

## ENG A01 Engelsk grammatik & översättning

### Lecture 1:

- *Introduction to the course*
- *Introduction to grammar*
- *Word classes*



## Engelsk grammatik och översättning 9 hp (högskolepoäng)

### Required reading:

- Estling Vannestål, Maria (2007). *A University Grammar of English with a Swedish Perspective*. Lund: Studentlitteratur (UGE)
- Lecture and workshop compendia

### Two written exams:

#### English grammar (6 hp)

Tests your knowledge about English grammar.

#### Translation (3 hp)

Tests your ability to use your knowledge of English grammar.



## Organisation of the course

- Lectures (like this one)
  - To get the most out of lectures, do some reading **before** coming to class – the lecture are self-contained but still cannot cover all the necessary background.
- Workshops
  - To get the most out of the workshops, go over the lecture handout, do the assigned readings and exercises in UGE, and write down any questions that you may have.
  - Bring UGE, a dictionary, and the two compendia that you buy from the reception, but
  - Do not prepare the exercises in the compendium beforehand – you do them in class.



## The main course book: UGE

- Estling Vannestål, Maria (2007). *A University Grammar of English with a Swedish Perspective*. Lund: Studentlitteratur (UGE)
  - Has many exercises, most of which have no key. If you have problems finding the answers ask for help in the workshops.



## The Lecture compendium

- Contains the detailed schedule, with required preparation ('homework')
- Contains lecture notes. However, note that the lectures may contain more than what is in the notes.
- Does NOT replace the textbook.



## The Workshop compendium

- Contains exercises to be done in class, including an old grammar exam and an old translation exam
- Has a lot of extra reading material which supplements the textbook. This material is part of the course, and not just trivia.



### Preparation required for workshop 1

- Read through chapters 1, 2, and 3 in UGE (Don't worry if you do not get through everything. We will deal with the content of Chapter 3 in the first four lectures and workshops.)
- Buy the workshop compendium!

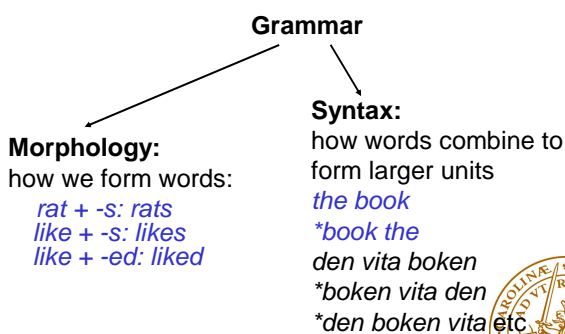


### Aims of today's lecture:

- To understand exactly what the term 'grammar' refers to
- To understand the basic distinction between 'open' and 'closed' word classes, and why this distinction is important
- To understand the word class system used in this course
- To improve your ability to identify word classes
- To understand the usefulness of up-to-date English dictionaries



### What does the term 'grammar' mean?



### MORPHOLOGY

- Morphology is concerned with the regularities (rules) that are found in the formation of words.
- The child learning a language faces the task of figuring out the regularities (rules) based on the language surrounding it.
- Adult learners have to learn and memorize the regularities (rules) in a more conscious way.



### Sometimes things are not so regular...

Child: My teacher **holded** the baby rabbits and we patted them.

Mother: Did you say your teacher **held** the baby rabbits?

Child: Yes.

Mother: What did you say she did?

Child: She **holded** the baby rabbits and we patted them.

Mother: Did you say she **held** them tightly?

Child: No, she **holded** them loosely.



### SYNTAX

Syntax is concerned with the regularities (rules) that are found in the formation of bigger units than words (sentences, for example)

*\*Yesterday played I with my friend Siri.*  
*Yesterday I played with my friend Siri.*

*Igår lekte jag med min kompis Siri*  
*\*Igår jag lekte med min kompis Siri.*

Note: The asterisk (\*) indicates that the sentence is ungrammatical



## Different kinds of 'grammar'

- Mental grammar
- Prescriptive grammar
- Descriptive grammar
- Pedagogical grammar (for non-native speakers)



## Mental grammar

People's knowledge of their mother tongue and other languages acquired. Much of this knowledge is **unconscious**. – Among other things, studying grammar is about becoming **conscious** of your mental grammar and what it contains.



## Prescriptive grammar

- Aims to tell people how they should speak and write"
- 'Someone' knows the correct expression, but a lot of other speakers do not and need to be educated.
- Some ways of expression are 'uglier' than others.



## An example of a faulty prescriptive statement

- It's not correct to say

*You need a driving instructor who you have confidence in.*

"The accusative *whom* is necessary with the preposition *in*, though *whom* is a word strangely shunned **by most English people**" (Phythian 1979)



## Descriptive grammar

Descriptive grammar is concerned with *describing* what utterances are actually produced by native speakers of that language, and what utterances are not. "Ungrammatical" on this view means that native speakers do not use a particular word, construction, etc.

\* *Enjoy grammar English I.*



## Pedagogical grammar (for non-native speakers)

- Partly descriptive, partly prescriptive
- But prescription is always based on description

For example:

– Do not use the definite article before plural nouns that make generic reference (roughly, refer to all of something), because English speakers don't.

\*The tigers are heavier predators than lions.

(\*' means 'ungrammatical, remember?)



### What will we do in this course?

- "General grammar" (word classes, phrase structure, and clause elements)
- Morphology and syntax for English
- Grammatical differences between English and Swedish
- A brief look at grammatical and lexical differences between British English and American English



### WORD CLASSES (UGE: pp. 49-57)

Noun ('substantiv', 'nomen')	Open (lexical) word classes
Verb	
Adjective	
Adverb	

Determiner ('artikel')	Closed (functional) word classes
Preposition	
Pronoun	
Conjunction ('konjunktion')	
Numeral ('räkneord')	
Interjection	



### Note: Determiner is a word class

- We depart from the textbook (p. 50) by regarding determiners (the definite and indefinite articles) as a special word class.



### Defining the open word classes

- Open word classes are typically defined by three different criteria (in ascending order of reliability):
  - Semantics (what the word means/refers to)
  - Morphology (what endings the word takes)
  - Syntax (what other elements the word combines with)



### NOUN

- Semantics ('meaning'): A noun is a word for a person, place, or thing.

A noun's the name of anything,  
like *house*, or *garden*, *boat* or *swing*.

But abstract nouns can also denote properties:  
*The BEAUTY of the English language fascinates me.*

- Morphology: For example, the suffix *-s* is added to express plurality (*cat – cats*) and possession: *Tina's*  
But: *He had MILK to drink. \*milks*  
*He watched his sisters with ENVY. \*envies*

- Syntax: For example, nouns can be preceded by *the* (a determiner) in a frame like:  
*the \_\_\_ seemed Adjective (good, bad, etc)*



### VERB

- Semantics: verbs denote actions (e.g. *run, talk*), states (e.g. *love, own*) and processes (e.g. *change*).

Verbs tell something to be done:  
*To read or count or laugh or run.*

- Morphology: For example, the suffix *-ed* can be added to form the past tense (e.g. *play – played*).  
But: *sit – sat, pay – paid* etc

- Syntax: Lexical verbs form the head of VERB PHRASES, and can be preceded by an AUXILIARY VERB  
(e.g. *I can speak English., He has gone to Greece.,* etc).



## ADJECTIVE

Semantics: For example, adjectives denote qualities and properties of people and objects (e.g. *a heavy box, a tall man*)

The adjective describes a thing,  
As *magic* wand or *bridal* ring;

Morphology: the suffixes *-er* and *-est* are added to form the COMPARATIVE and SUPERLATIVE forms of an adjective (e.g. *tall – taller – tallest*)

BUT: *good – better – best*  
*important – more important – most important*

Syntax: An adjective is the head of an ADJECTIVE PHRASE (AdjP). The adjective often precedes a noun (e.g. *He is a tall man*) or follows a verb like *be, seem* or *become* (e.g. *He is tall*)



## ADVERB

Semantics:  
How things are done the adverbs tell  
As slowly, quickly, ill or well

But this jingle is pretty far from the truth. In fact, it does not even do well on the semantics:

adverbs denote time or place, e.g. *I am leaving now. She was here earlier today, and a wide range of other kinds of accompanying circumstances.*

adverbs modify adjectives, verbs, and other adverbs, e.g. *happily, readily.* They are then adjacent to the verb, adjective or adverb.

adverbs modify the whole clause *Surely this can not be right* etc.



## ADVERB ctd.

Morphology: Some are formed from adjectives by adding *-ly*: *clearly, happily*, etc. Many are not: *now, here, there, very, however, just, today, earlier* etc.

Syntax: An adverb is the head of an ADVERB PHRASE (AdvP). An adverb often precedes an adjective: *just right, extremely pretty, very good*, or follows a verb: *sings well*, or precedes another adverb: *sings very well*. Adverbs also occur on their own: *I'll see you soon, Let's meet again, I don't know his name, however.*



## WORD CLASSES

Noun ('substantiv', 'nomen')  
Verb  
Adjective  
Adverb

Open (lexical)  
word classes

Determiner ('artiklar')  
Preposition  
Pronoun  
Conjunction ('konjunktioner')  
Numeral ('räkneord')  
Interjection

Closed  
(functional)  
word classes



## DETERMINERS

('artiklar', 'determinanter')

precede a noun and indicate its presumed degree of familiarity (*a/an, the*).

*a/an*: indefinite article  
(*'obestämd artikel'*)

*the*: definite article  
(*'bestämd artikel'*)



## PREPOSITION

('placed in front of')

Semantics: prepositions express relationships between things and/or events (*The game will be played on Friday*). The basic sense of prepositions is SPATIAL (e.g. *The book is on the table*).

Morphology: No suffixes or prefixes are added to prepositions.

Syntax: Prepositions are typically followed by a Noun Phrase, e.g. *in the garden, on the table, behind the tree*

Complex prepositions: e.g. *except for, apart from, because of, by means of, in spite of, with regard to*



## PRONOUN

(means 'instead of (Lat. *Pro*) name/noun' (Lat. *Nomen*)

### 1. Pronouns substitute for nouns and noun phrases (NPs) (UGE p. 54):

Martin said Martin was in a hurry. Martin was late for picking Martin's sister up at the train station, but Martin didn't know where the train station was.

Martin said he was in a hurry. He was late for picking his sister up at the train station, but he didn't know where it was.



pronoun ctd

2. Pronouns can also function in a similar way to articles: that man over there, these problems, a lot of money, many people etc.
3. ...or on their own: Everybody loves somebody.



## CONJUNCTION

Conjunctions have a linking (conjoining) function.

Conjunctions: two kinds

Coordinators (coordinating conjunctions):  
*and, but, or*

Subordinators (subordinating conjunctions):  
e.g. *because, since, if etc*



## Coordinators

('samordnande konjunktioner):  
*and, but, or*

- Link words (phrases) together:  
e.g. *Steve and I ... , Steve or I ...*
- Link clauses ('sats'er') together:  
e.g. *The party was over. I drove home.*

*The party was over and I drove home.*

*The party was not over but I drove home.*



## Subordinators

('underordnande konjunktioner')

- Subordinating conjunctions are linking words (e.g. *if, when, that, although, as, until, while* etc) that introduce DEPENDENT CLAUSES ('bisatser', (UGE: p. 74ff).

*He said that he was not guilty.*

*I stayed there until my son was born.*

*When our son was born we lived in Newcastle.*

- Some subordinators are identical to prepositions in form, e.g. *before, after, since*.



## Subordinator vs. preposition

Prepositions:

*After the game we had supper.*

*Since the war a lot of people have lost hope.*

Subordinators:

*After we had finished the game we had supper.*

*Since the war ended a lot of people have lost hope.*

(For now, just note that subordinators and prepositions differ with respect to what may follow them)



## NUMERAL ('räkneord')

Numerals constitute a rather self-contained area of English grammar.

*one, two, fifty-five* etc.  
*first, second, third* etc.  
*1998, 2004* etc.



## INTERJECTION ('interjektioner', 'utropsord')

*The interjection cries out: Hark!*  
*I need an exclamation mark.*

*Oh!, wow!, gosh!* etc

Interjections do not combine with other words to form phrases or clauses.



## Open word classes

- Are open to new coinages and borrowings, e.g.: *Googlegänger* 'A person with your name who shows up when you google yourself'.  
*wrap rage* 'Anger brought on by the frustration of trying to open a factory-sealed purchase'.
- Have lexical meaning (an image is evoked in one's mind when presented with a lexical word in isolation, e.g. *castle, party, dog* etc.)
- These word classes are relatively large in number.



## open word classes ctd

- They often have complex internal structure, e.g. *un + friend + li + ness*,  
*Swedish: bil + ar + na + s*
- They receive stress ('betoning') in speech
- Are used early by children
- They generally remain when a sentence is compressed, for example in text messages, telex messages or newspaper headlines:



## From *big mouth & ugly girl*:

*Rocky River H.S. student suspended pending investigation*  
*(big mouth and ugly girl, p. 77)*

Diagram showing red arrows pointing to the words *a*, *an*, and *was* in the text above.



## Open class words continued:

- In English, they are capitalised in book titles etc, e.g.  
*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*  
*English Phonetics and Phonology*  
*An Illustrated History of Britain*



### Closed word classes (‘function words’)

- Their primary function is to combine with open-class words or help us to interpret open-class words, e.g. *Bacon and egg for breakfast*
- The closed classes have limited and fixed membership, e.g. coordinating conjunctions in English:  
*and, but, or,*



### closed word classes ctd

- They have little lexical meaning.
- They are used productively relatively late by children.
- They are very frequent in spoken and written texts, and in almost any type of text.
- They are typically not capitalised in book titles.



### Terminology that you MUST know and understand:

Noun  
Verb  
Adjective  
Adverb  
Pronoun  
Preposition  
Determiner  
Conjunction (Coordinator/Subordinator)  
Numeral  
Interjection



open (lexical) word classes  
closed word classes (function words,  
grammatical words)  
grammar  
syntax  
morphology  
semantics



### References

- Estling Vannestål, Maria (2007). *A University Grammar of English with a Swedish Perspective*. Lund: Studentlitteratur (UGE)
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English
- McDowall, D. (1989). *An Illustrated History of Britain*. London: Longman.
- Oates, J. C. (2002). *big mouth & ugly girl*. New York: Harper Tempest.
- Phythian, B.A. (1979). *A Concise Dictionary of Correct English*. Teach Yourself Books: Totowa, NJ

