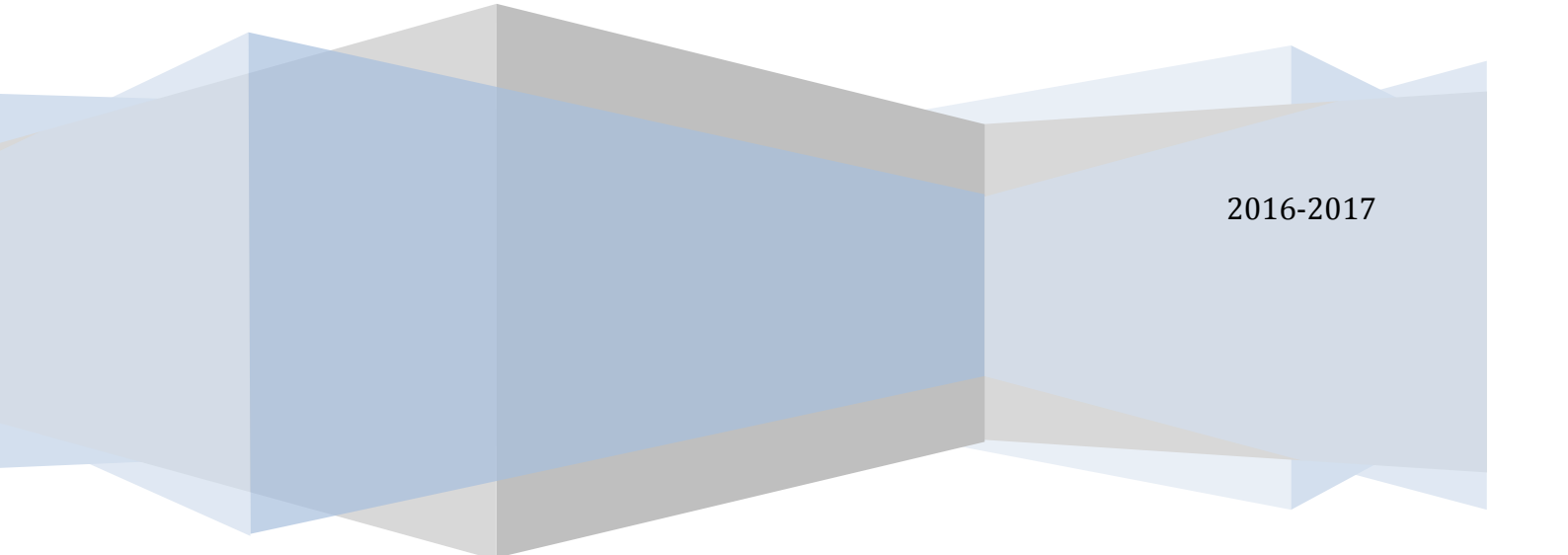UNIVERSITY OF TLEMCEN

FACULTY OF ARTS AND LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

COMPREHENSION AND WRITEN PRODUCTION
(1st Semester)
THIRD YEAR 'LICENCE' LEVEL

Prof Hafida HAMZAOUI- EL ACHACHI
Dr Chams Eddine LAMRI

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This Handout is a synthesis of papers and university handouts that were adapted to our students' needs. These sources are mentioned in the list of references

CONTENTS

STYLE IN ACADEMIC WRITING

1 Organizing the paragraph

1.1 Paragraph structure

Start your paragraph with a topic sentence.

> ### *Topic sentence*
> *A sentence that explains what you are going to write about. It should have a subject, a verb, and a controlling idea.*

Add supporting sentences.

> ### *Supporting sentences*
> *Add more information about your topic. One way to do this is to imagine your topic sentence as a question and then ask yourself: How can I prove this is true? What examples can I give?*

End with a concluding sentence

> ### *Conclusion*
> *An ending sentence that explains what your paragraph is about.*

Examples

1. ### American Food

American food is fast, cheap, and tasty. Some countries have food that takes a long time to make, but Americans like to eat food that is really fast, for example: hot dogs, hamburgers, and sandwiches. American food is not too expensive, if you work in the U.S. It is more expensive than in some countries and less expensive than in other countries, but I think it is pretty cheap. Some people don't like American food, but I think it tastes good. You can put ranch dressing on everything to make it taste delicious. If you are looking for food that is fast, cheap, and tasty, you should try American food.

2.

PROBLEM: THE PARAGRAPH HAS NO TOPIC SENTENCE.

Original paragraph

Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas. If the fish are well-fed, they won't bite humans.

Revised paragraph

Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, for the most part, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas. If the fish are well-fed, they won't bite humans.

3.

PROBLEM: THE PARAGRAPH HAS MORE THAN ONE CONTROLLING IDEA.

Original paragraph

Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, for the most part, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas.

Revised paragraph

Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, for the most part, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas. If the fish are well-fed, they won't bite humans.

1.2 Types of organization

Sentences should further explain and enhance the main idea of the paragraph. Arrange the ideas with methods such as <u>chronological order</u>, which means arranging events in the order in which they happened. Another method of organization is <u>spatial order</u>; sentences flow smoothly from one to the next, describing the order in which things appear or are placed. For example, a spacially organized paragraph's sentences can move the subject from north to south, near to distant or left to right. Organizing by <u>order of importance</u> means writing along the array of least important to most important or vice versa. The motion of a paragraph can also move from <u>general to specific or specific to general.</u>

An example of chronological order is as follows: "Todd woke up, went to the store, stopped by the post office and then he returned home."

Spatial order is illustrated with this sentence: "To drive from Charleston to Asheville, take I-26 west until you reach Asheville."

An order of importance sample follows: "We will discuss the matters at hand. We must put customer service first. Customers are number one. They are the reason we have a job. The next matter at hand is money or tips. We must come up with a tip agreement that automatically takes taxes out for tips. Our third item pertains to where to put the 'Employees Only' sign so the customers will see it."

The next paragraph pattern is specific to general: "A woman down the street is five feet tall, of medium build, and has black hair, blue eyes and a mole on her chin. She eats a lot and watches movies. Women like to watch movies."

The last organization strategy is general to specific: "There has been a growing interest in voice typing. Statistics show that 80 percent of Americans are using this innovative concept."

1.3　Types of paragraphs

There are many different types of paragraphs. Each type has a different purpose, and writers make use of different means in achieving each purpose.

1.3.1 Descriptive paragraph

The purpose of a descriptive paragraph is to allow the reader to experience the item, phenomenon or event being described as vividly as possible without physically sensing it. That is, the reader cannot see it, but knows what it looks like; cannot taste it, but knows whether it is salty or sweet; cannot touch it, but knows its texture. Descriptive paragraphs typically include modifiers (ex., adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases) and figurative language (ex., metaphors, personification, similes) to help enrich the "experience" for the reader.

1.3.2 Expository paragraph

An expository paragraph explains something; its purpose is to help the reader understand. Exposition often includes techniques such as the use of examples or illustrations to support a point or the use of some kind of ordering (chronological or numerical, for example) to help a reader follow a process. Exposition needs to be clear; language is often quite direct although sometimes a writer may use language devices to help illustrate a point.

1.3.3 Persuasive paragraph

The purpose of a persuasive paragraph is to convince the reader of something, such as the writer's position on a controversial topic or a proposal for a new project. The structure is often similar to that of an expository piece, as it is usually helpful to explain a little bit about the subject, but rhetorical devices are often employed to help sway the reader's opinion. The language can be highly charged; the aim is to get a reaction.

1.3.4 Narrative paragraph

Narrative paragraphs tell stories. They differ from short stories or novels in length as well as in the amount of detail provided; they sometimes are little more than brief vignettes. True narrative paragraphs, however, are similar to short stories in that they feature characters, follow a plot line, include a conflict which is resolved and are told from an identifiable point of view. They may also establish a setting or include a moral.

1.3.5 Literary paragraph

Literary paragraphs are paragraphs written about literature; they are part of a genre known as "literary criticism." This does not mean they are supposed to find fault with a piece of literature; criticism, in this sense, is an analytical examination of a poem, story, novel, play, essay, or other literary work. The writer of a literary paragraph must choose a specific aspect of the text to examine and then focus on that aspect, always referring back to the literature. Quotations are often used to support the observations and evaluations made by the writer.

2 Paragraph transition

Paragraphs represent the basic unit of composition: one idea, one paragraph. However, to present a clear, unified train of thought to your readers, you must make sure each paragraph follows the one before it and leads to the one after it through clear, logical transitions. Keep in mind that adequate transitions cannot simply be added to the essay without planning. Without a good reason for the sequence of your paragraphs, no transition will help you. Transitions can be made with particular words and phrases created for that purpose--conjunctive adverbs and transitional phrases--or they can be implied through a conceptual link.

2.1 Conjunctive adverbs and transitional phrases

Conjunctive adverbs modify entire sentences in order to relate them to preceding sentences or paragraphs; good academic writers use many of them, but not so many that they overload the page. Here is a list of some of them:

accordingly	meanwhile
also	moreover
anyway	nevertheless
besides	next
certainly	nonetheless
consequently	now
finally	otherwise
furthermore	similarly
hence	still
however	then
incidentally	thereafter
indeed	therefore
instead	thus
likewise	undoubtedly

Transitional phrases can perform the same function:

in addition	of course
in contrast	as a result
for example	in other words
for instance	as a result

Use them wisely and sparingly, and never use one without knowing its precise meaning.

2.2 Implied or conceptual transitions

Not every paragraph transition requires a conjunctive adverb or transitional phrase; often, your logic will appear through a word or concept common to the last sentence of the preceding paragraph and the topic sentence of the following paragraph.

For example, the end of a paragraph by Bruce Catton uses a demonstrative adjective, "these," to modify the subject of the topic sentence so that it will refer to a noun in the last sentence of the preceding paragraph:

> *When Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee met in the parlor of a modest house at Appomattox Court House, Virginia,...a great chapter in American life came to a close.*
>
> *These men were bringing the Civil War to its virtual finish.*

In this transition by Kori Quintana in an article about radiation and health problems, the connection between the paragraphs resides in the common term of "my

family":

> *What I did not know when I began researching the connection between radioactivity and genetic damage was that I would find the probably cause of my own family's battle with cancer and other health problems.*
>
> *Hailing from Utah, the state known for its Mormon population's healthy lifestyle, my family has been plagued with a number of seemingly unrelated health problems.*

The first paragraph outlines the origins of Quintana's research into the connection between radiation exposure and disease, and ends with the revelation that her own family had been affected by radiation. The next paragraph discusses her family's health history. Each has its own singular purpose and topic, yet the first paragraph leads to the topic of the second through a common term.

3 Sentence transition and combination

Two sentences become a sentence, using transition words / phrases or punctuation that link sentences together smoothly so that there are no abrupt jumps or breaks between ideas.

3.1 Linking words

- **Words that add information:** also, and, another, beside, furthermore, moreover in addition, first, second, third,...

- **Words that show conclusion:** to sum up, finally, in conclusion, to conclude

- **Words that repeat information** in fact, in other words, to repeat, once again, to put it another way

- **Words that show comparison:** as ... as, similarly, in comparison, likewise, by comparison, like, as if, in like manner.

- **Words that show contrasts or differences:** although, but, however, in contrast, in spite of, nevertheless, nonetheless, rather than, though, unlike, yet.

- **Words that show a time relationship:** after so much time, after that, at first, before, beginning, ending, eventually, earlier, even when, ever since, following, from then on, from; to, in time, last, later, meanwhile, near, far, next, now, over, soon, still, the next day, night, then, while.

- **Words that limit or prepare for an example:** for example, for instance, to illustrate, such as.

- **Words that show cause (explain why):** because, because of, caused by.

- **Words that show effect/results:** as a result, consequently, for this/that reason, that is why, therefore, thus.

- **Words that assert obvious truth or grant opposition:** certainly, conceding that, granted that, in fact, naturally, no doubt, of course, undoubtedly, without a doubt.

3.2 Punctuation

Learning to punctuate is about much more than rules. Punctuation, when skillfully deployed, provides you with considerable control over meaning and tone.

3.2.1 Commas

Commas are the most frequently used form of punctuation and probably the hardest to master. It is best to learn the rules—and to know which ones can be broken and when.

1. Commas after many introductory phrases are optional. When the introductory phrase is short, you can often omit the comma; when the phrase is longer, a comma will help your reader recognize where the main clause begins.

2. When joining two independent clauses (clauses that could stand alone as sentences) with a coordinating conjunction (AND, OR, NOR, BUT, YET, FOR, SO), you normally place a comma before the conjunction:

3. Place commas between each element of a list of three or more parallel words, phrases, or clauses. Writers often place a comma before the conjunction (AND or OR) preceding the last element in the list.

4. Surround interrupting or parenthetical clauses or phrases with commas. Such clauses or phrases are not essential to the sentence. If you removed them, the central point of the sentence would remain:

3.2.2 Semicolons

The semicolon has two main uses:

1. The first is to combine two closely related independent clauses into one sentence.

2. The second is to separate list elements that are long or complex. If, in particular, those list elements contain internal commas, semicolons will help show just where each element begins and ends.

3.2.3 Colon

1. The colon expands on the sentence that precedes it, often introducing a list that demonstrates or elaborates whatever was previously stated.

   e.g. There are many reasons for poor written communication: lack of planning, poor grammar, misuse of punctuation marks, and insufficient vocabulary.

2. The part of the sentence following a colon can expand on an idea

   e.g. He had just one fault: an enormous ego.

3.2.4 Parentheses

Parentheses offer another way of introducing interrupting material.

3.2.5 Punctuation in direct speech

There are two ways of reporting what someone has said. The speaker's words can either be reported (in a style known as reported speech), or they can be quoted directly in what is called direct speech.

3.2.6 Reported speech

In reported speech, the actual words are not usually quoted directly. Usually, they are summarized or paraphrased and there are no special punctuation issues to take into account:

e.g. The 180 respondents said that the main reason for setting up in business was to be their own boss.

e.g. Trade union representatives expressed their satisfaction at the news that there would be no job losses.

3.2.7 Direct speech

In direct speech, various punctuation conventions are used to separate the quoted words from the rest of the text: this allows a reader to follow what's going on. Here are the basic rules:

- The words that are actually spoken should be enclosed in inverted commas:

'He's very clever, you know.'

In British English, the usual style is to use single inverted commas but it is not wrong to use double ones:

"He's very clever, you know."

Every time a new speaker says something, you start a new paragraph:

'They think it's a more respectable job,' said Jo.

'I don't agree,' I replied.

• There should be a comma, full stop, question mark, or exclamation mark at the end of a piece of speech. This is placed inside the closing inverted comma or commas.

'Can I come in?' he asked.

'Just a moment!' she shouted.

'You're right,' he said.

'I didn't expect to win.'

• If direct speech comes after the information about who is speaking, use a comma to introduce the piece of speech, placed before the first inverted comma:

Steve replied, 'No problem.'

• If the direct speech is broken up by information about who is speaking, you need a comma (or a question mark or exclamation mark) to end the first piece of speech and a full stop or another comma before the second piece (before the inverted comma or commas):

'You're right,' he said. 'It feels strange.'

'Thinking back,' she said, 'I didn't expect to win.'

'No!' he cried. 'You cannot leave now!'

3.2.8 Comma splice

The comma splice is the incorrect joining of two independent clauses with a comma is an extremely common error. Most frequently students connect two short sentences:

They believe in Oedipus, he is their king.

There are three ways to solve this problem:

1. **Use a period to separate the clauses into two sentences:**

They believe in Oedipus. He is their king.

2. **Join the clauses with a coordinating or subordinating conjunction, depending on their relation to one another:**

They believe in Oedipus, for he is their king.

3. **Join the clauses with a semicolon:**

They believe in Oedipus; he is their king.

In the following example, however, the writer has used a comma where a semi-colon is appropriate:

Sgnarelle is not the primary character, still he acts as a foil.

The clauses could form separate sentences, but the use of "still" implies a stronger link which is best served by a semi-colon:

Sgnarelle is not the primary character; still, he acts as a foil.

In this example, the clauses being connected are too complex to be part of the same sentence:

Lear was a majestic ruler when he was young, however, as he became older, his temptations clouded his thought.

Lear was a majestic ruler when he was young. However, as he became older, his temptations clouded his thought.

The writer could use a conjunction:

Lear was a majestic ruler when he was young, but as he became older his temptations clouded his thought.

4 Phrases and words

4.1 Precision in word choice

Word choice is important in writing. In order to choose the right words, there are several general ideas and rules to keep in mind.

1) The purpose for writing & audience: All writing has a purpose, and the used diction should coincide with the purpose, based on the audience.

2) Specific jargon if writing in a specific field of study.

3) Avoidance of connotations, idioms, slang, archaic words & neologisms.

Connotations are images that a reader associates with certain words. These may often distract a reader and should be eliminated and replaced with words that have a simple denotation.

Idioms are phrases, frequently used in everyday speech, but are almost always too informal for writing.

Slang is the use of words that are not actually defined in the dictionary, but are commonly used in communication. Jargon is a special type of slang, which is used in association with a certain group of people.

Archaic words are old words which are not often used anymore, and neologisms are new words, which may not be understood by everyone. These are often considered types of slang as well.

Problems with clarity are a matter of word choice as illustrated below:

- **Misused words**—the word doesn't actually mean what the writer thinks it does. <u>Example:</u> Indians were a *monotonous* culture until French and British settlers arrived.
  <u>Revision:</u> Indians were a homogenous culture.
- **Words with unwanted connotations or meanings.**
  <u>Example:</u> I sprayed the ants in their private places.
  <u>Revision:</u> I sprayed the ants in their hiding places.
- **Using a pronoun when readers cannot tell whom/what it refers to.**
  <u>Example:</u> My cousin Jake hugged my brother Trey, even though he didn't like him very much.
  <u>Revision:</u> My cousin Jake hugged my brother Trey, even though Jake doesn't like Trey very much.
- **Jargon or technical terms** that make readers work unnecessarily hard. these words are important terms if the audience shares the same field study, otherwise simplify the wording.
  <u>Example:</u> The dialectical interface between neo-Platonists and anti-disestablishment Catholics offers an algorithm for deontological thought.
  <u>Revision:</u> The dialogue between neo-Platonists and certain Catholic thinkers is a model for deontological thought.
- **Loaded language.** Sometimes writers know what they mean by a certain word, but they have not ever spelled that out for readers. they rely too heavily

on that word, perhaps repeating it often, without clarifying what they are talking about.

Example: Society teaches young girls that beauty is their most important quality. In order to prevent eating disorders and other health problems, we must change society.

Revision: Contemporary American popular media, like magazines and movies, teach young girls that beauty is their most important quality. In order to prevent eating disorders and other health problems, we must change the images and role models girls are offered.

4.2 Avoidance of vague pronouns

Writers use pronouns to avoid redundancy. The word to which the pronoun refers is generally called the *"antecedent."* Pronouns need to agree in number, agree in person, and refer clearly to a specific noun. An extremely common mistake made by students is using pronouns—particularly the pronouns IT, WHICH, THAT, and THIS—without a clear antecedent.

There are several ways in which such vague pronoun usage could be resolved to produce stronger, clearer, and more engaging writing.

Possible ways to fix vague pronouns

- You could replace IT with a noun:

  Thomas was always unprepared for class, and his constant unpreparedness drove his teacher crazy.

- You could combine the two parts into a single statement:

  Thomas's constant unpreparedness made his teacher increasingly mad.

- You could add a noun before WHICH:

  Harry was always unprepared for class, a habit which drove his teacher crazy.

Any of these methods serve to dispel confusion regarding pronoun usage. The writing process requires you to frequently re-read your paper over and over again.

> *Remember, just because you (the writer) know to what noun your pronoun is referring doesn't mean that it is clear to the reader.*

5. Errors to avoid in academic writing

Learning to write well is learning how to avoid making errors. Here are some common mistakes to avoid in writing

5.1 Subject verb agreement

Subjects need to have the same number as the verb in a sentence. This makes the subject and verb agree. In the sentence,

The group of bizarrely dressed youths are taking over the cafeteria,

The writer has used a plural verb because of the proximity of *youths*, but the subject of the sentence is *group*. The sentence should read:

The group of bizarrely dressed youths is taking over the cafeteria.

If there are two subjects joined by *and*, use a plural verb:

My mother and father are coming to visit.

If the subjects are joined by *or*, the verb must agree with the nearest subject:

Either Danny or Sandy is handling it.

Either Sherlock Holmes or the Hardy Boys are capable of solving this crime.

Collective nouns such as *family* take singular verbs when the sentence deals with the group as a whole:

The Griswold family is going on vacation this year.

If the sentence deals with the family as individuals, then a plural form is used:

The Griswold family are going to fight all the way through their vacation.

Linking verbs in subjective completions agree with the subject, not the completion:

My favourite thing to buy is compact discs.

But compare:

Compact discs are my favourite thing to buy.

5.2 Sentence fragment

A sentence fragment is a piece of a sentence which has been punctuated as if it were a complete sentence. Usually it is a <u>phrase</u> or subordinate <u>clause</u> which has been improperly separated from a main clause:

Matt has been improving at school. *Since he stopped skipping class.*
The sentences must be reconnected:

Matt has been improving at school since he stopped skipping class.

Every sentence must have a main clause, and thus a complete <u>verb</u>. Particularly in works of fiction, a sentence fragment can be a rhetorically effective device, but in formal writing it is more likely to be simply inept.

A tip: if you are unsure of the distinction between a complete verb and an incomplete one, or a main clause and a <u>participle</u> phrase, there is a simple test you can apply to find out if you have a sentence fragment, or a comma splice: Each complete sentence will make a complete statement, and each complete statement must be either true or false. Thus if you ask of the fragment above--"Since he stopped skipping class": true or false--there can be no answer (what happened since he stopped?), and thus it is not a complete sentence.

5.3 Run-on sentence

A **run-on sentence** fuses two sentences together without any punctuation:
They believe in Oedipus he is their king.

This problem can be fixed in the same three ways as the <u>comma splice.</u>

5.3 Wordiness

Wordiness is the use of more words than necessary to effectively convey meaning in speech or writing. Writers can do what follows:

Avoid overusing **relative pronouns** such as *which* and *that*. Often they can be eliminated. For example, "The dog that you found yesterday" can be shortened to "The dog you found yesterday." The link is obvious.

Avoid overusing **meaningless qualifiers** such as *quite, extremely* and *very*. Words such as these have lost their potency through overuse, and have become filler. Use a stronger word instead (*exhausted* rather than *very tired*). Many of these qualifiers appear in the Usage dictionary. Also stay away from phrases like "A great many of . . ." and "A great deal of . . ."

Avoid **ponderous or vague constructions** such as *despite the fact that, due to the fact that, an aspect of,* and *the use of.*

Avoid **excessively tentative language** such as *it seems that* and *appears to suggest.* Not only is it wordy, it also makes your argument appear weak. Only use these constructions if there is genuine uncertainty. If you are at all confident, write as if you are.

Avoid **redundancies.** Do not write that someone is *naive and innocent* or *dull and boring.* These words are virtual synonyms. You do not have to provide a list where a single word will do. Be aware of a word's implications; for example, if you tell the reader that a woman is wearing a hat, you do not need to add "on her head." The reader will assume the hat is on her head because it is the nature of hats to be found on heads (if she is wearing it elsewhere, then it is worth mentioning).

Avoid the **passive voice** which is possibly the greatest cause of wordiness.

5.6 Faulty parallelism

Faulty parallelism is a construction in which two or more parts of a sentence are roughly equivalent in meaning but not parallel (or grammatically similar) in form. Faulty parallelism most often occurs with paired constructions and items in a series.

The ability to write a good **parallel sentence** is invaluable in essay work. Faulty parallelism, on the other hand, produces an effect in your reader similar to changing gears without using the clutch. A successful parallel sentence reads smoothly, while a faulty parallel sentence lurches awkwardly.

The previous sentence is an example of good parallelism because it obeys the technique's central rule: **The grammatical elements of parallel clauses must match.** The following sentence is an example of poor parallelism because the verb form changes:

This is a debate begun in Greece and which continues into modern times.

Begun is a participial adjective while *continues* is an active verb. The sentence should read:

This debate began in Greece and continues into modern times.

The rule applies not only to verbs but also to <u>nouns, adjectives, adverbs</u> and other parts of speech. In the following sentence, for example, a noun has been mixed with a pair of <u>verbal nouns (gerunds):</u>

*I acquired my considerable fortune by investing carefully, **hard work** and marrying a rich woman.*

The sentence should read:

*I acquired my considerable fortune by investing carefully, **working hard** and marrying a rich woman.*

Watch for grammatical signposts that point to the need for careful parallel constructions.

• **Linking words** (such as *and, or, yet* and *but*) Often indicators of the need for parallel structure:

"I lost my heart in San Francisco, but I left my shoes in Santa Fe."

Parallel constructions also follow

as

is better to give than to appear cheap." Here, the *to* must be repeated to preserve the infinitive structure.

• **Correlative conjunctions** (pairs such as *either . . . or* and *both . . . and*) introduce clauses that must be parallel. The following sentence is incorrect because the verb forms are mixed:

"We can either drive to the Grand Canyon or we're flying to Japan."

The indecisive vacationer should say

"We can either drive to the Grand Canyon or fly to Japan."

Not only . . . but also can be tricky because of the placement of *only* and *also*, but the same rules apply;

"He is not only the nicest person I have ever met, but also the most fragrant man I have ever sniffed."

In a *not... neither* construction, the first negation can affect the meaning of the second. For example, if you write

"Justin is not an ordinary person, and neither are his stories,"

you are implying that the stories are not ordinary people. A more accurate assessment of Justin would be,

"Justin is not ordinary, and neither are his stories."

• **Lists** also need to be parallel:

"I like a good lunch, singing and to read"

should read

"I like eating a good lunch, singing and reading."

5.6 Misplaced modifiers

A modifying word or phrase should be placed next to the word it describes. In the following sentence, the modifying phrase has been misplaced:

Growing at the bottom of the glass, Alison found some mold.

Since it is the mold that is growing at the bottom of the glass, rather than Alison, the sentence should read:

Alison found some mold growing at the bottom of the glass.

5.7 Dangling modifiers

A dangling modifier modifies a word which has been left out of the sentence:
"After writing all that material, the computer didn't save it."

The computer did not do the writing; what is actually meant is "After writing that material, I discovered that the computer didn't save it," (or, more honestly, "After writing all that material, I forgot to save it"). The subject *I* was omitted from the original sentence.

The positioning of limiting modifiers such as *only, nearly* and *almost* is especially important. "Only Frank dropped the bomb," "Frank only dropped the bomb" and "Frank dropped the only bomb" all have different meanings.

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