TOPICS
- Overview
- Constituent structure
- Linear order and hierarchical order
- Constituents: Phrases and clauses
- Tree Diagrams
- Ambiguity
- Syntactic categories of phrases (NP, VP, PP, etc)
- Types of clauses
- Constructions

OVERVIEW: Grammar and Syntax
- GRAMMAR - The framework of a language (the whole structure of a language)
- It includes words, formation of words, arrangement of words, relationships between words, meaning of words, the sound system of the language, etc.
- Syntax and morphology – part of the grammar of a language
- WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BOOK OF GRAMMAR USAGE AND A BOOK OF SYNTAX?

OVERVIEW: Grammar and Syntax
- GRAMMAR USAGE (traditional grammar) – prescriptive (in addition to description), focuses on common mistakes, partial towards standard and written forms, aims to ‘teach’ correct usage
- SYNTAX – mainly descriptive (describes how speakers of a language know and use the rules of grammar), a study of patterned relations between the components of sentences, tries to put forward concepts to describe how words combine into phrases and sentences, processes of word arrangement/order, and relationships between words

OVERVIEW: Syntax
- Syntax - refers to the relationship between the grammatical components of language in use. It is the nature, quality or type of relationship between the components in any given statement
OVERVIEW: SYNTAX

The study of syntax:
- Starts with identifying concepts that will explain rules that govern word order
- Eg. my bag / bag my *
  The bag that was torn / That was torn the bag *
- Eg. He ran / He ran towards the kitchen
  He shot* / He shot towards the kitchen

How can the rules explaining word order be described? How do we even start to talk about the rules?

How can parts of a sentence be described?

ARRANGEMENT OF WORDS

How do we know that words must be arranged in a certain order in a sentence and not others?

e.g. The beautiful girl / *The girl beautiful / *Beautiful girl the

e.g. The girl who is beautiful / *The beautiful who is girl

e.g. The girl who was my childhood friend is beautiful / The girl is beautiful who was my childhood friend

phrases

- Words are arranged in units called phrases and phrases are arranged into units called clauses to form sentences.
- A phrase is a group of interrelated words. They function and move as a unit in the syntax of a sentence.
- Speakers of a language know the boundaries of phrases in the language.

clauses

- A clause is made up of phrases.
- Within a clause, we can talk about the relationship between the phrases in it.

Linear order of words

- The linear order of words is important. The syntactic category of each word can be identified.
  Eg. *The beautiful girl is my friend.
  det adj n copula-v pro n

However, the linear order does not capture effectively what speakers of a language know.
Linear order and hierarchical order

- The beautiful girl is my friend.

How does a speaker know that the words in the sentence can be broken up into meaningful groups?

Eg. (The [beautiful girl]) (is [my friend]). ✓

(The beautiful) ([girl] is) (my) (friend). X

Hierarchical organisation of words in sentences

- Words are not arranged individually in a linear fashion. They are grouped into meaningful units called constituents, and these constituents are arranged in particular orders in sentences.
- As these groups of words can occur within bigger groups of words, there is hierarchical structure to their arrangement.
- This is the constituent structure of words.
- Speakers of the language know the structure; they can 'read' into the words, the organisation of words into phrases and so on.
- As linguists, we try to discover this knowledge that is in the heads of speakers of the language and try to represent them overtly.

Representing the structure of phrases

The beautiful girl is my friend.

Simple tree diagram

Representing the structure of phrases

The beautiful girl is my friend.

Constituents

Representing the structure of phrases

The beautiful girl is my friend.

NOT Constituents

Ambiguity

- He talked to the people in the room.

The sentence can be interpreted in two different meanings.

What are the two possible meanings of the sentence?

The meaning changes as you group the words in different ways; the sentence has more than one possible constituent structure.
Ambiguity

Syntactic categories of phrases

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Ambiguity

Next lecture:
Syntactic categories of phrases (NP, VP, PP, etc)
Types of clauses
Tree Diagrams
Constructions

He talked to the people in the room.

He - NP (other examples: the bag, beautiful girl)
talked to the people in the room – VP
to the people in the room – PP
in the room – PP
happy about his marks -- AP
went to the market - VP