LIN 222
Basic Grammar

Ibadan Distance Learning Centre Series

LIN 222
Basic Grammar

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Vice-Chancellor's Message

I congratulate you on being part of the historic evolution of our Centre for External Studies into a Distance Learning Centre. The reinvigorated Centre, is building on a solid tradition of nearly twenty years of service to the Nigerian community in providing higher education to those who had hitherto been unable to benefit from it.

Distance Learning requires an environment in which learners themselves actively participate in constructing their own knowledge. They need to be able to access and interpret existing knowledge and in the process, become autonomous learners.

Consequently, our major goal is to provide full multi media mode of teaching/learning in which you will use not only print but also video, audio and electronic learning materials.

To this end, we have run two intensive workshops to produce a fresh batch of course materials in order to increase substantially the number of texts available to you. The authors made great efforts to include the latest information, knowledge and skills in the different disciplines and ensure that the materials are user-friendly. It is our hope that you will put them to the best use.

Professor Olufemi A. Bamiro, FNSE
Vice-Chancellor

Foreword

The University of Ibadan Distance Learning Programme has a vision of providing lifelong education for Nigerian citizens who for a variety of reasons have opted for the Distance Learning mode. In this way, it aims at democratizing education by ensuring access and equity.
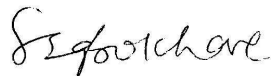
The U.I. experience in Distance Learning dates back to 1988 when the Centre for External Studies was established to cater mainly for upgrading the knowledge and skills of NCE teachers to a Bachelors degree in Education. Since then, it has gathered considerable experience in preparing and producing course materials for its programmes. The recent expansion of the programme to cover Agriculture and the need to review the existing materials have necessitated an accelerated process of course materials production. To this end, one major workshop was held in December 2006 which have resulted in a substantial increase in the number of course materials. The writing of the courses by a team of experts and rigorous peer review have ensured the maintenance of the University's high standards. The approach is not only to emphasize cognitive knowledge but also skills and humane values which are at the core of education, even in an ICT age.

The materials have had the input of experienced editors and illustrators who have ensured that they are accurate, current and learner friendly. They are specially written with distance learners in mind, since such people can often feel isolated from the community of learners. Adequate supplementary reading materials as well as other information sources are suggested in the course materials.

The Distance Learning Centre also envisages that regular students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria who are faced with a dearth of high quality textbooks will find these books very useful. We are therefore delighted to present these new titles to both our Distance Learning students and the University's regular students. We are confident that the books will be an invaluable resource to them.

We would like to thank all our authors, reviewers and production staff for the high quality of work.

Best wishes.

Professor Francis O. Egbokhare
Director

General Introduction and Course Objectives

This is a basic (elementary) course in grammar. It is to enable you to have a vivid and detailed knowledge of some grammatical terms that you will consistently come across in your study of syntax. Some of the topics covered in this course are principles of morphological analysis, word-classes (formerly known as parts of speech), grammatical units such as Tense, Aspect, Number, Person, Gender etc. The course begins with a short discussion on morphemes and the two types of morphemes – free and bound morphemes and how you should carry out morphological analysis.

You will also study about the division of the constituents of sentences into groups or classes. The division facilitates formation of new sentences by process of substitution. I shall explain with vivid illustrations the suitable criteria for a valid classification. Three types of criteria will be the focus of our discuss here. These are the Notional criteria, the Morphological criteria and the Functional criteria. The notional criteria is based on meaning associated with a particular constituent or word, the morphological criteria has to do with the form of word. It talks about the change in the form of a word (inflection). Finally, the functional criteria basically relate to the way words are used in sentences. In other words, the function or role ascribed to a constituent or word will determine the word class of such a word or constituent. I will discuss the three criteria in detail and bring out their strengths and weaknesses.

Two types of word-classes have been identified in grammar. These are major word-classes also referred to as full words and minor word-classes called empty words. I shall explain these two types and why they are so calloed. You will regularly come across deep and surface structures or their equivalents in your study of grammar. I will discuss these two terms in detail and give examples of how verbs and adjectives can be said to belong to the same syntactic category at the deep structure level.

The course also include subject and predicate. The two main subdivision of a simple declarative sentence. I shall also discuss minor sentence – types such as aphorism, vocative, fragments and imperative, which do not have either subject or predicate. One other constituent of the sentence is the adjunct. It is an optional constituent. You will also come

across the differences between the adjunct and the complement which is the obligatory part of the predicate for transitive verbs.

LECTURE ONE

Identification of Morphemes

Introduction

The morpheme is the segment employed in the study of the structure or form of the word. I shall examine the various types of morphemes in languages of the world for you to be able to identify them in morphological analysis.

Objectives

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

1. identify the various types of morphemes in languages of the world; and
2. explain the various types of morphemes.

Pre-Test

1. What is a morpheme?
2. Identify the following morphemes in your language: roots, prefixes, suffixes, infixes and interfixes.

CONTENT

Definition

A morpheme is the smallest unit of speech that has semantic or grammatical meaning. In other words, it is the smallest meaningful indivisible unit segment of grammatical description used in the analysis of words. The analysis of words into morphemes begins with the isolation of

morphs. A morph is a physical form representing some morpheme in a language. It is a recurrent distinctive sound or sequence of words.

If different morphs represent the same morpheme, they are grouped together and they are called allomorphs of that morpheme. for example, the past tense of regular verbs in English is realised as /Id/, /d/ or /t/. the phonological properties of the last segment of the verb to which it is attached determines the choice. It is realised as /Id/ if the verb ends in /d/ or /t/ e.g.

/mend / /mendId/   mend   -   mended
/peit/   /peitId/   paint   -   painted

It is realised as /d/ after a verb ending in any voiced sound except /d/ e.g.

/kli:n/   /klind/   clean   -   cleaned
/wei/   /weid/weigh   -   weighed

It is realised as /t/ after a verb ending in any voiceless consonant other than /t/ e.g.

/pa:k/   /pa:kt/ park   -   parked
/mis/   /mist/   miss   -   missed

Past tense

allomorph   allomorph   allomorph

morph   morph   morph

/Id/   /d/   /t/
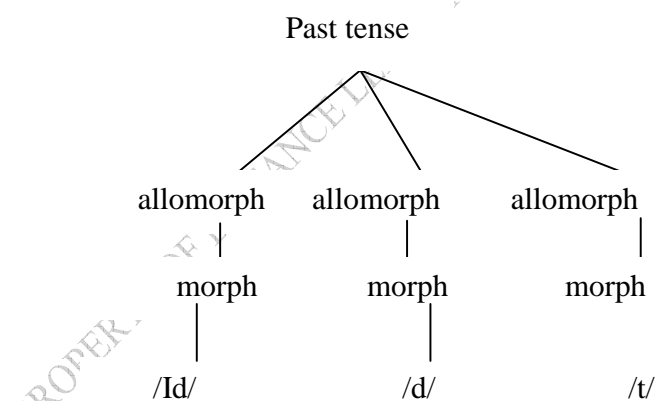
Types of morphemes

1.   Roots

A root is the irreducible core of a word with absolutely nothing else attached to it e.g. **walked, walks, walking, walk** all have the root morpheme **walk**

2

2. Affixes

An affix is a bound morpheme which only occurs when attached to some other morpheme or morphemes such as a root.

Types of Affixes

i. **Prefixes:** A prefix is an affix attached before a root e.g. **re**- make, **im**possible, **ì**- fé□ 'to love', **o**□- gbó□n 'wisdom'

ii. **Suffixes:** A suffix is an affix attached after a root e.g. kind -**ness**,

    a. boy -**s**, play –**er**, etc.

iii. **Infixes:** An infix is an affix inserted into the root e.g

Root	Infix	Derived word
su:lu	-ka-	su:kalu 'dog'
ana :la :ka	-ka-	ana :kala :ka 'chin'
kuhbil	-ka-	kuh kabil 'knife'

Ulwa language in Nicaragua (Napoli 1996 : 198)

iv. **Interfixes:** An interfix is an affix inserted inbetween two roots e.g.

o□mo□ o□mo□ 'grandchild(ren)' → o□mo□ -kí- o□mo□ → o□mo□kó□mo□ 'any child'/ stubborn child',

ìraníran 'generations' → ìrankíran 'any/bad generation' ìrandírànan 'from generation to generation'

Identification of Morphemes

The central technique used in the identification of morphemes is based on the notion of distribution, i.e., the total set of contexts in which a particular linguistic form occurs. A set of morphemes are referred to as allomorphs of the same morpheme if they are in complementary distribution. Morphs are said to be in contemporary distribution if they represent the same meaning or serve the same grammatical functions and they are never found in identical contexts.

Summary

In this lecture, I defined the morpheme as the smallest meaningful indivisible unit or segment of grammatical description used in the analysis of word. I explained to you what a morph is and gave examples of allomorphs too. I defined the root and the affixes and the different types of affixes in language such as prefixes, infixes, interfixes and suffixes. Lastly, though not the least, I discussed briefly the central technique used in the identification of morphemes. I shall go ahead to discuss with examples the segmentation of words in the next lecture.

Post-Test

1. What is a morpheme?
2. Identify the following morphemes in your language: roots, prefixes, suffixes, infixes and interfixes.

References

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

Napoli, Donna, J. (1996). *Linguistics*. Oxford & New York: OUP.

Nida, Eugene. (1949). *Morphology: The Descriptive Analysis of Words.* The University of Michigan Press. Ann Arbar.

Taiwo, Oye. (2006). *Mofó ló jì (Morphology)*. Ibadan: Layof publishing Educational services.

Tomori, Olu S. H. (1977). *The Morphology and Syntax of Present-day English: An Introduction*. London: H.E.B.

LECTURE TWO

Morphological Analysis

Introduction

In the last lecture, I discussed and explained the morpheme and the root and bound morphemes. In this lecture, I shall go ahead to explain how you should go about segmenting words with more than one morpheme. I shall give examples of how to segment words.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to segment words that contain more than one morpheme.

Pre-Test

Segment the following English words into their respective morphemes;

segmentability, nationalization, unreasonable, cried, wickedness, came, yours, went, identification.

CONTENT

Segmentability of words

Any word made up of more than one morpheme has its constituents joined in a structural bound according to the rules of utterance formation in that language. This is known as syntagmatic relationship. Words exhibiting syntagmatic relationship between the component morphemes display three types of segmentability or ordering of component morphemes (Tomori, 1977).

1. Some words can be segmented in a clear way into their component morphemes, e.g. respectable: respect, -able

2. A second group of words cannot be segmented in a clear fashion as in the example given above, e.g. redemption. It is quite clear that the word cannot be neatly segmented into these two morphemes: redeem, -tion **redemp-** is a bound alternant of the morpheme **redeem** because the form **redemp-** does not occur alone. Another example is **retention, reten-** is the bound alternant of **retain**.

3. A third group of words are words that are not easily segmentable into their component morphemes, e.g. **went**, the past tense form of **go**. We know that the form **went** includes the meaning of the word **go** and also conveys the idea of the past tense. The word **went,** therefore, is normally taken to be composed of the two morphemes go and the past tense morpheme.

Data analysis

1. Identify the negative morphs in the English data below and state their distributions.

   i. impossible   impatient   immovable

   ii. intolerable   indecent   intangible   inaction   inelegance

   iii. incomplete [iNk mpli:t] incompatible [iNk mpϴtibl]   ingratitude [iNgrϴtitjud]

Answer: The negative morphs are [im-], [in-] and [iN]

Their distributions:

[im-]   occurs before a labial consonant

[iN-]   occurs before a velar consonant

[in-]   occurs elsewhere

Negative morpheme

              allomorph   allomorph   allomorph
                  | | |
                morph   morph   morph
                  | | |
                [im]   [iN]   [in]
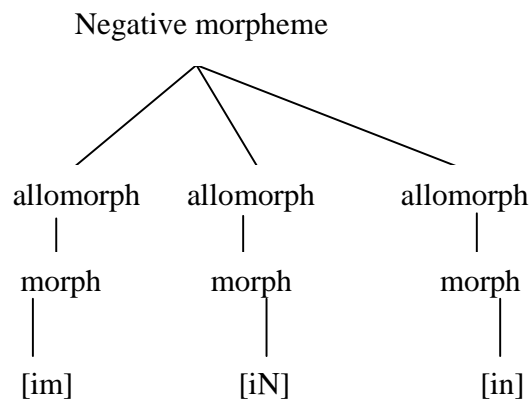
2. Identify the morphemes and give the meaning of each.
    Aztec dialect of Veracruz (Nida 1949: 8)

    niΣoka   I cry   niΣoka ?   I cried
    nimayana   I am hungry   nimayana?   I was hungry
    nimayanaya   I was hungry   (and may still be)
    timayana   You (sg)   are hungry
    nimayanas   I will be hungry
    tiΣoka   You(sg)   cry
    niΣokaya   I was crying   (and may still be)
    niΣokas   I will cry

Answer:

ni - I, Σoka - to cry, ? – past, -s :- future

mayana – to be hungry, - ya: past incomplete (continuous aspect), ti –
you(sg)

┌───┐
│ **Summary**   │
│ In this lecture, I explained and discussed how to segment polymorphic │
│ words. I also gave examples from English and Veracruz languages on │
│ how to analyse morphological data.   │
└───┘

Post-Test

Segment the following English words into their respective morphemes.

segmentability, nationalization, unreasonable, cried, wickedness, came, yours, went, identification.

References

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

Napoli, Donna, J. (1996). *Linguistics*. Oxford & New York: OUP.

Nida, Eugene (1949). *Morphology: The Descriptive Analysis of Words.* The University of Michigan Press. Ann Arbar.

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Tomori, Olu S. H. (1977). *The Morphology and Syntax of Present-day English: An Introduction.* London: H.E.B.

LECTURE THREE

Classification of Words

Introduction

Grammar is always concerned with dividing the constituents of sentences into groups or classes. In this lecture, I shall begin the discussion the criteria that are commonly used by grammarians in this task. I shall explain the notional criteria and bring out their weaknesses or shortcomings.

Objectives

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

1. determine the reasons behind the division of words to classes; and
2. explain the notional criteria as they are used in the classification of words.

Pre-Test

1. What is classification of words?
2. What do you think is the main reason behind word classification?
3. Discuss the notional criteria and the weaknesses associated with definitions given to the noun and the verb?

CONTENT

Word-class

Grammarians working on different languages have always shown serious concern about the various constituents of the sentence of such languages and have thereby divided or classified such constituents into groups or

classes. The assumption has always been that, that kind of division facilitates formation of new sentences by the process of substitution. For example:

1 a. The girl ran into the garden
   b. The boy ran into the garden
   c. The cat ran into the garden

The division into word-classes facilitates formations of new sentences as we have above. Members of the some class tend to share certain characteristic features. For example, in English language, nouns tend to be inflected for number as in boy – boys, girl – girls, goose – geese; verbs inflect for tense e.g. walk – walked, take – took, work – worked.

The number of word-classes set up for any language depend on the criteria used for the purpose of classification. Three types of criteria tended to be used in grouping of words into classes. They are the notional criteria, the morphological criteria and the functional or syntactic criteria. I shall discuss the Notional criteria in this lecture while the other two shall be discussed in lectures 4 and 5.

The Notional Criteria

The notional criteria is the most commonly used of the different criteria. It is based on meaning and the meaning associated with words. Traditional grammar makes extensive use of these criteria as can be attested to in the definitions given to the following word-classes.

Noun: A noun is a word used for naming anything

Verb: A verb is any word used to say something about something else

Preposition: A preposition is any word used for showing the relation in which one thing stands to another.

All the definitions above are derived from the meaning associated with members of appropriate classes of items. One principal objection to the use of Notional criteria is that they are vague, i.e. unclear. They tend to include things they should exclude and vice versa. For example, in the definition of 'noun', one would expect that **blue**, name of a colour, would be a noun, but it is infact an adjective. In addition, a large number of nouns that do not name anything are excluded in the definition. Such nouns include abstract nouns such as beauty, happiness, joy, etc. The

inadequacy of the notional criteria can be further demonstrated in the definition associated with verbs. Consider the following sentences.

2. a. Mary **went** to the US
    b. John **cooked** a super dinner
3   a. You **idiot**
    b. You **are** a nuisance

In (2a & b), the bold face words are verbs; they tell something about something else. In (3a), **idiot** says something about **You**, but **idiot** is not a verb, but a noun. In (3b), **are** refers to **You**, it is a verb, but does not tell us anything about the subject or any other thing. A comparison of (2) and (3) shows that the definition of the verb is valid for some classes and useless for other classes. Lyons (1968, 1981) argues that although notional definitions present some essential facts about word-classes, they do not tell the whole story.

Meaning itself is controversial. What is the meaning of meaning? There has not been a universally accepted definition given to meaning, rather various definitions have been given to it.

Post-Test
1. What is classification of words?
2. What do you think is the main reason behind word classification?
3. Discuss the notional criteria and the weaknesses associated with definitions given to the noun and the verb?

References
Brown, E.K. & J. E. Miller. (1980). *Syntax: A linguistic Introduction to Sentence Structure*. Auckland: Hustchinson & co (Publishers) Ltd.
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LECTURE FOUR

Morphological Criteria

Introduction

I shall continue with my discussion of the criteria that can be employed in the classification of words. I shall discuss the morphological criteria in this lecture. I will explain what the criteria stand for and how linguists make use of it and bring out the weaknesses of the criteria.

Objectives

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

1. explain the morphological criteria; and
2. say the sortcomings of the criteria.

Pre-Test

1. Explain the morphological criteria and how the criteria can be employed in the classification of words in your language.
2. Discuss the shortcomings of the morphological criteria.

CONTENT

Morphological criteria

Morphological criteria have to do with the form of the used. They are more obviously useful in Latin, Greek or German where nouns are inflected for case and number and verbs are conjugated in person and number. Therefore, morphological criteria are concerned with the change in the form or structure of words. The form of a word determines the classification of such words. This means that nouns as we have in Latin,

Greek or German must be words that inflect for case and number, while words would only be regarded as verbs if they are conjugated in person and number.

In English, whether a noun is the subject or the direct object of a sentence, its form is constant, i.e., it remains unchanged. In Latin however, this is not the case because the form of a given word in a sentence depends on its syntactic function in the sentence. In other words, the form of a noun as the subject of the sentence will be different from its form as object.

The word for house in Latin has these different forms.

	Singular	Plural
Nominative (subject)	domus	domi #
Accusative (object)	domum	domi #s
Dative (indirect object)	domo #	domi #s
Genetive	domi #	domo #rum
Vocative (case of address)	domus	domi #s
Ablative (instrument with which something is done)	domo #	domi #s

The word for 'girl' has these different forms in Latin

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	puella	puellae
Accusative	puellam	puella#s
Dative	puellae	puellis
Genitive	puellae	puellarum
Vocative	puella	puellae
Ablative	puella	puellis

The word 'house' has these different forms in Turkish

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	ev	evler
Accusative	evi	evleri
Dative	evin	evlerin
Genitive	eve	evlere

Vocative	evde	evlerde
Ablative	evden	evlerden

There will be no justification whatever for using morphological criteria for syntactic classification of words in English since there is no evidence that the language makes extensive use of inflection. In other words, English makes very little use of inflection as is found in plural and past tense formations unlike Latin, Greek or German, which make more widespread use of inflection. It is observed, that even English uses inflections more widely with verbs. Some examples are stated below.

go	going	went	gone
is	was		
are	were		
be	being	been	
has	have	had	

The picture we have is one in which morphological criteria can be more validly used in a language that makes extensive use of inflection, i.e., if a language does not use inflection extensively, it is usually not possible to determine the class of word to which any word in that language belongs by mere examination of its form.

Some other ways of using the morphological criteria have to do wth the number of syllables in a word and whether a consonant or a vowel begins a word. Some traditional grammarians in Yorùbá language employed these criteria in classifying words. For example, a noun is defined as a word that has more than a syllable and that usually begins with a vowel, except loan words. A verb is defined as a word that is always monosyllabic and begins with a consonant. Consider the examples below.

Nouns:　ilé 'house'

　　　　o☐mo☐ 'child'

　　　　aya　'wife'

　　　　o☐ko☐　　'husband'

　　　　ìyàwó 'wife'

　　　　Ìbàdàn　(name of a city)

Verbs: je□   'to eat'

            rà   'to buy'

            sùn   'to sleep'

            wá   'to come'

            rí   'to see'

            gbó□n 'to be wise'

However, there are many nouns that are not loan words that begin with a consonant in Yorùbá. Some of them are listed below.

                    Bàbá 'father'

                    Kó□kó□ró□ 'key'

                    pátákó 'plank'

                    babaláwo 'herbalist'

There are also many other verbs that are polysyllabic just as there many other word-classes in Yorùbá that begin with a consonant. Verbs with more than one syllable are:

                    pàdé 'to meet'

                    jókòó 'to sit'

                    tóbi 'to be big'

                    dára 'to be good'

other word-classes with one syllable

Pronoun:

            mo 'I'

            yín 'you (pl)

            rè□ 'him/her/it

Summary

In this lecture, I explained the morphological criteria in the classification of words. The criteria classify words based on inflection. Inflection is only widespread in languages such as Latin, Greek and German, while languages such as English do not make extensive use of inflection. In this connection, the morphological criteria will not be able to classify words in languages such as English. The criteria also classify words based on the number of syllables and the type of sound, whether consonant or vowel, that begins a word.

Post-Test

1. Explain the morphological criteria and how the criteria can be employed in the classification of words in your language.
2. Discuss the shortcomings of the morphological criteria.

References

Brown, E.K. & J. E. Miller. (1980). *Syntax: A linguistic Introduction to Sentence Structure*. Auckland: Hustchinson & co (Publishers) Ltd.

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LECTURE FIVE

Functional Criteria

Introduction

In this lecture, I shall discuss the third criteria employed in the classification of words into groups. Functional criteria are generally regarded as the most useful of all the criteria. I shall show how these criteria are employed and also discuss their merits over notional criteria and morphological criteria.

Objectives

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

1. explain how functional criteria are used in the classification of words into groups; and
2. say the advantages of the criteria over others.

Pre-Test

1. Examine some sentences in your language. What roles do the words in these sentences play?
2. Is it possible to employ the diagnostic frames in the identification of words in your language? Give examples of how to do this.
3. What are the shortcomings of diagnostic frame as you employ them in your language in (2) above?

CONTENT

Functional criteria

Functional criteria are generally regarded as the most useful of the three criteria in classifying words. This is because they do not involve the same kinds of problems as the other two. In other words, they do not display the vagueness associated with notional criteria, neither do they show evidence of inapplicability to all cases as is the case with morphological criteria. Functional criteria basically relate to the way words are used in sentences. Consider the following sentences.

1   a. Label the tips
    b. Give me the label

2   a. Water the flower
    b. Pass me some water
    c. Here is the water jar

Label in (1a) is a verb, but a noun in (1b) Water is a verb in (2a), a noun in (2b) and a qualifier in (2c) performing adjectival function.

Most traditional grammarians rely largely on notional criteria for the determination of word-classes. However, functional criteria are sometimes used alongside notional ones. For example, the definitions provided for adjective and pronoun in traditional grammar can be compared with those provided for noun and verb. An adjective is the word used to qualify a noun. A pronoun is a word used instead or in place of a noun. These two definitions fall back on the idea of function or use rather than the meaning associated with the particular words, whereas, the definitions for noun and verb are purely notional definitions.

Diagnostic frames

Diagnostic frames represent another dimension of functional criteria. These are frames or structures set up for the identification of word-classes. An example of the diagnostic frame is given in (3)

3. The _____ was good

The frame would opine that any word that can meaningfully function in the empty sloth in (3) must be a noun.

Similar frames can be provided for the identification of verb as in (4)

4. The N _____ the N

Any word that can meaningfully occur in the dash sloth must be a verb as in (5)

5. The man <u>saw</u> the boy

Some inadequacies of diagnostic frames:

These are some problems which suggest that these frames are not adequate. For instance, some words will be ruled out in the frames used for identifying nouns mainly because of the problem connected with concord or agreement. This is why the sentence in (6) is illformed.

6. *The boys was good

No agreement between **boys** which is plural and the verb **was** which is singular. Concord demands that a singular verb can only be associated with a singular noun subject and vice versa.

Proper names and pronouns will also be ruled out of the diagnostic frame since they cannot co-occur with the article as in (7a) and (7b)

7. a. "The John was good
    b. *The I   was good

8. a. John was good
    b. I was good

The sentence in (7a) will only be grammatical in special occasion. A noun like <u>evil</u> cannot feature in the frame because the resulting sentence will be semantically anomalous since it will involve a contradiction in term.

9. *Evil was good

All of these facts show us that there are co-occurrence restrictions which usually determine the actual word that can feature in particular sentences. It is co-occurrence restriction that account for the illformedness of these sentences.

10. a. *John ate his house

b. *John drank the stone

These restrictions are called selectional restrictions. They are important since not every noun can occur in just any sentence with any verb and vice versa. Sometimes the problem centres around the lexical meaning of an item since such meaning determines the meaning of the sentence.

11. The park spoke loudly and authoritatively

At other times, lexical items do not always perform their identificatory function.

12. a. My **mother's** property

b. The **public** service

c. A **private** club

We could say that the highighted items in (12a & b) are nouns while the one in (12c) is an adjective. To claim that diagnostic frames can clearly differentiate word-class entirely in term of structural position would be overreacting to the earlier total reliance on the grossly inadequate notional criteria.

Summary

I had explained the functional criteria in this lecture. The criteria have to do with the function or the use of the word in a sentence. I also discussed extensively the diagnostic frame and brought out its shortcomings. One of these shortcomings is the restrictions of words when they co-occur in a sentence.

Post-Test

1. Examine some sentences in your language. What roles do the words in these sentences play?
2. Is it possible to employ the diagnostic frames in the identification of words in your language? Give examples of how to do this.
3. What are the shortcomings of diagnostic frame as you employ them in your language in (2) above?

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LECTURE FIVE

Word-Classes in Relation to Deep Structure

Introduction
This lecture discusses two aspects in relation to word-classes. These are the two types of word-classes and the close relationship between verbs and some adjectives in language. I shall explain the differences between major and minor word-classes and show that some adjectives actually have verbal properties in their deep structure level.

Objectives
At the end of this lecture, you should able to:
1. identify the two principal types of word-classes; and
2. relate word-classes to deep structures.

Pre-Test
1. With examples from your language, make a distinction between major word-classes and minor word-classes.
2. Give ten examples each of full words and empty words in your language.
3. What is deep structure? Explain, with examples from your language, the differences between the order in which words occur and the underlying level.

CONTENT

Types of word-classes

Word-classes, traditionally referred to as parts of speech, can be divided into two principal types. These are the major word-classes and the minor word-classes.

Major word-classes

Major word-classes are those who usually have a specific meaning, that is, independent of whatever grammatical function they may be performing in particular sentences. These are Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives and Adverbs. They are words with lexical meaning.

Minor word-classes

Minor word-classes are those who have only grammatical meaning and no independent meaning of their own. They include prepositions/postpositions, pronouns, interjections and conjunctions.

Full and empty words

The distinction between major and minor word-classes is basically the same as the distinction that is sometimes made between full and empty words. Words with lexical meanings are full words while those without lexical meanings, but only have grammatical meanings are called empty words. The lexical meaning of the word is usually provided in the dictionary or lexicon associated with the grammar of the appropriate language. The grammatical meaning has to do with the

1. distinction between objects and subjects of a sentence;
2. opposition of definiteness (i.e. the distinction between definite and non definite), tense and number; and
3. differences such as the one between statements, questions, imperatives, etc.

Grammatical meaning deals with the meaning of grammatical items, grammatical functions such as subject, object, modifier and whatever meaning may be associated with notions like declarative, subjunctive, interrogative and imperative. Words like man, boy, girl are said to have lexical meanings because they can have ascribed to them some defined

meaning irrespective of whether in particular sentences they are functioning as objects, subjects or modifiers. A word like he, serves as the third person singular masculine subject pronoun, it has no other meaning in any sentence.

Deep and surface structures

One of the fundamental distinctions in contemporary grammar is the distinction between deep structure and surface structure. Let us examine the examples below.

1.   a. The beautiful girl built a house

     b. The girl who is beautiful built a house

2.   a. John killed the snake

     b. The snake was killed by John

The two sentences in (1) are similar, so also those in (2). The ones in (1) both have a subject and a direct object. But they are different in the sense that (1a) has a subject noun qualified by an adjective while (1b) has a subject noun qualified by a relative clause.

The difference between them can be shown to relate to their surface structure (the order in which words occur). This denotes that we can postulate another level of analysis at which the two sentences can be said to be identical. That level is the deep structure level.

3.   The girl [The girl is beautiful] build + past a house

     S_1 S_2

Because of the relationship between the interpretation of relative clauses and comparable sentences with adjective, linguists see them as deriving from the same source. The surface structure deals with the final output of the process by which sentences are derived, whereas the deep structure deals with the underlying structure. For example, the sentence in (4a) is a short form of (4b) which belongs to the deep structure.

4.   a. Bill is more intelligent than John

     b. Bill is more intelligent than John is intelligent

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Any theory of word-classes that is intended to have a general application (across languages) must be able to define such word-classes as elements of deep structure rather than surface structure. Let us look at these sentences in (5)

5.   a. Mary dances
     b. Mary cooks fish
     c. Mary is beautiful
     d. Mary is a child

A close examination of the above sentences reveals that a verb can tolerate a following noun object or a complement, such complement can either be an adjective or a noun. The verb may occur without the following noun. In (5c), **beautiful** is the predicative item where an adjective occurs after a copula (**is**) which is a linking verb.

Suppose we look at the same sentences in terms of deep and surface structures, we will discover that where adjective occurs is the one with a copula with just two elements in the deep structure as in below.

6.   a.
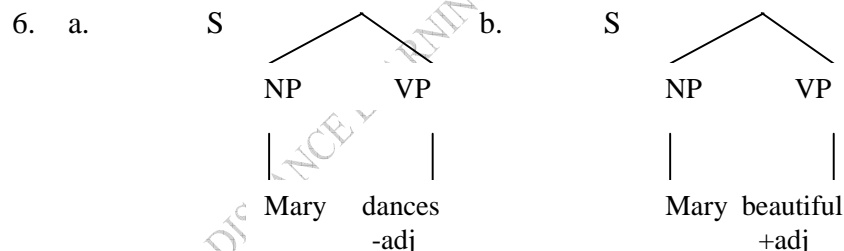
Verbs and adjectives: similarities and differences

Our discussion so far reveals that verbs and adjectives are related, at least at the deep structure level. I shall highlight some of the similarities and differences between them.

Differences

- verbs (in English) can be inflected for tense, adjective cannot
- when a verb is used to qualify a noun, it usually brings about a change in its form.

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7   a. The girl dances

      b. The dancing girl

In the case of adjective, no such changes is required

8   a. The girl is beautiful

      b. The beautiful girl

Similarities

A number of sentences involving verbs have paraphrases involving adjectives

9   a. I regret that x

      b. I am sorry that x

      c. I desire that x

      d. I am desirous of x

There are also indications of similarities between adjectives and verbs in deep structure.

10   a. I like John

       b. I am fond of John

       c. I fear rain

       d. I am afraid /scared of rain

       e. My fear of rain

Note that (10e) involves the nominal form of the verb which necessitates the use of 'of' like the adjectives in (10b) and (10d). Examine the sentences below.

11   a. *I fond John

       b. I am fond of John

(11a) is the underlying form of (11b), it can be compared with (10c), they are structurally similar. We can say that (11b) is derived by a process of **'be'** insertion followed by the insertion of **'of'** at the appropriate place.

     Adjective and verbs are subject to similar selection restriction so

that we can say that we have transitive verbs that required the following NP, there are also adjectives that are transitive.

In (10a), **like** is a transitive verb, in (10b), **fond** is a 'transitive' adjective. By the same token, verbs like **work, sheep** and adjectives like **alive, good** are intransitive in that they do not tolerate the following NP.

Summary

I explained the differences between major word-classes and minor word-classes. While the former have lexical meaning, the latter have only grammatical meaning. Words with lexical meaning are referred to as full words while those with only grammatical meaning are called empty words. Nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are full words while prepositions/postpositions, pronouns, conjunction, interjections are empty words. I went on to explain the surface structure, which deals with final output of the process by which sentences are derived; and the deep structure which is the underlying structure. Finally, I discussed the verb and the adjective and brought out the differences and similarities between them.

Post-Test

1. With examples from your language, make a distinction between major word-classes and minor word-classes.

2. Give ten examples each of full words and empty words in your language.

3. What is deep structure? Explain, with examples from your language, the differences between the order in which words occur and the underlying level.

References

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LECTURE SEVEN

Subject and Predicate

Introduction

In this lecture, I shall explain the two major constituents of the sentence. There are the subject and the predicate. As obligatory as these two constituents seem to be in a sentence, I shall examine other sentences where they are not found and the implications of such omission.

Objectives

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

1. identify the subject and the predicate of the sentence and;

2. explain the structure of sentences which do not have any of these obligatory constituents of the sentence.

Pre-Test

1. a.   What is the subject of the sentence?

   b.   What is the predicate of the sentence?

2. Examine the role of the verb in the selection of the subject of the sentence in your language.

3. Explain, with examples from your language, the term ergativity.

CONTENT

Subject and predicate

Whichever way we look at grammar, every simple declarative sentence is usually subdivided into a subject and a predicate. The sentence may also contain an adjunct or adjuncts. Such adjuncts are usually considered as structurally dispensable or optional constituents which may be deleted without any serious effect on the rest of the sentence. The subject and predicate, therefore, represent the nucleus of the sentence while the adjuncts are extra nuclea constituents.

1. A man wrote that nonsense letter

In (1) **A man** is the subject, **wrote that nonsense letter** is the predicate. However, the division into subject and predicate is usually only true of major sentence types as against minor sentences. Minor sentences types are the following.

- Vocative e.g. "John" "Mary" to call attention of a person. Such vocatives cannot be divided

- Aphorism e.g. the more the merrier (a maxim)

- Fragments that complete answers to questions e.g. In answer to a question such as "where are you going?", one can simply say "Home" or "Lagos". This cannot be divided into subject and predicate. Note that "Home" means "I'm going home".

- Sentences with no subject as in imperatives.

Note that the classification into major and minor sentence-types is only in cognisance of surface structure facts. In the example where "Home" is uttered in answer to a particular question, "Home" is the reduced form of "I am going home". By the same token the aphorism "the more the merrier" can be shown to be the reduced form of "the more we are, the merrier we shall be". In addition, imperatives do have subjects in deep structure. This fact is clear in utterances such as (2) below.

2. Get out! Will you?

In (2) above, the tag question repeats the subject of the preceeding sentence. The division of the sentence into subject and predicate makes

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two basic assumptions. Subjects and predicates are central notions which are actually what is meant by describing them as nuclear constituent of a sentence.

3. John killed Bill in central park on Sunday

    subject   predicate

Note that the predicate in (3) contains two adjuncts:

           "in central park" – a place adjunct

            on Sunday   - a time   "

Also note, in connection with (3), that it is possible to have the following sentences in (4) as correct and acceptable sentences of English.

4   a. John killed Bill

      b. John killed Bill on Sunday

      c. John killed Bill in central park

But the next set of sentences are not acceptable.

5   a. *killed Bill   -   no subject

      b. John on Sunday   -   no predicate (verb)

*killed Bill may be grammatical but not acceptable. Because acceptability goes beyond the simple rules of grammar that is why the sentence below is unacceptable.

6. John's dead father arrived on Sunday

The subject NP that is [-animate] cannot arrive. The verb determines the noun it takes or selects as subject, that is why a verb like "laugh' only selects nouns that are[+animate] as subjects. When a [-animate] noun is the subject of laugh, the meaning of that noun is modified to [+animate] and not that of the verb. The noun is modified in the interpretive process.

7. Table laughed

Another basic assumption of the division into subject and predicate is that noun object and the verb constitute one unit as opposed to subject that represents one unit.

8   a. John killed the dog

     b. What did John do?

In (8b), **what** and **do** represent the action i.e. the verb and its object in 8a (killed the dog).

Semantic intepretation of subject and predicate

Some linguists usually equates the subject of the sentence with the topic, while the predicated is equated with the comment. The topic is what is being talked about and the comment represents what is said about the topic. Therefore, the subject is what is talked about and the predicate is what is said about the subject.

9   a. John ran away

     b. John promised Mary a gold ring

In (9a), **John**, the subject is what is talked about, hence the topic, **ran away** is what is said about John, hence the comment. But in (9b), three things are being talked about: John, Mary and a gold ring.

There is some degree of vagueness in relating subject to topic and predicate to comment. Note also that where there is a reversal of the usual word order as in the sentence in (10), part of the predicate may become the topic and the subject may end up as part of the comment.

10. **That new book by Mary**,   **I**   **haven't read**

      predicate   subject   predicate

                   (I haven't read that new book by Mary)

There are many ways in which the topic of a sentence can be isolated and highlighted. This is what we have in (10) via the process of focus, which in that sentence, draws attention to the direct object, which under normal circumstances, is part of the predicate. Consider focussing in the below.

11. a. Mo je☐ is☐u

        I eat yam

        'I ate yam'

     b. Èmi ni   ó   je☐ is☐u

        I   foc trace eat yam

        'I was the one that ate yam'

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c. Jíjẹ ni mo jẹ isẹu
   eating foc I eat yam
   'It is the fact that I ate yam'

d. Isẹu ni mo jẹ
   yam foc I eat
   'It was yam that I ate'

We can also talk of topicalization; this is the conversion of a particular part of the sentence into a topic as in (12).

12 a. John ate rice
    b. Rice, John ate it

13 a. Òjó jẹ ìrẹsì
       Ojo eat rice
       "Ojo ate rice"

    b. Ìrẹsì, Òjó jẹ éẹ
       rice Ojo eat it
       "Rice, Ojo ate it".

Ergativity

The term ergativity is used to refer to the relationship between the subject of an intransitive verb and the direct object of the corresponding transitive verb. When the subject of the intransitive verb becomes the object of the transitive verb, we take of the relationship of ergativity. Examples are in the sentences below.

14. a. John opened the door
    b. The door opened

15. a. Òjó fó àwo Ànìá
       Ojo break plate Aina
       "Ojo broke Aina's plate".

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b. Àwo Àìná fó□

plate Aina break

"Aina's plate broke"

Subject of Passive Sentences

16. a. John killed Bill

b. Bill was killed by John

In the two sentences in (16), John represents the entity that did the killing, therefore, John is the logical subject in the two sentences. Bill in (16b) is only a grammatical subject, the logical subject is John. A logical subject of any sentence is the subject in the underlying structure or deep structure before the transformational rules deriving surface structures are applied.

Passive sentences, therefore, bring out most clearly the difference between grammatical and logical subjects. Note that the grammatical subject of a passive sentence is the direct object in the corresponding active sentence, while the logical subject of the passive is the original subject of the appropriate active sentence.

Summary

The focus of this lecture was the subject and the predicate. I explained that they are the two constituents of the sentence that are obligatory. I gave examples of minor sentence-types which may not have subject or predicate. But a close examination of these types of sentences revealed that they all have subject and predicate at the deep structure. I explained the term topic and comment which some linguists equate to be the subject and predicate. But further examples of sentences reveal that the idea of topic and comment cannot be equated to subject and predicate. I examined ergative and passive structures to further make a distinction between subject and predicate.

Post-Test

1. a.   What is the subject of the sentence?

b.   What is the predicate of the sentence?

2. Examine the role of the verb in the selection of the subject of the sentence in your language.

3. Explain, with examples from your language, the term ergativity.

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LECTURE EIGHT

Adjunct, Transitivity and Intransitivity

Introduction

I shall conclude our discussion of the constituents of the sentence by examining adjuncts. I shall also discuss the term transitivity and intransitivity which are terms used on the verb.

Objectives

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

1. give a clear explanation of what an adjunct is and its various types; and

2. make a distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs in language.

Pre-Test

1. What is an adjunct?

2. With examples from your language, show the differences between an adjunct and a complement.

3. Examine the claim that the direct object is the sufferer of an action.

CONTENT

Adjunct

Adjunct usually refers to adverbial modifiers of one kind or the other, e.g. adverb, adverbial phrase or adverbial clause. Traditionally, such modifiers are subdivided in term of modification that they introduced into the

sentence so that we have adverbs of time, place, purpose, result, condition, manner, reason, etc.

1 a. He did it **for the sake of his family** – reason

   b. He will come **if she allows him** – condition

   c. I will come **at 3o'clock** – time

   d. She put it together **hastily** – manner

The label that is put on the adjunct is a direct function of the meaning conveyed by the adjunct. There is usually a distinction made between adjuncts and complements.

Adjuncts and Complements

Adjuncts are defined as detachable extra neuclea constituents while complements are seen as obligatory constituents.

2. John killed Bill in **Central Park on Sunday**

                    place   time

The highlighted in (2) are adjuncts of place and time. They can be detached leaving (2) to become (3).

3. John killed Bill

The sentence in (3) is still meaningful even though it does not specify where and when the killing took place. Therefore, if we say that adjuncts are extra or non-nuclear constituents of the sentence, we mean that they do not have to feature in any sentence. A sentence that is made up of the subject and adjunct without the verb is not meaningful, whereas a structure with a subject and a predicate (i.e. a verb followed by an optional direct object) but without an adjunct would be meaningful. Consider the sentences in (4).

4 a. He came **on Sunday** – adjunct of time

   b. He took **the book** – complement

   c. He is **clever** – complement

Any form that is optional in (4) and similar sentences is an adjunct, any obligatory part of the predicate apart from the verb is a complement. In the sentences below, the underlined are complements and not adjuncts.

5   a. The parade was <u>on Sunday</u>

     b. The parade was in <u>Central Park</u>

The reason why those underlined are complements is tied to the nature of the verb in those sentences. Therefore, the quesiton as to whether a particular form is an adjunct or a complement can only be determined by reference to the verb in the appropriate sentence. That is why the underlined in (6) are adjuncts and not complements as they are in (5).

6   a. The parade took place <u>on Sunday</u>

     b. The parade took place in <u>Central Park.</u>

A careful examination of (6) and (5) brings up the fact that the decision as to whether a constituent is a complement or an adjunct must be seen as being tied to a kind of verb in a sentence. In (4c) and (5), complements (underlined) have been employed in relation to nominal or adjectival expressions which combine with the 'copula'.

Transitivity and Intransitivity

Transitivity suggests a situation in which the effects of the action expressed by a verb pass over from the performer or agent to the entity affected by the action. This view has given rise to the traditional definition of the direct object as representing the entity that undergoes an action.

However, we need to examine the appropriateness of this definition.

7.   a. John bought a book

     b. John opened the door

There is little doubt that the action of buying affects the book just like the action of opening affects the door. It is therefore a sense in which the direct objects in these sentences can be said to represent an affected entity. But consider the sentences in (8).

8. a. I heard him

   b. I saw him

The <u>him</u> in (8a) represents the entity that does the speaking while the <u>I</u> does the hearing. In that situation, it would appear that it is the subject that represents the entity that is actually affected by the action of the entity described as the direct object. The same point can be made with a slight modification about (8b) where we find that the entity represented by <u>I</u> experiences the seeing. Now, consider (9).

9. a. John suffers pains

   b. John fears the man

In (9a), John experiences the pain in question and he alone can be said to be an affected entity in the situation described. In (9b), John is the one that experiences fear and can therefore be said to be the affected of what the verb referred to. The sentences in (9) raise serious doubt as to the validity of seeing a direct object as the "sufferer of an action".

One test which has been proposed for identifying true direct object is the passive test. The idea is that if a sentence can be converted into a passive sentence, then it must involve a true direct object.

10 a. John plays football

   b. John plays the piano

11 a. Football is played by John

   b. The piano is played by John

Summary

In this lecture, I discussed adjuncts, complements, transitivity and intransitivity. The various types of adjuncts with regards to their functions were discussed. I also explained the optional nature of adjuncts to contrast the obligatoriness of complements in the predicate. I went ahead to discuss transitivity and I showed clearly that there is a serious doubt as to the validity of the claim that the direct object of the verb should be referred to as the sufferer of an action.

Post-Test

1. What is an adjunct?
2. With examples from your language, show the differences between an adjunct and a complement.
3. Examine the claim that the direct object is the sufferer of an action.

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LECTURE NINE

The Concept of Case

Introduction

Case is a grammatical category that is found in the noun. In this lecture I shall discuss both the surface realisation and the deep structure properties of case.

Objectives

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

1. explain clearly the concept of case as a phenomenon that is in all languages;
2. understand how case features in different languages; and
3. make a distinction between inflection and case.

Pre-Test

1. Draw a distinction between case and inflection
2. Give examples of the following in your language: Agent, Instruments, Experiential, Factitive, Locative and Objective cases.

CONTENT

Case and Inflection

Traditionally, case is considered to be a matter of inflection. The reason being that in languages such as Latin, Greek and even German, nouns are declined for cases. In Latin we have the following different forms for 'girl'.

1.

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	puella	puellae
Accusative	puellam	puellas
Dative	puellae	puellis
Genitive	puellae	puellarum
Vocative	puella	puellae
Ablative	puella	puellis

Languages such as Latin and others have a number of cases, usually six. The cases are determined by the inflection of the noun. When case shows up as inflection form, it becomes a purely surface phenomenon typical of some languages but not of others. The problem then is determining where languages that do not make widespread use of inflection fit into the scheme of things. It is known that in all languages, which either make use of inflection or not, certain grammatical functions have to be expressed. Consider the Latin sentence in (2).

2. Nauta   puellam   amat
    sailor(nom)   girl (acc)   love
                   "The sailor loves the girl".

The corresponding English of (2) is given in (3)

3. The sailor loves the girl

The NP before the verb in (3) expresses the subjective function while the one after the verb expresses the objective function. It is possible to argue that, whereas all languages have such functions as subject and object, whether direct or indirect, not all languages have case.

There is, however, evidence that functions such as subject and object may be expressed in different ways. Thus in Latin, these functions are expressed by specific case forms, in English they are functions of word order of structural position. Note however, that for indirect objects in English, one can argue as follows: whereas it is possible to have the sentence in (4a), we can't have that of 4b.

4   a. I gave it him

    b. *I gave him it

Note that it is possible to have (4c)

    c. I gave him a book

The comparison of the acceptability or otherwise of the sentences in (4) suggests that whereas in English, functions such as subject, direct and indirect objects are usually determined by syntactic position of appropriate lexical item so that the direct object preceeds the indirect, that fact raises question as to the validity of using positional criteria for defining such grammatical functions. It will be quite valid to argue that since all cases where the direct object preceeds indirect object are cases involving pronouns as direct object, therefore, the underlying form of (4a) is (4b) so that we have a special rule that accounts for surface form.

It is well known that there have been instances of case system in Latin, Greek, etc, which have been forced on languages that do not make heavy use of inflections. As long as we start off from the position that case is based on inflection, we will have to explain that the only evidence of case distinction in English is the opposition of possessive/genitive and the common unmarked case.

5.   John's will possessive/genitive case

It should be noted that there is a sense in which pronoun in English constitute an exception. English pronoun show evidence of the survival of a more elaborate case system so that in English we can say that:

    I and we are nominative (subject)

    me and us are accusative (direct object)

    mine and our – genitive (possessive)

These are the three possibilities in case as far as pronouns are concerned in English.

Case as deep structure category

There are linguists who see case as not an inflectional form but as a deep structure category. That position is based on the proposal by Charles Fillmore outlined in his article "The case for case" (1968). He argues that

grammatical functions such as subject and object are surface phenomenon because, according to him, sentences such as the ones in (6).

6. a. The door opened
   b. The man opened the door
   c. The key opened the door

The semantically relevant situation is the one between the subject and object in those sentences. In the more normal and common analysis, "the door" is the subject in (6a), whereas, in (6b) and (6c), "the man" and "the key" are the subjects respectively, while, "the door" is the direct object. Fillmore insists that the idea of subject and object does not really capture the significant semantic relationships in those sentences. A meaningful attempt to capture such relationship will have to accept that in each of the sentences in (6), the door represents the entity affected by the events described as in (7).

7. The man opened the door with the key.

A careful examinaton of (7) and its comparison with (6) shows that irrespective of the notion of subject and object, what is semantically significant centres around a question as to

- who does what
- to whom or to what it is done
- with what is it done

Fillmore concludes that grammatical functions such as subject and object are purely superficial/surface phenomena which do not highlight the semantically relevant relationship in a sentence.

Case relations can be redefined such that case would cover semantically significant relations instead of talking about case in term of inflection. Fillmore proposes a new concept of case that will embrace a kind of semantic relationships that are in evidence in the four sentences discussed in (6) and (7) above.

Defined in this way, case becomes a deep structure category present in all languages as opposed to the usual kind of definition which makes case a non—universal category present only in languages which make widespread use of inflection.

Fillmore proposes six cases

1. **Agent**: the entity which is the animate instigator of an action e.g. John in (8)

   8. John opened the door

2. **Instrument**: the inanimate form or object involved in the action e.g. key in (9)

   9. The key opened the door

3. **Experiential**: animate being affected by an event or action e.g. John in (10)

   10. John died

4. **Factitive**: object or being resulting from the action event or state e.g. 'a house' in (11)

   11. He built a house

5. **Locative**: location or spacious orientation of a state, event or action e.g. to Lagos and in Sokoto in (12a) and (12b)

   12a. To Lagos he went

     b. It is hot in Sokoto

6. **Objective**: inanimate entity affected by the action or state described in a sentence-"door" in (13) and "the house" in (14).

   13.   Door opens

   14.   He saw the house

As far as Fillmore is concerned, it is the semantic role of the noun in a sentence that determines a case role or case function assigned to the noun.

Summary

In this lecture, I started by examining case as a matter of inflection and gave examples of the various case systems in Latin. By looking at case in this way, some languages which do not make widespread use of inflection are excluded. Case will be a surface phenomenon as inflectional properties of the noun. I also discussed case as a deep structure category as proposed in Fillmore (1968). In this way, case relations are redefined such that case would cover semantically significant relations instead of talking about case in term of inflection. Case is now a deep structure category present in all languages. I also explained the six cases proposed by Fillmore. These are agent, instrument, experiential, factitive, locative and objective.

Post-Test

1. Draw a distinction between case and inflection
2. Give examples of the following in your language: Agent, Instruments, Experiential, Factitive, Locative and Objective cases.

Refereces

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LECTURE TEN

Gender, Person and Number

Introduction

Other grammatical categories have been identified in language. In this lecture, I shall discuss and explain three of such categories. These are gender, person and number.

Objectives

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

1. identity the gramatical categories of gender, number and person; and

2. explain the three grammatical categories as they manifest in language in general and in your language in particular.

Pre-Test

1. What is gender?

2. Make a distinction between gender and sex (male and female) in your language.

3. Discuss the category person in your language.

4. How does your language make a distinction between one and more than one? Explain with examples.

CONTENT

Gender

Gender is assumed to have to do with male or female but evidence from a wide variety of languages show that it is a grammatical category that is present in a number of languages in different ways. The term gender derives from a general word meaning 'class' or 'kind'. Nouns are classified into genders in order to account for two distinct phenomenon: pronominal reference and adjectival concord (agreement).

In Greek, Latin, Russian, German, French, Italian and Spanish, nouns are classified into two genders – masculine and feminine. In swahili, nouns are classified into at least six genders. Gender plays a relatively minor part in the grammar of English, the reference of the pronouns he, she, it is determined by what is referred to as natural gender, i.e. classification of persons and objects as male, female or inanimate.

The recognition of gender as a grammatical category is logically independent of any particular semantic association that might be established between the gender of a noun and the physical or other properties of the persons or objects denoted by that noun. For example, in French, the masculine/feminine distinction groups together animate and inanimate objects as the following examples show.

1   a. le garçon   -   the boy
    b. le livre   -   the book
    c. le jardin   -   the garden

2   a. la femme   -   the woman
    b. la manson   -   the house
    c. la table   -   the table

What makes book and garden "male"/masculine and house table feminine/female? Some people say that in English, male, female and neuter are realizations of gender such that all animate male nouns are male gender, animate female nouns are female gender and all inanimate nouns are neutre. However, there are a number of cases where what appear to be the rule is not actually kept. This will be the case where she is used to refer to a country or a vessel as in (3).

3   a. She sails – reference to a ship

     b. Nigeria and her neighbours

Such examples in (3) indicate that even in English, the arbitrariness of gender is not completely unknown.

Another evidence to support the claim that gender is arbitrary has to do with the fact that there are languages where the same words are used to cover male and female entities. For example in English, Teacher can be male or female, so also is Doctor, Lecturer, Professor etc. If gender were not arbitrary, male and female entities will not be covered by the same term.

There are languages in which what linguists considered to be a gender distinction has nothing to do with sex and animateness, but simply determined by class prefixes. This is the case with Swahili. In such languages, every noun requires a particular element, usually a suffix, to mark agreement in a sentence. Below are examples in Swahili.

mtu	'person'	watu	'people'
kisu	'knife'	visu	'knives'
mti	'tree'	miti	'trees'
nchi	'country'	nchi	'countries'
juwe	'stone'	mawe	'stones'
udevu	'single hair of beard'	ndevu	'beard'

Person

The grammatical category person is probably best defined by reference to the role of participants in a speech situation. Thus the first person usually refers to the speaker, the 2nd person – the hearer or addressee, the third person refers to others in the speech situation other than the speaker and hearer or addressee.

1st person plural	-	the speaker plus someone else
plural of second person	-	addressees or hearers
3rd person plural	-	more than one person other than the speaker and hearer

In effect, this means that 'we' could mean either the speaker plus addressee as is found in (1)

1. We are late, let us go

or it could mean the speaker plus some person other than the addressee as in (2)

2. We came to your house last week

where "<u>your</u>" is the addressee.

When "<u>we</u>" refers to the speaker plus the addressees it is term **"we inclusive"** in the sense that it included the addressee, whereas where "<u>we</u>" exclude the addressee but includes some other persons, it is termed "**we exclusive**".

There are languages where there is no overt recognition of what is usually described as 3rd person. In such languages, 3rd person simply means absence of the marker normally associated with 1st and 2nd persons.

There is a little misnormer in the way we handle combinations of person and number. For example, <u>we</u> cannot be described as the plural of 'I' in the same sense in which <u>boys</u> can be said to be the plural of <u>boy</u>, yet we describe we as first person plural in opposition to <u>I</u> which is the first person singular. Though **we** includes a reference to <u>I</u> and it is plural, its plurality derives from the fact that <u>we</u> is interpreted as <u>I</u> plus one or more other persons, the other persons may or may not include the hearer or addressee and that is in fact, the basis for the distinction made between <u>we inclusive</u> and <u>we exclusive</u>.

The category person is usually associated with pronouns because these are the items normally used to define participant roles in the sentence. The most common form is the six person system found in French, Yorùbá and a lot of other languages. If we compare the system in such languages with the system in English, we find that English has a five person system.

French

	singular	plural
1st	Je	Nous
2nd	Tu	Vous
3rd	Il/Elle	Ils/Elles

Yoruba

	singular	plural
1st	Mo	A
2nd	O	E□
3rd	Ó	Wo□n

English

	singular	plural
1st	I	We
2nd	You	You
3rd	He/She/It	They

The distinction between 2nd person singular and 2nd person plural is neutralized in English.

Person form ranges in actual realization from a four person to five person one to a six person form. The four person form is illustrated in Korean with the equivalence of I, Thou, We and He, with no difference between <u>thou</u> and <u>you</u>, <u>He</u> and <u>They</u>, and <u>You</u> and <u>They</u>, so that it is difficult to tell the singular/plural in second and third persons.

Languages that have a large number of person forms usually have dual or trial form or both, in addition to <u>we exclusive</u> and <u>we inclusive</u>. In Bamileke (in Cameroon), the we exclusive and the we inclusive are expressed by a combination of the following:

I - ba®g   we inclusive - ba®g – u

You - u   we exclusive – ba®g je

He - je

dual - speaker plus one other hearer

trial - speaker plus two hearers

plural – plural + dual

In a number of languages, the addressee can be referred to in the singular or plural like in Yorùbá. It depends on the degree of itimacy, especially when one is meeting a person for the first time. For example, in French, the use of <u>Tu</u> and <u>Vous</u> for the addressee depends on familiarity and intimacy. In Yoruba, *o* and *e* are used in term of respect, seniority and age.

Number

The most common manifestation of the category of <u>number</u> is the distinction between <u>singular</u> and <u>plural</u> (boy – boys), which is found in many languages all over the world. This distinction clearly rests upon the recognition of persons, animals and objects which can be enumerated (as one or more than one) and referred to, individually or collectively, by means of nouns. Number is therefore a category of the noun.

Not all languages have a grammatical category of number. In Chinese and Vietnamese, the distinction between, for example, 'I wrote a letter' and 'I wrote some letters' can be made, if necessary, by means of a numeral or a word meaning 'several', but it may be equally well left unexpressed. This is also applicable to Yorùbá. Other languages (e.g. classical Greek, Sanskerit, and certain Slavonic languages) have a dual, in addition to a singular and plural. The dual being used to refer to two objects. Fijian and a few other languages are reported to have a trial (for reference to three objects) as well as a singular, dual and plural.

Summary

The grammatical categories of Gender, Person and Number were the focus of discussion in this lecture. In discussing gender, I explained that the grammatical category is arbitrary in that it has nothing to do with male and female as evident in languages that make use of it. For example, in French, <u>table</u> has feminine (female) gender <u>la table</u>, while <u>book</u> has masculine (male) gender <u>le livre</u>. Also, in English **she** is used to refer to a country as in <u>Nigeria and her neighbours</u>, yet there are instances where the same word is used to cover male and female entities, e.g. teacher.

The category person refer to the role of participants in a speech situation. Thus, we have the 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons, we inclusive and we exclusive. I also discussed the category number which has to do with the distinction between singular and plural. Some languages do not make this distinction, others have a dual and even a trial form in addition to the singular and plural forms.

Post-Test

1. What is gender?
2. Make a distinction between gender and sex (male and female) in your language.

3. Discuss the category person in your language.

4. How does your language make a distinction between one and more than one? Explain with examples.

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LECTURE ELEVEN

Tense and Aspect

Introduction

The last of the grammatical categories to be discussed are tense and aspect. I shall explain each of these categories with examples.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to identify and explain tense and aspect.

Pre-Test

1. What is tense?
2. Identify the tense distinctions in your language
3. Why is tense referred to as a category common to all languages?
4. What is aspect?
5. Make a distinction between perfective and imperfective aspect.

CONTENT

Tense

The essential characteristic of the category of tense is that it relates the time, the action, event or state of affairs referred to in the sentence to the time of utterance. The term <u>tense</u> derives from the Latin translation of the Greek word for time. The category 'tense' has to do with time relations in so far as these are expressed by systematic grammatical contrasts. Latin and Greek have three such contrasts – past, present and future. From the

situation in English, we know that tense distinctions are morphologically marked as in (1).

1 a. I work
   b. I will work
   c. I worked

In okpe language, tense can be marked with the addition of affixes as in (2).

2 a. Mi a nya - 'I work/go'
   b. Mi na nya - 'I will work/go'
   c. Mi a nyari – 'I worked/went'

In Yoruba language, there is no tense marker or morphological distinction to mark tense as in (3).

3a. Ó mò☐   'He knows/knew'

In English as seen in (1a) and (1c) above, there is a change in verb form to indicate present and past. For some linguists therefore, tense exists in those languages that mark tense as a morphological category. But if we say this, it will mean that tense is a feature of some languages and not others. In (1) – (2) above, English and O☐kpe☐ mark tense. They are related in term of tense while Yorùbá as in (3), does not mark tense and will be classified as tenseless.

However, Bull (1964) established three tense markers

4.

                              TS (now)

    past (before)   ———O———▶ future (after)
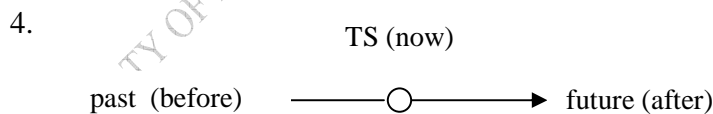
                    (TS = time of statement)

When an event is simultaneous with the time of speaking, it is the present; event that takes place before the time of speaking is the past; and that after the time of speaking is the future. Speaking about past events involve recollection while future events involve anticipation of what is to happen.

There is no justification for considering languages which do not indicate tense distinction morphologically as diffecient. Tense is common to all languages, the operative system differs from one language to the other. All languages do not have to mark the same distinction neither do they have to use the same method to indicate tense distinctions.

Lyons (1968: 305) correctly observes that various categorizations are possible in tense distinctions. The time of statement which he calls the theoretical zero point (the 'now' of utterance) might be included with the 'past' or 'future' to yield, on the one hand, a dichotomy between 'future' and 'non-future' or on the other hand, a dichotomy between 'past' and 'non-past'.

For example, Yorùbá language makes a distinction between future and non-future tenses as in the examples below.

5   a. Ó mò□

        he know   'He knew/knows'

     b. Ó máa mò□

        he fut know   'He will know'.

Aspect

The term 'aspect' (which is a translation of the Russian word vid) was first used to refer to the distinction of 'perfective' and 'imperfective' in the inflection of verbs in Russian and other slavonic languages.

Aspect, like tense, has to do with time, but aspect distinctions deal with the temporal distribution of an action, event or state of affairs, rather than with its location in time.

In English, there are the perfective aspect e.g.

        I have read the book

        I had read the book

progressive:

        I am/was reading the book

        I will/would be reading the book

57

habitual:

> I used to read, I usually read, etc

There are some verbs, called <u>stative verbs</u>, in English which do not normally occur with progressive aspect. These are think, know, understand, hate, love, see, taste, feel, possess, own, etc. These verbs refer to a state of affairs, rather than to an action, event or process. Since the most common function of the progressive is to indicate duration, it is only natural for stative verbs not to combine with the progressive: the implication of duration is already contained in the general meaning of these verbs.

Yoruba language has the following aspect distinctions: perfective, progressive, habitual and neutral aspects.

progressive:	Ó ń je□ is□u	
	he prog eat yam	'He is eating yam'
perfective:	Ó ti je□ is□u	
	he perf. eat yam	'He has eaten yam'.
habitual:	Ó máa ń je□ is□u	
	He hab. eat yam	'He usually eats/ate yam'.
neutral:	Ó je□ is□u -	no aspect marker
	he eat yam	'He eats/ate yam'

Summary

In this lecture, I discussed Tense and Aspect. I made it known that the essential characteristic of the category Tense is that it relates the time the action, event or state of affairs referred to in the sentence to the time of utterance. Every language has tense, there is no justification for considering languages which do not indicate tense distinction morphologically as having no tense. The operative system differs from one language to the other. All languages do not have to mark the same distinction neither do they have to use the same method to indicate tense distinctions. While Aspect, like Tense, has to do with time, but aspect distinctions deals with the temporal distribution of an action, event or state of affairs, rather than with its location in time. This is why we make a distinction between perfective and imperfective aspect. The perfective denotes a situation of completeness while the imperfective

has to do with incompleteness. It can denote an on-going event or action which is known as continuous or progressive; it can also refer to an event or action that takes place regularly or a habit which is called the habitual aspect.

Post-Test

1. What is tense?
2. Identify the tense distinctions in your language
3. Why is tense referred to as a category common to all languages?
4. What is aspect?
5. Make a distinction between perfective and imperfective aspect.

References

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LECTURE TWELVE

The Sentence

Introduction
The sentence is the largest unit of grammar on which linguistic analysis can be carried out. In this lecture, I shall be discussing relations within a sentences, therefore, I shall explain the phrase, the clause and the sentence itself.

Objectives
At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:
1. identify phrases and clauses in sentences; and
2. identify various types of sentences in language and particularly of your own language.

Pre-Test
1. What is a phrase? Give examples of the following phrases in your language: Noun phrase, Verb phrase, Adjective phrase and Adverb phrase.
2. Explain the types of clauses you know.
3. Give examples of the functions of the subordinate clause in your language.
4. Explain the following with examples from your language.
   a. complex sentence
   b. compound sentence
   c. compound-complex sentence

d. serial verbal construction

CONTENT

The phrase

A phrase is a group of words containing neither subject nor predicate and it can act as a single part of speech or a word-class within a sentence. For example, in the sentence below, the underlined part is a phrase.

1. <u>The silly little boy</u> failed woefully

The underlined part in (1) above can be replaced with a word as in (2).

2. <u>John</u> failed woefully.

Therefore, the underlined words in (1) belong to the noun phrase.

Noun Phrase (NP)

A noun phrase performs the normal function of a noun in a sentence, e.g.

3. <u>The young energetic boy</u> got <u>the loin's share</u>   of <u>the loot</u>
    subject   object of the verb   object of preposition

Verb Phrase (VP)

A verb phrase consists of the verb and its object or the main verb and its anxiliaries, e.g.

4. He <u>killed the goat</u>
        verb phrase

5. I <u>will write</u>
        verb phrase

Adjective Phrase (AdjP or AP)

An adjective phrase modifies or qualifies a noun or a pronoun, e.g.

6. a. A <u>very intelligent</u> boy
   b. The <u>extremely beautiful</u> girl

Adverb Phrase (AdvP)

An adverb phrase modifies or qualifies a verb, an adjective or another adverb e.g.

7   a. He ran <u>very quickly</u>

      b. John ate <u>amazingly well</u>

Prepositional Phrase (PP)

A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition; it has a noun or a pronoun following the preposition as its complement, e.g.

8   a. I keep my keys <u>in my purse</u>

      b. He yelled <u>at her</u>

      c. The dog ran <u>across the street</u>

The Clause

A clause is a group of words containing a subject and a verb of its own and forming part of a sentence.

Types of Clauses

There are two types of clauses. They are the main clause and the subordinate clause. The main clause is also referred to as the principal or independent clause. It is a clause that makes a statement capable of standing alone. The subordinate or dependent clause is a clause that makes a statement that cannot stand alone but is dependent on another clause within the sentence e.g.

9   a. <u>Though no goals were scored</u>, it was an exciting match

      b. The supporters still think <u>that their darling team could win the cup</u>

In the sentences in (9), the underlined parts are the subordinate clauses while those not underlined are the main clauses..

Functions of subordinate clauses

Subordinate clauses can function as nouns, adjectives and adverbs.

Noun clauses

A noun clause is a subordinate clause that works as a noun. In English, it is introduced by a subordinating conjunction <u>that</u> (which is sometimes omitted) or by other wh- words or interrogative words such as <u>what,</u> <u>when</u>, <u>whenever</u>, <u>where</u>, <u>whether</u>, <u>why</u>, <u>how</u>, etc., e.g.

10 a. He believed <u>that the girl is my sister</u>

     b. <u>What cannot be cured</u> must be endured

     c. I know <u>who has done the mischief</u>

     d. Your promotion depends on <u>how hard you can work</u>

The underlined in (10a) serves as the complement of the verb 'believed' while the underlined part in (10b) acts as the subject of the sentence. In (10c), the underlined is the object of the verb while in (10d) it is the complement of the preposition.

Adjectival Clauses

The adjectival clause is also called the relative clause. It works as an adjective, it is introduced by a relative pronoun like <u>who</u>, <u>which</u>, <u>what</u>. The basic function is to qualify a noun or a pronoun.

11 a. His excuses <u>which were not convincing</u>, angered his boss

     b. The topic was one <u>that I found most interesting</u>

Adverbial Clauses

An adverbial clause, like an adverb, can modify a verb, an adjective or an adverb.

12 a. The boy got up <u>when the rays of light entered his room</u>

     b. They lost the election <u>because the voters did not trust them</u>.

     c. The turnout was as large <u>as we could reasonably expect</u>.

     d. He sings as well <u>as he dances.</u>

In (12a) the underlined adverbial clause modifies the verb, so is the one in (12b), but that of (12c) modifies the adjective 'large' and that in (12d) modifies the adverb 'well'.

The adverbial clause has been classified into five in English. They are the following:

Adverbial clause of time:	answers the question when?
Adverbial clause of place:	answers the question where?
Adverbial clause of manner:	answers the question how?
Adverbial clause of reason/clause:	answers the question why?
Adverbial clause of purpose/result:	answers the question what?

The Sentence

A sentence can be defined structurally as the largest unit of grammar on which linguistic analysis can be carried out. It is a grammatical form which can be analysed into constituents but which is not a constituent of any large form.

A sentence should consist of two components: somebody or something who is doing the action which is called the subject of the sentence. It usually occurs at the beginning except in questions and instructions. The second component of the sentence is a word or a group of words which describes the action. This is known as the verb.

Classification of sentences

Sentences may be classified in two ways. These are the functions or roles of the sentence and the form or structure.

Functions

Sentences may function in four ways

1. They may be used to make statements. Sentences used in this ways are called declarative sentences. The subjects of such sentences are always present and generally precede the verb e.g.

    13.   The boy arrived late

2. Sentences may be used to ask questions. These are known as interrogative sentences e.g.

    14   a.   Will John go to Lagos today?

          b.   Did it rain heavily yesterday?

          c.   Where will John go today?

          d.   John will go to Lagos today?

3. Sentences may be used to issue commands or express an entreaty. These are called imperative sentences. Often, the subject of an imperative sentence is understood, not expressed e.g.

15. Go to Lagos.

4. Sentences may be used to express strong feelings of anger, sorrow, joy, grief, surprise or the like. These are referred to as exclamatory sentences e.g.

16. Congratulation! You made it at last!

Form or structure of the sentence

Four kinds of constructions may be distinguished in sentences

i. The simple sentence is a sentence that consists of a subject and a verb e.g.

17. a. Dogs <u>bark</u>

b. John <u>bought</u> a grammar book

c. About a week ago, my friend <u>sent</u> me a brochure of the fellowships available in American universities.

ii. The compound sentence is a sentence that contains at least two independent clauses e.g.

18. a. The zoo needed more money and it raised its admission fees

b. The car ran out of fuel and stalled in the middle of the road

Compound sentences are joined together by coordinating conjunctions. If we remove the co-ordinating conjunction, each of the clauses joined together can still stand on its own. Such conjunctions in English are <u>and</u>, <u>but</u>, <u>for</u>, <u>yet</u>, etc. We can also use semicolon instead of the conjunctions.

iii. The complex sentence contains one main clause and at least one subordinate or dependent clause introduced by a subordinator, e.g..

19. He has come <u>that we might see you</u>

iv. The compound-complex sentence contains two or more main clauses and one or more subordinate clauses e.g.

20.   <u>However great may be the love that unites them</u>, a man and a woman are always strangers in mind and intelligence; they remain combatants <u>who belong to different races.</u>

The subordinate clauses are underlined in the example above.

Serial Verbal Constructions (SVC)

In West African languages, there is another kind of sentence known as the serial verbal constructions (SVC). These are sentences which contain two or more verbs with one surface subject without any evidence of co-ordination. Some examples are given below in Yorùbá language.

21 a.   Obìnrin náà ra   e☐ran pa tà
       woman the buy animal kill sell
       'The woman bought, killed and sold the animal'.

   b.   Olú gbé àpótí wá   ilé
       Olu carry seat   come house
       'Olu carried the seat home'.

   c.   Òjó sùn   lo☐
       Ojo sleep go
       'Òjó slept off'

Summary

I explained and discussed the constituents of the sentence in this lecture. I started with the phrase which I defined as a group of words containing neither a subject nor predicate and can act as a single part of speech or a word-class within a sentence. I gave examples of the noun phrase (NP), the verb phrase (VP), the adjective phrase (AP), the adverb phrase (Advp) as well as the prepositional phrase (PP). I went ahead and explained the clause as a group of words containing a subject and a verb of its own and forming part of sentence. I discussed the two types of clauses – main and subordinate clauses and also discussed the functions of subordinate clauses. Finally, I discussed the sentence itself, I explained the four ways by which we can make use of the sentence and also the four ways of examining the structure of the sentence. I mentioned the serial verbal construction (SVC) and gave examples from Yorùbá languages.

Post-Test

1. What is a phrase? Give examples of the following phrases in your language: Noun phrase, Verb phrase, Adjective phrase and Adverb phrase.
2. Explain the types of clauses you know.
3. Give examples of the functions of the subordinate clause in your language.
4. Explain the following with examples from your language.
   a. complex sentence
   b. compound sentence
   c. compound-complex sentence
   d. serial verbal construction

References

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