BBI3427
Grammar for Communicative Purposes

Semester 1, 2018/2019

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Introduction

What is grammar?

• Study on parts of speech.
• A study about forms in language.
• Grammar and meaning is closely connected.

• To obtain meaning in the use of language, the study of grammar could extend to include meaning at different levels - word, phrasal and clausal levels.

• We shall examine these basic concepts and extend to other grammatical concepts in the building up the foundation of knowing and using grammar in English in meaningful contexts.
• Before going into the different chapters of the text, there are a number of basic concepts that must be firmly grounded as the foundation of grammatical knowledge.

• You are to learn it well before you proceed to the more advanced aspects of grammatical knowledge and its use.
• You may call them the **principles** upon which further ideas on grammar are developed.

• These fundamental principles that would help you to **link form and meaning**.

• The first lecture involves the recognition of word classes and its relationship to grammatical units.
LEXICAL PARTS OF SPEECH

• Four word classes in English that can describe many of the words used in the English language.

• They are: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs which form the lexical parts of speech.
Nouns refer to names of a material or tangible object or phenomenon—something recognizable through the senses. A noun (e.g. courage, freedom) also names an idea, event, quality, or concept.

Nouns (N) normally are necessary to begin a sentence. They can also be found after a verb or a preposition. Pronouns (Pro) replace nouns but they are considered as function words.

My friend studies at Harvard University.

John reads books on Chinese philosophy.
Common Nouns and Proper Nouns

• Nouns can be divided further into common nouns and proper nouns. e.g. table, tree, flower, cave, clothes, jar, coin, hill, food, sunset.

• Proper nouns are also names of things and they include names of people, buildings, countries, places, etc.

• Proper nouns are characterised by capital letters in the written script, e.g. Sharon, Equine Park, The United States of America, Wall Street, Twin Towers.
Count Nouns and Noncount Nouns

Count nouns can be counted

**Examples:**

- one pen  two pens
- one goat  five goats
- a pair of trousers  two pairs of trousers
- a bar of soap  six bars of soap
Noncount nouns refer to a mass or an abstract notion. They cannot be counted and are usually used in the singular form.

Examples:

flour
sand
wealth
oil
water
intelligence
Verbs

Verbs refer to two main classes of verbs

1. **Lexical verbs** (also known as *main verbs* or *full verbs*) that is, verbs that are not dependent on other verbs and they give meaning on its own.
   
e.g. rain, eat, dry, beat.

2. **Auxiliary verbs** (also know as a *helping verbs*) determine the **mood** or **tense** of another verb in a phrase e.g. will, should

In this unit, we are concerned only with the **lexical verb**.
Lexical Verbs

• Verbs play a very central role in the construction of sentences in English.

• There are many ways to describe the use of verbs. In this unit we are only concerned with the basic verb form that gives meaning.

• Sometimes it is also referred to as the main verb to distinguish it from other verbs that are used together with it.
Lexical verbs

• **Examples:**

• We **watched** the natives performing their dances.
• The computer **crashed** because of viruses.
• They are **counting** the money earned from the charity sale.
• The United Bank will be **donating** RM5000 for the landslide victims.
• He is **asking** too many questions.
Adjectives refer to words that modify a noun or a pronoun. They are also known as *modifiers*.

Under the lexical parts of speech, only the descriptive adjectives are explained in this unit.

Descriptive adjectives help us to describe nouns as in:

The *beautiful old* house on the hilltop belongs to my *rich* uncle.

The knife is *blunt* and the spoon is *rusty*. 
Adjectives are words that modify or tell us more about the nouns or pronouns that are used. They can be classified like this:

- Limiting adjectives
- Descriptive Adjectives
## Order of Descriptive adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limiting Adjective</th>
<th>Descriptive Adjectives</th>
<th>Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality, degree</td>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This, the, that</td>
<td>bright</td>
<td>little</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formation of adjectives

Adjectives may be formed from nouns.

Examples:

the *school* field                     a *drum*
major

an *ice cream* van                    the *ice box*

a *table* fan                         the *lady* manager
Formation of adjectives

Adjectives can also be formed from present and past participle verb forms.

Examples:

- a *ringing* tone
- the *dancing* ladies
- food
- the *talking* doll
- the *howling* wind
- the *stolen* goods
- the *cooked* food
- the *increased* fees
- a *torn* book
Placing of adjectives

Some adjectives can only be placed before the nouns as in:

the *first* turning  (correct) ✔️

* the turning is first  (incorrect) ❌

her *main* aim  (correct) ✔️

* her aim is main  (incorrect) ❌
Placing of adjectives

Some adjectives can only be placed after the noun as in:

The child is *awake* (correct) ✔

*The awake child* (incorrect) ✗

Her friend is *afraid* (correct) ✔

*Her afraid friend* (incorrect) ✗
Adverbs refer to words that are primarily used to modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. Adverbs can also modify prepositional phrases, subordinate clauses, and complete sentences. They are also known as modifiers.

- e.g. slowly, moderately, late.
Adverbs

Adverbs can be used as:

1. **Adverb of time to describe time**

Examples:
The train would be arriving *soon*.
He passed up his book *immediately*.
2. **Adverb of place to describe “where”**

Examples:
- He lives *near* the school.
- They walk *down* the road.

3. **Adverb of degree to describe the extent of an action**

Examples:
- He *absolutely* refused to change places with his friend.
- His parents are *quite* sure that he needs a hair-cut.
4. Adverb of manner to describe how something was carried out

Examples:

He eats his dinner slowly.
He read the notice carefully.

5. Adverb of frequency to describe “how often”

Examples:

Sometimes he plays badminton in the town hall.
He goes swimming occasionally.
6. Adverb of sequence to describe the order some thing occurs

Examples:

First, wash the meat before seasoning.  
Finally, heat up the oil for frying.
Formation of adverbs

Most adverbs are formed from adjectives by adding an -ly.

Examples:

quick       quickly
happy       happily
glad        gladly
lazy        lazily
sweet       sweetly
Differences between Adverbs and Adjectives

Some words that end with an -ly are adjectives.

Examples:

friendly girl  lonely house
lovely present  ugly duckling
sisterly act  silly song
lively concert  deadly poison
Some adverbs have the same form as the adjectives.

Study the examples below and see the difference in usage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>Adverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| He gets *daily* wages.  
daily. | He is paid |
| His *late* arrival is expected  
late. | He arrived |
| He is a *fast* player.  
fast. | He plays |
| I was *early*. | I came *early*. |
| Getting an “A” is *hard* work.  
to get an “A”. | She works *hard* |
Constructions Of Comparison

When we compare, we can use the comparative or superlative adjectives or adverbs.

We use the comparative when we want to compare one thing, person or action with another thing, person or action.

We use the superlative when we want to compare one thing, person, or action with that of whole group.
Forming the comparative and superlative adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>bigger</td>
<td>biggest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long</td>
<td>longer</td>
<td>longest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>older</td>
<td>oldest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above words have two syllables and end with a “y”. The “y” must be replaced with an “i” before adding an -er or est for the comparative and the superlative.
For a number of adjectives like the above, “more” and “most” are used before the words to form the comparative and superlative.
Comparative and superlative adverbs usually use “more” and “most” as in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beautifully</td>
<td>more beautifully</td>
<td>most beautifully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interestingly</td>
<td>more interestingly</td>
<td>most interestingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncomfortably</td>
<td>more uncomfortably</td>
<td>most uncomfortably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nervously</td>
<td>more nervously</td>
<td>most nervously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accurately</td>
<td>more accurately</td>
<td>most accurately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responsibly</td>
<td>more responsibly</td>
<td>most responsibly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Irregular Adverbs and Adjectives

There is a group of comparative adjective and adverbs which are considered irregular as they do not follow the usual rules in their formation.

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good/well</td>
<td>better</td>
<td>best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>far</td>
<td>farther/further</td>
<td>farthest/furthest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad/badly</td>
<td>worse</td>
<td>worst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>less</td>
<td>least</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
use of “as ……as” together with the positive adjective or adverb

1. When we compare two things or persons to show that they are the same, we use “as ……as” together with the positive adjective or adverb.

Examples:
She is as beautiful as her sister. (adjective)
She sings as beautifully as her sister. (adverb)
His composition is as interesting as Tim’s. (adjective)
He wrote as interestingly as Tim in the composition. (adverb)
Use of “than” together with the comparative adjective or adverb

2. To show that the compared things/persons are not the same.

Examples:

He looks *more nervous than John.*
(adjective)

He speaks *more nervously than John.*
(adverb)

Ka Hin is *older than* his cousin.
(adjective)

Ka Hin aged *much faster than* his cousin.
(adverb)
Use of “the” before the superlative adjective or adverb

Examples:

He has **the heaviest** bag among them.  
(adjective)

His school is **the farthest** from this area.  
(adverb)

He is **the quietest** boy in class.  
(adjective)

He talks **the loudest** in class.  
(adverb)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Classes</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Context of Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noun</td>
<td>table, kitten, girl, food</td>
<td>The <strong>food</strong> is on the <strong>table</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>books, children</td>
<td>The <strong>children</strong> found the kitten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Books <strong>are</strong> expensive these days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>buy, dance, laugh, build,</td>
<td>He <strong>bought</strong> some shirts yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eat</td>
<td>I <strong>laughed</strong> loudly at his joke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjective</td>
<td>rough, sweet, tired,</td>
<td>The sea is <strong>rough</strong> today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>handsome, kind</td>
<td>He is a <strong>kind</strong> person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverb</td>
<td>quickly, smoothly,</td>
<td>He walks <strong>quickly</strong> because it was raining.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>softly, quietly, widely</td>
<td>He <strong>reads</strong> widely for his project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How are lexical parts of speech used?

Example sentence:

*The man works in a pet shop every day.*

How are lexical parts of speech used?

In terms of the lexical units, the above can be broken down into four basic grammatical units to give sentential meaning. They are:

The man  works  in a pet shop  everyday

The units illustrate a separation of meaning that can correspond to the lexical parts of speech, which are ‘man’ – noun, ‘works’ – lexical verb, ‘pet shop’ – noun and ‘everyday’ – adverb.

The grammatical description of these parts of speech can be learnt quickly based on the recognition of these words in the context of sentences.

This knowledge is the stepping stone for other grammatical descriptions.
CONCLUSION

This unit has provided information that helps you to understand grammatical units and the lexical parts of speech.

Grammatical units give meaning through grammatical arrangements in terms of word order.

Lexical parts of speech are nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

Comparative constructions are an extension of the use of adjectives and adverbs.