

[Grammar] Mood Tags

An overview

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17 frimaire CCXXIX / 7 December 2020

PRINTOUT AVAILABLE AT: [http://www.spence.saar.de/
/courses/grammar/unit04a/moodtags-druck.pdf](http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/grammar/unit04a/moodtags-druck.pdf)



Figure: A gazebo is a pavilion structure commonly found in parks, gardens, and spacious public areas. Gazebos are freestanding, roofed, and open on all sides; they provide shade, basic shelter, ornamental features in a landscape, and a place to rest. — Wikipedia

Overview

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Feedback

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Mood		Residue	
Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement

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 - “You didn’t INTEND to kill him, did you?”

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- A way of inviting your addressee to respond to what you are saying
- A way of letting your addressee know what response you expect (!)
 - “You didn’t INTEND to kill him, did you?”
 - —“NO!”

Comparison with French and German mood tags

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- English:
 - ... , didn't you?
 - ... , have they?
 - ... , shall we?
 - ... , won't he? (etc. etc. etc.)

Variables and problems: Summary

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- **SPEECH FUNCTION**

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 - rising?
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 - the **Polarity**

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- Example:
 - “Shall I build you a gazebo?”
 - is grammatically ‘interrogative’, but
 - is really an Offer (Response: “Oh yes please!”), not a Question (*Response: * “Yes you shall.”)
- Always identify the underlying speech function!!

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 - No one rang while I was out, did **they**?
 - what about “there”?

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- Choose the right TagFinite (PROCESS TYPE? TENSE?)
- Identify the real Polarity (be careful with those special adverbs and with those 'metaphorical' expressions of MODALITY!)

Feedback

- Did you find this treatment of Mood Tags useful?
 - was it too simple?
 - was it too abstract?
- Did you find the use of data-projector slides as a teaching medium useful?
 - was the experience too “passive”?
 - could the same results have been achieved using other means?