

O'ZBEKISTON RESPUBLIKASI XALQ TA'LIMI
VAZIRLIGI JIZZAX DAVLAT PEDAGOGIKA INSTITUTI
INGLIZ TILI VA ADABIYOTI KAFEDRASI

REPORT

SUBJECT: THEORETICAL GRAMMAR IN ENGLISH

THEME: Main principles of grammatical analysis

Theme: MAIN PRINCIPLES OF GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS

Plan:

1. The type of "referential" meaning.
2. The existing models of linguistic description.
3. The essence of the functional approach in language analysis.
4. Language as a functional system.
5. The notions "system" and "structure" and other linguistic units.

Man is not well defined as "*Homo sapiens*" ("man with wisdom"). For what do we mean by wisdom? It has not been proved so far that animals do not possess it. Those of you who have pets can easily prove the contrary. Most recently anthropologists have started defining human beings as "man the tool maker". However, apes can also make primitive tools. What sets man apart from the rest of animal kingdom is his ability to speak: he is "can easily object by saying that animals (2m also speak *Homo loquens*" - "man the speaking animal". And again, you, naturally, in their own way. But their sounds are meaningless, and there is no link between sound and meaning (or if there is, it is of a very primitive kind) and the link for man, is grammar. Only with the help of grammar we can combine words to form sentences and texts. Man is not merely *Homo loquens*, he is *Homo Grammaticus*.

The term "grammar" goes back to a Greek word that may be translated as the "art of writing". But later this word acquired a much wider sense and came to embrace the whole study of language. Now it is often used as the synonym of linguistics. A question comes immediately to mind: what does this study involve?

Grammar may be practical and theoretical. The aim of **practical** grammar is the description of grammar rules that are necessary to understand and formulate sentences. The aim of **theoretical** grammar is to offer explanation for these rules. Generally speaking, theoretical grammar deals with the language as a functional system.

According to the Bible: 'In the beginning was the Word'. In fact, the word is considered to be the central (but not the only) linguistic unit of language. Linguistic units (or in other words –signs) can go into three types of relations:

a) The relation between a unit and an object in the world around us (objective reality). E.g. the word 'table'¹ refers to a definite piece of furniture. It may be not only an object but a process, state, quality, etc.

This type of meaning is called **referential** meaning of a unit, it is **semantics** that studies the referential meaning of units.

b) The relation between a unit and other units (inner relations between units). Nb unit can be used independently; it serves as an element in the system of other units. This kind of meaning is called **syntactic**. Formal relation of units to one another is studied by **syntactics** (or **syntax**).

c) The relation between a unit and a person who uses it. As we know too well, when we are saying something, we 'usually have some

purpose in mind. We use the language as an instrument for our purpose (e.g.). One and the same word or sentence may acquire different meanings in Communication. This type of meaning is called **pragmatic**. The study of the relationship between linguistic units and the **users of those units is done by pragmatics**.

Thus there are three models of linguistic description: semantic, syntactic and pragmatic. To illustrate the difference between these different ways of linguistic analysis, let us consider the following sentence: *Students are students*. The first part of the XXth century can be characterized by a formal approach to the language study. Only inner (syntactic) relations between linguistic units served the basis for linguistic analysis while the reference of words to the objective reality and language users were actually not considered. Later, semantic language analysis came into use. However, it was surely not enough for a detailed language study. Language certainly figures centrally in our lives. We discover our identity as individuals and social beings when we acquire it during childhood. It serves as a means of cognition and communication: it enables us to think for ourselves and to cooperate with other people in our community. Therefore, the pragmatic side of the language should not be ignored either. Functional approach in language analysis deals with the language 'in action'. Naturally, in order to get a broad description of the language, all the three approaches must be combined.

Any human language has two main functions: the communicative function and the expressive or representative function - human language is the living form of thought. These two functions are closely

interrelated as the expressive function of language is realized in the process of speech communication.

The expressive function of language is performed by means of linguistic signs and that is why we say that language is a semiotic system. It means that linguistic signs are of semiotic nature: they are informative and meaningful. There are other examples of semiotic systems but all of them are no doubt much simpler. For instance, traffic lights use a system of colours to instruct drivers and people to go or to stop. Some more examples: Code Morse, Brighton Alphabet, computer languages, etc. What is the difference between language as a semiotic system and other semiotic systems? Language is universal, natural, it is used by all members of society while any other sign systems are artificial and depend on the sphere of usage.

Language is regarded as a system of elements (or: signs, units) such as sounds, words, etc. These elements have no value without each other, they depend on each other, they exist only in a system, and *they* are nothing without a system. System implies the characterization of a complex object as made up of separate parts (e.g. the system of sounds). Language is a structural system. Structure means hierarchical layering of parts in constituting the whole. In the structure of language there are four main structural levels: phonological, morphological, syntactical and supersyntactical. The levels are represented by the corresponding level units:

The phonological level is the lowest level. The phonological level unit is the phoneme. It is a distinctive unit (*bag - back*).

The morphological level has two level units:

- a) the 'morpheme - the lowest meaningful unit (*teach - teacher*);
- b) the word - the main naming ('nominative) unit of language.

The syntactical level has two level units as well:

- a) the word-group - the dependent syntactic unit;
- b) the sentence - the main communicative unit.

The supersyntactical level has the text as its level unit.

All structural levels are subject matters of different levels of linguistic analysis^ At different levels of analysis we focus attention on different features of language. Generally speaking, the larger the units we deal with, the closer we get to the actuality of people's experience of language.

To sum it up each level has its own system. Therefore, language is regarded as a system of systems. The level units are built up in the same way and that is why the units of a lower level serve the building material for the units of a higher level. This similarity and likeness of organization of linguistic units is called isomorphism. This is how language works - a small number of elements at one level can enter into thousands of different combinations to form units at the other level.

We have arrived at the conclusion that the notions of system and structure are not synonyms - any system has its own structure (compare: the system of Uzbek education vs. the structure of Uzbek education; army organization).

Any linguistic unit is a double entity. It unites a concept and a sound image. The two elements are intimately united and each recalls the other. Accordingly, we distinguish **the content side** and **the expression side**. The forms of linguistic units bear no natural resemblance to their

meaning. The link between them is a matter of convention, and conventions differ radically across languages. Thus, the English word 'dog' happens to denote a particular four-footed domesticated creature, the same creature that is denoted in Uzbek or Russian languages by the completely different form/Neither form looks like a dog, or sounds like one.

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