The Research Faculty

Ezra Review
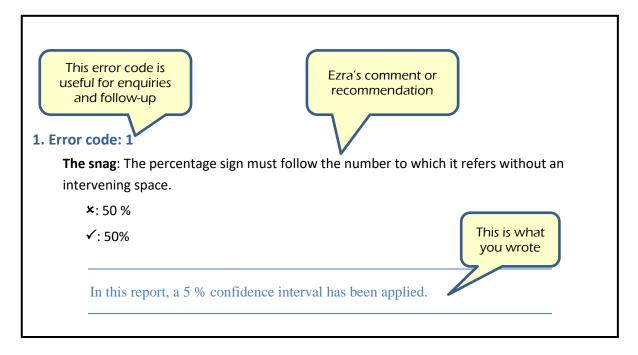
for Hamish McDoogol

About the source document

The source document used for this sample is a published Master's dissertation from a southern African university (2016). The PDF document was sourced from the university's website. The author is *not* a client of The Research Faculty. The author's name (Hamish McDoogol) is a pseudonym but extracted text is quoted verbatim. The Ezra analysis generated **260 comments**, of which 32 comments are presented here.

The Ezra Review is an analysis of your language use (words, phrases, and punctuation). Ezra makes suggestions to improve your grammar, expression, and writing style. The analysis is named after Ezra Pound, who advised TS Eliot with composing The Waste Land. Pound made such a substantial contribution to the poem that Eliot acknowledged him in the poem's opening lines.

FORMAT OF THE COMMENTS IN THIS REVIEW

Errors in your document are commented upon only once (based on a specific word or phrase). This block shows the format of the comments:

> *This error code is useful for enquiries and follow-up*

> *Ezra's comment or recommendation*

1. Error code: 1

> **The snag**: The percentage sign must follow the number to which it refers without an intervening space.
>
> ✘: 50 %
>
> ✓: 50%

> *This is what you wrote*

In this report, a 5 % confidence interval has been applied.

SEVERITY LEVELS

The comments are grouped into three types:
Type 1: No argument; this is broken and must be fixed.
Type 2: This is broken but the error is less glaring.
Type 3: No outright error on your part; tips to make your writing better.

SCOPE OF THIS ANALYSIS

Ezra does *not* address the content validity of your text (aspects such as the narrative thread, logic, truth value of your claims, fact-checking, or the accuracy of citations and references). It does *not* address language use at levels higher than the sentence (linkages between sentences, paragraph structure, and chapter structure).

Caveats—Some recommendations made by Ezra have an element of opinion and may attract disagreement from other commentators. Moreover, exclusions may apply and these are not fully covered in this report.

COMMENTS ON YOUR TEXT

TYPE 1 COMMENTS: CRITICAL ERRORS

1. Comment code: 387

The snag: This sentence has a case of US spelling.

The quick fix: If your intention is to write in another variation of English, such as British English, change this. The British form is *behaviour*.

The grammar: For a host of words, British spelling differs from US spelling. Some examples of differences are *centre* (*center* in US English), *colour* (*color*), *rivalling* (*rivaling*), and *paediatrics* (*pediatrics*). To avoid this error in future, change the settings of your operating system and Microsoft 365 to using the appropriate form of English.

It also evaluates the impact of individual behaviour upon the society as human behavior can be directly observed and interpreted (Haralambos & Holborn 2000).

2. Comment code: 2496

The snag: Punctuation or digits are missing.

The quick fix: The decade of the *90s* should be written as *1990s* or, if you wish to shorten it, as *'90s*.

Munyongani from Machawira centre in Gutu, the only woman who later survived the Pokoteke bus disaster of the early 90s.

3. Comment code: 2597

The snag: The phrases *open ended question* and *open ended questionnaire* require one or more hyphen.

The quick fix: Make that *open-ended question* or *open-ended questionnaire*.

The grammar: A compound adjective must be hyphenated. A compound adjective comprises two words that in combination modify a noun. An example is *long-term* goals. The goals are not *long* and *term* but *long-term*. The words *long* and *term* acting together modify *goals*. You show this to the reader by hyphenating the two words.

Compound adjectives can be more than two words, as in the three-word adjective *face-to-face* or the four-word *state-of-the-art*.

Adverbs are an exception. The convention is to omit the hyphen when the first word is an adverb ending with **-ly**.

- ✓ The editing is ==partly complete==.
- ✓ Southern University is in good standing with ==highly ranked== journals.

Thus, to maximize credibility, ==open ended question==naires were administered in both English and Shona so as to cover a wide spectrum of people.

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4. Comment code: 17839

The snag: A clause that is an aside is missing an opening comma or both opening and closing commas.

The quick fix: A clause that is an aside should be offset with commas.

The grammar: An offset clause should be marked off with commas (a comma at the start and a comma at the end). Alternatively, use no commas at all (if the clause is short).

- ✗ Hamish knew that to pass with flying colours, his language must be flawless.
- ✓ Hamish knew that, to pass with flying colours, his language must be flawless.
- ✗ Hamish decided on seeing the Ezra Review, to read ten recommendations per day.
- ✓ Hamish decided, on seeing the Ezra Review, to read ten recommendations per day.

On the other hand, if the clause is *not* an aside, do *not* use a comma.

- ✗ McDoogol explained that, the study was valid.
- ✓ McDoogol explained that the study was valid.
- ✓ McDoogol ensured that as much information as possible was collected.

Do not use a comma to separate a two-item list.

- ✗ McDoogol was eligible for an honorary doctorate, or a professorship.
- ✓ McDoogol was eligible for an honorary doctorate or a professorship.

It is also critical to mention ==that after== the training of mediums in Zhombe, a number of other angels joined archangel Cherubim and angel Luciana to communicate through the newly trained mediums.

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5. Comment code: 20470

The snag: Erroneous comma before a verb.

The quick fix: Verify that you have not included an unnecessary comma before a verb.

The grammar: Do not separate a verb and its subject with a comma. You would not write the following:

- ✗ Nobel, invented dynamite.

Clearly that sentence should not have a comma before the verb *invented*. If you are still not sure, try the test of reading the sentence out loud. If you do *not* pause for the comma, the comma is probably in error. You would not read that as *Nobel [pause] invented dynamite* (unless you were aiming for some unusual effect). The same principle applies to more complex sentences, such as the one below.

- ✖ The reason Hamish opted to use Ezra, was a desire to improve his writing skills.
- ✔ The reason Hamish opted to use Ezra was a desire to improve his writing skills.

From these examples, you can see that you must not be fooled by the mere fact of the subject of the verb comprising multiple words and a complex clause.

Be alert for the common case of error with a citation, such as:

- ✖ Creswell and Plano (2007), offer guidelines on conducting mixed methods research.

Urayai, is apparently based on a communication by the "Archangel Cherubim" who spoke to Sylvester,

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6. Comment code: 22169

The snag: Incorrect use of *on*.

The quick fix: Make that insights *into*.

The grammar: The preposition on is frequently used incorrectly, so much so that you would do well to consider every case. Bear in mind the essential meaning of on. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as "Physically in contact with and supported by (a surface)". Its opposite is *under*.

The following are all *incorrect* uses of *on*:

- ✖ The study offered insights on poverty (that should be insights *into*).
- ✖ This has implications on policy (that should be implications *for* policy).
- ✖ The gossip influenced on employees (the *on* should be omitted).
- ✖ Participants' perceptions on the events … (that should be participants' perceptions *of* the events).
- ✖ A discussion on the … (that should be discussion *of* the …).
- ✖ Investments on staff training (that should be investments *in* staff training).
- ✖ An understanding on the … (that should be understanding *of* the).
- ✖ Southern University had concerns on students' grammar (that should be concerns *about* students' grammar).

Super Roma draws most of its insights on ecclesiastical authority from Greber (1970).

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7. Comment code: 18559

The snag: The word <u>research</u> is a non-count noun.

The quick fix: Use the singular form of the word. If you want to refer to multiple research undertaken, use **studies**, **research studies**, or **prior work** (the last will imply multiple studies).

The grammar: A non-count noun is also known as a <u>mass noun</u>. Such a noun has no plural or its plural means something other than *multiple items of the thing referred to*.

For example, you can write **the desk is made of wood** but you cannot write **the desk is made of woods**. In English, **woods** are a **forest** and does not mean **more than one piece of wood**.

Other non-count nouns have no plural whatsoever, such as **equipment** and **knowledge**.

More examples of non-count nouns: **evidence**, **intelligence**, **justice**, **logic**, and **clarification**.

These angels always direct medical practitioners in their ==researches== and clinical operations (Sr.

TYPE 2 COMMENTS: NON-CRITICAL ERRORS

8. Comment code: 1277

The snag: Style choice that could be improved.

The quick fix: If your chapters are numbered with digits, rather refer to them as such. And when you do, capitalise ***Chapter***.

- ✓ Chapter 1; Chapter 2; Chapter 3 …

Of the three cases, the exorcism of Angela Washaya shall be reserved for Chapter three since it is directly and closely linked to the birth of Super Roma.

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9. Comment code: 1613

The snag: The phrase a ***lot of*** is too informal for formal writing.

The quick fix: Write ***much***, ***considerable***, or ***many***. The easiest fix is to replace ***lot*** with ***great deal***.

Urayai (1994) further highlight that it is also common for some patients to become mute, while others talk a lot of nonsense.

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10. Comment code: 1643

The snag: ***Literally*** is often misused as an intensifier.

The quick fix: Literally should only be used to contrast with figuratively. If something literally happened, the event took place as described. Mr McDoogol's insightful presentation ***literally blew the roof off*** means that some building somewhere had its roof removed (you naughty!).

On the other hand, you can use ***literally*** when translating words or phrases, as in:

- ✓ The French for ***goodbye*** is ***au revoir***, which literally means *until we meet again*.

Literally, it is the words about God or the study of God.

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11. Comment code: 2462

The snag: Academic style not followed.

The quick fix: Most style guides advocate that, within bracketed citations, the ampersand symbol (***&***) be used rather than ***and***.

> The office of the pope was also questioned during the period of the reformation and debates on the same issue resulted in denominational differences of far reaching consequences (Brockman and Pescantini 1991).

12. Comment code: 19139

The snag: Error with the citation verb.

The quick fix: Cite prior work in the past tense and cite the authors not the work.

The convention: Cite prior work in the past tense and cite the authors, not the work.

- ✗ Kahneman (2011) proposes a distinction be made between two modes of thought.
- ✓ Kahneman (2011) proposed a distinction be made between two modes of thought.

If you do this, you will automatically avoid another error, namely, citing documents rather than their authors.

- ✓ Kahneman and Tversky (2000) discussed determinants of choice.

However, when citing a definition, use the present tense.

- ✓ McMillan and Chavis (1986) define a sense of community as "a feeling that members have of belonging".

> Thus following the same argument, Greber (1970) describes contemporary spiritism as continuing the tradition of early Christianity and a re-introduction of what was once a constituent part of early Christian thought.

13. Comment code: 23678

The snag: Possible incorrect use of capital letters.

The quick fix: Unless it is part of a name, such as a company name, do not capitalise common terms.

The principle: Common nouns should *not* be capitalised. Most writers understand this for common single-word nouns.

- ✓ The black stallion was a race horse.
- ✗ The black stallion was a Race Horse.

However, writers sometimes get confused by recognised phrases and are not sure whether to capitalise them or not. For example, *service level agreement*, *non-disclosure agreement*, *information and communications technology*, *gross domestic product*, *mining industry*, *artificial intelligence*, and *university*. None of these should be capitalised unless they form part of the proper name of an entity.

- ✓ Consulting on research methodology is provided by The Research Faculty, a company that provides research support to students and universities.
- ✓ The University of the South Pole does not have a research faculty.

✘   The University of the South Pole does not have a Research Faculty.

✓   The university does not have a research faculty.

Finally, do not assume that, just because a term is given an abbreviation, it must be capitalised, as the following shows:

✘   Hamish planted trees so as to offset the effect of Greenhouse Gases (CHG).

✓   Hamish planted trees so as to offset the effect of greenhouse gases (CHG).

A General Meeting is also held once every year and it is only through such meetings (General Meetings) that amendments to the constitution can be made.

TYPE 3 COMMENTS: TIPS FOR BETTER EXPRESSION

14. Comment code: 2

The snag: Poor readability from using a symbol that cannot be read as a word.

The quick fix: Use *and* or *or*. Usually one of these is adequate.

The use of a forward slash (/) to represent *and* or *or* is poor style.

The principle: Text that cannot be verbalised as everyday speech constitutes poor style. The reader must interrupt the flow of reading to decipher the break from natural language. People do not say "*and forward slash or*". Thus, such an expression disrupts reading flow. In most, if not all cases, either *and* or *or* will work.

Whilst the most specific power of attraction and/or recruitment technique of Shona Zionism like many other Independent movements in Rhodesia remained healing and deliverance, in their Roman Catholic counterparts there was still that silent, as yet inarticulate yearning for the same approach.

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15. Comment code: 42

The snag: The term *amongst* is bookish and somewhat archaic.

The quick fix: Use *among*, which means the same thing.

For the Roman Catholic Church to remain relevant in such a milieu and also amongst its ever increasing traditional black laity, there was, therefore, urgent need to read the signs of time and adapt to the changing environment.

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16. Comment code: 1639

The snag: Be wary of qualifiers like completely that assert a condition as being absolute. Few things are *completely different*, *totally ridiculous*, or *absolutely essential*.

The principle: Some words are absolute. For example, unique means *one of a kind*. So you cannot have something being **more** unique or **less** unique. In other cases, the adjective is grammatically correct but is unnecessary. A common example of this is absolute. Few things are absolute.

In many cases, the absolute or partial quality of the adjective is implied. For example, an *overstatement* is a statement that is partially intensified. It would be difficult to find a statement that could accurately be described as a *complete overstatement*. Thus, *complete* merely adds dead weight to the noun.

> Quoting from Pretorius (1972), Daneel (1987:77) accused missionaries of preaching a superficial and impoverished gospel and further criticized them for failing to see the validity of a ==completely different== cosmological system of thought.

17. Comment code: 1647

The snag: Be wary of [particular].

The quick fix: It should only be used to contrast with the general case. If removing the word leaves the meaning unchanged, remove it.

> Taking into cognizance of the fact that every methodology, as with every paradigm, has its own strengths and weaknesses (Pazmino 2009), harnessing the phenomenological, historical, sociological and theological methods in this study minimized biases and limitations of eac==h particular== method to a greater extent.

18. Comment code: 1942

The snag: Meaningless phrase. This phrase has no place in any form of written English. Never write it again and preferably never say it again.

The quick fix: To say something is parcel of something else does not even make sense. The phrase *part and parcel* can be rendered as just *part*.

The principle: Omit needless words. This was famously asserted by Strunk and White, authors of possibly the world's most authoritative guide to fine writing.

Favour short expressions over long ones. Thus, say *various* rather than *a variety of*.

> Order of exorcism used to be ==part and parcel== of the general priestly vocation administered to seminarians but today things have changed.

19. Comment code: 2107

The snag: Possible wordiness with *a large number of*.

The quick fix: Consider using *many* or *numerous*. You can also consider *countless*, but only use it if the quantity indeed cannot be counted.

The principle: Omit needless words. This was famously asserted by Strunk and White, authors of possibly the world's most authoritative guide to fine writing.

Favour short expressions over long ones. Thus, say *various* rather than *a variety of*.

> Just as Porter (2001) classifies angels into <mark>a large number of</mark> different groups, according to their areas of responsibility, so also does Super Roma.

20. Comment code: 8121

The snag: Wordiness.

The quick fix: The phrase ***most of the time*** can usually be <u>usually</u>.

The principle: Omit needless words. This was famously asserted by Strunk and White, authors of possibly the world's most authoritative guide to fine writing.

Favour short expressions over long ones. Thus, say ***various*** rather than ***a variety of***.

> Reliable sources do confirm that he spent <mark>most of the time</mark> in Zhombe where he had started the school of mediums for his Super Roma movement (Super Roma Informant, Interview 15/10/13).

21. Comment code: 9472

The snag: Number format breaks style rules.

The quick fix: Regarding the number ***6000***, most style guides advocate that four-digit numbers take no thousand separator. Thus, write ***1000*** and not ***1,000***.

> Quoting from Barrett (1968), writing on South Africa, Daneel (1970:9) reveals by that 1970, there were more than <mark>6,000</mark> of these churches with a total membership of approximately 7 million to be found in more than 275 African tribes.' The majority of these, if not all, used healing and deliverance as one of their key recruitment techniques.

22. Comment code: 18422

The snag: Be careful of ***as well as***.

The solution: Only use it for the last item in a list if that item differs in a recognisable way from the other elements in the list. Do not use ***as well as*** when ***and*** will have the same meaning.

Furthermore, never use ***as well as*** if the list has only two items. Never use ***as well as*** twice in the same sentence.

> However, with faith healing occupying a key position in the life of the movement, the practice of Eucharistic intercommunion, a camouflaged strategy of 'stay and reform from within' ==as well as== providing a safety net for orphans and other vulnerable children, Super Roma has gained ground as a national movement of Christian derivation in Zimbabwe.

23. Comment code: 18544

The snag: Claim of dubious value (that something is interesting).

The quick fix: Describe this in some other way.

The claim that something is *interesting* has no place in the reporting of academic research results. Whether you find something interesting or not is most unlikely to have a bearing on its validity or usefulness.

> ==It is interesting== to observe in Table One that for the whole of his priestly life, Fr.

Comment code: 20342

The snag: Poor use of a partial term combined with an absolute term.

The quick fix: With *more universal*, a term that has a partial value has been combined with a term that has an absolute value. The result is weak expression. Write just *universal*.

> To this effect, the need to further unravel the interconnections in spirit manifestations between these two remains highly critical and pre-requisite to ascertain whether Super Roma spiritism is a bridge over which African Christians in general or Zimbabwean Christians in particular are being brought back to heathenism or propelled towards a ==more universal== and timeless practice that had remained in the periphery for centuries.

24. Comment code: 20804

The snag: A dubious claim, qualifying something as *important*.

The quick fix: First, importance is a vague concept. Consider making it more specific with, for example, *pertinent*, *useful*, *notable*, *relevant*, or *significant* (although arguably some of these are just as vague). Second, if you decide to retain *important*, then at least tell the reader why it is important. If you do not, your claim about importance probably fails to add value to your argument.

> The conviction that the body of Christ cannot be divided ==is an important== element in their living together.

25. Comment code: 18437

The snag: Negative forms are often weak expression.

The quick fix: For ***without any***, consider changing that to the positive ***with no*** or ***with none***. Positive statements are crisper and more readable than negative ones.

If you still prefer the negative form, consider removing ***any***, which is probably unnecessary.

- ✘ McDoogol's analysis was without any bias.
- ✓ McDoogol's analysis was without bias.

However, he would sometimes conduct services ==without any== of the two.

26. Comment code: 20889

The snag: Attribution of human cognitive capacity to an entity having no such capacity.

The quick fix: Use other phraseology. Often a reference to yourself as the researcher will solve the problem.

The principle: It is poor expression to attribute a capacity for human cognition or action to an entity that is incapable of such cognition or action.

- ✘ This study seeks to …
- ✘ This chapter reflects on …
- ✘ This research recognises …
- ✘ This disconnection fails to recognise …

Not much is said on the impact per se, a significant gap that ==this study intends== to fill.

27. Comment code: 20902

The snag: Attribution of human cognitive capacity to an entity having no such capacity.

The quick fix: Use other phraseology.

- ✓ The purpose of this study is …

The principle: It is poor expression to attribute a capacity for human cognition or action to an entity that is incapable of such cognition or action.

- ✘ This study seeks to …
- ✘ This chapter reflects on …
- ✘ This research recognises …
- ✘ This disconnection fails to recognise …

> A total of twenty people per every mission station were interviewed as this number was considered adequate and big enough to capture the kind of information that ==this study sought to== unravel.

28. Comment code: 22479

The snag: Possibly unnecessary qualifier.

The quick fix: The qualifier *really* is seldom useful. Try removing it; if your meaning is unchanged, leave it out.

The principle: Avoid intensifying concepts with ineffective adjectives like *very*, *really*, *positively*, *wholly*, *totally*, and *quite*. These intensifiers rarely add useful meaning. They add dead weight to your writing. Consider these two sentences:

- ✘   McDoogol was a very good scholar.
- ✓   McDoogol was a good scholar.

They do not meaningfully differ; thus, you may as well omit the *very* and lighten your writing.

If you feel the intensified form is essential, try find a word that expresses this without *very* or *really*.

- ✓   McDoogol was a perceptive scholar.

More examples:

- ✘   The findings were really useful for explaining the construct.
- ✓   The findings were essential for explaining the construct.
- ✘   The laser beam had a very destructive effect on the test apparatus.
- ✓   The laser beam wrecked the test apparatus.

> Members of the boka were taught never to regard the movement as an independent Church but to find a deeper expression of their faith and love of God within their own denominations and to acknowledge and appreciate with joy the ==really== Christian values that are at the very centre of their denominations.

29. Comment code: 23217

The snag: Some readers consider it poor style to end a sentence with a preposition.

The quick fix: Play it safe and rewrite your sentence. On the plus side, it will probably be more elegant. Consider this example pair:

- ✘   Prof Einstein was the best supervisor whom McDoogol had worked with.
- ✓   Prof Einstein was the best supervisor with whom McDoogol had worked.

Ezra's opinion is that the latter form is more elegant.

Urayai was the nature and character of the case of diabolic possession that he was dealing <mark>with.</mark>

30. Comment code: 23223

The snag: Some readers consider it poor style to end a sentence with a preposition.

The quick fix: Play it safe and rewrite your sentence. On the plus side, it will probably be more elegant. Consider this example pair:

- ✗ Prof Einstein was the best supervisor who McDoogol had worked with.
- ✓ Prof Einstein was the best supervisor with whom McDoogol had worked.

Ezra's opinion is that the latter form is more elegant.

Even those things I thought no one knew <mark>of.</mark>

31. Comment code: 24801

The snag: Possible poor choice of the present tense for a verb.

The quick fix: Refer to prior studies in the past tense. This applies to reporting the results of your own study. In the following examples, the author wishes to reference her own work:

- ✗ This study <mark>uses</mark> discourse analysis.
- ✓ This study <mark>used</mark> discourse analysis.

Why? Because the study has been done (in the past). The discourse analysis has been done.

<mark>The study utilizes</mark> the phenomenological, historical, sociological and the theological approaches.

32. Comment code: 18396

The snag: Arguably poor style from starting a sentence with *But*, as some readers may frown upon it.

The quick fix: Usually, you can use *However* and this will not offend anyone's stylistic sensibilities.

But with time through interacting with archangel Cherubim more often, the meaning and purpose of life on earth was explained; the doors to the high heavens as well as to the dark spheres (hell) were opened a little and the law of cause and effect was illustrated by way of actual life stories showing its consequences in the hereafter.