

EFFECTIVE SENTENCES EXAM REVIEW

I. Dangling modifiers, misplaced modifiers, faulty predication, lack of parallelism

Dangling modifiers: HFW, p. 293

Definition: “A dangling modifier describes or limits a word or words that never actually appear in the sentence.”

Misplaced modifiers, HFW, p. 289

Definition: “A modifier is a word or group of words that describes or limits another word or group of words. A misplaced modifier is positioned incorrectly in a sentence, which means, therefore, that it describes the wrong word and changes the writer’s meaning.”

Online sources:

<http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/grammar/modifiers.html>

http://aliscot.com/bigdog/dmmm_exercise.htm

Faulty predication, HFW, p. 302

Definition: “Faulty predication, sometimes called illogical predication, occurs when a subject and its predicate don’t make sense together.”

- ◆ “In academic writing, avoid nonstandard constructions such as “is when” and “is where.”
- ◆ They should be avoided not only because they are nonstandard, but also because they usually lead to faulty predication.”
 - is when
 - is where
 - the reason. . . is because

NO: One reason that TV news captured national attention in the 1960s is because it covered the Vietnam War thoroughly.

YES: One reason TV news captured national attention in the 1960s is that it covered the Vietnam War thoroughly.

YES: TV news captured national attention in the 1960s because it covered the Vietnam War thoroughly.

Online sources:

<http://www.larc.uci.edu/lewc/gramchk8.html>

<http://www.cwu.edu/~writingcenter/quizes/faultypredicationquiz.html>

Lack of parallelism, HFW, p. 329- 333

Definition of parallelism: “When you write words, phrases, or clauses within a sentence to match in their grammatical forms, the result is parallelism” (329).

Definition of faulty parallelism : “Faulty parallelism usually results when you join nonmatching grammatical forms” (331).

Online source:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_parallel.html

Practice: Identify the error in each sentence

- a. misplaced modifier
 - b. dangling modifier
 - c. faulty predication
 - d. incomplete comparison
 - e. lack of parallelism
-
1. Now I have time to spend with my family, my girlfriend, and relax.
 2. With fifty pages left to read, *War and Peace* was absorbing.
 3. My communications course is harder.
 4. Taxidermy is where you construct a lifelike representation of an animal from its preserved skin.
 5. She saw the house being built in her mind.
 6. The purpose of Hitler’s campaign failed because of the severity of the Russian Winter.
 7. Business writers are concerned about clarity as much as technical writers.
 8. Growing up in the computer age, research is completed on the internet.

I. Shifts in subject/voice, number, mood, person, discourse, tense

Shifts in Sentences, *HFW*, pp. 295- 300

Definition: A shift within a sentence is an unnecessary abrupt change in PERSON, NUMBER, SUBJECT, VOICE, TENSE, MOOD, or DIRECT or INDIRECT DISCOURSE.

Shift in subject/voice, *HFW*, p. 297

“ A shift in subject is rarely justified when it is accompanied by a shift in voice. The voice of a sentence is either active (*People expect changes*) or passive (*Changes are expected*).

Shift in number, *HFW*, pp. 295- 296

“NUMBER refers to whether words are singular (one) or plural (more than one) in meaning. Do not start to write in one number and then shift for no reason to the other number.”

Shift in mood, *HWF*, p. 298

“MOOD indicates whether a sentence is a statement or a question (indicative mood), a command or request (imperative mood), or a conditional or other- than- real statement (subjunctive mood). A shift in mood creates an awkward construction and can cause confusion.”

Shifts in person, *HWF*, p. 295

“Who or what performs or receives an action is defined by the term person. FIRST PERSON (I, we) is the speaker or writer; SECOND PERSON (you) is the one being spoken to or written to; and THIRD PERSON (he, she, it, they) is the person or thing being spoken or written about.”

Shifts in discourse, *HWF*, p. 299

“Indirect discourse is not enclosed in quotation marks because it reports, rather than quotes, something that someone said. In contrast, direct discourse is enclosed in quotation marks because it quotes exactly the words someone said. It’s incorrect to write direct discourse and omit the quotation marks. Also, it’s incorrect to write sentences that mix indirect and direct discourse.”

Shifts in tense, *HWF*, p. 298

“TENSE refers to the time in which the action of a verb takes place—past, present, or future: We will go to the movies after we finish dinner. An unnecessary tense shift within or between sentences can make the statement confusing.”

Online sources:

<http://www.nipissingu.ca/english/hornbook/SHIFTS.HTM>

http://www.iwu.edu/~jhaefner/WC200XSP03/shifts&mixed_construction.html

Practice

Identify the shifts

a. voice/subject b. number c. mood

1. If a person does not study regularly, they will have a difficult time passing organic chemistry.
2. Next, heat the mixture in a test tube, and you should make sure it does not boil.
3. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote *This Side of Paradise*, and later *The Great Gatsby* was written.

Identify the shifts

- a. person b. discourse c. tense
- a. When one looks for a car loan, you compare the interest rates of several banks.
- b. The prisoner told the parole board that he promises to stay out of trouble.
- c. My mother asked was I ever going to get a job.

II. Jargon, Euphemism, Slang, Sexist Language, Cliché

Jargon, HFW, p. 375

Definition: “the specialized vocabulary of a particular group. Jargon uses words that people outside that group might not understand.”

Euphemism, HFW, p. 376

Definition: words that “attempt to avoid the harsh reality of truth by using more pleasant, ‘tactful’ words.” Euphemisms, however, can be used to deceive people, to cover up the truth or the reality of a situation.

Sexist language, HFW, p. 370- 371

“Sexist language assigns roles or characteristics to people based on their sex and gender.”

Slang

American Heritage Dictionary: “The nonstandard vocabulary of a given culture or subculture, consisting typically of arbitrary and often ephemeral coinages and figures of speech characterized by spontaneity and raciness.”

Cliché, HFW, p. 375

Definition: A cliché is a worn- out expression that has lost its capacity to communicate effectively because of overuse. Many cliches are similes or metaphors, once clever but now flat.

Practice

Identify the underlined terms.

- a. jargon
b. euphemism
c. sexist language
d. slang
e. cliché

1. When general Motors didn't pay its workers more money, the company faced a work stoppage.
2. All men are created equal.
3. *American Beauty* was a cool movie.
4. We sociologists have identified the need for perspectivist thinking to achieve our organizational goals.
5. My daughter is as gentle as a lamb.

III. Coordination and subordination

Coordination, HFW, p. 318- 321

Subordination, HFW, p. 321- 324

Online source:

<http://owlet.letu.edu/grammarlinks/sentence/sentence3.html>

Practice:

Identify the dominant type of organization used in the following sentences:

a. coordination

b. subordination

1. I went to the buffet six times, and I still saved room for dessert.
2. Since I was hungry again in an hour, I drove through the Whataburger drive- thru.

IV. Figures of Speech: Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Hyperbole (Overstatement)

Simile, HFW, p. 365

Comparing dissimilar things, using the words *like* or *as*.

Metaphor, HFW, p. 365

Comparing dissimilar things without using the words *like* or *as*.

Personification, HFW, p. 365

“Assigning a human trait to something not human.”

Hyperbole (overstatement), HFW, p. 365

“Exaggerating deliberately for emphasis.”

Online source (for fourth graders):

<http://preservice.org/T0210661/Figurative%20language.html>

Practice:

Identify the figures of speech used in the following sentences:

**a. simile b. metaphor c. personification d. hyperbole
(overstatement)**

1. He was like a piece of rare china which was always threatening to break.
2. The wind started to howl, biting and gnashing its teeth at the cracks in the walls.
3. I am so hungry that I could eat a horse.
4. The girls, flowers of spring, danced around the maypole.

V. Homonyms and Commonly Confused Words

Homonyms: Words that are pronounced the same, spelled differently, and have different meanings.

Online sources:

<http://www.rhlschool.com/eng3n15.htm>

<http://a4esl.org/q/h/homonyms.html>

Practice:

Select the correct word from the choices in parentheses .

1. I am (a. to b. too) distraught over my horrible love life (a. to b. too) commiserate with you over yours.
2. I need to go to the soccer dinner to (a. accept b. except) the championship award given to all of us (a. accept b. except) our goalie, who quit before the final tournament.
3. I wonder (a. whose b. who's) jacket this is. Does it belong to Jennie (a. whose
b. who's) absent today?

Choose the best word for the sentence.

1. Gina is wise to be (finicky b. selective) about her choice for a roommate.
2. The movie is rated "R" because of its (a. violent b. aggressive) war scenes.

VI. Effective Sentences

In each of the following sentences choose the most effective sentence.

1. A. Many students could benefit from assertiveness training.

- A. In the case of students, training could teach them to be more assertive in a beneficial manner.
 - B. Many students could benefit from training for the purpose of assertiveness.
- 2.
- A. My student did not have a tendency to need additional math help.
 - A. My student did not need extra help with math.
 - B. The point I am trying to make is that my student didn't need help with math.
- 3.
- A. Now I shop at the mall near my work.
 - A. At the present time, I go to the mall near work for the purpose of shopping.
 - B. Now I shop at the mall that is, for all intents and purposes, closest to my place of work.
- 4.
- A. The childhood disease chicken pox occasionally leads to dangerous complications, such as the disease known as Reye's syndrome.
 - A. Due to the fact that children get the dangerous disease chicken pox, some children get Reye's Syndrome.
 - B. The childhood disease chicken pox can lead to dangerous complications, such as Reye's Syndrome.