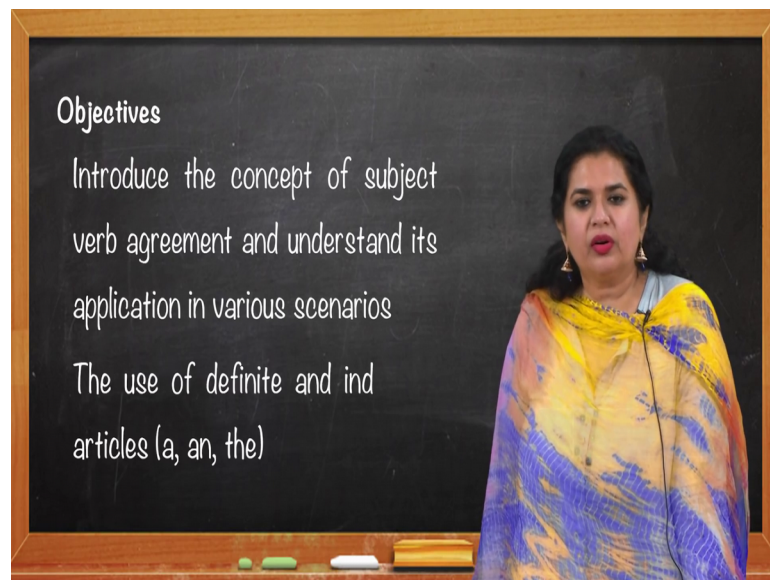


**Business English Communication**  
**Prof. Aysha Iqbal Viswamohan**  
**Department of Humanities & Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Madras**

**Lecture – 11**  
**Grammar**

Welcome back friends. So to we start our next week or week 3; that is grammar and I am your instructor professor Aysha Iqbal Viswamohan and we are going to do or we are going to rather start the grammar module with subject verb agreement.

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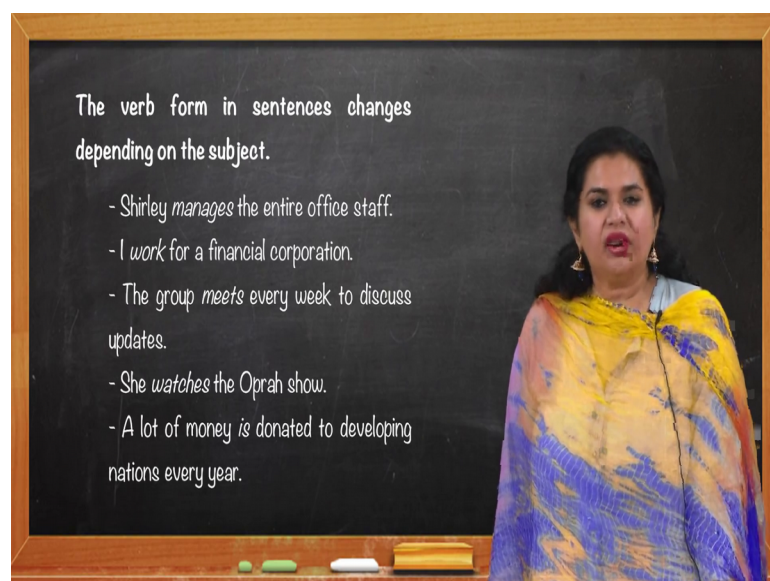
So, let us look at the objectives now; the objectives of today's lecture or class. First is to introduce the concept of subject verb agreement and understand its application in various scenarios, in various situations and also we are going to do a touch up on the use of definite and indefinite articles that is a, an, the.

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Now, what is Subject Verb Agreement? SVA; popularly known as this is agreement in grammar; that is to ensure that parts of a sentence connects with one another in the right manner. So, let me again repeat we use agreement in grammar to ensure that parts of a sentence connect with one another in the right manner. Thus the manner in which we use are subject should agree with; the way you have rendered or used your verb; this is not so complicated.

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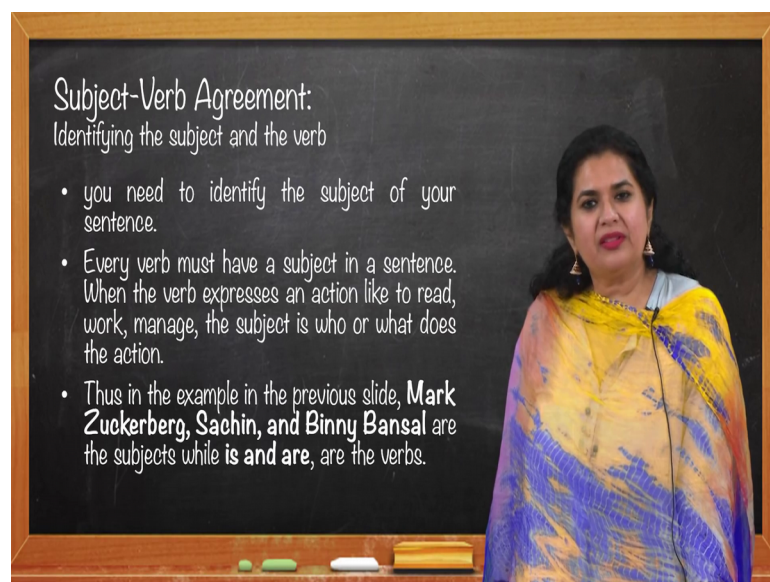




Now, the verb form in sentences changes depending on the subject; look at the examples Shirley manages the entire office staff. Shirley is singular and the regular verb manages is also singular; I work for a financial corporation, singular; first person and singular verb. The group meets every week to discuss updates; just because it is a group does not mean that you have to use the plural form of the verb.

She watches the Oprah show; a lot of money is donated to developing nations every year. So, look at the way subject agrees; a lot of money is the subject here, just because it is a lot does not mean that we have to say a lot of money are donated to developing nations every year; it is a lot of money is; a lot takes a singular.

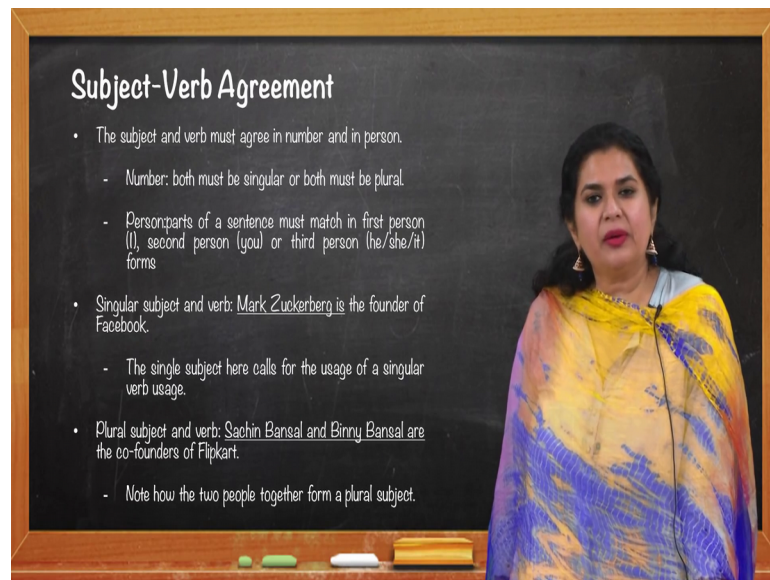
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Subject verb agreement and how to identify the subject and the verb? You need to identify the subject of your sentence; I, we, are, he, she, they; so that is the way you need to identify the subject. Every verb must have a subject in a sentence, when the verb expresses an action; for example, to read, work, manage; the subject is who or what; does the action, who is doing the action? What is doing the action?

In the previous slide; right now we have not seen it, but if we take example Mark Zuckerberg, Sachin, Binny Bansal they are the subjects. And Mark Zuckerberg is the founder of so and so, Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal are the founders of so and so; so that is the way it goes.

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Now, the subject verb agreement subject and verb must agree in number and in person. For example, number; look at number both must be singular or both must be plural. Person; parts of a sentence must match in first person, second person you or third person he, she or it. So, first person is I also we and are, second person you, third person he, she, it; all these are singular when you make them plural they become they.

Singular subject and verb for example, Mark Zuckerberg is the founder of Facebook; the single subject here calls for the usage of singular verb usage; this is very elementary very basic. But many a time; when we are in a hurry or when we are confused or nervous; we tend to make mistake in this very important area of grammar.

Another example; plural subject and verb; so, Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal are the co founders of Flipkart. So, two people together form a plural subject; it is not just because Sachin and Binny are singular; so the verb will also be singular. When two singular subjects come together; we use a plural subject. I know that you are aware of all these rules, but we are just refreshing and revising.

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### Subject- Verb Agreement: Regular Verbs

- Regular verbs follow a pattern that is predictable.

	Singular	Plural
<b>First Person</b>	I work	We work
<b>Second Person</b>	You work	You work
<b>Third Person</b>	He/She/It Works	They Work

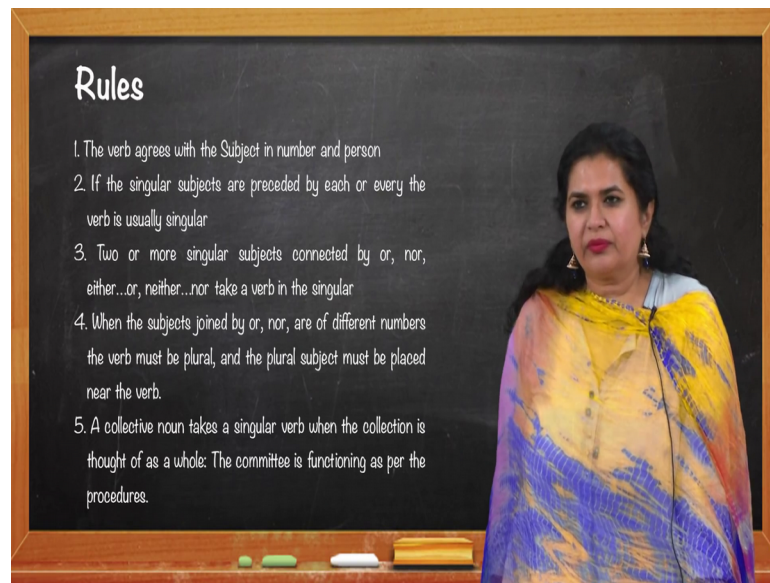
Note: in third person singular the regular verb always ends in -s

For regular verbs that end in -sh, x, ch and -s, add -es in the third person singular form.

Now, let us look at subject verb agreement and regular verbs. Regular verbs follow a predictable pattern; first person; so first column first person, second person, third person and then you look at the singular and plural; I work, we work, you work, he work, he, she, it works and they work.

And then notice you are given a rule very important rule in third person singular the regular verb always ends in s; Binny manages, John writes, Mary Reeds, Shirley Walks, mother cooks. For regular verbs, that end in s h or x or c h and s; add e s in the third person singular form. You are going to get several such examples during the course of remaining part of this course.

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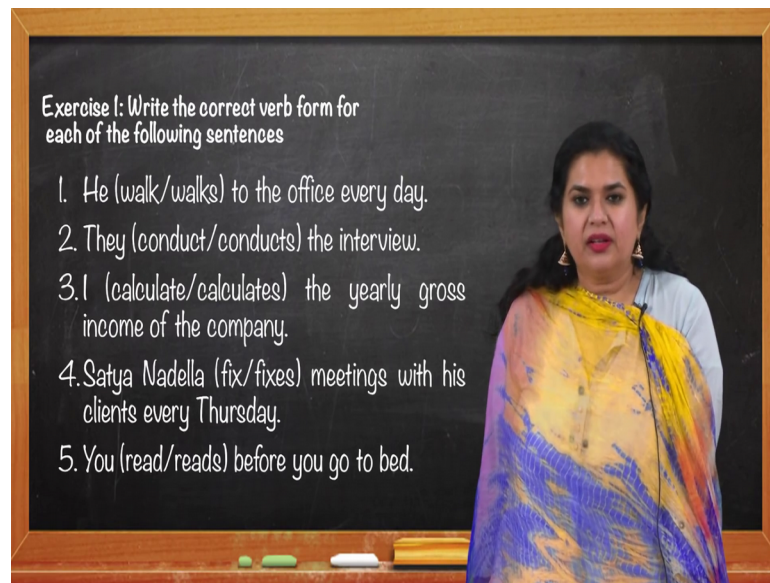
Now, look at the rules and try to understand them; you can look these up on the internet or if you have any good book of grammar; so please look at the rules here. First the verb agrees with the subject in number and person, we have already done this. Second rule; if the singular subjects are preceded by each or every, the verb is usually singular; each of the boy or every boy and girl; must bring his or her textbook; so, it is a usually singular verb.

Two or more singular subjects connected by or, nor, either or, neither nor take a verb in the singular; this is also important to remember. When the subject join by or, nor, are of different numbers; the verb must be plural and the plural subject must be placed near the verb, this is also extremely important. Joined by or, nor and of different numbers; the verb must be plural; remember that and the plural subject maybe placed near the verb.

A collective nouns takes a singular verb we have already seen that; a lot of money, the group meets every Tuesday; the committee is functioning as per the procedures just because it is a group of people does not mean that it is going to take a plural verb; collective noun takes a singular verb when the collection is thought of as a whole.

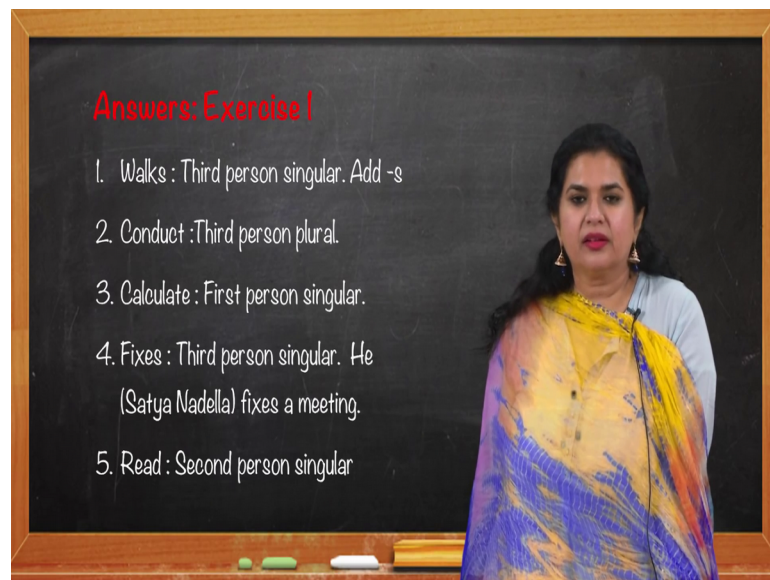


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Let us do some exercises; now exercise first write the correct verb form for each of the following sentence. So, first one he walk or walks to the office everyday, second they conduct conducts the interview, third I calculate calculates the yearly gross income of the company, four Satya Nadella fix fixes meeting with his clients every Thursday.

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Number five; you read reads before you go to bed and here are the answers; first walks, third person singular; so add s that is the rule, conduct third person plural, calculate; first

person singular. I calculates wrong; I calculate yes, fixes; third person singular; Satya Nadella fixes a meeting, and read; second person singular.

You read what is written; not you reads, not I reads remember these are the basic rules of grammar; subject verb agreement.

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Now, let us look at this; this particular rule convention, subject verb agreement and what happens with irregular verbs. Irregular verbs are those which do not follow a fixed pattern for example, be, do, have, be have several forms you should know that; do has several forms. So, be has performs like m and s and r and being, do has forms like didn't, does and have has; has and had.

So, learning the forms of these words in present tense will be helpful in everyday conversations or everyday communication. Present tense form of the verb to be; so, look at the chart here; first person, second person, third person; I am plural, we are, you are, you are in second person; third person he, she, it and they are. Now, one is implying that you do not know the basic rules, but perhaps some of you have forgotten; therefore, we are revising them. So, do not get disturbed that why we are doing something that is so basic.

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**Exercise 2**

Write down the different forms of the following irregular verbs in present tense in the table given below.

- To have
- To do

	Singular	Plural
First Person		
Second Person		
Third Person		

Exercise 2; write down the different forms of the following irregular verbs in present tense; in the table given below; to have, to do. First person and you have to write have, I, you, he, she, it, they and then second person; third person second person; you and third person he, she, it.

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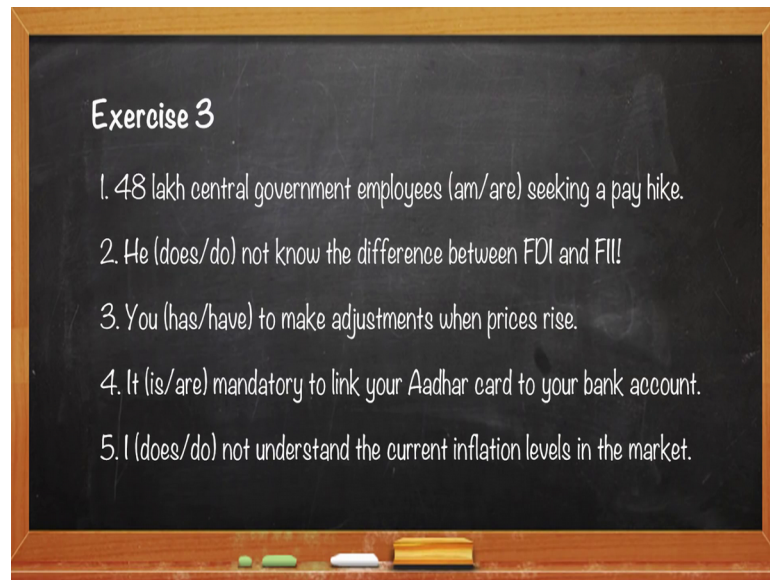
**Exercise 3**

1. 48 lakh central government employees (am/are) seeking a pay hike.
2. He (does/do) not know the difference between FDI and FII!
3. You (has/have) to make adjustments when prices rise.
4. It (is/are) mandatory to link your Aadhar card to your bank account.
5. I (does/do) not understand the current inflation levels in the market.

And you have to look at singular as well as plural; so look at the solved exercise here. Forms of the verbs do have in the present tense; first person I have plural we have. Second person you have plural; you have, third person singular he, she, it, has and plural

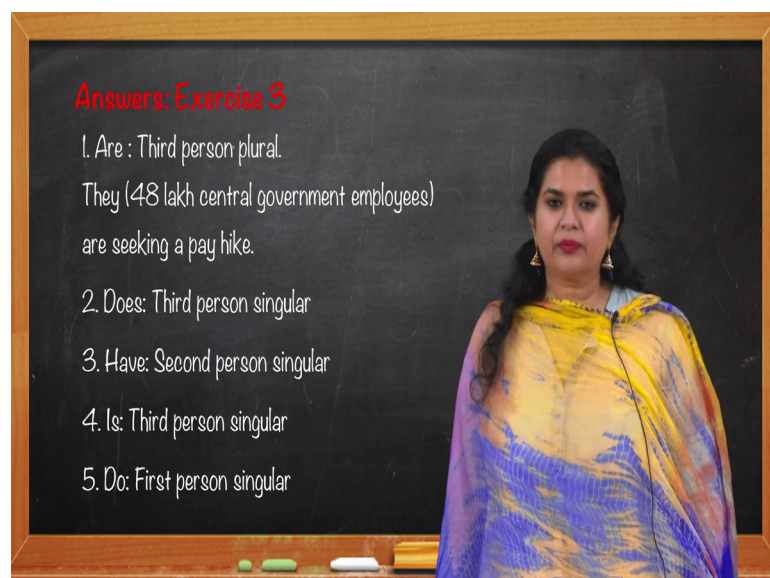
they have. And look at the forms of the verb to do; in the present tense first person I do; plural we do, second person you do plural; you do, third person he, she, it, does plural; they do; those are the conventions.

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Let us look at the third exercise; first 48 lakh central government employees am, are seeking a pay hike. Second; he does do not know; does or do not know the difference between FDI and FII. Third you has have to make adjustments and prices rise, four; it is are mandatory to link your Aadhar card to your bank account.

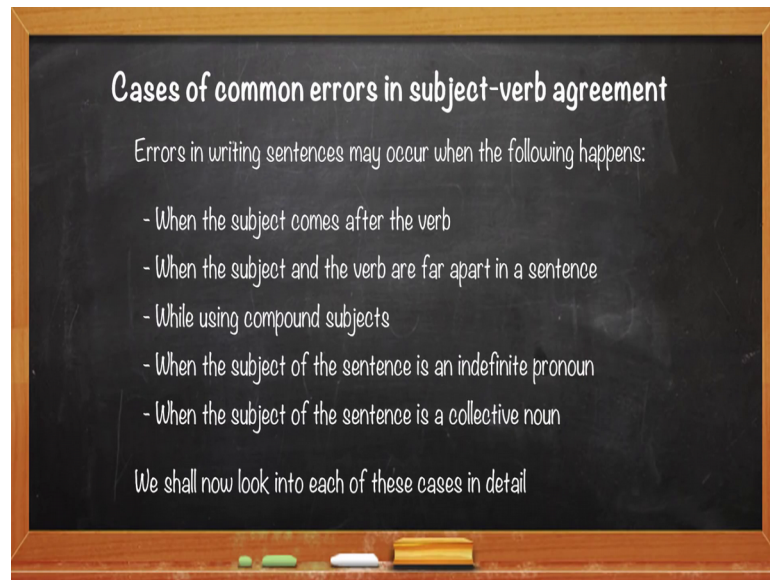
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And answers are third person plural; they are seeking a pay hike, second does that is third person singular; have second person singular; is third person singular, do first person singular.

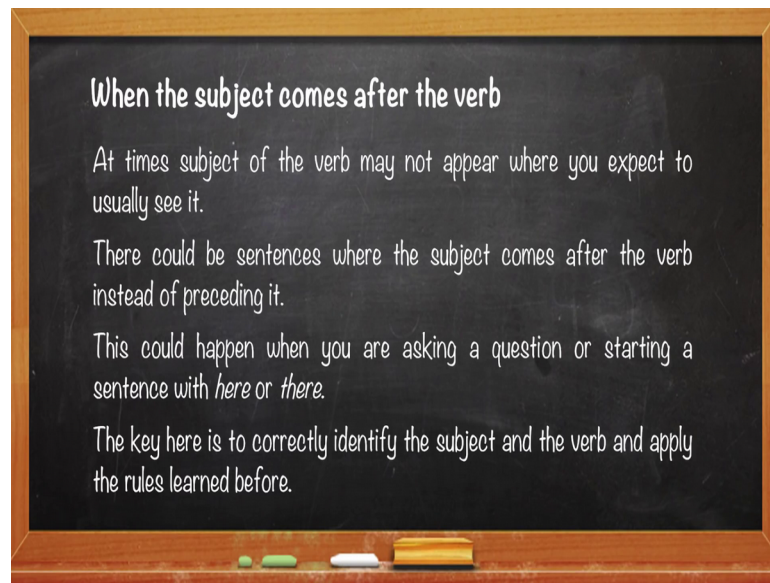
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Look at this slide and try to understand the rules; cases of common errors in subject verb agreement. So, when do we make errors in subject verb agreement; in written sentence, when the subject comes after the verb; when the subject and the verb are far apart in sentence, while using compound subjects; so, these are the common pitfalls; when the subject of the sentence is an indefinite pronoun and when the subject of the sentences a collective noun.

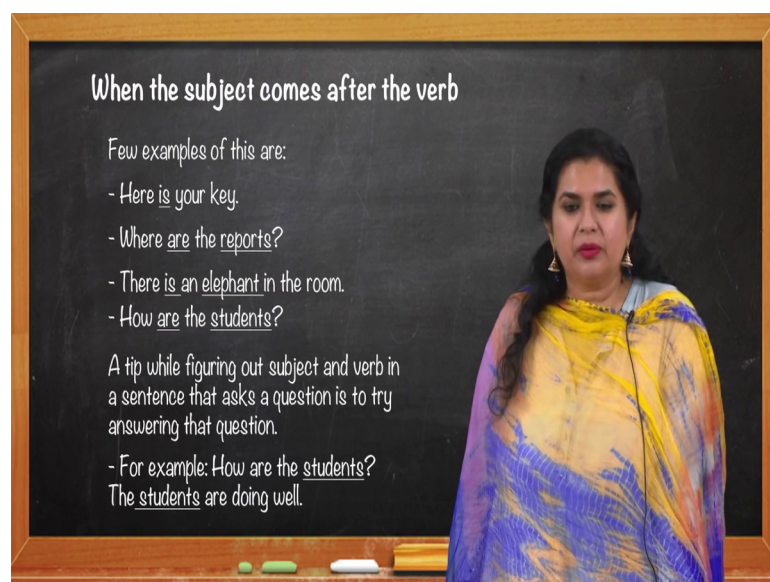
So, these are the places; these are the areas that errors may occur while writing or speaking.

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So, here is an example when the subject comes after the verb; at times subject of the verb may not appear where you expect to usually see it. There could be sentences where the subject comes after the verb; instead of preceding it. This could happen when you are asking a question or starting a sentence with here or there. The key here is to correctly identify the subject and the verb and apply the rules learned before.

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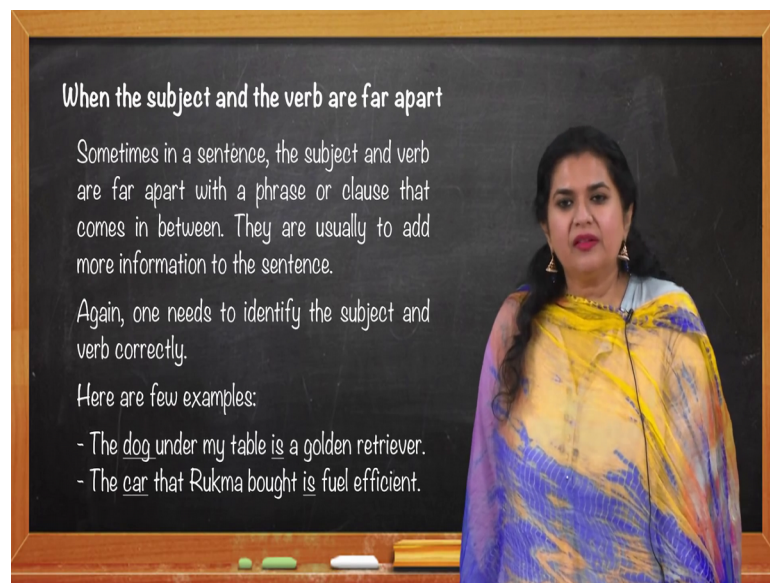


When the subject comes after the verb; for example, here is your key. So, key is the subject; remember it is not here; where are the reports? Reports are coming or following

the subject; I am sorry reports are the subject following the verb. Third sentence there is an elephant in the room; how are the students? When we interrogate subjects, the subject goes generally after the verb.

So, you have to remember this tip; while figuring out subject and verb in a sentence that asks a question is by; try answering the question for example, how are the students? The students are doing well. So, you will find the; where are the subjects? How are the students?

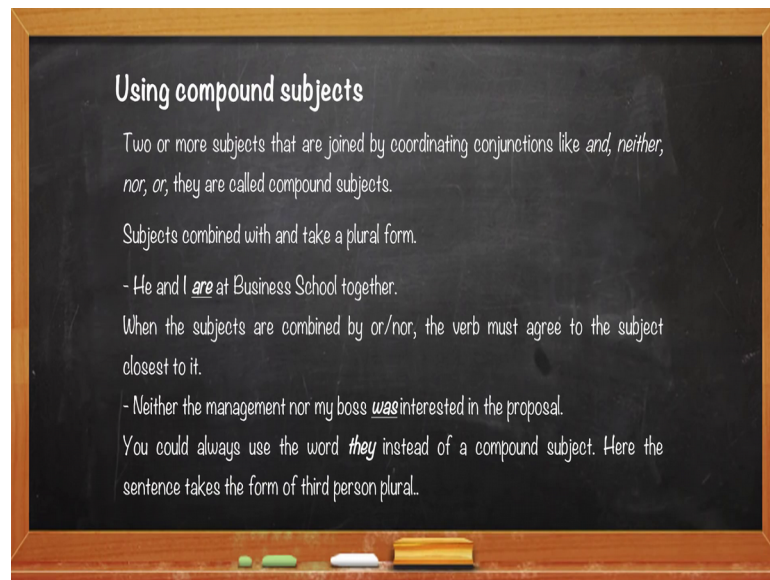
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When the subject and the verb are far apart; sometimes in a sentence the subject and verb are far apart with phrase or clause that comes in between, they are usually to add more information to the sentence.

Again one needs to identify the subject and verb correctly; you have already seen how we generally identify the subject. And look at the examples the dog under my table is a golden retriever. The car that Rukma bought is fuel efficient; so, the car is the subject here, the dog is the; it is not my table, the dog. So, who is under my table? What did Rukhma buy? And that is the subject.

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Now, again rule using compound subject; when two or more subjects that are joined by coordinating conjunctions like and, neither, nor, either, or they are called compounds subjects. And subjects combined with these and take a plural form he and I are at business school together.

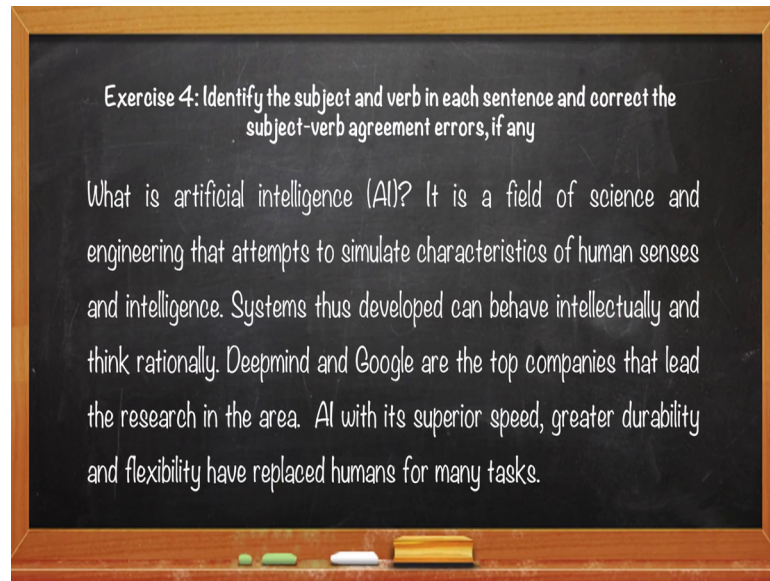
He and I are; generally we do not say I are; at IIT; I am at IIT, he is at IIT, but together he and I are at business school together. We do not even say I and here; that is the convention, second person precedes the first person. So, the verb has to agree because you see; there are two singular, so we have to use a plural verb.

When the subjects are combined by or or nor; the verb must agree with the subject closest to it. Neither the management this is an example please look at it neither the management nor my boss was interested in the proposal. So, boss join by neither nor and the verb agrees with the subject closer to it; so, singular; third person; therefore was.

Again remember you could always use the word they; instead of a compound subject here the sentence takes the form of third person plural.



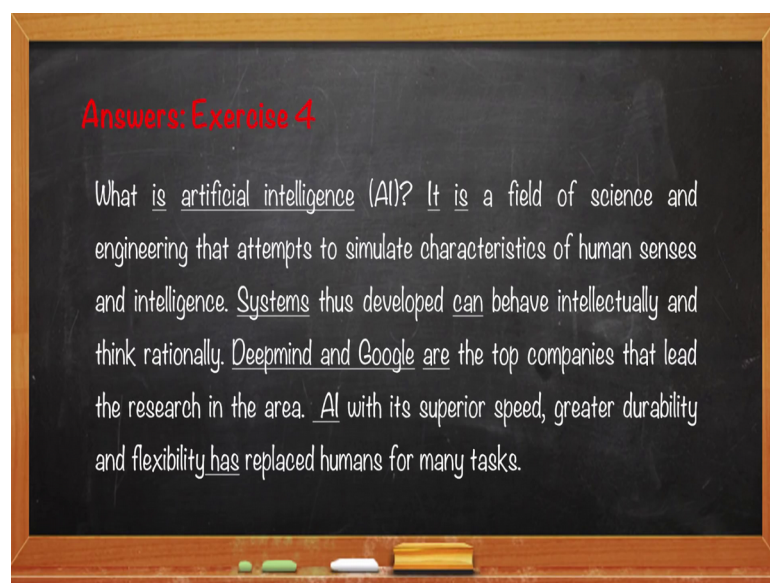
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Now, this is an exercise for you identify the subject and verb in each sentence and correct the subject verb agreement if any. What is artificial intelligence? It is a field of science and engineering that attempts to simulate characteristics of human senses and intelligence.

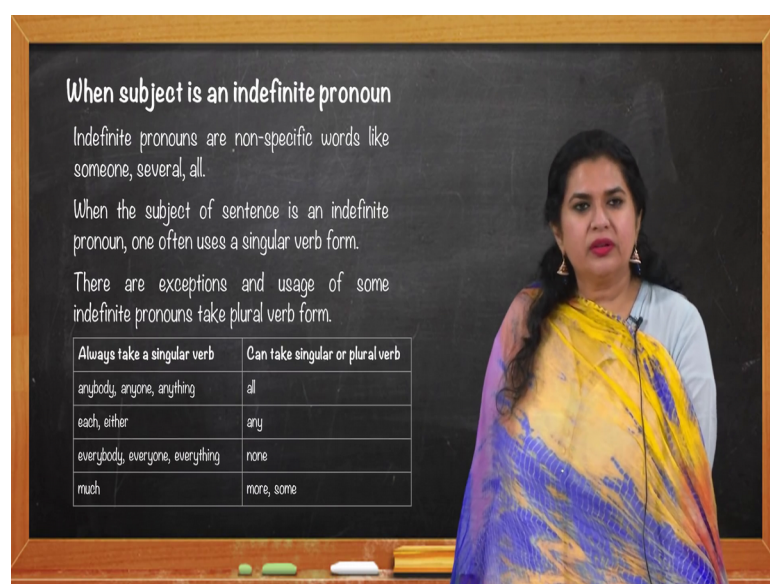
Systems thus developed can behave intellectually and think rationally. Deepmind and Google are the top companies that lead the research in the area. AI with its superior speed, great durability and flexibility have replaced humans for many tasks. Now you have to identify the subject and verb in each sentence and correct the errors if any.

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Look at the solved exercise same passage; what is artificial intelligence? It is a field of science and engineering that attempts to simulate characteristics of human senses and intelligence. Systems thus developed can behave intellectually and think rationally. Deep mind and Google are the top companies that lead the research in the area. AI with its superior speed greater durability and flexibility has replaced humans for many tasks.

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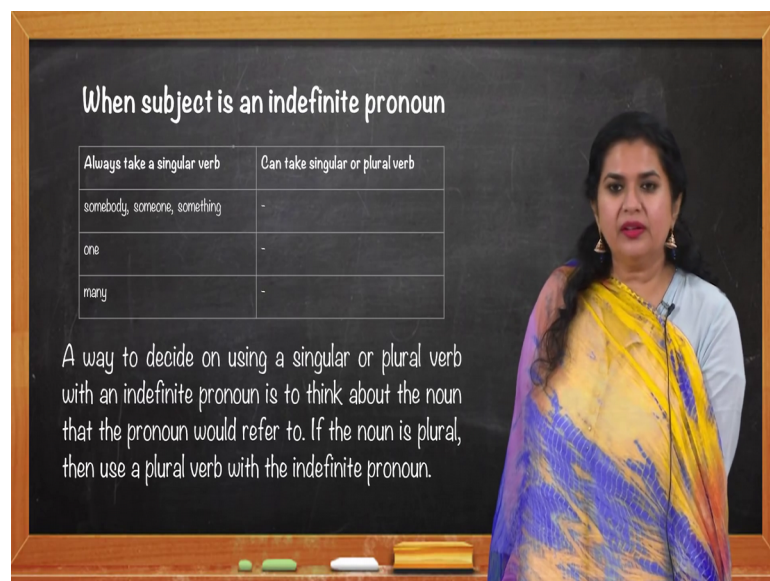
Now, let us move on to this notion, this concept when subject is an indefinite pronoun what happens? Now indefinite pronounce a non specific words like someone we are not

talking about any one particular, we are not saying he or she; someone, several, all, nothing in particular, no one in this specific. So, when the subject of sentence is an indefinite pronoun one often uses a singular verb form.

Someone is knocking at my door; there are exceptions and usage of some indefinite pronouns where they take plural verb forms. So, please look at the table here; always taking a singular verb anybody, anyone, anything can take singular or plural verb. So, look at the two columns; always take a singular verb anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, much. And can take either singular or plural verb; depending on the contexts all, any, none, more, some; some of the boys are here, some of them; aren't example.

Again, when subject is an indefinite pronoun and look at the table here.

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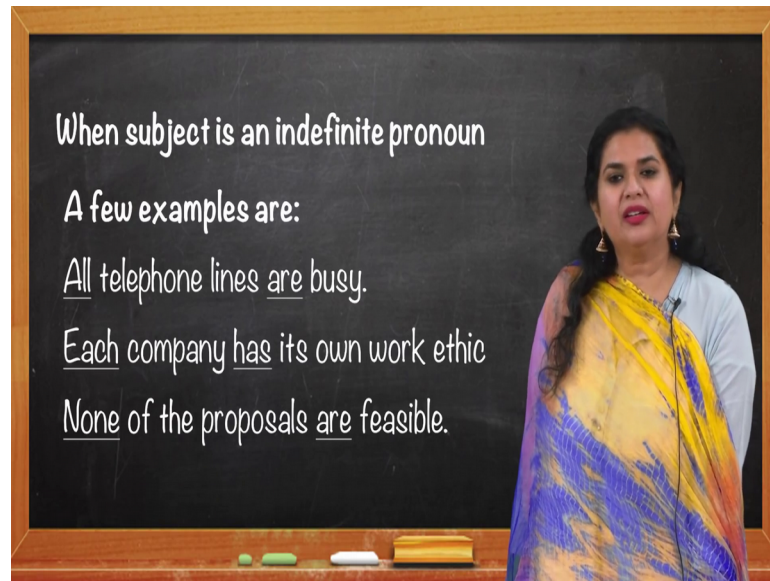
**When subject is an indefinite pronoun**

Always take a singular verb	Can take singular or plural verb
somebody, someone, something	-
one	-
many	-

A way to decide on using a singular or plural verb with an indefinite pronoun is to think about the noun that the pronoun would refer to. If the noun is plural, then use a plural verb with the indefinite pronoun.

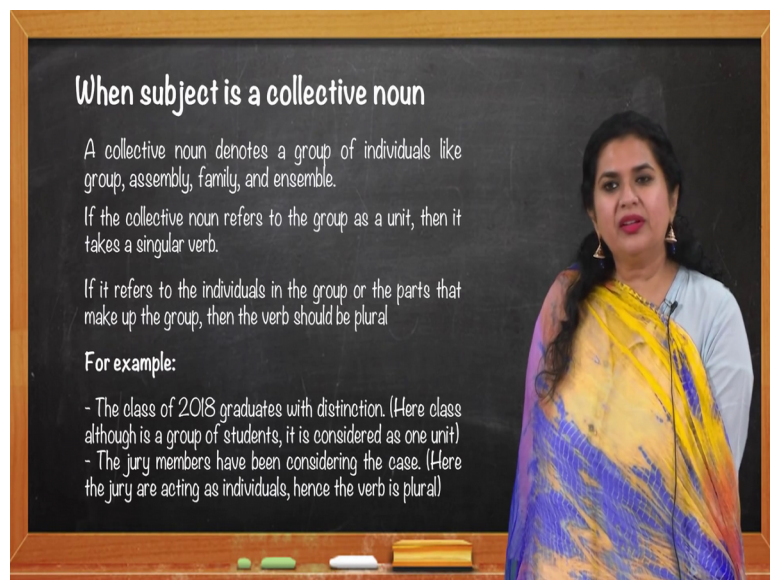
Always take a singular verb; somebody, someone, something, one, many always take a singular verb. One of the ways important way to decide on using a singular or plural verb with an indefinite pronoun is to think about the noun; that the pronoun would refer to if the noun is plural; naturally the verb is also going to be in plural.

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And when subject is an indefinite pronoun what happens? A few examples are given here; all telephone line are busy, all is indefinite pronoun. Each company has its own work ethic; none of the proposals are feasible. So, none of the proposals remember.

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When subject is a collective noun another area of confusion; collective noun what is it? It denotes a group of individuals like group, committee, assembly, ensemble, family; so, those are groups.

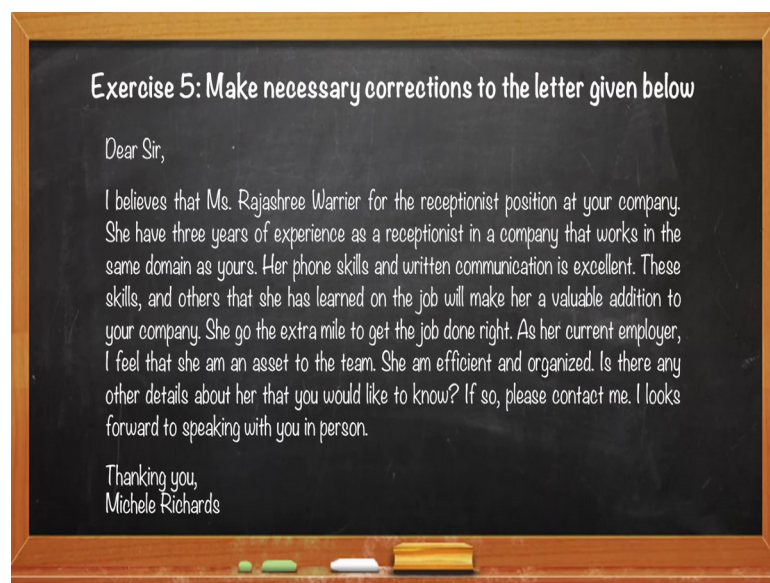


If the collective noun refers to the group as a unit; then it takes a singular verb we have seen that already. If it refers to the individuals in the group or the parts that make up the group, then the verb should be plural and now look at the examples here. The class of 2018 graduates with distinction; here class although is a group of a students is considered as one unit. So, the class of 2018, graduates; so, class after this a group, but we are using a singular verb.

The jury members have been considering the case; here the jury are acting as individuals hence the verb is plural. But you can also say the jury is considering the case, but we are saying jury members have. So, therefore, when we are referring to member then naturally the verb becomes plural; agreeing with the plural subject.

The jury is out there; although jury comprises several people, but here it is functioning as a single unit; collective noun.

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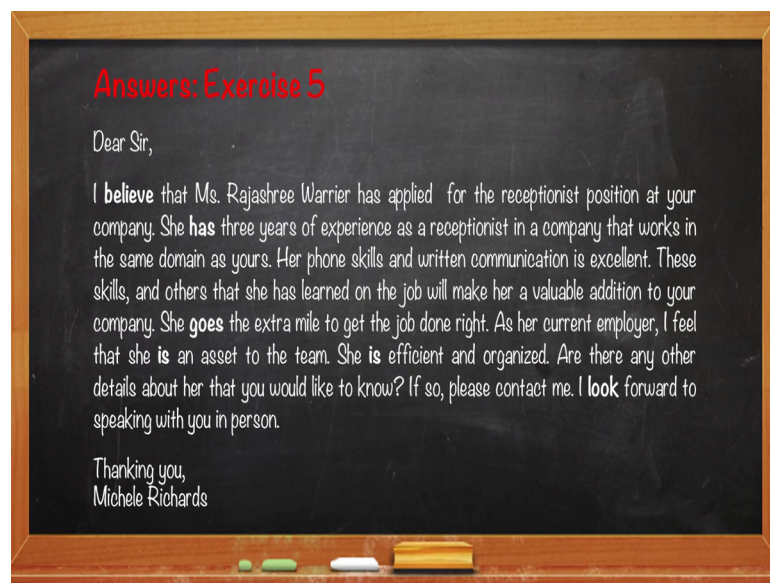
Now, here look at this particular exercise 5 and make correction to the letter given below. Dear sir, I believes that Miss. Rajashree Warriar for the receptionist position at your company, she have three years of experience as a reception is in a company that works in the same domain as yours.

Her phone skills and written communication is excellent. These skills and others that she has learned on the job will make her a valuable addition to your company. She go the

extra mile to get the job done right; as her current employer, I feel that she am an asset to the team. She am efficient and organised; is there any other details about her that you would like to know? If so please contact me. I looks forward to speaking with you in person; thanking you so and so.

Take a moment; look at it and identify the errors.

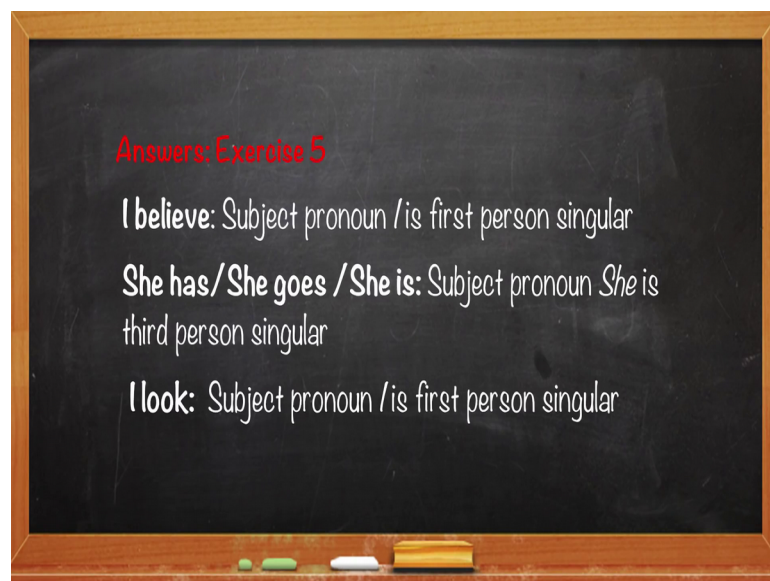
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Let us look at the corrections here; now solved exercise, exercise 5; Dear Sir, I believe that Miss Rajashree Warriar has applied for the receptionist position at your company. She has three years of experience as a receptionist in a company that works in the same domain as yours. Her phone skills and written communication is excellent; the verb is agreeing with something that is closer to it.

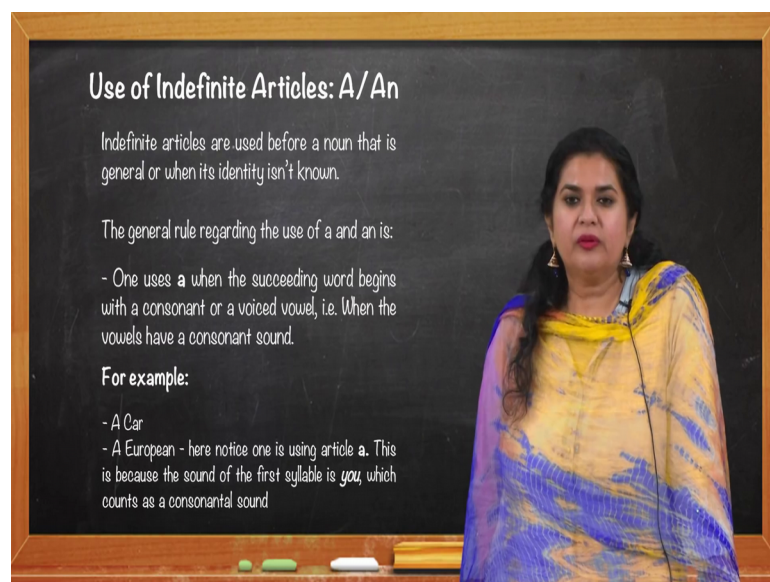
These skills and others that she has learned on the job will make her a valuable addition to your company. She goes extra mile to get the job done right; as her current employer I feel that she is an asset to the team. She is efficient and organized. Are there any other details about her that you would like to know? If so, please contact me; I look forward to speaking with you in person. Thanking you and it should also and with yours truly or yours sincerely, but here we are not practicing letter writing; we are doing subject verb agreement.

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Here we continue look at the way we have look; fragmented the sentences I believe. So, subject pronoun is first person singular; she has, she goes, she is. So, subject pronoun she is third person singular; I look subject pronoun is first person singular

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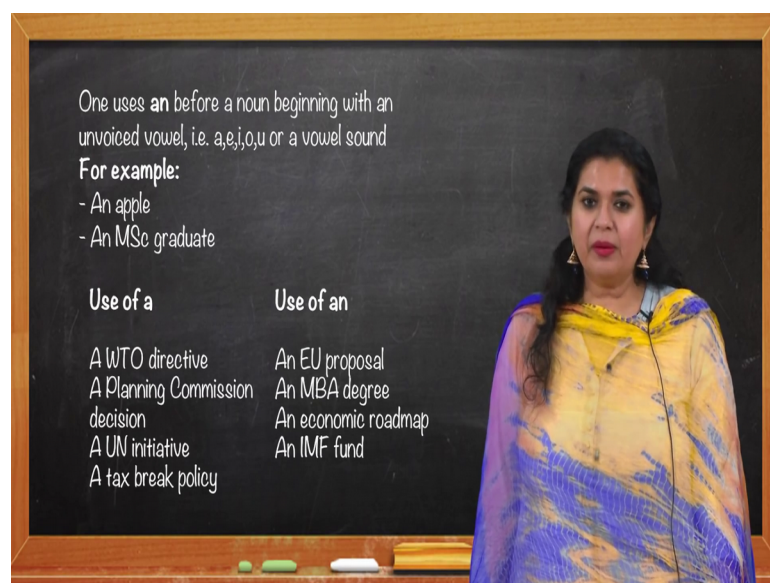


From here we will move on to use of indefinite articles a and an. Now remember these are something that we use all the time, but most of us keep making mistakes in this very elementary area of grammar; that is the articles.

Indefinite articles that is a and an, they are used before a noun; that is general or when is when its identity is not known. The general rule regarding the use of a and an is one uses a, when the succeeding word begins with a consonant or a voiced vowel; that is when the vowels have a consonant sound. For example, a car; c is a consonant; so, a European because although European starts with a vowel; e.

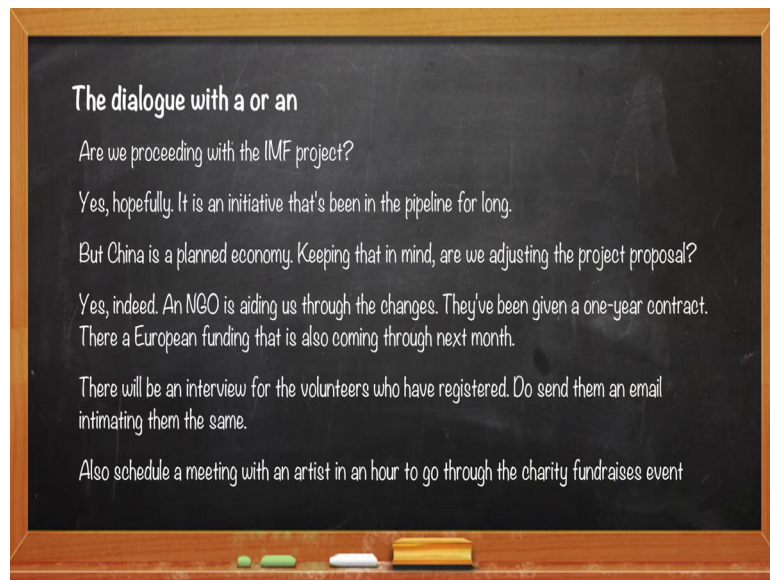
The pronunciation is the sound is you therefore, it is a consonant sound; therefore, we say a European, a University; not an University.

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And remember; one uses an before a noun beginning with an unvoiced vowel a, e, i, o, u or a vowel sound for example, an apple, an Msc graduate; unvoiced vowel; use of a, a WTO directive, a planning commission. So, these are the examples commission decision, a UN initiative, a tax break policy. and use of an; an EU proposal, an MBA degree, an economic road map, an IMF fund.

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So, here look at this dialogue and look at the usage of a and an. Are we proceeding with the IMF project? Yes, hopefully. it is an; so look at the way an is used; it is an initiative that is been in the pipeline for long. But china is a planned economy; keeping that in mind are we adjusting the project proposal? Yes indeed an NGO.

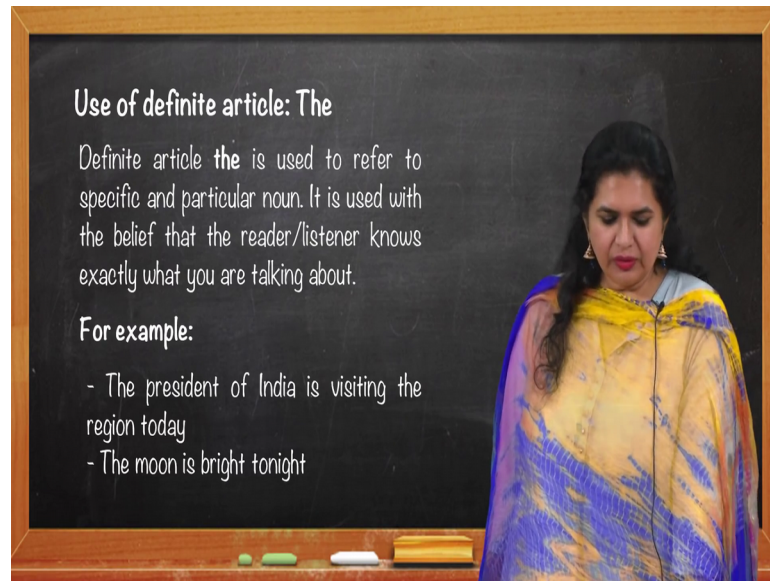
So, look at the way the way see an, but do not think why a NGO is not correct its, an NGO; because the sound is vowel sounded because then a an therefore, we go according to the sound. And therefore, an NGO is aiding us through the changes; they have been given, a 1 year contract.

Now, remember one year contract; so the sound is va; not a. So, therefore, a one year contract; there is a European funding that is also coming through next month. So, a European funding; there will be an interview for the volunteers, who have registered. Do send them an email intimating them the same. Also schedule a meeting with an artist an hour to go through the charity fund rises event.

So, in an hour to go through the charity; so hour is also an hour. So, it takes the indefinite article, takes the indefinite article an.



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And let us who want to look at the use of in a definite article that is the; definite article the is used to refer to specific and particular noun. It is used with the believe that the reader or listener knows exactly what we are talking about, what you are talking about. For example, the President of India is visiting the region today; the moon is brighten is bright tonight. We are going to do more of the definite article soon in our next class.

Thank you very much.