

Foundations of Linguistics

MSc Language Science and Technology

Syntax I

Annemarie Verkerk

Overview: Morphology and syntax

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments
25.10.23	Introduction		
30.10.23	Morphology I: Word formation	Haspelmath & Sims (2010) Chapter 1&2&3	
02.11.23	Morphology II: Inflection & Derivation; Hierarchical structure	Haspelmath & Sims (2010) Chapter 5 & 7 (if you have time, read Chapter 6 too)	Morphology assignment handed out
06.11.23	Syntax I: Word classes	Tallerman (2014) Chapter 1&2&3	Morphology assignment due
08.11.23	Syntax II: Heads, dependents, and beyond	Tallerman (2014) Chapter 4&5	Syntax assignment handed out
13.11.23	Syntax III: Grammatical relations	Tallerman (2014) Chapter 6	
15.11.23	Syntax IV: tba	tba	Syntax assignment due

Syntax

Syntax: the domain of grammar that represents a speaker's knowledge of the structure of phrases and sentences

? Are the following correct English sentences?

1. *The cat chased the mouse that ate the cheese that came from the cow that grazed in the field that was taken care of by the farmer.*
2. *The man who whistles tunes pianos.*
3. *Have the students who failed the exam take the supplementary no cheating.*
4. *Repotting plants is so difficult because the roots are often stuck to the pot and the plants are often completely dried out, making it hard to ease them back to life after the fact.*

Recursion

Recursion: is the repeated sequential use of a particular type of linguistic element or grammatical structure, when this gives rise to a non-flat hierarchical structure (aka ,self-embedding')

- Conjunction: [[Lee and Cindy] and Harry]
NOT: [Lee and Cindy and Harry and Robin and Yasmin]
- Clausal complements: [Lisa thinks that [Naruto said that [Jasper cried]]]
- Possessives: [[[Max]’s mother]’s brother]’s house]
- Possessives: [the house of [the brother of [the mother of [Max]]]]



Recursion, Chomsky, Universal Grammar & syntax

Noam Chomsky: recursion “is the only uniquely human component of the faculty of language”

competence vs. performance: abstract system of language knowledge, to be described in grammar, vs. language usage

Chomsky ≠ syntax!

The Faculty of Language: What Is It, Who Has It, and How Did It Evolve? (2002)

Marc D. Hauser,^{1*} Noam Chomsky,² W. Tecumseh Fitch¹

We argue that an understanding of the faculty of language requires substantial interdisciplinary cooperation. We suggest how current developments in linguistics can be profitably wedded to work in evolutionary biology, anthropology, psychology, and neuroscience. We submit that a distinction should be made between the faculty of language in the broad sense (FLB) and in the narrow sense (FLN). FLB includes a sensory-motor system, a conceptual-intentional system, and the computational mechanisms for recursion, providing the capacity to generate an infinite range of expressions from a finite set of elements. We hypothesize that FLN only includes recursion and is the only uniquely human component of the faculty of language. We further argue that FLN may have evolved for reasons other than language, hence comparative studies might look for evidence of such computations outside of the domain of communication (for example, number, navigation, and social relations).

If a martian graced our planet, it would be struck by one remarkable similarity among Earth's living creatures and a key difference. Concerning similarity, it would note that all living things are designed on the basis of highly conserved developmental systems that read an (almost) universal language encoded in DNA base pairs. As such, life is arranged hierarchically with a foundation of discrete, unblendable units (codons, and, for the most part, genes) capable of combining to create increasingly complex and virtually limitless varieties of both species and individual organisms. In contrast, it would notice the absence of a universal code of communication (Fig. 1).

If our martian naturalist were meticulous, it might note that the faculty mediating human communication appears remarkably different from that of other living crea-

question of language evolution, and of how humans acquired the faculty of language.

In exploring the problem of language evolution, it is important to distinguish between questions concerning language as a communicative system and questions concerning the computations underlying this system, such as those underlying recursion. As we argue below, many acrimonious debates in this field have been launched by a failure to distinguish between these problems. According to one view (*I*), questions concerning abstract computational mechanisms are distinct from those concerning communication, the latter targeted at problems at the interface between abstract computation and both sensory-motor and conceptual-intentional interfaces. This view should not, of course, be taken as a claim against a relationship between computa-

tures; it might further note that the human faculty of language appears to be organized like the genetic code—hierarchical, generative, recursive, and virtually limitless with

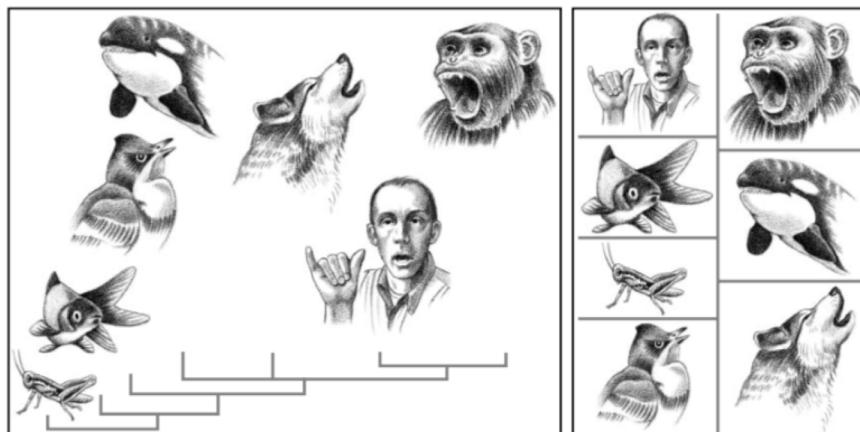


Fig. 1. The animal kingdom has been designed on the basis of highly conserved developmental systems that read an almost universal language coded in DNA base pairs. This system is shown on the left in terms of a phylogenetic tree. In contrast, animals lack a common universal code of communication, indicated on the right by unconnected animal groups. [Illustration: John Yanson]

¹Department of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA. ²Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA.
*To whom correspondence should be addressed. E-mail: mdhauser@wjh.harvard.edu

respect to its scope of expression. With these pieces in hand, this martian might begin to wonder how the genetic code changed in such a way as to generate a vast number of mutually incomprehensible communication systems across species while maintaining clarity of comprehension within a given species. The martian would have stumbled onto some of the essential problems surrounding the

tation and communication. It is possible, as we discuss below, that key computational capacities evolved for reasons other than communication but, after they proved to have utility in communication, were altered because of constraints imposed at both the periphery (e.g., what we can hear and say or see and sign, the rapidity with which the auditory cortex can process rapid temporal and spec-

Word classes

? Fill in the gaps ?

- a. The trains aren't ___ today.
- b. What ___ said was simply ignored.
- c. She sounded ___ impressed.
- d. It was ___ rewarding experience.
- e. ___ act is not amusing.
- f. His act is not amusing the ___.
- g. We were ___.
- h. The ___ was paid.
- i. He was shot in the ___.
- j. Let ___ dogs lie.

Word classes

? Fill in the gaps ?

- a. The trains aren't **running** today. verb
- b. What **they** said was simply ignored. pronoun
- c. She sounded **quite** impressed. adverb
- d. It was **a** rewarding experience. article
- e. **His** act is not amusing. possessive pronoun
- f. His act is not amusing the **crowd**. noun
- g. We were **surrounded**. verb
- h. The **bill** was paid. noun
- i. He was shot in the **leg**. noun
- j. Let **lazy** dogs lie. adjective

Word classes

Word classes vs. Parts Of Speech (POS) vs. grammatical categories (?)

content words

vs.

function words

nouns:

salamander, Germany, tofu, holidate

verbs:

google, walk, speak, dress, eat, go, come

adjectives:

righteous, nice, happy, smelly, old, purple

adverbs:

well, happily, always, badly, quickly, incredibly

adpositions:

with, from, on, in, ago

determiners:

a, the, this, these, that, those

conjunctions:

and, or, but

pronouns:

I, you, he, she, it, him, her, we, it

auxiliary verbs:

be, have, will, would, can

Word classes

Penn Treebank POS tag set

Tag	Description	Example	Tag	Description	Example
CC	Coordin. Conjunction	<i>and, but, or</i>	SYM	Symbol	+,%,&
CD	Cardinal number	<i>one, two, three</i>	TO	"to"	<i>to</i>
DT	Determiner	<i>a, the</i>	UH	Interjection	<i>ah, oops</i>
EX	Existential 'there'	<i>there</i>	VB	Verb, base form	<i>eat</i>
FW	Foreign word	<i>mea culpa</i>	VBD	Verb, past tense	<i>ate</i>
IN	Preposition/sub-conj	<i>of, in, by</i>	VBG	Verb, gerund	<i>eating</i>
JJ	Adjective	<i>yellow</i>	VBN	Verb, past participle	<i>eaten</i>
JJR	Adj., comparative	<i>bigger</i>	VBP	Verb, non-3sg pres	<i>eat</i>
JJS	Adj., superlative	<i>wildest</i>	VBZ	Verb, 3sg pres	<i>eats</i>
LS	List item marker	<i>1, 2, One</i>	WDT	Wh-determiner	<i>which, that</i>
MD	Modal	<i>can, should</i>	WP	Wh-pronoun	<i>what, who</i>
NN	Noun, sing. or mass	<i>llama</i>	WP\$	Possessive wh-	<i>whose</i>
NNS	Noun, plural	<i>llamas</i>	WRB	Wh-adverb	<i>how, where</i>
NNP	Proper noun, singular	<i>IBM</i>	\$	Dollar sign	\$
NNPS	Proper noun, plural	<i>Carolinas</i>	#	Pound sign	#
PDT	Predeterminer	<i>all, both</i>	"	Left quote	(‘ or “)
POS	Possessive ending	<i>'s</i>	"	Right quote	(’ or ”)
PRP	Personal pronoun	<i>I, you, he</i>	(Left parenthesis	([, { , <)
PRP\$	Possessive pronoun	<i>your, one's</i>)	Right parenthesis	(] ,) , } , >)
RB	Adverb	<i>quickly, never</i>	,	Comma	,
RBR	Adverb, comparative	<i>faster</i>	.	Sentence-final punc	(. ! ?)
RBS	Adverb, superlative	<i>fastest</i>	:	Mid-sentence punc	(: ; ... - -)
RP	Particle	<i>up, off</i>			

Word classes

? What word class are the words in bold?

Jabberwocky

'Twas brillig, and the **slithy** toves
Did **gyre** and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the **borogoves**,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Legende vom Schebberroch

's war britzlich, und der **schlinke** Totz
Zerschirrt' und drilberte 's Geweech;
Ganz jimmrig war's dem **Borgoglotz**,
Und die traue Schratte schreech.



Word classes

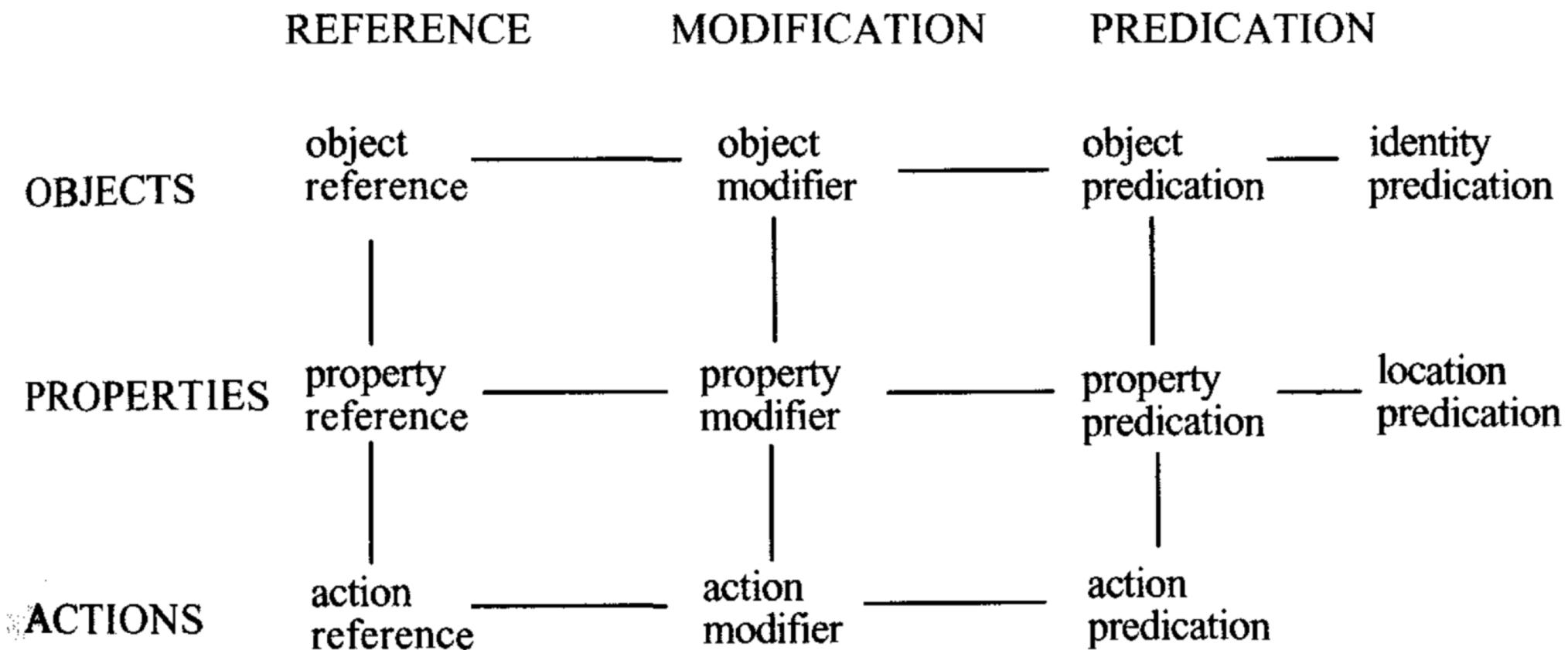


Figure 6.5 *Conceptual space for parts of speech*

Word classes

Verbs

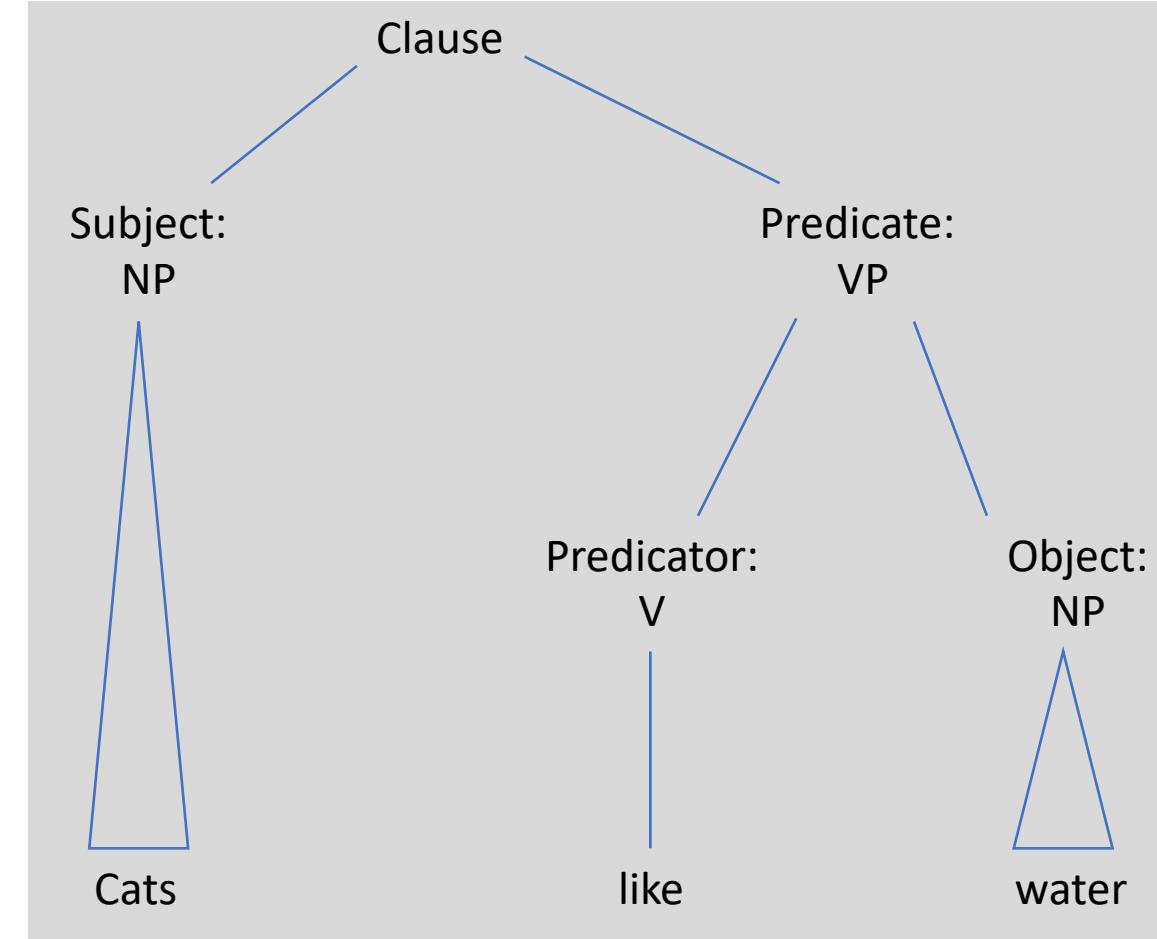
major function: predicate

Clause: grammatical constituent that contains a subject and a predicate, one level down from sentence

Predicate: expresses an event/action/process/situation/state...

Subject: ... that is initiated/experienced by somebody or something.

Heads & dependents



"Cats like water"

Word classes

Verbs

verb classes

intransitive verbs require a single participant (*walk, smile, hesitate, ask*)

transitive verbs require two participants (*break, sell, criticize, take*)

ditransitive verbs require three participants (*give, lend, I*)

Many verbs in English are **ambitransitive**; i.e. they can be used with different numbers of participants (*cook (1-2), feed (2-3), ask (1-2), bake (1-2-3), read (1-2-3)*)

Word classes

Verbs

Inflectional categories
of verbs

Agreement: the marking of
properties of noun phrase
arguments on the verb, most
commonly person, number,
and gender

On nouns, pronouns	On verbs	On adjectives, demonstratives, relative pronouns, adpositions
number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)	number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)	number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)
case (NOMINATIVE, ACCUSATIVE,...)	person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)	case (NOMINATIVE, ACCUSATIVE,...)
gender (MASCULINE, FEMININE,...)	tense (PRESENT, FUTURE, PAST, ...)	gender (MASCULINE, FEMININE,...)
person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)	aspect (PERFECTIVE, IMPERFECTIVE, HABITUAL, ...)	person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)
	mood (INDICATIVE, SUBJUNCTIVE, IMPERATIVE,...)	

Table 5.1 Common inflectional features and values

(Haspelmath & Sims 2010: p. 82)

Word classes

Nouns

semantic roles (aka thematic / theta roles), determined by the verb:

Lilly wrote a letter to John.

AGENT THEME RECIPIENT

Jenny broke the window with a bat.

AGENT PATIENT INSTRUMENT

The window broke.

PATIENT

Homework frightens Linus

STIMULUS EXPERIENCER

Linus hates broccoli

EXPERIENCER STIMULUS

Word classes

Nouns

syntactic roles: **subject** and **(direct) object**

Test 1: normal **position** in front of the verb; test with asking a question

Johnny, he really likes a lot > Does he really like Johnny?

Test 2: **subject-verb agreement:**

The principal was annoying

**The principals was annoying*

**The principal were annoying*

Test 3: **case marking:**

She likes rollerskating

*Her likes rollerskating

They saw a suspicious character in the building

*Them saw a suspicious character in the building

Word classes

Nouns – subject

? Identify the subject in each of the examples below (ignoring the subordinate clause in [4]). Present the reasoning that tells you it is the subject. Use the syntactic tests that are appropriate, and explain why the other tests are not appropriate. ?

1. *Tomorrow Pat will be back from skiing.*
2. *Is today some kind of holiday?*
3. *Down the road ran the crazy dog.*
4. *It isn 't the program that's at fault.*
5. *Dan got bitten on the neck by a bat.*

Word classes

Nouns

syntactic roles: **subject** and **(direct) object**

One and only test: normal **position** after the verb

David really likes Johnny

The policemen arrested the politician

The journalist continued the investigation into the alleged unsuitability of Microsoft Teams for academic teaching purposes

direct vs. indirect object

Sue gave Max the photo

Subject Indirect Object Direct Object

Eric bought his kids some shoes

Tallerman (2014: 49-51)

¹⁸
Huddleston & Pullum (2005: 71)

Word classes

Nouns

Inflectional categories
of nouns

On nouns, pronouns	On verbs	On adjectives, demonstratives, relative pronouns, adpositions
number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)	number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)	number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)
case (NOMINATIVE, ACCUSATIVE,...)	person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)	case (NOMINATIVE, ACCUSATIVE,...)
gender (MASCULINE, FEMININE,...)	tense (PRESENT, FUTURE, PAST, ...)	gender (MASCULINE, FEMININE,...)
person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)	aspect (PERFECTIVE, IMPERFECTIVE, HABITUAL, ...)	person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)
possession alienable vs. inalienable		
definiteness	mood (INDICATIVE, SUBJUNCTIVE, IMPERATIVE,...)	

Table 5.1 Common inflectional features and values

(Haspelmath & Sims 2010: p. 82)

Word classes

Adjectives

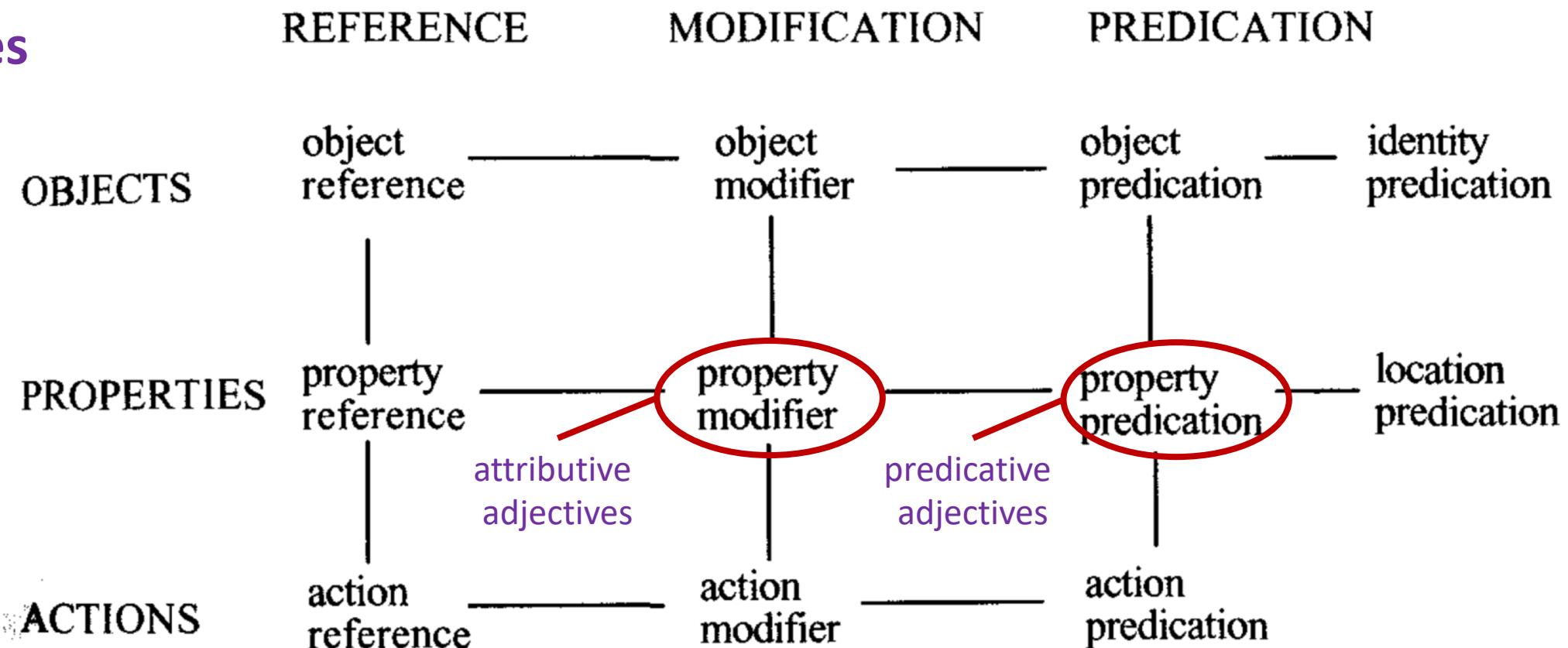


Figure 6.5 *Conceptual space for parts of speech*

Word classes

Adjectives: attributive function

Yukaghir (Maslova 2003)

Met-in [er-ce n'er-ek]
I-DAT bad-ATTR clothes-PRED
'They gave me bad clothes'

kej-?ile
give-3PL:of

the adjective precedes the noun

Tukang Besi (Donohue 1999)

ku-hoto [wunua to'oge]
1SG-have house big
'I have a big house'

the adjective follows the noun

Word classes

Adjectives: predicative function

Stassen (1997) introduces the terms “verby” and “nouny” encoding, indicating the choice of adjectives to conform either to the verbal or to the nominal strategy. In example (1) and (2) both strategies are illustrated:

Verby: Tigak (Wetzer 1996)

- | | | | |
|--------|-------------------------|----|------------------------|
| (1) a. | <i>Tang iai ga lavu</i> | b. | <i>Na Gamsa ga ima</i> |
| | the tree 3SG.PAST big | | the G. 3SG.PAST come |
| | ‘The tree was big’ | | ‘Gamsa came’ |

Nouny: Dutch

- | | | | |
|--------|-------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| (2) a. | <i>De man was mooi</i> | b. | <i>De man was leraar</i> |
| | the man was beautiful | | the man was teacher |
| | ‘The man was beautiful’ | | ‘The man was a teacher’ |

Word classes

Adjectives

Inflectional categories of adjectives

Agreement: the marking of properties of noun phrase arguments on other words such as adjectives, most commonly person, number, and gender

On nouns, pronouns	On verbs	On adjectives, demonstratives, relative pronouns, adpositions
number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)	number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)	number (SINGULAR, PLURAL,...)
case (NOMINATIVE, ACCUSATIVE,...)	person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)	case (NOMINATIVE, ACCUSATIVE,...)
gender (MASCULINE, FEMININE,...)	tense (PRESENT, FUTURE, PAST, ...)	gender (MASCULINE, FEMININE,...)
person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)	aspect (PERFECTIVE, IMPERFECTIVE, HABITUAL, ...)	person (1ST, 2ND, 3RD)
	mood (INDICATIVE, SUBJUNCTIVE, IMPERATIVE,...)	comparison (COMPARATIVE, SUPERLATIVE) <i>tall, taller, tallest</i>

Table 5.1 Common inflectional features and values

(Haspelmath & Sims 2010: p. 82)

R. M. Dixon

WHERE HAVE ALL THE ADJECTIVES GONE?

Dixon (1982),
Where have all the
adjectives gone?

Baker (2003), Lexical categories: Verbs, nouns and adjectives

4.6 Are adjectives universal?

Finally, now that we have an idea of what it is to be an adjective and what the grammatical consequences of being an adjective are, we can consider whether all languages have essentially the same category of adjectives or not.

Ever since Dixon (1982), adjectives have been widely held to be the most varied and least universal of the lexical categories, the locus of significant crosslinguistic differences (see also Schachter [1985], Hengeveld [1992], Bhat [1994]). Functional linguists in particular often see a continuum of possible lexical semantic meanings, with nouns at one end of the continuum and verbs at the other. Particular languages then divide this continuum into dis-

Word classes

Adverbs ... and their relationship to adjectives.

Maggie was never happy/*unhappily

The happy/*happily child sang a song at the top of his voice

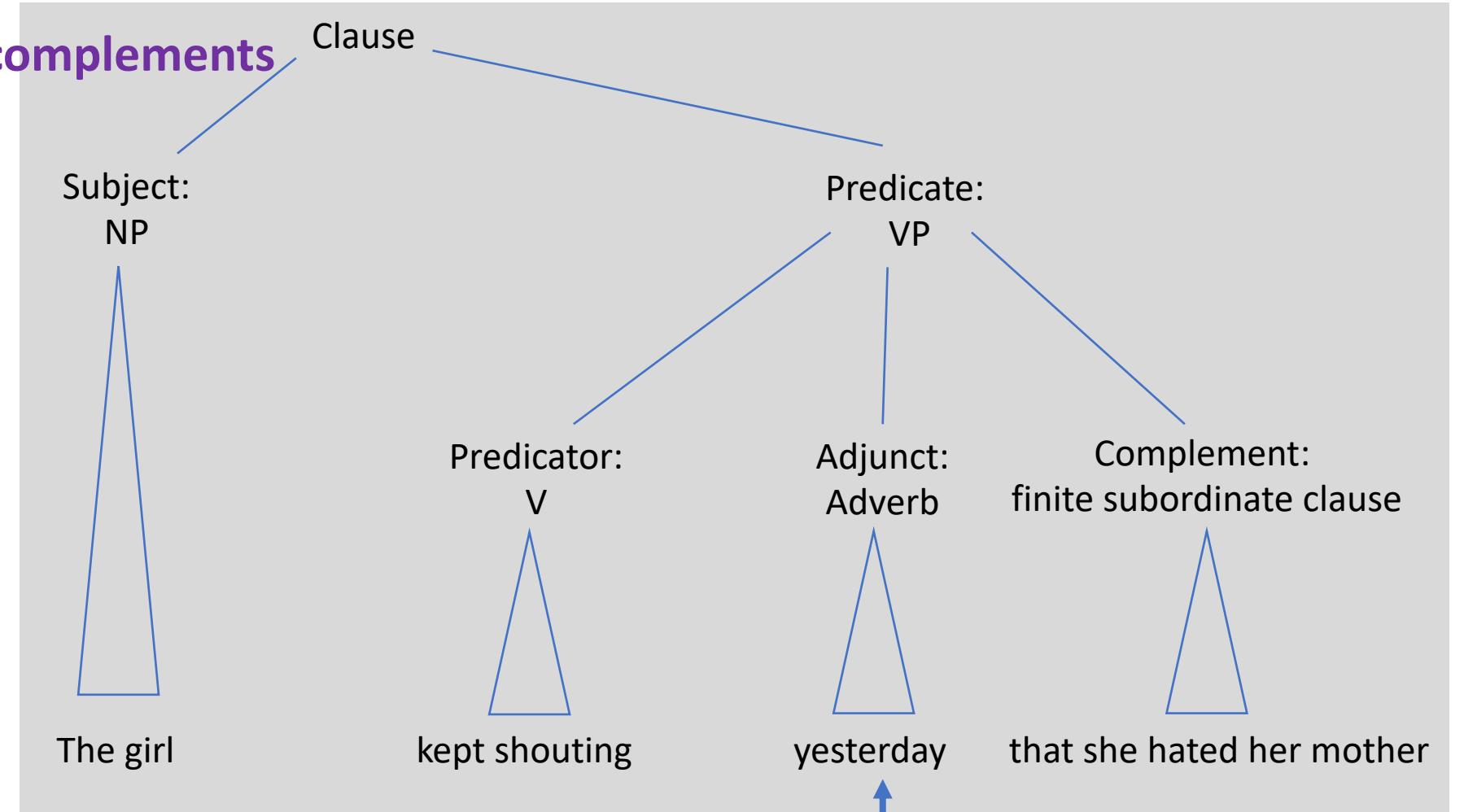
While hanging up the laundry, Georg hummed happily/*happy

Subclasses of the same word class?

- take the same intensifiers (*very, quite, often*, etc.)
- can both occur in the *as ____ as* comparative construction
- comparative suffixes *-er, -est* occur on (a subset of) both

Adverbs vs. adjuncts vs. complements

Complement:
‘completes’ the verb,
objects are complements
but so can be entire
clauses



Adjunct: optional
modifying phrases at the
level of the predicate or
clause

‘The girl kept shouting yesterday that she hated her mother’
...all the time, the whole day, at the top of her voice, angrily, etc. etc.

Huddleston & Pullum (2005: 65)
Tallerman (2014: 89ff)

Word classes

Adpositions (Tallerman's prepositions): mark locative and temporal information as well as marking grammatical functions ("grammaticized uses")

space & time

We left before the meeting

I worked all throughout college

The chair is beside the table

Let's work towards a conclusion

The Pope walked to the church

grammaticized

The book was written by Alex

The children of the sun

I transferred 100\$ to my inlaws

Their request for more was ignored

Are you keen on the idea?

Word classes

Adpositions (Tallerman's prepositions)

1. take certain modifiers: *straight, right, well, just, (bang)*.
 - a. *She pushed the box well/right/straight/just under the bed.*
 - b. *Class today went right over my head.*
2. INCLUDING intransitive adpositions:
 - a. *She went up to her right/straight/just afterwards.*
 - b. *She works right/just nearby.*
 - c. *Your luggage is stored right/straight/just overhead.*
 - d. *Get straight/right inside!*
3. INCLUDING particles:
 - a. *Put that well/straight/right away!*
 - b. *John picked the telephone straight up.*

CHAPTER 9

Adpositions as a non-universal category

Scott DeLancey

University of Oregon

A basic empirical fact about language is that morphemes can be sorted into categories according to their syntactic behavior. There are two long-standing problems in the study of lexical categories: how they are to be defined, and whether there is some set of categories which occur in all languages. Recent work on the problem of categories shows that these are essentially the same problem, since the universality or otherwise of major categories like Noun, Verb, and Adjective depends very much on how they are defined: functionally-defined categories can plausibly be argued to be universal, while reliance on purely distributional definitions makes it much more difficult to argue for the universality of categories like Adjective and Adverb. In this chapter I will argue that there is no useful sense in which the category of Adposition can be considered a linguistic universal, although it is universally available, in that it is the most natural outcome of the grammaticalization of certain types of construction (verb phrases and genitive constructions) which occur in any language.

Word classes

Velupillai (2012): Huddleston & Pullum (2005):

nouns	nouns
verbs	verbs
adjectives	adjectives
adverbs	adverbs
pronouns	determinatives
adpositions	prepositions
numerals	coordinators
articles	subordinators
auxiliaries	interjections
conjunctions	
interjections	

Tag	Description	Example	Tag	Description	Example
CC	Coordin. Conjunction	<i>and, but, or</i>	SYM	Symbol	+%, &
CD	Cardinal number	<i>one, two, three</i>	TO	“to”	<i>to</i>
DT	Determiner	<i>a, the</i>	UH	Interjection	<i>ah, oops</i>
EX	Existential ‘there’	<i>there</i>	VB	Verb, base form	<i>eat</i>
FW	Foreign word	<i>mea culpa</i>	VBD	Verb, past tense	<i>ate</i>
IN	Preposition/sub-conj	<i>of, in, by</i>	VBG	Verb, gerund	<i>eating</i>
JJ	Adjective	<i>yellow</i>	VBN	Verb, past participle	<i>eaten</i>
JJR	Adj., comparative	<i>bigger</i>	VBP	Verb, non-3sg pres	<i>eat</i>
JJS	Adj., superlative	<i>wildest</i>	VBZ	Verb, 3sg pres	<i>eats</i>
LS	List item marker	<i>1, 2, One</i>	WDT	Wh-determiner	<i>which, that</i>
MD	Modal	<i>can, should</i>	WP	Wh-pronoun	<i>what, who</i>
NN	Noun, sing. or mass	<i>llama</i>	WP\$	Possessive wh-	<i>whose</i>
NNS	Noun, plural	<i>llamas</i>	WRB	Wh-adverb	<i>how, where</i>
NNP	Proper noun, singular	<i>IBM</i>	\$	Dollar sign	\$
NNPS	Proper noun, plural	<i>Carolinas</i>	#	Pound sign	#
PDT	Predeterminer	<i>all, both</i>	“	Left quote	(‘ or “)
POS	Possessive ending	<i>'s</i>	”	Right quote	(’ or ”)
PRP	Personal pronoun	<i>I, you, he</i>	(Left parenthesis	([, { , <)
PRP\$	Possessive pronoun	<i>your, one's</i>)	Right parenthesis	(] ,) , } , >)
RB	Adverb	<i>quickly, never</i>	,	Comma	,
RBR	Adverb, comparative	<i>faster</i>	.	Sentence-final punc	(. ! ?)
RBS	Adverb, superlative	<i>fastest</i>	:	Mid-sentence punc	(: ; ... - -)
RP	Particle	<i>up, off</i>			

Tallerman (2014): ?

Word classes

Velupillai (2012): Huddleston & Pullum (2005):

nouns	nouns
verbs	verbs
adjectives	adjectives
adverbs	adverbs
pronouns	determinatives

Tag	Description	Example	Tag	Description	Example
CC	Coordin. Conjunction	<i>and, but, or</i>	SYM	Symbol	+%, &
CD	Cardinal number	<i>one, two, three</i>	TO	"to"	<i>to</i>
DT	Determiner	<i>a, the</i>	UH	Interjection	<i>ah, oops</i>
EX	Existential 'there'	<i>there</i>	VB	Verb, base form	<i>eat</i>
FW	Foreign word	<i>mea culpa</i>	VBD	Verb, past tense	<i>ate</i>
IN	Preposition/sub-conj	<i>of, in, by</i>	VBG	Verb, gerund	<i>eating</i>
JJ	Adjective	<i>yellow</i>	VBN	Verb, past participle	<i>eaten</i>
JJR	Adj., comparative	<i>bigger</i>	VBP	Verb, non-3sg pres	<i>eat</i>
JJS	Adj., superlative	<i>wildest</i>	VBZ	Verb, 3sg pres	<i>eats</i>
LS	List item marker	<i>1, 2, One</i>	WDT	Wh-determiner	<i>which, that</i>
MD	Modal	<i>can, should</i>	WP	Wh-pronoun	<i>what, who</i>
NN	Noun, sing. or mass	<i>llama</i>	WP\$	Possessive wh-	<i>whose</i>
NNS	Noun, plural	<i>llamas</i>	WRB	Wh-adverb	<i>how, where</i>
NNP	Proper noun, singular	<i>IBM</i>	\$	Dollar sign	\$

Now it has often been assumed that, across all languages, the major classes – those that are essentially unlimited in their membership – will always be the same “big four”: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. But we now know that this is untenable when we consider the cross-linguistic evidence. Many languages lack an open adverb class (Hengeveld 1992), making do with other forms of modification. There are also languages like Lao with no adjective class, encoding property concepts as a sub-sub-type of verbs (Enfield 2004).

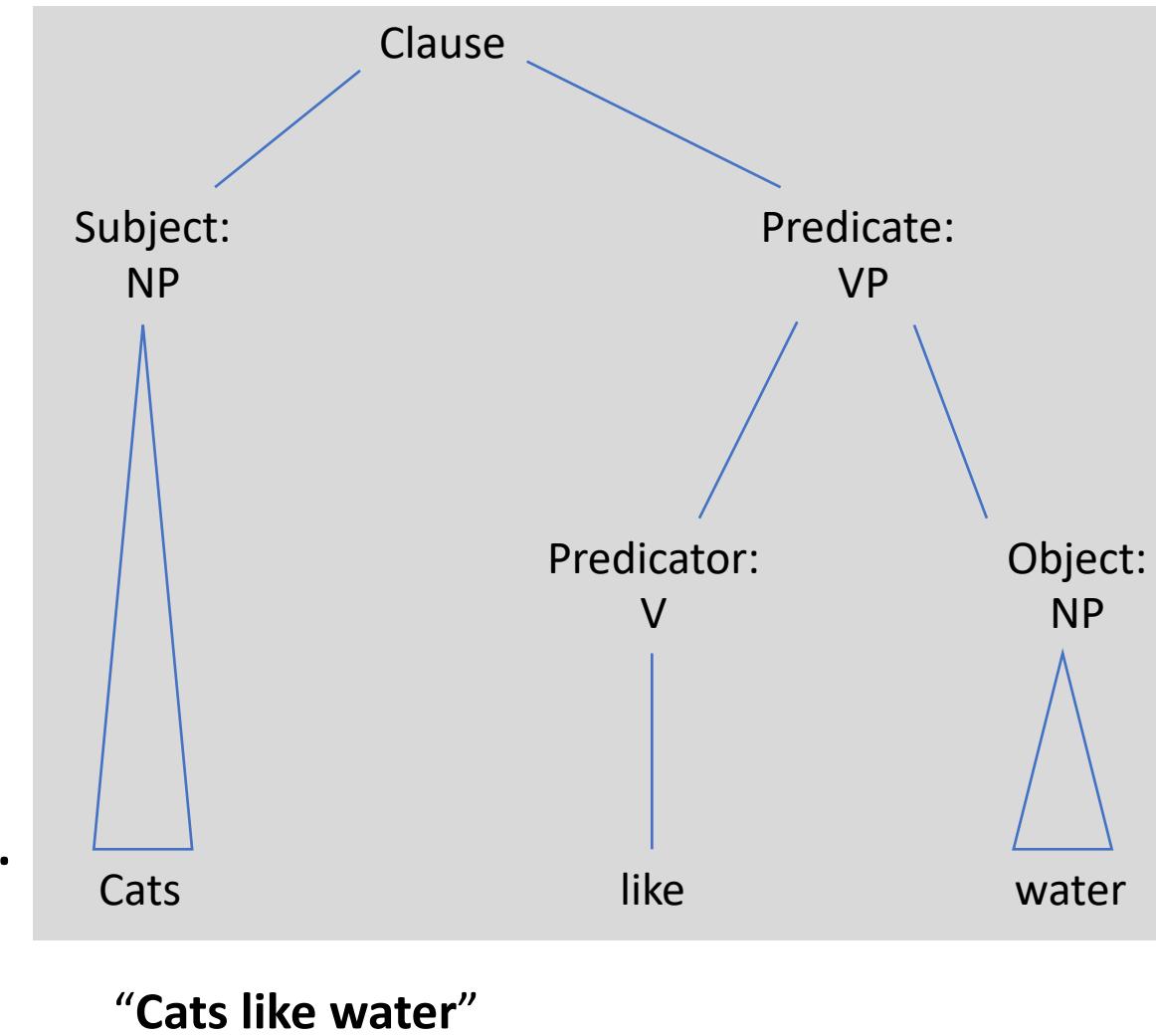
A feeling for what a language without a noun-verb distinction is like comes from Straits Salish. Here, on the analysis by Jelinek (1995), all major-class lexical items simply function as predicates, of the type “run,” “be_big,” or “be_a_man.” They then slot into various clausal roles, such as argument (“the one such that he runs”), predicate (“run[s]”), and modifier (“the running [one]”), according to the syntactic slots they are placed in. The single open syntactic class of predicate includes words for events, entities, and qualities. When used

Simple clauses

Clause: grammatical constituent that contains a subject and a predicate (exactly one predicate), one level down from sentence

Predicate: expresses an event/action/process/situation/state...

Subject: ... that is initiated/experienced by somebody or something.



Types of phrases

see Tallerman (2014: 120-124) on
the complements that head words
can take

NP: noun phrase: a phrase headed by a noun

*the island, my mother's golf ball, the incredible Mr Whiskers, the boy who hated school, a pink hairband,
My father is [a great teacher], her decision to stay onboard*

VP: verb phrase: a phrase headed by a verb

*Lilly [detests her cousin], The bomb [blew her leg off], Lucy [put the mushrooms into her basket], This
mushroom [smells of chicken]*

AP: adjective phrase: a phrase headed by an adjective

*the [incredibly cross] president, the window [that was opaque], Martin is [wonderful], Her singing was
[so beautiful]*

PP: preposition phrase: a phrase headed by a preposition

*Marcel stood guard [by the door], Trump is keen [on golf], the day [before yesterday], Bowie sings
[about the man [on the moon]], the blanket [with a hole in it]*

AdvP: adverb phrase: a phrase headed by an adverb

*We [quite often] have tea together, I found his advice [very useful], The shoes are [almost completely]
watertight, He screamed [completely uncontrollably] when he found out about the kidnap, etc.*

CP: complementizer phrase: a phrase headed by a complementizer (*that, whether, if, for, Ø*)

*You never told me [that you are gay], Birgit did not know [whether to do the assignment or not], [For
Alice to play the tuba] would be strange, Chris wondered [if he should write the recommendation letter],
The supporters hoped [Ø their team would win]*

Simple clauses

independent clause ~ finite ~ auxiliaries vs. main verbs

*Larry waited/*waiting*

*My sister brings/*to bring my nephew over*

...

*Larry waited/**is** waiting*

AUXILIARY

*My sister brings/**will** bring my nephew over*

Auxiliaries are used to convey tense, aspect, mood, voice, or the polarity of the verb with which they are associated.

Simple clauses - summary

- A normal simple sentence in English has one (and only one) finite element, which may be an auxiliary or a main verb.
- The finite element always occurs first in the sequence of auxiliaries/verbs.
- All other auxiliary and verbal elements in the clause are therefore non-finite.
- The main verb always follows any sequence of auxiliaries.
 - *Jo [might have been enjoying] the play, I [couldn't say].*
- English have and be occur both as main verbs and as auxiliaries.
 - *Jo is a teacher; Jo has a car.*
- Auxiliary *have* + past participle of verb gives the perfect aspect, e.g. *has written, has played*.
- Auxiliary *be* + -ing form of verb gives the progressive aspect, e.g. *is writing, is playing*.

Simple clauses

non-finite verbs

- [12]
- i If the verb is a primary form, the clause is finite.
 - ii If the verb is a gerund-participle or a past participle, the clause is non-finite.
 - iii If the verb is a plain form, the clause may be finite or non-finite; specifically:
 - a. Imperative and subjunctive clauses are finite.
 - b. Infinitival clauses are non-finite.

That gives us a partial fit between finiteness and verb inflection that looks like this:

[13]

primary forms: preterite walked
3rd SG PRS walks
plain present walk

VERB-FORM	CONSTRUCTION	EXAMPLE	FINITENESS
i PRIMARY FORMS		<i>She <u>brings</u> her own food.</i>	
ii	IMPERATIVE:	<i><u>Bring</u> your own food.</i>	FINITE
iii PLAIN FORM	SUBJUNCTIVE:	<i>We insist [that she <u>bring</u> her own food].</i>	
iv	INFINITIVAL:	<i>It's rare [for her to <u>bring</u> her own food].</i>	
v GERUND-PARTICIPLE		<i>She regrets [<u>bringing</u> her own food].</i>	NON-FINITE
vi PAST PARTICIPLE		<i>This is the food [<u>brought</u> by my sister].</i>	

Recognizing non-finite verbs in English

- Infinitives:
 - Distributional: after modal auxiliaries (*Lee can _; Sally must _*);
 - Distributional: after the infinitival marker *to* (*Lisa wants to work*);
 - Morphosyntactical: do not allow finite forms (*Lisa wants to *works*);
- Participles:
 - Morphosyntactical: *-ing* participle; *-ing* suffix.
 - Distributional: *-ing* participle; after finite *be* (*Parker was drinking all night*);
 - Also appears on its own; not all words ending in *-ing* are participles;
- Morphosyntactical: past participle; *-ed/-e)n* suffix
- Distributional: past participle; after finite *have* (*Parker had drunken all night*);

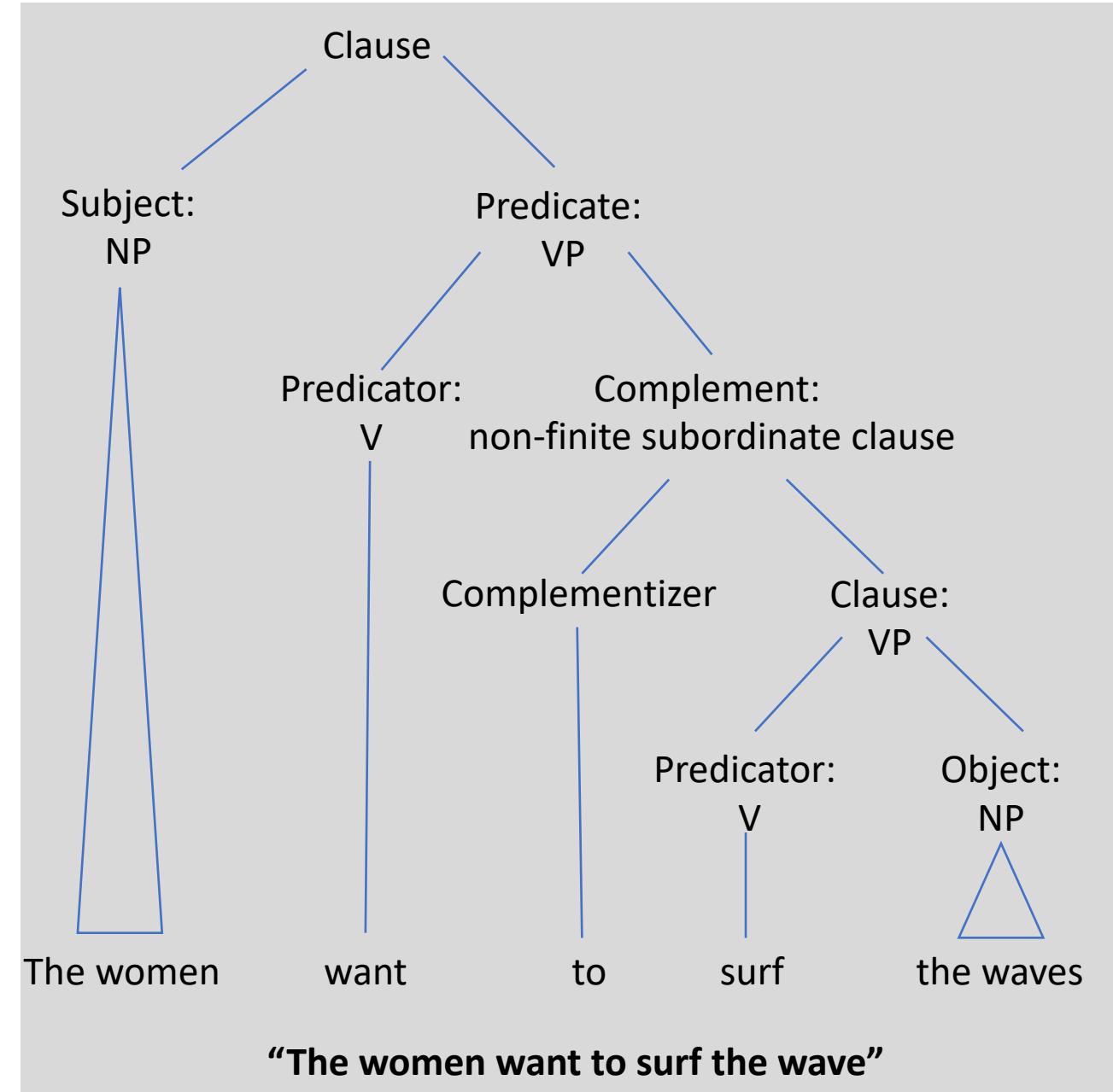
Complex clauses

subordinate clauses:

- can be non-finite or finite
- often introduced by complementizers (*that, whether, if*)
- sometimes have no overt subject

matrix clause: the entire sentence, headed by the finite VP;
subordinate clause is **embedded** in the matrix clause.

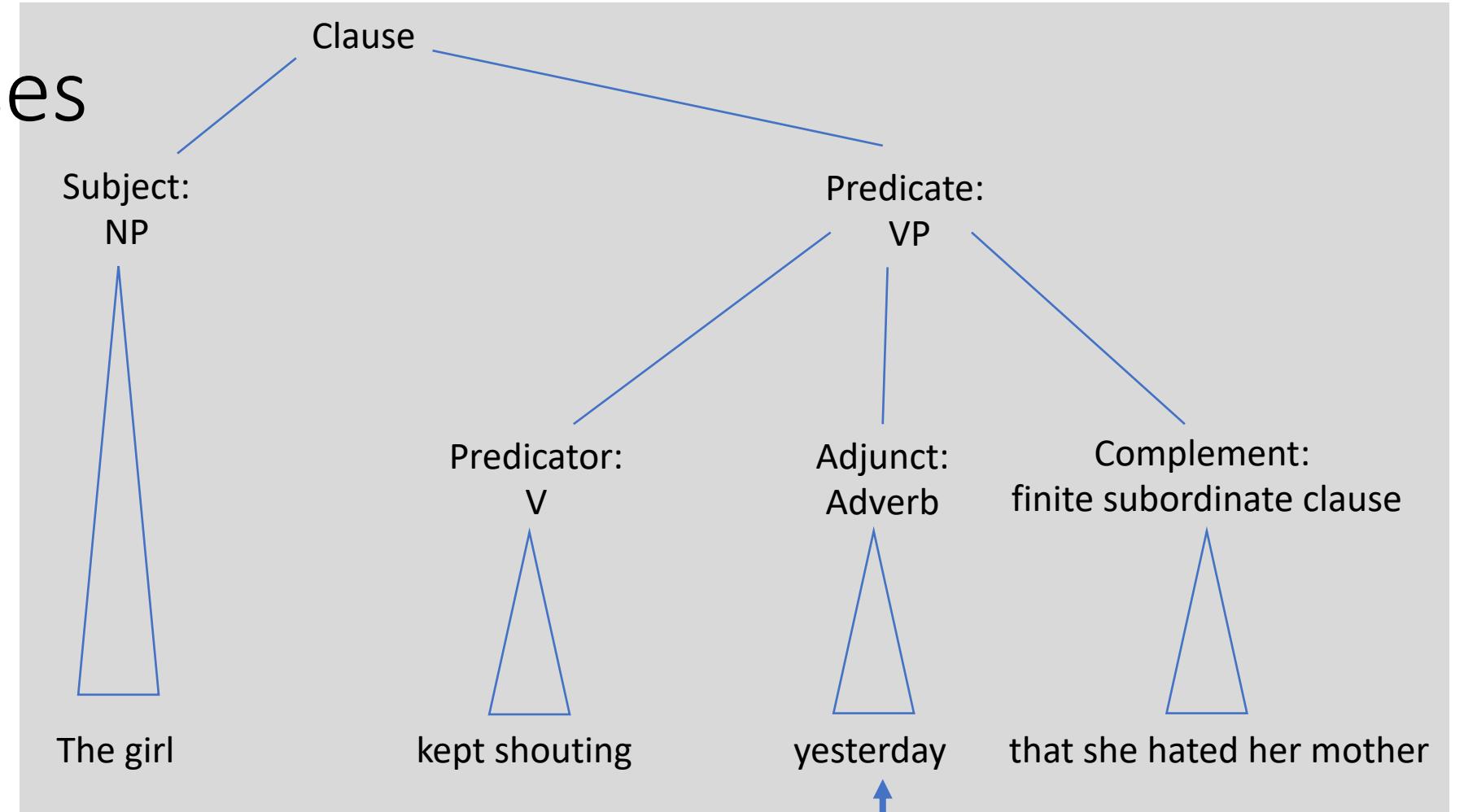
root clause: the verb in the highest matrix clause



Complex clauses

Complement:

'completes' the verb,
objects are complements
but so can be entire
clauses



Adjunct: optional
modifying phrases at the
level of the predicate or
clause

'The girl kept shouting yesterday that she hated her mother'
...all the time, the whole day, at the top of her voice, angrily, etc. etc.

Huddleston & Pullum (2005: 65)
Tallerman (2014: 89ff)

Complex clauses - identification

1. Focus on verbs and VPs: one main verb = one clause;
2. Locate any complementizers (*while, since, because, although, if, when, so that, as such, before, after, until, as long as, as soon as, by the time that, once, inasmuch as, ...*);
3. Main clauses (Tallerman's root clauses) may have special properties, such word orders; in English:
 - a. Only main clauses in English have subject/auxiliary inversion;
 - b. Only root clauses in English can have tag questions;
4. Distinguish between complements and adjuncts
 - a. complements are closer to the head positionally (*Lisa wants Robin to read the book thoroughly / *Lisa wants thoroughly Robin to read the book*);
 - b. adjuncts are „stackable“ and „replaceable“ (*Lisa wants Robin to read the book [on the shelf] [with the red cover] [thoroughly/with a passion/ regardless/tomorrow/last week]*.)

Review

? Classify the underlined clauses below as finite or non-finite. ?

1. Everyone arrested at the demonstration has now been released.
2. It is essential that he complete the course.
3. I think they may not have read the instructions.
4. Having been through a similar experience myself, I sympathise.
5. I'd advise you not to take it too seriously.
6. Hurry up, or we'll be late.

Simple clauses

non-finite verbs

- [12]
- i If the verb is a primary form, the clause is finite.
 - ii If the verb is a gerund-participle or a past participle, the clause is non-finite.
 - iii If the verb is a plain form, the clause may be finite or non-finite; specifically:
 - a. Imperative and subjunctive clauses are finite.
 - b. Infinitival clauses are non-finite.

That gives us a partial fit between finiteness and verb inflection that looks like this:

[13]

primary forms:
preterite walked
3rd SG PRS walks
plain present walk

VERB-FORM	CONSTRUCTION	EXAMPLE	FINITENESS
i PRIMARY FORMS		<i>She <u>brings</u> her own food.</i>	
ii		<i><u>Bring</u> your own food.</i>	FINITE
iii PLAIN FORM	{ IMPERATIVE: SUBJUNCTIVE: INFINITIVAL:	<i>We insist [that she <u>bring</u> her own food].</i>	
iv		<i>It's rare [for her to <u>bring</u> her own food].</i>	
v GERUND-PARTICIPLE		<i>She regrets [<u>bringing</u> her own food].</i>	NON-FINITE
vi PAST PARTICIPLE		<i>This is the food [<u>brought</u> by my sister].</i>	

Overview: Morphology and syntax

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments
25.10.23	Introduction		
30.10.23	Morphology I: Word formation	Haspelmath & Sims (2010) Chapter 1&2&3	
02.11.23	Morphology II: Inflection & Derivation; Hierarchical structure	Haspelmath & Sims (2010) Chapter 5 & 7 (if you have time, read Chapter 6 too)	Morphology assignment handed out
06.11.23	Syntax I: Word classes	Tallerman (2014) Chapter 1&2&3	
08.11.23	Syntax II: Heads, dependents, and beyond	Tallerman (2014) Chapter 4&5	Syntax assignment handed out Morphology assignment due
13.11.23	Syntax III: Grammatical relations	Tallerman (2014) Chapter 6	
15.11.23	Syntax IV: tba	tba	Syntax assignment due