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 $\rightarrow$ GATHER

• Material: action: disposal: acquisition: iterative: neutral: unmarked $\rightarrow$ COLLECT

• Material: action: disposal: acquisition: iterative: neutral: +vast $\rightarrow$ 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 wide 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 AJD 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

• \textit{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.
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

• 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*<sub>inf</sub>
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*
1. Carter **is remembered** as the president who...  
2. He **is recuperating** from his operation  
3. He **frightened** people into doing what he wanted  
4. He was met at the **airport**  
5. I **noticed** that a pane of glass...  
6. It **was decided** to place her...  
7. ...a natural **immunity** to malaria...  
8. ...his **unwillingness** to share his room  
9. Their **fear** is that the ship...  
10. ...may increase the **risk** of asthma...
The answers

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