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Error analysis: beyond the basic writer

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Error analysis: Beyond the basic writer

by

Barbara Bennett Schillinger

A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

Major: English

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Signatures have been redacted for privacy

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Composition teachers have always been concerned with reducing the number of errors in students' writing. The traditional strategy for dealing with errors was a comprehensive marking of errors with infamous red ink. Some teachers did look for patterns of errors and classified them into categories, but the necessity of doing this did not arise until the 1960s when open admissions policies brought a new type of students into the colleges. Many of these students came from disadvantaged neighborhoods and spoke a nonstandard dialect. Most of them were unprepared to do college-level work. Composition teachers began to see writing with far more errors than teachers had had to deal with in the past, writing that was sometimes unintelligible. The procedure called "error analysis" was adopted into composition teaching in an effort to help the new type of students.

Error analysis is a method of diagnosis. Errors are categorized in an attempt to find sources of error so that teachers can select an appropriate method to teach correct forms. Error analysis also provides a way of helping students see that they do not face a mountain of problems. Classifying numerous errors can be beneficial to students by enabling them to see that by learning general concepts, they are able to correct many individual errors.

Mina Shaughnessy's work with teaching basic writers
laid a foundation for the use of error analysis in the teaching of composition. The term basic writer is really a new term in the field of composition; it identifies adult beginners attempting to express complex ideas in a mode of communication that is difficult and unnatural for them. What they may be able to express clearly and logically when speaking, often becomes a jumble of incoherent and unintelligible ideas when they attempt to communicate in writing. Mina Shaughnessy's work helped teachers see that such students are not hopeless cases. Her talent in being able to see the intent and logic in students' writing served as an encouragement to teachers. Her practical method of classifying errors so that they could be dealt with by category rather than by chipping away at them one by one provided a starting point for the classroom teacher.

Shaughnessy observed that in addition to errors in grammar, basic writers have a tendency to be brief in their writing, reaching closure before a point has been adequately developed. It is generally believed that they write in concrete rather than abstract terms, but Shaughnessy saw that the inability to move between concrete and abstract statements was more typical of their problems. Moreover, basic writers have problems in organization. They are unaware of how an idea germinates into a topic sentence or how sentences grow into paragraphs. Neither do they know
how to achieve emphasis by using subordination or variety in word order. Shaughnessy used the term basic writing for the writing that these students produce in what she called "the first stage of the student's apprenticeship."²

The purpose of this study is to report a procedure I used in working with a student who, although her speech had characteristics of a nonstandard dialect, had advanced from the first stage of apprenticeship. When she first came to the Writing Center for help, she had already progressed beyond the basic writing stage in that she exhibited the ability to select topics to write about and usually could elaborate upon a topic by moving between the abstract and the concrete. She knew how to organize her ideas and wrote with an expression that, if not typical of formal standard writing, was easy for the reader to understand without confusion. An excessive number of errors in grammar was the problem that remained for her to work out.

This work is based on two assumptions. The first is that errors are normal and to be expected in the language development process. Moreover, errors indicate how far the students have progressed and what remains for them to learn. Errors may also provide clues to the strategies that students are employing. If errors are normal and useful, an atmosphere of acceptance helps students express themselves freely without the inhibiting fear of making an error. The positive view of error is a widely accepted part of the error analysis theory.
The second assumption, while not unanimously accepted, has many notable proponents. When grammatical errors occur in the writing of students who speak a nonstandard dialect, the point of contrast between the standard and the nonstandard forms may be the source of error. Errors resulting from the conflict between the two dialects might indicate that the standard form should be taught as a second dialect by using methods adapted from the way English is taught as a second language.

My work with a student whose writing showed signs of dialect interference was done in a tutorial situation in the English Department's Writing Center. Students are referred to the Writing Center by their instructors in freshman composition. They are students whose writing is acceptable according to department standard in areas designated as "material," "organization," and "expression," but whose writing is unacceptable in that it does not meet the minimum standard for correctness in "mechanics" (no more than one "serious error" in sentence structure, agreement, spelling, etc. for every one hundred words). In analyzing the errors that occurred in the writing of a speaker of a nonstandard dialect, I identified one category of error and suggested a taxonomy of sources for that category. Some sources appeared to be the kind that English as a second language methods could help while others in the same category could not be handled by those methods.
CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The assumptions for my work with a student whose writing exhibits characteristics of dialect interference were based mainly in the field of teaching English as a second language (hereafter ESL). The Error Analysis theory had its origin in ESL in the work of Charles Fries and was later modified by Robert Lado among others. The use of adapted ESL techniques to correct errors caused by dialect interference also draws from work in that field. In addition to the discussion of the basis for these theories, a brief description of the features of Black English which may cause problems in writing standard English is included to show, first, the relationship between ESL and English as a second dialect (hereafter ESD) and, second, the basis for the selectivity I exercised in concentrating on one specific problem with my student. Lastly, recent studies in the teaching of composition are important because they raise serious questions about the validity of assuming that dialect interference is in fact a problem in students' written communication. A review of some of the pertinent studies in these four areas is presented in an attempt to show how their influence is integrated in the tutoring procedure I devised in working with one student in the Writing Center.
The Work in Error Analysis

It was in 1945 that Charles Fries concluded, "The most effective materials [in foreign language teaching] are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner." It was from this hypothesis that Robert Lado drew his fundamental assumption for preparing teaching materials for ESL.

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture, to the foreign language and culture—both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives. . . . We assume that the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult.

This is the Contrastive Analysis theory, which, in brief, held that language teaching can be facilitated by first describing the two languages involved, then selecting features that contrast and finally predicting the errors likely to occur at the point of contrast.

In its strong version, the Contrastive Analysis theory proposed that the difficulties in foreign language learning can be predicted a priori. By teaching the points of contrast, teachers can help students avoid making errors in
language learning. However, ensuing scrutiny of the Contrastive Analysis theory has raised serious doubts as to its worth. First is the question whether Contrastive Analysis is indeed a scientific method at all. The numerous features of any language require that the person doing the analysis make selections for contrast, and selection requires the investigator to make intuitive judgments which cannot be considered purely scientific. As H. Douglas Brown summarizes, "While many linguists claimed to be using a scientific, empirical, and theoretically justified tool in contrastive analysis, in actuality they were operating more out of mentalistic subjectivity." A second question surfaced in the light of studies which showed that difficulties in language learning do not occur in the areas where languages are markedly different but in the gray areas where languages are most similar. One study which demonstrated the inadequacy of the Contrastive Analysis theory is that of Randal Whitman and Kenneth L. Jackson, who tested 2500 Japanese learners of English in grammatical items and found no support for the predictions of errors that linguists making a contrastive analysis of Japanese and English had so carefully worked out. It may be, as Jack C. Richards suggests, that contrastive analysis is most predictive at the phonological level and least predictive at the syntactic level.

In its weak version, as modified by Ronald Wardhaugh
and John W. Oller and Seid M. Ziahosseiny, Contrastive Analysis recognizes the significance of interference across languages but suggests that errors can be more profitably explained *a posteriori*. What this means to the language teacher is that it is not necessary to teach rules of a language in order that students avoid errors, which they may not make anyway. But, by dealing with error *a posteriori*, the teacher who is familiar with both the target language being taught and the native language of the learner can identify the source of the error, whether it be interference between the two languages or the incomplete internalization of the target language within the learner's approximate system of that language.

Furthermore, by permitting error to occur, the teacher might view the error as enlightening evidence if, as S. P. Corder suggested, the teacher views the making of errors as normal and expected in the language development process. Error can suggest what the student needs to learn; error might also provide clues to the strategies the student is employing and thereby contribute to an understanding of how language is learned. Error can benefit the learner too by allowing him to test the hypotheses he is forming about the nature of the language he is learning. ⁸

The weak version of the Contrastive Analysis theory focuses attention on a postulated *interlingual* system which a learner forms as he approaches the target language rather
than on the intralingual contrasts. The term interlanguage is Larry Selinker's, but it is akin to William Nemser's approximative system and S. P. Corder's idiosyncratic dialect. The basic concept which underlies these labels is that as a second language learner approaches the target language, he forms his own linguistic system based on what he perceives that language to be. This system is neither that of the native language nor that of the target language but is the result of the learner's attempt to provide order and structure to the new language system he is learning. While not directly observable, the interlanguage system seems to be in a constant state of flux as the learner acquires new items from the target language and relates those items to those he has already mastered. Knowledge of that interlingual system can be inferred only by observation and analysis of what the learner produces in speech and writing from that system. The correct forms of the target language really offer little help to the teacher trying to discern what further information the student needs to know. But the errors in a student's production of the target language can hold meaningful information for the teacher who is able to recognize error, account for the source, and devise an effective method of teaching the point in question. Clearly, accounting for the source of error is much easier if the teacher knows the native language of the student as well as the target language. For that reason, the
descriptions of Black English that resulted from the studies done in the 1960s are extremely valuable to the teacher desiring to adapt ESL theory to help students who speak that nonstandard dialect.

The Studies of Black English

One of the most concise descriptions of Black English emerged from the studies of Walt Wolfram and Ralph W. Fasold in several urban centers of the United States. Their research shows that Black English is a linguistic system in its own right, with its own grammatical and phonological rules. The distinction is an important one because one of the most noticeable features of Black English is the absence of endings: the -ed suffix for past tense, past participles, and adjectives derived from nouns (brown-eye child) and the -s suffix for plural, possession, and concord for third person singular present-tense verbs. Their analyses of speech show that the -ed deletion is often due to pronunciation rules whereas the lack of -s results from grammatical rules. Any teaching strategy devised for correcting the manifestation of these rules in written standard English must take into account the source of the apparent errors.

Another important distinction between phonological and grammatical differences is that grammatical errors incur greater social stigmatization than do phonological errors. Of course, many of the stigmatized features in Black English
also occur in the speech of standard dialect speakers but the occurrence is less frequent. It is the frequency of error in nonstandard dialects that causes the social stigma.

It is important to keep in mind while considering the simplified descriptions of Black English that there are many American dialects—spoken by Blacks and Whites—and that all dialects are complex. Dialects are not the result of color. Furthermore, any single speaker of a dialect may not exhibit all the features, but the frequency of occurrence of any of the features above the level which is deemed acceptable to the standard usage marks the speech as nonstandard.

As the studies of Black English were producing evidence of the dialect's being a logical, rule-based language, disparate views developed about how Black English should be treated in the classroom. There were some who sought to eradicate it, others who sought to promote it, and the compromisers who sought to appease everyone.

Eradicationists held that Black English was a deficit system that had to be eliminated and replaced by a prescribed standard that would enable nonstandard dialect speakers to think logically and communicate intelligibly. While linguists in particular objected to this position, their views of Black English were also divided.

At one end of the spectrum is the belief that because one dialect is as acceptable as another in being fully adequate for communication, an individual should not be
denied the right to use his native dialect. Rather, it is the standard-speaking public that needs to be educated about nonstandard dialects. James Sledd argued that the job of linguists should be to eliminate prejudice against minorities and their nonstandard dialects. He contended that the stigmatization of Black English is not inevitable and that all speakers of nonstandard dialects do not share the middle-class goals of upward mobility and standard speech. While Sledd's goals may seem utopian—what culture or system of government has ever achieved a prejudice-free society?—Jay L. Robinson's discussion of some recent studies indicates that traditional middle-class goals may be losing their grip on American society.

The melting pot may have been a congenial metaphor for the European immigrants flocking to the United States between the Civil War and World War I, eager as they apparently were to put behind them their languages and their old ethnic identities; but it does not appear to describe the aspirations of all groups in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Robinson cites studies which show people in New York City following ethnic patterns to shape their life styles, values and aspirations; American Indians feeling alienated because of cultural conflicts; and young urban Blacks adhering to peer group social and linguistic norms rather than those of middle-class Americans.

However, in a conservative society, change is slow, especially in educational systems. Recognizing the immediate
needs of students who use a nonstandard dialect, the bi-
dialectalists proposed that such speakers should be equipped
to use standard English in situations where the nonstandard
is deemed inappropriate and stigmatized while they retain
their native dialect for situations where it is appropriate.
Bidialectalism is a compromise. Part of its appeal must be
that it holds out to the classroom teacher some tangible
methods that can be adapted to composition instruction.

Adapting ESL Methodology to ESD Teaching

If standard English is thought of as a second dialect,
then one approach in teaching that dialect would be to use
methods from ESL. One assumption that some ESD researchers
made concerning second dialect learning was that it might
follow the "natural" sequence of first language acquisition,
namely, listening, speaking, reading, writing, unlike the
early twentieth-century approach to language learning, the
Grammar-Translation method, where instruction in grammatical
rules was followed by translating the foreign language into
the students' native language. Toward the middle of the
century, second language instruction took a more direct
approach, the reasoning being that learning the written
language first was counter to the way the first language had
been acquired. Children learn language by hearing it spoken
and then immitating the sounds they hear. They do not
normally confront reading and writing until they enter school.
One of the first studies in the aural-oral approach to second dialect learning is the experiment done at Claflin College from 1961 to 1964. Directed by Dr. San-su C. Lin, who herself had learned English as a second language, the experiment attempted to determine if pattern practice techniques could help speakers of nonstandard English master standard English. Pattern practice involved the students' spending six hours a week in addition to class time in the language laboratory where they both listened to and recited onto tapes. Dr. Lin concluded that speakers of nonstandard dialects do benefit from such pattern practice, but the pattern practice must be adapted from ESL methods.

Irwin Feigenbaum more specifically addressed the problem of adapting ESL drills to suit ESD purposes. He described the basic ESL approach to learning a new pattern as (1) listening to the correct model presented by the teacher or on a tape; (2) imitating that model with many repetitions so that saying it becomes automatic and easy; and (3) using the pattern with other vocabulary items and relating it to other patterns. Feigenbaum pointed out, however, that the first two stages may not be necessary for second dialect learners. For example, repetition of the sentence He walks to school is of little benefit to them because there are no problem sounds or sound sequences. Second dialect students already know the word-order pattern and the meaning, but the point of contrast, the -s on walks, is likely to be unnoticed.
by students. He suggested that contrast or minimal pair drill is more effective in training students to hear the point of contrast. In such a drill, the teacher pronounces pairs of words, and the students respond with whether the words are the same or different. Minimal pair drills serve to sharpen the students' perception of sounds in positions where they do not occur in the nonstandard dialect. Grammatical manipulation drills, on the other hand, require the students to substitute new words within a sentence pattern that the teacher presents. Feigenbaum was careful to point out the limitations of such drills. In effect, they serve only to aid students in a sorting out process whereby the problem—phonological or grammatical—can be identified. Others who saw value in such drills include Jean Malmstrom, who viewed the drills as an important breakthrough in the deliberate and respectful use of the nonstandard dialect in helping students—both standard and nonstandard speakers—hear the contrasts and John C. Fisher, who agreed that oral pattern practice can by reinforcement make standard forms automatic and thus transferable to writing.16

However, not everyone considers ESL drills appropriate for teaching ESD, nor is there agreement about the spoken dialect being transferred to writing. Roger Shuy expressed this reservation:
A majority of the materials currently available for teaching standard English to nonstandard speakers rest on the uneasy assumption that TESOL techniques are valid for learning a second dialect. They do this without any solid proof. We do not have a viable evaluation tool at this time nor are we likely to get one until the linguists complete their analysis of the language system of nonstandard speakers. Most current materials deal with pronunciations although it has long been accepted that grammatical differences count more heavily toward social judgments than phonological or lexical differences.¹⁷

There is some danger in borrowing teaching methods that have been developed for other fields without first verifying their applicability. Indeed, there seems to be an underlying uneasiness expressed in many of the articles on dialect interference and the teaching of composition. Some researchers refute the idea that any special pedagogical method is needed to help speakers of nonstandard dialects achieve skills in using standard English. Marilyn S. Sternglass reported that in a study of the writing of 304 college freshmen in a remedial writing class (223 White students and 81 Black), with the exception of one feature—_invariant be_—both Black and White students produced the same kinds of nonstandard forms although Blacks produced them far more often. The conclusion she drew is that there is therefore no need for separate language materials for Black students in remedial writing classes.¹⁸ Samuel Kirschner and G. Howard Poteet drew a similar conclusion from a study examining the types and frequency of nonstandard
usage in the writing of 109 students (85 Black, 13 Hispanic, 11 White) entering a remedial English course. They found no significant difference in the types and frequency of non-standard English usage among Black, White, and Hispanic students.19

However, other studies do find differences in the writing of remedial students who speak standard and nonstandard dialects and recommend special methods for correcting the errors. Barbara Quint Gray noted that nonstandard dialect speakers rarely equate their writing difficulties with their knowledge of a variety of English that is different from standard written English.20 They are more likely to lump problems into categories of spelling errors or use of "slang" vocabulary. She distinguished three categories of error in the writing of nonstandard dialect speaking students: (1) invisibly rule-based errors as exhibited by a writer's avoidance of a particular grammatical feature like the invariant be which results in an artificial stiltedness stemming from the inability to produce the complexity of a thought in standard form; (2) visibly rule-based errors which are conspicuous dialect-based features that are correct by some dialect rules but incorrect by the standard ones (for example, the -s suffix for third person singular present-tense verbs is redundant in Black English because number is indicated by the pronoun); (3) non-rule based errors which are forms that appear in the
written language but do not appear in the spoken language of the writers (an inflected infinitive, for example). She concluded that pedagogical method needs to be adapted to each category of error. The first, invisibly rule-based error, might be approached with an informative rather than a corrective method. In other words, the new forms must be taught as a foreign language. The second category, visibly rule-based error, is more difficult for students to eliminate because they have no mental uncertainty about these features. A contrastive analysis approach is recommended for that type of error. The third category, non-rule based error, needs both explanation and drill in the use of standard forms.

Furthermore, Gray pointed out that total elimination of nonstandard forms is not a realistic goal for basic writing students. She noted that after three semesters of a basic writing program, her students' writing still contained errors, but the number of errors in total word production was less than two percent. This level of error, she maintained, does not prevent the students' writing being successful. She noted that the two percent figure is identical to William Labov's observation of ungrammatical forms in the average person's speech. Rather than concentrating on having students produce error-free writing, teachers should also help students with expository writing techniques and be content with reducing nonstandard dialect interference only to the point where it does not interfere
with the reader's comprehension of ideas.

Peter Strevens also saw a need for a variety of methods in the language classroom. The complexity of language learning precluded any assumption that a single method might fit all circumstances. He stressed the value of Cognitive Code-Learning, which is not a method but a vaguely defined approach to language teaching. The term cognitive comes from psychologists who in the 1970s had begun to theorize that human behavior, especially linguistic behavior, could not be drummed into people by rote learning techniques. The aural-oral activities may have enabled language learners to produce memorized chunks of good pronunciation, but they did little to produce meaningful discourse with the creative use of language. Strevens saw the rejection of stimulus-response models as a signal encouraging deliberate grammar instruction--teaching the "Code"--as an aid to language learning.

If there is validity in using ESL methods in teaching English as a second dialect, then teachers of composition must watch closely the direction of language learning theory in ESL. The last decade has produced a sophisticated view of second language learning in that it is recognized that there exists no ultimate method in language teaching. As new insights into language, human behavior, and pedagogy are provided by linguists, psychologists, and educators, second language teaching is becoming, in H. Douglas Brown's
words, "cautiously eclectic." He points out that no one method is sufficient to meet the needs of all second language learners at all times. The selection of methods must be an "enlightened eclecticism . . . an intelligent use of selected approaches built upon and guided by an integrated and broadly based theory of second language acquisition."\(^{22}\)

Studies of Composition and Dialect Interference

A review of selected studies illustrates how diverse the opinions are concerning the relationship between dialect interference and written composition. The previously mentioned studies by Sternglass and Kirschner and Poteet concluded that the problems speakers of Black English have in composition are practically no different from the problems of other students. Similarly Robbins Burling assessed the problems Black dialect speakers have in writing as analogous to those a speaker of colloquial standard English has.\(^{23}\)

All students encounter problems in adjusting their colloquial speech to conform with the more formal standard of the written word. He suggested that students develop an unconscious awareness of the formality of written expression from their reading and that little formal instruction is necessary beyond that. When a student is motivated to learn a second dialect—the choice should be his own—he will learn it passively or by having the divergent features merely pointed out.
On the other hand, Walt Wolfram and Marcia Whiteman make the assumption that the written language is a reflection of the spoken and, therefore, departures from standard English are attributable to dialect interference. They suggest that while there is disagreement over how different nonstandard dialects are from standard dialects, most educators recognize the resulting learning problems.

Most composition teachers who have dealt with Black English speakers will perceive certain differences between the writing difficulties of Black English speakers and those of standard English speakers. Although the teachers' analyses may not be linguistically sophisticated, even such generalizations as "They leave out their verbs" or "They leave off the ends of words," while technically imprecise, show that they have recognized the different dimension that may exist for the Black English speaker.

In analyzing the writing of 19 Black tenth graders, these researchers compiled a selective inventory of grammatical and pronunciation features that do not conform to standard usage. Grammatical features included the frequent omission of third person singular -s and possessive -s. Omission of plural -s, however, occurred in the writing of only 4 of the 19 students; but in the writing of those 4 students, nouns were uninflected in 44% of all plural constructions. This percentage is much higher than the descriptions of Black English in New York, Detroit, and Washington D.C. would predict; and Wolfram and Whiteman mark it as an exception. Forms of the verb be were
deleted in only 9% of the instances where such forms should have been used, a lower percentage than would be predicted. Multiple negation and invariant be did not occur at all; the researchers suggest that these features may be so stereotyped that by tenth grade, students have learned to avoid them in writing. Errors resulting from pronunciation features included word-final consonant cluster reduction when the cluster represents an inflectional suffix (i.e., test: /st/ → /s/, tes' and missed: /st/ → /s/, miss' are both types of consonant cluster reduction, but only the second type occurs frequently in writing.) Researchers propose that the -ed suffix is more susceptible to interference because it is not part of the base word.

Wolfram and Whiteman conclude that dialect interference does occur in composition, but that not all nonstandard linguistic features interfere to the same extent. For example, interference in suffix forms may persist after interference involving free units is eliminated; or it may be that pronunciation interference can be reduced before some types of grammatical interference. It is important for teachers to distinguish the different dimensions of writing problems because correct identification is the first step in setting priorities for teaching the development of writing skills. Wolfram and Whiteman maintain that specific training is needed to limit dialect interference in writing. They suggest that the dimensions of dialect
interference may call for new pedagogical materials for teaching standard written English just as contrast drills were used for teaching the spoken standard.

However, Patrick Hartwell takes strong issue with Wolfram and Whiteman's point that specific training to limit the influence of the nonstandard dialect is necessary. Hartwell's contention is simply that "dialect interference in writing, in and of itself, does not exist." He follows Burling in elaborating the view that written English is a mode of expression apart from speech; it is not a dialect. In fact, he points out, "it is precisely the nature of a written standard to be adialectal." He points out that in Wolfram and Whiteman's study, the percentages of error reflecting dialect interference in writing were highly idiosyncratic rather than typical of predictable interference. Noting the conclusions of studies by Sternglass and by Kirchner and Poteet, conclusions contradictory to Wolfram and Whiteman's results, Hartwell dismisses the assumption that spoken dialect is a significant cause of error in writing. He proposes that what appears to be dialect interference in writing is really related to reading.

Apparent dialect interference in writing reveals partial or imperfect mastery of a neural coding system that underlies both reading and writing. . . . Writers turn to the surface features of the phonology and grammar of their spoken dialect when they do not have available mental equivalents of the print forms.
He maintains that studies show that good readers process print forms directly into meaning rather than focus on syntactic and phonological features. Since poor readers allow phonology and syntax to hinder direct processing of the print code into meaning, the attention given to surface details by teaching traditional grammar or by using ESL methods would seem to be counterproductive because it focuses the students' attention on the very features they need to escape from. Hartwell's conclusion is that

writing instruction, for all students, ought to be broadly rhetorical, stressing voice, audience and purpose, rather than narrowly grammatical, stressing surface detail and its presumed connection with a spoken standard. Print is a code, not a dialect, and one learns that code best from the top down, not from the bottom up. 28

Hartwell's conclusions are opposite to Patricia Laurence's earlier observations of the needs of basic writers. 29 She dismisses the broadly rhetorical approach as being of any use in clearing up students' confusion resulting from second dialect interference. She maintains that helping students focus on words is necessary to increase their perception of words and morphemes. Perception is an integral part of the cognitive process, not a separate function. Laurence suggests exercises designed to jar students out of their habitual centered perception and whole word approach to reading into a decentered stage wherein they learn to distinguish the written morphemic endings of
words. One exercise, for example, is a drill on endings that has students circle all words that end in -s. Subsequent exercises ask students to circle only specific kinds of -s endings: possessive, plural, and verb -s. A series of such exercises is followed by students' own production of writing in order to transfer the item, in this case -s, to their own writing.

In a recent article, David Bartholomae argues that students do not need such drill work on word endings. He agrees with Hartwell in maintaining that encouraging students to read "from the top down" is more important. He notes that students reading "from the top down" will correct errors in their written texts. Hence, all errors are not attributable to the interlanguage system or to the students' lack of competence. Rather, errors are indicative of an interference in transcription, which is more closely aligned with performance than with linguistic competence. One drawback with Bartholomae's report, however, is that his observations were drawn from only one student's performance in oral reading. It is a case that Bartholomae himself conceded is an "extreme" one. The value that Bartholomae places in studying students' oral reconstructions of their written texts is that it can serve as a diagnostic tool, a means of instruction, and perhaps, as an indication of a natural learning sequence. If researchers can determine what a learner's natural syllabus might be, then teachers can
approach the basic writer with a more efficient sequence of methods than they have in the past.

The new direction in work with basic writers seems to be a reconsideration of the relationship between active and passive forms of language: speaking and writing as opposed to listening and reading. The earlier studies, such as the Claflin project, suggested that aural-oral patterns were needed in order to modify dialect interference to standard written forms. Hartwell suggests that dialect interference in writing is really related to reading, not to the spoken dialect. Bartholomae as well as Laurence would concur although Laurence's methods for dealing with the problem of error are opposite to Hartwell's and Bartholomae's.

While research in language learning continues, the recourse for composition teachers seems to be the same sort of "enlightened eclecticism," in H. Douglas Brown's term, that ESL teachers find themselves using in order to find the most efficient methods for teaching language. This chapter has reviewed literature concerning theory from ESL, ESD, and composition. In tutoring a dialect-speaking student, I have attempted to draw from these three areas of theory in order to devise a procedure to use with a student whose writing is a step beyond the basic writing stage.
CHAPTER III. TUTORING PROCEDURE

A tutoring session with an individual student is quite different from classroom teaching. Using the student's writing as a text provides evidence of problems that the student has and an immediate opportunity for dealing with errors. Responses to questions provide clues to what errors reflect confusion about correctness in writing and what errors may be "slips," errors easily corrected by the student in proofreading or by having them merely pointed out. Grammar rules can be related directly to the student's own paper. Also, the spontaneity of learning opportunities in individualized tutoring sessions requires the teacher to draw from linguistic, language acquisition, and rhetorical theories in order to make instantaneous decisions about a priority for error correction. Although one tutoring procedure is not applicable to all students or to all situations, the procedure described in this paper is an attempt to show how theory from several fields of study can be practicable in making those decisions.

Specifically, I sought answers to four questions: (1) How useful is error analysis for teaching the student who is beyond the basic writing stage but who has not arrived at the place where she can pass the freshman composition course? (2) How useful are ESL methods in working on errors a dialect speaker makes in writing? (3) Can standard forms for written language be taught without correction of
of pronunciation features? (4) Does the student correct errors when reading the work aloud?

The student whose work I analyze in this paper was atypical of the other students in the Writing Center in that she was referred from a non-required remedial English course. I regarded her as a writer who had progressed beyond the basic writing stage because she demonstrated in her writing the ability to express her intentions in a way that did not demand considerable interpretation. For the most part, she knew how to select material appropriate to the type of writing assigned. She knew how to organize her material in the traditional introduction, body, and conclusion, as well as how to express her thoughts in coordinate and subordinate clauses. She knew some basic strategies of narrative, descriptive, and expository writing. Her problem in not meeting the minimum mechanics standard showed a confusion about written forms, particularly verb and noun endings. A highly motivated student, she brought with her to the tutorial sessions not only her writing but also pressing questions about her writing and a sufficient knowledge of grammatical terms such as noun, verb, auxiliary, and tense (a knowledge that many basic writers do not have) which facilitated communication between us. It is important to point out too that this student was not required to work in the Writing Center since the course she came from was not a required one. Her motivation for
being in the Writing Center seemed to be a genuine desire to improve her writing skills.

The tutoring sessions were scheduled for thirty minutes a week, and the student worked for two ten-week terms, writing eleven short compositions and two test-out themes of five hundred words. Each session was devoted to evaluating the student's writing and to grammar instruction. I allowed opportunity for her to read her own texts aloud and for discussion of the choices—correct and incorrect—she had made.

One of the first decisions I made in evaluating her writing was not to attempt to correct every error in order not to overwhelm her with the complexity of the task before us. While this philosophy may not have prepared the student for the strict evaluations of the first term's test-out theme, it seemed that a "one error at a time" approach would be best. James L. Collins points out that "to intervene too early in the writing process with advice about avoiding or correcting errors can block that process by making the student feel badly about writing, about language, and about himself or herself." 31

The Use of Error Analysis

The first short composition was a description of some feature of college life that was different from what the student had anticipated. The student wrote the following description (the major errors are underlined).
Roommate's Conflict

Last quarter when I came to Iowa State University, I had roommate's conflict. The first day I enter the room was the beginning of my nightmare. First of all, our room was a triple and that in itself encounter some problems. Imagine three people sharing a small room. Each morning we fought over the mirror, the dresser and the drawer and that was only the beginning. We even went as far as fighting over who pencil was who.

Every evening when I came home, there will be a group of people in my room with the stereo blasting and tv on. Also they had the nerve to sit on my clean bed and stay until 4:00 in the morning. How much more could a person take. Well it did get worst. They eventually brung their males friends to spend the night. I simply could not believe this. I could not take anymore.

Immediately the next day, I contact my R.A. and within two weeks I moved. This was strictly a gift from heaven. In the near future, it will be very wise for student on campus to select their roommate properly.

A premise of error analysis is that numerous errors can be reduced to categories to facilitate teaching one principle at a time. I first selected one feature, the -s inflection, as a category partly because it was the first one encountered (roommate's, who, males friends) and partly because of the questions the student asked about it. Roommate's is an error in pluralizing; who for whose results from a confusion over homophones; males results from
inflecting a modifier. After I had talked about pronoun case, pointing out that who is used in the subject position, the student indicated that she knew the form whose when I pronounced it. But her example of it in a sentence was Who's coming? The next -s error occurred in males friends; and after I had made the point that although friends is plural, the modifier of a noun is not inflected, she stopped me, hesitated a few seconds, and asked, "s on nouns means plural—but on verbs, s means singular?"

This, of course, is a fundamental concept that most native speakers of English do not even think about, but for this student to make the observation, generalize about it, and express it in her own words was indicative of the sorting out process she was performing. I prepared exercises for the occurrence of -s; and we worked on plurals, possessives, and third-person singular present-tense verbs for several sessions.

However, this category of error proved to be too large to work with. I began to suspect that in this student's approximate system, -s was but one example of any number of "unattached items" which she knew were required for standard writing but which she was still in the process of putting in the correct place. This passage from Bartholomae's article influenced me to narrow the category.

A single type of error could be attributed to a variety of causes. Donald Freeman's research,
for example, has shown that, "subject-verb agreement . . . is a host of errors, not one." One of his students analyzed a "large sample of real world sentences and concluded that there are at least eight different kinds, most of which have very little to do with one another."

Likewise, the -s inflection proved to be a "host of errors," too broad for concentrating on one error at a time. Still using error analysis, I redefined the category of error to work on. Verbs seemed to be the most pressing problem: not only must they occur in every sentence, but they also convey the core of meaning in every complete thought. The student's brief description of a favorite person illustrates the problem with verbs. Only the verb errors are underlined.

My Counselor

One of my best high school teacher and counselor was Ms. Smith, a person whom I respect greatly. She gives me confident and help me in deciding what was my goals in life. Sometimes when my mother or family wasn't around to help me, I would go to her for assistance. Even though Ms. Smith was my counselor, she was also a friend. I did not total dependent on her for everything, but just good advice.

Furthermore, she helps me realized that I will like to be a counselor or a social worker, because I like to help people. If there were more people like Ms. Smith, I think people would know what they want out of life.

Other papers contained similar verb problems. This student's writing appeared to illustrate precisely the types of errors
that Patricia Laurence had described. To deal with the errors, I first devised a taxonomy of verb errors and then sought to identify possible sources for each error.

Analysis of Verb Errors

(1) **tense shift** In this type of error, the sentence is correct when read out of context. The error appears only in context, i.e., the preceding or following sentences have a different tense, and the error is an unnecessary shift in time. Sometimes a further distinction seemed appropriate.

   (a) shift results from inconsistency in discourse
   (b) shift shows possible phonological dialect interference

(2) **word choice** This type of error shows a misunderstanding of the use or meaning of the word. An example from the preceding sample of writing would be dependent in the sentence *I did not total dependent on* ...

(3) **irregular verb form**

(4) **agreement**
   (a) subject-verb word order
   (b) verb-subject word order as in question inversion or after there

(5) **to deletion** The non-application of this transformational rule results in an inflected infinitive. An example from the preceding sample would be *realized*
in she helps me realized. . . .

(6) overgeneralization Briefly, this is the application of a rule to a situation where it does not apply. An example in the preceding sample would be gaves in She gaves me confident. . . .

(7) modal The inherent tense or the conditional aspect of these words is inappropriate.

(8) past participle
(9) auxiliary
(10) perspective This category differs from tense shift in that the tense the writer selects is not rhetorically appropriate. An example is using the past tense for universal truth.

(11) spelling
   (a) dialect interference
   (b) common misspelling

This list is by no means exhaustive. It is not a prediction of errors that may occur in verbs but an explanation of the errors that did occur in one individual's writing. Tables 1 through 6 show the verbs from six writing samples, the correct forms, and suggested sources for the errors. Table 7 presents a summary of the types of verb errors that occurred during the first term and the teaching method used for instruction. As the list grew each week, I looked for patterns of errors and the frequency of occurrence in order to determine the most serious problems.
Table 1. Verbs from writing sample 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Verbs</th>
<th>Corrections</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>came</td>
<td>entered</td>
<td>tense shift (a) (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enter</td>
<td>entered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td>created?</td>
<td>word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encounter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imagine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fought</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>came</td>
<td>would be</td>
<td>tense shift (a) (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will be</td>
<td></td>
<td>modal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>could ... take</td>
<td>brought</td>
<td>irregular verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brung</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>could ... believe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>could ... take</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contact</td>
<td>contacted</td>
<td>tense shift (a) (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will be</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of words: 191
Total number of verbs: 22
Number of verb errors: 5
Table 2. Verbs from writing sample 3

<table>
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<tr>
<th>List of Verbs</th>
<th>Corrections</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>enter</td>
<td>are</td>
<td>agreement (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td>are</td>
<td>distributive be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>φ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lie</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have</td>
<td>seem</td>
<td>to deletion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td>are</td>
<td>agreement (b)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of words: 123
Total number of verbs: 10
Number of verb errors: 4
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Verbs</th>
<th>Corrections</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td>gave</td>
<td>overgeneralization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respect</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td>tense shift (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gave</td>
<td>were</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>help</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td>were</td>
<td>agreement (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wasn't</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would go</td>
<td>realized</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td>would like</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did . . . dependent</td>
<td>did . . . depend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helps</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td>word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>realized</td>
<td>realize</td>
<td>tense shift (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will like</td>
<td>would like</td>
<td>to deletion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like</td>
<td></td>
<td>tense shift-modal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>want</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of words: 118
Total number of verbs: 18
Number of verb errors: 7
Table 4. Verbs from writing sample 5

<table>
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<tr>
<th>List of Verbs</th>
<th>Corrections</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have discover</td>
<td>have discovered</td>
<td>past participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td>can consider</td>
<td>word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can considerate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haven't found</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can communicate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must</td>
<td>must admit</td>
<td>word omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are concern</td>
<td>are concerned</td>
<td>past participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will like</td>
<td>would like</td>
<td>tense shift-modal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seem</td>
<td>seems</td>
<td>agreement (a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of words: 139
Total number of verbs: 16
Number of verb errors: 6
Table 5. Verbs from writing sample 6

<table>
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<tr>
<th>List of Verbs</th>
<th>Corrections</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>learn</td>
<td>learned</td>
<td>miswritten in title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knew</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wasn't</td>
<td>weren't</td>
<td>agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>locked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>took</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helps</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td>tense shift (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was transfer(ed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>parenthesis shows student's doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trial</td>
<td>tried</td>
<td>tense shift (a) (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>couldn't find</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was admit</td>
<td>was admitted</td>
<td>passive voice—not explained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assign</td>
<td>assigned</td>
<td>past participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learn</td>
<td>learned</td>
<td>tense shift (a) (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was assign</td>
<td>was assigned</td>
<td>past participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>help</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td>tense shift (a) (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'m ... learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of words: 139  
Total number of verbs: 20  
Number of verb errors: 10
Table 6. Verbs from writing sample 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Verbs</th>
<th>Correction</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>came</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offers</td>
<td>offered</td>
<td>perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offer</td>
<td>gives</td>
<td>perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gave</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have adjusted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can socialize</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will go</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don't</td>
<td>don't go</td>
<td>word omitted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of words: 100
Total number of verbs: 11
Number of verb errors: 4
Table 7. Summary of verb error types from 6 writing samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Frequency of Occurrence</th>
<th>Teaching Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tense shift</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>rhetorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>ESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word choice</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>traditional-rhetorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irregular verb</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agreement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ESL-traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distributive be</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to deletion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overgeneralization</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ESL</td>
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<tr>
<td>past participle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>ESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perspective</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>rhetorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spelling</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teaching approaches in Table 7 are designated rhetorical, traditional, and ESL, terms which need some further explanation. I use rhetorical to describe a discussion-type of instruction. Generally, with verbs, a rhetorical method is a way of helping the student think through the logic of her time sequence. What tense should she choose to speak to her audience? When did the incidents narrated occur? What tense is necessary to convey the time differences? Where is it necessary to have consistency in tense in the paper?

Traditional methods are designated for the errors common to all students. For a mistake in an irregular verb, for example, the correct verb form just has to be memorized. There is no point in trying to make any logic out of why we say brought instead of brung. Subject-verb agreement is also a common problem, and the dialect-speaking student like other students needs to be able to identify subjects of verbs in order to select the correct form for verbs such as in One of the boys is absent today.

ESL methods are designated for correcting errors which seem to result from dialect interference. Errors marked tense shift (b), for example, are probably caused by phonological dialect interference which results in the omission of past tense endings. This omission also appears in the past participle forms, two types of errors that occurred most frequently in my student's writing.
The Use of ESL Methods

The frequency of the errors marked tense shift and past participle led me to the decision to begin with the verbs have and be. I prepared the brief exercise with have and be (Appendix A), and we worked on this for the remainder of the first term along with reviewing the student's writing. At no time did I correct the student's pronunciation as we worked on the written forms of these verbs.

We reviewed have and be as main verbs first. We talked about principal parts, and I presented those parts as if we were discussing a foreign language. The distinction between past and past participle seemed hardest for the student to understand; therefore, I deliberately used irregular verbs to illustrate the concept of past participle since regular verbs that share the -ed ending for both principal parts did not make the distinction between past and past participle clear enough. We reviewed paradigms for these two verbs in present and past tense. The perfect tenses, where have and be are auxiliaries, were presented in the same manner, as if they were a foreign language.

Following the work on have and be as main verbs and as auxiliaries, I prepared exercises on what ESL terms the "sentence level." The sentence level exercise in Appendix B is an example of such an exercise using only irregular verbs. Again, the distinctive form for past participle makes the
student focus on that form rather than confuse the past and past participle form as with regular verbs.

Sentence level exercises were followed by "contextual level" exercises (Appendix C) which again require the student to supply the correct form of the verb but within paragraphs. Contextual level exercises require the student to use the correct form of verbs that she is learning as well as consider the rhetorical aspects of the writer's stance--selecting a tense to speak to an audience and showing relationships between that tense and past or future statements. Adapting ESL contextual level exercises to dialect speakers is a matter of changing the content of the paragraphs. Vocabulary can be on a more mature level because the dialect speaker, after all, is working in her native language; therefore, comprehension is not a problem. ESL contextual level exercises will often be about experiences that foreign students can relate to: how to learn a second language; how to study in a second language; how customs vary from native culture to target culture. Such topics might be offensive to a native speaker; and to prevent that possibility, the topics of contextual level exercises should draw from experiences all native speaker college students share.

Along with the various verb exercises, the student's own writing was reviewed each week. The value of the exercises is realized only when the student sees the
relationship between the exercises and her own writing. The transfer of correct forms from the dittoed exercise sheet to the student's creative expression is a tedious process. One point made by Barbara Quint Gray, among others, is important to remember: "writing need not be absolutely error-free to be successful." Reducing the frequency of occurrence of errors to the level where a reader's comprehension is not impeded is a more realistic goal. It would have been very easy to have become preoccupied with eliminating all verb errors to the exclusion of other important matters.

The Use of Traditional Methods

The signal that the time had come to consider other things came from the student. Toward the end of the first term she asked, "Does how take a singular or plural verb?" I asked for an example, and she responded, "How's the boy?" When I asked her to name the subject of the sentence, she correctly responded boy and added is. I asked her if 's could mean has as in How's the boy done his job? Her answer was, "Well, if I just use how's all the time, I can't go wrong." This response was unlike her typical persistent questioning of a point under discussion. We had not talked about contraction or inverted subject-verb order. Although these items are important—subject-verb word order in indirect questions is usually inverted in Black English
dialect—the confusion over the function of how in the student's question made me decide to follow the regular procedure that most students need in grammar instruction: subject-verb identification; recognition of sentence boundaries; consolidating statements in main, subordinate, and relative clauses. Along with these traditional exercises, I prepared an additional one to help with the problem that had occurred several times, confusion over derivational endings (confident for confidence, dependent for depend, considerate for consider). The Vocabulary Worksheet (Appendix D) was used only as errors with derivational endings appeared in her writing.

Just as other students benefit from learning proofreading techniques, dialect speakers too can benefit from specific instruction in how to concentrate on grammatical details in the proofreading or revision stage of writing rather than during the composing process itself. I used a taped oral reading to help me decide if it could be of use in the correction of nonstandard forms.

The Use of Oral Reading

In order to check the observations that Bartholomae had reported with a student reading aloud and correcting his written mistakes, I asked the student to read aloud her first term's test-out theme. I recorded her reading on tape so that I could carefully compare the spoken and
written versions of her theme. The written text of the theme follows. In this example, the errors are not noted; only the differences with the written text are underlined, the pronounced word written above.

What do you Think is the Most Serious Mistakes Parents Make with Their Children?

Parents make so many mistakes with their children that you can not count them on your two hands and some of the mistakes are not listening to their children, planning their future, watching their children too close or not close enough, and letting their older son or daughter take care of their children. This is just to name a few serious mistakes parents make and will continue to make in the future.

In many cases I have seen parents totally ignore their children because they don't want to be bother with them. For instance, when I was eight year old I came home from school and had a fight with some of the kids. I tried to explain to my mother about the incident, but she completely ignored me and kept on running her mouth on the telephone. Well later on the teacher contacted my mother and she told her what happen. Do you know she had the nerve to spank me because she said, "I kept that information from her?"

Some of the other things parents do are letting
your older brother [εrn] or sister babysit you. Every time my brother babysit me and I may get out of hand just a little bit, he would punish me. He would put me in the corner and make me hold two heavy cans of Crisco Shortening. That's what I called nerve! So when my father came home, I told him what my brother did. My father didn't punish him, he just told him not to do it anymore, which he did anyway.

Another serious mistakes parents make are they watch you too close at one moment and the next moment they don't give a damn. When I was a toddler, I stuck a uncooked bean up my nose and had to be rush to the hospital to get it take care of. Luckily, I sneezed and that incident was over. Another incident was when I felled and scraped my knee badly. I was in great pain and my parents said, "oh it will heal in do time." The next week I had to be rush to the hospital because they didn't take immediately precaution. I think this lead into another serious mistakes parents make and that is they are not consistent enough. If they had reacted to the second incident like the first one, then I wouldn't have gotten infection in my knee.

Finally, parents set too high expectation on their children's future. Most parents plan for their children from birth to go to college and get a good education. They never ask or discuss with their children what
would they like to do. Instead they tell you how, what and where you are going to college. This is where lack of communication come in at. I think from my personal experience, parents have made a lot of serious mistakes, but also they have learned from them. I just hope when I become a parent that I will learn especially to treat little children as a person and basically listen to them no matter if it is important or not.

In conclusion, I think most parents should try to have an open mind about their children. Of course, we all make mistakes, but if we can correct them when we make them, then I think we can cut down on rebellion kids.34

In this reading of her test-out theme, the student's oral version had 17 variants from the written version. Only 7 of the oral differences were corrections of what would be considered major errors while 10 differences reflected nonstandard pronunciation of correct written forms. Numerous other major errors—more than 20—were read as written with no question or hesitation on the student's part. Although oral reading of her own texts often appeared helpful to the student in proofreading for meaning, i.e., in checking to make sure the sentence structure relayed the completeness of her ideas, the mistakes in mechanics were not automatically corrected as Bartholomae suggests they are. For my student,
oral reading could not serve as a means of instruction for grammatical forms. There was too much variability in producing standard pronunciation. For example, eight year old was corrected in the oral reading to [ei ər əld] as was felled to [fɛl]; but encouraging the student to rely on pronunciation for correct forms would be counterproductive for forms like kept or contacted, which were correctly written but pronounced [kɛpt] and [kəntəkt]. I continued to use oral reading in each tutoring session to help the student read for completeness in meaning and to help me become more aware of the extent of her dialect interference.

In teaching proofreading, I did less and less marking on the student's papers. Helping the student find her own mistakes and having her make her own corrections are practices that work well in individual tutoring sessions and encourage the student to develop the responsibility for her own mistakes rather than depend on a teacher to find and mark them. In guiding her proofreading, I would suggest items for her to read for. One time she would look only for complete sentences, locating subjects and verbs. Underlining those words in her writing seemed helpful. A second step entailed looking at every verb and checking for third person singular present tense agreement in particular. Checking for tense logic and consistency required another reading. Checking punctuation and spelling were also separate steps.
Eventually, the student combined some of these steps, but the process remained a time-consuming one.
CHAPTER IV. IMPLICATIONS

The tutoring procedure described has demonstrated an eclectic approach to teaching standard written forms to a dialect-speaking student. It is an attempt to apply theories from ESL, ESD, and composition. In reviewing the work of two terms with this student, I note the following implications about the practicality of the theories and the progress of my student.

The use of error analysis, which originated in ESL research, served to categorize the many errors in my student's writing so that one type of error could be dealt with at a time. The usefulness of the category, however, depends on the way a teacher defines the errors. The first category that I defined, -s inflection in plurals, possessives, and third person singular present tense verbs, required too broad an area of instruction. It required the student to think about nouns and number, apostrophe placement before or after s rather than possession indicated by word order, and verb tense and agreement. It also mixed phonological and grammatical features. To be beneficial to the student, categories of error must be carefully selected and defined.

Once I had narrowed the category of error to verbs alone, I was able to suggest sources for those errors. The method of teaching correct forms could then be selected according to the source. As Table 7 shows, adapted ESL
methods seemed appropriate for only some of the sources of verb errors, usually where grammatical rules in Black English contrast with standard written English. Other sources seemed to require traditional or rhetorical methods of instruction.

The effectiveness of using ESL adapted exercises is not conclusive from working with only one student. In looking at just the verb errors as listed in Tables 1 through 6, I have to admit that the student still has a long way to go to write within the minimum number of errors allowed by the English Department's standards. On the other hand, the figures also show that the percentage of correct verb forms in her writing is never less than 50%, and usually it is a good bit better than that.

However, counting the number of errors is not truly indicative of progress. The number of errors may remain relatively stable as the student attempts new ways of expressing her ideas. One of the errors in the first test-out theme (p. 49) occurred at the end in the phrase cut down on rebellion kids. Cut down was crossed out and eliminate was inserted thus producing eliminate on rebellion kids. In attempting to improve the sentence, the student chose a more mature-sounding verb but spelled it incorrectly—I suspect in haste because spelling was not a problem with this student—and overlooked removing the preposition. She could have played it safe by using the simpler verb, but
she did not. The result is that the phrase is marked with two major errors labeled spelling and a slash through the preposition. I shall point out later why spelling was not the problem with rebellion for rebellious. Neither of these errors is truly indicative of competence problems.

Tables 1 through 6 also show that after we had begun the exercises with be and have, the perfect tense verbs started appearing in her writing. When an error occurred in the perfect tense, it was in the omitted ending for the past participle and not in the auxiliary. In light of Wolfram and Fasold's doubt whether the past participle even exists in Black English, this error is not surprising since it may be an entirely new form for this student. I noted that the error labeled past participle does not even occur until the fifth composition. This is not to say that the student had never used perfect tenses before; there is no way of knowing that. I can simply point out that writing samples 5 and 7 contain verbs that make a distinction between simple and perfect tenses that had not occurred in samples 1 through 4. Again, I suspect that some errors apparently occur as the student deliberately attempts to improve her writing rather than play it safe by writing in the simple tenses.

Another point about the past participle came up during the last session of the first term. As the student read the seventh composition orally, she read the verb have adjusted.
The form was correctly used and correctly pronounced in her reading. I noted its correctness and asked her how she had chosen to use it. In answering, she did not refer to the perfect aspect but said she had put the -ed on adjust because she was usually wrong; therefore, the ending must belong there even if it did not seem right. I inferred from this comment that the verb exercises had been effective in what Patricia Laurence describes as "jarring" the student out of habitual ways of perceiving words. After an uncertainty about the form is created, the awareness of the problem facilitates the coordination of rules and forms within the approximate system and causes the writer to attend specifically to those areas where unperceived errors habitually occur.

It seemed logical that before we approached the problem that appears in the seventh composition labeled as perspective, the student needed to understand what forms were available to express the difference between simple present and past tense and the perfected present and past tense. Once the forms were familiar to the student, it was possible to talk about the writer's options for choosing a time perspective to speak to her audience and how to reference past and present action to the time of the paper. To talk about perspective before the student knew the options available for expressing various perspectives would be futile.
For example, the first part of the exercise sheet on present perfect tense (Appendix A) asked the student to complete sentences by filling in the correct verb forms. The second part called for the student to create her own sentences using this tense. After working on this exercise for homework, the student said that she had done the first part but had had a problem with the second because she could not think of any situation where present perfect tense could be used.

More drills were not the sole answer for this aspect of the verb problem. She knew how to form the tense. The teaching approach called for a more rhetorical aspect. I chose to use conversation to illustrate the occurrence of present perfect tense by setting up a scenario and asking a question. One situation went like this: "Are you hungry? Would you like something to eat, or have you eaten?" She hesitated but eventually responded, "I have had breakfast." Once she had naturally produced the verb form, we talked about the implications that the tense carries, that the action is completed but the specific time when it was performed is not important. Technically, the question I asked was an ESL technique because I used the tense that I wished to elicit from her. It is similar to drills with tag questions in ESL. But, the discussion of the implications of the tense provided more understanding of the reason for its use.
Further evidence of the student's reluctance to use forms about which she was unsure came to my attention during her reading of the first test-out theme (p. 49). As she read the last words of the theme, eliminating rebellion kids, she hesitated. I asked her about rebellion kids. She responded that the phrase did not sound right, and in making a change, she considered substituting bad for rebellion. I encouraged her to retain rebellion. She asked me if that were the right ending, and I said it was not. Then she said, rather positively, that the ending should be -ious and that she had known that, but it sounded better in the sentence to write rebellion. She paused and then asked me how to pronounce the -ious. She repeated rebellious after me, emphasizing the -ious as I had done, and I pronounced the word again, normally. Although the point of this discussion did not concern verb forms, it is interesting to note that the student obviously knew the correct ending, but her unfamiliarity with its pronunciation had led her to write the form she could pronounce.

The complete comparison of the spoken and written versions of the first test-out theme (p. 47) did not replicate Bartholomae's observation that in oral reading a student corrects most of the errors in writing. While there were 7 incorrect forms being read correctly, there were 10 correctly written forms that were read incorrectly and numerous (more than 20) other errors that were read as
written. I inferred from these examples and from the discussion of rebellion/rebellious that there is some phonological relationship with the written word for this student.

The 10 correctly written forms read incorrectly included 6 verbs and 1 possessive noun whose endings were not pronounced, 2 articles, and 1 conjunction. It appeared that the -ed and -s suffixes were becoming associated with the written word even though they were not always a part of this student's speech. Shortly before the end of the second term, I again taped the student's oral reading of a short composition that she had proofread and corrected. This composition follows with the variants underlined.

When is it proper to use good manner or Etiquette?

Well I know most people use it when they go out to a banquet or luncheon. The first think a waitress brings you is the salad. The salad is so tough and big that you have to cut it with a knife and end up getting it all over your mouth and dropping it on your lap. You feel so embarassed because you can not eat a salad properly. Next they bring the fried chicken, peas and the potatoes. At first everyone looks at each other to see what everyone else is going to eat first. Mostly everyone tries to eat the potatoes or peas first because they are trying
to see should they try [kætʃɪŋ] cutting the chicken or [pɪkɪŋ] picking it up with their fingers. Someone [dɪˈsaɪd] decides to carve in their chicken with a knife. This is very difficult trying to cut through bones and whatever else is down there. You finally get a piece of chicken on your fork and before it gets to your mouth, the meat falls. Once more, you are embarrassed. You try at the chicken again but this time when you try to cut it your knife flies across the table and lands into someone lap. Now I say unto you, Is it wrong to pick up the chicken delicately and eat it instead of going through all that trouble.

The written verb forms are all correct. The interesting thing to note is that in the oral reading, there are only 7 variants ([lʊk/lʊks] indicates a misreading and correction). Of those 7 variants, 4 are phonological ([ɡeɪtʃɪŋ], [drɒpɪŋ], [kætʃɪŋ], [pɪkɪŋ]), variants which all speakers say at one time or another. There are only 3 seriously stigmatized grammatical variants ([brɪŋ], [træɪ], and [dɪˈsaɪd]), all problems in -s inflection. All of the -ed suffixes which we had concentrated on in the written exercises were correctly pronounced. Rather than draw a conclusion from this observation, I would merely pose a question: might this oral reading show signs of speech
becoming adapted to the written word, as Burling Robbins suggests? Neither the scope of my project nor the short time I worked with this student is adequate to answer that question at the present time.

The procedure described entailed only one category of error. The process of selecting other categories in order of frequency and the amount of stigmatization associated with them should be applicable to other types of errors. I believe that concentrating mainly on verbs for two terms enabled this student to make progress in the most important and most difficult grammatical feature. The evaluations of her second term test-out theme found her writing acceptable by the mechanics standard. I would expect that the number of errors in other categories, plurals, possessives, and word order in indirect questions, could be reduced in less time by procedures similar to the one I used with verbs.
CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS

In working with a student who speaks a nonstandard dialect, a student whose writing I have described as being beyond the basic writing stage, I have attempted to evaluate theories from three areas of study, ESL, ESD, and composition. For the questions posed about how some theories might be applicable to a tutoring procedure to use in the Writing Center, I draw these conclusions.

(1) How useful is error analysis for teaching the student who is beyond the basic writing stage but who has not arrived at the place where she can pass the freshman composition course? If error analysis accomplished nothing more than giving the teacher a starting place in dealing with numerous mechanics errors in a student's writing, it could be considered a valuable tool; but it serves to do much more than that. Charting errors and noting a frequency of occurrence is useful in determining a hierarchy of importance of the effect of errors in writing. Invariant be, for example, is a prominent feature in the grammar of Black English, yet this form appeared only once in my student's writing. Similarly, double negatives never appeared. Absence of inflectional suffixes, on the other hand, occurred frequently and therefore demanded priority. Thus the student's errors indicate what standard forms need specific teaching emphasis. A familiarity with the Black English dialect, even though a contrastive analysis
is not presented to the student, helps the teacher recognize
the sources of apparent errors and contributes to creating
a positive attitude of understanding toward errors. In
dealing with errors by categories rather than by occurrence,
the student has some of the sorting out process already
performed for her and is able to concentrate on one new
principle at a time. On the other hand, the categories of
errors must be carefully delineated by the teacher if they
are to be useful. Too broad a category defeats the attempt
to concentrate on one error at a time. Once a category of
error is defined, sources for those errors can be postulated
and a teaching method to address the problems selected.

(2) How useful are ESL methods in working on errors
a dialect speaker makes in writing? A definitive answer
to this question cannot be drawn from working with only one
student. However, in this situation, ESL methods seemed
the only recourse for some types of errors while traditional
or rhetorical approaches seemed better for other types of
errors. For example, early in the first term, the student
used the phrase stuff animals. An explanation for the -ed
suffix on stuff had to involve the past participle and
its functions. From the student's questions and from her
writing, I could only infer that this form had to be taught
as a completely new item. The sentence level exercises
helped the student focus on her particular problem with
verbs, and the contextual level exercises did the same as
well as make her consider the relationship between sentences. Since I did not attempt to correct the student's speech, contrast or minimal pair oral drills were not used at all. ESL methods and exercises are but part of a repertoire: they can be useful—with some adaptation—for helping eliminate some types of errors, but they are not the ultimate solution.

(3) Can standard forms be taught for written language without correction of pronunciation features? Throughout the two terms that I tutored this dialect-speaking student, I deliberately avoided any correction of her speech, first, because her speech performance would not be evaluated in the required freshman composition courses and, second, because the student never indicated any awareness of her dialect's being nonstandard nor did she ask me to correct it. Early research in Black English resulted in an aural-oral approach to correct dialect interference in writing, the assumptions being that this approach followed a "natural" sequence of language learning and that the spoken forms were directly transferable to writing. Subsequent research, however, has pointed out that speaking and writing are different forms of language production. That the written language sometimes determines the spoken is evident in the common pronunciation of often, which many people have been taught to pronounce as [əfɪn] rather than [əfən]. Feigenbaum has pointed out that in working with students who are literate, the teacher
has the advantage of showing the student the variant form in writing in order to teach the oral standard. While I did not apply the correct forms to speech, I did make an advantage of the student's knowledge in demonstrating endings that must be a part of the standard written language. The oral readings of her texts show that this student has begun to use correct written forms even though she does not always pronounce endings when she reads.

(4) Does the student correct errors when reading the work aloud? The two taped oral readings show conclusively that this student does not correct all errors in grammar in oral reading. Contrary to Hartwell's view that "writing instruction, for all students, ought to be broadly rhetorical . . . rather than narrowly grammatical," I suggest that some students benefit from several types of instruction. Rhetorical methods are but part of the solution. There is also a place for traditional methods as well as those adapted from ESL.
NOTES

2 Shaughnessy, p. 284.


18 Marilyn S. Sternglass, "Dialect Features in the Compositions of Black and White College Students: The Same or Different?" College Composition and Communication, 25 (1974), 259-63.


22 Brown, p. 245.
24 Walt Wolfram and Marcia Whiteman, "The Role of Dialect Interference in Composition," The Florida FL Reporter, 9 (Spring/Fall, 1971), 34.
26 Hartwell, p. 105.
27 Hartwell, p. 108.
28 Hartwell, p. 114.

33 Gray, p. 22.


35 Feigenbaum, p. 276.

36 Hartwell, p. 114.


Fasold, Ralph W. "What Can An English Teacher Do About Nonstandard Dialect?" The English Record, 21, No. 4 (1971), 82-91.


Sternglass, Marilyn S. "Dialect Features in the Compositions of Black and White College Students: The Same or Different?" College Composition and Communication, 25 (1974), 259-63.


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APPENDIX A. VERB EXERCISE WITH HAVE AND BE

Have as a main verb means "possess."
Consider the principal parts of the verb have.

infinitive  present participle  past  past participle
(to) have   having   had    had

Compare with the principal parts of two other verbs.
(to) drive   driving   drove   driven (irregular)
(to) walk    walking   walked  walked (regular)

PRESENT TENSE forms for have

I have a car.  We have a car.
You have a car.  You (plural) have a car.
He has a car.   They have a car.

Which form of have would you use in these present tense sentences?

John and Henry _____ a car.
John _____ a car.
The man _____ a car.
My mother and father _____ a car.

Write two sentences in the present tense with have as the main verb.

1.
2.

PAST TENSE forms for have

Last year I had a car.  We had a car.
Last year you had a car. You (plural) had a car.
Last year he had a car. They had a car last year.

Which form of have would you use in these past tense sentences?

John and Henry _____ a car last year.
John _____ a car last year.
The man who lives next door _____ a red convertible last year.
Choose the correct tense and form of have for these sentences.

Yesterday I ____ that book, but today Harry ____ it.
The puppy that he ____ last year is the dog that I ____ now.

Have can also be an auxiliary verb. have + past participle forms the perfect tenses.

PRESENT PERFECT TENSE present tense of have + past participle

Notice that the first word in the verb phrase always carries the tense.

Your car is a wreck. I know that because I have driven it.
John knows your car is a wreck. He _____ it.
John and Nancy know your car is a wreck. They _____ it.

Write two sentences using the present perfect tense.

1.
2.

PAST PERFECT TENSE past tense of have + past participle

Notice that the first word in the verb phrase still carries the tense. You might want to think about past perfect tense in this way: two things happened in the past.

#1 I drove my car into the garage.
#2 Then the muffler fell off.

The event that happened first is in the past perfect tense.
The second event is in simple past tense.

After I had driven my car into the garage, the muffler fell off.

Supply an appropriate past perfect verb in these sentences.

After I ________ the exam, I celebrated.
Because I ________ the movie before, I stayed home.

Since I ________ to class in the rain, my hair was wet.

Write two sentences which show an order to two past events.

1.
2.
Be as a main verb means "state" and carries the tense.
Consider the principal parts of the verb be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(to) be</td>
<td>being</td>
<td>was/were</td>
<td>been</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare with the principal parts of two other verbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(to) drive</th>
<th>driving</th>
<th>drove</th>
<th>driven (irreg.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(to) walk</td>
<td>walking</td>
<td>walked</td>
<td>walked (regular)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Present Tense forms for be**

I am happy. We are happy.
You are happy. You (plural) are happy.
He is happy. They are happy.

Which form of **be** would you use in these present tense sentences?

- My father ____ the president of the company.
- I ____ always sad to leave school in June.
- The colors of that flag ____ red and green.
- You ____ too late to see the doctor.
- John ____ happy all the time.

Write two sentences in which **be** is the present tense verb.

1.
2.

**Past Tense forms for be**

I was a student last year. We were students.
You were a student. You were students.
He was a student. They were students.

Which form of **be** would you use in these past tense sentences?

- My mother ____ sick almost all of last year.
- I ____ too tired to get up for my 8:00 class today.
- Why ____ you absent yesterday?

Write two sentences in which **be** is the main past tense verb.

1.
2.
APPENDIX B. EXAMPLE OF A SENTENCE LEVEL EXERCISE

Directions: Use the following verbs in the present tense.

1. The dentist ______ busy all week.
2. Each of the boys ______ his allowance.
3. After we ______ the exam, we'll go out for a pizza.
4. The paper boy always ______ past the house where the German Shepherd ______.
5. I ______ the principal of the school which Gary Coleman ______.
6. Each of the students in my dorm ______ to study next weekend.
7. All of the students at the university ______ to go through registration.
8. The man who ______ next door ______ a red Jaguar.
9. You ______ the person who ______ to collect the dues.
10. Any coach who ______ his time to youngsters ______ a winner.
APPENDIX C. EXAMPLE OF A CONTEXTUAL LEVEL EXERCISE

Directions: Supply the correct form of each verb in parentheses.

I (see) ______ the movie The Jazz Singer three times. Neil Diamond (be) _______ one of my favorite singers. He (make) _______ hit record albums for which he (write) _______ many of his own songs, but The Jazz Singer (be) _______ his first movie. His acting (be) _______ not the best, but the music (make) _______ the movie very enjoyable.

The movie (be) _______ an adaptation of a 1925 play by Samson Raphaelson. In the first movie version, Al Jolson (be) _______ the star. In the second movie entitled The Jazz Singer, Neil Diamond (play) _______ Jess Robbins, a young Orthodox Jew who (be) _______ a cantor in his synagogue. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather (be) _______ cantors before him. But Robbins (want) _______ to be a pop star. He (receive) _______ his father's consent to try Hollywood for two weeks. Naturally, a successful career (take) _______ longer than two weeks. After Robbins (decide) _______ to stay, his father (disown) _______ him. The eventual reconciliation, which (occur) _______ on Yom Kippur, (be) _______ a poignant moment in the movie.

The music, however, (be) _______ the highlight
of the movie. Diamond (sing) _______ religious chants, jazz, and patriotic march songs in his own impeccable style. The sound track from the movie (become) _______ a hit album in its own right. I (go) _______ to see the movie again next week.
APPENDIX D. VOCABULARY WORKSHEET

I. When you make a mistake with a suffix in your writing, record the word in the proper category on the following chart. Check the dictionary if necessary to find other endings for the word. Not all words will have a form for every category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adverb</th>
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II. Use each word on the chart in a sentence.

Recognizing some common suffixes is a help in deciding whether words are nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs.

Some common suffixes for nouns
- -hood neighborhood - -ence difference
- -ness goodness - -ation maturation
- -ty security - -ism patriotism
- -tude servitude - -dom freedom
- -ship friendship - -mony testimony
- -ance attendance - -ment accomplishment
- -ility dependability - -ology sociology
- -fication classification

These noun suffixes indicate persons.
- -eer auctioneer - -ster youngster
- -ess heiress - -ist activist
- -grapher biographer - -ier carrier

Some common suffixes for adjectives
- -est biggest - -able dependable
- -fic specific - -ous spacious
- -ful careful - -less careless

The -ly suffix
Adverbs frequently end in -ly. Notice, though, that adjectives too can have the -ly suffix. Usually, -ly added to a noun produces an adjective (heaven + ly = heavenly); -ly added to an adjective produces an adverb.