

Exercise Sheet 4 in
Scientific and Technical English
WiSe 2026/27

The exercise sheets consist of in-class exercises and homework. The in-class exercises take place during the second half of the lecture time slots. The homework, which is optional and ungraded, can be submitted via the “Homework” section in Moodle. The homework is subject to peer review.

Unless indicated otherwise, generative artificial intelligence assistants such as Chat-GPT may be used, as long as you acknowledge how you use them as specified by the Institute’s policy on plagiarism.¹ However, you may not use such tools to generate peer reviews for you. In addition, we strongly recommend that you do not use them to generate entire solutions, since that would defeat the purpose of the exercises.

In-class exercise 4-1 *Spelling Bee* For this exercise, a list of words and phrases will be read aloud. Please write them down, either on a sheet of paper or in a text editor (without spellchecking enabled). The goal of this exercise is not to spell everything perfectly on the first try but to find out which words are often misspelled.

In-class exercise 4-2 *What Is a Compiler?* Some words are easy to use but hard to define. For this exercise, we look at three specific words used by computer scientists.

- a) For the words *compiler* and *resolution*, compare their dictionary entries on the web. At least, consider the *Collins Online Dictionary*², *Merriam-Webster*³, and *Cambridge English Dictionary*⁴. Feel free to also include your favorite dictionary. Compare the writing style and the included information.
- b) Without looking up any definitions, write a dictionary entry for the word *computer*. Once you have come up with a draft, compare your version with the ones on the web and improve it.

¹<https://www.medien.ifi.lmu.de/lehre/Plagiate-IfI.pdf>

²<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>

³<https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

⁴<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

Homework 4-3 Malapropisms The following text⁵ contains a large number of malapropisms and some other word misuses. Identify as many as you can, and suggest more appropriate words or phrases in their place.

The truce that I once proposed between descriptivists and prescriptivists having been only conditionally excepted by a single linguist, the embattlements must continue.

Linguistic history bares out the fact that since English has spreaded throughout the world, people who hue to traditional idioms can avoid the maelstorm of indivious solecisms that await for the unwary. Although the language is continually evolving, and insipient changes become widespreedly disbursed and then take route so that words become distant from their entomologies, the mileau in which these changes occur remains fairly constant. To ask whether all change can be quelched is a mute point—a serious misnomer. The language is a self-regulating system of disambiguation, without any official body of persons in high dungeon, at our beckon call, exerting a right to meet out punishment to a would-be literati who has a heyday abusing it—punishment that might amount not just to a mild annoyance but to caricature assassination.

For all intensive purposes, some linguistic shifts may past mustard, even those that don't harp back to Middle English or Early Modern English. People with an overweening interest in oversighting English sometimes, as a kind of guttural reaction, take all this for granite. There will never be paralyzation of a living language, nor even hiati in its evolution. And it may give piece of mind to know that linguistic change isn't something to be measured in decades, much less per anum. Improprietous words and phrases that may once have been considered abdominable, slightly course, or otherwise beyond the pail may, over time, become fully acceptable and no longer peak anyone's interest. But even if there are many a person whom misuse particular words and are allowed to do so with impugnity—and all tolled, English contains a heterogenous mother load of almost infinite potential errors—their credulity is likely to be strained in the minds of listeners and readers. The more populace the language community, the greater the wrecklessness with which some speakers and writers can reek havoc on the language itself. These phenomenon become their mode of operandi; for them, perhaps we might say they could not of known better, even if they had ought to. But in the end, close analyzation should demonstrate that correct English usage should be brandishment enough—it's own reword.

⁵Bryan A. Garner, *Garner's Modern English Usage*, Fourth Edition, Oxford University Press, 2016.

Homework 4-4 ‘Which’ Hunting For each occurrence of *that* or *which* in the following sentences, determine which part of speech (pronoun, conjunction, or adjective) it belongs to. Then determine whether its use in the sentence is right, wrong, or controversial (“wicked”).

- A detailed investigation into the spreadsheets that takes into account these anomalies provides further evidence for the theory that the data might have been fabricated.
- Hopcroft’s algorithm for automaton minimization, which is based on partition refinement, was rediscovered by several other authors that cared about efficient algorithms.
- But because that formula does not occur on the right-hand side of the expression which we just derived, we need to rewrite it once more.
- It is possible to treat negation as a special symbol which only occurs applied to atomic formulas.
- Another approach, that prevents this problem from occurring, will be given in Section 4.
- Note that that is the algorithm of that we gave an informal description earlier.