

# 50 Common English Mistakes Moroccan Learners Make

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## Introduction

Welcome! This guide is designed specifically for you, the ambitious Moroccan learner of English. Because I am also from Morocco, I understand the unique challenges we face, especially with the influence of Darija and French. These are not just mistakes; they are opportunities to understand English on a deeper level.

Let's turn these common errors into your greatest strengths!

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## Part 1: Pronunciation Pitfalls

### 1. The “P” vs. “B” Problem

- **The Mistake:** Saying “beoble” instead of “people,” or “barking” instead of “parking.”
- **Why it Happens:** In Darija, the hard “P” sound is rare, so we often soften it to a “B.”
- **How to Fix It:** Hold a piece of paper in front of your mouth. When you say “People,” the paper should move from the puff of air. When you say “Boy,” it shouldn’t.

### 2. The Silent “H”

- **The Mistake:** Saying “appy” instead of “happy,” or “ungry” instead of “hungry.”
- **Why it Happens:** French influence often makes the “H” silent.
- **How to Fix It:** Exhale as you say the word. Feel the air leaving your mouth. Practice: How happy is Hassan?

### 3. The “TH” Trouble (This/That vs. Dis/Dat)

- **The Mistake:** Saying “dis” for “this,” or “dat” for “that.”
  - **Why it Happens:** The “th” sound doesn’t exist in Darija or French.
  - **How to Fix It:** Place the tip of your tongue *between* your teeth and gently blow air. It will feel strange at first! Practice: **This** is **the** mother of **that** brother.
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## Part 2: Grammar Gaffes

### 4. “I have 25 years.”

- **The Mistake:** Directly translating “J’ai 25 ans” or “3ndi 25 3am.”
- **The Correct Way:** “I am 25 years old” or simply “I am 25.”
- **Why it Happens:** In English, age is a state of being (to be), not something you possess (to have).

### 5. “I am agree.”

- **The Mistake:** Thinking “agree” is an adjective like “happy” (I am happy).
- **The Correct Way:** “I agree.”
- **Why it Happens:** In English, “agree” is a verb. You perform the action of agreeing.

### 6. Forgetting the “S” for He/She/It

- **The Mistake:** “He work in a bank.” or “She like pizza.”
  - **The Correct Way:** “He works in a bank.” / “She likes pizza.”
  - **Why it Happens:** This is a unique rule in English present tense that many languages don’t have. It’s easy to forget.
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## Part 3: Vocabulary Vexations (False Friends)

### 7. Using “Actually” like “Actuellement”

- **The Mistake:** Saying “Actually, I am working in Rabat” to mean “Currently.”
- **The Correct Way:** “Currently, I am working in Rabat.”

- **What “Actually” Means:** It means “in reality” or is used to correct a misunderstanding. Example: “He looks serious, but **actually**, he’s very funny.”

## 8. Using “Sensible” like “Sensible” in French

- **The Mistake:** Saying “He is very sensible” to mean he is sensitive or emotional.
- **The Correct Way:** “He is very **sensitive**.”
- **What “Sensible” Means:** It means practical, logical, or reasonable. Example: “It’s **sensible** to save money instead of spending it all.”

## 9. Confusing “Library” and “Bookshop”

- **The Mistake:** Saying “I’m going to the library to buy a book.”
- **The Correct Way:** “I’m going to the **bookshop** (or bookstore) to buy a book.”
- **What “Library” Means:** A place where you *borrow* books for free (like a “bibliothèque”). A **bookshop** is where you *buy* them (like a “librairie”).

## 10. “I will pass my exam.”

- **The Mistake:** Using “passer un examen” to mean you are going to take the exam.
- **The Correct Way:** “I am going to **take** my exam tomorrow.” or “I am **sitting** for my exam tomorrow.”
- **What “Pass” Means:** It means to succeed. You can only say “I **passed** my exam” *after* you get a successful result.

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## Part 4: Preposition Problems

### 11. “I am going to home.”

- **The Mistake:** Using “to” with the word “home.”
- **The Correct Way:** “I am going **home**.”
- **Why it Happens:** We use “to” for destinations (to the bank, to school), but “home” is a special case in English that doesn’t require a preposition when used with verbs of motion like *go*, *come*, *travel*, etc.

### 12. “It depends of...”

- **The Mistake:** Directly translating “ça dépend de...”

- **The Correct Way:** “It depends **on**...”
- **Example:** “Are you coming to the party?” “It depends **on** the weather.”

### 13. “Married with...”

- **The Mistake:** Using “with” to connect a person to their spouse.
- **The Correct Way:** “He is married **to** a doctor.” / “She is married **to** an engineer.”
- **Why it Happens:** We think of being “with” someone, but in English, the verb “marry” connects to its object with the preposition “to.”

### 14. “In the weekend” vs. “On the weekend”

- **The Mistake:** Using “in” for the weekend.
  - **The Correct Way:** “What are you doing **on** the weekend?” (American English) or “**at** the weekend” (British English). Both are correct, but “in” is always wrong.
  - **Rule of Thumb:** Use **on** for days and dates (on Monday, on October 31st) and **in** for longer periods (in December, in 2024).
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## Part 5: More Grammar Gaffes

### 15. Uncountable Nouns: “An advice,” “a feedback,” “an information”

- **The Mistake:** Treating these words as countable.
- **The Correct Way:** “Can you give me **some advice?**” or “**a piece of** advice.”
- **Why it Happens:** These are “uncountable” nouns in English. You can’t have one advice and two advices. The same applies to *information*, *feedback*, *knowledge*, *research*, and *luggage*.

### 16. “I didn’t met him.”

- **The Mistake:** Using the past tense of the verb after “didn’t.”
- **The Correct Way:** “I didn’t **meet** him.”
- **Why it Happens:** The word “did” already carries the past tense. The main verb that follows must return to its base form (infinitive).
- **Rule:** After `did` , `didn't` , `do` , `don't` , `does` , `doesn't` , always use the base form of the verb.

## 17. Confusing “Boring” and “Bored”

- **The Mistake:** Saying “I am so boring” when you mean you feel bored.
- **The Correct Way:** “I am so **bored**.”
- **How to Remember:**
  - -**ing** adjectives (**boring**, **interesting**, **tiring**) describe the *thing or person* that *causes* the feeling. “The movie was **boring**.”
  - -**ed** adjectives (**bored**, **interested**, **tired**) describe *your feeling*. “I felt **bored** during the movie.”

## 18. “I look forward to meet you.”

- **The Mistake:** Using the base verb after the phrase “look forward to.”
- **The Correct Way:** “I look forward to **meeting** you.”
- **Why it Happens:** This is a tricky one. The “to” in this phrase is a preposition, not part of an infinitive. Prepositions are followed by nouns or gerunds (-ing forms).

## 19. Using “People is...”

- **The Mistake:** Treating “people” as a singular noun.
- **The Correct Way:** “People **are** strange.” / “People **think**...”
- **Why it Happens:** The word “people” is the plural of “person.” Even though it doesn’t end in “s,” it is always plural.

## 20. “Make” vs. “Do”

- **The Mistake:** Confusing when to use “make” and when to use “do.” (e.g., “I need to do a cake.”)
- **The Correct Way:** “I need to **make** a cake.”
- **General Rule:**
  - **Make:** Used for creating or producing something new. (make a decision, make a coffee, make a mistake, make money).
  - **Do:** Used for actions, tasks, and obligations. (do your homework, do the dishes, do business, do a good job).

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## Part 6: Word Order & Sentence Structure

### 21. “I know him since 2010.”

- **The Mistake:** Using the Present Simple for an action that started in the past and continues to the present.
- **The Correct Way:** “I **have known** him since 2010.”
- **Why it Happens:** This requires the Present Perfect tense. The structure is `have/has + past participle`. Use this tense with `for` (a duration) and `since` (a starting point).
- **Examples:** “She **has lived** here `for` three years.” / “We **have been** married `since` 2015.”

### 22. “Tell to me what happened.”

- **The Mistake:** Adding the preposition “to” after “tell” when it’s followed by a person.
- **The Correct Way:** “**Tell me** what happened.”
- **How to Remember:** The verb `tell` is followed directly by the person (`tell me`, `tell him`, `tell the class`). The verb `say` is different: “He **said to me** that he was tired.”

### 23. Adjective Order: “A leather black jacket”

- **The Mistake:** Getting the order of adjectives wrong before a noun.
- **The Correct Way:** “A black leather jacket.”
- **The General Order (OSASCOMP):** Opinion (beautiful), Size (big), Age (old), Shape (round), Color (black), Origin (Moroccan), Material (leather), Purpose (sleeping). You rarely use more than three!
- **Simple Rule:** Opinion and Size usually come first. Material comes last. “A beautiful, old, Moroccan, leather bag.”

### 24. “I have a good news for you.”

- **The Mistake:** Treating “news” as a countable noun.
- **The Correct Way:** “I have **good news** for you” or “I have **some good news** for you.”

- **Why it Happens:** Like “information,” “news” is uncountable in English, even though it ends with an “s.”

## 25. “You are police?”

- **The Mistake:** Forgetting the article “a” for professions.
  - **The Correct Way:** “Are you **a** police officer?” / “He is **an** engineer.” / “She wants to be **a** doctor.”
  - **Rule:** When you talk about a person’s job, you must use the article **a** or **an**.
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## Part 7: Common Confusions

### 26. “Me and my friend went to the cinema.”

- **The Mistake:** Putting “me” first and using the object pronoun instead of the subject pronoun.
- **The Correct Way:** “My friend and **I** went to the cinema.”
- **How to Remember:** It’s polite in English to mention the other person first. To check if you should use “I” or “me,” remove the other person. You would say “**I** went to the cinema,” not “Me went to the cinema.”

### 27. “I can to swim.”

- **The Mistake:** Adding “to” after modal verbs like **can**, **should**, **must**, **will**.
- **The Correct Way:** “I **can swim.**” / “You **should go.**” / “He **must study.**”
- **Rule:** Modal verbs are followed directly by the base form of the verb without “to.”

### 28. Confusing “Fun” and “Funny”

- **The Mistake:** Saying “The party was so funny” when you mean you enjoyed it.
- **The Correct Way:** “The party was so **fun.**”
- **How to Remember:**
  - **Funny:** Makes you laugh (ha-ha). “The comedian was very **funny.**”
  - **Fun:** You enjoy it. “The game was a lot of **fun.**”

### 29. “I am going to the university.” vs. “I am going to university.”

- **The Mistake:** Not knowing when to use “the.”
- **The Difference:**
  - “I am going **to university**” (UK) or “I am going **to college**” (US) means you are a student there. It describes your life stage.
  - “I am going **to the university**” means you are going to the specific university building for a reason (e.g., to meet a professor, to visit the campus). You might not be a student there.
- The same rule applies to **hospital**, **church**, and **prison**.

### 30. “Very delicious” or “Very fantastic”

- **The Mistake:** Using “very” with “extreme” or “ungradable” adjectives.
  - **The Correct Way:** “This food is **delicious**.” or “It is **absolutely delicious**.”
  - **Why it Happens:** Adjectives like **delicious**, **fantastic**, **awful**, **enormous**, **impossible** are already at the extreme. You can’t be “very impossible.” Use adverbs like **absolutely**, **completely**, or **really** instead of **very** to add emphasis.
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## Part 8: Advanced Grammar & Nuance

### 31. “I suggest you to go.”

- **The Mistake:** Using an infinitive (**to go**) after “suggest.”
- **The Correct Way:** “I suggest **that you go**.” or “I suggest **going**.”
- **Rule:** The verb **suggest** is followed by a **that-clause** or a gerund (**-ing form**). Other verbs like this include **recommend** and **propose**.

### 32. Confusing “If I was” and “If I were”

- **The Mistake:** Using “was” in hypothetical or unreal situations (the subjunctive mood).
- **The Correct Way:** “**If I were** you, I would take the job.”
- **Why it Happens:** This is a formal grammar rule. When you are talking about something that is not real or is imaginary (like being another person), you use

were for all subjects ( I , he , she , it ). In informal speech, you will hear people say “if I was,” but in writing and for a polished sound, were is correct.

### 33. “Everybody are happy.”

- **The Mistake:** Treating words like everybody , somebody , anybody , and nobody as plural.
- **The Correct Way:** “Everybody **is** happy.” / “Somebody **has** my pen.”
- **Rule:** These indefinite pronouns are always singular in English, even though they refer to multiple people.

### 34. “I have been to Paris last year.”

- **The Mistake:** Using the Present Perfect tense with a specific past time marker.
- **The Correct Way:** “I **went** to Paris last year.”
- **Why it Happens:** The Present Perfect ( have been ) is for experiences in the past at an *unspecified* time. As soon as you mention a specific time ( last year , yesterday , in 2020 ), you must use the Past Simple ( went ).

### 35. “I am living here since 2015.”

- **The Mistake:** Using the Present Continuous for an action that started in the past and continues.
- **The Correct Way:** “I **have been living** here since 2015.”
- **Why it Happens:** This requires the Present Perfect Continuous ( have/has been + -ing ). It emphasizes the duration of an action that started in the past and is still ongoing.

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## Part 9: Everyday Expressions

### 36. Saying “No” too directly

- **The Mistake:** Answering a question like “Can you help me?” with a simple “No.”
- **The More Polite Way:** In English, a direct “No” can sound rude. It’s better to soften it. “I’m afraid I can’t right now.” / “I’m sorry, but I’m busy.” / “I wish I could, but...”

## 37. “Repeat again”

- **The Mistake:** This is a redundancy.
- **The Correct Way:** “Could you **repeat** that?” or “Could you say that **again**? ”
- **Why it Happens:** The prefix “re-” already means “again.” So “repeat again” is like saying “again again.”

## 38. Confusing “Lend” and “Borrow”

- **The Mistake:** “Can you borrow me your pen?”
- **The Correct Way:** “Can you **lend** me your pen?” or “Can I **borrow** your pen?”
- **How to Remember:** The action goes *from* the owner. The owner **lends**. The other person **borrow**s.

## 39. “I have a doubt.”

- **The Mistake:** Using “doubt” when you mean you have a question.
- **The Correct Way:** “I have a **question**.”
- **What “Doubt” Means:** It means you are not sure if something is true or you don’t believe it. “I **doubt** he will come to the party.” It implies a lack of belief, not a simple request for information.

## 40. “Thanks God.”

- **The Mistake:** Forgetting the verb.
  - **The Correct Way:** “**Thank** God.”
  - **Why it Happens:** This is an imperative (a command or a strong wish). It’s like you are telling yourself or others to “Thank God.” It’s a fixed expression.
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## Part 10: Final Polish

### 41. “According to me...”

- **The Mistake:** Using “according to” to introduce your own opinion.
- **The Correct Way:** “**In my opinion...**” or “I think that...”
- **Why it Happens:** “According to” is used to cite *other* people or sources. “According to the news, it will rain tomorrow.” You are the source of your own

opinion, so you don't need to cite yourself.

#### 42. “I am used to wake up early.”

- **The Mistake:** Using the base verb after “be used to.”
- **The Correct Way:** “I am used to **waking** up early.”
- **The Difference:**
  - **used to + verb** : Describes a past habit that is finished. “I **used to live** in Fes.” (I don’t live there now).
  - **be used to + -ing** : Describes something you are accustomed to. “I **am used to the noise.**” (It’s normal for me).

#### 43. “I want that you listen.”

- **The Mistake:** Using a **that-clause** after “want.”
- **The Correct Way:** “I want **you to listen.**”
- **Rule:** The structure is **want + object + infinitive**. “She wants **me to help.**” / “They want **us to come.**”

#### 44. “I have 10 years experience.”

- **The Mistake:** Missing the possessive apostrophe or the preposition.
- **The Correct Way:** “I have **10 years’** experience.” or “I have **10 years of** experience.”
- **Why it Happens:** When a time period possesses something (like experience), it needs an apostrophe. The second option with “of” is also very common and easier to remember.

#### 45. “He is a person very kind.”

- **The Mistake:** Placing the adjective after the noun.
- **The Correct Way:** “He is a **very kind person.**”
- **Rule:** In English, adjectives almost always come *before* the noun they are describing.

#### 46. Confusing “Recipe” and “Receipt”

- **The Mistake:** Asking for the “recipe” after paying at a restaurant.

- **The Correct Way:** “Can I have the **receipt**, please?”
- **How to Remember:**
  - **Recipe** (recette): Instructions for cooking.
  - **Receipt** (reçu): The paper you get after you pay.

#### **47. “I am going for to see my friend.”**

- **The Mistake:** Using “for” to state purpose with a verb.
- **The Correct Way:** “I am going **to see** my friend.”
- **Rule:** To express purpose, use the infinitive with **to**. You can use **for** with a noun (“I am going **for** a walk”) or with an **-ing** verb to describe the purpose of a **thing** (“This knife is **for** cutting bread”).

#### **48. “He is success.”**

- **The Mistake:** Using the noun “success” as an adjective.
- **The Correct Way:** “He is **successful**.”
- **Word Forms:**
  - Noun: **success** (He achieved great **success**.)
  - Adjective: **successful** (He is a **successful** businessman.)
  - Verb: **succeed** (He will **succeed**.)

#### **49. “All the people are agree.”**

- **The Mistake:** Combining two previous mistakes!
- **The Correct Way:** “**All the people agree.**” or “**Everybody agrees.**”
- **Breakdown:** “People” is plural, so it’s “people agree” (no “are”). “Everybody” is singular, so it’s “everybody agrees” (with an “s”).

#### **50. Not using contractions in speech**

- **The Mistake:** Speaking like a robot: “I do not know. He is not here. We will not go.”
- **The Natural Way:** “**I don’t** know.” / “**He’s** not here.” / “**We won’t** go.”
- **Why it Matters:** Using contractions ( **don’t** , **can’t** , **it’s** , **I’m** ) is the #1 way to sound more natural and fluent in spoken English. Not using them can make you

sound formal or even angry.

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## Conclusion

Congratulations on finishing the guide! Remember, every mistake is a lesson. Keep practicing, stay curious, and don't be afraid to speak. If you're ready to take the next step and get personalized feedback from a teacher who understands your journey, book a lesson with me today.

**Mr. Ibrahim K. Fluentry English Coaching**