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## Glossary

Words in **bold** are cross-referenced in this glossary. Parentheses indicate the section of the book where a more detailed description of the term can be found.

- action verb (1.5):** a verb that describes what people and things do (e.g., *perform, study, design*). Action verbs can be **transitive**, **intransitive**, or **ditransitive**.
- active voice (4.6):** a clause in which the **agent** of the **main verb** is the **subject** of the clause (e.g., *we mixed the compounds*).
- agent (1.5):** the person or thing that does, causes, or is responsible for the **main verb**. The agent is the **subject** of an **active clause**. A **passive** sentence may not have an agent.
- article (5.2):** see **definite article** and **indefinite article**.
- aspect (4.1):** an element of the **verb tense** that tells the reader whether the verb should be seen as factual (simple), connected to a previous time (perfect), or ongoing (progressive).
- auxiliary verb (1.1):** a verb such as *has/have*, a form of *be*, or *do/does/did* that is used when the **main verb** is not the **finite verb**. See also **modal verb**.
- bare infinitive (1.1):** the infinitive form of a verb without *to* (e.g., *write, suggest, have*)
- binary adjective (6.5):** an adjective that is either true or not, such as *employed* or *stationary*. Binary adjectives cannot logically be modified with adverbs such as *very, somewhat, quite*, and they do not have **comparative** forms. However, some adjectives that could be considered binary by their meaning (*unique, pregnant*) are often made **gradable** in actual use.
- boost (6.1):** increase the strength of claims, for example, with certain **modal verbs** or adverbs or by word choices.
- classifying adjective (5.7):** an adjective that indicates the type of noun in the **head noun** position—for example, *a political party*. See also **noun modifier** and **describing adjective**.
- clause (1.1):** a group of words connected by a verb. Clauses can be divided into **independent** and **dependent** clauses. All independent clauses are **finite clauses**; dependent clauses may be **finite** or **non-finite clauses**.
- collocation (7.1):** the tendency of words to occur together (e.g., *heavy rain, strong tea*).
- comma splice (2.7):** see **run-on sentence**.
- common noun (5.1):** a noun that describes anything that does not need to be written with a capital letter (see also **proper noun**).
- comparative (6.5):** a form of adjective or adverb used to show the difference between two items (words, ideas, actions, states, etc.). The comparative form of **gradable** adjectives is *-er* or *more/less* + adjective. The comparative form of adverbs is *more/less* + adverb. Nouns can be compared using the **quantifiers** *much, many, few, and little*.
- complement (1.1, 1.7):** a word, phrase, or clause that comes after a verb and is controlled by the verb. Complements can take many forms, depending on the type and meaning of the verb. See also **direct object**, **indirect object**, **subject complement**, **finite clause**, **noun clause**, and **non-finite clause**.
- complement clause (3.4):** an embedded clause that completes the meaning of a noun or adjective (e.g., *the fact that . . . or it is important to . . .*).
- complex sentence (2.2):** a combination of one or more independent and dependent clauses.

- compound sentence (2.2):** see **equal clauses**.
- conditional clause (6.4):** see **real conditional** and **unreal conditional**.
- conjunction (2.2):** see **coordinating conjunction** and **subordinating conjunction**.
- coordinating conjunction (2.2):** a conjunction that can join two **independent clauses** as **equal clauses** (also called a **compound sentence**). The coordinating conjunctions are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so* and can be remembered by the acronym FANBOYS.
- corpus (7.1):** a large collection of electronic texts that can be searched to discover patterns about particular uses of language (e.g., academic writing).
- count noun (5.1):** a noun that can be singular or plural. This means the noun has a shape or boundary, allowing you to *count* one or more. See also **non-count noun** and **double noun**.
- definite article (5.5):** *the*. The definite article is only used when both the reader and the writer can identify the specific reference of the **head noun**.
- dependent clause (2.1):** any clause that cannot be used as a complete sentence in academic writing. This includes all **non-finite clauses** and **subordinate clauses** (clauses with **subordinating conjunctions, relative clauses, and noun clauses**).
- describing adjective (5.7):** an adjective that describes the quality of the noun—for example, *an important question*. See also **classifying adjective**.
- determiner (1.2, 5.2):** a word that gives a reference to the **head noun** in a **noun phrase: indefinite, definite, generic, specific, or possessive**. The determiner helps the reader to determine what the head noun refers to: a category, any individual, a particular thing, or something belonging to someone.
- direct object (1.5):** the person or thing that is acted upon by the verb. In an **active** clause, the direct object is the **goal** of the verb. Direct objects are usually noun phrases, although they can be clauses with some verbs.
- ditransitive verb (1.5):** an **action verb** that requires two objects: an **indirect object** (functioning as the **recipient** in an **active** clause) and a **direct object** (the **goal**)—for example, *the university gave the team a grant*.
- double noun (5.1):** a noun that is usually **non-count** that has been made a **count noun**. In their countable meanings, double nouns can mean types, examples, or instances of the noun (e.g., *a wine* is a type of *wine*). In other cases, the count form has a boundary, which the non-count noun does not (e.g., *experience* is everything you have done until now; *an experience* is a particular event with a beginning and end).
- elaborating clauses (2.5):** **independent** or **dependent clauses** that describe or comment on the **main clause** without adding any particularly new information.
- embedded clause (3.1):** a clause that adds information about an element in another clause. Most embedded clauses are restrictive **relative clauses**, meaning they identify or define nouns. Sometimes, a **noun clause** can also be embedded with a noun that means *fact* or *idea*, in which case it acts as a **complement clause**, completing the meaning of the fact or idea.
- enhancing clauses (2.5):** **independent** or **dependent clauses** that add a time, place, manner, cause/effect, concession, or condition to the **main clause**.
- equal clauses** (also called **compound sentences**): two clauses with equal importance in a sen-

tence, joined with the meaning of **expansion** with a **coordinating conjunction** or a semi-colon.

**equative (6.6):** a phrase or clause that describes two items (words, ideas, actions, states, etc.) as the same or similar. There are many resources for expressing equatives, including *as . . . as*, *the same as*, and *as many as*.

**expansion (2.5):** combining clauses by **elaborating**, **extending**, or **enhancing**.

**experiential meaning (1.8):** the event, action, or experience that the clause describes. Writers create experiential meaning through their choices of clause and sentence structure as well as vocabulary. All sections of this book, but especially Units 1–5, describe the resources for controlling experiential meaning. Experiential meaning is one of the three layers of meaning in **functional grammar** (see also **interpersonal meaning** and **textual meaning**).

**extending clauses (2.5): independent or dependent clauses** that add new information to the main clause.

**finite clause (1.1):** a **clause** with a **subject** that agrees with a **finite verb**. All **independent clauses** are finite; some **dependent clauses** are finite (e.g., **subordinate clauses** and full **relative clauses**).

**finite verb (1.1):** a verb that agrees with its **subject** (see **subject-verb agreement**) and can be changed to express different **verb tenses**.

**fragment (2.7):** a **dependent** or **non-finite clause** punctuated as a complete sentence. This is usually an error in formal writing, although proficient writers can use fragments to good effect.

**functional grammar (Unit 1):** a description of how language is used in context. Functional grammar is a way of understanding language not from the perspective of rules but rather from an analysis of how different choices affect the meaning of a sentence and a longer text. Functional grammar is interested in what language *does*, and functional linguists explain that language works by creating three layers of meaning simultaneously: **experiential meaning**, **interpersonal meaning**, and **textual meaning**.

**future-in-the-past (4.4):** a verb form describing an action or state that happened after another time in the past. The future-in-the-past is formed with *was/were going to*, or *would*.

**generic reference (5.3):** a **head noun** that means all of a particular category or group.

**gerund (5.8):** the *-ing* form of a verb; see non-finite verb.

**goal (1.5):** The element of a clause that is acted upon by the verb. In the **active voice**, the goal is the **direct object** (*the engineer fixed the network*), whereas in the **passive voice**, the goal is usually the **subject** (*the network was fixed by the engineer*).

**gradable adjective (6.5):** an adjective that can have a range of intensity—for example, by modifying it with an adverb such as *very*, *somewhat*, *quite*. Only gradable adjectives have **comparative** forms. See also **binary adjective**.

**head noun (1.2):** the main noun in a **noun phrase**. It is the head noun in the subject noun phrase that agrees with the **finite verb** (see **subject-verb agreement**).

**hedge (6.1):** reduce the strength of claims out of uncertainty or modesty, or show the source for your ideas—for example, through citation. Hedging resources include **modal verbs**, adverbs, **conditional clauses**, and many word choices.

- indefinite article (5.4):** *a* or *an* (no article is used for indefinite reference with a **non-count noun** or plural noun).
- independent clause (2.1):** a clause containing a **subject** and a **finite verb**. An independent clause can be a complete sentence in formal writing.
- indirect object (1.5):** the element of a clause with a **ditransitive** verb that receives the action of the verb. In an active clause, the indirect object is the **recipient** (*the professor sent the class an email*). Indirect objects can be noun phrases but are often prepositional phrases with many **action** and **reporting** verbs (*the teacher talked to the class*).
- infinitive:** see **non-finite verb**.
- ing verb:** see **non-finite verb**.
- interpersonal meaning (1.8):** the relationship that a text builds between the writer and the reader. This level of meaning includes **hedging**, **boosting**, and evaluative language, as well as choices such as **personal pronouns** (first or third person?) and the use of questions (which directly address the reader). Unit 6 focuses on the resources for controlling interpersonal meaning. Interpersonal meaning is one of the three layers of meaning in **functional grammar** (see also **experiential meaning** and **textual meaning**).
- intransitive (1.5):** a verb that must have an **agent** (as the **subject**) but cannot take a **direct object**. Most intransitive verbs are usually followed by an adverb or prepositional phrase.
- irregular noun (5.1):** a noun with a plural form that is not formed by adding *-s* or *-es* (e.g., *children, criteria*).
- linking (8.4):** a pattern of paragraph organization in which the new information at the end of a sentence (or clause) becomes the old information at the start of the next.
- linking verb (1.7):** a verb that gives information about what something *is* or *is related to*. Describing linking verbs put the **agent** in a particular class or category (*She is a teacher*). Identifying verbs link the agent to its definition or to a statement about its identity, such as a name, example, role, symbol, or translation (*T is the response time*). The **complements** of linking verbs can be adjectives, **noun phrases**, prepositional phrases, and sometimes **clauses**.
- main clause (2.1):** in a sentence with more than one clause, the main clause is the **independent clause**. If there are two or more independent clauses, the first one is the main clause.
- main verb (1.1):** the verb in a **clause** that carries the main meaning, as distinct from an **auxiliary verb** or a **modal verb**.
- metalinguage (Introduction):** language used to talk about language—that is, the terminology used to describe grammar.
- modal verb (3.2, 6.1):** an **auxiliary verb** used to add **interpersonal meaning** to a **main verb**. The most common modal verbs in academic writing are *may, might, can, could, will, would, and should*. Modal verbs are often used for **hedging** and **boosting**.
- modifier (1.2):** a **determiner**, adjective, or **noun modifier** that appears before the **head noun** in a **noun phrase** and changes its meaning.
- nominalization (5.8):** changing a verb (or any other part of speech) into a noun phrase (e.g., *the reaction occurred quickly* → *it was a rapid reaction*).
- non-count noun (5.1):** a noun that does not have a plural form and cannot be used with **indefinite articles** because it has no shape or boundary and therefore exists as an

- uncountable concept. Many non-count nouns can become **countable**. These are called **double nouns**.
- non-finite clause (1.1):** a **clause** with a **non-finite verb** as its **main verb**. All non-finite clauses are **dependent clauses**. Some non-finite clauses are **reduced relative (i.e., embedded) clauses** or **non-restrictive relative clauses**.
- non-finite verb (2.4, 3.5):** a verb in the *to* infinitive (*to do*), bare infinitive (*do*), or *-ing* (*doing*) form that has no **subject** or a subject with which it does not agree in number. See **non-finite clause**.
- non-restrictive relative clause (2.3):** a type of **unequal clause** that **elaborates** on the meaning of something in the main clause with additional information, clarifications, descriptions, explanations, or comments. Non-restrictive clauses are always separated from the main clause with commas, unlike restrictive clauses, which are **embedded**.
- noun clause (3.3):** a dependent clause introduced with *that*, *if*, *whether*, or another **wh-** word. Noun clauses are usually the direct objects of **reporting verbs**. See also **subjunctive**.
- noun modifier (7.4):** a noun used as a **modifier** in front of a **head noun**. The modifier typically describes the type of head noun, for example—a *grammar* textbook.
- noun phrase (1.2):** a group of words that describe a main noun.
- object (1.1):** see **complement, direct object, indirect object**.
- passive voice (4.6):** a clause in which the **subject** is not the **agent** of the **main verb** (*The research was interrupted*).
- past habitual (4.5):** a verb form describing an action or state that was common or frequent in the past but is no longer so today. The past habitual is formed with *used to* or *would*.
- possessive determiner (5.6):** a word that specifies to whom the head noun belongs (*my, your, his, her, its, our, their*).
- pronoun (1.3):** a word that refers to a person or thing without naming it (*I, you, he, she, it, we, they*).
- proper noun (5.1):** a noun that is written with a capital letter because it is the name of a person, place, company, or trademark. All other nouns are **common nouns**.
- qualifier (1.2):** a prepositional phrase or **embedded clause** that appears after the **head noun** and explains or identifies it.
- quantifier (5.6):** an element of the **noun phrase** that specifies the quantity of the **head noun** (how much or how many), such as *many, a few, a number of*.
- real conditional (6.4):** a type of **enhancing clause** meaning that the main clause is true under certain conditions. In a real conditional, the conditions and the main clause are both factual (*they happened, are happening, or will/may happen*). See also **unreal conditional**.
- recipient (1.5):** the person or thing that benefits from the action of the verb. In the **active voice**, the recipient is usually an **indirect object** (*The experimenter gave the subjects clear directions*).
- reduced relative clause (3.2):** a relative clause can be reduced by omitting the **relative pronoun** and the verb *be* in some situations, or by changing the **finite verb** to an *-ing verb* in other situations.
- referent (2.3):** the noun, phrase, or clause that a relative pronoun replaces in a relative clause; in this definition, the referent of *that* is “noun, phrase, or clause.”

- relative clause (2.3, 3.1):** a **dependent clause** in which a **relative pronoun** takes the place of one of a noun (the **subject**, **complement**, or object of a preposition). See **embedded clause** (for restrictive relative clauses) and **non-restrictive relative clauses**.
- relative pronoun (2.3, 3.1):** a **subordinator** used with a **relative clause**: *that*, *which*, *who*, *whose*, and *whom*. The relative pronoun can be omitted if it is the **direct object** of the verb in the relative clause, or in a **reduced relative clause**.
- repeated theme (8.4):** a pattern of paragraph organization in which the same word or idea is used as the **theme** of several sentences.
- reporting verb (1.6, 6.6):** a verb that reports the words, thoughts, or ideas of another person or source (e.g., *say*, *believe*, *claim*). A complete functional grammar would distinguish between verbal processes and mental processes.
- restrictive relative clause (3.1):** see **embedded clause**.
- run-on sentence (2.7):** two **independent clauses** joined with a comma and no **conjunction**. This is considered an error in formal writing.
- sentence connector (2.2):** an adverb or prepositional phrase used to show the logical relationship between sentences or **independent clauses**—for example, *however*, *therefore*, *for example*.
- simple sentence (2.1):** a sentence composed of one independent clause.
- specific determiner (5.6):** words that make the **head noun** specific (*this*, *that*, *these*, or *those*) when used in the **determiner** slot in the **noun phrase** by pointing to *this one* or *these ones* here, or *that one* or *those ones* over there. Specific determiners are often used with **summary nouns** or by themselves as pronouns.
- subject (1.1):** the element of a **finite clause** that agrees with the verb (see **subject-verb agreement**). In an **active** clause, the subject is the **agent** of the verb. Most **non-finite clauses** do not have subjects, but occasionally they may, for example, *I wanted the students to participate*, where *the students* can be considered the subject of the **infinitive to participate**.
- subject-verb agreement (4.8):** a feature of **finite clauses** where the verb is changed slightly depending on whether the **subject** is singular or plural. In the present simple tense, most verbs add an *-s* or *-es* with singular subjects. The verb *have* changes to *has*. The verb *be* has more forms: *I am*, *you/we/they are*, *he/she/it is* in the present simple tense, and *I/he/she/it was* and *they/we were* in the past simple. When *be*, *have*, or *do* are used as **auxiliary verbs**, they agree with the subject. **Modal verbs** do not agree with their subjects.
- subjunctive (3.5):** a form of the verb used in **noun clauses** following verbs or adjectives with the meaning of recommendation, advice, or requirement (e.g., *recommend*, *insist*, *it is essential that*). The bare infinitive form of the verb (without *to* or third person *-s*) is used.
- subordinate clause (3.4):** a **dependent clause** that starts with any **subordinator**.
- subordinating conjunction (2.2):** a conjunction that can join a **dependent clause** to an **independent clause** in an **unequal** relationship, such as *because*, *if*, *although*.
- subordinator (3.4):** any word that introduces a subordinate clause, including **subordinating conjunctions**, **relative pronouns**, and **noun clause subordinators** (*that*, *if*, *whether*, and *wh-* words).

- summary noun (8.3):** a general noun with a broad meaning that is often used to create cohesion—for example, *difficulty*, *issue*, *feature*. Summary nouns are often used with **specific determiners** to create a link to a previous clause or sentence, a form of **textual meaning**.
- superlative (6.5):** a form of adjective or adverb used to show that an item (word, idea, action, state, etc.) is different from all others in some way. The superlative form of **gradable** adjectives is *-est* or *the most/least* + adjective. The superlative form of adverbs or nouns uses *the most/least*. Superlative noun phrases always require **definite articles**.
- super-theme (8.4):** a pattern of paragraph organization in which a main idea (the super-theme) is broken down into smaller parts or aspects in the **themes** of the following sentences.
- tense (3.2):** the meanings of time (past or present) and **aspect** that can be marked on a verb. Tenses in this book are described as time + aspect—for example, *present simple*, *past simple*, and *present perfect*.
- textual meaning (1.8):** the organization of the information and the message through an entire text (i.e. a paragraph, an essay, a paper, or a book). The textual function of language holds a text together and makes it coherent. This is done by choosing the **theme** of a clause and the position of new information. Unit 8 focuses on textual meaning. Textual meaning is one of the three layers of meaning in **functional grammar** (see also **experiential meaning** and **interpersonal meaning**).
- theme (8.2):** the first meaningful element in the clause. Typically, this is the **subject** plus any **sentence connectors** or **conjunctions** in front of it. The theme is “the point of departure of the message” (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004, p. 64), which is usually (but not always) old information. Writers use the theme position to create certain patterns of organization in paragraphs and longer texts (**linking pattern**, **repeated theme**, **super-theme**, **theme preview**).
- theme preview (8.4):** a pattern of paragraph organization in which the **themes** of the paragraph are previewed in the first sentence (sometimes called a topic sentence).
- time marker (4.2):** an adverb or prepositional phrase that expresses the time period of the clause, such as *today*, *in 1997*, or *in three years*.
- topic sentence (8.4):** see **theme preview**.
- transitive (1.5):** a verb that requires an **agent (subject)** and **goal (direct object)** in the **active voice**. Transitive verbs can be used in the **passive voice** with the goal as the subject.
- unequal clauses (a type of complex sentence) (2.2):** an independent clause joined with a **dependent or subordinate** clause in a relationship of **expansion**. The dependent clause often starts with a **subordinating conjunction**.
- unreal conditional (6.2):** a type of **enhancing clause** that gives the conditions under which the **main clause** would happen, even though it is not possible now. Unreal conditionals can be hypothetical (what would happen now or in the future) or counterfactual (what would have happened in the past). See also **real conditional**.
- voice:** see **active voice**, **passive voice**.
- wh- words (2.7):** **subordinators** that can introduce **noun clauses** formed from question words: *who*, *where*, *when*, *why*, *whether*, *which* + noun, and *how* (+ *many* / *much*).