

Lecture 01: Scientific Writing basics

Part two :

Active and Passive voice:

In active forms the subject of the sentence is the person or thing that does the action. In passive constructions, the verb is performed **by** someone or something other than the subject.

Present simple:

Use the simple present tense to generalize, to present a state of being, or to indicate a habitual or repeated action.

Active

base form or “-s/-es” form

eg: robots **perform** heavy tasks.

Passive

am/is/are + past participle

Heavy tasks **are performed** by robots.

Present Perfect:

Use the present perfect to describe an action occurring in the past but relevant to the present, or extending to the present.

Active

has/have + -ed/-en

eg: IT engineers **have installed** advanced systems

Passive

has/have + been + -ed/-en

.....

Simple Past:

Use the simple past to indicate a general or habitual action occurring in the past or at a specific time in the past.

Active

base + -ed or irregular form

eg: tesla **launched** their first car in 2008

Passive

was/were + -ed/-en

.....

Past Perfect:

Use the past perfect to indicate an action completed prior to a particular time or before another action in the past.

Active

had + -ed/-en

eg: in 2020, the IT service **had hired** 81 thousand people

Passive

had + been + -ed/-en

.....

Simple future

Use the future to indicate an action that is expected to take place at a future time.

Active

will + base

eg: cyber security **will use** AI to decrease cyber threats

Passive

will + be + -ed/-en

.....

Pronouns in passive voice:

subject pronouns **object pronouns**

I	by	me
You	by	you
She	by	her
He	by	him
It	by	it
They	by	them
We	by	us

When to use passive voice:

Although active voice is generally preferred in academic writing, passive voice is acceptable under certain conditions. Use passive voice:

- to emphasize the receiver of the action instead of the doer
- to keep the focus on the same subject through several sentences or paragraphs
- when we do not know who performed the action
- when we do not wish to mention the doer of the action
- when we want to sound objective or avoid using the subject “I”

Activity 01:

Write the passive from/ active form of each sentence below:

1. Computers provide online bilingual dictionaries.
.....
2. In a smart house, everything from TV sets to temperature is controlled by the main computer.
.....
3. Program Systems Engineering Prevents problems with interfaces and customer dissatisfaction.
.....
4. Robots have operated many patients.
.....
5. The new features are expected to be finished by 2023.
.....
6. Experts assured that this would be a revolutionary new design.
.....
7. They had given feedback on the performance of the app
.....

Reading comprehension:

Read the text carefully and answer the questions:

Microsoft says that hackers from Russia and North Korea attacked COVID 19 vaccine makers.

Cyber attacks that originated in North Korea and Russia have been targeting companies conducting research for COVID 19 vaccines and treatments, Microsoft said in a blog post. The company says the attacks were aimed at seven leading pharmaceutical companies and researchers in the US, Canada, France, India and South Korea.

“Among the targets, the majority are vaccine makers that have COVID-19 vaccine in various stages of clinical trials,” according to the blog post by Tom Burt, Microsoft corporate vice president of customer security and trust. Microsoft did not name the companies or provide details about what information have been stolen or compromised, but they said it had notified the organizations and offered help where the attacks were successful. According to Microsoft, the majority of the attacks were blocked by its security protection.

The hackers used various methods to carry out the attacks, according to the blog post, including brute force login attempts to steal **login credentials**, as well as **spear-phishing attacks** where the hackers posed as recruiters seeking job candidates, and as representatives of the world health organization WHO.

New coronavirus cases are on the rise across the US and other parts of the world, but there are some promising signs in the development of a vaccine. Pfizer, and bioNTech announced their vaccine was 90 percent effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 in clinical trials. That preliminary data hasn't been examined by independent researchers yet, but experts called the news “extremely encouraging”, and a vaccine candidate from Moderna, an American biotechnology company based in Massachusetts, is expected to release initial data soon.

Adapted from <http://www.theverge.com/2020/11/14/21565136/microsoft-hackers-russia-north-korea-attacked-covid-&c-vaccine-coronavirus>

Glossary:

Login credentials: Login credentials authenticate a user when logging into an online account over the internet. At the very least, the credentials are username and password; however, a physical or human biometric element may also be required.

Spear phishing attacks: this refers to an email or electronic communication scam targeted towards a specific individual, organization or business. Although often intended to steal data for malicious purposes, cyber criminals may also intend to install a malware on a targeted user's computer.

Questions:

Who are the North Korean and Russian cyber criminals?

Why have the cyber criminals been reported?

Did the attackers succeed?

What are the strategies that the attackers used?

How does a spear phishing attack work?

When did the attacks take place?