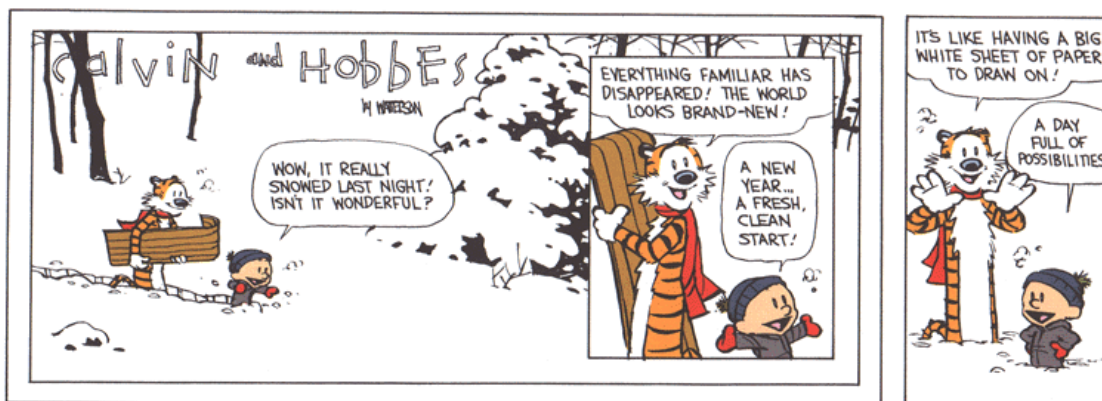


# Introduction to Language Study



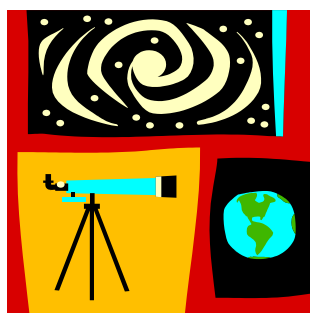
2018–19  
University of Jyväskylä  
Department of Language and Communication Studies

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Session #	Topic in the course booklet	Readings Yule 5 <sup>th</sup> ed.
1	Getting started Language, a language and language use What is language study?	1-2
2	What is language study? The politics of language	Ch. 18 Fasold, Ch. 11
3	Phonetics	3
4	Phonology	4
5	Word formation	5
6	Morphology	6
7	Grammar	7-8
8	Grammar and syntax	8
9	Syntax	8-9
10	Syntax and semantics	9-10
11	Semantics and pragmatics	11
12	Second Language Acquisition (SLA) <b>HOME EXAM 2 assigned: Due _____</b>	14

## Contents

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE .....	4
2 WHAT IS LANGUAGE?.....	7
3. WHAT IS MEANT BY LANGUAGE STUDY? .....	12
4. PHONETICS: WHERE AND HOW SOUNDS ARE PRODUCED.....	15
5. PHONOLOGY: THE SOUND SYSTEM OF A LANGUAGE .....	19
6. MORPHOLOGY: INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF WORDS.....	25
7. MORPHOLOGY: WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ‘A WORD’ AND WORD FORMATION? .....	28
8. GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX: THE STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES .....	31
9. SEMANTICS: THE STUDY OF WORD AND SENTENCE MEANING.....	42
10. PRAGMATICS: INVESTIGATING SPEAKER MEANING .....	45
11 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA) .....	51



## 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

### 1.1 What is this course about?

This course is an introductory course about the study of language – or linguistics. It gives you an overview of some central areas, concepts, methods and questions of the scientific study of language. The specific aims of this course are the following; the course tries

- (1) to give an overview of the aims, methods and practices of linguistics, the scientific study of language.
- (2) to introduce central concepts and assumptions used in the study of language.
- (3) to give some practical insight into different ways of analysing language and language use
- (4) to encourage a critical understanding of approaches to the study of language

### 1.2 How is the course structured?

The course will give you an introductory view of such basic issues as what is language and language study like. Further, we will have a closer look at some aspects of the study of language as system and structure (or, what is traditionally known as ‘theoretical linguistics’). More specifically, we will investigate structure in words, sentences (‘morphology’ and ‘syntax’), and discuss a number of linguistic approaches to grammar. At the end of the course, we will investigate meaning in language from two perspectives: lexical and sentence meaning (‘semantics’) and speaker meaning (‘pragmatics’).

### 1.3 What are the working methods of the course like?

The teaching and learning methods include:

- Background readings from the materials package and from George Yule. 2010/2014. *The Study of Language*. 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> edition. Cambridge: CUP.
- There are other extensive introductory books on linguistics that you might find helpful during your studies, for instance one of the following:
  - Ralph W. Fasold and Jeff Connor-Linton (eds.) 2006. *An Introduction to Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: CUP.
  - Koenraad Kuiper & W. Scott Allan. 2010. *An introduction to English language. Word, sound and sentence*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
  - Bruce M. Rowe & Diane P. Levine. 2006. *A Concise Introduction to Linguistics*. Boston: Pearson.
- Short introductory lectures introducing the main concepts and questions of the different approaches to language study
- Classroom discussion
- Homework: many of the exercises included in this booklet need to be prepared at home
- Group work: quite a few of our activities will require discussion in a small group and presenting your observations to the whole of the class



#### 1.4 How should you work in order to do well in this course?

Since most of the work is done in the classroom, and we only have six weeks, it is important that you attend **all** our classroom meetings.

Since the course is not primarily a lecture course, it is also important that you **prepare well for the classes** by reading the appropriate sections from this booklet before we begin work on a particular field of language study. It is strongly recommended that you also read corresponding sections from Yule or some other source book. In order to profit from classroom discussion, make sure that you also **do your homework**. In class, be prepared to participate actively in the group work and classroom discussions.

We will use English throughout the course as our working language. This should not be a problem for anyone – after all, your proficiency in English will *not* be evaluated in this course. Rather, try to see the use of English in this course as an opportunity to get more experience and confidence in speaking and writing English for a real purpose.

#### 1.5 How will your work be evaluated?

- 4 pts: class meetings, independent readings, preparation for class meetings and two take-home exams (home task and final exam)
- evaluation: participation and *Home Exam 1* 40%, *Home Exam 2* 60 %

Part of completing the exams is to hand them in on time. If, for some good reason, you cannot meet the deadline, make sure you contact your tutor in advance.

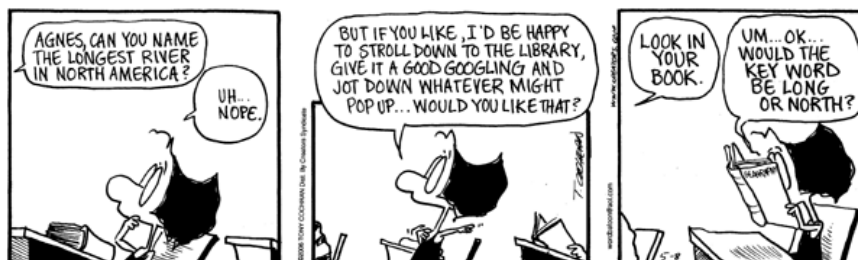
#### HOME EXAM 2

In addition to the topics covered in the booklet, Exam 2 will include the following items:

- **READINGS:** Some readings on second language teaching/learning will be assigned for the final exam. You will write your answer as a response to the text.

## 1.6 What is this booklet about?

This booklet contains some of the source materials – short introductory texts and different types of exercises and activities – that you will need in the course. In addition, you need to have access to Yule's *The Study of Language* throughout the whole course.



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Whenever you have a question or problem, please do not hesitate to talk to the instructors, either after classes, during their office hours or through e-mail!

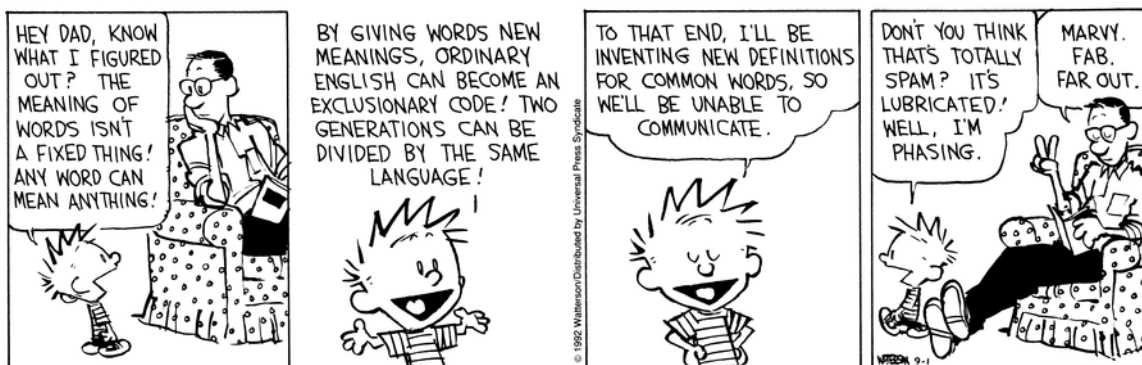
## PREPARING FOR THE SECOND MEETING

Please, read the chapter on the politics of language by Ralph Fasold<sup>1</sup>. Then look at the two newspaper articles from *Helsingin Sanomat* (2012) discussing language policies. Find links between Fasold's text and the newspaper articles. Questions you might want to consider include

- How are language and politics connected?
- How do authorities affect language choices?
- How can an individual affect language policies?

Make sure you have read the material and reflected on the questions BEFORE the meeting.

<sup>1</sup>Fasold, R. (2006). The Politics of Language. In R. Fasold and J. Connor-Linton (eds.), *An introduction to Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



## 2 WHAT IS LANGUAGE?

This unit will deal with the following questions:

- 1) What is meant by 'language', 'a language', 'language as system and structure' and 'language use'?
- 2) What is meant by the term 'levels of language'?

You will also be asked to apply the information on this handout and e.g. in Yule to discuss and evaluate a number of definitions of language and of language study by linguists.

### 2.1 Language as an ambiguous term

The term 'language' is surprisingly poorly defined – it can mean many different things, and it can be quite unclear and ambiguous. For example, in our everyday use, the term can have a variety of meanings, such as

spoken / written language  
 verbal / body / visual language  
 human / animal language (e.g. of bees, chimpanzees)  
 natural / artificial language  
 language of art / architecture / jazz music

### 2.2 Traditional linguistic definitions of 'language'

A traditional way of defining 'language' is to see it as a mechanism for conveying meaning which operates independently of other means of human communication (e.g. gesture) and which is distinctively different from animal communication.

*Problems in this view:*

Can verbal language be seen separately from body language and facial expressions; or from visual aspect of texts?

Recently, many scholars have argued that it cannot! For example, in *semiotics* the borderline between the verbal message and non-verbal phenomena is not taken to be a distinct one – semioticians are interested in not only verbal meanings but also other meaning making systems (e.g. choice of clothes, architectural design).

Another traditional way of defining 'language' is to see it as the general human capacity for verbal communication; as a system, and as a set of rules for producing grammatically correct structures, shared by the speakers of the language.

For example, this view was put forward by Ferdinand de Saussure, one of the founding fathers of western linguistics:

Language ('langue'): *the totality of grammatical rules shared by all the members of a linguistic community*, whereas speaking ('parole') refers to actual utterances of individual speakers (Ferdinand de Saussure, 1916)

### 2.3 Language vs ‘a language’

Saussure’s definition above also points to a distinction often made between two kinds of language study: language study focusing on language as a system (e.g. theoretical linguistics) and language study focusing on particular forms and uses of language.

### 2.4 How to investigate a form of language: English as an example

Question: Make a list showing the first five or six associations that you have when you think about the term ‘English’? On the basis of the list, consider what ‘English’ means to you. Then compare your list with your partner’s – is it similar or different?

English is a language which is, in fact, a multiple and complex phenomenon. Consequently, it can be investigated from a number of perspectives, for example:

- English as a first/ second/ foreign language
- English as originating in the British Isles
- English as an international language / lingua franca (EIL / ELF)
- The language varieties of English (e.g. British, Indian, Kenyan, Cockney)
- Situated uses of English in different social and cultural settings (e.g. English used in courtrooms, chat shows, at home)

### How to describe a language such as English

(i) It can be described in terms of its *typology*:

- according to its preferred word order:

English:     “Mary   kissed   John”  
                  Subject Verb    Object

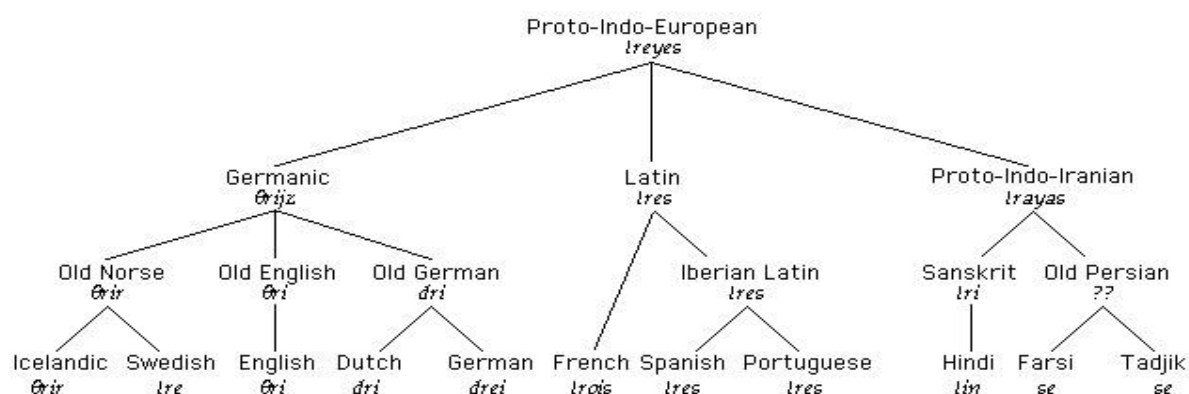
Finnish:     “Maija   suuteli   Jussia”  
                  S        V        O  
                  ”Jussia   suuteli   Maija”  
                  O        V        S  
                  “Suuteli   Maija   Jussia”  
                  V        S        O

- according to its *syntactic features*:
  - Analytic (isolating) languages: Syntactic relationships are signalled only by word order (e.g. Chinese)
  - Synthetic (inflectional) languages: Syntactic relationships are signalled by suffixes (e.g. Latin, Finnish)
  - Agglutinative (affixing) languages: Words contain slots within which syntactic relationships are signalled (e.g. Swahili, Turkish)
  - Polysynthetic (incorporating) languages: complex word forms may function as entire sentences (e.g. Australian Aboriginal languages: ‘Qasuiirsarvigssaaringitluinarnarpuq’ ‘someone did not find a suitable resting place’)



Even though typological descriptions can be useful for some purposes, they are problematic in that many languages do not fit neatly into the categories listed. For example, English can be seen as a mixture of analytic, synthetic and agglutinative.

(ii) Languages can also be described in terms of the *genealogical* relationships between languages (see Yule pp.182-191), by showing the historical relationships between languages, e.g. consider one version of the family tree for the Indo-European language family:



Although the genealogical explanation works with some languages (such as the Indo-European ones) it does not work so well with other language families (e.g. Bantu) because of lack of evidence from such languages or because the direction and type of development is not clear or one-directional (even in English!).

## 2.5 A language can also be described in terms of social, political and cultural criteria

**For discussion:** Make a list of the languages, which you know of. Do not attempt to look anything up – just jot down names as they come to mind. Then investigate your list and try to figure out what kind of mental strategy you used to get them. Did you, for example, go through a mental list of countries and mark down the language spoken in each? Did you write down one language per country? Or did you just write down names of the languages as they came to you?

Your list probably contains languages that are quite different in terms of their status. Some of them are powerful 'national' languages (e.g. German); some languages that are spoken alongside another language in a bilingual country (e.g. Swedish in Finland); some are languages spoken in a number of countries (Spanish); some might even be languages that linguistically speaking are not that different from one another, but that are considered different languages because of political, social and cultural reasons (e.g. Swedish, Norwegian and Danish); and still others may be languages spoken by particular ethnic or cultural groups (e.g. Sami, Ebonics, Flemish).

Your list should thus point to the fact that languages are not only linguistically different, but they can be seen as different languages because they can have quite different social and political identities.

## 2.6 Language as the ways that its speakers and writers use it in particular domains and situations

Language users can have different language identities and repertoires, e.g.

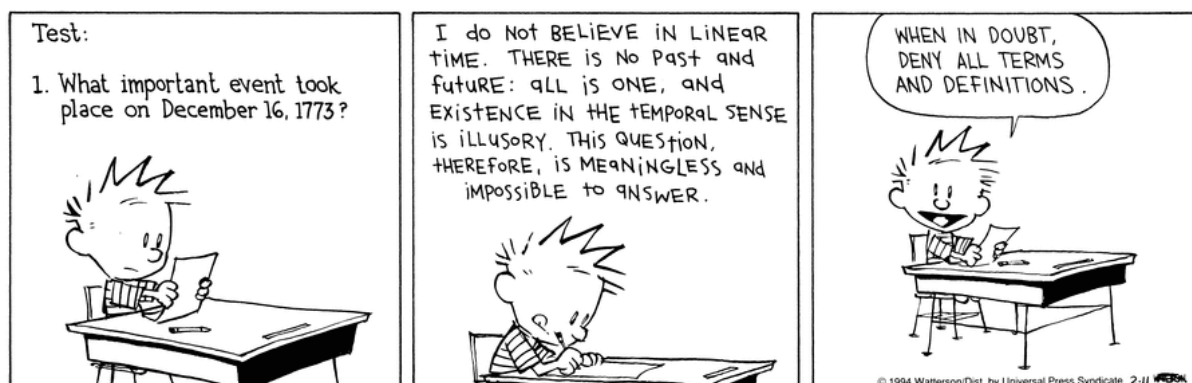
- Monolingual/bilingual/trilingual speakers
- Speakers as having a repertoire of language styles (e.g. formal, colloquial, informal, intimate . . .) used in different communicative domains

**Questions for you to consider:** Are you a monolingual or bilingual speaker? Why/ why not? Do you vary your language use in different communicative domains (e.g. school/ home) and different situations? Why/ why not? How?

One way of seeing language is to see it as the actual, variant uses of language by speakers and writers on different occasions.

This view is apparent in the following definition of 'language' by Halliday, a very influential contemporary linguist, who argues that the proper object of linguistic analysis is not the *language as a system* but *language use* in its social context:

After a period of intensive study of language as an idealized philosophical construct, linguists have come round to taking account of the fact that people talk to each other. In order to solve purely internal problems of its own history and structure, language has had to be taken out of its glass case, dusted, and put back in a living environment . . . (M.A.K Halliday, 1978)



## ACTIVITY

### Investigating definitions of 'language'

The following are claims that have been made in linguistic research. Some of them reflect very different ideas about language and language study. Working in pairs, examine them carefully and, using your knowledge and experience of language and your class notes, try to work out **(i)** what kinds of assumptions these claims make about *the nature of language and language study* and **(ii)** if, how and why these claims (and/or their underlying assumptions) are in your opinion *either useful or problematic*.

- a. Language is an autonomous, abstract system which is stored in the human brain as a set of rules, as an internal grammar.
- b. Language has two aspects. On the one hand, it is the totality of grammatical rules shared by all the members of a linguistic community (*langue*); on the other, it refers to actual utterances of individual speakers (*parole*). The subject of linguistics should be the first of these aspects.
- c. The proper object of linguistic study is the ideal competence of a native speaker of a language.
- d. The linguistic form is the sole, or the major mechanism for the communication of meaning.
- e. Societies or speech communities are homogeneous and they are characterised by a consensus about linguistic norms.
- f. Actual utterances and texts produced by real speakers and writers in real contexts are the legitimate object of linguistic study.
- g. The study of language should be correlated with the study of other activities, so that the meaning of each utterance is interpreted within its context.
- h. Members of the same speech community have some linguistic and communicative features in common, but absolute linguistic homogeneity may well not be found even within an idiolect (the variety of language spoken by one individual).
- i. Native speakers' competencies of a language are heterogeneous which means that native speaker competence cannot be the criterion of language competence.
- j. Communication is a precarious process and different members of the same speech community may arrive at rather different interpretations of the same text or utterance(s).

### 3. WHAT IS MEANT BY LANGUAGE STUDY?

In this unit, we will have a look at the motivations underlying language study and what language study consists of. In particular, we will examine what language study focusing on language as a system (i.e. theoretical linguistics) conceptualises its object of analysis as consisting of on a variety of 'levels'. In other words, what is theoretical linguistics all about?

#### 3.1 Why study language?

As ordinary people:

- We use language for some purpose: to get by in the world and to do a variety of things, to communicate with others, to make ourselves understood, to understand others, to express ourselves, to argue, to persuade, to fight and woo.
- At the same time, we all have internal (unconscious) and very sophisticated 'metalinguistic' knowledge about (our first!) language (cf Yule).
- We also have strong opinions and feelings about language (*good* and *bad* language).

But the linguist

- consciously and systematically *observes* language (language as a system, language as a particular form; the ways in which it is used by speakers and writers)
- tries to *describe* language and language use
- (more ambitiously) tries to discover the underlying *principles* which guide the ways in which language is organised and used
- tries to construct a *theory or model* of language

**Questions:** If you wanted to become a linguist, what would it involve?

- what steps would you have to take to become a linguist?
- should you forget and erase all your everyday knowledge, feelings, opinions, experiences about language in order to become a linguist?
- if you wanted to become a linguist studying the English language and use, is it a problem that your first language is not necessarily English?

#### 3.2 There is no *one* linguistics but many kinds of linguistics

As may have become obvious by now, traditionally, the field of language study has been divided into **two main components**: the study of language as a system, and the study of language use. However, nowadays, this division is not absolute: many linguists actually are interested in examining both structure and use. For example, in

the Finnish department of the University of Helsinki, scholars have compiled a grammar of spoken Finnish (ISO, *Iso suomen kielioppi* 2004, SKS:n toimituksia 950), focusing both on language structure (how spoken language can have structure) and language use (how people actually speak Finnish). However, this distinction between system and use (or *langue / parole*, or *competence / performance*) is useful to bear in mind because a great deal of linguistic study of the past relies on it.

Note also that Yule's term *language study* implies a broader outlook on the scientific study of language than *linguistics*.

During the course our focus will be on the first of these definitions, *language as a system*. We will thus investigate some aspects of what is known as *theoretical linguistics*.

Central questions for theoretical linguistics are, for example:

- description of language system
- origins of language
- language universals (what is universal about language, what do all the world's languages share?)
- language typology

Gradually, towards the end of the course we will begin to focus more on language use and language functions, and more generally on *applied linguistics*, which studies language and society (*pragmatics, language learning and teaching*).

### 3.3 Some examples of different approaches to language study:

#### Focus of interest

- Language as a system
- Language as a human cognitive faculty
- Different languages
- Types of languages of the world
- Types of language systems
- Language change
- Language in society
- Language and culture
- Language in conversation
- Language in texts
- Language, ideology, power, inequality
- Language and gender
- Language in literature

#### Approach

Theoretical linguistics  
 e.g. psycholinguistics, cognitive  
 Finnish/ English linguistics  
 Comparative linguistics  
 Contrastive linguistics  
 Historical linguistics  
 Sociolinguistics  
 Anthropological linguistics  
 Conversation analysis  
 Text and discourse analysis  
 Critical discourse analysis  
 Feminist linguistics  
 Stylistics

Note also that there are other disciplines that are interested in the role and significance of language, but which do not belong to the field of language study. Such fields are for instance literary criticism, semiotics and sociological discourse analysis.

### 3.4 Levels/ components of language as seen in theoretical linguistics

Level of language:	Level of analysis:	Explanation:
Phonic 'noise'	Phonetics	Study of the articulation, acoustics and perception of sounds
Sounds and sound system	Phonology	Study of phonemes, i.e. distinctive sounds and the system they form
Forms & elements of words and sentences	Morphology	Study of the smallest meaningful units of language (e.g. plural suffix)
Sentence structure	Syntax	Study of how sentences are structured
Meaning of words and sentences	Semantics	Study of meanings and meaning relationships
Speaker meaning	Pragmatics	Study of how utterance meaning depends on context
Structure of texts and talk, discourse	Study of discourse	Study of how sentences/ utterances combine to form larger wholes

Or expressed in another way:

#### THE SCOPE OF THEORETICAL LINGUISTICS

PHONETICS		LINGUISTICS		
	STRUCTURE		USE	SITUATION
SUBSTANCE: Phonic noise	Phonology	Morphology Syntax Semantics	Pragmatics Discourse	Extra-linguistic features

(adapted on the basis of Halliday)

#### Question

What do these schemas tell us about language study? What kind of picture do they give of the nature of language and language use? Does it seem complete and well-founded to you? Do you see any problems or gaps in it?

## 4. PHONETICS: WHERE AND HOW SOUNDS ARE PRODUCED

### 4.1 Phonetics in a nutshell

Phonetics is the study of the vocal aspect of language; **speech sounds and how they are produced** (*articulatory phonetics*), **transmitted** (*acoustic phonetics*) and **perceived** (*auditory phonetics*); also **prosodic features** of speech such as tone, intonation and stress. Speech sounds are transcribed by means of the **International Phonetic Alphabet** (IPA).

Phonetics provides

- methods for describing and classifying sounds in a detailed and systematic way
- methods for transcribing sounds

Chapter 3 in Yule explains the basics of phonetics. Yule follows the standard practice of enclosing phones in square brackets [ ]. In phonetic transcriptions, phonemes are usually placed inside slashes / /. The difference between phones, allophones and phonemes is explained below in section 5.1. The information below is taken from Ladefoged's *A Course in Phonetics* (2005/2012).

Minimal set: a set of words, which differ by only one sound

- *pie, tie, dye, guy, my, sigh, shy, etc.*
- Note: *spry* and *try* are not part of this minimal set because they begin with more than one sound
- *spry* [ spɹaɪ ]            *try* [ tɹaɪ ]

### 4.2 Phonetic rules

Many dictionaries will offer IPA transcriptions of words. These are context-free, however, and therefore may or may not accurately represent how the word is actually pronounced in speech. When people speak, the sounds that they produce follow observable rules and these change the way that the words are transcribed phonetically. For example, the distinction between whether a sound is voiced or voiceless is not absolute. Some rules are given below.

*Nasal plosion*: When a voiced stop occurs before a nasal in the same word, the stop is unreleased. The tongue comes up and stays on the alveolar ridge. Air pressure is built behind the tongue and the stop is released through the nose. Compare how the voiced plosive is not released in *hidden* /hɪdn/ and *sadden* /sædn/.

Rules for consonant allophones:

1. Consonants are longer when at the end of a phrase (*bib, did, don, nod*).
2. Voiceless plosives (/p, t, k/) are aspirated, or released with a burst of air, when they are syllable initial (*pip, test, kick*).
3. Voiceless stops (/p, t, k/) are unaspirated after /s/ (e.g. *spew, stew, skew*).

4. Voiceless obstruents – plosives, fricatives, and affricates (/ p, t, k, tʃ, f, θ, s, ʃ /) are longer than the corresponding voiced obstruents (/ b, d, g, dʒ, v, ð, z, ʒ /) when at the end of a syllable (e.g. *cap* vs *cab* and *back* vs. *bag*).
5. The approximants /w, r, j/ and /l/ are at least partially voiceless when they occur after initial /p, t, k/ (e.g. *play, twin, cue*).
6. The gestures for consecutive plosives overlap, so that plosives are “unexploded” or “unreleased” when they occur before another stop (e.g. *apt, rubbed*).
7. In many accents of English, /t/ is replaced by a glottal stop when it occurs before an alveolar nasal in the same word (e.g. *beaten*)
8. Nasals are syllabic at the end of a word when immediately after an obstruent (e.g. *leaden, chasm*).
9. The lateral /l/ is syllabic at the end of a word when immediately after the consonant (e.g. after plosives and fricatives: *paddle, whistle*; after nasals: *kennel, channel*).
10. In American English, alveolar plosives and alveolar nasal plus plosive sequences become voiced taps when they occur between two vowels the second of which is unstressed (e.g. *winter/winner; panting/panning*).
11. Alveolar consonants become dentals before dental consonants (e.g. *eighth, tenth, wealth*).
12. Alveolar plosives are reduced or omitted when between two consonants (e.g. *most people, Mos Def*).

### Rules for vowel allophones

Vowels are difficult to describe because the tongue position can vary so much. In contrast, the tongue position for consonants can be very accurately described by which part of the mouth it comes in contact with. So vowels can be said to form a continuum and they are described in comparison to each other (for example, some vowel sounds are higher than others). In addition, the vowels of one accent are usually described in comparison to a known accent, such as Received Pronunciation (RP) or General American.

1. Other things being equal, a given vowel is longest in an open syllable (that is, a syllable which does not end in a consonant), next longest in a syllable closed by a voiced consonant, and shortest in a syllable closed by a voiceless consonant. Compare the length of the vowels in:  

<i>sea, seed, seat</i>	/si:/	→	/si:d/	→	/si:t/
<i>sigh, side, site</i>	/saɪ/	→	/saɪd/	→	/saɪt/
2. Other things being equal, vowels are longer in stressed syllables (Compare the final vowels in *below* /bə'loʊ/ and *billow* /'bɪləʊ/).
3. Other things being equal, vowels are longest in monosyllabic words, next longest in words with two syllables and shortest in words with more than two syllables (Compare: *speed, speedy, speedily*).
4. A reduced vowel, or one that is shorter and more centralized than its closed counterpart, may be voiceless when after a voiceless plosive and before a voiceless plosive (e.g. *potato, catastrophe*).
5. Vowels are retracted (pulled back) before syllable final /l/



(Compare: *Heed/heal*).

**Assimilation:** In speech, sounds are affected by their adjacent sounds – those before and after them. For example:

- the [n] in *tenth* is articulated on the teeth because of the following fricative [θ]
- the voicelessness of [t] is preserved for [s] in *it's* /ɪts/ but the final sound is voiced in *it is* /ɪt ɪz/.
- When /m/ occurs before /f/, as in the word *emphasize*, it commonly becomes /mʃ/. The lips do not touch as in /m/. /mʃ/ is an allophone of /m/ in English.

Assimilation affects alveolar consonants /t, d, n, s, z/ more than the other consonants. The tongue moves to the place of articulation of the sound, which follows the alveolar consonant. So /t/ becomes /p/ in *football* /fʊpˈbɔːl/ and *seatbelt* /siːpbelt/, while /t/ becomes /m/ in *let me* /lemmi/.

Assimilation is completely natural and every speaker does it.

## Exercises

1. Say *The man and the old woman went to Britain and America*. Focus on how you pronounce *the* and *to*. How did your pronunciations differ?

2. Find the errors in the transcription of the consonant sounds in the following words. In each word, there is one error, indicating an impossible pronunciation of that word for a native speaker of English of any variety. Make a correct transcription in the space provided after the word.

strength	/strɛŋgθ/	should be	/	/
crime	/cɹaɪm/		/	/
wishing	/wɪʃɪŋ/		/	/
wives	/waɪvs/		/	/
these	/θiːz/		/	/

3. Transcribe the following phrases using the IPA (next page):

1. Obama knows exactly what he's doing
2. Look! Up in the sky!
3. Are you ready for some football
4. The Court's next bit of interpretive jiggery-pokery

## Further resources

- Interactive IPA chart: <http://www.ipachart.com/>
- Interactive phonemic chart (by Adrian Underhill): <http://www.macmillanenglish.com/phonemic-chart/>
- Cambridge English Online Phonetics focus website (designed for use by teachers in the classroom): [http://cambridgeenglishonline.com/Phonetics\\_Focus/](http://cambridgeenglishonline.com/Phonetics_Focus/)



## 5. PHONOLOGY: THE SOUND SYSTEM OF A LANGUAGE

In this unit, you will learn basic principles, terms and distinctions used in phonology, and how it is different from phonetics.

### 5.1 Phonology in a nutshell

Phonology is the study of the limited number of sounds that can be used to distinguish between meanings (e.g. /cæt/ v. /mæt/), their patterns and distribution in a language.

Of all the sounds produced in continuous speech, some are perceived as distinct and important in terms of making word/meaning distinctions in a language. *Changing this kind of sound results in a change of meaning.* This kind of a sound is referred to as a **phoneme**. For example, if you replace /b/ by /p/ in the word *big*, a word with a different meaning results. Consequently, /b/ and /p/ are interpreted as different phonemes.

In contrast, not everyone pronounces /b/ in exactly the same way, and there are variations according to its position in a word: e.g. /bɪg/ v. /ɪb/

These kinds of sounds make *no difference to the meaning of words* - these are simply *different ways of pronouncing a phoneme*. These sounds are referred to as **allophones** (= the actual versions of the phoneme that come out of our mouths). Allophones can occur either in *complementary distribution* (different allophones occur in complementary phonetic contexts) or they are in *free variation* (several allophones can be used in the same environment).

NB	Phone	- a sound
	Phoneme	- a sound that we interpret as capable of changing meaning ('an idea of a sound-type in our minds')
	Allophone	- a version of a phoneme; a sound that we cannot interpret as capable of changing meaning ('a real-life version of a phoneme')

#### Aims of phonology

- to describe the types of similarities and contrasts between different sounds that native speakers of a language rely on in understanding speech (e.g. Which sounds (phones) are similar and represent the same phoneme? Which sounds contrast with other sounds so that we interpret them as conveying different meanings?)
- In this way, to identify regular patterns and the phonological system of a language

### Questions and activities

- (1) Can you think of any reasons why it is necessary within linguistics to identify the phoneme system of a language?
- (2) Consider the following words used in Finnish. What difficulties might they cause for

- (A) native speakers of Finnish who pronounce them and  
 (B) linguists trying to describe the sounds used in pronouncing them?

*olympialaiset, banaani, metodologia, direktiivi, lasagne*

- (3) Possibly the most ingenious research carried out on phonological variation was the American sociolinguist William Labov's survey of the pronunciation of *r* among the workers at three New York department stores. Labov had noticed that some people pronounced the 'r' following vowels in words such as *car* and *park* and others did not. In order to investigate the variation in the community, he visited three department stores, one middle class, expensive store (Saks), one inexpensive store (Klein) and one in between (Macy's) and asked as many assistants as he could find the whereabouts of a product he knew to be on the fourth floor of each store. The expected answer *fourth floor* was, of course carefully chosen, as it contains two examples of the 'r' he was looking for: in *fourth* the 'r' occurs before a consonant, and in *floor* it occurs at the end of the word. Having received the answer *fourth floor*, Labov pretended that he had not heard properly, asking the assistant to repeat. He thereby doubled the size of his data set and introduced a further variable into the study, as the assistants' second replies could be regarded as 'emphatic' or 'careful'. Some of Labov's results appear in the figure below.

### On the basis of the figure, work out your answer to the following questions:

- What generalizations can you make about the way the two possible pronunciations co-exist in New York?
- What does the pattern of age variation suggest about the direction of language change?
- Which social groups appear to be leading in the use of the 'r-full' pronunciation?
- Does the position of the 'r' in the word affect which pronunciation form is chosen?
- What do the results comparing casual and emphatic styles suggest?

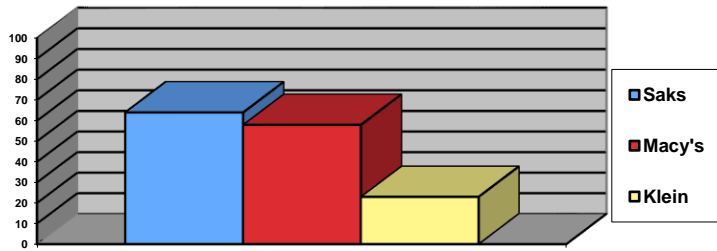


Figure 1 Percentage of assistants using 'r' by store

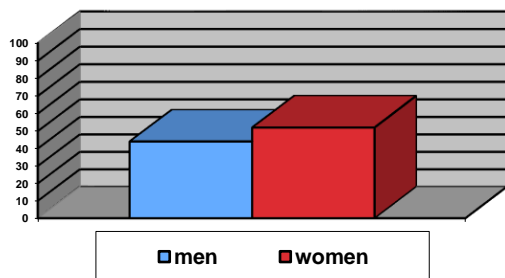
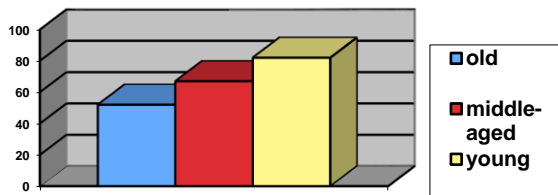
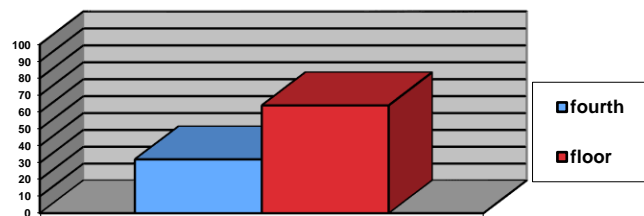


Figure 2 Percentage of assistants using 'r' by age and by sex



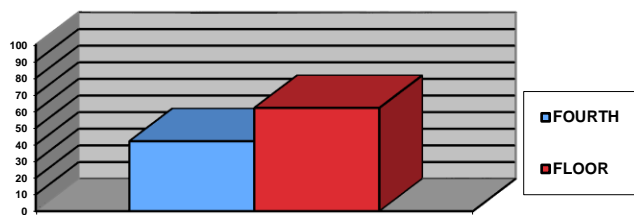


Figure 3 *Percentage of assistants using 'r' by position in the word and speech style (repetitions are capitalised)*

PHONE		PHONEME	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sounds produced</li> <li>- individual sounds as they occur in speech &gt; grouped into distinctive sound systems &gt; phonemes</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an abstract unit</li> <li>- the smallest unit of sound in a language which distinguishes two words (= meanings)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- phones of /æ/</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- English has 44 phonemes: 24 Consonants, 20 Vowels</li> </ul>	
<i>can</i>	[kæ:n] [kæɪn] [k n]	<i>pan</i>	/pæɪn/ <i>ban</i> /bæɪn/
ALLOPHONES			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- more than one phone is the phonetic realization of a single phoneme</li> <li>- predictable, based on the phonetic environment</li> </ul>			
/p/	<i>span</i> /spæɪn/	[sp..]	allophones of phoneme
	<i>spare</i> /speəʳ/	[sp..]	/p/
	<i>put</i> /pʊt/	[pʰ..]	
	<i>pair</i> /peəʳ/	[pʰ..]	
PHONEMIC REPRESENTATION	PHONOLOGICAL RULES	PHONETIC REPRESENTATION	
/pʊt/	/p/ > [pʰ] word initially	[pʰʊt]	

MORPH	MORPHEME
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- actual units produced in real speech/writing</li> <li>- the smallest distinctive string of phonemes which has a meaning or a function</li> </ul> <p><i>cats</i> - two morphs / two morphemes</p> <p><i>sheep/ pl.</i> - one morph / two morphemes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an abstract unit</li> <li>- the smallest meaningful unit of grammatical analysis</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. may be represented by a single sound: pl. <i>-s</i> → <i>cat+s</i></li> <li>2. may be represented by a syllable: <i>child+ish</i></li> <li>3. may be represented by more than one syllable: <i>aardvark</i>, <i>crocodile</i></li> <li>4. may have no sound to represent it: plural <i>sheep</i>, past tense <i>hit</i> (∅ morph)</li> </ol>
<h3>ALLOMORPHS</h3>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in addition to free variation, the concrete realization of a morpheme: different realizations according to phonetic contexts</li> <li>- predictable</li> </ul> <p>[t] [d] [əd] - allomorphs of the past tense morpheme {ED}</p> <p>[il] [ir] - allomorphs of the morpheme {IN}</p>	



## 6. MORPHOLOGY: INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF WORDS

In this section, you will learn about the internal structure of words: how words consist of smaller elements that have meanings of their own. This section also includes exercises with which you can practise analysing word structure.

### Morphology

- The study of the internal structure of words, their **stems** and **affixes** (prefixes, suffixes, infixes)
- **Morph** (real-life phenomenon, what comes out of our mouths): the smallest distinctive string of phonemes in real speech which has a meaning or a function
- **Morpheme** (the abstract concept, idea)
  - the smallest meaningful unit of grammatical analysis
  - can be (i) a word or **free morpheme**, or (ii) an affix (prefix or suffix) or **bound morpheme**

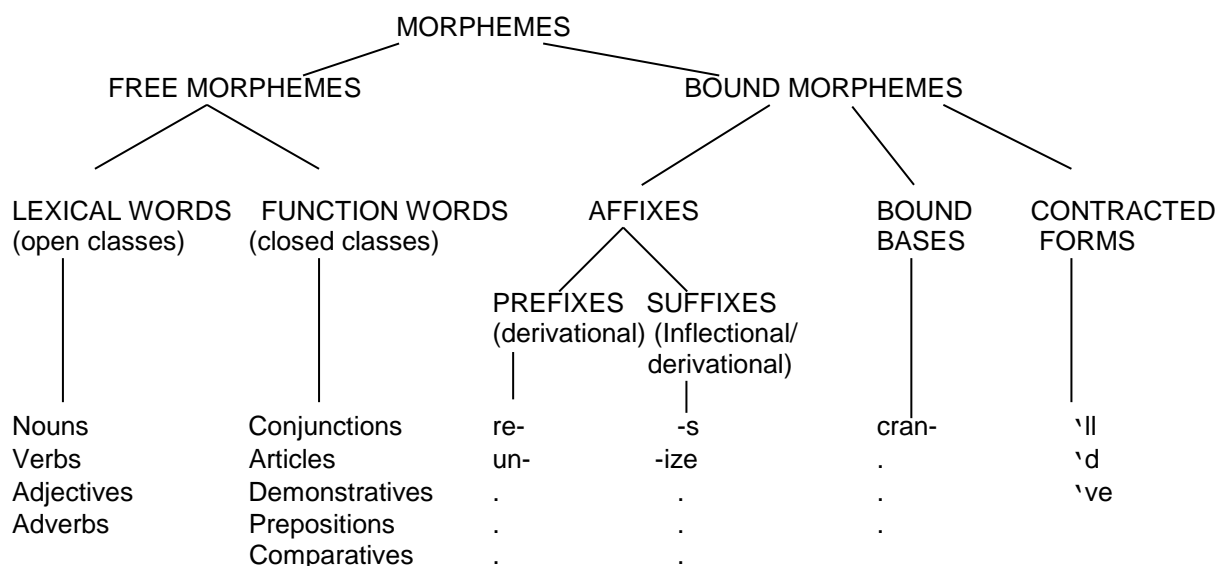
Bound/ prefix	free/ stem	bound/ suffix
	<i>sausage</i>	-s
in-	<i>discreet</i>	-ly

- **Allomorph** (a version of the morpheme)
  - the concrete realization of a morpheme
  - some (mostly grammatical) morphemes have different realizations according to their phonetic contexts

**e.g.** [ t ], [ d ], [ əd ] are all allomorphs of the past tense morpheme { ED }, in words like *missed*, *slammed* and *hoarded*

[ il- ], [ ir- ] are some of the allomorphs of the morpheme { IN }, in words like *illegal* and *irresponsible*

What other realizations are there?



### Exercises and activities on morphology

I. Analyse the following words into morphemes and explain their structure in terms of derivation, inflection, compounding, affixation and conversion. Give a brief explanation of the meaning or function of each bound morpheme. (Hint: a dictionary may be helpful with this exercise!)

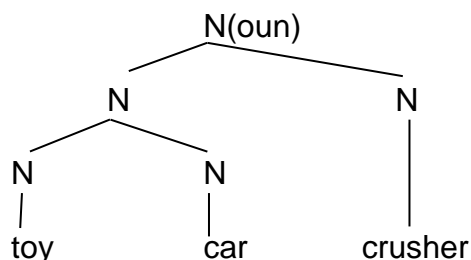
inoperability  
desalinated  
brickbatted

disloyalty  
counterintuitively  
rowing boats

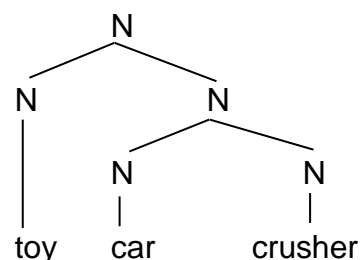
unhappier

II. Draw tree diagrams for the following compounds. Note that they all have more than one meaning and therefore require more than one tree. How does the tree structure relate to the difference in meaning?

e.g.



(crusher for toy cars)



(car crusher which is a toy)

(a) student film society

(b) New York taxi driver

(c) child psychology graduate

III. Below are listed some words followed by the incorrect definitions provided by high-school students.

**WORD**

*stalemate*

*tenet*

*dermatology*

*ingenious*

*finesse*

**STUDENT DEFINITION**

husband or wife no longer interesting

a group of ten singers

study of derms

not very smart

a female fish

For each of these incorrect definitions provide the possible reasons why the students made the guesses they did. Where you can exemplify by reference to other words or morphemes, do so.

IV. Below are some fairly recent words in the English language. Based on your knowledge of morphology, try to conclude what they mean. What kind of meanings do different morphemes carry? (Source: [http://public.oed.com/the-oed-today/recent-updates-to-the-oed/june-2016-update/new-words-list-june-2016/#new\\_words](http://public.oed.com/the-oed-today/recent-updates-to-the-oed/june-2016-update/new-words-list-june-2016/#new_words) , accessed 4<sup>th</sup> Sep, 2016)

*Afrofuturism*

*centimillionaire*

*diabetologist*

*exploitativeness*

*stalkerish*



## 7. MORPHOLOGY: WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'A WORD' AND WORD FORMATION?

In this section, you will learn that 'word' is not a straightforward notion, and that it is not always helpful as a concept when we want to analyse the type and structure of words. We will also discuss different processes used in creating new English words. This section also includes exercises, which you can do to investigate these issues further.

### 7.1 What do we mean by 'a word'?

It is not always easy to say what exactly we mean by a *word*. Below are some examples of ways in which word has been described in English dictionaries. Examine these definitions and try to determine which one(s) of them is/are the most useful one(s). Why? Can you think of examples, which would show that these definitions are not always adequate to explain what a word is or does in a language?

#### Definitions of the term 'word'

- a sound or a combination of sounds (or the written or printed symbols) forming a unit of grammar or vocabulary of a language
- an articulate sound or combination of sounds expressing an idea, object, action, etc.; constituent of a sentence
- a single unit of language which can be represented in writing or speech. In English, a word has a space on either side of it when it is written.
- a written representation of one or more sounds which can be spoken to represent an idea; the smallest unit of spoken language which has meaning and can stand alone

#### Some ways of defining what a 'word' is

- a) Semantic criteria: a word expresses an 'idea', object, action, etc.
- b) Syntactic criteria: a word occurs in a position within a sentence where we can have a simpler word

E.g. I met 

Mary
you-know-who

 today.

E.g. I heard about 

Mary's
you-know-who's

 adventures

- c) Grammatical criteria: a word can be inflected in a way typical of a particular word category
- d) Orthographic criteria: within a written text a word has an empty space on either side
- e) Auditory criteria: in spoken language a word can stand alone
- f) Dictionary: you can find the word in a dictionary

## 7.2 How do new words enter the language?

Vocabulary changes are commonly understood as a matter of new words for new things but it also shows both a social and a linguistic dimension. From the social perspective, vocabulary will emerge out of particular contexts of relationships, intentions, communities and power. Considering word origins and how words come into the language can be a productive way of seeing this social dimension and the ways in which new words reflect and define how people are thinking and relating to each other and the phenomenon or activity in question (e.g. Information technology).

Linguistically, words will show patterns of word formation, which relate to patterns in the language. In Yule's chapter 5 you can find information on some of the most common linguistic word formation processes used in English.

## EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES

### 7.3 Identifying words

In the light of what was said in 7.1 above, what would you say about the following items of spoken or written English? Is it possible to describe them as 'words'? If so, how many words are there in each case?

*because*

*like this*

*a bus stop*

*an*

*London*

*irregardless*

7.4 Look at the following lexical list and identify the processes through which they have been formed: (Sources: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/info/newwords09.htm>, accessed 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2015; Ayto, John. 2006. *Movers and Shakers*.)

fanboy  
Christmas bogus  
virtual Friday  
cardioprotective  
flash mob  
green-collar

locavore  
shawarma  
sock puppet  
staycation  
vlog



## 8. GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX: THE STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES

In this unit we will look at

- ways of defining the focus and scope of grammar
- different types of grammars for different purposes
- comparison of four grammatical paradigms: traditional, structuralist, transformational-generative and functional grammar

### 8.1 WHAT IS GRAMMAR?

Description of structure of words, phrases and sentences in a given language (= structuralist grammar)

**OR**

Description of rules of language system and internal knowledge about language (= Generative; universal grammar)

### 8.2 WHAT IS SYNTAX?

Traditionally, it means the study of the rules governing the way in which words are combined to form sentences in a language.

**OR**

Elements of the sentence structure and of the rules governing the arrangement of sentences in sequences. In this use, syntax also includes morphology.

### 8.3 WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF GRAMMAR?

Morphology and syntax? (traditional view)

Morphology, syntax and semantics?

Phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics?

Phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics (e.g. the pragmatic grammar of spoken language)?

A complete grammar would be a full description of all the subsystems of language (sounds, structures, meaning, use)

In practice, all grammars are incomplete descriptions of language.

### 8.4 WAYS OF CATEGORISING GRAMMARS

#### Prescriptive grammars

- certain kinds of language rules not necessarily based on usage by ordinary native speakers but on the kind of English believed characteristic of the most educated speakers of the language.

e.g. "The possessive forms for *everyone* are *his* and *her*. So do not say "Everybody brought *their* own lunch.", but rather "Everyone brought *his* (or *her*) lunch."

- + can be helpful to learners of the language
- problem of norms, whose norms?
- danger of purism

### **Pedagogic grammars**

- school grammars: instructions/rules/descriptions of syntax, morphology, semantics of the language, designed to be of use to language learners
- can be prescriptive or descriptive

- + can be useful to learners
- not always clear whether recommendations are based on actual usage of the language by native speakers; or on a systematic description of language structure

e.g. "Kielen opiskelun uudet päämäärät ja työtavat asettavat uudet vaatimukset myös käytettävälle oppimateriaalille. Niinpä kielioppikin palvelee nyt monipuolisempaa kielen opiskelua kuin ennen ja sen on tarkasteltava kielellisiä ilmiöitä sekä puhutun että kirjoitetun kielen, kuuntelemisen ja lukemisen, puhumisen ja kirjallisen tuottamisen kannalta." (I. and M. Mattila, *Englannin kielioppi*, esipuhe)

### **Descriptive grammars**

- a set of generalisations (and exceptions to them) formulated by linguists who try to determine the regular structures of the language as it is used by real speakers.

e.g. "The single-word form *maybe* is an adverb meaning 'perhaps.' The two-word combination *may be* consists of an auxiliary verb followed by the copula verb, *be*."

- + focus on language as it is used, not as it *should* be used (=descriptive)
- + provides the basis for a *theoretical* description of the language, its system and structure

### **Theoretical grammars**

- description of linguistic phenomena – what people intuitively know about language structure
- generalisations about language system
- more than description of grammars of individual languages (e.g. "universal grammar")

e.g. "[Grammar means] the rules and principles native speakers use in producing and understanding their language. These rules and principles are almost all acquired in childhood and are "in the heads" of native speakers." (Chomsky)



## 8.5 DESCRIPTIVE and THEORETICAL GRAMMARS BUILD ON THEORIES OF LANGUAGE STRUCTURE

Traditional, structural, generative, case, cognitive, valency, systemic functional grammar . . .

### Key features of grammatical paradigms

	<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Structural</b>	<b>Transformational</b>	<b>Functional</b>
<b>View of language</b>	Sees language as a set of rules	Sees language as a set of habits	Sees language as characterised by rule-governed creativity	Sees language as a system of meanings
<b>View of grammar</b>	Rules of formation and usage	Building blocks which combine in various structures	An innate device in the human mind	A resource for making meaning in social contexts
<b>Derivation of description</b>	Derived from ancient Greek and Latin models	Derived from recording of actual samples of spoken English	Derived from theorising about universal principles of language	Derived from observation and analysis of what people do through language
<b>Related disciplines</b>	Philosophy	Ethnography/behaviorist psychology	Philosophy/cognitive psychology	Sociology, anthropology
<b>Form vs. function/meaning</b>	Primarily concerned with form though traces of functions	Entirely focused on structure with little reference to meaning or function	Emphasis on syntactic form with more recent interest in semantics	Principled relationship between form and function
<b>Degree of similarity between languages</b>	Languages are different but can be made to conform to classical grammatical descriptions	Each language is unique and must be described on its own terms	All languages have in common an underlying universal grammar	Certain principles are universal but language use varies according to context
<b>Mode emphasis</b>	A grammar of written mode	Language is speech not writing	Not concerned with mode. Focus on 'mental' language competence	Shows how we draw differently on the language system in speaking and writing
<b>Unit of analysis</b>	Parts of speech and their combination	Phonemes, morphemes and relatively simple syntax	Phonemes through to complex syntactic forms	Text, clause, group, word, phoneme
<b>Key figures</b>	Dionysius Thrax, Bishop Lowth	Bloomfield, Fries	Chomsky	Halliday
<b>Classroom implications</b>	Overt teaching of rules, often as an end in themselves	No overt discussion of grammar but teacher's knowledge of grammar guides selection of structures	Teachers' knowledge of acquisition sequence guides selection of input/data from which students hypothesise	Discussion of relevant grammar point in context to heighten language awareness and appropriate use

## 8.6 Examples of grammatical analysis by different grammars

### **Traditional grammar:**

“Some sentences lack some part or parts that are ideally necessary to the full form of a sentence as defined above. These are called *elliptical* sentences, and an **ellipsis** is said to occur. Ellipsis plays an important part in English as in many other languages. It is common in all styles of speaking and writing. In poetical and rhetorical language, it often lends dignity and impressiveness, with something of an archaic flavour; to colloquial speech, it gives precision and brevity, and saves time and trouble. It is especially appropriate to exclamations and abrupt commands. Examples:

To err is human, to forgive divine – Pope (Supply ‘is’)  
 One murder makes a villain, a million a hero. (Supply ‘make’)  
 Well roared, Lion: well run, Thisbe. Shakespeare (p. 2)

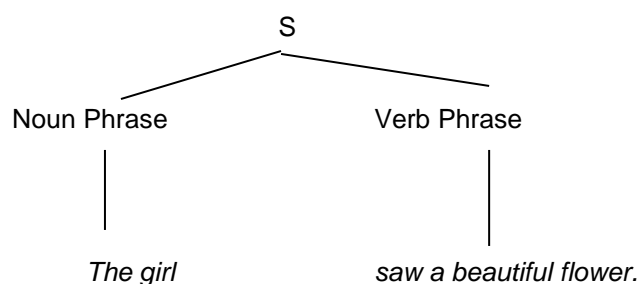
“**The genitive.** The fundamental meaning of the genitive is ‘of’, ‘in the sphere or scope of’. It is primarily an adjectival case, i.e. does the work of an adjective; but as in Latin and Greek, the genitive in OE [Old English] acquired adverbial uses from the lost ablative and locative cases. These adverbial meanings have now disappeared as living uses, the inflexion having been superseded largely by the preposition ‘of’, while many of its uses have been usurped by the accusative.” (p. 88)  
 (C.T. Onions. 1904/1971. *Modern English Syntax*)

### **Structural grammar:**

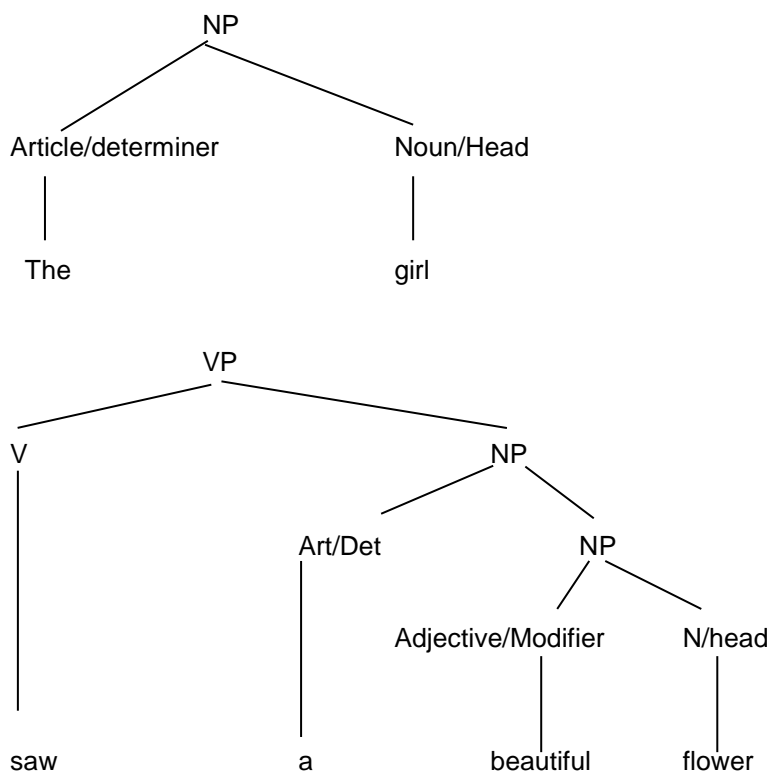
Main tenets:

- sequences of words have *internal structure and grouping*
- this grouping is *hierarchical*: groups of words consist of smaller units
- we can analyse sentences by dividing them *into successive layers of constituents from larger to smaller units* (sentences as consisting of phrases > phrases as consisting of words > words as consisting of morphemes)
- Immediate constituent analysis describes the internal structure of sentences and their constituents. The purpose of the description is to show how units at the lower levels form units at higher levels (e.g. how words combine to form phrases; how phrases combine to form a sentence.)

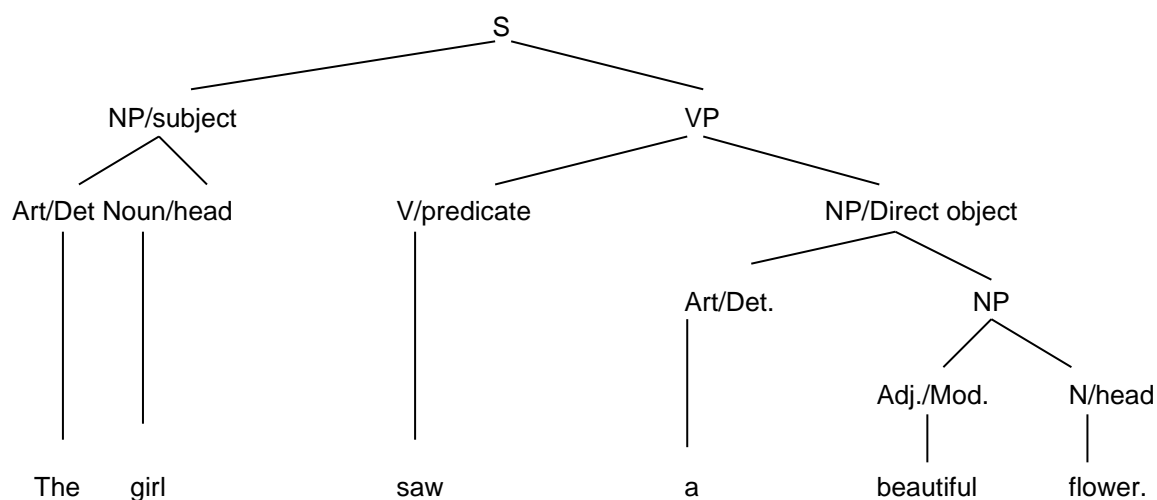
**Immediate constituent analysis** is the analysis of the sentence (1) into its immediate constituents (into a noun phrase (NP) and a verb phrase (VP))



(2) and the analysis of the phrases into their immediate constituents (e.g. a Noun Phrase can consist of an article functioning as a determiner, adjective functioning as a modifier, and a noun functioning as the head of the phrase).



The purpose of IC analysis is to show how sentences have structure on different syntactic levels



This kind of a tree diagram (or a box drawing, see Yule) shows the *hierarchical structure* of the sentence and the sentence-internal groupings.

## IMMEDIATE CONSTITUENTS

### Some principles for division of sentences into their immediate constituents

1. If the sentence contains a sentence modifier (e.g. an adverb which modifies the whole sentence), the first cut separates the sentence modifier from the rest of the sentence:

e.g.      *To tell the truth, | I was asleep.*  
             *Actually, |.....*  
             *Unfortunately, | .....*

2. If there is no sentence modifier, the first cut is made between the noun phrase functioning as subject and the verb phrase functioning as predicate:

e.g.      *The low-flying plane which roared above the trees | frightened the children.*

3. In Noun Phrases the analysis begins at the end: all modifiers that follow the main word (head of the Noun Phrase) are cut off successively first; then modifiers at the front of the head noun are cut off successively until you reach the head itself:

e.g.      *the old garden hose | in the shed*

4. In Verb Phrases, modifiers preceding the verb are cut off first. Thus, beginning at the end, cut off all modifiers successively until you reach the verb:

e.g.      *happily | jumped on the table*  
             *may have been | eating*

5. In Prepositional Phrases, the first cut is made after the preposition:

e.g. *on | the table*

6. In infinitive non-finite clauses the first cut is made after *to*:

e.g. *to | lessen the tension*

Example from the discourse of a structural grammar:

### “The genitive morpheme”

the genitive morpheme has four allomorphs, viz.

/s/      with the same phonemically conditioned distribution as the /s/ allomorph of {Z1} [the plural morpheme], i.e. used with bases ending in an unvoiced sound except hissing sounds: *Philip's car* /fɪlɪps 'kɑː/;

/z/      with the same distribution as the /z/ allomorph of {Z1}, i.e. used with bases ending in a voiced sound except hissing sounds: *John's car* → /dʒɑːnz kɑː/;

/ɪz/     again with the same distribution as the /ɪz/ allomorph of {Z1}, i.e. used with bases ending in a hissing sound: *George's car* → /dʒoːdʒɪz kɑː/;

/Ø/     or zero allomorph (indicated by an apostrophe in spelling), which is found (i) after the /s, z, ɪz/ allomorphs of the {Z1} morpheme, i.e. with nouns in the plural if the plural is 'regular': *the visitors' hats*, (ii) with some proper names, chiefly classical ones, which end in a hissing sound: *St Agnes' Eve, Socrates' wife, Sophocles' plays*, and (iii) with some singular nouns ending in a hissing sound in the construction *for . . . -s' sake: for goodness' sake*.

[. . .]

### The meaning of {Z2}

Having discussed the form of the {Z2} morpheme we again put the question, What is its meaning? The form is sometimes called the 'possessive' because it is said to express possession. But even if one is

prepared to interpret the word 'possession' in a very wide sense, there are a great many cases where the {Z2} morpheme cannot be said to express any kind of possession (e.g. *a stone's throw*, *John's death*). The traditional term for this form is the 'genitive', which is probably a better term than the 'possessive', because it is less committal; it says nothing of the meaning of the morpheme. The point is that the {Z2} morpheme expresses such a variety of different meanings that it is doubtful whether any *one* term could be found which would give adequate expression to all. It has been suggested that perhaps the best thing is to define the meaning of {Z2} in terms of the functions of the nouns with this suffix. It will be seen then that perhaps the noun with the suffix {Z2} nearly always occurs before another noun (or nominal), or in contexts where another noun (or nominal) can easily be supplied:

*It's John's car. St Paul's (Cathedral)*

As we shall see later, this position is normally occupied by words known as "determiners":

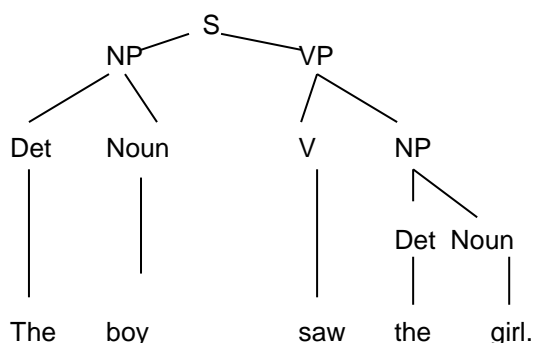
A car  
The car  
This car  
John's car

The name 'determinative suffix' has therefore been suggested for {Z2}.  
(Christophersen, P & A.O. Sandved. 1969/1980. *An Advanced English Grammar*.)

### **Transformational-generative grammar:**

#### **Main tenets:**

- Grammar is a *set of rules*, which generates all the grammatical sequences of a language and none of the ungrammatical ones.
- This set of rules is the *internal competence* (mental grammar) that native speakers have and which makes it possible for them to generate an unlimited number of grammatical sentences.  
e.g. Noam Chomsky: *Syntactic Structures* (1957)  
"Linguistic description should account for more than a set of observed sentences produced in speech; it should take into account possible future utterances. Thus, it should account for the characteristic of productivity (creativity) in human language."
- Use of intuition in language analysis (sentences invented by linguists, no real language data)
- Description of phrase structure with tree diagrams which represent ways of 'generating' a very large number of sentences with a very small number of rules.



- Formulation of phrase structure rules (rules with which we can generate sentences) These rules represent the information of the tree diagram in an alternative way:

S -> NP VP            (> The sentence consists of a noun phrase followed by a verb phrase)  
 VP -> V NP            (> VP consists of a verb and a noun phrase)  
 NP -> Det (Adj) N    (> NP consists of a determiner (an article) and a noun; NP may also include an optional adjective)

- Use of lexical rules to generate other sentences with a similar structure:

V {saw, like, abhor} (> As the verb of the sentence you can have words *saw, like, abhor*)  
 N {boy, girl, man, dog}  
 Det {a, the, some, this}

- With the help of the phrase structure rules and lexical rules, we can now generate a number of grammatical sentences (and *no* ungrammatical sentences).

E.g. The boy saw the girl.  
 The girl likes the boy  
 The man abhors the dog.

- The phrase structure rules generate all sentences with a fairly fixed word order. The same basic message can, however, be conveyed through a different kind of order or arrangement of words (i.e. as different surface structures of the same basic deep structure)

E.g. The dog is abhorred by the man.

- Therefore, in generative grammar another set of rules (in addition to the phrase structure rules) is necessary. These are called transformational rules. With the help of these rules, we can produce various sentences in which the constituents are arranged in a different order.

In the above example, we could say that we applied *the passive transformation rule*, which involves the operations of

- the object of the active sentence => the subject of the passive sentence
- the subject of the active sentence => the agent of the passive sentence
- active form of the verb => passive form of the verb.

## Example from the discourse of transformational-generative grammar:

### 2.2. The motivation for constituent structure

What, then, is the motivation for the assumption that sentences have constituent structures? The most general answer is that without it, it is more or less impossible to specify what is and what is not possible in a language. This soon becomes clear if we try to specify what is and what is not possible without making this assumption.

How might one specify what is and what is not possible if one assumes that sentences are just sequences of words of various kinds? Consider the following sentence:

(1) The boy was angry about the girl. [ . . . ]

How, then, can we provide a more satisfactory account of what is and what is not possible? The answer most syntacticians would give is by assuming that words are grouped together to form phrases. We noted earlier that certain sequences recur if we list the word categories in sentences. The following illustrates this.

(8) Hobbs was angry about Rhodes.

(9) The old man was angry about the young girl.

(10) Hobbs and Trumper were angry about Rhodes and Foster.

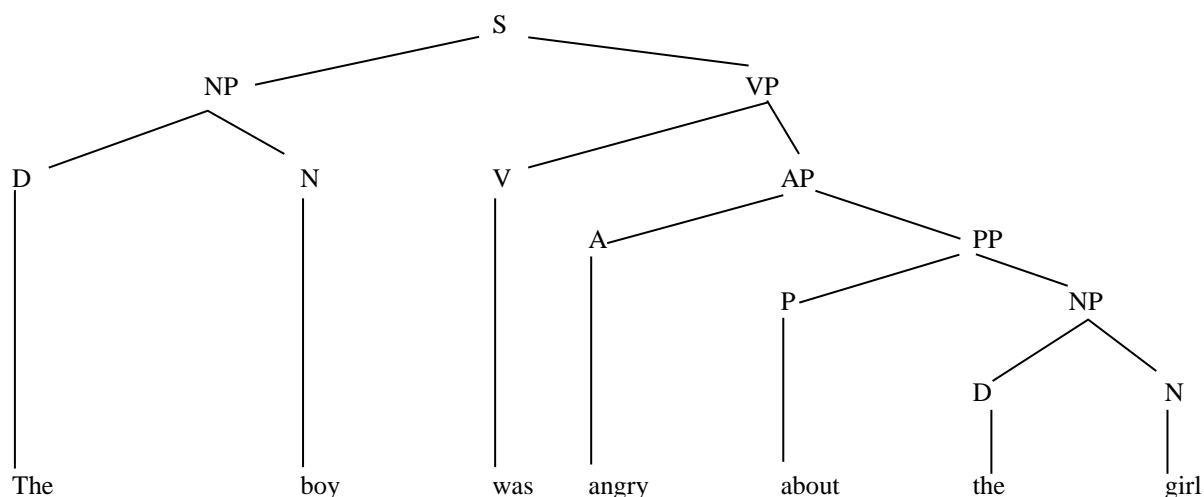
In (8), we have a single N, a proper noun, in the position where D(eterminer) + N(oun) appears in (1); in (9) we have D + A(djective) + N in this position; in (10) we have N + and + N in this position.

We can account for the facts by calling all these options noun phrases (NP's), and introducing NP onto rules for S(entence) and specifying just once what an NP can be. [ . . . ] We can introduce the rule in (11), and we can specify the range of options with (12).

(11) S → NP V A P NP

$$(12) \text{ NP} \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{D N} \\ \text{N} \\ \text{D A N} \\ \text{N and N} \end{array} \right\}$$

The curly brackets in (12) indicate that each sequence of categories is one option. One point to note about this approach is that it involves the assumption that a phrase can consist of a single word. [ . . . ] This approach gives us the following, more complex representation for (1):



(Borsley, R. 1999. Syntactic Theory: A unified approach)

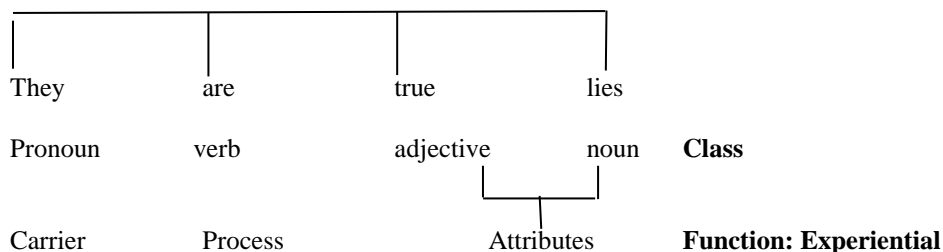
## **Systemic functional grammar**

### **Main tenets:**

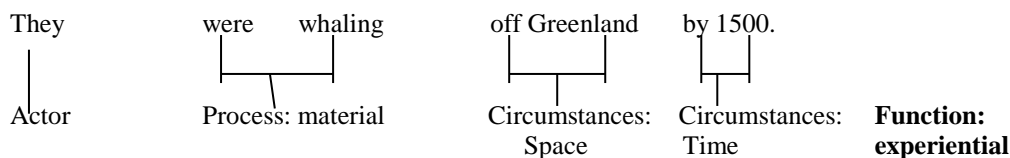
- Language as a semiotic system (=a system of meanings and a system for creating meaning) which embodies all human experience and relations, in which it is possible to talk about the others
- Language use and texts have their particular linguistic form because of the social purposes they fulfil
- Vocabulary and grammar are inseparable ('lexicogrammar')
- Grammar is a framework for studying texts and language in use
- Speakers and writers make choices from the options available for them
- Language has three *metafunctions*
  - Ideational: language represents and constructs human experience
  - Interpersonal: language enacts human relationships
  - Textual: language creates discourse that hangs together.

### Example from the discourse of functional grammar

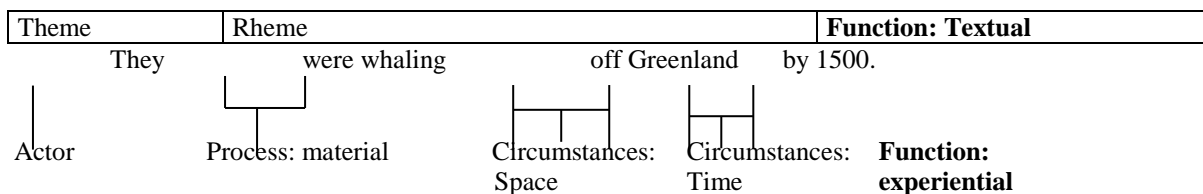
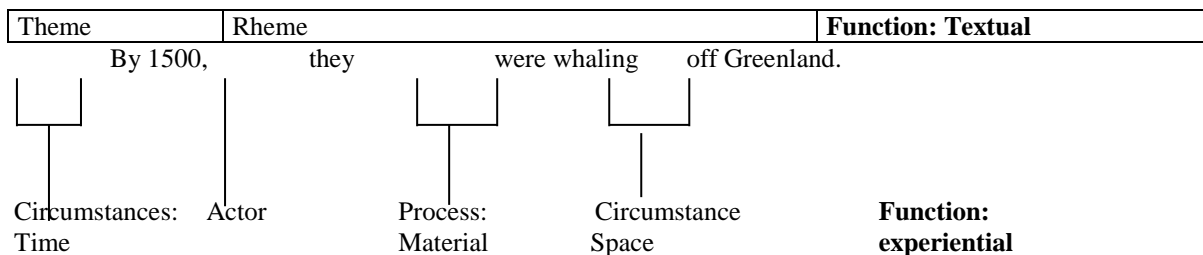
“Functional grammar is . . . concerned with understanding how the ways in which language is used for different purposes and in different situations have shaped its structure. The key argument of functional grammar is that to understand linguistic meaning we have to appreciate the function of items in a structure.



The functional analyses of clauses shown above indicate how the grammar realizes experiential (or referential) meaning (or metafunction) – the meaning concerned with constructing reality as configurations of people, places, things, qualities and the different circumstances of these configurations.



But there are other kinds of meaning operating in these (and all) clauses. For example, supposing we restructure the clause above as follows:



Now the experiential meanings here are the same as in the previous version. But notice that the orientation or point of departure of the clause is different. In the first version the point of departure is the time (by 1500) – you are going to find out something about 1500. In the second version the point of departure is “they” – in this clause you are going to find something about “they”. These differences are concerned with the organization of communication and are part of the textual meaning of the clause. They are realized grammatically by the Theme/Rheme system. In English the Theme is the first elements in the clause and this is what provides the orientation or point of departure for the clause. By changing the Theme we do not change the experiential meaning of the clause but we do change the textual meaning i.e. the arrangement of information.

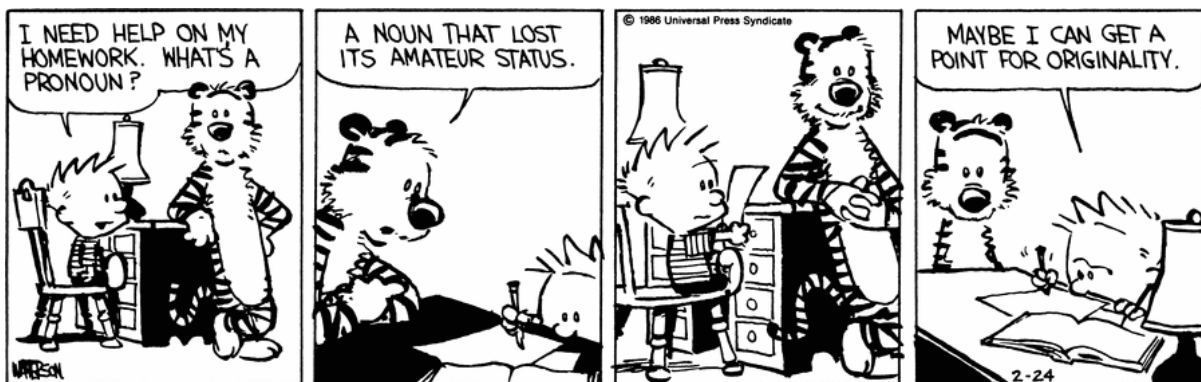


There is yet a third type of meaning constructed in all clauses. This is the interpersonal meaning – the meaning that reflects the nature of the interpersonal relationship among those who are using the language. Part of this relates to the interpersonal roles that are operating, for example, is the speaker a giver or a demander of information? Again these interpersonal roles, and hence interpersonal meanings, can change independently of the experiential or textual meanings. The grammatical systems that realize interpersonal meanings are those of Mood and Modality.

Theme		Rheme			Function: Textual
They		were whaling	off Greenland	by 1500.	
Actor	Process: material	Circumstances: Space	Circumstances: Time	Function: experiential	

MOOD		RESIDUE			Function: Interpersonal
Subject	Finite	Predicator	Adjunct	Adjunct	



### For discussion: Grammar in language teaching

On the basis of the description of different grammatical paradigms above, try and identify the particular model that was/is used when you were/are studying

- your first language (e.g. Finnish) at school
- your second language (e.g. Swedish) at school
- other foreign languages (e.g. Latin, French, German) at school
- language subjects in a university language department

Working with a partner, discuss the grammar taught in each of these contexts. What was/is the purpose of teaching grammar in each case? What was/is paid attention to in grammar teaching? Was/is the reliance on a particular grammatical paradigm a successful choice in terms of your learning of each language? Why/ why not? If you think it was not, try to work out which type of approach to grammar might have been a better choice and why.

## 9. SEMANTICS: THE STUDY OF WORD AND SENTENCE MEANING

In this unit, you will learn some basic distinctions and notions of semantics – denotation (basic lexical meaning) vs. connotation (associative meaning); lexical relations and metaphor.

### 9.1 Some key concepts in semantics:

**Lexical semantics** investigates the linguistic and/ or conceptual meanings of words; what words mean ‘generally’ or ‘objectively’ rather than in particular situations and/or by particular speakers

#### Linguistic/ conceptual meaning can be analysed:

- Through denotation, reference & connotation

<i>Denotation</i>	means the class of things indicated by a word
<i>Sense</i>	the basic meaning of a given word, dictionary meaning; the place which a word or phrase (a lexeme) holds in the system of relationships with other words in the vocabulary of a language
<i>Reference</i>	means the relationship between words and the things, actions, events and qualities they stand for or are used to refer to; <i>referent</i> means the particular thing in the real world that is indicated when the word is used.
<i>Connotation</i>	means the associations that words have for us. Words can conjure up associations that may affect our attitude and our response to an utterance which contains them

- E.g.
- A cat makes a good pet. (here the word *cat* denotes the class of all cats)
  - **Cat** A cat is a small, furry animal with a tail, whiskers, and sharp claws, Cats are often kept as pets.
  - A cat scratched her arm (here the word *cat* refers to a particular cat)
  - Cat as a beautiful, comforting pet vs. cat as a ferocious beast (the word *cat* can have different connotations for different people)

- Through semantic features

e.g. cow [+cattle] [+adult] [-male]

- Through semantic roles (cf. experiential meaning in functional grammar)

e.g.	agent	<b>The boy</b> kicked the ball
	theme	The cat chased <b>a mouse</b> .
	experiencer	<b>I</b> am sad.
		<b>She</b> saw an accident.

- **Through lexical relations**

- **Synonymy** same meanings; complete synonymy rare
- **Antonymy** opposite meanings; gradable (more/ less *hot – cold*); non gradable (*male – female*)
- **Hyponymy** meaning of one form 'included' in that of another (*carrot – vegetable*)
- **Homonymy** same phonological or orthographic form but unrelated meanings (*meat – meet* = homophones; *pupil – pupil* = homographs)
- **Polysemy** same forms, meanings related with extension (*head* of a person – *head* of a company – *head* of a beer)
- **Metonymy** whole – part relationship between words (*wheels – car*; *page – book*)
- **Collocation** words that frequently occur together (*salt and pepper*; *cat and dog*; *switch off lights* cf. *sammuttaa valot*)
- **Idioms** multi-word units with a metaphorical meaning (*put one's foot in*; *miss the forest for the trees*)
- **Prototype** the core meaning of a concept (e.g. what is a prototypical bird?)

## EXERCISES ON LINGUISTIC MEANING

### A. Connotative meaning

Working in small groups, look at the following words

vehicle, slavery, democracy, was, morphology, Rolls Royce, fascism, milk, photosynthesis, family, a, brat, police, animal.

Then, as quickly as you can, write down the list of words that first come to your mind about these words. Do this spontaneously, without thinking as much as you can. Do not spend more than a few minutes on this task.

Then compare your list of new words (=connotations of the words in the list) with those of the other members of your group.

- Do you agree on the connotative meanings of the words in the box?
- Which words tend to have no particular connotations?
- Which words tend to have strong negative connotations?
- Which words tend to have strong positive connotations?
- Consider also possible reasons for the connotations you had

## B. Lexical relations

Study the following list of words and expressions. It includes names of various shops, businesses and services, and notices from a church bulletin board. Discuss the ways in which words and meanings are used here. Are these examples synonyms or polysemes, or can you find other ways of using the relationship between word and meaning? What effects are created by using language in this way (i.e. what is the joke in each example)?

### *Hairdressers*

Curl up and dye, Fresh hair, Headlines, Making waves

### *Bed salesrooms*

Bedside manor

*Fur shop*

Hide and sheep

### *Services*

Nappy cleaning service: Wee care

Dry cleaning: Suits me

### *From a church bulletin board:*

- \* This afternoon there will be a meeting in the South and North ends of the church. Children will be baptised at both *ends*.
- \* Thursday at 5:00 PM there will be a meeting of *the Little Mothers Club*. All wishing to become *little mothers*, please see the minister in his study.
- \* This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Lewis to come forward and *lay an egg* on the altar.
- \* The ladies of the church have *cast off* clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the church basement on Friday.

Can you think of/ invent Finnish shop or company names, which create ambiguous meanings in the same way?



## 10. PRAGMATICS: INVESTIGATING SPEAKER MEANING

In this unit, you will learn more about some basic concepts of pragmatics and will have the opportunity to apply these notions to the analysis of pragmatic meaning.

“Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics which studies those aspects of meaning which cannot be captured by semantic theory. In brief, it deals with how speakers use language in ways, which cannot be predicted from linguistic knowledge alone. In a narrow sense, it deals with how listeners arrive at the intended meaning of speakers. In its broadest sense, it deals with the general principles followed by human beings when they communicate with one another.” (Aitchison, Jean. 1999. *Teach yourself linguistics*.)

### 10.1 Some clarifications of pragmatic terms:

#### (i) Speaker meaning

The meaning that a speaker/writer intends his/her utterance, sentence or text to have. This meaning cannot be worked out only on the basis of the literal meaning of the words, utterance, sentence or text, but its understanding is a process of inferring (or sometimes of negotiation) what the speaker/writer, in a particular (linguistic, physical, situational) context, most probably means by his/her text.

E.g. What might be the intended speaker meaning of the following actual utterances? How do you work out this meaning?

- *An invisible car came out of nowhere, hit my car and vanished.*
- *Everyone hates Aileen Elkinshaw because she's so popular.*
- *I sleep all the time, doctor.*

#### (ii) Context

(a) the specific parts of an utterance, sentence or text near or adjacent to a unit which is the focus of attention (= linguistic context; 'co-text')

(b) physical context, the physical location of an utterance, sentence or text

(c) situational context

Narrow definition: what is immediately observable in the co-occurring situation  
 Broad definition: the total non-linguistic background to an utterance, sentence or text, including the immediate situation in which it is used, and the awareness by speaker and hearer of what has been said earlier and of any relevant external beliefs.

What could be the (likely) context (in the three senses described above) of the following utterance?

- *Madam chairman, ladies and gentlemen.*

### (iii) Presupposition

A presupposition is something assumed (presupposed) to be true in an utterance/sentence which asserts other information.

E.g.

- *Christopher stopped looking.*  
Presupposition: Christopher had been looking.
- *The owl sneezed again.*  
Presupposition: The owl had sneezed before.

How to identify presuppositions?

If a sentence containing a presupposition is negated, the truth of the presupposition remains unchanged.

E.g.

- *Christopher realized that Winnie was gone.*  
Presupposition: Winnie was gone.
- *Christopher did not realize that Winnie was gone.*  
Presupposition: Winnie was gone.

Practise identifying the presuppositions of the following sentences:

- *Jack repeated the story for latecomers.*
- *It wasn't Jack who wrecked the car*

### (iv) Speech acts

#### Direct speech act:

- an act of speaking/writing which makes the speaker's/writer's intention evident in the overt form of the utterance/sentence.

e.g.: *Where do you live?*

(overt form: interrogative  
direct speech act: question)

*Stop talking!*

(overt form: imperative  
direct speech act: command)

*I **warn** you not to do that again!*

(overt form: contains a performative verb  
which overtly indicates the speaker's  
intention)

*I **promise** that I'll be there.*

- " -

*We **request** a booth in the back.*

- " -

**Indirect speech act:**

- an act of speaking/writing which leaves the speaker's/writer's intention unexpressed or implicit in the form of the utterance/sentence,

Examples:

*Do you know what time it is?*

(overt form: a question about the hearer's knowledge about the time; by pragmatic inference we know that it really is an indirect information question about the time, i.e. an indirect speech act)

*Can you pass the salt?*

(an indirect request)

*I'll be there.*

(an indirect promise)

*A booth by the window would be nice.*

(an indirect request)

**EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES**

(1) Examine the cartoon strips below from a pragmatic point of view. Pay attention to such pragmatic questions as:

- Speaker meaning: what is the intended message(s) (of the characters/ of the cartoon writer). Is it clear or is it manipulated in some way?
- Are direct / indirect speech acts used in the strips? If so, how do they affect your interpretation?
- Does the linguistic context help you in the interpretation of the cartoon strip? If so, how?
- Does the 'physical' context (e.g. that you know that they are cartoons which regularly appear in a newspaper) help you in your interpretation? How?
- Does the 'situational' context (e.g. what you know about the purpose, form and conventions of cartoon strips; your knowledge of the world) help you in your interpretation? How?







(2) What speech acts are expressed in the following sentences? How can you identify them? What type of person could be the recipient of these acts? How could the context shape the form of these utterances? (Note: in a way, the 'core' (propositional) message of each sentence is the same)

- Shut the door!
- Could you shut the door?
- Did you forget to shut the door?
- Put the wood in the hole.
- Were you born in a barn?
- What do big boys do when they come into the room, Johnny?

(3)

A sign on a shop window in a second hand shop in Notting Hill, London, July 1995:

**WE DO NOT BUY STOLEN GOODS**



## THE CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

Originally described by philosopher Paul Grice (1975).

The co-operative principle “is essentially a theory about how people *use* language. Grice’s suggestion is that there is a set of over-arching assumptions guiding the conduct of conversation. These arise, it seems, from basic rational considerations and may be formulated as guidelines for the efficient and effective use of language in conversation to further co-operative ends” (Levinson, 1983: 101, emphasis in original).

### ***The co-operative principle:***

“Make your contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged”

### **Four maxims**

#### ***The maxim of Quality:***

“try to make your contribution one that is true, specifically:

- (i) do not say what you believe to be false
- (ii) do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence” (Levinson, 1983:101)

→ Use of *hedges* to convey that we are not sure of what we are saying, thus trying to avoid flouting the maxim of quality

e.g. If I remember correctly, the next presidential elections are in 2018.

#### ***The maxim of Quantity:***

- (i) “make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange
- (ii) do not make your contribution more informative than is required” (Levinson, 1983:101)

#### ***The maxim of Relevance:***

“make your contribution relevant” (Levinson, 1983: 102)

→ *conversational implicature*

e.g. A     Where’s Bill?  
       B     There’s a yellow VW outside Sue’s house

#### ***The maxim of Manner:***

“be perspicuous, and specifically:

- (i) avoid obscurity
- (ii) avoid ambiguity
- (iii) be brief
- (iv) be orderly” (Levinson, 1983: 102)

Source: Levinson, S. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: CUP.

## 11 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA)

This unit will teach you the key concepts in second language acquisition (SLA) as well as introduce you the areas of study within SLA.

### 11.1 WHAT IS SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION?

“Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers both to the study of individuals and groups who are learning a language subsequent to learning their first language as young children, and to the process of learning that language.” (Saville-Troike 2006: 2).

SLA involves a wide range of language learning settings and learner characteristics and circumstances, which can be examined from linguistic, psychological and social perspectives. When we study SLA, we attempt to answer three basic questions from such perspectives:

- *What* does the L2 learner come to know?
- *How* does the learner acquire this knowledge?
- *Why* are some learners more (or less) successful than others?

### 11.2 KEY TERMS

- **First language (L1):** the language a child acquires from caretakers during early childhood, normally beginning before the age of three
  - Native language, primary language, mother tongue
  - **Simultaneous multilingualism** (includes bilingualism): acquisition of more than one language
  - **Sequential multilingualism:** learning of additional languages after L1 is established
- **Second language (L2):** an official or societally dominant language needed for education, employment and other basic purposes; often acquired by minority groups or immigrants
- **Foreign language (FL):** a language not generally spoken in the surrounding community; studied in the formal educational context but not widely used in the learner’s immediate social context; might be used for cross-cultural communication situations
- **Target language (TL):** any language that is the aim or goal of learning

#### Additional terms:

- **Library language:** a tool for further learning through reading
- **Auxiliary language:** a language one needs to know for some official functions in their immediate political setting
- **Language for specific purposes (LSP):** Spanish for Agriculture, English for Aviation Technology, English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

### 11.3 HOW DO WE STUDY IT?

The study of SLA has emerged primarily within the fields of linguistics and psychology to answer the questions listed in 11.1 above. The differences in the approaches used to study SLA result from the researchers' perspectives in these fields of study:

- Linguists: differences and similarities in the languages being learned and the linguistic competence (underlying knowledge) and linguistic performance (actual production) of learners
  - Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Interlanguage, Morpheme order studies, Monitor model; transfer
  - Functional approaches; acceptability judgements
- Psychologists and psycholinguists: mental and cognitive processes and the representation of language in the brain
  - Critical period hypothesis, lateralisation
  - Sex, aptitude, motivation, cognitive style, personality, learning strategies
  - Transfer
- Sociolinguists: variability in learner linguistic performance; communicative and pragmatic competence
  - Variation in learner language
  - Input and interaction (foreigner talk)
- Social psychologists: group-related phenomena, e.g., identity and social motivation, and the interactional and larger social contexts of learning

### EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES

1. Match the following terms to their corresponding examples:

1. auxiliary language	a. A French person studies German for six years because the school system requires it.
2. foreign language	b. A Chinese family immigrates to Canada and studies English so as to enter the school system and the work force.
3. second language	c. In India, native speakers of Tamil learn English to participate in official Indian government.

2. Acceptability judgment test: mark your own answers and ask two other non-native speakers of English who are not students of English to take the test. Do their answers agree with yours? Consider how you might modify this test to gain more insight into the learners' language. For example, you could ask them how confident they are in their answers.

	1	2	3	4	5
Is the boy standing over there is happy?					
I read a book of which my professor had recommended the style.					
Yesterday I saw a girl of whom I have forgotten the name.					
This is a book of which I hate the title.					
How many did you buy of the books?					
It's real hard to find a good job anymore.					
I'm done my homework.					

R.W. Fasold and J. Connor-Linton (eds.) 2006