

# Let's Eat Grandma!: The Vicissitudes of Grammar

by [Kenneth Francis](#) (June 2019)



*The Grammar*, Paul Sérusier, 1892

**The introductory clause in the** title of this essay would be morally dubious, despite being grammatically correct, if it was about cannibal grandchildren deciding what to have for dinner. However, if there was a comma included in the clause ('Let's Eat, Grandma!'), it would more normally denote some grandchildren telling their grandmother that they are hungry.

It seems bad grammar can be a matter of life or death (or should that be 'non-grammar'?). Whatever the term, there is no denying that standards in grammar/punctuation, and English education, have reached an all-time low in some academic institutions. (I write this from my proverbial grammar 'glasshouse', so I have to be *really* careful that the copy is 'clean'.)

When I started lecturing in print journalism part-time some 25 years ago, one of the toughest subjects for students was grammar. This was during a time when some people didn't have mobile phones or laptops and when the odd student used the last of the IBM Selectric typewriters in the late 1980s/early 90s.

We've come a long way since then, with spell-checking and even grammar/syntax/check programs installed in most computers to do the job for us at the click of a 'mouse'.

[Read more in \*New English Review\*:](#)

- [@NERIconoclast](#)