

February 13, 2007

## CLASS NOTES 2: EXERCISES

### GRAMMATICAL ROOTS AND GRAMMATICALITY

**1. Say whether the following sentences are grammatical (and hence acceptable) or ungrammatical (and hence unacceptable) by the rules of English.**

- (a) That car must have been driven by a madman.
- (b) Sally is easy to talk to.
- (c) Sally is eager to talk to.
- (d) Alana sent New York a present.
- (e) Alana sent Marna a present.
- (f) The FBI surveilled the criminal.
- (g) Who is the author Jane told Krista Harold had hoped to talk to?
- (h) It was chained to the door that I saw the dog.
- (i) It was in front of the store that I met my friend.
- (j) What classes did you sleep through?
- (k) What classes did they meet between?
- (l) The British aggressed against the Americans in the Revolutionary War.

**2. Which of the following sentences violate prescriptive rules and which violate descriptive rules of English? In other words, would such a sentence be judged to be not a sentence of English or simply nonstandard or uneducated?**

- (a) You should have saw that movie.
- (b) I forced that he leave.
- (c) The data is not conclusive.
- (d) She was laying in the sun all day.
- (e) Have finished your homework when I get home.
- (f) Do you feel badly about the outcome?
- (g) There's too many people in the elevator.
- (h) We cleaned up it.
- (i) Abe has invited you and I to come to dinner.
- (j) Wearing nothing but a sweater, the cold wind chilled me.
- (k) When the bone stuck in his throat, he stopped to breathe.
- (l) The wet campers tried to quickly light the fire.

**DISTRIBUTIONAL AND INFLECTIONAL TESTS FOR THE CATEGORY INFLECTION**

These words are generally considered to fall into the category of auxiliary verbs:

the modal auxiliaries *will, shall, can, may, must*  
 the “dummy” auxiliary *do*  
 the primary auxiliaries *have, be*

Auxiliaries cannot stand alone in a sentence, but must be accompanied by a main V.

**Given the (incomplete) data below, determine whether auxiliaries actually belong to the category Verb, or whether they should be put into a separate category Inflection (I). Part 1 below applies the inflectional tests for verbs to the auxiliaries. Do they work? Part 2 shows the syntactic distribution of auxiliaries. First, determine what the distribution is in each case and then decide whether auxiliaries have the same distribution as verbs. Not all auxiliaries meet every test, so note any exceptions.**

You should be aware that *be, have, and do* may also function as main verbs, as here:

Mary is happy about her promotion.  
 John has enough money to buy a car.  
 Bill does the dishes every evening.

**Decide when main V *have, be, do* behave like auxiliaries and when they do not.**

**1. Inflection of auxiliaries**

- (a) He said that he could / would / should / might / must help.  
He had gone. He was going. He did go.
- (b) He \*cans / \*wills / \*shalls / \*mays / \*musts leave.  
He has gone. He is going. He does go.
- (c) \*maying / \*willing / \*shalling / \*musting / \*canning / being / having / doing
- (d) been / had / done
- (e) \*to may / \*to will / \*to shall / \*to must / \*to can / to be / to have / to do

## 2. Distribution of auxiliaries

- (a) She is not taking the exam.  
John had not seen the stop sign.  
She can/will/should/might not leave.
- (b) I have too paid.  
I can so see the ocean.  
She is so talking too much.  
He did so turn in his paper.
- (c) She isn't taking the exam.  
John hadn't seen the stop sign.  
She can't/won't/shouldn't/?mightn't leave.
- (d) She's not taking the exam.  
She'll leave tomorrow.  
He'd better leave tomorrow.
- (e) Can/will/must he help?  
Is she working?  
Has she worked for long?
- (f) Hasn't he answered your letter?  
Can't she see me now?  
\*Has not he answered your letter?  
\*Can not she see me now?
- (g) He *d*oes know the answer.(contrastive emphasis)  
She will help, if she can.

### You might also consider the following:

- (h) She will know the answer and so will he.  
She will know the answer and he will too.  
John can go, but you can't.  
Burt won't attend, but I will.  
She will help, won't she?  
He left, didn't he?

## WORD CLASSES

1. Identify the word class of *up* in each of the following:

- (a) Your time is *up*.
- (b) She's in an *up* mood.
- (c) He *upped* the ante.
- (d) The balloons rose *up* into the sky.
- (e) The dog tore *up* the slipper.
- (f) Life is full of *ups* and downs.
- (g) They live just *up* the street from us.

2. Identify the word class of *down* in each of the following:

- (a) Alex is feeling rather *down* today.
- (b) Would you write your address *down* for me?
- (c) On a dare, he *downed* the whole beer.
- (d) That was a first *down*, wasn't it?
- (e) The computers are *down* today.
- (f) He ran *down* the stairs.
- (g) He looked *down* because he was embarrassed.

## 3. In the passage from E.B. White's "The Ring of Time" given below, identify the words in bold as belonging to one of the following categories:

<i>count noun</i>	<i>transitive verb</i>	<i>auxiliary</i>
<i>mass noun</i>	<i>copulative verb</i>	<i>preposition</i>
<i>abstract noun</i>	<i>intransitive verb</i>	<i>determiner</i>
<i>concrete noun</i>	<i>adverb</i>	<i>attributive adjective</i>
<i>collective noun</i>	<i>degree word</i>	<i>predicative adjective</i>

It has been **ambitious** and plucky of me to attempt to describe what is indescribable, and I have **failed**, as I knew I would. But I have **discharged my duty** to my **society**; and besides, a writer, like an acrobat, must occasionally try a **stunt** that is **too** much for him. At any rate, it is worth reporting that **long** before the circus comes to town, its **most** notable performances have **already** been given. **Under** the bright lights of the finished show, a performer **need** only **reflect** the electric candle power that is directed upon him; but in the dark and dirty old training rings and in the **makeshift** cages, **whatever** light is generated, whatever excitement, whatever **beauty**, **must** come from original sources — from internal fires of professional hunger and delight, from the **exuberance** and gravity of youth. It **is** the **difference between planetary** light and the combustion of the stars.

[White, E.B. 1934. *Essays of E.B. White*. New York: Harper and Row, p. 145]

## CONSTITUENT STRUCTURE

**1. Using the constituency tests discussed (Class Notes 1), determine whether the underlined sequences are constituents or not. (Not all tests will work in each case, nor will any one test necessarily be conclusive for a given sequence.)**

- (a) The workers lowered the desk from the balcony.
- (b) The workers lowered the desk from the estate auction.
- (c) She worked with two other people on the project.
- (d) She worked with great diligence on the project.
- (e) I saw the children with the glasses.

**2. Determine the function (modifier, head, complement) of each of the underlined constituents and indicate which other constituent it functions in relation to.**

Example: She got a disappointingly low grade on her paper.

Answer: Modifier in relation to the head *low*.

- (a) He is afraid of heights.
- (b) He didn't feel very confident.
- (c) He was worried about avalanches.
- (d) He checked with the weather office daily.
- (e) The approaching storm clouds looked ominous.
- (f) He asked his companions what they wanted to do.
- (g) They decided to cancel the climb.
- (h) They agreed to climb another mountain in the same area.

**3. Explain the structural ambiguity (e.g. in terms of the modifier-head relation):**

- (a) new boy's shirt
- (b) red cedar shingle
- (c) light house keeper
- (d) old dogs and cats
- (e) Herma gave her dog biscuits.
- (e) Mary saw the man in pyjamas.
- (f) John shot the cop with a gun.

**4. Identify the Subject and the Predicate in each of the following sentences:**

- (a) Every evening this week, there will be a different movie.
- (b) Running the race exhausted him.
- (c) The boxes in the back room are to remain.
- (d) That I am not pleased with the findings must be obvious.
- (e) Last winter in Vancouver, it didn't snow.
- (f) Ketchup on French fries I find disgusting.

**NOUN PHRASES****1. Provide tree diagrams or bracketing structures for the NPs below.**

- (a) a white dress with a dropped waistline
- (b) the east gate of the park
- (c) those large paintings by Renoir
- (d) the rather frightening bats up under the eaves
- (e) a tall, bald man with a bushy moustache
- (f) a long vacation on the Caribbean island of Trinidad or Jamaica
- (g) his most recent, very provocative novel
- (h) your very much deserved success in your career
- (i) a very long and boring modern novel
- (j) the weather in Vancouver on any given day in winter
- (k) the high wooden fence around our yard
- (l) a serious conversation with Sharon about her problems

**2. Explain the following ambiguities and draw tree diagrams for each reading.**

- (a) more detailed plans
- (b) rebellious boys and girls
- (c) new boy's shirt
- (d) light house keeper
- (e) old dogs and cats
- (f) Herma gave her dog biscuits.

## PHRASE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

1. Label the phrasal category of each underlined phrase (NP, VP, PP etc.). Then name its function (e.g., Subject, direct Object, indirect Object, Modifier).

Ex.: *She has completed a book manuscript.*

A: Category: NP, Function: dO

- (a) She wrote a book on a linguistic topic.
- (b) She sent the manuscript to her publishers.
- (c) They considered the book publishable.
- (d) The book might become a best-seller.
- (e) She was pleased with the sales.
- (f) The book got surprisingly good reviews.
- (g) She gave all her friends copies of the book.
- (h) Book sales made her a millionaire.
- (i) The book was on the best-seller list for many months.
- (j) She has appeared on several TV talk shows.
- (k) She has received rather large royalty checks.
- (l) She was in on the plans from the very beginning.
- (m) Some people regard her as a guru.
- (n) She hasn't responded to the critics.
- (o) The book is not highly-regarded by some.
- (p) She has agreed to the terms of the contract.

2. Identify the verb type in each of the following sentences. Then provide tree diagrams for each VP, or even the entire sentence if you can:

- (a) Those two items are in very high demand.
- (b) She followed the detailed instructions on the back of the box.
- (c) We put the books with torn pages under the counter.
- (d) The doctor administered the shot to the crying child.
- (e) The students concentrated on the assignment for the next day's class.
- (f) My aunt is quite allergic to the roses in the garden.
- (g) Those other people are very distantly related to us.
- (h) We went to our relatives' cabin in the mountains.
- (i) The manager discounted the very slightly damaged goods.
- (j) They pushed the table right up against the back wall.

