

**ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

**FDC 311**



**JACKSON COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

Contents

**UNIT 1:** [**ELEMENTS OF LANGUAGE** 1](#_Toc486326392)

[1.0 What is Language? 1](#_Toc486326393)

[1.1 What are the Constituents of Language? 3](#_Toc486326394)

[1.2 Morpheme 3](#_Toc486326395)

[1.3 Types of Morphemes 4](#_Toc486326396)

[1.4 Word 5](#_Toc486326397)

[1.5 Some Types of Word Formation 6](#_Toc486326398)

[1.6 Phrase 7](#_Toc486326399)

[1.7 Clause 8](#_Toc486326400)

[1.8 Sentences 8](#_Toc486326401)

[1.8.1 Types of Sentences 8](#_Toc486326402)

[1.9 Paragraph 10](#_Toc486326403)

**UNIT 2:** [**SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT - (CONCORD)** 11](#_Toc486326404)

[2.1 Introduction 11](#_Toc486326405)

[2.2 Recognizing the Number of Nouns and Pronouns 11](#_Toc486326406)

[2.3 Recognizing the Number of Verbs 11](#_Toc486326407)

[2.4 Modifications 12](#_Toc486326408)

**UNIT 3:** [**COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION** 15](#_Toc486326409)

[3.1 Coordination 15](#_Toc486326410)

[3.2 Punctuation 17](#_Toc486326411)

[3.3 What is Faulty Coordination? 17](#_Toc486326412)

[3.4 Subordination 17](#_Toc486326413)

[3.5 What is a Clause? 17](#_Toc486326414)

[3.6 Types of Subordinate Clauses 18](#_Toc486326415)

[3.7 Defining and Non-Defining Relative Clauses 18](#_Toc486326416)

**UNIT 4:** [**REPORTING WHAT PEOPLE SAY** 22](#_Toc486326417)

[4.1 Introduction 22](#_Toc486326418)

[4.2 Quote Structure (Direct Speech) 22](#_Toc486326419)

[4.3 Position of Reporting Verb 22](#_Toc486326420)

[4.4 Punctuation of Quotes 23](#_Toc486326421)

[4.5 Report Structure (Indirect Speech) 23](#_Toc486326422)

[4.6 Position of the Reporting Clause 24](#_Toc486326423)

[4.7 Tense in Indirect Speech 24](#_Toc486326424)

[4.8.1 Rule One: 24](#_Toc486326425)

[4.8.2 Rule Two 25](#_Toc486326426)

[4.8.3 Rule Three 25](#_Toc486326427)

[4.9 Reporting Questions (Indirect Questions) 25](#_Toc486326428)

**UNIT 5:** [**AMBIGUITIES AND DANGLING MODIFIERS** 28](#_Toc486326429)

[5.1 Ambiguities 28](#_Toc486326430)

[5.2 Dangling Modifiers 29](#_Toc486326431)

[5.3 Causes of Dangling Modifiers 29](#_Toc486326432)

[5.4 Types of Dangling Modifiers 30](#_Toc486326433)

[5.5 Correcting Dangling Modifiers 30](#_Toc486326434)

**References**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...31

**UNIT ONE**

# **ELEMENTS OF LANGUAGE~**

## 1.0 What is Language? @

The very first thing you notice about the heading is the use of the word “language” in the singular without the definite article. This is therefore different from “What is a language?”

We are concerned with the study of language in general and our interest is in **Natural Language** (human).



**Some Definitions of Language**:

* Language is a purely arbitrary human and non-linguistic method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols. (Edward Sapir)

This definition suffers from several defects:

* There is much that is communicated by language which is not covered by the words: ideas, emotions and desires.
* There are also other forms of expressing emotions other than the use of language.
* The definition does not mention the spoken aspect of language which is important.

However, Sapir makes good points in his definition.

* He mentions the fact that language is arbitrary and voluntary and is also stimulus free. (non-instinctive)
* Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates. (Bloch, B. & Trager, B. L.)

The striking feature about this definition which contrasts the first definition is that it makes no appeal except indirectly and by implication the communicative function of language. (Obvious absence of the word communicate.) Instead it puts all the emphasis upon its social function and in so doing takes a rather narrow view of the role that language plays in society.

Again, this definition does not differ from Sapir’s in that it brings in the property of arbitrariness but explicitly restricts language to spoken language. (vocal symbols)

* Language is the institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols. (Hall, R.A.)

In Hall’s definition, we observe that both communication and interaction are introduced. Again, “oral-auditory” can be taken to be roughly equivalent to “vocal”, differing from it only in the “oral-auditory” which makes reference to the hearer as well as to the speaker. The property of arbitrariness is once again mentioned.

Note that Hall employs the term “habitually used” – a term with historical origin. It takes its roots from the stimulus-response theories of the behaviourists and within the theoretical framework of behaviourism, the term “habit” acquired a rather special sense of appreciation.

* Language is a symbol system … almost wholly based on pure or arbitrary convention. Languages are flexible and adaptable. (Robins, R. H.)

Robins makes mention of the arbitrariness of language, he also states that language is flexible and adaptable. This shows that it is elastic and can be used in meaning several things. Human language has a way of accommodating for a change when the need arises.

* “From now on I will consider a language to be a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements.” (Noam Chomsky)

Chomsky introduces the issue of language being infinite in his definition. By this, he means that any time language is used one is performing or producing it, you can produce only a set of sentences which can be finite. At the same time we can produce a lot of sentences with the same pattern (infinite). (Language is a limited (finite) set of symbols but can be combined to produce infinite sentences.)

According to Chomsky, every person has a mechanism in his brain which processes language (speech). The mechanism is free of specificity to any language. It can process any language.

Chomsky’s definition says nothing about the communicative function of either natural or non-natural language. It also says nothing about the symbolic nature of the elements or sequences of them. Its purpose is to focus attention on purely structural properties of language and to suggest that these properties can be investigated from a mathematically precise point of view.

**Summary**:

Language is:

* A system of symbols used for communication.
* Flexible and modifiable – can be used in meaning several things – it is not rigid. New examples can be added.
* Arbitrary – there is no connection between what words stand for and the words themselves.
* Free from stimulus control – non-instinctive and voluntary.
* Structure dependent – organisation of symbols.

## 1.1 What are the Constituents of Language? @

In [English grammar](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-grammar-1690909), a constituency is a relation between a linguistic unit (i.e., a *constituent*) and the larger unit that it is a part of. The constituency is traditionally represented by bracketing or tree structures.

A constituent can be a [morpheme](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-morpheme-1691406), [word](https://www.thoughtco.com/word-english-language-1692612), [phrase](https://www.thoughtco.com/phrase-grammar-1691625), or [clause](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-clause-grammar-1689850). For instance, all the words and phrases that make up a clause are said to be constituents of that clause.

In this Unit we shall look at the following constituencies in hierarchical order from bottom to the top:

Paragraph

↑

Sentence

↑

Phrase

↑

Word

↑

Morpheme

## 1.2 Morpheme @

In English grammar and morphology, a *morpheme* is a meaningful linguistic unit consisting of a word (such as dog) or a word element (such as the -s at the end of dogs) that cannot be divided into smaller meaningful parts.

For example: 1. unladylike (3 morphemes)

un – not

lady – (well-behaved) female adult (human)

like – having the characteristics of

(None can be broken up any more)

2. dogs – (2 morphemes)

‘dog’

‘s’ – plural morpheme

3. technique – (1 morpheme)

2 syllables but 1 morpheme.

## 1.3 Types of Morphemes @

In linguistics, we would further classify morphemes as either as **phonemes** (the smallest units of grammar recognizable by sound) or **graphemes** (the smallest units of written language). For our purposes, we will focus on graphemes.

There are two types of morphemes: free morphemes and bound morphemes. A "base" or "root" is a morpheme in a word that gives the word its principle meaning. An "affix" is a bound morpheme that occurs before or after a base. An affix that comes after a base is called a "suffix."

**a)** **Free Morphemes**

These are morphemes that can occur on their own without any morphemes necessarily attached to them. As such, **free morphemes** can stand by themselves as single, thoroughly independent words.

For example:

i. *manage* as in management

ii. *mother* as in motherhood

iii. or words such as *pen*, *tea*, and *man*.

Free morphemes can further be subcategorized into [content words](http://www.ello.uos.de/field.php/Morphology/FreeMorphemeslexicalandfunctional) and [function words](http://www.ello.uos.de/field.php/Morphology/FreeMorphemeslexicalandfunctional).

Examples of free morphemes:

* *the* (article)
* *bird* (noun)
* *like* (adjective)
* *man* (noun)
* *hard* (adjective)
* *touch* (verb)
* *his* (determiner)
* *food* (noun)
* *at* (preposition)
* *dinner* (noun)

**b)** **Bound Morphemes**

Bound morphemes in obvious contrast, only appear in combination with others, in most cases free morphemes. That is, these morphemes are bound in the very sense that they cannot stand alone and are thus necessarily attached to another form.

For example:

i. “*-ment*” as in management

ii. "*un*" as in unhappy“''

**c) Derivational Morphemes**

Derivational morphemes can be either a suffix or a prefix, and they have the ability to transform either the function or the meaning of a word.

For example:

*meaning* (noun) – meaning*less* (adjective)

*beauty* (noun) – beauti*ful* (adjective)

*quick* (adjective) – quick*ly* (adverb)

**d)** **Inflectional Morphemes**

An inflectional morpheme is a suffix that is added to a word to assign a particular grammatical property to that word. In English [morphology](https://www.thoughtco.com/morphology-words-term-1691407), an inflectional morpheme is a [suffix](https://www.thoughtco.com/suffix-grammar-1692159) that is added to a [word](https://www.thoughtco.com/word-english-language-1692612) to assign a particular [grammatical](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-grammar-1690909) property to that word.

Inflectional morphemes serve as [grammatical markers](https://www.thoughtco.com/markedness-language-term-1691302) that indicate [tense](https://www.thoughtco.com/tense-grammar-1692532), [number](https://www.thoughtco.com/number-in-grammar-1691443), [possession](https://www.thoughtco.com/possessive-genitive-case-1691645), or [comparison](https://www.thoughtco.com/comparison-composition-and-rhetoric-1689882). Inflectional morphemes in English include the[bound morphemes](https://www.thoughtco.com/bound-morpheme-words-and-word-parts-1689177) -s (or -es); 's (or s'); -ed; -en; -er; -est; and -ing.

* dog – dog*s*
* change – chang*ed*
* hard – hard*er*
* *big* – big*ger* – big*gest*

**e)** **Empty Morpheme:**

An empty morpheme is a purely [formal](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/formal#English) morpheme with no [semantic](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/semantic#English) content.

## 1.4 Word @

Some definitions of word:

i. “A unit of expression which has universal intuitive recognition by native speaker, in

both spoken and written language” (Crystal)

ii. “A minimal free form” (Bloomfield)

iii. “The smallest of linguistic unit which can occur on its own in speech or writing”

(Richard & Schmidt)

iv. “A unit of meaning” (Finch)

A word is the smallest free form in a language. A word may consist of only one morpheme but a single morpheme may not be a word. A word may include a root or stem. It may also include one or more affixes. Words can be combined to create other units of language.

Eg: phrases, clauses, sentences.

## 1.5 Some Types of Word Formation @

In linguistics, word formation is the creation of a new word. Word formation is sometimes contrasted with semantic change, which is a change in the meaning of the word.

* **Compounding**Compounding forms a word out of two or more root morphemes. The words are called compounds or compound words. In Linguistics, compounds can be either native or borrowed. Native English roots are typically free morphemes, so that means native compounds are made out of independent words that can occur by themselves. Examples:
* *mailman* (composed of free root *mail* and free root *man*)
* *mail carrier*
* *fireplace*

Some compounds have more than two component words. These are formed by successively combining words into compounds, e.g. ***pick-up truck***, formed from ***pick-up* and *truck***, where the first component, ***pick-up*** is itself a compound formed from *pick* and *up.*



* **Derivation**

Derivation is the creation of words by modification of a root without the addition of other roots. Often the effect is a change in part of speech.

* **Affixation** **(Sub-type of Derivation)**  
  The most common type of derivation is the addition of one or more affixes to a root, as in the word *derivation* itself. This process is called affixation, a term which covers both pre-fixation and suffixation.
* *in*flammable
* *un*comfortable
* subtract*ion*
* **Blending**  
  Blending is one of the most beloved of word formation processes in English. It is especially creative in that speakers take two words and merge them based not on morpheme structure but on sound structure. The resulting words are called blends.
* brunch – (breakfast + lunch)
* telex – (teleprinter + exchange)
* **Clipping**  
  Clipping is a type of abbreviation of a word in which one part is 'clipped' off the rest, and the remaining word now means essentially the same thing as what the whole word means or meant.

For example:

* *rifle* is a fairly modern clipping of an earlier compound *rifle gun*,
* *burger*, formed by clipping off the beginning of the word *hamburger*.
* **Acronyms**  
  Acronyms are formed by taking the initial letters of a phrase and making a word out of it. Acronyms provide a way of turning a phrase into a word. The classical acronym is also pronounced as a word.

For example:

* UNICEF - United Nations International Children's Emergency

Fund

* GNAT - Ghana National Association of Teachers
* UTAG - University Teachers Association of Ghana
* WHO - World Health Organisation
* **Invention**

When new things are invented the names of the items become part of the vocabulary.

For example:

* computer – computerize – computerizations
* **Borrowing**

Words that are borrowed from other languages but have become part of the vocabulary of the new language.

For example:

* stadium (Greek)
* gymnasium (Greek)
* tete-a-tete (French)
* mango (Portuguese)

## 1.6 Phrase @

In grammar a phrase is a group of various words functioning as a single unit in the syntax of a sentence. A phrase can be simple (one word) or complex (a group of words)

Eg: the store at the end of the street….. (a noun phrase)

Most phrases have a central word defining the type of phrase. This word is called the head of the phrase. Phrases may be classified by the type of head:

* Prepositional phrase (PP): A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition and can act as a noun, an adjective or an adverb.  
   The book was *on the table.*
* Noun phrase (NP) – A noun phrase consists of a noun and all its modifiers.

*The bewildered tourist* was lost.

* Verb phrase (VP) – A verb phrase consists of a verb and all its modifiers.

He *was waiting for the rain to stop.*

* Appositive phrase (AP) – An appositive phrase restates a noun and consists of one or more words usually introduced by commas.

Bob, *the naughty priest*, is dead

* Gerund Phrases: A gerund phrase is simply a noun phrase that starts with a gerund.

*Taking* my dog for a walk is fun.

* Infinitive Phrases: An infinitive phrase is a noun phrase that begins with an infinitive.

Everybody loves *to watch movies*.

* Participial Phrases: A participial phrase begins with a past or present participle.

*Knowing what I know now*, I wish I had never come here.

* Absolute Phrases: An absolute phrase has a subject, but not an acting verb, so it cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. It modifies the whole sentence, not just a noun.

*His tail between his legs*, the dog walked out the door.

## 1.7 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. Clauses can be either independent clauses (also called main clauses) or dependent clauses (also called subordinate clauses)

Clause contrasts with sentence. Except in the case of a whole sentence, which is technically said to be also a clause, a clause is always smaller than the sentence that contains it.  
  
Clause also contrasts with [phrase](https://www.thoughtco.com/phrase-grammar-1691625). Clauses contain phrases. Clauses are bigger than the simple phrases they contain. The crucial characteristic of a clause, which is lacking from a phrase, is that a clause normally has its own verb and all or many of the other basic ingredients of a whole sentence.

(**Note**: Clauses will be discussed in detail under Unit Three - Coordination and Subordination)

## 1.8 Sentences @

A sentence is a group of words that are put together to mean something. A sentence is the basic unit of language which expresses a complete thought. A complete sentence has at least a subject and a main verb to state (declare) a complete thought.

The five main parts of a sentence are:

* Subject
* Predicate
* Clause
* Phrase
* Modifier

### 1.8.1 Types of Sentences

1. **Simple Sentence**

A simple sentence has the most basic elements that make it a sentence: a subject, a verb, and a completed thought.

Examples

a. Joe waited for the train.  
"Joe" = subject, "waited" = verb

b. The train was late.  
"The train" = subject, "was" = verb

The use of compound subjects, compound verbs, prepositional phrases (such as "at the bus station"), and other elements help lengthen simple sentences, but simple sentences often are short.

**2. Compound Sentence**

A compound sentence refers to a sentence made up of two independent clauses (or complete sentences) connected to one another with a coordinating conjunction.

Examples

a. Joe waited for the train, **but** the train was late.  
b. Mary and Samantha left on the bus before I arrived, **so** I did not see them at the bus

station.

**3. Complex sentence**

A complex sentence is made up of an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses connected to it. A dependent clause is similar to an independent clause, or complete sentence, but it lacks one of the elements that would make it a complete sentence.

Examples

a. *When he came* I had left.

b. I could not go to the stadium *because it was raining*.

**4. Compound Complex**

A compound-complex sentence is comprised of at least two independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses

Examples

a. Although I like to go camping, I haven't had the time to go lately, and I haven't found anyone to go with.

(independent clause: "I haven't had the time to go lately")

(independent clause: "I haven't found anyone to go with")

(dependent clause: "Although I like to go camping... ")

b. We decided that the movie was too violent, but our children, who like to watch scary movies, thought that we were wrong.

(independent clause: "We decided that the movie was too violent")

(independent clause: "(but) our children thought that we were wrong")

(dependent clause: who like to watch scary movies)

(Note: Compound-complex sentences are very common in English, but one mistake that students often make is to try to write them without having mastered the [simple sentences](http://www.learnamericanenglishonline.com/Orange%20Level/O1%20Simple%20Sentences.html), [compound sentences](http://www.learnamericanenglishonline.com/Orange%20Level/O3%20Compound%20Sentences.html), and [complex sentences](http://www.learnamericanenglishonline.com/Orange%20Level/O4%20Complex%20Sentences.html) first.)

## 1.9 Paragraph @

A paragraph is a group of words put together to form a group that is usually longer than a sentence. Paragraphs are often made up of many sentences. It is a self-contained unit of discourse in writing dealing with a particular point or idea.

Paragraphs can begin with an indentation (about five spaces), or by missing a line out, and then starting again; this makes telling when one paragraph ends and another begins easier.

Paragraphs contain a topic sentence. This topic sentence of the paragraph tells the reader what the paragraph will be about.

A basic paragraph structure usually consists of these elements: the topic sentence, three supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence

**Exercise**

1. Identify the type of sentence structure (simple, compound, etc.) of each of the following sentences.

1. I tried to study Spanish but my brother studied French
2. Kwame and Ama play football every afternoon.
3. After they had finished writing the difficult quiz, the students were angry with the teacher.
4. While Yaw reads novels, Afia reads comics, but Sam only reads magazines.

v. Although John is old, he is not married.

2. Identify the morphemes in the following words.

i. alligator

ii. calmly

iii. running

iv. blindness

v. stapler

vi. bargain

vii. regrouping

viii. undeniable

ix. antiestablishmentarianism

x. complimentation

**UNIT TWO**

# **SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT - (CONCORD)~**

## 2.1 Introduction

Just as special events can “fit” with certain celebrations, subjects and verbs must “fit” together in sentences. For example, you never say, \*“*I are the winner*” or \*“*Is they your best friends?”* You will hear that something is wrong with these sentences. The problem is that the subjects and verbs do not agree.

In most of the sentences we speak and write, the subjects and the verbs agree automatically. You would probably say, “*I am the winner*” or “*Are they your best friends*?” This Unit will explain the rules of agreement and how to make parts of sentences work together correctly.

It is important to establish the relationship between the subject and the verb. The number of a word can be singular or plural. Plural words indicate *more than one*. *Only nouns, pronouns and verbs* can indicate number.

## 2.2 Recognizing the Number of Nouns and Pronouns

Most of the time, it is easy to tell whether a noun or pronoun is singular or plural. Compare, for example, the singular and plural forms of the nouns in the following chart:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NOUNS** | |
| **Singular** | **Plural** |
| custom | customs |
| box | boxes |
| knife | knives |
| mouse | mice |

Most nouns are made plural by adding “s” or “es” to the singular form (customs and boxes). Some nouns become plurals in other ways (knives and mice). Pronouns have different forms to indicate singular and plural. For example, *I, he, she, it and this* are singular. *We, they, and these* are plural. *You, who and some* are either singular or plural.

## 2.3 Recognizing the Number of Verbs

Like nouns, verbs can indicate singular and plural forms. Problems involving the number in verbs normally involve the third-person forms of the present tense (she wants, they want) and certain forms of the verb be (I am; he is or was; we are or were).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SINGULAR AND PLURAL FORMS OF VERBS IN THE PRESENT TENSE** | |
| **Singular** | **Plural** |
| The girl runs. | The girls run. |
| The boy plays. | The boys play. |
| I am happy. | We are happy. |
| This was great. | These were great. |

To check for agreement between a subject and verb, begin by determining the number of the subject. Then, make sure it agrees with the verb.

This means that if the subject is singular (one) the verb should agree with the noun:

1. The teacher **is** in the classroom.
2. John **eats** apples every day.
3. The president **is** accountable to the electorate.

Plural nouns (more than one) have to agree with the form of the verbs.

1. Cars **are** important in the society.
2. Non-residential students **have** halls of affiliation.
3. Many women **like** sweets.

## 2.4 Modifications

a) When the singular subjects are defined by the words *each, every, anyone*, *everybody, nobody, somebody, no one*, the singular verb is used.

* 1. Each student in the university **studies** for good grades.
  2. Nobody **has**the mandate to nominate a new leader for the class.
  3. Everybody **is** supposed to register fro the elections.

b) The singular verb is used when two singular verbs are connected with “and” refer

to the same subject or idea.

* 1. Rice and stew **is** very delicious.
  2. Her husband and manager **controls** all her business dealings.

c) A compound subject joined by *and* is usually plural and must have a plural verb.

i. The *boy and the girl* **are waiting** for the bus.

ii. The *boys and girls* **are waiting** for the bus.

d) In mathematical computations and in the case of *any* and *none*, both the

singular and plural are used.

1. Six plus four **is** ten.
2. Six plus four **are** ten.
3. None **are** likely to pass the examination.
4. None **is** likely to pass the examination

* Although both forms are grammatically correct, the singular is used in formal style for *none* and *any.*

e) In the case of collective nouns like *staff, band, crowd, audience, family, etc*,

either the singular or the plural form can be used depending on whether the noun is considered as one group or the members are considered individually.

f) When two or more singular verbs are connected with *but, neither, nor, either*,

*or,* a singular form of the verb is required.

* 1. Neither the boy nor the girl **is** guilty of the offence.
  2. Not only his brother, but his friend **finds** him odd.
* When one of the nouns connected by *or, but, nor* is singular and the other is plural, the noun closer to the verb agrees with it.
  1. Either the boy or the girls are to blame for the offence.
  2. Either the boys or the girl is to blame for the offence.

g) When a singular subject is followed immediately by such group of words like *as well as, in addition to, including, no less than, with, together with,* or any similar construction, the singular verb is required no matter the status of the subject that comes after these words.

* 1. Gbagbo as well as his wife **has** been captured.
  2. The president together with his ministers **is** visiting the Ashanti Region.

If the sentences look awkward, then re-write it.

a) The president together with his ministers is visiting the Ashanti Region.

The sentence can be re-written as:

b) Both the president and his ministers are visiting the Ashanti Region.

h) When a subject is followed by a plural modifier, a singular verb is required.

i. One of my children **has** a very good appetite.

ii. The syllabus which contains all the topics to be studied **is** helpful.

i) Where the subject is a relative pronoun, the verb must agree with the antecedent of the pronoun.

i. She is one of the girls **who** sing in the church.

ii. His child is one of the **students** who play tennis.

j) When a plural noun is use to indicate a sum or unit, a singular verb is used.

i. Fifty years **passes** so soon in the life of a man.

ii. Two hundred Ghana cedis **is** a lot of money.

k) Some words are in the plural form but are usually singular in meaning, such

words take singular verbs.

i. The news has just been read.

ii. Economics is an interesting subject.

**Exercise**

The following sentences may or may not have concord errors. Re-write the sentences

correcting concord errors if any.

i. The mayor as well as his brothers are going to prison.

ii. Each of the reports were given an A.

iii. Neither of the two traffic lights were working when I passed by.

iv. Our thanks goes to the workers who supported the union.

v. Forty percent of the students are in favour of changing the policy.

vi. Ama or Adjoa plan to send Kwame a card on his birthday.

vii. The entire production, including the music and the sets appeal to everyone.

viii. None of the so-called volunteers was really willing to work in the village.

ix. The first match of the semi-finals are now going on.

x. It was the speaker, not his ideas, that has provoked the students to riot.

**UNIT THREE**

# **COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION~**

## 3.1 Coordination

Sometimes you want to show that two or more ideas are equally important in a sentence. In such cases, you are looking to coordinate. Sentence coordination links ideas of equal importance. You can use:

**Coordinating conjunctions**

**The Coordinating Conjunctions and Their Shades of Meaning: (fanboys)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Coordinating Conjunction** | **Meaning** | **Functions** |
| for | because | to show cause |
| and | also | to link ideas |
| nor | negative | to reinforce negative |
| but | however | to contrast ideas |
| or | choice | to show possibilities |
| yet | however | to contrast |
| so | therefore | to show result |

(Source: Rozakis, L. E. (2003). *Grammar and Style*. Indiana: Alpha Books.)

Coordination can show addition, contrast, choice/alternative and result.

i. **Addition**

The statements are of equal rank but what follows the connective is supplementary to

what precedes it.

a) I love him **and** he loves me.

b) John went to the bank **and** withdrew some money.

The conjunctions which indicate addition are:

* and
* also
* besides
* both
* furthermore
* likewise
* moreover
* then

ii. **Contrast**

The clauses are of equal rank but the clause that follows the conjunction is in contrast to what precedes it.

a) He wanted to buy a new shirt **but** his money was not enough.

b) The trip was expensive **but** it was worth it.

The conjunctions which indicate contrast are:

* but
* however
* nevertheless
* still
* yet (there is usually a comma after “yet”)

“Yet” is used mainly in written English to join clauses where, there is a contrast that is of a surprising nature.

a) He is a quiet man **yet**, he manages to command attention.

b) John was suffering from a hamstring injury **yet**, he managed to play full time.

iii. **Choice or Alternative (Correlative Conjunctions)**

They get their name from the fact that they work together (co-) and relate one sentence element to another. They are also known as a paired coordinator and a conjunctive pair.

Correlative conjunctions suggest an alternative possibility and include pairs like:

* both……..and
* whether…….or
* either………or
* neither…….nor
* not………..but
* not only……..but also

a) **Either** we travel by air **or** we drive to the place.

b) It is **neither** possible **nor** desirable that they should be invited.

iv. **Result**

They state the consequence or result of a preceding statement.

* accordingly
* consequently
* hence
* therefore

a) The footballer was hurt during training **therefore** he could not play the match.

b) John played well **hence** his reward.

**Position of Coordinators**

In clausal coordination, the coordinators: “and”, “or”, and “but” are restricted to the initial position in the clause. They occur at the beginning of the second or final clause.

For example,

The man plays the violin, **and** his wife plays the piano.

## 3.2 Punctuation

The conjunctions: “and”, “or”, “yet” and “but” are usually preceded by a comma, while the semicolon precedes conjunctions like “accordingly”, “consequently”, “nevertheless”, “likewise”, “however”, and “furthermore”.

## 3.3 What is Faulty Coordination?

Faulty coordination occurs when two coordinate clauses have unequal ideas and these two clauses are mistakenly treated as though they should be given equal emphasis. Faulty coordination is joining two clauses in such a way that the meaning is illogical

For example:

a) The iPhone is the best smart phone, **and** I bought one.

b) The bus driver is a careless person, **and** he was pulled over by the police.

## 3.4 Subordination

Subordination is connecting two unequal but related clauses with a subordinating conjunction to form a complex sentence. When you subordinate one clause to another, you make the subordinate or dependent clause develop the main clause. The subordinate clause works to throw more light on the main clause.

The main clause can stand on its own, but the subordinate or dependent clause amplifies the main clause, it has a subject and a verb but cannot stand on its own. A clause which begins with a subordinating conjunction is called a subordinating clause.

## 3.5 What is a Clause?

A clause is a group of words with its own subject and verb.

Types of Clauses

* Finite Clause: A finite clause is a clause whose verb element is finite (such as *takes*, *took*, *can work*, *has worked*).

For example: I cannot go out with you because I am studying this evening.

* Non-Finite Clause: A non-finite clause is a clause whose verb element is non-finite

(such as *to work, having worked*)

For example: Knowing my temper, I did not reply.

* Verbless Clause: A clause that does not have a verb element, but is nevertheless capable of being analysed as in clause elements.

For example: Although always helpful, he was not much liked.

(Although he was always helpful, he was not much liked.)

## 3.6 Types of Subordinate Clauses

There are three main types of subordinate clauses:

* Noun (nominal)
* Relative/Adjective
* Adverb

1. **Noun Clause**

The noun clause performs the function of a noun in a sentence. It is usually introduced by *that, where, why, what, how* and *whatever.*

For example:

i. Where we went should not bother you.

ii. Whatever he did was wonderful.

iii. This is what he did.

2. **Relative Clause**

The relative clause provides more information about nouns. It post-modifies the noun phrase. The noun which is modified is called the antecedent. The clause is introduced by a relative pronoun: *who, whose, that, which* and *whom*.

For example:

i. The people who live upstairs are having a party.

ii. The house which I want to buy has been sold.

iii. All the boys who took part in the robbery have been arrested by the police.

## 3.7 Defining and Non-Defining Relative Clauses

The relative clause can be defining or non-defining.

* **Defining/Restrictive Relative Clause**

The relative clause is not separated by a comma. It acts as an adjective by providing more information about a particular noun.

For example: The girl who was on the bus with us is from Brazil.

* **Non-Defining/Non-Restrictive Clause**

This clause adds extra information to the whole or the main clause separated by commas.

For example:

i. The man next door, who works alone, is dead.

ii. My brother, who lives in Canada, is a doctor. (he has only one brother)

(My brother who lives in Canada is a doctor. Restrictive clause – he has many brothers).

**3. Adverb Clause**

An adverb clause is a subordinate clause that modifies *a verb, an adjective or an adverb*.

Adverb clauses can answer any of the questions about the words they modify:

* Where?
* When?
* Why?
* In what way? (manner)
* Under what condition?
* To what extent?

The following table shows some of the most common subordinating conjunctions and the relationships that they show between ideas.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Relationship** | **Subordinating conjunction** |
| Cause, reason | so, because, as |
| Time | while, until,  when, before, after, since, |
| Purpose | in order to, so that, in case |
| Concession | though, even though, although |
| Place | where, wherever |
| Manner | as, like, the way |
| Result/effect | so that, |

**i. Clause of Reason:**

It indicates the reason for doing something.

a) I couldn’t come because it rained.

b) I didn’t know she was married since she seldom talked about it.

**ii. Clause of Time**

It is used to indicate when something happens by referring to a period of time or another event.

a) Her father died when she was young.

b) The rains stopped after we went home.

**iii. Clause of Purpose**

It indicates what is hoped will be achieved by carrying out the action,

a) Take an umbrella with you in case it rains.

b) I took the by-pass in order to avoid traffic.

**iv. Clause of Concession**

Sometimes when you want to make two statements, one of which contrasts with the other or makes it seem surprising, you can put both statements together into one sentence by using the concessive clause.

a) I used to read a lot although I don’t get time for books now.

b) Though he has lived in London all his life his English is bad.

**v. Clause of Place**

It indicates where an action or event takes place.

a) I put the book where nobody would find it.

b) This is the place where we slept.

**vi. Clause on Manner**

When you want to talk about the way something is done we use the clause of manner.

a) She treats him well as though he was her own son.

b) He danced as if he was mad.

**vii. Clause of Result/Effect**

This clause sets out what happened when the main clause was carried out.

a) John was so tired that he slept on the floor.

b) Kwame is such a wicked person that nobody likes him.

**Exercise**

1. Join the following pairs of clauses with appropriate coordinating conjunction.

i. The sky turned dark grey. The wind died down

ii. We often think. We often talk about people's behaviours.

iii. The mechanic fixed the broken tail-light. He replaced the brakes, too.

iv. We can go out to dinner with my parents. We can go to the movies with Mike and John.

v. Mary discovered she had forgotten our match tickets. We had to miss half the match while she went home to get them.

vi. I hated listening to her talk. She spoke in a high nasal voice.

vii. Kwasi liked to eat well. Kwasi hated to exercise.

viii. His mother did not complete college. His father did not complete college.

ix. He always arrives late**.** He expects everyone else to arrive on time.

x. My mother was born in Wa**.**  I've always wanted to visit that town.

2. Join each of the following pairs of clauses with the appropriate subordinating conjunction.

i. I got to the office at 8am. Most of the workers had not arrived.

ii. She didn’t want to be late for work. She set her alarm clock for 6:00 a.m.

iii. I arrived late. I had a flat tyre on the way and had to fix.

iv. We are doing our homework now. We want to play again.

1. Kate loves teaching. It is an extremely rewarding profession.
2. The teacher said we would be taking a test. The topics were not in the syllabus.
3. The man was in jail. The man confessed.
4. I want to read your report. I can evaluate it.
5. You have handed in your report. You cannot revise it.
6. Keep calling our customers from last year. You make your sales quota.

**UNIT FOUR**

# **REPORTING WHAT PEOPLE SAY~**

**(DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH)**

## 4.1 Introduction

There are two ways of relating what a person has said: direct and indirect. In direct speech, we repeat the original speaker’s exact words.

He said, “I have lost my wallet.”

What is repeated is placed between inverted commas and a comma or a colon is placed immediately before the remark.

You indicate that you are quoting or reporting what someone has said by using a **reporting verb**. Every reporting clause contains a **reporting verb.**

Some basic reporting verbs include the following:

* “say” – when you are simply reporting what someone said and do not want to add any more information.

For example: She said that she didn’t know about the story.

## 4.2 Quote Structure (Direct Speech)

When you want to say that a person used particular words, you use a quote structure (direct speech). A quote structure consists of two clauses.

i. One clause is the **reporting clause** which contains the reporting verb.

ii. The second clause is the **quote** which represents what someone says.

For example:

a) **“I knew I’d seen you,”** I said.

**↓ ↓**

(quote clause) (reporting clause)

b) “Only one,” **replied the doctor.**

**↓ ↓**

(quote clause) (reporting clause)

## 4.3 Position of Reporting Verb

There are several positions in which you can put the reporting clause in relation to a quote.

The usual position is after a quote, but it can also be in front of the quote or in the middle of the quote.

For example:

a) “You have to keep trying,” he said.

b) “You see,” he said, “my father was a clergyman.”

c) He said, “We have to go home.”

## 4.4 Punctuation of Quotes

You can use either the single inverted commas (‘’) or double inverted commas (“ ”). The one used to begin the quote is called **opening** inverted commas, and the one used as the end is called **closing** inverted commas.

For example:

a) “Let’s go,” I whispered.

b) ‘Let’s go,’ I whispered.

c) “What do you mean,” I demanded, “by a population problem?”

## 4.5 Report Structure (Indirect Speech)

Reported or indirect speech is usually used to talk about the past, so we normally change the tense of the words spoken. We use reporting verbs like 'say', 'tell', 'ask', and we may use the word 'that' to introduce the reported words. Inverted commas are not used.

*She said, "I saw him." (direct speech) = She said that she had seen him. (indirect speech)*

'That' may be omitted:  
*She told him that she was happy. = She told him she was happy.*

**Say' and 'tell'**

Use 'say' when there is no indirect object:  
*He said that he was tired.*

Always use 'tell' when you say who was being spoken to (i.e. with an indirect object):  
*He told me that he was tired.*

**'Talk' and 'speak'**

Use these verbs to describe the action of communicating:  
*He talked to us.  
She was speaking on the telephone.*

A report structure has two parts. One part is the reporting clause, which contains the reporting verb.

For example:

a) I told him that nothing *was going to happen to me*.

↓ ↓

(reporting clause) (reported clause)

b) I have agreed that *we should do it*.

↓ ↓

(reporting clause) (reported clause)

## 4.6 Position of the Reporting Clause

We usually put the reporting clause first in order to make it clear that you are reporting rather than speaking directly yourself. However, if you want to emphasize the statement contained in the reported clause, you can alter the order and put the reported clause first with a comma after it. (That is not used in this case.)

For example:

a) All the things were trivial, *he said.*

↓ ↓

(reported clause) (reporting clause)

## 4.7 Tense in Indirect Speech

Indirect speech can be introduced by a verb in the present tense when:

* reporting a conversation that is still going on;
* reading a letter and reporting what it says;
* reading instructions and reporting;
* reporting a statement that someone makes often;
* talking about reports attributed to famous works or authors which have present validity.

Apart from these situations, indirect speech is usually introduced by a verb in the past tense.

**4**.8 Rules for Changing Direct into Indirect Speech

Get one thing straight – you do not have to learn the rules by heart. Simply understand what they ask you to do and apply the same in converting a sentence from direct to indirect speech.

### 4.8.1 Rule One:

If in direct speech you find say/says or will say then **do not change the tense** that you can find within the quotation marks.

For example:

i. a) I say, “I am elated.”

    b) I say I am elated

ii. a) He says, “I was a fool then.”

b) He says he was a fool then.

iii. a) She says, “I will be more experienced then.”

1. She says she will be more experienced then.

### 4.8.2 Rule Two

If in direct speech the words within the quotation marks talk of a universal truth or habitual action then **Rule One** is followed or in other words the tense inside the quotation marks is not changed at all.

For example:

i. The teacher said, “The sun rises in the east.”

    ii. The teacher said the sun rises in the east.

### 4.8.3 Rule Three

If there is 'said' in the direct speech then the tense of the words inside quotation marks is changed to the past tense.

For example:

i. a) I said,” I am suffering from a fit of malaria”

b) I said I was suffering from a fit of malaria.

ii. a) I said, “My mother cooks well”

   b) I said my mother cooked well.

**Help List One**

**Words indicating nearness are changed into words showing distance**

* here – there
* this – that
* today – that day
* tonight – that night
* tomorrow – the next/following day
* yesterday – the previous day
* these – those
* the next week – the following week
* now – then

**Help List Two**

**The following changes in the tense need to be considered**

* is/am – was
* are – were
* is (sleeping) – was (sleeping)
* are (sleeping) – were (sleeping)
* has/have killed – had killed
* was/were laughing – had been laughing
* can – could; will – would; shall – should; may – might
* did – had done

## 4.9 Reporting Questions (Indirect Questions)

Indirect questions aren’t questions in the strict sense of the term. They do not have the word order of typical questions. They also don’t have a question mark at the end. Indirect questions are usually contained within a statement.

The reporting verb most often used for reporting questions is “ask”.

a) I asked if I could stay with them.

b. He asked me where I was going.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Other reporting verbs used in indirect questions** | |
|  | * remember * want to know * inquire * know * wonder |

**How to introduce an indirect question?**

1. If the direct question begins with a question word like **what, when, where, how** etc., that word is used to introduce the indirect question.

Study the following examples.

* “Where are you going?” she asked. (Direct question)
* She asked me **where I was going**. (Indirect question)

Here the indirect question *where I was going* is the direct object of the verb asked.

2. **Yes / no** questions

When reporting a yes/no question, we use ***if*** or ***whether***:

i. a) “Have you booked tickets for the concert?” Alex asked.  
 b) Alex was wondering if/whether I had booked tickets for the concert.

ii. a) “Is there a wireless network available in the library?” Peter inquired.  
 b) Peter inquired if/whether there was a wireless network available in the library.

iii. a) “Is it cold outside?” Kwame asked.  
 b) Kwame wants to know if/whether it is cold outside or not.

3. When reporting direct questions, we backshift tenses when the reporting verb is in the past tense. When the reporting verb is in the present tense, we do not usually backshift tenses.

Negative questions are usually reported as affirmative questions.

* “Aren’t you coming with me?” John asked. (Direct question)
* John asked me if I was going with him. (Indirect question)

4. **Shall**

Some people use **shall** instead of **will** when the subject is **I** or **we.** When these statements or questions are reported, **shall** will become **should** if the subject of the indirect speech is **I** or **we.** If the subject is a second or third person noun or pronoun, **shall** will become **would.**

* ‘I shall see you tomorrow’ said Andrew.
* Andrew said that he would see me the next day.

**Note:**

When we want to make a question more polite, we often introduce the sentence with expressions such as *Could you tell me...?, Do you know...?* etc. and continue with an indirect question:

* Could you tell me how I can get to the railway station?
* Do you know if this shop sells second-hand records?
* Can you remember what time the play starts?

**Exercise**

1. Change the following sentences from direct to indirect speech.
2. ‘How is it all going?’ Derek asked.

ii. ‘I don’t see what you are getting at,’ Jeremy said.

iii. ‘Let me go and have a look at the car,’ she suggested.

iv. ‘I rang the bell,’ John said, ‘and your friend let me in.’

v. She said, ‘I'd already been teaching for five minutes.’

vi. “Where is the station?” the stranger inquired.

vii. “I’ll be using the car myself on the 24th,” John said.

viii. “When shall I know the result of the test?” she asked.

ix. “I’m waiting for Ann,” James said.

x. “Mary, when is the next train?” the man asked.

2. **Change the following from indirect to direct speech.**

i. She asked him if the work was going well.

ii. She asked us not to be late.

iii. The man said he had been walking along the street.

iv. Kwame said he might be late.

1. She asked me who that fantastic man had been.

vi John said that he did not like the behaviour of the students.

vii. The woman asked if we admired the new shirts.

viii, He said that he had eaten all the food.

ix. The lawyer enquired from the suspect whether he knew the punishment for his offence.

x. The headmaster warned all the students to either obey the regulations or be dismissed.

**UNIT FIVE**

# **AMBIGUITIES AND DANGLING MODIFIERS ~**

## 5.1 Ambiguities

Words, as we know, often have more than one meaning, and that is the classic instance of ambiguity. Ambiguity has another sense, however. Occasionally, phrases and clauses create ambiguity because their structures may be interpreted in more than one way, leading to different meanings for the sentence as a whole. Such ambiguity is called 'grammatical ambiguity.'

In [English grammar](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-english-grammar-1690579), syntactic ambiguity is the presence of two or more possible [meanings](https://www.thoughtco.com/meaning-semantics-term-1691373) within a single [sentence](https://www.thoughtco.com/sentence-grammar-1692087) or sequence of [words](https://www.thoughtco.com/word-english-language-1692612), it is also called structural ambiguity or grammatical ambiguity. Compared with [lexical ambiguity](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-lexical-ambiguity-1691226) (the presence of two or more possible meanings within a single word).

(1) [**Lexical Ambiguity**](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-lexical-ambiguity-1691226)

Lexical ambiguity is the presence of two or more possible meanings within a single word. It is also called semantic ambiguity or homonymy.

* He went to the bank.

‘Bank’ in this sentence could refer to two things:

1. bank – a place where money transactions are made.
2. bank – the bank of a river.

* He is the captain.

i. The word *captain* has one meaning: 'the person in command of a ship, aircraft, or spacecraft'

ii. Another meaning of captain is 'a leader of a team or group'

(2) [**Grammatical/Structural ambiguity**](https://www.thoughtco.com/syntactic-ambiguity-grammar-1692179)(the presence of two or more possible meanings within a single sentence or sequence of words).

* She greeted the teacher with a smile.

The source of the ambiguity is the prepositional phrase (with a smile) as it could refer to both the teacher and the girl herself.

* The German history teacher will be teaching me next semester.

The source of the ambiguity here is the adjective (history teacher) which could be interpreted in two ways: the teacher is a German and teaches history. The other is that the teacher teaches German history.

**Ambiguity in Noun Clusters**: Noun clusters offer various possibilities of ambiguity.

I saw the student in the bus that had grounded. (Who was grounded?)

I saw the student in the bus *who* has been grounded.

I saw the student in the bus *which* had been grounded.

I saw the *students* in the bus that *were* grounded.

I saw the students in the *bus* that *was* grounded.

I taught the student in the bus that was singing.

**Ambiguity in Verb Clusters:**

He protected the woman he loved with all his heart.

## 5.2 Dangling Modifiers

Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers refer to phrases or clauses attributed or attached to wrong headwords (a noun or verb) which cannot be identified in the sentence. A modifier is a word or phrase that gives more information about the subject, verb or object in a clause. Because of the separation, sentences with this error often sound awkward, ridiculous, or confusing.

*a. Walking towards the office*, the bull crossed the street.

*b. On his way home, Kwame found a gold man’*

Let us have a close look at the modifiers in the two sentences. In (a), the only noun in the sentence is “bull”. It therefore appears that the “bull” was walking to the office. This is not possible because a bull cannot work in an office. In sentence (b), suggests that a **gold man** owns a watch.

## 5.3 Causes of Dangling Modifiers

i. **No logical headword.**

\*While watching the T.V. the light went off.

(Who was watching the T.V?)

\*Coming down the hall, the clock struck 10.

(Who was coming down the hall?)

ii. **Misplaced Head**

There is a headword in the sentence but it is removed from the modifier.

\*My father saw a snake driving home.

## 5.4 Types of Dangling Modifiers

i. To infinitive forms – they are usually used as adverbs of purpose with no identified subjects.

\*To become rich the business must be taken serious.

ii. Present Participle (-ing) forms:

\* *Walking across the desert*, fierce winds swirled around the riders.

\* *Strolling through the park*, the rats scampered across our feet.

iii. Past Participle (ed/en) functioning as adverbs of reason or circumstance.

\*Feared by many people, the boy’s birthday party was a flop.

iv. Verbless Clause: It has no subject also used as adverbs of reason or circumstance.

\*Sad, the boy tried to console his mother.

v. Prepositional Phrase

\*I bought a watch from a dealer with gold chain..

## 5.5 Correcting Dangling Modifiers

i. Introduce the head noun.

\*While watching T.V. the light went off.

(While we were watching T.V., the light went off.)

ii. Changing the word order.

\*I saw a python driving to Foso.

(While driving to Foso, I saw a python.)

\*Locked in the vault for 50 years, the owner of the coins decided to sell them.

(The owner of the coins which had been locked in the vault for 50 years, decided to sell them.)

\*While eating dinner, a fly slipped into her soup.

(While Jane was eating dinner, a fly slipped into her soup.

**Exercise**

Re-write the following sentences correctly. (Remove all ambiguities or dangling modifiers if

any.)

i. We saw a huge crocodile, driving to the Elmina Castle.

ii. She could not find the ladle to serve the food which she had left on the dining table.

iii. Teenagers who stay out all night sometimes should be punished.

iv. Sailing up the river, the Statue of Liberty was seen.

v. The gate being locked, he shouted for the porter.

vi. Locked in a vault for 50 years, the owner of the coins decided to sell them.

vii. An African history teacher.

viii. The guests who saw the hall durbar frequently commended it.

ix. Running into the room, her wedding date was announced.

x. Sailing up the river, the Statue of Liberty was seen.

xi The professor said on Monday he would give an exam.

xii. The chicken is ready to eat.

xiii. The burglar threatened the student with the knife.​

xiv Visiting relatives can be boring.

xv. This morning I shot an elephant in my pajamas.

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