Writing Skills:

An interactive Writers' Workshop

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PRELIMINARY ACTIVITY

Please write down 3 sentences about yourself!

IN THIS WORKSHOP

★What is Academic Writing in English?

★Some useful resources

★Formal speaking skills v Formal writing skills

★Accuracy or communication?

★Sentence construction: a critical aspect

★Putting your own skills into practice

★Conclusions

WHAT IS ACADEMIC WRITING IN ENGLISH (1)

- **What do you want from your students when they are writing texts in Czech?** *Brief discussion in pairs / 3s.* *Write 5 requirements*

- *and in English?*

ACTIVITY 1

The Minister's Press Conference

ACTIVITY 2

A time for sharing!

A brief look at sentence construction

THERE ARE THREE BASIC TYPES OF SENTENCES:

1. Simple sentences = one independent clause:

"The economic crisis ended in civil war after a few years."

2. Compound sentences = two or more independent clauses:

"The population revolted against the government, and the economic crisis ended in civil war."

THERE ARE THREE BASIC TYPES OF SENTENCES:

3. **Complex sentences = one independent clause combined with one or more dependent clauses:**

"The economic crisis ended in civil war when the population had finally revolted against the government."

Sometimes the pronoun is left out:

"The economic crisis caused a lot of unrest, resulting in civil war."

YOU CAN VARY SENTENCE OPENINGS AND ENDINGS OF LONGER SENTENCES BY …

Starting with the independent clause:

"We added a paragraph to our mission statement because we wanted employees to become more aware of ethical issues."

Starting with a dependent clause:

"As we wanted employees to become more aware of ethical issues, we added a paragraph to our mission statement."

YOU CAN DO A SIMILAR THINGS WITH PHRASES.

Phrase	Example
Prepositional phrase	*Before the war* the population of Germany and Austria-Hungary together substantially exceeded that of the United States.
Noun phrase	*The latest news* is that the Danish Tobacco market generated total revenues of $2.4 billion.
Adverb phrase	*Recently*, Iran has made new gas discoveries in the Caspian Sea.
Participle phrase	*Complaining about the huge rises in prices*, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe declared inflation illegal in 2007.

BEING CONCISE (1)

How do these two sentences differ?

1. "The majority of studies which were conducted before this research project did not find negative aspects related to the use of indirect outsourcing."

2. "Most previous studies did not find disadvantages of indirect outsourcing."

BEING CONCISE (2)

- **Descriptive** *(or verbose)* **constructions can usually be made more effective when you turn clauses into phrases.**

- *For example,*
  - "**studies which were conducted before this research project**"
  - can be replaced by
  - "**previous studies**".

ANOTHER WAY TO MAKE A TEXT MORE CONCISE IS TO RECONSTRUCT PHRASES.

Phrase:	reconstruction
a set of measures	measures
the students showing the best performance	the best-performing students
employees with ambition	ambitious employees
analyse the information very carefully	scrutinise the information

SOMETIMES A CLAUSE OR A PHRASE CAN BE REPLACED BY A PRONOUN.

Subject-verb, Phrase:	Subject-verb, Phrase:
The term community networking was coined in the 1980s. Since then, the term has been defined in many different ways.	The term community networking, which was coined in the 1980s, has been defined in many different ways.
Although social networking is possible in person, this process usually takes place online.	Although social networking is possible in person, it usually takes place online.

ACTIVITY 3

The Minister's Speech Feedback

1. Look at your article. Make any changes (accuracy, sentences, range) you think are necessary
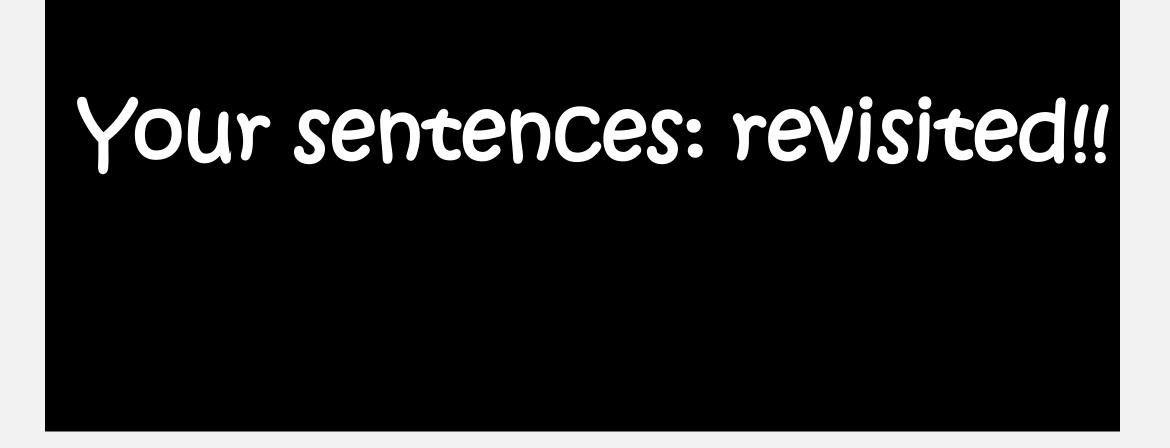
2. Peer review

3. Feedback

ACTIVITY 6

Your sentences: revisited!!

SOME USEFUL RESOURCES

Academic Word List (AWL)

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/

Academic Phrasebank

http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/

Purdue Online Writing Lab

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Transition words and phrases

WHAT IS ACADEMIC WRITING IN ENGLISH (2)

Principle aspects of English language use

- formal language

- a wide and appropriate academic vocabulary

- correctly structured text (sentence & paragraph level)

- use of correct punctuation

- avoidance of wordiness (circulocution / clarity)

- correct grammar forms

- linking ideas (coherence / topic sentences & thesis statement)

Our focus in these workshops is the use of appropriate vocabulary (range)

FORMAL SPEAKING V FORMAL WRITING

Spoken text

Nowadays companies are finding that they have to change the way they do things and they're finding that human resources planning is really helpful when they have to do this. One reason why it's helpful is because it can help the companies work out what the issues are and then, when you've done that, it can help you make up your mind what you're going to do about it. Basically, human resource planning is what you do when you're going through ….

Written text

As companies experience the need for change, they often apply human resource planning to define the relevant issues and develop responses to them. Broadly defined, human resource planning is the process of analysing an organisation's human resources needs under changing conditions and developing the activities necessary to satisfy those needs.

ACCURACY OR COMMUNICATION

- **Both!**

  - Who is the audience?

    - Professor

    - Seminar group

    - Journal readers

    - Family and friends

    - Wider public

  - **Don't underestimate punctuation and grammar to enhance meaning.**

EATS SHOOTS AND LEAVES

EVALUATION

What can you take from these sessions?