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Types of faulty parallelism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES Identify sentences that are parallel and not parallel. Identify ways to create parallelism in writing. Write and revise sentences using parallelism. Earlier in this chapter, we learned that increasing sentence variety adds interest to a piece of writing and makes the reading process more enjoyable for others. Using a mixture of sentence lengths and patterns throughout an essay is an important writing technique. However, it is equally important to avoid introducing variation within individual sentences. A strong sentence is composed of balanced parts that all have the same structure. In this section, we will examine how to create a balanced sentence structure by using parallelism. Parallelism is the use of similar structure in related words, clauses, or phrases. It creates a sense of rhythm and balance within a sentence. As readers, we often correct faulty parallelism—a lack of parallel structure—intuitively because an unbalanced sentence sounds awkward and poorly constructed. Read the following sentences aloud: **Faulty parallelism:** Kelly had to iron, do the washing, and shopping before her parents arrived. **Faulty parallelism:** Driving a car requires coordination, patience, and to have good eyesight. **Faulty parallelism:** Ali prefers jeans to wearing a suit. All of these sentences contain faulty parallelism. Although they are factually correct, the construction is clunky and confusing. In the first example, three different verb forms are used. In the second and third examples, the writer begins each sentence by using a noun (coordination, jeans), but ends with a phrase (to have good eyesight, wearing a suit). Now read the same three sentences that have correct parallelism. **Correct parallelism:** Kelly had to do the ironing, washing, and shopping before her parents arrived. **Correct parallelism:** Driving a car requires coordination, patience, and good eyesight. **Correct parallelism:** Ali prefers wearing jeans to wearing a suit. When these sentences are written using a parallel structure, they sound more aesthetically pleasing because they are balanced. Repetition of grammatical construction also minimizes the amount of work the reader has to do to decode the sentence. This enables the reader to focus on the main idea in the sentence and not on how the sentence is put together. A simple way to check for parallelism in your writing is to make sure you have paired nouns with nouns, verbs with verbs, prepositional phrases with prepositional phrases, and so on. Underline each element in a sentence and check that the corresponding element uses the same grammatical form. When you connect two clauses using a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so), make sure that the same grammatical structure is used on each side of the conjunction. Take a look at the following example: **Faulty parallelism:** When I walk the dog, I like to listen to music and talking to friends on the phone. **Correct parallelism:** When I walk the dog, I like listening to music and talking to friends on the phone. The first sentence uses two different verb forms (to listen, talking). In the second sentence, the grammatical construction on each side of the coordinating conjunction (and) is the same, creating a parallel sentence. The same technique should be used for joining items or lists in a series: **Faulty parallelism:** This committee needs to decide whether the company should reduce its workforce, cut its benefits, or lowering workers' wages. **Correct parallelism:** This committee needs to decide whether the company should reduce its workforce, cut its benefits, or lower workers' wages. The first sentence contains two items that use the same verb construction (reduce, cut) and a third item that uses a different verb form (lowering). The second sentence uses the same verb construction in all three items, creating a parallel structure. **Exercise 1** On your own sheet of paper, revise each of the following sentences to create parallel structure using coordinating conjunctions. Mr. Holloway enjoys reading and to play his guitar at weekends. The doctor told Mrs. Franklin that she should either eat less or should exercise more. Breaking out of the prison compound, the escapees moved carefully, quietly, and were quick on their feet. I have read the book, but I have not watched the movie version. Deal with a full inbox first thing in the morning, or by setting aside short periods of time in which to answer e-mail queries. **Collaboration** Please share with a classmate and compare your answers. When you are making a comparison, the two items being compared should have a parallel structure. Comparing two items without using parallel structure can lead to confusion about what is being compared. Comparisons frequently use the words than or as, and the items on each side of these comparison words should be parallel. Take a look at the following example: **Faulty parallelism:** Swimming in the ocean is much tougher than a pool. **Correct parallelism:** Swimming in the ocean is much tougher than swimming in a pool. In the first sentence, the elements before the comparison word (than) are not equal to the elements after the comparison word. It appears that the writer is comparing an action (swimming) with a noun (a pool). In the second sentence, the writer uses the same grammatical construction to create a parallel structure. This clarifies that an action is being compared with another action. To correct some instances of faulty parallelism, it may be necessary to add or delete words in a sentence. **Faulty parallelism:** A brisk walk is as beneficial to your health as going for a run. **Correct parallelism:** Going for a brisk walk is as beneficial to your health as going for a run. In this example, it is necessary to add the verb phrase going for to the sentence in order to clarify that the act of walking is being compared to the act of running. **Exercise 2** On your own sheet of paper, revise each of the following sentences to create parallel structure using than or as. I would rather work at a second job to pay for a new car than a loan. How you look in the workplace is just as important as your behavior. The firefighter spoke more of his childhood than he talked about his job. Indian cuisine is far tastier than the food of Great Britain. Jim's opponent was as tall as Jim and he carried far more weight. **Collaboration** Please share with a classmate and compare your answers. A correlative conjunction is a paired conjunction that connects two equal parts of a sentence and shows the relationship between them. Common correlative conjunctions include the following: either...or not only...but also neither...nor whether...or rather...than both...and Correlative conjunctions should follow the same grammatical structure to create a parallel sentence. Take a look at the following example: **Faulty parallelism:** We can neither wait for something to happen nor can we take evasive action. **Correct parallelism:** We can neither wait for something to happen nor take evasive action. When using a correlative conjunction, the words, phrases, or clauses following each part should be parallel. In the first sentence, the construction of the second part of the sentence does not match the construction of the first part. In the second sentence, omitting needless words and matching verb constructions create a parallel structure. Sometimes, rearranging a sentence corrects faulty parallelism. **Faulty parallelism:** It was both a long movie and poorly written. **Correct parallelism:** The movie was both long and poorly written. To see examples of parallelism in use, read some of the great historical speeches by rhetoricians such as Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. Notice how they use parallel structures to emphasize important points and to create a smooth, easily understandable oration. Here is a link to text, audio, video, and the music of Martin Luther King's speech "I Have a Dream": . Speechwriters use parallelism not only within sentences but also throughout paragraphs and beyond. Repeating particular key phrases throughout a speech is an effective way of tying a paragraph together as a cohesive whole and creating a sense of importance. This technique can be adapted to any piece of writing, but it may be especially useful for creating a proposal or other type of persuasive workplace document. Note that the spelling and grammar checker on most word processors will not draw attention to faulty parallelism. When proofreading a document, read it aloud and listen for sentences that sound awkward or poorly phrased. **Exercise 3** On your own sheet of paper, revise each of the following sentences to create parallel structure using correlative conjunctions. The cyclist owns both a mountain bike and has a racing bike. The movie not only contained lots of action, but also it offered an important lesson. My current job is neither exciting nor is it meaningful. Jason would rather listen to his father than be taking advice from me. We are neither interested in buying a vacuum cleaner nor do we want to utilize your carpet cleaning service. **Collaboration** Please share with a classmate and compare your answers. **Exercise 4** Read through the following excerpt from Alex's essay and revise any instances of faulty parallelism. Rewrite the sentences to create a parallel structure. Parallelism creates a sense of rhythm and balance in writing by using the same grammatical structure to express equal ideas. Faulty parallelism occurs when elements of a sentence are not balanced, causing the sentence to sound clunky and awkward. Parallelism may be created by connecting two clauses or making a list using coordinating conjunctions; by comparing two items using than or as; or by connecting two parts of a sentence using correlative conjunctions. 92 / 100 Faulty Parallelism is the grammatical error affecting readability and creates distractions. In this article, you will know the causes and tips to improve.What is Parallelism?Parallelism is a structural balance within one or more sentences, clauses, and phrases. The structural balance improves readability and makes the sentence easier to understand. For instance, the faulty parallelism is," she likes reading, cooking, and to jog." What do you think about this sentence. Is this correct?I am sure, you find it wrong. Yes, the correct form of this sentence is below:"She likes reading, cooking, and jogging."Let's consider one more example for more clarity."She likes running and baseball."Have you detected the parallel in this sentence? No? Yes, you are correct. This sentence doesn't have any parallel. Thus, lacks readability and effectiveness as well.So, the correct way to write this sentence with proper parallelism is "She likes running and playing baseball."What is Faulty Parallelism?Now, you must be wondering, what does parallelism actually mean?So, it is one grammatical error that people generally commit in the English language. The error affects the flow of the sentence, whether it's oral or written. In other words, Parallelism is the placement or use of proper forms of different parts of the sentences. Like clauses, words, and phrases. The correct use of all these parts is necessary for effective language use.Whereas, the incorrect forms of the sentence are equivalent in meaning but not grammatically. The basic grammar rule is one should use equal ideas in forms. Like verbs with verbs, nouns with nouns, phrases with phrases, and similar clauses with clauses.This correct placement will ensure the right delivery of the message by the sender and correct readability by the receiver as well. It will not distract your audience and make the communication effective.You may not just commit this error in a sentence only. There are chances of faulty parallelism in listing as well. Let's discuss some examples of this error in the list below:The purpose is defined.You must discuss the findings.What should the team do?Have you gone through this list properly? So, you just found that there is no flow in reading it. The first sentence is a simple form sentence. The second one is focusing on "we" whereas, and the last point in question. So, there is no flow and link established in this.Now, let's see what should be the correct form of this list mentioned below:Define Purpose.Discuss the findings.Determine Team tasks.So, this form is equivalent and grammatically right because the beginning of each sentence is with the verb followed by the object.Causes of Faulty ParallelismIf you think, how incorrect parallelism impacts your sentence. It's very common among us all. Generally, most of the mistakes happen in complex sentences. The sentence with longer phrases and lists may result in faulty parallelism.Another major cause of this error is confusion. Yes, we probably get confused while drafting a sentence. This leads to a plethora of errors in the sentence.How to Avoid Faulty Parallelism? Now, you are known with the causes of this grammatical error. The benefit of knowing this is to understand the ways to avoid the fault.How to correct?In case you find any incorrect form of words, phrases, and clauses in your sentence. You have to correct it now by following simple steps as follows:ProofreadThe most important and smart way to remove the error is proofreading. You need to check your writing and find the following points.Reduce Long sentences:As these sentences are the major cause of faulty parallelism. So, make them simpler as much as you can.Re-write the lists: Check your list and make ensure that the first word of all the points is in the same form. As, in these points, the sentence is starting from the verb.Read your writing piece: Now, to ensure the quality read your piece of writing in loud. If you stumble at any point or sentence, then it has a problem. Re-check it.Tips to ImproveSome other tips for improving the writing skills and avoid faulty parallelism are given below:Re-arrange the sentences/ wordsYou may use punctuation marks like semicolon to connect two sentences.Moreover, you can add extra information in parenthesis.Some FAQsHow do you fix faulty parallelism?The simple way to avoid this error is to use simple grammar and sentences. Make ensure that you are using all the elements in parallel. For instance, if you are writing "I am thinking and to run." Does it make any sense?No, yeah.Contrarily, if you write "I am thinking and running." This makes sense and fluency too.This is a very basic example of faulty parallelism. Depending upon your competency level, you may also think, who can make this basic mistake? But the hard truth is some fellows make. So, we need to practice more and more on this and excel in writing skills.What does faulty parallelism errors in a sentence?We write a piece to influence certain readers. Every writing or piece of article or paper has some meaning to someone and adds value to their skills or life. So, we must try to create a great impact and avoid the inconvenience in reading and understanding the information. This error refrains the reader to make the flow.Resulting in distraction and making your piece a waste. Do you want that? A big NO so improves your grammar and buckle up with the new version.Give examples of faulty parallelism?Now, let's focus on different ways to fix faulty parallelism. For example, the incorrect sentence isFaulty Parallelism: "My Sister likes to visit Malls and eating Sweets."So, firstly the error in this sentence is "to visit" and "eating". Now, we can either use a gerund sentence with "to" or simply use the continuous verb i.e. "eating". So, let us show you the correct forms of this sentence:Correct Parallelism form: "My Sister likes visiting malls and to eat sweets."Or the other way isCorrect form: "My Sister likes visiting malls and eating sweets."This sentence had two verbs. So now, we will see the sentence with three verbs.Faulty parallelism: "The customer wants to exchange the handbag, to get a refund or she wants to talk to the CEO."Correct Parallelism form: "The customer wants to exchange the handbag, to get a refund, or to talk to the CEO."Similarly,Other Correct form: "The customer wants to exchange the handbag, get a refund, or to talk to the CEO."Hence, I hope you are clear with the concept of Parallelism and will not commit these mistakes in your writing and make a masterpiece. Good Luck!Seven Sister Collages – Everything you need to know what is an example of faulty parallelism. what faulty parallelism

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