

morphosyntax session four

Chapter 1:

- standard vs non-standard
- formal vs informal style
- prescriptive vs descriptive grammars
- unclear terms: past tense and imperative

1 The basics

1.1 Some fundamental terms

- single clauses, coordinated clauses (= compound sentences)
 - clause, subject and predicate
 - phrase, head, and dependents
- (1)
- a. That you are still alive is a miracle.
 - b. The names of some of the people barred from entering the UK for fostering extremism or hatred have been published for the first time.
 - c. Coming to this country is a privilege.
 - d. Fred Waldron Phelps Snr, a 79-year-old American Baptist pastor, and his daughter Shirley Phelps-Roper are barred for their anti-gay comments.
 - e. A compromise deal suggested as a way to avoid a damaging Labour revolt on Royal Mail is not being considered, Post Office minister Pat McFadden said.
 - f. The bodies belong to six young Nigerians killed by the police.
 - g. The other five officers accused of the murders and eight more police witnesses have testified that Danjuma Ibrahim ordered the killings.
- functions and categories
 - function = relational concept
 - category = class of expressions that is grammatical alike
- (2)
- a. The day was waning.
 - b. This is the day, man.
 - c. We killed the day shooting rabbits.
 - d. I've been looking for you the whole day.
- words, lexemes, inflectional forms

1.2 The parts of speech

Noun

- meaning: denote physical objects BUT: abstract nouns, deverbal nouns
- form: singular-plural contrast BUT: non-count (mass etc.) *fun, gold, jewelry, snow*
- head of a noun phrase
- noun = common nouns, proper nouns, and pronouns

Verb

- meaning: chief determinant of what kind of situation is expressed by the clause
- form: tense, progressive, 3sg
- function: head of a verb phrase
- verbs = auxiliary verbs and lexical verbs

Adjective

- meaning: express properties
- form: inflection for grade
- function: attributive/predicative

Determinative

- meaning: definite vs indefinite
- form: *the, a, this, that, some, any, many, few*; numerals
- function: can function as determiners in noun phrases

Adverb

- meaning:
- form: *-ly*
- function: modify verbs, verb phrases, adjectives, and adverbs

Preposition

- (primary) meaning: express relations of space/time
- function: head of preposition phrases
→preposition phrases are dependents of verbs, verb phrases, nouns, or adjectives
- HP: intransitive prepositions

Coordinator

- meaning: to mark coordination (= the placing of two elements on the same syntactic rank)
- *and, or, and but*

Subordinator

- meaning: to mark subordination
- form: *that, whether, if_i* [!]
- no category CONJUNCTION

1.3 The structure of phrases

- head (+ dependents)
- complements vs modifiers
 - complements can be obligatory
 - complements subject to selectional restrictions
- object vs predicative complement
 - reference
 - form
- determiner
 - can be obligatory: *Dog barked.
 - form: determinatives or genitive NPs

1.4 Canonical and non-canonical clauses

- (3) Canonical clauses: the syntactically most basic/elementary clauses.
 - a. subject + predicate
 - b. predicate realized by a verb phrase
- (4) Non-canonical clauses are described in terms of how they differ from canonical clauses

Polarity

Polarity contrasts positive and negative clauses.

Clause type

1. declarative 2. interrogative 3. imperative 4. exclamative

Subordination

- (5)
 - a. We killed all the slugs.
 - b. Killing all the slugs was no fun at all.

Coordination

Information packaging

Different ways of rendering the same piece of information

- active/passive
- preposing
- extraposition

HA

- (1) HP, p. 28, #3
- (2) Canonical and non-canonical clauses
 - a. It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.
 - b. An invitation to dinner was soon afterwards dispatched; and already had Mrs. Bennet planned the courses that were to do credit to her housekeeping, when an answer arrived which deferred it all.
 - c. Mr. Bingley was good-looking and gentlemanlike; he had a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners.
 - d. The gentlemen pronounced him to be a fine figure of a man, [...]
 - e. I hate to see you standing about by yourself in this stupid manner.
 - f. The evening altogether passed off pleasantly to the whole family.
 - g. You have liked many a stupider person.
 - h. And so you like this man's sisters, too, do you?
 - i. Their manners are not equal to his.
 - j. But they are very pleasing women when you converse with them.