

# **MIXED CONSTRUCTION**

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# Agenda:

- Definition of Mixed Construction
- How do we correct it?
- Summary
- Fun Time 😊

# What do you think with these sentences??

- For many patients who have a high level of LDL increases the risk of heart disease
- We decide that Tiffany's welfare would not be safe living with her mother
- The reason I missed the EE295 class is because my girlfriend was sick.

Do you find anything wrong with these sentences??

- For many patients who have a high level of LDL increases the risk of heart disease
- We decide that Tiffany's welfare would not be safe living with her mother
- The reason I missed the EE295 class is because my girlfriend was sick.

What is the mixed construction??

- **A mixed construction contains parts that do not sensibly fit together**
- **The mismatch may be a matter of Grammar of Logic**

How do we correct it ???





Untangle the grammatical  
structure

# Untangle the grammatical structure

## **Once you start writing a sentence**

- **Your choices are limited by the range of grammatical patterns in English.**
- **You cannot begin with one grammatical plan and switch without warning to another.**

# Untangle the grammatical structure

## Example (previously)

- ~~For many patients who have a high level of LDL~~ increases the risk of heart disease

### *Comment:*

The writer tried to use a long prepositional phrase as the subject of the sentence

A prepositional phrase  
**CANNOT** serve as  
the subject of a sentence!!

# Untangle the grammatical structure

- For many patients who have a high level of LDL increases the risk of heart disease

Revised: For many patients who have a high level of LDL, the risk of heart disease is increased.  
Subject Verb

## *Comment:*

To begin with the prepositional phrase, the writer must finish the sentence with **subject** and **verb**.

# Untangle the grammatical structure

## Another alternative:

- ~~For many patients~~ who have a high level of LDL increases the risk of heart disease

Revised: **Many patients** who have a high level of LDL **increases** their risks of heart disease.

## *Comment:*

To keep the original verb (**increase**), the writer must change into another way (**Many patients..**).

# Untangle the grammatical structure

- The adverb clause also **CANNOT** serve as the subject of a sentence!!

**Example:**

~~When an employee is promoted~~ without warning can be alarming.

**Revised:**

**Being** promoted without warning **can** be alarming.

***Comment:***

The writer can use a gerund phrase (**Being**) to replace the adverb clause (**When an employee is promoted**).

# Untangle the grammatical structure

- The Although clause is subordinate, so it cannot be linked to an independent clause with the coordinating conjunction but.

## Example:

- Although the United States is one of the wealthiest nations in the world, ~~but~~ more than twelve million of our children live in poverty.

# Untangle the grammatical structure

- **English does not allow double subjects**

## **Example:**

- **The squirrel that came down our chimney ~~it~~ did much damage.**

## **Example:**

- **Hearing screams, Serena ran over to the pool that her daughter was swimming in. ~~it.~~**

Straighten out the logical connections



# Straighten out the logical connections

- The subject and the predicate should make sense together

When they don't, the error is known as "*faulty predication*"

## Example (previously)

- We decide that ~~Tiffany's welfare~~ would not be safe living with her mother

## Revised:

- We decide that **Tiffany** would not be safe living with her mother.

*Comment: Tiffany, not her welfare, may not be safe.*

# Straighten out the logical connections

- An appositive and the noun to which it refers should be logically equivalent. When they are not, the error is known as “*faulty apposition*”

## Example:

- ~~The tax accountant~~, a very lucrative field, requires intelligence, patience, and attention to mathematical detail.

## Revised:

- Tax **accounting**, a very lucrative field, requires intelligence, patience, and attention to mathematical detail.

*Comment: The tax accountant is a person, not a field.*



Avoid is when, is where, and  
reason... is because  
construction

Avoid is when, is where, and reason... is because construction

- **Grammatically, the verb is (as well as are, was, and were) should be followed by a noun that renames the subject or by an adjective that describes it**
- **It should not be followed by an adverb clause beginning with when, where, or because.**

Avoid is when, is where, and reason... is because construction

### Example (previously)

- ~~The reason~~ I missed the EE295 class ~~is~~ because my girlfriend was sick.

### Revised:

- I missed the EE295 class because my girlfriend was sick.

### Comment:

- *The writer might have changed because to that (the reason I missed the EE295 class is that my girlfriend was sick), but the prior revision is more concise.*

# Summary

**To apply mixed construction in the sentence, the writer should..**

- ✓ **Untangle the grammatical structure**
- ✓ **Straighten out the logical connections**
- ✓ **Avoid ..is when, ..is where, and reason..is because constructions.**

# Fun Time 😊

Untangle the grammatical structure

## Exercise

- Singers, like athletes, sometimes take steroids to repair the damage from physical stress causes blisters, and vocal nodes to form on the vocal cords.

## Revised

- Singers, like athletes, sometimes take steroids to repair the damage from physical stress which causes blisters, and vocal nodes to form on the vocal cords.

# Fun Time 😊

Faulty Apposition

## Exercise

- **A physician, the career my brother is pursuing, required at least ten years of challenging work.**

Revised:

- **A career in medicine that my brother is pursuing requires at least ten years of challenging work.**

*Comment: (A physician is a person, not a career)*

# Fun Time 😊

faulty predication

## Exercise

- **The resolving power of an electron microscope is keenly aware of life invisible to the human eye.**

## Revised:

- **Aided by the resolving power of an electron microscope, we have grown keenly aware of life invisible to the human eye.**

*Comment: A microscope's power cannot be keenly aware: people can be.*



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## Tip of today

***“To correct a mixed construction error, find the element that plays two roles and re-structure the sentence so that it works in only one way.”***

**Source:**

**(<http://athena.english.vt.edu/~IDLE/Gym2/index.html>)**

ANY QUESTION??

**Thank you**