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About Schwa

We are an academic journal produced by the students of Brigham Young University. Our mission is to increase the amount and the accessibility of linguistic scholarship—especially for those without graduate school experience—while simultaneously training editors and designers in the ways of modern publishing.

Some of our articles are strictly theoretical and academic. Others are less technical and more personal in nature. Experiments, surveys, corpus analyses, and essays are all acceptable. We have published on all the following subdisciplines of linguistics and more:

- Phonetics, the perception and production of speech sounds.
- Phonology, the system of speech sounds used in a given context.
- Semantics, the meaning constructs of words and sentences.
- Syntax, the structure of permissible and meaningful sentences.
- Sociolinguistics, the variation of language based on sociological factors.
- Psycholinguistics, the cognitive tasks necessary for language.
- Forensics, the role of language in creating and carrying out the law.

We are always accepting submissions. Papers on any language are welcome, including cross-linguistic studies, but papers must be written in English. Because we have a high standard of quality, our staff includes both editors and graphic designers. We extend an open invitation for new staff members.

Go to schwa.byu.edu to submit a paper or to join our staff.

Editor's Note

As I finish up my time at BYU and with *Schwa*, I remember my first semester on the journal, when editor in chief Olivia Snow had to pull *Schwa* out of the mud, wash it clean, and hang it out to dry—all on her own. She took initiative as the only returning staff member by recruiting and training new editors and ensuring that no matter what, *Schwa* would survive and publish again. Watching her take charge of something whose failure no one would have ever blamed her for was inspirational, as was seeing the way she trusted the new recruits to share the load with her.

Seasons have passed, and *Schwa* has passed from Olivia's hands to Maisy Ward's and into mine. Soon it will be my turn to entrust *Schwa* to someone new. I feel lucky to have so many experienced staff members by my side whom I can trust. One of my favorite things about being editor in chief is watching new members approach with some or no editing background but with a strong desire to learn and serve in whatever way they can—and then watching them succeed and become experienced staff members. Some of them think I can't see the progress they make, but I do. I see when they take responsibility for their own work, asking for clarification on or assistance with assignments and emailing when things aren't going according to plan. They, like Olivia, take initiative. That is an invaluable skill, and I owe special thanks to all those who have gone the extra mile. I hope you know who you are.

Thank you to everyone who has made this journal what it is today, from mentor and inspiration Olivia to each of the newest staff. It has been a pleasure and an honor to know you all.

Ashlin Awerkamp
Editor in Chief

Feeling Blue, Seeing Red, Being Green

Can You Speak with All the Colors of the Wind?

Breanna Anderl

A lot can be learned about individual words and phrases when examining patterns in collocates, which are words that appear in close proximity. This research paper uses the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to examine collocates of colors and determine the subsequent semantic prosody of popular color metaphors. While people use color metaphors all the time, most probably don't think about the metaphors' semantic prosody. This article discusses the possible causes and the results of the negative semantic prosody that surrounds English color metaphors.

Color is all around us every day—not in just our external world but in our language and metaphors as well. In English, colors have been used in set metaphors to express emotion and ideas for hundreds of years, some dating back to the 1600s (*OED Online*, "feeling blue"). While our color expressions and metaphors have changed over the years, many have become standardized and "fixed by convention" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 54). This is largely due to our tendency to describe our feelings and circumstances using a shared universe of discourse: sight and color in this case. In producing metaphors, "speakers make use of a familiar area of knowledge" (Hurford, Heasley, & Smith, 2007, p. 331). Colors, and the experiences that come with them, are something that most of us have in common. While the origins of many of our popular color metaphors have been lost, the understanding remains today.

While contemplating many of the common English color metaphors, I was struck by how many of them were negative. The term "semantic prosody" has been used to describe the positive, negative, or neutral aura of a word, in relation to the most common surrounding words or phrases. Semantic prosody has been defined as "the function of the whole extended unit. It is a generalization about the communicative purpose of the unit: the reason for choosing it (and is therefore related to the concept of illocutionary force)" (Stubbs, 1996, p. 125). Metaphor and prosody both deal with speaker meaning and illocutionary force more than they do the actual sense of each of the words in question. Colors, by themselves, may or may not have an obvious semantic prosody, but there is a pattern of negativity when it comes to colors used in metaphorical expressions. I will argue that words for color are often not just about color but become associated, metaphorically, with certain attributes and traits that often reveal negative semantic prosody.

Literature Review

In 2010, Changhu Zhang stated that "the study of semantic prosody is a brand-new area in linguistic field" (p. 190). This is still a relatively new area of research, probably because metaphors, idioms, and prosody don't deal with semantics in a literal way. However, they are incredibly prevalent in language—we use nonliteral communication through these expressions all of the time (Hurford, Heasley, & Smith, 2007, p. 328).

The authors of *Semantics: A Coursebook* define an idiom as a "construction in which one cannot combine the sense of each word to understand the meaning" (Hurford, Heasley, & Smith, 2007, p. 328).

Simply stated, in dealing with idioms and metaphors, we cannot take them one word at a time. In order to understand speaker meaning, we must view them as an entire construction. This view is also interesting when it is related to prosody because if we need to view metaphors as a whole construction, we must look at the prosody of the whole construction rather than the individual words. To get a better sense of the emotion of colors, I will be looking into the prosody of individual colors both in and out of the context of their most common metaphors.

Corpora, or collections of text made searchable, have been praised as one of the greatest methods in researching semantic prosody. Prosody is notoriously difficult to recognize without any research. As pointed out by Bill Louw and Carmela Chateau (2010), "Semantic prosody is not available to a priori intuition, but becomes visible 'to the naked eye' only through corpus analysis" (p. 726). Researchers have a difficult time seeing the sense on their own, but "corpus data provides us with incontrovertible evidence about how people use language. It allows us to examine, in a split-second, more language than we are likely to use in a lifetime" (Louw & Chateau, 2010, p. 726). Because of the research that I was able to find on the applications of corpora research relating to prosody, I will be using corpora as my main method of research.

The applications for semantic prosody are varied and are still being discovered. According to Zhang (2010), semantic prosody "has found great potential applications in dictionary compiling, translation, and second language acquisition, etc." (p. 190). Color metaphor prosody research could be used specifically in adding to what we already know about emotions linked to colors and could be used by businesses, graphic designers, or psychologists. While searching for precedent research, I found some articles on crosslinguistic and hedging prosody, but I was unable to find prior research dealing with the prosody of color metaphors.

Methodology

If we are to understand a word by the company that it keeps (Firth, 1957), then checking for the collocates of words and phrases is the way to go. I used Mark Davies's Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to look up various collocates and contexts for colors and their metaphors. Beginning with a solid color, like *red*, I looked up the collocates for up to three words before and after the searched word (*red* in this case) and recorded some of the top one hundred collocates (excluding function words). I then looked up a specific color expression, such as *in*

the red, for three collocates. Finally, I looked up a word that summed up the speaker meaning of the expression—taken either straight from the definition of the phrase or from a defining top collocate.

I stuck mainly to the three colors of *blue*, *red*, and *green*. These colors were the most prevalent in color metaphors that I could find, though I did find a few *red* variants—such as *pink* or *rose*. I purposely did not include *black* or *white*, although that would make for some interesting additional research. I made this choice because black and white are not defined as true "colors" to many people, and I felt that there were extra connotations involved with their color symbolism that I didn't want to have skew the research. To keep the playing field more level and be able to look at the prosody of the construction as a whole, I tried to look at colors that had a more neutral sense. Also, for the sake of time and space, I did not want to include too many metaphors and end up running out of room to explore the question and my hypothesis: colors used in metaphors contain a negative sense.

Analysis

I first gathered as many color metaphors as I could think of from my own experience and those that others had heard of. I wanted to use the metaphors that were recognizable—not too exotic—in English. After determining the prosody of the solid color, I then turned to the metaphors. I took the overall sense of the individual metaphor and searched the collocates of that sense. I will go into detail for the three colors that I focused on: blue, red, and green.

Blue

Using COCA, I checked for the collocates of *blue* and out of the top hundred, I sorted the words into prosody that best fit them. Included in Table 1 are some of the top examples for each prosody type.

Table 1: Top 100 Collocates of Blue *as Found in COCA*

Positive	Negative	Neutral
50	21	29
e.g., bright, light, gold, flowers, royal	e.g., pale, dark, devil, faded, smoke	e.g., wore, shades, shirt, dress

Overall, *blue* tended toward the positive, with more than twice the amount of words than that of negative collocates. We will now

look to the expressions themselves, which lean toward the negative. The following are a few of the expressions that I looked into:

Feeling blue

This expression was not used often in COCA, but some of the top collocates included words like *when, investors, frazzled, unreturned,* and *sapphires*. Apart from the words like *frazzled* and *unreturned,* these results don't seem to give us a lot to work with as far as prosody. But when we take the speaker meaning of the expression—that whomever we are referring to is sad, and we look up that word, we get a lot more data: *feel, story, eyes, feeling, angry, lonely, tired, truth,* and *makes* were a few of the top results, showing a clear negative prosody.

Out of the blue

This expression yielded collocates such as *asks, yesterday, wild, cards,* and *invited*. Again, there is not a lot of prosody to see. The sense of this overall construction is that something was a *surprise,* and that carries with it an interesting prosody: *comes, visitor, biggest, caught, attack, shock, pleasant, unpleasant, unexpected, nasty,* and *disappointment*. In looking at the COCA context, this expression occurred only in a negative context, generally from various news stories.

Blue blood

The top collocates for this expression were *aristocratic, pure, hundred,* and *percent*. What is interesting about this particular expression is the speaker meaning that comes of it. I originally was going to search *wealthy* as my sense prosody. However, I liked the top collocate: *aristocratic*. Out of curiosity, I looked up both of the words. *Wealthy* was used with words like *family, man, woman, powerful, individuals,* and *country*—not really obviously positive or negative. But *aristocratic* was used with the following: *radicalism, old, man, privilege, society, traditional,* and *elite*. *Aristocratic* had a much more negative prosody than *wealthy,* and even though we may not consciously recognize it, our usage reflects that negative association.

Talk a blue streak

The top collocates were as follows: *talking, talks, swearing, cursing, cussing,* and *fast*. The collocates of *swearing* were as follows: *false, oath, shouting, stop, off, cursing, secrecy,* and *screaming*—all very straightforwardly negative.

Blue in the face

This expression is referring to when someone is talking so much that they are running out of oxygen and their face "turns blue." I looked up the collocates for *talk* and found *about*, *nation*, *show*, *host*, *listening*, *openly*, *reluctant*, *trash*, and *strangers*. It is interesting to see that while the expression may not exhibit negative prosody on its own, the emotion or situation that it refers to does show a mildly negative prosody.

Red

I would think if any color had a negative prosody by itself, it would be *red*, but the results were a bit surprising. Table 2 follows the same format as Table 1 above.

Table 2: Top 100 Collocates of Red *as Found in COCA*

Positive	Negative	Neutral
39	19	42
e.g., bright, sea, planet, lips, velvet	e.g., blood, crushed, flashing, hot	e.g., carpet, wearing, teaspoon, clay

The overall sense prosody of *red* came out very close between neutral and positive. *Red* had less obvious positive prosody than that of *blue*, but it still shows us that the color by itself is more neutral than some of the metaphors may lead us to believe.

In the red

This expression is used not just metaphorically, but also as a preposition, and the collocates reflect that: *zone*, *sea*, *man*, *sox*, *army*, *river*, *room*, *curse*, and *dress*. But the expression is really referring to being in debt, and the collocates for *debt* are *ceiling*, *national*, *pay*, *billion*, *crisis*, *trillion*, *massive*, *outstanding*, *huge*, and *owe*. The overall prosody for *debt* is negative.

Seeing red

Some of the collocates for this expression as a whole were *over*, *still*, *green*, *why*, *flags*, *start*, and *today*. The speaker meaning is *angry* and has the collocates *very*, *makes*, *frustrated*, *upset*, *mob*, *hurt*, *sad*, *bitter*, *crowd*, and *voters*. We are not surprised to find a negative prosody surrounding *angry*.

Red tape

Some of our metaphorical referring expressions, including *red tape*, came into being because they reference a real thing that used to exist.

Some paper forms and regulations used to be wrapped in a red tape, and thus we have our collocates *bureaucratic, cut, government, paperwork, corruption, endless,* and *regulation*. In looking at the top collocate, *bureaucratic,* which may not have an obvious prosody, we find the words *politics, tape, red, process, control, hurdles, structure, maze, nightmare, obstacles,* and *delay*. Using COCA and collocates, we now have a good idea of the negative prosody of the expression *red tape* and its illocutionary force or speaker intent.

Red flag

Red flag is another referring expression that has both a literal and metaphorical referent. Interestingly, none of the top fifty examples of use in COCA were related to sports. According to COCA, this has become much larger as a metaphor than as an expression referring to an actual red flag. The top collocates were *raise, waving, huge, symptoms, warning, font, biggest,* and *potential*. Using *warning* as the illocutionary intent, we find the negativity: *signs, without, issued, system, fired, ignored, tornado, storm,* and *dire*.

Beet red

According to the collocates of the above expression—*face, turned, embarrassment, checks*—it appears that this expression is used less to describe the actual color of something (such as the color of a shirt, or even that of an actual beet) and more to describe the feeling of *embarrassment*. There is an extremely negative prosody surrounding the word *embarrassment*: *shame, without, riches, avoid, cause, potential, anger, fear, humiliation, save, flushed, die, hide, pain, guilt,* and *failure*.

Red-handed

Top collocates include *caught, him, thief, stealing, drugs,* and *blood*. When we look up the sense of the expression *guilty*, we find *pleaded, found, feel, murder, plea, innocent, verdict, charges, felony, crimes,* and *assault*.

Rose-colored glasses

A variation of *red,* this expression always seemed to be less negative in its meaning, but if we take the real intended meaning, we find the idea of romanticism. This word is used in the context of *past, easy, tendency, Americans, poverty, tend, idealize, refuses, glamorize, suffering,* and *violence*. It is also used to describe some extremely negative ideas, and we see that even some seemingly positive expressions reveal negative semantic prosody when viewed through the lens of actual usage in contemporary American English.

Green

Green is interesting because it sounds like a very positive color at first but is used negatively in many expressions.

Table 3: Top 100 Collocates of Green *as Found in COCA*

Positive	Negative	Neutral
46	16	38
e.g., lush, gardens, fields, emerald, brilliant	e.g., fees, monster, dark, chopped	e.g., wearing, jacket, dress, wore

According to COCA, it is not the most positive color of the three we have looked at, but it is the least negative. Let's take a look at our expressions:

Greenie

The only collocates I found in COCA were *different* and *worse*. That alone should tell us something of the expression's prosody. The sense of *greenie* could be related to inexperience or youth, and I took the meaning of *youth* to check for the prosody and found words such as *programs*, *services*, *violence*, *risk*, *behavior*, *movement*, *at-risk*, and *homeless*. We see the negativity displayed in both the expression and the meaning. When looking in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) for the origin of the expression, I found that it stems from the idea of a new plant. Interestingly, instead of taking the idea of the potential for new life or growth, it somehow took on the idea of "not ripe yet" (*OED Online*, "greenie") and developed a negative prosody.

Green with envy

There was not a lot of data in COCA, but the collocates of *envy* were *jealousy*, *green*, *class*, *anger*, *greed*, *resentment*, *fear*, and *pang*.

Looked green

This expression most commonly describes the face of someone who is feeling ill, as shown by the top collocates: *face*, *white*, *shamrock*, *scaly*, *clammy*, and *snake*. It is no surprise that many of the top collocates for *sick* are *dying*, *worried*, *injured*, *wounded*, *feeling*, *heal*, and *weak*. Rather than *green* being a symbol for growth or life in plants in our world, it describes an abnormal coloration of ill people. This suggests that when it comes to color, we welcome a variety in the natural world, but applying bright hues to people denotes something amiss.

Grass is always greener

This expression seemed more neutral, and the collocates appear so: *other*, *than*, *else*, *somewhere*, *fence*, *looking*, *across*, *always*, and *elsewhere*. But in looking at the prosody for *somewhere*, we come across *else*, *between*, *near*, *deep*, *nearby*, *lies*, *buried*, *hidden*, *hiding*, *hide*, *lurking*, *stashed*, *tucked*, *dump*, *leak*, and *depths*. In *somewhere* lies a secret negative prosody reflected again in an English color metaphor.

Green light

This expression is generally seen as positive in both a literal and metaphorical context. Here are our top collocates: *gave*, *given*, *permanent*, *waiting*, *received*, *flashing*, *bright*, *eerie*, *proceed*, *flashed*, *shoot*, *flickered*, *blinking*, and *invade*. Some of these now feel less positive. The meaning from the metaphorical expression is "to allow": *would*, *will*, *refused*, *access*, *users*, *law*, *escape*, *refusal*, *regulations*, and *inspections*. Surprisingly, this expression is often associated with negative ideas, providing a more negative prosody.

Discussion

It is interesting that *blue*, *red*, and *green* on their own reflect a neutral-positive prosody until the reference and expression are applied. Color could be associated with the unusual, only given attention when it is abnormal, which is perhaps why all of the metaphors tend to the negative. If there isn't anything abnormal about the color of someone's face, you won't mention it. But if it's blue because they are losing oxygen, red because they are mad or embarrassed, or green because they are sick, you'll bring it up.

As far as the domain of negativity, what are people or things being compared to or associated with negatively in these expressions? Sometimes real referents, such as red tape, red flags, red/green lights, or the blue (sky); sometimes plants; and often things that are abnormal or unusual that bear mentioning, such as blue face, red face, or green face.

There is still a lot of research that could be done in this area. Because prosody can be fairly subjective and lacks a standardized system, the positivity and negativity of a set of words could be argued. While I searched for prosody in collocates, I did not look up the sense prosody of every single collocate to determine an exact understanding of the semantic aura surrounding each one. I also didn't have the time or space in this article to look at everything that I wanted to. I ended up with way more research than I could use, thereby limiting

this analysis to three colors. There are many more metaphors and colors we could explore that would allow us to prove that color metaphors have taken on an almost exclusive negative prosody in English.

Conclusion

The results of this COCA prosody analysis suggest that words for color are not just used to refer to color but have become associated metaphorically with traits that reveal a negative semantic prosody. The colors themselves are often positive in nature but when applied metaphorically are used to describe things negatively. This article does not deal with the reasons why this might be the case; rather it shows that we often negatively describe our world or experiences in terms of color. Further research into the origins and early development of certain color expressions could tell us more about what factors contributed to the current negative prosody. But for now, I might be a bit more careful when describing others via "colorful" metaphors.

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There's, Like, More to Say About Like

Ellie Castillo

Data has been collected on various factors that contribute to the word like*'s growth in usage. These factors are things such as its flexibility in usage, its perception, its connection with gender and age, and its spread into other dialects and languages. Various linguistic studies describe the foundation of research on this small yet complex word, and the completed research suggests there is more to be discovered about* like.

The word *like* has accumulated immense complexity over the years despite its small size. *Like* now occupies more than ten different grammatical and vernacular functions (D'Arcy, 2007, p. 387, 391–94), has 1,161,665 hits in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies, 1990), and appears every fifteen seconds or so in speech (Jucker & Smith, 1998, p. 183). The exploration of the word *like* by scholars thus far has begun to offer some interesting insights into the development, use, and perception of the word. Despite *like*'s popularity and its exploration by linguists, these studies seem a bit disjointed. How can we piece them together to get a better view of the scholarly conversation on the usage of *like*? Linguists have conducted several studies in pursuit of answering this question. In this process, scholars have identified the most important factors that contribute to the frequent usage of the word *like* in modern speech.

Alexandra D'Arcy (2007), a linguist who seems to have taken a particular liking to *like*, outlines ten functions for the word *like* to provide a starting point for the research:

1. Clause-initial marker: And my other cat always sleeps, and *like* we almost never see him.

2. Verb: I don't really *like* her that much.

3. Noun: He grew up with the *likes* . . . of all great fighters.

4. Adverb: It looks *like* a snail; it just is a snail.

5. Conjunction: It felt *like* everything had dropped away.

6. Suffix: I went, "[mumbling]" or something stroke-*like*.

7. Quotative complementizer: And we were *like*, "Yeah but you get to sleep like three-quarters of your life." He was *like*, "That's an upside."

8. Approximative adverb: It could have taken you all day to go *like* thirty miles.

9. Discourse marker: I love Carrie. *Like* Carrie's *like* a little *like* out-of-it but *like* she's the funniest. *Like* she's a space-cadet.

10. Discourse particle: Well you just cut out *like* a girl figure and a boy figure and then you'd cut out *like* a dress or a skirt or a coat, and *like* you'd color it. (p. 387, 391–94)

These ten uses of *like* provide a contextual framework for emerging studies. Many scholars incorporate these ten functions as a basis for their own studies. Understanding how *like* is used in various functions was the first step to further research, because each use presents deeper complexity in the word *like*. We see the vast expanse of meaning and function that this one word can supply, which raises more questions for further exploration—exploration within each separate function and of possibilities for other functions. The complexity of *like* also initiates a search for sociolinguistic implications that may arise from the word's frequent use.

In addition to these initial ten functions, more applications for *like* have recently been pointed out: linguistic hedge, approximation marker, and focus marker, as Janet Fuller (2003) and Stephen Levey (2003) emphasize in their articles. These functions are more pragmatic than grammatical. Levey conducted research observing children's interactions on a playground, and Fuller observed adults' speech in interviews. The two situations for the studies provide insight into how these functions of *like* have come into being. The environments are regarded as very dissimilar—children on a playground would usually speak drastically differently from adults in interviews. Naturally, the level of formality varies, and as such, the language is expected to do the same based on the pragmatic situation. However, *like* was present in its functions as an approximation marker and focus particle in both situations, suggesting that *like* is not confined to informal environments.

Jean Fox Tree's (2015) article featured in *Discourse Studies* also presents evidence that newer forms of *like* (e.g., markers of approximation, focus, and looseness) are not just found in speech but in writing as well (p. 64). Normally, writing is regarded as a more formal means of communication, so the appearance of newer and less formal functions of *like* in writing is an unexpected but important development. It supports the idea presented by Fuller's study with adult interviews that *like* is not restricted to informal situations, as previously suggested by society's and scholars' ideas. All these findings work together to establish the claim that *like* is a frequently used and flexible lexical entity, one found in both informal and formal settings: among children on the playground as well as adults in interviews and in spoken conversations as well as writing situations.

Another illustration of the flexibility of *like* is its spread to other dialects and languages. Linguist Joseph Kern wrote a doctoral

dissertation in 2017 focused on the equivalent of *like* in Spanish, *como* (or *como que* in some contexts) (p. 9). This is one of several contemporary studies that have examined the adaptation of American English's *like* into the speech patterns of other dialects and languages. In its various newer functions, such as quotative marker and discourse marker, the word *like* has been incorporated into Parisian French, British English, Irish English, Canadian English, Indian English, New Zealand English, Jamaican English, and Filipino English (Cheshire & Secova, 2018; Schweinberger, 2011). The development of these functions into so many other dialects and languages is worth noting as evidence of *like*'s flexibility and applicability. This flexibility explains part of why *like* has become so popular in use, and it elicits a continuation of research on other factors pertaining to *like*'s usage.

Supplementing Levey's research with children and their use of *like*, scholar Christopher Odato (2013) completed a study on children ages three to ten. Odato's goal was to ascertain when children begin using the word *like*, how they apply it in their speech, and what differences may exist among genders at their ages. His most salient findings are that *like* shows up in speech usually at age four and that children use *like* in more syntactic positions as age increases (p. 117). Odato's research affects the scholarly conversation in a unique way. Not much research has been done to examine when the word's various uses develop in speech. These new findings imply that children are playing a role in the language change associated with *like*. Odato reported that the developmental pattern in children's speech mimicked society's historical or chronological development of the various functions of *like* (p. 117). Understanding how and when *like* development occurs in children's speech is one piece in the broader puzzle of *like* and the factors that contribute to its usage.

Age has been shown to be an important factor contributing to the usage of *like*. There exists a long-standing perspective in society about language change being most prominent and advanced in younger speakers (D'Arcy, 2007). This idea extends specifically to the newer functions of *like*, as "vernacular uses of *like* frequently [mark] the speech of adolescents and younger adults only to be outgrown in adulthood" (D'Arcy, 2017). While D'Arcy asserts that this belief is only a myth, Jennifer Dailey-O'Cain (2000) utilizes empirical data to argue that younger people do indeed use *like* significantly more frequently than older groups of people (p. 67). Linguists Laserna, Seih, and Pennebaker (2014) conducted research that supports

Dailey-O'Cain's argument, as they reported in their article that the young student participants in their study used *like* more frequently than the older professor participants. Federica Barbieri also contradicts D'Arcy's earlier claim that *like* becomes "outgrown in adulthood," because while younger speakers do use *like* more often than older speakers, *like* is still maintained through at least some decades of adulthood (D'Arcy, 2007; Barbieri, 2009). Younger speakers can therefore be classified as those whose age falls in the range from childhood to thirties, if not forties as well. Often, the younger members of society are first to implement new fads, whether in fashion, culture, technology, exercise, etc. This principle extends to language. Language change is also led by the younger members of society, as Dailey-O'Cain, along with Laserna et al., have shown through their research.

Another prevalent factor relevant to the research on *like* is gender difference. Most of the scholarly conversation focuses on this aspect. Scholars Barbieri (2009) and Dailey-O'Cain (2000) present findings that females are at the heart of *like* use and perpetuation as they consistently use the word in multiple functions, more frequently than males do. Gender differences even appear in the youngest age bracket with the development of *like* as "boys of six and younger used *like* less frequently and in fewer syntactic positions" than their female counterparts (Odato, 2013, p. 117). Girls show a stronger propensity to *like* usage from the very beginning of the word's development during their childhood. And this inclination has been maintained and increased over time. This is shown through Federica Barbieri's work studying teenage females' usage in the 1990s and comparing it with their usage now in their twenties and thirties (Barbieri, 2009). Her research showed that these women had either maintained or grown in frequency of usage of the word *like*, especially in its quotative function.

Laserna and her colleagues conducted a study on students to assess which gender utilized the discourse marker *like* more often in their speech. Their results showed that female students were more likely to use *like* than males were (Laserna et al., 2014). Laserna's team's research sustains the idea that females proliferate the language change surrounding *like*. However, D'Arcy (2007) again argues that this is another myth, claiming that men's and women's uses of *like* are not so drastically different. Rather, the use frequency for genders is dependent mostly upon which function of *like* is being applied.

D'Arcy found that men actually used the particle function of *like* more often than women.

D'Arcy's argument specifies the need to depend on specific function rather than merely gender alone to ascertain which gender uses *like* more frequently. However, if attempting to determine which gender uses *like* more often in a general or overall sense rather than in a specific function, the research from various linguists does support that females apply *like* in their speech more often than their male counterparts. These findings are important because they can imply that women are more active participants in language change and that the various functions of *like* appeal to the way women want to communicate. Gender is clearly one of the most important factors that determines the usage of *like,* because it has been researched thoroughly and nearly all studies agree on the prominent difference in usage that gender causes.

Another important factor that can contribute to the usage of *like* is how speakers who use *like* are perceived. However, not as much research has been conducted in this area. Two linguists who have studied *like*, Ruth Maddeux and Aaron Dinkin (2017), set up a matched-guise study with participants who listened to recordings with and without heavy *like* usage. The participants were asked to rate the recordings based on their own perceptions of various characteristics—"friendliness, intelligence, politeness, articulateness, youth, interestingness, confidence, and femininity" (p. 21). The results from this study elicit some interesting sociolinguistic implications. First, the participants rated the recordings with a lot of *like* usage significantly lower than the recordings without frequent *like* usage in the characteristics of friendliness, articulateness, and intelligence. This indicates a negative perception associated with speakers who use *like* frequently (p. 22).

Linguists Ashley Hesson and Madeline Shellgren, at Michigan State University, also wanted to examine listener perception of *like* usage. The participants in their study gave similar results to the ones in Maddeux and Dinkin's: recordings containing *like* received lower friendliness and intelligence scoring (Hesson & Shellgren, 2015, p. 169–70). However, the confusing point within this claim is that this negative perception would suggest that people would not use the word *like* so often if others viewed its use in an unpleasant light. Yet as discussed previously, many scholarly sources show that *like* is an immensely popular word because of its vast applicability.

Why is there a contradiction here? Can we expect the usage of *like* to decrease because of this newly researched appearance of a negative perception? Perhaps it is too soon after this discovery to answer these questions without further research. Another explanation might be that these studies comprised only a small number of participants, a number that may not accurately or fully represent society's sociolinguistic perceptions. This area of research within the usage of *like* is lacking in scope. More research can be done to examine the severity of negativity in perception among people when listening to speakers who use *like* frequently. Questions on what we can expect to happen with the usage of *like* still yield uncertain answers.

Scholars have examined the various functions of *like* in their frequency of use between genders and ages as well as their development in speech among children and speakers of other languages. The flexibility of *like* and its perception have also been analyzed. This research has gleaned the information from these studies to form a collection of the most important factors surrounding *like*'s usage. However, there is more to learn about the specific and ongoing perception of the word's frequent use. Is *like* becoming unwelcome in speech and in writing, or can we expect the word to maintain its popularity in years to come?

There are still questions to answer in the scholarly conversation on *like* and the factors that contribute to its use. Answering these questions will help scholars and society gain a broader understanding of the possibly negative perception of the use of *like* and the implications that may come from frequently utilizing it. Research in this field is almost always unfinished, because language change is a constant reality (Aitchison, 1991, p. 4), so new findings on the word *like* can be expected for years to come. Though small, the word *like* is an extremely complex word that has initiated a vast amount of research among linguists who seem to feel like there's just, like, more to say about *like*.

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Eye-Tracking

A New Way to Evaluate Prescriptive Rules

Claire Cook

While the relative importance of certain prescriptive rules can be difficult to measure, if a proscribed form impairs readability or comprehension, use of a prescribed form is valuable. Eye-tracking experiments allow measurement and analysis of readability. In measuring fixation duration and regression count, the use of proscribed forms was correlated with longer fixation duration, indicating impaired readability, but this correlation was not consistent for each of the four prescriptive rules investigated. Confounding variables and unclear correlation of regression count data indicate opportunities for future research.

A challenge when considering prescriptive rules is how to evaluate the relative importance of those rules. One empirical way to demonstrate the efficacy of a prescriptive rule is to measure whether it negatively affects comprehension or readability. While it can be difficult to gauge readability, an eye-tracking experiment wherein the position of the participant's right eye is both tracked and measured as they read across a screen can be a useful tool in revealing what kind of effects the use of the prescribed or proscribed forms have on the readability of written language. The hypothesis of this experiment is that use of the proscribed form hampers readability, thus legitimizing particular prescriptive rules in the first place.

Methodology

For this eye-tracking experiment, four prescriptive rules were chosen: "couple of" versus "couple," "fewer" versus "less," "reason that" versus "reason because," and "unawares" versus "unaware." Four sentences containing the prescribed form and four sentences containing the proscribed form for each rule were gathered, programmed into the eye-tracking equipment, and randomized. Fourteen participants were selected by the students of a Fall 2018 ELANG 495R course at BYU, but the demographic information of the participants was not recorded nor controlled as a potential confounding variable. However, due to the location of the experiment, it is likely that most of the participants were university students.

During the experiment, each participant was instructed to read the sentence once, press the space bar to clear the sentence from the screen, and report something they remembered about the sentence. While they read the sentence to themselves, their fixation duration in milliseconds (ms) and regression count in number of times for the target form were automatically recorded. All fourteen participants saw all eight of the sentences for each of the four prescriptive rules. Thus, fifty-six total data points for the prescribed form and fifty-six total data points for the proscribed form of each rule were gathered. The mean fixation duration and mean regression count for each rule were statistically analyzed individually using an Independent Samples t-Test. The mean fixation durations for each of the prescribed and proscribed forms, mean regression counts for each of the forms, and p-values for fixation duration and regression count were recorded and analyzed. Longer fixation durations indicated more time spent looking at a particular place on the screen, and more regressions

indicated more times that the eyes went back to a particular place on the screen. Both of these measurements were assumed to correlate positively with impaired readability.

Analysis of Results

The first prescriptive rule that we tested can be formulated in the following way: say "couple of" not "couple" when modifying a count noun. While neither the differences in fixation duration or in regression count between the prescribed and the proscribed form were found to be statistically significant, there are still other interesting features of the data worth noting. First, there was almost no difference between the mean fixation duration for the prescribed and the proscribed forms. The prescribed form had an average fixation duration of 174.71 ms, and the proscribed form had an average fixation duration of 174.77 ms. Their standard deviations were likewise comparable. This suggests that there is almost no difference in readability between the prescribed and proscribed form for this rule since nearly the same amount of time was spent looking at both the prescribed and proscribed forms. Similarly, the mean regression counts for the prescribed and proscribed forms, along with their standard deviations, were comparable.

Table 1: "Couple of" versus "Couple"

	Mean		Standard Deviation		P-value
Fixation Duration	Pre	Pro	Pre	Pro	
	174.71 ms	174.77 ms	100.822 ms	114.005 ms	0.430
Regression Count	Pre	Pro	Pre	Pro	
	0.41	0.39	0.733	0.652	0.726

The second prescriptive rule that was examined in this study follows: say "fewer" not "less" when modifying a count noun. In the case of this well-known language prescription, the difference of mean fixation duration between the prescribed and proscribed forms is statistically significant. Specifically, the probability that the difference in mean fixation duration, 145.11 ms for the prescribed form and 203.84 ms for the proscribed form, was caused by pure chance is about 3 percent. In other words, some consistent factor is most likely responsible for the difference in mean fixation duration. This study proposes that this factor, or independent variable, is whether the

prescribed or proscribed form was displayed to the participant. As with the prescriptive rule regarding "couple of" versus "couple," there is no statistically significant difference between the mean regression count for the prescribed and proscribed forms. All of this suggests that for a commonly known prescriptive rule, such as "fewer" versus "less," using the proscribed form may hamper readability by approximately 0.5 seconds.

Table 2: "Fewer" versus "Less"

	Mean		Standard Deviation		P-value
Fixation Duration	Pre	Pro	Pre	Pro	
	145.11 ms	203.84 ms	84.985 ms	179.777 ms	0.030
Regression Count	Pre	Pro	Pre	Pro	
	0.27	0.23	0.477	0.504	0.717

The third rule under investigation can be written in the following form: say "reason that" not "reason because" when giving an explanation. Once again, little difference is evident in the mean regression count between use of the prescribed form and proscribed form, and the difference that exists is not statistically significant. On the other hand, the difference in mean fixation duration between the two forms is statistically significant. In fact, the probability that this difference was caused by mere chance is only about 3.6 percent. The mean fixation duration for the prescribed form is 240.64 ms, while the mean fixation duration for the proscribed form is 150.09 ms. In other words, participants fixated on the prescribed form 0.9 seconds longer on average than on the proscribed form.

Interestingly, a large difference in the mean standard deviation between the two forms also reveals that the data for the prescribed form is much more spread out than the data collected for sentences containing the proscribed form. It is possible to draw two different conclusions from these results. First, it is possible that use of the prescribed form actually hampers readability, while the proscribed form enhances readability as measured by fixation duration. This may be because readers are more familiar with constructions containing the proscribed form than the prescribed form. This familiarity could have come formally, such as through school, or informally, such as through comedic depiction of so-called "grammar Nazis." On the other hand, because the standard deviation reveals an extremely wide spread in the data, it is possible that a few outliers have skewed the mean fixation duration.

Table 3: "Reason that" versus "Reason because"

	Mean		Standard Deviation		P-value
Fixation Duration	Pre	Pro	Pre	Pro	
	240.64 ms	150.09 ms	352.799 ms	84.593 ms	0.036
Regression Count	Pre	Pro	Pre	Pro	
	0.52	0.48	0.632	0.763	0.357

The fourth and final rule from this eye-tracking experiment may be formulated like so: say "unawares" not "unaware" for the adverbial function. The probability that the difference between the means for these two forms is caused by chance is 91.3 percent, the highest p-value of all the rules investigated thus far. It may be concluded that use of the prescribed form versus the proscribed form for this particular rule does not have a statistically significant negative effect on readability as measured by mean fixation duration.

It is also interesting to note that the standard deviation, or spread of data, for mean fixation duration for both the prescribed and proscribed forms is relatively large as compared to the standard deviations of the other rules. The difference in mean regression count between the two forms was found to be highly statistically significant. However, the mean regression counts for both the prescribed and proscribed forms in this language prescribed are the lowest of any of the means discussed thus far. Therefore, it appears that, while the mean regression count is statistically significant, in the context of the other prescriptive rules, participants regressed back to both the prescribed "unawares" and the proscribed "unaware" fewer times than for any of the previously investigated prescriptions. It can be concluded that this rule is quite innocuous; most people do not notice it as often as compared to the other prescriptive rules, and the readability of a sentence is not significantly hampered by using either form.

Table 4: "Unawares" versus "Unaware"

	Mean		Standard Deviation		P-value
Fixation Duration	Pre	Pro	Pre	Pro	
	224.98 ms	240.20 ms	161.021 ms	183.239 ms	0.913
Regression Count	Pre	Pro	Pre	Pro	
	0.20	0.09	0.401	0.288	0.001

Limitations and Future Research

This eye-tracking experiment, while helpful in identifying some possible relationships between the use of either prescribed or proscribed forms and readability, had some serious issues which may jeopardize the statistical soundness of this study—primarily, selecting a large enough sample and reducing the confounding effect of the selected sentences themselves. The results of the data suggest that commonly known rules, such as "fewer" versus "less," may indeed hamper readability as evidenced by increased mean fixation duration when the proscribed form was used. On the other hand, if the proscribed form is more familiar to the reader, as in the case of "reason that," readability may actually be hindered by use of the prescribed form as compared to the proscribed form.

In addition, if participants are likely to be completely unaware of the prescriptive rule, as in the case of "unawares" versus "unaware" for the adverbial function, use of either form may have no significant effect on the ease of reading because the participant pays no attention to the difference between forms. However, each of these conclusions must be taken with a grain of salt. Very high standard deviations in the data suggest significant outliers among the participants. Additionally, the sentences themselves may be a confounding variable that causes confusion and distraction or that hampers readability when trying to isolate the effect of using the proscribed form on readability. In future research, selecting a sufficiently large and diverse sample for experiment participants, as well as carefully selecting and editing test sentences, will help reduce the issues which have impacted this study.

Understanding Ambiguity

"Boo" David Ludlow

Ambiguity is a commonly recognized linguistic phenomenon, but how and why people interact with ambiguous words and sentences is less understood. Most research describes and defines ambiguity, but less research observes people interacting with ambiguity. In an effort to understand how ambiguity is interpreted, this project surveyed thirty university students about sentences that were lexically and structurally ambiguous. The study concluded that most people interpret utterances, even in isolation, according to a preexisting context in their minds.

Linguistic ambiguity is as common as oxygen. Many researchers in linguistics view ambiguity as a sort of pollutant in language, while others recognize its usefulness and seek to better understand and utilize it. Unfortunately, most researchers focus on ambiguity solely as a linguistic phenomenon; few put as much focus into the individuals who interact with ambiguity, why those individuals do or don't recognize it, and how those individuals tend to interpret ambiguity in practice. For this reason, this research pilot project focused on people actively interacting with ambiguity, with the intent to find out why some people recognize ambiguity and others don't.

Literature Review

Hurford, Heasley, and Smith (2007) provide the following definition for ambiguity: "A word or sentence is ambiguous when it has more than one sense. A sentence is ambiguous if it has two (or more) paraphrases which are not themselves paraphrases of each other" (p. 127). Stageberg, a pioneer in linguistics research about ambiguity, notes that "each [word in a sentence] is part of a larger whole, and this enveloping whole, this context, normally shuts out unwanted meanings and permits only the one desired by the writer" (1998, p. 502). The focus of Stageberg's research is to help people recognize and eliminate ambiguity.

More recently, Oaks (1994) builds on Stageberg's work but takes an opposite approach, seeking to understand ambiguity and its conscious use in the English language. He notes that ambiguity is particularly productive in humor (p. 377–78) and is perhaps most productive when the second, less obvious meaning of a sentence in a particular context is the intended meaning. Bucaria (2004) then builds on Oaks's (and others') work in a corpus analysis of newspaper headlines (p. 284). She notes the frequency of different examples of ambiguity in newspaper headlines and categorizes them using Oaks's system (p. 286). All of these researchers and more have put a lot of focus into the grammar and syntax of what is or what creates ambiguity, but research specifically on active human engagement with ambiguity is lacking.

Methodology

The purpose of this project is twofold: first, to determine which is more easily recognized, lexical or structural ambiguity; second, to determine which subcategories of lexical or syntactic ambiguity

are more easily recognized. Lexical ambiguity is ambiguity created by words with multiple meanings in the same grammatical category. Structural ambiguity is ambiguity that occurs when a sentence could be interpreted to have multiple grammatical structures (see Appendix D).

The best way to focus on how individuals interpret ambiguity is through a survey administered in-person. While such surveys are much more arduous to administer than online surveys, they have several advantages. Two of the advantages are being able to observe participants' behaviors and reactions as the survey is being administered and being able to answer any questions that confused participants may have.

The survey had three parts. The first part was dedicated to demographic questions. Since the population most readily available was the student body of Brigham Young University, the demographic questions asked for a participant's gender, age, major, and hometown. For the second part of the survey, each participant was shown two sentences, each of which were written on a notecard and not spoken aloud, and asked to state the sentences in their own words. The sentence with structural ambiguity was "Be sure to take her flowers." This sentence has only two possible interpretations: as a subject-verb-object sentence (SVO), paraphrased as "Take (or steal) the flowers that belong to her," or as a subject-verb-indirect object-direct object sentence (SVOO), paraphrased as "Take the flowers to her." The sentence with lexical ambiguity was "Firmly grasp the bat in both hands." The noun *bat* also has only two interpretations: "baseball bat" or "small, furry, flying mammal." After the participant restated the sentence, their interpretation was recorded. For the third part, each participant was informed that the sentences he or she previously saw had a meaning separate and unrelated to the first meaning that the participant recognized and was asked to find that meaning. As soon as a participant was shown each sentence a second time, a timer started in order to determine how long it took for them to find the other possible meaning. Once they stated that meaning, or gave up, the timer stopped, and their answers were recorded.

The majority of the potential problems with this survey revolve around not biasing the participants towards certain answers. Carefully crafting and sticking to a script will help the surveyor not bias participants. However, the surveyor will be expected to answer the participants' questions, and it is not possible or reasonable to try

and predict every possible question that a participant may ask. The surveyor will need to be very clear when answering questions without suggesting particular ways to interpret a sentence. It also may be proven that the sentences provided for the survey contain elements that bias participants to think a certain way. This is partially avoided by having the participants read the sentences so they cannot be provided clues for interpretation by the surveyor's tone or cadence and partially by cutting unnecessary words from each sentence. Another possible issue will be the surveyor's ability to understand the participants, particularly if a participant's rephrasing of one of the sentences is just as ambiguous as the original sentence. Asking for the context in which a participant might use each sentence may overcome this issue.

While the answers to various demographic questions may be helpful for discovering future avenues of inquiry, the most important data to collect is which interpretation order of each sentence is most common and how long it takes to recognize each interpretation. Here, "interpretation order" has two meanings: (A) for the structurally ambiguous sentence, the interpretation order is which grammatical sentence form was recognized first, SVO or SVOO, and which was recognized second; and (B) for the lexically ambiguous sentence, the interpretation order is which lexical definition was recognized first, "baseball" or "animal," and which was recognized second. Interpretation order is important because it creates a subset of data that can show preferences for how structural or lexical ambiguities are most likely to be interpreted. Interpretation time is important because it shows which is easier to recognize, structural or lexical ambiguity. The aforementioned categories will provide a lot of data for several different kinds of analysis.

For data analysis, once the survey has been administered and the data compiled, a chi-square analysis was best to determine which, if any, subset of data showed notable preference. For example, it may prove to be statistically significant how often the noun "bat" is interpreted to mean "animal" before it is interpreted to refer to "baseball." Determining whether lexical or syntactic ambiguities are easier to understand will be simpler: whichever has the higher average time to recognize the second possible interpretation is more difficult to recognize.

Pilot Study Results and Discussion

I administered the above-described survey on a small scale of thirty individuals on campus at Brigham Young University, using the script

in Appendix A and collecting information using the chart in Appendix B. I used the margins to take notes of behaviors and comments that I thought were significant. Near-full disclosure of the information I gathered can be found in Appendix C; the information that was left out did not show any patterns significant enough to report. The summary provided below will be more useful for this analysis.

Table 1: Ambiguity Survey Results Summary

		Structural Ambiguity				
	Gender	SVO-SVO	SVO-SVOO	SVOO-SVO	SVOO-SVOO	Time
Total	14 M; 16 F	3	3	19	5	
Average						15
		Lexical Ambiguity				
	Gender	Baseball-Baseball	Baseball-Animal	Animal-Baseball	Animal-Animal	Time
Total	14 M; 16 F	7	21	1	0	
Average						14

The average time that it took for participants to recognize structural ambiguities was only a single second more than the time it took to recognize lexical ambiguities, which isn't significant. However, what is significant is which subcategories in each overall category were more recognizable. The data related to both structural and lexical ambiguity, when entered into a chi-square test, both come out as extremely statistically significant, with a p-value of less than 0.0001. This strongly suggests that, when presented with a structurally ambiguous sentence, where possible, most people will see the SVOO meaning before the SVO meaning, but they will eventually be able to catch both meanings. Similarly, when presented with a lexically ambiguous sentence, my findings suggest that most people will have a specific definition that will always be preferred for each word, but it is still possible for them to recognize the alternate interpretation.

Each participant who could not find an alternate interpretation for a sentence, structural or lexical, appeared to have the same problem. He or she tried to reinterpret the context that first came to their mind and that they used to interpret the sentence, rather than trying

to reinterpret the sentence itself. For example, when asked to interpret the sentence, "Firmly grasp the bat in both hands," one participant said, "Oh, that's easy, it's like baseball." But when pressed to find the second possible interpretation for the sentence, they only came up with, "So, like in a robbery?" This inability to recognize ambiguity deserves further investigation in a separate project.

The results of this pilot survey give the strong impression that this overall project should be modified to focus more on seeing how individuals tend to interpret the two different categories of ambiguity, rather than focusing on which category of ambiguity is easier to recognize overall. Additionally, while administering the survey, I discovered that my script wasn't clear enough for many of my participants. Some were confused, even after several explanations of what was being asked of them, and it was very difficult to not ask leading questions to help them understand. In particular, the word "firmly" in "Firmly grasp the bat in both hands" seemed to complicate reinterpretation of the sentence. Most people didn't want to imagine someone grabbing a bat, the animal, "firmly." However, other participants seemed to understand instinctively what was being asked of them and provided alternative interpretations without being prompted. The example sentences could be made clearer, but in the end each participant's ability to engage with the survey seemed to be related to their conscious grasp of English grammar.

Overall, this pilot project was a success because it clarified what the focus of the project should be: determining which sub-categories of lexical and structural ambiguities the human mind tends to recognize and why.

Conclusion

If there is one thing to be taken from this survey, it's that most people have strong patterns for how they interpret ambiguous uses of language. Most people have topics or ideas they strongly associate with certain words or sentence forms, and it's difficult to break them away from those norms without clear context or much prompting. This information could be very useful for comedians in controlling audience expectations to maximize the power of a punchline or for news writers to avoid making misleading headlines or sentences. This also could be used to examine where some forms of miscommunication originate from. It is clear that these patterns of human thought deserve deeper inspection with a larger project.

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Appendix A

The following is the script used to conduct the survey.

Hello, my name is David Ludlow, and I am doing research on ambiguity. Would you be willing to participate in a brief survey?

Thank you! This survey has three parts. First, I'm going to ask you some brief demographic questions. If you are not comfortable with any of them, you do not have to answer them:

1-How old are you?

2-Have you declared your major yet? (If so: What is it?)

3-What city and state did you grow up in?

For the second part, I'm going to show you two different sentences, and I'm going to ask you to create your own context for these sentences and restate them in your own words:

1-Be sure to take her flowers. (Syntactic ambiguity.)

2-Firmly grasp the bat in both hands. (Lexical ambiguity.)

For the third part, I'm going to ask you to look at both of these sentences again while being timed. Both of them have a second meaning that is very different from the first meaning. Please restate, in your own words and in-context, the second meaning for each sentence as I show them to you. (After showing the sentence, start time. Once they recognize the alternate interpretation, or once they give up, stop time.)

1-Be sure to take her flowers.

2-Firmly grasp the bat in both hands.

Thank you very much for your time!

(Show them the notecards with the sentences, but do not read the notecards aloud.)

Appendix B

The following is the form used to collect data from the survey.

Number: _____

Gender: M F

Age: _____

Declared Major: _____

Birth City/State: _____

First Interpretation:

Sentence 1: SVO SV-IO-DO

Sentence 2: Ball Animal

Second Interpretation:

Sentence 1: SVO SV-IO-DO

Time:_____ seconds

Sentence 2: Ball Animal

Time:_____ seconds

Appendix C

Row	Gender	Geographic Area	SVO-SVO	SVO-SVOO	SVOO-SVO	SVOO-SVOO	Time	Baseball-Baseball	Baseball-Animal	Animal-Baseball	Time
1	M	South			1		4		1		12
2	M	Northeast			1		6		1		0
3	M	West			1		6		1		0
4	F	West			1		33		1		10
5	F	West		1			13	1			45
6	F	West	1				16		1		5
7	M	South			1		9		1		7
8	F	West			1		3		1		8
9	M	Northeast	1				45	1			50
10	F	West				1	26	1			12
11	F	West			1		0		1		0
12	F	South			1		6		1		12
13	M	West			1		3		1		3
14	M	South		1			0	1			21
15	F	West			1		10		1		10
16	F	Midwest			1		25		1		5
17	M	West				1	33	1			23

Row	Gender	Geo-graphic Area	SVO-SVO	SVO-SVOO	SVOO-SVO	SVOO-SVOO	Time	Baseball-Baseball	Baseball-Animal	Animal-Baseball	Time
18	F	Northeast				1	33	1			25
19	M	Canada			1		8		1		1
20	F	Northeast		1			3		1		25
21	M	West			1		34		1		16
22	F	West			1		3		1		9
23	F	England			1		6		1		15
24	F	Northeast			1		18		1		11
25	M	South			1		4		1		4
26	F	West			1		4	1			42
27	M	West				1	28				9
28	M	West			1		5		1		24
29	F	West				1	38		1		21
30	M	West	1				20			1	0
Totals:	14M 16F		3	3	19	5		7	21	1	
Averages:							15				14

Appendix C, cont.

The previous chart contains the majority of the data gathered by survey for this pilot project. The gender and geographic area of each participant was included in this chart in case future researchers needed the information. The age of each participant was left out, as almost all of them were within the small range of eighteen and twenty-two; the specific city and state that each participant was raised in was left out, in favor of their general geographic areas; each participant's major was left out, as there were not enough participants that shared majors to draw real conclusions from that data; and the column "Animal-Animal" was left out, as no participant interpreted the sentence "Grasp the bat firmly in both hands" to be referring to the animal twice in a row.

To correctly interpret the chart, keep the following in mind:

1-SVO here represents the grammatical structure "subject-verb-object," and SVOO represents the grammatical structure "subject-verb-indirect object-direct object." Each relevant column shows how each participant interpreted the sentence "Be sure to take her flowers," and in what order each interpretation was recorded. An SVO interpretation of the sentence could be paraphrased as "Please take away the flowers belonging to her." An SVOO interpretation of the sentence could be paraphrased as "Please bring the flowers to her."

2-Baseball and Animal here represent each participant's interpretation of the word *bat* in the sentence "Firmly grasp the bat in both hands," and in what order each interpretation was received. A Baseball interpretation of the sentence could be paraphrased as "Firmly grasp the baseball bat in both hands." An Animal interpretation of the sentence could be paraphrased as "Firmly grasp the small, furry, flying mammal in both hands."

3-The "Time" column represents the seconds it took to reinterpret the sentence.

4-A "1" can be considered the equivalent of a checkmark, except for in the "Totals" and "Averages" categories—a "1" in the category "SVO-SVOO" means that, when presented with the relevant sentence, the participant interpreted the sentence as a subject-verb-object sentence and then a subject-verb-indirect object-direct object sentence. "1"s were used over checkmarks to assist in data analyzation.

5-A "0" in the "Time" column means that the participant recognized the sentence as ambiguous immediately and stated both possible interpretations of the sentence without being prompted.

Appendix D

This appendix is intended to build on the information on structural and lexical ambiguity provided in the first paragraph of the "Methodology" section, specifically for anyone unfamiliar with or looking for extra help with the English grammar terminology.

Structural ambiguity occurs when a sentence could be interpreted to have multiple grammatical structures. For example, "Be sure to take her flowers" can be interpreted as a subject-verb-object sentence (which can be paraphrased as "Take [or steal] the flowers that belong to her") or as a subject-verb-indirect object-direct object sentence (which can be paraphrased as "Take the flowers to her"). Lexical ambiguity is created by words with multiple meanings in the same grammatical category: for example, *bat* is a noun that can mean "baseball bat" or "small, furry, flying mammal."

Note that lexically ambiguous sentences do not change the grammatical structure of a sentence at all. If a word has another meaning in a different grammatical category, the sentence that word is in is structurally ambiguous, not lexically ambiguous. In the sentence "Take her flowers," the word *her* is ambiguous. It can be a possessive, representing "flowers which belong to her," or a pronoun, representing an actual person. The grammatical ambiguity of this word is what makes the entire sentence structurally ambiguous.

"It's Me," or "It Is I"?

Corpus Findings

Jeremiah Madsen

Language usage experts have long debated whether a pronoun in a subject complement position should take the object case (It's me) or the subject case (It is I). Findings from corpus analyses indicate that the subject case has been on a steady decline for the last century, while the object case has been on the rise. In contemporary English, the subject case most often appears in a subject complement when it precedes a relative clause. This phenomenon can be explained by applying the idea of specifiers from discourse analysis.

Sally's friends drop her off at her home and she knocks on the door. Her mom says, "Who's there?" Sally is about to identify herself, when she finds herself paralyzed with grammar-induced uncertainty. Does she say "It's me," or "It is I"?

Many of us can relate to Sally's plight. In such a situation, nearly all of us would say "It's me." But if asked, many of us would say that "It is I" is considered more grammatically correct. The problem is more an issue of usage than an issue of grammar. Both expressions are used frequently by native English speakers, and both expressions clearly convey their meaning. However, for the last two and a half centuries, *it's me* has been condemned by prescriptive grammarians, not on the basis of clarity, but on the basis of their iffy grammatical postulations. When actual usage is examined, corpus analysis shows that *it is I* and similar constructions have been on the decline for more than a century. The data reveal that in contemporary English, *it is I* is used almost exclusively to introduce a relative clause: "It is I who knocks on the door!" This is likely because in such constructions, the "I" is seen not as the object of the verb "is" but as the subject of the noun clause: "I who knocks on the door." A greater awareness of this usage pattern will enable grammar and usage guides to make more precise guidelines for this thorny issue.

Let's take a moment to define the grammar. Phrases like *it is I* or *it is me* are known as *copular* constructions: sentences where a linking verb (typically a form of *to be*) connects or "couples" the subject (*it*) with the object (*me/I*). Since the object of a copular construction is effectively a restatement of the subject, the object is called the *subject complement*. The crux of the debate is whether the subject complement should be in the *subject* case (I, you, he, she, they) or the *object* case (me, you, him, her, them). In all other types of constructions, pronouns that follow verbs are always in object case: *the ball hit him*, not *the ball hit he*. With copular constructions, however, the object of the linking verb simply restates the subject. Does that mean it should be in the subject case? Some experts say yes; others say no.

The usage debate goes back to the eighteenth century. According to Merriam-Webster's *Dictionary of English Usage* (1994), the issue began with the prescriptive grammarian Robert Lowth (1762), who argued that the subject complement should be in the subject case, not the object case. Lowth based his argument on Latin grammar, which uses the subject case in copular constructions. Lowth was initially opposed by Joseph Priestley (1761), but later grammarians, including

Robert Baker (1770), Lindley Murray (1795), and Wilson Follett (1966), sided with Lowth (Merriam-Webster's, 1994, pp. 566–68). The traditional prescriptive rule is reiterated by Bryan Garner in *Modern American Usage* (2003), where he says that "the pronoun in the predicate denotes the same person as the subject, . . . so the predicate takes the nominative form because of that interchangeability" (p. 643). However, many modern usage guides disagree, pointing to the widespread use of the object case in standard English. Garner himself recognizes the growing use of the object case, and he admits that many writers avoid the strict rule "merely to avoid seeming pedantic" (p. 643). As early as the 1930s, a grammarian named Janet Aiken approved using the object case, writing in *Commonsense Grammar* (1936) that "such a change from *It is I* to *It's me* is probably a benefit to the English Language. It involves no ambiguity, simplifies grammar, and is intrinsically as euphonious as the alternative form" (p. 26). In a more recent guide, Ebbitt and Ebbitt (1990) note that speakers and writers of English are likely to use the object case for subject complements and that "all the major grammars of English regard *it's me* as acceptable" (p. 141).

Historically, has the English language favored one option over another? Merriam-Webster's (1994) cites examples of both *it is I* and *it is me* in literature going back to the sixteenth century. It notes that the use of the subject case was initially more common and has since been on the decline, while the object case is used increasingly more, especially in the *it's me* construction. In explaining this tendency, Merriam-Webster's points out that the subject complement is in "objective territory" after the verb, a place where most other constructions will demand the objective case (p. 566). The English language has a long history of object pronouns gaining ground over their subject counterparts, most notably in the object pronoun *you* completely displacing the subject pronoun *ye*.

Which option do people favor in contemporary usage? To answer this question, I searched two BYU corpora—the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA; Davies, 2008) and the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA; Davies, 2010)—to see how often people use subject pronouns versus object pronouns in subject complements. I looked specifically at the constructions "It was him/he," "It is him/he," "It is me/I," and "If I were him/he." The results are shown in Table 1. A complicating factor was that the search engine was unable to differentiate between an actual copular construction and the same

string of words in a different grammatical pattern (e.g., I don't know what *it was he* was looking for). In these cases, I examined the first thirty results, calculated the percent of copular constructions, and applied that percent to the total to arrive at an approximation of the number of actual copular constructions; these estimated numbers are noted with asterisks.

Table 1. Instances of Word Strings in Contemporary (COCA) and Historical (COHA) American English

Word string	COCA	COHA
It was him	535	246
It was he	*370	*1000
It's him	449	259
It is him	58	31
It's he	43	55
It is he	*73	*530
It's me	1762	1157
It is me	*70	0
It's I	22	113
It is I	*130	*570
If I were him	53	0
If I were he	12	0
Total object case	2,927	1,693
Total subject case	648	2,268
Total constructions	3,575	3,961

*Approximations

The corpus findings immediately reveal some interesting trends. In every category, the object pronoun is used far more often in contemporary English than in historical English, while the subject pronoun displays the opposite pattern. The findings also show that the person of the pronoun (first person or third person) affects its use. In historical English, the "more correct" phrases *it was he* and *it is he* occur far more frequently than their counterparts *it was him* and *it is him*. However, the first-person phrase *it's me* occurs far more frequently than *it is I*. The object pronoun *me* is used far more commonly with

the less formal contraction *it's* than with its more formal counterpart *it is*, suggesting that object pronouns are viewed as more casual and natural in subject complements than subject pronouns are.

The corpus also shows the frequency of word strings by year. The construction *it was him* has been on a steady rise, from 0.14 instances per million words in the early 1800s to 1.54 in 2017. In contrast, *it was he* rose in use during the 1800s, peaked at 7.29 around 1900, then declined to 0.74 in 2017. The construction *it's me* has proliferated; it was not attested until 1830, but its frequency has since risen to 5.88 in the year 2000. These data support the observation made by Merriam-Webster's that the object case has been steadily rising in frequency for the last two centuries.

The analysis gets more interesting when we look at what comes *after* the copular construction. Frequently, it is followed by a relative clause. Table 2 shows the instances of "It was him/he" clauses divided between those followed by *who* (the most common relative pronoun) and those not. The data show that when a relative clause follows a copular construction, the subject complement will almost invariably take the subject case. A relative clause is almost never preceded by a pronoun in the object case. This pattern occurs in both contemporary and historical English.

Table 2. Frequency of Relative Clauses following Copular Constructions

Word string	COCA	COHA
It was him	526	238
It was him who	9	8
It was he	*70	*104
It was he who	300	896

*Approximations

The same relationship with relative clauses occurs with instances of *it's me* and *it is I*. For the first thirty instances of these phrases, I divided them into several categories: the construction standing alone (*It's not you, it's me*); the construction followed by an appositive introducing the speaker (*It's me, your best friend*); and the construction introducing a relative clause (*It was I who sabotaged the bridge*). Table 3 compares the frequency of each construction. The object pronoun *me* is predominantly used when standing alone, while the subject pronoun *I* is usually used with a relative clause. In many of the

instances where *it is I* is followed by the identification of the speaker, a relative clause follows immediately afterward (*It is I, your father, who tricked you*).

Table 3. Frequency of Linking Constructions Divided by Type

Construction	Plain	__, [speaker]	____ who
It's me	24	6	0
It is me	25	1	4
It's I*	2	1	19
It is I	4	11	15

*Total instances of *it's I* numbered less than 30

Is there an explanation for why speakers prefer the subject case before relative clauses and the object case everywhere else? Some additional insights can be found in the growing field of discourse analysis, which replaces traditional grammar definitions with a more pared down terminology based on function. In discourse analysis, every clause has a specifier, which acts as the subject of a sentence or clause. Most English speakers naturally follow a principle known as *subject pointing*, which demands that the subject, or specifier, of a sentence should already be known to the reader or listener, and that any new information should be contained in the predicate. While this principle of subject pointing is often broken in prose, it is usually followed in natural speech and leads to greater clarity.

In English, subject pronouns are used to stand in for the specifier of a sentence or clause, while object pronouns are used in every other grammatical function. This explains why the subject pronoun is so predominantly used in subject complements where it is part of an extraposed *it* construction followed by a relative clause. In the sentence "It was he who stole the cookies," the word *it* is not acting as the specifier of the sentence, because *it* does not have a logical antecedent. We don't know what *it* is. Rather, *he* is acting as the specifier. The extraposed *it* structure gives greater emphasis to *he*, but does not remove *he*'s function as the specifier of the sentence. Thus, *he* is in the subject case.

On the other hand, in all other types of constructions, the pronoun is part of the predicate and cannot therefore be the specifier, because a clause can only have one specifier. Thus in the clause "if I were him," *I* is already acting as the specifier. To say "if I were he" would be to have two specifiers within one clause—a construction

foreign to English. This hypothesis is supported by examining other subject complement constructions other than those with *it*. Consider the following sentence: "Our only hope is him." It is unlikely that native English speakers would say, "Our only hope is *he*," because the sentence already has a clear specifying agent with the word *hope*.

Despite the objections of prescriptive grammarians, the use of the subject case in subject complements has been declining in the last century, matched by an increase in the use of the object case. The object case dominates even well-edited prose, suggesting that both writers and editors are abandoning the traditional rule. Although predicting how a language will change over time is nearly impossible, it is likely that for at least the next several decades, the trends of the last century will continue. As prescriptive grammar gradually gives way to more descriptive approaches, objections over *it's me* should largely disappear.

In light of these findings, modern usage guides should suggest the following: In all cases where a pronoun is needed in a place other than the subject of the clause—even if it be the subject complement—use the object case, except when introducing a relative clause. We can eliminate this last caveat by simply saying that in a sentence like *It is I who knocks on the door,* the subject complement is actually a noun clause: *I who knocks on the door*. The advantage of this definition is that the pronoun *I* functions as the specifier of the new clause, thus explaining why it is in the subject case. With this revised definition, we can thus simplify the usage guideline to the following: "Use the subject case *only* when a pronoun is acting as the subject of a clause." This rule is simple and elegant, it preserves the logical meaning of *subject* in the term *subject case*, and it reflects actual usage. It also completely overturns the arguments made by Lowth and his followers two centuries ago. Armed by this simple rule and backed by corpus evidence, Sally can now confidently declare, "It's me!" Or, if she's feeling more verbose, "It is I who knocks on the door!"

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Referential Relations in the Sermon on the Mount

Michael Oaks

The Sermon on the Mount constitutes the Savior's first recorded set of formal teachings during His mission. In the sermon, the Savior presents a series of theological juxtapositions, contrasting the preparatory Mosaic law with His preeminent eternal law. The purpose of this study is to analyze the Master's use of referential relations in the sermon. Specifically, what can we infer from His choice of referents in teachings that evoke the natural realm, the supernatural realm, or the sociopolitical realm? The Lord's references to these realms were analyzed to determine whether He employs certain realms to teach specific categories of principles.

For both its comprehensiveness and paramount role in transcending the Law of Moses, the Sermon on the Mount is perhaps the most studied and quotable passage of scripture. The passage constitutes the Savior's first recorded set of formal teachings during his three-year mission, which began in His thirtieth year immediately after His baptism, and contains many of His most important teachings. In the sermon, the Savior presents a series of theological juxtapositions, contrasting the preparatory Mosaic Law with His preeminent eternal law. To achieve such juxtapositions, the Lord employs various referents, figurative and literal, that expand the understanding of past and present audiences. In his book *Beyond Translation,* Dr. A. L. Becker (1995) identifies six contextual relations (referents) that can be applied to the analysis of the Lord's sermon: structural, generic, medial, interpersonal, referential, and silential (p. 186).

This study, however, focuses on just one of those relations that the Master employs: referential relations. Dr. Becker (1995) defines them as "relations of a text to nature, the world one believes to lie beyond language" (p. 186). He subdivides referential relations into three subcategories: natural, sociopolitical, and supernatural relations.

For this study, I considered the supernatural to be that which is scientifically inexplicable, such as "Heaven" and "Hell" or "God" and "Mammon." By contrast, I deemed the natural to be that which *is* scientifically explicable and refers to any living organism other than humans or any substance that supports some form of life. A few examples of the Lord's natural references are "fowls of the air," "sand," and "lilies." As for the sociopolitical, I considered it to be that which references neither the natural nor the supernatural and that involves a political or social object, idea, status, or position, such as "publican," "scribes," "Pharisees," and "Gentiles."

In a religious article entitled "The Sociocultural Context of the Sermon on the Mount," Amy B. Hardison, instructor at the East Valley Institute of Religion, highlighted some of the referential relations that appear in the Lord's teachings in the sermon. Most notably, the city of Jerusalem was the object of some of the Savior's references.

> [Jerusalem] is, no doubt, the city Jesus' listeners thought of when he proclaimed, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:14). This city, though mentioned by name only once in the sermon (see Matthew 5:35), makes several subtle appearances. For instance, when Jesus said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, . . . for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 4:11, 12), many first-century Jews would have thought of Jerusalem, where many prophets had been killed. (Hardison, 2010)

Hardison insightfully discusses some of the referential relations, implicit and explicit, that the Savior's contemporaneous audience understood. Another example of the Savior's referential relations that Hardison examines is flash floods, which she believes provide context to better understand the Savior's parable about the foolish man who built his house upon sand. She observes that "[in] the Middle East, most rivers are not ever-flowing but are dry washes called 'wadis'" that are often sandy and susceptible to flash floods (Hardison, 2010). The Savior's parable about the house upon the sand, then, is simultaneously literal and figurative.

Although Hardison's analysis is rather detailed, it expounds on only a few referential relations in the Sermon. Conversely, while less elaborative in individual examples than Hardison's article, this article presents a more panoramic portrait of the sermon by accounting for the totality of the Lord's referential relations. Indeed, this study is comprehensive enough to identify patterns for the Lord's holistic references to the three referential realms: sociopolitical, natural, and supernatural.

Methodology

I amalgamated all references of the same kind to their appropriate subcategory: sociopolitical, natural, or supernatural. Within these subcategories, I avoided referential redundancy by including only individually distinct references. This rule of individual distinctness was important: there are two accounts of the Sermon on the Mount in the King James Version of the Bible—one from Matthew 5–7 and one from Luke 6:18–49—and many of the referential relations in each account represent duplicates of the other. In fact, the account in Luke, doubtless due to its brevity, contains only three individually distinct references; that is, Luke includes only three referential relations that Matthew does not. I counted each occurrence of the same reference as its own referential relation unless the occurrence was repeated within the same phrase. For instance, when the Savior teaches that many will come to Him in the next life and exclaim, "Lord, Lord," I counted both occurrences of the word "Lord" together as only one referential relation since the phrase involves only one referent.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord describes, alludes to, or employs eighty-two referential relations. Of them, there were twenty-eight natural references, four sociopolitical references, and fifty supernatural references (see Appendix).

The Natural Realm

Unlike the Lord's supernatural and sociopolitical references, which convey meanings mainly in a literal manner, nearly all His natural references convey meanings figuratively. For instance, the Lord declares, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid" (Matt. 5:14). While the "light" the Lord alludes to is itself literal, the *meaning* behind that light is clearly figurative. The Lord's disciples radiate light when they emulate the Savior's example and become examples for others to follow. In the preceding verse, the Lord provides another figurative natural reference: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13). These are just two of many other examples of figurative references. Of the Savior's twenty-eight references to the natural realm, only two of them are literal.

What explains the Lord's penchant for personifications of and metaphors about nature? Nature's makeup of the vulnerable, transient, mutable, and depraved proves useful for comparisons to humans in a juxtaposition-rich sermon. Indeed, it is nature's versatility that provides the Lord with metaphors and personifications related to a wide variety of human actors. After all, nature comprises predators and prey, night and day, rain and sun, sand and stone, light and dark, and heat and cold, to name just a few antitheses conducive to metaphors or personification. The Lord conjures up these kinds of antitheses to depict human actors ranging from God-fearing disciples to fence-sitting spectators to malice-scheming detractors.

Examples of these human actors in the sermon abound. The Lord compares the malice-scheming detractors to wolves: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). The sheep in that verse embody God-fearing disciples—those whom false prophets can only impersonate due to their notorious pride, hypocrisy, and priestcraft. In a contrast similar to that of sheep and wolves, the Savior affirms that the Lord "sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:44). Although the Lord references in this verse only the righteous and wicked, it is clear that the unjust also includes the fence-sitters, for He said in the same biblical book, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matt. 12:30).

What else explains the Lord's penchant for natural references? The totality of His natural references is almost universally known to His audience, both contemporaneous and modern. This phenomenon is

rather significant, given that the Lord loves humankind of every race, color, nationality, age, and era equally and given that His mission to save them is contingent on their understanding His word and living in accordance with it.

In many cases, the Lord's references to nature, a corruptible sphere, transmit both an intense repugnance and incomprehensible love for the wicked. The Lord's aversion for wickedness is so intense as to be palpable in phrases such as "ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15) and "if the salt have lost his savour . . . it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13), and "every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matt. 7:19).

What can we glean from the Lord's impassioned references to nature? We learn about one of the Lord's paradoxes. Just as the Savior paradoxically descended below all in His atonement and ascended above all with His resurrection, He paradoxically repudiates the wicked for their iniquity while loving them more than anyone has ever loved them. The Savior who condemns the behavior of the morally corrupt is the same who, in agony on the cross, appealed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

The Sociopolitical Realm

Though infrequent, the Lord's sociopolitical references exhibit a conspicuous pattern—namely, they convey derision toward a certain referent reviled by some of His contemporaneous audience: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). Many of the Lord's contemporaneous listeners would have welcomed this derision of the scribes' and Pharisees' level of righteousness. After all, some of His listeners had presumably just left their pharisaical or scribal liturgies for Him, and if they had not, they may have harbored antipathy for these religious organizations that sought to undermine, thwart, and frame Him. Equally known to and disliked by many in His audience were the publicans, about whom the Savior quipped: "And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?" (Matt. 5:47). While perhaps comical to modern ears, this scripture would have been palatable to contemporaneous ears because many publicans routinely charged extra taxes to personally profit from financially disadvantaged citizens.

The Lord's infrequent and derisive references to the sociopolitical may evince that He generally views it in a lesser light than the other two

realms. Significantly, of the three referential relations, the only one that is at least partially man-made is the sociopolitical realm. Modern-day scripture of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints relates a visit of God the Father to Moses that attests to Christ's role as the creator of the natural and supernatural realm but not necessarily the sociopolitical realm: "Behold, I reveal unto you concerning this heaven, and this earth; write the words which I speak. I am the Beginning and the End, the Almighty God; by mine Only Begotten I created these things" (Moses 2:1).

While modern scriptures of The Church of Jesus Christ demonstrate the Lord's providence in certain sociopolitical activities such as Christopher Columbus's discovery of the Americas (1 Nephi 13:12) or the Founding Fathers' formation of the Constitution (D&C 101:77, 80), the sociopolitical sphere is obviously man-made in many others, including in tyrannical regimes (encompassing most of the world's history). Indeed, many of those regimes have trampled on the very rights that God himself grants humankind such as freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, and free speech.

Surprisingly, while two of the four scriptures that reference the sociopolitical realm also reference the supernatural realm simultaneously, no scriptures reference the natural and sociopolitical realms simultaneously. Perhaps the Lord's intent in juxtaposing the supernatural with the sociopolitical was to underscore the superiority of the supernatural over the sociopolitical. Or, more likely, perhaps His intent was to accentuate the foolishness associated with incompliance with His word. One example that lends itself to this interpretation is found in Matthew 6: "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matt. 6:31–32). He implies, "If you do not follow my words, you will be like the Gentiles," an unwelcome prospect to most of His contemporaneous audience.

Although infrequent, the Lord's sociopolitical references illustrate His vast knowledge of His audience and of the world. His sociopolitical knowledge, preternatural for a carpenter's son, no doubt enhanced His ethos and persuasiveness as an orator.

The Supernatural Realm

To teach His timeless truths, the Savior uses many supernatural references. From a technical definition, all the Savior's principles are

attributable to heavenly precept and thus allude to the supernatural. However, for the purposes of this analysis, references are considered supernatural only if they are explicitly supernatural, that is, they refer to a place, principle, or person whose existence science or atheism would refuse to acknowledge.

The makeup of the Lord's fifty supernatural references is intriguing. His second-person addresses to and third-person discussion about the Father total eighteen of His supernatural references, or just over a third of them. The Savior references Heaven nineteen times, Himself five times (for these references, His audience might not have known He was referring to Himself, not God the Father, who was demonstrably represented in only one of those references), "Hell" three times, and "mammon" once.

His greater emphasis on the supernatural than on the natural or sociopolitical lends itself to various possible inferences. First, perhaps the Lord views supernatural references as more important than the other kinds of referential relations. Convincing justification for such an inference lies in the most common object of His supernatural references: the Father. If Heaven is viewed as the place where the Father inhabits, then there are more references, direct or indirect, to the Fatherthan nearly all other referential relations in the Sermon on the Mount combined. While no Christian can comprehend the full depth of this Father-Son relationship, or the magnitude of Their shared mission, most Christians comprehend the centrality and preeminence of the Father and the Son in Christianity. Hence, they understand that, for at least references to deity, the supernatural supersedes the natural or the sociopolitical.

The Lord's characterization of the Father reinforces the greater significance of the supernatural as it relates to the natural or sociopolitical. The Lord directed, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). This directive, with its supernatural reference to deity and perfection, conveys more force than one of his natural references, such as, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth" (Matt. 6:19).

The Savior's constant emphasis on the supernatural supports the teaching that the lens through which He sees is an eternal one. All the Lord's supernatural references are beings, places, or qualities that have existed since before the foundation of the world and that, based on other biblical scripture, will always exist. One of the referential relations that exhibits an eternal quality is life. The Savior says,

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:14).

Interestingly, many of the principles for which the Lord employs an eternal or supernatural reference appear in the embodiment of absolutes. For instance, when the Lord notes, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8), the word *pure* conveys a sense of absoluteness or utter completeness. The pure in heart will one day, in fact, more than see God, the supernatural reference in the verse; they will, in consequence of achieving a quasi-supernatural or absolute state themselves, live with Him in His Heavenly abode. In other words, the Lord will one day, whether in this life or the next, be personally accessible to individuals who have, through the atonement of His Son Jesus Christ, purged themselves of unrighteousness and sin. Those individuals endeavor genuinely, if clumsily, to conform their lives to the Savior's supernatural mandate, "Be ye therefore perfect" (Matt. 5:48). He complements the directive with two more overtly supernatural references: that of the Father and that of Heaven. In such a way, He explains His specific standard of perfection, which is to become "even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

Conclusion

The frequency, objects, and tone associated with each of the Lord's subcategories of referential relations evince his different mindsets toward each of the categories. The Lord references the supernatural most often, employs almost exclusively positive referents about it, and speaks favorably of it. The Lord's mindset toward the sociopolitical, however, seems less positive. He references it least often and employs exclusively unfavorable references about it. His mindset toward the natural, by contrast, seems ambivalent. He references it a fair amount, but not nearly as much as the supernatural, and He includes both favorable and unfavorable references about it.

The topic addressed in this study is one that few have researched. For this reason, there is still much to discover about the Lord's referential relations. For instance, beyond general patterns, which this study provides, what else might we glean from the Lord's choice of each distinct referential relation? What referential relations does the Lord use in sermons other than the Sermon on the Mount? How do those referential relations differ from the referential relations in the Sermon on the Mount? What effect does the Lord's audience have on the kinds of referential relations He chooses to use?

Of course, in addition to referential relations, much is to be discovered about the Lord's other five contextual relations—namely, structural, generic, medial, interpersonal, and silential. The more researchers discover about the Savior's contextual relations, the more people will be able to learn about the Lord Himself. Discoveries about the Lord from religious leaders and researchers aid sons and daughters of God in the fulfillment of John's revelation about knowing God: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

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The Holy Bible. King James Version. Matthew 5–7. Luke 6:19–49.

Appendix

Natural References
Matthew 5:5, 13–15, 35, 44–45
Matthew 6:10, 19, 21–23, 25–26, 28, 30
Matthew 7:10, 15–20, 24–27

Sociopolitical References
Matthew 5:20, 32, 46–47

Supernatural References
Matthew 5:3, 8–12, 16, 18–20, 22, 29–30, 33–35, 37, 44–45, 48
Matthew 6:1, 4, 6, 8, 9–10, 13–15, 18, 20, 22–26, 30, 32–33
Matthew 7:11, 13

How to Be Successfully Awkward

Linguistic Lessons from *The Office*

Kimber Severance

The purpose of this article is to show how linguistic constructions like the Gricean maxims, cultural symbols, metaphors, and colloquialisms function in a space more familiar to a general audience. In order to prove how common the use of linguistic structures is, the research in this paper examines an episode of the popular TV show The Office. *This research analyzes the subtleties of a particular episode, picking out different instances where linguistics creates humorous scenarios. Through the analysis of just a single episode, evidence was found that* The Office *heavily depends on the use of linguistic instructions like the Gricean maxims, cultural symbols, metaphors, and colloquialisms in order to achieve its unique awkward humor.*

The Office is a popular television show that is known for its comedic use of awkward people and scenarios. By analyzing the dialogue of one episode, I was able to find a number of linguistic reasons for why the show is so successfully awkward. Ultimately, a number of speech violations are made throughout the episode by various characters. The mechanics of conversation, like the Gricean maxims, are also frequently misused or ignored. Cultural symbols, metaphors, colloquialisms, and the violations of the Gricean maxims are the main reasons why *The Office* feels so awkwardly funny.

The Gricean maxims were created in 1975 by a man named H. P. Grice. They are essentially principles of basic communication, and they include four categories—quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. Quantity refers to giving the appropriate amount of information in a verbal exchange, and not more or less than what is necessary or being asked for. Quality means that you don't say anything you believe to be false. Relevance means that your communication stays on topic with the conversation being held. Finally, manner means that you avoid ambiguity and attempt to be brief and orderly in your verbal interactions. These Gricean maxims describe the normal, general way that people communicate with one another.

In the beginning of the episode "Initiation," the Gricean maxim of relevance gets broken. The episode opens in the office where the main character Michael Scott and his boss Jan are in a meeting. In the meeting, Jan is interviewing Michael about his productivity. She asks him to "tell [her] what [he] did yesterday," and it is obvious that she means to ask what *work* did Michael do yesterday. Michael breaks the maxim of relevance when he misinterprets the meaning and responds as if Jan is only being friendly, asking if he did anything *fun* yesterday, and he replies with a casual, "Uh, nothing"—an inadequate response to her question.

The Gricean maxim of quantity is broken when he responds to Jan's question by giving more information than was required of him. After Jan asks about Michael's work productivity and he says, "Uh, nothing," he proceeds to tell Jan, "I worked, and then I went home to my condo, and Carol [Michael's girlfriend] came over, and we had sex." Jan was trying to ask Michael about what he had done specifically at work. She was not looking for an intimate account of his personal life. Michael therefore violated the Gricean maxim of quantity by giving more information than the conversation required.

Michael then breaks the Gricean maxim of manner by using ambiguous wording. He tells the camera, "Never, ever, ever sleep with your boss." However, he then continues to say, "I am so lucky that Jan and I only got to second base." The cultural slangs used in these two sentences do not make sense together because of their differing implications. By using the colloquial term *sleeping together*, Michael implies that he and Jan had sex. But using the term *second base* clarifies that they had not actually had sex. The scene is funny because it causes the audience to assume something startling at first, only to learn through the second sentence that the implication of the first sentence was wrong because of a misunderstanding of a colloquialism. Thus the first sentence is a clear example of the Gricean maxim of manner in that it is not clear.

The Gricean maxim of relevance is broken again later in the episode. At one point, employee Dwight is interrogating his coworker Ryan with a series of questions that are meant to test Ryan's knowledge about sales and the company, Dunder Mifflin. The problem is that all of the questions Dwight asks are extremely irrelevant. Instead of asking about sales, Dwight asks Ryan questions like, "What is Michael Scott's greatest fear?" and "What is the Dharma Initiative?" None of these questions are relevant to the topic of sales, which is what Ryan is actually trying to talk to Dwight about.

The episode also has examples of ignored social cues. Jan asks Pam, the office receptionist, to fill out a schedule that lists Michael's productivity throughout the day. As soon as Jan makes this cumbersome request, Pam attempts to politely decline Jan's request by saying, "Oh, I don't know." But Jan either does not pick up on this social signal or intentionally ignores it and proceeds to simply thank Pam as if she had said yes, and then Jan quickly leaves the office before Pam can decline her request more directly. This is just one example of many instances in the series where linguistic cues and signals that are common in our culture are not picked up by the characters.

Another scene between Dwight and Ryan is one of the most raved-about scenes in this particular episode. Dwight takes Ryan to a beet field in order to teach Ryan how to do sales. Dwight makes Ryan plant a beet seed. Then, in a failed attempt to be metaphorical and symbolic, Dwight says, "Just as you have planted your seed in the ground, I'm going to plant my seed in you." The seed is meant to represent Dwight sharing his knowledge of sales with Ryan so that he can be good at sales too. But the symbolic use of the word *seed* fails

here. This is a classic example of a poor choice of words because *seed* and *planting seeds* is also an innuendo for semen and conception. The precariousness of the phrase structure works in a comedic way precisely because Dwight's use of symbols is so flawed.

This botched-up use of symbols is similar to the show's common use of colloquialisms. The show's use of colloquialisms is somewhat awry in that many of them are uncommon and rural, adding to the confusing comedic effect of it all for a wider audience. An example of a colloquialism in this episode would be when a man selling pretzels to Michael says that he will give Michael "the works," meaning that he will put all of the available toppings on Michael's pretzel. Other times, the show's use of colloquialisms is to get the audience's attention and alienate the audience from the characters for comedic effect. For example, in a scene involving several coworkers, Michael and Stanley make Phyllis go to the back of the pretzel line rather than allowing her to cut in front of them to stand with her fiancé, Vance, who then calls Michael and Stanley "a pair of Marys." This uncommon phrase draws the audience's attention to the backward and sheltered community that the characters live in. Another instance where this same thing happens is when Dwight exclaims "Screw gun!" in place of saying "Dang it!" or swearing in some way. There is a lot of humor behind small, rural communities, and *The Office* uses the rural awkwardness of Scranton, Pennsylvania, to its advantage.

In the end, much of the awkward humor of *The Office* is achieved through multiple kinds of linguistic failures and oversights. The characters do not know how to use many proper conventions of communication. Cultural symbols, metaphors, colloquialisms, and the rules of Gricean maxims are all concepts that are strategically broken in this show in order to make the popular awkward humor that makes the show so successfully funny.

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"I'll Sing You a Song"

Gaelic History and Traditions in Folk Music

Erica Suggs

Folk songs call upon "historical genealogy . . . in which the singer performs as storyteller" (Eckstein, 2010, p. 113). This article demonstrates how folk songs aid in the pontification, or bridging (Becker, 2000, p. 321), of the Gaelic culture and other cultures. This bridge is created through an analysis of six Gaelic folk songs from three genres—supernatural songs, war songs, and mouth music. The analysis shows that Gaelic song lyrics tell stories of the Gaelic people and culture, and enlarge understanding through their language, direct narratives of history, and implementations of significant cultural traditions, such as Celtic knots and the Irish ringfort.

> In a multicultured world, a world of multiple epistemologies, there is need for a new philologist—a specialist in contextual relations—in all areas of knowledge in which text building (written or oral) is a central activity: literature, history, law, music, politics, psychology, trade, even war and peace.
>
> —Alton Becker

The traditional music of any given country is a prominent part of that country's culture because it teaches the history of that people. In any folk tradition, both written and oral text building are a "central activity" (Becker, 2000, p. 26). The opening quote describes text building as taking place in a variety of activities, even in some ways we would not think of as textual (such as war or politics). Part of what makes such things textual is their being recorded as literary works. For example, wars become literature through their textual existence—the stories people tell about them. This textualization can take place in written and oral prose stories and in narratives told through song.

As a folk musician fascinated with Celtic culture and history, I have spent much time studying and learning Celtic folk songs and the stories behind them. The songs I love to sing carry insights into the Gaelic culture. The lyrics textualize the history and become verbal behavior, serving various functions. Among the possible functions are entertainment, the promotion of cultural values and morality, the expression of mutual experience, the recording of historical events, and communication with supernatural beings (Fabb, 1997, p. 6). While one song is not by any means restricted to one function or category (Blankenhorn, 2018, p. 75; Fabb, 1997, p. 6), these functions are a useful way to classify six songs that I have explored in detail in this article.

The importance of understanding folk songs lies in the culture and history behind them. We can best "understand musical activity by considering the uses and functions that music serves within a given culture" (Blankenhorn, 2018, p. 71). Gaelic songs communicate the culture through their contextual references and linguistic features: "Gaelic culture is 'based on a language . . . and from that comes its literature which is communicated through song'" (Sparling, 2003, p. 145). Following are my analyses of the six Gaelic folk songs in three categories: two supernatural songs ("The Elfin Knight" and "A Ghaol Leig Dhachaigh Gum Mhathair Mi"), two war songs ("The Wind that Shakes the Barley" and "The Flowers of the Forest"), and two mouth music songs ("Fear a Bhrochain" and "Brochan Lom,

Tana Lom"). Each of these categories serves a different function in the Gaelic culture (Fabb, 1997, p. 6), and each song tells us a little bit more about life in Ireland and Scotland through their structure, especially through their comparison to Celtic knots—intricate interlaced patterns composed of plaits or interwoven cords (see Figure 1). These songs support my theory that contextual narratives are told through linguistic and literary features in folk music, enlarging our understanding of the Gaelic culture. The lyrics to these songs are found in the appendix, along with English translations where necessary.

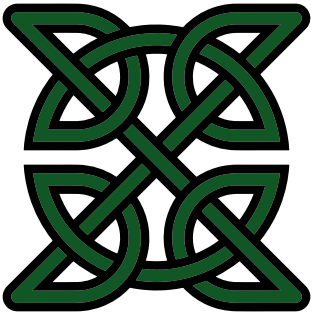

Figure 1. Celtic knot.

Supernatural Songs

These songs clearly serve the function of communication with supernatural beings, but they could also fall into several of the other categories Fabb (1997) describes (p. 6). Both supernatural songs I analyzed could be considered airs. In airs, the first or last verse is typically repeated at each end of the song; similarly, ballads usually end in the same place they began, making airs and ballads ring compositions. Ring compositions are significant in Celtic culture because they imply eternity. In fact, in Irish poetry there is a term, *dúnad* (literally "closing"), that refers to the ring composition structure, or repetition of a word or phrase at both the beginning and end of a song or poem to close it. This idea comes from the closing of a ringfort, or circle of stones (Watkins, 1995, p. 37). Ringforts had a variety of possible functions in Ireland, including enclosing a homestead or village, protecting a tomb, or providing a meeting place for supernatural beings. The prominent use of this ring structure reveals the significance of the Celtic knot. Like ringforts, Celtic knots are never-ending, and we could look at Gaelic songs as being the same way.

Folklorist Francis J. Child collected hundreds of ballads from England and Scotland (known now as the Child Ballads). A large portion of these are supernatural ballads, or ballads containing supernatural events. Either the first or last verse would be sung at each end of the ballad, or a line or phrase would be repeated, therefore tying the entire narrative together in a ring composition. Child Ballad 2, "The

Elfin Knight," falls into the subset of ballads that David Buchan calls the *witcombat* minigenre (Buchan, 1991, p. 63). (David Buchan was a scholar and lecturer renowned for his research of ballads; he is best known for his work *The Ballad and the Folk.*) The *witcombat* genre is where a "mortal counters the tests of cleverness posed by an unmortal and thereby escapes being bespelled" (Buchan, 1991, p. 67). The "story's tension derives from the threat of the spell," which "subsumes three elements . . . the bespelling, the state of being bespelled, and the unspelling" (p. 67–68).

"The Elfin Knight" tells the story of a young woman becoming bespelled by an elfin knight who gives her an impossible task. She counters his spell by challenging him to three similarly impossible tasks, freeing herself and breaking her obligation to marry him. Buchan (1991) also explains that supernatural ballads of the *witcombat* genre are much less common in English balladry, indicating a link between the Scottish ballads and Nordic ballads, among which supernatural themes are also quite common (p. 63). In his essay, Buchan (1991) analyzes several of the Child Ballads using a method called *talerole*, which he defines as "the interactive function served by a character in a narrative" (p. 63). His method and analysis help us see the historical significance of the Child Ballads.

The significance of these songs lies in the true meaning of the *witcombat* ballads and the purpose of the supernatural ballads collectively. There is a considerable lack of explicit reference to the Devil in Scottish balladry despite his prominence in Scottish tales and myths. Buchan suggests, however, that the *witcombat* minigenre is a separate genre of supernatural ballad because it once had its own class of supernatural being to deal with—namely, the Devil (p. 72). All supernatural ballads were meant to "show the dangers in these relationships [with supernatural beings], and how they can be evaded or mitigated. . . . The narratives demonstrate how to avoid such relationships, how to behave when you can't avoid them, how to end and how not to end them" (p. 72). The purpose of the ballads is to show what to do when you have an encounter with a supernatural being, and in this case, that was the Devil.

The introduction of Christianity to Gaelic Ireland and Scotland was difficult for the people to adapt to. These supernatural ballads show that the pagan superstitions of the Gaelic culture crept into the newly introduced Christian beliefs. They had to compromise their old beliefs with their new religion, and consequently they needed a plan for how to avoid evil and supernatural encounters should they experience them.

"A Ghaol Leig Dhachaigh Gum Mhathair Mi" ("Love, let me home to my mother") is a Scottish Gaelic air that would traditionally be sung with the first verse repeated at the end. This repetition of the girl's plea makes it a ring composition. The story tells of a young girl going to visit her lover in the fields, where she encounters an *each-uisge*, or water horse. The *each-uisge* is a mythical being, one of the most vicious in Celtic mythology, that resides in lochs and other large bodies of water (as opposed to kelpies that live in rivers and streams). It is a shape-shifter, often appearing in the form of a handsome man while typically residing in the form of a horse. While not a Child Ballad, this air appears to follow the same formula as some of the supernatural ballads. The *each-uisge* apparently makes promises to the girl to entice her to stay with him, and in the end, she refuses and begs him to let her return home.

Perhaps this air was meant to tell a story that someone claimed to have experienced, but more likely than not, its purpose was to show what to do should you find yourself in those circumstances. The Gaelic peoples had adopted Christianity, but they still relied heavily on their myths and legends, usually involving supernatural beings tricking people to go away with them. Thus, many of their airs and ballads were meant to teach the listeners what to do should such beings be encountered. They "carry the lore of the tribe, which here concerns . . . the complex sensitivities of human emotion." They show how "a traditional community passes on its practical human wisdom, educates its members, and tries to maintain the mental balance" of the community (Buchan, 1991, p. 76).

War Songs

War songs primarily serve the function of recording historical events but can also express mutual experience and promote values or morals (Fabb, 1997, p. 6). Some of these were marching songs, sung as soldiers went to battle. Others were written after the wars to tell what had happened and to evoke the pity of the audience. These songs arise from a long-held Indo-European poetic tradition called "imperishable fame," where a hero is kept alive through poetry and song even after he is dead (Watkins, 1995, p. 173–78). The two songs I analyze below memorialize the Rebellion of 1798 in Ireland and the Battle of Flodden fought by King James IV for the freedom of Scotland.

The surface-level function of "The Wind that Shakes the Barley" is that of a love song, perhaps with the purpose of entertainment and

bonding the audience through experience. However, as Fabb (1997) says, a text or verbal behavior may have different functions in different contexts (p. 6). This song is certainly not limited to one function. It is a ballad replete with symbolism about one of the infamous Irish rebellions, the Rebellion of 1798. It was written by English professor Robert Dwyer Joyce and first published in 1861. Its functions are to record historical events, as well as to portray an experience that the audience is hopefully familiar with, bringing them together.

Before delving into the language and symbolism, there are some historical facts to cover which enhance our understanding of the song and the story it tells. During the Irish Rebellion of 1798, the rebels were nicknamed "croppies" because they would crop (cut) their hair short. The croppies would carry barley in their pockets as rations, and when they were slain they were thrown into mass unmarked graves. Every spring, the barley that is buried with these slain rebels grows and marks the graves, which have become known as "croppy holes." The croppy holes are a constant reminder of Ireland's struggles and fights for freedom from British rule.

In this war ballad, every stanza ends with the imagery of the wind shaking the barley, reminding the participants, both performer and spectator, of the croppy holes and the Rebellion of 1798. The story of the ballad evokes freedom no less. It tells of a young man trying to choose between staying with his "old love" (his sweetheart) and going with his "new love" (Ireland and the revolution). He struggles with this decision and eventually leaves his sweetheart to join the United Irishmen. As he is parting with her, she is shot by an enemy and dies in his arms. In our surface-level understanding of this ballad, his sweetheart simply is killed, and he buries her. But his "old love" dying represents the death of his "new love," the revolution for Ireland's freedom. Distraught with grief, he goes to Oulart Hollow to avenge his sweetheart's death. The Battle at Oulart Hill was a momentary victory for the United Irishmen during the Rebellion of 1798. Here, where there was temporary success for the Irish rebellion, the young man wanders "noon, night and morning early" around his sweetheart's grave, mourning the eventual failure of Ireland's campaign for freedom, "With breaking heart whene'er I hear / The wind that shakes the barley."

Fabb (1997) describes how "parallelism (and repetition) can be used as ways of marking an episode boundary" (p. 198). We can look at this ballad as five episodes or as two major episodes: one before the young man goes to fight and one after Ireland's freedom is killed. The

final line of the song marks the end of the entire story, the whole episode of Ireland's rebellion. We can also compare the repetition of this line to the Celtic knot. Each time a line is repeated in the ballad, it is a strand of the knot crossing over itself. The episodes are all connected to each other, like the Celtic knot, through the repetition, creating a whole, complete story.

Notwithstanding the victory at Oulart Hill, the Irish Rebellion of 1798 was quenched, with the croppy holes becoming a constant reminder of the fight for freedom every time the wind blew. As we understand the symbolism of this ballad, the importance of the Irish Rebellion of 1798 becomes clearer to us. Not only do we understand the rebellion better, we understand why this song was written and why Joyce chose to preserve this history in literature: Ireland's fight for freedom was a long-lasting struggle that still causes grief over two hundred years later. The croppies have gained imperishable fame, not only through the barley that grows every spring, but also through the song and the symbolism it contains.

The Scottish war song "The Flowers of the Forest," written about the Battle of Flodden, is also very symbolic. The "smiling of fortune beguiling" refers to the many years Scotland enjoyed as a free country. The term "the flowers of the forest" references not only Scotland's brave soldiers but mainly the king, the Flower of the Forest. The imagery of a flower in bloom is common in Scottish songs referencing the kings ("Flower of Scotland," for example), and the mentioning of the flower withering or dying usually means the king has died.

This song is a lament written about the Battle of Flodden fought in 1513, almost two hundred years after the Scots had won their freedom in the Battle of Bannockburn under King Robert the Bruce. In the Battle of Flodden, the Scots were led by King James IV against a British army. It was one of the largest battles fought between Scotland and England; King James IV was killed, resulting in a British victory. This lament tells of the mourning which followed the death of the king. As with "The Wind that Shakes the Barley," most verses of "The Flowers of the Forest" end with a repeated line: in this case, "The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away." The repetition creates a Celtic knot, as well as emphasizing the end of Scotland's freedom.

Mouth Music: *Puirt a Beul* and Diddling

Mouth music is common in both Ireland and Scotland. The theories of its origin are disputed: some say the singing styles came about

when the playing of traditional instruments was banned, but likely they developed naturally if no instruments were on hand. Either way, its function is entertainment (Fabb, 1991, p. 6). The two main types of mouth music are *puirt a beul* and diddling, or lilting. *Puirt a beul*, a common Scottish Gaelic singing style, literally means "a song from the mouth." *Puirt a beul* songs have Gaelic lyrics, but emphasis is placed on the tones and rhythms of the songs rather than on the meaning of the lyrics; thus, the songs are essentially meaningless. For example, "Fear a Bhrochain" is about a man who eats gruel, a common theme in *puirt a beul* songs. We can see, then, that these are not historically significant song lyrics; the significance is derived from the situation in which the music came about.

Music was an essential part of life in Gaelic Scotland and Ireland—so much so that if no instruments were present, people would sing the tunes instead. Diddling, or lilting, is like *puirt a beul*, but there are no lyrics. Instead, the singer simply "diddles," just singing syllables to get the notes of the tune and perhaps to imitate the sound of instruments playing the tune. Diddling is what Fabb (1991) calls "vocables" (p. 104). Diddling songs are another variety of mouth music, and they make use of the vocable function of indicating the beginning or ending of a song (p. 104). They typically have a sung verse with a diddled chorus, and both verse and chorus strongly emphasize rhythm and tone. One example of a diddling song is "Brochan Lom, Tana Lom" or "It Wis Torn, Rippit, Tattered." Originally a *puirt a beul* song, "Brochan Lom, Tana Lom" is now often sung with English verses and a nonsense, diddled chorus (Alan Lomax Archive, 2000–2018).

However, as intriguing as we may find *puirt a beul* and diddling songs, the Gaelic speaking peoples view them as inferior to lyric songs. The language is different; that is where native speakers see the difference. Heather Sparling (2003) discovered in her research that the dislike for mouth music lay in the linguistic aspects rather than the musical aspects of the songs (p. 147): "There's a real distinction between a tune and a song. The Gaelic isn't as interesting. It's just a tune" (Sparling, 2003, p. 146). If mouth music represents a Celtic knot, it is a very overwhelming one, with so many strands crossing each other so many times that it is hard to follow; it is not meant to be understood, just to be looked at briefly. Mouth music is the same way: it is not meant to be understood on a deep level. It is merely there to listen to and enjoy materially. It may be inferior to lyric songs linguistically, but we can still learn about the Gaelic culture from mouth music.

We know that dance was important enough to the Gaelic people that they were willing to sing the accompaniment—possibly degrading their beautiful language—to be able to dance. The Gaelic people were very social and would gather most evenings for a music and dance session. They would have some rousing sets of reels and jigs and finish off the evening singing a few airs. Even though the lyrics seem to be nonsense, mouth music might even provide some insight into the lives of these active, musical people. Many of the *puirt a beul* songs talk about gruel, leading us to conclude that it was a staple in the Scottish diet. They also often tell one-stanza stories of lads courting lasses and cows eating corn. The lyrics of mouth music songs usually consist of everyday situations thrown in a jocular light. After all, the people just finished a long day of work and are now cheering themselves up with dance.

Conclusion

Gaelic folk songs reinforce the importance of cultural traditions by reminding the participants of "their shared history and kinship." They bring people together and strengthen "the community's sense of solidarity" (Blankenhorn, 2018, p. 88). The stories and traditions shared through Gaelic folk song also bring other communities together through the shared experience, as long as they understand the meaning. However, "when the language and everything, all the connections, are gone or not understood, then the music is just going to be a fad and it's going to lose its attraction" (Sparling, 2003, p. 145). If we forget the meaning of the music and its background, the true attraction to it is lost. If we fail to understand it, we fail to value it. The better we understand the purposes of the songs, the better we will understand the culture behind the songs and the songs themselves.

A significant feature of Gaelic folk music in conveying the importance of the people's history and their sense of solidarity is the ring composition structure and the Celtic knot. The Celtic peoples believed in eternity and continuity, a concept that they constantly applied to their life, from their holidays and rituals to their art and music. The Celtic knot is composed of one continuous string twisted around itself, ending where it began. Thus, through the use of repetition and ring compositions, songs can be seen as Celtic knots. They cross over themselves, weaving in and out to make an intricate and eternal knot.

Music is what held Gaelic communities together and kept them going continually. The structure of the songs being like Celtic knots makes them imperishable and continuous. The heroes of the past have been immortalized in song; the lessons taught once will be taught forever; Gaelic culture lives on through its music in one giant Celtic knot. Let us keep telling stories through song. "I'll sing you a song . . . and I trust that you'll join in the chorus with me" (Hugill, 1994, p. 154).

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Appendix: Song Lyrics

Supernatural Songs

The Elfin Knight (original ballad as collected by Francis J. Child)

My Plaid awa, my Plaid awa,
and ere the hill and far awa,
And far awa, to Norrowa
my Plaid shall not be blown awa.

The Elphin Knight sits on yon Hill,
ba, ba, ba, lilli, ba,
He blows his Horn both lowd and shril,
the wind hath blown my Plaid awa.

He blows it East, he blowes it West,
He blowes it where he lyketh best,

I wish that Horn were in my Kiss,
Yea, and the Knight in my Armes two

She had no sooner these words said,
When that the Knight came to her bed,

Thou art over young a Maid quoth he,
Married with me if thou wouldst be,

I have a sister younger then I,
And she was married yesterday,

Married with me if thou wouldst be,
A Courtesie thou must do to me,

For thou must shape a Sark to me,
Without any cut or heme, quoth he,

Thou must shape it needle & Sheerlesse,
And also sue it needle-Threedlesse,

If that piece of Courtesie I do to thee,
Another thou must do to me,

I have an Aiker of good Ley-land,
Which lyeth low by yon Sea-strand,

For thou must eare it with thy Horn,
So must thou sow it with thy Corn,

And bigg a Cart of stone and Lyme,
Robin-Red-breast he must trail it hame,

Thou must Barn it in a Mouse-holl,
And thrash it into thy shoes soll,

And thou must Winnow it in thy looff,
And also seek it in thy Glove,

For thou must bring it over the sea,
And thou must bring it dry home to me,

When thou hast gotten thy turns well-done
Then come to me & get thy Sack then,

Il not quite my Plaid for my life;
It haps my seven bairns and my wife
the wind shal not blow my Plaid awa.

My Maiden-head, Ile then keep still,
Let the Elphin-Knight do what he will *the*
winds not blown my plaid awa.

My Plaid awa, my Plaid awa,
and ere the hill and far awa,
And far awa, to Norrowa
my Plaid shall not be blown awa.

A Ghaol Leig Dhachaigh Gum Mhathair Mi (traditional Gaelic air)

A ghaoil, leig dhachaigh gum mhàthair mi;	Love, let me home to my mother
A ghràidh, leig dhachaigh gum mhàthair mi;	Darling, let me home to my mother
A ghaoil, leig dhachaigh gum mhàthair mi -	Love, let me home to my mother
An tòir chrodh-laoigh a thàine mi.	I only came for the cattle.
Gur ann a-raoir a chuala mi	It was only last night
Mo ghaol a bhith ri buachailleachd,	That I heard that my love was herding
'S ged fhuair thu 'n iomall na buaile mi,	And tho' you found me at the edge of the cattle fold
A ghaoil, leig dhachaigh mar fhuair thu mi.	Love, let me home as you found me.
'S mi dìreadh ris na gàrraidhean,	I was clambering up the dykes
'S a' teàrnadh ris na fàirichean,	And descending the ridges
Gun d' thachair fleasgach bàigheil rium,	When a friendly lad met me
'S cha d' dh' fheuch e bonn ga chàirdeis rium.	And he did not enforce his friendship on me.
Ged bheireadh tu crodh agus caoraich dhomh,	Though you were to give me cattle and sheep
Ged bheireadh tu eachaibh air thaodaibh dhomh,	Though you were to give me tethered horses
Ged bheireadh tu sin agus daoine dhomh,	Though you were to give me that and men
A ghaoil, leig dhachaigh mar fhuair thu mi.	Love, let me home as you found me.
Trodaidh m' athair 's mo mhàthair riut,	My mother and father will chastise you
Trodaidh mo chinneadh 's mo chàirdean riut,	My clan and my relatives will chastise you
Ach marbhaidh mo thriùir bhràithrean thu	But my three brothers will kill you
Mura tèid mi dhachaigh mar thàine mi.	If I don't return home as I came.
Gheall mo mhàthair gùn thoirt dhomh,	My mother promised me a gown
Gheall i ribean a b' ùire dhomh,	Decorated with the newest of ribbons
Is gheall i breacan ùr thoirt dhomh	And she promised me a new plaid
Ma thèid mi dhachaigh mar fhuair thu mi.	If I return home the way you found me.

War Songs

The Wind that Shakes the Barley (original lyrics by Robert Dwyer Joyce)

I sat within a valley green,
I sat there with my true love,
My sad heart strove the two between,
The old love and the new love, -
The old for her, the new that made
Me think of Ireland dearly,
While soft the wind blew down the glade
And shook the golden barley.

'Twas hard the woeful words to frame
To break the ties that bound us
'Twas harder still to bear the shame
Of foreign chains around us
And so I said, "The mountain glen
I'll seek next morning early
And join the brave United Men!"
While soft winds shook the barley.

While sad I kissed away her tears,
My fond arms 'round her flinging,
The foeman's shot burst on our ears,
From out the wildwood ringing, -
A bullet pierced my true love's side,
In life's young spring so early,
And on my breast in blood she died
While soft winds shook the barley!

I bore her to the wildwood screen,
And many a summer blossom
I placed with branches thick and green
Above her gore-stain'd bosom:-
I wept and kissed her pale, pale cheek,
Then rushed o'er vale and far lea,
My vengeance on the foe to wreak,
While soft winds shook the barley!

But blood for blood without remorse,
I've ta'en at Oulart Hollow
And placed my true love's clay-cold corpse
Where I full soon will follow;
And round her grave I wander drear,
Noon, night and morning early,
With breaking heart whene'er I hear
The wind that shakes the barley!

The Flowers of the Forest (traditional)

I've seen the smiling of fortune beguiling,
I've tasted her pleasures, and felt her decay;
Sweet was her blessing, and fond her caressing,
But now they are fled, they are fled far away.
I've seen the forest adorned the foremost,
Wi' flower o' the fairest, baith pleasant and gay;
Sae bonny was their blooming, their scent the air perfuming,
But now they are withered, and a' wede away.

I've seen the morning with gold the hills adorning,
And loud the tempest roaring before parting day;
I've seen Tweed's silver streams, glittering in the sunny beams,
Grow drumlie and dark as they roll'd on their way.
O fickle fortune, why this cruel sporting,
Why thus perplex us poor sons of a day?
Thy frown cannot fear me, thy smile cannot cheer me,
Since the Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

I've heard a lilting at our ewe-milking,
Lasses loud lilting before the dawn of day;
But now they are moaning in ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.
At bughts in the morning nae blythe lads are scorning,
The lasses are lonely, and dowie, and wae;
Nae daffing, nae gabbing, but sighing and sabbing,
Ilk ane lifts her leglin and hies her away.

In hair'st at the shearing nae youths now are jeering,
Bansters are rankled, and lyart, and grey;
At fair, or at preaching, nae wooing nae fleeching—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.
At e'en, in the gloaming, nae youngsters are roaming
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play;
But ilk maid sits eerie, lamenting her dearie—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Dool and wae for the order sent our lads to the border!
The English for once by guile wan the day;
The Flowers of the Forest, that fought aye the foremost,
The prime of our land, are cauld in the clay.
We'll hear nae more lilting at the ewe-milking,
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning in ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Mouth Music

Fear a' Bhrochain / Dòmhnall Binn (traditional *puirt a beul*)

Am brochanaiche mòr
Hiù bhì leasanaiche
Am brochanaiche mòr
'S iomadh fear a dh'òladh e.

Chuir an t-sealbh brochan air
Chuir an t-sealbh easan air
Chuir an t-sealbh brochan air
'S chuir e rithist ìm air.

Dòmhnall binn, Dòmhnall binn
'S e na ruith air feadh an taighe
Dòmhnall binn, Dòmhnall binn
Chaidh e sa phig' eòlain.

Siud far robh a' bhòilich
Nuair thòisich e feadh an taighe
Siud far robh a' bhòilich
Nuair chaidh e sa phig' eòlain.

The big gruel eater
Hiù bhì leasanaiche
The big gruel eater
Much would he drink.

Fortune sent him gruel
Fortune sent him thin gruel
Fortune sent him gruel
He added butter to it.

Sweet Donald, sweet Donald,
When he went running round the house
Sweet Donald, sweet Donald
Fell into the oil jar.

What an uproar ensued
When he set off round the house
What an uproar ensued
When he fell into the oil jar.

Brochan Lom, Tana Lom (diddling song)

Brochan lom, tana lom, brochan lom na sùghain
Brochan lom, tana lom, brochan lom na sùghain
Brochan lom, tana lom, brochan lom na sùghain
Brochan lom 's e tana lom 's e brochan lom na sùghain.

Oh, the lad that cannae kiss a lass is no the lad for me,
Oh, the lad that cannae kiss a lass is no the lad for me,
Oh, the lad that cannae kiss a lass is no the lad for me,
For ma ain bonnie laddie's kissed twa three.

He's torn a', rippit a', torn a' ma goon
He's torn a', rippit a', torn a' ma goon
He's torn a', rippit a', torn a' ma goon
Did ever ye see sic an ill-trickit loon?

Oh, the broon coo's gotten oot an' aten a' the corn,
Oh, the broon coo's gotten oot an' aten a' the corn,
Oh, the broon coo's gotten oot an' aten a' the corn,

What it eats the day it cannae eat the morn.

Idiom Usage in ESL Pedagogy

Kolbee Tibbets

Idioms are attached to culture and are a vital aspect of becoming fluent in English. As more individuals begin their journey to learn English as a second language, teachers should consider how to best incorporate idioms into their pedagogy. This study presents the effect of learning environments on the ability of ELLs (English language learners) to identify frequently used idioms. The results reveal that learning idioms in the classroom and in conversations are both effective methods for learning idioms. However, more individuals have access to learning idioms in conversation than they do in the classroom.

Imagine standing in the shoes of someone who has come to the United States for the first time. You are familiar with English but not quite fluent. You are here to envelop yourself in the culture. You hear English words echoing around you, reminding you of your purpose for coming here. You are standing outside the door of a business, waiting for the manager to signal you in for your job interview. Your nerves are twisting; you are hoping to be able to connect with the manager's culture. An employee walks by and in a reassuring tone says, "It will be a piece of cake." You look around. There isn't a cake anywhere to be seen . . . You search your mind for your knowledge of English culture. You find obscure memories of the phrase "piece of cake." Despite knowing you have heard this phrase before, you are lost. English is reaching every continent through the means of social media, entertainment, and business. The effect is a ripple, enveloping more and more individuals into seeking an English education. Many individuals begin learning English in their native country, and then they move to the United States to further their education.

Now that you have walked in the shoes of an English language learner (ELL), you can attest to the importance of understanding idioms. Learning idioms is a significant part of every ELL's journey in learning English. My analysis delves into idiom usage in the learning environment ELLs face. I hypothesize that if ELLs learn idioms from conversing with other (native or non-native) English speakers, then they will be able to identify and define more idioms. I predict that more ELLs learn idioms from conversations with other English speakers. Furthermore, I predict that ELLs who learn idioms from native English speakers will be able to identify and define more idioms than ELLs who learn idioms in formal settings like English as a second language (ESL) class. Understanding how exposure to American idioms affects the idiom usage of ELLs could lead to a stronger method of incorporating idioms and corpora use into pedagogy.

To help ELLs strengthen their idiom usage, we must first understand the significance of idioms as well the pedagogy that is currently being used to teach idioms. According to Dr. Dilin Liu (2003), the coordinator of Applied Linguistics and the TESOL program at the University of Alabama, most L1 (first language) pedagogy emphasizes teaching idioms; however, idioms are not focused on in L2 (second language) pedagogy. Dr. Liu performed a study on the most frequently used spoken American English idioms and performed a corpus analysis. He compared the most frequently used idioms to

the idioms that are being taught in ESL classrooms, and he found that much of the teaching materials that are used for teaching idioms are intuition based rather than based on authentic data that can be found in corpora. Using intuition-based materials leads ELLs to learn incorrect understandings and seldom-used idioms. Rather than using intuition-based pedagogy, authentic data (such as corpora data) could be implemented and used to support and improve the pedagogy of idioms.

Further studies have been completed on how corpora can be incorporated in the classroom. Dr. Anne O'Keeffe (2007), the director of Teaching and Learning at Mary Immaculate College, performed a study on the use of corpora in ESL pedagogy. She found that corpora are used to construct learner dictionaries; however, intuition is normally used in the classroom as well as in ESL textbooks. Anne Burns (2013), a professor in the Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University, Australia, says that ESL textbooks use many examples of scripted dialogue; however, the scripted dialogue does not account for the unpredictability of real conversations. This textbook dialogue is intuition-based and does not represent the full dynamics of conversation. O'Keeffe offers a replacement for scripted dialogue: incorporating the use of corpora into pedagogy and teaching students according to patterns that appear in real spoken English. By using corpora-based data, pedagogy will prepare students for conversations inside and outside of the classroom.

Idiom usage is an essential part of becoming a fluent speaker of English; therefore, my study calls out to linguists and ESL teachers alike as I examine the effect that the learning environment has on idiom usage. The studies mentioned above go hand in hand with the analysis I present in this article. From the studies performed by Liu (2003), O'Keeffe (2007), and Burns (2013), it is evident that some ESL pedagogy materials have been created based on intuition, and the use of corpora can be used to strengthen the ESL learning environment. My study takes this research one step further in analyzing if students are able to recognize and define idioms. Furthermore, I examine if ESL students are learning idioms in the classroom, with other English speakers, or independently.

Methodology

My study began with an analysis of idioms in the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE). I completed an online search to find

idioms that are frequently used, and then compared them to the data in GloWbE. Many ELLs begin learning English with the British English variety, and then they continue their English education in the United States with the Standard American English variety. Therefore, I searched for idioms unique to British English as well as idioms unique to American English. The frequently used British English idioms that I decided to use in my study are "pop his clogs," which means "to die"; "at a loose end," which means "to be bored"; and "itchy feet," which means "to desire to travel." I compared the meanings for each idiom across several British idiom dictionaries to ensure that I would be using the correct definition for my study. The frequently used American English idioms that I decided to use are "piece of cake," which means "to be easy"; "drive me up the wall," which means "to irritate me"; and "the ball is in your court," which means "it is up to you to make the next move." I also ensured that I would be using the correct definitions for the American English idioms by comparing definitions in several different American idiom dictionaries.

Test Items

After determining the most frequently used idioms in British English and American English, I created a survey. The survey asked ELL speakers how often they feel they use idioms as well as which idioms they most frequently use and see in their everyday lives. My survey measured their idiom usage in terms of comfort as well as frequency—in both British English as well as American English. The survey asked them to define the idioms I outlined above and then asked them if they learned idioms in a formal environment like a classroom, by speaking with other English speakers, or if they have depended on their own personal study. The results of the survey revealed the effect that the learning environment has on ELLs' idiom usage.

Participants

For my study, I picked fifteen ELLs from the following countries: Russia, Japan, Denmark, Tahiti, Brazil, Korea, Belize, Spain, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, and China. There is one individual representing each country with the exceptions of Brazil (three individuals) and Japan (two individuals). Some of the participants in my study have been exposed to British English as well as American English; however, some of them have only been exposed to American English. Each of

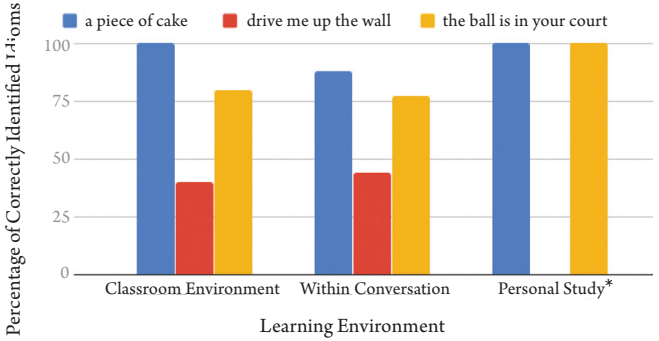
them has lived in Utah County for at least one year and is currently participating in an ESL class. Their ages range from 18 to 29. To maintain the integrity of the study, I limited the ability of individuals to take the survey. One of the questions on the survey asks the participants how long they have lived in the United States; their answer either directs them to the rest of the survey or directs them to the end of the survey if they have lived in the United States for less than a year.

Analysis

The survey revealed several salient points about the effect of ELLs' learning environment on idiom usage. I analyzed the results of my survey to test my hypothesis: If ELLs learn idioms from conversing with other (native or non-native) English speakers, then they will be able to identify and define more idioms. I performed a t-test on my data. My independent variables were (1) ELLs who learned idioms in a classroom environment and (2) ELLs who learned idioms from conversing with other English speakers. The dependent variable was the percentage of idioms that the ELLs were able to identify and define correctly.

The t-test revealed that the results are not statistically significant. The mean of ELLs who learned within a classroom minus the mean of ELLs who learned within conversation is -1.67. Furthermore, the 95 percent confidence interval of this difference is from -8.21 to 4.88, and the standard error of difference is 2.357. The two-tailed P value

Percentage of American Idioms Correctly Identified by ELLs according to Their Learning Environment

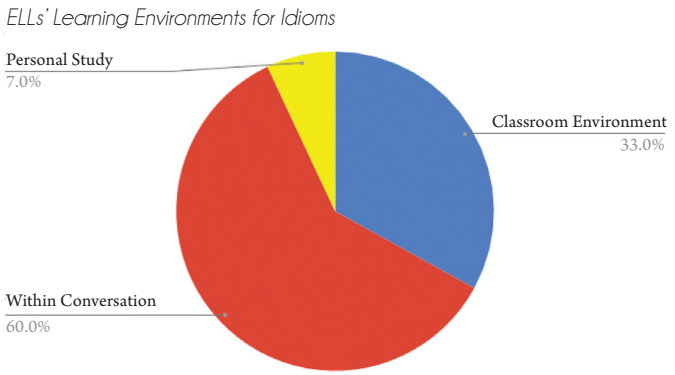


*Only one person reported using personal study to learn idioms.

of the t-test was 0.52, which is not considered to be statistically significant. This means that students who learn idioms in a classroom environment and students who learn idioms within conversation are both able to identify idioms correctly. Therefore, my hypothesis has been proved wrong. ELLs who learned idioms in a classroom environment were able to define "piece of cake" and "the ball is in your court" more often than ELLs who learned idioms within conversation. However, ELLs who learned idioms within conversation were more able to define "drive me up the wall."

There was an outlier within the results of my study; only one student reported using personal study to learn idioms. That student was able to identify and define two of three American English idioms. I did not include the outlier in the t-test in order to focus on the difference between learning idioms in a classroom and in English conversations. Furthermore, the results of the survey about British English idioms revealed that only three of the fifteen participants were able to identify two British English idioms. This could be attributed to not being exposed to British English. Another possibility is that the students learned the foundational aspects in British English and were not exposed to more advanced aspects of British English such as idioms.

Despite finding that the effect of the learning environment does not significantly influence ELLs, I found a significant point that should be further researched. The results of the survey revealed that far more ELLs learned idioms within conversation rather than in classroom environments. The results showed that 60 percent of the ELLs I



surveyed have depended on conversations with other English speakers to learn idioms, whereas only 33 percent of ELLs have learned idioms in a classroom environment.

Conclusion and Discussion

According to my study, the learning environment does not significantly impact the ability of ELLs to define idioms. However, there is a significant amount of ELLs who have not had the opportunity to learn idioms in a classroom setting. The results of my study show that students who learn idioms in a classroom setting are able to define idioms 73 percent of the time. Students who learn idioms within conversation are able to define idioms 70 percent of the time. Students are able to learn idioms on their own, which shows that there is value in learning from conversation. Dr. Michael Long (1985), the Director of the Center for Second Language Classroom Research at the University of Hawaii, and Dr. Patricia Porter, an Assistant Professor of English at San Francisco State University, explain that group work and interlanguage talk is becoming an alternative for language teaching and practice. Language teaching is changing to psycholinguistic rationale tied to language acquisition, a rationale linked to the relationship between linguistics and psychological processes.

Idioms are attached to culture and an aspect of becoming fluent in English. Therefore, there is value in continuing to research how ELLs can be given more resources for learning English idioms. My study revealed that 33 percent of the students I surveyed had access to learning idioms in the classroom, which means more students need access to idioms within classroom pedagogy. Furthermore, there is room for improvement in helping students define idioms. Further research in the implementation of Dr. Liu and Dr. O'Keeffe's idea of corpora within pedagogy could strengthen ESL teachers and give them the tools necessary to teach idioms within their classrooms. Remember how it felt to walk in the shoes of an ELL? Remember imagining the confusion of an ELL who did not understand "it will be a piece of cake"? Strengthening the pedagogy of idioms within ESL classrooms could eradicate the confusion that ELLs face when confronted by idioms in conversation.

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