Implementing Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements into the Composition Classroom: Re-inviting Grammar into the Writing Curriculum.

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis proposes a rejoining of process and product in the writing curriculum. As writing teachers, we have to acknowledge that there comes a time when we have to evaluate a written product. Before teachers can evaluate a product, however, they must first teach their students how to write better products using the writing process. To make this possible, teachers have to accept that because editing is a part of the writing process, grammar instruction has a rightful place in the composition classroom. Instead of using past approaches to grammar instruction that were difficult for both teachers and students, I present a new student-friendly grammar instruction that teaches students grammar in the context of several grammar concepts. In this grammar, I limit grammatical terminology and focus on helping students understand the concept rather than the terminology. In addition to the limiting of jargon, I use speech as a tool to help students further understand the grammar they are trying to learn. I offer applications for both native and nonnative students, and to illustrate more specifically how teachers can utilize this new grammar, I use restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, one of the more difficult grammatical concepts students have to learn.

Introduction

As the debate about grammar instruction in the composition classroom rages on, writing teachers find themselves in a difficult situation. The goal of the composition teacher is to teach and improve various writing skills that students can call upon in their everyday writing tasks as well as in academic settings, but no one can decide what role grammar plays in this instruction. When they find themselves confronting a grammatical problem in students' writing, teachers must decide how they will deal with the problem or if they will deal with the problem at all.

Anti-grammar advocates present study after study that seems to prove that grammar instruction is not useful to students. However, what type of grammar instruction are these studies analyzing? Grammar advocates present counter studies that prove grammar instruction is effective to some degree. How can both claims be true, and how are composition teachers supposed to determine which theory is correct?

As more and more research is conducted on grammar and its role in composition, researchers like Rei Noguchi and Constance Weaver have opened the world of composition up to a joining of process and product that is considered a post-process movement. The post-process movement acknowledges that there comes a time when teachers have to evaluate a product, and therefore, instruction has to reflect this. Yes, grammar is difficult, but it is not the grammar that fails students; it is the grammar instruction that fails students. There must be a way to implement grammar into the composition classroom that allows students both to learn the concepts and apply them to their writing and that enables teachers to present the grammar in a manner that does not require them to be the absolute authority on every grammar rule ever written.

Because editing is a part of the writing process, and post-process theorists challenge to the process/product split, grammar should be a part of the process-centered writing classroom. While it is noble to allow our students to grow as writers through the implementation of the writing process, as teachers, we do our students a great disservice by ignoring that there must eventually be a product that is evaluated. Ultimately, our goal should be to teach the writing process to enable our students to write better products. We have an obligation to teach our students grammar within the context of their writing process.

To do this, however, we must work through the grammatical jargon of traditional grammar in order to develop a foundation of grammar that we can present to our students. If we can work through the jargon and develop definitions and terms that are more student-friendly, then grammar instruction will not be so intimidating for teachers or students. Only then will grammar be able to take its rightful place in the writing curriculum.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I present a history of grammar instruction and address the movement away from implementing grammar into the composition classroom. This analysis will lead up to my theory that a new type of grammar instruction is needed, similar to what Noguchi and Weaver propose. This new instruction eliminates the aspects of grammar that were ineffective to students in the past and works toward helping students learn only the grammar relevant to their writing goals. I am not suggesting that we turn composition classes into the cliched red pen grammar classes. Instead, I ask that teachers acknowledge that grammar instruction invites itself into the composition classroom because students are working with language to express meaning

in written form. As teachers, we must be willing and able to provide our students with a better understanding of grammatical concepts that present themselves. The key is in the presentation of the grammar and how the presentation allows students to internalize the grammar concepts. If teachers can feel comfortable enough with the grammar, they will be more willing to present the grammar to their students. Thus, if grammar can be addressed in a non-intimidating way, both the teachers and students reap the rewards.

In chapter two, I use restrictive and nonrestrictive elements to illustrate the type of student-friendly instruction I am talking about. I analyze the different areas that have made this grammatical concept so difficult in the past. First, I work through various classifications used when explaining restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in order to develop one comprehensive explanation of this grammatical concept that students and teachers will be able to understand more easily. Then, I analyze how five different grammars handle restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. Each grammar represents a different approach to grammar instruction prominent throughout this century, and I explain why each approach to grammar is ineffective and unuseful to both students and teachers. Finally, I present what I consider to be the ideal way to approach restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in the composition classroom based on the growing trend in grammar instruction.

The third chapter is dedicated to intonation. My new theory of grammar not only requires a minimal use of grammatical jargon, but it also allows students to use speech as a tool for learning grammar. Just as we encourage our students to use speech to aid in proofreading, I propose that speech can be a useful tool when dealing with grammar.

Again, I use restrictive and nonrestrictive elements as an example of how speech, more specifically intonation, can be used in the composition classroom.

Since second language writing instruction is also process centered, a lot of the same issues pertaining to grammar and its place in instruction have become a part of the ESL curriculum. Thus, in the fourth and fifth chapters, I briefly review the movement in ESL called *focus on form*, which is close to the post-process movement in composition that tries to reunite process and product, and I offer suggestions about how grammar can be implemented into a meaning-centered ESL classroom. While the approach to grammar I present earlier in my thesis can be used for ESL students, I offer additional suggestions geared specifically at the problems ESL students would have learning grammar and, more specifically, how to use restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. This more specific approach will be more appropriate in a class made up of all non-native speakers, whereas the previous approach addresses typical freshman students in a composition classroom.

Together, these chapter work toward fostering a new attitude about grammar and its rightful place in writing classrooms. If teachers are willing to take the time to lean this new approach to grammar and implement it into the editing stages of the writing process, they can develop a writing curriculum that balances both process and product in a productive way, presenting a more comprehensive approach to writing instruction for students. As writing teachers, we should not only see this as our goal, but as our obligation.

Chapter 1

A Brief Historical Overview of Grammar Instruction and the Rise of a New Era

While a complete overview of grammar instruction would trace its origins back to ancient Rome, this overview is not quite that ambitious. Instead, I focus on grammar instruction in England and America, since the former strongly influenced the latter. I start my overview in the 1800s because educators' attitudes toward grammar and the shift in this attitude at the turn of the last century have been the most dramatic shifts seen in grammar instruction. This attitude affects grammar instruction today; thus, instead of providing a complete overview, I try to provide an overview that is most relevant to grammar instruction as it is today and uncover why the place of grammar in written instruction has been heavily debated by educators for decades.

Grammar Instruction From 1835 to 1895

Reflections on the time period between 1835 and 1895 bring forth images of a classical education where students were taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. In today's American education system, where the beliefs of traditional grammarians and anti-grammarians spark debates about grammar's place in formal instruction, many educators call for a movement back to the standards of this nineteenth-century period when a knowledge of grammar was considered an invaluable tool. During this period, grammarians provided three arguments for the inclusion of grammar into the curriculum:

- grammar is a science
- grammar aids personal growth and development

- grammar ensures national stability

Grammar as a Science

The idea that grammar is a science was the most prevalent argument used by grammarians to warrant its inclusion into the education system. S.W. Clark declares grammar as a science in the first line of his *First Lessons in English Grammar* (1857). Keeping with this traditional view of grammar, Clark calls for implementing this important science into schools: "While the science of language in its higher and more abstruse developments, has much in common with Science of Mind, and taxes the energies of minds matured, yet its more practical features may be clearly exhibited to children" (3). This concept of educating children in the science of grammar reinforces its importance. The sciences are considered complex anomalies that require years to master, yet children need the information. As with all of the sciences, the earlier children start learning grammar, the better they will be able to master it.

Clark also claims that the adults are responsible for ensuring children get this education. He insists it is not enough to simply allow parents to educate children about uses of grammar. When parents, and even teachers, do so, they usually rely on the teaching of "the right use of the language" as it applies to oral speech (3). A true education allows students to thoroughly examine all aspects of grammar, from individual words to complete sentences.

George Marsh also argues the importance of grammar in *Lectures of the English Language* (1859). Marsh stresses a comprehensive understanding of the language. The lectures take students through the history of English and lay a firm historic foundation

that eventually leads into more specific explanations of important grammatical concepts like nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

Despite grammar's obvious importance, Marsh concludes that that grammar is absent from later formal instruction due to the assumptions that grammar is an integral part of early schooling; thus, the teachers at this advanced level assume the knowledge is present when students come to the higher levels of schooling. In addition, Marsh explains that without grammar instruction, all other instruction is useless since the study of language serves as "an indispensable preparation for the reception of academic instruction" (2). Since grammar is excluded from higher education, Marsh feels the public deserves a better understanding of why such exemptions occur in addition to apologies for the exemptions.

Goold Brown, in *The Grammar of English Grammars* (1864), also stresses grammar's equality to other sciences, making it an essential part of an individual's education. Brown insists that grammar "is the first of what have been called the seven sciences, or liberal branches of knowledge; namely, grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music" (21-22). Grammar is inseparable from the other sciences in creating the well-rounded scholar. Therefore, despite grammar's elusive nature, which makes language "peculiar to man," Brown bids the reader to be patient as he would be in learning all of the sciences:

> some may begin to think that in treating of grammar we are dealing with something too various and changeable for the understanding to grasp; a decoding Proteus of the imagination, who is ever ready to assume some new shape, and elude the vigilance of the inquirer. (22)

The reader must approach the topic with an open mind and desire to learn in order to understand the complexities of this evolving science.

Albert Raub addresses his placement of grammar with the other sciences in a much more cautious manner in *A Practical English Grammar: For the Use of Schools and Private Students* (1880) and is the first author to acknowledge that there is a growing resistance to the teaching of formal grammar. As surprising as this fact seems to a modern reader, Raub argues that resistance to grammar is wrong:

> Many earnest teachers exclaim against the teaching of technical grammar, forgetful of the fact that it is not the science itself, but the mode of presenting it to the pupil, which is at fault. What the beginner needs is lessons in English to form for him correct habits of speech. These lessons should be given prepatory to any instruction in the science of Grammar. (3)

Raub is the first grammarian to question where the difficulty in learning grammar comes from. He insists that the problem is inherent in the instruction and not the grammar. Therefore, Raub is defending the credibility of the science by assaulting the ineffective teaching strategies.

Once he establishes that the fault with learning grammar lies with poor instruction, Raub brings his argument back to why individuals need to learn grammar. He insists that the "rules or laws [of grammar] are the standard by which every speaker or writer must judge, and test the correctness of his own speech" (3). By allowing students to learn how to test their grammar against the standards, teachers allow students to inevitably better themselves; this desire for betterment should be enough to warrant the

need for grammar instruction in the schools. Raub admittedly believes that just because grammar is difficult does not mean teachers should dismiss it. After all, all of the sciences are difficult, but no one would call for their removal from education.

In *Higher Lessons in English* (1895), Alonzo Reed and Brainerd Kellogg also address a growing movement away from the teaching of grammar. They conclude that this movement is led by those individuals who "joined in the hue and cry mainly because it is popular to denounce the old and hail the new" (3). Such a movement symbolizes a trend of uneasiness with traditional grammar, and anti-grammar advocates emphasize success without rigid standards. Reed and Kellogg, however, resist this movement.

Reed and Kellogg play to the sensibility of teachers, who are assumed to ultimately have the power to include or exclude grammar in the classroom. The authors insist that "practical teachers have never doubted the utility of the study of English grammar" but instead labor through inadequate textbooks and persevere through lesson after lesson for the good of the students (3). Hence, Reed and Kellogg parallel Raub's reasoning that the actual grammar is not at fault but rather the method of presentation causes the difficulty in learning the essential concepts involved in mastering the language.

Once Reed and Kellogg establish the problems with the current methods of teaching grammar, they move on to imply, as all of the previous authors have, that grammar is indeed a science, but it has been ineffectively addressed:

> From our own extended experience and from the nature of things, we are convinced that the oral instruction, the composition writing, and the studies in literature that are offered as substitutes for the study of

> grammar, invaluable as they are in themselves, fall short of their greatest possible good, are more or less loose and erratic, unless based upon the science of language, upon those principles that underlie the structure of the sentence; and that, on the other hand, the study of technical grammar, divorced, as it too generally has been, from practical language work, although not without value as a mental discipline, is hardly deserving of a place in the common school. (4)

The solution to this problem is to address the science with the same applicable approach used with other sciences in order to "make the Science of the Language, of which all the essentials are thoroughly presented, tributary to the Art of Expression" (4). Nothing is more important to the education of an individual than the ability to use the language and use it well. This continuing connection to science made grammar a necessary part of learning, and grammarians needed to emphasize the connection between clear expression and meaning to ensure grammar remained in the curriculum.

Grammar as a Means of Individual Growth

In addition to connecting grammar with the sciences, grammarians were able to ensure a high opinion of grammar by connecting it to personal growth and development. William Cobbett followed and stressed the belief that grammar was a fundamental part of an individual's education. Cobbett wrote *A Grammar of the English Language* (1832) as a series of letters to his son James. In these letters, Cobbett takes the reader through the aspects of the English language from pronouns and punctuation to syntax and etymology. This thorough examination alone reflects the importance of the topic, for to get a

complete understanding of the English language, one must master all aspects that make up the language.

A firm understanding of language, according to Cobbett, "gives, in proportion to its extent and usefulness, the possessor a just claim to respect" (8). Language is what helps separate the masses. A master of language rises above the less educated speakers and writers and commands the respect of others. While all knowledge is important, Cobbett emphasizes that certain knowledge is superior to other knowledge and that knowledge of grammar is imperative:

> . . . for though knowledge in every art an science, is, if properly applied, worthy of praise in proportion to its extent and usefulness, there are some kinds of knowledge which are justly considered as of superior order, not only because the possession of them is a proof of more than ordinary industry and talent, but because the application of them has naturally a more powerful influence in the affairs and on the condition of our friends, acquaintances, neighbors, and country. (8)

The idea that knowledge is power, and that knowledge of the language ensures more power, underlies Cobbett's rationale; thus, his push for his son to acquire such knowledge makes sense.

Brown, like Cobbett, hails grammar as the medium through which men can ensure knowledge is transferred. In keeping with the belief that grammar works to better the individual, Brown calls for education on this subject to prevent disaster. He asserts that "If for a moment we consider the good and evil that are done in the world through the medium of speech, we shall with one voice acknowledge, that not only the faculty itself,

but also the manner in which it is used, is of incalculable importance to the welfare of men" (22). Good grammar, therefore, allows knowledge to be more clearly and accurately presented since language is the vehicle through which thoughts are expressed. Again, knowledge is power, and he who can convey his thoughts in an accurate manner possesses the power since he then has the power to influence others.

Brown also addresses the connection between grammar and respect. In order to be a true gentleman, one needs to have a commanding knowledge of grammar, which allows one to use the language to separate himself from others who are lowlier and not respectable. Brown emphasizes that everyone desires to be considered educated by his peers or those he considers his intellectual superiors, but too often the limits of one's knowledge of the language reflect a more uneducated persona, and "who can tell how much of his own good or ill success, how much of the favour or disregard with which he himself has been treated, may have depended upon that skill or deficiency in grammar" (94-95). The only sure way to prevent such ill fortune is to learn to apply grammar correctly to both written and verbal communication.

The responsibility to learn grammar, however, does not fall solely on the shoulders of the individual. Again, there are people in power, although not necessarily possessing political power, who are responsible for ensuring that grammar takes its place in the basic education of all. Teachers, parents, and guardians "have a certain degree of influence upon the public mind; and the popular notions of the age, in respect to the relative value of different studies, will doubtless bias many to the adoption or the rejection of this" (95). Since students are impressionable, they need the most guidance, and adults have the power and obligation to give the students the education that will

allow the students to grow into respectable individuals in the community. Those in power have a duty to the subordinates.

Grammar as a Means of National Stability

Building on the idea of individual growth, grammarians tied individual growth to the growth of the entire country. Thus, if a person improved through the study of grammar, then the entire country would improve as a result. Cobbett does not argue strictly for the acquisition of knowledge of the English language for individual growth; he also stresses its ability to serve the communal good. In dedicating his book to the Queen of England, Cobbett argues that those who oppose the crown do so out of ignorance, so knowledge, particularly knowledge of English grammar, must be brought to the "Labouring classes of the community." Similarly, Cobbett pushes for recognition of grammar's place in government:

> To the functions of statesmen and legislators is due the highest respect which can be shown by man to any human . . . . Here the matters to be discussed and decided on, are peace and war, and the liberty or slavery, happiness or misery, of nations. Here a single instance of neglect, a single oversight, a single error, may load with calamity millions of men, and entail that calamity on a long series of future generations. (9-10)

These men, especially, need to have a keen sense of language if they are to represent the country. Such leaders have an obligation to provide people with knowledge that enables the people to be loyal citizens. This quest for knowledge takes many forms and follows many paths, but "GRAMMAR is the gate of entrance to them all. And, if grammar is so

useful in the attaining of knowledge, it is absolutely necessary in order to enable the possessor to communicate, by writing, that knowledge to others" (10). The key to all knowledge is grammar; without grammar, the people would be completely ignorant. As Cobbett has already established, an ignorant population would be detrimental to the leaders. The leaders would be unable to fulfill their duties if they, too, were ignorant of the language. Thus, the leaders must keep order by ensuring everyone is educated.

The strong objection Marsh has to the absence of grammar closely follows Cobbett's rationale for the need to know grammar, for a firm knowledge of grammar ensures a strong country. This nationalistic connection makes it necessary for every member of society to learn to utilize the language. The people are empowered by language, and, therefore, the whole country benefits. Marsh urges that grammatical studies provide

> the surest safeguard of national independence and national honor—an intelligent comprehension, namely, of what is good and what is great in national history, national institutions, national character . . . . The zeal with which these studies are pursued is a high expression of intellectual patriotism, a security against the perils of absorption and centralization which are again menacing the commonwealth of the Eastern continent. (7)

The desire to rise above the other nations and improve the American lifestyle serves as a powerful argument to encourage the study of grammar, and the argument was more than likely hailed and accepted by the American people as they sat on the edge of a period of great advancement.

This idea of advancement also plays an important role in Marsh's arguments for the importance of grammar. With technological advancement, Americans were afforded more opportunities that lead to the cliched American dream where the poor laborer is able to make a better living for himself and his family. This dream of betterment was filled with a hope of entering a new social class and earning a respectable place in society. Thus, Marsh insists,

> Every man is a dabbler, if not a master in every knowledge. Every man is a divine, a statesman, a physician, and a lawyer to himself, as well as a counsellor to his neighbors, on all the interests involved in the sciences appropriately belonging to those professions. We all read books, magazines, newspapers, all attend learned lectures, and too many of us, indeed, write the one, or deliver the other. (15)

While this advancement seems reflective of an educated society, the image was adored by all Americans. In short, advancement cannot continue without knowledge of the language. Along with this advancement, Americans "still need, with our multifarious strivings, an encyclopedic training, a wide command over resources of our native tongue" (16). Without a firm basis in the grammar of the language, advancement will inevitably cease.

Knowing the language, according to Marsh, also makes the country strong by allowing the people to be more politically active. Since language is not stagnant, people must keep themselves updated on the changes that occur. However,

> it is by no means easy to discriminate, at all times, between positive corruptions, which tend to the deterioration of a tongue in expressiveness

> or moral elevation of vocabulary, in distinctness of articulation, in logical precision, or in clearness of structure, and changes which belong to the character of speech. (644)

These changes, nonetheless, are important because they reflect changes in the individuals of society. If the people change for the better, then the language changes in a positive way by becoming stronger and more refined. On the other hand, if the people take a turn toward evil ways, they act in a more ignorant fashion, causing the language to deteriorate and take on a less educated appearance. There is a clear connection between the people and their language. Thus, Marsh concludes that by studying the language, "Mere corruptions . . . which arise from extraneous or accidental causes, may be detected, exposed, and if not healed, at least prevented from spreading beyond their source, and infecting a whole nation" (644). Since language allows for communication and is used, for example, in politics, a knowledgeable individual can serve the country better by preventing widespread decay of the morals of the people.

Raub continues the emphasis on individual improvement through grammar, but he more readily connects the individual's knowledge to the well being of others. He attests, "The close accurate habits of thought engendered by the critical analysis of the English sentence, and the cultivation of keen perception in the correction and criticism of errors in speech, are of incalculable value to the learner as a thinking citizen of the future" (3). Echoing Cobbett's assertion that an educated citizen is a loyal citizen, Raub emphasizes that there is more involved than individual growth in learning grammar, for one person's knowledge about the language ultimately affects everyone.

The majority of the population was willing to accept these three arguments as enough to warrant the inclusion of grammar into the curriculum; however, by 1880, members of the education system started to question these arguments. By this time, women were becoming more numerous in the classrooms both as teachers and students. Since grammar was considered a science and women were being welcomed into the classrooms, a change in attitude toward grammar instruction would allow women to teach and learn grammar, for permitting women to learn a science was inappropriate. Sciences were too difficult for women to learn, and young women had no need to learn science since tradition warranted women to stay at home and raise the family. By the turn of this century, researchers started to disprove the effectiveness of grammar instruction, leading the next generation to carry on the debate concerning grammar's place in education.

The theories behind teaching grammar were all accurate and worthy of acceptance. Knowing how to utilize the language does make someone a better person. If a person can present his ideas clearly, he or she will be better off than a person who cannot construct a coherent sentence. Meaning is important, but meaning amounts to very little if the errors in language usage prohibit the meaning from coming through. This is why individuals who know grammar are better individuals and better citizens. If a person can present his or her ideas clearly, people will listen, and even if the public does not agree, the individual will know that it is not because he or she presented the ideas in an illiterate manner.

It is important to note that before the turn of this century, the majority of grammar instruction was traditional. Students memorized rules from a grammar, completed exercises, and moved on to the next grammar concept. The amount of grammar

application to students' own writing was minimal at best, and the instruction was as formal and dry as grammar instruction could be. Educators started to question why the grammar instruction was ineffective and blamed teachers, while others questioned the grammar. Granted, teachers taught the grammar, but they were teaching the only grammar they knew. Educators never attempted to develop a more effective grammar. The grammar instruction was not working, so the grammar must be faulty. Regardless of the truth behind the theories originally used to implement grammar instruction, grammar was omitted from teaching because of the ineffective approach to grammar that was used. Instead of finding an alternate approach, teachers moved away from teaching grammar altogether. This travesty would become more prevalent during the next century.

GRAMMAR IN THE 1900s

By the turn of the century, grammar's place in formal instruction, and more importantly in writing classes, was at the center of debate. Rei Noguchi explains that studies began by at least 1906 that helped shift the dominant attitude for grammar instruction toward an anti-grammar attitude (2). Constance Weaver acknowledges that when the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English concluded in 1936 that teaching grammar had no useful impact on students, NCTE established that grammar should be excluded from writing instruction, and this attitude toward grammar and its place in the writing classroom continued to be a part of the writing curriculum well into the following decades (9-10).

In 1947, W.J. Macauley conducted a study in Scotland among elementary and secondary school students. Although the study was conducted outside of the United

States, Macauley's findings had a profound impact on the attitude toward grammar both in his own country and in the United States. Macauley looked at students' performance in grammar after almost five years of grammar instruction. After their grammar instruction was complete, students took tests on the parts of speech. Macauley's study provided the following conclusions:

- No domestic or technical class scored above 40 percent on the whole test.
- The only classes scoring 50 percent or above on all five parts of speech were the two classes studying foreign language.
- The overall mean for the top boys' class and the top girls' class increased from 46.5 percent in the first year to 62 percent in the third year.
- By the third year, when more than half the senior secondary students had left school, still only 41.5 percent of all the remaining students scored 50 percent or higher on the total test. (Weaver 19)

These conclusions seem to support the NCTE's assertion about grammar instruction. As a result of studies like Macauley's, researchers tried to find alternatives to traditional grammar that would be more effective.

During the 1950s and 1960s, structural grammar, introduced by linguists, attempted to take a more "as-it-is-now" approach to grammar rather than relying on older, more traditional rules. This approach tried to develop rules that governed the English language at the moment, and the overall idea seemed to spark much enthusiasm. However, research proved that the structural approach to grammar was no more effective

than the very grammar it was trying to replace (Weaver 11). Structural grammar ended up being just as difficult for students to comprehend and utilize in their writing. Replacing traditional grammar with structural grammar would not solve any of the problems prevalent in grammar instruction. Instead, the substitution would just open structural grammar up to the same well-deserved criticism that traditional grammar has endured through the years.

Overlapping the rise and fall of the structural approach, the 1960s and 1970s saw the development of another linguistic approach to grammar called transformational grammar. This approach "emphasized how surface structures can be generated from hypothesized deep, underlying structures, and how underlying structures can be transformed into different stylistic variants" (Weaver 11). Early research on transformational grammar conducted by D Bateman and F. Zidonis indicated positive results. As more researchers like John Mellon and Frank O'Hare conducted their own research on transformational grammar, however, it became evident that exercises in sentence combining provided the same rate of improvement as instruction utilizing transformational grammar (Weaver 11-13). Thus, this approach to grammar was not the saving grace to grammar instruction that some had hoped it would be.

In the late 1970s, Mina Shaughnessy published *Errors and Expectations*, and once again, theory around grammar instruction changed. Shaughnessy identified common errors found in basic writing and concluded that the errors students make are not random or the result of an ignorance of rules. Instead of writing students off as poor writers, teachers need to understand what is affecting the students' writing at a deeper level. If teachers look deep enough, they can find the patterns that students use when

creating error and use the pattern to teach students how to fix errors. While Shaughnessy focused on the errors prevalent in basic writing, she nonetheless contributed to field of composition and developed a theory pertaining to grammar and error that is still prevalent in writing curriculums today. Her approach to error analysis was the first indication that perhaps students did learn grammar to some degree, even if they were applying the rules incorrectly.

Additional research in the 1980s continued to prove that grammar instruction has no useful effects on students. F. McQuade studied his 11th and 12th grade students, believing that grammar instruction would improve the students' performance on college entrance examinations. The class reviewed basic grammar, and while students had a positive attitude toward the class, the end results were not so positive. Students' performance on the exams did not improve. In fact, students who had not taken the grammar class performed just as well as the students who had taken the class, proving what previous research had concluded (Weaver 22-23). Without positive results, it was clear to educators in the field of writing that grammar instruction was to remain outside of the limits of the writing classroom.

All of this research, however, only proves two things: traditional grammar instruction is not effective, and a more effective approach to grammar has not been developed. No one can deny these conclusions, for the research almost unanimously supports these very points. These conclusions, though, do not end the debate; they only end the past debates pertaining to the grammar theories that have already been developed.

The most successful attempt at trying to find an alternate method to traditional grammar instruction came from Mina Shaughnessy and her error analysis theory.

Unfortunately, it is difficult for teachers to pick up on error patterns because most teachers instruct students for only ten to fifteen weeks. In this short period of time, teachers cannot even truly begin to know their students' writing or the pattern of error that may be underlying the grammatical mistakes. While error analysis is valid and beneficial to, for example, high school teachers who instruct the same students for an entire school year, error analysis is difficult to utilize in a short-term writing class. Expecting teachers to utilize error analysis effectively under the time constraints is not realistic. By the time error can be placed into a pattern, the class is over, and the students are gone.

Another problem with error analysis is that unless a teacher has a strong background in grammar, he or she will not be able to pick up on the error pattern. It is easy to identify that something is wrong with a grammatical structure, but it is much more difficult to identify what the exact problem is and how the problem can be fixed. Error analysis is dependant on teachers being able to identify that there is an error, classify the error, note the pattern of misapplication, and suggest ways to correct the error. Realistically, a lot of teachers cannot do this, especially if they have been trained within the process-centered paradigm. There must be a way to implement grammar back into the writing curriculum without teachers having to go back and learn grammar from the beginning.

THE PARADIGM SHIFT AND NEW ERA OF WRITING INSTRUCTION

While researchers were looking for an alternative to traditional grammar instruction, by the 1960s, the largest and most prominent shift in attitude pertaining to

grammar occurred as a result of the shift from a product-centered writing curriculum to a process-centered writing curriculum. Maxine Hairston, in "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing," traces this revolution and explains its effects on the field of composition.

Hairston explains that Thomas Kuhn developed the concept of the paradigm shift in order to explain why scientific revolutions occur. According to Kuhn, once theories are developed, they become the standard belief system for everyone in the scientific field. Eventually, individuals start to discover holes in the old theory, and a new theory is developed. Although the new theory is not universally accepted at first, most individuals will accept the theory when proof of its superiority is provided. Hairston noted the similar paradigm shift occurring in composition as a result of the process-centered approach to teaching that is still emphasized.

Before the 1960s, the old paradigm focused on the product, often placing emphasis on style and error correction formulas. This product-based theory of writing assumed that writers had preconceived topics and ideas, and all writers needed to do was squeeze their topics into the required style. Another problem was that this theory treated writing as a linear process that smoothly passed through prewriting, drafting, and revising stages.

During the 1960s, the paradigm changed. Theorists like Noam Chomsky who stressed process over product paved the way for others. Also, the Anglo-American seminar on the teaching of English challenged the old paradigm in 1966, when the conference shifted attention from product to process. This process-centered approach led writers through the stages of a recursive writing process (planning, drafting, and

revising). The emphasis was on the ideas and how working through a writing process allows writers to express ideas and feelings they would otherwise not know how to express in writing. Grammar instruction was inconsistent with the process pedagogy because it focused on product, a secondary concern in the overall curriculum.

The most prominent sign of the paradigm shift in composition was represented by the research being conducted on the writing process. This research found that writing helped the writer find what it is he or she wants to write about. Also, the research emphasized that writing is non-linear; writers toggled from stage to stage. In addition to concentrating on the writing process, the new paradigm included instruction on finding topics. The product was evaluated based on how well it fulfilled the writer's plan, and the writing process was seen as recurring (Hairston 113-126).

Within this paradigm shift, other researchers have voiced their theories about why most grammar instruction is ineffective. Glynda Hall tells us that writing "remains more or less constant across ages 9, 13, and 17," and she goes on to explain that "there are, after all, differences in the kinds of error that students of various ages can correct" (239). If this is true, then the strategies for incorporating grammar into a writing classroom vary according to the grade level. This makes perfect sense. Of course, students in the third grade will not be able to utilize grammar or writing the same way a student in high school will; however, how much grammar instruction do students actually get at any given age, and what type of instruction do they get? Some theorists want teachers to believe that students cannot learn grammar after a certain age. If individuals do not continue to work on a skill, they lose it. Grammar is no exception. If we allowed students to continue improving their grammar, they would not forget the rules or how to apply the rules.

Patrick Hartwell addresses why grammar instruction has limited effects on writing. He explains, "The romantic position [of grammar] is that stylistic grammars, though perhaps useful for teachers, have little place in the teaching of composition, for students must struggle with and through language toward meaning" (124). Granted, traditional grammar is difficult, but grammar is an integral part of composition. Yes, students are learning to look for and create meaning, but how are they supposed to express that meaning if their writing is laden with error? If we are going to teach students to express themselves, we need to ensure they express themselves as clearly as they can. Of course teachers cannot spend the entire term teaching every grammar concept there is, but there are some grammar concepts that create problems for a large number of students; thus, teachers should address these problems to better students' writing.

GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION POST-PROCESS: FOSTERING A NEW ATTITUDE

It has now been over twenty years since the process-centered approach was introduced. Although process is still central to writing theory, a post-process movement is occurring. Post-process theory acknowledges that there has to be a product at the end of the process. This is exemplified in current writing handbooks by the inclusion of publishing as the final stage of the writing process. If there is a product, then grammar's place in the writing curriculum must be reexamined, and with this reexamination comes a new type of grammar instruction that incorporates grammar into its rightful place in the writing process and that eliminates the grammatical jargon that makes traditional grammar so difficult.

Post-process theory, although still new, is illustrated by Constance Weaver's *Teaching Grammar in Context*. Weaver calls for a rethinking of the way writing is taught. She insists that teachers have to "reexamine, refine, and expand [their] thinking about what aspects of grammar need to be taught to writers, along with the related questions of why, when, and how" (xi). In her approach, Weaver ensures that process and content receive the most attention, but grammar is never ignored. Grammar is dealt with in mini-workshops that last long enough to correct the misapplication or explain a rule in as basic terms as possible. The students are then directed back to their own writing; thus, the grammar instruction is presented in the least intrusive manner as possible.

My theory is closely related to this post-process movement. I believe that grammar is as important as the grammarians in the 1800s claimed it was. If students can use the language effectively, they can express their thoughts clearly, helping them to become members of society. Maybe students will not be engaging in politics as the grammarians in the 1800s stressed, but students will be joining society as lawyers, doctors, and business people. It is important that students know how to express their thoughts coherently, and as writing teachers, we promise our students that we will help them do that. They will learn in our classrooms and leave better writers. Knowing grammar plays a role in this writing evolution.

I also understand the importance of the writing process. The ideal writing class would consider both process and product equally important, for my goal in teaching is to teach the process in order to help students produce a better product. To do this, I acknowledge that within the writing process grammar has a distinct place. No matter

how much we want to emphasize process, there comes a time when we have to evaluate product. Just like all of the other stages in the writing process, editing deserves deep consideration as to how it affects students' writing. Teachers cannot be blind to the fact that there will come a time in all writing when readers evaluate a product, and in order to serve our students, we have to be willing to provide them with the resources and information that allow them to become the best writers that they can become.

To aid in teaching students, the elements in the editing process need to be clear and simple. Grammatical jargon should be limited, as should the amount of grammar presented. If grammar instruction is to be effective, however, teachers have to learn a basic foundation in grammar that they can break down into simple, student-friendly terms. Doing this aids teachers in their learning of the grammar and in their presentation of the grammar, which in turn benefits the students in the same way. This acceptance of grammar as a part of the process and the simpler instruction are the first steps in welcoming grammar back into the writing classroom.

It is also beneficial to make a connection between spoken and written language. Although written language is more formal than spoken language, written language can be tested through spoken language. Thus, speech becomes a valuable tool in grammar instruction and can aid students in their study of this seemingly difficult subject, as Chapter 3 will explain further.

As I stated above, it is important to remember that the post-process movement and my theory of grammar instruction work with the writing process, not against it. The writing process, in its most familiar form, involves four stages: planning, drafting, revising, and editing (as noted above, publishing follows editing as the final stage in

current models). While there is proof that these stages are actually recursive rather than linear, the basic premise of process-centered instruction is to allow students to concentrate on different aspects of their process at different times. Grammar instruction, by the nature of the breakdown of the writing stages, has a distinct place in the composition classroom. Therefore, once students have learned to prewrite, write, and revise, teachers should teach students how to edit, using this time to teach grammar. This is when teachers can conduct workshops on errors that seem to be consistent for the majority of the class, and the students who do not have the same errors can aid during such lessons, promoting a collaborative environment. For example, commas will almost always pose some problems in students' writing, so teachers can give a comma workshop. The workshop will be standard: explain the rules, give examples, and have students analyze the rule for a basic understanding of the underlying concept. While this procedure seems to be the same ineffective pattern that teachers already use, it is the next stage that makes this process effective.

In order to truly grasp a concept, students will have to learn how to apply the rules to their writing. All editing activities will focus mainly on their writing. Anyone can fill in a workbook exercise, but the true test is to seek and correct error in writing where error may not be so easy to find or to rewrite a sentence in order to correct the error. If students can complete such tasks, they understand the grammar concepts; if they still cannot find their errors, other steps will have to be taken. Teachers will have to explain concepts in a different way or teach students different strategies for finding error in order to provide students with a broader base of approaches to draw from. For example,

spoken language often aids students in their search for error since concepts such as sentence fragments or run-on sentences become more evident to the writer's ear.

One of the main reasons that traditional grammar instruction is ineffective is because all students learn differently, and traditional grammar allows for little flexibility. Barry M. Kroll and John C. Schafer explain that teachers have to be willing to accept that not all students will grasp grammatical concepts, so teachers have to be able to explain rules in numerous ways (247). Some students will be able to understand grammatical jargon, but other students will not. Therefore, teachers will have to be able to explain grammar in an array of ways. Sarah D'Eloia takes this idea a step further when she writes,

> If the instructor is familiar with several schools of grammar, he will be better able to practice an informed eclecticism, picking and choosing from a variety of explanations, possible presentations, and "discovery procedures" those that are most likely to shed light for the student on his error, to tell him exactly what to do exactly where in order to be correct, to give him a "mechanical" way to both produce and correct forms and proofread for correctness. (6)

D'Eloia's assertion presents two other problems, however, which lead to some of the most prevalent problems with the inclusion of grammar in the classroom.

Some teachers do not have a strong foundation in grammar. Teachers' lack of training in this area creates a reluctance to focus on anything product centered. Most writing teachers are not trained to be writing teachers; instead, they are trained in literature. Administrators do not believe that there are enough trained specialists to fill all of the positions for writing teachers. All too often, in order to curb this so-called

shortage, a Ph.D. in literature or, at most institutions, an MA stands as enough training to teach writing. Since traditional grammar is so difficult and few teachers have had training in grammar instruction, many teachers feel limited in their ability to teach grammar to their students. Also, if teachers have trouble understanding and applying grammatical concepts, how can students learn the same concepts?

Another problem lies within the idea of learning different schools of grammar. While the suggestion that teachers learn various schools of grammar is noble and attempts to take the students' needs into consideration, the various schools of grammar all pose the same problem that traditional grammar poses; they are too complicated for teachers and students. In chapter two, I analyze five different grammars that represent five different schools of grammar that use five different approaches to teaching grammar. This analysis illustrates the difficulty of the majority of approaches that already exist in this field. By learning from the "mistakes" of past grammar instruction, teachers can easily develop a new approach to grammar that covers all of the basic concepts students will need to know. This new approach digs into the heart of the traditional grammar in order to simplify it into a more user-friendly grammar.

It would be more effective for teachers to develop a basic foundation in grammar and create clear and simple lessons to get the grammar across to students. The solution is to break through traditional grammar that is laden with jargon to develop a new approach that simplifies grammar. This can be done by using a limited number of terms and combining related topics into the same workshops. It is important to note, however, that the selection of the grammar topics to be covered is actually dictated by the students' needs. Teachers need to develop basic categories to classify errors and deal with the

errors that are the most invasive to students' writing. Doing as little as developing basic categories of grammar, as Noguchi argues, allows for grammar instruction without taking time away from the more immediate goal, teaching students to write (60). Below is a list of terms and a grouping of concepts that illustrate the simplified approach I propose. The list will become clearer in the next chapter when I actually present an approach to teaching restrictive and nonrestrictive elements:

Terms[1]

Phrase	Clause
Independent Clause	Dependent Clause
Coordinating Conjunction	Subordinating Conjunction
Fragment	Run-on/ Comma Splice

Groupings

Independent vs. Dependent Clauses:

Fragments

Run-on/ Comma Splice

Commas:

Phrase	Clause
Independent Clause	Dependent Clause

[1] Noguchi suggests a basic category that consists of "Sentence" and "Nonsentence." Under "Nonsentence," Noguchi lists fragments, subjects, and verbs (34). I do not include terms such a noun, verb, adjective, and adverb because these are terms relatively familiar to students who are in a college freshman composition class. Doing so would imply little confidence in students' knowledge. The students' knowledge is not in question; the method of teaching grammar is in question.

Coordinating Conjunction Subordinating Conjunction

These labels provide an overview of the basic concepts that teachers and students need to know in order to teach and learn grammar. The terms, when accompanied with brief explanations, provide a foundation that students can call on when they are trying to learn grammar because these basic terms run throughout the grammar concepts that students at the college level may use incorrectly. Thus, teachers can use the concepts in the groupings to develop editing workshops that can be conducted during the lessons that focus on editing when it is that time in the writing process. This strategy allows for the most comprehensive coverage of as many grammar concerns that can be covered in a week that is devoted to editing.

Chapter 2

Implementing Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements into the Composition Classroom: A New approach to an Old Concept

My theory of grammar instruction, as presented in Chapter 1, breaks through the grammatical jargon to present a basic understanding of grammatical concepts. The way teachers learn grammar is the way they teach grammar. By utilizing the terms and categories I present in Chapter 1, teachers are making grammar easier to learn for both themselves and their students. If grammar is easier to learn, then it is easier to teach. Both teachers and students should feel comfortable with the grammar if it is to be implemented into the writing process.

One of the most difficult concepts to master in writing is restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, and that is why I have chosen this grammatical topic to illustrate the new type of grammar instruction I propose. A complete understanding of this grammatical concept involves a complete understanding of several other grammatical concepts—phrases, clauses, adjectives, etc.—and punctuation. Punctuation becomes an issue because the absence or presence of commas will alter the meaning of the sentence. For example, consider the different meanings elicited by the following sentences in each of the following pairs[2]:

1a. Susan's brother, who works at a bank, quit his job.

1b. Susan's brother who works at a bank quit his job.

[2] I number my own examples; however, I do not number the examples I cite from other authors in order to be true to the original text.

2a. College students, who drink a lot of coffee, have a high risk of stomach problems.

2b. College students who drink a lot of coffee have a high risk of stomach problems.

Both sentences in each pair are identical in wording, but the (a) sentences use commas to set off the relative clauses, completely changing the meaning of the sentence. In 1a, Susan only has one brother, so there is no need to identify him, so the relative clause adds unessential information about him. In 2a, all college students are being generalized about. On the other hand, in 1b, Susan must have more than one brother, so the relative clause is necessary to identify which brother is being referred to. In 2b, the relative clause identifies which college students have the high risk of stomach cancer.

As noted in the previous chapter, it is possible that many college composition teachers may not feel comfortable with their knowledge of grammar, not to mention the specifics of this particular grammatical concept, but grammar claims an important role in the composition classroom. As teachers, then, we are obligated to present this sometimes perplexing grammatical concept in a manner that will allow our students to utilize this knowledge in their own writing. If teachers can work through the grammatical jargon themselves, they will be able to understand grammar and present it to their students. If this grammatical concept, which is extremely prevalent in academic writing and therefore important for students to master, can be broken down into a more students-friendly presentation, then any grammatical concept can be taught using this new style. Once the concept is simplified, anyone can understand it, as is true with all grammar.

In this chapter, I will first work through various classifications used when explaining restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in order to develop one simple and comprehensive explanation of this grammatical concept. This section will show how to break through the difficult terminology of most grammar in order to develop terms that are learner-friendly, which is the first step in effective grammar instruction.

Then, I will analyze how five different grammars handle restrictive and nonrestrictive elements and the effectiveness of each grammar's attempt. I chose a random sampling of grammars that reflect the type of grammar instruction prominent throughout this century in order to illustrate how past approaches to grammar have been difficult and to illustrate how different my new approach to grammar is from these past models.

Finally, I present what I consider to be the ideal way to approach restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in the composition classroom. I utilize simple and limited terminology and approach the concept in relation to the other grammatical concepts I presented in Chapter 1. These concepts build off of each other and will help teachers and students understand restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

Developing a Clear Definition

Before I go any further, I want to take the time to offer a clear definition that will enable the reader to understand restrictive and nonrestrictive elements before I raise other points in this chapter.

Restrictive elements deliver important information. A technical definition that can be found in several traditional grammars would explain that these elements restrict

the meaning of the noun being modified. As it stands, the definition does not really explain what this concept is. Basically, this means that the information is necessary to identify the noun, and if the information is not a part of the sentence, the meaning of the sentence is altered. For example, look at the following sentences:

2a. The book that is on the table needs to be returned

2b. The boy wearing the green sweater broke the window.

2c. Cars with air bags are dangerous for children.

2d. Students who don't attend class usually fail.

The restrictive element in (2a) is *that is on the table.* This phrase identifies the particular book that needs to be returned. Without this information, the reader of the sentence would be left with the noun *book* but would not know exactly which book was the book in question; thus, the elimination of the phrase would cause confusion. The same is true for (2b), (2c), and (2d) as well. The restrictive elements identify which boy broke the window, which cars are dangerous for children, and which students don't pass. If this information is left out, the reader is left with the general terms *boy, cars,* and *students.*

Nonrestrictive elements, on the other hand, do not provide important information. The information is not necessary to identify the noun it modifies; instead, the modifier simply provides additional information that may be left out of the sentence without changing the meaning in any way. Thus, the information is set off with commas:

3a. Susan Jones, who lives on my street, is a successful politician.

3b. My brother, who always sleeps in, was late for school.

3c. The cat, running wildly through the hallway, slid right into the door.

3d. John, wearing a new suit, went for a job interview.

The set-off material in (3a), for example, does not add necessary information about Susan Jones, and if the information were left out of the sentence, the meaning of the sentence would not be affected. The sentence would still convey the central message: *Susan Jones is a successful politician.* In (3b), the nonrestrictive element is not necessary to identify which brother; therefore, the speaker must only have one brother. The same is true for the number of cats in question in (3c). If there were several cats to identify, the nonrestrictive element would become restrictive in order to identify the particular cat. However, the commas in (3c) indicate that there must only be one cat to refer to. In (3d), John does not have to be identified by what he was wearing. Instead, this is just additional information that may be omitted without changing the meaning of the sentence: *John went on a job interview.*

BREAKING THROUGH THE TERMINOLOGY

As I have stated, the first step in effective grammar instruction is to develop terminology that is simpler than past grammar theories have presented. For restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, there is no consistent use of terminology. Thus, problems arise when we try to classify restriction. Some like to use individual terms to reference restriction to different types of speech; for example, a teacher would talk about restrictive and nonrestrictive adjective clauses while talking about adjectives or restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses when talking about relative pronouns. Others have attempted to deal with restriction by grouping the parts of speech together and developing one term for all restriction. While this strategy works better, the terms developed are still too difficult and confusing for both teachers who have to teach the grammatical concept

and students who have to use the concept in their writing. Linguists often present counter examples that tear at the various classifications. Since teachers are dependent on linguists to present the most comprehensive approach to teaching grammar, teachers are dependent on the terminology developed in linguistics. To teach grammar effectively, however, teachers need to start moving away from the more scientific terminology used by linguists, working through all of these different counter explanations to develop a more accurate classification.

A common classification for restrictive elements is restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers. The very concept of modification relies on the act of describing, so accordingly, we assume that restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers describe. Domenico Parisi and Francesco Antinucci explain restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers in a manner that is consistent with the accepted definitions:

> when the modifier indicates to the listener which particular x the speaker has in mind, the modifier has a **restrictive** function. When, on the other hand, the modifier simply has the function of giving extra information about x, without identifying x for the listener, we say that the modifier has a **nonrestrictive** function. (102)

This explanation is very traditional and acceptable according to the basic understanding of restriction. Similarly, René Dirven and Günter Radden, in a manuscript of their book *Cognitive English Grammar*, use very similar criteria to explain relative clauses, which act as modifiers. Dirven and Radden use the terms "selective" to identify restrictive clauses and "characterizing" to identify nonrestrictive clauses (169). The assigned terms identify how a clause functions. In the following sentences,

4a. Her brother who enjoys making fun of people wants to be a comedian.

4b. Her brother, who enjoys making fun of people, wants to be a comedian.

The relative clause in (4a) selects which brother wants to be a comedian, while the relative clause in (4b) characterizes the brother but doesn't identify him in any way.

Because of the descriptive nature of modifiers, it seems that the classification of restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers is an acceptable one; however, this is not the case. Nigel Fabb presents an interesting explanation of restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses that creates a rather large hole in the restrictive and nonrestrictive modifier classification. According to Fabb, when explaining the differences between restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses, "there is no need for construction-specific stipulations which distinguish between them. The differences arise from the fact that the [restrictive relative clause] is a modifier, while the [nonrestrictive relative clause] is not, and in fact has no syntactic relation to its host/antecedent" (57). If a nonrestrictive relative clause does not function as a modifier, it cannot rightfully be labeled a modifier. Fabb's claim makes the modifier classification questionable because it just is not reliable in relation to the concept in question. Therefore, there must be another classification that doesn't have such a discrepancy.

Another classification that is commonly used when discussing restriction and nonrestriction is closed and open apposition. Apposition, as defined by David Crystal, is a grammatical term used "for a sequence of units which are constituents at the same grammatical level, and which have an identity or similarity of reference" (24). Close apposition is restrictive; thus, the phrase *restrictive apposition* may be used

interchangeably. Open apposition is nonrestrictive and can be replaced with the phrase *nonrestrictive apposition*:

5a. The radio, which is in the living room, needs to be repaired.

5b. The radio that is in the living room needs to be repaired.

According to the above explanation of apposition, (5a) is an example of open or nonrestrictive apposition because of the nonrestrictive element. Similarly, (5b) is close or restrictive apposition because it contains a restrictive element.

This classification, however, poses two problems. First, teachers and students will most definitely be deterred by the term apposition. Second, and more importantly, this classification really doesn't work either. Crystal explains that it is hard to develop a clear definition of apposition (24). Charles Meyer elaborates on the problems when he explains that while some agree that restrictive apposition exists, others do not. Some argue that the relationship between the two items is really modification, while others disagree with the overall analysis of restrictive appositive structures (147). Essentially, individuals within the fields of English and Linguistics cannot even agree if the concept of apposition exists.

In an attempt to salvage the concept of apposition, Donald Lee tries to clarify the confusion close apposition creates by discussing the relationship between remoteness and unfamiliarity within the patterns of close opposition (270). While his handling of the topic seems extensive, it is not the end of the discussion. Einar Haugen counters Lee's approach:

> I find such vague criterion unsatisfactory and fear that it would not be very helpful in guiding a foreigner or a student in his learning of English. Nor

> do I believe that it is correct, at least in its present formulation. I am convinced that [Lee] has overlooked several important formal aspects of the construction which may go much farther toward describing its actual position within the structure of English. (165)

Once again, controversy surrounds the classification, making its reliability questionable.

I prefer to use the classification restrictive and nonrestrictive elements and will do so throughout this paper. This classification seems to offer the fewest number of objections. An element is simply a smaller part of something larger. The phrases and clauses that may be incorporated into a sentence to identify a noun or that may be set off with commas to illustrate their nonrestrictive purpose are smaller parts of the larger sentence. There can be no objection to this since this is the criteria we base our understanding of the sentence and its constituents on. In addition, it is the category that is most student friendly and requires less technical terminology. There is no built-in terminology that causes students to fear the concept, unlike the terms *modifier* and *apposition*. Thus, this is the most effective classification we can present to students.

GRAMMARS' HANDLING OF RESTRICTIVE AND NONRESTRICTIVE ELEMENTS

Equally important to deciding on a classification is finding the right approach to use when implementing restrictive and nonrestrictive elements into the composition classroom. The following five authors handle the concept differently throughout their grammars:

1. Roberts, *Understanding Grammar* (1954)
2. Eschliman, Jones, and Burnett, *Generative English Handbook* (1968)

3. Jacobs & Rosenbaum, *English Transformational Grammar* (1968)
4. Quirk and Greenbaum, *A University Grammar* (1973)
5. Liles, *A Basic Grammar of Modern English* (1987)

This random selection allows for a representation of the schools of grammar theory that have been prevalent at some point in history. The grammars' purposes are to teach readers, whether teachers or students, to use grammar based on what the authors deem the most effective manner. Even if teachers and students are not the intended audience, these groups are affected by the various types of grammar instruction since most people learn the theory of grammar instruction that is dominant during their schooling. If teachers learn a particular style of grammar instruction, then that is the instruction they present to their students.

Analyzing just the sections pertaining to restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, it will become clear that the majority of the authors present complicated approaches to this grammatical concept. I am not saying that any one author's analysis of the language is wrong but that the approach to the language is more difficult than either teachers or students need grammar to be. Also, it is important to note that all of the authors dedicate the same amount of space to restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. This allows for a fairer comparison.

Roberts (1954)

Paul Roberts' *Understanding Grammar* deals with restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in different sections of his grammar, depending on the specific classification of

the element—adjective clauses, adverb clauses, appositives, and participle phrases. This separation does not allow the reader to get an overall understanding of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. Instead, the reader must make his or her own connection between the parts of speech and how each functions in a sentence as a restrictive or nonrestrictive element. The connections are made even more difficult to find as a result of Roberts' difficult language and ineffective definitions.

Roberts introduces the reader to restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in a section that explains relative pronouns. He explains that "If the subordinate clause points out which of several possibilities is meant, it is *restrictive*" (72). He goes on to explain that nonrestrictive clauses give added information about the antecedent and are set off with commas. Then Roberts breaks down how *who* and *which* can be used in restrictive or nonrestrictive clauses, but *that* can only be used in restrictive clauses (72-73). To compliment the explanations, Roberts provides sample sentences that illustrate the proper use of each relative pronoun.

The next restrictive and nonrestrictive elements Roberts explains are appositives. A restrictive appositive is considered "a *close* appositive" while a nonrestrictive appositive is considered "loose" (255). These explanations, which are not explained any more than this, are followed by four sets of sentences that show one loose and one close appositive. However, nowhere in the section does Roberts explain the punctuation of nonrestrictive appositives; thus, the reader must remember the rules for punctuating restrictive and nonrestrictive adjective clauses from earlier in the book or be able to pick up on the punctuation from the examples.

Next, some fifty pages later, Roberts once again attempts to explain restrictive and nonrestrictive adjective clauses. The explanations simply distinguish the clauses in the following way: "An adjective clause is either restrictive (identifying the substantive as one of several possibilities) or nonrestrictive (describing the subject but not identifying it)" (314). While the definition is consistent with the definition he provides in the section concerning relative pronouns, the mere separation of the two sections causes confusion, for Roberts should have combined the sections. After the definitions, Roberts once again provides sample sentences and explains that commas are used to set off the nonrestrictive clauses but are not used in restrictive clauses. This is the first time, however, that Roberts actually acknowledges that punctuation is important in identifying nonrestrictive clauses in written work. In addition, he explains that "the presence or absence of *the* is the difference between restrictive and nonrestrictive" (315). The author quickly goes on to explain when *who*, *which*, and *that* can and cannot be used in restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses, which is already covered on pages 72 and 73 when Roberts explains relative pronouns.

The discussion of restrictive and nonrestrictive adverb clauses is the most confusing Roberts offers. He simplifies restrictive adverb clauses by classifying them as essential to the meaning of the sentence. The difficulty arises in his discussion of punctuation. According to Roberts, "The punctuation of adverb clauses is not entirely dependent on whether the clause is restrictive or nonrestrictive" (331). Roberts states that commas are used to set off restrictive clauses at the beginning of sentences (However, he does not explain that the comma is the result of the clauses' function as an introductory element). Roberts' explanation, then, causes more confusion than it does clarification.

While the discussion of restrictive and nonrestrictive adverb clauses is the most confusing, the discussion of restrictive and nonrestrictive participle phrases is the sparsest. The only real explanation Roberts offers is a reference back to adjective clauses: "Like adjective clauses, appositive participle phrases may be either restrictive or nonrestrictive" (349). The concept of punctuation takes on an additional role since it "may indicate not only whether the phrase is restrictive or nonrestrictive but also which of the two substantives it goes with" (350). Roberts then provides the following examples:

> The man reprimanded the boy talking with his mouth full. (*Boy* is the implied subject of *talking*.)
>
> The man reprimanded the boy, talking with his mouth full. (*Man* is the implied subject of *Talking*.) (350)

While the term "substantive" makes the definition a bit overwhelming, the examples and their breakdown makes Roberts' point for him.

Roberts' division of the different types of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements makes the reader understand that there are many types of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements but does not offer a clear picture of how one should deal with these elements. The various terms used to describe restrictive and nonrestrictive elements—close, loose, essential, etc.—are confusing because each element is assigned a modifier, but each modifier can be used to refer to the various restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. Roberts' best explanation of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements can be found in the glossary. Under "nonrestrictive," Roberts provides his most clear definition: "A term used for a modifier that describes but does not limit the application of the word it

modifies" (507). Roberts goes on to explain that such modifiers are set off with commas, but he never gives a complete definition of a restrictive modifier in the glossary. Instead, he simply states within the nonrestrictive definition that restrictive modifiers are not set off by commas. Therefore, while Roberts' discussion of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements can be considered comprehensive because he identifies and explains, or attempts to explain, each type, his discussion is far from effective.

Eschliman et al (1968)

Herbert Eschliman, Robert Jones, and Tommy Burnett, in *Generative English Handbook*, also separate their discussion of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. The difference, however, is that Eschliman et al designate only two sections for this concept. Nonetheless, the discussions are rather distant from each other, so it is still difficult for the reader to make the necessary connection.

First, in a section called "Adjective Transformation," the authors explain how relative clauses function in sentences. The problem, however, is that the terms *restrictive* and *nonrestrictive* never appear in this section. Instead, the authors state that modifying clauses begin with *that* and are not set off with commas, and descriptive clauses do not begin with *that* and are set off with commas. Then, Eschliman et al go on to explain that the purpose of modifiers is to "limit" the noun phrase, while the purpose of descriptives is to give descriptive information that does not limit (35). Examples follow the explanations, and the authors move on to point out that nouns can be limited by words or phrases. Finally, the authors ensure the reader is clear about the function of each clause by walking the reader through an example and explaining how one can test if a modifier

is required by putting "it in the post-NP position in a relative clause introduced by *that*" (36). In the following examples,

The sky that was bright and blue

the bright blue sky

the first sentences is not acceptable, but the second sentence is acceptable since there is only one sky that needs no limiting as the first example suggests (36).

Next, some seventy pages later, the authors explain noun modifiers. This is where the authors utilize the terms *restrictive* and *nonrestrictive*. They state, "Descriptives and adverbs are the traditionally labeled **nonrestrictive elements** in a sentence. They are, with the exception of the adverb at the end of the sentence pattern, always utilized" (108). The authors continue by explaining that restrictive elements are noun modifiers, and commas should never be used to set them off. Again, there are tests to check which concept is being utilized. Noun modifiers begin with *that* and can be placed in the pre-noun phrase position. The authors end by emphasizing that modifiers distinguish the noun phrase, while descriptives provide non-limiting information. All in all, the reader can get an idea of the concept and the rules for punctuation that go with it, but the tests will not be too useful until the reader has a much stronger knowledge base.

Even though Eschliman et al separate their discussion into two sections, their handling of the material is less confusing than the previous authors. This grammar is not filled with a lot of jargon, which will allow students to understand the explanations. However, there is not a clear use of the terms *restrictive* and *nonrestrictive* in the first section I analyzed, which seems crucial since a lot of the foundation is set there. Eschliman et al explain the concept without actually identifying it by name, so the reader

may be confused and assume this section does not deal with restriction. Also, the authors of this grammar do not use enough examples. In all, the authors use less than a dozen full sentences to illustrate their points. If they insist on not using the terms, they definitely need to use at least twice as many examples to get the message across. Roberts at least used ample examples.

Jacobs and Rosenbaum (1968)

Unlike the previous grammars, Roderick Jacobs and Peter Rosenbaum keep their discussion of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in one section in *English Transformational Grammar*. In a section pertaining to conjunction, they discuss that in the example

John, who is lazy, went to the store,

who is lazy requires "non restrictive clause transformation" (259). The authors define a nonrestrictive clause as a sentence within a sentence. Then, they state that the reader should be able to distinguish the difference between restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses from the following examples:

professors who enjoy poetry are idealistic.

professors, who enjoy poetry, are idealistic. (259)

Jacobs and Rosenbaum go on to explain the difference in the two sentences by declaring that the first example makes "a single assertion about a certain subclass of professors, only those who enjoy poetry. The assertion is that such professors are idealistic" (260). They go on to explain that the second sentence makes an assertion about all professors.

In addition, this assertion could stand as an independent clause, and the meaning of the sentence would not be altered:

professors are idealistic and professors enjoy poetry. (260)

This is not true for a restrictive clause. Removing a restrictive clause alters the sentence's meaning. While the discussion up to this point is relatively easy to follow, things get more complicated.

At this point, Jacobs and Rosenbaum discuss the actual transformation of these clauses. According to the authors, restrictive clauses are noun phrases embedded in another noun phrase, but nonrestrictive clauses are actually two independent clauses in which one is embedded in the other following the noun phrase. These clauses serve as "afterthoughts," but for the most part, Jacobs and Rosenbaum address that there are many questions about nonrestrictive clauses that have yet to be answered. Thus, they spend the remainder of the section outlining those questions. In the end, after in-depth linguistic explanations and tree illustrations that attempt to explain this concept, the authors leave the reader with the idea that this concept is not clear nor should the reader be too concerned.

By keeping the information together, Jacobs and Rosenbaum seem to be attempting to offer an explanation that covers the underlying concepts that encompass all restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. Unfortunately, their discussion works against itself when they offer few examples outside of the tree diagrams and present problems that do not provide the reader with any information important to their needs. Teachers and students do not need to know what has not been identified about nonrestrictive clauses; they need to know how to utilize this concept in their writing. Part of the larger

problem here is that Jacobs and Rosenbaum never discuss how punctuation applies to this concept, which is a rather important detail to leave out. Therefore, the overall approach is ineffective.

Quirk and Greenbaum (1973)

In their grammar entitled *A University Grammar*, Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum also discuss restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in various sections throughout the book. Again, such a separation forces the reader to make the connection on his or her own, but Quirk and Greenbaum use a lot more jargon than Roberts does. This jargon inhibits the reader from truly getting to the heart of the basic explanations. All of this seems counter-productive in a grammar intended, at least by its title, for use in a university setting.

Quirk and Greenbaum first discuss restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in section 9.44 under "structures relating to coordination," where they explain that coordinate clauses and nonrestrictive relative clauses are considered equal on a semantic level. Then, they use the following examples to illustrate their point:

John didn't go to the show, *which is a pity.*

John didn't go to the show, *and that is a pity.* (275)

However, Quirk and Greenbaum do not go a step further and actually walk the reader through the differences, nor do they present any definition of nonrestrictive relative clauses previous to this analysis; thus, the reader has no foundation to build on at this point.

Next, after section 9.45, which explains apposition, the reader is supposedly introduced to restrictive and nonrestrictive apposition in section 9.46. Quirk and Greenbaum explain that "The appositives in non-restrictive apposition are in different information units, and the two appositives have different information value, one of them being subordinate in distribution of information" (277). They go on to identify the use of punctuation in nonrestrictive apposition and illustrate the point with examples:

> Mr. Campbell, the lawyer, was here last night.
>
> Mr. Campbell the lawyer was here last night (i.e. Mr. Campbell the lawyer as opposed to any other Mr. Campbell we know). (277)

While they clearly try to illustrate their point by analyzing the difference between their example sentences, Quirk and Greenbaum do not offer a clear explanation that teachers or students would understand. The overall explanation is too complicated.

Interestingly, the authors cover nonrestrictive apposition by itself in sections 9.49 through 9.55. The first section sets the stage by providing a visual outline that represents how different types of nonrestrictive apposition are related to each other. Basically, there are three main types of nonrestrictive apposition: equivalence, attribution, and inclusion.

Equivalence has four parts; however, in order to understand equivalence in general, the reader must understand section 9.47, which explains that there may be more than one apposition in a sentence (277). Then, the discussion of equivalence, at least the concepts of equivalence, appears to make more sense. Below are summaries of the four equivalence sub-classes and examples the authors actually use:

> **Appellation**: Both appositives are usually definite. The second appositive is usually a proper noun and a finite clause.

The company commander, who was Captain Madison, assembled his men and announced their mission.

Designation: While both appositives are usually definite noun phrases, the first appositive is more specific than the second.
Captain Madison, (that is to say) *the company commander*, assembled his men and announced their mission.

Identification: Unlike appellation and designation, the appositives are not equivalent. The first appositive is less specific, and the first appositive is usually an indefinite noun phrase.
We—(that is to say) *John and I*—intend to resign.

Reformulation: The second appositive rewords the first appositive.
He drew a *triacontahedral, or thirty-sided*, figure. (278-80)

Attribution is the next type of apposition Quirk and Greenbaum cover, but there are no sub-concepts that make up attribution. According to the authors, "attribution involves predication rather than equivalence" (281). They then go on to discuss three constructions common to attribution. First, the second appositive may lack an article as in "*Robinson, leader of the Democratic group on the committee,* refused to answer questions" (281). Second, the second clause may contain an adverbial appositive: "*Your brother, obviously an expert on English grammar,* is highly praised in the book I am

reading" (281). Third, "The second appositive has an internal structure of subject and either complement or adjunct. The particle *being* can be inserted between the two constituents of the appositive: *Jones and Peters, both (*being) *of unknown address,* were charged with the murder of Williamson" (281).

The final nonrestrictive apposition is inclusion. In this type of nonrestrictive apposition, the second appositive contains a reference to the first. In the first type of inclusion, exemplification, "the second appositive exemplifies the more general term in the first appositive" (282). The authors then go on to explain that there are markers that signal exemplification, like *for example*. Quirk and Greenbaum move on to identify that terms like *especially* mark the second type of inclusion, particularization. However, a clear explanation is never given. In fact, each section under nonrestrictive apposition is filled with bare-bone definitions and few examples, so the reader is most likely not going to understand any of the concepts relating to nonrestrictive apposition.

Immediately following nonrestrictive apposition is an explanation of restrictive apposition. The authors begin by identifying three forms restrictive apposition takes. First, and most frequently, "The first appositive is the more general expression and is preceded by a definite article" (282). Second, *the* precedes the second, more general appositive. Third, the first appositive is general and is not preceded by a determiner. The next two sections present additional information as to when these structures are most frequently used, but the information offers little applicable information to the reader, for it is highly unlikely that the reader will be able to write restrictive appositives as a result of this jargon-laden section.

The authors do not discuss restrictive and nonrestrictive elements again until chapter 13, which explains modification. In section 13.3, they explain,

> Modification can be restrictive or non-restrictive. That is, the head can be viewed as a member of a class which can be linguistically identified only through the modification that has been supplied (*restrictive*). Or the head can be viewed as unique or as a member of a class that has been independently identified (for example, in a preceding sentence); any modification given to such a head is additional information which is not essential for identifying the head, and we call it *non-restrictive*. (376)

Despite the term *head*, the explanation is clear enough to allow the reader to get an idea of the concept, and the authors present examples and walk the reader through the breakdown of the clauses and why each is restrictive or nonrestrictive. The discussion then moves to where restrictive modifiers usually fall in sentences—before or after the noun—and how the emphasis of the modification is determined by the clause's position. Once again, however, very few students would be able to work through the explanation that is heavily laden with linguistic jargon. This is also true for section 13.4 that discusses the relation between progression and restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers. Most readers will skip these sections, hoping that later sections will be easier to understand.

In section 13.8, Quirk and Greenbaum attempt to define restrictive relative clauses. This section concentrates on the use of *that* in restrictive relative clauses. *That* can usually be replaced with *who, whom,* or *which*, and it is also possible that the pronoun be eliminated altogether. In linguistic terms, this is referred to a "zero" (381).

While the underlying idea of distinguishing between the uses of pronouns is an important one, most students, again, will not follow the discussion or understand the zero concept. The same can be said for the section on nonrestrictive relative clauses, section 13.11. The clearest part is the discussion of wh- pronouns and the fact that they can be used in nonrestrictive clauses. All in all, the explanations are extremely confusing.

Next, the authors introduce the reader to postmodification. Nonrestrictive modifying clauses use "non-finite clauses," and restrictive modifying clauses use "Infinite clauses" (386-87). The example sentences offer the best picture of these concepts, but for the most part, this section resembles the previous sections. There is little chance that the reader will be able to work through the explanations or utilize the information on their own.

The final discussion pertains to prepositional phrases. Quirk and Greenbaum explain that prepositional phrases can be non-appositive or appositive and restrictive or nonrestrictive. They offer the following examples to illustrate their point:

This book on grammar (non-appositive, restrictive)

This book, on grammar (non-appositive, non-restrictive)

The issue of student grants (appositive, restrictive)

The issue, of student grants (appositive, non-restrictive). (389)

The problem remains, though, that the reader does not get more explanation than this. Also, the reader never learns why these distinctions are important to the overall concept. Thus, there is minimal, if any, applicable knowledge for the reader in this section.

Not only do Quirk and Greenbaum divide their explanations into various sections like Roberts does, they offer jargon-filled explanations that will be difficult for the reader

to work through. Without some foundation in linguistics, the reader is destined to wait for definitions that never come. Also, the authors never give a clear definition of the basic meaning of restrictive or nonrestrictive. Therefore, the reader has no general definitions to keep in mind as he or she works from section to section. Roberts at least gives a definition in the glossary. Unfortunately, even with the definitions, the reader would be more confused after reading this grammar than before. This grammar will only help teachers and students who are familiar with linguistics. No basic knowledge will be delivered in this grammar.

Liles (1987)

In *A Basic Grammar of Modern English*, Bruce Liles takes a less complicated approach to restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. He groups all of his explanations in one section located in his sixth chapter, entitled "Clauses and Phrases that Modify Nouns" (94). After explaining relative clauses, participle phrases, and adverbials, Liles provides a section dedicated solely to the purpose of explaining how the previous phrases and clauses can be restrictive and nonrestrictive (Previous to this section, Liles only uses examples of restrictive modifiers). This setup allows the reader to see a clear connection between the material in this chapter, making it much easier to gain some kind of understanding of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

After a review of the functions of modifiers, Liles provides the reader with definitions of restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers. He explains that "We call a modifier that does not serve the function of restricting the class of objects named a **nonrestrictive modifier**; one that restricts is called a **restrictive modifier**" (106). While

these first definitions do not provide the reader with any better of an understanding than Roberts' definitions, Liles' strength is his follow through. He goes on to build on these definitions by breaking the concepts into more simple terms. After four sets of sample sentences, Liles walks the reader through the sets of sentences and explains why the restrictive modifiers limit the noun and why the nonrestrictive modifiers do not need to. The breakdown of the example sentences alone provides a better explanation of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements than Roberts provides in his entire grammar.

Liles continues to explain some of the same concepts involved in restrictive and nonrestrictive elements that the previous authors do. However, instead of breaking the elements into the different types of clauses and phrases like Roberts, Quirk and Greenbaum, and Eschliman et al do, Liles attempts to explain the underlying reasoning that affects the restrictive or nonrestrictive nature of clauses and phrases. For example, Liles explains that sometimes "a possessive or adjective specifies the noun, and the relative clause is nonrestrictive" (107). He illustrates his point using the following sentences:

I was talking to a mother [who detests poems about motherhood].

I was talking to Sheila's mother, [who detests poems about motherhood]. (107)

Another example is Liles discussion of shared knowledge and its ability to restrict a noun. The example he uses,

My brother, [who went to Greece last summer], brought back some interesting post cards,

illustrates that the individual receiving the information may know the speaker or writer has only one brother, making the "The designation *my brother* . . . enough to indicate which brother is meant" (107).

Liles then moves on to explain how indefinite pronouns are related to restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses, something the previous authors do not do or do not do clearly. He provides two similar sentences:

> Anyone [who remembers these directions] can find my house.
>
> Anyone can find my house. (108)

Then, Liles explains the difference in meaning that results from the absence of the restrictive modifier, and he emphasizes that if the modifier is removed from the sentence the indefinite pronoun must be changed to convey a more accurate meaning.

Liles now moves on to discuss punctuation. He explains that commas set off nonrestrictive clauses but not restrictive clauses. This section is probably Liles' weakest. For the most part, Roberts consistently explained the connection between punctuation and nonrestrictive elements, and Quirk and Greenbaum and Eschliman et al touch on the subject briefly. However, Liles, like Jacobs and Rosenbaum, seems to gloss over the importance of punctuation. The reader will not fully understand how punctuation affects the sentence. Liles does not provide enough examples; in fact, he provides one sentence, and the example is ambiguous and could be both restrictive and nonrestrictive depending on the shared information he mentioned earlier:

> The Dean, [who listens to all grade complaints], is out of town this week. (108)

There can be more than one Dean, but by the use of punctuation, the writer is stating there is only one. Liles would serve the reader better by providing more examples that

clearly illustrate the defining line between restrictive and nonrestrictive elements and the use of punctuation with nonrestrictive elements. If he is going to use ambiguous sentences, he should show two sentences, one with the information as restrictive and one with the information as nonrestrictive, and describe how the elements affect the meaning of the sentence.

Somewhat related to the discussion of punctuation is Liles' discussion of relative pronouns. Like Roberts, and to some degree Quirk and Greenbaum and Eschliman et al, Liles explains when *who*, *whom*, *which*, *whose*, and *that* can or cannot be used in restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses (although Roberts does not deal with *whom* and *whose*). However, Liles takes the discussion a step further than the other authors by explaining that "object relatives may be deleted in restrictive clauses, but they must be maintained in nonrestrictives" (109). In other words, relative pronouns do not need to appear in restrictive clauses but must appear in nonrestrictive clauses in order to create what will be considered a grammatically coherent sentence.

Liles' final discussion pertains to the placement of restrictive and nonrestrictive phrases. He informs, "Unlike clauses, nonrestrictive participle phrases may occur at various places in the sentence" (110). Liles goes on to insist that placing these phrases at the end or beginning of sentences is more common than placing the phrases immediately after the noun. Roberts only deals with placement when he explains that restrictive clauses require commas when they come at the beginning of sentences. Roberts does not mention anything about phrase placement, and Liles mentions nothing about restrictive clauses appearing at the beginning of sentences. Thus, there is a clear gap in the placement information that both of these authors offer.

Overall, Liles attempts to deal with restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in a logical manner. It is effective to keep all of the information about modifiers together in one section so the reader still has the information about modifiers in his or her mind while reading about restriction and nonrestriction. Basically, Liles makes the connection for the reader that the first three authors force the reader to make on his or her own. Thus, these authors' discussions of the same concepts are too complicated. No one would want to flip from section to section in order to learn about restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. If a reader cannot distinguish between the different types of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, the first three grammars will be overwhelming. Liles', on the other hand, deals with everything together and offers explanations that are less technical and easier to understand than Jacobs and Rosenbaum, who also keep information together, because he tries to explain the underlying concepts at play. Liles weeds through the grammatical jargon and presents the topic in a basic way. His style would easily provide the grammatical information students need without taking an excessive amount of time away from the other stages of the writing process.

IMPLEMENTING THE CONCEPT INTO THE CLASSROOM

The most effective approach to teaching this concept is to take it as one concept instead of breaking the concept down into various parts (relative clauses, modifiers, etc.). It is more important that students understand the concept of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements as I presented earlier in this chapter: restrictive elements provide important information, while nonrestrictive elements do not. It is not important that students be able to break the different elements down and identify them. When will they be asked to

do this in the real world? Similar to Liles' approach, teachers should keep everything simple and together. Restrictive elements are essential to identify the noun; nonrestrictive elements add additional information about the noun.

By taking the above approach, a teacher can implement this concept into a punctuation review. During a lesson on comma usage, if presented clearly, the rule for punctuating restrictive and nonrestrictive elements becomes easier for students to comprehend. The basic grammar concepts students will need to know are intricate parts of all of the comma rules; therefore, all of the rules will build on each other. Once students understand the rule for using a comma and a coordinating conjunction to connect two independent clauses, for example, the rule for using a comma after introductory words, phrases, and clauses is more readily understood. The key is that all of the rules utilize the same terminology.

This terminology can be implemented by setting up editing workshops throughout the time period that editing is covered in the writing process. Since I am working within the writing process, all editing activities will focus on the students' writing, more particular, the drafts that students have revised during the previous stage of the process. A sample schedule would look like this:

Day 1:

Review phrases, clauses, and independent versus dependent (fragments).

Day 2:

Review run-ons and commas splices.

Day 3:

Review the six basic comma rules.

The concepts learned on day 1 build up to and leave off at the concepts covered on day 2. By the time the comma rules are covered, students will have all of the terminology they need to understand the comma rules and how to use restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

First, the distinction between a phrase and a clause needs to be made. A phrase is simply a group of words that has no subject or verb. There is no need to confuse students by trying to define the different types of phrases (infinite phrases, participle phrases, and prepositional phrases), for this distinction will add more difficulty to the lesson than needed. Instead, by keeping the definition simple, students will be less intimidated, and they will more than likely be able to pick up on the concept. The following examples can be used to provide the students with a more concrete understanding of what phrases are:

6a. my house

6b. to run

6c. are going

While some of the phrases contain nouns and others contain verbs, none contain nouns and verbs at the same time. Thus, the students can see exactly how the examples fit the definition.

Next, the definition of a clauses should be provided. A clause is also a group of words, but this group contains a subject and predicate. Before giving examples, however, it is most useful to define two types of clauses: independent and dependent clauses. An

independent clause can stand alone and be punctuated as a sentence. A dependent clauses, on the other hand, cannot stand alone, and therefore, it cannot be punctuated as a sentence. The following examples show both independent and dependent clauses, and the teacher and students can analyze the clauses to identify the subject and predicate of each clause to ensure understanding of the definitions:

7a. Before I go to the movies

7b. The dog ran away

7c. Since John is sick

All of the clauses, as stated in the definition, have subjects and predicates. Below, the subjects are italicized, and the predicates are bolded.

8a. Before *I* **go to the movies**

8b. *The dog* **ran away**

8c. Since *John* **is sick**

With this minimal amount of grammatical background, students will be ready to proceed with the editing lessons. This above explanation alone covers fragments, and if supplemented the next day with run-ons and comma splices, the students will be more than ready for a lesson on commas.

The comma lesson itself can be covered with six basic rules. Figure 2A is a handout that summarizes the six basic comma rules[3]. All of the terminology previously covered is used throughout the handout, yet, the handout is not intimidating to students because the definitions are simple, and the examples are clear. The rules build on each

[3] The comma handout is adapted from a handout by the Youngstown State University Writing Center.

other, and the rule for punctuating restrictive and nonrestrictive elements is last since it is the most difficult rule. Nonetheless, the rule can easily be presented.

THE SIX BASIC COMMA RULES

1. *Use commas between dates, addresses, and geographical names.*

   Ex. I will leave Youngstown, Ohio, on March 28, 1999, for an exciting week in the Caribbean.

2. *Use commas between items in a series of three or more.*

   Ex. I need to buy bread, milk, cheese, and ice cream at the store.

   NOTE: The comma before the conjunction in a series of three or more is optional.

   TIP: If you have commas within the items in a series, use semi-colons to separate the items.

   Ex. I will travel through Cleveland, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Chicago, Illinois; and New Orleans, Louisiana.

3. *Use commas to separate lists of adjectives that individually modify a noun.*

   Ex. It was a dark, stormy night when he left to go hiking.

   TIP: If you can **replace** the comma with **"and"** without destroying the meaning, the comma is correct. (It was a dark and stormy night).

4. *Use a comma with a coordinating conjunction to connect two independent clauses.*

   Ex. I go to school full time**, but** I also work.

   TIP: The comma is placed after the first clause and before the coordinating conjunction (**for**/**and**/**nor**/**but**/**or**/**yet**/**so**). However, a comma is needed only if there is an independent clause (sentence) on either side of the coordinating conjunction.

5. *Use commas after introductory words, phrases, or clauses.*

   Exs. **A.** Suddenly, the car spun out of control.
   B. Running carelessly down the street, the boy tripped and fell.
   C. Since winter is coming, Susan is going to buy a snowblower.

   TIP: Words such as **if, when, since, although, because, after,** and **before** are **subordinating conjunctions** and signal introductory elements.

6. *Set off in commas any words, phrases, or clauses--other than restrictive modifiers--that interrupt the structure of the sentence.*

   Exs. **A.** Roses, I think, are better than carnations.
   B. John, who lives down the street, drives a red Chevy S10.
   C. The man who lives down the street drives a red Chevy S10.

Figure 2A: The Six Basic Comma Rules

Basically, students will need to set off any words, phrases, or clauses that do not provide necessary information about the noun. At this point, the teacher will define the terms restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. As defined earlier in this paper, restrictive elements deliver necessary information to identify the noun, while nonrestrictive elements do not provide information necessary to identify the noun and, therefore, are set off with commas. The set off material can be removed from the sentence without destroying the meaning of the sentence. These explanations become clear after analyzing examples.

The best way to break down the rule is to look at each part one at a time. Thus, the teacher would first explain how words can interrupt sentences. These words are set off with commas because they can be removed without affecting the meaning of the sentence:

9a. My dog, however, hates to go for walks.

9b. The bill, therefore, is late.

9c. Her cat, Fluffy, enjoys sleeping in the window.

9d. You, Susan, are sadly mistaken.

The teacher can present these examples and illustrate the nonrestrictive nature of the set off words by removing them from the sentences to illustrate how the meaning of the sentences are not changed:

10a. My dog hates to go for walks.

10b. The bill is late.

10c. Her cat enjoys sleeping in the window.

10d. You are sadly mistaken.

Usually, students do not have difficulty identifying these nonrestrictive words, so it adds a bit of confidence to begin the explanation of the rule with an easily identified nonrestrictive element. The rest of the rule, however, usually causes a bit more trouble.

Next, the teacher would move on to restrictive and nonrestrictive phrases. The students already know about this concept, so they should be ready to dive right in. Again, these nonrestrictive phrases are set off with commas:

11a. Jason, wearing new running shoes, tried out for the track team.

11b. The chef, my brother, is known for his desserts.

11c. Running, contrary to recent theories, offers excellent health benefits.

Again, all of the set off phrases can be removed since they do not serve to identify the noun in any necessary way. Instead, the sentences would convey the same meanings if these phrases were completely omitted:

12a. Jason tried out for the track team.

12b. The chef is known for his desserts.

12c. Running offers excellent health benefits.

Once students have a handle on these parts of the rule, the rest of the rule becomes easy.

After phrases, the teacher will cover clauses. The pattern and explanations are the same as with words and phrases, so at this point, the students should be able to define the rule themselves with little input from the teacher. The following examples will help:

13a. Cheryl, who loves to swim, joined a health club.

13b. My car, which I bought from my brother, broke down yesterday.

13c. Gymnastics, I have always argued, is a very dangerous sport.

Again, the clauses can be removed, and the students should be able to explain that the clauses are not necessary to identify the noun, and the sentences can actually be written as follows:

14a. Cheryl joined a health club.

14b. My car broke down yesterday.

14c. Gymnastics is a very dangerous sport.

The rule, then, has been clearly presented, and ample examples have helped drive the point home. However, it is just as important to take time to look at restrictive elements.

At this point, the teacher will present restrictive elements. These elements are necessary to the sentence, and their absence affects the meaning of the sentence. Thus, examples become very important here. The following examples can be used to lay a basic foundation:

15a. A man wearing a gray cap robbed the bank.

15b. The boy with blond hair broke the window.

15c. My sister who works at a bank refinanced her car.

These examples take a lot more analysis than the nonrestrictive examples, and the teacher will need to walk the students through each example and explain why the element is restrictive. In example (15a), the phrase *A man* is vague, and the man needs to be identified somehow. Thus, the phrase *wearing a gray cap* identifies which man. The same is true for example (15b). The phrase *with blond hair* identifies the otherwise vague noun *The boy*. In (15c), the clause *who works at a bank* identifies which sister, meaning the speaker or writer must have more than one sister. This example is more clearly illustrated by using examples like the following:

16a. My dog that enjoys long walks always wakes me up at 6:00 am.

16b. My dog, which enjoys long walks, always wakes me up at 6:00 am.

16c. Jeff Jones, who lives down the street, loves to play tennis.

16d. The boy who lives down the street loves to play tennis.

If students analyze the examples, they have to determine why the information in one sentence is restrictive while it is nonrestrictive in the other. In (16a), the clause *that enjoys long walks* must be needed to identify the dog; therefore, the person must have more than one dog. However, in (16b), the clause *which enjoys long walks* can be removed from the sentence, as noted by the commas, so the person must only have one dog, and the nonrestrictive clause is simply providing additional information about this one dog. In (16c) and (16d), the important thing to note is the vagueness of the phrase *The boy* in (16d). Such a vague phrase needs to be identified, while the phrase Jeff Jones is specific to a particular individual. The nonrestrictive information gives added details about Jeff Jones that can be removed from the sentence without affecting it.

These examples lead to another important distinction that needs to be made when addressing this rule. I recommend that teachers move toward the designation that *which* be reserved for nonrestrictive elements and *that* be reserved for restrictive elements. This movement is apparent in copyediting, as illustrated by Karen Judd in *Copyediting: A Practical Guide*: "In restrictive clauses, use *that* instead of *which*" (77). This usage distinction takes away some of the confusion that using *which* for both classifications may cause:

17a. The book that is on the table needs to be returned.

17b. The book, which is on the table, needs to be returned.

In the first example, (17a), the clause is restrictive because it identifies which book out of several needs to be returned. It is specifically the book on the table. In (17b), the nonrestrictive element indicates that there is no need to identify the book; thus, there must be only one book in question, and it happens to be on the table. This distinction gives students a concrete rule to use when trying to create restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. *That* is used with restrictive elements, and *which* is used with nonrestrictive elements.

The next step would be to allow students to try to apply the rules to their own writing. There are two ways that this can be done. First, students can apply each rule one-by-one as the rules are reviewed. After the first rule is explained, students would take time to look through their writing for errors that apply to that rule and examine how the error obscures their meaning. Then, they could correct the error. Second, the teacher could present all of the rules and ask students to look through their writing for errors. This is more difficult since it is hard to edit for numerous errors at one time, and students would be trying to apply six different rules. This strategy should only be used in a class where the students already seem to have a strong knowledge of the grammar concept but need some review.

While the concept of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements can be covered in a separate lesson, by combining the rule in a punctuation review, the concept becomes less intimidating and requires a minimum amount of technical terms (*phrase* and *clause* are relatively familiar terms for students). I am not guaranteeing 100% performance from students with this approach, for such results are impossible. The key is to present students with information relevant to their needs. Students need to know how to

accurately incorporate restrictive and nonrestrictive elements into their writing, and the above approach allows them to understand how to do so without scaring them, which is often the problem with more traditional approaches to grammar that use a lot of jargon. Instead, this approach is student friendly because it cuts down on the terminology and presents the concept in the context of other grammar rules that make it easier to understand the central concepts at work. Thus, students will be willing to attempt to apply the information to their writing, hopefully improving it along the way. After all, this is the composition teacher's goal.

Chapter 3

Bridging the Gap Between Written and Spoken English: Intonation as a Marker of Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements

As I illustrated in the previous chapter, the first step in implementing this new grammar approach into the composition classroom is to eliminate grammatical jargon and develop more student-friendly definitions. It is also important to allow the grammatical concepts presented to build on each other in order to provide coherence to the different concepts covered during the editing process. There is, however, one more factor involved in the new grammar I propose, and that is the use of speech to aid teachers and students during grammar instruction.

No matter how diligently a teacher plans a grammar lesson, he or she cannot ensure that every student will grasp the grammar concept in question. Regardless of how many times a teacher goes over the rules pertaining to a grammatical concept, or how simple the teacher makes the explanations, some students may not be able to understand the concept. Therefore, the teacher must find a way to supplement the lesson with a different approach that will aid students further. In the new student-friendly approach to grammar, teachers will instruct students on how to utilize speech to help students implement grammar into their writing.

Written language is usually more formal than spoken language, but speech can be a valuable tool in grammar instruction. Speech allows students to recognize certain grammar concepts, which is why students can often find errors when they read their writing aloud. Reading aloud is a common editing strategy because of its effectiveness;

thus, teachers should implement speech into the actual grammar instruction as a tool for teaching instead of relying on it during the seek-and-correct part of the editing stage. To illustrate how speech can be incorporated into a grammar lesson, I will once again use restrictive and nonrestrictive elements as an example. More specifically, this grammatical concept utilizes speech through intonation because intonation serves as a marker for restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

In this chapter, I will first provide a basic foundation necessary to understand intonation, including an overview of the intonation patterns prevalent to the discussion of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. Then, I illustrate how intonation serves as a marker of this grammatical concept and how teachers can utilize intonation to help students implement this concept into their writing. A teacher does not have to have a strong linguistics background to truly understand the concept of intonation and use it in grammar instruction; instead, I present the minimal amount of information that teachers would need to know to be able to present the concept efficiently.

BUILDING THE FOUNDATION: DEFINITIONS AND RELATED CONCEPTS

Intonation is the change of pitch in speech. This fluctuation conveys the speaker's meaning based on the rise or fall of the pitch. While intonation is easily identified if one listens closely to any conversation, it is such an integral part of speech that speakers and listeners often are not aware of it. Speakers create the fluctuation with little thought, and listeners interpret the intonation with the same minimal effort. This ease does not allow speakers or listeners to realize the complexity of intonation, so the

importance of intonation can easily be overlooked. In order to understand intonation, teachers must understand what intonation is comprised of.

The most important concept involved in intonation is pitch. Pitch is the highness or lowness of the voice. The rise or fall in pitch reflects the meaning of an utterance. It seems, then, that the terms intonation and pitch can be used interchangeably. Both terms are identified by fluctuations in speech, but since the definition of intonation utilizes the entire concept of pitch, it seems that pitch must be a subordinate concept under intonation. However, some linguists view intonation as a subordinate part of pitch. For the purpose of this chapter and what I propose in it, it is not important that teachers understand whether intonation or pitch is the dominant concept. Instead, it is more important to understand how intonation and pitch relate to each other on a basic level. Therefore, it is satisfactory to leave the discussion where the majority of linguists have left it. Intonation is the change of pitch in speech. There is no need to define the relationship anymore, for this definition provides a clear understanding of what intonation is.

Accent is often associated with intonation, but the two concepts have no direct correlation to each other. Accent involves speaking with emphasis, giving a syllable or word prominence in a sentence. According to Dwight Bolinger, accent utilizes three concepts: length, loudness, and pitch (*Aspects* 47). However, he is not trying to make a connection between intonation and accent as it would seem when the concept of pitch is mentioned. Instead, Bolinger distinguishes between accent and intonation in the following way:

> *Accent* is intonation at the service of emphasis. In the shapes of the profiles it makes certain syllables stand out in varying degree above others, revealing to our hearer how important the words containing them are to us, and revealing also, by the buildup of accents, how important the whole message is. (*Intonation* 3)

Again, there seems to be some relationship between accent and intonation since accent is a way to convey meaning. However, while intonation makes meaning by changing pitch, accent makes meaning by emphasis. Thus, intonation changes the meaning of an entire utterance while accent stresses the importance of an utterance.

The definition of accent brings about another problem since the concept of stress and accent are often assumed to be closely associated. Stress is also a type of emphasis. What, then, is the distinguishing factor between accent and stress? Bolinger distinguishes the two in this manner:

> Accents are to highlight a word within the utterance or to lend power to the utterance as a whole. It is only the fact that most words have more than one syllable that makes *location* of the accent on a particular syllable a possible distinction between one word and another. . . Since accent is thus often not realized at all, we speak of the *potential* for it to be realized on a given syllable, rather than the actual realization, as the distinguishing feature, and for that purpose we use the term STRESS. Thus *úndertaking* is stressed on its first syllable, and also accented on that syllable *when* the speaker decides to accent it. (*Intonation* 214)

Stress, then, remains consistent from speaker to speaker (or should remain consistent according to correct usage of the language). An individual can look in a dictionary and learn where to place the stress in any given word. However, accent is completely subjective. A speaker can use accent in any way he or she deems appropriate to convey the emphasis necessary.

For our purposes, a middle ground is sufficient. Accent is used to emphasize sentence parts (words, phrases, and clauses) or entire sentences. Stress deals with emphasis on syllables. However, Bolinger's definition, as noted earlier, helps to create a more definite distinction between stress and accent. Stress is determined by the correct usage of the language. Each word in the English language is given a set stress. For example, the stress of the following words has been marked[4]:

1a. a´pron

1b. cat´tle

1c. eve´ning

The stress of these words are fixed and will remain the same in any dictionary a person uses as a reference. Accent, on the other hand, is not set, so different circumstances will result in different accent:

2a. **This** book needs to be returned to the library. (emphasizing which book)

2b. The recipe instructs you to add the sugar and **then the flour**. (emphasizing an important step in the recipe)

[4] I avoided using words with more than two syllables since doing so would force a discussion on primary versus secondary stress, which is outside of the domain that I have set for this particular chapter. In the end, the stress of words will have little affect on the intonation of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

2c. You can watch television **after** your finish you homework.

(emphasizing the importance of the time frame)

The important thing to remember is that each speaker can emphasize whatever he or she chooses to.

This distinction, then, leads us back to the relationship between intonation and accent. Intonation conveys meaning, and accent conveys emphasis. The following examples help make the distinction clear:

3a. The phone is for me

3b. The phone is for **me**

In 3a, the rising tone makes the sentence a question. The rising tone allows the hearer to recognize the utterance as an inquiry needing an answer or reassurance. In 3b, the accent of *me* emphasizes who the phone is for. This accent would be reflected by both loudness and length; however, it is difficult to illustrate exactly how the emphasis works since written language does not adequately reflect the endless variations possible in spoken language. Nonetheless, the distinction is relatively clear in the examples.

In conclusion, the concept of intonation deals directly with pitch. While it is not necessarily important to identify if pitch is a part of intonation or intonation a part of pitch, it is important to know that intonation is a shift in pitch. This definition is comprehensive enough for both teachers and students who want to utilize the concept. Also, it is important that stress and accent be kept separate from intonation. Accent lies on the boundaries of intonation, and while in a larger sense the relationship between the two is crucial in understanding and developing linguistic theories, teachers and students who wish to learn about intonation and use it to help them in their study of grammar will

not need to make such finite distinctions. They will need to be aware of intonation and how it affects meaning. Accent and stress pertain to emphasis, which does not affect intonation in any major way. Therefore, it would be best for teachers not to be too concerned about stress and accent or to introduce these concepts to students in order to avoid confusion.

TYPES OF INTONATION

In order to utilize intonation, students will need to identify it. Unfortunately, there is not a consensus as to exactly how many intonation patterns there are, so this discrepancy causes a slight problem for teachers who need to be able to present intonation patterns to students.

D. Robert Ladd notes that there are two to six intonation patterns identified by various linguists, but Ladd insists that there are four intonation patterns, and variations of each are possible. He concentrates on fall, fall-rise, rise, and rise-fall (32). These four categories are more than sufficient. In fact, it is possible to narrow the field to simply rise and fall, but once we discuss the actual intonation of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, we will need to utilize both fall and rise at the same time, making the fall-rise pattern necessary in our analysis. This will become clear in the next section.

Fall or falling intonation is exactly what it suggests. The pitch falls. This intonation pattern is easily recognized in statements. As the speaker concludes a statement, he or she drops the pitch, indicating a close to the thought. These examples illustrate this pattern:

4a. I love ice
cream.

4b. The library is
closed.

4c. Sarah went to the
store.

Rise or rising intonation is also easily identified. It is marked by a rise in pitch at the end of the utterance. Questions are the best examples of this pattern because an utterance is interpreted as a question as a result of a rising intonation even if the question does not begin with question markers such as *who* or *what*. Again, a written representation helps to illustrate this pattern:

pizza?
5a. John likes

party?
5b. she was invited to the

meat?
5c. Turtles eat

Some linguists try to distinguish between high and low tone. Thus, there would be a distinction between high falling and low falling tones and high rising and low rising tones. This distinction is certainly important if we needed to utilize intonation in a broader manner, but Crystal and Davy explain why the distinction between high and low is not always necessary:

> it is more important to know whether an utterance ends in a falling or rising tone than whether the beginning point of the fall is high or low: the

> first contrast might carry a critical distinction between a statement or a question, whereas the second simply distinguishes between, say, two kinds of statement. From the point of view of the information being transmitted, the first distinction is more important than the second. (25)

Crystal and Davy's theory is very relevant to the goals of this chapter since meaning will be the main focus of our intonation analysis.

It is not necessary to go any further in the explanation of the types of intonation. I have identified that there are two basic patterns (falling and rising), and the two patterns can work together to create two more complex patters (falling-rising and rising-falling). These are the only patterns teachers have to know to use tone to teach restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. With this small bit of information, a teacher is ready to implement intonation into the grammar lesson.

USING INTONATION AS A MARKER

It would be completely misleading to say that intonation always follows a logical, predictable pattern. For example, a person who is angry will violate intonation patterns by constantly varying the pitch of his or her speech. Exceptions aside, however, it is safe to say that intonation follows patterns. As stated in the previous section, questions are executed with a rise in intonation, and statements have a falling intonation. These intonation patterns serve as markers for these types of utterances. This concept of intonation as a marker can be a useful tool when teachers present a lesson on restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, for when a speaker utters a sentence containing a restrictive or nonrestrictive element, two different intonation patterns are produced.

Many linguists have noted the intonation patterns prevalent in restrictive and nonrestrictive elements; however, more analysis has been conducted on nonrestrictive elements since the information is not necessary, causing a more distinct intonation pattern. Maria Schubiger, in *English Intonation: Its Form and Function*, stresses that nonrestrictive elements "form a separate tone-group, sometimes preceded by a slight pause" (104). Bolinger takes this analysis further by noting the three intonation characteristics typical of a nonrestrictive element:

> it is lower in pitch than the matrix sentence, it is set off by pause(s), and it has a rising terminal. . . In final position it may be accentless-- a low terminal level. The pauses reflect the separation from the rest of the utterance, the lower pitch represents the incidentalness, and the terminal rise provides the linkup. (*Intonation* 186)

These markers are clear and can be used to teach students how to utilize nonrestrictive elements. The key is to allow speech to aid in written instruction.

In writing, nonrestrictive elements are clearly set off with commas. In speech, nonrestrictive elements are marked with pauses and a fall-rise or simple fall intonation pattern. If a student is unsure if information should be nonrestrictive, he or she can use speech to test the sentence. In *How to Speak the Written Word: A Guide to Effective Public Reading*, Nedra Newkirk Lamar offers readers advice that teachers can also offer to students. Lamar instructs,

> In reading a sentence containing a restrictive [element], almost never pause before the restrictive [element] as it is too closely connected with the word it modifies to be separated from it by even a very slight pause. . .

> In reading a sentence containing a nonrestrictive [element], almost always pause before the nonrestrictive [element] or you will give the impression that it is a restrictive [element]. (80)

Thus, the natural instinct to pause may indicate a nonrestrictive element, providing students with a signal to assist them in deciding how to treat information.

Of course, the obvious objection to this suggestion is that students will only pause if commas are present. However, Lamar insists that the commas do not cause the pause:

> The fact that in these sentences the pauses fall at the commas, in some cases, is merely a coincidence. THE COMMA IS NOT THE CAUSE OF THE PAUSE. THE PAUSE IS NOT THE EFFECT OF THE COMMA. THE COMMA AND THE PAUSE ARE BOTH THE EFFECTS OF THE SENSE. (81)

In writing, the meaning of the sentence warrants the commas, and in speech, the meaning warrants the pause and even the falling intonation. Even if a writer punctuates a sentence incorrectly, the natural urge to pause and drop intonation should still be present, according to Lamar's theory, based on the meaning of the sentence.

The best way for teachers to understand the difference in intonation between restrictive and nonrestrictive elements would be to see representations of the two types of sentences. The following examples illustrate the difference between restrictive and nonrestrictive elements in regards to the intonation of just the part of the sentence in question:

> 6a. The boy wearing the red sweater broke the window

6b. John, broke the window
sweater,
wearing a red

7a. My cat that likes catnip sleeps in my window

7b. My cat, sleeps in my window
catnip,
which loves

The (a) examples are restrictive, so they are providing necessary information. As a result, the intonation pattern does not affect the restrictive element in any way. The entire sentence would follow a typical falling intonation pattern for statements. The (b) examples, on the other hand, are nonrestrictive. The information is not necessary. The nonrestrictive element, therefore, is marked with a fall-rise intonation pattern preceded and followed by pauses. If a student reads a nonrestrictive element like a restrictive element, he or she changes the meaning of a sentence by implying the nonrestrictive element is restrictive and providing necessary information. The same would be true of the opposite. If a student pauses and follows a fall-rise intonation pattern, he or she implies the restrictive element is nonrestrictive and can be omitted from the sentence without changing the meaning in any way. Thus, the student will have to listen to both pronunciations and decide which conveys the correct meaning.

I am not suggesting that teachers attempt to teach intonation by working it into a lesson by itself or even suggesting that teachers have to use this strategy in a lesson at all. Some students will have trouble identifying restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. Since some students will require different teaching styles in order to learn, the students may

benefit from implementing intonation into the lesson. Sometimes the ear picks up what the eye misses. After all, isn't that why we tell students to read their papers aloud during their editing process?

Similarly, I am suggesting that students call on their oral skills to aid them in writing. After a student looks at a sentence and tries to omit the element in question to test if the deletion changes the meaning of the sentence, the student may still be unsure as to the restrictive or nonrestrictive nature of an element. To aid in the analysis, the student would have an additional tool to test the element. The student can read the sentence aloud using each intonation pattern. First, the student can read the sentence as if the element is restrictive, ensuring not to pause or change pitch. Then, the student can read the sentence as if the element is nonrestrictive, pausing and following the fall-rise pattern or fall pattern depending on the placement of the element in the sentence. Which sentence conveys the correct meaning? Chances are, the distinction will be clearer to the ear.

CONCLUSION

Granted, at first, this approach may seem odd, but the variety in the approach will allow more students to grasp the concept. Again, this is not the first approach to use in teaching this grammatical concept. This approach should supplement the lesson that teaches students how to identify restrictive and nonrestrictive elements I present in the previous chapter. The approach that uses intonation cannot stand by itself, for it depends on a student having some prior knowledge of the concept. Teachers certainly do not want to teach students to rely solely on their speech and sense when trying to use grammar;

instead, teachers should offer the use of speech to students as an additional tool available to aid them during their editing process. Thus, this approach can be very beneficial to students. There is a definite intonation pattern present in restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, and students should be aware of this marker so they have all of the tools necessary to aid them in their writing.

Using speech is not too off-the-wall. Fragments, for example, are easily identified when read aloud. Similarly, run-ons can be detected through speech, as well as subject-verb agreement. Will every student benefit from using speech? No, some students will not be able to utilize speech. Just like some students' ears have trouble picking up on syllable stress in words, their ears will not pick up on the intonation patterns in speech, too. However, others students will be able to identify intonation and use it to their advantage. Teachers, then, are leaving another learning possibility open to students, and this alone can help students learn grammar by zeroing in on a method that benefits their learning strategies. While I have clear methods for using intonation, there is no such methodology for all grammar. Teachers must decide how they feel most comfortable utilizing speech in grammar instruction and use that method.

Chapter 4

Post-process in the ESL Classroom:

Implementing *Focus on Form* into Second Language Instruction

While Chapters 1, 2, and 3 focused on the new type of grammar instruction that should occur in the composition classroom, this chapter deals specifically with how this new grammar can be introduced into ESL classrooms. Almost identical to the change in grammar's role in composition classrooms, grammar's place in second language acquisition also has changed dramatically, and now, teachers are trying to bring grammar back into ESL writing instruction.

Originally, language was seen as grammar, and the two went hand-in-hand. By the 1970s, grammar was removed from second language teaching in favor of strictly meaning-focused instruction similar to the process-centered composition classrooms. Today, this process-centered focus is still dominant, as reflected by Tony Silva and Ann Johns. These authors offer suggestions for implementing writing process into second language writing instruction and make critical connections to first and second language writing processes ("Second Language Composition Instruction," "L1 Composition Theories").

However, like the post-process movement in composition, the field of second language teaching is experiencing a similar movement. Grammar has been welcomed back into the second language classroom with a new approach called *focus on form*. This approach—which combines the form and function of the target language into the

language curriculum, concentrating mostly on function—is on the verge of revolutionizing the world of second language teaching.

This approach to second language teaching is very similar to the theory I propose. Just like grammar has a specific time and place in composition instruction, grammar has a designated place in second language teaching. While the main goal of a class may be to teach process and content, within the process or teaching of any content, grammar can be taught without being intrusive. The grammar instruction needs to be clear and simple.

Focus on form deals with grammar at an appropriate time and in an appropriate way. While the concept itself is still new and not supported by an ocean of research, it is possible to understand *focus on form* by looking at what it is, when it should be implemented, and how it can be implemented in the classroom.

WHAT IS *FOCUS ON FORM?*

Focus on form has not been completely understood. Some teachers object to the entire concept and argue that meaning-focused learning is the only instruction students need. At the other end of the spectrum, other teachers interpret *focus on form* as a call to return to the heavily laden grammar instruction once popular in second language instruction. These different interpretations of *focus on form*, as Catherine Doughty and Jessica Williams adamantly point out, derive from teachers' uncertainty about not only how to implement *focus on form* but also from their uncertainty about what exactly *focus on form* is ("Issues and Terminology" 2).

Part of the confusion comes from the assumption that *focus on form* is the same thing as teaching *formS*. Teaching f*ormS* deals with grammar separate from meaning.

This learning approach is the traditional grammar instruction that causes so much objection from teachers. Thus, the terms *grammar instruction, form-focused instruction, code-focused instruction*, and *formal instruction* are also used when referring to teaching *formS*. The key is to realize that *form-focused instruction* is not the same as *focus-on-form* ("Issues and Terminology" 3-4). However, it would be misleading to imply that the two approaches are completely opposite. Instead, they are forms of instruction that overlap in their attempt to teach linguistic concepts, but they utilize different approaches to do so.

Focus on form creates the happy medium for grammar instruction. In this teaching approach, grammar is not the most important aspect of the class; however, it is not thrown completely to the side and ignored either. *Focus on form* addresses grammar at an appropriate time in the curriculum. Doughty and Williams explain that in order for grammar instruction to be useful to students, the students must first have a foundation developed by meaning. Only after this foundation is developed will students be able to learn grammar ("Issues and Terminology" 3). Doughty and Williams defer, however, to Michael Long and Peter Robinson's definition of *focus on form* for a more comprehensive explanation since Long is credited for the "reawakening" of the issue of form ("Issues and Terminology" 3). Long and Robinson explain *focus on form* as follows:

> *Focus on form* refers to how focal attentional resources are allocated. Although there are degrees of attention, and although attention to forms and attention to meaning are not always mutually exclusive, during an otherwise meaning-focused classroom lesson, focus on form often consists

> of an occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features--by the teacher and/or one or more students--triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production. (23)

Grammar instruction invites itself into lessons when structure causes problems with meaning comprehension. Thus, in order for students to understand meaning, grammar has to be addressed. The important connection for native speakers to understand is the parallel concept in grammatical impasses in native speakers' search for meaning. As Long and Robinson point out,

> This is similar to what happens when native speakers who are good writers pause to consider the appropriate form of address to use when composing a letter to a stranger, or when efficient readers suddenly "disconfirm a hypothesis" while reading and are momentarily obliged to retrace their steps in a text until they locate the item-- perhaps a little *not* they had missed earlier in the sentence-- which caused the semantic surprise. The usual and fundamental orientation is to meaning and communication, but factors arise that lead even the fluent language user temporarily to attend to the language itself. (23-4)

If native speakers can understand the importance of having to move away from content to focus on form in the above examples, then surely language teachers can understand why this break is not only necessary but natural as well.

WHAT FORMS SHOULD *FOCUS ON FORM* ADDRESS?

Understanding the basic concept of *focus on form* is not enough, for it is also important to understand what kind of form should be addressed. However, it is actually very difficult to settle on definite forms. DeKeyser points out three concepts that help limit the scope of *focus on form*: Universal Grammar (UG), negative evidence, and the feature's degree of complexity (43). Together, the three variables provide both obvious and unclear implications that teachers can use to implement *focus of form* into the second language classroom.

Universal Grammar plays a large part in second language acquisition. Lydia White, in *Universal Grammar and Second Language Acquisition*, explains the basic meaning of Universal Grammar:

> Universal Grammar consists of principles which constrain the form and functioning of grammars. It gives the child advance knowledge of many abstract and complex properties of language, so that these do not have to be learned solely on the basis of linguistic input by means of general learning strategies. In language acquisition, then, there is an interaction between the innate UG and the linguistic input from the language being acquired. (5)

The innate language makes second language acquisition somewhat easier. DeKeyser illustrates this by explaining that "If a structure is part of UG, and UG is accessible to the second language learner, then all that is needed is sufficient input to trigger acquisition" (42). This concept of accessibility to innate grammar is not foreign to second language

learning; unfortunately, neither is the fact that students cannot always access this universal grammar.

When Universal Grammar cannot be called upon, negative evidence--which is essentially correction--becomes an essential part of language acquisition. White explains that when students are corrected because their use of the language is ungrammatical, teachers are providing negative feedback (13). This, however, poses another problem. According to Joyce L. S. Bruhn-Garavito, negative evidence is rarely given to students or children while learning their first language, and "without negative evidence and without UG, it is unclear how children would correct a hypothesis that was not compatible with the language being acquired or how they would acquire knowledge of what is not possible in the language" (79-80). Echoing Bruhn-Garavito's claim, White addresses the fact that the reason negative evidence has been ineffective in the past is because students never actually received it. She cites past studies that point out the absence of negative evidence and calls for a change (13). Negative evidence cannot work if it is completely absent from language learning.

While DeKeyser's first two criteria are somewhat easy to accept, the third criteria, the complexity of the features, is not. DeKeyser defers to Krashen and his well known coverage of this topic, presenting Krashen's two categories that grammar rules fall into: rules easily learned but difficult to acquire and rules easily acquired but difficult to learn. It is the rules that are easy to learn that have a place in *focus on form*. Unfortunately, there is no consensus as to which rules fall under this easy category. Another problem is that some researchers insist that harder rules should be at the center of *focus on form*. Again, though, a consensus as to which rules the difficult rules are does not exist. To

further illustrate the complexity of this concept, researchers have called for a focus only on the rules that have few exceptions, making the rules more reliable to teach (43-5). DeKeyser attempts to clarify which rules should be included in *focus on form* by drawing attention to various research that has yielded two conclusions:

> First, subjects tend to learn better under conditions of implicit induction (i.e., mere exposure to a very large set of instances or memorization of a set of exemplars) than under conditions of explicit induction (i.e., where they are asked to figure out the rules), in the sense that subjects in the implicit condition are subsequently better at making grammaticality judgments than are their explicit counterparts. (45)

This first conclusion is very different than the beliefs of researchers like White who assume learners can acquire the grammar magically without explicit instruction.

However, the second conclusion DeKeyser cites may lead some teachers to consider the first conclusion void. Studies prove that while students can often identify a deviation from a grammatical structure, students usually cannot identify a specific rule that governs the grammatical deviation they have identified. With both of the conclusions taken into consideration, researchers are willing to accept that students "can learn abstract rules implicitly and can subsequently draw on these rules without being able to state them" (45). To DeKeyser, this conclusion is enough to warrant a wide variety of rules to be implemented into *focus on form*.

Jessica Williams and Jacqueline Evans try to limit the rules that should be addressed in *focus on form*. These forms are forms that:

1. Differ in nonobvious ways from learners' first language, for example, adverb placement for L2 French and English.
2. Are not salient because they are irregular or infrequent in the input, for example, conditionals in L2 French.
3. Are not important for successful communication, for example, third person singular *-s* in L2 French.
4. Are likely to be misinterpreted or misanalyzed by learners. (140)

These four criteria provide a checklist for teachers to use when debating to include or exclude a particular rule from instruction.

Doughty and Williams also try to provide additional criteria for selecting what formS belong in *focus on form* in "Pedagogical Choices." Research has proven that some language features do not need to be taught because there are 'easy rules' that allow an ease in learning outside of the classroom. At the other extreme, some features are just too difficult to present and seem to elude learners no matter how much instruction is given. An obvious example would be the use of articles in English ("Pedagogical Choices" 200-201). Teachers, then, must determine what rules will be naturally picked up and what rules are beyond the scope of the communication-based classroom, meaning which rules will be too difficult to teach but not interfere with communication if the rule is not taught.

There is an array of rules that can be considered possible parts of *focus on form*, and many researchers have their own criteria that determines what rules are included. Ultimately, each teacher will have a set of rules that he or she believes appropriate for *focus on form*. A consensus may never be reached, but there has to be a way to limit the parameters. For now, such uniform limitations do not exist.

WHEN IS *FOCUS ON FORM* APPROPRIATE?

Focus on form is not foolproof because it relies heavily on timing based on students' readiness. In "The Importance of Timing in Focus on Form," Patsy M. Lightbown attempts to clarify how timing plays a crucial part in *focus on form*. She explains that the key to *focus on form* is to present topics that are 'next' in the developmental sequence. When this sequence is followed, students learn more, as opposed to the lack of learning that takes place when students receive instruction below or beyond their learning stage (177-78). Therefore, teachers must be able to pace the learners along a natural progression in their language acquisition. However, how does an teacher utilize this progression?

The first thing to note is that the majority of language learners evolve through typical stages. Lightbown insists that although there will be exceptions to this theory, the pattern is generally the same:

> SLA research showed that learners acquired features in a predictable sequence whether or not they got specific instruction on one feature or another. Indeed, much of the research prior to 1985 was based on subjects whose exposure to their second language took place exclusively, or to a large extent, outside classrooms. One could thus assume that they were exposed to a wide variety of linguistic features, in no particular order, from the beginning. This tended to confirm that the sequences were a result of mechanisms or processes internal to the learners rather than to any consistency in the input to which they had been exposed. (180)

If learning is indeed sequential, teachers should be able to utilize this sequence to the advantage of the class. Unfortunately, as Lightbown notes, there is still a lot of research that needs to be done in regards to the "*when*" aspect of *focus on form* (196).

It would seem, though, that even with the small amount of research that has been done pertaining to timing and *focus on form,* teachers can develop a sequence of learning. Second Language classes can be set up according to some skill sequence that research indicates students progress through; hence, learners are assumed to progress from lower-level language skills to skills that will enable the learners to be ready for the next class in the sequence or to be mainstreamed. Therefore, just by being aware of the level of language learning taking place in a particular classroom, teachers can predict the sequence their students will progress through, ending at a level that the following language class will start with. Granted, it may be difficult to develop consistency from teacher to teacher, but if teachers use students as a base to evaluate level, the sequence of learning should be somewhat easier.

HOW DO TEACHERS UTILIZE *FOCUS ON FORM*?

The obvious question that arises is how do teachers pull all of this information together in order to actually use *focus on form*? Doughty and Williams address this issue by proposing that the goal of second language learners is to communicate; therefore, *focus on form* must allow learners to improve their communication skills. Instruction, then, does not separate form and communication. Instead, instruction should take notice of form in the context of communication ("Pedagogical Choices" 197). Such instruction, however, takes many teaching decisions into consideration. Doughty and Williams go on

to address some of the pressing decisions associated with *focus on form* that teachers have to take into consideration before entering the classroom.

Doughty and Williams debate the reactive and proactive nature of *focus on form*. A reactive approach waits until a problem in communication presents itself and reacts by providing instruction to clear up the problem. Proactive *focus on form* will provide instruction before a problem arises. The teacher plans a lesson to lead up to the *focus on form* ("Pedagogical Choices" 205). It is the reactive approach that *focus on form* usually calls for since communication takes center stage in this learning approach. The reactive approach is advantageous because teachers do not have to choose which formS to concentrate on; the teachers simply address errors that present themselves in the classroom. Even when this happens, teachers only need to address formS that have been deemed appropriate for the level of the class ("Pedagogical Choices" 206). It is crucial to point out that once again there is a limited amount of research that has been done on reactive and proactive approaches to safely encourage teachers to choose one over the other. Rather, as Doughty and Williams conclude, "both approaches are effective, depending upon the classroom circumstances. . . The implications of the choices are, nevertheless, important, for they involve different emphasis in curricular planning" ("Pedagogical Choices" 211). Depending on the emphasis on form or communication, one approach will work better than the other.

Another decision Doughty and Williams address is the explicitness of instruction. They note that there is a direct tie between explicitness and teachers' theories on how students store the information about the target language, how students recall the information, and how metalinguistic factors affect second language acquisition

("Pedagogical Choices" 228). They go on to define implicit versus explicit *focus on form*:

1. Implicit focus on form: The aim is to *attract* learner attention and to avoid metalinguistic discussion, always *minimizing any interruption* to the communication of meaning.
2. Explicit teaching: The aim is to *direct* learner attention and to *exploit pedagogical grammar* in this regard. ("Pedagogical Choices" 232).

Implicit instruction would occur, for example, after a grammatical structure has been used incorrectly. The teacher might repeat the student's sentence, correcting the error that the student made to illustrate the correct usage without drawing an excessive amount of attention to the error, or, if enough students keep making a particular type of error, the teacher may present a brief lesson on the grammatical concept to clarify and usage and allow the students to continue with their exercise. The key is to take the least amount of time away from actual communication as possible. Explicit instruction is what I propose should take place during the editing process. This is when teachers plan out grammar instruction in order to teach students to utilize the concept in question. While one approach may seem favorable over another, research has indicated that a mixture of instruction types works best, proving that it is naive to believe that there is one clear way of teaching language.

The most important decision Doughty and Williams address is how *focus on form* actually fits into a curriculum. Again, there is no one way to implement this concept into the curriculum, but the authors provide examples of three curriculum options that they summarize in the following way:

Curriculum Option 1

A. Presentation of rules → development of declarative knowledge

B. Reflection → proceduralization

C. Controlled practice → anchoring of declarative knowledge

D. Fluency practice → automatization

Curriculum Option 2

A. Input → processing meaning

B. Input processing → intake of formal features

C. Output → fluency

Curriculum Option 3

A. Preemergence: implicit techniques, for example, flood or input enhancement→ noticing

B. Emergence: selection of appropriate techniques, that is, more explicit techniques, for example, focused feedback or metalinguistic reflection concurrent with production output in task-natural activities → noticing the gap or hole. ("Pedagogical Choices" 257)

The various approaches take many of the issues in second language acquisition into account. Thus, no matter what concepts a teacher considers pertinent to the curriculum, he or she can utilize *focus on form*.

The issue of curriculum brings up another pressing issue. As Doughty and Williams illustrate in their three curriculum options, there are various types of tasks and

exercises that can be used when implementing *focus on form*. However, there are differences that distinguish tasks from exercises. Exercises concentrate on form and treat "language-as-object," whereas tasks depend on language learning that goes beyond grammar ("Pedagogical Choices" 244). Exercises can be used in *focus on form*, but tasks usually make up the majority of the curriculum because tasks concentrate on meaning and are communicative. This idea of communicative task is a familiar point in second language acquisition. Such a task requires learners to interact in the target language, concentrating on meaning rather than form, which is the goal of the first three stages of the writing process. If grammar is introduced into the editing stage in the ESL classroom, than the writing still takes on a communicative focus. The learners are ultimately utilizing the target language, so the task is considered to have a more practical application than isolated exercises. In a writing class, the goal is to get the students to write in the target language as clearly as they can

If a communicative task focuses on meaning, how does *focus on form* relate to the communicative task? In a communicative setting, implicit instruction will be the most obvious teaching strategy, drawing attention to form only when necessary without taking attention away from meaning. This conclusion is supported by a study by Catherine Doughty and Elizabeth Varela. They studied a communicative classroom to determine the most effective way to implement *focus on form* into this type of classroom. The results of the study suggested that the interruption of *focus on form* should occur as soon as a problem is detected and should be as brief as possible. However, while students are willing to concentrate on communication, meaning, and form simultaneously, they do not want to be bombarded with form correction. Teachers, then, should know how much

feedback students are comfortable with. Together, this information makes *focus on form* possible without distraction from meaning (136-37). Thus, teachers have to be aware of several factors, all of which have been mentioned throughout. *Focus on form* is not intrusive to the larger concept of communication, but instead, it allows communication to keep progressing smoothly.

CONCLUSION

By this point, it should be clear that all aspects of *focus on form* are so interconnected that the issue seems to go in circles. Teachers have to decide what form they will address and if the form is worth addressing at all based on time constraints and students' needs at any given level of learning. Then, teachers have to decide how much instruction on form will be given, as well as what kind of instruction will be presented. Finally, teachers must work *focus on form* into the communicative classroom in a manner that draws attention to form but does not stop the communicative task. All in all, *focus on form* can be difficult to implement, but it is possible to incorporate it into the classroom.

My approach to grammar draws from *Focus on form* but does not follow all of the approaches implicitly since my focus is on writing, while many ESL classes focus on listening, speaking, and reading in the same term. The ultimate goal of *focus on form* is to allow students to learn the language's form without detracting from the important meaning that students are learning. However, isn't this the same goal present in the composition classroom—to allow students to express meaning in a clear and coherent manner? Thus, the same rules of grammar instruction that should be applied in

composition can be applied in the ESL writing classroom. Grammar instruction has an appropriate time in the curriculum. In composition, as I pointed out in chapter 1, grammar should be addressed during the editing stages of the writing process. In the ESL classroom, grammar instruction will be more frequent but no more intrusive than in a regular college-composition classroom.

The determining factor as to how prevalent grammar instruction is and what type of grammar instruction will be presented in the ESL classroom is the level of the class. The more students are expected to use the language in written form, the more intense grammar instruction may have to be in order to ensure that the students' meaning is clear enough to be understood by the reader. This may include explicit grammar instruction that covers grammatical concepts that students will need to know before they move into other college classes that require them to write. What type of grammar needs to be taught can be determined in the same manner that teachers following *focus on form* use to include or exclude particular grammar concepts. In short, the teacher's goals and the students' needs must be taken into consideration before any type of grammar is addressed in the class.

However, it is important to note that most ESL students have a strong foundation of rules because their language acquisition often begins with the memorization of rules. The most effective strategy is to break the rules down so students understand them. Rules alone mean nothing if the user cannot comprehend how to apply the rules. Similar to native speakers, ESL students are intimidated by grammar and its array of terminology. Although ESL students will know more grammatical terminology than native speakers, it is important that the basis of the instruction be about making students

understand concepts in an applicable manner, rather than learning concepts for the sake of memorization.

In the following chapter, I offer a lesson on restrictive and nonrestrictive elements that can be used in an ESL classroom. Similar to the approach I offer for implementing this concept into a regular composition classroom, I suggest that grammatical jargon be limited in order to make the concept easier to understand. In my lesson, I take a proactive approach to grammar for two reasons: First, this is a difficult concept, so students will need more specialized instruction than an implicit approach would allow for. Second, many languages do not utilize restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, so there may not be a time when this concept invites itself into the ESL writing classroom. Nonetheless, restrictive and nonrestrictive elements are a part of the English language, and they are especially abundant in academic writing. Before students experience problems with restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, I would offer a lesson to prepare them to use this concept.

Unlike the approach to grammar I offer in Chapter 2, which requires the students to relate the concept immediately to their own writing, in Chapter 5, I present the concept in a manner that builds from identifying the concept to writing using the concept. This presentation follows Doughty and Williams' curriculum option 1in which teachers present the rules, and the students then work through the rules, complete exercises, and move toward implementing the concept into their own writing. Since ESL students do not have as strong of a handle on the language, this approach allows them to understand restrictive and nonrestrictive elements through stages, and eventually, the students

incorporate the concept into their writing through a writing assignment that requires them to use their newly acquired knowledge.

Chapter 5

An ESL Grammar Unit on Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements

The lesson on restrictive and nonrestrictive elements is drawn from the proactive approach to *focus on form* discussed in Chapter 4. Thus, the lesson will be presented to students before a problem with this concept arises. Since the students' needs and the goals of the class need to be taken into consideration, there are various ways to proceed with the grammar lesson; however, as stated in the previous chapter, the difficulty of the grammar concept was ultimately the deciding factor in how to present this concept. The structure of the lesson follows Doughty and Williams' curriculum option 1 because the concept is difficult, and students may have problems since not all languages utilize the structures present in restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. Also, it is unlikely that students will be able to understand the concept after an explanation of restrictive and nonrestrictive elements that lasts thirty seconds.

The grammar lesson on restrictive and nonrestrictive elements is geared toward ESL students who are ready to enter college level writing courses. They will most likely know a lot of terminology pertaining to grammar, and they will have worked through almost all of the other grammar concepts that provide a nice foundation for this concept (phrases, clauses, etc.). However, I try to cut out a lot of the technical terms to make this concept easier. Instead of dealing with restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses and adjective clauses, for example, I lump all restrictive and nonrestrictive elements into one category called restrictive and nonrestrictive elements (just like I suggest doing for composition classes). Thus, the concept becomes much more student friendly than the

more traditional approach that uses grammatical jargon and complicates the concept unnecessarily.

The teacher's presentation (Appendix A) is identical to the students' worksheets (Appendix B). It is important for teachers to present information that the students can understand even if the teacher is not there to present the information. The students' handout breaks the concept down in simple terms, and the teacher should do the same. The students can follow the teacher from definition to definition and example to example. The only difference is that the teacher's presentation has reminder notes on it, and the exercises have all of the answers. The exercises were developed with the students in mind. My goal was to create exercises that built on each other, so each exercise becomes more difficult and requires the students to utilize all of the information about the concept necessary for the to fully understand it.

I begin by providing a basic definition of both concepts and using examples to illustrate what the definitions are trying to convey. It is also useful to point out that I break the examples down and explain why a restrictive element provides essential information while a nonrestrictive element does not. This dissection will show the students how the concept works and allow them to see how they can test sentences to determine if elements are restrictive or nonrestrictive.

In addition to the definitions, I provide a chart that compares restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. The chart lists the basic differences between the two types of elements. The chart can be used to test sentences. Thus, a students can look at the characteristics and realize that if an element does not follow the criteria under the restrictive column, it must be nonrestrictive. Again, this chart is supposed to be student

friendly, and it gives the students something simple they can refer back to while they are trying to work on the exercises. It is more important, in my opinion, that students be able to know where to look for information instead of trying to memorize every little bit of information available.

The first exercise tests their understanding of this grammatical concept by asking the students to determine if sentence elements are restrictive or nonrestrictive. If elements are restrictive, students have to underline the elements. If they are nonrestrictive, the students have to provide the correct punctuation. This exercise will be difficult, but most exercises pertaining to restrictive and nonrestrictive elements are, even for native speakers. However, this exercise will help the students complete the next exercise.

The next exercise requires students to create their own sentences. The students are given two sentences. The sentence that provides nonrestrictive information is in parenthesis. The students have to combine the sentences into one sentence using the techniques required for writing a nonrestrictive element. Thus, the students are getting practice incorporating nonrestrictive elements into sentences, and the exercise is a nice way to practice sentence combining, although this is an additional benefit and not one intentionally worked into the lesson.

Exercise three is the most challenging. Now that students know how to identify and write restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, they have to prove they understand the concept. Since this is the most difficult exercise, the students will work in groups of three so they can help each other. In this exercise, the students are given sets of sentences that are the same word for word, but one of the sentences has commas setting

off information. The students have to explain the difference in the sentences' meaning. This exercise illustrates how using commas or eliminating commas can change the meaning of the sentence. Again, the students have to test sentences using the information they have just learned, and they are gaining better understanding of how important this concept can be in their writing.

The final exercise is also a communicative exercise. The students have to write a paragraph that describes the hobbies of the members of the group. Each person in the groups has to be identified using a nonrestrictive element. This exercise tests the students in a different way. It is a little easier to pick information from existing sentences. Now, the students have to write their own sentences, which is much more difficult. The difficulty maybe curbed by the communicative nature of the task, but I like having students help other students learn.

There will be problems with this lesson. As I noted earlier, this is a difficult concept for native speakers to master, so second language learners will have trouble, too. The only way to deal with this is to walk the students through the definitions and chart slowly, ensuring that all of their questions are answered carefully and thoroughly. The exercises build on each other nicely. Each exercise challenges the students a little more. The key is to take each exercise one at a time. Before allowing the students to move on to the next exercise, teachers have to make sure there are no problems with the preceding exercise. Thus, if teachers have to review a little after each exercise, they should do so.

I think that restrictive and nonrestrictive elements are a lot easier than students think they are. Once the jargon is eliminated and the information is presented in a simple way, the concept become easier to utilize. Also, this type of grammatical concept is best

understood after seeing examples and working through examples. Once students have basic understanding of the concept, they will feel more comfortable about trying to incorporate the concept into their writing, but it will take a little time due to the complexity of this particular concept. Students tend to spend too much time analyzing elements to determine if they should be set off or not. Eventually, with ample opportunity to apply the concept into their own writing through assignments geared toward utilizing restrictive and nonrestrictive elements or through other writing assignments, the students should begin to feel more comfortable with the concept.

Conclusion:

Where do we go from here?

I have presented a new type of grammar instruction that addresses grammar at an appropriate time in the writing process, limits the use of grammatical jargon, and allows students to call on speech to further their understanding of grammar. In order for this new grammar to succeed, all three elements must be present. Alone, each element is a separate part of something larger, just like each stage of the writing process is a separate component of a grander writing tool. If one component is left out of this new grammar, then it fails, as have the past approaches to grammar instruction, and teachers are then left to ponder the same question: what do we do with grammar?

While this new approach to grammar can benefit students in their pursuit to learn how to utilize their language in writing, this new approach is dependent on teachers welcoming grammar back into the composition classroom. Yes, past grammar instruction has been ineffective, but to leave the research at this conclusion without attempting to try to develop a better approach is irresponsible on the part of teachers who have promised to do their best to teach students to write. We can teach students to work through their writing process to develop content, but that content is virtually meaningless if readers cannot understand it because it is laden with errors. Teachers have to accept that students will walk out of our classes and write for readers who do care about product. Most are not interested in how a writer got to the final product, readers care about what the

final product is like, and we have an obligation to present that reality to our students.

The writing process has helped students work their way through various stages of writing, allowing students to discover what their writing process is and how they can use it to their advantage. The emphasis on meaning and content allows students to express their thoughts and feelings, which gives students a command over their writing that product-centered writing classes seemed to ignore. Therefore, the writing process and the movement toward a process-centered writing curriculum is worthy of praise and acceptance.

Unfortunately, within that process-centered movement, grammar instruction was lost. Thus, students were walking out of their writing classrooms with the knowledge of how to express their thoughts and work through their process, but there was no guarantee that they learned how to utilize their language in a grammatical manner to ensure their thoughts were clearly expressed. This was a travesty. How could instruction on the language be removed from a field that was supposed to teach students how to utilize the language in written form?

I am not claiming that students need to know every aspect of grammar. Do drivers know everything about their cars? They know how to use the car to meet their driving needs, but only specialists know how every part of the car operates together to make things work. Similarly, students need to know the limited amount of grammar that will enable them to use the language to complete their writing goals.

This grammar instruction will not force teachers to revert back to the product-centered model of instruction because if teachers work with the process-centered model of writing, they already have time set aside to address grammar. The nature of the writing process leads to an eventual focus on grammar. As Constance Weaver proposes, grammar should be taught in context. In my writing curriculum, it is taught in the context of the writing process. Teachers should use editing stage to provide grammar instruction that is easily understood. This is done by eliminating grammatical jargon, which makes traditional grammar so difficult to learn. Grammar will also be easier to comprehend if students can utilize speech as a tool, since speech allows students to pick up on error.

The post-process movement is underway, and teachers are realizing that there comes a time when they have to evaluate a product. Students leave our classrooms with the assumption that they are better writers. They call on the information they learned in their composition classes in their other classes when they have to complete a writing assignment or in their everyday life when they have to write a letter to their VCR manufacturer explaining a glitch in the product. Just like the grammarians from the 1800s argued, our students use the knowledge that we supply them to become better citizens and to function in society. Even if the content of our students' writing reflects critical thinking, if the writing is filled with grammatical errors, how does the student benefit? How have we, as composition instructors, done our students justice? Should our students be proud that their writing is incoherent? They did not walk into the writing classroom

wanting to learn only half of what writing is about, and that is exactly what they have been learning.

Mina Shaughnessy wrote about errors and the expectations that teachers should have about those errors, and the composition field embraced her theory. Now it is time to take a step forward and reevaluate what we are teaching our students. Removing grammar from writing is like removing numbers from math. How can you calculate without numbers, and how can you write without a working knowledge of the language? Yes, our students make errors, and they will continue to make errors. Very few people can write perfectly. However, along with those errors come expectations, not from teachers but from students. Students expect to learn and expect their errors to be corrected. It is all a part of the writing process. They want to learn all they can about how to become better writers. Thus, each stage of the writing process needs to be addressed with the same importance. If we ignore grammar, we ignore our students' expectations and cease to be teachers.

Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements: Teacher's Presentation

**** GO OVER THE DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES WITH THE STUDENTS BEFORE LETTING THEM COMPLETE THE EXERCISES.**

A **restrictive element** provides ***essential*** information about the noun. If the restrictive element is removed from the sentence, the meaning of the sentence will change.

People *who smoke* have a high risk of developing lung cancer.

If *who smoke* is removed from the sentence, the sentence would read:

People have a high risk of developing lung cancer.

This sentence is untrue. Therefore, the restrictive element *who smoke* is necessary to identify which people are at risk and must be left in the sentence.

A **nonrestrictive element** provides nonessential information about the noun and can be removed from the sentence without affecting the meaning. The information is set off with commas.

Bill Clinton, *former Governor of Arkansas*, is the President of the United States.

If the nonrestrictive element is removed from the sentence, the meaning of the sentence does not change:

Bill Clinton is the President of the United States.

The chart below breaks down the differences between restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

**** USE THE EXAMPLES IN DEFINITION SECTION TO HELP THE STUDENTS MAKE THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE TWO TYPES OF ELEMENTS.**

Restrictive Elements	Nonrestrictive Elements
1. Provide necessary information information that identifies the noun.	1. Provide additional that is unnecessary to identify it.
2. No commas set off the information.	2. Commas set off the elements.
3. When spoken, the sentence has no pauses or shift in intonation.	3. When spoken, the sentence has pauses before and after the element, and there is a falling intonation after the initial pause.

** **READ THE EXAMPLE SENTENCES OUT LOUD TO ILLUSTRATE THE PAUSES AND SHIFT IN INTONATION.**

4. *That, who,* and *whom* can be used to begin restrictive elements. You should avoid using *which* for restrictive elements.	4. *Which, who,* and *whom* can be used to begin nonrestrictive elements. *That* can never be used with nonrestrictive elements.

** **EXPLAIN THAT *WHICH* SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR NONRESTRICTIVE ELEMENTS, WHILE *THAT* SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR RESTRICTIVE ELEMENTS. THE DISTINCTION WILL GIVE THEM A DEFINITE RULE TO APPLY TO HELP THEM.**

5. Proper nouns are usually not identified with restrictive elements	5. Proper nouns can be identified with nonrestrictive elements.
6. Nouns that are considered generic are usually identified using restrictive elements.	6. Generic nouns cannot be identified with nonrestrictive information.

Exercise 1

Below are sentences that contain both restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. You have to do three things:

A. Decide which type of element is in the sentence.
B. If the sentence is restrictive, underline the restrictive element.
C. If the element is nonrestrictive, set it off with commas.

1. The boy wearing a blue shirt broke the window. **Restrictive**

2. James Cameron, who directed *Titanic*, is one of the most respected directors in Hollywood. **Nonrestrictive**

3. Lasagna, which can be made with or without meat, is a type of Italian food. **Nonrestrictive**

4. Any students who wants to see an advisor should make an appointment. **Restrictive**

5. Mr. Johnson, wearing his favorite blue hat, won the marathon in record time. **Nonrestrictive**

6. Mrs. Johnson, who loves to knit, made the blue hat. **Nonrestrictive**

7. Children who have allergies should not play outside in the spring. **Restrictive**

8. John, who loves to exercise, tried out for the track team. **Nonrestrictive**

9. Hollywood, located in California, is one of the most glamorous cities in the United States. **Nonrestrictive.**

10. Dogs that bite should never be allowed around people. **Restrictive**

Exercise 2.

Below are sets of sentences. The sentences in parentheses ( ) provide unnecessary information. Combine the two sentences to make one sentence.

Example: Mr. Jones goes for walks every day. (Mr. Jones own the local flower shop.)

Mr. Jones, who own the local flower shop, goes for walks every day.

1. An apple is a healthy snack. (An apple has about seventy calories.)

An apple, which has about seventy calories, is a healthy snack

2. Susan drives me to school three times a week. (Susan lives next door.)

Susan, who lives next door, drives me to school three times a week.

3. My car has 42,000 miles on it. (I bought my car three years ago.)

My car, which I bought three years ago, has 42,000 miles on it.

4. Blue is John's favorite color. (Blue has been proven to make people calm.)

Blue, which has been proven to make people calm, is John's favorite color.

5. Coffee can cause stomach problems. (Coffee contains a lot of caffeine.)

Coffee, which contains a lot of caffeine, can cause stomach problems.

Exercise 3

Work in groups of three. Together, explain the differences between the pairs of sentences using the information you have learned about restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

1a. My brother who lives in Cleveland loves to play baseball.
I have more than one brother, so I must identify which brother I am talking about.

1b. My brother, who lives in Cleveland, loves to play baseball.
I only have one brother.

2a. The book that is on the table needs to be returned to the library.
There are a lot of books around, so I must identify which book.

2b. The book, which is on the table, needs to be returned to the library.
There is only one book in question.

3a. Children who are exposed to music at an early age develop excellent coordination.
***Only* children who are exposed to music at an early age develop excellent coordination.**

3b. Children, who are exposed to music at an early age, develop excellent coordination.
***All* children develop excellent coordination.**

4a. Susan, the oldest member of the choir, often gets a lot of solos.
Susan gets a lot of solos. Susan is being talked *about.*

4b. Susan, the oldest member of the choir often gets a lot of solos.
Susan is being *addressed.* The oldest member of the choir is being talked about.

Exercise 4.

Write a short paragraph about the hobbies each member of the group has. Identify each person in the group with a nonrestrictive element.

Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements

A **restrictive element** provides ***essential*** information about the noun. If the restrictive element is removed from the sentence, the meaning of the sentence will change.

People *who smoke* have a high risk of developing lung cancer.

If *who smoke* is removed from the sentence, the sentence would read:

People have a high risk of developing lung cancer.

This sentence is untrue. Therefore, the restrictive element *who smoke* is necessary to identify which people are at risk and must be left in the sentence.

A **nonrestrictive element** provides nonessential information about the noun and can be removed from the sentence without affecting the meaning. The information is setoff with commas.

Bill Clinton, *former Governor of Arkansas*, is the President of the United States.

If the nonrestrictive element is removed from the sentence, the meaning of the sentence does not change:

Bill Clinton is the President of the United States.

The chart below breaks down the differences between restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

Restrictive Elements	**Nonrestrictive Elements**
1. Provide necessary information that identifies the noun.	1. Provide additional information is unnecessary to identify it.
2. No commas set off the information.	2. Commas set off the elements.
3. When spoken, the sentence has no pauses or shift in intonation.	3. When spoken, the sentence has pauses before and after the

element, and there is a falling intonation after the initial pause.

4. *That, who,* and *whom* can be used to begin restrictive elements. You should avoid using w*hich* for restrictive elements.

4. *Which, who,* and *whom* can be used to begin nonrestrictive also elements. *That* can never be used with nonrestrictive elements.

5. Proper nouns are usually not identified with restrictive elements.

5. Proper nouns can be identified with nonrestrictive elements.

6. Nouns that are considered generic are usually identified using restrictive elements.

6. Generic nouns cannot be identified with nonrestrictive information.

Exercise 1

Below are sentences that contain both restrictive and nonrestrictive elements. You have to do three things:

A. Decide which type of element is in the sentence.
B. If the sentence is restrictive, underline the restrictive element.
C. If the element is nonrestrictive, set it off with commas.

1. The boy wearing a blue shirt broke the window.

2. James Cameron who directed *Titanic* is one of the most respected directors in Hollywood.

3. Lasagna which can be made with or without meat is a type of Italian food.

4. Any students who wants to see an advisor should make an appointment.

5. Mr. Johnson wearing his favorite blue hat won the marathon in record time.

6. Mrs. Johnson who loves to knit made the blue hat.

7. Children who have allergies should not play outside in the spring.

8. John who loves to exercise tried out for the track team.

9. Hollywood located in California is one of the most glamorous cities in the United States.

10. Dogs that bite should never be allowed around people.

Exercise 2

Below are sets of sentences. The sentences in parentheses ( ) provide unnecessary information. Combine the two sentences to make one sentence.

Example: Mr. Jones goes for walks every day. (Mr. Jones own the local flower shop.)

Mr. Jones, who own the local flower shop, goes for walks every day.

1. An apple is a healthy snack. (An apple has about seventy calories.)

_____

_____

2. Susan drives me to school three times a week. (Susan lives next door.)

_____

_____

3. My car has 42,000 miles on it. (I bought my car three years ago.)

_____

_____

4. Blue is John's favorite color. (Blue has been proven to make people calm.)

_____

_____

5. Coffee can cause stomach problems. (Coffee contains a lot of caffeine.)

_____

_____

Exercise 3

Work in groups of three. Together, explain the differences between the pairs of sentences using the information you have learned about restrictive and nonrestrictive elements.

1a. My brother who lives in Cleveland loves to play baseball.

1b. My brother, who lives in Cleveland, loves to play baseball.

2a. The book that is on the table needs to be returned to the library.

2b. The book, which is on the table, needs to be returned to the library.

3a. Children who are exposed to music at an early age develop excellent coordination.

3b. Children, who are exposed to music at an early age, develop excellent coordination.

4a. Susan, the oldest member of the choir, often gets a lot of solos.

4b. Susan, the oldest member of the choir often gets a lot of solos.

Exercise 4

Write a short paragraph about the hobbies each member of the group has. Identify each person in the group with a nonrestrictive element.

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