Answers Unit 5

1. The definition of "preposition" proposed by Huddleston/Pullum/Reynolds is very far removed from and far more extended than the more traditional one in Greenbaum/Quirk. For example, prepositions can govern clauses in Huddleston/Pullum/Reynolds' model, but not in Greenbaum/Quirk's:

   I haven't heard from her since May. - I haven't heard from her since she left.
   I went home after lunch. - I went home after I had bought the tickets.

   All uses of *after* and *since* in these four sentences would be considered prepositional by Huddleston/Pullum/Reynolds. For Greenbaum/Quirk (and most other grammars), *after* and *since* are prepositions when governing noun phrases, and conjunctions when governing (finite and non-finite) clauses. The argument in favour of Huddleston/Pullum/Reynolds' classification is that it makes the grammatical description of the facts of English more consistent (for reasons they specify). In the practical language teaching and learning context, the traditional distinction between prepositions and conjunctions is well-established and to some extent useful. We would have to weigh the benefits of making the description more theoretically coherent against the risks of confusing learners with an entirely new definition of an established concept.

2. For Greenbaum/Quirk, determiners are a form category comprising words that co-occur with nouns and clarify (or determine) the kind of reference a noun phrase has: cf. ***a*** *tiger,* ***the*** *tiger,* ***all*** *tigers,* ***this*** *tiger*, etc. This class of words is exactly what Huddleston/Pullum/Reynolds refer to as *determinatives*. In their terminology, the term *determiner* denotes any functional unit that helps specify whether a noun phrase has definite or indefinite reference. In the simplest case, the determiner is realised by a suitable determinative, such as the definite article *the*: ***the tiger***. In more complex cases, the determiner may be made up of series of determinatives: ***all these*** *tigers*, or even of a genitive phrase: ***the zoo's*** *tigers*.

   Note that – in line with the complex form-function mapping in human languages, many determiners/determinatives also serve other functions. In ***the*** *more I find out,* ***the*** *more shocked I am*, the word *the* is not part of a noun phrase, but correlates two finite clauses. Similarly, *that* in *it's not* ***that*** *surprising* is an adverb functioning as an intensifier in the adjective phrase.

3.

	SP	SPO	SPCs	SPA	SPOO	SPOCo	SPOA
Be			✓	✓			
Have		✓				✓	✓
Do		✓		✓	✓		

Get	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Want		✓		(✓)		✓	✓
Come	✓		✓	✓			
Go	✓		✓	✓			
Give		✓			✓		
Take		✓		✓		✓	✓
Make		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Put							✓
Keep		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Be: I am ill (SPCs) – I am home (SPA)

Have: I have a car (SPO) – I had everything ready (SPOCo) – She had her passport in her purse (SPOA)

Do: She did a nice job (SPO) – She did well (SPA) – I do him justice (SPOO)

Get: I told him to get (SP) [i.e. get out/off; marginal] – I got a book (SPO) – I'm getting nervous (SPCs) – He'll get here (SPA) – He got her a present (SPOO) – He got his shoes wet (SPOCo) – Peter got his friend into trouble (SPOA)

Want: I want a coffee (SPO) – (Jenny wants out (SPA) [marginal]) – I want my coffee black (SPOCo) - We want him out of here (SPOA)

Come: I'll come! (SP) – This car doesn't come cheap (SPCs) – We came home (SPA)

Go: I'll go! (SP) – I'll go mad (SPCs) - I'll go to bed (SPA)

Give: I gave a small donation (SPO) – He gave his mother flowers (SPOO)

Take: I'll take a coffee (SPO) – It'll take half an hour (SPA) – The rebels took him prisoner (SPOCo) – He took the book to the library/ He took the threat too lightly (SPOA)

Make: She made a cake (SPO) – She'll make a nice colleague (SPCs) – He made her coffee (SPOO) – The news made him happy (SPOCo) - We won't make it to London (SPOA) [restricted]; exceptional idiomatic pattern SPOCs: She will make him a good wife

Put: Peter puts sugar in his coffee (SPOA)

Keep: I'll keep the present (SPO) – I'll keep warm (SPCs) – They kept in the shade (SPA) – Please keep me a seat (SPOO) – He kept his father busy (SPOCo) – Liz keeps her passport in her purse (SPOA)

4. *Visiting relatives can be a nuisance.*
   a. Relatives who visit can be a nuisance.
   Visiting relatives (S) can be (P) a nuisance (Cs)

   b. It is a nuisance to visit relatives.
   [Visiting (P) relatives (O)] (S-clause, non-finite) can be (P) a nuisance (Cs).

   George spends more money on gambling than his children.
   a. George spends more money on gambling than his children do.
   [The paraphrase makes explicit that "his children" is to be construed as the implicit subject of the elliptical comparative clause.]

b. George spends more money on gambling than he does on his children. [The paraphrase makes explicit that "his children" is to be construed as object of the verb *spend on*.]

5. ***Whether we will get our money back*** *is still in doubt.* - Subject clause

   Almost everything he has said in his defence *is completely unconvincing.* - no subject clause: *he has said* is a relative clause post-modifying the phrase *almost everything*

   What you need *is a good rest.* - finite subject clause

   Old people living alone and dying of hypothermia *is a bloody shame.* - non-finite subject clause. Note that *old people*, the plural, does not agree in number with the singular verb *is*; paraphrase: "That old people (should) live alone and die of hypothermia is a shame."

   Old people living alone *are the group most at risk.* - no subject clause; noun-phrase subject *old people* post-modified by non-finite relative clause; *old people* accordingly agrees with *are* in number.

   To give up now *would be a mistake.* - non-finite (infinitival) subject clause

   It is heartening ***that so many people have agreed to help****.* - a clause with subject function but not in subject (i.e. pre-verbal) position, usually referred to as extraposed subject clause. Extraposition of long clauses to the end of a sentence is a way of achieving better balance of information. In place of the extraposed subject, we get the empty or "dummy" pronoun *it*.

6. *She used to make a living* ***giving English lessons****.* - non-finite adverbial clause of manner. One slight complication: unlike most such clauses, this one cannot be moved to the beginning of the sentence: **Giving English lessons, she used to make a living*. This is an argument for treating the adverbial as an obligatory rather than optional constituent in this particular construction.

   I'm looking for a book ***to consult on weak-stress forms in English****.* - non-finite relative clause, with a purpose meaning ("a book which I could consult on weak-stress forms in English"). This works better than the alternative, plausible at first sight, of treating the underlined passage as an adverbial clause of purpose: Note that such a purpose clause would have the form "…. in order to consult **it** on weak-stress forms in English," with the pronoun *it* in object position, and we have no ready way of explaining its disappearance. Note, further, that we could not expand the *to* into *in order to* in the original version: "*in order to consult on weak-stress forms in English".

   We're all waiting ***for the crew to open the door****.* - non-finite object clause; evidence: the whole underlined sequence allows passivisation:

"We're all waiting for the door to be opened." Complication: the notional subject of this non-finite clause is introduced by the preposition *for*, which, however, is quite common in present-day English. These are a few more examples in which *for* when introducing an infinitival clause is equivalent in function to the conjunction *that* introducing a finite clause:
*That's not a thing **for you to say**.* = That's not a thing that **you** should say.
*I stepped aside **for her to enter**.* = I stepped aside so that **she** could enter.
*The park was built **in order for people to enjoy the view of the countryside**.* = The park was built so that **people** might enjoy the view of the countryside.

***Coming home**, we found the kids **playing in the bathtub**. - coming home* = non-finite adverbial of time (*when we came home*); *playing in the bathtub* = adverbial of place (where?) or description of the object. Depending on your choice, you will opt for either a SPOA and SPOCo analysis (in which the A or Co constituent is realised as a non-finite clause).

*This won't prevent you **falling asleep in his classes**.* - non-finite object clause. Note that there is a more explicit variant, *This won't prevent you **from** falling asleep in his classes*, which is in a more obvious relation to comparable simple sentences such as *This prevents you from disease* (SVOO).

*... several measures that **failed to** keep the system running ... - failed to* = catenative verb used in combination with a following non-finite verb

*Who would want **there** to be another war.* - existential *there*. Complication: Existential *there* is normally restricted to subject position. We exceptionally find it placed after the verb here because the entire structure *there to be another war* is a non-finite object clause, identical in its logical structure to the finite *there is another war*, in which the *there* is in its proper place. The one odd fact about the grammar of present-day English is that the language does not allow a simple concatenation of two finite clauses, as in **Nobody wants that there is another war*.

*That was the **wrong** solution to advocate. - wrong* = pre-modification of *solution*. Complication: There is no all-round satisfactory solution as we have a mismatch between form and function. In terms of form, *wrong* is an attributive adjective characterising the following noun, *solution*. The underlying idea, though, is that what is wrong was not the solution itself but the fact that someone actively advocated it (cf. "It was wrong to advocate this solution.")

7. The example shows how the meaning of the verb phrase and the grammatical rules for the use of the progressive interact in subtle ways. Used by itself, *read* is a durative verb. No clear beginning or ending of the activity is marked. *Read a book*, on the other hand, is terminative, i.e. the action is completed after you've turned over the last page.

The English present perfect (simple) usually indicates that an activity started in the past and extends to the moment of speaking or that there is some currently relevant result of the past activity. This is clearly the case for *I have read several books on the subject*. You have read the books, and now you know about the topic. **I have read*, by contrast, is ungrammatical, or at least unusual and incomplete, because this clause does not describe an action with specifiable consequences for the present.

The way to make this sentence sound grammatical and complete is to use the present perfect (progressive), *I have been reading*, because this form presents the activity of reading as a process unfolding in time: I started reading a while ago, have continued to the present moment and may go on reading in future. (Note that we could also say *I have been reading several books on the subject*, thereby shifting the emphasis from the present result of our reading to the process of reading.)

As the distinction between the simple and progressive forms is not available in German, *ich habe gelesen* covers both the fact/result and the process.

8. *They persuaded the parents to sell their house.*

The parents were persuaded (by them) to sell the house.
*They persuaded their house to be sold by the parents.

In this example, *the parents* is the direct object of the active clause which becomes the subject of the passive clause. *To sell their house* is a non-finite clause without an explicitly expressed subject. The boundary between the main clause and the subordinate clause is placed **after** the word *parents*:
They persuaded the parents|to sell their house.

They wanted the parents to sell their house.
* The parents were wanted (by them) to sell their house.
They wanted their house to be sold.

In this example, the noun phrase *the parents* may look like an ordinary object of the preceding word but if you think about its logical status you will admit that it must be part of the object clause *the parents to sell their house*. This is a non-finite clause with an explicitly expressed subject, *the parents*, and an object, *their house*. As such, it can be passivised. The boundary between the main clause and the subordinate clause is placed **before** the word *parents*: *They wanted|the parents to sell their house.*