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# *Faulty Parallelism in Students' Writings*

The Case of Third Year L.M.D. Students Department of Foreign Languages Mentouri  
University of Constantine

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Language Studies

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***Dedication***

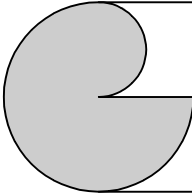
*I would like to dedicate this work:*

*To my mother, the dearest person to my heart. Thank you for all your sacrifices, your encouragement, and all your love.*

*To my brothers and my sister. Thank you for kindness.*

*To my nephew Anwar and my cousin Ramy.*

*To my best friends who have always been a source of motivation.*



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## **Abstract**

The present dissertation aims at investigating the use of faulty parallel structure in students' writings. It takes the specific case of Algerian third year LMD students of the Department of Foreign Languages at Mentouri University of Constantine. Because faulty parallelism is the lack of parallel structure, it creates sentences without balance. Readers expect parallel word structures especially when there is some underlying parallelism of meaning; however, this is not the case in many students' productions. Faulty parallelism is a crucial problem for students; the level and degree of difficulty differ in accordance to types of grammatical elements used.

To achieve the aim why most students confront faulty parallelism, a test is the tool used for the present investigation. The results corroborate our hypothesis is that mainly students deal with faulty parallel structure. Reasons behind this failure of using grammatical rules in parallel structure are also showed in the study.



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# *CHAPTER ONE*

## *FAULTY PARALLELISM*



# **Introduction**

## **1. Statement of the Problem**

Writing is the representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set of signs or symbols known as writing systems. It also refers to the arrangement of thoughts and information in a consistent way, therefore creating meaning. Consistency is essential to good writing since it makes the flow from one sentence to another easy and natural. Because writing is related to grammar, writers have to improve their sentence construction to link grammatical elements within a sentence in a correct and a parallel structure. This latter refers to the information process in which two or more processing operations are carried out in the same grammatical form. The general principle of parallelism is the use of similar ideas expressed by a similar grammatical structure. Though, many writers fail to recognize the construction, so that it would be there no constancy in their writings, and the result is a sentence that is guilty of what is called faulty parallel structure. This thesis is divided into two chapters; the first is the theoretical chapter which is devoted to the definition of writing and its relation with grammar, definition and aim of parallelism definition of faulty parallelism and its effect on writings, the chapter also deals with common use of faulty parallel structure and finally the conclusion. The second practical chapter consists of a test and its analysis, the results, and the conclusion deriving from the test.

## **2. Rationale**

Faulty parallelism refers to a clumsy construction in which the elements bump up against each other awkwardly instead of matching in an adequate way. However, faulty

parallelism occurs in students' writings when elements that are similar in idea are not made similarly in structure. So that, the main aim of this research is to investigate the problem of faulty parallelism that students confront when they write.

### **3. Research question**

This piece of research aims at addressing the following question:

Why are students confronted to faulty parallelism when they write?

### **4. Research Hypothesis**

As a major step in our research, we put forward one main research hypothesis, which investigates the lack of students' awareness of the grammatical forms which leads to a faulty parallel structure. In other words:

If students are aware to the formerly used grammatical forms, faulty parallelism will not occur.

### **5. Methodology**

To find the reason why students confront to faulty parallel structure, a test in which students have to correct wrong portions will be carried out. The subject of the study is a randomly selected sample of third year LMD students of the Department of Foreign Languages at Mentouri University of Constantine. These third year students are selected on purpose because they have normally reached a proficiency level and now master the English language.

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

This chapter is based primarily on the fundamental concept of this study which is faulty parallelism. Because a faulty parallel construction relates to grammar and style construction to support the choice of the best words to convey meaning, the chapter includes the definition of writing and parallelism, and the aim of parallelism, then the definition of faulty parallel structure and its effect that can be ranged from subtle to flagrant. The chapter also covers the common grammatical errors that are confronted by writers which lead to a non parallel construction during the process of writing. Special attention to some grammatical categories are also dealt with such as verb forms, nouns, pronouns, articles, correlative conjunctions, and prepositions that are included in the category of single words, in addition to focuses on clauses and phrases and types of each of all the previous grammatical elements. The chapter is also devoted to some examples in which there is no agreement between sentence elements as it shows the proper use of these basics to ensure a parallel and an accurate piece of writing.

### 1.1. Writing

According to Smith (1994), writing consists of words and these words are put together in a particular order to make sentences; these sentences are then grouped together into paragraphs in a coherent way which means that the relationships between sentences is clear, and the transition from one sentence to the other is easy and the reader should follow the thought without difficulty in a text. In short, it should be there a fundamental logic and a consistency in a text. Galko (2001) acknowledged that in order to match this coherence, and

this easy flow from sentence to sentence the writer should rely on the arrangement of the sentences in a clear order. One way to create this agreement is to be cohesive.

Baugh (1993) stated that cohesion refers to the well organization of the grammatical features in a text that enable the parts to fit together. According to Creme and Lea (2008), cohesion is concerned with the way in which parts of written texts fit together to make a whole rather than a series of incoherent spots. This is mainly essential when writers write an assignment and they have to focus on the linking pieces they use. These devices attach the thoughts in one sentence to the previous and to the following one. They also connect the smaller components of the sentence together, the phrases and clauses. Likewise, they join items to each other. The connecting devices assist to hold the argument along and provide arrangement to writing. According to Crystal (1998: 13):

*Grammar is what gives sense to language. . . Sentences make words yield up their meanings. Sentences actively create the study of grammar.*

This means that writing clear and informative sentences is as much art as it is the skilled use of grammatical rules which convey the intended meaning and capture the reader's interest (Baugh, 1993). According to Radford (2004) the incorporation of grammar in the writing process should be emphasized because of the importance it brings to students.

However, some writers generally fail when applying the grammatical essentials such as parts of speech, punctuation and punctuation style, sentence and sentence patterns, spelling, and capitalization on one hand, and the use of style consideration like composing and combining sentences, brevity, clarity accuracy, and parallel structure on the other hand. Parallel structure or parallelism is one of the major problems that writers confront (Creme & Mary 2008).

## **1.2. Parallelism**

Parallelism refers to the expression of two or more sentence elements in the same grammatical form. It keeps a sentence balanced because these basics are grammatically equal. Rozakis (2003: 137) describes it in the following way:

*Parallel structure means putting ideas of the same rank in the same grammatical structure. In the above anecdote, the italicized words and phrases show parallel structure. Your writing and speech should have parallel words, phrases, and clauses. Parallel structure gives your writing many admirable strengths, including tempo, stress, balance, and conciseness.*

As maintained by Folds One (1998), versatility of the English language makes it possible to express the same concept and meaning in many ways. But this freedom makes it too easy to start composing a sentence one way, and then switch tactics another way.

Raimes (1987) stated that insuring parallelism does not mean that every sentence should be structured in the same way. It does mean that, if a writer is creating a sentence or a passage that contains elements that are related in purpose, these elements must be presented in the same grammatical structure. Thus writer must not go arbitrarily from the active voice to the passive, from the present tense to the past, from the first person pronoun to the third, and from series of adjectives to series of nouns and so forth.

## **1.3. Aim of Parallelism**

According to Raimes (1987), the general principle of parallelism is to provide significant flexibility in sentence construction as well as a well organized message. It also leads to clarity in writing as it creates a satisfying rhythm in a prose passage (Starkey, 2006).

Nevertheless, many writers fail to recognize the problem, hence there would be no consistency in their writings, and the result is a sentence or a passage that is guilty of what is called faulty parallelism (Raimes, 1987).

#### **1.4. Faulty Parallelism**

Faulty parallelism refers to a clumsy construction in which the elements put up against each other uncomfortably instead of matching in a satisfactory way (Raimes, 1987). It occurs when the elements put into pairs and series go in different directions because they do not have the same form, in other words when a sentence does not employ equal grammatical structure to express related ideas. Faulty parallelism also occurs when a sentence is awkwardly or carelessly constructed so that the words do not seem to make much sense.

#### **1.5. Effect of Faulty Parallelism**

Faulty parallelism often brings strange results; its effects can range from subtle to fragrant. Certain errors may be noticed only on close assessment, others may render the sentence visibly ambiguous or confusing. Several writers set up faulty parallelism out of a mistaken principle that the variety makes for more interesting reading (Raimes, 1987).

Once a parallel structure has been started, the reader expects it to continue. If the structure changes in progress, readers will be confused. Writers err at a number of levels when creating a parallel sentence construction (Baugh, 1993):

## 1.6. Common Uses of Faulty Parallelism

### 1.6.1. Single Words

#### 1.6.1.1. Verb Form

Verbs are words or group of words that express an action or a state of being or a condition; they have basic forms: infinitive, present, past, and gerund form (Baugh: 1993). Learners often use the wrong verb form; these errors are painfully evident in written communication, since they confuse the reader and affect the tone of the message (Laissaoui, 2004). In his examination, Baugh (1993) found that this mistaken use of verb structure appears in several shapes:

##### 1.6.1.1. Gerunds and Infinitives

*Gerunds and infinitives are used to name actions, and thus to make it possible to talk about them* (Bright, 1970:02). Gerunds may be used alone (e.g.: singing), or they may be followed by some kind of completion (e.g.: falling in love); in order to include these possibilities, it is better to refer to gerund structure and to infinitive structure in a similar way (Bright: 1970). This former stated that writers violate parallel structure when they mix the forms within a sentence:

- *People are expected to laugh and cry, fall in love, bring up children, grow old and sometimes living lonely lives* (Bright: 1970:02)
- *Michael smiles at the baby, touches her arm, and then winking at her* (ibid: 05)
- *I am so glad about you getting this job, and to get married* (ibid)

In the first and the second examples, writers switch from the infinitive to the gerund form, that is the words *laugh, cry, fall, bring,* and *grow* are infinitives, however *living* is a gerund, and the words *smiles* and *touches* are in the present form, whereas *winking* in the

gerund form. In the last example, the word *getting* is a gerund, while *to get* is an infinitive. So the writer should be consistent, and he should better say (Bright, 1970):

- *People are expected to laugh and cry, fall in love, bring up children, grow old, and sometimes live lonely live (Bright: 1970:02)*

**Or:** *People are expected laughing and crying, falling in love, bringing up children growing old, and sometimes living lonely lives (ibid)*

- *Michael smiles at the baby, touches her arm, and then winks at her (ibid:05)*

**Or:** *Michael is smiling at the baby, touching her arm, and then winking at her (ibid)*

- *I am so glad about you getting this job, and getting married (ibid)*

**Or:** *I am so glad about you to get this job, and to get married (ibid)<sup>1</sup>*

## 1.6.1.2. Pronouns

### 1.6.1.2.1. Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

As claimed by Baugh (1993), pronouns take the place of one or more nouns or a group of words in a sentence; like nouns, they can be used to refer to a person, place, or thing. The word or words the pronoun replaces are called the antecedent of the pronoun. They must agree with their antecedent in person, case, and number.

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<sup>1</sup> For the infinitive or the present form, writers can use “to” before all the verbs in a sentence, or only before the first one:

e.g.: Mary likes to hike, to swim, and to ride a bicycle.

**Or** Mary likes to hike, swim, and ride a bicycle.

Both examples are correct.



#### 1.6.1.2.1.1. Agreement in Person

Vince (2008) stated that a writer can create parallel sentence construction in a number of ways. It is important to supply all essential words to make the parallelism comprehensible. Thus the antecedent that a pronoun refers to must be clearly stated and in close proximity to its pronoun. (Rozakis: 2003). In their investigations, Baugh (1993) and Raimes (1987) found that writers confront when they use these minor words and they have illustrated by the following examples:

- *The programmer should know BASIC carefully. Otherwise, you will have trouble writing programs (Baugh, 1993:10).*
- *Writers who work on temporary basis do not get fixed paychecks, but one has the benefit of further tax breaks (Raimes, 1987:223).*

In the former examples, faulty parallelism evidently appears. In the first one, the pronoun *you* is in the second person, while its antecedent *programmer* is in the third person. Therefore, the correct pronoun is the third person *he* or *she*. The second sentence switches from the plural noun *writers* to the singular pronoun *one*. The two researchers noticed the errors and they have corrected them as follow to make a correct parallel structure:

- *The programmer should know BASIC carefully. Otherwise, he or she will have trouble writing programs (Baugh, 1993:10).*
- *Writers who work on temporary basis do not get fixed paychecks, but they have the benefit of further tax breaks (Raimes, 1987:123).*

#### 1.6.1.2.1.2. Agreement in Case

As it is stated before, pronouns have to agree with their antecedents. The following examples as stated in one of Vince (2008) and Hewings (2005) investigations will show the disagreement between pronouns and their antecedents used by several writers:

- *Is that Cherry and Donna by the car? Yes, it's them (Vince,2008:114)*

- *Is that Lucie? Yes, it's her* (ibid)
- *Only you and me will be in the next competition* (Hewings,2005:60)

In the first example, Vince (2008) stated that the objective case *them* is not correct, the nominative case *they* is the right form, even though it may sound strange. The same error concerning the second example, the writer used the objective case *her* instead of the nominative case *she*. Hewings (2005) also noticed the error when the use of *me* instead of *I*. So, both researchers have corrected the errors and said that the writer should better say:

- *Is that Cherry and Donna by the car? Yes, it's they* (Vince,2008:114)
- *Is that Lucie? Yes, it's she* (ibid)
- *Only you and I will be in the next competition* (Hewings,2005:60)

#### **1.6.1.2.1.3. Agreement in Number**

As the agreement in person and case, pronoun has to agree with its antecedent in number. However, Vince (2008) found that learners also deal with the wrong form concerning agreement between pronouns and antecedent in number and he demonstrated this incorrect use in the following examples:

- *The data are obsolete and should be replaced. We can't use it any longer*  
(Vince, 2008: 117)
- *Peter and Carla will come this afternoon. Don't tell him anything, please!* (ibid)

The plural noun *data* is the antecedent, and requires the plural pronoun *them*. And the plural antecedent *Peter* and *Carla* also need the plural pronoun *them* (Vince, 2008). So, the correct form is:

- *The data is obsolete and should be replaced. We can't use them any longer* (Vince, 2008:117)

- *Peter and Carla will come this afternoon. Don't tell them anything, please!* (ibid)

#### 1.6.1.2.2. Double Antecedents

Baugh (1993) claimed that pronouns may refer to more than one antecedent; they may refer to double antecedents. When *and* joins two antecedents, plural pronouns must be used. If the antecedents are joined by *nor* or *or*, or when they form a unit, a singular pronoun must be used. In his book, Baugh (1993) maintained that learners' errors concerned double antecedent, and he illustrated by some of writers' essays in the following examples:

- *An elm and a maple tree cast its shadows across the lawn* (Baugh, 1993:11)
- *Neither Peter nor John have their car today* (ibid)
- *Research and Development had their plan slashed this year* (ibid)

Faulty parallelism evidently appeared in the former examples; this is due to the misuse of the pronouns. In the first example, the writer switches from the plural antecedent *an elm and a maple tree* to the singular pronoun *it*. Then, he switches from the antecedents *neither Peter nor John* that are linked by *nor* to the plural pronoun *their* in the second example, and from the antecedents *research and development* which form a unit to the plural pronoun *their*. So this faulty parallel structure must be repaired as follows (Baugh, 1993):

- *An elm and a maple tree cast their shadows across the lawn* (Baugh, 1993:11)
- *Neither Peter nor John has his car today* (ibid)
- *Research and Development had its plan slashed this year* (ibid)

### 1.6.1.2.3. Reflexive Pronouns

Swan and Walter (1989) stated that reflexive pronouns are used when an object is the same person or thing as the subject. The two researchers found that writers often get confused about the use of these reflexive pronouns or simply they err when they use them. These errors obviously lead to a passage or a sentence that is guilty of faulty parallel structure:

- *We are sure that both sets of supporters will behave ourselves at the match* (Swan & Walter, 1989:179)
- *She talks about himself all the time* (ibid)
- *They really enjoyed yourselves during the party* (ibid)

Both researchers noticed the errors made by writers and they stated that all these sentences contain a problem with parallel construction, because elements within a sentence are not grammatically equal. Thus the correct form is:

- *We are sure that both sets of supporters will behave themselves at the match* (ibid)
- *She talks about herself all the time* (ibid)
- *They really enjoyed themselves during the party* (ibid)

### 1.6.1.2.4. Possessive Pronouns

Baugh (1993) stated that possessive pronouns, unlike possessive nouns, never take an apostrophe. In one of his examinations, he found that writers often get confused when the use of these pronouns, this makes the meaning ambiguous as it leads to a non parallel construction:

- *I thought my bag was lost, but the one James found was my*  
(Baugh,1993:08)
- *Do you want to take her book or theirs? Her is better* (ibid:09)

In the former examples, the researcher noticed the errors; he found that writers misplace the possessive pronouns, so he said that the correct form to say:

- *I thought my bag was lost, but the one James found was mine*  
(Baugh,1993:08)
- *Do you want to take her book or theirs? Hers is better* (ibid:09)

### 1.6.1.3. Nouns

#### 1.6.1.3.1. From Series of Adjectives to Adverbs

Adjectives, describe things; they generally come in front of nouns. An adjective always has the same form; there are no endings for number or gender; they also do not change for singular and plural or before masculine and feminine nouns (Eastwood, 2002). Adjectives provide relevant information about the words they modify (Baugh, 1993).

Adverbs, as Baugh (1993) claimed modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. They describe an action or state of being in greater detail and can provide an extra vivid picture of what is happening.

Eastwood (2002) stated that some adjectives look like adverbs, and he found that many writers confuse them, so that they confront to faulty parallelism when they write. The researcher pointed up one of writers' errors in the following example:

- *Henry and Claire are having dinner in a quiet restaurant. It's a hot evening. The food is delicious. Henry is feeling romantically* (Eastwood, 2002: 158)

In the former example, the writer switches from series of adjectives to an adverb. The words *quiet*, *hot*, and *delicious* are adjective, whereas the word *romantically* is an adverb (Eastwood, 2002). So, the correct form is:

- *Henry and Claire are having dinner in a quiet restaurant. It's a hot evening. The food is delicious. Henry is feeling romantic* (ibid)

### 1.6.1.3.2. From Series of Adjectives to Nouns

In his book, Raimes (1987) found that writers violate parallel structure that is; they mix between adjectives and nouns and he showed these wrong forms in the following example:

- *The lecture was long, uninspiring and bore* (Raimes, 1987: 224).

The words *long* and *uninspiring* are adjectives, while the word *bore* is a noun. Thus the writer should better say (Raimes, 1987):

- *The lecture was long, uninspiring and boring* (ibid).

### 1.6.1.3.3. From Series of Gerunds to Nouns

- *Planning a surprise party calls for organizing, scheduling, and cunning* (Raimes: 1987: 224).

Despite the common endings of the last three words, they are not grammatically equivalent. *Organizing* and *scheduling* are gerunds: words that function as nouns by ending -ing to verbs. The third word *cunning* is a straightforward noun that just happens to end in -ing (there is no verb *to cunn*). Hence, the series should consist of all gerunds or all nouns. *Organize* can easily be made to fit either form, but the other two should be changed to some extent. The correct form is then (Raimes, 1987):

- *Planning a surprise party calls for organization, scheduling, and scheming* (ibid).

**Or:** - *Planning a surprise party calls for organization, cunning, and scheduling*  
*Skills* (ibid)

### 1.6.1.3.4. From Series of Nouns to Infinitives

- *Her responsibilities were the management of the PR department and to attend trade shows* (Raimes, 1987: 225).

In the former example, the first element is a noun, while the second is an infinitive. So, the sentence should consist of either nouns or infinitives (Raimes, 1987):

- *Her responsibilities were the management of the RP department and the attendance at trade shows (ibid).*

**Or:** - Her responsibilities were to manage the RP department and to attend trade shows (ibid)

#### 1.6.1.3.5. From Series of Nouns to Clauses

- *It is obvious that my lifestyle is preferable to that of my parents because I have more luxuries, better education opportunities, and morals today are less rigid (Murphy, 2004: 92).*

The series of ideas in this sentence begins with two plural nouns, *luxuries* and *opportunities*, but finishes with the clause *morals today are less rigid*. In order to fix the sentence, the clause must be rearranged to make a noun:

- *It is obvious that my lifestyle is preferable to that of my parents because I have more luxuries, better education opportunities, and less rigid morals (ibid)*

#### 1.6.1.4. Articles

Writers often confront to faulty parallelism when they write. In some cases, the violation of parallel structure is not always obvious (Clarke, 2008):

- *I first went skiing in the spring of 1995, but I'd like to go in Ø autumn (Clarke, 2008: 120)*
- *In autumn, the temperature is different between the land and Ø sea (ibid)*
- *Jack's boat was not the most elegant in the port, but it was definitely Ø biggest (ibid: 121).*

In the previous examples, there is no consistency between sentence elements which leads to a non parallel construction. Thus, the writer should rearrange these elements to get an equivalent structure (Clarke, 2008):

- *I first went skiing in the spring of 1995, but I'd like to go in the autumn*  
(Clarke, 2008: 120).
- *In autumn, the temperature is different between the land and the sea*  
(ibid)
- *Jack's boat was not the most elegant in the port, but it was definitely the biggest* (ibid: 121)

Articles are used in a series of terms must be used only before the first term or with all the terms, but this is not the case in the following examples (Clarke, 2008):

- *We sold jeans to the Spanish, the French, Ø Italians, and Ø Germans*  
(Clarke, 2008: 125)
- *Put the verbs between brackets into the past, the present and Ø future tense* (ibid)

To keep the basics within a sentence parallel, Clarke (2008) said that the writer has to say:

- *We sold jeans to the Spanish, the French, the Italians, and the Germans*  
(Clarke, 2008: 125).
- Or:** - *We sold jeans to the Spanish, French, Italians, and Germans* (ibid)
- *Put the verbs between brackets into the past, the present and the future tense* (ibid)
- Or:** - *Put the verbs between brackets into the past, present and future tense*  
(ibid)

#### 1.6.1.5. Correlative Conjunctions



According to Baugh (1993), correlative conjunction such as - *both. . .and , not. . .but , not only. . .but also , either. . .or , neither. . .nor* – should be followed by the same grammatical structure. In one of their investigations, Baugh (1993) and Raimes (1987) found that learners often confront to faulty parallel structure and they showed these errors in some of writers' writings then rearranged the sentences to correct the problem:

- *Clients may either pick up the products themselves, or the corporation will transport it for a small payment (Raimes,1987: 227)*
- *It's not a time for emotion but clear thinking (Baugh,1993: 25)*
- *My father is neither a Democrat nor is he a Republican (ibid)*
- *The show was both enjoyable and it was educational (ibid: 26)*
- *He not only shoveled the pavement, but also the stairs and balcony. (Raimes, 1987: 228).*

In the previous examples, it is markedly that there is faulty parallel structure because the elements within a sentence are not grammatically equal. Saying *clients may either* implies that the clients will be able to do one of two things, but then the focus switches to a different actor which is *the company*; the two options that follow *either* must be parallel. Whenever writers use the combination *either/or*, they have to make sure to see if the syntax still stands up if they put the second option in place of the first. In the last example, the contrasted items that come after *not only* must be parallel. Putting *not only* before the verb sets up anticipation that another action will follow; for example, “*He not only shoveled the walkway, but also salted it*”. (Raimes, 1987:228). Whenever writers use the combination *not only/but also*, they have always to put *not only* immediately before the first of the pair basics that are being contrasted. Hence, if there are two actions involved, place it directly before the first action; if there is one action affecting two objects, put the action first, and *not only* come instantly before the first object (Raimes,1987) and (Baugh,1993). Thus, it is better to say:

- *Either clients may pick up the products themselves, or the corporation will transport it for a small payment* (Raimes, 1987: 227)
- *It's not a time for emotion but for clear thinking* (Baugh, 1993: 25)
- *My father is neither a Democrat nor a Republican* (ibid)
- Or:** - *Neither is my father a Democrat nor is he a Republic* (ibid)
- *The show was both enjoyable and educational* (ibid: 26)
- *He shoveled not only the pavement, but also the stairs and balcony* (Raimes, 1987: 228)

#### 1.6.1.6. Prepositions

Prepositions are connecting words that show the relationship among words in a sentence (Vince, 2008). If different words within a sentence take different prepositions, each preposition must be integrated (Raimes, 1987). Writers often let the prepositions that come last serve for all without checking to see if it is suitable or not (Vince, 2008)

- *It may be indispensable to either insert or deduct things from this list* (Vince, 2008: 154)

The writer should better say:

- *It may be indispensable to either insert things to or deduct them from this list* (ibid)

When the same preposition applies to a series of elements, it may be either repeated for each one or used just once, but you must be consistent. It should not be included for some items and dropped for others (Hashemi & Murphy, 2004):

- *These opportunities are offered in spring,  $\emptyset$  summer and in fall* (Hashemi & Murphy, 2004:228)

In the former example, there is no consistency between sentence elements. The writer put the preposition before the first element and the last one; however, the second element does

not contain any. To make syntactic agreement and a correct parallel construction the writer has to say (Hashemi & Murphy, 2004):

- *These opportunities are offered in spring, in summer and in fall* (ibid)

**Or:** - *These opportunities are offered in spring, summer and fall* (ibid)

### 1.6.2. Clauses

As claimed by Davidson (2002), a clause is a word-group which has the same arrangement as a sentence but which is part of a larger sentence. Hence, “*a clause is a sentence inside a sentence*” (Davidson, 2002: 64). The most basic kind of sentence consists of a single clause. More complicated sentences may consist of multiple clauses, including clauses contained within clauses (Baugh, 2003). As it was stated before, parallelism aims to make meaning clear; it generally decreases the number of basics within a sentence. According to Langendoen (1970), a general rule to follow is to repeat the initial word or phrase in a parallel construction whenever it is required to make the sense clearer. In series of *that-clause*, for instance, the meaning is typically clearer if the introductory word is frequent in each clause; however, it is not the case in most of learners’ writings (Langendoen, 1970):

- *He refuted that he had entered the house and he had taken the money*  
(Langendoen, 1970: 134)

- *My manager informed me that I would be sent to France and I should make arrangements to leave about two weeks* (ibid)

- *Galileo found it difficult to believe that the sun rotated around the earth and the earth to be the centre of the Universe* (ibid)

In the previous examples, the writer confront to faulty parallelism, this is by the omission of some of the sentence elements which makes the meaning ambiguous; so he should renovate this vagueness to make the meaning clear (Langendoen, 1970):

- *The boy denied that he had entered the house and that he had taken the money* (Langendoen, 1970: 134)
- *My employer informed me that I would be sent to France and that I should make arrangements to leave about two weeks* (ibid)
- *Galileo found it difficult to believe that the sun rotated around the earth and that the earth to be the centre of the Universe* (ibid)

### **1.6.3. Phrases**

Davidson (2002: 124): “*A phrase is any group of two or more words that can occupy the same slot in a sentence as a single word.*” Phrases are group of associated words that do not hold a subject-verb arrangement or utter a complete thought; there are several types of phrases: prepositional, infinitive, participle, noun, and gerund phrases (Baugh, 2003). The writer is free to arrange sentence elements in a number of ways, this freedom often makes him confront to faulty parallel construction:

#### **1.6.3.1. Prepositional Phrases**

A prepositional phrase as claimed by Davidson (2002) is a phrase that consists of a preposition followed by, for example, a noun, a pronoun, a noun phrase or an adverb. Davidson stated that the writer is free to arrange sentence elements in a number of ways; although, if these elements are not arranged in a parallel construction, faulty parallelism will emerge, which is the case in the following examples:

- *How did you get here? By bus, on foot, or did you take a train!?*  
(Davidson, 2002: 99)
- *Mary has travelled by sea, by land, and she travelled using a plane* (ibid)

The former examples contain a problem with parallel structure, that is the writer switches from series of prepositional phrases to a sentence with an S.V.O form in the first example, and an –ing form concerning the second example; so the correct form is to say (Davidson, 2002):

- *How did you get here? By bus, on foot, or on train!* (ibid)
- *She has travelled by sea, by land, and by plane* (ibid)

### **1.6.3.2. Infinitive and Gerund Phrases**

According to Eastwood (2002), an infinitive phrase is any phrase that has an infinitive verb form as its head, whereas, gerund phrase is the one that has an –ing verb form as its head. Eastwood (2002) found that writers confront to faulty parallel structure when they use infinitive and gerund phrases, he acknowledged some of these writers' errors in the following examples:

- *To support his family and putting himself through college, he worked eight hours a day* (Eastwood, 2002: 139)
- *Buying a new car and to travel to her preferred country are her best dreams* (ibid)

In the previous sentences, the writer switches from an infinitive phrase to a gerund phrase in the first example, and from a gerund phrase to an infinitive one in the second example. To keep the elements parallel, the writer should say:

- *To support his family and to put himself through college, ha worked eight hours a day (ibid)*
- *Buying a new car and travelling to her preferred country are her best dreams (ibid)*

### 1.6.3.3. Participle Phrases

Eastwood (2002) stated that writers frequently err when use participle phrases, as it will be shown in the following example:

- *Lily passes her time watching TV and collect stamps (Eastwood, 2002: 143).*

In this example, elements within the sentence are not consistent; thus, the writer begins with the participle phrase *watching TV* then an infinitive phrase *collect stamps*. Hence, to make a parallel construction, the sentence should be corrected as follows (Eastwood, 2002):

- *Lily passes her time watching TV and collecting stamps (ibid)*

### Conclusion

The general principle of parallelism, in addition to clarity in writing, is the matter of keeping elements equivalent within a sentence. It is not trustworthy to say that ensuring parallelism means that every sentence should be structured the same way, however parallel construction refers to the creation of a sentence or a passage in which elements are presented in a parallel grammatical form. This is the job of the writer who should have a good mastery of the grammatical essentials that are a vital principle to convey the meaning and to not confuse the reader. Very often, writers neither have exact equivalent grammatical forms, nor clarity in meaning. If these grammatical items are not rendered to their direct equivalent, a

sentence or a text which is ill structured appears, and meaning will be destroyed, therefore faulty parallelism occurs. Writers should tend to apply correct grammatical structures to avoid any grammatical disagreement between elements within a sentence; they also have to make sure that the reader can follow the intended chain of thought.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **2. Introduction**

Parallelism, by clarifying the relationship between a writer's ideas, or between parts of a single idea, has similar effects. The general principle of parallelism is that similar ideas are expressed by parallel grammatical forms. However, faulty parallelism occurs in students' writings when elements that are similar in idea are not made similar in structure. This chapter aims at testing our hypothesis which investigates the lack of students' awareness of grammatical rules which leads to faulty parallelism. For this rationale, a test was carried out as an implement to collect data. The analysis of the test was carried out in the form of occurrence of errors.

#### **2.2. Students' Test**

##### **2.2.1. The sample**

In order to test our hypothesis which investigates students' lack of awareness of grammatical rules that leads to faulty parallel structure and obtain the information required from our subjects, and to fit the objective of our study, it was helpful to work on a representative sample randomly selected from a population. The subjects of this study are third year LMD students of the Department of Foreign Languages at Mentouri University of Constantine. These students were invited by the researcher to participate in the study, and only those who agreed to contribute were called for the study. The choice has fallen on these subjects because these third year students are characterized as seniors since they have



normally mastered the language as they have reached a proficiency level. Under normal conditions, the sample should have consisted of 1/5 of the whole population of the third year students representing twenty participants.

### 2.2.2. Description of the test

For the sake of checking students' lack of consciousness in using parallel grammatical structure, students were given twenty sentences with portions incorrect, and were asked to correct them. They were required too, to rewrite the sentences in order to make elements within a sentence grammatically parallel. Some of the twenty sentences of this test were taken from books of grammar. Different grammatical elements are used in the twenty sentences that constitute the test.

### 2.3. Analysis of the results

#### Sentence 01

**Faulty:** My uncle likes to eat in expensive restaurants and visiting museums.

**Correct:** My uncle likes to eat in expensive restaurants and to visit museums.

**Or** My uncle likes eating in expensive restaurants and visiting museums.

	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
<b>Sentence 01</b>				
<b>Number</b>	16	04	-	20
<b>Percentage</b>	80%	20%	00%	100%

Table 01 The Use of Parallel Structure in the First Sentence

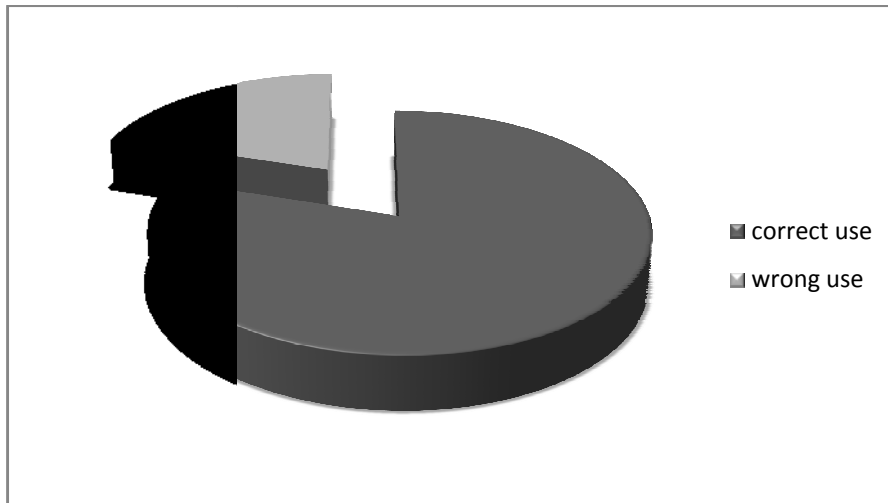


Figure 01 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the First Sentence

In the first sentence out of 20 students, 16 (80%) caught the right answer. The other 4 students (20%) got the wrong answer. The majority of the students rewrote the sentence in a correct parallel structure. The other 4 students violated parallel structure: they mixed the two forms within the sentence (e.g.: *to eat* and *visiting*).

### **Sentence 02**

**Faulty:** She told him *to* get to the hotel by six o'clock, check with the concierge for messages, leave his luggage at the front desk and to wait for her in the lobby.

**Correct:** She told him to get to the hotel by six o'clock, to check with the concierge for messages, to leave his luggage at the front desk and to wait for her in the lobby.

**Or:** She told him to get to the hotel by six o'clock, check with the concierge for messages, leave his luggage at the front desk and wait for her in the lobby.

<b>Sentence 02</b>	<b>Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Faulty Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	09	09	02	20
<b>Percentage</b>	45%	45%	10%	100%

Table 02 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Second Sentence

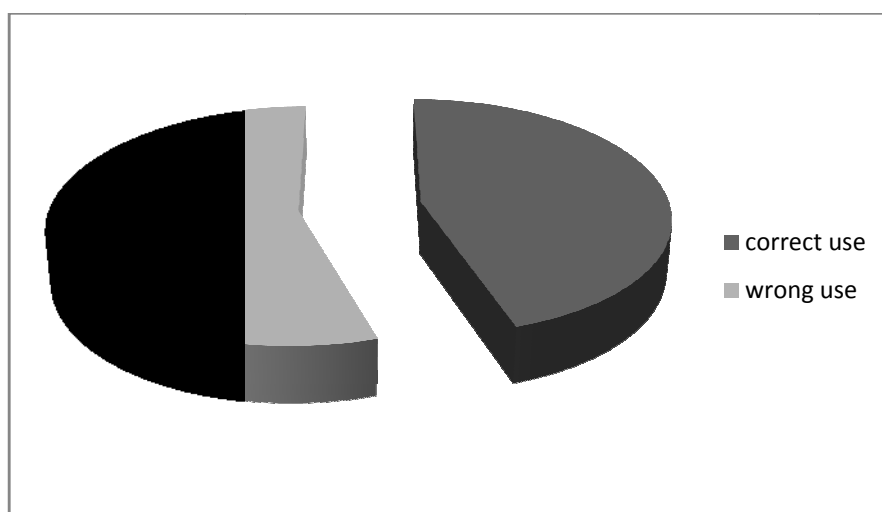


Figure 02 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Second Sentence

In the second sentence, the same wording must be used for each element. If *to* is used, it must be put either before each element in the series or just at the start. Out of 20 answers, 09 answers (45%) were correct, students either put the *to* before all the grammatical elements, or they put it only before the first constituent and made the sentence parallel; yet an amount of 11 students (45%) confronted to faulty parallel structure, that is they rewrote the sentence in a non parallel structure.

### **Sentence 03**

**Faulty:** Jack and Tom are the best. He won the race many times.

**Correct:** Jack and Tom are the best. They won the race many times.

	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
<b>Number</b>	12	08	-	20
<b>Percentage</b>	60%	40%	00%	100%

Table 03 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Third Sentence

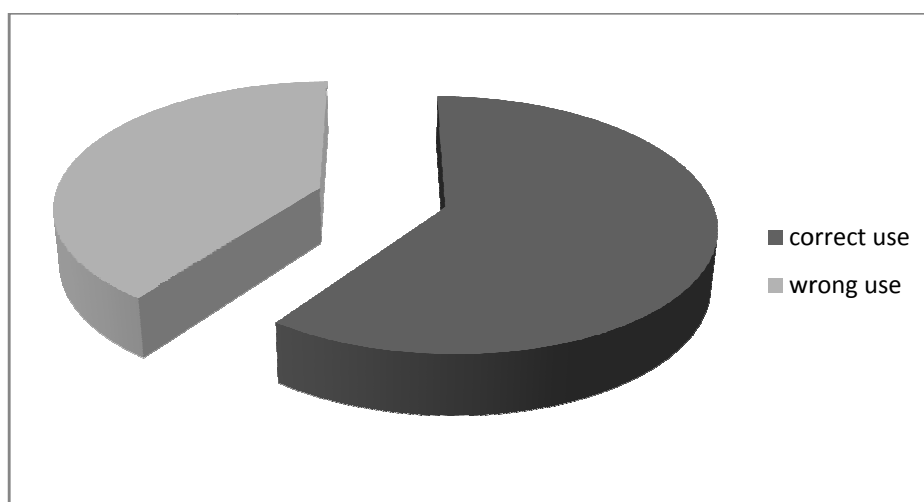


Figure 03 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Third Sentence

Although 08 (40%) of the students rewrote the third sentence in a faulty parallel structure, the percentage of the correct answers is higher than the one of the wrong ones with a proportion of 60%. These results are owing to the clearness and the obvious use of the plural pronoun *they* to refer to the plural person antecedent *Jack and Tom*. Students who got the wrong answer put other person pronouns which did not agree with the antecedent.

#### **Sentence 04**

**Faulty:** Is that your brother standing at the back? Yes, it's him!

**Correct:** Is that your brother standing at the back? Yes, it's he!

<b>Sentence 04</b>	<b>Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Faulty Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	05	15	-	20
<b>Percentage</b>	25%	75%	00%	100%

Table 04 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Fourth Sentence

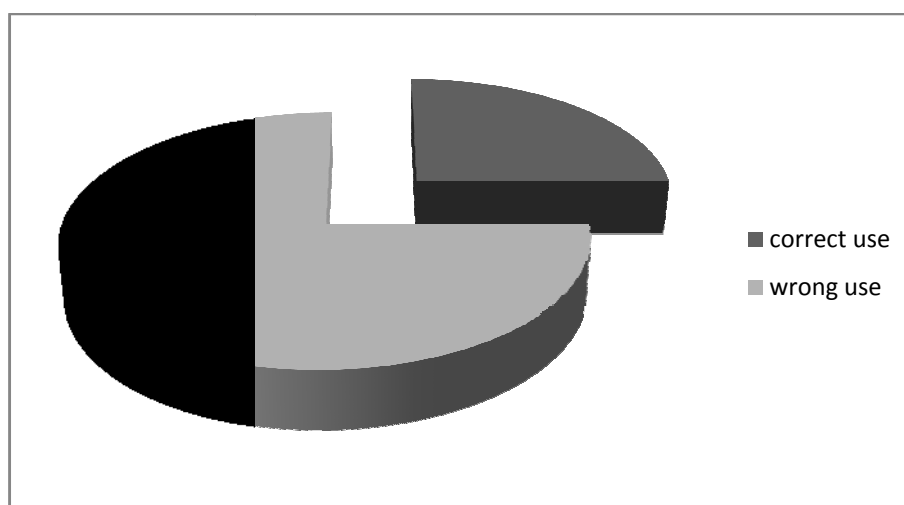


Figure 04 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Fourth Sentence

When only 05 (25%) students wrote the sentence in a correct parallel structure, the great majority of them (75%) confronted to a faulty parallel structure. This conventional part represents the wrong answers in which almost all the students inserted the objective case *him* which is faulty instead of the nominative case *he* which corresponds to the right form.

#### **Sentence 05**

**Faulty:** All these goods are for sale, so keep it away.

**Correct:** All these goods are for sale, so keep them away.

Sentence 05	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
Number	08	09	03	20
Percentage	40%	45%	15%	100%

Table 05 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Fifth Sentence

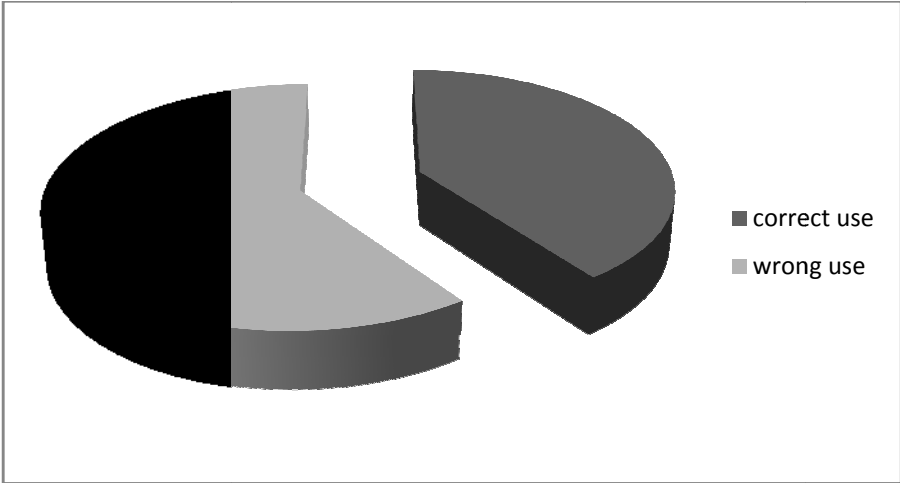


Figure 05 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Fifth Sentence

The plural noun *goods* is the antecedent, and entails the plural pronoun *them*. Students’ answers concerning the fifth sentence represent a percentage of 08 students (40%) who obtained the correct answer and made the grammatical elements consistent within the sentence; conversely, an amount of 60% of the answers vary between students who rewrote the sentence in a faulty parallel structure, and those who did not answer in any way.

**Sentence 06**

**Faulty:** Neither Maya nor Linda have their assignment today.

**Correct:** Neither Maya nor Linda has her assignment today.

<b>Sentence 06</b>	<b>Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Faulty Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	01	16	03	20
<b>Percentage</b>	05%	80 %	15%	100%

Table 06 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Sixth Sentence

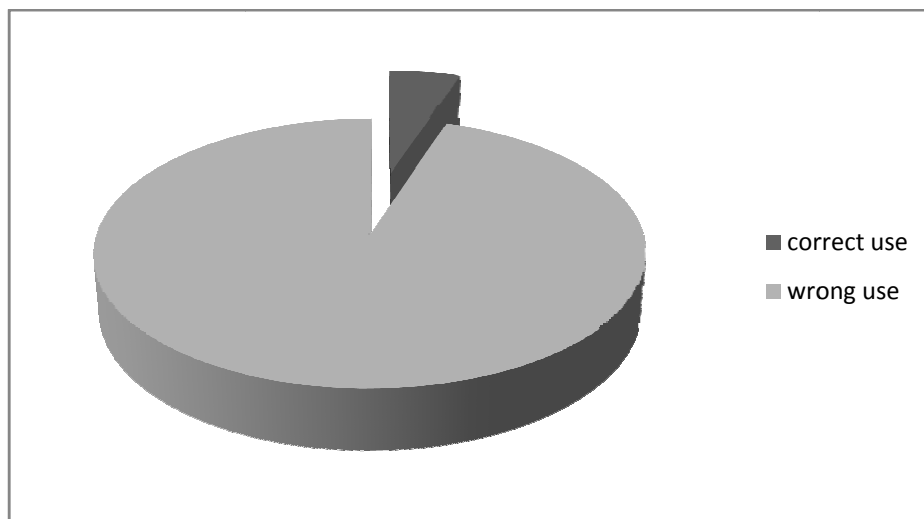


Figure 06 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Sixth Sentence

The use of double antecedents in the sixth sentence looks to be awkward because the fraction of wrong answers is higher; it represents 95%. The double antecedents *neither Maya nor Linda* needs the singular pronoun *her* because it is linked by *nor* as it forms a unit. This explains that students are not conscious that if the antecedents are joined by *nor* or when they form a unit, a singular pronoun must be used.

**Sentence 07**

**Faulty:** I won't stay with her because she talks about himself all the time.

**Correct:** I won't stay with her because she talks about herself all the time.

<b>Sentence 07</b>	<b>Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Faulty Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	07	08	05	20
<b>Percentage</b>	35%	40%	25%	100%

Table 07 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Seventh Sentence

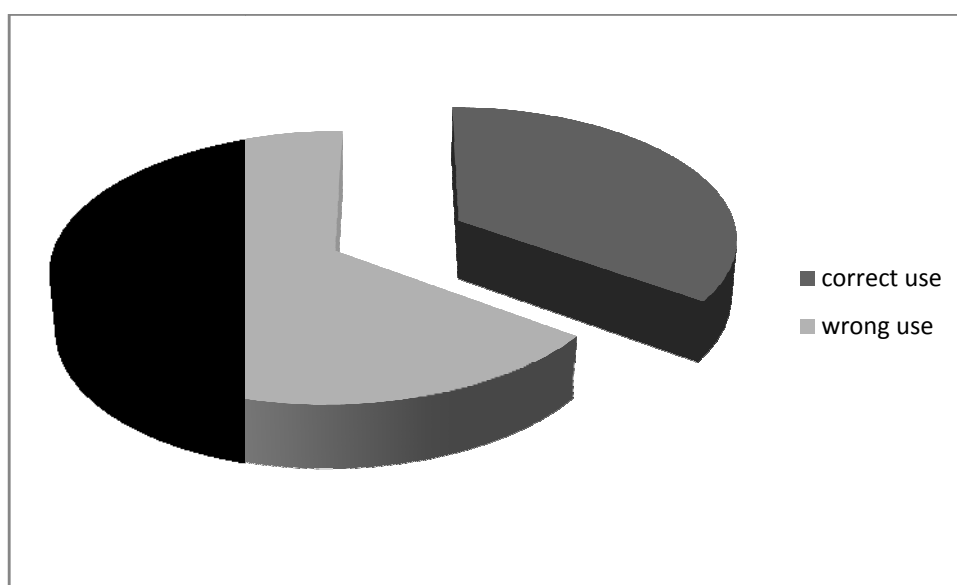


Figure 07 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Seventh Sentence

The percentage of the wrong use of reflexive pronouns in the seventh sentence is much greater than the one of the correct ones. 65% of the students got the wrong answer, they rewrote the sentence in a faulty parallel structure using different pronouns especially personal pronouns; the minority who rewrote the sentence in a correct grammatical parallel structure which symbolizes a ratio of 35% has a good mastery of such pronouns uses.

### **Sentence 08**

**Faulty:** Is she a friend of you?



**Correct:** Is she a friend of yours?

<b>Sentence 08</b>	<b>Parallel structure</b>	<b>Faulty parallel structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	02	07	11	20
<b>Percentage</b>	10%	35%	55%	100%

Table 08 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Eighth Sentence

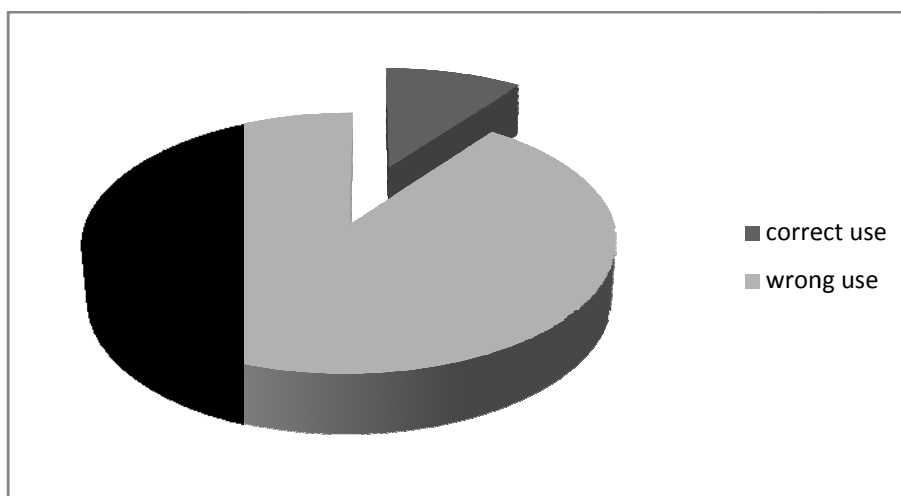


Figure 08 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Eighth Sentence

02 students out of 20 answered correctly i.e. inserted the right possessive pronoun *yours* which makes elements within the sentence grammatically parallel. A considerable (90%) put the wrong possessive pronoun and other types of pronouns with amounts of 35% and 55% respectively.

### **Sentence 09**

**Faulty:** The actor was handsome, gentle and sympathy.

**Correct:** The actor was handsome, gentle and sympathetic.

Sentence 09	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
<b>Number</b>	03	13	04	20
<b>Percentage</b>	15%	65%	20%	100%

Table 09 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Ninth Sentence

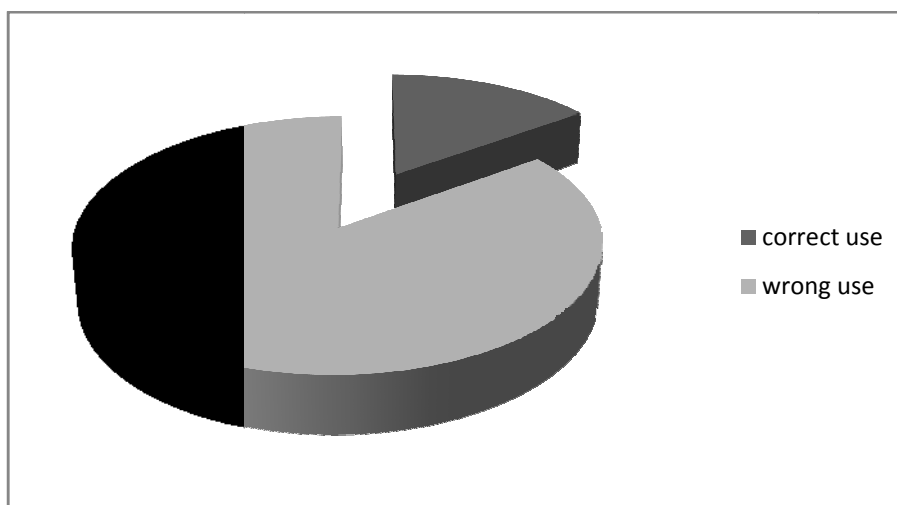


Figure 09 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Ninth Sentence

The ninth sentence requires the use of an adjective to make the grammatical elements consistent within the sentence. Only 03 students (15%) got the correct answer, they inserted the adjective *sympathetic* which agrees with the other grammatical items in the sentence. Many other grammatical components were used by students with a high proportion of 85%. The insertion of inappropriate grammatical forms represents an amount of 13 students (65%), whereas the inclusion of other grammatical items signified a ratio of 20%.

## Sentence 10

**Faulty:** The dictionary can be used for these purposes: find word meanings, pronunciations, correct spelling, and *looking up* irregular verbs.

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

Sentence 10	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
Number	01	18	01	20
Percentage	05%	90%	05%	100%

Table10 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Tenth Sentence

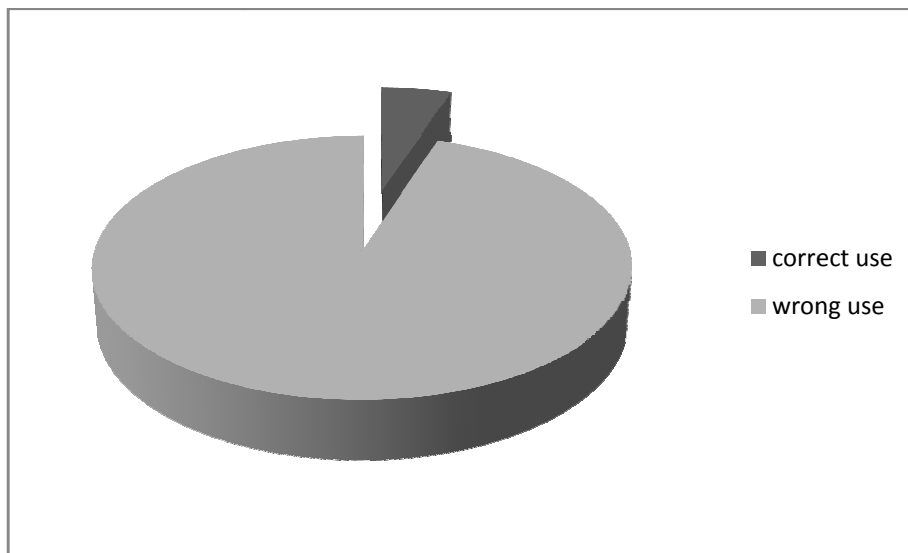


Figure 10 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Tenth Sentence

The use of parallel structure in the tenth sentence was problematic for students since the percentage of wrong answers exceeded too much the percentage of the correct

answers. In this sentence, the majority of the students (95%) answered wrongly; only one student put the grammatical items in a correct arrangement so that made the sentence grammatically parallel.

**Sentence 11**

**Faulty:** I've got a headache, a toothache, and earache.

**Correct:** I've got a headache, a toothache, and an earache.

Sentence 11	Parallel tructure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
Number	12	06	02	20
Percentage	60%	30%	10%	100%

Table 11 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Eleventh Sentence

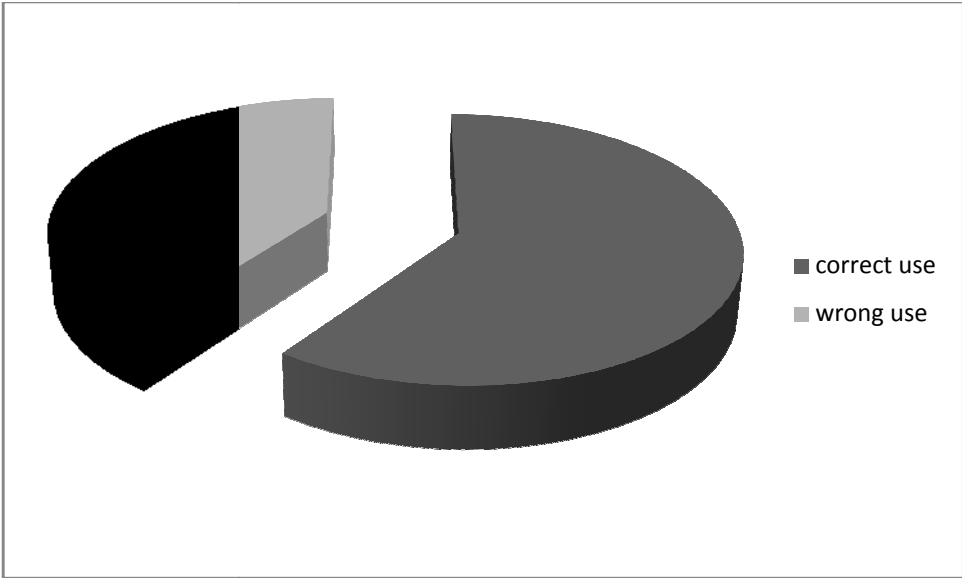


Figure 11 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Eleventh Sentence

While 40 (08) students used no article at all in the last element within the sentence, the majority of the students (12) answered well and inserted the right article and made the items within the sentence equivalent.

**Sentence 12**

**Faulty:** I would like to buy both a new house and I want to purchase a new car.

**Correct:** I would like to buy both a new house and to purchase a new car.

I would like to buy both a new house and a new car.

	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
<b>Sentence 12</b>				
<b>Number</b>	13	07	-	20
<b>Percentage</b>	65%	35%	00%	100%

Table 12 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Twelfth Sentence

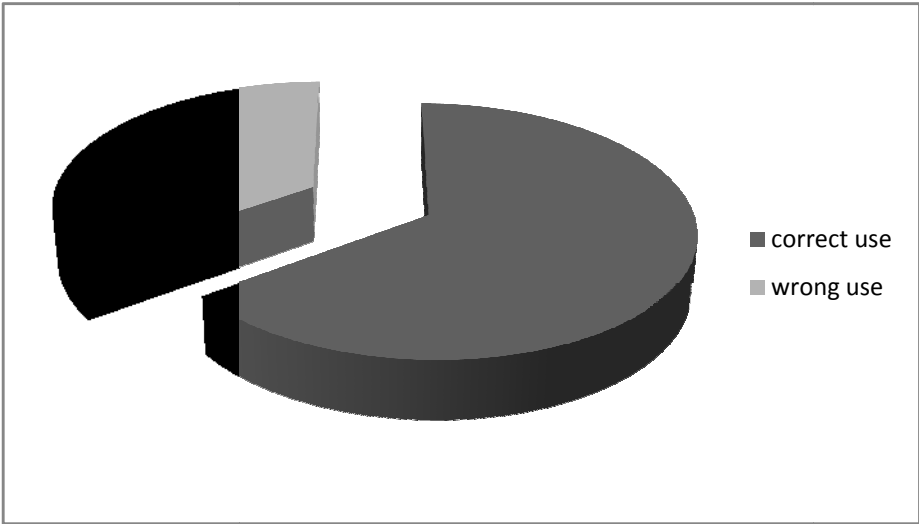


Figure 12 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Twelfth Sentence

The use of grammatical parallel structure in the twelfth sentence was as follows: 13 students (65%) put the correlative conjunction *both . . . and* correctly so that they made grammatical items within the sentence equal, while the 07 students who represent a proportion of (35%) were wrong in their use of this type of correlative conjunctions.

### Sentence 13

**Faulty:** We were told to reduce either the staff or they have to look for new customers.

**Correct:** We were told either to reduce the staff or find new customers.

	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
<b>Sentence 13</b>				
<b>Number</b>	08	09	03	20
<b>Percentage</b>	40%	45%	15%	100%

Table 13 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Thirteenth Sentence

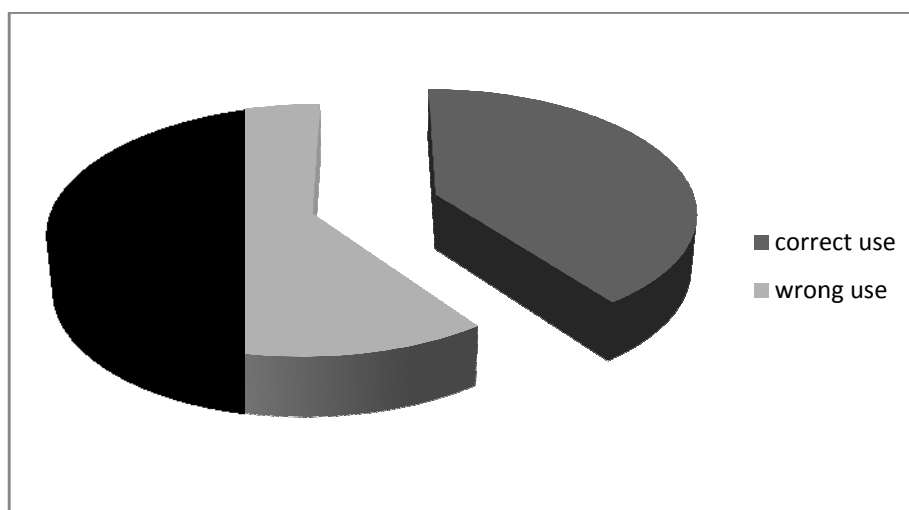


Figure 13 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Thirteenth Sentence

Elements in the thirteenth sentence violate the parallel structure, the use of the correlative conjunction *either . . . or* must be put correctly in order to make the elements parallel. The ratio of correct answers concerning this sentence is absolutely missing, it represents 00%; whereas, an amount of 100% (20students) represents the false answers.

### Sentence 14

**Faulty:** She not only brought her sister and cousin, but also her niece.

**Correct:** She brought not only her sister and cousin, but also her niece.

Sentence 14	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
Number	00	06	14	20
Percentage	00%	30%	70%	100%

Table 14: The Use of Parallel Structure in the Fourteenth Sentence.

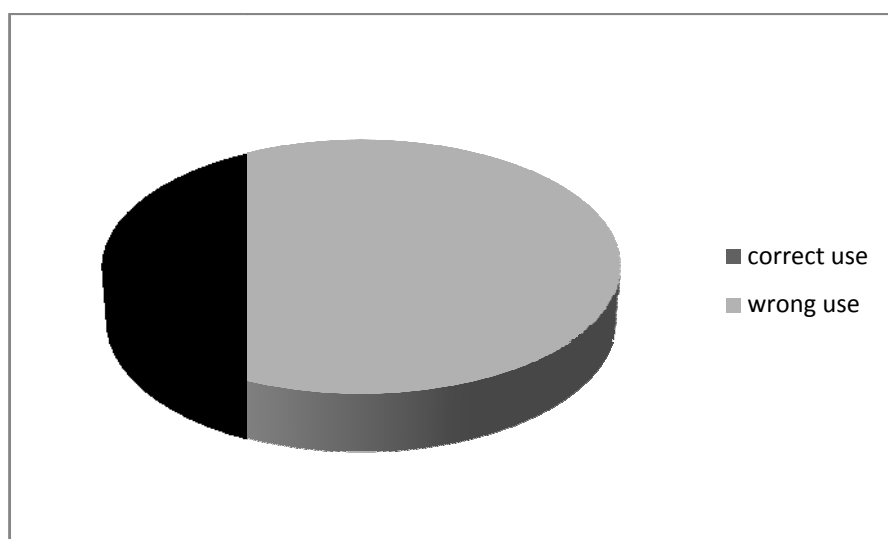


Figure 14 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Fourteenth Sentence

The contrasted elements that come after *not only* must be parallel. Putting *not only* before the verb sets up a prospect that another action will happen. All of the 20 students (100%) rewrote the sentence in different ways and made the elements in the sentence imbalanced. Students answered wrongly because they do not know that if there is only one action in the sentence, the combination of *not only . . . but also* must be placed immediately before the first of the pair basics that are being contrasted, that is why they wrote: *she not only brought her sister and cousin, but also her niece* instead of writing: *she brought not only her sister and cousin, but also her niece*.

### Sentence 15

**Faulty:** She is neither for us nor is she against us.

**Correct:** She is neither for us nor against us.

Neither is she for us nor is she against us.

<b>Sentence 15</b>	<b>Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Faulty Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	06	10	04	20
<b>Percentage</b>	30%	50%	20%	100%

Table 15 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Fifteenth Sentence



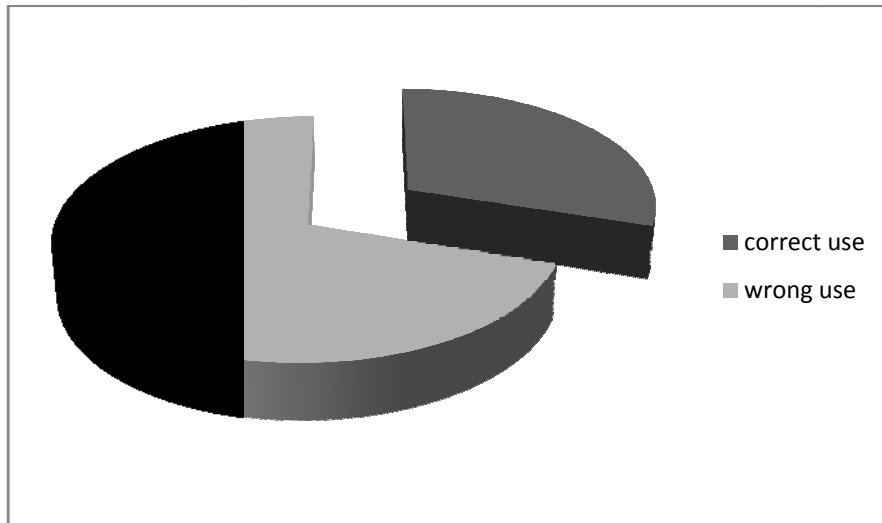


Figure 15 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Fifteenth Sentence

Only few students (06) with a percentage of 30% got the right answer, they rewrote the sentence in a correct grammatical structure, while the great majority rewrote it in a faulty parallel structure with a ratio of 50%. 4 students did not know the answer and represent a percentage of 20%.

### Sentence 16

**Faulty:** The author does not want money but fame.

**Correct:** The author does not want money but he wants fame.

	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
<b>Sentence 16</b>				
<b>Number</b>	10	10		20
<b>Percentage</b>	50%	50%	00%	100%

Table 16 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Sixteenth Sentence.

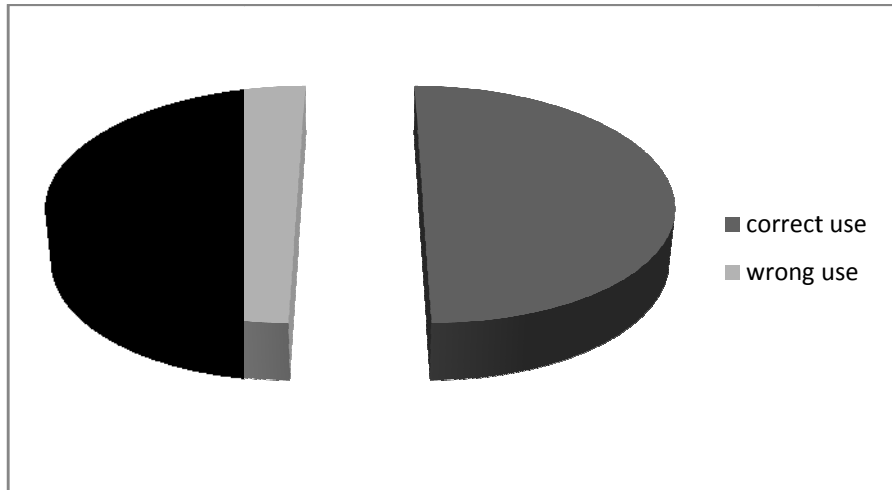


Figure 16 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Sixteenth Sentence

Although 50% of the answers violated to parallel structure, 10 students (50%) rewrote the sentence in a parallel arrangement. Avoiding the repetition of the words *he wants* in the second part of the sentence makes the meaning vague, so that students had to rewrite all the elements that is to make the sentence grammatically parallel.

### **Sentence 17**

**Faulty:** You must take particular care in the preparation of your methods, your bibliography, and your index.

**Correct:** You must take particular care in the preparation of your methods, of your bibliography, and of your index.

<b>Sentence 17</b>	<b>Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Faulty Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	09	11	-	20
<b>Percentage</b>	45%	55%	00%	100%

Table 17: The Use of Parallel Structure in the Seventeenth Sentence.

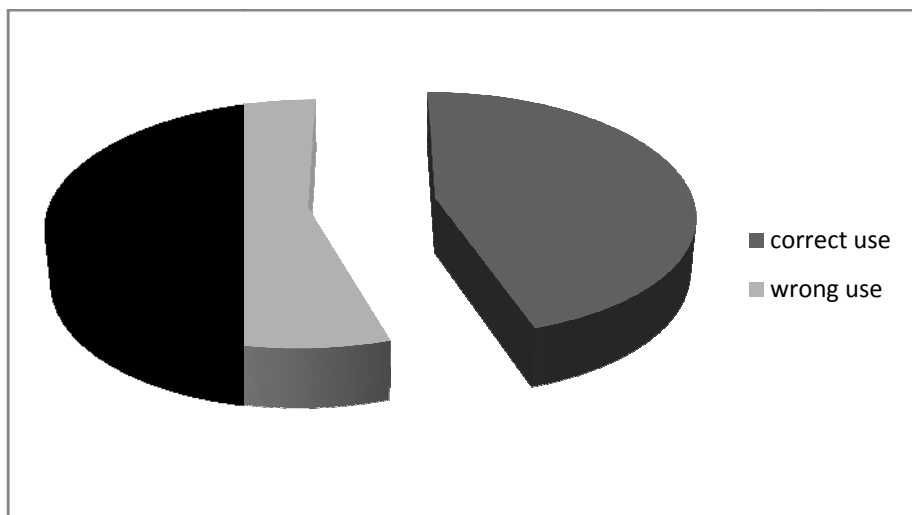


Figure 17 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Seventeenth Sentence

In the seventeenth sentence, the preposition *of* applies to a series of elements, so that it may be replicated for each one or used just once. An amount of 45% represents the right answers, this means that students (09) either wrote the preposition before each sequence or they wrote it only before the first one. The other students (11) did not apply the rule correctly.

### **Sentence 18**

**Faulty:** 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

**Correct:** 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.

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.

<b>Sentence 18</b>	<b>Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Faulty Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	08	11	01	20
<b>Percentage</b>	40%	55%	05%	100%

Table 18 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Eighteenth Sentence

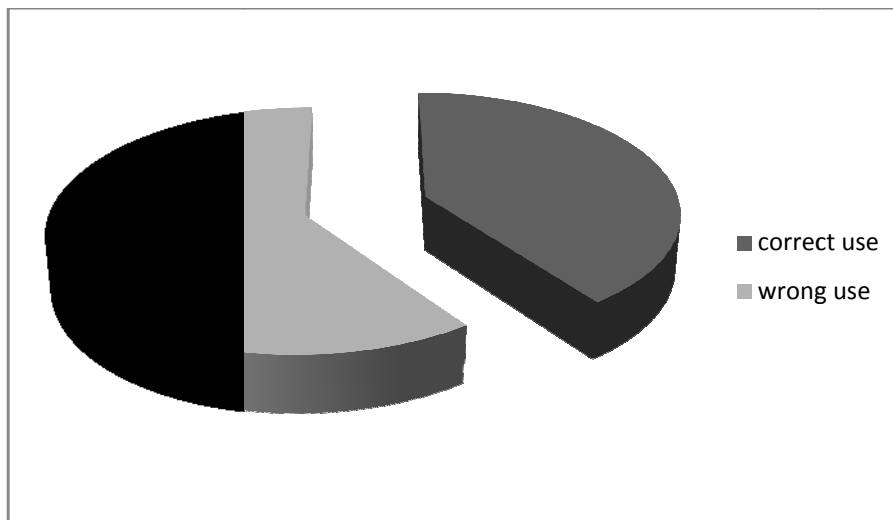


Figure 18 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Eighteenth Sentence

In *that-clause* series, the meaning is clearer if the initial word is repeated in each clause. In this sentence 8 students (40%) got the correct answer, the other students who represent a proportion of 55% answered wrongly. The student who did not know how to make the constituents parallel did no answer at all.

### Sentence 19

**Faulty:** To speak is the thing that she prefers, but not listening.

**Correct:** To speak is the thing that she prefers, but not to listen.

Speaking is the thing that she prefers, but not listening.

	Parallel Structure	Faulty Parallel Structure	Others	Total
<b>Sentence 19</b>				
<b>Number</b>	15	05	-	20
<b>Percentage</b>	75%	25%	00%	100%

Table 19 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Nineteenth Sentence

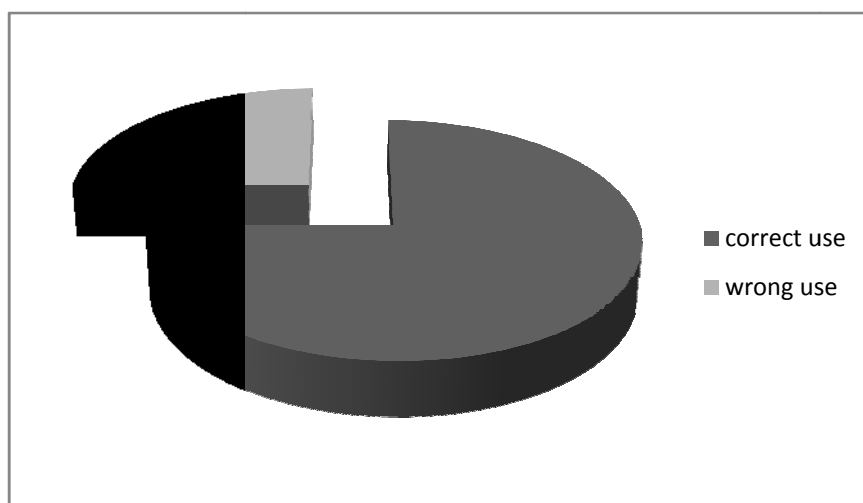


Figure 19 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Nineteenth Sentence

In the nineteenth sentence, it is apparent that students are familiar with the use of such grammatical rules because the percentage of correct answers is much higher than the one of the wrong ones. 15 students (75%) answered correctly, while only 5 of them (25%) obtained the wrong answer.

**Sentence 20**

**Faulty:** He passes his time doing crossword puzzles and to build model airplanes.

**Correct:** He passes his time doing crossword puzzles and building model airplanes.

He passes his time to do crossword puzzles and to build model airplanes.

<b>Sentence 20</b>	<b>Parallel structure</b>	<b>Faulty Parallel Structure</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	17	03	-	20
<b>Percentage</b>	85%	15%	00%	100%

Table 20 The Use of Parallel Structure in the Twentieth Sentence

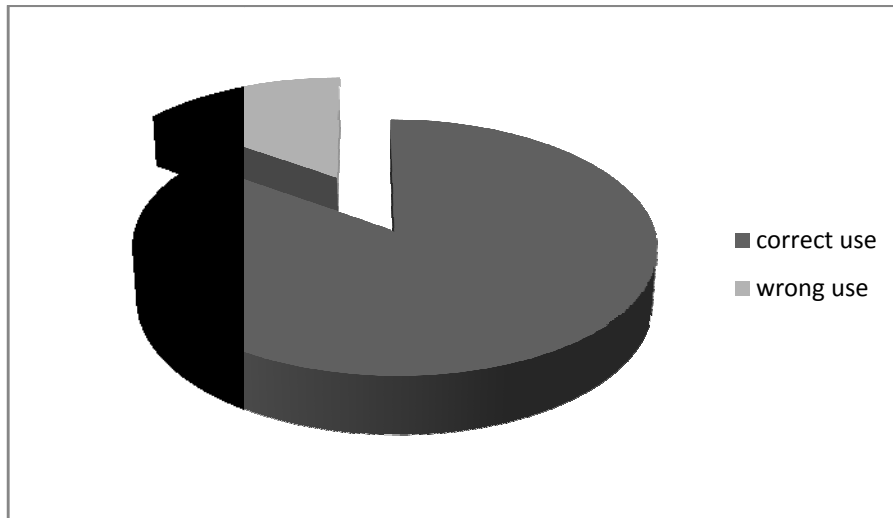


Figure 20 Correct vs. Wrong Use of Parallel Structure in the Twentieth Sentence

Except for 03 students who represent a ratio of 15% rewrote the sentence in a faulty parallel structure, the great majority of answers 17 (85%) were correct.

#### **2.4. Discussion**

Sentences are differently structured, and the ability to link ideas within sentences by combining and sequencing clauses correctly enables learners to secure and connect ideas in a wide variety of ways; this is not the case with mainly learners especially foreign ones. What can be obtained from the results of these sentences' analysis demonstrates that students have problems with the use of parallel structure. These results came to confirm our hypothesis that most students produce erroneous parallel structure with faulty parallel structure in their writings. Learners find it easy to write the sentence in an identical structure when using rules such as infinitives and gerunds, and the use of antecedents especially agreement in person, students seemed also to be familiar with the use of articles. The percentage of students who confront faulty parallel structure far exceeds to the one in which grammatical rules are correctly applied. The problem takes place especially with rules such as double antecedents;

learners do not know that when two antecedents are joined by “and”, plural pronouns must be used, and if the antecedents are joined by *no* or *or*, or when they form a unit, a singular pronoun must be used. Correlative conjunctions also seem to be a problematic for learners especially the use of the combination *not only/but also*; students do not apply the correct rule that this combination must be used before the first of the pair fundamentals that are being contrasted, they are also not aware that if there are two actions mixed up, it must be placed directly before the first action. These results are due to a lack of knowledge of the use of these grammatical forms which make students write without any strategy. This lack of awareness of correct grammatical rules prevents items to fit together. In addition, students often do not focus on the whole as well as the parts of the sentence -- particularly sentences that are long and complex which makes the sentence become needlessly awkward.

### **Conclusion**

As a conclusion, the use of parallel structure seems to be a problematic issue for learners especially foreign ones because they are not accustomed with the use of such grammatical rules. These results validate our hypothesis that is students are not aware of key grammatical principles and their effects on writing which makes them confront to faulty parallel structure. The major reason that explains this occurrence of errors is the fact that students often concentrate only on parts within a sentence rather than focusing on the whole.



## **General Conclusion**

The present study attempted to highlight the use of faulty parallel structure in students' writings with special reference to Algerian third year LMD students of the Department of Foreign Languages at Mentouri University of Constantine. As far as writing involves content which has to be relevant, clear and logic, it also needs to be organized in such a way as to form a coherent whole in addition to grammar which relates to rules of language. The current research showed that there is a number of different types of ambiguous sentence structures used by mainly all students. The use of this awkwardness of rules is due to the lack of awareness of correct grammatical rules in which English language is used, and the result is a sentence that is clumsily constructed. The field of investigation is carried out by means of a test which helped us accomplish the study. The results came to validate our hypothesis that the use of incorrect grammatical rules imposes a problematic issue for most writers, this is why nearly all students confront to faulty parallel structure.

The results of the study are in the direction of our hypothesis as students demonstrated that they do not apply grammatical rules correctly, and then they confront to what is called faulty parallelism. The research certainly contains some limitations.

The main important limitation is that of time. Because of time restrictions, it was only possible to explain the common errors students confront when they write.

Another limitation consists in the number of participants to the study. The results obtained cannot be generalized to all learners. It would be better if the setting included a larger number of students from different levels, not only third year ones.

What might be known by every one involved in the field of teaching English as a foreign language is the focus on some tools in which the language works. The reasons behind the appearance of grammatical errors in students' writings which lead to faulty parallelism are many and varied. One reason is that because most students do not know the rules of matching grammatical items in parallel structure, this makes them write without any strategy; another reason is that students need to practice; this is why they should be given examples of strategies that work and be provided with opportunities to perform those tactics. Teaching which focuses on grammar helps to make students' knowledge about the rules more explicit. Teachers may help students by giving them more exercises which help them learning the rules of good writing, and grammar is fundamental to this because it is a means which involves investigation, problem-solving and a growing awareness of and interest in how language works. Trainings that focus on teaching the sentence level objectives are also an effective tool because this makes students conscious of key grammatical principles as well as help them develop versatile language use. Some students seem to have grammatical rules as natural gift of writing, while the others work hard to understand these rules. This explains why most of them find it hard when they are faced with grammar lessons because they find memorizing grammar rules so tedious; hence teachers may animate classroom teaching with enjoyable exercises and may do some through provoking activities that engage learners both in exploring aspects of structure and using language meaningfully

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## Appendix

*Dear students,*

*this test is used as an instrument to collect data. Please, work seriously on the questions since your input is very significant. Thank you at advance.*

Read the following sentences carefully, and then rewrite each one of them so that you make grammatical elements parallel within a sentence:

- 1- My uncle likes to eat in expensive restaurants and visiting museums.
- 2- She told him to get to the hotel by six o'clock check with the concierge for messages, leave his luggage at the front desk and to wait for her in the lobby.
- 3- Jack and Tom are the best. He won the race many times.
- 4- Is that your brother standing at the back? Yes, it's him!
- 5- All these goods are for sale, so keep it away.
- 6- Neither Maya nor Linda have their assignment today.
- 7- I won't stay with her because she talks about himself all the time.
- 8- Is she a friend of you?
- 9- The actor was handsome, gentle and sympathy.
- 10- The dictionary can be used for these purposes: find word meanings, pronunciations, correct spellings, and looking up irregular verbs.
- 11- I've got a headache, a toothache, and earache.
- 12- I would like to buy both a new house and I want to purchase a new car.
- 13- We were told to reduce either the staff or they have to look for new customers.

- 14- She not only brought her sister and cousin, but also her niece
- 15- She is neither for us nor is she against us.
- 16- The author does not want money but fame.
- 17- You must take particular care in the preparation of your methods, your bibliography,  
and your index.
- 18- 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.
- 19- To speak is the thing that she prefers, but not listening.
- 20- He passes his time doing crossword puzzles and to build model airplanes.



**Thank you**

## Résumé

La présente thèse vise à étudier l'utilisation défectueuse de la structure parallèle dans les écrits des étudiants. Elle prend le cas particulier des étudiants algériens de la troisième année système LMD de la Faculté des Langues Etrangères à l'Université Mentouri de Constantine.

Parce que le parallélisme défectueux est le manque d'une structure parallèle, il crée des phrases sans équilibre. Les lecteurs s'attendent à des structures parallèles surtout quand il y a un certain parallélisme sous-jacent de sens ; quoique ce n'est pas le cas dans les productions de nombreux étudiants. Le parallélisme inachevé est une difficulté notamment pour les étudiants étrangers. Le niveau et le degré de difficulté diffèrent en fonction des types d'éléments grammaticaux utilisés.

Pour atteindre cet objectif pourquoi la plupart des étudiants obtiennent dans leurs écrits un parallélisme imparfait, un test est l'outil utilisé pour la présente recherche. Les résultats corroborent notre hypothèse selon laquelle la majorité des étudiants ont un problème avec le parallélisme. Les raisons de l'échec de l'emploi de règles grammaticales de la structure parallèle sont également montrées dans l'étude.

## ملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقيق في استخدام خلل التوازي في كتابات الطلاب. و قد جرى التحقيق على عينة من طلاب السنة الثالثة في قسم اللغات الأجنبية بجامعة منتوري بقسنطينة.

لان خلل التوازي هو فقدان تركيبية موازية لعناصر الجملة فهو يؤدي إلى خلق قواعد لغوية دون شعور بالتوازن و هو الحال بالنسبة لعدد من كتابات الطلاب إذ لا يوجد توافق لغوي بين عناصر الجملة. تختلف درجة صعوبة التنسيق لدى الطلاب وفقا لأنواع العناصر اللغوية المستخدمة.

لتحقيق الهدف من هذه الدراسة و إيجاد سبب وقوع معظم الطلاب في خلل التنسيق اللغوي بين عناصر الجملة اجري اختبار على الطلاب حيث تؤكد النتائج المحصل عليها مواجهة الطلاب لمشكل خلل التوازي و هو ما يدعم فرضية هذا البحث كما تبين الأسباب الكامنة وراء هذا الفشل.