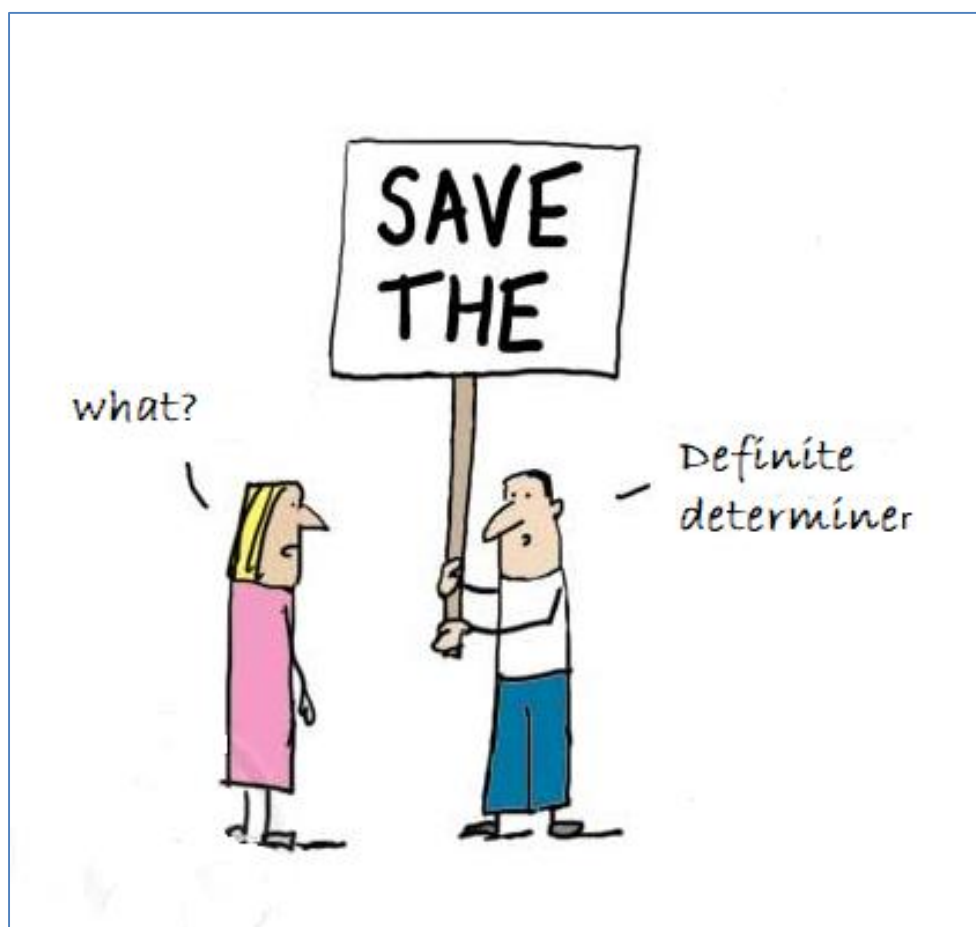


Introductory course to English Grammar

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First reflexion: Verbs

1. Read the extract below about the new social network called *Tik Tok* and answer the questions below.

For any *TikTok* novices out there, here's a quick start guide.

Set up your account

Once you've downloaded, they will send you. Once you click on the link the screen, you are ready to browse. It's very easy to get lost in the continuous stream.

If you want a video star and want to post your, you will need to create. It's worth noting that all Tik Tok profiles are automatically set to Public, meaning anyone can your profile and your posts.

Adapted from <https://thesocialnetwork.ie/what-is-tik-tok/>

- Is there anything strange about the text?
- What changes can you add to make the text better?
- What have the changes consisted in?



The obligatory elements that are selected by the verb are called **arguments**. If any of them is not present, the sentence is **ungrammatical**. The information that has the **number of arguments** a verb selects is contained in the **argument structure**. It gives information about the **number of obligatory elements** in a sentence with a given verb. A sentence is **grammatical** when the verb is accompanied by all the elements it requires. If this does not happen, or if there are more elements than the ones required by the verb, the sentence is **ungrammatical**. Ungrammatical sentences are marked with an asterisk (*) at the beginning of the sentence.

2. Have a look at the sentences below and answer.

- Do all verbs have their complements? To answer this, consider sentences (a) and (f).
- Which sentences are grammatical and which ones ungrammatical? Mark the ungrammatical ones with an asterisk.
- Compare sentences (e) and (f). Does *sing* have its obligatory elements in both of them? What is the difference between them?

- John uploaded a video a song on TikTok.
- John gave a like to Marie's post.
- John gave to Marie's post.
- Marie sang.
- Marie sang a song.
- Marie sang a dog.



The verb also imposes restrictions on the **type** of complements it can select. That is to say, the verb and its complement must have a particular **semantic relationship** for the sentence to make sense. This information of the **kind of arguments** a verb can select is called **thematic structure**. For example, a

sentence like *Marie ate a shoe* is correct if we just consider the number of elements this verb selects. However, there is a problem with the **meaning (semantics)** of the sentence. The verb *eat* only accepts “edible objects” as complements.



Are your conclusions also true for Spanish? Think of examples to discuss these concepts.

3. Analyse the sentences below: identify the main verb and its arguments (obligatory elements). Are all the elements present in the sentences complements?

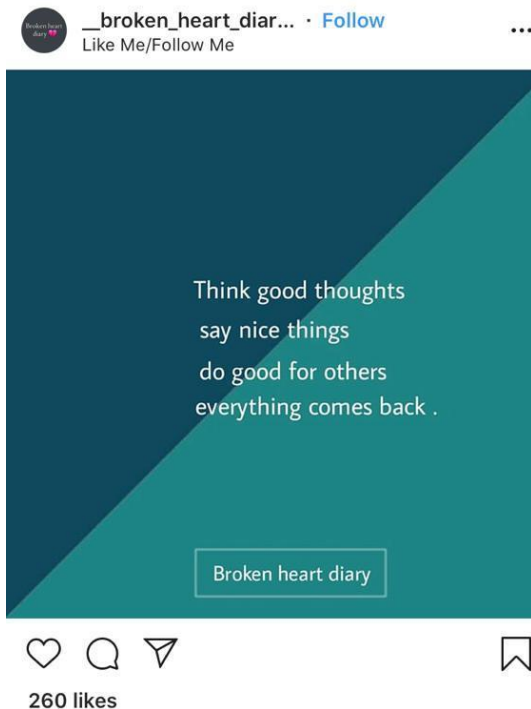
- a. Tom sent a message to Katy yesterday.
- b. During lessons, Marie checked her emails.
- c. Marie recorded a song to share on Instagram.
- d. Marie put the camera on the table.
- e. John laughed a lot in the meeting.

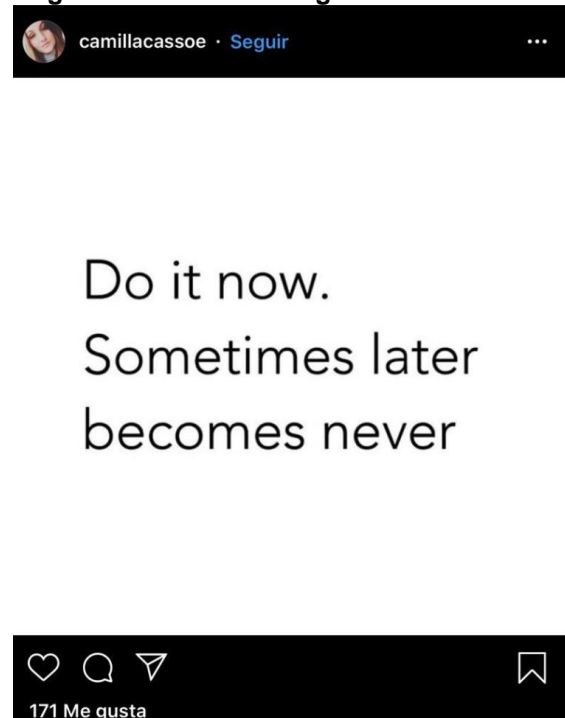


Some other **non-obligatory** elements can appear in the sentence. These elements are not complements. They are called **adjuncts**, and their function is to add extra information to the sentence. If they are not present, the sentence is still grammatical because the argument structure of the verb is still complete.



The following images contain real quotes in English. What can you say about them in relation to what we have discussed so far? Have they got any problems in relation to argument structure?





4. Analyse the sentences below. To answer the questions consider the argument and thematic structure of the verbs and the difference between complements and adjuncts.

a. What can you notice in the sentences in set (1)? Are both possible in English? Do they comply with the argument structure of the verb?

b. Look at set 2. State whether the sentences below are grammatical or ungrammatical.

Set 1

a. Pat never reads.

b. Pat never reads the newspaper.

Set 2

a. Mary never drinks on weekdays.

b. Susie likes a lot.

c. Mark watched last night.

d. Mary watched TV.

e. Millie heard.

5. Read the extract on *Different steps to become popular on TikTok*.

Different steps to become popular on TikTok

1. Click clothes related to the song to find popular trends.

2. Watch the look of your room in the trending section at the beginning of every day to see if there are any new songs that users are interested in.
3. Make the “Discover” button everyday to gain followers.
4. If you don't have crazy ideas, choose the simple sing-along videos.
5. Wear filters. Users are more likely to click your video.
6. Change the first 10 TikToks by changing the colour of the lights or adding some posters.
7. Add one video to make your videos look more attractive or to create different effects.

[Adapted from <https://www.wikihow.com/Become-Popular-on-TikTok>]

- a. What can you notice about the text? Does the text make sense? What problems can you spot?
- b. Find the main verbs in each step and reorganize the text by identifying the correct complement for each one.

Extra clue: All the arguments are mixed up.

You do not need to add anything extra.

Nouns and Adjectives

1. In the following groups of words, identify the root of the different lexical items and the affixes attached to them. What types of affixes can you identify in the different words? Do they change the category of the words?

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1.a. build | b. builder | c. building |
| 2.a. possible | b. impossible | c. possibility |
| 3.a. uncomfortable | b. discomfort | c. comfort |
| 4.a. predict | b. unpredictable | c. prediction |
| 5.a. visit | b. visitor | c. visitation |

2. WORD FORMATION



a. **CREATING NEW TRENDS.** Choose 3 words you know in English and use them following Spanish rules. Pick any English word you know and propose its Spanish use. Of course they do not need to be productive in Spanish now. Explain what they refer to.



b. Look at the following word bases and add affixes to form new words. You can add either prefixes or suffixes.

1. music (adj) _____
2. read (verb) _____
3. bed (noun) _____
4. cool (adj) _____
5. teach (noun) _____
6. friend (noun) _____
7. friend (adj) _____
8. friend (verb) _____

3. Are the following words simple or complex?

- a. members b. priority c. twitter d. influencer e. social f. surf g. posts

If you have difficulty deciding whether particular words are simple or complex, explain why you find them problematic.

- a. Do all suffixes provide the same type of information?
- b. If added, is there a change in meaning in the word that is formed?
- c. What type of information does each one provide?



Complex words can take one or more affixes. There are two types of affixes. Affixes that change the word category, add substantial meaning, or both are called **derivational affixes**. Affixes that do not change the category of the word but rather change the form of it so that it fits into different grammatical contexts are called **inflectional affixes**. These affixes add grammatical information about person, number, gender, tense, etc.

Derivational suffix: build - **builder**; controversy-**controversial**.

Inflectional suffix: **actor** - **actress** (gender); post - **posted** (tense); watch - **watches** (number).

These provide useful **word-internal information** that can help you determine the **word class** or **category** a word belongs to.

4. COMMON AND PROPER NOUNS

a. **Classify the nouns into common or proper nouns. What is the most salient difference you can notice?**

1. WhatsApp is an ad-free mobile application.
2. Mark Zuckerberg is the creator of Facebook.
3. FaceTime is another app that is exclusive to iPhone users.
4. I follow Billie Eilish on Instagram.
5. Tik Tok is a new social network. This network allows you to post videos.

b.  **What can you notice about the way in which these proper nouns are used?**

1. The Youtube I have on the phone does not have ads.
2. What happened to the Mark Zuckerberg of December 2015 who told his Muslim employees that he would “fight to protect your rights and create a peaceful and safe environment for you”. [Taken from: <https://theintercept.com/2019/12/07/facebook-mark-zuckerberg-muslims-islamophobia/?comments=1>]
3. Everyone is waiting to see the Disney of the future.



Nouns are expressions that are used to denote the world. **Proper nouns** make **explicit reference** to a specific entity in the world and they are always **referential**. On the contrary, **common nouns** need to be specified to refer to a particular entity in the world. That is, while the proper noun Mark Zuckerberg refers to a clear identifiable entity in the world, this is not the case for common nouns. For them to become referential expressions, they need to be specified with **determiners** (this, my, the) or **quantifiers** (another, one, many). The common noun *car* does not denote a specific entity unless it is part of a bigger phrase. For example, *my car*, *this car*, *the car*. All these denote different cars in the world. Exercise (b) forces us to make a distinction between **proper names** and **proper nouns**. When used with either a determiner or quantifier, they look like common nouns and do not have a fixed referent.

5. **NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES. Translate the following sentences into English. What differences can you observe in relation to the nouns and the adjectives?**

1. Los profesores jóvenes están interesados en el uso de artefactos tecnológicos en el aula.
-

2. HealthMap te ayuda a tomar decisiones correctas y saludables para tu alimentación.
-

3. Google maps es una de las aplicaciones más útiles para los viajeros.

4. Las nuevas aplicaciones diseñadas para comprar desde la comodidad del hogar son muy populares.

a. What is the main difference in the order of adjectives and nouns in English and Spanish?

b. What other difference can you spot?



Adjectives are words that describe or classify nouns. Depending on the language, they occupy different **positions** in relation to nouns. In Spanish, adjectives usually come after the noun. On the other hand, in English, adjectives usually go before the noun they describe. But this is not the only difference in relation to adjectives in English and Spanish, since they also have other discrepancies. For example, in Spanish, adjectives contain the same information as regards person, number and gender as the noun they modify (as shown in all the sentences in ex. 5). In other words, the adjective **agrees** with the noun in person (first, second or third), number (singular, plural) and gender (feminine, masculine). However, there is no explicit **agreement** between adjectives and nouns in English. That is to say, no inflectional affixes attach to the adjectives in English. The adjective remains the same irrespective of the grammatical information the noun contains.

6. INTEGRATION. Look at the text below and classify the nonsense words into ADJECTIVES or NOUNS.

Ladies and gentlemen, mobos and tramps,
cross-eyed mosquitoes, and bow-legged ants,

I come before you to sit behind you
and tell you a story I know nothing about.

Admission is free, so pay at the door,
pull out a chair, and sit on the floor.

One yainy day in the middle of the night,
two hippous boys arose to fight.

Back-to-back, they faced each other,
drew their quowns and shot each other.

A croushal man shrieked at the gright,
and a lame man danced at the pranctic sight.

A deaf policeman heard the poisance
and came to kill the two yurking boys.

If you don't believe this memment is true,

[Adapted from <http://playgroundjungle.com/2009/12/ladies-and-gentlemen-hobos-and-tramps.html>]

Part 3. Subject and Predicate

1. HOW DO YOU SAY?

- a. Translate the sentences into English.
- b. Separate your English version into subject and predicate.
- c. How can you identify the subject in the sentences?

- 1. Hoy llovió todo el día. _____
- 2. Hay dos nuevas publicaciones en mi muro. _____
- 3. A mi me encanta el helado. Es riquísimo. _____
- 4. Son las 3 de la tarde. _____



Key words for theoretical explanation:

implicit - explicit - agree- subject- verb- English- Spanish

2. SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT. Indicate which sentences are ungrammatical and explain why.

- 1. It don't matter what you post but when you does it.
- 2. Whatsapp doesn't show advertisements.
- 3. Their father love Facebook..
- 4. My friends likes all my posts.
- 5. Spotify gives you a three-month trial.