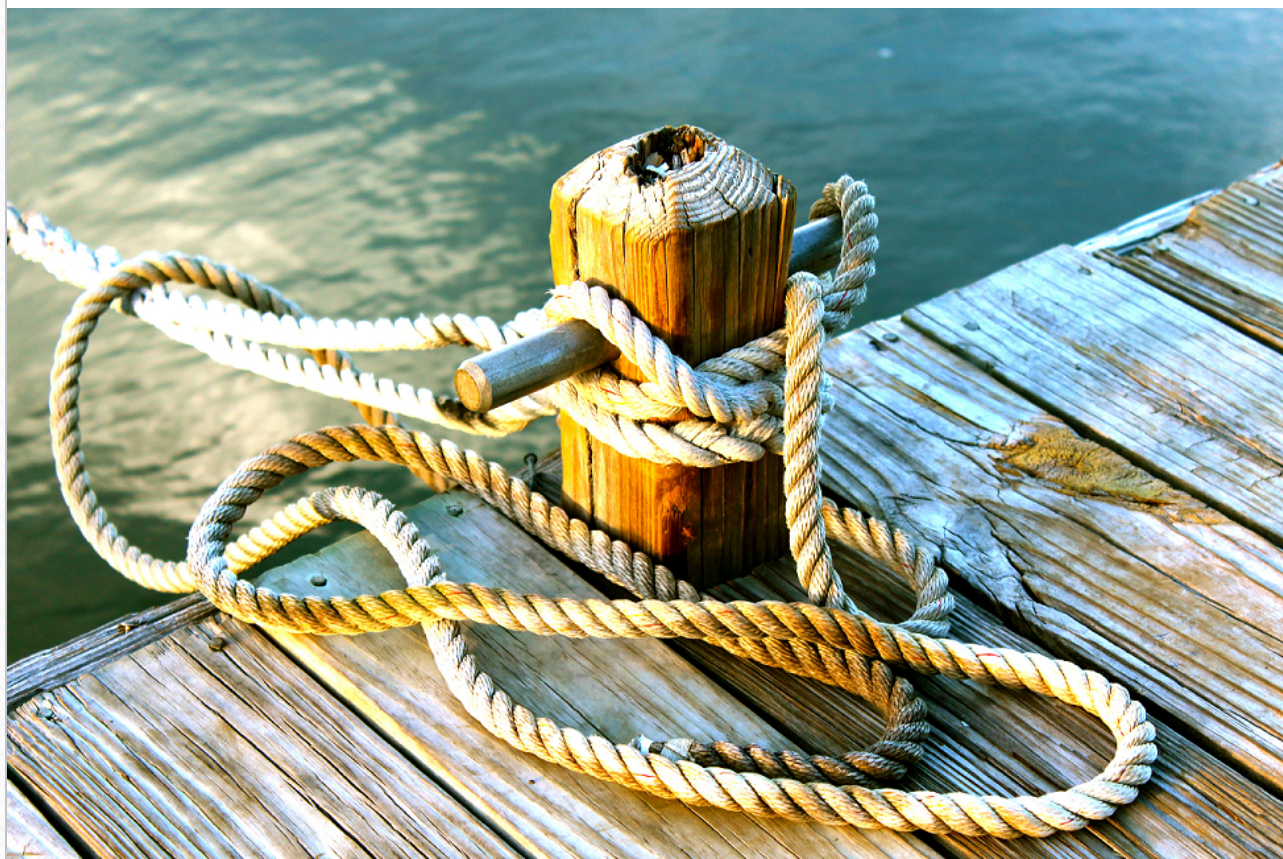


BORDERLESS DEFINED

Newsletter of Borderless Interpreting & Translation, LLC



Untangling the Knot

Newsletter No. 121 issued by Noriko Rogers (October 17, 2022)

I hope this finds you doing well! A few weeks ago, my husband showed me [this CBC article](#) about how extremist groups oftentimes turn to social media like TikTok and YouTube as a means to influence and radicalize young people, particularly young men.

Then, my husband pointed at one sentence in particular, which read as the following:

Though TikTok's decision to remove influencer Andrew Tate's account for misogynistic content the company said violated its policies put the discussion in the spotlight, the personal stories of people like Brown offer unique insight into the effect the content can have on teen boys.

What a knot of a sentence! At this point, I quickly copied the text to a note to tease it apart. And here is my analysis.

Though TikTok's decision to remove influencer Andrew Tate's account (for misogynistic content) the company said violated its policies put the discussion in the spotlight, the personal stories of people like Brown offer unique insight into the effect the content can have on teen boys.

In the first clause, which ends with "spotlight," we see that it is TikTok's decision that put the discussion in the spotlight. This is the highest-level skeleton. (For now, I am putting "[t]hough" aside for simplicity.)

Next, we also see that this decision entailed the act of removing Andrew Tate's account. And it is the misogynistic content of Andrew Tate's account that violated the company's policies although the clause at first glance can be construed as TikTok's decision violating "its policies," with the word "violated" possibly being the predicate verb for "TikTok's decision," which, however, makes little contextual sense.

At this point, we realize that "violated" should perhaps be preceded by "that" as a relative pronoun. But is this what the author intended? Why did they insert "the company said" directly after "misogynistic content" rather than "its policies," or even "the

spotlight"? In the meantime, I added commas before and after "the company said" to examine further.

Though TikTok's decision to remove influencer Andrew Tate's account for misogynistic content, the company said, that violated its policies put the discussion in the spotlight, the personal stories of people like Brown offer unique insight into the effect the content can have on teen boys.

With commas added before and after "the company said," I quickly realized that this entirely disagrees with the intended meaning of "the company said" in the original text. What the author meant by "said" is that the company claimed the misogynistic content to be in violation of its policies. Thus, if we were to add a relative pronoun at all, it should be placed before "the company."

Though TikTok's decision to remove influencer Andrew Tate's account for misogynistic content that the company claimed violated its policies put the discussion in the spotlight, the personal stories of people like Brown offer unique insight into the effect the content can have on teen boys.

The first clause is semantically clearer, but I wanted to come up with a better structure for how TikTok's decision that put the discussion in the spotlight encases the removal of Andrew Tate's account for the reason stated.

What happens if I took "[t]hough" out so that the readers undoubtedly understand that the subject of the first sentence is TikTok? The adversative conjunction can be placed before "the personal stories" instead.

TikTok removed influencer Andrew Tate's account for misogynistic content that the company said violated its policies and **it is this** decision **that** put the discussion in the spotlight. **However**, the personal stories of people like Brown offer unique insight into the effect the content can have on teen boys.

Overall, I split the original first clause into two clauses joined by a copulative conjunction, "and," in an effort to remove ambiguity. This is followed by the adversative conjunction, "[h]owever," in the second sentence to convey the inconsistency in logic suggested by "[t]hough" in the original text.

As you might have gathered, I really enjoyed the process of analyzing and polishing this text.

Your feedback is always much appreciated!

The next Borderless Defined will be in your inbox in the week of November 7, 2022.

Thanks for reading!

Noriko Rogers
Borderless Interpreting & Translation, LLC

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