Unit 5 (a)

Transitivity

Clause as representation – 'construing' experience

Grammar presentation given on 05.xii.2017

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4. To learn an alternative, more general classification of types of participants.
5. To learn the types of circumstances that the grammar of English recognizes.

Grammar as a theory of reality

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6. English construes these two situations totally differently – it doesn't "see" the similarity.
7. The grammar of a natural human language is a collective, unconscious theory of reality.
8. Can some interpretations of reality be 'more successful' than others?

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- Circumstance –> adverbial group or prepositional phrase (in the sky).

Interpersonal and experiential structure compared

Mood		Residue
Subject	Finite	Predicator

it   is   raining

Process

Mood		Residue	
Subject	Finite	Predicator	Adjunct

birds   are   flying   in the sky

Participant	Process	Circumstance

The grammar of experience: types of process in English

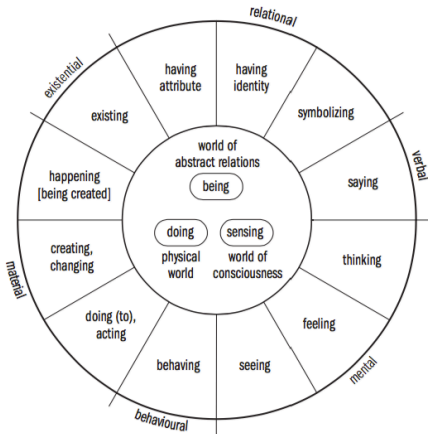- See page 1 of your three-page handout.

Fig. 5-2   The grammar of experience: types of process in English

The circle of process types

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- Main types of process: doing — sensing — being.

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- Main types of process: doing — sensing — being.
- In-between types of process: behaving — saying — existing.
- Together they form a complete circle, with 'existing' flowing into 'happening'.
- Meteorological processes (e.g. "it's raining") are a special subtype of 'happening' material processes.

The system of PROCESS TYPE, with primary participant(s) of each type

- See page 1 of your three-page handout.
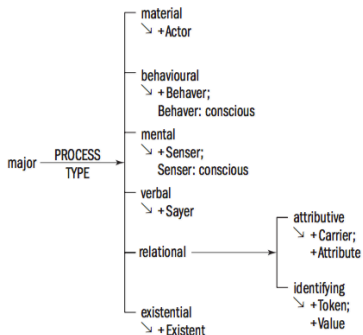
Fig. 5-3   TRANSITIVITY represented as system network

Process types in English are *cryptotypes*

- Process types in English are 'cryptotypes'.

Table 5(8) Unmarked present tense with material and mental processes

	present	present in present
material	[marked] they build a house (for every employee) [habitual; generalized]	[unmarked] they're building a house
mental	[unmarked] I know the city	[marked] I'm knowing the city (for the first time) [inceptive]

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- Cryptotypes are 'covert' semantic categories that have no explicit 'mark' – you can't recognize them. (Is "think" really a mental process? – In a moment we'll find out.)

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- We'll use *both* groups of labels (e.g. both 'Actor' and 'Agent').

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- This is a 'technological-magical' theory of reality.
- English uses both theories in modelling processes, so we'll use both (more specific) **transitive** labelling (Actor, Goal, Recipient; Senser, Phenomenon; etc.) and (more general) **ergative** labelling (Medium, Agent, Beneficiary, Range).

Transitive and ergative participant labelling

Table 5(41) Table of transitivity functions, showing transitive and ergative equivalents (participant functions only)

	Typical preposition	Ergative function	Transitive function						
			material	behavioural	mental	verbal	relational: attributive	relational: identifying	existential
process	–	1 Process							
participants		2 Medium	Actor [mid.]; Actor or Goal [eff.]	Behaver	Senser	Sayer [mid.]; Target [eff.]	Carrier	Token	Existent
	by	3 Agent	Initiator or Actor [eff.]	–	Phenomenon ['please']	Sayer [eff.]	Attributor	Assigner	–
	to, for	4 Beneficiary	Recipient; Client	–	–	Receiver	(Beneficiary)		–
	at, on, &c.	5 Range	Scope	Behaviour	Phenomenon ['like']	Verbiage	Attribute	Value	–
circum-stances	for; over, across, &c.	6 Extent	duration, frequency (temporal), distance (spatial)				how long? how far? how often?		
	at, in, on, from, &c.	7 Location	time (temporal), place (spatial)				when? where?		
	with, by, like	8 Manner	means, quality, comparison, degree				how? what with? in what way? like what? to what extent?		
	through, for, &c.	9 Cause	reason, purpose, behalf				why? what for? who for?		
	in case of, &c.	10 Contin-gency	condition, concession, default				under what conditions?		
	with, besides, &c.	11 Accom-paniment	comitation, addition				who/what with? who/what else?		
	as, into, &c.	12 Role	guise, product				what as? what into?		

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- See page 2 of your three-page handout.

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Transitivity/ergativity produces nuclear, not linear structures (1)

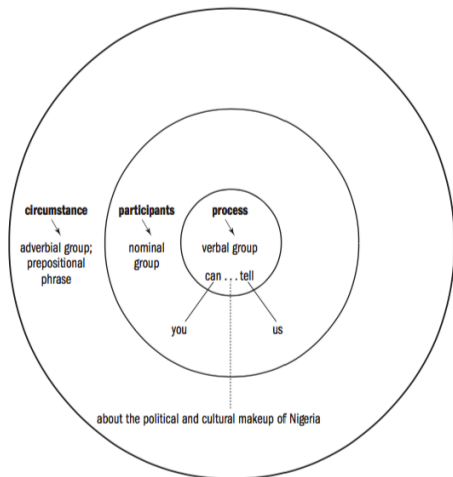- See page 2 of your three-page handout.

Fig. 5-4   Central and peripheral elements in the experiential structure of the clause

Transitivity/ergativity produces nuclear, not linear structures (2)

- See page 3 of your three-page handout.
- Medium and Process are very closely related (lexical collocation!!)
- Agent is like Manner, Beneficiary is like Cause, Range is like Extent.
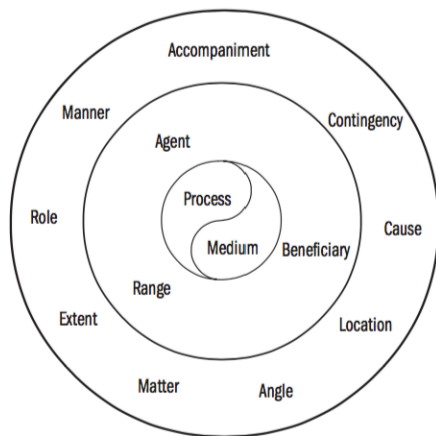

Fig. 5-38   Clause nucleus of Process + Medium, inner ring of Agent, Beneficiary and

Transitivity/ergativity produces nuclear, not linear structures (3)

- See page 3 of your three-page handout.
- Agent, Beneficiary, and Range can be expressed as prepositional phrases.

Table 5(44) Association of prepositional phrase with textual prominence

	non-prominent	marked Theme	'late news'
Agent (her nephew)	her nephew sent her flowers	by her nephew she was sent flowers	she was sent flowers by her nephew
Beneficiary (his aunt)	he sent his aunt flowers	to his aunt he sent flowers	he sent flowers to his aunt
Range (the high jump)	John wins the high jump every time	at the high jump John wins every time	John wins every time at the high jump

There are grammatical criteria for distinguishing process types

Table 5(45) Criteria for distinguishing process types

	material		behav.	mental		verbal	relational		existential
							attributive	identifying	
Category meaning	doing (doing, happening, doing to/with)		behaving	sensing		saying	being (attribute)	being (identity)	being (existence)
Number of inherent participants:	1 or 2		1	2		1	1	2	1 or 0
Nature of first participant:	thing		conscious thing	conscious thing		symbol source	thing or fact	thing or fact	thing or fact
Nature of second participant:	thing			thing or fact				[same as 1st]	
Ability to project:	–		–	projection of ideas		projection of locations	–	–	–
Directionality:	one way		one way	two way: phase type	like type	one way	one way	one way	one way
Voice:	middle or effective		middle	effective	middle	middle or effective [target type]	middle or effective	middle or effective	middle
Type of receptive:		receptive		receptive	medio-receptive			receptive	
Pro-verb:	do	do to/with	do	(do to)					
Unmarked present tense:	present in present		present in present	simple present		simple present	simple present	simple present	simple present
Accentuation of verb:	accented		accented	accented	(either)	(either)	unaccented	unaccented	unaccented

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Ability to project:	–		–	projection of ideas		projection of locutions	–	–	–
Directionality:	one way		one way	two way; phase type	like type	one way	one way	one way	one way
Voice:	middle or effective		middle	effective	middle	middle or effective [target type]	middle or effective	middle or effective	middle
Type of receptive:		receptive		receptive	medio-receptive			receptive	
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Unmarked present tense:	present in present		present in present	simple present		simple present	simple present	simple present	simple present
Accentuation of verb:	accented		accented	accented	(either)	(either)	unaccented	unaccented	unaccented

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- See page 3 of your three-page handout.
- What are you doing ('right now')? (present-in-present tense → material process)

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Voice	middle or effective		middle	effective		middle	middle or effective [target type]	middle or effective	middle or effective	middle
Type of receptive		receptive		receptive		medio-receptive			receptive	
Pro-verb	do	do to/with	do	(do to)						
Unmarked present tense	present in present		present in present	simple present		simple present		simple present	simple present	simple present
Accentuation of verb	accented		accented	accented		(either)		(either)	unaccented	unaccented

There are grammatical criteria for distinguishing process types

- See page 3 of your three-page handout.
- What are you doing ('right now')? (present-in-present tense → material process)
- Quiet! I'm thinking! (present-in-present tense → material (or behavioural?))

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Nature of second participant:	thing			thing or fact				[same as 1st]	
Ability to project:	–		–	projection of ideas		projection of locations	–	–	–
Directionality:	one way		one way	two way: phase type	like type	one way	one way	one way	one way
Voice:	middle or effective		middle	effective	middle	middle or effective [target type]	middle or effective	middle or effective	middle
Type of receptive:		receptive		receptive	medio-receptive			receptive	
Pro-verb:	do	do to/with	do	(do to)					
Unmarked present tense:	present in present		present in present	simple present		simple present	simple present	simple present	simple present
Accentuation of verb:	accented		accented	accented	(either)	(either)	unaccented	unaccented	unaccented

There are grammatical criteria for distinguishing process types

- See page 3 of your three-page handout.
- What are you doing ('right now')? (present-in-present tense → material process)
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Table 5(45) Criteria for distinguishing process types

	material		behav.	mental		verbal	relational		existential
							attributive	identifying	
Category meaning:	doing (doing, happening, doing to/with)		behaving	sensing		saying	being (attribute)	being (identity)	being (existence)
Number of inherent participants:	1 or 2		1	2		1	1	2	1 or 0
Nature of first participant:	thing		conscious thing	conscious thing		symbol source	thing or fact	thing or fact	thing or fact
Nature of second participant:	thing			thing or fact				[same as 1st]	
Ability to project:	–		–	projection of ideas		projection of locations	–	–	–
Directionality:	one way		one way	two way: phase type	like type	one way	one way	one way	one way
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- It's not JUST a question of what you think a clause means... you need firm grammatical evidence!

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- We'll try to get as far as mental and maybe even verbal processes.

Homework

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- Your homework for next week is to go through the twelve-page handout again.
  In case you missed the class, that handout is also available here:
  `http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/grammar/`
  `questions05a/index.pdf`

- The three-page handout is available here:
  `http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/grammar/`
  `unit05a/handout_5a.pdf`

Acknowledgements, further reading, other sources