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ED – Participle Functioning as Dangling Modifier in English Language: An Eclectic Study

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Article Information	Abstract
	This study investigates a particular type of dangling modifier in English, the *-ed* participle, adopting the Quirk et al. (1985) paradigm, which discusses grammar from syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic perspectivesf. The *-ed* participle poses difficulties with clarity, ambiguity, and functioning as a dangling modifier. By building self-generated data based on common syntactic structures and linguistic principles, this study fills a research gap by examining *-ed* participles as dangling modifiers from an eclectic perspective. Using an eclectic approach, the study aims to investigate how *-ed* participles work as dangling modifiers and how this affects sentence comprehension. One of the primary hypotheses is that *-ed* participles affect the meaning of entire sentences rather than simply the components they directly alter when they are used as dangling modifiers. The data samples, which comprise 10 different texts each and are representative samples of the corpus of 50 texts, were collected from literary works, language textbooks, journals, and news items in order to assess the dependability and credibility. These self-constructed examples are examined using Quirk et al.'s eclectic framework (1985), and their design is based on common patterns observed in both literary and non-literary English. The findings add to our understanding of this grammatical phenomenon by shedding light on the function of *-ed* participles inside sentences and their effect on overall meaning.

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وظيفة الفعل *ED* كمعدل متدلي في اللغة الإنجليزية: دراسة انتقائية

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المستخلص:

تستقصي هذه الدراسة نوعا معينا من التعديلات المعلقة في اللغة الإنكليزية وهو المشاركة معتمده على نموذج كويرك واخرين 1985 الذي يناقش القواعد النحوية من منظور نحوي ودلالي وبلاغي. صعوبة في الوضوح والغموض والوظيفة كجمله معلقه. من خلال بيانات مولده ذاتيا استنادا الى Ed تشكل المشاركة الهياكل النحوية والمبادئ اللغوية الشائعة ،تملا هذه الدراسة فجوه بحثيه من خلال فحص المشاركات Ed كجمل معلقه من منظور انتقائي .باستخدام نهج انتقائي ،تهدف هذه الدراسة الى التحقيق في كيفيه عمل المشاركات

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توثر على Ed كجمل معلقه وكيف يوثر ذلك على فهم الجمل . واحده من الفرضيات الرئيسية هي ان المشاركات معنى الجمل بأكملها بدلا من مجرد المكونات التي تعدلها مباشره عندما تستخدم كجمل معلقه تتكون عينات البيانات ، التي تضم 10 نصوص مختلفة وتعد عينات ممثله من 50 نصا ، من عمال ادبيه وكتب دراسية ومجلات واخبار تم جمعها لتقييم الاعتمادية والمصداقية .يتم فحص هذه الأمثلة المولدة ذاتيا باستخدام ا اطار كويرك واخرين 1985 ويستند تصميمها الى الانماط الشائعة التي لوحظت في كل الإنجليزية الأدبية وغير الأدبية .تضيف النتائج الى فهمنا لهذه الظاهرة النحوية من خلال تسليط الضوء على وظيفه المشاركات داخل الجملة وتأثيرها على المعنى العام المعدلات المعلقة، Ed،

الكلمات المفتاحية : الفعل المشارك المنتهي بالنموذج الانتقائي ، البيانات المنشاة ذاتيا.

1.Introduction:

One significant area of concern in English grammar is hanging modifiers, which frequently lead to misunderstandings and ambiguity. Of all the structures that can be used as modifiers, the ED-participle—which is distinguished by its past participle form—has not gotten as much attention in scholarly writing. In order to address the frequent misapplication and probable misunderstanding that the ED-participle creates among both learners and native speakers, this study explores the function of the ED-participle as a hanging modifier.

The main aim of this study is to analyse how the ED-participle may function as a dangling modifier, altering phrase clarity and interpretation. It is hypothized that although these modifiers appear simple, proper meanings of them require speakers to collaborate and grasp context. This poses an important question for research: How may an eclectic analysis of the ED-participle take into account both linguistic and extralinguistic aspects? In order to accomplish this goal, the study will use an eclectic framework as described by Quirk et al. (1985) to analyse instances of the ED-participle in a variety of English literature. Through the study of data samples, this research seeks to show the complexity surrounding the usage of the ED-participle and its impact on effective communication.

This study will investigate the syntactic structures, semantic characteristics, and contextual roles of the ED-participle as a dangling modifier using a qualitative methodology. It is aimed to illustrate how incorrect use can skew intended signals by highlighting the need of context in determining its meaning. Three steps will comprise the analysis: first, analysing the ED-participle's syntactic placement and linkages; the second is to analyze its meaning in isolation versus context. The final step is to discuss the pragmatic implications of its employment in various contexts. This eclectic approach holds the potential to improve our comprehension of the ED-participle as a dangling modifier and offer insightful information about a linguistic phenomenon that has not received enough attention in the literature to date .

2.Literature Review

Grammarians and linguists have paid close attention to the problem of dangling modifiers, which has made it easier to comprehend the consequences of this phenomena for English syntax. In order to highlight the potential for structural ambiguity, Ebest et al. (2003: 263) define a dangling modifier as a shortened clause that provides a different subject than the main phrase. Hale (2005: 1) goes on to clarify this uncertainty by referring to dangling modifiers as "words or phrases that modify a clause in an unclear manner," leaving readers uncertain as to whether they relate to the clause's subject or object. This idea is further supported by Zwicky (2005), who claims that dangling modifiers can make it difficult for readers and listeners to understand what is being said, hence impeding effective communication (p. 2). Many studies have investigated the significance of context becomes when using dangling modifiers. Sentences containing dangling modifiers, such as " "Dressed in a blue skirt, the man was talking to festival organizers." may not solely stem from grammatical oversight ; grammatically speaking , there is no misuse of verb ; it is not like '" dressed in a blue skirt , the table …..” , so the syntactic structure is correct however , semantically speaking , "Dressed in a blue skirt, the man was talking to festival organizers. Is unclear since men typically don't wear skirts in real life, hence this sentence is hanging because it doesn't match the truth condition state. if the receiver does not know the background of the man , it will not be

easy to understand why the man wearing skirt . Therefore , these constructions often arise from a lack of contextual understanding. Analyzing the sentence purely from a grammatical standpoint can lead to the conclusion that the modifier is dangling; however, a pragmatic approach—considering cultural contexts— can clarify its function. For example, in Scottish culture, where men may wear skirts at formal events.

Biber et al. (1990: 552), who argue that contextual and cultural factors have a significant impact on the interpretation of modifiers, provide support to this idea. They challenge conventional grammatical analyses that ignore these factors by arguing that comprehension of the sociolinguistic context is necessary for accurately interpreting the meanings of modifiers .

Furthermore, dangling modifiers have effects on clarity of communication that go beyond simple syntax. Misuse of modifiers can result in phrases that confuse the reader and take attention away from the intended meaning, claims Lanham (2007). This emphasizes how crucial precise grammatical structures are to writing that works, especially when using participles.

The literature that is currently available on ED-participles highlights the importance of using an eclectic approach that takes pragmatic and grammatical viewpoints into account. The objective of this study is to enhance the overall comprehension of ED-participles' function as dangling modifiers in the English language by analysing their usage from the perspectives of context, culture, and communication. Effective communication in this situation depends on the interaction of syntax and pragmatics, especially in a globalized society where cultural interpretations might differ greatly. The importance of examining the ED-participle as a dangling modifier from a variety of perspectives is highlighted by this literature review, since it enables a more thorough examination of how language meaning is shaped by context. Better understanding of the complexities of English modifiers and how they affect communication can be gained by using this broad perspective.

2.1 Definitions:

Quirk et al. (1972: 757; 1985: 434) define dangling modifiers as structures that are widely misused, linking these errors to what they label "style faults." These have historically been called "dangling participles," or "unattached or unrelated participles." The -ED participle creates verbal phrases that can serve as adjectives among other functions (ibid). However, the -ED participle clause carries the risk of becoming a "dangling" or "unattached" participle, a phenomenon condemned in grammar and writing textbooks for both native and non-native speakers (Hooper, 2003: 79.(

Another viewpoint is provided by Diana (1996: 255), who explains that a dangling modifier does not logically refer to any word in the sentence. According to her, these kinds of modifiers frequently show up as opening lines that refer to a character without mentioning them. Readers therefore anticipate that the actor will be made clear in the next clause, leaving the modifier "dangling" (ibid). She further claims that because dangling modifiers alter a term or subject that might not even be in the phrase, they make comprehension difficult (ibid: 256(

Most importantly, Biber et al. (1990: 157) examine the mismatch that can develop when modifiers fail to fit with both language and real-world contexts. The word "poor man" is used to refer to a wealthy person who has lost a contract; it implies sympathy rather than true financial need. This is an example given to demonstrate their point .

Using Quirk et al.'s findings as a starting point, this work defines dangling modifiers from an eclectic standpoint (1985). They are considered as linguistic constructs that produce ambiguity or misinterpretation by failing to sufficiently alter the intended phrase, both in grammatical contexts and in real-world situations. When these modifiers are examined only from a grammatical or linguistic perspective, without taking into account the pragmatic and contextual factors at work, this shortcoming can result in misunderstandings and miscommunication among English speakers. Therefore, it is believed that dangling modifiers are cross-disciplinary structures that are context-shaped and have particular pragmatic roles and purposes .

2.2 Semantic Theory for Analysis of Dangling Modifiers:

Different grammatical occurrences are explored by various semantic theories, showing that grammatical notions can be examined from a syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic perspective. Within this field, truth-conditional semantics is one well-known theory.

2.2.1 Truth-Conditional Semantics:

According to their truth conditions, sentences' meanings are examined by truth-conditional semantics. This methodology is fundamental to the study of natural language semantics, which includes any language that has historically or presently been used for communication within a community (Palmer, 1981: 195 .(

According to truth-conditional semantics, a statement is considered to have dangling modifiers if any of the modifiers are not used appropriately in everyday speech. Take the following line, for instance: "Guided by the bright light, the door was opened." Here, "guided by the bright light" is true only if the light can actually guide the door, which is not feasible. Since a door cannot be guided by light in reality, the sentence becomes misleading. Moreover, sentences containing modifiers that do not meet their truth conditions can lead to dangling modifiers from a semantic viewpoint. Thus, truth-conditional semantics proves to be insufficient and limited in scope for analyzing grammatical structures in general and dangling modifiers in particular.

3. Methodology and Data Analysis:

The present study applies three procedural methods to examine the acquired data samples: (1) highlighting the ED-participle to identify its position as a dangling modifier, (2) classifying the sentence structures, and (3) coding the information found for later semantic and pragmatic analysis .

The data samples are made up of 10 different texts that are representative of a larger corpus of 50 texts, given the qualitative nature of this research. These examples are taken from academic journals, news pieces, literary works, and language textbooks. The study of these materials follows the multidisciplinary approach suggested by Quirk et al. (1985.(

3.1 Non-finite verb phrase / ED – participle:

The most noteworthy theme that comes out of the phrases is ambiguity brought on by truth-condition failures. Semantic misunderstanding arises when the sentence's modifier mistakenly implies that an inanimate thing or concept—like a pizza, report, door, or truck—is going through human-like feelings or states, like tiredness, disruption, fear, or joy .

Additionally, the sentences can be categorised according to the kind of subject confusion (whether the ambiguity is caused by the modifier or the main clause's object.(

The following themes are present:

1. Truth-Condition Failures, in which the modifier wrongly gives inanimate objects human characteristics :
2. Pizza, Report, Door, Truck, Presents, Test Results, Questions, Awards, Project, and Exhibit: These examples create semantic confusion by assigning emotions or states (such as being enthusiastic, bored, or pleased) to things that cannot actually experience them .
3. Issues with syntactic structure, primarily dangling modifiers that don't correspond with logical subjects :

There is structural ambiguity in these sentences because the modifiers do not clearly connect to
the sentence's subject.

1.Sentence: "Exhausted from work, the pizza was devoured".

The sentence **"Exhausted from work"** is a modifier of syntactic structure.

and "The pizza was devoured" is the main clause. dangling Modifier, "Exhausted from work" is a participial phrase that does not have a clear subject that goes with "the pizza.". Semantic Analysis, the modifier implies that after a hard work, something or someone is worn out. But the truth is that pizza can never get tired. There is uncertainty over the real topic of the activity as a result of the semantic gap. Pragmatically, the function of the dangling modifier has not been achieved, which is to modify the subject or the doer of the action. Such a sentence cannot be considered formal or informal, because in both cases it cannot be used since there is no context that can be represented.

2.Sentence: "Disturbed by the loud noise, the report was filed late".

Syntactic Structure:

- Modifier: "Disturbed by the loud noise"
- Main Clause: "the report was filed late"
- Dangling Modifier: The phrase does not specify who was disturbed, leading to ambiguity.

Semantic Analysis: The intended meaning is that a person filing the report was disturbed. The modifier mistakenly attributes disturbance to "the report," creating a nonsensical implication.

Pragmatic analysis: The participial phrase lacks an appropriate subject, causing the sentence to convey an unintended meaning and resulting in a dangling modifier, so the one who got affected by the noise is not clear ; his role is not specified.

3.Sentence "Frightened by the sudden movement, the door was closed".

Modifier in syntactic structure: "Frightened by the sudden movement "

"the door was closed " is the main clause and the structure is passive voice with no reference to the doer of the action. "frightened by the sudden movement is dangling since it does not modify the correct subject.

Semantically speaking , the truth -conditional sentences is not applied on this sentences since there is no door in real life that can be frightened .

4.Sentence: "Surprised by the sudden rain, the truck slid off the road".

The sentence structure is as follows :

Modifier: "Surprised by the sudden rain "

"The car slid off the road" is the main clause .

Dangling Modifier: This illogically suggests that the automobile is surprised .

Semantic Analysis: Although the syntax implies that the truck is shocked which is impossible, the intended meaning is that the driver was taken aback. Therefore, misunderstanding resulted when the participial phrase does not match a logical subject.

5.Sentence:"Excitedbythe anno uncement, the gifts were openedimmediately".

Syntactic Structure: Modifier: "Excited by the announcement", Main Clause: "the gifts were opened immediately" which is passive voice with no reference to the doer of the action .Dangling Modifier: Incorrectly attributes excitement to the gifts. Semantic Analysis: The excitement should belong to the people opening the gifts, but the syntax misleadingly suggests that the gifts themselves are excited.

6. Sentence: "Pleased with the results, the test scores were celebrated".

•Syntactic Framework :

Modifier: "Happy with the outcome "

o main clause "The exam results were celebrated

o Dangling Modifier: This expression falsely suggests that test results are subject to pleasure .

•Semantic Analysis: It is meant to imply that teachers or pupils were happy. The test results are incorrectly linked to the emotion in the syntax. The truth condition is not fulfilled since it is impossible to think that test scores have feeling .

7.Sentence: "Bored by the lecture, the questions were hardly understood".

Syntactic Structure: Modifier: "Bored by the lecture", Main Clause: " the questions were hardly understood, dangling Modifier: Suggests the questions experienced boredom, which is nonsensical.

Semantic Analysis: The intended meaning is that students were bored during the lecture, but the syntax implies the questions are bored. The reference is not stated clearly

8.The sentence: "Impressed by the performance, the awards were handed out".

- Syntactic Framework:
- "Impressed by the performance" is the modifier.
- "The awards were handed out" is the main clause.
- Dangling Modifier: Indicates that the rewards had an impact.
- Semantic Analysis: Although the syntax incorrectly links the emotion to the awards, the intended meaning is that the judges or audience were impressed.
- Syntactic Analysis: There is an ambiguity and a dangling modifier since the participial phrase lacks a logical subject.

9.The sentence: "Motivated by the deadline, the project was completed just in time".

Syntactic Framework:

* "Motivated by the deadline" is the modifier.
* "The project was completed just in time" is the main clause.
* Dangling Modifier: The expression misattributes the project's motivation.
* Semantic Analysis: Although the syntax suggests that the project itself was motivated, the intended meaning is that the people working on it were.
* Syntactic Analysis: A dangling modifier results from the participial phrase's failure to connect to an appropriate subject.

10. The sentence: "Fascinated by the exhibit, the group spent hours at the museum".

Syntactic Framework:

* "Fascinated by the exhibit" is the modifier.
* "The group spent hours at the museum" is the main clause.
* Hanging Modifier: The exhibit, not the group, is mistakenly given credit for the excitement.
* Semantic Analysis: Although the construction implies that the exhibit itself was fascinating, the intended meaning is that the group was.
* Syntactic Analysis: Although the participial phrase appropriately modifies "the group," structural ambiguity leaves room for misunderstanding.

3.2 A summary of the analysis:

Semantic ambiguity and grammatical analysis result from the -ED participial phrases in each case acting as modifiers but not making sense in relation to their subjects. The analysis highlights how crucial it is to make sure modifiers appropriately represent the subjects they are meant to represent in order to improve communication clarity.

Summary:

Sentence	Theme	Explanation
1. **Exhausted from work, the pizza was devoured.**	Truth-condition failure	"Exhausted" wrongly applies to pizza, which cannot be exhausted.
2. **Disturbed by the loud noise, the report was filed late.**	Truth-condition failure	"Disturbed" is wrongly applied to a report, which cannot be disturbed.
3. **Frightened by the sudden movement, the door was closed.**	Truth-condition failure	"Frightened" is wrongly applied to a door, which cannot be frightened.
4. **Surprised by the sudden rain, the truck slid off the road.**	Truth-condition failure	"Surprised" is wrongly applied to the truck, which cannot be

Sentence	Theme	Explanation
		surprised.
5. **Excited by the announcement, the gifts were opened immediately.**	Truth-condition failure	"Excited" is wrongly applied to gifts, which cannot be excited.
6. **Pleased with the results, the test scores were celebrated.**	Truth-condition failure	"Pleased" is wrongly applied to test scores, which cannot feel pleasure.
7. **Bored by the lecture, the questions were hardly understood.**	Truth-condition failure	"Bored" is wrongly applied to questions, which cannot be bored.
8. **Impressed by the performance, the awards were handed out.**	Truth-condition failure	"Impressed" is wrongly applied to awards, which cannot be impressed.
9. **Motivated by the deadline, the project was completed just in time.**	Truth-condition failure	"Motivated" is wrongly applied to the project, which cannot be motivated.
10. **Fascinated by the exhibit, the group spent hours at the museum.**	Truth-condition failure	"Fascinated" is wrongly applied to the exhibit, which cannot be fascinated.

3.3 Findings:

Because it offers a thorough framework that incorporates knowledge from other linguistic theories, such as syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, the eclectic approach makes a distinctive contribution to this study. By integrating several theoretical viewpoints, it enables a comprehensive examination of sentences with hanging modifiers, addressing both structural problems and their meaning-related ramifications .

The method helps explain how modifiers fail to alter the correct subject, resulting in ambiguity, by bridging the gap between syntax and semantics. It also highlights the significance of pragmatics and context, providing a greater comprehension of how these sentences might be understood in various communicative contexts. By taking into account a variety of elements that contribute to the misunderstanding or confusion created by dangling modifiers, this interdisciplinary approach enriches the research and promotes critical debate across linguistic subfields.

Finally, the eclectic approach offers flexibility, enabling a more nuanced exploration of how modifiers function and how their failure to align with the intended subject affects sentence clarity.

The following is the finding of each sentence:

1. The sentence: "Exhausted from the long hike, the pizza was devoured".
2. Finding: Readers are misled by the structure into believing that the pizza is worn out, which leaves them unsure of who is truly worn out.
3. The sentence: "Disturbed by the loud noise, the report was filed late".

4. Finding: A semantic mismatch results from the modifier's improper attribution of disturbance to the report rather than the person who filed it.
5. The sentence: "Frightened by the sudden movement, the door was closed" o Finding: the door is treated as animate which is incorrect.
6. The sentence: "Surprised by the sudden rain, the car slid off the road".
7. Finding: The sentence's erroneous implication that the car is surprised is actually that the driver was surprised.
8. The sentence: "Excited by the announcement, the gifts were opened immediately".
9. Finding: It is unclear who is truly excited since the excitement is mistakenly attributed to the presents rather than the recipients.
   a. .6The sentence: "Pleased with the results, the test scores were celebrated".
10. Finding: There is a semantic error in the statement since this structure erroneously implies that the test results are capable of experiencing pleasure.
    a. .7The sentence: "Bored by the lecture, the notes were hardly taken".
11. Finding: It is absurd to infer from the sentence that the notes were bored; rather, the intended connotation should convey the students' boredom.
12. The sentence: "Impressed by the performance, the awards were handed out".
13. Finding: The sentence should have said that the judges or audience were impressed, not that the awards are impressed, which is nonsensical.
14. The sentence is: "Motivated by the deadline, the project was completed just in time".
15. Finding: Rather than the people working on the project, the structure falsely suggests that the project was motivated.
16. The sentence is: "Fascinated by the exhibit, the group spent hours at the museum".
17. Finding: The group is misidentified as the object of attention when the fascination is mistakenly ascribed to the exhibit.

3.4 Conclusion:

This study used Quirk et al.'s (1985) eclectic framework to investigate the use of the -ed participle as a dangling modifier in English. According to the analysis, even though these modifiers are frequently used in English syntax, when their syntactic structure deviates from their intended meaning, they frequently cause grammatical uncertainty and semantic ambiguity. By incorrectly attributing actions, traits, or states to unintended subjects, the usage of -ed participles as dangling modifiers can skew sentence comprehension and impair clarity and communication in general. The study emphasises the significance of context, culture, and pragmatics in interpreting -ed participles and draws attention to the need for increased knowledge of their correct usage in both written and spoken English.

The study's findings underscore the complexity of English grammar and point to the necessity of considering both syntactic and pragmatic factors when analyzing modifier usage. By incorporating a broader, eclectic perspective, this research has contributed to a deeper understanding of how dangling modifiers function within real-world communication, bridging the gap between grammatical structure and contextual interpretation.

3.5 Suggestions for Future Studies:

The study's findings underscore the complexity of English grammar and point to the necessity of considering both syntactic and pragmatic factors when analyzing modifier usage. By incorporating a broader, eclectic perspective, this research has contributed to a deeper understanding of how dangling modifiers function within real-world communication, bridging the gap between grammatical structure and contextual interpretation.

Ideas for Further Research

The current work could be expanded upon in a number of ways in future research. In order to comprehend how the usage of -ed participles as dangling modifiers may vary depending on the context, a larger corpus might be employed to examine a greater range of English genres and dialects, including formal and informal contexts. Studies could also look into how non-native English speakers understand and use these structures, as this could help identify possible places where learners might be confused and guide instructional tactics.

Lastly, Examining how education and grammar training can lessen the usage of dangling modifiers is another possible direction for future research. It would be beneficial to investigate the effects of explicitly teaching modifier usage on students' writing and comprehension abilities.

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