



**Uni-edit English Writing Tip: Parallel structures Part C — both, and; not, but; not only, but also; either, or; first, second, third etc.**

Level of difficulty: Intermediate

**Parallel structures Part C — both, and; not, but; not only, but also; either, or; first, second, third etc.**

This is the third part in a five part series about using parallel structures. This part focuses on the use of commonly found words in parallel structures.

While editing English manuscripts, Uni-edit editors often need to correct sentences for correct usage of parallel structures. Correct use of parallel structures makes the writing easier to read and easier to understand for native-speakers of English and for non-native speakers of English.

For sentences that use these commonly found words, parallel structures are required to ensure clarity. Many violations of this rule can be corrected by rearranging the sentence.

Incorrect: It was both a long ceremony and very tedious.

English corrected: The ceremony was both long and tedious.

Explanation: In the correct sentence, 'ceremony' is clearly the subject that is being described. In the incorrect sentence, is the subject 'it' or 'ceremony'? The subject is not clear, which makes the sentence grammatically incorrect.

Another example is below. Pay attention to the use of 'for' in the parallel structure.

Incorrect: It is a time not for words, but action.

English corrected: It is a time not for words, but for action.

Another example is below. Pay attention to the use of 'that' in the parallel structure.

Incorrect: My objections are, first, the injustice of the measure; second, that it is unconstitutional.

English corrected: My objections are, first, that the measure is unjust; second, that it is unconstitutional.

END OF TIP