

LANGUAGE SUPPORT FOR READINGS

Section 4

LANGUAGE SUPPORT by Veronica Baig

“THE CASE FOR ACTIVE EUTHANASIA”

Janice Procée

Prereading vocabulary

giveth	an old-fashioned way to say “gives”
lost	refers to someone’s death

Idioms and Expressions

patch	call a radio call alerting staff to the fact that a severely injured or sick patient is being transported to the hospital
highly charged	tense
the passing	the death
a black-and-white issue	a situation in which clear decisions are possible

References

ER	Emergency Room
----	----------------

Language Pointers

The Subjunctive and the Unreal Conditional

The unreal conditional supposes a hypothetical situation—one that is not real. In this situation, the verb is not inflected. The unreal conditional is an example of the use of the subjunctive.

Para. 2: “were legalized” is an example of the subjunctive voice; it is used here because of the hypothetical (unreal) situation suggested; that is, euthanasia is not currently legal in Canada

Para. 5: “If given an informed choice...” is an example of a participial adverbial clause using the subjunctive in a passive construction. In this case, the clause has a past meaning (some elements of the verb phrase have been omitted): “If (he had been) given ...”. This construction can also be used to identify a general situation without a time frame; in that case the subsequent clause would have a present meaning: “... he might very well not choose ...”

LANGUAGE SUPPORT by Veronica Baig

“EUTHANASIA RECONSIDERED”

Gail Deagle

Idioms and Expressions

in the face of (death) in a particular situation (in this case death)

References

Hemlock Society	An organization that promotes access to end-of-life options for the “hopelessly ill” (http://www.hemlock.org/default.asp)
Not Dead Yet	An organization founded in 1996 to protect the lives of people with disabilities from euthanasia. (http://www.notdeadyet.org/)
Dr. Jack Kevorkian	A former pathologist who assisted many people to die. He was found guilty of second degree murder in 1999 and is currently in prison. (http://www.finalexit.org/drkframe.html)
Mike Wallace	A correspondent/journalist/investigative reporter
60 Minutes	A weekly current events program on TV

Language Pointers

Compounds

Two or more words can be joined together to form a single word. In some commonly used compounds the words are joined together as one word. In situations where the compounding is more creative or unusual, or in the case of compound adjectives before a noun, the words are joined by a hyphen. Consult a dictionary if in doubt about hyphenation.

a. no hyphen:

para. 1:	workplaces (noun)
para. 2:	commonplace (adjective)
para. 4:	guidelines (noun) afeguard (verb)

b. hyphen:

para. 1:	physician-assisted (noun + adjective) end-of-life (noun + preposition + noun)
para. 2:	post-implementation (adverb + noun) community-based (noun + <i>ed</i> participle)
para. 3:	Anti-Euthanasia (adverb + noun)
para. 4:	health-care (adjective + noun)
para. 5:	care-giving (noun + <i>ing</i> participle)
para. 9:	twenty-year-old (adjective + noun + adjective)

+++

LANGUAGE SUPPORT by Veronica Baig

<H1>“The Doomsday Machines”

John Markoff</H1>

<H2>Prereading Vocabulary</H2>

<GLOSSET><GLOS><KT>**boosterism**</KT> the activities and attitudes characteristic of “boosters”—people who promote something</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**darker**</KT> more sinister, more threatening</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**dawning**</KT> a beginning, the start of something new</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**doomsday**</KT> the end of the world</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**hype**</KT> extravagant, promotional publicity</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**near-term**</KT> almost developed, nearly ready</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**utopia(s)**</KT> a perfect place or situation</GLOS></GLOSSET>

<H2>Idioms and Expressions</H2>

<GLOSSET><GLOS><KT>**(the) catch**</KT> (the) problem or difficulty</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**a doozy**</KT> an extraordinary one of its kind</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**laundry list**</KT> a long list</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**run amok**</KT> behaved wildly or in a crazy way</GLOS>

<GLOS><KT>**toy(ing) with**</KT> play with, imagine</GLOS></GLOSSET>

<H2>References</H2>

<ML1><ITEM><LBL>**Armageddon**</LBL> a disastrous conflict (from the Biblical story of the end of the world)</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**black hole**</LBL> a region of space with such dense gravity that even light cannot escape, and all matter is consumed by it</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**Darwinian**</LBL> according to Darwin’s theory; the survival of the fittest</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**DNA**</LBL> deoxyribonucleic acid; the building blocks of life</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**holy grail**</LBL> a symbol of the ultimate search; something a group of people are looking for more than anything else; refers to the chalice Jesus drank from at the Last Supper</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**IBM**</LBL> International Business Machines, a multinational company</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**Information Age**</LBL> the current period in history; the previous one was the Industrial Age</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**Luddite**</LBL> during the Industrial Revolution in England, people who were afraid of new machines and broke them—after Ned Ludd, who destroyed some machines</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**Pandora’s Box**</LBL> from Greek mythology, a box that held all of the various problems that afflict mankind</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**Robocop(s)**</LBL> from a futuristic movie of that title—Robocop is part human and part robot</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**The Sorcerer’s Apprentice**</LBL> an animated Disney film about magic</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**Mark Twain**</LBL> pseudonym of Samuel L. Clemens, a famous nineteenth-century American novelist</ITEM>

<ITEM><LBL>**Y2K**</LBL> the year 2000</ITEM></ML1>

<H2>Language Pointers</H2>

<NL>1. Newspaper style:

<PARA>Articles written in newspapers have very short paragraphs. An essay paragraph should usually have at least four sentences, but many paragraphs consist of only one sentence in news paper articles. This style is a response to the narrow columns of print and the need to make articles easy to read. Long columns of print without a break are much more difficult to read. This newspaper sentence-paragraph construction, however, imposes an easily read structure on the material.</PARA>

<PARA>Compare the paragraph structure in this article to a more “normal” essay:</PARA>

<NUM>**Normal**</NUM> **Newspaper Style**

Paragraph 1 Paragraphs 1–4

Paragraph 2 Paragraphs 5–9

Paragraph 3 Paragraphs 10–13

Paragraph 4 Paragraphs 14–19

Paragraph 5 Paragraphs 20–23

Paragraph 6 Paragraphs 24–28

Paragraph 7 Paragraphs 29–31

Paragraph 8 Paragraphs 32–35

Paragraph 9 Paragraphs 36 and 37

<PARA>Another device for making longer newspaper articles more readable is subheadings. These can also give more prereading information so readers have a better understanding of the content of a long article. Subheadings provide some added essay organization for people who may not want to read every word of an article.</PARA></ITEM>

2. Verb tense usage:

<PARA>You will recognize a variety of verb tenses in this article. When one sentence contains a combination of tenses, that combination informs the reader about the connection between the two actions described. In the examples given here, you will see some reference to the particular contexts found within this article.</PARA>

<EXM>*Simple Present—with a future meaning*, e.g., paragraphs 4, 10, 14, and 16

Simple Present—a general statement of fact, e.g., paragraphs 20, 24, 28, 33, and 36

Simple Present—a current, repetitive situation, e.g., paragraphs 7, 8, 11, 18, 19, and 32

Simple Past—something occurred at a specified time in the past, e.g., paragraphs 12, 22, 34, and 35. Note the time clues that may be present (“recently,” “last year,” and “earlier this month”).

Present Progressive—used to describe an ongoing situation, e.g., paragraph 13.

Present Perfect—something occurred between an unspecified time in the past and the present, e.g., paragraphs 1–3, 6, and 25. Note the time clues (“in the space of three short decades” and “this month”).

Simple Present + Simple Past—a combination often used in direct speech, e.g., paragraphs 9 and 30.

Simple Present + Present Perfect—provides contrast or connection between a present situation and something that has happened as a result, e.g., paragraphs 5, 21, and 29.

Simple Present + Simple Future—shows a connection between a current situation and a possible future situation, e.g., paragraphs 15 and 17. Note that in the case of paragraph 23, “believe” is a stative verb, one not generally used in a progressive tense.

Simple Present + Present Perfect Progressive—shows a connection between a situation that is described and an ongoing situation that started at an unspecified time in the past, e.g., paragraph 27.

Simple Present + Present Perfect + Simple Past—shows a connection between a statement of fact, an event in the past and an action that resulted from it, e.g., paragraph 29.

+++

LANGUAGE SUPPORT by Marlene Wurfel

“LOGIC WILL BETRAY MANKIND LONG BEFORE THE ROBOTS DO”

Bryce Clayton

Prereading Vocabulary

ingenuity	skill at inventing things, ability to create new technologies
senescence	deterioration with age
sociopath	someone who lacks any sympathy for other human beings and does not consider their lives to hold any value

References

Vernor Vinge	contemporary Science Fiction writer
Ray Kurzweil	computer scientist and pioneer in the fields of optical character recognition, text-to-speech synthesis, and speech recognition technology, and author of several books on artificial intelligence, technological singularity and futurism
Bill Gates	current chairman and founder of Microsoft, once the chief software architect and CEO, well-known entrepreneur, software executive and philanthropist
Aum Shinrikyo cult	an esoteric Japanese new religious movement that gained

international notoriety in 1995 after carrying out a gas attack in the Tokyo subways

Y2K

Also known as the year 2000 problem or the millennium bug, widespread concern leading up to the year 2000 based on the worry that many machines and computer processes would malfunction because they were programmed to work with an ascending number system of dates that would not recognize the year correctly after January 1, 2000. Anxiety that critical banking and utilities systems would stop working at the stroke of midnight proved to be greatly exaggerated.

Twelve Monkeys

dark and dystopian American science fiction film (1995) about a world plagued by a super-virus, based on a short French film, *La Jetée*

Cat's Cradle

1963 science fiction novel by American author Kurt Vonnegut about destructive technologies including the atomic bomb and a fictional substance called ice-nine, which ultimately destroys all life on Earth

Eric Drexler

an American engineer best-known for popularizing the potential of nanotechnology during the 70s and 80s, also coined the term “grey goo,” which refers to a hypothetical doomsday scenario in which out-of-control nanobots might replicate themselves from all living and non-living matter on Earth to completely consume and cover the globe in an amorphous substance

Bill Joy

co-founder of and chief scientist at Sun Microsystems, noted for a cautionary stance against nanotechnology, genetics, and robotics and the insistence that these technologies pose risks to humanity

Language Pointers

1. *Accusational Tone*

In these parallel sentence structures, Bryce Clayton creates an accusatory tone. Note how he repetitively begins sentences with the subject (*Markoff*) followed by an active verb (e.g. *fails*).

Para. 1: Markoff is quick to point out many dark aspects of technology that are indeed dangerous....

Para. 1: Markoff fails to analytically investigate and present the threats posed by advanced technology through his bias, logic, and examples.

Para. 2: Markoff presents this event as the moment when machines will begin competing

and eventually either enslaving or destroying mankind. Markoff refers to a computer scientist and science fiction writer, Vernor Vinge....

Para. 3: Markoff alludes to what has become known as “ghosts in the machine,”....

Para. 3: Markoff rightly ignores the viruses....

Para. 4: Markoff reminds the reader of mankind’s resilience with this example, not of our vulnerabilities.

2. *Antonyms*

Clayton uses antonyms (words with opposite meanings) to create a sense of controversy.

complex vs. simple

logical vs. illogical

emotional vs. analytical

Catholic vs. Islam

biased vs. unbiased