it out at interest, and it fetched us a dollar a day apiece all the year round—more than a body could tell what to do with. The Widow Douglas she took me for her son, and allowed she would sivilize me; but it was rough living in the house all the time, considering how dismal regular and decent the widow was in all her ways; and so when I couldn't stand it no longer I lit out. I got into my old rags and my sugar-hogshead again, and was free and satisfied. But Tom Sawyer he hunted me up and said he was going to start a band of robbers, and I might join if I would go back to the widow and be respectable. So I went back.

The widow she cried over me, and called me a poor lost lamb, and she called me a lot of other names, too, but she never meant no harm by it. She put me in them new clothes again, and I couldn't do nothing but sweat and sweat, and feel all cramped up. Well, then, the old thing commenced again. The widow rung a bell for supper, and you had to come to time. When you got to the table you couldn't go right to eating, but you had to wait for the widow to tuck down her head and grumble a little over the victuals, though there warn't really anything the matter with them,—that is, nothing only everything was cooked by itself. In a barrel of odds and ends it is different; things get mixed up, and the juice kind of swaps around, and the things go better.

After supper she got out her book and learned me about Moses and the Bulrushers, and I was in a sweat to find out all about him; but by and by she let it out that Moses had been dead a considerable long time; so then I didn't care no more about him, because I don't take no stock in dead people.

Pretty soon I wanted to smoke, and asked the widow to let me. But she wouldn't. She said it was a mean practice and wasn't clean, and I must try to not do it any more. That is just the way with some people. They get down on a thing when they don't know nothing about it. Here she was a-bothering about Moses, which was no kin to her, and no use to anybody, being gone, you see, yet finding a power of fault with me for doing a thing that had some good in it. And she took snuff, too; of course that was all right, because she done it herself.

Her sister, Miss Watson, a tolerable slim old maid, with goggles on,

CHAPTER TWO

We went tiptoeing along a path amongst the trees back towards the end of the widow's garden, stooping down so as the branches wouldn't scrape our heads. When we was passing by the kitchen I fell over a root and made a noise. We scrouched down and laid still. Miss Watson's big nigger, named Jim, was setting in the kitchen door; we could see him pretty clear, because there was a light behind him. He got up and stretched his neck out about a minute, listening. Then he says:

"Who dah?"

He listened some more; then he come tiptoeing down and stood right between us; we could a touched him, nearly. Well, likely it was minutes and minutes that there warn't a sound, and we all there so close together. There was a place on my ankle that got to itching, but I dasn't scratch it; and then my ear begun to itch; and next my back, right between my shoulders. Seemed like I'd die if I couldn't scratch. Well, I've noticed that thing plenty times since. If you are with the quality, or at a funeral, or trying to go to sleep when you ain't sleepy—if you are anywheres where it won't do for you to scratch, why you will itch all over in upwards of a thousand places. Pretty soon Jim says:

"Say, who is you? Whar is you? Dog my cats ef I didn' hear sum-f'n. Well, I know what I's gwyne to do: I's gwyne to set down here and listen tell I hears it agin."

So he set down on the ground betwixt me and Tom. He leaned his back up against a tree, and stretched his legs out till one of them

had just come to live with her, and took a set at me now with a spelling-book. She worked me middling hard for about an hour, and then the widow made her ease up. I couldn't stood it much longer. Then for an hour it was deadly dull, and I was fidgety. Miss Watson would say, "Don't put your feet up there, Huckleberry;" and "Don't scrunch up like that, Huckleberry—set up straight;" and pretty soon she would say, "Don't gap and stretch like that, Huckleberry—why don't you try to behave?" Then she told me all about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there. She got mad then, but I didn't mean no harm. All I wanted was to go somewheres; all I wanted was a change, I warn't particular. She said it was wicked to say what I said; said she wouldn't say it for the whole world; she was going to live so as to go to the good place. Well, I couldn't see no advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind I wouldn't try for it. But I never said so, because it would only make trouble, and wouldn't do no good.

Now she had got a start, and she went on and told me all about the good place. She said all a body would have to do there was to go around all day long with a harp and sing, forever and ever. So I didn't think much of it. But I never said so. I asked her if she reckoned Tom Sawyer would go there, and she said not by a considerable sight. I was glad about that, because I wanted him and me to be together.

Miss Watson she kept pecking at me, and it got tiresome and lonesome. By and by they fetched the niggers in and had prayers, and then everybody was off to bed. I went up to my room with a piece of candle, and put it on the table. Then I set down in a chair by the window and tried to think of something cheerful, but it warn't no use. I felt so lonesome I most wished I was dead. The stars were shining, and the leaves rustled in the woods ever so mournful; and I heard an owl, away off, who-whooing about somebody that was dead, and a whippowill and a dog crying about somebody that was going to die; and the wind was trying to whisper something to me, and I couldn't make out what it was, and so it made the cold shivers run over me. Then away out in the woods I heard that kind of a sound that a ghost makes when it wants to tell about something that's on its mind and can't make itself understood, and so can't rest

CHAPTER ONE

HUCKLEBERRY FINN

Scene: The Mississippi Valley
Time: Forty to fifty years ago

You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied one time or another, without it was Aunt Polly, or the widow, or maybe Mary. Aunt Polly—Tom's Aunt Polly, she is—and Mary, and the Widow Douglas is all told about in that book, which is mostly a true book, with some stretchers, as I said before.

Now the way that the book winds up is this: Tom and me found the money that the robbers hid in the cave, and it made us rich. We got six thousand dollars apiece—all gold. It was an awful sight of money when it was piled up. Well, Judge Thatcher he took it and put

easy in its grave, and has to go about that way every night grieving. I got so down-hearted and scared I did wish I had some company. Pretty soon a spider went crawling up my shoulder, and I flipped it off and it lit in the candle; and before I could budge it was all shriveled up. I didn't need anybody to tell me that that was an awful bad sign and would fetch me some bad luck, so I was scared and most shook the clothes off of me. I got up and turned around in my tracks three times and crossed my breast every time; and then I tied up a little lock of my hair with a thread to keep witches away. But I hadn't no confidence. You do that when you've lost a horseshoe that you've found, instead of nailing it up over the door, but I hadn't ever heard anybody say it was any way to keep off bad luck when you'd killed a spider.

I set down again, a-shaking all over, and got out my pipe for a smoke; for the house was all as still as death now, and so the widow wouldn't know. Well, after a long time I heard the clock away off in the town go boom—boom—boom—twelve licks; and all still again—stiller than ever. Pretty soon I heard a twig snap down in the dark amongst the trees—something was a stirring. I set still and listened. Directly I could just barely hear a "me-yow! me-yow!" down there. That was good! Says I, "me-yow! me-yow!" as soft as I could, and then I put out the light and scrambled out of the window on to the shed. Then I slipped down to the ground and crawled in among the trees, and, sure enough, there was Tom Sawyer waiting for me.

most touched one of mine. My nose begun to itch. It itched till the tears come into my eyes. But I dasn't scratch. Then it begun to itch on the inside. Next I got to itching underneath. I didn't know how I was going to set still. This miserableness went on as much as six or seven minutes; but it seemed a sight longer than that. I was itching in eleven different places now. I reckoned I couldn't stand it more'n a minute longer, but I set my teeth hard and got ready to try. Just then Jim begun to breathe heavy; next he begun to snore—and then I was pretty soon comfortable again.

Tom he made a sign to me—kind of a little noise with his mouth—and we went creeping away on our hands and knees. When we was ten foot off Tom whispered to me, and wanted to tie Jim to the tree for fun. But I said no; he might wake and make a disturbance, and then they'd find out I warn't in. Then Tom said he hadn't got candles enough, and he would slip in the kitchen and get some more. I didn't want him to try. I said Jim might wake up and come. But Tom wanted to resk it; so we slid in there and got three candles, and Tom laid five cents on the table for pay. Then we got out, and I was in a sweat to get away; but nothing would do Tom but he must crawl to where Jim was, on his hands and knees, and play something on him. I waited, and it seemed a good while, everything was so still and lonesome.

As soon as Tom was back we cut along the path, around the garden fence, and by and by fetched up on the steep top of the hill the other side of the house. Tom said he slipped Jim's hat off of his head and hung it on a limb right over him, and Jim stirred a little, but he didn't wake. Afterwards Jim said the witches bewitched him and put him in a trance, and rode him all over the State, and then set him under the trees again, and hung his hat on a limb to show who done it. And next time Jim told it he said they rode him down to New Orleans; and, after that, every time he told it he spread it more and more, till by and by he said they rode him all over the world, and tired him most to death, and his back was all over saddle-boils. Jim was monstrous proud about it, and he got so he wouldn't hardly notice the other niggers. Niggers would come miles to hear Jim tell about it, and he was more looked up to than any nigger in that country.

Everybody was willing. So Tom got out a sheet of paper that he had wrote the oath on, and read it. It swore every boy to stick to the band, and never tell any of the secrets; and if anybody done anything to any boy in the band, whichever boy was ordered to kill that person and his family must do it, and he mustn't eat and he mustn't sleep till he had killed them and hacked a cross in their breasts, which was the sign of the band. And nobody that didn't belong to the band could use that mark, and if he did he must be sued; and if he done it again he must be killed. And if anybody that belonged to the band told the secrets, he must have his throat cut, and then have his carcass burnt up and the ashes scattered all around, and his name blotted off of the list with blood and never mentioned again by the gang, but have a curse put on it and be forgot forever.

Everybody said it was a real beautiful oath, and asked Tom if he got it out of his own head. He said, some of it, but the rest was out of pirate-books and robber-books, and every gang that was high-toned had it.

Some thought it would be good to kill the *families* of boys that told the secrets. Tom said it was a good idea, so he took a pencil and wrote it in. Then Ben Rogers says:

"Here's Huck Finn, he hain't got no family; what you going to do 'bout him?"

"Well, hain't he got a father?" says Tom Sawyer.

"Yes, he's got a father, but you can't never find him these days. He used to lay drunk with the hogs in the tanyard, but he hain't been seen in these parts for a year or more."

They talked it over, and they was going to rule me out, because they said every boy must have a family or somebody to kill, or else it wouldn't be fair and square for the others. Well, nobody could think of anything to do—everybody was stumped, and set still. I was most ready to cry; but all at once I thought of a way, and so I offered them Miss Watson—they could kill her. Everybody said:

"Oh, she'll do. That's all right. Huck can come in."

Then they all stuck a pin in their fingers to get blood to sign with, and I made my mark on the paper.

"Now," says Ben Rogers, "what's the line of business of this Gang?"

"Nothing only robbery and murder," Tom said.

CHAPTER THREE

Well I got a good going-over in the morning from old Miss Watson on account of my clothes; but the widow she didn't scold, but only cleaned off the grease and clay, and looked so sorry that I thought I would behave awhile if I could. Then Miss Watson she took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing come of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it warn't so. I tried it. Once I got a fish-line, but no hooks. It warn't any good to me without hooks. I tried for the hooks three or four times, but somehow I couldn't make it work. By and by, one day, I asked Miss Watson to try for me, but she said I was a fool. She never told me why, and I couldn't make it out no way.

I set down one time back in the woods, and had a long think about it. I says to myself, if a body can get anything they pray for, why don't Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can't the widow get back her silver snuffbox that was stole? Why can't Miss Watson fat up? No, says I to my self, there ain't nothing in it. I went and told the widow about it, and she said the thing a body could get by praying for it was "spiritual gifts." This was too many for me, but she told me what she meant—I must help other people, and do everything I could for other people, and look out for them all the time, and never think about myself. This was including Miss Watson, as I took it. I went out in the woods and turned it over in my mind a long time, but I couldn't see no advantage about it—except for the other people; so at last I reckoned I wouldn't worry about it any more, but just let it go. Sometimes the widow would take me one

"But who are we going to rob?—houses, or cattle, or—"

"Stuff! stealing cattle and such things ain't robbery; it's burglary," says Tom Sawyer. "We ain't burglars. That ain't no sort of style. We are highwaymen. We stop stages and carriages on the road, with masks on, and kill the people and take their watches and money."

"Must we always kill the people?"

"Oh, certainly. It's best. Some authorities think different, but mostly it's considered best to kill them—except some that you bring to the cave here, and keep them till they're ransomed."

"Ransomed? What's that?"

"I don't know. But that's what they do. I've seen it in books; and so of course that's what we've got to do."

"But how can we do it if we don't know what it is?"

"Why, blame it all, we've *got* to do it. Don't I tell you it's in the books? Do you want to go to doing different from what's in the books, and get things all muddled up?"

"Oh, that's all very fine to *say*, Tom Sawyer, but how in the nation are these fellows going to be ransomed if we don't know how to do it to them?—that's the thing I want to get at. Now, what do you reckon it is?"

"Well, I don't know. But per'aps if we keep them till they're ransomed, it means that we keep them till they're dead. "

"Now, that's something *like*. That'll answer. Why couldn't you said that before? We'll keep them till they're ransomed to death; and a bothersome lot they'll be, too—eating up everything, and always trying to get loose."

"How you talk, Ben Rogers. How can they get loose when there's a guard over them, ready to shoot them down if they move a peg?"

"A guard! Well, that IS good. So somebody's got to set up all night and never get any sleep, just so as to watch them. I think that's foolishness. Why can't a body take a club and ransom them as soon as they get here?"

"Because it ain't in the books so—that's why. Now, Ben Rogers, do you want to do things regular, or don't you?—that's the idea. Don't you reckon that the people that made the books knows what's the correct thing to do? Do you reckon *you* can learn 'em anything? Not

Strange niggers would stand with their mouths open and look him all over, same as if he was a wonder. Niggers is always talking about witches in the dark by the kitchen fire; but whenever one was talking and letting on to know all about such things, Jim would happen in and say, "Hm! What you know 'bout witches?" and that nigger was corked up and had to take a back seat. Jim always kept that five-center piece round his neck with a string, and said it was a charm the devil give to him with his own hands, and told him he could cure anybody with it and fetch witches whenever he wanted to just by saying something to it; but he never told what it was he said to it. Niggers would come from all around there and give Jim anything they had, just for a sight of that five-center piece; but they wouldn't touch it, because the devil had had his hands on it. Jim was most ruined for a servant, because he got stuck up on account of having seen the devil and been rode by witches.

Well, when Tom and me got to the edge of the hill-top we looked away down into the village and could see three or four lights twinkling, where there was sick folks, maybe; and the stars over us was sparkling ever so fine; and down by the village was the river, a whole mile broad, and awful still and grand. We went down the hill and found Jo Harper and Ben Rogers, and two or three more of the boys, hid in the old tanyard. So we unhitched a skiff and pulled down the river two mile and a half, to the big scar on the hillside, and went ashore.

We went to a clump of bushes, and Tom made everybody swear to keep the secret, and then showed them a hole in the hill, right in the thickest part of the bushes. Then we lit the candles, and crawled in on our hands and knees. We went about two hundred yards, and then the cave opened up. Tom poked about amongst the passages, and pretty soon ducked under a wall where you wouldn't a noticed that there was a hole. We went along a narrow place and got into a kind of room, all damp and sweaty and cold, and there we stopped. Tom says:

"Now, we'll start this band of robbers and call it Tom Sawyer's Gang. Everybody that wants to join has got to take an oath, and write his name in blood."

So far we have only considered orthographic words, i.e. recognisable physical written word-forms. Obviously, words as physical objects exist not only in writing, but also in speech. We will now briefly turn to word-forms in spoken language. We will refer to them as PHONOLOGICAL WORDS.

The challenge of word recognition arises in an even more obvious way when we consider speech. Words are not separated distinctly from each other. We do not leave a pause between words that could be equated to a space in writing. (If we did that, conversation would be painfully slow! Just try speaking to one of your friends today leaving a two-second gap between words. See how they react.) In normal speech words come out in a torrent. They overlap. Just as droplets of water cannot be seen flowing down a river, individual words do not stand out discretely in the flow of conversation. So they are much harder to isolate than words in writing. None the less, we are able to isolate them. If you heard an utterance like:

[2.4]

The cat slept in your bed.
/ekæt slept In : bed/
(Note: ‘ ’ shows that the following syllable is stressed; phonemic transcription is written between slant lines.)

you would be able to recognise the six phonological words that have been written in PHONEMIC TRANSCRIPTION (which shows the PHONEMES, i.e. the sounds that are used to distinguish the meanings of words) although what you hear is one continuous stream of sound. For purely practical reasons, throughout the book, unless otherwise stated, phonemic transcriptions and references to pronunciation will be based on RECEIVED PRONUNCIATION (RP), the prestige accent of standard British English—the variety popularly known as the Queen's English or BBC English.

An intriguing question that linguists and psychologists have tried to answer is: how do people recognise words in speech? We will address this question in detail in section (11.2.1) below. For now let us simply assume that phonological words can be identified. Our present task will simply be to outline some of their key properties. To do this it will be useful to distinguish between two types of words: the so-called CONTENT WORDS and FUNCTION WORDS. Content words are the nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs which contain most of the REFERENTIAL (or COGNITIVE MEANING) of a sentence. This roughly means that they name individuals and predicate of them certain properties. They tell us, for instance, what happened or who did what to whom, and in what circumstances. An example will make the point clear. In the old days, when people sent telegrams, it was content words that were mainly (or exclusively) used. A proud parent could send a message like *Baby girl arrived yesterday* which contained two nouns, a verb and an adverb. Obviously, this is not a well-formed, grammatical sentence. But its meaning would be clear enough.

Function words are the rest—prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, articles and so on. They have a predominantly grammatical role. A telegram containing only the words *She it and for us* would convey little idea of what the intended interpretation was. This is not to say that function words are superfluous. Without them sentences are usually ungrammatical. A sentence like **Nelly went town* which lacks the preposition *to* is not permitted. We have to say *Nelly went to town*.

In English, content words have this property: one of their syllables is more prominent than the rest because it receives MAIN STRESS. This is seen in the words below where the syllable with main stress is preceded by ‘ ’:

[2.5]

Initial stress	*Medial stress*	*Final stress*

own. If some shouted to you in the street, 'Hey, are you *-ish*?' you might smile bemusedly and think to yourself, 'Isn't he weird!' In the next chapter we will take up the question of what to do with pieces of words that cannot be used meaningfully on their own. But for the moment we will focus exclusively on words.

2.2
WORDS ARE LIKE LIQUORICE ALLSORTS

When we talk of words we do not always mean exactly the same thing. Like liquorice allsorts, words come in all sorts of varieties. We will start our discussions by distinguishing the different senses in which we use the term 'word'.

2.2.1
Word-forms

Let us use the term WORD-FORM to describe the physical form which realises or represents a word in speech or writing. Consider the words in the following extract from T.S.Eliot's poem:

[2.1]

Half-past one,
The street-lamp sputtered,

The street-lamp muttered,
The street-lamp said, 'Regard that woman
Who hesitates towards you in the light of the door
Which opens on her like a grin…
('Rhapsody on a windy night' in Eliot 1963)

In written English, words are easy to recognise. They are preceded by a space and followed by a space. Using this criterion, we can say that there are thirty-one words (i.e. word-forms) in the extract from 'Rhapsody'. We will call word-forms like these which we find in writing ORTHOGRAPHIC WORDS. If you look again at the extract, you might wonder if some of the hyphenated orthographic words are 'really' individual words. Many people would hyphenate *half-past* as Eliot does but not *street-lamp*. They would write *street lamp* as two separate words, with a space between them. What would you do?

The use of hyphens to indicate that something is a complex word containing more than one word-like unit is variable, largely depending on how transparent the compound nature of a word is. Shakespeare wrote *today* as *to-day* and *tomorrow* as *to-morrow:*

[2.2]

a. To-morrow, Caesar,
I shall be furnished to inform you rightly…
(*Antony and Cleopatra*, I, iv)

hyphenated word-form *street-lamp* occurs three times. So if we were counting different word-forms, we would count *street-lamp* three times. However, if we were counting distinct words, in the sense of distinct VOCABULARY ITEMS we would only count it once.

The distinction between word-forms and vocabulary items is important. Very often, when we talk about words what we have in mind is not word-forms, but something more abstract—what we will refer to here as LEXEMES (i.e. vocabulary items). Anyone compiling a dictionary lists words in this sense. So, although the word-forms in each of the columns in [2.8] below are different, we do not find each one of them given a separate entry in an English dictionary. The first word in each column is listed under a heading of its own. The rest may be mentioned under that heading, if they do not follow a regular pattern of the language—e.g. *write, written* (past participle), *wrote* (past tense). But if they do follow the general pattern (e.g. *washes, washing, washed; smile, smiling, smiled*) they will be left out of the dictionary altogether. Instead, the grammar will be expected to provide a general statement to the effect that verbs take an *-ing* suffix, which marks progressive aspect, and an *-ed* suffix that marks both the past tense and the past participle, and so on.

[2.8]

WASH	TAKE	BRING	WRITE
wash	take	bring	write
washes	takes	brings	writes
washing	taking	bringing	writing
washed	took	brought	wrote
washed	taken	brought	written

In [2.8] each lexeme (i.e. vocabulary item) that would be entered in a dictionary is shown in capital letters and all the different word-forms belonging to it are shown in lower-case letters.

The examples in [2.8] are all verbs. But, of course, lexemes can be nouns, adjectives or adverbs as well. In [2.9] you will find examples from these other word classes.

[2.9]

	Noun	*Adjective*	*Adverb*
a.	MATCH	KIND	SOON
	match	kind	soon
	matches	kinder	sooner
b.	GOOSE	BAD	WELL
	goose	bad	well
	geese	worse	better

In [2.9] we have three pairs of lexemes: the nouns, *match* and *goose;* the adjectives *kind* and *bad;* and adverbs *soon* and *well*. In each case the word-forms belonging to each lexeme in [2.9a] follow a general pattern for words of their type and need not be listed in the dictionary. But all the ones in [2.9b] are irregular and must be listed in the dictionary.

The lexeme is an abstract entity that is found in the dictionary and that has a certain meaning. Word-forms are the concrete objects that we put down on paper (orthographic words) or utter (phonological words) when we use language. The relationship between a lexeme and the word-forms belonging to it is one

Evidently, the position of words in a sentence is not rigidly fixed. They can, and often do, get moved around if the communicative needs of the speaker or writer require it. However, the interior of a word is a no-go area for syntactic rules. They are strictly barred from manipulating elements found inside a word. As far as syntax is concerned, words are indivisible units that cannot be split and whose internal units are inaccessible (cf. Bauer 1988, Matthews 1991, Lyons 1968, Di Sciullo and Williams 1987).

The word as a grammatical unit shows stability (or INTERNAL COHESION). The order of elements inside a word is rigidly fixed. If the elements of a sentence are shifted, certain meaningful units (in this case *re-visit-ed* and *fortun-ate-ly*) all move *en bloc*, and their order always remains unchanged. The internal structure of the word cannot be tampered with. We are not allowed to perform operations that would yield words like **ed-visit-re, *ate-fortune-ly* etc. We will return to this point on p. 33 below.

The definition of the word includes the term 'minimal' for a good reason. This is intended to separate words from phrases like *this old industrialist*. Like words, phrases can occur in isolation and they can be moved from one position to another (as we have seen in [2.19]). But the expression *this old industrialist* is not a minimal form since it contains smaller forms capable of occurring independently namely, *this, old* and *industrialist*. Furthermore, the sequence *this old industrialist* does not have the kind of internal cohesion found in words. It can be interrupted by other words e.g. *this wealthy old industrialist; this very wealthy, old, benevolent industrialist.*

The assumption that the grammatical word is 'a minimum free form' works well as a rule of thumb. But it encounters difficulties when confronted by a COMPOUND WORD like *wheelbarrow* which contains the words *wheel* and *barrow* which can stand alone. In such cases it is clear that the word is not the smallest meaningful unit that can be used on its own. It is for this reason that the definition of the word as the unit on which purely syntactic operations can be performed is preferable. In the case of compounds this definition works. The interior of a compound is a syntactic no-go area. Syntactic rules are not allowed to apply separately to words that make up a compound. Thus, for example although the nouns *wheel* and *barrow* can be modified by the adjective *big ([big barrow], [big wheel]),* and although we can talk of *[big wheelbarrow],* in which case *big* modifies the entire compound, there is no possibility of saying *wheel [big barrow],* with the adjective only modifying the second element of the compound word.

2.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter we have established that normally, the term 'word' is used ambiguously. To avoid the ambiguity, we need to distinguish between three different types of word: (i) a word-form (i.e. a particular physical manifestation of one or more lexemes in speech or writing); (ii) a vocabulary item (i.e. lexeme); and (iii) a unit of grammatical structure that has certain morphological and syntactic properties.

We will revisit the distinction between lexemes, grammatical words and word-forms mainly in Chapters 7 and 11. In Chapter 7 our main concern will be the realisation of words in speech and in writing. In Chapter 11 we will show that this distinction is not an artefact of the linguist's analysis. Rather, it is a distinction that is well supported by studies in the way in which we store words in the mind and retrieve them for use in communication in real life.

In the coming chapters, in cases where the relevant sense of the term 'word' is clear from the context I will not spell out whether it is the word as a vocabulary item, grammatical word, phonological or orthographic form that is being dealt with. But where it is not clear, I will indicate the sense in which I am using this term. We are now in a position to consider in detail the internal structure of words. That is the task of the next chapter.

c. *fair: fair* $_{(\text{Adjective})}$ 'beautiful, attractive'
fair $_{(\text{Noun})}$ 'holiday'

By contrast, word-forms may have the same pronunciation but different spellings and meanings. Such forms are called HOMOPHONES. See this example from a joke book:

[2.12]

Why does the pony cough?
Because he's a little hoarse.
(Young and Young 1981:57)

The joke is a pun on /h:s/, the pronunciation of the two lexemes represented in writing by *horse* and *hoarse*. Other examples of homophones include *tail ~ tale, sail ~ sale, weather ~ whether, see ~ sea, read ~ reed, reel ~ real, seen ~ scene, need ~ knead.*

Conversely, it is also possible to have several closely related meanings that are realised by the same word-form. The name for this is POLYSEMY. Often you find several senses listed under a single heading in a dictionary. For instance, under the entry for the noun *force,* the *OED* lists over ten senses. I have reproduced the first six below:

[2.13]

1. Physical strength. Rarely in *pl.* (= Fr. *forces*—1818.)
2. Strength, impetus, violence, or intensity of effect ME.
3. Power or might; esp. military power ME. b. In early use, the strength (of a defensive work etc.). Subseq., the fighting strength of a ship. 1577.
4. A body of armed men, an army. In *pl.* the troops or soldiers composing the fighting strength of a kingdom or a commander ME. b. A body of police; often absol. *the force*=policemen collectively. 1851.
5. Physical strength or power exerted on an object; *esp.* violence or physical coercion. ME.
6. Mental or moral strength. Now only, power of effective action, or of overcoming resistance. ME.

The line that separates polysemy from homonymy is somewhat blurred because it is not altogether clear how far meanings need to diverge before we should treat words representing them as belonging to distinct lexemes. In [2.13], it is not entirely clear that the sixth sense of the noun *force* is not sufficiently removed from the other meanings to merit an entry of its own. The other meanings all show a reasonably strong family resemblance. But mental or moral strength shows a somewhat weaker relationship.

In the *OED,* there is a separate entry for the lexeme *force,* the verb. It is considered a different lexeme because it has a different meaning and belongs to a different word-class, being a verb and not a noun. Belonging to different word-classes is an important consideration in determining whether separate dictionary entries are needed.

In real-life communication, the lack of a one-to-one match between lexemes and word-forms does not necessarily cause ambiguity. In context, the relevant meaning is normally easy to determine. But there are cases where it is not. For instance, the homonymy of *bat* in [2.14] can cause semantic confusion:

[2.14]

I saw a *bat* under the tree.

[2.10]

of REALISATION or REPRESENTATION or MANIFESTATION. If we take the lexeme *write* which is entered in the dictionary, for example, we can see that it may be realised by any one of the word-forms *write, writes, writing, wrote* and *written* which belong to it. These are the actual forms that are used in speech or appear on paper. When you see the orthographic words *written* and *wrote* on the page, you know that although they are spelt differently they are manifestations of the same vocabulary item WRITE.

The distinction between word-forms and lexemes which I have just made is not abstruse. It is a distinction that we are intuitively aware of from an early age. It is the distinction on which word-play in puns and in intentional ambiguity in everyday life depends. At a certain period in our childhood we were fascinated by words. We loved jokes—even awful ones like [2.10]

The humour, of course, lies in recognising that the word-form *shrimp* can belong to two separate lexemes whose very different and unrelated meanings are none the less pertinent here. It can mean either 'an edible, long, slender crustacean' or 'a tiny person' (in colloquial English). Also, the word *serve* has two possible interpretations. It can mean 'to wait upon a person at table' or 'to dish up food'. Thus, word-play exploits the lexical ambiguity arising from the fact that the same word-form represents two distinct lexemes with very distinct meanings.

In real-life communication, where potential ambiguity occurs we generally manage to come to just one interpretation without too much difficulty by selecting the most appropriate and RELEVANT interpretation in the situation. Suppose a 20-stone super heavyweight boxer went to Joe's Vegetarian Restaurant and asked the waiter for a nice shrimp curry and the waiter said in reply, 'We don't serve shrimps', it would be obvious that it was shrimps in the sense of crustaceans that was intended. If, on the other hand, a little man, barely 5 feet tall and weighing a mere 7 stone, went to a fish restaurant and saw almost everyone at the tables around him tucking into a plateful of succulent shrimps, and thought that he would quite fancy some himself, he would be rightly offended if the waiter said 'We do not serve shrimps.' It is obvious in this situation that shrimps are on the menu and are dished up for consumption. What is not done is serve up food to people deemed to be puny.

Puns are not restricted to jokes. Many advertisements like that for Standens rely on puns for their effect. Given the context, it is obvious that *sound* is meant to be read in more than one sense here.

Serious literature also uses this device. For instance, the First World War poet Siegfried Sassoon gives the title 'Base details' to the poem in which he parodies cowardly generals who stay away at the base, at a safe distance from the action, and gladly speed young soldiers to their death at the front. The word-form *base* in the title represents two distinct lexemes here whose meanings are both relevant: (i) *Base details* are details of what is happening at the *base* $_{(\text{Noun})}$ (meaning 'military encampment'), and (ii) *Base details* are particulars of something that is *base* $_{(\text{Adjective})}$ (meaning 'reprehensibly cowardly, mean etc.').

The term HOMONYM is used to denote word-forms belonging to distinct lexemes that are written and pronounced in the same way. There are separate dictionary entries for such words. *Shrimp* and *base* are examples of homonyms. But perhaps they are not so obvious. Better examples of homonyms are shown in [2.11].

[2.11]

a. *bat: bat* $_{(\text{Noun})}$ 'a small flying mammal'
   bat $_{(\text{Noun})}$ 'a wooden implement for hitting a ball in cricket'

b. *bar: bar* $_{(\text{Noun})}$ 'the profession of barrister'
   bar $_{(\text{Noun})}$ 'a vertical line across a stave used to mark metrical accent in music'
   bar $_{(\text{Verb})}$ 'to obstruct'

EXERCISES

1. Comment on the problems you encounter in determining the number of words in the following nursery rhyme. Relate your answer to the different senses in which the term 'word' is used.

The grand old Duke of York
He had ten thousand men.
He marched them up to the top of the hill,
Then he marched them down again.
When they were up, they were up,
And when they were down, they were down,
And when they were only half way up
They were neither up nor down.

2. Find and analyse at least three examples of advertisements that exploit the homonymy, polysemy or homophony of words.
3. Which ones of the italicised word-forms in the following sentences belong to the same lexeme? What difficulties, if any, have you come across in determining whether word-forms belong to the same lexeme?

   a. She *saw* him *saw* through that plank of wood.
   b. *Bill* will pay the *bill*.
   c. I saw *Farmer* near your *farm* again this morning.
   d. Jan looked *pale* when she walked towards the *pail*.
   e. I am *sick* of your claiming to be *sick* all the time.
   f. I was looking at the *book* when she *booked* the ticket.

4. Using at least two fresh examples, show how syncretism can be used to support the distinction between word-forms and grammatical words.
5. This is the beginning of W.H.Auden's poem 'Musée des Beaux Arts'.

About suffering they were never wrong,
The Old Masters…

These lines can be paraphrased as 'The Old Masters were never wrong about suffering.'

Referring to the definition of the word given in this chapter, explain why it is correct to regard *suffering* as a word but incorrect to treat *about suffering* also as a word.

It could be a *bat* with which you play cricket or a small, flying mammal. This is a case of LEXICAL AMBIGUITY. We have in this sentence a word-form that represents more than one lexeme with a meaning that is quite plausible. It is not possible to determine the right interpretation of the sentence without looking at the wider context in which it appears.

We have established that the relationship between a word-form and the meaning that it represents is a complex one. This is exploited not only in literature and word-play as we saw above but also in the language of advertising. For instance, a recent British Gas newspaper advertisement for gas heating said:

[2.15]

You will warm to our credit. It's free.

This advertisement exploits the lexical ambiguity that is due to the fact that *warm (to)* can mean 'become enthusiastic' or 'experience a rise in temperature'. Next time you look at an advertisement, see whether it exploits any of the relationships between lexemes and word-forms that we have examined.

2.2.3 Grammatical words

Finally, let us consider the word from a grammatical perspective. Words play a key role in syntax. So, some of their properties are assigned taking into account syntactic factors. Often words are required to have certain properties if they serve certain syntactic purposes. Thus, although in [2.16a] we have the same sense of the same lexeme *(play)* realised by the same word-form *(played)*, we know that this word does at least two quite different grammatical jobs in the sentence of which it is a part:

[2.16]

a.	b.
She played the flute.	She took the flute.
She has played the flute.	She has taken the flute.

If you compare the sentences in [2.16] above, you will see that in [2.16a] the verb *play* is realised by the word-form *played* regardless of whether it simply indicates that the action happened in the past as in the first example or that an action was (recently) completed as in the second example. Contrast this with the situation in [2.16b] where these two grammatical meanings are signalled by two different forms. *Took* indicates that the action happened in the past while *taken* (after *has/had*) indicates that the action is complete. In *She played the flute* and *She took the flute* the words *played* and *took* are described grammatically as the 'past tense forms of the verbs *play* and *take*'. By contrast, in *She has played the flute* and *She has taken the flute* we describe *played* and *taken* as the 'past participle' of *play* and *take*.

Linguists use the term SYNCRETISM to describe situations such as that exemplified by *played* where the same word-form of a lexeme is used to realise two (or more) distinct grammatical words that are represented separately in the grammatical representations of words belonging to some other comparable lexemes. The phenomenon of syncretism is one good reason for distinguishing between word-forms and grammatical words. It enables us to show that words belonging to the same lexeme and having the same form in speech and writing can still differ.

A further example should make the ideas of grammatical words and syncretism even clearer. Consider the verbs in the following sentences:

[3.2]

childish hopeless sooner mended elephants re-boil unsafe ex-wife

You would have to give a different answer. You would need to tell your interrogator, who by now would be getting increasingly bewildered, that the words in [3.2] can be divided into smaller units of meaning as shown in [3.3]:

[3.3]

child-*ish* hope-*less* soon-*er* mend-*ed* elephant-*s* *re*-boil *un*-safe *ex*-wife

The part of the word that is not italicised can function as an independent word in the grammar. Indeed, each of the nonitalicised chunks is a word (i.e. vocabulary item) that is listed as such in the dictionary. By contrast, the italicised bits, though meaningful (and their meanings can be indicated as shown in [3.4]), cannot function on their own in the grammar.

[3.4]

-ish	'having the (objectionable) qualities of'	child-ish= 'having the qualities of a child'
-less	'without X'	hopeless= 'without hope'
-er	'more X'	sooner= 'more soon'
-ed	'past'	mended= 'mend in the past'
-s	'plural'	elephants= 'more than one elephant'
re	'again'	re-boil= 'boil again'
un	'not X'	unsagfe= 'not safe'
ex	'former'	ex-wife= 'former wife'

What we have done to the words in [3.4] can be done to thousands of other words in English. They can be decomposed into smaller units of meaning (e.g. *re-* 'again') or grammatical function (e.g. *-ed* 'past').

The term MORPHEME is used to refer to the smallest unit that has meaning or serves a grammatical function in a language. Morphemes are the atoms with which words are built. It is not possible to find sub-morphemic units that are themselves meaningful or have a grammatical function. Thus, given *-less* or *un-*, it would make no sense to try to assign some identifiable meaning to any part of these forms. Of course, it is possible to isolate the individual sounds /l-I-s/ or / -n/, but those sounds in themselves do not mean anything.

We have now established that words are made up of morphemes. But how do we recognise a morpheme when we see one? Our definition of the morpheme as the smallest unit of meaning (or grammatical function) will be the guiding principle. Any chunk of a word with a particular meaning will be said to represent a morpheme. That is how we proceeded in [3.3] and [3.4] above.

Morphemes tend to have a fairly stable meaning which they bring to any word in which they appear. If we take *re-* and *un-*, for example, they mean 'again' and 'not' respectively—not just in the words we have listed above, but also in thousands of other words. Usually morphemes are used again and again to form different words. Thus *re-* meaning 're-do whatever the verb means' can be attached before most verbs to yield a new word with a predictable meaning (e.g. *re-run, re-take, re-build* etc.). In like manner, *un-* meaning 'not X' (where X stands for whatever the adjective means) can be attached to various adjectives (e.g. *un-real, un-clean, un-happy* etc.) to yield a new word with a predictable negative meaning.

several syllables realise a single morpheme, is equally possible. Thus, the trisyllabic and quadrisyllabic word-forms *elephant* and *asparagus* both realise just a single morpheme.

The nature of the relationship between sounds and morphemes is intriguing. At first sight, it might look reasonable to assume that morphemes are made up of PHONEMES. We might be tempted to think that *cat*, the English morpheme with the meaning is made up of the phonemes /kæt/. But we have several kinds of evidence showing that this is not the case.

First, if morphemes were *made up* of phonemes, a given morpheme would be uniquely associated with a given phonological representation. In reality, the same morpheme can be realised by different morphs (i.e. sounds or written forms). Morphs which realise the same morpheme are referred to as ALLOMORPHS of that morpheme.

The INDEFINITE ARTICLE is a good example of a morpheme with more than one allomorph. It is realised by the two forms *a* and *an*. The sound at the beginning of the following word determines the allomorph that is selected. If the word following the indefinite article begins with a consonant, the allomorph *a* is selected, but if it begins with a vowel the allomorph *an* is used instead:

[3.6]

a.	a dictionary	b.	an island
	a boat		an evening
	a pineapple		an opinion
	a leg		an eye
	a big (mat)		an old (mat)
	a dull (song)		an exciting (finish)

Hence the incorrectness of the sentence marked with an asterisk in [3.7]:

[3.7]

a.	I spent *an* evening with them.
	*I spent *a* evening with them.
b.	I spent *the* evening with them.

Allomorphs of the same morpheme are said to be in COMPLEMENTARY DISTRIBUTION. This means that they do not occur in identical contexts and therefore they cannot be used to distinguish meanings. In other words, it is impossible to have two otherwise identical utterances that differ in their meanings depending on the allomorph of a morpheme that is selected. So, because *a* and *an* both realise the same indefinite article morpheme, it is impossible to have two sentences like those in [3.7a] above which are identical in all ways, except in the choice of *a* or *an*, but mean different things.

Complementary distribution presupposes the more basic notion of DISTRIBUTION. Distribution is to do with establishing facts about the occurrence of allomorphs of a particular morpheme. It is concerned with establishing the contexts in which the morpheme which we are investigating occurs and the allomorphs by which it is realised in those different contexts. In other words, by distribution we mean the total set of distinct linguistic contexts in which a given form appears, perhaps in different guises. For instance, the indefinite article has the distribution: *a* before consonants (e.g. *a tree*) and *an* before vowels (e.g. *an eagle*).

As mentioned already, such functionally related forms which all represent the same morpheme in different environments are called allomorphs of that morpheme. Another way of putting it is