

MA GRAMMAR / WEEK 15

Integrated grammatical argument

MA Grammar · Week 15

Quirk et al., Chapters 12, 13, 14 and 16

Can you defend a complete analysis?

Constructed example

The tutor asked Rana to revise the abstract, and Noor did so too.

Today's goals

Connect all four chapters.
Compare competing analyses.
Revise a claim in response to evidence.

Start with the observed structure

Retain the complete token and enough surrounding context.

Bracket clause and constituent boundaries.

Identify the lexical head and the pattern it enters.

Distinguish what is overt, recovered, substituted and inferred.

Chapter 12 · Recover without inventing

Constructed example

Rana can explain the rule, and Noor can too.

A defensible claim

Can is retained; explain the rule is unexpressed in the second conjoin.

The first conjoin supplies the recoverable predication.

Chapter 13 · Brackets predict scope

Constructed example

We invited new lecturers and researchers.

Competing analyses

[new lecturers] and [researchers]

new [lecturers and researchers]

Context is needed to select the intended scope.

Chapter 14 · Hierarchy predicts relations

Constructed example

We hope to discover why the method failed.

Hierarchy

hope [to discover [why the method failed]]

The finite question is inside the infinitival complement.

Chapter 16 · Several tests must converge

Constructed comparison

We prefer Noor to lead.
We expect Noor to lead.
We asked Noor to lead.

Evidence to combine

The intended event or speech act.
The span replaced by it or a noun.
The matrix passive.
The interpretation of Noor.

Theory check · Turn a label into an argument

Claim: This is a phrasal verb.

Evidence: The pronoun precedes the particle in the intended sense.

Comparison: A prepositional pattern keeps the pronoun after the preposition.

Limit: The test must retain the same lexical meaning.

Workshop 1 · Four short arguments

1. Rana has checked the file, and Noor has too.
2. The tutor praised the careful analysts and coders.
3. We wondered whether the analysis would change.
4. The draft is easy to revise.

For each, give a label, a diagnostic and a limitation.

Drill key · Evidence beyond labels

Reduction and scope

1: checked the file is recovered after has.
2: careful may modify analysts alone or both groups.

Clauses and complementation

3: whether-clause complements wondered.
4: draft is understood as object of revise;
compare It is easy to revise the draft.

Workshop 2 · A Mosul seminar report

“The English Department held a scientific seminar for master’s students specializing in linguistics.”

Authentic extract · University of Mosul, College of Arts
Seminar report, 29 December 2024

Identify the finite clause and the nonfinite modifier.
Analyse held and specializing in.

Several relations fit inside one sentence

Held is finite and monotransitive in this event-organising sense.

The object NP is headed by seminar.

Specializing in linguistics is a nonfinite -ing clause modifying students.

In introduces the prepositional complement of specializing.

Text laboratory · Departmental discussion

Constructed teaching data

- 1 Rana: The first group analysed the notices, and the second the forum posts.
- 2 Noor: We found the contrast useful, but we need to check another sample.
- 3 Tutor: I asked both groups to explain why the patterns differed.
- 4 Rana: Our extracts are easy to annotate, and theirs are too.
- 5 Noor: We looked up the disputed terms before revising the labels.
- 6 Tutor: Keep the claim that the sample is small in your final report.

Write and defend an analytical commentary

Identify at least one construction from each selected chapter.

Develop two disputed cases using diagnostics and alternatives.

Write a 100–130-word commentary on one connected problem.

Prepare a two-minute defence and revise one claim after peer challenge.

Suggested analysis of the discussion

Chapters 12–14

- 1: gapping of analysed; nominal recovery group.
- 3: why-question inside an infinitival directive.
- 4: theirs has genitive reference; are retains the operator before ellipsis.

Chapter 16 and integration

- 2: found + object + useful; need + infinitive.
- 5: transitive phrasal look up; temporal nonfinite clause.
- 6: claim has a content that-clause.

Challenge · Revise one claim publicly

State the claim your partner challenged.

Name the evidence that supports or weakens it.

Give your revised analysis, or explain why you retain it.

Exit response · Evidence and uncertainty

Choose one sentence from the laboratory text.

Give your strongest grammatical claim and its diagnostic.

State one remaining uncertainty or boundary of the analysis.

Prepare for the final assessment

Review your five portfolios and the feedback on your practical.

Practise a fresh passage without consulting an answer key.

Use brackets, diagnostics, alternatives and context.

Follow the department's confirmed assessment arrangements.