

# Grammar and Composition: Chapter 1 & 2

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# What is grammar?

- Grammar is the discipline that studies the structure of sentences in human languages (e.g., English).
- five senses of grammar
  1. Usage Grammar: standard usage referring to the grammatical rules of Standard English
  2. School Grammar: the grammar taught in the schools in language arts and English classes
  3. Stylistic grammar: the grammar used in writing varied and stylistically mature sentences
  4. Cognitive grammar: the grammar in our head, the internalized system of rules the native speaker of a language (linguistic competence vs. performance)
  5. The Grammarian's grammar: the grammar that explains in a systematic way what speakers of English know about English sentences

# Descriptive vs. prescriptive grammar

- Descriptive: the interacting unconscious rules of syntax, morphology, phonology, and semantics that speakers use to speak their language
- Prescriptive: Linguistic rules arbitrarily designated (by various sources, including dictionaries, textbooks, self-appointed authorities, etc.) as the rules of "correct" grammar
  - (1) It's me.  
It's I.
  - (2) I want to quickly visit the library.  
I want to visit the library quickly

# Why study grammar?

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- Intrinsic motivations: to understand the structure of English and hence master the language? e.g, teaching English, solving grammar problems, editing English sentences, writing, etc.
- Extrinsic motivations: course motivations?

# How do grammarians study grammar

- introspection: thinking up sentences to study and then making a judgement about their grammaticality
  - (3) a. The guests disappeared.  
b. \*The guests disappeared the party.
  - (4) a. Who do you think that Bill saw?  
b. Who do you think that saw Bill?

# How do grammarians study grammar

- Comparison (with minimal difference)
  - (5) Emily stood up awkwardly.  
Awkwardly, Emily stood up.
  - (6) a. Whom do you doubt that Jane saw?  
b. \*Whom do you doubt the claim that Jane saw?
  - (7) a. The student looked up the word.  
b. The student looked the word up.
  - (8) a. The student looked up the stairs.  
b. \*The student looked the stairs up.

## How do we study grammar?

- Checking the real data  
English grammar is a body of rules [specify] how meanings [create] in English. There are many accounts of the grammar, which [tend] to fall into two groups: the descriptivist, which describe the patterns [which] meanings are typically created in functional speech and writing; and the prescriptivist, which set out pre-existing rules as to how meanings are created.  
No human language's grammar has been fully [map] out. That is, no set of unambiguous rules has [formulate] that will always or almost always agree with native speakers on whether any given sentence is grammatical or not. The development of a complete grammar is [important goal] of natural language processing.

# What do we look at when we study grammar

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- grammatical categories: noun, verb, ....
- constituency: phrase, clause
- grammatical function: subject, object, modifier
- phrase structure: S, NP, VP, PP
- clauses: finite vs. nonfinite

## Mismatches between form and function: Tense

- Definition: The past tense form (ed) expresses a time that is in the past
  - (9) a. The course started last week.
  - b. If he said that, he was wrong.
  - c. I offended the Smiths

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- Definition fails:
  - (10) a. I thought the course started next week.
  - b. If he said that, she wouldn't believe him.
  - c. I regret offending the Smiths.

## Mismatches between form and function: imperative

- Definition: Imperative is a form or construction used to issue a command
  - (11) a. Go to bed.
  - b. Please pass me the salt.
- Definition Fails:
  - (12) a. Sleep well.
  - b. Could you pass me the salt?

## Mismatches between form and function: imperative

- NPs are complements whereas Adverbs are modifiers
- (13) a. The student studied English grammar really well.  
b. They behaved really well.

# Components of grammar

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- Have intuitions about structure, sound, meaning in the language; unconscious knowledge of language that allows us to produce and understand the sentences of English

(14) The fringle grobs the yobel.

# Syntax

- Syntax: the way in which words are ordered and grouped together and how each group of words functions in a sentence as a syntactic phrase
  - (15) The Presidential candidate thought that the expensive dinners given in Lee's honor were surprisingly boring.
- Rearrange words and phrases too
  - (16) Will the presidential candidate give an expensive dinner in Lee's honor?

# Morphology

- Morphology: the structure of words and how they are formed; divide words into morphemes (affixiation)
  - (17) a. inflectional affixes: es/ed
  - b. derivational affixes: presidential, legal, social, expensive ...
  - c. blending: flying rubber/flubber, brunch, motel, ...
  - d. clipping: fax,...
  - e. compounding: blacklist, ..
  - f. coining: email, computer, spam...
  - g. acronyms: NASA, NAFTA,...

# Semantics

- Semantics: the meaning of the sentence
  - (18) a. John kicked Mary.  
b. Mary kicked John.
  - (19) Each/a/the presidential candidate thought that...
- Semantic anomalies
  - (20) Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.
- Contradiction
  - (21) The fertilizer killed the plant but it didn't die.
- Presupposition
  - (22) Would you like another sandwich?
- Metaphor
  - (23) That class was a long trip/haul.  
Argumentation is a war.
- Ambiguous
  - (24) The...

## Syntactic or semantics?

- Questions: Fill out the blanks with an appropriate one, selecting from *resist, suffer, die, prosper*

(26) Time: In what way do you believe the Chinese people have lost their values?

Dalai Lama: Today, there's nothing only money. Marxism doesn't have any effect. There's corruption and scandals everywhere. Nowadays, the Chinese are saying that if corruption is eliminated then the Communist Party will \_\_\_\_, and if corruption is not eliminated then the country will \_\_\_\_ . Self-discipline based on spiritual values – that's the real answer.

- Do Exercise 4,5 & Read Chap 2
- Read the Korean grammar book (2 weeks)