**Answer NO-01(a)**

**Semantics**

Semantics is the study of meaning in language. It can be applied to entire texts or to single words. It is the study of [reference](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reference), [meaning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meaning_(philosophy)) or [truth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Truth). The term can be used to refer to subfields of several distinct disciplines, including [philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy), [linguistics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics) and [computer science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_science). In [linguistics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), semantics is the subfield. What studies meaning. Semantics can address meaning at the levels of words, phrases, sentences or larger units of [discourse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discourse). Two of the fundamental issues in the field of semantics are that of [compositional semantics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compositionality) which pertains on how smaller parts, like words, combine and interact to form the meaning of larger expressions, such as sentences and [lexical semantics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lexical_semantics). Other prominent issues are those of [context](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Context_(language_use)) and its role on interpretation, [opaque contexts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opaque_context), [ambiguity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambiguity), [vagueness](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vagueness), [entailment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entailment_(linguistics)) and [presuppositions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presupposition). Several disciplines and approaches have contributed to the often contentious field of semantics. One of the crucial questions which unites different approaches to linguistic semantics is that of the relationship between form and meaning. Some major contributions to the study of semantics have derived from studies in the 1980s to 1990s in related subjects of the [syntax semantics interface](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syntax%E2%80%93semantics_interface) and [pragmatics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatics). The semantic level of language interacts with other modules or levels like syntax in which language is traditionally divided. In linguistics, it is typical to talk in terms of "interfaces" regarding such interactions between modules or levels. For semantics, the most crucial interfaces are considered those with syntax [pragmatics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatics) and [phonology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phonology) what regard [prosody](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosody_(linguistics)) and [intonation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intonation_(linguistics)). It is also called **Semiotics, Semology** or **Semasiology.** Semantics is defined as the study of the meaning of language.

**Semantic features-** Semantics is one of the important branches of linguistics. It related with interpretation and meaning of the words, sentence structure and symbols. A semantic feature is an element of meaning. The meaning of each word in a language is formed of a set of abstract characteristics called semantic features. It is also called Semantic Properties, Sense Components, Semantic Markers, Semantic Components. It acts as the determinant for distinguishing one word from another. It is a component of the concept associated with a lexical item. More generally, it can also be a component of the concept associated with any grammatical unit, whether composed or not. The method by which the meaning of a word is analyzed into a set of semantic features is called theSemantic Feature Analysis. Which is also called the Contrast Analysis,the Componential Analysis. It is defined as a process of understanding natural language by extracting insightful information such as context, emotions, and sentiments from unstructured data.

Example:

Gender like masculine, feminine, neuter.

Count like singular, plural, indeterminate, specific.

**Semantic roles-**

Semantic roles are roles that participants pl Semantic roles ay in events and situations. They are part of the content of linguistic communication, therefore they are defined in terms of prototypes, and the labels we give them are convenient approximations. The semantic roles that we will be concerned with in this class are taken largely from Berk (1999) with some modification and extension. We will use the convention of indicating semantic roles in capital letters, and grammatical relations in lower case letters. A semantic role is the underlying relationship that a participant has with the main [verb](https://glossary.sil.org/term/verb-linguistics) in a [clause](https://glossary.sil.org/term/clause). It is the actual role a participant plays in some real or imagined situation, apart from the linguistic encoding of those situations. It is also known as ‘Semantic case, Thematic role’.

**Types of Semantic roles-**

Here a list of the most popular of Semantic role-

* **Agent**
* **Patient**
* **Experiencer**
* **Source**
* **Goal**

Here I describe them-

**Agent- The most obvious semantic role is called “Agent”.** It’s a participant which the meaning of the verb specifies as doing or causing something, possibly intentionally.

Examples: subjects of kill, eat, hit, smash, kick,watch**.**

**Patient- Another important semantic role is “Patient”.** This is the role of being acted upon by an agent. It is sometimes called ‘Undergoer’.It doesn’t refer to a patient in the medical sense.

Examples: objects of kill, eat, smash but not those of watch, hear, love.

**Experiencer- It is** participant who is characterized as aware of something. It is an argument that someone feels something.

Examples: subject of love, object of annoy.

**Source- It is a** role of argument that the place from which an action originates. It’s an object from which motion proceeds.

Examples: subjects of buy, promise, objects of deprive, free, cure.

**Goal- It is** an argument that place from which an action is directed.

Examples: subject of receive, buy, dative objects of tell, give.

**Answer NO-01(b)**

**Grammar**

Grammar is the system of a language. It is the systematic study and description of a [language](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-language-1691218). It’s a set of rules and examples dealing with the [syntax](https://www.thoughtco.com/syntax-grammar-1692182) and word structures of a language usually intended as an aid to the learning of that language. The word grammar also [denotes](https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/denotes) the study of these abstract features or a book presenting these rules. In a restricted sense, the term refers only to the study of sentence and word structure like syntax and morphology, excluding vocabulary and pronunciation. In [linguistics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), the grammar of a [natural language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_language) is its set of [structural](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structure) constraints on speakers or writers composition of [clauses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clause_(linguistics)), [phrases](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phrase), and [words](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Words). The term can also refer to the study of such constraints, a field that includes domains such as [phonology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phonology), [morphology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morphology_(linguistics)) and [syntax](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syntax). It also often complemented by [phonetics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phonetics), [semantics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantics) and [pragmatics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatics). There are currently two different approaches to the study of grammar: [traditional grammar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional_grammar) and [theoretical grammar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammar#Theoretical_frameworks). During the Middle Ages, grammar was often used to describe learning in general, including the magical, occult practices popularly associated with the scholars of the day. People in Scotland pronounced grammaras "glam-our," and extended the association to mean magical beauty or enchantment. In the 19th century, the two versions of the word went their separate ways, so that our study of English grammar today may not be quite as glamorous as it used to be. People sometimes describe grammar as the "rules" of a language; but in fact no language has rules\*. If we use the word "rules", we suggest that somebody created the rules first and then spoke the language, like a new game. But languages did not start like that. Languages started by people making sounds which evolved into words, phrases and sentences. No commonly-spoken language is fixed. All languages change over time. What we call "grammar" is simply a reflection of a language at a particular time.

**Types of Grammar-**

There are two types of grammar. They are:

* **Prescriptive grammar**
* **Descriptive grammar**

**Here I’m describing them:**

**Prescriptive grammar- Prescriptive grammar** is the set of rules people should follow when using the English language. It is normative. It tells us actually prescribes what we shouldsay*,* should write, and what we should not say or do or write. It gives us a set of norms to follow. It tells us which ``errors" to avoid. It tells us that somethings are ``bad" and some things are ``good". Prescriptive grammar fails to distinguish between style and grammar, often confusing the two. It condemns all styles or dialects of a language except the standard or classical or ‘King's English’ style and often characterizes non-standard language as corrupt or vulgar or even morally deficient.

**Descriptive grammar- Descriptive grammar** is how we describe the way people are using language. The term descriptive grammar refers to an objective, non-judgmental description of the [grammatical](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-grammar-1690909) constructions in a [language](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-language-1691218). It's an examination of how a language is actually being used, in writing and in speech. [Linguists](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-linguist-1691239) who specialize in descriptive grammar examine the principles and patterns that underlie the use of words, phrases, clauses and sentences. In that respect, the adjective "descriptive" is a bit misleading as descriptive grammar provides an analysis and explanation of a language's grammar, not simply a description of it.

Both types of grammar are concerned with rules but in different ways. In terms of teaching a language, both types of grammar have advantages and disadvantages.

**Prescriptive Grammar Advantages & Disadvantages-**

Advantage- Teaching prescriptive grammar creates formal writers and resources.

Advantage- Teaching prescriptive grammar is beneficial for both non-native teachers and learners, as it has definite rules of language that help reduce confusion.

Disadvantage- Prescriptive grammar might keep non-native speakers wondering and confused when they talk with a native speaker, as they might realize that some natives do not write or speak with these rules.

**Descriptive Grammar Advantages & Disadvantages-**

Advantage- Thedescriptive grammar approach improves non-native speakers’ pronunciation and helps them sound like native speakers.

Advantage- The descriptive grammar approach helps language learners understand the applied usage of language and communicate better with native speakers.

Disadvantage- Thedescriptive grammar approach is sometimes not used in formal settings, such as exams and speech.

**Differences between Descriptive and Prescriptive grammar-**

A descriptive grammar is a study of a language, its structure, and its rules as they are used in daily life by its speakers from all walks of life, including standard and nonstandard varieties. A prescriptive grammar, on the other hand, specifies how a language and its grammar rules should be used. A prescriptivist view of language implies a distinction between “good grammar” and “bad grammar” and its primary focus is on standard forms of grammar and syntactic constructions. Author Donald G. Ellis says, "All languages adhere to [syntactical](https://www.thoughtco.com/syntax-grammar-1692182) rules of one sort or another, but the rigidity of these rules is greater in some languages. It is very important to distinguish between the syntactical rules that govern a language and the rules that a culture imposes on its language." He explains that this is the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive grammar. "Descriptive grammars are essentially scientific theories that attempt to explain how language works." Ellis admits that human beings were using language in a variety of forms long before there were [linguists](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-linguist-1691239) using descriptive grammar around to formulate any rules about how or why they were speaking as they did. On the other hand, he likens prescriptive grammarians to the stereotypical uptight high school English teachers who "prescribe, like medicine for what ails you, how we 'ought' to speak."

The main difference between descriptive and prescriptive grammar is that the**descriptive grammar describes how the language is used whereas the prescriptive grammar explains how the language should be used by the speakers.**

**Differences are:**

* Prescriptive Grammar records and teaches the grammar rules. Descriptive Grammar records how people actually use a language.
* In Prescriptive Grammar it’s not logical to say Each Person should do Their own work. In Descriptive Grammar I wonder why so many people say Each Person should do their own work.
* Prescriptive Grammar I’m interested in codifying and preserving language. Descriptive Grammar I’m interested in understanding how language breathes.
* Prescriptive Grammar it’s important to define standards so that there can be agreement and order. Descriptive Grammar it’s important to observe language patterns so we can understand one another.
* Prescriptive Grammar allows v**ariations.** Descriptive Grammar doesn’t allows v**ariations.**

Descriptive grammar and prescriptive grammar are the two approaches to study grammar. They are different based on their rules, grammatical structure, established norms, and grammar.

**Grammar real usage in daily English-**

In daily English Grammar is an important aspect. It is one of the most important elements of our daily English. Unfortunately, it can also be one of the most complex and difficult. Correct grammar is our key to speaking daily English fluently and confidently. [Knowing grammar](https://www.fluentu.com/blog/english/english-grammar-exercises-online/) will help us to avoid errors that make our daily English sound strange to native speakers. It is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves. The more we are aware of how it works, the more we can monitor the meaning and effectiveness of the way we and others use daily English. It can help foster precision, detect ambiguity, and exploit the richness of expression available in English. Grammar is not just about avoiding mistakes. Understanding how grammar works is fundamental for all daily English speaker. While it can be argued that good grammar knowledge will not necessarily make us a better daily English, it is recognized that it will help make us a more effective daily English speaker. Good grammar knowledge enables us as a daily English speaker to understand what makes a piece of writing successful, so that it will capture both the interest and understanding of daily English speaker. It helps us to know how to craft words into coherent sentences and how to form those sentences into paragraphs that successfully convey our meaning. Punctuation is an aspect of grammar that should never be underestimated. Correctly used, it can clarify meaning while, on the other hand, lack of use can cause ambiguity. Punctuation also acts as a signposting system for daily English speaker, indicating where to pause and what to stress.

**Answer NO-01(c)**

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Examples: subjects of buy, promise, objects of deprive, free, cure.

**Goal- It is** an argument that place from which an action is directed.

Examples: subject of receive, buy, dative objects of tell, give.

**Associative**

According to the [semantic analysis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantic_analysis_(linguistics)) of [Geoffrey Leech](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Leech), the associative meaning of an expression has to do with individual mental understandings of the speaker. In [semantics](https://www.thoughtco.com/semantics-linguistics-1692080), associative meaning refers to the particular qualities or characteristics beyond the denotative meaning that people commonly think of correctly or incorrectly in relation to a word or phrase. Also known as expressive meaning and stylistic meaning. Associative meaning is a label applied to certain kinds of associations with words, and the internalization of words and phrases, by readers or listeners. This category of meaning, as a popular label, can be traced back to a linguist named Geoffrey Leech in the 1970s. Leech developed the broader category of associative meaning into six individual subcategories that help to analyze how humans understand language. As a linguistic and psychological term, associative meaning is part of the larger category of [semantics](https://www.languagehumanities.org/what-are-semantics.htm). Semantics is the study of how people attach meaning to language. In this case, meaning is attached to language in an associative way, meaning that some of the connections that language users draw may not be directly referenced in text or speech. Within the general category of associative meaning, the six subcategories detail the ways in which people might associate ideas with a given work. The first one is connotative meaning, which is a way to describe some kinds of indirect references that people commonly make in associating a word with a particular idea. Another category is collocative meaning, where people typically associate words that are often presented together in text or speech. Other categories of associative meaning include social meaning, affective meaning, reflective meaning, and thematic meaning. Social meaning generally applies to associations that are related to interpersonal relationships, where affective meaning largely relates to the emotions of the parties involved in communication. Reflective meaning relies on the interplay between multiple uses or associations for a single word or phrase, and thematic meaning as described by linguistic experts, often has to do with the sequence of words or phrases and how they come together to present a unified theme. All of the categories of associative meaning are helpful for presenting a semantical analysis of any text or speech. Individuals might use this kind of resource in literary criticism, or in a broader analysis of a piece of [fiction](https://www.languagehumanities.org/what-is-fiction.htm) or other literary work. Psychologists might use associative meaning in various tests and other tools to explore an individual psyche, or in research to apply to collective mentalities for a certain community. The idea of associative meaning can generally help researchers to construct a more comprehensive picture of how certain communications are received by an audience, and how individuals might “use” words or phrases in different contexts.

**Conceptual**

In [semantics](https://www.thoughtco.com/semantics-linguistics-1692080), conceptual meaning is the [literal](https://www.thoughtco.com/literal-meaning-language-1691250) or core sense of a [word](https://www.thoughtco.com/word-english-language-1692612). There is nothing read into the term, no subtext; it's just the straightforward, literal, dictionary definition of the word. The term is also called [denotation](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-denotation-1690436) or cognitive meaning. Contrast the word with [connotation](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-connotation-words-1689912), affective meaning, and [figurative meaning](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-figurative-meaning-1690792), which go beyond the dictionary to add subtext to a word when it's used. In writing and conversation, it's good to know the difference between the literal, conceptual meaning of a word and all the connotations it has before you use it, to dispel misunderstandings or any offense before you accidentally put it out there especially if a word is loaded with negatives or stereotypes about a group of people. Conceptual semantics is a framework for semantic analysis developed mainly by [Ray Jackendoff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray_Jackendoff) in 1976. Its aim is to provide a characterization of the conceptual elements by which a person understands words and sentences, and thus to provide an explanatory semantic representation. Explanatory in this sense refers to the ability of a given linguistic theory to describe how a component of language is acquired by a child. Recently, conceptual semantics in particular, and [lexical semantics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lexical_semantics) in general, have taken on increasing importance in linguistics and psycholinguistics. Many contemporary theories of [syntax](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syntax) how sentences are constructed from individual words rely on elements that are idiosyncratic to words themselves. As a result, a sound theory accounting for the properties of the meanings of words is required. Conceptual semantics distinguishes a single, universal meaning to a word. Instead of having a lexical semantic meaning in addition to the conceptual representation of the actual referent, here the two are combined into what Jackendoff calls "lexical concepts". Conceptual semantics is considered to be not just a linguistic theory, but a theory on human cognition. Like many semantic theories, Jackendoff claims that a decompositional method is necessary to explore conceptualization. Just as one of the ways a physical scientist tries to understand matter is by breaking it down into progressively smaller parts, so a scientific study of conceptualization proceeds by breaking down, or decomposing, meanings into smaller parts. However, this decomposition cannot go on forever, for at some point, meanings can no longer be broken down.

**Answer NO-02(a)**

**Prosodic**

**Prosody** is the study of all the elements of [language](https://www.britannica.com/topic/language) that contribute toward [acoustic](https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/acoustic) and rhythmic effects, chiefly in [poetry](https://www.britannica.com/art/poetry) but also in prose. The term derived from an [ancient Greek](https://www.britannica.com/place/ancient-Greece) word that originally meant a song accompanied by music or the particular [tone](https://www.britannica.com/topic/tone-speech) or accent given to an individual syllable. Greek and [Latin](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Latin) [literary](https://www.britannica.com/art/literary-criticism) critics generally regarded prosody as part of [grammar](https://www.britannica.com/topic/grammar); it concerned itself with the rules determining the length or shortness of a [syllable](https://www.britannica.com/topic/syllable), with syllabic quantity, and with how the various combinations of short and long syllables formed the [metres](https://www.britannica.com/art/metre-prosody) of Greek and Latin poetry. Prosody was the study of metre and its uses in [lyric](https://www.britannica.com/art/lyric), epic, and dramatic verse. In sophisticated modern [criticism](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/criticism), however, the scope of prosodic study has been expanded until it now concerns itself with what the 20th-century poet [Ezra Pound](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ezra-Pound) called “the articulation of the total sound of a poem.” Prose as well as verse reveals the use of rhythm and sound effects. However, critics speak not of “the prosody of prose” but of prose rhythm. The [English](https://www.britannica.com/art/English-literature) critic [George Saintsbury](https://www.britannica.com/biography/George-Saintsbury) wrote A History of English Prosody from the Twelfth Century to the Present, which treats English poetry from its origins to the end of the 19th century, but he dealt with prose rhythm in an entirely separate work, A History of English Prose Rhythm. Many prosodic elements such as the rhythmic repetition of consonants or of vowel sounds occur in prose; the repetition of syntactical and grammatical patterns also generates rhythmic effect. Traditional [rhetoric](https://www.britannica.com/topic/rhetoric), the study of how words work, dealt with acoustic and rhythmic techniques in Classical oratory and literary prose. But although prosody and [rhetoric](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rhetoric) intersected, rhetoric dealt more exactly with verbal [meaning](https://www.britannica.com/topic/meaning) than with verbal surface. Rhetoric dealt with grammatical and syntactical manipulations and with figures of speech; it categorized the kinds of [metaphor](https://www.britannica.com/art/metaphor). Twentieth-century critics, especially those who practiced the [New Criticism](https://www.britannica.com/art/New-Criticism), bore some resemblance to rhetoricians in their detailed concern with such devices as [irony](https://www.britannica.com/art/irony), [paradox](https://www.britannica.com/art/paradox-literature), and [ambiguity](https://www.britannica.com/topic/ambiguity).

**Suprasegmental**

A suprasegmental is a vocal effect that extends over more than one sound segment in an utterance, such as pitch, stress, or juncture pattern. In speech, Suprasegmental refers to a [phonological](https://www.thoughtco.com/phonology-definition-1691623) property of more than one sound [segment](https://www.thoughtco.com/segment-phonology-and-phonetics-1691934). It is also called Non-segmental. The term suprasegmental, was coined by American structuralists in the 1940s. It is used to refer to functions that are "over" [vowels](https://www.thoughtco.com/vowel-sounds-and-letters-1692601) and [consonants](https://www.thoughtco.com/consonant-sounds-and-letters-1689914). Suprasegmental information applies to several different linguistic phenomena including pitch, duration and loudness. Suprasegmentals are often regarded as the "musical" aspects of speech. Suprasegmentals are important for marking all kinds of meanings, in particular speakers' attitudes or stances to what they are saying or the person they are saying it to and in marking out how one [utterance](https://www.thoughtco.com/utterance-speech-1692576) relates to another. Both the forms and functions of suprasegmentals are less tangible than those of consonants and vowels, and they often do not form discrete categories.

**Answer NO-02(b)**

**Structural ambiguity**

Structural ambiguity is a big error in English language. Structural ambiguity is most simply represented in English. Specifically, selected sentences containing structural ambiguity. Ambiguity is the inner feature of every language.

A word, phrase, or sentence is ambiguous if it has more than one meaning. Ambiguity is a word or sentence. What is not clear about the intention or meaning. Something of doubtful meaning. Ambiguitypronunciation “Am-big-you-it-tee”. It is the presence of two or more possible meanings in a single passage. This word comes from a Latin term. Which means "wandering about" and the adjective form of the word is *‘*ambiguous’. Other terms used for ambiguity are amphibologia, amphibolia and semantic ambiguity. In addition, ambiguity is sometimes regarded as a [**fallacy**](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-logical-fallacy-1691259). Which is commonly known as [**equivocation**](https://www.thoughtco.com/equivocation-fallacy-term-1690672)**.**In which the same term is used in more than one way.

In speech and writing, there are two basic types of ambiguity:

1. [**Lexical ambiguity**](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-lexical-ambiguity-1691226)- It is the presence of two or more possible meanings within a single word.
2. [**Syntactic ambiguity**](https://www.thoughtco.com/syntactic-ambiguity-grammar-1692179)**-** It is the presence of two or more possible meanings within a single sentence or sequence of words.

It is uncertainty as to intended meaning. It is the quality of being open to more than one interpretation. There is a lack of clarity or awareness about situations.   
Uncertainty that leads to more than one interpretation. It occurs when the meaning of an item can be interpreted in two or more ways. This is the noun of the word ambiguous which means confusing, able to be understood in different ways.

Example: Union Demands Increased Unemployment– newspaper headline.

"Thanks for dinner. I’ve never seen potatoes cooked like that before."-Jonah Baldwin in the film Sleepless in Seattle, 1993.

Structural ambiguity is the presence of two or more possible [meanings](https://www.thoughtco.com/meaning-semantics-term-1691373) within a single [sentence](https://www.thoughtco.com/sentence-grammar-1692087) or sequence of [words](https://www.thoughtco.com/word-english-language-1692612). Which is as opposed to [lexical ambiguity](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-lexical-ambiguity-1691226). Which is the presence of two or more possible meanings within a single word. The intended meaning of a syntactically ambiguous phrase can generally, although not always be determined by the [context](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-context-language-1689920) of its use. It occurs when a phrase or sentence has more than one underlying structure. Such a sentence can be interpreted in more than one way. It is also known as **syntactic ambiguity.** A generative grammar defines the syntactic structures of a language. The grammar will generate all the well-formed syntactic structures of the language and will not generate any ill-formed structures. This has been called the ‘all and only’ criterion, that is, all the grammatical sentences and only the grammatical sentences will be produced. Syntactic ambiguity arises not from the range of [meanings of single words](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polysemy), but from the relationship between the words and clauses of a sentence, and the sentence structure underlying the word order therein. In other words, a sentence is syntactically ambiguous when a reader or listener can reasonably interpret one sentence as having more than one possible structure. Some structural ambiguity is the result of writing errors, such as misplaced modifiers. An example from Tom Sant’s book Persuasive Business Proposals: “Featuring plug-in circuit boards, we can strongly endorse this server’s flexibility and growth potential.” That sentence might be intended to mean that the server has plug-in circuit boards, and a human would be likely to understand that. However, the way it’s organized, the sentence actually means that the writer features plug-in circuit boards, and software would be likely to require word sense disambiguation to understand that is not the intended meaning. The term structural ambiguityis often contrasted with [lexical](https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/lexical-ambiguity) which is word related ambiguity, which often arises because words can have multiple meanings. Both are examples of [linguistic ambiguity](https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/linguistic-ambiguity), which also results from other things including figurative language and vagueness.

Example:

The teacher said on Friday he would give a test.

* On Friday, the teacher said she would give a test.
* The test will be on Friday.

Visiting relatives can be boring.

* It is boring to visit relatives.
* Relatives who are visiting are boring.

It is well known that a number of phrase and sentence types in English may give rise to cases of structural ambiguity. In English language Structural ambiguity also called ‘grammatical ambiguity’ or ‘constructional homonymy’. It has been defined simply as “[a]mbiguity explained by differences in syntax”. In a more elaborate formulation, the definition might read as follows: “An utterance is structurally ambiguous when it can yield more than one syntactic interpretation or when it implies more than one syntactic relationship between constituents within a structure”. These definitions imply that a structurally ambiguous sentence is to be coupled with two or more alternative representations at a deeper level of analysis, which account for the different semantics and paraphrases. Aspecial case of ambiguous structures within syntax are the so called “garden path sentences”. But it can be argued that sentences of this type “do not allow more than one structural interpretation when taken in their entirety, even though the initial parts of their sentences do”. It must be emphasized, however, that the phenomenon in question is not limited to syntactic categories like phrases, sentences. Some patterns of English language notably within compounding and affixation, comprise complex lexemes that are also characterized by structural ambiguity. Textbooks on morphology often discuss parallel mechanisms of structural ambiguity that are a feature of English. Indeed, when we look at products of derivational morphology, particularly certain lexemes coined by affixation, there is, again, evidence for structural ambiguity. One pattern that offers relevant examples in English are deverbal adjectives where the verbal base is preceded by the prefix un- and followed by the suffix-able.

We come across the process of ambiguity in both spoken and written discourse. Ambiguity has been a topic of interest. Not only for linguists but also for psycholinguists. The interest in the study of the decoding of the meaning of the sentence can be considered a new sphere in general linguistics.

From many types of structural ambiguity here I’m exploring some examples of some types of structural ambiguity:

* Type 1: VP + NP + PP
* Type 2: Gerund + VP
* Type 3: VP + NP + more…than + NP
* Type 4: VP + NP + PP1 + PP2
* Type 5: NP + Adj. Clause

I’m describing now:-

**Type 1: VP + NP + PP (prepositional phrase)**

Example- The girl hit the boy with a book.

The sentence may mean ‘The girl hit the boy using a book’ or ‘The boy is holding a book when the girl hit him. This type of ambiguity occurs since the prepositional phrase ‘with a book’ can modify two nouns ‘the girl or the boy’, either of which can be treated as its antecedent. In the sentence there is no clue to which noun the prepositional phrase modifies. In other words, ‘with a book’ can modify the boy or the girl. This type of structural ambiguity results from the lack of information in the construction. If additional information is added to it, the sentence becomes unambiguous:

* The girl hit the boy with a book. The book is broken.
* The girl hit the boy with a book. The boy hurts.

In ‘a’, ‘with a book’ refers to ‘the girl’ and in ‘b’, to ‘the boy’.

**Type 2: Gerund + VP**

Example- Visiting relatives can be boring.

The second type of ambiguity has the construction a gerund followed by a verb. The example sentence is ambiguous because ‘visiting relatives’ can be understood in two ways: as a compound noun and as a noun phrase consisting of a modifier plus a noun. In writing, it is hard to eliminate the ambiguity, but in speaking, it can be cleared up by using intonation pattern.

**Type 3: VP + NP + more … than + NP**

Example- Jerry loves the fans more than Sally.

This third type of ambiguity concerns comparative degree. It is ambiguous because the shortened version may function as the subject of the second (shortened) clause or as the object of the verb ‘love’ which is in comparative relation with ‘the fans’. The rule is if the comparative clause is identical to the main clause except for a contrasted phrase, optionally remove everything from the comparative clause except for this contrasted phrase. In other words, when one makes a sentence using comparative degree, he or she will use the sentence, For instance, ‘Tom hates Martha more than Susanne’, rather than ‘Tom hates Martha more than he hates Susanne’ to avoid repetition of similar words. From the example of this type, because of the removal of similar words, the sentence has two meanings.

* Jerry loves the fans more than Sally loves the fans.
* Jerry loves the fans more than He loves Sally.

To make it unambiguous, the shortened version should be added some missing information. The shortened version of ‘Jerry loves the fans more than Sally loves the fans’ should be ‘Jerry loves the fans more than Sally does. If we mean ‘Jerry loves the fans more than He loves Sally', the sentence cannot be shortened.

**Type 4: VP + NP + PP1 + PP2**

Example- Put the bottle on the table in the kitchen

The sentence above is ambiguous since the first modifier ‘on the table’ can modify the closest NP or PP2. It is not clear whether ‘on the table’ modifies ‘the bottle’ or ‘in the kitchen’. If it modifies ‘the bottle’, it means that the bottle is already on the table and should be put in the kitchen. On the other hand, if it modifies ‘in the kitchen’, it means that the bottle should be put from somewhere else to the table which is in the kitchen. The ambiguity can be resolved by placing a terminal juncture between the first and the second modifier. Thus, the sentence may mean ‘Put the bottle on the table / in the kitchen’. The juncture shows that the bottle is already on the table and then to be put in the kitchen. The second interpretation, is ‘Put the bottle / on the table in the kitchen’. It means that the bottle should be put on the table, and the location of the table is in the kitchen. Not the table in the bedroom.

**Type 5: NP + Adj. Clause**

Example- The teacher thanked the students who had given her some flowers.

This sentence can be ambiguous. Because it can be written in two versions with absolutely different meaning:

* The teacher thanked the students who had given her some flowers.
* The teacher thanked the students, who had given her some flowers.

We sometimes do not know if a sentence has a clear message or ambiguity. Whether or not we recognize the ambiguity depend on our linguistic knowledge. For English learners, however it is still not easy to know if a sentence is ambiguous or not. Having adequate proficiency of English, we are aware of the ambiguity and try to avoid them, if possible. In writing, for example, we need to use some formal signals to avoid ambiguous sentences.