**Class 1: Simple Sentence Structure**

1. **Learning objectives**

Learners should be able to:

1. use correctly simple sentences in writing and in speaking in English;
2. proofread simple sentences (their own sentences and those from their co-learners)
3. **Teaching and learning activities**

* ***Importance of Simple Sentence Structure in English***

*A sentence is the basic functional unit of a text (paragraph, lesson, or chapter). Sentence structure is important to express ideas clearly in writing. The structure refers to how words are arranged or organized by writing convention in a meaningful way. In English, there are four types of sentences: simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences and compound complex sentences. All other three are derived from simple sentences using conjunctions, prepositions and proper punctuations.*

* **Activity 1:**

***Q1. What do you know about simple sentence structure in English?***

A simple sentence structure is subject (S) + verb (V) ± object (O).

***Q2. What can be a subject in a sentence?***

A simple subject usually contains a noun or pronoun and modifying words, phrases, or clauses.

We will focus only on common and proper nouns, personal pronouns and phrases.

***Q3. What are the personal pronouns in English?***

Personal pronouns are I, You, She, He, It, We, You, and They.

***Give some examples of common and proper nouns?***

***Q4. What should we know about a subject?***

When you have a subject, you should

1. Remember that every sentence must have a verb, and vice versa.
2. Determine its person (first, second or third) and number (singular or plural) (Table 1). In English, singular is one and plural starts with two.
3. Determine whether the subject is simple, complete or compound.
4. Determine the corresponding personal pronoun if the subject is a noun or a phrase it be simple, complete or compound.

**Table 1:** Person and number of subject in English

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Person of subject** | **Number of subject** | |
| **Singular** | **Plural** |
| **First** | I | We |
| **Second** | You | You |
| **Third** | She/He/It | They |

**Q5. *What are the commonly used types of verbs in English?***

There are action verbs, linking verbs, modal or helping verbs. For simplicity, we categorize as regular, irregular, auxiliary and modal verbs. Note that auxiliary verbs (to be, to have and to do) are irregular verbs as well.

***Q6. What are the auxiliary verbs in English?***

To be, to have and to do

***Q7. What are the regular verbs in English you know or remember?***

***Q8. What are the irregular verbs in English you know or remember?***

***Q9. What are the modal verbs in English you know or remember?***

***Q10. What should we know about a verb?***

**You should know that:**

1. Modal verbs have no infinitive.
2. The base form of a verb is its infinitive without “to”. Example: To work (infinitive), work (base form).

***Q11. What can be an object in a sentence in English?***

Nouns or pronouns (usually follow the verb). We will focus on common nouns and personal pronouns.

**Table 2:** Subject and corresponding object pronouns

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject pronouns** | **Object pronouns** |
| I | Me |
| You | You |
| She | Her |
| He | Him |
| It | It |
| We | Us |
| You | You |
| They | Them |

* **Activity 2**

***Instructions:*** *In small group (4-5 learners each), write 10 sentences on a sheet of paper A4 and write down the group name or ID (group 1, group 2, etc… or your given name). Each group should share their sentences with another group. Check to make sure the structure is simple S + V ± O and provide a constructive feedback.*

* **Activity 3**

You should proofread our own sentences to make sure they are correct and meaningful. Here are few rules you can apply for that purpose:

**Rule 1:** A simple sentence structure is S + V ± O.

**Rule 2:** A sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.

**Rule 3:** A subject should agree with the verb (in person and in number).

**Rule 4:** A good sentence has neither a grammatical nor a spelling error.

**Rule 5**: A better word choice clarifies the meaning of a sentence.

**Rule 6:** A good sentence is **K.I.S.S** (**K**eep **I**t **S**imple, **S**hort and **S**weet). Simple means the structure S + V ± O. Short means the minimally necessary number of words. You will sense its importance either to make your writing concise or to meet the word limit in a document. Sweet means the tonality, which is either positive or negative.

In addition to these rules or steps in editing a simple sentence, consider:

* **Capitalization**: Proper nouns (Ex: **R**obert), days of the week (Ex: **M**onday) and months of the year (Ex: **J**anuary) start with a capital letter. Common nouns should start with a capital except at the beginning of a sentence.
* **Spacing between words**: as a simple rule, the best practice is to use only one space between words and sentences.
* **Punctuation**: a correct punctuation (a comma, a semicolon, a colon, or a full stop) adds clarity and precision to writing. A sentence can have different meaning due to punctuation.

Example: A man without a woman is nothing

1. **A man without a woman is nothing. Correct**
2. A man**,** without a woman is nothing**. Incorrect**
3. A man without**,** **a woman is nothing. Incorrect, unethical and judgmental**
4. **A man,** without a woman**,** **is nothing**. **Incorrect, unethical and judgmental**

* **Formatting**: words should be properly arranged in a sentence and sentences should be so in a paragraph and so on. For example, an information between two commas in a sentence may not be necessary (see example 4 just above).
* **Highlighting**: An important information in a sentence is either bolded, italicized or underlined. Words or phrases in language other than that of the text are also highlighted (italicized).

Let apply these six (6) rules to your own ten (10) sentences from activity 2 in your small group for proofreading.

* **Activity 4**

***Q11. What do you do on your typical weekday or weekend?***

*Instructions: In five (5) simple sentences, describe what you usually do in weekdays or on weekends. Share your sentences in your group for proofreading. Go on* [*www.wordreference.com*](http://www.wordreference.com) *to translate key words from English to French and check the pronunciation of key or difficult-to-pronounced words in your sentences. Get ready to read them loudly in front of the entire class.*

*Note: Reading sentences or a text in English is like riding a car in a traffic at the traffic lights. You stop at a red light (a full stop); you slow down and process with caution at a yellow light (a comma) and you drive normally at a green light (no punctuation).*

1. **Assignments (individual and group homework)**

***Instructions:*** *Describe in ten (10) what you usually do on your typical weekends, bring your individual homework in your small group for proofreading. Be ready to read them loudly before the entire class next class.*

1. **Self-evaluation**

Answer to the following questions:

1. What is the structure of a simple sentence?
2. What are the six (6) rules for editing a simple sentence?
3. **Useful links**
4. <https://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/subject.htm>
5. <https://www.butte.edu/departments/cas/tipsheets/grammar/sentence_structure.html>
6. <https://www.thesaurus.com/e/grammar/what-are-the-types-of-verbs/>