

English 3653 – Introduction to English Language Studies

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Homework 1

Exercise 1. Divide the following words into morphemes. If there are any you are not sure about – that you believe could be divided in more than one way – describe what is problematic and/or discuss any other issues.

Treehouses

Equipment

Massage

Cabinets

Freakishness

Communism

Shipment

Turnip

Nevertheless

Gracious

Begs

Heated

Exercise 2. Find at least six (different) function words in the following text excerpt. Label each word's syntactic category. Also list and label at least six different content words. What kind of information is lost when function words are omitted?

Bilbo was very rich and very peculiar, and has been the wonder of the Shire for sixty years, ever since his remarkable disappearance and unexpected return. The riches he had brought back from his travels had now become a local legend, and it was popularly believed, whatever the old folk might say, that the Hill at Bag End was full of tunnels stuffed with treasure. (from *The Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien).

Exercise 3. Find an example of a text that omits function words (the classified advertising section of any newspaper is a good place to look, and newspaper and magazine headlines provide good examples). Identify the syntactic category of each content word in your example, and list the function words that are missing. What effect does the lack of function words have on your understanding of the piece overall?

Exercise 4.

- a) *Remarkable* is ambiguous, meaning either 'notable' or 'able to be marked on again.' (One meaning is more common, but the other is possible nonetheless.) Draw tree structures illustrating these two meanings.
- b) *Inflammable* is a word that has come to have two opposite meanings. The traditional meaning is 'able to catch on fire easily,' while the more recent meaning is 'not flammable.' Draw tree diagrams that show the two possible meanings, and provide a brief discussion of what you have illustrated.