

Written Fluency – Autumn semester 2004

Handout 2 – Tuesday, 19 October 2004

The language of administrative texts. Announcements, instructions, guidelines, directives, forms.

Task 1:

Read the following extract from a British tax return form. Identify the features relevant for the style of administrative texts (particularly *instructions* in the introductory part of a *form*):

▼ Please read this page first

The green arrows and instructions will guide you through your Tax Return.

This Notice requires you by law to send me a Tax Return for the year from 6 April 2002 to 5 April 2003. Give details of all your income and capital gains using:

- *this form and any supplementary Pages you need; OR*
- *other Inland Revenue approved forms or software; OR*
- *the Electronic Version of the Tax Return (EVR), OR*
- *the Electronic Lodgement Service (ELC).*

Make sure your Tax Return, and any documents asked for, reaches me by:

- *the later of 30 September 2003 and 2 months after the date this notice was given if you want me to calculate your tax, OR*
- *the later of 31 January 2004 and 3 months after the date this notice was given, at the latest, or you will be liable to an automatic penalty of £100.*

Make sure your payment of any tax you owe reaches me by 31 January, or you will have to pay interest and perhaps a surcharge.

Task 2:

Compare the above extract with the following advice from a UK government website guide for citizens. Which are the common features of the texts?

Working hours

The Working Time Regulations provide basic rights and protections to workers, including limits on the average working week, and rights to rest breaks and paid leave.

Basic rights

The basic rights and protections that the regulations provide are:

- a limit of an average of 48 hours a week which a worker can be required to work (though workers can choose to work more if they want to)
- a limit of an average of eight hours work in a 24 period which night workers can be required to work
- a right for night workers to receive free health assessments
- a right to 11 hours rest a day
- a right to a day off each week
- a right to an in-work rest break if the working day is longer than six hours
- a right to four weeks paid leave per year

Working time limits

Workers cannot be forced to work for more than 48 hours a week on average. Workers can, however, agree to work longer than the 48 hour limit. An agreement must be in writing and signed by the worker. This is generally referred to as an opt-out. It can be for a specified period or a indefinite period. There is no opt-out available from the young workers limits. Young workers may not ordinarily work more than eight hours a day or 40 hours a week, although there are certain permitted exceptions.

Task 3:

Write a short administrative text (a form, regulation, instructions, guideline, ...) of your own. Check if it uses the following elements. Add any other features that you consider to be relevant.

- technical terms
- familiar words with a specialist sense
- adverbial phrases
- imperatives
- impersonal constructions (the passive voice)
- modal verbs
- dependent clauses
- parentheses
- coordinating conjunctions
- special graphetic features
- clear organisation of text to avoid ambiguity
-
-
-