

MA GRAMMAR / WEEK 01

Pro-forms and reference

MA Grammar · Week 1
Quirk et al., Chapter 12

What has been replaced?

Opening problem

Mariam revised the proposal.
Zainab did so too.

Mariam revised the proposal.
Zainab revised another one.

Today's analytical goals

Locate the antecedent span.
Separate reference from substitution.
Test a proposed replacement.
Explain changes in meaning.

Reference and substitution differ

Coreference

Mariam submitted a proposal.
It was persuasive.

It refers to the same proposal.
The link concerns identity of reference.

Substitution

Mariam submitted a proposal.
Zainab submitted another one.

One supplies nominal content.
The proposals need not be identical.

The source of interpretation varies

Anaphoric: I read the proposal. It needs revision.

Cataphoric: When she arrived, Mariam opened the seminar.

Situational: Put that here. The speaker points to a folder and a desk.

An antecedent may be a phrase, a predication or a whole proposition.

Nominal substitutes have limits

One / ones

I need a recent article.
Do you have a recent one?

One carries the nominal content article.
It can take its own modifier.

Other nominal substitutes

The methods differ from those of the earlier study.

The demonstrative substitute retains plural number.

Compare some, none and the same in context.

A worked predication analysis

The group checked the references, and the tutor did so too.

Target: did so. Antecedent predication: checked the references.

The subject changes. The repeated action remains recoverable.

Do so is one unit here. Its do is not merely a stranded operator.

So can stand for different units

A proposition

Will the committee approve it?
I think so.

So stands for the positive proposition that
the committee will approve it.

A complement

The first analysis is plausible.
The second is less so.

So supplies the adjectival content plausible.
Its function differs from clausal so.

Defend the size of the antecedent

A. The reviewers requested a table. We added one.

B. The reviewers requested a table. We did so.

C. The reviewers requested a table. That surprised us.

For each target, bracket the recovered span and explain whether reference is preserved.

Workshop 1 · Identify and test

1. I downloaded two articles, but neither was useful.
2. The first explanation was clear. The second was not so.
3. Rana checked the DOI, and Omar did so as well.
4. One should check every source before citing it.

For each: target, antecedent span, category, and one diagnostic.

Drill discussion · Evidence first

Items 1–2

Neither: neither of the two articles.
The two-member set matters.

So: adjectival content clear.
Compare less so and equally so.

Items 3–4

Did so: checked the DOI.
Recover the predication, not Rana.

One: generic person, not a substitute for an earlier noun.
It: each relevant source.

Workshop 2 · A Mosul webpage

“It can teach you English Language, which is a global language.”

Authentic extract · University of Mosul, College of Arts
Section: Why choose Department of English Language?

What does It refer to? What does you refer to?
Does each expression require a preceding noun phrase?

The context controls the reading

It: the department, supplied by the webpage heading.

You: the addressee, identified through the communicative situation.

Which: a relative link to English Language, not a nominal substitute like one.

Replacing a word is a useful test only if grammar and intended meaning are both considered.

Text laboratory · Reading-group chat

- 1 A: I found two articles on seminar feedback. The newer one uses classroom recordings.
- 2 B: Is that the article the tutor recommended?
- 3 A: I think so. She said it was useful.
- 4 B: I have not checked the references yet.
- 5 A: Please do so before we meet.
- 6 B: The earlier article was detailed, and the newer one was equally so.

Build an analytical record

Map one, that, so, she, it and do so to their sources. Include the final equally so.

For each target, state the recovered content and its grammatical size.

Give two readings of that in line 2. Which reading does the reply favour?

Replace three targets with explicit wording. Explain any change in naturalness or meaning.

Suggested analysis of the chat

Nominal and referential links

The newer one: article.

That: likely the newer article.

She: likely the tutor.

It: likely the recommended article.

These reference choices remain contextual.

Larger substituted units

I think so: the newer article is the one the tutor recommended.

Do so: check the references.

Equally so: detailed, with equally expressing the comparison.

Challenge one attractive mistake

Claim: do so always replaces the preceding sentence.

Test the claim against line 5 of the chat.

Which material is retained? Which material changes?

Write a revised claim that fits the evidence without becoming too broad.

Exit response · Explain the contrast

Two constructed replies

A: Is the analysis complete?

B: I hope so.

A: The analysis is incomplete.

B: That worries me.

Your response

Identify the function of each target.

State its source content.

Explain why the two targets are not interchangeable.

Use 50–70 words.

Prepare an evidence-based annotation

Choose a short English text and analyse six pro-forms. Record its source and relevant context.

For each target, give its form, function, source span and one test.

Discuss two cases where a substitute changes the reading or fails.

Next week: Quirk et al., §§12.31–52, on ellipsis and recoverability.