MAJOR SYNTAX: SENTENCE. SIMPLE SENTENCE

Lecture 2.

1. Definition.
2. Characteristics.
3. Sentence in *langue* and *parole*.
4. Classifications

Sentence definition

- the immediate integral unit of speech built up by words according to a definite syntactic pattern and distinguished by a contextually relevant communicative purpose.

- a portion of the flow of words of one speaker containing a complete thought.

Word vs. Sentence

- Nominative units

- Predicative

- Modal

- Word: objects and phenomena of reality
- Sentence: situation
- Sentence: reflects the connection between the nominal denotation of the event and objective reality, showing the time of the event
- Reality of the situation, attitude of the speaker

Predication and modality

- connection between the named objects and actual reality.
- Modality is a broader category, revealed not only in grammar, but in the lexical elements of language:
  - Modal verbs: *can, may, must…*
  - Particles and adverbs: *just, even …*
  - Modal words: *perhaps, unfortunately…*
- Predication = syntactic modality, expressed by the sentence.

Modality

- Objective: real / unreal situation

- Subjective: speaker's attitude towards the situation (action)

- Mood

- Modal verbs
- Modal words

What type of modality?

- England and America are two countries separated by a common language. (G. B. Shaw)
- Even if you do learn to speak correct English, whom are you going to speak it to? (Clarence Darrow)
- We have really everything in common with America nowadays except, of course, language. (O.Wilde)
- Every English poet should master the rules of grammar before he attempts to bend or break them. (Robert Graves)

Predication

- Broad meaning: relation between the sentence and reality

- Narrow meaning: structural core (kernel) of the sentence

Predication

- the finite form of the verb = the predicate
- tense, mood, person, and voice = the main predicative meanings, actual evaluations of the event.

- *You get married at twenty, you're going to be shocked who you're living with at thirty.* (Peter Blake)

Expressing predication

- verbal time/tense and mood
- word order
- functional words
- Intonation in oral speech

e.g.,

- *The Internet is like alcohol in some sense. It accentuates what you would do anyway. If you want to be a loner, you can be more alone. If you want to connect, it makes it easier to connect.* (Esther Dyson)

- verbal time and mood
- word order
- functional words
- Intonation in oral speech

- *Hard work never killed anybody, but why take a chance?* (Edgar Bergen)

- *Things are only impossible until they're not.* (Jean-Luc Picard)

- *Too bad the only people who know how to run the country are busy driving cabs and cutting hair.* (George Burns)

- *Only the mediocre are always at their best.* (Jean Giraudoux)

Word? Sentence?

- *What*?

- *Thanks*.

Word vs. Sentence

- Word

- Sentence

- a ready-made unit, reproduced in speech

- produced each time in speech (except for a limited number of idiomatic utterances.)

Nominalization: S > NP

⊙ transformation of a sentence into a nominal phrase

⊙ *His father arrived unexpectedly >*

⊙ *his father's unexpected arrival,*
⊙ *the unexpected arriving of his father*

⊙ no predication

Nominalization

- She recovered soon. =>

- She grew vegetables at home. =>

Sentence as a unit of speech ("parole") = utterance
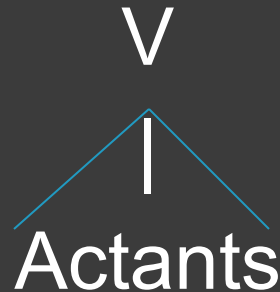
- intonation: *To London? To London!*
- pauses, pitch movements and stresses, which separate one sentence from another in the flow of speech:
- *Казнить нельзя помиловать*

Sentence as a unit of language ('langue')

- typical models, generalized sentence patterns:

1. SP   *The bird sings.*
2. SPO_1 *The hunter killed a bear.*
3. SP_CComp *He is a boy/ young.*
4. SPO_2O_1 *Sam gave him a book.*
☐ SPO_1Comp_O *He painted the door white.*
1. There P_rS *There is a book on the table.*
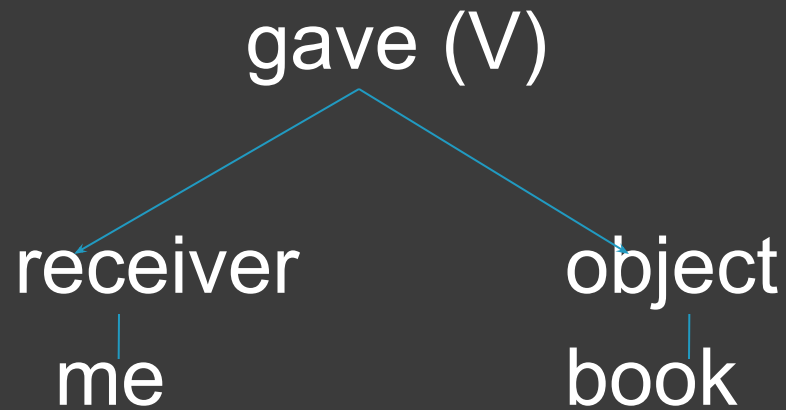
Case Theory of the Sentence by L. Tesnière

V

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Actants

(participants in the process)

= valencies

Circonstants

(circumstances)

He gave me this book yesterday.

gave (V)

receiver   object

me   book

yesterday (time)
-              (place)

Proposition

- nominative **content** of a syntagmatically complete average sentence
- processual situation = an event:
  - process (actional or statal) as its dynamic center,
  - the agent of the process,
  - the objects of the process, and
  - various circumstances of the process.

- *Experience teaches slowly and at the cost of mistakes.* (James A. Freude)
- Process?
- Agent?
- Objects?
- Circumstances?

What are the propositions?

- *I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him.* (Galileo Galilei)

- I always learn something from people.
- Every person knows something.
- I can learn.

Functions of the sentence

- predicative function , or reality-evaluating
- nominative

Sentence predication

- Evaluation of the situation
  - real or unreal
- the purpose of communication:
  declaration

  interrogation

  inducement
- affirmation and negation

Communicative Types of Sentences

- Declarative statements
- Interrogative (questions)
- Imperative (commands)

- ? Exclamatory ?

- I can do nothing to you.
- What can I possibly do to you?
- Do something!

- What can he possibly do to you!

Problem of the exclamatory sentence

- Not a communicative type:
- Do not express communicative intent
- Express intensity of tone

- Affirmative sentences.
- Negative sentences
  - I don't know this.

???

- *I know nothing.*
- *I saw him nowhere.*
- *It was difficult for him not to do it.*

not grammatical structure: affirmative

Semantic types of the sentence

- Existential (*There is a book on the table.*)

Structural and semantical

- <u>Definite-personal</u> *(I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.)*

- <u>Indefinite-personal</u> *(They say we'll have a warm spring this year.)*

- <u>Impersonal</u> *(It takes a touch of genius - and a lot of courage to move in the opposite .)*

Structural classification

simple
- S P
- *It snowed last night.*

compound
- S P and S P
- *He should have been here at five and he's not here yet.*

complex
- S P when S P
- *When I left college, I couldn't find any work.*

Simple sentence structure (based on main parts)

1. One-member sentence
   - *Fire!*
   - *Come on!*

2. Two-member sentence
   - *Helen sighed.*
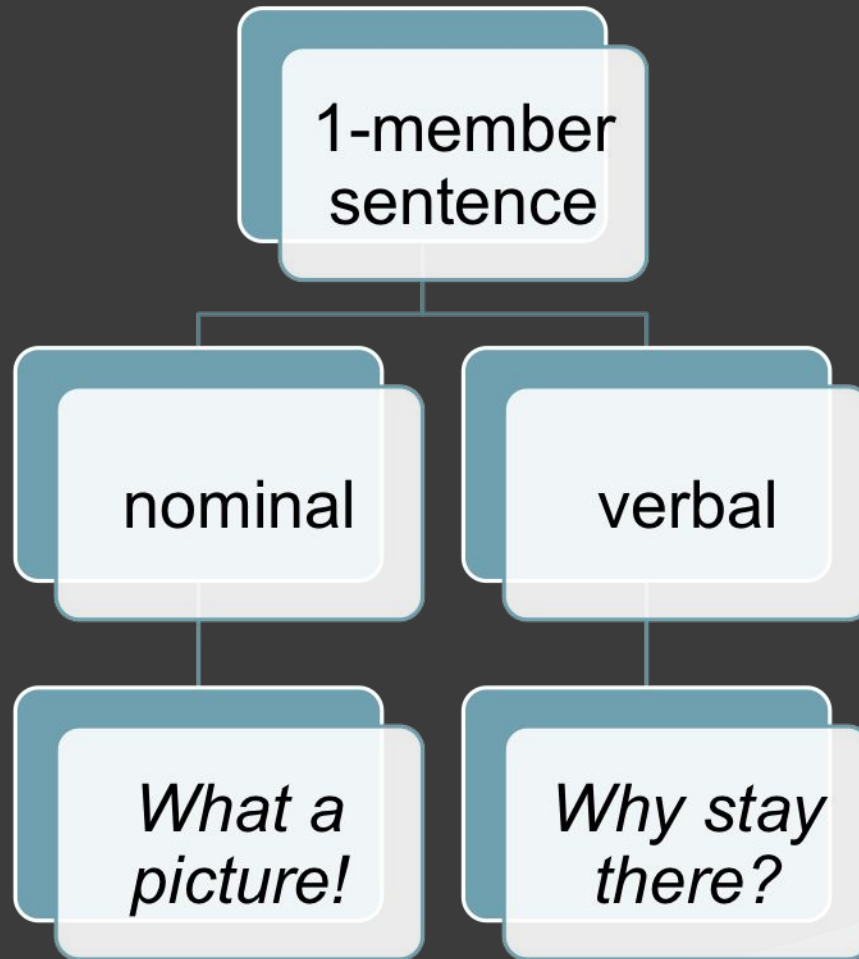
One-member sentence

1. No separate main parts (no subject, no predicate) <= V. Vinogradov.

2. Either subject or predicate <= A.Shakhmatov

Is it a one-member sentence?

- *Why not?*
- *Haven't heard from you so long!*

- No. These are **elliptical** sentences, with one or more of their parts left out but easily restored from the context.

One-member sentences

Structural types of sentences:

full

- *I am glad to meet you.*

elliptical

- *Glad to meet you.*

Structural type (based on secondary parts)

Extended

- *Hunger breaks stone walls.*
- *Every dog is a lion at home.*

Unextended

- *Extremes meet.*
- *Promise is debt.*

Глоссарий

- Предикативность
- Модальность
- Высказывание
- Валентность
- Актант
- Сирконстант
- Пропозиция
- Декларативное предложение
- Вопросительное предложение

- Повелительное предл.
- Утвердительное предл.
- Отрицательное предл.
- Простое предложение
- Сложносочиненное пр.
- Сложноподчиненное пр.
- Бытийное предложение
- Определенно-личное пр.
- Неопределенно-личное
- Безличное предложение

Глоссарий

- Односоставное предл.
- Двусоставное предл.
- Полное предложение
- Неполное предложение
- Распространенное пр.
- Нераспространенное пр.
- Именное предложение
- Глагольное предложение