

130 MISTAKES STUDENTS DO (oh, sorry!) MAKE

130 Common Mistakes in English

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Mistakes and students go together. Otherwise, pupils would be teachers. English –a language of few infallible rules– is fertile land for blunders, which I have been listening to and committing for years. One day I started to keep a list of the most common slips and ended up with around three hundred. After eliminating the least frequent I listed the remainder, which you'll find below.



Even though I have strived to include the most common errors this list is arbitrary. I therefore apologise to those faults who feel their prevalence makes them belong here and to those who are in but consider themselves exceptional and would rather join another club.

This book has two parts. The first includes correct and incorrect examples. The second shows which ones are right.

Part 1: Which one is wrong?

1. Accused of	The man was accused of the murder. The man was accused with the murder.
2. Administrative	I work as an administrative at a co-operative. This is just an administrative problem.
3. Agree	Greta agrees with you. Greta is agree with you.
4. Alive & live	Only three people were alive after the accident. Only three people were live after the accident.
5. Alternate & alternative	We'll meet on alternate Mondays. Today, on the 11 th and on the 25 th . We'll meet on alternative Mondays. Today, on the 11th and on the 25th.
6. Alternative & alternate	Is this the only solution? Isn't there an alternate option? Is this the only solution? Isn't there an alternative option?
7. Among & between	The three boys divided the cake among themselves. The three boys divided the cake between themselves.
8. Angry & hungry	He's angry because he had an accident. He's hungry because he had an accident.
9. Anything & nothing	She can't see anything. She can't see nothing.

10. As & like	<p>He's an engineer but works as a driver. He's an engineer but works like a driver.</p>
11. Attempt & intend	<p>She tried to climb Mount Kilimanjaro last year but failed. This year she'll attempt it again. She tried to climb Mount Kilimanjaro last year but failed. This year she'll intend it again.</p>
12. Axis & axle	<p>Shall I write the figure on axis X or axis Y? Shall I write the figure on axle X or axle Y?</p>
13. Axe & axis	<p>My car wheels are held together by the axis. My car wheels are held together by the axle.</p>
14. Bad & badly	 <p>He reacts in a bad way. He reacts in a badly way.</p>
15. Badly & bad	<p>He reacts bad. He reacts badly.</p>
16. Be fifteen years old	<p>We are both fifteen years old. We have both fifteen years.</p>
17. Believe	<p>I don't believe anything she ever says. I'm not believing anything she ever says.</p>
18. Between & among	<p>France lies among Spain and Germany. France lies between Spain and Germany.</p>
19. Billion	<p>A billion is a thousand million in the USA. A billion is a million million in the USA.</p>

20.	Boring	I find the economics class boring. I'm boring at the economics class.
21.	Can	I can speak Swahili. I can to speak Swahili.
22.	Can't & mustn't	It can't be Silvia. It's too early! It mustn't be Silvia. It's too early!
23.	Casual	It was a casual meeting. We met by chance. We were expected to wear casual clothes so I didn't bring a tie.
24.	Certainly & surely	Unemployment is certainly rising. Look at these figures! Unemployment is surely rising. Look at these figures!
25.	Charge	 They charge the elephant onto the lorry. They charge the laptop on the mains.
26.	Comprehensible & comprehensive	The book is written in a comprehensible style. It is easy to understand. The book is written in a comprehensive style. It is easy to understand.
27.	Comprehensive & comprehensible	That was a comprehensible research paper. It covered the history of mankind. That was a comprehensive research paper. It covered the history of mankind.
28.	Constipated	I'm constipated. I should take a laxative. I'm constipated. I think I have a cold.

29.	Continually & continuously	<p>She's continually taking days off. She missed Monday, Wednesday and Friday last week.</p> <p>She's continuously taking days off. She missed Monday, Wednesday and Friday last week.</p>
30.	Continuously & continually	<p>The bell rang continuously and didn't stop for even a second.</p> <p>The bell rang continually and didn't stop for even a second.</p>
31.	Crash into	<p>He crashed a wall.</p> <p>He crashed into a wall.</p>
32.	Current & actual	<p>I always check news online because I like to be informed about current affairs.</p> <p>I always check news online because I like to be informed about actual affairs.</p>
33.	Dairy	<p>He works on a dairy farm.</p> <p>She writes on her dairy every night.</p>
34.	Deduce & deduct	<p>She deduced he was the murderer.</p> <p>She deducted he was the murderer.</p>
35.	Deduct & deduce	<p>We can either deduce taxes from your salary now or next year.</p> <p>We can either deduct taxes from your salary now or next year.</p>
36.	Depend from	<p>In a hierarchical organization employees depend from one boss.</p> <p>In a hierarchical organization employees depend on one boss.</p>
37.	Depend on	<p>My decision will depend of the</p>

<p>information I have. My decision will depend on the information I have.</p>	<p>38. Desert & dessert The Gobi desert is cold at night and warm during the day. The Gobi dessert is cold at night and warm during the day.</p>
<p>39. Dessert & desert Would you like apple pie for dessert? Would you like apple pie for dessert?</p>	<p>40. Diary He keeps a private diary. These are diary cows. They produce milk.</p>
<p>41. Dislike Mark dislikes modern architecture. Mark is disliking modern architecture.</p>	<p>42. Doctor My brother is a doctor. My brother is doctor.</p>
<p>43. Download & upload We must download the page from the server to our laptop. We must upload the page from the server to our laptop.</p>	<p>44. Enjoy I am enjoy the cinema. I enjoy the cinema.</p>
<p>45. Enjoy I enjoy my children. I enjoy with my children.</p>	<p>46. Everywhere He looked for the keys every place. He looked for the keys everywhere.</p>
<p>47. Except We'll finance all the new projects except for Joe's, which will be discontinued.</p>	

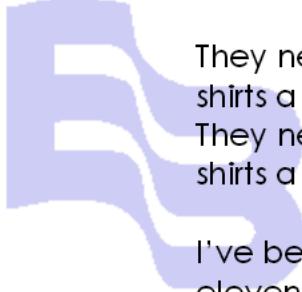
		We'll finance all the new projects except Joe's, which will be discontinued.
48.	Explain	Please explain me your theory. Please explain your theory to me.
49.	Familiar	I can't remember her face but her name does sound familiar. We have a large family so I invited several familiars to the wedding.
50.	Few & little	We need a few dollars to meet our savings goal. We need a little dollars to meet our savings goal.
51.	Flour & flower	You need flour to bake a pizza. You need flower to bake a pizza.
52.	Flower & flour	Most flours bloom in spring. Most flowers bloom in spring.
53.	Folder & carpet	I use a carpet to keep papers. I use a folder to keep papers.
54.	For & since	I've waited for three hours already. I've waited since three hours already.
55.	Good & well	This is a good book. This is a well book.
56.	Had better	You had better to visit the client tomorrow. You had better visit the client tomorrow.
57.	Hate	I hate her because she is mean. I'm hating her because she is mean.

58.	Intend & attempt	I attempt to attend university when I finish school. I intend to attend university when I finish school
59.	It's & its	It's going to snow. Its going to snow.
60.	Its & it's	The company pays its employees once a month. The company pays it's employees once a month.
61.	Job & work	I'm the company manager. It is my job to solve problems. I'm the company manager. It is my work to solve problems.
62.	Ladder & stairs	Shall I move the ladder under the chandelier so you can change the bulb? Shall I move the stairs under the chandelier so you can change the bulb?
63.	Large enough	This boat isn't large enough for all our family. This boat isn't enough large for all our family.
64.	Lay & lie	You must lay the table before they arrive. You must lie the table before they arrive.
65.	Lie & lay	He always lays down for a nap. He always lies down for a nap.
66.	Like	I like Picasso because he's a Cubist painter. I'm liking Picasso because he's a Cubist painter.
67.	Like & as	That product is very much as the one we developed.

		That product is very much like the one we developed.
68.	Listen	I always listen my boss. I always listen to my boss.
69.	Live & alive	NBC will broadcast the match alive. NBC will broadcast the match live.
70.	Load	They'll load the computer on the mains. They'll load the elephant onto the lorry.
71.	Look forward to	We look forward to meeting your partner. We look forward to meet your partner.
72.	Love	I love her more every day. I'm loving her more every day.
73.	Make a mistake	Andrew wrote this list so he would make fewer mistakes. Andrew wrote this list so he would do fewer mistakes.
74.	Many & much	Many people came today. Much people came today.
75.	Media & medium	Most of the media live from advertising revenue. Most of the medium live from advertising revenue.
76.	Medium & media	I think you should try another media. I think you should try another medium.
77.	Most	Most managers have arrived. Most of managers have arrived.

78.	Motorway	We drove through the motorway. We drove through the autoway.
79.	Much & many	Having much money is always better than having little money. Having many money is always better than having little money.
80.	Must	We must increase prices. We must to increase prices.
81.	Nothing	She didn't understand nothing. She understood nothing.
82.	Now & actually	He used to be a secretary. He's a manager now. He used to be a secretary. He's a manager actually.
83.	Officer & official	Could you please call a police officer? Could you please call a police official?
84.	Official & officer	This is an officer statement. This is an official statement.
85.	Parents-in-law	She loves her parents-in-law. She loves her fathers-in-law.
86.	Parking	I rarely leave my car at a parking lot because it's too expensive. I rarely leave my car at a parking because it's too expensive.
87.	People	Most people are interested in their health. Most people is interested in their health.
88.	Personal & personnel	I have a personal trainer. I have a personnel trainer.
89.	Personnel & personal	Where's the personnel department?

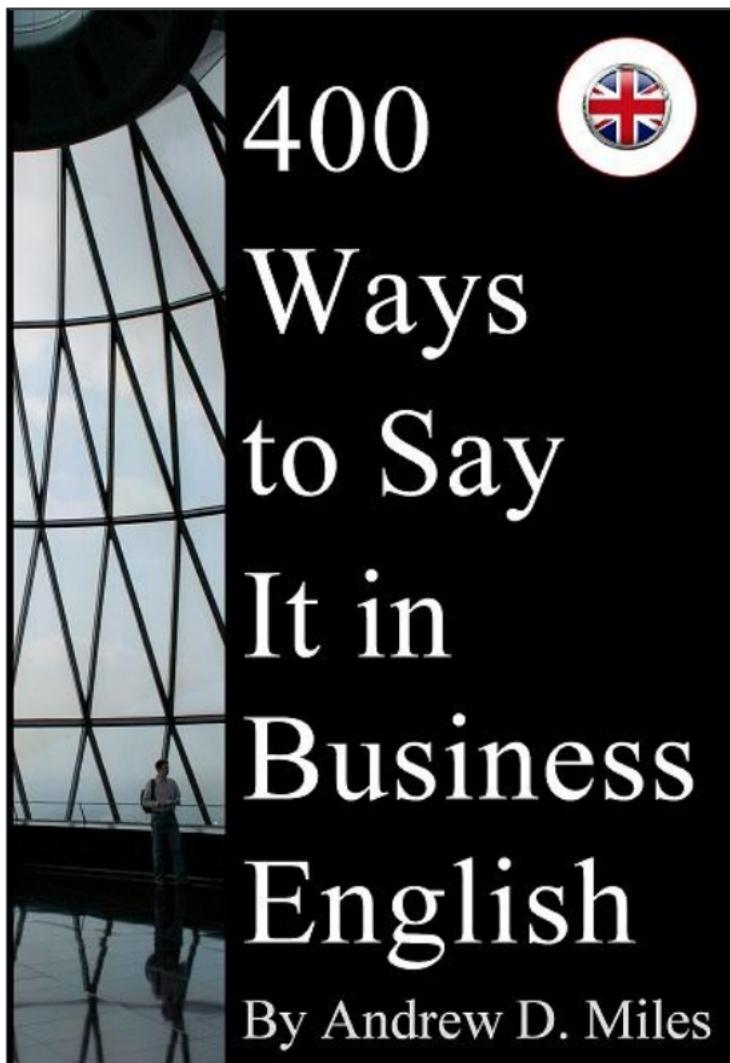
		Where's the personal department?
90.	Price & prize	The price of this shirt is twelve dollars. The prize of this shirt is twelve dollars.
91.	Prize & price	She's an excellent student and won the first price. She's an excellent student and won the first prize.
92.	Professor	Anthony is a university professor. He teaches Physics. Richard is a kindergarten professor. He teaches children.
93.	Raise & rise	Farmers raise cattle. Farmers rise cattle.
94.	Recipe	Do you have the recipe for Yorkshire pudding? The doctor gave me a recipe for more antibiotics.
95.	Rise & raise	Prices raise because of inflation. Prices rise because of inflation.
96.	Rob & steal	He robbed me. He stole me.
97.	Safe & secure	Is your neighbourhood safe? There are many robberies here. Is your neighbourhood secure? There are many robberies here.
98.	Salary & wage	The manager collects her salary monthly. The manager collects her wage monthly.
99.	Say & tell	He says that India is big. He tells that India is big.

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105. Since & from	I've been waiting here since eleven this morning. I've been waiting here for eleven this morning.
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107. Stairs & ladder	Walk up the marble ladder to reach the hotel lobby. Walk up the marble stairs to reach the hotel lobby.
108. Stake & steak	Our company owns a stake in Citibank. Our company owns a steak in Citibank.
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111.	Steak & stake	I always order my stakes well-done. I always order my steaks well-done.
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113.	Story & history	Can you tell me the Cinderella story tonight? Can you tell me the Cinderella history tonight?
114.	Straight & strait	Look straight ahead and you'll see the factory. Look strait ahead and you'll se the factory.
115.	Straight & straight	The ship crossed the Strait of Gibraltar. The ship crossed the Straight of Gibraltar.
116.	Suit & suite	All lawyers must wear suites at this office. All lawyers must wear suits at this office.
117.	Suite & suit	She stayed at her suite all day. She stayed at her suit all day.
118.	Tell & say	She never says me the truth. She never tells me the truth.

119. The reason why	She couldn't explain the reason why she was here. She couldn't explain the reason because she was here.
120. Think of	I'm thinking of moving to Australia. I'm thinking to move to Australia.
121. Times & per	Two per three equals six. Two times three equals six.
122. Two pounds' worth	I'd like two pounds' worth of sweets. I'd like two pounds worth of sweets.
123. Upload & download	We must upload the page from our laptop to the server. We must download the page from our laptop to the server.
124. Used to	 We used run a small company. Now it's grown rather large! We used to run a small company. Now it's grown rather large!
125. Wage & salary	Their salaries are between five and six dollars an hour. Their wages are between five and six dollar an hour.
126. Want to	I want that you contact the production supervisor. I want you to contact the production supervisor.
127. Well & good	She dances, sings and draws quite good. She dances, sings and draws quite well.

128.	Who & whom	Who is responsible for collections at this office? Whom is responsible for collections at this office?
129.	Whom & who	I'll send this note to who it may concern. I'll send this note to whom it may concern.
130.	Work & job	Writing the budget is hard job. I wish I didn't have to do it! Writing the budget is hard work. I wish I didn't have to do it!



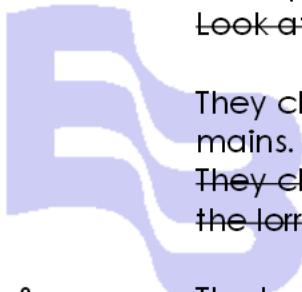
400
Ways to
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Part 2: Right and wrong

1. Accused of	The man was accused of the murder. The man was accused with the murder.
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19. Billion	<p>A billion is a thousand million in the USA. A billion is a million million in the USA.</p>

20. Boring	I find the economics class boring. I'm boring at the economics class.
21. Can	I can speak Swahili. I can to speak Swahili.
22. Can't & mustn't	It can't be Silvia. It's too early! It mustn't be Silvia. It's too early!
23. Casual	We were expected to wear casual clothes so I didn't bring a tie. It was a casual meeting. We met by chance.
24. Certainly & surely	Unemployment is certainly rising. Look at these figures! Unemployment is surely rising. Look at these figures!
25. Charge	 They charge the laptop on the mains. They charge the elephant onto the lorry.
26. Comprehensible & comprehensive	The book is written in a comprehensible style. It is easy to understand. The book is written in a comprehensive style. It is easy to understand.
27. Comprehensive & comprehensible	That was a comprehensive research paper. It covered the history of mankind. That was a comprehensible research paper. It covered the history of mankind.
28. Constipated	I'm constipated. I should take a laxative. I'm constipated. I think I have a cold.

29.	Continually & continuously	<p>She's continually taking days off. She missed Monday, Wednesday and Friday last week.</p> <p>She's continuously taking days off. She missed Monday, Wednesday and Friday last week.</p>
30.	Continuously & continually	<p>The bell rang continuously and didn't stop for even a second.</p> <p>The bell rang continually and didn't stop for even a second.</p>
31.	Crash into	<p>He crashed into a wall.</p> <p>He crashed a wall.</p>
32.	Current & actual	<p>I always check news online because I like to be informed about current affairs.</p> <p>I always check news online because I like to be informed about actual affairs.</p>
33.	Dairy	<p>He works on a dairy farm.</p> <p>She writes on her dairy every night.</p>
34.	Deduce & deduct	<p>She deduced he was the murderer.</p> <p>She deducted he was the murderer.</p>
35.	Deduct & deduce	<p>We can either deduct taxes from your salary now or next year.</p> <p>We can either deduce taxes from your salary now or next year.</p>
36.	Depend from	<p>In a hierarchical organization employees depend from one boss.</p> <p>In a hierarchical organization employees depend on one boss.</p>

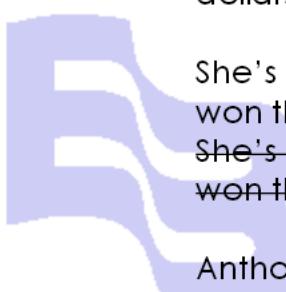
37. Depend on	<p>My decision will depend on the information I have.</p> <p>My decision will depend of the information I have.</p>
38. Desert & dessert	<p>The Gobi desert is cold at night and warm during the day.</p> <p>The Gobi dessert is cold at night and warm during the day.</p>
39. Dessert & desert	<p>Would you like apple pie for dessert?</p> <p>Would you like apple pie for desert?</p>
40. Diary	<p>He keeps a private diary.</p> <p>These are diary cows. They produce milk.</p>
41. Dislike	<p>Mark dislikes modern architecture.</p> <p>Mark is disliking modern architecture.</p>
42. Doctor	<p>My brother is a doctor.</p> <p>My brother is doctor.</p>
43. Download & upload	<p>We must download the page from the server to our laptop.</p> <p>We must upload the page from the server to our laptop.</p>
44. Enjoy	<p>I enjoy the cinema.</p> <p>I am enjoy the cinema.</p>
45. Enjoy	<p>I enjoy my children.</p> <p>I enjoy with my children.</p>
46. Everywhere	<p>He looked for the keys everywhere.</p> <p>He looked for the keys every place.</p>

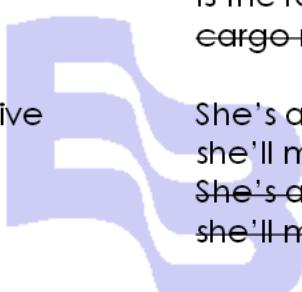
47. Except	<p>We'll finance all the new projects except for Joe's, which will be discontinued.</p> <p>We'll finance all the new projects except Joe's, which will be discontinued.</p>
48. Explain	<p>Please explain your theory to me.</p> <p>Please explain me your theory.</p>
49. Familiar	<p>I can't remember her face but her name does sound familiar.</p> <p>We have a large family so I invited several familiars to the wedding.</p>
50. Few & little	<p>We need a few dollars to meet our savings goal.</p> <p>We need a little dollars to meet our savings goal.</p>
51. Flour & flower	<p>You need flour to bake a pizza.</p> <p>You need flower to bake a pizza.</p>
52. Flower & flour	<p>Most flowers bloom in spring.</p> <p>Most flours bloom in spring</p>
53. Folder & carpet	<p>I use a folder to keep papers.</p> <p>I use a carpet to keep papers.</p>
54. For & since	<p>I've waited for three hours already.</p> <p>I've waited since three hours already.</p>
55. Good & well	<p>This is a good book.</p> <p>This is a well book.</p>
56. Had better	<p>You had better visit the client tomorrow.</p> <p>You had better to visit the client tomorrow.</p>

57.	Hate	I hate her because she is mean. I'm hating her because she is mean.
58.	Intend & attempt	I intend to attend university when I finish school I attempt to attend university when I finish school.
59.	It's & its	It's going to snow. Its going to snow.
60.	Its & it's	The company pays its employees once a month. The company pays it's employees once a month.
61.	Job & work	I'm the company manager. It is my job to solve problems. I'm the company manager. It is my work to solve problems.
62.	Ladder & stairs	Shall I move the ladder under the chandelier so you can change the bulb? Shall I move the stairs under the chandelier so you can change the bulb?
63.	Large enough	This boat isn't large enough for all our family. This boat isn't enough large for all our family.
64.	Lay & lie	You must lay the table before they arrive. You must lie the table before they arrive.
65.	Lie & lay	He always lies down for a nap. He always lays down for a nap.

66. Like	<p>I like Picasso because he's a Cubist painter. I'm liking Picasso because he's a Cubist painter.</p>
67. Like & as	<p>That product is very much like the one we developed. That product is very much as the one we developed.</p>
68. Listen	<p>I always listen to my boss. I always listen my boss.</p>
69. Live & alive	<p>NBC will broadcast the match live. NBC will broadcast the match alive.</p>
70. Load	<p>They'll load the elephant onto the lorry. They'll load the computer on the mains.</p>
71. Look forward to	<p>We look forward to meeting your partner. We look forward to meet your partner.</p>
72. Love	<p>I love him more and more every day. I'm loving him more and more every day.</p>
73. Make a mistake	<p>Andrew wrote this list so he would make fewer mistakes. Andrew wrote this list so he would do fewer mistakes.</p>
74. Many & much	<p>Many people came today. Much people came today.</p>
75. Media & medium	<p>Most of the media live from advertising revenue. Most of the medium live from advertising revenue.</p>

76.	Medium & media	I think you should try another medium. I think you should try another media.
77.	Most	Most managers have arrived. Most of managers have arrived.
78.	Motorway	We drove through the motorway. We drove through the auteway.
79.	Much & many	Having much money is always better than having little money. Having many money is always better than having little money.
80.	Must	We must increase prices. We must to increase prices.
81.	Nothing	She understood nothing. She didn't understand nothing.
82.	Now & actually	He used to be a secretary. He's a manager now. He used to be a secretary. He's a manager actually.
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84.	Official & officer	This is an official statement. This is an officer statement.
85.	Parents-in-law	She loves her parents-in-law. She loves her fathers-in-law.
86.	Parking	I rarely leave my car at a parking lot because it's too expensive. I rarely leave my car at a parking because it's too expensive.

87. People	Most people are interested in their health. Most people is interested in their health.
88. Personal & personnel	I have a personal trainer. I have a personnel trainer.
89. Personnel & personal	Where's the personnel department? Where's the personal department?
90. Price & prize	The price of this shirt is twelve dollars. The prize of this shirt is twelve dollars.
91. Prize & price	 She's an excellent student and won the first prize. She's an excellent student and won the first price.
92. Professor	Anthony is a university professor. He teaches Physics. Richard is a kindergarten professor. He teaches children.
93. Raise & rise	Farmers raise cattle. Farmers rise cattle.
94. Recipe	Do you have the recipe for Yorkshire pudding? The doctor gave me a recipe for more antibiotics.
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114. Straight & strait	Look straight ahead and you'll see the factory. Look strait ahead and you'll see the factory.

115. Strait & straight	<p>The ship crossed the Strait of Gibraltar.</p> <p>The ship crossed the Straight of Gibraltar.</p>
116. Suit & suite	<p>All lawyers must wear suits at this office.</p> <p>All lawyers must wear suites at this office.</p>
117. Suite & suit	<p>She stayed at her suite all day.</p> <p>She stayed at her suit all day.</p>
118. Tell & say	<p>She never tells me the truth.</p> <p>She never says me the truth.</p>
119. The reason why	<p>She couldn't explain the reason why she was here.</p> <p>She couldn't explain the reason because she was here.</p>
120. Think of	<p>I'm thinking of moving to Australia.</p> <p>I'm thinking to move to Australia.</p>
121. Times & per	<p>Two times three equals six.</p> <p>Two per three equals six.</p>
122. Two pounds' worth	<p>I'd like two pounds' worth of sweets.</p> <p>I'd like two pounds worth of sweets.</p>
123. Upload & download	<p>We must upload the page from our laptop to the server.</p> <p>We must download the page from our laptop to the server.</p>
124. Used to	<p>We used to run a small company. Now it's grown rather large!</p> <p>We used run a small company. Now it's grown rather large!</p>

125. Wage & salary	Their wages are between five and six dollar an hour though they should be much higher. Their salaries are between five and six dollars an hour though they should be much higher.
126. Want to	I want you to contact the production supervisor immediately. I want that you contact the production supervisor immediately.
127. Well & good	She dances, sings and draws quite well. She dances, sings and draws quite good.
128. Who & whom	 Who is responsible for collections at this office? Whom is responsible for collections at this office?
129. Whom & who	I'll send this note to whom it may concern. I'll send this note to who it may concern.
130. Work & job	Writing the budget is hard work. I wish I didn't have to do it every year! Writing the budget is hard job. I wish I didn't have to do it every year!

Andrew D. Miles is the director of English for Business Barcelona, English for Business Madrid, English Phone and Words 300.

English for Business Barcelona teaches English lessons to companies in the Barcelona area.

English for Business Madrid teaches English lessons to companies in the Madrid area.

English Phone provides lessons by telephone to students who want to improve their oral communication skills

English 300 teaches business English online to students who need oral practise and time flexibility

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