



## COMMON MISTAKES IN ENGLISH GRAMMAR AMONG NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS

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**Abstract.** *Learning English as a second language presents numerous challenges for non-native speakers. While vocabulary acquisition may be relatively straightforward, mastering English grammar requires an understanding of complex rules, irregular structures, and idiomatic expressions. This article explores the most frequent grammatical mistakes made by non-native speakers, their causes, and practical strategies for overcoming them. The study is based on linguistic research and practical observations, highlighting errors in verb tenses, prepositions, subject-verb agreement, articles, and sentence structure. Additionally, the influence of a speaker's native language interference, overgeneralization of rules, and direct translation is examined. The article concludes with effective strategies for learners, including grammar drills, immersive learning, and digital tools to improve grammatical accuracy. The findings will be useful for English learners, teachers, and linguists studying second-language acquisition.*

**Keywords:** *English grammar mistakes, non-native speakers, verb tense errors, subject-verb agreement, article misuse.*

### INTRODUCTION



English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, serving as a global lingua franca in business, science, and international communication. However, learning English grammar poses significant challenges, particularly for non-native speakers whose first languages differ structurally from English.

Many errors arise due to differences in grammar rules, word order, and pronunciation between English and a learner's native language. Other common causes include:

Overgeneralization – applying English grammar rules too broadly.

Direct translation – translating word-for-word from a native language to English.

Lack of exposure – insufficient immersion in English-speaking environments.

This article categorizes and analyzes the most frequent grammatical mistakes among non-native speakers and suggests effective solutions for improving accuracy in spoken and written English.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

English has a complex tense system, and non-native speakers often struggle with choosing the correct tense.

Table 1. Common Verb Tense Mistakes

Mistake	Incorrect Sentence	Correct Sentence	Explanation
Wrong use of past simple vs. present perfect	I have seen him yesterday.	I saw him yesterday.	"Yesterday" requires past simple, not present perfect.
Incorrect present continuous	I am knowing the answer.	I know the answer.	Stative verbs (know, love, hate) do not use continuous forms.





Future tense	I will go to school every day.	I go to school every day.	"Every day" indicates a habitual action, requiring the present simple.
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◆ Reason for mistakes: Many languages have fewer tenses than English, leading to confusion when distinguishing between past, present, and future actions.

◆ Solution: Practice timeline exercises to visualize time expressions and their corresponding tenses.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the most persistent issues among non-native speakers is misalignment between the subject and verb, especially with third-person singular subjects.

Common Mistakes:

✗ She go to school every morning. → ✓ She goes to school every morning.

✗ The news are good today. → ✓ The news is good today.

◆ Reason for mistakes: In some languages (e.g., Mandarin, Turkish), verbs do not change based on subject pronouns, making it difficult for learners to remember this rule in English.

◆ Solution: Use gap-fill exercises and repetition drills to reinforce subject-verb agreement.

Many non-native speakers omit or misuse articles because their native language either lacks articles (e.g., Russian, Japanese) or uses them differently (e.g., Spanish, French).

◆ Reason for mistakes: English requires "a" or "an" for indefinite singular nouns and "the" for specific references, while many languages do not have equivalent structures.

◆ Solution: Encourage learners to practice with real-world examples (e.g., reading news articles and highlighting article usage).





English prepositions are challenging because their meanings do not always translate directly from other languages.

Table 2. Common Preposition Mistakes

Mistake	Incorrect Sentence	Correct Sentence	Explanation
Wrong preposition with time	I was born in July 5th.	I was born on July 5th.	"On" is used for specific dates.
Incorrect use of "in" vs. "on"	She is in the bus.	She is on the bus.	"On" is used for public transport.
Wrong preposition in phrasal verbs	I am waiting to you.	I am waiting for you.	"Wait for" is the correct collocation.

◆ Reason for mistakes: Preposition usage in English is often idiomatic and must be memorized rather than deduced logically.

◆ Solution: Use flashcards and visual association techniques to reinforce correct preposition use.

## CONCLUSION

Mastering English grammar is challenging for non-native speakers due to structural differences between English and their native language, overgeneralization of rules, and lack of immersion. The most frequent mistakes involve verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, articles, prepositions, and sentence structure.

The key to overcoming these errors is consistent practice, exposure to native English content, and active correction strategies. By integrating grammar-focused exercises, digital learning tools, and real-world English usage, non-native speakers can significantly improve their grammatical accuracy and fluency.

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