Flaws In Reading

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(6 Marks)

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Flaws In Reading

"We must realize that English is not the native language of Indians. Yeah, we could go wrong and we could make innumerable mistakes, but there is always a room for improvement."

Introduction:

Many people know their letter sounds, but cannot recognize these sounds when trying to sound out words. They will skip words when reading, preferring instead to read the words they recognize first and fill in the unknown words later. Or if they can't decode the word, they will guess. No doubt, spelling rules, conventions and exceptions that take time to learn. There is more at stake here than just spelling accuracy. Recognition of spelling patterns is a big part of how the brain reads. Reading is a key decoding skill.

Causes of Errors:

For simplicity's sake I've broken those layers down to **four** separate processes.

First, to properly comprehend a written passage a person must be able to decode the words on the page.

Second, the person needs to hold the information in working memory long enough for the information to be more extensively processed. Working memory is like a **mental workspace** where new information is held briefly before being transferred to higher level language and executive functions.

> All men make mistakes, but only wise men learn from their mistakes.
> Winston Churchill

Third, the person must have adequate vocabulary, grammar and syntactical skills to organize and interpret the written message efficiently.

Fourth, the person needs to access higher order thinking skills to process the written message and go beyond the surface layer of the text and **infer** possible meaning.

If a breakdown occurs in one or more of these steps then the person may fail to grasp the meaning of the text, which often results in reading comprehension problems and failure.

A Classic Example:

To explore one example, problems with understanding syntactical rules can result in students not understanding the difference between simple, compound and complex sentences, which can result in confusion in understanding the author's intended meaning. This is certainly the case in non fiction text where authors, who write history and science texts, use complex and compound-complex sentences routinely to communicate more detailed and elaborate ideas.

Let's look at the following passage from **Herbert & Harry** by popular children's author, Pamela Allen.
'At last Herbert lay down to sleep. But even though it was very dark, and he was very tired, he could not sleep.'

The second sentence contains a compound-complex structure, which in my experience, some students find difficult to comprehend when they read it.
When asked questions about this passage, some students fail to recognize that it's 'very dark' or that 'Herbert is tired.' Certainly, the context of the story helps with comprehension in that we know Herbert is tired, and on the run from his brother. But, when read in isolation, and without context the students' understanding of this particular sentence tends to unravel.

I believe, in this instance, that reading comprehension failure is caused by the complexity of the passage and its intricate construction. The clause 'he could not sleep' is preceded by the **subordinate clause**, 'But even though it was very dark,' the **coordinating conjunction** 'and,' and the main clause, 'he was very tired.'

As we can see, the construction of this particular sentence could quickly overload a student's working memory capacity and syntactical understanding.

Types of Errors:

A MAN'S ERRORS ARE HIS PORTALS OF DISCOVERY. – JAMES JOYCE
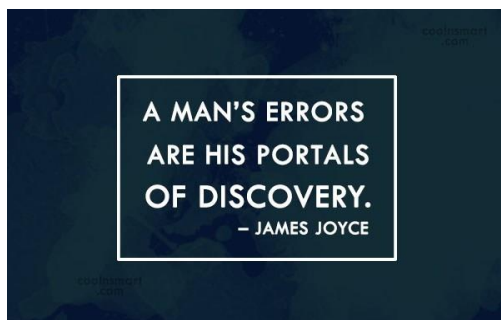
The following examples show common types of errors made by students who struggled with reading and the types of problems these errors may indicate. Once again, it is not a single error but the patterns of repeated mistakes that are informative. All these examples came from actual experiences with students who struggled with reading. While each student is unique, these types of errors are common with struggling readers. For descriptive purposes, the errors are grouped into categories. These are not clear-cut categories and overlap is common. For examples 'whole word' readers often are not tracking and often do not know their sounds.

All of the examples of actual reading errors are shown as:

Actual word → what the student said

(For example, **spread → prize** means the student looked at the word 'spread' and incorrectly read it as 'prize')

"Whole Word" Errors: These types of errors occur when the student is attempting to **'see' or 'visually recognize' entire words as a unit instead of processing the print by sound.** The student tries to recognize the overall visual appearance of the word. Often the words 'look similar' to words the student has already learned as 'sight' words. Words usually contain some visually similar letters or structure. Frequent 'whole word' type errors indicate that the student is not processing print phonetically. Examples of 'whole word' type errors include:

exit → next	every→very	simple→smile	sprout → poured
van→ have	roam→ more	dim→ made	years → yours
value → volume	afraid → after	include→locating	agree→argue
lord → rod	speed → sleep	cork → clock	text → next
vane → have	being→belong	navy → very	clang → change
adult →about	spread → prize	will →while	shift →finish
since →nice	scrape→ escape	when → then	district →distance
swallowed →shallow	child→could	relocate → recycle	scoundrel→school
prolong→program	blinking → belong	wild→would	remind→random
empty→empathy	relic →recycle	pilgrim→program	enact→enchant
combine → become	balcony → balance		

"Word Guessing" Errors: Frequent 'word guessing' errors are somewhat similar to 'whole word' errors because the student **is not processing print phonetically.** In 'word guessing' the student often only looks at the first letter and then guesses a word. Frequently, errors are completely 'off'. Sometimes a recently used word will be used or a word will be guessed from an illustration. **Word substitutions** are considered 'word guessing' errors as the student is not reading the print but instead guessing their own word from context. Occasionally these are the 'I have absolutely no idea where that come from' type errors. These types of word guessing errors are closely associated with students who do not process print phonetically and instead are relying on 'whole word' visual recognition techniques. There is usually overlap between 'whole word' errors and 'word guessing' errors. Examples of 'word guessing' errors may include:

pencil → pear	spoil→special	hound → hundred	gentle→giant.
graft → giraffe	hound → hundred	true → tunnel	
plenty → prehistoric			
command → computer	detest →dentist	vitamin → vacuum	
chart →chimp	value → Valentine	shell → shark never → nurse	
angry → mad or class → school			

Tracking Errors: These errors can sometimes appear similar to 'whole word' errors. The distinction is that the student appears to **be attempting to sound out words. However, they are not properly tracking left-to-right.** The words they say often contain the same sounds but

are out of order. These tracking errors are closely related to 'whole word' processing. If the student looks at the word as a 'whole' instead of processing correctly in an orderly left to right manner they frequently 'mix up' the sounds within the word. Improper tracking is a symptom of whole word processing. Students can also make tracking errors if they are 'hopping' around looking for familiar bits and pieces that they 'recognize'. These types of errors indicate the student need to develop proper left to right directional tracking. Examples of tracking errors include:

was → saw	no→on	slip → spill	left → felt
step → pest			
lots → lost	slot → lots	form →from	miles → smiles
balk → black			
last → salt	tired → tried	act → cat	persist → preset
tarnish → tranish			

<u>Lack of Code Knowledge/Difficulty with Complexities</u>: When the student makes frequent errors or has difficulty with words that contain vowel combination and r-controlled vowel combinations it often indicates they lack knowledge of the complete phonemic code. If the student did not know the complexities in isolation and has difficulty reading words that contain these sounds, often the student needs is some direct instruction and practice in these sounds. These students sometimes **read correctly and accurately with the basic sounds and are attempting to sound out words but lack the complete code knowledge therefore struggle with the complexities.** Examples of difficulty with code knowledge include:

- a classic example of lack of code knowledge is exhibited by many young beginners when they learn t=/t/, h=/h/ but are not yet taught th=/th/. They frequently make errors, reading 'that' as /t/ /h/ /a/ /t/ or 'the' as /t/ /h/ /e/. Similarly they read 'sh' as /sss/ /h/ instead of /sh/.
- mispronunciations where the sounds of vowel combinations are sounded out separately such as sound → /s//o/ /u/ /n//d/   tease as /t/ /ee/ /a/ /z/   'compete' as /k//o//m//p//e//t/ /ee/
- difficulty with words that contain complexities when simple code is read accurately and easily
- lack of knowledge of the alternate sounds, for example every time the student comes across 'ow' they use the /ow/ sound and do not know and apply the /oa/ sound
- student will start sounding out the word and then 'word guess' because they don't have knowledge to sound out correctly

<u>Consonant Cluster Errors</u>: These errors occur primarily with common 'blended clusters' such as s-st, st-str, d-dr, c-cl, c-cr, t-tr, g-gr, f-fr and ending clusters p-mp, and d-nd. In these types of errors the student will insert the 'blended cluster' sounds into words even when it is NOT present. These type of errors occur frequently in students who were taught consonant clusters as a unit (student learned the consonant cluster as a unit such as st, str, tr, mp, gr, fr, dr…) The student consequently 'sees' and processes the blended sounds even when they are actually not present in a word. Often the student will look at the word several times repeating the same error. Examples of 'consonant cluster' errors include:

flip → flimp	clip→climp	cap → camp	stiff → striff
gab→ grab			
tying → trying	dip → drip	cop → crop	speak → spreak
sand → stand			
tide→ tride	fog → frog	chat → chant	tease→ trease
stout → strout			
steak→ streak	widest → windest	taper → trapper	tendency→ trendency

Attention to Detail Errors: These types of errors are when the student **does not pay close attention detail, carefully processing all the letters in order.** Attention to detail is closely associated with proper tracking and correct phonologic processing. The 'attention to detail' errors are when the student misses bits and parts of the word. Consonant cluster errors are a type of attention to detail error. Sometimes the student will be sounding out the words correctly but misses some parts. The 'fast and sloppy' readers often make frequent errors with the details. Examples of attention to detail errors include:

inspect → insect	father →farther	must → most	son→soon
	explain→ exclaim		
explore → explode	invent → invert	powder →power	retorted→reported
	adapt→adopt		

+ missing details with plural words (inaccurately leaving off or adding /s/ /es/)
+ changing or missing other endings (such as ing, ed)

Difficulty with Multi syllable Words: These types of errors occur **when the student appears to sound out and accurately read the shorter words without problem and yet struggles with multi syllable words.** If fundamental reading skills are established (processed phonologically, knows sounds, tracks correctly) then often the student simply needs instruction in handling these more complex multi syllable words. Errors with multi syllable words tend to include missing or changing parts of the word, dropping or adding sounds inappropriately, difficulty putting the words together and general trouble handling the longer words. Examples of multi syllable errors include:

inconsistent → inconstant	opportunity→oppority	eliminate →elimate
committed → committitated	determine → deterimmine	objective → objectactive
representative → repsetive	fundamental → funmental	
encountering → encounting		

Slow Processing: If the student is 'sounding out' words but the phonetic decoding is slow and difficult, it may be that the reader is relying on indirect processing to phonologically process the print. For efficient reading the student needs to automatically convert print to the correct sound. If the student must first recall another word that contains the sound, extract the correct sound and then apply it to the new word, it involves slow indirect 'long way' processing pathways. While the student is able to extract the necessary sound knowledge it takes lots of effort. In this case the student needs to practice the direct print-sound relationship so the print can be processed rapidly and efficiently. In addition, once correct phonologic processing is established it still takes repeated practice of each word to develop fluency. Remember fluency

is build word by word and requires repeated phonologic processing. Practice is necessary to build this 'fast' fluent reading.

Blending Difficulty: Difficulty blending is evident by the 'choppy' or 'segmented' sounding out. **The sounds are said broken apart instead of being blended smoothly together.** The 'choppy' sounding out is usually very noticeable. Sometimes the student says all individual sounds correctly but because they are segmented/separated they are not able to combine them back together. The student needs to learn to smoothly blend sounds. Have them take a deep breath before starting and if necessary sing the word. Directly teach smooth blending.

'Fast and Sloppy': This is where students **appear to be rushing through the reading, moving so fast and careless they miss entire words and sections.** When they slow down their accuracy and reading improves dramatically. They appear to have necessary skills but are in too much of a hurry to apply them. These types of 'going too fast' errors often correspond with the personality of certain students. They are simply in too much of a hurry to be careful. These types of students simply need training in careful reading! These students have the necessary skills, they simply have to slow down and apply their skills. Guided reading, where you stop the student at every error is the best way to help these students develop careful reading skills. Impatient individuals usually do not like to stop so forcing them to stop and go back usually motivates them to improve their accuracy!

Letter Confusion: Letter confusion is most commonly encountered **with the visually similar letters b - d - and p.** For example:
       big→dig   drag→brag   brown→drown
Letter confusion with other letters can also be created by certain writing styles. For example loopy cursive crossover print can create confusion with additional letters. The loopy cursive writing can create confusion between i-j-l. When curves and loops are added, i-j-l , these letters which are distinct under normal block print also become visually similar. Loopy writing of k & h as k-h can create confusion not just between k-h but also with ch-ck. As a result, some students who learn these loopy cursive crossover styles will make errors such as:
      ask → ash   much → muck   mash → mask   racket → rachet
      basket → bashet
      hill → kill   joint → loint
Remediation for these letter confusion errors is to have the student repeatedly print the letters with proper formation in normal block style print. While print or font style is usually irrelevant for skilled readers it can create additional difficulty in students who are learning the printed language.

Comprehension Reading Issues:

"Is reading an art or a science?" To answer this, reading teachers and students, as well as adult non- or limited readers, may benefit from review of what I like to call "**The Super Seven**." These are the **seven skills, processes or talents** needed to be proficient and competent at both the art and science of reading:

1. decoding—sound-symbol association
2. vocabulary—definition and pronunciation of words
3. fluency/prosody—appropriate speed with accuracy and inflection
4. syntax—sentence structure, word and phrase associations
5. semantics—changes of word meanings in context
6. schematics—prior knowledge, culture and memories
7. pragmatics—intended meaning of the writer

Adults and children who struggle with the science of reading often do not get to the art of reading, so they do not experience the joy and wonder of all the knowledge and entertainment available through the printed page.

Decoding and Word-Recognition Issues

Decoding is the term for sounding out letters and words. Being able to match letters to their sounds is an essential step in learning how to read. In fact, decoding is the foundation on which all other reading instruction builds.

Reading Fluency

Decoding is very important. But sight words are important too. The more words a person can recognize at a glance (without having to sound them out), the faster he'll be able to read.

Focus and Attention Issues

Attention issues are another reason why a person might have trouble understanding what he reads. Good reading comprehension depends on being able to ignore distractions.

Vocabulary and comprehension:

It's a truth universally acknowledged that students with larger vocabularies are also much better at reading.

Comprehension Skills and Strategies:

Reading Comprehension questions are more familiar to most people than the other verbal questions on the **GMAT**. Part of it is that most people have encountered them before on the **SAT** or **ACT**, and part of it is that the task of reading a passage and answering questions about it is more familiar than the tasks of fixing the grammar of sentences and analyzing the logic of arguments. But there are still plenty of ways to go wrong in Reading Comprehension. The following are five common mistakes people make that prevent them from maximizing their performance on Reading Comprehension.

1) Reading the passage in too much detail the first time

Clearly, you need to know something about the passage before you tackle the questions. You don't need to know everything, though. One of the biggest mistakes people make with Reading Comprehension is reading the passage slowly and in great detail the first time through. These passages are dense with information and most of it is not important, because the test will only ask 3 or 4 questions about each passage. Trying to absorb everything is a waste of time. You get no points for reading; you only get points for answering questions correctly.

Solution: Therefore, the first time through the passage you want to read quickly, paying attention to the following two questions:

> 1) What is the general idea (topic, purpose, author's tone)?

> 2) What is the structure of the passage (organization, location of details)?

2) Not clarifying the question

After reading the question you're ready to go back and find the answer, right? Well, hold on. Are you certain you know what you're looking for? Be sure to take a moment to clarify what the question is asking. What is the actual task? For example, some questions more or less ask you to retrieve information from the passage. "According to the passage, which of the following is one of the mating rituals of the moth?" That's a straightforward question that requires you to find out what the passage said. But what about, "The author mentions the mating rituals of the moth in order to"? That's a little different. That's a question that isn't interested in what was said, but rather why it was said. It's a question about purpose and intention, and you have to think about the context of the passage to answer it. Or how about, "Which of the following can be inferred about the mating rituals of the moth?" Here we're looking for something that wasn't explicitly stated, but must still be true based on the text of the passage.

Solution: In order to answer questions successfully, you need to know what information you're reading for in the first place, which means you need to know exactly what the question is asking.

3) Failing to go back to the text to prove your answer

One consequence of spending too much time initially reading the passage (see point 1) is that you're tempted to answer questions from memory rather than go back to the passage and read closely to find the necessary information. Reading Comprehension is like an open-book test. Everything you need is there in the passage — it's just a matter of finding it. **One of the main reasons you don't need to read the whole passage carefully the first time is that you should be going back to the passage later anyway to read the important sections when it's time to answer specific questions.**

Solution: Reading Comprehension answer choices can turn on tiny details in the passage, and it's unlikely you'll know them by heart. Train yourself to find the text in the passage that proves the answer choice you pick.

4) Turning to the answer choices too soon

You've read the paragraph that the question asked about. Time to hit the answer choices, right? Not so fast. **There's a big difference between reading and understanding. Reading is a mechanical skill, but comprehension is not.** Everyone has experienced this at some time. You're reading something, reading along, reading along, and it suddenly occurs to you that you have no idea what you're reading anymore. Your eyes are still processing the words but the part of your brain that actually understands the words checked out a few paragraphs back. The point is that after you read the relevant text from the passage, you need to give yourself a moment to process that information before you turn to the answer choices.

Solution: Think about what you've just read and what it means, especially in light of the question you're trying to answer. The clearer of an idea you have about what you're looking for, the easier it will be to work with the answer choices.

5) Looking only for good stuff in the answer choices

Most people examine answer choices with one question in mind: Is there anything here that I like? If there's something about an answer choice that you like, it stays. If you don't like anything about it, it goes. Ideally, you find one that you like the best and pick it. There's nothing inherently wrong with that, and sometimes it's all you need. But too often it's not enough, particularly when you like more than one answer choice or you don't like any of them. What too many people never develop is the ability to spin their perspective 180 degrees and look for flaws in answer choices.

Solution: You need to think like a prosecutor. "What is the strongest case I can make against this answer choice?" The human brain is wired in many ways to focus on one thing at a time. If I'm looking for reasons to choose an answer, it's harder for me to see reasons to eliminate it. There are parts of answer choices that you literally will not even notice unless you are specifically looking for flaws.

Ultimately, this is just one example of a larger principle that has resonance across the whole GMAT — it's very hard to find certain things unless you are specifically looking for them.

Exhaustive Examples:

Let's start off with a few common blunders that reader comes across frequently:

1. ~ "It was a blunder mistake."

Correction, people! The word 'blunder' means mistake, so you could say:

~ "It was a blunder," or
~ "It was a big mistake."

2. ~ "It would have been more better."

The word 'better' itself implies that the option in question is superior -- the use of the word 'more' in the sentence is, therefore both inappropriate and unnecessary. Thus the correct sentence would go as follows:

~ "It would have been better."

3. ~ "Why don't he get married?"

The term 'don't' applies when discussing a plural subject. For instance, "Why don't they get married?" The right way to phrase that sentence would be:

~ "Why doesn't he get married?"

4. ~ "I want two Xeroxes of this card."

The term 'Xerox' is used in North American English as a verb. Actually, 'Xerox' is the name of a company that supplies photocopiers! The correct thing to say, therefore, would be:

~ "I want two photocopies of this card."

5. ~ "Your hairs are looking silky today."

This is one of the most common Indian bloopers! The plural of 'hair' is 'hair'! Thus:

~ "Your hair is looking silky today."

6. ~ 'I don't want to loose you.'

Many people make this mistake. They inevitably interchange the words 'loose' and 'lose' while writing. 'Lose' means to 'suffer a loss or defeat'. 'Loose', on the other hand, means 'not firm' or 'not fitting.' Thus, you would write:

~ 'I don't want to lose you,"

~ "My shirt is loose," not "My shirt is lose."

7. ~ "One of my friend lives in Kolkata."

This is one of the most common Indian English bloopers ever! The correct way of putting that is:

"One of my friends lives in Kolkata."

Why? Because the sentence implies that you have many friends who live in Kolkata, but you are referring to only one of these friends.

8. ~ Tension-inducing tenses.

People often use the wrong tense in their sentences. For instance, someone might say:

~ "I didn't cried when I saw the movie."

Unfortunately, the word 'didn't' is never followed by a past tense verb, in this case 'cried'. The correct way of putting it would be:

~ "I didn't cry when I saw the movie."

Semantic errors

Many different spellings are pronounced in the same way, and what first seems to be a correct reading may have been the selection of an irrelevant homonym.

 (1)   Text: The sun came up.
          Reading: The son came up

.But if the sequence in (1) were followed by additional information, as shown in (2), the teacher would realize that the child had selected a wrong homonym, son for sun.

(2)   Text: The sun came up; it was going to be a hot day.
          Reading: The son came up; he was going to be hot.

          A reading error can be defined as the selection of the wrong word in a printed text that is, not the word intended by the writer of the text.

Potential errors and clear errors

(3)   Text: My blood began to boil.
          Reading: My boat began to bill.

The reading boat for blood in (3) is a clear error and so is bill for boil. In both cases initial and final consonants are read correctly; the errors concern the initial cluster and the vowel pairs oo and oi. The second error bill for boil is in the semantic shadow of the first error. .

(4)   Text: I played it cool and took a sip of my coke.
       Reading: I play it cool and took a sip of my coke.

The potential error play for played in (4) is a common type of error. It may be a failure to decipher the past tense signal "ed", and indeed such readings of past tense forms as present tense are extremely frequent. On the other hand, it may represent a phonological deletion of the final /d/, though this is not as common for single consonants as in played as compared to consonant clusters in words like served.

(5)   Text: His teeth are as sharp as the edge of my knife.
       Reading: His teef are as sharp as the edge of my knee.

The potential error teef for teeth in (5) incorporates a well known dialect feature of African American Vernacular English [AAVE]: the realization of syllable final "th" as final "f" .

Potential error types

Homonym pairs like son/sun create a problem for the teacher more than for the reader, since these words are homophones but not homographs.

(6)   find   →   /fayn/ =   fine

       told   →   /towl/ =   toll

       mist   →   /mis/   =   miss

       rift   →   /rif/   =   riff

The same process affects the clusters formed by the regular past tense -ed suffix, though at a lower frequency:

(7)   dined   →   /dayn/ =   dine

       rolled   →   /rowl/ =   roll, role

missed → /mis/ = miss

(8)   told, old, find, kind, around, worst, thirst, spend, stand, hand, ground, last, risk

(9)   **Mispronunciations are counted as errors.**

Example Text: The small gray fox ran to the cover of the trees.
Student: "The smill gray fox ran to the cover of the trees."

(10)   **Substitutions are counted as errors.**

Example Text: When she returned to the house, Grandmother called for Franchesca.
Student: "When she returned to the home, Grandmother called for   Franchesca.

(11)   **Omissions are counted as errors.**

Example Text: Anna could not compete in the last race.
Student: "Anna could not in the last race."

(12)   **Transpositions of word-pairs are counted as error**.

Example Text: She looked at the bright, shining face of the sun.
Student: "She looked at the shining bright face of the sun."

(13)   **Pronoun confusion**

Students get questions wrong simply because they don't know who "he" or "she" refers to. In addition to summarizing, when you're doing reading, it's a good idea to stop now and then and ask who is "he" or who are "they"?

(14)   **Contractions/Abbreviations**

Even fluent readers I work with get confused between Mr. and Mrs. It makes a big difference in who we're reading about. Students read don't as do or skip the word entirely and it changes the meaning of the sentence.

(15)   **Other Common Errors:**

1. **Much, more, less (**some nouns occur only in the singular form)
Incorrect: There is much dusts. There is more courages. He had less funs.
Correct: There is much dust. There is more courage. He had less fun.

2. **Less, fewer** (countable nouns)
Incorrect: There were less people.
Correct: There were fewer people.

3**. Possession shared by two nouns**
Incorrect: It was John's and Peter's car.
Correct: It was John and Peter's car.

4. **His/hers/its** (If you don't know an animal's gender, you use "it".)
 Incorrect: The dog lost his bone. (You don't know the gender.)
Correct: The dog lost its bone.

5. **That/who**
Incorrect: I have written to my sister that lives in France.
Correct: I have written to my sister who lives in France.

6**. Me/I**
Incorrect: Give it to I. Jason and me took the class. He read as well as me.
Correct: Give it to me. Jason and I took the class. He read as well as I.

7. **This/that/those/these**

Incorrect: These/those is my child. That/this are my children.
Correct: This/that is my child. Those/these are my children.

8. **Happy (well/good)**
Incorrect: She feels well.
Correct: She feels good.

9. **Quality (well/good)**
 Incorrect: She sings good.
 Correct: She sings well.

10. **Adverbs with "ly"**
Incorrect: She spoke to him quiet. He shouted not as loud as the rest of the group.
Correct: She spoke to him quietly. He shouted not as loudly as the rest of the group.

11**. Plurals and Their Correct Verbs**
Incorrect: The wages is little. The scissors are broken. The police is coming.
Correct: The wages are little. The scissors is broken. The police are coming.

12**. Misplaced verb as modifier** (If you put the modifier in a different place in the sentence, it means something different.)
 Incorrect: Josh threatened to divorce her often. (This is not what you intend to say.)
Correct: Josh often threatened to divorce her.

13. **Misplaced noun as modifier**
Incorrect: We gave the flowers to the customer in the refrigerator.
Correct: We gave the flowers in the refrigerator to the customer.

14. **Misplaced adverbs** (Be careful where the adverb is placed in the sentence as it has a different meaning.)
Incorrect: She almost washed all of the dishes. He offered to paint the fence last night. (This is not what you intend to say.)
Correct: She washed almost all of the dishes. Last night, he offered to paint the fence.

15. **Parallel verb phrases**
Incorrect: She was late for work and fired by her boss.
Correct: She was late for work and was fired by her boss.

16. **Old friend/long time**
Incorrect: She was my old friend. (You may have known her for a long time, but she might be offended if you use the word "old" as it implies age.)
Correct: She was a friend who I have known for a long time.

17. **An/a**
Incorrect: It is a old television set, but it still works. It is an costly purchase.
Correct: It is an old television set, but it still works. It is a costly purchase.

18**. Among/between**
Incorrect: She could not decide among the two guys.
Correct: She could not decide between the two guys.

19. **Beside** (means "next to")/besides (means "in addition to")
Incorrect: Ask him to sit besides me.
Correct: Ask him to sit beside me.

20. **Presently** (soon or shortly)/at present (now, currently, at this time)
Incorrect: Presently, the boss is in his office.
Correct: At present, the boss is in his office.

21. **Regardless (despite)/irregardless (a nonstandard word)**
Incorrect: Irregardless of what you want, the restaurant does not have it.
Correct: Regardless of what you want, the restaurant does not have it.

22. **Rare (implies value)/scarce** (applied to ordinary things that are no longer in abundant) Incorrect: The painting was very scarce.
Correct: The painting was very rare.

23**. Future tense**
Incorrect: Tomorrow we go shopping.
Correct: Tomorrow we will go shopping.

24. **Since/for**
Incorrect: I've been in America since 3 months.
Correct: I've been in America for 3 months.

25**. Adjectives in right order**
Incorrect: Have you bought the blue china antique vase? I like ice cream vanilla the most. Correct: Have you bought the antique blue china vase? I like vanilla ice cream the most.

Bibliography:

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