

End-Weight原則と対照をなす“Head-Weight”について

—文構成要素の配置に関連して—

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Abstract

When we write English sentences, one prevailing convention is to follow the end-weight rule, and not place heavier content at the start of a sentence.

This convention is not always followed, however: examples exist in which heavier parts are placed at the sentence head. These “head-weight” sentences are not particularly common, but are worth paying attention to from a stylistic viewpoint.

In this paper the author tries to show that a number of writers make use of the “head-weight” method and then develops the hypothesis that “head-weight” is a recognized literary technique.

はじめに

言語にとって語順は重要である。語の羅列だと意味伝達が正確にできないが、容認されている語順の文だとそうではない。英語の5文型はそのため重要ということであり、捨て去られるということはない。肯定文、否定文、疑問文の場合も事情は同じである。

ところで現在語順ということ述べているが、この語順、言い換えると語の配置ということである。文中で語をどこに配置するのが良いのかということである。例えばこの語は動詞の前に配置すべきか、後に配置すべきかといった具合であるが、こうした配置は語に限ったものではない。句、節も関連がある。句、節も文中でどこに配置するかは大きな問題であり、結果語より大きい文要素に関して次のような原則が生まれてきた。

The preferred distribution of elements in the clause is called the principle of

end-weight: long and complex (i.e. heavier) elements are placed towards the end of the clause.⁽¹⁾

そして

clumsy *The rate at which the American people are using up the world's supply of irreplaceable fossil fuels and their refusal to admit that the supply is limited* is the real problem.

improved The real problem is *the rate at which the American people are using up the world's supply of irreplaceable fossil fuels and their refusal to admit that the supply is limited.*⁽²⁾

というように実例も示されるようになった。つまりend-weightの原則は好ましいもので順守することが望ましい、とされているのである。確かにそのためほとんどすべての英文でend-weightの原則は守られている。だがしかしである。それはほとんどすべてであって、すべてではない。end-weightの原則からは外れたものもある。筆者はそうしたものを個人的に“head-weight”⁽³⁾と呼ぶことにする。前記の例でいえばclumsyとして示されている例が、つまり“head-weight”の例ということになる。それからすると一般的に好ましいと思われていない文要素の配置も英文にはあるということになるが、しかしそのような配置はどのようにして生まれてきたのであろうか。そう考えてみると、理由は窮屈さに起因しているのではと思われてくる。end-weightの慣例だけを拘子定規に忠実に守るのでは、変化があまりに乏しく、文に活気がなくなるからである。結果、変化をつける意味でheadをheavyにするのである。

そのためこうした“head-weight”は最初は堅苦しさへの反抗ということで、個人レベルからスタートしたものであろう。しかし時の経過とともに同じ方法を選択する人が出てきた。同じようにend-weightに息苦しさ感じていた人たちの歩調が合うようになってきたのである。さてそうなってくるともはや個人・個人の特殊な選択というわけにはいかなくなってくる。共通性があるものということになる。文体関連の共通技巧ということになってくる。ところで現代小説等を読んでも、headがheavyなものは見かける。今回の論文ではそのところを例で証明し、“head-weight”が気まぐれなものではなく、共通性のある技巧であることを明らかにしたい。

なお例証のための例は、現代小説等、現代英語の領域より引用し、句、節を基にパターンに分類することにする。

I 名詞句

1 名詞句に前置詞句がpostmodifierとして含まれるものとしては次のようなものがある。

(a) The idea of letting a child fake his death and be buried alive was repulsive to him. (*Lord of the Shadows: The Saga of Darren Shan*, p.62)

(b) But always before, his own years of study and practice and his own strength with the Force had been more than enough to prevail.
(*Star Wars: Episode III, Revenge of the Sith*, p.162)

(c) A cherubic man in his early fifties with thinning red hair, a hint of potbelly and a huge smile was holding the storm door open to them.
(*The Class Menagerie*, p.12)

(d) The idea of meeting the senator after breaking into her room was not appealing. (*New York Minute*, p.84)

(e) A check of available coffee pots in the area yielded nothing.
(*A Diet of Treacle*, p.108)

(f) Commitment to an emptiness far greater than the one she spoke of was another. (*A Diet of Treacle*, p.88)

(g) Just then, the door opened and a neat-looking girl with her hair pulled back in a long plait stepped out. (*St Trinian's*, p.110)

(h) But the bias against poetry they had picked up, the view of it as a product of unsteady masculinity, was too much even for Yeats to overcome. (*The Bridges of Madison County*, pp.71-72)

(i) Somehow, though, the noise of the fans, the smell of stale beer and smoke, the blare of the jukebox and the semihostile faces staring at him from along the bar made it seem hotter than it really was.
(*The Bridges of Madison County*, p.95)

(j) The only kind of thief who would wear shoes like that when pulling a heist was someone who cared about shoes *a lot*.
(*The Tunnel of Bones*, p.91)

(k) First, anything other than a total ban on human cloning would be unethical. (*Nothing is Impossible*, p.178)

- (l) The most consistent source of frustration is still politics.
(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.201)
- (m) The comparison of the two, and the mysteries they both held was not lost on Jane.
(*Thor: The Dark World*, p.45)
- (n) The din of sword on sword, sword on shield, sword on flesh, flesh on flesh was one that made the eardrums reel and quiver and want to cry.
(*The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul*, p.217)
- (o) The calm, steady humming of the plane's engines soon put him to sleep.
(*Jurassic Park*, p.16)

2 名詞句にpostmodifierとして関係節が含まれるものに次のようなものがある。

- (a) The first thing he saw when he entered the ship was Master Yoda, standing placidly next to the worried-looking Senator.
(*Star Wars: Episode III, Revenge of the Sith*, p.139)
- (b) She had been certain that the best thing she could do for Pixie Hollow was to leave.
(*Tinker Bell*, p.102)
- (c) The last thing she needed on top of everything else was a broken foot.
(*Charmed: Soul of the Bride*, p.78)
- (d) 'In my experience,' replied Thwaites, 'the only thing the public want to read in the morning...is...misery, mayhem and disaster.'
(*St Trinian's*, p.105)
- (e) 'All we've got to worry about now are aeroplanes,' said Ron.
(*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, p.80)
- (f) The Calormenes who had been with the Ape almost from the beginning had had no spears: that was because they had come into Narnia by ones and twos, pretending to be peaceful merchants, and of course they had carried no spears for a spear is not a thing you can hide.
(*The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*, p.160)
- (g) Their love and the love that flowed from my extended family as well as from friends and even complete strangers all over the world, had saved me from my initial desire to end it all.
(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.10)
- (h) Opponents of the research who objected because of deeply held

religious or ethical convictions, who were absolutely true to their beliefs (like Stephen McDonald), I felt had to be respected.

(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.182)

(i) The cure that millions want so desperately for so many diseases might have been achieved.

(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.186)

(j) All we have to do if you want to avoid sepulchral sympathy, remorseless heartiness or off-the-wall cures — whichever is most maddening—is to send out the right vibes.

(*Aches & Pains*, p.xiii)

(k) Jenny tried to dispel her illusions, but all she could get in addition to the already offered thirty-five hundred for the year was about two minutes of “ho ho ho”s.

(*Love Story*, p.114)

(l) One thing he did remember and was sure was not a dream.

(*The Seventh Tower: The Fall*, p.193)

(m) Then everything and anything that wasn't nailed down to the ground began to shake, and with a deafening *BOOM*, the Bifrost shot down to Earth and whisked Thor and Jane up into the sky.

(*Thor: The Dark World*, p.84)

(n) The same two damn people who had been the bane of his life for the entire day (he allowed himself this slight exaggeration on the grounds of extreme provocation) had now flagrantly and deliberately disappeared in front of his eyes.

(*The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul*, p.213)

(o) The women she had met in the past few days, the ones in the nearby houses, were pleasant and helpful enough, but they seemed completely absorbed in their household duties. (*The Stepford Wives*, p.4)

3 名詞句にpostmodifierとして不定詞節を含むものに次のようなものがある。

(a) “Your plot to regain control of the Republic is over,” Master Windu said.

(*Star Wars: Episode III, Revenge of the Sith*, p.119)

(b) I learned that as the result of a fall during an equestrian competition I had broken my neck just centimeters below the brain stem, and that my chances of surviving the surgery to reattach my head to my spinal column were 50/50 at best.

(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.5)

4 名詞句にpostmodifierとして分詞節を含むものに次のようなものがある。

- (a) There were few people abroad and the two men standing quietly under a tree on the opposite side of the boulevard looked out of place.

(*Casino Royale*, p.42)

- (b) Inner turmoil and the highs and lows caused by contradictory information would become the norm, but there would be no turning back.

(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.11)

- (c) A feeding tube was inserted into my stomach, and during the night a bagful of mocha-colored goop containing essential nutrients dripped down a long catheter into the site.

(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.11)

5 名詞句に同格句を含むものとしては次のようなものがある。

- (a) Francesca Johnson, a woman walking through after-supper grass and leafing through girlhood dreams, would turn it off.

(*The Bridges of Madison County*, p.76)

- (b) Two of the banner carriers, sixteen-year-olds Knox Overstreet and his friend Charlie Dalton, joined in the applause.

(*Dead Poets Society*, p.3)

- (c) But a greasy, decomposing corpse, always pathetic, frequently the victim of a horrendous crime, was another thing.

(*Murder in the Queen's Armes*, p.66)

- (d) His cousins and this unknown Shadowmaster — a title that meant he served the Empress directly, in addition to his rank in the Orange Order — would never have dared treat him like this if his mother or father were around.

(*The Seventh Tower: The Fall*, p.30)

6 名詞句に同格節を含むものとしては次のようなものがある。

- (a) The thought that this being was his daughter made him beam.

(*Arthur and the Minimoys*, p.108)

- (b) Winterset was having trouble finding teachers when I arrived here in

1946, and the fact that I was married to a local man who was a veteran made me acceptable. (*The Bridges of Madison County*, p.49)

(c) In some cases the old adage “Fake it until you make it” is actually helpful. (*Nothing is Impossible*, p.47)

(d) The fact that Donn was prepared to perform and therefore was aware of Poser’s death indicated he was involved in the murder.

(*Two-Minute Mysteries*, p.88)

7 名詞句に挿入句を含むものとしては次のようなものがある。

(a) Ruth’s stories about the kids she’d looked after the year before—a cabin full of sensitive, creative, superintelligent little girls, who still wrote her sweet funny letters, a year later—totally impressed me.

(*Code Name Cassandra*, p.7)

(b) The roof—as much of it as could be made out at this distance, and by the dark and flickering light of the bonfires—was made of lashed-together shields.

(*The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul*, p.217)

(c) And all the passengers (except Mr. Wonka, who was holding onto a strap from the ceiling) were flung off their feet onto the floor.

(*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, p.121)

(d) Penny closed her eyes and the memories of the last few days—and a lifetime—came rushing back to her.

(*The Stepbrother*, p.181)

8 名詞句に挿入節を含むものとしては次のようなものがある。

(a) This fellow—and I won’t give you his name even now—this fellow will speak only to me. (*The Good Detective*, p.141)

(b) While she was crossing a wide, boulder-strewn clearing, a large black helicopter—the sort of helicopter the sinister government conspiracy guys used in *The X-Files*—came and hovered over Trisha’s head.

(*The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon*, p.204)

9 名詞句に名詞節を含むものとしては次のようなものがある。

- (a) Dana's intuition about what my state of mind would be two years after the accident proved to be absolutely right: I was glad to be alive, not out of obligation to others, but because life was worth living.

(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.15)

II 前置詞句

1 前置詞句としては次のようなものがある。

- (a) Like the fact that they were going to get to spend six weeks away from their parents was some kind of hardship. (*Code Name Cassandra*, p.3)

III 名詞節

1 thatを含む名詞節には次のようなものがある。

- (a) But that the Chancellor wanted to destroy the Jedi seemed incredible.

(*Star Wars: Episode III, Revenge of the Sith*, p.54)

- (b) 'That you made it down the driveway is qualification enough,' Miss Fritton replied brightly. (*St Trinian's*, p.15)

- (c) That they are prepared to make such an effort intrigues me, in spite of my skepticism about such offers. (*The Bridges of Madison County*, p.xii)

2 what, whateverを含む名詞節には次のようなものがある。

- (a) He hadn't got very far but what he had seen already was certainly *educational*. (*St Trinian's*, p.49)

- (b) But what you were supposed to do was also impossible, inconceivable, and couldn't work out no matter how much grass you smoked.

(*A Diet of Treacle*, p.49)

- (c) But what he had in his pocket was top-grade and he was looking

- forward to a stick or two himself. (*A Diet of Treacle*, p.67)
- (d) “What we’d have to figure out to be sure is the link between the crimes.” (*The Tunnel of Bones*, p.74)
- (e) But what made the scene a million times more gruesome was that rats were everywhere. (*The Tunnel of Bones*, p.135)
- (f) But what he thought of as “the real moat at home” had no trees. (*The Stones of Green Knowe*, p.87)
- (g) Whatever it was that was making that sound was much closer now. (*Thor: The Dark World*, p.25)
- (h) But Julia snapped, “Come on, come on. It’s no big deal. We all get awards. What we’ve got to work on now are these clues.” (*The Name of the Game Was Murder*, p.77)

3 whetherを含む名詞節には次のようなものがある。

- (a) (Whether the others had all been killed, or whether some of them had got away, was never known.) (*The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*, p.158)

IV 不定詞節

1 不定詞節については次のようなものがある。

- (a) To be invited to visit Master Yoda in his living quarters was usually a privilege and an honor, but today it was a privilege Obi-Wan would have preferred to do without. (*Star Wars: Episode III, Revenge of the Sith*, pp.53-54)
- (b) “To be on the Council at your age has never happened before.” (*Star Wars: Episode III, Revenge of the Sith*, p.69)
- (c) To make her believe he was her husband was utterly impossible. (*The Queen of the Silver Castle*, p.28)
- (d) To recognize herself in a book would be amazing. (*The Amazing Days of Abby Hayes*, p.104)

- (e) The *caissier* has a cosh and a gun to protect him, and to heave over the barrier and steal some notes and then vault back and get out of the casino through the passages and doors would be impossible.
(*Casino Royale*, p.2)
- (f) To say that I believed in Superman is quite an understatement.
(*Nothing is Impossible*, p.175)
- (g) To shoot with the rat and Leela so close together meant taking a terrible risk.
(*Doctor Who: The Talons of Weng-Chiang*, p.80)
- (h) To see a wretched criminal squirming in the dock, suffering the tortures of the damned, as his doom came slowly and slowly nearer, was to me an exquisite pleasure.
(*And Then There Were None*, p.211)
- (i) “To follow a swarm of bees over rough country is no easy task,” he said.
(*Deltora Quest: Return to Del*, p.70)

V 動名詞節

1 動名詞節については次のようなものがある。

- (a) Spying on the Chancellor was wrong, but it wasn't a *plot*, he told himself.
(*Star Wars: Episode III, Revenge of the Sith* p.82)
- (b) Trying to creep around silently in the pitch black while lugging heavy bags was proving difficult.
(*St Trinian's*, p.40)
- (c) Arriving and flying were all fine and dandy, but watching a new fairy figure out her talent was the most exciting part.
(*Tinker Bell*, p.11)
- (d) Putting Ben in the same vicinity with one of her suitors was just inviting trouble.
(*National Treasure: Book of Secrets*, p.76)
- (e) Because hitting the water from a height of twelve meters feels like landing on concrete.
(*Anaconda Ambush*, p.12)
- (f) Just being within a few feet of Roxy was distracting.
(*New York Minute*, p.34)
- (g) Bussing tables at the Automat for a day or two at a time wasn't working.
(*A Diet of Treacle*, p.46)
- (h) Getting a gig as a messenger boy for a week at a clip wasn't working.

(*A Diet of Treacle*, p.46)

- (i) Bumming off Shank, bumming from the women you crawled into an occasional bed with, bumming off anybody who happened to have bread or food or an empty bed or a lonesome gland wasn't woking.

(*A Diet of Treacle*, p.46)

- (j) Being an evil mastermind sure is expensive.

(*The Rotten Adventures of Zachary Ruthless*, p.46)

- (k) Being so good at her job was just exhausting. (*St Trinian's*, p.126)

- (l) Maybe stealing from little galleries without security systems isn't such a big risk. (*The Tunnel of Bones*, p.77)

- (m) He found the speed of sleigh exciting first, but after a while, standing up as it bounced and swayed over the lumpy ice made his knees sore, and his fingers were aching from holding onto the side.

(*The Seventh Tower: The Fall*, pp.157-158)

- (n) Not being able to see properly where they were going also made him nervous, though Milla did not seem concerned.

(*The Seventh Tower: The Fall*, p.158)

- (o) “Acting as caretaker to the scoundrels is beneath us,” he said.

(*Thor: The Dark World*, p.95)

- (p) Fillyjonk stood up and said: “Not being able to stop doing something and having to do it don't go together. I don't think that what one should do is the same thing as not being able to stop oneself doing it ...”

(*Moominvalley in November*, p.140)

- (q) Even coming up with those three words was hard.

(*Roswell High: The Watcher*, p.40)

VI 副詞節

1 副詞節については次のようなものがある。

- (a) Just because no bombs had dropped on this part of Japan was no reason to be stupid. (*Mieko and the Fifth Treasure*, p.25)

- (b) Just because you get muscled into helping set up an ROTC program at

school, and being unable to escape joining said program, doesn't mean that you'll end up in the military, Alex promised himself.

(*Roswell High: The Watcher*, p.36)

以上のようなものである。これが今回提示の例と分類項目である。⁽⁴⁾

まとめ

これまで43人の異なる著者、脚色者、翻訳者の作品より91の例を引用し、16の項目に分類してきた。43人の著述者の作品より“head-weight”の例を抽出できたことで、“head-weight”の共通性が指摘できるものとする。

ところでこれに付随していえることは、タイプ別に16分類できたことは、“head-weight”の共通性といっても内容的にはバリエーションがあるということである。

注

- (1) D. Biber, S. Conrad and G. Leech, *Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English*, (Pearson Education, 2002, p.400).
- (2) S. Greenbaum and G. Nelson, *An Introduction to English Grammar*, (second edition), (Pearson Education, 2002, pp.170-171).
- (3) ここでいう“head-weight”はほぼsubjectと同一である。
- (4) なおその他として参考までに挙げると、メディア英語の例としては次のようなものが見うけられる。

Many older Japanese—like 78-year-old Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishiwara, who initially called the earthquake “divine retribution” for the country’s consumerist excesses—fulminate against the material addictions of the young. (*TIME*, April 4, 2011, p.32)

Whether that momentum will carry through in the months and years needed to rebuild Tohoku is far from clear. (*TIME*, April 4, 2011, p.33)

One of the first phrases foreigners pick up when they live in Japan is *ganbatte kudasai*, because it is so commonly used. (*Newsweek*, March 28 & April 4, 2011, p.24)

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