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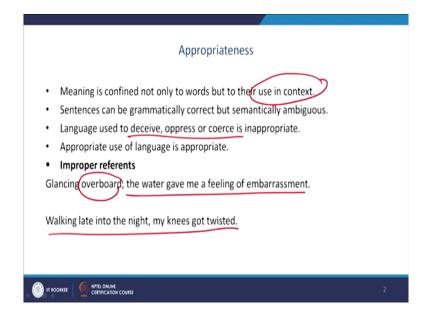
Lecture – 06 Notions of Correctness and Appropriateness, Part II

Hello friends and welcome back to online lectures on effective Writing. In the previous lecture we have talked about the Notions of Correctness and in this lecture which is actually the second part of the previous lecture, we will be talking about appropriateness. You are listening to online lectures by Binod Mishra and I hope you are enjoying these lectures.

My dear friends writing correct sentences is ok, but then how appropriate it is that also has to be decided. Because when we talk about correctness we talked about the structure, but then whether our sentences are meaningful or not and in which context we are talking each which context you are using a particular expression that we shall be discussing in this lecture. I have titled this module as the notion of Appropriateness. What exactly do we mean by appropriateness?

We all know that we use words; words make sentences, but then as we have been discussing words have meaning, but they are not confined only to one meaning. Meaning also is not confined to words because words have meaning, but more than words the meaning lies with the user with the writer. So, meaning is confined not only to words, but also to their use in context.

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Suppose you use a particular word or you use a particular sentence and you are not aware or the person who is going to read that is not aware of the context, what he or she will do is they will actually infer the meaning based upon their own understanding, based upon their own familiarity with the word. Because all of us have got some experiences of the words that we have come across and when we come across a particular word what we do is we actually refer that word to our perception, to our experience, to our knowledge.

Sentences can be grammatically correct, but they may be semantically ambiguous also. We shall be discussing how because of the careless use of some words or some structures our sentences become ambiguous. Do we really want to make our sentences ambiguous? Of course, at times in the business world you will find that there are many situations when you

make a sentence ambiguous just to take the benefit by the use of structuring a word or an expression in a manner that you want.

So, words have a tendency that through words you can also deceive a person, language is used to deceive oppress or coerce also at times, but then honestly speaking we do not want to deceive people, we do not want to oppress people. There are some situations where you want to get the desired meaning or get your desired aim fulfilled for that also you are making use of language. But in order to serve your desired purpose you have to use words in such a manner that they must appear correct, but at the same time they must also serve your purpose. Appropriate use of language is only appropriate when it meets the desired use.

Now, what people do? You will find that as we discussed in the previous lecture that sometimes either because of hurry or because of our carelessness we make use of improper reference and then we commit a sort of ungrammaticality. And the meaning is destroyed, the meaning is obscured you may have a look at these 2 expressions which have been giving given here. Glancing over board the water gave me a feeling of embarrassment.

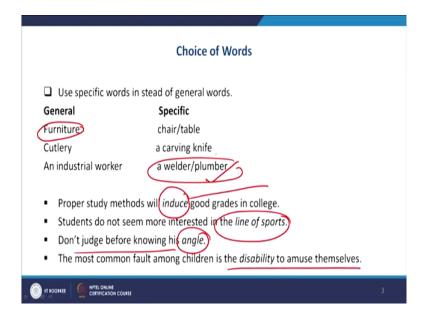
Now, look at this sentence let us judge whether the sentence is appropriate the sentence is structurally appears to be correct, but then semantically it is not correct. Glancing overboard the water, so who is the referent, who actually is the referent? Actually the writer wants to convey that he had in feeling, he had a feeling of embarrassment, but this way he has used the sentence what happens is actually the water becomes the subject and we find the meaning is obscured, glancing overboard who glanced the person or the water that is why the meaning is obscured here likely when we say walking late into the night my knees got twisted.

Now, see the immediate different my knees my knees you want to say my knees got twisted, but then what you have said before it actually confuses or it actually distorts the meaning, it appears as if your knees walked late into the night. So, we find that both these sentences are not appropriate. Now, when we talk about appropriateness as we have been saying since the beginning of this course that you actually have to make right choice of words and not only right choice of words, but right choice of words in the right context.

Now, what exactly is right choice of words? Words may have different meanings one word may have more than one meaning and that is why people at times very very you know reluctantly sometimes when they use words they obscure the sense no doubt, but sometimes they willingly do so also when they have a sort of different purpose. You will find if you come across several advertisements you will find how they create a sort of structure.

So, that they may deceive or they make coerce the readers, but then in order to make the specific choice it is always better to make specific words instead of general words, because when you are writing a sentence when you are you want to convey a sense you actually have a meaning with you. For example, if you say furniture people or your readers may have different things in mind chair, table, desk, book, shelf what is so ever.

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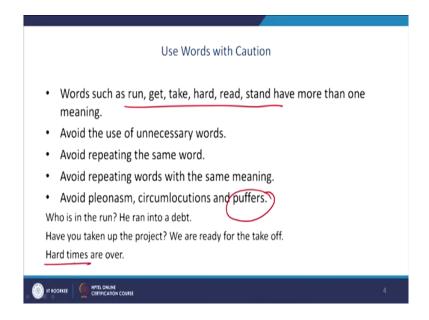
So, you here you have to make a specific use and say chair again when you say cutlery that also may include so many things, but in order to make it a specific you can say a knife, a carving knife, a fork or what is so ever, again when you talk about the worker industrial worker or a field worker or somebody else, but then all these are general. What you mean to say is in order to be specific, in order to mean, in order to convey your thoughts you actually have to make a specific use and say a welder or plumber like that.

Now, have a look at these sentences here the author or the writer has not made a right choice of words and that is how the meaning has been sacrificed. Proper study methods will induce good grades in college. Now, the use of the word induce is wrong this has to be substituted in order to convey the right meaning.

So, what we should say is here we have made a wrong use of words, you should say proper study methods will ensure good grades in college. The same is again in the second sentence students do not seem more interested in the line of sports in the line of sports. So, why in the line of sports? By saying in the line of sports again you are going to confuse it. So, you must say students do not seem more interested in hockey nowadays, in cricket nowadays, in kabaddi nowadays, then you will become more specific do not judge before knowing his angle you see how you have not been clear as to what you mean by angle and your readers may think what angle he is talking about because a person who has got a familiarity with geometry or some other discipline will be thinking about angle in his way in his own perception. So, what actually you mean to say is do not judge before knowing his opinion fine.

So, likewise in the last sentence again the most common fault among children is the disability to amuse themselves. The writer actually wanted to say the most common fault among children is the inability to amuse themselves rather in place of inability the author or the writer has written disability, so this is wrong use my dear friends. In order to be specific, in order to be effective what we must do is we must actually know how words can be used in the proper context.

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Because words like run, get, take, read, stand all these words, if you simply put a preposition with that the world will have a different meaning or moreover this word run may have different meanings in different contexts fine. The word get may also can have different meanings; why are you getting late fine. Suppose we say why are you getting late, again we can say I got a letter from my friends fine, you can again say I have got a new assignment fine, please get off fine.

So, now you see when you are making use of words you have to be very cautious avoid the use of unnecessary words. Sometimes what people do is they actually obscure a thought they obscure the meaning by making use of unnecessary words. Sometimes they also repeat the words fine the same words in the same paragraph in the same you know thread of thought and what will happen the writing will not appear effective.

So, what needs to do is when you are writing see to it that while you are you have made use of one word and again you feel the necessity of having the same word using same word it is always better to use the synonyms, but while making use of synonyms also you have to think about the context, whether it suits the context or not do not make use of synonyms very carelessly or simply for the sake of making synonyms.

Again do not repeat words with the same meaning, avoid the use of pleonasm. What is pleonasm? Pleon is a word which actually means excess so, when you make excess use of words. At times you also say many people simply confuse or obscure or destroy the meaning by making use of puffers. Puffers are when you are either trying to become too literally when you are either trying to make use of roundabouts expressions, circumlocutions you are actually going to destroy or distort the sense.

Now, let us have a look at the use of words and you will find who is in the run; who is in the run? Now, it will have a different meaning I mean who is in the race, he ran into a debt. Now, you see the same word run has been used and again right in running prose fine right in running handwriting fine. So, there can be many more likewise when you make use of words take have you taken your breakfast, have you taken your meal, but then we are ready for the takeoff, you see how the meaning changes.

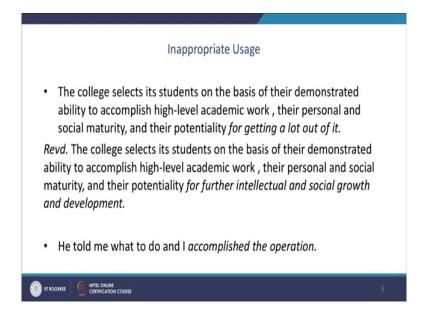
So, are you going to take on again we can with certain prepositions we can create phrasal verbs take after, she takes after her mother so, the meaning changes. So, we have to be very careful while we are making use of words. So, make use of caution while you are making, while you are making use of words, hard times are over now hard times what do you mean by hard times.

So, people actually make meanings based on their associations or based on their own experiences, but then they never think about I said earlier also that people while writing they write what they actually know and they write with a view that their readers know everything. They must also think that their readers do not know and their purposes whatever responsibilities you are going to discharge as a writer, whether you are going to give them

instructions, directions you are going to give them advice what is so ever, but please see that you make right use of words.

You will also come across several sentences where what happens is in order to because we have been saying that make a specific use of words, make use of words that are familiar, but it is not going to be applicable every now and then we can have a look at this sentence, where it says. The college selects its students on the basis of their demonstrated ability to accomplish high level academic work their personal, social, maturity and potentiality for getting a lot out of it.

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Now, this use of getting a lot out of it this is very confusing getting what. So, you have to be specific and rather you have to say potentiality for further intellectual and social growth and

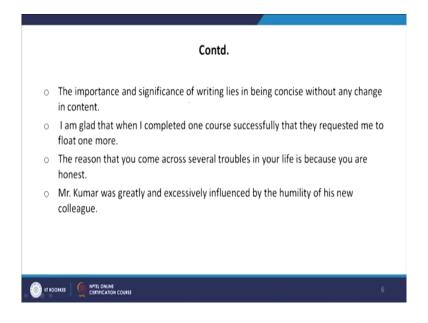
development, then perhaps the sentence will have it is complete meaning, otherwise the sentence will not have it is proper meaning.

Sometimes when people try to be very sort or very concise what they do is or sometimes people try to be very fashionable. For example, look at the sentence he told me what to do and I accomplished the operation now this is not the right use. In the first what you have said he told me what to do so, what you should do, what you should say is and I did find and I did, because you also had to see that a sort of parallelism is to be maintained in order to convey the meaning effectively.

Sometimes what people do is, people actually create and people make repetitions; repetitions and by repetitions what they do is, they make use of words the word has the same meaning though the word is different, but in a sentence what they are going to do is they are actually going to load the sentence and unnecessarily tire the mind of their readers.

You can have a look at all these sentences that have been given here and you will find that what I am saying is or what the gist of what I have said is that you have to be while writing, you have to be simple as I have said earlier, you have to be brief you have to be concise, but not at the cost of meaning. Let us have a look at this sentence.

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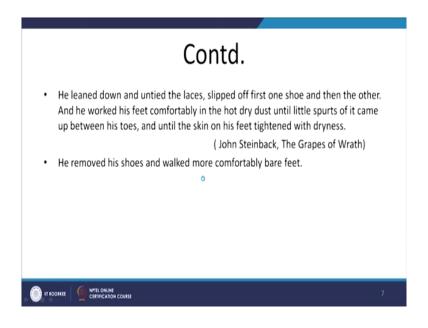
The importance and significance of writing lies in being concise without any change of content, fine what is what is the problem? The problem is if you are writing importance why you are writing the significance, what is the need of writing significance, you are simply loading it. So, do not load your sentence by unnecessary words. Again in the second sentence you will find, I am glad that when I completed one course successfully that they requested me to float one more, why this that, why you have used that.

So, let us delete this in order to be effective, the reason that you come across several troubles in your life is because you are honest, fine, such sentences which appear to be long this is just a sample know which appears to be long you can make it short simply by cutting some of the words, but without sacrificing the meaning. Mr. Kumar was greatly and excessively influenced why greatly and excessively you only want to say that Mr. Kumar was heavily

influenced by the humility of his new colleague. So, either use greatly or excessively there is no need of using.

So, this is called tautology when you are going to make use of unnecessary words that do not mean rather they actually load your sentences and the tire the mind of the readers. But then you will find a literature there is a tendency to describe, but then you cannot do so, when you are writing for other purposes I have selected one line from John Steinbeck, the Grapes of Wrath, now look at this line.

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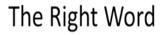
He leaned down and untied the laces, slipped off first one shoe and then the other. And he worked his feet comfortably in the hot dry dust until little spurts of it came up between his toes and until the skin on his feet tightened with dryness. Now, when you read it you find you are involved. So, that is correct because you are reading a piece from literature, but then this

can also be when you and you know what is the gist of all, the gist of all is simply which is given in the second sentence.

Now, depending upon the need depending actually upon the situation both the sentences are correct, the first sentence serves to literary people, but the second sentence subs to those people who are having less time and who actually wants the sense to be conveyed, he removed his shoes and walked more comfortably barefoot. So, that is all you have not sacrificed the meaning.

So, this is an example through which I want to convey that even effective sentences can be written without loading it, because every now and then you are not writing literature you are actually writing for some other purposes as well.

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"The difference between the almost right word and the right word is ... the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning."

—Mark Twain

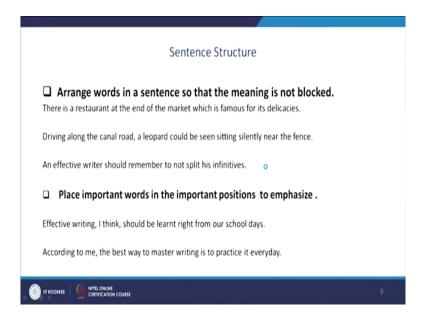


And here goes a quote which is very important where Mark Twain one of the celebrated author says, the difference between the almost right word and the right word is the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning. So, we have to be careful when we are making use of the right word. So, the difference is very less, but then it depends upon our own discretion it depends our own consideration how we can make the use of the right word in the right context

Sometimes people actually make their sentences or their writing inappropriate because of the sentence structure, as I have been saying that simply by putting one phrase at one place and one clause at other place you can obscure the meaning you can block the meaning.

So, while we are writing we also must be careful to the sentence structure the way something has been a structured it actually gives it actually helps in deriving the meaning from the readers point of view. So, let us remember some of the golden rules arrange words in a sentence so, that the meaning is not blocked; so that the meaning is not blocked.

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Now, look at this sentence where if you have a look at these words you will understand the meaning, but then this sentence because of the poor structure it gives a different meaning. There is a restaurant at the end of the market which is famous for it is delicacies, now what is what happens here. So, you are talking about the restaurant which actually is famous for delicacies, but then the way you have structured it because you say market which is famous.

So, what happens? The market is being referred and not the restaurant. So, it is actually a case of paying less attention to the sentence structure again this lack of our consideration for the sentence structure is being caused because of the dangling modifiers; dangling modifiers or reference.

Now, look at the other sentence driving along the canal road, a leopard could be seen silently sitting near the fence. Now, who would seen a leopard, whether the leopard was driving no

you were driving. So, this all these sentences actually require a sort of revision, you could have said while I was driving along the road I could see a leopard sitting silently near the fence. And so, here what you do? You have simply changed the order and you have conveyed the meaning. So, that is required my dear friends.

Again, an effective writer should remember to not split his infinitives, here you all might have come to know a golden rule of grammar that never split infinitives. Now, what are infinitives, infinitives are actually words infinitives are actually verbs which take 2 to go, to do, to swim, to think, to berry, to worry fine all these are infinitives.

Now, when there is an infinitive the rule says that do not split the infinitives, I mean if somebody says here I as the sentences in effective writers should remember to not split the infinitives. So, as per the rule what should be done is never ever bring any adverb between the infinitive I mean between 2 and the verb.

So, this sentence could also be improved and said and effective writers should remember not to split is infinitives, my dear friends as a writer when you are writing something a document. Your main aim is also to emphasize and you can emphasize by making appropriate use of infinitives at appropriate places.

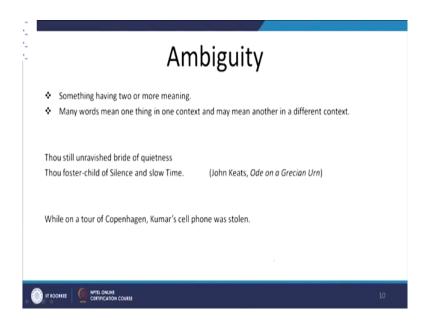
Nowadays there is a trend going on to split the infinitives also for example, we can say he really fought bravely, he really fought bravely to win or we can also say he fought to win bravely. Now what happens here? In both the sentences the meaning each obscured. So, please see that you are not going to put an adverb before or in and between the infinitives.

Place important words in the important positions to emphasize you all remember I am always reminded of one line from Julius Caesar, where antony says I came to bury Caesar not to praise him look at the use I came to bury Caesar not to praise him; not to praise him. He did not say I came to bury Caesar; I came to bury Caesar to praise him or he could not say I came to bury Caesar to not praise him. What he said was I came to bury Caesar not to praise him and by this saying he actually emphasized what he actually wanted what which is purpose.

So, if you place the words at important positions because positions matter a lot in order to give appropriateness. Effective writing, I think now see here; effective writing I think should be learnt right from our school days. Here the emphasis is the writer things should be learnt right from our school days. Again in the second sentence, according to me so, when you bring according to me. So, you actually emphasize that what you want to say, according to me the best way to master writing is to practice it every day. So, when we are talking about sentence structure say to it that the sentence structure is followed or maintained in such a manner that meaning is not obscured, otherwise there will be a great difficulty for the readers.

Now, at times people create ambiguity by following some or by simply changing some orders as one case that we have already discussed is misplaced modifiers, dangling modifiers. Now, what is ambiguity? How do people create ambiguity? And is it needed to create ambiguity? As a writer our main motto is to convey the sense, but at times either because of our carelessness we make our sentences ambiguous. So, let us try to understand what is ambiguity?

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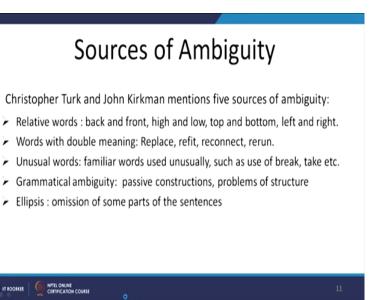
By ambiguity we mean a word may have 2 or more meaning fine many words there are many words which may have may appear to be having one meaning in one context, but in other contexts they may have a different meaning. So, sometimes when you have a purpose say especially in advertisements you will find when they create ambiguity because their main aim is to put it in such a manner that the buyers or the clients are induced.

Now, in literature you will come across plenty of ambiguities and in literature ambiguity is considered to be a sort of trait, but in everyday writings this ambiguity does not carry much weight. Now, let us have a line from John Keats, Ode on a Grecian Urn, where the poet says thou still unravished bride of quietness, thou foster child of silence and slow time. Now, see what the; what the poet has done, he has actually made it ambiguous although by making use of still, still can have 2 meaning thou still unravished bride of quietness.

The writer is talking about his love, either he is talking about still unravished bride of bride of quietness he is talking about the beauty, but again he struck he is giving the meaning of still here may also be yet thou yet unravished bride of quietness or many of us can have different meaning because by stillness we also believe that either something that is no more. So, there are many ways people can derive meanings when they are talking about ambiguity.

Again here is another sentence where the by the use of the modifier we are obscuring the sense, while on a tour of Copenhagen, his cell phone was stolen. So, whose cell phone we are talking about the person cell phone, you are not talking about you know Copenhagen while on a tour of Copenhagen, Kumar's cell phone was stolen. So, it had to be changed in order to convey the right meaning.

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One very famous book on effective writing written by Christopher Turk and John Kirkman mentions 5 sources of ambiguity. And he says that in our day to day lives when we have to have several transactions, there can be 4 or 5 sources of ambiguity, either the ambiguity can be with the writers use of relative words or the ambiguity can be caused by words having a different meaning, the words having double meaning, sometimes while making use of unusual words, sometimes by creating grammatical ambiguity and sometimes by ellipsis.

Now, when people actually write something say for example, they are writing instruction or they are I writing some explanation and if they make use of relative words back and front high and low top and bottom left and right. So, this may be very confusing, if you look at the use of these words in a particular context and it has been repeated timely, so this may confuse the readers. So, it is always better to be very specific then making use of these relative words, sometimes we make use of words which have got a double meaning. Say for example, words like replace, refit, reconnect, rerun.

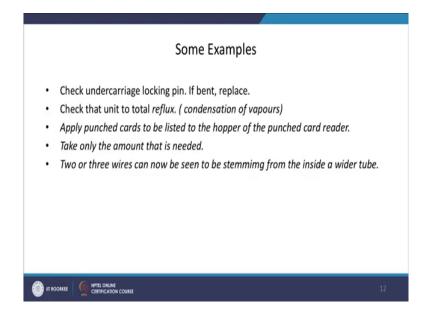
So, people may have different sorts of meaning depending upon their experiences and their exposure to these words and what people do is, they actually start associating or they start deriving the meaning based on their own experience. Whereas, the writers aim was to convey it properly we will also have several examples of how we obscure by dint of ambiguity.

And then at times we also in order to make it a standard use, sometimes we make use of familiar words, but familiar words are used in such an unusual manner that we actually confuse. Earlier we have also talked about the use of the words like get and take and have, we can also make use of break and take. So, when you make use of break in a general sense all you know the meaning of break is break.

But when you start it using in a different manner have you taken a break, was there a break away, was there a break down. So, now, all these know are you taking everything down fine, has the plane taken off fine, have you taken up the assignment fine that see take after as I mentioned earlier and then you also create grammatical ambiguity by making passive constructions and by problems of structure. In the previous lecture we also talked about how

passive structure sometimes actually delay the meaning and why you should make use of active constructions and then sometimes we also make use of ellipses. Now, let us have some examples.

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Now, see these are some of the sentences that I have collected from different sources, now look at the first sentence check undercarriage locking pin, if bent replace. Now, the fun is on the word replace it was actually a sort of instruction check undercarriage locking pin if bent replace, now this was a part of instruction. So, what the person did was he checked the locking pin and of course, the locking pin was; locking pin was bent. So, what he did was once again he simply put it replace he replaced it. So, here the word replace is so confusing and finally, what happened you know it resulted in a sort of accident.

Now, if there is such an instruction it will actually create a lot of disturbance, again you can have a look at the other sentence check that unit to total reflux. Now, look at the use of the word reflux when you make use of the word reflux this can have several associations people may also think because by reflux the writer meant condensation of vapors while he was using in that context. But then a person who is not familiar with the word reflux may think of baby reflux, baby reflux is a sort of a syndrome where the child know when the child eats something or drink something know again it backs it up. So, baby reflux then we can have an acid reflux this is actually a sort of gastro disorder.

So, now the question is when you are making use of words you also have to see you also have to check whether your audience as in the previous lecture we talked about you have to be aware of your audiences background otherwise what will happen is the sense will be obscured. Then apply punched cards to be listed the hopper of the punch card reader, now when we make use of the world apply.

So, there are several things that come in our mind, we do not think that the people will be able to make the specific use of apply means to use, many people may also think because those who are in jobs and all they might be thinking of by apply application for job or something else by applying.

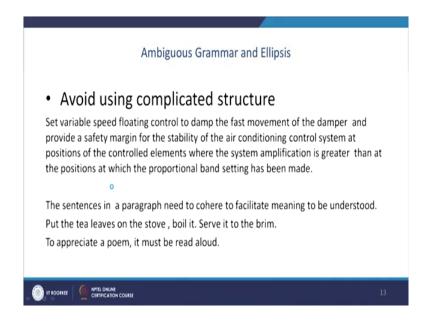
Now, the question is this is not a specific my dear friends. Now, here I have taken one line from somewhere where I could see it written, take only the amount that is needed. Now, what is the meaning? This can have different meaning in different situations. So, one has to be specific there is actually a loss, loss of a particular word also which we consider take only the amount of food that is needed, take only the amount of petrol that is needed, take only the amount of gas that is needed, take only the I mean when you are making use of something please be specific.

Two or three wires can now be seen to be stemming from inside a wider tube. Now, here you see the writer actually has made use of wires and by wires here actually he talks about flowers, 2 or 3 wire of flowers are now seen to be stemming, but naturally when we make use

of the wire everyone goes to the world of electricity in a starts thinking. So, what happens? The desired sense is obscured.

So, my dear friends what we need to do is, we actually need to be very careful while we are making use of these expressions also as we discussed earlier that a structure can lead to a sort of confusion. Now, let us have a look at this technical language and how this structure is complicated and by reading it you will come across such a sort of difficulty that you will not be able to understand.

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Set variable speed floating control to damp the fast movement of the damper and provide a safety margin for the air conditioning control system as the positions of controlled elements where the system amplification is greater.

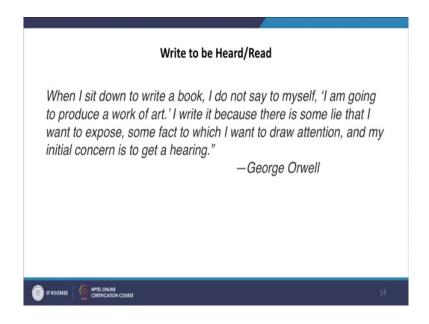
Now, do you think that people will be able to derive meaning? What actually is meant here is that you need to reduce the speed by providing or you need to stabilize the speed by providing a margin and near the band, but the way it has been carved, the way it has been written it is actually a complicated structure. Again when even when you write a sentence because in a sentence also you are going to create a sort of lexical ambiguity or you are going to create a sort of structural ambiguity, when you are making use of a wrong word you are going to create a sort of lexical ambiguity. And when in a sentence you are going to make use of it in a different manner you are going to create a sort of a structural ambiguity.

For example look at the last sentence last 2 sentences, put the tea leaves on the stove, boil it, serve it to the brim. Suppose you are giving somebody an instruction as to how the tea can be made and if you make use of the sentence like this put the tea leaves on the stove, what is the meaning? Can you put the tea leaves on the stove? Actually there is something left which in a you know in a civilized language we can say ellipsis you actually meant to put tea leaves in a utensil on the stove boil it and then serve it to the brim again to the brim also a confuses people.

So, when you are going to give instructions or when you are going to explain something see to it that the meanings are clear. Again the last sentence, to appreciate a poem it must be read aloud, this sentence also can be changed in order to make some; in order to make a proper appreciation of a poem the poem must be read aloud. So, sometimes though you may find that when you make a long sentence you are going to give a lot of stress, but you are actually going to ease these stress sometimes by explaining things also.

So, my dear friends all you need to do is when you are writing, because you know when you write something you actually want to mean, you do not want to confuse your readers it is not only about the question of what idea you have, but since the idea has to be expressed and keeping into consideration the readers background, the readers familiarity, the readers knowledge, the readers grasp over vocabulary, the readers grasp over grammar, the readers grasp over structure, readers knowledge about ambiguity.

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So, do not go after creating a sort of ambiguity, rather your main aim should be to make things understandable to make things easier, because you are writing only because you want to be heard, you want to be read, you want to be understood, you want people to know something. And in order to make them know all you need to do is you need to follow a style, you need to follow a structure, you need to use a word that is familiar, to use the word that is not too much technical to because you know when you are in a profession you are familiar with a particular word. And it is human nature or to think that what you know is also known by others, the situation is not that you are writing to make people understand and make people know.

So, for that you have to think yourself in the condition of being a reader, in the condition of being a receiver and for that you need to make some extra efforts only then you can be heard, only then you can be read. So, before I conclude because today we have discussed not only

the way people create problems for the readers, but we have also seen to it that proper use of vocabulary in the proper context with the proper anticipation of the readers background can make our document, can make our writing understandable and make our writing convincing as well as effective.

So, let us have a look at the code by the famous author George Orwell who says, when I sit down to write a book, I do not say to myself, I am going to produce a work of art. I write it because there is some lie that I want to expose, there is some problem that he wants to resolve some fact to which I want to draw attention, because as a writer all of us should aim at achieving a sort of simplification or a satisfaction and my initial concern is to get a hearing because when we write something we want to be heard.

So, let us conclude this lecture with this code and let us practice it in our life when you also sit to write something you say to yourself I am not going to produce a work of art, but I am writing it because there is some lie that I want to expose, there is something that you want to tell people that is actually the meaning. I want to draw attention you want to grab attention you want to convince them and your concern should be to get a hearing.

My dear friends I do hope that with these lectures you might be now in a condition to start your writing and writing it in such a manner that you are being heard you are being understand, before we meet for the next lecture let us keep trying, let us keep thinking, let us keep writing, let us keep revising.

So, that a wrong word does not create a wrong image, a word in the proper context will only create a right image and a document written carefully with concern for grammar, with concern for ambiguity, with concern for structure, with concern for vocabulary will only make our reading smooth our reading easy.

Thank you very much.