



# Università di Cagliari

Corso di Laurea in  
**Economia e Gestione Aziendale**  
**Economia e Finanza**  
**Economia e Gestione dei Servizi Turistici**

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# Instructions



- ⌘ This lesson will teach you how the different classes of words function.
- ⌘ It will tell you how discourse develops from the smallest unit of language (the morpheme) to the highest level of discourse (the sentence)

# The Structure of the English Sentence



The International Monetary Fund sent a clear message to the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee.

This sentence contains 5 phrases

# The Structure of the English Sentence

1. The International Monetary Fund
2. sent
3. a clear message
4. to the Bank of England's
5. Monetary Policy Committee

Each of these phrases is made up of **words**.  
Each of these words consists of one **morpheme** except International and England's which contain two.

# UNITS OF LANGUAGE



- ⌘ 5. **Sentence** (made up by 1 or more clauses)
- ⌘ 4. **Clause** (made up by phrases) ↑
- ⌘ 3. **Phrase** (made up by words) ↑
- ⌘ 2. **Word** (made up by 1 or more morphemes) ↑
- ⌘ 1. **Morpheme** (the smallest unit of discourse) ↑

# THE WORD



- ⌘ The easiest unit of written language to identify. Words have spaces on either sides.
- ⌘ In speech, it is more difficult (French and English), because pauses do not occur between each word.

# WORD CLASSES

**COHERENCE:** all the words within a class (part of speech) should behave in the same way.

**JUMP, WALK, COOK** form a coherent class because all the **GRAMMATICAL** and **MORPHOLOGICAL** operations that apply to one (**-s; -ed**) apply to the others

This leads to establish the important class of **VERBS**.

# WORD CLASSES

Although word classes should be coherent, because of the irregularities in a language, word classes are not totally homogeneous.

Each word class has a core of words that behave identically, from a grammatical point of view. But at the edges of a word class are the more irregular words, some of which may behave like words from other classes

# Irregularity / Gradience

Within each class, some words behave like words from other classes:

⌘ Some adjectives have a function similar to nouns: **THE RICH**

⌘ The word **ROUND** can belong to any of 5 word classes, depending on the grammatical context:

**A ROUND TABLE; ROUND THE CORNER** (prep.); **THE BOAT WILL ROUND THE BUOY; IT'S YOUR ROUND; WE WALKED ROUND TO THE SHOP** (adv.).

# THE WORD



## 9 Classes of words:

nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs,  
pronouns, determiners,  
prepositions, conjunctions,  
Interjections.

# WORD GROUPS



1. **OPEN CLASSES**: noun, verb, adjective and adverb.

They are a very large group. More words can be added to them. They have a definable meaning. Also known as **Lexical Words**.

## 2. CLOSED CLASSES



pronouns, determiners,  
prepositions, conjunctions and  
interjections

Smaller number, they have a  
grammatical meaning, are known  
as **Structural** or **Functional Words**.

# THE NOUN




A word which names something.

Factors to be considered when analysing nouns:

1. Syntactic structure (noun phrase);
2. Syntactic function (S/O/C);
3. Grammatical Morphology (cats/cat's);
4. Lexical Morphology (-age; -ment, -tion).

# THE NOUN (FACTORS)



## 1. Syntactic structure (noun phrase)

“**The travel arrangements** were made by  
**an online booking agency**”

In this sentence, the syntactic structures  
in **red** are **NOUN PHRASES**, where  
the main words are the **NOUNS**  
**arrangements** and **agency**.

# THE NOUN (Factors)

2. Syntactic function (S/O/C);

“I made the travel arrangements”

“The travel arrangements were made by  
an online booking agency”

In these sentences, the NOUN

“arrangements” is the **object** (1st s.)  
and the **subject** (2nd s.) . In the second  
sentence, the noun **agency** is the  
**complement**

# THE NOUN

## (Factors)

### 3. Grammatical Morphology (INFLECTIONAL)

Arrangement/ Arrangements

The Bank of Italy / The Bank of Italy's

### 4. Lexical Morphology (DERIVATIONAL)

ArrangeMENT; Inflat(e)ION;

PercentAGE; ManageMENT;

EffectiveNESS; efficien(t)CY

# Proper Nouns



⌘ They refer to a specific place, time, person, event, publication and are written with a capital letter. In English, names of months and days are also regarded as p.n.'s.

# Common Nouns



⌘ They are more general in meaning. They can be classified into *Concrete* and *Abstract* nouns

# Common Nouns

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⌘ *Concrete* nouns signify material things that can be observed and measured (cat, desk). *Abstract* nouns signify non-material things, such as ideas, feelings, conditions (death, hope).

# Nouns

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⌘ We can also classify nouns according to their **countability**

⌘ Count nouns

⌘ Non-count (uncount) nouns

# Nouns

Count nouns refer to individual, countable entities. They cannot stand alone in the singular, and they allow a plural:

interest–interests; share–shares.

Non-count (uncount/mass) n.'s refer to an undifferentiated mass or notion. They can stand alone in the singular, do not allow a plural, and occur in the singular with **some**: money; language; music

# Countability



Some nouns can be both count and uncount, with a slight change of meaning:

Language is a human characteristic

I speak three languages;

The lights were amazing;

Light travels fast.

# Countability



## Countable

Meeting, Ticket

Time

Trip, flight, journey

Location

Questionnaire

Network

## Uncountable

money

time

transport, travel

accommodation

research


information

# Nouns

Morphologically, nouns can be marked for plural. The usual one is the bound morpheme *-s*. Some words have different plural for historical reasons:

*child, foot, sheep.*

# Nouns



Some foreign borrowed words have retained their original plurals:

*index – indeces; antenna – antennae; phenomenon – phenomena; datum – data*

# Nouns



Nouns are also marked to  
show **possession**

My father's car

My parents' video recorder

# Nouns



A noun occurs as the **headword** of a noun phrase (a phrase where a noun or a pronoun is the most important word)

# Nouns



“*The highest stock in the market*” is a noun phrase: *STOCK* is the headword, premodified by *the highest* and postmodified by *in the market*.

# Pronouns



Pronouns are words which stand for a noun, a whole noun phrase, or several noun phrases:

I've got a red hat, and Jane's got a brown one;

My uncle Fred has just arrived. He's very tired;

# Pronouns

Pronouns can also refer to a very general concept which includes the meaning of many possible noun phrases:

*I can see someone in the distance (men, boys, girls, soldiers...). → INDEFINITE pronoun (notion of quantity)*

They can also refer to some unspecified event of the situation (pointing):

*Look at that! He's going to crash!*

# Pronouns



Personal, Reflexive, Possessive,  
Relative, Demonstrative,  
Interrogative, Indefinite.

Central categories: Personal, Reflexive,  
Possessive → express contrasts of  
number, person and gender

# Pronouns



Most pronouns exist in more than one form. This is because they have retained – more than nouns or adjectives – the inflectional form they had in Old English. This is mostly true for **personal pronoun.**

# Pronouns



**Personal Pronouns** have different forms to denote person, plurality and gender, but they also possess a subject, a possessive and an object case: I-MY-MINE-ME

# Pronouns

**Subjective Pronouns:** they act as the subjects of verbs

→ *She saw Mark at the restaurant*

**Objective Pronouns:** they act as the objects of verbs

→ *Mark saw her*

**Possessive Pronouns:** they indicate ownership

→ *This is not my book. The blue one is mine.*

# Pronouns

Demonstratives are marked for plural:

This – These; That – Those

Reflexive Pronouns are marked for person:

Myself, Yourself .... Ourselves, ecc.

(combination of a personal/possessive pronoun with the morpheme –self/–selves)

→ *The children dressed themselves*

# Pronouns

Relative pronouns: connect a subordinate clause to a preceding noun/noun phrase.

They have a subject case: *who*; a possessive case: *whose*; and an object case: *whom*. They generally refer to people.

*Whom* is falling into disuse except in formal written English. In expressions such as 'TO **WHOM** IT MAY CONCERN'; he didn't know to **whom** he had to address the letter (he didn't know **who** he had to address the letter to).

*Which and that* are used as both subject and object when referring to inanimate nouns. **That** can also refer to people.

# Interrogative relative pronouns

⌘ Kimberly went back to Austin on Friday

⌘ When did Kimberly go back to Austin?

⌘ Where did Kimberly go back on Friday?

⌘ Who went back to Austin on Friday?

⌘ I went out with Jen last Saturday

⌘ Who went out with Jen last Saturday?

⌘ Who did you go out with...?

# The Verb

A word which signifies an action or a state:  
*arrive, call, make, tell, win...*

A sentence may contain a single verb, or it may use a cluster of verbs which work together as a **verb phrase/chain** (auxiliary verb(s) + main verb):

*I **saw** an elephant.*

*You **didn't see** one. They **coundn't have seen** one.*

# The Verb

Three classes of verbs can occur within the verb phrase:

- ⌘ Lexical Verbs;
- ⌘ Primary Auxiliary Verbs;
- ⌘ Modal Auxiliary Verbs.

# Classes of Verbs

**Lexical verbs** have a meaning, as a vocabulary item. They act as main verbs. Morphologically, they have more forms than any other word class:

base form; 3<sup>rd</sup> pers. sing.;

present tense, past tense, imperative:  
usually finite verbs.

pres. participle; past participle; infinitive:  
usually non-finite verbs.

# Classes of Verbs

**Auxiliary verbs** are used in conjunction with lexical verbs.

Primary auxiliaries verbs are **have**, **be** and **do**.

→ That firm has employed many skilled workers.

→ He was sent to New York on business.

→ Do you play the piano?

They can **also** be used as **lexical verbs** (main verbs):

→ That firm has many employees;

→ He was in New York last year;

→ They did a good job.

# Classes of Verbs

## MODALS

⌘ They can express: **Obligation** / **prohibition** / **ability** / **permission**

⌘ **What are modal verbs?**

⌘ Modal verbs are special verbs which behave very differently from normal verbs. Here are some important differences:

**1. Modal verbs do not take "-s" in the third person.**

⌘ He can speak chinese.

⌘ She should be here by 9:00.

**2. You use "not" to make modal verbs negative, even in simple present and simple past.**

⌘ He should not be late.

⌘ They might not come to the party.

**3. Many modal verbs cannot be used in the past tenses or the future tenses. Other forms should be used.**

⌘ He will can go with us. → *Not correct*

⌘ She musted study very hard. → *Not correct*

# Classes of Verbs

## MODALS

- ⌘ *can*
- ⌘ *could*
- ⌘ *may*
- ⌘ *might*
- ⌘ *must*
- ⌘ *ought to*
- ⌘ *shall*
- ⌘ *should*
- ⌘ *will*
- ⌘ *would*
- ⌘ ***have to***: this expression is not a modal but is closely related to modals in meaning and is often interchanged with them

# Classes of Verbs



## Modal auxiliaries

They convey a certain kind of judgements about the probability or possibility of events, or about the ability of performing an action.

They only function as **auxiliary** verbs

# Classes of Verbs

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## Modal auxiliaries:

Can you do me a favour?

It may rain tomorrow

This might be a problem

May I use the toilet?

He couldn't do it today.

# Verb Finiteness

We usually classify verbs into 2 broad types, based on the kind of contrast in meaning they express:

**FINITE FORMS** are those which limit the verb to a particular number, tense, person or mood. In a series of verbs, the finite one is always the first:

*I was being asked; He hadn't done it;  
They did not understand the problem*

# Verb Finiteness

**NON-FINITE FORMS** do not limit the verb. When a nonfinite form is used (-ing; -ed; infinitive), the verb can refer to any number, tense, person, mood.

A **non-finite form** of the verb stays the same in a clause, regardless of the grammatical variation taking place:

I'm leaving / They're leaving / He was leaving / He might be leaving.

# Verb Finiteness

A verbal phrase is **finite** if

- 1) it is inflected for tense, and
- 2) it agrees with its subject in number and person.

## Question:

Is the underlined verb finite or non-finite?

*He walks.*

It is finite because

- 1) a different form of verb changes the tense:

*He walked.*

- 2) a change in number of subject (sing > plural or vice versa) forces agreement change. *They walk.*

# Verb Finiteness

Finite and non-finite verbal phrases are constructed using forms of the verbs **to be** and **to have** as auxiliaries,

<---TENSE CHANGE--->

*He is jumping*

*He was jumping.*

NUMBER

CHANGE *They are jumping*

*They were jumping.*

Also: *He has jumped* and *They have jumped.*

Any of the above kinds of verbal phrases are **finite** and can be substituted for other finite verbal phrases.

# Verb Finiteness



Verbal phrases with non-finite auxiliaries look like this:

*jumping, be jumped,  
to have jumped,  
being jumped,  
to be jumped,  
having jumped*

# Verb Finiteness

Here are some examples of verbal groups in which the finite element is indicated by the symbol "f", and non-finite elements by the symbol "nf", and the verbal group has been underlined.

SHE WORKS (f) IN A BANK

SHE HAS (f) WORKED (nf) IN A BANK

SHE HAD (f) BEEN (nf) WORKING (nf) IN A BANK

I AM (f) HAVING (nf) A HOLIDAY

I USED (f) TO WORK (nf) IN A BANK

# Adjectives

Adjectives express some quality of a noun or pronoun.

→ *That's a strategic plan.*

They are defined according to their function.

⌘ In English they normally occur before a noun  
(ATTRIBUTIVE FUNCTION): *a beautiful day; an  
important meeting; a strong inflation*

⌘ They can occur alone after forms of the verb to be  
(PREDICATIVE FUNCTION): *He is ugly; It's nice.* 52

# Adjectives

Adjectives can be

pre-modified by intensifiers to give additional details and emphasis such as *absolutely, very, extremely, terribly...*

They can be immediately preceded by *very* and other **INTENSIFYING** words (*rather, incredibly...*).

# Adjectives

## 3 forms:

Absolute /base form;

Comparative: + - ER

Superlative: + - EST

**Periphrastic forms:** polysyllabic adjectives don't use inflection but they are preceded by MORE (in comparatives) or THE MOST (in superlatives)

# Adjectives

## 3 forms:

Absolute/base form	Comparative	Superlative
<b>Big</b>	<b>Bigger</b>	<b>The biggest</b>
<b>Rich</b>	<b>Richer</b>	<b>The richest</b>
<b>Safe</b>	<b>Safer</b>	<b>The safest</b>
<b>Delicious</b>	<b>More delicious</b>	<b>The most delicious</b>

# Adverbs

The relationship between adverbs and verbs is similar to that between adjectives and nouns.

They modify a verb and define the manner, place and time of an action:

*He spoke loudly – We live here*

*She arrived recently.*

# Adverbs



Many can be formed by adding the derivational morpheme *-ly* to the adjective.

Many other adverbs are monomorphemic words (*soon, fast, often, once, twice, just, only*)

# Determiners

They are used in conjunction with the noun and their function is **to limit** the reference of the noun.

They precede the noun (phrase) and determine definiteness, quantity number or possession.

# Determiners



Determiners are part of the **premodification** structure of the noun phrase, that part which comes before the head:

*“The big strong company on the market”*

# Determiners

Two main functions: REFERRING and QUANTIFYING.

❖ REFERRING: they can identify the noun: *a, the* (articles); *this, that, these, those* (demonstrative); *my, his, ecc.* (possessive).

⌘ QUANTIFYING : They can quantify the noun: *some, any, much, no* (indefinite pronouns).

# Determiners



A few words such as **all** or **half** are sometimes classed as **predeterminers**: **all** *the shares*.

Others, such as **numerals**, are called **post-determiners**: *the* **five** *shares*.

# Prepositions

More than 100 in English: words which come before a noun to form a structural unit, showing how the parts are related in space and time:

through *the years*, under *the table*,  
over *the moon*, on *the bench*, at *3*.

→ *I saw him walking down the road.*

# Prepositions

These resulting structures are known as **prepositional phrases**.

## FUNCTIONS:

### ❖ Adverbial:

*The man approached with aggressive intent.*

### ❖ Post-modify nouns:

*The man with the red hat was first on the train*

# Prepositions

Single-word prepositions include:

About, at, before, by, down, for, from, in, of, on, out, over, round, since, through, to, under, up, with

They can describe: the position of something in the space – *The flat was over the shop*; the time when something happens – *The class starts at 9 A.M.*; the way in which something is done – *We went to London by train.*

# Prepositions

Multi-word prepositions include:

Ahead of, because of, due to, instead of, near to, as far as, by means of, in accordance with, in spite of, on behalf of

- I am talking on behalf of my boss
- The analysis showed the sales trends instead of showing the final results.
- In accordance with the new strategic plans, the industry will increase the marketing budget

# Conjunctions



CONJUNCTIONS are words which join stretches of language (clauses) to each other. They are also the links in syntactic chains.

Co-ordinating and Subordinating  
conjunctions

# Conjunctions

Co-ordinating conjunctions link units which have the same grammatical status in the sentence, such as two clauses, two nouns, two verbs or two adjectives:

AND, OR, BUT; NEITHER...NOR

EITHER....OR

My mother and my father are young; (conjoin two nouns)

The coffee was strong, but sweet (conjoin two adjectives)

We can go to the match or watch it on TV (conjoin two verbs)

# Conjunctions

**Subordinating** conjunctions join units which **do not have** the same grammatical status in the sentence, as when one clause is **subordinated** to another:

It started to rain after I had just come in.

We went out when the rain stopped.

**As** it was raining, we couldn't go out.

Although I was cold, I didn't put my coat on.

If she didn't study so much, she couldn't pass her exams.