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English – II (Advanced English)
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Questions in English
(Interrogative Sentences)

Welcome to the class. We are going to look at another aspect of sentence in English today. There are several important aspects that we need to look at in order to understand formation of a sentence. One such aspect is formation of questions in English sentences. We are going to work on certain preliminary aspects of such sentences in the class today. As you understand, understanding aspects of sentence, particularly for the formation of them is important to look at a sentence as a whole.

We use all kinds of sentences when we speak, and to be able to speak confidently, to be able to produce our sentences confidently, we need to go through a clearer picture of what constitutes accuracy, and we also need to look at appropriateness in sentences. The two things together make a sentence useable, and that is how we develop an understanding of a sentence in English.

So, we, today we are again going to look at another aspect of it, which is question formation. We know few things about question formation. We understand several things about them. But when we put all of them in context, then we create a better picture. And let us see how it works for English today.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:17)



- Sentence
- Sentence = [Subject + Predicate]
 - Predicate = [Verb + Object(s) [adjuncts/adverbs]]
 - Order of words:
 - SUB VEB OBJ
 - Verbs host agreement marking as well as tense.
- Handwritten notes: AGR, TENSE, invisible*



As we know, sentences in English or, for that matter, in any language has got two parts. We have subject and predicate. A sentence is not possible without either one of the two. And more than that or along with that, what we also need something that connects these two, which is called agreement. So, when we look at predicate, we see that it has a verb.

And it may or may not have objects. And also, it has some adjuncts, or maybe it would not have adjuncts depending upon a sentence. As adjuncts are not essential part of formation of a sentence compared to the complements of verbs, which are often the objects of the verb. So, moving ahead from there, when we look at the order of words in a sentence in English, we see this is how it works. We have a subject, we have a verb, and we have an object.

So, what happens is, objects follow the verbs in English. That is one of the factual things which we know about English. And then finally, we need to know that verbs, it is the verb, this part of the sentence which host agreement marking that is this part and tense in a sentence. So, there are two parts that are crucial. One is agreement, and the other is tense. These are sort of invisible things in a sentence.

Sometimes they become visible, sometimes they appear and sometimes they may not appear in a sentence. So, what we know about them is they are functional elements. They become visible. They may not become visible at times. But they play a very critical role in putting these two

things together. So, to put the sentence again together, we know about subject and predicate, we know about verbs and objects and predicate, then we know about verbs, objects and adverbs in the predicate, then we know that there is something that connects the two together.

So, basically, when we are looking at the order of words in a sentence, at this point, we need to articulate that there are two other aspects of a sentence, which are critical in their formation, which are agreement and tense. In order to understand formation of question, a clearer understanding of these two and how they work becomes imperative. And once we understand how tense and agreement play along with subject verbs and objects, then formation of question becomes easy for us to understand, and it also becomes very, very nice for us to observe the systematicity that is underlying in our human mind.

And it also helps you understand, in turn, how human mind beautifully captures these things, and in our subconscious work with them, and subconscious reveals it when we want to use them. So, remember one more time that trying to understand the process that triggers subconscious and to leave it there to have impact on how we are going to produce, how we are going to practice what we have learned, it is important to go to that point to have impact of these things in our speech, in our learning. And thus, we get to see the impact of them when we produce the language, when we speak the language. So, we are looking at the impact of tense and agreement, their role in formation at a very, very intense level in our cognition. So, let us see how they work.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:34)



Agreement

- Agreement marking
 - Person — I II III
 - Number — S P
 - Gender
- Ramu loves cricket.
- Ramu = III Person/Singular
- Love = Hosts matching information



So, basically, what is it and what is it that we call agreement? There are three elements that participate in agreement. They are called person, number and gender. In English, we often see only these two, not gender participating in agreement. So, I have put this in color, and we are going to leave this aside. But we always say persons, what are they? They are one, two, and three, that is first person, second person and third person.

And what is number? They are singular, and plural. So, every noun must be either singular, or plural in English. So, these two things together, play an agreement in the sense that they, the... there is..., these things are embedded in nominals, in the nouns, in the subject, and they are matching value, they are matching values appear on the verb. And that is what we call agreement. So, look at this.

When we take a sentence, Ramu loves cricket, what is it? We see here, this is the marking that you see in addition, which indicates the third person and singular number of this Ramu, which is... which happens to be the subject of the sentence. And the verb love hosts this matching information. That is one part which we need to pay attention to. And that is going to be true for all sentences. The only thing that we need to keep in mind is here in this particular type of a sentence, we see some of them appearing in some cases. Agreement marking, that is number and persons.

Markers of these elements do not really appear. As you can see, there is no marker as such on the subject Ramu. We infer this information that when we say Ramu, it is a name, it is a masculine name. So, that is not important in English, but it is singular number and third person which become... which becomes crucial for the purpose of agreement in English. And then we get the verb to host this information on the verb.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:12)

Tense

	SINGULAR	PLURAL	Handwritten Notes
• Present	Is	Are	Impersonal: Am, I, we, X
• Past	Was	Were	
• Future	Shall/Will		Aux Verbs: Tense / Agr. BE



Agreement

- Agreement marking
 - Person — I, II, III
 - Number — S, P
 - Gender — M, F, N
- Ramu loves cricket.
- Ramu = III Person/Singular
- Love = Hosts matching information

10:12:12



Let us look at tense. The markers of tense is very simple in English. We have these kinds of information, these kinds of things like is, are, am. Allow me to spend a moment here, these

elements in English language are taught as auxiliaries. These elements are taught as auxiliaries. Sometimes they are called auxiliary verbs. You can call it whatever you want to call. I do not want to work on how things are named.

But I am more interested in telling you the functional aspects of these elements. They are tense markers. Take my word and check it for yourself, what is it that they are doing? And what are the things that they tell us? They also tell us agreement information and basically, originally, they are tense markers by themselves. So, is they are all different forms of verb BE in English and therefore probably this is called auxiliary verb.

But, keep in mind, I repeat one more time, they are not verbs. We need to understand verbs carefully in English for our understanding of sentences. Verbs have completely different functions. So, this is singular, singular 'are'. Plural 'am' is a special case which comes for first-person only. So, first person happens to be a special case in all languages, including English. So, we use this marking only with the first person pronoun, I. Nowhere else, not even the plural form of the first person that is we.

Only with first person singular. 'Was' singular marking in past tense and 'were' plural marker in past tense. Unlike 'am', there is no special marker for first person pronoun in past tense. And in future tense, you only have shall or will. Both of them can be interchangeably used for both singular and plural and also for all, all three persons- first person, second person, third person- and singular and plural in all of them, we can use the two interchangeably.

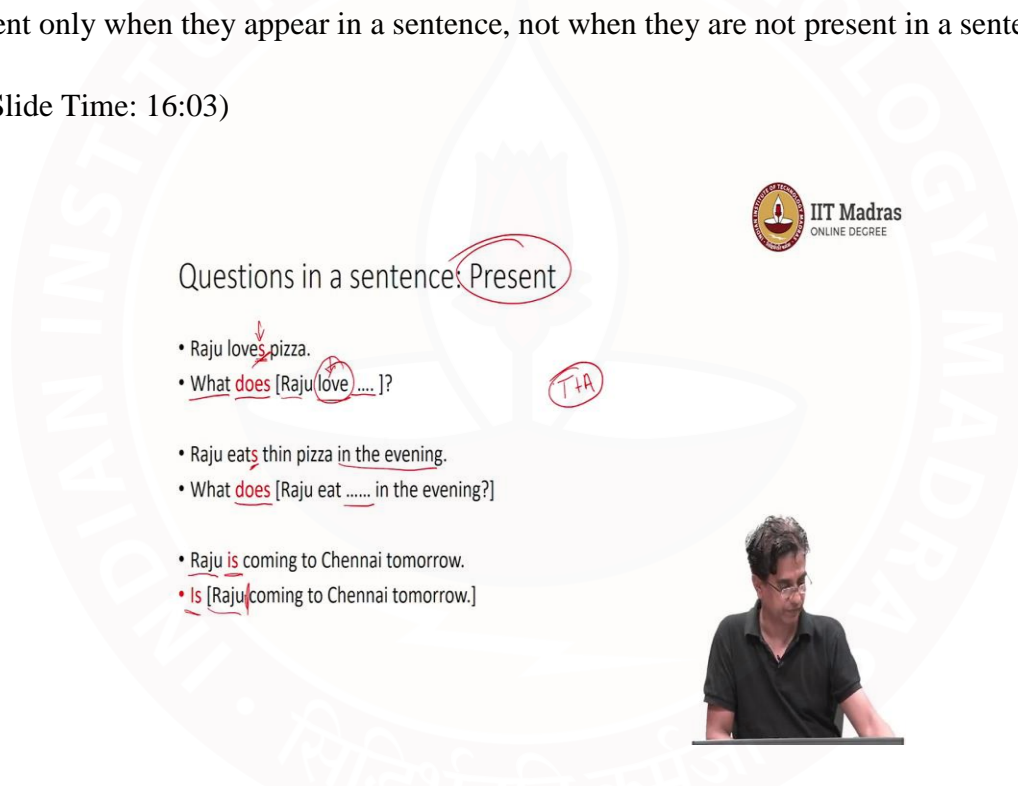
A footnote here, there is not any distinction between shall and will in modern English. Probably there was a way to make the distinction between the two in older English in ancient time, but we can use either one of the two interchangeably in modern English as we see it in different uses. So, if you keep this much of picture in mind, then you understand the distribution of tense marking in English. Another footnote about tense marking.

These appear, these become tense markers, these things carry tense marking only when they appear in a sentence. In the absence of these elements in English, tense appears on verb. Verbs carry tense or sometimes it is just zero. We know it is a tense, but it is just zero. And we will see that as well. For example, just look at this sentence. John loves cricket. This is a present tense sentence. What tells us that this is present tense sentence.

Probably, the same element carries tense information as well. You see here is as a marker of present tense is also carrying agreement marker singularity. These are plural markings. So, tense and agreement are sometimes associated with each other on certain words. So, here tense is already embedded in that agreement marking. When we can also say Raju loved cricket, maybe now he doesn't.

So, here when you see sometimes this marking on verbs is a marker of past tense. So, this becomes the marker of present tense in singular, present tense and plural, there is no marking of tense or for that matter there is no marking of any agreement either, but in past tense, we do see some markers. So, again I go back to my main point, that these are the markers of tense and agreement only when they appear in a sentence, not when they are not present in a sentence.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:03)



Questions in a sentence: Present

- Raju loves pizza.
- What does [Raju love]?
- Raju eats thin pizza in the evening.
- What does [Raju eat in the evening?]
- Raju is coming to Chennai tomorrow.
- Is [Raju coming to Chennai tomorrow.]

With this much of understanding, this much of clarity with tense marking and agreement marking in English sentences, we go to look at questions. You know questions are also called interrogative markers. Interrogative sentences question the sentences that tell us about... tell us that these are questions sentences are also called interrogative sentences. Like I keep telling you, one more time, names are not important. What is important is to understand how they work, how they function. So, look at... look at the question formation now.

And I want to take you through this process before we derive generalization and underlying patterns. I promise you, by the time you look at these things you would have figured the underlying patterns by yourself. So, look at this, Raju loves pizza. You have this as tense and agreement marker. Look at this. In English, when we make a question, we have a sentence, what does Raju love?

What do... what are the things that we see? This was the sentence, Raju loves pizza. So, when we say what does Raju love? We basically know that the object is being questioned. And hence there is no object here. This is an empty place. It is a complete sentence, but I am only indicating the empty part, which is not in the sentence. So, love is still the transitive verb, it requires an object, but it is empty in the sentence because this is being questioned. What does Roger love?

And so, this is the question where we have... please pay attention to this part. The tense and agreement markers are not here in this question sentence. So, the question is, where is it? Where are they? What we see that in the process of questions, they get separated from their host verb. And they move out of the sentence. Now, and therefore, you see the bare form of the verb here. But this marking alone is a morphemic marker in the grammar.

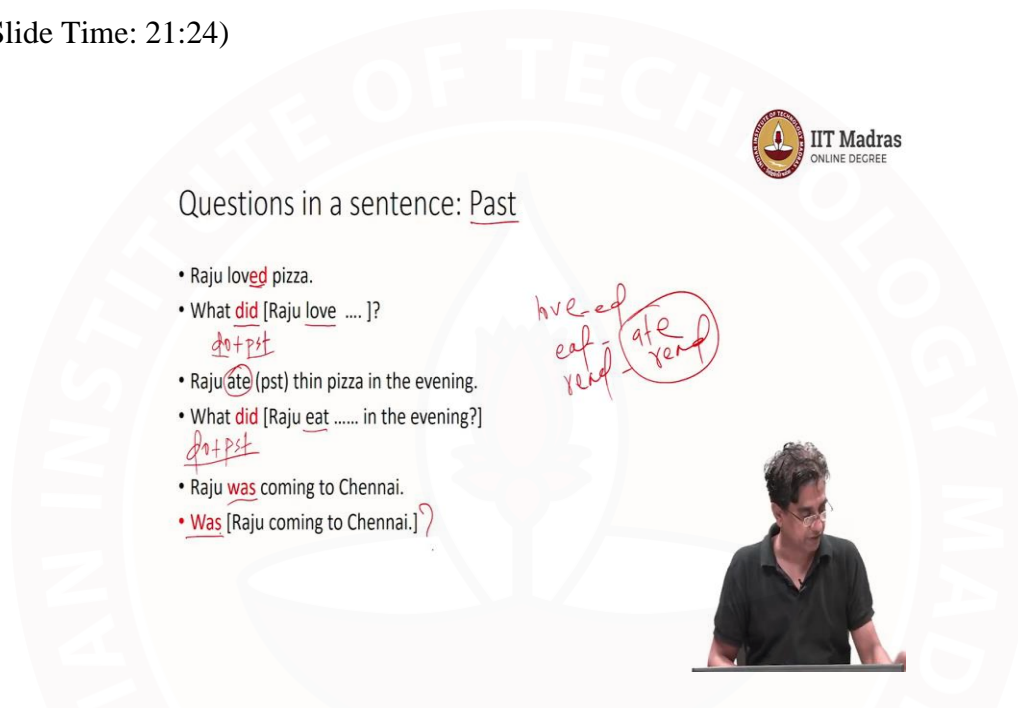
Therefore, it does not have its independent status. It cannot stand on its own. So, what it does is there are elements in, in languages. And that element in English is do, which we use to host it. So, we use do and because it was third person singular, so we get does. And that tells you that it gets fronted. It gets out of the sentence and it is fronted. And then we get a question word, and thus we get a question sentence. What does Raju love?

Look at another sentence, Raju eats thin pizza in the evening. Irrespective of other components of the sentence, that is some kind of adjunct. When we say, the question is, what does Raju eat? Again, the object of this verb is being questioned. And you see the same thing here. You have present tense, singular marker, third-person marker. That is tense and agreement marker together is being taken out of the verb. The verb that hosted them in an affirmative sentence, in the question sentence, the verb in question sentence does not host these elements and they get fronted.

And for that again, we take do as a word and we get does. So, question sentences, what does Raju eat in the evening? Look at another sentence, because we are looking at present tense

sentences. So, I am giving you an example. Raju is coming to Chennai, tomorrow. You have a, you have again, singular marker, and you have a tense marker here in that sentence. So, when we have, when we make a question, this gets fronted. And we say, is Raju coming to Chennai tomorrow. Here, it is missing from here, and you see it is fronted. So, what do we observe from here? We observe, one of the things that is critical is tense. Plus, agreement gets fronted to form the question.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:24)



Questions in a sentence: Past

- Raju loved pizza.
- What did [Raju love]?
- Raju ate (pst) thin pizza in the evening.
- What did [Raju eat in the evening?]
- Raju was coming to Chennai.
- Was [Raju coming to Chennai.]?

Handwritten notes on the slide:

- do + pst (written next to the first two bullet points)
- hve-ed, eat, read, ate, read (written in a circle next to the third and fourth bullet points)

A video inset shows a lecturer in a black shirt speaking.

When we look at just a few past tense sentences, we see similar pattern. For the purpose of simplicity, and for the purpose of not losing attention from the main point, I am using certain sentences out of the context. And I will talk about the context in a moment when I tell you something to do about this part. So, look at this, here is the past tense marker ed on this verb, Raju loved pizza.

When we make the question, remember the pattern. The pattern is tense marking and agreement marking moves out of the sentence. So, it got separated from the verb, you have the bare form of the word left and the sentence becomes what does Raju love. What did Raju love in past tense. So, what happens here is, did is basically do plus past, as opposed to when you had does you have do plus present.

So, tense marking and agreement marking cannot stand on their own. So, it needs support of another word and do functions in that capacity. Same thing is happening here. Do plus past becoming did, so the sentence is what did Raju love? Raju ate thin pizza in the evening. Now, look at this verb, ate. It is different from the ed type of verbs when we had loved. This is a verb which has its own past tense form. Like eat has the past tense form ate and sometimes you are going to see verbs like read has same word in the past tense.

Basically, there is no specific marker of tense on them. But when we use these, these things in a sentence, we know that there are past tense marking embedded on them. So, when we... how do we...it gets tested when we use them in a question sentence. So, look at this now same thing happens again. So, when in order to past getting fronted, it gets added with do and when it gets fronted gets out of the sentence you are left with eat.

So you have, what did Raju eat in the evening? A past tense marking here? Singular marker with past tense, Raju was coming to Chennai. Was Raju coming to Chennai? Sorry, this is a question mark, question sentence. Was Raju coming to Chennai? Here, it is fronted, tense is fronted.

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Things to notice ...

- Question formation attracts attention in the structure of a sentence.
- Questions are fronted in English. *Tense + Agreement*
- Mainly two types of questions:

- Content type - *why? who?*
- Yes or no type



So, when we want to observe few things, what do we see? And how do we describe tense marking? My purpose today is to give you certain, very basics of question formation without taking into other aspects of questions. Other aspects of questions are also not complicated. But

when you look at other aspects, these basics are prerequisite for that. Therefore, first, we want to understand this part and what are they.

Question formation attracts attention in the structure of a sentence in the sense that it gets the question words are fronted and two things that are fronted are tense and agreement. Basically, these two invisible categories, these two invisible aspects of a sentence play a very crucial role in the formation of a sentence, that is in the structure of a sentence and therefore, this attracts our attention for question formation.

Without getting a clearer picture of these two, we do not quite understand the formation of a sentence properly. Please keep this in mind. Understanding nuances of structure is not a matter that we can memorize. And once we understand these subconscious cognitive processes of our mind, we understand everything with clarity and we also understand why our mind can produce unlimited number of sentences once it has got its machinery fixed.

There are two types of questions in English. One is content type question. And the other is yes or no type question. Content-type questions are words like when we have questions with what or who, or all kinds of question words that you know, I do not want to give you the list of it. So, what are the who, what, when, where, how, why, all kinds of question words. So, please pay attention to the formation of question words also in English.

But whenever we have a sentence with these words, they are content type questions. Because the reason why we call them content type is because we can only answer these questions. In order to answer these questions, we need to provide content for answer. And the other is yes or no type of question because in order to answer them, we can say yes or no in response to the question, and they cannot be alternated. So, this is why we are putting them into two types. So, these are just a few things that we noticed. A few things that we see as generalization of discussion on sentences.

(Refer Slide Time: 28:13)



Questions

- All question words in English are wh-words. *how*
- Check question words in your language.
- Check the position of question words in your language.
- Cautions with questions...



Questions in a sentence: Past

- Raju loved pizza.
- What did [Raju love]? *love-ed*
- Raju ate (pst) thin pizza in the evening. *eat - ed*
- What did [Raju eat in the evening?] *eat - ed*
- Raju was coming to Chennai.
- Was [Raju coming to Chennai.]?



And then we see, we notice certain other things like all question words begin with wh at the beginning of it. So, question words in English are also called wh words. Some of you may feel that how does not begin with wh but in some way w and h are there in that. I keep telling that these the ways of spelling is not really crucial, but sometimes they help that we call them wh words. I invite you to check question words in your language.

As I said several times all of us have one primary language. In your case, check this for yourself. I speak someone language and in Hindi. English is definitely not my primary language. So, it is

for you to decide what your primary language is. What is the language at home? What do you consider as your native language and check what are the question words in your language? If you speak Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, please check the question words.

If you speak languages like Hindi, Punjabi, Bangla, Assamese, Odia, Marathi please check question words in your language. And when you check the question words, also check... make a sentence and see the position of question words in your languages. You will see it happens only in English that question words get fronted. The questions sentence begins with a question word. In the content type question and in yes-no questions, you still have the tense and agreement markers fronted like this, Was Raju coming to Chennai? This is a yes-no type of question and it begins with tense markers.

What did Raju eat? What did Raju love? These are the content type of questions with what? So, please check the position of question words in your sentences. So, how would you do that? And how, why will that help you learn English. The reason why I am asking you to do this is, there is a huge impact of the language that we speak primarily on the learning of another language that we want to learn, particularly after fifteen years of age.

And after fifteen years of age, these kinds of things help us set certain parameters in our subconscious. So, we alter things and it gets... it stays there, that in English these things have to come in the beginning. In English tense has to be fronted, and then we never make mistakes of this type or these structures get, we start developing a sense of ownership over these structures also.

And also, you will, when you pay attention to these things, you will get to understand that in our minds, there are not different compartments for our native languages and new languages that we want to learn. Learning of new language always works on exploiting existing structure. And for that purpose, if we keep paying attention to these kinds of alternations, which we can, it helps us learn any language.

So, you will see striking difference between the languages that you speak and English. That tense gets fronted in English, question words occur in the initial position of the sentence, unlike our languages. And that becomes a critical part. At this point, I would like to draw your attention to another aspect of questions. As you see, these are also called interrogative sentences. For the

purpose of appropriateness in our speaking, we want to make sure that we ask a question in the way that it does not sound like we are interrogating the person. We are asking a question.

This is specific knowledge, specific part of human cognition. This is the kind of pragmatics that we need to train ourselves with. So, you only ask the questions to get information and you develop innovative ways of asking questions, which do not directly hit the person. Or your questions must not sound interrogative, interrogating the other person.

This is... this is a line of caution that we need to exercise, in spoken language, in speech, in our communication, and for making our communication effective and for making our language impressive, this is a specific aspect that we need to learn additionally. Please, please work on it. take sentences, look at affirmative sentences, look at declarative sentences, and then see their question counterparts and look at how they work.

Take any question sentence for that matter in English and see whether these things work or not. I know there are several questions which will come after this. I am aware of them. But I invite you to participate in discussions on this. And look forward to more on this thing from us. Meanwhile, thank you so much.