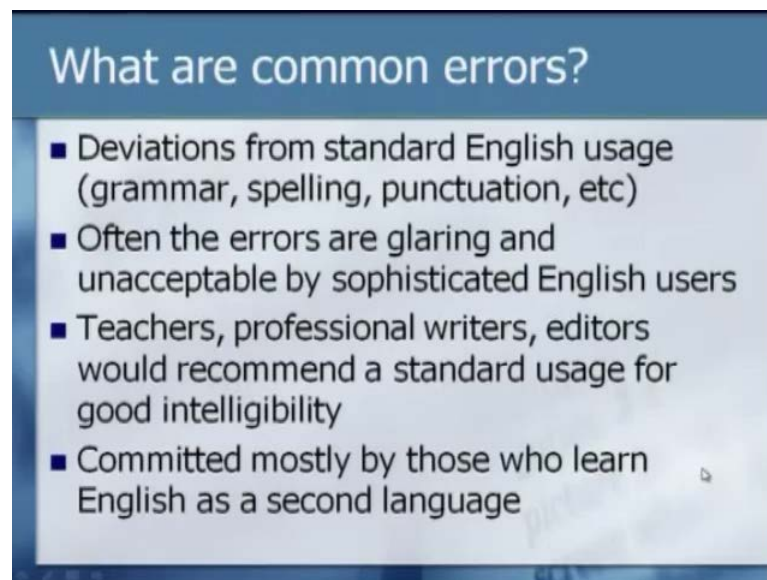


Communication Skills
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Lecture - 38

Hello and welcome to NPTEL's course on communication skills. We are now on the twelfth module of this course, and this time we will be talking about common errors. What are common errors and why is it important that we should know how to overcome the common errors? What are the commonly committed mistakes which are quoted under common errors and how is it going to help us, if you know them to be a very good communicator these are the aspects we are going to look into this module.

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What are common errors?

- Deviations from standard English usage (grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc)
- Often the errors are glaring and unacceptable by sophisticated English users
- Teachers, professional writers, editors would recommend a standard usage for good intelligibility
- Committed mostly by those who learn English as a second language

First let us start with what I mean by common errors? Common errors are deviations from Standard English usage, so they are deviations because they are errors which are not acceptable in terms of grammar, spelling, punctuation even pronunciation.

So, when you deviate from the normal set of rules, the accepted norms and then they become common errors. They are common because they are so glaring and they are so frequently committed errors and they are not acceptable by sophisticated speakers of English. So, if you speak this kind of error in day to day language in a very informal situation, it does not make any difference okay, often errors becomes part of the group

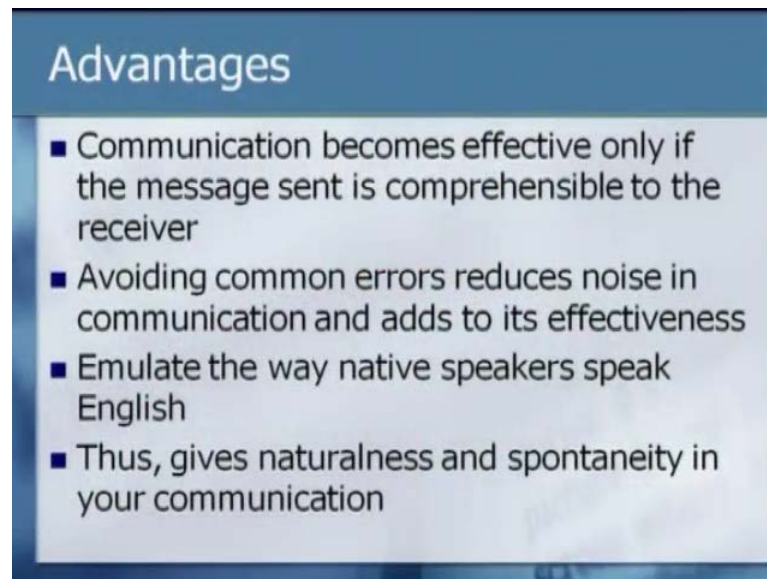
identity that you are related to. So, it gives a kind of communal feeling that everybody is committing errors you are also doing it, so that is no problem.

But if you are in a formal situation and then if you are addressing audience who know how to use English in a better manner sophisticated manner or. If you are going to give presentations or if you are writing some formal document these errors should be avoided, otherwise it gives the impression that you are a very bad or often a very poor communicator in English. As I said they are deviations from standard English usage and generally teachers so when you write some assignment to the teachers. So, they would expect that you avoid committing these common errors than professional writers, editors would recommend a standard usage for good intelligibility.

Good intelligibility means what? So, when somebody reads it they should be able to understand what you have written without repeatedly reading that without trying to comprehend what is looking to be very unscrutable. So, they should be able to get the meaning easily so then it becomes the intelligible level becomes very good. So, try to reach that good intelligibility level by minimizing this common errors and which teachers, professional writers, editors would generally recommend you to do.

Now, who are the ones who are committing these common errors? Common errors are committed mostly by those who learn English as a second language. Most of the Indian speakers for example, who have not got an opportunity to go abroad stay there or who are not born and brought up in that environment particularly the US and UK. environment. And, who learnt English as a second language as a foreign language in their classrooms situations they tend to commit errors. Some of these errors as I said they are so common so frequent and that is why we call them as common errors.

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What are the advantages, if you try to minimize the errors, if you overcome the common errors, what are the advantages? Now, communication becomes effective only if the message sent is comprehensible to the receiver. If you remember if you go to our earlier lessons on the definition of communication, we already discussed that it is a kind of dialog between the sender and the receiver. If the sender sends a message properly and if it is received by the receiver then communication takes place, but in the message itself there is something called noise created by common errors, then it is difficult for the receiver to receive it and the communication will not take place.

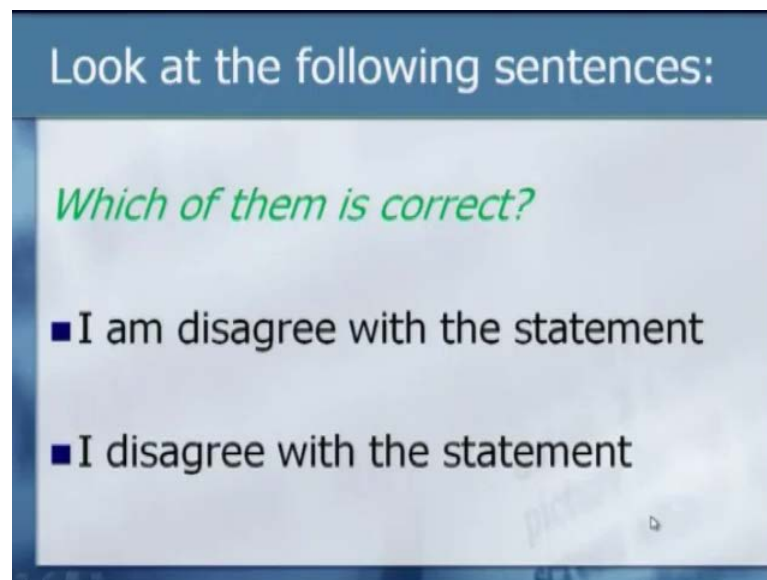
So, avoiding common errors reduces noise in communication and adds to its effectiveness this means you will be minimizing the common errors, but at the same time you will be maximizing the effectiveness of your communication. You know that effective communication is very important either in a very informal or a formal situation because success in your personal as well as professional life depends much on the effectiveness of your communication. Minimizing common errors, completely avoiding them knowing, how to avoid them gives you a cutting edge in giving this effective communication.

Now, how do you do this? One easy way is to emulate the way native speakers speak English. So, if you listen to BBC and any kind of T V program in which you are coming across native speakers speaking English and if you listen to them and if you read

materials written by native speakers. So, you will be able to emulate follow them closely so that you can imbibe some of the skills innately spontaneously without even mugging up some statements and sentences from grammar books, that is one method. The other method is you can also expose yourself to lots of reading materials and then you can also avoid, when I am going to state some of the common errors, when you read those materials. You see that generally intelligent writers, good communicators do not use those kinds of errors.

So, when you compare your writing with that writing, so then also you are able to see where you stand and then you are able to improve yourself. When you avoid this it will also give you naturalness and spontaneity in your communication. So, you will actually start speaking writing like the native speaker once you are able to minimize avoid this common errors.

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Look at the following sentences:

Which of them is correct?

- I am disagree with the statement
- I disagree with the statement

Now, to begin with look at the following sentences and tell me which of them is correct. Now, two sentences, I am disagree with the statement, I disagree with the statement. Look at them carefully, I am disagree with the statement, I disagree with the statement. Honestly, if you ask yourselves you will know that between these two, its one statement that you repeatedly use or one form of construction that you repeatedly use and I am going to tell you that that is the kind of error that you may be committing so far.

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Answers & Explanations

- I am disagree with the statement
- I disagree with the statement

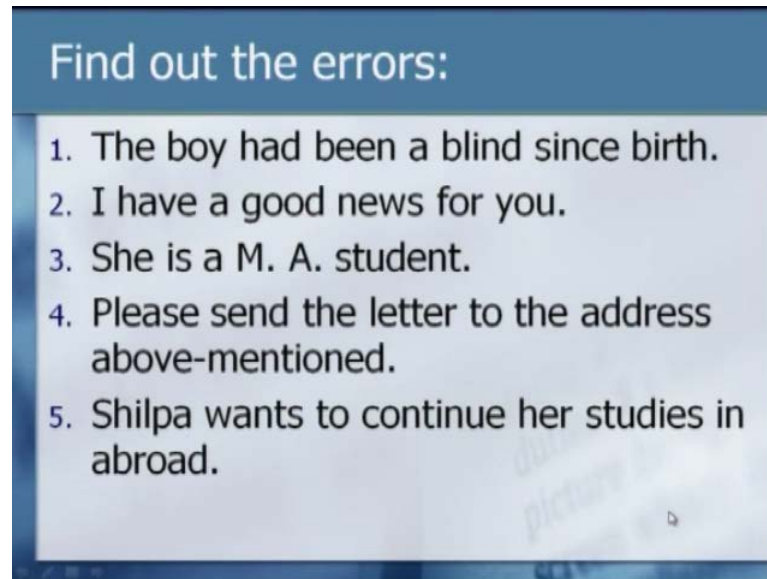
You cannot use disagree as an **adjective**. It can be used only as a verb.

- My cousin always disagrees with me.

Now, the answer is the first one I am disagree with the statement although it is frequently used in Indian context I am disagree, that is a wrong statement and the correct answer is I disagree with the statement, that is a correct answer. Now, what is the explanation you cannot use disagree as an adjective, that is a verb cannot be used in the position of an adjective and it can be used only as a verb. So, you cannot use disagree as an adjective, you can use it only as a verb. Now, look at the example; my cousin always disagrees with me. Now, here if you look at the example disagrees is used in verb position not in the adjective position and when you say I am disagree you are putting it in the adjective position which is incorrect, a verb should always be used in the verb position.

So, this is the correct form; my cousin always disagrees with me. So, remember this example I am disagree and I disagree, I disagree is the correct form used in the verb sense this is one major error that you frequently commit.

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Find out the errors:

1. The boy had been a blind since birth.
2. I have a good news for you.
3. She is a M. A. student.
4. Please send the letter to the address above-mentioned.
5. Shilpa wants to continue her studies in abroad.

Now, I am going to give you some more sentences this time there is no comparison and look at these sentences closely, deeply, intensely and then ask yourselves honestly do I speak like this or do I speak differently do I write like this or do I write differently. If you write differently how differently you write if you are similar why I am saying that this is a common error so think in that sense.

Let us read out these sentences the first one The boy had been a blind since birth The boy had been a blind since birth. Now, identify the common error if any, if you think that there is an error, identify that I have a good news for you then She is a M.A. student, next please send the letter to the address above mentioned and Shilpa wants to continue her studies in abroad let me repeat Shilpa wants to continue her studies in abroad. Take a look at the sentences once again very quickly you try to identify whether there are any errors. If there are errors what are the errors, if they are not also you think why they are not or which word is correct, which is incorrect take a quick look then I am going to give you the answers.

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Answers & Explanations

1. × The boy had been a blind since birth.
You should not use a/an before an adjective (deaf, dumb, poor, rich) unless the adjective is followed by a noun.
- ✓ The boy had been blind since birth.
- ✓ The girl had been a deaf person since birth.
- × The child had been a rich since birth.

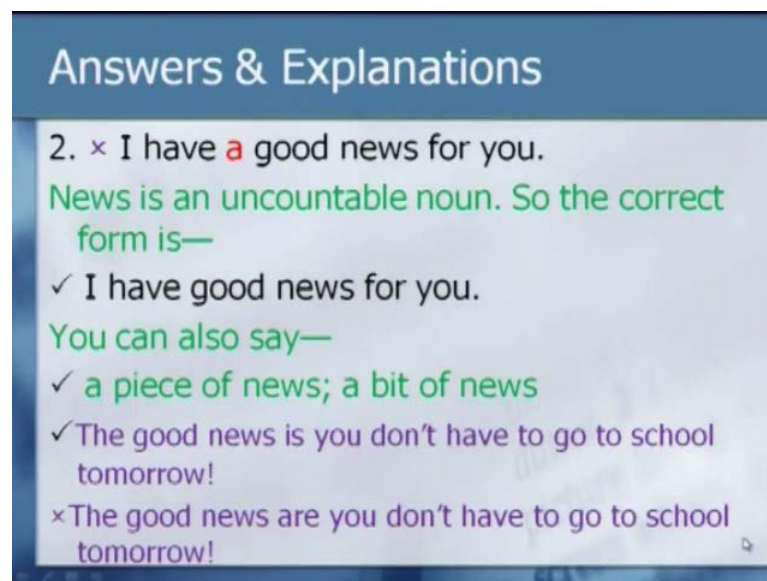
1. ✓ The child had been rich since birth.
2. ✓ The child had been a rich person since birth.

Let us look at the answers and explanations one by one. The first sentence; the boy had been a blind since birth now, here the inappropriate use of the article a. So, whatever is inappropriate I have used red color to indicate, whatever is correct I have used green color to indicate, so that you can easily identify when you look at the slides. The boy had been a blind since birth, a usage is incorrect because you should not use either a or an before an adjective which means you cannot say a blind, a deaf, a dumb, a poor, a rich. That is before all these adjectives you cannot use a, unless the adjective is followed by a noun. Let us look at some examples you will understand, what I mean when I say you should not use this unless the adjective is followed by a noun. Look at the example that is given the boy had been a blind since birth, the correct form is the boy had been blind since birth, no article is required here because before adjective you cannot put the article.

Now, I also said that unless the adjective is followed by a noun. Look at the other sentence; the girl had been a deaf person since birth, here we are using a article before deaf adjective, but person noun is there. So, if the adjective is followed by a noun like person then you can use a, so a deaf person, a dumb person, a poor person, a rich man, a rich women so that is acceptable. But without the qualifying noun the adjective will not take the article so that is the rule so keep that in mind. Look at the error sentence I have given so that you understand this The child had been a rich since birth so a rich is wrong, but if you want to use it there are two ways look at the first way the child had been rich since birth.

Now, without the article; the child had been rich since birth, removing the article a this is correct or if the noun is there to qualify the adjective then you can use it. Look at the second example; the child had been a rich person since birth. The child had been a rich person since birth, so both are acceptable. Now, you ask yourself, are you committing these kinds of errors? If yes look at your writing and then try to avoid this let us go for the other explanations.

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Answers & Explanations

2. × I have a good news for you.
News is an uncountable noun. So the correct form is—
✓ I have good news for you.
You can also say—
✓ a piece of news; a bit of news
✓ The good news is you don't have to go to school tomorrow!
× The good news are you don't have to go to school tomorrow!

Look at the second one I have a good news for you this is again a very common error that is committed mostly by Indian speakers. Now, I have a good news for you, what is the error here again the use of article a, why the use of article a is an error here because news is an uncountable noun news is an uncountable noun. This means you cannot use a to indicate the sense of counting it when you say a, it also a synonymous with the word one. So, I am having one good news for you that is what you want to say, but which is wrong. News is an uncountable noun so the correct form is I have good news for you there is no article at all. You can also say if you want to indicate that you are giving one part, one bit of something that is uncountable then you will use a piece, a bit.

As in this example, you can say I have a piece of news which is good for you I have a bit of news which is not that good for you so try to use this a piece of news, a bit of news. Although it may sound little bit uncomfortable to you initially because in case you are commonly using these common errors, you may not be very uncomfortable with what is

right. But understand that what is right is also what is intelligible and what is understandable for most of the sophisticated users of English and it is going to raise the bar of your communication level. So, keeping that in mind even if it is putting you into some level of discomfort try to use what is correct, what is right.

Now, look at the other sentence; the good news is you do not have to go to school tomorrow, the good news and look at the verb it says is so there is no plural form here. The good news is you do not have to go to school tomorrow if you say; the good news are you do not have to go to school tomorrow this is wrong, because you are using the plural form of the verb where the subject although it is uncountable is taken in singular form. So, for example no news is good news, no news is good news it is not no news or good news or bad news like that. So, remember that it is taking a singular verb and then use singular verb to make your communication correct.

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Answers & Explanations

3. × She is a M. A. student.

- You should use only "an" not "a" before a word beginning with a vowel sound.

✓ She is an M. A. (/em eI/) student.

- ✓ an MLA, an MSC, an MP, an SMS.

Look at another common error that we keep committing when we say M.A., M. Phil, MLA, M.S. etcetera. The statement given before was She is a M.A. Student is wrong, because you should use between the choice of a and an you should use only an not a before a word beginning with a vowel sound. Now, the confusion here is M.A. if you look at it M the letter M is giving the wrong impression that it is also connoting a consonantal sound, but actually it is giving the sound of a vowel and this is the vowel representation. When you say; she is an M.A. so you are using a vowel sound here em, eI

an M.A. student. So, before the vowel sound always you will be using an apple an umbrella, you do not say a apple which is wrong.

Similarly, although here it is M, letter M the pronunciation is em, so since the pronunciation is starting with the vowel sound so you should use an. So, similar examples an MLA an MSC an MP an SMS so do not say I am sending a SMS to you, I am sending an SMS, I sent an SMS message so this is another common error keep this in mind.

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Answers & Explanations

4. × Please send the letter to the address above-mentioned.

Use "above-mentioned" before the noun.

✓ Please send the letter to the above-mentioned address.

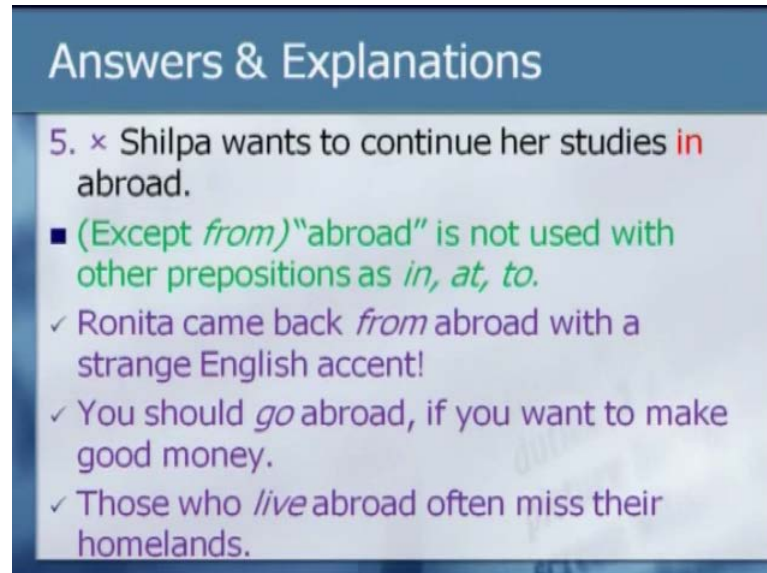
Above may be used before or after the noun:
✓ 'the above address', 'the address above'.

Look at the next one number 4, please send the letter to the address above mentioned. Now, here what is the error use above mentioned before the noun so how do you correct this? Please send the letter to the above mentioned address, above mentioned address is the noun above mentioned is used in the adjectival position. So, when you say please send the letter to the address above mentioned noun is going before and adjectives are coming later. So, to avoid this use above mentioned or any adjective that will come before the noun.

Please send the letter to the above mentioned address now, above may be used before or after the noun without the coinage with mentioned. Look at this example you can say the above address, you can say the address above both are acceptable the above address, the address above both are acceptable. But when you say above mentioned when you make

this coinage so then it should be used only in the adjectival position so keep that in mind.

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Answers & Explanations

5. × Shilpa wants to continue her studies **in** abroad.

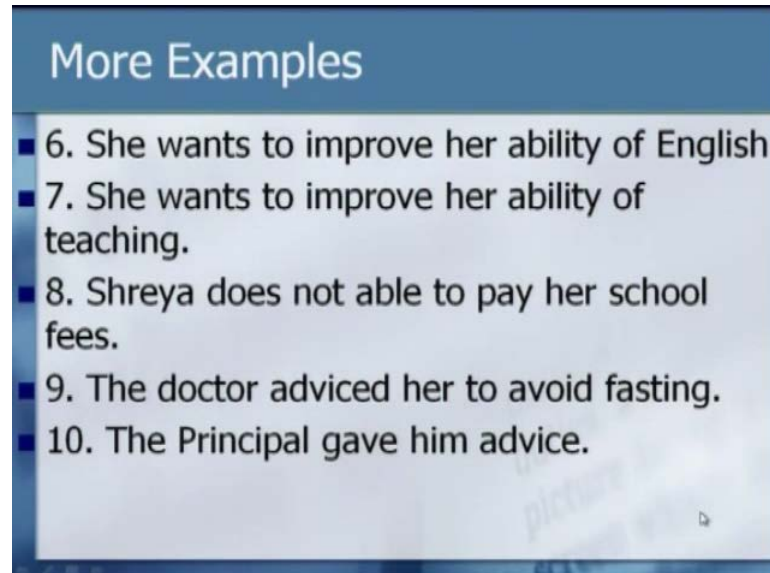
- (Except *from*) "abroad" is not used with other prepositions as *in, at, to*.
- ✓ Ronita came back *from* abroad with a strange English accent!
- ✓ You should *go* abroad, if you want to make good money.
- ✓ Those who *live* abroad often miss their homelands.

Look at the next answer and explanation the fifth one again it is a wrong sentence, which has a common error; Shilpa wants to continue her studies in abroad, the error is committed with regard to the use of the preposition in. Now, there is something called collocation which I mentioned in one of the previous lectures. So, collocation is certain words it may be preposition, it may be adjective, it may be a noun phrase will go with certain other words in English. You cannot separate them or you cannot substitute them and when you do that you commit the so called collocation clash or collocational clash not only you do that, but also you commit common error. Now, in this case in abroad cannot be used at all. What are the prepositions that can be used generally? So, except the preposition from abroad is not used with other prepositions as, in, at, to. I am going to abroad wrong I am going abroad, I will be in abroad, I will be abroad, I will be at abroad again I will be abroad. So, these are inappropriate prepositions, but except from, from abroad are possible.

Look at the example given here; Ronita came back from abroad with the strange English accent. So, from abroad is acceptable whereas, you will say you should go abroad, not you will go at abroad, go in abroad you will not use any other preposition here, You should go abroad if you want to make good money. Look at another right example; those

who live abroad the common error committed here is those who live in abroad or those who live at abroad, which is incorrect, those who live abroad often miss their homelands.

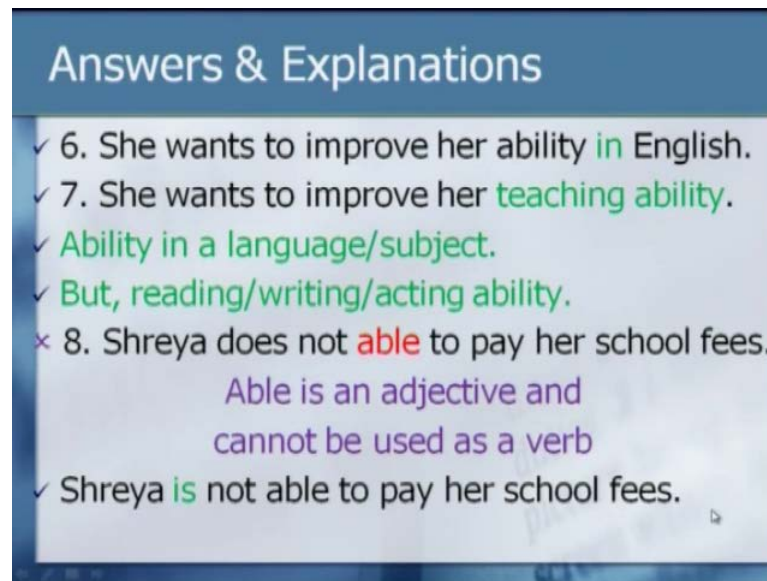
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It is time for looking at some more examples. So, we looked at five examples, but those five are very representative examples for common errors. Let us look at some more examples which are equally representative of the kind of common errors that most of us are committing and look at the first example and I will read them one by one to you and when I read it, you try to identify where the error is committed. Sometimes, it is in the grammatical form sometimes it is just in the usage of the word or the preposition. Look at them carefully, six. She wants to improve her ability of English look at the next one 7th one; She wants to improve her ability of teaching both sound similar, but there are errors identify them.

The 8th one; Shreya does not able to pay her school fees, the 9th one; the doctor adviced her to avoid fasting, ten. The principal gave him advice the principal gave him advice. Now, if you look at it the first two sentences are close ability of, ability of is used like that. In the last two the usage of the word advice, but if you look at it one is used in the verbal position another one is used in the noun form. Is there a difference think about it? Let me go with the answers.

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Answers & Explanations

- ✓ 6. She wants to improve her ability **in** English.
- ✓ 7. She wants to improve her **teaching ability**.
- ✓ **Ability in a language/subject.**
- ✓ **But, reading/writing/acting ability.**
- ✗ 8. Shreya does not **able** to pay her school fees.
Able is an adjective and cannot be used as a verb
- ✓ Shreya **is** not able to pay her school fees.

Look at the first one she wants to improve her ability in English, not ability of English why? Whenever, you talk about any language or any subject so it could be English or it could be Math's. So, usually it is ability in English, ability in French, ability in Japanese, ability in German, ability in Chinese and ability in mathematics, ability in physics, and ability in chemistry. So, when it is language or subject it is ability, in the preposition that is generally used is in. Whereas, look at the second one She wants to improve her teaching ability so the normal expression is not ability of teaching. so the activity goes before and determines the word ability so you have reading ability, her reading ability is remarkable, writing ability.

So, apart from being a good speaker she also has a great amount of writing ability, acting ability so you do not say ability of acting, it is acting ability. So, you see the difference when you use in terms of language or subject then only you use in and you do not use of the preposition, but you say reading ability, writing ability, acting ability. Now, look at the next word another common error committed by most of us, Shreya does not able to pay her school fees. Now, able usage is wrong here, why is it wrong? Able is an adjective and cannot be used as a verb if you change the sentence and then use a proper verb here like Shreya is when you use the verb. So, then the sentence is corrected Shreya is not able to pay her school fees, okay. So, do not use able in the sense of a verb, so then it becomes wrong.

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Answers & Explanations

× 9. The doctor **adviced** her to avoid fasting.

Advice is a noun. **Advise** is a verb.
Both are pronounced differently.

The **c** in **advice** has the sound /s/. (also, **device**)
The **s** in **advise** has the sound /z/. (also, **advise**)

- When you **advise** you give opinion or suggest a course of action.
- When you **advise** you counsel, caution, or warn somebody.
- The doctor **advised** her to avoid fasting.

Similar: device (*noun*)/devise (*verb*)

Let us go to the 9th sentence. The doctor advised her to avoid fasting, the error is not in terms of the way the word is set although there is a subtle difference I will come to that. But look at the way it is spelt, if you remember I said that the common errors are committed not necessarily in terms of grammar, but also in terms of spelling and pronunciation. Look at this case the doctor advised here c the letter c is the wrong usage here and here it should be s.

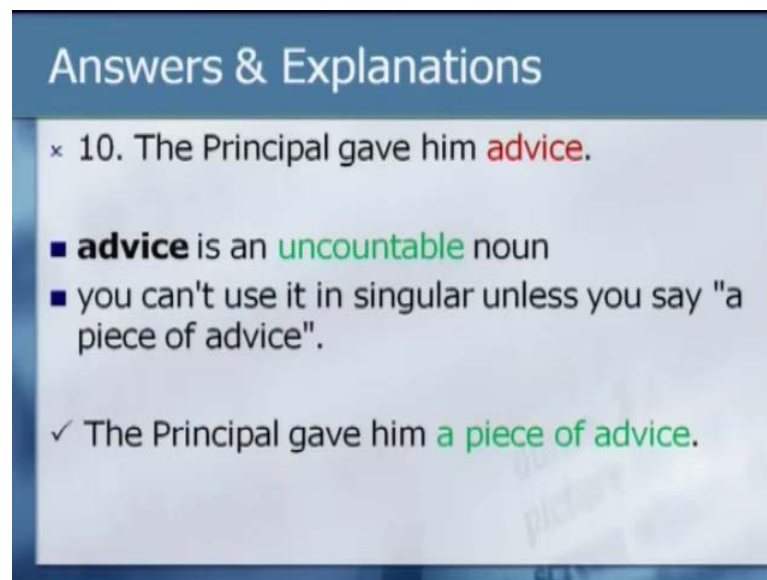
Now, what is the difference between advice with c and advise with s the difference again is one that of between noun and a verb advice is the noun it is a naming word advise is a verb. If you listen to me carefully, I am making a difference between these two in terms of pronunciation because they are pronounced differently. How the letter c in advice has the sound (()) a similar word which is again commonly mispronounced, misspelled and thus a common error that has been committed is the word device.

Here, again between device and devise (()) and (()) look at the next one the s in advise has the sound (()) the difference between (()) and (()) also devise. Now, when you advice you give opinion or suggest a course of action, it is used in the noun form when you advise you give opinion or suggest a course of action when you advise. It is used in the verb form you are doing something, you are counseling somebody, you are cautioning somebody, you are warning somebody against doing something, you are actively involved in the process.

Now, look at the correct form the doctor advised her to avoid fasting advised her to avoid fasting. Now, here it is used in the correct sense because the use of s is indicating that it is used in the verbal form and it is correct. And similarly, when you use the word device and the word devise you understand that there is a difference between the noun form and the verb form. In case of device it is indicating an instrument or an equipment, in case of devise, you devise a crafty plan you scheme something you plan sometimes even you manipulate or you chalk out a plan.

So, this planning is different from the equipment device which is a noun so keep that in mind. These are closely associated words, but then the common errors are committed in both cases look at the next explanation which is similar to what I discussed before.

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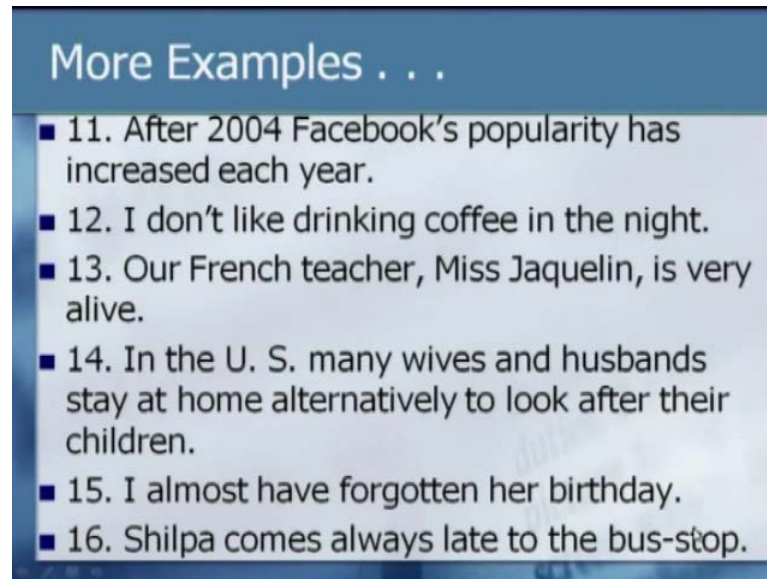


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- × 10. The Principal gave him **advice**.
- **advice** is an **uncountable** noun
- you can't use it in singular unless you say "a piece of advice".
- ✓ The Principal gave him **a piece of advice**.

The principal gave him advice now, here advice is an uncountable noun so you cannot use it in a singular sense unless you say a piece of advice. You cannot say the principal gave him an advice so you have to say the principal gave him a piece of advice, an advice is wrong, a piece of advice is correct. Just like the way we were discussing about news a piece of news, not a news and similarly, a piece of advice not an advice or a advice.

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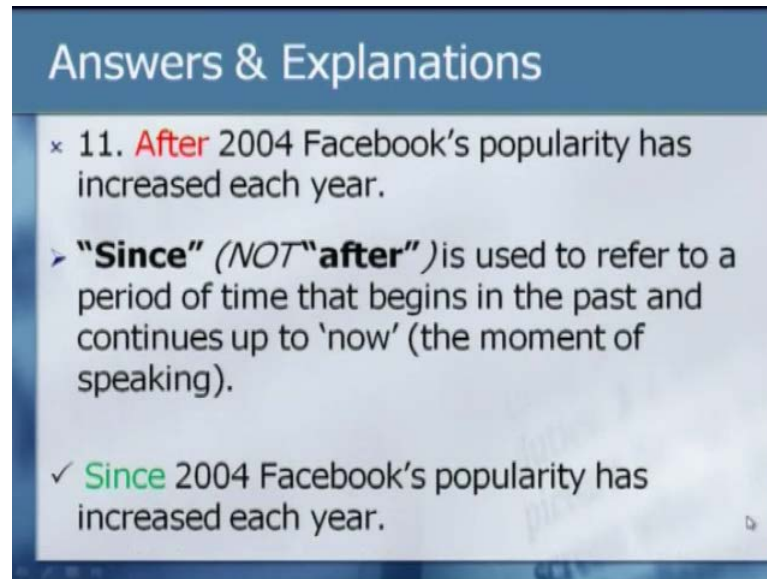
More Examples . . .

- 11. After 2004 Facebook's popularity has increased each year.
- 12. I don't like drinking coffee in the night.
- 13. Our French teacher, Miss Jaquelin, is very alive.
- 14. In the U. S. many wives and husbands stay at home alternatively to look after their children.
- 15. I almost have forgotten her birthday.
- 16. Shilpa comes always late to the bus-stop.

Let us go for some more examples, I hope you are getting geared up and then now, slowly you get the track of it. Now, more examples let us look at some six more examples very quickly. Look at the 11th example I am giving, after 2004 Facebook's popularity has increased each year. It was in the year 2004 probably Facebook was launched and then year after year it has been increasing in its popularity. So, look at the statement after 2004 Facebook's popularity has increased each year, is there an error. Do you think that there is an error? If yes note it if not think because I am giving you deliberately sentences which have common errors. So, think even if it appears to be a correct statement think whether is there any error.

Look at the next one the 12th one; I do not like drinking coffee in the night, does it sound similar, dissimilar, something wrong here think about it and the 13th one our French teacher, Miss Jaquelin, is very alive, think about it. The 14th one In the U.S. many wives and husbands stay at home alternatively to look after their children and 15th one; I almost have forgotten her birthday, many times you have also forgotten and you use this statement frequently. Look at the 16th one; Shilpa comes always late to the bus stop, take a look quickly, look at the common errors. I am going to discuss the answers with you.

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Answers & Explanations

- × 11. **After** 2004 Facebook's popularity has increased each year.
- **"Since"** (*NOT "after"*) is used to refer to a period of time that begins in the past and continues up to 'now' (the moment of speaking).
- ✓ **Since** 2004 Facebook's popularity has increased each year.

Look at the first statement the error here is with regard to the use of the preposition the word after, after 2004 Facebook's popularity has increased each year is incorrect because the right word that should have been used here is since. As you know is generally used in a continues sense and it is since not the word after which is used to refer to a period of time that begins in the past and continues up to now that is the moment of speaking. So, this means since 2004 the time it started and the time that I am speaking now, each year Facebook is increasing in terms of popularity. So, when there is the sense of continuity from the past till the moment use since not after. So, the correct form is; since 2004 Facebook's popularity has increased each year.

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Answers & Explanations

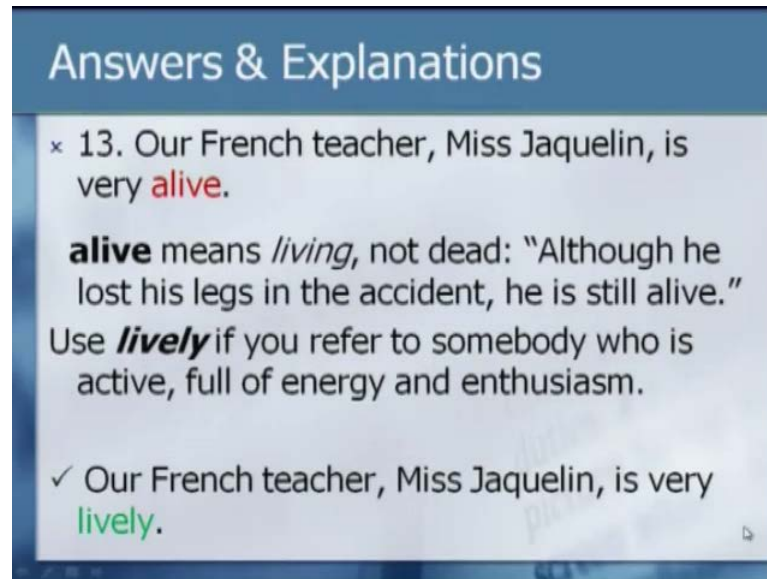
- × 12. I don't like drinking coffee **in the night.**
- I like to have a cup of tea **in the morning.**
- I like to take a nap **in the afternoon.**
- I go for a walk **in the evening.**

BUT—
I don't like drinking coffee **at night.**

Let us go to the next one it is again a very interesting one and it is very easy for you to commit error in this case because one third of similar examples are used in a different sense and only this sentence. Look at this I do not like drinking coffee in the night, the error is committed in the phrase in the night, why because the usual expression is at night. Whereas, all other parts of the day, you separate that or you identify that by saying in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening, but when it comes to night, it is at night. So, look at this I like to have a cup of tea in the morning, I like to take a nap in the afternoon, I go for a walk in the evening so these are all correct. I like to have a cup of tea in the morning, I would like to read news paper in the morning, I would like to go for a walk in the morning so all are okay. I like to take in the take a nap in the afternoon in the evening so these are all correct forms.

But I do not like drinking coffee at night, I do not like to watch T V at night so whenever you use night, the preposition that is used is at night and not in and the article the is not used.

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Answers & Explanations

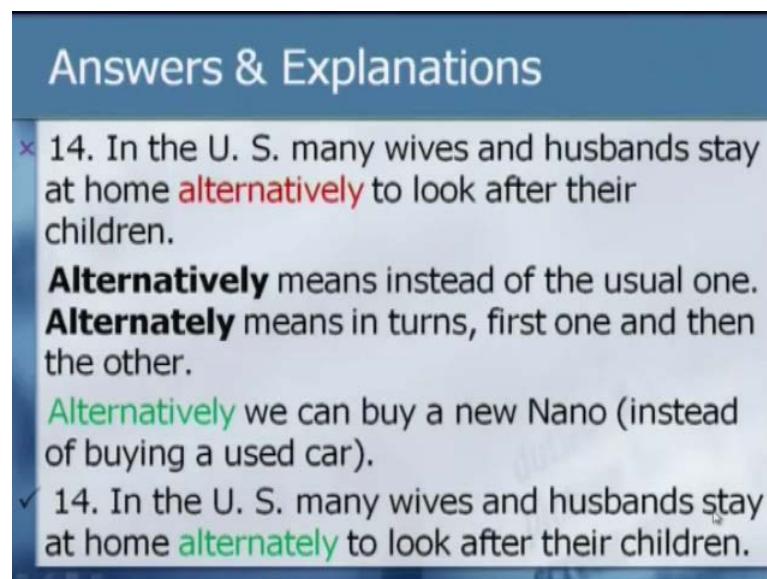
× 13. Our French teacher, Miss Jaquelin, is very **alive**.

alive means *living*, not dead: "Although he lost his legs in the accident, he is still alive."
Use ***lively*** if you refer to somebody who is active, full of energy and enthusiasm.

✓ Our French teacher, Miss Jaquelin, is very **lively**.

Look at the next answer, Our French teacher Miss Jaquelin is very alive. Now, again here it is an error with regard to usage of the word alive actually means living not dead. So, look at the example although, he lost his legs in the accident, he is still alive, which means he is still surviving, he is lucky to have survived this accident. What should you do? You should use lively, if you refer to somebody who is active, full of energy and enthusiasm not alive. So, Our French teacher Miss Jaquelin is very lively is the correct answer. So, we look at more sentences, more examples let us look at the remaining explanations and answers.

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Answers & Explanations

× 14. In the U. S. many wives and husbands stay at home **alternatively** to look after their children.

Alternatively means instead of the usual one.
Alternately means in turns, first one and then the other.

Alternately we can buy a new Nano (instead of buying a used car).

✓ 14. In the U. S. many wives and husbands stay at home **alternately** to look after their children.

Look at the next statement number 14, initially it was told to you in the U.S. many wives and husbands stay at home alternatively to look after their children. Now, the error is with regard to the usage of the word alternatively here. Now, what is the error and why it is a common error because this word is often confused with the word alternately instead of using alternately. The word alternatively frequently used and that is the common error has been committed. Look at this alternatively means instead of the usual one that is instead of choosing this, you choose the other as a second choice.

Now, here alternately suggest the shift in turns. So, if you will come only on alternate days it means you will come on a day and leave another day, you will take turn. So, first one and then the other so there is a kind of shift, there is a kind of taking turn here instead of choosing one for the other so see the difference. Thus alternatively if I want to use it, I can use it in a sentence like this, alternatively we can buy a new Nano, which means instead of buying a used car, instead of buying a used car I am saying that we can buy a new Nano alternatively.

So, instead of this I will go for that, but if you want to correct the sentence that was given before it should be corrected like this, in the U.S. many wives and husbands stay at home alternately to look after their children. It means when the husband is taking his turn the wife goes to the office and vice versa. That is when the wife is taking her turn to take care of the children the husband goes to the office, unlike in India.

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Answers & Explanations

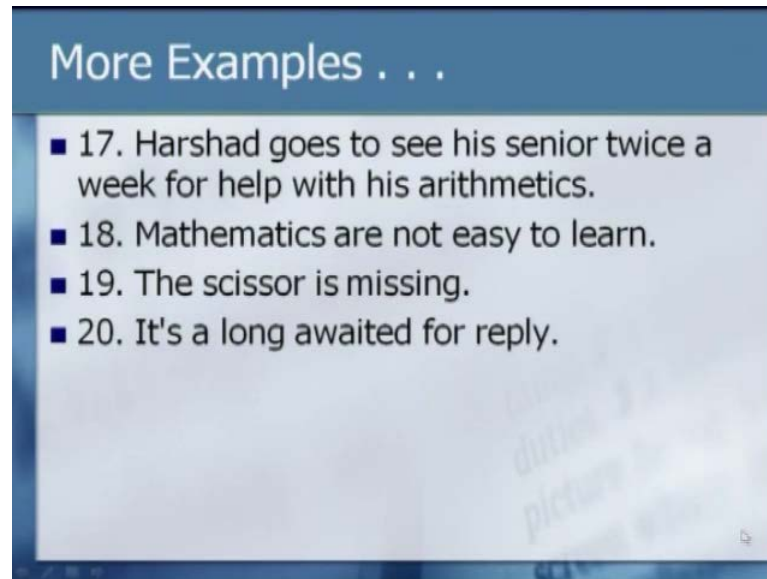
- × 15. I **almost have** forgotten her birthday.
- × 16. Shilpa **comes always** late to the bus-stop.
- Adverbs such as *almost, always, scarcely, hardly, often, even* are placed before the main verb or the word it modifies.
- ✓ I have **almost forgotten** her birthday.
- ✓ Shilpa **always comes** late to the bus-stop.
- Except in "be" form: Shilpa **is always** late.

Now, look at the remaining ones question number 15, again it is a very wrong statement and it is a common error committed there with regard to the use of the word almost or the position in which you keep the word almost. Look at this one I almost have forgotten her birthday and the next one; Shilpa comes always late to the bus stop, they are similar in terms of usage and errors. So, let us look at them both together, look at this adverbs such as almost, always, scarcely, hardly, often, even are placed before the main verb or the word it modifies. That means the principal verb that comes and before that these words are kept or forget the word, principal verb or anything whatever word is there which should be modified these words go before that.

So, the correct examples instead of saying I almost have, you should say I have almost forgotten her birthday. Why? Apply the rule the word here forgotten is the main verb not have. So, it should not be kept before have, it is a subordinate one now, again forgotten if you look at word as such, almost it is actually modifying forgotten. I have almost forgotten which means I actually did not forget I still remembered at the last minute, somebody reminded or I saw the reminder elsewhere or I just recollected at the last minute, good that I remembered it.

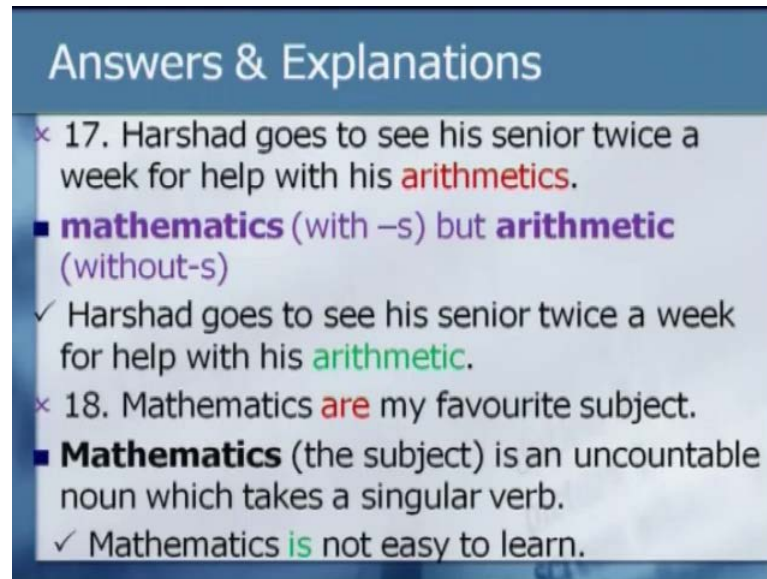
So, I have almost forgotten is indicating that I did not forget, but at the point of forgetting I was there. So, this almost is actually modifying forgotten not have so it should be placed here. Look at the next example; Shilpa always comes late to the bus stop, comes is the main one and always goes before that not as in the case; Shilpa comes always late, so Shilpa always comes late, except in be form there is a exception. Now, what is the exception, when you use be form that is the verbs like is, are, was, where etcetera you can use it before, example; Shilpa is always late, it is not Shilpa always is late, Shilpa is always late. So, here it is accepted it is an exception.

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Now, look at some more examples four more examples at least and then we will continue with this in the next lecture. Harshad goes to see his senior twice a week for help with his arithmetics, so at the outset its look like there is no error. But look at the words used very carefully, look at the spelling there may be an error next one; mathematics are not easy to learn. So, again at the outset it sounds logical that plural form plural verb is used so there should not be any error. But read the statement very carefully look at the next one the scissor is missing, again if you apply the subject verb logic so singular verb so absolutely no problem. But is it sounding okay? The scissor is missing so ask yourself there is an error here. Look at the last example for this lecture it is a long a waited for reply, again as I said looks normal, but there is an error here with regard to the usage of the preposition, I am giving the clue and let us look at the answers one by one.

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Answers & Explanations

- × 17. Harshad goes to see his senior twice a week for help with his **arithmetics**.
- **mathematics** (with -s) but **arithmetic** (without-s)
- ✓ Harshad goes to see his senior twice a week for help with his **arithmetic**.
- × 18. Mathematics **are** my favourite subject.
- **Mathematics** (the subject) is an uncountable noun which takes a singular verb.
- ✓ Mathematics **is** not easy to learn.

Look at the first one obviously it is wrong to say, Harshad goes to see his senior twice a week for help with his arithmetics, arithmetics is not used with s its arithmetic. Whereas, it is interesting funny even to see that mathematics is always used with s both of course, you know that they are synonymous with each other. Mathematics and arithmetic they are synonymously used however when you use arithmetic it is without s when you use mathematics it always has the s so that is the difference.

So, you cannot use in a confused sense between these two words, these two forms one does not take s that is arithmetic and one always takes s that is mathematics. So, the correct form is this Harshad goes to see his senior twice a week for help with his arithmetic, not arithmetics. Now, the next one if you say mathematics are my favorite subject or as the previous example I had given if you look at it very quickly Mathematics are not easy to learn, Mathematics are my favorite subject these are all wrong sentences. Why? Simply, because mathematics is the subject and it is a singular subject and it is an uncountable noun which takes a singular verb singular subject and takes a singular verb although it is appearing to be plural in the form because of this confused last letter s.

So, car, cars so you think that cars is the plural form, you also think that mathematics s is there its plural form and if you apply the subject verb logic. So, plural form should take a plural verb. So, you may tend to use Mathematics are my favorite subject or Mathematics are not easy subject etcetera are, is wrong. So, the correct form is Mathematics is not easy to learn, mathematics is my favorite subject, physics is not my favorite subject physics is another similar subject which has s, but not to be used in

plural form. So, when you use these subjects be careful because if you commit this error as I said at the beginning to the sophisticated uses of English, it will sound ridiculous and it may create a very bad impression about you as a good communicator. So, that is the reason why I am repeatedly telling that you should focus on the common errors and you should not commit them look at the next one.

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Answers & Explanations

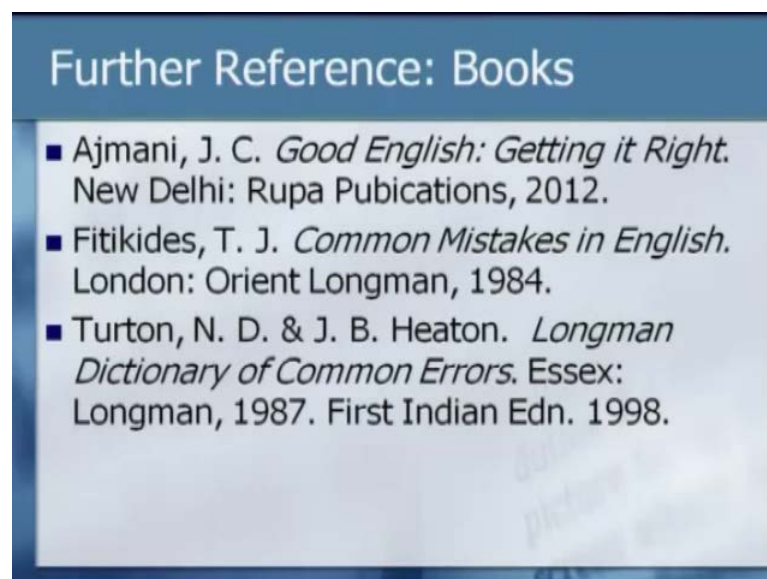
- × 19. The **scissor is** missing.
 - **Scissors, like trousers, spectacles, shears, pliers**—that is—all names of things consisting of two parts, take a plural verb.
 - ✓ The **scissors are** missing.
- × 20. It's a long **awaited for** reply.
 - The verb "await" takes a noun phrase as its object, and it doesn't require "for".
 - ✓ It's a long **awaited** reply.

The Scissor is missing, what is the error here? If you apply the grammar logic of subject verb concord subject verb agreement again it appears to be correct Scissor is looking singular and singular verb is used. So, the scissor is missing is looking absolutely grammatically a correct sentence. So, where is the common error? The common error lies here because scissors is always spelt pronounced with the s and so are words like trousers, spectacles, shears, and pliers. Now, all these words, that is all names of things consisting of two parts so when you look at scissors, it has two parts when you look at trousers it has again two parts now even shears.

So, all of them that will have two parts they are treated plural, see Mathematics and Physics although these subjects have s its treated singular because it is a singular subject. Now, here they have two parts within themselves in each of them so they take a plural verb. So, when you see the scissor is missing you are committing an error and to correct it you need to say the scissors are missing, the trousers are on the table, the spectacles are kept inside the cupboard, the shears are found in the garden and so on. So, use plural

form does not use singular form to all names of things which will contain two parts okay. Now, look at the next one the last one for this lecture, it is a long awaited for reply, I will of course continue with another word the next one wait. How to use wait and how to use await? Let us look at await first It is a long awaited for reply the usage of the preposition for is wrong here because the verb await takes a noun phrase as its object and it does not require for it takes a noun phrase as its object. That means when it is awaited it will take as its object reply and it does not require for. So, the correct way is it is a long awaited reply. So, long awaited reply so not for, but in the next lecture just look at some examples of wait where for is required okay. Now, let me take a break with bringing to you some of the Reference books and Resource materials that you can use even from online with the regard to improving your common errors.

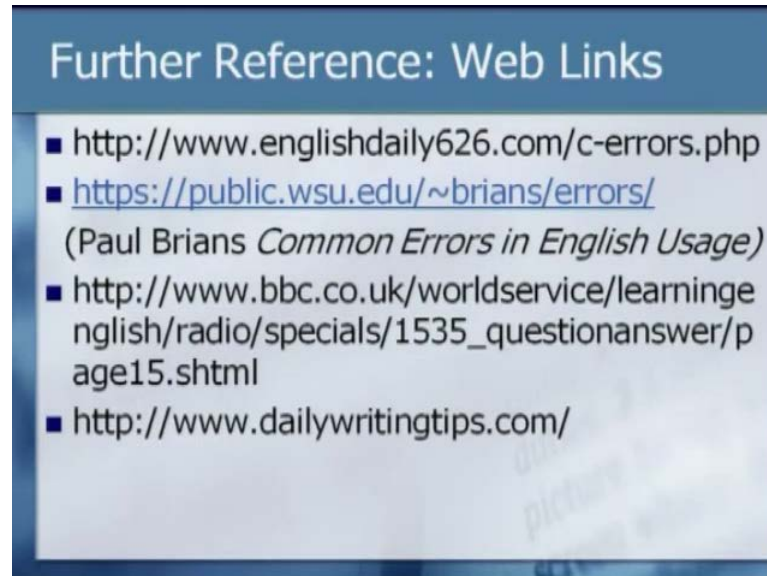
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Some books which I found to be quite interesting and useful is one written by one Ajmani, J.C. *Good English: Getting it Right* and it is a very recent publication, it is recently published in 2012. But there are other old ones which are quite popular it is one by Fitikides, T.J. *Common Mistakes in English* and this was published long before from 60s. It is been reprinted by Orient Longman and the recent one that I have is 1984 edition this is also containing lots of examples classified into various categories and Turton, N.D. and J.B. Heaton. So, they have produced Longman's dictionary of Common Errors. So, here you can use common errors or refer to common errors in a very easily referable dictionary form. So, any word you come across just like your refer to a dictionary for

meaning, here you refer to this for checking whether it is an error or not and there are some interesting useful web links.

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There is this <https://www.englishdaily626.com/c-errors.php> it gives you list of errors on a day to day basis. Similarly, you also have this <http://www.dailywritingtips.com/> which has lot of writing tips and one area is focused on common errors. Apart from these two there are two interesting websites the one is actually a online website for the book written by Paul Brians on *Common Errors in English Usage* and this is the link <https://public.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/>.

So, in this one what you find is the book is actually kept in the form of online resource. You can go to that check it and then check the word, search for the word, and then see how the word is being used and last but not the least of course BBC. BBC itself has a service on question answer format in which you can ask am I writing this correctly. What is the difference between advice and advise, so the c and s, is it related to American English, British English difference are its really not just that easy and acceptable, but there is a serious error, so BBC gives you the answer.

So, these are some interesting web links keep using them in your day to day life, I will come back in the next lecture to continue with some of the discussions we had and hopefully in the meanwhile I want you to refer to these sites get some of these books and

then spruce up your writing and spoken skills. So, that you become not only a good, but also an effective communicator and thank you for your patience for this lecture until I come back in the next one.

Good bye.