

Word Form Grammar Tutorial Worksheet

For the Tutor

Some words have more than one form for the same part of speech. Such subtle distinction can be troubling for your L2 writers. For example, *bored* and *boring* are both adjectives, but their meaning is different. "The student is bored" indicates that something outside the student is causing the boredom (such as the classroom lecture). "The student is boring" indicates that the student herself is causing the boredom (possible by talking for too long). In general, the past participle form is used to indicate an outside cause, and the present participle form is used to indicate an internal cause.

Other differences in word form are nonrule based and must be acquired by paying attention when listening or reading. For example, *discriminating* may be considered positive, as in the ability to make wise choice, whereas *discriminatory* is certainly negative, indicating prejudice.

For the ESL Writer

Be aware that although words may share the same root and even the same part of speech, word meaning changes when form changes. Use an ESL dictionary (such as *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*) to determine the differences in meaning in these words. Study the following:

DIFFERENCES IN MEANING

interesting (adjective) _____

interested (adjective) _____

confusing (adjective) _____

confused (adjective) _____

friend (noun) _____

friendship (noun) _____

automotive (adjective) _____

automatic (adjective) _____

systemic (adjective) _____

systematic (adjective) _____

Correct the following:

PRACTICE SENTENCES

- Alma feels *boring* when she listens to long lectures.
- Gregorio is *concerning* about global warming.
- The senators attacked each others' *characteristic* during their political campaigns.
- Yesterday it was hot; today it is cold. The weather has been *various*.
- This class is *comparative* to the class you are taking at city college.

Bruce, S. & Rafoth, B. (Eds.), (2009). *ESL writers; A guide for writing center tutors*. (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.