

Grammar Analysis Assignment

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Introduction

This presentation showcases everyday examples of grammar-in-use, or grammar that is used in a casual, conversational context. The examples used in this presentation are all from X (formerly Twitter) and while some of them include grammatical errors that fall under descriptive grammar, my analysis only focuses on grammar-in-use.

Example 1

A popular example of grammar-in-use that I see a lot on social media platforms is the removal of a subject pronoun at the beginning of a sentence. The author of this tweet seems to be a tourist sharing his discovery on X. What makes this an example of grammar-in-use is that while there is something to correct (putting “I” before “just”), the choice to not include “I” alludes to the unselfconscious and mindless nature of X. Keeping the first sentence shorter without “I” also adds more appeal and interest. The prescriptive grammar alternative, “I just saw this”, sounds less interesting and more formal.



Example 2

The author of this tweet takes on the voice of a journalist or reporter, and that is what makes this tweet a great example of grammar-in-use. There are several ways this could be written in prescriptive grammar: “Juliette Binoche and Cate Blanchett are together at the Milan Fashion Week”, “This is Juliette Binoche and Cate Blanchett together at the Milan Fashion Week”, etc. We see this casual grammar a lot in tabloids and magazines. When new photos come out about current events and celebrities involved, people are not interested in reading a lot of text about it. These short, casual descriptions are key in the world of social media updates.



Example 3

The author of this tweet exhibits a great example of the casual, unselfconscious characteristics of grammar-in-use. The first thing I noticed about this tweet is how much it felt like reading a transcription of something said during a casual conversation.

Descriptive grammar would categorize this as a run-on sentence, and prescriptive grammar might rewrite it as: “I want to share an outlet on the internet where we film and critique everyday people in their workplace eval performance. Anyone who doesn’t understand their jobs at all can critique and criticize them in whatever way they seem fit”. X is a place for people to spew their thoughts and the rules of “Standard English Grammar” do not need to apply.



Reflection

While casual or conversational grammar is often thought of as “bad grammar”, this idea is inaccurate. By doing this analysis, I expanded my ideas of the conventions of grammar that I have had instilled in me from grade school. While looking for examples of grammar-in-use, it was important to me to remember words and sentence structures that fall under regional and cultural dialects, as they do not reflect informal or casual speech. One thing that I struggled with however was not choosing tweets solely based off of punctuation or spelling error. Choosing these would have highlighted descriptive grammar instead of grammar-in-use. If I were to analyze grammar-in-use again, I would have gone to the student center at ODU and listened to conversations as people passed by. This approach would better reflect peoples’ natural speech in casual conversation with friends, and might give me better material to work with.

Thank you for reading!

Sources

Jones, D. [@ldster65]. (2023, September 24). *Just saw this. Its a tiny record shop for mice. In Sweden* ❤️ [Tweet]. X. <https://x.com/ldster65/status/1705861304517292043?s=20>

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McKenzie Jr., K. [@Kahlil_McKenzie]. (2023, September 23). *I want to start a outlet where we film n critic everyday people in their workplace eval performance so we can share the content with the world so everyone on the internet who doesn't understand their jobs at all can critic and criticize them in whatever way they deem fit.* 🔥🔥 [Tweet]. X. https://x.com/Kahlil_Mckenzie/status/1705719222985265532?s=20