

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN
DISTANCE LEARNING CENTRE

LIN 122

ELEMENTARY GRAMMAR II

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1 st	First
2 nd	Second
3 rd	Third
A/Adj	Adjective
Adv/ADV	Adverb
Aff	Affix
AGR/Agr	Agreement
AP/AdjP	Adjective Phrase
ASP/Asp	Aspect
AUX/Aux	Auxiliary
C/COMP/Comp	Complementizer
Cont.	Continuous Aspect
D/Det	Determiner
F	Functional category
Fem.	Feminine
Fut.	Future tense
H	Head
Hab.	Habitual Aspect
Imp	imperative
INFL/I	Inflection
M	Modal
M	Modifier
M/Masc.	Masculine
MV	Main Verb
N	Neuter
N	Noun
Neg/neg	Negative
No	Number
Nom	Nominative
NP	Noun Phrase

Num	Number
P/Preposition	Preposition
Part	Particle
Past	Past tense
Per	Person
Perf	Perfective Aspect
PL/Pl	Plural
PP	Prepositional Phrase
Pred	Predicate
Pres	Present tense
PRO/PRN/Pro	Pronoun
Prog	Progressive Aspect
Q	Quantifier
Q	Qualifier
Q-M	Question Marker
REFL	Reflexive
REL/rel.	relative marker
S	Sentence
SG/Sg	Singular
Subj	Subject
T/Tns	Tense
V	Verb
VE	Verbal Element
VP	Verb Phrase
W X Y Z	Variables

General Introduction and Course Objectives

This course is a continuation of your study of Grammar which you began with LIN 121: Elementary Grammar I, hence it is called **LIN 122: Elementary Grammar II**. The aim of the course is to introduce you to some basics in the study of Syntax and Morphology in Linguistics. I started the course by discussing the various meanings different people give to grammar and the different types of grammar you will likely come across in your study of linguistics. Some of these types are Descriptive Grammar, Prescriptive Grammar, Pedagogical Grammar, Reference Grammar, Theoretical Grammar and Traditional Grammar. I explained each of the types with appropriate examples where applicable.

For you to have a clear understanding of the term *grammar* and to be able to identify the proper use of the term, I gave a vivid and lucid account of some of the misconceptions about the use of the term “grammar”. These misconceptions are various, such as using the term *grammar* to refer to the grammatical book itself; equating the term with grammatical labels or terminologies, and regarding a student who cannot define such grammatical terms in a language as grammatically unknowledgeable in the language. Some other misconceptions about the use of the term *grammar* are that languages which have not been reduced or committed to writing are normally taken as having no grammar; that grammar is essentially concerned with meaning and languages which have different shapes/ forms for a word have grammar while those which do not have different shapes/ forms for a word have no grammar.

In the remaining part of the lecture, that is, from lectures four to fourteen, I discussed and explained the principal units of grammatical descriptions. These principal units are the morpheme, the word, the phrase, the clause and the sentence. I began the discussion on the morpheme by explaining the various aspects of the morpheme, such as the meaning, types and functions. I devoted a whole lecture to the study of bound morphemes, which are also known as affixes so that you will be able to have adequate knowledge of affixes and be able to segment (divide) a complex word into its various morphemes. I discussed the various ways by which linguists define the word. This is necessary because there is no universally accepted definition for the word. I gave four different definitions of the word based on the types of words identified in human language. These are the orthographic word, the morphological word, the lexical word and the semantic word. I explained two ways of identifying the word; these are the criterion of structural stability and the criterion of uninterruptedness. I also discussed grammatical classification of words. I grouped words into six classes; these are variable and invariable words; grammatical and lexical words; and

open-class and closed – class words. I gave the definition of the phrase and explained its various constituents. These are the head word and the dependent words. The dependent words can precede the head word. I explained the various types of phrases in languages of the world. These are the Noun Phrase (NP), the Prepositional Phrase (PP), the Verb Phrase (VP), the Adjective Phrase (AP) and the Adverb Phrase (AdvP). I defined the clause, examined its structure and explained the various functions the clause can perform. I defined the sentence as a group of words having a subject and a predicate, which expresses a complete thought. I discussed the types of sentences based on structure; these are the simple sentence, the compound sentence, the complex sentence and the compound- complex sentence.

Finally, I explained other types of sentences based on use; these are the declarative, the imperative, the interrogative and the exclamatory. As a student, you should have a clear view of what each of the topics in this series of lectures covers. The lectures have been specially prepared for you to have a solid foundation in Linguistics, especially in the areas of Syntax and Morphology. By the end of the series of lectures, you should be able to (among others) define the term “grammar”; identify the misconceptions about its use; and explain the principal units of grammatical description.

Course Objectives

After you have studied this course, you should be able to:

- explain the term *grammar* and the various types of grammar
- discuss some of the misconceptions about *grammar*
- identify and discuss the principal units of grammatical descriptions such as the morpheme, the word, the phrase, the clause and the sentence

Lecture One

Meaning of Grammar

Introduction

Grammar is a central term in Linguistics. However, there is a great deal of confusion about this term because it is used in very many ways. In other words, the term 'grammar' covers a wide range of phenomenon. In this lecture, I shall teach you the various meanings different people give to grammar.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to

- explain the various meanings associated with the term *grammar* and
- bring out the differences in these meanings

Pre-text questions

1. What is grammar?
2. Which language has a better grammar considering English and Yorùbá?
3. If a language has not been developed into a standard written form, can such language have any grammar at all?

The Linguistic Definitions of Grammar

Term *grammar* goes back to the Greek word which may be translated as 'the art of writing'. But this word acquired a much wider sense and came to embrace the whole study of language.

In Linguistics, the concept of grammar is not restricted to a single meaning despite the fact that all these meanings are taken to be standard in their own contexts. Each definition depends on the context where the term is used. Although these meanings interrelate with one another somehow, yet you should know how to distinguish one from the other. These meanings are stated below.

Grammar is all that a native speaker knows in the use of his language.

Grammar is a branch of language study which comprises morphology and syntax.

Grammar is a formal description of a language usually being published as grammar texts meant for students or other users.

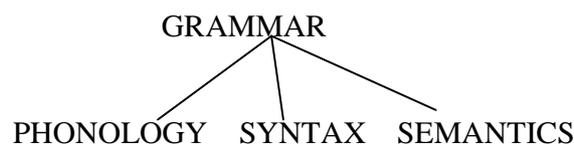
Grammar is a set of language rules which can be generalized into a body of truth called theory.

Grammar is the attainable standard of acceptability being used to justify grammatical expressions in a particular language.

Grammar as the native speaker knowledge

A native speaker is the one that speaks a language as his first language. He is expected to be competent in that language because he uses it as a mother-tongue (the first language one acquired in life). This is the language through which he acquires more knowledge in life. He also uses this language to learn other languages. Therefore, it is expected that he knows the structure of his language. He is the best person to describe his language because he knows when an utterance is correct or not. Linguists believe that he could do this because he had internalized the grammar of his language. Between Mr. Òjọ that speaks only Yorùbá and Mallam Nuhu that speaks only Hausa, who do you think can really describe the Yorùbá language structure? Of course, it is Mr. Òjọ. Since Mr. Òjọ is a native speaker of Yorùbá, his knowledge of the language constitutes a kind of Yorùbá grammar. Mr. Òjọ has in his head a complete grammar of Yorùbá “according to” his experience in the language. So does Mallam Nuhu a complete grammar of Hausa corresponding to his exposure therein. In the same way, the native speakers of Edo, Efik, Igbo, Idoma, Epira, Urhobo, Isokiri, Ijo and other languages also have the grammar of their languages in their heads.

The native speaker knowledge is implicit. It is usually easy to think about and to report on. According to Chomsky (1957), it is seen as a device that formulates all the acceptable sentences possible in a language. It is a very broad concept of grammar because it includes the right pronunciation (the phonology), the right structure (the syntax) and the right meaning (semantics) of each acceptable expression. This is represented in the diagram below.



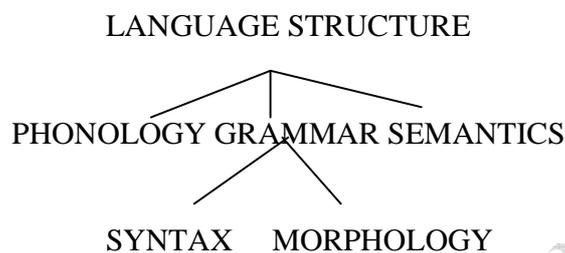
Phonology is the study of sound systems in language.

Syntax refers to the arrangement of words or ways in which words are put together and the internal structure of the word i.e. syntax includes morphology.

Semantics is the study of meaning in language.

Grammar as Morphology and Syntax

In the specific or restricted sense, grammar is just one branch of language structure distinct from phonology and semantics. It deals with a set of rules and examples dealing with the syntax and morphology of a language.



Syntax refers to the arrangement of words or ways in which words are put together.

Morphology refers to the internal structure of words or the different forms or shapes of words.

Grammar as a Language Description

In another sense, grammar is a description of the structure of a language and how linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined into sentences and the meaning and functions of the sentences in the language in question. In this sense, every language, be it English, Yorùbá, Igbo has a grammar of its own and the grammar of one language is different from the other.

When grammar is used in this sense, it is more preferable to use the term grammatical structure. That being the case, when we are talking about the grammar of Hausa, for example, what we mean is the grammatical structure of Hausa. This view is in Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics where the first definition of grammar is given 'a description of the structure of a language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. It usually takes into account the meaning and function these sentences have in the overall system of language. It may or may not include the description of the sounds of a language'.

Grammar as a Theory of Syntax

In a certain current linguistic theory, grammar is used to designate a set of rules and the lexicon. The set of finite rules are designed to account for different languages with the aim of providing a theory that can model what will be known as Universal Grammar (UG). Some of these theories or models are Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG), Systemic Grammar, etc.

It should be emphasized that within Linguistics, this view of grammar has undergone and is still undergoing several modifications to produce several model of grammatical structure.

Grammar as a Standard of Acceptability

What do you think is meant by the term ‘grammar’ when one says any of the following sentences?

I need to improve on my grammar before I can attend that interview.

It is not a good grammar to say you should raise up your hands.

It is a bad grammar to say “It’s me” when you are asked who knocks at the door.

Though John has a good command of vocabulary, his grammar is terrible.

When the term *grammar* is used in this way, one is simply making judgment on whether an expression is acceptable or unacceptable in a particular variety or dialect of a language. Linguists have also discovered that some expressions that are usually termed “ungrammatical” in the standard dialect of a language are often accepted as grammatical in the non-standard dialects. Therefore, if the research is based on any of those non-standard dialects, the same expressions will be grammatical.

Summary

We have seen both the inappropriate and the appropriate meanings being given to the term *grammar*. As a linguistic concept, we have seen how grammar could be defined from five different perspectives. It can be defined as a native- speaker intuition of his language, as a branch of language analysis involving morphology and syntax, as an account of a structural description of a particular language, as a theory of syntax, and finally as a linguistic judgment for acceptable utterances in a particular language.

Post-text Questions

- 1). Discuss the various meanings associated with grammar in Linguistics.
- 2). Why do you think that your mother-tongue (your native language) has its grammar?

3). Provide a list of books that can be called a grammar of a particular Nigerian language.

Suggested books for further reading

Elson, B. and V. Picket. 1962. *An Introduction to Morphology and Syntax*. California: SIL

Fromkin Victoria and Robert Rodman, 1998. *An Introduction to Language*. Orlando: Harcourt
Brace Jovanovich Publishers.

Katamba, Francis 1993 *Morphology*. The Macmillan Press Ltd. London.

Malmkyaer, Kristen (ed.) 1991. *The Linguistic Encyclopedia*. London & New York: Routledge.

Mario, Pel 1966. *Glossary of Linguistic Terminology*. New York & London: Columbia
University Press.

Okolo, B. A. and P. A. Ezikeojiaku 2000. *Introduction to Language and Linguistics*. Benin
City: Mindex Publishing Company.

Taiwo, Oye 2011. *Mofólójì: Atun e kejì (Morphology: Second edition)*. Ibadan: Universal
AkadaBooks (Nig). Limited

Tomori, S.H.O 1977. *The Morphology and Syntax of Present-day English. An
Introduction*. London: HEB.

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Lecture Two

Types of Grammar

Introduction

In lecture one, I defined and explained the various meanings associated with the term *grammar*. I will, in this lecture, explain the various types of grammar associated with the definitions in lecture one.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able identify and explain various types of grammar.

Pre-text Questions

- 1). What is Descriptive Grammar?
- 2). What is Prescriptive Grammar?
- 3). What is the difference between a Pedagogical Grammar and a Reference Grammar?
- 4). How is Descriptive Grammar different from Theoretical Grammar?
- 5). Explain the term *Traditional Grammar*

Types of Grammar

In this lecture, I will discuss six types of grammar. These are Descriptive Grammar, Prescriptive Grammar, Pedagogical Grammar, Reference Grammar, Theoretical Grammar and Traditional Grammar. I will explain each of the types with appropriate examples where applicable.

Descriptive Grammar

Descriptive Grammar is an approach that describes the grammatical constructions that are used in a language. These are the sounds and sound patterns, the basic units of meaning, such as words, and the rules to combine them to form new sentences. When linguists wish to describe a language, they attempt to describe the grammar of the language that exists in the minds of its speakers. There may be some difference among speakers' knowledge, but there must be shared knowledge, because it is this grammar that makes it possible to communicate through language. The grammar then, is what we know; it represents our linguistic competence. To understand the

nature of language, we must understand the nature of this internalized, unconscious set of rules, which is part of every grammar of every language.

A descriptive grammar does not tell you how you should speak; it describes your basic linguistic knowledge. It explains how it is possible for you to speak and understand, and it tells what you know about the sounds, words, phrases and sentences of your language.

Prescriptive Grammar

Prescriptive Grammar is a manual that focuses on constructions where usage is divided, and lays down rules governing the socially correct use of language. The prescriptive grammarians believed that there are certain “correct” forms that all educated people should use in speaking and writing and that language change is corruption. They wished to prescribe rather than describe the rules of grammar. For example, they would say that “two negatives make a positive” and therefore one should not say *I don't have none* rather one should say *I don't have any*; that even when *you* is singular, it should be followed by the plural *were*; hence it is wrong to say *You was wrong about that*. The correct form is *'You were wrong about that.'* In comparative constructions, the nominative form of the pronoun (e.g. I, he, and they) should follow and not the objective form (me, him, and them). Therefore, it is wrong (as the prescriptive grammarian would say) to say *Ade is fatter than me*. The correct form is *Ade is fatter than I*.

Many of these “rules” were based on Latin grammar, which had already given way to different rules in the languages that developed from Latin. Many of these new rules were legislated in English grammar. All those who prescribe rules for language are bound to fail. Language is vigorous and dynamic and constantly changing. All languages and dialects are expressive, complete and logical.

Pedagogical Grammar

A Pedagogical Grammar of a language is a book specifically designed for teaching a foreign language or for developing an awareness of the mother tongue. It is also known as **teaching grammar**. It states explicitly the rules of the language or dialect. It assumes that the student already knows one language and compares the grammar of the target language with the grammar of the native language. The meaning of a word is given by providing a gloss- the parallel word in the student's native language such as *ilé* “house”. It is assumed that the student knows the meaning of the gloss “house” and so the meaning of the Yorùbá word *ilé*.

Sounds of the target language that do not occur in the native language are often described by reference to known sounds. The rules on how to put words together to form grammatical sentences also refer the learners' knowledge of their native language. Pedagogical grammars might be prescriptive in the sense that they attempt to teach the student what is or is not a grammatical construction in the new language. Their aim is different from grammars that attempt to change the rules or usage of a language already learnt.

Reference Grammar

A Reference Grammar is a grammatical description that tries to be as comprehensive as possible, so that it can act as a reference book for those interested in establishing grammatical facts in much the same way as a dictionary is used as a "reference lexicon". For example in the book 'A Reference Grammar for Students of English' by R.A. Close, the preface says the book 'will explain how an English sentence is built up,... describe the grammatical system as a whole...[and] introduce the terminology with which we can label its component parts'. Professor Awobuluyi's book 'Essentials of Yorùbá Grammar' '...presents the Yorùbá language as it really is, rather than as seen hitherto. The major parts of speech of the language are...established uniformly on the criterion of function alone'. Books like the ones mentioned above are reference grammar books of these languages. Other examples of reference grammar include 'A Grammar of Yorùbá' by Emeritus Professor Ayo Bamgbosé, 'English Grammar: A Linguistic Study of its Classes and Structures' by F.S. Scott et al.

Traditional Grammar

Traditional Grammar is a term often used to summarize the range of attitudes and methods found in the period of grammatical study before the advent of linguistic science. The 'tradition' in question is over 2,000 years and includes the works of classical Greek and Roman grammarians, Renaissance writers and 18th century prescriptive grammarians. The traditional grammarian saw it as his task to formulate the standards of correctness and to impose these, if necessary, upon the speakers of the language. Linguists generally use the term 'traditional grammar' pejoratively, identifying an unscientific approach to grammatical study in which languages were analyzed in terms of Latin, with scanty regard for empirical facts i. e. publicly verifiable data/facts obtained by means of observation or experiment.

Theoretical Grammar

Theoretical Grammar is an approach that's goes beyond the study of individual language. It studies language and languages with a view to constructing a theory of their structure and functions. Those that pertain to human languages, representing the universal properties of language, constitute the universal grammar. Theoretical grammar determines what constructs are needed in order to do any kind of grammatical analysis, and how these can be applied consistently in the investigation of a human language. Theoretical grammar supplies the concepts and categories in terms of which particular languages are to be analyzed. The goal of theoretical grammar is the formulation of a satisfactory theory of the structure of language in general. For example, it might formulate the hypothesis that all languages have nouns and verbs. The study of grammar of a particular language (descriptive grammar) provides the data which confirm or refute the propositions and theories put forward in theoretical grammar.

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Summary

I have, in this lecture, explained and discussed the various types of grammar such as descriptive grammar, which describes the grammatical constructions that are used in a language; prescriptive grammar, which focuses on constructions where usage is divided, and lays down rules governing the socially correct use of language; a pedagogical grammar, which is a book specially designed for teaching a foreign language or for developing an awareness of the mother tongue; a reference grammar, which is a grammatical description that tries to be as comprehensive as possible, so that it can act as a reference book for those interested in establishing grammatical facts; traditional grammar, which is the unscientific approach to grammatical study in which languages were analyzed in term of Latin, with scant regard for publicly verifiable data/facts obtained by means of observation or experiment; and finally theoretical grammar, which determines what constructs are needed in order to do any kind of grammatical analysis and how these can be applied consistently in the investigation of a human language.

Post-text Questions

- 1). What is Descriptive Grammar?
- 2). What is Prescriptive Grammar?
- 3). What is the difference between a Pedagogical Grammar and a Reference Grammar?
- 4). How is Descriptive Grammar different from Theoretical Grammar?
- 5). Explain the term “Traditional Grammar”.

Suggested books for further reading

Elson, B. and V. Pickett. 1962. *An Introduction to Morphology and Syntax*. California: SIL

Fromkin, Victoria and Robert Rodman 1998. *An Introduction to Language*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.

Katamba, Francis 1993 *Morphology*. The Macmillan Press Ltd. London.

Malmkyaer, Kristen (ed.) 1991. *The Linguistic Encyclopedia*. London & New York: Routledge.

Mario, Pel 1966. *Glossary of Linguistic Terminology*. New York & London: Columbia University Press.

Okolo, B. A. and P. A. Ezikeojiaku 2000. *Introduction to Language and Linguistics*. Benin City: Mindex Publishing Company.

Taiwo, Oye 2011. *Mofólójì: Atun e kejì (Morphology: Second edition)*. Ibadan: Universal AkadaBooks (Nig). Limited

Taiwo, Oye (forthcoming) *Introductory Semantics and Pragmatics for Nigerian Students*

Taiwo, Oye (in prep.) *Introduction to Grammatical Analysis*

Tomori, S.H.O 1977. *The Morphology and Syntax of Present-day English. An Introduction*. London: HEB.

Lecture Three

Misconceptions about the Use of the Term *Grammar*

Introduction

In the last lecture, I explained the six types of grammar. These are Descriptive Grammar, Prescriptive Grammar, Pedagogical Grammar, Reference Grammar, Theoretical Grammar and Traditional Grammar. The term 'grammar' can be used in any of the senses explained in lecture two, but in certain other senses, it could be regarded as misconceptions. In this lecture, I will explain and analyze these misconceptions so that you will be able to avoid them.

Objective

After studying this lecture, you should be able to identify certain misconceptions about grammar and analyze how they are so.

Pre-text Question

Indicate whether the following statements are true or false

1. The term grammar refers to the grammar book itself
2. The request 'Can you lend me your grammar?' refers to a grammar book and not the grammar of the language.
3. A student who cannot define grammatical term that is given to a word when it is used in a certain way does not know any grammar in the sense of the structure of the language in question.
4. Gender and sex virtually refer to the same thing in grammar.
5. Sex is a semantic distinction while gender is a grammatical distinction.
6. It is wrong to equate sex with gender or to give meaning to gender as male or female in grammar.
7. Grammar is essentially concerned with meaning.
8. Meaning is not relevant to gender distinction in grammar.
9. Some languages have grammar while others are devoid of grammar.
10. The grammatical patterns written down when we write the grammar of a language already exist in spoken form hence, spoken languages have grammar.

Misconceptions about Grammar

Using the term *grammar* to refer to the grammar book

It is not uncommon for a school pupil to ask his/her classmate the following question: “Can you lend me your grammar?” It is obvious that the term *grammar* in this sense simply refers to a grammar book. But in actual fact, the grammar of a language is not the same thing as the book. However, it could be argued that although the book itself is not the grammar, what it contains is at least grammatical. Even in this sense, the grammar of the language in question is still limited as presented by the author of the book because the grammar of a language is certainly more than the one written by an individual author.

Equating Grammar with Grammatical Labels or Terminologies

Another sense in which the term *grammar* is misused is when it is confused with grammatical terms. It is not unusual for a school teacher to complain that a student ‘does not know any grammar’ when the student does not know for example that the word ‘dancing’ belongs to the grammatical term called ‘gerund’ or when the student is unable to refer to traditional terms as part of speech, or when the student does not know the traditional definition of the verb as, ‘a word which expresses action, or state of being’. Common grammatical terms such as noun, verb, gerund, subject, object, predicate, etc. do not constitute the grammar of a language. The fact that a student cannot define such grammatical term that is given to word when it is used in a certain way does not mean that the student does not know any grammar in the sense of the structure of the language in question.

Grammatica

When the term *grammar* is used in the sense of ‘**grammatica**’: a Greek word meaning **a set of rules for writing**; it is clear that languages which have never been reduced or committed to writing will be regarded as having no grammar. However, it should be emphasized that the spoken language precedes the written language and that one learns to speak before learning to write. This means in effect that the grammatical patterns written down when we write the grammar of a language already exist in spoken form. That being the case, the view that languages that have not been reduced or committed to writing have no grammar is simply unacceptable.

Grammar and Meaning

Another misconception is that grammar is essentially concerned with meaning. This view is unacceptable in Linguistics where a distinction is usually made between Grammar and Semantics. There are indeed several ways of showing that there is no one to one correspondence between grammatical and semantic distinctions. To cite just one instance, we can consider the case of sex and gender. Sex is a semantic distinction while gender is a grammatical distinction. Examples from Romance languages- French, Italian, Spanish will clearly show that it is wrong to equate sex with gender or to give meaning to gender as male or female in grammar. In these romance languages, all nouns can be divided grammatically according to gender into two places namely masculine and feminine. The classification is supported in the grammar in the fact that different forms of articles and adjectives go with these classes. Some examples are stated below.

	French	Italian	Spanish
Masculine:	Le livre	il libro	el libro 'the book'
Feminine:	la porte	la parta	la puarta 'the door'
French:	Masculine Le livre vert the book green 'the green book'		Feminine La porte verte the door green 'the green door'

Given these examples, it will be clearly wrong to claim that in French, Italian and Spanish languages, all objects are either male or female or that they have the meaning male or female. This is far from being correct, what simply happens is that in grammar of these languages, all nouns can be divided into two classes: masculine and feminine.

To further show that meaning is not relevant to gender distinction in grammar, we can compare the gender of words in two or more languages.

	SUN	SUN	MOON	MOON
Language	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine
German	_____	Die sonne	Der mand	_____
French	Le soteil	_____	_____	La lune
Italian	Il sole	_____	_____	
Spanish	El rol	_____	_____	

As can be seen from these examples, the romance languages and German have different gender distinction for “sun” and “moon”. In German, ‘sun’ is feminine, ‘moon’ is masculine. But in romance languages, ‘sun’ is masculine while ‘moon’ is feminine. If gender were to be equated with sex distinction as male or female, it will not be the case that genders of words in romance languages and German will be different.

Another evidence to show that gender in grammar does not mean the same thing as sex is the fact that in some languages, many of the nouns which are classified as feminine actually refer to occupation that are normally performed by heavy looking young men as is evident in the following French examples.

La vigie ‘the night watch’
 La recruit ‘the recruit’
 La sentinelle ‘the sentinel (guard)’

Moreover, in German, the words that are commonly used to refer to young girls as well as young ladies are classified as neuter gender (neither masculine nor feminine), e g

German: das mädchen ‘girls’
 Das fräuleu ‘young ladies’

The conclusion from all these examples and others is that grammar is not essentially concerned with meaning.

Some Languages have Grammar while others are devoid of Grammar

Another misconception is the viewpoint that some languages have grammar while others are devoid of grammar. This viewpoint is based on a very restricted use of the term grammar. In this restricted sense, grammar is equated with just the morphological process referred to as inflections. Thus, languages such as Russian and Latin which have inflections are regarded as having grammar, while languages like English which have little inflections have not much grammar, and languages like Vietnami, Chinese, Yoruba which have no inflections have no grammar. In languages that have inflections, we have several shapes/forms of a word as is evident from the following examples.

Russian	‘cat’				
Koška	‘cat’ (nominative)	Koški	‘of a cat’	Koške	‘to / for a cat’
Košku	‘cat’ (accusative)	Koško	‘by a cat’	Koške	‘about a cat’

Latin	'Master'		
Dominus	'master' (nominative)	Domini	'of a master/ masters (plural)'
domino	'to/from a master'	dominum	'master' (accusative)
domine	'O master'	dominorum	'of masters' (plural)
dominos	'masters' (accusative)	dominis	'from masters'

The fact that some languages have different shapes/forms for a word and others languages do not have does not mean that the languages that do not have this feature have no grammar. Inflection is just a grammatical feature and does not constitute the grammar of the language.

Summary

In this lecture, I explained and analyzed some misconceptions about the use of the term grammar. These are using the term grammar to refer to the grammatical book itself; equating grammar with grammatical labels or terminologies and that a student who cannot define such grammatical terms does not know any grammar of the language. Some other misconceptions about the use of the term grammar are that languages which have not been reduced or committed to writing will be regarded as having no grammar; that grammar is essentially concerned with meaning and languages which have different shapes/ forms for a word have grammar while those which do not have different shapes/ forms for a word have no grammar.

Post text Question

Indicate whether the following statements are true or false

1. The term grammar refers to the grammar book itself
2. The request 'Can you lend me your grammar?' refers to a grammar book and not the grammar of the language.
3. A student who cannot define grammatical term that is given to a word when it is used in a certain way does not know any grammar in the sense of the structure of the language in question.
4. Gender and sex virtually refer to the same thing in grammar.
5. Sex is a semantic distinction while gender is a grammatical distinction.
6. It is wrong to equate sex with gender or to give meaning to gender as male or female in grammar.
7. Grammar is essentially concerned with meaning.
8. Meaning is not relevant to gender distinction in grammar.

9. Some languages have grammar while others are devoid of grammar.
10. The grammatical patterns written down when we write the grammar of a language already exist in spoken form hence, spoken languages have grammar.

Suggested books for further reading

Elson, B. and V. Picket. 1962. *An Introduction to Morphology and Syntax*. California: SIL

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Lecture Four

The Morpheme

Introduction

In the last three lectures, I have explained to you the various meaning associated with grammar and the types of grammar that you may likely come across in your linguistic study. I have also alerted you of the misconceptions about the use of the term grammar. I will, from this lecture, explain and discuss the principal units of grammatical description. These principal units are the morpheme, the word, the phrase, the clause and the sentence. In this lecture, I will begin the discussion on the morpheme.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to define and identify the morpheme, be able to show the difference between the morpheme and the syllable and be able to segment (divide) words into their respective morphemes.

Pre text Question

1. What is a morpheme?
2. How will you be able to identify a morpheme?
3. A syllable can be a morpheme. Can you give examples from any language of your choice where you can have a syllable functioning as a morpheme?
4. Divide the following words into their respective morphemes.
 - a) unfaithfulness
 - b) irresponsibility
 - c) rewrite
 - d) nationalization
 - e) segmentability

Definitions of the Morpheme

The morpheme is the unit we employ in the study of the structure or form of the word. Various definitions have been given to it by linguists. I will give some of these definitions.

Tomori (1977) defines the morpheme as “the minimal linguistic elements that carries grammatical and/or semantic meaning”.

Fromkin and Rodman (1988) define it as “the minimal linguistic sign, a grammatical unit that is an arbitrary union of a sound and a meaning that cannot be further analyzed”.

Taiwo (2011) defines the morpheme as “the smallest meaningful unit or segment of grammatical description that can be used in the analysis of the structures of words”.

Identification of Morpheme

The definitions of the morpheme can be easily understood if we examine some examples of words arranged into patterns as follows:

- a) cat hat rat
 cats hats rats
- b) look cook book
 looked cooked booked

The examples in (a) show that in English, plurality can be indicated by adding ‘s’ to the singular nouns to have plural in grammar. Each of these singular nouns is mono-morphemic. On the other hand, the plural nouns are made up of two morphemes each. Other plural morphemes occur in the following examples.

fish fishes
box boxes
watch watches

As for the examples in (b), they show that the past tense of verbs in English can be indicated as follows:

Present	Past
Look	look + ed
Cook	cook + ed
Book	book + ed

In the examples, the past tense of verbs is indicated by the morpheme ‘ed’.

Difference between the Morpheme and the Syllable

A syllable is a unit of pronunciation forming the whole or a part of a word and usually having one vowel sound often with a consonant before or after while a morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit or segment of grammatical description that can be used in the analysis of the structures of words.

One important difference between the syllable and the morpheme is that a syllable does not need to be meaningful while the morpheme must be meaningful. Therefore, meaning is very important in the identification of the morpheme while pronunciation is what is used to identify a syllable. A syllable can be a morpheme where a word is a monosyllabic one. The examples below are instances of this.

Me, is, tall, on, the, can,
past, by, -er, in-, un-, -ed

However, on several occasions, a segment that contains a morpheme may have more than one syllable as is the case in the examples below.

Friend – 2 syllables
House – 2 syllables
Develop – 3 syllables

Segmentation of Words into Morphemes

Any word made up of more than one morpheme can be segmented into its morphemic units. Many words can be easily divided into morphemes as such words exhibit clear segmentability. For example, a word like **respectful** can be segmented in a clear way into the morphemes:- **respect** and **-ful**. Other examples are listed below.

Meaningful mean, ing ful
Unfriendliness un, friend ly ness
Unfaithfulness un faith ful ness

Summary

I have explained and discussed the morpheme in this lecture. Part of this explanation included the definition of the morpheme and how to identify it. I also discussed the difference between the morpheme and the syllable so that you will be able to make a clear distinction between the two. Finally, I gave a brief explanation of the segmentation of words into morphemes

and pointed out that some words can be easily divided into morphemes. We shall continue our discussion on the morpheme in the next lecture where I will be explaining some other concepts about the morpheme.

Post text Question

1. What is a morpheme?
2. How will you be able to identify a morpheme?
3. A syllable can be a morpheme. Can you give examples from any language of your choice where you can have a syllable functioning as a morpheme?
4. Divide the following words into their respective morphemes.
 - a) unfaithfulness
 - b) irresponsibility
 - c) rewrite
 - d) nationalization
 - e) segmentability

Suggested books for further reading

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Lecture Five

Types of Morphemes

Introduction

In lecture four, I began the discussion of the morpheme by defining it as well as how to segment poly-morphic words. In this lecture, I will continue the discussion of the morpheme by explaining the types of morphemes identified in the languages of the world. These include the base/root morpheme, stem, lexical and grammatical morphemes, and free and bound morphemes.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, I expect you to be able to identify the various types of morphemes in the languages of the world. You should be able to define them also.

Pre- text Questions

- 1). What is a morpheme?
- 2). Differentiate between a root and a stem.
- 3). Why are some morphemes referred to free morphemes and others as bound morphemes?
- 4) Define a lexical morpheme and a grammatical morpheme.

Roots

The root is the core of the word. The root morpheme contributes the basic or core meaning of a word which is modified in various ways by other morphemes. Let us examine these examples from English and Yorùbá languages.

English

Word	Root	Prefix	Suffix
Unmanly	Man	Un-	-
Kindness	Kind	-	-ness
Carefulness	Care	-	-ful, -ness
Unwarrantable	Warrant	Un-	-able
Enrich	Rich	En-	-
Disagreements	Agree	Dis-	-ment, -s

Yorùbá

Word	Root	Prefix	Interfix
ikú 'death'	kú 'to die'	i-	-
ìfẹ́ 'love'	fẹ́ 'to like/love'	ì-	-
adé 'crown'	dé 'to cover'	a-	-
o mo kó mo 'any child'	o mo o mo 'grand child(ren)'	-	-kí-
okodóko 'from a farm to another farm'	Oko oko 'farm farm'	-	-dé-

The root morpheme is also known as the base morpheme. Roots may be joined to other roots to form compound words. E.g.

English

Man + kind = mankind

House + hold = household

Over + coat = overcoat

Yorùbá

ilé + iwé = iléiwé (iléèwé)

'house' 'book' 'school'

o mo + e ran = o mo e ran

'child' 'goat' 'the child of a goat' / 'a stubborn person'

Stems

The stem is that part of the word to which the last morpheme in the word is structurally added. For example, in the word 'naturalization', the stem is 'naturalize', the last morpheme structurally added to the word is '-ation'. Let me use the word 'naturalization' to produce further examples. 'Nature' is the root of the whole word; 'nature' is also the stem of 'natural', 'natural' is the stem of 'naturalize'. 'Naturalize' is the stem of 'naturalization'. It follows therefore, that a root can also be a stem and a stem can be a root. While all roots can be stems, not all stems, however, are roots, as shown in the above analyses.

A stem may also be defined as that part of a word to which inflectional affixes is added (I will explain inflectional affixes in lecture six).

Root	Stem	Derived word	Inflectional affix
Kind	Kindness	Kindnesses	-es
Nature	Naturalize	Naturalizes	-s

In the above examples, 'kindness' and 'naturalize' are stems of the derived words 'kindnesses' and 'naturalizes' respectively. The inflectional affixes attach to 'kindness' and 'naturalize' are '-es' and '-s' in that order.

Free Morphemes

A morpheme which can constitute a word on its own is called a free morpheme. Examples of free morphemes are **boy, cat, rat, fish, book, watch, look, cook**, etc. A free morpheme is also the root morpheme which other morphemes can be attached to derive a new word.

Bound Morphemes

A bound morpheme is a morpheme that is never a word but is always a part of a word. It cannot occur unattached; it must be attached to a free morpheme. It is also known as an affix.

Derived word	Root/free morpheme	Bound morpheme
Naturalization	Nature	-al, -ize, -ation.
Kindnesses	Kind	-ness, -es

Unfaithfulness	Faith	Un-, -ful, -ness
----------------	-------	------------------

Lexical and Grammatical Morphemes

Morphemes can again be divided broadly into two types: lexical morphemes and grammatical morphemes. Lexical morphemes are morphemes that are used for the construction of new words. Examples include those root morphemes used for the formation of compound words.

House + hold = household

Black + bird = blackbird

Fly + over = flyover

They also include class-changing affixes e.g.

Nation (n) +-al = natural (adj)

Legal (adj) + -ize = legalize (v)

Danger (n) + -ous = dangerous (adj)

I will explain class-changing affixes in the next lecture.

Lexical morphemes have semantic or inherent lexical meanings associated with them.

Grammatical morphemes are morphemes that are used to express grammatical relationship between a word and its content. They do not normally have lexical meanings. In other words, they are not normally given definitions in dictionaries. They include the following:

Pronouns: I, you, they, it, us, etc

Prepositions: at, in, etc.

Conjunctions: and, with, etc.

Articles: an, a, the, etc.

Inflectional affixes- plural morphemes: -s, -es; tense morphemes: -ed, -d, etc.

Summary

In this lecture, I explained the various types of morphemes identified in the languages of the world. These are the root, the stem, free and bound morphemes, as well as lexical and grammatical morphemes. The root morpheme is the core of the word which contributes the basic meaning of that word. A stem is that part of the word to which the last morpheme in the word is

structurally added. It may also be defined as that part of a word to which inflectional affixes are added. A morpheme which can constitute a word on its own is called a free morpheme while a morpheme that cannot constitute a word on its own but must be attached to another morpheme is known as a bound morpheme. Lexical morphemes have semantic or lexical meanings while grammatical morphemes lack semantic or lexical meanings but are used to express grammatical relationship between a word and its content.

Post- text Questions

- 1). What is a morpheme?
- 2). Differentiate between a root and a stem.
- 3). Why are some morphemes referred to free morphemes and others as bound morphemes?
- 4) Define a lexical morpheme and a grammatical morpheme.

Suggested books for further reading

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Lecture Six

Affixes

Introduction

This is the third lecture on the morpheme. It will focus on affixes. Affixes are bound morphemes that must be attached to a root or a stem. I shall explain the various types of affixes in the languages of the world in this lecture.

Objective

After studying this lecture, you should be able to identify and explain the various affixes in human language.

Pre- text Questions

1. Write out ten (10) words in English, identify the affixes in the words and give the types of the affixes each of them belong to.
2. Identify the following types of affixes in your language or any Nigerian language: prefixes, suffixes, infixes, derivational affixes (both class-changing and class-maintaining), and inflectional affixes.

Affixes

It is possible to form new words by putting certain morphemes before some words while adding certain morphemes after some words. Therefore, we can identify prefixes, suffixes and infixes as three types of affix.

Prefixes

A prefix is an affix that is attached before the root or stem e. g

True: untrue un-

Write - rewrite re-

Un- and **re-** are the affixes attached before the root morphemes 'true' and 'write' respectively.

They are therefore, prefixes. The examples below are from the Yorùbá language.

fé□ ìfé□ ì-

to love love

bàtà	oníbàtà	oní-
shoe	owner of shoe	

ì- and onì- are prefixes in the Yorùbá language. They are attached before *fé* 'to love' and *bàtà* 'shoe' respectively.

Suffixes

An affix that is attached after the central morpheme (root or stem) in a polymorphic word (a word that contains many morphemes) is known as a suffix. Below are examples from English.

Nation	national	-al
Danger	dangerous	-ous
Speak	speaker	-er

Infixes

An infix is an affix inserted in a central morpheme of a polymorphic word.

Yurok: an American Indian language of California

Sepolah	segepolah	-ge-
Field	fields	

Cambodian: a South East Asian language

De:k	dꞑ:mne:k	-ꞑmn-
To sleep	slept	

In Yurok, -ge- is the infix, while in Cambodian -ꞑmn- is the infix.

Interfix

An Interfix is an affix used to join to free morphemes

Yorùbá

oꞑmoꞑoꞑmoꞑ	oꞑmoꞑkóꞑmoꞑ	-kí-
child child/ grandchild	any child/ stubborn child	
ilèilè	ilédélé	-dé-
house house	from house to house	

In the Yorùbá examples, -kí- and -dé- are interfixes

Derivational and Inflectional Affixes

Two other types of affixes are identified in language. They are derivational and inflectional affixes.

Derivational Affixes

Derivational affixes are those affixes that are used in the formation of new words. Some examples are given below.

Nation	national	-al
danger	dangerous	-ous
true	untrue	un-
write	rewrite	re-

Yorùbá

fé□ to love	ìfé□ love	ì-
bàtà shoe	oníbàtà owner of shoe	oní-
lo□ to go	ìlo□ act of going	ì-

Derivational affixes are of two types. These are class-changing derivational affixes and class-maintaining derivational affixes.

A class-changing derivational affix is a derivational affix that changes the word class or the syntactic category of the morpheme or word to which it is attached. e. g

Nation (n)	national (adj)	nationalize (v)
Attract (v)	attractive (adj)	attraction (n)

In the above examples, **-al**, **-ize**, **-ive**, and **-ion** are all class-changing derivational affixes.

Yorùbá language:

fé□ (V) to love	ìfé□ (N) love	ì-
gbó□ (V) to hear	àìgbó□ (N) lack of hearing	àì-

ì- and àì- are examples of class-changing derivational affixes in the Yorùbá language.

A class-maintaining derivational affix is a derivational affix that do not change the word-class or the syntactic category of the morpheme or word to which it is attached.

e. g

True (Adj)	untrue (Adj) un-
Write (V)	rewrite (V) re-

Yorùbá language

o mo o mo (N)	o mo kó mo (N)-kí-
grandchild	any child
bàtà(N)	oníbàtà (N) oní-
shoe	owner of shoe

In the English examples, **un-** and **re-** are class-maintaining derivational affixes as they do not change the class of the words they are attached to. In the Yorùbá examples, **-kí-** and **oní-** are also class-maintaining derivational affixes.

Inflectional Affixes

Inflectional affixes are affixes which perform grammatical functions like indicating the plurals of nouns, indicating the tense forms of verbs, indicating comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives. E.g

Apple (sg)	apples (pl)
Walk (pres)	walked (past)
Small	smaller (comparative) smallest (superlative)

Summary

In this lecture, I explained the various types of affixes in human languages. These are prefixes, infixes, suffixes, class-changing derivational affixes, class-maintaining derivational affixes and inflectional affixes. I gave examples from both English and Yorùbá languages to enable you identify these various affixes whenever you come across them.

Post- text Questions

1. Write out ten (10) words in English, identify the affixes in the words and give the types of the affixes each of them belong to.
2. Identify the following types of affixes in your language or any Nigerian language: prefixes, suffixes, infixes, derivational affixes (both class-changing and class-maintaining), and inflectional affixes.

Suggested books for further reading

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Lecture Seven

The Word

Introduction

In this lecture, I will discuss another basic unit of grammatical description which is the word. I will explain the various ways to define the word so that you will not be confused when you come across any of them.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, I expect you to be able to give the various definitions of the word.

Pre-text Questions

1. How will you define orthographic words in your language? Give examples of this type of words.
2. What is a morphological word?
3. How is the semantic word different from the morphological word? Give examples from your language or any Nigerian language.
4. List ten (10) examples of lexical words in English and in any Nigerian language of your choice.

The Word

The word is another basic unit of grammatical description. Despite the fact that the notion of words appears quite widespread or familiar, no one has yet been able to propose a satisfactory universal definition of the word. In other words, it is not easy to say categorically what a word is and how it can be defined.

Types of Words

The inability of linguists to find a satisfactory definition to the notion of the word could be traced in part to the fact that there are at least four different types of words. These are the orthographic word, the morphological word, the lexical word and the semantic word.

Orthographic word

By orthographic word, it is meant the word which in writing has a space on either side of it.

E.g. That boy is a student of Linguistics. - 7 orthographic words

Phonological word

The notion of orthographic word applies only to the written medium. This is so because in normal speech, we do not always have to pause between words. But if a word can be identified by the phonological phenomenon of pause in speech, such a word is referred to as a phonological word. Hence, a phonological word can be defined as sound or combination of vocal sounds to express meaning.

Morphological words

A morphological word is recognized by its form or shape only and not by its meaning. For instance, the word **bank** is one morphological word in spite of the fact that it can refer to the following among others:

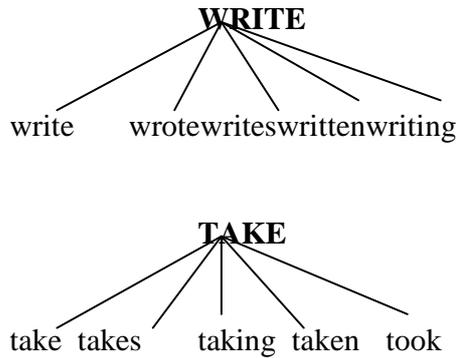
- it can refer to a place where money is loaned, issued, exchanged, and kept.
- it can refer to the rising ground bordering a river, lake or sea.

However, **bank** and **banks** will be regarded as two morphological words by virtue of the fact that they are not identical in form.

Lexical Words

A lexical word includes all the various forms of items that are closely related in respect of meaning. For instance, while **bank** and **banks** are two morphological words, they are just one lexical word because of meaning relationship. Similarly, the various forms such as the following **write, writes, writing, written, and wrote** are five morphological words but only one lexical word.

WRITE is the lexeme (the basic lexical unit comprising one or several words) or the principal word where other forms are derived.



Semantic Words

A semantic word is one which has just one unit of meaning. In effect, morphologically identical items which differ in meaning are different semantic words. Words like these are regarded as polysemous words. For instance, the item **bank** can have more than one meaning, and for that reason, the item is not just one semantic word. A word that is marked by multiplicity of meaning is said to be polysemous. If **bank** is given two meanings, it is one morphological word with two semantic meanings. Also the word **table** can be one morphological word but more than one semantic word.

Table- chart, diagram

where things are kept e.g. book. Used for writing.

Summary

In this lecture, I discussed the various ways by which linguists define the word. This is because there is no universally accepted definition for the word. I gave four different definitions of the word based on the types of words identified in human language. These are the orthographic word, the morphological word, the lexical word and the semantic word.

Post-text Questions

1. How will you define orthographic words in your language? Give examples of this type of words.
2. What is a morphological word?
3. How is the semantic word different from the morphological word? Give examples from your language or any Nigerian language.

4. List ten (10) examples of lexical words in English and in any Nigerian language of your choice.

Suggested books for further reading

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Lecture Eight

Identification and Classification of Words

Introduction

In this lecture, I will explain how you will be able to identify the word and discuss the various ways to classify it.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to identify the word and discuss the various ways to classify it.

Pre-text Questions

1. What is a variable word and what is an invariable word?
2. Differentiate between an open-class word and a closed-class word.

3. Why are some words referred to as grammatical words and others as lexical words? Give examples of these two types of words in English and in your language or in any Nigerian language.

Identification of Words

Although there are no full proof criteria for identifying words, the following are among the criteria that have been suggested by linguists for this purpose.

The criterion of structural stability

The criterion of uninterruptability

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The criterion of structural stability

This criterion emphasizes the fact that of all linguistic units, words are the most structurally stable in respect of internal structure. In other words, the constituent parts of a complex word are more or less fixed, they cannot be rearranged.

Unwarrantable un- warrant- able
not * warrantableun *unablewarrant *ablewarrantun *warrantunable

Disagreement dis- agree- ment
not *agreementdis *dismenagree *mentagreedis *agreedisment

The criterion of uninterruptability

According to this criterion, the sequence of a word cannot be interrupted. In other words, new elements cannot be inserted in the sequence of a word.

Children
we can have
‘little children’
but cannot have
***child little ren**

Disagreement
we can have
‘small disagreement’
but cannot have
***disagreessmallment**

This criterion can in fact be used to confirm the number of words in a given sequence.

Grammatical Classification of Words

Several grammatical classifications of words have been proposed by linguists. Among such are the following:

- Variable and Invariable words
- Grammatical and Lexical words
- Open-class and closed – class words.

Variable words

Variable words are words that express or signal grammatical relationship through a change of form e.g. boy - boys; big - bigger, biggest
Dance- dancing, dances, danced, dancers

Invariable words

Invariable words are words that express grammatical relationship without a change of form. They include words like

at, on –prepositions;
a, an, but –conjunctions

Grammatical words

Grammatical words are words that merely signal grammatical relationship or words whose roles are largely wholly grammatical. E.g.

Pronouns- I, they, you, it, etc
Prepositions- at, on, etc
Conjunctions- and, but, etc
Articles- an, a, the, etc

Other terms used for this class of words are function words; empty words i.e. empty of semantic content, or functions.

Lexical words

Lexical words are words that have lexical meaning. In other words, they have semantic content. e.g.

Nouns- bank, road, students, etc
Verbs –jump, cry, shout, etc
Adjectives- small, big, etc

Open-class Words

Open-class words are words which belong to word-class whose membership is in principle unlimited or indefinite. New items or words are regularly added to express new ideas, new inventions. e.g

Nouns- bank, road, students, etc

Verbs –jump, cry, shout, etc

Adjectives- small, big, etc

Adverbs – silently, slowly, quietly, etc

Closed-class Words

Closed-class words are words which belong to the word-class whose membership is fixed or limited. New words are not regularly added to such class of words. e.g

Pronouns- I, they, you, it, etc

Prepositions- at, on, etc

Conjunctions- and, but, etc

Articles- an, a, the, etc

Summary

In this lecture, I explained two ways of identifying the word. These are the criterion of structural stability and the criterion of uninterruptability. I also discussed grammatical classification of words. I grouped words into six classes. These are variable and invariable words; grammatical and lexical words; and open-class and closed – class words.

Post-text Questions

1. What is a variable word and what is an invariable word?
2. Differentiate between an open-class word and a closed- class word.
3. Why are some words referred to as grammatical words and others as lexical words?
Give examples of these two types of words in English and in your language or in any Nigerian language.

Suggested books for further reading

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Lecture Nine

The Phrase

Introduction

Another principal unit of grammatical description is the phrase. In this lecture, I will give the definition of the phrase and discuss its constituents.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to define the phrase and analyze the phrase to its various constituents.

Pre-text Question

1. What is a phrase?
2. How can you identify a phrase? Give examples of phrases in your language or any Nigerian language.
3. What is a dependent word in a phrase?
4. Differentiate between the modifier and the qualifier in a phrase.

Definition of the Phrase

A phrase is a group of related words without a subject and a finite verb. It can also be defined as that unit of grammar typically but not necessarily containing more than one word but functions as a unit lacking the subject- predicate structure characteristics of clauses. Examine the following examples.

The girl
Joy
James
Nigeria

The beautiful girl
An influential man
The giant of Africa

The Structure of the Phrase

As can be seen from the definition given above, a phrase in modern linguistic description can consist of one word as we have in the examples below.

Dogs attack fiercely

She ate often

In these examples, the single word in each column constitutes a phrase each. When a phrase is made up of just a word, that word is called the **head word** or simply the **head** of the phrase. The head of a phrase can therefore be simply defined as the minimal form of the phrase.

It is quite often common however, for other related words to occur with the head of the phrase as it is evident from the following examples.

Many dogs	can attack	quite fiercely
She alone	had been eating	particularly often

Words that occur with the head of a phrase are dependent on that head. Sometimes, a dependent word may precede the head of the phrase as in the following examples.

Many dogs, can attack, quite fiercely, hadbeen eating, particularly often

The dependent words underlined in the above examples precede the head words. Sometimes however, the dependent word can follow the head word of the phrase. e.g. she alone, where **alone** is the dependent word which follows the head word **she**.

Whenever the phrase is made up of a head and (a) dependent word(s), the head can be identified using the criterion of substitution or replacement. Thus a word which is, by distribution, equivalent or can substitute for the entire phrase is the head. Let us examine the examples in (a) and (b) below.

- a. This sweet potato tastes incredibly nice
b. Potato tastes nice

These examples show that the phrase 'this sweet potato' and 'incredibly nice' in (a) can be replaced by 'potato' and 'nice' respectively as in sentence (b). This means that 'potato' and 'nice' are the head words in the phrases which contain them. Other examples of dependent words that precede or follow a head word occur in the following sentence.

That beautiful car in the garage belongs to me.

In this example, the dependent words that precede the head word 'car' are 'that' and 'beautiful', while the dependent string of words that follow this head word is 'in the garage'.

In some model of linguistic description, the dependent word which precedes the head of a phrase is referred to as the **modifier** while the dependent word which follows the head of a phrase is called the **qualifier**.

Head = H; Modifier = M; Qualifier = Q

The phrase 'That beautiful car in the garage' can be structurally analyzed as follows:

H=car, M= that beautiful, Q= in the garage or

M M H Q

That beautiful car in the garage

In linguistic literature, modifiers are also referred to as **pre-modifiers** while qualifiers are called **post-modifiers**.

Summary

In this lecture, I gave the definition of the phrase and explained its various constituents. These are the head word and the dependent words. The dependent words can precede the head word. When you come across this situation, such dependent words are called modifiers or pre-modifiers. The dependent words that follow the head word are called qualifiers or post modifiers.

Post-text Question

1. What is a phrase?
2. How can you identify a phrase? Give examples of phrases in your language or any Nigerian language.
3. What is a dependent word in a phrase?
4. Differentiate between the modifier and the qualifier in a phrase.

Suggested books for further reading

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Lecture Ten

The Noun Phrase and the Prepositional Phrase

Introduction

In the last lecture, I gave the definition of the phrase and explained its structure. There are a number of phrases recognized in languages. In this lecture and the two that will follow it, I will discuss these types of phrases. I shall discuss the Noun Phrase (NP) and the Prepositional Phrase (PP) in this lecture.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to identify and explain both the Noun Phrase and the Prepositional Phrase.

Pre-text Questions

What is a Noun Phrase?

Explain with examples the Appositive Phrase in your language or in any Nigerian language.

Can you identify the Prepositional Phrase in your language? Write them down and underline the obligatory NP objects of the PPs.

The Noun Phrase (NP)

In some model of grammatical analysis, the Noun Phrase (NP) is referred to as the nominal group. In its structure, the NP comprises of the head word which may be preceded by some pre-modification and followed by some post modification.

M1	M2	H	Q
That	beautiful	car	in the garage

It is important to emphasize that the only obligatory element is the head word. Both the pre-modification and the post modification are optional.

The head of the NP may be a noun or a pronoun. On the other hand, the modifiers may belong to a number of different word-class e.g. articles, demonstratives, possessives (these are

normally called identifiers) or they may be numerals (quantifiers), adjectives or nouns. Examples are given below.

M1 M2 M3 M4 H
Those five beautiful country houses

M1- article; M2-numeral; M3- adjective; M4- noun.

M1 M2 M3 M4 H
My three fierce police dogs

M1 M2 M3 M4 M5 H
All the five troublesome village policemen

Another type of pre-modification is the genitive case or the NP in the genitive which is marked in English language by an apostrophe and s. for example, in the sentence below,

M1 M2 M3 M4 H
That young man's elegant stupid female secretary

that young man's is the NP in the genitive.

The post modification qualifiers may be words, phrases or clauses as is evident in the following examples.

M H Q
The funds available are not sufficient.

M H Q
The car in the garage belongs to me.

M H Q
The dog which I bought last year

The NP can occupy five important positions where a noun can be found in a sentence.
These are:

The subject of a verb

That young boy has succeeded.

Object of a verb

I have married the lady.

We have a good reputation.

Complement of a preposition

He is afraid of that man.

Complement of a verb

He is the president.

Complement of an object

They name that lady a prostitute.

Appositive Phrase

An Appositive Phrase is usually an NP that gives more information about a noun, a pronoun, or a noun phrase. It can be used in place of a noun, a pronoun or a noun phrase it talks more about. Appositive phrases are marked off by commas at the beginning and at the end in a construction.

Examples are underlined in the examples below.

Jesus Christ, the Lord of lords, will reward you accordingly.

Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe's first novel, is a classic.

Prepositional Phrase (PP)

A Prepositional Phrase (PP) is one headed by a preposition. It obligatorily has a noun phrase as complement. Some examples are given below.

I saw the boy at the park.

Behind a successful man is the woman.

Put it inside the room.

The wife of my son is very godly.

My dear wife is an embodiment of virtues.

Summary

In this lecture, I discussed the Noun Phrase (NP) and the Prepositional Phrase (PP). In the NP, the head word can be a noun or a pronoun which may be preceded by some pre-modifications and followed by some post modifications. I also treated another kind of the NP which is called the Appositive Phrase. This gives more information about a noun, a pronoun or a noun phrase. Finally, I explained the constituents of the PP. These are the head word – a preposition, and an obligatory noun phrase as its complement.

Post text Questions

1. What is a Noun Phrase?
2. Explain with examples the Appositive Phrase in your language or in any Nigerian language.
3. Can you identify the Prepositional Phrase in your language? Write them down and underline the obligatory NP objects of the PPs.

Suggested for further Reading

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Lecture Eleven

The Verb Phrase

Introduction

In the last lecture, I explained the NP and the PP. In this lecture, I will discuss the Verb Phrase (VP) and other types of phrases associated with the verb such as Gerundive Phrase, the Participial Phrase and the Infinitival Phrase.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to explain what the Verb Phrase (VP) is and describe other types of phrases associated with the verb.

Pre-text Questions

1. What is a Verb Phrase?
2. With examples from your language or any Nigerian language, discuss the Infinitival Phrase and the Finite Verb Phrase.
3. What is a Gerundive Phrase? Can you identify this type of phrase in your language? Write the ones you identify down.

The Verb Phrase (VP)

The head of the Verb Phrase (VP) is the verb. However, there is no agreement among linguists on the exact structure of the VP. For some linguists for instance, all the elements of the VP are verbs of one kind or another. In other words, the head word which is also a verb is accompanied by other verbs commonly referred to as auxiliary verbs to distinguish them from the head verb which is called a lexical verb. Consider the examples below.

	M	M	H
John	may	have	gone

	M	M	M	H
He	should	have	been	killed

As can be seen from these examples, the lexical verb is always the last element in the VP.

Other linguists have a much broader definition of a VP. For such linguists, a VP is equivalent to the predicate of a sentence. Under that view, the underlined in the following sentences are VPs.

John may have gone.

John may have gone to the market.

John bought a very fine car last week.

For some linguists still, while the modifiers of the head word are auxiliary verbs, the qualifiers are particles that are particularly closely linked to the head word (verb).

H Q

The clock runs down

M M H Q

John may have run across a friend

For such linguists, particles that are loosely linked to the head verb and which can be freely interchanged with other particles are not part of the VP.

Types of Verb Phrases

Finite VP

These are those containing finite forms of the verb i.e. verb forms which indicate tense and are associated with a particular subject e.g. 1st, 2nd or 3rd person. Such verb forms vary according to the person and number of the subject. Examples of finite VP in English language are underlined in the following sentences.

John is walking

John was walking

John walked

John walks

In fact, all forms of the verb with the exception of infinitive and participle are finite. A finite VP can occur on its own in an independent or main clause.

Gerundive Phrase

A gerund is a verbal noun. In English, it is the '-ing' form of a verb (present participle form) used as a noun. Examples are underlined in the sentences below.

Rioting is evil

They are fond of murmuring

A gerundive phrase is a phrase headed by a gerund. The underlined parts of the sentences below are examples.

Shouting when praying, is common these days.

The law does not allow smoking in public places.

Participial Phrase

A Participial Phrase is a phrase headed by the participle form of a verb in English. Participial phrases function as adjectives. Examples are underlined below.

Shocked by the comments of her friends, the lady decided to resign from her appointment.

Having apologized, they can now present their case.

Infinitival Phrase

The Infinitival Phrase is a phrase headed by an infinitive verb. It can function as a noun, an adjective or an adverb. Examples are given below.

To have a house is different from to have a home.

To control a woman is difficult.

This is a woman to honour.

It is nice to know God.

They stood up to greet him.

Summary

In this lecture, I discussed the various ways linguists look at the verb phrase. I gave examples to drive home the discussion. I also looked at the various types of phrases associated with the VP, especially as they occur in English language. In the next lecture, I will conclude our discussion of the phrase by examining the Adjective phrase and the Adverb phrase.

Post text Questions

1. What is a Verb Phrase?
2. With examples from your language or any Nigerian language, discuss the Infinitival Phrase and the Finite Verb Phrase.
3. What is a Gerundive Phrase?' Can you identify this type of phrase in your language? Write the ones you identify down.

Suggested for further reading

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Lecture Twelve

The Adjective Phrase and the Adverb Phrase

Introduction

In this lecture, I will conclude the discussion on the phrase. I will explain both the Adjective Phrase (AP) and the Adverb Phrase (AdvP). I will enumerate the functions of each of the phrases and teach you how to identify them.

Objective

After you have studied this lecture, you should be able to give a thorough explanation of both the Adjective phrase and the Adverb phrase.

Pre-text Questions

1. Write out the Adjective phrases in your language.
2. What functions do the APs in your list perform?
3. Do you have AdvP in your language? Can you lay your hands on any book that treats AdvP in your language? If you cannot, try to write out a list of AdvPs in your language and observe their uses.

Adjective Phrase (AP)

The Adjective Phrase (AP) functions to modify a noun. Its head is an adjective. In structure, an AP may consist of only the head. In fact, many APs have this type of structure. However, an AP may consist of the head and some pre-modification and post modification. The pre-modification are usually adverbs, particularly the sub-class of intensifying adverbs.

Examples

M H

Very intelligent boy

M H

Highly satisfactory reply

Post modifications are complements. Such complements may be a prepositional phrase, an infinitive clause or a that-clause.

Examples

H Q= PP
Anxious about his result

H Q= Infinitive clause
Anxious to do the right thing

H Q= that- clause
Anxious that somebody may replace her

Functions of Adjective Phrases

APs like adjectives have two uses or functions. These are the attributive function and the predicative function. An AP performs the attributive function when it precedes or occasionally follows a noun within an NP. Examples are given below.

That very fine house has been destroyed.

The man, complaining loudly, ran out of the House of Assembly.

APs that follow 'copula' verbs perform a predicative function.

His letter was very interesting.

There are APs that perform both predicative and attributive functions.

His letter was very interesting. - predicative function

I received a very interesting letter - attributive function

That very interesting letter has been destroyed – attributive function

On the other hand, some APs perform either attributive or predicative function only.

Attributive function only

A mere youth; the main event

Predicative function only

The boy is alone. The lion is asleep.

Adverb Phrase (AdvP)

The head of an Adverb Phrase (AdvP) is an adverb. In effect, an AdvP may consist of only an adverb in its structure. Many AdvPs are of this type of structure.

Examples
He ran quickly.
John ate well

However, an AdvP may also consist of the head word, which is an adverb and other adverbs modifying this head word.

Examples

M H
He ran very quickly.
M H
John ate amazingly well.

AdvP have the following uses or functions: Adjunct function; Conjunct function

Adjunct function

The adjunct function is the principal function of the AdvP. AdvPs perform this function when they provide information about the place, time, and manner, cause of the action or event talked about in the clause in which the AdvPs occur.

Examples
He ran very quickly- manner
She sang too often - time

Conjunct function

AdvPs that link or conjoin one clause to another perform a conjunct function. The number of AdvPs that perform this function is limited and such AdvPs do not normally contain modifiers in their structure.

Examples

She is inefficient, therefore, cannot be considered for a post, besides, we already have a better person.

AdvPs that indicate the speaker's attitudes or stance to what he is saying perform a disjunct function. Such disjunct adverbs normally occur in front of the sentence or clause. They may contain modifiers in their structure occasionally.

Example

Frankly, John cannot do that job.

Summary

In this lecture, I have taught you both the AP and the AdvP. I gave the definitions of the two phrases, their various functions and their structures.

Post text Questions

- 1) Write out the Adjective phrases in your language.
- 2) What functions do the APs in your list perform?
- 3) Do you have AdvP in your language? Can you lay your hands on any book that treats AdvP in your language? If you cannot, try to write out a list of AdvPs in your language and observe their uses.

Suggested for further reading

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Lecture Thirteen

The Clause

Introduction

In this lecture, I will discuss the clause. The clause is another principal unit of grammatical description next to the sentence in rank. I will define and explain the various functions the clause can perform in human utterances.

Objective

After you have studied this lecture, you ought to be able to

- identify the clause,
- explain the various functions performed by the clause and
- give a vivid account of the types of clauses in human language.

Pre-text Questions

1. What is a clause?
2. Identify the two types of clauses in your language and examine their structure.
3. What functions does the clause perform in your language?

Definition

A clause is a group of related words containing a subject and a verb.

Types of Clauses

The clause can be divided into two main types based on their structure. These are the main clause and the subordinate clause.

Main Clause

The main clause is also known as the principal clause or the independent clause. It is a clause that can express complete thoughts and such can stand on its own.

Examples

She believes in herself, and she succeeds in her efforts.

The sentence contains two main clauses (underlined), each capable of standing alone. Note, however, that if either of the underlined parts stood alone, it would be classified as a simple sentence, not as a clause. Clause necessarily implies the large whole of which it is a part.

Subordinate Clause

The subordinate clause is a clause that cannot stand on its own in that it does not express a complete thought. It is usually introduced by subordinating conjunctions such as **if, unless, that, because, while, whereas, when**, etc.

Examples

Olú will leave if you abuse him.

Oṣṣé loves you because you respect her.

It stopped raining before I got there.

The subordinate clauses are underlined in the examples above.

Functions of Clauses

The clause performs a number of functions in language. It can be used as a noun (this is called the noun clause), as an adjective (called an adjectival or a relative clause), and as an adverb which is known as an adverbial clause.

The Noun Clause

A noun clause is a subordinate clause used as a noun. In the sentences below, the noun clauses are underlined.

He did not tell you what I wanted to do.

That we greet you always does not mean that we are sycophants.

We know what we need.

The Adjectival Clause

An adjectival clause is a subordinate clause used as an adjective. It is also called a relative clause. Some examples are underlined in the following sentences.

That house which I built is on the last street.
The man whom I invited will come very soon
Students that study Linguistics are always very brilliant.

The Adverbial Clause

An adverbial clause is a subordinate clause used as an adverb. It has the following types.

Adverbial clause of time, answers the question 'when?' For example:

Before we responded, they had run away.
He was provoked when the man asked for a bribe.

Adverbial clause of place, answers the question 'where?'

Nobody knows where he is heading to.
Where I will be tomorrow, you cannot say.

Adverbial clause of reason, answers the question 'why?'

She fainted because she was disappointed.
I will make it because God is on my side.

Adverbial clause of concession tries to show contrast between the main clause and the subordinate clause. The markers of this clause include **although, though, even though**.

Although he prepared, he did not do well in the test.
Even though I know it, I won't tell you.

Adverbial clause of manner, answers the question 'how?'

He talks as if he is God.
Jane dances as an insect does.

Adverbial clause of condition gives the condition under which something will happen.

Provided that you know him, you can consult him.
Unless God intervenes, the situation will get worse.

Summary

In this lecture, I treated the clause. I defined it, examined its structure and explained the various functions the clause can perform. Some of these are that it can be used as a noun, as an adjective and as an adverb.

Post text Questions

What is a clause?

Identify the two types of clauses in your language and examine their structure.

What functions does the clause perform in your language?

Suggested for further reading

Alo, Moses and Ayo Oguniji (Eds) 2004. *English Language Communication Skills for Academic Purposes*: Ibadan, General Studies Programme (GSP) Unit, University of Ibadan.

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Lecture Fourteen

The Sentence

Introduction

The sentence is the last of the principal unit of grammatical description. I will, in this lecture, discuss the structures and functions of the sentence.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to analyze any sentence into its structure and identify the function it performs.

Pre-text Questions

1. What is a sentence?
2. Identify the various sentences in your language.
3. What are the structures of the sentences you identify?
4. Explain the various ways we can make use of the sentence in speech. Give examples of these uses in your language.

Definition of the Sentence

The sentence can be defined as a group of words having a subject and a predicate, which expresses a complete thought.

The structure of the Sentence

Four types of sentences can be identified when you examine the structure of the sentence. These are the simple sentence, the compound sentence, the complex sentence and the compound-complex sentence.

The simple sentence expresses a single complete thought. In English language, it has only one main verb.

Joy is wise.
Océ bought that book.
I will win many awards.

The compound sentence is a combination of at least two simple sentences.

He laughed but I have crossed the Rubicon.

We went to the hostel, begged him but he refused to listen to us.

We went to the hostel;

We begged him;

He refused to listen to us.

A complex sentence contains a main clause and at least one subordinate clause.

Examples: When I become a man, I will listen to you.

I will listen to you (main clause)

When I become a man (subordinate clause)

John was disturbed because the examination was at the corner.

John was disturbed (main clause)

Because the examination was at the corner (subordinate clause)

A compound-complex sentence is a combination of compound and complex sentences. It comprises at least two main clauses and at least one subordinate clause.

Example:

When you are criticized, examine yourself, but do not reply your critics so that they don't feel important.

Examine yourself (main clause)

Don't reply your critics (main clause)

When you are criticized (subordinate clause)

So that they don't feel important (subordinate clause)

Functions of the Sentence

The sentence can be used in four ways. These are declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory.

The declarative sentence is a sentence that makes a statement of fact. It may be true or false, negative or affirmative.

Examples:

Things are becoming more difficult.

He did not listen to us.

The imperative sentence is one that makes a command or an entreaty. The subject is **you** but is often deleted because it is understood.

Examples:

Stand up.

Don't lose hope.

Love your neighbour as yourself.

The exclamatory sentence is used to express a sudden feeling or emotion.

Examples:

This is serious!
Good God! What is this!
Why am I so favoured!

Summary

In this lecture, I defined the sentence as a group of words having a subject and a predicate, which expresses a complete thought. I discussed the types of sentences based on structure. These are the simple sentence, the compound sentence, the complex sentence and the compound-complex sentence. Finally, I explained other types of sentences based on use. These are the declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory.

Pre-text Questions

1. What is a sentence?
2. Identify the various sentences in your language.
3. What are the structures of the sentences you identify?
4. Explain the various ways we can make use of the sentence in speech. Give examples of these uses in your language.

Suggested for further reading

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Lecture Fifteen

General Revision

Examine the post text questions in all the lectures. Are you able to answer all these questions satisfactorily? If you are not, study the lectures whose questions you cannot answer again to identify the thorny issues. You must be able to explain the topics covered in this course because this is a foundation course in syntax and morphology. Your ability to explain and teach others this course will give you a solid and firm foundation in Linguistics. Good luck!

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