

6.4 WRITING EFFECTIVES SENTENCES

For effective communication, each sentence must be effective. A sentence is a combination of words expressing a complete thought. The sentence can be a statement, a question, a command or in the form of an exclamation. The sentences of normal length with a subjects-verb-object pattern are called normal sentences. The sentences in which two or more clauses are joined by coordinating conjunctions making coordinating structures are called compound sentences or parallel sentences. In sentence-building we use phrases and clauses. The phrases can be noun phrases, adjectival phrases, adverbial phrases and prepositional phrases. A phrase is a group of words with no finite verb and it does not give a sense completely by itself. Whereas a clause is a part of a longer sentence. Each clause in a sentence has its own subject and predicate. The clauses are of three types, the noun clauses, the adjectival clauses and the adverbial clauses. The sentences which are made of one principal clause and one or more than one clauses subordinating it are called complex sentences. In complex sentences the clauses are joined by subordinating conjunctions.

Writing becomes monotonous when sentences are built up following the same pattern. As per the language conventions there are a number of acceptable patterns of sentences. For effective writing the variety in selecting patterns is very important. The variety of patterns is also used to create various moods and pace changes in writing. In narrative writing sentence patterns are exploited to create characters, the talking style, their state of mind whether confused or cool or excited etc. Similarly, sometimes to create the impact of argument and reasoning various sentence patterns are used. The variety of patterns also creates interest and attractiveness in the text. When a sentence extends, even after having a complete sense in the first clause, to some other explanatory or qualifying clauses, it is called a loose sentence. There are also periodic sentences where principal statement comes at the end. It is not grammatically complete until the end of the sentence is reached.

<i>Loose Sentence</i>	<i>Periodic Sentence</i>
The prices of electronic goods decreased heavily owing to foreign companies entering the domestic market.	Owing to foreign companies entering the domestic market, the prices of electronic goods decreased heavily.

Apart from the form of a sentence, the length of the sentence is also equally important. In writing, although there is no hard and fast rule for deciding upon the length of sentences but short sentences have inherent simplicity because they are easy to understand. They do not create any problem by presenting

complicated structures. For simplicity the writer should practise framing short sentences. The longer the sentence is the greater are the chances of having grammatical errors. Also the use of a number of long sentences together makes the text lofty whereas the presence of a number of short sentences at a place in the text makes it light and conversational. Sometimes two long sentences followed by a short sentence used alternatively generate pace in the text. If the text has many short sentences together, their presence slows down the pace of the text. Efficient authors manipulate and experiment with the combinations and number of short and long sentences for various purposes in mind as per the requirements of the texts.

6.4.1 Characteristics of Effective Sentences

The characteristics of effective sentences are as follows :

1. **Unity** : Building grammatically correct sentences to a regular plan is called the grammatical unity of sentences. A sentence containing one idea at a time with all its parts contributing to strengthen the main idea is called the thought unity of a sentence.
2. **Coherence** : Coherence in a sentence implies how various parts are sticking to each other with no word superfluous, no word inappropriate. Also the parts are sticking tightly to each other in a logical order. For coherence in sentences parts must be balanced and the qualifying sentences must be placed in proximity.
3. **Variety** : Another important characteristic of effective sentence construction is that some idea may be expressed creatively in a variety of sentences. Same kind of structure for same kind of thought or idea and again creates monotony in expression.
4. **Economy** : The effectiveness of a sentence is judged by the number of words that make a sentence to take its shape. Concise expressions increase the effectiveness of a sentence. Each word must be weighed and then used to frame a sentence.
5. **Proper Selection** : An effective sentence has a proper selection of words. Precise selection and appropriate choice of words not only makes a sentence more connotative but also generates an impact on the reader of the text.
6. **Sequence and Ranking** : The effectiveness a sentence depends upon what kind of ranking is thought upon while the selection and placement of the words is done. The ranking of words causes all changes in the meaning. The word-order though followed as per the conventions of a language but still there remains a scope for experimentation.
7. **Simplicity**. This is another important characteristic of effective sentence construction. The choice of words, their consistency and the simplicity in the choice of patterns give a sentence an overall simple look.

6.5 DEVELOPING LOGICAL PARAGRAPHS

A paragraph is a cohesive arrangement of sentences moving sound one idea. In a paragraph there are sentences grouped closely under one idea. The arrangement of sentences and their ranking generate progression in thought. A dominant theme binds the sentences together in a paragraph. All sentences, individually, have a distinct role in the development of an idea and in the growth of a paragraph. A text having a solid block-like look with no paragraphs makes itself unapproachable for the reader. Also a text divided in parts creates a picture of unity in variety, variety, because it partly strengthens a dimension of the text and unity because the text is not complete without a paragraph. A paragraph is a small unit, a link of a bigger unit, a chain. It has its own individuality and its own existence. In a paragraph, every sentence gives birth to the sentence that follows it and every two consecutive sentences are connected to each other in thought.

6.5.1 Characteristics of a Good Paragraph

The characteristics of a good paragraph are as under :

1. **Unity** : The unity in a paragraph means that the paragraph deals with only one point. All sentences at the individual level strengthen or develop that point. No word or sentence makes any digression. The development of the point or idea is also gradually done from one sentence to another. There is a movement from the first sentence to the last sentence of the paragraph and when the paragraph ends it given a sense of completion.
2. **Coherence** : In a good paragraph, there is flow from one sentence to the next sentence. The sentences are well-knit. Each sentence is logically connected with the preceding and the following sentences. Every sentence has the seeds for beginning the next sentence. There is a movement of thought from sentence-to-sentence.
3. **Order** : In a good paragraph, there is a proper order with regard to time and space sequence. The order is also from particular to general, from question to answer. The proper order in a paragraph generates a sense of completion. The aspect of order in a paragraph gives a feel of the movement, because the logic and the reasoning develop the order in a paragraph.
4. **Length** : The length of a good paragraph is neither too short nor too long. The optimum length of a paragraph can be effected by weighing each sentence and its effectiveness in terms of precision. Long sentences may be converted into short sentences by one word substitutions or by removing unnecessary details making the sentences compact and concise. For effectiveness a short paragraph creates clarity of expression.
5. **The Topic Sentence** : As a paragraph deals with one point or one topic only, hence the topic dealt with by the paragraph is shown by one sentence in the paragraph called the topic sentence and all other sentences elaborate that point in

the paragraph. The importance places the topic sentence usually at the beginning of the paragraph. The topic sentence helps the reader to follow what the writer's train of thought is.

6.5.2 Elaboration

In writing, elaboration has a great significance. Sometimes something which is brief and concise is not understandable to all. A passage of short length which is increased to a greater length without repetition of a single sentence is called elaboration. Repetitions lead to monotony but elaboration does not. The elaborated version of the same passage brings clarity in understanding. In elaborating a text it is very important to know what is to be elaborated for what purpose and for whom it is to be elaborated. Elaboration sometimes requires examples and anecdotes to clarify a statement. Elaboration of a text is possible only when the reader has analysed the text. If the reader is unable to understand the text, he or she who has understood it should elaborate it.

6.6 EFFECTIVE WRITING SKILLS

For effective writing, we should take care of following skills :

- (i) Unified writing.
- (ii) Coherence

6.6.1 Unified Writing

Effective writing is always unified. There is a proper development of the topic duly selected. There is no digression in the development of the topic. The position and the stature of the reader is always to be kept in mind. The writer knows how to manifest himself through his or her writing as well as maintaining its universal appeal. He or she knows how to use his or her vocabulary to encode his or her ideas and information and succeed in communicating with his or her readers. For effective writing there should not be any hasty generalization. There should be a proper cause and effect relationship. There should be a proper prediction and appropriate conclusion. The features of unified writing are as follows :

1. **Uniqueness of the Topic :** For unified writing there should be one and only one topic. For selecting a topic the writer should make a proper evaluation of his or her own knowledge. He or she should be aware of the field which he or she could deal with without any hindrances, the field in which his or her concepts are clear. He or she should know the topic in which he or she is proficient. Any hasty decisions regarding selection of a topic may prove him or her an inefficient writer.

2. **Clarity of Thought :** The topic generates numerous thoughts in the mind of the writer. From the crowd of thoughts he or she should effect clarity. From these thoughts the writer develops his or her point of view and approach to deal

with the topic. Unclear mind of the writer cannot satisfy the reader. Nor could his or her muddled thoughts justify his or her topic for communication.

3. Grouping of Ideas into Paragraphs : An efficient writer groups the thoughts pertaining to an idea into various paragraphs. In this way there may be as many paragraphs as there are ideas. The thoughts having associations brought and grouped under one idea create an ease in the understanding of the text.

4. Effecting the Right Sense Movement : The effective piece of writing is dynamic. The number of paragraphs in which the whole text is divided should depict a sense of movement from the first paragraph to the last paragraph. This movement depends upon the manner of the development of the text. Usually the writer does it by dividing and subdividing the main topic into various components and sections. The classification and categorization of the theme also helps in the progress of the theme. Structurally the writer initiates the topic and gradually approaching it from various angles, reaches the conclusion of the theme and hence yields a dynamic character to it.

5. Proper Transition : An efficient writer groups paragraphs in such a fashion that the paragraphs are linked. At the end of first paragraph there must be some queries or issues raised which are to be dealt with in the ensuing paragraph. Here transition means movement on a pre-decided path. The movement is not arbitrary. The topic grows with every new paragraph. And this process continues till the end.

6. A Sense of Direction : In an effective piece of writing the transition is definitely towards some goal, towards which the writer gradually takes his or her text. The goal decides how the movement should be and which path it should follow to reach that goal.

7. A Feel of Novelty : A unified piece of writing generates novelty by making innovations at the level of ideas and at the level of the presentation of ideas. Sometimes new thoughts and new ideas are conceived by the writer, sometimes he or she experiments with the technique of presentation making use of semantic and syntactic innovations, using different patterns of sentences, changing the ranking of words and hence succeeds in creating a feel of novelty in the text.

8. Generating Interest : An efficient writer, to produce a piece of unified writing, also keeps in mind that his or her text must generate interest in the mind of the reader. This he or she does by tapping the expectations of the readers. He or she then arranges the ideas with necessary examples and anecdotes to make the text readable and interesting. It also encourages him or her to read further.

9. A Sense of Completion : The unified writing also gives the feel of a sense of completion to the reader. The reader after going through the text feels satisfied in a sense that it has introduced him or her to a topic and gradually enlightened him with different dimensions and approaches of its development. The reader gets a sense of fulfilment after going through it.

10. Informative Contents : A unified piece of writing is informative. It collects information and facts keeping in mind the kind of information that the reader would be benefited from. The text presents the information in a systematic fashion adding his or her the personal point of view.

6.6.2. Coherence

Coherence is another prominent skill of writing. Any effective piece of writing coheres. In writing the text should cohere. The coherence of the text implies the compactness of the text. The sentences stick to each other, the paragraphs or the sections must adhere to each other. Apparently the text does not seem a loosely composed piece. It is only after going through a text one could find out the inner looseness. The tight text does not allow the reader to move elsewhere or digress from the text. Its tightness sustains his or her concentration, maintains his or her line of interpretation and analysis. The coherence of the text helps the author too. The author by coherence sticks to the outline prior prepared. The features or factors of coherence are as follows :

1. Precision : The precise word for a precise expression makes a writer avoid any roundabout or choppy expression. The writer selects the appropriate expression for encoding his or her message. The precision also depends upon the clarity of thinking. The writer is to the point in his or her writing. He or she should call a spade a spade. The words must be well-chosen. They should be graphic not abstract.

2. Conciseness : Conciseness plays a great role in effecting coherence in the text. Conciseness in a matter of expressing something in minimum possible words. There should be less sound but more sense. Words or expressions in the text should be more connotative than denotative. The conciseness removes all superfluous words and expressions and tightens the text. The writer should edit his or her text ruthlessly.

3. Reasoning : Reasoning helps in the tightening of the text. Proper reasoning does not allow the writer to express anything at any point of time. He or she would keep that which is pertinent and remove that which is an odd man out. The reasoning suggests which idea should follow or precede a particular idea. Structurally, the sentences should be so placed that a sentence that follows takes birth from the preceding sentence.

4. Logic : The writer uses his own logic, deductive or inductive to express his views. If the writer sticks to the logic in his or her writing the text remains tightened. Structurally, the logic indicates the validity of a word in a sentence or a sentence in a text. The writer must justify why this particular expression appears in the text. If it is a cause and effect relationship it should be clear from the text that the writer has stuck to the same. He should hear the music of the language to feel whether the expressions have the correct feel or not when they are used in the text.

5. Ethics : At the level of ideas, the writer must stick to the ethics of the ideas and writing. Whenever the writer goes against the ethics he has to justify and convince, which consequently requires more space for explication. This also shows the writer's own sense of responsibility.

6. Proper Generalization : For attaining coherence in writing, the writer should make his generalization properly. Any vague generalization impairs the connections and linkages between ideas and statements. Proper generalizations do not require too many examples. For a proper generalization the writer should go in depth of the idea he or she wants to convey through his or her writing. A hasty generalization also loosens the text.

7. Abbreviations and One Word Substitution : Linguistically the accepted abbreviated forms pertaining to a topic and the substitution of a sentence by a word reduce the length of expressions.

8. Compression : For coherence the writer should know how to compress the text. The efficient writer converts large sentences into short sentences. The reduction of their length is done by removing superfluous expressions and by linking the ideas. The compression is also done by making use of shorter words the words shorter in size.

9. Avoiding Repetitions : For coherence in the text the writer should note where he or she is repeating the same idea, though not by the same expression but by expressing it through different expressions. This makes the text loose in structure and appeal.

10. Removing Padding and Ornamentation : The inefficient writers exaggerate a lot. To deal with a small idea they use very many expressions. This increases the size of the text unduly. Also just to establish their flair in writing they deliberately use ornamental and bombastic expressions for fancy sake. This too loosens the compositions. The writer should not simply go for impressing his or her readers. Hence, for coherence in the text this practice should be avoided.

11. Punctuation : Proper punctuation tightens the text. Sometimes appropriate punctuation marks substitute for the words and expressions. The efficiency of a writer depends upon his or her proficiency in the use of appropriate punctuations in the text.

The coherence in the text is done by overt and covert connectors linguistically. However, the clarity in the mind of the writer makes him attain coherence in the text and produce an effective piece of writing.

6.10 DRAFTING AND EDITING THE BUSINESS LETTERS

Outward correspondence acts as representative of business, and so great care should be given to each outgoing letter. In every office, there are many clerks for correspondence work. These clerks prepare rough drafts either by way of replies to the inward letters or write letter quite independently. These draft replies are then placed before departmental managers for approval and signature. In some offices, the letters are often passed through a chain of superiors before they are placed before the executive for final signature. The object of this arrangement is to ensure accuracy and to avoid the possibility of any mistake.

In certain concerns, important letters are drafted and dictated by the officers themselves whereas the routine letters are written by correspondence clerks and signed by the competent officers. Important letters such as those relating to complaints or agreements, etc., are to be drafted by the senior officers, and sent for the approval of the General Manager. Often the General Manager calls a stenographer and dictates to him the letters which are taken down in shorthand. The dictaphone may also be used by higher level officers for dictating letters in their leisure time.

Giving Dictating to a Stenographer, or a Dictation Machine. The dictation of letters to a shorthand typist or stenographer is widely used in organisations. In this case, the executive dictates correspondence and the stenographer takes it down in shorthand and then types or transcribes it either in draft or in final form. This method requires simultaneous physical presence of both the executive and the stenographer at one place. This may not always be possible or convenient. Such cases are quite common when the stenographer or typist may be busy either taking dictation from another executive or busy doing other important work at a time when the executive may feel the urgency of dictating letters and leaving for other work. Sometimes, after the usual work hours, the executive may feel it necessary to dictate important letters or assign other important work to the subordinate staff. To avoid these difficulties, it is advisable to use dictating machines.

6.10.1 Principles of Drafting

Little field and Rachel has laid down the following key principles for drafting effective letters :

- (i) *Determine the purpose of the message.* Usually, there is the central purpose of conveying certain information and an important secondary purpose of conveying a feeling of helpfulness and goodwill.
- (ii) *Plan the message.* Know the ideas that you want to put across, and arrange them in a logical sequence before you begin the communication.
- (iii) *Use natural conversational language.* Aim at directness and simplicity.
- (iv) *Be compact and clear.* Try to make one message do the job. Don't leave questions, raised in the letters addressed to you, unanswered.
- (v) *Be brief but not too brief.* Give a through explanation, but be selective in using detail.
- (vi) *Be courteous.* considerate, friendly and helpful.
- (vii) *Proof read carefully.* An excellent document can be ruined by a skeptical attitude generated by grammatical and typing errors. Spelling name improperly, typing numbers incorrectly and insequence, and failing to enclose necessary items are the most frequent problems. Proof reading should also involve checking for completeness.

- (iii) He or she may answer it by form paragraphs or as a form letter. To add a personal touch, when desired, certain fill-in paragraphs or a personal opening sentence or postscript, may be written.
- (iv) He or she may answer it with a printed letter / form.
- (v) He or she may jot down an outline of the proper answer and let his secretary shape it up.
- (vi) He or she may turn the letter over to an intelligent secretary without comment.
- (vii) He or she may dictate a special letter which is to be sent to several widely separated correspondents. Each letter may be separately typed, or its copy may be put on a duplicator.
- (viii) When he or she wishes to show intimate personal interest, he or she may add a brief note in his or her own handwriting.