

Tallerman: Chapter 2.3

# Grammatical Categories

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- Form:
  - Inflection
    - Affix indicates grammatical category
  - Closed class words
- Types
  - Inherent categories
    - Properties a word has or doesn't have
  - Agreement categories
    - Show syntactic links between words
  - Relational categories
    - Mark the relationship a word or phrase has to the whole sentence

- Nouns
  - Inherent: number, gender or noun class, definiteness
  - Relational : case
- Verbs
  - Inherent: tense, aspect, mood, transitivity
  - Relational: voice
  - Agreement: agreement with arguments
- Adjectives
  - Inherent: degree of comparison (equative, comparative, superlative)
  - Agreement: agreement of attributive adjectives with head noun; agreement of predicative adjectives with subject.



## – Gender or noun class

- Spanish: two genders: masculine & feminine
  - **el libro** ‘the book’
  - **el chico** ‘the boy’
  - **el vestido** ‘the dress’
  - **el jardin** ‘the garden’
  - **la revista** ‘the magazine’
  - **la chica** ‘the girl’
  - **la corbata** ‘the necktie’
  - **la libertad** ‘the liberty’
- Swahili: 15-16 noun classes.
  - **m-toto** ‘child’
  - **NC1-child**
  - **ki-kapu** ‘basket’
  - **NC7-basket**
  - **ku-soma** ‘reading’
  - **NC15-reading**
  - **wa-toto** ‘children’
  - **NC2-child**
  - **vi-ti** ‘stools’
  - **NC8-stool**

## – Definiteness

- Swedish marks definiteness morphologically:
  - **mus-en**  
mouse-DEF  
'the mouse'
  - **den** (hungriga) **mus-en**  
the hungry mouse-DEF  
'the (hungry) mouse'

## – Case

- English shows case only on pronouns
- Some languages show no case at all

– <b>Saya benci dia</b>	<b>Dia benci saya</b>	(Malay)
I hate he/she	He/she hate I	
‘I hate him/her’	‘She/he hates me’	

- Some languages have rich case systems:

– <u>German</u> has four cases: Nominative, Accusative, Dative, Genitive:	<b>Der Mann</b> kaufte <b>dem</b> Vater <b>des</b> Jungen <b>den</b> Computer.
	DEF:NOM man bought DEF:DAT father DEF:GEN boy DEF:ACC computer
	‘The man bought the boy’s father the computer.’

- Rich case systems can allow freer word order:

– <b>Nauta puellam amat</b>	(Latin)
sailor:NOM girl:ACC loves	
‘the sailor loves the girl.’	
– <b>Puellam nauta amat</b>	
girl:ACC sailor:NOM loves	
‘the sailor loves the girl’	

- Finnish has 14 cases:

– Nominative	talo	‘house’
Genitive	talon	‘of (a) house’
Essive	talona	‘as a house’
Partitive	taloa	‘house (as an object)’
Translative	taloksi	‘to a house’
Inessive	talossa	in (a) house’
Eitative	talosta	‘from (a) house’
Illative	taloon	‘into (a) house’
Adessive	talolla	‘at (a) house’
Ablative	talolta	‘from (a) house’
Allative	talolle	‘to (a) house’
Abessive	talotta	without (a) house’
Comitative	talomeni	‘with my house(s)
Instructive	talon	‘with (a) house’

*<http://www.cs.tut.fi/~jkorpela/finnish-cases.html>*

- **Grammatical categories for verbs**

## – Tense

- Grammaticalized expression of location in time (Comrie)
- English
  - I liked him yesterday. past tense
  - I like him now. present (non-past) tense
  - I will like him tomorrow. future auxiliary verb
- Location of an event (E) taking place at a reference time (R) relative to the time of speaking (S).

<u>[x x]</u>	S = E = R	<u>Simple present</u> 'I like (E) him now (R).'
<u>S,E,R</u>		
<u>[xx]</u>	E = R < S	<u>Simple past</u> 'I liked (E) him yesterday (R).'
E,R S		
<u>[xx]</u>	S < E = R	<u>Simple future</u> 'I will like (E) him tomorrow (R).'
S E,R		

- ChiBemba

- ba-àlí-bomb-ele  
ba-álìì-bomba  
ba-àcí-bomba  
ba-á-bomba  
‘they worked’
  - ba-áláá-bomba  
ba-léé-bomba  
ba-kà-bomba  
ba-ká-bomba  
‘they’ll work’

remote past (before yesterday)  
removed past (yesterday)  
near past (earlier today)  
immediate past (just happened)

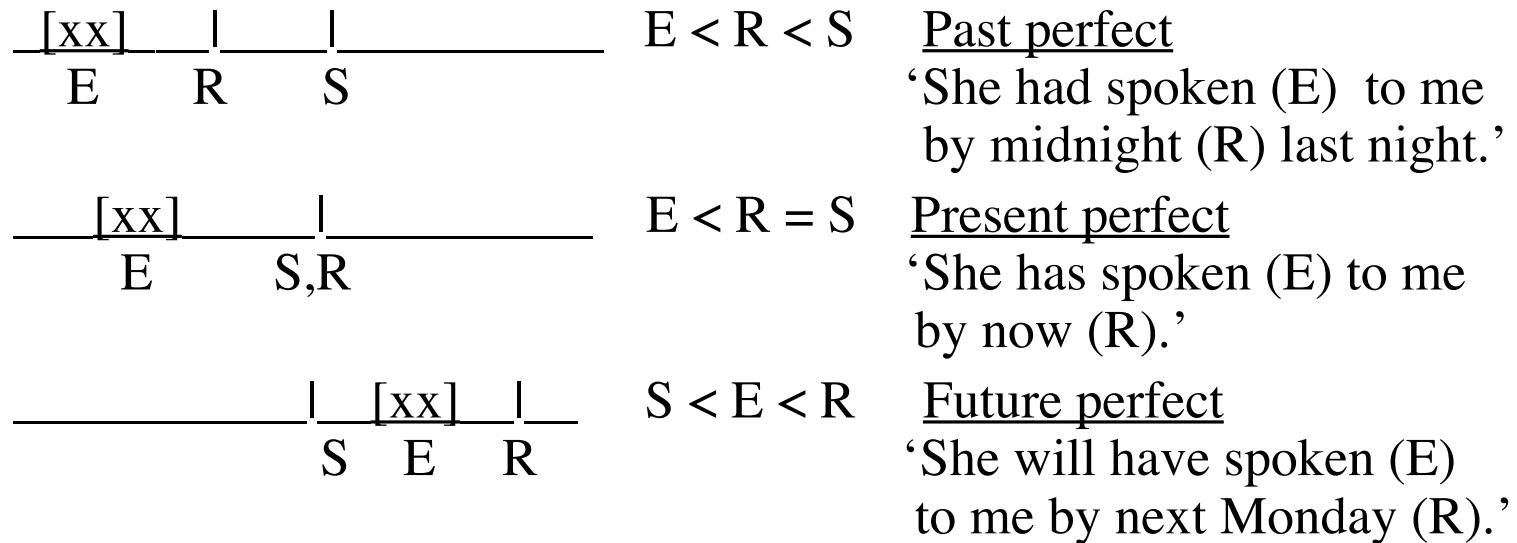
immediate future (very soon)  
near future (later today)  
removed future (tomorrow)  
remote future (after tomorrow)

– **Aspect:**

- Different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation (Comrie)
- English:
  - Perfect aspect
    - » Present perfect
    - » Past perfect
    - » Future perfect
  - Progressive aspect
    - » Present progressive
    - » Past progressive
    - » Future progressive

She has studied.	
She had studied.	
She will have studied.	
She is studying.	
She was studying.	
She will be studying	

- Saeed: “The perfect aspect is a relative aspect: it allows a speaker to emphasize the relevance to an anchoring point (R) of an event (E) in its past.”



[Reichenbach 1947]



- Progressives signal background information and description. They don't advance the stream of the narrative.
- Stephane Breitweiser, 33, from Alsace, in France, is the greatest art thief in Europe. For over six years, **while he was working as a lorry driver**, he stole 239 paintings from museums in France, Austria, and Denmark. He went into the museums **just as they were closing** and hid the paintings under his coat. Nobody looked at him **because he was wearing a security guard's uniform**. Back in his apartment, **where he was living with his mother**, he filled his bedroom with priceless works of art. His mother, Mireille, 53, thought all the paintings were copies. One day **while they were having supper**, the police arrived, and they took Stephane to the police station. Mireille was so angry with her son that she went to his room, took some paintings from the walls, and cut them into small pieces. Others she took and threw into the canal. Altogether she destroyed art worth two billion dollars! Both mother and son spent many years in prison.
  - [Example from Teri Hedberg, Oxford University Press EFL materials]

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- Stephane Breitweiser, 33, from Alsace, in France, is the greatest art thief in Europe. He was working as a lorry driver. The museums were closing. He was wearing a security guard's uniform. He was living with his mother. They were having supper.
- Which is the better story?

- Aspect: Mandarin Chinese
  - PERFECTIVE: **LE**
    - » Ta zuotian mai le yi tiao gou.  
he yesterday buy LE one CL dog  
'He bought a dog yesterday.'
  - PERFECT: **GUO**
    - » Wo chi guo Zhongguo cai.  
I eat GUO Chinese food  
'I have eaten Chinese food.' (I have tried it)
  - IMPERFECTIVE: **ZHE**
    - » Mayi zai dishang pa zhe.  
ant at ground crawl ZHE  
'The ants are crawling on the ground.'

[Examples from Marita Ljungqvist, *Journal of East Asian Linguistics*, 2007, 16:193–235.]

## – Modality

- Saeed: devices which allow speakers to express varying degrees of commitment to, or belief in, a proposition; or which signal the speaker's attitude to social factors of obligation, responsibility and permission.
- Modal auxiliaries:
  - She has left by now.
  - She **must** have left by now.
  - She **could** have left by now.
  - She **must** leave now.
  - She **could** leave now.

## – Mood

- Modal distinctions made by inflections on verbs.
- Subjunctive versus indicative mood in European languages
- Subjunctive typically appears in subordinate clauses, often following verbs of ordering, preference, opinion, emotion:
- French:
  - Je sais qu'il **viendra**  
I know that-he come.INDIC.FUT  
'I know that he'll come.'
  - Je doute qu'il **vienne**.  
I doubt that-he come-SUBJUN.PRES  
'I doubt that he'll come.'

- ‘Mood’ sometimes indicates forms used to express different speech acts:

- Declarative mood: You are on time.
- Interrogative mood: Are you on time?
- Imperative mood: Be on time!
- Conditional mood: You would be on time.

- French:

Vous <b>êtes</b> gentils.	Vous <b>seriez</b> gentils.	<b>Soyez</b> gentils!
You be.INDIC.2PL nice	You be.COND.2PL nice	Be.IMPER. 2PL nice
‘You are nice.’	‘You would be nice.’	‘Be nice!’

- Mandarin Chinese:

- Women chi fan **ma**?  
We eat rice MA  
‘Do we eat dinner?’  
INTERROGATIVE (NH: ?)
- Women chi fan **ba**!  
We eat rice BA  
‘Let’s eat dinner!’  
IMPERATIVE (NH: ?)

## – Voice

- Relational category because it is associated with the position of the NP arguments of the verb.
- Active vs. Passive voice
  - Japanese (from David Oshima)
    - » Pat-ga Max-o nagut-ta  
Pat-NOM Max-ACC hit-PAST  
‘Pat hit Max.’
    - » Max-ga Pat-ni nagu-**rare**-ta  
Max-NOM Pat-DAT hit-PASSIVE-PAST  
‘Max was hit by Pat.’
  - Direct object of active verb is promoted, subject of active verb is demoted, and the form of the verb changes.
  - English: auxiliary *be* or *get* plus past participle.

## – Agreement



- **Grammatical categories for prepositions**
  - **Agreement**

- Irish

le Séamas	‘with Séamas’
leis	‘with him’
léithí	‘with her’

- Kaqchikel

- **ru-ma ri-ixoq**  
3SG-by the-woman  
‘by the woman’
- **ki-ma ri-ixoq-e**  
3PL-by-the-woman-PLURAL  
‘by the women’

# Summary

- Languages with a lot of morphology represent grammatical information without needing a lot of closed class words
  - Bantu languages, native American languages, Greek, Slavic, Finnish, Turkish
- Languages without a lot of morphology rely on closed class words.
  - Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malay/Indonesian