

18 items of spoken grammar

Spoken grammar items (*working list*)

LGSWE = Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English

CGE = Cambridge Grammar of English

ELT J = English Language Teaching Journal

- 1 Binomial phrases [*nice **and** warm; come **and** look*] (LGSWE: 1035)
- 2 Cooperative language [*It's cold out here. ~ **Freezing!***] (ELT J (2005) 59 (2): 117-125)
- 3 Declarative questions [***You'll be finished by seven, then?***] (CGE: 724)
- 4 Discourse markers for direct speech [*So I said, '**Oh**, are you sure?'*] (LGSWE: 1118-9)
- 5 Ellipsis [***Want to share a taxi?***] (CGE: 181-8)
- 6 Headers [***The broken cups**, did you throw them away?'] (CGE: 192-194)*
- 7 Hyperbole [***Just a second.***] (McCarthy & Carter: Journal of Pragmatics, 36)
- 8 Interjections [***Wow**, that's great!] (LGSWE: 1083)*
- 9 Lexical bundles [***I don't know** what to do.] (LGSWE: 1002)*
- 10 Linking adverbials [***Anyway**, I missed the bus.] (LGSWE: 887)*
- 11 Response questions [***Have they really?***] (CGE: 200)
- 12 Response tokens [***Fine. Great.***] (CGE: 188-192)
- 13 Response words *so* and *do* [*I suppose **so**. You could **do**.*] (CGE: 252, 734)
- 14 Spoken discourse markers [***I mean**, where would we start?'] (LGSWE: 1096-7)*
- 15 Stance adverbials [*Have you **actually** got a ticket? ~ **Of course.***] (LGSWE: 867-875)
- 16 Tails [*It's cheap, **this jacket.***] (CGE: 194-197)
- 17 Vague language [*Did you see that **thing** on Somalia?'] (CGE: 202-5)*
- 18 Vocative use [***Steve**, come and see this! ~ What is it, **Mike?***] (CGE: 228-235)

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a massive great dog, a tiny little road, a huge great round of applause.
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Elliptical:
Careful when you pick that up! Hands off my things!
Take at taxi or you'll miss the train.
Not your thing?
- 6 Headers [***The broken cups, did you throw them away?***] (CGE: 192-194)
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Don't you think it's a bit hot in here?
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What is extra?

Polite language:

It wasn't very clean. (softening a complaint.)

Should and would

Indeterminate they

We can always go to the café on the corner.

(See classification in LGSWE)

Freq use of literally, basically,

Whatever

Just v. only?

Just the one. Just the three boxes, then?

Just is softening, maintaining a supportive tone.

I'm just phoning to see how you are.

You just stick it in the microwave.

Just because:

Just because you've had a bad day...

We had to waitng for the doctor just to make sure.

EX idea: where does missing 'just' go?

Just send me an email.

I've just got to make a quick call.

I've only just got in.

And then I just put an egg in.

Apparently, he was just waiting at a bus stop...

This and that: that café, this huge dog came towards me

Over at my brother's/down at

Meaning 'taking into consideration' in spoken English.

'With the kids, we don't really have the time.'

also response forms, greetings, backchannels, response elicitors, discourse markers...

Mm.

Yep is business-like.

We were in France, right, and we got to the campsite.

Inter alia, *he's a right idiot*. Right is used to end and begin sequences. *Oh right* shows you've understood something.

Right? (less common?) to check understanding.

Well meaning 'that may be so, but...' eg:

A. *You shouldn't have given her the money.*

B. *Well, she didn't leave me much choice.*

Well can mark also a new or different topic.

There means sometimes 'that's it/I've finished my task.'

So as a summary of what has been said. (sim.to *well*)

Individual words: well, then, right, just etc.

VAGUE is massive

ELLIPSIS is bigger

HEADS is bigger

LGSWE p. 1080:

1. retrospective comment:

'they're open ten hours a day you say?'

2. retrospectively vague hedges:

'and it was the first time she'd ever been sort of thing'.

3. q tags *'you had a nice trip yeah?'*

4. Clarificatory noun-phrase tags

'it had its own kitchen, the one I was going to have.'

5. non-clausal: *'she never liked him. Ever.'*

6. self-supplied answer: *'what are you going to get - some wine?'* 7. vocatives: *'thanks for the note, Tom.'*

Another eg: *It's not very good is it, that wine?*

They've brought out a new Ford Mondeo, a turbo diesel.

CLEFTS