

Pose

This Kibbitzer is based on the thesis of a Chinese-speaking postgraduate student of metallurgy:

Original	Revisions
Heavy metals can pose acute, chronic and latent toxicities or inhibitory effects in living organisms ...	Heavy metals can create acute, chronic and latent toxicities or inhibitory effects in living organisms ...
	Heavy metals can pose problems of acute, chronic and latent toxicities or inhibitory effects in living organisms ...

What attracted attention in the original drafting was the collocation between **pose** and the nouns **toxicities** and **effects**. A quick check (confirmed later by a more extensive search) indicated that **pose** takes as objects a limited set of general nouns within a restricted semantic field, notably **threat**, **problem**, and **question**:

1 g that governments can and often do, **pose a threat** to individual liberty, there is another
2 now aims to find all asteroids that **pose a definite threat** to life on Earth. If one is
3 NER says the centre's management is "**posing a serious threat** to its future". The centre
4 explosive eruptions. These volcanoes **pose a significant threat** to human life. They also
5 hey are likely to follow. The **threat posed** by malaria is especially worrying. The disease
6 says the material found in Frankfurt **posed no threat** to the public because it was packaged
7 Saturated fats do not **pose a problem** for all creatures, according to American
8 where. Technology in modern medicine **poses special problems**. There are, and always have
9 none of pattern formation. Patterning **poses the problem** of how the cells know what to do,
10 their attempts, and some patients who **pose very difficult management problems**. A case has
11 the most difficult ethical **questions posed** by medical science are dealt with by the bill
12 . Moreover, their ideas about how to **pose the fundamental questions** of cognitive science
13 1986 Lake Nyos explosion, but sadly **posed yet more questions**. The phenomenon of invertebrates
14 to improve evaluations of the **risks posed** by warehouses which store toxic chemicals. Revisions
15 As a rapidly rotating neutron star **poses a challenge** to models of nuclear matter. The
16entials sometimes overstate the **dangers posed** by hackers, who are often teenagers engaging

We could find no examples of nouns denoting specific problems such as **toxicity**, nor any examples of nouns outside the semantic area of problem such as **effect**.

In the light of this evidence, it appeared appropriate to redraft the original. Two strategies seemed possible:

- To find a verb to replace **pose**. The one I suggested in the course of the consultation was **create**. An alternative, of course, was **cause** (Kibbitzer 24), which has appropriate negative connotations.
- To retain **pose**, but to insert **problem** after it in order to reclassify the following nouns. (c.f. citation 9). The second revision shows the result of employing this strategy.

