

PW Club Minutes

March 30, 2011

Meeting begin: 6:02 pm

Attending: Kelli Barnett, Courtney Elsten, Lauren Fisher, Sadie Williams, Keith Price, Kasey Cranfill, Christina Ripley, Corinne Feight, Brittany DeSalvo

Topic: Grammar Workshop with Russell Keck, Part 1

Grammar Workshop, Part 1

Grammar: List of Rules or Structural System?

Rules you've heard of

Don't end sentence with a preposition

Don't start sentence with "because," "so," etc.

Grammar is not just a list of rules!

Can start a sentence with "because," etc, just need a good reason!

Grammar is audience-driven

Know whom you are addressing and for what purpose (formal)

Know who(m) you are talking to and why (Informal)

} Both say the same thing,
both grammatically
correct.

Syntax

Order of words, sentence structure (logical sequence)

Main clause = main idea

Use strong verbs! ("remains," "asserts," etc, not "to be" verbs)

Introductory phrase or clause = set-up, introduce topic

After main clause = new ideas or elaboration

Gerund phrases (-ing)

Relative clauses

Introductory phrase → Main clause → Gerund phrases/relative clauses

Never ever use "flow"!

"Good sentence structure and organization of paragraphs" is better

Subordination (everything but the main clause)

When to use "that" and "which"

Restrictive relative clause = all the time "that" → brings ideas together

"I saw the wreck that just happened": info necessary so whole idea comes into understanding

"The tree (that was planted last spring) had its first bloom yesterday."

Modifying noun: take it out, you don't have a full idea

Non-restrictive relative clause = "which" (separate ideas)

"I hate the cold, which is why I don't like living in Indiana."

Two separate ideas, not entirely separate, but not as closely related as ideas using "that"

Cases where you can't interchange "that" and "which"

"that...which" construction (no comma)

That tree *which was planted last spring* had its first bloom yesterday.

"which was planted yesterday" is functionally restrictive

Vocabulary of grammar

Gerund = -ing, present participle is also -ing

Gerund = noun

“Running is difficult”: *Running* is functioning as a noun

Present participle = adjective

“The galloping horse escaped.”: *galloping* is modifying *horse*

Preposition: takes object, shows action

Particles in Verb Phrases (Verbal Particles)

Particle refers to preposition: becomes associated with verb

A preposition connected to a verb: combination creates new idea

Source of idioms and colloquialisms

“I **looked up** to my dad.”

Don’t literally **look up** to your dad → verbal phrase

to is a different preposition, carries directionality

“I **thought over** my decision”

Can’t literally **think over** something

Preposition loses directionality

“The idea **ran across** my mind.”

Transitive Verbs

Takes a direct object: “I threw the ball.”

Sentence moves across sentence to object

Intransitive Verbs

No direct object: “I looked.” “I ran.”

Sentence stops at verb, no movement to direct object

Have to work in positions for objects

“I ran *to* the store.”

“to be” verbs ALWAYS intransitive “I am”/ “she is” / etc

Clichés, Maxims, Sayings, etc

Half of clichés come from Shakespeare!

“knit your brows,” “wild goose chase,” “too much of a good thing”

Should avoid them at all costs!

Never feel like you have to end a piece of writing with a cliché or maxim

UNLESS you can show awareness that you are using a cliché

Follow up cliché with these phrases:

So to speak/say

As it were

As Shakespeare said (give credit to source)

To borrow X’s terminology

Cliché has to make sense! Sports paper with Winston Churchill doesn’t make sense

Who/Whom

“Whom” is an object, need for object case

Object of preposition (by whom, for whom, to whom, etc)

“The student, **whom** I saw, was one of my best students.”

Whom is object

I is the subject

saw is the verb

Now acceptable to use “The student, who I saw,...”

When you’re going overboard...

“This is something up with which I will no longer put” → be aware of your audience!

Book you should buy/scan/etc

Style: Basics of Clarity and Grace by Joseph Williams

For specific questions, email Russell at rlkeck@purdue.edu

Meeting adjourned: 7:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Elsten