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## ABC of Common Grammatical Errors

## List of entries involving system errors

For teachers of English, the ABC provides a comprehensive checklist of learners' grammatical errors, together with clear explanations of the relevant grammatical points. (See A note for teachers below.)

## Which errors are dealt with?

The ABC deals with the grammatical errors that learners make again and again. It covers errors in system grammar and errors in word grammar. System grammar includes such areas as subject-verb agreement, tense use, the passive, question forms. Word grammar, sometimes called 'usage', consists of rules that control the use of particular words. For example, we allow someone to do something, but we let someone do something (without to). We hope that someone will do something, but we wish that someone would do something. We open our letters (with a), but we open our mail (without a). We can say 'It seems that she likes you' but not 'She seems that she likes you'. System errors and word errors are combined in the ABC within a single alphabetical arrangement.

The ABC contains 'common' errors. A common error is one that is made frequently by learners of various language backgrounds. An error that is made, for example, only by Italian learners of English is not included.

The errors have been gathered from a large corpus of written texts produced by learners at intermediate and advanced levels of proficiency. In view of this proficiency range, some of the errors in the ABC may seem surprisingly elementary (e.g. 'She lives in Paris' instead of 'She live in Paris'). It should be remembered, however, that even advanced learners sometimes make basic mistakes.

The model of correct usage employed in the ABC is standard British English. Differences between British English and American English usage are described at the relevant entries.

## How do I find the information I need?

When you need information about a word error, you look for the information in the same way that you would look for it when using a normal dictionary. For