

### Additional Note:

In summarising the plot of a play, book or film, the so-called historic present is generally used:

The main character is a German doctor, Rabik, who *emigrates* to France because of his political beliefs. Although he *is* a clever, skilled, and experienced surgeon, he *cannot* work as he used to...

The natural candidate for the title of ninth Duke d'Ascoigne, Louis Mazzini, *has been disinherited* by his family. Louis *suffers* the additional blow of the loss of his mother, who was his one friend and ally. Soon, however, he *evolves* a precise plan of revenge.

## PART TWO

# Coordination

Good English is generally very careful to express things which are parallel in thought in a way which is correspondingly parallel in form. This is especially important when enumerating lists of items:

The constitutional functions of HM the Queen include *opening* Parliament, *receiving* new ambassadors, *giving* her consent to new legislation, as well as *being* the supreme head of the Church of England.

This sentence, listing the Queen's constitutional functions, is clearly and consistently organised by means of a series of gerunds (*opening... receiving... giving... being...*). An equally possible alternative would have been a sentence like the following:

Among her various constitutional functions, HM the Queen is expected *to open* Parliament, *to receive* new ambassadors, *to give* her consent to new legislation....

or even a sentence like this one:

The constitutional functions of HM the Queen include *the opening of* Parliament, *the reception of* new ambassadors, *the granting of* her consent to new legislation....

One of the most common mistakes is to list items in a grammatically inconsistent manner, using different grammatical categories, as in the following sentence:

The Roundtable recognises three projects — *to cross* the Channel by bridge, *the tunnel* between Denmark and Sweden, and *developing* a new European high-speed rail network.

Here the three projects are not expressed in any coordinated way: the sentence needs to be rewritten in a consistent manner, either: “*to cross the Channel..., to build the tunnel..., and to develop...*”, or: “*the*

*bridge across the Channel, the tunnel..., and a new European high-speed rail network."*

A related error of coordination involves the use of the pronoun *one*. It is important to be consistent when using the word, as in the following sentence:

*One* must not forget that *one* is, after all, but a temporary sojourner on this earth (*instead of*: "One must not forget that he...").

### Suggested Exercises (10):

Rewrite the following in more coordinated (and where necessary, grammatically correct) English:

1. He is neither a member of Parliament nor of a political party.
2. The author's intention was not only to attack social hypocrisies but also an appeal for greater humanity.
3. This kind of understanding requires a great deal of effort — both from the teenagers and older sections of the community.
4. Languages are disparate not only in regard to grammar and vocabulary but also they differ phonetically.
5. Industrialisation does more harm than good to forests, animals, and indirectly to ourselves.
6. The police do not only not want to protect black people but sometimes even beat them up.
7. Australians almost worship their sports heroes irrespective of their worth as individual people and without distinguishing the importance of their achievements.
8. The vicar said that there was too much permissiveness in society anyway and therefore the young were in need of firm moral guidance.
9. We need a person who is not afraid of responsibility and making important decisions.
10. Not only are there no funds for classroom equipment, scientific laboratories and sports facilities, but even for basic needs of schools.
11. He talked about the famine, how more supplies were urgently needed, and that the situation was serious.
12. Besides, this project would not only become a major tourist attraction but a profitable business for the town as well.

13. We knew that everyone important, whether British or from America, would be at the meeting.

14. The book was written not only for the edification of young people but also to remind adults of their own duties.

15. Either they will go west for a few years or forever.

16. He not only presents the events but also his reactions to them.

17. Their religion teaches them to be kind, tolerant, love other people, nature and life.

18. The heroine becomes on the one hand the object of Wayne's love and devotion, and on the other of Benjamin's hatred.

19. They turn to theft, steal cars, break into shops or private houses, and finally they are sent to prison.

20. Before the War not only teachers were very rigid but also parents.

21. That has become an important date not only in the history of the USA but also of the whole world.

22. That would be good both for the children and teachers.

23. The reader does not only witness spectacular events but also takes part in the daily life of the main characters.

24. Many people merely show their respect for convention rather than they really believe in God.

25. So if we want our family life to change for the better, do your best and try first to change yourself, and then start to find the way to communicate with your parents.

26. The author planned to write something completely devoid of culture, taste, good manners, shocking and disgusting for a typical Parisian bourgeois.

Similarly one should avoid making the verb-form change unnecessary within the same sentence, as in the following:

These refugees *had known* degradation, for every conceivable injury *had been inflicted* on them.

This sentence is confusing because the subject of the first verb is not the subject of the second, even though the switch in subject seems to serve little purpose. Better would be a sentence like:

These refugees had known degradation, *having been subjected* to every conceivable injury.

Much the same can be said about the following sentence, where the switch in subject makes the sentence especially unclear:

Research *has been done* on this virus by scientists at our department, but *it still remains* an enigma.

Perhaps the worst thing about the sentence is that *it* can refer to *research*, *virus*, or *department*. A possible way of improving the text would be to write:

Scientists at our department *have been conducting* research into this virus, but so far *they have not met* with much success.

### Suggested Exercises (11):

Rewrite the following sentences in more coordinated English:

1. The book was well received by critics, and they praised the scrupulous scholarship of the author.
2. They were arguing for days, but no agreement was reached.
3. It must be a person who is not afraid of responsibility, and at the same time any kind of criticism should not worry him or her.
4. Women in our country like the idea of equality of the sexes, and the picture of the "modern woman" is very tempting to them.
5. At that time Castro expressed warm friendship for the communist countries, and closer economic ties were established with them.
6. After its discovery Canada was first a French colony and then the British acquired it.
7. People in Europe not only adopted so-called American tastes but also some of their habits changed to what we might call the American life.

## Left- and Right-Handed Sentences

Typical of many types of good English is the striving to create variety in sentence patterns, the avoidance of monotony. This can be illustrated by means of two alternative beginnings to a brief biographical entry for Marilyn Monroe:

A. Marilyn Monroe was born in Los Angeles on June 1, 1926. She was the illegitimate daughter of a depressive mother. Her early life was passed in various foster homes. She was selected as a model by an army photographer in 1944 and became a forces' pin-up overnight. She won a Twentieth Century Fox contract in 1946, but until the mid-50s her film appearances were restricted to minor roles. She was complex, driven, demanding, self-absorbed, and an early convert to the dubious pleasures of psychoanalysis. She ceaselessly revealed, reinvented and deconstructed herself at interviews and soon came to exercise a hypnotic fascination over a whole generation of Americans.

B. Born in Los Angeles on June 1, 1926, the illegitimate daughter of a depressive mother, Marilyn Monroe's early life was passed in various foster homes. Selected as a model by an army photographer in 1944 and becoming a forces' pin-up overnight, she won a Twentieth Century Fox contract in 1946, but until the mid-50s her film appearances were restricted to minor roles. Complex, driven, demanding, self-absorbed, and an early convert to the dubious pleasures of psychoanalysis, she ceaselessly revealed, reinvented and deconstructed herself at interviews, soon exercising a hypnotic fascination over a whole generation of Americans.

In **Passage A** every single sentence begins with the subject of the main verb, thereby creating an impression of monotony and failing to capture the attention of the reader.

In **Passage B**, by contrast, no sentence begins with the subject. In the first sentence the subject is preceded by a participial clause (*Born...*) and an appositional phrase (*the illegitimate daughter...*). In

the third sentence the subject is preceded by a series of adjectives (*Complex, driven, demanding...*) and a phrase (*an early convert...*) in apposition, while the main verb is actually followed by a participial clause as well (*soon exercising...*).

This variation in word-order is a crucial technique for avoiding sentence monotony, and its importance can hardly be overestimated. It is favoured by many writers of English — and especially by journalists, reviewers, biographers, and translators of literature. Here are a few more such sentences, which are sometimes referred to as 'left-handed':

1. A semi-secret network, the Broederbund considers itself responsible for maintaining the interests of the tribe. (*Instead of:* The Broederbund, which is a semi-secret network, considers itself responsible for ... .)
2. A lonely figure, he was compelled to react in the gloom of the 30s to the political situation. (*Instead of:* He was a lonely figure and he was compelled to react in the gloom... .)
3. Fiercely clan-ridden and individualistic, that nation has always thwarted any encroachments on its collective independence. (*Instead of:* Since it is fiercely clan-ridden and individualistic, that nation... .)

### Suggested Exercises (12):

Rewrite the following sentences using similar syntactical patterns:

1. They are the first sectarian killings this year. They highlight the increased activity of the Protestants in recent months.
2. The new clerk was hard-working and reliable, within a short time he had made himself indispensable.
3. Gowen is a former Springbok captain; he has received many international awards for rugby.
4. He was a corpulent man with a short black moustache; he was wearing what appeared to be an old military uniform.
5. These groups were jealous of their traditional prerogatives and implacably hostile to any change. They were organised in a supreme council known as the Congress.
6. He was a solitary man; he was a retired chemist for a large mining company; he had no relations in South Africa.

7. Elizabeth Regina, who is more a monarch than a mother, continues to reign and shine.

8. He was a democrat of the Left and kept a tactical distance from the Communists.

9. She was petty and vindictive, and soon made a bad reputation for herself.

10. Panama, which was weaker and poorer, was defending itself fiercely.

11. I was hungry for knowledge. I was occasionally able to lay my hands on other publications.

12. They were cousins. They were both from failed marriages. They were polar opposites in temperament but equally fragile in character. They conspired in their own destruction.

13. Slovenia was once the scene of Turkish raids, peasant revolts, and religious persecution. It underwent rapid economic development in the nineteenth century.

14. Lumumba was a politician of vibrant energy and charismatic powers. He was also abrasive and unstable.

15. Oliver Scott was himself a Vietnam war-veteran. He spares us no details in portraying the full horrors of that conflict.

16. He was almost mad with fear; he tried to reason with his captors.

17. He was anxious to appear the peace-broker, and relished every possibility of mediating between the two sides.

18. He was an admirer of Hitler, and was constantly on the look-out for Nazi paraphernalia.

19. Yeltsin was an old hand in the Kremlin: he was used to such tactics.

20. Jagger was never one to turn down a free meal. He bore Driberg's company through long lunches at the Ritz.

21. The \$87 million structure is cozily small and acoustically excellent, though it will not be to every taste.

22. Mrs Castle has been traditionally at the left of the Labour Party; she has always been that party's conscience.

23. Andrew was frequently away on military duty. He began turning Fergie into a grass-widow.

24. He sat there impassively, ashen faced, and purse-tipped; he was an old man close to tears.

So far we have examined left-handed sentences which consist of nouns and/or adjectives in apposition to the subject. One special variety, however, exists which deserves attention. If we go back to **Passage B** of the Monroe-biography and study the first sentence, we

will see that the subject of that sentence is not *Monroe* but *Monroe's early life*; nonetheless, this subject is preceded by *Born* and *the illegitimate daughter*. These words refer, of course, not to *early life* but to *Monroe*, which here is in the possessive case, namely *Monroe's*. Here is another similar sentence:

4. A writer of the first magnitude, Singer's books have been translated into 64 languages. (*Instead of*: Singer was a writer of the first magnitude. His books have been translated into 64 languages.)

Some more conservative authorities of English would question this construction, but ultimately it is up to the individual writer whether he or she wishes to adopt it.

### Suggested Exercises (13):

Rewrite these sentences using the same construction:

1. Belloc was a lover of France, Sussex and the sea. His best work lies in his histories where he presents a rich vision of Catholic Christendom.
2. She was a brilliant correspondent: her letters often bettered her more polished efforts in print.
3. It is one of the most disturbing films ever made, and its place is now guaranteed in Hollywood's Valhalla.

A more common form of left-handed sentence, however, involves the use of *participles* in apposition to the subject of the sentence, as in the second sentence of **Passage B** of the Monroe-biography (*Selected...*) and in the following examples:

5. Lacking a proper infrastructure, that country seems ill-equipped to face the twenty-first century. (*Instead of*: Since it lacks a proper infrastructure, that country...)
6. Written in the 1930s, the book aroused little interest for many years. (*Instead of*: The book was written in the 1930s. It aroused little interest for many years.)

In **Example 6** it is just about possible to start the sentence with *Having been written...*, but *Written...* is simpler, and therefore more elegant. Generally it is a good idea to avoid past participle passives of the type *Having been written* etc. Similarly, in **Passage B** of the

Monroe-biography, *Born...* and *Selected...* are preferable to *Having been born* and *Having been selected*.

### Suggested Exercises (14):

Rewrite these sentences using a participial construction:

1. The sketch, which is drawn in heavy strokes, is a harsh reminder of everyday realities a century ago.
2. He was forced out of office three years later and devoted the rest of his life to the problems of North-South confrontation.
3. Comprehensive schools were introduced in the 1960s. They sought to guarantee a good education to all, irrespective of their academic abilities.
4. He was galvanised by Franco's invasion of Spain, and covered the war as a journalist.
5. She was abandoned by her mother at the age of four and mistook her father's distress for her own until the age of eight; she grew up emotionally impoverished.
6. *The Observer* was founded in 1791. It is the world's oldest Sunday newspaper.

7. Wajda's film, which has been made in black and white, skilfully evokes the Warsaw of 1939.

8. She was endowed with an excellent memory and spoke several languages perfectly.

9. Mladych, who has been waging a campaign of slaughter and has been deaf to threats or pleas for mercy, has led his army to de facto victory.

If the sentence expresses a clear *causal* relationship, then it is generally possible to turn phrases like "he is", "she was" etc. into the participle *being*:

7. Being acutely aware of the weakness of his position, he avoided open confrontation. (*Instead of*: Since he was acutely aware of the weakness of his own position, he avoided open confrontation.)

Thus, in **Example 7**, where a causal relationship is expressed, the sentence begins with the participle *Being*. But it is also possible to leave the word out ("Acutely aware...").

In **Example 3**, similarly, there is a relation of cause and effect: the fact that "that nation" is "fiercely clan-ridden and individualistic" is

basically the reason *why* it has "thwarted any encroachments on its collective independence". Thus, it is possible to insert the word *Being* ("Being fiercely clan-ridden and individualistic...").

Similarly, when we look at **Passage B**, the fact that Monroe was "Complex, driven, demanding and self-absorbed" explains her behaviour at interviews. Therefore it is possible to insert the participle *Being* before "Complex...". In sentences like this one, as well as those in **Examples 3** and **7**, you must decide how close you wish to be to a literary register: **leaving out being is more typical of literary registers than inserting it.**

By contrast, when we go back to **Example 2** the fact that the subject was "a lonely figure" is merely an interesting circumstance, and not the actual reason why he "reacted[... to the political situation". Therefore the word *Being* should not be inserted before "a lonely figure".

### Suggested Exercises (15):

Look at **Exercises 12, 13** and **14** above and decide whether it is possible to use the participle *being*.

Here are two more examples of participial clauses:

8. Suffering a major heart attack in 1925, he lived for another four years, producing some of his finest work during that period.
9. Studying in Paris from 1910 to 1913, he returned to London in 1914, joining up with the British Army a year later.

**Examples 8** and **9** illustrate a curious feature of English style: people often write *Suffering...* and *Studying...* etc., using the present participle, when what they actually mean is *Having suffered...* and *Having studied...* One clause in **Passage B** of the Monroe-text ("becoming a forces' pin-up overnight") is similar, since what it really means is "*having become...*". In other words, the tense of the participle may sometimes be simplified, as long as it does not mislead the reader.

In the last sentence of **Passage B** of the Monroe-biography and in **Examples 8** and **9** above we actually have a participial clause coming after the main verb (*exercising a hypnotic fascination...* *producing...*

*joining up...*). Such a syntactic pattern is almost as frequent as those that go before the main verb. Here are two more examples:

10. They sat there drinking wine, completely unmoved by the spectacle.
11. He stood there, a lonely and aloof figure.

Needless to say, such sentences are sometimes referred to as 'right-handed'.

### Suggested Exercises (16):

Rewrite the following sentences, using syntactical patterns outlined above:

1. The liberals came third. They polled 14% of the vote.
2. He was the first Indian leader to achieve international status. He became a symbolic figure throughout the Continent. He gave people a new pride and confidence in themselves.
3. Grass's novels are prolix, sprawling and anarchic; nevertheless, they are full of delights for those who persevere: they offer profound insights into the creative mind.
4. I am God's victim: I have been lying in Delhi for two weeks now like Lazarus; I have been struggling against fever.
5. Lumumba became increasingly radicalised by the difficulties his government faced in the immediate aftermath of independence. He turned to the USSR for support. Thus he alienated the Western powers.

Left- and right-handed clauses are also very useful in rewriting clauses involving the conjunctions *as*, *because*, *since* and (*al*)*though*.

12. Living *as I do* in a heavily industrialised area, I often go to the mountains for fresh air. (*Instead of: As, Because, Since I live...*)
13. These beliefs are rejected by modern science, finding them misguided *as it does*. (*Instead of: ...as, because, since it finds them misguided.*)
14. Annoyed *though he was*, he said nothing. (*Instead of: Though he was annoyed...*)

N.B. This construction can only be used with the words *as* and *though*. Cf. also pp. 65-66.

### Suggested Exercises (17):

Rewrite the following sentences, using the syntactical pattern outlined above:

1. Since they were tired after the long journey, they had no great desire to socialise.
2. She decided to ignore his invitation, since she was annoyed by his earlier welcome.
3. Though it is inadequate, it is still our only source for the saint's life.
4. Since I am a poor sinner, it is not for me to instruct others.
5. Capital punishment has generally disappeared from West-European countries, as they find it distasteful.
6. I work in the police force. I (thus) have special opportunities to study criminals.

So far we have been looking at sentences where the subject of the participial clause is, generally speaking, the same as that of the main verb. One particular kind of related construction deserves special attention, since it is very widely used in more sophisticated English. Instead of writing something like

15a. Since most people in Srebrenica have not eaten for several days, the situation there is desperate.

it is easy to formulate the sentence as follows:

15b. *With* most people in Srebrenica *not having eaten* for several days, the situation there is desperate.

Here we see that *not having eaten* takes the place of *have not eaten*. In other words, the construction involves the use of the word *with* and the substitution of a participle for one of the finite verbs.

Other sentences can be treated the same way:

16. *With* the discussion *breaking down* and many of the delegates *arguing* furiously, the assembly had to adjourn. (*Instead of:* The discussion was breaking down and many of the delegates were arguing furiously. In these circumstances the assembly had to adjourn.)

17. *With* the central authority *growing weaker and weaker*, there was a resurgence of local nationalisms. (*Instead of:* As the central authority grew weaker and weaker, there was a resurgence of local nationalisms.)

One final example is particularly noteworthy:

18a. When negotiations finally failed, the future began to look very bleak indeed.

Here it is possible to formulate the sentence as follows:

18b. *With* negotiations *having failed*, the future began to look very bleak indeed.

or:

18c. *With* negotiations *falling*, the future....

In other words, the tense of the participle may sometimes be simplified, especially when there is no danger of causing confusion. This is reminiscent of Examples 8 and 9 as well as of a sentence in Passage B of the Monroe-text ("becoming a forces' pin-up overnight"). "Right-handers" are possible as well:

19. Wildlife has been severely affected, *with* many species *moving* northwards. (*Instead of:* Wildlife has been severely affected and many species have been moving northwards.)

Here the words *have been moving* have been replaced by *moving*. (It is also possible to write *having been moving*, but doing so adds nothing to clarity; the phrase is longer, and therefore less elegant.)

20. The Latin system of cases gradually fell into disuse, *with* their functions *being generally taken over* by various prepositions. (*Instead of:* ... and their functions were generally taken over....)

In the latter example, the words *were taken over* are replaced by *being taken over*. But it is also possible to leave out *being* ("...with their functions *taken over*...").

21. South Africa is now well on the way to regaining international respectability, *with* all remaining restrictions on trade now *being lifted*. (*Instead of:* All remaining restrictions on trade are now being lifted.)

Here a present participle (*being lifted*) replaces the present continuous (*are being lifted*). In this particular example it would be wrong to miss out the word *being* and to write "with all restrictions on trade now *lifted*", since that would imply that all remaining restrictions have already been lifted.

Thus, in several of the sentences examined in this section we may note a tendency to simplify the verb form whenever it is possible to do so without misleading the reader.

Sometimes instead of a participial construction a 'nominalisation' is also possible. For example, going back to **Example 17** ("With the central authority growing weaker and weaker..."), one might just as easily write:

*With the steady weakening of the central authority....*

Similarly, **Examples 18b** and **c** can be replaced by:

*With the failure of negotiations....*

### **Suggested Exercises (18):**

Use left- or right-handed constructions with the following sentences, after deciding where they can best be applied; when you are in doubt, rephrase those words which explain, illustrate, or generally complement the basic statement:

1. Pressure is growing of Belgrade: Germany's foreign minister has been calling for Serbia's international isolation.
2. India's political life is undergoing great changes, and many women are running for Congress.
3. Inflation is running at over 50%. The Government must do something soon.
4. The other day I saw a young couple kissing passionately in the Métro, while other Parisians were paying not the slightest attention.
5. There have been huge demonstrations throughout Germany; the biggest ones have been taking place in Berlin and Köln.
6. The political crisis is deepening: the prime minister has offered his resignation, but the president has refused to accept it.
7. The third system is syllabic: one sign stands for one syllable.
8. The campaign is entering a final phase, and no prisoners are being taken.
9. Coloured glass works in a similar way: the ray of light penetrates our aura.
10. Exploding populations are plunging such countries into seemingly irreversible poverty. How will they find the resources to embark on the industrialisation that will bring employment?

11. There are ominous signs of a deterioration in the situation, and several cases of cholera have been recorded.
12. Hungary's situation is likely to improve: workers are being made to realise that industry cannot be subsidised indefinitely.
13. As the launch was called off five times due to technical problems, take-off came as a great relief.
14. The British Isles have been experiencing unusually harsh weather. Heavy rain has been falling in SE England.
15. Mrs Aquino has been declared the winner, while Mrs Imelda Marcos came second.
16. Speculation has been continuing about the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and Princess Diana has taken a two-week skiing holiday in Switzerland.
17. The country seems set to disintegrate, and the South will fall under Afghanistan's influence.
18. The Mexican government is trying to steer a middle course between inflation and recession. The IMF is breathing down its neck and says that inflation is the lesser of the two evils.
19. World attention has been focussed on Bosnia. The Somalian famine has been largely ignored.
20. There have been renewed reports of officially sponsored terrorism in the Punjab: the security forces have been supposedly acting as judge, jury, and executioner.
21. The shortage of organs is critical: many people die every year for lack of suitable donors.
22. Three quarters of the vote has already been declared. President Bush is conceding defeat.
23. Europe's foreign exchanges have opened to a stormy start. The pound is expected to come under renewed pressure.
24. Work has been planned for the weekends. We will ensure that as few passengers as possible are affected by the service changes.
25. The Pentagon has published its long-awaited report on the Gulf War. A number of embarrassing facts have been omitted.
26. In the novel the affair seems both loveless and characterless; Marlowe has been cast as the heartless sadist.
27. Three thousand foreigners were convicted in the UK in 1992. It makes more sense to have them serve their sentences in their native countries.