



Pitfalls of scientific English

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Find the flaws

1. The reviewers monitored closely the prescribed adjustments.
2. Never before such an effect has been documented.
3. The minister's attempts to reform the health care system create optimism in some circles.
4. Economists are investigating the underlying mechanisms of this phenomenon.
5. Intrigued by these findings, a new study was designed.
6. Using a new script, the participants were interviewed a second time.
7. We have to emphasize that companies, which are focused on stock management, utilise significantly less external finance than A and B type companies.
8. This model predicted a decrease in UVI adsorption that was consistent with experimental data.

1. The reviewers **closely** monitored the prescribed adjustments.
2. Never before **has** such an effect been documented.
3. The minister's attempts to reform the health care system **are creating** optimism in some circles.
4. Economists **investigate** the underlying mechanisms of this phenomenon.
5. Intrigued by these findings, **we/they** designed a new study.
6. Using a new script, **we** interviewed the participants a second time.
7. We emphasize that companies **that/which** are focused on stock management, utilise significantly less external finance than A and B type companies.
8. This model predicted a decrease in UVI adsorption, **which** was consistent with experimental data.

Topics

1. **Word order:** inversion, place of adverbs
2. **Verb tenses**
present noncontinuous vs. present continuous
3. Using **which** or **that** in (non)defining clauses
4. **Dangling modifiers**

WORD ORDER

Adverbs: three locations

1. Initial position: **emphasis**

Yesterday we worked till 5.

2. Middle position

He is **usually** late. -> after single verb 'to be'

He **always** says what he means. -> single verb, not 'to be'

Ideas have **always** been shared. -> after first auxiliary

3. End position

They volunteered **willingly**.

No adverb **between verb and direct object**
(werkwoord en lijdend voorwerp)

- The reviewers *monitored* closely *the prescribed adjustments*.
- The reviewers *closely* monitored the prescribed adjustments. **(middle)**
- The reviewers monitored the prescribed adjustments *closely*. **(end)**

Inversion following negative and restrictive adverbials

- Not only *did* Rogers fail to ...,
- On no account *should* these results be considered...
- Only after three months *did* the effect take hold.
- Only then *did* we realize the mistake.
- Seldom *has* such ingenuity been demonstrated.

PRESENT CONTINUOUS VS PRESENT NONCONTINUOUS

Present (Non)continuous

Lower wages **lead to** lower tax revenues.

Lower wages **are leading to** lower tax revenues.

Present Noncontinuous

*Lower wages **lead to** lower tax revenues.*

Expresses:

- habits,
- dispositions,
- usual or typical behavior,
- general relationships,
- enduring facts, activities or situations

Present Continuous: happening NOW

*At this moment, lower wages **are leading to** lower tax revenues.*

DANGLING MODIFIERS

Dangling modifiers

- Swinging from tree to tree, we watched the monkeys at the zoo.
- Filled with gas, we were able to drive our car all the way to Paris.
- Taped to the door, I wrote a note that I would return shortly.
- Using red ink, mistakes can be read more clearly.

Dangling modifiers

- A global computational analysis was performed **using** an in-house developed script.
- **Using** an in-house developed script **we** performed a global computational analysis.

OR

- A global computational analysis was performed **with (the) use of** an in-house developed script.

OR

- **We used** an in-house developed script to perform a global computational analysis.

WHICH OR THAT IN
(NON)DEFINING CLAUSES

Which/that & the comma

1. Land which (that) is surrounded by water is an island.
2. Tasmania, which is surrounded by the waters of Bass Strait, is an island of great natural beauty.



Defining clauses

1. Land **which (that)** is surrounded by water is an island.

No comma: defining clause (essential for meaning)

2. Tasmania, **which** is surrounded by the waters of Bass Strait, is an island of great natural beauty.

Comma: non-defining clause (not essential)

UK: 'which' or 'that' in defining clauses & 'which' in non-defining

US: only 'that' in defining clauses & 'which' in non-defining

defining = beperkende bijzin, non-defining = uitbreidende bijzin

Tense	Dutch	English
Present O.T.T.	Dit wordt aangetoond	This is shown
Past O.V.T.	Dit werd aangetoond	This was shown
Present perfect V.T.T.	Dit is aangetoond	This has been shown
Past perfect V.V.T.	Dit was aangetoond	This had been shown