



No. 2/2021

English Revisited: Tips, Tidbits & Tutorials

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial	2
Currently on Offer	2
Grammar: Subject-Verb Inversion	3
Brexit: Five Years On	4
Vocabulary: English as a Medium of Instruction	5



EDITORIAL

GLOSSARY

It hasn't escaped your attention.:

You have definitely seen something.

compounded:
made worse

The media reports about shortages of products due to the reopening of economies worldwide have probably not escaped your attention. In Britain this problem has been compounded by the after-effects of Brexit. Check out our intercultural section in this issue of our newsletter to learn more about the current situation in post-Brexit Britain.

A new semester has begun and many instructors will be either teaching in English or interacting with international students. Learn more about English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in our vocabulary section and find out about our offerings to assist you with teaching and working in English.

Finally, our grammar section highlights the less common structure of subject-verb inversion in English.

Happy reading!

John Nixon

Style Guidelines for Writing Official University Texts in English

The University Communications Department has in collaboration with the Language Center developed a number of style guidelines for publishing official university texts in English, e.g. websites and brochures. Please take a look at these useful tips when publishing university documents in English.

[Guidelines](#)

CURRENTLY ON OFFER

If you are interested in any of the following, please click on the links or [contact us](#).

- [Regular Courses](#)
- [Workshops for Master's and PhD Students](#)
- [Schreibwerkstatt / Writing Center](#)
- [Englischkurse für Uni-Beschäftigte](#)
- [Intercultural Offerings](#)
- [English as a Medium of Instruction](#) (Learn how to teach in English!)



Comments

Do you have any ideas for future issues or would like to give us feedback? Please contact us.



Subscription

Subject-Verb Inversion

The typical word order in an English sentence is Subject + Verb + Object (SVO). An inversion of the subject and the object is, however, found in questions.

Was the final exam difficult?

Where is she going?

What is unusual for a Germanic language is the fact that English does not employ a subject-verb inversion when a word other than the subject (often an adverb) is placed in first position.

Tomorrow I am going to finish my essay.

In the train there was a lot of commotion.

Compare this with German, a language in which the verb is typically in second position.

Morgen schreibe ich meinen Aufsatz zu Ende.

Im Zug war viel Trubel.

Whether the fall of Anglo-Saxon England in 1066 to the Norman French might have led progressively to this syntactic change is debatable.¹ It is true, nevertheless, that inversion can be found in Old English texts.

[Ǫa] aras he hal & gesund
then arose he uninjured and healthy²

Regardless of the origin and evolution of subject-verb inversion in English, it can be found in certain specific situations in modern-day English.

Conditional Sentences (Were/Had/Should)

In conditional sentences we can dispense with the word “if” by reversing the subject and object in a sentence. This only works if our verb is “were”, “had” or “should”.

Were she prime minister, she would balance the budget.

Had the class taken place in person, class participation would have been better.

Should you decide to buy property, make sure you choose a good location.

Limiting and Negative Adverbs (Not only.../Hardly/Barely/Seldom/Rarely)

Should we use a limiting or negative adverb at the beginning of a sentence, then we must use a verb/subject word order and in present or past simple active sentences the helping verb “do/

did”, which is similar to the verbal structures of questions.

Not only do I enjoy skiing, but I also like to play hockey. (present simple active)

Hardly had I finished running when it started to rain heavily.

Seldom did I drink wine when I was young. (past simple active)

No sooner was he finished with grad school than he moved back to his home town.

Never has this country faced such rosy prospects.

Adverbs of Place (Here/There)

If a sentence starts with the adverbs “here” or “there”, then sometimes we invert subject and object. This is limited to certain structures.

Here began his demise. (more literary)

There goes our train.

Such / So + adjective

Other instances where we use subject-verb inversion is with “such” and “so + adjective”.

Such was the state of affairs in the beleaguered country after 40 years of unrest.

So delighted were the children that they ran towards the toys.

As you can see, present-day English does place the verb before the subject in certain cases. However, these are limited to very specific situations and are usually only taught to advanced-level students, as these uses tend to have a more formal or literary touch.

John Nixon

Footnote

¹http://www.unige.ch/lettres/linge/syntaxe/journal/Volume5/ggg5_Haeberli.pdf

²taken from Saint Bede’s writings (ibid.)

GLOSSARY

commotion:
noisy disturbance

dispense with:
leave out

grad school:
short for graduate school, i.e. all Master’s and PhD programs at North American universities

rosy prospects:
a positive future
Note: *Perspektiven* (DE)
= prospects (ENG)

demise:
end or failure; death (sometimes)

beleaguered:
having many problems

Brexit Five Years On

GLOSSARY

infamous:
known because of its
bad qualities

withheld:
refused to give

bone of contention:
cause of dispute =
Zankapfel

acrimonious:
full of bad feeling

red tape:
bureaucracy; excessive
paperwork

plunged:
fell suddenly and a lot

tempting:
encouraging with some-
thing desirable

tax incentives:
tax reductions offered
by the government

hassle:
annoying problems

It has been more than five years since June 2016 when the UK voted by 52% to 48% to leave the EU in the infamous referendum, the majority of voters reacting favourably to the slogan of 'take back control'.

The referendum led to great division within the UK; England (53%) and Wales (52.5%) voted to leave the EU, whereas Scotland and Northern Ireland voted by 62% and 56% respectively to remain.

In an earlier referendum in 2014 the Scots had voted against becoming an independent country, but the nationalist Scottish National Party, using the Brexit referendum result as justification, have been since pushing for a second Scottish referendum. If the pro-independence party were successful, Scotland could then of course re-join the EU.

However, to hold a new referendum, they need the permission of the UK government in Westminster, which, to date, has been withheld. Brexit remains a great bone of contention.

The UK officially left the EU on 31 January 2020, ending 47 years of British EU membership and marking the first occasion that the EU had actually lost a member. There then followed a transition period where old rules remained in place. As of 1 January 2021, however, the UK is no longer part of the EU's single market and customs union and is free to sign its own deals with third countries.

The first post-Brexit trade deal was signed with Australia in June this year. Under the deal all UK import tariffs are eliminated and young people are offered greater opportunities to live and work in Australia.

The whole process of leaving the EU has been a complex, prolonged and acrimonious process. There have been many complaints about the increased bureaucracy and red tape involved in doing business with the EU, so much so that an estimated quarter of small UK firms have temporarily suspended all EU sales.

With the UK out of the single market, January of this year saw exports to the EU fall £5.6 billion and imports fall £6.6 billion, according to figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

In percentage terms, exports of goods to the EU have plunged by almost 41 % and imports of goods from the union by 29 %

Much more recently, there has been mass panic over empty supermarket shelves. Being outside the EU's single market and customs union has imposed bureaucracy and friction at borders that British businesses did not previously face. Ending freedom of movement for EU nationals has greatly reduced the labour pool from which many industries recruited. There is a great shortage of lorry drivers. The Road Haulage Association (RHA) estimated there is a shortage of 100,000 drivers in the UK including 25,000 EU truckers who returned home after Brexit.

On 25 September 2021 the government issued an emergency programme to issue temporary visas to 5,000 lorry drivers and 5,500 poultry workers until Christmas to help the fuel and food industries with shortages.

Marco Digoia, the head of the European Road Haulers Association, which represents more than 200,000 trucking companies across the continent, told the *Observer Newspaper* that "much more would be needed" than a temporary relaxation of immigration rules. "There is a driver shortage across Europe," he said. "I am not sure how many would want to go to the UK."

"Tempting European drivers back to the UK when they also have to face the reality of customs and border checks, all the uncertainties of Brexit ... We have to be realistic."

Higher salaries, and perhaps tax incentives, might help in the short term, he said, but "a lot of money is being thrown at this whole problem in Europe right now. There's a level playing field, and none of the Brexit-related hassle".

This situation highlights one of the key Brexit issues; in leaving the EU, the UK has only succeeded in making its own markets less attractive and trickier to access than before.

After EU membership of almost half a century, it will be years before the full effects of Brexit are clear, but for now the Brits are certainly still feeling the pain of separation.

Cheryl Stenzel

English as a Medium of Instruction

You may have - intentionally or unintentionally - stretched the truth when describing your English skill set. There is a difference between flourishing and just getting by. You may be able to follow a lecture in English, but would you be able to teach one? Moreover, would you be able to field challenging questions spontaneously, adapt your content to the needs of your students, and give meaningful feedback? Many people fear public speaking more than death, but teaching is even more daunting!

there is a roadmap, the students know what to expect in the lecture and are prepared to take notes on each of the topics introduced.

This technique is not only useful in the introduction, but also when moving from one point to the next:

This concludes our discussion of different methods of transportation. **Now let's move on to** how much each mode of transport is used.

This phrasing helps to reestablish where the lecture currently stands. It acts as a signal to the audience that they can move on to the next topic, and may indicate to them that they have questions that need to be answered about the topic. It also may help them recognize if there is something they do not understand and need to have clarified in an office hour. These words and phrases are a scaffolding, which holds up the main content of the course. There are, however, a number of additional challenges in teaching in English aside from lecturing.

The English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) program at the Language Center assists lecturers in adapting their materials to an English-speaking audience. The workshops in lecturing not only instruct in the use of the above-mentioned discourse markers, but also provide a safe space for practice with detailed feedback. These workshops can help lower your stress level when challenged by spontaneous questions. There are video examples available of student-teacher interactions that lessen the anxiety of professors when communicating clear expectations. We even offer one-on-one coaching if you have a specific request which is not currently covered in the topics on the website. https://www.sz.uni-stuttgart.de/en/teaching_in_english_center/

Gretchen Chojnacki-Herbers

GLOSSARY

flourishing:
developing or doing well

field questions (idiom):
answer a series of questions

daunting:
overwhelming

discourse markers:
words that provide a logical connection to a text

roadmap:
(here) direction

scaffolding:
supporting structure

Your language ability directly impacts aspects of teaching, including speaking spontaneously in office hours, evaluating student work, and presenting materials in a lecture or seminar. A helpful way of easing the comprehension for both you and your students is to use guiding words throughout your lecture. These guiding words give you marking points as you move along, and can be thought of as signposts along a path. Non-native English speaking students can benefit in particular from these key words to help them follow the lecture. They will be able to use the discourse markers as guides as you move from one topic to the next. Below is an example of these words in use:

Today's lecture will focus on the sustainability of infrastructure, in particular creating cities which encourage environmentally-friendly modes of transportation. **To do this** we will evaluate the transport infrastructure of an example city. **First**, we will look at the current situation evaluating the different methods of transportation. **Second**, we will examine the frequency of each mode of transport. **However**, not all modes of transportation are created equally; **therefore**, we will determine which environmentally-friendly mode of transportation is most appropriate for the current city landscape. **After that**, we will go over how to implement the plan in the city. **Finally**, we will debate whether it is better to adapt a current city infrastructure, or completely overhaul the infrastructure.

As mentioned above, discourse markers guide the students along a path that the lecturer will follow while establishing the topic of the lecture. The sequential words present a step-by-step structure to the overall lecture. Since