DANGLING MODIFIERS & FAULTY PARALLELISM

STW UNIT 02

WHAT IS A MODIFIER?

- A modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that provides additional information about another word or group of words in a sentence.

- Modifiers are used to add detail, clarify meaning, or provide context to the words they modify.

- Some examples of modifiers are adjectives, adverbs, adjective clauses (including relative clauses and appositive phrases), and adverbial clauses.

- Modifiers are generally optional elements of sentences e. g.

- A secure login process is essential for protecting user data (adjective

- modifier).

- The algorithm ran flawlessly without any errors (adverbial modifier).

- The software, which was developed by a team of experts, is now widely used (adjective clause).

WHAT IS A DANGLING MODIFIER?

- When modifiers do not clearly and logically refer to the correct noun or pronoun, they are called *dangling modifiers.*

- Dangling modifiers usually appear at the beginning of a sentence as an introductory phrase e. g.

- While having lunch, the computer malfunctioned [INCORRECT: not clear who was having lunch].

- To correct a dangling modifier, add the appropriate subject to either the dangling modifier or the main clause.

- CORRECT: While I was having lunch, the computer malfunctioned.

WHAT IS A DANGLING MODIFIER?

INCORRECT	REASON	CORRECT
The program gains efficiency by eliminating the superfluous instructions.	Not clear who eliminates the superfluous instructions.	**The program gains efficiency when you eliminate the superfluous instructions.**
After finishing the research, the proposal was easy to write.	The appropriate subject is **I**, but it is not stated.	**After I finished the research, the proposal was easy to write.** **After finishing the research, I found the proposal easy to write.**
Downloading the app, the battery drained quickly	It seems that the battery is downloading the app.	**While downloading the app, the battery drained quickly.**

WHAT IS PARALLELISM?

- Parallelism refers to the principle that parts of a sentence that are the same in function should be the same in structure.

- Words or phrases joined by coordinating conjunctions should have the same form. e. g.

- She likes to swim, to bike, and to run.

- The project requires dedication, hard work, and a positive

- attitude.

- To install the software, you should download the installer, double-click the file to run it, and then follow the on-screen instructions.

WHAT IS FAULTY PARALLELISM?

- Faulty parallelism results when joined elements are intended to serve equal grammatical functions but do not have equal grammatical form.

- Faulty parallelism sometimes occurs because a writer tries to compare items that are not comparable e. g.

- She likes to swim, biking, and running. (faulty)

- The project requires dedication, working hard, and with a positive attitude. (faulty)

- To install the software, you should download the installer, double-clicking the file to run it, and then following the on-screen instructions. (faulty)

EXAMPLE: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

NOT PARALLEL

The company offers special college training to help nonexempt employees move into professional careers like engineering management, software development, service technicians, and sales trainees.

(mix-up of occupations and designations)

PARALLEL

The company offers special college training to help nonexempt employees move into professional careers like engineering management, software development, technical services, and sales.

(all are names of occupations)

EXAMPLES: HEADINGS & SUB-HEADINGS

NOT PARALLEL

1. Project Phases

    1.1 **Plan** Stage

    1.2 **Execution of** the Project

    1.3 **Evaluate** Progress
(mixed up headings)

PARALLEL

1. Project Phases

    1.1 **Planning** Stage

    1.2 **Execution** Stage

    1.3 **Evaluation** Stage

(similar, uniform headings)

EXAMPLE: INCOMPLETE COMPARISON

Incomplete comparisons detract from the clarity of your writing. To be complete, a comparison must include both the item being compared and the item it is being compared with. If you leave out the item being compared with, the reader may not understand your intended meaning.

INCORRECT	REASON	CORRECT
The new algorithm is faster.	Faster than what?	**The new algorithm is faster than the previous one.**
In our new phone, you will find a bright display, long-lasting battery, and the best camera.	Best among which ones?	**In our new phone, you will find a bright display, long-lasting battery, and the best camera among all our phone models**

EXAMPLE: AMBIGUOUS COMPARISON

When you construct a **comparison**, you can avoid **wordiness** by shortening the basis of the comparison. However, this can introduce ambiguity, so shorten your basis of comparison carefully, checking to make sure that the meaning is clear.

INCORRECT	REASON	CORRECT
The symposium revealed that more was known than **realized**.	What does 'realized' mean here: accomplished, or thought?	The symposium revealed that more was known than **we realized**. (pronoun added, meaning clarified to 'thought')
Von Neumann took a very different approach towards artificial intelligence (AI) than other computer scientists.	Approach towards AI different, or approach towards other computer scientists different?	Von Neumann took a very different approach towards artificial intelligence (AI) than other computer scientists **did**. (auxiliary verb added)

THANK YOU!