3.2: Sentence Formation (Type 1 Errors)

About The Type 1 Errors

Whole books have been written about English grammar, and a full discussion of grammar is beyond the scope of this book. But there are a few major errors to watch out for, errors that indicate some difficulty in forming sentences. Here at Dalton State College, those are referred to as Type 1 errors, although other schools may have other names for them. This section is a short introduction to those Type 1 errors; if you have questions, please visit the Writing Lab in the Liberal Arts building (room 315).

Type I

Sentence fragments

Fused or run-on sentences

Subject-Verb disagreement

Comma Splices
A Quick Guide to the Type 1 Errors

Fragments

A fragment is a group of words that is trying to be a sentence, but that lacks a subject, a verb, or a complete thought.

Example (PageIndex{1}):

• Because Johnny can't read. (Incorrect. No complete thought – “Because” is the most common subordinating conjunction.)
• The kids running through the field. (Incorrect. No verb – remember, -ing verbs don’t count, and neither do infinitives like “to be” or “to run”).
• Ate ten Krystals all at once. (Incorrect. No subject – who ate those Krystals?)

Comma Splices

This is when there are two independent clauses (subject, verb, and complete thought) with only a comma between them.

Example (PageIndex{2}):

John ate ten Krystals, then he threw up. (Incorrect. Both have subject, verb, and complete thought, so you need at least a semicolon, not a comma, between them.)

Run-on Sentences or Fused Sentences

Just like a comma splice, except that there’s nothing at all in between the independent clauses.

Example (PageIndex{3}):

Dr. Jones must love grammar she writes run-on sentence examples at seven in the morning. (Incorrect. This is two clauses with subject, verb, and complete thought, just stuck together.)

Subject-Verb Agreement Problems

Subjects and verbs must agree in number. Verbs are “backwards”—that is, verbs have an ‘s’ on the end when they are singular (remember, nouns have ‘s’ when they are plural).

Example (PageIndex{4}):

• One guy runs. (Correct)
• Three guys run. (Correct)
• Three guys runs. (Incorrect)

The trick with subject-verb agreement is to find the subject—what’s doing the “verbing” in the sentence?
Example \(\PageIndex{5}\):

- One guy, as well as his roommates, runs across the dorm parking lot. (Correct. The subject is “guy.” The stuff set off by commas and “as well as” doesn’t count.)
- One guy and his roommates run across the parking lot. (Correct. With “and,” all of them are running, so all are the subject).
- There are three apples. (“There” can be either singular or plural, depending on what it is “pointing to.” In this case, that’s “three apples,” a plural subject.)
- There is one apple. (Correct. “There” can be either singular or plural, depending on what it is “pointing to.” In this case, that’s “one apple,” a singular subject.)
- Where is my apple? (Correct. Like “there,” “where” can be either singular or plural, depending on what it’s “pointing to.”)

Subjects, Verbs, and Independent Clauses - the Keys to the Type 1 Errors

- Subject and Verb Handout - The print handout was revised and redesigned by Maggie Escalas for the Write Place, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota.
- Independent Clauses Powerpoint
- Quiz on Identifying Independent Clauses

Run-on or Fused Sentence

1. What is a run-on sentence?
2. Examples of run-on sentences
3. Fixing run-on sentences
4. Examples of fixed run-on sentences
Comma Splices

1. **What is a comma splice?**
2. **Examples of comma spliced sentences**
3. **Fixing comma spliced sentences**
4. **Examples of fixed comma spliced sentences**
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Fragments

- Fragments
What Is Subject-verb Agreement

- Subjects and Verbs Should Agree in NUMBER
- Subject and Verb Agreement
- Finding Nouns, Verbs and Subjects Quiz
- Subject and Verb Agreement quiz
- Making Subjects and Verbs Agree
Subject-verb Agreement

- Different Look at Subject-Verb Agreement
- Subject and Verb Handout - The print handout was revised and then redesigned for the Web by Maggie Escalas for the Write Place, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota.
- Subjects and Verbs Should Agree in NUMBER
- There Is vs. There Are practice
- Subject-Verb Agreement powerpoint
Lack of Agreement Between Subject and Verb Book Chapter

1. Examples
2. What is subject-verb agreement?
3. Examples
4. Other guidelines

References

- Jenny Crisp
- *From Rhetoric and Composition/Run-on sentence*
- *From Rhetoric and Composition/Comma Splice*
- *From Rhetoric and Composition/Lack of agreement between subject and verb*