

Contemporary Grammar of English

Third Year 2020-2021

Asst. Prof. Mahdi Alasadi

First Semester

Week 2:

Lecture 5:

- Pro-forms
- Wh-words as a special set of pro-forms
- Yes/No Questions and Negation



Pre-teaching Activity

Consider the content of the following table:

Original	Modified
There were 20 children at the party and <u>all 20 children</u> got a present to take home.	There were 20 children at the party and <u>each</u> got a present to take home
She has already finished and <u>her brother has already finished, too.</u>	She has already finished and <u>so has her brother.</u>
There's a restaurant on the corner. We can meet <u>in the restaurant on the corner.</u>	There's a restaurant on the corner. We can meet <u>there.</u>
Almost everyone came to the dinner party but John didn't <u>come to the dinner party.</u>	Almost everyone came to the dinner party but John didn't <u>do so.</u>
I like to get up early in the morning because if I <u>get up early in the morning</u> I can get more work done.	I like to get up early in the morning because if I <u>do so</u> I can get more work done.

- Can you tell the difference between each pair of the above sentences?
- What is the reason(s) behind such modification(s).



Pro-forms

A Pro-form is a word or a phrase that can take the place of another word (or word group) in a sentence. Pro-forms help provide a means for referring to an expression without repeating it. So, they represent a means for syntactic condensation.

1. The most common pro-forms in English are pronouns. They replace NPs.
 - The poor girl didn't complain, although she was badly hurt.
 - Their new car was badly damaged when it was struck by a bolt.
 - Do you like this dress or that one?
2. There are pro-forms for spatial adverbials:
 - Mary is in London and John is there too.
 - If you look on the table, you'll find the book there.
3. There are pro-forms for temporal adverbials:
 - Mary arrived on Tuesday and John arrived then too.
4. There are pro-forms for other adverbials.
 - John searched the big room carefully, but the small room less so.
 - Peter works out regularly. I do too. (Is there any other pro-form here?)
 - Linda did the job well. Cathy did it similarly. (.....any other pro-form?)



Pro-forms

5. There are other pro-forms for noun phrases:

- Give me the pen or the pencil. Either will do.
- The guests complained to the manager and each had a point.
- The guests complained to the manager but none was satisfied.
- I'll have the chicken. I'll have the same.
- He wanted me to lend him the special tools. Those I could not find.

6. There are pro-forms for verb phrases.

- I never watch TV but they do.
- She took a holiday in France and her brother did in Spain.
- He called the waiter and so did I.



Wh-Words as a Special Set of Pro-forms

Wh-words can be considered as a special set of pro-forms which can be used to refer forward to what has not been stated. To highlight both the similarity and the contrast between other pro-forms and wh-words, we may suggest that whereas other pro-forms have a general meaning roughly statable as “We know what this item means/refers to, so we need not state it in full”, the wh-words have a meaning something like “It has not been known before what this item refers to, and so it needs to be stated in full”. Through the use of wh-words we can ask for the identification of the subject, object, complement, or an adverbial of a sentence:

- What was badly damaged?
- Where do your parents live?
- When did you raise the proposal?
- What did she hope they would play?

Wh-questions elicit information on a particular part of a sentence; subject, object, complement or an adverbial.



Yes/No Questions

Beside the Wh-questions, which elicit information on a particular part of a sentence; subject, object, complement or an adverbial, there are questions which seek a yes/no response in relation to the validity of the predication. Consider the following examples:

A: Do they pay you for the work?

B: Yes, they do.

No, they don't.

A: Will they pay you for the work?

B: Yes, they will.

No, they won't.

A: Are they paying you for the work?

B: Yes, they are.

No, they aren't.

A: Have they been paying you for the work?

B: Yes, they have.

No, they haven't.

