

BCA & B.Tech. (All Branches) Professional Communication

Topics covered:

*words

*Requisition of a good Sentence

*Paragraph development; Techniques and Methods

Words

Word Formation

Affixation

Affixation is generally defined as the formation of words by adding word-forming or derivational affixes to stems. This process is also known as **derivation**, for new words created in this way are derived from old forms. The words formed in this way are called derivatives. According to the positions which affixes occupy in words, affixation falls into two subclasses: **pre-fixation**, and **suffixation**.

Pre-fixation is the formation of new words by adding prefixes to stems. Prefixes do not generally change the word-class of the stem but only modify its meaning. However, present-day English finds an increasing number of class-changing prefixes, e.g. *asleep* **a.** (a- + v), *encourage* **v.** (en- + n), *unearth* **v.** (un- + n), *de-oil* **v.** (de- + n). These make up only an insignificant number in the huge contemporary vocabulary. The majority of prefixes are characterized by their non-class-changing nature. Their chief function is to change meanings of the stems. The italicized and bold morphemes in the following examples are the prefix

Irreplaceable, *Unmovable*, *Irreplaceable*, *Immovable*, *Insensitive*, *Disservice*, *Malpractice*, *Misconduct*, *Underdeveloped*, *Anti-government*, *Extraordinary*, *Multi-purpose*, *Decentralize*, *Immature*, *Disallow*, *Asleep*, *Injustice*, *Unfair*, *Unwilling*, *Irresistible* etc.

Suffix

A **suffix** (also sometimes called a *postfix* or *ending*) is an affix which is placed after the stem of a word. Common examples are case endings, which indicate the grammatical case of nouns or adjectives, and verb endings, which form the conjugation of verbs. With the use of the suffix, the category of a word can be either changed or maintained, e.g. *plays*, *played*, and *playing*, *kingdom* as *Class* maintaining and *Play-ground*, *player* and *playful* as class changing. The italicized and bold morphemes in the following examples are the suffix.

Examination, *criticize*, *beautify*, *beautifully*, *readable*, *childhood*, *Kindness*, *careful*, *careless*, *criticism*, *development*, *dentist*, *financial linguist* and *childish* etc

Compounding:

Noun + Noun

The most common type of word formation is the combination of two (or more) nouns in order to form a resulting noun:

Noun + Noun = Noun

Examples: landmine, wallpaper, toothbrush

Verb + Noun

Here verbs describe what is done with an object or what a subject "does", in short, a new noun is formed, usually referring to something concrete, and the verb defines the action related to it:

Verb + Noun = Noun: draw + bridge = drawbridge.

hitman = a man who carries out "dirty jobs", or, who "hits".

Noun + Adjective

Nouns and adjectives can also be compounded in the opposite order:

Noun + Adjective = Adjective

Camera + shy = camera-shy (Shy in respect of appearing or speaking before cameras).

Dirt-cheap = cheap as dirt;

Adjective + Noun

Another major type of word formation is the compounding of Adjectives and nouns:

Adjective + Noun = Noun:

Brown + bear = brownbear

Examples:

blackboard (a board to write on vertically attached to a wall), redneck (a Southerner of poor social background), yellowpress (see above), blueprint (prints of building plans).

Adjective + Adjective

bitter-sweet, deaf-mute, aural-oral, Anglo-Saxon

Adjective + Participle

far-reaching, far fetched, narrow-minded, single-minded, high-climbing, low-yielding, red-painted, bare-handed

Adjective + Verb

to blackmail, to dry-clean, to blackpaint, to whitewash

Noun + Verb

to proofread, to baby-sit, to brainstorm, to sightsee, to tape-record

Other Word Formations

Concluding, here is an offer of complementary word formations that cannot sensibly be grouped within the context of the previous sections.

Clipping

Clipping is a shortening of a word by the omission of one or more syllables.

Examples: bike (bicycle), decaf (decaffeinated coffee), fan (fanatic), exam (examination), phone (telephone), fax (facsimile), fridge (refrigerator), hyper (hyperactive), intercom (intercommunication system), lab (laboratory), medic (medical student/doctor), memo (memorandum), mike (microphone), movie (moving picture), photo (photograph), pub (public house), zoo (zoological gardens), maths (mathematics).

Acronyms

Words that are formed from the initials of several words. The usually resulting word class is that of a noun: UNESCO(United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organisation), SCUBA (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus), email (electronic mail).

Blends

Process of creating a new word by combining the parts of two different words, usually the beginning of one word and the end of another. Here, two or more Complementing components constitute the basis for the resultant. These components are omitted of one or more syllables before compounded to the blend.

Examples: bit binary+digit, camcorder camera+recorder, contraception contrasting+conception, geepgoat+sheep, glitterati glitter+literaty, modem modular+demodulator, motel motor+hotel, smog smoke+fog, transistor transfer+resistor.

Conversion

Conversion is the derivational process whereby a word changes its word-class without the addition of an affix. Thus, when the noun 'sign' (1) shifts to the verb 'sign(ed)' (2) without any change in the word form we can say this is a case of conversion. Conversion is particularly common in English because the basic form of nouns and verbs is identical in many cases.

Switch on the **light**.

Light the lamp.

ABSTRACT AND SPECIFIC WORDS

When writing a technical document the writer should strive for plainness. One should take care not to use abstract words as they fail to clarify the exactness of a situation. Abstract words convey generalized opinion e.g. good.

Abstract words	Specific words
Majority Group Near future Later Slump Engineering Recently Executive Staff Meager Substantial A significant loss The leading company	70 % 20 people Next month In the afternoon at 3 Twenty percent down Electrical engineering Last week Manager Accountants Ten percent Eighty percent 45 % loss The first among 20 teams

e.g.

1. The hall was big enough for a large audience.
2. The hall could accommodate a thousand people.

JARGONS

Jargons are the words that are quite common to a particular trade and profession. Jargons are also known as technical words. Jargons contribute new words to the language. People of all trades and disciplines have their own jargons which can be better understood when exchanged between individual of the same profession but create inconvenience to the people from other trade and profession. To maintain smooth exchange of information such words should be avoided.

- **Sports Jargons** - rookie, huddle, hat-trick, etc.
- **Chat Jargons** - *poof*, lol, msg, asl, etc.
- **Computer Jargons** - cache, CPU, cookie, crash, etc.
- **Business Jargons** - aggressive quote, band-aid, bearish on, bullish on, etc.

CLICHÉ

Phrases that have been used so long and so often that they are dull for the reader or listener. Good to listen though, it often conveys problems of meaning and makes our expression wordy. It mars the effectiveness and, hence, should be eliminated especially in technical writing.

e.g.

- blind as a bat
- busy as a bee
- a piece of cake cool as a cucumber
- cry over spilt milk
- Live and learn
- Live and let live
- Rome was not built in a day
- All is fair in love and war

More examples:

1. The new policy on education has thrown cold water on students.

Revised: The new policy has disappointed students.

2. The manager smelt the rat in the deal and put it on the backburner.

Revised: The manager doubted the deal and put it aside.

Sentence

Sentence: A set of words that is complete in itself, typically containing a subject and predicate, conveying a statement, question, exclamation, or command, and consisting of a main clause and sometimes one or more subordinate clauses.

Requisites of a good sentence

There are three basic requisites of a good sentence:

Clarity, Consistency, and Economy

Clarity refers to the clear expression of writer's thought without any ambiguity. The three basic aids to maintain clarity in a sentence are **adequate punctuation, clear pronoun reference** and **correct word order**.

Consistency means grammatical harmony in sentences to make them errorless and effective. Writers should keep tenses consistent, make subjects and verbs agree in number and person and make pronoun agree with their antecedents in gender, number and person.

Economy refers to express one's viewpoints precisely and effectively. To achieve economy in communicating one's thoughts the writer should avoid long winded sentences, repetitions and redundancies from one's expressions.

Further Reading

Temptations to be avoided while composing a sentence:

Resist the temptation of making a sentence too short, even at the cost of clarity, and the temptation to go on adding clauses and thus crowding it with information. Some of the faults that result from one's inability to resist these temptations are:

- **Rambling** or run-on sentences are sentences that contain several clauses connected by coordinating conjunctions such as: **and, or, but, yet, for, nor,** and **so**.

I was happy to walk down the aisle as a bridesmaid in my sister's wedding, but I was very embarrassed when I stumbled in the middle of the ceremony, for when I recovered, I looked up and saw my sister and I thought she was going to faint, because I could see her standing in the doorway waiting to begin her own walk down the aisle, and her face was all white, she looked like she was going to throw up.

- **Expletives** such as - What *the hell* do you mean?
- A **garbled sentence** is a confused construction. It happens when we force too many ideas in a single sentence.
- A loaded sentence contains so many facts in its subordinate clauses that the main idea in the main clause gets obscured e.g.
Since air is a gift of God, for which we have not to pay anything, which is so freely and so easily available to the highest and to the lowest in this world, its purity must not be neglected.
- A **squinting construction** is a loosely constructed sentence, in which it is not possible to decide with part of sentence is being modified by a particular word. This is generally because of a misplaced adverb e.g.
The items that we received *finally* met the requirements.
- Stacked modifiers refer to a series of modifiers modifying the same noun e.g.
Those demographically destabilizing foetus-sex identification tests have been banned in India
- Dangling participles do not logically modify the word that it should e.g.
He bought a doll for his daughter *called Barbie*.
Here 'called Barbie' should come immediately after 'a doll'.

PARAGRAPH WRITING

What is a paragraph?

It is a group of sentences that introduces, presents and develops **one** main idea about the topic. It can be divided into **three** major parts.

A. The Topic Sentence

- It is normally the first sentence of the paragraph.
- It conveys the overall point of the paragraph.
- It helps the writer focus on the idea written about.
- It helps the reader know about what the paragraph is all about.

B. The Supporting Details

- They are sentences used to support the main idea stated in the topic sentence.
- They give more information about the main idea through examples.
- They say in detail what the topic sentence says in general.
- They should be clear evidence that what the topic sentence says is trustworthy.
- They should be strong convincing points on which the topic sentence can rely upon.

C. The Concluding Sentence

- It is a reflection of the main idea pronounced in the topic sentence.
- It sums up what the topic sentence and the supporting details talk about.
- It is the closing sentence that reminds the readers of what they have to value.

It is compulsory for the completion of the paragraph unity.
It eventually indicates the end of a paragraph.
It prepares the reader for a smooth transition to the next paragraph if there is one.

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

Most paragraphs in an essay have a three-part structure—introduction, body, and conclusion. You can see this structure in paragraphs whether they are narrating, describing, comparing, contrasting, or analyzing information. Each part of the paragraph plays an important role in communicating your meaning to your reader.

Introduction: the first section of a paragraph that generally includes the topic sentence and any other sentences at the beginning of the paragraph that give background information or provide a transition.

Body: follows the introduction; discusses the controlling idea, using facts, arguments, analysis, examples, and other information.

Conclusion: the final section; summarizes the connections between the information discussed in the body of the paragraph and the paragraph's controlling idea.

Requisites of a Paragraph

The three basic requirements of a good paragraph are **Unity, Coherence** and **Emphasis**.

1Unity

The entire paragraph should concern itself with a single focus. If it begins with a one focus or major point of discussion, it should not end with another or wander within different ideas.

2Coherence

Coherence is the trait that makes the paragraph easily understandable to a reader. In a coherent paragraph, each sentence relates clearly to the topic sentence or controlling idea, but there is more to coherence than this. If a paragraph is coherent, each sentence flows smoothly into the next without obvious shifts or jumps. A coherent paragraph also highlights the ties between old information and new information to make the structure of ideas or arguments clear to the reader.

Along with the smooth flow of sentences, a paragraph's coherence may also be related to its length. If you have written a very long paragraph, one that fills a double-spaced typed page, for example, you should check it carefully to see if it should start a new paragraph where the original paragraph wanders from its controlling idea. On the other hand, if a paragraph is very short (only one or two sentences, perhaps), you may need to develop its controlling idea more thoroughly, or combine it with another paragraph. You can help create coherence in your paragraphs by creating logical bridges and verbal bridges.

Verbal bridges to maintain coherence in a paragraph:

- Key words can be repeated in several sentences
- Synonymous words can be repeated in several sentences
- Pronouns can refer to nouns in previous sentences
- Transition words can be used to link ideas from different sentences

3**Emphasis** refers to the force or prominence on important points in the paragraph. It is essential because when a person reads a text, he should know at once what the author is writing about. Also, the most important idea should stand out. There are five devices which help writers emphasize on significant ideas in a paragraph. They are **Balance, Space, repetition, contrast** and **Emphatic words**.

Some methods to make sure your paragraphs are well-developed:

- Use examples and illustrations
- Cite data (facts, statistics, evidence, details, and others)
- Examine testimony (what other people say such as quotes and paraphrases)
- Use an anecdote or story
- Define terms in the paragraph
- Compare and contrast
- Evaluate causes and reasons
- Examine effects and consequences
- Analyze the topic
- Describe the topic
- Offer a chronology of an event (time segments)

What is an Inductive paragraph?

An inductive paragraph begins with either evidence or reasons leading to the statement of the Writer's claim at the end of the paragraph. Inductive paragraphs are therefore 'conclusion-oriented'. The main conclusion is the most important part of the reasoning and usually comes at the end of a paragraph. Read the following paragraph:

Oceans have ingredients which can benefit human health. Several important medical treatments are based on chemicals discovered in marine animals. On the other hand, increasingly common phenomena such as harmful algal blooms have demonstrated their negative impact on human health. The health of marine ecosystems is affected by human activities such as pollution, global warming, and over fishing. But at the same time, human health depends on thriving ocean ecosystems. We need a better understanding of the many ways marine organisms affect human health, both positively by providing drugs and bio-products, and negatively by causing human ailments.

The following diagram illustrates how a claim is developed in an inductive way.

Sentence 1: Evidence/Sub-claim 1

Sentence 2: Example of Sub-claim 1

Sentence 3: Evidence/Sub-claim	2
Sentence 4: Evidence/Sub-claim	3
Sentence 5: Evidence/Sub-claim	4
Sentence 6: Conclusion/Claim	

What is a Deductive paragraph?

In a deductive paragraph, the claim is usually provided in the first sentence of the paragraph. The sentence containing the claim, which is the main point of the paragraph, is often referred to as the '**topic sentence**'. The topic sentence is then developed in the rest of the paragraph with evidence and reasoning supporting the initial claim. Example:

Beneficial and harmful links exist between human health and ocean health. While several important medical treatments are based on chemicals discovered in marine animals, increasingly common phenomena such as harmful algal blooms have demonstrated their negative impact on human health. The health of marine ecosystems is affected by human activities such as pollution, global warming, and over fishing. But human health in turn depends on thriving ocean ecosystems.

The following diagram illustrates how a claim is developed in an inductive way.

Sentence 1: Topic sentence/Claim	
Sentence 2: Elaboration/Sub-claim	1 & 2
Sentence 3: Elaboration/ Sub-claim	3
Sentence 4: Elaboration/Sub-claim	4

What do you mean by spatial order of paragraph?

Spatial order refers to space or layout. To use spatial order, you describe the setting in some sort of order based on location - you can go in a clockwise direction, or start at the front and go to the back, or go from top to bottom - so long as you list things in some kind of logical order. For example, if you write a paragraph about your local mall, you could organize the paragraphs and begin at the entrance, then describe each section of the mall until you got to your favourite store.

What do you mean by chronological order of paragraph?

Chronological order refers to time. To use chronological order, you could describe the subject by starting at the moment it began and working forward until present day; or you could start by describing it as it is now, then working backwards until the moment it began.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Write a note on the following:
 - a. Jargon and cliché
 - b. Abstract and specific words
 - c. Spatial paragraph
 - d. Chronological paragraph
 - e. Topic sentence
2. What are the prerequisites of a good sentence?
3. What are the components of a good paragraph?
4. What do we mean by an inductive paragraph? Develop a paragraph using the inductive method.
5. Write a note on the deductive method. Write a paragraph using the deductive method.