

(b) Overworking of roundabout phrases.

Examples are "reached a high level", "consideration should be given to the need for" — and the use of compound prepositions (in connection with, with regard to, in respect of, and so on).

(c) Repetition of certain words or phrases:

Some writers repeat words or phrases, good in themselves, over and over again in a report. Try to employ synonyms. Roget's "Thesaurus" will help.

(d) Too frequent use of subordinate clauses.

This makes for an involved style and, as one authority remarks, "after sorting out all the clauses and phrases and connecting words we are left wondering what the writer means".

(e) Use of plural verbs with singular subjects and vice-versa

This is largely carelessness; careful checking of a report after it is typed should eliminate this grammatical mistake.

4. The writer of reports for "Foreign Trade" is not expected to turn out literary productions. The acceptable style for our purposes is one that is grammatically correct, clear and concise. The Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey summed it up when he said: "Our language will be in peril until we can train the craftsmen who, objuring all uncertain sounds, fix their hearts and minds on the good writing that is rooted in clarity, in honesty, in simplicity": Trade Commissioners who feel they need further help with questions of style or grammar will find it in Sir Ernest Gowers' "The Complete Plain Words" and in "The Elements of Style" by Strunk and White.

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