

Introduction to Pattern Grammar

Outline

- The lexis-grammar interface
- A word and its patterns; a pattern and its words
- The Grammar Patterns books and on-line resource

A generative grammar view

- “Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.”
- A sharp distinction between syntax and the lexicon.

A systemic-functional view

- Lexis as the most delicate grammar (e.g. Hasan 1987/1996).
- Material: action: disposal: acquisition:
iterative: unitary → *GATHER*
- Material: action: disposal: acquisition:
iterative: neutral: unmarked → *COLLECT*
- Material: action: disposal: acquisition:
iterative: neutral: +vast → *ACCUMULATE*

A cognitive view

- ‘Cognitive linguistics does not accept the sharp distinction made in generative grammar between syntax and the lexicon.’
- ‘Rather, it contends that syntax and the lexicon form a continuum of constructions ranging from very specific elements (e.g. *cat*, *kick the bucket*) to increasingly more general patterns (e.g. noun, transitive construction).’

(Broccias 2006)

Sinclair's view

- 'Is it wise to divide language patterning into grammar and something else ... before considering the possibility of co-ordinated choice?'
- (Sinclair 1991)

Syntax and lexis

- ‘Is it wise to divide language patterning into grammar and something else (be it lexis or semantics or both) before considering the possibility of co-ordinated choice?’
- (Sinclair 1991)

Form and function

- 'All levels of grammatical analysis involve constructions: learned pairings of form with semantic or discourse function.'
- (Goldberg 2006)

Form and meaning

- ‘Soon it was realized that form could actually be a determiner of meaning, and a causal connection was postulated, inviting arguments from form to meaning. Then a conceptual adjustment was made, with the realization that the choice of a meaning, anywhere in a text, must have a profound effect on the surrounding choices...’
- ‘There is ultimately no distinction between form and meaning.’
- (Sinclair 1991)

Pattern Grammar

A word and its patterns

- ...to ensure that we get every **possible** bit of information...
- ...it has been **possible** to identify the silk as coming from...
- ...get back on track as quickly as **possible**...
- ...this made an interest-rate cut **possible**
- It is **possible** that this happened when...
- Fishing is **possible** in virtually any weather...
- ...turned out to be the worst **possible** time.
- ...was taken to A&E, the best place **possible**.

More words with the patterns

- ...to ensure that we get every **possible** bit of information...
- ...every available bit...
- ...every conceivable bit...
- ...every last bit...
- ...every possible bit...
- ...every single bit...

- ...it has been **possible** to identify the silk as coming from...
- ...it will be easier to run...
- ...it's hard to see...
- ...it's very difficult to know...
- ...it was impossible to prove...

- ...this made an interest-rate cut **possible**
- ...have made the track safer...
- ...made a decision inevitable...
- ...made a mum physically ill...
- ...made a normal birth impossible...
- ...made inarticulate people eloquent...
- ...made a complex task manageable...
- ...made the task tougher...
- ...made the situation worse...
- ...made the day special...
- ...made the city famous...
- ...made the task easier...

- It is **possible** that this happened when...
- ...it is unlikely that we will have...
- ...it is inconceivable that the King...
- ...it is likely that in the future...
- ...it is certain that proper growth...
- ...it is clear that it is much easier...
- ...it was obvious that something...

- Fishing is **possible** in virtually any weather...
- ...support is essential...
- ...arguments are inevitable...
- ...a fix on the sun is crucial...
- ...the meaning is uncertain...
- ...the outlook is hopeful...
- ...the vaccine is effective...

- ...turned out to be the worst **possible** time.
- ...the best available price...
- ...the worst conceivable accident...
- ...the worst imaginable insult...
- ...the best obtainable system...

- ...was taken to A&E, the best place **possible**.
- ...the best textbook available...
- ...the worst news imaginable...

Unique use

- ...get back on track as quickly as **possible**...

Pattern Grammar: coding

- Grammar coding for Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (1995)
- Simple, transparent, flexible
- *Sara tried hard to build up her daughter-in-law's strength, to prepare her for motherhood.*
- *Sarah tried hard to build...*
 - TRY: **V to-inf**
- *to build up her daughter's strength...*
 - BUILD UP: **V P n**
- *to prepare her for motherhood...*
 - PREPARE: **V n for n.**

Pattern coding: adjective

- *...we can't be **certain** about religion*
 - v-link ADJ *about* n
- *He was not **certain** of failure*
 - v-link ADJ *of* n
- *I am **certain** that some of my readers...*
 - v-link ADJ *that*
- *it is already **certain** that the two transitional years...*
 - *it* v-link ADJ *that*
- *MPs are **certain** to insist on...*
 - v-link ADJ *to-inf*

Pattern coding: noun

- *Perhaps he'd follow her **suggestion** of a stroll to the river.*
 - **N of n**
- *I have lots of **suggestions** for the park's future.*
 - **N for n**
- *We reject any **suggestions** that the law needs amending.*
 - **N that**

Pattern coding: verb

- *He **suggested** a link between class size and test results.*
 - V n
- *I **suggest** you ask him some questions about...*
 - V that
- *I **suggested** to Mike that we go for a meal...*
 - V to n that
- *No one **has suggested** how this might occur*
 - V wh
- *I **suggested** taking her out to dinner...*
 - V -ing

A pattern and its words: Pattern and Meaning

- **V n *for* n / ing**
- The 'buy' group (i.e. do something for the benefit of someone)
 - book; bring; buy; carve; collect; cook; do; fetch; find; fix; forge; get; knit; leave; make; order; play; pour; prepare; prescribe; raise; secure; wangle; write.
- The 'exchange' group
 - barter; exchange; mistake; substitute; swap; trade; trade off.
- The 'ask' group
 - ask; beg; beseech; implore; importune; pester; press; pressure; pump; tap; touch.

...continued...

- The 'praise' group
 - accept; acclaim; admire; applaud; commend; congratulate; laud; praise.
- The 'condemn' group
 - admonish; attack; berate; blame; castigate; censure; chide; condemn; criticize; despise; (not) fault; rap; reprimand; reproach; scold; slam; slate; upbraid; vilify; tell off; tick off.
- The 'reward and punish' group
 - arraign; arrest; commit; compensate; console; excuse; execute; forgive; indict; prosecute; punish; recompense; remember; report; reward; sue; thank; try; want; haul up; pay back.

...continued...

- The 'leave' group
 - desert; forsake; leave.
- The 'prepare' group
 - brace; clear; equip; fit; free; gird; groom; intend; prepare; prime; qualify; ready; revise; score; steel; train; transcribe; fit out; put up.
- The 'select' group
 - audition; choose; interview; nominate; recommend; recruit; seek; select; shortlist; pass over; rope in; single out.
- The 'pay' group
 - ask; bill; charge; pay; reimburse; cough up; fork out; pay out; shell out.

...continued

- The 'allocate' group
 - allocate; allow; budget; commit; designate; earmark; reserve; vote.
- The 'schedule' group
 - reschedule; schedule; slate; time.
- The 'search' group
 - comb; explore; scan; scour; scout; search.

Grammar Patterns on-line

- Use the Chrome browser.
 - <https://hcd.demo.idm.fr/dictionary/grammar>
 - Login: Grammar
 - Password: Summer_17
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- From the University of Birmingham website (verbs only):
 - arts-ccr-002.bham.ac.uk/ccr/patgram/

HANDS-ON

1. Match the pattern to the example. Identify the pattern elements.
2. Find the pattern in the on-line resource.
3. Find the meaning group in the on-line resource.

The examples

1. Carter **is remembered** as the president who...
2. He **is still recuperating** from his operation.
3. He tried to **frighten** people into doing what he wanted.
4. He was met at the **airport**...
5. I **noticed** that a pane of glass was missing.
6. It **was decided** to place her with a foster family.
7. People can develop a natural **immunity** to malaria...
8. She could understand his **unwillingness** to share his room.
9. Their **fear** is that the ship could break apart.
10. Wool carpets may increase the **risk** of asthma in children.

The patterns

- a) *at* N
- b) N *of* n
- c) N to-inf
- d) N *to* n
- e) poss N *be* that
- f) *it be* V-ed to-inf
- g) V *from* n
- h) V n *as* n
- i) V n *into* -ing
- j) V that

The answers

1. Carter is remembered as the president who...	V n as n
2. He is recuperating from his operation	V from n
3. He frightened people into doing what he wanted	V n into -ing
4. He was met at the airport	at N
5. I noticed that a pane of glass...	V that
6. It was decided to place her...	it be V-ed to-inf
7. ...a natural immunity to malaria...	N to n
8. ...his unwillingness to share his room	N to-inf
9. Their fear is that the ship...	poss N be that
10. ...may increase the risk of asthma...	N of n

The answers

1. Carter <u>is remembered</u> as the president who...	V n <i>as</i> n
2. He <u>is recuperating</u> from his operation	V <i>from</i> n
3. He <u>frightened</u> people into doing what he wanted	V n <i>into</i> -ing
4. He was met <u>at the airport</u>	<i>at</i> N
5. I <u>noticed</u> that a pane of glass...	V that
6. It <u>was decided</u> to place her...	<i>it be</i> V-ed to-inf
7. ...a natural <u>immunity</u> to malaria...	N <i>to</i> n
8. ...his <u>unwillingness</u> to share his room	N to-inf
9. Their <u>fear</u> is that the ship...	poss N <i>be</i> that
10. ...may increase the <u>risk</u> of asthma...	N <i>of</i> n