

LENG1228

Introduction to English linguistics: syntax
and stylistics
2025-2026

General Introduction

Based on the Cambridge Grammar of English, written by Carter and McCarthy + focus on two fields:

- 1) syntax (grammar)
- 2) Stylistic (differences between types of English)

What is syntax ?

Syntax = the study of the **structures** of sentences, the rules governing the **arrangement of entities**. In English the **SVO rule** prevails (Subject + verb + object).

In English, the smallest entity in syntax is the **word**. Words are classified in **wordclasses/part of speech** (pronoun, verbs, nouns, ...). Words in the same classes share characteristics like inflections or if they can be modified or not.

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Phrases = **grammatical units** made of a word or a group of words. They can be described in terms of **nature** (Noun Phrase, Prepositional Phrase, ...) and they each have **individual syntactic functions** in the sentence (subject, direct object, ...).

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Clauses = **separate units containing their own verbs**. Two clauses can coexist in a sentence, they can for example be coordinated.

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Sentences = **largest independent units of grammar**. They are composed of **at least one main clause and a full stop**. Other possibilities are [main clause1] + [main clause 2] or even [main clause [subclause(1, 2, ...)]]

⇒ This hierarchy also defines the order in tree diagrams.

What is stylistics ?

Stylistic = multiple definitions due to different uses of 'style'. In terms of linguistic = **the study of language variation and variation in different contexts**, such as speech VS written english, or formal VS informal.

Syntax and stylistics are combined usually because **syntax varies depending on the text type and the context**.

⇒ example of newspaper vs face-to-face conversation

newspaper: - complete sentences with long and complex structures - rehearsed - identification of referent because no shared context - almost no personal pronouns	face-to-face: - short sentences, blurred end, often incomplete - spontaneous - interactions (imperative, questions, shared context and supposed presence of an addressee) - contracted forms
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¹ hiérarchie Sentences> (one-or-more) Clause> (one-or-more) Phrase> (one-or-more) Word

The Cambridge Grammar of English

English is not one standardized language, there are a variety of dialects with different standards and nuances, depending on the country, the region, the social class, etc. This class follows Standard British English. The grammar studied also recognizes the existence of nuances between written norms and spoken norms², as well as formal and informal usage.

Grammar rules

deterministic = rules that **always** apply (grammar as **structure**)

probabilistic = **most likely/least likely** rules to apply in particular circumstances (grammar as **choice**)

Descriptive vs prescriptive

Descriptive approach = based on observation of usage. How language is used.

Prescriptive approach = based on idea that some forms are "good usage". How language "should be". (association with social rules)

→ those rules often come from latin

→ In CGE, mostly descriptive but highlight of less socially accepted structures

Examples of prescriptive rules: not to split infinitives; not to end a sentence with a preposition

Grammar and lexis

Grammar = rules governing how words are structured to create meaning

Lexis = vocabulary of a language, word families, idioms, semantic relationships

From two distinct layers of linguistic to closely linked terms. **Grammatical choices entail particular choices of vocabulary.**

⇒ the passive [*be* + PP]; [*by*-phrase]; [special order of constituents]: some verbs are **usually used in the passive** (surprise, please) vs **rarely used in the passive**.

Grammar and semantics/style

Demonstration of link between grammar and semantic: **auxiliary *be/get* have different nuances**: *be*=neutral and *get*=not neutral.

Link between grammar and style: **frequency of passive depending on text types.**

Grammar and discourse

Discourse= **pattern of language** beyond the level of the sentence/beyond individual speaking turn. ⇒ **how language is used in context.**

- **written discourse structure**: combination of sentences to form coherent texts

- **spoken discourse structure**: opening, closing and organizing

→CGE describes cohesion of sentences, the use of grammatical links, etc.

If appropriate, the context of use is usually marked. **Different contexts can also be linked to distinctive patterns** : cook book and imperatives, newspapers and compressed forms, academic use of the passive, incomplete sentences in advertising and else to highlight, etc.

² traditional grammar usually only focus on standard written norms

Grammar and corpus data

Corpus = collection of **authentic texts**. CGE is based on a corpus of multigenres, spoken and written English, the Cambridge International Corpus. The grammar is based on examples of the corpus thus revealing frequency and patterning.

Corpus offer **insights on**:

- Frequency information
- Concordances
- Insights into style (ex: what is more/less used in written/spoken English)
- Interpreting the data (what word for what ?)
- Word clusters (group of word that often occur together; examples of the fuzzy border between lexis/grammar)

Learner corpus = corpus of **texts made by learners of English**. They offer **insights on common areas of potential error**

Structure of the grammar and the other English grammars

CGE is composed of:

- 1) usage guide
- 2) Grammar proper
- 3) Appendices: punctuation, numbers, US grammar, etc.
- 4) Glossary
- 5) Index
- 6) CD-ROM

Other Grammars such as:

- Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language [CGEL], Quirk & al. ⇒ influential but nouse of Corpus ('common core'), preference for gradience and multiple analysis
- Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English [LGSWE], Biber & al. ⇒ 'four core registers', based on corpus, in-depth quantitative analyses
- The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language [CamGr], Huddleston & Pullum. ⇒ international standard English, generative influence

Words and phrases

Lemmas/lexemes = the unit covering the different inflected forms with the same word category [eat, ate, eats, eaten, eating]. If they are not from the same category they are treated as different lemmas/lexemes [to water VS water].

Multiword units

Different from single words, there exist **multiword units** = words that consist **of two or more morphemes but operate (syntactically and semantically) as unified items** [phrasal verbs].

For prepositions, there are:

⇒ **simple prepositions**: one word

⇒ **complex prepositions**: more than one word [such as; in addition to; ...]

For conjunctions:

⇒ **simple conjunctions**

⇒ **complex conjunctions** [in order to; as far as]

⇒ **correlative conjunctions** = two members each of which is attached to an element to be coordinated [either ... or ...; neither ... nor ...]

For multiword verbs:

⇒ **phrasal verb** = [verb + adverbial particle]

⇒ **prepositional verb** = [verb + preposition]

⇒ **phrasal/prepositional verb** = [verb + adverbial particle + preposition]

Words like [away, back, out] can only be used as particles, others [at, from, for, into, of, with] only as prepositions. But for some, they can be used as either [off, on, through].

Phrasal verbs VS prepositional verbs

	Phrasal verbs	Prepositional verbs
Presence of NP	Optional	Obligatory
NP placement	if NP = pronoun → [V + NP + particle] if not → [V + particle + NP]	[V + preposition + NP]
Interruption by adverb	Not possible	Possible
Pied-piping	Not possible ex: *The man up whom they called.	Possible ex: The man on whom they called.
Pausing	Not possible	Possible
Stress pattern	Stress on the particle	Stress in the verb

1. phrasal verb: [V + adverbial particle + direct object]

⇒ the stress is on the adverbial particle

⇒ the pronominal direct object precedes the particle

⇒ the object of phrasal verb can become the subject in the passive

2. prepositional verb: [V + Prep + Prepositional object]

⇒ verb carries the main stress

⇒ pronominal object follows the preposition

⇒ object of preposition can become the subject of a passive sentence

3. [V + prepositional adjunct]

= an optional prepositional phrase adding details

⇒ verb carries the stress

⇒ pronominal object direct follows the preposition

⇒ passive is usually not possible

Phrases

Phrases = combination of words to form a phrase. Word classes have corresponding phrases classes (5): **noun phrase** (NP), **verb phrase** (VP), **adjective phrase** (AdjP), **adverb phrase** (AdvP) and **prepositional phrase** (PP).

Heads

Heads= the **main word** of the phrase. In each case it **has to be the same word class as the phrase** (in a NP the head is a noun).

Each phrase consists **at least of a head** (single-word phrases), but most often multiple (multiword phrases).

Constituent phrases

Constituent phrases = phrases **with syntactic function** in the clause. They can be identified through tests:

1. **Substitution test**: phrase can be replaced by word/expression that fits into the structure.
2. **Movement test**: a phrase can only be moved as a unit to a different position.
3. **Interrogation test**: a phrase can be used on its own to answer a question.

Noun phrases

Their structure is **[Pre-modifiers + head + complement + post-modifiers]**

Complement = obligatory VS **modifier** = optional

Pre-modifiers usually are determiners, adjectives and other nouns [ex: country house].

Post-modifiers usually are prepositional phrases, relative clauses³ [wh-clauses] or adverb phrases.

Complements usually are prepositional phrases and nominal clauses [that-clauses].

Noun phrases have distinct functions:

- **Functions related to the verb** of the clause: subject, object, (predicative) complement

[ex: You are a good friend^{Complement}]

- **Functions related to the clause as a whole**: clause adjunct

[ex: I saw him the following day^{Adjunct}]

- **Functions related to a preposition**

[ex: I did it for the children^{C of prep}]

Verb phrases

There are **three types of verb phrases**:

1. **lexical verbs** = action with independent meaning
2. **Auxiliary verbs** = before main verb
3. **Modal verbs**
 - a. **core-modal verbs** = express possibility, permissions, ability, etc.
 - b. **semi-modal verbs** = change form based on tense
 - c. **modal expressions** = [be able to; have to; etc.]

VP can be as short as a simple lexical verb but also be complex:

- [modal V + lexical V]
- [perfect Aux + lexical V]
- [Progressive Aux + lexical V]
- [Passive Aux + lexical V]

³ clauses include verbs

Although rare, the **maximum number of elements is five** which come in this order: **[modal + perfect + progressive + passive + lexical verb]**

A verb phrase can be **finite = tensed** or **non-finite = non-tensed**.

Adjective phrases

AdjP = a phrase with an **adjective as its head** that **acts as a modifier or a complement**.

It can be **attributive** = modifies a noun or a pronoun.

It can be **predicative** = complement of a copular verb.

Some adjectives can function as both attributive and predicative but some can only function as one of those.

Some adjectives are **more central** than others, especially **if they can be attributive, predicative, be pre-modified by 'very' and be used with comparatives/superlatives**. Thus, 'hungry' is a more central adjective than 'ablaze'.

Adverb phrases

Adverb phrases can be simple, with **only an adverb** within it, or **complex**, with an **adverb followed by a modifier and/or a complement**. [Adv + modifier + complement]

Adverb phrases **can modify verbs, adjectives/adverbs, NPs, determiners (quantifiers) and clauses/sentences**.

They are:

- **Adjuncts** = specify the circumstances under which an action takes place (how, where, when, etc.).
- **Disjuncts** = convey the speaker's attitude or point of view.
- **Conjuncts** = indicate relationships between two clauses or sentences.

Prepositional phrases

Usually formed of **a preposition and a complement to the preposition**. But the preposition **can be modified by some adverbs**.

They function as:

1. **Adjunct in the clause**
2. **Postmodifier or complement of a noun**
3. **Complement of a verb/adjective/adverb**

But prepositional attachment can create ambiguity on what the function is.

Preposition attachment = to what the PP refers to

ex: "They agreed on the boat."

It can be an adjunct, saying that the discussion for which they agreed was on a boat. Or it could be a complement saying that they agreed to buy the boat.

Embedding

Embedding = use of a phrase as a **constituent of a higher level phrase**.

ex: She stayed [for [a few days]^{NP}]^{PP}

⇒ tree diagrams

Semantic features and roles

Word classes

Nouns = refer to **concrete entities, to qualities, places, events and states**.

Verbs = denote **actions, states or events** + establish **relationship between the participants** in an action, state or event.

Adjectives = three types

1. **descriptive adjectives**, usually gradable
2. **classifiers**, usually non-gradable and cannot function as predicatives
3. **intensifiers**, usually non-gradable and cannot function as predicatives

Adverbs = express a **wide range of meaning**: manner, place, time, duration, frequency, degree, focusing, modal, evaluative and viewpoint.

Prepositions = express a **relation between two events or between two or more things/people**. They can be **free prepositions**, which have independent meaning. Or they can be **bound prepositions**, in which case they rely on a word that selects specific prepositions.

Semantic roles

Semantic roles are the **underlying relationship between a participant and the main verb** in a clause. They are:

- **Agent** = entity deliberately performing the action
- **Patient** = entity undergoing/affected by the action
- **Recipient** = entity that receives something
- **Beneficiary** = entity that benefits from the realization of the action
- **Temporal** = time of action
- **Locative** = place of action
- **Instrument** = entity used to carry-on an action
- **Carrier** = entity that is assigned some attribute
- **Experiencer** = entity receiving sensory or emotional input
- **Causer** = force or natural element instigating the action
- **Resultant** = created by the action

Semantic roles and functions

For the **subjects**, the function indicates the **'doer' of an action**. Yet a subject can be an **agent, a patient, a cause, a recipient or an instrument, etc.**

Direct objects can have two different semantic roles: either **affected/patient or effected/resultant**.

Indirect objects are usually the **recipient or beneficiary**.

Verb complementation

Items need to follow verbs of different types in order to complete the meaning of the verb. These items can be NPs, AdjPs, PPs, even clauses. They **function as objects or complements**.

In some cases there is **no complementation**, sometimes **single complementation** and other times **dual complementation**.

Main complement types

- **Intransitive verbs** = action is self-contained, do not require other elements
- **Transitive verbs** = need objects to complete the meaning
- **Copular verbs** = connect the subject to an adjective/noun to describe, require a predicative complement
- **Verbs that can be used transitively or intransitively**
- other intransitive constructions
 - **Pseudo-intransitive** = transitive verbs used as intransitive with the subject being the affected
 - **Reciprocal verbs** = express mutual action or relationships
 - **Reflexive construction** = indicates that the action is being done on the subject

Subtypes of transitive constructions

- **Monotransitive** = the verb + a direct object or a prepositional complement (1 object)
- **Ditransitive** = the verb + indirect object + direct object OR V + Direct object + oblique complement (same role as indirect object but positioned after the direct object).
- **Complex transitive** = [V + direct object + object complement] or [V + direct object + locative complement]

Clauses and sentences

Clause = made of a subject and a predicate.

Sentence = largest **unit of grammar**, must include at least one clause and **be grammatically complete**

Utterance = a unit of communication which must be **communicatively complete** (communicate a meaningful message) and **pragmatically complete** (be interpretable in context).

It can **sometimes be hard to establish clear sentence boundaries in speech**, that is why we talk about **utterances**.

Main vs subordinate clause

Main clause (/independent clause) = is not dependent from any other clauses in the sentences. **Each sentence must contain at least one main clause.**

Subordinate clause (/dependent clause) = **need to be accompanied by a main clause** to form a sentence.

- **A simple sentence** = a sentence with one main clause
- **A compound sentence** = a sentence with two or more main clauses

- **A complex sentence** = a sentence with a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses.

Basic features of clauses

1. **Polarity**: either positive or negative
2. **participants, processes and circumstances**: NP, verbs, AdvPs and PPs
3. **Order**: subject, verb, objects, complements, adjuncts
4. **central elements**: subject, verb, object, complement
5. **peripheral elements**: adjunct

A clause can include **elements outside of its structure (= inserts)**:

1. **headers and tails** = a noun usually **isolated from the clause** (before or after) but that refer to an element cited in the clause
[Joe, I've known him for years.]
2. **pragmatic markers** = discourse markers or interjections
3. **vocatives**
[Would you like a drink, Molly ?]

Dependent clauses

There are three types of dependent clauses:

→ Adverbial clauses

They are **dependent clauses acting as modifiers in/of the main clause**. They **specify circumstances** like time, place, manner, etc. They either **function as adjunct** and are fully **integrated** in the main clause, or as **disjunct** and are **separated** from the main clause by a comma.

→ Relative clauses

They **postmodify an element** which can be a noun or a whole clause, they usually start by wh-words. They can be **defining** (= they define the antecedent) or **non-defining** (= they describe the antecedent).

→ Nominal clauses

They function **like NPs** (as subjects, objects, complements in the clause).

ex: [The idea was that I would make tea for everyone.]

Relative clauses VS nominal clauses

1. A relative clause **can attach to any noun**, in comparison, nominal clauses are only **possible with a limited number of nouns**, nouns with corresponding verbs, adjectives or simple nouns.
2. The **function of 'that'** has a **function** within the relative clause, however it is a **simple subordinating conjunction** in the nominal clause.
3. Status of 'that', usually in relative clauses **'that' can be replaced by 'which/who'** and can often **be left out**. But it **cannot be replaced or (usually) removed** in nominal clauses.
4. If the sentence is split in two, in relative clauses, **some words will repeat**. In nominal clauses there are **no words in common**.

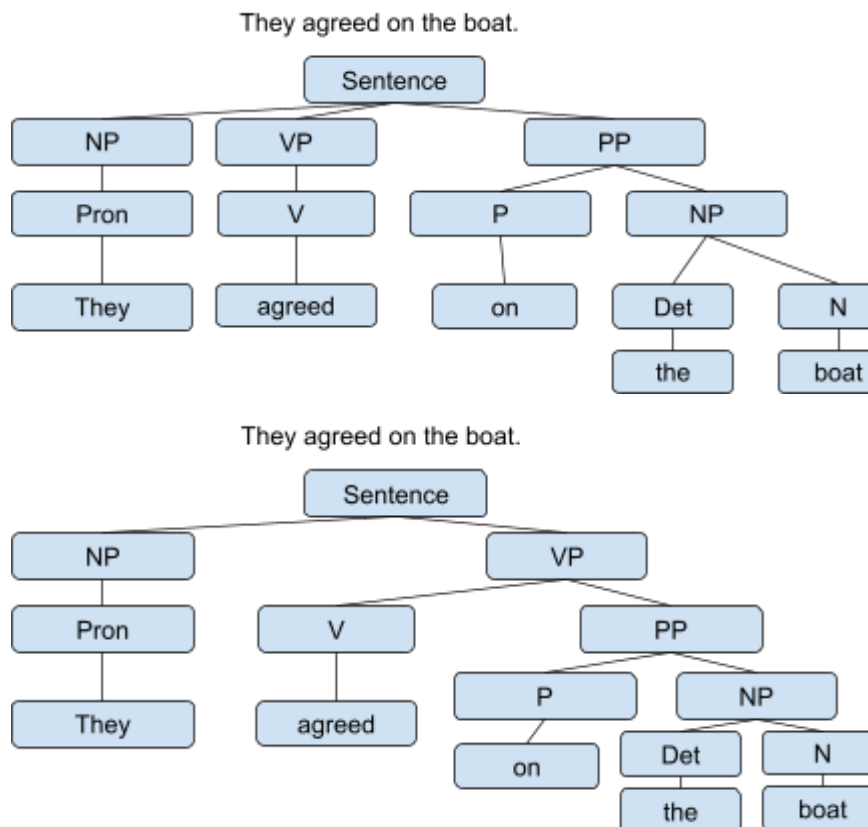
ex: Relative [He crashed into the shop with the car. That car belonged to his father.]

ex: Nominal [We have to accept the idea. Politicians don't always tell the truth.]

In those three types of dependent clauses, they can be finite (tensed) or non-finite (non-tensed).

Tree diagrams

Tree diagrams are exposed to the **problem of structural ambiguity**. See previous example with the boat.



Tree diagrams consist of **successive subdivision until we reach the lowest level of structuring**, it can also be done with bracketing.

Gardenpath sentences = sentences whose **syntactic structure is different from readers' most likely initial interpretation**.

Word order and focus

Framework

The English general framework follows the functional model of language. It is a three part system of macro-functions:

- **ideational function** (⇒ language is used to represent the real world)
- **interpersonal function** (⇒ language is used to express relations, and attitudes of/between speakers and hearer)

- **textual function** (⇒ language is used to make links with itself and the context; with cohesive elements, information structure, thematic structure⁴)

Theme and rheme

The **theme** is the **initial element** in a sentence, **around which the sentence is organized**.

There are three types of theme :

- 1) Topical themes → information conveyed in the discourse
- 2) Interpersonal themes → attitude/opinion of the speaker/hearer
- 3) Textual themes → link a clause to the rest of the discourse

The **rheme** is everything that **follows the theme**.

In declarative clauses, the **unmarked theme is the subject of the clause**. However in interrogative clauses, the **unmarked theme is the wh-interrogative or the operator** (verb) + subject in yes/no question.

An **information is given** = it is **known to the participants**, whether from the co-text or presupposed from the context.

An **information is new** = **not assumed to be known to the hearer**, or is considered particularly 'newsworthy'.

The **highest degree** of informativity usually comes **at the end** of the sentence/utterance.

Changing the word order

Changing word order can be useful for : **introducing new topics, distinguishing old and new info, link events in particular ways, highlight the importance of some things and background others**.

There exist simpler word order choices:

- **fronting** = moving objects, complements and adjuncts to front position while still fully integrating the elements in the clause. Usually used to contrast things.
- **headers and tails** = elements of the clause placed outside the clause structure, before (header) or after (tail), typical trait of spoken grammar.
 - **headers** take the form of an initial NP referring to the same entity as a later pronoun, it is used to focus on an entity or highlight contrasts.
 - **tails** involve NP used at the end of the clause, referring to a previous pronoun in the clause, it is used to highlight judgment or evaluation.

And specific structures:

- **indirect object vs oblique complement** = two structure including a recipient/beneficiary but indirect objects focus on the object while oblique complement focus on the recipient/beneficiary.
ex: [She gave it to me.]
- **active vs passive voice** = passive focuses on the new element
ex: [My friend was attacked by two men]
- **cleft sentences** = single message divided into two clauses to bring one element into focus. The focus is on the it-clause and the wh-clause reiterates given information.

ex: [It was Mary who crashed the car.]

- **pseudo-cleft sentences** = [wh-clause + BE + NP/clause] the info in wh-clause is given what the subject complement contains new info. The copular BE is often omitted in spoken English.

ex: [What surprises me is that she isn't there.]

- **existential 'there'** = alternative for clauses with indefinite subjects, the focus is on the subject because of its rheumatic position.

ex: [There were too many people.]

- **anticipatory it** = enables the subject to appear at the end of the clause, producing end-focus.

ex: [It is regretful you forgot to warn me.]

- **raising** = quite similar to raising but expressed through a structure that involve raising the subject or object. Via adjectives, passive structures verbs and copular verbs.

ex: [This distinction is impossible to make.]

- subject-to-subject raising = the subject of a subclause becomes the subject of the main verb
- object-to-subject raising = object of a subclause becomes the subject of the main verb

- **pseudo-intransitive construction** = transitive verb used intransitively with the direct object of the corresponding transitive verb as subject, the verb is usually complemented by an adjunct of manner. It shifts the focus to the verb and the adjunct.

ex: [Fish cooks quickly.]

Spoken English

Spoken	Written
- dialogic, interactive - shared spatiotemporal context - Unrehearsed and spontaneous - transient - informal (greetings, first names, discourse markers, ...) - spontaneous	- monologic - decontextualized - edited and redrafted - permanent - written letter by letter - no paralinguistic cues

Spoken syntactic features

- loose coordination
- pragmatic markers
- pronominal subjects
- simple noun/verb phrases
- Ellipsis
- Concord
- Fronting
- Headers
- Tails
- Retrospectives

Spoken lexical features

Traces of **imprecision** (adjective in -ish, 'and things', ...), **intensification** and **colloquial vocabulary**.

Normal non-fluency

- False starts
- Truncated words (not complete)
- Fillers
- Unfinished statements
- Blends
- Performance errors
- Lack of planning

Inexplicitness

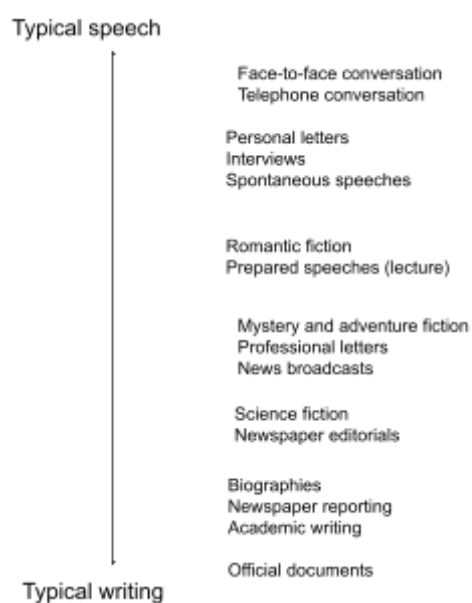
Another feature of spoken English is the **inexplicitness**.

Conversational strategies

- **Opening**: greetings, polite remarks and small talk
- **Message**: Topic 1 (subtopic1; 2; topic change), Topic 2 (...), ...
- **Closing**: winding-up talk, polite remarks, farewells

Speech **relies on the interaction between participants**. The interaction materializes through linguistic phenomena like:

- **adjacency pairs** = sequence where a turn type is predictably followed by a specific type of turn. They follow one another, produced by dif speakers, have logical connection and conform to a pattern (greeting/greeting; question/answer).
- **overlapping speech** = two people or more speaking at the same time
- **backchanneling** = things listeners say to show they are listening and involved. They appear like vocalizations, phrases, sentence/question, paralinguistic (head nod, smile, ...)



Speech-writing continuum

There are **no absolute differences** from spoken and written discourses, however there are **features associated with either spoken or written discourse**. See Svartvik and Leech 'spectrum of usage'.

Some types of **discourses are mixed genres** since they are **written to be spoken**, it is the case with broadcast news or political speeches for example.

Academic writing

Academic writing is **used in academic settings to generate and disseminate knowledge that is produced by research**. It includes **multiple text types** (essays, dissertations, scientific articles and books) in a **wide range of disciplines**. This style of writing presents certain syntactic and lexical features.

In academia, **English is the most dominant language** for articles and scientific developments and discoveries. For academic purposes, the language is highly conventionalised with **clear structural divisions, usually: abstract, introduction, review section, methods part, result section, discussion part, conclusion**.

Via corpus, we know that in academic writing it is **more usual to encounter declarative and interrogative sentences**, sometimes imperative sentences and very rarely exclamatory sentences.

Syntactic features

1. **High lexical density**: more content words than function words
⇒ content words = primary carriers of meaning
2. **High nominal styles**: actions and events presented as nouns rather than verbs
⇒ nominalization = replacing clauses by nominal phrases
⇒ use of compound nouns
⇒ post-modification with embedded PPs
⇒ Appositions = two NPs side by side, one renaming the other
ex: [The city of Rome, capital of Italy, [...]]
3. **Tenses**
⇒ present tense is more frequent than past tense. Past tense is used to describe past research.
⇒ Progressive tenses are very rare
4. **Subordinate clauses**
⇒ non-finite subordinate clauses are more frequent than finite subordinate clauses
⇒ Ellipted subordinate clauses are quite common
5. **Impersonal constructions**
⇒ passive voice
⇒ dummy 'it' subjects
⇒ adverbs
⇒ abstract rhetors

Lexical features

1. **combination of three types of vocabulary**
⇒ general vocabulary, academic vocabulary and technical vocabulary
2. **highly routinized**
⇒ standardized conventions

3. typical phraseology

⇒ fixed expression, idioms and multiwords units

4. lexical bundles

⇒ referential expressions = identify specific entities

⇒ discourse organisers

⇒ stance expressions = expressing position

5. hedging

⇒ cautious use of language indicating that the writer allows alternative voices into the text.

⇒ introductory verbs (appears to be), lexical verbs (suggest), modal verbs, adverbs of frequency, modal adverbs, modal adjectives, modal nouns, that-clauses, to clause + adjective.

In-text citations

There are two ways to cite other people's works, quoting or paraphrasing. For paraphrasing, it can be done in an '**integral**' way (**author-prominent**) = ["the author" does ...], or a '**non-integral**' way (**information-prominent**) = [.... (author)].

Language of newspaper

Firstly, there are **two types of newspaper** with different features.

On one side **broadsheets/serious press**, they have:

- limited circulation,
- home and overseas news (sports, cultural, financial, reviews, ...)
- sober typography
- restricted use of colours and photographs

On the other hand, **popular newspaper, called tabloids or gutter press**:

- wide circulation
- focus on national news (personal drama and gossip)
- bold and large headlines
- many colours and photographs

Broadsheets' features

Formal:

- long paragraphs, made up of several sentences
- standard typographical features (same size of print through the all paper except for headlines and sub-headlines).

Syntactic:

- varied sentence structure and complex sentences
- more passive clauses
- few coordinators in initial position
- use of adjuncts in a variety of position
- pre-modification and post-modification

Lexical:

- specific and formal lexis
- restrained and controlled tone

Tabloids' features

Formal:

- paragraphs composed of one or two sentences only
- varied typographical features

Syntactic:

- basic sentence structure
- more active clauses
- coordinators often used in initial position, loosely coordinated sentences
- many adjuncts at the start of sentences
- most nouns are pre-modified

Lexical:

- informal and emphatic lexis
- conversational tone and sensational and dramatic approach

Speech representation

There are **multiple types of speech**:

- **direct speech** = quoting directly what was said
- **partial direct speech**
- **indirect speech** = rephrasing
- **narrator's representation of speech act**
- **free direct speech**
- **free indirect speech**

Headlines

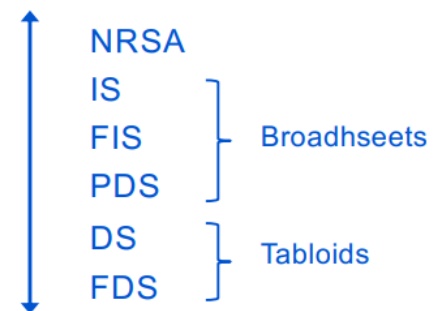
Their purposes are to **attract the attention and interest of the reader and to give the reader some idea of what the article is about in a very limited space**.

Due to the restricted number of words headlines tend to have **very condensed structures, words chosen for their brevity/dramatic quality**, uses of **cultural allusions or associations**.

Syntactic features:

1. not always complete sentences
2. often contain sequences of 3/4/more nouns
3. leave out articles and the verb 'be'
4. subjects are deleted + subjects and verb ellipses at the same time
5. prepositions are avoided
6. place rarely specified
7. genitive suffix instead of of-construction
8. terms strung in concentrated, opaque sentences
9. simple tenses instead of perfective/progressive forms, no matter the past events
10. present progressive to talk about changes (without 'be')
11. rare use of simple past tense to deal with reports (like court cases)

Under journalist's control



Under speaker's control

12. auxiliary verbs dropped from passive structure
13. future expressed by to-infinitive
14. future auxiliary "will" in quality newspaper

Lexical features:

- use of abbreviations when possible
- short words used in unusual contexts/different sense than in ordinary language
- some words chosen because they sound dramatic

There are **uses of word play in headlines**, either playing with the **meaning** (puns based on homonyms, homophones, similar pronunciations, etc.) or with **sounds** (rhyme, alliteration, etc.).

Headlines often try to do **cultural references**, hinting at movies, books, and other cultural elements.

Crash blossoms = **ambiguous and badly-worded headlines** with a possible absurd other meaning.

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