

CHAPTER SUMMARY

OBJECTIVE: To review and master the correct usage of final *-s* / *-es* and subject-verb agreement. To assist students in chipping away at the fossilized errors they have in subject-verb agreement and to help them self-correct.

APPROACH: Correct use of final *-s* / *-es* is a common problem among English language learners. Even though most students at this level “know” the grammar rules for using the final *-s* / *-es* suffixes, they remain unable to use these endings consistently in their own production, both oral and written. To help with self-monitoring and the development of correct patterns of production, this chapter focuses on final *-s* / *-es* and singular and plural distinctions, beginning with a review of some rules for spelling and pronouncing the final *-s* / *-es* suffixes. The main sections deal with the problem of number: quantities and various aspects of singular-plural agreement between subject and verb.

TERMINOLOGY: The term “expressions of quantity” is used for any quantifier (e.g., *some of*, *a lot of*, *several of*, *two of*), determiner (e.g., *no*, *each*, *every*, *some*, *any*), or predeterminer (e.g., *all*, *both*) that expresses amount or size.

PRETEST. What do I already know? Page 78.
Time: 5 minutes

- Give students a few minutes to read the direction line and select which sentences are incorrect.
- Encourage students to read aloud to themselves rather than simply look for errors. They will develop good self-correction instincts if they hear the sentences in their heads.
- Review as a class.

► **EXERCISE 1.** Warm-up. Page 78.
Time: 5 minutes

- Read the direction line and have students complete the exercise as seatwork, checking the appropriate boxes.
- Discuss the role of the *-s*.

CHART 5-1. Final *-s* / *-es*: Use and Spelling. Page 79. Time: 10 minutes

Most students are probably well aware of the elementary grammar in this chart but still sporadically or even frequently omit final *-s* / *-es*. This chart seeks to reinforce students’ awareness of *-s* / *-es* by a review of rules and an emphasis on oral production.

Encourage correct production of final *-s* / *-es* by exaggerating your own correct pronunciation. Remind students that mistakes with this basic point may make their accent sound more “foreign” than it would otherwise sound. Most adult learners speak an accented English, but most also want to minimize their accents. By becoming vigilant about the correct pronunciation of final *-s* / *-es* and self-correcting as much as possible, students can minimize their own accents.

- Begin with the Use section of the chart.
- Present the endings systematically—first the nouns in (a) and then the verbs in (b).
- Write the sentences from the chart on the board, and then co-create example sentences with your students. For example:
Abdul collects antique books.
English classes interest us.
Angelo enjoys his classes.
Hye Pak works as an engineer.
- Next, review the Spelling section with your students, going through items (c)–(f) one by one.
- Ask students to add to each group of words and related spellings.
- Though the chart focuses on use and spelling, spend time reviewing pronunciation as well. An understanding of pronunciation will support students’ ability to use the words correctly.

Expansion (pronunciation)

Write the three symbols /s/, /z/, and /əz/ on the board. Model the sounds. As you work through the chart and following exercises that follow, point to the appropriate symbol when discussing a particular pronunciation to help those students who may not be able to hear the differences yet.

Present each ending and its particular pronunciation systematically, using your students' lives as a context for these sentences. For example:

Pavlo likes books, movies, and especially comedies.

- Highlight or underline the -s endings:

Pavlo likes books, movies, and especially comedies.

Point out that the final -s is pronounced differently after different nouns. For example, after *book* (a voiceless ending sound /k/, the -s is pronounced like /s/. After *movie* (a voiced ending sound, /i/[ee]/), the -s is pronounced like /z/.

Have students repeat each sound after you.

► EXERCISE 2. Spelling. Page 79.

Time: 10 minutes

- Give students time to work through the exercise and choose whether -s / -es is needed.
- Ask students to not only identify and explain the correct choice but also to pronounce the word by creating sentences using the words.

► EXERCISE 3. Grammar and pronunciation. Page 79. Time: 10 minutes

- Have students work in pairs.
- Ask students to expand on this exercise by also adding another noun / verb phrase (one not already included in the exercise).
- Discuss as a group.

► EXERCISE 4. Let's talk. Page 80.

Time: 10 minutes

- Have a student read the direction line aloud.
- Ask students to explain the meaning of the term *proverb* and to share a few proverbs from their culture / language.
- Write students' proverb contributions on the board.
- Ask students why plural nouns are used, leading them to the conclusion that it is due to the generality described in a proverb.
- Discuss what proverbs they know of that have similar meanings.

Optional Vocabulary

challenging	march
security badge	broth
itch	early bird
hiss	

► EXERCISE 5. Warm-up. Page 80.

Time: 5 minutes

- Ask students which words determine if the verb is singular or plural.
- Explain that the first noun they see, the noun before any preposition, is the actual subject of the verb.

CHART 5-2. Basic Subject-Verb Agreement. Page 80. Time: 10 minutes

This entire chart is review for students, and the concept of subject-verb agreement is one they will be able to discuss readily. It is very straightforward. Remind your students that though they intellectually know that subjects and verbs must agree, because many subjects are presented as nouns in phrases with both plural and singular nouns, it can be hard to maintain accurate agreement.

The grammatical term "third person" refers to the following pattern:

Singular

I = the person who is speaking, the "first person"

you = the person who is being spoken to, the "second person"

he/she/it or singular or noncount noun = the person or thing that is being spoken about, the third person

Plural

we = the speaker and included persons, the "first person plural"

you = all persons who are being spoken to and included in the audience, the "second person plural"

they or plural noun = all people or things that are being spoken about, the "third person plural"

- Using your students as topics, write a simple present tense sentence on the board. For example:

Hassan works for his father.

- Draw an arrow from the singular subject to the verb it determines and highlight the verb's third person -s ending.

*Hassan works for his father.*

- Diagramming is particularly helpful when presenting subjects followed by prepositional phrases, adjective clauses, or gerunds. You can exaggerate subject-verb agreement by writing a long sentence that begins with a subject followed by a prepositional phrase (or adjective clause) that contains both singular and plural nouns. Underline the subject and then highlight the many nouns before the verb appears. For example:

The essay in the school newspaper about the original candidates for the presidency of the United States in 2016 was too long.

- Write a few complex sentences on the board. For example:

The apples picked by Yessiana's son are tart.

Memorizing English phrasal verbs helps students recognize them.

The *theories* first discussed by Watson and later taken up by his partner, Crick, *were* groundbreaking.

- Ask students to come to the board and diagram the sentences.
- Have students read the sample sentences included in the chart aloud, and review the notes on the right as a group.

► **EXERCISE 6.** Speaking or writing. Page 81.
Time: 10 minutes

- Put students into pairs.
- Ask students to first complete the sentences with what first comes to mind, and then to write the completed sentences as revealed by their partner.
- Remind students that because the quantifier is singular, the verb must be also.

► **EXERCISE 7.** Looking at grammar. Page 81.
Time: 10 minutes

Students must be able to identify the grammatical subject before selecting the correct form of the verb. The grammatical subject may or may not be the logical subject. Subjects with *each* (e.g., *each man and woman, every teacher in the school, etc.*) may seem plural to students. These expressions refer to more than one person, but because they use the word quantifiers *each* and *every*, they refer to many but one by one. The concept of *each* and *every* is singular and therefore, the verb must also be.

- Read the direction line.
- Have students complete the exercise on their own as seatwork.
- Correct as a class, and put any challenging items on the board for diagramming and discussion.

► **EXERCISE 8.** Grammar and listening.
Page 82. Time: 10 minutes

- Be provisioned by having the audio ready to play.
- Read the direction line aloud, and have students complete the exercise with the anticipated correct form of the verb in parentheses.
- Play the audio.
- Review as a class.

Optional Vocabulary

universe	curtain
syllabus	adrenaline
protected	hormone
retirement home	release
lettuce	seek out
produce	parachuting
waterfall	exhilarating
kayak	
somersault	

► **EXERCISE 9.** Warm-up. Page 82.
Time: 5 minutes

- Do the tasks in the direction line with your class.
- Remind students of the previous chart and the discussion of what constitutes the *real subject* of each sentence. Remind them that the real subject precedes the first preposition they see, and that these nouns, collective nouns, often have singular grammar.

CHART 5-3. Collective Nouns. Page 82.
Time: 10 minutes

- Begin by writing a sentence about your class on the board. For example:
My class is very intelligent and motivated.
- Ask students to count off how many people are in the class. Once they have given you the number, ask them why, with that number of students, the verb with *class* is singular.
- Explain that *class* is a collective noun, and write the words *Collective Nouns* on the board as a header.
- Ask students to take turns reading sentences (a)–(d) on the left side of the chart. Explain that though different in British English, these words are singular in American English.
- Ensure that students understand the meaning of all the collective nouns in the list at the bottom of the chart.
- Ask different students to take turns reading sentences (e)–(h) aloud. Spend time explaining that *members* is implicit, and it is with this implicit inclusion—and thinking of the group members rather than the group as an entity—that plural grammar can be used. Don't spend too much time on this, however, as it is subtle and students may not be able to easily discern the difference.

► **EXERCISE 10.** Looking at grammar.
Page 83. Time: 5 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Have students read the sentences aloud so that they can hear the lack of agreement. This is critical because it is hard to only “see” agreement errors.

► **EXERCISE 11.** Looking at grammar.
Page 83. Time: 5–10 minutes

- Remind students of the lower half of Chart 5-3.
- Explain that if they can add *members*, they will see a third person plural verb.
- Review as a class.

Optional Vocabulary

requested	performers
raises	coach
audience	improve
choir	paramedic(s)
committee	shifts

► **EXERCISE 12.** Warm-up. Page 83.

Time: 5–10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Remind students, again, about the real subject of any noun phrase coming before the first preposition.
- Discuss as a class which words determine whether a singular or plural verb is used.

CHART 5-4. Subject-Verb Agreement:
Using Expressions of Quantity. Page 84.

Time: 10 minutes

Make sure students understand that with *some*, *most*, *all*, and fractional expressions of quantity (*two-thirds*, *one-half*, etc.), students need to find the noun that follows the expression of quantity to understand whether a singular or plural verb is needed. Conceptually, this is exactly the opposite of what they have just learned and therefore, explaining this clearly should help. Take plenty of time with this. In contrast, the expressions *one*, *each*, and *every* always require singular verbs, no matter what precedes them.

- Ask one student to read item (a) and another one to read item (b) aloud.
- Ask the class how and why examples (a) and (b) are different. Point out—repeatedly—how the number of the noun after the expression of quantity governs whether the verb is singular or plural.
- Continue to work through the example sentences, having students read aloud (c)–(h) in pair fashion. Take time to reiterate and emphasize the noun that governs the verb with boardwork.
- Stress the consistency of the examples here.
- To further illustrate the point, write contrasting examples using your students' lives. The more tailored these and all examples are to your lives, the more engaging they will be for the students in your class. Below are some examples, but these can be expanded and added to greatly. Ask students to explain the differences in meaning.

Singular Verb

Some of the movie was too violent for Ree.

A lot of Jee-Hyung's notebook is full of grammar notes.

One-half of Marta's birthday cake is gone.

Most of Malek's weekend is busy.

Plural Verb

Some of the movies were too violent for Ree.

A lot of the students' notebooks are full of grammar notes.

One-half of Marta's birthday presents are gone.

Most of Malek's weekends are busy.

- Emphasize that the expression of quantity preceding the noun (e.g., *some of*, *two-thirds of*, *a lot of*, etc.) does not determine the verb. In these cases, it is the noun itself that matters and not the quantifier.
- Have students read the sentences and notes in the rest of the chart aloud.
- Provide clarification by referring to the notes, and write more example sentences on the board as needed.

► **EXERCISE 13.** Looking at grammar.

Page 84. Time: 5–10 minutes

Part I

- Remind students of what they have already learned about what determines whether a verb is singular or plural.
- Explain the direction line.
- Have students do Part I as seatwork.
- Review as a class.

Part II

- Have students choose the correct completions as seatwork.
- Review as a class.

Expansion

The United States is not the only country in love with cars and thus, the content of these exercises can be a springboard for natural discussion. Any and every time you can have an impromptu natural discussion that relates to a topic in a grammar exercise, you can engage students in the grammar more simply by discussing the topic and inviting spontaneous conversation.

Ask students if they have ever bought a car and whether they enjoyed the experience.

Ask students how important cars are in their country.

Ask students whether there is social status attached to buying a new or used car.

Explain that fairly or unfairly, car salespeople have a somewhat negative reputation in the United States. Ask if this is also true in students' countries, and invite them to discuss how car (or other salespeople) are perceived.

Ask students whether "green" cars are more popular than non-green ones.

Ask students what kind of cars they like and what they would look for in a car.

Optional Vocabulary

pre-owned	vehicle
rear view camera	reliability
markup	standard
dealer	models

► **EXERCISE 14.** Reading and writing.

Page 85. Time: 5–10 minutes

Part I

- Ask your students if they have ever heard of King Midas or the Midas touch.
- Give students time to read through the story and choose the correct verbs as seatwork.
- Have students take turns reading sentences aloud, and discuss the content.

Part II

- Give students time to write the elements and key sentences of a folktale from their country.

- Ask them to use simple sentences and focus on subject-verb agreement with quantity words.
- Put students into pairs to edit their stories.

Fluency Practice

- Have students tell their story to their partners and then to other students, in increasingly concise ways as described in the task.
- Ask students to then share a story he or she heard from another student with the class as a whole.
- Correct subject-verb agreement and expressions of quantity immediately and overtly, writing on the board as needed.

Optional Vocabulary

exceedingly	overjoyed	plead
greedy	elaborate	wand
luxury	feast	remorse
fortune	dismay	humble
satisfy	dawn on	generous
lovely	edible	ruler
treasures	embrace	contented
acquire	overcome	

► EXERCISE 15. Warm-up. Page 86. Time: 5–10 minutes

- Read the direction line to your students.
- Divide the board into two columns, headed with *There is* and *There are*.
- Have students contribute classroom items by name and create full sentences, according to whether the noun phrase given follows *There is* or *There are*.
- To challenge students, invite them to add abstract nouns to the two columns. For example:

There are laughter and happiness in our classroom.
There is no hatred in our class.

CHART 5-5. Subject-Verb Agreement: Using *There + Be*. Page 86. Time: 10–15 minutes

Like much of this chapter, this chart will serve as review for most students.

The structure *there + be + noun* conveys the idea that something exists. Make sure students understand that the meaning of this structure is very different from *They are there*. In this case, *there* refers to a particular physical location.

Help students understand that *there* doesn't have a clear meaning in and of itself. Only when it is used in reference to a particular location, does it become a preposition of place. The special structure *there + be + noun* means that something exists.

- Before looking at the chart, write example sentences on the board and then point to the noun featured to show that *there* in the first case is simply a prepositional location. For example:

The books are there.

(Meaning: specific books are in a specific location—there is that location.)

There are books in this classroom.

(Meaning: books can be found / exist in this classroom)

- Explain that in the second example above, the verb always agrees with the noun that follows *be*; *there* itself is neither singular nor plural.
- Ask a student to read items (a) and (b) from the chart, and review the corresponding notes.
- Write additional examples on the board.
- Explain item (c) and tell students when and where they are likely to hear this contraction of *there + is*.

► EXERCISE 16. Grammar and speaking. Page 86. Time: 5–10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Have students complete each item according to the direction line.
- Ask students to read their completions aloud and explain their completion based on their opinions or statistics they know.
- As much as possible, use this speaking exercise to invite more conversation that requires generalities using *there + be*.

Optional Vocabulary

resources	climate change	decade
due to	cures	

Expansion

In order to get students using the target grammar, have them describe random and unusual places without saying the actual place names. Before you go to class, write the names of certain places / organizations / buildings / facilities on them. Have students create *there is* and *there are* sentences in order to describe them (again without saying the name). After they have created sentences, students read them aloud to the class, and the class has to guess the place / building / facility / etc. based only on the *there is / there are* sentences. For example:

There are test tubes.

There is expensive equipment.

There are scientists and researchers.

There are usually a lot of computers.

What is it?

A laboratory.

Ideas for places:

<i>a laboratory</i>	<i>a hospital / clinic</i>
<i>a beach</i>	<i>a mechanic's workshop</i>
<i>a beauty salon</i>	<i>a pet store</i>
<i>a barber shop</i>	<i>a water park / an amusement park</i>
<i>a doctor's / dentist's office</i>	<i>a gym</i>
<i>a bar</i>	<i>a swimming pool</i>
<i>an Internet café</i>	<i>a grocery store</i>
<i>an embassy or state department office</i>	<i>an open-air market</i>

► **EXERCISE 17.** Listening. Page 86.

Time: 5–10 minutes

- Ensure that you are completely provisioned and have the audio ready.
- Read the direction line and note aloud.
- Write the phonetic version of *Is there* (as written in the text), and repeat it for students so that they can be prepared for the listening.
- Play the audio.
- Review the correct choices by referring to the listening script as needed.

► **EXERCISE 18.** Grammar and listening.

Page 87. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Review the direction line carefully.
- Have students underline the words that determine verb agreement and circle the correct verb, independently, as seatwork.
- Play the audio and use the listening script to review the correct verbs.

Optional Vocabulary

scattered	intent
property	commit
threat	subtleties
enter	distinctions

► **EXERCISE 19.** Warm-up. Page 87.

Time: 10 minutes

Because students are used to anticipating errors, it may be hard for them to accept that all of these sentences are correct. You may want to look at this warm-up while also presenting the chart on irregularities.

- Explain that all the sentences are correct.
- Encourage students to explain why certain nouns ending in *-s* are actually singular. Ask students what they notice about, for example, the *United Nations*. For example:

What do you already know about the United Nations?

It is an organization made up of many countries. It is one organization and therefore, its grammar is singular.

What do you already know about the phrase seven kilometers? In the context here, are we counting each of the kilometers or looking at a total distance? We are looking at a total distance and therefore, the grammar is singular.

- Explain to students that in some cases, they may simply need to learn that certain words (for example, *news*) always have singular grammar, whether they have a final *-s* or not. You can assure them that while this may not make sense to them, they will become used to the singular grammar of some words.

CHART 5-6. Subject-Verb Agreement: Some Irregularities. Page 88. Time: 10–15 minutes

Let students know that as these are irregularities, students are better off simply learning these exceptions by rote, than trying to envision one hard and fast rule. One way to present these irregularities (which, after all, are not in keeping with what students have learned so far about subject-verb agreement) is to diagram and highlight example sentences that are correct but in which the subject and verb do not agree.

- Write a few sentences featuring these irregularities on the board. For example:

Today's news were interesting.

Today's news was interesting.

- Connect plural subjects to their singular verbs overtly by crossing out the plural verbs and emphasizing the singular ones.

Today's news ~~were~~ interesting.

Today's news was interesting.

- Continue to emphasize that though this grammar is not expected, the irregularity is correct.

► **EXERCISE 20.** Looking at grammar.

Page 89. Time: 10 minutes

- Give students time to complete this exercise as seatwork.
- Review the correct verbs and diagram any challenging items on the board.

► **EXERCISE 21.** Game. Page 89.

Time: 10–15 minutes

Expansion

Each team has the opportunity to provide the correct answer to each of the statements given and based on students' general knowledge. In addition, extra points are gained by each team's coming up with accurate sentences about the other two choices presented in parentheses. Some teams or groups may not be able to come up with additional sentences, but it can be engaging for students to show their general knowledge and to create sentences on the spot. This expansion requires the teacher to know or prepare enough facts about all the choices for each item so that she/he can judge whether the additional sentences are correct. Have students work in teams, and keep score on the board. For example:

The English are famous for educational institutions like Cambridge and Oxford.

The Scots are famous for inventing golf.

The Scots are well known for traditional universities such as St. Andrews and Edinburgh.

The Scots are famous for their production of woolen goods and whiskey.

The Irish are famous for their great writers, like Keats and Wilde.

The Irish are known for their exaggerated style of story-telling.

Optional Vocabulary

respected	fatal	plenty
statistics	proud	structure
branch	training	mammals
infectious	unreasonable	

► EXERCISE 22. Let's talk. Page 90. Time: 10–15 minutes

Some of these discussion questions will be more productive than others. Because people find it easy to talk about themselves and their preferences, items 1 and 6 may work well with little elaboration. However, you may need to model what is meant by item 2 and/or ask leading questions in order to engage students in items 3 and 4. For example, items 3 and 4 can be rephrased:

What do books and supplies cost here / in Japan / in Saudi Arabia / in your country?

How far do most people commute to and from work or school here / in Brazil / in Russia / in your country?

- Have students work in small groups to respond to the questions.
- Circulate around the room assisting students as needed.
- Correct students immediately when you hear third person mistakes and/or subject-verb agreement problems.

► EXERCISE 23. Game. Page 90. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Have students remain in small groups from the previous exercise, or put them into new teams.
- Engage the class in the topic by first writing the phrase *Physical Exercise* on the board and asking students simple questions about whether they exercise, and if so, what kind of exercise they do, for how long, and how regularly.
- You can also ask students whether their own exercise habits are similar to what people in their country do or different.
- In teams, have students match the beginning of the sentences (from the left-hand column) with the appropriate completions on the right.
- Review as a class.

Optional Vocabulary

manageable	injury	buddy
commute	warm up	motivation
advantages	joints	elderly
familiar with	routine	

► EXERCISE 24. Let's talk. Page 90. Time: 10–15 minutes

These statements can be a great springboard for spontaneous discussions, but you may need to paraphrase some of the wording to help engage students.

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Ask students to first respond to the items, on their own, circling *yes* or *no*, according to their opinion.
- Now have students get into small groups to discuss their opinions. Emphasize that they should provide additional sentences supporting their opinions.
- Compare and contrast opinions among the group as a whole.

► EXERCISE 25. Check your knowledge. Page 91. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Give students a chance to locate the errors independently first.
- As you review, ask students to read the correct answers aloud in turn and explain how they arrived at their answers. For example:

What is the subject?

Does the subject agree with the verb?

- Ask students to give clear explanations to their peers.

Optional Vocabulary

immunizations	attend	dramatic
necessary	disturbing	comprehensive
suitable	budget cuts	worsen

► EXERCISE 26. Reading and writing. Page 92. Time: 10–15 minutes

Part I and Part II

- Engage students in the topic by asking them about their experiences in U.S. restaurants.
- Ask some of these general questions (along with those in Part II) to get the ball rolling before students read the passage. You can write these on the board:

Do you or do you not tip? Under what circumstances have you refused to tip? Have you ever given someone a very big tip?

What is the typical percentage to tip in a restaurant in your country?

In the United States, many university and college students wait tables and earn tips. Is this also true in your country?

What message do patrons give when they tip their servers, bartenders, cab drivers, hairdressers, etc.?

Are there any negative impacts of tipping those who provide services?

- Read the direction line for the passage to your students.
- Give students time to work through the passage for content, and to underline the words that determine agreement.

- Have students take turns reading aloud once they are finished, and as a class, discuss the words that determine agreement. Spend more time on those words that students find challenging.

Part III

- Ask students to begin writing about tipping practices (or any related subject) in class and complete this for homework.
- Circulate and help students get started, which is often the most challenging part of any writing assignment.

Part IV

- Remind students that every writer needs a good editor.
- Have students work on editing their own work or that of other students, using the list included.

Optional Vocabulary

common practice
custom
apps
mandatory service charge
valet
bellhops
concierge