

GRAMMAR 101: Focusing on clarity vs. ~~correctness~~ & educating vs. ~~editing~~.

10 most common grammatical issues	Examples	How concerned should you be? What can/should you do?
<i>Verb tense/form (incorrect or shifting)</i>	When interest rates expecting to fall, three reasons would cause to raise in stock prices. Is she speak Japanese?	Can seriously interfere. Ask students to explain what they wish to say orally. It may also help to ask about “who does what” (agent, verb, object).
<i>Word form</i>	It is importance to investment money for the future.	Often interferes. Offer another word form, telling them which part-of-speech they need (n, v, or adj, in most cases)
<i>Subject/verb agreement</i>	Investors search ...to protect their wealth which are deposited in banks	Often interferes. Worth pointing out and asking for clarification..
<i>Plurals (count/non-count)</i>	We have ordered new office equipments . My favorite animals are sheeps .	Sometimes interferes. Worth pointing out but maybe not correcting.
<i>Syntax (sentence structure / word order)</i>	I asked my instructor what would be the due date for the written second assignment.	Sometimes interferes. Worth pointing out and asking for clarification.
<i>General ‘awkwardness’ or incorrect expressions.</i>	<i>[numerous examples abound]</i> (My favorite): “On the third hand...” I wish that we will have more time to work on this paper.	Seriousness depends on severity. You can start by telling the student whether it’s a content issue (i.e. “I don’t understand this part”) or simply a style issue (i.e. “This just seems strange”). If the latter, you might ignore it. Expect some ‘written accent.’
<i>‘Marked’ errors (non-standard English)</i>	He don’t know ... I’m gonna ...	What do you think? (depends on course, genre, student goals, etc)
<i>Punctuation</i>	[: . ? ’ “ ! - ☺]	Rarely interferes. Do what you would with your other students.
<i>Incorrect/missing article (a, an, the)</i>	The individuality is [] important aspect of American culture.	Almost never interferes. Many tutors correct these directly or ignore them.
<i>Wrong preposition (to, from, about, by, etc)</i>	The essay from Foucault is for many important issues.	Almost never interferes. Many tutors correct these directly or ignore them.