TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC ĐÀ LẠT
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GIÁO TRÌNH

WRITING I
(Dành cho sinh viên tại chức Anh văn)

NGUYỄN TẤT THẮNG

2002

CONTENT

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PART I:
SENTENCE SENSE

I. Recognizing phrases

A phrase is a group of related words without a subject or predicate and used as a single part of speech. Typical phrases are a preposition and its object {I felt *on the sidewalk*), or a verbal and its object (I wanted *to see the parade).*

Prepositional phrases are classified, according to function, as adjective, adverb, and noun phrases.

An adjective phrase modifies a noun or pronoun. (He is a man <u>of action</u>.}

An adverb phrase modifies a verb, adjective, or adverb. (The train arrived <u>on time</u>. We were ready <u>at the station</u>.)

A noun phrase is used as a noun. (<u>Before breakfast</u> is the best time for calisthenics.)

Verbal phrases are classified as participial, gerund, or infinitive phrases.

A participial phrase functions as an adjective, modifying a noun or pronoun. (The man <u>sitting on the porch</u> is my father. The dog <u>found in the street</u> was homeless.) Such phrases are formed with the present participle of a verb (seeing, calling) or the past participle (seen. called).

A gerund phrase is used as a noun. {<u>Collecting stamps</u> is my hobby.} Since both gerunds and present participles end in -ing, they can be distinguished only by their separate functions as nouns or adjectives.

An infinitive phrase is used as an adjective, adverb, or noun. (It is time <u>to go to bed</u>. We were impatient <u>to start the game</u>. I wanted <u>to buy a house</u>.)

II. Recognizing clauses

A clause is a group of words containing a subject and a predicate. The relation of a clause to the rest of the sentence is shown by the position of the clause or by a conjunction. There are two kinds of clauses (1) subordinate or dependent clauses, and (2) main or independent clauses.

1.   Subordinate clauses are frequently introduced by a subordinating conjunction (as, since, because, etc) or by a relative pronoun (who, which, that). A subordinate clause functions as an adjective, adverb, or noun and expresses an idea that is less important than the idea expressed main clause. The exact relationship between the two ideas is indicated by the subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun that joins the subordinate and the main clause.

A Main clause also has both subject and verb but is not introduced by a subordinating word. A main clause makes an independent statement. It is not used as a noun or a modifier.

III. Recognizing sentences

A sentence is a grammatically independent and complete unit of communication. It may contain words that we cannot fully understand unless we read preceding or succeeding sentence, but it is grammatically self-sufficient even when lifted out of context and made to stand alone.

> Old Dinger's ghost was said to live in the surrounding hills.

> It had been seen several times from the tavern window.

Sentences in English are traditionally described as *simple*, *compound*, *complex*, and *compound-complex*.

A simple sentence has a single subject-verb combination

> Children play

> The game ended early

> My car stalled[1] three times last week

A simple sentence may have more than one subject

> Lora and Tony drove home

> The wind and water dried my hair

or several subjects and verbs

> Manny, More, and Jack lubricated my car, replaced the oil filter, and cleaned the spark plugs

A compound , or 'double,' sentence is made up of two simple sentences. The two complete statements in a compound sentence are usually connected by a comma plus a joining word (*and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet*).

> The rain increased, *so* the officials cancelled the game

> Martha wanted to go shopping, *but* Fred refused to drive her

> I had to give up woodcarving, *for* my arthritis had become very painful.

A complex sentence is made up of a simple sentence (a complete statement) and a statement that begins with a dependent word:

DEPENDENT WORD		
After	if, even if	when
Although, though	in order that	where, wherever
As	since	whether
Because	that, so that	which, whichever
Before	unless	while
Even though	until	who
How	what, whatever	whose

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[1] Chết máy

A complex sentence is used when you want to emphasize one idea over the other

Because I forgot the time, I missed the final exam.

The idea that the writer wishes to emphasize here –*I missed the final exam* – is expressed as a complete thought. The less important idea – *because I forgot the time-* is subordinated to the complete thought. The technique of giving one idea less emphasis than another is called *subordination.*

The compound-complex sentence is made up of two (or more) simple sentences and one or more dependent statements.

When the power line snapped[2], Jack was listening to the radio, and Linda was reading in bed.

After I returned to school following a long illness, the math teacher gave me make-up work, but the history teacher made me drop her course.

COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION

Coordination and subordination are ways of showing the exact relationship of ideas within a sentence. Through coordination we show that ideas are of **equal importance.** When we coordinate, we use the words *and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet.* Through subordination we show that one idea is less important than another. When we subordinate, we use dependent words like *when, although, since, as, whole, because,* and *after*.

IV. Patterns that add variety to writing

-ING GROUPS

Use an –ing word group at some point in a sentence

The doctor, *hoping* for the best, examines the x-ray
Jogging everyday, I soon raised my energy level

-ED WORD GROUPS

Use an –ed word group at some point in a sentence

Tired of studying, I took a short break
Mary, *amused* by the joke, told it to a friend
I opened my eyes wide, *shocked* by the red 'F' on my paper

APPOSITIVES

An *appositive* is a word group that renames a noun (any person, place, or thing)

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[2] Bị đứt, gãy

Rita, a good friend of mine, works as a police officer.
Alan Thorn, a former member of the team, got lost on the hiking trip.

-LY OPENERS

Use an –ly word to open a sentence.
Gently, he mixed the chemicals together
Anxiously, the contestant looked at the game clock
Skillfully, the quarterback[3] rifled a pass to his receiver

TO OPENERS

Use a TO word group to open a sentence.
To succeed in that course, you must attend every class
To help me sleep better, I learned to quiet my mind through meditation.
To get good seats, we went to the game early.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE OPENERS

Use prepositional phrase to open a sentence.
From the beginning, Ii disliked my boss.
In spite of her work, she failed the course.
After the game, we went to a movie

EXERCISES

I. Underline the prepositional, participial, gerund, and infinitive phrases in each sentences and then state whether they function as noun, adjective, or adverb phrases.

1. Many children with talent performed at the concert for the Red Cross.

2. Paul drove around the block, looking for a parking lot.

3. Delayed by the storm, the ship came into port a day late.

4. With growing interest we listen to the story.

5. Joining clubs is a way of meeting new people.

6. To be successful doesn't necessarily mean to be wealthy.

7. Alex, looking very unhappy, was leaning against the fence, watching the game.

8. Our neighbors across the road are moving to a house around the corner.

9. Our first job, painting the fence, took all morning.

10. The birds, made bold by hunger, came to the doorstep for food.

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[3] Tiền vệ

II. Underline the Subordinate clauses (or clause) in each of the following sentences and then write their names and functions.

1. Have you ever asked your doctor what a disease is?

2. I forgot to tell you the time when I shall return.

3. That you are in good health again pleases all of us.

4. He tried for a long time before he succeeded.

5. The only people who never fail are those who never try.

6. If Jane comes, should we show her the photographs you brought?

7. We were still eighty miles from where we were going.

8. Attracted by the high waves, many people moved to the big cities where they found jobs in factories.

9. My uncle laughed at me when I ran from a cow that only wanted to be friendly.

10. When I got to the station, I learnt that the train that I expected to get had left ten minutes before.

11. Miss Sullivan is annoyed if we come in after the bell, which is hung above the front door, has rung twice.

12. The day after I arrived I met a friend whom I had not seen since he moved to the South.

III. Determine the kind of each of the following sentences. Underline each clause of the sentence, and then write its name.

1. Fishing isn't any fun for me unless I catch a fish.

2. He did not talk or laugh; he just merely smiled.

3. Ask no questions and you will be told no lies.

4. Dad, busy with his monthly report, hardly heard a word we said.

5. At a dangerous speed the thieves drove the stolen car through the thick traffic.

6. The violinist bowed and smiled while the audience applauded wildly, but he played no encores.

7. I was happy when I heard that he had been appointed chairman of the committee.

8. The student checked his paper carefully; still, he was sure that he had made a mistake.

9. If anyone telephones me while I was out, tell him that I have gone to Kiev for the day.

10. I do not know how you regard this action, but I do know what I think of it.

Further reading

PARALLEL STRUCTURE

Parallel structure means using the same pattern of words to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance. This can happen at the word, phrase, or clause level. The usual way to join parallel structures is with the use of coordinating conjunctions such as "and" or "or."

1. Words and Phrases

With the -ing form (gerund) of words:

Parallel: Mary likes hik*ing*, swimm*ing*, and bicycl*ing*.

➢ With infinitive phrases:

Parallel: Mary likes *to hike*, *to swim*, and *to ride* a bicycle.
OR
Mary likes to *hike*, *swim*, and *ride* a bicycle.

➢ (**Note:** You can use "to" before all the verbs in a sentence or only before the first one.)
Do not mix forms.

Example 1

Not Parallel: Mary likes hik*ing*, swimm*ing*, and *to ride* a bicycle.

Parallel: Mary likes hik*ing*, swimm*ing*, and rid*ing* a bicycle.

Example 2

Not Parallel: The production manager was asked to write his report quick*ly*, accurate*ly*, and *in a detailed manner*.

Parallel: The production manager was asked to write his report quick*ly,* accurate*ly*, and thorough*ly*.

Example 3

Not Parallel: The teacher said that he was a poor student because he wait*ed* until the last minute to study for the exam, complet*ed* his lab problems in a careless manner, and *his motivation was* low.

Parallel: The teacher said that he was a poor student because he wait*ed* until the last minute to study for the exam, complet*ed* his lab problems in a careless manner, and lack*ed* motivation.

2. Clauses

A parallel structure that begins with clauses must keep on with clauses. Changing to another pattern or changing the voice of the verb (from active to passive or vice versa) will break the parallelism.

Example 1

Not Parallel: The coach told the players *that they should get* a lot of sleep, *that they should not eat* too much, and *to do* some warm-up exercises before the game.

Parallel: The coach told the players *that they should get* a lot of sleep, *that they should not eat* too much, and *that they should do* some warm-up exercises before the game.

-- or --

Parallel: The coach told the players that they should *get* a lot of sleep, not *eat* too much, and *do* some warm-up exercises before the game.

Example 2

Not Parallel: The salesman expected *that he would present* his product at the meeting, *that there would be* time for him to show his slide presentation, and *that questions would be asked* by prospective buyers.
(passive)

Parallel: The salesman expected *that he would present* his product at the meeting, *that there would be* time for him to show his slide presentation, and *that prospective buyers would ask* him questions.

3. Lists after a colon

Be sure to keep all the elements in a list in the same form.

Example 1

Not Parallel: The dictionary can be used for these purposes: to find *word meanings*, *pronunciations*, *correct spellings*, and *looking up irregular verbs*.

Parallel: The dictionary can be used for these purposes: to find *word meanings*, *pronunciations*, *correct spellings*, and *irregular verbs*.

Proofreading Strategies to try when you write:

Skim your paper, pausing at the words "and" and "or." Check on each side of these words to see whether the items joined are parallel. If not, make them parallel.

If you have several items in a list, put them in a column to see if they are parallel.

Listen to the sound of the items in a list or the items being compared. Do you hear the same kinds of sounds? For example, is there a series of "-ing" words beginning