

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 (2007/2015). *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 lectures 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 relevant material that you have downloaded from the course platform, 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.)
- Download and print the workshop compendium!

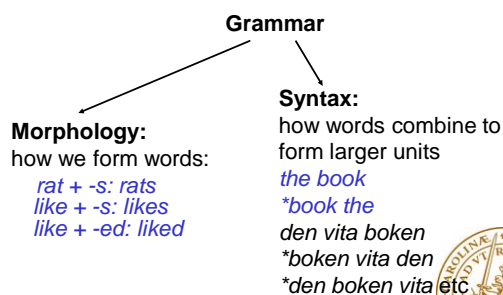


Aims of today's lecture:

- 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. 57-65)

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

Open
(lexical)
word classes

Determiner ('artikel')
Preposition
Pronoun
Conjunction ('konjunktion')
Numeral ('räkneord')
Interjection

Closed
(functional)
word classes



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. 62):

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 ('satser') together:
e.g. *The party was over and 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: pp. 83-85).

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.



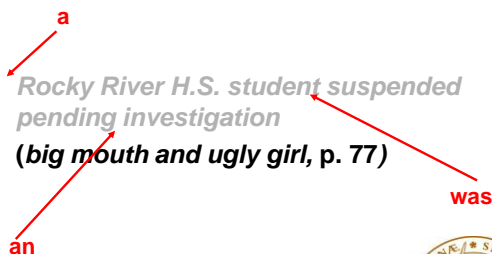
open word classes ctd

- 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)



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 (2007/2015). *A University Grammar of English with a Swedish Perspective*. Lund: Studentlitteratur (UGE)

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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

