Commentary for Exploring Options in Academic Writing: Effective Vocabulary and Grammar Use

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As writing instructors, we know one language skill students want and need in order to improve their writing for college-level work: vocabulary. In fact, many students list academic vocabulary as their number one obstacle to improvement (Folse, 2004). And, while writing teachers are often told that vocabulary acquisition will come with time and exposure, our experience suggests otherwise. The amount of exposure to words needed for acquisition is high, yet the students in our classes have often not had adequate interaction with the types of academic texts that would provide such multiple encounters. And time is short, but vocabulary learning is incremental, with increases in word knowledge that are sometimes so gradual learners are not aware of them. Students may be able to increase the number of words they can recognize and understand (their receptive vocabulary) through the sheer amount of reading they do in academic settings. However, for these students to increase their active vocabulary, being able to pull words from one’s memory often requires conscious attention, and using vocabulary correctly in writing often requires the conscious noticing of each word’s particular constraints for use: the words that tend to co-locate with it, the grammatical environment in which it is used, and more (Nation, 2001; Zimmerman & Schmitt, 2005). Relying on incidental vocabulary learning is not enough. And the explicit strategies that some learners employ, such as looking up every unfamiliar word in an assigned text, are not effective ones. We need to intervene with instruction (Folse, 2008), targeting the vocabulary that will be most useful to students as they develop their academic writing proficiency. Teachers need to help students develop strategies for becoming independent word learners as they embark on the process of intentional vocabulary development.
Exploring Options in Academic Writing is designed to do just that—to help student writers develop their knowledge and use of academic language in meeting demands of college- and university-level writing assignments. It draws on the research identifying lexical and grammatical patterns across academic contexts and provides authentic reading contexts for structured vocabulary learning. Recognizing that vocabulary choices in writing often require consideration of grammatical structure, Exploring Options focuses on specific kinds of lexico-grammatical decisions—that is, ones involving the interaction of vocabulary and grammar—that student writers face in shaping, connecting, and restructuring their ideas. It also helps writers learn how to effectively use resources such as learner dictionaries, thesauruses, and concordancers to develop their academic word knowledge.

As a supplementary text for reading and writing courses, Exploring Options offers a functional approach to the development of academic language proficiency. Rather than being structured as a series of academic word lists or selected grammatical features that students need to master, this textbook integrates instruction in vocabulary and grammar by considering the goals that all writers must pay attention to in producing effective academic discourse. Such goals include choosing words that “fit” their writing contexts not only in meaning (semantically) but also in relationship to the grammar of phrases or clauses and in the level of formality required; they also involve showing relationships between ideas within sentences, creating connections across sentence boundaries through a variety of appropriate cohesive devices, expressing writer stance, or referencing source materials accurately and effectively. To assist students in achieving these goals, each chapter of Exploring Options provides scaffolded instruction that will help students check their current lexico-grammatical knowledge and build on that knowledge by using available resources and engaging in guided text analysis and production tasks.
Intended Audience(s) and Objectives

*Exploring Options* is intended primarily for students at the community college and college level, especially those in developmental and ESL writing classes, as well as courses focusing on grammar and vocabulary for academic purposes. This text would also be appropriate for high-intermediate ESL graduate students needing to develop academic language proficiency. In addition, it could be used in the upper levels of intensive language programs that focus on preparing students to enter English-medium colleges and universities.

*Exploring Options* has these specific objectives:

1. to make students aware of paper and online resources for developing academic language proficiency and ways to use these resources effectively
2. to provide guided practice in strategies for crafting lexico-grammatical structures needed for academic writing
3. to familiarize students with vocabulary used for particular academic discourse functions such as showing relationships between ideas, expressing stance, focusing information, and creating cohesion.

Current Research on Vocabulary and Grammar for Academic Writing

Recent research reveals the complexity of academic language learning and the need to integrate grammar and vocabulary in language instruction. The activities in this book are based on a synthesis of current research that responds to the following questions:

What do students need to know about a word to use it correctly in their writing?

As previously noted, the development of active vocabulary involves more than the mere knowledge of a word’s meaning. Paul Nation (2001) highlights the following components of word knowledge that writers must have to control the use of a word in their writing:
denotations, connotations, collocations, grammatical characteristics/ context, register/level of formality, frequency of use, and word forms/ derivatives. Learning all of these components takes not only con- scious effort but also numerous “passes” at a word, and thus a great deal of investment on the part of students and instructors (Schmitt, 2008; Zimmerman, 2013). Thus, the opening chapter raises stu- dents’ awareness of the complexity of word knowledge while intro- ducing students to resources that help them investigate the com- ponents or characteristics of a word. Each remaining chapter introduces academic vocabulary to students and then focuses students’ attention on, and provides practice with, the components of word knowledge necessary to control the use of that vocabulary. Of particular focus throughout the text are a word’s lexical and grammatical associations—

The author strongly emphasizes the importance of vocabulary vs. The author places strong emphasis on the importance of vocabulary—as a lack of understanding of these constraints on a word’s use tend to create, in our opinion, the “awkward” wording we often see in our students’ writing as they attempt to imitate an academic tone and style.

Which vocabulary should we focus instruction on?

Frequency is the best gauge we have for choosing words on which to focus instruction (Zimmerman & Schmitt, 2005). But we also have the ability to look at frequency within specific contexts. The activi- ties in this textbook draw heavily on vocabulary from the academic word list, which presents the most common words used in the higher education fields of commerce, law, liberal arts, and science (Coxhead, 2000). Exercises also rely on vocabulary frequencies and collocations from the newspaper, magazine, and academic registers of the Cor- pus of Contemporary American English (Davies, 2008) to provide context-rich examples for students. Finally, exercises also focus on vocabulary to help students approach writing using outside sources and in common academic genres, such as words and phrases express- ing change-of-state, comparison, cause-effect, and problem-solution (Gillett, 2014; Hinkel, 2004; Swales & Feak, 2012).
What types of language structures are used most frequently in academic writing?

Much of this book examines the ways in which the choice of vocabulary drives the use of grammar. Corpus linguistics in particular, which identifies how language is used across registers and genres, has produced a wealth of new information about lexico-grammatical patterns (cf. Biber, 2006; Biber et al., 1999; Hinkel, 2002) is now available through dictionaries, concordancers, and other resources. Corpus and functional linguistics analyses also highlight common grammatical features of academic writing that differ from those used in spoken contexts and thus, we believe, should form the focus of academic writing courses. The features that tend to be used with high frequency in academic writing include:

- complex sentence structures but also syntactic density, like this sample sentence from a conference proposal: *In order to better prepare students for undergraduate study and in order to better serve them once they matriculate, it is important to examine how well students’ academic literacy skills and prior educational experiences prepare them to meet instructors’ expectations* (Hinkel, 2003; Schleppegrell, 2004).

- noun phrases, nominalizations, abstract nouns, and signaling or classifier nouns, such as *the development of written work appropriate for university assignments* (Biber et al., 1999; Flowerdew, 2010; Schleppegrell, 2004).

- cohesive devices, such as *given these criteria* and *despite such requirements* (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).

- hedging devices to express stance, as in this sentence: *Students tend to / often rely on the language characteristics of speech* (Hyland, 2008).
Structure of Exploring Options

Introduction: Chapter 1

The purpose of the opening chapter is to help students learn how to investigate a word’s meanings, uses, and forms in academic writing. Through explanations and practice exercises using different corpus-based resources, the introductory chapter offers students both a framework for developing a rich knowledge of vocabulary—including a more comprehensive understanding of words with which they may be only somewhat familiar—and the tools with which to explore words in context and enhance their linguistic resources for academic writing assignments. These tools include advanced learner dictionaries, collocation dictionaries, and concordancers. Each of these resources offers students different perspectives on targeted vocabulary. For example, in a learner dictionary, students can check whether a noun is count or non-count or which prepositions often occur with specific verbs (e.g., contribute to, prevent from); in a collocations dictionary, they can examine categorized lists of adjectives or adverbs that often co-occur with nouns or verbs, especially ones that are frequently used in academic writing; using a concordancer such as the online Corpus of Contemporary American English, students can compare frequencies of words or phrases (e.g., how often on account of is used compared to because of) in written registers and examine vocabulary in sentence contexts.

Part 1: Showing Relationships within Sentences (Chapters 2–6)

Chapters 2–5 engages students in learning and practicing some of the many lexical options that writers have to express two important functional meanings across disciplines: writing about how things change, with a focus on increases and decreases as well as other types of change, and writing about causal relationships, with an emphasis on logical connectors within sentences and on verbs used to express causes and effects. Chapter 6 focuses on creating parallel structures, a writing skill important both for managing longer, complex sentences and for producing clear and elegant prose. In this final chapter of Part 1, appropriate forms of words as well as coordinating structures play an important role.
Part 2: Connecting and Focusing across Sentences  
(Chapters 7–8)

This section turns students’ attention to exploring another very important aspect of academic writing: creating effective links between ideas beyond the sentence. In writing conferences about their work-in-progress, multilingual students sometimes complain how simple their writing seems in comparison to the academic texts assigned in their classes. In part, the difference they observe results from their lack of linguistic resources, ones that more experienced writers possess for creating precise and concise connections across sentences for their readers. For instance, a student writer, drawing on knowledge of logical connectors from a list in a grammar textbook, might select therefore—instead of in light of these recommendations for reducing household water consumption—in a context, such as the beginning of a new paragraph, that, for clarity, requires a much more explicit connection to the previous text. Academic writers rely on a variety of resources for creating connections: repeating words in different forms (e.g., the verb solve in one sentence followed by the noun solution in a subsequent one) and creating lexically dense phrases that may combine a logical connector (e.g., in light of), a reference word (e.g., these), and a classifier noun (e.g., recommendations) along with modifiers. The two chapters in this section thus help students to learn about and practice more effective ways of creating links between the parts of a text through lexicogrammatical structures frequently used in academic writing.

Part 3: Qualifying Ideas and Reporting Research  
(Chapters 9–10)

In this final section, students learn about and practice language options for two other important, and related, features of academic writing: the ways in which writers express their stance toward the information they are conveying and, in selecting reporting verbs, their interpretations of how others present information. Chapter 9 helps writers consider the diverse structures that English has to qualify assertions, often known as hedges, including modals, vocabulary expressing probability and frequency, and verbs such as seem
and appear. The final chapter encourages writers to expand their repertoire of verbs used to express how sources present information and helps them gain familiarity with such features of these verbs as strength of claims and the kinds of grammatical constructions that can follow specific reporting verbs.

Throughout the text, we have aimed to use passages from authentic texts and examples that reflect the style and tone of writing that is both academic and accessible for students studying in a variety of disciplines. While writing expectations in each discipline differ substantially, the chapters introduce and reinforce general academic vocabulary and structures.

Structure within Chapters

Following the introductory chapter of Exploring Options, each of the chapters includes two major sections, Raising Language Awareness and Building Your Knowledge. Unlike many textbooks, each chapter or section may not follow exactly the same format but instead, we have included different types of exercises in order to best support students’ understanding and use of the vocabulary and grammar highlighted.

Raising Language Awareness

This section provides an introduction to features of the target structures or writing subskills and gives students opportunities to identify their current level of exposure and understanding. For teachers, student responses will help to determine what areas of the chapter’s focus might deserve the most attention.

The exercises in this section are typically one of these types:

- Noticing exercises ask students to identify examples and somehow mark (circle, underline, bracket) the target vocabulary in context (e.g., words that express kinds of change; words that express possibility or probability) or structure (e.g., different kinds of logical connectors; coordinators that connect parallel structures). Where appropriate, authentic texts have been used for these exercises.
• Vocabulary self-assessment exercises ask students to examine lists of vocabulary focused on in the chapter to determine which of the words they are not familiar with, which they have some familiarity with (receptive knowledge) but do not use in their writing, and which they both know and use.

• Error analysis exercises ask students to distinguish correct from incorrect examples of vocabulary usage or form (e.g., transitive verbs that can take direct objects vs. intransitive verbs that cannot and sentences with correctly used parallel structures vs. those that have incorrect word forms).

Building Your Knowledge

This section, the main part of each chapter, offers explanations about various aspects of the targeted vocabulary or structure that seem most relevant and challenging for student writers. These features have been selected partly on the basis of our observations on how the vocabulary of focus is used in academic writing, including analysis of vocabulary in corpus-based resources. We have also selected them drawing from our experience working with students and their texts. This experience has led us to believe that developing student writers need guided instruction in improving academic writing fluency as well as accuracy. Numerous guided activities in this section help students gain awareness of the range of lexico-grammatical options and develop strategies for implementing them effectively in their own writing. Expanding on what it means to know a word as outlined and explained in Chapter 1, the explanations, tables, and activities in Building Your Knowledge offer exposure to many aspects of vocabulary knowledge that go beyond just knowing word meanings. Bearing in mind that each student enters a class with different language abilities, the chart on the next page gives one example from each of the Chapters 2–10 of vocabulary knowledge and language structures that students may learn to use through the explanations, discovery tasks, and productive practice.
## Examples of Vocabulary Focus from Building Your Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>What Students May Know</th>
<th>What Students May Not Know (or May Not Use Productively in Their Writing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The verb <em>subside</em> means to become settled or become less.</td>
<td>Grammatical environment: Since <em>subside</em> is an intransitive verb, it cannot take a direct object. Thus, one cannot, for example, say, <em>The counselor subsided the student’s anger.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The verb <em>alter</em> means to change or modify.</td>
<td>Collocations: In academic writing, <em>alter</em> is frequently followed by abstract noun phrase direct objects: <em>plans, beliefs, understanding, approaches, etc.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Subordinators, coordinators and sentences connector like <em>because, so and therefore</em> express reasons or results.</td>
<td>Prepositional connectors: In academic writing, preposition reason connectors such as <em>given, due to,</em> or <em>as a result of</em> followed by an abstract noun phrase (e.g., <em>the need for…</em>) can often better express complex causal relationships between parts of texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The verb phrase <em>account for</em> means to provide a satisfactory record or explanation for something.</td>
<td>Collocations: This verb phrase is often followed by a noun phrase that indicates a number or amount (e.g., <em>half of, the majority of, a total of</em>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Two or more structures joined by conjunctions like <em>and, or, both… and, neither… nor</em> need grammatically parallel forms, such as nouns, adjectives, or verbs.</td>
<td>Syntactic complexity: In academic writing, these connectors often help to manage complex sentences by joining not only words and short phrases but also more complex constructions like infinitive and gerund clauses (e.g., <em>Writers can develop their vocabulary knowledge by considering the frequency of particular words or phrases in academic registers and by learning what other words or grammatical constructions frequently co-occur with them</em>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The noun <em>tendency</em> refers to a predisposition to act or move in a particular way or direction.</td>
<td>Classifier nouns: <em>Tendency</em> belongs to a large class of abstract nouns known as <em>classifier nouns,</em> which can serve to summarize and connect ideas in previous text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>Contrary to</em> and in <em>contrast to</em> followed by a noun phrase can both express contrasting ideas.</td>
<td>Denotations: The two connectors have different meanings and usually cannot be used interchangeably.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Probability adverbs <em>likely, perhaps, possibly, potentially, and probably</em> can all be used to express the likelihood of something occurring.</td>
<td>Word order: In academic writing, of these adverbs, only <em>perhaps</em> occurs with great frequency at the beginning of a sentence. The others typically occur close to the verb of the sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>Discuss</em> is a common reporting verb that can be used to reference a source in academic writing.</td>
<td>Grammatical environment: The reporting verb <em>discuss</em> takes a noun phrase direct object and not a <em>that-clause,</em> as in <em>The author discusses the drawbacks of the solution but not in The author discusses that the solution has drawbacks.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The activities in Building Your Knowledge represent a range of complexity and types, including text analysis, practice selecting and using structures in authentic and constructed texts, and error analysis and editing practice. This section aims to provide a wide range of activities from which teachers can select those that are appropriate to their classroom goals and students’ proficiency levels.

**Different Ways to Use *Exploring Options***

- **In writing classrooms:** We believe that this book can provide the focus on language use often missing from writing textbooks and the focus on writing that is often missing from grammar and vocabulary texts. Given the many examples in the textbook, instructors can assign specific chapters or exercises for self-access, asking students to study and complete sections on their own to address their individual writing needs. However, many of the exercises involve negotiating meaning or investigating the characteristics of the vocabulary under study, and thus lend themselves to in-class pair or group work. Chapters do not need to be completed in order, though we highly recommend working through Chapter 1 first, as it forms the foundation for most of the discussion that follows. Instructors can then choose chapters to assign based on the writing assignment and student needs. For example, most problem-solution texts require a discussion of the causes and effects of both the problem and its solution, and related to those causes and effects are often explanations of changes. Chapters 2–5 would be ideal to assign while students draft and revise such texts, as the chapters focus on the connectors and the verbs students can use to express these ideas. When instructors first ask students to use outside sources in their writing, working through Chapter 10 on reporting verbs would be beneficial. Chapter 9 on hedging offers students the language needed in persuasive essay assignments and lab reports. Finally, the focus of some chapters, like parallel structure and cohesion, can provide useful practice any time during the term.
• **In grammar and vocabulary classes:** Ideal for such classes, the book can be used as a main text in grammar and vocabulary classes. Instructors can assign exercises from chapter Raising Language Awareness sections to build schema and deliver mini-lessons about items covered. For example, instructors can model the use of online resources for students to help them find collocations for the vocabulary introduced in Chapter 2 or show students how to analyze sample passages in Chapter 7 to match the cohesive device to the idea(s) they echo. Then, students can work on select Building Your Knowledge exercises in pairs or groups and complete assigned follow-up work for peer- or self-check in the following class. Instructors can also use this book in grammar/vocabulary courses that work in conjunction with writing courses. While the book provides practice in editing for word choice and structure errors, unlike many grammar and vocabulary books, it is organized based on a functional approach that ties the academic language to specific writing demands. Thus, instructors of the adjunct class can assign chapters for in-class discussion and then create editing and revising activities based on the main writing course assignments.

• **In computer lab settings:** College-level writing classes often have a computer lab component, either regularly scheduled each week or scheduled as the instructor sees fit. In such sessions, students may be guided in developing effective draft revision strategies, among other tasks. Many of the activities in this book are aimed at helping students revise their writing by having them consider alternate ways to express ideas in their work-in-progress. For example, students may complete collocation exercises (either grammar or meaning related) involving consultation with an online collocation dictionary or the Corpus of Contemporary American English and then turn to drafts they are revising to do similar searches for collocations, such as prepositions needed to follow verbs they have used. They could complete a word family exercise using
an online dictionary and then check their own writing for correct word forms. After completing exercises focusing on verbs that express causal relationships, they can reconsider the vocabulary and phrasing in a draft. They may learn and use more complex ways of achieving cohesion across sentence boundaries than the use of one-word logical connectors and subsequently examine their drafts to see how they might create more effective connections between their ideas to improve clarity and readability. Of course most of these activities can be done in a classroom also, but some are best worked on with access to online resources. And while draft revision can also be done outside the classroom, students often benefit by at least getting started on these activities with some guidance from the instructor.

• **In tutorial centers:** Writing tutorial assistance varies from campus to campus. In general, however, student writers seek help from tutors to work on their drafts in progress. If instructors provide feedback on drafts beforehand, they can identify areas for revision or editing along with sections of this book for students and tutors to consult together, such as choosing classifier nouns to summarize previously discussed ideas, selecting more appropriate or a greater variety of reporting verbs, or adding hedges to qualify statements. An instructor could also assign a section or exercise that students could review with tutors after the instructor has read a final paper and has identified an area for improvement. And students themselves may want to choose a section to discuss with a tutor. Peer tutors in tutorial centers often appreciate having structured tasks during a session with students since typically they are working under time constraints. It can be difficult for them to quickly pick out a language focus, whether grammar, vocabulary, or both, that will not only improve the draft being revised but also benefit students in their future writing assignments.
• **In flipped classrooms:** The text also lends itself to use in a flipped-classroom model. Each chapter includes schema-building work, explanations and charts of new language and structures for self-access learning, and many exercises designed to scaffold the use of the new academic language introduced. Also, instructors can create online mini-lessons based on the tables and explanations provided or show students how to investigate the characteristics of the academic language covered in each chapter. Thus, students can work independently on their first pass through each chapter, freeing up class time for collaborating on or checking more demanding tasks and for peer editing of follow-up writing assignments.

**References**


Chapter 1 Commentary: 
Using Resources for Vocabulary Development

Intended Outcomes

- Students will become familiar with the elements of a word that govern how to use that word in the correct environment within a sentence.
- Students will learn about and gain practice using learner dictionaries and concordancers to investigate the correct usage of words.
- Students will develop editing strategies for addressing awkward wording and inappropriate word choice.

Contents

1.1 Characteristics of a Word

Exercise 1 Denotation, Literal vs. Figurative Meanings, Connotation, Formality/Register, and Frequency
Table 1.1 Characteristics of a Word, Part I
Exercise 2 Collocations, Spelling/Homophones, Word Forms/ Derivatives, and Grammatical Environment
Table 1.2 Characteristics of a Word, Part II
Exercise 3 Editing Practice—Characteristics of a Word

2.1 Resource: Learner Dictionaries

Figure 1.1 permeate (from the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary online)
Figure 1.2 interrogate (from the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary online)
Exercise 4 Word Characteristics Practice—interrogate
1.3 Resource: Collocations Dictionaries

Figure 1.3 adjective + evidence (from Oxford Collocations Dictionary)

Exercise 5 Editing Practice—Characteristics for evidence
Exercise 6 Collocations Practice—requirement
Exercise 7 Editing Practice—Collocations

1.4 Resource: Online Concordancers

Figure 1.4 Inside the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)
Figure 1.5 Frequency Results for accordance in COCA
Figure 1.6 Context Results for accordance in COCA
Figure 1.7 Frequency Results for visible, ridiculous, and ludicrous in COCA
Exercise 8 COCA Practice: Checking Frequency
Figure 1.8 Context Results for dwindled in COCA
Exercise 9 COCA Practice: Checking Frequency of Phrases

Chapter Background and Use

This chapter forms the foundation for the rest of the book, as it highlights for student writers the connection between vocabulary and grammar, the complexity of appropriate word usage, and ways to investigate new words to control or master their use. Thus, we recommend using this chapter early in the term so that both you (and your students if you choose to share it with them) can link back to its contents while working through class assignments.

In the Classroom

We use this chapter as an overview of the vocabulary-grammar connection and the difference between knowing a word’s main meaning as part of one’s receptive vocabulary and controlling its use in one’s own writing. Once students understand the various characteristics of words that circumscribe their use, as they come across less familiar but useful words in later chapters, in course readings, or in thesauruses, students can investigate the characteristics of these words. This
Investigation can help students select appropriate words while drafting sentences or make changes to the wording of sentences while editing.

Before beginning this unit, we recommend having a short discussion with students about the difference between one’s productive and receptive vocabularies. Students may be familiar with many of the specific vocabulary words examined in this chapter. They are relatively common academic words that may have appeared in readings the students have done, and thus students may know the general meanings of many of these words (receptive vocabulary). Students may be much less familiar with how to control the use of these words in their own writing, and these words may not be ones the students can “think of” when they are writing (productive vocabulary). This distinction is important to highlight. The purpose of this chapter—and this textbook as a whole—is not only to introduce students to completely new words but also to help increase the set of academic words students can access automatically and use appropriately while writing.

In Written Feedback

We use the characteristics of a word in the feedback we give to students on their drafts. Once students have completed this chapter, instead of writing “awkward,” “wrong word,” or “word choice,” we can guide writers to an understanding of what is inappropriate or awkward by using comments like “check collocation” or “register issue,” helping them create an editing plan.

In Conferences or Tutorials

It is often very difficult to talk about word choice in tutorial settings, as tutors often feel that the only way to help the student is to “correct the error,” something that goes against tutor pedagogy. Once students have become familiar with the characteristics of a word as outlined in this chapter (either via class discussion or a short minilesson in a tutoring session), tutors can talk to student writers about what makes a particular wording “awkward” or inappropriate. The tutor and student writer can work together, using the resources highlighted
in the chapter, to investigate word usage, pinpoint the characteristic of the word that created the awkwardness or inappropriateness, and then generate a list of more appropriate uses.

**IN-DEPTH COMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS**

The language in this opening section may be new to students. These are the characteristics of a word (Nation, 2001) covered in the chapter:

1. **Denotation** or a word’s various meanings, including its (2) *literal vs. figurative meanings*
2. **Connotation** or the idea or feeling a word evokes
3. **Register** or the level of formality and style required for a particular audience
4. **Frequency** of a word’s use
5. **Collocations** or the (types of) words that tend to come before or after this word in a sentence
6. **Spelling and homophones** or words that are often confused because they sound the same but are spelled differently
7. **Derivatives** or the different forms of a word
8. **Grammatical environment** or the grammatical structures that are used before or after a word

**Exercises 1 and 2: Characteristics of a Word**

The explanations for answers to Exercises 1 and 2 are provided in Tables 1 and 2 respectively on the pages just after the exercises. If you are using this book in class, we recommend that you not assign the chapter to be read for homework but instead project Exercise 1 on a screen in class and ask students to try to answer items before looking at Table 1. Then repeat with Exercise 2 and Table 2.
**Exercise 1 (pages 2–3)**

This exercise introduces students to the following word characteristics: denotation, connotation, formality or register, and frequency. Answers will vary. Sample responses are listed here and explained in detail in Table 1.1.

1. In a., *count* means to calculate the total number of things or people. In b., it means to be important or valuable.

2. In a., *hurdle* refers to a small fence that is jumped over in a race. In b., *hurdles* refer to difficulties or problems one must overcome.

3. *Interviewed* has a much more neutral connotation. The use of *interrogate* changes that tone. In the second sentence, the encounter seems much more aggressive or hostile.

4. *Tons* sounds too informal. *Abundant* sounds more academic, which matches the formality level of the other words in the sentence.

5. *Risible* is not a very common word in English, much less frequent than *ridiculous*, so it stands out. It also sounds much more formal than *ridiculous*.

**Exercise 2 (pages 5–6)**

This exercise introduces students to the following word characteristics: collocation, spelling and homophones, word forms or derivatives, and grammatical environment. Answers are explained in detail in Table 1.2.

1. Researchers are quite interested about the relationship between socioeconomic status and acquisition of academic English. *(Hint: Consider the prepositions.)* [When introducing preposition collocations, we find it useful to discuss with students the difference between spatial prepositions (on the table) vs. time/location prepositions that collocate with the noun that]
follows (in + month, at + street name and number) vs. allied prepositions that collocate with particular nouns, verbs, or adjectives but are not rule governed. These are the chunks of language that students must memorize almost as if they were each one compound lexical item.]

cites

2. In her article, Santossites several studies that examine this relationship. (Hint: Consider spelling/homophones.)

3. According to these researchers, unequal school funding can affect negatively effect students’ success. (Hint: Consider spelling/word forms.)

recognize

4. It is also important to recognize the debates about bilingual education in the US. (Hint: Consider word forms.)

5. Many people claim that bilingual education causes that learners develop English skills more slowly than English-only programs, whereas others believe the opposite. (Hint: Consider grammatical environment.)

Exercise 3 (page 8)

This exercise works well as a pair or small group activity. Some answers are rather straightforward (like Item 2). However, others require some intuition about English (like Item 1) and, for several items, more than one answer is possible. Asking students to work in pairs or small groups can lead to interesting conversations about word choice and grammatical appropriateness. Students may want or need to use dictionaries to help them answer items.

Undoubtedly / Without a doubt

1. Indubitably, the current law will save people thousands of dollars. (frequency)
[See Exercise 8 on page 20, which asks students to compile frequency counts for *indubitably*, *undoubtedly*, and *without a doubt* using a concordancer.]

due

2. This bill is now over 60 days past **do**. (*homophone*)

in

3. All food has been prepared **on** accordance with strict safety guidelines. (*collocation*)

[See Section 1.4. This example is highlighted in the explanation and figures showing students how to use an online concordancer.]

4. It is important to conduct a complete inspection annually to **met** / **fulfilled**

   ensure that all requirements have been **done**. (*collocation*)

5. After the incident, the main character in the novel became much **violent**

   more aggressive and **violence**. (*word form / derivative*)

   **taking** / **that I take**

6. My college advisor suggested **me to take** another math class.

   (*grammatical environment*)

**Exercise 4 (page 13)**

The sample learner dictionary entry for and subsequent discussion of *permeate*, which appears right before this exercise, can be difficult for students to follow. It is helpful to provide more samples for students by looking at the entry in other online dictionaries (see [www.thefreedictionary.com/permeate](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/permeate)) or a concordancer. The sample learner dictionary entry for *interrogate*, used in Exercise 4, should present fewer problems for students.

1. **Connotation**: “Aggressive way”

2. **Derivatives**:
   a. interrogate
   b. interrogation
   c. interrogator
3. **Countability:**
   a. *uncountable*—no article + singular noun + preposition signal uncountability
   b. *countable*—the number and use of the plural form signals countability.

   [This distinction can be uncovered via the grammar clues, but often students want to know why or when they should use the double noun as countable or uncountable. In 3a., the word *interrogation* refers to the action in general. In 3b., the word *interrogations* refers to specific instances of questioning. Often times, it is helpful to gather many countable vs. uncountable samples. After showing students how to use a concordancer, you can ask students to search “an interrogation” or “interrogations” vs. “for / under interrogation.”]

4. **Collocations:**
   a. conduct or carry out
   b. under

**Exercise 5 (page 15)**

This exercise is designed to give students practice in using learner and collocations dictionaries to respond to instructor comments concerning word choice or awkward wording.

1. Possible responses: powerful/solid/strong evidence
2. Possible responses: insufficient/scant evidence
3. Possible responses: clear/compelling/conclusive evidence
4. Possible responses: concrete/direct evidence

**Exercise 6 (page 16)**

This exercise refers back to an early error analysis exercise (Exercise 3, Item 4) to reinforce how a collocations dictionary can help students control the use of a word in a sentence. Possible responses: *comply with/fulfill/meet/satisfy.*
**Exercise 7 (pages 16–17)**

This exercise provides additional practice in using learner and collocations dictionaries to respond to instructor comments concerning word choice or awkward wording.

Possible responses:

1. A good manager is always ready, no matter what situations happen.

   Explanation: Common collocations with *happen*: *things, accidents, miracles, disasters, emergencies, tragedies*. Common collocations with *arise*: *problems, issues, conflicts, difficulties situations* (usually negative), *complications, questions, challenges*.

2. The politician **did** a serious mistake when he used a racial slur in his comment to the press.

   Explanation: The most common verb used with *mistake* is *make*. Because the two verbs *do* and *make* are often part of nonrule–governed patterns, it can be quite useful to have students investigate these words in detail. We often ask students to look these words up in learner or collocations dictionaries, which often contain many useful expressions for students. Students may ask if these verbs should really be used in academic writing given their less formal register. You might consider creating an exercise around these verbs, asking students to find more “formal-sounding” ways to express *do* and *make* phrases, like *err* for *make a mistake* or *perform* for *do an action*.

3. The Prime Minister noted that the new incentives should **excite** the economy.

   Explanation: *Excite* is followed by a person (e.g., *It is important to create learning environments that stimulate and excite students*).
Or: *The speech excited the Republican base.*) Other common expressions: *to excite the imagination, the senses, curiosity, passion, feelings.* In science contexts, something can *excite* atoms, molecules, gas, etc. Verbs that collocate with *the economy* in this context include *stimulate, grow, boost, fix, improve, revive.*

reverse / curb / end / stop

4. The Federal Reserve lowered interest rates, hoping to *demise the downward trend* in consumer spending and employment rates.

Explanation: First, *demise* is almost always used as a noun. Second, common collocations with *the downward trend* are *reverse, curb, end,* and *stop.*

5. Engineers are working on materials that will improve the *tall/high-rise* concrete design of *high* buildings.

Explanation: The distinction between *tall* and *high* can be very difficult for students to conceptualize. Thus, you may suggest to students that they look up nouns in collocations dictionaries or concordancers to check *tall vs. high.* If they press you for a rule: *Tall* collocates with “buildings” but *high* does not. *High* refers to the distance something is from the ground (like a *high shelf, high ceilings, high branches on a tree*). *Tall* refers to the total length of something, like a building, tree, or person.

In the author’s opinion / From the author’s perspective / point of view

6. *From the author’s opinion,* the proposed policy will not be effective in solving the current political crisis.

Explanation: According to online learner dictionaries, *From the author’s opinion* is not a possible combination. The most common preposition with *opinion* is *in.* The preposition *from* is used with the noun *perspective, point of view,* or *viewpoint.*
Exercise 8 (page 20)

Answers will vary. The specific numbers students find will differ based on the current size of COCA. It should be clear, however, that undoubtedly is much more common than indubitably and a bit more common than without a doubt. Also, get will be much more common than either acquire or obtain, as it can appear in many more contexts. The same will be true for spread and permeate, respectively.

Exercise 9 (page 22)

This exercise highlights a very useful function of a concordancer – the ability to look up the use of phrases, not merely single words. We have chosen three contrast connectors, only two of which are commonly used in standard, academic English, and one of which is often inappropriately used by students. By looking these up and noticing considerable differences in frequencies, students not only receive reinforcement regarding the correct forms of these contrast connectors but also learn a valuable strategy they can use when drafting and editing written texts. Note: Results will vary based on updates to COCA.

1. In spite of: 7049
2. Despite of: 34
3. Despite: 59918

Reference

Chapter 2 Commentary: Writing about Increases and Decreases

All page numbers in the Commentary refer to the student book.

Intended Outcomes

- Students will become familiar with a variety of words and sentences writers use to express increases and decreases.
- Students will develop their productive use of verbs, nouns, and modifiers to describe increases and decreases.
- Students will develop their ability to use vocabulary appropriately and effectively in writing about charts and graphs that depict increases and decreases.

Contents

2.1 Verbs Expressing Increases and Decreases

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 Self-Assessment: Checking Vocabulary Knowledge of Verbs Expressing Increase and Decrease
Table 2.1 Change-of-State Verbs

Building Your Knowledge

Using Verbs to Express Changes in Amount, Size, Quality, and Intensity

Exercise 2 Meaning: Verbs That Express Increase vs. Verbs That Express Decrease

Using Transitive and Intransitive Verbs Appropriately

Table 2.2 Examples of Change-of-State Verbs
Exercise 3 Analysis: Transitive and Intransitive Verbs Expressing Increase and Decrease
Exercise 4 Concordancer Practice: Object Nouns with Verbs of Increase and Decrease
Exercise 5 Concordancer Practice: Subject Nouns with Verbs of Increase and Decrease
Exercise 6 Error Analysis: Intransitive Verbs That Cannot Take Objects
Exercise 7 Collocation Analysis: Verbs of Increase and Decrease with Subject and Object Nouns

Using Verbs to Describe Graphic Data

Exercise 8 Meaning: Verb Synonyms for Phrases
Exercise 9 Practice: Describing Graphic Increases and Decreases

Figure 2.1 Growth of Wages by Year, 1997–2008

More on Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Exercise 10 Error Analysis: Objects with Verbs Expressing Increase and Decrease

2.2 Modifiers Expressing Increases and Decreases

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 11 Identification: Expressions of Increase and Decrease

Building Your Knowledge

Modifying Verbs

Figure 2.2 Change-of-State Adverbs Expressing Speed and Degree
Exercise 12 Meaning: Rate of Change
Exercise 13 Meaning: Amount of Change
Exercise 14 Revision Practice: Expressions for Academic Register

Modifying Nouns That Express Increases or Decreases

Table 2.4 Adjectives and Nouns with Verbs Expressing Change
Exercise 15 Transformation Practice: Verb + Adverb → Adjective + Noun
Exercise 16 Transformation Practice: Adjective + Noun → Verb + Adverb
Exercise 17 Transformation Practice: Clauses → Phrases
Exercise 18 Error Analysis: Word Forms

Using Change-of-State Modifiers with Nouns
Exercise 19 Transformation Practice: Sentences → Noun Phrases

Chapter Background and Use

As the introduction to this chapter indicates, writing in many academic disciplines makes use of vocabulary expressing increases and decreases, especially verbs and their noun forms. Such writing could involve explaining a process in which changes occur in the amounts or sizes of physical objects, a graph or chart describing changes over time, or an issue in which efforts or the effects of something grew larger or smaller. While vocabulary expressing increases and decreases is especially common in the sciences and social sciences, it will no doubt be relevant for many composition topics in writing courses.

Building on the characteristics of words presented in Chapter 1, this chapter helps students not only to learn meanings of new vocabulary but also to learn how these words frequently collocate with other words. We focus especially on verbs expressing increases and decreases, which we call change-of-state verbs, and the nouns which occur with them, both as subjects and objects in sentences. One challenge we have often noted with multilingual student writers’ use of these change-of-state verbs is knowing which verbs can or cannot be followed by object nouns; that is, which are transitive and which intransitive. Consequently, this chapter offers explanations and exercises to raise students’ awareness of this distinction and to give them practice using both transitive and intransitive change-of-state verbs.

Before beginning this unit, you may want to ask students to do a brief in-class writing that would require using vocabulary expressing increase or decrease, such as a summary of a graph or chart showing increases and decreases, and then discuss some of the vocabulary choices they have used to express changes. A graph or chart from
an online source expressing a recent economic or population change could be used, or examples can be found on one of the many websites focusing on the language for describing graphic information, such as those for IELTS® exam preparation. Gallup polls are other good sources of graphs showing change over time.

Another way of introducing the vocabulary of increases and decreases could be to give students a noticing task based on a reading from your class materials or an internet source. An example of such a task is Exercise 1 in Chapter 3. Topics we have used for this include economic issues, immigration, climate change, and change over time in social practices, such as the decline in marriage rates, especially for young people, in many countries worldwide.

IN-DEPTH COMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS

2.1 Verbs Expressing Increases and Decreases

*Raising Language Awareness*

**Exercise 1 (pages 24–25)**

This is the first of a number of exercises throughout this book that offer a list of words and ask students to check their knowledge of them. After completing this exercise, students will have an annotated list of which verbs focused on in this chapter they know and use in their writing, which ones they are familiar with but rarely use, and which are unfamiliar to them. As you might expect, students often finish this type of exercise at different rates; we find that when done as an in-class exercise, those who finish first are often very interested in consulting online dictionaries to look up some of the words they don’t know. Since all of the verbs will appear in exercises subsequent to this one, we don’t think there is much need to spend time discussing the results of this exercise. You might want to mention to students that they will be seeing more of this vocabulary in the pages that follow. After students complete the chapter, they can go back to this exercise and assess their current knowledge of those words they indicated with either a √ or a −.
Obviously, since this is a self-assessment of word knowledge, the answers will vary.

**Building Your Knowledge**

The explanation that introduces this section is intended to familiarize students with the kinds of questions that will govern the choices writers make in selecting verbs to express meanings for specific contexts. The sentence examples given for the categories under the first question present verbs in a range of contexts. It should be noted that many of the verbs presented as examples for a particular category can also be used in other categories. For example, the verb *shrink*, used as an example of a decrease in physical size for the second category, could also be used to express a decrease in the importance or value of something. You may want to ask students to read this section as a homework assignment, letting them know that these questions will be addressed in later parts of the chapter. From our experience, students are familiar with many of the words but may not use many of them (e.g., *eased, soared, plunged*) very frequently in their own writing.

**Using Verbs to Express Changes in Amount, Size, Quality, and Intensity**

**Exercise 2 (page 28)**

As with the previous exercise, the task students are asked to do in this exercise is a type that is repeated throughout the book: namely, to sort groups of vocabulary into broad categories of meaning. The exercise engages students in learning which words express increases and which express decreases. When they have completed this exercise, they will have a chart that should be useful for future reference. As we noted with Exercise 1, some of the words will be quite familiar to most students, while others will be less so. The familiar words should help to build student confidence in their current language resources at the same time that they learn new word meanings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs Expressing Increase</th>
<th>Verbs Expressing Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accumulate</td>
<td>abate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inflate</td>
<td>ease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amplify</td>
<td>compress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intensify</td>
<td>exhaust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>augment</td>
<td>condense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maximize</td>
<td>lessen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boom</td>
<td>contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mount</td>
<td>lose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>build up</td>
<td>cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multiply</td>
<td>minimize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enlarge</td>
<td>deflate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mushroom</td>
<td>reduce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>escalate</td>
<td>degenerate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proliferate</td>
<td>shrink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expand</td>
<td>deplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>propagate</td>
<td>shrevel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extend</td>
<td>depreciate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spread</td>
<td>subtract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gain</td>
<td>diminish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swell</td>
<td>subside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heighten</td>
<td>dwindles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Using Transitive and Intransitive Verbs Appropriately**

This section takes up a very important grammatical distinction in the characteristics of verbs: those that can be followed by direct objects versus those that cannot. And of course some verbs can be both transitive (taking a direct object) and intransitive (not allowing a direct object) in different contexts. Table 2.2 is intended to help students better understand this distinction. However, we feel that because the concepts are somewhat complex, it is better to go over this information in class rather than as assigned reading. We would suggest that you use the example sentences in Table 2.2 to clarify what the terms *transitive*, *intransitive*, and *direct objects* mean. Many students have heard of these terms, perhaps in learning how to get information from a dictionary about verbs, but they may not really understand what they mean. If you use Table 2.2 to discuss these grammar terms, you might point out how intransitive verbs can be followed by prepositional phrases with objects as in the intransitive example for *diminish*, which is followed by *with each passing day*. You could offer some other prepositional phrases that could be added to the intransitive sentences. For example, you could add *in several ways* to the intransitive example for *intensify*: *Our efforts intensified in several ways*. Or you could prompt examples from students, perhaps giving them a preposition such as *in* or *into* as a starter.
The text accompanying Table 2.2 reminds us that this distinction can be rather tricky for individual verbs. Thus, we recommend that students check a concordancer (such as The Corpus of Contemporary American English) to get a better sense of what forms are used. Alternatively, you could extract a few examples from a concordancer, put them on a data projector or other displays, and ask students to notice how they are used.

**Exercise 3 (page 30)**

This is an exercise that we intended to be a “noticing” analysis task, with transitive and intransitive sentence pairs for each numbered item. In other words, the intended purpose is for students to become more aware of how this distinction is realized in sentences. It should not be very difficult for them. This would make a good pair or small group activity. If you go over the exercise orally, in addition to asking students to state the circled objects for transitive verbs, you could either explain or (perhaps with some prompting) have students identify the structures that follow some of the intransitive verbs. Examples: 1b: time adverb *next week* followed by infinitive clause; 2a: prepositional phrase; 3b: manner adverb *again* followed by prepositional phrase; 4b: infinitive clause; 5a: adverb *rapidly* followed by prepositional phrase.

1. **T** a. Bears are encountering more humans as they **expand** *(their range)* in the Rocky Mountains.
   **I** b. The committee will **expand** next week to include three more members.

2. **I** a. As the virus spreads, concern **extends** to other countries not yet affected.
   **T** b. The group **extended its concert tour** to include five more cities.

3. **T** a. His doctor hopes the radiation will **shrink** *(the tumor)*
   **I** b. Forecasters predict that the economy will **shrink** again during the next quarter.
4. **T** a. I believe that my study enlarges the understanding of the motivations for this behavior.

   **I** b. When the flower dies, its base enlarges to become a capsule of small black seeds.

5. **I** a. With the deaths of a half million bats from a fungal infection, the insects these animals feed upon may propagate rapidly throughout the eastern states.

   **T** b. The candidate for President declared that her opponent was propagating rumors about her.

**Exercise 4 (page 31)**

If you conduct any of your classes in a computer lab or allow students access to the internet in your classroom, this makes a good in-class activity. It could also be done outside of class, assuming that students have worked through the exercises in the introductory chapter (and perhaps done a YouTube tutorial or two on using COCA) so that you feel they are comfortable with this site. They should be able to use the concordancer feature that will show them the most common nouns that follow each of the verbs. We have found that most students have no problems with this.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Nouns That Can Follow as Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amplify</td>
<td>effects, message, signals, sounds, voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>augment</td>
<td>income, power, data, knowledge, instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deplete</td>
<td>ozone, resources, nutrients, savings, reserves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>escalate</td>
<td>conflict, tensions, situation, attacks, confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lessen</td>
<td>impact, competition, dependence, severity, pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduce</td>
<td>heat, risk, emissions, costs, deficit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 5 (page 32)

In this exercise, students are focusing on nouns that collocate with intransitive verbs. After they have completed it, you might ask if they observed any patterns in the kinds of collocations. You could also show them these examples and ask for observations. For example, subject nouns with *abate* often reflect negative conditions; subjects with *condense* are often atmospheric terms; those for *depreciate* are often related to economic conditions; subjects expressing emotions often collocate with *subside*.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns That Can Precede as Subjects</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>symptoms, worries, violence, turmoil, problems</td>
<td>abate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>molecules, gases, vapors, metals, clouds</td>
<td>condense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vehicles, stock, equipment, rates, currency</td>
<td>depreciate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supplies, numbers, resources, funds, support</td>
<td>dwindle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cells, bacteria, services, networks, options</td>
<td>proliferate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word, news, rumors, disease, fire</td>
<td>spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>symptoms, pain, effects, anger, panic</td>
<td>subside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 6 (page 33)

Because we are aware of the challenge for students in understanding the transitive/intransitive distinction and because we think it is a very important distinction for using change-of-state verbs appropriately, we have included yet another exercise with this focus. This one includes both correct and incorrect uses. You may want students to have their dictionaries at hand for this if done in class, or you could assign it for homework.

1. Thousands of newly arrived immigrants *boomed* the population.

   Rephrased: The population boomed when thousands of new immigrants arrived.
2. He dwindled his job opportunities by dropping out of school.
Rephrased: After he dropped out of school, his job opportunities dwindled.

3. Herbs should augment a sound diet and not replace it.

4. The opening of the new oil refinery mushroomed the number of jobs.
Rephrased: The number of jobs mushroomed due to the opening of the new oil refinery.

5. Several aspirin and some rest subsided her bad headache.
After she took several aspirin and got some rest, her bad headache subsided.

6. Plants growing in the shade can build up too much nitrogen.

7. The economic recession has shriveled individual savings.

8. Our company downsized its corporate headquarters last year.

Exercise 7 (page 34)
This exercise presents some common noun collocations, both subjects and objects, for change-of-state verbs. Most students will probably need to consult a dictionary or concordancer for at least some of these collocations. Some collocations can be identified by trying out phrases in a search engine; for example, a quick search on Google for accumulate/inflate/heighten awareness (Item 2) reveals no instances of accumulate awareness and many of heighten awareness. While there are examples of inflate awareness, they occur with articles about balloons being used to raise awareness of an issue! So the best collocate would be heighten awareness.

1. a. abated
2. c. heighten
3. b. dwindled
4. b. exhausted
5. a. amplify
6. c. mounted
7. b. escalated
8. c. eased
Using Verbs to Describe Graphic Data

In this section, Table 2.3 includes both single verbs and a few phrasal verbs (*bottom out, drop off, fall off, shoot up*) that express upward and downward movement. You may want to explain to students that the more common verbs such as *rise* and *fall* occur with great frequency in descriptions of graphic data and that some repetition of these more general verbs is fine. However, other verbs in Table 2.3 can express more precisely dramatic changes either upward or downward in addition to highest and lowest points, as focused on in Exercise 8. Although we often note that phrasal verbs are typically less formal than the single verbs, these phrasal verbs occur quite frequently in descriptions of graphic data, especially in the journalism register.

**Exercise 8 (page 35)**

1. decrease dramatically
   - (a) plummet
   - (b) plunge
   - (c) sink
   - (d) tank

2. increase sharply
   - (a) shoot up
   - (b) skyrocket
   - (c) soar
   - (d) spike

3. reach a low point
   - (a) bottom
   - (b) peak

**Exercise 9 (page 36)**

This exercise offers practice for students in writing their own sentences to describe graphic data.

Answers may vary. Possible responses:

1. As shown in Figure 2.1, wages climbed/rose by 3% from 1999–2002.

2. In 2002, the rate of wage growth peaked at 6%.


More on Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

In our experience, one of the most common errors students make in using verbs to describe graphic data is following intransitive change-of-state verbs with direct objects. Thus, we return to this grammatical focus in this section.

Exercise 10 (page 38)

This exercise could make a good pair/small group task if students have access to online resources.

_OK_ 1.b. After the stock market tanked, the country experienced an extended recession.

_OK_ 2.a. The Arts Foundation slashed its budget after its proposal for the grant was denied.

_OK_ 3.b. After the sewage tank malfunctions, bacteria levels spiked downstream from the plant.

_OK_ 4.b. If the severe drought continues, the prices of the farm produce in grocery stores may skyrocket.

2.2 Modifiers Expressing Increases and Decreases

_Raising Language Awareness_

Exercise 11 (pages 39–40)

In this noticing exercise, students identify examples of adjective/noun and verb/adverb phrases, thus becoming more familiar with the different word forms expressing increase and decrease as well as the most common modifiers used with change-of-state verbs and nouns. We find that this awareness often leads to students using these modifiers more frequently in their own writing. The modifiers _significant/significantly_ have both a general meaning and a statistical one. However, most undergraduate students are not writing in contexts that involve statistical significance.
1. Investing more taxpayer funds in education does not necessarily produce even slight student achievement. A recent study for the Center for an Educated Georgia found that per-student spending over the last generation (adjusted for inflation) dramatically increased in Georgia, while at the same time public high school graduation rates fell sharply. This dramatic increase in operational spending led to significant decreases in class sizes, and marked increases in instructional technology and administration.

(Adapted from “Does Money Matter in Schools?,” Joseph G Martin, Jr., & Benjamin Scafidi, Atlanta Journal Constitution, September 9, 2009.)

2. In the late 1950s, the term study abroad was created, and it became recognized as an innovative path to enrich the undergraduate learning experience (Bowman, 1987). Large private and public institutions first became involved in providing overseas opportunities for their students during the 1960s. Study-abroad programs experienced a dramatic increase in number between the early 1960s and mid-1970s. Since then, the number of education abroad programs has been steadily growing. The growing number of programs has provided many personal and professional opportunities to U.S. college students.

(Adapted from “CCSC Review Series Essay: Education Abroad in the U.S. Community Colleges,” Yi Zhang, Community College Review, April 2011.)

3. Dwindling state funding has forced public colleges and universities to drastically cut services while increasing tuition. One possible solution to the problem of rising tuition is for colleges and universities to put more full-time tenured professors in the classroom. Significantly reducing the other requirements on professors—such as research, scholarship, service, and the like—would, in turn, considerably reduce academic costs.

(Adapted from “The Open Forum,” Denver Post, January 28, 2012.)
Building Your Knowledge

Modifying Verbs

In this section, students learn about and gain practice using a number of adverbs that can express the speed at which or degree to which things increase or decrease. They will use Figure 2.2 to complete the two exercises that follow. In looking over the modifiers in Figure 2.2, you might want to discuss with students which of the adverbs they have used most frequently to describe changes and which are not very familiar to them. You might want to note that the adverb *markedly* differs in pronunciation from past tense verb forms in that the *-ed* is pronounced as a separate syllable.

Exercise 12 (page 41)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fast</th>
<th>Slow</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>quickly</td>
<td>slowly</td>
<td>constantly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abruptly</td>
<td>gently</td>
<td>steadily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rapidly</td>
<td>gradually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suddenly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swiftly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 13 (page 41)

Answers could vary somewhat

A lot

1. enormously
2. dramatically
3. significantly
4. considerably
5. substantially
6. markedly
7. noticeably
8. moderately
9. somewhat
10. slightly

A little
Exercise 14 (page 42)

Since our students have often not had much experience using the more formal adverb modifiers focused on in this section, we include this exercise to help students transform informal register vocabulary to more formal academic language. Most students seem to enjoy exercises that offer them practice in shifting from informal to academic register; many of our students acknowledge that they have often used informal modifiers such as *a lot* or *a little* in more formal writing contexts and appreciate learning vocabulary that can substitute for these modifiers.

Answers may vary.

1. After the announcement of her engagement to Prince William, Princess Kate’s public exposure increased *considerably*/*significantly*.

2. The stock market average dropped *slightly*/*somewhat* after the negative report …

3. Worldwide support for the country decreased *dramatically*/*significantly* because of …

4. The company’s sales grew *slightly*/*moderately*, so management introduced sales incentives for the upcoming quarter.

Modifying Nouns that Express Increases or Decreases

This section helps to build students’ word form knowledge, an important aspect of learning new vocabulary. Transformation tasks such as those in Exercises 15, 16, and 17 can also help students develop their paraphrasing skills.
### Exercise 15 (page 45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb + Adverb</th>
<th>Adjective + Noun</th>
<th>Verb + Adverb</th>
<th>Adjective + Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to expand considerably</td>
<td>considerable expansion (of, in)</td>
<td>to cut back sharply</td>
<td>sharp cutback (in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to reduce constantly</td>
<td>constant reduction (of)</td>
<td>to lose significantly</td>
<td>significant loss (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to change enormously</td>
<td>enormous change (in)</td>
<td>to decelerate slowly</td>
<td>slow deceleration (in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to accelerate gently</td>
<td>gentle acceleration (in)</td>
<td>to increase steadily</td>
<td>steady increase (in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to decline hugely</td>
<td>huge decline (in)</td>
<td>to incline steeply</td>
<td>steep incline (in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to inflate markedly</td>
<td>marked inflation</td>
<td>to add substantially</td>
<td>substantial addition (to)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to dip noticeably</td>
<td>noticeable dip (in)</td>
<td>to escalate swiftly</td>
<td>swift escalation (of/in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to drop quickly</td>
<td>quick drop (in)</td>
<td>to spike suddenly</td>
<td>sudden spike</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exercise 16 (page 46)

Since students often vary in the rate at which they can make transformations in sentence contexts, this might make a good homework exercise after going over the example sentence in class. Otherwise, if done with pairs or in a small group, there may be a tendency for the more linguistically proficient students to do all the work!

1b. **Ethnic segregation increased sharply in Belfast in the 1970s.** *(Given)*

2b. In the 1980s, however, Belfast’s ethnic segregation rose sharply.

3b. Reports show that interest in after-school programs in two-income households increased markedly during the 1970s and 1980s.

4b. We have seen distance and online education in higher education grow substantially during the past decade.
Exercise 17 (page 47)

The focus on noun phrases as an important part of academic writing, especially noun phrases that link to earlier parts of a text, is one that we have emphasized in several chapters of this book. This exercise is more challenging than Exercise 16. It could be worked on individually in class or assigned as homework. If given as homework, we often go over several together in class (the example and perhaps one other) and ask students to complete the remaining items on their own. It could also be done with you leading the class as a whole if you think students need more guidance in the process. If so, you could ask them to first identify what the noun form should be for the blank and then build the phrase from there.

1A. Business use of online authoring tools—such as Google Drive, Basecamp, and Trello—has risen more than 200% in just the past decade.

1B. This swift rise in use has allowed people from around the globe to collaborate on projects much more efficiently.

2A. Tomato plant yields dropped by 25% from the previous year despite robust flowering.

2B. Given this noticeable drop in yields, the tomato plants may have experienced blossom drop, a condition in which temperature ranges impede fruit production.

3A. Middle-aged women in an experimental group who engaged in a weight-training exercise gained bone density at up to two times the rate of those who engaged in only cardio exercise.

3B. Such a substantial gain in bone density / substantial difference in gains provides support for increased weight-bearing exercise for women over the age of 50.
4A. During the past decade in the U.S., food prices have increased little by little every year.

4B. Despite this **steady / gradual increase in prices**, the total percentage of salary Americans use for food purchases remains one of the lowest in all developed countries.

5A. Over the last two days, tensions have escalated as the two countries ended negotiations, recalled their diplomats, and even started amassing troops on their shared border.

5B. The **swift escalation in tensions** has alarmed governments across the region.

**Exercise 18 (page 48)**

This error analysis exercise provides practice in using correct word forms, including adverbs, verbs, and nouns.

1. The goal of sustainable architecture is to **substantial** minimize the negative environmental impact of buildings. **substantially**

2. The most well-known strategy is the installation of solar panels, the price of which has **drop** sharply in recent years. **dropped**

3. But even simple changes in building design can **noticeable** improve energy savings. **noticeably**

4. For example, windows can be positioned to dramatically **maximum** the input of heat-creating light while substantially minimizing the loss of heat through glass. **maximize**

5. Such methods can lead to significant gains in efficiency and dramatic **reduces** in energy costs. **reductions**
Using Change-of-State Modifiers with Nouns

This last section focuses on the past (–ed) and present (–ing) participle adjectives that are often used to express increases or decreases related to the noun modified. The explanation offers three examples that illustrate how the use of change-of-state modifiers can improve conciseness, flow, and focus in writing. If time permits, you could offer some other examples taken from COCA or ask students to find examples from COCA. They could search for common –ing change-of-state modifiers such as rising, falling, increasing, and declining, using the Position function of COCA to restrict search to noun collocations to block examples that are progressive verbs.

Exercise 19 (page 50)

Students can refer to the examples in the previous explanation in transforming sentences into noun phrases in this exercise. To reinforce the purpose of these transformations as described earlier, after students have completed the exercise, you could ask them to state the advantage(s) of condensing sentence information into the noun phrases. You could also ask them, if relevant, to look at their work-in-progress to see if they might be able to revise text using this transformation strategy to make expression more concise.

1C. Farmers and city governments are fighting over dwindling water resources during the drought.

2C. Escalating violence in PG-13 films has come to the attention of many parent groups….

3C. Current students report that skyrocketing tuition over the past 20 years has placed….

4C. As more and more people get their news from the internet, many newspapers face serious consequences, including declining readership and shrinking budgets.
Chapter 3 Commentary:
Writing about Other Types of Change

Intended Outcomes

- Students will increase their repertoire of verbs to express changes of different types.
- Students will learn the kinds of conditions and situations for which different change verbs are used.
- Students will learn the grammatical environments of different kinds of change verbs, including noun phrase objects and prepositional phrases.
- Students will become more familiar with prepositions that co-occur with particular change verbs.
- Student will learn the abstract noun forms of change verbs and how they are modified in academic writing.

Contents

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 Identification: Words That Express Changes Other Than Increase or Decrease
Exercise 2 Meaning: Synonyms

3.1 Verbs Expressing Change in Form or Behavior

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 3 Self-Assessment: Vocabulary Knowledge of Verbs Expressing Change in Form or Behavior
Table 3.1 Common Verbs That Express Change in Form or Behavior
Building Your Knowledge

Table 3.2  Change-of-State Verbs with Object Collocations
Table 3.3  Change-of-State Verbs with Prepositional Phrase Collocations
Exercise 4  Collocation Analysis: Nouns and Change-of-State Verbs
Exercise 5  Practice: Using Change-of-State Verbs

Convert/Transform + Noun Phrase + into + Noun Phrase

Exercise 6  Analysis: Use of Convert and Transform in Sentence Contexts

Vary + Noun Phrase + Preposition + Noun Phrase

Exercise 7  Analysis: Use of Vary + Preposition in Sentence Contexts

3.2 Verbs Expressing Positive and Negative Changes

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 8  Self-Assessment: Vocabulary Knowledge of Verbs That Express Positive and Negative Changes
Table 3.4  Verbs That Express Positive or Negative Changes

Building Your Knowledge

Using Verbs that Express Changes for Positive, Neutral, or Negative Conditions, Processes, or Activities

Table 3.5  Object Collocations with Transitive Verbs
Table 3.6  Subject Collocations with Intransitive Verbs
Exercise 9  Meaning: Verbs Expressing Making or Becoming Better vs. Verbs Expressing Making or Becoming Worse
Exercise 10  Analysis: Meaning and Collocations of Verbs Expressing Positive and Negative Changes
Exercise 11  Practice: Using Verbs Expressing Positive and Negative Changes
Using Verbs That Express Intensifying or Lessening of Negative Conditions or Situations

Table 3.7 Object Collocations with Verbs Related to Change in Negative Conditions

Exercise 12 Dictionary Practice: Meaning and Collocations of Change-of-State Verbs

Exercise 13 Transformation Practice: Phrases → Verbs Expressing Making Things Better or Worse

3.3 Abstract Nouns Derived from Verbs Expressing Change

Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 14 Word Families: Verbs → Abstract Nouns

Exercise 15 Concordancer Practice: Phrase Collocations with Nouns Expressing Change

Chapter Background and Use

Like the vocabulary presented in Chapter 2, vocabulary in this chapter used to express various kinds of changes is found in all academic disciplines. Example collocational phrases, sentences, and paragraphs in this chapter cover a range of topics, from politics to social issues to ecology. If you are using this textbook along with a themed composition unit, students would most likely find opportunities to use some of this vocabulary in their writing. In particular, problem-solution texts are often rich in vocabulary that describes changes, both positive and negative.

Also similar to the change-of-state vocabulary in the previous chapter, many words focused on here should be familiar to many of your students, although they may not know about words that frequently collocate with them or about their grammatical environments. As we have stressed, knowing a word means knowing its many characteristics, not just general meanings. Some vocabulary words in this chapter, such as enhance, exacerbate, and deteriorate, are rarely used in informal, conversational registers, so students will likely be less familiar with these than with words that are more common across registers, such as adjust, modify, and renew. And again, while they may have come across the more formal vocabulary in their academic reading, they may not have used many of these words productively in their own writing.
While some chapters in this textbook could be used in any order, we suggest that this one follow Chapter 2; it includes in the first exercise some of the vocabulary from that chapter and, of course, builds on the vocabulary expressing changes. And some of the vocabulary topics covered in the last chapter, such as transitive and intransitive verb use in sentence contexts and learning the multiple forms of words (verbs, nouns, etc.), that is, word families, are dealt with here also.

**IN-DEPTH COMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS**

The introduction to this chapter notes that Chapter 3 vocabulary, though including in some cases the meaning of increases and decreases, is in part concerned with changes for better or worse; that is, they carry either positive or negative connotations. However, other kinds of changes are covered as well. You might ask students to read this introduction with its explanations and examples prior to beginning classwork on the chapter.

*Raising Language Awareness*

**Exercise 1 (pages 52–53)**

This noticing task focuses students’ attention on the kinds of change vocabulary in this chapter. As noted previously, it also highlights some of the vocabulary of the previous chapter expressing increases and decreases. The exercise can work well as either homework or classwork, and as either an individual or a pair/group activity. Students often like to work in pairs or groups “hunting” for vocabulary examples in texts, and we find it is both helpful for them and more efficient to let them know how many they should be finding. Students will have a chance later to assess their knowledge of these words.

1. In measuring inflation, economists omit consumer items whose costs fluctuate greatly, either rising or declining sharply, from month to month. Items that vary widely in price include airline tickets and televisions.
2. The altering of photographs, known as photo manipulation, has been practiced since the early 20th century. However, through digital technology, the practice has mushroomed in recent years. Commonly referred to by its slang term photo-shopping, photo manipulation is often used to enhance an individual’s physical appearance through alterations such as adjusting eye color.

3. After Hurricane Katrina, ecological engineers attempted to create landscapes that would help to restore water quality. In these and other ways, they hope to mitigate the effects of present and past storms.

4. Critics of some current drug use laws contend that the laws have done little to lessen the drug problems. Instead, they argue that these laws have inflated the prison population with individuals who pose no serious threat to society. This population only aggravates existing problems with overcrowding, worsening conditions for all. Indeed, the surging prison population in many states has become a serious social and economic issue.

5. Sound, or audio, files on computers tend to be very large. Thus, they are often compressed for storage. This conversion may result in reduced file quality as the complexity of the data will be simplified.

6. There is mounting evidence that children’s creative play has steadily declined as a result of extended periods of watching television and video games. Some researchers believe this decline in play may transform children’s cognitive development and modify their skills in social interactions.

Exercise 2 (page 53)

This exercise asks students to group vocabulary with similar meanings by identifying the one which is unlike the others. When they have finished, students could discuss how they selected the “outlier.” If you have students work on this in small groups, each group could be assigned to look up the three similar words for one numbered
item in a dictionary to identify what characteristics the three similar words share (e.g., the three similar words in Item 2 all refer to making something better in some way).

1. a. adapt  
   b. adjust  
   c. fluctuate  
   d. modify
2. a. complicate  
   b. enhance  
   c. enrich  
   d. refine
3. a. degenerate  
   b. deteriorate  
   c. simplify  
   d. worsen
4. a. alter  
   b. convert  
   c. revitalize  
   d. transform

3.1 Verbs Expressing Change in Form or Behavior

*Raising Language Awareness*

The verbs in this section, as the introduction summarizes, have neutral (i.e., not necessarily negative or positive) connotations, though in different contexts they could reflect either positive or negative changes. As noted, we often use *revise* in a positive sense though it does not necessarily need to be positive. Similarly, the verb *manipulate* can express negative meanings in relation to actions by people toward others (e.g., manipulating emotions, opinions), but it can also in many contexts, especially involving inanimate objects (e.g., variables, controls, gears), be quite neutral.

**Exercise 3 (page 54)**

This is another self-assessment of vocabulary knowledge. Answers will vary.

*Building Your Knowledge*

The explanation introducing this section distinguishes the ways in which change-of-state verbs can involve human actions or mental states as well as changes in things such as documents of various types and statistical data. It notes the syntactic roles of the verbs as both main verbs and infinitives and points out that some of the verbs such
as adapt and adjust are followed by prepositional phrases. Like many verbs, they are followed most often by one specific preposition, in this case to. Some grammar books refer to these preposition collocations as allied prepositions; that is, they are frequently associated with a verb, but they are different from phrasal verbs in that they belong to a prepositional phrase and are not a verb + particle as phrasal verbs are. Other examples of verbs plus allied prepositions: convert from, fluctuate with. As will be discussed later, the verbs convert and transform often occur with two prepositional phrases, and the verb vary is unusual in its combination with a number of prepositions. All of these points have been selected for focus based on analysis of numerous examples from academic texts in COCA and consideration of their usefulness in writing across disciplines in college settings, including the sciences as well as social sciences and humanities.

Table 3.2 in this section presents object noun phrase collocations for the transitive meanings verbs from Table 3.1, while Table 3.3 shows object of preposition collocations for adapt to and adjust to/for when used intransitively. As noted, collocational frequencies were derived from COCA. We have placed the prepositions next to the verbs to highlight their close association with the verbs. You could ask students to take a few minutes to skim the information in these tables before having them answer the questions in Exercise 4.

Exercise 4 (page 57)

This could be a good pair or small-group exercise to get students talking about the collocational data in the two tables.

1. adjust, alter, modify
2. adapt, modify
3. alter
4. adapt
5. adjust
Exercise 5 (page 58)

If you feel it is appropriate for your students before they begin this activity, you could present a few more examples of questions or further prompt them. You might suggest that conditional questions could be posed—e.g., *If you could alter one thing about this school, what would it be?* Here are a few more examples of the kinds of questions that could be posed:

- How do you usually go about revising a paper for one of your classes?
- What ways could you modify your behavior to be a more successful student?

Answers will, of course, vary for this exercise.

Convert/Transform + Noun Phrase + into + Noun Phrase

As mentioned earlier, our investigations into corpus-based sources of vocabulary use, namely COCA, made us aware of how often the verbs *convert* and *transform* occurred with prepositional phrases *from X to Y*. This was especially prominent in writing in the sciences, such as in engineering and geography. Research in vocabulary has emphasized the value of learning chunks and strings (Zimmer, 2010); it seemed useful for our students in writing across the disciplines to be aware of these common patterns, particularly since the use of verbs with prepositions and prepositional phrases pose challenges to many multilingual writers.

Exercise 6 (page 59)

In this matching exercise, as noted in the directions, students can use vocabulary cues to match the phrases in the two columns.

Here are examples of vocabulary cues: (1) aging populations…retirement communities; (2) forage fish, other small fish…fishmeal; (3) teachers, students…information, skills; (4) mirror electrons, positrons…ordinary electrons, positrons; (5) upload files…different format; (6) China’s…the country; (7) securities…cash; (8) water, minerals…acid
runoff. If you would like to reinforce the vocabulary associations, you could ask students to identify the cues that helped them match the phrases.

1. d With the aging population, we may see some college campuses converted into retirement communities.

2. f Forage fish and other small fish are often converted into fishmeal used to grow salmon, shrimp, and other species.

3. a Teachers must help students transform the information they receive into skills they use.

4. h During a supernova explosion, pairs of mirror electrons and mirror positrons would convert into ordinary electrons and positrons.

5. c In order to upload files, students need to convert them into a different format.

6. g Along with scientists, China’s political leaders hope to transform the country into a leading center of innovation.

7. b The employees were compensated with securities, which they could easily convert into cash.

8. e When coal mines close, they often leave behind water and minerals that bacteria can convert into acid runoff that is deadly to plants and animals.

**Vary + Noun Phrase + Preposition + Noun Phrase**

Just as we selected the prepositional patterns with *convert* and *transform* for focus in this chapter because of our observations of the examples we saw in COCA, the data examples revealed that the verb *vary*, in contrast to most verbs, co-occurred with many different prepositions. They are listed in the first paragraph of the explanation here along with examples. We note also common “chunked expressions” that seemed useful for students to add to their vocabulary repertoire. Because this topic is fairly limited, you may decide, due to either time constraints or your students’ needs, to skip this part of the chapter.
Exercise 7 (page 61)

In creating this exercise, we used some examples adapted from COCA and wrote others echoing usage similar to the data examples but with more accessible topics. Some items in this exercise could be challenging for some students because they rely on real-world knowledge (such as what geographic variables affect temperatures). Thus, it might be a good one for you to do with the class as a whole, discussing what makes the answers for each item inappropriate as a choice. But, for the most part, we think that students will see which choice appears inappropriate in meaning or, in Item 5, inappropriate grammatically. The intention here is for them to notice how these uses of *vary* + preposition can be used to concisely list variables expressed as noun phrases.

1. b large animals
   Large animals would not be a variable in affecting temperatures in a region. In contrast, temperatures often vary based on altitudes, influence of large bodies of water, and vegetation density.

2. c land
   Variation in language, customs, and culture is certainly seen among Native American tribes. The noun *land* without modification does not make sense as variation (a modified phrase could be a variable, e.g., *the different types of land on which they prefer to live*).

3. d learning strategies
   While individuals’ gender roles can certainly be influenced by their cultures, religious backgrounds, and educational levels, there is no research we are aware of that relates gender roles to learning strategies.

4. a clothing style
   Class level, gender, and field of study all make sense as possibly influencing students’ opinions. It would be difficult to relate clothing style to such opinions.
5. b the cost of tuition is rising in college
   All of the choices would make sense semantically, but (b) is a clause, not a noun phrase, so it is not grammatical as a sentence completion. You might ask students how it could be transformed to create a noun phrase (a topic covered in Chapter 2).

3.2 Verbs Expressing Positive and Negative Changes

*Raising Language Awareness*

**Exercise 8 (page 62)**

Another self-assessment of vocabulary knowledge, so answers will vary.

*Building Your Knowledge*

**Using Verbs That Express Changes for Positive, Neutral, or Negative Conditions, Processes, or Activities**

In this section and the next section, we are distinguishing verbs that are used in different contexts. This section presents change-of-state verbs used in situations that initially can be either positive, negative or neutral ones. The examples illustrate these distinctions, and it would be useful to go over these in class, reading aloud and making sure that students understand the changes acting upon different types of situations. The tables that follow (Table 3.5 and Table 3.6), like others in this chapter, give examples of common object collocations with transitive verbs followed by subject collocations with intransitive verbs. Exercises 9–11 offer students opportunities to explore further the verb meanings in these tables as well as analyze the kinds of object and subject phrases that often occur with specific verbs.

**Exercise 9 (page 65)**

Similar to other exercises you have seen so far, this exercise asks students to separate the verbs presented into broad semantic categories, in this case those that express making things better and those that
express making things worse. They will be examining these verbs further in the next exercise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs That Express Making or Becoming Better</th>
<th>Verbs That Express Making or Becoming Worse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>enhance</td>
<td>complicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enrich</td>
<td>decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refine</td>
<td>degenerate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>renew</td>
<td>deteriorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>restore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revitalize</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simplify</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise 10 (page 66)**

Here students will build their knowledge of the verbs of this section by analyzing their forms, their meanings, and their uses.

1. a. prefix: en-  meaning: to cause to become
   b. prefix: re-  meaning: back, again
   c. prefix: de-  meaning: to do the opposite, against

2. a. enhance
   b. enrich

3. restore

4. decline

**Exercise 11 (page 67)**

Instead of discussing all of the questions here, you could ask students in pairs or small groups to choose two of them. Following the discussion, as a brief in-class writing or as a homework assignment, students could be asked to write a paragraph responding to one of the questions, using the underlined vocabulary.
Using Verbs That Express Intensifying or Lessening of Negative Conditions or Situations

Whereas the verbs in the previous section combined with negative, positive, and neutral situations or conditions, those in this section are distinguished by their use with negative conditions. Some of the verbs express the idea of making a condition even worse; other verbs refer to easing or lessening of a negative condition. Since other than the word *worsen*, the verbs in this section occur mainly in formal writing and speech, they may be less familiar to students. Because of their rare use in conversational English, you may want to go over the pronunciation of these words in class. The word *exacerbate* is especially challenging to pronounce, even for native English speakers, perhaps partly because it may be confused with *exasperate* or even *exaggerate*.

Exercise 12 (pages 68–69)

This exercise asks students to analyze meanings and semantic collocations of verbs in Table 3.7. Their analysis of the data in the table may be helpful in developing their academic reading proficiency as well as writing.

1. alleviate, mitigate
2. alleviate
3. aggravate, exacerbate, worsen
4. worsen
5. Answers will vary. Examples: health, diseases, physical conditions, economic conditions, political condition, social conditions
Exercise 13 (pages 69–70)

The goal of this exercise is to reinforce the meanings of the vocabulary in Table 3.7 and to make students aware of how these verbs can substitute for the more wordy expressions, resulting in more concise phrasing. Students generally like these opportunities to write sentences using vocabulary that they may have come across in reading but have not used productively.

Answers will vary. Examples:

1. Privacy concerns can **exacerbate** the already uneasy relationship that many people have with social networks.

2. “Children of the Border,” a development project that serves people in Haiti and other countries, aims to **alleviate** problems of unemployment and poverty.

3. Climate change may **aggravate** problems such as degradation of air quality.

4. Some of the streams in the Bristol Bay area are going to be permanently lost, and scientists must find ways to **mitigate** the consequences of these losses.

5. Several World Bank studies indicated that resorting to biofuels could **exacerbate** the situation of world hunger.

3.3 Abstract Nouns Derived from Verbs Expressing Change

**Building Your Knowledge**

Here we return to the important aspect of word knowledge involving learning word families. The examples show how an abstract noun often echoes a verb used previously, creating lexical cohesion. The second example also points out the common occurrence of nouns used to modify other nouns (i.e., **restoration project**).
Exercise 14 (page 71)

The completion of this chart can serve as a future reference for students in their writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adapt</td>
<td>adaptation</td>
<td>decline</td>
<td>decline</td>
<td>refine</td>
<td>refinement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjust</td>
<td>adjustment</td>
<td>degenerate</td>
<td>degeneration</td>
<td>renew</td>
<td>renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aggravate</td>
<td>aggravation</td>
<td>deteriorate</td>
<td>deterioration</td>
<td>restore</td>
<td>restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alleviate</td>
<td>alleviation</td>
<td>enhance</td>
<td>enhancement</td>
<td>revise</td>
<td>revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alter</td>
<td>alteration</td>
<td>enrich</td>
<td>enrichment</td>
<td>shift</td>
<td>shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amend</td>
<td>amendment</td>
<td>manipulate</td>
<td>manipulation</td>
<td>simplify</td>
<td>simplification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complicate</td>
<td>complication</td>
<td>mitigate</td>
<td>mitigation</td>
<td>transform</td>
<td>transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convert</td>
<td>conversion</td>
<td>modify</td>
<td>modification</td>
<td>vary</td>
<td>variance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last section in this chapter, following Exercise 14, focuses on the modification with prepositional phrases that so commonly follows abstract nouns expressing change. It notes that modification with of-phrases is most common for these nouns, with the objects of the prepositions often linking to previous ideas. This section also points out the semantic difference between prepositional modifiers in which to is the preposition versus those in which the preposition is in. When abstract change nouns are modified by to + NP, the change described is that of a person or thing external to that phrase. Here are some examples of adjustment to + NP from COCA:

- adjustment to the rigors of high school
- adjustment to civilian life
- adjustment to the reality of 40

In these examples, an individual is changing to get used to a new situation described in the noun phrase objects of the preposition.
In contrast, when the preposition following the abstract noun is *in*, it is often, though not always, the object of the preposition that is changed. Here are some examples of *adjustment in* + NP, again from COCA:

- adjustment in the workplace
- adjustment in our analyses
- adjustment in the policy

In these examples, the three things mentioned have undergone a change. You may want to provide these additional examples of *adjustment to* and *adjustment in* and ask students to state what is being adjusted in each case. It should be noted, however, that sometimes *adjustment in* can refer to people or things outside of the prepositional phrase, especially when the object of the preposition is a physical place such as school.

**Exercise 15 (page 73)**

Answers will vary. An example is given in the textbook.

**Reference**

Chapter 4 Commentary:  
Writing about Causal Relationships: 
Connectors and Abstract Nouns

Intended Outcomes

• Students will become familiar with a variety of words and structures writers use to express causal relationships.

• Students will learn how to use connectors that work together with abstract noun phrases to show cause.

• Students will use their knowledge of causal relationship options to expand the forms they use to connect ideas in their writing.

Contents

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1  Grammatical Environment Analysis: Clausal and Phrasal Connectors

4.1 Using Connectors and Abstract Nouns

Building Your Knowledge

Forming Abstract Noun Phrases

Table 4.1   Causal Connectors That Introduce Abstract Noun Phrases

Using Connectors with Abstract Noun Phrases

Exercise 2  Practice: Abstract Noun Phrases

4.2 Modifying Abstract Noun Phrases

Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 3  Practice: Abstract Noun Phrases with Modifiers
Describing Abstract Nouns

Exercise 4  Vocabulary Practice: Synonyms for A lot

Adding Prepositions

Table 4.2  Transitive Verbs Whose Abstract Noun Derivatives Require Prepositions
Exercise 5  Practice: Prepositions with Abstract Nouns
Exercise 6  Practice: Abstract Noun Phrases with Prepositions

4.3 Punctuating Causal Phrases

Building Your Knowledge

Table 4.3  Comma Use with Causal Phrases
Exercise 7  Editing Practice: Comma Use

Chapter Background and Use

This chapter focuses on less-commonly taught connectors for establishing cause-effect relationships. Textbooks often focus on building connections with adverbial clauses (because, since) or via conjunctive adverbs (thus, as a result). Research suggests, however, that academic writers use connectors followed by noun structures (despite, on account of) as often, or perhaps even more often (Flowerdew, 1998), especially when referring back to previously mentioned information. This chapter introduces and gives students practice with such structures.

Given the focus on building causal relationships, a quite common relationship explored in academic writing assignments, this chapter, along with Chapter 5, can be used in many different teaching contexts. We have used this chapter with students when they are working on problem-solving texts; position papers; results and discussion sections of reports; and even essay exam or timed writing in which students need to explore the causes or results of social, political, or historical events.

When teaching Chapters 4 and 5, we often ask students to do some writing first—either a draft of a paper based on content in a reading-writing class or a draft based on students’ own interests or
fields of study. After going over the information and exercises in the chapter, students can return to this writing and work on revising it with an eye toward using the structures and vocabulary covered in class. Similarly, in tutorial settings, students and tutors can look over the students’ writing and work together to find ways to rewrite sentences or passages using the new vocabulary and grammar.

You may want to “flip” the classroom when you use this chapter. The sentence transformation exercises can be done at home, perhaps with some additional scaffolding for students who may be less familiar with the grammar terminology in the text. Then class time can be spent on going over troublespots, on analyzing published texts that use these structures, on revising students’ own writing, and on completing new writing tasks that ask students to produce these structures.

Here is a sample writing assignment used to set up the discussion of cause-effect in a grammar/vocabulary class with students from across the disciplines:

Think about a problem, issue, or debate in your field of study or in any class you are currently taking. For example, perhaps one issue might be current policies and debates around immigration, about creating greener buildings or cars, about finding the most efficient or effective model for a company or a product for a company, or about health problems in particular locations or for particular populations.

• Write at least 1.5–2 pages of text, but please don’t take more than one hour to plan and write. We will revise this piece together.
• Establish the problem, issue, or debate and its context.
• Discuss the problem/issue/debate and reasons for it. What causes the debate or problem?
• Discuss possible solutions or the most optimal solution. Focus on the justification for and effects of the solution.
IN-DEPTH COMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 (page 75)

This first exercise is intended as a noticing task. While students will most likely see the difference in structures (clause vs. phrase) fairly easily, in class we note how often we see errors with these connectors in student papers or how students tend to avoid using the connectors that are followed by phrases. We then follow up the exercises in the chapter—either at this point or later—with error analyses of actual sentences excerpted from student essays.

1. a. Scientists are working to find and develop alternative energy sources [because] supplies of fossil fuels will eventually be depleted.
   
   b. Scientists are working to find and develop alternative energy sources [due to] the eventual depletion of fossil fuels.

2. a. [Even though] there are many reasons to support the use of nuclear energy, many people reject nuclear energy as unsafe.
   
   b. [Despite] the many reasons to support the use of nuclear energy, many people reject nuclear energy as unsafe. [Students may or may not use the after despite. The use of the, of course, depends on what information is shared between the reader and writer. If this sentence follows a description of the reasons, we recommend using the, as the reasons are now defined for the reader. If the sentence is opening the discussion, then we might delete the.]

3. a. [Although] nuclear power might be dangerous, some scientists and environmentalists still favor this resource.
   
   b. [Even with] the dangers of nuclear power, some scientists and environmentalists still favor this resource.
4. a. The creation of nuclear power contributes very little to global warming [because] the emissions of greenhouse gases are low.

b. The creation of nuclear power contributes very little to global warming [given] the low emissions of greenhouse gases. [Note: the low greenhouse gas emissions is also possible in this context]

4.1 Using Connectors and Abstract Nouns

Building Your Knowledge

Forming Abstract Noun Phrases

On pages 76–79, there is a great deal of information about the formation of abstract noun phrases, mainly based on sentence transformation. This type of practice continues in Exercises 2, 3, and 6. We have included this information to help students who may be more likely either (a) to write clause-heavy texts approximating a spoken, not written, style of English or (b) to write abstract noun-heavy texts that can be hard to follow or may contain errors in the formation of phrases.

While discussing this information and going over exercises, we recommend revisiting some style points that students may have been taught in previous classes (“Never use there is/there are.” “Avoid to be as the main verb or in passive structures.” “Use strong verbs.”) Using phrases instead of clauses can improve style in these areas—if phrases are not overused in any one sentence. Be sure to note, however, that these style rules, while popular in many college writing classes, may not hold from discipline to discipline.
Using Connectors with Abstract Noun Phrases

Exercise 2 (pages 80–81)

This exercise highlights the different ways that using connectors + abstract noun phrases can help students increase their sentence concision by reducing the use of passive verbs, to be verbs, and weaker verbs such as to have.

1. b. In light of new evidence, the prosecution has dropped all charges against the arrested man.

2. b. Many doctors now advise their patients on what foods they should eat given the relationship between diet and heart disease. [Note: It is important to discuss why we use the indefinite a after there is: There is + a is a much more common construction than there is the (995 vs. 11,014) in COCA’s academic register. We use the definite the before the noun phrase with the form the + noun + preposition + noun. It is assumed by the reader that readers are aware that unhealthy diets can cause heart disease. Of course, if the reader doesn’t know the relationship exists, the writer has erred in this assumption. The indefinite article could be used here grammatically—then the writer would assume the reader did not previously know that such a relationship existed.]

3. b. Despite his dissatisfaction with the results, he felt he learned a great deal from doing the experiment.

4. b. As a result of the organization’s strong track record of success, its proposal for additional funding was approved.

5. b. The new version of our smart phone outsold competitors’ versions thanks to its sharper and clearer screen.’

6. b. In spite of the client’s interest in our concept, we lost the bid to another company, whose idea was considered more cutting-edge.
4.2 Modifying Abstract Noun Phrases

Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 3 (pages 82–83)

The focus on the use of adjectives vs. adverbs in this exercise, along with the description that precedes it, has dual benefits. In addition to seeing how students can add modifiers to abstract noun phrases, students can also review the use of adverb forms in clauses, which many students struggle to use correctly.

1. b. In light of rapid developments in cell phone applications, many people can now run their businesses entirely by phone.

2. b. The town has received a recommendation from the state government as a result of its successful fight to keep its streets free of crime.

3. b. I would like to study contract law in your program given my strong interest in how the internet has increased access to music online.

4. b. Thanks to your prompt response, we have been able to solve the client’s software issue before further damage occurred.

5. b. Despite the client’s extreme anger, the customer care staff maintained a professional attitude and attended to the client’s needs.

Describing Abstract Nouns

Exercise 4 (page 84)

Answers will vary.

Sample synonyms:  Great: considerable, strong, keen, intense  Little: limited, weak, scant

We often expand this exercise to include other a lot of expressions that students tend to us: a lot of evidence (see Chapter 1), a lot of information, a lot of research, etc.
Adding Prepositions

Exercise 5 (page 86)

The chart on page 85 is by no means exhaustive. Students may want to keep adding to this chart throughout the term should they come across additional examples.

Dear Neighbors:

While the general public does not often make direct contact with its elected city officials, I urge you to contact them today. I have written to our officials numerous times to request road maintenance in our neighborhood, but I have not received any answer to my inquiries. We all know that the current economic situation has resulted in a decrease in revenues for the city. We understand that the city lacks money. But our neighborhood has experienced great increases in both housing and commercial development over the past five years, which has increased city revenues contributed from our neighborhood. Increased road use has affected the quality of road surfaces: some roads are so full of potholes that they pose a safety risk. We demand improvements in road surfaces immediately! Our demand for improvements must be heard! Please show your support for this demand by writing your officials today.

Exercise 6 (page 87)

1. b. In spite of the governor’s support for the initiative, it could not garner enough public support to pass.

2. b. Union members voted against the initiative as a result of the government’s demand for higher insurance premiums.

3. b. Businesses opposed the initiative given its lack of safeguards against increased corporate taxes.

4 b. And, in general, the public did not favor the bill because of its/the decrease in public services like welfare.
4.3 Punctuating Causal Phrases

Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 7 (page 89)

1. Given that two-income families earn the same income today as single-income families did in the 1950s, the option for stay-at-home mothers or fathers is diminishing.

2. No comma: The results of the study were viewed with some skepticism given the small sample size.

3. As a result of our collaboration with a university writing instructor, we propose substantial changes to the current college preparatory classes offered in our program.

4. No comma: Families are now facing higher prices for meat and milk because of increased prices for corn and fuel.

5. It has been a very good year for sales of our local newspaper, even with the increase in cover price. [Note: A comma is often used with this contrast connector, even when the connector comes after the main clause of the sentence.]

Reference

Chapter 5 Commentary:
Writing about Causal Relationships: Verbs

Intended Outcomes

- Students will increase their repertoire of verbs that can express cause-effect relationships.
- Students will learn the grammatical structures and collocations used with these verbs.
- Students will practice drafting sentences with abstract nouns and verbs to express cause-effect relationships.

Contents

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 Identification: Cause-Effect Verbs in Context
Exercise 2 Meaning: Cause-Effect Verbs

5.1 Using Verbs That Introduce Reasons or Causes

Building Your Knowledge

Table 5.1 Subject Collocations with Verbs Introducing Reasons/Causes
Exercise 3 Collocations Analysis: Subjects with Verbs Introducing Reasons/Causes

5.2 Using Verbs That Introduce Results or Effects

Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 4 Self-Assessment: Vocabulary Knowledge of Verbs That Introduce Results or Effects
Table 5.2 Verbs That Introduce Results or Effects
Exercise 5  Collocations Analysis: Objects with Verbs
Introducing Results or Effects

Exercise 6  Dictionary Practice: Object Collocations with Verbs
Introducing Results or Effects

Exercise 7  Collocations Analysis: Objects with Verbs
Introducing Results or Effects

5.3 Using Verbs That Express How a Result Can Be Minimized

**Building Your Knowledge**

Table 5.3  Verbs that Introduce How a Result or Effect Is
Minimized

Exercise 8  Dictionary Practice: Object Collocations with Verbs
Introducing How a Result or Effect Can Be
Minimized

Exercise 9  Collocations Analysis: Verbs Introducing How a
Result or Effect Is Minimized

Exercise 10  Practice: Prepositions with Cause-Effect Verbs

Exercise 11  Editing Practice: Cause-Effect Verb Meanings in
Context

5.4 Crafting Sentences with Causal Verbs and Abstract Noun Phrases

**Building Your Knowledge**

Exercise 12  Transformation Practice: Clauses → Abstract Noun
Phrases

Exercise 13  More Transformation Practice: Clauses → Abstract
Noun Phrases

Exercise 14  Revision Practice: Cause-Effect Verbs and Abstract
Noun Phrases
Chapter Background and Use

This chapter, focusing on cause-effect verbs, should be taught together with Chapter 4 as both explore options for expressing causal relationships and because this current chapter builds on the use of abstract noun phrases as introduced in the previous chapter. Like Chapters 2 and 3, this chapter focuses on what students need to know about a set of common academic verbs in order to control their use in sentences. The first three sections introduce sets of verbs with similar meanings but different specific characteristics for their use. When working on this chapter in class, we ask students to bring laptops or other devices that will allow them to access online dictionaries and concordancers. The last section illustrates how using the verbs covered in this chapter can also help students increase the lexical and syntactic density of clauses in their writing, a characteristic of academic prose.

As noted in the commentary for Chapter 4, with the focus on building causal relationships, the content in this chapter can complement many different writing types: problem-solution texts, position papers, results and discussion sections of reports, essay exams or timed writing, among others. Also noted in the Chapter 4 commentary, before we begin Chapters 4 and 5, we often ask students to draft a paper based on relevant content in our reading-writing courses or a draft based on students’ own interests or fields of study in a grammar-vocabulary class so that students can revise this writing after we cover the chapter. See the previous chapter’s commentary for a sample writing assignment.

IN-DEPTH COMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 (pages 90–91)

Note that the number in parentheses for the first paragraph includes the first item, which has been done as an example. Students should find three additional verbs. We recommend asking students to
underline any preposition collocations. Research suggests having students learn these phrases as “bundles” or “chunks.” We also recommend that you have students underline any modals, as these are often used as hedges with cause/effect verbs. See Chapter 9 for more information about hedges.

Sleep affects many areas of our lives: work, relationships, decision-making, and general well-being. Recent studies have focused on the topic of sleep, noting that inadequate amounts of sleep can lead to poor health and weight gain and can also inhibit one’s productivity. It can even account for increased accidents on the road.

Several factors may contribute to sleep disorders. Some disorders can be attributed to age and our circadian rhythms, which regulate our internal clocks. As we grow older, our internal clocks are no longer synchronized with the day-night cycle and our bodies want us to go to sleep early and rise even earlier. Gender may also account for sleep disorders, as some studies suggest that women are more likely to suffer from insomnia, though results are somewhat inconclusive.

Overall, many studies show that it is lifestyle issues that most influence our sleep patterns. The invention of the light bulb now allows us to remain awake and work late into the night. Our consumption of caffeine enables us to trick our internal clocks and prevent sleep. Finally, overtime promotes more work, which triggers more stress, further hindering our sleep and rendering us irritable and unfocused.

Exercise 2 (page 91)

Note that the first four items ask students to pick out the verb that sets up a different relationship between the subject and object as outlined in the first three sections. In Item 1, all verbs except provoke show how the subject can minimize the result. In Items 2 and 3, three of the four verbs signal the creation of a result, while the circled
verb signals a minimization. In Item 4, three verbs introduce a result, while one verb introduces a cause. Item 5 stands out, as all these verbs signal a result, but three of them signal a sudden or strong result, with the subject being the main driver of the result.

1. (a) curb  (b) deter  (c) provoke  (d) suppress
2. (a) enable  (b) induce  (c) inhibit  (d) promote
3. (a) block  (b) create  (c) evoke  (d) generate
4. (a) bring about  (b) contribute to  (c) lead to  (d) stem from
5. (a) enable  (b) spark  (c) stimulate  (d) trigger

5.1 Using Verbs That Introduce Reasons or Causes

Building Your Knowledge

When writing sentences with cause-effect verbs, students can get confused about the order of information: (1) Cause → Effect or (2) Effect ← Cause. This section helps students identify and work with verbs in the second category.

Exercise 3 (page 93)

This exercise works well in pairs or small groups, as students can negotiate the meanings and descriptions of the collocational data.

1. derive from
2. arise from  stem from
3. be attributed to  result from
4. scientific, medical terms
5. categories, classifier nouns, words that represent a group of things
5.2 Using Verbs That Introduce Results or Effects

Building Your Knowledge

This section helps students identify and work with verbs in the first category: Cause → Effect.

As recommended for Exercise 3, we encourage students to work in pairs or small groups to complete Exercises 5–7.

Exercise 4 (page 94)

Answers will vary depending on students’ background knowledge.

This is another self-assessment of vocabulary knowledge. As noted in earlier chapters, students often finish this type of exercise at different rates; we find that when done as an in-class exercise, those who finish first are often very interested in consulting online dictionaries to look up some of the words they don’t know. Since all of the verbs will appear in exercises subsequent to this one, we don’t think there is much need to spend time discussing the results of this exercise. After students complete the chapter, they can go back to this exercise and assess their current knowledge of those words they indicated with either a √ or a −.

Exercise 5 (page 95)

This exercise asks students to come up with labels to describe groups of collocations. After students complete this exercise, if you are asking students to keep a vocabulary notebook, you can ask students to write or list sample sentences from learner dictionaries. See Exercise 7 as an example.

1a. generate + positive things having to do with money or the economy
1b. generate + things related to power
1c. generate + words that represent a reaction to a topic or idea
2a. give rise to + words related to a negative response
2b. give rise to + something biological
3a. yield + things that are uncovered in a study/research
3b. yield + things related to food/measurements
Exercise 6 (page 96)

After modeling the process of (1) listing collocations and then (2) finding commonalities among collocations in Exercise 5, here we ask students to do both steps of the process on their own. We highly recommend having students work through this exercise in pairs or groups.

*Stimulate* is generally followed by positive things. The others typically introduce negative things. It is important to have students investigate the context of these collocations to see if resulting responses or discussions are positive or negative in nature. For example, consider *trigger* + a *reaction*: The reaction is generally a negative thing.

1. Collocations will vary: Negative things
   Sample collocations: *myth(s), stereotype(s), poverty, violence, cycle/system (of) + something that the writer thinks is negative or should be changed, idea/notion (that/of) + something that the writer thinks is negative or should be changed*

2. Collocations will vary: Negative reactions
   Sample collocations: *reaction(s), (negative) response(s), debate, discussion, people + to respond/react negatively, violence, war, confrontation*

3. Collocations will vary: Generally the growth or creation of more positive things
   Sample collocations: *economy, growth, production, development, interest in/discussion of/about OR system (like the nervous or immune system)*

4. Collocations will vary: Negative reactions
   Sample collocations: *reaction(s), response(s), memory(ies), war, attack, changes OR release (of something in the body, like white blood cells or insulin)*
Exercise 7 (page 97)

In this exercise, students practice creating sentences using cause-effect verbs and their collocations. Be sure to ask students to list sources for any copied sample. Answers will vary.

Sample responses:
Account for (from Cambridge Learner’s Dictionary online)
   a. He’d had an argument with Caroline, which accounts for his bad mood this morning.
   b. She was asked to account for the missing money.
   c. Oil accounts for 40% of Norway’s exports.

Allow for
   a. The research design did not allow for the analysis of all potential risk factors.
   b. The new version of the software will allow for more functionality.
   c. We must allow for the possibility that income played a role in our results.

Prompt (from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English online)
   a. The decision prompted an outcry among prominent U.S. campaigners.
   b. What prompted you to buy that suit?

Render
   a. The Supreme Court rendered a decision on the very controversial matter.
   b. Scientists are concerned that transgenic crops will create superbugs that will render topical pesticides useless.

5.3 Using Verbs That Express How a Result Can Be Minimized

Building Your Knowledge

The final set of verbs in this chapter still follow the Cause → Effect order, but these verbs are used to show how one cause tends to block or reduce an effect. Again here, we recommend that students work in pairs or small groups to complete the exercises in this section.
Exercise 8 (page 99)

This exercise asks students to choose between appropriate and inappropriate collocations. As we go over answers in class, we highlight the connotations and types of those nouns that collocate:

*Impede* is followed by nouns representing positive nouns. *Deter, hinder, and restrain* generally block negative things. *Block* often collocates with nouns like *efforts* or *attempts*, or nouns having to do with movement or access. It usually focuses on stopping something from happening. In item 1, block could collocate with a phrase like *the passage of the new law*, but *implications* does not collocate.

1. **X** the *implications* of the new law
2. **X** hopes for peace
3. **X** terrorism at home and abroad
4. **X** increased *pollution*
5. **X** economic *recovery*

Exercise 9 (pages 100–101)

This exercise combines information about the connotations (positive or negative) and the grammatical structure of noun-phrase collocations for *curb, prevent, slow, accelerate*, and suppress. You may want to provide students with additional examples for Items 2 and 4c. See the bulleted examples. Also, for *prevent*, we highlight the very common structure *prevent someone from doing something*, as shown in Item 2e and in the additional examples shown.

1. Noun + *to curb*
2. a–c: *prevent* + something negative
   * The Army Corps of Engineers reinforced the levees to prevent further erosion.
   * The Supreme Court decision in Brown vs. the Board of Education prevented *state governments* from continuing unfair *segregation practices*.
d–e: negative subject + prevent + something positive

- The Civil War prevented access to education, especially for those living in rural areas.
- The violence prevented some people from casting ballots in the election.

3. the + noun + of + noun

4.a. the + increase in size/scope + of + something biological
4.b. something biological or physiological
4.c. action showing dislike for those in power

- Additional collocations: uprising, demonstrations, political movements, insurrections

Exercise 10 (page 101)

This exercise provides practice with preposition collocations. It is often helpful to have students learn these verb + preposition combinations as “chunks.” If students are keeping vocabulary journals, we ask them to include the prepositions in the entry name: blame for, interfere with, etc.

1. in
2. for
3. with
4. to
5. from
6. to
7. in
8. from

[Note: You may need to help students conceptualize the difference between result in and result from in Items 7 and 8. It might be helpful to recast the ideas in these sentences and ask students to use caused or was caused by:

- The collaborative effort by neighbors and police _____________ reduced in crime.
- The reduction in car theft ________________ the collaborative effort by police and neighbors.

Results in replaces caused; resulted from replaces was caused by.]
Exercise 11 (page 102)

This is a very difficult exercise for some students, as it requires not only an understanding of the verbs themselves but also the ability to conceptualize the verbs' possible use in the active and passive voice. The two possible answers to Item 1 illustrate this complexity.

1. I: The recent Supreme Court decision generated much controversy throughout the country.
   OR
   Much controversy was generated throughout the country by the recent Supreme Court decision.
   [Note: The student text contains the first example only, as the active voice sentence is more concise and focused overall. However, the second example listed here is considered “correct” grammatically and semantically and might be used in very specific contexts.]

2. Correct

3. I: Patricia’s success was derived from a lot of hard work and a little bit of luck.
   [Note: Students may want to know why this sentence is not OK: A lot of hard work and a little bit of luck derived from Patricia’s success. In the active voice, the sentence would need to read derive X from Y. Patricia derived success from her hard work.]

4. I: My interest in ancient history was sparked by the history course I took.
   OR
   The history course I took really sparked my interest in ancient history.

5. I: His rather poor performance can partly be attributed to his severe headache.
   [Note: The active voice requires this structure: verb X to Y. Example: She attributes her success to a lot of hard work and a little luck.]
5.4 Crafting Sentences with Causal Verbs and Abstract Noun Phrases

Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 12 (pages 104–105)

Exercises 12 and 13 give students additional practice creating sentences containing abstract noun phrases and with cause-effect verbs. Many style manuals for English and writing classes may discourage students from using abstract noun phrases or nominalizations, as these structures, together with to be verbs, can interfere with sentence concision and focus. We emphasize for students that, while some sentences with abstract noun phrases can sound heavy, the use of a strong, vivid verb in each sentence in this exercise helps keep the focus clear. We strongly believe that students need to be encouraged to use abstract noun phrases appropriately, not avoid their use, especially given the frequency of these structures in the social sciences and in science and technology fields.

1. The wide distribution of serotonin cells influences various psychological functions in the body.

2. Poor eyesight can seriously hinder an individual’s ability to engage in daily activities.

3. Hilly, terraced farmland prevents soil erosion and carbon loss.

4. The use of four-stroke engines for snowmobiles will curb exhaust and noise emissions. (Or: curb exhaust and noise.)

5. Consumption of limbs, twigs, and leaves by fire (or: A fire’s consumption of limbs, twigs, and leaves) can create mudslides on hillsides during the rainy season.

Exercise 13 (page 106)

Answers may vary slightly. Samples listed.

Be sure to highlight for students the move from a reliance on clauses to a focus on abstract noun phrases in these answers. While the original sentences were “complex,” as they each contained more than one cause, the resulting sentences are considered “simple,” as
they contain one clause only. However, the resulting sentences are also lexically and syntactically dense, with strong verbs that allow the sentence focus to remain clear.

Also be sure to note the clearer sentence focus that is created in Item 5, and prepositions that collocate with the noun derivatives of verbs throughout (changes in, support for, discovery of, resistance of X to Y, release of)

1. In 1965, changes in U.S. immigration laws resulted in the admission of a larger number of immigrant families.
2. Our support for this legislation follows from our belief in freedom of expression.
3. The discovery of penicillin has brought about great improvements in health care.
4. The resistance of many illnesses to drug therapy stems from people’s overuse of antibiotics.
5. Regular exercise can trigger the release of ghrelin, an appetite-stimulating hormone meant to protect the body from losing weight too quickly.

**Exercise 14 (pages 107–108)**

Answers will vary—samples listed. Here, you might want to remind students that both sets of sentences are fine. Many students know to use the if- or when-clause or the verb to cause to create relationships. The verbs highlighted in this chapter can give students options for variety.

1. Fertilizers promote faster leaf growth.
2. The doctors soon realized that the patient’s chronic headaches were attributed to his vision problems.
3. Increases in layoffs generate anxiety in the workforce.
4. Barring the release of coyotes back into the wild may lead to the extinction of the coyote.
5. In recent years, strains of drug-resistant bacteria have rendered many antibiotics ineffective.
6. Racial profiling by police sparked community protests.
Chapter 6 Commentary: 
Creating Balance and Emphasis 
with Parallel Structures

Intended Outcomes

• Students will understand the role of parallel structures in communicating ideas clearly and effectively.
• Students will become familiar with the different types of parallel structures within sentences.
• Students will be able to recognize and use a variety of connectors to express ideas in parallel structures.
• Students will understand how parallel structures joined by correlative conjunctions can be used for focus and emphasis.
• Students will be able to identify and correct problems with faulty parallelism.
• Students will be able to apply the principles of parallel structures effectively in their own writing.

Contents

6.1 Using Parallel Structures

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 Analysis: Parallel vs. Non-Parallel Structures
Exercise 2 Identification: Parallel Grammatical Structures

Building Your Knowledge

Purposes and Types of Parallel Structures

Table 6.1 Types of Parallel Structures
Table 6.2 Common Connectors Signaling Parallel Structures
Exercise 3 Practice: Using Parallel Structures
6.2 Recognizing Words That Introduce Parallel Structures

*Raising Language Awareness*

Exercise 4  Error Analysis: Identifying Faulty Parallelism

*Building Your Knowledge*

Table 6.3  Common Phrase and Clause Introducers in Academic Writing

Exercise 5  Identification: Parallel Structures and Introducer Words

*Checking for Faulty Parallelism*

Exercise 6  Editing and Revising Strategy: Correcting Faulty Parallelism

6.3 Emphasizing Ideas with Correlative Conjunctions

*Raising Language Awareness*

Exercise 7  Identification: Correlative Conjunctions and Conjoined Parallel Structures

*Building Your Knowledge*

Subject-Verb Inversion with *not only …(but) also*

Exercise 8  Transformation Practice: Sentences with Coordinating Conjunctions → Sentences with Correlative Conjunctions

*Chapter Background and Use*

Most of the chapters before this one have focused primarily on academic vocabulary, with sections on grammatical use related to how various words interact with other words in sentence roles—for example, the ways that transitive and intransitive verbs differ in the kinds of structures that can follow them, or how writers need to change word forms when transforming clauses into noun phrases.
This chapter, which concludes the first section of this book, Showing Relationships Within Sentences, has greater focus on grammatical patterns than earlier ones. At the same time, it highlights the development of an important characteristic of word knowledge: using appropriate forms of words in communicative contexts. As was stressed in previous chapters, the ability to recast ideas in different grammatical forms can help students express ideas more concisely, create more effective links to other parts of text, and help students craft more effective paraphrases of source text information.

Parallel structures are typically defined as the same grammatical forms used to show ideas of equal importance. In composition classes, the topic of parallelism often arises either in discussions of its use as a stylistic device, for example, in analyzing qualities of effective writing in assigned readings or in addressing grammar and usage errors to be avoided (i.e., in correcting faulty parallelism when words, phrases, or clauses that should be the same grammatical structure are not).

Most writing handbooks and ESL composition textbooks include some attention to parallel structures, often with simple one-word examples such as the following:

Carol likes swimming, jogging, and playing tennis.

He is reliable, diligent, and creative.

While this chapter presents similar examples of parallel gerunds and adjectives, we also give a lot of attention to the more complex patterns that are repeated to create flow and thus help readers understand the relationships of ideas in long sentences more easily; these structures might be repeated subordinate clauses (e.g., since X and since Y) or, quite frequently, conjoined that-complement clauses (e.g., the authors state that X and that Y). As writing teachers, we know that one of the challenges student writers have as they attempt to move beyond more simple prose into complex sentences is managing the grammar of long sentences. The use of parallel structures, where appropriate, can help to achieve both elegance and clarity of expression.

This is a chapter whose sections could be divided and worked on at different points during a course. Some of the exercises could be most helpful as preparation for either revising or editing drafts of
papers. Because Section 6.3 focuses specifically on using correlative conjunctions, you might want to postpone work in this area until later in a course—or possibly leave that section for students to do on their own or with tutorial assistance if desired.

If your students are working with assigned readings, you might want to introduce the topic of this chapter by locating a few paragraphs that have examples of parallel words (e.g., conjoined nouns, adjectives, adverbs) or phrases and ask them to find and circle, highlight, or otherwise identify them.

**IN-DEPTH COMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS**

The brief introduction connects the topic to students’ previous work, defines parallelism, and briefly states the purpose of parallel structures.

### 6.1 Using Parallel Structures

**Raising Language Awareness**

**Exercise 1 (pages 110–111)**

Like many exercises in this book with contextualized sentences, the content is based on an authentic text, in this case about the benefits of daydreaming. In this noticing task, students are asked to distinguish parallel structures from those that are not parallel.

If you would like students to do more with this exercise than indicate which are okay and which not, you could ask them to circle parallel structures in the “OK” sentences, or you could orally identify the structures with the class as a whole. Or you may want to return to this exercise later as additional practice for students after they have completed other identification. To that end we have underlined the parallel structures here and noted what grammatical structures they are in parentheses. (Students are not asked to do this in the directions.)

If you wish to further discuss the errors in the “not OK” answers at any time, here are explanations for the faulty parallelism:

1. b. Structures joined by *or*: a noun phrase and an independent clause
2. a. Structures joined by *or*: an adjective and a noun
3. a. Structures joined by *and*: a *that*- clause and an infinitive clause
4. b. Structures joined by *or*: three verb phrases and one participle phrase
5. b. Structures joined by *not only… but also*: a noun phrase and an independent clause

1. OK a. A daydream can be defined as a fantasy indulged in while awake or as a wishful plan about the future. (parallel prepositional phrases)
2. OK b. Some psychologists have regarded extensive daydreaming as a symptom of *unhappiness* or even *neurosis*. (parallel nouns)
3. OK b. However, psychologist Scott Barry Kaufman believes that certain kinds of daydreaming have many benefits and that daydreaming should not always be viewed negatively. (parallel *that*-clauses)
4. OK a. Kaufman points out that daydreaming can help people reflect on their lives, plan their futures, develop creativity, or even amuse themselves in boring situations such as being stuck in a traffic jam. (parallel verb phrases)

Note: You may want to remind students here that parallel structures can be of varying lengths. (This is explicitly stated in Table 6.1 later on.)

5. OK a. According to Kaufman, people who have not only the most positively oriented daydreams but also the most specific ones paradoxically score high in mindfulness, which involves *attention control*, *mental flexibility* and other *positive cognitive traits*. (parallel noun phrases for both sets)

Exercise 2 (page 112)

In contrast to the last exercise, all sentences in this exercise have parallel structures and students are asked to bracket them. We have included examples of more complex structures of the kinds that students will come across in their readings and, we hope, will attempt in their writing assignments. Items 5 and 6 especially show how writers can present ideas effectively in long sentences through parallel structures, ideas that otherwise might require two separate sentences. For your information, we have included the kinds of structures after the answers in parentheses.

1. Current research on what makes people happy has added [some fresh ideas] as well as [new insights] into this topic. (noun phrases)

2. Scientists have looked at [what happy people have in common] in addition to [why it’s worth trying to become one of them]. (wh-noun clauses)

3. Researchers have found that for many people happiness primarily results from pursuing passive, pleasure-oriented activities but from striving towards excellence based on one’s unique talents. (prepositional phrases)

4. Psychologist David Schkade believes that people neither think often enough about how they spend their time nor consider how much of it they actually enjoy. (verb phrases)

5. To increase a sense of happiness, Schkade recommends that people add to their daily lives something they enjoy doing, like spending time with friends, or that they take positive action to change something negative, such as improving their study habits. (that-clauses)

6. [If people are willing to analyze their current circumstances], which isn’t always easy, and [if they can question some of their long-held assumptions about what constitutes genuine happiness), they will have a better chance of making their lives more fulfilling and being truly content.]

(Adapted from “Five Things Happy People Do,” Gabrielle Le Blanc. www.positivelypresent.com/2009/05/5-things-happy-people-do.html.)
Building Your Knowledge

Purposes and Types of Parallel Structures

In the introduction to the section, we wished to stress that the topic of parallel structures in writing instruction is not just about correcting errors in faulty parallelism, the focus in many writing handbooks, but also about developing linguistic resources for concise and elegant expression.

During the era when sentence pedagogies were widely practiced in composition classes (especially in the 1970s and early 1980s), much attention was given to the stylistic use of parallelism for rhythm and focus: students analyzed examples of language pattern repetition in famous works such as Martin Luther King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and practiced what was termed *stylistic imitation* of language patterns as a way of developing academic writing fluency. Although imitative writing exercises were later discouraged by L1 compositionists as overly mechanical practices, we know that in fact most of us have developed our own academic writing styles through attention to linguistic forms, both grammar and vocabulary, and their functions in the kinds of writing we needed to do. For developing writers, we believe that instructional attention to the kinds of grammar structures that enhance clarity, focus, and flow, along with ample practice of these structures, is an important part of academic writing development.

The information in Table 6.1 is quite detailed and meant to serve as a reference for later work. You might want to give students a brief overview of what is in this table, starting with the three structure groups in the far left-hand column, point out the boldfaced labels describing structures in the examples, and explain that in some cases there are options as to what structures are repeated, such as in Example 5, but that in other cases, such as Example 6, we cannot delete the parallel structure markers (adverbial conjunction *because*). In Example 5, the first relative introducer *who can* could govern two verb phrases (*analyze their life circumstances, take positive action*). In Example 6, the first use of *because* cannot govern both clauses; deleting the second would result in faulty parallelism.
You may also want to alert students to the fact that potential (Examples 1 and 6) can be an adjective as well as a noun.

Table 6.2 summarizes the connectors for parallel structures. We note that students do not need to learn all the terms (e.g., coordinating vs. correlative conjunctions), but they should recognize the lexical items as connectors.

**Exercise 3 (page 115)**

In this exercise, students add a structure like the one given in the sentence openers to complete the sentences. This could be a good small-group exercise in which you ask groups to see if they could come up with two or more examples. The groups could then share their answers with the class, and you could provide corrective feedback if needed. If you want to shorten the time involved, you could assign different items to different groups, with each group responding to one item and then sharing the answers with others. If you are working in a computer lab, students could write answers individually or in pairs to be shared on a class website or projected on a screen.

Answers will vary. Example answers are given.

1. Airplane flights are often delayed due to mechanical problems that get detected shortly before the scheduled departure or to bad weather conditions such as fog or thunderstorms.
2. A good leader is someone who has well-developed persuasive skills and who listens to others.
3. You can become a better academic writer by expanding your range of vocabulary and by examining closely good models of the kind of writing you need to do.
4. College students often have part-time jobs because they need extra income or because they would like to gain work experience.
5. To improve your study habits, I would recommend that you spend some time every day reviewing the lecture notes from your classes and that you annotate your assigned readings.
6.2 Recognizing Words That Introduce Parallel Structures

In this section, we present more explanations, noticing exercises, and practice in recognizing word forms and structures that can be repeated to achieve parallelism. This section does take up the problem of faulty parallelism. Once again, you can remind students that they do not need to learn all the grammatical labels of structure introducers if they are not familiar with them. The tables in this section are intended to provide useful reference for future work.

_Raising Language Awareness_

**Exercise 4 (pages 116–117)**

By bracketing the first parallel structure and circling the connector, we hope that students will find it easier to assess whether the last structure matches the first or not. Following students’ completion of this exercise, whether for homework or in class, you should have an idea of the extent to which they are able to identify some of the introducing structures such as complementizer _that_, prepositions, or gerunds/infinitives that need to be repeated as well as the distinction between phrases and clauses with subjects and verbs.

Under the incorrect items, we have given an explanation in the event that you wish to discuss further with your students the examples of faulty parallelism and/or correct them.

Note: The answers here also show the second part of what should be a parallel construction in brackets (both the correct and incorrect ones).

_C_ 1. During the past several decades, the idea that human beings possess different kinds of intelligence has been both [promoted] and [challenged] by scholars.

_I_ 2. Howard Gardner, a Harvard professor, has proposed [that our intellectual abilities are divided into at least eight categories] and [schools not valuing equally these multiple intelligences].

The two non-parallel structures joined are a _that_-clause and a noun phrase.

Correction: and _that schools do not value equally these multiple intelligences._
3. According to Gardner, intellectual abilities such as [musical ability] or [a person has good interpersonal skills] are sometimes not considered kinds of intelligence.

The two non-parallel structures joined are a noun phrase and an independent clause.

Correction: or good interpersonal skills (delete a person has)

4. Gardner’s work has been very influential, both in repudiating the concept of one type of intelligence and in shaping educational psychology.

5. Other scientists, however, argue that while the theory of multiple intelligences sounds nice, it is more intuitive than empirical.

The two non-parallel structures joined are a noun and an adjective

Correction: it is more intuitive than empirical.

(Students might also suggest intuition, empiricism, but we think this does not seem quite right in the context of this sentence describing the theory.)

6. Psychologist Lynn Waterhouse contends that multiple intelligence theory has little value for clinical testing of intelligence or to predict future performance.

The two non-parallel structures joined are a gerund and an infinitive

Correction: or (for) predicting future performance.

(Grammatically, after the preposition for, we need a gerund, not infinitive structure. Note that the repetition of for is optional as the phrases are short.)

7. Behavioral scientist Christopher Ferguson points out that too many people believe in what they wish to be true instead of what the truth actually is.

8. While Ferguson challenges the idea of multiple intelligences, he says we must avoid the fallacy that some people deserve to live in poverty or entire groups of people being inferior in respect to intelligence.

The two non-parallel structures joined are a that-clause and a noun phrase.
Correction: or *that* entire groups of people are inferior in respect to intelligence.

(It would be possible to make create two *of-modifiers*, i.e.,

*of some people deserving to live in poverty* or *of entire groups of people being inferior in respect to intelligence*. However, we think that the use of *that*-clauses is clearer and involves less text manipulation.

9. Ferguson notes that in the past such fallacies have been used to justify [oppression] and [racist].

The two non-parallel structures joined are a noun and an adjective.

Correction: and *racism*.

10. While he does not support the theory of multiple intelligences, Ferguson agrees that [identifying strong and weak areas of achievement] as well as [encourage exploration of talents] are worthwhile pursuits.

The two non-parallel structures joined are a gerund and a verb phrase.

Correction: as well as *encouraging exploration of talents*…

(Grammatically, we need noun form to act as the subject of the *that*-clause.)

(Adapted from “Not Every Child is Secretly a Genius,” Christopher Ferguson, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 55 (June 2009), 139.)

**Building Your Knowledge**

Here we discuss further the advantages of noticing word forms and structural markers such as prepositions. We have pointed out features with which most students should be familiar, such as the suffixes that mark nouns. International students who have learned English in foreign language contexts will most likely be familiar with categories such as gerunds (which they often learn in the contexts of which verbs take gerund complements and which take infinitive complements), but domestic multilingual students may not have studied formally many of the terms here. As we mentioned earlier, they do not have to learn the labels to recognize that grammatical structures...
such as relative pronouns or adverbial conjunctions fall into the same category. You may want to go over in class the explanation of the parallel structures used in the sentence *Recognizing words or parts of words* before Table 6.3. Table 6.3, Common Phrase and Clause Introducers in Academic Writing, is meant to be a reference for students to use in the exercises that follow as well as in their own writing.

**Exercise 5 (page 121)**

This exercise asks students to identify introducer words for parallel structures in addition to identifying the entire structures that are parallel. If you wish to see further examples from Czikszentmihalyi’s “The Creative Personality,” you can find the article on the internet:  http://psychologytoday.com/articles/index.php?term=pto-19960701/the-creative-personality

While students are not asked to name the kinds of parallel structures in the directions for this exercise, we include them in parentheses here after each item in case you wish to discuss further.

1. Most of the things that are [interesting], [important], and [human] are the result of creativity. (parallel adjectives)

2. But creativity also leaves an outcome that adds to [the richness] and [complexity] of the future. (parallel noun phrases that function as objects of the preposition to)

3. Creative individuals are remarkable for their ability [to adapt to almost any situation] and [to make do with whatever is at hand to reach their goals]. (parallel infinitive phrases)

4. It seems that their energy is internally generated, due more to [their focused minds] than to [the superiority of their genes]. (parallel noun phrases)

5. This does not mean that creative people are hyperactive. In fact, they [rest often] and [sleep a lot]. (parallel verb phrases)

6. Creative people combine [playfulness] and [discipline], or [responsibility] and [irresponsibility]. (both pairs are parallel noun phrases)
7. Creative people tend to be both [extroverted] and [introverted].
(parallel participle adjectives)

8. We are usually one or the other, [preferring to be in the thick of crowds] or [[sitting on the sidelines] and [observing the passing show.]] (parallel participle phrases joined by and, including another participle pair—sitting/observing—embedded in the second compound phase.)

Checking for Faulty Parallelism

We describe here a step-by-step procedure for checking parallel structures. You will probably want to explore whether your students already have a good grasp on how to do this checking process. If many of them seem not to need this information but some students are still struggling with examples that are more complex than identifying word forms, perhaps you could go over this with individual students or small groups. Or, if writing tutors are available, individual students could go through the steps with a tutor. We find that-clauses, such as the ones in this example, can aid greatly in reader processing of parallel ideas expressed as clauses.

Exercise 6 (pages 124–125)

This provides more practice in correcting faulty parallelism. If needed, students should be encouraged to review and apply the steps in the explanation that precedes it. We have provided brief explanations for each item.

Answers may vary; examples are given.

1. A recent study on sleep habits reports [that more than half of all Americans do not sleep well most nights] and [defining what constitutes insomnia is not an easy task].

   Rewrite: ...and that defining what constitutes insomnia is not an easy task.
Explanation: To make ideas in this sentence easier to read, adding *that* makes two parallel *that*-clauses, identifying the two facts that the study reports.

Students may need some help in recognizing the parts of the clauses since the subjects are very long and since the second subject is a gerund phrase. If so, you could ask them first to find and underline the verbs (*do*… *sleep*; *is*) and then highlight or circle the subjects (*more than half of all Americans; defining what constitutes insomnia*).

2. People may complain about [difficulty falling asleep] or [they wake up during the night.]

   Rewrite: … or *problems waking up during the night.*

   Explanation: Two noun phrases are needed since *about* is a preposition, which must be followed by nouns. To help students with the structures of this sentence, you could ask them to identify the head noun *difficulty* and then to analyze what the second bracketed section is by finding the subject and the verb.

3. Sleep research reveals that insomniacs almost always [overestimate how long it took them to fall asleep] and [underestimating how long they actually slept].

   Rewrite: … and *underestimate how long they actually slept.*

   Explanation: Two finite verb phrases are needed for the subject *insomniacs.* (Creating two progressive verb phrases by adding *are* before *almost* and changing *overestimate* to *overestimating* seems less appropriate since this statement is a generalization, not an expression of ongoing activity.)

4. For some with sleep difficulties, the problem lies in poor “sleep hygiene,” [they overconsume caffeine drinks] or [watching television in bed].

   Rewrite: … *overconsuming caffeine drinks or watching television.*
Explanation: Many students are not aware that the phrase such as requires noun phrases rather than clauses following it in formal academic English. This could be a good time to review briefly this grammar point. Gerund noun phrases are especially common with such as since gerund phrases can condense the idea of a process into a phrase. Here are a few more examples from COCA:

... such as the cutting of old-growth forests
... such as using the stairs instead of the lift
... such as simulating a network

5. In past centuries, Western society slept in two shifts; people [went to sleep], [got up in the middle of the night for an hour or so], and [then back to sleep].
Rewrite: ... and then went back to sleep.
Explanation: The first two structures are verb phrases, so a verb needs to be added to the third phrase.

6. Thus, according to history professor A. Roger Ekirch, some sleep disorders, namely [waking up in the middle of night] and [unable to fall asleep again], may be a traditional pattern.
Rewrite: ... and being unable to fall asleep again.
These two structures, waking... and naming, are appositives; that is, gerund noun phrases that elaborate/explain the noun phrase sleep disorders.

7. Anthropologist Carol Worthman notes that in our culture, quality sleep involves [going into a dark and quiet room], [falling asleep], [do that for eight hours] and [then get up again].
Rewrite: doing that for eight hours and then getting up again.
Explanation: The grammatical environment here requires gerund phrases. Sleep is the subject of the that-clause, involves is the verb, and what follows are four conjoined direct objects of the verb. (Sleep involves A, B, C, and D.)
8. Worthman points out that [this 8-hour sleep model is not typical] [and] [science has never investigated empirically whether this way of sleeping has more benefits].

Rewrite: … and (also) that science has never investigated…

We have presented another that-clause example since conjoined that-clauses are so common in academic writing and since we find students need practice using them. That is, they tend to express similar ideas in two separate sentences, perhaps connected by also.


6.3 Emphasizing Ideas with Correlative Conjunctions

Raising Language Awareness

As this introduction states, little attention is given to using correlative conjunctions in writing guides other than the rules that govern subject-verb agreement when they are used to join subjects (e.g., Neither the laptop nor the book is on the desk). We think it is important to show how writers can use these structures to create focus and concise expression. They are not often used in informal speaking contexts, so students can gain more familiarity with their forms and uses through examples in academic contexts and through practice in using them. We conclude by noting how these conjunctions differ from one-word coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or) in their emphatic function.

Exercise 7 (page 127)

1. This connection between water scarcity and pollution can lead to problems of water access…. Water scarcity [not only] [makes it more difficult to get adequate and clean water to meet human needs], [but also] [harms aquatic habitats and species downstream]. (parallel verb phrases)

(Source: “Water in the 21st Century: Defining the Elements of Global Crises and Potential Solutions,” Upamanu Lall et al., Journal of International Affairs, 61(Spring/Summer 2008), 2.)
2. The literature on parent involvement in children’s sport tends to focus on either negative or positive outcome. It seems important to point out that parent involvement in their child’s sport experiences is inherently [neither good] nor [bad]. (parallel adjectives—the first modified by an adverb)

(Source: “Supported or Pressured? An Examination of Agreement Among Parents and Children on Parents’ Role in Youth Sports,” Journal of Sport Behavior, 31(March 2009), 1.)

3. Business should not feel the need to overstep its boundaries or take on responsibilities that belong to the state. Companies that practice global corporate citizenship do so [either] through thought leadership, that is providing the knowledge and technology essential to addressing a global problem, or [through concrete action, that is through the execution of a coordinated plan]. (parallel prepositional phrases)

(Source: Global Corporate Citizenship, Foreign Affairs, 2008, 87.1.

4. There is much to explore about the functional anatomy of talent. Why talent? It is a concept broad enough to encompass questions related to [both] [intelligence] and [creativity]. (parallel noun phrases)

(Source: “Getting to the Heart of the Brain: Using Cognitive Neuroscience to Explore the Nature of Human Ability and Performance,” Roeper Review, July-Sep 2008.)

5. It is also incorrect to say that the state of violence currently in Iraq is due to U.S. actions alone, and not due to any pre-existing conditions created by the former regime. The march towards some form of democratic governance will flow [either] from the barrel of a gun [nor] from the slot of a ballot box. (parallel prepositional phrases)

(Source: “Fighting for Iraq: A Case for Liberation,” Humanist, 68(Jan/Feb 2008).)
6. Understanding the nature of graphic communication—a form of communication that is both atemporal and spatial—forms one of the key foundations for communicating scientific and technical information. It is essential for graphic designers to understand why and how to effectively transform data into graphics to both engage the viewer and communicate information. (parallel verb phrases)


Building Your Knowledge

In this last section, we focus on both form and use, reminding students again that correlative conjunctions are used primarily in writing or formal speech and that when they are used in conversational English, speakers often conjoin utterances that are not parallel, and most of the time no one even notices. For example, someone might say, “I not only have lived for years in Japan but also in China,” when a parallel version in writing might be “I have lived for years not only in Japan but in China.” Indeed, one can also find many examples these days of non-parallel structures in writing, as evidenced by data in COCA. Students may wonder why it matters. We think that especially in longer sentences, parallel structures used with correlative conjunctions aid readers in processing ideas more easily.

This section also explains an important function of not only… but also that cannot be achieved by using only coordinating conjunction and: Its use as a signal to the reader that the writer is emphasizing the second of the conjoined structures.

Subject-Verb Inversion with not only …(but) also

Many students may have learned this inversion rule in other English classes, so this may be a review. You may want to give students some more examples of this structure or lead them in rewriting some of the sentences in Exercise 8 as conjoined independent clauses with not only…but also. See Item 1 for an alternative to the answer given in the textbook that uses do support.
Exercise 8 (pages 130–131)

The final exercise of this chapter gives students a chance to use correlative conjunctions in places of coordinating ones to emphasize information. The content, though not the language, was drawn from several articles, especially “Fact or Fiction: Dogs Can Talk” by Tina Adler in *Scientific American*, June 10, 2009. You may want to reinforce the directive that encourages students to use a variety of the correlative conjunctions in order to benefit most from the exercise. For extra practice or assessment, you may also want to ask students to bracket or identify the kinds of structures conjoined, noted here in parentheses.

Answers may vary. Examples are given.

1. Some dogs not only learn to understand hundreds of words but also remember them for a period of time. (verb phrases)

   If you want to have your students practice the subject-verb inversion rule with conjoined independent clauses, another rewrite of this sentence could be: Not only do some dogs learn to understand hundreds of words but also they remember them for a period of time.

   You could point out that the emphasis changes somewhat with this version.

   You could ask them which version they prefer and why. (We prefer the verb phrases since it seems to focus better on the point of dogs remembering.)

2. Although dogs can imitate human speech, such as the words “I love you,” they can neither talk nor understand full sentences the way we do. (verb phrases)

3. Psychologist Gary Lucas says that the vocal imitation skills of dogs are quite limited, so the sounds need to be shaped by either selective attention or behavioral rewards such as treats. (noun phrases)
4. Dogs can indicate meaning through both intensity and duration of their vocalizations. (noun phrases)

5. A dog’s tail wag could either express happiness or (in some situations) signal a state of anxiety. (in some situations could be deleted or left in) (verb phrases)

6. Dogs bark not only to express a variety of emotions, such as loneliness, fear, or pleasure, but also to show desire for an activity such as getting food or fetching a ball. (infinitive phrases)

7. Cats have a variety of both vocalizations, including purring, meowing, and hissing, and a range of body language, such as tail twitching, head bumping, and yawning, to express themselves. (noun phrases)

8. Careers in animal training can be both exciting and financially rewarding. (participle adjective phrases)

9. Some animal training careers, such as for marine animals, require not only a high school diploma but a bachelor’s degree in a special field. (noun phrases)

10. Animal trainers not only must be patient and sensitive but also should have experience with problem-solving and animal obedience. (verb phrases)
Chapter 7 Commentary: Creating Cohesion with Word Forms and Reference Words and Phrases

Intended Outcomes

• Students will become familiar with a variety of reference forms (such as pronouns and determiners) and the ways in which they combine with other words (such as classifier words and synonyms) to connect ideas.
• Students will learn how the passive voice in English is used to maintain focus on important topics and create cohesion across sentences.
• Students will practice using cohesive strategies to connect ideas in written texts.

Contents

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 Identification: Cohesive Devices

7.1 Using Word Forms to Connect Ideas

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 2 Review: Word Forms

Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 3 Practice: Word Forms as Cohesive Devices

7.2 Using Reference Forms

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 4 Identification: Cohesive Devices and Their Referents
Building Your Knowledge

Using Reference Forms to Connect and Focus
- Table 7.1 Reference Forms with Classifier Nouns
- Exercise 5 Practice: Reference Forms and Classifier Nouns

Using such vs. Demonstrative Determiners to Connect Ideas
- Exercise 6 Context Analysis: such vs. this and these
- Exercise 7 Context Analysis and Practice: such
- Exercise 8 Practice: Cohesion with such

Checking Verb Agreement with Long Subjects
- Exercise 9 Editing Strategy: Subject-Verb Agreement
- Exercise 10 Editing Practice: Subject-Verb Agreement

Using Comparative Reference Forms
- Table 7.2 Comparative Reference Forms
- Exercise 11 Practice: Comparative Reference Forms
- Exercise 12 Editing Practice: Comparative Reference Forms

7.3: Using Reference Forms with the Passive

Raising Language Awareness
- Exercise 13 Analysis: Topic Flow

Building Your Knowledge
- Table 7.3 Ways to Create Cohesion through Passive Sentences
- Exercise 14: Editing Practice: Cohesion through Passive Sentences

Chapter Background and Use

While Chapters 2–6 focus on building relationships between ideas within sentences, this chapter that opens the second section of the textbook focuses on creating connections across sentences, what students often deem a characteristic of “good” academic writing (Sinowitz & Hahn, 2008). While creating cohesion across larger chunks of
text, what instructors and teachers alike sometimes refer to as “flow,” is addressed in textbooks and style manuals (see Graff & Birkenstein, 2014, pp. 105–120), the strategies, structures, and language covered are often not adequate to help students create cohesion in the sophisticated ways used in academic texts. Chapter 7, together with Chapter 8, provides the necessary scaffolding for building cohesion from paragraph to paragraph and from sentence to sentence.

The first section highlights how students can create links across sentences and paragraphs using lexical repetition via different word forms. The second section takes students through a series of exercises to model how to create cohesion using pronouns and reference forms (the, this/these, such (a/an), other/another) + classifier nouns. The final section focuses on cohesion built via the ordering of information, which can require the use of the passive voice in order to keep the focus on the main topic of the passage. According to research on the characteristics of academic writing (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Hinkel, 2004), these three approaches are used with greater frequency than coordinating conjunctions (and, but, so) to connect clauses and conjunctive adverbs (therefore, nevertheless, etc.) to connect sentences (Biber, et al., 1999; Hinkel, 2001).

The exercises in this chapter can be used proactively, to help students before they draft, or “reactively,” to help students revise after they have drafted an assignment. Helping students analyze their own writing for cohesive devices not only allows them to create clear connections within their texts for readers but also helps them uncover places in which the organization of their ideas needs to be revised in order to create a better flow. The exercises can be done in a whole group setting but also work well as part of self-access learning or in tutorial settings.

Before students begin this chapter, we recommend discussing coherence, more specifically the known-new contract, with students (Kolln & Gray, 2012, Chapter 5). Readers can better understand new information when it builds on old or known information. Thus, to create a logical flow of information, ideas toward the beginning of a new sentence should refer back to ideas presented in the previous
sentence. The same holds true for information flow across paragraphs. Read these two examples:

A. Writers can create cohesion using a variety of strategies. Repetition of words or word forms, as illustrated in Exercise 3 about Jared Diamond's book *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, is one such strategy.

B. Writers can create cohesion using a variety of strategies. One such strategy involves the repetition of words or word forms, as illustrated in Exercise 3 about Jared Diamond's book *Guns, Germs, and Steel*.

Because the sentences are not very long, as a reader, you were most probably able to follow Example A, but note the “jump” from strategies (old information, bolded) in the first sentence to repetition (new information, underlined) at the start of the second sentence:

cohesion $\rightarrow$ strategies
repetition $\rightarrow$ one such strategy

Example B creates a smoother flow, moving from old information in the first sentence and then at the start of the second sentence to new information.

cohesion $\rightarrow$ strategies
one such strategy $\rightarrow$ repetition

We often bring in sample passages and ask students to map the coherence patterns to uncover strong and weak flow. Then, we might ask them to map coherence patterns in their own writing. Once students have identified places in which they need to build better coherence and cohesion, they are anxious to learn the strategies covered in this and the following chapter.

Search for CU Denver’s YouTube videos on the known-new contract for additional instructional assistance on the known-new contract.
Also search Carnegie Mellon University’s Global Communication Center for the handout.

IN-DEPTH COMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 (pages 134–135)

As an introduction to the strategies highlighted in the chapter, we recommend listing all the answers on the board or in a projected document and then analyzing the structures and vocabulary in the cohesive devices: the, this/these, such, other, the + classifier nouns (see the Appendix). We often also ask students to reflect on which of these cohesive devices they already use in their writing—or even have them analyze a piece of writing they have already drafted.

1. Santa Cruz-based Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning slapped a strongly worded warning label on the state’s new algebra requirement, saying the state doesn’t have nearly enough qualified teachers to do the job. “Scant attention has been paid to this critical issue and California’s approach to math instruction still doesn’t add up,” according to the Center’s July report on the issue. (Source: “A matter of mathematics,” J. Tucker. San Francisco Chronicle, 08 August, p. A1.)

2. If teachers want to bring changes into their teaching methods for the solution of problems and the establishment of their own theories, they should make an effort to improve their teaching methods. However, the improvement of teaching methods cannot be made within a short period of time. Teachers should frequently take part in a supervision process and share their ideas and reflections with other teachers. (Source: “Empowering early childhood teachers to keep teaching fresh as a lifelong learner,” S.Y. Yoon. Education, 123(2002), 334–338.)
3. The present analysis will serve as a first step in evaluating the effectiveness with which plastic surgeons publish novel information first presented in abstract form. It will also estimate time requirements for successful research publications and determine which plastic surgery journals are final destinations for presented abstracts.


4. [It was believed that] (a) psychological skill would predict subjective athletic performance, (b) self-confidence would be the single strongest predictor of performance, and (c) sex of athlete and type of sport would significantly predict performance. While these hypotheses were generally confirmed, it was also observed that some of the significant psychological skills predicted performance in a negative direction (e.g., coachability and goal setting).


5. They’re out of tune with the times. They’re swayed by the emotional rather than the cerebral. They go for the familiar and reassuring over the innovative and challenging. Members of Congress? American Idol judges? Nope. Try the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the organization that for 83 years has been handing out Oscars for outstanding achievements in the film industry. Such accusations are routinely hurled by those in the entertainment media and movie lovers who watch at home as they question the choices of the 5,755-member group that decides who wins those coveted gold statuettes.


6. Good reasons to get more shut-eye—you’ll live longer. Chronic insomniacs are more likely to suffer a heart attack than those who sleep well, according to new research in the journal Circulation. Other studies have linked lack of sleep to a higher risk of dying from a stroke and developing breast cancer.

(Source: “Sleep rehab,” B. Stephens. Shape Magazine (January 2012), 118.)
7.1 Using Word Forms to Connect Ideas

_Raising Language Awareness_

**Exercise 2 (page 136)**

This exercise is a review of word forms for students. It is preparing students to think about the ways we can create lexical links via word forms (not merely through a repetition of the same word forms and phrase) and to complete Exercise 3 on page 138.

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Students may want to use _distinguish_ as a verb form of _distinct_. We often ask students to look these words up in a learner dictionary and/or concordancer to help them understand the subtle difference between these words and their use.
Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 3 (page 138)

This exercise shows the way to create links by repeating ideas via the use of different word forms. When assigning this exercise, we caution students that the use of this one device over and over again can sound forced, an unfortunate consequence of contextualized grammar and writing exercises. We remind students that this is one of many possible strategies and that they will want to aim for variety in strategy use.

Note: It might be useful to have students trace the use of old information vs. new information in this passage to drive home the idea of the known-new contract.

According to Jared Diamond, many newly invented technologies are never (4) adopted by society. Diamond notes that, while many inventions are more (1) efficient than older technologies, (1) efficiency is not always the main factor in embracing a new technology. Often, a society has economic reasons for holding on to an older technology and thus (2) rejects the new one. For example, the (2) rejection of electric lighting in England can be traced to massive investments in gas lighting. In addition, some ancient Mexican societies never adopted the wheel for transportation, as they (3) were not able to use animals to pull wheeled vehicles. This (3) inability to use animals rendered wheeled vehicles useless and thus uneconomical.

Another factor affecting the (4) adoption of new technologies is (5) resistance to (6) change. In the 1930s, typists (5) resisted the introduction of a new, more efficient typewriter keyboard given that typists were used to the old keyboard and did not want to (6) change their habits. Often a new item is adopted or rejected based not on its use or economic value but on its social (7) value. One such example is expensive designer jeans, which are more highly (7) valued than cheaper generic jeans. Another example is the (6) preference of Japan’s kanji writing system over the kana system. Many people (8) prefer using kanji, even though it is a quite difficult system, because it holds social prestige.
7.2 Using Reference Forms

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 4 (pages 139–140)

If you created a list of cohesive devices with students after completing Exercise 1, you might want to add the examples in this exercise to the list. Students might want to ask clarification questions right away about the use of the different choices. For instance, we often get a question about others and another in this exercise and the use of other when discussing answers for Exercise 1. You can put all three (Exercise 1, Item 6, Exercise 3, Items 7 and 8) up on the board or projector and ask students to write these down and think about possible rules. You can revisit the list when you get to Table 7.2 and Exercises 11 and 12, which provide additional information and practice with these comparative forms.

Analysis:

The reference in Sentence a. is not clear since there are three potential plural noun referents for they in the first sentence: countries, laws and children. Therefore b. is a better choice; it creates cohesion that will allow the reader to get the meaning right away.

Identification:

1. A. [Childhood] is a term that usually refers to the human developmental period between infancy and adulthood.
   B. In psychology, it is typically divided into several stages.
   B. This stage begins when a child starts speaking or walking and ends around the age of seven or eight.
3. A. Cultures vary as to [when they determine a child becomes an adult].
   B. Such variation results from differences in the age at which cultures consider a person mature enough to have certain rights or responsibilities.
4. A. Many historians have researched [social attitudes toward childhood over the centuries].
   B. This research reveals that the concept of childhood has changed dramatically over time in many cultures.

5. A. All U.S. states have [laws requiring a period of educational attendance for children].
   B. Most of these laws, known as compulsory education, allow home schooling.

6. A. [The ages for which education is required] vary from state to state.
   B. For example, the range is between 5 and 16 in Maryland; in Ohio it is between 6 and 18, and in Washington between 8 and 17.

7. A. [One benefit of compulsory education worldwide] is that it has discouraged child labor.
   B. Another is that it helps to prepare individuals for vocations and professions in adulthood.

8. A. Our current system of compulsory education does, however, have its critics; [one objection to mandatory schooling] is that it stifles creativity.
   B. Others include the beliefs that not all individuals are suited for schooling and that compulsory education interferes with individual liberty.

Building Your Knowledge

Using Reference Forms to Connect and Focus

Exercise 5 (page 142)

This exercise brings together two cohesion strategies: the use of the reference words this/these and the use of different word forms to create lexical links. It also focuses students’ attention on the use of classifier nouns (see Appendix) in academic writing. The Appendix is clearly not exhaustive. When doing this exercise, we suggest asking
students to add items to the list in the Appendix, whenever they are working through exercises and reading academic texts.

1. This mistake
2. these warnings
3. these assumptions
4. This theory
5. this expectation

Using *such* vs. Demonstrative Determiners to Connect Ideas

**Exercise 6 (page 144)**

This exercise helps students conceptualize the difference between *this/these* + classifier noun and *such (a/an)* + classifier noun.

1. Sentence A means specifically searching the web and answering e-mail, while B indicates activities of this type, which could include others such as tweeting or browsing through Facebook posts.

2. Again, sentence A refers specifically to the activity mentioned (playing loud music), whereas *such a situation* means a situation like this, one that could be rude or annoying to others (getting rowdy after too much drinking, yelling from the yard outside to friends in the dorm, etc.).

**Exercise 7 (page 145)**

This exercise reinforces both the forms of *such* as a reference word and the use of the indefinite article with singular count nouns.

1. With singular count nouns, use *such a/an*.
2. With plural count nouns, use *such*.
3. With non-count nouns, use *such*. 
Answers for the second part of this exercise will vary. Sample responses:

1. In the 1950s, such an accusation [of an interracial affair] might have destroyed someone’s social status.
2. Such attitudes slowly abated during and after the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s.
3. Such concern now seems misguided and irrelevant.
   [Note: If you want to challenge students, ask them to write sentences about something they are currently studying in your class or another class—in the samples, the student is writing in response to the film Far from Heaven. Then students can exchange sentences, check the use of *such* (*an/an*) and the classifier term, and discuss the topic or text they are studying.]

**Exercise 8 (pages 146–147)**

Answers will vary. Sample answers are listed.

1. *Such rude and criminal actions* are shocking; they have led to articles calling for drivers to be more considerate and for society to deal severely with crimes resulting from road rage.
2. Although some think *such courses* should no longer be required for graduation, others think a liberal education is an essential part of a college education.
3. Since then many safeguards have been put in place to make sure *such a disaster* does not happen again.
4. Researchers believe it is important to learn about *such cultural differences in everyday communication* when living in another country.

Note: You might want to do some follow-up exercises to Exercises 6–8, asking students to look for the use of these reference words in course articles or ones in their fields of study.
Checking Verb Agreement with Long Subjects

Exercise 9 (page 148)

When writing longer pieces, students sometimes need to modify noun phrases, especially when referring back to information from several paragraphs earlier or when using a classifier noun to summarize information from several paragraphs. This exercise, with sentences adapted from David Elkind’s *The Hurried Child* (2001), gives examples of ways to modify nouns and highlights a strategy for uncovering a potential trouble spot: subject-verb agreement. The strategy is outlined on page 147. As a review, we recommend listing the types of modifiers (prepositional phrases, infinitive phrases in this exercise) and to remind students of prepositional collocations (*pressure + on, trend + toward, consequence + of, emphasis + on*).

1. [Today’s pressures on middle-class children to grow up fast] begin in early childhood.
   
   *Pressures* is plural. Thus: *They begin in early childhood.*

2. [The trend toward early academic pressure] was further supported by the civil rights movement.
   
   *Trend* is singular. Thus: *It was further supported…*

3. [One consequence of all this concern for the early years] was the demise of the “readiness” concept.
   
   *Consequence* is singular. Thus: *It was….*

4. But [the emphasis on early intervention and early stimulation (even of infants)] made the concept of readiness appear dated and old-fashioned.

   *Emphasis* is singular. Thus: *It made.* (Here the verb is the same whether singular or plural; you can ask students what the verb would be if changed to present tense.)

5. [The pressure to engage in competitive sports] is one of the most obvious pressures on contemporary children to grow up fast.

   *Pressure* is singular. Thus: *It is…*
Exercise 10 (page 149)

This exercises gives students additional practice editing for subject-verb agreement.

(1) The Model Minority myth in America introduce Asian Americans as a successful ethnic minority with higher median incomes than other groups. (2) These assertions of achievement for Asian Americans conceal many facts. (3) One of the facts concealed is that Asian-American families live disproportionately in high cost of living areas such as New York and Los Angeles. (4) An emphasis on this material success of Asian Americans also pervades the media’s focus on their educational status at “the top of the class.” (5) Contrary to these media reports, almost all of the academic studies* on the actual returns from their education point to prevalent discrimination toward Asian Americans. [Note: with all—the number of the verb is dictated by the noun in the of-phrase.]

In class, we sometimes ask students to identify the reference form and noun phrase pairs in Sentences 2–5 and then state what each refers to in a previous sentence.

Sentence 2: “These assertions of achievement for Asian Americans” refers to “successful ethnic minority with higher median incomes than other groups”

Sentence 4: “this material success of Asian Americans” also refers to “a successful ethnic minority with higher median incomes than other groups”

Sentence 5: “these media reports” refers to “media’s focus on their educational status at ‘the top of the class.’”
Using Comparative Reference Forms

Exercise 11 (page 151)

Students in even very advanced classes still struggle with the use of the comparative reference forms *another*, *other*, and *others*. Table 7.2 gives examples.

1. As most everyone knows, one of the most popular social networking internet sites is Facebook. *Others* are LinkedIn, Tumblr, and Twitter. [Note: This is not an exhaustive list; there are still other sites. Thus, writers should use *Others*, not *The others*, here.]

2. For Twitter, whose brief messages up to 140 characters are called tweets, informational sites abound; for example, one site lists special vocabulary describing Twitter users and tweeting activities; *another* offers rules of tweeting etiquette. [Note: *Another* is used because the writer is referring to “one other” site of many.]

3. A number of Twitter terms refer to users of Twitter. One is *tweeple*; *others* are *tweeps* and *tweeters*. *Another*, which describes people who tweet too much, is *tweeterboxes*. [Note: This item highlights the difference in use between the singular pronoun form (*another*) and the plural pronoun form (*others*).]

4. Two more Twitter terms refer to tweeting overuse; one, *tweetaholism*, indicates an apparent addiction to tweeting; *the other*, *tweetacholic*, describes a person who seems to be addicted to Twitter. [Note: Because the writer is focusing on two items and has already mentioned one, only one additional item remains: the definition of the context for *the other*.]

Exercise 12 (pages 152–153)

This exercise further reinforces the use of comparative forms, asking students to edit for errors and to give explanations for edits to help them internalize the use of these forms.

1. *Others*
   
   *The others* are corn and strawberries.

   Explanation: There are a number of genetically modified foods other than soybeans. Corn and strawberries are only two others.
2. Another crop involved in early genetic engineering experiments was cotton.

Explanation: Another expresses one more of a group of crops. The singular verb was also indicates this should not be other crops. In this context, we can assume that there were more than two crops involved in early experiments, so cotton was not the other one of only two.

3. Some other include Argentina, Brazil, and China.

Explanation: The plural form is needed for some and the three countries named.

4. Explanation: Since there are a number of advantages and tolerance to colder temperatures is just the second advantage of many possible ones mentioned, Another is correct.

5. Other concerns involve the risks to farmed ecosystems and to wildlife.

Explanation: Others is used only to replace a noun, not as a modifier of a noun.

7.3 Using Reference Forms with the Passive

Raising Language Awareness

We include this section for two reasons:

1. Topic flow is an item we feel should definitely be covered explicitly in any writing-focused course. If you have not already introduced the idea of mapping topic flow, we recommend doing so before embarking on these exercises with students. See the introduction to this commentary chapter.

2. Students need to see examples of the appropriate, not merely inappropriate, use of the passive voice. Students in humanities courses are often told to avoid the passive voice at all costs, yet this form is used strategically in both the humanities and other disciplines—for very specific purposes.
Exercise 13 (pages 154–155)

This exercise works well as pair or small-group work as students need to negotiation meaning and logic. We review the sample passages in the first item together as a class, mapping the topic flow.

1. Main Topic: bad habits
   A1: Bad habits → break them
   A2: Person → bad habit → different places
   A3: Habit → difficulty breaking / willpower

   B1: Bad habits → break them
   B2: Bad habit → different places
   B3: Habit → difficulty breaking / willpower

   The B version makes the passage flow better because in the second sentence a bad habit is in the subject position instead of a person. A person is not the topic of the passage.

2. Main Topic: urban legends
   The version with the best flow is A, in which the subject of the second sentence is these stories, which refers to urban legends.
   In the fourth sentence of A, true elements creates a better link to the end of the last sentence, which has to do with true and false elements. Again, though nothing is grammatically wrong with the other version, the subject people in the second sentence of B is not the focus of the topic.

3. Main Topic: soccer
   The best version is A. The second sentence places soccer towards the beginning of the sentence, creating a better link with the topic of the previous sentence. Nothing is grammatically wrong with B, but the use of people in the second sentence does not create as strong a link.
Building Your Knowledge

Exercise 14 (pages 157–158)

This exercise gives students practice editing existing drafts for information or topic flow. We often have students work together on this exercise as well, following a similar process as discussed for Exercise 13, to show students a strategy for checking the topic flow in their own writing.

1. (a) Sometimes for no apparent reason, the hard drive of a computer crashes.
   (b) Many hard drive failures are caused by parts that no longer align correctly.
   (c) Such misalignments make it impossible to read data from the drive.

2. (a) The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of member states.
   (b) It was established by independent sovereign states in 1993.
   (c) To join the EU, a country must meet what are known as the Copenhagen criteria.
   (d) The fulfillment of these criteria is determined by the European Council.

3. (a) How do memories get formed and retained in the brain?
   (b) According to researchers Robert Stickgold and Jeffrey Ellenbogen, when we encode information in our brain, the new memory is just embarking on what will be a long journey.
   (c) The memory is stabilized, enhanced, and transformed until it is quite different from its original form.
   (d) This resulting memory is retained in a detailed form something like a story.
4. a. California sea otters have been struggling to repopulate after being hunted almost to extinction in the early 20th century.

b. Although these marine mammals have gained protection through their status as an endangered species, the health of the sea otter population continues to be threatened.

c. Their immune systems have been weakened by polluted runoff.

d. And recently, they have been poisoned by an ancient microbe found in warmer waters.

e. As a result of these threats, their numbers have been declining.

References


Chapter 8 Commentary:  
Creating Cohesion with Topic Introducers 
and Logical Connectors

Intended Outcomes

- Students will further build their resources for connecting and focusing ideas.
- Students will learn how to use topic introducers and logical connectors that combine with other kinds of cohesive devices.
- Students will understand the specific uses of connectors of contrast and comparison.

Contents

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 Identification: Topic Introducers and Referents

8.1 Using Topic Introducers with Reference Forms to Connect Ideas

Building Your Knowledge

Table 8.1 Topic Introducers and Examples
Exercise 2 Editing Practice: Topic Introducer Forms
Exercise 3 Practice: Reference Forms and Classifier Nouns in Topic Introducers

8.2 Using Logical Connectors with Reference Forms to Connect Ideas

Building Your Knowledge

Table 8.2 Cohesion Created through Logical Connectors with Reference Forms
Table 8.3 Logical Connectors with Reference Forms
Exercise 4  Practice: Logical Connectors, Reference Forms, and Classifier Nouns

Using Logical Connectors to Express Differences

Table 8.4  Contrast and Comparison Connectors with Reference Forms

Exercise 5  Practice: Using Contrary to vs. in Contrast to

Exercise 6  Editing Practice: Comparative Connector Forms

Chapter Background and Use

Building on the work in Chapter 7, which focused on using reference forms to create cohesive links, this chapter helps students further develop language resources for making connections with previous text.

The introduction of the chapter provides a number of sentence examples of topic introducers used to link ideas across sentences. The first section further explains the uses of topic introducers in academic writing, including some register differences, and gives students an opportunity to focus on the forms of these introducers. The second section focuses on prepositional logical connectors, such as based on, given, despite, and in addition, and the noun phrases that combine with them, often with a reference word (e.g., this, these) and classifier noun (e.g., fact, strategies) to show relationships between ideas across sentences. The third and final section targets the forms and meanings of contrast and comparison prepositional logical connectors, such as in contrast to vs. contrary to, a particularly challenging set for student writers as the forms of these connectors are similar.

Much of the vocabulary in this chapter should be familiar to students; the writing challenges lie in selecting the words and phrases that will best fit the writer’s meanings in contexts and in using the correct forms of words. Some forms of topic introducers and prepositional logical connectors are quite similar (e.g., concerning, as concerns; compared to, in comparison to), and student writers sometimes get them confused, producing for example, ungrammatical phrases such as as concerning or comparing to. Since, in crafting connections,
many student writers tend to use primarily either linking adverbials such as *however* before independent clauses or subordinate clauses with conjunctions like *because*, they may use similar patterns with prepositional connectors, such as *because of* or *as a result of*, mistakenly adding clauses after them (*As a result of the law was passed…*) as noted in (Larsen-Freeman et al., 2016, p. 550).

Assuming students have completed at least parts of Chapters 4 and 7, they will have a good grounding in the use of a variety of reference forms and patterns of cohesion. Before beginning this chapter, you may want to direct students’ attention to the use of some of the topic introducers and prepositional logical connectors in readings they have done, if relevant. As with Chapters 4 and 7, exercises in this chapter could be assigned either prior to drafting pieces of writing or during revision processes in which students would explore how they might use topic introducers or logical connectors and classifier nouns to link ideas. Students are reminded that these cohesion devices need to be used selectively; overuse could result in “flow” problems. And of course although the work in this chapter is intended to focus on an area of cohesion that is not often dealt with in writing handbooks, or at least not with the frequency in which linking adverbials are discussed, we do not want to imply that these connectors should replace the use of adverbials such as *however, in addition, or furthermore*. The main goal of this chapter is to help students explore other ways to create connections that may be more effective than a linking adverbial, especially when writers want to express connections with larger parts of a text than just the previous sentence.

If you wish students at any time during work on this chapter to look at academic register examples of either the topic introducers or prepositional logical connectors, a useful strategy for finding examples in COCA is to use in the search box a reference word after the introducer or logical connector word/phrase. For example, if you enter *in contrast to this* or *in contrast to these*, you can eliminate many examples that would not be making connections to previous text. You will instead get mostly examples that refer to a previous sentence or sentences such as these: *in contrast to this approach/style/study; in contrast to these findings.*
As noted previously, the introduction to this chapter offers a preview of the main topics along with examples, which could be used for discussion of students’ existing knowledge of these structures. You may want to point out how some of the phrases (e.g., similar to, in contrast to) look very much like linking adverbials, often called sentence connectors or just logical connectors in textbooks (e.g., similar, in contrast) and ask if students can see how the forms that follow them differ from those that usually come after linking adverbials.

**Raising Language Awareness**

**Exercise 1 (pages 160–161)**

This noticing exercise asks students to locate and circle topic introducers in the last sentence of short passages and then find the text that is referred to. The source of each passage, taken from COCA, is given. We don’t ask students to identify explicitly the classifier noun and reference forms that follow the topic introducer, but of course students will be considering these phrases and what they mean to locate the text being referred to. If you wish, you could ask students to identify the classifier word in each sentence that describes and thus links to previous text (i.e., question, increase, assertions, analyses, trends, and outlooks). You may also want to point out that all of the topic introducer phrases are followed by a comma.

1. A number of questions were raised regarding how grades were computed. An initial issue was whether or not the department had a policy on grading. The idea here was to get a sense of whether faculty members agreed on how such things as skill, knowledge, and class participation should be weighed in determining a student’s performance. In regard to this question, 80% of respondents indicated that their departments did not have a formal grading policy.  

[Note: There are two *whether* clauses in this passage. However, students should be able to see that the information in the last sentence refers to the first one in the second sentence. This example is discussed in the next section since the writer’s addition of the second *whether* clause makes the topic introducer’s role of connection even more important.]

2. As a result of the 1965 changes in the Immigration and Nationality Act emphasizing family reunification, the number of parents of U.S. citizens admitted annually doubled between 1980 and 1990. Related to this increase, from 1986 to 1996, the number of noncitizens receiving SSI benefits rose from slightly over 244,000 to almost 800,000.


3. FDA officials claim that past inefficiency and excesses have been remedied and that the time required for approval of drugs for marketing is shrinking. Contrary to these assertions, in recent years the FDA has arguably moved in the opposite direction, introducing numerous obstacles to drug manufacture and clinical testing.


4. In Latin America during the 1970s, when the school-age population expanded dramatically, public spending per primary-school student fell by 45% in real terms. In Mexico, life expectancy for the poorest 10% of the population is 20 years less than for the richest 10%. Based on such analyses, the World Bank has stated: “The evidence points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that population growth at the rates common in most of the developing world slows development.”

5. Alas, our economic forecasts call for rising pricing pressures and a steady federal funds rate. In short, investors may be disappointed if the Fed doesn’t cut rates anytime soon—and we don’t think it will. Given these trends and outlooks, we recently signaled to our investor clients that they should consider paring back the exposure to stocks in their portfolios.


6. In Iowa, land values jumped nearly 45 percent from 1986 to 1989, though they’re still far below 1981 peak levels. Less than one in five farmers had significant money troubles last year, compared with a third in 1986... In Minnesota, state officials say soil moisture is the best it has been since November 1986. Despite such optimistic signs, drought persists in areas, including Florida and parts of Colorado.


8.1 Using Topic Introducers with Reference Forms to Connect Ideas

**Building Your Knowledge**

The explanation here, including the examples in the chart, is intended to show how adding topic introducers to provide readers with explicit connections makes comprehension of complex ideas easier. It might be useful for you or a few students to read the two examples in the chart out loud in class so that students can get a good sense of the difference between the passage without and with the topic introducer.

Table 8.1, Topic Introducers and Examples, is meant to serve as another of the many reference charts for students as they work on their own composing, revising, and editing. It will also serve as a guide for error correction in the next exercise. You could discuss with students which ones they have used previously, and it is helpful to note that the last two are quite formal and not used in as many contexts as the others. They may suggest others, such as *as concerns*, *as regards*, or *in relation to*. We have limited the number of topic introducers to keep things simple and focus more on the ways in which these structures combine with others.
Exercise 2 (page 164)

As the directions state, students can refer to Table 8.1 to identify and correct errors. For your information, the type of error is given in parentheses below each answer.

1. We have received your letter dated October 20, 2014, in which you ask for a full refund. In reference with your letter, we will not be able to fulfill your request without the following documentation. with reference to (incorrect 2nd preposition)

2. There are two possible solutions to this budget problem: negotiate a lower price with our current vendor or find a new vendor willing to come in at a lower price. Regarding to the first option, we will need to send a request to Halsom Equipment by the end of the month. Regarding (Preposition to deletion needed—this form is often confused with in regard to.)

   If students get confused by these two similar forms, they may want to opt for just one of them in their writing.

3. Tuition costs are on the rise these days, even for public colleges and universities. As related to this problem is an increase in housing and textbook costs, which makes higher education even less affordable. Related to (preposition needs to be deleted)

4. First-generation college students face many challenges at four-year universities, including managing family and work obligations. In regards to family obligations, students feel caught between two worlds—their school and non-school world—often feeling forced to sacrifice their close-knit relationship with their family in order to succeed at the university. In regard to (regard should be singular, not plural)

The explanatory text that precedes Exercise 3 describes a common use of topic introducers in academic writing: referencing and then expanding on one of several points previously discussed.
**Exercise 3** (page 166)

This exercise provides practice with this common use of topic introducers. It is fairly challenging and might make a good partner or group activity since students could discuss various options and perhaps help each other understand the ideas. You might want to do the first one together as a class, regardless of whether students complete the last two items as classwork or homework. You could prompt students first to think of an appropriate classifier noun that can summarize the information given previously; the classifier nouns we suggest here are *change, requirement, effects,* and *terrorism/crime,* but as noted, other nouns and other modifiers are possible.

Answers will vary. Samples are listed.

1. Regarding this change in campaign ad strategy
2. As for the first requirement
3. In regard to economic effects / Regarding increased terrorism and crime

**8.2 Using Logical Connectors with Reference Forms to Connect Ideas**

**Building Your Knowledge**

In earlier sections of this book, we helped students understand how transforming clause structures into noun phrases could improve conciseness and clarity. Here we illustrate the advantages of using logical connectors that can combine with reference words and classifier nouns. We think the passage examples in Table 8.2, Cohesion Created through Logical Connectors with Reference Forms, illustrates well the economy of phrasing that can be achieved by replacing a reason subordinate clause (in this case a *because*-clause in the middle column) with the reason prepositional phrase (connector *given* followed by reference form *these* and classifier words *trends* and *outlooks* in the right-hand column). As the explanation above the table notes, these compact cohesive expressions are more commonly used in academic
writing. In fact, we have found that the logical connector *given* is very frequent in academic texts though rarely appearing in lists of logical connectors in ESL/writing handbooks.

The reference chart in Table 8.3, Logical Connectors with Reference Forms, lists prepositional logical connectors along with shared semantic meanings of connector groups and examples used with reference forms and classifier words. You may want to consider the following notes in going over this chart with students: (1) While all the examples in the right-hand column start with a capital letter, implying that they are used to begin sentences, these connectors can also be used sentence-medial and sentence-final. We have presented them as sentence-initial here and in exercises to emphasize their use as cohesive links across sentence boundaries. In this role, they are typically at the beginnings of sentences. (2) Many compound preposition connectors such as *because of*, in contrast to, and *addition to* are very similar in form to either subordinating conjunctions (*because*) or sentence adverbs (*in contrast*, *in addition*). Student writers can get these forms confused, resulting in ungrammatical combinations such as *because of there was an imbalance*. Even for compound prepositions like *due to*, writers may mistakenly follow them with clauses rather than noun phrases: *due to she was in an accident*... So it is helpful to point out that all of the examples in the right-hand column have noun phrases after the connectors. It is of course their combination with noun phrases, especially classifier noun phrases, that can make them such effective cohesive devices in linking to previous information. (3) Finally, you may want to refer students to the footnote that explains how comparison words typically signal differences—for example, *compare*, like *contrast*, is most often used to note differences between two or more things.

**Exercise 4 (pages 169–170)**

This is a challenging exercise. We have usually had students work in groups of three or four to create the connector phrases that will fill in the blanks. If time does not allow the groups to do all of the items after Item 1, each group could be assigned one item and then
they can share their completions with the rest of the class. You may
want to point out how these elaborated phrases can help readers bet-
ter understand the connections between sentences, improving “flow.”
Students often ask us in conferences to evaluate whether or not their
writing “flows.” Flow is a quality they recognize as a feature of good
writing but, assuming the underlying ideas are coherent, they often
haven’t had much instruction or practice in achieving connection
and flow through linguistic devices such as the connector + reference
forms on which this exercise focuses. In doing this exercise in class
with our students, we have sometimes pointed out how much more
helpful these connectors can be than a simple however or therefore.
For example, the connector nevertheless could be used in the blank
for Item 2, but a phrase like our suggested despite these warnings/
negative information helps a reader more readily understand that the
last sentence of the passage is referring to the previous three sentences
and not just to the last sentence. Similarly, for Item 3, even the brief
phrase given these changes better connects the reader to the previous
three sentences in the passage than a sentence adverb (linking adver-
bial) like therefore. This is not to say that the one-word connectors are
inappropriate or should not be used but that experienced academic
writers in all disciplines tend to make use of the more complex forms
of reference.

Answers will vary. Samples listed.

1. In light of these dietary restrictions
2. Despite these warnings / Despite this negative information
3. Given these changes
4. In addition to these reasons
5. Because of this increased popularity and availability

Using Logical Connectors to Express Differences

In this section of our chapter, we turn to the form, meaning, and
use challenges for writers of contrast and comparison connectors.
The opening explanation points out both the potential confusion in
meaning with connectors that explicitly refer to a contrast and the form confusion with connectors such as *compared to* and *comparing*. If you have the time in your course, we would recommend that you spend some class time with Table 8.4, Contrast and Comparison Connectors with Reference Forms, perhaps asking for volunteers to read examples and explanations. With the *contrary to* explanations, you could ask students if they could come up with some things that people assume that are not true, such as stereotypes about cultures if you feel comfortable with that topic. You could point out some of the set phrases that English uses for this purpose, some of which are found in Exercise 5, in which *contrary to* collocates with noun and noun phrases such as *myth*, *common misperceptions*, *beliefs*, *popular wisdom*, among others. Students might want to search for other *contrary to* completions using a search engine such as Google or consulting COCA.

**Exercise 5 (page 172)**

This exercise should help you to diagnose whether students understand the difference between *contrary to* and *in contrast to*. Students should be encouraged to look back at the information in Table 8.4 if they are not sure which choice is correct.

1. **Contrary to** this common misconception
2. **In contrast to** sea otters
3. **Contrary to** this popular wisdom
4. **Contrary to** this continuing myth
5. **In contrast to** these so-called bad fats

**Exercise 6 (page 173)**

This error analysis exercise is form-based. It should not be very difficult for students, though as noted previously, the forms here are, in our experience, a very common source of error. If done in class, it would be useful if students could orally explain why they chose one form over another so that this does not become just an “intuition”
exercise for some. In explaining choices they could refer to the relevant explanations in Table 8.4 for any students who might not have understood the corrections needed.

1. **Compared to** Europe
2. **in comparison to/with** Europe
3. **compared to** Spanish
4. **Comparing** Egyptians with Americans

**References**

Chapter 9 Commentary:
Expressing Degrees of Certainty
and Accuracy

Intended Outcomes

- Students will gain an understanding of the need for and use of hedges in academic writing.
- Students will expand their repertoire of hedging devices: modals, verbs, adjectives and adverbs of probability, frequency, and degree.
- Students will practice using these devices in the appropriate contexts and with the appropriate grammatical structures.

Contents

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 Analysis: Sentences with and without Hedging Devices
Exercise 2 Identification: Hedging Devices

Building Your Knowledge

Using Modal Verbs

Exercise 3 Writing Practice: Sentences with Modal Verbs

Using Adjectives of Probability

Table 9.1 Adjectives of Probability
Exercise 4 Transformation Practice: Modal Verbs → Adjectives of Probability
Chapter Background and Use

Much has been written about the use of hedging devices in academic writing (c.f. Biber, 2006; Hyland, 1998; Hyland, 2005). According to Hyland, “academic writing has gradually lost its traditional tag as an objective, faceless and impersonal form of discourse and come to be seen as a persuasive endeavor involving interaction between writers and readers” (2005, p. 173). Writers take positions in relation
to what they are writing about, and they position themselves in relation to others who hold points of view on the topic.

One item that has traditionally been overlooked in handbooks, style guides, and even ESL textbooks is the use of hedging devices to express needed uncertainty or doubt. Students are often taught to “take a stand” and “sound confident.” However, in order to make claims that are defendable, writers often need to soften those claims. They need to draw on various linguistic forms to express attitudes about ideas and establish an appropriate voice.

According to research, many students rely on a very small range of hedging devices and often make commitments in claims that are too strong or inappropriate (Hyland & Milton, 1997). This chapter aims to help students expand their range of hedging devices, learn more about the vocabulary and structures used to hedge, and understand when and where to use such devices to soften claims and to sound more polite when making recommendations. Please note that this chapter covers only a subset of hedging devices. An extensive list can be found in University Language, Chapter 5 (Biber, 2006).

We have found the discussion and practice of hedging devices to be useful for many different types of writing assignments. The most obvious use is in summarizing authors’ or students’ own results of empirical research in the form of data commentary. Hedging devices are also quite useful to cover when working with students on writing persuasive papers, especially problem-solution papers and causal essays in which students highlight potential results of proposed actions, make predictions or recommendations, or discuss causes or effects.

IN-DEPTHCOMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 (pages 175–176)

The examples in this raising awareness exercise are designed to help students see the potential danger of making sweeping claims, as it is often not hard to find examples that can disprove such claims.
Specific answers and explanations given by students will vary—each should focus on how the situation or result is not always correct/true or how the cause listed may be one of many—and thus how the first sentence in each set may be an overgeneralization.

Note that each item in Exercise 1 introduces a new type of hedging device, each of which will be explored in depth in the chapter. We recommend listing each device on the board as a preview both for use in helping students complete Exercise 2 but also as an overview of the chapter.

Exercise 2 (pages 177–178)

This exercise expands the single examples of possible hedging device types listed in Exercise 1.

1. 9 words/phrases, including the one that has been done as an example:

What techniques are effective for individual learning? Recent research reveals that the advice generally offered in study skills courses is in fact wrong. For example, these courses typically encourage students to find a specific, quiet place to study; however, psychologists have found that students may learn more if their study contexts are varied. It is possible that this improved learning occurs because the brain is able to make multiple associations with the same materials, which slows down forgetting. Another study habit that seems to improve learning is varying the kinds of material studied at one time, such as vocabulary and speaking in language learning. It appears that mixing the types of materials learned leaves a deeper impression on the brain. One piece of advice that does hold true is cramming, as cramming does not, in most cases, lead to retention of information over time. While cramming might improve one’s test score on a particular exam, information learned will probably be forgotten soon afterward.

2. 6 words/phrases
During the last decade, school systems have tended to decrease their focus on the fine arts in order to stress core subjects such as reading and mathematics. However, a growing body of research suggests that instruction in the arts could improve student learning across all disciplines. A four-year study at Boston College indicates that students who get musical training experience structural changes in the brain. Despite these intriguing findings, conclusions of current research sometimes do not translate directly to classrooms. The next probable area of focus, according to University of Oregon researcher Michael Posner, will explore the connection that scientists believe most likely exists between the study of music and math ability.
(Source: “Getting Scientific about Arts Education,” Los Angeles Times, May 24, 2009.)

3. 5 words/phrases:
With economic changes in work environments nationwide, American workers today frequently complain about workload. Employees often feel pressured to work extra hours and/or to give up vacation or sick days to get work done. Professional workers routinely extend their work time into the weekends and holidays. In one study, parents stated they hardly ever had enough time to spend with their children due to work hours. With continued downsizing and mergers occurring in workplaces, the problems of work overload for employees are unlikely to improve in the near future.
(Source: Boston College Center for Work and Family, www.be.edu/centers/cwf/research/publications/meta-elements/pdf/workload_ebs.pdf; retrieved 12/17/10.)
Building Your Knowledge

Using Modal Verbs

Exercise 3 (page 180)

The text preceding this exercise introduces examples of how modals can be used to soften claims focusing on recommendations or possibility. This exercise gives students practice. When doing this exercise, we often ask students to try to paraphrase, not directly quote, information from the passage given. (See Item from the passage.) Also, some answers may involve inference. The information about creating “flow” is quite abstract. Students may respond with a more concrete example of this abstract concept. (See Item 4.)

Answers will vary. Sample sentences listed below.

1. The happiness that athletes, musicians, writers, gamers, and religious adherents feel could be due to their activities that involve creativity and play.

2. Being optimistic about one’s future might lead to increased happiness.

3. In order to increase one’s level of happiness, a person might want to engage in learning a musical instrument.

4. Given recent research results, in order to increase employee morale, employers should encourage workers to explore their creative sides.


Using Adjectives of Probability

Exercise 4 (page 182)

This exercise refers to the information in Table 9.1 (page 181). This section focuses on not only the vocabulary used to show probability but also the grammatical structures used and the placement of these
structures in sentences. It is important to emphasize to students that the original sentences in each item are “correct.” Use of these probability adjectives merely gives writers options for variety.

1. It is likely that Saturn’s moon has liquid mixtures below its surface.
2. Next year’s basketball season is unlikely to start on time because the players are on strike.
3. The gas and dust surrounding black holes is one possible source of high-energy cosmic rays.
4. Given recent research results, it is probable that the state of Michigan will now use this new method to increase iodine in table salt.
5. Microsoft’s ability to reverse this downward trend / Microsoft’s reversal of this downward trend is doubtful.
6. According to scientists, a likely cause of sudden acceleration is internal electromagnetic interference, not floor mats and sticky gas pedals.

Modifying Probability Adjectives with Highly

Exercise 5 (pages 184–185)

This exercise gives students a chance to practice writing commentary about data and making inferences from a set of results. Students will have to use their imaginations and create plausible responses with probability hedges and based on the data given.

Answers will vary. Sample sentences are listed.

1. The most probable explanation for low morale is employees’ belief that their skills are underutilized.
2. Another probable cause of this low morale is a lack of job security given the current budget crisis.
3. An employee is highly likely to feel more job satisfaction if she is given opportunities to use her skills to a greater extent.

4. It is unlikely that our employees’ job satisfaction will increase unless we allow for more flex scheduling and internship opportunities.

5. An increase in job satisfaction is highly doubtful right now, as the company’s financial future is uncertain.

6. Some possible solutions include opening lines of communication between management and employees and increasing our recognition of employees’ work.

**Using Adverbs of Probability**

**Exercise 6** (page 187)

This exercise highlights adverbs of probability and focuses students’ attention on the difference between adjectives and adverbs as well as different placement of adverbs within sentences.

1. dangerous, adjective

2. before the main verb / between the auxiliary or helping verb and the main verb

3. It is not before the main verb but at the beginning of the sentence instead.

4. close to the verb

5. the main verb = *to be*. The probably adverb comes after *to be*.

**Exercise 7** (page 188)

Like Exercise 5, this exercise gives students a chance to practice writing commentary about data and making inferences from a set of results. Students will have to use their imaginations and create plausible responses with probability hedges and based on the data given in Table 9.2 on page 184.
Answers will vary. Possible responses:

1. The current drop in employee morale is possibly due to worries about decreasing benefits.

2. There has been a drop in employee morale, possibly due to worries about job security.

3. Low employee morale likely stems from a lack of opportunities to use one’s skills to the fullest while on the job.

4. Perhaps many employees have communication issues with their supervisors.

5. One potentially useful program would involve public recognition of employee performance.

6. Allowing employees to have a more flexible schedule will possibly lead to increased morale.

**Using Verbs of Uncertainty**

**Exercise 8 (page 190)**

This section focuses on not only hedging verbs (*appear, seem, tend*) but also the grammatical structures used and the placement of these structures in sentences. Note that for most items, more than one answer is possible.

1. It appears that our previous thinking about gender and competition in sports is incorrect. OR
   Our previous thinking about gender and competition in sports appears to be incorrect.

2. According to the results of a new study, adolescent girls enrolled in co-educational schools tended to shy away from competition.

3. However, it seems that the girls from single-sex schools entered competitions as often as boys. OR
   However, the girls from single-sex schools seem to have entered competitions as often as boys.
4. A girl’s school environment appears to play an important role in her choice to compete. OR It appears that a girl’s school environment plays an important role in her choice to compete.

5. It appears that these results contradict earlier beliefs about gender and involvement in sports. OR These results appear to contradict earlier beliefs about gender and involvement in sports.

6. Such behavior seems learned, not genetic. OR It seems that such behavior is learned, not genetic.


Using Frequency Adverbs

Exercise 9 (page 191)

There may be quite a bit of debate here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Frequency</th>
<th>Low Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>almost always</td>
<td>almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>hardly ever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generally</td>
<td>rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in most cases</td>
<td>seldom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>normally</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often</td>
<td>on occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on average</td>
<td>at times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ordinarily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>routinely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>typically</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expressing Normal or Usual Patterns

Exercise 10 (page 192)

This exercise focuses students’ attention on the frequency of hedges that express normal or usual patterns while also expanding their repertoire of hedging options. Clearly, certain hedges are used much more frequently than others. However, the choice of hedging device should focus on more than just frequency; context is also quite important. *Ordinarily*, for example, is often used. As students look these devices up in COCA, we recommend having students read through the contexts for use for the devices that are used less frequently in order to begin to conceptualize when their use seems most appropriate and effective.

Here are answers from COCA in 2015. Searches were limited to the “academic” register only. Answers will change as the corpus changes.

- **generally**: 16,819
- **in most cases**: 1,019
- **normally**: 2,862
- **often**: 52,844
- **on average**: 1,821
- **ordinarily**: 454
- **routinely**: 1,643
- **typically**: 9064
- **usually**: 14,521

Exercise 11 (page 193)

This exercise focuses students’ attention on the contexts for use and placement of frequency adverbs in sentences.

1. Solar radiation would **normally** reach the earth within a few days.
2. **Often** the large African masks in our collection deliberately include ferocious animal features to frighten onlookers.
3. It **typically** takes eight to ten years to build a nuclear power plant.

4. Many music teachers **routinely** rely on curriculum models that are academic and that emphasize facts over music.

5. In **most** cases, the content of a physical education curriculum consists of more than team sports.

6. In public hospitals, people whose social worlds do not **ordinarily** intersect share intimate space and daily routines.

7. The survey took 37.5 minutes **on average** to complete.

8. At a variety of interactive displays, you can experience colors as other animals do including parts of the spectrum that are **normally** imperceptible to humans.

9. In Singapore, athletes **usually** believe that coaches employed by schools are experts in their fields.

10. Throughout much of his career, Robert Mitchum was **generally** regarded less as an actor than as a personality.

The frequency adverb is placed **between the auxiliary and main verb**.

**Exercise 12 (page 194)**

Continuing the focus on both context and placement, this exercise asks students to choose the appropriate hedge for the situation described and rewrite sentences adding the hedging device. This exercise works well as a pair or small group activity so as to allow negotiation of meaning.

1. a. College students **generally** complete their degrees in four years.

2. c. Safety checks are **routinely** made on automobiles before they leave the factory.

3. b. You can’t **ordinarily** see the sun’s corona from the earth.
4. c. The Mainland Airlines flights have *seldom* arrived on time this year.

5. b. The company’s Chief Executive Officer projects 20% annual profits *on average* for the next five years.

**Adding Hedges**

**Exercise 13 (page 195)**

The sentences in this exercise have all appeared in essays students have written in first-year composition classes—each receiving the following teacher feedback in the margin: “edit—watch strength of claim.”

Answers will vary.

**References**


Chapter 10 Commentary: Using Reporting Verbs

Intended Outcomes

- Students will become familiar with a range of verbs used for summarizing and paraphrasing source materials.
- Students will be able to distinguish the strength of claims of reporting verbs.
- Students will gain a better understanding of which reporting verbs are used with inanimate subjects that describe different kinds of source materials.
- Students will be able to use the appropriate grammatical environments required for different reporting verbs.

Contents

Raising Language Awareness

Exercise 1 Identification: Reporting Verbs
Exercise 2 Self-Assessment: Vocabulary Knowledge of Reporting Verbs
Table 10.1 Reporting verbs
Exercise 3 Identification and Analysis: Reporting Verbs and Complement Structures

Building Your Knowledge

Reporting on an Author’s Strength of Claim and Emphasis

Exercise 4 Analysis: Reporting Verbs for Expressing Strength of Claims and Importance of Information
Exercise 5 Practice: Choosing Appropriate Reporting Verbs for Meaning and Use
Using Reporting Verbs with Inanimate Subjects

Exercise 6 Identification: Inanimate Subjects That Collocate with Reporting Verbs

Learning the Grammar of Reporting Verbs

Table 10.2 Reporting Verbs and Complements
Exercise 7 Analysis: The Grammar of Reporting Verbs

Using Complements after Reporting Verbs of Advice

Exercise 8 Analysis: Complements Used with Reporting Verbs
Exercise 9 Analysis: Meaning and Grammatical Environments of Reporting Verbs

Chapter Background and Use

As a companion chapter to Chapter 9, which was concerned with the use of hedging devices, Chapter 10 aims to help students develop their knowledge and use of a wide range of reporting verbs for writing from sources. As with other sets of vocabulary in this book, we include a number of verbs that should be somewhat familiar to students, though we expect they will not know some of the features of these words, such as the words with which they commonly collocate (for example, animate or inanimate subjects) or the grammatical environments of their use in sentence contexts. They may also know many of the reporting verbs presented here as verbs with other uses; that is, a number of the verbs are also used in contexts that do not involve references to source material.

The vocabulary focused on this chapter should be useful to students in all assignments that involve referring to source material, whether written texts or spoken sources such as TED talks or YouTube videos in which speakers present ideas and opinions. While this chapter does emphasize using this vocabulary in writing from sources, reporting verbs can also of course be used as student writers present their own ideas in which they may demonstrate, propose, or predict something; urge readers to take action; and so on. As students review work in progress, they can use their newly developed knowledge of reporting verbs to edit choices such as repeated use of said.
Our students are typically quite enthusiastic to learn and incorporate into their writing reporting verbs that they were not familiar with or had not used before. As with other sets of new vocabulary that students encounter in this book, the goal here is not for them to try to use as many different words as they can but rather to expand their repertoire of options, selectively choosing words that they think will be especially effective and relevant to the contexts of their writing.

The reporting verbs focused on here are not meant to represent all reporting verbs. One useful document with additional verbs categorized semantically and including useful schematics on co-occurring grammatical structures is available from the Writing Centre of the University of Adelaide. Search for “Verbs for Reporting.” Finally, we will note that this chapter would also be a good companion for other topics you work on with your class related to writing from sources, such as paraphrasing practice or summary writing.

IN-DEPTH COMMENTARY WITH EXERCISE ANSWERS

In the opening reference to academic writing as a conversation, we want to emphasize to students that writing from sources it not just a matter of gathering information and transferring it to a piece of writing. Rather it is a process in which writers engage with sources along with their own ideas to create something new that will add to the conversation on a topic. In some cases, the summary of a source may provide a springboard from which the writer will develop his or her own perspective on a topic, perhaps providing support from personal experience as well as other source materials. Before moving on to the Raising Language Awareness section, you may want to have students discuss or write about their prior experience with writing from sources and about their level of familiarity with reporting verbs.
Raising Language Awareness

The explanation that begins this section reminds students that quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing all require attribution. You may want to make sure students understand the differences between these three practices and their inter-relationships (for example, that quotes and paraphrases may be used in a summary).

Exercise 1 (pages 197–198)

This noticing exercise offers students an opportunity to identify reporting verbs in context. The number of verbs given in parentheses for Item 1 includes the circled first one. Students could do this individually or in pairs and it would work equally well as a homework or in-class assignment as it doesn’t need much guidance for completion and shouldn’t take much time.

1. A recent study in the journal *Science* indicates that Tibetans have developed a unique form of a gene allowing them to thrive at altitudes above 14,000 feet. The research group, led by a UC Berkeley biologist, found that the DNA of Tibetans differed from the Han Chinese with whom they are closely related ethnically. The genetic variant was identified in 87% of Tibetans and only 9% of Han Chinese. Researchers determined that these two ethnic groups separated from each other about 3,000 years ago. As John Hawks, an anthropologist at the University of Wisconsin, pointed out, in evolutionary terms, this is not the distant past. The rapid evolutionary change was explained by the need for Tibetans to adapt quickly in the harsh environment of the Himalayas.

(Adapted from “Tibetans’ genes have quickly adapted to high altitude,” Rachel Bernstein, *Los Angeles Times,* July 4, 2010.)

You may want to ask students to identify the two verbs in this passage that are passive and consider why the passive was used. In both cases (*was identified, was explained*), use of the passive allows the topics to be put in subject position (*the genetic variant, the rapid evolutionary change*) rather than putting the researchers as the subjects.
2. In *The Facebook Effect*, David Kirkpatrick, a *Fortune* magazine reporter, presents the first authoritative account of the founding of Facebook, the social media network. The early days of the company’s formation are described in detail, including many humorous anecdotes about the founder, Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg. Kirkpatrick reveals that Zuckerberg from the start wanted to change the world with Facebook, to make it “a more open place.” Kirkpatrick provides little information about some of the current problems with Facebook users’ personal data; on the other hand, he does not dismiss concerns that Facebook may become less a place for friendship and more of a place for marketing.

(Adapted from “‘The Facebook Effect’ Reveals Story of Company’s Founding,” David Gelles, *Los Angeles Times*, July 4, 2010.)

Note: If students put does not dismiss for the last reporting verb, this should be considered acceptable since the negation is part of the meaning. This sentence also has a passive reporting verb, are described. The agent, Kirkpatrick is obvious; the topic is the early days of the company’s formation.

3. Reporting on recent studies on the effects of birth order on personality, Harvard researcher Joshua K. Hartshorne acknowledges that most previous studies have not supported links between birth order and personality or behavior. He notes, for example, that cognitive scientist Steven Pinker has rejected the notion that birth order is relevant in the discussion of nature vs. nurture in cognitive development. Hartshorne counters these findings with those of recent research. He offers evidence from his own research that suggests birth order influences whom people select for friends and spouses.

(Summarized from “Ruled by Birth Order?” *Scientific American Mind*, January/February 2010.)

Note: The first reporting verb in this passage reminds students that sometimes these verbs can appear in participle clauses.
**Exercise 2 (page 199)**

The list of verbs for students to self-assess knowledge is not all-inclusive. There are other reporting verbs that writers use, but we felt these represented a large group of the most common ones across disciplines. After students complete this exercise, you may want to choose a few of the verbs to discuss in terms of how students would use them as reporting verbs. Or as a check on students’ knowledge of the grammatical environment of some of the verbs other than ones included in Exercise 3, you could select some verbs and ask small groups to create a sentence for each using them as reporting verbs. For example, reporting verbs such as *challenge* and *present* cannot be followed by *that*-clauses but instead need noun phrase complements (e.g., *She challenged his ideas*; *they presented the results of the first experiment*).

**Exercise 3 (page 200)**

Because this is a Raising Language Awareness exercise and not Building Your Knowledge exercise, students are asked only to identify the reporting verb and assess whether the structure following is correct, not to correct it. However, if you wish to discuss with students why some of the structures cannot occur after the verbs and what a correction might be, we have included explanations and possible corrections.

1. The author *discusses that* Tibetans have DNA different from the Han Chinese.
   
   **Error:** The verb *discuss* cannot be followed by a *that*-clause complement.
   
   **Possible correction:** The author discusses DNA differences between Tibetans and the Han Chinese.
2. The authors recommend us to be careful in using credit cards for internet purchases.

   **Error:** The verb *recommend* is of a set of verbs that need to take a *that*-clause with a *to*-less infinitive (subjunctive). This is explained in Table 8.2, though we do not use the term subjunctive there.

   **Possible correction:** The authors recommend that we be careful in using credit cards for internet purchases.

3. Four of the five experiments support the hypothesis.

4. These findings indicate both of the hypotheses.

   **Error:** The verb *indicate* as used here requires either a *that*-clause to complete the meaning or a different noun phrase.

   **Possible corrections:** These findings indicate that both of the hypotheses were supported/rejected. These findings indicate a serious problem.

5. Parker rejects that the results of the survey were valid.

   **Error:** The verb *reject* cannot be followed by a *that*-clause complement.

   **Possible correction:** Parker rejects the validity of the survey results.

   Note: The correction of this error offers a good transformation exercise from a full clause to a noun phrase.

6. The researcher denied that she altered the results of her experiment.

7. The Career Center’s handbook suggests students to have their resumes reviewed by an advisor.

   **Error:** Like the verb *recommend*, the verb *suggest* cannot be followed by a pronoun or noun direct object but rather takes a *that*-clause with a *to*-less infinitive. In some grammar books, these verbs are referred to as ones that take the mandative subjunctive.
Note: The kind of syntax error here is so common among some multilingual writers that we think it possible it is now considered acceptable in some varieties of English, though it is regarded as an error in standard written American English.

Possible correction: The Career Center's handbook suggests that students have their resumes reviewed by an advisor.

C 8. Kirkpatrick acknowledges the concerns about Facebook.

**Building Your Knowledge**

**Reporting on an Author's Strength of Claim and Emphasis**

We have found that many of our students have not had much prior instruction about the connotations of reporting verbs in signaling the strength of a claim, though they are able to understand fairly easily the explanation presented here. In their own writing, students often use strong verbs like *prove* in contexts that do not warrant their use for academic writing, most likely because in less formal, including conversational, English we often *prove* in ways that do not require very strong evidence. We remind our students that especially in research writing, writers use the verb *prove* very sparingly and instead use verbs that hedge, such as *indicate*. In this section we also point out that a writer’s choice of reporting verbs often signals their interpretation of an author’s intention, that is, whether the writer thinks a piece of information is more or less important to the overall message being conveyed.

**Exercise 4 (page 202)**

Most students should be able to complete this exercise fairly quickly. Our students often do so with electronic dictionaries at hand if they need to check some of the words. The last one often seems a bit more difficult than the others.

1. assert  
2. confirm  
3. emphasize  
4. assert  
5. caution  

claim  
contend  
note  
remark  
maintain  
propose  
speculate  
suggest  
focus on  
mention  
say  
stress  
mention  
note  
remark  
urge  
deny  
indicate  
warn  
urge
Exercise 5 (pages 203–205)

This exercise, which focuses on the meanings of reporting verbs, may be challenging for many students. We think it might be best assigned as an individual task, either as homework or classwork, in order to give individual students the opportunity to read carefully, consider the choices, and be prepared to explain why only one of the three choices is appropriate. The answers include explanations regarding verb choices that are not appropriate for the meaning of the passages.


1. (b) Explanation: In (a) predicts is not appropriate because Greenfield is talking about the present, not some future, event. In (c) explains is not accurate because there is no explanation in this passage. The verb indicates in (b) appropriately expresses the idea that the studies analyzed have shown an increase in visual intelligence.

2. (a) Explanation: In (b), the stance of the verb confirms is too strong (absolute); Greenfield is presenting these factors as other possible influences. Similarly, in (c), the verb argues along with the statement following also distorts Greenfield’s intention of suggesting other factors. In the passage, the verbs thinks, feels, and may have contributed express conjecture; thus, (a) is the most appropriate paraphrase.

3. (b) Explanation: The verb in (a), deplores, expresses a negative attitude on Greenfield’s, which is not at all what is implied in the passage about reading for pleasure. In fact, the Greenfield report as expressed here is neutral (says) in terms of stance. The verb in (c) is inappropriate for the same reason. In (b), the verb compares accurately expresses what the passage reports.

4. (c) Explanation: In (a), the verb disputes expresses disagreement; in the passage, information about multi-tasking based on internet use in class is presented as a fact. In (b), the verb warns does not express Greenfield’s stance. She does say that wiring classrooms for the internet does not enhance learning, but nowhere does she draw a conclusion such as that stated in (b). The conclusion is accurately paraphrased in (c).
5. (c) Explanation: The verb *counters* in (a) suggests an opposing view, which is not accurate; Greenfield does not disagree with the claim. In (b), the verb *support* suggests a favorable attitude toward the activity of multi-tasking; the passage does not express her attitude about the information. (c) accurately describes the purpose of Greenfield's information in this passage.

**Using Reporting Verbs with Inanimate Subjects**

Students who have read research reports for their courses will be familiar with the use of reporting verbs with inanimate subjects such as *report, study, table,* and *figure.* This identification exercise aims to focus attention on some of the common reporting verbs that occur with these subjects. If you have time and you think your students would be interested in pursuing this further, you could go back to Table 10.1, choose some of the verbs, and ask them whether or not they think each verb could be used with an inanimate subject. If the internet is available during classwork, they could check their assessments in a corpus such as MICUSP or COCA to see if examples of these reporting verbs exist with inanimate subjects. For the items, the discipline abbreviation (for economics, sociology and linguistics) and data item number from MISCUSP are given in parentheses.

**Exercise 6** *(page 206)*

1. *(This report) studies the correlation …* (ECO.G1.02.1)

2. *(The following figures) investigate these changes further.* (ECO.G0.06.)

3. *(This paper) first discusses some case studies of tall buildings which have advantageously incorporated outrigger beams in their design, and then explores …* (CEE.G1.07.1)

4. *(Figure 3) shows 1990 and 2000 census data …* (SOC.G3.07.1)

5. *(Table C) examines the relationship …* (SOC.G0.02.2)

6. *(The results of the investigation) reveal that adults did indeed play a necessary role in the formation and development of Nicaraguan Sign Language.* (LIN.G0.08.1)
Learning the Grammar of Reporting Verbs

We believe that grammatical environment is a very important feature of learning how to use reporting verbs appropriately. Student writers are often unfamiliar with this aspect of word knowledge and thus may follow reporting verbs with complements that create ungrammatical sentences, such as *The author criticizes that automakers have violated safety regulations*. Like other charts in this book that contain a great deal of information and vocabulary, Table 10.2 is meant to be returned to repeatedly as a reference when students compose, revise, and edit.

You may want to spend some time explaining how students can use the chart in this way. For example, if they choose a reporting verb to reference source material, they could check to see where the verb is found in the chart and what kind of structure typically follows it. You might encourage them to note particularly those verbs they think they might frequently use in the future, such as *analyze* or *discuss*. The most common errors we have seen is using a *that*-clause after reporting verbs that require a noun phrase and, as mentioned earlier, following verbs like *suggest* and *recommend* with pronouns such as *me* or *her* and an infinitive structure with *to*.

The next exercise helps students to gain more general knowledge of the grammar structures that co-occur with specific reporting verbs and of typical patterns.

**Exercise 7 (page 209)**

This might be a good exercise to complete as a group as students review the material in Table 10.2.

1. *That*-clauses seem to be most commonly used after verbs that express an author’s opinion. Unlike noun phrases, a *that*-clause expresses a complete idea with subject and verb, which would correspond to expressing an opinion.

2. Structures that tend to follow what an author does (e.g., *analyzes, compares*) tend to be noun phrases. These structures often express nouns that classify or categorize things (e.g., *conditions, factors, problems*), which would fit with these verbs that express a rhetorical activity involving information.
3. The verbs that are followed by to-infinitives often have advisory meanings regarding future activities. (The to+ verb complement structure tends to be concerned with hypothetical, unfulfilled events.)

**Using Complements after Reporting Verbs of Advice**

Since, as noted previously, this is a particularly troublesome point for many student writers, we have devoted a special section to complements for advisory verbs and note again at the bottom of the page that pronoun objects cannot follow them. Of course, noun objects (e.g., students) cannot follow these verbs either, but in our experience it is the pronouns (especially me, us) that are used in error and rarely noun phrases.

**Exercise 8 (pages 211–212)**

Similar to Exercise 5, this exercise requires careful reading. While Exercise 5 was concerned with appropriate meanings of reporting verbs, this exercise is concerned with appropriate grammatical environments, namely the complement structures that can follow specific reporting verbs. Students can refer back to Table 10.2 and the explanation about advisory verb complements to identify the two complements that can follow each verb. In some cases, they will be able to do this by eliminating the one incorrect choice. To make sure that they have understood how to go about making selections, you could ask them why (a) is not a grammatical choice for (1).

(Source: “Can you hear me now?” Thomas H. Maugh II, Los Angeles Times, August 18, 2010.)

1. In the article “Can you hear me now?” Thomas Maugh II describes
   a. increases in hearing loss among teenagers during the last 15 years.
   b. how hearing loss has increased among teenagers during the last 15 years.
2. A study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, reported
   a. that one in every five teens now has at least a slight hearing loss.
   b. slight hearing loss in one of every five teens.

3. The researchers could not identify
   a. that a specific cause was responsible for the increase in hearing loss.
   b. a specific cause for the increase in hearing loss.

4. However, many experts speculate
   a. that headphones used to listen to music may be a primary cause.
   c. whether headphones used to listen to music may be a primary cause.

5. They also found
   a. that some genetic differences accounted for hearing loss.
   b. genetic differences accounting for hearing loss.

6. In providing advice to teens, researchers recommended
   a. that they turn down the volume on MP3 players and wear ear protection at rock concerts.
   c. turning down the volume on MP3 players and wearing ear protection at rock concerts.

**Exercise 9 (pages 213–214)**

This final exercise is intended to help students review meaning and grammatical environments of specific reporting verbs, with an emphasis on meaning. Depending on how challenging you think this will be for your group of students, you may want to do the exercise together as a class so that you can discuss each choice while deciding which verb should be eliminated for each item. Or students could do the exercise out-of-class and write their answers as a homework assignment in order for you to check your individual students’ understanding of this chapter’s key instructional points.
1. After a five-year review of the scientific literature concerned with corporal punishment of children, a task force concluded/recommended/summarized that parents should reduce or stop their use of physical punishment in disciplining children.

Explanation: The statement that follows the reporting verb is a recommendation. The meaning of summarize does not fit this context; furthermore, summarize is rarely followed by a that-clause.

2. The task force, a group of experts in child development and psychology, determined/found/speculated that correlations existed between physical punishment and childhood anxiety and depression.

Explanation: Correlations are measures that are determined through statistical analysis. The verb speculate expresses a conjecture or guess that wouldn’t be associated with something so precise. Researchers might speculate that a relationship existed between two variables. Also, most likely a task force would be summarizing the findings of research.

3. Some studies also believed/observed/revealed correlations between physical punishment of children and aggression and impaired cognitive development.

Explanation: The verb believe is used with animate, not inanimate, subjects.

4. The task force was not, however, unanimous in the conclusions presented; some members of the task force, contested/criticized/favored the evidence.

Explanation: The verb favor does not collocate with evidence, at least not without modification of the word.
5. One task force member who was not in agreement with the majority, Professor Robert E. Larzelere of Oklahoma State University, argued/contended/disputed that the evidence against spanking children was faulty.

Explanation: The verb disputed cannot be followed by a that-clause as its object in this way. (One could dispute evidence, but not an assertion about that evidence.)

6. Larzelere cautioned/recommended/suggested that parents use spanking as a punishment if more gentle forms of punishment are unsuccessful.

Explanation: The meaning of the verb cautioned is not appropriate for what follows as the object.