

September 18, 2003

CLASS 7: CATEGORIES, PART II

SUMMARY OF KEY TERMS FROM BRINTON 2000 (CH. 5)

Number

We distinguish **singular** vs. **plural** (in older stages of English and some languages today: **dual**).

Gender

Nouns are marked: **masculine** — **feminine** — **common** (dual: MASC or FEM) — **neuter** (sexless)

Person

1st (*I / we*) — **2nd** (*you / you*) — **3rd** (*he, she, it / they*) — **generic** (*one, you / we, they*)

Case

nominative (*I, we...*) — **objective/accusative** (*my/mine, our/ours...*) — **genitive** (*me, us...*)

- possibly **dative** (object of a preposition, though it could also be objective/accusative)
- types of genitive (see Brinton 2000: 108-109 for illustration):
possessive, subjective, objective, descriptive, partitive, appositive / of origin, of measure

Degree

Adjectives are marked: **positive** (\emptyset) — **comparative** (-er/more) — **superlative** (-est/most)

Definiteness

Nouns are marked either **indefinite** (e.g. through *a/an*) or **definite** (e.g. through *the*), but the real interpretation varies (e.g. *specific* vs. *generic, anaphoric* etc.; see Brinton 2000: 110-111).

Deixis

We distinguish **personal deixis** — **spatial deixis** — **temporal deixis** — **textual deixis**.

Tense

The basic tense categories in English are **present** — **past** — **future**.

Aspect

We distinguish **perfective** (*resultative* vs. *continuative*) from **imperfective**, and **progressive**.

Mood

The basic moods are **indicative** vs. **subjunctive** (kind of lost nowadays) and **imperative**.

Voice

This is the classic distinction between **active** and **passive**; also: **middle** (*notional passive*).