

A 30-Minute Focus Lesson to Address Resumptive Pronoun Usage

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Hello, and thank-you for taking over my class today. After taking attendance, please go straight to the lesson plan on page 3. Do not worry if you are unable to finish everything – just let me know where you left off. Before class, the students can help you set up the a/v and overhead projectors. Also before class, please write the lesson plan agenda (1-5) on the side of the whiteboard.

Class Background

A class of fifteen Japanese EFL students studying at a Japanese university, students are taking this English for Academic Purposes class on top of their regular course load in preparation for their planned study abroad at an affiliated university in the United States. In this productive skills class (2 hours per classes, twice per week), students study various types of writing and speaking, and they are now in a narrative unit. The first 30 minutes are reserved for intensive grammar lessons that can facilitate success in the current unit and abroad.

Description of the Problem

I have noticed that many of my students say (and write) a subject and then its pronoun right afterwards. E.g.:

The computer, it's slowing down.

My friend, she lives in Vancouver.

Carey, does he want to talk to me?

Similarly, relative pronouns in complex sentences are unnecessarily repeated by a following pronoun. E.g.:

“There is one thing that I can remember it clearly” (Li et al., 2002, their emphases).

Although this problem does not get in the way of comprehension, it seems to be easily noticed by native speakers of English as a signal (rightly or wrongly) of students' proficiency. Therefore, attention must be drawn to it in order to make the necessary adjustments.

Objective

After today's lesson, students will be able to point out examples of resumptive pronouns in ESL and English as a First Language texts, and they will be able to state the rules of thumb for avoiding resumptive pronouns.

Materials

- The main computer at the front of the class easily connects to the internet and the digital projector bolted to the ceiling.
- There is a whiteboard and four markers for writing down the day's agenda, objective, and the word pairs for the BNC word pair game.
- Christine's Resumptive Pronoun Usage Text – Teacher Copy (1 copy)
- Resumptive Pronouns Work Sheet (15 copies) and Teacher Answer Key (1 copy)
- Each student sits at their own computer terminal, which they will require for the collaborative practice (BNC Game) part of the lesson.
- Overhead Transparency Projector and Lesson Review Transparency.

LESSON PLAN

<p>1)</p> <p>Noticing And Establishing a Purpose</p> <p>Time: 10 minutes</p> <p>Materials: Internet, A/V Projector</p>	<p>Please refer to the text “Christine's Resumptive Pronoun Usage – You Tube Video [Teacher Copy]” and link to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30oiQAUWBq4</p> <p>As a class, students watch the You Tube Video. Have a brief discussion to see if the students can notice the speaker’s problem. Most likely, the students will be able to tell what the problem is. In order to elicit further discussion, ask the following questions:</p> <p>A) What is wrong with the speaker’s sentences? B) Why do you think she makes this problem? C) Why is this an important problem to fix?</p> <p>Please elicit the following answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The speaker is stating the subject of her sentences twice. This problem is referred to as resumptive pronoun usage. b) She makes this problem because of a number of possibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I.) She wants to introduce the topic of her sentence independent of the sentence. II.) While speaking, she does not have time to formulate in her head the correct way to say what she wants to say. III.) In her first language, this type of speech is acceptable. She is translating directly from her L1 (Chan, p. *). IV.) Lax monitoring: in the online “formation of a relative clause, especially a long one, [she] may have forgotten the presence of the relative pronoun by the time the original position of the pronoun is reached” (Chan, 2004, p. *) so a resumptive pronoun gets added. c) This problem is important to fix because of its salience to native speakers of English.
<p>2)</p> <p>Guided and Collaborative Learning</p> <p>Time: 10 minutes</p> <p>Materials: Student Worksheet, Teacher Answer Key</p>	<p>Hand out the student work sheet (pp. 6-8) and use the teacher copy with answer key for yourself (pp. 9-11).</p> <p>Teacher Guided Practice: Do questions 1-10 as a class.</p> <p>Student Joint Responsibility: Students do questions 11-18 in pairs and in one group of three. Give students 3 or 4 minutes and address students who have problems. Take up answers as a class.</p> <p>Individual Practice: Assign question 19, a-h for homework due for next class.</p>

<p>3)</p> <p>Collaborative Practice</p> <p>Time: 10 minutes</p> <p>Materials: Student Computer Terminals, Whiteboard, 4 markers</p>	<p>Students access The British National Corpus (http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk) to find examples of Presumptive Pronouns. Please write this address on the white board. They are already familiar with this database, so teaching them the basics of searching is unnecessary.</p> <p>Divide the class into 4 teams (4, 4, 4, 3). In the search box, students type in various word pairs. The students' job is to find as many examples of presumptive pronouns as they can. When they come across one, they write the full sentence on their section of the white board. The team with the most sentences wins.</p> <p>Please write the following list of word pairs on the board for students to search (students can also add to this list): friend she, friend he, car it, computer it, dog it, book it, coffee it, table it, car it, John he, Mary she.</p> <p>As a class, first do one example together. Everyone types the word pair <i>friend she</i></p> <p>Near the bottom of the list, students should be able to find the sentence, KC9 992 <i>And my friend she looked about eighty.</i></p>
<p>4)</p> <p>Formative Self - Assessment</p> <p>Time: 5 minutes</p> <p>Materials: Transparency, Overhead Transparency Projector</p>	<p>If there is time...</p> <p>Formative Self – Assessment - Natural Examples of Native Speakers of English using Resumptive Pronouns (Transparency to be placed on the overhead projector)</p> <p>Put the transparency on the overhead projector and discuss as a class these natural examples of resumptive pronouns. As a ticket out the door, students write the answers (A-E) in their notes.</p> <p>Answers: A) he B) I C) Answers may vary. E.g. My friends, they like ice cream. D) it E) Please refer to the Resumptive Pronouns Work Sheet</p>
<p>5)</p> <p>Homework - Independent Practice</p> <p>Materials: Student Worksheet</p>	<p>Assign Question 21 (a-h) for homework due for next class.</p>

MATERIAL

Christine's Resumptive Pronoun Usage – You Tube Video [Teacher Copy]

Abashiri. (2009, March 6). Christine's Resumptive Pronoun Usage [Video File]. Video posted to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30oiQAUWBq4>

Please refer to this sheet if students are not able to guess Christine's problem.

In Christine's speech, there are many examples of resumptive pronouns. E.g. "My friend, *she* is coming to visit me." *She* is the resumptive pronoun.

Examples of resumptive pronouns are underlined:

My friend, she is coming to visit me this weekend. Ann, my friend, lives in Pusan, and she will take the train. The train, it is really fast, so it only takes one hour for her to get here. She and I, we will do many things together. For example, we want to see a movie, its name is *Notebook*. The movie is such a good story. The movie, there is one thing that is really good about it. The story, it is about friendship. The man and woman, they have a strong friendship, just like me and Ann. I can't wait for her to come. Ann is my friend and I care about her a lot.

Resumptive Pronouns Work Sheet (Adapted from Li et al., 2002)

(STUDENT COPY)

NAME _____ DATE _____

1. What is wrong with the following sentence?

(i) ✗ Mary found the dress that her aunt wore it last week.

2. Divide the sentence into 2 parts by rewriting them in the space provided below

(ii) _____

A

B

3. Identify all the pronouns in B (e.g. *he, she, it, I, you, we*, etc.)? _____

4. Circle the pronoun *it* in B.

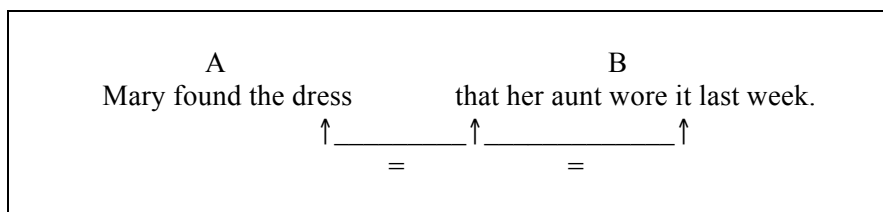
5. What does the pronoun *it* refer to? _____

6. Underline the relative pronoun *that* in B.

7. What does the relative pronoun *that* refer to? _____

8. Compare your answer to item 5 with your answer to item 7. What can you find?

_____ = _____ = _____



9. Since the pronoun *it* = the relative pronoun *that* in B, the pronoun *it* is NOT needed.

10. Rewrite B with the pronoun *it* deleted.

11. Rewrite the whole sentence.

Rules of Thumb:

In a simple sentence, only refer to the subject once

i.e. if subject x = pronoun y
then delete pronoun y

e.g. My friend ~~she~~ is coming to visit me.

In a relative clause, only the relative pronoun is needed. The pronoun which refers to the same thing/person as the relative pronoun is redundant.

i.e. if relative pronoun x = pronoun y
then delete pronoun y

e.g. Mary found the dress that her aunt wore ~~it~~ last week.

12. Now look at sentence (iii).

(iii) I lost the pen I bought it yesterday.

13. Divide the sentence into 2 parts by rewriting them in the space provided below

A B

14. Identify all the pronouns in B? _____

15. Circle the pronoun *it* in B.

16. What does the pronoun *it* refer to? _____

17. Rewrite B by deleting the pronoun *it* and inserting a relative pronoun at the beginning.

18. Rewrite the whole sentence by joining A and B.

HOMEWORK (Adapted from Li et al., 2002)

19.

Determine whether the following sentences are correct or wrong, and rewrite the wrong ones.

e.g. a. John likes chocolates. []

Correction:

b. John do not like chocolates. []

Correction:

John does not like chocolates._____

a. He is the man who he was on duty yesterday. []

b. John took out the book which he wrote his notes on it. []

c. She is the teacher that she changed my life. []

d. There is one thing I can remember clearly. []

e. A complement is an obligatory element without which the verb cannot be complete. []

f. I cannot find the book I read yesterday. []

g. John lost the wallet which he put it in his bag yesterday. []

h. They want to build a tower which it is the tallest in the world. []

Rules of Thumb:

In a simple sentence, only refer to the subject once

i.e. if subject x = pronoun y
then delete pronoun y

e.g. My friend ~~she~~ is coming to visit me.

In a relative clause, only the relative pronoun is needed. The pronoun which refers to the same thing/person as the relative pronoun is redundant.

i.e. if relative pronoun x = pronoun y
then delete pronoun y

e.g. Mary found the dress that her aunt wore ~~it~~ last week.

12. Now look at sentence (iii).

(iv) I lost the pen I bought it yesterday.

13. Divide the sentence into 2 parts by rewriting them in the space provided below

I lost the pen I bought it yesterday
A B

19. Identify all the pronouns in B ? I, it

20. Circle the pronoun *it* in B.

21. What does the pronoun *it* refer to? the pen

22. Rewrite B by deleting the pronoun *it* and inserting a relative pronoun at the beginning.

I bought yesterday.

23. Rewrite the whole sentence by joining A and B.

I lost the pen I bought yesterday.

Formative Self – Assessment
(Transparency to be placed on the Overhead Projector)
Natural Examples of Native English Speakers using Resumptive Pronouns

A)

Spoken by an English speaking child:
"Smokey is an engine that he pulls a train"

What is the resumptive pronoun? _____

Rewrite the sentence correctly _____

(Adapted from Russom, 92)

B)

1. This is the guy that after you talked to everyone got very upset.
2. This is the guy that after you talked to him everyone got very upset.

Which sentence sounds more natural? _____

(Adapted from Yafei, 1999).

C)

1. Create a sentence with a resumptive pronoun using the words *friends* and *ice cream*.
- _____
-

D)

I asked my daughter what time she had to get up on Monday.
"9:30."

"9:30!" I said, "My day will be half over by then. Not really, I'll be in the middle of the math lesson. Which I don't even know what it is yet."

Where is the resumptive pronoun? _____

(Adapted from Patti, 2005)

E)

From memory, write the rules of thumb for avoiding resumptive pronouns

RATIONALE FOR THE LESSON

Overall Rationale Regarding the Structure of the Lesson.

Divided into five parts, this lesson incorporates the gradual release of responsibility model of instruction, which suggests that “the cognitive load should shift slowly and purposefully from teacher-as-model, to joint responsibility, to independent practice and application by the learner” (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983, as cited in Fisher & Frey, 2008, p. 2). Likewise, this “guided practice” (Fisher & Frey, 2008, p. 15) attempts to “balance the new with the familiar” (Thornbury, 1999, p. 94) as a way to scaffold the lesson’s focus. This “consciousness-raising” lesson allows students to notice a feature that may not be readily visible (Thornbury, 1999, p. 24), which is important since “a learner will not be motivated to try out a new linguistic structure if he or she is not aware of the differences between his or her current interlanguage system and the target language system” (Schmidt, 1990, as cited in Richards, 2002, p. 42).

The L2 learning of these students can be compared to the L1 learning of children. Children’s syntactic knowledge begins simply and grows progressively towards more complex and abstract constructions. For example, Parisse (in press) suggested that “subject dislocations in French language (e.g. *‘la fille elle dort’*) could be considered as a marker of morphosyntactic development in children with normal language development” (as cited in Maillart & Parisse, 2008, p. 255). Similarly, ESL students make syntactic errors en route to L2 fluency. Since these students are at the intermediate level, they are past the stage where their English is “agrammatical” (Ellis, 2002, p. 23), so teachers should begin focusing on refinement, “cleaning up” egregious errors, and “drawing learners’ attention to the rule-governed nature of language” (p. 23).

Rationale Behind Each Part of the Lesson

Part 1): Noticing and Establishing a Purpose

The first part of this lesson is meant to help the students see the problem. This is important since, “once a learner’s consciousness of a target feature has been raised through formal instruction or through continued communicative exposure” (Hinkel and Fotos, p. 7), the learner may become more aware of it in their speech. As students at this stage are encouraged to discover the problem themselves, instead of having it explicitly told to them, they may be encouraged to remember it (Richards, 2002, p. 42). By analyzing a narrative discourse, students can see how the grammar can be problematic even though meaning and intelligibility are not affected. The “context-embedded discourse” (Celce-Murcia, 2002, p. 122) also provides relevance to the topic, since it portrays a seemingly natural situation.

One reason to use a video is to help students see the commonality of their English problems. With *You Tube*, “the emphasis is on the active agent *You*” (Duman & Locher, p. 194, their emphasis). Since it is a medium usable by anyone with a computer, with Internet access and a video camera” (p. 194), students may feel a greater connection to the content than if it were an English learning video created by a publishing company.

Personalizing the lesson and beginning it in an engaging manner, such as with a video, “often promotes successful learning” (Hinkel & Fotos, 2002, p. 10).

The E and A Factors

By no means, is making a video an **efficient** process for the teacher. One can only hope that the extra effort will be reciprocated by the students. Through practice, however, video production can become **easier**. As part of the lesson, students could assist in this type of materials production. I believe, videos are **effective** ways of capturing students’ interest, but like all mediums, they can be overdone to the detriment of learning.

Part 2): Worksheet - Guided and Collaborative Learning

The worksheet follows a guides the students into discovering the rule themselves before it is explicitly stated. The pedagogical “rules of thumb” for avoiding resumptive pronouns signals a transition to the collaborative practice stage. In terms of Swan’s criteria for good rules (as cited in Thornbury, 1999, p. 32), the rules in the worksheet are clear, true, simple, familiar, and relevant. They do not go into detail and they make use of students current lexical and grammatical knowledge.

The worksheet is scaffolded so that the teacher can guide the students through the first section. Scaffolding is a “metaphor for describing the temporary supports (in the form of questions, cues, and prompts) a teacher offers a learner to help him or her bridge toward a skill or concept he or she cannot do or understand independently” (Wood et al., 1976, as cited in (Fisher & Frey, 2008, p. 41). Since the steps are easy to follow, students can work at their own pace, which is useful in classes of varying proficiencies.

The E and A factors

The worksheet leads students in an **easy** and methodological manner. The steps **effectively** drawn out, which ensures that students consider each part of the process. The steps illustrate the mental processing students must do if they want to avoid producing resumptive pronouns. Worksheet creation tends not to be **efficient** when worksheets are created by the teacher and tailored to the needs of the class. On the other hand, worksheets that are adapted from ones that are already created can greatly assist teachers. Although many types of worksheets can be seen as busy work, I believe it is an **appropriate** type of activity for substitute teachers, since they do not have a chance to prepare a fuller lesson or conduct a more interactive lesson. Worksheets also allow the students’ regular teacher to see what the students accomplished in class.

Part 3): Collaborative Practice (BNC Game)

Concordancers “facilitate the use of authentic language, make students more active and independent analyzers of language, and provide empirical evidence about language use” (Conrad, 1999, p. 2). In fact, teachers “owe it to their students to share the insights into language use that corpus linguistics provides” (Conrad, p. 3). Getting students to look for mistaken English, may seem counter-intuitive, especially since information of this type is not possible to find in grammar textbooks (Biber & Reppen, 2002, p. 200); however, when students practice their mistake finding skills, they may be able to more closely monitor their own mistake production.

Collaborative practice is an essential part of this lesson, since it allows the students to formulate and hear explanations in their own words. This aids in synthesizing and consolidating information (Fisher & Frey, 2008, p. 6). Partner talk also helps students who are reluctant to speak in front of the whole class. When students work and learn together, they compare their own understanding with those who are at the same cognitive level.

As a follow up activity, students could analyze which registers or social groups use resumptive pronouns. This is possible since the BNC provides demographic information of where the text came from. Undoubtedly, a teacher's greater understanding of how to search for content can make concordancers and corpora an even more useful tool for the students.

The E and A factors

The game is **efficient** and **economical**, since all that is required is an internet connection and a list of word pairs. The amount of **efficacy** comes from the students' ability to realize that the word pairs they type are *not* to be used when writing and speaking. Efficacy is also increased, since "games help and encourage many learners to make and sustain [effort to understand, to repeat accurately, to manipulate newly understood language and to use the whole range of known language in conversation or written composition]" (Wright et al., 1979, 1). This game loses some of its **effectiveness** if students are unable to quickly "understand and interpret concordance data" (Thornbury, 1999, p. 68). It is also not effective for finding naturally occurring uses of resumptive pronouns in complex sentences, such as "*There is one thing that I can remember it clearly*" (Li et al., 2002, their emphases). Lastly, the amount of **affectivity** for this game may depend on how much they enjoy working with computers. Students may derive a certain pleasure, however, to see native English speakers having trouble with the language. This observation may help students confirm that learning English is difficult for everybody.

Part 4): Formative Self-Assessment (Transparency - if there is time)

Each lesson should have a component that checks for understanding. Since implicit knowledge is not a goal of this lesson, we must check for knowledge of the rules given. The last part of the assessment does this clearly. As a review to do on another day, students could correctly rewrite the dialogue from the You Tube video.

The E and A Factors

There are authentic usages of resumptive pronouns, which demonstrates how "the language is used in real-life contexts" (Thornbury, 2002, p. 72). Even though they are authentic, they are still **easily** understood. In its ability to measure how well students satisfy the lesson objectives, this formative assessment's production components of the concluding work sheet are more **effective** than the questions that require just one-word answers. Also, as a **efficacious** assessment, it is a little short. More examples, such as the amount given in the homework assignment, should be used.

Part 5): Homework – Independent Practice (Last Part of Worksheet)

The homework drill takes advantage of repetition and frequency – factors that help students move from the input stage to the intake stage of learning (Richards, 2002, p. 41). Writing, itself, may also have a positive effect on memory.

The E and A factors

By assigning students homework, and having them apply the in-class learning, it is an **efficient** use of time (Thornbury, 1999, p. 47). Since the students also have similar examples from the lesson to refer to it is also **easy** for the students to complete.

Summary

I hope that my students will be able to fix their use of resumptive pronouns after their attention is drawn to it. A major difference between this grammar lesson and others is that this one teaches how to avoid something, whereas others teach how to add or change something. This is why I chose not to use a role play. It is difficult to measure success by measuring students' ability to not use a certain structure. The explicit knowledge they gain will hopefully turn into implicit knowledge (Ellis, 2002, p. 26). At the very least, after this lesson, they should at least be better prepared to notice it in their own production and the production of others.

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