PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

23

Topic 23: Sentence Structure in English: Statements, Questions, Negations and Exclamations

Estructura de la oración en inglés: Afirmaciones, preguntas, negaciones y exclamaciones.

§

NOVIEMBRE DE 2026

Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

Índice

1. INTRODUCTION

2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE AND THE FOUR SENTENCE TYPES

- 2.1. Sentence, clause and the basic patterns
- 2.2. The four sentence types

3. STATEMENTS

- 3.1. Affirmative statements and the position of elements
- 3.2. Emphasis, inversion and other marked statements

4. QUESTIONS

- 4.1. Yes-no questions
- 4.2. Wh-questions
- 4.3. Question tags
- 4.4. Indirect and embedded questions, and other types

5. NEGATION

- 5.1. Sentence negation with not
- 5.2. Negative words and double negatives

6. EXCLAMATIONS AND THE IMPERATIVE

- 6.1. Exclamations
- 6.2. Other ways of exclaiming, and imperatives

7. ENGLISH AND SPANISH: CONTRASTS AND TYPICAL ERRORS

- 7.1. Statements
- 7.2. Questions
- 7.3. Negation
- 7.4. Exclamations

8. PEDAGOGICAL AND DIDACTIC IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. The place of the content in the curriculum
- 8.2. Principles
- 8.3. Classroom proposals

9. CONCLUSION

Fuentes

1. INTRODUCTION

Every sentence we utter is, at bottom, a small act: we assert, we ask, we deny, we exclaim. Compare "The bus is late", "Is the bus late?", "The bus isn't late" and "What a late bus!". The words are almost the same, yet the order, the verb forms and the intonation change, and with them the act we perform. The central idea of this topic is that English grammar uses a very small number of devices (word order, the auxiliary verb, the negative particle and a few special words) to turn one basic pattern into four different communicative functions.

This is a topic of great practical importance for a teacher of English as a foreign language, because these are the structures that a Spanish-speaking learner meets in the very first lessons and that remain fragile for years. I will first describe the basic structure of the English sentence and the four traditional sentence types. Secondly, I will examine statements and the order of elements within them. Thirdly, I will study questions in their different forms: yes-no questions, wh-questions, question tags and indirect questions. Fourthly, I will deal with negation, and fifthly with exclamations and the imperative. Sixthly, I will compare English with Spanish. Finally, I will consider the pedagogical and didactic implications for Secondary Education and Bachillerato, before drawing a conclusion.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted. The descriptive background comes from Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik's A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language (Longman, 1985); Rodney Huddleston and Geoffrey K. Pullum's The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language (Cambridge University Press, 2002); Douglas Biber, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, Susan Conrad and Edward Finegan's Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (Longman, 1999); and Michael Swan's Practical English Usage (Oxford University Press, fourth edition, 2016), the standard learner's reference. I have also consulted the English Grammar Today section of the Cambridge Dictionary and the grammar reference of the British Council LearnEnglish site. As for the legal framework, I rely on Organic Law 3/2020 (LOMLOE), Royal Decrees 217/2022 and 243/2022, and Extremaduran Decrees 110/2022 and 109/2022, together with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of the Council of Europe and its Companion Volume of 2020.