



Misplaced Or Dangling Modifiers

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Audience...

For those studying or reviewing English-Writing skills

TUTORS:

--SUBJECT OF ENGLISH-WRITING

STUDENTS:

-ENROLLED IN LOWER LEVEL ENGLISH COURSES

OR

-WHO MAY NEED A REVIEW OF FOUNDATIONAL ENGLISH SKILLS

What...

+A misplaced modifier is a word or phrase that is misplaced and misleads the reader.

Example: The **blue student's book** laid open.

→ the placement of the modifier "blue" makes the reader think the student is blue.

Correct: The **student's blue book** laid open.

+A dangling modifier modifies a word not clearly known. The modifier dangles because it is connected to nothing.

Example: **Singing along loudly**, the musical was a success.

→ it is unclear who is "Singing loudly"...

Correct: Singing along loudly, **I thought** the musical was a success.

Its purpose:

-Modifiers add incredible detail to our sentences. They can express a word or phrase in more specific terms. All they need is the correct placement, and their meaning is vital.



How...

Goal:

- encourage student to find and solve problem independently.
- the student should better understand the concept of modifiers.
- purpose should be promoted.

- ▶ *Step one: identify the problem modifier*
- ▶ *Step two: explain why this is a problem (refer to the purpose of modifiers and the examples of their misuse)*
- ▶ *Step three: illustrate the solution*
- ▶ *Step four: Draw it out (write their problem-area on paper) and explain visually.*
- ▶ *Step five: change the scene (can they identify the same mistake in a verbal example)*
- ▶ *Step six: continue through assignment.*
- ▶ *Step seven: If this issue occurs again, refer to what you explained and indicate the problem. Allow them to fix it independently.*

Why...

Modifiers are crucial to a well formulated sentence, which makes up an assignment or essay.

They give greater detail to our meaning and allow for more advance communication.

Misplaced or dangling modifiers can lead to:

- loss of purpose due to confusion
- loss of credibility

Correctly placed modifiers can lead to:

- increased understanding due to clarity and detail
- improvement in credibility and writing style

Check in... How do you know if the student understands the information

Teach back moment

Ask the student to reflect on what modifiers are and their purpose.

Observe the student's nonverbal communication cues. Does the student appear worried or hesitant in their explanation to you. This is often an indicator you may need to reinforce the concept.

Give an example and analyze

Ask the student if a simple example seems to use modifiers appropriately.

Point out any future modifier-mistakes

If the student misuses modifiers once, they may misuse them again in the same assignment. After the initial explanation, allow student to fix modifiers independently (but with some guidance).

Strategies used...

SELF-REGULATED LEARNING:

Eventually allow the student to encounter a productive struggle by encouraging them to solve independently. Self regulated learning is important to promote student understanding so that they are able to write better on their own.

SOCRATIC QUESTIONING:

Encourage the student to reflect. Ask them if the misplaced modifier makes sense after the explanation. Ask them what they intended to mean and what their sentence appeared to mean. Draw contrast between the problem and the resolution and allow the student to reach metacognition. This will improve the students understanding of writing and learning in general.

EQUIPPING A VARIETY OF LEARNING STYLES:

Through verbal and visual explanation, we appeal to a variety of learning preferences. It is crucial to appeal to a wide range of personality and learning preferences in order to foster understanding. Students may not be able to fully understand your explanation unless you appeal to their learning style.

ANDRAGOGY:

Explain the purpose. Why do modifiers matter and why do they need to be positioned correctly. Adult learning strategies are vital in a student's understanding. The purpose of modifiers ties to the real world. It improves our communication skills and promotes better understanding.

SCAFFOLDING:

After the initial explanation, future issues should be approached more independently. Scaffolding allows the student to improve upon independent learning and metacognition. As you allow the student to resolve conflict increasingly on their own, the student will develop a better understanding of the concept. It is important to guide the student to success. Productive struggle is necessary, but your guidance is key.