

# Session 4

Typical grammar mistakes in written English,  
Punctuation,  
Peer review of press release introduction

# Discuss with a partner

- What is the most difficult part of English grammar for you?
- What mistakes do you think you typically make?

# Typical grammar mistakes in written English

- Non-parallel structures
- Subject/verb disagreement
- Sentence fragments
- Wrong verb tense or aspect
- Run-on sentences

In small groups, discuss what these terms refer to?

- Non-parallel structures
- Subject/verb disagreement
- Sentence fragments
- Wrong verb tense or aspect
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# Non-parallel structures

- [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/mechanics/parallel\\_structure.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/mechanics/parallel_structure.html)
- Read through this resource. Explain in your own words to your partner what is meant by the terms parallel and non-parallel structures

# Non-parallel structures

Make sure you maintain the same grammatical structure before and after a coordinating conjunction

- **FANBOYS: For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, and So**

## PAIR WORK:

Reformulate the following non-parallel structures and post in the padlet

- The 21st century has witnessed an unprecedented rise in anxiety, stress, and people feeling lonely.
- The study suggested that future research investigate potential gender differences between the groups or should evaluate the level of drop-outs between institutions.
- The research team collected the data, compiled it into sets, and a statistical analysis was performed.
- In order to successfully pass exams, ensure that you do the following:
  - 1) Read the instructions carefully
  - 2) Revise sufficiently
  - 3) You should allocate a similar amount of time to each question

Subject/ verb disagreement



# Subject/ verb disagreement

- Singular noun (phrase) takes a singular verb
- Plural noun (phrase) takes a plural verb

# Subject/ verb disagreement

- Examples:
- Research have shown that online teaching is less effective than face-to-face instruction in the classroom.
- Environmental impact assessments and the carbon-offset requirement significantly increases the costs for companies.
- Raising the number of both employees and local branches represent one potential solution to the problem

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# Sentence fragments

Every sentence must have an independent clause containing a tensed verb and a subject (or object if the verb is passive).

# Sentence fragments

## Examples of sentence fragments

Teachers are poorly paid. Whereas, doctors receive high salaries.

In the last few years, as scientists and politicians have increasingly stressed the importance of mitigating climate change.

For another key example (see below), from which I developed the idea for the practical part of my thesis.

# Sentence fragments

## Examples of sentence fragments

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In the last few years, **as** scientists and politicians have increasingly stressed the importance of mitigating climate change.

For another key example (see below), **from which** I developed the idea for the practical part of my thesis.

This contains an introductory  
phrase and a relative clause but  
no main clause

# How should/could the sentences be formulated?

Teachers are poorly paid. Whereas, doctors receive high salaries.

In the last few years, as scientists and politicians have increasingly stressed the importance of mitigating climate change.

For another key example (see below), from which I developed the idea for the practical part of my thesis.



# Common tense and aspect errors

- Present tense with past time expressions:

‘The project **has been** completed in 2021’

- Continuous aspect with long-term or repeated actions:

‘The technology **was** gradually **developing** over two centuries’

- Mixing present and future forms:

‘The chapter **discusses** current methods and **will** review their efficacy’

# Common tense and aspect errors

- Present tense with past time expressions:  
'The project **was** completed in 2021'
- Continuous aspect with long-term or repeated actions:  
'The technology gradually **developed** over two centuries'
- Mixing present and future forms:  
'The chapter discusses current methods and **reviews** their efficacy'

# Run-on sentences

- Two independent clauses joined without appropriate punctuation or coordinating conjunction.

# Run-on sentence examples

- The project began well, however, it ran into problems later.
- Aalto represents an innovative learning environment, it offers its students a blend of online and campus-based instruction.

# How would you fix these problems?

- The project began well, however, it ran into problems later.
- Aalto represents an innovative learning environment, it offers its students a blend of online and campus-based instruction.

# Run-on sentences

- The project began well; **however**, it ran into problems later.
- Aalto represents an innovative learning environment; it offers its students a blend of online and campus-based instruction.

# Run-on sentences

- The project began well, **but** it ran into problems later.
- Aalto represents an innovative learning environment**:** it offers its students a blend of online and campus-based instruction.

# Punctuation

- Complete the handout in MyCourses on punctuation symbols



# Punctuation: collaborative punctuation review

- Read through the handout on basic punctuation rules
- Your team will be assigned some rules, devise four questions based on those rules for the other teams to answer

# Peer review of press release introduction

- Exchange texts with your partner

## Part 1

- Does the introduction follow the problem-solution pattern? Highlight the four moves: situation, problem, solution, evaluation. If one of the moves is missing, how could it be added?
- What words and phrases are used to mark the transition between the moves? Could this be improved?
- Does the introduction sufficiently engage the reader's attention? Is there an attention grabber?
- Is there an engaging headline?
- Are the five Ws answered?

# Peer review part 2

- Does the introduction contain any grammar errors related non-parallel structures, subject/verb disagreement, sentence fragments, faulty verb tense/aspect, run-on sentences. How could these be corrected?
- Does the text contain any punctuation errors?

# Homework

- Complete first draft of press release and submit to MyCourses (2%)
- Note: no lessons next week. Instead, you will complete the online presentation modules

# The Press Release

- 1 page of text (approx. 400 words)
- Written in a popular style
- Starts with a catchy headline
- Introduction paragraph(s) containing problem-solution pattern and answers to the five Ws
- Two or three body paragraphs going into more detail about your solution (project), including one or two quotes to establish your credibility
- A conclusion paragraph that summarises the main points, links back to the introduction and ends with a take-home message.
- Your contact information at the end plus citation information (references)