

Lecture 5 Sentence length

Sentence length



Lee and colleagues noted that, although removal of physical inactivity had the largest effect, in terms of percentage reduction, on colon cancer and the smallest on coronary heart disease, the number of coronary heart disease cases prevented would be greater due to higher global incidence.

(45 words)

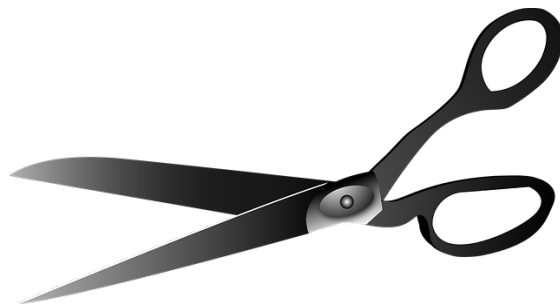
Lee and colleagues noted the following. Removal of physical inactivity had the largest effect on colon cancer. The smallest effect was observed for coronary heart disease. These two observations were expressed in terms of percentage reduction. Yet, the number of coronary heart disease cases prevented would be greater than that for colon cancer. This is explained by a higher global incidence.

(61 words)

Removal of physical inactivity had the largest effect on colon cancer, and the smallest on coronary heart disease, in terms of percentage reduction. However, with respect to the number of cases that can potentially be averted, coronary heart disease would have a far larger effect than would colon cancer because of its higher incidence. (ref)

(54 words)

average sentence length > 24 words ?



Advantages of short sentences

SHORTER SENTENCES:

- Are more easy to read
- Make reshuffling of sentences within a paragraph easier
- Prevent you from needless mistakes
- Give key messages more power

Yet

- Variety gives more harmony
- Complex sentences often enhance information density: you need less words
- Complex sentences allow more detailed expression

More detailed expression

Emphasis in a complex sentence:

1. Main clause
2. End placement

Emphasis on main clause

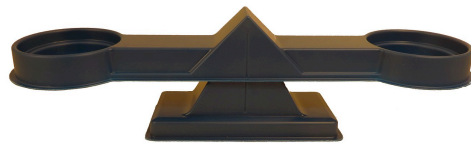
Although Fred is a nice guy, **he beats his dog.**



Although Fred beats his dog, **he is a nice guy.**



Fred is a nice guy, **but** he beats his dog.



Fred beats his dog, **but** he is a nice guy.



Placement long-short

Shorter sentences: topic or key sentences

Longer: heart of the paragraph

Example short-long

Our results suggest that adherence to the full bundle is important. Given that adherence rates for patients who had urgent or emergent operations performed by surgeons who implemented the bundle were substantially lower than for patients who underwent scheduled operations, we hypothesize that institutional barriers may prevent full bundle adherence for patients undergoing urgent or emergent operations.

Example short-long

Our results suggest that adherence to the full bundle is important.

Given that adherence rates for patients who had urgent or emergent operations performed by surgeons who implemented the bundle were substantially lower than for patients who underwent scheduled operations, **we hypothesize that** institutional barriers may prevent full bundle adherence for patients undergoing urgent or emergent operations.

Example short-long

This bundle is concordant with current SSI prevention guidelines. For example, the bundle stipulates that vancomycin be given as perioperative prophylaxis only for patients who are MRSA-positive or for patients whose *S aureus* carriage status is unknown at the time of the operation, which meets Surgical Care Improvement Project criteria. Similarly, guidelines from ASHP, the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the Surgical Infection Society, and the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America state that mupirocin may have utility among *S aureus* carriers, and that patients carrying MRSA should receive vancomycin and cefazolin or cefuroxime because vancomycin is not active against gram negative organisms and it prevents MSSA SSIs less effectively than cefazolin or cefuroxime.

Example short-long

This bundle is concordant with current SSI prevention guidelines. **For example**, the bundle stipulates that vancomycin be given as perioperative prophylaxis only for patients who are MRSA-positive or for patients whose *S aureus* carriage status is unknown at the time of the operation, which meets Surgical Care Improvement Project criteria. **Similarly**, guidelines from ASHP, the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the Surgical Infection Society, and the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America state that mupirocin may have utility among *S aureus* carriers, and that patients carrying MRSA should receive vancomycin and cefazolin or cefuroxime because vancomycin is not active against gram negative organisms and it prevents MSSA SSIs less effectively than cefazolin or cefuroxime.

Embedded sentences

The smallest of the URF's (URFA6L), a 207-nucleotide (nt) reading frame overlapping out of phase the NH₂-terminal portion of the adenosinetriphosphatase (ATPase) subunit 6 gene has been identified as the animal equivalent of the recently discovered yeast H⁺-ATPase subunit 8 gene.

Embedded sentences

The smallest of the URF's (URFA6L), a 207-nucleotide (nt) reading frame overlapping out of phase the NH2-terminal portion of the adenosinetriphosphatase (ATPase) subunit 6 gene has been identified as the animal equivalent of the recently discovered yeast H⁺-ATPase subunit 8 gene.

Reshuffling

The smallest of the URF's has been identified as the animal equivalent of the recently discovered yeast H⁺-ATPase subunit 8 gene. This URFA6L is a 207-nucleotide (nt) reading frame overlapping out of phase the NH2-terminal portion of the adenosinetriphosphatase (ATPase) subunit 6 gene.

The URFA6L is a 207-nucleotide (nt) reading frame overlapping out of phase the NH2-terminal portion of the adenosinetriphosphatase (ATPase) subunit 6 gene. This URF, the smallest, has been identified as the animal equivalent of the recently discovered yeast H⁺-ATPase subunit 8 gene.

Sentence length + structure

- ✓ Follow a grammatical subject as soon as possible with its verb
- ✓ Place new information you want readers to emphasize at the end of the sentence or in a main clause.
- ✓ Put important information in shorter sentences.