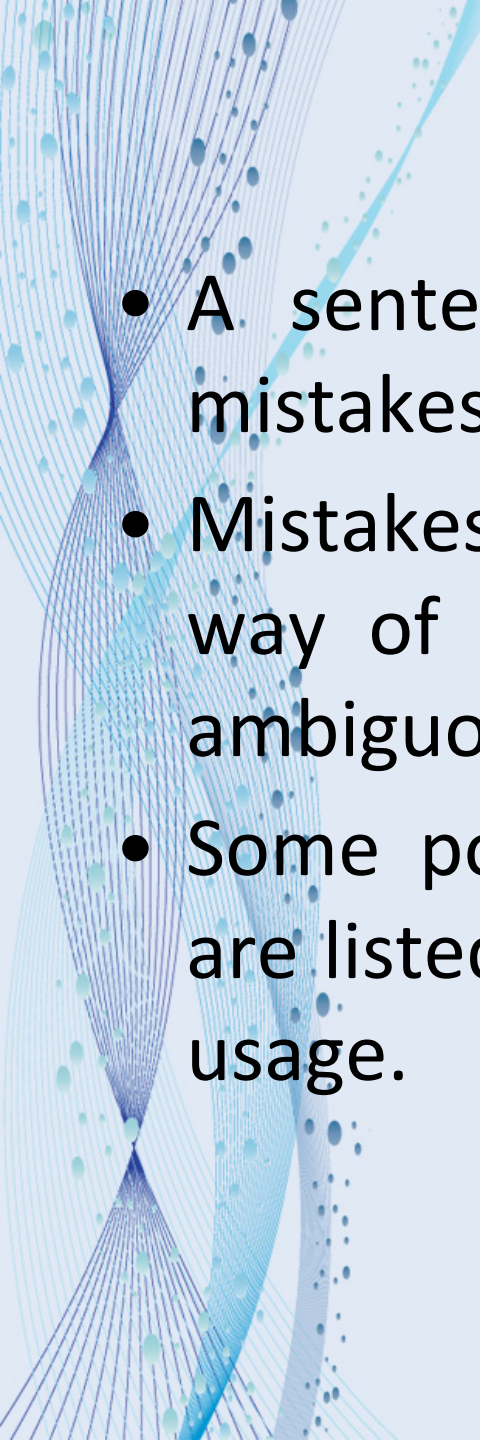




False Witnesses

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- A sentence need not contain grammatical mistakes to be considered it wrong.
 - Mistakes occur in our speech or writing by way of wrong usages, making it vague and ambiguous.
 - Some popularly common mistakes we make are listed here along with their correct way of usage.

1. That was mere 'pretension'. John was cheating you.

✓ Pretend has two noun forms-

Pretension(claim, desire for recognition)

Pretence(act of pretending, deceiving)

Correct usage

That was mere pretence.

2. I may be as 'disinterested' in my studies as he is, but I won't do such a thing.

- Disinterested-having no personal advantage or gain, impartial
- Uninterested-not interested, unwilling
- Interested ✕ Uninterested

Correct usage

I may be as uninterested in my studies as he is.

3. In the class, he is hated **both by the boys and girls.**

- 'The' should be repeated if the words are preceded by the word 'both'.

Correct usage : In the class he is hated both by the boys and by the girls.

- If a preposition comes immediately before 'both', it need not be repeated.

E.g. : He got money from both the plaintiff and the defendant.

- If it comes after 'both' it should be repeated.

E.g. : He got money both from the plaintiff and from the defendant.

4. He escaped **without scarcely** a scratch.

He might **deny** that he had **not** fainted on purpose

- This are examples of double negative i.e. using two negative words together in a sentence.
- Scarcely means hardly, barely or redundant, etc. Both without and scarcely are negative words here.
- Deny means saying that you have not done something/refuse to accept the truth, etc. So 'not' should not be used after 'deny'.

Correct usage

He escaped without a scratch/ with scarcely a scratch.

He might deny that he had fainted on purpose.

5. If you question him with a cane, that might make him **to** tell the truth.

- Whether to use the infinitive form can be confusing. The addition of 'to' changes the meaning in some cases.

E.g. : dare to say(have courage to say) and daresay(probably)

Correct usage

If you question him with a cane, that might make him tell the truth.

- 'Help' can be followed by an infinitive with or without 'to'.

E.g. :We should help him (to) complete the task.

- In passive sentences, it is usual to use 'to' after make/made.

E.g. : He was made to sign the document.

6. He talked as well as **copied** in the last examination.

- ‘As well as’, when used to join two verb forms means ‘in addition to’ and then it is not followed by a finite verb. We have to use the ‘ing- form’ here.

Correct usage

He talked as well as copying in the last examination.

He not only talked but also copied in the last exam.

American and British English variations

7. When he was **in** the middle school, he was nearly expelled for misbehaviour.

- ‘In the middle school’ is American usage. Correct usage is ‘at the middle school’.
- A post-graduate course is called a graduate course in American English.
- ‘Public school’ in British English is a private school where you have to pay for education. In American English, it is a government school where education is free.

8. He is **both** crooked, cunning and jealous.

- 'Both' should not be used if more than two terms are used or involved.

Correct usage

He is crooked, cunning and jealous/ He is both crooked and cunning.

9. He is shabby; you **can notice** it in his behaviour.

- 'Can' is not used before 'notice'.

Correct usage

You notice it in his behaviour/ you can see it in his behaviour.