

**COMMON GRAMMAR MISTAKES IN ENGLISH / ERREURS  
GRAMMATICALES COURANTES EN ANGLAIS / GREȘELI  
GRAMATICALE COMUNE ÎN LIMBA ENGLEZĂ<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** *The current paper aims at presenting several English grammar mistakes that occur most frequently with foreign English speakers. It debates upon the English grammatical contexts that are usually confused by this category of speakers, also providing the readers with correct variants for each of the respective situations as well as with the necessary explanations for these variants. The paper intends to help readers avoid this type of errors, thus enhancing the importance of a correct usage of the language.*

**Key words:** *conformance, mistake, grammar.*

The importance of a correct usage of the language should be enhanced with every foreign English speaker that should understand and avoid all the possible mistakes that frequently occur. As Sporiș stated, “lack of compliance with the linguistic norms results in deviation/ mistake. A form of deviation from correctness is represented by the solecism. In a larger sense, solecism is defined as any type of mistake, deviation from norms, including the breaking of etiquette, of decency.”

The current paper takes into account the grammar errors that usually appear in written as well as in spoken forms with most of the foreign English speakers.

**Incorrect** I have seen her last weekend.

**Correct** I saw her last weekend.

When time is clearly stated (*last, ago, yesterday, on the 5th of May*), the use of Past Tense is requested.

**Incorrect** The woman which is talking to him is from France.

**Correct** The woman who is talking to him is from France.

Who is used with reference to persons, which – with reference to things and animals.

**Incorrect** She’s married with a doctor.

**Correct** She’s married to a doctor.

The correct use of this verb is *to be married to somebody*. Other verbs: *to marry somebody, to get married to somebody*.

**Incorrect** She wanted to leave the party because she was boring.

**Correct** She wanted to leave the party because she was bored. (or "She wanted to leave the party because it was boring")

Boring means uninteresting and tiresome, dull. Bored means filled with boredom, uninterested.

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**Incorrect** You must to fasten your seatbelts.

**Correct** You must fasten your seatbelts.

One cannot use the preposition *to* neither before, nor after modal verbs, such as *must*.

**Incorrect** Every girls like him.

**Correct** Every girl likes him.

*Every* can be used only in conjunction with singular nouns.

**Incorrect** Although she was sad, but she put on a happy face.

**Correct** Although she was sad, she put on a happy face.

Although means despite the fact of. But cannot be used in immediate connection with although.

**Incorrect** I enjoyed from the film.

**Correct** I enjoyed the film.

The correct form of the verb is *to enjoy something*, which means *to like something* and not *to enjoy from something*.

**Incorrect** I look forward to meet you.

**Correct** I look forward to meeting you.

The correct form of this expression is *to look forward to +noun-ing*. It compulsorily requests an -ing form after.

**Incorrect** I like very much chocolate.

**Correct** I like chocolate very much.

Direct objects must be placed immediately after notional verbs. Manner (*very much*) must be placed after direct objects.

**Incorrect** She can to play the guitar.

**Correct** She can play the guitar.

Modals, such as *can* don't request the use of preposition *to* after them.

**Incorrect** Where I can find a good restaurant?

**Correct** Where can I find a good restaurant?

In modal interrogative sentences, the subject is replaced by the modal verb. (*I can* becomes *Can I*) The first place can be taken by a wh-question word.

**Incorrect** She doesn't know where can she find a good restaurant.

**Correct** She doesn't know where she can find a good restaurant.

The second sentence is not an interrogative one. That is why the word order should be subject, verb and not viceversa.

**Incorrect** She lives in United States.

**Correct** She lives in the United States.

The correct form of the proper name is the United States, i.e. the USA. We normally use *the* for country names that include *States, Kingdom, Republic*.

**Incorrect** When I will buy a house, I'll ask you to come by.

**Correct** When I buy a house, I'll ask you to come by.

In temporal clauses, one cannot use Future Tense but Present Tense when the actions in the temporal clause and in the regent clause happen simultaneously.

**Incorrect** I've been in Romania since three months.

**Correct** I've been in Romania for three months.

*Since* marks the time when the action begins, for example one correct sentence would be I've been in Romania since August, which means starting with the month of August.

*For* shows the entire period of time when an action unfolds.

**Incorrect** He has a new work.

**Correct** He has a new job. (or "He has got a new job")

The correct noun is job. Work means labour.

**Incorrect** She doesn't listen me.

**Correct** She doesn't listen to me.

The correct form of the verb is *to listen to somebody* and not *to listen somebody*.

**Incorrect** You speak Spanish good.

**Correct** You speak Spanish well.

The above-mentioned context shows the manner in which a person speaks Spanish, which means that an adverb is required. The adverb form of good is well.

**Incorrect** The police is coming.

**Correct** The police are coming.

The members of the collective noun *police* are implied, i.e. *they*.

**Incorrect** His garden isn't enough big.

**Correct** His garden isn't big enough.

*Enough* should be placed only after the adjective.

**Incorrect** Do you like a glass of water?

**Correct** Would you like a glass of water?

The correct polite form of asking if somebody cares for a glass of water is *would you like*.

**Incorrect** There is many books on the table.

**Correct** There are many books on the table.

The expression *there are* is used in conjunction with plural nouns, i.e. books. *There is* must be used in connection with singular nouns.

**Incorrect** There are 120 km from Bucharest to Pitești.

**Correct** It is 120 km from Bucharest to Pitești.

The expression *it is* must be used in connection with time (It's four o'clock), distances (the above-mentioned sentence) and degrees (It is two degrees below zero).

**Incorrect** There are two degrees below zero.

**Correct** It is two degrees below zero.

The expression *it is* must be used in connection with time (It's four o'clock), distances (It is 120 km from Bucharest to Pitești) and degrees (It is two degrees below zero).

**Incorrect** I didn't know nobody in Paris.

**Correct** I didn't know anybody in Paris.

Double negation is incorrect – *didn't* and *nobody*. *Nobody* should be replaced by *anybody* so as not to employ a double negation.

**Incorrect** My flight departs in 5:00 am.

**Correct** My flight departs at 5:00 am.

The correct forms are: *at* a certain hour, *on* a certain day, *in* a certain month/year.

**Incorrect** I promise I visit you soon.

**Correct** I promise I'll visit you soon.

The verb *to promise* requires the use of Future Tense after it.

**Incorrect** She was gave a new book to read.

**Correct** She was given a new book to read.

The form of the grammatical structure of the Passive Voice, Past Tense Simple is: subject + was/were + verb 3 (Past Participle)

**Incorrect** Where is park?

**Correct** Where is the park?

The definite article before the noun (*the park*) individualizes the noun. If one uses the zero article (no article before the noun *park*), the noun gets a general meaning, i.e. all the parks.

**Incorrect** He is a important person.

**Correct** He is an important person.

Before a noun or an adjective starting with a vowel one must use the indefinite article *an*.

**Incorrect** The life is beautiful.

**Correct** Life is beautiful.

With the zero article (life, not preceded by any article), the noun implies a general meaning, i.e. *Life in general is beautiful*.

**Incorrect** My husband is engineer.

**Correct** My husband is an engineer.

Before stating one's profession, one must place the indefinite article *a* or *an*. (*a* + consonant; *an* +vowel)

**Incorrect** If you will believe in yourself, you will succeed.

**Correct** If you believe in yourself, you will succeed.

In Type 1 Conditionals, one must use: If +Present Tense, Future Tense.

In Type 1 Conditionals, the condition to be satisfied is real and it has a likely outcome.

**Incorrect** We studied during five hours.

**Correct** We studied for five hours.

*For* shows the entire period of time when an action unfolds, i.e. the entire interval of studying.

*During* means throughout the course or duration of.

**Incorrect** Is ready my contract?

**Correct** Is my contract ready?

In interrogative sentences, when the notional verb is the verb *to be*, the correct word order is: *to be* + subject.

**Incorrect** She is success.

**Correct** She is successful.

Success is the noun, whereas successful is the adjective.

**Incorrect** How many childrens do you have?

**Correct** How many children do you have?

The plural form of the noun *child* is *children*.

**Incorrect** My brother has 10 years.

**Correct** My brother is 10 (years old).

The correct form of this expression is: *to be* 'x' years old. You can also use *to be* and state the age. It's incorrect to say *to have an age* or *to be* 'x' years. Years can be used only in connection with *old* in this expression.

**Incorrect** I want sleep now.

**Correct** I want to sleep now.

The correct form is *to want something* or *to want to do something*.

**Incorrect** You are very nice, as your mother.

**Correct** You are very nice, like your mother.

*As* shows the quality (e.g. *he works as a waiter*), whereas *like* denotes a resemblance (she resembles her mother)

**Incorrect** He works like a waiter at that restaurant.

**Correct** He works as a waiter at that restaurant.

As shows the quality (e.g. *he works as a waiter*), whereas *like* denotes a resemblance.

**Incorrect** She said me all those things.

**Correct** She told me all those things.

The correct forms of these verbs are: *to tell somebody something, to tell something to somebody, to say something to somebody*.

**Incorrect** She came Romania to study.

**Correct** She came to Romania to study.

The correct form in this context is: *to come to a place*, not *to come place*.

**Incorrect** It is more hot now.

**Correct** It's hotter now.

One-syllabled adjectives form their comparative degree by adding –er to the adjective in the positive degree. A single final consonant preceded by a single vowel must be doubled in the comparative as well as in the superlative (hot, hotter, the hottest).

**Incorrect** Can you give me an information?

**Correct** Can you give me some information?

*An information* does not exist; the singular form of the noun *information* is a *piece of information* since the noun *information* is already in its plural form. However, it's rather unusual to ask for a piece of information. The most frequently used form is asking for some information.

**Incorrect** You like to dance with me?

**Correct** Would you like to dance with me?

The correct formal expression is *would you like*, which means *would you care for*. It is used for asking politely whether somebody would like something.

**Incorrect** I go always to school by bus.

**Correct** I always go to school by bus.

Complements of indefinite frequency should be placed before the notional verbs.

**Incorrect** We drive usually to home.

**Correct** We usually drive home.

Complements of indefinite frequency should be placed before the notional verbs.

To conclude with, the major purpose of this paper is to focus on the importance of a proper usage of the language by presenting the main grammar mistakes that generally occur with foreign English speakers. Therefore, by making them aware of the occurrence of such improper contexts, the current paper intends

to avoid nonconformance with the general usage of the language for each and every foreign English speaker.

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