease their teachers, in what situations should

students code-switch and, if they are reluctant, should they be "pushed or made to"?

Upon interviewing the students, however, it soon became clear that the teacher's

assessment of her students' linguistic facilities was somewhat mistaken.

In one of the intake interviews, for example, I ask a female student who was

completing her first year at Capitol High to describe her successes with writing at school.

She responds:

> When it be interesting topics and stuff to write about it be easier to do. If it's
> something that you really like (#) if you get a broad topic that you can really talk
> about (#).

The two instances of habitual *be* (*it be interesting* and *it be easier*) in this short example

are indicative of the student's overall use of AAE in the interview. Given the context of

the interview (my whiteness, age, lack of established relationship with the students at this

early stage, introduction to the students as a "university researcher," the location of the

interview at the school and the interview topic), one might expect that the social

conditions would prompt the student to code-switch into StE (Rickford and McNair-

Knox 1994), yet she does not. Certainly, the absence of code-switching in this instance

does not confirm that the student cannot code-switch. It does, however, at least prompt

some uncertainty regarding the teacher's assessment of the students' code-switching

practices, uncertainty that is only heightened in subsequent interviews. Early in the

second intake interview, for example, I asked a student if he talks differently at school

than he does with his friends. He answers:

> In class I be like more respectable cause the teacher there, (#) and I talk kind of
> proper. (#) But when I get out with my friends I just talk normal.

As in the previous excerpt, the student here uses habitual *be* (*I be more*), as well as the

zero-copula (*the teacher there*). This brief example is indicative of this interviewee's,

like the first one's, use of AAE throughout the conversation. The third interview, too, reveals the same phenomenon. When I ask the student what she finds difficult about academic writing, she replies:

> We be having to write five-page essays and (#) I mean no matter how hard we try, (#) we think th- that words that we using is helping us wri- (#) It do help us but we have misspelled words or we not using that word in a- in that right senses so it comes out to be wrong [[laughing]].

Again, the student does not code-switch in the interview as the teacher's comments suggest that she might.

One possible explanation for the lack of evidence of code-switching in the students' interviews is that the context of the interview, though generically motivating the production of more standard features, was not so motivating in these particular cases. Some of the statements of the third interviewee, however, suggest that this explanation might not be an entirely satisfactory one. In one segment of her interview, she explains that she changes her language use in class and in the presence of teachers. She then adds:

> You also got to watch it when you out in the public too, (#) cause when you around adults regardless.

In other words, she perceives that adults in public spaces—even those she does not know—are likely evaluators of her language, and thus a salient social factor that prompts her to alter her language use. My own adultness, then—even disregarding other social signifiers like my race and the interview setting—is a salient social signal, for this student anyway, to "watch it."

A difference between the students' oral and written production of standard features offers a potential alternative explanation. Certainly, speaking and writing are different, if related, linguistic processes. Writing is more conscious and recursive, and

just as Sims (1975) makes the case that a student does not need to speak StE in order to read it, one might similarly argue that a student need not speak StE in order to write it. Analysis of the students' pre-intervention writing samples provides insight into the possibility that students more actively engage in written, rather than spoken, code-switching. That analysis, which includes samples from all students in the participating class, shows that the students use StE more consistently in their writing than in the interviews with the three participants. None of the student participants code-switches entirely into StE during their interviews, while slightly less than half of the intake writing samples evidence AAE features. There may be factors other than the students' facilities with code-switching contributing to the increased use of StE in their writing, however. The samples were recent writing assignments that the students had completed for the class. Some of the students had participated in drafting processes and worked with tutors, so there is no way to tell whether the appearance of StE in a given essay is the product of a student's own linguistic choices or the result of outside editorial influence. Still, the writing samples suggest two conclusions. First, that the students are, indeed, more aware of, and adept at, code-switching in their writing than they are in their speech. Second, that many students, nonetheless, do only limited code-switching in their writing. For example, Figure 4.2 below presents a sample student essay in which the student analyzes the poem "The Whipping" by Robert Hayden.[1] In the essay, the student deploys a variety of AAE features: for example, existential *it* (twice in line 1, line 4), habitual *be* (line 2), zero-copula (line 5), unmarked third person (line 7) and unmarked possessive (line 9). Other writing samples exhibit these as well as other AAE features such as:

- Unmarked past tense: *If someone **ask** me about this poem I would tell them that the poem is a great poem.*

- Emphatic *to do*: *...he/she **don't** want anything to come near them that will harm them.*
- Multiple negation: *This country **does not have no one** here that is a native here except the Indians...*

1	The whipping is a poem with anger but at the same time its discipline. It's a lady beating a
2	boy again. Again because the boy probably be in a situation that he was not listening or pay
3	attention or talking back to the lady in a manner which she don't deserve. The lady is
4	shouting to the neighborhood her reason for beating the boy and it's a good reason. And his
5	wrongs she is beating out of him. He crying out loud trying to plea his case to cover up what
6	he did and talk her out from beating him. But in spite of what he is trying to defend she
7	pursues to corner him and continue to beat him. "She strikes and strikes the shrilly circling
8	boy till the stick breaks in her hand His tears are rainy weather to woundlike memories." I
9	can relate to that because I remember me getting beat with a stick and it breaking in mother
10	hand or on my back, because I did something wrong or being disrespectful that's her
11	goodness and my wrongs coming out. And wouldn't stop crying because of the pain and I
12	wanted her to feel sorry for me. "Works could bring the face that I no longer knew or loved."
13	As in words he probably said something wrong to his mother and she didn't like it and
14	thought what he said wasn't appropriate. What he said or done she never seen him act like
15	that or say something so that she won't believe he said it. So that the person at that time
16	she didn't even know that's why the stick broke in her hand of madness. Now it's over the
17	boy and the boy sobs in his room with guilt he felt.

Figure 4.2. A pre-intervention sample of student writing.

In light of the evidence from the students' writing, as well as the interviews, therefore, it would appear that the teacher's assertion about the students' code-switching is mistaken. Yet, in their interviews, the students themselves express awareness, similar to the teacher's assertion, that the language they use at school is different from the language they use in their peer groups. The first interviewee indicates that there is some difference in her language, depending on the situational context:

> The way I talk at home probably be more slang and stuff. When I at school it probably be more educational.

The second interviewee echoes this assessment in his own metalinguistic awareness, suggesting that his language at school is more "respectable" and "proper" than the language he uses with his friends, which is "normal." The third interviewee, too, expresses a similar understanding of her situational language use:

When we in school we got to watch what- (#) what words that we say in front of the teachers and some of the people that come (#) to see the school see how nice it is. Then it's like when you with your friends you can use those languages.

On the one hand, it seems fairly clear that the teacher's assessment of the students' code-switching practices does not match the available evidence.[2] On the other hand, it is equally clear that the students, like the teacher, construe their language practices to adapt to the communicative context. In fact, the students are rightly recognizing their linguistic adaptivity, and the teacher is wrong only in her naming of the phenomenon, not in her essential awareness that her students adapt their language. Although the students do not fully code-switch into StE during the interviews, they construe a shift in their language toward greater formality, which is understood and marked, in part, by a reduction in their use of slang. The move to formality is realized by a shift in registers of AAE, rather than a full switch into StE. In addition, analysis of the students' writing demonstrates that, even in those compositions that manifest less code-switching, the students are register-shifting—they are tying to mimic academic language and make use of formal linguistic features.

4.3 FORMAL AND INFORMAL REGISTERS IN STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING

Abstract concepts like formality can be elucidated using systematic analyses of register features like Thematic structure. To facilitate such analysis, like the sample text presented in the previous chapter (Figure 3.7), the student's essay (Figure 4.2) can be separated into its constituent clauses. The deconstructed text appears in Figure 4.3 below. In this form, it is easier to see some features that show the student aspiring to more formal registers. In addition, we can also see how the student's gestures toward

formality are sometimes countered by his deployment of less formal features associated

with spoken registers.

Figure 4.3. A sample text broken down into clauses. The Themes of the clauses are identified as follows: ☐ = Theme; ☐ = marked Theme; underline = predicated Theme; *italics* = textual Theme; [[ ]] = rankshifted clause (i.e., a clause that is functioning as something other than a clause, one that has changed rank). Highlighting = a quotation.[3]

1   The whipping is a poem with anger

2   *but at the same time* it's <u>discipline</u>.

3   It's <u>a lady beating a boy again</u>.

4   *Again because* the boy probably be in a situation [[that he was not listening or pay attention or talking back to the lady in a manner which she don't deserve.]]

5   The lady is shouting to the neighborhood her reason for beating the boy

6   *and* it's <u>a good reason</u>.

7   *And* his wrongs <u>she</u> is beating out of him.

8   He crying out loud trying to plea his case to cover up [[what he did and talk her out from beating him.]]

9   *But in spite of* what <u>he</u> is trying to defend

10 she pursues to corner him

11 *and* continue to beat him.

12 "She strikes and strikes the shrilly circling boy

13 *till* the stick breaks in her hand

14 His tears are rainy weather to woundlike memories."

15 I can relate to that

16 *because* I remember

17 me getting beat with a stick

18 *and* it breaking in mother hand or on my back,

19 *because* I did something wrong or being disrespectful

20 that's her goodness and my wrongs coming out.

21 *And* wouldn't stop crying because of the pain

22 *and* I wanted her to feel sorry for me.

23 "Works could bring the face [[that I no longer knew or loved."]]

24 *As in* words he probably said something wrong to his mother

25 *and* she didn't like it

26 *and* thought

27 what [[he said]] wasn't appropriate.

28 What [[he said or done]] she never seen

29 him act like that or say something

30 so that she won't believe

31 he said it.

32 So that the person at that time she didn't even know

33 that's why the stick broke in her hand of madness.

34 Now it's over the boy

35 and the boy sobs in his room with guilt he felt.

The first two clauses illustrate the student's use of academic register features. The student thematizes the title of the poem in the first clause (a common strategy in literary analysis) and uses the relational process verb *to be* in order to establish a judgment about the poem (that it communicates "anger"). Then, in the second clause, the student uses a textual Theme (*but at the same time*) to create a judgment that contrasts with and qualifies the first (that in addition to "anger," the poem also communicates "discipline"). The use of the conjunctive resource *at the same time* is particularly indicative of a more formal, written register, and the student deploys a similar resource again in clause 9 (*in spite of*).

The presence of these features exemplifies some the efforts on the part of the student to adapt to the communicative situation, to be more "educational," "proper" or academic. It addition to the features that are present, one can also point to the absence of others that illustrate the student's attempts to register-shift. In the interviews, the students, like students in other studies (e.g., Brown 2006a; Rex *et al.* 2005), frequently equate peer communication with "slang" and construe slang as counter-indicative of "proper" language. The student's essay in Figure 4.3 exhibits a standard lexicon and an absence of any of the innovative lexical items that a student would likely perceive as slang. Thus, the lexical choices, together with some of the lexicogrammatical ones

described above, illustrate how the student is shifting registers and aspiring to academic

language, though he does not consistently code-switch into StE.

The student's gestures toward academic language, however, are also frequently

offset by other, less formal features. For example, like the sample text discussed in the

previous chapter, this text's Themes tend to be simple, rather than complex, and

emphasize people—characters and the writer himself—but not ideas or other abstractions

(with the exception of clause 7). Additionally, although the writer twice uses conjunctive

resources that suggest his effort to be more "educational," he also relies heavily on *and*

(11 occurrences, not including quotations) and *because* (4 occurrences). Often, his use of

and and *because* evokes spoken registers more than written, academic ones. Consider,

for example his use in clauses 15-19:

15 I can relate to that
16 *because I* remember
17 me getting beat with a stick
18 *and it* breaking in mother hand or on my back,
19 *because I* did something wrong or being disrespectful

In these clauses, the writer is explaining how his personal experiences connect him to the

poem's narrative and Themes. The student's experiences are described in series of

clauses linked by *because* and *and*. Clause 19 is causally linked to clause 17. However,

the paratactically linked clause 18, which also includes coordinated prepositional phrases,

interrupts the logical connection of these clauses. The effect is that of the writer

recounting events as they occur to him and of information being presented in independent

segments—a strategy common to oral registers and a feature in the compositions of some

novice writers (Syrquin 2006).

In addition to its structure, the entire segment of discourse in the previous example comprises an embedded anecdote. The anecdote expresses the writer's affinity for the poem and also implicitly comments on what the writer sees as the poem's central Theme—the justifiability of violence, in some circumstances, in order to carry out necessary discipline. The embedded anecdote is a feature identified by Ball (1995) as a rhetorical strategy common in African American students' compositions and is discussed by Syrquin (2006) as a form of indirection (others include counterlanguage, circumlocution, call and response, innuendos, semantic inversion, instigating, and baited and pointed indirectness). Syrquin (2006: 66) notes that embedded anecdotes, like other forms of indirection, are characteristic of spoken registers realized in African American oral discourse communities and are sometimes used by writers skilled in the "verbal artistry, exaggerated language, spontaneity, and improvisation" of their speech community when shifting to the "direct, planned, and organized" style of expository academic writing.

This rhetorical strategy is again in evidence in lines 4-7 of the sample below (Figure 4.4), in which the student is arguing for the merits of immigration. This sample—written by a female student and one more academically successful than the first—exhibits far fewer AAE features than the first example (there is an unmarked past tense, *use to*, in line 4, though this could also be a phonological artifact since most speakers reduce the back-to-back stops to /justu/ or /justə/). Similar to the previous example, however, the paragraph contains a mixture of register features—some formal some informal, some more orally-based and some more written—in addition to the embedded anecdote.

1	To begin with immigrants contribute to the American society with their hard work. Most
2	Americans don't like to do manual labor but it needs to be done. That's where immigrants
3	come into the picture. They have no problem with doing manual labor because it is
4	something that they are use to. For example my cousin owns his own landscaping company
5	and he said that only about five people of African American descent applied for the job. On
6	the other hand he said that most of the other applicants were Mexicans. He even said that
7	the Mexicans had no problem with working for minimum wage. Immigrants work very hard
8	and for a very low salary. That's one reason why we should not close our borders.

Figure 4.4. A pre-intervention sample of student writing.

In order to facilitate the analysis, we can, as we did before, break this paragraph

down into its constituent clauses (see Figure 4.5 below).

1   To begin with immigrants contribute to the American society with their hard work.

2   Most Americans don't like to do manual labor

3   *but* it needs to be done.

4   That's where immigrants come into the picture.

5   They have no problem with doing manual labor

6   *because* it is something [[that they are use to.]]

7   *For example* my cousin owns his own landscaping company

8   *and* he said

9   *that* only about five people of African American descent applied for the job.

10 *On the other hand* he said

11 *that* most of the other applicants were Mexicans.

12 He even said

13 *that* the Mexicans had no problem with working for minimum wage.

14 Immigrants work very hard and for a very low salary.

15 That's one reason [[why we should not close our borders.]]

Figure 4.5. A sample text broken down into clauses. The Themes of the clauses are identified as follows: ☐ = Theme; ☐ = marked Theme; underline = predicated Theme; *italics* = textual Theme; [[   ]] = rankshifted clause (i.e., a clause that is functioning as something other than a clause, one that has changed rank).

As in the previous sample in which the student analyzes the poem, the student's gestures

to formal, academic writing are evident in some of her choices of conjunctive resources:

To begin with (clause 1), *for example* (clause 7) and *on the other hand* (clause 10). She

also composes a relatively long Theme in clause 9 that clearly represents an effort to

sound academic. However, like the first student, this student, too, frequently chooses compositional strategies—in addition to the embedded anecdote—that seem to demonstrate an uncertain grasp of academic registers. Other than clause 9, for example, most of her Themes are simple and unmarked. There is little nominalization and, again, other than clause 9, no complex nominal groups.

These writing samples, in combination with the interviews, then, shed light on a number of issues complicating students' and teachers' understanding of academic language and students' success in meeting their teachers' expectations. First, it is clear from the school's existing curricular materials and the teachers' statements that the teachers perceive a need for students to adapt their linguistic performance for academic tasks, but the teachers have some uncertainty recognizing the nature of either the required adaptation or the performance. And that uncertainty extends to the students who sense that they change their linguistic performance at school but are only vaguely aware of the linguistic demands of academic tasks. The general uncertainty manifests in a complex interaction of dialect and register. Few students code-switch consistently in their speech. More code-switch in their writing. Most students register-shift but frequently use many spoken and informal register features in their academic writing, regardless of whether or not they code-switch. A number of inter-related objectives, therefore, emerge from the analysis phase of the instructional design:

- Dialect and register features need to be disambiguated for students and teachers, alike.
- Students could benefit from code-switching practice.
- All students, even those who seem to code-switch with greater facility in their writing, need greater awareness of academic register features.

In light of these objectives, one of the primary challenges facing the curricular design is balancing and integrating the presentation of dialect- and register-related content.

4.4   THE QUESTION OF TERMINOLOGY

Before discussing some of the particulars of the curricular design, it is important to address, briefly, the question of the naming in a curriculum like this one that introduces the study of different language varieties. The naming of varieties, particularly historically marginalized ones like AAE, is weighted with past (and, sadly, sometimes present) popular construals of those varieties as broken, degraded or pathological—construals of language inextricable from the social, political and economic prejudices visited upon the speakers of those languages. For example, even within the linguistics community, there is no consensus about what to call AAE. It is sometimes referred to as Black English, African American Vernacular English and African American English. Some scholars, however, find that such appellations emphasize AAE's anglican origins, subordinate AAE to English on a hierarchical linguistic taxonomy and, thus, reflect African Americans' slave history and sociopolitical marginalization. To counter such associations, to emphasize AAE's creole origins and to connect AAE historically and culturally to the African diaspora, some scholars prefer terms like African American Language, African Language System, Black Language or Ebonics. Clearly, participants in the debate view the act of naming as having important social and political stakes.

When the debate moves outside of the academy, as it does in education, to include students, teachers, administrators, parents, politicians and the general public, the nature of that debate becomes, predictably, even more fraught. In addition to historical, technical

and sociocultural considerations, there are pragmatic ones, as well. A term like Ebonics is burdened with the rhetoric surrounding Oakland and its aftermath. Even terms that might seem more benign to linguists, like African American English, can spark controversy and resistance from the stakeholders in schools—from teachers to students to the community at large—because any term correlating race and language is frequently met with suspicion by those outside of linguistics.

Because of the contentiousness of such terms, Wheeler and Swords (2006), for example, suggest avoiding the topic of race altogether and adopt the terms "Formal" and "Informal" to describe the two language varieties that they contrast. They additionally argue that these terms are not only race-neutral, but also value-neutral and, thus, do not evoke the stigmatization insinuated by other possible choices like "Standard" and "Nonstandard." While I both understand and appreciate Wheeler and Swords' argument, I find their particular choice of terminology problematic in light of the previous discussion on register. Since students at Capitol High already appear to shift regularly into formal registers of AAE without fully code-switching into StE, directing students to use "Formal English" when one's objective is facilitate their use of StE creates ambiguity and the potential for frustration. Because one of the stated goals of this study's curriculum is to disambiguate dialects and registers, Wheeler and Swords' choice of terminology is not a fitting one for this curriculum.

In her curriculum, Sweetland (2006) resolves the naming dilemma by using the terms "Everyday English" and "Standard English." As I admire Wheeler and Swords' efforts, I appreciate Sweetland's wish to choose terms that avoid pejorative connotations. However, Sweetland's choice of terminology presents similar problems to Wheeler and

Swords'. Like "Formal" and "Informal," the term "Everyday" collapses distinctions of dialect and register. The registers of church-talk, for example, would not fall into the category of "Everyday English," but may be executed in a variety of Englishes, standard and nonstandard. Conversely, a student's "Everyday English" may very well be carried out in a standard dialect.

In order to maintain a dialect/register distinction, I have chosen to use, in the curriculum, the terms "Standard" and "Nonstandard" for distinguishing dialects and "Formal" and "Informal" when distinguishing registers. However, I acknowledge that this terminology, like the others, is an imperfect solution. I share Wheeler and Swords' and Sweetland's concerns about the stigmatization that could be read into naming a linguistic feature "nonstandard." In the curriculum, I try to combat any pejorative connotations of "nonstandard" by repeatedly emphasizing the logic, systematicity, value and efficacy of all varieties of English, but, clearly, the deep historical and cultural biases against nonstandard varieties and their speakers are not so easily overcome.

4.5 SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The scope and sequence of a curriculum delineates the content and objectives that are incorporated into a collection of lessons (whether in a unit, across units or even across grade-levels) and the sequential development of those lessons. A scope and sequence is an important tool for planning in a classroom, school or district. Authoring a scope and sequence was one of the first tasks in the design phase of the curricular development. The original scope and sequence appears in Figure 4.6.

AIN'T: DISCOVERING THE RULES	
• What does it stand for? • What are the grammatical rules for using *ain't*?	• Students will begin to consider the fact that they make language choices all the time when they speak and write. • They will recognize one of the systematic differences between standard English and other varieties.

AIN'T: SOCIAL USES	
• Do you use it? Where? • Have you ever seen it written? Where? • Is it "slang"? What is slang?	• Students will examine some of the social implications of using *ain't*. • Students will practice critical analysis by examining some basic labeling on dictionary definitions.

STANDARD ENGLISH: WHAT IS IT?	
• Who uses StE? Who doesn't? • Why is there language variation?	• Students will investigate the situational use of language. • Students will begin defining standard English.

CODE-SWITCHING: INTRODUCTION	
• What is a dialect? • What is code-switching? • How does it work with different features?	• Students will begin comparing features of standard and nonstandard English. • They will practice code-switching using features like *ain't*, the zero-copula and reflexive pronouns.

LEXICON: EXPLORING DICTIONARIES	
• What are dictionaries for? • Who makes them? Why? • What would you include in your own dictionary?	• Students will practice identifying parts of speech. • They will become familiar with some of the features of dictionary entries. • They will demonstrate their knowledge by drafting dictionary entries.

VERB TENSES: LOCATING ACTIONS IN TIME	
• What is a verb tense? • What work do they do? • How do we mark person and number?	• Students will practice identifying verb tenses. • Students will identify some uses of the verb *to be*. • They will practice code-switching with features like the unmarked third person singular and habitual *be*.

LANGUGAGE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES: ACADEMIC WRITING	
• How are speech and writing similar? Different? • What is academic writing?	• Students will be able to identify both simple and complex nominal groups. • They will be able to identify Topic and Comment in sample sentences.

ACADEMIC WRITING: EXPLORING ITS FEATURES	
• How do sentences organize information? • How is information connected from sentence to sentence? • How can we make texts "stick together"?	• Students will understand the Known/New Contract. • They will apply their knowledge of the Known/New Contract to predict sentence Topics. • They will practice some organizational principles of academic writing. • They will become familiar with some of the basic properties of conjunctive resources.

The sequence on the far right, top to bottom:

Epitome Lessons → **Building Concepts** → **Guided Practice** → **Expanding Concepts** → **Guided Practice** → **Expanding Concepts** → **Guided Practice** → **Independent Practice**

Figure 4.6. A preliminary scope and sequence. For each thematic grouping, the left column lists some of the guiding questions and the right some of the objectives associated with that theme. Each grouping is abstract; that is, they do not correlate with the number of lessons required to put a theme into practice. The sequence on the far right represents the conceptual elaboration.

The scope and sequence is intended to map an elaboration progression in accordance with the fundamental principles of ETI. The epitome lessons introduce concepts of grammatical systematicity and situational variation. From there, students are invited to critically examine the idea of Standard English and its functions. The next lessons introduce code-switching, weaving together the students' examinations of standard English and the ideas established in the epitome lessons. Students, then, investigate dictionaries. These lessons provide some practical instruction in the features of dictionaries, about which many students are unfamiliar. More importantly, these lessons explore the practice of labeling, thus encouraging students to consider standard and nonstandard distinctions critically. Finally, they engage students with some fundamental technical vocabulary regarding parts of speech that will be useful as the lessons progress. After the dictionary-related lessons, students are provided additional opportunities to practice and review code-switching. At the same time, they examine the functions of verb tense and aspect.

Following the lessons on verbs, the curriculum transitions from contrastive study of dialect variation to the study of register variation with a focus on register features of academic writing. These lessons, therefore, move from analyzing lexical and morphological features to larger constituent structures of texts: phrases and clauses. In these lessons, students begin by identifying nominal groups and are then introduced to basic Theme/Rheme structure. These initial lessons establish some scaffolding for the key register lessons in which students explore strategies for organizing, linking, expanding and contracting information in texts. The curriculum concludes with a look at

the importance of conjunctive resources and the ways in which they logically connect

chunks of information in academic writing.

The scope and sequence of the lessons are designed to achieve a number of

fundamental objectives:

- helping teachers and students recognize the grammatical systematicity of all varieties of English;
- increasing teachers' and students' understanding of basic grammatical concepts;
- developing students' facility with academic language;
- fostering teachers' and students' awareness of language variation across both dialects and registers;
- educating teachers and students about the sources of language authority.

Secondary objectives or objectives for individual lessons, like those listed in the right-

hand column of Figure 4.6, support or advance these broader curricular goals.

4.6   FEATURES OF THE CURRICULUM

Objectives like those listed above are not, of course, achieved in the abstract, but

in classrooms. Instructional design, therefore, must attend not only to conceptual

concerns but also to the pragmatic needs and desires of real teachers, students and

communities. Thus, the curricular design features components intended to address some

of the pragmatic conditions facing implementation. These features include: 1) efficient

support materials, 2) relatively short lessons, 3) the use of literary quotations to illustrate

grammatical features, 4) a focus on academic writing, 5) the inclusion of real-world

examples of grammatical phenomena and 6) the incorporation of real student writing

samples.

Lessons 15-18
Verb Tenses and Subject V

BACKGROUND

As we noted in the introduction to ____ ____ verb
aspect indicates the perception of an action by a speaker (like whether that action is
complete or habitual). It isn't necessary to make such a technical distinction with
students, but it might be useful for students to understand that verbs can indicate both the
time an action takes place and the nature of that action. Such characteristics can be
marked by adding suffixes (in the case of regular verbs), changing forms (in the case of
irregular verbs like *to be* or *to sing*) and adding auxiliaries or modals (like *be, do, have,
can, would, should,* etc.).

Like systems for pro____
across dialects. A change ov____
instead of *–s* in marking the ____
Shakespeare (*O, how this spring of love resembleth/The uncertain glory of an April day*)
and the King James Bible (*...and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart*).
Similarly, verb systems can vary across dialects. For example, some dialects do not use a
suffix to mark the present tense third person singular. Some of the characters in *A Raisin
in the Sun* use this unmarked ending (*Walter Lee say colored people ain't never going to
start getting ahead...*).

We had a glimpse of how verb systems can vary when we looked at *ain't*. Such

Like its name suggests, habitual *be* designates an action that is customary or
regularly repeated. When, in August Wilson's *Fences*, Bono asks, "How you figure **he
be** making out with that **gal be** up at Taylor's all the time..." the verbs imply that his
(Brownie's) efforts with the woman (Alberta) are customary and that Alberta is regularly
at the Taylor's—and Wilson emphasizes the verbs with the adverbial "all the time."
Used in this way, the verb *be* does not imply that either of these actions are going on right
now, in the present moment.

It may be tricky for some students to recognize the difference between habitual *be*
and infinitive *to be*. Habitual *be* takes the form of subject + *be* and is, then, distinct from

Handout 15:1: Verb Tenses

Verbs give readers or listeners a lot of information. Not only can they tell us the nature
of an action or state (whether a person or thing is running or standing, stepping up or
stepping off, go____
time. Verbs ca____
example, show____
quotations. For____
nonstandard. R____
Then circle the let____

1. From "Me, Myself and I" by Beyoncé:
   I'm gonna be my own best friend
   In the preceding quotation, the verb indicates an action that
   a. is happening in the present (present tense).
   b. happened in the past and is continuing in the present (present perfect tense).
   c. will happen in the future (future tense).

2. From "Ballot or Bullet" by Malcolm X:
   ...if some enemy hadn't kidnapped you and brought you here.
   In the preceding quotation, the verb indicates an action that
   a. happened in the past (past tense).
   b. happened in the past before another past action (past perfect tense).

Callouts:
— Synopses of useful background information prior to each lesson
— Weaving technical vocabulary throughout the lessons
— Inclusion of references from literature commonly used in secondary classrooms
— Inclusion of references from pop culture and real-world examples

Inset boxes:
Verb Tenses and Subject Verb

BACKGROUND

As we noted in the introduction to Les
aspect indicates the perception of an a
complete or habitual). It isn't necessa

...of regular verbs), changing forms (in th
nd adding auxiliaries or modals (like *be, d*

...uggests, habitual *be* designates an action that is customary or
...en, in August Wilson's *Fences*, Bono asks, "How you figure **he**
...t **gal be** up at Taylor's all the time..." the verbs imply that his
...th the woman (Alberta) are customary and that Alberta is regularly

From "Me, Myself and I" by Beyoncé:
I'm gonna be my own best friend

Figure 4.7. Illustration showing some of the features of the curricular design.

Most teachers of English have extensive training in literature and literary studies complemented by training in composition and instructional strategies. Few, however, have had much training in language—its history, structure or variation. Such limited exposure can impede the adoption of language and grammar curricula because the mastery of content can seem too labor intensive, too time consuming. The curriculum developed for this study attempts to alleviate at least some of burden placed on teachers by providing a fairly brief (1- to 3-page) synopsis of useful background information prior to each set of related lessons (see Figure 4.7 above). In addition, this curriculum includes lesson plans, answer keys, definitions—all of the materials necessary for implementation. One final feature of the lessons intended to ease the preparation needed to use them is their approach to technical vocabulary. Terminology (like *pronoun*, *predicate*, *tense*, *aspect*, etc.) can sometimes discourage teachers and students from engaging in grammar and language study. Yet, such terminology can be useful and is increasingly appearing on some standardized exams like the SAT. The curriculum does not avoid technical vocabulary, but neither is that vocabulary required to teach most of the lessons. Instead, technical terms are woven throughout the unit as part of the lessons' background and context, and definitions and examples are provided when terms arise (see Figure 4.7 above). In this way, teachers and students can learn the terms by repeatedly engaging them, and teachers can use any encounters with terminology as occasions for further study of vocabulary if they feel it is needed.

In addition to a general lack of teacher-training in language, constraints on classroom time can dissuade teachers from devoting much of the time that is available to grammar instruction. This limitation has been at least part of the appeal of methods like

"Daily Oral Language," which can been carried out quickly and as a kind of supplemental activity. The curriculum developed for this study takes a similar, though more robust, approach. Lessons are designed to be between 10 and 20 minutes long. In addition, the lessons do not need to be taught every day. They can be taught according to whatever schedule fits the needs of individual teachers and their students. The lessons are designed to be compact and flexible enough so teachers do not feel that they need to displace other content to accommodate them.

Yet another hurdle that language study sometimes needs to overcome is the perception that it is not always relevant. How does knowing what a noun is help students understand Shakespeare? Or even write better? The rise of standardized testing may have muted some of questions of grammar's relevance. Still, most teachers are not likely enthusiastic about instruction aimed primarily at testing. Two features of this curriculum are intended to help integrate grammar and language study with some of the other instructional content of secondary English classrooms. First, many of the lessons are designed around examples from literature commonly used in schools like *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and *The Piano Lesson*. Similarly, explanations and background materials reference works from authors like Shakespeare, Chaucer and Austen (see Figure 4.7 above). By doing so, the curriculum developed for this study tries to make an explicit connection between the understanding of language and the analysis of literature. Second, and even more importantly, many of the lessons are designed to use SFL-based grammar to explicate clearly and practically some of the features of academic writing like how sentences are organized, how conjunctive resources can be deployed and the kinds of linguistic work that different sorts of verbs

can do. These materials, then, use the explanatory power of grammar to help both students and teachers troubleshoot some common critiques of novice writers' compositions—that, for example, an essay "lacks development," "isn't focused" or "doesn't flow."

One final critique frequently leveled against grammar instruction is that it is boring. That general sense of tediousness is particularly unfortunate since most people are quite curious about language. This curriculum tries to tap into that curiosity. In addition to the literary references mentioned earlier, the lessons also make extensive use of examples from music, movies and other cultural sources that are a part of students' linguistic environment (see Figure 4.7 above). These allusions are not there to pander to students or to "dumb-down" the curriculum. They are included as illustrations of the systematicity of everyday language and to connect students to the material by bringing into the classroom the real-world language that they encounter in their lives outside of school.

There is one final gesture in the curriculum to relevancy and authenticity. The second half of the curriculum deals extensively with the grammar of academic language and expository writing. Here, all of the examples have been culled from the writings of real students—with all of their successes, failures and quirks. The inclusion of these writing samples is important both so that students' voices are a part of the curriculum and so students can encounter as many models of academic writing as possible. The overall objectives of these lessons are two-fold: to increase students' awareness of the multiple grammatical systems they may use in their personal, scholastic and professional lives and to improve students' facility with academic writing.

4.7   SOME FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

In designing any curriculum, one is forced to make choices—choices about what to include, what to emphasize, what content to place where. The necessary choices for this curriculum were made even more difficult first, because of the range of content and second, because an emphasis was placed on implementability. Thus, that range of content needed to be presented as concisely as possible. As a result of that imperative, some dialect features that are covered in other curricula (like possessive case markers, for example) are not covered in this first iteration of the curriculum. Similar choices had to be made about how to efficiently present the SFL-based content. Some descriptions of concepts are simplified. Register, for example, is analogized to style and word choice, and Theme/Rheme structure is initially applied to sentences rather than clauses. In an effort to make the technical requirements of the curriculum as accessible as possible, some terminology is changed. Kolln's (1991) substitution of *Known/New* for *Given/New* is adopted, for example, and *Theme* and *Rheme* are referred to as *Topic* and *Comment*. All of these choices are driven by the need to balance implementability with robustness and accessibility with rigor, while maintaining focus on the objectives. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, some of these choices appear sound, but others had to be revisited when the curriculum was revised—the process of revision, like the process of making choices, being an unavoidable part of curricular design.

Finally, I would like to re-emphasize two important points regarding the curriculum's objectives. The first is that the curriculum is focused exclusively on code-switching as a written practice. Though the students may develop increased metalinguistic awareness of speech as a result of studying language variation, none of the

curriculum's activities asks the students to alter their speech in any way. Speech and identity are fundamentally intertwined, and to ask students to change the way they speak is to ask them to change how they see themselves in relation to their social worlds. Conversely, students often do not feel such a keen relationship between their academic writing and their identities. By focusing on academic writing, then, the curriculum intends not simply to avoid assailing students' speech/identity relationship, but to engage students in establishing a more discerning relationship between their writing and identities. The establishment of such a relationship is facilitated through a focus on metalinguistic awareness and choice—and that focus is my second point. The curriculum is designed to promote teachers' and students' awareness of variation across dialects and registers and the systematicity of such variation and to facilitate students' linguistic choices by adding to their repertoire. Part of the goal, as Lanehart (2007: 140) argues, is to help students and teachers "know their language and discourse patterns and recognize their [language] for the rich resource that it is, not as a deficit." Additionally, the curriculum is intended to facilitate teachers' and students' awareness of academic language and the exigencies of academic writing. Thus, students are prepared to participate in the domains of academic language if they so choose.

There is, however, an inescapable caveat. After the curriculum is authored, it becomes a text whose meaning is mediated in the classroom by the teacher and students together. My intentions, whatever they may be, are secondary. Though I may provide what I think are opportunities for the participants to critically examine language attitudes, for example, the teacher and students bring to the classroom their own ideas about and experiences with language. Thus, they may not negotiate those opportunities in

predictable ways. It is this negotiation—the dialogue among students, teacher and

content—that is the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4 NOTES

[1] This writing sample will be analyzed for both dialect and register features. Such analysis can sometimes seem rather clinical and indifferent to aesthetic and emotive features of students' compositions, like the affecting memories recounted by the student in this essay. In undertaking the following analysis, I neither intend to dismiss the importance of such features nor mean to suggest that such features should be eliminated from academic writing. I wish, rather, to shed some light on textual features that enhance or inhibit students' success with an academic writing task.

[2] Although, in the teacher's defense, it is apparent that the students engage in code-switching to a greater degree in their writing, and even in an example like the essay in Figure 4.2 where the student deploys an AAE feature in one place (the zero-copula in *He crying*), the student code-switches that same feature in other places (*The lady is shouting*).

[3] Quotations are certainly a part of academic argumentation. They are highlighted here because these quotations stand alone without introduction or comment. Thus, their Themes seem unintentional. This lack of intentionality does not mean that they are unimportant or trivial, rather that they are not representative of the student's tendencies or facilities with Themes.

CHAPTER 5

PATTERNS OF POSSIBLITY AND CHALLEGE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF A LINGUISTICALLY INFORMED CURRICULUM

As part of this study, a few conditions have been identified that are necessary for a linguistically informed curriculum to be generally implementable. First, a curriculum must articulate a coherent approach to dialect and academic language issues. Such articulation requires attention to existing educational processes and goals, which includes attention to the register features of academic writing. Second, a curriculum, through its design, must mitigate both teachers' lack of experience with linguistic content and a common ambivalence toward grammar. A linguistically informed curriculum, therefore, must be accessible to teachers and students, relevant to their learning objectives and integrable into an existing classroom ecology.

In order to analyze the implementation of the curriculum authored for this study, three sources of data were collected: classroom videotapes, student writing samples and interviews with the teacher and her students. The analytical focus of this chapter is the video data and patterns of coded events. These patterns establish a qualitative account of the class's interaction with the curricular content, which is further supported by analysis of students' writing and interviews. The emergent picture reveals some of the rewards and possibilities of linguistically informed instruction, as well as some of the distinct challenges facing the design and implementation of a curriculum that introduces teachers and students to new ways of understanding and making meaning with language.

Particularly in light of the conditions described above, it demonstrates how the teacher and her students connect the curricular content to other learning and the students' own linguistic practices, how effectively the teacher is able to manage unfamiliar content, how she and her students construe and respond to new grammatical concepts and how engaged the teacher and her students are with the content. Ultimately, the analysis of event patterns has implications for strengthening and enriching the curriculum.

The analysis of the video data was facilitated by the use of Transana—video analysis software that enables the authoring of multiple, synchronized transcripts and the coding of interactive events. The transcripts authored for this study (one a narrative summary and the other a Jeffersonian rendering of discourse) are coded for events in which the teacher, in interactions with her students, is trying to understand, represent or make meaning with the new tools and approaches of the curriculum. These events are separated into two general groups: Curricular Achievements and Curricular Impediments. Curricular Achievements are interactions that further the goals of the curriculum, and they include:

- **Clarifying**: When the teacher talks explicitly about code-switching or the systematicity of language.
- **Extending**: When the teacher connects the lesson content to the students' own practices.
- **Scaffolding**: When the teacher connects the lesson content to earlier lessons.
- **Weaving**: When the teacher connects the lesson content to other school work.

Curricular Impediments, by contrast, work against the goals of the curriculum, and they include:

- **Countering**: When the teacher reinforces prescriptive attitudes.
- **Forestalling**: When the teacher closes off potentially productive talk.

- **Misinterpreting**: When the teacher misrepresents or misunderstands content in the curriculum.

- **Overlooking**: When the teacher misses an opportunity to reinforce or extend the content of the lesson.

The patterns of Achievements and Impediments are represented by tabulations of events' frequencies, maps illustrating the occurrence of events on a chronological timeline and the transcription and analysis of discourse.

This chapter discusses, first, some of the study's general findings—some of the manifest possibilities and challenges in the broad context of the curricular implementation. This section provides and analyzes examples of all four Achievements. The chapter, next, examines how the teacher and her class negotiate lessons with different emphases: those focusing on specific contrastive features, those focusing on register and those dealing more broadly with language ideology. In these subsequent sections, examples of Impediments and some additional examples of Achievements are presented and discussed in order to investigate the implications of their patterns for different content area foci. Both sets of results have important implications for linguists and educators interested in the design of curricula that are intended explicate the workings and demands of academic language for diverse speakers of English.

5.1   GENERAL FINDINGS

The complete corpus contains just under five-and-a-half hours of video. A total of 141 separate events occurring within that corpus were coded.[1] In general, the coded events book-end activities during which the students are engaged in individual or group work; it is frequently during the preface to and unpacking of an activity that the teacher and her class together negotiate the content. Thus, the map of Lesson 11, which focuses

on reflexive pronoun patterns, is typical of the tendency for events to cluster at certain

points in the lesson.
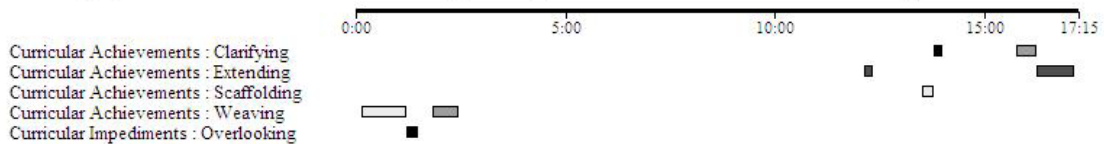
Figure 5.1. An event map for Lesson 11 illustrating the clustering of interactions.

While this clustering pattern is common, it is also important to note that there are a

number of exceptions, which result from a variety of circumstances. One class is cut

short by a fire drill. In others, the teacher is pressed for time and jumps into an activity

with little discussion or, conversely, engages in an extended preliminary discussion with

little time left over for the activity itself, let alone a wrap-up. There are the occasional

comings and goings of students, interruptions and distractions. In short, like any

classroom, this one has its preferred rhythms but is influenced by the multiple

instructional, administrative and social demands that are a part of the complexities of

education and educational processes.

Event Type	Count
Clarifying	26
Extending	18
Scaffolding	21
Weaving	33
Total	**98**

Table 5.1. Curricular Achievements occurring during the implementation of all lessons.

Event Type	Count
Countering	1
Forestalling	10
Misinterpreting	17
Overlooking	21
Total	**49**

Table 5.2. Curricular Impediments occurring during the implementation of all lessons.

Across the entire corpus of video, Curricular Achievements outnumber Curricular Impediments 2:1. Above, Tables 5.1 and 5.2 present counts of coded events. As I noted in Chapter 3, one has to be careful not to unambiguously equate Curricular Achievements with success or learning and Curricular Impediments with the lack thereof. Event patterns, however, illustrate significant trends in the curricular implementation.
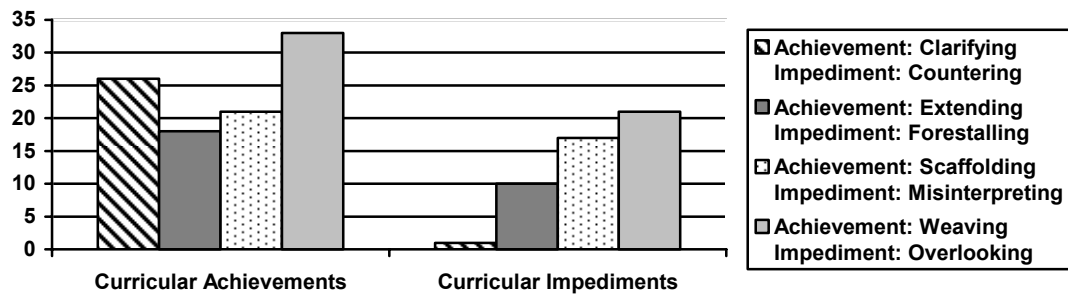
Figure 5.2. Chart illustrating counts of Achievements and Impediments during the implementation of all classes.

One clear trend that emerges from the data is the teacher's consistent demonstration of Clarifying in contrast to her very limited expression of Countering. This pattern of events evidences the teacher's recognition of one of the principles undergirding the curriculum: all varieties of English are logical, grammatical and systematic. She consistently reinforces the fundamental concept of grammatical systematicity across standard and nonstandard dialects. In only one instance (the lone Countering event takes place very early in the implementation) does she contradict that concept with prescriptivism that equates standard English with correctness. The consistent manifestation of Clarifying events is illustrated, for example, in the following excerpt of discourse, which takes place during the implementation of Lesson 16 (see Appendix A, page 228). In this portion of the lesson, the class is analyzing the following

excerpt from Smitherman's (2000: 25) *Talkin That Talk: Language, Culture, and Education in African America*:

> Teacher: Bobby, what does your mother do everyday? (Teacher apparently wanted to call Bobby's parents.)
>
> Bobby: She be at home!
>
> Teacher: You mean, "She is at home."
>
> Bobby: No, she ain't, 'cause she took my grandmother to the hospital this morning.
>
> Teacher: You know what I meant. You are not supposed to say, "She be at home." You are to say, "She is at home."
>
> Bobby: Why you trying to make me lie? She ain't at home

The class is trying to determine to source of the miscommunication between the teacher and Bobby in Smitherman's scenario. A student suggests that the misunderstanding arises because Bobby uses language that is not "proper." The teacher responds:

> Teacher: Now when you say proper English, then what you're implying is that when you say "I be goin to the store" is improper. (#) Improper to me is like (#) doing something like- (#)
>
> Student A: That's wrong=
>
> Teacher: =Wrong.
>
> Student A: Or not-
>
> Teacher: You're not doing something wrong. You use a pattern of language. There are rules that you use and the way you say it, but it's not standard English right. Okay.

Although Clarifying events do not reflect the teacher's handling of specific content (how she construes and represents habitual *be*, for example), the consistent presence of Clarifying events is nontrivial. Clarifying represents an explicit negotiation of the teacher's and students' language attitudes; they are an expression of an affirmative stance toward linguistic diversity, which by itself can positively influence student achievement (Blake and Cutler 2003).

Other promising patterns emerge from the coded events, as well. Like Clarifying, the remaining three Curricular Achievements—Extending, Scaffolding and Weaving— are manifest with considerable frequency. Extending is the least prevalent Achievement, which is not a particularly surprising result since it requires an active application of content knowledge outside the framework of a lesson. However, despite being the least frequent Achievement, Extending events outnumber all Impediments except Overlooking. In an Extending event, the teacher actively connects the linguistic content of a lesson to the linguistic practices of her students, as she does in the following excerpt. The exchange takes place during Lesson 15 (see Appendix A, page 226). As the class discusses verb patterns, they note that when people try to imitate a dialect that they do not normally speak, those people usually sound unconvincing:

Teacher: They're not aware of what the rule pattern is. (#)

Student A: So how you be aware of it then. What you born into it? (3.0)

Teacher: Ye- I mean it's just something for- for you that's (#) like what you just said. You be born into it.

Class: [[laughs]]

Teacher: So for me it would be you are born into it.

Class: [[laughs]]

Teacher: No it's okay because it's just- it's automatic=

Student B: =Like Ms. [X]- Ms. [X] can't say gangsta [[/gæŋstə/]]. She say gangster [[/gæŋstər/]].

Class: [[laughs]]

Teacher: Okay but that's- that's a whole different issue but still similarly related.

In this segment of discourse, the teacher picks up on Student A's use of a nonstandard verb form in order to make a point about her belief that people learn language in the context of communities of speakers. In echoing the student's use of habitual *be,* the teacher both affirms the student's suggestion that one is "born" into way

of speaking and establishes her own claim that a person's dialect often functions below the level of consciousness, that it is "automatic." In fact, by mimicking the student's language, the teacher calls attention to just how "automatic" language is for Student A, indeed for the entire class. Ironically, in attempting to mimic Student A's use of habitual *be*, the teacher misquotes the student and actually misuses habitual *be* (being born is not, generally, construed as a habitual action). She, thus, unintentionally confirms the thesis of the discussion that prefaces the excerpt: that people who try to imitate a dialect that they do not normally speak usually sound unconvincing.

Despite the unintentional irony of the teacher's grammatical miscue, the excerpt highlights the teacher's growing awareness of her students' linguistic practices and the ways in which the curriculum invites discussions that connect students to the curricular content. Indeed, though Extending events are the least common of the Achievements, their number is surprisingly high—and encouraging—in light of the teacher's lack of formal, linguistic training.

The regular presence of Scaffolding events is similarly promising. Many of these events occur at the beginning of a lesson and exemplify the common teaching practice of trying to activate students' prior knowledge or rehearse prior learning as an early step in a lesson's structure.[2] Often these are brief events during which the teacher herself references prior learning or asks the students to recall prior learning as a point of departure for a new lesson. As the unit progresses, however, the teacher is able to connect concepts and content in new and less routinized ways. In Lesson 17 (see Appendix A, page 231), for example, the class is reviewing the paradigm for nonstandard habitual *be*, and a student notices that the form does not change by person or number, that

it is invariant. The teacher responds by recognizing another feature that is invariant in

nonstandard English:

> Teacher: What is a similarity here. What else- what else do we look at that
> doesn't change in nonstandard English but it sta- changes in standard
> English? We spent a lo:t of time on it? (#)
>
> Student A: (xxx)
>
> Student B: Be?
>
> Teacher: Of to be? (3.0) Verb form of to be? We spent ages on it. (1.0) Ain't.
>
> Student C: Oh yeah.
>
> Teacher: Right. I ain't. You ain't. She ain't. He ain't. It doesn't change in
> nonstandard. (#) In standard English it changes.

This Scaffolding event occurs near the end of a lesson, as opposed to the beginning, and

shows the class, having induced an idea of invariant forms, applying that idea to prior

content. That application, like the teacher's responsiveness to the student's use of

habitual *be* in the previous example, illustrates the teacher's growing linguistic awareness

and confidence in managing grammatical concepts.

Not only does the teacher connect the content from one lesson to another, but she

also connects the content of the lessons to class-related content outside of the lessons.

She takes advantage of opportunities in the lessons to talk about usage conventions,

vocabulary, the class's Shakespeare readings and the students' writing assignments. In

the excerpt below, for example, the teacher uses a moment in Lesson 24 (see Appendix

A, page 257)—which has the class practicing identification of Given and New

information—as an occasion for briefly discussing some properties of pronouns:

> Teacher: If you have an "it," as something that's new, then you ar- an- I'm
> stopping here because many of you do this. What does a pronoun have
> to have?
>
> Student A: A verb=
>
> Student B: =A noun. (#)

Teacher:　A noun that comes before it, it's called an antecedent.

Student B: Oh.

Student C: I know but what's "it" though?

Student A: An antecedent.

Student D: Iambic parameter.

Class:　　[[laughs]]

Student D: Penta[meter]

Teacher:　　　[Okay.]　Ante. (#) [[writes on the board]] Meaning before.　Like antebellum is the t- the history period before the civil war and anteroom.　'A' 'n' 't' 'e'.　Not 'a' 'n' 't' 'i' which means against.　Okay. (#) So what's "it" referring to?

Events such as these during which lesson content is linked with other classroom content are coded as Weaving.　Among all coded events, Achievements and Impediments, Weaving is the most common.　By itself, the number of Weaving events is promising, as it demonstrates the teacher's understanding that the language curriculum is consistently relevant to other classroom content.　Additionally, Weaving events like the preceding example illustrate how the curriculum creates numerous opportunities for exploring and reinforcing fundamental grammatical concepts like person, number, tense, inflectional morphology, part of speech, etc.

　　　The preceding examples show the teacher and her students engaged in events during which the linguistic content is negotiated by identifying the logic and systematicity of all varieties of English and by forging links between the content specific to a particular lesson and other sources of language-related knowledge, whether that knowledge is connected to learning relevant to other classroom content, prior learning from the curriculum or the students' own linguistic practices.　The preponderance of Curricular Achievements is strongly indicative of the teacher's ability to manage new and unfamiliar linguistic concepts, a high level of engagement with the material on the part of

both the teacher and the students and the integrability of the curriculum into an existing classroom ecology. Much of these results can certainly be attributed to the specific character of the teacher and her class. The teacher's own curiosity, willingness to experiment and teaching experience are, undoubtedly, salient factors in the particular expression of the implementation. The results, however, also highlight some of the strengths of the curricular design. For example, the background information that accompanies the lessons explicates standard and nonstandard linguistic features by highlighting their essential grammaticality and functionality. That information also addresses some common misperceptions that can hinder this message thereby addressing prior understandings in addition to providing new information. During the implementation of the lesson plans, the teacher repeatedly communicates the curricular emphasis on systematicity, which is illustrated by the frequent Clarifying events. In addition, the numerous Weaving events support the decision to keep the lessons relatively short, thus enabling the teacher to assimilate the lessons into more customary classroom routines and other kinds of instruction. They also support the focus on academic writing, thus aligning the curriculum with school- and teacher-supported learning objectives.

In order to more specifically identify and understand the strengths of the curriculum, as well as its weaknesses, frequencies of coded events (events/min.) were calculated for segments of the curriculum with different foci (see Figure 5.3 below). I performed these calculations because, as I coded the video, different patterns of Achievements and Impediments seemed to emerge for a lesson on, for example, Given/New information than for a lesson on reflexive pronoun paradigms. Thus, the curriculum was divided into three segments reflecting their different foci: those dealing

with contrastive analysis, those dealing with issues related to language ideology and those dealing with register. Contrastive analysis lessons are those that concentrate on specific linguistic features in nonstandard and standard varieties and include lessons on *ain't*, reflexive pronouns, copular *be*, habitual *be* and third person singular verb inflections in the present tense; language ideology lessons are those that engage more broadly with the sociopolitical implications of language use and include lessons reflecting on speakers, formal and informal English and those investigating dictionaries; register lessons are those based in SFL and include lessons on Topic/Comment (Theme/Rheme), Known/New (Given/New) and conjunctive resources.
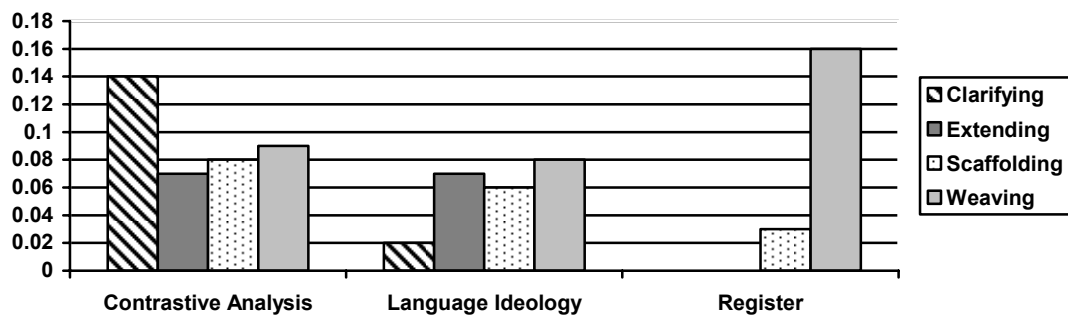
Figure 5.3. Chart illustrating the frequency of Curricular Achievements (events/min.) for segments of the curriculum with different foci.

Some readily apparent trends are the high frequency of Clarifying events during contrastive analysis lessons and their complete absence during register lessons. Conversely, Weaving events have a very high frequency during register lessons but are not nearly as frequent during either contrastive analysis or language ideology lessons. Similar disparities in event frequencies occur for Curricular Impediments (see Figure 5.4 below). Overlooking events, for example, have a relatively high frequency during contrastive analysis lessons, while Misinterpreting events are more common during register lessons. Exploring some potential explanations for these disparities provides a

fuller qualitative account of the implementation, sheds greater light on the strengths and

weaknesses of the curriculum and is the subject of the following sections.
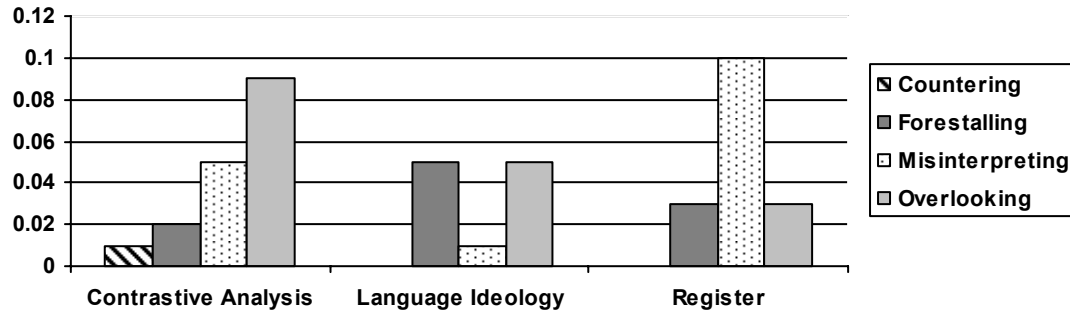
Figure 5.4. Chart illustrating the frequency of Curricular Impediments (events/min.) for segments of the curriculum with different foci.

5.2 CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS AND PATTERNS OF CURRICULAR ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPEDIMENTS
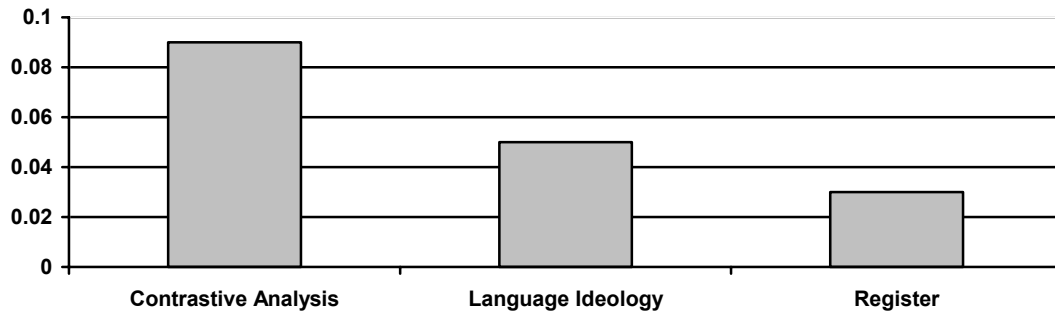
Figure 5.5. Chart illustrating the frequency of Overlooking (events/min.) for segments of the curriculum with different foci. Contrastive Analysis: 0.09 events/min. (n=15); Language Ideology: 0.05 events/min. (n=4); Register: 0.03 events/min. (n=2).

The segment of the curriculum defined as *contrastive analysis* includes those

lessons that focus on a specific linguistic feature and the grammatical functioning of that

feature in at least two different varieties of English. Most of these lessons also have

students identifying and manipulating standard and nonstandard variants of the feature

under study. As I noted at the end of the previous section, one of the characteristic trends

in the contrastive analysis lessons is their higher frequency of Overlooking events (see Figure 5.5 above).

Overlooking events occur when a potentially productive area for teaching and learning arises in classroom discussion but is not pursued by the teacher. In the segment of discourse that follows, for example, the teacher is guiding a review of the subject pronoun paradigm in standard English. In the review, the teacher calls out a form (second person singular, for example), and the class calls out a response. When the teacher asks for the second person plural form, the following exchange ensues:

Teacher: Okay.

Student A: You all. (#)

Student B: [Us.]

Teacher: [Um.]

Student A: You all=

Student C: =You all.

Teacher: You all. [[laughing]]

Student D: Y'all

Student B: [Us.   ]

Student A: [Y'all.]

Student E: We.

Student F: Y'all better come back now [ya hear.]

Student D: [You for] a (xxx). [[singing]]

Teacher: Okay. Second person, you. [Right?]

Student G: [Is all] of us in here?

Student A: You all.

Student H: Y'all.

Student F: Y'all better come back now ya hear.

Student G: (xxx)

Teacher: You got the idea though right?

Student A repeatedly suggests "you all" as an answer, and a few other students echo his

suggestion. While the teacher acknowledges his response, she does not appear to

construe it as serious, repeating "you all" and laughing. While there is clearly joking

taking place during the excerpt (Student F, for example, twice says a line from *The*

Beverly Hillbillies theme song in a bid for attention and laughs), Student A appears to be

sincerely trying to answer the teacher's question. In fact, Student A's response is not

only legitimate, but also perceptive and arguably correct, depending on one's definition

of "standard." In and around Washington, D.C., where Capitol High is located, *you all*

(or *y'all*) is a common second person plural pronoun variant. Indeed, for many varieties

of Southern American English, it could be argued that *y'all* is the spoken standard. Thus,

the student's suggestion presents the teacher with an opportunity to explore issues related

to "standardness" and spoken versus written language. In addition, acknowledging the

student's response would reinforce both the systematicity of pronoun paradigms and their

variation, which are central concepts of the lesson (see Appendix A, page 213).

The relative frequency of Overlooking events like this one in contrastive analysis

lessons raises the question: why are they more common in these types of lessons than

elsewhere? One contributing factor actually runs counter to the general rule that

Impediments are negative indicators of the realization of the curriculum. Many of the

Overlooking events, like the previous example, occur during moments of high student

involvement (note that during the preceding sequence, which lasts for little more than a

minute, seven of the twelve students in the class participate). The preponderance of

Overlooking events, therefore, partly speaks to the engaging nature of language study,

particularly when that study is focused on grammatical features that students recognize and use. Such focus is strongest in the contrastive analysis lessons.

While the frequency of Overlooking events can be partly attributed to high levels of student engagement, the fact remains that they also represent missed opportunities to further the curricular objectives. In the preceding example, I do not think that the teacher misses the opportunity because she does not recognize or understand the feature. The second person plural pronoun is discussed in the background material, and the teacher has spent much of her life in the American South. It is not that she is unable to talk about the feature; it is that she chooses not to. Teachers, of course, have to make these kinds of choices all of the time. To pursue every potentially productive opportunity would lead to "bird-walking," jumping from topic to topic, and could make a discussion chaotic. In this particular instance, the teacher's choice appears to be motivated by her perception that the suggestion of *you all* is in fun. Nonetheless, her failure to recognize the suggestion as an opportunity may, in fact, follow from her lack of experience with the curricular content. Though she may recognize and understand the feature, she fails to see how it could contribute to the discussion, and the message that *you all* is just in fun does not support the overall message about nonstandard variants as sources of systematic variation—not just humor. Additionally, despite the necessity for teachers to limit bird-walking and maintain coherence in a classroom discussion, the frequency of Overlooking events during contrastive analysis lessons suggests that the lack of content-area expertise is a limiting factor in the implementation of the curriculum.

Though the teacher's content-area knowledge presents limits to the curricular implementation, those limits are neither critical (in that they threaten the teacher's ability

to implement the curriculum) nor unexpected. Indeed, what is perhaps more surprising is that, most of the time, the teacher effectively manages the content of the contrastive analysis lessons. That effectiveness is evidenced, for example, in the high frequency of Clarifying events and the very low frequency of Countering (see Figure 5.6 below).
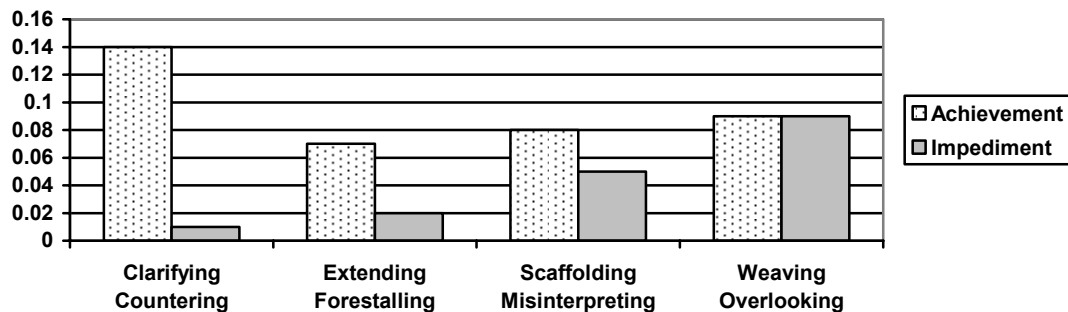
Figure 5.6. Chart illustrating the frequency of all Achievements and Impediments (events/min.) for contrastive analysis lessons. Clarifying: 0.14 events/min. (n=24); Countering: 0.01 events/min. (n=1); Extending: 0.07 events/min. (n=12); Forestalling: 0.02 events/min. (n=4); Scaffolding: 0.08 events/min. (n=14); Misinterpreting: 0.05 events/min. (n=9); Weaving: 0.09 events/min. (n=15); Overlooking: 0.09 events/min. (n=15).

The significance of the frequency of Clarifying events relative to Countering ones I discussed previously: it evidences the teacher's recognition that all varieties of English are logical, grammatical and systematic, one of the fundamental principles of the curriculum. The contrastive analysis lessons are also marked by much higher frequency of Clarifying events relative to language ideology and register lessons (see Figure 5.6 below). What remains to be examined, then, is why the distribution of Clarifying frequencies is so heavily weighted toward contrastive analysis lessons.

Broadly, there is nothing particularly surprising or concerning about the relative distribution of Clarifying events. The contrastive lessons are designed in their explanations and presentation to stress the grammatical systematicity of a linguistic feature under study. Such emphasis routinely manifests during classroom talk throughout these lessons. Even the lone Countering event is more an upholding of standard

English's privilege than a repudiation of nonstandard systematicity. During that event, the class is engaged in a contrastive exercise with *ain't*, and a student asks if *ain't* is in the dictionary. When the teacher replies that it is and that they will be studying *ain't* in the dictionary soon, the student expresses surprise. The teacher responds, "There are a lot of words in the dictionary that aren't appropriate." Far more often, however, in discussions of nonstandard variants, the teacher routinely affirms that the use of these variants "isn't random" and that "there are rules." The consistent manifestation of such emphasis during classroom talk throughout contrastive analysis lessons confirms the strength of the instructional design.

The language ideology lessons—like those that investigate dictionaries, for example—differ from the contrastive analysis lessons in their orientation. They look at language, its use and its social implications more broadly; they do not create schemata that set up the comparisons of grammatical mechanisms or rules. Thus, one would not expect as strong an emphasis on patterns and systematicity. Similarly, the register lessons are designed to unpack some important features of academic language that satisfy its meaning-making conditions—complex Themes, abstract participants, non-constant information structures, etc. The emphasis, therefore, is on developing students' understanding of academic language as guided by purpose rather than governed by system, so a decline in Clarifying events is to be expected. One potential cause for concern, perhaps, is that the register lessons manifest no Clarifying events, a concern that I address in the section analyzing the register-based lessons in detail.
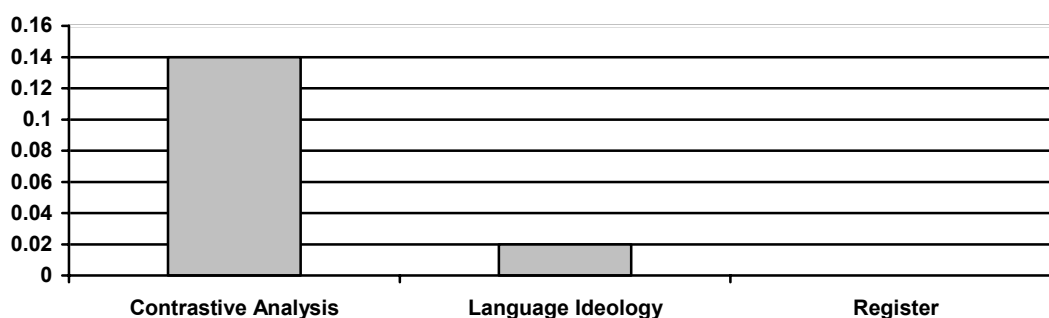
Figure 5.7. Chart illustrating the frequency of Clarifying (events/min.) for segments of the curriculum with different foci. Contrastive Analysis: 0.14 events/min. (n=24); Language Ideology: 0.02 events/min. (n=2); Register: 0.00 events/min. (n=0).

Finally, in addition to the regular occurrence of Clarifying events, the appearance of Extending events during the contrastive analysis lessons are particularly encouraging indicators of the teacher's content management. Although Extending events are the least common of the Achievements during the contrastive analysis lessons, their frequency approaches all other Achievements except for Clarifying and is higher than all Impediments except for Overlooking (see Figure 5.7 above). Extending events are especially encouraging because they most explicitly highlight the teacher's developing linguistic awareness. During the contrastive lessons, they demonstrate the teacher actively recognizing and negotiating her students' linguistic practices in new ways. The following excerpt is from Lesson 15, which explores verb forms, and actually bridges the end of an Extending event and the beginning of a Clarifying one:

Teacher: In the actual writing what is it that many of you leave off your verbs?

Student A: A noun.

Student B: Like 's'.

Teacher: ['S'.]

Student A: ['S'.] I was about to say [that.   ]

Teacher: [Okay.] So, now. It's- it's not a random thing. (#) It's not a random thing. There's a definite pattern to it. Just like we talked about like with ain't, with any part of speech it's like

when there is (#) uh (#) a rule that is used, you all follow- when you do that you follow a rule with it.

The teacher calls students' attention to the unmarked third person singular form of regular verbs in the present tense. After making students aware of the feature, she proceeds to characterize the feature as rule-governed and patterned. This characterization is in contrast to the teacher's pre-intervention responses to students' writing. Pre-intervention, whenever it surfaces in students' essays, the teacher responds to the appearance of this grammatical feature by suggesting correction using an insertion mark and adding an *s*, as in the two examples below:[3]

...that tell you that the poem is going to be about life and death...

...such as the words that she speak is outstanding.

These two short selections from graded student papers typify the kind of corrective annotation that teachers commonly make on students' texts, and the kind of annotation that is not particularly effective in helping students understand their writing practices or improve them (Connors and Lunsford 1993; Shaughnessy 1977). The corrections certainly do not reflect the understanding of the unmarked third person as a rule-governed feature that the teacher expresses in the preceding excerpt.

Not only does the excerpt appear to evidence the teacher's developing understanding of the feature, but it also suggests that the students, too, are developing new understandings of language variation and grammatical systematicity. Without much prompting, Student B is able to identify the unmarked third person as the feature in question, and Student A expresses disappointment that she did not come up with the answer first. Their recognition of a specific grammatical contrast between the language

practices of their peer and community networks and the practices of school is patently

different from the characterizations in the intake interviews that express the difference

generically as that between "slang" and "proper" English. Those generic ideological

orientations to nonstandard and standard varieties are, however, stubbornly persistent,

which I discuss in the following section.

5.3 LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY AND PATTERNS OF CURRICULAR ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPEDIMENTS
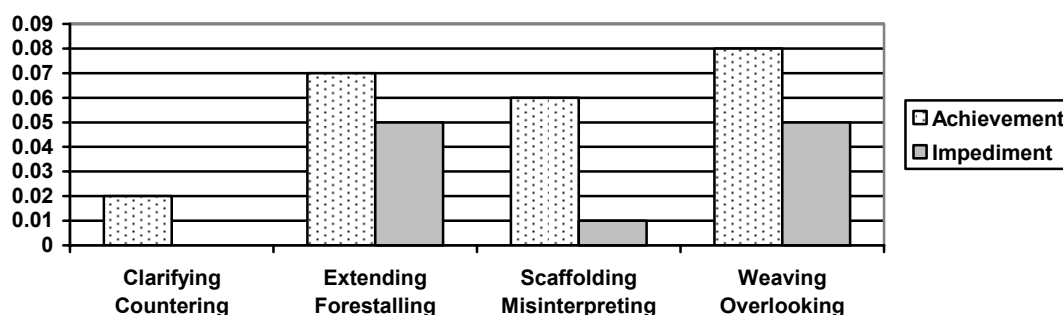
Figure 5.8. Chart illustrating the frequency of all Achievements and Impediments (events/min.) for language ideology lessons. Clarifying: 0.02 events/min. (n=2); Countering: 0.00 events/min. (n=0); Extending: 0.07 events/min. (n=6); Forestalling: 0.05 events/min. (n=4); Scaffolding: 0.06 events/min. (n=6); Misinterpreting: 0.01 events/min. (n=1); Weaving: 0.08 events/min. (n=7); Overlooking: 0.05 events/min. (n=4).

Lessons that do not explore the grammatical function of a linguistic feature, but

rather interrogate the social functions of language use are here grouped under *language

ideology*. Language ideology lessons include those like Lesson 5 (see Appendix A, page

196), which asks students to investigate their perceptions of *ain't* users, as well as those

lessons examining dictionaries and formal versus informal language. The patterns of

Achievements and Impediments for the language ideology lessons do not have the

dramatic extremes that are present in either the contrastive analysis lessons or the register

lessons (see Figures 5.3 and 5.4). The language ideology lessons, however, do

consistently exhibit all of the Achievements except for Clarifying (see Figure 5.8 above),

the lack of which can be attributed to their focus on social rather than grammatical questions and is discussed in the preceding section. Likewise, no Curricular Impediment manifests with pronounced frequency, though Forestalling events occur more often in these lessons than they do elsewhere.

The consistent presence of Extending and Weaving events in the language ideology lessons suggests that the teacher finds these lessons to be relevant to her students and their work in her classroom, even though these lessons do not focus on grammatical features in the same ways that either the contrastive analysis or register lessons do. For example, in the following Weaving event the class is investigating the labeling used in dictionaries—specifically, the difference between two dictionaries' identifications of *ain't*, one as "nonstandard" and the other as "substandard." The teacher, then, references work the class has done examining connotation and denotation:

> Teacher: Think about- I can't write in here. Think about the difference between connotation and denotation. Remember denotation is the def- dictionary definition. (#) Okay. You remember that connota- denotation is the dictionary definition=
>
> Student A: =And connotation is your own definition.
>
> Teacher: Connotation is?
>
> Student A: Your own definition?
>
> Teacher: Sort of. Connotation is like the attitude that goes along with something. So: nonstandard, is that judgmental or is that pretty objective?

There is some irony here since the teacher's last statement in this excerpt seems to equate dictionary definitions with objectivity, and the lesson is structured around interrogating the ways in which definitions are constructed from human choices and judgments. That being said, the excerpt illustrates how the teacher and her class negotiate the meaning of these lessons not as distinct from but imbricated with other classroom learning.

The rate of Forestalling events in the language ideology lessons, like the rate of Overlooking events in the contrastive analysis lessons, can be partially attributed to high levels of student involvement. For example, during Lessons 13 and 14 (see Appendix A, pages 222-223), which have the students writing dictionary entries for words from their own peer-group or community lexicon, the students are so enthusiastic that they take charge of the process of brainstorming and selecting words. While the teacher encourages students during those particular lessons, in other circumstances that kind of enthusiasm leads the teacher to actively close off talk in an effort to channel classroom discussion. However, also like Overlooking events during the contrastive analysis lessons, the Forestalling events sometimes appear to show the teacher neglecting potentially productive opportunities. During the language ideology lessons, many such opportunities seem to arise from issues related to parts of speech. One such event occurs during the discussion of the use of *bling-bling* in a *New York Times* article as part of Lesson 8 (see Appendix A, page 205): "Chrysler is threatening G.M.'s reign as king of the trend-setting bling-bling cars and trucks" (Hakim 2004). The discussion focuses on the social and stylistic implications of the writer's word choice, but a student finds the use of *bling-bling* to be grammatically problematic:

> Student A: That's what they calling it, like bling-bling cars. But we don't call like, saying like this chain is like a bling-bling type of watch. You know what I'm saying. We say oh you got bling-bling or something like that.
>
> Teacher: Okay. So it's- it's- it's taking a- (#) but they're still using it correctly in the sense of how it's referring to something. Right.

Student A appears to question the use of *bling-bling* as nominal modifier or adjectival modifying *cars and trucks*. He maintains, instead, that it is a noun—that it is an object, something that a person can have, in so far as he and his peers use the word.

The teacher's response to Student A's skepticism is somewhat vague. She makes a claim about *bling-bling* retaining its essential semantic properties in the *New York Times* quotation; the word maintains its correct "sense" in "referring to something." It is unclear, however, if she recognizes the precise objection that the student raises. With her statement, the teacher effectively closes off any further discussion on the topic.

Again, as I stated earlier, teachers cannot pursue every potentially interesting line of inquiry that is raised during a classroom discussion. What makes the preceding example instructive is that Student A's observation touches on concepts central to the particular activity in which the class is engaged and that other student comments during the language ideology lessons seem to evidence collective difficulty with those same concepts. In one of the activities central to the dictionary lessons mentioned above, the students compose dictionary entries for words from their own peer-group or community lexicon. An important element of those entries is the identification of part of speech. Thus, Student A's comment poses an intriguing problem that the students are confronted with as part of the lesson: how does one determine part of speech? It is a question with which the class appears generally to struggle. In a discussion about *ain't*, a student asks the teacher, "Why is it a verb cause it's something you don't do? A verb is something you do?" In a different lesson, the teacher mentions parts of speech and a student remarks, "I don't even know what them is no more." As in the excerpt above, both of these examples initiate Forestalling, suggesting that like her students, the teacher may have some difficulty with parts of speech.

The pattern of Forestalling events in the language ideology lessons, then, reveals an area in need of attention in future revisions of the curriculum. Much of the class's

difficulty with parts of speech appears to stem from a reliance on semantic definitions of parts of speech (i.e., a noun is a person, place or thing; verb is an action; etc.). It might be more useful for teachers and students to think about both the function and the form of a word when trying to determine part of speech. In determining function, teachers and students could examine what grammatical role a word in question is serving. In the case of *bling-bling*, for example, Student A is right about its function. It is modifying *cars and trucks* and is in attributive position; it is functioning as an adjective. In English, of course, nouns often function as adjectivals (e.g., *a hospital window*). Thus, one might ask whether or not *bling-bling* can be an adjective by form. In determining form, teachers and students could apply simple morphosyntactic tests for possession, time, etc. For *bling-bling* one could ask whether or not it can be used in comparative or superlative forms: can something be more or most *bling-bling*? A quick search of the World-Wide-Web, suggests that comparative and superlative forms exist but are unusual. By form, then, *bling-bling* is most commonly a noun. Thus, Student A's observation appears not only relevant, but also valid. The use of *bling-bling* in the *Times* quotation calls attention to itself both through its semantic properties and its grammatical realization—a grammatical realization that to some readers may appear inauthentic. Exploring grammatical function and form may not eliminate teachers' and students' struggles with parts of speech, but it can move them away from the kind of person-place-or-thing tests that seem to be more confusing than helpful, and it supports the overall goal of a more linguistically informed curriculum. While grammatical function and form are discussed in the background materials to these lessons, clearer explanations and heuristics are needed.

The relationship between Forestalling events in the language ideology lessons and curricular content related to parts of speech points to something salient about the interaction between different types of lessons (contrastive analysis, language ideology or register) and different types of content (grammatical, social or rhetorical): regardless of a lesson's particular orientation, it opens up spaces for the exploration of various kinds of content. So, in a language ideology lesson like Lesson 8, a discussion about parts of speech may arise, and in a contrastive analysis lesson like Lesson 16 (which includes Smitherman's scenario and an introduction to habitual *be*), the class may interrogate what it means to speak "proper" English. In fact, the language ideology lesson that is most narrowly tailored to examining the social implications of language use, Lesson 5 (see Appendix A, page 196), exhibits the lowest frequency of Achievements. More disappointing still is the clustering of all events in the first two minutes of the lesson:
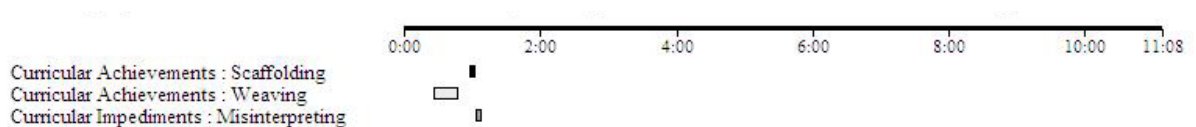
Figure 5.9. An event map for Lesson 5.

The event map suggests not that the lesson fails but rather that much of the lesson is executed in isolation from other classroom content and the students' existing knowledge. In Lesson 5, students are presented with pictures of people and are asked to explore their perceptions of who they think might use *ain't* and why. In the classroom discussion, the teacher and her students focus exclusively on the hypothetical people in the pictures and a generic conclusion that language can stereotype people. That discussion, however, establishes no external relevancies to the lesson content. Again, this deficiency should not be taken to mean that no learning takes place during the lesson. Nonetheless, the

pattern of Achievements is in stark contrast to the lesson immediately preceding it. In that lesson, Lesson 4, students are asked to determine the standard variant for *ain't* in sentences they have composed and, then, induce some grammatical rules for the use *ain't*:
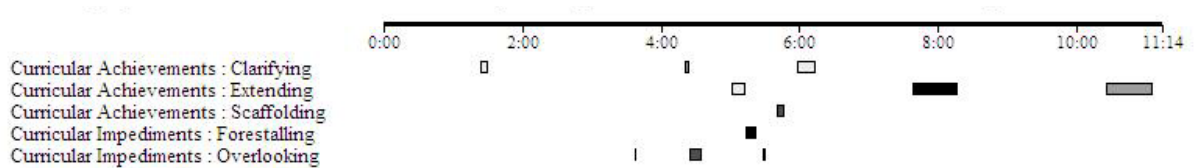
Figure 5.10. An event map for Lesson 4.

Such a contrast at least calls into question how best to investigate with students the social implications of language variety and use. Although the data for this study are not conclusive, it suggests that it may be most effective to create opportunities for social inquiry to bubble up from grammatical investigations of linguistic features or from the examination of linguistically relevant artifacts like dictionary entries.

Another question related to lesson effectiveness and language ideology is whether the unit has any perceptible impact on the language attitudes of the teacher or her students. As I noted in section 5.1, the pattern of Clarifying relative to Countering during the unit as a whole indicates that the teacher's language attitudes are influenced by the curriculum. This influence is confirmed in a personal communication (2008) in which she states that after using the curriculum, she has "had discussions around standard/nonstandard and formal/informal...even 'correcting' teachers about using terms like correct and proper and 'speak right'!" As a volunteer for this research study, the teacher's response should not be taken as representative. Language attitudes can be stubbornly resistant to change. Their persistence is evident in the outtake interviews with students. In describing the differences between his school and home language practices,

one student says, "Around my friends I would talk in like slang, and in school talking to like you or my teachers I would talk properly." Responding to the same question, another student says, "In school I try to use proper English and at home I talk any way." These responses express the same characterizations of standard English as "proper" and nonstandard as "slang" as the intake interviews. Even as such characterizations persist, however, there is evidence of evolving attitudes. When asked what she knows about grammar, the same student who gave the previous response replies: "English is all the same even if you use Ebonics. It's really the same. You just using another word. It might not sound the same but everyone can communicate."

5.4   REGISTER AND PATTERNS OF CURRICULAR ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPEDIMENTS

Register-based lessons include those lessons that seek to explicate some of the important features of academic language using the theoretical framework of SFL—these begin with Lesson 21 and continue to the end of the unit. The data from the register-based lessons reveal two striking trends: a very high frequency of Weaving as an Achievement and of Misinterpreting as an Impediment (see Figure 5.11 below). Both the Achievement and the Impediment seem, at least partly, to follow from the same cause: the teacher's perception that the new content is closely linked to the objectives and methods of the writing instruction that are part of the school's established curriculum. This perception prompts the teacher to make numerous connections between the language curriculum and other relevant classroom learning; hence, there are abundant Weaving events during the register lessons. That same perception, however, also prompts the teacher to sometimes conflate the objectives of the register lessons with the objectives of

the established writing curriculum, leading to a relatively high frequency of

Misinterpreting events, as well.
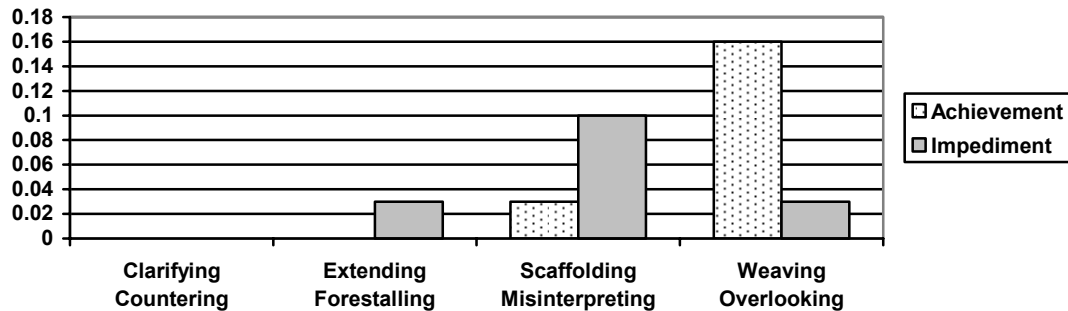
Figure 5.11. Chart illustrating the frequency of all Achievements and Impediments (events/min.) for register-based lessons. Clarifying: 0.00 events/min. (n=0); Countering: 0.00 events/min. (n=0); Extending: 0.00 events/min. (n=0); Forestalling: 0.03 events/min. (n=2); Scaffolding: 0.03 events/min. (n=2); Misinterpreting: 0.10 events/min. (n=7); Weaving: 0.16 events/min. (n=11); Overlooking: 0.03 events/min. (n=2).

Regardless of a lesson's particular focus—whether it is contrastive analysis,

language ideology or register—Weaving events are consistently present. Such

consistency demonstrates that the teacher construes the curriculum to be generally

aligned with extant learning objectives. The frequency of Weaving events increases

sharply, however, during register lessons, suggesting that she finds these lessons to be

particularly salient to the work of her classroom (see Figure 5.12 below). One such event

is described in section 5.1 above, during which the teacher uses a discussion on

identifying Given and New information as an occasion for talking about the relationship

between pronouns and antecedents. As she does in that event, the teacher regularly uses

opportunities in the register lessons to explain grammatical or rhetorical features that she

perceives to be problematic in her students' academic writing. In reviewing conjunctive

resources in Lesson 28 (Appendix A, page 272), for example, the teacher tells her

students that she wants students to keep the handout with them as they write their final

papers because "the last hurdle to get across is to really get your writing to move

smoothly from one thought to the next, from one paragraph to next." Likewise in Lesson

26 (Appendix A, page 262) the teacher advises the students to hold on to their completed

handouts and use them as references because "when you go back over them and start

thinking about what they're suggesting you do, they're going to help you improve your

writing."

Figure 5.12. Chart illustrating the frequency of Weaving (events/min.) for segments of the curriculum with different foci. Contrastive Analysis: 0.09 events/min. (n=15); Language Ideology: 0.08 events/min. (n=7); Register: 0.16 events/min. (n=11).

   In stressing the connection between the content of the lesson and the students'

upcoming writing assignment, the teacher analogizes their current work on conjunctive

resources to previous work the class had done on rhetorical transitions. At the end of

Lesson 28 and again at the end of Lesson 29, the teacher states that the conjunctive

resources collected on the handout are "good transition words." The concept of

transition words is exceedingly common in secondary composition pedagogy. It

frequently designates words that logically link one paragraph to another and are

prescribed for a *topic sentence*, the first and rhetorically controlling sentence of a

paragraph. By conceptually linking conjunctive resources and transition words, the

teacher is trying to stress the relevancy of the lesson to the students' academic work.

Although conjunctive resources and transition words are not conceptually equivalent (at

least as transition words are conventionally taught in secondary schools), there is enough

overlap so that invoking transition words in these lessons is potentially more helpful to the students than problematic.[4]

The teacher, in fact, invokes concepts from other classroom writing instruction frequently during the register lessons. She clearly construes imbrications of content and relevant applications of the register lessons to the students' academic writing. While many of these inter-curricular invocations, like the teacher's linking of conjunctive resources and transition words, are potentially helpful, others sometimes instantiate misrepresentations of the curriculum under study. In other words, the teacher sometimes appears to perceive segments of the register lessons as a familiar way of teaching and learning academic writing with some new packaging rather than a new way of approaching academic writing with some recognizable components. This mistaken sense of familiarity is partially responsible for the relatively high frequency of Misinterpreting events during the register-based lessons (see Figure 5.13 below). In the following excerpt, for example, the teacher summarizes the purpose of Lesson 26 (see Appendix A, page 265):

> Teacher: What it's having us take a look at here is using different kinds of structures instead of always having a noun verb (#) object kind of sentence. To have a more complex sentence, to use these different types of (#) um grammatical structures is going to help to make your writing much more complex and much more interesting. Okay.

In this excerpt, the teacher interprets the lesson as an introduction to techniques for creating sentence variety. Lesson 26, however, is not about sentence variety at all. The lesson is designed to help students manipulate information. By deploying grammatical structures like prepositional phrases and relative clauses, a writer can make sentences more information-dense—information density being a hallmark of some

academic texts. The purpose of the lesson is to help students to manage information in their academic writing more intentionally, not to arbitrarily add sentence variety. *Sentence variety*, though, is a component of conventional secondary writing instruction. Additionally, the grammatical structures that are part of the lesson, like prepositional phrases and appositives, are commonly included as techniques for adding sentence variety. One representative online writing guide, for example, advises, "The use of appositives is another excellent tool to introduce sentence variety" (Baack 2008). Another trumpets, "Variety is the spice of life!" and includes reference to appositives, relative clauses and other grammatical structures that are part of Lesson 26 (Dillon 2007). Thus, the same grammatical structures are represented differently in the lesson and in conventional writing instruction. In this instance, that leads the teacher to substitute the objective of conventional writing instruction for objective of the lesson.
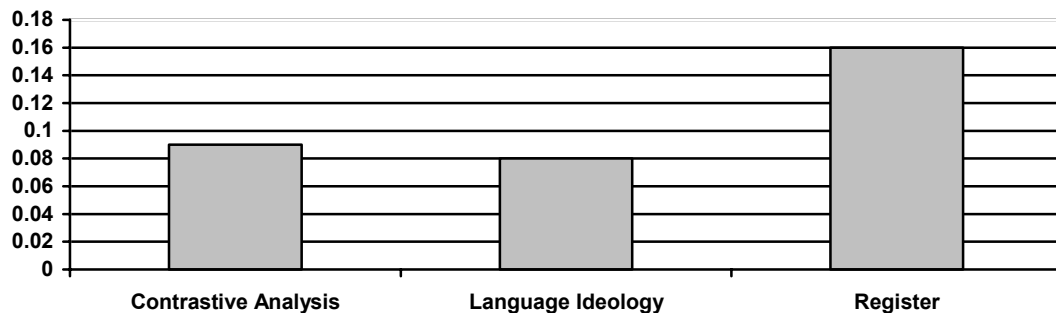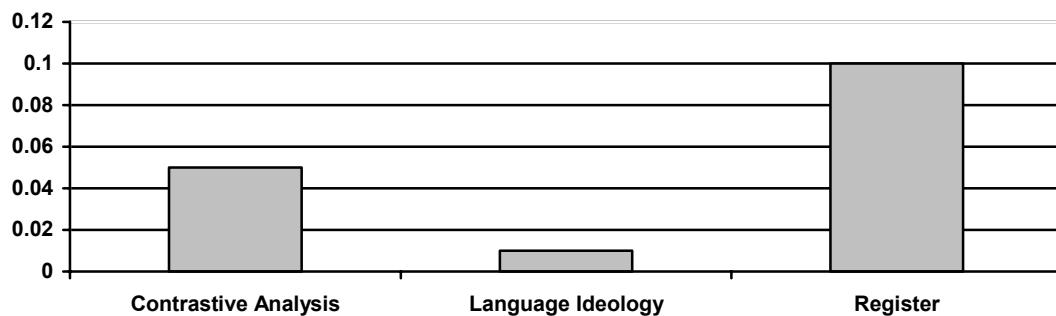
Figure 5.13. Chart illustrating the frequency of Misinterpreting (events/min.) for segments of the curriculum with different foci. Contrastive Analysis: 0.05 events/min. (n=9); Language Ideology: 0.01 events/min. (n=1); Register: 0.10 events/min. (n=7).

Such confusion is not, of course, the sole cause of the relatively high rate of Misinterpreting events during the register lessons. Some of the Misinterpreting is predictable simply because the register lessons operate at a greater level of abstraction than the contrastive analysis lessons. The contrastive analysis lessons examine lexical or inflectional features, while the register lessons examine phrasal, clausal or multi-clausal

features. The larger constituent structures are more complex and can be more susceptible to misunderstanding.

Lastly, I would like to point out the need for the content of the curriculum to be fully integrated into the writing and editing processes of the students. While the level of Weaving events is certainly promising, not just in the register lessons but throughout the curriculum, such events represent connections negotiated during classroom talk. The next and crucial hurdle is getting students to translate those connections made during discussion into changes or new awareness in their writing practices. That kind of application requires guided practice, which did not occur during this curricular implementation.

In order for students to grasp how something like the Known/New Contract can improve their writing, for example, they need many opportunities to practice applying the concept. One way to provide such opportunities would be to integrate the concepts presented in the lessons into the writing process. The writing process is, generally, presented as comprising five steps:

- Prewriting/Invention
- Writing/Drafting
- Revising
- Editing/Proofing
- Publishing

The kinds of activities that are introduced in the lessons can comfortably be made a part of the revising stage. After composing a draft of a paper, students could circle all of the sentence Topics in their first body paragraph. After quickly identifying their Topics, students might create a T-graph of their Topics and Comments. This additional step

sometimes makes it easier to see and analyze the kinds of patterns that are presented and discussed in the lessons. Students could, for example, use such T-graphs to chart the development of New information in the body paragraphs they are examining.

The absence of such practice during the study is not at all surprising given that this implementation was the teacher's first experience with the curriculum. Nonetheless, finding ways to encourage and support robust integration of lesson content and writing instruction is critical to the project of implementing linguistically informed curricula.

The outtake student writing samples illustrate the exigency for greater application of the curricular content. The outtake samples are the students' final essay prior to graduation. The assignment asks students to research the biography of a historical figure who suffered from either a physical of mental ailment and examine the impact of that ailment on her or his life and achievements. Students wrote about figures including Vincent Van Gough, John Nash, Charlie Parker and Howard Hughes. The following is a sample introduction from a student's essay on Isaac Newton:

> Sir Isaac Newton was born in Lincolnshire on December 25, 1642 and died on March 20, 1727, in Kensington London. Mr. Isaac Newton enjoyed a productive life. He was really excited about math and considered himself a mathematician. He never had a father figure in his life because his dad died before he was born. His father spent his days working on his farm. Isaac Newton's father would always dream that his unborn son would grow up and be a farmer like he was.

Before analyzing this segment of text, I want to acknowledge the complexity of the assignment. None of the students had written a research paper prior to this. Thus, much of the time and energy allocated to the assignment was directed at teaching the students appropriate research practices. Additionally, the nature of the assignment demands extraordinarily sophisticated rhetorical control. It requires students to blend chronological narrative and academic argument—no easy task for any writer, let alone

for students stretching their research muscles for the first time. That being said, a glance at the sample paragraph above reveals a familiar Thematic pattern. Separated into its constituent clauses, the paragraph appears as follows:

16 Sir Isaac Newton was born in Lincolnshire on December 25, 1642.

17 *and* died on March 20, 1727, in Kensington London.

18 Mr. Isaac Newton enjoyed a productive life.

19 He never had a father figure in his life

20 *because* his dad died

21 *before* he was born.

22 His father spent his days working on his farm.

23 Isaac Newton's father would always dream

24 *that* his unborn son would grow up and be a farmer

25 *like* he was.

Figure 5.14. An outtake student writing sample broken down into clauses. The Themes of the clauses are identified as follows: ☐ = Theme; ☐ = marked Theme; underline = predicated Theme; *italics* = textual Theme; [[ ]] = rankshifted clause (i.e., a clause that is functioning as something other than a clause, one that has changed rank).

The paragraph manifests the same constant Theme pattern that is discussed in Chapter 3. The student Thematizes Sir Isaac Newton or his father in all ten clauses. Also, the Themes are all simple, none are marked and there is limited use of conjunctive resources. The paragraph very much follows the Thematic template of an encyclopedia entry, which is not surprising given the nature of the assignment. Furthermore, since the essay prompt focuses on the relationship between disease and achievement, one would expect Newton's ailment to figure prominently in both Themes and Rhemes, but that does not surface in the paper until a few paragraphs later. Another student paper exhibits similar problems in its Thematic pattern, though here the final sentences clearly try to attend to the assignment prompt:

> Charlie Parker was a self-taught Alto Saxophonist from Kansas City. Charlie had
> an average family but things weren't so average in Charlie's life. He got addicted

to drugs, heroin to be exact at a very young age. He was a very talented and gifted person who worked to become a legend which is what he is called today. Charlie had so much going on with his career and personal life. Charlie developed an acute stress disorder due to all the traumatic events that have happened throughout his life. From losing loved ones to the effects of drugs, concerts and all the fans helped Charlie live a far from normal life.

The assessment rubric for the assignment establishes four ranks for the evaluative criteria: 1) Not Yet; 2) Approaching Standard; 3) Meets Standard and 4) Exceeds Standard. On the rubric, the evaluative criteria that are likely influenced by Thematic choice and information structure include:

- Establishes a purpose for the interpretation—has a thesis and focus for interpretation/analysis
- Uses an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose and specified audience in order to focus my paper
- Effective, varied sentences

In these areas, both the essays examined above scored a 2 or Approaching Standard. It would appear, then, that these students could have benefited from locating and characterizing the Themes in their introductions or mapping the Given/New structure in these paragraphs—applying the activities of the lessons to their writing.

That the teacher did not attempt such application is partly attributable to the newness of the content, as I noted above. In addition, the implementation of the register lessons and the writing assignment both occurred in the final weeks of the school year with its attendant scheduling pressures. Furthermore, much of the revision process was overseen by tutors without any exposure to the curricular content. The potential benefit to students of better synthesizing curricular content and their writing processes, however, is evident. Such synthesis, therefore, needs to be supported either through adjustments in

the instructional design, by devising other mechanisms like teacher training modules, or both.

5.5   CONCLUSION

The qualitative analysis of the curricular implementation demonstrates how the teacher is able to manage capably linguistic content with which she is unfamiliar. She consistently emphasizes the essential rule-governedness of all varieties of English. She is able to connect content among lessons within the curriculum and to salient classroom learning outside of it. Additionally, she is able to make connections between curricular content and her students' own linguistic practices. Her ability to make these various conceptual connections and her reinforcement of grammatical systematicity suggest that the teacher's lack of content expertise is not a barrier to the effective implementation of a linguistically informed curriculum, as long as the curriculum has sufficient guidance and structure. This is an important finding given that a lack of sufficient implementation is a critical barrier to the success of linguistically informed curricula, particularly as such curricula are scaled up, and their success is increasingly dependent on teachers with limited linguistic training (Ai 2002).

Some of the teacher's effective implementation is certainly the product of her own enthusiasm and teaching expertise, as well as the curiosity and good will of her students. Some of that effectiveness, however, can also be attributed to features of the curricular design: the inclusion of well targeted background material, the relative brevity of the lessons and the emphasis on academic language and writing. Addressing the latter design imperative necessitates attention to register since academic writing is, most often, characterized not only by a standard dialect but also by constellations of register features.

The study's finding that students sometimes have difficulty distinguishing code-switching from register-shifting further underscores the need to incorporate register into linguistically informed curricula.

Integrating dialect and register content, of course, is not easy. During the implementation of register-based lessons, the teacher sometimes struggles. Some of that difficulty can be attributed to the register-based lessons' seeming familiarity. Because the lessons touch on issues like sentence and organizational structures, logical connections and verb choice that are addressed by conventional high school composition pedagogy in other ways, the teacher sometimes conflates the purposes of the register-based approach with the objectives of more familiar instructional approaches. That conflation, in part, leads the teacher to misconstrue elements of the register-based lessons more than the dialect-based ones, which are more obviously distinct from the conventional work of the English classroom.

Some of the teacher's difficulty can also be attributed to the design of the lessons themselves. The attempt to join dialect and register instruction is, arguably, the most ambitious goal of the instructional design. It is also one for which there is no precedent. Some of the register-based lessons are, in fact, overly ambitious. They attempt to cover too much content, too quickly and with too little scaffolding. The reworking of these lessons, thus, became a major focus of the revision process, which is partly the subject of the final chapter.

The study results suggest other challenges, too, ones that are not specific to the register-based lessons but are more general to the project of implementing linguistically informed curricula. The teacher's ability to make connections between the lesson content

and the students' own classroom work is critical—for example, by having students find and code-switch dialect features in their own writing or having them chart the information structure in one of their own essay introductions. It is through such extensions of the curriculum that students can more clearly appreciate applications of the content and can practice and further develop their linguistic facilities. Although the teacher does unexpectedly well in making various connections to the linguistic content during classroom discussion, the students need more guided practice in making such connections during their writing and editing processes. Given that this study was the teacher's first experience with the curriculum, it is not surprising that she was not yet prepared to apply the curricular content in this way. Nonetheless, this is an area that is attended to in the revision of the curriculum. Additionally, the application of content might be productively addressed as part of teacher workshops or training. If curricular materials can effectively support the general implementation of linguistically informed content, the limited resources available to train and support teachers can be targeted at facilitating teachers' integration of that content into the teaching and learning of their own classrooms.

In spite of the obstacles, the possibilities for linguistically informed curricula that this study highlights are unmistakable. The study evidences important changes in the metalinguistic awareness of the teacher and her students during the curricular implementation and in the outtake interviews—development that can promote students' academic achievement (Blake and Cutler 2003). In addition to revealing those changes, the study debunks the oft-repeated claim that grammar is boring. The high levels of student participation during the lessons demonstrate the curiosity that many students have

about language; it is not the content but how that content is presented that can sap

students' interest. Furthermore, the teacher sees the linguistic content as relevant to

established goals and presents it to students that way. The challenge, then, is to help

teachers—as the participating teacher in this study has—to recognize the value of

linguistically informed content and to help linguists recognize the importance of

fashioning that content into usable, accessible and relevant curricula.

CHAPTER 5 NOTES

[1] For the complete raw data generated in Transana, see Appendix B.

[2] The review, rehearsal or activation of prior learning can, for instance, be a part of an "anticipatory set" in Hunter's widely practiced lesson-planning structure (Hunter 1976, 1989).

[3] These samples are from the pre-intervention data collected for the study and recreate all of the teacher's markings for the given segment of text.

[4] In the curriculum, conjunctive resources are presented as words or phrases (including coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs) used to logically connect sentences or parts of sentences. The curriculum divides conjunctive resources into four basic categories of logical relationships: addition, comparison, time, and consequence. Often, transition words are presented in secondary writing curricula much as they are on the *Purdue OWL* as words for "connect[ing] paragraphs and turn[ing] disconnected writing into a unified whole" (Weber 2006). Teachers sometimes advise them, as does the teacher in this study, to make writing "move smoothly" or to improve "flow." Clearly, there is some commonality in the general principle of "connection," but the professed motivations for such connection (expressing logical relationships versus unifying or improving flow) and the potential locations for those connections (anywhere versus a few key rhetorical positions in paragraphs) distinguishes the two approaches.

CHAPTER 6

AFTERWORD

Part of what this study seeks to challenge are established notions in the educational community and among compositionists of what it means to teach grammar and in the linguistics community of what it means to design linguistically informed instruction. At the heart of the challenge to both communities is an attempt in the authoring of the curriculum and in the research methodology to articulate an approach that synthesizes dialect and register. What educators can gain from this synthesis is powerful insight into students' writing practices. Educators and rhetoricians can see, for example, that grammar is not separate from the development of argument, but rather that arguments are developed through the deployment of specific grammatical choices on the part of a writer. With a broader understanding of what *grammar* means, teachers and scholars of writing can recognize that the development of argument includes the deployment of syntactical choices, which includes dialect features, as well as the presentation of information via nominal groups, conjunctive resources and other register features. Additionally, by recognizing the difference between dialect and register educators and scholars can understand the distinctions among either the skills they are trying to teach or the textual features they are studying. Armed with such insights, teachers might be able to more clearly explicate the array of grammatical possibilities available to students and the expectations for different kinds of academic writing.

Grammar, then, can be presented as a resource, a resource students can draw on to shape their rhetorical choices rather than an inflexible set of rules that circumscribe and limit students' writing.

A coherent approach to dialect and register can also help linguists to theorize and analyze the written texts and spoken discourse that students produce and perform in schools. From the writing samples and interviews gathered for this study, it is clear that one dialect is not performed to the exclusion of another, neither is one register performed to the exclusion of others. Rather than existing as discrete or binary entities, dialects can be imbricated. Thus, in their speech and in their writing, the students in this study code-switch to varying degrees from AAE into StE. In this way, code-switching is more like a dimmer than a toggle switch—there are gradations not just "on" and "off" positions. The same is true of registers, which the students frequently blend in their writing. The students draw on register features, sometimes formal sometimes informal, that are more familiar parts of their repertoires even as they try to imitate academic register features that are less familiar. Current code-switching models that linguists have developed for schools in the U.S. collapse formal registers into standard English and informal registers into nonstandard English. The distinctions among dialects and registers need to be made so that teachers and students can more clearly appreciate the language tasks they are asked to explain, perform and evaluate.

As linguists should recognize the complex relationships among dialects and registers, they also need to exercise caution in how they present that complexity to teachers and students. I am not advocating for linguists to present a "dumbed down" version of our language models to teachers. On the contrary, it is clear that a version of

code-switching more complex than most current ones needs to be presented to teachers—one that includes discussion of not just dialect, but also register since register features, particularly in the writing of secondary students, are more likely than dialect features to influence evaluations of that writing. However, linguists also need to be mindful of the pragmatic realities of classrooms and the content (like students' facility with standard written English) for which teachers and students are held accountable.

Beyond the need for a more coherent approach to dialect and register, the study described in this dissertation has additional implications for educators and linguists. For English educators, the study demonstrates that linguistically informed content can support established learning objectives, that the teaching and learning of language and grammar can foster academically salient changes in metalinguistic awareness, that teachers' lack of content-area expertise need not be a barrier to the implementation of linguistically informed content and that such content can be an engaging subject for students and teachers, alike. For linguists, the study demonstrates that consideration of schools' existing goals and practices is critical for the implementability of linguistically informed curricula and that, more generally, instructional design is important.

It is this final point that I would like to drive home in this closing chapter. If linguists are serious about the project of linguistically informed curricula and gaining such curricula widespread acceptance, then they need to engage with the actual practices and contexts of schools. Such engagement means that linguists will need to do more of the creative heavy lifting. Linguists cannot rely on teachers without the time or expertise to produce linguistically informed instructional materials. We, as linguists, need to be more actively involved in the design and development of curricular materials that

teachers and administrators believe are usable and relevant. Linguists like Adger, Reaser, Wheeler and Wolfram are already doing significant work in this regard (Reaser and Wolfram 2008; Reaser and Adger 2007; Wheeler and Swords 2006). Further progress necessitates understanding and taking seriously the instructional design process: from identifying objectives, to laying out a scope and sequence, to authoring lessons and coherent units. I describe much of that process in Chapter 4, so there is no need to revisit it here. There is, however, an aspect of the design process that I allude to in that chapter but have yet to discuss in detail: its iterative nature.

Authoring curricula is a process that requires repeated reflection and revision. One must evaluate and re-evaluate what in a curriculum is working and what is not. Are the learning objectives being met? Are the instructional activities aligned with the learning targets? Do the instructional activities engage the students and the teacher? Do the students and the teacher find the learning useful? Is the content too complicated? Too simple? In response to such questions, the curriculum authored for this study has gone through revision processes since it was first implemented. (For the revised curriculum, see Brown (2009).) Because I believe that these revisions are critical steps in instructional design, I want to discuss them briefly.

6.1   REVISING THE REGISTER LESSONS

The register lessons received the most attention in the revision process. In her outtake interview, the teacher reported difficulty only with Lesson 25 (see Appendix A, page 262). In light of the frequency of Misinterpreting discussed in Chapter 5, it was clear that more than that one lesson was in need of attention. Based on the data from the

videotapes, I felt that the lessons tried to do too much too quickly. Therefore, much of the revision focused on expanding the lessons and building in more scaffolding.

Information structure was one part of the curriculum that is particularly important to students' writing and one that the participating class seemed on the cusp of understanding but was in need of additional clarification. As I discussed in Chapter 3, one effective strategy for developing information is to pick up a Rhematic element in a subsequent Theme:

$$\text{Theme}_1 \quad + \quad \text{Rheme}_1$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$\text{Theme}_2 \quad + \quad \text{Rheme}_2$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$\text{Theme}_3 \quad + \quad \text{Rheme}_3$$
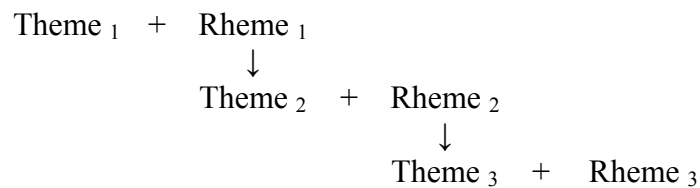
In the first iteration of the lessons, this important strategy was given neither enough emphasis nor enough scaffolding.

The first step in the revision of these lessons was to give the strategy a name: *Chaining*. The strategy is, then, distinguished from other common informational patterns that allow writers to present Given information before New: *Constant*, whereby the Theme is simply repeated (*King Lear → He*) or *Derived*, whereby a part or a characteristic of a Theme is taken up (*A squirrel → Its tail*). In the revised curriculum, students are first given practice identifying these types of patterns. Then, students are introduced to Chaining strategies—repetition, nominalization and substitution—and given opportunities to recognize those strategies in textual examples (see Figure 6.1 below). Following this exercise, students practice nominalization—using derivational morphemes to create nouns from adjectives and verbs like *insignificant*, *resent*, *illustrate*, etc. Finally, students are provided with sample sentences and asked to practice Chaining

using the three different techniques. The purpose of these revisions is to provide students with a clearer vocabulary for exploring the processes under study, graduated steps for developing their understanding of those processes and a well-defined framework for performing the processes on their own.

Each of the following examples have information connected in a Chained pattern. For each one, identify the Chaining technique as:

    A. Repetition
    B. Nominalization
    C. Substitution

1. _____

Topic	Comment
Apple	announced Wednesday in its fiscal third-quarter earnings report that it sold 270,000 iPhones in its first two days of release.
The announcement	follows AT&T's report on Tuesday that 146,000 iPhones had been activated in the first 30 hours of sale before the closing of the quarter on June 30. (*Newsday*)

Figure 6.1. An example of a revised exercise in the register lessons.

In addition to these modifications, lessons on verb processes were added. Depending on their context and purpose, texts construe verb processes and the relationship between processes and their participants differently. In SFL, these processes are organized into semantic categories (Material, Behavioral, Mental, Verbal, Relational and Existential). The types of processes and participants that academic texts construe are salient register features. Because the participating teacher reported that verbs were an area in which her students struggled and because verb processes is a feature identified by Christie (2002b) and Schleppegrell (Forthcoming) as critical to effective academic writing, I authored three new lessons. The first of these lessons simply has students explore verb processes in the same way that they successfully explored conjunctive resources in Lesson 28 of the original curriculum. The second lesson partly replaces

some of the conceptual content of the lessons on expanding and contracting information,

which seemed to be overly ambitious in the original curriculum. In the revised

curriculum, the students examine participants of verbs, particularly abstract participants

of verbs. The third lesson has students probe the various functions of the verb *to be* in

academic writing. In its revised form, the section on register is reorganized—eliminating

three lessons and adding eight more. The original sequence was as follows:

Lesson 21: Nominal Groups
Lesson 22: Topic/Comment Structure in Sentences
Lesson 23: Topic/Comment Structure, Cont.
Lesson 24: Known/New Contract
Lesson 25: Known/New Contract, Cont.
Lesson 26: Expanding and Contracting Information
Lesson 27: Expanding and Contracting Information, Cont.
Lesson 28: Conjunctive Resources
Lesson 29: Conjunctive Resources, Cont.

The revised sequence is:

Lesson 23: Language Variation According to Purpose
Lesson 24: Introduction to Topic/Comment
Lesson 25: Topic/Comment in Academic Writing
Lesson 26: Known/New Contract
Lesson 27: Identifying Known/New Information
Lesson 28: Chaining Information
Lesson 29: Nominalization
Lesson 30: Chaining Information, Cont.
Lesson 31: Conjunctive Resources
Lesson 32: Conjunctive Resources, Cont.
Lesson 33: Types of Verb Processes
Lesson 34: Abstract Participants of Verbs
Lesson 35: Verbs of Being
Lesson 36: Academic Language Review

6.2   REVISING THE EPITOME LESSONS

In Chapter 4, I discuss the purpose of beginning the unit with epitome lessons—

lessons that capture the most fundamental and inclusive principles of the curriculum.

These lessons, spanning Lessons 1-6, focus on the grammatical and social functions of *ain't*, and they introduce some basic concepts of grammatical systematicity and situational variation. In the outtake interview with the participating teacher, she reported that these lessons went on too long and that some students resisted discussing *ain't* because they maintained that they were not users of the feature.

The teacher's second complaint is an intriguing one because, based on my observations of the class, most students were users of *ain't*, though I could not claim with any certainty that all of them were. It is possible that some of the expressed reluctance that the teacher reported stems from the extreme markedness of *ain't* as "wrong" or "improper." Students' sense of that markedness could well be heightened by the presence of the teacher and the classroom context—even if they were users of the feature, they certainly wouldn't use it *there*.

The possibility that markedness as much as non-use can motivate students' discomfort with the feature raises a dilemma: would it better to keep *ain't* as the focus of the epitome lessons and simply confront its markedness or to begin the curriculum with a different feature? While a case can be made for either alternative, I chose the latter. In the curriculum, I have tried to craft an approach that develops students' and teachers' linguistic awareness and students' linguistic repertoires by facilitating their understanding of how English works. Certainly, part of that approach requires combating counterproductive folk theories or misrepresentations of language. However, I have tried to avoid giving prominence to my own social judgments about language, preferring to provide teachers and students with information about language and letting them make such judgments for themselves. In light of that orientation, I decided that it would be less

fraught to begin with a different feature. When revising the epitome lessons, then, I chose to begin with quotative *be + like* (e.g., *She was like, "Are you crazy?"*) and to pare down their number.

Although quotative *like* is certainly marked, it is not freighted with the same sociolinguistic history as *ain't*. While *ain't* is often construed as marking correctness, education or class, quotative *like* is often construed as marking youth and gender, even as its users become increasingly diverse (Dailey-O'Cain 2000; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004). The diversity of its users as well as its saliency to youth makes quotative *like* a potentially engaging place for students to begin language and grammar study and to introduce the concepts of grammatical systematicity and situational variation, as the epitome lessons are intended to do. The revised curriculum, then, opens with four epitome lessons on *like*, followed by a lesson on the grammatical function of *ain't* and two lessons examining *ain't* in the dictionary.

6.3   PARTS OF SPEECH

I note in Chapter 5 that the participating class seemed to struggle with parts of speech during the study. Much of the class's difficulty appeared to stem from a reliance on semantic definitions of parts of speech (i.e., a noun is a person, place or thing; a verb is an action; etc.). I posited that it might be more useful for teachers and students to think about both the function and the form of a word when trying to determine part of speech. The need to attend to grammatical form and function in revisions of the curriculum was additionally emphasized by Wheeler (2008) in consultation on the curriculum.

The approach to parts of speech is modified, for example, in the lessons during which students are asked to compose their own dictionary entries. The revised lessons

introduce students to some simple grammatical and morphosyntactic tests (see Figure 6.2

below). Note that in the curriculum students are advised that such tests have exceptions

(e.g., standard English modal auxiliaries do not take the *-s* inflexion for third person

singular). As I earlier maintained, the exploration of grammatical function and form may

not eliminate teachers' and students' struggles with parts of speech, but it can move them

away from the kind of person-place-or-thing tests that seem to be more confusing than

helpful, and it supports the overall goal of a more linguistically informed curriculum.

Verb: Function Test	Verb: Form Test
can accept a subject; a subject pronoun (*I*, *you*, *he*, *she*, *it*, *they*) can work for this test (I *sing*, they *study*)	can be marked for time—like past time, for example, either by changing form or being marked with the ending *-ed* in Standard English (*sang*, *studied*)
	can accept the third person singular marker *-s* for present time in Standard English (he *sings*, she *studies*)

Figure 6.2. An example of the revised approach to parts of speech.

6.4 PRESENTATION OF THE LESSONS

Finally, advising on the lessons, Sweetland (2007) observed that they were too

"text-y." The participating teacher, also, stated in her outtake interview that she would

have liked some information to be more accessibly presented. Presentation of

information and instructions matters when teachers are pressed for time; a curriculum

needs to be inviting as well as functional. Reaser (2006) is a good example of how

presentation and graphic design can be used effectively. In response to the teacher's

suggestion and Sweetland's critique, I tried to make the lessons more readable by pulling

out and highlighting crucial information as "Key Points" or "Important Terms" (see

Figures 6.3 and 6.4 below).

Lessons 1-4
Discovering Some Grammatical Rules for *Like*
BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Why are we starting by having students investigate *like*? Given that our stated goal is to extend students' facility with Standard English, this might seem an odd point of departure. What we are trying to do early in the unit is to get students thinking and talking about language. Part of that process is developing a vocabulary and a framework for understanding how the language they use every day works. *Like* is a word that makes for interesting and productive opening lessons for several reasons:

1. Most speakers of English are familiar with the use of *like*.
2. *Like* has various uses, and its use is quite complex (and rule-governed).
3. Students will begin contrasting one system that employs *like* with one that does not, thereby setting some groundwork for more extensive contrastive analysis.
4. Though some consider it uneducated or illiterate, *like* remains in productive use.
5. The continued use of *like* invites questions as to its social and rhetorical effects.

    Like has been a part of the English language since at least the 10th century, and probably well before, and has all sorts of accepted uses in Standard English: as a verb and a preposition, among others. In the late 70's or early 80's, some new uses began to be popularized, and through movies like *Valley Girl* and *Clueless* have become associated with the speech of Southern California adolescent girls although the use is much more extensive. These uses are considered by many people to be the careless (and sometimes irritating) speech of young people, yet the use of *like*, if anything, is continuing to spread. What's more, the stereotypical uses of *like* in "valley girl" speech have rules. Consider the boldfaced *likes* in the following quotations (we'll talk about the underlined one shortly):

> **Like**, it's not cool at all! **Like**, it's all this stuff that tastes <u>like</u> nothing and it's supposed to be so good for you. Why couldn't they, **like**, open a Pizza Hut or something? (*Valley Girl*)

> This weekend he called me up and he's all "Where were you today?" and I'm **like** "I'm at my Grandmother's house..." (*Clueless*)

    In order to figure out how *like* is being used, we need to ask ourselves a couple of questions: How is *like* functioning, and is there a pattern? In the first example, *like* is being used to emphasize words and phrases, to focus the listener's attention on certain parts of the narrative. It's being used, in technical terms, as a *discourse marker*. In the second example, *like* is being used with *to be* as a verb to introduce quoted speech. This type of verb is called a *quotative*. (Note that *be + all* ["he's all..."] earlier in the example

🔑 Key Points

- *Like* has both Standard and Nonstandard uses.

- Even though some consider Nonstandard uses of *like* to be indiscriminant, such uses are rule-governed and grammatical.

- As a Nonstandard feature, *like* can be used as a quotative and a discourse marker.

📖 Important Terms

discourse marker: A word or phrase that divides or organizes spoken discourse into units.

English has many discourse markers, for example *I mean*, *you know*, *well* and *okay*. As a discourse marker, *like* can serve several functions. It can be a place holder, in that case working similarly to *uh* or *um*. It can intensify or focus the listener on certain information. Sometimes this kind of usage comes before hyperbole: "Fine I just got a, a lot of reading to do, **like** five hundred years of it, so..." (*The OC*). Conversely, *like* can function as a hedge when the speaker is unsure of the information that follows: "She looks a little older don't you think, **like**, maybe she's in college" (*The OC*).

Figure 6.3. An example of the revised format.

LESSON PLAN 30

Objectives:
1. Students will practice Chaining Topics that are linked to a preceding Comment.
2. Students will apply their knowledge of parts of speech.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 30:1.

Procedures:
1. You can tell students that they will be completing their work on Chaining Topics. (3 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 30:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the directions with students. They are going to be composing Topics for the missing ones in the second sentence of examples A-C using nominalization, substitution and repetition. (3 min.)
4. Have students complete the handout either individually or in small groups. (5 min.)
5. Review their responses. (6 min.)

✓ **Answer Key**

Handout 30:1

1. *His actions...* (or *His impulsiveness...*)
2. *His lack of control...* (or *recklessness, impetuousness*, etc.
3. *His audacity...*
4. *His boldness...* (or *moment of bravery, daring*, etc.)
5. *These opportunities...*

Known/New

💡 **Other Ideas**

Have students choose paragraphs from their own writing and track the Known/New patterns from sentence to sentence. Do they keep to the Known/New Contract? Do they over-rely on the Constant pattern? Do they ever Chain information?

Figure 6.4. A second example of the revised format, which includes additional ideas for the application of the content.

In addition to making the curriculum more comprehensible and usable, the design changes include new content—"Other Ideas" at the end of each lesson intended to help teachers develop further applications of student learning (see Figure 6.4 above) and "Help!" sidebars on student handouts intended to further explain concepts in the lessons.

6.5   CODA

The process of instructional design is one that demands reflection and on-going commitment. No doubt, the changes to the curriculum that have been described here will

be followed by new ones when classrooms that are using the curriculum in the Detroit-area, in Chicago and in Pittsburgh report on their experiences and make suggestions. It is certainly a process that can be both challenging and humbling. Yet, if linguists are to have a greater impact in schools, they will need to take on more of the work of instructional design, be more involved in the education of preservice teachers and build more partnerships with schools. In doing so, linguists will need to engage with the complex and sometimes conflicting needs of administrators, teachers and students. That engagement requires interaction in an educational environment that is shaped by established learning objectives and standardized testing. Linguists may, as many educators do, work to reform that environment. Even so, linguists need to author work that acknowledges it and some of the pragmatic realities of teaching and learning. Wide-spread adoption of any future linguistically informed initiatives is dependent on schools' recognition of their value, their relevance and their usability. Linguists have important contributions to make to schools—in helping students and teachers better understand the features of academic language, in developing students' and teachers' grammatical awareness of standard and nonstandard varieties and in fostering schools' support of students regardless of the variety of English they speak—but it is up to linguists in collaboration with schools, not the schools by themselves, to make those contributions not just a promise but a reality.

APPENDIX A

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTED FOR THE STUDY

My education and that of my Black associates were quite different from the education of our white schoolmates. In the classroom we all learned past participles, but in the streets and in our homes the Blacks learned to drop s*'s from plurals and suffixes from past-tense verbs. We were alert to the gap separating the written word from the colloquial. We learned to slide out of one language and into another without being conscious of the effort. At school, in a given situation, we might respond with "That's not unusual." But in the street, meeting the same situation, we easily said, "It be's like that sometimes."*

~Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

Unit Introduction

This unit focuses specifically on the workings of the English language and the relationship of language choices to writing. It is made up of 27 short (~15-minute) lesson plans, with the idea that teachers can use 3-4 lessons a week as a way to begin class.

UNIT GOALS

The goals of this unit are to help students:

- develop their academic writing skills; and
- better understand how the English language works.

Before proceeding to some specifics of the unit and background information, we want to acknowledge upfront that writing is hard. Clearly, no one set of teaching materials and strategies can address all of the complex, individual challenges writing presents to each of our students. Developing writing skill takes diligence and practice. We hope, however, that the materials and strategies presented here will provide students and teachers alike with practical tools and ways of thinking about language that will clarify some of the demands of academic language and lead to improved student performance.

That improved performance, we hope, will be the result of helping students to think about language as a *series of choices*. In order to make those choices meaningful, students will need to recognize all of things that they do with language as well as what they are being asked to do with language in school. By thinking about language closely, students will better understand the choices that they make when they write. What's more, studying language in this way can be extremely fun and engaging. People have a natural curiosity about language, and this approach aims to take advantage of that curiosity.

The lessons in the unit center on two basic activities: 1) investigating language, and 2) applying new understandings about it. For the first, students and teachers might discuss questions like *How is* ain't *used? Who makes dictionaries and how? How is information conveyed in a written sentence?* No doubt, some questions may seem unconventional. We are more used to, for example, warning against the use of *ain't* (my grammar checker is cautioning me, even now, with its squiggly red underline) than analyzing how people use it. However, by talking about such questions, we hope that students will begin asking themselves when, why and how they use certain features of the language: *Do I ever use* ain't*? Do I use it with my friends? At school? Have I ever seen it written? Why is it used in these situations?* These kinds of questions help students recognize what they already know about language. The purpose of these activities isn't to encourage the use of an informal feature like *ain't*. Without exception, students' academic writing should be held to the highest formal standards. Rather, engaging in these questions can help students to develop some systematic and explicit knowledge about language. In the case of *ain't*, for example, students will have to have a grasp of English's tense/aspect system as well as recognize the impact of certain rhetorical choices. This knowledge can, then, be put to use in the second set of activities— application in the practice of academic writing.

STRUCTURE OF LESSONS

Each lesson is designed to be about 15 minutes long, and the lessons, while interrelated, do not need to be taught in uninterrupted succession. The lessons are designed in this way because they are intended to complement, not displace, the varied and important work that English teachers do. Many English teachers, for example, give their students guidance on composing thesis statements and topic sentences. The lessons presented here on vocabulary, information structure, and conjunctive resources could very well supplement that kind of instruction. This language-focused curriculum, then, is meant to be adaptable to the needs of teachers and their students.

Each lesson is prefaced with a brief summary of background and contextual information. This information should be enough for teachers to successfully implement the lesson without occupying too much of their valuable time. It is quite possible, however, that questions or issues may arise that are not addressed in the information we provide. This isn't necessarily a bad thing. Studying language, like studying any other complex phenomenon, does not always lend itself to straightforward answers. As with a great novel, it is often its ambiguity that proves to be the most compelling. Knowing this, however, may not relieve everyone's anxiety. We will, therefore, try to point teachers and students to relevant resources that they can use to investigate further as the need may arise. And, of course, we are always available for any consultation. As teachers and students move through the lessons, we hope that the approaches and strategies they lay out will enable students to puzzle out some of the quandaries of language on their own.

SOME BACKGROUND ON GRAMMAR

Before proceeding to the lessons, themselves, we want to explain our approach to grammar because it differs, somewhat, from approaches that teachers and students might

be used to. Traditionally, grammar is taught as a collection of rules: commas go here, this is a noun, etc. There is nothing inherently bad about these approaches; there is nothing in them, necessarily, that students must unlearn. Indeed, some of the basic vocabulary of traditional grammar (noun, verb, pronoun, preposition, etc.) is extremely useful for students to know. And knowing where to put your commas? Certainly, that's valuable. Yet, instruction in traditional grammar doesn't seem to have much of an impact on students' writing. In spite of this, teachers and students alike have a sense that knowing grammar is important. And, of course, we do too.

It can help to distinguish between two kinds of "grammar" or "grammatical rules": *prescriptive grammar rules* and *descriptive grammar rules*.

VOCABULARY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

grammar: The organization and structure of language that enables people to communicate with each other.

We use *grammatical* to mean that a sentence/utterance/feature adheres to the systematic rules of a language variety for creating comprehensible utterances. A useful distinction here is between *descriptive grammar* and *prescriptive grammar*.

prescriptive grammar: Rules of language that recommend how people should communicate.

Prescriptive rules are what most people think of as "grammatical rules." These rules make value judgments about the correctness of utterances and try to enforce one formal norm. These rules are generally associated with the written language and are typically enforced by grammarians, editors, newspaper columnists, English teachers, style book writers, etc. Examples of prescriptive rules include: Do not end a sentence with a preposition (which we will discuss); Do not use *hopefully* as a sentence adverb; Use singular pronouns to refer back to indefinite pronouns such as *everyone* (e.g., "Everyone should mind his or her manners"). So when most people ask if a sentence is "grammatical," they really are asking whether or not it adheres to a particular prescriptive rule.

descriptive grammar: Rules of language that describe how people do communicate.

These rules are generally associated with the spoken language, and generally speaking, linguists record these rules. Examples of descriptive rules for Standard English include: Adjectives precede the nouns they modify; Regular nouns form the plural by adding *–s*; Indefinite pronouns such as *everyone* are often referred back to with plural pronouns because they are semantically plural (e.g., "Everyone should mind their manners"). Descriptive rules for African American English (which differ from Standard English) include: Two or more negative forms can be used to express negation; Invariant *be* expresses habitual action (e.g., "He always be bothering me."). So when linguists ask if a sentence is "grammatical," they are really asking whether or not it adheres to the systematic patterns of a particular language variety.

When we use the term *grammatical*, we are using it in a descriptive sense. This is not meant to imply that it isn't important for students to master the prescriptive grammatical rules—as we all know, they will be judged on their control of them in many formal situations. But it is helpful to make a distinction between the two, so that Standard English is not seen as objectively "more right" than other varieties of English and so that students understand that there are two kinds of "rules."

Let's look at an example of a grammatical issue we commonly confront as teachers and the potential complications it presents.

Ending Sentences with a Preposition

There's a commonly understood prescriptive grammar rule regarding prepositions: you can't end a sentence with one. For example, you can't say *...the river that Marlow travels down*. Instead, you must say *...the river down which Marlow travels*. Yet, as speakers of English, we understand the first example perfectly well. And what's more, we say sentences like it all the time without really paying much attention. That's because English is a Germanic language and as such is capable of producing perfectly logical and understandable sentences that end with a preposition. The rule that one shouldn't is, in fact, a relic of the eighteenth century. At that time, many scholars believed that English was too unsophisticated to communicate the profound ideas of the day. The language most suitable for that task was Latin. It was thought that English could be polished by making it look more like Latin and, therefore, be made more substantial. In Latin, a grammatical sentence cannot end in a preposition. To do so would be the equivalent of something like *...the river that Marlow down travels*. It wouldn't make any sense. That Latin rule, then, was applied to English in order to improve the language and has been with us ever since. And similar rules have stuck around: that you can't split an infinitive (in Latin an infinitive is one word, in English two), or that you can't use multiple negation (an application of mathematical logic to language).

Because some of these rules are artificial applications of one language to another, they can sometimes cause problems when you try to use them uniformly. Let's look at the rule governing sentence-final prepositions again. In English, prepositions are extraordinarily useful words. We normally think of them as indicating spatial relationships (*above*, *below*, *beside*, etc.). Prepositions, however, can do many other things. One common function of prepositions is to act as part of a verb. For example, *down* is often attached to *weigh*, making the verb *to weigh down*, as in *...the foreboding that weighs Marlow down*. Used in this way, *down* carries some of its prepositional meaning (it conveys a sense of downwardness), but is really part of the verb. Therefore, it would seem strange to say *...the foreboding down which Marlow weighs*.

The rule governing sentence-final prepositions, then, isn't really a *grammatical* rule at all in the descriptive sense. In other words, it doesn't describe how English syntax works. It is, instead, a convention of usage, which doesn't mean that the convention is worthless. It is, perhaps, useful to think of these conventions like table manners. Manners don't describe how people eat food; they tell people how they should eat in light of certain social expectations. Not ending a sentence with a preposition might be akin to not eating with your fingers. Violation of the etiquette might be penalized in some social situations and unnoticed or even encouraged in others. It is useful to know the convention, but it is also important to know when, why and how to break to it.

SOME BACKGROUND ON DIALECT AND REGISTER

All living languages, like English, vary over time (language change), over geographic region and social groups (dialects), and over different types of use (register and genre).

VOCABULARY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

dialect: A variety of a language that is systematically distinct from other varieties.

Appalachian English is distinct from Standard English, which is distinct from African American English. Each dialect has its own particular vocabulary, pronunciations, verb and pronoun systems, etc. Yet, each is a variety of English and, to a greater or lesser is degree, is intelligible to speakers of other dialects. As a term, dialect is most often used to refer to spoken language but can refer to written language as well.

register: A collection of linguistic features customarily used for a particular rhetorical practice.

A register is something like what is popularly referred to as –*speak*: business-speak, political-speak, jock-speak, etc. Underlying these terms is a recognition that there is a particular way of communicating associated with a particular purpose. Register describes the vocabulary, sentence structures, verb types and other features that are common to practices like business communication or academic writing.

genre: A group of texts with common characteristics.

There are all sorts of academic genres: the lab report, the mathematical proof, the history essay, short-answer exam, etc. As English teachers we are well-attuned to genres and teach genre features all the time—thesis statements, topic sentences, particular paragraph structures—without necessarily thinking of them as describing the literary analysis genre. But there are also other features of the literary analysis genre that we may be less aware of—like the use of densely packed noun phrases in topic sentences—that may be useful for our students to work on.

The difference between usage conventions and grammar points to the way that grammar, as a concept, is conceived of and presented in this unit. Grammar is far more than a well-defined, ageless set of prescriptive rules. It is a complex intersection of linguistic systems and social expectations that is sometimes ambiguous and always changing. One way to think about this complexity is through changes over time. Consider how different the language of Shakespeare or Chaucer or *Beowulf* is from ours. And language change doesn't just occur over centuries. It occurs during our lifetimes. Younger people, for example, are far more inclined to use *like* than older people. Some may think of the newer uses of *like* as sloppy or quasi-literate, but there is actually system to its use, a grammar.

In addition to changing over time, English, at any given time, varies community by community. Such variations are commonly referred to as dialects, and each dialect has its own specific grammar. For example, later in the unit, we have a lesson on reflexive pronouns—contrasting the system in Standard English from the system used in African American English and some other dialects. Fill in the blank at the end of the sentence with a reflexive pronoun: *I did it ___.* You would end the sentence with *myself.* Now change the pronoun to the second person. You would end the sentence with

yourself. Now change the pronoun to the third person masculine. If you speak a standard variety, you would end the sentence with *himself*. Note the change in the pattern: *myself* and *yourself* are possessive, while *himself* is objective. This doesn't happen in all English dialects. In some, the pattern holds: *myself, yourself, hisself*. Why does Standard English break the pattern but others maintain it? While the answer is unclear, the different pronoun systems serve as a small example of the ways in which the grammars of different dialects can vary.

In addition to varying by dialect, the English language also varies by use. Since increased Standard English facility is the goal for our students, think about the vast array of written uses to which Standard English is put (or that Standard English is put to?): newspaper articles, business reports, government records, technical reports, advertising copy, instruction manuals, school essays, etc. For each of these uses, there has evolved sets of characteristic features—vocabularies, sentence types, organizational structures. These features are often called *registers* (we can talk about academic registers, for example) and the types of texts that are frequently reproduced *genres* (the literary essay being an important genre for us). The expected features of registers and genres are what people often associate with good writing in a given field. However, even very skilled writers and readers are not always explicitly aware of the features that they frequently use and respond to. For example, I am prone to use the comment "needs development" in the margins of my students' essays. If a student asks about the comment, I can tell him or her that they need to take an idea and explain it further. But what does that look actually look like? How do I explain the characteristics of a well-developed sentence? Or how sentences should connect one to another to create a cohesive and well-developed passage? These questions present all together different challenges.

At this point, all of the challenges—those presented by both the variations in dialects and registers—may seem overwhelming. How can we, as teachers, possibly know the complex grammars of the dialects that our students speak as well as the grammars of all of the registers they will need to know? While the task before us is certainly not a simple one, the good news is that we do not need to know all of these things. Teaching grammar is a funny subject because, unlike math, say, any high school student who is a native speaker of the language already has internalized all of the grammatical rules for whatever variety of English he or she speaks. What we are trying to get them to develop is an understanding of that grammatical system, a framework for thinking about language, and then extend and apply that understanding to other systems with which they are less familiar. We are trying to find a way to approach grammar that will help students to develop the facility and confidence to make choices as they compose and revise their writing. As we said before, this is no easy task, but one that we think is both important and achievable.

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Origins of Some Prescriptive Grammar Rules:
www.uoregon.edu/~spike/ling290/badEnglish.html

Language Variation and Change: **What Is Ebonics?**:
www.lsadc.org/info/ling-fields-change.cfm

Do You Speak American?: www.pbs.org/speak/education/

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lessons 1-4
Discovering Some Grammatical Rules for *Ain't*

BACKGROUND

Why are we starting by having students investigate *ain't*? Given that our stated goal is to extend students' facility with Standard English, this might seem an odd point of departure. What we are trying to do early in the unit is to get students thinking and talking about language. Part of that process is developing a vocabulary and a framework for understanding how the language they use every day works. *Ain't* is a word that makes for interesting and productive opening lessons for several reasons:

1. All speakers of English are familiar with the use of *ain't*.
2. *Ain't* has various uses in different dialects and in African American English, in particular, its use as an auxiliary verb is quite complex (and rule-goverened).
3. Students will begin contrasting one verb system that employs *ain't* (African American English) with one that does not (Standard English), thereby setting some groundwork for more extensive contrastive analysis.
4. Though it is often considered uneducated or illiterate, *ain't* remains in productive use both in spoken and written English.
5. The continued use of *ain't* invites questions as to its social and rhetorical effects.

In the late seventeenth century, *ain't* started out as *an't*, a contracted form of *am not* and *are not*. Since contracted negative forms of *to be* exist for all persons and tenses (*isn't*, *aren't*, *wasn't*, *weren't*) but Standard English doesn't have one for the present tense first person singular (I am not), perhaps it's not surprising that *ain't* survives for that purpose. After all, what is logical about saying that "aren't I?" is grammatical and "ain't I" isn't?

What is, perhaps, surprising is the variety of persons and tenses for which *ain't* can be used. Below is a partial list with examples from some literary and other sources. (Note: not all speakers use all of these different forms of *ain't*.)

Contraction of 'to be' in the Present Tense

➢ *First person singular (am not):* I **ain't** much good, but I could cook and tend the chickens and hoe the garden some. (*Of Mice and Men*)

➢ *First person plural (are not):* We **ain't** burglars. That ain't no sort of style. We are highwaymen. (*Huckleberry Finn*)

➢ *Third person singular (is not):* There **ain't** one thing in this world I can do about folks except laugh, so I'm gonna join the circus and laugh my head off. (*To Kill a Mockingbird*)

➢ *Third person plural (are not):* Even then, they **ain't** worth the bullet it takes to shoot 'em. (*To Kill a Mockingbird*)

➢ *Second person singular (are not):* Humph! Y'all let her worry yuh. You **ain't** like me. (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

Contraction of 'to be' in the Progressive

➢ *Progressive (is not):* You never oughta drink water when it **ain't** running, Lennie. (*Of Mice and Men*)

➢ *Progressive, indicating future (are not):* I'll give him the work tickets, but you **ain't** gonna say a word. (*Of Mice and Men*)

Contraction of 'to have' in the Perfect

➢ *Present Perfect (has not):* Scout yonder's been readin' ever since she was born, and she **ain't** even started to school yet. (*To Kill a Mockingbird*)

-or-
Ah **ain't** had a thing on mah stomach today exceptin' mah hand. (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

➢ *Perfect Progressive (have not):* Ah **ain't** been sleepin' so good for more'n uh week... (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

Contraction of 'to have' in 'to have got'

➢ *Negative of "to have got":* Well, we **ain't** got no ketchup. (*Of Mice and Men*)

-or-
We **ain't** got to stay here. (*Of Mice and Men*)

Contraction of 'to do' in the Past Tense

➢ *Past tense (did not):* What tow-head? I **hain't** see no tow-head. (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*)

When we ask students to produce examples of how they've used *ain't* or heard it used, they should come up with similar uses and, perhaps, even additional ones. Whatever variations students produce, we can make some generalizations about the use of *ain't*: 1) it can substitute for the negative of *am*, *is* and *are* as they are used in the present, present progressive and future tenses (when the future is formed by *to be going to*); and 2) it can substitute for the negative of *has* and *have* as they are used in the present perfect tenses and as auxiliary verbs with *got*; (3) it can substitute for *didn't*..

And a note: It isn't necessary for students to memorize the technical names of the verb tenses (though there is nothing wrong with introducing the terms if you wish, particularly the basic categories of past, present and future).

VOCABULARY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

verb tense: An indication of when an action or state takes place in time.

NOTE: Technically <u>verb tense</u> locates an action in time and <u>verb aspect</u> indicates the perception of an action by a speaker (like whether that action is complete or habitual). What is commonly called the progressive tense, therefore, is really a progressive aspect. Such a distinction is not necessary to make with students, but is interesting nonetheless, in part, because the distinction isn't always clear. We might ask, "Does English really have a future tense?"

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Wikipedia Article on Ain't: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ain%27t

Tense and Time: www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/tta/tense/tense.htm

Verb Tense Chart: owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/esltensverb.html

LESSON PLAN 1

Objectives:
    1. Students will begin to consider the fact that they make language choices all the time when they speak and write.

Materials:
    1. None.

Procedures:
    1. Begin by giving a quick version of the objectives for the unit: that we will be spending some time this semester looking at how language works and using what we learn to improve our writing. (1 min.)
    2. Ask students, "How is the way you talk at home or with your friends different from the language you use in your school work?" They might respond by saying at home or with friends they're more relaxed, but at school they're more formal. Discuss their responses. If they characterize school language as more formal, ask what they mean by that. How would they describe "formality?" (4 min.)
    3. Students may respond to the previous discussion by saying they use more slang with their friends. If they do, ask them for examples of the slang they use outside of school, keeping it appropriate, of course. If slang does not come up, ask them if they can think of examples of words they use with friends but not at school. I, for example, having grown up in California, have the residual habit of using "dude," a word that doesn't frequently make into my school compositions. Write their list on the board and have a student record the list on a piece of paper. (3 min.)

LESSON PLAN 2

Objectives:
1. Students will generate a list illustrating a variety of uses for *ain't*.
2. Students will begin to recognize one of the systematic differences between Standard English and other varieties.

Materials:
1. One or two pre-prepared sample sentences containing *ain't*. These could come from a novel you plan on reading this semester, from a song, from this document, etc. Make sure you figure out the tense, person and number of *ain't* in your example ahead of time.

Procedures:
1. If *ain't* came up in the previous discussion, you can point it out and tell students that they're going to be looking at *ain't* and how they use it or have heard it used. If it doesn't come up in the prior discussion, just introduce *ain't* as a word that people are told they can't use in school but use all of the time elsewhere. (1 min.)
2. Tell students that they're going to be spending a little time figuring out how *ain't* is used. Write one of your sample sentences on the board. (1 min.)
3. Ask students what *ain't* stands for in your example. Or in other words, how might they change it to look like the more formal language they use in school? This is a good point to quickly review the concepts of verbs, making sure students understand that a verb can include more than one word. (4 min.)
4. Either individually or in small groups, have the students generate and record sample sentences that contain different uses of *ain't*. They all shouldn't start with *I ain't...*, for example (3 sentences for individuals, 5 sentences for groups). (5 min.)
5. Collect their responses. These will be used in the following lesson as the evidence needed to come up with rules for using *ain't*. (1 min.)

LESSON PLAN 3

Objectives:
1. Students will be able to recognize verbs.
2. Students will be able to substitute nonstandard uses of ain't with standard uses of *to be*, *to have* and *to do*.

Materials:
1. An overhead or copies of Handout 3:1.

Procedures:
1. Begin by telling students that they are going to try to figure out rules that describe how people use *ain't*. If you want to give them an analogy, ask students to think of something that they do that has rules, and imagine trying to figure out the rules of that activity without knowing anything about it or having anyone explain it to them. For example, I'm a bit of a sports junkie. But what if I knew nothing about football, needed to know the rules, and had only a stack of game tapes to help me? How would I go about figuring out the rules that determine how the game is played? (2 min.)
2. But before working through the students' sentences, they need to do a little guided practice. Distribute Handout 3:1 and guide the students through the directions. Do the first sentence as a class. Then, have students complete the other 4 individually or in small groups. When they are done, review their answers as a class. If you wish, as you review the answers, you can ask students to identify the verbs in the sentences and phrases on the handout [1) *ain't cheatin'*, *don't get caught*; 2) *ain't wanna rap*; 3) *ain't heard*; 4) *ain't got*; 5) *ain't gonna lie*] (8 min.)

   [**Note**] This can be a good opportunity to point out verb tenses to students. You might discuss the different tenses of the examples on the handout.

Handout 3:1: Uses of *Ain't* Exercise

For each quotation, you're going to decide what *ain't* stands for. Take, for example, the phrase "It ain't over till it's over." *Isn't* could be substituted for *ain't*. Be careful. The answer ain't always obvious...

1) It ain't cheatin' if you don't get caught (ESPN)

   What could be substituted for *ain't*?   _____

2) I ain't wanna rap for you anyway (D12)

   What could be substituted for *ain't*?   _____

3) In case you ain't heard (Sean Paul)

   What could be substituted for *ain't*?   _____

4) If I ain't got you (Alicia Keys)

   What could be substituted for *ain't*?   _____

5) I ain't gonna lie (Kanye West)

   What could be substituted for *ain't*?   _____

LESSON PLAN 4

Objectives:
1. Students will be able to recognize verbs.
2. Students will be able to identify some rules governing the use of *ain't* based on their sample sentences.

Materials:
1. Students' sample sentences for the previous lesson.

Procedures:
1. Hand back their sentences from Lesson 2. Ask for a volunteer to write one of his or her sentences on the board.
    a. When they are done, ask the same question that is on the handout: What could be substituted for *ain't*?
    b. Continue to repeat with different volunteers.
    c. If students generate examples that only stand in for *to be*, ask for a volunteer to write an example that uses *ain't* to stand in for a different verb.
    d. Keep going until you have enough examples on the board that students will be able to induce rules. (10 min.)
2. As a class, ask the students to articulate one rule for *ain't*. Individually or in small groups have the students write down two more rules based on the examples. Collect their answers. (5 min.)

Lessons 5-6
The Social Uses of *Ain't*

BACKGROUND

Now that we've done some work on how *ain't* is used, we want to discuss with students why it is used, and why, for example, *ain't* is considered so much worse than, say, *don't* or *can't*. In 1781, Reverend John Witherspoon condemned a whole list of "vulgar abbreviations," including "an't, can't, han't, don't, should'nt, would'nt, could'nt, &c." Of course, most of these contractions are no longer considered "vulgar," except for *ain't*. Many scholars have pointed out that one reason *ain't* may have been so criticized is that its form does not clearly correspond to the forms for which it is a contraction (*am, is, are, has, have*, and in some dialects, *does* and *do*); however, one could make a similar point about the contraction *won't*. Although *ain't* has been condemned in prescriptive resources and many speakers believe the word is somehow fundamentally corrupt (which accounts for the uproar after the publication of Webster's Third in 1961, which recognized the word's widespread use without a derogatory label), as we saw in the previous lessons, there is nothing grammatically "wrong" with *ain't*. Be that as it may, given that *ain't* is so often socially stigmatized, and has been for such a long time, why do people still use it?

For some speakers *ain't* is simply a systematic part of their dialect—in particular, a part of their system for marking negation in various verb tenses—and its use operates, most of the time, below the level of consciousness. For other speakers, it can be a stylistic choice—a linguistic feature they can use if they want to sound or appear in a particular way. And for all listeners, *ain't* carries a great deal of social information. In these next two lessons, we want students to examine some of those social meanings. Some of the students' perceptions may echo those of Witherspoon and later grammar watchdogs, and most, if not all, will at least be aware of those perceptions, even if they don't share them. Other perceptions may be quite different. Students may perceive the use of *ain't* in some situations as more cool or real than the alternatives.

Even in writing, which adheres more to Standard English norms than speech, the use of *ain't* crops up, often tapping into these latter perceptions of *ain't* as authentic. Recently, the New York Times ran the headline, "For the Mets, Two Out Of Three Ain't Bad," and in another newspaper a movie review proclaimed, "Lucky Number Slevin: 'Slevin' Ain't So Lucky..." On the World Wide Web where writers frequently play with grammatical convention, one popular site goes by the name of "Ain't It Cool." As evidence of the tension between competing perceptions of *ain't*, another website offers up the following definition: "Bad Grammerian—people who think the word 'ain't' is cool" (my English teacher instincts just can't ignore the ironic spelling of "grammerian").

In the fourth lesson, we will be looking at social meanings of *ain't* specifically through the lens of dictionary definitions. This lesson will complete our work on *ain't* and set up some of our later, more detailed work with dictionaries. For this short lesson, students will be comparing definitions and labels—whether dialect, nonstandard, substandard, colloquial or slang. As we noted above, when the 1961 edition of Webster's included *ain't* and didn't label it as pejoratively as some thought it should be, there was a

flood of criticism. Richard Bailey describes the controversy in a review of *The Story of Webster's Third*:

> "*Ain't* ain't a word 'cause it ain't in the dictionary" is a folk adage commonly quoted to me by my students, and their credulous acceptance of it illustrates their conviction that dictionaries regulate English and that words not appearing in them aren't words. It also suggests that they have never bother to look up *ain't* in a dictionary.

> Though attested in print only form the late 18th century, *ain't* became a shibboleth [a language feature that distinguishes "good speakers" from "bad speakers"] in the 19th and was regularly treated as such by lexicographers, not only in the *Oxford English Dictionary* but also in large American dictionaries for general use, for instance *The New Century* (1927; "vulgar") and the second edition of the *Merriam-Webster New International* (1934; "dial. or ill."). The treatment of *ain't* in Philip Gove's third edition of the *New International* (1961; "though disapproved by many and more common in less educated speech, used orally in most parts of the U.S. by many cultivated speakers") created a firestorm of criticism and a vigorous assault on "structural linguistics".

The ways that dictionaries label words obviously carry a lot of weight and both reflect and influence how people think about those words. It is useful, therefore, to interrogate these labels. During this process, students will also review some from the first two lessons, practice argumentation and get some preliminary experience working with dictionaries.

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Ain't Misbehavin': www-csli.stanford.edu/~nunberg/aint.html

LESSON PLAN 5

Objectives:
    1. Students will examine some of the social implications of using *ain't*.

Materials:
    1. Copies of Handout 5:1

Procedures:
    1. Remind students that we've been working on how people use *ain't* and now we want to talk about who uses it, why speakers use it, and how people perceive its use.
    2. Review the directions to Handout 5:1. (1 min.)
    3. Either individually or in small groups, have students complete the handout. (4 min.)
    4. Discuss the results. You can begin by asking who students thought used *ain't* the least and why, and then work your way down the list. Or you could begin by having a volunteer write their complete list on the board or overhead and asking students if they agree or disagree with the list and why. Students will likely respond to a host of impressions. Ask students to defend their positions. (4 min.)
    5. When you have completed the discussion, ask students if they could think of a situation where the person they think uses *ain't* the least would use *ain't* and a situation where the person they think uses it the most wouldn't. Could they think of a situation where anyone would write it? (2 min.)
    6. Finish by reviewing what *ain't* can stand for: *to be*, *to have*, *to do*. (1 min.)

Handout 5:1: Who Uses *Ain't*?

For each picture, decide if you think the person would use *ain't* A) never, B) sometimes, or C) frequently and write a short explanation of your choice.
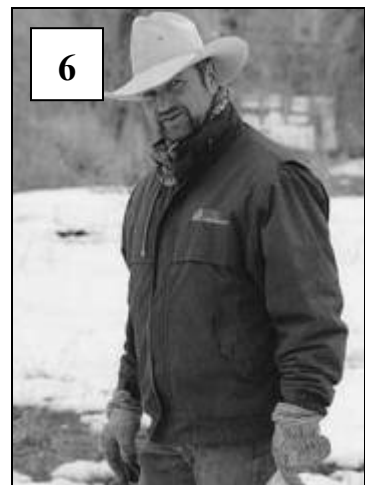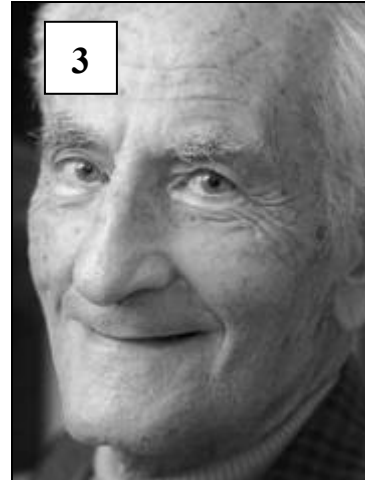
LESSON PLAN 6

Objectives:
1. Students will become acquainted with some features of dictionaries.
2. Students will practice critical analysis by examining some basic labeling on dictionary definitions.
3. Students will practice writing analytical paragraphs.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 6:1

Procedures:
1. Tell students that they are going to be looking at how *ain't* is defined in dictionaries. Ask students, "Who writes definitions in dictionaries?" (It is not necessary to go into too much detail here, as we are going to be revisiting these questions later. However, students should, at least, understand that dictionaries are made by people, and those people make choices about how words are represented and labeled.) (3 min.)
2. Distribute the handout. (1 min.)
3. Answer the Part I questions as a class. These may be fairly difficult questions. Feel free to give students as much guidance and framing as they need.
   a. The first part of the first question (what is missing from the definitions?) should be fairly straightforward (*to do*). Why it's not included is more difficult to answer—perhaps because it's less common, perhaps because it's more specifically a feature of African American English. It's not necessary for students to arrive at a particular answer. It's more important for them to think carefully about the question.
   b. The second question might be somewhat easier: substandard is decidedly more negative than nonstandard. But this question will also force students to think a bit about what "standard" means. This is an issue we will engage in greater detail in the next lesson. (3 min.)
4. Review the directions for Part II and have students answer the questions individually or in small groups. Review and collect their responses. (8 min.)

   [**Optional Modification**] This last exercise might be a good opportunity for students to practice close-reading and writing analytical paragraphs. You may want to give them additional time to write and, perhaps, edit their responses.

Handout 6:1: *Ain't* **in the Dictionary**

A. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition*

Nonstandard **1.** Contraction of *am not.* **2.** Used also as a contraction for *are not, is not, has not,* and *have not.*

B. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*

1. **a**: are not **b**: is not **c**: am not **2**. *substand* **a**: have not **b**: has not

Part I Questions
Discuss the questions as a class.

1. Based on our work on what *ain't* can stand for, what is missing from these definitions? Why do think it's not included in the definitions?
2. What is the difference between labeling *ain't* "nonstandard" (A) and "substandard" (B)?

Part II Questions
The following definitions for *ain't* appear in an online dictionary:

1. Nonsense word substituted for "isn't" mainly used by four groups of people: (1) Ignoramuses. (2) People who want to pretend to be ignorant to fit in. (3) Songwriters who need to cut out a syllable. (4) Kids who want to annoy their parents or teachers.

2. A form of saying is not, are not. This is a word people should not use because it is not actually a word defined by the dictionary. If you use it, it shows that you are not an educated person.

3. Slang contraction of is not, are not, am not, do not or does not.

Choose one of the three definitions and write a paragraph responding to it. Your paragraph should answer these two questions: 1) Is the definition complete and accurate? 2) How is *ain't* being labeled?

Lesson 7-10
What Is Standard English?

BACKGROUND

Most of us have a sense that there is a thing that we call "Standard English"—we have, after all, been using the term in these materials as if it were something on which everyone agreed. However, actually defining Standard English is a little more complicated than it might seem. The two complications we want to address here are the differences between written and spoken language and the differences between dialect and register, which crucially distinguishes formal from standard language.

Written and spoken language are distinct. Written language can be endlessly scrutinized and edited and is, therefore, more easily compared from text to text and normalized. Spoken language, however, is more ephemeral and much of the time, we are not conscious of precisely how other people, or even we ourselves, talk. The pace of change is, then, different for written and spoken English as is the stability of what we understand to be "standard." Let's consider what constitutes the spoken standard and the written standard separately.

Part of what is perceived as spoken Standard English is influenced by grammar. For example, verb forms, noun forms and pronouns can all play a part in marking a dialect as either standard or nonstandard. Not all such features, however, are perceived equally. The use of *ain't*, as we have seen, is a feature strongly marked as nonstandard. A similarly marked feature is multiple negation. Multiple negation was once common in English. Some of the most revered authors in the English language like Chaucer and Shakespeare were frequent users of multiple negation. In *As You Like It*, Celia says "I cannot goe no further..." and in *Hamlet*, Hamlet tells the players, "Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus..." However, in the eighteenth century, mathematical logic was applied to language and multiple negation was warned against:

> But the two negatives as used by the Saxons and French must be understood by way of apposition... which way of speaking is still in use among us; and in this case the two negatives answer to the addition of two negative quantities in Algebra, the sum of which is negative. But our ordinary use of two negatives (in which the force of the first is much more than merely destroyed by the latter) corresponds to the multiplication of two negative quantities in Algebra, the product of which is affirmative; as mathematicians very well know. (Benjamin Martin, 1748)

Despite the apparent arbitrariness of such pronouncements and to the disappointment of some (In 1873, Fitzedward Hall lamented, "The double negative has been abandoned, to the great injury of strength of expression.") multiple negation has become strongly marked as nonstandard usage.

But other features often regarded as standard are not as strongly marked as we might think. Consider the relative pronouns *who* and *whom*. We are probably inclined to think of *who* as being the subject pronoun ("And indeed nothing is easier for a man **who** has, as the phrase goes, 'followed the sea' with reverence and affection...") and *whom* as being the object ("The idleness of a passenger, my isolation amongst all these men with

whom I had no point of contact...") in Standard English, as the vast majority of usage guides advise. This is certainly the case in written English, but is it in spoken English? In truth, almost all English speakers, even those who speak varieties considered standard are prone to using *who* as both subject and object pronoun. When speaking extemporaneously, both a president and a former network news anchor are users of *who* as object:

> George W. Bush: "And personal accounts will enable a worker to be able to pass on his or her earnings to **whoever** he or she chooses..."

> Walter Cronkite: "And unfortunately, there are few people in that corporate environment, virtually none **who** I can cite on any network..."

These quotations are not so much evidence that people make mistakes when they speak, but rather that the use of *who* in the objective case is not a particularly marked feature of the spoken standard. (That the subjective and objective case would collapse in this way is not surprising since all English nouns used to have different endings marking them as subject or object, and the only surviving vestiges of that system are pronouns. *Whom* would likely have died out long ago were it not for teachers, copy editors and usage guides.) What is relevant to our discussion here is that some features like *ain't* and multiple negation are strongly marked as nonstandard, while others like the use of *who* are not. The grammatical markers of the spoken standard, then, are not fixed and consistent.

An additional complication arises when trying to define Standard English for spoken language because perceptions of what is standard are influenced not only by grammar but also by accent. Is there a Standard English accent? Some might consider the "accentless" speech of news anchors to be representative of the standard. No speech, however, is truly "accentless". The intensity of an accent is a matter of perception and familiarity. Compare the voices of a broadcaster from a 1940's newsreel (video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4674735587144817110&q=owner%3Anara) to that of a current anchor on a network webcast (www.msnbc.msn.com). Others contend that the standard accent is simply the accent of the economic and politically powerful. But such accents are hardly homogeneous and change with time. Just listen to FDR (millercenter.virginia.edu/scripps/diglibrary/prezspeeches/roosevelt/). Would we, today, consider his East Coast patrician accent to be standard?

Defining Standard English for written language is a little easier than doing so for spoken language, but there are still ambiguities. As we noted in the unit introduction, written language has registers—it varies according use. For some uses like journalism and academic writing, it might be relatively easy to conclude that, though they may be in different registers, still primarily use Standard English. But what about other uses, say for blogs or myspace pages? Are those registers still a part of the standard dialect?

The range of registers available to all dialects, whether standard or nonstandard, raises an important issue: **switching between registers is not the same as switching between dialects**. Switching between dialects—what is often called *code-switching*— requires changing systematic grammatical features, like changing verb or pronoun patterns. Changing registers is often marked by the application of specific vocabularies. Registers can have preferred grammatical features, say a preference for subordination vs. coordination. But note that attending to a register feature is different than code-

switching; a speaker can subordinate or coordinate, for example, in any variety of English.

One important implication of this difference is that using formal English is not the same as using Standard English. "Formal" describes a range of registers, while "standard" describes a particular dialect of English; one can use formal registers in African American as well as Standard English. Academic writing requires fluency in both a dialect (Standard English) and in registers (formal, academic registers). Students might have difficulty, for example, if they were using a formal register of a nonstandard dialect and were confident they were meeting the expectations for language in school. In coming to an understanding of Standard English, therefore, it is important for students to explore this crucial distinction.

VOCABULARY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

accent: The systematic pronunciation of a dialect.

One factor influencing accent is where in the mouth vowels are articulated. Do *pin* and *pen* sound the same when you say them? What about the vowel in *dude*? Is the vowel pronounced in very back of your mouth or more toward the front? Another factor influencing accent is the articulation of consonants. How do you pronounce *–ing*? Does the tip of your tongue hit the ridge just behind your teeth, or does the back of your tongue touch against the back of your mouth? Finally, accent is influenced by the tonal rise and fall and inflections of speech.

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Why "Standard" English:
www.wonderfulwritingskillsunhandbook.com/html/why__standard__english.html

Three Views of Standard English: www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/standard.htm

The Sounds of Spoken Language: www.uiowa.edu/%7Eacadtech/phonetics/#

American Tongues: www.wisc.edu/english/rfyoung/336/american_tongues.htm

LESSON PLAN 7

Objectives:
1. Students will investigate whether certain words are formal or informal.
2. Through this exercise, they will begin defining Standard English.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 7:1

Procedures:
1. Remind students that in the last lesson they looked at how *ain't* was labeled in dictionaries. One label that was applied to *ain't* was "Nonstandard". Now we want to investigate what that, and its counterpart "Standard," means. Before we talk about what standard language is, however, we want to talk about the difference between formal and informal language. Then we can work on distinguishing formal language from standard language. (1 min.)
2. Here we would like to have a brief discussion with students about how are language changes when we are in different social situations. The metaphor of clothing might be useful: In some situations we dress up our language; in others we might dress it down. Almost all people adjust their language—as they adjust their attire—to fit their social surroundings. Most of us wouldn't wear a tux or a gown to ballgame any more than we would ask the vendor at the park for a *saucisson* (or even a frankfurter?) when we wanted a hotdog. (3 min.)
3. Distribute Handout 7:1. (1 min.)
4. Have students complete Handout 7:1 individually, in small groups, or as a whole class. (3 min.)
5. Review their responses. You might ask students why they would expect to hear particular words in particular settings. The objective is to get students thinking and talking about relative levels of formality. Collect their work. (2 min.)

Handout 7:1: What Is Formal English?

Answer the questions that follow the list of words below.

1. BLING

   For those that think Hov' fingers **bling bling**'n/Either haven't heard the album or they don't know english... (Jay-Z)

2. GOOGLE

   They **Googled** him and then went onto a web site... (BBC News)

   i just **googled** this guy. he's hawaiian?? (online music forum)

3. COOL

   ...cold in the winter and **cool** like ice (Beastie Boys)

4. COOL

   Our team's too **cool**... (Bring It On)

5. LIKE

   This weekend he called me up and he's all "Where were you today?" and I'm **like** "I'm at my Grandmother's house"... (Clueless)

6. DIS

   Ain't nobody **dissed** or dismissed me, Derek... (Save the Last Dance)

1. List those words from the above list that you think you would likely:

   a. hear talking with friends

   b. hear on the radio

   c. read in a newspaper

   d. use in a paper for school

LESSON PLAN 8

Objectives:
1. Students will investigate whether certain words are formal or informal.
2. Through this exercise, they will continue defining Standard English.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 8:1

Procedures:
1. Remind students that they will be continuing their discussion of formal vs. informal language. (1 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 8:1. (1 min.)
3. Have students complete Handout 8:1 individually, in small groups, or as a whole class. These quotations raise the issue of using informal language in formal writing. Who gets to play with language in this way and why? One characteristic that these two quotations share is that they are excerpted from feature articles. Would a news article use language like this? What about an editorial? Can students use informal language in academic writing? Most of the time, probably not, but why? (5 min.)
4. Review their responses and collect their work. (3 min.)

Handout 8:1: Using Informal English

Each of the quotations below comes from publications that most people associate with formal language. Read the quotations and answer the questions that follow.

> ➢ "Chrysler is threatening G.M.'s reign as king of the trend-setting **bling-bling** cars and trucks..." (New York Times)
>
> ➢ "His **dis** of one hopeful's off-key song..." (Time Magazine)

1. Does it surprise you to see these words used in these publications? Why or why not?

2. Why do you think the writers chose to use these particular words?

LESSON PLAN 9

Objectives:
1. Students will begin defining Standard English.
2. Standard English will begin comparing the features of Standard and Nonstandard English.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 9:1

Procedures:
1. Tell students that we've looked at formal and informal language. Now we want to compare Standard and Nonstandard language. We're going to start by revisiting the work we've already done with *ain't*. (1 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 9:1 and review the directions with the students. I might be productive at this point in the unit to introduce **code-switching** to the students as a term. You might tell students that we're going to start comparing features of Standard and Nonstandard English. This is a little different than comparing formal and informal language, which we just did. As we saw in the New York Times and Time Magazine quotations, you can be informal but still be using Standard English, just as you can be formal and use Nonstandard English. Adjusting your language to be more or less formal is called style-switching; moving between Standard and Nonstandard English is called *code-switching*. At the moment, this may be a little confusing, but it should become clearer as we go along. We've already done some work comparing Standard and Nonstandard English when we looked at *ain't*. Now we want to reinforce what we know, then extend our knowledge to other comparisons. (3 min.)
3. As a class, complete the rule and have the students write it on the handout. Having worked with *ain't* already, this shouldn't take too much time. They might take some prompting to express *ain't = to be + not* (or *am not*, *is not* and *are not*) instead of, say, just *are not*. (5 min.)
4. Collect Handout 9:1. (1 min.)

Handout 9:1: Code-Switching Using *Ain't*

For each of the following pairs, fill in the blank with the missing form. If the Nonstandard form is given, provide the Standard equivalent, and if the Standard is given, provide the Nonstandard. Then complete the rule that begins at the bottom.

Nonstandard	Standard
Humph! Y'all let her worry yuh. You <u>ain't</u> like me. (*Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston)	...You _____ like me...
...I _____ afraid...	My citing the creation of tension as part of the work of the nonviolent-resister may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I <u>am not</u> afraid of the word "tension." ("Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King, Jr.)
Well, they can just take they stocking down 'cause it <u>*ain't*</u> Christmas... (*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison)	... it _____ Christmas...
Rule: In the **present tense**, ain't =	

Nonstandard	Standard
Scout yonder's been readin' ever since she was born, and she <u>ain't</u> even started to school yet. (*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee)	...she_____ even started...
...I _____ said...	So I <u>have not</u> said to my people: "Get rid of your discontent." ("Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King, Jr.)
I don't want all that loud carrying on around here. I'm surprised you ain't woke Maretha up. (*The Piano Lesson* by August Wilson)	...you _____ woken...
Rule: In the **present perfect tense**, ain't =	

LESSON PLAN 10

Objectives:
1. Students will begin defining Standard English.
2. Students will begin recognizing sentence subjects.
3. Standard English will compare the how predicative adjectives are structured in Standard and Nonstandard English.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 10:1

Procedures:
1. Remind students that they will again be comparing Standard and Nonstandard English. (1 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 10:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the directions with the students. While it's important to expose students to some technical vocabulary here, it's not important that they memorize what a subject complement is, for example. Rather, they should simply recognize this as a common type of sentence. (2 min.)
4. Have students complete Handout 10:1 either individually or in small groups. (4 min.)
5. Review their responses in class. Their answers may vary, but should include the idea that in Standard English the subject and a predicative adjective in the present tense are linked with a verb (often *to be*), while in Nonstandard English they don't need to be linked with a verb **except in the first person singular**. If you like, you may also explain the basic structure of predicate adjectives (or what are called elsewhere *subject compliments*) (3 min.)

    In one common type of English sentence, we have a **subject** or topic and want to describe it some way using what is called a **predicative adjective**:

She	**was**	**sixteen**
subject		predicative adjective

    The predicative adjective, or **subject compliment**, can be a single word or a group of words that works like an adjective:

She	**'s**	**way past forty**
subject		predicative adjective

6. Discuss with students what they think difference is between formal English and Standard English. Formal English is marked largely, though not exclusively, by vocabulary. Standard English is marked by specific grammatical forms. Students certainly would not be expected to condense these complex ideas to definitions like these; however, they might touch on similar ideas. If they don't have a definitive answer, that's okay. This will be an ongoing topic of discussion. (4 min.)

Handout 10:1: Code-Switching Using Predicative Adjectives

For each of the following pairs, fill in the blank with the missing form. If the Nonstandard form is given, provide the Standard equivalent, and if the Standard is given, provide the Nonstandard. Then complete the rule that begins at the bottom. Note that #2 has been done for you. This clue will help you complete the table and the rule.

Nonstandard	**Standard**
You mean, <u>you mad</u> 'cause she didn't stop and tell us all her business. (*Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston)	...you _____ 'cause...
No—<u>I'm just sleepy</u> as the devil... (*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry)	...<u>I'm just sleepy</u> as...
"Fuller?" The name was familiar to the man's tongue. "I don't know, <u>he here</u> somewhere..." (*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison)	...he _____ somewhere...
...I _____ of...	Moreover, <u>I am cognizant</u> of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. ("Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King, Jr.)
No—<u>she just tired</u>. She was out this evening... (*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry)	...she _____. She was...
...I _____ as...	No—<u>I'm just sleepy</u> as the devil... (*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry)

Rule: In Standard English, a **subject** and a **predicative adjective** are linked by...

        In Nonstandard English, a **subject** and **predicative adjective** are linked by...

...except...

Lesson 11
Reflexive Pronouns

BACKGROUND

English pronouns are a rich subject for investigation. As we noted in the background to the previous lessons on Standard English, pronouns are a link to our linguistic past. All nouns used to be marked for case. That is, the endings of nouns used to change depending on the noun's relationship to a verb or preposition (Old English nouns, in fact, could be in any of five different cases). For example, the Old English word for *stone*, *stān*, would be *stān* as the subject and *stāne* as the indirect object. In present day English, we still mark nouns for plurality (-*s* for regular nouns) and possession (-*'s*), but the only nouns that otherwise change are pronouns.

The systematic forms that pronouns take (for singular, plural, subject, object, possession, etc.) can vary by dialect. One common form that varies is the second person plural pronoun. Once, English differentiated the second person singular pronoun, *þū* (thou) from the second person plural pronoun *ġē* (ye), but both singular and plural merged into *you*. Because it is useful to be able to distinguish an individual from a group, many dialects have developed a second person plural pronoun. Southern English uses the well-recognized *you all* or *y'all*; Pittsburghese uses *youns* or *yins*; and some dialects use *youse*. (I tend to use *you guys*.)

It is not only single pronouns that can differ, but also entire systems, or paradigms, that can vary. For example, English has two different kinds of possessive pronouns, dependent and independent. Dependent possessive pronouns modify nouns or noun phrases (*If **my** children are silly I must hope to be always sensible of it...*), while independent possessive pronouns can stand alone (*This was a lucky idea of **mine**, indeed!*). In Standard English, the paradigm for independent possessive pronouns is as follows:

	Singular	Plural
First person	mine	ours
Second person	yours	yours
Third person	his/hers	theirs

Some Southern dialects, however, use a different paradigm:

	Singular	Plural
First person	mine(s)	ourn
Second person	yourn	y'alls(es)
Third person	hisn/hersn	theirn

This is a system that is sometimes evident in literature that uses Southern dialect features:

But, Huck, dese kings o' **ourn** is reglar rapscallions... (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*)

Pheoby, dat Sam of **your'n** just won't quit! (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

So whilst me and Jim filed away at the pens on a brickbat apiece, Jim a-making **his'n** out of the brass and I making mine out of the spoon... (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*)

One thing that these kinds of paradigms reveal is that the use of nonstandard forms is not careless speech, but is, in fact, systematic; it's just a different system. One paradigm that illustrates this systematicity particularly well is the one for reflexive pronouns. Reflexive pronouns most of time refer back to the subject of the clause (*Impossible, Mr. Bennet, impossible, when **I** am not acquainted with him **myself**...*). In Standard English the paradigm for reflexive pronouns is as follows:

	Singular	Plural
First person	myself	ourselves
Second person	yourself	yourselves
Third person	himself/herself	themselves

Notice that for the first and second person the form takes the possessive form plus *–self*. The third person, however, takes objective form plus *–self*. Other dialects, including African American English, however, keep possessive plus *–self* consistent throughout the paradigm:

	Singular	Plural
First person	myself	ourselves
Second person	yourself	yourselves
Third person	hisself/herself	theirselves

In this particular instance, it is the nonstandard forms that appear more logically consistent than the standard ones. (A related paradigm uses the possessive pronoun followed by the infix *–own–* followed by *–self*: *Ah'll give one whole hawg **mah ownself**... [Their Eyes Were Watching God]*; *Us keeps **our own selves** down... [Their Eyes Were Watching God]*).

It is useful for students to both puzzle out and see these paradigms for at least three reasons. First, these paradigms illustrate what we mean by grammatical rules: both standard and nonstandard dialects have a system governing reflexive pronouns. Second, in juxtaposing the two systems, students will have a first experience with contrastive analysis, which is the practice of examining and moving between dialects. Third, attending to pronouns is a very important skill in both reading and writing. In fact, the effective use of pronouns can greatly enhance the coherence of students' essays. This lesson, then, will provide them a first foray into looking carefully at pronouns.

LESSON PLAN 11

Objectives:
1. Students will be able to identify reflexive pronouns.
2. Students understanding of code-switching will increase by examining how reflexive pronoun systems work in Standard and Nonstandard English.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 11:1.

Procedures:
1. Remind students that we will be continuing to compare features of Standard and Nonstandard English. Today we will be comparing reflexive pronoun systems. Here you may need to remind students what pronouns are, their person (first, second and third) and number (singular or plural). (3 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 11:1 and reeview the directions with the students. You might point out to students that reflexive pronouns end in *–self* and usually refer back to the subject or topic of the sentence. (2 min.)
3. Have students complete Handout 11:1 either individually or in small groups. (4 min.)
4. Review their responses. For Nonstandard, the paradigm should be:

	Singular	**Plural**
First person	myself	ourselves
Second person	yourself	yourselves
Third person	hisself/herself/itself	theirselves

For Standard English, the paradigm should be:

	Singular	**Plural**
First person	myself	ourselves
Second person	yourself	yourselves
Third person	himself/herself/itself	themselves

Now ask the class what differences they notice between the two patterns. This should be a quick identification of himself vs. hisself and themselves vs. theirselves. Then ask which pattern—Standard or Nonstandard—they think is more consistent and why. It may take some prompting, but they should notice that the Nonstandard pattern is consistently possessive + *–self* while the Standard breaks with that pattern. (5 min.)

Handout 11:1: Code-Switching Using Reflexive Pronouns

Both sets of quotations are from *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. The first set is taken from dialogue, which uses Nonstandard English. And the second is taken from the narration, which uses Standard.

For each of the following pairs, fill in the blank with the missing **reflexive pronoun**. If the Nonstandard form is given, provide the Standard equivalent, and if the Standard is given, provide the Nonstandard. Then complete the rule that begins on the back. You may standardize spelling for the nonstandard pronouns, so *yo'* would be *your* and *mah* would be *my*, for example.

Nonstandard	Standard
She asted me dat maybe twenty-five or thirty times, lak she got tuh sayin' dat and couldn't help <u>herself</u>.	She took careful stock of <u>herself</u>, then combed her hair and tied it back up again.
Ah couldn't love yuh no more if Ah had uh felt yo' birth pains <u>mahself</u>.	... your birth pains _____.
Neither can you stand alone by <u>yo'self</u>.	...by _____. *What if the speaker were talking to a group of people?* Neither can y'all stand alone by _____.
It connected _____ with...	It connected <u>itself</u> with other vaguely felt matters that had struck her outside observation and buried themselves in her flesh.
He had always wanted to be a big voice, but de white folks had all de sayso where he come from and everywhere else, exceptin' dis place dat colored folks was buildin' <u>theirselves</u>.	...was building _____.
Now, Lum, you know dat mule ain't aimin' tuh let <u>hisself</u> be caught.	...to let _____ be caught.
Even if dey don't take us in wid de whites, dey oughta make us uh class tuh <u>ourselves</u>.	...a class to _____.

Rule:

	Singular	Plural
First person (*I*)		
Second person (*you*)		
Third person (*he*, *she*, *it*)		

Rule:

	Singular	Plural
First person (*I*)		
Second person (*you*)		
Third person (*he*, *she*, *it*)		

Lessons 12-14
Dictionaries

BACKGROUND

In Lesson 6, we introduced students to some of the choices that go into the making of dictionaries. Now we want to look at dictionary entries in a little more detail and give students an opportunity to draft some dictionary entries of their own. The analysis and composition of dictionary entries will provide a useful platform for working with parts of speech and wrestling with some even more complex word categories like transitive vs. intransitive and regular vs. irregular verbs.

We tend to think of dictionaries as authoritative and rather unambiguous. It is the place, after all, that most of us turn when we want to find out what a word means. But dictionaries, of course, are made by people. And as such, they are subject to various motivations and decision-making processes. At different times they have been viewed as preservers of the English language, bulwarks against moral and intellectual decline as well as authentication of national identity. In addition to the assorted values motivating their creation, dictionaries are subject to a host of editorial choices. What words are included? When, for example, should *google* be put in (as Webster's now has) and when should a word like *manutenency* (meaning the act of holding or support) be taken out? And how should words be labeled? Should *google* be labeled "slang"? (We encountered some of the complications of labeling words with *ain't*.) Furthermore, how are definitions composed? What definitions are included? And how are definitions ordered?

In addition to engaging questions about existing dictionary definitions, students will be given the opportunity to compose entries themselves. The composition of entries will foster students' role as informants about their language use. The entries will also force students to think through how words function as parts of speech.

It isn't always straightforward determining what part of speech a word is. How, for example, do we recognize nouns? According to Schoolhouse Rock, "A noun's a special kind of word/It's any name you ever heard/I find it quite interesting/A noun's a person, place or thing." This is a handy rule of thumb that most of us have learned at one time and which covers many nouns. But what about actions like *running* or *thinking*? Certainly, such actions can be nouns (*...to talk to each other is but a more animated and an audible **thinking***). In addition, a person, place or thing isn't always unambiguously a noun. Consider the word *Sacramento*. A proper noun, right? What about in the following sentence: "It looked very much like it was going to be *a Sacramento sweep*, over on Sunday in Game 3 at Arco Arena"? In this example, we might conclude that *Sacramento* is functioning as an adjective (modifying *sweep*) rather than as a noun.

Another common test for nouns is that they can take an article (the definite *the* or indefinite *a*/*an*). Like the person-place-or-thing test, this is a useful, but not always reliable way to identify nouns. Actions, again, can cause problems because unlike the preceding example (*an audible thinking*) they usually don't take articles. Similarly, proper nouns don't usually take articles (unless you're *the* Donald or attend *the* Ohio State University).

The sure-fire way to identify a noun is that it can be the subject of a verb. Unfortunately, this doesn't eliminate the problem of *Sacramento* in *Sacramento sweep*.

Here is a similar sentence: *A Chicago sweep seems unlikely—aren't sweeps always unlikely?* The sentence subject is *a Chicago sweep*. So what are we to make of *Chicago*? In the lesson, students might run up against similar ambiguities with *dog*. They might, for example, generate uses like *dog tired* or *dog days*. In the first case, the argument could be made that *dog* is an adverb modifying *tired* and in the second it is an adjective modifying *days*. Or they might be seen as compounds (a compound adjective or a compound noun). In either case, it isn't important that students arrive at a particular identification. It is far more important that they can articulate an explanation for their choice. What will later be an indispensable skill will be recognizing a sentence subject like *a Chicago sweep*, regardless of our agreement on the identification of all the individual words.

VOCABULARY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

noun: A word that signifies a person, place, thing, idea, action, etc., and which can function as the subject or object in a sentence.

verb: A word that signifies a physical or mental action, a relationship, or existence.

NOTE: All verbs can take a subject, but the subject of a verb can also be implied. In the imperative mood, for example (*Run!*), the subject is not explicitly stated. Also, some verbs require a direct object, while others do not. Whether or not a verb needs a direct object determines its **transitivity**. A transitive verb needs a direct object, while an intransitive verb does not.

adjective: a word that modifies a noun.

As we have noted, words that normally function as other parts of speech (like nouns) can sometimes function as adjectives. At other times, however, an adjective can be formed by adding a suffix to a word stem. Below is a partial list of adjectival suffixes. One of the most productive suffixes on the list is one of the simplest, *-y*. It is also interesting to note that these suffixes do not always follow our expectations. Why, for example, is *awful* an antonym and not a synonym for *awesome*?

Ending	Usage	Example
-able/ -ible	capable of, tending to, likely to	...that turns even the most **respectable** men into scoundrels. (*Pirates of the Carribean*)
-al	relating to, having the nature of	Geathers' hit on Green wasn't dirty or **intentional**... (ESPN)
-ant/ -ent	doing a particular action, in a particular condition	Ricky Bobby is at once a creature of pure, **extravagant** absurdity... (The New York Times)
-er	comparative ending	Who you know **fresher** than Hov? (Jay-Z)
-est	superlative ending	There was only the **slightest** smell of singed fur. (*The Bluest Eye*)
-ful	full of, characterized by	We are **beautiful** no matter what they say (Christina Aguilera)
-ic	pertaining to, resembling	...the sudden **dramatic** events which make history. (*A Raisin in the Sun*)
-ish	having the qualities of	...and her face looked like the mask of an **impish** elf. (*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*)
-ive	having a tendency to or the nature of	...a very special, very **expensive**, very large birthday present. (*The Little Mermaid*)
-less	without the qualities of, lacking	...why hide yourself at the *Hollywoodland* premiere in this **shapeless** black cocktail frock... (E! Online)
-like	having the qualities of	It was in this **godlike** state that he met Pauline Williams. (*The Bluest Eye*)
-ose	full of, like	Sitting through all the **verbose** explanations and speculations about symbols, codes, secret cults... (Variety)
-ous/- ious	full of, having the qualities of	...on a **glamorous** trip way up North to the **fabulous** St. Louis... (*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*)
-some	characterized by a quality or action	...those great and **awesome** wonders you saw with your own eyes. (Deuteronomy 10:21)
-y	having a quality of	Spitting his wry and wise rhymes over **Prince-y** synth beats... (The Stranger Weekly)

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Dictionaries and Meanings: www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/dic/meanings.html

Some Quotes about Dictionaries: faculty.fortlewis.edu/BENZ_B/engl461/dictionaries.html

Reading a Dictionary Entry: www.cabrillo.edu/services/writingcenter/290/dictionary3.html

LESSON PLAN 12

Objectives:
1. Students will practice identifying parts of speech.
2. They will become familiar with some of the features of dictionary entries.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 12:1.

Procedures:

1. You might begin by engaging with students in a general discussion about dictionaries. For what do we use dictionaries? Where do they come from? Who makes them? Are all words included in a dictionary? What words are left out? Why? Then, pass out and review the first page of Handout 12:1. (If you are pressed for time, you might begin with the handout and let the previous questions emerge from analysis of the dictionary entry on the second page.) (3 min.)
2. Have students look at the definition for *dog* on the second page. Discuss the first three questions as a class and have students write down their responses. Students may or may not have some difficulty with the second question. If they have trouble responding, this is an opportunity to review some fundamentals about parts of speech. You might start by pointing out that we're looking for a use of *dog* that is not a noun, and then asking, "What is a noun? How do we know when a word is a noun?" (4 min.)
3. As a class, in pairs, or individually, have the students complete Question 4. (5 min.)
4. Review and collect their responses. (3 min.)

Handout 12:1: Reading Dictionaries

Below are explanations of some of the common features of dictionaries.

\\'kül

Pronunciation:
Dictionaries will include a pronunciation key to demonstrate how different symbols represent different sounds. For example:
\\ü\\ as **oo** in l**oo**t
\\ō\\ as **o** in g**o**

Functional Label:
This indicates the part of speech of the entry (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, conjunction, etc.) or some other functional classification (like a suffix, for example).

col

Etymology:
This is the history of the word. This part of the entry shows what older words the current word likely came from and from what languages.

adj

cool \\'kül\\ *adj* [Middle English *col,* from Old English *cōl;* akin to Old High German *kuoli* cool, Old English *ceald* cold -- more at COLD] **1 :** moderately cold **:** lacking in warmth **2 a :** marked by steady dispassionate calmness and self-control <a *cool* and calculating administrator — *Current Biography*> **b :** lacking ardor or friendliness <a *cool* impersonal manner> **c** *of jazz* **:** marked by restrained emotion and the frequent use of counterpoint **d :** free from tensions or violence <meeting with minority groups in an attempt to keep the city *cool*> **3** -- used as an intensive <a *cool* million dollars> **4 :** marked by deliberate effrontery or lack of due respect or discretion <a *cool* reply> **5 :** facilitating or suggesting relief from heat <a *cool* dress> **6 a** *of a color* **:** producing an impression of being cool; *specifically* **:** of a hue in the range violet through blue to green **b** *of a musical tone* **:** relatively lacking in timbre or resonance **7** *slang* **a :** very good **:** EXCELLENT; *also* **:** ALL RIGHT **b :** FASHIONABLE 1 <not happy with the new shoes... because they were not *cool* — Celestine Sibley> — **cool·ish** \\'kü-lish\\ *adj* — **cool·ly** *also* **cooly** \\'kü(l)-lē\\ *adv* — **cool·ness** \\'kül-nəs\\ *n*

keep the city *cool*

Illustration:
Entries sometimes give examples of how the word is used in context. Here, they are between the angle brackets < >.

coolish

6 a

Division of Definitions:
The numbers are supposed to represent different meanings of the word. The letters are supposed to represent related meanings with slightly different senses.

Derived Forms:
These are related words. In this case, they have been formed by adding various suffixes to *cool* in order to form new words. A reader is supposed to be able to figure out the meaning of these words based on the given definitions.

Below is an entry for *dog* (which appears in Webster's Dictionary). Read the definition and answer the questions that follow.

dog \'dog\, \'däg\ *n* [Middle English, from Old English *docga*] **1 a :** CANDID; *especially* : a highly variable domestic mammal (*Canis familiaris*) closely related to the common wolf (*Canis lupus*) **b :** a male dog; also : a male usually carnivorous mammal **2 a :** a worthless person **b :** FELLOW, CHAP <a lazy *dog*> <you lucky *dog*> **3 a :** any of various usually simple mechanical devices for holding, gripping, or fastening that consist of a spike, bar, or hook **b :** ANDIRON **4 :** uncharacteristic or affected stylishness or dignity <put on the *dog*> **5** *capitalized* : either of the constellations Canis Major or Canis Minor **6** *plural* : FEET **7** *plural* : RUIN <going to the *dogs*> **8 :** one inferior of its kind: as **a :** an investment not worth its price **b :** an undesirable piece of merchandise **9 :** an unattractive person and especially a girl or woman **10 :** HOT DOG

1. The definitions are all for what part of speech?

2. What is another part of speech that *dog* can be? Give an example of how *dog* can be used in this way.

3. Write a definition for the usage you identify in question 2.

4. You are the editor of the entry for *dog*:

    a. Many young speakers use dog with their friends in a way not listed here. What definition would you add, if you could?

    b. What changes might you suggest for definition 9?

LESSON PLAN 13

Objectives:
1. Students will practice identifying parts of speech.
2. They will demonstrate their knowledge by drafting dictionary entries.

Materials:
1. None.

Procedures:
1. Start by telling students that they will be writing their own dictionary entries. The entries will be for words that they or their friends use and that other people might not know or understand. They might imagine if a new student came to school from a different part of the country, what sort of lingo would he or she need to know in order to fit in? Give them the directions for the assignment, which are as follows:
    ➢ The students will each write entries for two words. In order to maximize the available time, you might have the students work in pairs.
    ➢ Have the students compose entries for two different parts of speech. You can divide nouns, verbs, and adjectives among the students/pairs, so that one student/pair writes an entry for a noun and a verb, another for a verb and an adjective, etc.
    ➢ The words should be ones that are appropriate for school.
    ➢ Each entry will include the word, the part of speech, the definition, and a sentence illustrating its use. (4 min.)
2. Before students proceed to drafting their entries, you might allow them the opportunity to brainstorm possible words either as a class or in small groups. This also might be a good opportunity to quickly review parts of speech and strategies for identifying what part of speech a word might be. (5 min.)
3. Give students sufficient time to draft their entries.

    [**Note**] The amount of class time you want to devote to the drafting of entries is up to you.

LESSON PLAN 14

Objectives:
1. Students will practice identifying parts of speech.
2. Students will practice their editing and revision skills.

Materials:
1. Drafts of the students' dictionary entries.

Procedures:
1. The purpose of this lesson is to have students review, edit and finalize their dictionary entries. You might have each student write one of their entries on the board or on an overhead. As a class, discuss them. Are the parts of speech correctly identified? Would everyone agree on the definitions? Are they stated clearly? Are the sample sentences descriptive and evocative? The other two entries students can edit either individually or in small groups. (15 min.)
2. Have students type up their entries.

   [**Note**] The amount of class time you want to devote to typing the entries is up to you.

3. Share the definitions either by collecting them in a booklet or posting them on the wall.

Lessons 15-18
Verb Tenses and Subject Verb Agreement

BACKGROUND

As we noted in the introduction to Lesson 1, <u>verb tense</u> locates an action in time and <u>verb aspect</u> indicates the perception of an action by a speaker (like whether that action is complete or habitual). It isn't necessary to make such a technical distinction with students, but it might be useful for students to understand that verbs can indicate both the time an action takes place and the nature of that action. Such characteristics can be marked by adding suffixes (in the case of regular verbs), changing forms (in the case of irregular verbs like *to be* or *to sing*) and adding auxiliaries or modals (like *be*, *do*, *have*, *can*, *would*, *should*, etc.).

Like systems for pronouns, systems for verbs have changed over time and vary across dialects. A change over time that is probably familiar to us is the use of *–th* instead of *–s* in marking the present tense third-person singular. We see this ending in Shakespeare (*O, how this spring of love* **resembleth**/*The uncertain glory of an April day*) and the King James Bible (*...and when he* **seeth** *thee, he will be glad in his heart*). Similarly, verb systems can vary across dialects. For example, some dialects do not use a suffix to mark the present tense third person singular. Some of the characters in *A Raisin in the Sun* use this unmarked ending (*Walter Lee* **say** *colored people ain't never going to start getting ahead...*).

We had a glimpse of how verb systems can vary when we looked at *ain't*. Such variation can get quite complex. We, of course, can only examine a small part of that complexity. The particular features we are going to look at are 1) habitual *be*; and 2) third person singular verbs that aren't marked with *–s*. We chose habitual *be* because it is a feature of AAE that really stands out when people hear it, and we chose the third person singular because it and similar features are likely to show up in students' writing.

Like its name suggests, habitual *be* designates an action that is customary or regularly repeated. When, in August Wilson's *Fences*, Bono asks, "How you figure **he be** making out with that **gal be** up at Taylor's all the time..." the verbs imply that his (Brownie's) efforts with the woman (Alberta) are customary and that Alberta is regularly at the Taylor's—and Wilson emphasizes the verbs with the adverbial "all the time." Used in this way, the verb *be* does not imply that either of these actions are going on right now, in the present moment.

It may be tricky for some students to recognize the difference between habitual *be* and infinitive *to be*. Habitual *be* takes the form of subject + *be* and is, then, distinct from uses like "She **used to be** real little" (*The Piano Lesson*) or "Mr. Younger **would just be** plain mad if he could hear you talking foolish like that" (*A Raisin in the Sun*).

The other feature we are looking at—the third person singular ending—is one that researchers have suggested tends to crop up frequently in students' writing. In Standard English, most verbs in the third person singular present tense end with *–s*. In some nonstandard dialects, this ending has been dropped, so the third person is not marked ("Dat's 'cause **Tony love** her too good..." [*Their Eyes Were Watching God*]). Throughout its history, English has shed many such endings like *–en* marking an infinitive ("And palmeres for to **seken** straunge strondes" [*The Canterbury Tales*]), *–en* marking present tense plurals ("And smale fowles **maken** melodye" [*The Canterbury Tales*]) or *–est* marking the present tense second person singular (" Thou **woldest** been a

trede-foul a-right" [*The Canterbury Tales*]). Given the number of changes over time, perhaps it isn't surprising that word endings of all kinds—those that mark tense or person for verbs, or possession for nouns—appear to be the writing features most influenced by dialect.

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Definition of habitual *be*: www.pbs.org/speak/about/guide/index.html#Habitual_be

Habitual *be* exercise:
www.pbs.org/speak/education/training/seminar/sessiontwo.html#post_activities

Subject-verb agreement: www.csulb.edu/~wrl/handouts/SubjectVerbAgreement.pdf

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LESSON PLAN 15

Objectives:
  1. Students will become familiar with some of the basic properties of verbs like tense.
  2. Students will practice identifying various verb tenses.

Materials:
  1. Copies of Handout 15:1.

Procedures:
  2. You might begin with a quick discussion/review of verbs. Some of the basic principles that might be worth touching on include:
      ➤ Verbs are often described as "action words," but verbs can also describe processes that may not seem like actions like mental activities or states of being (*to be* is one of the most useful verbs in English).
      ➤ Verbs can be more that one word; they can be phrases.
      ➤ Verb tense tells us when an event occurs in time.
    If students have difficulty engaging in the discussion, it might help them to think back on their work with *ain't*. Think of the different ways can *ain't* function: **ain't** much good, **ain't** running, **ain't** even started, **ain't** been sleepin'. In each of these examples, the verbs are different and indicate a different timing for the action. As you review some basic properties of verbs, again, it isn't necessary for students to memorize the more technical names, like "present perfect progressive" (though students should know fundamental terms like past, present and future). (3 min.)
  3. Distribute Handout 15:1. (1 min.)
  4. Review the directions with students. Then have students complete the handout either individually or in small groups. (3 min.)
  5. Review students' answers. (1. *gonna be*, c; 2. *hadn't kidnapped*... *brought*, b; 3. *done blazed*, b; 4. *has been doing*, a). Students may have some difficulty distinguishing between an event that happened in the past and one that happened in the past before another past action (that is between past and past perfect) particularly since the quotations don't have any context. If this happens, you might have students imagine the context by inventing extensions to the quotations. This might help them to puzzle out the verb tense that is being used. Students also might have some difficulty with example 3. In some nonstandard dialects, the construction *done + past participle* can have a variety of functions. The construction can indicate an action that has recently been completed (so the standard equivalent would be roughly "I have just blazed the instrumental"), and the construction can also indicate what is called a resultant state, an emphasis on the state of the subject ("I have already blazed the instrumental"). If students have different answers for #3, this might be an interesting and productive point to discuss. (4 min.)

Handout 15:1: Verb Tenses

Verbs give readers or listeners a lot of information. Not only can they tell us the nature of an action or state (whether a person or thing is running or standing, stepping up or stepping off, going berserk or simply being), they can also tell us when an event occurs in time. Verbs can even give us additional information about an event. They can, for example, show that an action is continuing or hypothetical. Below are some short quotations. For each one, underline the verb. Some are standard and some are nonstandard. Remember that the verb can be more than one word; it can be a phrase. Then circle the letter of the response that most accurately completes the sentence.

1. From "Me, Myself and I" by Beyoncé:

    I'm gonna be my own best friend

    In the preceding quotation, the verb indicates an action that

    a. is happening in the present (present tense).

    b. happened in the past and is continuing in the present (present perfect tense).

    c. will happen in the future (future tense).

2. From "Ballot or Bullet" by Malcolm X:

    ...if some enemy hadn't kidnapped you and brought you here.

    In the preceding quotation, the verb indicates an action that

    a. happened in the past (past tense).

    b. happened in the past before another past action (past perfect tense).

    c. is happening in the present (present tense).

3. From "Holidae In" by Chingy:

    I done blazed the instrumental

    In the preceding quotation, the verb indicates an action that

    a. happened in the past, continues in the present and my continue in the future (present perfect progressive tense).

    b. happened in the past before another past action (past perfect tense).

    c. happened in the past (past tense).

4. From "What It Means to be Colored in Capital of the U.S." by Mary Church Terrell:

    ...it has been doing its level best ever since to make conditions for us intolerable.

    In the preceding quotation, the verb indicates an action that

    a. happened in the past, continues in the present and my continue in the future (present perfect progressive tense).

    b. happened in the past before another past action (past perfect tense).

    c. happened in the past (past tense).

LESSON PLAN 16

Objectives:
1. Students will practice identifying verb tenses.
2. Students will identify some uses of the verb *to be*.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 16:1.

Procedures:
1. You can begin by reminding students that they will be continuing their work on verb tenses. You might ask them again, "What do verb tenses do?" (2 min.)
2. Next, you can tell them that they are going to look specifically at the verb *to be*. You might ask the students to conjugate the verb: In Standard English, what is *to be* in the present tense? First person singular? Plural? Second? Third? (Note that some students may generalize *is*, as in *you is*.) What about in the past tense? Etc. Then you might remind students that the verb to be has a variety of uses and those uses can vary in Standard and Nonstandard English—they can think back to their work on *ain't*. In fact, it is, perhaps, because it is so useful and so common that it is so irregular. (2 min.)
3. Distribute copies of Handout 16:1, and review the directions with students. The directions to the handout provide quite a bit of background information. The activity itself is can be kept short, so if necessary, you can take your time reviewing the introductory information. (3 min.)
4. As a class discuss the scenario in Part I. The disagreement, of course, arises because *be* as the student uses the verb is not equivalent to *is*. The teacher misunderstands the student's language use and the fundamental meaning of habitual *be*. Students may also have other, social observations to make about the misunderstanding. This could be an interesting discussion, but you may also want to conserve time. If such a discussion begins to evolve, it is up to decide if it is worth pursuing. (3 min.)
5. Either as a class, in small groups, or individually, have students complete Part II. The correct responses are "b" (the gal who is usually) for #1, and "a" (is habitual or customary) for #2. The clue that these are the correct answer is the adverbial phrase "all the time." Students, however, may have alternative responses. If they do, such responses are worth discussion. When discussion is complete, you can tell students that the use *be* in this example is known as "habitual be." (3 min.)

Handout 16:1: Uses of the Verb *to Be*

The verb *to be* is one of the most common and useful verbs in the English language. By itself, it can be used to describe the qualities or state of something. When Paris Hilton says, "I'<u>m</u> an actress, a brand, a businesswoman. I'<u>m</u> all kinds of stuff," she is using the verb *to be* to make a claim about what and who she is.

The verb *to be* can also be used with other verbs as part of different verb tenses. For example, when talking about his concert film, Jay-Z tells the interviewer, "When I wasn't onstage, I <u>was changing</u> clothes." The verb "was changing" is in what is called the past progressive tense (a tense indicating a past action that was happening when another event occurred). In progressive tenses like this one, *to be* is used as a part of the verb (past progressive = *was/were* + verb ending in *–ing*; present progressive = *is/are* + verb ending in *–ing*).

Given that the verb *to be* has such a variety of uses, it's probably not surprising that Standard English and Nonstandard English sometimes use *to be* differently. In fact, we have already looked at two of those differences. We looked at *am not/is not/are not* versus *ain't*. And we looked at instances where a subject and an adjective are linked with the verb *to be* ("...I am cognizant...") versus where it is implied ("...you mad...").

Now we are going to look at another use of *to be*, one that probably sounds familiar to a lot of people but one that we may not think much about.

Part I

The excerpt below was recorded in elementary school in Los Angeles (from *Talkin That Talk: Language, Culture and Education in African America* by Geneva Smitherman).

Can you figure out and describe the cause of the miscommunication between the teacher and the student?

Teacher: Bobby, what does your mother do everyday? (Teacher apparently wanted to call Bobby's parents.)

Bobby: She be at home!

Teacher: You mean, "She is at home."

Bobby: No, she ain't, 'cause she took my grandmother to the hospital this morning.

Teacher: You know what I meant. You are not supposed to say, "She be at home." You are to say, "She is at home."

Bobby: Why you trying to make me lie? She ain't at home.

Part II

Read the quotation below from August Wilson's *Fences* and answer the questions that follow.

How you figure he be making out with <u>that gal be</u> up at Taylor's all the time...

1. Choose the following phrase that you think would most accurately switch the underlined section of the quotation into Standard English:

    a. that gal who might be

    b. that gal who is usually

    c. that gal who had been

    d. that gal who used to be

2. The use of *be* in the preceding quotation describes an action that:

    a. is habitual or customary

    b. is hypothetical

    c. happened in the remote past

    d. happened in the past before another action

LESSON PLAN 17

Objectives:
1. Students will determine the grammatical rules governing the expression of habitual action in Standard and Nonstandard English.
2. Students will practice code-switching.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 17:1.

Procedures:
1. You can remind students that they have been working with the verb *to be*. In particular, they have looked at one use of *to be* that indicates a habitual or customary action. Now, they will be completing that work by explaining the grammatical rules that describe how people express habitual actions in Standard and Nonstandard English. (1 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 17:1, and review the directions with students. (1 min.)
3. Have students complete the handout either individually or in small groups. (5 min.)
4. Review the students' responses. In switching from the Nonstandard habitual *be* to the Standard, students may have a variety of responses. Switching into standard requires the addition of an adverb or adverbial phrase, so students may have answers that employ words like *usually*, *always*, etc. The rule, then, for Standard English is that a habitual action can be expressed using a verb (which can be *to be*) plus an adverbial, while in Nonstandard English a habitual action is expressed using *be*.

   In their forms at the end, it is worth noting that habitual *be* is an invariant form. That is, it doesn't change by person or number.

   Finally, time permitting, you might have a discussion with students about the social uses of habitual *be*. Who uses it? Do they use it? Do they know people who use it? Is it ever used in writing? Why or why not? (5 min.)

Handout 17:1: Code-Switching Using *Habitual Be*

For each of the following pairs, fill in the blank with the missing form. If the Nonstandard form is given, provide the Standard equivalent, and if the Standard is given, provide the Nonstandard. Then complete the rule that begins at the bottom and fill in the verb form chart for <u>using *to be* to indicate a habitual action</u>.

Nonstandard	Standard
And <u>they be</u> lining down the block... (Fergie/Fergalicious)	And they _____ lining...
Cuz he hot on the block and <u>he be</u> ridin nija bikes yea (Thugman/Tweet)	...he _____ riding...
...you _____ running...	<u>You're always</u> running in place... (Aerosmith/The Reason a Dog)
Like <u>we ain't be</u> hearin what they be saying on the streets... (Kelis/ I Don't Know What)	...we _____ hearing...

Rule: In Standard English, a habitual action is indicated by...

In Nonstandard English, a habitual action is indicated by...

Habitual action in Standard English:		
	Singular	Plural
First person (*I, we*)		
Second person (*you*)		
Third person (*he, she, it, they*)		

Habitual action in Nonstandard English:		
	Singular	Plural
First person (*I, we*)		
Second person (*you*)		
Third person (*he, she, it, they*)		

LESSON PLAN 18

Objectives:
1. Students will practice conjugating verbs in the present tense.
2. Students will practice code-switching.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 18:1.

Procedures:
1. You might start by telling students that they will be completing their work with verbs by looking at the differences in the endings of present tense verbs in Standard and Nonstandard English. (1 min.)
2. Distribute copies of Handout 18:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the directions with students, and have them complete the handout either individually or in small groups. (4 min.)
4. Review students' responses. You might ask them how most Standard English verbs are conjugated in the present tense. Take an example from the handout *to say*:

	Singular	Plural
First person	say	say
Second person	say	say
Third person	says	say

All forms are consistent except for the third person singular, which takes the ending *–s*. You might ask students if they can think of examples of Standard English verbs that don't follow this pattern. *To be* is one example. They might also come up examples of modals like *can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would*. (These are special verbs; not only does the third person singular not take an *–s*, but modals don't have an infinitive form—you can't say *to can* or *to may*.) They might also suggest *to do* or *to have*. These are interesting cases. *To do* actually follows the pattern (*he does*), but there is a pronunciation change (dəz, not düz). *To have* is also close to the pattern with a slight difference. The third person singular is *she has* not *she haves*. But try saying "haves"—it comes out sounding a lot like "has". (5 min.)

Handout 18:1: Code-Switching Using the Third Person Singular

For each of the following pairs, fill in the blank with the missing form. If the Nonstandard form is given, provide the Standard equivalent, and if the Standard is given, provide the Nonstandard. Then complete the rule that begins at the bottom.

Nonstandard	Standard
The Bible <u>say</u> an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth... (*The Piano Lesson* by August Wilson)	The Bible _____ an eye...
She <u>keep</u> telling him no but be won't give up (*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry)	She _____ telling him...
...who _____ the piano...	And there's this other guy <u>who plays</u> the piano... (*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry)
I see <u>Bernice still try</u> to be stuck up. (*The Piano Lesson* by August Wilson)	...Bernice still _____ to be...
...It _____ someone...	<u>It means</u> someone who is willing to give up his own culture... (*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry)

Rule: In Standard English, a **third person, present tense, verb** is usually marked by...

In Nonstandard English, a **third person, present tense, verb** is usually marked by...

Lessons 19-20
Code-Switching Review

BACKGROUND

So far, we have looked at the following grammatical features:

> ➢ the use of *ain't*
> ➢ implied *to be* before a predicative adjective
> ➢ reflexive pronouns
> ➢ habitual *be*
> ➢ unmarked third person singular verbs in the present tense

There are, of course, other grammatical features that differentiate Standard and Nonstandard Englishes. For example, two additional features that might arise in students' compositions are unmarked past tense (a dropping of the –*ed* suffix) and unmarked possessives (a dropping of –*'s*). While it would take far too long to present every grammatical difference (entire books are dedicated to documenting the features of a single dialect), at this point, the hope is that by giving students and teachers a new way to think about language, as you come across features in readings or students' compositions, you will have some tools at your disposal for identifying and working with those features.

Our emphasis has been on the logic and systematicity of language, be it Standard or Nonstandard. This emphasis should help make clearer to those students who use Nonstandard English both the logic of their own language and the logic of the language that they are being asked to use in school. Similarly, it should help teachers to guide students in the process of switching between grammatical systems.

Teachers, of course, need to be prudent in their application of this approach. For example, a teacher might want to respond to an unmarked third person singular verb in a student's composition. This may be an instance in which the teacher might want to prompt the student to code-switch. However, it might also be a simple typo or mistake—the kind that novice writers are prone to make. The teacher's decision on how to respond to and guide the student's writing will be influenced by the teacher's knowledge of the student's language use, a recognition of language use patterns, and an understanding of the student's rhetorical purpose.

In order to help students and teachers alike recognize patterns of linguistic features, the next two lessons will review the features we have studied thus far and also ask students to apply the techniques they've learned to some features we haven't studied. The lessons that follow these will move from the subject of code-switching and address some of the specific grammatical features of academic language.

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

American Varieties: http://www.pbs.org/speak/seatosea/americanvarieties/

AAE Grammar: http://www.stanford.edu/~rickford/ebonics/EbonicsExamples.html

Dialect Map of American English: http://www.uta.fi/FAST/US1/REF/dial-map.html

LESSON PLAN 19

Objectives:
1. Students will review features of Standard and Nonstandard English
2. Students will practice code-switching.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 19:1.

Procedures:
1. You might begin by asking students to name the Nonstandard/Standard grammatical features they've studied so far. They should be able to identify the following:
   - ➢ the use of *ain't*
   - ➢ implied *to be* before a predicative adjective
   - ➢ reflexive pronouns
   - ➢ habitual *be*
   - ➢ unmarked third person singular verbs in the present tense

   If they have difficulty, you might prompt them. (2 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 19:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the directions for Part I with students. Note that C is somewhat a somewhat expanded rule from their previous work. They have studied to be absence before predicative adjectives. However, to be can be absent in other constructions, such as before a predicative noun or a present participle in a progressive verb. The extension of the rule is not overly complicated, and we have provided examples in the directions. Nonetheless, you might want to point out this extension to the students as you review the directions. (1 min.)
4. Have students complete Part I of the handout either individually or in small groups. (3 min.)
5. Review students' answers. (1. C; 2. A; 3. C; 4. B; 5. A; 6. B; 7. B & C; 8. B; 9. C; 10. B). (3 min.)
6. **Part II may require a second day.** The previous review may take longer if students have questions or have comments. If you have time, continue to Part II. If not, you can continue Part II as a separate lesson. Review the directions for Part II with students. Emphasize the note that precedes the directions. It reminds students that this is to be an exercise in code-switching <u>not</u> error correction. (2 min.)
7. Have students complete Part II of the handout either individually or in small groups. (3 min.)
8. Review students' answers. (1. B, *and healthcare <u>gets</u> settled...*; 2. A, *The boy probably <u>is frequently</u> (*or *usually, often,* etc.) *in a situation...*; 3. B, *that <u>tells</u> you...*; 4. C, *He <u>is</u> crying out loud...*) (3 min.)

Handout 19:1: Code-Switching Review

Part I

Below are ten quotations from *The Piano Lesson* by August Wilson. Each one contains at least one of the following features:

A. Habitual *be*
B. Unmarked third person, present tense singular
C. Absence of *to be* (such as before a predicative adjective [...*she just _tired_*], a predicative noun [*We just plain working _folks_*], or a verb in a progressive tense [*I know what you _thinking_ about*])

Identify the feature or features (at least one quotation has two) in the quotations.

_____ 1. *They nice and lean.*

_____ 2. *I know you can carry two hundred pounds! You be lifting them cotton sacks!*

_____ 3. *She real nice.*

_____ 4. *That dime say you can't be bashful.*

_____ 5. *Mostly they be lonely and looking for somebody to spend the night with them.*

_____ 6. *Uncle Doaker tell me your mama got you playing that piano.*

_____ 7. *Boy Willy say you staying...*

_____ 8. *I see Berneice still try to be stuck up.*

_____ 9. *He my friend.*

_____ 10. *Let her sleep until she get up.*

Part II

Note: In the following exercise, we are <u>not</u> practicing error correction. The examples below are perfectly grammatical expressions in Nonstandard English. We want to practice code-switching into Standard English because, often, Standard English is the expectation in academic writing. This doesn't mean, however, that writing in Nonstandard English can't be an effective and powerful choice sometimes, as the preceding quotations by August Wilson attest.

Below are four quotations from student essays. Each one contains at least one of the following features:

    A. Habitual *be*
    B. Unmarked third person, present tense singular
    C. Absence of *to be* (such as before a predicative adjective [...*she just <u>tired</u>*], a predicative noun [*We just plain working <u>folks</u>*], or a verb in a progressive tense [*I know what you <u>thinking</u> about*])

First, identify the feature or features in the quotations. Second, code-switch each of the quotations into Standard English.

_____   1. *Until the situation with jobs, money, and healthcare get settled I think that the U.S. should be closed for immigrants.*

_____   2. *The boy probably be in a situation that he was not listening or paying attention or talking back.*

_____   3. *That is to say that if the poem is called "If We Must Die," that tell you that the poem is going to be about life and death.*

_____   4. *He crying out loud, trying to plead his case.*

LESSON PLAN 20

Objectives:
1. Students will review features of Standard and Nonstandard English
2. Students will practice code-switching.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 20:1.

Procedures:
1. You can begin by telling students that after completing these activities on code-switching, their next set of lessons will address some of the specific grammatical features of academic English. (2 min.)
2. Distribute copies of Handout 20:1, and review the directions with students. You might emphasize that while we have looked at a few nonstandard features, grammatical systems, whether standard or nonstandard, are quite complex. However, students should be able to apply the approaches they've been practicing to any grammatical feature that they come across. (2 min.)
3. Have students complete the handout individually. (5 min.)
4. Review their answers to the first part. Below are the features in the paragraph that students might identify:

> They <u>been</u> [a past tense form of *to be*, which would probably be a present perfect verb in Standard English] around here three days trying to sell <u>them</u> [pronoun] watermelons. They <u>trying</u> [implied *to be* before a progressive verb] to get out to where the white folks live but the truck <u>keep</u> [unmarked third person singular] breaking down. They go a block or two and it <u>break</u> [unmarked third person singular] down again. They <u>trying</u> [implied *to be* before a progressive verb] to get out to Squirrel Hill and get around the corner. He <u>say</u> [unmarked third person singular] <u>soon as</u> [subordinating conjunction] he can get that truck empty to where he can set the piano up in there he <u>gonna</u> [implied *to be* before a progressive verb indicating the future] take it out of here and go sell it.

For the first two features, since we haven't studied them, you might ask students some questions. For example, what parts of speech are they? The *been* in the first sentence might be very interesting to discuss. What is verb *been* indicating about the action in the first sentence? How does it locate the action in time? Its tense/aspect is somewhat ambiguous, but students might have some intuitions about it. It could be identified as a past tense form. It is likely to be code-switched into a present perfect verb (*have been*), indicating an action that happened at an indefinite time in the past and continues into the present. Others, however, have argued that this indicates a habitual action, like habitual *be*. Students may well argue for either interpretation. (3 min.)

5. Review students answers to the second part. You might do this by having them compare answers with a partner, having volunteers write their code-switched paragraphs on the board, or simply having volunteers read their responses aloud. Their paragraphs might look something like the following:

They <u>have been</u> around here three days trying to sell <u>those</u> watermelons. They <u>are trying</u> to get out to where the white folks live but the truck <u>keeps</u> breaking down. They go a block or two and it <u>breaks</u> down again. They <u>are trying</u> to get out to Squirrel Hill and get around the corner. He <u>says</u> <u>as soon as</u> he can get that truck empty to where he can set the piano up in there he <u>will</u> [*or* <u>is going to</u>] take it out of here and go sell it.

When you are done, if you have time, it might be interesting to ask students why August Wilson didn't simply write the dialogue in this standard form to begin with? What does he gain by using Nonstandard English? (4 min.)

Handout 20:1: Code-Switching Review, Cont.

The following is a passage from the *Piano Lesson* by August Wilson. First, circle any Nonstandard grammatical features that you find. (Note: While we have studied most of the features that are present in this passage, there are at least a couple that we haven't.) When you have finished identifying the features, code-switch the passage into Standard English in the space below.

They been around here three days trying to sell them watermelons. They trying to get

out to where the white folks live but the truck keep breaking down. They go a block

or two and it break down again. They trying to get out to Squirrel Hill and get around

the corner. He say soon as he can get that truck empty to where he can set the piano

up in there he gonna take it out of here and go sell it.

Lessons 21-23
Topic/Comment Organization in Sentences

BACKGROUND

In our work thus far, we have been looking at how language varies across dialects. Our emphasis has been on systematicity—the ways in which dialects may have different verb tenses, pronouns, etc., but those differences are logical and systematic. The features that we chose to illustrate contrasting systems have been word-level features (contrastive words like *himself/hisself* rather than, say, how interrogatives are constructed). Now we are going to change our focus in two ways.

First, we will be examining a different kind of variation. Rather than looking at variation *across* dialects we will be looking at variation *within* a dialect. One example of this kind of variation would be relative formality. Standard English, for instance, can be used for very formal purposes like academic writing, but it can also be used for less formal purposes—writing emails, talking about sports, hanging out with friends. The same holds true for nonstandard dialects. They may be used for preaching in church, writing fiction (as we have seen) or talking with friends, etc.—a whole variety of purposes and a whole range of formality.

As we mentioned in our introduction to the unit (where we provided a definition), this type of variation is called *register*. While dialect variation can be significantly described by contrasting grammatical systems, register variation can be significantly described by contrasting vocabularies and organizations. At the end of this introduction we have provided an illustration of register variation with three texts about surfing. Like each of those examples, academic texts have a recognizable register—they tend to have features and structures that are preferred over other ones. While these features are likely not transparent to students and teachers, we almost always respond to them, either positively or negatively. They are often related to observations we make about development, coherence and voice. An important objective for these lessons is to give students some concrete strategies for improving their writing when, for example, a teacher comments that their argument "needs development."

The first step in building up these skills is helping students to recognize some of the ways that sentences work. One way to think about how meaning gets made in a sentence is to think of a sentence, like a journey, as having two parts: a point of departure and a destination. The point of departure is simply the beginning of the sentence. This may be the sentence subject, but we can also begin sentences in the other ways, with an adverbial or a prepositional phrase, for example. What a writer chooses as a point of departure has a big impact on how sentences relate to one another and how information gets organized. At the other end of a sentence, its destination is where the writer takes that sentence—how the writer builds on or expands his or her message.

For these lessons we will be calling the sentence's point of departure its *Topic* and the sentence's destination its *Comment*. Many linguists and educators refer to these as *Theme* and *Rheme*. We have chosen an alternative terminology because *Rheme*, while a useful technical term, would quite literally be Greek to students, and *Comment* is both accessible and evocative.

Identifying the Topic and Comment of a sentence is, most of the time, fairly straightforward. In simple, declarative sentences, the Topic is the part of the sentence up to the verb, and the Comment is the rest of the sentence. Here are some examples from a student's paper on *Pride and Prejudice*:

Jane	is led to believe that Bingley is interested in marrying her and she finds herself equally attracted to him.
Topic	**Comment**

Jane's facade of contentment and the repression of her feelings	only leave her unhappy and tormented.
Topic	**Comment**

Caroline's assurances that Bingley was attracted to Georgiana	broke down Jane's conviction even further.
Topic	**Comment**

In the preceding examples, the Topic corresponds to the sentence subject. Topics, however, can include other elements that perform logical or linking functions like adverbials or conjunctions:

However, he	eventually realizes that he cannot be truly happy following his mind instead of his heart.
Topic	**Comment**

And sentences can begin in other ways as well. The next example begins with a prepositional phrase:

To Jane, his attitude of seeming indifferent	was not only socially acceptable, but also encouraged by his family for it made his intentions of not marrying obvious to Jane.
Topic	**Comment**

Our final example begins with a subordinate clause. One way to analyze this clause (and the way we are beginning with students) is to see the subordinate clause as the Topic:

When Bingley leaves for London and does not return,	Jane follows him in hopes of an explanation.
Topic	**Comment**

As you work through the lessons with students it is important to note that precision in identifying Topics and Comments is not the objective. The purpose is to give students a basic tool to analyze the way meaning is being constructed in their compositions. Some sentences can be messy and confusing. Deciding where the Topic ends and the Comment begins may not always be clear. That's okay and, in fact, can make for some interesting and productive discussions.

What is important for students to understand is that both the choice and organization of Topic and Comment are very important to their academic writing. What a writer chooses to put in Topic position is made prominent. So, for example, if a student were to write, "I believe that Beloved represents Sethe's past experiences in slavery," *I* would be in Topic position, and the writer would be the focus rather than the character

Beloved. This Topic placement may not be particularly problematic in a single sentence, but if a pattern of Topicalizing the writer were to emerge in a paper that was meant to focus on character analysis, the analysis would likely be perceived as weak (since the analysis would, quite literally, be grammatically backgrounded).

One potentially problematic pattern that commonly emerges in students' compositions is the repeated use of a character or literary feature like a symbol or motif as sentence Topics. A student, for example, in writing about Hamlet's indecision, might repeatedly Topicalize *Hamlet* or some variant like the pronoun *he*. (This pattern is evident in the second example of register variation below and in one of student paragraphs in Handout 21:1.) Of course, one can't avoid Topicalizing the name of character when writing about literature. But what happens when a pattern of repetition lasts for the better part of a paragraph? For example, consider a series of sentences like these:

> *Hamlet can not decide to act. He is indecisive. For example, he says in his soliloquy, "To be or not to be." Hamlet is trying to make up his mind if he wants to live or die.*

By identifying and placing the Topics and Comments into a T-graph, some problems become obvious.

Topic	Comment
Hamlet	can not decide to act.
He	is indecisive.
For example, he	says in his soliloquy, "To be or not to be."
Hamlet	is trying to make up his mind if he wants to live or die.

First, the Topic remains completely static. This is a common organization in encyclopedia entries, for example, but in a piece of analytical writing this is problematic, in part, because static Topics add incremental information about a single Topic but don't develop any of the information in the Comments. (We will be investing this issue in detail in subsequent lessons.) Second, in literary analysis, abstract ideas often appear as Topics. So here we might expect to see "Hamlet's inaction" as a Topic somewhere. Third, the Comments don't really go anywhere. The first two Comments essentially repeat and the last is actually a Comment following from Hamlet rather than the quotation.

In Lessons 21-23, we will be doing activities very similar to what we have done here with the paragraph on Hamlet. In the Lesson 21, students will practice identifying how groups of words can function together as nominals. In Lesson 22, they will practice identifying Topics and Comments. And in Lesson 23, they will work with a paragraph that has been separated into sentences, examine the Topics and Comments of those sentences, and then make some observations about Topic/Comment choice and how that influences the argument that paragraph is trying to make.

Finally, though we only work with some sample student texts in these lessons, having students repeat these activities with their own essays, either as a reflection or as a part of revision, can be extremely valuable in helping them to develop their fluency with academic language.

VOCABULARY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Topic: The beginning of a sentence or clause. Because of its initial position, it is both grammatically and thematically important.

Comment: The part of the sentence or clause that follows the Topic. It is the place where the writer develops the message of the sentence or clause, where the writer "comments on" the Topic.

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Theme/Rheme:
http://www.tki.org.nz/r/esol/esolonline/secondary_esol/classroom/ncea/fat_tax/task12_e.php

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AN EXAMPLE OF REGISTER VARIATION

Consider the three following excerpts about surfing:

1. *It is unclear why surfing has found a broader respectability. Some point to the initial public offering of Quiksilver, the board apparel and accessories company, in 1986 as a catalyst. Perhaps reflecting surfing's laid-back roots, concrete figures on participation are hard to come by. Two million people consider themselves active surfers in the United States, twice as many as 20 years ago, according to Action Sports Retailer, the leading board-sports industry trade show.*

2. *Modern surfboards are constructed of a plastic foam core that is shaped by hand or machine and then covered with a shell of fiberglass and resin. Individual surfboards can vary in dimensions. The high performance surfboards used by top professional competitors are typically about 1.8 to 2 m (6 to 6.5 ft) long, 47 cm (18.5 in) wide, less than 6 cm (2.5 in) thick, and weigh about 2.7 kg (6 lb). These boards are also known as shortboards. On the other end of the surfboard spectrum is the longboard. Most longboards are 2.7 m (9 ft) long, 51 to 56 cm (20 to 22 in) wide, and about the same thickness as shortboards. They weigh less than 7 kg (15 lb).*

3. *Wow... definitely a night and day scenario. Headed out to DH early yesterday morning for a quick surf on the Bing. Small kine waves rolling through with hardly a wisp of wind. Super fun to be loggin it again. Good chance for me to get back into shape before going back to the northshore. Managed to get one killer wave... it walled up about waist high for a nice long hang ten, then back stepped as it pitched a bit to get a teeny weeny coverup, more like water splashing on my shoulder, but felt good. Zipped through that section and the wave opened up again for a another noseride with a fade back. Good fun and all to myself!*

All three texts are written in Standard English, but all are written in distinctly different registers. Using our intuitions about language, we could probably guess their contexts. The first is from a New York Times article on the growing popularity and gentrification of surfing. We might notice the speculative language (*unclear*, *Perhaps*). We might also notice the attributions to authorities (*Some*, *Action Sports Retailer*) and the preponderance of numbers as both Topic and Comment (*1986*, *concrete figures*, *Two million*, *20 years ago*). All of which are characteristic of newspaper writing. The second excerpt is from an Encyclopedia Encarta article on surfing. Why might we suspect this is from an informational source like an encyclopedia? We might, for example, notice the repetitive and related sentence Topics, which is a hallmark of some informational texts (*Modern surfboards*, *Individual surfboards*, *The high performance surfboards*, *These boards*, *Most longboards*, *They*). The third excerpt is from a surfer's blog. In this case, we might notice the frequent appearance of the first person as Topic (even where it is implied), or the use of specific vocabulary items like *kine*, *hangten*, *coverup*, *noseride*, etc. There are, of course, many other observations we might make, but the basic idea is one that is fairly straightforward: these texts are recognizable and describable according to their rhetorical purposes.

LESSON PLAN 21

Objectives:
1. Students will practice applying their knowledge of parts of speech, particularly nouns.
2. Students will be able to identify both simple and complex nominal groups.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 21:1.

Procedures:
1. You might begin by reminding students that they will be shifting their focus from examining code-switching to looking at some of the specific features of academic writing. (2 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 21:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the directions with students. You might emphasize that students are looking at how a group of words can work together, in this case to function like a noun. Being able to understand and manipulate this kind of grouping is important to doing academic writing successfully. Also, this is a skill they will be returning to in later lessons. (2 min.)
4. Have students complete the handout either individually or in small groups. (3 min.)
5. Review their responses. They should be as follows: 1. Y; 2. Y; 3. N; 4. Y; 5. Y; 6. N; 7. Y; 8. Y; 9. N; 10. Y. You might, then, ask students of the nominal groups, whether the groups are simple (short) or complex (long). As an example, the first two groups in the instructions are simple, and the last two are complex. Their answers might be something like: 1. simple; 2. complex; 3. N/A; 4. complex; 5. complex; 6. N/A; 7. simple; 8. complex; 9. N/A; 10. complex. (5 min.)

Handout 21:1: Nominal Groups

In the following exercises, we will be looking at how sentences work and how they fit together. But first, we need to get used to groups of words that work like nouns. We call these words that work together as nouns *nominal groups*. All of the following are nominal groups:

> ➢ *Toni Morrison*
> ➢ *both Sethe and Paul D*
> ➢ *the one thing that he cannot face again*
> ➢ *the carefree girl who Paul D knew at Sweet Home*

One way to figure out if something is a nominal group is to decide if the words are describing a person, place, thing or idea. So *the character*, *the dignified character*, *the dignified character in the novel*, and *the dignified character in the novel who is important to the central theme* are all describing a person "the character," just in more and more detail.

Another way to figure out if something is a nominal group is to apply the "it" test. Can you replace the group of words with a pronoun like *it*, *she*, *he* or *they*?

Below are some sentences from a student's essay on *Beloved*. Applying the tests above, or simply using your own intuitions, determine if each of the underlined groups of words is a nominal group. If you think it is a nominal group, put a Y (Yes) in the space provided, if not, put an N (No).

1. _____ Paul D has suffered through a slave's punishment and lived without going crazy, but hasn't "figured out yet which was worse."

2. _____ The fears of pain, humiliation, and death have all been faced and beaten by Paul D.

3. _____ His instinct forces him to protect himself by shutting out the world and the people he should be able to share his burdens with.

4. _____ His instinct forces him to protect himself by shutting out the world and the people he should be able to share his burdens with.

5. _____ The way that Paul D has survived numerous terrors is by shutting off his mind and emotions to the world.

6. _____ Paul D refuses to live his life to its fullest potential because of the injuries to his heart in the past.

7. _____ His survival is only possible through the death of his humanity.

8. _____ His decision to "put his story next to [Sethe's]" (273) and never pick it up again allowed him a chance for the future that he never had before.

9. _____ His emotional scarring has damaged him beyond any physical torment.

10. _____ Paul D refuses to live his life to its fullest potential because of the injuries to his heart in the past.

LESSON PLAN 22

Objectives:
1. Students will know the definitions of Topic and Comment.
2. Students will be able to identify Topic and Comment in sample sentences.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 22:1.

Procedures:
1. You might begin by reminding students that they will be shifting their focus from examining code-switching to looking at some of the specific features of academic writing. (2 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 22:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the directions with students. If students have difficulty with the concept of Topic/Comment, you could compare the role of Topic in a sentence to a Topic Sentence in a paragraph. A Topic Sentence should orient the reader and frame the paragraph just as the Topic of a sentence orients a sentence to what is to follow. Also, you might emphasize that separating the Topic from Comment is not always precise, and it's okay if their answers are not all exactly the same. (4 min.)
4. Have students complete Part I of the handout either individually or in small groups. Their answers should look something like:
    A. <u>Shakespeare</u> pinpoints hesitation and over-rationalization as the source of his ultimate ruin.
    B. <u>Once again, Hamlet's unnecessary observation</u> keeps him from taking the life of Claudius.
    C. <u>The combination of Hamlet's omnipresent logic and fear of action</u> cripple his attempts at revenge.
    D. <u>He</u> believes that the spirit could be a devil "assum[ing] a pleasing shape…to damn [him]."
    E. <u>Time and time again, Hamlet</u> waits for the ideal opportunity to avenge his father.
    F. <u>Each occasion that presents itself</u> never reaches fruition because Hamlet's rationale outweighs his passion. (3 min.)
5. As a class discuss Part II questions 1, 2 and 3. Answers to question 1 might be as follows: A. simple; B. complex; C. complex; D. simple; E. simple; F. complex. You, then, might ask students which is most important to academic writing, complex or simple Topics? In fact, both complex and simple Topics are important. Answers to question 2 might be as follows: A. person; B. other or perhaps event; C. concept; D. person; E. person; F. event. The answer to question 3, of course, is that **all of these** are important in writing about literature. What students may not be aware of, and what may be worth emphasizing, is that occasionally Topicalizing concepts or other abstractions is a key component of academic writing. (5 min.)

Handout 22:1: Topic/Comment Structure in Sentences

How do sentences work? One way to think about the workings of a sentence is to compare it to a journey: it has a point of departure and moves to a destination. The point of departure is important because it orients us, lets us know where we're going. And, clearly, the destination is important, too. This, after all, is where we end up.

We're going to be calling a sentence's point of departure its *Topic* and a sentence's destination its *Comment*. The Topic of a sentence is just the beginning of a sentence, and it is what the sentence is about. The Comment is the rest of the sentence. It's what the writer has to say about the Topic. Here are some examples from student papers on *Pride and Prejudice*:

Jane	is led to believe that Bingley is interested in marrying her and she finds herself equally attracted to him.

Topic   **Comment**

Jane's facade of contentment and the repression of her feelings	only leave her unhappy and tormented.

Topic   **Comment**

Caroline's assurances that Bingley was attracted to Georgiana	broke down Jane's conviction even further.

Topic   **Comment**

However, he	eventually realizes that he cannot be truly happy following his mind instead of his heart.

Topic   **Comment**

To Jane, his attitude of seeming indifferent	was not only socially acceptable, but also encouraged by his family for it made his intentions of not marrying obvious to Jane.

Topic   **Comment**

When Bingley leaves for London and does not return,	Jane follows him in hopes of an explanation.

Topic   **Comment**

You might notice that the Comment, most of the time, starts at the verb (or the adverb modifying the verb). The exception here is last sentence. That sentence is actually made up of two clauses, which just means there are two subjects (*Bingley* and *Jane*) and two verbs (*leaves* and *follows*). We've ended the Topic at the end of the first clause.

You also might notice that some Topics (like the first one) contain simple nominal groups, while others (like the second and third one) contain more complex nominal groups.

In the following exercises, you will practice identifying Topic and Comments. Sometimes separating the Topic and Comment will be clear, sometimes (like in the last example above), it may not be. It's okay if you identify the Topic slightly differently than someone else. What will be important as we move through these lessons is understanding that our choices of sentence Topics and how we organize them has a big impact on the success of our academic writing.

Part I: Identifying Topics

The following sentences are from a student's essay on *Hamlet*. For each of the sentences below, underline the Topic:

A. Shakespeare pinpoints hesitation and over-rationalization as the source of his ultimate ruin.

B. Once again, Hamlet's unnecessary observation keeps him from taking the life of Claudius.

C. The combination of Hamlet's omnipresent logic and fear of action cripple his attempts at revenge.

D. He believes that the spirit could be a devil "assum[ing] a pleasing shape…to damn [him]."

E. Time and time again, Hamlet waits for the ideal opportunity to avenge his father.

F. Each occasion that presents itself never reaches fruition because Hamlet's rationale outweighs his passion.

Part II: Discussing Topics and Comments

1. For each of the sentences A-F, characterize the Topic as either simple or complex.
2. For each of the sentences A-F, characterize the Topic as one of the following: a person or character; concept or idea; an event; something else (please specify).
3. What kinds of Topics (people, concepts, events or other) do you think are most important in the writing you do in your English class?

LESSON PLAN 23

Objectives:
 1. Students will practice identifying Topics and Comments.
 2. Students will begin theorizing how the organization of Topics can affect the development of an argument.

Materials:
 1. Copies of Handout 23:1.

Procedures:
 1. You may start by reminding students that they will be working some more with Topics and Comments. (1 min.)
 2. Distribute copies of Handout 23:1, and review the directions with students. The goal is to have students try to reconstruct the disassembled paragraph. Have them complete the activity either individually or in small groups. This is not a particularly successful paragraph, which may make some of the ordering difficult. Note: this activity can be easier if the students actually cut the sentences into strips and physically try to reorder them. (4 min.)
 3. When they are done, as a class, make a tally on the board of what sentences they thought went first, second, etc. and how many students chose each sentence. In this way, you should be able to determine where students agreed and where they disagreed, what sentences were easy to place and what sentences were difficult. (The actual order of the paragraph is E, C, H, B, G, I, F, A, K, J, D.) (3 min.)
 4. When you have completed the tally, discuss with students whether they found ordering the paragraph easy or difficult and why? Were there particular sentences they found more challenging to place than others? What made them easy or difficult to place? (3 min.)
 5. Now, as a class, make a list of all the sentence Topics on the board, which should be something like:
      a. The symbol of fog
      b. Fog
      c. Being caught in the fog
      d. You
      e. The river itself, where much of the novel takes place
      f. It
      g. As much of an access route the river may be, it
      h. The flow of the river
      i. It
      j. The river
      k. Conrad
    Ask the students how they would characterize the Topics. Are they mostly simple or complex? Is there enough balance between simple and complex Topics? Where does the writer's choice of Topics make this paragraph easier or more difficult to put in order, more or less effective? You might notice that these

Topics fall into two basic groups, those about the river and those about the fog. Because the Topics are fairly unchanging and are mostly about things rather than concepts, some of these sentences can feel a little interchangeable. Also, there are two Topics that seem out of place: *You* and *Conrad*.

If you have time, you might also ask students to list and characterize the Comments.
   a. enhances the darkness theme given by Conrad.
   b. obscures and distorts a person's ability to see and make decisions.
   c. gives you no sense of direction.
   d. do not know where you are, and you do not know where you are going.
   e. is a symbol that is key to the setting in *The Heart of Darkness*.
   f. is the main access route for the Europeans to Africa.
   g. may also be viewed as a barrier, trying to keep the Europeans out of Africa.
   h. seems to handicap the colonists as they enter and help them as they try to leave.
   i. signifies the natives not wanting the colonists in their world.
   j. keeps them physically off of their land, where they are not wanted.
   k. states, "Going up the river was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world."

You might notice that the first Comment establishes the idea of "the darkness theme." However, no succeeding Comment clearly picks up on this idea. Much of what follows is about direction, movement, barriers and access, which is not explicitly connected to the theme of "darkness." Because of the choices of Topics and Comments, this paragraph doesn't seem to be building an argument or working toward a point. (7 min.)

 [**Note**] As we stated in the background, have students identify and analyze the Topics and Comments in their own essays. Also, if students get accustomed to examining Topic/Comment structure, you can add detail to their analysis by having them perform the same process with each clause rather than each sentence. Thus, sentences that have subordinate or coordinate clauses would be broken up:

When Bingley	leaves for London and does not return,
Topic	**Comment**

Jane	follows him in hopes of an explanation.
Topic	**Comment**

Handout 23:1: Topic/Comment, Cont.

The following a paragraph is from a student's essay on *The Heart of Darkness*. It has been broken up into individual sentences that have been put out of order. Try to put the sentences back in order by putting the letter of sentence you think goes first next to number 1, second next to number 2, etc.

A. The flow of the river seems to handicap the colonists as they enter and help them as they try to leave.

B. You do not know where you are, and you do not know where you are going.

C. Fog obscures and distorts a person's ability to see and make decisions.

D. Conrad states, "Going up the river was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world."

E. The symbol of fog enhances the darkness theme given by Conrad.

F. As much of an access route the river may be, it may also be viewed as a barrier, trying to keep the Europeans out of Africa.

G. The river itself, where much of the novel takes place, is a symbol that is key to the setting in *The Heart of Darkness*.

H. Being caught in the fog gives you no sense of direction.

I. It is the main access route for the Europeans to Africa.

J. The river keeps them physically off of their land, where they are not wanted.

K. It signifies the natives not wanting the colonists in their world.

1. _____   2. _____   3. _____   4. _____   5. _____   6. _____

7. _____   8. _____   9. _____   10. _____   11. _____

Lessons 24-27
The Know/New Contract and Information Structure

BACKGROUND

In the previous three lessons, we introduced the concept of Topic/Comment organization in sentences and began to discuss how the composition of Topics and Comments can affect the larger organization of a paragraph. Now we are going to build upon those basic concepts in order to help students better understand how Topic/Comment structure influences the coherence and development of a paragraph and how to more effectively choose what they want to put in the Topic position of any given sentence.

The concept that will be the focus of these next lessons is the Known/New Contract. The essence of the Known/New Contract is a fairly simple idea: as readers, we prefer information that we know to come before information that is new. In conjunction with what we've learned in previous lessons, this means that it is most often preferable to have Known information in Topic position and New information as Comment.

Fulfilling the Known/New Contract can be accomplished using three basic methods: repetition of a previous Topic, derivation from a previous topic, or adoption of a previous Comment.

Repetition is probably the most obvious strategy. Using repetition, the writer simply repeats some or all of a previous Topic:

Hamlet	can not decide to act.

Known   **New**

$\downarrow$

He	is troubled.

Known   **New**

In the above example, Known$_1$ *Hamlet* becomes Known$_2$ *He*. Often the repeated Topic will come from the sentence immediately before it, but it may come from even earlier in a sequence of sentences. (Although the farther the repeated Topic is from the original, the greater the likelihood the repeated Topic is to appear to the reader to be New rather than Known information.)

A second method for placing Known information in the Topic is to derive a Topic from a previous one. Such derivation requires that the initial Topic be generalized in some way such that latter Topics can be examples or characteristics of that first, root Topic. This is a common organization in encyclopedia entries, for example, where the initial Topic might be *a bat*, and subsequent entries might be *its wings*, *its hearing*, *its sonar*, etc. Another example would be:

All of the characters in the play	are flawed.

Known   **New**

$\downarrow$

Hamlet, for example,	can not decide to act.

Known   **New**

A third strategy for organizing information is to take up the Comment of previous sentence and restate it as the Topic:

Hamlet	**can not decide to act.**
Known	**New**

↓

His indecision	is a symptom of the kingdom's corruption.
Known	**New**

All three strategies are important to students' writing. However, we are going to concentrate here in helping students to develop this third strategy. While the first two strategies of repetition and derivation are clearly useful ways of organizing information, and they should be pointed out to students, they are methods that are more intuitive and ones students have practiced (whether or not they are aware of it) doing reports in elementary and middle school, for example.

The third method of taking up New information, Topicalizing it, and generating additional New information is an organizational structure that students are probably not aware of and one that seriously affects their ability to develop arguments. Indeed, very often when teachers respond to a place in a student's essay with "needs development," the student has introduced some important New information but has failed to take it up in any subsequent sentence.

Let's take another look at an excerpt we introduced earlier when we were examining Topic/Comment structure:

> *Hamlet can not decide to act. He is indecisive. For example, he says in his soliloquy, "To be or not to be." Hamlet is trying to make up his mind if he wants to live or die.*

Combining what we learned about Topics and Comments with our understanding of the Known/New Contract, we can say a little bit more about how and why this segment of text fails. Tracking the Known/New information would look something like this:

Hamlet	can not decide to act.
Known	**New**

↓ ↓

He	is indecisive.
Known	**Known**

↓

For example, he	says in his soliloquy, "To be or not to be."
Known	**New**

↓

Hamlet	is trying to make up his mind if he wants to live or die.
Known	**New**

The first problem we might notice is that the second sentence doesn't actually introduce any New information. Another more global problem is that Hamlet's indecision is introduced as New information, but is never taken up as a subsequent topic.

Thus, what develops is less an analysis of Hamlet's inability to act and more of a description of Hamlet's actions, or lack thereof. This, in fact, is the very kind of writing that is likely to be met with a response of "needs development" or "too descriptive."

So how might a student revise a piece of writing like this? One strategy (though not the only one) might be something like this:

Hamlet	can not decide to act.
Known	**New**

↓

His indecision	is shown, for example in his soliloquy, "To be or not to be."
Known	**New**

↓

In that soliloquy, he	...
Known	**New**
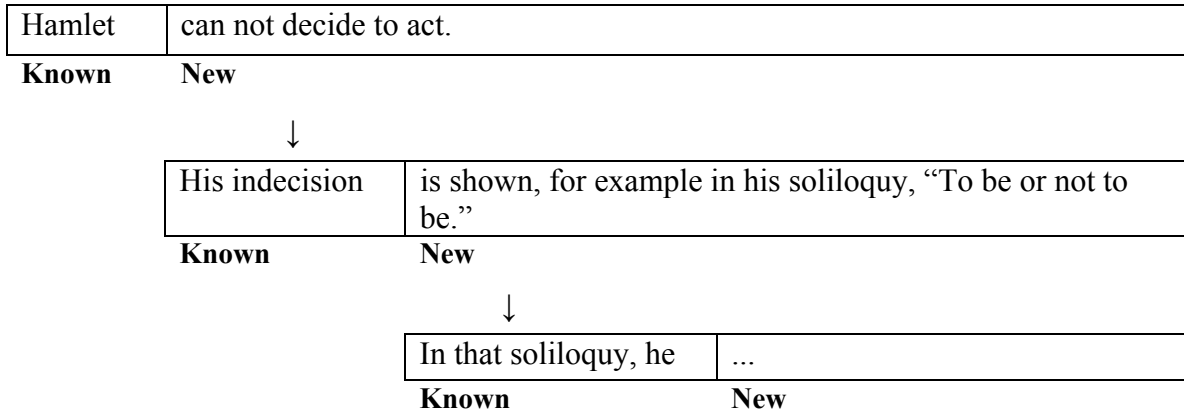
We don't want to suggest here that sentences should always and forever progress in this way. Certainly, in an argument such as this one, the student is going to have organize information in a variety of ways. However, by making students aware of the Known/New Contract and the importance of Topicalizing New information at critical moments in their writing, their writing can improve dramatically.

We will be revisiting the paragraph about *The Heart of Darkness* from the Topic/Comment lessons as we familiarize students with the concept of Known/New organization. Then, students will practice both predicting and composing sentence Topics.

VOCABULARY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Known/New Contract: The preference for information that is known to come before information that new in a sentence or clause.

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Achieving Coherence in Writing: http://www.boisestate.edu/wcenter/ww97.htm

The Known-New Contract:
http://www.d.umn.edu/~dmorriso/readablewriting/Coherence/known-new%20contract.html

LESSON PLAN 24

Objectives:
1. Students will learn the concept of the Known/New Contract.
2. Students will begin identifying Topics and Comments as containing either Known or New information.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 24:1.

Procedures:
1. You could start the lesson by telling students that they will be continuing to look at how sentences work. In particular, they will be looking at how sentence fit together, and how they can address issues like "lack of development" in their essays. (1 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 24:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the information and directions with students. You might emphasize that while the Known/New Contract is very important to understand, it is not unbreakable. There are times when writers can effectively choose to place New information first—to, for example, foreground an important point. The Known/New Contract should guide their composing, not inhibit it. [**Note**] If you use curriculum that prescribes certain paragraph structures or the rhetorical function of particular sentences within a paragraph (e.g.., that the first sentence is a topic sentence, that the second sentence introduce some kind of evidence, that the third sentence analyze that evidence, etc.), introducing students to the ways in which information connects sentences can strengthen their paragraphs based on such boilerplates. Students can begin to see how sentences can fulfill a particular rhetorical purpose but also grammatically dovetail with the other sentences around it. (4 min.)
4. Have students complete Part I of the handout either individually or in small groups. (5 min.)
5. Review their responses. Their answers should look something like: 1. K (or N), N; 2. N, N; 3. K (empty Topic), N; 4. K, K (perhaps N); 5. K, N; 6. K (maybe N if they don't connect this to the Topic in sentence #2), N.
    ➢ Sentence #3 is a possible hang-up. Here, the pronoun *It* has no referent; it is simply existential. In this way it is an empty Topic that functions as Known information.
    ➢ The Comment of sentence #4 (*is his lifeblood*) might also present a problem. The Comment might be recognized as Known information if *lifeblood* is viewed as a repetition of *that keeps him alive*. Otherwise, one could see this Comment as New. Either way, it is worth discussing.
    ➢ Another place of ambiguity might be sentence #6. Here, the Comment is clearly repeating that of sentence #2. However, they are separated enough that some students might not notice the repetition. It might be useful to discuss how far apart information can be before we no longer recognize it as Known. In this case, the sentences may well be too distant. (5 min.)

6. If you have time after the preceding discussion, proceed to the next activity. Otherwise, you may complete the following activity another day. As a class, discuss the three questions in Part II.

> In response to question #1, it is fairly clear that the information structure breaks down in the second sentence. Students may also note that sentence #4 could be viewed as repetitive, and sentence #6 is possibly disconnected from the information flow.

> In response to question #2, students should note that the *It* in sentence #3 has no referent (this is an it-cleft sentence), while the *It* in sentence #4 refers to *the fantasy of being a cowboy* (or at least it seems to). [**Note**] This may be a productive time to discuss pronouns, what they are and how they work. Pronouns are words that can substitute for or point to other nouns. But in the specialized case of the it-cleft, the pronoun is not substituting for or pointing to anything.

> In response to question #3, students may have a variety of responses. One piece of advice students might offer the writer, is that the writer introduces some significant information in the first, topic sentence: blood represents life and hope. The second sentence, however, introduces New information about John's fantasy of being a cowboy. This latter information is what is built upon through subsequent Topics and Comments, while the symbolism of the blood is largely abandoned. Students might suggest that the writer either compose a different topic sentence or pursue the information that has been introduced in the current one. (8 min.)

Handout 24:1: The Known/New Contract

In the previous exercises, we worked with Topics and Comments and began to think about how they are arranged, and how we can organize our sentences to make our writing more effective. We are now going to explore some organizational strategies in more detail.

In particular, we are going to work with what is called the Known/New Contract. The Known/New Contract has to do with the organization of information. It simply states that in writing, we prefer to have information that we know come before information that is new. In other words, it is better, most of the time, to have Known information appear in the Topic and New information appear in the Comment.

Let's look at an example from a student essay on *Beloved* by Toni Morrison:

Paul D	witnesses the burning of one best friend and the insanity of another.
Topic	**Comment**

He	also struggles with his own dehumanization and slavery in a chain gang.
Topic	**Comment**

In this example, Paul D, a character in the novel, is Known information—if we've read the novel, we <u>know</u> who Paul D is—and both Comments give us New information about Paul D. If we were to draw a diagram of the progression of information it would look something like:

Paul D	witnesses the burning of one best friend and the insanity of another.
Known	**New**

    ↓

He	also struggles with his own dehumanization and slavery in a chain gang.
Known	**New**

Here is another example:

In the novel <u>Beloved</u>, Toni Morrison	creates a poignant and compelling story about Sethe, a strong ex-slave living with her daughter—and struggling with her past—in Ohio.
Topic	**Comment**

Despite attempts to live in the present, Sethe's tragic and disturbing past	refuses to be ignored.
Topic	**Comment**

These are the first two sentences of the essay. The first two sentences may be difficult to classify. In one sense, this is New information since we haven't written anything yet. It has to be New! But since anyone reading this essay probably knows it is going to about *Beloved*, we could also consider this Known. The Comment of the first sentence, then, introduces the idea of Sethe's struggle with her past as New information. The Topic of the second sentence takes up this idea of Sethe's past and presents it as Known information. A diagram would look something like:

In the novel <u>Beloved</u>, Toni Morrison	creates a poignant and compelling story about Sethe, a strong ex-slave living with her daughter—and struggling with her past—in Ohio.
Known	**New**

↓

	Despite attempts to live in the present, Sethe's tragic and disturbing past	refuses to be ignored.
	Known	**New**

From these two examples, we can see that information can progress from Topic to Topic or from Comment to Topic.

But what happens when the Known/New Contract is violated? Sometimes, it's okay. Maybe we want to emphasize a key point, so we'll put New information in the Topic. Usually, however, when the Contract is violated, the clarity of our writing suffers:

In Beloved, trees	are an important symbol of the past.
Known	**New**

The memory of murdering one daughter and almost killing her other three children	are haunting incidents in Sethe's past.
New	**New**

While these two sentences may seem related somehow because of the idea of the past, the second one doesn't seem to follow from the first because neither the idea of trees nor their symbolism is taken up.

Identifying what is Known and what is New can be tricky. Sometimes a Topic may take up some Known information but also add to it, introduce a little New information, too. That's okay. As readers, as long as there's a kernel of Known information and not too much New information in a Topic, we can follow along.

In cases where there's a mix of Known and New, we might not all agree on what to call a particular Topic or Comment. What is important for our writing is recognizing the importance of adhering to the Known/New Contract most of time.

There are also Topics that can be confusing because they don't contain any information at all.

It	is impossible to reflect even a semblance of "life" when consumed by the past.
Topic	**Comment**

There	is not enough time to let one's worst mistakes dominate life.
Topic	**Comment**

In the preceding sentences, to what are the *It* and *There* referring? In short, nothing! These are empty Topics that allow us emphasize the New information in a Comment. For the sake of consistence, we'll call these empty Topics Known information.

Part I: Identifying Known and New Information

Below is a paragraph from a student paper analyzing *All the Pretty Horses* by Cormac McCarthy. The book describes the adventures of a Texas teenager, John, who rides into Mexico. The paragraph we will be looking is as follows:

> In *All the Pretty Horses,* blood takes on the form of life and hope. John's fantasy to become a cowboy stems from "what [John] loved in horses was what he loved in men, the blood and the heat of the blood that ran them." It is the fantasy of being a cowboy that keeps him alive. It is his lifeblood. He sees the horses on the same level as himself. His fantasies of being a true cowboy are embodied by the horses.

We have divided the paragraph into Topics and Comments. Before each Topic and after each Comment is a line. Identify each Topic and each Comment as either Known or New information, and then write a *K* (Known) or *N* (New) on the line.

		Topic	**Comment**	
1.	—	In *All The Pretty Horses,* blood	takes on the form of life and hope.	___
2.	—	John's fantasy to become a cowboy	stems from "what [John] loved in horses was what he loved in men, the blood and the heat of the blood that ran them."	___
3.	—	It	is the fantasy of being a cowboy that keeps him alive.	___
4.	—	It	is his lifeblood.	___
5.	—	He	sees the horses on the same level as himself.	___
6.	—	His fantasies of being a true cowboy	are embodied by the horses.	___

Part II: Discussing Known and New Information

1. Where in the paragraph does the Know/New Contract break down?

2. What is the difference between the *It* in sentence #3 and the *It* in sentence #4?

3. Applying your knowledge of the Known/New Contract, what would you recommend that the student do to improve this paragraph?

LESSON PLAN 25

Objectives:
1. Students will apply their knowledge of the Known/New Contract to predict sentence Topics.
2. Students will practice some organizational principles of academic writing.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 25:1.

Procedures:
1. You can tell students that they will be continuing their work with the Known/New Contract, and you might ask students to define the Known/New Contract as a reminder and reinforcement of what they've done in previous lessons. (2 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 25:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the directions with students. Make sure to take some time to thoroughly go over the example. You might reinforce that there are other possible choices for the Topic, as it says in the directions. A choice for *His virtuousness* was made for the reasons that are explained. However, one could easily opt for and defend a different choice. (3 min.)
4. This exercise is likely to be challenging for many students. First, they need to identify what information is presented. Then, they need to select the piece of information that they think will be carried forward. You might have students complete the exercise individually, and then carefully review their responses. Or this might be an activity that you could complete as a class. We explain some possible responses below, but students might come up with other, viable answers.
   a. #1 introduces information about Hamlet's inclination to delay, his rationality and his lack of passion. The next sentence seems like it would continue exploring Hamlet's rationality, perhaps introducing and example (*For example, his rationality...*).
   b. #2 introduces information describing Hamlet's inability to attack Claudius, his cowardice and his reflection. The next sentence could easily take up either *cowardice* or *reflection*, but it also might also take up *Hamlet's inability to kill Claudius* or simply *Hamlet*.
   c. #3 introduces information about Laertes' impulsiveness, passion and lack of logic. The next sentence might take up any of these ideas. (8 min.)

Handout 25:1: The Known/New Contract, Cont.

In the previous exercise, we discussed the preference for putting Known information before New information in a sentence (the Known/New Contract), identified Known and New information in some sentences and discussed how the violation of the Known/New Contract can make an argument difficult to follow or make it seem undeveloped. Now we want use our knowledge of the Known/New Contract to make predictions, a helpful skill for both reading and writing.

Below are some short excerpts from student papers, and we've separated the sentences into Topics and Comments. Based on you knowledge of information structure, for each excerpt predict the Topic for the next sentence in the sequence, and write that Topic in the space provided.

For example, consider the example below from a student's essay on *Hamlet*. The third Topic, the one we are predicting, is likely to be Known information. That means the Topic would follow from either of the previous Topics or Comments. The Topics/Comments introduce three pieces of information—Prince Fortinbras, his balance, and his virtuousness. We could, then, predict any of those three. Because the first sentence introduces both stability and virtuousness, and the second sentence has stability as the Topic, we've predicted *virtuousness*.

Topic	Comment
Prince Fortinbras	remains as the only character of the play stable and virtuous.
His balance of reason and passion	creates a complete personality unmarred by individual blemishes.
His virtuousness	

Predict a Topic for each of the following:

1. Topic	Comment
Time and time again, Hamlet	waits for the ideal opportunity to avenge his father but never finds one because no such perfect situation exists.
Each occasion that presents itself	never reaches fruition because Hamlet's rationality outweighs his passion.

2. Topic	Comment
When Hamlet finds Claudius defenseless and kneeling in prayer,	he quickly draws his sword.
However, his moment of audacity	is cut short by his cowardice and reflection.

3. Topic	Comment
Laertes	acts on pure impulse, but his impetuous choice backfires, leaving him the victim of his own villainy.
His desire to "cut [Hamlet's] throat i' th' church"	only succeeds in killing Claudius after he has been poisoned by Laertes rapier, and his own death is imminent.

LESSON PLAN 26

Objectives:
1. Students will practice using grammatical techniques to expand nominal groups.
2. Students will use expansions techniques to make more information dense phrases.
3. Students will work with some technical grammatical and rhetorical categories including nouns, modifiers, prepositions, relative clauses and appositives.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 26:1.

Procedures:
1. You may tell students that they are going to be working with nominal groups again. They may need to be reminded what a nominal groups is (a groups of words that functions as a noun) and an easy test for identify a nominal group (all of the words can usually be replaced by a pronoun like he/him, she/her, they/them or it). (2 min.)
2. Distribute copies of Handout 23:1. (1 min.)
3. There is quite a lot of information on the handout, so you can take your time. Also, you might tell students that the goal is not to have them memorize all of the technical terms. But they don't need to be scared of or intimidated by them. The handout describes tools that they already use. The goal is to have them begin to purposefully use these tools in their writing. You might also emphasize that longer more dense nominal groups are important in academic writing, but you don't need to, indeed you shouldn't, use them all of the time. You might even ask students what their intuitions are about when one might choose to use more complex nominals. (6 min.)
   [**Note**] This might also be an opportunity to review any of the underlying grammatical terminology that you think students need (like what is preposition, for example). Also, the lesson provides an opportunity to review some usage conventions like dangling participles. When participial phrases are acting like adjectives, they need to be placed near the noun they're modifying (just like an adjective). If the example sentence were changed to say, "Recognizing the threat of Claudius and holding true to his oath, a military campaign is undertaken by Fortinbras," what would the participial phrase be modifying?
4. As a class, do the discussion activity. You may repeat the activity as many times as you think necessary or as time permits. (8 min.)
   [**Note**] The discussion will help them work with some of the structures of academic language, but it is also a great opportunity to review their readings and reinforce literary terminology like symbolism, imagery, motif, etc.

Handout 26:1: Expanding and Contracting Information

In an earlier exercise we worked with nominal groups, groups of words that act like nouns. Nominal groups are important in academic writing because, whether they appear in Topics or Comments, they are useful ways of both introducing information and carrying it forward.

Some moments in an essay call for longer, expanded nominal groups, while others call for shorter, contracted ones. Topic sentences, for example, often contain longer nominal groups in either the Topic, Comment or both. Longer nominal groups pack in a lot of information. That can be useful in a Topic Sentence because the writer can then unpack that information throughout the paragraph. Short or condensed nominal groups can be useful at other times—when developing arguments or summarizing plot points, for example.

Expanding Information

There are many ways to expand nominal groups. Here, we are going to concentrate on five: modifiers, prepositional phrases, relative clauses, appositives, and participial phrases. Don't worry if you don't recognize the technical terms. These are strategies you use already, even if you don't know it.

1. Modifiers

    Modifiers are simply words that modify other words—adjectives, adverbs and sometimes other nouns. One easy way to expand on a noun is to add modifiers that describe or specify the noun. Consider the difference between...

    The debate paralyzes him. And... *Hamlet's ever-present internal debate paralyzes him.*

← nominal group (*it*) →				
Hamlet's	ever-present	internal	debate	paralyzes him.
possessive	adjective	adjective	noun	

    In the above example, the possessive and both adjectives expand the nominal group and add information.

2. Prepositional phrases

    Prepositions are an extremely useful, but complicated set of words. Basically, they show the relationship of one word to another. One way to think about prepositions is to imagine two objects—a basketball and a rim, say—and all of their possible relationships to each other (*above* the rim, *under* the rib, *through* the rim, *against* the rim, *at* the rim, *by* the rim, etc.). The words that show the relationship between those objects (the words in italics) are prepositions. Some of the most common prepositions are *at*, *for*, *from*, *of*, *to* and *with*. Prepositions and the words the accompany them (a prepositional phrase like *above the rim*) are a common way of expanding a nominal group.

← nominal group (*it*) →		
His moment	of audacity	is cut short by his cowardice and reflection.
	prep. phrase	

    The prepositional phrase in this example specifies *his moment*—his moment of audacity.

3. Relative clauses

A relative clause is a grouping of words beginning with a relative pronoun (usually *that*, *which* or *who/whom*) that can be used to modify a noun.

← nominal group (*they*) →		
The qualities	that define each character	often lead to their self-destruction.

relative clause

The relative clause in this example specifies *the qualities*. Note: The words *that, which* and *who* can be used in other ways besides introducing relative clauses. *That*, for example, is often used after verbs associated with speaking and thinking:

*Hamlet believes **that** the spirit could be a devil "assum[ing] a pleasing shape…to damn [him]"*

A relative clause should modify a noun and contain a verb. In this case, what follows *that* is not modifying a noun.

4. Appositives

To appose two things is to set them side by side. An appositive, then, is a grammatical way of setting two things side by side for the purpose of explanation, illustration or identification. Appositives are two nominal groups, one right after the other, referring to the same thing. The second nominal group is set off with commas or dashes. Some common examples that often occur and beginning of essays are of the kind "*Hamlet*, a play by William Shakespeare, ..." or "Hamlet, a character in Shakespeare's play, ..." The second nominal group set off by commas is equal to or could be substituted for the first one, and it provides additional information. Here's another example with two appositives:

	← nominal group (*him*) →		
He does not emphasize Hamlet's actions, but rather, his *inactions* in dealing with	his uncle Claudius—	the usurper of the throne and murderer of his father,	King Hamlet.
		appositive	appositive

The first appositive identifies *Claudius* and the second identifies *his father*.

5. Participial phrases

A participle is the form of a verb used with auxiliary or helping verbs like *to be* or *to have*. In the present, participles will end in *–ing* (*is **arguing**, are **claiming**, is **thinking***). In the past, the participles of regular verbs will end in *–ed* (*had **argued**, have **claimed***), but irregular verbs will not (*had **thought***). Participles have many possible functions. One function—and the one we are concerned with here—is that they modify nouns. In other words, they can function like adjectives (*a **consuming** passion, an **impassioned** hero, a **fleeting** moment*). Groups of word that begin with participles (participial phrases) can function in the same way:

← nominal group (*he*) →		
Recognizing the threat of Claudius and holding true to his oath,	Fortinbras	resigns himself to running a military campaign "[a]gainst the Polack" while he waits for his chance to avenge King Fortinbras.

participial phrase

The participial phrase provides additional information about Fortinbras.

Discussion Question:

Choose a character, image, symbol or motif from one of your readings. Beginning with that one noun, apply each of the five techniques to expand the nominal group.

Starting with *corruption*, for example: 1. the hidden corruption; 2. the corruption of the Danish court; 3. the corruption that incapacitates Hamlet; 4. the corruption, a recurring image in the play; 5. beginning with the murder of the king, the corruption.

Bonus: Can you craft a nominal group that uses three expansion techniques?

LESSON PLAN 27

Objectives:
1. Students will practice composing Topics that are linked to a preceding Comment.
2. Students will recognize such linking as an important tool in developing ideas and arguments.
3. Students will practice applying knowledge of parts of speech.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 27:1.

Procedures:
1. You can tell students that they will be looking at how to manage information in their essays. But rather than expanding information, they will be practicing contracting information. In particular, they will be practicing using techniques of contraction to link a Topic to a previous Comment. It might be useful to remind students what Topics and Comments are. You might also remind them of some of the previous paragraphs they analyzed and what problems they found in those paragraphs. (3 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 27:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the information and directions with students. You could emphasize that the pattern of linking they will be practice is very important. However, not all sentences should be linked in this way. This is <u>one</u> way to develop <u>parts</u> of argument. A writer may only link two or three sentences this way in paragraph. But it is a pattern that is often less intuitive to students. And it is one that should provide a new compositional tool. (5 min.)
4. Have students complete the handout either individually or in small groups. (4 min.)
5. Review their responses. Their answers will certainly vary. #1 might be something like *His lack of corruption*. Students might be tempted to put *Fortinbras* here. That would be wrong because they are to link the Topic to the previous <u>Comment</u>. For #2 some students might simply repeat *His lack of reservation*. Others might try to find a synonym for *lack of recklessness—rashness*, *recklessness*, *haste*, etc. For #3 students might have something like *Hamlet's flaws* or *These characteristics*. Time permitting, you might also ask students to identify the processes they used (summary, repetition or nominalization) to craft their Topics. (6 min.)

   [**Note**] One very useful way to have students build on the exercises presented in this section is to have them map Known/New information in one of their own essays, or a paragraph from one of their essays. Such an activity can be carried out fairly efficiently with highlighting and drawing arrows to connect related Topics or Comments. Students can then see how they are presenting and developing information in their writing. Doing this at any time would be productive, but can be particularly helpful prior to revision if you use a process approach in the classroom.

Handout 27:1: Expanding and Contracting Information, Cont.

In the previous exercise, we worked on techniques for expanding nominal groups, ways of adding information to sentences. Now we are going to turn our attention to contracting information, making nominal groups shorter. In particular, we want to look at contracting information as a way of moving an argument forward by connecting the Comment of one sentence to the Topic of the next, taking what is New information and making it Known. Here is an example from a student's paper:

Shakespeare	**pinpoints hesitation and over-rationalization as the source of Hamlet's ultimate ruin.**
Topic (A)	**Comment (B)**

↓

	is apparent to even Hamlet, himself, who states,
This weakness	"There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."
Topic (B)	**Comment (C)**

If you were to extend this pattern, a series of sentences (with the first letter representing the Topic and the second letter the Comment) could be diagrammed as: A-B, B-C, C-D, D-E, etc. Being able to take up a Comment in a following Topic is a very important skill. Have you ever been told by teacher that an idea in one of your essays needed development? Contracting information from a previous Comment and making it a Topic is one very important way of developing ideas. What if the next Topic had been *Shakespeare* again? The ideas of hesitation, over-rationalization and Hamlet's ruin might well have been cut off. If you remember, we saw the kinds of problems not taking up Comments or New information can cause in the paragraphs on *All the Pretty Horses* and *The Heart of Darkness*.

Contracting Information

As with expansion, there are many ways of contracting information. We are going to introduce three: summary, repetition and nominalization.

1. Summary

   The example above illustrates summary. The writer has taken the information in the Comment and chosen a word that summarizes it: *weakness*. Sometimes writers try to summarize just with the pronoun *this*. Imagine the example reading, "*This* is apparent to even Hamlet..." The reader would be left to figure out what exactly *this* is referring to. When using *this*, it is best, most of the time, to follow it with at least a noun that indicates to the reader what you're discussing.

2. Repetition

   You've probably been told that repetition is bad. And it's true that you don't want to overdo it. Over-repetition can make a text very monotonous. However, some repetition can be useful in developing ideas. You can take a key word from a Comment and repeat it in a following Topic.

In *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare	**explores many of the weaknesses in character that eventually lead to the downfall of an individual.**
Topic	Comment

↓

All weaknesses	are harmful to one's nature, but Shakespeare notes the title character's imperfection as perhaps the most detrimental.
Topic	Comment

3. Nominalization

Nominalization is a technical term that simply means taking a word that isn't a noun and making it one. Often this can be done by adding a suffix like *–ion*, *–ness* or *–ity*. So a verb like *communicate* can be turned into the noun *communication*. The adjective *polite* can become the noun *politeness*, or the adjective *scarce* can become *scarcity*. Using nominalization a verb or adjective from a comment can be turned into a noun in the next Topic:

Hamlet	**can not decide to act.**
Topic	Comment

↓

His indecision	is a symptom of the kingdom's corruption.
Topic	Comment

In this example, the verb *not decide* is nominalized as *indecision*.

Using the above techniques, compose a Topic for the second sentence in each pair below:

1.

Prince Fortinbras	is uncorrupted.
Topic	Comment

↓

	is rewarded when he becomes king of Denmark through sustained moral distinction and the avoidance of extreme behavior.
Topic	Comment

2.

Where Hamlet lacks conviction,	Laertes lacks reservation.
Topic	Comment

↓

	backfires, leaving him the victim of his own villainy.
Topic	Comment

3.

Prince Hamlet, a melancholy, yet impassioned hero,	notices the flaws in all people—including himself—but remains helpless against the very characteristics that he resents.
Topic	**Comment**

↓

	are hesitation and over-rationalization and are the source of his ultimate ruin.
Topic	**Comment**

Lessons 28-29
Conjunctive Resources and Cohesion

BACKGROUND

In the previous set of lessons we looked at strategies for organizing information in academic writing. Some of those strategies involved condensing and replicating information through nominalization, summary or simple repetition. All of these are important to cohesion—the ways in which a text holds together. Cohesion can be quite various and complex. For example, cohesion is accomplished through the use of thematically related vocabulary as well as though reference, primarily pronouns. Indeed, the complexity of cohesion can sometimes be more interesting to marvel at after a text has been produced (*How do we do that?*) than to think strategically about as we compose. There is, however, one set of cohesive devices that is relatively easy to think about strategically and one that is often underused by students—conjunctive resources.

Conjunctive resources include coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs (technical terms you may know, but are not crucial for these particular lessons). Conjunctive resources are those words that connect one idea (whether expressed in a sentence or part of a sentence) to another. And, most importantly, they establish the relationship between those ideas. As relational links, conjunctive resources are incredibly important in both academic writing and testing. Arguments, after all, are developed by demonstrating the relationship of various claims.

The conjunctive resources that we all use in speech are very different from those that we need to use in academic writing. For example, two common conjunctions in speech are *and* and *because*. In speech, these conjunctions have many uses. For example, *and* is often used to indicate how two events are related by time, and *because* can be used to link two clauses coordinately, rather than subordinately. (That is, *because* doesn't show a causal link between two propositions, but rather links them more like *and* does.) Sometimes these spoken uses show up in students' writing. Here are two examples from students' essays on *All the Pretty Horses*:

> *He ran away with his best friend by the name of Rawlins, **and** they are joined by a younger, more stubborn and sensitive boy named Blevins.*

> *There were few cattle in that country **because** it was desolate country indeed.*

In the first sentence, *and* is used to indicate that the event in the second clause occurs after the event in the first one. To express that relationship using more academic conjunctive resources, the student could have written ...*and **subsequently** they are joined*, for example. In the second sentence, the first clause is not necessarily a consequence of the first—desolation doesn't explain the lack of cattle. In this case, the two clauses could be separated into sentences without *because*.

Not only do students use more informal conjunctive resources in their formal academic writing, but they also sometimes do not include logical connections between statements or propositions. Here, for example, is a paragraph from a student's essay:

> *The locusts in* Things Fall Apart *depict the white settlers, who invade and destroy the natural resources of the natives. The locusts eat the crops. They may be*

viewed as eating their thoughts or beliefs. The white settlers take in their thoughts, by converting to them Christianity, which many end up doing. The oracle says, "Other white men were on their way. They were locusts...."

Each sentence in this paragraph states a proposition, but none of the propositions are connected explicitly. In the absence of any conjunctive resources, we may very well try to fill in the blanks ourselves as we read: the second sentence seems to be an example; the third sentence seems to be a symbolic interpretation of the first, etc.

In these final two lessons, we want to familiarize students with some of the conjunctive resources common in academic writing and give students some practice using those resources.

VOCABULARY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

conjunctive resources: Words or phrases (including coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs) used to logically connect sentences or parts of sentences. Four basic categories of logical relation include addition, comparison, time, and consequence.

OTHER READINGS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Cohesion in academic writing:
http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/llsu/resources/esl/gram003.html

Connective words: http://unilearning.uow.edu.au/effective/6b.html

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LESSON PLAN 28

Objectives:
1. Students will become familiar with some of the basic properties of conjunctive resources.
2. Students will identify words that can express important logical relationships in academic writing.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 28:1.

Procedures:
1. Many of the words that we will be working with in this lesson are often called *transition words* in English classrooms. If you use that terminology you could begin by asking students for examples of transition words that they use in their academic writing. After the class has generated a short list, you might ask them where they use transition words in their essays. They might say, for example, that they use them in their Topic Sentences or when introducing a quotation. In fact, these words are important to include at any moment in an essay where you need to indicate to your reader the relationship between things or ideas. And they are going to be working with these words so that they can use them effectively in their writing. (3 min.)
2. Distribute Handout 28:1. (1 min.)
3. Review the directions with students. The four categories should be fairly self-explanatory. You might need to emphasize that the category of *comparison* also includes contrast. Also, *consequence* might present a bit of a challenge. In general, *consequence* expresses *how* or *why*. It can show the cause of something, the means by which something happened, the reason something happened or the condition of something. They can also express a **negative** consequence, or **counter** a claim or condition. (3 min.)
4. Have students complete the handout either individually or in small groups. (3 min.)
5. Review students' responses. Their responses should look similar to the following:
   ➢ (T) after, (A) again, (A) also, (CN) although, (A) and, (T) as soon as, (CN) because, (CP) but, (CN) consequently, (CN) despite, (T) eventually, (T) finally, (CP) for example, (CP) for instance, (A) furthermore, (CN) hence, (CN) however, (A) in addition, (CP) in contrast, (CP) likewise, (A) moreover, (CN) nevertheless, (A) or, (CP) rather than, (CP) similarly, (T) since, (CN) so, (T) subsequently, (T) then, (CN) therefore, (CN) thus, (A) too, (CN) unless, (T) when, (T or CP) while, (CN) yet

   Students will be able to readily classify most of the words. Some, however, are likely to provoke a variety of responses, in some cases because students may be unfamiliar with the word. In other cases, a word (like *while,* for instance) may have multiple uses, or a word may have uses more common to spoken language and uses more preferred in academic writing. For example, *yet* is often used as an adverb to indicate time (*Are they here yet?*). Students may well think of this use

and classify it under *time*. However, in this exercise, we want students to consider *yet* as a conjunction:

> *Slavery is a significant part of our nation's past, **yet** many are oblivious to its history because of the pain and the shame it provokes.*

As a conjunction, it functions more like *though*. Another conjunction with multiple uses is *since*. Most students will probably classify it under *time*; however, some students might view it as synonymous with *because* and, therefore, classify under *consequence*. For example:

> ***Since*** *Sethe denies her past, the past continues to seek Sethe's attention and it comes in the form of Paul D.*

This is a common use of *since*. The question, then, would be whether this use of *since* is conventional in the academic register. Also, students may have difficulty with words like *although*, words that counter and qualify. They may want to classify such words under *comparison* rather than *consequence*. If students want to argue for a particular classification, that's great. Have the class compose a sample sentence using the word. Ask them to explain the logical link it expresses. **Being able to articulate such an explanation is far more important than any particular classification.** (8 min.)

Handout 28:1: Conjunctive Resources

Conjunctive resources are simply the words and phrases we use to connect sentences or parts of sentences. Two of the most common conjunctive resources, for example, are *and* and *because*. Conjunctive resources are important in academic writing because they express the relationship between ideas. For example, consider the two, sequential statements below from a student's essay on *Beloved*:

> *Schoolteacher travels to Ohio to find Sethe twenty-eight days after her escape from slavery*

> *Sethe attempts to kill her children instead of returning to Sweet Home*

What is the relationship between them? Are they related by time? If so, you could start the first statement with *when* or the second with *then*. Or are they related by cause and effect? In that case, you could start the first statement with *because* or the second with *so*. The choice here makes a big difference in how the argument is developed.

Just like the Known/New Contract, the effective use of conjunctive resources is a very important tool in organizing your academic writing.

Conjunctive resources can be put into four categories: **addition**, **comparison**, **time**, and **consequence**. Each of these categories describes a kind of relationship between connected events or ideas. The names of the categories are fairly descriptive. Nonetheless, the table below should help clarify their basic properties.

	addition	comparison	time	consequence
logical relationships	adding alternating	comparing contrasting	ordering sequencing	explaining concluding countering
example	and	similarly	then	because

For each of the conjunctions below, identify it as belonging either to (**A**) addition, (**CP**) comparison, (**T**) time, or (**CN**) consequence.

____ after	____ despite	____ in contrast	____ subsequently
____ again	____ eventually	____ likewise	____ then
____ also	____ finally	____ moreover	____ therefore
____ although	____ for example	____ nevertheless	____ thus
____ and	____ for instance	____ or	____ too
____ as soon as	____ furthermore	____ rather than	____ unless
____ because	____ hence	____ similarly	____ when
____ but	____ however	____ since	____ while
____ consequently	____ in addition	____ so	____ ye

LESSON PLAN 29

Objectives:
1. Students will practice the effective use of conjunctive resources.
2. Students will expand their repertoires of conjunctive resources.

Materials:
1. Copies of Handout 29:1.

Procedures:
1. You can begin by telling students that they will be finishing their work with conjunctive resources (or transition words). (2 min.)
2. Distribute copies of Handout 29:1 and review the directions with students. If there are other conjunctive resources or transition words that you would like students to practice, add them to the list. (2 min.)
3. Have students complete the handout individually. (3 min.)
4. Review their responses. Here is one way that the blanks could be filled in:
    ➢ To protect her children, Sethe becomes the judge between two evils and finds that security in death is better than slavery. **Consequently**, twenty years after the incident, Sethe's home is still haunted by the presence of the "crawling-already?" baby. The spirit is melancholy, vengeful, and prone to fits of rage when craving attention from the inhabitants of 124. Sethe and Denver both welcome this haunting presence, **despite** the havoc it raises, **because** both are convinced of its right to be in their home with them. **When** Beloved—Sethe's symbolic past—enters 124 in human form, she is immediately drawn-in and protected by Sethe. **But** as their relationship deepens, Beloved quickly makes it apparent that she is in command. **For example**, she only needed to say, "'Do it,' and Sethe complied." Her presence, **therefore**, transforms Sethe from a proud, confident woman into an apologetic, cowering skeleton of her former self. **Susequently**, Sethe becomes so "loaded with the past and hungry for more," she is "not interested in the future." Her sole desire becomes so bent upon pleasing Beloved that she crowds out Denver's needs, and **eventually**, her own as well.

    Students will have a variety of responses. You can have students compare their answers to others' and make arguments for why they selected particular words. For example, some students may have a conjunction of *time* rather than *consequence* for the first blank. How does this change the relationship to those sentences? How does it change the argument? A variety of responses will work for most of the blanks. Students' rationale for choosing a word or a word from a particular classification is the most important part of the exercise. (6 min.)

Handout 29:1: Conjunctive Resources, Cont.

Below is the list of conjunctive resources that you worked with in the previous exercise. Use any of these words (or any other transition word you think is appropriate) to fill in the blanks in the following paragraph from a student's essay. Pay close attention to what the missing words are linking. Figuring out their logical relationship will help you choose the most effective word.

addition	comparison	time	consequence
again, also, and, furthermore, in addition, moreover, or	for example, for instance, in contrast, likewise, rather than, similarly	after, as soon as, eventually, finally, since, subsequently, then, when, while	although, because, but, consequently, despite, hence, however, nevertheless, so, therefore, thus, unless, yet

To protect her children, Sethe becomes the judge between two evils and finds that security in death is better than slavery. _____ twenty years after the incident, Sethe's home is still haunted by the presence of the "crawling-already?" baby. The spirit is melancholy, vengeful, and prone to fits of rage when craving attention from the inhabitants of 124. Sethe and Denver both welcome this haunting presence, _____ the havoc it raises, _____ both are convinced of its right to be in their home with them. _____ Beloved—Sethe's symbolic past— enters 124 in human form, she is immediately drawn-in and protected by Sethe. _____ as their relationship deepens, Beloved quickly makes it apparent that she is in command. _____ she only needed to say, "'Do it,' and Sethe complied." Her presence, _____, transforms Sethe from a proud, confident woman into an apologetic, cowering skeleton of her former self. _____ Sethe becomes so "loaded with the past and hungry for more," she is "not interested in the future." Her sole desire becomes so bent upon pleasing Beloved that she crowds out Denver's needs, and _____, her own as well.

APPENDIX B

RAW DATA GENERATED IN TRANSANA

CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS LESSONS

Lesson	Time
03	9:29
04	11:14
09	13:35
10	13:15
11	17:15
15	27:25
16	12:19
17	16:18
18	12:32
19	21:21
20	14:26
Total	**169:09**

Event Type	Number	Frequency (events/min.)
Clarifying	24	0.14
Extending	12	0.07
Scaffolding	14	0.08
Weaving	15	0.09
Total	**65**	**0.38**

Event Type	Number	Frequency (events/min.)
Countering	1	0.01
Forestalling	4	0.02
Misinterpreting	9	0.05
Overlooking	15	0.09
Total	**29**	**0.17**

LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY LESSONS

Lesson	Time
05	11:08
06	10:50
07	5:00
08	12:47
12	21:02
13	6:56
14	17:10
Total	**84:53**

Event Type	Number	Frequency (events/min.)
Clarifying	2	0.02
Extending	6	0.07
Scaffolding	5	0.06
Weaving	7	0.08
Total	**20**	**0.23**

Event Type	Number	Frequency (events/min.)
Countering	0	0.00
Forestalling	4	0.05
Misinterpreting	1	0.01
Overlooking	4	0.05
Total	**9**	**0.11**

REGISTER LESSONS

Lesson	Time
24	13:46
25	4:57
26	11:44
28	17:25
29	18:51
Total	**66:43**

Event Type	Number	Frequency (events/min.)
Clarifying	0	0.00
Extending	0	0.00
Scaffolding	2	0.03
Weaving	11	0.16
Total	**13**	**0.19**

Event Type	Number	Frequency (events/min.)
Countering	0	0.00
Forestalling	2	0.03
Misinterpreting	7	0.10
Overlooking	2	0.03
Total	**11**	**0.16**

COMPARISONS
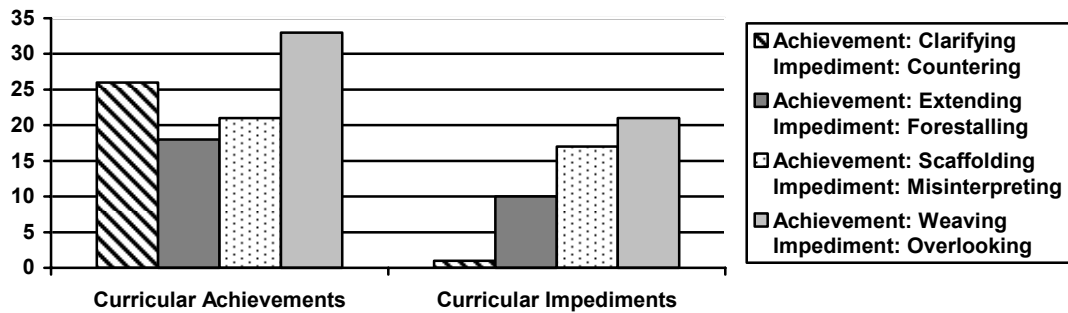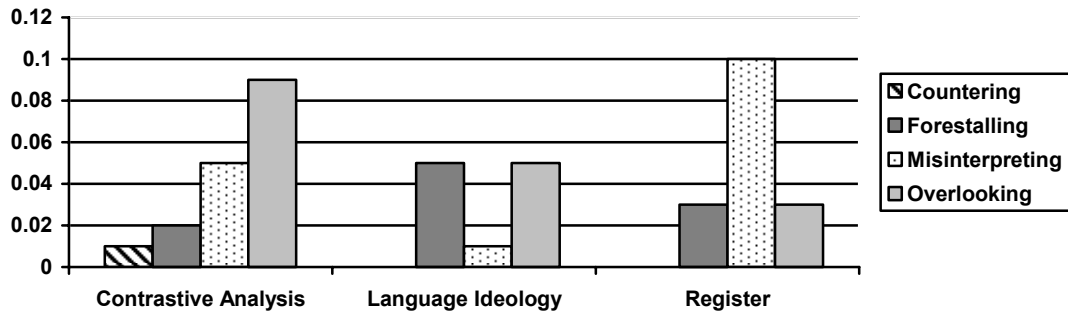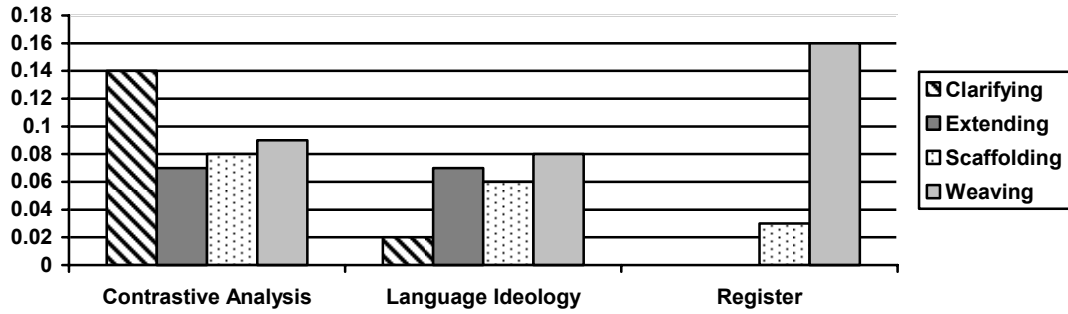
EPISODE: 03_USES OF AIN'T

Clip: 03-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 03-02: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 03-03: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 03-04: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 03-05: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 03-06: Curricular Achievements: Clarifying

Clip: 03-07: Curricular Impediments : Countering

Clip: 03-08: Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 03-09: Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 03-10: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 03-11: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 03-12: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 03-13: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 03-14: Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 03-15: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	5
Curricular Achievements : Extending	2
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	2
Curricular Impediments : Countering	1
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	2

	Clips:	15
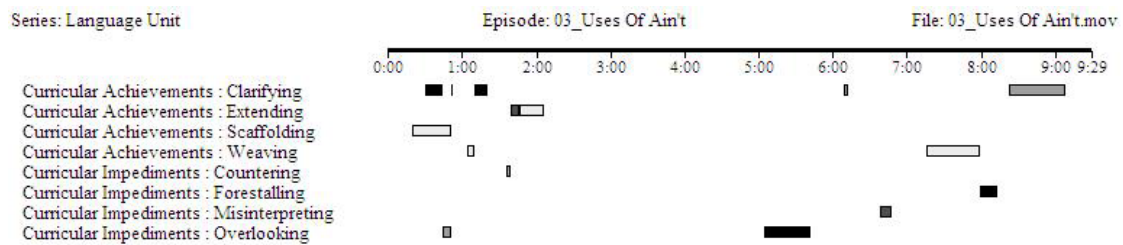
EPISODE: 04_USES OF AIN'T CONT

Clip: 04-01**:** Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 04-02**:** Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 04-03**:** Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 04-04**:** Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 04-05**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 04-06**:** Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 04-07**:** Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 04-08**:** Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 04-09**:** Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 04-10**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 04-11**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	3
Curricular Achievements : Extending	3
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	3
Clips:	11

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 04_Uses of Ain't Cont   File: 04_Uses of Ain't Cont.mov

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying
Curricular Achievements : Extending
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking
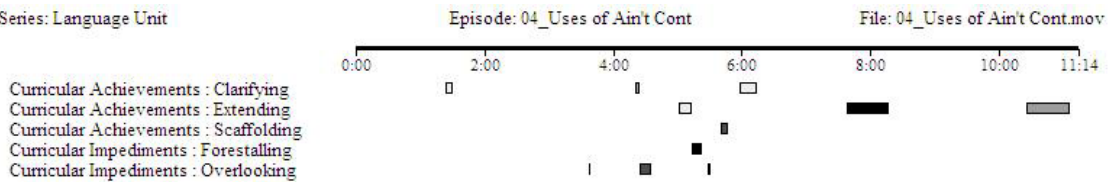
EPISODE: 05_WHO USES AIN'T

Clip: 05-01**:** Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 05-02**:** Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 05-03**:** Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Clips:	3

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 05_Who Uses Ain't   File: 05_Who Uses Ain't.mov

0:00   2:00   4:00   6:00   8:00   10:00   11:08

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

EPISODE: 06_AIN'T IN THE DICTIONARY

Clip: 06-01: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 06-02: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 06-03: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 06-04: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 06-05: Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	1
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	2
Clips:	5

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 06_Ain't in the Dictionary   File: 06_Ain't in the Dictionary.mov

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking
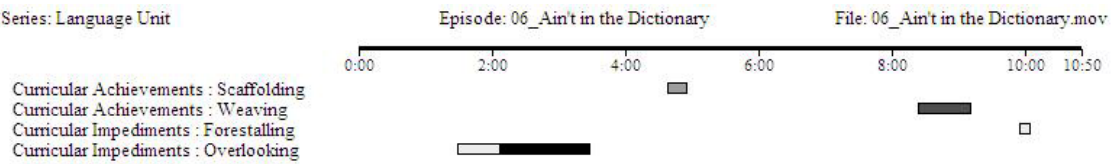
EPISODE: 07_WHAT IS FORMAL ENGLISH

Clip: 07-01: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 07-02: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 07-03: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	1
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	1
Clips:	3

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 07_What is Formal English   File: 07_What is Formal English.mov

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Achievements : Weaving

EPISODE: 08_USING INFORMAL ENGLISH

Clip: 08-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 08-02: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 08-03: Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 08-04: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 08-05: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Summary
Curricular Achievements : Clarifying   1
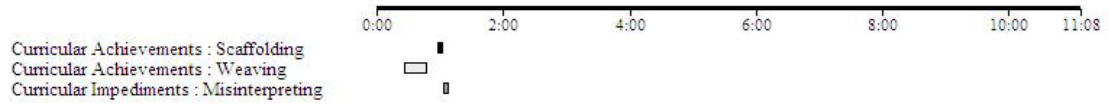Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding   1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving   2
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling   1

                                    Clips: 5

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 08_Using Informal English   File: 08_Using Informal English.mov
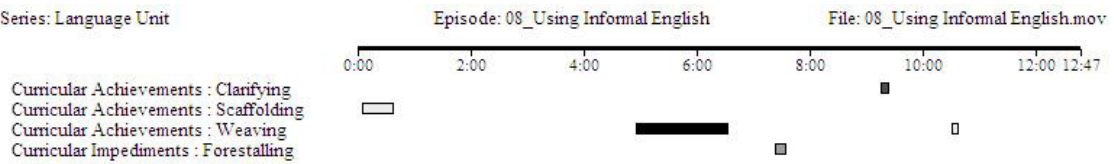
EPISODE: 09_CODESWICHING USING AIN'T

Clip: 09-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 09-02: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 09-03: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 09-04: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 09-05: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 09-06: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 09-07: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 09-08: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Summary
Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	2
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	4
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Clips:	8

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 09_Codeswiching Using Ain't   File: 09_Codeswiching Using Ain't.mov

	0:00	2:00	4:00	6:00	8:00	10:00	12:00	13:35

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting
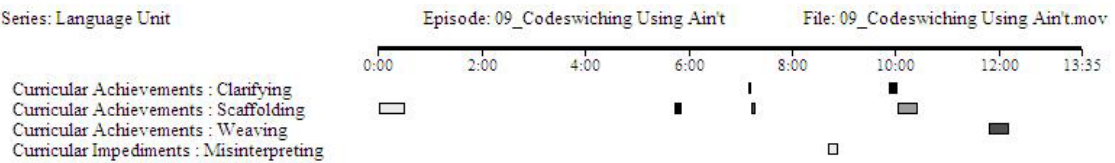
EPISODE: 10_PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVES

Clip: 10-01: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 10-02: Curricular Achievements : Weaving
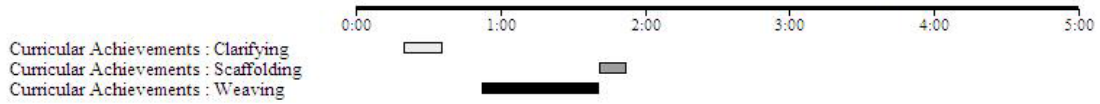
Clip: 10-03: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 10-04: Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 10-05: Curricular Achievements : Extending

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	1
Curricular Achievements : Extending	2
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	2
Clips:	5

Series: Language Unit — Episode: 10_Predicative Adjectives — File: 10_Predicative Adjectives.mov

	0:00	2:00	4:00	6:00	8:00	10:00	12:00	13:15
Curricular Achievements : Clarifying								
Curricular Achievements : Extending								
Curricular Achievements : Weaving								
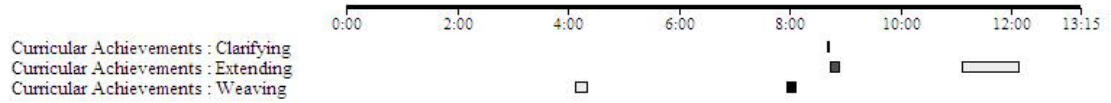
EPISODE: 11_REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

Clip: 11-01**:** Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 11-02**:** Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 11-03**:** Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 11-04**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 11-05**:** Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 11-06**:** Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 11-07**:** Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 11-08**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	2
Curricular Achievements : Extending	2
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	2
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	1
Clips:	8
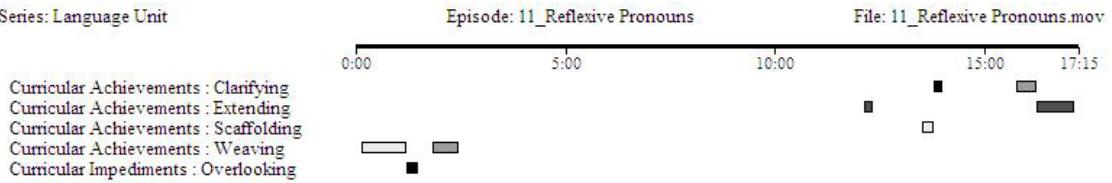
EPISODE: 12_READING DICTIONARIES

Clip: 12-01**:** Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 12-02**:** Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 12-03**:** Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 12-04**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 12-05**:** Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 12-06**:** Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Extending	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	2
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	2
Clips:	6

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 12_Reading Dictionaries   File: 12_Reading Dictionaries.mov

0:00   5:00   10:00   15:00   21:02

Curricular Achievements : Extending
Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking
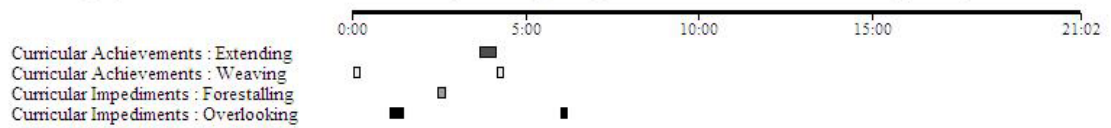
EPISODE: 13_WRITING DICTIONARIES

Clip: 13-01**:** Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 13-02**:** Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 13-03**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Extending	1
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Clips:	3

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 13_Writing Dictionaries   File: 13_Writing Dictionaries.mov

| 0:00 | 1:00 | 2:00 | 3:00 | 4:00 | 5:00 | 6:00 | 6:56 |

Curricular Achievements : Extending
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling
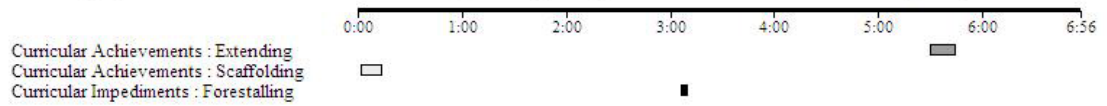
EPISODE: 14_WRITING DICTIONARIES CONT

Clip: 14-01**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 14-02**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 14-03**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 14-04**:** Curricular Achievements : Extending

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Extending   4

                                                          Clips: 4

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 14_Writing Dictionaries Cont   File: 14_Writing Dictionaries Cont.mov

Curricular Achievements : Extending

EPISODE: 15_VERB TENSES

Clip: 15-01: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 15-02: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 15-03: Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 15-04: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 15-05: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 15-06: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 15-07: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

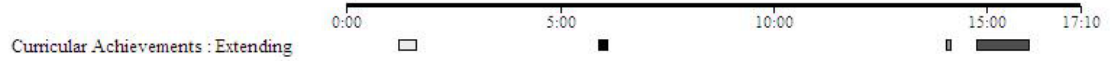**Clip:** 15-08: Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 15-09: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 15-10: Curricular Achievements : Extending

Clip: 15-11: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 15-12: Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 15-13: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 15-14: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 15-15: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	4
Curricular Achievements : Extending	3
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	4
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	2

Clips: 15

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 15_Verb Tenses   File: 15_Verb Tenses.mov

EPISODE: 16_USES OF TO BE

Clip: 16-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 16-02: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 16-03: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 16-04: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 16-05: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 16-06: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

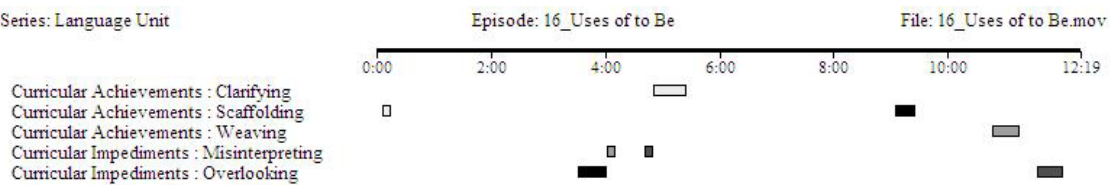**Clip:** 16-07**:** Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 16-08: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	1
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	2
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	2
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	2
Clips:	8

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 16_Uses of to Be   File: 16_Uses of to Be.mov

	0:00	2:00	4:00	6:00	8:00	10:00	12:19

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

EPISODE: 17_HABITUAL BE

Clip: 17-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 17-02: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 17-03: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 17-04: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 17-05: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

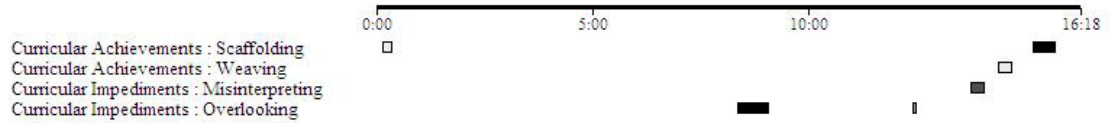**Clip:** 17-06: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	2
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	2
Clips:	6

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 17_Habitual Be   File: 17_Habitual Be.mov

0:00   5:00   10:00   16:18

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

EPISODE: 18_THIRD PERSON SINGULAR

Clip: 18-01: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 18-02: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 18-03: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 18-04: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 18-05: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 18-06: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Summary

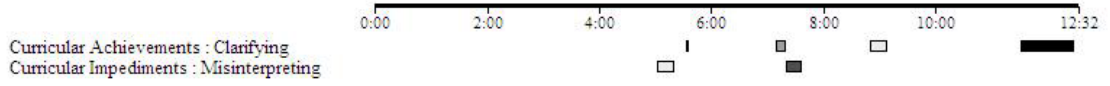Curricular Achievements : Clarifying   4
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting   2

                                       Clips: 6

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 18_Third Person Singular   File: 18_Third Person Singular.mov

0:00   2:00   4:00   6:00   8:00   10:00   12:32

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

EPISODE: 19_CODESWITCHING REVIEW

Clip: 19-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 19-02: Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 19-03: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 19-04: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 19-05: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 19-06: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 19-07: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	2
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	2
Clips:	7

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 19_Codeswitching Review   File: 19_Codeswitching Review.mov

	0:00	5:00	10:00	15:00	21:21
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding					
Curricular Achievements : Weaving					
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling					
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting					
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking					
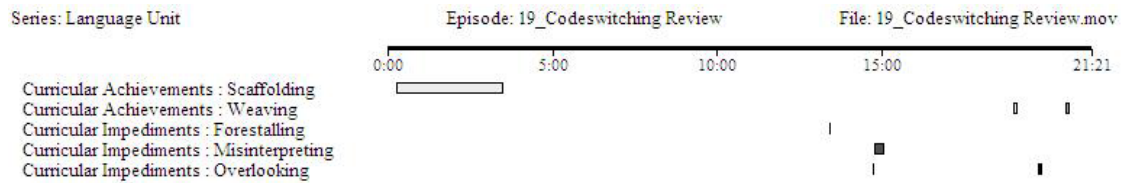
EPISODE: 20_CODESWITCHING REVIEW CONT

Clip: 20-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 20-02: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Clip: 20-03: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

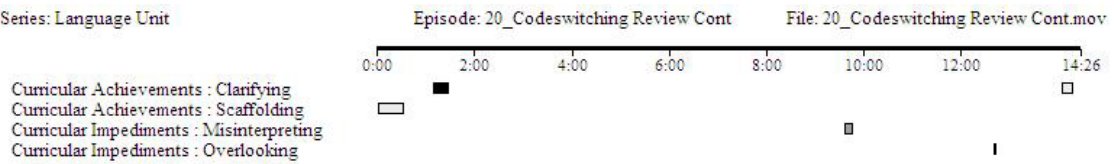**Clip:** 20-04: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 20-05: Curricular Achievements : Clarifying

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying	2
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	1
Clips:	5

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 20_Codeswitching Review Cont   File: 20_Codeswitching Review Cont.mov

0:00   2:00   4:00   6:00   8:00   10:00   12:00   14:26

Curricular Achievements : Clarifying
Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

EPISODE: 24_IDENTIFYING KNOWN-NEW

Clip: 24-01: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Clip: 24-02: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 24-03: Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 24-04: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting
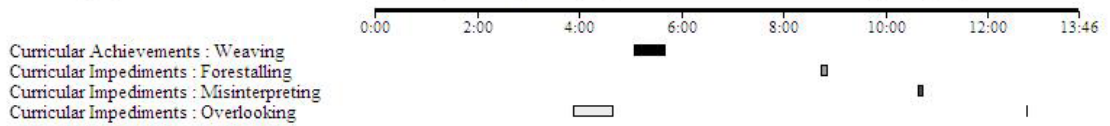
Clip: 24-05: Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Weaving	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking	2
Clips:	5

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 24_Identifying Known-New   File: 24_Identifying Known-New.mov

	0:00	2:00	4:00	6:00	8:00	10:00	12:00	13:46

Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting
Curricular Impediments : Overlooking

EPISODE: 25_KNOWN-NEW CONTRACT

Clip: 25-01: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 25-02: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Weaving	1
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Clips:	2

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 25_Known-New Contract   File: 25_Known-New Contract.mov

0:00   1:00   2:00   3:00   4:00   4:57

Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

EPISODE: 26_EXPANDING INFORMATION

Clip: 26-01: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 26-02: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 26-03: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 26-04: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 26-05: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 26-06: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 26-07: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Weaving		3
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting		4
	Clips:	7
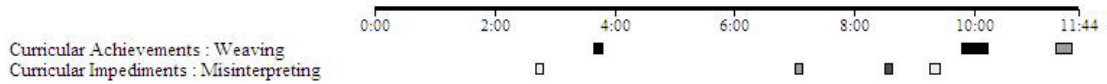
EPISODE: 28_CONJUNCTIVE RESOURCES

Clip: 28-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 28-02: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 28-03: Curricular Impediments : Forestalling

Clip: 28-04: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	2
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling	1
Clips:	4

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 28_Conjunctive Resources   File: 28_Conjunctive Resources.mov

0:00   5:00   10:00   15:00   17:25

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Forestalling
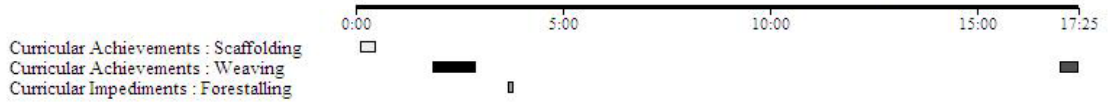
EPISODE: 29_CONJUNCTIVE RESOURCES CONT

Clip: 29-01: Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding

Clip: 29-02: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 29-03: Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting

Clip: 29-04: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Clip: 29-05: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

**Clip:** 29-06: Curricular Achievements : Weaving

Summary

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding	1
Curricular Achievements : Weaving	4
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting	1
Clips:	6

Series: Language Unit   Episode: 29_Conjunctive Resources Cont   File: 29_Conjunctive Resources Cont.mov

| 0:00 | 5:00 | 10:00 | 15:00 | 18:51 |

Curricular Achievements : Scaffolding
Curricular Achievements : Weaving
Curricular Impediments : Misinterpreting
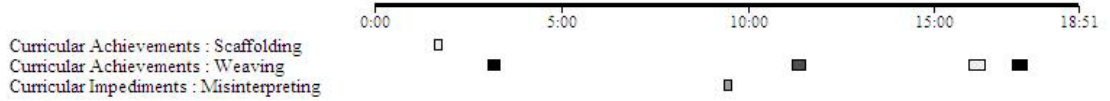
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