1. What is the grammar of a language?
2. Content of grammars
3. Different kinds of grammars
4. Structure of grammars
5. Collecting words and sentences for a grammar
6. Collecting texts for a grammar

1. What is the grammar of a language?

The box-model:

- Phonetics
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Lexicon

grammar book
dictionary
Lexicon: arbitrary, idiosyncratic form-meaning pairings

Grammar: form-meaning pairings that are governed by rules

What goes into the dictionary?
What goes into the grammar book?

2. The content and size of grammars (grammar books)

depends on:
1. the structure of the language (Esperanto vs. Russian)
2. choice of variety/varieties
3. available primary and secondary data
4. the writers’ competence of the language
5. the writers’ training and interests
6. the prospective users and the intended purpose
7. money, staff and time

>> different kinds of grammars

What goes into the grammar book and what into the dictionary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>grammar-book</th>
<th>dictionary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>classification of words</td>
<td>words (lexemes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>productive word formation rules</td>
<td>irregular inflectional forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inflectional rules and paradigms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grammatical constructions</td>
<td>information on the usage of words in grammatical constructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on phrase, clause, sentence level and beyond</td>
<td>(word classes and their subclasses)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Different kinds of grammars

Who is the grammar book written for?

- native speakers / foreign language learners
- children / adults
- students / school teachers / linguists

What is the grammar book written for?
- teaching
- reference for the general public
- reference for linguists

In what kind of theoretical framework is it written?
The reference grammar
is a scientific grammar that can be used as a basis for:

➢ further research on the language
➢ comparative typological or historical research
➢ the development of pedagogical grammars
➢ other educational materials

4.1 Form & meaning – two approaches

Grammar: predictable, regular form-meaning pairings

But there is no 1:1 relationship between
FORM and MEANING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 The structure of reference grammars

4.1 Form & meaning – two approaches

4.2 The onomasiological approach

4.3 The sequence of chapters in a semasiological grammar

MORPHOSYNTACTIC FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>SVO (declarative) clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>AUX SVO (interrogative) cl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>VO (imperative) clause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MEANING

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>command</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>X closed the door.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Did X close the door?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Close the door!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X closed the door?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You close the door.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will close the door.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you close the door?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two perspectives in describing grammar:

1. FORM > MEANING (semasiological)
   the hearer’s perspective
2. MEANING > FORM (onomasiological)
   the speaker’s perspective

1. What does FORM X express?
   What does a SVO-clause express?
   - statement, question, command
2. How is the MEANING X expressed?
   How is a command expressed?
   declarative, interrogative, imperative

Terminology
Strictly distinguish between
- terms for formal categories (noun, subject)
- terms for word classes (e.g. noun, verb, adjective ...)
- terms for syntactic functions (e.g. adjunct, attribute)
- terms for extra-linguistic concepts (e.g. ‘human being’)

Never say anything like:
* “here the noun functions as an adjective”
* “if the argument is a human being, …”

Workflow
(1) FORM > MEANING (semasiological approach)
Identify and describe:
1. wordforms (inflection and derivations) and
   the grammatical categories and meanings they express
2. constructions (phrases; clauses) and
   their syntactic functions in larger linguistic units
3. the meaning of constructions

(2) MEANING > FORM:
1. select a particular meaning (semantic category),
2. describe the various means of expression for this meaning
3. try to find rules and principles
   that govern the selection of expressions

Example:
   negation in English:
   determiner: no
   pronouns: nobody, nothing, none
   particle not
   prefixes: un-, in-
4.2 The onomasiological approach

Example: Negation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Oceanic languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>determiner</td>
<td>+ no</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pronoun</td>
<td>+ nobody</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle</td>
<td>+ not</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interjection</td>
<td>+ no</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prefix</td>
<td>+ un-, in-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suffix</td>
<td>+ -less</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>existential verb</td>
<td>- ('there is not')</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possessive verb</td>
<td>+ lack</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verb of command</td>
<td>- ('don’t')</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Negation verbs in Samoan

1. **E leai se tupe.**
   TAM not.exist any money
   ‘There is no money.’

2. **E leai sa’u tupe.**
   TAM not.exist my money
   ‘I don’t have any money.’

3. **‘Aua le tagil**
   don’t ART cry
   Don’t cry!

4.3 The sequence of chapters

1. Introduction
2. Phonology and orthography
3. Word classes and their morphology
4. Types of phrases and their structure
5. Types of clauses and their structure
6. Complex sentences
7. Discourse

5 Collecting words and sentences for a grammar: elicitation

1. **Wordlists**
   method of active eliciting

2. **Clauses**
   the ‘word-to-text technique’ (Samarin 1967)

3. **Non-translational supplementary elicitation**
   substitution
   paraphrasing
   sentence completion
6 Text collection – corpus building

6.1 Recorded speech vs. written edited texts
6.2 Grammatical variation across genres
   1. Legends
   2. Encyclopedic descriptions
   3. Procedural texts
6.3 Different themes – different grammatical phenomena

6 Collecting texts for a grammar

The corpus consists of

1. Recordings + metadata
2. Annotations:
   - transcriptions
   - glossings
   - free translations
   - comments

Mosel, Ulrike. forthcoming. Corpus linguistic and documentary approaches in writing a grammar of a previously undescribed language.

6.1 Recorded speech vs. edited texts

1. original recordings with annotations
2. edited versions of the recordings

The parallel corpus

- gives a fuller picture of the expressive potential of the language;
- shows alternative ways of expressing the same content
- provides a new type of data for research on what speakers actually do when they put an oral text into writing

6.2 Grammatical variation across genres

(Toep corpus)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genres</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>legends</td>
<td>Fights</td>
<td>spoken, edited some written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Origin of things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Autobiographies</td>
<td>spoken, edited, two only written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>narratives</td>
<td>2nd World War</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encyclopedic</td>
<td>Plants, animals, artefacts</td>
<td>descriptions of things only written; procedural texts spoken, edited, written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descriptions</td>
<td>House &amp; canoe building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fishing, butchering, cooking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>customs</td>
<td>spoken &amp; edited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.1 Legends

- may contain archaic expressions
- are recited from memory
- are situated in imaginary worlds
  - where animals talk and
  - things can change into living beings
    - interesting for noun classification
- contain direct speech
  - interjections, swearing ....

6.2.2. Encyclopedic descriptions

non-verbal clauses in definitions

(1) SUBJ.NP PRED.NP QUALIFICATIVE ATTRIBUTIVE AP

The bokua (is) a fish a big (one)

(2) SUBJ.NP PRED.NP POSSESSIVE AP

The booboo (is) a fish (with) a strong skin

(3) SUBJ.NP PRED.NP RELATIVE CLAUSE

The shelf (is) a thing that we put things (on).

Non-verbal clauses (1)

2) SUBJ.NP PRED.NP QUALIFICATIVE ATTRIBUTIVE AP

The bokua (is) a fish a big (one)

(2) SUBJ . PRED.NP

A bokua a iana a beera ...
ART bokua ART fish ART big, ...

'The bokua is a big fish.' (MD Fishes, bokua)

Non-verbal clauses (2)

(3) SUBJ.NP PRED.NP POSSESSIVE AP

The booboo (is) a fish (with) a strong skin

(3) SUBJ NP PRED POSSESSIVE AP

A booboo a iana a kapa kikis.
ART booboo ART fish ART skin strong

kuri takaku '(having) a broken arm'
kahoo tamamata '(having) an open head'
Non-verbal clauses (3)

SUBJ SUBJ PRED PRED
O pokaa o hum
ART shelf ART place

'The shelf is a place

RELATIVE CLAUSE
to vavaobetera- ara bona maa taba.
REL put 1PL.INCL.IPV- 1PL.INCL ART PL thing

that we put things on.' (MD House, poka)

Definitions of “thing”-words

supply excellent examples for:

1. non-verbal clauses
2. topicalisation
3. various kinds of modifiers
   (1) adjectival phrases ('big')
   (2) possessive adjectical phrases
       ('having a thick skin')
   (3) relative clauses

Definitions of “action”- words

NMLZ DEM COMPLEMENT CLAUSE
'A siri atovo
ART tear sago.palm.leaf
'The tearing of the sago palm leaf,

ei be- ara gono kahi o paka
DEM when- 1PL.INCL get from ART leaf
this (is) when we get from the leaf.'

bonosikiri nae.
ART midrib 3SG.POSS
the midrib

6.2.3 Narratives vs procedural texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narratives</th>
<th>Procedural texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paratactic clauses</td>
<td>Adverbal clause constructions: ‘when ..., then...’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate clauses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Tail-Head-construction”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence of past events</td>
<td>Regular fixed order of actions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

> create a corpus of parallel narrative and procedural texts
6.4 Different themes – different grammatical phenomena

6.4.1 Tropical fishes are colourful

Do colour-words behave like beera ‘big’ and mataa ‘good’?

- do they have the same morphology?
- do they have the same syntactic functions?
- do they enter comparative constructions?

Make series of photographs and use them as stimuli for
1. the description of how to butcher a chicken
2. the narrative of how the twins helped their father butchering a chicken

procedural text: 40 clauses, 12 adverbial clause constr.
narrative text: 53 clauses, no adverbial clauses
13 paratactic clauses

The sinarona [is red] [pass] than the aranavi.

A sinarona na gogoaravi oha nana bona aranavi.

TAM = tense/aspect/mood marker
6.4.2 What trees are good for

Teop clause structure:

intransitive: \( \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{OBJ} \)

transitive: \( \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{OBJ} \)

agent \( \rightarrow \) patient/recipient/theme

ditransitive: \( \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_1 \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_2 \)

agent \( \rightarrow \) recipient/theme

agent \( \rightarrow \) patient/instrument

\( \text{The man gave} \quad \text{the child} \quad \text{a coconut.} \)
\( \text{The man made} \quad \text{the canoe} \quad \text{from wood.} \)

Clause patterns of \( \text{hee} \) ‘give’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause pattern</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_1 \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_2 )</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \text{OBJ}_1 \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_2 )</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \text{OBJ}_2 \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_1 )</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When is the primary or secondary object used in the first position?

Is this a “marked constituent order”?

Is \( \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_1 \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_2 \) the dominant order?

Descriptions of trees and what the parts of trees are used for:

\( \text{OBJ}_2 \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_1 \)

\( \text{(18)} \quad \text{‘The putty-nut tree (its nuts), they use for plastering the canoe.} \)

\( \text{(19)} \quad \text{‘(The putty-nut), they plaster the knotholes.’} \)

The more tree descriptions, the more clauses with \( \text{OBJ}_2 \rightarrow \text{VC} \rightarrow \text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \text{OBJ}_1 \) wordorder!

It makes only sense to speak of a dominant word order with respect to a particular type of genre.
Conclusions

If you come across a grammatical problem
- distinction of word classes
- relative clauses
- nominalisations
- inanimate topics
- expression of the semantic role of instrument

try to find out which genre or theme might provide relevant natural data.

When writing a grammar, be aware that
different registers/genres have different preferred constructions and

that the grammar you write is
the grammar of your data,
not the grammar of the language as such.