

# **THEORY OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

some schemes to be used  
while reading independently  
and points to be covered

# GRAMMAR

Language – 3 subsystems:

phonetics, lexicon (vocabulary), **grammar**

- as a phenomenon – *a subsystem in language which ...*
- as a linguistic discipline – *a type of describing / interpreting the phenomenon*
- as a university course – ‘subject’ to learn:  
*‘practical’ vs ‘theoretical’ grammar =  
‘what & how’ vs ‘what & why’*

# Units of grammar

- **Morpheme** - form-building morphemes / inflections: *asked*, *dogs*, *bigger* ...
- **Word** – a system of wd-forms
- **Word group / phrase**
- **Sentence**
- **Units larger than a sentence** - suprasentential unities / supraphrasal unities / etc. / texts

***HIERARCHY of levels***

# MAIN NOTIONS OF GRAMMAR

GRAM. MEANING

GRAM. FORM

GRAM. CATEGORY

**function**

Any grammatical unit (*єддиница*) is a unity (*єдинство*) of grammatical **meaning** and grammatical **form**

**Gr.unit = gr. mning + gr.form**

# MEANS OF FORM-BUILDING

## synthetical

- inflections  
(form-blding morphemes)
- *boy - boys*
- sound alterations –  
inner inflections =  
mutation

*man - men*

- suppletivity

*go - went*

synthetical forms

## analytical

with the help of  
semi-bound  
morphemes or wd  
morphemes (= auxiliaries)

*ask - will ask*

*ask – have asked*

analytical forms

# Features of an analytical form

1. Analytical forms consist of 2 parts: auxiliary element (operator) & notional part  
*is writing*
2. Analyt. forms develop grammatical idiomaticity ~  
*'the meaning of the whole differs from the meaning of its parts'* -  
*Grammatical meaning (!)*  
*is writing ≠ is + writing*
3. Within a category analyt. forms sh. be opposed to synthetic ones:  
*is writing - writes*

4. The elements of an analyt.form function as one member of the sentence, i.e. perform one syntactic function

*Tom was shaved by the barber –*

*Tom shaved himself*

5. Auxiliary elements are lexically empty

6. The lexical mning of the whole group is understood from its notional part

7. In analit.forms the aux.is changeable, it sh. change grammatically:

*is writing – are writing – am writing – was writing  
– will be writing – ... – <...>*

(read *А.И.Смирницкий*)

there is no direct correspondence  
bw **gram. meaning** ↔ **gram. form**

**2** or more units of  
*the plane of  
expression* may  
correspond to **1**  
unit of *the plane of  
content*

e.g. **boys** – **children**

[different planes of  
expression – one gram  
mning ]

**2** or more units of *the  
plane of content*  
may correspond to **1**  
unit of *the plane of  
expression* □

polysemy, homonymy

e.g. – **s** inflection:

**boy's**, **dogs**, **asks**,  
**greens**



# Grammatical category

is a generalized grammatical meaning realized through *formal* and *meaningful* opposition of variants of one and the same unit (i.e. grammatical forms)

Gr.category is revealed through the method of opposition.

# Method of opposition – A.I.Smirnitskiy

**The essence** (суть, сущность):

**partially similar elements**, i.e.

elements having common and distinctive features,

**constitute** an **opposition**,

the members of which **differ** in **form** and in **meaning**:

***dog – dogs***

common – one wd, gram. mning of quantity;

distinctive – diff. forms of 1 wd & diff. mnings of  
quantity/number: oneness – more than oneness

There may be cases of categorial **neutralization**:

(1) ... e.g. ***Tonight we start for Landon***

(2) ... e.g. ***She is always complaining of something***

# Types of oppositions

acc. to the number of  
members (elements):

- **binary** - 2

- **ternary** - 3

- **quaternary** - 4

qualitatively:

- **privative**

*ask* - *asked*<sup>+</sup>

- **equipollent**

*am*<sup>+</sup> - *is*<sup>+</sup>

- **gradual**

*good* - *better* - *best*

**Parts of speech:  
principles of classifications  
and  
gram. categories  
of some parts of speech  
in modern English**

# **A part of speech**

is a grammatically relevant  
class of words  
which is specified  
on the basis of grammatical,  
semantic and lexical properties. □

**Parts of speech are  
lexico-grammatical categories**

3 or 5 ?

3  
principle  
s/criteria

**Meaning**  
semantic cr.

**Form**  
morph. cr.

**Function**  
n  
syntactic cr.

**Derivational**  
word-blding

**Inflectional**  
form-blding

**Distribution/  
combinabilit  
y**

**Syntactic**  
function  
proper

# **Notional and functional wds**

**4 criteria for differentiating:**

- 1) the 'prominence' of their lexical mning**
- 2) peculiarities of their combinability**
- 3) ability to be substituted by a wd of a more general mning**
- 4) ability to add / create new items**

# Notional and functional wds

- **Notional wds**

- 1) **complete  
nominative force**
- 2) **- self-dependent fns**
  - can be used in  
isolation
- 3) **can be substituted  
by a wd of a more  
general mng**
- 4) **open classes**

- **Functional wds**

- 1) **incomplete  
nominative force**
- 2) **- non-self-dependent  
mediatory fns: linking  
or specifying**
  - obligatory  
combinability
- 3) **cannot be substituted**
- 4) **closed classes**



# GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES

## of some parts of speech

(points to be covered)

□ form – *the opposition, members*

□ meaning:

- *meaning of the category*

*(general categorial meaning)*

- *meanings of the members*

*(individual meanings)*

□ peculiarities / problems

# **GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES OF THE NOUN**

# the morph. category of NUMBER

**Form**: the c. of N. is constituted by the inflectional opposition of 2 categorial forms of N.:

**Sg<sup>-</sup> – Pl<sup>+</sup>**

***dog<sub>-</sub> – dogs<sub>+</sub>***

**Meaning**: **for counts**:

**number / quantity** (for discrete nouns)

***oneness – more than oneness***

**for uncounts**:

***Sing. only – plural only***

**Foundation**:

**discreteness – non-discreteness**

**countable - uncountable**

# **The category of article DETERMINATION**

**Many scholars recognize the semantic category of article determination which marks some referents as definite & some as indefinite.**

**Article determination – the binary opposition which contrasts the noun with the definite article against the noun with the indef. or zero article:**

**the N<sup>+</sup>**

identification / def-ss

*The train* *hooted* that train

*The oxygen* *is out*

*Oxygen* *is necessary for*  
*life*

our supply

oxygen in general

**The meaning of the category and of the members constituting its opposition gives reason to term it**  
**the category of definiteness / indefiniteness**

(If) Article is a wd morpheme ☐  
there IS the morph.

**category of article determination** in Engl.

Mningful absence of an element – only for  
gram.form-blding morphemes ☐ if we can  
speak of a mningful absence of an article – we  
speak abt a morph.marker / a form-blding  
morpheme ☐ ☐ ☐

- **a** & **the** are not independent wds & do not  
constitute a part of speech, they are  
wd-morphemes
- **a / an / Ø** can be treated as allomorphs of the  
indef.article opposed to the def.article;

# The category of CASE

**Form** – opposition: the c. of Case is constituted by the inflectional opposition of 2 categorial forms:

**Common C. – Possessive/Genitive<sup>+</sup>**

*boy*<sub>=</sub> – *boy's*<sub>+</sub> or *boys*<sub>=</sub> – *boys'*<sub>+</sub>

**Meaning**: rlns bw wds in the sentence:

The genitive form renders a variety of mnings:

- possessiveness – *the boy's dog*
- subjective gen. – *the boy's answer*
- objective gen. – *the boy's punishment*
- gen. of origin – *the boy's letter*
- quantitative (of measure) – *an hour's drive*
- qualitative (descriptive) – *a women's college*

# Peculiarities □ Case theories

- **Limited** case theory – Otto Jespersen, H.Sweet, Л.С.Бархударов, А.И. Смирницкий
- **Positional** c.th. – M.Bryant, J.C.Nesfield
- **Prepositional** c.th. – G.Curm
- **Post-positional** c.th. – Воронцова, Мухин, Аракин, Кобрина  
~ *‘-s’ inflection is not typical*
- **Limitative** c.th. – V.Ja.Plotkin  
~ *‘ limitation of the scope of reference’*



# The VERB as a field structure

- The paradigm of most English verbs (except for modal vs) is constituted by 2 subparadigms:
- **finite forms** – represented by the paradigm of categorial (temporal, aspective, modal, etc.) forms & characterized by their **fn** of syntactic predicate – **the core**
  - **non-finite fms (verbals / verbids)** – the Inf., Participle II & ing-forms – characterized by a ***deflected*** paradigm; mixed features; perform various synt. fns but for the synt. predicate of the sentence – **the periphery**

**Ns**

**Adj/Adv**

***non-finite forms***

the Infinitive

Participle I

***finite forms***

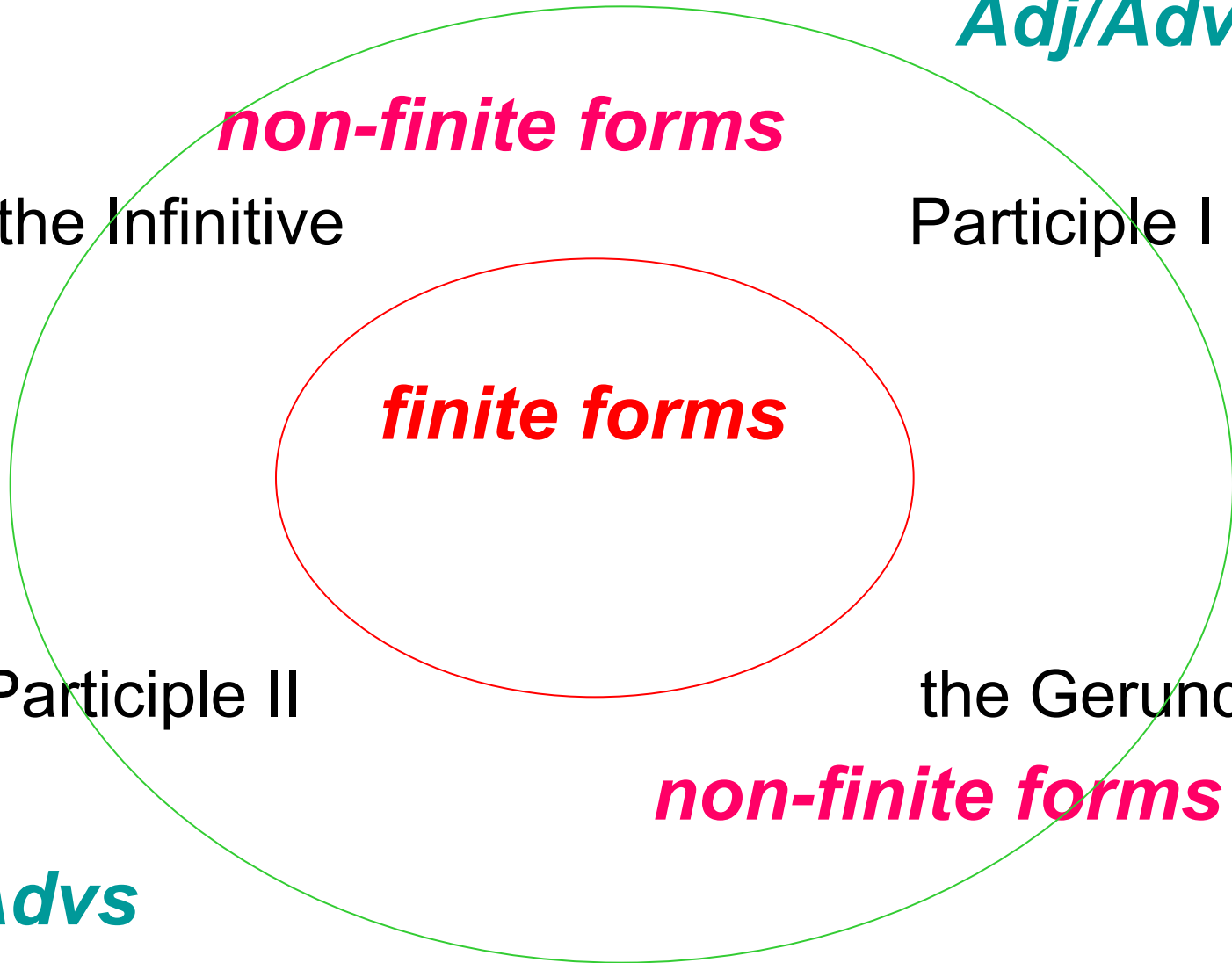
Participle II

the Gerund

***non-finite forms***

**Adj/Adv**

**Ns**



# Grammatical categories of the EV

- Tense
- Person
- Number
- Aspect
- Correlation (order)
- Prospect  
(Posteriority)

- Mood
- Voice
- Finitude  
(representation)

*The categories underlined  
are proper to finite forms  
of the verb only*

## the c. of Tense

opposition: present – past – [ future ]

*ask*⁻ – *asked*⁺ – [ *will ask* ]

meaning: the *time of action* in relation to the moment of speaking □

In Engl. the c. of tense denotes the time of action only *absolutely*, i.e. in relation to the moment of speaking

peculiarities: the problem of *shall/will* forms

□ the category of **prospect/posteriority**

*asks*⁻ – *will ask*⁺ – absolute prospect

*asked*⁻ – *would ask*⁺ – relative prospect

## the c. of Aspect

**opposition**: non-progressive-progressive

*asks* - - *is asking* +

**meaning**: the **character of action**

**peculiarities**: the c. of aspect is dependent on the  
lexical meaning of the verb □ **types of verbs**

## the c. of Voice

It is a syntactically bound morphological category

opposition: active – passive

*asks*<sup>-</sup> – *is asked*<sup>+</sup>

meaning: *direction of an action* ;

**active voice** – the action is issuing from the subject (agent/doer) to the object;

**passive voice** – the action is directed twds the object

(I) the problem of the number of voices:

1) active voice – S □ O *Tom asks Mary*

2) passive voice – O □ *Mary is asked by Tom*

3) *Tom asks himself* – *what direction ?*

4) *Tom and Ann ask each other* – *what direction ?*

5) *The door opened* – *any direction ?*

3 more voices - ?! **reflexive, reciprocal, middle**: meaning – yes; form – no.

(II) The problem of *get/become*+PII forms

(III) The homonymy of *be*+PII – a passive action or a state?

# THE CATEGORY OF MOOD

The c.of MOOD is constituted by the forms of the verb which express objective modality.

**meaning**: the c.of Md expresses the character of connection bw the process denoted by the verb and the actual reality presenting the process **either as a fact** that really *happened, happens, will happen*, or treating it **as an imaginary phenomenon** (non-fact) – *desire, speculation, hypothesis*, etc.

**opposition**: is constituted by sets of forms denoting ***facts*** and forms denoting ***non-facts***, the latter being the **strong marked** member of the opposition.

The category is revealed both in the opposition of morph.forms of the verb and syntactic structures.

It is proper to finite forms only □ it is a predicative category.

(*read Prokopchuk, Smirnitsky,  
review Gr-Perfect*)



# The problem of the number of mds

Linguists distinguish from 2 to 17 mds in ME.

Deutschbein M. – 17

Smirnitsky A.I. – a system of 6 mds (indicative, imperative, 4 oblique)

Ylyish B.A., Ivanova I.P. et al. – 3 mds (indicative, imperative, subjunctive)

Barkhudarov L.S., Shteling D.A. – 2 mds (indicative, subjunctive)

Vorontsova G.N. – indicative, optative (imperative, desiderative, subjunctive), speculative (2 forms), presumptive (7 forms all in all)

Plotkin V.Ya. denies the existence of the c.of md in E. altogether

# Mood - Summing up

Mnngs: **facts – non-facts**

direct imperative – problematic – unreal

Mds: **Indicative – Imperative – Subjunctive (!)**

*a set of forms:*      *one form*      *a set of moods which have forms of:*

*tense*

*person & number*

*aspect*

*order*

*voice*

*prospect*

*aspect*

*order*

*voice*

*prospect*

*person*

# The c.of REPRESENTATION / FINITUDE

a set of all  
finite forms

vs

a set of all  
non-finite forms

are opposed morphologically & syntactically

the **opposition**

the c.of finitude (**B.Strang, L.S.Barkhudarov**) /

the c. of representation (**A.I.Smirnitsky**)

the differential feature –

the expression of verbal time and modality

(the c.of tense & mood) □ predicativity

the **members**

***predicative<sup>+</sup>***

***non-predicative<sup>--</sup>***

# 3 forms of representation

**Predicative** (finite) forms are marked morphologically through the forms of the categories of ***TENSE***, ***MOOD***, ***PERSON*** & ***NUMBER*** and the syntactic fn of the predicate

- **verbal representation**

**Non-predicative** forms (verbals) are unmarked

- **substantive** representation (the Inf., Ger.)
- **adjectival** representation (participle I & II)

# **Syntactic relations** between the constituents of a phrase

elements are equal  
in rank

**coordination**

*come and go*

elements are not equal

**subordination**

*blue sky*

adjunct + kernel

modifier + modified

**interdependence**

*the train arrives*

***the roof of the house*** – a sub. noun phrase

*the roof of the house is red = the roof is red*

***the city of Minsk*** – ???

*I live in the city of Minsk ≠ I live in the city*

but = *I live in Minsk*

syntactic  
nucleus

semantic  
nucleus

subordinate syntactic rlns but...

**an appositive phrase**

# Means of expressing syntactic relations

- Word order *cannon ball* N+N
- Prepositions *the category of aspect*
- Conjunctions *warm and nice* Adj+Adj
- Case inflection -'s *Bob's car* N's+N
- Morphological expression of the components *speak softly* V+Adv

**The Sentence -  
the main unit of syntax.**



# THE SENTENCE

**is the immediate integral unit of speech built according to a definite syntactic pattern and distinguished by a contextually relevant communicative purpose**  
(M.J.Blokh)

It has 2 basic fns: naming and communicative.

It can perform the communicative fn because it possesses the property known as predicativity.

# Predicativity

is the **correlation** of what is named by the sentence with the situation of speech.

# Predicativity

is constituted by 3 components:

**Modality** □ the category of mood – Pr. Verb

**Time** □ the category of tense – Pr. Verb

**Person** □ the category of person – Pr. Verb

\

Subject

*The boy laughed out loudly*

The Predicate Verb is the main means of expressing predicativity. The Subject is involved in expressing the person component of predicativity.

# Classification of sentences

## Structural classification

General principle –  
structural, i.e. the  
structure of a sentence

Subcriteria (principles):

- Ways of expressing predicativity:
  - divided / undivided
  - complete / incomplete
- Number of predication lines

## Communicative class-n / types of s.

Principle – communicative  
aim / purpose

- *I give info* - **Declarative**  
= statements
- *I ask for info* -  
**Interrogative** =  
questions
- *I want U to do smth* -  
**Imperative**
- *I want to express myself*  
- **Exclamatory**

# **Sentence structural types & principles of classification**

**Simple / composite**

**the number of  
predication lines**

**1-member / 2-memb.**

**the way of  
expressing predicativity:  
divided or undivided**

**complete / elliptical**

**completeness of  
a 2-memb. pred. line**

**Composite**

**type of syntactic rlns:**

**Compound**

**coordination**

**Complex**

**subordination**

# Models of sentence analysis

**A. Pre-functional level** – units are just wds & wd groups:

- the distributional model
- the immediate constituents model
- the transformational model

## **B. Functional level**

**I. Syntactic level** – the model of the members of the sentence (syntactic functions)

**II. Semantic level** – case grammar – the model of the proposition structure

**III. Communicative level** – sentence as a unit of speech – FSP = functional sentence perspective – the logico-communicative structure

# Syntactic structure

At the **functional** level the s.s.s. is described in terms of members (parts) of the sentence performing certain functions.

**Parts of the sentence** are notional sentence constituents as they name elements of the situations named by the sentence: processes, participants, circumstances. They are in different relations to other parts of the sentence or to the sentence as a whole.

# Members (parts) of the sentence

Though the traditional set of members is more or less established, there are quite a number of disputable points. For e.g.

*The room measures 10 metres square - ???*

Modern grammars partially overcome these difficulties



# Sentence syntactic structure

subject

predicate

predicator complements objects

Vf

direct obj.

indirect obj.

prepositional obj.

subject[ive] c. ***She looks tired***

object[ive] c. ***He painted the door green***

predicat[ive] c. ***The room measured 10 m<sup>2</sup>***.

Objects can become subjects of passive constructions. Complements cannot.

# **The subject, predicator, complements and objects**

are nuclear and often obligatory constituents of a clause. Their appearance and properties are predetermined by the verb which serves as a predicator.

Other constituents are **circumstances** (time, place, manner, etc. of the whole stn) and **attributes** (characteristics of the participants). They are optional.

# Non-obligatory members

These are mainly adverbials of various character:

**adjuncts** – optional circumstances attending the process expressed by the clause

e.g. *He briefly interrupted her*

# Elements outside the s.s.s

- **disjuncts** – express evaluation of what is being said:

e.g. ***Obviously, he was wrong.***

- **conjuncts** – indicate the connection bw what was said before and is being said now:

e.g. ***He was wrong and so he kept silent.***

**NB! conjunct ≠ conjunction**

# The structure of the complex sentence as a whole

**Classn of the structural patterns of complex sentences** is based on the following **criteria**:

- the structural completeness of the main part
- the means of connection & the way the parts are linked, what element in the main cl. performs the main part in subordination of the other(s) clause(s)
- relative importance the main and the sub.cl. have in the sentence

# 5 structural types of complex sentences

1. Inclusive type: What I want to know ↔ *is* ↔ why he didn't come.
2. Sentences with pronominal correlation: *And it was just that □ which impressed me most.*
3. Sentences with complement or appositive connection: *She had a strange feeling □ as if something had happened*
4. Sentences with optional sub.clauses: *She looked round the stuffy sitting-room □ as if it were a prison.*
5. Sentences with mutually dependent clauses: *The door had scarcely closed behind her □ before it opened again.*