ASSIGNMENT No. 2

Q. 1 Discuss problems with sentences construction in technical writing.

Two key characteristics of effective academic writing are that it is precise and concise. This precision and concision must be evident at all levels, from the overall document, to paragraphing, to sentence structure to word choice, and even to punctuation. Every word or phrase should have a distinct and useful purpose.

Write Clear Sentences

Students sometimes worry that their sentences don't sound smart enough and they feel like they need to use the thesaurus to find fancy words instead of using their natural vocabulary. Fancy words and complicated sentences are not always better. Clear sentences are strong sentences.

Compare these two sentences (the first is taken from President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address):

1. Do not ask what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.

2. Do not submit a query concerning what assets and benefits your country can bestow upon you and yours, but rather inquire as to what tasks or activities you yourself can perform and carry out that will be useful for the citizens of your own country.

Although the second sentence is longer and harder to grasp, that doesn't make it more intelligent. In fact, it's far more impressive to write a complex thought in simple prose than vice versa. Beware, however, that you do not lose meaning when you make a sentence simpler; cut out only the most unnecessary "fluffy" adjectives, but don't sacrifice being descriptive.

Clear writing involves knowing what you want to say before you say it. So a lack of clarity often comes from unclear thinking or poor planning. This, unfortunately, leads to confused or annoyed readers. For many of us, our ideas become more clear as we draft our essays. That's why the revision process is so important. As you clarify your ideas, you need to ensure that each sentence conveys one idea, and that each paragraph thoroughly develops one unified concept.

Avoid vague and unnecessary words

Are you **very** hungry? Or are you so hungry you could eat out the entire refrigerator? Is your English class **really** great? Or does your English class make you feel as if you are the most creative writer and the smartest thinker, lucky enough to be studying in class full of ambitious and engaged peers? Words like very and really don't say much. Instead of using stock or clichéd phrases, try to be more specific about what you mean. Below are some examples of overused intensifiers and clichés you should be wary of.

Vary the Length of your Sentences

Your sentences should vary in length (short sentence). Avoid having too many long sentences because they take longer to read and are often more complex (longer sentence). Reserve the short sentences for main points and use longer sentences for supporting points that clarify or explain cause and effect relationships (longer sentence). If you feel the sentence is too long, break it into two sentences (medium sentence). You do not want your reader to have to read a sentence twice to understand it (short sentence). (Note: you'll learn more in a later

module about using colons and semi-colons to structure your complicated and longer sentences so that don't get out of control, grammatically.)

Name the People

Directly state who or what group is acting in your sentences. Note the contrast in power and clarity among the sentences below

- **Without people:** A citywide ban on indoor smoking in Duluth originally caused a marked drop in bar patronage.
- **With people:** When the Duluth City Council passed a citywide ban on indoor smoking, many people stopped going to bars.

Use Active Verbs

Consider replacing "be-verbs" (is, am, are, was, were, be, has/have been) with active verbs that allow you to compose powerful sentences shaped around action. Below the italics are the same sentences that have been transformed with active verbs.

- **To be**: The sharp rise in fuel prices **is** a serious challenge to trucking firms. It makes it hard for them to provide timely service to customers and to meet payroll expenses.
- **Active**: Sharply rising fuel prices **challenge** trucking firms by causing delays in customer service and payroll.
- **To be**: Primary causes of the rise in fuel prices **are** an issue of confusion for many citizens. They don't know how to fight the rise because they don't know its cause.
- **Active**: Primary causes of rising fuel prices **elude** many citizens, making them unaware of how to fight the increase.

Use Parallel Structure Effectively

Simply put, parallellism is the practice of using the same patterns in words and structures in order to provide balance to sentences and paragraphs.

Parallel structure can be applied to a single sentence, a paragraph, or even multiple paragraphs. Compare the two following sentences:

- Yara loves running, to swim, and biking.
- Yara loves running, swimming, and biking.

Was the second sentence a smoother read than the first? The second sentence uses parallelism—all three verbs are gerunds (running, swimming, biking) —whereas in the first sentence two are gerunds (running and biking) and one is an infinitive (to swim). When reading the first sentence, it's easy to trip up over the mismatching items. Using strong parallel structure improves writing style and readability and makes sentences easier to process.

Compare the following examples:

- Lacking parallelism: "She likes cooking, jogging, and to read."

- o   Parallel: "She likes cooking, jogging, and reading."

- o   Parallel: "She likes to cook, jog, and read."

- Lacking parallelism: "The dog ran across the yard and jumped over the fence, and **down the alley he sprinted**."

  - o   Parallel: "The dog ran across the yard, jumped over the fence, and **sprinted down the alley**."

The parallel examples sound much better to your ears.

You can also apply parallelism across a passage:

Manuel painted eight paintings in the last week. Jennifer sculpted five statues in the last month. Zama wrote fifteen songs in the last two months.

Each of the sentences in the preceding paragraph has the same structure: Name + -ed verb + number of things + in the past time period. When using parallelism across multiple sentences, be sure that you're using it well. If you aren't careful, you can stray into being repetitive.

Effective Use of Parallelism and Repetition

Parallelism can also involve repeated words or repeated phrases. These uses are part of "rhetoric" (a field that focuses on persuading readers). Here are a few examples of repetition:

- "**The inherent vice** of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings; **the inherent virtue** of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries." —Winston Churchill

- "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall **pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe** to assure the survival and the success of liberty." —John F. Kennedy

- "And that government **of the people, by the people, for the people**, shall not perish from the earth." — Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address

When used this way, parallelism makes your writing or speaking much stronger. These repeated phrases seem to bind the work together and make it more powerful—and more inspiring.

Q. 2 How can you use foot notes for effective communication?

Footnotes, found at the bottom of a page, provide additional information or credit about the presented work. Discover some examples of footnotes in different formatting styles such as APA, MLA, and Chicago Manual styles.

Footnote:There are two types of footnotes commonly used in writing. A **content footnote** is used to provide additional information or reference that simplifies or supplements information in the text. A **copyright permission footnote** is used to give credit to the source for long quotations, tables or graphs, and other lengthy information within a text. Both types of footnotes will appear at the bottom of the printed page and the text that has a footnote will have a small letter or number following it. This same number or letter will appear at the bottom of the page beside the footnote.

Endnote: An endnote is the same as a footnote in that it gives a credit or additional information to the reader. The only difference is that an endnote is found at the end of the work, instead of at the bottom of the page.

Style Formatting

There are three main styles for footnotes used in writing today, and each has a slightly different way of making a footnote: APA (American Psychological Association), MLA (Modern Language Association), and Chicago Manual.

APA: Content notes should use a superscript number that is also used at the bottom of the page with the note. APA does not recommend the use of footnotes unless it is necessary for explanation because it is expensive to reproduce.

See the following content footnote in APA style:

evidence of Germanic leave no doubt that we have to do with Proto-Indo-European paradigmatic mobility.

Given the fact that a number of original consonant stems have preserved traces of consonantal inflection in both Baltic and Slavic, e.g. LI *dantis*, *šuõ* from PIE *$h_i$dent-, *$k\mathit{u}on$-,[4] it is possible that the monosyllabic stems had retained their original accentual mobility in Proto-Balto-Slavic. As was stated in Ch. 1 § 5, however, I do not think that the mobility of these stems played any significant role in the development of paradigmatic mobility in the Balto-Slavic vowel stems.

The following table shows the declension of the desinentially accented vowel stems in Proto-Indo-European; cf. the relevant parts of Ch. 1v § 2.

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1   Rasmussen 1978: 38; Schaffner 2001: 85; cf. Eichner 1974: 28–29.
2   Like in the *i*- and *u*-stems, original final accentuation of certain disyllabic desinences is assumed by some scholars, e.g. Hirt, who proposed a Vedic "Tonverschiebungsgesetz" to explain the penultimate accentuation of forms like *duhitṛṣu* (1929: 188–191, 230; the law was accepted by Bonfante 1931b: 168–169; in GK θυγατράσι the possibility exists of a retraction of the accent from the final syllable by Wheeler's Law, for which see Collinge 1985 [1996]: 221–223 with references; cf. Debrunner & Wackernagel 1930: 17; Meier-Brügger 1992: 288 (arguing for accent on the first syllable of the desinence in forms like this before the operation of Wheeler's Law).
3   Schaffner 2001: 625–631; cf. Griepentrog 1995: 479.
4   Stang 1966a: 223; notice Larsson 2003c: 239–240.

Now look at the following copyright permission footnote in APA style:

The details for arranging information in notes are found in your handbook.[3]

[3] Diana Hacker, *The Bedford Reader* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1998), 700.

MLA: MLA format for footnotes is very similar to APA style. MLA recommends limited use of footnotes and if they are needed, to use endnotes in place of footnotes. The reason for this is because footnotes can often take up too much space at the bottom of the page whereas the endnotes don't take up any room because they are on a separate page at the end of the piece of writing.

See the following content footnote in MLA style:

Finally, I will consider how the way Yeats reads and rereads himself functions both to authorize and undermine the authority of his poetic voice, and the relation of these dynamics to those romantic tensions I will have outlined. In the end I shall suggest that the myth of himself Yeats took such great pains to manufacture, and which is repeatedly and faithfully taken up in biographical studies of his poetry, is itself the golden bird of his "Byzantium," that artificial monument in which he figures his own immortality.[1]

II. Yeats's Myth of Himself: The Influence of the Romantics

Yeats intentionally and explicitly leads his readers to interpret his poetry in terms of his imaginative and intellectual development, so as to unify them according to his conception of "unity of being."[2] The result is that nearly every major study has attempted to synthesize his life and work, suggesting some kind of unified, comprehensive vision toward which the narrative of his career leads. Ellman writes: "We have seen how his life and work had converged. . . now he wanted to fuse life, work, and country into one dissoluble whole."[3]

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[1] David Young, in his chapter on "Byzantium," also emphasizes reads the poem as a working out of the artist's desire for immortality. He argues that "Sooner or later readers must consider that this poem is about the relation between artist and work of art. The later can be perfect and changeless, while the former is subject to decay and mortality." (Young, David. in Troubled Mirror: A Study of Yeats's *The Tower* (Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1987), 17.)

[2] Norman A. Jeffares, Yeats's Poems (London: Papermac, 1989), 580.

[3] Ellman, Richard, Yeats: The Man and the Masks (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1958), 265.

Now look at the following copyright permission footnote in MLA style:

In the book Lawrence is compared to "a caliph . . . who had stepped out from the pages of 'The Arabian nights'".[1]

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[1] Lowell Thomas, *With Lawrence in Arabia* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1924) 16.

Q. 3 Discuss visual aids in details to teach technical writing.

In the past, transparencies displayed with overhead projectors, posters, and flip charts were common visual aids, but these have mostly been replaced with computer technology. For many people, the term "visual aids" for presentations or speeches is synonymous with PowerPoint (often long, dry, painful PowerPoint at that), but this is just one type of visual aid. You should consider all the available options to determine what will be most effective and appropriate for your presentation. Some people chose to dress up as part of their presentation, and

this can help set the tone of the speech or reinforce a specific point. A speaker may choose to wear a handmade sweater in a talk about knitting in order to inspire others to begin the hobby. Another speaker may opt for a firefighter's uniform in a speech about joining the local volunteer fire department in an effort to appeal to the respect most people have for people in uniform.

If you aren't dressing in relation to your topic, you should dress appropriately for your audience and venue. A presentation to a professional audience or at a professional conference would lend itself to appropriate business attire. If you are giving a presentation to your local Girl Scout troop, more casual clothing may be the best choice. Any time you are doing a demonstration, make sure you are dressed appropriately to give the demonstration. It is difficult for a speaker to show how to correctly put on a rock climbing harness if she is wearing a skirt the day of the presentation.

Beyond dressing appropriately for your audience and topic, the audience will make judgments about you even before your presentation begins. Your dress, mannerisms, the way you greet the audience when they are arriving, how you are introduced, and the first words out of your mouth all impact your credibility and ability to connect with your audience. Make sure you are calm and welcoming to your audience when they arrive and greet them in a professional manner. Your credibility and professionalism suffer when the audience arrives and you are busy scrambling around attempting to finish your preparations. Objects and props, such as a bicycle helmet for a speech on bike safety or an actual sample of the product you are trying to sell, can greatly enhance your presentation. Seeing the actual item will often make it easier for your audience to understand your meaning and will help you connect with your audience on an emotional level. Props can be used as part of demonstrations (discussed below) or as a stand-alone item that you refer to in your speech.

There are several important considerations for using props in your presentation. If you have a large audience, showing the prop at the front of the venue may mean that audience members can't see the item. The alternative to this is to pass the item around, though Young and Travis advice caution in passing objects around during your speech, as most people will be seeing the object after you have moved on with your talk. Having your prop out of sync with your presentation, either as it is passed around disrupting your audience's attention or by having your prop visible when you aren't talking about it, is distracting to your audience and message. To make the most effective use of props in your presentation, carefully consider how the object will be visible to your entire audience when you are speaking about it, and make sure it is out of sight when you are not.

A demonstration can serve two different purposes in a speech. First, it can be used to "wow" the audience. Showing off the features of your new product, illustrating the catastrophic failure of a poorly tied climbing knot, or launching a cork across the room during a chemistry experiment are all ways of capturing the audience's attention. Demonstration should not be gimmicky, but should add value to your presentation. When done well, it can be the memorable moment from your speech, so make sure it reinforces the central message of your talk.

Demonstration can also be used to show how something is done. People have different learning styles, and a process demonstration can help visual learners better understand the concept being taught. Consider for a

moment the difference between reading the instructions on how to perform CPR, watching someone perform CPR, and trying CPR on the training dummy. As evidenced by the huge number of online videos illustrating how to do something, there is great value in watching while you learn a new task.

If your presentation includes a process where seeing will improve understanding, consider including a demonstration. Because you have a limited time to present, make sure your demonstrations are succinct, well-rehearsed, and visible to the entire audience. Be prepared for the demonstration to fail and have a back-up plan in place. It is better to move forward with your presentation than to fret with trying to get your demonstration perfect or fixed. However, if you are providing a demonstration of your new product, make sure it is as error free as possible. If you can't be positive the product will perform as expected, it is better to skip the demonstration. If you are presenting to a small audience, around a dozen people, you may choose to use a poster rather than PowerPoint. The focus of your poster should be to support your core message and can be left behind to remind those in attendance of your presentation after you have left. Posters should look professional (e.g., not handwritten), be visible to everyone in the room, and follow design rules covered later in this chapter. Before your presentation, you should ask whether posters must be hung or be free standing. For posters that will be hung from a wall, sturdy poster or matte boards will suffice. If your poster is going to be free standing or if you are going to use the same poster for multiple presentations, you should consider using a tri-fold display board.

Q. 4 What are the styles of citing refreshing? Explain

Academic disciplines have varying expectations for how to list citation information. In some instances, even two journals in the same field will use different styles. This guide covers the three main styles used at Yale. All three of these styles require the same basic information, but the order of that information varies, in part because different academic fields emphasize different elements of a source when referring to previous research.

The first two styles are known as "in-text" citation styles, which means that you give some information about the source directly after the quotation, but leave the rest to a list of References (APA) or Works Cited (MLA) at the end of the paper. (1) MLA style, defined by the Modern Language Association, is most common in the humanities. Because humanities research highlights how one piece of writing influences another, MLA style emphasizes the author's name and the page in the original text you're using. This information allows scholars to track down easily the exact sentences you're analyzing. (2) APA style, defined by the American Psychological Association, is most common in the social sciences. Although the author's name is an important element in APA citations, this style emphasizes the year the source was published, rather than the page number, which allows a reader to see quickly how the research you're writing about has evolved over time.

The alternative to in-text citation is to use footnotes, which give source information at the bottom of the page. The footnote style we demonstrate here is called Chicago style, defined by the University of Chicago. Chicago style is especially popular in historical research. When developing a historical explanation from multiple primary sources, using footnotes instead of inserting parenthetical information allows the reader to focus on the evidence instead of being distracted by the publication information about that evidence. The footnotes can be

consulted if someone wants to track down your source for further research. Chicago style is more flexible than MLA and APA formats, and therefore more complicated to explain. Please see **More Notes on Chicago Style Footnotes** for more information about how Chicago style is treated in this guide. All three of these styles have different conventions for how to refer to a source in the body of your paper.

Note: Some works written with MLA or APA style also include what are called **discursive** footnotes. Rather than giving only the author and title of the sources, these notes discuss in a sentence or two some aspect of the evidence that is not part of the paper's main argument. Discursive footnotes are also welcome in Chicago style, and many papers that use Chicago style footnotes will mix discursive footnotes with others that just give bibliographical information.

You should check with your instructors about the style they want you to use. When in doubt, remember that the goal of your citations is to help a reader who wishes to consult your sources directly. Give enough information to make such retrieval easy. The examples below are correct, and can be relied on as guides for citing your sources. But the examples don't always highlight very slight variations in format among the styles (for instance, whether to use a colon or parentheses to separate the issue number from the volume number in a quarterly journal). For more information about each of these citation styles, see the websites listed below.

Q. 5 How do you avoid plagiarism in writing technically?

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the verb "to plagiarize" means:

"to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own : use (another's production) without crediting the source"

The inclusion of the word "steal" in this definition, includes instances when another's ideas or words are intentionally used without crediting the source. Even accidentally using another's ideas or words without proper citation, due to carelessness, falls under this definition since your work tries to "pass off" another's work as your own.

In our tech-forward culture, the simple act of copy-and-paste can seem harmless, but it has serious consequences in academic and professional settings.

At its core, plagiarism is an ethical issue. A writer who submits plagiarized work is committing theft with the hope of benefiting from that theft. This is true whether you're turning in a school paper to get an "A" or are a writer by trade expecting monetary compensation.

Avoiding plagiarism is paramount as a writer because it compromises your integrity. Aside from losing the respect of your mentors and peers, it could cost you valuable professional referrals and future career advancement. If you're still in school, plagiarism may result in lost financial aid or leadership roles.

Additionally, it takes credit or profit away from the original creator of the work which may mean more trouble if the source takes legal action against you.

Fortunately, it's not all scary. Avoiding plagiarism is actually easy to do now that you have a foundational understanding of what it is. To help you steer clear of this taboo, here's how to avoid plagiarism in your writing.

1 Cite your source

When alluding to an idea or wording that's not your own, add a citation in your writing that identifies the full name of the source, the date it was published, and any other citation element that's required by the style guide you're adhering to.

2 Include quotations

If you insert a source's words into your writing, verbatim, one of the most simple yet obvious ways to avoid plagiarism is by using quotation marks around the text to denote that the words aren't your own. A direct quote should also cite the source so that readers know who the quote is from.

3 Paraphrase

Paraphrasing is rewriting a source's ideas or information into your own words, without changing its meaning. But be careful—paraphrasing can slip into plagiarism if done incorrectly.

Successfully paraphrasing without plagiarizing involves a bit of a dance. Reword and format your writing in an original way, and try to avoid using too many similar words or phrases from the source. The key is to do so without altering the meaning of the idea itself. Remember, you're still using another's idea so you'll need to include a citation to the source.

4 Present your own idea

Instead of parroting the source's ideas or words, explore what you have to say about it. Ask yourself what unique perspective or point you can contribute in your writing that's entirely your own. Keep in mind that if you're alluding to a source's ideas or words to frame your own point, you'll still need to apply the guidelines above to avoid plagiarizing.

If you're writing on the same topic for multiple assignments, it can be tempting to recycle some of your previous words—this is called "self-plagiarism". The risk involved with self-plagiarism is just as high if the publisher or your instructor didn't give you permission to reuse your old work.

5 Use a plagiarism checker

While conducting your research on a topic, some phrases or sentences might stick with you so well that you inadvertently include them in your writing without a citation. When in doubt, using an online plagiarism checking tool can help you catch these issues before submitting your work.

There are several plagiarism checkers online, such as the one offered by Small SEO Tools. Grammarly also offers a plagiarism checker that scans your text for borrowed content for free. These tools let you know whether or not parts of your writing are plagiarized—and some even highlight the specific words or sentences of concern and identify where the text originated from.

These suggestions can be helpful in avoiding plagiarism in your work and is worth the effort. In addition to being more aware of what constitutes plagiarism, figuring out how to avoid plagiarism ultimately takes daily practice.