

to principal sentences, which expletive words bear to principal words. As such they can be taken out, or put in, without affecting, in the slightest, the correct and perfect structure of their principals.

The third example illustrates the nature of the ellipsis, which is the most difficult part of the study of languages. An ellipsis is an omission or leaving out, by an author, of some words which, he supposes, his auditors or readers understand. The supplying of these understood words is often an affair of the greatest difficulty, and has proved a formidable stumbling block to the most able translators. In this respect a marked distinction is observable, between the Greek and Latin versions of the Bible, on the one hand, and what are known, on the other, as the classical writings of Greek and Roman authors. While, in the Bible, the ellipsis is so simple as to preclude the possibility of mistaking the exact words to be supplied, its complexity is so great in Greek and Roman works, particularly the oratorical, that translators necessarily disagree at every step. With respect to the Bible, the absence of the ellipsis is the reason why the Bible is preferable, as a first book, for learning to read, in the Common School. This remark holds, not only with reference to the Greek and Latin versions, but equally with those in use in the various modern European tongues. On the other hand, as the more abstruse, because more elliptical, works of many of the Greek and Roman writers, require a familiarity with their respective styles, such works should take their place, not as lesson books, either in the Common or Grammar School, or in the College, but as the subjects of University lectures. The Grammar School and College, as intermediate institutions, should confine their teaching to the historical and prose writings which are capable of being easily mastered. In contravention, however, of this natural gradation, we have Homer and Virgil in our Grammar Schools, Homer and Virgil in our Colleges, Homer and Virgil in our Universities, and we are at this moment threatened with the introduction of Homer and Virgil to our Common Schools. No account is taken of the vast difference, for school purposes, between the easiness of a book that is comparatively free from ellipsis, and one in which the ellipsis is so complicated, and abounds to such an extent, as to baffle the scholastic skill of the most learned Professors. And the consequence is, that, for all practical purposes, our middle seminaries might as well have tried to teach the Zend-Avesta, the Maha-Bharata or the Hu-King, as have attempted the teaching of Homer's Iliad or any work of a similar kind.

The principal and parenthetical sentences, and the ellipsis, being once understood, the remaining study of language becomes easy. Though stated here, at this early stage, for the guidance of the teacher, it is not intended that pupils should begin by analysing compound

sentences. On the contrary, their first lesson must be the structure and different kinds of simple sentences.

With the blackboard, and without any text book or written rules, the teacher is first to draw two perpendicular lines; and then to point out the three places of the parts of the sentence, and the places of the conjunctions, as in the example on the first page. Next select a simple and complete sentence, on which to experiment. Take the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis:—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Look for the predicative conjunction. *Created* is the word. Place it close to the right side of the first perpendicular line, the place designed for this class of words. Then, to find the theme, ask the question—Who created? The answer is—*God*. Therefore place the word *God* in the thematic department, on a line with *created* and preceding it. Having found the theme, the next business is to find the predicate. For this purpose, ask the question—Created what? To which the answer is *the heaven*. Which place in the predicative department, on a line with *created*. The last question, on account of the *and*, has to be repeated:—Created what? Answer, *the earth*. Place this answer on the next line and immediately below *the heaven*. At the same time, putting the conjunction *and* in the sentential conjunctive column, and on a line with *the earth*. The accident has now to be found. Therefore ask the question—Created when? The answer is—in *the beginning*. Which place in the department of the accidents, either on the line above that of the theme, or on the line of the last predicate. The product will stand thus:—

God	.		.	.	.		In the beginning
and	.		.	.	.		.
			created the heaven				
			the earth.				

This is the natural and correct structure to which all sentences have to conform. If the answers to the questions are not appropriate, it is a proof that the structure is wrong. An example of this is perceptible in the first part of the succeeding verse:—"And the earth was without form and void." Now, it could not have been the intention of the translators to say that the earth was without form and without void, for the Hebrew and also the Septuagint and Vulgate versions are too explicit to permit such a supposition. Yet this is exactly what the passage both expresses and implies, in consequence of a wrong structure of the sentence; as the application of the rule will exemplify.

And the earth was	.	.	.	.	.		without form
and	.	.	.	.	.		void.

To be correct, the predicative conjunction *was* should be repeated, and then *void* would necessarily go in the predicate, where it was intended by the translators it should be: thus—

And the earth was	.	.	.	.	.		without form
and	.	.	.	.	.		was void.