

CUFE, M. Sc. 2014-2015

Gen 600: Technical Writing

Sentence Errors

Will emphasize two types of error:

1. Errors of parallelism

2. Use of dangling modifiers

Definition of a sentence?

- **A sentence starts with a capital letter and finishes with a period, question mark, or exclamation point. Or a “–” in rare cases.**
- **Grammatically, a sentence consists of at least one independent clause.**
- **Above all, a sentence should have a complete meaning.**

Parallelism

is the repetition of the same grammatical structure, especially when writing lists.

The variables are

- **pressure and temperature of the boiler**
- **type of fluid fuel**
- **amount of oxygen**
- **temperature of the fluid.**

Structure: S-V+ *(noun-prep-noun)*

**Repeated
pattern**



1.Errors of parallelism

☒ The variables are

- Pressure and temperature of the boiler,
- what type of fluid fuel is required,
- oxygen amount, and
- Fluid temperature.

✓ The variables are

- pressure and temperature of the boiler
- type of fluid fuel
- amount of oxygen
- temperature of the fluid.

1.Errors of parallelism

☒ The variables are

- Pressure and temperature of the boiler,
- what type of fluid fuel is required,
- oxygen amount, and
- Fluid temperature.

✓ The variables are pressure and temperature of the boiler, type of fluid fuel, amount of oxygen, and temperature of the fluid.

2. Use of dangling modifiers

a. To develop writing skills,



....., good texts should be consulted.

✓ b. In order to develop writing skills,



....., good texts should be consulted.

✓ c. To improve writing skills, read good texts.

✓ For writing reports

✓ For report writing

Parallelism (examples)

Effective sentences should

- 1. be correct**
- 2. have unity of idea**
- 3. Emphasize the right parts**
- 4. show cohesion of parts**
- 5. be precise in meaning**
- 6. be concise**
- 7. show word propriety**
- 8. be clear in meaning**
- 9. show variety in structure.**

C. Check Sentences for Effectiveness

2 UNITY

Check for

- a. related thoughts**
- b. overloaded thoughts**
- c. misplaced parts of speech**
- d. excessive details**
- e. excessive use of coordination and subordination**
- f. style errors ...**

Check for

3 EMPHASIS: Check for

- a. key words (KW) of the main idea**
- b. placement of KW at positions of stress**
- c. the use of emphasis techniques.**

**For the fundraising event,
we placed an ad, did a
mailing, and were making
(made) a lot of phone calls.**

Parallelism between large elements

a. Parallelism between sentences

First, a good paragraph has unity: focuses on a single idea or theme. Second, a good paragraph has coherence: one sentence leads to the next in some kind of logical sequence. Finally, a good paragraph has adequate content: each sentence contains appropriate details to support the main idea.

A good paragraph has unity, coherence, and adequate content.

Examples

The employees present assignment is to develop a software for operations, to reside in the computer memory, and to control software functioning.

2. His present occupation is repairing typewriters, duplicating machines, and printing machines.

Examples

The employees present assignment is to

- 1. develop a software for operations**
- 2. reside in the computer memory**
- 3. control software functioning.**

2. His present occupation is repairing typewriters, duplicating machines, and printing machines.

Examples

The employees present assignment is to develop a software for operations which resides in the computer memory, and controls software functioning.

His present occupation is repairing

1. typewriters

2. duplicating machines

3. printing machines.

Other forms of Parallelism

- ✓ **Color**
- ✓ **Font**
- ✓ **Formatting**
- ✓ **Underlining**
- ✓ **Size**
- ✓ **Use of white space**
- ✓ **Justification**
- ✓ **Use of bold facing**
- ✓ **Artful touches.**



**Consistent use
of parameters**

Parallelism enhances cohesion

Dangling Modifiers

In grammar a dangling modifier (DM) is a misplaced word or phrase that modifies another part of speech placed incorrectly and misleadingly.

Generally, the DM is placed at the beginning of the sentence.

"Arriving late, I was able to catch the train after all."

"Being ill in bed, a friend startled me when he rang."

"Being ill in bed, the telephone startled me when it rang."

Correct the faulty expressions.

1. Being ill in bed, a friend startled me when he rang.
2. A friend startled me when he rang, being ill in be.
3. A friend startled me, being ill in bed, when he rang.

1. Leading phrase (LPh), Main Clause.
2. Main Clause, a trailing phrase.
3. Part of the MC, A phrase, the other part of the MC.

Which is a faulty expressions?

- 1. Being ill in bed, a friend startled me when he rang.**
- 2. Being ill in bed, the telephone startled me when it rang.**
- 3. Arriving late, I was able to catch the train after all.**
- 4. Loaded, the truck drivers will be on time.**
- 5. Using the new technique, one hour was saved.**
- 6. Arriving late, the crew had already left the place.**
- 7. For checking spelling, a dictionary is essential.**
- 8. Ready to pitch the camp, orders changed to move to a new location.**
- 9. Once made, you should execute the decision.**

Arriving late, I was able to catch the train after all.

Which is the intended meaning?

1. I caught the train although I was late.

or

2. I caught the train although it was late.

3. Although I arrived late, I was able to catch the train after all.

4. I was able to catch the train after all because it was late.

"arriving" modifies/needs "I" rather than "train."

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Generally, the DM is placed at the beginning of the sentence.

"Arriving late, I was able to catch the train after all."

"Being ill in bed, a friend startled me when he rang."

"Being ill in bed, the telephone startled me when it rang."

Not all dangling modifiers cause such confusion.

"Being ill in bed, the telephone startled me when it rang" is relatively clear.

"Being ill in bed, I was startled by the telephone when it rang" is better

"Being ill in bed, **the operator** startled me when she rang."

the operator or the speaker is ill?

1. "Being ill in bed, I was startled when the operator rang"
2. "While I was ill in bed, the operator startled me when she rang"
3. "Ringing suddenly, the operator startled me while I was ill in bed."

- 1. Using the technique, hours are saved.**
- 2. To save time, the computer is used.**
- 3. Considering his age, his health is good.**
- 4. Assuming $x=y$, the function will degenerate.**
- 5. For checking spelling, a dictionary is essential.**
- 6. Considering age, his health is good.**

Other case

- 1. “Hopefully, the sun will be shining tomorrow.”**
- 2. The speaker hopes that the sun will shine.**
- 3. To satisfy people who dislike these types of participle in principle, it is best to rewrite the sentence.**

Examples of Dangling Modifiers

1	Loaded or not, the drivers will arrive in time.	سواء كانت محملة أم فارغة، سيحضر السائق في الميعاد المتفق عليه.
2	Loaded or not, the drivers will arrive in time.	سواء كان يحمل أثقالاً أم فارغاً، سيحضر السائق في الميعاد المتفق عليه.
3	Loaded or not, the trucks will arrive in time.	محملة أم فارغة، ستصل الشاحنات في الميعاد المتفق عليه.
4	To arrive in time, the train will depart at 5:00 p.m.	للوصول في الوقت المناسب، سيتحرك القطار في الساعة الخامسة مساءً.
5	Laughing, the problem was wisely solved.	ساخرًا من الجميع، تم معالجة الأمر بحكمة.
6	In writing reports, word processing is useful.	عند كتابة التقارير، معالجات النصوص مفيدة.
7	In report writing, word processing is useful.	في فن كتابة التقارير، معالجات النصوص لها دور مفيد.

Structure of the dangling sentence

Leading phrase (LP), a main clause:

LP, MC. Or MC TP.

LP (TP) is an action, or an adjective

There is a dangling situation when

✓ LP or TP is not tied to a noun in MC.

(MC does not start with a noun).

**While being there, the wind
was blowing violently.**

Dangling Modifiers

- ✓ **Modifiers are words, clauses or phrases, which alter the meaning of sentence elements by restricting, emphasizing, and describing them.**
- ✓ **He works in a place *not very far from downtown.***
- ✓ **A person *who produces quality work* is a fortune these days.**
- ✓ ***Modifiers are dangling when there is no word to which they can clearly relate.***

Modifiers occur in various forms

Participial	Loaded, the truck will be on time.
Infinitive	To save time, use the computer.
Gerund	Using the new technique, he has saved time.
Elliptical	When (I was) using the new technique, I saved 10% of the time.

In writing reports, word processing is useful.

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Word processing, in writing reports, is useful.

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Correcting Dangling Modifiers

- 1. Change LP to a leading clause.**
 - **When he was only 8 years old, computer games fascinated him.**
- 2. Start MC with the missing noun.**
 - **When only was 8 years old, he was fascinated by computer games.**
- 3. Insert LP into an idiomatic expression.**
 - **For mastering vocabulary, a good dictionary is essential.**
 - **A good dictionary is essential for mastering vocabulary.**

4. Shift voice of MC if necessary.

- When heavily used, you need to regularly maintain hardware.**
- When heavily used, hardware should be maintained regularly.**

5. Make other necessary changes without affecting the original meaning

- The icon will be examined in order to determine its value.**

Squinting Modifiers

- Those who watch television rarely read much.



- I only told what happened to him.
➤ تشاهدونه خلال شهر رمضان فقط على قناتنا.
- Lunchtime Weather Forecast
- Lower production interval.

Recognize the structure in the following

Unlike readers of the academic world, most readers of the “real world” read selectively: rather than digesting a piece of writing, they skim-read most of it, skipping from one main idea to another until they come to something that particularly interests them.

Used to refer to things or repeating reference to the same thing, noun compounds are made of two or more words usually without functional words.

If word class is considered, the structure of the two-word noun takes seven forms.

Like most reorganizations, this one was not easy. It will be no surprise to many of you that this was a stressful period; both for those who participated on the reorganization team and those who waited to learn the outcome.

When faced with two conflicting obligations, both of which appear to be justified, one approach is to try to find a way to satisfy both of them.

- **To study the level of the English language and the style of abstract writing, a group of persons interested in the usage of English language has reviewed the majority of the technical abstracts submitted to EGPC 14th Conference (approximately 140 abstracts).**
- **After verifying the primary impression, the group decided to make further in-depth analyses on nearly 50% of the abstracts, randomly selected from the initially reviewed ones.**

Try the following

1. In operating the press, the hand was injured.
2. Not able to find the way, one came to my rescue.
3. Given the circumstances, lucky we are.
4. After reading the minutes, a heated discussion started.
5. To determine its value, the watch will be examined.
6. The paint is to be stored when finished.
7. While asleep, fire started in the room.
8. After sitting calm, the building began to shake, and we rushed out to open areas.
9. Arriving late, the crew had already left.
10. Ready to pitch the camp, orders changed to move to a new location.

	R	?	W
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