# Errors and Infelicitous Usages Commonly Found in Students' Term Projects

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# Inappropriate Choice of Homonym
# from among Several Possibilities

NOTE:   Each word in the following word groups is a correct spelling under some circumstances.   You should familiarize yourself with each spelling, and be prepared in each case to use the spelling appropriate to the meaning that you want to convey.


- **their**, **they're**, & **there**

    [Egregious Example:  ".  . claim to have no back doors into <u>there</u> software."


- **its** & **it's**

    [Egregious Example:   "Intel decided to buy back the rights and *it's* marketing from Busicom for a price of sixty thousand dollars."]

- **two** & **too** & **to**

    [Egregious Example:  "Hook *too* cameras together."]


- **principle** & **principal**

    [Egregious Example:  "ILP is limited by branches in two *principle* ways."]


- **manner** & **manor**

    [Egregious Example:   "The cracker can then shut down services or cripple the server in some *manor* that could inconvenience."]

# The Actual Student Slide
# with "into there software"

Advanced Encryption Package

- Features 17 different encryption algorithms
- Files Encryption / Decryption
- Text Encryption / Decryption
- File Shredding
- Claim to have no backdoors into there software

# The Actual Student Slide
## with "Hook too cameras together"

Peer-to-Peer

- communicate with one another without the need for a computer
  - could transfer data from a hard drive without the need for computer assistance
  - hook too cameras together and dub from one to the other without any computer

- share the same resource without any need for special support
- Also supports "Hot Swapping"

# Inappropriate Choice of Homonym (continued)

- <u>border</u> & <u>boarder</u>
  [Egregious Example: ". . .allows the user to configure the appearance of the window *border* to some extent by manipulating the sunken-edge *boarder* and gap between text and window edge . . ."]

- <u>past</u> & <u>passed</u>
  [Egregious Example 1: "If work is being done in front of a faculty office, there will be no way to get in or out of that office until the workers get *passed* that particular office as they move down the hall."]
  [Egregious Example 2: "How many places *passed* the radix point must be written in the converted number?"]

- <u>compliment</u> & <u>complement</u>

- <u>peddle</u> & <u>pedal</u>

- <u>whose</u> & <u>who's</u>

- <u>aid</u> & <u>aide</u>

- <u>course</u> & <u>coarse</u>

- <u>meet</u> & <u>meat</u>

# Inappropriate Choice of Homonym (continued)

- **<u>raise</u>  &  <u>raze</u>**

- **<u>rest</u>  &  <u>wrest</u>**

- **<u>sight</u>  &  <u>site</u>**

- **<u>bear</u>  &  <u>bare</u>**
  [Egregious Example:  ".  .  please just <u>*bare*</u> with us  .  .  ."]  Comment:  I don't normally undress in class, and it is my hope that my students will also refrain from doing so.

- **<u>aloud</u>  &  <u>allowed</u>**

- **<u>raise</u>  &  <u>raze</u>**

- **<u>tale</u>  &  <u>tail</u>**

- **<u>roll</u>  &  <u>role</u>**
  [Egregious Example 1:  ".  .  could never have imagined that US divisions would <u>*role*</u> into Baghdad  .  .  ."]
  [Egregious Example 2:  "I so appreciate how dedicated you are to your <u>*roll*</u> as a professor  .  .  ."

# Inappropriate Choice of Homonym (continued)

- **reign**, **rein**, & **rain**

- **prescribe** & **proscribe**

- **wreak** & **reek**

- **sole** & **soul**

- **phase** & **faze**
  [Egregious Example: "Junior High Schools will be *fazed* out."]

- **vein**, **vane**, & **vain**

- **site** & **sight**

- **clause** & **claws**

# Side Note: Homonyms *in Extremis*

When you write copy, you have the right to copyright the copy you write, if the copy is right. If, however, your copy falls over, then you must right your copy. If you write religious services you write rite, and you have the right to copyright the rite you write.

Very conservative people write right copy, and have the right to copyright the right copy they write. A right wing cleric would write right rite, and has the right to copyright the right rite he has the right to write. His editor has the job of making the right rite copy right before the copyright can be right.

Should Tom Wright decide to write right rite, then Wright would write right rite, which Wright would then have the right to copyright. Duplicating that rite would copy Wright rite right, and would therefore violate copyright, which violation Wright would then have the right to right. Right?

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# Confusion Between Words that Are <u>Nearly</u> Homonyms

- <u>then</u> & <u>than</u>
  [Egregious Example: "Smaller instruction set *then* RISC"]

- <u>effect</u> & <u>affect</u> (the nouns, and *also* the verbs)
  [Egregious Example: ". . . might not only *effect* you, but possibly all the computers that you have accounts on."]

- <u>diffuse</u> (the verb) & <u>defuse</u>

- <u>founder</u> & <u>flounder</u>

- <u>versus (vs.)</u> & <u>verses</u>
  [Egregious Example: "The first advantage the 750CX has is the amount of power it uses *verses* the 750."]

- <u>homogenize</u> & <u>homogeneous</u> (NOTE that the proper spelling of *homogeneous* includes two 'e's, one on each side of the 'n'.)

- <u>presence</u> & <u>presents</u> [Example: Children may soon forget your *presents*, but they will always remember your *presence*.]

# Confusion Between Words
# that Are <u>Nearly</u> Homonyms (continued)

- <u>appraise</u> & <u>apprise</u>

- <u>due</u>, <u>dew</u>, & <u>do</u>

- <u>imminent</u> & <u>eminent</u>
    [Egregious Example: "Approving this resolution does not mean that military action is <u>*eminent*</u> or unavoidable." ]

- <u>perspective</u> & <u>prospective</u>
    [Egregious Example: "I have a <u>*perspective*</u> student who would like to . . ."]

- <u>compile</u> & <u>comply</u>
    [Egregious Example: "It is open source and can be downloaded and run effectively on an Intel machine, if the source is <u>*complied*</u> on the Intel machine."]

# Confusion Between Words
# that Are <u>Nearly</u> Homonyms (continued)

- <u>accept</u> & <u>except</u>

- <u>averse</u> & <u>adverse</u>

- <u>root</u> & <u>route</u>
  [Egregious Example: "Problem can be solved by figuring how many different combinations there are to get through $n$ cities by the shortest <u>*root*</u> without backtracking"]

- <u>addition</u> & <u>edition</u>
  [Egregious Example: "In edition, it only takes a few lines of code to implement this algorithm . . .]

- <u>winch</u> & <u>wench</u>
  [Egregious Example from "The Breeze", 09 Feb 2006: "Harrisonburg Fire Chief Larry Shifflett said . . . the SUV . . . was (in) being loaded on the tow truck when the <u>*wench*</u> pulling the vehicle up either snapped or unhooked itself."]

# Confusion Between Words
# that Are <u>Nearly</u> Homonyms (continued)

- <u>lie</u>  &  <u>lay</u>

- <u> </u>  &  <u> </u>.

# Use of a Word that Sounds APPROXIMATELY
# Like the Word Intended

- Manchester (N.H.) Union Leader classified ad for a child-care center: ''FUN AT PLAY where it's creative, safe, wholesome and _neutering_.''

- Watertown (N.Y.) Daily Times stated in an article that the Lewis County Board of Legislators had authorized the creation of a petty cash fund ''for the weekly purchase of dry ice, used for _incest_ control.''

- Jerusalem Post (Israel) stated in an article that a wildcat action by union members "violates the ruling of the Tel Aviv Labor Court barring a _stroke_ over the lab dispute."

# Failure to Understand the Proper Usage of Words

- "like"  vs.  "as"

# Egregious Misspelling

- seperate

# The Actual Student Slide
# with "Smaller instruction set then RISC"

## EPIC

- Explicitly Parallel Instruction Computing

- Smaller instruction set then RISC.
- Room on chip for more functional units and registers.
- Relies on Compiler to extract parallelism.

# Inconsistencies Within the English Language

- **<u>choose</u>** & **<u>chose</u>**

- **<u>loose</u>** & **<u>lose</u>** (NOTE: There exists an English language word *<u>losing</u>*, but there is NOT a word *<u>loosing</u>*.)

  [Egregious Example: "So, <u>loosing</u> a password due to poor security might .  .]

# Adjective Modifying a Missing Noun; Preposition with Missing Object

- Dynamic switching between the 64-bit and 32-bit is supported.

**Switching between the 64-bit and the 32-bit _WHAT_?**

- IBM 601 microprocessor used all but two of the instructions in the of the PowerPC's instruction set.

**Instructions in the _WHAT_ of the PowerPC's instruction set?**

## PowerPC Architecture: A New Beginning

- The PowerPC is 64-bits in length and is compatible with the Power 32-bit data paths.
- Dynamic switching between the 64-bit and 32-bit is supported.
- Infrequently executed instructions in the Power architecture were discarded in the PowerPC.
- IBM 601 microprocessor used all but two of the instructions in the  of the Power instructions set.

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# The Unfinished Sentence

- What separates the 750CX from its predecessor the 750, commonly known as the G3, is that the 750CX has an integrated 256KB level 2 (L2) cache.

The authors fail to state what _DOES_ the G3 have:

(a)  an L2 cache of some size <u>other</u> than 256k, or
(b)  a 256kB L2 cache that is NOT integrated, or
(c)  no L2 cache at all, just an L1 cache?

# A Slide SO Crammed Full of Graphics as to be UNREADABLE when Projected



PowerPC 750 Microprocessor
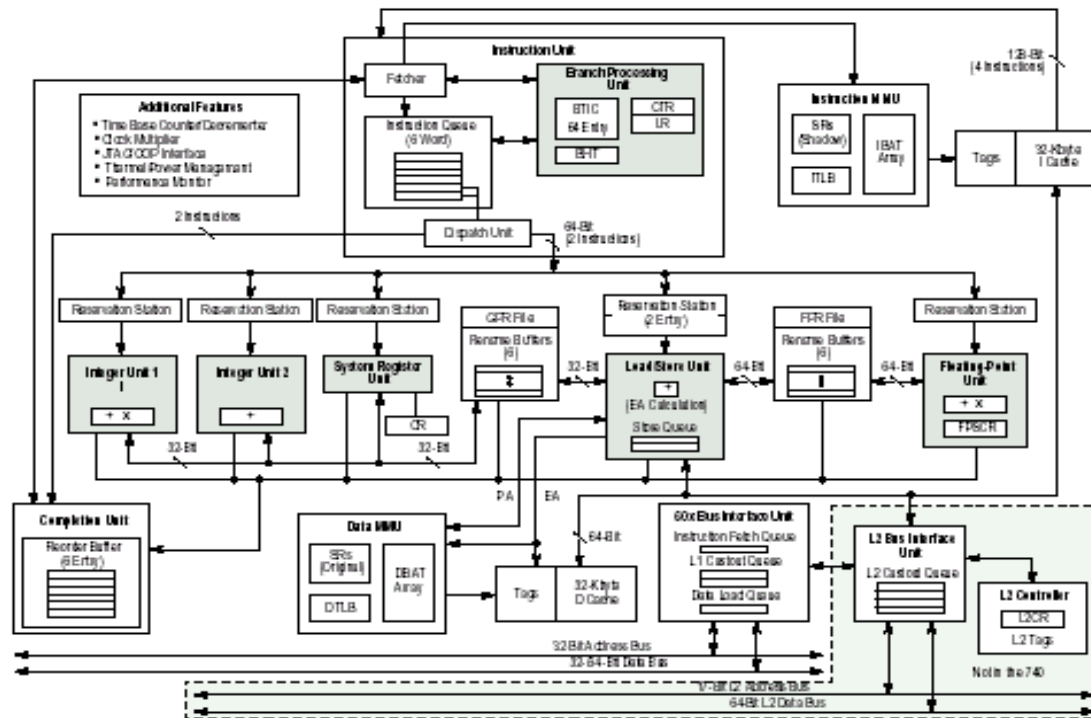
# A Slide SO Crammed Full of Graphics as to be UNREADABLE when Projected

SOLUTION if this slide <u>must</u> be part of the presentation:  make hardcopies, and give one out to each and every member of the audience (be sure to make enough).

# Transitive Verb with Missing Object

Bulleted item in student presentation:


- ## Technology eventually renders obsolete


WHAT is it that is rendered obsolete?

## CAN <u>YOU</u> FIND *ALL* THE ERRORS?

# Speculation (Memory Hoisting)

- Speculation is used to try to eliminate memory latency

- IA-64 looks ahead in code are loads data before it is needed.

# Multiple Errors in One Slide
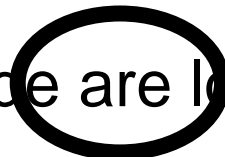
## CAN YOU FIND THE ERRORS?

Speculation (Memory Hoisting)

**What might the authors have intended here?**

- Speculation is used to try to eliminate memory latency

- IA-64 looks ahead in code are loads data before it is needed.

# Multiple Errors in One Slide

## Speculation (Memory Hoisting)

- Speculation is used to try to eliminate memory latency

- IA-64 looks ahead in code are loads data before it is needed.

and

# Multiple Errors in One Slide

## Speculation (Memory Hoisting)

- Speculation is used to try to eliminate memory latency

- IA-64 looks ahead in code are loads data before it is needed.

  they are

# Redundant Information

## Introduction

- industry standard for the scalable, inexpensive interface
- universal interconnect among many different devices
- Apple computer corporation version is called Fire Wire while Sony and other corporation's version is called i.Link

**Slide 2**

## History

- Apple invented Fire Wire in the early 1990s
- adopted by IEEE Trade Association
  - became known as 1394
- name Fire Wire still used by Apple
- Others have adopted the name i.Link
  - trademarked by the Sony Corporation
- 1394 comes from the specification that defines the technical traits of the interface

**Slide 9**

**Two Slides from a Single Student Presentation**

# Use of Complete Sentences instead of Bullets

## Shortcomings

- not robust enough to operate as a true network interface
- Many devices don't require such high throughput yet
  - USB still sufficient
- Many computer companies haven't started including the interface on their personal computers

**BETTER:**

- **Insufficient robustness to operate as a true network interface**

- **Lack of requirement for throughput at the high level provided by this bus**

- **Failure by manufacturers to incorporate into Personal Computers**

# Mixture of Verbs, Adjectives, and Nouns

## Benefits

- speed
- ideal for an interface between high end digital electronics to exchange data
- Hot Swap and Daisy Chain
- peer-to-peer capabilities
- provides a power source in the media

# Mixture of Verbs, Adjectives, and Nouns

Benefits

- speed
- ideal for an interface between high end digital electronics to exchange data
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- peer-to-peer capabilities
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**COMMENTS:**

- "**Speed**" is a noun.
- "**Ideal**" is an adjective.
- "**Provides**" is a verb.

# Mixture of Verbs, Adjectives, and Nouns

## Benefits

- speed
- ideal for an interface between high end digital electronics to exchange data
- Hot Swap and Daisy Chain
- peer-to-peer capabilities
- provides a power source in the media

COMMENTS:

- "Speed" is a noun.
- "Ideal" is an adjective.
- "Provides" is a verb.

## BETTER:

### Benefits

- Speed

- Ability to serve as an interface for exchange of data between high-end digital electronics devices

- Support for Hot-Swapping

- Connectivity via Daisy-Chaining

- Conveyance of electrical power to the connected device

# Mixture of Verbs, Adjectives, and Nouns

BETTER:


ALL NOUNS

**Benefits**

- Speed
- Ability to serve as an interface for exchange of data between high-end digital electronics devices

- Support for Hot-Swapping
- Connectivity via Daisy-Chaining
- Conveyance of electrical power to the connected device

# Failure to Separate Distinctly Different Items

**Benefits**

- speed
- ideal for an interface between high end digital electronics to exchange data
- Hot Swap and Daisy Chain
- peer-to-peer capabilities
- provides a power source in the media

# Sloppy Editing

IEEE Specifications

**This is the ENTIRE slide that was part of these students' presentation!!!!!**

# GREAT concept, <u>but</u> where is the rest of the table?

## Processor Timeline

| Date | Name | MIPS | MFLOPS |
|------|------|------|--------|
| 1987 | SUN 4 | | |
| 1989 | SPARCstation 1 | 12.5 | 1.4 |
| 1990 | SPARCstation2 | 28.5 | 4.2 |
| 1991 | SPARCserver 600MP | | |
| 1992 | SPARCstation 10 | | |
| 1993 | SuperServer 6400 – Crap computer | | |
| 1995 | SPARC64- 64 bit Computer SuperSparcII is released | | |
| 1996 | UltraSPARC is released | | |
| 1998 | UltraSPARC IIi, Ultra5, Ultra10, Ultra30 | | |
| 1999 | Ultra 60, Ultra 80 Processor Release | | |

# Inconsistency in Type Size

**Why is the type size for the bulleted list of items on the right (for CISC) different from that on the left (for RISC)?**

## RISC vs. CISC

- Reduced Instruction-Set Computer
- More register
- Faster and slower
- Faster raw speed (executing instructions per sec)
- Faster in terms of implementing one single instruction

- Complex Instruction-Set Computer
- Micro conversion layer
- Faster and slower
- More powerful in terms of what each instruction can do

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# Failure to Distinguish between
# Compound Words and their Separate Component Words

**setup**  vs.  **set up**

**maybe**  vs.  **may be**


**Without**  is a single word.

**Therefore**  is a single word.

# Failure to Distinguish between
# Simple Past and Participle

- **<u>ran</u> & <u>run</u>**
     **[Egregious Example: "... the platforms in which it can be *<u>ran</u>,* ..."]**

# Constructive Use of Hyphens
# to Indicate Word Association

EXAMPLE 1: *large memory addresses*

    QUESTION: Does this term refer to the ordinary-sized addresses of a <u>large memory</u>, or to memory addresses where the addresses are large, <u>not</u> the memory?

    Ambiguity can be resolved using a single hyphen:
          *large-memory* addresses
          large *memory-addresses*


EXAMPLE 2: *large animal veterinarian*

    QUESTION: Does this term describe a 350-lb veterinarian who may treat sick salamanders, rabbits, and mice, or an 86-lb veterinarian who treats elephants, rhinoceri, and hippopotami?


EXAMPLE 3: *indestructible patio furniture covers*

    QUESTION: Exactly <u>what</u> is it that is indestructible? The patio, the furniture, or the covers?

# Use of Slang in Formal Documents

<u>Example 1</u>:

"  .   .   .   because the cache runs <u>off</u> the CPU's power."

<u>Example 2</u>:

"  .   .   .   in terms of breaking new ground and building <u>off of</u> and improving their previous accomplishments in processor technologies   .   .   ."

<u>Example 3</u>:

"This is based <u>off of</u> the AIX operating system."

# Use of Meaningless Rhetoric

**Example 1**:

"The memory sizes on this computer can go from big to huge."


**Example 2**:

" . "


**Example 3**:

" . "

# Chattiness/Folksiness Inappropriate in a Technical Report

Example 1:
"With <u>grand raves</u> coming from Intel and Hewlett-Packard, most were looking forward to its release with much anticipation."  [Subsidiary Note:  "most" what?]


Example 2:
"."


Example 3:
"."

# A Piece of Sound Advice

If yours is a group project, DO take the trouble to find out how your colleagues <u>spell their names</u>.

# Abominations I: The Run-On Sentence

*Egregious Example*: "Ted Hoff and Stan Mazor creators of the chip it was 1/8 inch long and 1/6 inch wide, had 2,300 metal oxide semiconductors"

*Correct Treatment*:

- Creators of the chip:  Ted Hoff and Stan Mazor

- Dimensions:  1/8" long  ×  1/6" wide

- Composition:  2300 MOS transistors

*The Original in All Its Magnificent Splendor*:

–    Ted Hoff and Stan Mazor creators of the chip it was 1/8 inch long and 1/6 inch wide, had 2,300 metal oxide semiconductors

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# Abominations II:  Jumble of Information

## The First Microprocessor

– Busicom asked Intel to create 12 custom chips

– Intel answered this with one general purpose chip

– Ted Hoff and Stan Mazor creators of the chip it was 1/8 inch long and 1/6 inch wide, had 2,300 metal oxide semiconductors

– Equivalent to the ENIAC supercomputers

– Foundation of modern Chips the Intel 4004

# Abominations III: Information Vomit

## Intel 4004
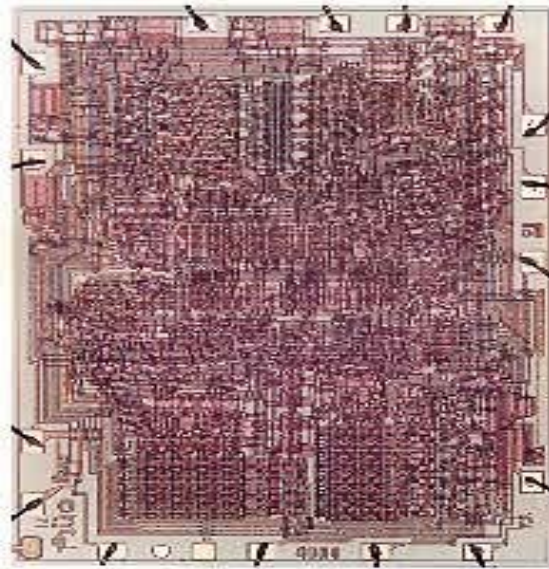


- 4-Bit
- Containing command registers, a decoder, decoding control, control monitoring of machine commands, and interim registers.
- Pioneer spacecraft used the 4004 and started the use of processors in broader areas

1. Photograph unnecessary, conveys no useful information, wastes space
2. Sudden transition from technical data to historical

# Abominations IV: Multiple Errors in a Single Sentence

*Egregious Example*: "The output enable pin's (which is missing from the diagram please just bare with us and pretending its there, this is an old picture) basic function is to let SRAM know it is being read from and not written to."

*Corrected to*:

- Sentence 1: The output-enable pin's basic function is to let *the* SRAM know *whether* it is being read from *or* written to.

- Sentence 2: The output-enable pin, *although present, nevertheless does not appear* in the diagram.

- Technical Correction of the deleted portion: Please <u>bear</u> with us and pretend it<u>'</u>s there.  The picture is an old one.

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# <u>Doing IT RIGHT</u>:   The First Microprocessor:   Intel 4004

- **Significance:** forerunner of modern microprocessor chips, initial realization of a concept that has radically transformed the entire computer industry

- **Creators of the chip:** Ted Hoff and Stan Mazor

- **Dimensions:** 1/8" long × 1/6" wide

- **Composition:** 2300 MOS transistors

- **Register width <u>and</u> datapath width:** BOTH 4 bits

- **Contents:**
  - **Command Registers**
  - **Decoder**
  - **Decoding Control**
  - **Interim Registers**

- **Use:** Pioneer spacecraft

Generations: First Generation
Generations: Second Generation
Generations: Third Generation
Generations: Fourth Generation
Generations: Fifth Generation
Generations: sixth Generation
Generations: seventh Generation
Generations: eight Generation
Generations: nine Generation

# Abomination VI:  Grammatical Sloppiness

**Example 1**:

"This new partnership company drastically needed findings in which they found in a San Francisco venture capitalist Art Rock."


**Example 2**:

"Processor Design based off of the RISC I and II designs as the University of California, Berkeley"


"Processor Design based off of the RISC I and II designs as the University of California, Berkeley"

# Abomination VII: Non-Agreement in Number between SUBJECT and VERB

<u>Example 1</u>:

"first Intel processors that was backwards compatible"

<u>Example 2</u>:

"Only a small amount of the total physical register are available at any one time."

<u>Example 3</u>:

".  .  .  in the Power architecture each function were partitioned into their own separate units."

# Abomination VIII:  Totally Inappropriate Use of a Legal English Word

**Example 1**:
".   .   .   for this paper we refrain to discussing three of those microprocessors."

**Example 2**:
"."

**Example 3**:
"."

# To Split or Not to Split [the Infinitive]: That Is the Question

In ancient times, i.e., more than fifty years ago, a split infinitive was strictly forbidden.

Today, we are not so rigid as used to be the custom; nevertheless, even by today's relaxed standards, on occasion an infinitive can be split *SO VERY FLAGRANTLY* as to constitute a clear and unequivocal abomination:

Our intent in designing this process was to, at a significant level relative to the pool with which we had to work, recognize the continuing contributions of . . .

# To Split or Not to Split [the Infinitive]:
## That Is the Question

Our intent in designing this process was <u>to, at a significant level relative to the pool with which we had to work,</u> recognize the continuing contributions of . . .

# Words of Latin Origin Used in English

| Masculine and Feminine | | Neuter | |
|---|---|---|---|
| SINGULAR | PLURAL | SINGULAR | PLURAL |
| femina | feminae | medium | media |
| alumna | alumnae | datum | data |
| | | bacterium | bacteria |
| alumnus | alumni | | |

RIGHT:   The data are useful.

RIGHT:   The infection was due to a bacterium.

RIGHT:   The broadcast medium was radio.

RIGHT:   She is an alumna of Harvard.

RIGHT:   Fred and Jim are alumni of Brown.

WRONG: The data is useless.

WRONG: That bacteria is deadly.

WRONG: The media is relentlessly pursuing that issue.

WRONG: He is an alumna of Yale.

WRONG: Mike and Ted are alumnae of Swarthmore.

# Failure to Recognize <u>and Eliminate</u> Semantic Ambiguity

## Subtleties of word order can exist in WRITTEN English that are totally unambigous in SPOKEN English.

**Text Appearing on a Sign:**     "Right turn only during peak hours."

**Which is the correct meaning:**

    **(a)**  During peak hours, it is permitted only to turn right.  Left turn, or proceeding straight ahead without turning, are both forbidden,

          i.e.,     Right turn <u>only</u>    during peak hours.

    **(b)**  It is permitted to make a right turn during peak hours only.  At no other time may a right turn be made,

          i.e.,     Right turn       <u>only</u> during peak hours.

NOTE that in *SPOKEN* English, the correct meaning would be apparent from the phrasing.

# Failure to Recognize <u>and Eliminate</u> Semantic Ambiguity

The reader's brain can resolve a semantic ambiguity, but if the author
forces the reader to do that, then his/her reading speed
will likely be slowed, and comfort level reduced.

<u>*EXAMPLE*</u>:


Two blondes were walking down the road and the first blonde says, "Look at that dog
with one eye!"


The other blonde covers one of her eyes and says, "Where?"



<u>*INTERPRETATION* I</u>:  Look at that one-eyed dog.
Look at that dog, which has only one eye.


<u>*INTERPRETATION* II</u>:  Using only one of your eyes, look at that dog.
Look, with only one of your eyes, at that dog.

# Possibly Unintended Nuances/Alternative Interpretations

Business must follow numerous rules and regulations laid down by government agencies. So maybe we shouldn't have been surprised by this memo from the county Department of Health Services:

"The month of August has been designated as Breast-Feeding Awareness Month," it read. "This is a good time for employers to review their policies relative to breast-feeding employees."

[Reader's Digest.]

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage

Is it a coincidence that the only 15 letter word that can be spelled without repeating a letter is uncopyrightable?

Is there another word for *synonym*?

Why do *overlook* and *oversee* mean opposite things?

Why doesn't *onomatopoeia* sound like what it is?

Why is it so hard to remember how to spell MNEMONIC?

Why is the plural of goose  *geese*,  but the plural of moose is not  *meese*?
If two mouses are  *mice*  and two louses are  *lice*,  then why aren't two houses  *hice*?
If the plural of  *tooth*  is  *teeth,*  then shouldn't the plural of  *booth*  be  *beeth?*

Shouldn't there be a shorter word for "monosyllabic"?

(continued)

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of
# English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

If *peanut butter cookies* are made from *peanut butter,* then what are *Girl Scout cookies* made out of?

If a *vegetarian* is someone who eats vegetables, then what does a *humanitarian* eat?

There is no *egg* in an *eggplant,* there is no *ham* in a *hamburger,* and a pineapple contains neither *pine* nor *apple.*

*English muffins* were not invented in England, and *French fries* were not invented in France.

*Quicksand* takes you down *slowly.*

Boxing *rings* are *square.*

Neither is a *guinea pig* from *Guinea,* nor is it a *pig.*

A house can *burn up* as it *burns down.*

(continued)

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

If *writers write,* then why don't *fingers fing?*

If the *teacher taught,* then surely the *preacher praught!*

Why do people *recite* at a *play,* yet *play* at a *recital?*

Why do we *park* on *driveways,* but *drive* on *parkways?*

Why do we *fill in* a form by *filling* it *out.*

When the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible.

When I wind up my watch, it starts, but when I wind up this lecture, it ends.

Why is it that when you transport something by car, it's called a *shipment,* but when you transport something by ship, it's called *cargo*?

(continued)

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of
# English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

Why do they call them *apartments* when they're all stuck together?

Why do they call it *rush hour* when nothing moves?


(continued)

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of
# English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

A father was reading Bible stories to his young son.  He read, "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and <u>flee</u> out of the city.  But his wife looked back and was turned to salt."

The son asked, "What happened to the <u>flea</u>?"

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

A nearsighted minister glanced at the note that Mrs. Jones had sent to him by an usher.

The note read: "Bill Jones having gone to sea, his wife desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety."

Failing to observe the punctuation, he startled his audience by announcing:  "Bill Jones, having gone to see his wife, desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety."

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

## English is a Terrible Language

I take it you already know
Of tough and bough and cough and dough?
Others may stumble but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, laugh and through.

Well done!  And now you wish, perhaps,
To learn of less familiar traps.
Beware of heard, a dreadful word
That looks like beard and sounds like bird,

And dead: it's said like bed, not bead -
For goodness' sake don't call it "deed"!
Watch out for meat and great and threat
(They rhyme with suite and straight and debt)

(continued)

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

*English is a Terrible Language  (continued)*

*A moth is not a moth in mother*
*Nor both in bother, broth in brother,*
*And here is not a match for there*
*Nor dear and fear for bear and pear,*

*And then there's dose and rose and lose -*
*Just look them up - and goose and choose,*
*And cork and work and cord and ward*
*And font and front and word and sword*

*And do and go and thwart and cart -*
*Come, come, I've hardly made a start!*
*A dreadful language? Man alive.*
*I'd mastered it when I was five.*

From a letter published in the London Sunday Times, 03 Jan 1965.  Only the initials of the author, T.S.W., are known.

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

The bandage was wound around the wound.

The farm was used to produce produce.

The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.

We must polish the Polish furniture.

He could lead if he would get the lead out.

The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.

Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.

A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.

When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.

I did not object to the object.

The insurance was invalid for the invalid.

# Points to Ponder on the Futilities of English Spelling, Grammar, and Usage (continued)

There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.

They were too close to the door to close it.

The buck does funny things when the does are present.

A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.

To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.

The wind was too strong to wind the sail.

After a number of injections my jaw got number.

Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.

I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.

How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

# NOTE:  You can always "roll your own".

The Washington Post's Style Invitational asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition. Here are oue year's winners:

1.    Intaxication: Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

2.    Reintarnation: Coming back to life as a hillbilly.

3.    Bozone (n.): The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. Unfortunately, the bozone layer shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.

4.    Cashtration (n.): The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.

5.    Giraffiti: Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.

6.    Sarchasm: The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.

7.    Inoculatte: To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

# You can always "roll your own".     (continued)

8.       Hipatitis: Terminal coolness.

9.       Osteopornosis: A degenerate disease. (This one got extra credit.)

10.      Karmageddon: It's like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth totally explodes and it's, like, a serious bummer.

11.      Decafalon (n.): The grueling process of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.

12.      Glibido: All talk and no action.

13.      Dopeler effect: The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come toward you rapidly.

14.      Arachnoleptic fit (n.): The frantic dance performed just after you've accidentally walked through a spider web.

15.      Beelzebug (n.): Satan in the form of a mosquito that gets into your bedroom at three in the morning and cannot be cast out.

# You can always "roll your own".     (continued)

17.     Caterpallor (n.): The color you turn after finding half a grub in the fruit you're eating.


. . . And the pick of the literature:


17.     Ignoranus: A person who's both stupid and an a--hole.

# Rules for Writers

1. Verbs HAS to agree with their subjects.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
4. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
5. Avoid clichés like the plague. (They're old hat.)
6. Also, always avoid annoying alliteration.
7. Be more or less specific.
8. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.
9. Also too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.
10. No sentence fragments.
11. Contractions aren't necessary and shouldn't be used.
12. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.
13. Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
14. One should NEVER generalize.
15. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
16. Don't use no double negatives.
17. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
18. One-word sentences? Eliminate.
19. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
20. The passive voice is to be ignored.

# Rules for Writers (continued)

21.     Eliminate commas, that are, not necessary.
Parenthetical words however should be enclosed in commas.
22.     Never use a big word when substituting a diminutive one would suffice.
23.     Kill all exclamation points!!!
24.     Use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.
25.     Understatement is always the absolutely best way to put forth earth-shaking ideas.
26.     26. Use the apostrophe in it's proper place and omit it when its not needed.
27.     Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."
28.     If you've heard it once, you've heard it a thousand times:
Resist hyperbole; not one writer in a million can use it correctly.
29.     Puns are for children, not groan readers.
30.     Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.
31.     Even IF a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
32.     Who needs rhetorical questions?
33.     Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
34.     Avoid "buzz-words"; such integrated transitional scenarios complicate simplistic matters. And finally...
35.     Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.

# Some Tongue-in-Cheek Advice

- Who needs rhetorical questions?

- Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.

- Foreign words and phrases are not *apropos*.

- Do not put statements in the negative form.

- Understatement is always the absolutely worst way to put forth earth-shaking ideas.

- Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.

# WARNING:  Beware the Hazards of Automation!!!

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## SPELL CHECQUER

Eye halve a spelling chequer.

It came with my pea sea.

It plainly marques four my revue

Miss steaks eye Cannes knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word

And weight four it two say

Weather eye am wrong oar write

It shows me strait a weigh.


As soon as a miss steak is maid

It nose bee fore two long,

And eye can put the error rite.

Its rare lee ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it.

I am shore your pleased two no

Its letter perfect awl the weigh.

My chequer tolled me sew.

# Concluding Comments and Observations

1. In the classroom, shoddy spelling, grammar, and usage, as well as poor organization and focus, greatly detract from the effectiveness of both your paper and your presentation. They also leave a poor impression of you as a student.

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3.	In the workplace, ability to communicate well and effectively leads to speedier promotion and higher probability of promotion.

4.	It is never too late to correct deficiencies in spelling, grammar, and usage. However, the sooner you correct any deficiencies you may have, the better it is for you.

# Some Useful Sources (1)

1. Brians, Paul (2003). *Common Errors in English Usage.* Wilsonville, OR: William, James & Co. PE1464 .B75 2003; 421/.1 21; 2003044605; ISBN 1887902899. [Provides a list of common errors along with an explanation of each.]

2. Gordon, Karen Elizabeth (1993a). *The Deluxe Transitive Vampire: The Ultimate Handbook of Grammar for the Innocent, the Eager, and the Doomed.* New York, NY: Pantheon Books. ISBN 0679418601.
   [This book is a concise, wittily written tutorial on the fine points of grammar and punctuation. It can serve as a guide for preparation of the term paper.]

3. Gordon, Karen Elizabeth (1993b). *The New Well-Tempered Sentence: A Punctuation Handbook for the Innocent, the Eager, and the Doomed.* New York, NY: Pantheon Books. PE1450.G65 1993; 428.2—dc20; 93-18454; ISBN 0-395-62883-0.
   [This book is a concise, wittily written tutorial on the fine points of punctuation.]

# Some Useful Sources (2)

4.      Dupre, Lyn (1998).  *Bugs in Writing Revised.  A Guide to Debugging Your Prose.* Reading, MA:  Addison-Wesley.  ISBN 0-201 37921-X.

[The author specifically addresses the needs of computer professionals and other technical people to write clearly.  This book lacks the light, witty approach of *The Deluxe Transitive Vampire* (and is correspondingly more difficult to read), but it is more comprehensive.  This book, too, can  be a useful guide for the preparation of the term paper.]

5.      Strunk & White (2000).  *The Elements of Style.  Fourth Edition.*  Allyn & Bacon. ISBN:  020530902X.

[This is a classic work that provides guidance on some of the finer points of writing.  It is an advanced book, very useful <u>after</u> you have mastered either *The Deluxe Transitive Vampire* or *Bugs in Writing.]*

# END