

This sentence is taken from the dissertation of a Taiwanese student in the Faculty of Education. Quite often in the course of revision we arrive at two possible rewrites of the original text, with the student having to make the final choice between them. This was what happened in this case:

Original	Revisions
<p>As Newell (1993) mentioned that hitting children with some objects, such as hands, belts, is a common habit in most countries of the world.</p>	<p>As Newell (1993) has pointed out, hitting children with the hand or with objects such as belts is a common practice in most countries of the world.</p>
	<p>Newell (1993) has pointed out that hitting children with the hand or with objects such as belts is a common practice in most countries of the world.</p>

The following 'incidental' revisions are worth noting:

- **pointed out** in place of the 'casual' **mentioned**
- Present Perfect for 1st mention of Newell (year in brackets does not require time to be treated as definite).
- Correction of attempt to use **some** as generic determiner.
- Insertion of **or** between alternatives
- We do not usually think of **hands** as **objects**.
- Substitution of **practice** (social) for **habit** (personal).

Each of these points is worth discussing in greater detail, and we may return to one or more of them later in Revision Watch. The main point at issue here, though, is the way in which two perfectly good ways of starting the sentence ('**As Newell has pointed out**, ... and **Newell has pointed out that** ...) have been 'blended' to produce a structure (**As Newell has pointed out that** ...) that is not English at all. Blending is a common source of error among our students, and this particular blend is one of the commonest: so much so, that all teachers of EAP who have to do much revision of students' texts would do well to keep by them a handout of authentic examples of the two structures, for use when and as the need arises. My own effort at such a handout is offered to fellow EAP surfers free of charge (citations from *New Scientist*):

As-clause

1. **As Cronquist has pointed out**, most evolutionary theorists have been zoologists and have given relatively little thought to the very different problems of plants. Nevertheless botanists have long been aware of the difficulties and have offered many explanations for them.

2. **As the NEA pointed out**, many householders are in a position to

That-clause

5. **The researchers also point out that** a similar chain of events - gradual cooling followed by abrupt warming - has happened during the past 1000 years of our present warm interglacial.

6. **Eichler and Silk point out that** after a neutron star forms in the kind of collision they envisage, it will take time to settle down into a

invest in the improvements in home insulation which can make a major contribution to reducing energy use

3. Galileo's heresy lay in declaring the Sun to be the fixed point and not the Earth. But **as Bertrand Russell pointed out** many years ago, modern science has shown that the Universe has no fixed point and all motion is relative.

4. Science is no stranger to controversy. But, **as sociologists of science have pointed out**, the controversy that is intrinsic to science has to do with what it produces - how data are interpreted, for instance. By contrast, the use of animals in scientific experiments is controversial because of the way new scientific knowledge is produced.

stable configuration.

7. Probably everyone has wished to believe in their immortality. **Freud pointed out that** when a death occurs "Our habit is to lay stress on the fortuitous causation of the death - accident, disease, infection, advanced age; in this way we betray an effort to reduce death from a necessity to a chance event".

8. **John Fairclough**, chairman of Britain's Engineering Council and a professional engineer, **points out that** there appears to be a declining public confidence in science and technology caused partly by lack of understanding and partly by fear of the unknown.

Do the citations give you any insight into when the structure with the as-clause is preferred, and when the structure with the that-clause? (In case you were wondering, in this case the student chose the that-clause).

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