

Uses of the participle - part II

Participles are also used in absolute phrases with a noun or pronoun going before them.

God willing, we shall meet again.

The fog having lifted, the plane took off.

Notes:

Each of these absolute phrases can be transformed into a subordinate clause.

If God is willing, we shall meet again.

When the fog had lifted, the plane took off.

A common error

As the participle is a verbal adjective it should have a proper subject of reference. If the subject is missing or a wrong subject is used the whole sentence will be wrong.

The following sentences are wrong because the participle has no proper subject.

Standing at the gate, a scorpion stung him. (This sentence means that it was the scorpion that was standing at the gate.)

Going up the hill, an old temple was seen.

We should, therefore, rewrite these sentences as given below.

While he was standing at the gate, a scorpion stung him. OR Standing at the gate, he was stung by a scorpion.

When we went up the hill, we saw an old temple.

More examples are given below:

Incorrect: Being a rainy day, we did not go out.

Correct: It being a rainy day, we did not go out.