ESSAYS

IN

INFORMATIONAL ENGLISH GRAMMAR

with reference to English language teaching

Acknowledgements

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INTRODUCTION

Why an "informational" English grammar?

Each type of English grammar arose in circumstances we may identify as:

- a) the grammar designed to make it easy for English learners of Latin to master the written forms of what, till recently, was the high status European academic language, or to learn the matching forms of modern European languages described in Latin terms. This is the traditional grammar
- b) particular selections from traditional grammar. These arose to satisfy (especially spoken) "communicative" needs in circumstances of person-meets-person (actually elite foreign language learner meeting elite native speaker). We may attribute these selections to development of the late 19th Century railway networks
- c) theoretical grammars deriving from current linguistic theory
- d) a "bottom-up", informational grammar to meet a demand for (especially "machine") translation.
- (c) and (d) are related. Translation presents repeated problems anticipated in linguists' relaxation of a formerly rigid idea of "structure", their recognition of the grammar of the "arguments" of particular words, and their idea that a spoken or written form at one point in a sequence of forms may be represented by a "trace" (not heard or seen) at another.

Compare:

- 1 She took a biscuit from the tin and munched it noisily
- 2 She took a biscuit from the tin and closed it noisily

Whenever a construction of the kind $\underline{take} + noun + \underline{from} + noun$ appears, the grammar of a following \underline{it} reference is informational; in the examples, from the association of 'biscuit' and 'munch', 'tin' and 'close'.

For speakers of English, the grammar is unnoticed. However, when it has alternative translations according to the grammatical gender of "biscuit" and "tin" (e.g. in French le and la) how would one instruct a computer to make the choice? The obvious way would be to tag biscuit and munch with 'edible', tin and close with 'container'. Such informational tags are essential to the grammar of translation.

Machine translation shows up multiple instances of such "bottom-up" grammar, in which information, underlying native speaker usage, has to be explicit; so that a computer knows how to translate (Malay) dia as (English) he or she or it; and whether to translate (English) we as (Malay) kita or kami.

However, I will show that informational grammar is not just particular, as in the above examples, but general.

To begin with, I need to develop the ideas

- i that the outmoded (a) style grammar is currently applied in both teacher and learner English courses
- ii that clinging to an out-dated rationale is a reason for our profession not developing an informational style of grammar matching the present day world language and its learner needs.

I go on to consider grammatical forms as clues, enabling listeners/readers:

- a) to direct attention selectively
- b) to recognize information continuity/discontinuity.

I use few special terms. One is <u>designatum</u>, 'what is designated by a form', 'what a form is a sign for', 'what a form is a clue to'. Informational reference is shown by single inverted commas: ' '.

Prague School linguists used the term "Functional Sentence Perspective" to describe the point of view from which particular sentences are organized. I do not see "the sentence" as an informational unit, therefore use "Functional Perspective", chiefly to maintain the Prague School link; I could have used "Informational Perspective".

GRAMMARS AND THEIR CONTEXTS

Sinclair (1972) writes, introducing his *English Grammar*, that "nearly all modern grammars work "downward" from the sentence to the smaller units" and that "distinctions of meaning arise from systemic contrast".

That is to say, the grammar sets off with "English" as a given, self-contained field for formal study. The *Cobuild* (1991) *Grammar* under Sinclair's editorship does so too.

However,

- (1) English must represent the general functions of all languages
- (2) communication in English must take place in the way it does in all languages
- (3) outcomes to the study of English grammar are subject to the limits to study outcomes generally
- (4) as stated above, study of English grammar is subject to influence from social circumstances, especially from the grammarians' study traditions.

It goes without saying that grammarians are not obliged to consider such things; but then, I think "nearly all modern grammars" overlook factors which are central to an English grammar for teachers. And, incidentally, the overlooked factors listed above lead one, eventually, to challenge all three assumptions nearly all modern grammarians are said to accept: "the sentence" as a primary unit, the "working down" procedure, and the centrality of "systemic contrasts".

I will, therefore, outline factors (1) - (3) above, then take up a methodological issue relevant to (4).

The general functions of language

Ethologist Lorenz (1974) and geneticist Jones (1991) point out that each of the world's 5-6,000 languages functions to make communication easy, among its language community members; equally, to make communication difficult outside them: all languages have in-built means of keeping strangers (and learners) recognizably "out". One cannot realistically study features of a language ignoring a primary, biological communication-hindering function.

Communication theorists Shannon and Weaver (1949) point out that messages in a natural language are communicated in "noisy" circumstances. Their diagram is:

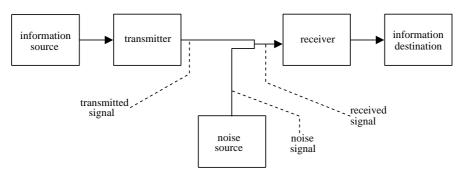


Figure 1 Elements in Communication

Each language must give protection against noise, the protection taking the form of redundancy in all aspects of its spoken and written form sequences.

If there were no formal redundancy, all forms would have equal status (like the numbers from 0 to 9). A listener to a message would be like a listener to a string of number forms, having to take them in one by one, unable to predict how the sequence is likely to develop. In fact, being able to predict the development of sequences (knowledge of sequence probabilities) is part of a person's knowledge of a language's grammar. It is likely to be unobserved under a "systemic contrast" approach.

However, redundant and partly redundant features, being redundant or partly redundant, need not and do not coincide from language to language. Many such features appear to groups of learners to be, as in fact they are, from their nature, non-systemic; they are the means of keeping strangers (and learners) "out".

How communication takes place: "observer", "encoder" and "decoder" grammars

"Observer grammar"

Sinclair's introduction sets his grammar in a descriptive or observer tradition. Observer grammarians spend years working out and describing the systemic contrasts they present; however, the time available to grammarians puts them in a different position, vis-à-vis a language, from its writers and speakers (henceforward encoders) and from its readers and listeners (decoders), needing grammars for use under time pressure.

"Encoder grammar"

As people under time pressure speak or write sequences of language forms (henceforward <u>texts</u>), they usually feel two obligations towards decoder listeners and readers.

A main encoder obligation is to indicate how, in a text, more and less significant information is distributed; the other to indicate (decoder expected) information continuity, or (decoder unexpected) discontinuity. In an informational grammar, these, not the systemic contrasts of an observer grammar, are broad features for study.

An "encoder grammar" involves, not in the first place text product, but processes resulting in the text.

The processes involve access to forms in the encoder's memory store, influenced by at least two of three information feedback sources, at the encoding point, at the transmission point and from the decoder(s).

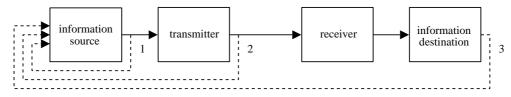


Figure 2
Communication Feedback Circuits

"Decoder grammar"

A "decoder grammar" requires sensitivity to an encoder's clues to the distribution of more and less significant information, and to continuity and discontinuity clues. Decoders may happily leave to encoders whatever measure of redundant grammatical features they include in their texts; usually, there is no decoder advantage to perceiving them.

"Learner grammar"

Learners are decoders, and are usually required to be encoders using language forms they have learned. However, representation of the learning itself requires a reversal of the left-to-right representation of communication. Learning results, when it does, from learners' exploration of a "field" before them, in the first place to distinguish significant from insignificant features within it. In other words, learners must have the initiative to "scan" the language forms they encounter; and representation has to show a right-to-left process:

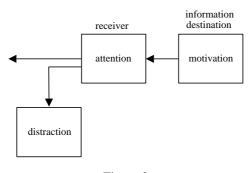


Figure 3
The Learner Viewpoint

There is room for a clash of interest when efficiency-seeking learner brains scan material for significant features and their course designer, following observer grammar, presents for learning an uncontrolled assortment of redundant and significant features.

Limits to description of structure

Structuralist Lévi-Strauss (1962) distinguished "major limb" from "twig" level structure; saying one cannot expect system regularity at the twig level, and must expect irregularities to obscure major limb structure. The theme will be developed; not least as it concerns an aspect of observer grammarians' methodological weakness with respect to irregularity.

A methodological issue

From the rarity of occurrence of contrasting features in successive grammatical units, grammarians, wanting examples, are tempted to take them from unconnected, contrasting text snippets (nowadays using a computer), or, as innumerable grammarians do, and as I did, with the "biscuit – tin" example, invent their own.

Using snippets and making up their own examples put grammarians in a poor position to be aware of the limits to their "downward" study.

Actually, present day English language teachers should have a right not to expect this particular methodological weakness still to be common; Kruisinga (1941) already identified three styles within descriptive grammar:

- i the "older method of providing sentences made up for the purpose"
- ii The use of "genuine sentences detached from their context"
- iii his own use of "a number of passages of English prose representing colloquial as well as literary English".

The relevance of systemic contrasts using examples "made up for the purpose" or taken from non-continuous text is relevance to the grammarians. With "examples made up for the purpose" they do not necessarily take into account how representative or unrepresentative the examples are. With "genuine examples taken out of their context", they take for granted that systemic contrast existed between forms that came to the mind of the person writing or talking and forms either not coming to that person's mind; or coming to that person's mind and being rejected. In either case, the mind of a reader or listener decoder is unlikely to have been concerned with absent elements.

Since a sequence "made up for the purpose" does not make a spoken or written text (in the way a sequence does when a speaker or writer has non-grammarian purposes), information about the distribution of forms in texts is not represented in the "systemic contrast" with which grammarians work. This, for a teacher's grammar, indeed, for a grammar, is a drawback.

Methodological weaknesses in "systemic contrast" grammar

1 Some traditional "systemic contrasts" are "systemic" because grammarians classify separately the language forms which might be expected to but do not enter into the contrast. For instance, they state a meaning contrast between

- "continuous" and "simple" verb forms, then separately list "verbs of perception" (etc.) not showing the contrast. Ignoring the number of text occurrences of the "verbs of perception".
- Often, a contrast is made to appear systemic by the grammarian disregarding large-scale meaning and function overlap. Even at word level, this and that are more often interchangeable than not; in narrative, 'next' may be expressed by now as well as by then (or next). Most vocabulary and grammar contrasts refer to scale ends, and do not mention large "in-between" areas, in which speakers and writers choose forms without awareness of contrast.
- 3 It is rare for a single form to have a single function, or for a function to have expression through a single form. Either way, systemic contrasts become parts of complexes:

When I was young, I would play chess every day used to play

Where there is a "systemic contrast", the resulting "smaller units" are often, incorrectly, assumed to contribute equally to communication, and be equally learnable.

The "working down" from the sentence tradition

de Saussure (1909) said language shows two kinds of relations, shown in a school Substitution Table:

1 2 3

She walked room
The girls rushed into the kitchen
Miss Brown sidled auditorium

Table 1 "Horizontal" and "Vertical" Relations

de Saussure identified

- a) the horizontal relations, those between successive selected forms from Columns 1, 2 and 3, making a type of clause: and
- b) the vertical relations, making the forms in each Column (1, 2, and 3) a type of forms, i.e. one of the "smaller units" within the clause type.

The "vertical style" grammar then acquires sub-units. Here are two clauses:

1 2 3
i She likes Miss Brown ii Miss Brown adored *she

Table 2 Establishing Subclasses

Unlike <u>Miss Brown</u> and <u>the girls</u>, <u>she</u> of Table 1 won't fit in Column 3 of Table 2. <u>She</u> must have subclassification.

Similarly, subclassification is needed from the presence of <u>the</u> in Column 3 of Table 1 and its absence before Column 1 items; subclassification of the <u>ed</u> and <u>s</u> endings in Column 2 of Table 2 when the grammar writer contrasts them with the stem forms (<u>like adore</u>).

For millions of learners, the subclassification is redundant. It is therefore unfortunate that, traditionally, the subclasses are given names, and invite "downward working" grammarians to state, for each named subclass, what its function is, contrasting one with the other: "noun" versus "pronoun"; "subject" form versus "object" form, "proper noun" versus "class noun"; "past" tense versus "present"; "third person singular present" versus "other person present".

Little of the subclassification need have a significant place in even native speaker decoder grammar. And learners as encoders show limited tolerance for it; indeed, the nature of learning (exploration, to distinguish significant from insignificant features in a field) virtually requires learners to disregard subclassification which does not match that of their mother tongue. A systemic contrast account, with associated contrast of function, and associated class and subclass names, misrepresents the degrees of informational (in)significance of the forms and their rôle in communication.

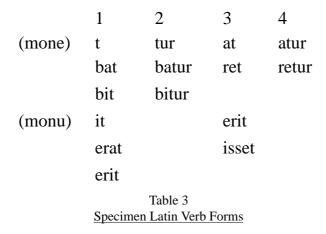
I now need to state the local reasons for traditional observer grammarians giving particular attention to such "vertical" rather than to "horizontal" relations.

The traditional grammar model

A traditional grammar of English is indirectly a traditional grammar of Latin, for centuries—indeed, until our own—the prestige European language. To understand how far nearly all modern grammars are from being good representations of English or good models for English course design outside Europe, one has to look at the Latin-learning heritage.

A regular Latin verb has 118 forms. I present below a list of "third person singular" forms beginning with <u>monet</u> (in which <u>monemans</u> 'warn', <u>e</u> (later <u>u</u>) classifies the verb type, or "conjugation", and <u>t</u> indicates "third person singular").

Each listed form is one of six completing a "Person" paradigm, or "vertical" subclass. The first two Columns are "Indicative", Columns 3 and 4 are "Subjunctive". Columns 1 and 3 are "Active", Columns 2 and 4, "Passive". The blank "Passive" spaces are filled with parts of the verb 'be' followed by one of the "Past Participle" forms.



"The verb" has, in addition, Imperatives, Infinitives, Present Past and Future Participles, Gerunds, Gerundives, and Supines.

In third person singular <u>monebat</u>, students are invited to observe that the -<u>bat</u> ending comprises two forms, -<u>at</u> and -<u>b</u>. -<u>at</u> contrasts with -<u>am</u>, -<u>as</u>, -<u>amus</u>, -<u>atis</u>, -<u>ant</u> in "person"; with -<u>atur</u> in "voice"; with -<u>ret</u> in "mood"; with -<u>retur</u> in "voice" and "tense"; while the -<u>b</u> contrasts with absence of -b and with -u in "tense".

With each verb form selecting a unique combination of "person", "voice", "mood" and "tense", one expects general unwillingness to consider that the <u>-bam</u> of <u>monebam</u> might, in a text, and non-

contrastively, merely confirm information already given: "still talking about myself", and "yesterday".

Peano (1931) unintentionally showed that this is indeed so; he devised an artificial language, "Interlingua (Latino sine flexione)", using uninflected Latin stem forms.

Inflectional luxuriance, so organized and presented, needs a syllable structure itself alien to speakers of many mother tongues, its functions initially incomprehensible.

A regular English verb has four forms. Generations of teachers of Latin to English speaking learners tried to make the 118 Latin verb forms learnable by giving Latin names to certain of their English translations; thus the verb forms of English were made to leave natural English text groupings to enter into groups named in a Latin style.

Column 2 (Table 4) corresponding forms may be elicited, easily, from any group of native or non-native speakers presented with the Column 1 item:

1 2
a teacher
happy
popular with her students
She's there
in her classroom
teaching English
respected by her colleagues

Table 4
Examples of Predicative Adjuncts

Looking at horizontal relations, items in Column 2 are seen to follow, in a similar way, the Column 1 item, suggesting similar classification (Predicative adjunct, or "focus").

However, grammarians accustomed to a Latin style, vertical Column presentation prefer to see contrasts:

's teaching × teaches
's respected × respected

That is, traditionalists prefer **not** to see the closest possible spoken and written "horizontal" relation of <u>she</u> and <u>'s</u>; instead, to see, in an

improbable <u>'s teaching</u> group, the "vertical" contrast "Present Progressive" × "Simple Present", and in an equally improbable <u>'s</u> respected group the "vertical" contrast of "Passive" × "Active".

When there are alternative boundaries ($\underline{\text{she's}} \mid \underline{\text{teaching}} \times \underline{\text{she}} \mid \underline{\text{'s}}$ teaching) one should expect grammarians to state the alternatives. Usually, their tradition ensures they do not.

Most Western European grammarians are familiar with Western European languages, in which the smaller units are identifiable by Latin-style form contrasts (Latin-derived Italian regular verbs, for example, having forty-nine forms).

English itself still has sufficient distinction of "tense", "number", "case" in the Latin style to make it possible for traditional observer grammarians to describe it usefully (for European students of English) in the inherited European "systemic contrast" tradition.

The same descriptive "systemic contrast" style does not enlighten learners whose mother tongues are non-European and whose syllable structure has meant the use of non-inflected word stem forms only.

However, Table 4, with the question whether the spoken and written boundary (she's | teaching) better represents present day English than the traditional style boundary (She | 's teaching) brings into question the general validity of the systemic contrast method, for description of English.

Readers may accept, pragmatically, the idea that a sensible grammar for Chinese learners, for instance, may describe the use of the **four** forms of English verbs; already complex for speakers of a language whose verbs have **one** form.

However, the main part of the grammar I will try to write will, I hope, be free, as far as I can make it, from the traditional style, from interest in English grammar itself.

I will develop the idea that traditional observer grammarians examine a highly edited product (often edited by the grammarians themselves), whereas our professional need is for study of features of actual encoder, decoder and learner grammars.

On those premises, I develop the ideas:

(1) that an informational grammar of text comprises clues to

- differentiation of background and focus features
- (2) that essential features in the formal grammar of spoken and written text are the encoder's clues to text continuity and discontinuity
- (3) that word-word juxtaposition is the most elementary grammatical construction, with clause—clause juxtaposition more complex. Successive stages in juxtaposition would appear to describe a sensible learning route
- (4) that physical aspects of spoken text, text encoding speed, spans, pauses, stress placing, have grammatical significance
- (5) that a language's syllable form structure determines its word forms, thus its potential for inflectional grammar.
- (1) and (2) make up the grammar of informational coherence.

At first, (4) seems unrelated to (2), but group-group juxtaposition already involves it: in "Anita, please come here – stand next to Siti", the *mental* juxtaposition (from form parity of <u>come</u> and <u>stand</u>) shows sequence continuity.

I think of spoken forms as partly edited translations, and of written forms as highly edited translations, from inner speech forms (Vygotsky, 1962).

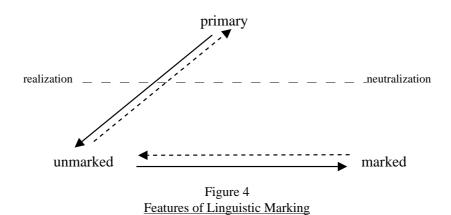
LINGUISTIC MARKING

To understand potentially troublesome features of the editing, especially under the greater time pressure upon speakers, one needs a broad understanding of Troubetsky-style marking (Troubetskoy, 1939).

"Marking theory" interprets the translation situation of:

Malay	mau	
English	want	wants

as:



The special learning problem for Malay speakers does not lie in understanding the "rule" for using English stem and stem+ \underline{s} forms (which is simple). It is that they identify the (primary) stem form mau with the unmarked stem form want.

Experience of English text reinforces the identification, since

- a) the stem form occurrences are more frequent
- b) the English unmarked × marked distinction is often (in "teacher English", very often) "neutralized"; e.g. in occurrence of she want after Did /Will (she want. . .?)

As well as being the forms prevailing when neutralization occurs, linguists characterize unmarked forms as "simpler", "normal",

"frequently occurring", "first acquired by infants", "easier for foreigners to learn", "with equivalents found in other languages". They characterize marked forms as "more complex", "less frequent", "harder to learn".

The distortion, in learner experience, of the actual disparity in occurrence frequency of unmarked and marked forms is unfortunate for learners. However, I hope to show that the disparity should be great enough, even in observer grammar, to bring into doubt apparent "systemic contrasts".

It is worth noting that, when designate comparisons are made between unmarked and marked forms, the coverage area of the unmarked designatum is often wider than that of the marked form.

<u>I like hot pancakes</u> is commonly stated to have the "equivalent" marked form <u>I like pancakes that are hot</u>.

In fact I like pancakes that are hot is one equivalent, selected from:

I like pancakes

when they are so long as they are provided they are

PARAMETERS OF RELATIVELY UNEDITED, SPOKEN TEXT

Continuous, relatively unedited spoken text has been directed by its encoder's intention at the beginning of the text, and by any changes in intention during it. This is a matter of the degree of memory persistence the encoder is capable of, then judges to be appropriate, to the occasion and to the text development. Item sequences are then organized grammatically

- a) within the encoder's point to point memory spans
- b) within the encoder's breath spans, accommodated to his rate of syllable production
- c) according to the encoder's skill
- d) according to the encoder's degree of application.

General form predictability

As encoded items succeed one another, a decoder's prediction of successive forms is confirmed or thwarted. For comfortable decoding (which may or may not be intended), a decoder's 'I've been here before' responses (Russell, 1959) to familiar or predicted forms must outnumber his 'What's that?' responses to unfamiliar or unpredicted forms; and encoder awareness of such decoder expectation is an elementary feedback information factor in the actual encoding.

These are general parameters within which partially edited spoken text is produced and perceived. And its grammar is description of what encoder and decoder are considered to have perceived as formal relations within these parameters.

There is another aspect to encoder grammar. The time constraint under which spoken messages are produced controls the relative frequency with which an encoder uses this or that grammatical form, since the frequency reflects the relative ease of his access to it in his memory store.

In this way, a particular text is encoded in the general context of the encoder's overall previous experience of text decoding and encoding. That is, when it ends, the particular text will have comprised a sub-population of forms which, to a large extent, represents a large population of forms. Like any sub-population or population, the sub-population of grammatical forms in an encoded message is susceptible to statistical study (Herdan, 1960). So that there can be a statistical check on the extent to which particular sub-population forms *do* represent those of a larger population.

Thus, each actual occurrence of a form represents the differential general probability of its occurrence at particular points in the text. Without this characteristic, decoder prediction would be blocked, together with encoder provision for decoder prediction. A grammar, of whatever kind, that ignores the occurrence frequency characteristic is defective language description.

Herdan (1960) thinks that an encoder's approximation to average form distribution is as vital to his language community membership as approximation to an accepted pronunciation.

Local sequence form predictability

Because sequences of language items are patterned, and because of the differential probabilities of occurrence of patterns, a listener whose experience has brought him familiarity with the patterns and probabilities can usually anticipate the continuation of a formal sequence, of sounds, or of group or clause construction. For example, in any text sequence patterning, the systemic contrasts observers see <u>he</u> entering into are inconsequential; <u>he</u> does not communicate the designatum 'he' so much as lead listeners to anticipate that a verb will follow, whereas <u>his</u> would make them expect a noun.

The more clues listeners register in a sequence of forms, the easier it becomes for them to predict the continuation of the sequence; in other words, the less likely it becomes that successive items will deviate from those of the predicted sequence. It follows that, as a word, group or clause unfolds, prediction of form requires a progressively diminishing part of a listener's attention.

On the other hand, when a sequence becomes long enough to show differential distribution of information, e.g. word group or clause, it

is usual, assuming normal group or clause grammar, that low information-bearing items occur earlier and high information-bearing items later. It follows that, as a sequence unfolds, a progressively increasing part of a listener's attention must be directed to the information.

It is a decoder's matching of an encoder's form clues with stored experience of clause sequence development that enables him to predict, then establish the sequence shape. The point may be tabulated:

Attention	towards the	towards the
requirement	beginning	end
form	high	low
information	low	high
	Table 5	

Listener Attention to Form and to Information

The relation of formal sequence and predictability shown above is "normal", or "unmarked": it corresponds to the usual "background – focus" description detailed later. However, there is variation from sequence to sequence. A speaker does not always want a listener's prediction to be successful. A speaker wishing to draw attention to a particular item in a sequence would not be happy if a listener predicted it without effort; and what one calls "style" is essentially interplay between satisfying and disappointing decoder expectations.

OBSERVER, ENCODER AND DECODER GRAMMARS

As already stated, at a first level, there can be three standpoints:

- 1 that of observer, leisurely concerned with a recorded product
- 2 that of encoder, involved in a process, under time pressure
- 3 that of decoder, involved in a process, under time pressure.

To illustrate observer and encoder-decoder styles, I will parallel styles of describing language through grammar and styles of depicting territory by geographical maps.

Map representation is often valued according to the extent of the point-to-point correspondence between map features and territory features; the best approximation, for smaller territories, being achieved by aerial photography, i.e. from a remote, neutral, ideal observer position. Such maps and map making are "topographical". Their usefulness is not called into question.

From traditional Western European grammar, there developed "topographical" grammars of European languages, the best of them showing the same esteem for correspondence of grammatical statement and actual usage, the same uninvolved, observer standpoint, the same aim of detailed, accurate coverage. But the reference is to Kruisinga-style, text-based work. There have also been innumerable bad copies of copies of "sketch map grammars", satisfying those (language course designers too) who find it troublesome to worry about grammar – text correspondences.

However, a motorist crossing a territory leaves his topographical map at home; its maker's skill and accuracy represent redundant effort; the accurate contour indication of a hill forty kilometres to the left of his route is as redundant as the shape of a lake out of sight to the right. A motorist is happy with a "route map", really just a line from bottom to top or from top to bottom of a page, showing intersections. Usually, the only remaining map — territory correspondence is indication of distances between the intersections.

This disappears from representations of the transport systems of large cities; the representation then being completely "topological", representation of the routes being that of continuity and potential discontinuity (at intersections, or articulation points).

Comparing topographical and topological style grammars, the first thing one observes is the different coverage. A grammar of the x language sets out the comprehensive coverage according to which grammarians expect their achievement to be judged. Route map grammar is selective in scope, annoying every time the handbook does not include the route one is interested in, or does not show the alternative route one knows is there.

More serious is any weakness consequent on taking for granted the route start and end points. (I will later argue that Capital Letter and Full Stop do not start and end the informational units of spoken language.)

Moreover, while it is true that the motorist leaves his topographical map at home, it is true, too, that he keeps his topological map in the glove compartment or on the armrest; his eyes he keeps on the road itself, on the route "unrolling" before him. This analogy closest represents the viewpoint of an encoder/decoder, especially of a learner/decoder. Both topographical and topological maps stay "still"; the map of the unrolling road moves. An encoding language learner must see grammatical relations in terms of 'What do I do now?' rather than in terms of 'What is the language observed to do?'

The difference is critical. A topographical map implies stationary observer triangulation points, or sufficient height above the territory to enable high-speed photography to "stop" any movement. Territory features are "there" for the observer to give, hopefully "authentic", representation to.

A topological map is designed for a user, in proximity with a territory; and whereas for an observer it would be the user of the map who moves with respect to the territory, for the map user it is the route itself that moves; the virtue of his route map is that it puts him in a position to anticipate what to do at route intersections.

Topological grammar was not, I think, deliberately so oriented. Nevertheless, terminology began to change. Instead of <u>form</u> and <u>function</u> as key words, one encountered <u>string</u> (<u>segment</u>), <u>slot</u> and <u>filler</u>. These brought grammarians closer to decoder/learner need to

anticipate: "What will happen? What do I do next?" Later, the idea of 'generation' contained the idea of movement, of user-decision even.

It is a matter of observation (a) that the coverage of the topological grammars is restricted (b) that there is still too much dependence on topographical, conventional, static description of territory for them to represent the reality of encoding/decoding.

Neither topographical nor topological maps represent an actually "unrolling road", as aircraft flight simulators and their car driving equivalents do.

Speech transmission speed

Part of encoder/decoder experience is experience of speed. Cyclist scanning of a route as it unrolls from A to B differs from motorist observation of it. What is significant for one, a kilometre marker for instance, is perhaps noise for the other, should he notice it.

Objectively, of course, the route unrolling speed for spoken message decoding is determined by encoder utterance speed, moderated, as the encoder wishes, by feedback information.

One may guess, but certainly not assume, that when an encoder wishes to facilitate rather than impede decoding, transmission and reception rates would match. This may be so, but not straightforwardly so, as far as physical transmission and reception of signals are concerned, but if one thinks of a "receiver" scanning an unrolling route, then physical speed becomes equivalent to the proportion of encoder-provided route detail that is decoder-perceived; determining whether the decoder has, so to say, the leisure of a cyclist, or has demanded of him the reactions of a motorist.

General native speaker ability to decode artificially speeded speech suggests that normal speech utterance speed is leisurely route unrolling. So does ability to decode "chopped" speech, speech from which up to each alternate tenth of a second of time has been removed (evidence of an overall, built-in 50% redundancy in the spoken language).

Syllables as elementary structural units

It seems (Liberman, 1975) that sequences of phonemes unroll at a rate of 20 to 30 per second, two or three times the rate which would allow listeners' ears to register them individually. Syllables unroll at speeds of from 2 to 4 per second, well within listeners' discrimination ability. A reason for taking, as I do, the syllable as the basic structural unit.

Rather obviously, a Polynesian language with a potential syllable inventory of 55 forms (Krupa, 1947) has different vocabulary-building and grammatical device resources from English with over 89,000 (Trnka, 1935). Equally obviously, no inflectional grammar is possible for languages using only Vowel and Consonant+Vowel syllable word forms.

Editing

Encoding unit lengths and transmission speeds are important aspects of the transfer of information from inner to recordable speech forms and vice versa; and it should be a premise of formal grammar that it be in reasonable accord with the psychology of the way such transfer takes place.

An acceptable word for encoding transfer is <u>editing</u>, and I take it that the grammar of an encoder must reveal the level of editing he has subjected his inner speech text to.

The professional significance of decoder grammar

As a teacher, I must emphasize the decoder standpoint. Many Government Ministries of Education pay for English teaching so that learners get, in the first instance, the ability to decode written and (to a lesser, but growing extent) spoken messages. To fulfil the official aim, only a decoder grammar is needed.

It is certainly naïve to believe, as many course designers have done and still do, that observer grammar must necessarily help all learners; and it is understandable that many course designers have decided no longer to present systemic contrasts directly. Unfortunately, the course designers who say they have abandoned the traditional grammar have not, in fact, done so. With no adequate alternative teachers' grammar, the same "smaller units" still appear (now, higgledy-piggledy) in the course material.

5 ENGLISH WORD LEVEL GRAMMAR

Earlier I referred to the need for encoders to enable decoders to recognize parts of text that are background information and parts that are information foreground, parts to focus attention on. It would seem a primary function of a grammar to distinguish between parts meant merely to elicit an 'I've been here' decoder response and parts meant to elicit a 'What's that?' response. The decoder must be guided to recognize shared information and to "focus" on what is new.

Many grammatical words, through their meanings, or functions, are likely to clue both background and continuity of background information.

Names

Names of people (Miss Brown, Mabel) usually occur in a text first as focus items (May I introduce Miss Brown?), later, in clause initial positions, as background, i.e. as part of the information shared by encoder and decoder (Miss Brown is a teacher at...). However, though obviously names often refer 'back' to a previous occurrence, as continuity indicators they allow listeners to anticipate that they are background to a further focus. Background items differ individually in the extent to which they are "retrospective" (i.e. 'back-looking') or "prospective" (i.e. 'forward-looking').

Pronouns

Pronouns are commonly said to "stand for" antecedent nouns, and <u>I</u>, <u>we</u>, <u>you</u>, <u>he</u>, <u>she</u>, <u>it</u>, <u>they</u> in grammatical subject position, necessarily refer to known antecedents, often antecedents in previous clauses.

Since a subject pronoun renews "known" information (information already shared, that is, between encoder and decoders), any information other than continuity of reference, e.g. information of sex and number, is usually redundant.

All teachers are aware of the existence, in English, of a systemic contrast distinguishing <u>he</u> (<u>him</u>, <u>his</u>, <u>his</u>) from <u>she</u> (<u>her</u>, <u>her</u>, <u>hers</u>). Many are equally aware that their own groups of learners do not willingly accept the distinction, and "use <u>he</u> for <u>she</u>".

To try to forestall learners' "errors", most teachers go along with course designers who want an initial presentation of the contrast: (pointing to a boy) he, (pointing to a girl) she.

However, this may be both poor teacher strategy and poor grammar. It is poor strategy, when the learners' mother tongue single pronoun form tells them that the he /she distinction is informationally redundant. It is poor grammar, since giving redundant reference to the sex of a known person cannot be a major informational function for the pronoun.

English <u>my</u> has fourteen translations into Latin, and traditionally those forms are learned by recitation in a traditional order. Obviously no one of these forms follows another in any text; the traditional learning emphasizes the form relations, not any text function.

English has less, but still considerable residual complexity; other European languages have even more than English. However, despite the complexity and redundancy of pronoun forms in particular languages, their major function is to reassure decoders of continuity of reference. The awareness learners of English need first is that of the continuity shown by <u>he. . . he. . . him. . . his. . .</u>

The English pronoun system, observer described, illustrates the complexity and redundancy that obscure the major function:

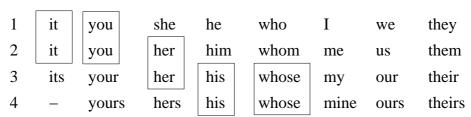


Table 6
Pronoun Systemic Redundancy

The grid has 32 places, of which 31 are filled. However, they are filled by 26 distinct forms. The boxed items demonstrate:

- a) that only three "persons" have four distinct forms
- b) that since decoders distinguish Position 1 it and you from

formally identical Position 2 <u>it</u> and <u>you</u>, the other Position 1 and 2 items do not need encoder distinction through separate forms; that since decoders distinguish Position 2 <u>her</u> from Position 3 <u>her</u>, other Position 2 and Position 3 items do not need encoder distinction through separate forms; and that since decoders distinguish Position 3 <u>his</u> and <u>whose</u> from Position 4 <u>his</u> and <u>whose</u>, other Position 3 and Position 4 items do not need encoder distinction through separate forms

c) that decoder knowledge of the masculine or feminine, or neuter identity of a <u>they</u> antecedent shows that an encoder's he/she/it distinction is unnecessary.

Chinese languages have five pronoun forms (e.g. Cantonese <u>ngoh</u>, <u>nei</u>, <u>kui</u>, <u>tei</u>, <u>ke</u>), namely, first, second and third person forms, a plural marker, and a possessive marker (thus <u>ngoh tei ke</u> translates as 'our', 'ours'). To Chinese learners, English "systemic contrasts" other than those within the Chinese system are both redundant and non-systemic. Classroom presentation of "English contrasts" shows poor teaching strategy with Asian learners; teachers have to hope that, for learners who will need an encoder grammar, a process of "shaping" will eventually develop acceptability for the redundancies.

I think that I should point out, too, the variability, from language to language, of usage features of background grammatical items. Consider direct and indirect object pronoun positions in:

English: I have given it him

I have given him it

French: 'I it to him have given' (but) 'He me it has given' Dutch: 'I have it him given'

English is somewhat uncertain for order, French varies order according to pronoun, Dutch splits the verb group items.

More interesting is an English-Italian comparison. Take Position 1 items (other than who) in Table 6 above. In Italian, as in Latin, the equivalent pronoun items are not separate words but verb endings, i.e. items that occur in what, with respect to information, is inconspicuous word final position (Table 5, above). The low, background information which English pronouns communicate is that suggested by their Italian position.

As low information forms, in most native speakers' English, pronouns do not have phonological stress, unless people are quarrelling; first school presentations of pronouns in systemic contrasts gives learners of English a habit of pronoun stressing, a habit that is unfortunate for the few who, later, speak in public. The already inappropriate presentation is taken to extremes by those course books which require learners to add to the answers <u>Yes</u> and No tags that include pronoun emphatic repetition (/yes she does/).

A neutral observer must regret traditional grammarians' major sentence boundary between pronoun subject and verb; indeed, between noun subject and verb generally. They state the boundary despite the common phonological merging of pronoun and noun subject and verb (Table 4):

It is not only written <u>'s</u>, <u>'m</u>, <u>'re</u> that show spoken subject+verb amalgamation; also 'll, 'd, 've.

Teachers should note, and teachers of beginners avoid use of <u>you</u>, <u>we</u> and <u>they</u> to mean 'one' or 'people' ("You never can tell", "Today, we have computers to help us", "They say that. . ."). <u>You</u> is used in native speaker texts to ask for continuity of listener attention ("You see", "You know"). In some texts, one in three occurrences of these personal pronouns does not refer to the official "persons".

By comparison with most languages, English seems to overuse pronouns, especially <u>I</u>, <u>me</u> and <u>my</u>. Speakers of many languages also avoid English (and mother tongue) <u>you</u>, using instead a third person form.

On the other hand, certain mother tongues show English to lack discrimination, e.g. between 'we' which includes and 'we' which excludes the person spoken to; in reported 'his' (He said his. . .) 'his' refers either to the person 'who said', or, to a 'third person'.

The short review of pronoun systemic contrasts and usage shows:

1 how code redundancy, said by communication theorists to be necessary for human communication, may expand as a

- language's syllable structure permits, resulting in the complexity and largely unpredictable growth of twig level structure
- 2 how places in texts where informationally inconspicuous (continuity-indicating) functions are performed can be places for accretion of twig level structure individual to each language.

It is not helpful to try to present such twig level structure as sets of "systemic contrasts". English pronouns represent a clash of learner interest in efficiency and teacher demand for conformity. Teachers can:

- 1 avoid personal pronoun presentation contrasts
- 2 be tolerant of learners who transfer mother tongue usage to English; one cannot expect the learning involved in the redundant complexity of Table 6 not to need time and patience
- 3 make sure that classroom text shows the continuity function.

Deictics

"Deictics" (or "Demonstratives" or "Determiners") 'point'. Teachers find it useful to get beginner learners to point with extended first finger as they learn to make the sound /ð/. The association is useful for understanding the 'pointing now' or 'pointing back' function, not only of this, that, (these, those), there, then (usually, but not always) pointing back in time, and thus ('in that way'), which have mother tongue equivalents, but also for the, which may not have one.

'Pointing now' usually clues continuity of context, reason for the encoder's pointing. 'Pointing back' shows continuity of information reference.

Many grammarians use a sequence (or "slot and filler") account of noun groups; I do so too. The sequence itself will be a later concern. Immediate interest is in its first item:

The sequence principle is fine. Unfortunately it puts into a common D-item group all those words which can appear first in a noun group. Thus a appears in the same d-group as the. Many

grammarians then put \underline{a} and \underline{the} together in a ("vertical") subclass of "Articles", in which the is said to be "Definite" and a "Indefinite".

Their presence in a common subclass invites grammarians (and teachers) to contrast "the use" of the and a. It is poor strategy and poor grammar to do so. For a does not 'point', or clue background, or show retrospective continuity; and a teacher's grammar should not, from their "vertical" classification, set a and the in a common subclass or in contrast. Their main text occurrences are unrelated.

However, a teacher's grammar should show awareness of how, as is usual with low information items, their relative redundancy gives <u>a</u> and <u>the</u> scope for information overlap which, when carelessly introduced into beginners' courses, make learning difficult.

I refer in particular to the unfortunate use of both <u>is</u> and <u>a</u> in the common 'naming' formula, "This is a. . .", with the teacher pointing to an object. It is easy for learners whose languages have a different naming formula (and perhaps no equivalents to $\underline{\text{am/are/is/was/were}}$) to associate the presentation with 'possession'; leading to a lasting confusion of 'be' and 'have'. The second disadvantage is that, while $\underline{\text{this}}$ appropriately accompanies the pointing, the "definite" object pointed to is, most inappropriately, associated with $\underline{\text{a}}$. The formula is an idiom, in which $\underline{\text{a}}$ has the approximate meaning 'one specimen of a class of items to which the name. . . is given'.

Other languages have particular naming idioms too ("calls itself") or a distinct verb for naming. There is no need for teachers of English to use the formula; the association of \underline{a} with new information may be made without "sentences" beginning with $\underline{\text{This}}$: \underline{a} battery \underline{a} wire \underline{a} switch. . .

Teachers need to be aware too of the information overlap, when \underline{a} and \underline{the} refer, indifferently, to classes:

- 1 A computer is a . . .
- 2 The computer is a . . .

Both alternate with:

- 3 Computers are . . .
- 4 The computers are . . .

When original texts are copied, so that whenever there is an occurrence of one of the forms all four forms are made available for native speakers to show their preferences, choices do not often

coincide, either with the forms of the original writer or with those of other native speakers.

Since there is a tendency in native speaker English for deictic <u>the</u> to occur in early clause position, and for (nondeictic) <u>a</u> to occur in clause final position, teachers should prefer 2 over 1; I prefer to use 3, as in the previous paragraph, rejecting alternative "When an original text is. . . a native speaker. . ."

To conclude, teachers, especially of beginners, usefully avoid classroom association of <u>a</u> with 'pointing' (<u>Show me a . . . Point to a . . .</u>), and association of <u>the</u> with a 'general' idea (as in <u>The computer. . .</u>).

In informational grammar, \underline{a} equals numerical 'one' or generic 'one' (one of a class).

Verb stem forms (Imperatives)

In written English, verb stem forms typically tell somebody what sequence of actions to follow to bring about some consequence. After the first, each stem occurrence identifies a successive step in a set of steps: thus, continuity of the stem form, at times supplemented by and, now. . . shows instruction sequence continuity.

"Remove the antenna cable \dots and plug it \dots Take the supplied antenna cable and connect it \dots Check that \dots "

In spoken English, the form gives orders, advice, and warnings. Often, as above, the occurrences are in sequences of orders, recommendations and warnings. Parity of form then indicates sequence continuity of recommendations, or whatever.

With the word level grammar so far, and the addition of invariable prepositions, all the traditional commands in the classroom (sometimes elevated to the title of a "Method") become possible. Vygotsky (1962) associated the social, "regulatory rôle" of (parents') speech with the development of (children's, originally "self-regulatory") inner speech. Teachers, very early this century, may have hit on a well justified classroom technique.

Information-bearing affixes

Keeping to word grammar, I mention in passing information-bearing prefix and suffix syllables. Many prefixes and suffixes by juxtaposition add meaning to the meaning of a word stem form, the

<u>er</u> of <u>farmer</u>, for instance. Some, however, suggest word class too, <u>ize</u>, <u>ment</u>, <u>ly</u>.

A word stem form plus juxtaposed syllables, each a meaning element, is for Asian learners a most familiar grammatical construction. Many first level words are "free" (need little learner effort) by such juxtaposition, <u>un true</u>, <u>un kind</u>, <u>un fair</u>, and it is arguable that second level vocabulary is best taught in Asian schools through affix and stem meanings. A grammar of English more accessible to large numbers of foreign learners seems likely through working up from words whose forms are permitted by the syllable structure.

That completes a sketch of word level grammar. To go further, one needs to further describe form juxtaposition.

6 JUXTAPOSITION

In any language, the most widely used grammatical device is form juxtaposition, putting one form before another or following one form with another.

The juxtaposition may be by contact, the forms being spoken or written one immediately after the other: (Bring) paper, a pencil, a ruler; or mental, a first form retained in short term memory being recalled by a subsequently occurring form of the same or matching class.

Informationally, juxtaposition of dissimilar forms (e.g. items in a noun group) implies mutual classification; occasionally contrast.

The more frequent mental juxtaposition shows information continuity. The continuity is clued

- a) by successive occurrences of grammatically similar forms (Come. . . Stand. . .)
- b) by individual forms (pronouns and deictics),
- c) by the juxtaposition of forms with formal consequence only, (as when a noun stem form is followed by a verb stem+ \underline{s} form).

With respect to (c), teachers whose learners' mother tongues do not have Latin-style inflection need an English grammar which gives priority to the continuity potential of the mental juxtaposition of earlier forms and the forms "in concord" or "agreement". The continuity function occurs in all languages, its clueing by "agreement" only in some.

Concord, or agreement

A language with syllable diversity can have a variety of inflections. A student of Latin reads: "adjectives agree with the noun they modify in gender, number and case" (there being three genders, singular and plural number and five cases for "agreement" to be shown). Latin verb endings contain subject pronouns, so that subject + verb agreement is "built-in".

Concord forms and meaning

Strictly, grammatical concord is concord of forms, and is a clue to information continuity. At times, endings do appear to be grammatical only, as with Latin noun "gender", which one is supposed to learn without association with the ordinary meanings of 'masculine', 'feminine' and 'neuter'.

On the other hand, for instance, the words <u>singular</u> and <u>plural</u> seem to feature both as elements in grammatical agreement and to have meanings ('one' × 'more than one'); and it is usually these "singular" and "plural" meanings grammarians take for granted and Asian teachers of English feel they have to focus learners' attention to.

English is said to show agreement in gender, number, tense, with meanings attributed to all three. Presence in the language of such agreement forms is so taken for granted that grammarians are usually content to state them: "The deictic and the noun agree in number. . ." (The writer is thinking of, for example, $\underline{\text{this road}} \times \underline{\text{these}}$ $\underline{\text{roads}}$.) "The general rule is of course that a plural subject takes a plural verbal. . .". Then the grammarians set out to state, at great length, the exceptions to the statements.

For Asian learners, there is no "of course" to concord rules; in Asian learner total language experience, such concord is, itself, exceptional; and "rules" set out in terms of one form "taking" another are particularly strange.

Grammarians and teachers overvalue the importance of concord, as a phenomenon, and in its contribution to communication. Its small, but real, significance is to clue continuity additional to decoder assumption of continuity of information through the designata of the successive forms used.

An important difference between other European languages and English is that word endings in other European languages typically indicate their word class. Some English words do, but many do not; English dictionaries showing hope, function, divorce, despair as noun and verb, free, equal, hollow, open as adjective and verb, further as adjective, adverb and verb. . .

This feature fits Asian language style; on the other hand leads Asian learners to transfer English word forms more freely than official English permits, e.g. "Please off the radio."

I turn now to the classifying implications of juxtaposition of dissimilar forms.

Juxtaposition of noun group forms

I look at noun group form juxtapositions; they are dissimilar, each from the others, especially by being felt to occupy different group positions.

The juxtaposition effects mutual classification or subclassification among the group forms. 'Pointing' the puts the o—e—c—h—q forms into an anticipated subclass. The "ordinative" first, subclassifies into 'first' and 'other than first', then offers the selected sub-class for a decoder to register. Fine, similarly, subclassifies into 'fine' and 'not fine'. cotton subclassifies among 'textile materials'; all subclasses jointly subclassifying within the class of 'shirts'. shirt subclassifies between 'shirts' and 'non-shirts'; and on the rack between 'on the rack' and 'not on the rack'.

A problem, for grammarians, is that description of the subclassifying function of a group form within its group is not necessarily, perhaps not usually, sufficient description.

The reason is that the general functions, of continuity/ discontinuity indication, may take precedence: the in the grammatical device has subclassifying informational reference outside the group, but not necessarily grammatical relevance within the clause containing the group; for it may point back to a reference in a preceding paragraph. a in a grammatical device is more likely to have little subclassifying function within the group but to have clause relevance in anticipating a clause item for a decoder to focus attention on.

Since the simplest, most frequently occurring "noun group" comprises a head only, any d—o—e—c group item is both informational, and simultaneously a grammatical discontinuity item.

Grammarians describe:

Deictic **d**:

Deictics were referred to (p.29) as items in word grammar. Generally, they make up a class of 'pointing' signals, referring to encoder – decoder shared information, i.e. 'continuity' indicating.

Formal Deictics include <u>a</u>, together with <u>my</u>, <u>Henry's</u>, <u>those</u>, <u>each</u>, <u>some</u>, <u>all those</u> and, arguably, phrases matching <u>a lot of</u>, forms that can fill the first slot in noun groups.

However, as earlier stated, in informational grammar, <u>a</u> does not fit: <u>a</u> ought not to be taught in association with a 'deictic' concept.

Ordinative **o**:

Ordinatives are words substitutable for <u>two</u>, <u>second</u>, <u>many</u>. . . Generally, they follow, and may not precede a deictic form; but we have such a. . . as exception.

Modifier **m**:

I mentioned the adjective modifiers <u>very</u> and <u>more</u>. There are <u>nearly</u>, <u>a bit</u>, <u>too</u> and so on.

Epithet **e**, and Classifier **c**:

"Epithet" and "Classifier" are sub-classes of the more general "Adjective". Skibsbye, who, I think, first made the distinction, calls (Skibsbye, 1965) the Epithet – Classifier subclasses "descriptive" and "limiting". Typical epithets are <u>large expensive fine</u>. Typical classifiers are <u>cotton</u>, <u>wooden</u>, <u>steel</u>, <u>classical</u>.

The characteristics, in observer grammar, are (1) when an epithet slot is occupied, any classifier must follow it (2) adjectives may be modified, e.g. by very or by er or more; classifiers may not, and (3) in informational grammar, classifiers seem informationally more closely associated with the head word than do adjectives.

Head **h**:

The noun group head is the noun, or form which takes its place in head position. The h

item in English has a complexity many languages are fortunate not to have, namely a major classification into non-count(able) and count(able). This is a designatum, or informational, classification, a noncount noun representing a "generic" entity (e.g. <u>football</u> in <u>Football</u> is <u>popular in many countries</u>) and a count noun a "specific" entity (e.g. <u>game</u> in <u>Did</u> you have a good game?).

NOUN CLASSES

Course designers distinguish "singular" count noun game from "plural" count noun games, and many grammarians have called the $+\underline{s}$ a marking element. However, this oversimplifies, for the stem form of a count noun rarely occurs without a preceding d-item (e.g. your game or the game). Count names are, therefore, alternatively marked. Moreover, from one European language to another among those admitting the distinction, noun designata vary as they are variously interpreted , and within each language from context to context; \underline{eggs} being countable, but \underline{egg} on a person's chin, or necktie, not countable.

In the following table, a "/" shows that the word at the top of the column can replace \times in the expression at the left of the row:

		A car	B team	C music	D coffee	E Beryl
1	$\underline{\mathbf{X}}$ is good			/	/	/
2	The \underline{X} are good		/			
3	These \underline{X} s are good	/	/		/	
4	He/she/it is a/an \underline{X}	/	/		/	
5	not much X			/	/	

Table 7 Noun classification

The Table classifies h-item nouns into five types:

A type	The A type (<u>car</u>), fitting into slots in Rows 3 and 4, is a count noun.
B type	The B type (team), fitting into slots in Rows 3 and 4, is a count noun, but fits, too, into the Row 2 slot, showing a stem form noun followed by a plural verb form (are). The designatum of a noun of this type may be thought of, at different times, either as singular or as plural.

C type

The C type (<u>music</u>), fitting into slots in Rows 1 and 5, but not into slots in Rows 3 and 4 is the non-count type.

D type

The D type (<u>coffee</u>) comprises words which, at different times, occur in both non-count and count contexts. So the form <u>coffee</u> represents two designata, one count, 'cup of the liquid', the other non-count, 'the substance'.

D type nouns exist only in observer grammar, which may bring observations from various texts into contrast. In encoder or decoder or in informational grammar, this type cannot exist, for at each occurrence in a text <u>coffee</u> is either a type A or a type C noun.

The E type (<u>Beryl</u>) comprises nouns that begin with a capital letter in written English. They are usually specific names.

Qualifier (q):

A qualifier (often an adverb, or a preposition group) "limits the meaning" of a head word. More generally, a qualifier refers to, but has a position following, a head noun. Often, when a group has both d and q items, the d-item is the.

Obviously, slots may be empty or filled. Only a group "made up for the purpose" shows all six slots filled. In most non-technical texts, one expects five out of six successive noun group occurrences to comprise h, or d—h forms. A teacher might hope that, after some years' experience, good learners would have a d—o—e—c—h—q grammar in their competence.

Teachers usefully note that some d-items reinforce a non-count \times count distinction: stem \times \underline{a} + stem; $\underline{\text{much}} \times \underline{\text{many}}$; $\underline{\text{few}} \times \underline{\text{little}}$; $\underline{\text{less}} \times \underline{\text{fewer}}$ (e.g. $\underline{\text{much milk}} \times \underline{\text{many eggs}}$). More d-items "unteach" the distinction: (with stem forms) $\underline{\text{the}}$; $\underline{\text{her}}$; $\underline{\text{Beryl's}}$. . . (e.g. $\underline{\text{the milk the egg}}$); and (with stem+ $\underline{\text{s}}$ forms): $\underline{\text{the}}$; $\underline{\text{her}}$; $\underline{\text{Beryl's}}$; $\underline{\text{some}}$; $\underline{\text{any}}$; $\underline{\text{no}}$; $\underline{\text{a lot}}$ (etc.) of (e.g. a lot of milk a lot of eggs).

To illustrate noun groups, I will now describe and introduce justifying material.

ENCODER GRAMMAR JUSTIFYING MATERIAL

As exemplification, and for justifying statements, I refer in the following pages, to

- A a short text (Text A) recorded at random during an Australian radio "phone-in" programme (it turned out to be the contribution of an "Expert")
- B a private recording (Text B) of two graduate teachers
- C an excerpt (Text C) from, and statistics from the whole of a recording of a 45 minute interview of the novelist J. B. Priestley by Peter Orr of the British Council. Of the encoders, Priestley is, by far, the most proficient.

Transcribing Spoken Text

For a reader to be comfortable with written representation of spoken forms, there has to be considerable idealizing of the latter: a first requirement is for the forms to be as recognizable to the eye as the spoken forms would have been to the ear. It is for this reason that phonemic/phonetic transcriptions often use the conventional wordword separation of written forms. With such idealization generally acceptable, I do not see overall gain in departing from conventional written word forms.

It is another matter, though, for conventional punctuation. Though grammar books associate punctuation with spoken text pauses and clause intonation, examination shows pauses to be independently grammatical and informational. For that reason, I have used representation, rather than what would have been interpretation, of those spoken phenomena, and have transcribed pauses and audible breath intake. Minor but perceptible pauses are shown with the – sign, major pauses with line ending and #, breath intake by h, and stronger, hh.

I should perhaps emphasize that Texts A and B are by native speaker

university graduates, expected to be, and considered to be competent speakers.

Spoken Text, Text A

it's rather making the comment #

that #

that we aren't taking it seriously enough here #

I mean I think that is #

5 the the reason why #

in fact #

the debate in Australia ultimately will probably be more beneficial to both

men and women #

is that we have #

this #

10 this self-deprecating sense of humour # hh

and #

Australian men `are still willing to take the mickey out of the idea of # hh the new male #

they are #

still willing to talk a little bit more about #

how they feel #

than the men in america who are really toeing the line now #

but Tina I#

but Tina I talked about #

doing this programme on the new age sensitive guy with my partner # and she fell over and laughed #

I mean sh sh #

she was still on the floor laughing when I left for work this morning #

well I mean #

that #

20 I mean #

it is #

is#

an australian approach but #

I think #

25 within that it gives men an opportunity to be more honest #

about how they really #

feel about this #

I mean #

it's been #

30 I don't think #

that knocking the idea of #

of change #

but think they #

are i it g #

35 allows a freedom #

to say #

hey I don't want to necessarily give this up # which is something that was important to me as a male # I mean I think #

40 the the problem with with just toeing the line # assuming that we all have to be interested in changing to be the this new male #

that's where we come to the idea #

means that its very hard for a man to really # talk about he # where he's willing to change #

and what he # really wants to hang on to about the traditional concept of masculinity and

respect #
and concern #
about #

50 men's concern #
about impressing each other #
and that #
is a lot #

I mean there's some really important areas to look at #

55 that #
in terms of men's #
the importance of work for instance to a man's life #
and how difficult it is #
for a man to feel self respect #

60 if he is not achieving in #
in the work place #
and that's something we just can't # hhh
ask men to give up in #
in wanting to change #

The (female speaker) text (omitting the male announcer's contribution) has 428 syllables and lasts 94 seconds, giving an utterance speed of 4.55 syllables per second, rather fast.

Such Texts have a sobering effect on the transcriber, as I hope Text A had on readers. I realize that as a decoder I edit, and edit out, many audible features of input; to such an extent that I become unaware of the grammatical incoherence, and limit my intake to the informational coherence.

Teachers cannot usefully ignore, throughout a whole course, the characteristics of relatively unedited text, for

a) current foreign language input to their learners must include a certain amount of such text (indeed, teachers themselves are likely to provide some of it)

- b) they must expect that their learners' own autonomous efforts to speak are likely to be relatively unedited, and ought not to be discouraged by demands greater than those expected of native speakers
- c) their learners, eventually, may have to decode large amounts of such text, indeed are far more likely to encounter it than the idealized dialogue text "made up for the purpose".

Noun groups in Text A

I will refer to the observer slot and filler group grammar of:

Counting in Text A shows:

There are three 4 item groups, out of a total of 72. Single items (one slot filled) outnumber two and three item groups by almost 2:1; and one and two item groups outnumber three and four item groups by over 3:1. Linguistic marking observation leads one to expect simple groups to outnumber complex.

Generalizing from counting in various lengthier texts, there is a better than 5:1 probability that a noun group will have either one or two slots filled; the less edited the text, the greater the probability. Native speaker experience is experience of probabilities; these are,

indeed, part of any language description directed to teachers; I would say, part of any language description.

All observer style grammar needs moderating through course designer/teacher awareness of the probability of form occurrence; for there is a tendency for both to overuse the rarer, more complex grammatical forms they feel their learners should become aware of.

In unmarked two slot d-h groups, group stress falls on the group head (the men, her idea. . .). Thus, after the there is high expectation of a stressed head word. When an encoder chooses to make the next item, not h but h or h or

Many epithet modifiers are conventionally used and do not affect epithet stress. When encoders wish a modifier to be decoded as such, they place higher stress on "m" than on "e".

Verb forms and verb group grammar deferred

Verb and verb group grammar may be described as word and word juxtaposition grammar. To explain why slot and filler grammar is deferred, I refer to Table 4 (p.11) above, in which clause transition or background constituents (She and 's are followed by a clause focus.

Thus we have alternative (1) traditional and (2) informational boundary positions:

(1)	She She Her lesson	 	's teaching 's finished her lesson 's ended
(2)	She's She's		teaching finished her lesson
	Her lesson's	1	ended

Neutrally observed, there is a poor fit of spoken and written (<u>She's</u> etc.) forms with grammarians' views, (<u>'s</u> as a "short form" of <u>is</u> and <u>has</u>), and their names ("Present Progressive", "Present Perfect", "Present Passive").

Learners with European language backgrounds may be helped by identification of English with mother tongue forms. Learners without equivalent mother tongue verb and verb group forms gain from the more straightforward "background focus" grammar, in

which the spoken and written <u>She's</u> representation is respected. Thus, I give priority to the (2) boundary placing, and information distribution. Giving clause interpretations, I have to present clause grammar before coming to a grammar of verb forms and groups.

CLAUSE GRAMMAR

"Sentence" grammar, traditional and informational

I look, therefore, at various styles of working "downward" from "the sentence":

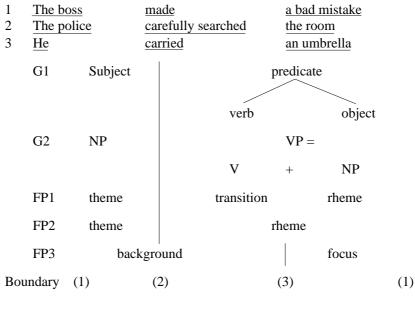


Table 8
Alternative Clause Description

"Sentences" 1 and 2 are taken from esteemed, current Grammars. They almost certainly seemed to the grammarians making them up to be typical; in fact, they would require quite special circumstances for occurrence in text. I have myself "made up" (a more typical) Sentence 3; its pronoun subject makes clear that, in fact, all three sentence subjects are likely to be backwards-looking, have retrospective, reference, and, informationally, be unlikely to have a grammatical function exclusively, or mainly, as sentence subject.

G1 and G2 are matching, traditional, grammatical divisions of "the sentence" into "smaller units". FP1, FP2 and FP3 are informational; in the Prague School tradition.

Informational grammar

The Prague School idea is that, still working "downward", each "Sentence" has a Functional Perspective (FP), and each smaller unit its own degree of "communicative dynamism" or "CD", in other words, its own information value.

In FP1, the earliest Prague School representation, the "theme" has lowest CD, the "transition" has intermediate CD, and the "rheme" has highest CD. Thus FP1 adds an informational aspect to traditionally described G1 and G2.

However, in English spoken and written texts, in about one clause in three, the transition, or grammatical verb, is <u>am</u>, <u>are</u>, <u>is</u>, <u>was</u>, or <u>were</u> or (far less often) a group with <u>been</u> or <u>being</u>. These forms have so little CD (communicate so little information) that in many languages they have no translation counterpart. In those clauses, the transition CD is lower than that of the theme. For that reason, a simpler division into theme and rheme was suggested (the FP2 representation).

The background – focus division

All four sentence accounts so far have boundaries between the "smaller units" at identical places. (e) is non-traditional.

Since all the clauses in Table 4 (p.11) have the single internal boundary $\underline{She's} \mid \ldots$, all illustrate the FP3 rather than the G1, G2, FP1, FP2 representations. Further evidence for the FP3 representation will be given later.

Background and focus

One can call "background" the information the encoder thinks a decoder is familiar with, and one can call "focus" the information the encoder thinks a decoder is not but should be made familiar with.

Distinguishing background from focus is a main decoder task. Most often, the meaning of the speaker's words tells which is which. But it is both a feature within decoder grammar and a requirement of encoder grammar that the distinction is supported.

Background, the shared information, does not recognize any edited Full Stop – Capital Letter "sentence" boundaries. It grows as a

decoder gains more and more information from a writer's or speaker's text; much information, at first focus information, becomes part of the growing shared information store; obviously going further back than to individual sentence beginnings.

Continuity and discontinuity indication

An already mentioned basic need of decoder grammar is that it should enable decoders to recognize continuity and discontinuity clues; and of encoder grammar, that it should use discontinuity clues clearly.

Psychologically, most continuity clues mean 'no change in background information'; such continuity clues are reassuring. Being reassuring only, they have little intrinsic importance; native speakers take them for granted, and it is unfortunate, for learners, that native speakers, and examiners, not noticing the presence, do notice the absence of "concord" grammatical continuity clues.

Informationally, 'discontinuity' is discontinuity in decoder prediction. It can be large scale, or small scale.

Grammatical continuity clues

The most frequent grammatical clue to continuity is juxtaposition of grammatically similar forms. A succession of nouns (book, paper, pencil) indicates continuity, and perceived order in continuity; as does a succession of verb forms (came, saw, conquered; to look, find, observe; by looking, finding, observing). There are formal clues, especially and (though and also clues the onset of the last item in a list, and is occasionally equivalent to discontinuity but). Repetition of informational items is also a simple continuity-indicating device.

Stem form juxtapositions of continuity clues are likely to translate directly from language to language, and to cause no difficulty for learners.

However Latin-style "concord" or "agreement" clues cause learners much trouble.

Discontinuity clues

Discontinuity clues are necessarily less numerous than continuity clues; otherwise there would be conspicuous discontinuity in the

communication of information. With no occasion for discontinuity clues, texts are boring; with too large a number, texts become tiresome.

Unexpected form changes (e.g. of tense, or number) clue discontinuity. Special discontinuity forms, the conjunctions, usually appear near the beginning of their discontinuous sequences, and in association with that position have high formal significance. They mark "diversion of route" at an "unrolling road" articulation point.

Nevertheless, the level of informational specificity of the conjunctions is usually that which the context warrants, far less than is usually assigned.

Discontinuity clues may, indeed, simply clue 'discontinuity', and, since they often function to subclassify, it may be sufficient to identify for decoder attention one of the sub-classes. Thus, even for lexical interpretation of the "subordinating" conjunctions (the most conspicuous discontinuity clues), there is vagueness and ambiguity within one language (e.g. the meanings of since), and only partial correspondence in translation from language to language.

Traditional grammarians class <u>but</u>, <u>and</u> and <u>or</u> as "coordinating" conjunctions; <u>however</u>, <u>nevertheless</u>. . . as adverbs, with meanings at word level; and <u>though</u>, <u>when</u>, <u>if</u>. . . as "subordinating", at clause level.

A further drawback to treating conjunctions as "subordinating" is the invitation to treat them as introducing "subordinate clauses", which are then each named according to one, supposedly typical, meaning or function: "concessive" for <u>though</u>, "conditional" for <u>if</u>, "relative" for who, which, "temporal" for when. . .

A knowledge of the statistical characteristics of linguistic marking leads one to expect the decreasing frequency, in any text, of discontinuity word, word group, clause.

Of occurrences of <u>if</u>, most are of <u>if</u> + word or word group, their function to classify (any 'conditional' interpretation is contrived):

If under 18, please tick here Clause if may be as little "conditional". In (Text A, ll.5861):

how difficult it is #
for a man to feel self respect #
if he's not achieving in #

in the work place

<u>if</u> is interchangeable with <u>when</u>. Either classifies 'men' into 'those achieving' and 'those not achieving', and makes a statement about the second group.

I will show that /d/ (She'd), /hd/, /had/, /wd/, /wud/ may all function as discontinuity clues, without their having specific interpretation as items in verb groups.

Continuity and background

The label "continuity" is functional. The label "background" is informational. I associate them because they frequently appear to be associated in text occurrences. Obviously, however, there can be continuity, and continuity clues, to link focus items.

Discontinuity and focus marking

I will look now at a significant optional boundary marking, through discontinuity in a person's flow of speech.

Officially, many discontinuity clues should correspond with written text punctuation. Actually, they more often occur as focus anticipating (pre-focus) pauses.

Pre-focus pauses

Pre-focus pauses are interesting, first, since they are physical evidence for the "background – focus" interpretation of "the sentence"; secondly, since, giving opportunity for breath intake, they decrease the need for end-of-sentence edited pauses.

In the "background – focus" account (FP3 in Table 8, p.47) of a traditionally described "sentence", Boundary (3) corresponds, in spoken English, with a physical indication of an immediately following focus – when an encoder wishes to use one. Incidentally, such "pre-focus pauses" are a common classroom phenomenon.

As native speaker examples, I transcribe the speech of two male graduate teachers (A and B), each asked to assess the proficiency of an overseas student: as with previous transcription, a line ending indicates a pause:

Spoken Text, Text B

```
I worked with johnny #
     his english was good as a matter of fact he had #
     some small problems with #
     pronouncing a few words like advertisement and #
5
     'adver'tisement he would say #
     but eh#
     in general his english was good and also #
     his ability to continue a long conversation #
10
     was good #
     as well#
     em
     but #
     I'm not quite #
     so sure about #
     his ability to read and write #
     which he's #
     probably going to have to develop more because he's going #
     to er
20
     study at university next year #
I
     where's he from, d'you know
     taiwan#
Α
В
     rumiko#
     japanese girl#
     she is #
     a very nice girl #
5
     a very lovely girl#
     she was #
     she was very good to work with #
     except em#
     being #
10
    probably a little reserved #
     just a personality em#
     made it a little bit #
     difficult #
     in a classroom situation to actually observe and assess her #
15
     because she wasn't the sort to #
     to#
     to tell the teacher #
     anything er#
     like offer the answers #
20
     unless em#
     she was asked #
     when she was asked she'd #
     tell the answer but that was it #
     and then em #
```

- 25 she wouldn't sort of #
 offer it to the teacher #
 so as a result of that it was very hard for me to actually #
 ascertain what level #
 of em #
- 30 or assess what what level of English she had in in that respect #

The conventional sentence criterion is an unbroken utterance sequence comprising or having within it subject – verb – adjunct constituents. There are 9 such sentences, e.g.

```
I worked with johnny # (A l.1)
```

Incidentally, 2 of the 9 subject + verb + adjunct sequences run on, i.e. do not have endings marked by pauses (stated to correspond with full stop placings in written text), but are like:

```
\frac{\text{his english was good and also}}{\text{em}} \# \text{ (A l.7)}
\underline{\text{em}}
\text{his ability.} \dots
```

There are 17 (that is, about twice as many) utterance lengths ending with a pre-focus pause, e.g.

```
<u>as a matter of fact he had</u> # (A l.2) some small problems. . .
```

6 utterances comprise a focus element only, e.g.

```
japanese girl # (B 1.2)
```

Several features of the texts have relevance for teachers, and for grammar description generally.

Compare:

```
line: A 1 <u>I worked with johnny</u> # and B 1 rumiko #
```

Is the B form a version of the A form, with <u>I worked with</u> "understood"; or is the A form an "expanded", edited version of the inner speech B form? I would say that the B form is a prototype inner speech form from which the A form was edited, with, at the B occurrence, no need for repeat editing. However, this is a problem for a grammar contrasting the forms, not for a grammar considering them as alternatives. Informational grammar sees the different information situations of A and B, in that A's <u>I worked with</u>... has become information background for B's <u>rumiko</u>, and ensures the latter's adequacy, and grammatically unmarked status. The mental

juxtaposition of <u>I worked with johnny</u> and <u>rumiko</u> would make <u>I</u> worked with rumiko an unnecessarily marked version.

The informational grammar style takes for granted frequent occurrence of B-style forms. The purpose of the speaker is fulfilled as the text moves from one informational focus to the next, but each focus, once stated, becomes possible background, for speaker and addressee. The movement of information from being focus to being background is partly represented in observer grammar (through personal names, pronouns, deictics, and the "concord" phenomenon already referred to), additionally in informational grammar through mental juxtaposition of focus forms, thus absence of repetition of background forms. The constant classroom injunction to "answer in a full sentence", the "What is your name? – My name is..." classroom style is, informationally, ungrammatical.

A second feature shown by the text is that a "sentence" internal boundary between subject and predicate is a grammarian construct, rather than an observed phenomenon; and if one retains the "sentence" concept, supports an informational boundary between background and focus. It does so in that a focus often corresponds with a grammatical "adjunct" or "NP". However, often a finite verb is a focus; as in:

```
B22 she'd #
B23 tell the answer. . .
```

in which she and the answer are equally background.

What is important for teachers to realize is that background – focus grammar has a psychological basis.

The psychological basis can be shown by examining a standard notetaking system used by consecutive interpreters, e.g. at meetings of heads of states. One of the latter says what he wants to say, taking his own time, then waits for an interpreter to convey the information in the language of the person addressed. The interpreter's skill consists in taking notes in such a form as will enable him to recollect for translation the speaker's information.

An Interpreter's note taking grammar

The Interpreter's note taking grammar of J.F. Rozan (1956) lists eight techniques:

1 noting ideas (rather than words)

- 2 using standard abbreviation techniques
- 3 indicating degrees of importance
- 4 noting connectives systematically
- 5 noting negation clearly
- 6 exploiting vertical display
- 7 exploiting connecting, arrowed lines
- 8 exploiting indentation to display information

Of the eight, the second and third do not concern us.

Techniques 1, 4 and 5 concern (a) focus (thus implicitly background) identification, and (b) provision of clues to information continuity and discontinuity.

If one considers the movement of information communication as a route followed in the production of a spoken text, one sees the point of occurrence of, say, discontinuity indicating <u>but</u> as a point of "articulation" i.e. as a point at which a speaker had a choice of information routes, and selected one which a listener would not take for granted.

Similarly, one sees the occurrence of continuity indicating <u>and</u> as a point at which there was, or might have been, a choice of routes and where the speaker reassured a listener that there was no diversion from what was expected; this is the way in which occurrence of both discontinuity and continuity indicators "articulate" text.

Rozan's Technique 6 uses vertical space, reserving a notebook line for each information focus. However, since the interpreter has to record the original articulation points, especially, of course, those indicating discontinuity, each discontinuity indication also occupies a line (continuity being indicated by indentation, illustrated later). Thus, it is interesting to find actual Text B transcription equivalents marked by pauses:

```
# but # (A 1.6)
# but # (A 1.13)
# except em # (B 1.8)
# unless em # (B 1.20)
```

There is no following pause in one instance:

```
# tell the answer but that was it # (B 1.23);
```

in this instance, and could substitute for but.

Of emphatic continuity indicators, one notes:

```
# as well # (A l.11)
# which he's # (A l.17)
```

Technique 7 also finds illustration through the transcribed text. When speaker B says <u>rumiko</u>, he has no need to repeat speaker A's <u>I</u> <u>worked with</u>... The reasonable assumption is that both he and listeners have the "worked with" idea in short term memory mental "juxtaposition". Note taker Technique 7 would ensure such recollection, if the note taker thought it necessary (having in mind the anticipated longer time span between hearing and recollecting), by drawing an arrowed line down or up his notes, relating subsequent to earlier reference.

To show Technique 8, the first few transcribed pause marked lines of B's text can be noted:

```
rumiko
japanese
<u>nice</u>
lovely
```

In other words, information above and to the left of a notetaker's line applies to the information in that line.

Incidentally, the underlining illustrates Technique 3.

I want to make the following points:

- 1 Rozan's note taking system enables a notetaker's colleague to take over the reconstitution of an original text, suggesting universality of application of the system
- 2 The notetakers' purpose is to move information from language to language; naturally, they use either language for their notes. Perhaps the system of note taking brings one close not only to a universally valid note taking system but to a universal "grammar" of information organizing. Incidentally, the note taking, and grammar, do not include number and tense (and noun gender), unless there is specific local need
- The note takers are concerned simultaneously with the recording of ideas (information), the recording of the movement of ideas, and the recording of the relations among ideas. The recording of relations implies a temporal awareness backwards as well as forwards

- 4 The note takers are concerned with subsequent recollection of a text. That is, the notes are meant to support a psychological process
- Memory is reconstruction. The interpreter uses his notes to reconstruct a text which is a counterpart (not a reproduction) of the original information. The counterpart appears in a second language; interpreter and participants take for granted the cross language efficacy of information organization. Incidentally, since the organizing skill of a second person is added to the organizing skill of the first, it often happens that the interpreter's text is better organized than the original.

Reference to Rozan has, I hope, enabled me to suggest that his techniques have more than professional interpreter significance, that they correspond with the ad hoc organizing shown as underlying objectively transcribed, actually spoken text.

The interpreter's notes constitute a disciplined "decoder grammar", since they are meant for subsequent editing into an educated "encoder grammar"; the transcribed texts, on the other hand, were edited only to a degree determined by circumstance; representing a less organized "encoder grammar".

The note taking system, and the extent to which the transcriptions are like the interpreter's notes suggest what an underlying or "deep" or "universal" grammar may be.

Obviously, interpreters use their notes to produce a version edited to conform to the official conventions of another language; they are paid for the intensive training they have undergone so that they can do this. What teachers usefully observe is that, for the interpreters, information decoding and encoding in note form comprise one operation; the editing to conventional forms, a second and distinct one.

Competence and performance

If "deep" grammar represents relations between successive information focus forms, one envisages any number of intermediate stages of editing, from "deep" to "surface" grammar.

The obvious difference between actual spoken text forms and what native speaking experts declare they should have been is sometimes explained as a difference between performance and competence. The speaker is able to show competence, it is said, by adjusting actual performance forms to edited grammatical norms. The adjustment process is then assumed to be largely a restoration of "known" or "understood" forms.

As a teacher, I prefer to take the performance forms (whatever they are) as they are, and look at them positively; as evidence of intermediate editing. For teachers, the difference in viewpoint is significant. If native speaker Texts A and B are valid as exponents of intermediate editing, so is our learners' editing of autonomous spoken English to comparable levels; and it is unreasonable for teachers to inhibit speaking by an expectation of initial editing to a higher level.

Many examiners of learners' written text do require more highly edited forms. Learners are fortunate when their teachers have trained them, both to distinguish between initial, free encoding and subsequent editing, and to set aside time for applying specific editing rules. The habit of post-editing is useful, for examination success first, and later, when it is preferable that an important document should be in officially edited English.

With the comments above, I hope to have shown again:

1 how different, for a grammar, relatively unedited English text is from "examples made up for the purpose"

Tradition makes it hard for would be grammarians not to start from a preconceived classification of forms, and I am a believer, therefore, in taking text at random.

When one is responsible for a grammar course with advanced students, a good approach is to stick a pin through a popular weekly journal, choose "left" or "right", then open the journal and type for study the paragraph the pin identifies.

The procedure presents one with forms that, like Texts A and B, were not originated with grammar in mind; but which, unlike the Texts, were edited for publication. Transcribing spoken text, I am always astonished at the gap between the relatively unedited and the relatively edited texts. I might add that, when one merely reads, and one does not actually

make such recordings and transcriptions for oneself, the utterances seem almost too unskilled to be real.

With regard to decoder tasks, the gap between recorded native speaker texts, such as learners may later encounter and the highly edited, model spoken texts teachers use, makes one question the practical value of much learning material.

Even more questionable is the gap between real native speaker proficiency and the supposed native speaker proficiency which native speaker experts tell us to accept as a standard by which the proficiency of foreign learners is to be judged.

2 how difficult it is to demonstrate a function for a redundant inflectional contrast.

When teachers of French puzzle English learners with the supposed key importance of the fact that 'room', 'door' and 'window' are "feminine" and 'wall', 'floor' and 'ceiling' are "masculine" (or, worse still, just try to crash the forms across), most English learners have a simple reaction: they last out the first year, and, since they are allowed to, quit.

Most Asian learners of English are not allowed to quit, yet the reaction is similar. It is one thing for teachers to tell learners (or, worse still, to "demonstrate" to them) that the noun stem form is for 'one' and the stem+s for 'more than one'; or that the stem form, this time, is for use after I, we, you, they, and the stem+s form for use after he, she, it. The small text study shows that it is quite another thing to assign to the form contrasts a function learners find immediately intelligible. What is for native speakers simple, informationally insignificant concord, i.e. continuity indication, is, for classroom learners, presented as important formal grammar.

3 that, it is both unrealistic to try to teach redundant systemic contrasts from made up examples, and impractical to present any regular text function such contrasts perform.

In the following pages, I introduce, present and discuss informational grammar justificatory text material.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RELATIVELY UNEDITED TEXT

I will briefly again look at:

- 1 the grammar of informational coherence
- 2 text encoding from inner to externalized forms; encoding spans
- 3 distributional factors in encoder grammar.

1 The grammar of informational coherence

I mentioned the need for the grammar of relatively unedited texts to reflect their encoders' intention at the beginning of a text, and any changes in intention during its production. This demands memory persistence on the part of encoders, and, for decoders, clues to its presence; that is to say, encoded forms have a primary grammatical function of establishing information continuity for both.

Decoders need clues to continuity, enabling them to register, and predict, form successions. I mentioned pronouns, deictics and juxtaposition as direct clues to continuity, and form parity clueing mental juxtaposition.

Against a continuity background, interruption to continuity, for whatever encoder reasons, may need grammatical clues; where these occur, decoder prediction is, to an extent, thwarted, and decoder attention aroused. Many (rather incorrectly named) conjunctions clue discontinuity directly; perhaps more often, discontinuity is shown by the disappointment of decoder prediction of mental juxtaposition.

For example, an encoder's succession of narrative stem+<u>ed</u> verb forms leads decoders to predict a further stem+<u>ed</u> form occurrence. An encoder's <u>was/were</u> or <u>had</u>, before the expected stem+<u>ed</u>, clues discontinuity in the narrative events.

2 Text encoding from inner to externalized forms; encoding spans; inner and externalized speech forms

I mentioned Vygotsky's theory that a stage children go through, in which their speech seems "egocentric" (not directed to any decoder) is actually a stage during which the "regulatory speech" of parents has been internalized for self-regulation, then externalized, still without a social function.

Vygotsky sees, from that stage onward, inner speech forms having two functions. The private function starts up when one wakes, and ends (if it does) when one goes to sleep. It continues as a medium for self regulation, for information feedback, for day dreaming, for "thinking". Its second, quantitatively minor, function is as a source, and resource, for "social speech".

The grammar of inner speech is not concerned with the editing requirements for social speech, e.g. need for code redundancy, or need for the grammatical clues (for instance, the concord clues) native speaker decoders expect.

To realize external social speech norms, inner speech has to be edited, redundant forms added. Native speakers edit with a degree of care constrained by competence, but, within the bounds of the competence, encoder conformity to a particular decoder's or decoder group's expectation. As the transcribed spoken texts (Texts A and B p.42 and p.44) show, acceptable spoken texts demonstrate a far smaller degree of care than do acceptable written texts: their utterance spans not coinciding with those of official, written "sentences", rather with movement from one informational focus to another.

Genuine language learner encoding is also from an inner speech resource, with the degree of inner speech informational coherence the learner would be capable of in the mother tongue.

Learner externalizing of spoken English forms represents a process of further editing. The process occurs under still greater time pressure, and the edited forms have then to be physically uttered with greater attention. There is often a pressure from the faster inner speech informational sequences upon the usually much slower edited and uttered sequences. The pressure tends to result in a degree of editing nearer the inner speech, informational level than the formal style speakers might be competent to write.

It seems unrealistic for English language course designers and teachers (a) to expect highly edited model forms to progress to an inner speech level unchanged (b) to ignore the inner-to-social speech encoding process and pretend that one can by-pass it, and expect from one's learners imitated model speech forms and model encoding spans.

3 Distributional factors in encoder grammar

I mentioned the idea that the time constraint under which spoken messages are produced controls the relative frequency with which an encoder uses this or that grammatical form, to the extent that this reflects the relative ease of his access to it in his memory store.

Without this characteristic, decoder prediction would be blocked, together with encoder provision for decoder prediction.

The characteristic is of first importance for our professional awareness. Course designers and teachers tend to direct learners' time and effort in proportion to perceived learning "difficulty", rather than to learner reward for the effort.

The learner psychology of effort to access forms, the statistical evidence and the theory of linguistic marking all draw attention to a common misdirection of time and effort.

SPOKEN TEXT C: A PRIESTLEY-ORR INTERVIEW

My justificatory material for further aspects of an informational grammar is an interview of the novelist J. B. Priestley, the interviewer being Peter Orr of the British Council. I refer to an Excerpt, and to the whole Interview which lasted 40½ minutes and comprised 5,685 words (a comfortable encoder – decoder rate of 140 words per minute, or 2.3 per second).

The Priestley text is slower, more professionally edited spoken English than Texts A, and B but still shows the astonishing gap between actual native speaker spoken text and the artificially edited, élite "native speaker" standard by which the encoding efforts of foreign learners are judged.

Interview parameters

Certain communication characteristics may be expected of the interview text, and may be expected to have grammatical representation.

There are two participants, each aware of the other and, in this case, of eventual listeners to the recording. The listeners must be able to identify each participant, which they do from an announcer's naming both, from Orr's naming Priestley, and from listeners' recognition of each voice.

One expects Priestley to be asked about current activity and future plans, but since he is interesting to an audience from past achievement, one reasonably expects questions and statements about Priestley's past to occupy most of the text.

Text continuity is shown grammatically, with great redundancy, by <u>I</u> (346 occurrences in the text), <u>me</u> (24 occurrences), <u>my</u> (26); and by <u>you</u> (99 occurrences), <u>your</u> (23). The 99 <u>you</u> occurrences comprise 44 from Orr, 55 from Priestley.

Redundancy, through non-specificity in expression of the continuity

function, is instanced, in the Priestley share of the text, by a further 33 occurrences of <u>you</u> (i.e. 40% of his total <u>you</u> occurrences) referring, not to Orr, but either to an impersonal, "third person entity" (equivalent to 'one') or to Priestley himself. 9 instances of <u>you know</u>, <u>y'know</u> were counted as continuity indicators too, since they invite Orr's (and listeners') continued attention; however, these parenthetical expressions also function as pause equivalents, giving the speaker extra encoding time.

Of the participants, one expects the interviewer to speak less (Orr speaks 933 words, or 16.4% of the text), and to be the more deferential (there is a little deference, a <u>may I?</u> and occasional use of the informationally 'remote' stem+<u>ed</u> form which Kruisinga calls a 'preterite of modesty'). In respect of deference, English speakers differ from speakers of other languages. Many of these would consider Priestley's large <u>I</u> total inappropriate, as, too, the absence of Orr "punctuation" of the Priestley text with indication of continued respectful attention: "Sir" ("Professor" etc.) or "True".

One expects Priestley's narrating to be formally simple; continuity of occurrence succession shown by succession of stem+ed forms, discontinuity (at Priestley's option) by was/were. . . and by had. . .

However, there is a complication making a person invited to reminisce less likely to use narrative forms predominantly.

Lévi-Strauss noted that a historian can, literally, study only the present, in the sense that he must use information now available, through present access to memory or to recorded material. His "historical facts" are, as Lévi-Strauss puts it, like cards simultaneously laid out on a table, to scan, arrange, rearrange, as he begins to perceive, then develop, some pattern among them.

When Orr invites Priestley to reminisce, (a) Priestley's recollections are present in the manner just described (b) Priestley will regard as "timeless" any pattern he has perceived and recollects, or perceives at the time of encoding (c) the invitation to reminisce is from one person visibly present to another. It follows that one expects (a), (b) and (c) to be prominent informationally and grammatically, through "actual" (stem/stem+s) verb forms.

The outlined grammar will be developed.

For the following Priestley-Orr interview excerpt, and in the

following discussion, I use the same transcription conventions as for Texts A, and B.

Priestley-Orr interview text excerpt

Orr:

- i mister priestley what would you say was your first big success #
- ii I don't necessarily mean financial success but the sort of success that er
- iii made you feel you were on the right road and that you
- iv were going to make a success of this career #

Priestley:

- 1 well #
 - this is rather hard to answer # h
 - em t#
 - if you said what was my first big success # h
- 5 that was obviously the novel the good companions which # hh I suppose has sold # hh
 - almost as many copies as any novel of the century y'know # hh but em #
 - e –I'd written about ten books before that and was # h
- 10 doing quite nicely and er # h
 - was sure I was in the right profession and everything I # hh
 - er er th–th–th # I was doing quite nicely then this thing shot up like a rocket # h
 - I was doing quite nicely then this thing shot up like a rocket # h er #
- 15 wa#
 - I was delighted at the time've been rather sorry ever since # because I think it had # h much too great a popular success it did me # h
 - a good deal of harm #
- 20 because # h
 - one lot of people condemned me #
 - because I'd written the good companions and they'd probably not even read it er I mean a lot of people # h
 - write 'nd talk about books who haven't read them # hh
 - then a great many more people condemned me because I didn't write #h
- 25 a series of good companions #
 - because they found say the next novel angel pavement was quite

different #

- you see # hh
- so that -e #
- they get at you both ways and I suffered a good deal from this # h
- 30 it's only I'd say it's only lately that the last few years that em # h you know I've had any real critical # attention # hh

The Good Companions and Angel Pavement are the titles of novels.

Discussion

I now naïvely do what Orr and Priestley intended, namely consider the Excerpt information. It fulfils the expectation of reminiscing about past achievement.

Orr's first question I take to be rehearsed, and I reproduced it for its elicitation relevance. Priestley's reply shows evidence of immediate encoding processes, i.e. processes in turning elicited inner speech into external speech forms.

Information topics and text coherence

Information communicated by a text comprises one or more information topics, and in the latter case one expects transitions from one to the other. This is illustrated in the Excerpt, where the topics are 'success', 'career' and 'harm'.

Orr introduces the first, <u>your big success</u>, then the second, <u>a success</u> of this career. His transition is, informationally, by qualification of the success he invites Priestley to consider; formally, by ...<u>n't necessarily...but</u>... To reply, Priestley has to keep within his memory span both 'success' and 'career'. His memory association of the 'success' of <u>The Good Companions</u> and 'harm' to his career leads him to make 'harm' a third topic.

When spoken messages are transmitted as more or less coherent text, a listener hears the outcome of the joining together of several encoding processes, each taking place at its own speed, and within its own span lengths.

When Orr asks, then qualifies, his question, Priestley's motivation and psychological (eventually physical) states determine the effort he is willing to give at that time.

Effort must be expended first in raising the mental threshold against "noise" (e.g. visual distraction), so permitting attention to Orr's question and qualification; involving short term memory to retain the question over the time Orr spends formulating the qualification, then to retain the qualification during the time spent answering the question.

For an answer to be available, Priestley must have rapid access to an elicited, limited reference field within his long term memory. Inner speech formulation of the product of the access may be rapid, but is

noisy and not necessarily coherent. Encoding to external speech forms comprises a large amount of editing before a relevant reply may be ready.

The editing is a slower process, so leading to a mismatch of processing rates; the kind particularly observable in young learners (whether of mother tongue or foreign language) whose relatively slow editing speed results in a backlog of information they become desperate to communicate.

For formal encoding, Priestley must have access to memory of acceptable external speech forms, while feedback information from awareness of the interview situation must determine and modify the more general acceptability. When, as in the interview, there is time pressure, Priestley is likely to choose, from encodable forms, those of easy access, low specificity and (as appears from observer study) high occurrence frequency.

The forms have then to be articulated through particular exploitation of speech organ muscular memory.

Since the processes occur over periods of time, one usefully considers attention as repeatedly scanning a range of processes: accessing information; retaining just accessed information; encoding inner speech information; editing to external speech propriety; applying feedback information; utterance.

To the extent it is successful, the scanning would ensure process organization into overlapping spans of uttered formal material, most of which is fairly standardized; for this is not likely to be the first time Priestley has reminisced; indeed, for much of his topic information, the 'harm' topic, for instance, there has probably been regular memory rehearsal.

Of the named processes, utterance is by far the slowest, and the utterance spans are limited by the amount of breath expelled from the lungs at a go, and the rate of expulsion – an out-of-breath runner is properly described as incoherent.

In the Excerpt, Priestley shows large variation of breath span. Those of lines 1, 3, 8, 14, 15, 20, 27 and 28 comprise one or two syllables only and give little information per span. That of line 22 comprises 29 syllables.

One might think that, for aesthetic appreciation of an utterance, its

(edited) form spans would match its breath spans, but Priestley's utterances frequently do not show such matching. The breath spans of lines 9, 18, 22 and 30 overshoot traditionally described utterance form spans (i.e. comprise one conventional form span and a fraction of another); whereas those of lines 6, 9, 17, 24 and 31 conspicuously undershoot traditionally described spans (i.e. split them).

For Priestley, however, editing into utterance forms takes noticeably more time than his skilled syllable utterance rate would need; and interview time pressure requires use of a strategy for gaining encoding/editing time (e.g. lines 1 and 2: well this is rather hard to answer); while that part of the editing which takes place after utterance has begun requires pauses for Priestley to consider what form is to follow what.

It is at such editing (articulation) points that a speaker of English is concerned to make sure his listener continues to give attention, and inserts his <u>y'know</u>, <u>you see</u> items. That is, when he anticipates the points; he may simply get stuck, as Priestley does at the end of line 12, with <u>I</u>. He fills a pause with <u>er-er</u>, <u>th-th-th</u>, then recapitulates, <u>I</u>, and (presumably having now processed **two** further information spans) continues (line 13) <u>I was doing quite nicely when this thing shot up like a rocket</u>, to pause again for breath and <u>er</u> #, and <u>wa</u> #, giving time for **two** further information spans to be encoded and edited for utterance.

One may believe that Priestley's reference of Orr's information requests to the relevant memory store elicits a variety of information at relatively high speed, and that much more of this information is processed into inner speech forms than is eventually processed into external speech. Conversely, skilled listeners find themselves having time for available attention to "wander" while the edited message "unrolls".

Looking again into the text Excerpt, one sees the 'success' – 'career' – 'harm' topics having of themselves informational coherence: when Orr asks about Priestley's 'success', (lines i, ii and iv), he and listeners anticipate that Priestley's reply will be about his 'success'; and Priestley's subsequent success (line 3) refers back to Orr's. However, further reference to 'success', though a possibility a listener keeps in mind, is not so predictable, for Priestley himself decides when he will move from this to another topic.

Priestley skips quotation of Orr's word <u>career</u> (line iv), but takes up the 'career' topic; as Orr's inclusion of it in his question leads listeners to expect; he does so with affirmative evidence: <u>I'd written about ten books before that</u> (line 9). A listener cannot predict with certainty that there will be further 'career' references, but has them in mind, so that <u>doing quite nicely</u> (line 10), <u>the right profession</u> (line 11) and <u>doing quite nicely</u> (line 13) are easily taken to refer to 'career'.

The 'harm' topic is perhaps anticipated already in line 2 by the 'hard to answer' qualification, certainly in line 4 by the <u>if you said</u>... reservation. In line 16, the 'delighted' which a listener associates with 'success' is contrasted with 'sorry', anticipating an explanation for the 'sorrow'; the 'too' of <u>too great a success</u> further anticipating an explanation.

Text coherence: bi-directional time reference

One takes informational coherence so much for granted that it may seem trivial that I should have gone into information anticipation and retrospective reference in such detail. However, it is worth noting again that, while external speech sequences are, from their existence in time, uni-directional, the informational references are bi-directional.

Moreover, though speaker and listener look ahead, it is usually only for a short time span, and imprecisely; whereas a speaker quickly establishes for himself and listeners a far larger past-reference field. In other words, there is more potential for retrospective than for prospective reference.

The potential for retrospective reference constitutes, so to say, ongoing encoding tension between elements of the established informational field and what is presently being encoded; and threat of disrupting coherence. Public speakers not actually reading a prepared script learn to take the threat seriously, many of them dealing with it either by having a mnemonic system for keeping utterance sequences as they prepared them, or by referring to a set of sequenced cards, each with a "point" earlier decided upon.

On the smallest scale, even as a speaker utters a processed information span, he hears the uttered words, which belong to the past; and constitute wanted or unwanted, possibly distracting, feedback information. There is constant encoder and decoder need for a grammar of informational coherence.

Text coherence: clause-clause continuity indication

Establishment and maintenance of informational coherence are expected features of external (to whatever extent edited) speech. I now list continuity-maintaining items in the Excerpt, with, in each case, the item referred to and the continuity direction, shown by P (prospective) and R (retrospective):

line	item	type	reference item
i	you	R	mister priestley
	you	R	you
ii	success	R	success
	success	R	success
	that	R/P	the sort of success / clause
iii	you	R	you
	that	R/P	feel / clause
	you	R	you
	and	R/P	clause / clause
	that	R/P	feel / clause
	you	R	you
iv	success	R	success
2	this	R	Orr's double question
4	you	R	you (Orr)
	what	R/P	(a) what (l.1) (b) said / clause
	my	R	speaker
	first big success	R	first big success (1.1)
5	that	R	my first big success
	which	R/P	the good companions / clause
6	I	R	speaker
	as many	R/P	has sold /as
	y'	R	you
9	I	R	I
	that	R	the good companions
	and	R/P	(a) was sure (1) and (2) or
			(b) I was (1) and (2) or
			(c)profession (and) noun
10	and	R/P	was doing / verb form
11	I	R	I
	I	R	I
13	I	R	I

	I	R	I
13	I	R	I
13	doing quite nicely	R	doing quite nicely (l.10)
	then	R/P	= `intervention´
	this thing	R	the good companions
16	I	R	I
10	the time	R	`of this thing' (`then')
	ever since	R	`this thing' (`then')
17	I	R	I
1,	it	R	this thing
18	too	P	adjective or adverb
10	success	R	success
	it	R	this thing
	me	R	me
21	one lot of people	P	`another' (lot of people)
21	me	R	me
22	I	R	I
22	the good companions	R	the good companions
	and	R/P	(a) I'd written and –clause
	and	IV I	(b) the g. companions and –name of novel
	they	R	one lot of people
	it	R	the good companions
	I	R	I
	a lot of people	R/P	one lot of people / clause
	and	R/P	write and talk
23	who	R/P	a lot of people / clause
24	then	R/P	one lotthena great many more
24	a great many more people	R/P	one lot of people / clause
	me	R	me
	I	R	I
25	a series of good companions	R	the good companions
26	they	R	a great many more people
20	the next novel	R/P	the good companions / angel pavement
27	you	R	you
28	so that	R/P	`and in that way' / clause
29	they	R	a great many more people
2)	you	10	(a) = `one' or
	you		(b) = 'me
	both ways	R	condemned me condemned me
	I	R	I
	this	R	`the fact of condemned me'
30	it	P	formal it
20	I	R	I
	it	P	formal it
31	you	R	you
51	I	R	I
	-		-

Table 9
<u>Text Coherence: Continuity Indication</u>

Text coherence: discontinuity indication

With a discontinuity indicator, a speaker warns that a justified listener expectation will be delayed or negated. Instead of moving on directly, the speaker will give some contra-indication to what one would otherwise expect, or will shift attention to some point that otherwise would have been informationally incidental.

In the Excerpt, discontinuity clues are:

line	item	type	reference item	
i–ii	n't but	P	the sort of success	
4-8	ifbut	P	`success' qualified	
13	then	P	(a) = `and'	
			(b) = `but immediately after'	
17	because	R/P	sorry / clause	
20	because	R/P	harm / clause	
22	because	R/P	condemned me / clause	
	er – er I mean	R/P	probably notread it / clause	
24	because	R/P	condemned me / clause	
26	because	R/P	condemned me / clause	
30	it's only lately	P	that – clause	
		Table	10	
Text Coherence: Discontinuity Indication				
•				

Text coherence: continuity and discontinuity indication through juxtaposition.

When continuity and discontinuity are informationally implicit, a speaker may use the simplest grammatical device, namely juxtaposition. Languages differ in the extent to which relations are judged to be implicit.

Here is a continuity example from the Priestley–Orr text:

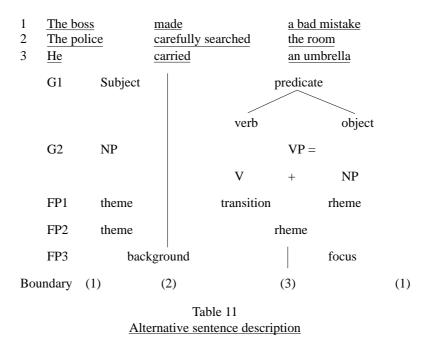
```
(<u>I think I had</u> # h
my first article published #
by a london newspaper #)
when I was sixteen I got a guinea for it
```

Discontinuity examples from the Excerpt, all prospective, are:

- 16 I was delighted at the time 've been sorry ever since
- 17 ...it had # h
- much too great a popular success it did me # h
- 19 a good deal of harm #

EXCERPT AND TEXT CLAUSE CONSTITUENT GRAMMAR

To discuss clauses with reference to traditional grammatical and informational (FP) accounts, I reproduce Table 8:



G1 and G2 are successive traditional accounts; FP1, FP2 and FP3 are successive Functional Perspective accounts.

The Priestley–Orr Excerpt has 267 words. Discounting one <u>it's only</u> from (line 30) <u>it's only I'd say it's only lately</u>. . . (either a false start or a start which feedback information predicted would need qualification), the 267 words make up 42 clauses (i.e. at an average of 6.5 words per clause). One could wish for learners a similarly relaxed decoder, and encoder, clause simplicity.

Grammar 1 and 2 "subjects", FP 1 and 2 "themes", and constituent boundary authenticity

Of the 42 clauses, 4 have no grammatical subject. Of 38 grammatical subjects, 32 are pronominal (25 personal pronouns, 3

relative, 2 demonstrative, 2 interrogative), 5 are noun groups, and there is 1 "formal it".

Pronouns as "subject" or "theme"

Readers who did not examine Table 9 in detail must nevertheless have noted the large number of retrospective continuity indicators. All statement personal pronouns must be so classed, and those in subject position must be clause-clause continuity indicators. Readers may also accept that, in the Excerpt of 267 words, the 13 occurrences of I function to indicate clause-clause continuity rather than to function as clause subjects individually.

In Latin, all nouns and pronouns indicate formally when they are clause subjects. In modern West European languages, nouns no longer have formal indication that they are clause subjects, but their pronouns still do.

In Latin, the verb ending is either equivalent to a pronoun subject or "in agreement with" a noun subject.

Grammar 1 and 2 "subjects", FP 1 and 2 "themes", and verb form "agreement"

Danish has no "agreement": "I go – He go". Italian retains a 6-item (3 person singular, 3 person plural) agreement; and whereas the Danish pronoun distinction makes verb agreement redundant, the Italian agreement makes the use of independent personal pronoun subject forms redundant: the -mo of dicevamo makes noi ("we") redundant, for Como noi dicevamo ("as WE were saying") would be a highly marked expression.

In the mother tongues of many non-European learners of English, the Danish reduction of agreement redundancy is combined with the Italian reduction of pronoun redundancy.

From the standpoint of boundary marking, one's interest in the Italian style redundancy reduction is in the fact that verb + subject pronoun combine to form single spoken and written units. It is thus impossible for a grammarian to sustain, for Italian, any primary boundary between pronoun subject (noun phrase – theme) and later clause constituents.

Nouns as "subject" or "theme"

The continuity relations of the five Excerpt noun subjects are:

line	item	type	reference item
13	this thing	R	the good companions
21	one lot of people	P	`another' (lot of people)
22	a lot of people	R/P	they / clause
24	a great many more people	R/P	a lot of people / clause
26	the next novel	R/P	novels already/to be mentioned

The clause with a formal it subject is:

```
30 it's only lately that... P (subject in rheme position)
```

Like pronouns, noun grammatical clause subjects are, typically, clause—clause continuity clues.

Grammatical subject and informational topic

It is notable that in no instance, in the 42 clauses, is a grammatical subject or FP theme (whether pronoun or noun group) an informational topic. These ('success', 'career', 'harm') nevertheless make 16 occurrences in 15 clauses:

what	was	our first big success
what	was	my first big success
you	were	on the right road
you	were	going to make a success
	was	doing quite nicely
I	was	in the right profession
I	was	doing quite nicely
	've been	rather sorry ever since
I	don't mean	financial success
		the sort of success that
It	did me	a good deal of harm
one lot of people		condemned me
a great many more people	condemned	me
they	get at you	
I	suffered	a good deal of harm

Table 12
Grammatical subject and informational topic

8 of the above 15 clauses have 'be' verb forms; their informational "focuses" are in typical grammatical "predicate adjunct to the

(grammatical) clause subject", or focus positions. In 3 clauses, the informational themes are in typical grammatical "object" or focus position. In 4, they are in the stem form of the verb.

Of course, it is easy for a native speaker to think of counter instances, where, in the traditional convention, informational topic and grammatical subject coincide. And they are to be found in the Orr–Priestley text, though one has to search for them. The following two (judgment, versatility) are:

```
and I think # h
that this judgment is very stupid because I believe versatility # h
er should be part of literature #
```

However, <u>this judgment</u> itself refers back to <u>this is against you</u>; and <u>versatility</u> to <u>I've been very versatile</u>, so that both as informational themes and as grammatical subjects, <u>this judgment</u> and <u>versatility</u> are also continuity indicators.

Subject, topic, and theme boundaries 1 and 2

In Grammars 1 and 2, FP 1 and 2 (Table 11), subject or theme is represented as a major clause constituent, standing between preceding and following boundaries.

Inspection of the Priestley-Orr spoken text shows that, informationally, most items in the subject position are continuity indicators; and that unless a clause has early, spoken or implicit, discontinuity indication the function of clueing clause-clause continuity is of greater informational consequence than any function as a grammatical clause constituent.

However, saying that the grammatical subject position is typically assigned to a clause-clause reference function is the same as saying that, functionally, a conventionally identified "subject" of one "sentence" could, but for editing convention, equally well appear before the preceding "sentence punctuation mark" as after it. It seems, too, that encoder breath spans do not confirm boundary placing before the traditional subject.

An "unrolling road" grammar would not accept Boundary 1 of Table 11 as a major articulation point. Further inspection of the text also calls into doubt the boundary marked as following the subject, topic or theme, Boundary 2 of Table 11.

In English spoken text, as in Italian, the most frequently occurring finite verbs and their subjects amalgamate: /its/ and /aiv/ occur in the Excerpt. Other amalgamations are: /aim/, /jo:/ /hi:z/, /ðeiə/, /ju:v/, /wi:v/, /ðeiv/, while, without "subject—verb agreement", /l/ and /d/ may substitute for /v/ and /z/ above.

One should not feel comfortable with the idea of a main clause constituent boundary in the middle of what is ordinarily taken as a single spoken unit.

Priestley's response (Excerpt line 1)

(well) this is rather hard to answer

could have boundary marking at:

	(a)	this	is rather hard to answer
or	(b)	this is	rather hard to answer
or	(c)	this is rather	hard to answer

Listening does not reveal criteria for approval of one instead of either of the other two. However, elsewhere in the interview, Priestley uses the functionally matching:

it's not easy to answer

The grammarian boundary possibilities are:

```
(a) /it | snoti:zi.../

Or (b) /its | noti:zi.../

Or (c) /itsnot | i:zi.../
```

Elsewhere, Priestley uses (i) tisn't. This could have given, as one unit:

```
/tiznti:zi.../
```

There does not appear to be spoken text justification for the Grammars 1 and 2 mechanical assignment of major constituent item status to the sentence subject, or to Boundary 2. FP 1 and 2 qualify the status by assigning low CD to theme. The low CD is usual when themes are continuity references.

One expects higher CD when themes are, or are associated with, discontinuity clues; or when, rarely, an informational topic/subject/ theme occupies the grammatical subject position.

However, study of text shows the continuity-indicating function to predominate; and Grammars 1 and 2 to ascribe untypical major

constituent status to subject/initial "NP". This they do from poor methodology, precisely the "older style" according to which each grammarian is his own informant, using examples "made up for the purpose". In this older style, each thought up, justificatory sentence is the rarer clause type, with an informational topic/subject/theme.

Grammar 2 "verb"; FP 2 "transition"

I look now at the second constituent in the Grammars 1 and 2, FP 2 models. FP 2 shows formal identity with Grammar 2, but typifies the latter's "verb" informationally as "transition", and assigns it a CD intermediate to those of theme and rheme.

Of 854 clauses in the interview, 293 (34%) have as verb a finite form of "be", and, if one accepted the theme-transition-theme description, "transition" would go best for them (am are is was were ('m 're 's /wz//wə/). However, with respect to those forms, one has to challenge the attribution of higher CD to them than to theme. It must be lower, and, indeed, in many languages there is no translation equivalent, except when 'be' means 'be present' or 'be called'. Thus the following Excerpt clauses would, in such languages, comprise two constituents:

i	what	was	your first big success
ii	you	were	on the right road
iii	you	were	going to make a success
2	this	is	rather hard to answer
4	what	was	my first big success
5	that	was	the good companions
9 - 10		was	doing quite nicely
11		was	sure (that)
	I	was	in the right profession
13	I	was	doing quite nicely
16	I	was	delighted
		've been	rather sorry
26	angel pavement	was	quite different
30	it	's	only later (that)

Table 13
Excerpt clauses with 'be'

Grammar 2 "noun phrase"; FP "rheme"

I now consider the Grammar 2, FP 2 boundary between verb/

transition and following noun phrase/rheme.

In clauses in which the finite verb form may be amalgamated with, or is closely associated with the grammatical subject, a boundary between the combined item and NP/theme should accentuate the information value of the latter:

9	I'd written	about ten books
22	I'd written	the good companions
31,2	I've had	any critical attention

Of clauses eligible for Grammar 2 / FP 2 description, those with phrasal and prepositional verbs make problematic grammatical boundaries between verb/transition and NP/rheme:

The four words <u>write</u>, <u>talk</u>, <u>about</u> ('on the subject of') and <u>books</u> have dictionary meanings, and <u>about books</u> is an entirely acceptable preposition group. On the other hand, <u>write about</u>..., <u>talk about</u>... are like typical "prepositional verbs" in their formal and functional need for a noun or nominal "object".

From the Grammar 2 viewpoint, either interpretation is acceptable; from the FP viewpoint, since one has to associate high CD with the rheme, the prepositional verb interpretation (as above represented) is preferable:

The prepositional verb <u>get at</u> has the characteristic of an independent designatum (= 'attack'), and one can make a question <u>Who are they getting at?</u> with <u>you</u> as an unmarked (grammatical object) answer. Nevertheless, for an FP interpretation, it is not obvious that there is an informational boundary between <u>at</u> and <u>you</u>. Here, <u>you</u> means either 'me' or 'writers'; its assigned CD would be that of a continuity indicating clause item, a CD difficult to reconcile with FP rheme position.

30 I suffered from this

There is a functionally independent verb (<u>suffer</u>). When a preposition group follows, a particular preposition is required (<u>suffer from x</u>), and it would seem strange to place a boundary either between <u>suffer</u> and <u>from</u>, or between <u>from</u> and <u>this</u>. The FP rheme item has to be <u>suffered</u>; it cannot be the low CD continuity indicating <u>this</u>.

```
this thing 'shot up. . . (like a 'rocket)
```

The verb + particle is a functionally and informationally independent unit, grammatical verb, FP rheme (with a parallel rocket rheme).

There are four clauses that admit a verb / NP boundary, but do not conform to the FP 2 attribution of high CD to the form occupying rheme position:

21	one lot of people	condemned	me
22	they'd not even	read	it
23	who haven't	read	them
24	a great many more people	condemned	me

From the FP 2 viewpoint, these clauses have the finite or non-finite verb form with higher CD than the pronouns in rheme position; no naïve observer could accept grammatical description of <u>me</u> as a constituent equal in rank with <u>condemned</u> in a VP + NP formula. In <u>con'demned me</u>, Priestley unites word, group and clause stress; in other languages, unstressed <u>me</u> would have no equivalent; being, in fact, redundant.

There remain six clauses admitting a boundary between verb/transition and NP/rheme, and having appropriate rheme CD:

4	you	said	what (+ clause)
6,7	which	has sold	as many copies as
17	it	had	much too great a success
18,9	it	did (me)	a good deal of harm
24,5	I	didn't write	a series
26	they	found	the next novel (+ adjunct)

Conclusions

Checking traditional Grammar 2 / FP 2 assumptions against appropriately transcribed, relatively unedited spoken text suggests a challenge to the assumptions:

- that "human speech is made up of sentences" and "we shall mean by grammar the description of the sentences of a language"
- 2 that clause internal constituent relations accord with a traditional formula.

Functional Perspective 3

FP 3 has in its favour:

- 1 freedom from many difficulties associated with the Grammar 2 / FP 2 descriptions
- 2 admission of the influence of text attributes not traditionally considered by grammarians for whom highly edited or made-up sentences comprise justificatory material.

FP 3 "background – focus" classification merges FP 2 "transition" into "background". However, FP 3 "background" does not merely combine FP 2 "theme" and "transition": "background" can take reference as far back, and as far forward as is informationally realistic, most often further back than occurrence of an edited text written sentence boundary, less frequently forward: FP 3 interprets

one lot of people condemned me

as having as its focus <u>con'demned</u>, and having as its background both one lot of people and unstressed me.

Though children and adults can learn to isolate sentence constituents in recorded edited text, and to assign each to a grammatical class, it does not follow that text encoding was an inverse process of setting small classificatory units one after the other into a larger classificatory unit. The interpretation of features of a map laid on a table differs qualitatively from the selection of an informational route, which, in turn, differs qualitatively from "unrolling" a continuous strip of text.

Assuming that message encoding moves, informationally, from focus to focus, one expects the language form sequences both to indicate focuses and to relate each approaching focus indication to previous and anticipated focuses.

For instance, suppose that at Excerpt line 13 one could guess that 'harm' will be Priestley's next focus, all one could predict, probably all that Priestley himself can predict, is that 'harm' will get high CD attribution: the actual point, or points, from which focusing will occur could be anywhere close enough to maintain or heighten listener attention, while the actual encoder strategy (choice of route) to ensure the high CD could be predictable one short word sequence at a time.

Here are lines 16 to 19:

- 16 I was delighted at the time 've been . . . sorry ever since #
- 17 because I think it had # h
- much too great a popular success it did me # h
- 19 a good deal of harm # h

The word focus is (line 19) <u>harm # h</u>, and the word group focus <u>a good deal of harm # h</u>. However, working back, as an observer, to locate Priestley's own boundary to his background, one finds informational anticipation in (line 18) <u>much too great</u>, and in (line 16) rather sorry ever since.

There could be an edited grammatical boundary after (line 16) time in the sequence at the time 've been. . . ; on the other hand, delighted provides a contrast with sorry, as at the time does with ever since; if Priestley had realized the edited grammatical boundary in the text, it would have put delighted and at the time on one side with a discontinuity pause between them and sorry and ever since on the other. Obviously Priestley was happy with the informational contrast.

That is, there is a common phonological, grammatical and informational boundary after focus $\underline{\text{harm}} \# \underline{\text{h}}$, but no phonological, grammatical or informational boundary to identify a background beginning. This is the reality of relatively unedited text.

Question-elicited statements

A background – focus description satisfactorily accounts for the forms of question-elicited text; the question is background to the elicited statement focus.

Priestley responds to 35 questions from Orr. 21 immediate word, phrase and clause responses are information delaying, with the function of giving Priestley encoding time; 7 give information (with or without introductory well), 6 of the answers having pronoun grammatical subjects, 1 having formal there. The remaining 7 responses are focus responses:

dramatist please #
yeh not a playwright – a dramatist #
would depend a good deal on the novel #
at some time round there – yes #
not a very strong impression #
apart from the tourists in the summer #
not – not in the least #

Table 14 Elicited focus statements

Elicited statements have beginner and intermediate classroom significance for two reasons. First, course designers and teachers want to restrict learner autonomy in producing statements, and use questions to elicit and control them. Secondly, common classroom practice ("Answer in a full sentence") upsets the primary grammar of background and focus distinction.

Grammarians distinguish two communication situations for the occurrence of statements. In the first, a speaker holds the initiative and proffers information. In the second, a questioner elicits information.

In the situation in which the speaker proffers information, feedback information enters at the point of encoding (Feed-back information 1 in Figure 2), and the statements, in a way, give information which could have been elicited by an "ideal" questioner, i.e. one registering each item of information as the encoder wishes and eliciting the next.

Since one can look at all statement sequences from the view-point of feedback information, whether elicited from externalized speech from another person or elicited from one's own inner speech development, it is appropriate to apply to all statements an assessment of their markedness as expressions of elicited information. This I will now illustrate:

Suppose I describe to a visitor the work of an English Language Institute, and say Mona 'Long 'teaches 'grammar.

The statement communicates three pieces of information: \underline{a} the name, Mona Long \underline{b} that Mona Long is a teacher \underline{c} that she teaches grammar.

Each item is related to some informational presupposition: a that

there are more persons (names) concerned \underline{b} that there are more jobs concerned (secretary...) \underline{c} that there are more subjects concerned (Spoken English...). With respect to the presuppositions, each item of information is specific to an extent appropriate to the context of the communication; one may say that in this context the statement represents an unmarked positive statement form.

Suppose, instead, that the visitor asks the information eliciting question, <u>What does Mona Long do?</u> Obviously, the visitor knows, or knows of, Mona Long. A reply statement <u>Mona Long teaches</u> <u>grammar</u> would be redundant with respect to <u>a</u>, and non redundant with respect to <u>b</u> and <u>c</u>.

Another way of describing the "full sentence" reply is to say that the degree of specificity of <u>a</u>, the name, is unnecessarily high. Thus, even should the speaker say <u>Mona Long</u> without stress, the listener would still be tempted to "read into" the statement some information not openly expressed, perhaps a wish not to pursue this point further. The reply with normally required degrees of specificity, and the one bearing no implicit information is <u>She teaches grammar</u>; it represents, in this information context, an unmarked positive statement form.

Suppose, instead, that the visitor asks the information eliciting question, What does Mona Long teach? The visitor knows or knows of Mona Long and that she is a teacher. The answer Mona Long teaches grammar would be redundant with respect to communication of a and b, and non redundant with respect to c.

Another way of describing the "full sentence" reply is to say that the degrees of specificity of <u>a</u>, the name, and <u>b</u>, the job, are unnecessarily high. Thus the listener is tempted to "read into" the unnecessarily specific reply some implicit message. The reply with a normal degree of specificity is <u>Grammar</u>. In this information situation, the single word represents an unmarked positive statement form.

Suppose, instead, that the visitor asks the information eliciting question, <u>Who teaches grammar?</u> The visitor knows that grammar is taught, and a reply statement <u>Mona Long teaches grammar</u> would be non redundant with respect to \underline{a} and redundant with respect to \underline{b} and \underline{c} .

Another way of describing the "full sentence" reply is to say that the

degrees of specificity of \underline{b} and \underline{c} are unnecessarily high, and that the reply would suggest some implicit message. The reply with the normal degree of specificity is $\underline{Mona\ Long}$. If this reply seems abrupt, the speaker may prefer $\underline{Mona\ Long\ does}$. The unstressed proverb \underline{does} being as redundant informationally as the unstressed pronoun \underline{she} of $\underline{She\ teaches\ grammar}$. In this information situation, the name is an unmarked statement form.

The information situations are:

	a	b	c
1	Mona Long	teaches	grammar
2	She	teaches	grammar
3			Grammar
4a	Mona Long		
4b	Mona Long	does	

Table 15 Elicited statement information situations

Teachers who use questions to elicit statements and then require the 1 style answer, ("Answer in a full sentence") are, in fact, "unteaching" the primary grammar, shown in all the native speaker Texts, of background – focus distinction.

There is a further grammar implication too. Using 1 as the basis for comparisons, 2 and 4b show apparent "substitution" of <u>She</u> for <u>Mona Long</u> and of <u>does</u> for <u>teaches</u>. 3 shows apparent "deletion" of <u>Mona Long</u> and <u>teaches</u>. 4a shows apparent "deletion" of <u>teaches</u> and <u>grammar</u>, and 4b shows apparent "deletion" of <u>grammar</u>.

Grammarians describing conditions for and constraints upon substitution and deletion base their studies on the assumption that a statement of the 1-type is an originating statement for producing the 2, 3, 4a, and 4b forms.

However, when one takes all five forms to be equally available and the actually spoken statement to be the result of exercise of the speaker's option, there are no processes.

Each of the items \underline{a} , \underline{b} , and \underline{c} is edited to a degree of specificity needed in the informational circumstance of the communication. 1, 2, 3, 4a, 4b show speaker control of the information communicated, according to background – focus grammar.

It would be astonishing were such control not basic to

communication in all languages, were means for it not built into the capacity of each language. "Deleted", "reduced", "abbreviated", "truncated" "telegraphic", imply **non**-deleted (reduced etc.), i.e. prescribed, "full" forms. A grammar or learning psychology using these terms has implicit an arbitrarily imposed model or standard form: the grammar and psychology are not learner friendly.

The above description of information representation in a statement would lead naturally to discussion of information representation in statement sequences. However, I will first look at question and negation marking.

A short grammar of question forms

On the asker's part, a genuine question implies: (a) not knowing (b) wanting to know (c) believing the person asked may know and may be prepared to answer. Two kinds of information may be unknown: (1) whether such and such is the case (2) circumstantial information, 'when', 'where'. . .

The question form corresponding to (1) is, in many languages, that of the statement that such and such is the case; for there are many occasions when making a statement elicits assent or dissent. In those cases, there is no formal clue, though minimal marking may then be shown through facial expression, and languages with clause intonation may use it to a degree selected by the speaker. It is such non-specific question marking that speakers, and learners, prefer.

However, still in keeping with preference for non-specificity, there are several ways in which languages allow the (1) question type to be clued. In most, the statement form is left unaltered and a "particle" (question marker) is attached, before or after the statement. "Not?" after the statement is common. Malay places -kah after the first word of the statement clause. More explicit is the offer of alternatives: "This coffee good not good".

English, like other European languages, marks (1) style questions by "question word order", i.e. with finite verb before clause subject. It differs, however, by restricting this form to finite parts of 'be', 'have', and modals (<u>can</u>. . .).

For other verbs, marking occurs with initial <u>Do</u>, <u>Does</u>, <u>Did</u>. This marking gives a clear, early clue to the question designatum, then maintains the regular statement word order. For learners, these

advantages are offset through (a) the redundancy of English having two marking devices for one style of question (b) the redundancy of the "agreement" (person and tense) of the marking device (c) interference with an otherwise wanted statement "third person singular" stem+ \underline{s} association (for example, $\underline{Did}/\underline{can}$. . \underline{SHE} SEND. . .).

In every language, the second question kind, asking for circumstantial information, requires only the attachment of the designata-wise appropriate marking "pronominal" word or expression, who, when, in which direction etc. to beginning or end of a statement form.

Somewhat less sensible standard English gives the pronominal word or expression front position, but requires it to be followed, not by statement but by the prescribed, marked, (1) style question form (Where did the accident happen?) Understandably, efficient learner translation-English "Where accident happen" or "Accident happen where", usually without redundant clause intonation, has supplanted native speaker forms in many parts of the world.

A short grammar of negation forms

Languages apply negation to clause or clause item with a particle. English applies <u>n't/not</u> (<u>nor</u>, <u>never</u>) to statement and question forms, following the (1) style question requirement (<u>He doesn't mind</u>... <u>Doesn't he mind</u>...).

There are complexities, especially in the spoken language.

Compare learner-friendly

	1	2
a	He is	He is `not
b	<u>Is he</u>	Is he not

with learner unfriendly

in a and b there is spoken and written orderliness, and conformity to marking requirement that a continuity-indicating pronoun is not stressed, while a discontinuity <u>not</u> must be.

In c1, pronoun /hi:/ is stressed, /z/ appearing in a wordfinal low information-bearing position (Table 5). In c2, on the contrary,

neither /hi/ nor /nt/ (or /n/) has stress, stress going, incongruously, to /iz/. It does so in d1 and d2.

In Priestley's <u>aren't taking</u> (Excerpt 1.3), there is no spoken /t/ to match <u>t</u> in written <u>n't</u>. "Negative" in <u>aren't taking</u> is expressed through the stress on <u>are</u> rather than though the unstressed nasal /n/ occurring, as it does, in the low CD position referred to. The same remarks apply to <u>don't think</u> (1.30).

<u>Don't want</u> (1.37) offers the possibility of pronunciation or non-pronunciation of a written <u>t</u>. In British pronunciation (used by Priestley) of <u>don't</u> and <u>can't</u>, (<u>shan't</u>, <u>won't</u>), "negative" is shown not so much by an inconspicuous nasal, as by the preceding vowel sound.

With <u>don't think</u> (1.30), for example, "negative" is expressed mainly through the pronunciation /dou/, by contrast with /du:/ for the statement form. Similar vowel clues indicate negation for <u>shall</u>, <u>will</u> and <u>can</u> (/ʃa:n/, /woun/, /ka:n/).

The nasal itself is variably realized as /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/, according to the immediately following sound (don't mind, don't know, don't care /doumain/ /dounou/ /douŋkeə/), and the vowel sound varies from modal to modal.

By comparison with <u>not</u> (l. 60), negativity through $\underline{n't}$ is a problem area in ELT, for learners reasonably expect discontinuity to be indicated clearly, and uniformly.

Efficiency-seeking learner brains, with the help of mother tongue example, inevitably prefer the <u>not</u> (<u>no</u>) negative: in learner-friendly courses, this is used first; incidentally <u>am not</u> is the only official form.

There is a further problem with the placing of relatively marked <u>not</u> when there is a noun subject. It can fill either of two slots:

```
Do ( ) birds ( ) copy the behaviour of others of their kind?
```

Languages other than English offer various optional means by which a speaker checks for continued attention and approval. The simplest is addition to the statement of "not?" or "not true?".

English has a system of 44 items (are you? should she? can't you? don't they?...). In the unmarked (!) form of the system, the appended tag is negative when the statement is positive, positive

when the statement is negative; and in the marked form the opposite is the case (So she went there, did she).

Though in fact native speakers rarely use them, and they are unnecessary, these 44 forms are frequently set down for **automatic** response mastery; a prescription demanding maximum learner effort to minimal effect, giving unthinking priority to "what they (are supposed to) say".

A comprehension complexity arises when such tags are appended to negative statements and ask for listener assent or dissent as relevant information: There's no ice cream left, is there? For many learners, native speaker English Yes and No conflict with mother tongue "Yes" and "No"; for English No confirms the no of the statement, as English Yes means that the statement was wrong, whereas the learners' "Yes" means agreement, and "No" disagreement with the statement.

A further, minor point confirms the annoyance learners experience from the complexity of English question and negative forms. Why don't you try? is paralleled by Why not try? Resulting mixed forms (Why not you try? and Why you not try? and, through analogy, Why not they try? and Why they not try?) compete, successfully, with the native speaker forms.

Native speaker English question and negative marking goes well beyond the relative simplicity of other languages, and many nonnative English speakers do not accept them. It gets beyond comprehension when teachers, additionally, require unnecessary, indeed often inappropriate, <u>yes</u> and <u>no</u> **statement** tags (<u>Yes</u>, <u>I would</u>, <u>No I don't</u>, <u>Yes he can</u>.) The psychology of élitism on the basis of twig-level structure is the explanation.

One notes, as features of background-focus grammar. the focusing not in line 22, by comparison with the background n't in line 23:

<u>they'd probably</u> <u>not even read them</u> <u>who haven't</u> <u>read them</u>

Assignment of \underline{not} and $\underline{n't}$ to focus and background respectively is particularly evident when the sequence continues with an adjective:

 $\begin{array}{cc} \underline{it's} & \underline{not \ easy} \\ \underline{(i)t \ isn't} & \underline{easy} \end{array}$

The 'negative' designatum common to both clauses does not imply

common FP. 'Negative' assignment to predicative adjunct/rheme/ focus is certain only when it is included in the constituent as <u>in</u>-, <u>un</u>-, <u>dis</u>-... or when the stressed <u>not</u> precedes the adjective; so that one may substitute among:

 $\frac{\underline{untrue}}{\underline{it's}}$ not true

It is inadequate description of <u>not</u>, <u>n't</u> to list <u>not</u> as one of the words "most commonly reduced" or "having a weak form".

FP 3 and strategy for gaining encoding time

I will now show how FP description is sensitive to encoder need for additional encoding time. In an obvious way, encoder time is gained, and continued listener attention invited, by phrases with <u>say</u>, <u>suppose</u>, <u>know</u>, <u>think</u>, <u>mean</u>, <u>see</u>. Excerpt examples are worth looking at with respect to occurrence and non-occurrence of pauses. With continuity representation (_), the 8 examples are:

```
6
         h I suppose _
         _ y'know # hh
7
17
         J I think J
22
         er I mean
26
          say 
         # you see # hh
27
30
             I'd say
   em # h you know
        Table 16
    "Parenthetical" clauses
```

Some items in Table 16 must be parenthetical, i.e. not participating in clause grammar or information communication; others may be interpreted as participating or not; it is unlikely Priestley knew.

Edited text punctuation has a comma before and a comma after a parenthetical expression, and readers commonly understand the commas both as indication of the parenthesis and as pause signals. Only one of the Excerpt items has a pause on either side, namely:

3 items have preceding pauses only:

6 # h I suppose 22 er I mean 31 # h you know 1 item has a following pause only:

y'know # hh

3 items occur without pauses:

17 I think26 say30 I'd say

The items <u>y'know</u> (line 7), <u>you know</u> (line 31) and <u>you see</u> (line 27) have no part in sentence grammar, no informational status; have, in fact, the encoder time-gaining function.

<u>say</u> (line 26) invites comparison with <u>I'd say</u> (line 30). The line 26 item has no preceding and no following pause; informationally it anticipates 'an example'. The line 30 item has neither preceding nor following pause, plays no part in wider clause grammar, but functions to halt a sentence begun before Priestley has its further progress under control:

it's only I'd say it's only lately that. . .

<u>I suppose</u> (line 6), in a conventional transcription, <u>which I suppose</u> <u>has sold</u>, could be interpreted as a main clause (with relative <u>which</u> corresponding to <u>it</u> in <u>I suppose it has sold</u>. . .). However, Priestley's pauses:

which # hh I suppose has sold # hh almost as many copies

suggest a parenthetic modifying of <u>has sold</u>, with a touch of modesty. However, an observation I will take up later, it weights a clause with conspicuous pause and breath intake before the clause focus.

I think (line 17) in:

because I think it had # h much too great a popular success it did me # h

could be understood similarly as a main clause with <u>it had</u>. . .as its object clause (i.e. <u>I think</u> (that) <u>it had</u>. . .). Absence of preceding or following pause supports this understanding; but grammatical and informational status would then be at odds; one cannot really accept <u>I think</u> as having greater informational status than <u>it had much too great a popular success</u>.

mean (line 22) in:

er I mean a lot of people # h

anticipates Priestley's justification of what has been stated, and functions to interrupt the <u>condemned me</u> clauses.

The verb forms just studied fulfil an encoding function; equally, they fit uneasily into conventional constituent analysis. Their function, I believe, is related to Priestley's general use of pauses.

The rôle of pauses in spoken text

Pauses either intervene rather idly in or have an active rôle in taking encoder (and decoder) from one focus to the next. The latter interventions become part of spoken text grammar; and one cannot ignore the mismatches between the forms of the transcribed text and those which could eventually have become the forms of an edited written text version. One notes:

- 1 pauses that are physiological, i.e. for breath intake
- 2 pauses that give time for encoder and decoder to relax
- 3 pauses that give decoders the gratification of successful anticipation
- 4 pauses that gain time for the speaker to go on encoding
- 5 pauses that appear after a focus
- 6 pauses that appear before a focus.

Table 17 Types of pause

The first type does not need comment; being, presumably, common to spoken language encoding generally.

Type 2 pauses that afford relaxation for encoder and decoder (and, for the latter, opportunity for memory reinforcement of the latest message) occur typically after a focus, particularly one followed by a discontinuity marker:

- 16 I was delighted at the time 've been. . .sorry ever since #
- 17 because...

Type 3 is exemplified in Excerpt 1.4. The line begins <u>if you said</u>... There is no doubt about Orr's having said... and with <u>if</u> Priestley merely excuses his repetition of Orr's question. Given this opportunity for access to short term memory, a listener can anticipate from <u>my first</u>... what the next words will be: the pause between <u>my first</u> – and <u>big success</u> gives time to do so; then, with Priestley's utterance of the expected words, a listener enjoys a second 'I've been here before' gratification.

Type 4 pauses, forming part of encoder strategies for gaining encoding time, are associated with, perhaps alternative to, "hesitation" noises (em. . ., er and so on). Since they represent some loss of encoder control, thus risk loss of decoder attention, they often accompany or are perhaps alternative to the parenthetical clauses described functionally and earlier listed. The pauses or equivalents are themselves informationally neutral, so are not associated with particular clause positions. The first three Excerpt lines exemplify:

- 1 well
- 2 this is rather hard to answer # h
- 3 em t#

Priestley makes type 5 pauses, i.e. at places such as would permit representation by conventional punctuation; i.e. for unmarked statement clauses, in edited grammar after the NP in VP + NP, informationally after a focus:

The focus items, <u>rocket</u>, <u>different</u>, <u>this</u> mark points where there is both prospective and retrospective continuity:

Line 13, (this thing) / rocket marks continuity from and to I.

In line 26, the continuity is between <u>different</u> and preceding <u>they</u> and (via parenthetical you see) subsequent they.

In line 29 the continuity is between <u>this</u> and preceding \underline{I} and subsequent formal <u>it</u> clause.

When such focuses are points of continuity, it may be a matter of indifference for encoder and decoder whether a pause is to one side or the other of a continuity indicator.

Compare:

- 9 I'd written about ten books before that and. . .
- they get at you both ways and. . .

with:

10 was doing quite nicely and $-\dots$

Type 6 pauses interrupt message transmission at points at which a decoder will predict sequence continuation (a) with pleasure when the prediction is confirmed ('I've been here before') or (b) with

surprise/frustration when the prediction is thwarted ('What's that?') or (c) with mixed pleasure and surprise when confirmed prediction is given unexpected expression. Such pauses occur before, and signal, focuses:

```
5
      the good companions which
                                  #hh
                                         .. has sold
6
                        has sold
                                  #hh
                                         .. as many copies as
9
                                  #hh .. doing quite nicely
                        and was
17
                           it had #h
                                        a popular success
18
                       it did me
                                  #h
                                        a good deal of harm
22
                                        write and talk
                   a lot of people #h
24
            because I didn't write #h
                                        a series of
30
             it's only... that – em #h
                                        .. I've had
```

Table 18 Focus-anticipating pauses

Including Orr's <u>er</u> in <u>the sort of success that er made you</u>. . . (line ii), the Excerpt shows the following grammatical distribution:

```
verb + pause + object 4
verb + pause + adjunct 1
subject + pause + verb 2
relative + pause + verb 2
```

I will look at the relative + pause + verb example of line 5:

5 the good companions which # hh has sold

Having observed pauses apparently indifferently on either side of a continuity indicator,

```
they get you both ways – and was doing quite nicely and –
```

one might wonder whether similar indifference would apply to:

```
the good companions which # hh
```

and: the good companions # hh which

If it did, focus clueing might be an accidental function of the pause. Moreover, the pause after (actually unstressed) which precedes parenthetical I suppose, and either would have delayed the which-sequel.

One cannot make mutually exclusive categories for pause interpretation. An encoder need not encode, and a decoder certainly

is under no obligation to decode, to any determined degree of specificity. An encoding pause has in the first place the general alerting designatum of marking.

What is certain is that spoken text without encoding pauses easily loses listeners' attention. They resist the over rehearsed lecture or lesson, the "paper" actually "read"; nor is an artificially bright intonation sometimes affected with small children an adequate substitute for normal clause shaping, in which pauses are a normal element.

Pre-focus pauses appear to be natural teacher strategy, the teacher providing background to and the learners chorusing successive focus forms. Paradoxically, the practice is most unpopular with experts in spoken English. It is true that many teachers distort the words preceding the pauses, with undue vowel length and rising intonation; but the distortion is not implicit in the use of pre-focus pauses.

Pre-focus modifiers

I assumed that the pre-focus pause is an FP 3 marking device, with an inconspicuous "wait-for-it" designatum. I now mention use of "modifiers" with a similar focusing function and with designata that often are nominal. Priestley has:

5	that was	obviously	the novel
7	# hh	almost	as many copies as
9	I'd written	about	ten books
10	doing	quite	nicely
16	have been	rather	sorry
26	was	quite	different

Table 19 Focus-anticipating "modifiers"

Lines 7 and 9, <u>almost</u> and <u>about</u> may be, designata-wise, necessary qualification; probably the focusing function is the predominant reason for the presence of the others.

13 VERBS

It would be unsatisfactory to produce a grammar of verbs and verb groups in a style matching that of the grammar of noun groups; an informational grammar of clause sequences is needed.

A main reason is that a reasonable verb form grammar involves the grammar of clause – clause continuity and discontinuity, sequences of the traditionally described "simple tenses" being associated with clause – clause continuity, occurrences of the traditionally described "expanded tenses" with discontinuity.

Teaching English to Europeans, there is a case for the traditional account, avoiding the broader text grammar, on the assumption that this will be understood from matching mother tongue grammar; though one needs to be aware that the statistical distribution of apparently matching forms differs from one European language to another.

Teaching English to the much larger numbers of non-European learners should involve study of ways of making the English forms accessible neutrally, i.e. without the European Latin based classification, and emphasizing the (more intelligible) broader continuity/discontinuity text grammar. . .

In this respect, Kruisinga's observation that a regular English verb has four forms provides the neutrality.

Occurrences and percentage occurrences of the "simple" (i.e. stem\stem+s and stem+ed forms in the 108,738 verb form occurrences in approximately a half million "running words" in a 1963 count in Hyderabad, India, were:

% of total: 20.9 stem/stem+s 22,682 29,935 27.5

52,617 48.4 Total:

And as percentages of the 52,617 combined occurrences, the percentage distribution is:

> 43.1 stem/stem+s 56.9 stem+ed

stem+ed

Table 20 Occurrences and percentage occurrences of "tense" forms

The proportion of (almost half) of verb form occurrences indicates the grammatical significance of the stem/stem+s and stem+ed forms. A change in balance of corpus texts would bring stem/stem+s into parity with stem+ed forms. They are major verb forms.

Verb tense form labels, and occurrence statistics

The words "Tense" (= 'time'), "Present" and "Past" mislead by giving priority to a 'time' designatum feature of their grammar. Kruisinga has sensitive function/designata labels occurrences. I will give his subclass names, function/designata annotations, examples (when possible from the Priestley-Orr text), and, using the Hyderabad count, the percentage comprised by the most significant sub classes within each listed class:

stem/stem+s		% of total stem/stem+s
ACTUAL	referring to the moment of encoding	stem/stem+s
ACTUAL	referring to the moment of encoding: I s u p p o s e	57.7
NEUTRAL	with no specific time reference:	31.1
NEOTRAL	a lot of people write and	
	t a l k about books who	33.6
ITERATIVE	referring to repeated occurrence with	33.0
TILKATIVE	a moment-of-encoding reference point:	
	they g e t at you both ways	5.5
FUTURE	(a) in main clauses:	5.5
POTORE	we leave tomorrow	1.4
	(b) in subordinate clauses:	1.4
	when we l e a v e	1.3
MODAL	when we i e a v e	1.3
MODAL	I suggest she take turns	0.1
stem+ed		
NARRATIVE	for narration of past happenings	
	in the order of their occurrence:	
	I got a guinea for it and I	
	remember (Actual) my father	
	g a v e me a cigar	56.8
ACTUAL	for statement of contemporary	
	circumstances at an actual point in	
	narration:	
	it had (narrative) a wonderful press	
	er all the chief reviewers wrote	
	about it and g a v e me a good deal	
	of praise	30.2
NEUTRAL	occurrence of stem+-ed from "concord"	
	i.e. at a text point at which form change	
	would be undesirably conspicuous:	
	I always thought it had a horrible	
	climate	5.5
ITERATIVE	referring to repeated occurrence over a	
	period of time in the past:	
	I mean (Actual) twenty or thirty miles	
	walk was nothing on a Sunday	5.2
MODAL	with reference to action activity or	
	state in some way remote from reality;	
	made remote through a speaker's modesty	
	or through being non-real or through	
	being unlikely:	
	I wish (Actual) they cared more	
	about construction	
	if I h a d press cuttings	2.3
	T 11 21	

Table 21

 $\underline{Stem/stem+s/stem+ed\ function/designata\ labels\ and\ occurrence\ frequency\ percentages}$

A popular course presentation assigns representative function to the 5.5% "Iterative" (or "Habitual") stem/stem+s occurrences, and, ignoring the typical, 57.7% "Actual" occurrences, assigns representation of the "Actual" designatum to a supposed am/ are/is stem+ing group form. One could not imagine, for our profession, a more unfortunate grammar.

Rather obviously, as people talk to each other (e.g. Priestley to Orr), they encode their **actual** thoughts, feelings, reactions, hopes, fears, questions, proposals. . . They use stem/stem+ \underline{s} (usually stem) forms for the individual 'thought' etc. designata, and sequences of stem/stem+ \underline{s} forms to show continuity of succession of 'thoughts' etc. These are major functions of the forms, associated with a text style.

The second, equally significant function of the stem/stem+ \underline{s} forms is to represent occurrences that are invariable (or 'neutral') with respect to time (33.7% of total stem/stem+ \underline{s} occurrences). Sequences of the forms (usually of stem+ \underline{s} forms) indicate sequences of steps in expository, especially scientific, description.

Traditional grammarians associate the stem+<u>ed</u> form with 'past' time, and call it "Past tense". However, it is rare for a stem+<u>ed</u> form to occur in a single clause, with the <u>ed</u> form expressing a 'past' designatum.

Typically a succession of <u>ed</u> forms indicates a succession of narrative events, each narrated in the order of actual occurrence. The major association of the stem+<u>ed</u> form is not with 'past' time, but with 'narrative' sequence.

Often, narrative sequences are interrupted by <u>ed</u> forms representing not successive events but circumstances at the time of an event in an event sequence. In the quoted example, taking "<u>had</u> a wonderful press" as a narrated event, "all the chief reviewers <u>wrote</u> about it" and "<u>gave</u> me a good deal of praise" are simultaneous with, or at the "actual" time of, that event.

This "Actual" function accounted for 30.2% of occurrences of stem+ed forms. Course design often assigns the function to was/were stem+ing or "Past Progressive". The was/were and ing marking makes one anticipate that it may indeed perform the function; but, as the following pages show, encoders have infrequently need for the relatively marked form.

"Verb group" or verb + clause constituent

A "slot and filler" grammar of noun groups is satisfactory because it can be established unambiguously (indeed, learners can establish it) from encountered form sequences.

It would have been possible, at an earlier stage, to make a comparable slot and filler verb group grammar, but not unambiguously. I now proceed to do so; but will then propose a more learner-friendly alternative, that anticipated in Table 4.

The Priestley–Orr excerpt has, in order of occurrence:

```
would...say
do...mean
was going (to make)
hard to answer
has sold
'd written
was doing
was delighted
've been
'd written
'd...read
did...write
'd say
'ye had
```

The criterion of their substitutability for one-item forms (e.g. <u>would</u> <u>say</u> for <u>said</u>, <u>was going</u> for <u>went</u>) would exclude <u>hard to answer</u>, but allow one to call the others occurrences of two-item verb groups.

Elsewhere, Priestley has:

```
could have stayed
may be talking
should be proved
had been talking
've been asked
```

Sorting such items (exploring their item order) one discovers an "item-and-slot" grammar, with 5 slots, or positions, and four sequence rules (and, readers may notice I have, in fact, included the <u>hard to</u> + stem form):

5	4	3	2	1
(a)				
would	have	be	be	stem
'd	've	been	been	stem+ing
could	has	am	am	stem+ed
should	's	'm	'm	
might	had	are	are	
may	'd	're	're	
must		is	is	
can	having	's	's	
will		was	was	
shall		were	were	

being

(b) do does did

(c) verb + to noun + to adjective + to

The rules are:

5 -> stem
4 -> stem+ed
3 -> stem+ing
2 -> stem+ed

Table 22
A verb group grammar

A non-text paradigm is:

2 - 1	is changed
	being changed
3 – 1	are changing
3 - 2 - 1	were being changed
4 – 1	has changed
	having changed
4 - 2 - 1	had been changed
	having been changed
5a – 1	may change
5a - 4 - 1	may have changed
5a - 4 - 2 - 1	may have been changed
5b – 1	does change
5c – 1	wanted to change
	willingness to change
	hard to change

5b has a restriction; a following form must be in Position 1.

5c permits complex groups:

intended to have changed willingness to be changed hard to be changed

Verb and verb group form statistics

I now add to the paradigmatic model the statistics emerging from study of text. What I would like kept in mind, however, is that the paradigm and boundaries are imposed on text. The procedure is, so to say, to use topographical maps to establish various routes, then count the number of vehicles travelling them; a preliminary to deciding what topological maps to make.

The frequencies of occurrence in the 40½ minute Priestley–Orr interview are:

Simple finite forms: 234 stem 155 stem+s 199 stem+ed total 588 Two-item groups: 5a - 175 5b - 199 5c - 171 4 - 178 3 - 135 2 - 117 375 total Three-item groups: 5 - 4 - 18 5 - 3 - 12 4 - 3 - 15 5 - 2 - 15 4 - 2 - 15 total 25 988 grand total

Table 23
Verb group item occurrences

This total is so near 1,000 that figures may be read individually as approximate per thousand or percentage proportions of the total.

I now apply the text statistics to the paradigm; a first step to questioning its validity, and suggesting an alternative grammar.

- The three-item groups account for 2.3% of the total; I leave them out of present consideration; as they can usefully be left out of consideration at all levels of study at school.
- The "simple" forms total 588. There are 17 occurrences of 2–1 groups, or "passives". The respective percentages of "active" and "passive" forms are 97% and 3%. The forms do not have matching status for presence together in a paradigm, i.e. between common boundaries for text study.
- 3 The "simple" forms total 588. The total for 3–1 groups, or

"present progressive" and "past progressive" is 35, i.e. 94% and 6% respectively of their combined total occurrences. The forms do not have matching status to be set in a paradigm, between common boundaries.

- 4 The "simple" forms total 588. The total for 4–1 groups, or "present perfect" and "past perfect", is 78, i.e. 88% and 12% respectively of their combined total occurrences. The forms have doubtful status for setting in a paradigm.
- 5 The "simple" forms total 588. The total for 5a–1 and 5b1 groups ("modals", and "do, does, did + stem forms") is 174, i.e. 77% and 23% of the combined total occurrences. These figures approach parity of status, but it may be noted that 5a items are numerous and, by comparison with the am, are, was, were, have, has, had items, have individual designata.

The alternative grammar

An alternative interpretation applies to all two-item groups from Table 22 whose first slot is filled by a finite stem, stem+ \underline{s} or stem+ed form.

2 – 1 groups, or "Passive Voice"

No one questions the existence of "Vox Passiva" forms in Latin, or, for that matter, in Swedish; Latin <u>moneor</u> contrasts formally with <u>moneo</u>, Swedish <u>varnas</u> with <u>varnar</u>. But English has no inflectional counter-part; and, as Kruisinga (1960) points out, forms **called** "passive" are simply those traditionally used for translation from and into the Latin forms; for <u>moneor</u> (and <u>varnas</u>), the 2 – 1 group <u>am warned</u> is a usual translation. But their being translations from Latin should not give them status in English grammar.

Latin has a battery of inflectional forms (Table 3) uniquely ascribed to its Vox Passiva. On the other hand, of a supposed 2-1 group, neither the $\underline{\text{am/are/is/was/were}}$ item nor the non-finite stem+ $\underline{\text{ed}}$ item is used exclusively to produce equivalents to Latin Vox Passiva forms; both have independent existences. Nor, indeed, when they are juxtaposed, are all resulting classifiable 2-1 groups translation equivalents to Vox Passiva.

Indeed, since 2 - 1 groups are formally alike, and only some of them correspond with Latin passive forms, grammarians have been obliged to formulate restrictions on the use of the label "passive".

Necessarily, the restriction criteria must lie outside the group form itself.

One grammar style states that for a 'be' + stem+-<u>ed</u> group to be passive the clause in which the group occurs must stand in a transformational relation with an "active" clause. Their representation is:

$$NP_1 + V_{trans} + NP_2 \rightarrow NP + (agreeing form of)be + V_{ed} (+ by + NP_1)$$

In the style, an audible/visible Latin inflection criterion is replaced by an English relation criterion between an audible/visible member and an unheard/unseen member of a clause pair.

2 Similarly, the "passive" label is applied to finite 2 – 1 groups in which the stem+<u>ed</u> forms in Position 1 are those of "transitive" verbs, that is, those "taking an object". Thus, the second clause in Priestley's

That's not why the big money is being lost

should be "passive" because, typically, "somebody loses something". In this style, passives are identified by a prior verb classification, established by criteria of verb stem designata.

In a third style, a 2-1 group would be passive through predominance, in the designata of Position 1 verb stem and context, of "the idea of ACTION", by contrast with the designata of "resultant condition or STATE".

The three restriction styles have in common their observer (as distinct from text encoder or decoder) origin. They share the difficulty of trying to apply to English text forms the objective Latin formal distinction.

Consider the grammar of:

dismayed
They were not dismayed by the report undismayed

To a transformationalist, 1 is a passive counterpart to <u>The report dismayed them</u>, and 2 is a passive counterpart to negative 1; 3, on

the other hand, cannot be passive, since there is no active *The report undismayed them counterpart to be transformed into 3.

A strictly observer grammarian would see potential common classification through (a) the common <u>ed</u> ending (b) the common clause position and (c) common <u>ed</u> designata, i.e. "states (of mind), resulting from (reading of) the report". Items 2 and 3 have potential sub-group membership through presence of a negative particle, <u>not</u> or un-.

Is there an English encoder distinction between "occurrence" and "state"? Does an encoder or decoder have time to perceive one? The Priestley–Orr Excerpt, line 16, reads:

I was delighted at the time 've been sorry ever since

One observer grammarian may interpret as "passive" 'was delighted by this thing (line 14) shooting up like a rocket', with an active originating (unspoken) "This thing (shooting up like a rocket) delighted me at the time". Another interpretation is 'was in a state of delight at the time', with no "active" counterpart. Or, <u>delighted</u> may be a counter-part to <u>sorry</u> in the following clause, i.e. a predicative adjective.

The Hyderabad count classified 13,210 non-finite stem+<u>ed</u> groups (excluding miscellaneous and <u>have/has/had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> groups) as follows (with percentages of the total number of verb forms, and of the total stem+ed occurrences):

		% of total	% of stem+ed
total verb form occurrences	108,783	100	
total stem+ed occurrences	50,295	46	100
finite stem+ed	29,935	27.5	59
non-finite "occurrence"	6,514	6	13
"state"	3,541	3.25	7
"adjective"	2,531	2.3	5
"free adjunct"	625	0.5	1

(7,543 occurrences, i.e. 7% of total, 15% of total stem+ed occurrences belong to miscellaneous and 4 - 1 groups)

Table 24
Stem+ed percentage occurrences

Exemplification of the relevant non-finite stem+<u>ed</u> forms is shown by <u>damaged</u> in:

The parcel was <u>damaged</u> in transit (occurrence)
The parcel arrived <u>damaged</u> (state)
The <u>damaged</u> parcel. . . (adjectival)
The parcel, <u>damaged</u> in transit, . . . (adjectival)
Damaged in transit, the parcel. . . (free adjunct)

I do not, myself, see that either form or designatum of <u>damaged</u> alters from one construction to the next. And any "passive" designatum attaches to the stem+<u>ed</u> form, irrespective of presence or not of a preceding form of 'be'.

Moreover, the preceding form of 'be' is typically unstressed, and assimilates, not with a following stem+<u>ed</u> form, when there is one, but observably, with a preceding clause subject (Table 4).

I have looked at so-called passive forms from the viewpoint of observer grammar. I do not think an encoder or decoder has time or would waste effort separating, from presence of a preceding form of 'be', one anticipated stem+ed occurrence from others.

As for prescription for learning, the transfer of "passives" from Latin to English I personally see as innocuous when the language being learned is Latin; inefficient when learners are mother tongue speakers of one modern European language learning another modern European language; and deplorable when Asian learners are set to learn English.

In all instances other than the first, the obscurantism should be avoided, by the transfer of 2 - 1 verb group grammar to clause grammar, adding the Excerpt item <u>delighted</u> to matching predicative adjunct items:

there
in the right profession
was sorry
delighted

3 – 1 groups, or "Progressive (Continuous) tenses"

The Priestley text excerpt itself suggests an alternative classification. The stem+<u>ing</u> occurrence in Excerpt line 13 is transcribed:

I was doing quite nicely then. . .

However, in lines 9.10, the identical words are transcribed:

```
- and was # h
doing quite nicely and – er # h
```

That is, Priestley puts an observable boundary between finite was and the (focus) group doing quite nicely.

Am, are, is, was, were appeared as the finite verb element in 34% of the Priestley clause total, i.e. as a major "transitional" item; there is no reason to alter its clause constituent status when it is followed by a focus stem+ing.

That is, the stem+ing form appears normally among the range of focus forms following transitional 'be'; to quote Priestley Excerpt instances:

> was in the right a writer sorry delighted in the right profession doing quite nicely

There are two more considerations

The first is the previously mentioned observation that spoken finite forms of 'be' associate with preceding subject nouns and pronouns, not with following stem+ing forms.

The second is the quite independent nature of the stem+ing form. Though (Priestley's) changing a bit occurs after 'be', it may also occur (a) as a nominal group, (b) as a clause subject adjunct, (c) as an object adjunct, (d) as an adjective qualifier, and (e) as an attributive adjective:

- (a) Changing a bit was easy I don't mind changing a bit
- (b) Changing a bit, she. . .
- (c) I noticed his opinion changing a bit
- (d) a person changing a bit. . .
- (e) a changing scene.

In fact, both nominal and adjectival text occurrences far outnumber occurrences of the stem+ing form after 'be'; the apparent "verb group" classification is spurious.

The above considerations are in terms of observer grammar. Using Kruisinga's function classification and the Hyderabad count, one may contrast:

Simple Present	occurrences
Actual ("now")	13, 084
Neutral	7, 597
Iterative	1, 244
Refering to the future	798
Present Progressive	
"now"	627
Habitual	137
Referring to the future	181

Table 25
Occurrences of "Simple Present" and "Present Progressive"

In the Hyderabad count, 34 "Progressive" forms occurred per 1000 combined "Progressive" and "Simple" forms. There is no parity of status; or of usefulness for learners.

In defiance of observation of spoken text, some Course design assigns to <u>am/are/is</u> stem+<u>ing</u> a **typical** "future" indicating function ("What are you doing this evening?"). The "Present Progressive" classification appears to be, in effect, a normal classification of Simple Present <u>am/are/is/</u>; followed by (an independent) predicative stem+ing.

The figures for Simple Past and Past Progressive are:

Simple Past	occurrences
Narrative Actual ("at that moment")	17, 004 9, 038
Neutral	1, 643
Habitual	1,550
Past Progressive	
"at that moment"	509
Habitual	341
Reported Future	60

Table 26
Occurrences of "Simple Past" and "Past Progressive"

Removal of finite 3-1 groups from "verb group" to clause grammar need not affect observer grammar classification of non-finite 3-1 sequences within 3-item and 4-item groups.

However, the Priestley–Orr text total of 25 such groups included only 7 Position 3 items. In the Hyderabad count, there was 1 (one!) 5–4–3–1 ("Future Perfect Progressive") occurrence; there were 23 occurrences of 5–3–1 ("Future Progressive"), 167 of 4–3–1 (namely 87 of "Past Perfect Progressive" and 80 "Present Perfect Progressive"): in percentage terms, 0.00, 0.02 and 0.15.

To dignify such 3-item and 4-item groups with their traditional names and paradigmatic status is wholly unrealistic. Their interpretation, when they are encountered, and noticed, is straightforward, and they merit no attention unless from specialists.

Concluding discussion so far of shorter sequence (group) classification versus longer sequence (clause) classification, it seems that, when there are alternatives, classification as a constituent in a longer sequence offers two features of descriptive economy:

- 1 the item enters into a larger class of substitutable items
- 2 recognition of an item as a constituent of a longer sequence invites recognition of whatever freedom it has to occupy other constituent positions, in other sequences.

4 – 1 groups, or "Perfect tenses"

In the Hyderabad count of 108,738 verb form occurrences, 462 of every 1000 were, or included stem+ed forms. These 462, in turn, included 20 has.stem+ed ("Present Perfect") forms, and 26 had.stem+ed ("Past Perfect") forms.

There is no status equivalence; and no learner profit from a course design assumption that the forms have to be learned as "tenses" with defined functions.

The question arises, whether <u>have</u>, <u>has</u> and <u>had</u> have the same 'transition' status as <u>am</u>, <u>are</u>, <u>is</u>, <u>was</u>, <u>were</u>.

Observer grammar notes that there is a common amalgamation with clause subject (rather than with a following stem+ed), and indeed a common third person form she's, he's, amalgamating is and has.

Dictionaries give for "he has packed" the equivalence "His packing

is completed", and teacher presentation on these lines leads many learners to associate a mother tongue 'finished' clue to a perceived English have/has clue.

had stem+ed

For <u>had</u>, a clue (rather than "tense") association is present on most of its occurrences.

Successive <u>ed</u> forms clue matching event occurrence/narration order. The sequence-marking <u>ed</u> itself occurs in unobtrusive, word final position.

Occasionally the sequence marking is broken by attention-drawing, front position was or had.

The first clues a break in narrative for description; the second clues a break in the match between order of narration and order of occurrence: the event indicated by the stem form of the particular had stem+ed is not in its event sequence order. The reason may be that the speaker or writer forgot to narrate it at the proper place in the sequence, or, more likely, that the speaker withheld the event information, perhaps for humorous effect.

I now assess <u>had</u> as such a marking item.

In a general 'remote' information narrating context, the <u>ed</u> marking of stem+<u>ed</u> occurrences (predictable, redundant, in final word-position) gives the statistically predominant, informationally insignificant 'I've been here before' decoder reassurance. In relatively unedited text, <u>had</u> appears as a designatum-free discontinuity clue. That it is one appears from native speaker additional (equally designata-free) marking items.

For if she had known one hears: if she had've known and even: If she had've'd known

I transcribed the spoken forms, assuming a <u>'ve</u> interpretation; however, a graduate teacher recently **wrote**:

For this lesson to run smoothly, we would of had to of completed. . .

Interpreting '<u>ve</u> as a designatum-free marking token, one can perceive of as an equally designatum-free marking token.

The interposition of <u>had</u> with the pronunciation /had/, before statistically and contextually predictable stem+<u>ed</u> is a less frequent discontinuity-alerting clue to presence in the text of a situation calling for decoder "What's that?" alertness.

Communication significance does not attach to such <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> occurrences as two-item groups; it attaches to the <u>had</u> interruption.

I have mentioned the problem for a writer on grammatical topics, that the twig level forms, through their complexity, can get discussed at a length altogether out of proportion to their significance. I therefore direct interested readers, perhaps especially teachers of modern English literature, to further comment on <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> in Appendix 1.

Have/has stem+ed

Have stem+ed is harder to describe than had stem+ed. The "time" accounts, and diagrams, fit their authors' examples, "made up for the purpose". So, "I have lived in Baghdad for three years" is held to imply "and am still here, in Baghdad". It does when the speaker IS still in Baghdad; when the speaker is in Singapore, obviously it doesn't.

Kruisinga classified contexts in which <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u> appeared in text. As main classes, he has "Present Perfect", "Resultative", "Continuative", "of Experience". (The classification exemplification is given in Appendix 1. He would classify the first "I have lived in Baghdad" as Continuative, and the second as "of Experience".

In most contexts, stem+ed alternatives fit. Here are examples:

- In considering the expansion of gases, and the thermal exchanges associated with them,
 - we found it convenient to employ. . .
- 2 Yet I never did anything to hurt her till now.
- 3 ... you are the most impudent person I ever met. have ever met.

Bolinger (1961) elicited replies to "Finish your assignment?" showing the possibility of interpretation as either "Did you..." or "Have you...ed"?

The suggestion would be that learners' English would lose no more

from the absence of a "Present Perfect" interpretation than from an interpretation of "Passive" and "Continuous" forms.

The suggestion would be valid for all except occurrences classed as "Continuative". Here are Priestley text examples:

- 1 've been sorry ever since
- 2 **I've** never **lived** there since 1914
- 3 I haven't lived there for over fifty years

It is, indeed, remarkable how often traditional grammarians make up exemplifying sentences with <u>live</u>. Of 108,738 Hyderabad verb form occurrences, "Continuative" <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u> accounted for 368 (0.34%).

These occurrences would give "Present Perfect" a marginal claim to constituting a "tense". However, Feigenbaum, using an elicitation technique, found native speakers unreliable identifiers of "continuative" usage.

In any case, there is no justification for the present course design introduction of have/has stem+ed into school courses.

5a - 1, or "Modals" ("Anomalous Finites")

A supposed "Future tense"

Latin has a "Future" tense, marked by an inflection; so have the European "Romance" languages. Unfortunately, some teachers of English still separate <u>shall</u> and <u>will</u> from the other Position 5a items; to give English an equivalent "Future tense".

However, text occurrences of <u>will</u> + stem show <u>will</u> to refer to a **present** 'intention', or 'consent'; the following verb stem designatum to any future occurrence. In other words, <u>will</u> refers to 'future' time only in the way 'hope', 'expect' and verbs with similar designata do.

In course design grammar without a Future tense, there are no Future Perfect, Future Progressive and Future Perfect Progressive forms to define.

European grammarians give English 5a items the status of the cognate German items, which show inflection of person (kann kannst kønnen) and of tense (kann konnte); they are, indeed, finite verb forms.

Thus, some grammarians have called the 5a items "anomalous finites"; the 'rule' for which they are anomalous being that third

person subjects are not followed by a stem+s form.

Generally the idea that 5a forms are finite is reinforced:

- (a) by their position in statement clauses immediately after a noun group
- (b) by analogy with finite forms of 'be' and 'have' in negative statement and negative question forms, e.g. <u>it wasn't wasn't</u> it; it hadn't hadn't it; it wouldn't wouldn't it
- (c) by analogy with finite forms of 'be' and 'have' in assimilating with clause subject forms, e.g. <u>I'm I've</u>; <u>I'll I'd</u>.
- (d) by standing alone as elicited statement forms, e.g. <u>I may</u>.
- (e) by appearing before non-finite verb stem forms (<u>sing</u> in <u>He</u> <u>must sing</u> is classed as non-finite, since there is no third person s or 'past' ed inflection).
- (f) by (occasional) use of <u>could</u> and <u>would</u> as 'past' equivalents of <u>can</u> and <u>will</u>, e.g. <u>I couldn't answer Question 4</u>. <u>They would come i.e. 'insisted</u> on coming'.
- (g) by recollection of historical, poetic, inflections, e.g. <u>couldst</u> thou.

Non-European students and those who set aside the European and historical backgrounds, easily see present-day 5a items as a set of invariable forms with adverb function and designata, preceding a verb stem form. The adverb status is reinforced:

- (a) by their invariable form
- (b) by their being virtually tense-free
- (c) by their occupying the clause position of the group of adverbs showing 'frequency' and 'manner'
- (d) by each item's representing a subset of designata modifying a following item in the same way as the mid-position adverbs referred to, e.g. will represents 'intention', 'obligation', 'consent' 'wish' and modifies the designatum of the following verb as an adjective does a following noun or as an adverb does a following adjective or verb; through the same juxtaposition
- (e) by the existence of substitutable adverb equivalents; for Priestley's I must say. . . I would put it like this.may begin to acquire. . ., one could substitute I always say. . . I tentatively put it like this.sometimes begin to acquire. . .
- (f) There is customary coupling of particular 5a items with

particular adverbs, with occurrence order determined by clause stress:

as soon as I possibly can as soon as I can possibly do so I certainly shall I shall certainly do so.

Whether one interprets 5a items as finite verbs or as adverbs, there is the anomaly that one (or the other) finite verb third person \underline{s} is neutralized. This is unlikely to worry learners; but should worry teachers who have a strategy for establishing third person concord. Like the 5c items \underline{does} and \underline{did} , all 5a items in positive and negative questions place a third person subject form immediately before a verb stem form:

Will/can/did/. . . SHE COME ?

Can, may, shall, will, must, could, might, should, would occur before a verb stem form to the extent of 8.2% of the 108,738 verb forms of the Hyderabad count; but this percentage is the sum of over sixty distinct form/designata items. It is worth noting that could, might, should, would occur more frequently than their "present" form counterparts.

$5b - 1 \left(\frac{do}{does} / \frac{did}{did} \right)$

I discussed 5b items as clue words to one question (negation and exclamation) type.

It is unrealistic to expect beginner learners to accept the form <u>Did</u> <u>you remember</u>...? in competition (as it is, in fact, also in native speaker competition) with <u>You remembered</u>...?

As "negation" clues they are more acceptable. However, <u>don't</u> <u>remember</u> is matched by <u>didn't remember</u>, not with the learner intuited *didn't remembered (a form deserving praise).

5c - 1 (verb/noun/adjective + to + stem)

5c items show a relation, effected by <u>to</u>, between verb/noun/adjective and a following verb stem form.

Of the distinctions traditional grammarians make, the most straightforward is that between constructions (a) in which <u>to</u> has the designatum 'in order to' or 'so as to' (b) in which <u>to</u> has a (designatum-free) linking, or buffer, function. Examples from the Priestley–Orr interview are:

- (a) I'm going to the Yorkshire dales to write a piece about it
- (b) I wanted to be a writer

A second traditional distinction is whether (i) the verb/noun/adjective is "dominant for meaning" or (ii) the to + stem item is.

Instances of (a), in which \underline{to} means 'in order to', are instances of (i), for the item that follows \underline{to} is an appended adjunct to the verb/noun/ adjective that precedes it.

Instances of (b), in which <u>to</u> has no particular meaning, separate into instances of (i) and (ii):

- (i) a very good thing to do content to be talented
- (ii) (people) seem to think so(I'm) going to enjoy it(I) begin to feel miserable

Testing whether, in the observer grammarian's opinion, a group internal boundary could appear between the verb/noun/adjective and the \underline{to} + stem items is a reasonable observer basis for decision whether the clause could end there, or whether the \underline{to} + stem item is an obligatory completion.

```
I'm going to the Yorkshire dales

Nobody's content

It's a very good thing
```

have plausible end boundaries, and one feels comfortable interpreting to... as adjuncts adding specificity:

```
...<u>to write a piece about it</u>,
```

... to be talented,

. . .<u>to do</u>.

On the other hand,

People seem, I'm going, I begin

have less plausible end boundaries, and

```
...to think so,
```

...to enjoy it,

...to feel miserable

represent natural completions.

Kruisinga noted that with (ii) items negation is likely to be applied,

formally, to the group in its entirety, even when, logically, it should apply only to the <u>to</u> + stem item, e.g. <u>People don't seem to think so</u> is preferred to <u>People seem not to think so</u>. Encoders keep intact the (ii) group identities:

- ... seem to think so
- ...going to enjoy it
- ...begin to feel miserable

The relevant Hyderabad count figures are:

verb/noun/adjective + to + stem total	9,870
verb + to + stem, verb dominant	2,993
verb + to + stem, to + stem dominant	1,098
noun + to + stem *	1,445
adjective + to + stem, adj. dominant	576
adj. + to + stem, to + stem dominant	250

(* Dominance classification was unsuccessful.)

Table 27
Occurrences of to + stem items

The dominance ratio for verb + \underline{to} + stem is understandable from the frequent occurrence of a small number of verbs allowing dominance to the \underline{to} + stem item; as well as \underline{seem} , \underline{going} , \underline{begin} above, there are \underline{happen} , \underline{chance} , \underline{grow} , \underline{get} , \underline{used} , \underline{prove} .

An intermediate level teaching strategy might be to use <u>in order to</u> rather than <u>to</u> with this designatum; allowing the use of the verb + <u>to</u> + stem items with the <u>to</u> + stem element dominant; and permitting noun + <u>to</u> + stem and adjective + <u>to</u> + stem forms to occur in learners' reading experience.

I gave a lot of space to verb forms, more than they deserve, from the viewpoint of encoder and decoder grammar. However, great economy of learner effort is possible through course design reduction of the traditional tenses to two, and through promoting learner perception of text focus points as a decoder priority. It seemed necessary, therefore, to assemble grounds for the revision from the several sources available.

RELATIVE "MARKING" AT GROUP, AND CLAUSE LEVELS

I now resume the natural progression from smaller and less marked grammatical units to longer and more complex ones, units necessarily characterized by redundancy.

Native speaker English has three often used ways of ensuring to clauses a decoder-unexpected ('What's that?') development.

The first way is through phonological stress, independently or in association with either or both of the others.

The second way is through marked constituent order. Either first or second way modifies, or both modify, what would be an otherwise expected background-focus relation.

The third way is focus delaying (thus, as an encoder thinks, focus enhancing), through a redundant (often redundantly stressed) word or phrase or through a clause with a designatum-free, but designatum-anticipating ("dummy" or "vicarious") verb.

At paragraph level, too, all three modify an otherwise expected background-focus sequence.

The syllable-timed varieties of English, like syllable-timed languages, rely on the grammatical and focus delaying means alone; evidencing the intrinsic redundancy of the phonological means.

Since marked phonological stress is simply unexpected stress, easy for an encoder to ensure and for a decoder to perceive, the usual association of redundancy with complexity might seem to be counter-instanced. However, the marking is applied to what in itself is a linguistically marked (learner-unfriendly) phenomenon.

Since phonological stress is not usually described in informational terms, such description is required.

Phonological stress

In the 1970s, a colleague and I became increasingly dissatisfied with available piecemeal accounts of phonological stress, accounts lacking functional/informational realism. I will summarize them.

Sweet (in Henderson, 1971) had cited two functions, namely "to distinguish the meanings of words and to mark their relations in sentences."

For the first function, Vanvik (1961) listed just 325 instances in British English (188 of them optional, and many applying to rarely occurring word pairs). Considering the large number of such distinctions effected without intervention of stress variation (a report, in a newspaper, of a firearm; a hope, to hope and so on), Sweet's first function must indeed be marginal.

Of course, word stress has often been associated with grammatical parts of speech. For instance, according to Crystal (1969), 93% of stressed syllables are in noun, verb, adjective and adverb forms. In line with this observation, it has been suggested that presence and absence of word stress distinguish "content" from "structural" clause constituents – something equivalent to the use, in written German, and formerly in Danish, of initial capital letters to distinguish noun status; a not impressive, indeed redundant, function.

Descriptions of the second function, i.e. "sentence" stress, have followed approaches labelled "rhythmic" "grammatical" and "attitudinal".

Sweet noted that, in continuous text, stressed syllables tended to occur at regular intervals (giving English the "stress timed" label).

This description would make rhythmic clause stress autonomous, i.e. with no other function (other, that is, than to contribute to the language style or "cut").

Attitudinal stress is illustrated by different spoken versions of a written statement: WE saw him yesterday, we SAW him yesterday, we saw HIM yesterday, we saw him YESTERDAY.

However, when you ask twenty people to read <u>We saw him yesterday</u>, they do not sort out into those who stress <u>WE</u>, those who stress <u>SAW</u>, and so on; all put main (nuclear, tonic) stress on <u>YES</u>,

secondary stress on <u>SAW</u> and no stress on <u>we</u> or <u>him</u>. Thus the attitudinal account distinguishes unmarked from marked clause stress, but without characterization of unmarked clause stress.

FP 2 (Table 8) permits a more credible account of the function of clause stress, to enhance "communicative dynamism", but one, we thought, which involves a certain circularity within the areas of hypothesis and evidence. We could get informants to produce reasonably consistent attributions of degrees of CD to clause constituents; but could not be sure we had not just exchanged sets of labels, those of FP 2 and Grammar 2.

Indeed, experience shows that rhythmic, grammatical and attitudinal accounts are all reasonably learnable, given motivation.

A hypothesis for experimental testing

Our hypothesis for experimental testing was more general, namely that:

the degree of stress on an item is inversely proportional to the predictability of the item

Relative predictability and non-predictability correspond generally with encoder choice of easy-access, relatively unmarked forms or of less accessible, relatively marked ones, and, more particularly, with encoder manipulation of decoder psychological responses of 'I've been here before' and 'What's that?'. It seemed, then, that the hypothesis might have sufficient power for extension to all stress clues and to the psychology of encoding.

At the time of the experiment to be described, we took for granted "the sentence", but the methodological defect is not critical precisely because the hypothesis would relate word, group and clause stress.

Since Miller and Coleman (1967) had described a technique for getting a predictability-correlated index for each word in a text, it seemed in the interest of scholarship to get consent for replication of prediction ratings using their own text material. This was well meant, but the texts were highly edited, thus not ideal from a present standpoint.

Predictability ratings were ranked from 0 to 5 on the basis of the collective performance of five native English speaking university students, each with his own cloze version of a common text (Version 1 with the first, sixth, eleventh. . . words omitted, Version 2 with the

second, seventh, twelfth. . . etc.)

Stress ratings were ranked from 1 to 5 on the basis of three native speaking readers' versions of the same text. The versions were tape recorded, and after adjustment to a common average amplitude level, actual peak levels on a 1 to 5 scale were noted for each word in each version. The predictability ratings were then inverted, and they and the stress ratings for each successive word were superimposed. One text display follows; it shows a degree of support for the hypothesis (the relevant text, the statistical tabulations, and a detailed discussion may be found in Appendix 1):

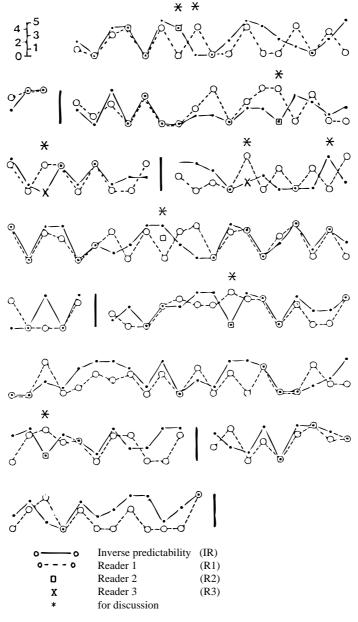


Figure 5
Inverse predictability – stress correlation

It is not my present intention, reviewing a previous incursion into the theory of stress (George and Neo, 1974) to contribute to specialist writing. It was not our intention at the time.

Indeed, we saw word stress as a redundant aid to aural word recognition, for insiders; and for language teaching our hypothesis would be useful only at the level of decision whether or not to give syllabus time to word stress, and, should time be allotted, how much. It was more that, as long as the traditional accounts of stress remain in place, the detail of, for instance, Kingdon (1958) or Chomsky and Halle (1968) do not set the phenomenon into a context of relations which, rationally, it should have.

What we tried to do, therefore, was make a methodological rather than a specialist contribution, namely:

- to test a possible underlying generalization that could apply in encoder grammar
- 2 to find what conformity, thus expectation of conformity, to the generalization there might be
- 3 to explore mutual feedback information between the observational data and the generalization, i.e. use the generalization to accommodate, at a second level, the anomalies one may expect, at a first level, for any generalization about features of a natural language.

With the above statement of methodological aims, I end, and hope to have excused, the digression on stress; adding only that the aims are not separable, and that, together, they may usefully inform study of any specific topic in grammar.

It is on the basis of the informational function of unmarked clause stressing that marked stress placing occurs (as, indeed, the Appendix discussion shows).

Grammatical clause constituent marking

Languages not using phonological stress may, colloquially, bunch FP theme and FP rheme in clause final position. Vendryes (1921) cites II l'a-ti jamais attrapé – le gendarme son voleur? ("Did he ever catch him – the policeman, his thief?"). However, Queneau (1965) points out that the information-bearing items may be bunched at the clause beginning; il l'a mangé le croquant le boudin ("He ate it, the lout, the black pudding") matched by le croquant le boudin il l'a mangé ("The lout, the black pudding, he ate it").

English, using phonological stress, does not so separate designatabearing from grammatical clause features, but sometimes places high CD items in (usually low information bearing) clause initial position: Her new car, (well) she's smashed it. Some grammarians give the name "topic – comment" to clauses which give front position to the clause focus.

In the following spoken text, the speaker is a University professor. As with Texts A, B and C, each line ending and # represents a pause in a speaker's utterance; audible breath intake is marked h. I will use the very ordinary text to identify the speaker's use of phonological and grammatical marking.

Spoken text, Text D

```
the universities have to # h
     come around #
     to the to #
     this notion #
5
     that # h
     that looking at #
     merely school achievement #
     which they would say equates with academic merit # h
     is really much too simplistic # h
     and of course the fact of the matter is that in Queensland this year of # h
     every eight students that were admitted to university this year # h
     five of them # h
     five out of the eight have #
     come #
     not directly from year twelve but from #
     some other source and of course there's many different ways #
     in which they come to # h
     the people coming in to university from year twelve # h
```

eh now constitute thirty-seven and a half percent only #
20 of of the university entrance #
and yet we still seem to # h
ee er em #
have a system #

which is really dominated by that particular group of # of students # h

Worth noting are:

line:

3,4 These lines see stressed <u>this</u> preferred to unstressed <u>the</u>. Other text word level FP adjusting items are (1.5) <u>merely</u>, (1.9) <u>really</u>, <u>much</u>, <u>too</u> (1.21) <u>yet</u>, <u>still</u>.

- 1–4 <u>to come around to... this notion... that</u> means 'to agree that' and `this `notion delays the statement that 'merely looking at school achievement is simplistic'. Such delay enhances focus CD.
 - Simple focus-delaying forms intrude a phrase (ll.10,16 of course) or an apparent what clause with an anticipatory, "vicarious" or "dummy" verb, often 'do': So what they did was to... What we really have to do is to... What happened was that... Line 10 has The fact of the matter is that... The Priestley Excerpt has (ll.4,5) if you said what was... that was obviously...
- and is often a ("coordinating") continuity indicator; here, and of course means 'but', 'while'. The same words occur in 1.16, with and having its more usual continuity indicating function.
- 11–3 The speaker wants a non-standard FP, to give high CD to <u>`five</u>, so begins with <u>of every `eight</u>... He now has two plural clause items, <u>eight</u> and <u>students</u>, showing number concord. However, the intervening clause (<u>that were admitted</u>...(l.11) seems to make <u>them</u> (l.12) have retrospective ambiguity ('five of the eight students admitted' or 'five of the students admitted'), so that l. 13 redundantly reassures: <u>five of the `eight</u>.
- 15 <u>not ... but ...</u> is a simple device to enhance the CD of the item following but.
- there in /ðəz/ is traditionally called "formal there"; it is allotted the function of "moving" a theme form to a clause position with more CD than that ordinarily held by clause initial position. Here the theme shift is accompanied by an in which clause like the what clause mentioned above. So an unmarked "People come to the university in many different ways" is marked to There's many different ways in which they come to... the people coming in to university... at which point the speaker's short term memory fails to ensure sequence continuity.

<u>There's</u> itself is a frequently used prospective clue, alerting listeners to a following unusually high CD item. Many traditional grammarians have noted the occurrence after

there of is/was or are/were in agreement with the following noun group; and also (as in 1.16) the non-agreeing occurrence of 's/is before a plural group.

A grammarian interested in course design has to note, however, a relatively unmarked (decoder-expected) use of initial weak-stressed there when a wanted theme-form includes a number, or no (e.g. two visitors) and/or the rheme mentions or implies a place: There are two visitors in the front room.

"Formal <u>it</u>" functions similarly to formal <u>there</u>. The Priestley Excerpt has (Text C, 1.30) <u>It's only 'lately that</u>. . . Kruisinga correctly states that the introductory phrase with <u>it</u> emphasizes "the part of the sentence that is separated from the rest" or "the identity of 'an entity' mentioned".

24 <u>that</u> is a strong deictic, further strengthened by redundant, conventionally focus-delaying <u>particular</u>. The use of <u>particular</u> is comparable with that of <u>different</u> after any number <u>four different languages</u> or quantifier (line 16): <u>many different languages</u>. Both are so decoder expected that they have lost any FP function.

INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION IN EDITED CLAUSES

A sleep seat is the seat in which the co-driver in a long-distance lorry or truck can rest. A magazine article starts: <u>In the sleep seat sat John Robb</u>. Ask a Chinese speaker to translate, and another to "back translate" into English. It is likely that the back translation will be: John Robb sat in the sleep seat.

The constituents of the clauses [In the sleep seat] [sat] [John Robb] and [John Robb] [sat] [in the sleep seat] are identical, and communicate identical information. The difference, lost in the back translation, is the "functional perspective" from which the information is given and perceived.

Each clause gets its FP from (a) the internal arrangement of its constituents (b) its relations with other clauses in a clause sequence.

The internal arrangement is an ordering of communicative elements, each associated with a degree of "communicative dynamism" characteristic of items in its clause position, modified in the particular informational situation.

The unmarked arrangement of the constituents set out above is that of the back translation: John Robb sat in the sleep seat. Other arrangements (In the sleep seat sat John Robb It was John Robb who sat in the sleep seat John Robb it was who sat in the sleep seat) are relatively marked.

In early Prague School terms (Table 8) the unmarked FP of <u>John Robb sat in the sleep seat</u> has <u>John Robb</u> as "theme", <u>sat</u> (or its 'past' designatum) as "transition" and <u>in the sleep seat</u> as "rheme", the theme showing the lowest degree of CD ("communicative dynamism"), the rheme the highest.

In those terms, for <u>John Robb sat in the sleep seat</u>, FP and traditional grammatical descriptions coincide, "theme" with "subject", "transition" with "verb" and "rheme" with "predicative adjunct to the subject". Indeed, unmarked FP, and unmarked clause grammar

are parallel virtually by definition; the parallelism being thus predictable and unnoticed.

In languages whose spoken forms show clause stress and intonation, a "normal", predictable clause stress and intonation go together with unmarked constituent order. Marked FP may be imposed on an otherwise unmarked clause constituent order by placing stress on a constituent which, from its clause position would be expected to have non-nuclear or no stress: for instance, <u>John Robb sat...</u> Grammatical and phonological marking combine in <u>It was John "Robb who...</u>

Of course, over-frequent use of grammatical and phonological marking nullifies the intended psychological effect; instead, decoders become conscious of the, annoying, redundancy.

Informationally, in clauses with unmarked FP, a technical "theme" or "subject" represents the non-technical theme or subject. Unless beginning a paragraph, the theme refers to back ground information i.e. information already shared by writer and reader, speaker and listener. The rheme refers to information expected to be new to reader or listener.

When a writer or speaker does not want to present information in the most predictable way, and chooses a marked FP, the grammar/FP parallelism is lost. In marked <u>In the sleep seat sat John Robb</u>, <u>John Robb</u> remains the grammatical subject, but is the FP focus.

In an unmarked, 3-constituent clause like the example above, traditional grammar and Prague School FP mark two internal boundaries: subject \uparrow verb \downarrow object, and: theme \uparrow transition \downarrow rheme. Other grammarians first place a single major boundary: "subject" \uparrow "predicate", then a second boundary within the predicate: "verb" \downarrow "object".

A later "background" and "focus" interpretation (Version FP3 of Table 8) represents a genuine alternative.

For the moment, I look again, in terms of their contrasting rhemes and the implication for a following theme, at:

- 1 John Robb sat in the sleep seat
- 2 In the sleep seat sat John Robb

In a general way, there is high probability that the following clause will have unmarked FP; but the probability is higher for 2. In a

particular way, either 1 or 2 could be followed by a theme group with a stressed noun The 'lorry. . . The 'weather. . . The 'road. . . ; but the likeliest themes after 1 are, I think, He. . . and It. . . , whereas the likeliest theme after 2 is He. . . Each clause through its own FP, affects the FP of a following clause, and a sequence of clauses develops an informational shape. Some linguists describe such shaping as successive "limitation of possible worlds"; which I take to be a complementary negative aspect of FP, one equally in accord with information (communication) theory.

Incidentally, the back translation John Robb sat in the sleep seat occurs in the following way. In the sleep seat sat John Robb represents marked English FP, unmarked Chinese FP. The first translator, influenced by mother tongue FP, accepts the English statement at face value, and produces a Chinese statement with unmarked Chinese FP. The second translator, aware of the matching unmarked constituent order in English, makes the appropriate transfer of the adverbial group from the unmarked (initial) position in Chinese to the unmarked (final) position in English.

While constituent order is formal, the unmarked – marked constituent order relations are in terms, not of "absence – presence" of a marking item, but of 'expected – unexpected'.

It is necessary to make the point, as languages differ in their formal marking features, but share the element of predictability/non-predictability. He writes from where? is marked in English, its word for word equivalent unmarked in Malay/Indonesian.

The hypothesis inversely relating phonological stress and predictability would mean that, for languages using such stress, one may expect language – language equivalences in phonological marking. On the contrary, however, one may not expect equivalences in terms of clause constituent orders.

Focus, background, and clause organization

In a clause with unmarked FP, one would neither expect the clause focus to have a considerable rôle in the organization of that clause nor expect it to have an organizing role in determining paragraph organization (unless the focus form is in initial, background, position. This must be so, because the focus occurs typically as the last clause item, i.e. when the organization of the clause has already

been established.

Thus, for recognition of English FP, a listener to, or reader, or consecutive interpreter of clauses with unmarked FP does not economically distribute attention equally over the whole clause; the earlier elements, theme and transition, or background, are organizationally more important, and "merit" more attention.

Designata distribution

Distribution of designata importance is inversely arranged. The initial, background elements corresponding to known or contextually given information, require little decoder attention; comprehension of the final, focus elements, on the other hand, is essential for comprehension of the message. In this way, efficient distribution of attention to FP (most attention to the beginning) complements distribution of attention to message information (most attention to the end). The distribution was shown in Table 5.

All languages must offer the same kind of predictability with respect to FP; the sequential nature of speech implies that what one has experienced helps one to anticipate what one will experience. In each language, however, the distribution of FP information is influenced by formal marking (often of the +s kind) and clause syntax, in a particular proportion. I refer again to the widely differing numbers of forms of a regular Latin verb (118) and of a regular English verb (4).

Explicit and implicit designata

Moreover, each language shows the view of its speakers as to what designate information lies below and what designate information lies above the threshold of explicit reference.

For instance, imperative 'bring' implies 'person speaking', 'person addressed', 'object' and 'places from and to'. English typically has double explicit mention of the 'person speaking': <u>Bring ME MY shoes</u>. Malay typically has no mention of the 'person speaking', explicit reference being as redundant as it would be for 'person addressed', 'from there', 'to here'; all any language actually needs is "Bring shoe".

One cannot anticipate that items having low CD in one language will match items having low CD in another; in any way, except, that is, in having low CD. Indeed, having low CD is itself a factor in the variability, from language to language, in the number of "equivalents" and the distinctions they effect.

Third person pronouns are necessarily anaphoric, that is, background items: one must know already who is referred to by she, ..., what is referred to by it, they... Like these words, their translations (when present in other languages) necessarily have low CD. However, French has a gender distinction in the plural where English doesn't (ils elles : they), and English has a gender distinction in the singular where French doesn't (he she it : il elle); Malay having no gender distinction. For learners, the extent of formal marking among low CD items represents one potential hindrance to learning, i.e. for élite forming.

The Latin marking heritage

For European élite forming, classical Latin was, for centuries, ideal. It survives in edited, written form; in which clause constituent relations are officially (i.e. as far as teaching is concerned) shown by word endings. Thus, from the three constituents <u>canis</u>, <u>equum</u>, <u>momordit</u> the 'dog' – 'horse' – 'bit' relations are maintained throughout six order permutations; whether <u>equum</u> appears as first, second or third clause item its um ending indicates 'bitten'.

This degree of obligatory marking at word level correlates with variety of optional marking (choice of order permutation) at clause level, i.e. with variety of FP. When one Latin FP of the six available is taken as unmarked (e.g. on a basis of occurrence frequency), the other five are marked. Accepting (with horse still bitten) canis equum momordit as unmarked FP, that is the FP in which attention is given to the -is, -um endings merely for reassurance, any other FP would require that a decoder give specific attention to them.

Decoders whose mother tongues have accustomed them to give little attention to forms at word, group or clause ending points find any degree of a Latin-style demand for attention to specific word endings in conflict with their expectation that already experienced forms progressively permit prediction of how clause organization will go on.

Classical Latin encoders had to be able to control the large number of word-ending forms, whether or not they made use of the FP freedom the forms gave, and encoders whose mother tongues have accustomed them to give little attention to forms at word, group or clause ending points find demand for any degree of parallel control especially in conflict with their expectation of how clause FP is established.

European modern foreign language teaching accepts the classical language model to such an extent that, for best part of the century, advocates for new languages into their schools and universities were obliged to represent the languages as requiring the same learner effort as the classical languages.

Entirely in the classical tradition was the recommended use of a device to make unobtrusive, objective assessments of candidates' performance during interviews. The device, held below the examiner's table, had three buttons, representing severity of errors. The rationale was that word-morphology should offer least learning difficulty, and that errors at that level should, therefore, incur maximum penalty, that, group construction and clause construction representing increasing degrees of complexity, errors at those levels should, therefore, incur less and least penalties.

Reading and listening experience give little support to learners' effort to master complex morphology. It is the encoders who are supposed to control the morphology, and the "communicative competence" concept is in line with the classical model in demanding that it is as encoders that learners are accepted or rejected for élite membership, or judged to have reached an intermediate standard.

RELATIVE MARKING IN CLAUSE SEQUENCES

I now look at FP in a few (highly edited) clause sequences, since most clauses occur in them. Here is a common pattern:

(1) The Rousseauist especially feels an inner kinship with Prometheus and other Titans. (2) He is fascinated by any form of insurgence. . . (3) He must show an extraordinary energy in his explosion against the established order and at the same time a boundless sympathy for the victims of it. . . (4) Further the Rousseauist is ever ready to discover beauty of soul in anyone who is under the reprobation of society.

This paragraph FP is relatively unmarked. Its four statements have a common theme and its FP may be represented (B = background (theme) F = focus (rheme) as:

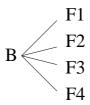


Figure 6 Paragraph FP 1

One would expect a consecutive interpreter, hearing a less edited version, to reproduce the paragraph FP by simply indenting the F items, giving a line to each.

A common function of the technical theme, or subject, or topic (the initial background) is to serve as the (non-technical) "theme", "subject" or "topic" of a paragraph; this is the case in the Figure 6 paragraph. After the introduction of the theme, the pronoun or repetition of the theme is inconspicuous, simply reassuring a reader that the information background has not changed.

In some languages, and for some persons, retention, over a sequence of statements, of common background information with an unchanging form is "bad style", and alternative clause types are used "to give variety". The passage above has some pretension to style, yet the paragraph FP is unmarked. There is no need for course designers for, or teachers of intermediate and advanced learners to worry them to produce marked "styles".

The next paragraph shows a variation. Eight statements have common background information, stated as the theme of the first. Each following statement has a theme with implied reference to the first theme:

(1) New Jersey is flat along the coast and southern portion; (2) the northwestern region is mountainous. (3) The coastal climate is mild, but (4) there is considerable cold in the mountain areas during the winter. (5) The summers are fairly hot. (6) The leading industrial production includes chemicals, processed food, coal, petroleum, metals and electrical equipment. (7) The most important cities are Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Trenton, Camden. (8) Vacation districts include Astbury Park, Lakewood, Cape May and others.

<u>New Jersey</u> is the paragraph background information, the northwestern region, the coastal climate, the mountain areas, the <u>summer</u>, the <u>industrial production</u>, the <u>most important cities</u>, the <u>vacation districts</u>, are all those of <u>New Jersey</u>. The paragraph FP may be represented as:

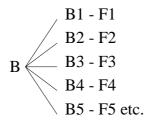


Figure 7 Paragraph FP 2

The clause FP in the paragraph is uniform: four clauses have transitional <u>is</u>, two have <u>are</u>, and two have <u>include(s)</u>. The writer gives information, using an unmarked sequence style and unmarked clause FP, neither distracting reader attention.

A consecutive interpreter uses parallel indentations (he cannot know that a single F item will follow any B1...item.)

I now look at a paragraph with the same basic organization, but with a distinctive form of marking:

(1) Defined or described in this general manner, learning is clearly one of the many manifestations of physiological homoeostasis. (2) Physiologically, it is a neuromuscular homoeostatic condition ensuring the survival of the organism in a changing and often unfavourable external physical environment. (3) To an observer of behaviour, learning is a homoeostatic mechanism the aim of which is to maintain the life, substance and energy of the living creature. (4) And, like any homoeostatic mechanism, it must be controlled and actuated by some sort of negative feedback of information about the degree of its effectiveness.

One may strip the information of the four clauses to:

Clause 1 Learning is physiological homoeostasis

Clause 2 Learning is to ensure survival

Clause 4 Learning is controlled by feedback

As Clause 3 duplicates the information of Clause 2 (with a faint contrast: <u>physiological condition</u> x <u>behavioural mechanism</u>), the paragraph may be represented as:

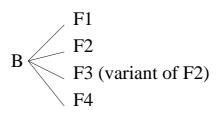


Figure 8 Paragraph FP 3

Each clause starts with a parenthetical free adjunct: 1 <u>Defined or described</u>... 2 <u>Physiologically</u>... 3 <u>To an observer of behaviour</u>... 4 <u>like any homoeostatic mechanism</u>...

These adjuncts have low CD, (a) as each (apart from the redundant Clause 3 item) refers to previous statement information (b) as each has (low CD) front position in its clause.

The clause grammatical subjects (FP initial background items, or

themes) are <u>learning</u> (Clauses 1 and 3) and <u>it</u> (Clauses 2 and 4); no new information is communicated by the repetition, and the CD of these items is low.

The transition elements are <u>is</u> (Clauses 1, 2, and 3) and its variant <u>must be</u> (Clause 4), all low CD items.

Of Paragraph FP interest is the right – left movement, over the four statements, of high CD words, representing what at first is "unfamiliar" information. They move, that is, from a typical focus position to a typical background position as successive repetition makes them familiar; their information established, as the writer hopes, they "disappear".

The F1 item is <u>physiological homoeostasis</u>. <u>Physiological</u> moves fast; <u>homoeostasis</u> step by step:

1	()	learning	physiological		
2	physiologica	lly		it		
1	()	learning	homeostasis		
2	()	it	homeostatic	survival	
3	()	learning	homeostatic	survival	
4	homeostatic		it		feedback	
	Figure 9					

The parenthetical adjuncts, and the repetition, may show the social function of slowing down the reader's information intake; but, quite generally, the fronting and eventual disappearance of each consecutive focus is necessary for smooth succession of focuses.

Paragraph FP 4

A consecutive interpreter shows the fronting of an item by drawing an arrow from the item to the a spot before the following (indented) F-item.

A typical focus succession is shown in:

(1) The first of the antibiotics was discovered by Sir Alexander Fleming in 1928. (2) He was busy at the time investigating a certain species of germ (3) which is responsible for boils and other troubles.

In this paragraph organization, the focus of one clause becomes background for the next. Each following background item is, typically, a low CD item with anaphoric reference (he and which above). The organization is relatively unmarked:

$$\begin{array}{c}
B1 - F1 \\
\downarrow \\
B2 - F2 \\
\downarrow \\
B3 - F3
\end{array}$$

Figure 10 Paragraph FP 5

The following paragraph illustrates a development, in which the background consists of parallel items, each of which is taken up in turn. The construction requires the encoder to identify successive background items, which he often does by anaphoric <u>The former.</u>.. <u>The latter.</u>... In the paragraph below, he does it by repeating the focus items:

(1) All substances can be divided into two classes: elementary substances and compounds. (2) An elementary substance is a substance which consists of atoms of only one kind. (3) A compound is a substance which consists of atoms of two or more different kinds.

The representation is:

B1 — F1 (= F'1 + F"1)

$$\downarrow$$

B'2 — F'2 \downarrow
 \downarrow
B"2 — F"2

Figure 11 Paragraph FP 6

Since focus position is usually given to new information, it is rare for the focus of one clause to be repeated, in focus position, in the following clause. However, here is an example of this marked sequence:

(1) The chief organic compound obtained from natural gas is saturated methane. (2) Small quantities of other volatile hydrocarbons are associated with methane.

Presumably, the Paragraph FP fulfils the writer's wish to contrast chief and small.

The organizing functions of background items (theme and transition)

Within a statement, the theme element of background selects, from previously available, or assumed available, information, what the statement will be about; and successive clause background theme items represent the development of the writer's argument or the "plot" of the piece of writing,

Within a clause, the transition element of background is usefully taken to indicate the degree of marking to be attributed to the time and mood aspects of the information. A succession of identical background transitional forms indicates an unchanged background to the general kind of communication; a change of form indicates a discontinuity switch from one time or mood to another.

I refer to a previous account of a succession of finite stem/stem+ \underline{s} forms suggesting, then confirming, either statement sequence (often personal) referring to the present moment, or general statement of factual information, unmarked for time and mood.

The account of successions of stem+ed (/t//d//id/) forms suggests that one is listening to or reading narrative in which the order of narration of events coincides in one-to-one fashion with the order of their occurrence.

Infrequent intervention of <u>was/were</u> (sometimes followed by a stem+<u>ing</u> form) indicates interruption of narration to give description or relate circumstances "at the time".

Infrequent intervention of <u>had</u> + stem+<u>ed</u> forms indicates either non-correspondence of the order of events with the order of their reporting, or asks for 'narrative' interpretation at places in texts at which there might be ambiguity.

Both 'be' + stem+<u>ing</u> and <u>had</u> + stem+<u>ed</u> are marked (a) formally with the 'be' or 'had' item (b) in the sense that these transitional elements get higher than unmarked CD: they are alerting (by contrast with reassuring) clues.

This small grammar of Narrative Past, Past Progressive and Past Perfect is a repetition of description of verb form and was, were, had clues. The point here is that for the grammar to be apparent, there has to be a shift of grammarian interest from the traditional contrasting of individual clause constituent, or individual clause

forms, to study of clause sequences in text.

Some linguists have interpreted the organizational role of the non-background (i.e. the designatum) element of verbs, other than 'be', 'have' and modals, so highly that they have seen it as controlling both theme and rheme types.

In either "John Robb. . ." statement, they would say, <u>sat</u> required an animate clause subject and made likely an indication of the place of sitting. However, since it is the designatum, and not the 'past' form of 'sit' that exercised the control, similar control could be exercised by any designatum, irrespective of clause constituent grammar. For instance, the noun <u>seat</u> equally implies a 'sitter' and 'place'; in the statement <u>John Robb was</u> in the sleep <u>seat</u>, the designatum 'be' is compatible with, but does not require, either animate clause subject or indication of place – these designata emerge precisely from <u>sleep</u> seat.

A language with whatever amount of FP variety leads users to perceive, from time to time, a tension between the requirement of standard syntax that a certain clause constituent order be followed and the desire to distribute CD differently. In English, "rhetoric" is an encoder response to the tension. With tension heightened to the degree of "organized distortion of language", one has a modern definition of poetry.

One means of resolving such tension, leaving standard constituent order intact, is to place an item of high communicative (informational) importance in a clause position associated with low CD, or (with bathos as the intended solution) to put an item of low communicative importance in a clause position associated with high CD.

DYNAMISM AND INFORMATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Assignment of communicative (or informational) significance to an item is clearly different from assessment of the communicative dynamism it gets as, or as part of, a constituent in a particular clause, or paragraph, FP.

In informational terms, relative significance lies in relative unpredictability, whether general or in the particular context.

The FP concept has thus wider relevance than to clause and paragraph construction, for relative unpredictability must be a feature of any aspect of language.

A word or word group must, through receptive and active experience of it, have an overall significance rating vis-à-vis all other words and groups, and a local status within a particular designata-related set of words/groups comprising a generality/specificity scale; and there must develop, too, some expectation of a correspondence between these ratings and the kind of CD each word/group is likely to have both in unmarked and in marked clause and paragraph FPs.

However, it is at each subsequent encounter a matter of 'I've been here before' or 'What's that?' whether the encounter fits and reinforces the expectation or, in some way, does not fit.

One expects, generally, that clause and group forms, stress, speech context, social relations and vocabulary will be informationally interrelated. I stated as a structuralist position that the features of a code are: (a) an item sequence (b) points of articulation within the sequence (c) differential probability of occurrence among the alternatives at such points. It would seem that the main interrelating feature is the relative probability (unpredictability / predictability) of occurrence of successive items at group or clause articulation points.

In achieving native speaker balance between wish to communicate explicitly and wish to do so economically, encoder and decoder "effort" may be straightforward mental and physical effort, but is likely to be effort relative to the time taken over the communication (as indeed the "value" of a message is usually qualified by one's sense of the appropriateness or otherwise of the length of time that has to be spent on its communication).

Syntax marking and language cut

Languages with limited syllable structure and word building potential rely on (1) the simplest grammatical device, item-item juxtaposition (2) use of formally invariable pronouns, prepositions, particles, conjunctions. They do so from necessity. However, a language with potential for luxuriant form redundancy may use the simple grammatical devices; and its form luxuriance is then seen to be there for selective exploitation; in part obligatorily (for native speakers) but unsystematically (promoting élitism), in part at its speakers' option. This potential for complexity together with preference for simplicity is, I think, a feature of the English cut.

Constituent—constituent relations shown through inflections occurring obligatorily, as in classical Latin, retain continuity in an encoder's and decoder's memory over a considerable length of text; on the other hand, since constituent relations shown by juxtaposition are implied, not only is their nature less specific, but, without the inflectional reminders, one relationship is easily undermined by later juxtapositions.

Thus (BBC): The time taken by British Rail to deal with complaints have increased by fifty percent. . . the stem+s form of complaints provoking a verb stem form. Verb form agreement with the nearest preceding noun form is widespread in present day English; esteem for the "concord" feature declining with the decline of prominence, in native speaker education, of the classical languages.

It is interesting to see how juxtaposition is viewed by speakers of languages showing relations more explicitly.

To a French learner of English, <u>cotton socks</u> appears as a, specifically English, "zero genitive", since French requires an "of" marking ("socks of cotton"). Juxtapositions I frequently use, <u>form redundancy</u>, <u>syllable structure</u>, <u>word building potential</u>, have to find specific, relatively marked, French versions.

Trends in language cut

One is accustomed to think of oneself as a user of a language, so to think of others (alive now or once living) as users too, of "the same" language. From the viewpoint of trends in language cut, it is the language that uses the persons who speak and write it, to maintain, then modify, states of homoeostasis.

Each language has arrived at a present-day (more or less marked) cut through a history of compromise; between need for continuing identity of form and need for sufficient change of form to suit the demands of successive generations of its speakers. In each generation, much innovation is experimental, and unsuccessful; but some may be seen to constitute a trend. All active users of English (UK newspaper editor, West Indies cricket commentator, Thai schoolgirl with a New Zealand friend. . .) are caught up in the processes of maintaining most language forms, and changing some.

For English, trends of the past are likely to continue, particularly trends that have made the language able to communicate with a degree of freedom from biological and social functions of hindering communication.

English must expect continued efficiency seeking by large numbers of foreign users whose own teachers had less concern for those biological and social functions than mother tongue speakers. This is not a modern phenomenon only, but has been a formative feature in the language's history.

It was in that way that English "lost" much of its word inflectional marking. Daniel Defoe gave a historical/social reason: his "True Born Englishman" was, and spoke, "Roman-Saxon-Danish-Norman-English". Conquerors formed a special kind of language learner, less inhibited than most, more inclined to do away with redundant marking forms.

Otto Jespersen (1938) noted that "the wearing away and levelling of grammatical forms in the regions in which the Danes chiefly settled was a couple of centuries in advance of the same process in the more southern parts of the country."

He noted too how the trend to displace word inflection, substituting juxtaposition and word order as grammatical devices, went together, over the same period of time, to reduce two-syllabled to monosyllabic words; the high proportion of which is characteristic of present day English.

On the other hand, the proportion of, longer, Latin/Romance to Teutonic words, as dictionary items and as occurrences in texts, has steadily risen since Chaucer's time. The growth was not due to any deliberate cooperation among individual users; rather that a style for meeting new needs gradually established itself.

Herdan (1960) showed that the number of finite verb forms (thus clauses) per written sentence decreased from over 5 in Chaucer's to about 2 in contemporary English; while the number of simple (one finite verb) sentences per hundred sentences increased from 4 to 45. Some present day story writers average 1.2 finite verbs per sentence, so that one expects 5 sentences to comprise 4 simple sentences and 1 with a single subordinate clause. How grossly course designers can distort the present day cut of English!

I am a member of an English-speaking community; if you open this book at any full page, you should expect to find that occurrences of primary and unmarked forms, for whatever grammatical feature, significantly outnumber occurrences of the corresponding marked forms. You should expect about 60% of the words to be monosyllabic, and that, plotted on a graph, the occurrence figures for one, two, three, four and five syllabled words show a typical item population curve of the inverse exponential kind:

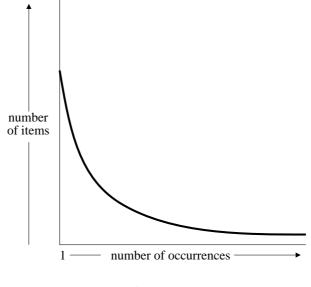


Figure 12 A typical population curve

Such expectations are valid because my membership of the language community consists in sharing those factors already noted: (a) a vocabulary (b) a grammar (c) a pronunciation (d) writing conventions (e) a statistical distribution of the distinctive features of (a), (b), (c), and (d).

Among historically related languages with a large common vocabulary and many common grammatical features, an individual overall cut has developed for each; it is a consideration for translators, and for any serious language course design.

In 1961, G Barth made a comparison of occurrences of "parts of discourse" (Nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions) in 9 twentieth century novel excerpts (3 English, 3 French, 3 Spanish) and in the published translations, by different persons, from each original into the other two languages.

Each excerpt having 15,000 occurrences of parts of discourse, for each language there were 90,000 opportunities for the translators to keep to the part of discourse of the original, or to make a switch from one to another.

Barth thought that the relative frequency of changes from particular parts of discourse in each original to the various parts of discourse in each other language would be stable; and that the relative "semantic load" of parts of discourse would vary from language to language in a constant manner — in other words, that experienced translators would be sensitive to the cut of the language into which they translated. His study showed his hypothesis to be correct.

It showed in particular that there was a tendency for a verb form in the other languages to be matched by a noun form in English. (I could have written, but didn't write a verb form in the other languages **tended** to be matched. . .)

The English nominal preference largely explains the number of occurrences of the verb 'be' in constructions like those of Table 4.

LANGUAGE TRENDS AND TEACHING TRENDS

Its present day cut gives English an advantage as a prospective international language.

It is sad to see how not only grammar books but courses for use in schools frustrate learners with forms that are unnecessarily marked and out of touch with "the spirit of the language".

One understands the recent reaction against the complexity of professional books and courses. However, frustrating learners is the particular risk with native speaker mediated lessons directed to "learners' needs". Few native speaker teachers have a realistic idea of the number of optional and obligatory constructions English offers for their often ad hoc selection among.

It may be useful to give such an idea, at verb and simple clause levels.

A certain 1,000 word "little language" used in TESL courses included 237 verbs, each of which was considered for occurrence or non-occurrence in each of 22 Constructions (e.g. Number 18, verb + noun + \underline{to} + verb stem (+ noun) corresponding to \underline{They} allowed him to do it).

Here is a detail of the variability studied: 88 of the 237 verbs occur in Construction 1 (verb). Of the 88, one (happen) occurs in Construction 1 and in no other construction, one (grow) occurs in Construction 1 and co-occurs in Constructions 2, 3, 4, 5, 21, 22; one (stay) occurs in Construction 1 and co-occurs in Constructions 2, 3, 5, 22; one (drive) occurs in Construction 1 and co-occurs in Constructions 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 21, 22; six (fly, jump, move, ride, run, turn) occur in Construction 1 and co-occur in Constructions 2, 4, 5, 21, 22. Thus, the ten cited verbs fall into five patterns of occurrence and co-occurrence. Looking at the total 88 verbs occurring in Construction 1, one discovers they fall into 39 patterns of co-occurrence.

I now list the 22 Constructions; and in a following tabulation give for each Construction the number of verbs occurring in it and the number of patterns of co-occurrence.

Construction

```
1
       verb
 2
       verb + adverb
 3
       verb + adjective
 4
       verb + noun object
 5
       verb + preposition group
 6
       verb + noun clause
 7
       verb + noun object + preposition group
 8
       verb + noun object + adverb
 9
       verb + noun object + adjective
10
       verb + noun object + noun object
       verb + noun object + noun clause
11
12
       verb + noun + verb stem (+ noun)
13
       verb + how + to + verb stem (+ stem)
14
       verb + noun + how + to + verb stem (+ noun)
15
       verb + noun + preposition + stem+ing (+ noun)
       verb + preposition + stem+ing (+ noun)
16
17
       verb + noun + stem+ing
18
       verb + noun + to + verb stem (+ noun)
19
       verb + to + verb stem (+ noun)
20
       verb + stem+-ing
       am/are/is/was/were + stem+ed
21
22
       verb stem (Imperative)
```

Table 28
<u>Verb constructions studied for patterning</u>

In Table 29, showing the number of patterns each Construction enters into, Constructions 4, 21 and 22 are omitted, as the large number of verbs occurring in them would cause unmanageable diversity:

Construction	Number of verbs	Number of patterns
1	88	39
2	27	8
3	7	7
5	64	32
6	24	20
7	49	23
8	22	12
9	8	7
10	25	19
11	5	4
12	7	7
13	13	12
14	4	3
15	7	4
16	8	8
17	11	11
18	16	11
19	23	19
20	13	10

Table 29
Verb construction patterning

I emphasize the 1,000 word "little language" context, in which, for example, <u>advise</u> is not assigned to Construction 1, as <u>we advised</u> would be un-English within that "little language", though in the larger language one could encounter (<u>He did as</u>) <u>we advised</u>.

Years ago, when computers filled rooms, I wondered how many simple clause types could be extracted from computer permutation of the following constituent items:

- 1 clause subject (except 2 and 3)
- 2 clause subject, formal it
- 3 clause subject, formal there
- 4 object
- 5 predicative adjunct to clause subject
- 6 not
- 7 never
- 8 finite verb (except 9)
- 9 am/are/is/was/were
- 10 modal/auxiliary
- 11 non-finite verb stem
- 12 non-finite stem+ed
- 13 non-finite stem+ing

Table 30 Permutation of simple clause constituents

A total of 518 clause types was exemplified. I wrote above of the potential English has for complexity, and the preference for simplicity. It is part of a teacher's professionalism that she is able to perceive both.

INDIVIDUAL TOPICS IN ENGLISH GRAMMAR

I conclude with observer accounts of two topics in English usage, rectifying, as I hope, traditional distortion carried over into ELT. The topics are:

Comparison and comparative forms

If, and if clauses

Comparison and comparatives

Comparison comprises informational, formal and functional aspects. A grasp of the concepts is needed for higher studies, and many of the world's students get them (to the extent they do) through English. A question of grammarian methodology arises too.

The conceptual aspect

What underlies comparison is that, within a class of items, a 'quantity' or 'degree' criterion distinguishes two, or more, subclasses (or individual class members) as being in a condition of 'parity' or of 'more: less' or of 'less: more'.

The Priestley-Orr interview is too short to give realistic statistics for formally expressed comparisons; however, it provides examples for exploration of concepts. I give them with, in the right column, a surmised general class which the comparative expression subclassifies:

as often as I could frequency another few years time period colder in winter temperature capacity more space for reviewing almost as many copies as number further away distance as you get older age nothing so strong as strength more aggressive manner not enough talent amount

more smoking than writing the dramatist is more original the satisfaction. . . is much greater you've done as well as you thought I would rather have been a musician activity originality satisfaction achievement unreal alternative

Teachers tend to present comparisons between physical objects simultaneously present; but might usefully remember the variety of classification, and at least compare states of one entity at different times.

The "comparison" concept

In observer grammar, the formal <u>er</u> of Priestley's <u>older</u> seems equivalent to the <u>more</u> of his <u>more aggressive</u>. This explains how the function of <u>er</u> and <u>more</u> was (and still is) taken to be that of adding the designatum 'more' to the designata 'old' and 'aggressive'; so that <u>older</u> should have the designatum 'more old than old', and <u>more aggressive</u> that of 'more aggressive than aggressive'.

This naïve, but persistent, idea ignores the premise of marking theory that the addition of a marking form to a relatively unmarked form (e.g. <u>er</u> to <u>old</u>) results in **reduction** of the area of applicability of the unmarked form. A grammarian should look, not for a designatum or function added by <u>er</u>, but for a designatum or function taken away.

Consider the designatum 'old'. The statement <u>Emmy was old</u> places Emmy on the 'old' side of a boundary determining 'old' and 'not old' subclasses within the an 'age' class. <u>Old</u>, by virtue of the 'not old' subclass, has simultaneously a classifying and a comparing function. The boundary between 'old' and 'not old' often corresponds to what is taken by encoder and decoder to be 'average' or 'expected' or 'normal'. The norm is sometimes expressed: <u>old for a cat, aggressive for a female Labrador pup</u>; often the norm is unstated.

On the other hand, the statement <u>Emmy was older than Jim</u> does not place either Emmy or Jim in either an 'old' or in a 'not old' subclass; they could be twin, new-born babies.

Older refers to one entity having 'greater age' than that of a stated entity. If the statement Emmy and Nell were older than their brother can be made of Emmy, Nell and Jim as infants, it can be made of them when they reach whatever age; that is, irrespective of any 'normal', 'average' or 'expected' age. And, incidentally, the entities

may be singular or plural.

I apologize for this laboured expression of the obvious, that an 'older' person may be 'young', that a 'more aggressive' person may be 'meek'. True, many grammarians of the 19th century failed to notice that addition of <u>er</u> took away a subclass boundary; but Jespersen and Kruisinga, decades ago brought common sense into observer grammar. What then is one to make of the lapse into methodological indolence of:

"The sentence <u>This book is heavier than the *New York Times*</u> is thus based on a deep structure containing <u>this book is heavy</u> and <u>the *New York Times*</u> is heavy ."?

The formal aspect

Some grammarians have as their comparison prototype <u>X</u> is <u>q-er</u> than <u>Y</u>. Others, noting instances of the kind <u>X</u> is more involved with <u>Philips than Y is with Toshiba</u>, regard <u>X is q-er than Y as "reduced"</u> from <u>X is q-er than Y is q</u>. Clauses with predicative <u>er (as you get older, . . .)</u> are said to have prototype parts "understood", or (modern style) "deleted".

Statistical information

To consider forms realistically, one needs statistical information. A technique for collecting data from edited text, in which one or two occurrences per page may be expected, is to ask members of a senior class to note, and copy, a given number of sentence occurrences in whatever each happens to be reading, using a separate slip of paper for each sentence. The figures below were collected in this way:

Comparative Forms			
indicating parity	127		
with er	102		
with est	54		
Total Number	283		
er occurrences			
rather other	15	Note:	a
attributive adjectival	34		b
predicative adjectival	25		c
adverbial	28		d
Total Number	102	Notes:	a 6 followed by than b 19 before stem noun forms; 15 before stem+s c 12 followed by than d 12 followed by than number of constructions (not counting minor variants) entered into: 16 Proportion without: with than 3:1
est occurrences			
first, next, last	11		
with no following adjunct	32		
with a following of adjunct	9		
followed by other preposition groups	2		
Total Number	54	Notes:	attributive to stem form noun 12 attributive to stem+s noun 9 number of constructions entered into: 12

Table 31
Comparison with er and est forms

The range of constructions into which <u>er</u> and <u>est</u> forms enter, and their minority occurrence in the traditional <u>er than Y</u> and <u>est of the</u>... suggest that the traditional prototypes do not have text justification. Moreover the higher frequency of the relatively unmarked forms suggest them as the appropriate start point for study.

A more obvious prototype for the <u>er</u> comparison is <u>another</u>. 'Another' represents, separately or together, the two designata 'additional' and 'different'. Priestley examples are <u>another ten years</u> (additional members of the same class) and <u>He may prefer one kind of play to another</u> (different through membership of different subclasses).

The comparative prototype designatum is then 'another' + specification of the 'otherness'; <u>a later model</u> being an additional model, different as specified. The designata suggest initial teaching strategy.

When the 'otherness' is specified in the stem designatum of the stem+<u>er</u> form, an additional marking form, a <u>than</u>-adjunct, should represent further specification; otherwise, the <u>than</u> marking is redundant. Priestley explains <u>not a playwright a dramatist</u> with <u>the dramatist is more original</u>. A <u>than the playwright adjunct would be informationally redundant, since <u>more</u> adequately establishes the subclasses of 'originality': 'more' and 'less'.</u>

When, in such informational situations, a <u>than</u>-extension occurs, one explains it in encoder terms: making available extra encoding time, gratifying listener anticipation. . .

When Priestley says, well this is like saying... you'd like a table with the fourth leg shorter, a listener may expect to hear the words than the other three spoken (whereas a shorter fourth leg would probably not result in the expectation).

On the other hand, a <u>than</u>-adjunct is not redundant when the 'otherness' designatum needs the further specification. When Priestley says . . . <u>they've made a bigger impression</u>. . . the terms of subclassification are unclear until <u>than I thought at the time</u> shows them to be those of "then" and "after".

The without adjunct: with adjunct proportion 3:1 for both <u>er</u> and <u>est</u> occurrences, represents a grammatically expected unmarked: marked proportion.

er vis-à-vis more

Grammarians note a formal aspect of comparatives, namely the distribution of er and more. Consider:

(a) polite

Can't you find a (b) politer way of saying it?

(c) more polite

Formal criteria for encoder choice between <u>er</u> and <u>more</u> are said to be: number of syllables of the adjective stem form; word stress placing; phonetic final syllable form; "English" or "Latin" word origin; encoder style. Obviously none of these criteria would determine preference for <u>politer</u> or <u>more polite</u>.

I will consider the choice in terms of marking theory.

<u>er</u> is a low information bearing syllable in a low information bearing (word final) position; and its phonological exponent (/ə/), is a non-specific marking form. Thus, between (b) and (a) above there is large information overlap (tending to make the <u>er</u> informationally redundant); indeed, when a speaker uses an emphatic enunciation a listener with normal decoding priorities would not spend effort to distinguish (b) from (a).

<u>more</u>, by contrast, is a high information bearing stressed syllable in a high information bearing (noun group initial) position: <u>more po'lite</u> or <u>more po'lite</u>.

When a text sequence makes probable the occurrence of a noun or noun group, there is strong encoder expectation of occurrence of a noun alone, or of a group comprising deictic + noun. Occurrence of a group comprising adjective + noun, or deictic + adjective + noun is less likely, and group stress is then likely to fall on the adjective rather than on the noun.

An intervening <u>more</u> is an alerting 'What's that?' signal, a potential discontinuity indication (the discontinuity realized implicitly as subclassification, or with a <u>than</u>-sequence). When <u>more</u> occurs as an item in a clause final group, it is stressed, and may receive clause focus stress (the dramatist is more original).

It is unsatisfactory to suppose an encoder should select a quite inconspicuous <u>er</u> or a quite conspicuous <u>more</u> on criteria which, as grammarians represent them, are informationally neutral. One would feel more comfortable with 'word length', 'word stress placing' and so on were they to correlate with the more general criterion I tried to give, from the hypothesis that the degree of stress on an item is inversely proportional to its predictability; i.e. inversely to its information bearing value.

Comparatives and superlatives

From a Latin counterpart, the stem+<u>est</u> and <u>most</u> + stem forms inherit the name "superlative", and the forms have been taken to add a further 'more' designatum to a comparative 'more' designatum; i.e., <u>riche</u>, <u>riches</u>, <u>richest</u> should represent three "steps" (or "degrees") of 'more than average wealth'.

Not so; only rich does: to a non-resident, the richest villagers may

be wretchedly 'poor'. The stem+<u>est</u> form compares them, not, like the adjective stem form, with a "standard" or "normal" or "average" or "expected" measure of wealth, but with the measure of wealth of the other members of the group.

In this sense, stem+<u>er</u> and stem+<u>est</u> make the comparison itself in identical informational terms. Both Jespersen and Kruisinga pointed out the distinction, that with <u>er</u> an encoder removes the <u>er</u> referent(s) from the other referent(s) in the comparison, whereas with <u>est</u> an encoder leaves the <u>est</u> referent(s) together with the other referent(s) in the comparison. That is, the villagers who are (distinct through being) <u>richer</u> than the others are precisely the <u>richest</u> (among the) villagers.

Comments above about selection of stem+<u>er</u> or <u>more</u> + stem apply to selection of stem+est or most + stem.

Since "absolute" comparatives and superlatives involve comparison only to a minor extent, there is no need for comment.

A vestigial constraint on occurrence of est

The <u>er</u> and <u>est</u> forms feature in an area of twig level structure, shown especially in relation to a "dual" \times "plural" distinction. This is shown by selection between:

both	and	all
either	and	each
neither	and	none

Educated native speaker English associates 'duality' with comparative <u>er</u>, so that one should say, not *the . . .est of the two but the . . .er of the two. In many grammars the twig level prescription has had too much attention, with the result that teachers associate comparative forms literally with 'two' rather than with two (singular or plural) referents, and associate superlative forms with 'three or more'.

Observations

I will end with a few observations:

Though the forms <u>tall</u>, <u>taller</u> and <u>tallest</u> evidently derive from the source form <u>tall</u>, their designata are related through a common, underlying, not formally expressed, designatum 'height'. If one wished for an example of "deep structure", the deep presence of 'height' in the taller and tallest forms

could be one.

- 2 Many Indian and Southeast Asian users of English, writing theses for higher degrees, show determined avoidance of stem+er forms, preferring a man with the advantage of height over his peers in the matter of wealth, the Netherlands predominated over neighbouring countries etc.
 - One guesses that a traditional school presentation of "positive", "comparative" and "superlative" has provided muddled concepts, and, has made intelligent learners circumspect.
- An oral presentation of stem+<u>er</u> further mystifies. Beginner learners, having become a little accustomed to <u>a book</u> (with redundant <u>a</u>) now hear: <u>a big a book</u>, <u>a small a book</u>. Then, after <u>Ali is a tall a boy</u>. . . learners whose mother tongue inventory of front vowel sounds does not distinguish /a/ from /e/ hear <u>Ali is a tall a boy then Idris</u>, which makes redundancy-reduced sense: 'Ali tall, after him Idris'.
 - My way with beginners is to use <u>another</u> as the prototype form. The word begins and ends with the neutral sound of its initial <u>a</u>. (Among the learners) "Take a chalk. Take another chalk. Take another chalk. . . Take a longer chalk." (At the blackboard) "Here is my dog." (passing the chalk) "Rashid, make his tail longer. Idris, make his tail shorter. Ravi, make his nose a bit longer. . ." I ask how learners say these things in their mother tongue. I write the forms.
- The last observation is of the strength, in this area of language description, of the inherited dogma. Once somebody translated the <u>tall</u> <u>taller</u> <u>tallest</u> form relation into the conceptual terms of 'tall', 'more tall than tall', 'more tall than taller', the translations go on being accepted; despite the satisfactory observational grammar of Jespersen and Kruisinga, and despite the opportunity millions of teachers have of challenging it. A Singapore 1991 beginner course (of native speaker origin), a 1992 "grammar made easy" for Australian learners, equally promote the same, nonsensical "cultural heritage".

A grammar of if occurrences

A traditional account

Traditional observer grammars of <u>if</u> occurrences are at a supposed "conditional sentence" level: the <u>Shorter Oxford English Dictionary</u> presents them in terms of "Indicative" and "Subjunctive" moods in "Protasis" (the <u>if</u> clause) and "Apodosis" (the main clause). The model is exemplified as:

If they competed they would succeed would have succeeded

Through comparison with the model, the frequently occurring forms if true, if so, if possible, if necessary... have to be "reduced" or "truncated" protasis clauses, i.e. clauses from which "understood" subject and verb forms were "deleted".

However, when continuity relations are informationally obvious and encoders choose the grammatical device of juxtaposition: Help me with this; I'll... would a listener have to suppose the encoder has actually "deleted" If you? This style of analysis could get even more troublesome: for instance, Help me with this and I'll... might have to result from the encoder's "substitution" of and for if, and "transfer" of the conjunction clause position!

While it is easy for a grammarian to find, or make up, examples to fit the standard model, it is unrealistic to force the model to cover more than a part of the total <u>if</u> occurrences in everyday text. It seems more useful to start an encoder grammar of <u>if</u> occurrences by looking first at the simplest occurrence forms. I now attempt such a "bottom-up", informational grammar, with exemplification, so far as possible, from the Priestley–Orr text.

An encoder grammar of if

Wishing to start with the simplest forms, I divide the grammar into two Parts, Part 1 with no modal form complexities (would, would have), Part 2 with them.

Part 1 (if without modal forms)

The basic marking function

When <u>if</u> occurs in <u>if true</u>..., it does so as the result of the encoder's decision to modify 'true' by 'if'. One may see 'true' as an unmarked

form; 'if true', like 'not true' and 'untrue', as a marked form.

One may then expect encoders to exploit <u>if</u> when they need any of the general functions of marking.

(i) In encoder grammar, some <u>if</u> phrases and clauses have the straightforward function of gaining encoding time for the speaker. With this encoder purpose, an <u>if</u> construction parallels Priestley's parenthetical <u>I suppose</u>, <u>you know</u>, <u>I'd say</u> and one needs to assign no particular meaning to <u>if</u>.

The Priestley–Orr interview has Priestley's:

if I can put it that way if I can put it like this

and three occurrences of

if you like.

(ii) A further virtually designatum free encoder <u>if</u> function is that in which <u>if</u> is associated a <u>to</u> + stem form, with <u>to</u> meaning "in order to"; compare:

The list must be long and varied to be useful

and

The list must be long and varied if it is to be useful

There is no designata difference, but alternative functional perspective, the <u>if</u> clause giving "CD", informational emphasis, to the focus useful.

Sometimes the to + stem or clause occurs in inverse order:

To survive the Commonwealth must. . . If the Commonwealth is to survive it must. . .

With <u>it</u> functioning as subject to <u>must</u>, <u>the Commonwealth</u> gains CD as subject to <u>survive</u>. There is no designatum difference between the construction with and the construction without <u>if</u>.

(iii) The encoder sets up a classificatory choice between the form "true" and the form "if true", between continuity implication of what it is that is true and the discontinuity implication of "doubt". However, the form classification is not a fixed designatum classification: if true often means "accepting the proposition that what was stated is true. . ."

(iv) Encoding sequence discontinuity, through "not", "un. . ." and "if" requires time additional to that needed to encode "true" (with continuity implication).

If with various designata

Most <u>if</u> occurrences may be accounted for in encoder grammar by supposing an encoder has in mind one or more of the informational designata of <u>if</u>. For those occurrences, there is no need to refer to verb form or clause sequence. I think one may distinguish:

- 1 class assigning <u>if</u>
- 2 <u>if</u> meaning 'given that', 'on the assumption that'
- 3 if meaning 'on condition that'
- 4 <u>if</u> meaning 'in the eventuality that'
- 5 if meaning 'though', 'by contrast with the fact that'
- 6 if meaning 'when', 'whenever'
- 7 <u>if</u> meaning 'whether'

Listing distinct meanings, one does not infer that an encoder on a particular occasion selects a particular meaning; on the contrary, one of the designata-free functions may accompany a designatum, and there may be designate overlap. Encoders are likely to have if available at information source within a range of forms and designate suggested by preceding forms and corresponding to present encoding intention.

Priestley seems to edit forms so as to prefer if to as and as though in:

```
or as I if I'm travelling people talk to me as though as if I'd. . .
```

He seems to be editing from the more particular to the more general.

The above mentioned observer grammar designata are worth illustrating. They have the advantage of "bottom-up" simplicity and coverage, compared with the protasis-apodosis model. I use Priestley–Orr examples when possible.

1 Class assigning if

Insurance Companies are specialist dealers in circumstances which may or may not eventuate and with what is conditional on their occurrence and non-occurrence; and many <u>if</u> occurrences in Insurance Policies are equivalent to 'conditional upon'. However, an <u>if</u> occurrence may mean 'conditional upon' from the viewpoint of the encoder-Insurer, but be factual from the viewpoint of the decoder-

Proposer:

if any of the beneficiaries are minors, state. . .

In this instance, one assumes the <u>if</u> clause encoder not to know, and the decoder to know whether any beneficiaries are minors. What is one-sidedly conditional functions to select from a class of Proposer decoders the subclass to which further attention will be given. There is little doubt that the class-assigning function is more important to the encoder than the setting of a condition.

In the following:

```
if it is desired that the protection of this guarantee should extend. . . state (i) the description of. . .
```

if it is desired may be taken as equivalent to 'conditional on your desire to', and a class assigning rôle (into those who desire and those who do not) may appear to have secondary importance. However a rival Company uses another technique, establishes a class assigning criterion with a 'yes-no' question:

```
Do you require extension to indemnify for. . . ? If so, please state. . .
```

<u>If</u> then clearly identifies the 'yes' subclass, and, considering that the identification is necessary for calculating the Policy premium, one suspects that the earlier 'conditional upon' sense of <u>if it is desired</u> had only secondary encoder importance.

In the following, the primary if function is clearly class assigning:

```
If 'yes', state to whom. . .

If so, state the perils. . .

If 'No', give details. . .

If (b) please state. . .

If this cover required, please state. . .
```

2 If meaning 'given that', 'on the assumption that'

Consider:

A: I know Martha went there last night.

B: Well, if she went there she saw what happened

The <u>if</u> of B's <u>if she went there</u> expresses, not doubt about but acceptance as fact of A's statement. B's <u>if</u> leads A to expect that, on the basis of what A stated as a fact, B is about to deduce or produce a statement.

There is no model "sequence of tenses" with respect to either clause:

recommends

If he recommended it, the quality will be good has recommended

will tell us

If she went there she knows what happened

witnessed has witnessed

This use of <u>if</u> is frequent in argumentative text, so frequent, indeed, that a sign (\supset) is available for its use in symbolic logic: $p \supset q$ (<u>if</u> p, then q). In formal writing, granted that. . . is often used.

Priestley says

I've always argued that if #
I've got to spend a lot of time with it then I must be the chap #
who enjoys it #

...well if I'm spending. . . six months I'm going to enjoy it

Often if so, if true etc. belong here.

3 If meaning 'on condition that'

A dictionary definition of a condition is 'something that must happen or be done before something happens or is done'. Without the designatum 'must', the definition could refer, incorrectly, to any event sequence, random or predictable.

However, 'must' refers only to the **fulfilment** of a condition. For one event to be a condition for a later happening, there has to be a non-fulfilment possibility too.

'Doubt' about the fulfilment of conditions is especially important when one considers, as is done in Part 2, its reinforcement with modal verb forms. Modal forms are quite generally associated with a 'doubt' designatum, so that there may be no need for learners to be taught special (and spurious) rules at the clause level.

The 'condition' designatum does not require expression through \underline{if} ; it may be implicit in the simple grammatical device of juxtaposition. This is especially so when promises or threats are made 'on condition that' something is done, or not done:

```
Get in my way; I'll...
Get in my way, and I'll...
Get out of my way, or I'll...
```

In the above, a condition applies at the time of the 'present' threat. The time of fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the action in question is, by its nature, future.

Often conditions are generalized, and are then neutral for clause subject and for time, as in Priestley's:

```
you need a lot of space for #
rich characters to show themselves and er #
if you can't leave them #
a fair amount of space they can't exhibit themselves in the round #
```

4 If meaning 'in the eventuality that'

Sometimes doubt exists with respect to an 'eventuality', and <u>if</u> reflects the doubt. A following clause states consequence or recommended action. Priestley says:

```
I do it as well as I can #
if some people like it that's fine #
```

A common 'eventuality/non-eventuality' situation is that of:

```
If he's not at home get the key from the neighbour at 107 If I can't come, I'll let you know
```

5 If meaning 'though', 'by contrast with the fact that'

The Priestley–Orr text contains no example of \underline{if} = 'though'. Here is one:

But, if they drove those whom they controlled, they also drove themselves

The if is common without a following verb:

```
It is possible, if difficult
It was, if not commendable, at least excusable
```

6 If meaning 'when', 'whenever'

With occurrences of <u>if</u> meaning 'when', 'every time that', the general 'doubt' or 'non-reality' designatum is reduced to the implication (from 'when') of 'when not'. A main clause states the consequence of the 'when' and implies a non-consequence of 'when not'. Priestley has:

```
but em certainly it helps me to enjoy life # particularly if I'm #
```

well away from cities #
or as I if I'm travelling we do a good deal of travelling #

7 If meaning 'whether'

When 'doubt' is limited to 'yes' – 'no' alternatives, <u>if</u> and <u>whether</u> are interchangeable. There is no example in the Priestley–Orr text. In the following, typical preceding clause constructions imply or express 'doubt'.

	doubt			
	will ask	whether		has come
I	wonder		she	will come
	am not sure	if		came
	don't know			

I end Part 1 with the remark that there is nothing surprising in the variety of designata and functions associated with the form <u>if</u>. Linking <u>if</u> with a 'conditional' designatum alone, and its occurrence in a clause results in a grammar that is limited, artificial and complex.

Part 2 (If with modal verb forms)

"formal", "showing sequence of tense"

Kruisinga, observer style, grammar notes verb stem+<u>ed</u> occurrences (especially <u>was/were</u>) that are merely formal, in the sense that absence of, or an alternative to the <u>ed</u> ending would arouse decoder attention when this was not part of the encoder's intention. Traditional grammarians include under this usage a "sequence of tenses" rule. In

I thought you were Irish

were does not imply that the person addressed has changed nationality: were is Neutral with respect to time.

'remoteness' defined

Apart from this formal use, a verb stem+<u>ed</u> form clues, or is associated with one or the other of two kinds of 'remoteness'. They are (a) remoteness of narrated events from the moment of narration ('Past'), (b) remoteness from reality of the verb stem designatum ('Modal').

As earlier noted, associated with (a) are <u>ed</u> forms indicating circumstances 'actual' at the time of the 'remote' Narrative events.

Within (b), modal remoteness, one distinguishes remoteness from

reality ('irrealis') and remoteness deriving from an encoder's 'mood', often of 'modesty'.

It may be recalled that occurrences under Narrative and Actual together total 80% of finite stem+ed occurrences.

Present day English formally clues a 'modal' designatum only in the following (verb form) instances: (i) occurrence of a verb stem form after a third person subject (ii) occurrence of <u>be</u> as a finite form (iii) occurrence of were after first and third person subjects.

The vestigial forms occur so rarely that applying the category name "subjunctive" to them is justified only when teachers expect that analogy may help English learners of Latin to accept the 48 forms (a third of the total) of a regular Latin verb; or the reduced number of forms in modern West European languages.

Since explicit verb form clues are limited in number, occurring mainly in set expressions (<u>If I were you</u>,... <u>So be it Whether it be</u>...), attribution of a modal designatum must often be from inference.

When <u>could</u> in <u>We hoped you could come</u> is, situationally, 'and, happily, here you are' it is, in observer grammar, Narrative. When it is, situationally, 'but, regrettably, you didn't come', a modal inference is taken. In a similar way, stem+<u>ed</u> forms in <u>if</u>-clauses are Narrative when <u>if</u> means, or turns out to have meant, 'given that', 'granted that':

And what if I did!

If I stayed late, it was for a good reason

If she knew, it was because Clarissa told her

Inference of a stem+<u>ed</u> modal designatum is through qualification of a statement as 'tentative' or as being an 'assumption', 'supposition', 'possibility', 'wish', 'wishful assumption'. . . The qualification is usually through a clause adverb designatum (<u>maybe</u>, <u>presumably</u>. . .) or through a conjunction designatum (<u>if</u>. . ., <u>assuming that</u>. . .) or through a clause verb stem designatum (<u>think</u>, <u>assume</u>, <u>suppose</u>, guess, wish. . .).

When a modal designatum clue (e.g. finite <u>be</u>) is within a clause and the modal designatum itself is a feature of a foreshadowing or following clause, its exponent is usually a Position 5 verb group item:

If it be. . . it may

or

It may. . . if it be. . .

This is twig level structure, strange for learners whose mother tongues express modal designata formally by clause adverbs only.

Most likely such learners are like many English speaking learners of Latin who disregard 'subjunctive' designata in favour of establishing a set of formal alerting clues (<u>cum</u> "takes" the subjunctive when. . .), or of English speaking learners of French for whom <u>le premier qui</u> ('the first to') is a subjunctive clue, with no learner need to worry about what in 'the first to' is, designata-wise, 'subjunctive'.

One understands that course designers are tempted to try to fit English language facts into a simple "sequence of tense" formula, for modal <u>if</u> usage is annoying: low frequency of occurrence, redundancy, complexity, communication hindrance and élitism combining to the discomfiture of learners.

<u>If</u> with modal verb form enhancement often expresses 'on condition that', 'suppose that' and, after <u>as</u>, 'in a manner leading one to believe that'. I will look at each in turn.

If meaning 'on condition that'

The modal stem+<u>ed</u> enhancement may be the type Kruisinga calls "of modesty", for example:

If you help me I'll pay for. . .

is enhanced to

If you helped me I'd pay for. . .

There is no time difference with respect to the 'helping', and 'd is neutral for time. There is no example in the 40 minute Priestley–Orr text.

Since, as in the above example, the 'd of I'd pay for. . . may add a 'remote through modesty' designatum to the verb stem designatum, an encoder wanting a distinct 'irrealis' modal enhancement may clue the fact by 'd, (had) (+ stem+ed):

If you'd helped me, I'd have paid for. . .

On the other hand, when the verb stem designatum is not one which the 'modesty' readily accompanies, the stem+ed form is interpreted as 'irrealis'. Priestley says:

If I had press cuttings they'd (neutral) come in by the hundred

If meaning 'suppose that'

By associating a modal designatum with that of 'supposition', an encoder may imagine situations that are non-existent, "events" that had no opportunity to occur, and "events" whose opportunity to occur has gone: in all three, the modal designatum is 'irrealis'.

Common anticipating designata are those of an encoder's attitude towards a supposition; typically, a 'wish' that the supposition were real, or unreal, or a 'wish' that a supposed or imagined situation might replace reality. Priestley says:

I wouldn't mind if Stratford were further away

(imagined situation difference) and:

I wouldn't care if I didn't visit some of these birth places

(imagined occurrence difference)

Stratford's existence is neutral for time; Priestley's visiting is iterative. The 'irrealis' designatum, therefore, is (redundantly) clued by the number discontinuity: <u>Stratford were</u>.

Priestley continues a generalization about <u>play after play that didn't</u> succeed with:

a great many novels could be improved enormously if the man had thought a little more about the construction of them

By the man, Priestley means 'any writer of any one of the badly constructed novels' he had in mind. In each such instance, opportunity for occurrence of the improvement has, regrettably, gone, so that the 'improvement' has an 'irrealis' designatum.

Further notes:

- (a) Priestley's <u>could be improved</u> presents <u>improved</u> as a non-finite stem+<u>ed</u> of 'state'. To encode a 'narrative' or 'iterative' designatum would require (would have required) <u>could have</u> been.
- (b) Had Priestley said <u>novels could be improved</u>. . .<u>if the man thought</u>. . . the stem+<u>ed thought</u> would clue either that the statement was 'general' or would refer to 'future' time.

To clue the unrealized opportunity for occurrence of the improvement, <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> (<u>had thought</u>) is necessary.

<u>If</u> (after <u>as</u>) meaning 'in a manner leading one to believe that...', or 'as though...'

As if, as a compound conjunction, usually means 'in a manner leading one to believe that':

It looks as if it's going to rain. He spoke as if he knew all about it.

When a stem+<u>ed</u> form follows <u>if</u>, and is suspected of being modal, the implication is 'leading one **falsely** to believe that. . .' Thus, one may draw conclusions opposite to the statements following <u>as if</u>, but with certainty only when there is a discontinuity clue (such as <u>he</u> were).

We hear: We may understand:
as if he were a stranger 'he isn't really a stranger'
as if he knew all about it 'he doesn't know all about it'

Priestley says:

people talk to me as though as if I'd just arrived on the last train from the north

He had arrived fifty years before.

The above informational account of <u>if</u> occurrences suggests that the formal "sequence of tense" grammar of indicative and subjunctive moods in protasis and apodosis (<u>if</u> clause and main clause) is unnecessary, and inadequate. <u>If</u> occurrences are better accounted for by having in mind (i) the designata of <u>if</u>, and (ii) the clue functions of ed and had.

Revisiting <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u>

An observer grammarian of <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> notes form-substitutability, at a text point, of stem+ed, have/has stem+ed, and had stem+ed:

She has lived there for five years had lived

The traditional grammar style leads to interpretation, or acceptance of interpretation, of circumstances for and distinctions effected by the use of <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> rather than of either of the others.

When observation is extensive, it becomes clear that choice of form according to circumstances and distinctions (e.g. of 'time') does not apply to all occurrences in text.

I refer again to Lévi-Strauss's analogy of main limb and twig levels of structure, and of the degrees of orderliness or otherwise one may reasonably expect at each level.

Most important for teachers of English to speakers of Southeast Asian languages are the reasons for not having to regard <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> as a tense. Perhaps the most convincing of these is the physical combination, in both spoken and written English, of <u>had</u> with a preceding subject form (e.g. <u>he'd</u>) rather than with any following verb stem+ed form.

The good sense of a

She'd | lived

boundary is confirmed when, for instance, <u>always</u> further separates the items on either side:

She'd | always lived

I now look more closely at <u>had</u> in "<u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u>" as an inserted marking form, i.e. as an encoder clue to a certain kind of designatum.

Table 5 indicates that the CD (informational) status of the <u>ed</u> item, occurring as it does in word-final position, i.e. following a verb stem designatum, should be lower than the status of <u>had</u>, an independent word, preceding a stem designatum.

I suggested that, after an initial general 'remote in time' designatum, successive <u>ed</u> forms clue an informationally insignificant 'I've been here before' reassurance that narration order follows event occurrence order.

The interposition of <u>had</u>, after a clause grammatical subject, and before a (statistically and contextually expected) stem+<u>ed</u> form clues the presence of a 'What's that?' alerting information situation.

<u>had</u> inferences

What had then alerts to is inferred.

One notes:

1 indication of sequence discontinuity in narration of events

- 2 indication of points in a narrative at which there is recapitulation of events
- 3 indication of narrative interpretation at points at which a stem+ed form could be interpreted ambiguously
- 4 indication of reported statement or of the gist of reported statement
- 5 a novelist's indication that his author perspective has been suspended in favour of that of one of his characters
- 6 indication of a modal ('irrealis') designatum.

However, <u>had</u> may communicate an 'alerting', 'marking', designatum of a vaguer kind than 'irrealis' marking.

The novelist Hardy writes:

One night, when Farmer Oak had returned to his house. . .

(many native speaker readers might be ready to half believe the return would prove vain) and continues:

believing there would be no further necessity. . .

(what readers do not now know that Oak will not be allowed to remain at home?)

Considering:

1. One night, when Farmer Oak had returned

and

2. One night, when Farmer Oak returned

one notes as obvious the presence and absence of the form <u>had</u>.

Since the 'time' circumstances are identical, there cannot be a difference of grammatical "tense". The fact is that a reader is ready to anticipate, from 1 that Farmer Oak's house will not be the scene for further events, and, from 2 that it will be. An informational account assigns to <u>had</u> a general 'discontinuity marking' designatum, to be decoded as such, or in one of the more specific ways listed above.

I do not suggest that 'discontinuity marking' should, or could, be taught. On the other hand, teaching should not get in the way of learners' perception; and perception should, I think, be at word (not clause) level.

TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR IN MODERN GUISE

Grammarians' conventional symbols

I have freely used the symbols " + " and, less often, " | ". Each symbol has the following designata:

- (i) the symbol infers a relation between the forms on either side
- (ii) the symbol represents a boundary between forms
- (iii) the symbol represents one form "followed by" an other

I used the "+" symbol for small units, the "|" for larger.

Use of the "+" symbol

For closely associated form items, the "+" is not spaced; for larger but still closely associated form items, the symbol is spaced; both appear in: was + stem+ing.

In both cases, the 'followed by' designatum predominates. At the same time, from the substitutability of forms on either side, the presence of a boundary is evident.

Use of the "/" symbol

I used the "|" symbol where main interest is in boundary-clueing, as in : she's | teaching English. The designatum 'followed by' is evident.

Interestingly, Palmer (1938) uses the multiplication sign, \times , and is explicit about it: the pattern VERB \times DIRECT OBJECT means "this type of sentence is formed by the multiplication of appropriate verbs by appropriate direct objects".

It seems to me that there is no special designatum for the "x" sign and the word "multiplication"; both having the designata 'relation', 'boundary' and 'followed by'.

Use of the symbol " \rightarrow "

In the formula

$$NP_1 + V_{trans} + NP_2 \rightarrow NP + (agreeing form of)be + V_{ed} (+ by + NP_1)$$

there appears the symbol " \rightarrow ".

Of the designata of the "+" and "|" symbols, (i) some 'relation' designatum is implicit in " \rightarrow ". (ii) the symbol must represent a boundary ending one form and beginning the following one. (iii) the inference of the arrow direction is that of 'prior' and 'following'.

An additional suggestion from the " \rightarrow " symbol is that the relation between the prior and following forms is that the form appearing before the symbol transforms into or generates the following form.

That is, the symbol is held to represent a process, by which an originating [x] becomes a generated \underline{x} :

$$[x] \rightarrow x$$

I already discussed the unfortunate representation, as a feature in English grammar of what are translations of a genuine Latin (or Swedish) Vox Passiva. What I now question is the general validity of the " \rightarrow " designatum of 'process' from the [x] form to the \underline{x} form.

The relation is one in observer grammar; for the grammarians who assert it most certainly know in advance which forms ([x] and \underline{x}) are on either side of the symbol.

However, to the extent both [x] and \underline{x} on either side of the symbol are grammatical, they are through outside reference; grammaticality is not conferred from within an [x] \rightarrow x formula itself.

With respect to encoders of spoken text, I have taken the structuralist positions:

- (1) that each particular encoder, reaching an articulation point in a sequence of forms, may **see**m to an observer to have chosen from whatever alternative forms there could be in his short term memory for selection from
- (2) that the "choice" (apparent to an observer) could resolve into encoder **use** (rather than choice) of the form appropriate to a perceived informational situation, **use**, moreover, under time pressure, and influenced by an unwanted or wanted degree of formal marking.

There is no reason to suppose, and I have seen no convincing evidence for supposing, that an observer-style grammarian's transformation operates in encoder text production. With reference to text occurrence of either [x] or \underline{x} , one remembers de Saussure's observation that the paradigmatic, (systemic) contrast style relates one actually occurring form to an absent form or absent forms; there is no reason to suppose that an encoder has, in a regular way, time to observe or consider the theoretical possibility of form substitution.

How does it come about, then, that some grammarians interpret an essentially spacial arrangement or rearrangement (with all elements mentally present at the same time, and no originating or resulting forms) as "generation" or "transformation"?

One part of the answer lies in the slant European-style linguistic and grammar studies confer through the traditional setting out of Latin forms in paradigms or "vertical" lists, giving prominence to the "systemic contrasts" among the forms.

Students of Latin are encouraged to observe (especially inflectional) form differences, then compare the forms. Thus, the list (mone-) o, s, t, mus, tis, nt, encourages the idea that, learning them by heart, one has made "changes" of form, "adding" the o etc. (according to "person") as one "moves" from one listed item to the following one.

Accordingly, generations of learners of English have "changed the following" into 'plural', or 'third person', or 'past tense' or 'passive', or 'indirect speech'.

Very properly, the learner profit from such exercises is currently doubted, and they have been faulted on psychological grounds.

However, as demand for organization grows louder within the profession ("Grammar must come back"), it will be tempting to restore traditional "change-the-following" transformational exercises, which noted linguists seem to claim validity for.

Teachers convinced, on the other hand, that our learners' interest is in text understanding, eventually production, will challenge forms brought by grammarians into systemic (or "transformational") contrast. With no place in informational, text based grammar, there will be no justification for the symbol " \rightarrow ", or for any other way of bringing [x] and \underline{x} into juxtaposition in our learners' experience.

"Deep" and "surface" structure

I have accepted, as essential to understanding language learning, Vygotsky's account of "inner" and "externalized" speech. Both show ranges of editing.

"Day dreaming" inner speech structure seems to comprise chains of associated designata, the only grammar being that of successive juxtapositions of focus forms. Approaching the inner – externalized boundary, indeed, preparatory to crossing it, there is structured information organization and preliminary form editing.

The spoken Text transcriptions showed the degrees of editing effort which various encoders felt to be appropriate.

It might seem that the Vygotsky "inner" and "externalized" would match the terms "deep" and "surface", with "deep" the less and "surface" the more structured. In Chomsky-style grammar, the opposite is the case, later analyses, with "trace filters" making the hypothesized deep structure even more specific with respect to surface structure.

To illustrate, I refer to an earlier, publicized contrast:

- (a) John is eager to please
- (b) John is easy to please

It was claimed that, though the (a) and (b) surface structure is identical (epithet + to + stem), the clause subject <u>John</u> in (a) is the subject of <u>please</u>, whereas the same clause subject <u>John</u> in (b) is the object of <u>please</u>; the inference being that "a single surface structure expresses each of two deep structures".

Acceptance of the inference was, and still is, I suggest, over-hasty.

A non-grammatical reason for the acceptance may have been the convention in experimental psychology that all parameters stay constant except the one under study; so that from the common <u>John is ea</u>— <u>to please</u>, study of a <u>ger</u> \times <u>sy</u> contrast may have seemed "objective". The rigour would be spurious.

As I see things, under consideration should be two features of informational grammar.

The first is one's expectation of the most frequently used, most simple grammatical device, juxtaposition; here, of epithet + \underline{to} +

verb stem. The second feature is one's way of dealing, informationally, with spoken form homophony.

I look first at reasonable expectation from form – form juxtaposition.

Considering linguistic marking I looked at the designata of (a) the relatively unmarked epithet – noun juxtaposition <u>hot pancakes</u>, (b) the relatively marked noun – relative clause juxtaposition <u>Pancakes</u> <u>that are hot</u>, concluding that the (b) juxtaposition, with the larger number of formal elements, is the sequence with fewer designata elements. That is, relatively marked <u>Pancakes that are hot</u> is unmarked <u>hot pancakes</u> <u>minus</u> all its designata ('if', 'when', 'provided that') except the one specified by that.

Since the grammar of juxtaposition is one of **wide** designata relations, it seems odd to label each designata-wise general construction "surface" and each specific one "deep". Would an encoder make the effort to achieve deep structural designata and form specificity, then swamp the result of the effort in a form juxtaposition?

The effort, during text production, could be considerable, for both encoder and decoder. If, in <u>John is easy to please</u>, a speaker implies that John <u>is</u> (neutrally for time) a member of a class of 'easy-to-please' people, and also that <u>John</u> is the object of <u>please</u>, then an assumed "deep subject" should be a vague 'anyone' (from 'for anyone to please').

And if Priestley's <u>It's not easy to answer</u> means 'It's (at this actual moment) not easy (for me) to answer', the "deep object" should be 'the question you just asked', and the "deep subject" (the person who does the answering) should be 'I'.

And so on, from example to example. With each occurrence of form juxtaposition, an observer grammarian may isolate, and contrast, **two** designata relations among a totality of designata relations possible within the juxtaposition; an encoder does not have time to do so.

An informational possibility for the observer grammarian's $\underline{\text{eager}} \times \underline{\text{easy}}$ juxtapositions is that encoders would use, and decoders perceive, on unrelated occasions, an appropriate surface structure:

(a) John is eager | to please

and:

```
(b) John is | easy to please
```

each encoded and decoded on the basis of the particular epithet designatum.

In (a), <u>John is eager</u> is, designata-wise, acceptable, and <u>to please</u> an optionally appended adjunct to <u>eager</u>. In (b), <u>John is easy</u> would be acceptable only with the designatum 'compliant', but this would not be compatible with a 'to please' adjunct. <u>John is</u>... as clause background and ...<u>easy to please</u> as clause focus brings (b) into the commonly encountered clause type of Table 4.

Interpreting homophonous forms

With this designata-dependent interpretation, the word form <u>please</u> is seen to be homophonous for the designata 'please (someone)' and 'be pleased'.

One has now to consider what one expects of homophony. First, it is by no means unusual. The large number of English one-syllabled word stem forms is associated with a degree of word homophony affecting from 30 to 40% of the different words in a variety of texts.

Word homophones may be interpreted in two ways: one may think of a "word" as having more than one function or designatum; or as two or more functions or designata sharing expression through a common form, e.g.

```
please = 'please'(i) and 'please'(ii)
or
'please'(i) and 'please'(ii) = please
```

The dictionary existence of a homophonous counterpart rarely interferes with an encoder's or decoder's immediate informational association of the word form with a textually appropriate occurrence of a particular designatum or grammatical function. Only isolated from sufficiently explicit text or non-verbal information, can <u>bank</u> not be distinguished from <u>bank</u> or <u>report</u> from <u>report</u>; such non-context is unusual. The <u>easy-eager-to please</u> contrast was "made up for the purpose", and the clues to resolving the 'please' homophony had, therefore, to be looked for in observer grammar terms.

The clues are more explicit in Chomsky's <u>flying planes</u> in which <u>fly</u>, used with the designata 'fly' and 'cause to fly', is placed in an ambiguous context: Flying planes can be dangerous.

I will use a more plausible instance of a sequence in which a homophonous word form offers the possibility of more than one interpretation, girls like her; fitted into a clause, there results a pun: I know a lot of girls like her.

To perceive a pun, decoders need to recognize each of the designata sharing the common form. That is, they must have access to information stored from previous experience of occurrence situations for the form. When the form punned on can be interpreted as a member of each of two (or more) word classes, success requires decoder reference to previous experience of linguistic situations for occurrence of the form in each word class. There is no "deep" – "surface" implication.

In:

I know a lot of girls like her 1

oscillation of interpretation between designata sharing the form <u>like</u> is accompanied by oscillation between verb and preposition functions. Faced with a pun of this kind, a perceptive listener is like a viewer of Rubin's reversible configuration:

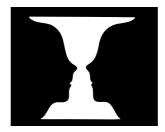


Figure 13
Rubin's Reversible Configuration

Description of this configuration as 'a quadrilateral enclosing two symmetrically opposed lines' certainly implies one picture, or one "surface structure". However, the description neglects the fact that the visual pun was constructed, that in drawing the lines and spacing them the artist deliberately drew **two** forms, representing **two** designata, and, in this sense, **two** pictures. It also neglects the fact that viewers see the **two** pictures they were intended to see.

¹ The clause is simplified from an unintentional pun in a Jack London novel, cited by Jesperson (1928)

A key fact is that though a viewer's perception of the pun depends on coincidence of his present and previous ideas about the appearances of vases and human face profiles, the pun itself is a particular occurrence; it will not survive even slight line alteration or displacement. This peculiarity of the pun is what attracts attention and gives pleasure.

In other words, an implication of the peculiar nature of the pun is that vase and human face profiles have an inherent quality of **not** coinciding; that the pun does **not** represent the nature of profile representation of the world.

In the same way, <u>I know a lot of girls like her</u> is **one** clause in the sense that it is one phonological sequence, but it too is able to represent **two** designata sequences, and to be so perceived.

It too is a particular event; it would be far fetched to generalize, from <u>like her</u>, that <u>like + pronoun</u> when the first <u>like</u> is a verb is always, or often, indistinguishable from <u>like + pronoun</u> when the second <u>like</u> is a preposition.

One recognizes <u>I</u> know a lot of girls like her as a pun precisely because most tokens of the verb + pronoun type are both formally and designata-wise distinct from tokens of the preposition + pronoun type. Their coincidence in a pun is a particular event and invites a local explanation; certainly not Chomsky's "only a single surface structure may be assigned but the deep structure must differ".

As for the Chomsky "flying planes" pun, the following, entirely local, or "surface", instructions apply:

- 1 Choose a verb form that is homophonous for the designata 'x' and 'cause to x', as <u>fly</u> represents 'move through the air' and 'cause to move through the air'
- 2 Place the stem+<u>ing</u> form of the 'x' / 'cause to x' item before a plural noun and place the resulting group in, for example, clause predicate position after a suitable form of 'be'.

Instruction 1 determines which particular tokens (gallop, sail, cook, steam. . .) can appear in the ambiguous construction:

galloping horses
They are sailing boats
cooking apples

Actually, Chomsky's <u>flying planes</u> is an unworthy specimen.

'Galloping' is a subclass of 'horse movement' (c.p. 'trotting', 'cantering'), 'sailing' a subclass of 'boat movement'. 'Flying', however, is not a subclass of 'plane movement', since it is axiomatic that all 'planes' 'fly'. Thus, 'flying' in 'flying planes' has no designatum justification, as it might have in 'flying fish', 'flying saucers'. . . .

I justify the above, surely over-long examination of the widely accepted "evidence" for a theory by repeating a general observation. A pun approach to language study is an extension of the systemic contrast approach. It is disturbing, in that any descriptive statement distinguishing one element in the pun from the other is certain to need some sort of paraphrase that will be more complex formally than either element as it features in the pun; e.g. <u>I know that</u> a lot of girls like her and I know a lot of girls who are like her.

Linguists who consider the two sentences to be "deep structure" versions of <u>I know a lot of girls like her</u> condition themselves to think of "deep structure" as more specific than "surface structure".

Setting each interpretation of the punned upon clause through a more specific, formally more complex counterpart has set side by side relatively unmarked and relatively marked members of a pair in binary opposition.

There is then total mismatch between the "deep" and "surface" labels and the associations (a) of encoder effort to achieve designatum specificity (b) of the time constraints upon an encoder's decision to make the effort.

This methodologically questionable style promotes a grammarian bias towards the relatively marked, formally complex, infrequently occurring, designata-wise specific forms.

Summary

I argued that one cannot understand learners' problems with grammar without awareness that language, dialect, accent, have the biological, then social function of hindering cross-border communication.

The function is promoted by the particular sets of redundant forms.

The hindering is strengthened when grammarian tradition (a)

describes modern English, with vestigial inflection, in terms of classical Latin with luxuriance of inflection (b) dictates Europeanstyle presentation of English to learners whose mother tongue syllable forms do not permit inflection.

I introduced the concept of major limb – twig level structure and observer difficulty in distinguishing them. Since complexity is associated with twig level phenomena, grammarians and course designers, who allot class time in terms of anticipated learner difficulty, are tempted to give most attention to (and assign most importance to) minor features. Course designers and teachers making a point of keeping to "native speaker authenticity" offer learners miscellanies of major and minor, of non-redundant and redundant, of learner-friendly and learner-unfriendly forms.

I reaffirmed the importance of seeing both native speaker and learner spoken and written texts as products of mental processes: (a) internalization of spoken and written forms, (b) their (major) use in inner speech activity, and (c) their (minor) use in externalized (social) speech and writing.

I emphasized the place, in encoder externalization, of the degrees of editing decoders expect, and the need for teachers to be realistic in their expectation; truly authentic native speaker forms being edited to an altogether different degree from that of the supposed native speaker forms which course designers try to exact from learners. I rejected any competence – performance explanation of the difference.

I pointed out that observer grammar, resulting from setting forms into systemic contrasts, differed from non-contrastive encoder and decoder grammars, accessed under time constraint, and I developed the idea that relative ease and difficulty of general encoder access to forms resulted in the statistical data essential for course designer reference.

As informational grammar, I identified two main features of encoded text (1) formal clues to what is background and what is focus information (2) formal clues to information continuity and discontinuity.

Seeing these features to be universal, I tried to indicate how various English forms can be disengaged from a systemic contrast style presentation, to be seen as clues to the major features. I went on to show that a "bottom-up", informational grammar better fits the language awareness of learners with non-inflected mother tongue forms. I gave my opinion that it better represents the grammar of current English.

I feel readers may now appreciate my approval of an English linguist, JR Firth, who wrote, "To deal with the theory of language, the Western scholar must (after "de-Classicalizing") de-Europeanize himself, and the Englishman must de-Anglicize himself."

COMMENT ON A CENTURY OF LANGUAGE TEACHING

Commercial school and public domain language teaching

From the 1890s:

"Excuse me Sir, but can you tell me the way to King Street?"

to the 1980s:

"Sorry to trouble you, but can you tell me how to get to King Street?"

such themes have provided the unchanging substance of innumerable commercial language school courses.

The assumption has been: preparation for later foreign learner to meet (élite) native speakers in the foreign country; so that the language is learned for direct satisfaction of social "needs". It followed that the spoken language had priority, and that it was to be "idiomatic".

To the latter end, the commercial schools preferred teachers to be fluent native speakers. With most of them untrained, two policies developed:

- (1) with account taken of the lack of training, prescription of extremely detailed course material and routines, to be strictly followed
- (2) with account taken of the native speaker attributes and the presumption that all "input" from them was necessarily valuable, general guidance about topics, no prescription.

There was common belief that translation was not useful, and, with beginners, that learner responses should require no process of editing from an inner speech resource.

Energetic young teachers, in commercial school classes with three or at most four learners, can, in fact, prevent learner reference to the mother tongue, develop what school directors called "tempo", and satisfy teacher and beginner learners that learning is taking place.

On the other hand, it may also be noted that the schools cater especially for adult beginners, and that profit comes from people inveigled to start, but who soon "drop out".

It seems strange that commercial school advocacies gained high standing among professionals in the public education domain, where circumstances are so different. Beginner learners are younger, are in much larger classes, and probably cannot appreciate reward in terms of person-meets-person encounters that are improbable and are certainly years off.

Yet a succession of public domain "Methods" followed the commercial school models. Though the "person-meets-person" theme would apply only to some learners, it was asserted that since the spoken language was "primary", a l l learners would better get a reading ability by first following an aural — oral course. The commercial school policies with regard to teaching were reflected, according to time and place, (1) in innumerable detailed syllabuses and course books (2) in reliance on native speaker "input" and learner "acquisition".

I pointed out that we have 150 years' experience of the exposure or "immersion" or "meaningful input" idea, put into large scale practice under British, Dutch, and French colonial régimes, with consequent élite formation and large "drop-out" rate.

The colonial "immersion" practice had a simple theoretical assumption, the benefit of coloniser mother tongue speaker influence on the children of the colonized. It was late in the colonial period that any language teaching professionalism developed.

The current "communicative competence" vogue resumes the colonial, and century old commercial school assumption of special value in "native speaker competence" and native speaker authenticity.

There is also a closer commercial background. The fact is that most native English speaking countries now have a, hopefully, profit-making ELT "industry" and a consequent demand for large numbers of instant expert teachers. It is convenient to theorize that the natural assets of being an educated native speaker, plus a course of a few

weeks, form "native speaker authentic learner input" providers.

As with the commercial school assumption of future person-meetsperson needs, the "communicative competence" idea has led to definition of course material in terms of learners" "communicative needs", and the production of inventories of needs, and formulas for their satisfaction.

"Learner needs" is an attractive concept. However, nothing, I think, could be further from genuine language learning than imitation of (supposedly authentic) native speaker models for meeting (supposed) learners' (future) needs.

The search for "communicative competence" in native speaker authenticity terms has consistently resulted in small élites and large numbers of "drop-outs".

Some countries' public education authorities have persisted with a sounder notion of language learning as part of an education, but there has been increased pressure on them to follow the commercial school line. Unfortunately the pressure has come from both Theoretical and Applied Linguistics.

The "language acquisition" device theory

Over the Century, many commercial language schools have promoted the idea of "effortless" learning by "natural" means — and encouraged prospective clients to believe they would learn as infants naturally learned their mother tongue.

In the same vein, many linguists have supported the assumption of an "innate language acquisition device" as a genetic feature of human beings. It has been stated that human brains are "wired for language learning".

I assent to the probability of an innate element in language learning; and to the idea of some universality within it. However, I find the designata of <u>device</u> and <u>wired</u> altogether inappropriate.

We have communication, with channel noise; structure also at twig level; the human genome is said (Jones (1991) to have 50,000 functioning genes, accompanied by millions of imperfect ones, in fact, genome junk. Channel noise, twig level structure, non-communicating genes are an aspect of reality, quite uncharacteristic of "devices" and "wiring"; any innate element in language learning

would have the "channel noise" element.

In typical schools for native English speaking children, an innate "language acquisition device" does **not**, in fact, assure anything approaching the widely asserted "mastery" of mother tongue grammatical forms. Those children receive more hours of "English" than foreign learners, but, experiencing the same difficulties from the same communication-hindering forms, many of them leave school semi-literate and relatively inarticulate.

With respect to the communication-hindering language function, I do not find the "behaviourist" X "mentalist" (or "cognitive") opposition useful. Distinct from what Skinner wrote (1957) about language learning is his laboratory work. It is to this we can usefully give attention.

First, as I understand, the initial behaviour of his rats inside their "Skinner boxes" depended absolutely on mammalian primary motivation to "explore". The rat, not the human, initiated the learning.

Secondly, the Skinner box design provided an experimenter – rat communication channel with an extremely favourable signal to noise ratio.

Thirdly, learning was promoted by a motivation – success feedback loop.

Fourthly, Skinner as teacher used a routine of what he called behaviour "shaping", which I think is universal among teachers of skills. In a Yehudi Menuhin school, no learner is expected to "strike" notes on a violin string with total accuracy; the developed skill is one of increasingly speedy adjustment of the finger from an initial to a wanted note.

It seems to me as a teacher, that these four aspects of organizing learning are extraordinarily valuable as touchstones to one's own professionalism.

Obviously, I do not admire teaching advocacies that try (1) to bypass a basic to-and-fro movement between inner speech and external speech forms (2) thereby to upset the balance of a country's need for learners to gain decoder and encoder skills.

Such advocacies distort the nature of language and the public interest school language learning should serve.

The socio-linguistic influence

I may mention the invasion of socio-linguistics into language teaching. A school-leaving examination paper in an English speaking country recently required candidates to comment on:

Swap a sanny?

Candidates were supposed to identify the speech act as "school playground English", with perhaps a comment that <u>sanny</u> is playground "sandwich"; then to identify it as "offering or extending or restoring friendship". Probably higher marks would be granted for the use of taught jargon.

One may perceive the reasoning behind the question type, and agree that at least some learners gain insight into the ways language use may be classified, and how it may affect, and be manipulated, to affect the responses of readers and listeners.

However, there is a methodological issue. Traditional grammar instruction classified words, word groups and clauses, then tested learners' knowledge of the classificatory system by requiring them to "parse" sentences. Giving learners an inventory of text types, then testing them on their ability to place chosen or made-up texts into a given framework are quite similar instructional and testing techniques. And learner success, like learner success in parsing, reflects above all, the skill of particular teachers. Learners relying on personal experience, without recollection of a teacher's example would risk making hit-or-miss placings: what if an actual "Swap a sanny" experience had been with a playground bully, or a rich child currying favour, or in a school dining room where such offers were expected, and perfunctory?

I would think that identification according to "genre", "tenor" and the like deals to a minor extent with actual texts, and their functions in situational contexts; and to a major extent with a system of abstraction like any other, reflected in a terminology.

Thus, recognizing a certain descriptive value, I do not see any centrality with respect to language in a language learning context.

Learner motivation and grammar

I stress again the difference between decoder and encoder grammars. Learning to read foreign language texts depends, first, on recognition of and understanding written words; then on recognition of grammatical clues to the onset of information focus points, and to information discontinuity. Both are features of grammar learners' mother tongue experience leads them to expect.

It is regrettable that such positive features of informational grammar have to be presented negatively, in later, specialist courses in "speed reading", as a matter of "editing out" attention to redundant and twig level grammatical forms. Such courses attempt to develop the skill of refusing attention to all elements of "vertical-style", systemic contrast grammar, except the one element present in the text being read.

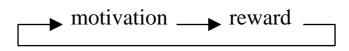
Reading is correctly regarded as a reward activity, so that when reading proficiency is achieved, motivation to read is self-sustaining.

By contrast, learning to encode text confronts learners with forms that have the biological function of keeping language communities intact, forms which enable members to recognize non-members. They are, usually,

- 1. pronunciation shibboleths, and, for English, non-conformity of written and spoken forms
- 2. mother tongue and foreign language vocabulary mismatches
- 3. especially, the prevalence and complexity of twig level structure, leading to frequent failure to gain mother tongue speaker approval for forms learners predict, usually using, what, in itself, is entirely praiseworthy analogy.

A course designer's conception of learner motivation affects the manner of presenting material for learning, and, often, teachers' responses to learner-encoding.

I accept (1) universal initial mammalian motivation, to explore, and (2) subsequent and necessary motivation from a motivation – success feedback loop:



Ethologist Konrad Lorenz (1974) adds that the exploration is "for its own sake, without regard to achievement of any consummatory state" (for which we may read "without regard to aims, objectives, goals, targets").

This account leads directly to a methodology: presentation of a "field" for successful learner exploration (scanning) to identify its prominent features, and with course design to ensure success.

I need to digress, briefly. In 1972, there arose out of a bi-lingual social context, a quite different classification of motivation, into "instrumental" and "integrative". Astonishingly, this "dichotomy" was accepted as the basis for a large amount of research.

Astonishingly, for there are inherent shortcomings.

The first shortcoming is the fictitious nature of the instrumental × integrative opposition. If "instrumental" means 'instrumental to achievement of some perceived advantage' and if integration is perceived as an advantage, then any "integrative" motivation is "instrumental", and "integrative" is, at most, a non-contrasting subclass of the latter. . .

The second shortcoming is that the originators of the classification, and subsequent researchers, take 'motivation' and 'reason' to have interchangeable designata (and in much research are treated as interchangeable words). True, statement of 'motivation' and statement of 'reason' both answer the question "Why?"; but that is all they have in common. If I give a reason for doing something, I am, in fact, unlikely to have revealed my motivation; indeed am unlikely myself to have worked out what motivated me.

To assess learners' stated reasons realistically, one must be aware that, within "bi-lingual" or "multicultural" political orthodoxies, both instrumental and integrative interpretations ("Have more chance of promotion" "Get on with native speakers of the other language") are teacher-inspired, researcher-approved responses.

Primary motivation

Where learners are expected to use edited forms, it is especially useful to have in mind the second of the sources of intrinsic motivation, the success—reward loop.

Learners' everyday mother tongue experience tells them that there

are degrees of editing, and that moving from the basic grammar of inner speech forms to the teacher-expected ones puts increasing demand on their time and effort, and decreasing reward for the time and effort.

It is unwise for teachers to compare learners' forms with the eventually expected native speaker edited versions. Instead, the motivation—reward loop requires comparison with the inner speech forms they are edited from.

Recent advocacy for "accelerated learning" gives great significance to the motivation – reward feedback loop, with a recommendation of a proportion of 30% teacher "instruction", 70% learner "activity", which I take to be exploratory and/or rewarding. I strongly believe that foreign language "instruction" should relate to organized learner exploration, and that language learning should thus enter into the mainstream of educational practice.

APPENDIX 1

have/has had stem+ed

From Kruisinga's (1960) observation that 4 - 1 forms "are really a species of present and past tense (as far as time is concerned)", one might expect his labels for them to overlap those for stem/stem+ \underline{s} and stem+ \underline{ed} (Actual, Neutral, Narrative etc.) with appropriate sub class labels. However, there is no such correspondence.

For have/has stem+ed, they are:

Perfect Present

Resultative with Future reference Continuative of Experience

and for had stem+ed:

Resultative
with Future reference, with respect to a past point of time
Continuative
of Experience
Irrealis (Modal)

Have/has stem+ed

I now classify selected Priestley–Orr <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u> occurrences, under Kruisinga's labels; suggesting the stem/stem+<u>s</u> or stem+<u>ed</u> paradigmatic counterpart each could have. There is no point in percentage breakdown of such small total occurrence figures.

		paradigmatic Alternative
PERFECT PRESENT RESULTATIVE	with this novel I've started which I suppose (Actual) has sold almost as many copies as	/ started / sold
= "FUTURE" CONTINUATIVE	We'll (Actual) wait till you've telephoned I've never lived there since 1914	/ telephone
	I haven't lived there for over fifty years	/ –
of EXPERIENCE	've been sorry ever since it's (Actual) only lately that I've had any critical attention	/ – / had
ITERATIVE	I've never written a sequel when he's finished one book he needs (Iterative) a rest	/ wrote / finishes
	at the moment when you've just finished	/ finish
	I've had a few of these the last few years	/ had
	I've been colder in winter and hotter in summer in Cambridge than in any other place in England	/ was

Table 32 Have/has stem+ed function/designata labels and examples

The examples were selected so as to include adverbial expressions which are often taken as typical accompaniers of have/has stem+ed forms. Kruisinga's "Continuative" label has no counterpart within his stem/stem+s and stem+ed description, which suggests a distinctive use. Four examples of "Iterative" use show that it is not at all unusual.

Looking for the kind of correlation grammarians suggest by their labels, one may begin by considering the contribution of each item, have/has/had and stem+ed, to such correlations.

The 'have' element, from its group initial position, is less obligatory,

i.e. potentially more information bearing, than the final -ed. On the other hand, the 'have' element is often weak-stressed, and often amalgamates with a preceding clause subject, with, apparently, only a transition/buffer function.

One asks, therefore, whether a /hav/ - /haz/ - /had/ pronunciation might show dominance of the 'have' element (thus, presumably, of an 'Actual' designatum) a /hv/ - /hz/ - /hd/ pronunciation show dominance neither way, and a /v/ - /z/ - /d/ pronunciation concede dominance to the stem+ed 'remote' designatum. I look at the Priestley–Orr statistics.

The 78 Priestley–Orr <u>have/has/had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> occurrences comprise 12 with /hav/, 2 with /hz/ and 64 with /v/ /z/ and /d/.

Unfortunately for the hypothesis, however, the pronunciations correlate, not with designata or dominance, but with local phonological features. Not only does the 'have' element amalgamate with preceding clause subjects, but, quite readily and to the point of disappearance, with any compatible initial sound of the following stem+ed form: I (v)finished it; he (s)secured it; they (d)damaged it.

Moreover, the placing of an adverb influences the form. Priestley's <u>I've never lived there</u> is marked by '<u>ve</u> and <u>never</u>, but when, elsewhere, he decides to place <u>never</u> between <u>I</u> and the 'have' item, the resulting form is not <u>I never've lived</u>, but, with additional marking, <u>I never have</u> (/hav/) <u>lived</u>. Similarly his <u>I've never written</u> and <u>I never have</u> (/hav/) <u>written</u>. One expects <u>I've not</u> and <u>I haven't solely on encoder decision to stress or not to stress not.</u>

Perhaps most grammarians postulate either extra-text criteria for use of the "Present Perfect", or criteria from adjacent text items.

There are stated sets of distinguishing features outside text occurrences, through natural time relations. Diagrammatically, a horizontal line with an arrow represents the flow of time, and a short vertical intersecting line marks the "present moment", with reference to which various points and periods, future and past, are shown. The diagram for "Present Perfect" is:

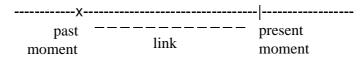


Figure 14
Diagram representation of have/has stem+-ed

Thus Christophersen and Sandved (1969) state:

"the perfect links up a past event with the present. . . It can either denote an action which began in the past and which has continued right up to the present moment, as in <u>They have lived in London for three years</u> (and are still living there) or it can represent the present state of affairs as a result of an action which began in the past as in <u>They have moved to London</u> (and as a result they are no longer living here)."

The descriptions match Kruisinga's "Continuative" and "Resultative" labels; and they have widespread acceptance.

However an unsympathetic reader may confirm that it is what the authors add in their brackets (and not the forms <u>have lived</u> and <u>have</u> moved) which they describe/described/have described.

Compare identical forms and the converse bracketed comment in They have lived in London for three years, and don't want to be transferred there again (and are **not** still living there), and They have moved to London and back no fewer than four times (and as a result are **not** still living there).

For that matter, <u>They moved to London</u> could equally match either the 'as a result are still living in London' or the 'are **not** still living there' criteria.

The diagrammatic exemplification of verb form – time relation criteria seems a good idea; but it depends on the grammarian's taking for granted a prior idea that the function of a language's verb forms is to show such relations.

Study of text shows that, through paradigms of inference, a grammarian can observe more than one time relation in the context of a single form, and can observe several forms in the context of the same time relations.

There follows from the attempted time association a criterion teachers like, namely specification for each verb form of a supposedly typical time modifier: <u>for three years</u>, <u>never</u>. . .

I now consider the supposed modifier criteria for occurrence of 4 – 1 groups, namely adjacent text modifiers. I refer to the Priestley–Orr interview text.

4 – 1 group modifiers

Here are the ratios of (Priestley-Orr text) "without modifier" to "with modifier" occurrences of (a) one-item verbs, (b) two-item and (c) three-item groups:

```
      ratio

      (a) for 575
      stem, stem+s, stem+ed forms
      4.8:1

      (b) for 78
      4-1 groups
      1:1

      (c) for 22
      5-4-1, 4-3-1, 4-2-1 groups
      1:2
```

Taking (b) as a marked form with reference to (a), and (c) as a marked form with reference to (b) and (a), one notes two facts: the rapidly diminishing frequency of occurrence with increasing degrees of verb form marking; and the increase of modifier marking with the increase of verb form marking.

Of the 99 (a) occurrences with modifiers, 97 have one-item modifiers, including:

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n't 24
never 6
just 5
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Of the 38 (b) occurrences with modifiers, 36 have one-item modifiers, including:

Of the 10 (c) occurrences with modifiers, the most frequently occurring was:

The remaining 7 included <u>always in any circumstances</u> and <u>very very frequently</u>.

Many grammarians note frequent occurrence of <u>never</u> in 4-1 groups, but considering <u>n't</u> and <u>never</u> as relatively unmarked and relatively marked negation forms, the occurrence of <u>never</u> in association with 4-1 groups illustrates a tendency, shown in the proportion of forms with and without modifiers, namely, to have relatively unmarked forms either without modifiers or associated with relatively unmarked modifiers and to have increase in verb form marking associated progressively with increasing modifier marking.

It is much the same for other traditionally associated modifiers, <u>already</u>, <u>just</u>, and so on. In texts of sufficient length, they occur more frequently, in absolute terms, with stem+<u>ed</u> than with <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u> forms, proportionately more frequently with the latter; understandably, since modifiers generally are almost five times as frequently associated with the more marked group.

For that matter, any observer of occurrence frequency of items in grammar book exemplification of 4-1 groups would certainly notice a particular grammarian association of the form with the individual verb <u>live</u>. The above examples from the interview text would confirm "Continuative" association, both with <u>live</u> and with the officially noticed <u>for</u> + 'period of time' and <u>since</u> + 'point in time'.

Nevertheless, the associations are situation dependent. As earlier noted, colleagues in Singapore do not take I've lived in Baghdad for four years. . . to imply that I am still there, or I've been in Libya since Gaddafi came to power. . . to imply more than an "Experience" relevant to some statement to follow. In a grammar of 4-1 forms working with a modest degree of detail, awareness of the without modifier – with modifier proportionate expectation is, I would say, more significant than any result of an attempt to organize inevitably variable twig level modifier usage.

A further general observation is that high frequency form occurrences tend to be evenly distributed over stretches of text, lower frequency form occurrences, on the contrary, tending to cluster. Priestley says, <u>I've never lived</u>... Only three clauses later occur consecutive <u>I've never lived</u>... <u>I've never lived</u>... clauses, and still in the same topic span, <u>I haven't lived</u>. Of Priestley's five 5–4–1 occurrences, three, all with <u>n't</u>, occur within four consecutive clauses (couldn't've earned/got/met).

Study of the Priestley-Orr text confirms a further general observation, the designatum overlap of more marked and less marked forms.

It would be improper, in observer grammar, to note occasions on which Priestley uses one form, but, in observer opinion, could have used another. It is permissible to note where Priestley actually juxtaposes forms which observer grammarians attempt to contrast:

I've never planned a career or anything. I never did plan anything.

and this \pmb{has} always \pmb{come} natural to me. . . I always \pmb{wanted} to write all sorts of things

I've described all this at considerable length in a book called margin released the first part of the book **describes** . . .

had stem+ed

The parallelism of <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u> and <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> has led grammarians to give them parallel description. Such description applies, to the extent it does apply, to the "perfective" ('completed' or 'finished') aspect implicit in certain occurrences of the form.

Redundancy in the overall <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> usage area gives native speakers room to exploit the form in ways only remotely related to the matching "perfect" specifications.

When observer grammarians account for <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> occurrences through time representations external to text, their representation is:

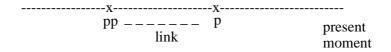


Figure 15
Diagram representation of had stem+-ed

'p' and 'pp' represent 'past' and 'previous to past' events with respect to the 'present moment'. Comparison with Figure 14 for have/has stem -ed suggests that the 'present moment' of Figure 14 corresponds with the 'p' of Figure 15; and 'past event' with 'pp'; in other words, that Figure 15 represents a "shift into the past" of the time relations of Figure 14.

A typical descriptive equivalent prescribes:

"an activity which had started before and continued up to and possibly beyond a given point of time in the Past".

The grammarian's description applies to his own use, within the description itself, of "had started before and continued up to. . .", but does not explain why had started before and continued was preferred, redundantly, to started before and continued.

Guessably, the grammarian used the form that was at that moment, briefly, in his encoder consciousness. And one has to say "briefly", for the description accompanies the fatuous specification:

"Suppose we want to say that Pedro **learned** English before he came to England. Then we use the Past Perfect Tense for the action that took place first. . . We say "Pedro **had learned** English before he came to England.""

One laughs at the particular grammarian for not noticing that his failure to follow his own specification removes credibility from it; but neither specification nor exemplification are out of the ordinary run of observer-grammarian contribution to the grammar of <u>had</u> stem+ed.

When a grammarian takes for granted that a form difference necessarily and always represents a function or designatum difference, his examples easily fall into his style of classification, to confirm his (mis)conception.

An instance of more praiseworthy observation, unfortunately also accommodated to the premise, is Skibsbye's (1965):

"The preterite (i.e. stem+<u>ed</u>) is often **substituted for** (my emphasis) the pluperfect (i.e. <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u>) when the stress is on the logical independence rather than on the temporal relation:

...<u>before Harvey's day men **thought**</u> that arterial and <u>veinous blood were separate streams</u>

Though it ended in revolution, the eighteenth century **opened** placidly. . ."

The forms thought and opened do not require explanation; they present no encoder or decoder problem. What is amiss, I fear, is the grammarian's idea of a relatively marked form as normal, and of a relatively unmarked form as substitutable for it in specified circumstances.

Since <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> occurs frequently in subordinate clauses, conjunctions associated with Figure 14 points 'pp' and 'p', e.g. <u>after</u>, <u>before</u>, <u>until</u>, are potential, within-text clues to occurrence of the form, and grammarians sometimes state them to be such.

No specific associations can be established; though there is the tendency, already noted, for marked forms to associate with marked forms. There is a case for <u>by</u> + 'a past point of time' marker: <u>By</u> midnight all the guests had <u>left</u> does not admit a stem+<u>ed</u> equivalent (but <u>By midnight the party was over does not admit a had stem+ed</u>

form).

Obviously my own observer style grammar could consider the stem+ed as the relatively unmarked and the <u>had</u> stem+ed as the relatively marked member of an opposition. I would then expect a degree of overlap of function, redundant use of the marked form, and, at points within text at which <u>had</u> stem+ed seems obligatory, <u>had</u> itself to be a clue to decoder interpretation. This observer grammar would lead directly to encoder grammar.

The encoder grammar is that text points requiring <u>had</u> as a clue to decoder interpretation are those at which the stem+<u>ed</u> form would permit the latter, perhaps momentarily, to misinterpret a message, points at which <u>had</u> would ensure the decoder interpretation the encoder wanted.

For instance, a decoder is likely to interpret successive stem+<u>ed</u> forms, from the second item on, within sequence possibilities; i.e. either the second stem+<u>ed</u> represents occurrence of a second event in a narrative, or the designata of both allow the second to refer to a circumstance attending the first (stem+<u>ed</u> "Narrative" and "Actual").

When a second, or subsequent, stem+ed occurrence cannot, from its designatum, be decoded as "Actual", there may still be no problem, as there was none with Skibsbye's examples. However, when, hearing or reading the stem+ed sequence, a decoder is likely to interpret, erroneously, a successive ed as clueing narrative continuity, an encoder inserts had as the discontinuity indication. Sometimes it is obligatory.

For instance, hearing When we reached the station the train left a decoder is likely to understand the 'reaching' and 'leaving' as successive occurrences; an encoder uses <u>had</u> (<u>had left</u>) to indicate event sequence discontinuity.

As already noted, 'discontinuity' <u>had</u> is often associated with a 'discontinuity' – indicating conjunction. Clueing event sequence discontinuity I take to be the main function of <u>had</u>. It occurs typically when a narrator accidentally (by forgetting) or deliberately (for the humour or dramatic effect of later relation) omits statement of occurrence of an event at the point of its occurrence in a sequence; to recount it later.

The Priestley-Orr text Excerpt has three instances of had stem+ed,

and an interesting instance of $\underline{\text{didn't}}$ + stem, for comparison:

Excerpt line:

8,9	but – em # e –I'd written about ten books before that – and was # h
21–3	one lot of people condemned me # because I'd written the good companions and they'd probably not even read it er
24–6	then – a great many more people condemned me because I didn't write # hh a series of good companions #

The instance in line 9 is well represented by the diagram and traditional description; and by the discontinuity clue description too. Certainly, (the publication of) The Good Companions sets a past point in time, and wrote in (but) I wrote about ten books (before that) could give a decoder the (brief) incorrect idea of subsequent books. Any potential misconception is efficiently and economically avoided by 'd written.

However, not obligatorily avoided. Suppose a listener takes (line 8) <u>but</u> to be a discontinuity indicator, and (line 9) <u>before that</u> to specify the discontinuity as one of sequence: the two could begin a clause <u>but before that</u>...: <u>but before that I wrote about ten books</u>: informants presented with this version find nothing amiss.

Condemned (line 21) is in Kruisinga's classification "Iterative" (from a lot of people's doing it) and a decoder might take wrote, from form continuity, as iterative too; 'd written confirms (publication of) The Good Companions as a single past event. There could be no objection to (line 22,3), and they probably didn't even read it referring to the one lot of people who condemned me (i.e. with both stem+ed forms Iterative); hadn't even read shows preference for form continuity, when change of form would make no significant change to a message.

<u>Condemned</u> (line 24) matches Iterative <u>condemned</u> (line 21), and both start second clauses with <u>because I</u>. . . However, <u>hadn't written</u> became optional, and encoder economy produced <u>didn't write</u>: Priestley's rejection of repeated opportunity to write another <u>The Good Companions</u> was Iterative too, and encoder economy gave priority to verb form continuity.

Form constancy is reassuring; form change, alerting; and decoders

expect alerting form change to mark encoding significance to some message element. For instance, <u>I knew you were Irish</u> is usual, from form continuity, or "concord": <u>knew... were... Are</u> would be unusual since nationality change is rare compared with nationality constancy; it would be encoder uneconomical and decoder mystifying to have a form change from <u>knew</u> to <u>are</u>, for the change would alert without reason.

<u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> and "reported speech"

In Figure 15 the intersecting "present moment" line was once at the immediately past (p) reference point; moving the line back to that point produces the Figure 14 representation of have/has stem+ed. From that observation came the observer grammarian's interpretation that had stem+ed was a "shifting back" of have/has stem+ed (or of stem+ed) "into the more distant past".

"Shifting", like "transformation", I characterize as having existence in observer, not encoder grammar, the "before shift" and "after shift" forms existing in space, not time: they are contemporaneous in that an observer knows in advance what is to "shift" to what.

"Reported speech"

The point would hardly be worth making again, except that the "shifting" interpretation of Figure 15 is part of a fictional grammar of "Reported Speech", in which, typically:

"When the Simple Past "I saw him" is reported in relation to the introduction "he said that", it takes place notionally before the past "said" and must therefore "be" Past Perfect (i.e. <u>He said that he had seen him</u>)."

The grammarian's "must" is a fiction: <u>I saw you at the fair</u> is normally reported as <u>She said she saw you at the fair</u>, or, for instance, <u>I said I saw you at the fair</u>.

<u>She said that she had seen you at the fair</u> is less, not more, acceptable, for there is no encoder/decoder reason for the form change.

Since a whole set of such "shifts" is still widely prescribed, from the same "notional" grammar, I now make an otherwise unnecessarily sustained digression to show their fictional nature:

Teacher's statement, Friday:

I'll see you here tomorrow at ten.

Bill, inattentive, to neighbour, Tom:

What's he / What'd he say?

Note:

Bill's choice of 's or 'd is likely to determine Tom's choice of says or said in reply

Tom, reporting:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 He says/said he 'll/'d meet us here tomorrow at ten.

Notes:

- 1, 3 The teacher is I to himself, to his students, he.
- 2 The <u>says</u> option is open while the said information is relevant.
- the <u>'ll</u> option is open, in the same way as the <u>says</u> option; <u>'d</u> is neutral with respect to time, its occurrence likely to be continuity-dependent on occurrence of <u>said</u> and (Bill's) <u>'d</u>.
- 5 To the teacher, Tom and Bill are <u>you</u>; to Tom and Bill, Tom and Bill are we, us.
- 6,7 <u>here</u> and <u>tomorrow</u> are still 'here' and 'tomorrow'. Tom "shifts" nothing; he states a real world situation, as it is.

Bill, reporting to mother:

1

He says/said he'll/'d meet us there tomorrow at ten.

Note:

Bill "shifts" nothing: the classroom is really (not transformationally) 'there'.

Saturday, 10.30; still no teacher; Bill complains:

1 2 3 4

He said he 'd meet us here today at ten.

Notes: Bill "shifts" nothing. 1, 2 says and 'll are no longer options. 3, 4 here is truly 'here' and today 'today'.

Bill's mother, reporting to a neighbour:

1 2 3 He said he'd meet them there today at ten.

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Notes: Bill's mother "shifts" nothing. 1 To Bill, Tom and Bill are us; To Bill's mother, Tom and Bill are them. 2, 3 To Bill's mother there is truly "there", while today is truly "today".

Monday. Tom tells the teacher:

Notes: Tom "shifts" nothing. 1, 3 For Tom, the teacher addressed is <u>you</u>. 2 The teacher's 'saying' took place on Friday. 4 'd corresponds with the teacher's '<u>ll</u> of Friday. 5 For Tom, he and his classmates are <u>us</u>. 6 The classroom in which Tom talks to the teacher is <u>here</u>.

There are, so far, no reporting "shifts"; just representation of actual circumstances. I now introduce a possibility for occurrence of <u>had</u> (stem+ed).

Neighbour reporting to his wife:

(a) is customary, for the decoder is in no doubt about the time sequence: first the teacher promised, then Bill's mother reported the promise. The fact that (a) and (b) are options means that the <u>had</u> of <u>had promised</u> performs a minor function, if any; it may slightly stress the 'promised' designatum.

"Modal" had stem+ed

A less frequent use of <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> is labelled "Modal". <u>Had</u> under this label clues discontinuity too, discontinuity between the implication of reality without it and the implication of rejected reality with it. One-clause examples are: <u>If only I'd known! Suppose I'd known!</u> Two-clause examples are: <u>I wish I'd known Had I known, I. . . If I'd known, I. . . and . . . as if I'd known.</u> All imply 'I didn't know!

Native speakers take <u>wish/wishes</u> to refer to a present designatum (present 'wish' with reference to a future situation). Thus they do not follow these forms with clauses containing a stem/stem+<u>s</u> or <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u> form. When <u>wish/wishes</u> is followed by stem+<u>ed</u>, or <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u>, there is always implied rejection of the reality of the following verb stem designatum ('know' in I wish I'd known).

Verbs similar to wish are: want expect hope suppose think intend mean anticipate presume. . . I want to go and I expect she'll come have 'wanting' and 'expecting' as 'present' encoder information at the time of utterance, the actual 'going' and 'coming' necessarily occurring (should either occur) later.

However, of the <u>had</u> in the <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> forms of these verbs (e.g. <u>I'd intended to go</u>) it can be said only that they **may** imply non-reality of the following verb stem designatum. It is possible to estimate, for these verbs, how far rejection-implication is decoder-perceived. Below is a frame into which the investigator can insert the stem form of each above listed verb:

				A	В
1	• • •	<u>ed</u>			
2	• • •	<u>didn't</u>	• • •		
3		<u>had</u>	<u>ed</u>		
4	• • •	<u>hadn't</u>	<u>ed</u>		
5	<u>Had</u>	subject	ed, subject		

Native speaker elicitees then make a set of five clauses, to fit the frame. Such a set for <u>expect</u> could be:

- 1 I expected him to win
- 2 I didn't expect him to win
- 3 I'd expected him to win
- 4 I hadn't expected him to win
- 5 Had I expected him to win, I...

Having the set of five clauses, the elicitee enters in Column A one of the signs [+] [-] or [O] to show whether he thinks each clause implies affirmation of the 'winning', rejection, or an Open opinion. When an O is entered in Column A, a corresponding place in Column B is available for the elicitee's judgment whether the likelihood of affirmation seems greater [+], or that of rejection [-], or whether neither implication is particularly indicated [O].

Entries suggest each Column A box except 5 should contain 'O', elicitees' responses depending on the situations that came to mind. For instance, both (a) and (b) below represent situations for <u>hadn't</u> expected:

- (a) (Mary's not here.) (Well) I hadn't expected her to come.
- (b) (Mary's here.) (Oh) I hadn't expected her to come.

And one notes anomalies such as that in (b) above $\underline{\text{Who}}$ substitutes easily for $\underline{\text{I}}$:

(Mary's here.) (Oh) Who hadn't expected her to come

whereas the same substitution in (a) results in incongruity:

(Mary's not here.) (Well) *Who hadn't expected her to come?

Column B entries vary from verb stem to verb stem, from person to person, and doubtless from clause to clause. Compare:

I hadn't expected it to happen

implying either 'and it didn't' or 'but it did', with:

I hadn't expected this to happen

which is more likely to imply 'but it did'.

With such low-frequency usage, one is well and truly at twig level structure, where encoder and decoder are likely to feel a need to discuss interpretation.

Stylistic exploitation of <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u>

When a formal redundancy is perceived as offering an encoder option, there is opportunity for a new convention to come into being to exploit it. Its use or non-use is then a matter of style; in the case of <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u>, a matter of edited, especially written, style. I will instance such exploitations, first in biography:

In *Mass, Length and Time* (1961), Norman Feather takes, one by one, a series of topics, <u>Moments of Force and Inertia</u>, <u>Universal Gravitation</u> etc., and at some place in his exposition selects a historical turning point in the formulation of the concept and summarizes previous theory.

When in 1685 he began... there had been much experimenting... these three had communicated their results to the Royal Society in November and December 1668... Also, in 1676, Hooke had published...

Feather's procedure causes no decoder problem.

Here is a significant stylistic exploitation of <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u>, one that is troublesome, particularly to non-native learners whose mother tongues have not developed parallel devices:

E.M. Forster (1905) writes:

"Do you chance to know whether Signor Carella is in?" he asked her.

She had just seen him go in.

How are unsophisticated readers to know that <u>She had just seen him go in</u> is not a statement of the author to them, but a report of the girl's reply; and therefore not necessarily (even unlikely to be) the truth?

Such readers are disconcerted to read, a few lines later, that Signor Carella is out

"When will he be back?" he called to Perfetta. It really was too bad. She did not know. He was away on business. He might be back this evening, he might not. He had gone to Poggibonsi.

Readers may prefer to think the girl actually uttered (the Italian for) "I've just seen him go in". However, <u>It really was too bad</u> is unlikely to represent any actually spoken words, rather Philip's feeling, translated by Forster into expression his readers might appreciate.

In the following clauses, (Mansfield 1923), a reader is not to suppose any actual speech:

- (1) The water bubbled round his legs (2) as Stanley Burnell waded out exulting. (3) First man in as usual!
- (4) He'd beaten them all again. (5) And he swooped down to souse his head and his neck.

Clauses 1 and 2 verb forms are Narrative – Actual, or Actual – Narrative, <u>as</u> working either way. The author's narrative is resumed in Clause 5 (i.e. Clauses 1, 2 and 5 are addressed to readers).

Clauses 3 and 4 elaborate <u>exulting</u>: they represent not only Stanley's "thoughts" but the mental base for them, namely that there is (real or imagined) competition to be the first person to enter the water each morning, that by being first there is status gained, and (for Stanley) justifiable pride in achieving the status.

Decoder distinction between author statement to reader and the character's "interior monologue" is essential for appreciation of the writing. A reader taking <u>He'd beaten them all again</u> literally, as a statement from the author, is disconcerted to find that Stanley "in fact" was not <u>first man in</u>. Indeed, large numbers of unsophisticated

readers of present day English fiction are repeatedly disconcerted, to the point of frustration.

Clues to decoder perception of what Kruisinga called "indirect style" show structure at twig level; the following are common:

- 1 had stem+ed
- a clause in inverted commas followed by one in which a third person pronoun refers to a second or third person context in the preceding clause
- 3 exclamation or question marks in contexts where there is no indication that words are actually spoken

Some advantages of indirect style to the encoder are:

- 1 Compression The writer does not have to write she felt, he thought, and so on. More importantly, a small scene can be depicted without need for spoken words to be "in character"; for instance, Perfetta's she did not know, he was away on business were elicited replies to questions. In a dialogue representation of the scene, the questions would have been there; Forster's indirect style freed him from obligation to provide realistic dialogue, and so to develop Perfetta's "servant" character something the novel did not need.
- Gain in contrast Direct speech from a character upon whom interest centres may alternate with indirect style for characters (like those of the girl and Perfetta) of no importance at the moment, or whose feelings are uninvolved.
- 3 The possibility of being vague Indirect style allows a writer to be imprecise about who said what and in what words, when vagueness or confusion is a feature to be communicated, for instance in an altercation.
- 4 A change of viewpoint Indirect style gives a writer the freedom to abandon his narrator's viewpoint and present the reactions, thoughts and feelings of particular characters, from "their own" viewpoint, through their personal "interior monologues".

In the section "REVISITING <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u>" (pp.171), I suggested for <u>had</u>, in literary prose, an even vaguer alerting quality suggesting 'irrealis' marking.

A caution: two features of encoder grammar

I end this section on <u>had</u> stem+<u>ed</u> in literary work stressing two features of encoder grammar.

The first is that one should not expect a grammarian to be precise about functions that an encoder does not wish anyone to be precise about; or think that imprecision is not itself functional.

There is nothing unusual when the form <u>had</u> (before stem+<u>ed</u>) serves several, sometimes overlapping, functions. A specific, but relatively minor, one is to show a time relation, i.e. to enter into a description of the "tenses". However, grammarians who attempt systemic description of the tenses do not realise that when they focus on a preconceived system they omit mention of many attributes of the forms they list.

Twig level, infrequently occurring forms often have as their chief function insertion into text of the designatum 'marking'; with more specific designata inferred according to circumstance. For text progress, indication of continuity, and discontinuity, is a major need, the former giving reassurance, the second indicating need for increased listener/reader attention. <u>Had</u> alerts a decoder to such need, then, on occasion, gives a fuzzy hint about the nature of the discontinuity, in a non-contrastive manner.

The second is that encoding takes place under time pressure, greater of course for spoken than for written text, least for fiction.

Time pressure, in proportion to its intensity, is equivalent to pressure to use forms most readily accessed at the encoder's information source. Since a resulting text comprises a small immediate population of forms within an extremely large population, there is approximate correspondence between the relative accessibility of forms for one speaker and for other speakers.

This correspondence is the basis for general frequency distribution of forms, enabling encoder and decoder to share, for instance, occurrence probability information for <u>lived</u>, <u>have/has lived</u>, <u>had lived</u>; e.g. that for each <u>have/has</u> stem+ed occurrence, there is probably one too of had stem+ed; fourteen of stem+ed.

It is a poor start to ensuring learner familiarity with English when course designers and teachers ignore, thus distort, a statistical distribution of forms. When a standard grammarian, school or university textbook presents low occurrence frequency forms in paradigmatic contrasts, it distorts text reality.

Speaking broadly, statistical information reflects the wishes of past encoders to satisfy a psychological need to distribute, within an "unrolling" text, decoder responses of 'I've been here before' and 'What's that?'. From this viewpoint, an overall statement of verb form grammar must be:

Treat all <u>am</u>, <u>are</u>, <u>is</u>, <u>was</u>, <u>were</u> occurrences as background – focus boundary marking items (with the 'be' forms as final background items).

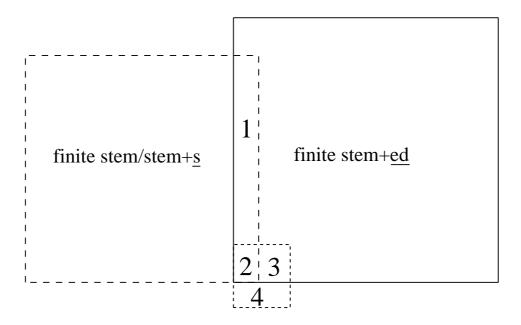
Treat all have, has, had occurrences as performing the same background – focus boundary marking function as the 'be' forms.

Treat all following verb stem forms as focus or focus-initiating items.

Treat (stem+)ing forms, when present, as adding a 'durative' designatum to the designatum of a preceding stem form. Treat ed forms, when present, as adding an 'occurrence to' or 'state resulting from' designatum to the designatum of a preceding stem form. Southeast Asian languages have corresponding "particle" or "adverb" translations.

Consider <u>have</u>, <u>has</u> forms as adding a general designatum of (translatable) 'finished'; with Kruisinga's 'resultative', 'of experience' designata implicit; only his 'continuative' function obligatory in native speaker English. Treat any <u>had</u> occurrences as narrative discontinuity markers.

We are left with the following, overall (main and vertigial) statistical representation:



- 1 optional finite stem/stem+<u>s</u> / finite stem+<u>ed</u>
- 2 optional <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u> / finite stem/stem+<u>s</u>
- 3 optional <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u> / finite stem+<u>ed</u>
- 4 obligatory <u>have/has</u> stem+<u>ed</u>

Figure 16

Occurrence frequency diagram representation of main finite verb forms

APPENDIX 2

Stress and predictability; extra information

The Miller/Colemen text referred to is:

- 1 When the Spaniards came to Colombia, *South *America, they were told of a tribe of Indians who possessed fabulous wealth. Many years before, the wife of an Indian chief had thrown herself *into a lake
- to escape punishment and *had become the goddess of the lake. Because they believed she *had the power to make *their tribe prosperous and victorious, whenever a new chief was chosen *this tribe made a grand pilgrimage to Lake Guatavita to honour the goddess
- and take her presents. First in the procession came wailing men *who bore signs of mourning for the chief who had died, and then came men decked with ornaments of gold and emeralds with feathers in their hair, then braves in jaguar *skins, then priests in black
- robes and tall caps. Finally came the nobles and chief priests, among them the new chief who rode in a barrow covered with gold discs.

Discussion

Visual inspection of the display shows general inverse predictability – stress matching. If for each word in the text both 0-5 scales were floating and numbers from 0 to 5 were issued from an external source, there would be 1 chance in 36 of any issued number occurring at the same time on both scales. However, if one considered the numbers on one scale to be pegged to "reality" in some form or other, and those on the other scale to float with respect to those valid numbers, there would be 1 chance in 6 that a number

^{*} for discussion

on the pegged scale would be matched by a number on the floating scale.

The chance that a number on the pegged scale would be matched with an adjacent number (\pm 1 scale division) averages slightly better than 1 in 3.

A first consideration may thus be the extent to which the stress scale seems to float or be pegged to "reality". The stress ratings of the three readers (R1, R2, R3) of the text coincided or approximated or diverged as follows:

	coincided:	approximated:	total:
		(± 1 division)	
R1/R2	49%	21%	70%
R1/R3	45%	17%	62%
R2/R3	45%	28%	73%
	diverged:	diverged:	total:
	(± 5 divisions)	(± 4 divisions)	
R/R2	2%	3%	5%
R1/R3	1%	6%	7%
R2/R3	1%	0%	1%

Table 33 Stress ratings from 3 readers

Clearly, the stress scale does not float, but includes a floating component, presumably from readers' personal habits and differing immediate interpretations.

With a 30% floating component, such as the figures indicate, one would expect 12% chance coincidences between the stress scale and a floating inverse predictability scale. Comparison of inverse probability (IP) and stress ratings for each reader is as follows:

coincided:	approximated:	total:
	(± 1 division)	
30%	27%	57%
30%	27%	57%
29%	25%	54%
diverged:	diverged:	total:
(± 5 divisions)	(± 4 divisions)	
7%	9%	16%
2%	7%	9%
3%	6%	9%
	30% 30% 29% diverged: (± 5 divisions) 7% 2%	(± 1 division) 30% 27% 30% 27% 29% 25% diverged: diverged: (± 5 divisions) 7% 9% 2% 7%

Table 34 Inverse predictability and stress ratings (1)

Thus, on the average, the stress ratings are closer to each other by some 12% than they are to inverse predictability ratings; and there are fewer discrepancies. However, when one sets inverse predictability ratings side by side with two or all three stress ratings simultaneously, one finds that though an individual IP rating may not match the stress rating of one reader, it may match that of another. The extent to which this is so is shown as follows:

	coincided:	approximated:	total:
		(± 1 division)	
IP/R1:R2	41%	28%	69%
IP/R1:R3	40%	31%	71%
IP/R2:R3	41%	27%	68%
IP/R1:R2:R3	49%	29%	78%

Table 35 Inverse predictability and stress ratings (2)

Clearly, the IP scale does not float either, but is substantially pegged to the stress scale, or to a "reality" underlying both; and the hypothesis is supported.

Nevertheless, there are points to note. A first comment must be on the extent of indeterminate, or floating, data. For instance, the following three words show three stress gradients and only a single stress rating coincidence (R1:R3 for <u>before</u>) among the three readers:

	Many	years	before
IP	2	0	5
R1	3	1	3
R2	2	4	5
R3	4	5	3

Table 36 Floating data

The indeterminate nature of such data tempts professional workers to ignore them; yet language features usually represent overlapping functions, and the redundancy within all communicative features and their functions permits the variety of use we actually experience.

Listener prediction stems from overall predictability of form occurrences (illustrated through frequency counts of actual past occurrences within text populations of forms) and predictability within local item sequences.

Relative frequency/infrequency in one's overall experience applies both to individual forms and to grammatical constructions. It goes together with relative ease or difficulty of encoder access to items, and to encoder wish to elicit listener responses of 'I've been here before' and 'What's that?'.

Several text items starred for discussion are items in noun groups. Considering general predictability among such items,

- i there is a good chance that a noun will occur in the stem, rather than in the stem+s form
- ii most noun groups are constituted by one or two words
- iii the stem form of a count noun is unlikely to occur without a preceding deictic item
- iv the and \underline{a} are the most likely "deictic" items.

This kind of general grammatical sequence predictability is part of a native speaker's 'I've been here before' background awareness to text encoding and decoding.

The stress – inverse predictability association is supported by the ratings (in the order IP–R1–R2–R3) for the Spaniards: 04, 03, 03, 04, and for the procession: 03, 03, 05; the wife, the goddess, the chief, the nobles showed similar rating sequences; as did, in non-

retrospective contexts, <u>a tribe</u>, <u>a lake</u>, <u>a barrow</u>. However, when the encoder chose the generally and locally less frequent <u>their</u> (line 6) and <u>this</u> (line 7), prediction of these items became unlikely, and thus inverse predictability and stress ratings for <u>their tribe</u> and <u>this tribe</u> were towards opposite ends of their scales: 51, 05, 12, 02; and 52, 04, 34, 13 respectively.

On the display and in the tabulations of coincidences and divergences, such instances appear to run counter to the hypotheses. In fact, though, the tribe could substitute for both their tribe and this tribe; however, a text would be dull indeed were item sequences entirely an 'I've been here before' experience: but, it is on the basis of 'I've been here before' experience that 'What's that?' becomes possible.

Since the group constructions, adjective + head word, and deictic + adjective + head word, have far lower occurrence probabilities than the formally simpler, head word, and deictic + head word, the adjective should have a high IP rating; and since there is high probability that the word to follow an adjective will be the group head word, the latter should have a lower IP rating than the adjective.

However, on this general grammatical-statistical foundation of predictability, particular instances work out according to the semantic predictability of each item. In some groups, an adjective makes the noun predictable; in others, the noun remains unpredictable: compare <u>priests in black</u>. . . followed by <u>robes</u> and covered with gold. . . followed by the much less predictable discs.

Text ratings suggest, but cannot do more than suggest, an underlying formal (grammatical) factor in predictability and stress. <u>Fabulous wealth</u> scored (IP–R–R2–R3) 55, 55, 53, 42. Whereas <u>the chief scored 24, 04, 01, 02, the new chief</u> was accorded 241, 053, 033, 053; and <u>a grand pilgrimage</u> produced 054, 044, 044, 054. After <u>braves in jaguar</u>. ..' <u>skins</u> is really the only possibility, and <u>jaguar skins</u> received the ratings 51, 45, 51, 42.

Somewhat similarly, after <u>Colombia</u>, <u>South</u> the word <u>America</u> is completely predictable; yet retained considerable part of the stress it would have when occurring alone. The anomaly disappears when <u>South America</u> is taken to be a single name; the total stress then makes a good fit with the IP rating. The anomaly and its resolution

apply to many occurrences of compound nouns.

Comparing noun group and traditional grammarian-style verb group construction, one sees that the semantic element plays a greater role in predictability of item sequence in noun groups, the initial item performing almost solely the grammatical role earlier suggested.

<u>Had</u> in <u>had thrown</u> shows the following ratings (for IP, R1, R2, R3): 0,0,0,0. <u>Had</u> in <u>had died</u> shows: 0, 0, 0, 1. In such cases, <u>had</u> has a grammatical (clue) function, and in a cloze context (in which the reader can see the following stem+<u>ed</u> form), is predictable and receives minimum stress. However, <u>had</u> in <u>had become</u> shows: 0, 4, 2, 0. Reader 1 gives strong stress to <u>had</u> and Reader 2 definite though less stress. <u>Had</u> in <u>had the power</u> shows: 1, 5, 2, 1. The overall step-up in the ratings may be attributed to a small semantic value <u>have</u> may get as a "full verb", but Reader 1 may be one of those persons who nowadays do stress modals or auxiliary items in verb groups.

One observes, too, that in <u>wailing men who bore signs of mourning</u>, Reader 1 gives maximum stress to <u>who</u>: 0, 5, 0, 0. The same reader shows an aberration, to exactly the same extent (0, 5, 0, 0) with the preposition <u>into</u>. And certainly the "rule" prescribing small or no stress on prepositions in preposition groups is sometimes broken in a regular way in some geographical and social varieties of English.

One could guess that, in certain contexts, whole groups are predictable from occurrence of the first group item, and that the stressed preposition is then a sufficient signal for the whole group sequence, thus acquires the main stress: 'from the 'B 'B 'C London'. Nevertheless, assuming earlier recorders transcribed typical performance, there seems to be, in formal speech contexts, a tendency for more speakers to read like Reader 1, i.e. stressing prepositions in preposition groups, relative pronouns and modal or auxiliary items in verb groups. One seems to have here a small confirmation of the Prague School statement that languages are unstable systems.

If one accepts that word stress is inversely proportional to predictability, one expects general correspondence of distribution of word stress with distribution of information within unmarked statement clauses, namely, low stress rating background information followed by high stress rating clause focus.

This should be so, from the nature of background and focus. Background typically includes specific retrospective items i.e. referring to items within encoder—decoder shared information and memory spans ensuring mental juxtapositions. The most frequently occurring retrospective items are pronouns, and to avoid ambiguity of reference across a clause—clause boundary have to occur early in the second clause. Focus, on the other hand, realizes encoder intention for his clause to communicate information supposedly so far unknown to the decoder.

The passage confirms the expectation that focus constituents have high stress ratings: here are those of Reader 1 for what I have considered to be focus constituents:

	5	5	5		
1	Colombia	South	America		
	5	4			
2	a tribe	of Indians			
	5	5			
3	fabulous	wealth			
	4				
4	a lake				
	5				
5	punishment				
	5	5			
6	goddess	of the lake			
	3				
7	the power				
	5	4			
8	prosperous	and victorious			
	4				
9	was chosen				
	5	5	3	5	
10	a grand	pilgrimage	to Lake	Guatavita	
	5				
11	the goddess				
	5				
12	presents				
	3				
13	procession				
	4	3	3		
14	came	wailing	men		
	4	4	3		
15	bore	signs	of mourning		
	5				
16	had died				
	4	3			
17	gold	and emeralds			
	4	4			
18	feathers	in their hair			
	4	5			
19	braves	in jaguar skins			
	3	4	4	0	4
20	priests	in black	robes	and tall	caps
2.1	4	3	4	5	
21	came	the nobles	and chief	priests	
22	3	5			
22	the new	chief			
22	3				
23	a barrow	_			
24	0	5 diana			
24	gold 4	discs			
25					
25	the chief				

Table 37
Focus stress

The list has a point of methodological interest: the inference that perception of a stressed item as a focus has also determined perception of a "clause".

An interesting factual observation is that the stress ratings for focus items 1 - 12 are higher than those for items 13 - 25. Items 1 - 12 include 21 stressed words, 4 with a 4-rank, 15 of them with a 5-rank. Items 13 - 25 include 30 stressed words, 13 with a 4-rank, 6 with a 5-rank.

There could be local reasons for the lower focus item stress: the text got less interesting, the reader got tired. A linguistic interpretation would be in terms of tension between grammar convention, that in clause statements subject precedes verb, and the encoder's wish for marked functional perspective, i.e. one in which the particular "subject" has final position (focus) status.

In most spoken language contexts, focus status can be conferred through exceptional word stress. In a smaller number, the encoder may be able to use focus-shifting "formal" <u>it</u> and <u>there</u>. In a still smaller number of instances, a strong stressed first item of a verb group may precede the clause subject (<u>Should the President call</u>, . . .). Then there are a small number of clauses beginning with strong stressed adjuncts which one of a very small number of verbs may follow (<u>Before them rose the mountain range</u>), and, from the text,

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Firstcamemen who. . .thencamemen decked in . . .thenbraves. . .thenpriests. . .Finally camethe nobles. . .
```

It may be that the very marked clause constituent order of the second half of the text reduced the need for stress ratings equal to those of the focus items in the unmarked constituent orders of the clauses in the first half. In any event, interaction is probable.

From the viewpoint of millions of speakers of syllable timed English, native speaker word and clause stress may be classed as redundant features in the communication of information, successful communication validating their viewpoint.

It is interesting, therefore, to see how native speaker texts show to a major degree constraint, to a minor degree freedom, in exploitation of the features of stress predictability (thus decoder 'I've been here before' and 'What's that?' responses). It is interesting, too, to see how word and clause stress correlates with, or sets up tension within the essentially grammatical function of distributing decoder attention to information.

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