# THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

## Institute of Continuing Education

## Foundation Programme

**OFP 007**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Published by
**The Open University of Tanzania**
Kawawa Road,
P. O. Box 23409,
Dar es Salaam,
TANZANIA
www.out.ac.tz

*First Edition: 2013*
*Second Edition 2018*


**ISBN 978 9987 00 255 9**

# Contents

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

## Course Description

This course aims to develop academic and communicative proficiency in English among students. It will introduce the learners to fundamentals of English grammar, formation of English sentences, pronunciation of English words and appropriate use of English language vocabulary and grammar through well set activities. Furthermore, the course will address the basics of developing competence in reading and writing creatively in English, focusing on their academic and social communication needs.

## Course Objectives

By the end of this course, learners are expected to be able to do the following.

1. Refine their ability to pronounce English language words correctly.
2. Use English language vocabulary and grammar appropriately.
3. Write extensively and creatively using English language.
4. Classify the major classes of English language.
5. Demonstrate communicative competence in English through integration of English grammar and language development skills.
6. Demonstrate advanced competence in English reading and writing skills.

## Mode of Assessment

| | |
|---|---|
| Continuous Assessment: | 30% |
| Final Examination: | 70% |

**SECTION I: Listening and Speaking Skills**

# LECTURE 1

# The Sound System of the English Language

## 1.1 Introduction

Let us begin our lecture with a tale from one famous writer:

I take it you already know

Of tough and bough and cough and dough?

Others may stumble but not you

On hiccough, through, lough, and through.

Well-done! And now you wish perhaps,

Of less familiar traps?

Beware of heard, a dreadful word,

That looks like beard and sounds like bird,

And dead, it's said like bed, not bead,

For goodness sake don't call it 'deed'!

Watch out for meat and great and threat

(They rhyme with suite and straight and debt).

(Elliot, 1970)

This tale is a reminder that the sounds of spoken English do not match up, a lot of the time, with the letters of written English. In the same vain, the writer asks a rhetoric question that, if we cannot use the letters of the alphabet in a consistent way to represent the sounds we make, how do we go about describing the sounds of a language like English?

One solution proposed is to produce a separate alphabet with symbols which represent sounds. Such a set of symbols does exist and it is called the 'phonetic alphabet'. These symbols or phonetic alphabets represent consonant and vowel sounds of the English language and guide us in the pronunciation of English words.

The other reason is that the language we speak works as a system of sounds which in turn are used to build or create words used in a language. Just look at the following definition of language for clarity of what we mean by system.

Language is defined as 'a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication' (Maghway, 1996).

What does it mean when we talk of a system?

A system is made of units which depend on each other to be able to function properly. This means, the absence of one unit in the system affects the functioning of other units.

Think of the human body, although we are not scientists, we can still think of systems, dependent on each other for their functioning.

The following are some of the systems found in the human body:

1. The circulatory system
2. The excretory system
3. The reproductive system
4. The nervous system

Take one system and think of the elements which make it up. In the circulatory system for instance, there is the heart, the capillaries, the veins, the aorta and the blood. Can the system work without anyone of the elements, which constitute it? Would the circulatory system work without the capillaries or veins?

Similarly, in languages the symbols used to represent the sounds, are arranged in a systematic way to form a unitary whole. If one sound in the system were to go missing, the whole system would fail to function. So in languages, we have sounds organised systematically to form words. The words are assigned different meanings by different language communities. Language is also said to be arbitrary. What does arbitrariness mean in this context?

It means that, the meanings assigned to the symbols happened by chance, no meeting was held in the community to agree on the various names of different items or objects. It just happened that an item was called say 'table' and so it became. If one were to ask why the item called 'table' is called so, certainly it would be difficult to state reasons to substantiate same because there is no explicable reason. That is why we have different names for the same thing in different languages.

Language is said to be vocal because all languages are essentially spoken, writing is secondary or is a recent development. It is also symbolic in the sense that the relationship between the meanings assigned to the sounds and the object is not a direct one, except for onomatopoeic words (words which imitate the sound of an object: e.g. cockorikoo from a cock's crow or ding dong from the ringing of a bell). In addition, language is said to be for human communication because it is only human beings who are capable of communicating through language, other species just imitate human sounds and cannot be as creative as human beings. Since language is essentially spoken we will begin our discussion by comparing the sounds which make up the English language and their orthography because in English sounds do not correspond to orthography.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Identify linguistic symbols used to represent the sounds of the English language.

ii. Describe and discriminate sounds in spoken English.

iii. Know (as a listener and speaker) the need for clear expression in English language.

## 1.2 Sound–Orthography Correspondence

When we speak, we produce sounds, and thus a spoken word is a sequence of sounds. On the other hand, a written word in the English language is a sequence of letters. The letters in a written word stand for, or represent, the sounds in a spoken word. But letters in written English are not completely consistent with the sounds of the language. In other words, there is not always a one-to-one correspondence between English letters and English sounds. For instance, look at the following words: picture, pneumonia, photograph.

They all begin with the letter 'p', but those spoken words do not begin with the same sound in spoken English. What sounds are represented by the letter 'p' in each word? In the first word, **picture,** the letter 'p' stands for the sound 'p' as it is also found in the beginning of words such as: paragraph, polite, pink and a lot others. In the second word, **pneumonia,** the letter 'p' does not stand for any sound at all, also as in the word psychology. In the third word, **photograph** the letter 'p' combines with the letter 'h' to represent a sound which is represented by 'f' just as in words like fibre, feel, fully, fool and many more. In other words, talking about the letter 'p' is not the same as talking about the sound /p/ because the letter may be part of a combination that represents some other sounds.

Let us look at another sound used in English, this time a vowel sound. The following words contain the letter 'a': Cat, taxi, safe, calm, wall. But the letter 'a' stands for different sounds in these words. Therefore, it is not correct to talk about the letter 'a' as a representative of a single sound, because the letter represents different sounds in different words.

This lecture compares the pronunciation of English sounds and the ways in which we represent these sounds when we write. Any good dictionary will give you the written form of a word (spelling), and a special way of telling you the pronunciation (transcription). It uses a pronunciation key in which symbols such as **a:** or **æ**, **u:** or **ʊ** always stand for one sound each and always stand for the same sound. These symbols spell the word by sounds. They are referred to as the *phonetic symbols*. Since we are going to be talking about sounds, we also need a special way of representing sounds; a way that is regular than ordinary spelling. When we want to indicate a sound not just a letter, we will put a slanted line on both sides of a letter or combination of letters such as this: **/a/.**

There are two major categories of sounds – vowel sounds and consonant sounds.

Every language in the world has these two types of sounds only that languages differ on the number of sounds used in a language. For example, English has twenty vowels while Kiswahili has only five.

## 1.3 The English Vowel Sounds

Some scholars (Glatthorn *et al*., 1971) group English vowel sounds into two: those, which can come at the end of a word and those which cannot. For example, the following sounds cannot come at the end of a word:

/ **æ** / as in the word cat

/**e**/ as in the word pet

/ **I** / as in the word pit

**/ U**/ as in the word put

/^/ as in the word cut

Let us begin with the vowel found in the word ***cat*** represented phonemically as **/æ/.** This is the sound we make in such words as **nap, hat, match, mad, glad** and **black**. Below are seven sounds, all of them which have the letter **'a'** in their written form but only three of them have the vowel sound **/æ/** in their spoken form. Can you pick out these three words?

**drape slap card talk flat flash frame**

Which word has a different sound from the sound **/æ/** when you pronounce them out loud? Can you add five more words which have a sound similar to that of ***cat?***

The vowel sound of drape and frame are similar and surely they do not resemble the sound in cat. Similarly, the vowel sound of talk cannot be pronounced as that of cat but the rest of the words do so.

Another vowel sound is the one we make when we say such words as:

**bet, stretch, neck**, and **bed;** the symbol for this vowel is **/e/.**

All the following words have the letter 'e' in their spellings, but two of them do not have the sound **/e**/ when you pronounce them out loud. Which two are they?

**theme, serve, step, feud, dress, edit, else, ever**.

Study the list of words below and then answer the questions that follow.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| pen | pest | stead | health |
| said | breast | tent | shed |
| Best | fence | Says | help |
| Desk | head | Wet | break |

You are encouraged to use your dictionary to get the correct answers**.**

**Activity 1.1**

How is /e/ spelt most frequently?

What is the next most frequent way of spelling the vowel sound /e/?

Find three uncommon spellings for the sound /e/.

The third vowel is the one we make when we say such sounds as ***chip, hit, dig, pitch, pit*** and ***kick.*** The symbol for this sound is **/I/** (short). The sound **/I/** is usually spelt with the letter 'I' but words which are spelt with the letter 'i' do not always have the sound /I/. Which of these words have the vowel sound /I/?

ship fire shirt big chief

Think of five more words which have the sound /I/.

We sometimes use another letter to represent the sound /I/. Look at these words and tell what that letter is:

myth nymph crypt cynic cyst

There are not many words in which the letter ‘y’ is used for /I/. And there are only a few common words with irregular ways of spelling /I/ as shown below:

sieve, build, busy, and business

Activity 1.2

Can you think of two more words for each of the irregular ways of spelling the sound /I/?

The fourth vowel sound we use is the one in **top, hot, nod, lock, noodle** and so forth. This sound is represented as**. /Ď/.** (short o)

The words below are all spelt with the letter ‘o’, but only six of them have the sound / **Ď** /. Which ones are they? (You can use your dictionary to help you identify the correct sound and hence correct pronunciation).

work globe fox foreman forge love prompt
onto open oppose opposite oracle option

You may say the vowel sound / **Ď** / in some of these words:

watch wash water waffle swamp

You must have been able to eliminate the following words: work, love, open, and oppose from the list of words pronounced with the sound / Ď/.

The fifth vowel sound is represented by the symbol **/u:/ : long u.** This stands for the sound we make when we say:

**Boom, boomerang, boot, boost, mood, took, pool, blue, Ukranian, jubilee, jute and beautiful.**

As these examples show, there is a number of ways of spelling the vowel sound /u: / however two major ways dominate, one is with the letters **u**, and the other is with the letters **oo.** However, the letters **u** and **oo** are used to spell other words too.

The following words are spelt with the letters **u** and **oo**. How many of them have the sound /u:/?

**mule, full, bush, dull, stuff, juvenile, Juliet**

**smooth, look, stool, blood, stooge, good, stood**

These are some words with irregular spellings for /u/:

**Coulom, zouk, through, youth, you, bougie, boulie and blouson.**

I think you managed to discriminate full, dull stuff, look, blood and good from the list of words pronounced with the sound /u: /.

There is a sixth vowel sound we make when we say ***jump, shut, lunch, duck***, and a lot of other words. There is a special symbol for this sound because there are more vowel sounds in English than vowel letters in the alphabet. The special symbol for this sound is |^|. How many of the words below do you say with the vowel |^|?

**judge juice crumb cube much**

There is also another way of spelling the sound |^|; by using the letter o, especially before the consonant letters m, n and v. Study each of the following examples:

**love** **glove** **month** **money** **some**

Here are some words with less common spellings for the sound |^|:

**young** **touch** **rough** **tongue** **blood**

Is a juice and cube member of the sound /^/? Certainly no.

**Summary**

The vowel sounds discussed above can never come at the end of a word. They are always followed by at least one consonant sound. They are also made by only one sound. We have used special symbols to represent these vowel sounds:

| | |
|---|---|
| \|æ\| – cat | \| Ď \| - cot |
| \|e\| – pet | \|u\| - put |
| \|I\| – pit | \|^\| - cut |

(Fromkin and Rodman 1978)

The letters or symbols between slant lines stand for sounds. In writing or spelling words we sometimes use one letter to represent sounds. We sometimes represent one sound by different letters or combination of letters.

**Exercise**

1. Each of the following words has at least one homophone – a word with the same spoken form but different written forms (e.g. stair and stare). Copy each word and write its homophone beside it. Underline the vowel letter(s) which make up the same vowel sound and for each pair you create, construct at least two sentences to illustrate the differences in meaning between the word and the homophone.

   (a) bred (b) led

   (c) ruff (d) scull

   (e) son (f) track

2. Which of the following pairs rhyme? Think of a word that will rhyme with each word in a pair that does not rhyme. Write it in parentheses

   (a) box – locks (b) flood – mood

   (c) laugh – half (d) athletic – sympathetic

   (e) mile – style (f) tough – though

   (g) muddy – study (h) fanned – land

3. Insert the words in their proper places:

(a) The Palestinians will give no …….until the Israelis evacuate from the ……. of land they occupy in the Gaza. (piece – peace)

(b) My mother went ……when she realised that her grandchild had smeared…… on her bedcover. (mud- mad)

(c) "Did you get the …….. I …. You?"(Scent – sent).

(d) The florist inspected the…. and picked up ……..(rows – roses).

(e) It is not …… to speak…… ( allowed – aloud)

4. From the list insert the correct words in the following sentences:
(Medal, horde, gambol, guilt, prophet, gamble, meddle, profit, gilt, hoard.)

(a) A …….. of coins was found under the floor.

(b) The business made a large …… on the deal.

(c) She was told not to …….. with the toys.

(d) I saw the lambs …….. in the field.

(e) His name was printed in large ……. Letters.

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# LECTURE 2

# Compound, Short and Weak Sounds

## 2.1 Introduction

The six vowel sounds you studied in the previous lecture had one common characteristic – they cannot come at the end of a word. Remember the vowel sound we make in words such as add, lack, stand and a lot of other words. But other vowels can do so. (Remember we are talking about sounds, not letters.)

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Identify what is meant by compound, short and weak sounds

ii. Differentiate between strong and weak sounds

iii. Use vowel sounds to create assonance

## 2.2 The Diphthong /ei/

Say the vowel sound in these words:

**Date, stake, plain, train.**

We make the same vowel sound in these words:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| day | stay | tray | play |
| way | clay | may | lay |

This vowel sound can come in the middle or at the end of a word, such as play and day respectively.

All the vowel sounds that you will study in these sections have a similar characteristic to this. We represent the vowel sound of date and day by the symbol |ei| – A diphthong because it combines two sounds, (Gimson 1970). words such as stay, tray, portray, they, obey, and weigh, have the vowel sound |ei|.

Can you think of three more words which rhyme with and are spelt with the letters *ay* at the end? Can you think of another word which rhymes with these words but has the letters *ey* in its written form?

Here are some words which also have the vowel sound */ei/*. Notice the different ways of spelling the sound.

| | |
|---|---|
| cape | waist |
| debate | veil |
| complain | neighbour |

How many ways of spelling the sound /ei/ have you identified?

One way is with the letter ***a*** itself as in **cape** and **debate**. This spelling of the vowel sound is followed by a consonant letter and the vowel letter 'e'. The vowel letter 'e' does not stand for any sound. What does it do?

Compare the pronunciation of ***cap*** and ***cape,*** of ***rat*** and ***rate, fad*** and ***fade***. What clue does the vowel letter **'e'** following a consonant give us about the pronunciation of these words? It tells us that the vowel letter **'a'** stands for the vowel sound /**ei/.**

Two other ways of spelling the vowel sound /ei/ are the letter combinations **ai** and **ey;** which we write in the middle of words – **train, vein** – and we write ay and **ey** at the end of words such as **tray** and **they.**

**Activity 2.1**

1. Think of three more words which have the sound /ei/ and the spelling ai.
2. Can you think also of two words with the vowel sound /ei/ and the spelling ei? The spelling ay? The spelling ey?

## 2.3 Long /i/

The next group of words has the vowel sound */i/* **- long i**. This is the sound we use in **bee, see, and flee, flea, me** and many others. Let us see the ways of representing this vowel sound in the written form of words.

First, look at these words which have the sound **/i/** in the final position:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| fee | free | | | |
| see | three | referee | guarantee | agree |
| be | tea | she | he | |
| sea | key | plea | ski | |

The most common way of spelling the vowel sound **|i|** at the end of a word is **ee.** Can you think of three words of the sound **|i|** and the spelling **ee** at the end of the words?

Look at ways in which the sound **|i|** is spelt within words:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| weed | wee | keen | been | wheel |
| scene | theme | complete | extreme | precede |
| week | weep | street | green | succeed |
| weak | weave | wheat | defeat | beacon |
| chief | shriek | field | achieve | belief |
| seize | ceiling | receive | deceive | deceit |

It is obvious that words with the vowel sound **|i|** are most likely to cause spelling and pronunciation difficulties to second and foreign language learners; because there are so many different ways of spelling the sound.

Here are some homophones (same pronunciation but different spelling) in which the spelling of the sound **|i|** is different:

steel – steal, beet – beat, seen – scene, peace – piece.

Can you think of three other such homophones? Notice the inconsistency in the spelling of these words which appear to be similar:

exceed, proceed, succeed, but concede, precede, recede.

The word **theme** has the vowel letter 'e', consonant letter 'm' and vowel letter 'e' that is, the pattern eCe (e + consonant + e), but the final letter does not stand for any sound. What does it do?

Compare the pronunciation of ***pet*** and ***compete.***

It tells us that the vowel sound between the sound /θ/ and /m/ is a long /i/ sound.

**Take Note**

The most frequently seen spellings of the vowel sound /i/ are e, ee, and ea however, ei, and ie can also represent the vowel sound.

## 2.4 The Diphthong /ai/

The next vowel sound is the one we make when we say:

**like**, **time, dry** and so on and is much easier to spell. This vowel sound is /ai/.

Where does the vowel sound /ai/ come in these words?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| my | die | dye | high |
| cry | pie | lye | sigh |

The vowel sound **/ai/** comes at the end. The most common spelling of this vowel sound at the end is **y.**

Can you think of words with the vowel sound **/ai/** and the spelling **y** at the end of the word?

These words have the vowel sound /**ai**/in the middle:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| bite | strike | drive | describe | divide |
| fight | might | slight | delight | |
| type | style | analyze | | |

The most common spelling is the pattern Ice (i + consonant + e) as in **bite** and **describe.**

Activity 2.2

Can you think of five more words with the vowel sound /ai/ and this spelling pattern?

The spelling **igh** within a word is generally found just before one consonant letter. What is the letter? Can you think of three more words that end with **ight?**

## 2.5 The Diphthong /ə‍ʊ/

Another vowel sound is /ə‍ʊ/:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| go | no | so |
| toe | hoe | foe |
| throw | stow | grow |

These words have the vowel sound /ə‍ʊ/ in the middle.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| hope | choke | stove | explore | compose |
| soap | croak | roast | loaf | encroach |

Can you think of five more words which have the vowel sound /ə‍ʊ/ and the spelling pattern oCe (o + consonant + e)? Can you think of three more words which have the same vowel sound but a different spelling?

The next two vowel sounds are very similar and hence we are going to study them together, say these words: **food** and **feud**, **boot**y and **beauty**, **moo** and **mew.**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| cube | chew | new | blue | true |
| due | tune | suit | fuse | june |

There are several ways of spelling these two vowel sounds. Study the list of words. The list is arranged according to the ways of spelling the vowel sounds. In the first two words of each column, you would probably say the vowel sound /ui/ in the rest probably /**u:**/ in some words and /**ju:/** in others.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| too | tattoo | boot | bloom | spoon | zoom |
| soup | group | wound | uncouth | souvenir | |
| cute | prude | fume | tube | amuse | |
| bruise | fruit | suit | juice | recruit | |
| few | brew | shew | shrewd | review | |
| feud | deuce | sleuth | rheumatism | | |

Think of three words with the sound /u:/ and the spelling oo. Think of three more words with the spelling pattern uCe (u + Consonant + e) and the sound /u:/ or /yu./

## 2.6 The Diphthong /aʊ/

The next vowel sound is easy to spell. This is the vowel sound we make when we say out, loud, down and town. The compound symbol **/aʊ/** represents this vowel sound. Study the two ways of spelling this sound in the following words:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| cow | brow | town | crowd | allow |
| stout | coach | noun | cloud | astound |

Find two words in the previous list where the letters ą**w** represent the vowel sound /aʊ/ before a consonant. See if you can think of three more words with the vowel sound /aʊ/ and the spelling **ow** and three more with the spelling **ou**.

## 2.7 The Diphthong /ɔi/

Now let's take the vowel sound we make when we say **enjoy** or **avoid.** We will represent this vowel sound with another compound symbol /ɔi/. There are also two ways of spelling this sound.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| toy | annoy | loyal | royal | oyster |
| join | moist | voice | appoint | |

Which spelling do we use at the end of a word? Which one comes before another vowel letter? Which usually comes before a consonant letter? Think of three more words with the vowel sound **/ɔi/.** Are they spelled with **oi** or **oy**?

## 2.8 Long /a:/ and / ɔ /

The last two vowel sounds we will study in this section may be difficult for you to recognise. One of these vowel sounds is spoken in the words *palm, calm, father*, and **garage** and is represented by a written a: between slant lines, /**a:**/. The other vowel sound is spoken in words such as *law, cause, haul*, and *crawl* – and is represented by a special symbol, / ɔ /, which we will call an open **o**.

The vowel sound /**a:**/ is spelled with the letter **a** or **ar** in most words;

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| massage | sabotage | camouflage | garage | sonata |
| casket | castor | castle | casting | caste |
| departure | department | car | carve | cart |

Here are three lines of words with the vowel sound /ɔ/:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| saw | water | | | |
| law | straw | hawk | crawl | withdrawal |
| cause | gauze | caught | taught | exhaust |
| all | call | halt | walt | chalk |
| wall | ball | hall | laundry | |

Note that the spelling **au** is never used at the end of words.

In the third line the vowel sound /ɔ/ is represented by the letter **a.** What consonant letter follows 'a'? Find one word for each of the spellings of the vowel sound /ɔ/ which are illustrated above.

Some people pronounce the words below with the vowel sound /**æ**/, the vowel sound for such words as pat, tap, back. Some people say these words with the vowel sound /a:/, as in f<u>a</u>ther or mass<u>a</u>ge. Which way do you think you would say them?

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| class | fast | ask | bath | laugh |
| l<u>a</u>rk | l<u>a</u>rva | ban<u>a</u>na | large | |

In the words below or some of them, people may pronounce the vowel sound /Đ/, the same sound as in top, hot, and clock. Other people say these words – or some of them with /⊃/, the vowel sound of such words as **law**, **daughter**, and **cause**. What vowel sound do you use?

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| soft | office | cloth | cross | lost |
| hog | dog | song | wrong | hank |
| watch | wash | paw | swamp | squad |

## 2.9 The Weak Vowel | ∂ | - a schwa

There is another vowel sound which can be at the end of a word or within it but not in words that have either primary or median stress (see lecture 4 on stress). This is the vowel sound you make at the beginning of the word **arena, aroma,** and **America**. The symbol for this vowel sound is |∂| – a schwa. This vowel sound has many different spellings (cf. Leech & Svartvik 1975): study the following words:

parade salute gorilla circus porpoise

Notice these words also:

apple uncle battle middle

Where we write **le** at the ends of words after a consonant letter, we actually say the weak vowel | ∂ | and then the sound of the letter **l.**

The weak vowel sound represented by a schwa | ∂ | sounds such as the vowel sound made in the first and last sounds of aroma. This weak vowel sound has different spellings and occurs only in words which have neither primary nor secondary median stress (see lecture 4 on stress).

**Summary**

There are ten vowel sounds which can occur at the end of words and before consonant sounds. Words having the same vowel sound do not always spell it in the same way. Here are the symbols we have used for the ten vowel sounds and one word to illustrate each.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| \| ei \| | - | cake | \| ju: \| | - | fuse | \| u: \| | - | rude |
| \| i \| | - | eve | \| ai \| | - | time | \| au \| | - | house |
| \| a: \| | - | father | \| əυ\| | - | home | \| ⊃i \| | - | point |

/ ⊃/ - straw

***Source:*** Glatthorn *et al*., 1971:125

**Exercise**

1. For each of the sounds presented in the summary above, write three words and a sentence to demonstrate how each word is used in the English language.

2. Write down one word for each of the following phrases.

   ***Example:***

   (i) Suffering pain

   (ii) Piece of glass pane

   (a) (i) A female sheep ……..

   (ii) An evergreen tree ……

   (b) (i) No ……

   (ii) A cry of a horse …….

   (c) (i) Sandy shore …….

   (ii) Kind of tree ……..

   (d) (i) Guided ……..

   (ii) A metal …….

   (e) (i) Rough …….

   (ii) Place for golf …….

3. Choose the correct word to complete the following sentences:

   (a) She preferred eating …….. (steak, stake) to fish.

   (b) The joiner …… (bored, board) a small …….. (hole. whole) in the wood.

   (c) We must …….. (hire, higher).

   (d) We walked to the golf……. (course, coarse).

   (e) The wounded soldier uttered a loud……. (grown, groan).

4. Fill in each space correctly with one of these words:
   (rise, rose, raise, risen, raised.)

   (a) When the soldiers met the President, they ……their hats.

   (b) Yesterday the maid ……..at five o'clock.

   (c) I saw him ……. from his seat.

(d) She tried to ……. the lid but she couldn't.

(e) The sun had …… high up in the sky.

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# LECTURE 3

# Consonant Sounds

## 3.1 Introduction

It is much easier to identify consonant sounds than vowel sounds. There are two reasons for this. First, people in various parts of the English speaking community do not differ much in the pronunciation of consonant sounds as they do in that of vowel sounds. For instance, it is not so easy to talk about the vowel sounds of *fast, rather, water,* and *fog.* To discuss any vowel sound, we have to be sure that we are talking about the same vowel sound. We don't have that trouble with consonant sounds because they are very few differences in the way people pronounce consonant sounds or in what consonant sounds they speak in particular words. And like some vowel sounds, these slight differences are usually noticeable only to the trained linguist.

Second, consonant sounds do not have so many spelling variations as some vowel sounds. In other words, consonant sounds are spelt more consistently than vowel sounds.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Identify and classify consonant sounds which have spelling variations

ii. Distinguish between voiced and voiceless consonant sounds

iii. Use consonants to create alliteration and consonance in writing

## 3.2 Voiced and Voiceless Consonant Sounds

The consonant sounds we will consider here come in pairs. In each pair, the two sounds are made by the same part of the mouth and are similar, but not the same. What makes the two sounds different is that one is made **with a humming sound** in the throat. This is called a **voiced** sound. The other sound made **without the humming** in the throat is called a **voiceless** sound. As you study each pair of sounds, notice the difference between the two sounds by pronouncing each sound while placing your fingers on your throat.

### 3.2.1 /b/ /p/

The sound you make at the beginning of ***big***, at the end of ***tub,*** and middle of ***able*** is one sound in the first pair of consonant sounds which we will study.

The other sound in this pair is the sound /p/, which is at the beginning of ***pen,*** at the end ***of step*** and in the middle of ***Maple.***

Say **bib** and **pep,** and notice how you make the sounds /b/ and /p/. You bring your lips together. You make both sounds in the same way, they are not the same, of course, but they are similar. If they were exactly the same, nobody would notice whether you are saying **bill**

or **pill, cub** or **cup**, **mabel** or **maple.** Although **/b/** and **/p/** are the same as they are made by bringing your lips together, they differ because of the vibration created in your throat when you pronounce /**b**/ – a voiced sound. You do not make this humming when you pronounce /**p/** and therefore **/p/** is a **voiceless sound.**

We usually spell the sound /b/ with the letter **b** and the sound /p/ with the letter **p**.

In the middle of words however, we sometimes use double b for /b/ and double p for /p/ For example, the word *rabbit* has only one /b/ sound such as *habit*. The word *cripple* has only one /p/ sound, such as *triple.*

**Activity 3.1**

1. Say each of the following words and find out how many times you make the /b/ or the sound /p/ in each word.

   baby, bobby, paper, puppy, bubble, trouble, couple, upper, copper, copy, pebble, pimple.

2. As you know, we sometimes write the letter b or the letter p in words which are spoken without the sound /b/ or the sound /p/. Which of these words have the consonant sound /b/?

   Plumber, lump, number, limb, timber, comb.

3. How many of these words have the consonant sound /p/?

   Psalm, lamp, phone, pneumonia, powder.

### 3.2.2 /d/, /t/

Say **dead** and **toot**. The sound you make at the beginning of dead is indicated by /d/, and /t/ indicates the sound you make at the beginning and end of toot. Notice how you make these two consonant sounds. You put the tip of your tongue against the roof of your mouth when you make both of them. But of course, there is a difference when you say the /d/ sound. You make a humming noise in your throat, which means /d/ is a voiced sound. You do not make this humming noise when you say /t/ sound; therefore /t/ is a voiceless sound.

We usually spell the sound/d/ with the letter d and the sound /t/the letter t.

**Activity 3.2**

1. Sometimes in the middle of words, we write dd and tt. Say these words and tell how many times you say /d/ or /t/ in each word.

   Ladder, lady, city, bitter, attain, retain.

2. Some words have the letter t in the middle, not pronounced. Say the following words and listen for the sound /t/. Which word has the sound /t/? Listen, whistle, fasten, actor, soften.

### 3.2.3 /g/, /k/

Say **gag** and **cook**. The sound /g/ represents the sound at the beginning and end of gag; while the sound /k/ represents the sound at the beginning end of cook. Notice how you make these sounds. You touch the roof of your mouth with the back of your tongue when you make both sounds. The sound /g/ is voiced, the sound /k/ is voiceless.

We have several ways of spelling the consonant sound /g/.

**Activity 3.3**

1. Try to identify different ways of spelling /g/ in the following words:

   leg, guess, maggot, wagon, ghost, ghastly, spaghetti, egg, guard, vague, fatigue, catalogue, catalog.

2. We also have several ways of spelling the consonant sound /k/. See different ways you can find in these words.

   count, account, stack, locker, keep, character, orchid, liquor, biscuit, quit

### 3.2.4 /f/, /v/

List down two words, one which begins with the sound /v/ and another which begins with the sound /f/ for example, valve and fife. Notice how you make these sounds. You put your lower lip tightly against your upper teeth for both sounds. But /v/ is a voiced sound, and /f/ is a voiceless sound. Cover your ears with your hands and make the /v/ sound, then the /f/ sound. You can hear the humming sound that goes with /v/, but you won't hear this sound when you say /f/.

The /v/ sound has no spelling problems except for the word *of* and the name *Stephen*, which is also written *Steven*, we always spell this sound with the letter 'v.' We rarely write a double v in the middle of a word. We do not often just write v at the end of a word but almost always write *ve*, as in *five, glove, sleeve, receive* and so on.

Here are some ways to spell the sound /f/:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Flat | Cuff | muffin | rough |
| Photograph | Symphony | orphan | cough |

The letters ***gh*** stand for the sound/f/ and come at the end of a number of such simple words as rough, tough, enough, cough. You can add a suffix to some of these words so that ***gh*** will be on the inside of a complex word: roughness, coughing, toughen. But ***gh*** never stands for the sound /f/ at the beginning or at the middle of a simple word (See lecture 7 on suffixes).

### 3.2.5 /ð/, //θ/

Notice the sound you make at the beginning of the word *then* at the end of the word *breathe*, and in the middle of the word *other*. We write the letters ***th*** in all these words, but ***th*** represents two different sounds. The word *then* begins with a voiced sound while *thin* begins with a voiceless sound. Cover your ears with your hand and say the first sound of *then* and the first sound of *thin.* (Gimson, *ibid*.)

The English language orthography does not make a distinction between these sounds. Both sounds are spelt with the letters ***th.*** To talk about these letters however, linguists had to distinguish the two by representing the voiced sound as: /ð/.

Say these two words *thy,* and *thigh*. They both end with the sound /i/, the only difference between the two is the consonant sound at the beginning: /ð/ and //θ/. (Gimson, *ibid*.)

**Activity 3.4**

Say each of the following words and tell whether it has the sound /ð/or/ θ/:

They, that, thank, this, thistle, thimble
Those, though, through, these, thief, math
Brother, mother, either, ether, athlete, theatre
Cloth, clothing, smooth, ruth, both, soothe

In the first line, we have the sound / ð/ in words such as they and that while the rest have / θ/. In line two, we have the sound / ð/ in those and these. In the third line, we have / ð/ in brother, mother, either, and ether. And in the last line, we have / ð/ in clothing and soothe.

### 3.2.6 /z/, /s/

Say ***zoo*** and ***ooze***, then ***sigh*** and ***ice***. The symbols for the sounds at the beginning of zoo and the end of ooze are /z/ and that at the beginning of sigh and the end of ice is /s/. Notice how you make these sounds. You bring the front of your tongue near the roof of the mouth and make hissing sounds. We call hissing sounds such as /z/ and /s/ sibilants. The sibilant /z/ is voiced and /s/ is voiceless. We have several different ways of spelling the consonant sounds /z/ and /s/.

**Activity 3.5**

You will make either /z/ or /s/ in each of the following words. Say each word and tell which sound you are making. At the end of the list, try to classify the different ways of spelling each of these sibilants:

Zone, buzz, has, deserve, desert
Assert, scene, city, race, base
Dazzle, sane, gas, psalm, phrase

If you fail to segregate the sounds, consult your dictionary.

### 3.2.7 /Ž/, /§/

We use some other sibilant sounds in English language. Listen to the sound you make in the middle of each of these words: **vision** and **azure** then **fishing** and **mission.** The sounds in the middle of vision and azure will be represented by the symbol / Ž/ and that in the middle of mission and fishing will be represented by the symbol /§/

You make /Ž/, and /§/ by raising the centre of your tongue near the roof of the mouth. Each of the following words is produced with either the sound / Ž/ or /§/.

Tell which one it is. Try to classify the different ways of spelling each sound:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treasure | casual | azure | fish | pressure | nation |
| ocean | special | sugar | tissue | conscious | measure |

### 3.2.8 /dŽ //t§/

We have two more sibilant sounds these are /d Ž / and /t§/. The sounds found at the beginning and end of the word **judge** is represented by the symbol /dŽ /. The second sound, / t§/ is the one that comes at the beginning and the end of the word church. To make these sounds, you raise your centre of the tongue to the roof of the mouth as you do for /Ž/, and /§/ but this time, you touch the roof of the mouth. You have already figured that /dŽ / is a voiced sibilant sound while /t§/ is a voiceless sibilant. (Gimson *ibid.* and Glatthorn *op cit*).

**Activity 3.6**

Describe whether each of the following words contains the consonant sound /dŽ / or /t§/:

magic, patch, natural, graduate, soldier

exaggerate, jealous, badge, rich, witch

Consult your dictionary to check the accuracy of your description

## 3.3 Single Voiced Consonant Sounds: Nasal Sounds

The nasal sounds /m/ and /n/, are similar not only that they are made using the voice but by forcing the air through the nose. This forced air results in a series of vibrations similar to the humming in the throat when voiced sounds are made and therefore nasal sounds are voiced. Say the words mom and madam. Note that you make this sound by closing your lips then let air go out through your nose. If you hold a finger close to your nostrils, you can feel the air coming out. The /m/ sound is a nasal because we make it with air coming through the nose, (Atkinson *et al*., 1982).

The other nasal sound is /n/ found in words such as *noon* and *nine*. How do you make the /n/ sound? You put your tip of the tongue against the roof of your mouth just behind the upper teeth and let the air go out through the nose. The /n/ sound is also a nasal sound. The spellings for the /m/ and /n/ sounds are simple. In some words, we use a double m or a double n, as in common and kennel but we only have one /m/ in common and one /n/ sound in kennel.

**Activity 3.7**

Say these words and tell how many times you make the sound /m/ or the sound /n/ in each word:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hammock | stomach | nonsense | cannon | memory |
| Pneumonia | manner | connection | knit | gnat |

### 3.3.1 /ŋ/

The other nasal is the one at the end of words such as *ring* and *wrong*. You make the /ŋ/ sound by raising the back of your tongue until it touches the roof of your mouth and letting the air out through your nose. Thus /ŋ/ is a nasal consonant. At the end of simple words such as *sing* or *song,* we use the two letters to represent the sound /ŋ/; however, it is just one sound. In the middle of simple words and some complex words, this sound comes before the sound /g/ as in *finger,* or *anger* or *younger* or before the sound /k/ as in *sprinkle* or *anchor.* In words such as these the sound /ŋ/ is spelt with just the letter *n.*

**Activity 3.8**

Say these words and tell how many times you make the /ŋ/ sound in each word. Which word does not have the sound /ŋ/?

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| singing | thinking | longing | hunger | monkey |
| blanket | drunkard | stinky | hanger | danger |

The remaining consonant sounds are not nasal as we will see in the following section.

### 3.3.2 /l /

The first of these is the voiced sound / l / as in *lull* and *loyal.* Notice that you make the sound / l / by curling in the sides of your tongue until the tip touches the upper teeth. We always spell the sound / l / with the letter, sometimes one and sometimes two. How many times do you make the sound / l /?

Lilliputian, lollipop, fulfil, lilac, silly, lily, valid, valley.

### 3.3.3 / r /

The sound / r / is the one you make in *roar* and *river*. At least you make the sound / r / at the beginning of these words. You make this sound by pulling back the tip of the tongue till it touches the roof of the mouth.

**Activity 3.9**

Say each of the following words and notice whether you make the sound / r / in the word and if you do, how many times you make the sound. Note also the common way for spelling the sound.

Ruler, drummer, record, remember, reward, career

Error, terrible, clearest, carrot, wrong, rhinoceros

### 3.3.4 / j /

The sound /j / is the one you make in words such as *yard* and *you.* Notice that you make this sound by raising the middle of your tongue. There is one common way of spelling this sound and one way which is not common. Find both of them in these words:

yes beyond yellow million onion

We sometimes use the letter y for a vowel sound, as in *my*, *deny*, or *penny.* The letter y is combined with a, e, and o to represent other vowel sounds, as in *gray*, *they*, and *joy.* These words do not have the consonant sound / j /. Say these words and decide which ones have consonant sounds and which ones do not.

mayor royalty physics yodel yield

### 3.3.5 / w /

You make the voiced sound / w / at the beginning of water and window. Notice that you make the sound by raising the back of your tongue and rounding your lips. There is one common way of spelling the sound /w / and one which is not so common. Can you find them in these words?

warble reward awake language persuade

The combination of the consonant sound /k/ and /w/ has a special spelling. You will find this spelling in the words below. You will also find one word which has the sound /k/ but not the sound /w/.

quick quiet request banquet square liquor

You remember that we combine the letter ‘w’ with the letters ‘a, e,’ and ‘o’ to represent vowel sounds as in law, new, and low. These words do not have the sound /w /. Say these words and decide which ones have the consonant sound /w/ and which ones do not.

twelve extinguish awful brewing dwarf crowd

### 3.3.6 / h /

The last sound is / h /, the one we make at the beginning of words such as *hat* and *happy*. You make this sound by forcing air from your throat. Some of the words below have the consonant sound /h /, and some do not. Say each one and decide whether you make the sound / h / or not.

hole whole behind ahead oh herb

who humid exhibit exhale vehicle heir

The words *who* and *whole* begin with the sound / h /. Say *wheel* and *whistle*. We write these words with the letter 'w' and then the letter 'h'. We say these words with the sound / h / and then we say wheel and whistle and other such words with the / w / sound at the beginning and no / h / sound. (Glatthorn et al opi cit)

## 3.4 Alliteration and Consonance

Just as the uses of vowel sounds can communicate meaning, so too can the uses of consonant sounds.

Study the following poem and compare how the consonant sounds are exploited to create an effect.

***Cheers***

The frogs and the serpents each had a football team,

And I heard their cheer leaders in my dream:

'Bilgewater, bilgewater' called the frog

'Bilgewater, bilgewater.

Six boom bog!

Roll 'em off the log.

Slog 'em in the log.

Swamp 'em, swamp 'em,

Muck mine quash!'

'Sisyphus, Sisyphus.' Hissed the snake,

'sibilant syllabub,

Syllable-loo-ba-lay.

Scilla and Charybdis'

Sumac, asphodel,

How do you spell success?

With an S-S-S!'

(Eve Meriam in Glatthorn *et al.*, 1971)

**Summary**

We have studied sixteen out of the twenty four English consonant sounds. These are those which can be paired because the two sounds in each pair are similar in terms of place of articulation. However, one sound in each pair is voiced and the other is voiceless. The voiced and voiceless sounds of each pair are listed below with examples:

| **Voiced** | **Voiceless** |
|---|---|
| /b/- buy | /p/ - pie |
| /d/ - die | /t/ - tie |
| /g/ - goal | /k/ - coat |
| /v/ - veal | /s/ - feel |
| /ð/ - thy | /θ/ - thigh |
| /z/ - zoo | /s/- sue |
| /Ž/ - measure | /§/- pressure |
| /dŽ/- Jane | /t§/- Chain |

The last three pairs are called sibilants

**Exercise**

1. List five sets of words with each set containing three, four, or five words which rhyme and begin with different sibilant sounds. Follow the example below:

   Sheep, cheap, jeep, seep

2. Each of these words ends in two consonant sounds. Tell whether the consonant sounds are voiced or voiceless. Then tell what the two sounds are**. Pay attention to the sounds not letters e. g.** the word **beds** ends with the sounds /d/ and /z/ why because the sound /d/ is voiced and hence the letter s becomes voiced also and is pronounced as /z/.

   Beds bets rugs bucks cuffs caves

   Begged leaked lived laughed raised raced

   Kissed pushed wedged reached hoped described

3. Each word below begins with one consonant sound and ends with one consonant sound. Say the word and list what consonant sound you make at the beginning and what consonant sound you make at the end.

   (a) rain (b) main (c) more

   (d) wrong (e) year (f) wire

   (g) young (h) lean

4. Find three pairs of homophones that begin with each of these consonant sounds /m /, / n /, / l /, / r /, / j /, / w /, and / h /. Have at least one pair end with one of the eight

consonant sounds just studied and the remaining end with one of the vowel sounds. Follow the example done for the / w / sound:

wear – were  we're – weir  way - weigh

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# LECTURE 4
# Syllable and Stress

## 4.1 Introduction

To understand what a syllable is let us take a look at the following examples of letters and sounds:

The word **red** has one vowel sound and one vowel letter. The word **head** has only one vowel sound, but it has two vowel letters.

The word **over** is pronounced with two vowel sounds, and it is written with two vowel letters. The word **vote** is written with two vowel letters. How many vowel sounds do you make when you pronounce the word **rave**? The written word **leave** has three vowel letters, but the spoken word has only one vowel sound. The written word **elephant** has three vowel letters. How many vowel sounds does the spoken word have?

The sounds of a word go together in **syllables.** Every syllable has one vowel sound; therefore, a word has as many syllables as it has vowel sounds. Since every word has at least one vowel sound, every word has at least one syllable. A word with three vowel sounds has three syllables, and so on. Vowel sounds are louder than consonant sounds, so it should be easy for you to identify them. Remember that a vowel sound, not a vowel letter, makes a syllable. (Gimson op cit)

Here are some words with one syllable each, say them aloud:

***Yes guess sing dew low load lead leave sleeve***

Now say these words, notice that they have two syllables each:

***Lemon shoe horn recess loyal Table fiddle frigid***

Say these three-syllable words; listen for the three vowel sounds:

***Physician violin lemonade disconnect meditate***

A four syllable word is pretty long. Here are some to practice on:

***Automobile chronometer violinist impossible Mississipi***

Words which have more than four syllables are not very common but they exist. Five-syllable words are for example:

***Exasperated possibility***

Six-syllable words;

***Impossibility, prestidigitation***

Seven-syllable words:

***constitutionality, electrocardiograph***

We don't need to worry about such big words, however. The words we use most often have just one, two, three or possibly four syllables.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Explain the meaning of syllable and stress

ii. Differentiate monosyllabic, disyllabic and polysyllabic words in English language

iii. Mark primary and secondary stress on English words

## 4.2 Stress

Say these two words: alone, lonely. You notice that both words have the syllable lone. You notice too, that in each word, the syllable **lone** is louder than the other syllable.

We pronounce the first word aLONE, and we pronounce the second word LONEly

Whenever we say a two-syllable word, we make one syllable louder than the other. Another word for loudness is stress. We can say that the syllable which is louder has **primary stress** and the syllable which is not so loud has **weak stress.**

In the word alone, the second syllable has primary stress, and the first syllable has weak stress. In the word lonely, it's the other way round. Here are some more words such as **alone.** Each of these has primary stress on the second syllable:

Agree presume divide pronounce complain

And here are some more words such as lonely. Each of these has primary stress on the second syllable:

angry ticket solid button fiddle captain

**Activity 4.1**

Say these two-syllable words aloud. For each word, state whether the first or second syllable has primary stress.

decide decent arouse allow swallow

study supply proper prefer lemon

Linguists have devised a way of marking a word to show which syllable has primary stress. The first one is to write capital letters such as:

aLONE, LONEly or to put a line under the syllable which has a stress, such as a<u>lone</u>, <u>lone</u>ly.

Some dictionaries put a stress mark such as (´) this after the syllable which has primary stress – for example, a loné, lonély. Syllables with weak stress are not marked.

Here are some more examples:

attáck, dený, províde, ángry, bútton, fiddle

**Activity 4.2**

Where would you put the mark for primary stress on these words?

attend rely divide ticket solid lemon

In some words as you know, we write two vowel letters to represent one vowel sound. For example, in the word **complain,** the letters **ai** stand for one vowel sound and in the word **ready,** the vowel letters **ea** stand for just one vowel sound. Whenever we want to put the stress mark in words such as these, we put it over the first vowel letter in the syllable with stress such as: **compláin** and **réady** (Gimson ibid).

fáucet, appláud, móuntain, pronóunce, nóisy , avoid, gréedy, degrée, blóoming.

**Activity 4.3**

Where would you put the primary stress on these words?

ahead weapon contain fountain announce agree groovy

If a word has three syllables, one of them is louder than the other two. The primary stress can be on the first syllable, the second syllable, on the last syllable.

Study these words:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| élephant | éleven | enginéer |
| régular | remémber | recomménd |
| vítamin | volcáno | violín |

Three-syllable words with stress on the third syllable such as *enginéer, recomménd* and *violín* are not so common. Here are a few more examples which you can pronounce with stress on the last syllable.

disagree lemonáde, magazíne, misbeháve

seventéen, understánd

Three-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable are very common so are three syllable words with stress on the middle syllable, such as **eléven, remémber** and **volcáno.**

**Activity 4.4**

There are sixteen words in the group below. Ten of the words have primary stress on the first syllable, and six have stress on the second syllable. Say each word aloud, which syllable has primary stress? You can use a dictionary to check the correctness of your pronunciation.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| accident | definite | happiness | opposite |
| aroma | develop | ignorant | permanent |
| banana | enamel | important | physical |
| canary | enemy | injury | syllable |

All Indo-European languages (Indo = Indian) showed, at an early stage, a tendency to throw the stress back towards the beginning of a word, and in Germanic languages of which English is one (others are Danish, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian), it now normally falls on the first syllable of a word (Laura and Sinclair 1961). But there are exceptions to this rule.

(i) Words of English origin with adverbial prefixes that have lost their adverbial or prepositional force such as understánd, indéed, todáy.

(ii) Words borrowed from the Romance languages, such as French.

French loan words at first kept the stress on the last syllable, but by the 15th century at the latest, the stress had usually shifted to the first syllable, except in words compounded with a prefix, such as commánd, and replý. Later French borrowings have usually kept their French stress, such as coquétte, promenade, though short words that have come into common use, and three-syllable words, often follow the Englsih pattern: for example, chaúffeur, gárage, pétrol, ménu, réstaurant, and énvelope.

Words borrowed from Latin and Greek (as well as some borrowed through French) often show variation even in standard speech (for example, láboratory or labóratory). In long words, the stress tends to be on the third syllable from the end (photógraph), except in words ending in ic, when it is on the last but one, as in geométric.

Walkie – talkie telephone, mobile

There is at present a tendency to shift the accent forward in many-syllabled words of classical origin – to say hospítable, capítalist. This avoids a series of weakly stressed syllables, which tend to become shortened and sometimes lost: láboratory tends to become labrotry, just as boot swain became bos'n. In American speech, long words tend to have two main stresses as in nécessáry, ádvertísement.

Accent sometimes varies if a word is used as a noun or a verb; for example, we say 'a safe cónduct,' but I will condúct you there.

**Summary**

There are two kinds of sounds in English language, vowels and consonants. A word has as many syllables as it has vowel sounds. When a sound has more than one syllable, one of the syllables, is louder and has primary stress.

**Exercise**

1. Find four words which have just one syllable each, such as cat or less.
2. Find five two-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable, such as árgue or síddle or lemon. (Pronounce each word).
3. Find five two-syllable words with primary stress on the second syllable, such as agrée, divíde or regrét.
4. Find five three-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable, such as ánimal or hándkerchief or óxygen.
5. Find five three syllable words with stress on the second syllable, such as divísion or impórtant or tomáto.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) | amount | (i) | damage | (q) | opposite |
| (b) | banana | (j) | define | (r) | pocket |
| (c) | behave | (k) | develop | (s) | possible |
| (d) | brush | (l) | electric | (t) | potato |
| (e) | clean | (m) | hammer | (u) | property |
| (f) | comedy | (n) | house | (v) | respect |
| (g) | committee | (o) | island | (w) | surprise |
| (h) | control | (p) | name | (x) | window |

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|---|---|
| Lecture 5: | Borrowing as a Vocabulary Acquisition Strategy |
| Lecture 6: | Varieties of English |
| Lecture 7: | Word Formation |

# LECTURE 5

# Borrowing as a Vocabulary Acquisition Strategy

## 5.1 Introduction

The present day English language has a word stock estimated at about 6,00,000 words. The big number however is not all English vocabulary in origin. Out of these, only about 50,000 are from Old English (OE), a language spoken about 1100 years ago in England. Old English is the ancestor of present day English (Glatthorn *et al., op. cit.*).

How did the word supply of English language expand more than 1000 percent? It did so in two ways – by borrowing from other languages and by coining, or making up new words. These processes of borrowing and coining are the subject matter of this lecture.

Let's have a look at the following list of words and the languages from which they originate. The first column below shows words borrowed. The second column indicates the origin of each borrowed word. The third column shows words that come from Old English.

| Borrowed word | Language origin | Words from OE |
|---|---|---|
| Boss | Dutch | |
| Journeyed | Middle French | |
| Mammoth | Russian | |
| Mall | Middle French | |
| Vicinity | Latin | |
| Store | Old French | |
| Adjacent | Latin | |
| Plaza | Spanish from Latin | |
| Bargains | Middle French | |
| Purchase | Old French | |
| Scarlet | Persian | |
| Rug | Norwegian | |
| muzzle | Medieval Latin | |
| Poodle | High German | My |
| Umbrella | Italian | And |
| Tea | Chinese | 1 |
| coffee | Turkish and Italian | To |
| | From Arabic | A |
| Continue | Latin | Shopping |
| Tank | Portuguese | In |
| | From Vulgar Latin | Our |
| Tropical | Greek | The |
| Mattress | Arabic | Were |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Shampoo | Hindi | Many |
| Locate | Latin | We |
| Gingham | Malay | For |
| Apron | Latin | And |
| Thermometer | Greek and French | An |
| Cevise | French from Latin | Stopped |
| | | Some |
| Kimono | Japanese | Then |
| Cashews | Portuguese | Our |
| Soda | Medieval | Fish |
| | Latin | Also |
| Return | Middle French | Ate |
| | | Drank |
| | | Home |

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Explain how the English language acquired the vocabulary used today

ii. Identify and account for the mismatch between spelling and pronunciation of some words used in the English language

iii. Use your dictionary to trace the origins of some borrowed words into the English language

## 5.2 The Influence of Latin on English Language

Observe the list of words from Old English. What sort of words are they as compared to the borrowed words? If we examine the total English vocabulary – the 600,000 words that you could find in an abridged dictionary – we would find that only fifteen to twenty per cent came from native Anglo-Saxon words. About half of the total English vocabulary originated in the Latin language, and about half of these Latin derived words came to English-speaking people through the French language. English has borrowed from all the major languages of the world to enrich its total vocabulary. (Glatthorn ibid)

If, however, we look at the everyday language – the words used most often and the words we find in daily newspapers – then we find that more than half of these common words came from Anglo-Saxon with most of the words from Latin, French and Scandinavian languages.

**Activity 5.1**

1. Study the data above and find out from which language(s) did English borrow most of its vocabulary?

2. List the first twenty-five words from the most recent daily newspaper that you have read in English. Use your dictionary to determine the origin of each word.

3. The following everyday words are from languages other than Anglo-Saxon. Find each word in the dictionary and write its etymology. How many languages are represented?

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) anger | (d) | hour | (g) | poor | |
| (b) athlete | (e) | navy | (h) | pupil | |
| (c) dollar | (f) | pastor | (i) | sky | |

The enrichment of the English vocabulary through borrowing from other languages did not take place all at once or in one simple fashion.

To understand how the language has grown by linguistic transfusion, it would be wise to look individually at each of the two major donors, Latin and French, and then survey the contributions of several other languages.

Latin, the language of the ancient Romans played a major part in the development of English at several important stages. Its earlier contributions to the Germanic languages, one of the branches of the Indo-European Family, were made before the Angles, Saxons and Jutes migrated to Britain. During the first century B.C., the legions conquered that part of Western Europe, which was known as Gaul and made Latin the major language there. To the north, however, there were several Germanic tribes, whom the Romans never succeeded in conquering, but who lived on land claimed by the Roman empire. For several centuries, the Germanic tribes and Roman soldiers and merchants lived side by side. As could be expected, the words borrowed from each other included many military terms and many words for everyday objects. (Laura and Sinclair *op. cit*.).

Here are a few of the words which came from Latin through the early Germanic Languages to Modern English:

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Battle | Wall | Banner | pound | Street | wine | cheese |
| Tile | Inch | Shop | kettle | pillow | jar | |

The second occurrence of early Latin influence came when the Angeles, Saxons, and Jutes invaded Britain in the middle of the fifth century A.D. Britain at that time was a Roman colony, and Latin had become the language of the ruling class. The Romans had lost control and therefore war and disorder had swept the country. The invading Germanic tribes drove the native Celts of Britain to Wales and Brittany and some were absorbed into their culture thus borrowed few Celtic terms such as Avon or Thames. The Germanic invaders did borrow a few Latin words from the defeated Celts such as camp, harbour and mountain.

The next major period of Latin influence came approximately in A.D. 600 when missionaries from Rome and Ireland began to convert the Anglo-Saxon settlers to Christianity, which by that time was official religion of the Romans. Many of the words borrowed from this period were words related to religion – creed, martyr, disciple and temple.

Some words came to English through Germanic languages which the Anglo-Saxon invaders brought with them to Britain. A great many more Latin words came indirectly through the French language which the Norman invaders brought with them in 1066.

The last major period of Latin influence came during the Renaissance, which influenced England around 1500. From this great revival of learning, the educated Englishman developed a new interest in classical Latin, often regarding it as the model for all languages. Many learned words which came in this period but were given English endings are: areas, abdomen, urban, vindicate, fortitude, medium, and education (Laura and Sinclair, *ibid*.).

However, few Latin words have been borrowed during the last three hundred years – deficit, nebular and insomnia have recently come into the English language from Latin.

Latin has been a major contributor to the English language during many periods of time and in many ways. Knowledge of Latin roots, or base parts can help you to unlock the meanings of hundreds of English words. Following are a few examples of the English words that have incorporated the Latin root:

iv. ***Port:*** meaning 'to carry' or 'to harbour'.

v. ***Import***: to bring into a country

vi. ***Export:*** to send out from a country

vii. ***Transport***: to move from one place to another

viii. ***Report:*** to tell or narrate

ix. ***Portable***: movable.

Another common Latin root is mit, mis, meaning 'to send'.

This root is found in the following words: transmit, remit, omit, emit, summit, missile, missive, submission and omission.

The list below includes other important Latin roots, their meanings and examples of English words which have incorporated those roots.

| Root | Meaning | Example |
|---|---|---|
| Am | Love | Amiable |
| Annus | Year | Annual |
| Cogn | Know | Recognise |
| Dict | Say | Dictate |
| Fin | End | Final |
| Greg | Gather | Congregate |
| Litera | Letter | Literate |
| Man | Hand | Manipulate |
| Pon | Put | Postpone |
| Scrib | Write | Describe |
| Solve | Loosen | Dissolve |
| Tempar | Time | Temporary |
| Ver | True | Verdict |


**Activity 5.2**

From the knowledge of the roots given above, guess the meanings of the following words. Check your guess in your dictionary to find out whether or not you are correct. Then write a sentence using each word:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (a) annuity | (d) dictatorial | (g) manatee |
| (b)confine | (e) gregarious | (h) mortician |
| (c) contemporary | (f) literary | (i) verify |

## 5.3 French Influence on English

After the Norman conquest in 1066, French became the official language of the governing class. As a result, the French language had a profound influence on the English language. A scholar has estimated that some ten thousand words were borrowed from French during the middle ages. Many of these words were in the areas of the government and administration.

Crown, court, empire, crime, attorney, state and royal are a few examples. Other important words were borrowed from areas that included – the church with words such as religion, baptism, saint, miracle, and piety*;* the law with words such as Judge, plaintiff, decree, felony, and legacy; fashion and dress, with words such as *apparel*, *chamise*, and *lace*; the military, with words such as combat, siege, guard, assault, sergeant, lieutenant, and enemy. (Glatthorn *et al., op. cit.*)

With such extensive borrowing, some English words died or were replaced because they were not used. For example,

| Old English words | French words in replacement |
|---|---|
| Éam | Uncle |
| vuldor | glory |
| ieldu | age |

In other cases, both words were retained with a slight difference in meaning. Sir Walter Scolf in his novel Ivanhoe has one of his characters point out that a native word refer to the animal and a French word is used to refer to the flesh of the animal prepared for dinning. This reflects the fact that the conquered natives did the tending of the animals, while the ruling French did the feasting.

| Native word | French word |
|---|---|
| Ox | Beef |
| Sheep | Mutton |
| Swine | Pork |
| Calf | Veal |

Other pairs of OE and French words which have remained with slightly different meanings are:

| Old English | French |
|---|---|
| Stench | Aroma |
| ask | demand |
| hearty | cordial |

In fact, in some cases they have kept a native word, a Latin word and a French word, each expressing slightly a different meaning. For example:

| Native word | Latin word | French word |
|---|---|---|

Ask Interrogate Question

All have approximately the same meaning, yet each expresses a different kind of asking as exemplified below:

x. He asked me several questions about the theft at the bank/whereabouts

xi. He interrogated the thief at length

xii. He questioned me about the theft at the bank

Unlike Latin, French has continued to have strong influence on the English language in modern times. For many years, French was considered to be the most important language of the arts and diplomacy. Along with Spanish, it is one of the languages most studied in the US. These facts have accounted for the continued borrowing of words used in the arts, such as tableau, connoisseur, pavilion, and matinee; words used in fashion, such as blouses, cravat, chenille, and corduroy, and words used in cooking, such as aspic, chef, restaurant and roast.

**Activity 3**

1. Many French phrases are used in the English language. Take a dictionary and write the literal meaning that each of these following phrases has in French and then write the general meaning it has taken on in English.
   (a) a` la carte (b) a` la mode
   (c) avant-garde (d) pièce de résistance
   (e) raison d'être (f) table d'nôte

2. For each word in the sets of words below, write the language of origin, write its meaning in English and use it in a sentence that will clarify the destination in meaning

   (a) Holy, sacred and consecrated

   (b) Fire, flame and conflagration

   (c) Rise, mount and ascend

   (d) Goodness, virtue and probity

## 5.4 Greek Words in English Language

Greek words such as atmosphere, autograph, critic, enthusiasm, and parenthesis came to English through other languages. During the Renaissance, however, the interest in classics led to direct borrowings of Greek words such as acme, catastrophe, lexicon and thermal.

Greek roots have also been useful in the coining of words in English language. The following lists include some familiar roots, their meanings and an example of an English word which has incorporated each root.

| Root | Meaning | Example |
|---|---|---|
| Anthrop | man | Anthropologist |
| Demo | People | Democracy |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Gen | Birth | Eugenics |
| Homo | Same | Homogeneous |
| Neo | New | Neophyte |
| Ortho | Straight | Orthodontist |
| Phil | Love | Philanthropist |
| Psych | mind | Psychology |

## 5.5 The Scandinavian Influence of English Language

From the eighth to the eleventh centuries, people from the Scandinavian countries invaded the lands of the English, making settlements in what are now England, Ireland and Scotland. After initial battles, these Norwegians and Danes lived peacefully with the English; and since the language they spoke – Old Norse was also a Germanic tongue such as English, Scandinavian words were easily assimilated into the English language. For example, the third person pronouns – *they, them* and *their* – came from Scandinavian languages about this time. Other common words absorbed during the early period were: *fellow, law, rag, riding, sly; take, want, kin,* and *skirt*. Words borrowed around the thirteenth century are *ski*, and *smorgasbord*.

## 5.6 Spanish Influence

Spanish words came to English after the sixteenth century, and most of them came by way of South and Central America. Words such as *alligator, armada, avocado, barbecue, chocolate, cigar, mosquito* and n*egro* came into the language three or four hundred years ago; while such words as *adobe, bonanza, bronco, buckaroo, canyon* and *rodeo* were adopted during the nineteenth century.

## 5.7 Italian, German and Dutch Influence

Musical terminologies were borrowed from Italian: *Duo, fugue, violin, solo, sonata, adagio, aria, cantata, concerto, contralto, duet, oratorio,* and *trio* – all show the importance of Italian musical terms in English language. The familiar names of Italian foods were also borrowed: *broccoli, maraschino, macaroni, artichoke, ravioli,* and *spaghetti. Pizza* is a late arrival coming to the language in the nineteenth century.

Food terms were also borrowed from German: *noodle, delicatessen, pretzel, pumpernickel, liverwurst, frankfurter* and *hamburger*. Dutch seafarers influenced English with nautical terms: *dock, cruise, marlin,* and *yacht* to mention a few.

## 5.8 Other Languages

**Languages of the Middle East contributed less to English, but a few of them from** Arabic are: *amber, cotton, mattress* and *saffron*.

Hebrew contributed many words to the religious vocabulary: *amen, cherub, hallelujah, rabbi, jubilee, Sabbat,* and *Satan.*

The influence of trade and commerce is seen in words borrowed from Persian: *caravan, bazaar, scarlet, taffeta* and *naphtha.*

Most of the words borrowed from the languages spoken in West Africa came by way of Portuguese and Spanish: Banana, yam and zombie are a few examples.

## Summary

The present word stock of the English language has developed from both native Anglo-Saxon and borrowed sources. In the everyday vocabulary, more than half of the words came from Anglo-Saxon, with most of the rest borrowed from Latin, French and Scandinavian. In the total vocabulary, however, only fifteen to twenty percent of the English words are of Anglo-Saxon origin and almost half are from Latin.

Latin influenced the English language in several ways. It influenced the Germanic languages prior to the Anglo-Saxon invasion to Britain; it influenced the Celtic language spoken by the natives of Britain; it influenced the language of the Anglo-Saxons during the Christianization of England; it influenced the French language prior to the Norman Conquest; and it influenced the vocabulary of the English Renaissance scholars. Latin roots have become the bases for many English words.

Following the Norman conquest, the French language had a profound influence on the English vocabulary. About ten thousand words were borrowed from French during the Middle Ages. The borrowing process has continued up to the present time, chiefly in the areas of arts, fashion, and cooking.

Either directly or indirectly, English has borrowed from many languages: Greek, Dutch, Spanish and Middle Eastern and Scandinavian languages.

## Exercise

1. Each of the following words identifies an object which suggests the language of origin. Write your guess as to the origin of the word and then check in your dictionary to see whether or not you are correct.

   (a) curry (c) fez (e) samovar

   (b) banjo (d) polka (f) samurai

2. Explain in a brief paragraph why so many of the borrowed words are words which refer to food and clothing.

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# LECTURE 6

# Varieties of English

## 6.1 Introduction

The English language is not a single language but comprises many languages each of which belong to a particular geographical area or to a particular kind of situation. The English used in Great Britain is somewhat different from the English used in the United States. Likewise, the English used in formal written communications is in some ways different from the English used in formal conversation. However, there are general features of English language which are found in nearly all varieties. General features of this kind are said to belong to the 'Common Core' of the language (Leech and Svartvik 1975). For example, study the following words:

Children, offspring and readers

The word *children* belongs to the 'common core' usage; *offspring* is rather formal (and used of animals as well as human beings); *readers* is informal and familiar.

It is safest, when in doubt to use the 'common core' term; thus children is the word you would want to use most often. But part of 'knowing English' is knowing in what circumstances it would be possible to use offspring or readers instead of children. Let us take another illustration from grammar:

Feeling sick, David went to bed early [1]

David went to bed early because he felt sick [2].

David felt sick, so he went to bed early [3].

Sentence [2] is the 'common core' construction, it can be used in both speech and writing. [1] is formal and typical of written construction. [3] is informal and can occur in relaxed conversation.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Identify through listening and reading the different varieties of English language

ii. Distinguish between geographical and social dialects

iii. Use language and write appropriately

## 6.2 Geographical and National Varieties

Geographical varieties are referred to as dialects – language used according to users. English is spoken as a native language by 600,000 million people in the United States of America, Canada, Britain, Ireland, Australia, the Caribbean and many others. The varieties used by Britain and the United States of America are the most influential and hence distinguished in the written forms as AME for American English and BE for British English. The grammatical differences between the two varieties (in comparison with difference of pronunciation and vocabulary) are not very great.

Here are some brief examples of how <AME> and <BE> can differ.

### 6.2.1 Grammar

(i) (AME) has two past participle forms of get: **gotten** and **got** whereas (BE) has only one: got. (The past tense form is **got** in both varieties).

For example:

(AME): Have you gotten/got the tickets for the match?

(BE): Have you got the tickets for the match?

(ii) There is also a difference in the repeated subject after one.

(AME): **One** cannot succeed unless **he** tried hard.

(BE): One cannot succeed unless one tries hard.

(iii) The normal compliment after different is than in (AME) but from (or sometime to) in (BE).

(AME): Their house is different **than** ours.

(BE): Their house is different **from** ours.

(iv) The use of the subjective after verbs such as demand, require, insist, suggest, etc. is more common in (AME) than (BE), where the construction is restricted to rather formal contexts.

For example:

Especially in (AME)

It is necessary that every member inform herself of the rules (formal)

It is necessary that every member should inform herself of the rules.

It is necessary for every member to inform herself of these rules.

They suggested that Ali be dropped from the team (AME)

They suggest that Ali should be dropped from the team. (AME) and (BE)

Within each English speaking country, there are many differences of regional dialect (for example between English spoken in New England and in the South States of the U.S.A).

### 6.2.2 Pronunciation

To simplify matters only one accent is considered from each national variety: Received Pronunciation or RP which is spoken by the educated in England and the General American

pronunciation or GA which is used in Central and Northern areas of the United States and in parts of Canada.

1. Different sounds are used for the same phoneme. In other words, a phoneme (or 'distinctive sound', enclosed within slants //) that is linguistically the same may be phonetically different in RP and GA.

   Very many differences fall into this category for example:

   /T/, as in bid, is often more central in GA than RP.

   /e/, as in bed, is usually more open in GA than RP.

   /æ/, as in bad, is usually longer and more close in GA than in RP.

   /⊃:/, as in cause, is usually more open in GA than RP.

   /oʊ or əʊ/, as in go, has a more central and unrounded first element in RP than in GA (which is why many British books show the vowel as /∂).

2. RP and GA have a different number of phonemes. Where RP has the four phonemes /æ/, /a:/, /D/ and /⊃:/, GA has only three, /æ/, /a/ and /⊃:/. There is a considerable variation in words with these vowels. For example:

   RP has /æ/ in hat, man

   /a:/ in path, calm, father

   /D/ in got, log, cross, long

   /⊃:/ in law, cause

   GA has /æ/ in hat, man, path, and laugh

   /a/ in calm, father, got; log

   /∂i/ in cross, long, law, cause

3. A sound used in one accent may be omitted in the other. For example RP does not pronounce a written /r/ before a consonant:

| B & E | | AME |
|---|---|---|
| farm, | /fa:m/ | //farm,/ |
| card | /ka:d/ | //kard/ |
| burn | /bɜ:n/ | //bɜrn/ |

   At the end of a word, /r/ is pronounced in RP if the next word begins with a vowel but not otherwise, whereas it is always pronounced in GA. To show this a small raised /$^{r}$/ is used:

   far /fa:$^{r}$/

   store /st ⊃:$^{r}$/

   sir /sɜ:$^{r}$/

On the other hand, before a written 'long' u RP inserts /j/ after certain consonants while GA does not:

| | B & E | AME |
|---|---|---|
| tube | /tj:b/ | //tu:b/ |
| assume | /ə[1]sju:m/ | //ə[1]su:m/ |

4. Different phonemes may be used in the same word. There are no regular rates principles for this type of variation, which is found only with individual words. For example:

| BE | AME | |
|---|---|---|
| ate | /et/ | //eit/ |
| clerk | /kla:k/ | //klɜrk/ |
| shone | /S D n/ / | /Soʊn/ |

### 6.2.3 Spellings

The differences in spellings between American English and British English are very common. Let us look at the following examples:

| British English | American English |
|---|---|
| Behaviour | Behavior |
| Organisation | Organization |
| Colour | Color |

## 6.3 Written and Spoken English

The English of speech tends to be different from the English of writing in some fairly obvious ways. For example in writing, we tend to be careful while in speech (unless it is a lecture prepared in advance), we have no time to revise what we are to say but may shape our message as we go:

Well we have just come back from Arusha where it was pretty clear that this was a general trend with young people there.

This situation is troublesome. You're kind of putting the whole blame on the family instead of on the conditions a family's being forced to live in these days. Look, if you took er I mean monkeys are very good parents aren't they. Rhesus monkeys and so on. They look after their young marvellously – now you put them together, you crowd them. And they're extremely bad parents.

Often we use in speech words and phrases such as 'well', 'you see', and 'kind of' which add little information, but tell us something of the speakers attitude to the audience and to what s/he is saying. We also often hesitate, or fill in gaps with hesitation fillers' such as er/ɜ:r/ and

um /∂m/ while we think of what next to say. We may fail to complete a sentence, or lose track of our sentence and mix up one grammatical construction with another. All these features do not normally occur in writing.

In general, the grammar of spoken sentences is simply and less strictly constructed than the grammar of written sentences. It is difficult to divide a spoken conversation into separate sentences, and connections between one clause and another are less clear because the speaker relies more on the hearer's understanding of context and on ability to interrupt if he fails to understand. But in 'getting across' his message, the speaker is able to rely on features of information which tell us a great deal that cannot be given in written punctuation.

Formal language is the type of language we use publicly for some serious purpose, for example, in official reports, business, letters and regulations. Formal English is nearly always written. Exceptionally it is used in speech, for example in formal public speeches.

Informal language (i.e. colloquial language) is the language of private conversation, of personal letters, etc. It is the first type of language that a native speaking child becomes familiar with. It is generally easier to understand than formal English, and it is often used nowadays in public communication of a popular kind: for example, advertisements and popular newspapers mainly employ a colloquial or informal style.

### 6.3.1 Levels of Formality

There are various degrees of formality, as these examples show:

When his dad died, Peter had to get another job [4]

After his father's death, Peter had to change his job [5]

On the decease of his father, Mr Brown was obliged to seek alternative employment [6]

These sentences mean roughly the same thing, but would occur in different situations. Sentence [4] could be part of a casual conversation between friends of Mr. Brown.

[5] is a fairly neutral ('common core') style.

[6] is very formal, in fact stilled, and would only occur in a written report.

In English, there are many differences of vocabulary between formal and informal language. Much of the vocabulary of formal English is of French, Latin, and Greek origin; and we can often translate these terms into informal language by replacing them by words or phrases of Anglo-Saxon origin' compare: <u>commence</u>, <u>continue</u>, <u>conclude</u> <formal> with begin, keep (up)

end:

The meeting will { commence at 4 p.m. (formal)
begin at 4 O'clock

The government is { continuing its struggle against inflation (formal)
keeping up its fight against inflation. (rather formal)

The concert concluded with a performance of Beethoven's 5th Symphony. (formal)

They ended the concert with Beethoven's 5th. (informal)

Many phrasal and prepositional verbs are characteristic of informal style:

| Formal Or Common Core Word | Informal Equivalent |
|---|---|
| Discover | find out |
| Explode | blow up |
| Encounter | come across |
| Invent | make up |
| Enter | go in (to) |
| Tolerate | put up with |
| Investigate | look into |
| Surrender | give in |

But there is not always a direct 'translation' between formal and informal English. This may be because an informal term has emotive qualities not present in formal language, or because formal language often insists on greater preciseness. The informal word **job**, for instance, has no formal equivalent instead, we have to choose a more precise term, according to context: employment, post (esp. BE), position, appointment, profession, vocation, etc.

There are also grammatical differences between formal and informal English. For example, the use of who and whom, and the placing of a preposition at the beginning or at the end of a clause.

- She longed for a friend in whom she could confide (formal)
- She longed for a friend (who) she could confide in. (informal)

- In what country was he born? (formal)
- What country was he born in? (informal)

### 6.3.2 Impersonal Style

Formal written language often goes with an impersonal style; i.e. one in which the speaker does not refer directly to himself or his readers, but avoids the pronouns I, you, we. Some of the common features of personal language are passives, sentences beginning with introductory it and abstract nouns. Each of these features is illustrated in the box below:

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE LIBRARIAN

Text A:

It has been noted with concern that the stock of books in the library has been declining alarmingly. Students are asked to remind themselves of the rules for the borrowing and returning of books, and to bear in mind the needs of other students. Penalties for overdue books will in future be strictly enforced.

The author of this notice could have written a more informal and less impersonal message on these lines:

Text B:

The number of books in the library has been going down. Please make sure you know the rules for borrowing, and don't forget that the library is for everyone's convenience. So from now on, we're going to enforce the rules strictly. You have been warned!

**Activity 6.1**

Study the librarian's announcement and then, list down the features of text A which make it rather formal as compared to text B and those which make text B informal.

## 6.4 Polite and Familiar Language

Our language tends to be more polite when we are talking to a person, we do not know well, or a person senior to ourselves in terms of age or social position. English like any other natural languages has the polite and familiar forms

The opposite of 'polite' is 'familiar'. When we know someone well or intimately, we tend to drop polite forms of language. For example, instead of using the polite vocative Mr. Brown, we use the first name (Peter) or a short name (Pete) or even nickname (shartie). English has no special familiar pronouns, like some languages (e.g. French tu, German du), but familiarity can be shown in other ways. Compare for example, these requests:

Shut the door, will you? (familiar)

Would you please shut the door (polite)

I wonder if you would mind shutting the door (More polite)

Words such as please and kindly have the sole function of indicating politeness. One can also be familiar in referring to a third person:

Peter's old woman hit the roof when he came home with the girl from the disco (very familiar) [7]

Peter's wife was very angry when he came home with the girl from the discotheque. (Common core) [8]

We might judge [7] to be (impolite) because it fails to show proper respect to Peter's wife and the girl. In other words, impoliteness is normally a question of being familiar in the wrong circumstances.

Sentence [7] is also an example of slang. Slang is a language very familiar in style, and is usually restricted to the members of particular social group, for example, 'teenage slang'

'army slang', 'theatre slang'. Slang is usually not understood by people outside a particular social group and so has a value of showing the intimacy and solidarity of its members.

## 6.5 Tactful and Tentative Language

Politeness in English language is connected with tactics or diplomacy. To be tactful is to avoid causing offence or distress to someone. Sometimes tact means disguising or covering up the truth. In the following sentences, 'gone' and 'passed away' are ways of avoiding mentioning the unpleasant act of Peter's father's death.

Peter's father has *gone* at last.

Peter's father has *passed away* at last.

Here is a tactful imperative, said by Prof. Temu to his new typist, Mrs Hassan:

Would you like to type this letter for me?

It may be Mrs. Hassan's job to do what Prof. Temu tells her to do. But by disguising his order in the form of a question about Mrs Hassan's wishes, he may win her cooperation more readily.

**Summary**

The English language is not a single language but comprises many languages. The geographical varieties are referred to as dialects – language used according to users. The varieties used by Britain and the United States of America are the most influential and hence distinguished in the written forms besides there are many differences of vocabulary between formal and informal language.

**Exercise**

1. Find the correct English expression for the following British English words: trousers, biscuits, lorry and taxi.
2. Transform the following sentences from informal to formal English.
   (a) The machine should work because it has been tested.
   (b) Our bank has told us that you haven't made this month's payment.
   (c) We'll help you if you need it.
   (d) If you've got any problems give me a call.

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# LECTURE 7

# Word Formation

## 7.1 Introduction

The world has continued to witness many changes since the invention of science and technology. New things have continued to be invented and hence the need for new words. The speakers of English like those of other languages of the world use many techniques for coining new words. The methods used in word making account for many new words and many old words with new meanings.

Two of the most common techniques for coining new words are compounding, – putting two or more words together to make a new word and conversion – changing the classification of a word so that it can function in more than one word class.

Compounding, probably the oldest coining technique, has given us such words as lift-off, be-in, drip-dry and splashdown. Conversion has enabled us to take a *walk*, listen to *commercials*, and *object* almost anything.

***New Recipes***

Sometimes a word is seemingly made up 'out of thin air' with no connection to any previously existing word in the language. The word **Kodak** is an example of creative coining. George Eastman coined the word **Kodak**. He writes that it was 'purely an arbitrary combination of letters, not derived in whole or in part from any existing word'. As a trademark, the word must be capitalised, since it is the special property of the Eastman Kodak Company.

There is now much demand for new trade names that at least one company has coined new names with a computer.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Explain how the English language creates new words

ii. Use various affixes in an acceptable manner to create English words

iii. Explain the meaning of the various prefixes and suffixes used in the creation of English words

## 7.2 Ways of Expanding Vocabulary of English

Expansion of vocabulary is also known as word making. Somehow the sounds of words draw particular interest to most of us. Many of us like to listen to the sounds that words make, and we like to feel the tongue and lips pronounce these sounds. This game of playing with the sounds of words has resulted in three kinds of word making.

### 7.2.1 Onomatopoeia

What is the word that imitates the sound of a dog barking? *bow-wow;* of a canon firing? *Boom;* of a cat crying? *Meow;* of an owl hooting or northing. Writing these words – bow-wow, boom and meow – illustrate the coining process called *Onomatopoeia*, making a word by imitating the sound of the thing it represents. Through this process, words such as gurgle, murmur, bang, burp, and ting-a-ling have been coined.

### 7.2.2 Reduplication

A second kind of sound game is *reduplication*. Words created by this process are made by repeating or rhyming a sound, and they often suggest a comic effect. Such words as willy-nilly, hocus-pocus, suddy-duddy, hodgepodge, goody-goody, boogie-woogie, teemy-weeny, mish-mash and hoity-toity illustrate this process of reduplication.

### 7.2.3 Symbolism

A third type of sound game is called sound symbolism. Linguists have discovered that certain sound combinations suggest certain common responses in us. For example, the sound /k// is said to be an attention drawing noise, since many English words beginning with this sound have a generally similar meaning: clatter, clap, clash, click, clang, clank and clamour.

On the other hand, the sound /fl/ is said that it may suggest rapid movement in such words as flee flicker, flow, flutter, fling, and flit. Other writers have called attention to many words that begin with /sn/ that are connected with noise: *snarl, sneer, sneeze, sniff, snivel, snore, snort, shout, and shuffle.*

Do these words have the same impact as that suggested by the authors?

What do you think the type of impression depends upon?

New words may be coined by three methods based on sounds: onomatopoeia, the imitation of sounds; reduplication: the repeating or rhyme of sounds; and sound symbolism: the use of certain sounds that suggest common responses in us.

**Activity 7.1**

1. Suppose you are working in a company which has just produced a new soap detergent and you have been given a job of coining a new name for it. Use reduplication to make a new name for the product.
2. Beside each word below, write whether it is an example of onomatopoeia, reduplication or sound symbolism.

   (a) kerplunk (b) snoop

   (c) razzle-dazzle (d) nishy-washy

   (e) flighty (f) rat-a-tat-tat

3. Identify the rhyming words from the following pairs and distinguish them from those which are just homophones.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (a) | tacks – tax | (i) | depend – defend |
| (b) | wear – ware | (j) | strict – kicked |
| (c) | die – dye | (k) | even – seven |
| (d) | berry – burry | (l) | rhyme – climb |
| (e) | Choose – chews | (m) | shallow – swallow |
| (f) | meat – meet – mete | (n) | plumber – summer |
| (g) | cent – scent – sent | (m) | try – lie |
| (h) | locks – lox | (o) | mouth – youth |

## 7.3 Personal Touch

Some words in English language have been coined out of names of real or imaginary persons or characters. For example, the word 'quixotic' meaning idealistic but in literature, it was a result of a character of a great novel (Don Quixote who tried to do great deeds of chivalry which invariably backfired) written by a Spanish author Miguel Cervantes.

It is estimated that more than 2000 words have come into English in this way. Other examples of such words are**: sandwich** named for John Montague who is reported to have spent many hours at the gambling tables with nothing to eat except slices of meat between pieces of bread. **Boycott** after Charles Cunningham Boycott, an Irish land agent who refused to reduce rent for his tenants. When he forced his tenants out of their homes, they refused to associate with him, persuaded his workers to desert him, stopped his food coming in, and cut off his mail. Since then, when members of any group combine their efforts to hurt a person or institution financially or socially, we say the person or institution is being boycotted. A few other words taken from the names of real people are **bloome**r, **ampere, guy, valentine, omhs volt, and watts**. Other words have come from names of characters in literature and mythology. For example, from Greek Mythology we have the names **atlas, babbitt, mercator, projection, hector, mentor, psyche, volcano, herculean, jovial, panic,** and **morphine.**

The names of places have also given us useful words. Frankfurter is named for Frankfurt, Germany. Champagne, cheddar, china, cologne, mackinaw, oxford, sauterne, turkey, tuxedo, bayonet, cashmere, spartan, sherry, spaniel, and worsted are all words taken directly from or based on names of places.

Many words come from the names of real people, literary and methodological characters, and the names of places.

**Activity 7.2**

1. Look up these words in your dictionary and write the origin of each word

calliope, epicurean, mercurial, odyssey, protean, cereal and stentorian.

2. Our names for certain days of the week – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday – are all said to have been derived from the gods of people who once occupied Britain. Look them up in your dictionary, and then write the origin of each word.

3. Look up each of the following scientific and technical words in your dictionary and write the origin of each word, denrick, diesel, macadam, ampere, galvanize, Kelvin, volt, and watt.

## 7.4 Affixation

Prefixes and suffixes together form affixes. In the word antidesegregationist: there are two prefixes anti- and de- the root word segregation, and the suffix ist. If you check with your dictionary, you will find whole word. It came from late Latin and was derived from Latin root, greg, which was affixed with the prefix se- and suffix – ion.

Most of the affixes we use come from Anglo-Saxon Latin and Greek. Let us look at some of the most common affixes from each language, their meanings, and examples of English words using those affixes.

### 7.4.1 Anglo-Saxon

***Prefixes***

| Prefix | Meaning | Example |
|---|---|---|
| by- | Near | bypass |
| fore- | front | forelimb |
| mis- | wrong | mismanage |
| over- | too much | overjoyed |
| under- | below | underline |

***Suffixes***

| Suffix | Meaning | Example |
|---|---|---|
| -dom | state of being | chiefdom |
| -ful | full of | careful |
| -hood | state of being | childhood |
| -less | without | spotless |
| -ness | quality of | smoothness |

### 7.4.2 Latin

***Prefixes***

| Prefix | Meaning | Example |
|---|---|---|
| ambi- | both | ambivalent |
| ante- | before | antecedent |
| circum- | around | circumlocution |
| contra- | Against | contradict |
| in- | Into | inculcate |
| In | Not | inadmissible |
| non- | not | inaccurate |
| post- | after | postnatal |
| pre- | before | pre-school |
| re- | Back | return |
| sub- | under | subway |
| super | above | supernatural |
| ultra- | beyond | ultra-modern |

***Suffixes***

| Suffix | Meaning | Example |
|---|---|---|
| -ous | full of | conscious |
| -ation | process | discoloration |
| -ian | relating | physician |
| -ine | chemical substance | chlorine |
| -ory | place for | dormitory |
| -or | one who does something | inspector |

### 7.4.3 Greek

***Prefixes***

| Prefix | Meaning | Example |
|---|---|---|
| a-, an, | Not | anarchy |
| amphi- | both | amphibian |
| anti- | against | antisocial |
| hyper- | above | hypertension |
| hypo- | beneath | hypocentre |
| peri | around | perimeter |
| pro- | before | proceed |

***Suffixes***

| Suffix | Meaning | Example |
|---|---|---|
| -cracy | Government | Autocracy |
| ize | cause to be | democratise |
| -meter | mean of measuring | speedometre |
| -ous | like | gaseous |
| -gram | letter | telegraph |

**Take Note**

**Caution!**

Do not rely too much on your knowledge of roots and affixes. A word has often more than the sum of its parts; sometimes you cannot get an accurate meaning of a word by just putting together the parts you know. For example, the word 'antisocial', does not mean 'against social'. It means 'hostile to society' or 'averse to social relationships'.

Another danger is that many affixes have more than one meaning, and in a few cases the meanings are totally unrelated. For example, the word 'inflammable' has the prefix in-, which in this case means into, meaning it will burst into, 'flames'. An unsuspecting person who thought that the prefix 'in' meant 'not' could make a tragic error.

Some suffixes are quite productive – that is, they land themselves to word making; a good example is the Anglo-Saxon suffix – wise, meaning 'in the manner of'. It has given rise to such words as style-wise, weather-wise, budget-wise, word-wise, and so on.

Affixing words enables us to use language with economy, for instance instead of saying 'That was an act not benefiting a gentle man' you simply say 'That was an ungentlemanly act'. It also enables us to take a word such as **telegraph** and create related words such as telegrapher, telegraphy, and telegraphic.

New words are coined by affixing: adding prefixes to the beginning and suffixes to the end of roots or base words.

**Activity 7.3**

1. (a) List as many kinds of 'burgers' as you can.

(b) Where did the word 'hamburger' originate?

2. Take an English newspaper and list down all the words with affixes. Beside each of the words, write the root word and the affix indicating whether the affix is a prefix or a suffix.

3. The word 'antidisestablishmentarianism' is a compound of several affixes. List each of the affixes, the meaning of each one, the meaning of the base word 'establish' and the meaning of the total word.

4. Using your knowledge of roots and affixes try to unlock the meanings of the italicised words:

   (a) The end of the hypodermic needle was broken.

   (b) I received the antitoxin yesterday.

   (c) It is your duty to unshackle the prisoners.

   (d) We waited in the anteroom.

   (e) The contraband was confiscated.

## 7.5 Word Reducing Processes

English language includes several reduced word forms and word reduction is a common phenomena in the English language

### 7.5.1 Clipping

A long word is shortened e.g. mathematics is reduced to maths. Many clipped words however, are considered colloquial and thus used by special groups of people e.g. students. Such clipped forms such as lab for laboratory, cafe for cafeteria, and lit for literature. Other clipped forms, however, have become fully accepted and widely used such that most people have forgotten the original form.

Below is a list of widely accepted clipped forms and the longer original words from which they were derived:

| Clipped form | Original |
|---|---|
| Mob | Mobile vulgus- |
| bus | 'fickle people' |
| taxi | omni-bus |
| wig | taximeter |
| pants | periwig |
| phone | pantaloons |
| auto | telephone |
| flue | motorcar |
| | influenza |

A second kind of shortening occurs when you take an existing word such as the noun enthusiasm, and change its form so that it can be used as a very enthuse. The word 'dominate' came from the noun form domination. This process is called backformation.

Other words that came to English in this way are burgle from burglar, televise from television, and automate from automation.

A third kind of shortening is making a word from a long phrase using the first letter of each word or the first letter of each major word in the phrase such words are called acronyms.

NATO, VISTA, NIASA, RADAR, WAVES, UNESCO, TANESCO, NUTA and TANU

Shortening processes are formed by three forms of clipping, a general process of simply dropping one or more syllables; back formation, changing the form of an existing word to create a parallel word with a different grammatical function; and acronyms, words made up from the initial letters of each word or each major word in a phrase.

**Summary**

The English vocabulary has multiplied more than 1000 percent since Anglo-Saxon times. This vocabulary explosion has come about through extensive borrowing from other languages and from coining of new words. However, most of the everyday vocabulary is still Anglo-Saxon in origin, although this Anglo- Saxon element accounts for less than half of the total vocabulary.

Latin has had a major influence on the English language vocabulary chiefly as a result of several invasions of Great Britain by the Roman legions. French also has had an important influence, with many words coming in after the Norman conquest and also during modern times.

Other languages which have contributed to English are Greek, Scandinavian, Spanish, Italian and German.

Words have been coined by several methods such as compounding, and conversion; a few have been coined as root creations, and seen unrelated to existing words in the language. Three methods of coining are based on word sounds: onomatopoeia, reduplication, and sound symbolism. Many words have been derived from the names of real people, literary and mythology characters, and the names of places. Several words have been coined by affixing – adding suffixes and prefixes. Three coining methods that result in shortening the original word are clipping, backformation and using acronyms. Blends are new words made by combining parts of existing words.

**Exercise**

1. Using a dictionary find what the following acronyms stand for. Write an acronym and the long phrase it stands for.

   NATO, RADAR, VISTA, UNITA, SWAPO, ECOWAS, DDT, CARE and UNESCO.

2. What is back formation? Give examples of at least five words which were created as a result of this process.

3. Say whether the following words are a result of clipping, acronyms or backformation processes.

   (a) UNIDO, BRUNCH, DISCO, TEENS, ZOO, FLU, LASER, SPAR and SMOW.

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**PART III: Reading and Writing**

Lecture 8: Creative Writing

Lecture 9: Writing Creative Essays

Lecture 10 Reading for Comprehending a Text

# LECTURE 8

# Creative Writing

## 8.1 Introduction

In the following section, we are going to look at some poems written by experienced poets. Poets are writers of poems. It is the concern of this lecture to make you see how they have used language to create imagery and paint pictures. This is what we call creativity in writing, which is mostly shown by the writer's techniques in using language to conquer the readers' feelings and imagination. The aim here is for you to learn and use English language for the same purpose, i.e. in a creative manner and for entertainment.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Sense and observe the world around you in a discerning manner

ii. Show how other writers have used language to paint a picture or to create an emotional effect

iii. Use your own experiences, observations and imaginations to write poems for entertainment and educating others

## 8.2 Poetry

**Moon**
The moon is broken.
Last night I saw it lying
In the big, blue bowl of the lake
In a thousand shining, silver pieces.
I asked the whispering wind
To bring me the crystal chips
That, I might string them on a cord of gold.
But when the mind stretched out its fingers
To pick them up,
They began to dance
Up and down
And round about
Like gleaming fairies
And were all so beautiful
I left them there
To play

– Jean Gay

Writers look for words that will help us to see and hear what they have seen, heard or imagined. Poets in particular use words in special ways to paint word pictures for their readers. They polish their work as a jeweller polishes stones to bring out their beauty.

Many people have seen the moon reflected in a lake or river, and have seen the wind rippling the surface of the water, shaking the reflection. Most people think this a beautiful sight. What did the author of the poem Moon above see when she looked at the moonlight lake? How did she think of the wind on the lake? What did she see when the mind rippled the water?

Because she is a poet, the writer saw in her imagination much more than most people would see. She captured her fanciful pictures in words so that others, too, might see the big blue bowl of the lake with the crystal chips dancing up and down and about like gleaming fairies. Her words flow like music when you read them, making her imaginative word pictures into a poem.

Following is the first stanza of the poem 'the Highwayman' by Alfred Noyes.

> The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees.
>
> The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas.
>
> The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moon.
>
> And the highwayman came riding -
>
> Riding - riding –

Activity 8.1

1. How did Alfred Noyes see the moon in his imagination when he wrote 'The Highwayman'?
2. What other imaginative word pictures did he write in this stanza?
3. What do those lines tell us about the kind of night it was?
4. To one poet, the moon appears as crystal chips and later gleaming fairies. To another is a ghostly galleon. How can it be so many different things?

Prose writers, too, use word pictures.

The Moon painted the seaward slope of each wave with silver, and threw a shadow under each advancing crest, so that it came to the beach mysteriously, and then leaped and sprawled on the frozen sand and flung up handfuls of diamonds at our feet, (Randall, H.).

Activity 8.2

What were the handfuls of diamonds in this passage? Why does the writer say: Each crest leaped and sprawled on the frozen sand?

## 8.3 Language use in Poetry

Poetry is characterised by its distinctive use of language. The choice of words and the creation of imagery and symbolism make poetry a unique literary art. There are also factors such as richness in vocabulary, language economy, sound patterning and poetic licence which indeed prove that creativity is the major tool that poets use to interact with their world, explore it and communicate with those living within and outside the world of poetry. In this particular case, a poet is anybody who writes poems. So in some cases this poet will be referred to as the writer.

### 8.3.1 Figures of Speech

A writer can tell us about things he has seen or imagined by using descriptive words, for example – shining, silver, pieces; gleaming, fairies; purple moon. Or if he looks at the moon and it reminds him of a galleon on, cloudy seas, he may say that the moon is like a galleon or that it is a galleon tossed upon cloudy seas.

***For Example***

The road was a ribbon of moonlight; such a figure of speech is called a **metaphor**; and so is: The mind was a torrent of darkness.

The wind stretched its fingers; this type is called **personification** because the wind is given features of a living being.

The big, blue bowl of the lake; this one is a **simile;** that means the shape of the lake looks like a bowl.

Expressions like these are called **figures of speech.** Watch for other figures of speech in the poetry you read. Figures of speech are used by prose writers too, and in everyday speech.

**Activity 8.3**

Find a figure of speech in the prose paragraph above. When we say "His bark is worse than his bite", we are speaking of a person as if he were a dog, we are using a figure of speech. Think of other figures of speech we use in our talking to one another.

Here are a few examples of telling about familiar things.

The mind told its own ghost stories. He watched the shadows yawning and stretching at twilight.

Pine trees like a row of sharpened pencils.

Jet planes chalking up the sky.

A red moon rides on the humps of the low river hills* A baby just as big as a hug.

The dog followed his tail into a warm circle of sleep.

Notice that one can sometimes mix up two figures of speech and make a ridiculous statement. You picture the politician whose rivals said he sat on the fence and kept both ears to the ground?

***Now it's your turn to write:***

The poets whose works we have just read saw the moon in imaginative ways which they described in beautiful word pictures. What do you see when you look at the round, full moon? What do you see when it is a new, crescent moon? What do you see when it is partly hidden by clouds? Let your imagination work for a while. Then write a poem to tell about the pictures of your fancy. Use figures of speech to show your readers what you have seen or imagined.

Your poem might begin with one of these lines.

The moon is a boat dipping through the waves

Yellow balloon, flying on high ……

The moon is wading through the clouds ……..

Little, silver thread of moon …….

When the moon is shining bright ……..

***Read this poem by a school child:***

The moon is a silver dollar
Flipped way up on high,
It looks like a giant's thumbnail
Illuminated in the sky.

– Donald.

A writer often gives his readers pictures to see, sounds to hear, things to taste, feel, and smell. Some of the impressions the writer gives are pleasant and others are probably not so pleasant. Read the following paragraph let your imaginations run free. Try to see and hear and smell in your imagination.

*The night was black, dark clouds had rolled across the sky soon after sunset, hiding the stars from sight. A few drops of rain fell, and Lone Hunter listened to their soft pleasant patter on the leaves over his head. Not far away in the darkness a coyote howled and its shrill yip yip yip sent a chill up his spine. Another coyote answered and then a whole chorus of them shattered the stillness. Lone Hunter pulled his robe more tightly about him. The air had become cool. (from Worcester).*

Suppose the author of this paragraph had written:

It was a dark night and it started to rain. Lone Hunter could hear coyotes howling. He pulled the robe more tightly about him. The air had become cool.

These sentences tell almost as much as the paragraph above. Yet do not make you feel as if you are lying under the trees with the Lone Hunter, listening to the rain and surrounded by coyotes. How does the author make the story so real that you almost feel warm and cosy as Lone Hunter pulls his robe more tightly about him? What does he give you to see and hear? Which one of the senses does he appeal to the most? What words that he uses do you like best?

### 8.3.2 Sounds in Poetry

Rhyme and rhythms make words flow easily. We have seen how poets use words to create special effects. What are some of the effects poets can achieve with words?

Now we shall see how poetry can appeal to another of our senses.

**Noise**

I like noise
The whoop of a boy, the thud of a hoop,
The rattle of rain on a galvanized roof,
The hub bubs of traffic, the roar of a train,
The throb of machinery numbing the brain,
The switching of wires in an overhead train,
The rush of the wind, a door on the slam,
The boom of the thunder, the crash of the waves,
The din of a river that races and raves,
The crack of a rifle, the clank of a pail,
The strident tattoo of a swift – slapping sail –
From any old sound that the silence destroys,
Arises a gamut of soul - stirring – joys
I like noise.

– Pope

**Activity 8.4**

1. Read the poem 'Noise'. Which of your senses does this poem appeal to?
2. Find words in the poem that imitate the sound they tell about. Such words can be called sound they tell about.
3. Which sound words in the poem do you think give the best imitations?
4. Use your imagination while you listen to the poem read aloud. What sounds can you hear? Which sounds can you remember after – words?
5. Listen for the sound words while you read.

The sounds in the morning
The sounds in the morning
Go all down the street
The tapping of sticks
And the patter of feet
The wind in the plane trees
That whisper and rustle,
The pigeons all sleepy,
The newsboys all hustle,
Bogs twitter of sparrows,
Till the sun through the slats
of my blind shoots his arrows
And the world of my ears
Seems to dwindle in size
As I jump out of bed

To the world of my eyes

– Eleanor Farjeon

(a) This poem is full of sounds. Why is the early morning, when a person is just waking up, a good time to hear sounds?

(b) What sounds did the poet hear in the morning? What words in this poem help us to hear the sounds she heard?

(c) What does the poet mean by the world of my ears? What does she mean by the world of my eyes?

(d) What sounds do you hear when you wake up in the morning? Close your eyes and try to remember. Try to think of words that sound like the sounds you hear in the morning.

***Now it's your turn to write:***

Make a list of sounds you can hear at one particular time and place. It may be as you lie awake in bed at night, as you sit in a garden, as you stand in the street, or on a farm, in the woods, or anywhere you wish. Then write a poem about the sounds.

***Writing Hints***

1. You may find it best to write one line about each sound; for example:

   The trample of feet …….

   The squealing of brakes …….. or

   The drip, drip of rain

2. Do not worry if your lines do no rhyme, try rather to make them flow smoothly.

3. Try to use words that will make the sounds real to your listeners.

### 8.3.3 Rhythm in Poetry

A poet who wishes to convey a deeper meaning and feeling uses rhythm as part of his tool chest of poetic skills. The rhythm itself helps to give the reader the feeling the poet wishes to express. Read the poem below:

**A Modern Dragon**

A train is a dragon that roars dark.

He wriggles his tail as he sends up a spark.

He pieces the night with his one yellow eye,

And all the earth trembles when he rushes by.

– By Rowena Bastin Bennet in MarcFalane *et al*.

Notice how the poet has carried the figure of speech throughout the whole poem. What does each line add to the picture of the train as a dragon?

### 8.3.4 Rhyme

Most of the poems you read in this lecture have rhyme as well as rhythm. Sometimes every pair of lines rhyme; sometimes the first and third lines rhyme with each other, and the second and fourth lines with each other. Some poems have a much more complicated rhyme scheme.

**Paul Bunyan**
He came
Striding
Over the mountain,
the moon slung on his back,
like a pack,
a great pack;
a great pine
stuck on the shoulder
swayed as he walked,
as he talked
to his blue ox

**Babe**
A huge, looming shadow
of a man,
clad
in a mackinaw coat,
his logger's shirt
open at the throat
and the great mane of hair
matching,
meeting
the locks of night,
the smoke from his cauldron pipe
a cloud on the moon.
And his laugh
rolled through the mountains
like thunder
while the lightning of his smile
split the heavens
asunder

– Arthur S. B. in MarcFalane *et al*.

**Summary**

A writer can tell us about things he has seen or imagined by using descriptive words rhyme and rhythms make words flow easily. A poet who wishes to convey a deeper meaning and feeling uses rhythm as part of his tool chest of poetic skills. The rhythm itself helps to give the reader the feeling the poet wishes to express.

**Exercise**

1. What rhyme can you find in 'Paul Bunyan' above?
2. Some poetry has lines of irregular length. Some has irregular rhyme and rhythm. Some has no rhyme. Such poetry is sometimes called free verse. What other poem can you remember that could be called free verse?
3. Why do we call such writing poetry?
4. What reason might the poet have had for using this style of writing to tell about Paul Bunyan?
5. What impression does this poem give you of Paul Bunyan?
6. How does the poet give this impression? What words in particular help to call up an imaginary picture of the mighty logger?
7. What expressions go beyond exact description and suggest that Paul Bunyan has become a legendary hero?
8. Read the following selection from "Hiawatha" a long poem about a legendary Indian hero. This passage is from the early part of the poem which tells about Hiawatha's boyhood.

**Hiawatha**

At the door on summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha;
Heard the lapping of the waters …
Saw the firefly, wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting though the dusk of evening,
with the twinkle of its candle
lighting up the brakes and bushes,
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him:
"Wah-wah-taysee, little firefly,
Little, flitting, white-fire insect,
Little dancing white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids."

– Longfellow in MarcFalene *et al*., 1963

(a) Find the rhythm pattern in "Hiawatha".

(b) How does the poet use figures of speech to let us see nature in the eyes of an Indian boy?

(c) What difference can you see between the two poems, 'Paul Bunyan' and 'Hiawatha'?

9. What type of poetry is the next poem, 'Arithmetic'?

Notice that in 'Arithmetic' each thought takes a line. There is no rhyme, but the poet is very careful of his choice of words and of the rhythm.

Arithmetic is where numbers fly like pigeons in and out of your head.

Arithmetic tells you how many you lose or win if you know how many you had lost or won.

Arithmetic is seven eleven all good children go to heaven – or five six bundle sticks.

Arithmetic is where the answer is right and everything is nice and you can look out the window and see the blue sky – or the answer is wrong and you have to start all over and try again and see how it comes out this time.

– Carl Sandburg

(a) How does the writer of this poem feel about arithmetic?

(b) How can Arithmetic be called a poem?

10. What word pictures or figures of speech in the poems especially appeal to you?

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# LECTURE 9

# Writing Creative Essays

## 9.1 Introduction

After you have familiarised yourself with creativity in writing as it is revealed in poetry it is now the concern of this lecture to address creativity in prose through exploring essay writing. The intention of this lecture is to show you that creativity in writing is not confined solely to poetic works, or rather fiction but also non-fiction works including the essays we frequently read and write. In essay writing, creativity means flexibility for the writers to behave in open mind to write about their personal experiences, their imaginations about the world they live in, their interactions with both physical, psychological and spiritual world in the manner that will capture the eye of the readers, their feelings and imaginations to the extent that they willingly become a companion to the writer through sharing experiences and feelings or reacting to what has creatively been presented as if it is existing in their real life.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Describe creativity used in essay writing

ii. Identify techniques used in writing creative essays

iii. Use the techniques learned to write authentic and aesthetic essays.

## 9.2 Creativity in Essay Writing

Generally, creativity as associated with essay writing focuses on two significant factors which are: authenticity and aesthetics. Authenticity addresses the issue of originality of what the essay writer has written. This takes into consideration that someone's imagination and perception of the world around him is likely to reveal some uniqueness in viewing similar events and experiences because we normally do not think in similar ways. Aesthetics is all about the art of beauty. This reflects means and ways the writers use to beautify their works, making them adhesive and attractive to their readers through their choice of words, creation of imagery and symbolism, ordering of events, presenting their ideas, clarity of their explanations and their struggle to approach the world of reality even presenting imaginative and unreal things originated from their imaginative world.

### 9.2.1 Techniques in Writing Creative Essays

Creative essays borrow alot from creative writing since it is also a part of creative writing. Creative writing, by definition, involves being creative: making things up, letting your imagination run wild. Essays are about being factual and objective, communicating ideas and arguments in the clearest way possible and attempting to enhance the reader's knowledge, rather than their imagination. But while the literary devices and colourful tales we associate with creative writing are indeed out of place in an essay, these two very different kinds of writing actually have a few similarities. Above all, they are both meant to be read by other people, and that means that they need to sustain the reader's interest. The following are

some basic writing techniques you can borrow from creative writing to help making your essays more interesting and original:

#### 9.2.1.1 Understand your reader

With creative essay writing, as with any kind of writing, your reader is your most important consideration. You need to know and understand whom you are writing for if you are to do a good job of keeping them interested. Let us think for a moment about the kind of audience you are addressing when you are writing a creative essay, and what you `should do to write specifically, authentically and creatively to capture their attention. For example, if your audience contains teachers or university lecturers you should know that:

- They are going to be marking your essay, so it needs to answer the question effectively.
- They have set the question and they probably have a pretty good idea of how you are going to answer it – so be original and unpredictable; catch them by surprise with an unusual approach or structure.
- They arre going to be reading many other responses to the same question – so they may well be bored by the time they get to yours. Keep them interested!
- They are probably going to be pressed for time – so they won't have time to reread badly written passages to try to understand what you are getting at. Keep your writing easy to read, succinct and to the point.

#### 9.2.1.2 Three-act structure

The three-act structure is a writing device used extensively in modern writing, including for film and television dramas. These 'acts' aren't as distinct as acts in a play, as one follows seamlessly on from another and the audience wouldn't consciously realise that one act had ended and another began. The structure refers to a plotline that looks something like this:

1. **Set-up** – establishes the characters, how they relate to each other, and the world they inhabit. Within this first 'act', a dramatic occurrence called an 'inciting incident' takes place (typically around 19 minutes into a film) involving the principal character. They try to deal with it, but this results in another dramatic occurrence called a 'turning point'. This sets the scene for the rest of the story.

2. **Confrontation** – the turning point in the previous 'act' becomes the central problem, which the main character attempts to resolve – usually with plenty of adversity thrown their way that hampers their efforts. In a murder mystery, for example, this act would involve the detective trying to solve the murder. The central character – with the help of supporting characters – undergoes a journey and develops their knowledge, skills or character to a sufficient degree to be able to overcome the problem.

3. **Resolution** – the climax of the story, in which the drama reaches a peak, the problem is overcome, and loose ends are tied up

The key similarities of the structure to creative essay are:

- The central argument of your essay is the equivalent of the main character.
- The essay equivalent of the set-up and resolution are the introduction and conclusion.

- The inciting incident in an essay encourages you to get to the point early on in the essay.
- The equivalent of character development in the second act is developing your argument.
- The equivalent of the supporting characters is the evidence you refer to in your essay

So, applying the three-act structure to an essay gives you something like this:

1. **Set-up** – the introduction. This establishes what you're talking about, setting the scene. The 'inciting incident' could be the introduction of evidence that contradicts a common theory, or the highlighting of a central disagreement in how something is interpreted.

2. **Confrontation** – you discuss the different problems surrounding the topic you're writing about. You develop the argument using various bits of evidence, moving towards an overall conclusion.

3. **Resolution** – the conclusion. You summarise and resolve the argument with your own opinion, by coming down on one side or the other, having weighed up the evidence you've discussed. You could perhaps tie up loose ends by offering an alternative explanation for evidence that doesn't sit with your conclusion.

Using this structure keeps you focused on the central point, and stops you from waffling, because everything you write is working towards resolving your argument. The use of the inciting incident in the first 'act' encourages you to get to the point early on in your essay, thereby keeping the reader interested. The principles of good plot-writing are centred around the connection between different events that show cause and effect, and this central tenet of the three-act structure has obvious parallels with the way in which essays work through presenting evidence in support of arguments.

#### 9.2.1.3 An attention-grabbing opening

An oft-spouted piece of advice in creative writing is to use an attention-grabbing opening. One way of doing this is to start with a flashback, which could disrupt the chronology of events by transporting the reader directly back to the midst of the action, so that the story begins with maximum excitement. In a murder mystery, for instance, the writer might skip a slow build-up and instead use the murder itself to form the opening of the novel, with the rest of the story charting the efforts of the detective to uncover the perpetrator and perhaps telling the events prior to the murder in a series of flashbacks. The same principle can be applied to essays, though it's easier to use in some subjects than others.

To take an example, let us say you were writing about how the First World War started. Rather than building up slowly with the various factors, an attention-grabbing opening could briefly describe the drama of the Battle of the Somme, perhaps citing some statistics about the number of men involved and killed, and quoting some war poetry about the horrors faced by the soldiers on the front line. Then, to introduce the purpose of the essay and launch into your argument about what started the war, a phrase such as, "It seems hard to imagine that all this began with…". Alternatively, a rhetorical question: "But how did these tens of thousands of soldiers end up in the mud and horror of trench warfare? The story begins several years earlier, with…" It may not be the standard way of writing an essay, but you will certainly score points for originality and perhaps ruffle a few feathers.

#### 9.2.1.4 Extended Metaphors

Creative writing often makes use of extended metaphors. For example, when Shakespeare wrote the passage in *Romeo and Juliet* referring to "It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!" he was using an extended metaphor. With this in mind, it's time to revisit a point we insist on writing more original essays, in which we argued that, rather than battling on with trying to explain a complex concept in a straightforward way, it might be easier to use an analogy to convey the meaning by drawing comparisons, which people find easier to understand. A metaphor is a kind of analogy, so the similarities with creative writing are strong here. In one of the famous articles the author used the example of radioactive decay. An analogy for this is the pressure with which water escapes from a hole in a bucket. It does so exponentially, just as radioactive substances decay exponentially. In both instances, the rate of a consumptive process depends on how much there is left of whatever is being depleted, which results in an exponential rate of decay. This concept is so much easier to explain using the analogy of water flowing from a hole in a bucket, as you give your reader something familiar to visualise in order to explain a concept with which they are unfamiliar.

#### 9.2.1.5 Interesting details about setting and location

Another way of keeping your reader interested is to bring your essay to life with details about setting and location, just as creative writers do. Essays can become quite dry if you focus solely on the academic problems, but you can make them more interesting by peppering them with details. This may not work quite so well for a scientific essay, but it is certainly relevant for some humanities subjects, in particular English literature, history and archaeology. For example, an essay about the Roman emperor Augustus could mention that he lived a famously modest lifestyle, quoting details from Roman writers and archaeological evidence that support this: Suetonius mentions his "low bed" (interesting because of what it says about accepted standards of Roman beds!) and coarse bread and cheese diet, and the relatively small and non-lavish remains of his house on the Palatine Hill in Rome back up the idea of his having lived a modest life.

Incidental details like these can actually prove to be more significant than you initially realise, and you can use them to build your argument; in the case of Augustus, for example, his modest lifestyle is particularly important when seen in the context of Rome's troubled history with kings. As he gradually acquired more power and became Rome's first emperor, he had to avoid coming across as being too 'regal', and the little details we know about his way of life are significant in light of this. So, not only have you brought your essay to life, but you've raised an interesting point, too

#### 9.2.1.6 Editing

Few writers get it right first time. Once you have written a first draft, read through it and think about whether the order of your points is optimal and whether what you have written actually makes sense. It is easy in the age of computers to chop and change – you can simply copy and paste part of your essay into another part where it might fit better, and then make minor changes to your wording so that it flows. After you have finished editing, have a final read through and check that you're happy with the wording. Don't forget to proofread to ensure that your spelling and grammar is impeccable.

#### 9.2.1.7 Record your ideas

Creative writers swear by having a notebook with them at all times, ready to jot down any ideas that suddenly spring to mind. You can adopt the same principle for your essay-writing, because you never know when the inspiration might strike. Have a think about your essay topic when you are out and about; you would be surprised what occurs to you when you are away from your normal place of study.

As you can see, there are more similarities between two apparently unrelated kinds of writing than you might have realised. It is, of course, possible to go too far with the creative writing idea when you're essay-writing: literary devices are not always appropriate, and your essay still needs to retain objectivity and conform to the more formal conventions of academic writing. But there are certainly techniques to be borrowed from creative writing that will help your essays stand out from the crowd and give your teacher or lecturer a welcome break from the monotony of essay-marking.

## 9.3 Coherence in Creative Essays

Coherence in writing is the logical bridge between words, sentences, and paragraphs. Coherent writing uses devices to connect ideas within each sentence and paragraph. Main ideas and meaning can be difficult for the reader to follow if the writing lacks coherence.

### 9.3.1 Establishing Coherence

It is important to focus on coherence when writing at the sentence level. However, cohesion smoothens the flow of writing and should be established. There are various ways to ensure coherent writing:

- Write sentences that flow by varying the lengths and structures, the use of correct punctuation, and broadening your word choices
- Use simple transitions, such as "in addition, additionally, furthermore, therefore, thus, on the contrary, by the same token, at the same time, in other words, etc."
- Repeat your keywords but be careful of excessive repetition
- Repeat sentence structures, which is used as a rhetorical technique rather than cohesion to highlight parallelism between sentences
- Ensure thematic consistency
- Start every sentence or paragraph with information that hints at the content of the next sentence

Creative writing is improved by coherence and cohesion. Without coherence and cohesion, readers will become confused and eventually disinterested in the article. Your ideas then become lost and the primary objective of writing is not achieved.

### 9.3.2 Guides and Strategies

There are six ways for creating coherence, which you will find useful while polishing your manuscript. Creating coherence is not as difficult as it seems, but you will need the right tools and strategies to achieve it.

- Lexis creates cohesion using synonyms, hyponyms, and super ordinates. The use of lexical chains creates variety in writing and avoids monotony.
- Reference creates cohesion by using possessive pronouns (e.g. your, their, etc.), pronouns (e.g. she, me, etc.), and determiners (e.g. those, these, etc.).
- Substitution, which is the use of a different word in place of a previously mentioned word (e.g. "I bought a designer bag today. She did the same.")
- Ellipsis is the removal or omission of words because their meaning is implied through context (e.g. "He goes to yoga classes in the afternoon. I hope I can too.")
- Cohesive nouns are also called umbrella nouns because they summarize many words in one.
- Conjunctions include words that list ideas (e.g. first, next, then, lastly, etc.)

Creative writing should be concise, coherent, and cohesive. Maintaining these three qualities involves using a number of strategies to impart ideas to the reader. After all, that is the whole point of any type of writing.

## 9.4 Language use in creative writing

Creative writing is an art of sorts - the art of making things up. It is writing done in a way that is not academic or technical but still attracts the audience. Without figurative language, writing would be plain and shallow. The more stylistic devices you know, the more unique your writing can be. If writing is your passion, you probably already know a dozen or so stylistic devices; however, there are a few on this list you've never heard of.

### 1. Adnomination

Repetition of words with the same root. The difference lies in one sound or letter. A nice euphony can be achieved by using this poetic device.

Examples: "Nobody loves no one." (Chris Isaak). Someone, somewhere, wants something.

### 2. Allegory

Representation of ideas through a certain form (character, event, etc.). Allegory can convey hidden meanings through symbolic figures, actions, and imagery.
Example: *Animal Farm* by George Orwell is all about the Russian Revolution. And characters stand for working and upper classes, military forces, and political leaders.

### 3. Alliteration

The repeated sound of the first consonant in a series of words, or the repetition of the same sounds of the same kind at the beginning of words or in stressed syllables of a phrase.

Examples: A lazy lying lion. Peter picked a peck of pickled peppers. Sally sells seashells by the seashore.

### 4. Allusion

Reference to a myth, character, literary work, work of art, or an event.

Example: I feel like I'm going down the rabbit hole (an allusion to Alice's *Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll).

**5. Anaphora**

Word repetition at the beginnings of sentences in order to give emphasis to them.

Example: “Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.” (Martin Luther King)

Opposite: **Epiphora.** Word repetition at the end of sentences.

Example: “And that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.” (Abraham Lincoln)

**6. Antithesis**

Emphasizing contrast between two things or fictional characters.

Example: “Love is an ideal thing, marriage a real thing; a confusion of the real with the ideal never goes unpunished.” (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

**7. Apostrophe**

Directed speech to someone who is not present or to an object.

Example: “Work on, my medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught.” (William Shakespeare)

**8. Assonance**

Repetition of vowels in order to create internal rhyming.
Example: “Hear the mellow wedding bells.” (Edgar Allan Poe)
Related: **Consonance.** Repetition of consonants.

**9. Cataphora**

Mentioning of the person or object further in the discourse.

Examples: I met him yesterday, your boyfriend who was wearing the cool hat. If you want some, here’s some cheese. After he had received his orders, the soldier left the barracks.

**10. Climax**

Arranging text in such a manner that tension gradually ascends.

Example. He was a not bad listener, a good speaker and an amazing performer.

Opposite: **Anticlimax.** Tension descends.

**11. Charactonym** (or Speaking Name)

Giving fictional characters names that describe them.

Example: Scrooge, Snow White.

**12. Ellipsis**

Word or phrase omission.

Example: I speak lots of languages, but you only speak two (languages).

### 13. Euphemism

Replacing offensive or combinations of words with lighter equivalents.

Example: Visually challenged (blind); meet one's maker (die)

Opposite: **Dysphemism**. Replacing a neutral word with a harsher word.

### 14. Epigram

Memorable and brief saying, usually satirical.

Example: "For most of history, Anonymous was a woman." (Virginia Woolf)

### 15. Hyperbole

Exaggeration of the statement.

Example: If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times.

Opposite: **Litotes.** Understatement.

### 16. Hypophora

Asking a question and answering it right away.
Example: Are you going to leave now? I don't think so.

### 17. Irony

There are three types of irony:

- *Verbal* (Antiphrasis) – using words to express something different from their literal meaning for ironic effect ("I'm so excited to burn the midnight oil and write my academic paper all week long").
- *Situational* – result differs from the expectation (Bruce Robertson, a character of *Filth*, is a policeman. Nonetheless, he does drugs, resorts to violence and abuse, and so on).
- *Dramatic* – situation is understandable for the audience but not the fictional character/actor (audience sees that the fictional characters/actors will be killed now, though the characters don't expect it).

### 18. Merism

Describing people/objects by enumerating their traits.

Example: Lock, stock, and barrel (gun); heart and soul (entirety)

### 19. Metalepsis

Referencing one thing through the means of another thing, which is related to the first one.

Example: "Stop judging people so strictly—you live in a glass house too." (A hint at the proverb: people who live in glass houses should not throw stones.)

### 20. Metaphor

Comparing two different things that have some characteristics in common.

Example: "Love is clockworks and cold steel." (U2)

### 21. Metonymy

Giving a thing another name that is associated with it.

Example: The heir to the crown was Richard. (the crown stands for authority)

### 22. Onomatopoeia

Imitating sounds in writing.

Example: oink, ticktock, tweet tweet

### 23. Oxymoron

Combining contradictory traits.

Example: Living dead; terribly good; real magic

### 24. Parallelism

Arranging a sentence in such a manner that it has parallel structure.

Example: “Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I will learn.” (Benjamin Franklin)

Opposite: **Chiasmus**. An inverted parallelism.

Examples: “To stop, too fearful, and too faint to go.” (Oliver Goldsmith); “My job is not to represent Washington to you but to represent you to Washington.” (Barack Obama)

### 25. Parenthesis

Interrupting a sentence by inserting extra information enclosed in brackets, commas, or dashes.

Example: Our family (my mother, sister, and grandfather) had a barbeque this past weekend.

### 26. Personification

Attributing human characteristics to nonhumans.

Example: Practically all animals in fairy tales act like human beings. They speak and have traits that are typical of people.

### 27. Pun

A kind of wordplay. Here are a few types of puns:

- *Antanaclasis* – repetition of the same word or phrase, but with a different meaning (“Cats like Felix like Felix.”—“Felix” catfood slogan).
- *Malapropism* – usage of the incorrect word instead of the word with a similar sound (“optical delusion” instead of “optical illusion”).
- *Paradox* – self-contradictory fact; however, it can be partially true (“I can resist anything but temptation.”—Oscar Wilde).
- *Paraprosdokian* – arranging a sentence in such a manner so the last part is unexpected (You’re never too old to learn something stupid).
- *Polyptoton* – repetition of the words with the same root (“The things you *own* end up *owning* you.”—Chuck Palahniuk).

**28. Rhetorical question**

Questioning without expecting the answer.

Example: Why not? Are you kidding me?

**29. Simile**

Direct comparison.

Example: “Your heart is like an ocean, mysterious and dark.” (Bob Dylan)

**30. Synecdoche**

Generalization or specification based on a definite part/trait of the object.

Example: He just got new wheels. (car)

**31. Tautology**

Saying the same thing twice in different ways.

Example: first priority; I personally; repeat again

**32. Zeugma** (or Syllepsis)

Applying a word to a few other words in the sentence in order to give different meaning.

Example: Give neither counsel nor salt till you are asked for it.

With all these stylistic devices, your writing can potentially be so much more pretty and authentic. The important thing here is not to memorise them but understand the meaning they convey and the context to employ them precisely.

**Summary**

Writing creatively is a matter of being authentic and aesthetic. While authenticity is realised by the writers creative imagination and picturing of the world such that the reality can be observed even when it is implicit; aesthetics works on the style and techniques which the writers artistically exploit to make their writing the focus of attention of the readers. Aesthetics becomes a means to capture the readers’ feelings due to the beauty of the written essay or poem as a result of good and creative use of language to create the world that no reader manages to disregard or avoid.

**Exercise**

1. What are the important devices to make your writing creative?
2. Why do you think creativity is essential in writing?

3. How would you distinguish technical writing and creative writing?

4. Practice writing on your own in one of the following topics:

   (a) The Day I Met My Guiding Angel

   (b) The House under the Sea

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# LECTURE 10

# Reading for Comprehending a Text

## 10.1 Introduction

This lecture addresses significant skills in approaching a text so that the reading done should enable the reader to grasp what the writer has intended. Reading goes further than simple recognition of letters and their sounds, words and expression as well as sentences. It is a struggle to grasp the meaning intended by the writer. This struggle is managed through comprehension of the text read. Comprehension of a text is enabled by a systematic approach to the text such that each of the meaning is conveyed appropriately. It is here where the reader's ability to interpret the text works effectively and guides them to explore and exploit from the text.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Describe successful reading approaches towards comprehending a text

ii. Read, interpret and identify the meaning and the message from a text

iii. Summarise by paraphrasing a text after a successful reading

## 10.2 Approaches to Comprehending a Text

Reading is a skill many people take for granted; however, the act of reading and properly comprehending a text is a complex and interactive process. It requires several different brain functions to work together and most often requires one to puzzle through multiple layers of context and meaning.

Since reading comprehension is so complicated, we can often find ourselves understanding the most basic interpretation of a text, but missing the emotional core or the "big picture." Or we might just find our brains spinning with no clue at *all* as to what a text is attempting to convey.

Reading comprehension is the level of understanding of a text or message. This understanding comes from the interaction between the words that are written, and how they trigger knowledge outside the text or message. To achieve this understanding some of the key procedures are as follows:

### 10.2.1 Decoding

Decoding is a vital step in the reading process. Readers use this skill to sound out words they have heard before but haven't seen written out. The ability to do that is the foundation for other reading skills.

Decoding relies on an early language skill called phonemic awareness. This skill is part of an even broader skill called phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness enables readers to hear individual sounds in words known as phonemes. It also allows them to "play" with sounds at the word and syllable level.

Decoding also relies on the ability to connect the individual sounds `to letters. For instance, to read the word *sun*, readers must know that the letter *s* makes the /s/ sound. Grasping the connection between a letter (or group of letters) and the sounds they typically make is an important step toward "sounding out" words.

### 10.2.2 Fluency

To read fluently, readers need to instantly recognize words, including ones they can't sound out. Fluency speeds up the rate at which they can read and understand text. It is also important when readers encounter irregular words, like *of* and *the*, which can't be sounded out.

Sounding out or decoding every word can take a lot of effort. Word recognition is the ability to recognize whole words instantly by sight, without sounding them out.

When readers can read quickly and without making too many errors, they are "fluent" readers. Fluent readers read smoothly at a good pace. They group words together to help with meaning, and they use the proper tone in their voice when reading aloud. Reading fluency is essential for good reading comprehension.

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### 10.2.3 Vocabulary

To understand what you are reading, you need to understand most of the words in the text. Having a strong vocabulary is a key component of reading comprehension. Readers can learn vocabulary through instruction. But they typically learn the meaning of words through everyday experience and also by reading.

The more words readers are exposed to, the greater their vocabulary becomes. You can help build your vocabulary by having frequent conversations on a variety of topics. Try to include new words and ideas. Telling jokes and playing word games is a fun way to build this skill.

Reading together every day also helps improve vocabulary. When reading aloud, stop at new words and define them. But also encourage your child to read alone. Even without hearing a definition of a new word, your child can use context to help figure it out.

### 10.2.4 Sentence Construction and Cohesion

Understanding how sentences are built might seem like a writing skill. So might connecting ideas within and between sentences, which is called cohesion. But these skills are important for reading comprehension as well.

Knowing how ideas link up at the sentence level helps readers get meaning from passages and entire texts. It also leads to something called coherence, or the ability to connect ideas to other ideas in an overall piece of writing.

### 10.2.5 Reasoning and Background Knowledge

Most readers relate what they have read to what they know. So it is important for readers to have background or prior knowledge about the world when they read. They also need to be able to "read between the lines" and extract meaning even when it is not literally spelled out. Take this example. A reader is reading a story about a poor family in the 1930s. Having knowledge about the Great Depression can provide insight into what's happening in the story. The reader can use that background knowledge to make inferences and draw conclusions.

Readers can build knowledge through reading, conversations, movies and shows, and art. Life experience and hands-on activities also build knowledge. Therefore, expose yourself to the world as much as possible, and talk about what you have learned from experiences you have had together and separately. Make connections between new knowledge and the existing knowledge. Additionally, ask yourself open-ended questions that require thinking and explanations.

### 10.2.6 Working Memory and Attention

These two skills are both part of a group of abilities known as executive function. They are different but closely related. When readers read, attention allows them to take in information from the text. Working memory allows them to hold on to that information and use it to gain meaning and build knowledge from what they are reading. Working memory and attention are part of executive function. The ability to self-monitor while reading is also tied to that. Readers need to be able to recognize when they don't understand something. Then they need to stop, go back and re-read to clear up any confusion they may have.

## 10.3 Reading Comprehension Guidelines

### 10.3.1 Try to summarize what you have just read

As you read, let yourself stop whenever you lose focus or feel confused. Just stop. Now, without re-reading, **summarize aloud or in your head what you've comprehended so far** (before the place where you became confused).
Skim back through the text and compare how you've summarized it with what is written on the page. Do you feel you have captured the salient points? Do you feel a little more focused on what is going on now that you have put the material into your own words?

Keep on reading with your summation in mind and let yourself stop and repeat the process whenever the piece becomes confusing to you. The more you are able to re-contextualize the work in your own words, the better you will be able to understand it and lock the information in your mind as you keep reading.

10.3.2 Try reading aloud

Sometimes, we can form a sort of "mental block" that can halt our reading progress for whatever reason (maybe the sentence looks complex or awkward, maybe you're tired, maybe you feel intimidated by the word choice, or are simply bored).
Reading these problematic passages aloud can often help circumvent that block and help you to form a visual of what the text is trying to convey.

10.3.3 Re-read (or Skim) previous sections of the text

For the most part, reading is a personal activity that happens entirely in your head. So don't feel you have to read just like anyone else if "typical" methods don't work for you.
Sometimes it can make the most sense to read (or re-read) a text out of order.

It is often helpful to glance backwards through a piece of text (or even re-read large sections) to remind yourself of any information you need and have forgotten--what happened previously, what a particular word means, who a person was...the list is endless.
Previous sentences, sections, or even whole chapters can provide helpful context clues. Re-reading these passages will help to refresh your memory so that you can better understand and interpret later sections of the text.

10.3.4 Skim or read upcoming sections of the text
Just like with the previous step, don't feel that the only way to read and understand a text is to work through it completely linearly. Allow yourself the
freedom to take apart the text and put it back together again in whichever way makes the most sense to you.
Sometimes a current confusion in a work will be explained later on in the text, and it can help you to know that explanations are upcoming or even just to read them ahead of time.
So skip forward or backwards, re-read or read ahead as you need to, take the piece in whatever order you need to in order to make sense of the text. Not everyone thinks linearly, and not everyone best understands texts linearly either.

### 10.3.5 Paraphrase what you have read

Sometimes discussing what you know so far about a text can help clear up any confusion. If you have a friend who has not read the text in question, then explain it to them in your own words, and discuss where you feel your comprehension is lacking. You will find that you have probably understood more than you think once you have been forced to explain it to someone who is completely unfamiliar with the piece.

Even if no one else is in the room, trying to teach or discuss what a passage says or means with "someone else" can be extremely beneficial. In fact, software engineers call this technique "rubber duck debugging," wherein they explain a coding problem to a rubber duck. This forces them to work through a problem aloud, which has proven time and time again to help people solve problems. So if a piece of text has your head spinning from trying to work through it by yourself, start chatting with your nearest friend rubber duck. You will be surprised with how much easier it is to understand a text once you have talked it through with someone.

**Summary**

Reading is more than just recognising sounds and letters. It is a skill that one should systematically develop to make it successful and meaningful. Reading is actually a planned search for a particular meaning which the writer intends to communicate to the reader. Since the reader and the writer have not communicated before, the reader needs to employ skilful approaches to capture the meaning intended by the writer. It is only when the reader has succeeded to capture the intended meaning from the text then we can say the reader has comprehended the text. It is also only when the text is comprehended, then reading becomes meaningful and successful indeed.

**Exercise**

1. What are the basic approaches in reading for comprehending a text?
2. After you have gone through this lecture, get a five paragraphs text and develop a summary of one paragraph with a maximum of six lines.
3. What will you consider first before you summarise a text?
4. Why are successful readers required to paraphrase the text?

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**PART IV: Grammar and Usage**

# LECTURE 11
# The English Words

## 11.1 Introduction

Traditionally, the English words are grouped into eight parts of speech. These parts of speech are listed below with some words to exemplify each class:

(a) ***Noun:*** The noun is the word used as the name of a living thing or non-living thing: David, Gloria, man, woman, chair, sincerity, Jack, girl, cow, Dar es Salaam, beauty.

(b) ***Pronoun:*** A pronoun is a word which serves as a substitute for a noun, in other words, it is a word used in place of a noun. I, we, who, they, you, she.

(c) ***Verb:*** The verb is the part of speech that predicates, or the word that describes an action done by the noun: laugh, dance, write, sit, rush, have.

(d) ***Adverb:*** An adverb modifies a verb, an adjective or even another adverb: quickly, then, fast, soon, suddenly.

(e) ***Adjective:*** An adjective is a word that modifies the reference of a noun or pronoun: fat, ugly, black, tall, kind, happy.

(f) ***Preposition:*** A preposition shows the relationship between itself and the noun or pronoun that governs it: over, above, in, under, at, outside: e.g. The cow ran into the bush.

(g) ***Conjunction:*** A conjunction is used to join two or more constructions: and, but, or, while, although.

(h) ***Interjection:*** An interjection is that part of speech used to express emotion such as pain, anger, surprise, happiness ah! ouch! Alas! Oh!

These definitions derived from Curme 1935 are based on two criteria: namely functional and semantic. The noun for instance, is defined in terms of what it denotes, i.e. its meaning; while the other parts of speech are defined in terms of their functions.

Ndemele, however, argues that, in defining word classes, three major criteria need to be taken into account. The first is the form of the word, then the meaning of the word and lastly but most importantly is what the word performs in a larger construction, i.e. its function. In other words, what Ndimele is stressing here is that form and meaning are secondary criteria in determining word classes. They are not sufficient on their own in assigning words to their correct classes. For instance, there are many words in English which belong to more than one word class. To determine the word class of such a word will depend on the function the word performs in a sentence. For example, the word dance can function as a verb:

1. Mary, go and **dance** with Jacky

As a noun (taking a determiner and an adjective):

2. We watched a traditional **dance** last weekend.

The word **beauty** can serve as an adjective (modifying the noun contest) in:

4. Lady Jay Dee performed music for the Miss Tanzania **beauty** contest.

As a noun:

5. The bride's **beauty** attracted everybody in the room.

The lessons we learn from the above examples is that:

'… we cannot classify a given instance of a word by considering it in isolation. We need to examine how it is being used in that particular instance… the context provided by the rest of the sentence will be sufficient to determine which part of speech a particular word belongs to'. (Huddleston 1988).

It is also necessary to mention that the form of a word is not a very useful guide in placing words into their proper class. In English for example, we have contrasts such as tall, taller tallest; cool cooler coolest. Words which behave like this i.e. words capable of admitting –er and est inflections are known as adjectives. But our experiences about the behaviour of English words tell us that this characteristic of adjectives (i.e. –er and est inflections) cannot be extended to include words such as **beautiful** and **handsome.** These words will not qualify as adjectives if we were to rely on this general pattern. Since defining parts of speech on the basis of form and meaning is problematic the best way is to use the grammatical function or the position they occupy in a sentence. This can however be augmented by their meanings (such as name of thing, statement of action) and changes that can occur in their form (-s to mark plurality, -ed to mark past tense, -ing to mark progressive action, -er to mark comparative degree, -est to mark superlative degree, etc).

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Determine and classify words according to their function in a sentence.

ii. Distinguish definitions based on form, meaning and functional criteria.

iii. Criticise any traditional definitions to parts of speech.

## 11.2 Major Word Classes

In traditional grammar, only eight parts of speech were set up for English, as we had indicated earlier, but Ndimele recognises in addition to these eight, two other parts of speech; namely determiners and auxiliaries, (Ndimele p. 27). The reason for the inclusion of the two is that, neither the determiner nor the auxiliaries can be accommodated within any of the eight parts of speech as defined by grammarians. They are important word classes which any serious discussion on parts of speech in the English language cannot exclude. In the following section, we shall examine briefly the properties of the major word classes.

### 11.2.1 The Verb

The verb has been described as the most important word class in the predicate slot of the sentence and the ultimate head of any sentence. It is central to the syntax and semantics of any language. It has the power to determine not only the type of word that occurs in the object position, but also in the subject position of the sentence, as can be seen below:

(1) (a) Julian ate the apple.

(b) *The wall ate the apple

(2) (a) Julian put the apple in the basket

(b) *Julian put the apple

(3) (a) Julian looked tired

(b) *Julian gave tired

From the foregoing examples, we can see that it is the verb which dictates what precedes or follows it.

A typical verb has five major inflectional forms:

(i) The base form: or ∅, e.g. write, call, laugh, dance

(ii) The past form: -ed, e.g. called, danced, laughed

(iii) The progressive form: -ing, e.g. writing, calling, dancing, laughing

(iv) The 3rd person singular present form: -s, e.g. writes, calls, laughs, dances

(v) The past participle form: -en/-ed, e.g. written, called, laughed, danced

Verbs can take a wide range of dependents. Transitive verbs, for instance necessarily take objects as their dependents.

Verbs can be derived from other form classes through numerous morphological processes. The most productive affix used to derive verbs **–ize,** as in

special specialize

formal formalize

regular regularize

legal legalize

other less productive affixes are –ify, - en, -be-, as in:

glory, glorify

intense intensify

glad gladden

sad sadden

witch bewitch

fall befall

### 11.2.2 The Noun

Nouns serve as the head of the noun phrase. They can be found in a number of syntactic positions, namely subject, object (direct and indirect), subject complement, object complement, complement of the preposition:

1. (a) **Mary** came - subject
   (b) Mary kicked **the dog** - direct object
   (c) Mary brought **John** a book - indirect object
   (d) Mary is a **prefect** - subject complement
   (e) Mary appointed John king. - object complement
   (f) Mary is in **the house** - complement of a preposition

   Nouns can take a number of modifying elements, more than any other word class in English. Most of them occur before the head which is the noun. Nouns can as well take Relative Clause (RC) or Prepositional Phrases (PPs) as modifiers:

2. The girl **who visited us** is my friend. (RC)

3. The streets of Dar Es Salaam are dirty. (PP)

   Most nouns that belong to the count class can be inflected for number. That is to say they can be marked for **singular** (e.g. **boy, goat**) and plural (e.g. **boys, goats**). Some nouns especially those referring to human beings, can be inflected to indicate possession, e.g. **John's, man's.**

### 11.2.3 The Adjective

Adjectives limit or specify the references of a nominal, e.g. **beautiful girl, fat man, round table, good music.** Adjectives can function predicatively (i.e. when they are used as the complements of certain verbs in the predicate slot of the sentence or attributively when they serve as pre-head modifiers;

1. (i) The man is **old.** - predicative use
   (ii) The **old** man is here - attributive use

   Although the majority of adjectives can be used both predicatively and attributively, there are some that have either attributive or predicative use, as can be seen below:

2. (i) The man is **afraid** - predicative use
   (ii) *The **afraid** man - attributive use

3. (i) Mary is an utter fool - attributive use
   (ii) *The fool is utter - predicative use

   'Gradable' adjectives (i.e. adjectives that can be marked for comparative and superlative degrees) are frequently modified by certain class of words that can be described as intensifiers or degree expressions, as in: **too small, quite big, very ugly, extremely beautiful,** etc.

A number of gradable adjectives can be inflected (i.e. change their forms) for comparative and superlative degrees. These adjectives that can take **-er** and **-est** to mark their comparative and superlative degrees respectively are referred to as variable adjectives. The invariable ones, on the other hand, take the free lexical items **more** and **most** to mark their comparative and superlative degrees respectively.

4. (i) short, fine, ugly

   (ii) shorter, finer, uglier

   (iii) shortest, finest, ugliest

   The problem with the above criterion for identifying adjectives is that there are also adverbs which can take **-er** and **-est** to form their comparative and superlative degrees respectively.

### 11.2.4 The Adverb

Adverbs specify the reference of verbs and sometimes adjectives (cf. 16-17). The adverb is the most difficult word class to handle in terms of its definite position in the sentence. It is a most unstable word class, and this makes it difficult to state precisely the peculiar position of the adverb class.

1. He behaved **carefully** - modifies the verb

2. He is **extremely** careless - modifies the adjective

All gradable adverbs can be modified by certain class of words known as degree expressions or intensifiers, as in **very carefully, too carelessly, rather quickly,** etc.

A small class of gradable adverbs can be inflected for comparative (**-er**) and superlative (**-est**) degrees respectively (e.g. soon, sooner, soonest).

The productive suffix for deriving adverbs from adjectives is **-ly:**

careful - carelessly

quick - quickly

anxious - anxiously

### 11.2.5 The Preposition

The preposition functions as the head of a prepositional phrase. The phrase is always introduced by a preposition obligatorily followed by a complement. The complement of a preposition is always a noun phrase (e.g. **on + the table, by + train, etc.)**. There is nothing peculiar about the form of prepositions.

### 11.2.6 The Pronoun

Pronouns can be found in the same syntactic environments as nouns or noun phrases. They differ from nouns in the sense that their membership is limited. And most importantly, pronouns, unlike nouns, can change their forms in response to the following grammatical categories: case, person, and gender (e.g. **I/me, We/us, he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.**). There is nothing unique about the form of pronouns.

### 11.2.7 The Determiner

Determiner refers to a class of items which co-occurs with nouns and which are used to express some semantic notions. It is a cover term for such class of words as articles (**the, a (n)**), possessives (**my, your, his**), quantifiers **(all, every, a few),** demonstratives **(this, that, those, these)** and numerals **(one, first, two, second**). They precede the noun in a noun phrase.

### 11.2.8 The Conjunction

A conjunction is a word or group of words used to join or connect words or other units of grammar. Conjunctions are of two types: coordinators and subordinators. Coordinators can further be divided into major and minor. The major coordinators are **and, but, or**. Those in the minor class include **neither ... nor, either ... or.** The main coordinators can join units (words, phrases, clauses) that are of equal syntactic status.

There are more subordinators than coordinators in English. The primary function of subordinators is to introduce subordinate clauses. Some examples of subordinators are whether, whenever, if, unless, although, that, etc.

### 11.2.9 The Auxiliary Verb

The auxiliary verb refers to a class of words that are subordinate to the main verbs. Grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, mood, voice and polarity are rendered through the use of auxiliary verbs. In other words, they can serve as hosts for the markers of these grammatical categories. Auxiliary verbs belong to the closed class, because their members are few. The auxiliaries differ from the main verbs in a number of ways. Some examples of auxiliaries are **be, have, can, will, shall, could,** etc.

### 11.2.10 The Interjection

The 'interjection' is a term used to refer to a part of speech which performs emotive function. A typical characteristic of an interjection is that it does not enter into any syntactic relation with any other class of words. Examples of interjections include: **Oh!, Marvelous!, Alas!, Good heavens!, Fantastic!, Gosh!, Cheers!, Bravo!,** etc.

Activity 11.1

1. In word class analysis, 'words are assigned to word classes on the formal basis of their syntactic behaviour, but supplemented and reinforced by differences of morphological paradigms' (Robins, 1964:227). Discuss.
2. Do you think that the eight parts of speech set up by the traditional grammarians are adequate for discussing English words?
3. What are the obvious problems that one encounters in classifying words into parts of speech using form and meaning as the only criteria?
4. What are the major differences between open and closed classes?

## Summary

Word classes can be divided into two major kinds, sometimes referred to as open and closed classes. In English, the open classes are noun, verb, adjective and adverb; the closed classes are preposition, pronoun, determiner, auxiliary and conjunction. In principle, an open class has unlimited membership, while a closed one has a relatively small membership. An open class can readily admit new members as the lexicon (vocabulary) of the language expands to meet the communication need of its speakers, especially when there is cultural contact. The new word may result from the application of various morphological processes to the existing words in the language or loan-words (words borrowed from other languages). The closed class, on the other hand, repels the addition of new members.

## Exercise

Examine the following list of words and pick out those that belong to both the noun and verb classes, and construct sentences to show the two different functions of each of them:

trouble, border, eye, father, head, elbow, man, mother, export,

care, concern, aid, bother, place, finger, import, dodge, drag.

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# LECTURE 12
# The English Noun Phrase

## 12.1 Introduction

In this lecture, we shall discuss the noun and its modifiers. The focus will be on the order of elements in the English noun phrase and the general structure of the English noun phrase. The structure will maintain the projection of the head noun and the possible co-occurrence of its modifiers, which are words, phrases and clauses functioning as adjectives.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Identify noun phrases in English sentences

ii. Analyse the elements in the English noun phrase and their co-occurrence possibilities.

iii. Identify different types of the English noun modifiers

iv. Describe the order of different types of modifiers in the English noun phrase

v. Use the English noun phrase in making meaningful sentences

## 12.2 The Noun

A noun is a word which names things, persons, places, activities, concepts or notions. Many nouns add -s to form the plural (e.g. **cat/cats**); a few nouns, however, have irregular plural forms (e.g. **man/men, child/children, ox/oxen, goose/geese**), and some others which denote a quality or attribute (e.g. **hatred, beauty**), or those which name places (e.g. **Lagos, London**) and people (**John, Mary**) do not have a plural.

A number of nouns (especially those denoting human beings) add **-s** preceded by an apostrophe (if the noun is singular) to show possession (e.g. **John's, boy's**).

Some nouns can be identified by such endings as **-or** (sailor), **-er** (leader), **-(a)tion** (formation), **-ment** (arrangement), **-dom** (freedom), **-ness** (kindness), **-(i)ty** (liberty), **-ance** (elegance), **-ence** (eminence), **-ship** (stewardship).

Nouns also exhibit two characteristics which distinguish them from other word classes:

(i) The presence of nouns is often indicated by a determiner:

(1) (a) a(n) _____

(b) the _____

(c) my _____

(d) this _____

(e) that _____

(f) those _____

(ii) Nouns serve as heads of noun phrases.

### 12.2.1 Types of Noun

Nouns are traditionally grouped into five classes on the basis of their meaning. These classes are:

1. ***Proper Nouns****:* Proper nouns refer to personal names (e.g. **John, Mary**), names of places (Tang**a, Moshi, Lindi)** days of the week (**Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday**), months of the year (**December, January, April**) name of institutions, rivers, mountains, languages, etc. A proper noun can occur as a full-fledged noun phrase without a determiner (e.g. ***A** Gloria**, *The David, *That Tanga,** etc.) The first letter of any proper noun is capitalised no matter where the word occurs in a sentence. Proper nouns do not normally exist in the plural form, unless they are used in a specialised sense. For example:

   *All the Mandelas of Africa should rise up and fight.*

   In the above example, we observe that a typical proper noun such as **Mandela** co-occurs with a determiner **the,** and takes a plural inflection. The meaning that is conveyed when **-s** is added to the name **Mandela** is that:

   All Africans who have the attributes of Mandela should rise up and fight.

   It is also possible for one to say: **There are two Johns here,** meaning that there are two individuals here who bear the name **John.** The use of **Johns** here, does not, however, convey any specialised sense.

2. **Common Nouns:** This refers to a subclass of nouns where a name is shared by everything of the same class or kind (**e.g. table, boy, girl, goat, man, woman, teacher, etc.)**

3. **Collective Nouns*:*** A collective noun is a class of nouns which names a group of entities or people acting as an indivisible unit (e.g. **audience, choir, family, jury, team, committee, congregation, public,** etc.).

3. **Concrete Nouns*:*** These refer to nouns that are tangible, i.e. nouns that we can see, touch or feel (e.g. **table, dog, tree, boy, girl, bottle,** etc.).

4. **Abstract Nouns*:*** These are nouns that are not tangible, i.e. nouns that we cannot touch, see or feel (e.g. **beauty, affection, kindness, importance, love, etc**.).

### 12.2.2 Count and Non-count or Mass Nouns

Count nouns refer to a class of words that can be individuated or separated into units, while non-count or mass nouns refer to a class of nouns which are conceived as 'continuous entities, having no natural bounds' (Crystal 1991: 87). Count nouns are given count interpretation, e.g.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| boy | a boy | two boys |
| goat | one goat | three goats |
| table | a table | two table |

egg an egg four eggs

There are nouns that can only be given a mass interpretation, e.g.

milk *a milk *two milks

bread *one bread *two breads

butter *a butter *two butter

ink *an ink *inks

water *a water *two waters

There are however, some other nouns that can be given both count and mass interpretation. That is to say they cut across the count and non-count class:

| Count interpretation | Mass interpretation |
|---|---|
| a few yams | a little yam |
| many stones | much stone |
| several papers | much paper |
| many wines (assorted) | much wine |

Let us demonstrate how a particular noun can be given both count and non-count interpretation with the word **cake:**

1. (a) I made a cake for the party.

   (b) I made some more cake for the party.

   In (1a), **cake** expresses a count notion. **A cake** refers to one member out of a larger set of separate units which can be isolated and then counted. The notion of countable is crucial here. In (1b), on the other hand, **cake** expresses a mass notion. Here the speaker conceives **cake** as a substance having no natural bounds.

   When a count interpretation is intended, it is appropriate to ask the question '**How many**' But when a mass interpretation is intended, it is necessary to ask the question **'How much?':**

2. (a) How many cakes are left?

   (b) How much cake is left?

   (c) *How many cakes is left?

   (d) *How much cake are left?

From the above discussion, it seems that the distinction between count and non-count nouns is not necessarily based on whether an item can be counted or not, but on the following factors:

**Choice of Determiners*:*** The distinction between count and non-count nouns is based on how the language users view the meanings of the nouns and how the different meanings of the nouns condition the choice of determiners by these nouns. For example, any common noun which cannot occur in a sentence without a determiner is a count noun. Determiners such as **a, an, one, every, each, two many,** etc., bring about a count interpretation, and nouns that can co-occur with them belong to the count category. Nouns which do not take such determiners or which do not necessarily require the presence of determiners, belong to the class of non-count. Similarly, nouns in the noun-count category are often identified by the

class of determiners which they permit. Some of these determiners are **much, little,** etc. These determiners bring about a mass interpretation.

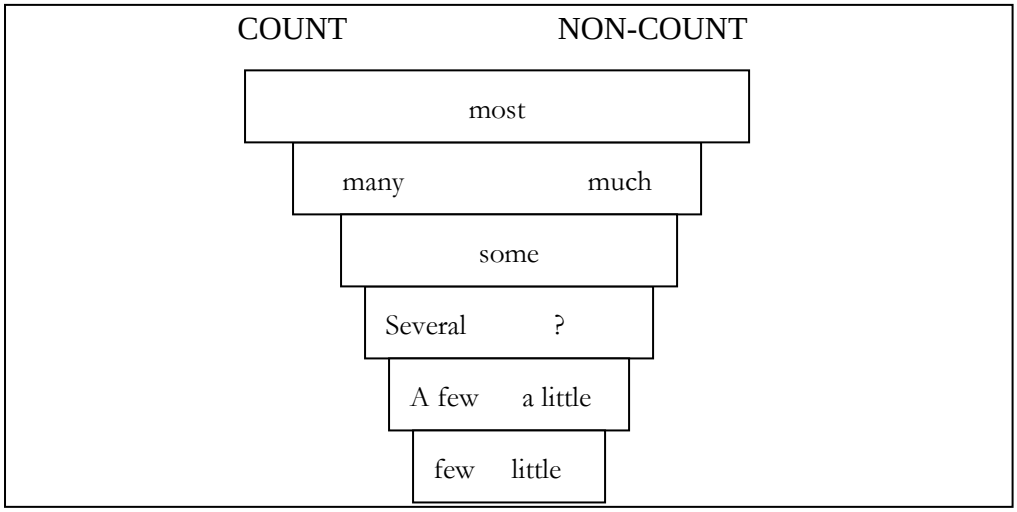
Below are some examples showing how count and non-count nouns select determiners.

1. (a) **A coin** was picked up in the garden.

   (b) ***coin** was picked up in the garden.

   (c) ***Much coins** were picked up in the garden.

(1b-c) is ungrammatical because of article usage. Again, there are some other determiners (especially the amount words), which occur only with count nouns, and not with non-count ones. There are, however, some others which cut across the two classes, as can be seen below:




***Source:*** Leech et al 1982

From the above diagram, we observe that the following amount words: **few, a few, several** and **many** occur only with count nouns, while **little, a little much** occur only with non-count nouns. Amount words such as **no, some, most** and **all,** which are located at the centre of the diagram, cut across the two classes. The amount words in the above diagram are arranged from the greatest to the least quantity, i.e. starting from **all** to **no.**

**Inherent Properties of Certain Nouns**

There are some nouns which have only a mass interpretation. Some examples of these are **equipment** and **information.** These nouns have no plural counterparts. They do not also permit determiners which require a count interpretation. For example:

1. (a) He brought some information.

   (b) *He brought an information.

2. (a) We sold him some equipment.

   (b) *We sold him an equipment.

There is another class of nouns which has only a count interpretation, and therefore requires the presence of a determiner which brings about this interpretation. Examples of nouns in this class are: **entity, unit, thing, individual,** etc. So nouns such as **equipment** and **information** belong to the non-count class and those such as **entity** and **individual** belong to the count class.

Non-count nouns may be followed by either a singular or plural verb. Those that are followed by a verb in the singular form include **news, measles, advice, luck, economics, phonetics, luggage, chalk, gold, music, courage**, etc. Some of these nouns can, however, express countability if they are qualified by certain quantity expressions pertaining to measurement, as in:

1. (a) a piece of chalk.
   (b) a piece of advice.
   (c) a piece of information.
   (d) a piece of land.
   (e) a loaf of bread.
   (f) an acre of land.

There are non-count nouns that are followed by a verb in the plural form:

(a) Summation Plurals

These are nouns which denote entities consisting of equal parts. The nouns exist in pairs. For example: Scissors, pliers, shears, trousers, spectacles, pajamas, pants, bellows, binoculars, etc. Because of this impression that the nouns exist in pairs, they are often expressed with '**a pair of' before.**

1. (a) a pair of trousers, not *a trousers/*trouser
   (b) a pair of pliers, not *a pliers/*plier
   (c) a pair of scissors, not *a scissors/*scissor
2. Noun which end in -s and which are always used in a plural sense e.g. annals, dregs, earnings, means, thanks, surroundings, remains, credentials, etc.
3. (a) Our surroundings are clean.
   (b) *Our surrounding is/are clean
4. (a) His earnings are low
   (b) *His earning is/are low
5. (a) His remains have been recovered
   (b) *His remain has/have be recovered

### 12.2.3 Definite vs Non-definite Reference

Articles can be used to make definite or non-definite reference **the;** belongs to the class of definite articles, while **a, an, some** belong to the indefinite class. A definite article specifies the reference of the noun it modifies, while an indefinite article does not. The use of **a** or **an** as an article, for instance, does not indicate any previous knowledge of the thing, person or entity denoted by the modified noun. A noun modified by **a** or **an** refers to a single unspecified member of a class. The identity of the entity concerned is not certain:

1. I need **a** ball. [non-def]
2. I need **the** ball. [Def]

Whereas a definite reference is made in (1), no such reference is made in (2). Articles in the indefinite class (**a, an, some**) are contextually determined. Where one is found, the other is not. Whereas the definite article **the** can occur with both count and non-count nouns (whether singular or plural), there is no non-definite article that has this type of distribution.

(i) Singular count nouns can take **a** or **an** depending on whether the nouns they precede begin with a consonant or a vowel. If a noun which follows the indefinite article begins with a consonant sound, the choice is **a;** if not it is **an.**

(ii) Non-count nouns cannot co-occur with **a** or **an.**

(iii) Non-count nouns or plural count nouns can select either some or no article at all.

### 12.2.4 Number as a Category of the Noun

A noun is said to be singular if it refers to one thing, but plural if it refers to more than one thing. The majority of nouns form their plurals by adding an -s to the singular form. The main exceptions, following Quirk (1972 et al.), are as follows:

(i) Add -es to form the plural of nouns ending in letters of the alphabet such as s, sh, ch, x and o (bus = buses, brush = brushes, church = churches, mango = mangoes, box = boxes).

(ii) Nouns that end with a consonant plus a -y change the -y to -ies (baby = babies, lady = ladies, etc.).

(iii) Nouns ending in an -f or an -fe form their plural by changing f and -fe into -ves (leaf = leaves, knife = knives).

Exceptions are: chief = chiefs, dwarf = dwarfs (dwarves), gulf = gulfs, proof = proofs, grief = griefs, hoof = hoofs (hooves), wharf = wharfs (wharves), roof = roofs.

(iv) The following nouns form their plural by adding an -en to the base (ox = oxen, child = children).

(v) Some nouns form their plural through mutation, Le. by making certain internal changes (e.g. man = men, mouse = mice, louse = lice, foot = feet, goose = geese, tooth = teeth).

(vi) Some nouns do not change their forms whether they are singular or plural (e.g. sheep, swine, deer, salmon).

(vii) Nouns such as infrastructure, furniture, equipment, property, music, etc. are always used in the singular.

(viii) Personal adjectival heads always express plural notions without taking -s inflection. Nominals in this group are always preceded by the determiner the. Similarly, nouns such as cattle, dumb, deaf, British, etc. express plural notions without taking -s inflection.

1. (a) The **poor** always sober.
   (b) *The **poor** is always sober.

2. (a) The **young** have brighter future.
   (b) *The **young** has brighter future.

3. (a) The **rich** have no reason to grumble.

(b) *The **rich** has no reasons to grumble.

4. (a) The **cattle** are grazing.
   (b) The **cattle** is grazing.

5. (a) The **dumb** need some assistance.
   (b) The **dumb** needs some assistance.

6. (a) The **deaf** are always dumb.
   (b) The **deaf** is always dumb.

(ix) **Foreign Words** - o -> i: tempo/tempi or tempos

- Ø -> im: seraph/seraphim, cherub/cherubim
- us -> i: radius/radii, fungus/fungi
- us -> ora: corpus/corpora
- us -> era: genus/genera
- um -> a: agendum/agenda, datum/data
  stratum/strata, curriculum/curricula
- on -> a: criterion/criteria, phenomenon/phenomena
- a -> ae: larva/larvae, antenna/antennae,
  formula/formulae/formulas
- x/ex -> ces: matrix/matrices or matrixes,
  index/indices or indexes
- i -> e: thesis/theses, basic/bases,
  crisis/crises
- eau-> e: plateau/plateaux, bureau/bureaux
  adieu/adieux/adieus

***Note:*** **Agenda** and **data** are now re-interpreted as singular. Their singular forms **agendum** and **datum** are now rarely used except for those who want to sound pedantic or bookish. Nowadays, we hear people say:

"The data is faulty"

"There **is an item on the agenda** which we have not discussed." Rather than "The **datum is** faulty"

"There is an agendum which we have not discussed."

(x) These are nouns, which are plural in form, but which are grammatically singular, e.g. **barracks, measles, means, news, headquarters,** etc.

(xi) Compound nouns (i.e. nouns consisting of more than one root) form their plurals in different ways. The plural indicator can be marked on the first or last member of the compound (depending on which of them is more important) or sometimes on both, as can be seen below;

| | |
|---|---|
| sister-in-law | sisters-in-law |
| grant-in-aid | grants-in-aid |
| grown-up | grown-ups |
| manservant | menservants |
| blackboard | blackboards |

## 12.3 Noun Phrase Structure

A noun phrase is group of grammatically related words which has a noun as the head. The other elements which may occur either before or after the noun are the modifiers which limit or specify the reference of the noun. A noun phrase consists of a noun as head alone or accompanied by one or more modifiers.

In a construction like:

1. The very pretty little Nigerian **girls**

**Girls** is the head word of the phrase, because it can stand alone as the only word in that phrase.

Some modifiers precede the head word, while others follow it. Modifiers which occur before the head are called pre-head modifiers, while those that follow the head word are called post-head modifiers.

The English noun phrase is exceedingly complex. This is because the head word can be modified by a number of other elements. The noun phrase can take a number of forms, as in;

(a) Intensifier + Adjective + Noun (e.g. very little **boy**)

Inten. Adj. N

(b) Article + Intensifier + Adjective + Noun

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (e.g. The | very | pretty | innocent | little | **girls**) | |
| Art. | Inten | Adj | Adj. | Adj. | N | |

(c) Quantifier + Noun

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (e.g. Many | **Boys**; | every | **man:** | | | |
| all | **women;** | some | **eggs;** | each; | **pen**) | |
| Q | N | Q | N | Q | N | |
| | Q | N | Q | N | | |

(d) Numeral + Noun (e.g. one **man**)

Num N

(e) Article + Noun (e.g. the **boy;** an **egg;** a **girl**)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Art. | N | Art. | N | Art. | N |
| (f) | Demonstrative + Noun (e.g. | | | This | **man;** | those | **girls**) | | |
| | | | | Dem. | N | Dem. | N | | |
| (g) | Possessive + Noun (e.g. | | | His | **table;** | my | **orange**) | | |
| | | | | Poss. | N | Poss. | N | | |
| (h) | Pronominal modifier + Noun (e.g. | | | | | We | **students**) | | |
| | | | | | | PM | N | | |
| (i) | Noun (e.g. | **Boys;** | **girls;** | **John;** | **tables**) | | | | |
| | | N | N | N | N | | | | |
| (j) | Noun + prepositional Phrase (e.g. | | | | | the | **streets** | **<u>of Lagos</u>**) | |
| | | | | | | Art. | N | PP | |
| (k) | Noun + Relative clause (RC) (e.g. | | | | | The | **man** | <u>who came here</u> | is my uncle |
| | | | | | | Art | N | RC | |
| (l) | Noun + **-ed** or **-en** verb form (e.g. | | | | | all | the | **problems** | discussed |
| | | | | | | Q | Art | N | V + -ed |
| (m) | Noun + Adverb (e.g. | | all | these | **goats** | here) | | | |
| | | | Q | Dem. | N | Adv | | | |
| (n) | Noun + **-ing** | verb form (e.g. | | | | Those | **boys** | are swimming) | |
| | | | | | | Dem. | N | V + -ing | |
| (o) | Noun + adjective (e.g. | **body** | politic; | **God** | Almighty) | | | | |
| | | N | Adj. | | N | Adj. | | | |

(where inten= intensifier; Adj = adjective; Art = article; N = noun;

Q = quantifier; Num = numeral; Dem = demonstrative; Poss = possessive;

PM = pronominal modifier; RC = relative clause; PP = prepositional phrase; Adv = adverb)

### 12.3.1 Order of Modifiers in a Noun Phrase

The pre-head modifiers do not follow one another in a random order.

For example:

*The pretty very little young fair-complexioned Lagos girls, and

*The newly magnificent finished building

are grammatically deviant. Within the noun phrase, the relative position of certain word classes is fixed. The order is usually this:

(i) Predeterminers (**all, both**)

(ii) Determiners (**a**(**n**), **the, some,** and nouns in the genitive case, e.g. **John's**)

(iii) Numerals (**one, two, three, first, second, …**)

(iv) Intensifiers (**very, exceedingly, quite, too extremely**)

(v) Adjective

**Activity 12.1**

1. List few words which can be given both count and non-count interpretation.
2. Write down some sentences using different forms of noun phrase.

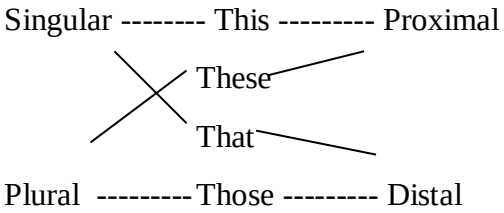
### 12.3.2 Determiner as a Pre-head Modifier

The determiner refers to a class of items whose main role is to co-occur with nouns to express a wide range of semantic contrasts, such as quantity or number. A determiner is a word which is used with a noun and which limits the meaning of the noun in some way.

Determiners include articles, demonstratives, possessives, quantifiers and numerals. Articles have been adequately discussed elsewhere in this work, and therefore will be excluded from our discussion here.

**Demonstratives**

A demonstrative is a word which refers to something in terms of whether it is near to or distant from the speaker. Demonstratives divide into two sets: Proximal (this, these) and non-proximal or distal that, those). A demonstrative is proximal when it is used to refer to something that is near to the speaker, but distal when it refers to something far away or distant from the speaker. The patterning of demonstratives is symmetrical, as can be seen in the diagram below***:***




From the above configuration, we can observe that **this** and **these** express near reference; **that** and **those** express distant reference, both from the point of view of the speaker.

Where something has already been mentioned in the sentence, a demonstrative can be used to make reference to it. In this way, the demonstrative in question functions such as the definite article **the** in particularising the noun that it modifies;

Our nation is witnessing a number of phrase (as a way of reducing redundancy);

Demonstratives can also allow reductions of noun phrase (as a way of reducing redundancy);

My uncle asked me to travel by that other bus, but I think there is nothing wrong with **this** one.

## Summary

A noun is a word which names things, persons, places, activities, concepts or notions. Nouns also exhibit two characteristics which distinguish them from other word classes. The distinction between count and non-count nouns is based on how the language users view the meanings of the nouns and how the different meanings of the nouns condition the choice of determiners by these nouns.

## Exercise

1. Describe the classes of nouns.
2. Distinguish between count and non-count nouns.
3. What is a determiner? Give examples.
4. What is a demonstrative?

## References


1. Briton, L.J. (2000). *The Structure of Modern English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.

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# LECTURE 13

# The English Verb Phrase

## 13.1 Introduction

A verb phrase (VP) is a syntactic unit composed of at least one verb and its dependents namely, objects, complements and other modifiers—but not always including the subject. The verb phase is the most significant part of the English sentence structure because it carries the most important information. The verb phrase is similar to what is considered a predicate in more traditional grammars. Verb phrases generally are divided among two types: finite, of which the head of the phrase is a finite verb; and nonfinite, where the head is a nonfinite verb, such as an infinitive, participle or gerund. Phrase structure grammars acknowledge both types, but dependency grammars treat the subject as just another verbal dependent, and they do not recognize the finite verbal phrase constituent.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Describe the structure of the English verb phrase

ii. Identify elements of the English verb phrase

iii. Use the English verb phrases appropriately in sentence construction

## 13.2 The Verb

A verb form consists either of a verb (in the form of a participle or infinitive) plus one or more auxiliaries (e. g. will see, would have seen) or of a (usually inflected) verb only (as in: They take drugs, John smokes).

### 13.2.1 Tensed vs non-tensed verb forms

As far as English is concerned, only finite verb forms are tensed. The term finite (which means 'limited') refers to a verb form that is marked for tense and potentially also for other grammatical categories like mood, person and number. (These markings limit the possibilities of using the form). For example: *works* (marked for tense, mood, person and number: present tense, indicative mood, third person, singular) *drank* (marked for tense and mood only: past tense, indicative mood) (unmarked for person and number).

The form *works* is more limited in applicability than *drank*, since it cannot be used, say, with a plural subject. *Drank* can be used in a wider range of grammatical environments, but it cannot be used in a situation in which a present tense form is required. Being marked for tense apparently stands out as a necessary defining feature of finite verb forms in English.

Because of the crucial importance of being marked for tense, finite verb forms are by definition indicative forms. Compare:

*They were in the kitchen.*

*John wished he were somewhere else*.

In the first example, were is an indicative form because it is tensed: it is a past tense form locating the time of the state referred to in the past. In the second example, *were* is a subjunctive form. Though traditionally called 'past subjunctive' (because of the formal contrast with the 'present subjunctive' be and the fact that it has the same form as the past indicative form were), the subjunctive form *were* is not tensed, because it does not express or imply any temporal relation between the time of the situation referred to (John's being somewhere else) and the time of speech.

In later chapters we will distinguish between 'absolute' and 'relative' past tense forms. The former relate the time of a situation directly to the 'temporal zero-point' to (which is usually the time of speech), whereas the latter relate it to another 'orientation time'. Thus, *John suddenly complained that he felt ill* is analysed as having an absolute tense form *complained*, which locates the complaining in the past (relative to the time of speech), and a relative tense past form *felt*, which represents the situation of John feeling ill as simultaneous with the situation referred to by complained. It might seem as if the past subjunctive *were* did the same job in *John wished he were somewhere else*, but this is not true: whereas a relative past tense form can only express simultaneity with a past time of orientation, 3 the past subjunctive can express simultaneity with any time of orientation, irrespective of whether it is past, present or future. Compare:

John {said / says / will say} that Bill *was* ill. (*It is only after said that was is interpreted as a relative past tense expressing simultaneity. After says and will say, Bill was ill is interpreted as expressing that Bill's illness is anterior to the present or future time of saying*.)

John {wished / wishes / will wish} he *were* somewhere else. (*In all three cases the subjunctive form were is interpreted as expressing simultaneity*.)

It is clear from these examples that a relative past tense still has an 'absolute tense' component in its semantics: the time of orientation with which a relation of simultaneity is expressed must form part of a 'temporal domain' which is past with respect to the temporal zero-point. The past subjunctive does not share that semantic characteristic. This means that in spite of expressing simultaneity, the subjunctive *were* is not a relative *tense* form. Since, obviously, it is not an absolute tense form either (i. e. it does not relate its situation to the temporal zero-point), it can only be treated as an 'untensed' form. In this respect it resembles nonfinite verb forms, i. e. infinitives, participles and gerunds.

'Marked for tense' or 'tensed' does not simply mean 'carrying temporal information'. Nonfinite verb forms may have a 'perfect' form, i. e. express anteriority (e. g. *have eaten*, *having eaten*). The point is that the time of orientation to which they relate the time of their situation does not have to be the temporal zero-point. It is criterial of tensed forms that they encode information concerning the relation of the time of a situation to the temporal zero-point t0 (which is usually the time of speech), whether that relation is direct (as in absolute tenses) or indirect (as in relative tenses). Subjunctive forms and nonfinite forms do not share this characteristic. They are therefore treated as untensed (tenseless) forms.

## 13.3 The Verb Phrase Structure

A verb phrase consists of a main verb alone, or a main verb plus any modal or modal plus auxiliary verbs. The main verb always comes last in the verb phrase:
(Mo = modal verb; Aux = auxiliary verb; MV = main verb)
*We all [MV]**laughed**.*
*Computers [MO]**can** [MV]**be** very annoying!*

*An apartment [MO]**would** [AUX]**have** [MV]**cost** less than a hotel for four of us.*

*Tony [MO]**might** [AUX]**have** [AUX]**been** [MV]**waiting** outside for you.*

### 13.3.1 Simple verb phrases

A simple verb phrase consists of a main verb. The verb in a simple verb phrase shows the type of clause (e.g. declarative, imperative):
*Your camera **takes** fantastic pictures.* (present simple, declarative clause)

***Dress** smartly. **Arrive** on time.* (imperative clauses)

### 13.3.2 Complex verb phrases

A complex verb phrase may include one modal verb and one or more auxiliary verbs before the main verb. A modal verb always comes before any auxiliary verbs:

(mo = modal verb; aux = auxiliary verb; mv = main verb)

*House prices [MO]**could** [MV]**fall** during the next six months.* (modal verb + main verb)

*You [MO]**may** [AUX]**have** [MV]**played** this game before.* (modal verb + one auxiliary verb)

*The work [MO]**should** [AUX]**have** [AUX]**been** [MV]**finished** by 30 January.* (modal verb + two auxiliary verbs)

## 13.4 Meaning of Auxiliary Verbs in Verb Phrases

Auxiliary verbs give different types of meanings to a verb phrase.

| Meaning | auxiliary verb (+ form of main verb) | Example |
|---|---|---|
| Continuous | *be* + *-ing* form | *I **was** **thinking** about you all day.* |
| Perfect | *have* + *-ed* form | *The girls **have** all* |

| Meaning | auxiliary verb (+ form of main verb) | Example |
|---|---|---|
| | | ***gone*** *out together.* |
| Passive | *be* + *-ed* form | *Val's car* ***was stolen*** *from outside her house.* |
| interrogative | *do* + subject + base form | ***Do*** *they* ***sell*** *newspapers in your local shop?* |
| Negative | *do* + *not* + base form | *It* ***didn't*** ***last*** *very long.* |
| Emphatic | *do* (stressed) + base form | *It* ***does*** ***annoy*** *me when they make so much noise.* |

## 13.5 Order of Verbs in Verb Phrases

The continuous, perfect and passive meanings of auxiliary verbs may be combined in a verb phrase, and auxiliary verbs may combine with modal verbs.

The order of the different types (and meanings) of verbs in the verb phrase is shown in the table as 1–5, from left to right.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Subject | modal verb | perfect *have* | continuous *be* | passive *be* | main verb |
| | must be followed by base form | must be followed by *-ed* form | must be followed by *-ing* form | must be followed by *-ed* form | |
| *Prices* | | | | | *rose.* |
| *She* | *Will* | | | | *understand.* |
| *The builders* | | *Had* | | | *arrived.* |
| *The show* | | | *is* | | *starting.* |
| *Four people* | | | | *were* | *arrested.* |
| *Seats* | *cannot* | | | *Be* | *reserved.* |
| *The printer* | *should* | | *be* | | *working.* |
| *He* | *must* | *Have* | | | *forgotten.* |

| Subject | 1<br>modal verb<br>must be followed by base form | 2<br>perfect *have*<br>must be followed by *-ed* form | 3<br>continuous *be*<br>must be followed by *-ing* form | 4<br>passive *be*<br>must be followed by *-ed* form | 5<br>main verb |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Temperatures* | | *Have* | *been* | | *rising.* |
| *William* | | *has* | | *been* | *promoted.* |
| *You* | *could* | *have* | | *been* | *killed!* |

A combination of all the auxiliary meanings plus a modal verb is possible but is very rare:

*She may have been being interviewed for a job. Perhaps that's why she was there.* (modal *may* + perfect *have* + passive *been* + continuous *being* + main verb *interviewed*)

## 13.6 The First Verb

The first verb in a complex verb phrase indicates the time somebody did something and matches the person and number of the subject, except when it is a modal verb.

| | Time | Person | Number |
|---|---|---|---|
| *He has lost his keys.* | Present | Third | Singular |
| *We were taken to a big room.* | Past | First | Plural |
| *I was hoping to see Professor Jones.* | Past | First | Singular |

**Summary**

The verb phrase is made up of the verb and its modifiers. These modifiers include the auxiliary verbs and other words dominated by the verb. The verb
phrase is the core of the English sentence. It contains the part of sentence which talks about what the subject is doing. This is what the traditional grammar calls the predicate. The verb phrase can be describe in two ways: the first is the verb and its auxiliaries and the second is the whole part of sentence dominated by the verb.

## Exercise

1. Make at least ten sentences with different forms of the verb phrase then identify them by underlining each.

2. Describe different modifiers of the verb phrase.

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# LECTURE 14

# The English Prepositional Phrase

## 14.1 Introduction

This lecture addresses the prepositional phrase of English focusing on its structure and function. It begins with an overview of the preposition and little by little, analyzing the structure and its context of use in English sentences.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Identify elements of the prepositional phrase

ii. Describe the order of modifiers in the prepositional phrase

iii. Discuss how the prepositional phrase functions

## 14.2 Prepositions

A preposition is a word that logically connects a noun or pronoun to another word in a sentence. Together, the preposition and the noun (called the object of the preposition) form a prepositional phrase that modifies another word in the sentence. Other words may come between the preposition and the noun that follows it. Adverb prepositional phrases answer such questions as When? Where? How? and Why? Adjective prepositional phrases answer such questions as Which one? What kind of? and How many?

A preposition is a single word. Prepositions generally express a spatial, temporal, or other relationship. There are about 150 prepositions in the English Language.

**Commonly Used Prepositions**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • aboard | • about | • above | • across | • after |
| • against | • along | • amid | • among | • anti |
| • around | • as | • at | • before | • behind |
| • below | • beneath | • beside | • besides | • between |
| • beyond | • but | • by | • concerning | • considering |
| • despite | • down | • during | • except | • excepting |
| • excluding | • following | • for | • from | • in |
| • inside | • into | • like | • minus | • near |
| • of | • off | • on | • onto | • opposite |
| • outside | • over | • past | • per | • plus |
| • regarding | • round | | | |

## 14.3 Prepositional Phrase

A prepositional phrase is a group of words (usually 3 to 5 words) that begins with a preposition.

Examples:

♣ in a yellow house

♣ over the large hill

♣ at the small pond

A prepositional phrase must always contain a preposition, but it may also contain one or more of the following:

♣ article (a, an, the)

♣ noun (some examples are house, hill, pond)

♣ pronoun (some examples are him, her, them)

♣ adjective (some examples are yellow, large, pretty)

A prepositional phrase can never contain any one of the following elements:

♣ Subject **Tim** dropped the aquarium on the floor.

♣ Verb Tim **dropped** the aquarium on the floor.

♣ Object Tim dropped **the aquarium** on the floor.

Note: Many prepositional phrases will contain an object TO THE PREPOSITION, but not an object of the main clause of the sentence.

## 14.4 Modifiers of the Prepositional Phrase

Prepositional phrase modifiers are words, phrases, and clauses that modify or describe a prepositional phrase. A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition plus another word, phrase, or clause that functions as the prepositional complement. The two grammatical forms that can function as the prepositional phrase modifier in the English language are:

- Adverb phrases
- Adjective clauses

The following sections define and exemplify the two grammatical forms that can function as the prepositional phrase modifier in English grammar.

### 14.4.1 Adverb Phrases as Prepositional Phrase Modifiers

The first grammatical form that can perform the grammatical function of prepositional phrase modifier is the adverb phrase. Adverb phrases consist of an adverb plus any modifiers such as another adverb. For example, the following italicized adverb phrases function as prepositional phrase modifiers:

- You seem *rather* under the weather.
- That painting is *not* unlike one I saw in New York.

- Your drawing looks *very much* like a dog.
- His directions are *not very much* like the original.

### 14.4.2 Adjective Clauses as Prepositional Phrase Modifiers

The second grammatical form that can perform the grammatical function of prepositional phrase modifier is the adjective clause. Adjective clauses, or relative clauses, are subordinate or dependent clauses that consist of a subordinating conjunction in the form of a relative pronoun followed by a clause. Only *which* adjective clauses can function as prepositional phrase modifiers. For example, the following italicized adjective clauses function as prepositional phrase modifiers:

- Behind the machine shed, *which is overgrown with weeds*, needs mowed.
- Between seven and nine, *which is a reasonable time frame,* is when employees must arrive.
- After six, *which is usually also after dinner,* is a good time to call.
- You must clean under the bed, *which is covered with dust bunnies*.

The two grammatical forms that can function as prepositional phrase modifiers are adverb phrases and adjective clauses.

**Summary**

Prepositional phrase modifiers in English grammar are words, phrases, and clauses that modify or describe a prepositional phrase. The phrase is made up of a preposition and its modifiers. The modifiers are likely to determine the position of the preposition phrase in the sentence as well as its grammatical function.

**Exercise**

1. With examples, identify the main functions of the prepositional phrase in the English sentence.
2. Describe the structure of the prepositional phrase in the English sentence..
3. Make at least ten sentences containing different forms of prepositional phrases.

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1. Briton, L.J. (2000). *The Structure of Modern English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
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# LECTURE 15
# The English Clauses

## 15.1 Introduction

This lecture addresses the English clause focusing on its structure and function in English sentence. It begins with an overview of the clause then it analyses its structure and the context of use in English sentences.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Identify elements of the English clause

ii. Describe the form and function of the English clause

iii. Analyse types of English clauses

### 15.2 The clause

A clause is a group of words that contains both a subject and a predicate but cannot always be considered as a full grammatical sentence. It is a group of words which convey a single idea. A clause is further defined as the grammatical unit where a unit of conversational meaning is expressed. Every complete sentence is made up of at least one clause.

*Jane bought a new car* (One sentence, one clause)

*Jane bought a new car, but she still has the old one*. (One sentence, two clauses)

*Although she still has her old one, Jane now has a new car.*
(One sentence, two clauses)

By their structure clauses contain the Noun phrase (NP) subject and the Verb Phrase (VP) – object. Analytically, a clause despite behaving like a sentence by its structure; it is not a sentence since it is recognised within a sentence structure. However, the most significant relationships between the English sentence and the clause are:

(a) The number of clauses within a sentence structure determines the type of sentence.

(b) The combination of the same or different types of clauses dictates on the types of sentences.

(c) Clauses support each other to form a sentence

Clauses can be either independent (main clauses) or dependent clauses (subordinate clauses).

An independent clause (or main clause) makes sense by itself. It expresses a complete thought.

*Jane bought a new car*. [One independent clause]

***Jane bought a new car***, but ***she still has the old one***.
[Two independent clauses (Coordinating conjunctions don't count as part of the clause.)]

*Although she still has her old one,* ***Jane now has a new car****.*
[Only the second clause is independent.]

A dependent clause (or subordinate clause) does not make sense by itself. It does not express a complete thought.

***Although she still has her old one***. (Without the independent clause, a dependent clause is a sentence fragment.)
A dependent clause usually begins with a subordinating conjunction, a relative pronoun, or some other word that causes it to become dependent. A dependent clause will make sense only when attached to an independent clause. ***Although she still has her old one***. (*Although* is a subordinating conjunction.)

*She still has her old one.* (Without the conjunction, the clause becomes independent.)

*Jane now has a new computer* **although she still has her old one**. [Combined with an independent clause, the dependent clause makes sense.]

## 15.3 Types of English Clauses

### 15.3.1 An independent clause (Main clause)

This contains both a subject and predicate, can stand alone as a sentence (a simple sentence), or be a part of a multi-clause sentence. Coordinating conjunctions (i.e. *and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet*) are used to connect elements of equal weight such as two independent clauses, using a comma before the conjunction.

*We visited Dodoma last year.*
*[*Independent clause functioning as a full sentence]

*We visited Dodoma in September, and then we visited Mwanza in October.*
[Two independent clauses connected by the coordinating conjunction and preceded with a comma]

### 15.3.2 A dependent clause (subordinate clause)

This contains both a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone as a sentence. It must always be a part of a sentence, on which it depends for meaning. Reading a dependent clause on its

own leaves the reader wondering where the rest of the information is. The following sections describe the different kinds of dependent clauses

### 15.3.2.1 An adverb clause or adverbial clause (subordinate clause)

This is a type of dependent clause which starts with a subordinating conjunction (e.g. because, although, when, if, until, as if etc.). It indicates a dependent relationship with information elsewhere in the independent clause that it modifies. Similarly to adverbs, adverb clauses usually answer questions such as: Why? How? When? Under what circumstances? When the adverb clause is written before the independent clause, separate the two with a comma.

In the following example pairs, see how the same information is given using a word, phrase or a clause.
*We ate dinner at the hotel Continental*.
[the adverbial phrase modifies the verb ate; it answers the question where?]

*We ate dinner* ***where all students usually go to***.
[The adverb clause modifies the verb ate; it answers the question where?]

*They wanted to go to the party early*.
[The adverb modifies the verb phrase wanted to go; it explains when?]

*They wanted to go to the party* ***as early as they could***.
[The adverb clause modifies the verb phrase wanted to go; it explains when?]

We visited Dodoma last September due to a business meeting.
[The adverbial phrase explains why?]

*We visited Dodoma last September* ***because we wanted to see the paintings at Kondoa-Irangi.***
[The adverb clause modifies the entire independent clause; it explains why?]

### 15.3.2.2 An adjective clause (a relative clause)

Just like an adjective, it modifies the noun or pronoun preceding it ( the antecedent). It starts with a relative pronoun (e.g. who, which, that, where, when, whose, whom, whoever etc.) which is also the subject of the clause.

In the following example pairs, see how the same information is given using a word, phrase or a clause.
*This is a great museum*.
[The adjective amazing modifies the noun museum]

*This is a museum* ***that we visited last year***.
[The adjective clause modifies the noun museum; that is a relative pronoun referring to the antecedent museum]

*In Mwanza, we met good friends*.
[The adjective good modifies the noun friends]

*In Mwanza, we met friends* ***whom we haven't seen for years.***

[The adjective clause modifies the noun friends; whom is a relative pronoun referring to the antecedent friends]

In addition, use who, whom, whoever and whomever when the adjective clause refers to a person or an animal with a name. Use which or that when the adjective clause refers to a non-person (thing) or an animal that is not a pet.

*The French lady **who was our tour guide** turned out to be a distant relative of ours.*
[The French lady is **a person**; ***who*** is used]

*Our hotel, **which was built in 1830**, had an excellent bistro.*
[our hotel is **a thing**; ***which*** is used]

When an adjective clause is non-restrictive, (i.e. gives an extra piece of information not essential to the overall meaning of the sentence), separate it with commas from the rest of the sentence. Do not use that with non-restrictive adjective clauses.

*The hotel **that was built in 1830** has an excellent bistro*
[The adjective clause is **restrictive**; only the hotel built in 1830 has an excellent bistro. The adjective clause is **essential to the meaning of the sentence**]

*The hotel , **which was built in 1830**, had an excellent bistro.*
[The adjective clause is **non-restrictive**; there may be more hotels with excellent bistros. The adjective clause merely **adds extra information**]

#### 15.3.2.3 A noun clause functioning as a noun

This can be a subject, object or complement in a sentence. It starts with the same words that begin adjective clauses: that, who, which, when, where, whether, why, how.
*The Songea museum was amazing!*
[The Songea museum = noun phrase as subject of sentence]

***What we saw at the Songea museum** was amazing.*
[What we saw at the Louvre Museum = **noun clause as subject of sentence**]

*We loved **what we saw at the Songea museum**.*
[what we saw at the Songea museum = **noun clause as object of the verb like**]

*The best thing we liked was **what we saw at the Songea museum**.*
[what we saw at the Louvre museum = **noun phrase as complement of the verb was**]

Do not confuse between adjective and noun clauses, as they begin with the same words. A word starting an adjective clause has an antecedent to which it refers, whereas a word starting a noun clause does not.
*Our foreign friends know **that we saw the new exhibition at Sabasaba ground**.*
[that we saw the new exhibition at Sabasaba ground = noun clause as object of the verb know]

*The new exhibition **that we saw at Sabasaba ground** was amazing.*
[that we saw at sabasaba ground = adjective clause referring to the antecedent exhibition]

### 15.3.2.4 An elliptical clause

An elliptical clause may seem incorrect as it may be missing essential sentence elements, but it is actually accepted grammatically. As these clauses must appear together with complete clauses which contain the missing words, repetition is avoided by leaving the same words (or relative pronoun) out in the elliptical clause. This conciseness actually adds to the flow of the text and promotes writing that is more elegant.

In the following examples, the omitted words are given in parenthesis.
*The Songea museum was one of the sites (that) we did not want to miss*.
[The relative pronoun that is omitted from the adjective clause]

*After (we visited) the Serengeti, we went out to dinner at the Mount Meru Hotel* .
[subject and verb omitted from adverb clause]

*The French make better croissants than the American (make or do).*
[second half of comparison omitted]

*Though (they) sometimes (appear) impatient and somewhat assertive, most Tanzanians are actually kind and warm-hearted.*
[subject and verb omitted from adverb clause]

**Summary**

The English clauses are of two main types, namely dependent and independent. The clause is the determinant factor for classifying English sentences structurally. Clauses perform different other functions apart from classifying sentences which include modifying the noun, becoming the subject, object, adverb and compliment. The relationship between clauses distinguishes complex sentence from other types of English sentences.

**Exercise**

1. With examples of English sentences, distinguish between subordinating clause and the main clause.

2. With supporting examples, describe different ways which a dependent clause can be used in English sentences.

3. Why a is subordinate clause called dependent?

## References


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# PART V: The English Sentence



# LECTURE 16

# Sentence Patterns

## 16.1 Introduction

We discussed the sentence as one of the basic units of grammar. In this lecture, we shall examine sentence patterns.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Analyse sentences according to their patterns

ii. Classify basic and non-basic patterns.

iii. Use sentence patterns appropriately

## 16.2 Basic Sentence Patterns

All sentences in English can be grouped into five basic patterns. Differences in sentence patterns can be achieved by varying the five major elements of the sentence which are the Subject, Verb, Object, Complement and Adverbial. Since the subject is an obligatory element of any sentence, it therefore means that the differences amongst the five basic patterns lie in the kind of verb of the sentence and what follows it. The object of a verb can be direct (DO) or indirect (IO).

In Table 16.1, we present five major elements of a sentence.

**Table 16.1: Five Major Elements of a Sentence**

| Sentence | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Subject | Predicate | | | |
| They | Verb | DO | Complement | Adverbial |
| | Elected | Him | the chairman | last year |

A basic sentence is that which has not undergone any change. In what follows, we shall examine the five basic sentence patterns.

### 16.2.1 Sentence Pattern 1

This pattern comprises just a subject and a verb, as can be seen in Table 12.2.

**Table 16.2: Subject–Verb Sentence Pattern**

| Subject | Verb |
|---|---|
| Jaydee | Sings |
| Laila | Arrived |
| Some friends | Came |
| She | Has grown |

### 16.2.2 Sentence Pattern 2

This pattern consists of a subject, a transitive verb and a direct object, as in Table 16.3:

**Table 16.3: Subject, Transitive Verb and Direct Object Sentence Pattern**

| Subject | Verb | Do |
|---|---|---|
| David | Slapped | Gloria |
| Jimmy | Married | Jane |
| Lions | Like | Meat |

The three major things we should note about sentences in pattern 2 are

1. The verbs are mostly action verbs. They require the presence of object. Verbs which require the presence of an object belonging to a class known as transitive verbs.

2. The object is always a noun, a pronoun, or a group of words serving as a noun, which answers the question 'what' or 'who' after the verb. We can see that the verbs slap, marry and like obligatorily require the presence of a noun or pronoun as object. We call these elements which follow the verbs in the above sentences the **direct object**.

3. Unlike sentences in Pattern 1, those in Pattern 2 can be passivised. In a passive construction, the underlying object (which is affected by the action of the verb) is moved into the subject position, while the original subject of the sentence may be expressed by the prepositional phrase. The passive sentence is made from the basic sentence pattern which has a transitive verb and an object. The verbal complex in a passive construction consists of some form of the auxiliary verb *be* plus the past participle form of a main verb:

    i. Jane was married by Jimmy.

    ii. Bananas are liked by monkeys.

### 16.2.3 Sentence Pattern 3

Pattern 3 is made up of a subject, a transitive verb, a direct object and an object complement (OC). Whereas the direct object is the entity affected by the action of the verb, the object complement provides more information about the object. Some sentences that exhibit this pattern are presented in Table 12.4.

**Table 16.4: Subject, Transitive Verb, Direct Object and Object Complement Sentence Pattern**

| Subject | Verb | DO | OC |
|---|---|---|---|
| We | Appointed | Him | President |
| David | called | the lawyer | a thief |
| She | left | the window | open |

The verbs that can occur in Pattern 3 are few. The object complement can either be a noun phrase which provides a name for the object, or an adjective which modifies the object. Sentences in this pattern can easily be passivised:

1. He was appointed president by us.

2. The lawyer was called a thief by David.

3. The window was left open by her.

### 16.2.4 Sentence Pattern 4

Sentence Pattern 4 is made up of a subject, a transitive verb, an indirect object (IO) and a direct object (DO). An IO is an entity which receives anything or entity (the DO) affected by the action expressed by the verb.

Below is a table containing sentences that display this sentence pattern:

**Table 16.5: Subject, Transitive Verb, Indirect Object and Direct Object Sentence Pattern**

| Subject | Verb | IO | DO |
|---|---|---|---|
| David | Gave | Him | a book |
| David | Bought | Gloria | a dress |

### 16.2.5 Sentence Pattern 5

Sentence pattern 5 consists of a subject, verb and a Subject Complement (SC). An SC is the entity that gives more information about the subject.

**Table 16.6: Subject, Verb and Subject Complement Sentence Pattern**

| Subject | Verb | SC |
|---|---|---|
| The boy | is | a perfect |
| I | have been | unwell |
| The story | sounded | true |
| David | is | there |

In the above pattern, the subject complement may either be a predicate noun or predicate adjectival or an adverbial. Whereas the predicate noun provides another name for the subject, the predicate adjectival modifies the subject.

Sentences that conform to the above five basics patterns exhibit the following characteristics:

(i) They are all statements (i.e. none is a command, question, request, or even a wish)

(ii) They are all affirmative (i.e. none is negative).

(iii) They are all in active voice (i.e. none is in the passive).

## 16.3 Non-basic Sentence Patterns

The non-basic sentence patterns are sentences which are derived due to the changes which apply to the five basic sentence patterns. The changes can be which apply to the five basic sentence patterns. The changes can be in the form of deletion of an item, substitution of an item with another, insertion (addition) of a new item into an already existing one, or permutation (movement) of an item from one syntactic environment to another. These kinds of operations are referred to as **transformations**. For instance, we can drive an interrogative sentence from any of the five basic sentence patterns by switching the order of the subject and the auxiliary verb, as in:

1. (a) He will come. (Sentence Pattern 1)

   (b) Will he – come? (Movement Transformation)

Secondly, imperatives are assumed to have you as subject in the underlying structure, but which is deleted in the derived structure, as can be seen below:

1. (a) You open the window (Sentence Pattern 2)

   (b) Open the window. (Deletion Transformation)

2. (a) Which has no overt subject, is preferred to (2a). Sentences like (2a), where you is present in the subject position of an imperative, can only be used for emphasis or contrast.

Another non-basic sentence pattern which involves changes in the usual word order is the passive sentence. A sentence is passivised when its subject is the entity that is affected by the action of the verb:

1. (a) The police kept him in custody.

   (b) He was kept in custody. (by the police)

2. (a) John insulted them.

   (b) They were insulted. (by John)

In all passive sentences, the original subject can be expressed by a prepositional phrase. But, the sentence will be grammatical without the prepositional phrase and this is why, we enclosed the by prepositional phrase in parentheses, as in (1b) and (2b).

It is also possible to derive a non-basic sentenced pattern from the basic one by the insertion of a false subject known as an **expletive**. The two expletives in English are, it and there. When an expletive (particularly there) is inserted in sentence-initial position, the original subject of the sentence is postponed until after the verb. Two operations are thus involved. These are insertion and permutation operations:

1. (a) Eleven students are in the class.

   (b) There are eleven students in the class.

2. (a) David ate the mango.

   (b) It was David that ate the mango.

(1b) is referred to as an 'existential construction'. Although the existential construction in (1b) is derived from the basic pattern, it is more natural than its original version, as in (1a).

**Summary**

The sentences in the English language fall into five basic patterns which are determined by the presence and functions of nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives. The patterns can be easily classified based on the type of verb used.

**Exercise**

1. Describe the differences between basic and non-basic clause patterns.

2. Identify the causes for formation of non-basic clause patterns.

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# LECTURE 17

# Types of English Sentences

## 17.1 Introduction

We discussed the sentence as one of the basic units of grammar. In this lecture, we shall examine the English sentences and their types on the basis of function and structure. The lecture intends to bring awareness to you that whenever one talks of types of sentences in English should specify the approach towards identifying these types. Two approaches are common, namely: functional classification and structural classification.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Analyse English sentences according to their function

ii. Classify English sentences according to their structure

iii. Use English sentence appropriately

## 17.2 Communicative Types of Sentences

A person's intention or purpose in speaking is of immense importance in the communicational frame. The intention or the purpose of the speaker can be expressed in the form of an ASSERTION (i.e. to confirm, negate or elicit some piece of information), or in the form of a REQUEST (i.e. to ask somebody to carry out some instruction). The speaker's intention can be expressed in the form of certain types of sentences. There is, however, no one-to-one correspondence between the intention of the speaker and the type of sentence that is used to express this intention. One sentence-type may be used to express this intention. One sentence-type may be used to express different types of communicative intent, and one type of communicative intent can be expressed by different sentence-types (cfd. Giering et al. 1987:209). For instance, a request (as communicative intent) may be rendered by different sentence-types (by an int = interrogative or imp = imperative sentence), as in:

1. (a) May I have your pencil? (int.)

   (b) Give me your pencil. (imp.)

   (c) Give me your pencil, won't you? (imp. + int)

From the above examples, we can see that the classification of sentences cannot be based purely on their syntactic structures, since certain utterance-types can be used for several other communicative intents.

The standard communication types of sentence for making assertions are declaratives. Declarative sentences are used to express some state of affairs, as in:

1. Gloria bought a dress.

2. David is a handsome boy.

The standard communication types of sentence used for making requests are imperatives. These sentences are used to instruct someone to carry out an instruction and thus influence someone's actions, e.g.:

1. Call him for me!

2. Lift that stone!

Inquiries/questions are usually rendered or expressed by interrogative sentences. These sentences are used to ask someone to make a verbal response (by providing some facts to fill the gap in the questioner's knowledge) or to ask the opinion of the questioner, as in:

1. What is your name?

2. Did you sell the goat?

From the foregoing, we can observe that there are three major sentence-types for expressing three major communicative intents. In what follows, we shall briefly examine the three communicative types of sentences.

### 17.2.1 Assertion

A sentence-type expressing an assertion is generally rendered by a declarative sentence, which is used to express some state of affairs. A declarative sentence can be affirmative or negative, e.g.

1. (a) David bought a dress to Gloria.

   (b) David did not buy a dress for Gloria.

### 17.2.2 Inquiry/Question

An inquiry or a question is expressed by an interrogative sentence. A question is an expression that requires a verbal response. Asking a question is a special case of requesting information (real question) or requesting that the questioner displays knowledge (examination question). Questions can be divided into following major types depending on the kind of answer drivable from them:

(i) ***Yes–No Questions:*** A Yes–No question expects the hearer to affirm or reject the questioned proposition. Yes–No questions usually involve the switching of the order of the auxiliary and the subject or placing the auxiliary before the subject and a rising intonation at the end of the sentence.

   1. He is a man Is he a man?

   2. David goes to school Does David go to school?

(ii) ***Question TAG:*** A question tag consists of an auxiliary verb plus a pronoun, with or without a contracted negative particle (e.g. will you? Isn't it?) added to a sentence to make it a question or to ask for agreement. A positive statement requires a negative tag and a negative statement requires a positive tag:

   1. You will come today: won't you?

   2. David does not eat apples does he?

Note that positive tags have a falling intonation while negative ones have a rising intonation.

It is also possible to provide responses to question tags. The speaker expects a Yes or No response from his bearer. Notice also that the form of the auxiliary verb in the response tag is the same as that in the statement part of the sentence (the main clause).

1. He oughtn't marry Jane ought he? No he oughtn't
2. We shall go today; shan't we Yes, we shall
3. David goes to school doesn't he? Yes, he does

From the examples provided, it appears that the statement part of the sentence and the response tag are on the same intonation pattern.

(iii) ***Wh-Questions:*** Wh-questions are formed with the following question words: who (m), whose, what, which, when, why where, how. The Wh-question word occurs as the first element in the sentence.

1. What is your name?
2. Where are you going to?

Notice that unlike Yes-No questions. Falling intonation is a general characteristic of Wh-questions; but like the Yes-No questions; the auxiliary verb and the subject of the sentence switch position in Wh-questions. When there is no auxiliary in the equivalent statement, do is always introduced:

1. (a) She went to the farm.
   (b) Where did she go to?
2. (a) Mary likes apples.
   (b) What does Mary like?

(iv) ***Alternative Questions****:* Alternative questions are of two types; 'the first resembles a Yes-No question, the second a wh-question' (Quirk and Greenbaum 1973:198):

1. Shall we go by bus or train?
2. Which of the boys do you like? John, Eze or Peter

An alternative question provides a list from which the bearer is at liberty to choose one.

### 17.2.3 Commands

There are three major types of command in English: commands without subjects, commands with subjects and commands with let. We shall discuss these one by one.

(i) ***Commands without Subject:*** Commands in this category do not have subjects at the surface structure. They are the most common.

(ii) ***Commands with subject:*** It is often claimed that the underlying subject of a command is the second person you. One of the arguments in support of the underlying you subject proposal for an imperative sentence is the occurrence of you in question tags that follow imperative sentences, as can be seen in:

1. (a) Leave here immediately, won't you?
   (b) *Leave here immediately, won't he?

(1b) is ill-formed, because he cannot serve as the subject of a tag question that follows an imperative sentence.

Another piece of evidence in support of the underlying you subject proposal for the imperative sentence is the occurrence of yourself in a construction like "wash yourself", but not *Wash himself.

There are, however, certain situations in which there may be an overt subject in an imperative sentence. According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:201), imperative sentences that have overt subjects "are usually admonitory in tone, and frequently express strong irritation". This accounts for why they do not require the presence of any politeness indicator, as in:

1. *Please. You shut the door!

Commands in this class are used to particularise or to single out the addressee.

(iii) ***Commands with Let:*** There are cases when the subject of an imperative can be the first or third person pronoun. When this happens, we find let introducing the whole sentence. Only objective pronouns can follow let in this class of command, since the pronoun is the object of the verb let:

1. (a) Let us go.
   (b) *Let we go.

2. (a) Let me have some piece.
   (b) *Let I have some piece.

3. (a) Let him do it.
   (b) *Let he do it.

4. (a) Let them come.
   (b) *Let they come.

**Activity 17.1**

1. With relevant examples, discuss the five basic sentence patterns in English.
2. 'Other Sentence Patterns result from changes applying to the basic ones.' Discuss.

## 17.3 Structural Classification of Sentences

Sentences are not only classified with respect to the kind of function they perform; they can also be classified with respect to their structure. A sentence may be simple, compound or complex.

A simple sentence is a clause that has only one subject and predicate, e.g.

1. John came.
2. John and Mary visited us.
3. John has been sleeping.
4. John kicked the ball.

A compound sentence consists of two main clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, e.g.

1. John plays drums and Mary plays the piano.
2. John is a student, but Mary is a nurse.

A complex sentence is made up of at least one main clause plus one or more dependent clauses, e.g.:

1. I saw a mad man while I was coming to school.
2. This is the man that ate the food.

**Summary**

The English sentences are classified on the basis of their function and structure. The two approaches do not interfere with each other. The details for each type of sentence using structural approach are given in subsequent lectures.

**Exercise**

1. What are the major differences between Wh-questions and Yes-No questions in English?
2. How are imperatives marked in English?
3. Provide question tags and responses for the following constructions:
   (a) John will go to school, _____? Yes, he will
   (b) He will not do it, _____
   (c) These girls are pretty _____? _____
   (d) He came here, _____? _____
   (e) He ought to come _____? _____
   (f) You need not come _____? _____
   (g) He must be a criminal_____? _____
4. Write the following sentences in the passive, omitting the words in brackets:
   (a) (Everybody) knows the truth.

(b) (They) opened the cinema just last night.

(c) (We) have already employed somebody.

(d) (The policeman) called the lawyer a liar.

(e) I would not mind if (anybody) does it.

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# LECTURE 18

# The Complex Sentence of English

## 18.1 Introduction

We discussed the sentence as one of the basic units of grammar. In this lecture, we shall examine the complex sentence of English so as to describe its form, function and use. It is also the interest of this lecture to describe the major components of this sentence by addressing the clauses in the sentence and the subordination as the major attribute of this sentence. The sentence also contains clauses of unequal rank, joined by a subordinator.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Analyse main features of the complex sentences of English

ii. Classify clauses in the complex sentences of English

iii. Use the complex sentences of English appropriately

## 18.2 The Complex Sentence

The complex sentence of English is normally a sentence that contains more than one clause, where one is dependent and the other is independent. In its structure, the two clauses are described to have unequal weight since independent clause can make sense on its own where as dependent clause cannot. Following that, the independent clause is always the main clause while the dependent clause is the subordinating clause.

In some literature all sentence with more than one clause are regarded as complex sentences. For the sake of clarity, this lecture will distinguish complex sentence from such a generalisation by considering the ranking of clauses in the sentence structure. The main feature of complex sentence in this approach is the subordination of one clause to the other.

## 18.3 The Structure of the Complex Sentence

The complex sentence is made up of a sentence and a sentence fragment. The sentence is normally the independent (main) clause while the fragment is the dependent (subordinate) clause. The two main components are joined by subordination as the main feature.

### 18.3.1 Subordination

Clauses joined by subordination are not equal in rank. A main clause can stand alone, a subordinate clause cannot stand alone or form a simple sentence – due to the presence of a subordinator which is either expressed or understood (zero marker).

A subordinate clause is introduced by typical markers of subordination:

1. Subordinating conjunctions
2. wh-pronouns and adverbs
3. a zero marker
4. inversion

#### 18.3.1.1 Subordinating Conjunctions

These join the subordinate clause with the main clause or with a clause of a higher degree of subordination:

*after, although, as, as soon as, before, because, if, as if, even though, in order that, lest, on condition that, that, providing, seeing, since, so that, supposing, that, in that, than, till, unless, until*

According to morphemic structure they are divided into:

- simple: *as if, that, though, till*
- compound: *although, unless, until, notwithstanding*
- phrasal: *as if, as long as, as soon as, in order to, on condition that*
- participial: *providing, provided that, seeing, supposing*

Most subordinating conjunctions introduce adverbial clauses.

Subordinating conjunctions have different syntactical characteristics from co-ordinating conjunctions.

They are always placed in initial position in the clause they introduce. Subordinator can come at the beginning of the complex sentence, which is never the case with co-ordinating conjunctions and the clauses they introduce.

*They soon settled down because they liked the place.*

vs.

***Because they liked the place**, they soon settled down.*

#### 18.3.1.2 Wh-Pronouns and Adverbs as Subordinators

These function as markers of subordination

- pronouns: *who, whom, which, what, whose*
- adverbs: *where, when, why, how, wherever, whenever*

Wh-pronouns and adverbs perform a syntactical function also in the subordinate clause they introduce.

Two functions:

(a) That of subordinating conjunction joining the subordinate to the main clause

(b) That of subject (who), direct object (whom), and adjunct (where) in the subordinate clauses they introduce.

*Tell me **who did it.***

*Tell me **where he works**.*

### 18.3.1.3 Zero –Marker – the marker of subordination

It is normally:

- the subordinating conjunction (that):

  *You know you can rely on him. (That you can rely on him)*

- a relative pronoun in the objective case:

  *John does not like the girls Mary shares the flat with. (with whom Mary shares the flat)*

### 18.3.1.4 Different degrees of subordination

We distinguish subordinate clauses of the first, the second, the third... degree of subordination:

*I know that you will be surprised when you hear how the diver managed to survive although he was attacked by a shark.*

Subordinate clauses of the same type may be joined by coordinating conjunctions – complex compound sentence:

*When the guests were gone and (when) she was alone, she kicked off her shoes and sank into an armchair.*

### 18.3.2 Position of Subordinate Clauses:

- When in final position, subordinate clauses are not separated from the main clause by commas:

*He didn't miss the train because it was 20 minutes late.*

- When in initial position they often sound emphatic with the exception of subject clauses – normally separated from the main clause by a comma:

*Since the train was 20 minutes late, he didn't miss it.*

- Relative clauses introduced by the independent relatives whoever, whatever, whichever, whenever normally occur in initial position:

*Whoever you are, be honest.*

- Medial position is not very common – subordinate clause is usually separated from the rest by commas:

*On Tuesday, as he came home from school, his brother broke the news to him.*

### 18.3.3 Classification of Subordinate Clauses according to their Structure

#### 18.3.3.1 Finite clauses
These contain a predicator expressed by a finite verb form (speaks, have spoken...)

#### 18.3.3.2 Non-finite clauses
These include those whose predicator consists of a non-finite verbal phrase:

#### 18.3.3.3 Infinitival clauses:
- Bare infinitive:
  - Without subject: *All I did was **take French leave**.*
  - With subject: *I saw **her take the change from the counter**.*

- With the to-infinitive:
  - Without subject: *He wants **to leave at once**.*
  - With subject: *He wants **me to leave at once**.*

#### 18.3.3.4 Gerundial clauses:
- without subject: *I like **driving a fast car**.*
- with subject: *I don't mind **your brother coming to our party**.*

#### 18.3.3.5 Participial clauses:
- –ing participial clauses:
  - Without subject: ***Nearing the entrance** I shook hands with my friends.*
  - With subject: ***The bus being crowded**, I had to stand.*

- past participial clauses:

- Without subject: ***Once published**, the book proved a bestseller.*

- With subject: ***The choice made,** she rang her father up.*

#### 18.3.3.6 A verbless clause
It is a sort of elliptical adverbial clause without a predicator and usually without a subject as well – usually introduced by subordinators *when, while, though, if, as if, unless:*

***When in doubt**, consult a reference book.*

### 18.3.4 Classification of Subordinate Clauses according to their Function
In a complex sentence, subordinate clauses perform a similar function to phrases in a simple sentence.
Thus they may function as:

**(i) Subject:**

***What he said** was interesting.*
***What you lack** is a sense of humour.*
***When he arrives home** is no concern of mine.*

There is no connection between the form and the function of a subordinate clause
*When he arrives home* is classified according to its function as a subject clause.

**(ii) Subject complement:**

*The question is **whether they will import those spare parts**.*
*He is not **what he pretends to be.***

The subject in complex sentences containing predicate clauses is usually expressed by:

- An abstract noun like concern, fact:
  *The fact is **that we miss him**.*

- the demonstratives this/that
  *This is **what he said***

- a subject clause:
  *What I want to know is **what he is going to do next**.*

**(iii) Object**

- Direct object

*He told me **what he had heard.***

*I think **that Jack has no influence on Mary.***

- Indirect object

*He sent **whoever he liked** an invitation card.*

*Tell **whoever you want** that I'm fed up with the whole affair.*

**(iv) Object Complement**

*He made his firm **what it is today**.*

*You may call it **what you like**.*

**(v) Adjunct**

*I saw him **when he arrived**.*
*He won't come **because he isn't well**.*

**(vi) Loose Adjunct (Disjunct)**

***To be frank**, I cannot stand your manners.*

*He'll never be back by midnight, **to be sure**.*

**(vii) Conjunct**

*One of you, **let us say Mary**, might take this letter to the post Office.*

*He is lazy; **what is more**, he is stupid.*

Besides these functions as sentence elements, subordinate clauses may also occur on a lower level, i.e. as elements in phrase structure. Thus they occur as:

❖ **Postmodifier in Nominal Phrases (Adjectival Clauses)**

*The criminal **who escaped punishment** flew to Argentina.*

*The book **I am reading** is about the war in Vietnam.*

❖ **Apposition in Nominal Phrases (Appositive Clauses)**

*His request **that he be freed from paying taxes** was refused.*

*The fact **that he always cheats at playing cards** makes me furious.*

❖ **Postmodifier in Adjectival Phrases**

*I am glad **that his design was a success**.*

*Are you aware **that the affair is very risky?***

❖ **Object to a Preposition**

*It all depends on **what he will decide**.*

### 18.3. 5 Subcategorisation of subordinate clauses

On the basis of similar patterning with phrases, subordinate clauses may also be subdivided into three large groups:

1. Nominal clauses
2. Adjectival clauses
3. Adverbial clauses

#### 18.3.5.1 Nominal Clause Patterns

**(a) Dependent statements**

Dependent declarative clauses or statements are usually connected with the main clause by means of the subordinating conjunction ***that*** – hence, *that clauses*. They may have any nominal function except that of prepositional object.

**(i) Subject (Subject clauses) –** only in initial position

- Linking verbs:
  ***That she does not believe him** is obvious.*
- Verbs expressing emotion:
  ***That his daughter was awarded the first prize** flattered him greatly.*
- The verbs such as matter, mean, make a difference, come:
  ***That he is rich** doesn't mean anything to them.*

**(ii) Subject Complement (Predicate clause)**

*His impression was **that he could make his own terms**.*

- Subjunctive mood:
  *The regulation is **that all workers be x-rayed**.*
- Subjunctive equivalent should:
  *My advice is **that you should apply for the job.***
- The fact is, the point is, the reason is, etc. sentences:
  *The fact is **John is one of the best students in English.***

**(iii) Direct Object (Object clause)**
The verbs followed by a that-clause as DO have subjects that refer to human beings – mainly verbs introducing reported speech or expressing mental activities – *admit, agree, fear, feel , hope, imagine, say, show...*

*I gather* ***that he is the boss here***.

*He assured them* ***of his loyalty***. (instead of that of is used)

*He informed us* ***that he would sell the estate***.(personal object precedes the that clause).

*Bob announced to us* ***that he was going to get married next month***. (to phrase is placed before the that clause)

*I wish* ***that you should be present at the ceremony***.

**(iv) Zero '*That Clauses'***
In colloquial style the conjunction that introducing object clauses is often optionally deleted and the clause is then introduced by a zero marker:
*I think* ***you have some influence on her.***

*He said* ***he was still able to blush at the memory***.

**(v) So and Not Pro-Forms for Object Clauses**

- An object clause referring to a previous affirmative statement is replaced by the pro-form so, usually after the verbs *fancy, regret, notice, say...*

  *Is Jane going to take the exam in June? I think* ***so***

- In statements confirming what has been said by another person

  *You can always rely on him.* ***So*** *we can.*

- Not is a substitute for a negative object clause after verbs as *believe, expect, guess, hope, suppose, think, be afraid*

*Is Jane going to take the exam in June? I hope* ***not****.*

**(vi) Apposition in Nominal Phrases (Appositive Clauses)**
*The fact* ***that he is now old and weak*** *must be taken into consideration.*

*The request* ***that our salaries be raised*** *was flatly refused.*

**(vii) Postmodifier in Adjectival Phrases**
*He is afraid* ***(that) things might get worse***.

We are aware **(that) he can do nothing to prevent it**.

**(b) Dependent Verbal Questions (Yes – No Questions)**
Dependent verbal questions are introduced by the conjunctions if or whether. In a complex sentence they may occur as:

**(i) Subject:**
***If / Whether the invention will serve any practical purpose*** *may be left an open question at this point.*

**(ii)Subject Complement:**
*The problem is* ***if / whether everything has been done to save his life.***

**(iii) Direct Object:**
*He asked me* ***if / whether I had been there before****.*

*We don't know* ***if / whether he'll accept the proposal.***

**(iv)Apposition in Nominal Phrases:**
*The problem* ***whether or not they should send the child to the kindergarten*** *will soon have to be solved.*

**(v) Postmodifier in Adjectival Phrases:** (after adjectives certain, doubtful, sure - negation)
*I am not certain* ***whether or not there is an elephant in our zoo****.*

**(vi) Object to a preposition:**
*Everything depends on* ***if /whether or not the information will reach him in time***

**(c )Dependent Verbal Questions (Yes – No Questions)**
Dependent wh-questions are introduced by interrogative pronouns and adverbs: who, what which, when, where, how. They occur as:

**(i) Subject:**
***Who will substitute for him*** *is still not known.*
**(ii) Subject complement:**
*The question is* ***who cares for it.***

*That's* ***why I am here****.*

**(iii)Direct object:**
*The passport official knew* ***who I was / what my occupation was.***

**(iv) Apposition in nominal phrases:**
*The question* ***who shall take his place*** *is still open.*

**(v) Postmodifier in Adjectival Phrases:**
*I am not sure* ***who will substitute for the manager.***

**(vi) Object to a Prepostion:**
*Don't worry* ***(over) what people will say.***

### 18.3.5.2 Nominal Relative Clauses

Nominal relative clauses are introduced by the independent relative pronoun what, by the compound relative pronouns whatever, whichever, whoever and occasionally by who – they are used independently – without an antecedent since they represent the antecedent and the relative in one word. Nominal relative clauses may function as:

- **Subject:** ***What he had seen*** *surprised and alarmed him.*

- **Subject Complement:** *This is* ***what he said.***
- **Direct Object:** *I mean* ***what I say****.*
- **Indirect Object:** *He gave* ***whoever came first****, the first choice.*
- **Object complement:** *He made his firm* ***what it is today****.*
- **Object to a preposition:** *You may ask advice of* ***whomever you like.***

#### 18.3.5.3 To-Infinitival Nominal Clauses

These can occur in the function of:

- **Subject:** ***To know the truth*** *is important.*
- **Subject complement:** *Mary's aim is* ***to win the first prize.***
- **Direct object:** *The doctor wanted* ***to cure her.***

#### 18.3.5.4 Gerundial Clauses

These can occur as sentence elements in the function of:

- **Subject:** ***Writing letters*** *is a waste of time****.***
- **Subject complement:** *During the war our only task was* ***fighting for freedom****.*
- **Direct object:** *Have you finished* ***reading the newspaper?***

**Summary**

The complex sentence is made up of two clauses of unequal weight, where one clause is dependant and the other is independent. The most salient feature of this sentence is subordination. This is due to the fact that one of its clauses can not stand alone and express a complete thought. Subordinate clause occupies different positions in English sentence structure. The purpose of communication determines where to place the clause.

**Exercise**

1. What makes the complex sentence of English different from other sentences?
2. What are functions of subordinate clause?
3. Why is the subordinate clause called subordinate?

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# LECTURE 19
# The Compound Sentence of English

## 19.1 Introduction

This lecture keeps on exploring the English sentences with a particular focus on the compound sentences. In the general sense a compound sentence is said to be a combination of more than one sentence which together are realised as one. This mean it may be made of two or more simple sentences, two or more complex sentences, one or more simple sentences plus one or more complex sentences, but all these are joined by a coordinating conjunction or any language symbol functioning as a coordinating conjunction. In this lecture, we will cover compound sentences and how to create them by joining two or more independent clauses together. Compound sentences differ from other sentence types, and if you leave out their joining elements, you turn them into run-on sentences.

## 19.2 The Compound Sentence

A compound sentence is a sentence that has at least two independent clauses joined by a comma, semicolon or conjunction. An independent clause is a clause that has a subject and verb and forms a complete thought. When independent clauses are joined with coordinators (also called coordinating conjunctions) commas and semicolons, they do more than just join the clauses. They add meaning and flow to the sentences. An example of a compound sentence is:

*This house is too expensive, and that house is too small.*

This sentence is a compound sentence because it has two independent clauses, 'This house is too expensive' and 'that house is too small' separated by a comma and the conjunction 'and.'

The coordinators you can use to join independent clauses are:

***for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so***

The three you will use most often are 'and,' 'but' and 'or

Here is an example of how coordinating conjunctions add meaning:

*I think you would enjoy the party, **but** I don't mind if you stay home*.

In this sentence, the coordinator '**but**' shows a clear relationship between the two independent clauses. In this case, that the speaker is making a suggestion that the person being addressed isn't expected to follow it. Without the coordinator 'but,' the relationship isn't apparent, making the writing choppy and the meaning less clear:

*I think you would enjoy the party. I don't mind if you stay home*

You can also join independent clauses with a **semicolon (;)** which looks something like a cross between a colon and a comma. If you join clauses with a semicolon, you add an abrupt pause, creating a different kind of effect, as shown in the sentence below:

*He said he didn't mind if I stayed home**;** it soon became clear he wasn't being honest.*

You should use a semicolon when the independent clauses are related, but contrast in a way that you want to stand out. In the sentence above, the contrast is that the person being talked about in the first clause sounded honest when he said he didn't mind if the speaker stayed home, but in the second clause, the speaker is telling you that the person being talked about was not honest. You could just as easily have written the sentence using a coordinating conjunction:

*He said he didn't mind if I stayed home, **but** it soon became clear he wasn't being honest.*

The sentence still means the same as before, but using the coordinator 'but' softens the impact of the second clause

## 19.3 The Structure of the Compound Sentence

A compound sentence has at least two independent clauses and always includes a conjunction.

### a. Independent Clause

An independent clause has a subject and a predicate and makes sense on its own as a complete sentence. Here are a few:

- *The parrot ate popcorn.*
- *The wolf ran quickly.*
- *He ate candy apples.*
- *He went to the mall*

So, you can see that all of the clauses above are working sentences. All sentences have an independent clause, but all compound sentences have at least two independent clauses

### b. Conjunction

A conjunction is a word in a sentence that connects other words, phrases and clauses. The most common conjunction that you know is *"and***."** Other common conjunctions are *for, but, or, yet,* and *so.* A compound sentence needs at least one conjunction to connect two or more complete sentences.

Conjunctions are important because they let us combine information, but still keep ideas separate so that they are easy to understand. A compound sentence without a conjunction would be a run-on sentence, and would sound very confusing! Here are two sentences, with and without conjunctions:

*The boy ran to the park then he ate a hotdog.*

*The boy ran to the park, and then he ate a hotdog.*

So, you can see that we need a conjunction to for the sentence to be clear.

It is important to know that the word "then" is NOT a conjunction—it is an adverb. So, when you are writing a compound sentence and want to use "then", you still need a conjunction, for example, "so then," "but then," or "and then."

### 19.3.1 Types of Compound Sentences

As mentioned, a compound sentence combines two independent clauses. But, sometimes a compound sentence is about:

- one subject (like when you discuss two different things you did)
- or two different subjects doing the same thing.
- or two different subjects doing two different things

**a. When one subject does more than one thing:**

*Example 1:*

*The boy ran to the park.*

*The boy ate a hotdog there.*

These sentences have the same subject, "boy," but two verbs, "ran" and "ate." Since both sentences are about what the boy does at the park, we can combine them:

*The boy ran to the park, and he ate a hotdog there.*

This compound sentence is the best way to share the information from the two original sentences. Even though the boy does two different things, we can explain them in one sentence because they are related to each other. Let's try another example, again starting with two sentences.

*Example 2:*
*Every morning, Shelly eats breakfast.*
*After breakfast, Shelly works in her garden.*

Both of these sentences describe what the subject, Shelly, does every morning. Why not say this in one sentence?

*Every morning, Shelly eats breakfast and then she works in her garden.*

Again, the compound sentence is much stronger than two separate sentences.

**b. When multiple subjects do the same thing:**

*Example 1:*

*Yesterday the lion went to the candy store.*

*The zebra also went to the candy store yesterday.*

Both subjects, "the lion" and "the zebra," went to the candy store yesterday. So, let's combine these things:

*Yesterday, the lion went to the candy store, and the zebra went too.*

Also, you should know that in contrast, combining the subjects makes a compound subject, but NOT a compound sentence:

*The lion went to the candy store and the zebra went too.* Compound sentence

*The lion and the zebra went to the candy store.* Compound subject

**c. When multiple subjects do multiple things**:

*Example 1:*

*The girl ate cake at the party.* Subject "girl," verb "ate"

*The boy drank soda at the party.* Subject "cat," verb "drank"

Even though these two sentences are about two different subjects doing two different things, they both share the phrase "at the party." Since they have this information in common, we can combine them:

*At the party, the girl ate cake but the boy drank soda.*

### 19.3.2 Co-ordinate Clauses

Clauses in a compound sentence are joined either by co-ordination.

In co-ordination the constituent clauses are on the same level, i.e. they are equal in rank – they are known as a compound sentence and are joined by:

1. **a co-ordinating conjunction** *and, but, or, nor , for*

   *She came early but he arrived only in the small hours*.
2. **a conjunct** (conjuncts are adverbs – *accordingly, also, consequently, however, indeed, in fact, nevertheless*); normally they conjunctions are preceded by semi-colons

   *It was late autumn; yet the days were very warm*

   *He was early and he went to his office.*

Clauses cannot be transposed to the beginning:

e.g. **And he went to his office he was early.*)

*The boy is very clever; however he is lazy.*

*The boy is very clever; he is, however, lazy.*

*The boy is clever; he is very lazy, however.*

Conjunctions may occur in initial, medial and in final position in the second clause.

**3. Punctuation**

- Clauses joined by punctuation alone are usually marked off by a semicolon or colon. The absence of any punctuation would be regarded as a serious fault.

- Short co-ordinate clauses are sometimes joined by a comma, particularly when the second clause is abridged

- The meaning is indicated by the words of which the clauses consist – the relation may imply cause, contrast, result, etc.

  *He came, he saw, he conquered.* (addition)

  *The order was given; there was no retreat* (result)

According to the lexical meaning of individual conjunctions we can distinguish:

### 19.3.3 Copulative co-ordination

In this type the idea expressed in the second clause is added to the idea expressed in the first clause.

Copulative conjunctions: *and, nor, neither... nor, not only... but also, as well as, besides, moreover, further, furthermore, in addition*

The meaning of conjunction *and* is rather wide:
*He is very fond of music **and** plays the violin. (**addition**)*

*There was a thunderstorm **and** the party was spoilt. (**result)***

*You have your opinion **and** I'll have mine (**contrast**)*
*Come **and** see me some day. (**purpose**)*

### 19.3.4 Disjunctive or Alternative Co-ordination

In this type the idea expressed in one clause is an alternative to the idea expressed in the other clause.
Conjunctions: *or, else, otherwise, either...or, or at least*
*Take it or leave it.*

*Stop cheating or I won't play with you. (negative condition)*

### 19.3.5 Adversative Co-ordination

Clauses contradict each other
Conjunctions: *but, however, nevertheless, nonetheless, only, rather, still, yet, after all, on the other hand, on the contrary...*

*But* may denote:

- a complete contrast
  *He adores football matches, but his wife doesn't.*

- only partial contrast or concession
  *It was his fault, but he doesn't admit it*

*However, still, yet* are interchangeable with *but* (when it denotes partial contrast)
*He is often in pain, nevertheless he never complains.*

### 19.3.6 Resultative Co-ordination

On clause expresses what can be inferred or concluded from the other

Conjunctions: *accordingly, consequently, hence, so, then, therefore, thus*

*You are the only one who can speak Spanish; consequently, you'll have to act as our interpreter.*

With the predicator containing should, the latter expresses:

- strong probability:

  *They left early, so they should have reached the top by now.*

- obligation:

*You are older than your brother, so you should be wiser.*

### 19.3.7 Explanatory Co-ordination

Clause introduced by an explanatory conjunction adds a fuller explanation to the preceding clause.

Conjunctions: *as, namely, for instance, for example, in other words, that is to say...*
*He is not a reliable man, that is to say, he rarely keeps his word.*

### 19.3.8 Co-ordinating Conjunctions and Conjuncts as Sentence Connectors

*She said she would settle the affair herself. And she did.*

### 19.3.9 Abridgement in Co-ordinate Clauses, Substitution and Ellipsis

In order to avoid the repetition of individual sentence elements, English makes use of substitution and ellipsis:

- An auxiliary may stand for the entire predicate of the second co-ordinate clause:
  *You have forgotten your promise but he hasn't.*

- To may stand for the entire clause on condition that the verb takes a to-infinitive
  *She would like to help them out but her husband doesn't want her to.*

- So, not may substitute for the entire object of the second clause after verbs like believe, guess, suppose, think, hope
  *He thinks that we should abolish old customs but I don't think so.*

- By means of ellipsis the second predicator may be omitted if both coordinate clauses are short.
  *To err is human, to forgive is divine.*

**Summary**

The compound sentence of English is a kind of two sentences in one. It is made up of two independent sentences which are linked by coordinating conjunction. The sentence comprises of clauses of equal weight and a conjunction. The conjunctions by themselves have their meaning; each conjunction is used for both grammatical and semantic purposes.

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# PART VI: Concordial Relations

**Lecture 20 Agreement in English Sentence**

# LECTURE 20
# Agreement in English sentence

## 20.1 Introduction

The term 'concord' (sometimes known as agreement) is used to refer to a grammatical relationship existing between elements of the sentence, whereby the form of one of the elements necessarily requires a corresponding form of another. In other words, concord is the constraint on the form of words occurring together. Agreement between words in a sentence is a most problematic aspect of English grammar that mars students' ability to speak or write effectively. For this reason, lessons in concord should be amongst those that must be vigorously pursued by the teacher.

Certain areas of the language where agreement is mostly found have been identified. It is therefore the duty of the teacher to bring to the knowledge of his students:

1. The constructions where agreement between words is needed;
2. The areas of grammar where errors resulting from the violation of certain agreement requirements are most common, and
3. The general rules or conventions regarding concord.

Errors in concord are caused by inconsistency in the following areas of grammar:

Subject–Verb concord, Antecedent–Anaphor pair, Subject–Complement concord, Shift in Tense/Aspect, and Voice.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Describe how the rules of concord operate in:

ii. Subordinators, amount words, subjects, expletives, complements, collective nouns, intervening modifiers, subject–verb

iii. Understand the use of concordial agreement correctly in texts

## 20.2 Subjects–Verb Concord

There is a general rule in English grammar which states that a verb must agree in number (i.e. singular or plural) with the subject of its sentence. This means that a singular subject must be followed by a singular verb, while a plural subject must be followed by a plural verb. Subject–verb concord is relevant mainly if the verb form of such a sentence is the simple present. That is to say agreement between the verb and its subject does not hold for other verb forms (e.g. simple past).

The most common question that students ask when this subject-matter is introduced in the class is 'What does it mean to say that a verb can be either singular or plural in form?' while in the real sense the so-called singular verb takes **'-s'** or **'-es'** to indicate plurality for the noun. So it is the duty of the teacher to let the learner know that the noun and the verb are marked for singular and plural in different ways. Whereas the addition of an **–s** or **–es** to the verb signifies that the verb is singular. It is very important that the learner should know this, because this over-generalization that **–s** or **–es** inflection marks plural is one of the primary sources of errors in Subject–Verb concord. This appears to be the source of the following deviant constructions:

1. *Those **boys** who **knows** the man are lucky,

2. ***They comes** here often.

3. *The **girls doesn't know** their parents.

Any student who produces the above ungrammatical sentences must have been influenced by the already held though erroneous impression that the presence of **–s** or **–es** on a word is always an indication of plurality. It is the responsibility of the teacher to emphasise this unfortunate and misleading resemblance in the morphology of the noun and the verb.

For the learner to know whether a subject is singular or plural, it may be necessary to conduct the following tests:

i. Check whether the head of the noun phrase has got the **–s** or **–es** inflection (e.g. boy/boys, girl/girls).

ii. For nouns that cannot take the –s or –es inflection, check the type of determiner they permit. It is likely that singular subjects or nouns must be modified by such singular determiners as **a, an**, **this, each, every,** while the plural ones are likely to be modified by such plural determiners as **those, these,** some. Students should, however, know that not all nouns that end in –s or –es have a plural meaning (e.g. **linguistics, physics, measles, news, mathematics, economics, phonetics,** etc). These nouns, though apparently plural in form, express singular meaning.

Singular Subject followed by Singular Verb:

1. This boy comes here often.
2. The girl sings well.
3. That teacher loves mangoes.
4. Linguistics is an interesting subject.

In the above examples, the verbs agree in number with their subjects. In each case, both the subject and the verb are singular. Agreement in the above examples involves only the 3rd person singular, and this accounts for why the (b) sentence below are ungrammatical.

1. (a) You come here often,
   (b) *You comes here often
2. (a) I love mangoes
   (b) *I loves mangoes.
3. (a) You who see clearly should lead the way.
   (b) *You who sees clearly should lead the way.
4. (a) You know his name.
   (b) *You knows his name.

The (b) option in each of the above sentences ought to have been the correct version, at least from the morphological point of view, but unfortunately they are unacceptable. The pronouns I and you (sg) behave like plural nouns or pronouns in terms of their agreement with the verb.

Plural Subject followed by Plural Verb:

1. (a) **These girls** love sweet mangoes.
   (b) ***These girls** loves sweet mangoes.
2. (a) **Those people** who know the answer **are** selfish.
   (b) ***Those people** who knows the answer **are** selfish.
3. (a) **They come** here often.
   (b) ***They comes** here often.

There are, however, exceptions to the combination below. In fact, there may be cases where a plural subject permits a singular verb. This happens when a plural numeral is used in a phrase to indicate a sum or unit, as in:

1. **Two thousand years** is like a minute before God.
2. **One hundred litres** of oil is not enough.

Two Singular Subjects joined by and are followed by a Plural Verb:

1. (a) **The man** and **his wife** like twins.
   (b) ***The man** and **his wife** likes twins.
2. (a) **John** and **Mary** come here often.

(b) **John** and **Mary** comes here often.

The b sentences are ungrammatical, because the verbs do not agree in number with their respective subjects.

Although we have said that two singular subjects joined by **and** should be followed by a plural verb, there are certain exceptions to the rule, as can be seen below:

(i) When two singular subjects joined by and give the impression that the conjoined noun phrases function as a unit, the verb of the sentence is singular:

1. Bread and butter is what we had for breakfast.
2. Bananas and soup is a popular meal in Arusha.

(ii) When two singular subjects are introduced by each or every, the verb of the sentence is singular:

1. (a) **Every teacher** and every **accountant** is frugal.
   (b) ***Every teacher** and every **accountant** are frugal.
2. (a) Every bottle of oil **and** water **contains** an equal amount of oxygen.
   (b) *Every bottle of oil **and** water **contain** an equal amount of oxygen.

(iii) When two singular subjects joined by **and** serve as a name or title of a work, the verb of the sentence is singular, as in:

1. 'The Long Walk to Freedom' is Mandela' best novel.

(iv) Mathematical computations, however, hover between singular and plural, as can be seen in the following examples:

1. Two and two is/are four
2. Five and five makes/make ten.

(v) Two plural subjects joined by **and** must be followed by a plural verb:

1. (a) Many fathers and a few mothers are strict.
   (b) Many fathers and a few mothers is strict.
2. (a) **Boys** and **girls love** Christmas
   (b) ***Boys** and **girls loves** Christmas.

### 20.2.1 Verb (to) be and the Rule of Concord

In this section, we shall examine the nature of the verb **(to) be**, and its implications for concord.

(i) **Be** is the only verb in English where Subject–verb concord holds for both the simple present and past verb forms. For all other verbs, agreement between the verb and the subject applies only if the verb form is the simple present:

1. (a) He **is** there. (simple present)
   (b) They **are** there.
   (c) He **was** there. (simple past)
   (d) They **were** there.

2. (a) He **comes** here every day. (simple present)

(b) They **come** here every day.

(c) He **came** here (simple present)

(d) They **came** here.

(ii) The verb (to) be has three different forms to mark the simple present for the 1st person singular (am), 2nd person singular (are) and 3rd person singular pronouns (is):

1. (a) I am a student.

(b) You are a student.

(c) He is a student.

2. (a) I who am a teacher should lead the way.

(b) *I who is a teacher should lead the way.

(c) You who are a teacher should lead the way.

(d) *You who is a teacher should lead the way.

(e) He who is a teacher should lead the way.

(f) *He who are a teacher should lead the way.

(iii) In the simple past, the first person singular pronoun **I** and other singular pronouns (with the exception of the second person singular pronoun **you**) take the same form of the verb **to be,** as in:

1. (a) **I was** a student.

(b) **He was** a student.

(c) **You were** a student.

(d) ***You was** a student.

2. (a) **Were you** there when it happened?

(b) **Was you** there when it happened?

### 20.2.2 Subordinators and the Rule of Concord

Another important rule of concord states that two singular subjects joined by a subordinating linker (e.g. together with, as well as, except, no less than, along with, in addition to, including, with, neither…nor, either…or, not only…but also, etc) must be followed by a singular verb, as in:

1. (a) The **man** with his **wife** is here.

(b) *The **man** with his **wife** are here.

2. (a) **John** as well as **Mary has** a BMW car.

(b) **John** as well as **Mary** have a BMW car.

3. (a) Neither **Mary** nor **Peter deserves** our assistance.

(b) Neither **Mary** nor **Peter deserve** our assistance.

(1b) and (2b) are ungrammatical, because of the presence of plural verbs. (3b) is, however, acceptable in colloquial usage.

### 20.2.3 Indefinite Expressions and the Rule of Concord

Certain words or phrases have been identified as indefinite expressions, because their references are not particularised or specified. Examples of indefinite expressions are **each, every, anyone, anybody, somebody, nobody, nothing, something, someone, no one,** etc. These indefinite expressions require a singular verb, e.g.

1. (a) Nobody knows tomorrow.
   (b) *Nobody know tomorrow.

2. (a) Someone wants to deceive me.
   (b) *Someone want to deceive me.

3. (a) No one was there.
   (b) *No one were there.

4. (a) Something has entered my ear.
   (b) *Something have entered my ear.

(1b) and (3b) are ungrammatical, because of the co-occurrence of indefinite expressions with plural verbs.

There are, however, cases when the use of indefinite expressions with singular verbs can create an awkward sentence. This happens when an indefinite pronoun clearly conveys a plural meaning due to the nature of the construction in which it is involved. For instance, the indefinite expression in (1), everybody, conveys a plural meaning. This accounts for why the sentence is awkward.

1. **Everybody** in Dar **is** poor, because he does not have a foreign account.

The corresponding sentence (1) is ungrammatical, because of the co-occurrence of an indefinite expression **everybody** with a plural verb **are.**

1. ***Everybody** in Dar **are** poor, because they do not keep foreign accounts.

One way to circumvent the problems with (1) and (1) is to restate them in such a way as to avoid the use of the indefinite expression everybody (cf.(2)).

1. **All the people** in Dar **are** poor because they do not keep foreign accounts.

2. **Everybody in** Dar **is** poor because they do not keep foreign accounts.

### 20.2.4 Amount Words and the Rule of Concord

Amount or quantity of words can be classified into those that occur with either count or non-count nouns, or those that hover between the two classes of noun. Amount words such as few, several, many, etc., which qualify count nouns must be followed by plural verbs. For example:

1. (a) A few of these **oranges taste** fine.

   (b) *A few of these **oranges tastes** fine.

2. (a) Many **children have** died.

(b) *Many **children has** died.

Amount words which hover between count and non-count nouns (e.g. **some, most, all, part of, half of**, etc.) may be followed by either a plural or a singular verb depending on the intention of the speaker. If the speaker intends **how much** of something, the choice of the verb is singular, but if he intends **how many** of something, the choice is plural:

1. (a) Some of the orange **is** sour. (how much; what part of a particular fruit)

   (b) Some of the oranges **are s**our. (how many: what quantity in terms of different fruits)

2. (a) Some of the milk **is** sour, (how much: what part of a particular container)

   (b) Some of the tins of milk are sour. (hour many; what quantity in terms of the number of bags)

3. (a) Half of the apples **are** infected. (how many; what quantity in terms of the number of different fruits)

Although we agree that the choice of a singular or plural verb in each of the above examples depends on the intention of the speaker, more important than just intention is the distinction between count and non-count nouns. From the above examples, we observe that it is more natural for the plural verb to co-occur with amount words that qualify count nouns. When a plural verb follows a non-count or mass noun qualified by an amount word of the types listed above, there must be a unit of measurement for the entity in question (cf.(46b) and (47b)).

### 20.2.5 Pseudo-Subjects and the Rule of Concord

In certain constructions, the true subjects may be found after the verb, while the original subject position is filled by other words (e.g **there, here,** etc). In cases like this, the learner is cautioned never to make the verb agree in number with these pseudo-subjects, but with the true subjects irrespective of their position in a sentence.

1. (a) There lies the **great soldier.**

   (b) There lie the **great soldiers.**

2. (a) Here comes **the man**.

   (b) Here come **the man and his wife**.

3. (a) There is **a student** in the room.

   (b) There are **two students** in the room.

The true subjects in the above sentences are underlined. In each of the examples, the verb agrees in number with the nominal or noun phrase that follows it, and not with the false subject that preceded it.

### 20.2.6 Expletives and the Rule of Concord

The expletives **there** and **it** have different ways of affecting subject-verb concord. Whereas the verb following **there** may be singular or plural depending on the number of the true subject, the expletive **it** is always followed by the singular form of the verb **(to) be** which may be is or **was**:

1. There is /was a snake in the box.

2. (a) It was these boys that visited us.

(b) *It were these boys that visited us

(c) It was this boy that visited us.

3. (a) It was three years since I had visited home.

(b) *It were three years since I had visited home.

### 20.2.7 Intervening Modifiers and the Rule of Concord

Intervening phrases (especially prepositional phrases which post-modify the head of a noun phrase) have no influence on the agreement between the subject and its verb. It is not important whether the intervening phrase is singular or plural: what matters is the number of the subject.

1. (a) One of the girls in the class is sick.

(b) *One of the girls in the class are sick.

2. (a) A list of JAMB candidates has been published.

(b) A list of JAMB candidates have been published.

3. (a) The first two chapters of the book are difficult.

(b) *The first two chapters of the book is difficult.

### 20.2.8 Complement and the Rule of Concord

Concord between the verb and its subject does not depend on the nature of number of the subject complement:

1. (a) The boys are a nuisance.

(b) *The boys is a nuisance.

2. (a) Vegetables are a necessity for his survival.

(b) *Vegetables is a necessity for his survival.

3. (a) Women's best friend is diamonds.

(b) *Women's best friends are diamonds.

From the above sentences, we observe that the subject complements a **nuisance,** a **necessity** and **diamonds** have no influence on the number of their respective verbs. (1b) – (3b) are ungrammatical, because the verbs in these sentences agree in number with the subject complements and not with their real subjects.

### 20.2.9 Collective Nouns and the Rule of Concord

Subject–verb concord for collective nouns is not as straightforward as other types of nouns; this is because singular and plural verbs are interchangeable in certain situations. By its

nature, a collective noun requires a singular verb, because it is considered as a single indivisible unit or body, e.g

1. The committee is meeting today.

2. The crowd was dispersed by the police.

The type of agreement between the verb and its subject in each of the above sentences is known as "grammatical" concord (i.e a type of concord where the verb matches its subject in number); this differs from 'notional concord' (i.e a type of agreement of the verb with its subject on the basis of the speaker's notion or impression about the composition of a particular group or class). If the speaker views a group or a class as a collection of separate individuals or entities, the verb is plural. For instance:

1. The team **are** enjoying every minute of their break.

2. The police **have** decided to remain silent.

It must, however, be stated that for collective nouns that are plural in form, a plural concord is unavoidable:

1. (a) Their families **are** happy.

   (b) *Their families **is** happy.

2. (a) The teams **play** well.

   (b) *The teams **plays** well.

Although we have said that collective nouns can take singular or plural verbs depending on the notion of the speaker, some students still produce ungrammatical sentences due to their inability to maintain the first number they have chosen. Such inconsistency in number culminates in a grammatical blunder often referred to as **shift in number.**

1. (a) *The police nowadays **conceals their** identity.

   (b) The police nowadays **conceal their** identity.

   (c) The Committee **has** probed **their** officers.

   (d) The Committee **have** probed **its** officers.

So one way to circumvent the problems given above is to avoid any shift in number and to adhere to the number that has already been chosen. It should, however, be noted here that a choice of either a singular or a plural verb is only possible in (1) but not in (2).

A singular collective noun followed by **of** and a plural noun requires a singular verb, e.g

1. (a) A gang of thieves has invaded the campus.

   (b) *a gang of thieves have invaded the campus.

2. (a) A team of players **was** waiting hopelessly at the stadium.

   (b) * A team of players **were** waiting hopelessly at the stadium.

It is, however, possible to say either (1a) or (1b).

1. (a) A battalion of soldiers **has been** shipped to Liberia.

   (b) A battalion of soldiers **have been** shipped to Liberia.

## 20.3 Antecedent–Anaphor Pair Relation

An antecedent is a word from which another word takes its reference, while anaphor is a word that takes its reference from another word known as its antecedent. The reference of an anaphor is embodied in its antecedent.

It is therefore necessary that the two units must agree in certain grammatical features. In this regard, a rule of concord is formulated which states that a pronoun must agree in number, gender, person with its antecedent.

1. Take care of this cup. I think it belongs to your father.
2. John said that he will come.
3. Women are gullible; they believe anything they are told.
4. Everybody should know his rights.
5. Mary injured herself.
6. John and Mary hurt themselves.

7. (a) When one gets into the plane one feels comfortable.
   (b) *When one gets into the plane he feels comfortable.

***Note:*** (1b) is odd only if one and he refer to the same individual (i.e. have identical reference). Again some feminists will favour a construction like

1. Because of its neutrality to sex bias, everybody should know their rights.

## 20.4 Subject– Complement Concord

There is a rule of concord which states that a subject complement must agree in number with the subject of the sentence. Subject-complement concord is necessitated by the semantic or referential equivalence of the subject and its complement. This kind of concord hold for clauses of the type:

Subject + Verb + Subject Complement

Examples:

1. (a) **John** is a **prefect**.
   (b) ***John** is **prefects.**
2. (a) **These** are my **children.**
   (b) ***These** are my **child.**
3. (a) **Mary** was a **saint.**
   (b) ***Mary** was **saints.**

An abstract noun which serves as a complement may not agree in number with the subject of its sentence:

1. (a) These boys are a nuisance.

(b) *These boys are nuisances.

2. Children can be a liability.

## 20.5 Shift in Tense/Aspect and Voice

Errors of agreement do not only occur when there is a shift or inconsistency in the use of a particular nominal category such as person, number or gender; there may also be errors of agreement resulting from a shift in a particular verbal category such as tense/aspect to another or from one voice to another when expressing a single idea, e.g.:

1. (a) *The police arrested him, he was locked up and then killed him. (active-passive-active)

   (b) The police arrested him, locked him up and then killed him. (active-active-active)

   (c) He was arrested, locked up and then killed by the police. (passive-passive-passive)

2. (a) *We were detained, but they released John. (passive-active)

   (b) We were detained, but John was released. (active-active)

3. (a) *We hurried to the class, but the teacher is not there. (past- present)

   (b) We hurried to the class, but the teacher was not there. (past-past)

4. (a) *I am not there when the accident happened. (present-past)

   (b) I was not there when the accident happened. (past-past)

5. (a) *The boys are present when we left the house.(present-past)

   (b) The boys were present when we left the house. (past-past)

A shift in voice is, however, possible when the subject of the main clause is repeated in the embedded one, as in:

1. We did the work to the best of our ability, but we were still punished. (active-passive).
2.

Activity 20.1

1. With appropriate examples, discuss the relevance of concord in the grammar of English.
2. "The most important type of concord in English is concord of number between subject and verb" (Quirk et al., 1972:359). Discuss.

3. Write notes on all the following subjects:

(a) Notional Concord

(b) Grammatical Concord

(c) Shift in number

**Summary**

Agreement between words in a sentence is the most problematic aspect of English grammar that mars students' ability to speak or write effectively. Concord refers to the grammatical relation between a pronoun and its verb, a subject and a verb, or a demonstrative adjective and the word it modifies.

**Exercise**

Choose from the alternatives provided the one that correctly completes each of the following sentences:

1. The theme of Things Fall Apart …the horrors of traditional beliefs. The novel …how Okonkwo…Ikemefuna to appease the gods.
   (a) is/describes/killed
   (b) is/described/killed
   (c) is s/describes/killed
   (d) was/describes/killed
2. The Choir…clapping …hands and singing…songs.
   (a) were/their/their
   (b) was/their/their
   (c) were/its/their
   (d) was/their/its
3. They…him, …him, and …
   (a) dragged/tortured/murdered him
   (b) dragged/tortures/murders him
   (c ) dragged/tortured/he was murdered
4. When … gets into the ship,…feels nervous.
   (a) you/you
   (b) he/they

(c) all/all

(d) one/one

5. As a man…so…

(a) sows/does he reaps

(b) sow/does he reap

(c) sow/does he reaps

(d) sows/does he reap

6. He who …and …away …to fight another day.

(a) fight/runs/lives

(b) fight /run/live

(c) fights/runs/lives

(d) fights/runs/live

7. Even though bread and butter ….scarce commodities nowadays, bread and butter … the combination she served at the party.

(a) are/were

(b) are/was

(c) is/were

(d) is/was

8. His team …always quarrelling amongst …

(a) are/itself

(b) are/themselves

(c) is/themselves

(d) is/itselves

9. Here … the principal and his wife.

(a) came

(b) come

(c) coming

(d) comes

10. Here … the principal with his wife.

(a) comes

(b) come

(c) coming

(d) came

11. The …that men … after them.

    (a) evils/do/lives

    (b) evils/does/live

    (c) evil/do/lives

    (d) evil/do/live

12. A thousand pages …enough work for a day.

    (a) were

    (b) are

    (c) is

    (d) be

13. A lot of instability …caused by tribalism.

    (a) were

    (b) are

    (c) be

    (d) is

14. I who … innocent should have been set free.

    (a) is

    (b) were

    (c) are

    (d) am

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