

INTEGRATED ENGLISH

For the

PRELIMINARY YEAR



A publication of the Department of
ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

7245

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION.**

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PART I

ELEMENTS OF GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS

Chapter 1: Concord in English	1
- M. T. Bisong	
Chapter 2: Phrasal Verbs	7
- Benedict Nchu	
Chapter 3: Transformation	15
- Itaya A. N.	
Chapter 4: Reading comprehension and Summary	27
- Benson O Nkanu	
Chapter 5: Academic Communication	57
- M. T. Bisong	
Chapter 6: Principles of Debate and Discussion...	75
- A. Ekpata	
Chapter 7: Introduction to creative writing	85
- Mrs. P. O. Ebam	
Chapter 8: Idiomatic Expressions and Proverbs	93
- Mrs. Jane Ojating	

PART II

ELEMENTS OF LITERATURE AND LITERARY APPRECIATION

Chapter 9: Introduction to the Language of Literature	103
- Agba Linus Agba	
Chapter 10: Analysing a Play	136
- Agba Linus Agba	

CHAPTER ONE

CONCORD IN ENGLISH
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In grammatical studies, concord refers simply to agreement. Ekeagwu (1988) writes that the principles of grammatical concord govern the relationship each word has with the other in a sentence. This includes the relationship between nouns, nouns and pronouns, nouns and adjectives, nouns and verbs etc.

From what has been stated before, it goes to show that words do not just exist in sentences. Their existence, the form and sequence are largely determined by other words in the sentence.

CONCORD BETWEEN NOUNS AND PRONOUNS

A subject in singular form has to go with a another noun or pronoun which is in singular form. Let us consider some examples:

1. She is a Lady
2. It is He
3. They all became believers

"Lady" agrees in case with "she", "he" agrees with "it", believers agree with "they" and "king" with "him".

APPOSITION

Apposition is a situation where a word or phrase is closely followed by another word or phrase and both refer to the same person or thing, for emphasis or clarity. In grammar concord requires in case with another noun or pronoun it is in apposition with e.g.

1. Chief Asinya, the family-head of Mbemkpen will send a representative.
2. The Chairman, Mr. Ransom has promised to speak for me. In the sentences above, "Chief Asinya" and "family-head" are in apposition since they refer to the same person and they agree in case. "Chairman" and "Ransom" are also in apposition and they also agree in case.

CONCORD IN ADJECTIVES

In using adjectives, the rules of concord must strictly be applied. A singular demonstrative adjective must go with or qualify a singular noun and a plural demonstrative adjective must also qualify a plural noun. Let us consider the following examples:

This dress (1a) These dresses

That boy (2a) Those boys

The demonstrative adjectives "This, that", agree in number with the singular nouns "dress, boy" while the plural

adjectives " These, those" also agree with the plural nouns "dresses, boys".

CONCORD IN VERBS

When we use the conjunction, "and" to link two or more nouns or pronouns, the auxiliary verb that follows after must be in the plural form. Consider the following sentences.

Alicebert and Ramsom are fine

The Governor and himself were prompted

My daughter and her husband have left for London

If nouns coming together form one unit of meaning, the singular form of the auxiliary is used. E.g.

Bread and Butter is good for me

Praying and fasting is helpful

twenty years is quite long

Generally speaking, a very agrees with its subject in person and number. When the subject is in the singular, the verb is in the singular and when the subject is in the plural, the verb is also in the plural. But there is no rule without exception and we want to look at the exceptions:-

A singular subject that is followed by a phrase introduced by "with" or "as well as" takes a singular verb

e.g.

The boy with his dog is here

The man accompanied by his wife and children is travelling to Mbemkpen by air.

The pastor with the treasurer was asked to represent the parish

Ese, as well as members of Nde for Christ is here.

But note that in the sentence members of Nde for Christ as well as Ese are here "Are" is used because the first mentioned subject is already in plural hence the plural form of the verb.

Note that when the subject is made up of two or more singular nouns and they are separated by either.... Or/ either.....nor the verb it takes has a singular verb e.g. neither many nor Helen is at fault.

Either James or Peter has the key.

If however one or both of the nouns is in plural form, the subject takes a plural verb, e.g. either the pastor or the members go there every Sunday.

When the subject consists of two or more pronouns or nouns of different persons separated by either ...or/neithernor, then the verb agrees in person with the noun or pronoun nearer or nearest it. This means that the noun or pronoun that comes immediately before the verb determines the form of the verb to be used. E.g.s

1. Either you or Enagu is to go
2. Neither Ese nor I am to be invited

This is done following the principle of proximity which demands that verbs agree in person with nouns immediately before them e.g.

1. No one except her village people support her. Collective noun denotes a group or collection of similar individuals

considered as one whole (collective). It is therefore regarded as being singular and as such takes a singular verb e.g.

1. The choir is singing well
2. The union has one on strike
3. The family is well represented.

When the numbers that compose the group denoted by the collective noun are thought of individually, then a plural verb is used e.g.

1. The police are difficult to deal with
2. The audience have dispersed

In this case, care should be taken to ensure consistency in regarding the collective noun as either plural or singular in any one sentence or situation.

It will be out of place for one to say you should have looked at a collective noun as a whole or as individuals making up the noun. But you will be easily faulted if at one point, you talk of the collective noun as a single unit then within the same sentence or situation you portray same as individual units. Consider the following sentence.

"The congregation is very excited since 'they' 'have' been given a new pastor". "Is" is singular but they, have are plural hence lack of consistency.

"The congregation is very excited since it has been given a new pastor" or

"The congregation are very excited since they have been given a new pastor. Consistency is the watch-word.

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