

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES


GRAMMATICAL MEANING



The grammatical category



- is a system of expressing a generalised grammatical meaning by means of paradigmatic correlation of grammatical forms




*□ grammatical category is generally
represented by at least two
grammatical forms, otherwise it
cannot exist*


Singular - Plural



- A **grammatical category** is a unit of grammar based on a morphological opposition of **grammatical meanings** presented in **grammatical forms**



Grammatical categories may
be influenced by the
lexical meaning

- 
- The most general meanings rendered by language and expressed by systemic correlations of word-forms are interpreted in linguistics as **grammatical meanings**.

Grammatical meaning



is a system of expressing the grammatical meaning through the paradigm of grammatical forms expressed by grammatical opposition

Grammatical meaning is the meaning of the whole class or a subclass.



For example, the class of nouns has the grammatical meaning of thingness.

table

its individual **lexical meaning** (it corresponds to a definite piece of furniture) and **the grammatical meaning** of thingness (this is the meaning of the whole class).

Besides, the noun '*table*' has the grammatical meaning of a **subclass** – countableness

A diagram illustrating the relationship between Lexical and Grammatical meaning and their concrete/abstract nature. At the top, a horizontal line is centered with a small square box. Below this, two rows are shown. The first row consists of a dark red rounded rectangle on the left containing the text 'Lexical meaning', followed by a light gray arrow pointing to the right containing the text '• concrete'. The second row consists of a dark red rounded rectangle on the left containing the text 'grammatical meaning', followed by a light gray arrow pointing to the right containing the text '• abstract'.

Lexical
meaning

• **concrete**

grammatical
meaning

• **abstract**

Grammatical meaning

□ explicitly

The book reads well

□ Implicitly

lexico-grammatical meanings of
countability / non-countability of
nouns

Grammatical form




is the sum total of all the formal means constantly employed to render this or that grammatical meaning

(morphemes, synthetic forms, and grammatical word combinations)

Types of expressing the grammatical meaning

- ❑ **Synthetic Types.** Inflexions (*actor, studying*)
- ❑ **Sound-alternation** (*mouse – mice, meet – met*)
- ❑ **Analytical Types** (extra elements which help to form language phenomena: *have finished*)
- ❑ **Suppletive Formations.** (Some special forms which substitute missing forms: *good – better – best.*)

- 
- The paradigmatic correlations of grammatical forms in a category are exposed by the so-called **"grammatical oppositions"**



The minimal (two-member)
opposition is called
binary.

**The correlated elements (members) of the
opposition must possess two types of
features**



serve as the basis
of contrast

express the function
in question

Types of oppositions were established in phonology

- Privative
- Equipollent
- Gradual

Privative oppositions



One member has a certain distinctive feature. This member is called marked, or strong (+). The other member is called unmarked, or weak (-)

□ Speak – speaks⁺

Equipollent oppositions

- both members of the opposition are marked
- opposition is formed by a contrastive pair or group in which the members are distinguished by different positive features

$$Am^+ - is^+$$

Gradual oppositions



- members of the opposition differ by the degree of certain property

strong - stronger - strongest



*morphological oppositions unlike
those of phonological oppositions
possess both the **plane of
expression** and the **plane of
content***

Reduction of oppositions



- one member of an opposition can be used in the position of the other

Oppositional reduction



neutralization

- the use of the weak member instead of the strong;

*Next week we start for
Moscow*

transposition

- the use of a linguistic unit in an unusual environment or in the function that is not characteristic of it

He is a lion