

the Gateway

EDITORIAL

Compound Verb

2 a.m., Tuesday, Oct. 6

At times like this I cannot resist the temptation, in the absence of editorial inspiration, to trod into the realm of the irrelevant.

In my own small way I might imitate one-time *Globe and Mail* principal columnist Geoffrey Stevens, who on the bottom left wrote authoritatively on the Laws of the Sea. Thus, someday I may be remembered likewise for expounding on the use of the Compound Verb.

"Compound Verb" does sound less romantic than "Laws of the Sea," and though I admit the more common name for the phenomenon, "split infinitive," sounds less like a routine bit of grammar, it is less appropriate, as you will soon discover.

"Split infinitive" (to go quickly vs. to quickly go) is a misnomer. It is another rule of Latin grammar surreptitiously borrowed by Victorian English scholars who lacked for inspiration, not to mention common sense. Thus:

"The notion that 'to' constituted an integral part of the infinitive is a grammarian's fiction invented during the nineteenth century as a product of the practice then current of 'parsing' sentences, that is, breaking them down into their respective parts of speech and identifying each part by name. As a result, 'to' became regarded as the equivalent of the infinitive inflection in Latin and Greek."

Of course, Latin infinitives can not be split because they are single words already, and so much for the English split infinitive.

But that doesn't begin to explain the non-use of the unsplit compound verb, elements of which are, *oth*: "To Go," "Would Go," "Would Have Gone", and so on and so forth.

But why then did George Orwell write "...the active voice is wherever possible used in preference to the passive..."

Thoreau wrote "...have most thoroughly learned..." and Henry Fowler wrote "Sentences must if necessary be thoroughly remodelled instead of having a word lifted from its original place and dumped elsewhere."

Fowler, of course, had the right thought but he didn't express it clearly. He should have written, "If necessary, sentences should be remodelled thoroughly..." just as Thoreau should have said "Have learned most thoroughly..." and Orwell, "...the active voice is used wherever possible in preference to the active."

(For the beginner, the compound verb splits in these prose selections are, again: 'is...used' (Orwell); 'have...learned' (Thoreau), and 'be...remodelled' (Fowler).

Aside from the fact these splits are ugly, awkward, and unnatural, there exists a logical reason why not to use them.

Compliments of Peter M. Neely in *College English*, "a verb, whether it is an infinitive or a compound (essentially the same thing) should be generated in its entirety."

What is gained in this is completeness of thought, Neely says. The whole verb, and nothing but, contributes to the internal definition of that verb. An added benefit is that if you can't decide whether to pre-position or post-position an adverb, that is proof in itself that the modifier is unnecessary, or structurally ambivalent.

For example, "have most thoroughly learned" (Thoreau) should be, at least, "have learned most thoroughly", but in fact the most thoroughly part is unnecessary; he simply should have written "Have learned..."

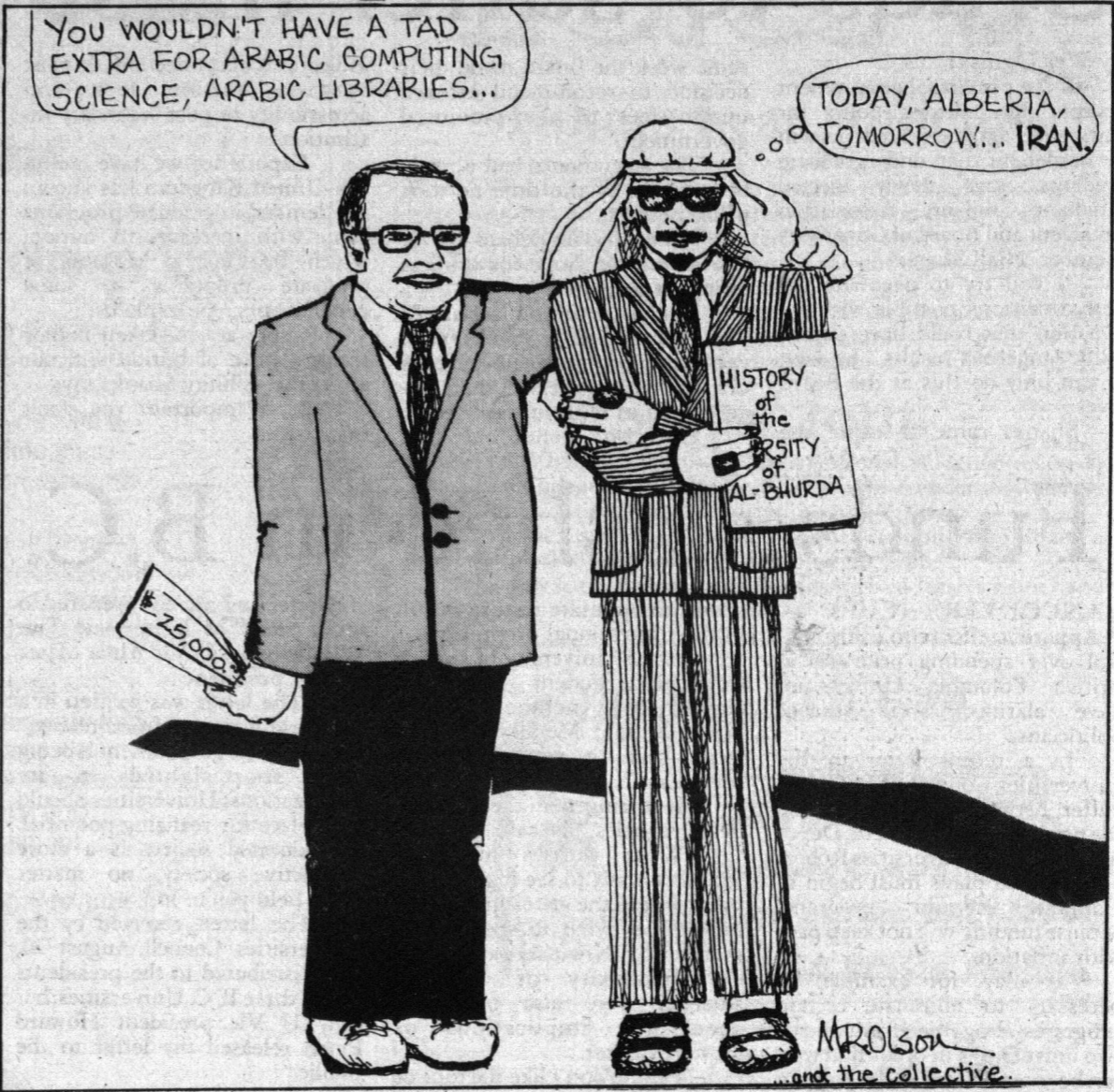
Well, that's enough for now. Notice, however, that I have not expounded upon non-splitting and the use of negation or non-splitting for emphasis. That will be the subject of some future dissertation on the subject in this space.

Peter Michalshyn

Revelant

Irrelevant. IRRELEVANT. IrreleVANT. irrelevant. Irrelevantirrelevantirrelevant. Irrelevancy. Irrelevantism. Irrelevantesque. Irrelevant. I*R*R*E*L*E*V*A*N*T*. Irrelevant. Irrelevant. Mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm; feels so goooooo00000000000000000000.

P.M.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Art gallery's classes to be cut

In light of the extremely difficult financial position the Students' Union faces this year, a number of major changes must occur to assure the continued existence of the organization. We will continue to evaluate each area within the Students' Union in terms of the service value to students and the financial drain or contribution the continued operation of the area entails.

Students and members of the Edmonton artistic community have expressed concern over the future of the Students' Union Art Gallery. This letter will serve as an answer to many of the 28,000 people who walked through the doors of the facility last year - the Students' Union Art Gallery will continue to operate its high quality exhibition programme and extension services, such as poetry readings and art lectures, for the foreseeable future.

The Executive will recommend to Students' Council that the Art Classes/Workshop Programme now offered will cease to exist in 1982. It is important to note that these are courses that are also available through the University's Department of Extension.

Through the elimination of the art classes and sale of equipment associated with such, the cost of operating the Students' Union Art Gallery will be greatly reduced. As well, we have confirmed increased support from provincial and federal governments.

There also exists the

possibility of support from the private sector upon receipt of charitable donations status, expected later in the current year. These steps should ensure a healthy Gallery programme in the coming years.

It is essential that the Students' Union finds firmer financial footing in the months

ahead. It is our belief, however, that the organization can achieve fiscal credibility with a minimum of reduction in student services.

Philip D.K. Soper
President
Students' Union
Executive Committee.

ACT! Straight ahead

In reply to Peter Michalshyn's rather vicious editorial "Student Activism" (Oct. 6):

Getting 200 students out to a U of A Board of Governors meeting is an unqualified success. The hard work behind this success was done by members of the Anti-Cutbacks Team (ACT!), a recently-formed committee of students backed by the Federation of Alberta Students and the U of A Students' Union. ACT!'s numbers are not yet large, our experience not yet great. But we got 200 students crammed into the Board meeting and we are proud of that.

Thanks to the 30-odd students who have so far volunteered their time and effort, ACT! was able to set up information tables for the entire week of Sept. 28 to Oct. 2 in HUB, CAB and Education, to put up a huge banner in CAB, to speak in classrooms and to run advertisements in the *Gateway*. Finally, and most importantly, during the week before the meeting, ACT! members were out in force shortly

after sunrise distributing thousands of leaflets publicizing the meeting.

We applaud the *Gateway* for its excellent coverage of the issue and the meeting — for its recognition that students must work together however they can to demand that the Board of Governors, and the government, listen to them.

But Mr. Michalshyn implies that this co-operation among students can be bought. He is wrong. The amount of money the *Gateway* or ACT! has (we don't get \$44 from every student!) is largely irrelevant to their success. Both rely for their strength on students donating their time to a common cause. This, Mr. Michalshyn, is the essence of "student activism". And this is why ACT! expects to get stronger and stronger in the coming months, as more and more students see the need to work together.

Amanda LeRougetel (Arts IV)
Tony Brouwer (Arts II)

EDITOR - Peter Michalshyn
MANAGING - Mary Ruth Olson
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Staff this issue: "Must...have...monosodiumglutamate...MUST...MSG!" chanted Andrew Watts, Don McAlear, and Luis Pena, lead, naturally, by that #1 user, Peter (organ) Hammond. Giggling hysterically under the ping-pong table were life long addicts, Diana Taschuk and I. and J. Levanta; experienced burnout Pat just left the planet and never came back, but no one really noticed the difference anyway. Meanwhile, Dave Chan, Peter Jarvis and Bill Inglee locked themselves in the darkroom to sniff the daisies - they were last seen streaking through the nurses' dorm. Dave Oginski and Andrew Zowallich were still trying to pronounce each others' last name at midnight, but everyone else was too far gone to even care, except Dave Cox.