editage
by CACTUS

Editage Language Enhancement Guide

Communicate your research in fluent English

Through this report, your Editage English Coach will help you
- ✓ improve your understanding of English language rules and best practices so that you can gradually write like a native English speaker,
- ✓ communicate your research in fluent English to your target readers across the globe,
- ✓ understand academic language style and conventions, and
- ✓ write papers more confidently in English.

The report contains 3 parts:

- Overall comments on your language skills and guidance for improvements,

- Detailed examples of focus areas found in your original text and corresponding suggestions for accurate ways in which to communicate those examples,

- Recommendations for reading to help you improve your language skills.

Note from your English Coach

Dear author,

My name is Natalie, and I am your English Coach for this project. I have 6 years of experience in providing English language guidance. I have reviewed for *Journal of Infection* (IF: 4.603) and *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* (IF: 3.084) and published papers in *Current Opinion in Microbiology* (IF: 6.916), *Microbiology Spectrum* (IF: 3.88), and *Current Opinion in Infectious Diseases* (IF: 3.752)*.*

Publishing academic work in international English language journals can be challenging for native English authors and ESL (English as a Second Language) authors alike, I assure you! Through this report, my goal is to help you overcome this challenge gradually and with confidence.

Below, I have shared my assessment of your paper from the perspective of academic English accuracy and usage. I have read and understood your paper thoroughly before offering suggestions. Studying my recommendations below and applying them will gradually help you become proficient in English.

All the best! All good research deserves to be shared with the world!

Grammar	**Example 1**: At the 7th day of admission…
	• **English Coach's revised version**: *On* the 7th day of admission…
	• **Explanation for the change**: Although both "on" and "at" are used to describe a moment in time, "on" is used with days, while "at" is used with the time of day. In the example, since we are referring to the day of admission, the use of "on" is appropriate. If an event occurred at 9 AM on the 7th day of admission, it would be appropriate to say "… occurred at 9 AM on the 7th day of admission."
	Example 2: Mercury is silver-colored and exists in the liquid state at room temperature. Mercury is available in inorganic and organic forms.
	• **English Coach's revised version**: Mercury is silver-colored and exists in the liquid state at room temperature. *It* is available in inorganic and organic forms.
	• **Explanation for the change**: When you write multiple sentences on the same subject, you will find yourself repeating the subject in every sentence, which renders the text rather monotonous. In such cases, you could substitute the noun with a pronoun. In this example, the noun "Mercury" is replaced with the pronoun "It."
	Example 3: Follow-up was scheduled for one week later. In follow-up visit, the patient was asymptomatic …
	• **English Coach's revised version**: *A* follow-up was scheduled for one week later. In *the* follow-up visit, the patient was asymptomatic …
	• **Explanation for the change**: There are two types of articles in the English language: the definite article "the" and the indefinite articles "a" and "an." "The" is used to refer to specific nouns, while "a" or "an" is used to refer to non-specific nouns. In the first sentence of this example, "follow-up" is a non-specific noun, so the article "a" should be used to refer to it. In the next sentence, "follow-up" is referred to again, but this time, you are not talking about any follow-up, you are talking about the same follow-up mentioned in the first sentence. This makes the reference to "follow-up" specific and, accordingly, "follow-up" is preceded with the definite article "the" in the second sentence.

Sentence construction/ Phrasing	**Example 1**: Nothing was remarkable on examination and routine laboratory tests.
	• **English Coach's revised version**: The results of an examination and routine laboratory tests were unremarkable.
	• **Explanation for the change**: The examination/routine laboratory tests mentioned in the example are merely procedures, so the use of "unremarkable" in this context is not appropriate. "unremarkable" applies to the results or findings of these procedures rather than the procedures themselves.
	Example 2: "Complete blood count, urinalysis, sodium, potassium, blood urea nitrogen (BUN), creatinine, aspartate aminotransferase (AST), alanine aminotransferase (ALT), bilirubin levels were within normal ranges."
	• **English Coach's revised version**: *The results of the* complete blood count and urinalysis *were normal*, and the levels of sodium, potassium, blood urea nitrogen (BUN), creatinine, aspartate aminotransferase (AST), alanine aminotransferase (ALT), and bilirubin were within the reference ranges as well.
	• **Explanation for the change:** Complete blood count and urinalysis are diagnostic techniques, and the techniques themselves cannot be "within normal ranges." Thus,

in this example, it is important to rephrase the sentence so that the results for complete blood count and urinalysis are presented separately.

Example 3: The chelating drugs with worldwide application are dimercaprol (BAL), dimercaprosuccinic acid (DMSA), 2,3-Dimercapropropane-1-sulphonate (DMPS) British Anti Lewisite (BAL) (2.5 mg/kg) is also commonly used in the treatment.

- **English Coach's revised version:** *Other mercury-chelating drugs commonly used worldwide* are dimercaprol *or British anti-Lewisite (BAL)*, dimercaprosuccinic acid (DMSA), and 2,3-dimercapropropane-1-sulfonate (DMPS) (2.5 mg/kg).

- **Explanation for the change:** The phrasing in the example is convoluted and wordy. "is also commonly used in the treatment" does not align with the first half of the sentence, and the full form of BAL is misplaced as well. The revised version addresses both these issues.

Word choice

Example 1: Chest X-ray...

- **English Coach's revised version:** Chest *radiography*...

- **Explanation for the change:** X rays are a form of radiation just like light or microwaves. Radiography is an imaging technique that uses X rays to visualize different parts of the body. Thus, when referring to the imaging technique, "radiography" is the preferred term, and the image that is generated using radiography is called a radiograph.

Example 2: ...respiration, 18 breaths per minute...

- **English Coach's revised version:** ...*respiratory rate*, 18 breaths per minute...

- **Explanation for the change:** Respiration is the process by which living organisms produce energy through the intake of oxygen and the release of carbon dioxide generated from the oxidation of complex organic substances. In the example provided, a person's respiratory rate, which is the number of breaths taken per minute, is being referred to. Hence, the term "respiratory rate" is more suitable here.

Example 3: ...36-year-old case...

- **English Coach's revised version:** 36-year-old *woman*

- **Explanation for the change:** A "case" is abstract and not considered synonymous with a "patient." A case is merely a statistic or an occurrence of a disease/condition, while a patient is the individual who experiences the symptoms of the condition, undergoes surgery, receives therapy, etc. A patient also has multiple attributes like sex, age, lifestyle, and dietary habits that are relevant to a case. In the phrase "36-year-old case," the patient rather than the occurrence of the condition is being described.

Academic language conventions

Example 1: A 36-year-old woman presented to the ED...

- **English Coach's revised version:** A 36-year-old woman presented to the *emergency department*...

- **Explanation for the change:** Conciseness is important in academic writing, so abbreviations come in handy when you do not want to repeat a very long term multiple times to convey your thoughts. Having said that, abbreviations can impede understanding if they are not considered standard in the field you are publishing in. Thus, it is important to introduce an abbreviation at its first use by stating the complete term followed by the abbreviation in parentheses, e.g., "emergency

	department (ED)". Moreover, if a term is not used more than once in a stand-alone section of the manuscript, it is best to not abbreviate it at all.
	Example 2: The use of both O_2 saturation and oxygen saturation in the same document.
	• **English Coach's revised version:** Use "*O_2 saturation*" consistently in the document.
	• **Explanation for the change:** An element's name and the corresponding symbol are not to be treated as an abbreviation and its spelled-out form. Either the name or the symbol can be directly introduced in the text, but it is important to use one style consistently.
	Example 3: …1 gr paracetamol…
	• **English Coach's revised version:** …1 *g* paracetamol…
	• **Explanation for the change:** In academic writing, it is important to follow the conventions for expressing the names of units of measure and their abbreviations. In the example, the unit of mass "gram" is abbreviated as "gr" rather than "g," which is the accepted unit.

	Example 1: …14-month old infant…
	• **English Coach's revised version**: …14-month-old infant…
	• **Explanation for the change**: In the phrase "…14-month-old infant…," "14," "month," and "old" jointly describe the noun "infant" and are thus hyphenated to form a single descriptor "14-month-old." While this hyphenation style is used when the descriptor ("14-month-old") comes before the noun ("infant"), it is not used in constructions like "The infant was 14 months old." when the noun ("infant") does not come after the age ("14 months").
	Example 2: …three-day history of abdominal pain, diarrhea and fever.
	• **English Coach's revised version:** …three-day history of abdominal pain, diarrhea, and fever.
Punctuation	• **Explanation for the change:** The use of the serial comma, which is the comma before the conjunction in a series, is encouraged in academic writing, since it delineates the elements in the series. Elements in a series are not always clear, e.g., "It is important to estimate the levels of lactose, proteins such as casein and diacylglycerol in milk." Diacylglycerol is a lipid, but for someone unfamiliar with the term, it is unclear from the sentence whether or not both casein and diacylglycerol are examples of proteins. When a series comma is used to punctuate the sentence as "It is important to estimate the levels of lactose, proteins such as casein, and diacylglycerol in milk," the elements in the list are clearer.
	Example 3: …range: 0 - 10 µg/dL…
	• **English Coach's revised version:** …range: 0–10 µg/dL…
	• **Explanation for the change:** In the example, a hyphen is used to indicate a range of values. The function of the hyphen, however, is to connect two or more words. The en dash, which is longer than the hyphen, is used to represent a range of numbers and is typically read as "to." There should be no space between the en dash and the adjacent values.

RECOMMENDED READING

As a bonus, I have shared a list of articles divided by areas of improvement. I do hope you find them informative!

Area of improvement	Description
Grammar	https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/index.html
Sentence construction	https://www.editage.com/insights/6-actionable-tips-to-improve-academic-writing
	https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/mechanics/index.html
Word choice	https://www.editage.com/insights/a-vocabulary-lesson-for-clear-writing-commonly-confused-words
Academic language convention	https://www.editage.com/insights/using-past-and-present-tenses-in-research-writing
	https://www.editage.com/insights/how-to-effectively-use-active-and-passive-voice-in-research-writing
Punctuation	https://www.editage.com/insights/quick-tips-on-using-commas-brackets-and-dashes-in-a-research-paper
	https://www.editage.com/insights/8-pros-and-cons-of-using-the-oxford-comma
	https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/index.html