



Unit 3 Lesson 4 The importance of Word Order

Teacher Notes

Slide 1: Introduce today's topic – we will be playing around with word order in English and looking at how Master Yoda ignored the rules.

The **subject** of a **sentence** is the person or thing doing the action or being described.

A **verb** is a word used to describe an action, state, or occurrence.

The **object of a sentence** is the person or thing that receives the action of the verb. It is the **who** or **what** that the subject does something to.

Slide 2: Read out the four sentences on the board and ask the following questions:

Which sentences work in English? (sentences 1 and 2)

Do any of them mean the same thing? (sentences 1 and 4 and possibly 3, 2 and possibly 3. It's impossible to tell in English as we rely on word order to make meaning clear.)

What is typical word order in an English sentence? (subject, verb, object)

Slide 3: Read through the slides. Pupils should write down 3 sentences to test out the subject, verb, object rule. Can they change word order and retain the same meaning?

Slide 4: Explain to pupils that without the subject, verb, object rule, we are left guessing who is doing the action and who is receiving the action. Use the previous examples from slide 2 to illustrate this.

Slide 5: What has Yoda been doing to English? Read out the sentences in Yodaspeak and hand out the UKLO worksheet.

Slide 6: Before pupils begin the worksheet, go through the questions on the slide to help them make inroads.

What is strange about the way Yoda speaks? He plays around with word order – the verb can be moved; the subject and object are not in the correct place.

Can you find the subject and verb in each sentence?

'Take you to him I will.' I – subject, you = object (to him = indirect object)

'A domain of evil it is.' It – subject, domain = object

'Help them you could.' You – subject, them = object

'Always two they are.' They – subject, two – object

You can also do this for the sentences on the worksheet.

What does the position of the subject and verb tell us about how Yoda forms his sentences? The subject and verb go at the end of the sentence.



What does he move, and to where? Object moves before the subject and verb.

Can you use your grammatical knowledge to explain what Yoda does to his sentences? Can you explain the rules? Pupils should refer to subject, object, verb position.

Slide 7: Ask the class to think about word order rules in other languages. Do they think other languages stick to the subject. Verb, object rule and if not, how to they ensure the meaning of the sentence is clear? Pupils could mention Yodaspeak and how we can understand what Yoda says through the use of natural grammatical understanding. Pupils could mention the use of cases to show the function of nouns in a sentence in e.g. German or Latin.

Slide 8: Explain that German relies on cases to show the function of the noun in a sentence rather than word order. It means you can move nouns around the verb and the meaning is not lost. Cases change the article of the noun and indicate whether the noun is the subject or object.

Go through the German sentences on the board.

 The United Kingdom Linguistics Olympiad		Breakthrough Workout
(1) Solutions and Markscheme		
Pure Yodaspeak	Regular English	
Take you to him I will.	I WILL TAKE YOU TO HIM	
Your apprentice Skywalker will be.	SKYWALKER WILL BE YOUR APPRENTICE	
Truly wonderful the mind of a child is.	THE MIND OF A CHILD IS TRULY WONDERFUL	
Hiding in the Outer Rim Grievous is.	GRIEVOUS IS HIDING IN THE OUTER RIM	
Go I will. Good relations with the Wookies I have.	I WILL GO. I HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE	



	WOOKIES.
Help them you could.	YOU COULD HELP THEM.

b) Now write these sentences from 'alternative' Yodaspeak in 'pure' Yodaspeak

Alternative Yodaspeak	Pure Yodaspeak
I cannot teach him.	TEACH HIM I CANNOT.
A Jedi's strength flows from the Force.	FROM THE FORCE A JEDI'S STRENGTH FLOWS.
Disturbing is this move by Chancellor Palpatine.	DISTURBING THIS MOVE BY CHANCELLOR PALPATINE IS.

(2) Commentary

Pupils are likely to be most successful in this problem if they are confident in their knowledge of subject, verb and object in a sentence, and a useful starting point is to get them to identify the verb(s) in each subject.