

729G49 Språk och datorer (VT2024)

Introduction to Syntax and Morphology

Linguistics 2 – Words, Lexicon, Parts-of-Speech

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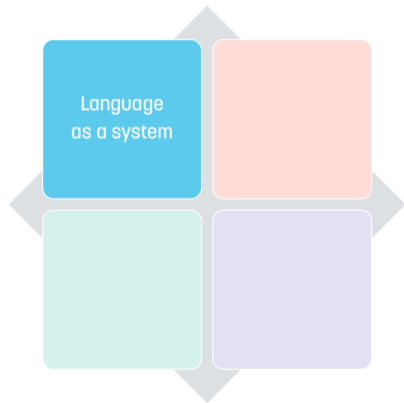
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Based on material from
Mikael Svensson & Evelina Rennes.

Reminder: Language as a system

- **Phonology**: the study of sounds in a language and how they are organized
- **Morphology**: the study of how **words** are built up from “smallest meaningful units”
- **Syntax**: the study of how **words** combine to form phrases and sentences
- **Semantics**: the study of the meaning of linguistic expressions



This lecture

■ Words and the Lexicon

- Words
- Lexicon
- Word Formation

■ Parts of Speech

- Nouns
- Verbs
- Adjectives and Adverbs
- Pronouns
- Function Words

Words and the lexicon



What **is** a word?

What is a word?

- **How many words** in the following examples?

What is a word? – What's a word?

I will not accept it. – I cannot accept it.

I bought a washing machine. – Jag köpte en tvättmaskin.

語とは言語の構成単位の一つである。

→ Whitespace separation is not always a good indicator of a “word.”

What is a word?



There is **no universally agreed-upon definition** in linguistics what a “word” is.

“**word.** *A unit of expression which has universal intuitive recognition by native speakers, in both spoken and written language.*”

— Crystal (2008), *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*

Proposed criteria for “words”

1. Words have a **fixed internal structure**.

*o-drick-bar-t — *drick-t-o-bar*

*Hur snabb är bilen? — Bilen är snabb. — *Bil är snabben.*

2. Words are **uninterruptible**.

**What 's a word?*

3. A word is the **smallest unit** that can “stand on its own”.

Vad dricker du? — Kaffe.

What is the lexicon?

- In linguistics, the **lexicon** stores information about words and their properties.
 - Abstract concept, not a physical thing!
 - **lexicon** \approx **vocabulary**
- Lexicon provides the “parts”, morphology provides “rules” how to combine them.
 - Lexicon: *lögn*, *-aktig*
 - Morphology: *lögn* + *-aktig* \rightarrow *lögnaktig*



Image: Svenska Akademiens Ordbok (SAOB)

How many words do you know?

Mental lexicon

- We all have a limited, but large **vocabulary** of words.
 - Adult native speakers of English probably know **at least 50,000** words.
 - *But*: Depends a lot on what counts as a “word” ...
- The word forms in the lexicon are **symbolic** and **conventionalized**.
 - 🌲: *träd, tree, Baum, árbol, cây, strom, drevo, ağaç, 木, дерево, ...*
- The **mental lexicon** connects these **forms** to **meaning**.

Source: Aitchinson (2012), p. 8

Mental lexicon

We can access information in our mental lexicon in a lot of different ways.

- **Phonological** properties
 - *What rhymes with “hund”?*
- **Semantic** properties
 - *What are some synonyms of “dålig”?*
 - *What is the opposite of “pratsäm”?*
- **Sociolinguistic** properties, e.g. register
 1. *Det var en jävligt schysst chaffis.*
 2. *Det var en utomordentligt trevlig chaufför.*

Word recognition tasks

- Which of these are actual English words?

desk

sjmf

sjif

sajf

sarf

Word recognition tasks

Stimulus	Example	Reaction time (average)
Word	<i>desk</i>	708 ms
Non-word (unpronounceable)	<i>sjmf</i>	607 ms
Non-word (onset unpronounceable)	<i>sjif</i>	644 ms
Non-word (coda unpronounceable)	<i>sajf</i>	680 ms
Non-word (pronounceable)	<i>sarf</i>	746 ms

Nyordslistan: Which year?

- *barnvagnsbio*
- *finansfobi*
- *googla*
- *(göra en) labrador*
- *närvaropeng*
- *social turism*
- *stalka*
- *tröskelboende*



Source: Nyordslistan

Nyordslistan: Which year?

- *alternativa fakta*
- *cringe*
- *dabba*
- *fidget spinner*
- *fejkade nyheter*
- *killgissa*
- *#metoo*
- *sekundärkränkt*



Source: Nyordslistan

Nyordslistan: Which year?

- *AI-klonad*
- *bubbelhoppa*
- *dubbelswisha*
- *gargasnipe*
- *ick*
- *känslighetsläsare*
- *nepo baby*
- *situationship*



Source: Nyordslistan

Word formation mechanisms

- **Loan words** (*lånord*)

- *cringe* (...*cringeig?* att *cringea?*)
- *situationship*

- **Calques** (*översättningslån*)

- Eng. *software* → *mjukvara*
- Ger. *Staubsauger* → *dammsugare*

- **Backformation** (*retrogradering*)

- *kedjerökning* → *kedjeröka*

- **Blending** (*teleskopord*)

- *bank* + *automat* → *bankomat*
- *Barbie* + *Oppenheimer*
→ *Barbenheimer*

- **Clipping** (*kortord*)

- *loppmarknad* → *loppis*
- *climate fiction* → *cli-fi*

- **Coinage**

- *googol* → *Google* → *googla*
- *fear of missing out* → *fomo*

Parts of speech



How can we classify words?

- **Semantic criterium** (*betydelsekriteriet*)
 - Nouns often refer to things
 - Verbs often refer to actions
- **Morphological criterium** (*böjningskriteriet*)
 - Nouns can be inflected by number (*e.g. singular/plural*)
 - Verbs can be inflected by tense (*e.g. past/present*)
- **Functional criterium** (*funktionskriteriet*)
 - Nouns can function as subjects or objects in a sentence

Parts of speech (*ordklass typer*)

- **Open class words**, or **content words** (*innehållsord*)
 - e.g. *bil, riktning, hamna, dike, köra, sten, ...*
 - Refer to things, people, properties, actions, etc.
 - Continuously expanding with new words
- **Closed class words**, or **function words** (*funktionsord*)
 - e.g. *en, på, måste, och, i, mot, ...*
 - Perform grammatical functions
 - Set of words tends to stay constant

Examples of common parts-of-speech

Open class

- **noun** (*substantiv*)
- **verb** (*verb*)
- **adjective** (*adjektiv*)
- **adverb** (*adverb*)

Closed class

- **determiner** (*artikel*)
- **conjunction** (*konjunktion*)
- **preposition** (*preposition*)
- **pronoun** (*pronomen*)

*“Substantiv är namn på ting, så som klocka, hatt och ring.
Verb är sådant man kan göra: sitta, springa, gå och köra.
Adjektiven sen oss lär, hurudana tingen är.”*

Parts of speech



Nouns

Nouns (*substantiv*)

- **Nouns** are hard to define semantically...
 - *bil, ring, nyfikenhet, promenad, väderomslag*

Swedish nouns inflect in four categories:

- **Number**: singular/plural
 - **Case**: base form/genitive
 - **Gender**: common/neuter
 - **Definiteness**: definite/indefinite
- **Numerus**: *singular/plural*
 - **Kasus**: *grundform/genitiv*
 - **Genus**: *utrum/neutrum*
 - **Species**: *bestämd/obestämd*

Nouns – Number (*numerus*)

Singular	Plural
<i>en <u>bil</u></i>	<i>många <u>bilar</u></i>
<i>ett <u>tåg</u></i>	<i>tre <u>tåg</u></i>

- Not all nouns have a plural form; some are **uncountable** (*oräknebart*).
 - Often nouns referring to substances or certain abstract concepts
 - *mjök, smuts, panik, samverkan*
- **Pluralia tantum** are nouns that only exist in the plural.
 - *kläder, glasögon*

Nouns – Case (*kasus*)

Base form	Genitive
<i>min <u>katt</u></i>	<i>min <u>katts</u> matskål</i>

- Other languages can have much richer case systems:

Swedish	Finnish	Case
<i>hus</i>	<i><u>talo</u></i>	nominative
<i>i huset</i>	<i><u>talossa</u></i>	inessive
<i>målning av huset</i>	<i>maalaan <u>taloa</u></i>	partitive
<i>leva utan hus</i>	<i>elää <u>talotta</u></i>	abessive

Nouns – Gender (*genus*)

Common/utrum	Neuter/neutrum
<i>en bil, bilen</i>	<i>ett hus, huset</i>

- Noun gender affects other parts-of-speech too, like adjectives.
 - *en grön bil, ett grönt hus*
- Old Norse still distinguished **masculine** and **feminine** gender.
- Swedish merged these into the **n-gender** (*utrum, reale*), but some traces remain.
 - *den gode mannen – den goda kvinnan*
 - *den snälle/snälla farbrorn*

Nouns – Definiteness (*bestämthet, species*)

Indefinite/obestämmd	Definite/bestämmd
<i>bil</i>	<i>bilen</i>
<i>(ett) hus</i>	<i>huset</i>
<i>bilar</i>	<i>bilarna</i>
<i>(flera) hus</i>	<i>husen</i>

Parts of speech



Verbs

Verbs

- **Verbs** describe actions, but also states/conditions.
 - *sjunga, hoppa, köra — heta, känna, bo*
- **Finite** verb forms inflect for grammatical categories such as:
 - tense (*tempus*): past, present
 - modality (*modus*): indicative, conjunctive, imperative
 - voice (*diates*): active, passive
- **Nonfinite** verb forms are those that normally cannot stand “on their own.”
 - infinitive (*infinitiv*)
 - supine (*supinum*)
 - participles (*participer*)

Swedish verb inflection

	Aktiv	Passiv
Infinitiv	<i>vinna</i>	<i>vinnas</i>
Presens	<i>vinner</i>	<i>vinns</i>
Preteritum	<i>vann</i>	<i>vanns</i>
Supinum	<i>vunnit</i>	<i>vunnits</i>
Imperativ	<i>vinn</i>	—

	Particip
Presens	<i>vinnande</i>
Perfekt	<i>vunnen</i>

Tense categories

- Two **simple tenses** (*tempus*): *present* and *past*
- **Auxiliary verbs** (*hjälpverb*) can be used to express more tenses.

Tense	Form	Example
present	indicative present	<i>Jag <u>springer</u>.</i>
past	indicative past	<i>Jag <u>sprang</u>.</i>
future	<i>kommer att</i> + infinitive	<i>Jag <u>kommer att springa</u>.</i>
	<i>ska</i> + infinitive	<i>Jag <u>ska springa</u>.</i>
present perfect/perfekt	<i>har</i> + supinum	<i>Jag <u>har sprungit</u>.</i>
past perfect/pluskvamperfekt	<i>hade</i> + supinum	<i>Jag <u>hade sprungit</u>.</i>

Grammatical mood/Modality (*modus*)

- **Indicative:** “default” modality, factual statements, positive beliefs
 - *jag vinner, hon vann*
- **Conjunctive:** hypothetical statements, wishes
 - *jag önskar att du vore här*
 - *leve Sverige!*
- **Imperative:** commands, requests
 - *Kom! Gå! Försvinn!*

Grammatical voice/Diathesis (*diates*)

- **Active:** the grammatical subject is performing the action
 - *Chefen avskedade honom.*
 - *Han säljer boken.*
- **Passive:** the grammatical subject is affected by the action
 - *Han avskedades.*
 - *Boken säljs av honom.*

Verb forms vs. diathesis

- Passive diathesis can also be expressed with *bliva* + participle.
 - *Han blev avskedad.*
- Passive forms can sometimes have an active meaning. (*deponensverb*)
 - *Jag hoppas det.*
 - *Vi lyckades inte.*
- Active forms can sometimes express a **middle** voice.
 - *Boken säljer bra.*

Auxiliary verbs (*hjälpverb*)

- **Temporal** auxiliary verbs are used to construct complex tenses.
 - *ha, kommer (att), ska*
- **Modal** auxiliary verbs are used to express different modalities.
 - *vill, bör, ska, måste, får, lär, ...*

Parts of speech



Adjectives and adverbs

Adjectives (*adjektiv*)

- **Adjectives** describe properties or membership of a group.
 - *söt, glad, irriterad, akrobatisk, svensk, grön*
- Adjectives inflect for **agreement** with their noun. (*kongruensböjning*)
 - *en brun katt, ett brunt glas, den bruna katten*
- Adjectives can often be **compared** in different **degrees**. (*komparationsböjning*)

positiv	komparativ	superlativ
<i>söt</i>	<i>sötare</i>	<i>sötast</i>
<i>irriterad</i>	<i>mer irriterad</i>	<i>mest irriterad</i>

Adverbs (*adverb*)

- Adjectives modify nouns; **adverbs** modify verbs.
 - *det snabba tåget – tåget kör snabbt*
- Adverbs can fulfill different functions than adjectives.
 - *Alltså kommer jag. (relation between sentences)*
 - *Jag kanske kommer. (probability/degree of truth)*
 - *Lyckligtvis kan jag komma. (attitude of the speaker)*
 - *Jag kommer inte. (negation)*

Parts of speech



Pronouns

Pronouns (*pronomen*)

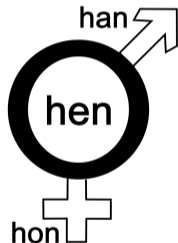
- **Pronouns** literally stand “in place of” a noun.
 - *Peter träffade Lisa. Han gav henne mina anteckningar.*
- **Nominal pronouns** (*substantiviska pronomen*) always stand alone as a noun.
 - *jag, du, han, honom, oss, de, det, man, ingenting, ...*
- **Adjectival pronouns** (*adjektiviska pronomen*) can also be used like adjectives.
 - *min/mitt, hennes, någon, många, övrig, enda, ...*

Categories of pronouns (examples)

- **Demonstrative** pronouns
 - *denne, denna, detta, dessa*
- **Possessive** pronouns
 - *min/mitt, hans, hennes, dess, vår/vårt, ...*
- **Reflexive** pronouns
 - *sin, sig*
- **Quantitative** pronouns
 - *många, fler, varje, all, båda, någon, ingen, ...*
- **Interrogative** pronouns
 - *vem, vad, vilken, när, hur, ...*

Pronouns – closed class?

- Pronouns are typically categorized as a **closed class** of words.
 - “closed class” \approx we can't add/invent new words to the list
- **Neopronouns** violate this assumption!
 - In Swedish: hen as a genderneutral pronoun
 - In English: *xe/xem, ze/hir, fae/faer, ...*
 - Language is always changing, but pronouns traditionally being a fixed, closed class of words may explain why they feel more “unnatural” to many speakers than other “new” words.



Parts of speech



Function words

Determiners (*artiklar*)

- **Determiners** indicate a noun's **definiteness** (*bestämmdhet*).
 - Definite (*bestämd*): *den, det, de*
 - Indefinite (*obestämd*): *en, ett* — only in the singular in Swedish!
- Swedish (and Norwegian) are among the very few languages that express definiteness with **two articles**, both preceding and following the noun.
 - den *ståtliga* *strutsen*

Prepositions (*prepositioner*)

- **Prepositions** usually describe relations, e.g. spatial relations.
 - *Lampan sitter i taket.*
 - *Vattnet rinner under huset.*
 - *Han sover på natten.*
- Some **verb participles** have effectively become prepositions.
 - *oavsett tidigare resultat; angående provet*
- Some **idiomatic phrases** effectively function as prepositions.
 - *Jag överlever med hjälp av kaffe.*
 - *Han lyckades på grund av tur.*

Conjunctions (*konjunktioner*)

- **Conjunctions** are words that connect phrases or sentences. (*bindeord*)
 - *och, men, så, för, eller, ...*
- Typically, conjunctions connect two **main clauses** (*huvudsatser*).
 - *Kalle diskade men Lisa lagade bilen.*
 - *Anna kommer inte och/men/så/för/eller Bo har kvällspasset.*
- The conjunction **och** can connect many types of phrases.
 - *Kalle och Lisa, nu och då*

Subjunctions (*subjunktioner*)

- **Subjunctions** are words that introduce **subordinate clauses** (*bisatser*).
 - *Han inser att vi måste ändra inställning.*
 - *Du kan läsa medan du väntar.*
 - *Han kan om han vill.*
 - *De kan ingenting trots att de har gått på universitetet.*
- Subjunctions can indicate different **semantic relations** between the clauses.
 - **Temporal:** *innan, sedan, medan, tills, samtidigt som, ...*
 - **Causal:** *eftersom, därför att, då*
 - **Conditional:** *om, bara, förutsatt att, ifall, ...*
 - **Comparative:** *liksom, som, såsom, än*

Wrapping Up



Wrapping up

Before the seminar

Do the following exercises:

- Josefsson övningsbok chapter 2 (*ordklasser och morfologi*)
- *Övningsuppgifter* from the website

Next time: Morphemes and morphology

Reading:

- Yule chapter 6, Josefsson chapter 5 (*ordbildning*)

