



An introduction to

SYNTAX

A Coursebook for University Students

Dr. Albashir Ahmed

© Albashir Ahmed 2020

This book is in copyright. No reproduction of any part by any means may take place without the written permission of the author.

دار الكتب الوطنية / بنغازي

رقم الإيداع 2019/178

Introduction

This coursebook is designed to satisfy the need for a coursebook that is suitable for the university level. It is a practical book which introduces syntactic concepts in a simple way and which gives a chance to students of syntax to understand these concepts through practice by doing related exercises. It is based on my experience of teaching syntax to university students for several years. It has been found that available syntax books are not suitable for learners of English as a foreign language since those learners need more clarifications and simpler explanations than those required by native speakers of the language being learned.

The sequencing and the grading of material from simple topics to more difficult ones makes it easier to understand and grasp the ideas discussed. For example, Unit One is an introductory unit where syntax as a subject is clarified and where analysis approaches and methods of representations that will be used throughout the book are introduced and explained. Unit Two discusses the internal structure of clauses and phrases. It is only after a thorough understanding of these constituents has been ensured through illustrations and practice that the functions of these constituents are introduced in a separate unit, i.e. Unit three.

Also, each topic in the book is followed by a relevant exercise which is believed to help students have enough practice to reinforce understanding of syntactic ideas and concepts. In addition to exercises covering all topics, each unit is concluded with a summary of the main points dealt with in the unit. Some students find summaries very useful when revising and preparing for exams.

Finally, more chance is given to the students to have more practice on their own by including some samples of previous exams with their answers as an appendix at the end of the book. . In addition to the more practice these samples will provide to the students, they will also

familiarize them with the question types that they may encounter in exams which will also help them in their preparations for midterm and final exams.

Contents

Unit One: Introduction	1
1.1. Syntactic categories	1
1.2. What is syntax?	2
1.3. Constituents	3
1.4. Testing constituents	4
1.4.1. Substitution	5
1.4.2. Interrogation	5
1.4.3. Movement	6
1.4.4. Passivisation	6
1.4.5. Clefting	7
1.4.6. Pseudo-clefting	7
1.5. Analysis approaches	9
1.6. Representation methods	9
1.6.1. Labeled bracketing	9
1.6.2. Treediagraming	12
1.7. Abbreviations	15
1.8. Summary	16
Unit Two: Phrases and Clauses	18
2.1. Phrase structure rules	18
2.2. Clauses	19
2.2.1. Coordination	19
2.2.2. Subordination	21
2.3. Phrases	25
2.3.1. Noun phrases	28

2.3.1.1. Pre-head elements	31
2.3.1.1.1. Determiners	31
2.3.1.1.2. Adjectives	33
2.3.1.2. Post-head elements	34
2.3.1.2.1. Clauses	35
2.3.1.2.2. Prepositional phrases	36
2.3.2. Verb phrases	38
2.3.2.1. Pre-head elements	40
2.3.2.1.1. Tense	40
2.3.2.1.2. Modal auxiliaries	41
2.3.2.1.3. Perfect aspect	42
2.3.2.1.4. Progressive aspect.....	42
2.3.2.1.5. Passive aspect	43
2.3.2.2. Post-head elements	46
2.3.2.2.1. Complements	46
A. Copula verbs	46
B. Intransitive verbs	47
C. Transitive verbs	48
1. Monotransitive verbs	49
2. Ditransitive verbs	51
3. Complex transitive verb.....	53
2.3.2.2. 2. Adjuncts	55
2.3.3. Prepositional phrases	57
2.3.4. Adjective phrases	61
2.3.5. Adverb phrases	63
2.4. Abbreviations	66
2.5. Summary	67
Unit Three: Functions of Constituents	69

3.1. Grammatical functions in sentences	69
3.1.1. Subject	69
3.1.2. Predicate	71
3.1.3. Sentence Adjuncts	72
3.2. Grammatical functions in phrases	74
3.2. 1. Functions in noun phrase	75
3.2.1.1. Specifiers	75
3.2.1.2. Modifiers.....	76
3.2.1.2.1. Premodifiers.....	76
3.2.1.2.2. Postmodifiers	78
3.2.2. Functions in verb phrases	81
3.2.2.2. Complements	84
3.2.2.2.1. Object.....	84
A. Direct object.....	84
B. Indirect object	86
3.2.2.2.2. Predicative complement.....	87
3.2.2.2.3. Adverbial complement.....	88
3.2.2.2.4. Complex complement	90
3.2.2.3. Adjuncts	92
3.2.3. Functions in prepositional phrases	94
3.2.4. Functions in adjective phrases	97
3.2.5. Functions in adverb phrases.....	99
3.3. Abbreviations	101
3.4. Summary	101
References	103
Appendix (some previous exams with answers).....	104

Unit One: Introduction

1.1. Syntactic categories

Words in a language are commonly known as parts of speech. We can use these parts of speech to construct sentences. In syntax we call these parts of speech categories or syntactic categories. They include nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, determiners and conjunctions. The following are some examples for each category:

Noun (N): television, town, Benghazi, Ali, intelligence, Morocco.

Verb (V): listen, remember, fight, try, cause, break, love, catch.

Adjective (adj.): clever, beautiful, fantastic, angry, worried, sad.

Adverb (Adv.): quickly, always, then, hardly, seriously, often

Preposition (P): before, of, within, out, on, at, from, into.

Determiner (Det.): a, an, this, all, those, some, the.

Conjunctions (Conj.): and, but, while, although, though, because.

It is a common practice that in determining the category of a word we rely on semantic and morphological information related to the word. For example, we say a noun refers to a place (*Tripoli*) or a person (*Ahmed*) or a thing (*table*), and that '*handed*' is a verb because it ends in -ed and '*wonderful*' is an adjective because it ends with the suffix '*ful*' .. However, it is not always easy to tell the category of a word from the word itself. Consider the following examples in which the same word functions as a noun in one sentence and as a verb in another.

(1.1) He is *eating* an apple. *Eating* too much fat is not good for your health.

She had a *break*.

Kids always *break* things.

Give me a *hand*, please

Will you *hand* me that bottle?

A more reliable criterion for determining the category of a word is a syntactic one. That is, the position of the word in the sentence will always tell its category. Fill in the gaps in the following sentence with suitable words with the category type indicated. Is it possible to use a different category for each gap?

The is interesting. (n)

You can (v)

That movie was very (adj)

She sat you and me. (p)

Mary drove fast. (adv)

It is clear from the examples above that the position of the word in the sentence determines the category type that should be used. It is not possible to replace a category with another in the same position. Studying the distribution of categories and their roles in a sentence is the major concern of SYNTAX to which we try to give a definition in the following section.

Exercise 1

1. *Specify the syntactic category of the following words. What kind of information (semantic / morphological / syntactic) that helped you in your specification.*
go - present - wild - pretty - wisely - friendly - prefer - intention - of - export – unreliable
2. *Did you have any difficulty with any word? Explain.*

1.2. What is syntax?

Syntax can be defined as the study of the structure of sentences in a language. In other words, it is the study of how words are grouped and arranged together to make larger units including phrases, clauses and sentences. Basically, when we study syntax we first try to

determine the parts which make a sentence and then, we describe these parts. Let us have a look at the sentence in (1.2) below:

(1.2) That handsome boy is a friend of mine.

In order to do syntactic analysis with this sentence, we need to determine its parts. Relying on your knowledge of the English language, you will probably say that this sentence includes two nouns, a verb, an adjective, two pronouns and a preposition plus two determiners. Can you tell which is which?

In this simplistic analysis you have only identified words. However, as you proceed with your study in syntax you will discover that there are parts in this sentence which are bigger than words. For example, *'that handsome boy'* is considered a noun phrase, *'is a friend of mine'* is a verb phrase and *'a friend of mine'* is also a noun phrase and, finally *'of mine'* is a prepositional phrase. Also, in syntactic analysis, we may also need to mention something about the functions of these parts like, for instance, which part is the subject or object or predicate, etc.

Exercise 2

1. *What is syntax and what is it about?*

2. *Relying on your intuition can you tell the kind of phrase in each of the following word strings:*

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| - <i>clever boys</i> | - <i>in the house</i> | - <i>very beautiful</i> |
| - <i>helped me</i> | - <i>peacefully</i> | - <i>safety</i> |

1.3. Constituents

We have said before, that a sentence is made of a group of words. However, words are not stringed randomly to make sentences. Can you tell which of the following is a sentence and which is not and why?

(1.3) Sundus went to school yesterday.

*Went school Sundus yesterday to. .

It is clear that the one marked with an asterisk is not a grammatical sentence. (Using asterisk in this book is a convention to indicate that something is ungrammatical). Moreover, words can combine with other words to make larger parts. These parts of a sentence are known in syntax terminology as *constituents*. These constituents which may make a sentence can be *clauses*, *phrases* and *words*. As you may know and as we will see later, clauses are syntactically larger units than phrases and phrases are larger than words. (The word syntactically here is important because as we will see later, phrases may contain clauses)

We can also have smaller units than words, that is, morphemes. However, we are not going to do this in this book because breaking words into morphemes is the concern of another field of study, namely *morphology*. In morphology you study how words are made up of morphemes including stems, suffixes and prefixes. Similarly, we are not going to study units larger than single sentences because studying a group of sentences which make larger text is the concern of another science called *discourse analysis*. In the units that follow you will learn how to distinguish between these constituents and how they are arranged and grouped together to make sentences.

1.4. Testing constituents

In order to ensure that a string of words makes a constituent, we can conduct a constituency test. A constituency test is a process through which a constituent goes and which changes the sentence appearance or pattern but the sentence remains grammatically correct. In what follows we will discuss some of the constituency tests. They are substitution, interrogation, movement, passivisation, clefting and, finally, pseudo-clefting.

1.4.1. Substitution

Substitution happens when we do not want to repeat a constituent that has been mentioned before and, thus, we replace it with a *proform*. A proform is any word that can be used to replace a constituent in a sentence without affecting the meaning of that constituent. The most common types of proforms are pronouns and forms of the verb do. Have a look at the following example:

(1.4) Arwa and Enas are friends. They always go to school together.

Ali passed the exam and Anwar did so, too.

Muna went to London last summer and I went there this summer.

In the first example, the string '*Arwa and Enas*' is a constituent because it was possible to replace it with the proform '*they*'. In the second example, the string '*passed the exam*' is also considered a string because it was possible to replace it with the proform '*did so*'. In the third example, the proform '*there*' replaces the string '*to London*' and that is an evidence that '*to London*' is a constituent.

1.4.2. Interrogation

Another type of proforms is wh-words. When they are used to ask questions, they replace constituents. Consider the following example:

(1.5) The teacher gave that smart boy a present in the party.

Using this example, we can ask the following question

Who gave that smart boy a present in the party?

(*Who* asks about 'the teacher')

Whom did the teacher give a present in the party?

(*Whom* asks about 'that smart boy')

Where did the teacher give that smart boy a present?

(*Where* asks about 'in the party').

We conclude that all these strings of words which have been asked about by wh-words represent constituents.

1.4.3. Movement

Some strings of words can be moved to another position in the sentence. If this happens and the sentence remains correct, then that moved string is likely to be a constituent. Have a look at these examples:

(1.6) Duaa had a very nice holiday in Cairo last year.

Last year, Duaa had a very nice holiday in Cairo.

A lot of people left their country during the civil war.

During the civil war, a lot of people left their country.

The child ran into the house when she saw the dog.

In to the house, the child ran when she saw the dog.

Can you think of other constituents that can be moved in the examples above?

1.4.4. Passivisation

Passivisation is the process of changing active sentences into passive ones. In active sentences the *agent* is mentioned before the *patient* while in passive sentences the patient is mentioned first. The agent is who or what performs the activity and the patient is who or what undergoes that activity. Look at the following example:

(1.7) Libyan people grow olive trees in the western part of the country

Olive trees are grown in the western part of the country (by Libyan people).

The two word strings '*olive trees*' and '*Libyan people*' are constituents since moving them to new positions in the passive sentence does not affect the grammaticality nor the basic meaning of the sentence.

1.4.5. Clefting

The meaning of *cleft* is related to divide or separate. A cleft sentence is one which we divide into parts by using [it + be that], and the purpose is to emphasize something or contrast it with something else. Let us consider the following example:

(1.8) Muna gave that bag to Jamila in the celebration last month.

1. It was last month that Muna gave that bag to Jamila in the celebration. (Last month not this month)

2. It was to Jamila that Muna gave the bag in the celebration.

(To Jamila not to Hana)

3. It was that bag that Muna gave to Jamila in the celebration last month. (That bag not this bag)

4. It was Muna that gave that bag to Jamila in the celebration last month. (Muna not Ruwaida)

The sentences resulting from such movement are called cleft sentences, and the moved elements must be constituents. If the string is not a constituent, it cannot be moved. For example, if we apply clefting on the string '*Muna gave*' the result will be ungrammatical sentence because this string is not a constituent.

(1.9) *It was Muna gave that that bag to Jamila in the celebration last month.

1.4.6. Pseudo-clefting

Pseudo-clefting is a process similar to that of clefting but instead of using *it + be*, we use *what + be*. Moreover, '*that*' is not used in pseudo-

clfting. Let us use the same example used with clfting to help you compare them.

(1.10) Muna gave that bag to Jamila in the celebration last month.

*What Muna gave to Jamila in the celebration last month was
that bag.*

*That bag was what Muna gave to Jamila in the celebration last
month.*

The string '*that bag*' is a constituent since applying the pseudo-clfting test does not affect the grammaticality of the sentence.

To conclude this section about constituency tests, it should be emphasized that it is not necessary for a string of words to be considered a constituent to pass all tests. Passing one test is enough for a string to be considered a constituent. To put it in another way, a constituent may fail to pass a test but yet it is still considered a constituent because it passes one or more other constituency tests.

Exercise 3

Apply as many constituency tests as you can on the underlined constituents in the following sentences:

A girl in a white dress sang that amazing song.

Libya produces one million barrels of oil at present.

Madrid is the capital of Spain.

I drank a cup of coffee and my friend drank a cup of coffee at the party.

Nasreen drove her car along the high way for two hours.

1.5. Analysis approaches

Since Sentences are larger than clauses, clauses are larger than phrases and phrases are larger than words, our analysis should be hierarchical. That is, we start from the smallest units (i.e. words) and go up to phrases and then clauses until we reach the whole sentence. In this kind of analysis we use a bottom-up approach. Alternatively, we can start from the top (i.e. sentence) and go down to clauses, then phrases and, finally, we reach words. This is known as a top-down approach. In this book, we are going to use the two approaches, that is, the bottom-up approach and the top-down approach. However, before we go on and attempt to analyze sentence we need to familiarize ourselves with methods of representing the structure of a sentence. That is, methods that clearly show us the constituents which make a sentence.

Exercise 4

- 1. Arrange the following constituents hierarchically from the smallest to the largest: clause - sentence - phrase - word*
- 2. Mention two approaches that can be used to analyze sentences syntactically and illustrate how these two approaches work.*

1.6. Representation methods

In fact, there are several methods that can be used for such representation. In this book, we will focus on two of them and practice using them. These methods are (1) Labeled bracketing and (2) Treediagraming. Let us start with labeled bracketing before we discuss treediagraming in a subsequent section.

1.6.1. Labeled bracketing

In bracketing we include constituents between square brackets. Let us consider the sentence in (1.11) below:

(1.11) The girl smiled and the boy laughed.

The analysis approach we are going to adopt with this representation method is the top-down approach. This is so because it is more convenient with this method to start with the whole sentence, the highest level (i.e. the top) in the hierarchical structure of the sentence. By using brackets we can analyze this sentence in the following steps:

1. Put the whole sentence between square brackets. This is so because, as mentioned above, the sentence is considered the largest constituent. Put capital S in the lower corner of the left side bracket. This S is an abbreviation for a sentence and it labels (or names) what is inside the brackets.

[_S The girl smiled and the boy laughed]

2. Look for clauses and, if you have any, put each clause between square brackets. As can be seen here, this sentence has two clauses separated by the coordinator '*and*'. From your previous knowledge of the English language, you know that a clause is basically a sentence within a sentence. Therefore we will use the same abbreviation used for a sentence which is 'S'. This, however, will result in some ambiguity since we have three Ss in the analysis above. To solve this, we just number the three Ss to be able to distinguish between them. The main sentence is given number 1 and the two clauses contained inside it are given numbers 2 and 3 respectively. This makes our syntactic analysis of this sentence more obvious.

[_{S1}[_{S2} The girl smiled] and [_{S3} the boy laughed]]

3. For each clause identify phrases and square bracket them. S2 contains a noun phrase '*the girl*' and a verb phrase '*smiled*', and S3 contains a noun phrase '*the boy*' and the verb phrase '*laughed*'. As you will see later when we study phrases in detail, a phrase may consist of just one word. Therefore, the verb phrase in S2 is a single word and the verb phrase in S3 is also a single word.

[_{S1}[_{S2} [_{NP} The girl][_{VP} smiled]] and [_{S3} [_{NP} the boy][_{VP} laughed]]]

4. Now it is time to break down phrases into words. Put each word in each phrase in square brackets. Do this throughout the whole sentence. Do not forget to label your words. Use N for noun, Det for the determiner 'the', V for verb and, finally, Coord for the coordinator 'and'.

(1.12) [S₁ [S₂ [NP [Det The][N girl]][VP [V smiled]]] [Coord and] [S₃ [NP [Det the][N boy]] [VP [V laughed]]]]

You may have had some trouble doing step 2 and 3 because the idea of clause and phrase is not clear enough at this point. Do not worry because the more we proceed with our study in the subsequent sections the clearer and more obvious these ideas will be. Also, our main aim in this section is to familiarize you with these methods of representation and not to make you understand the structure of phrases and clauses.

The labeled bracketing might not be clear enough at this time because we are still at the beginning. Therefore, do not worry and remember that this is just the beginning and things will be more understandable the more we proceed with our study of syntax. As you can see, Abbreviations are used to label constituents. We will use abbreviations for labels throughout the book so be ready to learn them and how to use them. In particular, notice the place where we put the label. It is in the low corner of the square bracket at the beginning of the constituent.

Exercise 5

1. Practice analyzing the sentence in (1.11) by following the steps again and again until you can do it from your memory.
2. Following the above mentioned steps, try to bracket and label the following sentences:
 - a. *Ali came*
 - b. *Lubna prepared tea and her sister cooked lunch.*

c. All students did well in the exam

d. She dances energetically.

1.6.2. Treediagramming

As you have seen from the steps above, the approach used is a top-down one. That is, we started our analysis from the whole sentence and then moved down to clauses, then phrase and, finally, ended up with words, the smallest units in syntax. The other approach we have mentioned before is the bottom-up approach and in which we start the analysis from the bottom (i.e. words) and then go up to phrases, then clauses until finally reach the top (i.e. the whole sentence). The preferred method of representation used with this approach is treediagramming. It is called so because the representation is like a tree with a trunk and branches. To clarify this kind of representation let us use the same sentence used with bracketing repeated in (1.13) below:

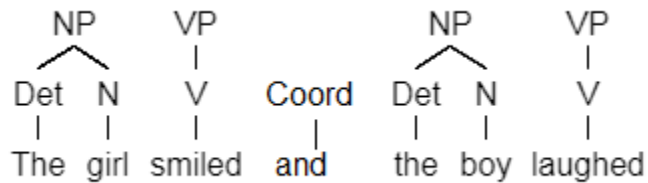
(1.13) The girl smiled and the boy laughed.

Again we need the four steps we used with labeled bracketing but in the opposite order starting with words in step 1 and ending with the whole sentence in step 4.

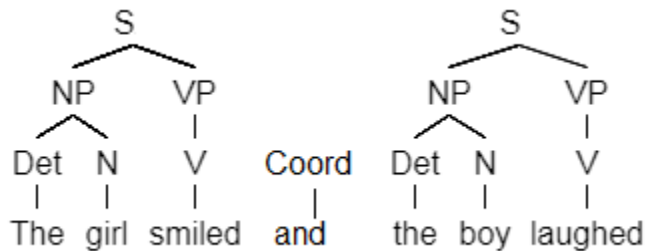
1. In a separate paper write the words of the sentence in the same order found in the sentence but separated by some space between each word and the other. Write them in a line at the bottom of the paper to have enough space for your analysis when you go up to clauses, phrases and, finally, the whole sentence. Do not forget to label your words.

Det	N	V	Coord	Det	N	V
The	girl	smiled	and	the	boy	laughed

- Identify your phrases and project them as can be seen below. Again do not forget to label them.

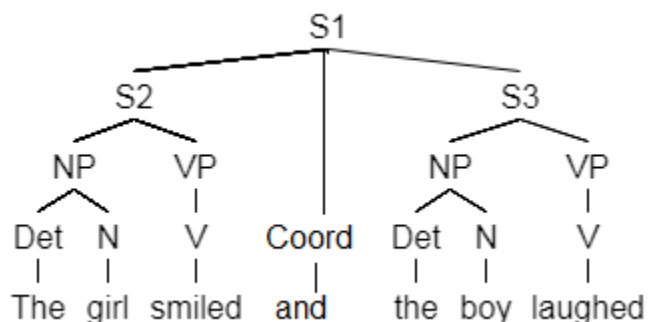


- Identify your clauses and project them like what you have done with your phrases.



- Finally project your sentence by combining the two clauses together. Because you have now three Ss, give them numbers for easy distinction and to avoid ambiguity and confusion. Give number one to the main sentence and numbers 2 and 3 to the two embedded clauses respectively. Also, do not forget to draw a line between S1 and the Coordinator 'and' to complete your analysis.

(1.14)



This treediagramming basically contains the same information found in the labeled bracketing for the same sentence in (1.12) above. However, while the labeled bracketing technique is more

economical in terms of space, the treediagramming procedure shows the hierarchy of constituents more clearly.

Hierarchy of constituents means that the structure of a sentence has levels. For example, in the tree diagram above, there is a sentence level at the top, then a clause level, a phrase level and, finally, a word level at the bottom of the structure.

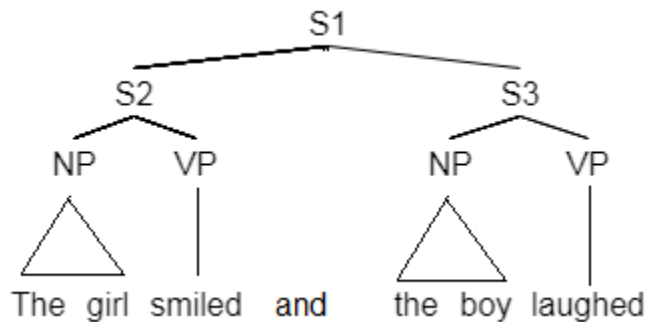
In order to talk about this hierarchical structure we need some special terms to describe such hierarchy. In the following description of the sentence structure in the tree diagram above, all syntactic terms are written bold and italic so that you can concentrate on, understand and memorize them.

The tree diagram is called so because it is similar to a tree turned upside down. The lines shown in the tree diagram are called *branches* and the points where these branches meet are called *nodes*. S1 is *expanded* as S2 and S3 which are coordinated by 'and'. Therefore, S2 and S3 are considered *immediate constituents* of S1. Similarly, each clause *expands* as NP and VP. That is, S2 expands as NP and VP and S3 expands as NP and VP. Thus, the NP and VP under S2 are its immediate constituents and the NP and VP under S3 are its immediate constituents.

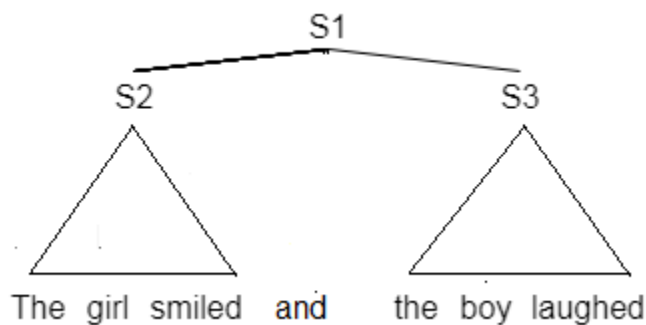
Because the relationship between constituents in the sentence is hierarchical, we can express this relationship in terms of *dominance*. For example, S1 *dominates* S2 and S3, and both S2 and S3 each dominates a NP and a VP. In fact, S1 dominates all the nodes contained in the diagram. However, it is important here to distinguish between dominance and *immediate dominance*. For example, S1 *immediately dominates* S2 and S3. S1 also dominates the NPs and VPs under S1 and S2 but that dominance is not immediate or direct. Similarly, S3 immediately dominates a NP and a VP. S3 also dominates a N and a V but that dominance is not immediate.

A final word that should be said here is that we do not need to show all levels of the structure in our representation. Our

representation will depend on our interest or purpose of the analysis. For instance, if we are not interested in the word level and we are only interested in the phrase level and the clause level, we can have a representation like the following:



The triangles above simply indicate that the analysis has not been completed and that we are not interested in the level below the phrase level. Similarly, we can stop at the clause level if we are not interested in the levels below that clause level.



1.7. Abbreviations

The use of abbreviations is very common in syntax in general and particularly in sentence structure analysis. Thus, in this section we give a list of all the abbreviations used so far to give them special attention due to their importance during this course and any subsequent study of English syntax.

Sentence (S)	Conjunction (Conj)
Noun (N)	Noun Phrase (NP)
Verb (V)	Verb Phrase (VP)
Adjective (Adj.)	Adjective Phrase (Adj.P)
Adverb (Adv.)	Adverb Phrase (Adv.P)
Preposition (P)	Prepositional Phrase (PP)
Determiner (Det.)	Coordinator (Coord.)
Subordinator (Sub.)	

Exercise 6

1. *Practice analyzing the sentence in (1.13) using the treediagramming method by following the steps again and again until you can do it from your memory.*
2. *Following the above mentioned steps, try to treediagram the following sentences:*
 - a. *Ali came*
 - b. *Lubna prepared tea and her sister cooked lunch.*
 - c. *All students did well in the exam*
 - d. *She dances energetically.*
3. *Compare your treediagramming with the labeled bracketing you have done for the same sentences in exercise 5 above.*
4. *Which representation method do you like more and why?*

1.8. Summary

In this introductory chapter, the science of syntax is introduced and defined as the study of the structure of sentence in a language. Moreover, the concept of syntactic categories was clarified. In syntax, categories do not only refer to word classes which include nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, determiners and

conjunctions, but also to other categories including phrases and clauses which make the structure of a sentence. It was obvious from the discussion that a sentence is not merely made of a string of words in a random order, but these words are structurally arranged in phrases and clauses which make, together with words, the constituents of a sentence.

In order to ensure that a string of words makes a constituent, we can carry out some tests known as constituency tests. These include substitution, interrogation, movement, passivisation, clefting and pseudo-clefting. Passing one test of these is enough for a string of words to be considered a constituent.

Two approaches are used in our analysis of the structure of a sentence, namely, bottom-up and top-down. In the bottom up approach, we start our analysis with the smallest units in a sentence, namely words, and go up to phrases then clauses until we reach the top in which we have the whole sentence. However, in the top-down approach, we take the opposite direction. We start from the top which is the whole sentence and go down until we reach the bottom in which we have words, the smallest units in the syntactic structure of a sentence.

To represent the analysis of the syntactic structure of a sentence, two representation methods are used, namely labeled bracketing and treediagramming. In labeled bracketing, constituents are enclosed in square brackets and given abbreviated labels for easy identification and recognition of these constituents. In treediagramming, the structure of a sentence is shown by an upside down tree with branches which clearly indicate the hierarchical structure of the constituents making the sentence.

Unit Two: Phrases and Clauses

2.1. Phrase structure rules

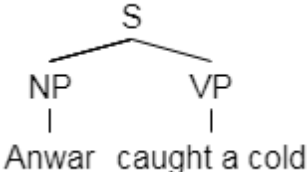
In Unit One, we have seen that sentences are made of strings of words. We have also seen that the grouping of these words in sentences is not random. That is, you cannot have these words in any order but they should be arranged according to rules. These rules are known as phrase structure rules because phrases are the basic constituents of any sentence. Consider the following example:

(2.1) Anwar caught a cold.

Analyzing this simple sentence will give us the following structure representation using labeled bracketing in (2.2a) and treediagramming in (2.2b):

(2.2a) [s[NP Anwar][VP caught a cold]]

(2.2b)



```

graph TD
    S --> NP
    S --> VP
    NP --> Anwar
    VP --> caught
    VP --> a
    VP --> cold
  
```

As you can see, the immediate constituents of this sentence are phrases. That is, the sentence is expanded as a NP and a VP. We can, therefore, provisionally formulate this expansion as a phrase structure rule which can be notated as in (2.3).

(2.3) $S \longrightarrow NP-VP$

This phrase structure rule can be translated as follows: A sentence is expanded as a noun phrase plus a verb phrase. Speakers of the language can use this rule to generate and produce infinite number of simple sentences. However, this rule is still provisional. That is, this rule will undergo further adaptations since we can have other types of sentences besides simple sentences. These types include compound sentences, complex sentences and compound complex

sentences which result from a combination of compound and complex ones. Relying on your previous knowledge of these types, can you give a sentence as an example for each type?

Exercise 7

1. *What are phrase structure rules, why are called so, and why are they important?*
2. *How do you say this phrase structure rule in words: $S \longrightarrow NP-VP$*
3. *Complete the analysis given in (2.2a) and (2.2b) to show lower levels.*
4. *Analyze the following sentences using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.*
 - *The baby is crying.* - *He plays the piano.*
 - *Madonna is a celebrity.* - *They went there.*
5. *Provide an example for the following types of sentences and explain the difference between them:*
 - Simple sentence - compound sentence - complex sentence*
 - compound complex sentence*

2.2. Clauses

As we have seen in Unit One, a sentence may expand as two coordinated clauses. In fact, sentences can be expanded using coordination and subordination to which we turn in the following subsections.

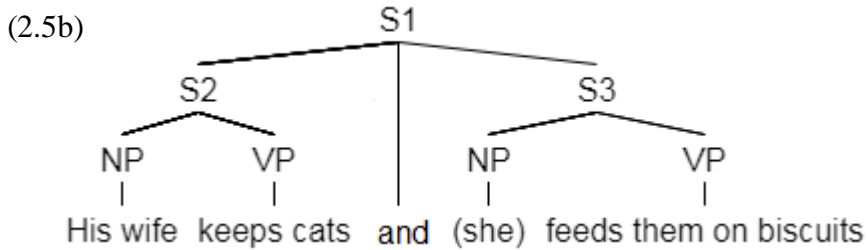
2.2.1. Coordination

As we have seen before, a sentence can be expanded by coordinating two (or more) clauses using coordinators like *and*, *or*, *but*, etc. Let us consider the following example:

(2.4) His wife keeps cats and feeds them on biscuits.

The labeled bracketing and treediagramming representations of this sentence will give the structure in (2.5a) and (2.5b) respectively.

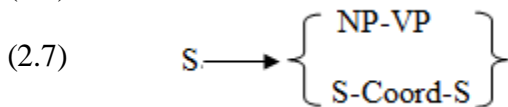
(2.5a) [_{S1}[_{S2}[_{NP} His wife] [_{VP} keeps cats]]and[_{S3}[_{NP} (she)][_{VP} feeds them on biscuits]]]



Although the noun phrase of the third sentence (she) is omitted in the surface structure, it is retained in the representation due to its importance to the grammaticality of the deep structure of the sentence. It is included between brackets to indicate this omission in actual speech. Since all sentences in the language are generated according to rules, we need to incorporate this sentence type possibility into phrase structure rules. We do this by formulating the following phrase structure rule: $S \longrightarrow S\text{-Coord-S}$

(2.6)

Now we have two phrase structure rules for generating sentences; the one found in (2.3) and the one shown in (2.6). However, the tendency in syntax and in any other field is to keep the number of rules as small as possible for obvious reasons. Thus, these two rules can be merged together in one phrase structure rule which is shown in (2.7) below.

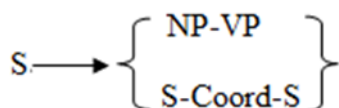


This notation shows that a sentence can be produced through two possibilities. In the first possibility, a sentence expands as a noun phrase plus a verb phrase, and in the second possibility a sentence expands as two clauses connected together using a coordinator like 'and'. However, because it is possible theoretically at least to

coordinate any number of clauses, our phrase structure rule in (2.7) is still provisional since it lacks this possibility. In the following section we will discuss another possibility of expanding sentences. That is, subordination.

Exercise 8

1. What is coordination? Give examples using at least three different coordinators
2. How do you say this phrase structure rule in words?



3. Analyze the following sentences using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

- *Yousef is a naughty boy but his brother is a quiet one.*
- *We go together or stay together.*
- *Zainab helps her mother in the kitchen and Hiba does the washing-up.*

2.2.2. Subordination

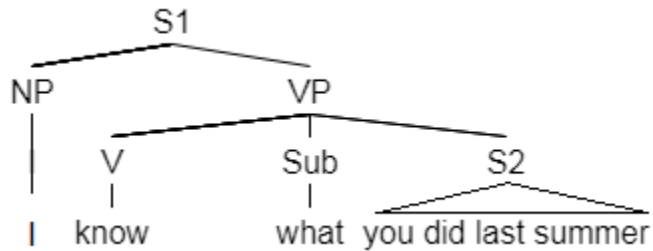
Subordination means that we have a subordinate clause embedded inside a main clause or a sentence using a subordinator like *what*, *when*, *if*, *because*, *though*, *although*, *since*, etc. Let us clarify this by using the example in (2.8) below:

(2.8) I know what you did last summer.

The structure of this sentence can be represented with labeled bracketing as in (2.9a) and with treediagramming as in (2.9b) below:

(2.9a) [S₁ [NP I][VP [V know] [S_{ub} what] [S₂ you did last summer]]].

(2.9b)



This additional possibility of sentence structure is compatible with the revised phrase structure rule given in (2.7). There is no need for formalizing additional rules. Can you tell why? It is obvious that the embedded clause is immediately dominated by the VP which in turn is immediately dominated by the main sentence. That is, S1.

What needs to be considered here though not in a lot of detail is the VP structure rule to show how verb phrases can include imbedded clauses inside them. (Verb phrases and their expansion will be discussed in a separate section in this unit) The two possibilities of the structure of the verb phrase we have already seen in previous examples can be clarified more using the following two sentences:

(2.10) The criminal attacked the woman.

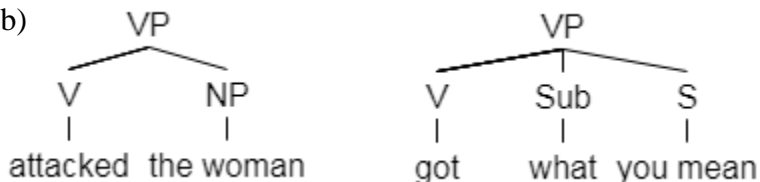
I got what you mean.

Excluding the two noun phrases at the beginning of these two sentences, we can have the following representations of the verb phrases in both sentences.

(2.11a) [VP [v attacked]][NP the woman]]

[VP [v got] [Sub what] [S you mean]]

(2.11b)



It is obvious that we can have verb phrases in two ways. In the first way, a VP expands as V plus NP and in the second, a VP expands as a V plus a clause or a sentence. These two possibilities are formulated in the following phrase structure rule.

$$(2.12) \quad VP \longrightarrow V - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} NP \\ S \end{array} \right\}$$

Yet, this rule is still provisional because verbs subcategorize for other structures and, thus, may have other possibilities. The various possibilities for verb phrases will be discussed later in a separate section.

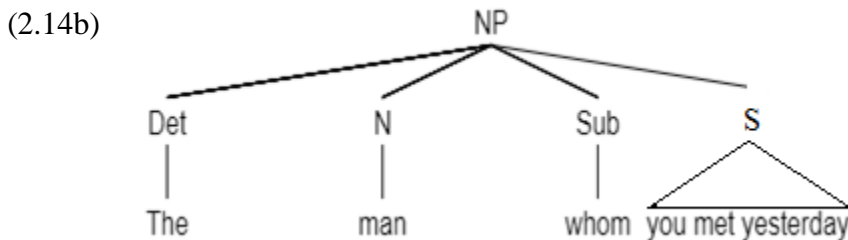
Similar to verb phrases, noun phrases can expand using subordination. Compare the following two sentences:

(2.13) The man is my uncle.

The man whom you met yesterday is my uncle

The noun phrase *'the man whom you met'* in the second sentence can be represented using labeled bracketing and treediagramming as in (2.14a) and (2.14b) respectively.

(2.14a) [NP [_{Det} The][_N man] [_{Sub} whom][_S you met yesterday]]



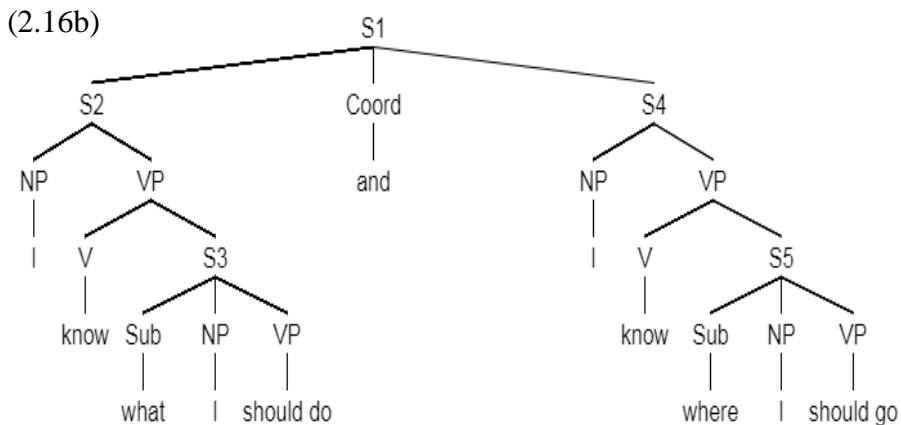
The simple sentence *'the man is my uncle'* was expanded to a complex one *'the man whom you met yesterday is my uncle'*. The embedded clause in the expanded sentence is found inside the first noun phrase in the sentence. More detail about noun phrases and their structure will be given in a subsequent section devoted to noun phrases.

To finish this section about clauses and their types, let us consider an example related to compound complex sentences and see how this type is expanded and structured. Have a look at the example in (2.15) below.

(2.15) I know what I should do and (I know) where I should go.

In this example, we have two complex sentences coordinated with 'and'. The inclusion of the string 'I know' between round brackets means that it can be omitted in speech. Analyzing the sentence using labeled bracketing and treediagramming will give the representations in (2.16a) and (2.16b) respectively.

(2.16a) [S₁ [S₂ [NP I][VP [V know][S₃ [Sub what][NP I][VP should do]]]]
 [Coord and][S₄ [NP I][VP [V know][S₅ [Sub where][NP I][VP
 should go]]]]]



As you can see from the representation above, whatever the number of clauses is in the sentence, the basic structure of each clause or sentence is the same; each sentence expands into a NP and a VP. You should also notice that the numbers given to sentences do not imply anything but their order of occurrence in the sentence. S3 occurs before S4 in the sentence and thus it is given number 3 although it is hierarchically lower than S4.

Exercise 9

1. What is subordination? Give examples using at least three different subordinators.
2. How do you say this phrase structure rule in words?

$$VP \longrightarrow V - \left\{ \begin{array}{c} NP \\ S \end{array} \right\}$$

3. Analyze the following sentences using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.
 - *Nasreen is not coming tomorrow because she is ill.*
 - *I told him what he should do.*
 - *Ayman is watching TV while his sister is studying for the exam.*
 - *Ali told me that he did not come because he was ill.*

2.3. Phrases

A phrase is a group of words which works as a constituent in the sentence and does not contain a finite verb except for the verb phrase which must contain a finite verb. Have a look at the following phrases:

- (2.17) that tall man with a mustache (NP)
 visits his grandmother every weekend. (VP)
 quite attractive (AdjP)
 very carefully (AdvP)
 under the table (PP)

As can be seen from the examples above, no phrase contains a finite verb except for the verb phrase. A *finite* verb is one that can take a subject pronoun as its subject. For example, the verb 'go' can have any of the subject pronouns as its subject as the following examples show:

(2.18) I /You /They go -He /She goes.

I /You /He /She /We /They went.

A *non-finite* verb, on the other hand, is one that does not take a subject pronoun as its subject as can be seen from the examples in (2.19).

(2.19) *I /You /He /She /We /They to go.

*I /You /He /She /We / They going.

*I /You /He /She /We / They gone.

Phrases occupy the third level from the top in the syntactic structure of sentences. As said before, they come after sentences and clauses. This, however, does not always coincide with the size of these constituents. As we have seen before, we may have clauses that are embedded inside noun phrases and thus they constitute parts of these noun phrases. Similarly, we have seen clauses embedded inside verb phrases and, therefore, make parts of these verb phrases.

Phrases in English may be of the following types: noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases, adverb phrases, and, finally, prepositional phrases. A noun phrase is called so because the head word in that phrase is a noun, a verb phrase is called so because the head word in that phrase is a verb. The same thing applies to other types of phrases. To clarify the idea of head, let us consider the phrases in (2.17) above repeated in (2.20) below. The head word in each phrase is underlined. The phrase type is also given.

(2.20) that tall man with a mustache (NP)

visits his grandmother every weekend. (VP)

quite attractive (AdjP)

very carefully (AdvP)

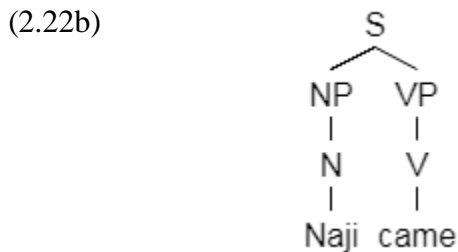
under the table (PP)

The head of the phrase is called so because it is the most important element or part of the phrase. It is the word which determines the nature of the whole phrase. If the phrase is made of one word, that word constitutes the head and the whole phrase. Thus, we can have phrases that are made of just one word each. The following sentence contains two phrases each of which is made of just one word.

(2.21) Naji came.

Analysis of the structure of this sentence is represented in (2.22a) and (2.22b) using labeled bracketing and treediagramming respectively.

(2.22a) [s [NP [N Naji]][VP [V came]]]



As you can see, the sentence is expanded into a noun phrase and a verb phrase and both phrases are made of one word each; the noun '*Naji*' is the head of the noun phrase '*Naji*' and the verb '*came*' is the head of the verb phrase '*came*'. However, as we have seen from the examples in (2.20), phrases are often made of strings of words.

Returning to the idea of head, let us have another look at the examples in (2.20) again. For example, in the noun phrase '*that tall man with a mustache*' the most important word is '*man*' because it is the only word that cannot be omitted. Other words in the phrase are not equally important and, thus, can be omitted and the remaining continues to carry the basic meaning of a noun phrase since they only give additional information about the head. In the following subsections we will deal with the phrase types in more detail starting with the noun phrase.

Exercise 10

Identify the phrase type in each of the following phrases and underline its head and justify your identification and your choice of heads.

- a. *A collection of interesting books*
- b. *should find the authentic document*
- c. *towards the solution of the problem*
- d. *highly valuable*
- e. *thoroughly independently*

2.3.1. Noun phrases

A noun phrase is a group of words in which the head word is a noun. Examine the following sentence and try to locate the noun phrases found in it.

(2.23) That intelligent girl failed her final exams in the secondary school.

In order to identify noun phrases in a sentence you look for nouns and then try to find if there are any expansions to these nouns by trying to find the words before or after these nouns that are directly related to it and combine with it to make one unit. By looking at the sentence in (2.23) we can find that it contains three nouns: *girl*, *exams*, and *school*. These three nouns are the heads of the following three noun phrases.

(2.24) that intelligent girl
her final exams
the secondary school

These underlined words are considered heads of these phrases since omitting them will result in loss of the basic meaning of the phrases while omitting other elements in each phrase is possible.

- (2.25) *That intelligent ~~girl~~ - ~~That~~-intelligent girl - That ~~intelligent~~ girl
 *her final ~~exams~~ - ~~her~~ final exams - her ~~final~~ exams
 *the secondary ~~school~~ - ~~the~~ secondary school - the ~~secondary~~
 school

To ensure that these phrases are constituents of the whole sentence lets conduct some of the constituency tests we studied in Unit One of this book. By applying substitution by proforms we can obtain the following sentences.

- (2.26) She failed her final exams in the secondary school.

That intelligent girl failed them in the secondary school.

That intelligent girl failed her final exams in it.

Since it was possible to replace these strings of words with pronouns and the sentence remains grammatical, then these strings must be phrases and constituents of the sentence.

Another test that would prove the constituency of these phrases is interrogation.

- (2.28) Who failed her final exams in the secondary school?

(Answer: The intelligent girl)

What did the intelligent girl fail in the secondary school?

(Answer: Her final exams)

Which school did the intelligent girl fail her exams in?

(Answer: The secondary school)

Of course using 'where' instead of 'which' is not possible to test the constituency of the noun phrase 'the secondary school'. Why?

When defined a noun phrase above, we said it is a group of words which make one unit and in which the head word is a noun. In the

examples above it was possible to substitute these phrases with pronouns. It is also possible to substitute noun phrases with nouns and vice versa as can be seen in (2.29) below. This means that pronouns have the same distribution as nouns and noun phrases as can be seen from the following example:

(2.29) *That intelligent girl* } failed her final exams in the secondary school.
Mary }
She }

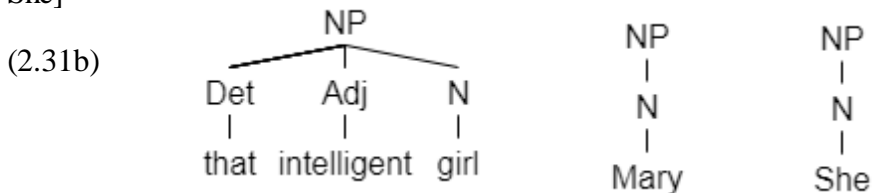
This means that pronouns, nouns and noun phrases may occupy the same position in the sentence or, to use syntax terms, have the same distribution. When categories have the same distribution, they belong to the same constituent which is a noun phrase in this case. Above, we have used the interrogative form 'who' to ask a question about the string 'that intelligent girl' to make sure that this string constitutes a phrase. We can use the same wh-word 'who' to ask about 'Mary' and 'She' as can be seen in (2.30) below.

(2.30) A: Mary/She failed her final exam in the secondary school.

Q: Who failed her final exams in the secondary school?

Since single nouns and pronouns have the same distribution as noun phrases then they themselves are considered full noun phrases and treated as noun phrase when we analyze the structure of sentences. To clarify this, let us represent the three phrases 'Mary', 'She' and 'That intelligent girl' in the sentences above.

(2.31a) [NP [Det that] [Adj intelligent][N girl]] [NP [N Mary]] [NP [N She]]



Because pronouns occupy the same positions in noun phrases as nouns and, thus, have the same distribution we use the same abbreviation used for nouns which is N.

In (2.24) above, we have seen that the head in a noun phrase can be preceded by some elements with which it constitutes the whole noun phrase. Heads in noun phrase can also be followed by some elements. In the subsections that will follow, we will discuss elements before the head and elements after the head in the noun phrase in more detail before we reach the point where we can formalize a noun phrase structure rule.

Exercise 11

1. *Identify the noun phrases in the sentences below and do the following; (1) square bracket them. (2) Test their constituency using a variety of tests. (3) Underline their heads.*
 - a. *We should give our children great care.*
 - b. *The Libyan people elected their representatives in a general election.*
 - c. *My brother and I are going to the party tonight.*
 - d. *I will send you a view of the historical castle by email*
 - e. *Hardy has written an amazing detective story.*

2.3.1.1. Pre-head elements

The head in the noun phrase may be preceded by elements which generally belong to two categories. They are determiners and adjectives.

2.3.1.1.1. Determiners

Determiners can be classified according to their position before the head noun into three subcategories these are pre-determiners, central determiners and post determiners. The following example illustrates the idea.

(2.32) All the six players are from Africa.

The head word *'players'* in the noun phrase *'All the six players'* is preceded by three determiners: a pre-determiner *'All'*, a central determiner *'the'* and a post-determiner *'six'*. The pre-determiner subcategory comprises words like *all*, *both*, and *half*, the central subcategory includes the *articles*, *the possessive pronouns* and *the demonstrative pronouns*. Finally, the post determiners subcategory includes *numbers*. Look at the following examples and specify the subcategory of each determiner:

- (2.33) both boys all the eleven students some teachers
 my school these three books half a bottle
 seven apples Ali's mother no money

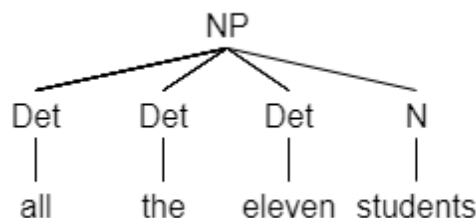
As you can see from the example *'Ali's mother'*, *the possessive s* is considered a determiner in addition to *'some'* and *'no'* in *'some teachers'* and *'no money'*. All these three determiners are classified as belonging to the central determiners subcategory.

Another thing about determiners is that it is not necessary to have all types together before a noun. Sometimes we have all three types, sometimes two, sometimes one and sometimes no determiner is used as in *'girls are smarter than boys'*

Finally, when representing noun phrases that contain more than one determiner, there is no need to classify them. The abbreviation Det is enough to refer to any determiner in the representation. Have a look at the multiple determiner noun phrase found in (2.33) and represented in (2.34) below.

- (2.34a) [NP [Det all][Det the][Det eleven][N students]]

- (2.34b)



Exercise 12

1. *Classify these determiners into pre-determiners, central determiners and post-determiners.*
half - that - our - three - Asma's - a - both - the - an - no - some – those
2. *Use these determiners in noun phrases of your own. In some of them use three, in others use two and in some other occasions use one.*

2.3.1.1.2. Adjectives

Adjectives are another category that can be found before head nouns in noun phrases. Let us examine the following examples.

- (2.35) a. historical event c. that beautiful Libyan girl
 b. a useful course d. these three nice big red apples

The underlined words are the head words in these noun phrases. In (a) the head word is preceded by the adjective '*historical*', in (b) the head noun is preceded by the adjective '*useful*', in (c) the head noun is preceded by two adjectives: '*beautiful*' and '*Libyan*', and, finally, in (d) the head noun '*apples*' is preceded by three adjectives: '*nice*', '*big*' and '*red*'.

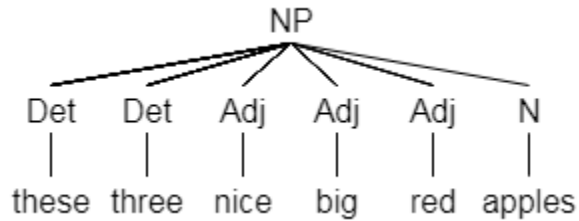
As you can see from the last two examples, we have more than one adjective before a head noun. In fact, we can have any number of adjectives before a head noun in the noun phrase. When we have more than one adjective before a noun we should put them in a certain order. Generally the order of adjectives in English is as follows: quantity or number, quality or opinion, size, age, shape, color, and finally proper adjectives such as nationality or place of origin. (See examples c and d above.)

You should also notice that when we have determiners in the noun phrase in addition to adjectives, determiners precede adjectives as in examples b, c, and d above. To conclude this section let us have an

idea about the syntactic structure of these noun phrases by representing the noun phrase *'these three nice big red apples'* as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming as can be seen in (2.36) below.

(2.36a) [NP [Det these] [Det three] [Adj nice] [Adj big][Adj red][N apples]]

(2.36b)



However, this representation is a provisional one. As we will see later, the adjectives here are not just words but each adjective constitutes an adjective phrase on its own.

Exercise 13

1. Use the following jumbled words to construct noun phrases.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| - cow brown that big fat | - clever both sisters |
| - two ugly those girls | - delicious these grapes small |
| - food healthy that | - man brave strong young |

2. Represent the noun phrases you constructed using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

2.3.1.2. Post-head elements

In addition to the elements found before the head noun in the noun phrase, it is also possible to expand the noun phrase by adding elements after the head word. In fact, head nouns can be followed by clauses and prepositional phrases.

2.3.1.2.1. Clauses

When we discussed types of clauses at the beginning of this unit, we found that some clauses are found inside noun phrases. Specifically, they are found after the head word in the noun phrase. Consider the following sentences in which the first noun phrase in each sentence is put between brackets:

(2.37) [The film which I told you about] is on TV tonight.

[The man who said nothing] was dumb.

[The girl that we met] is from Malaysia.

[The question whether he knows her] has not been answered.

In all of the examples above the underlined head nouns are followed by clauses which are related to and describe the noun and without which important information that specify that noun is missing. To make sure that these clauses are parts of the noun phrases and belong to them let us use some constituency tests. By using interrogation, we can have the following question.

(2.38) Which film is on TV tonight? *Answer:* The film I told you about.

Who was dumb? *Answer:* The man who said nothing.

Which girl is from Malaysia? *Answer:* The girl that we met.

Which question has not been answered? *Answer:* The question whether he knows her.

Another test that can be used to ensure the constituency of these noun phrases is substitution.

(2.38) *It* is on TV tonight. (*It* substitutes *the film I told you about*).

He was dumb. (*He* replaces *the man who said nothing*)

If we only replace 'the film' and 'the man' the result will be ungrammatical structures.

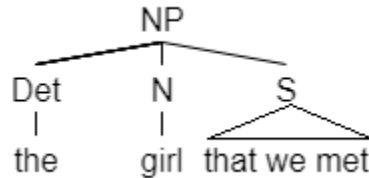
(2.39) *It I told you about is on TV tonight.

*He who said nothing was dumb.

Let us conclude this section by practicing labeling and treediagramming noun phrases containing clauses using one of the examples in (2.37) above.

(2.40a) [NP [Det the] [N girl] [S that we met]]

(2.40b)



Of course we can analyze the clause found in the noun phrase further; however, that is not relevant to the point we are discussing here which is the relevance of the whole clause to the noun phrase.

2.3.1.2.2. Prepositional phrases

Head nouns can also be followed by prepositional phrases. Let us have some examples:

(2.41) [The number of students] is big.

[The boy with the curly hair] is my nephew.

[The red roses in the garden] are beautiful.

In the first example the head noun '*number*' is followed by the prepositional phrase '*of students*', in the second example the head noun '*boy*' is followed by the prepositional phrase '*with curly hair*', and finally, in the third example, the head noun '*roses*' is followed by the prepositional phrase '*in the garden*'.

To make sure these prepositional phrases are parts of the noun phrases between brackets, we conduct some constituency tests. By using clefting test with the first example we will have the sentence in (2.42a), by using interrogation with the second example we will have

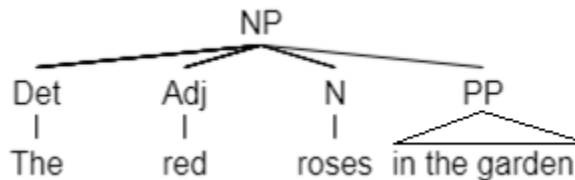
the interrogative sentence in (2.42b), and, finally, by using substitution with the third example we will have the sentence in (2.42c).

- (2.42) a. It is the number of the students that is big
 b. Which boy is my nephew?
 c. They are beautiful.

All the three sentences resulting from applying constituency tests are grammatically correct. Therefore, we conclude that the prepositional phrases belong to the testified noun phrases. Let us finish with practicing labeling and treediagramming one of the noun phrases found in (2.41) above as an example.

(2.43a) [NP [Det The][Adj red][N roses] [PP in the garden]]

(2.43b)



Now we are in a point where we can formalize a noun phrase structure rule like the one in (2.44) below.

(2.44) $NP \longrightarrow (Det)^+ - (Adj)^+ - N - \left\{ \begin{matrix} S \\ PP \end{matrix} \right\}$

Elements between round brackets are optional. The only obligatory constituent in the noun phrase is the head noun. The raised plus sign after (Det) and (Adj) means that we can have more than one determiner and more than one adjective preceding the head noun in the noun phrase. Elements between curly brackets are alternatives. Here we can have a clause OR a prepositional phrase following the head noun in the noun phrase.

Exercise 14

1. Underline the head noun in each of the noun phrases between brackets in the following sentences.

- [*The book that I gave you*] is Ali's.
- [*The money which you lent me*] solved my financial problems.
- [*The blue car in that corner*] belongs to the oil company.
- [*Both windows of the room*] are broken.
- [*That fat man with a mustache*] was elected chairman.

2. Prove that each clause or prepositional phrase following the underlined noun in each bracketed phrase belongs to the whole noun phrase.

3. Use labeled bracketing and treediagramming to show the structure of the noun phrase between brackets.

2.3.2. Verb phrases

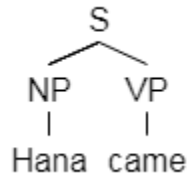
A verb phrase is a group of words in which the head word is a verb. One obvious difference between a verb phrase and other types of phrases is that a verb phrase must have a finite verb whereas other phrases must not. Let us have an example.

(2.45) Hana came.

Identifying the verb phrase in a sentence is a simple task. First you identify the noun phrase at the beginning of the sentence and what follows the noun phrase to the end of the sentence is considered a verb phrase. In the example above the verb phrase is made of only one word. That is the verb '*came*' as the analysis of the structure shows in (46a) and (46b) below.

(2.46a) [S [NP Hana][VP came]]

(2.46b)



However, we may have longer verb phrases such as the one in (2.47) below.

(2.47) Hana [came to class late].

As you can see in this example, the whole word string '*came to class late*' makes the VP in this sentence. In order to ensure that the whole string is a constituent, we conduct some constituency tests.

(2.47) *Interrogation*: What did Hana do?

Answer: She [came to class late].

Substitution: Hana came to class late and Wafa did so, too.

(*did so* replaces the whole verb phrase)

Pseudo-clefting: Came to class late is what Hana did.

These three tests prove that the whole string '*came to class late*' is a constituent in the sentence.

Verb phrases are similar in their structure to noun phrases because a head verb like a head noun may be preceded and followed by elements belonging to the verb phrase. Therefore, our analysis of verb phrases will follow the same approach followed in analyzing noun phrases. First we will discuss elements before the head and then elements after the head will be dealt with in some detail.

Exercise 15

1. *Identify the verb phrase in the following sentence and put them between square brackets.*
 - *The mechanic repaired my car.*
 - *He has promised not to do that again.*
 - *She might have done it by mistake.*
 - *Laila will have been watching TV for two hours.*
 - *Mahmud is studying hard to pass the syntax exam*
2. *Underline the head verbs of the verb phrases in the sentence above.*
3. *Test the constituency of the verb phrases in these sentences using a variety of tests.*
4. *Label-bracket and treediagram these sentences to show their basic structure.*

2.3.2.1. Pre-head elements

Elements found before the head verb in the verb phrase include tense, modal auxiliary, perfect aspect, progressive aspect and, finally passive voice. Apart from the tense which is an obligatory element in the verb phrase. Other elements are optional.

2.3.2.1.1. Tense

The verb phrase should contain a finite verb which shows tense. This finite verb can be in the present or past tense as the examples in (2.48) show.

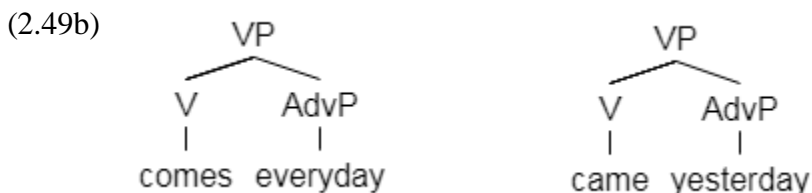
(2.48) He [comes everyday].

 He [came yesterday].

As you will see below, it is always the first element in the verb phrase which exhibits tense. Therefore, except when the verb phrase starts with the head verb which could be in the present or past, tense is always shown on elements preceding the head. The structure of the

two sentences in (2.48) is represented using labeled bracketing and treediagramming in (2.49a) and (2.49b) respectively.

(2.49a) [_{VP} [_V comes][_{AdvP} everyday]] [_{VP} [_V came][_{AdvP} yesterday]]



2.3.2.1.2. Modal auxiliaries

Modal auxiliary verbs are found before the head verb in the verb phrase. Modal auxiliaries include *will*, *would*, *shall*, *should*, *may*, *might*, *can*, *could*, *must*, etc. For example, we may change the time in one of the sentences in (2.48) to the future by inserting the model 'will' before the head verb and making the necessary changes.

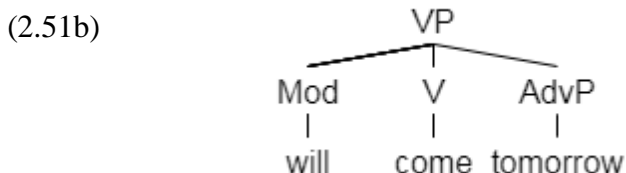
(2.50) He [will come tomorrow].

In this verb phrase, we have two elements before the head, the tense which is the present and the model auxiliary 'will'. As you can see, tense appears on the first element which is the model auxiliary 'will'. To change this sentence to the past tense, we will have the one in (2.50) below:

(2.50) (He said) He [would come tomorrow].

As you can see here, it is the first element in the verb phrase (i.e. the model auxiliary) which is affected by tense. The structure of the verb phrases in (2.50) can be represented as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming as follows.

(2.51a) [_{VP} [_{Mod} will][_V come][_{AdvP} tomorrow]]



2.3.2.1.3. Perfect aspect

The perfect aspect is obtained by have/has + the past participle form of the main verb. The following are some examples:

(2.52) Amel [has written her homework].

They [have gone].

The head word in the first sentence is '*written*' and it is preceded by the two elements: the tense and the perfect aspect. The tense which is the present appears on '*has*' and the perfect aspect is shown by '*-en*' in '*written*'. Similarly, in the second sentence, the tense affects the verb '*have*' and the perfect aspect is shown by '*-en*' in '*gone*'. To change the sentences in (2.52) to the past, we will have the following sentences:

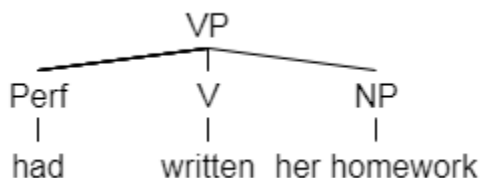
(2.53) Amel [had written her homework].

They [had gone].

Again, in these sentences, the tense affects the first element 'had' while the perfect aspect is shown on the main verbs '*written*' and '*gone*'. Representation of the structure of the verb phrase in the first sentence in (2.53) is shown in (2.54a) and (2.54b) below.

(2.54a) [VP [_{Perf} had]][_V written][_{NP} her homework]]

(2.54b)



2.3.2.1.4. Progressive aspect

The progressive aspect is made by verb 'be' + main verb + ing. The following are some examples.

(2.55) Zainab [is reading].

The fourth year students [are studying syntax].

The head word in the first sentence is '*reading*' and it is preceded by the two elements: the tense and the progressive aspect. The tense which is the present appears on '*is*' and the progressive aspect is shown by the '*ing*' in '*reading*'. Similarly, in the second sentence, the tense affects the verb '*are*' and the progressive aspect is shown by the '*ing*' in '*studying*'. To change the sentences in (2.55) to the past, we will have the following sentences.

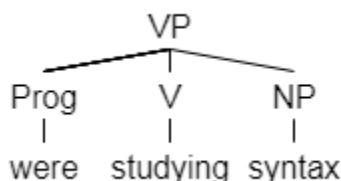
(2.56) Zainab [was reading].

The fourth year students [were studying syntax].

In the last two sentences, the tense affects the first element '*was*' in the first sentence and the first element '*were*' in the second sentence while the progressive aspect is shown by the '*ing*' in '*reading*' and '*studying*'. A representation of the structure of the second sentence in (2.56) is found in (2.57a) and (2.57b) below.

(2.57a) [VP [Pro_g were][V studying][NP syntax]]

(2.57b)



2.3.2.1.5. Passive aspect

The passive voice is obtained by verb '*be*' + main verb in the past participle form. Consider the following two examples.

(2.58) The work [is done perfectly].

The conversations [are recorded for you].

The head word in the first sentence is '*done*' and it is preceded by the two elements: the tense and the passive voice aspect. The tense which is the present appears on '*is*' and the passive aspect is shown by the '*ne*' in '*done*'. Similarly, in the second sentence, the tense affects the verb '*are*'

and the passive aspect is shown by the 'ed' in 'recorded'. To change the sentences in (2.58) to the past we will have the following sentences.

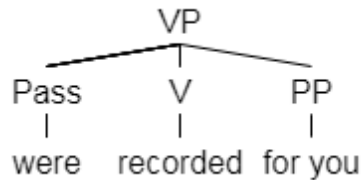
(2.59) The work [was done perfectly].

The conversations [were recorded for you].

In the last two sentences, the tense affects the first element 'was' in the first sentence and the first element 'were' in the second sentence while the passive voice is shown by the 'ne' in 'done' and 'ed' in 'recorded'. The structure of the second sentence in (2.58) is represented using labeled bracketing and treediagramming in (2.60a) and (2.60b) respectively.

(2.60a) [_{VP} [_{Pass} were]] [_V recorded]] [_{PP} for you]]

(2.60b)



In all the examples above, only one pre-head element is used. It is possible to have some or all elements together in one verb phrase. Let us expand the verb phrase [recorded for you] to include other pre-head elements.

(2.61) a. The conversations [are recorded for you].

(Tense and passive)

b. The conversations [are being recorded for you].

(Tense, progressive and passive)

c. The conversations [have been being recorded for you].

(Tense, perfect, progressive and passive)

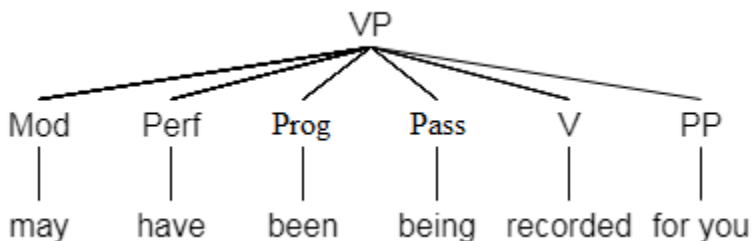
d. The conversation [may have been being recorded for you].

(Tense, auxiliary model, perfect, progressive and passive)

Representation of the structure of the verb phrase of the last sentence which includes all pre-head elements is shown in (2.62a) and (2.62b) below.

(2.62a) [_{VP} [_{Mod} may][_{Perf} have][_{Pass} been][_{Prog} being][_V recorded]][_{PP} for you]]

(2.62b)



The obligatory tense specifier affects the first element of the verb phrase which is the modal auxiliary 'may' which is in the present tense.

Exercise 16

1. Name the elements that precede the head in verb phrases and give an example for each element.
2. Expand the verb phrase in the following sentence by including one of the given elements each time until all elements are included.
 1. You write a letter
 - b. Modal auxiliary
 - c. Perfect aspect
 - d. Progressive aspect
 - e. Passive voice
 - f. Past tense
2. Label bracket and treediagram each phrase of the phrases you made in question 2.

2.3.2.2. Post-head elements

Regarding post-head elements, generally a head verb may be followed by two types of elements: obligatory and optional. Obligatory types are called complements and optional types are called adjuncts. In the following subsections we will discuss these two main types in more detail.

2.3.2.2.1. Complements

Complements are constituents which are required by head verbs in verb phrases. Consider the following example.

(2.63) *He told

The sentence in (2.63) is ungrammatical because the verb *'tell'* requires an element that completes the meaning of the verb.

(2.64) *He told me

In spite of the fact that we have added an element to the verb in (2.63), the result is still an ungrammatical sentence.

(2.65) He told me the truth.

After adding the second element, we have obtained a grammatical meaningful sentence. It seems that the verb *tell* requires or *subcategorizes* (to use syntax terminology) for two elements. In fact, the number of elements required by verbs and their types depend on the type of the verb itself. Verbs can be classified into three main categories: copula verbs, intransitive verbs, and transitive verbs.

A. Copula verbs

A copula verb is a verb which subcategorizes for a complement that describes the noun phrase (or subject) preceding it; it joins that noun phrase with the complement. Examples for copula verbs include *be, seem, look, appear, sound*, etc. Consider the following examples.

- (2.66) a. You [look tired].
 b. He [is a student in the faculty of Arts].
 c. They [seem in danger].

In sentence (a), the copula verb 'look' subcategorizes for an adjective phrase, in sentence (b) the verb 'be' subcategorizes for a noun phrase and, finally, in sentence (c), the verb 'seem' subcategorizes for a prepositional phrase. The subcategorization of copula verbs can be formally put in a frame like the one in (2.67)

$$(2.67) \quad \text{.Copula verb} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{AdjP} \\ \text{NP} \\ \text{PP} \end{array} \right\}$$

Exercise 17

1. *What is a verb complement? Give an example to clarify your answer.*
2. *Use the following copula verbs in sentences of your own. Use different types of complements: be - appear - sound - look - seem*
3. *Represent the verb phrases of the sentences you gave in 2 using labeled bracketing and tree diagramming.*

B. Intransitive verbs

An intransitive verb is one which is not followed by an object. The following are some examples.

(2.68) Hani [laughed]. The baby [cried] The old woman [died].

In the verb phrases of these sentences, the main verbs are intransitive verbs and, thus, they are not followed by an object. However, there are some intransitive verbs which require a complement. The following are some examples.

(2.69) Jamila [referred to the house]. Nader [pointed at the gap].

In the two verb phrases each of the two head verbs require a complement. This complement is not an object since the verb is intransitive; it is a prepositional phrase. This prepositional phrase is required by the intransitive verb to complete the verb phrase. If this prepositional phrase is omitted, the result will be ungrammatical sentence.

(2.70) *Jamila referred *Nader pointed.

This subcategorization for no complement by some intransitive verbs and the subcategorization for a prepositional phrase complements by some other intransitive verbs can be framed as follows.

(2.71) Intransitive verb - $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \emptyset \\ PP \end{array} \right\}$

The notation \emptyset means that no complement is required by the transitive verb, or a prepositional phrase is required as a complements for some intransitive verbs.

Exercise 18

1. *Give an example for an intransitive verb which requires a prepositional phrase as a complement and another example for an intransitive verb which requires a zero complement.*
2. *Put the two verbs you gave in 1 in sentences of your own.*
3. *Represent the verb phrases in the sentences you gave in 2 using labeled bracketing and tree diagramming to show their syntactic structure.*

C. Transitive verbs

A transitive verb is one that requires an object or two objects. The number of objects following the verb depends on the type of the

transitive verb. Transitive verbs can be classified into three types: monotransitive, ditransitive, and complex transitive.

1. Monotransitive verbs

A monotransitive verb is a verb which is followed by one obligatory object. The following are some examples:

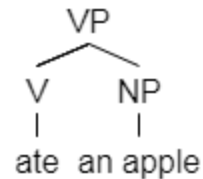
(2.72) Yousef [ate an apple]

The cat [killed the rat]

I like [reading]

The head verbs in the sentences in (2.72) are followed by one noun phrase each. In the first example, the verb '*ate*' subcategorizes for the noun phrase '*an apple*', in the second example the head verb '*killed*' subcategorizes for the noun phrase '*the rat*' and, finally, in the third example the head verb '*like*' subcategorizes for the noun phrase '*reading*'. The representation in (2.73a) and (2.73b) show the syntactic structure of the first example.

(2.73a) [_{VP} [_V ate][_{NP} an apple]] (2.73b)



In addition to the noun phrase required by monotransitive verbs, some monotransitive verbs subcategorize for a prepositional phrase as the example in (2.74) show.

(2.74) She [put the book on the table].

*She [put the book].

As you can see, the monotransitive verb requires the prepositional phrase '*on the table*' in addition to the noun phrase '*the book*'. In the ungrammatical sentence '*she put the book' the meaning is incomplete.

A monotransitive verb can also subcategorize for a clause as the examples in (2.75) show:

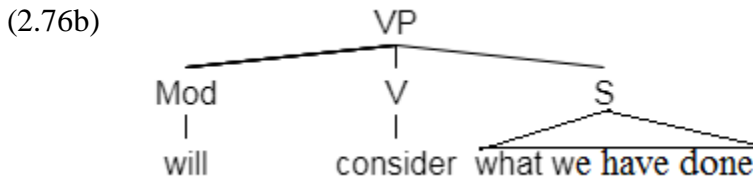
(2.75) The teacher [will consider what we have done].

I [understand that she is seriously ill].

They [know where they should go].

Each head verb in the sentences in (2.76) is followed by a clause. The main verb 'consider' in the first sentence is followed by the clause 'what we have done', the main verb 'understand' in the second example is followed by the clause 'that she is seriously ill' and, finally, the main verb 'know' in the third example is followed by the clause 'where they should go'. Representation of the structure of the verb phrase of the first sentence in (2.75) is given in (2.76a) and (2.76b) as an example.

(2.76a) [VP [Mod will][V consider][S what we have done]]



The subcategorization of monotransitive verbs for complements can be framed as in (2.77) below.

(2.77) Monotransitive verb -- { NP
NP-PP
S }

This frame can be translated as follows: a monotransitive verb is followed by a noun phrase, a noun phrase and a prepositional phrase OR a clause as its complement.

Exercise 19

1. How do you translate this notation into words?

Monotransitive verb -- { NP
NP-PP
S }

2. Give each type of a monotransitive verb in a sentence of your own.

2. Label bracket and treediagram the verb phrases of the sentences you gave in 2 to show their syntactic structure.

2. Ditransitive verbs

A ditransitive verb is a verb that subcategorizes for two objects: one is direct and the other is indirect. The following are some examples:

(2.78) Malik [gave his sister a present]

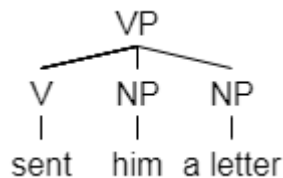
Lubna [told us a story].

I [sent him a letter]

The head verb 'gave' in the first verb phrase above is followed by the two noun phrases 'his sister' and 'a present', the head verb 'told' in the second noun phrase is followed by the two noun phrases 'us' and 'a story', and finally, the head verb 'sent' is followed by the two noun phrases 'him' and 'a letter'. The structure of the verb phrase 'sent him a letter' is represented in (2.79a) and (2.79b) using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(2.79a) [_{VP} [_V sent][_{NP} him][_{NP} a letter]]

(2.79b)



The ditransitive verb may also subcategorize for a noun phrase and a prepositional phrase. Using the examples in (2.78) and by reversing the order of the two noun phrases subcategorized for by the head verb we obtain the following sentences:

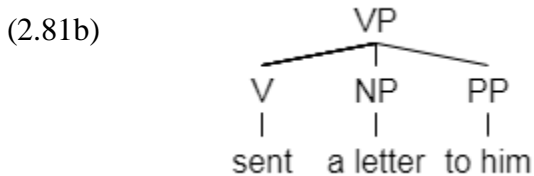
(2.80) Malik [gave a present to his sister].

Muna [told a story to us].

I [sent a letter to him].

The head verb 'gave' in the first verb phrase above is followed by the noun phrases 'a present' and the prepositional phrase 'to his sister', the head verb 'told' in the second verb phrase is followed by the noun phrases 'a story' and the prepositional phrase 'to us', and, finally, the head verb 'sent' is followed by the noun phrases 'a letter' and the prepositional phrase 'to him'. The structure of the verb phrase 'sent a letter to him' is represented in (2.81a) and (2.81b) using labeled bracketing and tree diagramming.

(2.81a) [VP sent [NP a letter][PP to him]]



The subcategorization of ditransitive verbs for complements can be put in a frame as in (2.82) below.

(2.82) Ditransitive verb - $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP-NP} \\ \text{NP-PP} \end{array} \right\}$

This frame can be translated as follows: a ditransitive verb subcategorizes either for two noun phrases or a noun phrase plus a prepositional phrase.

Exercise 20

1. What is a ditransitive verb? Give three examples and put them in sentences of your own.
2. How you say this notation in words?

Ditransitive verb - $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP-NP} \\ \text{NP-PP} \end{array} \right\}$

3. *Represent the syntactic structure of the verb phrases in the sentences you gave in 1 using labeled bracketing and tree diagramming.*

3. Complex transitive verb

A complex transitive verb, like a ditransitive one subcategorizes for two noun phrases or a noun phrase and an adjective phrase. However, while the two noun phrases required by a ditransitive verb refer to two different things or people, the two noun phrases required by a complex transitive verb refer to one thing. As we will see in the third chapter this will have consequences on the functions of these noun phrases. To clarify the difference between noun phrases subcategorized for by ditransitive verbs and those subcategorized for by complex transitive verbs, let us consider the following examples.

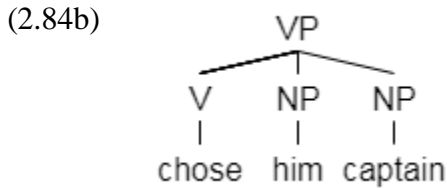
(2.83) He [lent me some money]. (lent: ditransitive verb)

They [chose him captain]. (chose: complex transitive verb)

Both verbs in the two noun phrase in (2.83) subcategorize for two noun phrases each. However, while the two noun phrases required by the head verb '*lent*' refer to two different things: '*me*' and '*some money*', the two noun phrases required by the head verb '*chose*' refer to the same thing or person; '*him*' and '*captain*' refer to the same person. When the two noun phrases subcategorized for by a transitive verb refer to different things that verb is said to be a ditransitive verb. However, when the two noun phrases subcategorized for by a transitive verb refer to the same person or thing then that verb is known as a complex transitive verb. As have been mentioned before, this difference will have its effect on the grammatical functions of these noun phrases as we will see in Unit Three.

The structure of the second verb phrase in (2.83) is represented in (2.84a) and (2.84b) as an example of a complex transitive verb complement.

(2.84a) [VP [v chose][NP him][NP captain]]

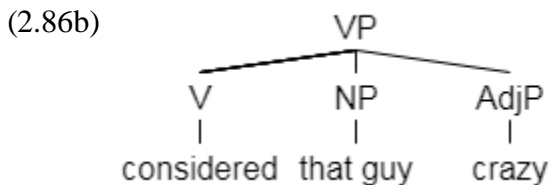


Complex transitive verbs can also subcategorize for a noun phrase and an adjective phrase. Let us consider the following example.

(2.85) The woman [considered that guy crazy].

The complex transitive verb '*considered*' is followed by two complements: the noun phrase '*that guy*' and the adjective phrase '*crazy*'. This can be shown through a representation of the verb phrase by using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(2.86a) [VP [v considered][NP that guy][AdjP crazy]]



The subcategorization of complex transitive verbs for complements can be put in a frame as in (2.87) below.

(2.87) Complex transitive verb - { NP-NP
NP-AdjP }

This frame can be translated as follows: a complex transitive verb subcategorizes for two noun phrases or a noun phrase and an adjective phrase.

Exercise 21

1. *What is the difference between a ditransitive verb and a complex transitive verb? Give an example of each one of them in sentences to illustrate this difference.*
2. *Represent the syntactic structure of the verb phrases in the sentences you gave in 1 using labeled bracketing and tree diagramming.*

2.3.2.2. 2. Adjuncts

In addition to complements required by head verbs in verb phrases, these phrases can have adjuncts. However, while verb complements are obligatory, adjuncts are optional because they are not needed to complete the verb phrase; they only add information to the verb phrase. However, when they are there in the sentence they are considered part of the verb phrase. Let us consider the following examples.

(2.88) He opened [the door][for the guest].

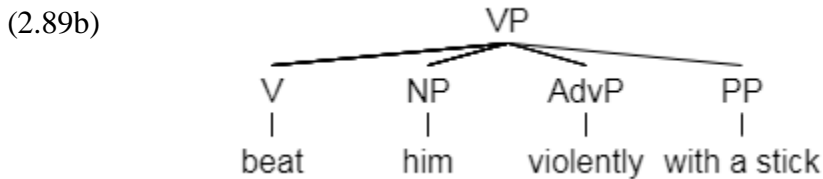
She beat [him][violently][with a stick]

In the first sentence, while the noun phrase '*the door*' is required for the meaning of the verb phrase, the prepositional phrase '*for the guest*' can be omitted because it is not required by the head verb to complete the meaning of the verb phrase. It only gives additional information and thus can be omitted. Similarly, in the second sentence, while the noun phrase '*him*' is needed to complete the meaning of the verb phrase, the adverb phrase '*violently*' and the prepositional phrase '*with a stick*' can be omitted because they are not obligatory constituents.

- (2.88) He opened the door *He opened for the quest
 She beat him *She beat violently with a stick.

As you can see in the last example, the phrase has two optional constituents. A representation of the structure of the verb phrase in the second example in (2.88) is found in (2.89a) and (2.89b) below.

- (2.89a) [VP [V beat][NP him][AdvP violently][PP with a stick]]



It is possible theoretically at least to add an indefinite number of adjuncts to verb phrases.

- (2.90) She beat him violently with a stick when she met him by chance at the street corner yesterday.....

Now we reached the point where we can try to formulate a verb phrase structure rule like the one below:

- (2.91) VP → Tense - (Mod) - (Perf) - (Prog) - (Pass) - V - (Comp)⁺ - (Av)⁺

As you can see from this provisional phrase structure rule, all elements are optional except for the head word, which is a verb, and the tense. As we have already mentioned before, verb phrases should contain finite verbs and these finite verbs by definition carry tense. That is why the element tense is obligatory in this verb phrase structure rule.

Due to the complexity of the types of verb complements, they cannot be specified in such a rule. The abbreviation *comp* refers to verb complements and the abbreviation *Av* refers to verb phrase adjuncts. We use *Av* and not *Adj* for adjuncts because *Adj* has already been used to refer to adjectives. Both *comp* and *Av* are put between brackets since complements are not required by all verbs and since

adjuncts are optional constituents. Can you tell which verbs do not subcategorize for complements? Also, the raised plus sign following *comp* and *Av* means that we can have one or more of these constituents in a verb phrase.

Exercise 22

1. *What is an adjunct and what is the difference between an adjunct and a complement? Give a sentence as an example to illustrate your answer.*
2. *Represent the structure of the verb phrase in the sentence you gave in 1 using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.*
3. *Explain this verb structure rule in your own words:*

$VP \longrightarrow \text{Tense} - (\text{Mod}) - (\text{Perf}) - (\text{Prog}) - (\text{Pass}) - V - (\text{Comp})^+ - (\text{Av})^+$

2.3.3. Prepositional phrases

A prepositional phrase is a group of words in which the head word is a preposition. What follows the preposition is said to be its complement.

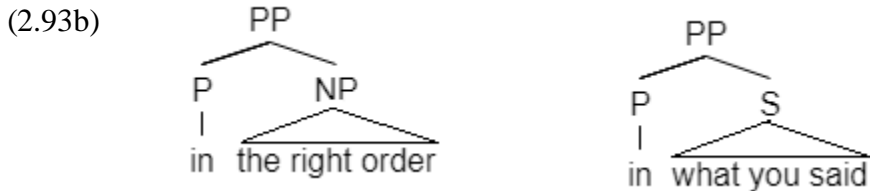
Preposition complements are of two types: A noun phrase or a clause. The following are some examples.

- (2.92)
- a. Nour is [at school].
 - b. The girl [with red hair] is my cousin.
 - c. Put these words [in the right order].
 - d. I believe [in what you said].
 - f. Have you talked [about where she should go].

In the examples a, b, and c. the prepositions *at*, *with* and *in* are followed by the noun phrases '*school*', '*red hair*' and '*the right order*' respectively. However in d and c, the prepositions '*in*' and '*about*' are

followed by the clauses *'what you said'* and *'where she should go'* respectively. A noun phrase or a clause following a preposition is considered its complement and belongs to the prepositional phrase as a whole. Let us represent the structure of the two prepositional phrases in c and d as examples using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(2.93a) [PP [P in][NP the right order]] [PP [P in][S what you said]]

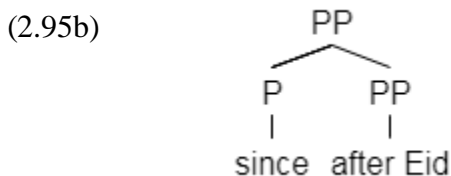


Sometimes the complement of the preposition itself is a prepositional phrase. This happens when a preposition is followed by another preposition in the same prepositional phrase. Here are some examples:

- (2.9 a. The mother watched her child [from behind the curtains].
 b. The mouse peeped [from under the cupboard].
 c. They have not met [since after Eid]

In the prepositional phrase in (a), the complement of the preposition *'from'* is the prepositional phrase *'behind the curtains'*. In the prepositional phrase (b) the complement of the preposition *'from'* is the prepositional phrase *'under the cupboard'*. Finally, in the prepositional phrase in (c) the complement of the preposition *'since'* is the prepositional phrase *'after Eid'*. In (2.95a) and (2.95b) we give a representation of the structure of the prepositional phrase in (c) as an example.

(2.95a) [PP [P since][PP after Eid]]



In all the examples given above, a preposition complement follows the preposition. However, there are exceptions to this typical order like the one in (2.96) below in which the complement precedes the preposition.

(2.96) I met her [two years ago].

The village is [a few miles away].

In the first example, the preposition '*ago*' comes at the end of the prepositional phrase preceded by its complement '*two years*'. Similarly, in the second example, the preposition '*away*' comes at the end of the prepositional phrase preceded by its complement '*a few miles*'.

Sometimes the prepositional complement is omitted altogether. Consider the following examples.

(2.97) She is [inside (the building)].

They looked at the stars [above (them)].

Pull that map [off (the wall)].

In these three examples the complement of the prepositions put between round brackets can be omitted.

Finally, head prepositions in prepositional phrases, like heads in other phrases, can be preceded by specifiers. Consider the following examples:

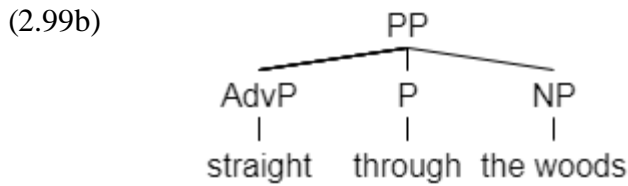
(2.98) a. The player kicked the ball [right in the goal].

b. They walked [straight through the woods].

c. The shot was [two inches above his head].

The underlined head preposition in (a) is specified by the adverb phrase '*right*', the underlined head preposition in (b) is specified by the adverb phrase '*straight*' and the head preposition in (c) is specified by the noun phrase '*two inches*'. Let us represent the preposition phrase in (b) as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagraming.

(2.99a) [PP [AdvP straight]][P through][NP the woods]]



Now we have reached a point where we can formalize a provisional prepositional phrase structure rule like the one in (2.100)

(2.100) $PP \longrightarrow (Spec) - P - (Prepc)$

In this provisional phrase structure rule the P is obligatory. The abbreviation *Spec* refers to the specifier that may or may not precede the head preposition. Because this element is optional it is put between round brackets. The same thing applies to the abbreviation *Prepc* which refers to the prepositional complement. Although the absence of prepositional complements is not so common we enclose it between round brackets to make our rule cover all possibilities.

Exercise 23

1. What is a prepositional phrase? Give an example to clarify your answer.
2. Put the prepositional phrases in these sentences between square brackets and circle their heads.
 - a. She cares about what he does.
 - b. She stared at the boy from behind the glass door.
 - c. He slapped her right in the face.
 - d. Huda left the country ten months ago.
3. Underline the prepositional complement of each prepositional phrase.
4. Are there any specifiers of prepositions in these prepositional phrases? Locate them.
5. Represent these prepositional phrases using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.
6. Explain this rule in your own words: $PP \longrightarrow (Spec) - P - (Prepc)$

2.3.4. Adjective phrases

An adjective phrase is a phrase in which the head word is an adjective. Let us consider the following examples

(2.101) That building is [old]

This little girl is [very smart].

Sundus is [fond of cats].

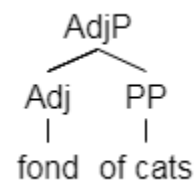
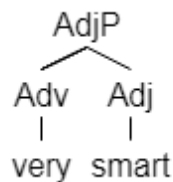
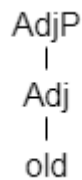
Adjective phrases in the sentences in (2.101) are enclosed between square brackets. These phrases are considered adjective phrases because their heads are adjectives. The head word in the first phrase is the adjective '*old*', the head word in the second phrase is the adjective '*smart*' and the head word in the third phrase is the adjective '*fond*'. Like other phrases, the adjective phrase may be made of one word or more than one word. Label bracketing and treediagramming these phrases will give us their syntactic structure in (2.102).

(2.102a) [AdjP [Adj old]]

[AdjP [Adv very][Adj smart]]

[AdjP [Adj fond][PP of cats]]

(2.102b)



As you can see, the head word in an adjective phrase can be preceded and/or followed by other elements. Consider the following examples. The head word is underlined.

(2.103) They are [very interested in reading].

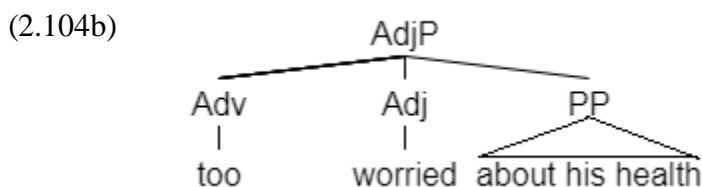
His mother was [totally surprised that he passed the exams].

He is [too worried about his health].

The words '*very*', '*totally*' and '*too*' found before the underlined heads in these adjective phrases are adverbs and they express the degree of the adjectives following them. As you have already seen, elements before the head adjective are optional. i.e., they may or may not precede the head in an adjective phrase.

In addition to these elements which precede the head, there are elements which follow the head in the adjective phrase. The elements which follow heads in adjective phrases are obligatory for some adjectives and optional for others. In (2.103) the underlined head word in the first example is followed by the prepositional phrase '*in reading*', the underlined head word in the second example is followed by the clause '*that he passed the exams*' and finally, the head word in the third example is followed by the prepositional phrase '*about his head*'. All these complements work as complements to these head adjectives. That is, they complete the meaning of the adjective phrase in which they are found. A representation of the last adjective phrase is shown as an example in (2.104)

(2.104a) [AdjP [Adv too][Adj worried][PP about his health]].



All examples of adjective phrases dealt with so far are found after the main verb in the sentence. That is they are located inside verb phrases. As we have seen before, adjective phrases can also be found inside noun phrases. Let us consider the following examples:

(2.105) That [fat] boy is my son.

[Bright] stars can be seen clearly.

My [new][friendly][English] neighbor is coming to the party.

The adjective '*fat*' is found inside the noun phrase '*that fat boy*', the adjective '*bright*' is found inside the noun phrase '*bright stars*' and,

finally, the three adjectives 'new', 'friendly' and 'English' belong to the noun phrase 'my new friendly English neighbor'. As you can see from the last example, we may have more than one adjective describing the same noun.

An adjective phrase structure rule can be formulated as follows:

(2.106) $\text{AdjP} \longrightarrow (\text{Adv}) - \text{Adj} - \{\text{PP/S}\}$

Elements between round brackets are optional. However, elements between curly brackets are not always optional. This is so to incorporate adjectives that are obligatorily followed by complements. Elements separated by a slash are alternatives. That is, you can either use a prepositional phrase or a clause after an adjective.

Exercise 24

1. *Identify the adjective phrases in the following sentences and put them between square brackets.*
 - *Libyans are aware of the problems their country encounters.*
 - *She became very angry with him.*
 - *The child was afraid of the cat.*
 - *She married him young.*
2. *Underline the head words in these phrases.*
3. *Label bracket and treediagram these phrases.*
4. *Explain this adjective phrase structure rule in your own words:*

$\text{AdjP} \longrightarrow (\text{Adv}) - \text{Adj} - \{\text{PP/S}\}$

2.3.5. Adverb phrases

An adverb phrase is a word or a group of words in which the head word is an adverb. It often tells us how, when or where something happened. The following are some examples.

(2.107) He arrived [yesterday].

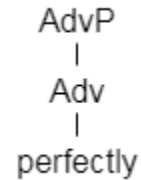
I saw him [there].

She has done her work [perfectly].

A representation of the structure of the last example of adverb phrases is shown in (2.108a) and (2.108b) using labeled bracketing and treediagramming respectively.

(2.108a) [AdvP [Adv perfectly]]

(2.108b)



In the first sentence the adverb phrase '*yesterday*' tells us about time, i.e. it answers the question *when*. In the second example, the adverb phrase '*there*' tells us about place; it answers the question *where*. Finally, in the third example the adverb phrase '*perfectly*' tells us about manner; it answers the question *how*.

In all the examples above, the adverb phrase is made of one word. However, the head adverb in an adverb phrase can be preceded by an element which specifies it. Such element is often an adverb which works as a degree expression. Consider the following examples:

(2.109) Nour did [very well] in the final exam.

The boxer hit his rival [extremely violently].

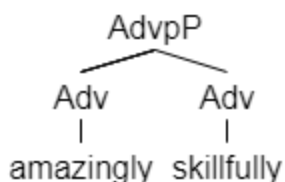
The cook prepared the dish [amazingly skillfully].

As can be seen from the examples in (2.109), the underlined head adverb is preceded by another adverb which works as a specifier and expresses the degree of the head adverb.

In (2.110) the syntactic structure of the third adverb phrase is represented as an example using labeled bracketing and tree diagramming.

(2.110a) [AdvP [Adv amazingly]][Adv skillfully]

(2.110b)



In all the examples that have been dealt with so far, the adverb phrase is found within the verb phrase. An adverb phrase can also be contained in an adjective phrase. Have a look at the following examples.

(2.111) The program was [extremely interesting].

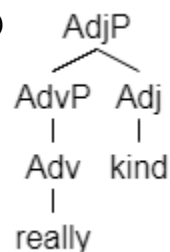
The result was [unexpectedly positive].

He was a [really kind] person.

The adverb phrases in (2.111) work as specifiers in larger adjective phrases. In the first example, the adverb phrase '*extremely*' functions as a specifier of the adjective '*interesting*'. In the second example the adverb phrase '*unexpectedly*' works as a specifier of the adjective '*positive*'. Finally, in the third example, the adverb phrase '*really*' plays the role of a specifier of the adjective '*kind*'. The structure of the last adjective phrase is represented as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming in (2.112a) and (2.112b),

(2.112a) [AdjP [AdvP [Adv really]][Adj kind]]

(2.112b)



Now we have reached a point where we can formalize an adverb phrase structure rule like the one in (2.113) below:

(2.113) AdvP → (Spec) - Adv

Exercise 25

1. Identify the adverb phrases in the following sentences and put them between square brackets.
 - a. He presented the material very badly.
 - b. The party was marvelously enjoyable.
 - c. The musician played the piano completely expertly.
 - d. They were quite nice people.
 - e. Come here.
2. Underline the head words in these phrases.
3. Label bracket and treediagram these phrases.
4. Explain this adverb phrase structure rule in your own words:

AdvP → (Spec) - Adv

2.4. Abbreviations

In addition to the abbreviations studied in unit one (See section 1.7), you also need to study and memorize the following abbreviations encountered in this unit due to their importance and use in the syntactic analysis throughout this coursebook and in your future study of syntax.

Mod.	Model auxiliary
Perf.	Perfect aspect
Pass.	Passive aspect
Prog.	Progressive aspect
Comp.	Complement
Av	Adjunct (in verb phrases)
Spec.	Specifier
Prepc.	Prepositional complement

2.5. Summary

In this unit, phrase structure rules were discussed. Phrase structure rules are those used by speakers of the language to structure sentences. They are called so because phrases are the basic constituents of sentences. In addition to phrases, sentences may also contain clauses which are formed through coordination and subordination.

As for phrases, they are classified into noun phrases, verb phrases, prepositional phrases, adjective phrases and, finally, adverb phrases. A noun phrase is called so because the main word in the phrase is a noun. Similarly, the main word in the verb phrase is a verb, the main word in a prepositional phrase is a preposition, the main word in an adjective phrase is an adjective and the main word in an adverb phrase is an adverb. The main word in each phrase type may be followed or preceded by other words which themselves belong to the phrase. The main word in a noun phrase can be preceded by determiners and adjective phrases and followed by clauses and prepositional phrases. All elements preceding and following the main noun in a noun phrase are optional.

The main verb in a verb phrase is similar to the main word in a noun phrase in that it can be preceded and followed by other elements. Elements preceding the main verb in a verb phrase include '*tense*' which is obligatory, '*modal auxiliary*', '*perfect aspect*', '*progressive aspect*' and '*passive aspect*' all of which are optional. Regarding elements following the main verb in a verb phrase, they are of two types: complements and adjuncts. Complements are those constituents which are required by some verbs and which complete the meaning of the verb in a verb phrase and thus are considered obligatory. Adjuncts are optional because they give extra information that can be omitted without affecting the grammaticality of the verb phrase.

The type of complement is dependent on the type of the main verb in the verb phrase. Copula verbs subcategorize for an adjective phrase, a noun phrase or a prepositional phrase. Intransitive verbs may subcategorize for nothing or a prepositional phrase. Monotransitive verbs subcategorize for a noun phrase or a noun phrase plus a prepositional phrase or a clause. Ditransitive verbs are followed by two noun phrases

or a noun phrase plus a prepositional phrase. Complex transitive verbs are followed by two noun phrases or a noun phrase plus an adjective phrase.

The main word in a prepositional phrase which is a preposition can be preceded by specifiers and should be followed by complements. Similarly, the main word in the adjective phrase can be preceded by an adverb phrase which specifies it. Some adjectives require complements which can be realized by prepositional phrases or clauses. Finally, an adverb phrase can be made of a single adverb or an adverb preceded by another adverb which specifies it.

Unit Three: Functions of Constituents

3.1. Grammatical functions in sentences

When we studied the structure of sentence in Unit One, we found that a sentence is basically made of a noun phrase and a verb phrase. These two constituents have the functions of a subject and a predicate respectively.

3.1.1. Subject

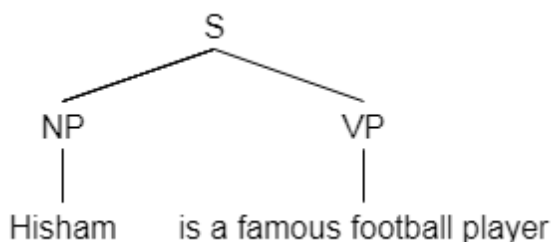
The subject of a sentence is the noun phrase which combines with the verb phrase to make a sentence. It is often found at the beginning of the sentence. Let us illustrate this through the following example.

(3.1) Hisham is a famous football player.

Representing this sentence by labeled bracketing and treediagramming will give us the structure representation in (3.2) below.

(3.2a) [S [NP Hisham][VP is a famous football player]]

(3.2b)

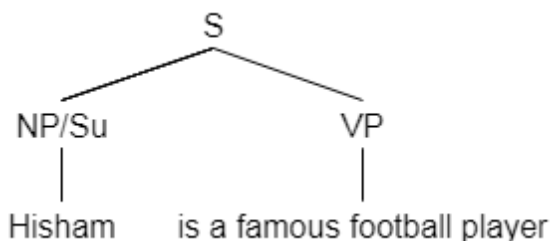


The noun phrase immediately dominated by the sentence and found at the beginning of the sentence before the verb phrase functions as the subject of the sentence, or (to use syntax terms) *realizes* the function of the subject. As you can see, the representation only shows labels of

constituents. Incorporating functions into our representations needs some modifications in such representations as can be seen in (3.3) below.

(3.3a) [_S [_{NP/Su} Hisham]] [_{VP} is a famous football player]]

(3.3b)



By using a slash between the label and the function, it was possible to show functions on both representations. The function 'subject' is abbreviated as 'Su'. We will continue to use this convention to show grammatical functions of all constituents.

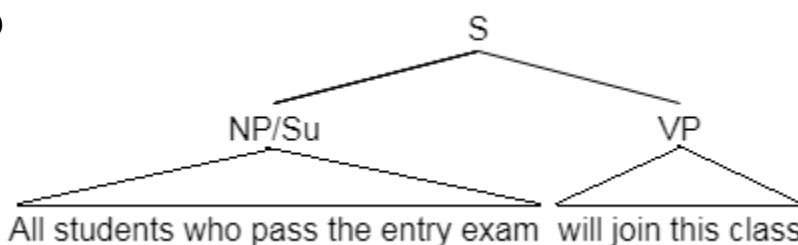
In the example above, the noun phrase realizing the function of the subject is made up of a single word. As we have seen in unit two, a noun phrase can consist of a string of words like the one at the beginning of the following sentence.

(3.3) All students who pass the entry exam will join this class.

Representing this sentence with labeled bracketing and treediagramming will give the syntactic structure representation in (3.4).

(3.4a) [_S [_{NP/Su} All students who pass the entry exam]] [_{VP} will join this class]

(3.4b)



As you can see from both representations, the whole noun phrase '*all students who pass the entry exam*' realizes the function of subject.

Because we have not studied the function of the VP yet, it does not show in these representations. The function of the VP will be clarified in the following section.

3.1.2. Predicate

While the noun phrase at the beginning of a sentence realizes the function of the subject, the verb phrase which follows it functions as the predicate. A predicate is called so because it predicates something of the subject. Consider the following examples and see in particular how the VP or the predicate of each sentence is related to the NP or the subject of the same sentence.

(3.5) The Libyan people are generous.

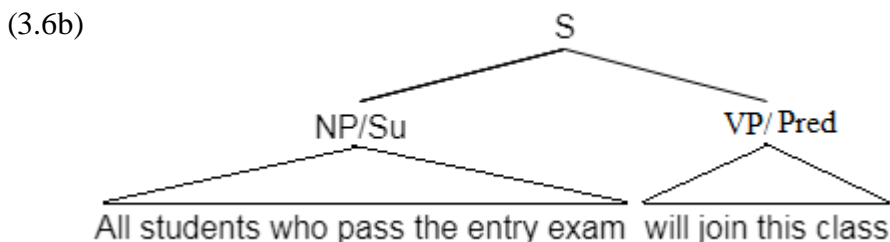
Syntax is a very interesting subject.

They come here every month.

I believe in ghosts.

In all the sentences in (3.5) the VP or the predicate of every sentence tells something of the NP or the subject of that sentence. Let us repeat the representations of the sentence in (3.3) but now showing the function of the verb phrase as the predicate of the sentence.

(3.6a) [S_[NP/Su All students who pass the entry exam]][VP/*Pred* will join this class]



As you can see from the representation, the predicate is the verb phrase immediately dominated by the sentence and which realizes the function of the predicate. *Pred* is the abbreviation.

3.1.3. Sentence Adjuncts

In Unit Two, we mentioned that adjuncts are optional elements found in verb phrases and which give additional information. In addition to these optional elements found in verb phrases, there are optional elements attached to the sentence and, thus, they do not constitute a part of the basic structure of the sentence. They are known as sentence adjuncts. The label is abbreviated as As to distinguish it from adjuncts found in verb phrases and abbreviated as Av.

Sentence adjuncts (As) can be grouped in two types: speaker attitude expressions and sentence connectors.

3.2.3.1. Speaker attitude expressions

This type of adjuncts includes elements that are used to express the attitude of the speaker towards the idea of the sentence. Examples of this type include items like *luckily*, *hopefully*, *sadly*, *certainly*, *in my opinion*, *in my view*, *in fact*, etc. Consider the following examples which contain these expressions.

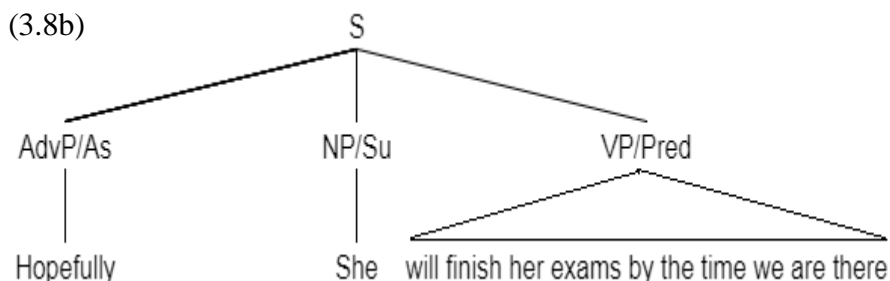
(3.7) Sadly, we will not be able to go for a picnic this weekend due to bad weather.

Hopefully, she will finish her exams by the time we are there.

In my opinion, the problem of large-size classes should be solved immediately.

As you can see from these examples, these expressions do not make a part of the basic structure of the sentences in which they are found and, therefore, they are separated by commas from the rest of the sentence. The representations in (3.8) show the structure of the second sentence in (3.7) as an example.

(3.8a) [S [AdvP/As Hopefully] [NP/Su She][VP/Pred will finish her exams by the time we are there]]



3.2.3.2. Sentence connectors

This type of sentence adjuncts includes elements that are used to connect sentences in discourse whether written or spoken such as *therefore*, *however*, *yet*, *moreover*, etc. The following are some examples:

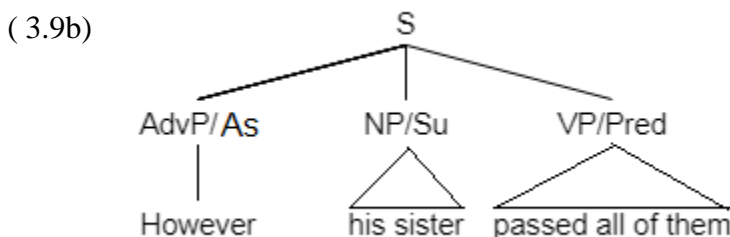
(3.8) It is raining heavily. Therefore, I will not go out.

Waleed failed all his exams. However, his sister passed them.

She is fat and short. Yet, she is very attractive.

As can be seen from these examples, Sentence connectors do not belong to the basic structure of the sentences they are found in, but their role is mainly to connect these sentences to others preceding them in the text. The following is a representation of the structure of the second sentence found in the second example using both labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.9a) [S_{AdvP/SA} However][NP_{Su} his sister][VP_{Pred} passed all of them]]



To conclude this section, we present a table in which we show the constituents making the basic structure of the sentence and their grammatical functions with some examples.

Table (3.1)

<i>Function</i>	<i>Sentence Adjunct (As)</i>	<i>Subject (Su)</i>	<i>Predicate (Pred)</i>
<i>Category</i>	<i>AdvP/PP</i>	<i>NP</i>	<i>VP</i>
Examples	Certainly, Luckily, In fact, However, Yet,	that little boy I that girl the weather the football team	is smart. met her before. did it purposefully. got terrible. played very well.

Exercise 26

1. In each of the following sentences, circle the subject and underline the predicate.
 - a. In fact, you have broken my pencil.
 - b. Hiba and Nour will arrive before noon, fortunately.
 - c. Yet, your transcript show many high grades, .
 - d. The old woman embraced her long lost daughter.
 - e. The guy with long hair is a good swimmer, however.
2. Identify sentence adjuncts and specify their types.
3. Represent the structure of the sentences above using both labeled bracketing and treediagraming methods of representation.

3.2. Grammatical functions in phrases

When we discussed the structure of phrases, we said that every phrase has a head. The head of the noun phrase is a noun, the head of a verb phrase is a verb, the head of a prepositional phrase is a preposition, the head of an adjective phrase is an adjective and the head of an adverb phrase is an adverb. By definition, the function of the head words in phrases is a head. The head noun realizes the function of the head of the noun phrase and the head verb realizes the function of the head of the verb phrase and so on. Heads of phrases may be preceded or followed by other elements. These elements have functions in their phrases. In the following subsections, functions of elements preceding and following heads in phrases will be discussed.

3.2. 1. Functions in noun phrase

3.2.1.1. Specifiers

Head nouns in noun phrases may be preceded by determiners. As said before, determiners are divided according to their position into three categories: pre-determiners, central determiners and post-determiners. However, all determiners, whatever their type is, realize the function of specifier. They specify the head noun in the noun phrase. Let us consider the following examples:

(3.10) [A new teacher] came today.

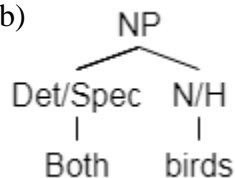
[Both girls] are my friends.

[Three cars] were sold to that rich man.

In the first example, the indefinite article 'a' functions as a specifier of the noun head 'teacher', in the second example, the determiner 'both' also functions as a specifier of the head noun 'girl' and, finally, in the third example, the determiner 'three' realizes the function of a specifier of the head noun 'cars'. The following is a representation of the noun phrase in the second sentence in (3.10) as an example.

(3.11a) [NP [Det/Spec Both][N/H birds]]

(3.11b)



As you can see from this representation, the abbreviation of 'specifier' is 'Spec' and the abbreviation of 'head' is 'H'. In all the examples in (3.10), there is only one specifier preceding the head noun. As we have seen in Unit Two, we may have a number of determiners preceding the head noun in a noun phrase. All determiners preceding the head noun function as specifiers. The following are some examples.

(3.11) [All the five red apples] are fresh.

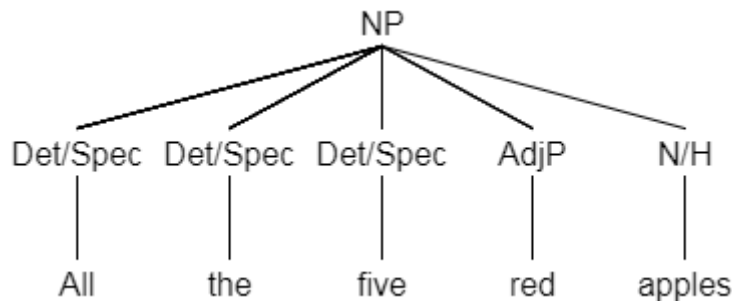
[Half a bottle of milk] is enough.

[both my little kids] are naughty.

In these sentences, noun phrases are enclosed between square brackets and their heads are underlined. In the first example, the head noun is preceded by three determiners and an adjective; in the second sentence, the head noun is preceded by two determiners. Likewise, in the third example the head noun is preceded by two determiners. All these determiners realize the function of specifier. Let us represent the noun phrase in the first sentence as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.12a) [NP[Det/Spec All][Det/Spec the][Det/Spec five][AdjP red][N/H apples]]

3.12b)



As you can see from this representation, the only element that does not show a function is the adjective phrase 'red' immediately preceding the head noun. The function of adjective phrases preceding head nouns is discussed in the following subsection.

3.2.1.2. Modifiers

Modifiers are those words which may be found in a noun phrase and modify the head noun. They are classified in two categories: premodifiers and postmodifiers. Premodifiers precede the head noun and postmodifiers follow it.

(3.13) Premodifiers - Head noun - Postmodifiers

3.2.1.2.1. Premodifiers

In addition to the fact that head nouns in noun phrases can be preceded by determiners which function as specifiers, these nouns can

also be preceded by adjectives. These adjectives realize the function of premodifier since they come before the noun and premodify it. Have a look at these examples. Premodifiers are usually adjectives.

(3.13) [cheap clothes] are sold in this store.

This is [a great idea].

[These four French girls] came to visit my grandmother.

In these examples, adjectives preceding head nouns are underlined. In the first example the head noun '*clothes*' is preceded by the adjective '*cheap*' which premodifies it. In the second example, the head noun '*ideas*' is preceded by the adjective '*great*' which functions as a premodifier of that noun. In the third example, the head word '*girls*' is preceded by the adjective '*French*' which realizes the function of a premodifier of the head noun.

In addition to the above mentioned adjectives found in these noun phrases and which realize the function of premodifier, the second and third example contain determiners which realize the function of specifier. In the second example, there is the indefinite article '*a*' and in the third example, there is the demonstrative '*these*' and the number '*three*' both of which are determiners and function as specifiers. It is particularly important to notice here that when we have specifiers and premodifiers together in the same noun phrase, specifiers precede adjectives and adjectives come immediately before head nouns.

(3.14) These four French girls *These French four girls

Like determiners in noun phrases, we may have more than one adjective preceding a noun head and premodifying it.

(3.15) a white horse.

 those useful scientific books

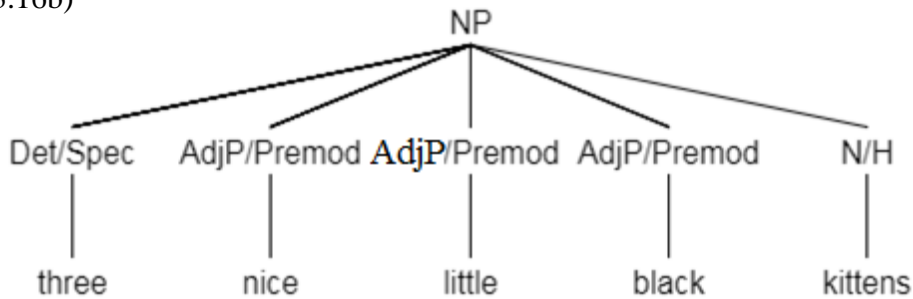
 three nice little black kittens

While the underlined head noun in the first example is preceded by one adjective, the head word in the second noun phrase is preceded by

two adjectives. In the third noun phrase, the head word is preceded by three adjectives all of which function as premodifiers of the head noun. This noun phrase is represented as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.16a) [NP [Det/Spec three][AdjP/Premod nice][AdjP/Premod little][AdjP/Premod black][N/H kittens]]

(3.16b)



It is clearly seen from both representations that the adjectives constitute an adjective phrase each and that each adjective phrase realizes the function of a premodifier which is abbreviated as Premod.

3.2.1.2.2. Postmodifiers

As we have seen in Unit Two when we discussed the structure of noun phrases, a head noun in a noun phrase may be followed by a clause or a prepositional phrase. These elements which follow the noun phrase realize the function of postmodifier because they postmodify the head noun. The following are some examples.

(3.17) The car which you bought yesterday

The woman whom I met at the party

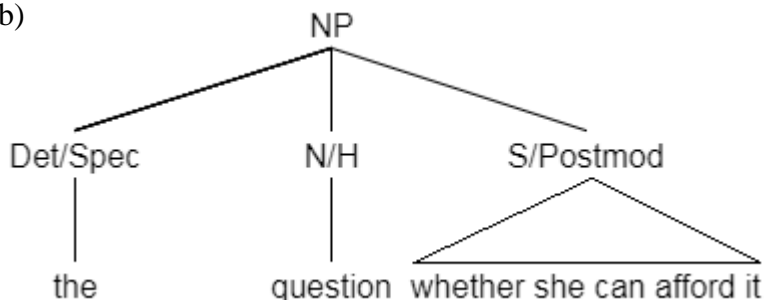
The question whether she can afford it

As can be seen from these examples, the underlined head nouns in these noun phrases are followed by clauses. In the first noun phrase, the head word 'car' is followed by the clause 'which you bought yesterday', the head word 'woman' in the second noun phrase is

followed by the clause *'whom I met at the party'*, and finally, the head noun word *'question'* in the third noun phrase is followed by the clause *'whether she can afford it'*. These clauses realize the function of postmodifier. Here is a representation of the third noun phrase as an example using both labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.18a) [NP [Det/Spec the][N/H question][S/Postmod whether she can afford it]]

(3.18b)



In addition to clauses, head words in noun phrases can be followed by prepositional phrases which also function as postmodifiers of the preceding head nouns. The following are some examples:

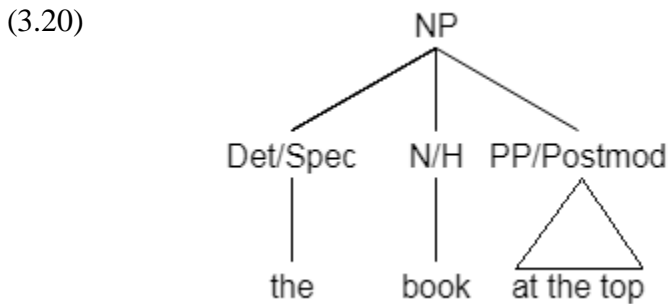
(3.19) The key of the main door

A television with flat screen

The book at the top

In the first example the head word *'key'* is followed by the prepositional phrase *'of the main door'*. In the second example, the head noun *'television'* is followed by the prepositional phrase *'with flat screen'*. Finally, the head word *'book'* in the third noun phrase is followed by the prepositional phrase *'at the top'*. All these prepositional phrases in these noun phrases realize the function of postmodifier since they postmodify the nouns preceding them. Here is a representation of the third example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.20) [NP [Det/Spec the][N/H book][PP/Postmod at the top]]



To conclude this section about grammatical functions in noun phrases, we present a table in which we show the constituents preceding the head word in a noun phrase and elements following this head along with their functions illustrated with some examples:

Table (3.2)

<i>Function</i>	<i>Specifier (Spec)</i>	<i>Premodifier (Premod)</i>	<i>Head (H)</i>	<i>Postmodifier (Postmod)</i>
<i>Category</i>	<i>Det</i>	<i>AdjP</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S/PP</i>
Examples	A These The	white clever palm	house boys men tree	with long hair which I planted

Exercise 28

1. Put noun phrases in the following sentences between square brackets and underline their heads.

- The young English prince participated in the celebration.
- This is the one I wanted.
- Those red roses with a pleasant natural sent are grown in my garden.
- That is the bird which you gave me.
- She gave birth to three little beautiful babies.

2. Analyze these noun phrases showing both their labels and functions of their constituents using labeled bracketing and treediagraming.

3.2.2. Functions in verb phrases

Like other types of phrases, the main function in the verb phrase is realized by the head word in the phrase. That is, the head word in the verb phrase is the main verb and which realizes the function of head. Other functions found in a verb phrase can be divided in two categories: those preceding the head and those following it. Elements preceding the head in a verb phrase realize the function of specifier. Elements which follow the head word in the verb phrase realize two main functions: complement and adjunct. Let us start with specifiers in the verb phrase.

3.2.2.1. Specifiers.

Like noun phrases, verb phrases may contain elements which come before the head word. These elements work as specifiers. As said in Unit Two when the structure of the verb phrase was discussed, the head verb can be preceded by a modal auxiliary, a perfect aspect, a progressive aspect, and a passive aspect. All of these elements work as specifiers of the main verb in the verb phrase. However, while these specifiers are optional in that the head verb may or may not be preceded by any one or all of them, the tense element is always there in the verb phrase. As we will see later, the tense is always shown by the first finite verb in the verb phrase. It is shown by the head verb if that head is not preceded by specifiers. If, however, it is preceded by specifiers, the first specifier will carry tense. The verb which shows tense in the verb phrase should either be in the present or the past. This tense element, thus, is considered an obligatory specifier of the head verb. In fact, it is the only obligatory specifier in the verb phrase. Let us consider the following examples.

(3.21) I clean my car regularly.

You will go with me to the party.

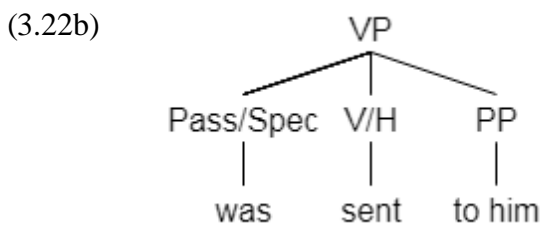
Salwa has done her house work perfectly.

The girls are dancing.

The letter was sent to him.

In addition to *tense* which is found in the first element in each verb phrase in every sentence in (3.21), there is a specifier preceding the head verb with the exception of the first sentence in which the head verb '*clean*' is not preceded by any specifier apart from tense which is *present*. In the second sentence, the head verb has two specifiers: the modal auxiliary '*will*' and the *present tense* which is shown by the first element in the verb phrase: the auxiliary verb '*will*'. In the third sentence, the head verb is preceded by the perfect aspect and the tense which is *present*. Both specifiers are carried by '*has*', and the perfect aspect is shown by the past participle form of the main verb '*done*'. In the fourth sentence, the head verb is preceded by the progressive aspect and the tense which is *present*. The progressive aspect is shown by the *ing* form of the main verb. Both specifiers are carried by '*are*'. Finally, in the sixth sentence, the head verb is preceded by two specifiers: the passive aspect and the tense which is *past*. Both specifiers are carried by '*was*', and the passive aspect is shown by the past participle form of the main verb '*sent*'. The following is a representation of the verb phrase of the last sentence as an example.

(3.22a) [VP [Pass/Spec was][V/H sent]][PP to him]



As you can see from these representations, the function of the tense element as a specifier does not show in the representation but it is evident from the first lexical element in the verb phrase '*was*'. Can you represent the other examples in (3.21) using both labeled bracketing and treediagramming? The abbreviations of verb specifiers are as follows: Model Auxiliary (Mod), Perfect (Perf), Progressive (Prog) and, finally, Passive (Pass).

In all examples above, there is only one optional specifier preceding the head verb in each verb phrase. As said before, we may have more than one specifier of a head word in the same verb phrase. The following are some examples.

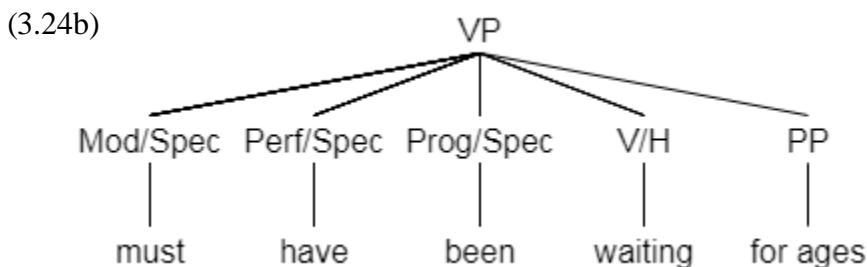
(3.23) You should have studied hard.

Ridha has been told to join the army.

They must have been waiting for ages.

In the first example we have a modal auxiliary and the perfect aspect as specifiers. In the second example, we have the perfect and the passive aspects as specifiers. Finally, in the third example we have the modal auxiliary and the perfect and the passive aspects as specifiers. Here is a representation of the verb phrase in the last example:

(3.24a) [VP [Mod/Spec must][Perf/Spec have][Prog/Spec been][V/H waiting][PP
for ages]



Exercise 29

1. Identify verb phrases in the following sentences and put them between square brackets.
 - a. I have read the book several times.
 - b. She will pay off her mortgage in ten years.
 - c. Laila must have been living here for a long time.
 - d. Fourth year students ought to study harder.
 - e. The message should have been sent earlier.
2. Underline head verbs and circle their specifiers.
3. Represent these sentences using labeled bracketing.

4. *Represent verb phrases using treediagramming.*

3.2.2.2. Complements

Complement is the other type of functions found in verb phrases. Complements are often found after head verbs. A verb complement can be of the following types: object, predicative complement, adverbial complement, and a complex one which combines predicative complement and adverbial complement.

3.2.2.2.1. Object

When verbs were discussed in Unit Two, we saw that they are classified into certain subcategories depending on the complements they require. For example, some intransitive verbs require no complements, monotransitive verbs are followed by one object and ditransitive verbs require two objects and so on. These objects which follow transitive verbs are of two types: direct and indirect. .

A. Direct object

An object whether direct or indirect is whatever or whoever receives the action of an action verb. Let us consider the following examples.

(3.21) The dog chased the cat.

The girl put the cups in the cupboard.

That kind man offered me some help.

The underlined words in these examples are direct objects; they receive the action of the verbs '*chased*', '*put*' and '*offered*' respectively. That is they realize the function of direct objects in these sentences. An object in an active sentence becomes the subject of a passive one. Therefore, to make sure that these are objects we simply change them to passive.

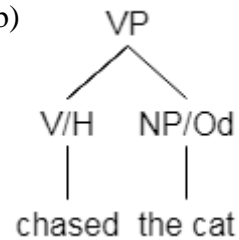
(3.22) The cat was chased by the dog.

The cups were put in the cupboard by the girl.

I was offered some help by that kind man.

The underlined words in the sentences in (3.21) have become subjects in the passive sentences in (3.22). This indicates that these words realize the function of object, more specifically direct object. Let us represent the verb phrase in the first sentence in (3.21) using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.23a) [VP [V/H chased][NP/Od the cat]] (3.23b)



As can be seen from both representations, direct object is abbreviated Od with Object before Direct. This is so because we have another type of the object function which is indirect object abbreviated as Oi giving the function in both types first followed by its type. The indirect object function is discussed in the section that follows this section.

In all examples discussed above, direct object function is realized by a noun phrase. However, full clauses can also realize this function as the following examples show.

(3.24) She decided [that she would never marry him].

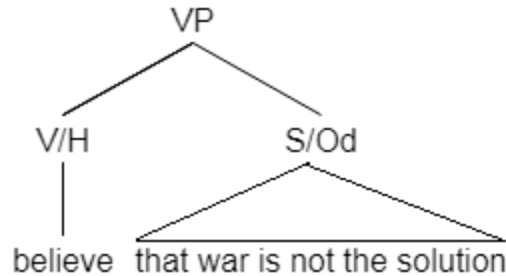
Runda felt [that she needs more love from her family].

Libyans believe [that war is not the solution].

In these sentences the head verbs are followed by full clauses which realize the function of direct object. Here is a representation of the verb phrase of the last one as an example.

(3.25a) [_{VP} [_{VH} believe][_{S/Od} that war is not the solution]].

(3.25b)



B. Indirect object

Indirect object is found in the sentence when the head verb is a ditransitive one. A ditransitive verb by definition requires two objects: direct and indirect. The following are some examples.

(3.26) The teachers gave [the students][homework] today.

My mother always brings [me][presents] when she travels abroad.

Will you fetch [her][that book], please?

In these examples, each underlined verb is followed by two objects, one is direct and the other is indirect. This is so because these verbs are ditransitive verbs and, thus, each requires two objects: one is direct and the other is indirect. The one which receives the action of the verb is the indirect object and the one to which the direct object is passed is the indirect object. Thus, in the first sentence in the examples above, the direct object is '*homework*' and the indirect one is '*the students*', in the second sentence, the direct object is '*presents*' and the indirect one is '*me*'. Finally, in the third sentence the direct object is '*that book*' and the indirect one is '*her*'.

If you are in doubt of which is the direct object and which is the indirect one, you change the order of the two objects and use the preposition 'to' (or 'for') before the second one. The object which is directly preceded by 'to' is the indirect object and the other one is the direct object.

(3.27) The teachers gave [homework] [to the students] today.

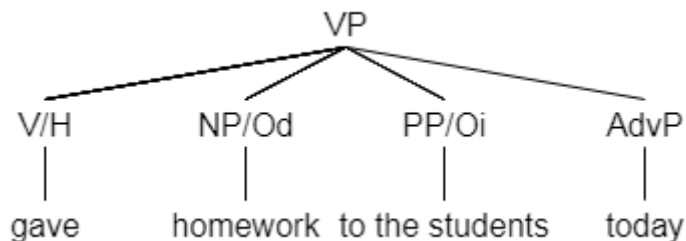
My mother always brings [presents][to me] when she travels abroad.

Will you fetch [that book][for her], please?

As you can see from these examples, the indirect object is realized as a prepositional phrase. The following are representations of the structure of the verb phrase in the first sentence as an example using both labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.28a) [VP[V/H gave]][NP/Od homework]][PP/Oi to the students]][AdvP today]

(3.28b)



Exercise 30

1. Circle direct objects and underline indirect objects in the following sentences.
 - a. The president gave a speech.
 - b. Libyan farmers grow barley and wheat in winter.
 - c. She had given the small bag to her before she left.
 - d. The sad girl told me her story.
2. Represent verb phrases in these sentences using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

3.2.2.2.2. Predicative complement

Copula verbs like *be*, *seem*, *look*, *sound*, *appear* subcategorize for predicative complement (Pc). A predicative complement is one which

gives some property to the subject of the sentence. Have a look at the following examples.

(3.29) You seem [very happy] today.

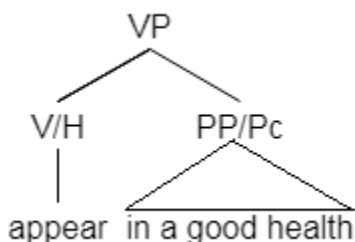
Alaa is [a high school student].

They appear [in a good health].

Predicative complements in these examples are put between square brackets. In the first example the copula verb '*seem*' is followed by a predicative complement which is realized as an adjective phrase, in the second example, the predicative complement required by the copula verb '*is*' is realized as a noun phrase and, finally, in the third sentence the copula verb '*appear*' subcategorizes for a predicative complement that is realized as a prepositional phrase. Let us represent the structure of the verb phrase in the third sentence as an example.

(3.30a) [VP [V/H appear][PP/Pc in a good health]]

(3.30b)



As we have seen when the basic structure of sentence was discussed, a verb phrase as a whole has a predicative function because it predicates something related to the subject of the sentence and thus we call it predicate. Can you tell which constituent is the predicate in each sentence in (3.26) above?

3.2.2.2.3. Adverbial complement

Another function found in the verb phrase after the head word is the adverbial complement. It is realized by constituents which give information related to time or duration, place, manner, etc. When

these constituents are obligatory, they function as adverbial complements. Let us consider the following examples:

(3.31) She remained [in hospital] for three days.

They were [at school] when it rained.

The midterm exam is [next week].

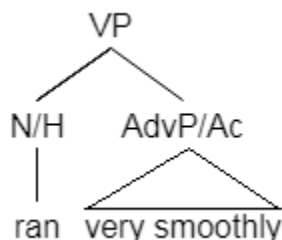
The earthquake lasted [for three seconds].

The negotiations ran [very smoothly].

The constituents enclosed in square brackets are considered complements because they cannot be omitted. Their existence is necessary for the meaning of these sentences. They are specifically adverbial complements. In the first two examples these adverbial complements tell us about place, in the third and fourth examples, they tell us about time and in the last sentence, the adverbial complement expresses manner. In the first, second and fourth examples, the adverbial complements are realized respectively by the prepositional phrases '*in hospital*', '*at school*' and '*for three seconds*'. In the third and fifth examples, it is realized by the two adverbial phrases '*next week*' and '*very smoothly*' respectively. Let us represent the structure of the verb phrase in the fourth sentence as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.32a) [VP [N/H ran] [AdvP/Ac very smoothly]].

(3.32b)

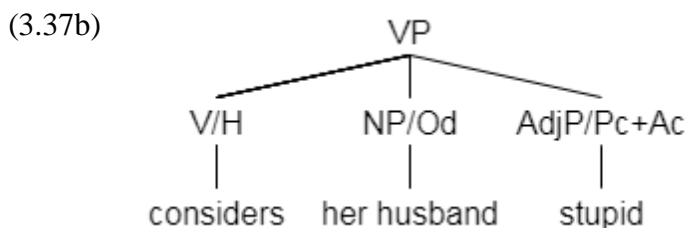


In all the examples discussed above, the main verbs subcategorizing for an adverbial complement are intransitive verbs. Adverbial complements can also be found after transitive verbs. The following are some examples.

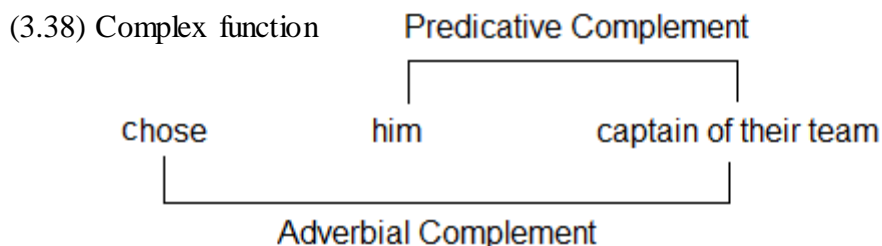
In these examples, each of the underlined constituents realizes a complex function. In the first sentence, the noun phrase *'boss'* realizes the function of a predicative complement because it attributes the property of being boss to the noun phrase *'their father'*. Simultaneously, it realizes the function of an adverbial complement because it is related to the verb *'called'*. In other words it answers the question: *'What did the kids call their father?'* and the answer: *The kids called their father BOSS*. Because of this dual function of the constituent *'boss'*, it is considered as having a complex function that comprise a predicative function and an adverbial one. The same thing applies to the underlined noun phrase in the second sentence and to the underlined adjective in the third sentence. Can you explain how?

The following is a representation of the verb phrase in the third sentence as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.37a) [VP [V/H considers][NP/Od her husband][AdjP/Pc+Ac stupid]]



The complex function is illustrated further with the diagram in (3.38) below using the second example in (3.36) above.



Exercise 31

1. Put the complements in the following sentences between square brackets and give their types in the space provided.

- *They live in a luxurious house.*
- *Waleed is a moody person.*
- *Nada called her baby spider man.*
- *The lesson will be given tomorrow.*
- *Mr Nader is a physician in the local clinic.*

2. *Represent the structure of these sentences using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.*

3.2.2.3. Adjuncts

In addition to specifiers and complements found in verb phrases, there is a third function that may be found in verb phrases. That function is known as adjunct and it is an optional one. That is, it is not required by head verbs because it does not provide necessary information for the completion of the meaning of verb phrases but it merely adds extra information that can be omitted without affecting the basic meaning of the verb phrase nor its grammaticality. Let us consider the following examples:

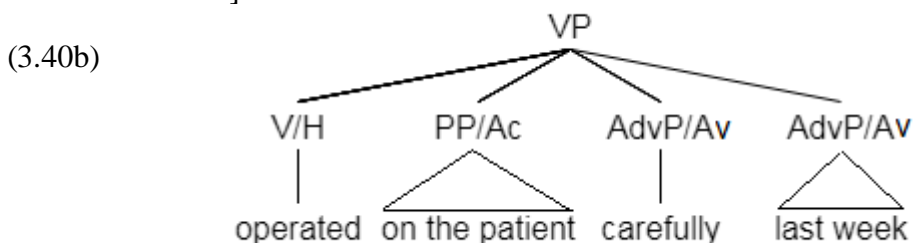
- (3.39) The surgeon operated on the patient
- The surgeon operated on the patient (carefully).
- The surgeon operated on the patient (carefully)(last week).
- (Last week), the surgeon (carefully) operated on the patient (because her life was in real danger).

While the elements in the first sentence are obligatory and, thus, cannot be omitted, the added elements (between brackets) to this sentence in the subsequent examples can be left out without affecting the basic meaning of the sentence, and, thus, are considered optional. Each of these optional constituents realizes the function of adjunct.

Also, as can be noticed from these examples, there is no fixed position for adjuncts. Their position will depend on how much emphasis the speaker puts on them in speech. The following is a representation of the verb phrase of the third sentence with some

change in the position of these adjuncts as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming. The adjunct in a verb phrase is abbreviated as (Av) to distinguish it from Adjuncts in sentences (As).

(3.40a) [_{VP} [_{V/H} operated][_{PP/Ac} on the patient][_{AdvP/Av} carefully][_{AdvP/Av} last week]



As we have seen before, sentences also may have adjuncts which are different from verb phrase adjuncts. Go back to section (3.1.3) and study it again carefully before you do this exercise on both verb phrase adjuncts (Av) and sentence adjuncts (As)

Exercise 32

1. Put adjuncts in the following sentences between square brackets and indicate their type (Av) or (As) in the space provided.
 - My father bought me a gold watch when he travelled to London.
 - I did not attend the lecture because I was ill.
 - Therefore, they will not join us.
 - She prepared the table skillfully.
 - However, she managed to do it.
 - Sadly, I did not see her again.
 - I still know what you did last summer.
2. Show the syntactic structure of these sentences using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

Now we reached a point where we can summarize the structure of verb phrase and its functions in the following table with some examples:

Table (3.3)

<i>Function</i>	<i>Specifier (Spec)</i>	<i>Head (H)</i>	<i>Complements (Od/Oi/Pc/ Ac/Pc+Ac)</i>	<i>Adjuncts (Av)</i>
<i>Category</i>	<i>Tns- Mod/Perf/ Prog/Pass</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>AdjP/NP/ PP/S</i>	<i>NP/PP/ AdvP/S</i>
Examples	- - has will are - could have - was	eat elected named give reading sounds lived think taken	apples him her baby Jerry me some cakes love stories interesting in Benghazi that she is right to hospital	every day president - tomorrow in the evening - - because she is ill

3.2.3. Functions in prepositional phrases

In addition to the head function which is realized by the preposition, there are two other functions that are found in prepositional phrases: prepositional complement and specifier.

3.2.3.1. Prepositional complement

In a prepositional phrase, like other types of phrases, the main function is head which is realized by the head word in a prepositional phrase which is a preposition. In addition to the head function, a head preposition is often followed by a complement which is called a prepositional complement and abbreviated as (PrepC) to distinguish it from other types of complements. The following are some examples.

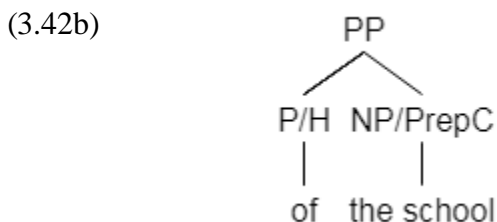
(3.41) They opened the gate [of the school].

The mechanic repaired the car [in a jiffy].

The girl [with a long black hair] is my sister.

In these sentences the heads in the prepositional phrases (between square brackets] are the prepositions *of*, *in* and *with*. In the first example, the head preposition is followed by the noun phrase '*the school*' which functions as a prepositional complement. In the second example, the head preposition is followed by the noun phrase '*a jiffy*' which also realizes a prepositional complement function. In the third example the prepositional complement is realized by the noun phrase '*my sister*'. The syntactic structure of the prepositional phrase in the first sentence is represented below as an example.

(3.42a) [PP [P/H of][NP/PrepC the school]]



In all the examples above, the prepositional complement is realized by noun phrases. Clauses can also function as prepositional complement. The following are some examples:

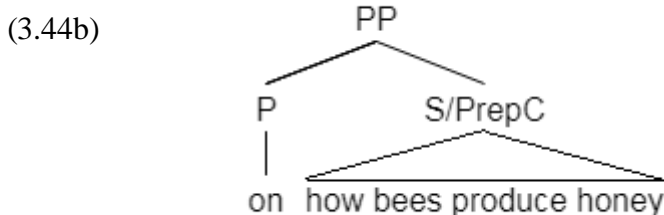
(3.43) I do not believe in [what you said].

They enquired about [whether they can do it later].

Arwa gave a presentation on [how bees produce honey].

In these examples the prepositional complement is realized by the clauses found between square brackets. Here is a representation of the structure of the prepositional phrase in the last sentence as an example.

(3.44a) [PP [P on][S/PrepC how bees produce honey]]



3.2.3.2. Specifier

In addition to complements found in prepositional phrases, a head preposition may be preceded by a specifier. The following are some examples.

(3.45) I will be there [fifteen minutes] before the meeting.

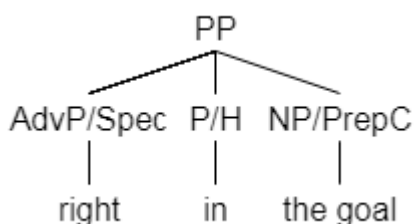
The player kicked the ball [right] in the goal.

The scout went [straight] through the woods.

The elements before the head preposition realize the function of specifier in these prepositional phrases. In the first sentence the specifier '*fifteen minutes*' is a noun phrase. In the second and the third sentences, the specifiers '*right*' and '*straight*' are adverb phrases. The structure of the prepositional phrase in the second example is represented using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.45a) [PP [AdvP/Spec right]][P/H in][NP/PrepC the goal]

(3.45b)



To conclude this section, a summary of the structure of the prepositional phrase is given in the following table:

Table (3.4)

<i>Function</i>	<i>Specifier (Spec)</i>	<i>Head (H)</i>	<i>Complement (PrepC)</i>
<i>Category</i>	<i>AdvP/NP</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>NP/S</i>
examples	right two meters	in under regarding about	the middle water what is going on how you do it

Exercise 33

1. Square bracket the prepositional phrases in the following sentences and circle their heads.
 - You should find it under the table.
 - The post office is three blocks from the crossroads.
 - She talked about why he did this.
 - Yousef gave Yaseen a slap right on his face.
 - We need to talk about what we should do next.
2. Identify specifiers and underline them.
3. Identify complements and double underline them. Give their types.
4. Represent the structure of these sentences using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

3.2.4. Functions in adjective phrases

The basic structure of an adjective phrase is similar to that of a verb phrase in that an adjective head may or may not be preceded by a specifier and may or may not be followed by a complement.

3.2.4.1. Specifier

A specifier function in an adjective phrase is realized by adverb phrases as the following examples show:

(3.46) That guy is [Libyan].

She looks [very young].

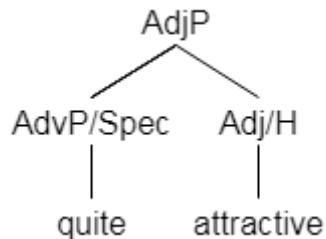
They are [quite attractive].

Adjective phrases in these sentences are put between square brackets. In the first sentence, the head adjective is not preceded by a specifier. However, in the second and third sentences the head adjectives are preceded by the adverb phrases 'very' and 'quite' respectively. These two adverb phrases function as specifiers of the head adjective in these adjective phrases. 'Very' specifies 'young' and 'quite' specifies 'attractive'. Here is a representation of the structure of the adjective phrase in the

third sentence as an example using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.47a) [_{AdjP} [_{AdvP/Spec} quite][_{Adj/H} attractive]]

(3.47b)



3.2.4.2. Complement

Regarding elements following the head adjective in an adjective phrase, a head word in an adjective phrase can be followed by a prepositional phrase or a clause both of which realize the function of a complement. The following are some examples.

(3.48) The lady is [worried about her children].

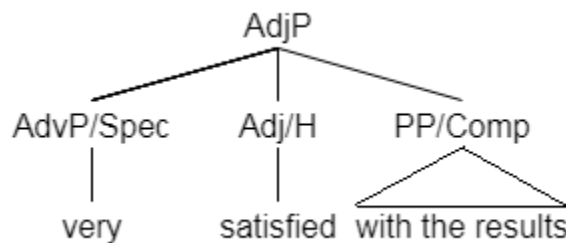
He is [very satisfied with the results].

They are [afraid that they may not be allowed to enter].

In these adjective phrases, the head adjective is followed by an element which works as a complement. While the complement function in the first and second example is realized by a prepositional phrase, in the third example it is realized by a clause. In the second example, the head adjective is also preceded by a specifier. Let us have a clear representation of the structure of the adjective phrase in the second sentence as an example using both labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.49a) [_{AdjP} [_{AdvP/Spec} very][_{Adj/H} satisfied][_{PP/Comp} with the results]]

(3.49b)



The structure of the adjective phrase can be summarized in the following table with some examples:

Table (3.5)

<i>Function</i>	<i>Specifier (Spec)</i>	<i>Head (H)</i>	<i>Complement (Comp)</i>
<i>Category</i>	<i>AdvP</i>	<i>Adj</i>	<i>PP/S</i>
Examples	quite extremely very terribly	clever beautiful Interested fond worried sorry	in politics of adventure that he might fail that he could not make it

Exercise 34

1. Identify adjective phrases in these sentences and square bracket them.
 - A very big black dog jumped over the high fence.
 - I am terribly sorry because I could not help you.
 - Your mother is rather clever with her hands.
 - Dina is lazy today.
 - My father is proud of me.
 - She is content that she passed with a moderate grade.
2. Underline their heads.
3. Identify any specifiers of these heads and circle them.
4. Identify any complements of these heads and circle them.

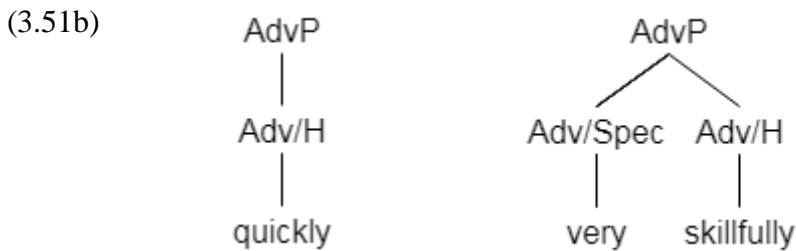
3.2.5. Functions in adverb phrases

An adverb phrase may consist of a single element which is an adverb functioning as the head of an adverb phrase. Another possibility is that a head adverb may be preceded by a specifier which is also occupied by another adverb. The following are some examples.

- (3.50) a. quickly b. very skillfully
 then quite well
 here rather easily
 rather extremely fast

While the adverb phrases in the first column are made of single words, the adverb phrases in the second column are made of two words each. The underlined word realizes the function of head and the word preceding the head realizes the function of a specifier of the head word. Let us have a representation of two adverb phrases as examples using labeled bracketing and treediagramming.

(3.51a) [AdvP [Adv/H quickly]] [AdvP [Adv/Spec very][Adv/H skillfully]]



A summary of this syntactic structure of adverb phrases is given in table (3.6) with some clarifying examples.

Table (3.6)

<i>Function</i>	<i>Specifier (Spec)</i>	<i>Head (H)</i>
<i>Category</i>	<i>Adv</i>	<i>Adv</i>
Examples	very rather	typically smartly rabidly clearly

Exercise 35

1. *Identify adverb phrases in these sentences and square bracket them.*
 - *The film we watched was really interesting.*
 - *They answered all the competition questions quite easily.*
 - *She did very well in her interview.*
 - *-The kids are waiting eagerly for the trip.*
 - *Your suggestion is practically impossible.*
2. *Underline their heads.*
3. *Identify any specifiers of these heads and circle them.*

3.3. Abbreviations

The following are the abbreviations related to the grammatical functions found in Unit Three which need to be focused on and memorized due to their importance in any analysis of syntactic structures.

Head (H)	Specifier (Spec)
Subject (Su)	Object (O)
Direct object (Od)	Indirect object (Oi)
Complement (Comp)	Predicativ complement (Pc)
Adverbial complement (Ac)	Complex function (Pc+Ac)
Verb phrase Adjunct (Av)	Sentence Adjunct (As)
Prepositional complement (PrepC)	

3.4. Summary

In this unit, grammatical functions were discussed. They were classified into grammatical functions in sentences and grammatical functions in phrases. In sentences, the main constituents making the basic structure realize two functions. A noun phrase at the beginning of the sentence realizes the function of the subject and the verb phrase following it realizes the function of a predicate. In addition to these two

obligatory functions, a sentence may also include optional elements that are called adjuncts.

Phrases in English are classified into five types: noun phrase, verb phrase, prepositional phrase, adjective phrase and adverb phrase. In the noun phrase, the main word functions as the head of the phrase. The head noun can be preceded by specifiers and premodifiers and followed by postmodifiers: specifiers are realized by determiners and premodifiers are realized by adjectives. Postmodifiers in noun phrases can be occupied by prepositional phrases or clauses.

In the verb phrase the main verb is the head. The head verb, like the head noun may be preceded by specifiers. Specifiers of head include tense which is obligatory and other optional specifiers. These include modal auxiliaries, progressive, perfect, and passive aspects. Some head verbs subcategorize for complements. These complements are of these types: direct object, indirect object, predicative complement, adverbial complement and another type which has a complex function combining predicative and adverbial complements. Verb phrases can also include adjuncts which are optional constituents.

Head words in a prepositional phrase, like other types of phrases, may be preceded by specifiers. A specifier in the prepositional phrase is realized by a noun phrase or an adverb phrase. The head preposition is often followed by a complement which is called prepositional complement and abbreviated as PrepC.

In adjective phrases, head adjectives can be preceded by specifiers realized by adverb phrases. Some head adjectives also require complements which are realized by prepositional phrases or clauses.

Finally, heads in adverb phrases can constitute phrases on their own or they may be preceded by other adverbs which function as specifiers.

References

Carine, Andrew (2011) *Modern Syntax: A Coursebook*. Cambridge University Press.

Hayes, B. P. (2015) *Introductory Linguistics*. Los Angeles: University of California.

Kim, J. B. & Sells, P. (2008) *English Syntax: An Introduction*.
Researchgate: <https://www.researchgate.net>

McIntyre, A. (2014) *Fundamentals of English Syntax*.
[https://www.anl.hu-berlin.de/departement/staff
faculty/other/mcintyre/unterrichtsmaterialien/fundamental-engl-syntax-
2014-online-doppelseitig.pdf](https://www.anl.hu-berlin.de/departement/staff/faculty/other/mcintyre/unterrichtsmaterialien/fundamental-engl-syntax-2014-online-doppelseitig.pdf)

Tallerman, M. (2011) *Understanding Syntax*. London: Hodder Education

Weckr, Herman & Haegeman, Liliane (1996) *A Modern Course in English Syntax*. London: Routledge.

Appendix (some previous exams with answers)

Final exam 2015 - Course: Syntax - Third year – Instructor: Dr. Albashir Ahmed

Answer all of the following questions (60 marks):

Q1. Give the full form of the following abbreviations: (10 marks)

- PS rules phrase structure rules
- Det Determiner
- AdjP Adjective phrase
- A Adjunct
- Comp Complement
- Art Article
- COMP Complementizer
- Poss Pron Possessive pronoun
- Premod Premodifier
- Perf Perfect

Q2. Give the type of the constituency test used in each of the following sentences. (10 marks)

Pronominalisation - Passivisation - Fronting - Pseudoclefting - Clefting

- It is the final result that we must concentrate on. *Clefting*
- What Mary keeps in the garden is a little dog. *Pseudo-clefting*
- To know what is happening in the world, I always listen to the news. *Fronting*
- Millions of Beatles records were sold in the 1960s. *Passivisation*

- When there is a better alternative, It is often preferred. *Fronting*
- It is hard work that makes people succeed in life. *Clefting*
- What the criminal did after killing the victim was go to the police.
Pseudo-clefting
- After talking to you, I always feel better. *Fronting*
- Millions of pounds were stolen from a train in 1957.
Passivisation
- If you fail this midterm, you still have the chance to pass in the final exam. *Fronting*

Q3. Indicate whether the following sentences below are simple, compound, complex or compound-complex. (10 marks)

- Things have changed a lot since the end of the war. *Simple*
- He was watching TV and his wife was cooking dinner in the kitchen. *Compound*
- That is the dog that attacked me in garden. *Complex*
- The man who is there is the university president and he is my father. *Compound-complex*
- We will try to finish the work before midnight. *Simple*
- The doctor wants to examine you all over. *Simple*
- Amira did not attend the exam, for she was sick. *Compound*
- This is the skirt I bought from the supermarket yesterday.
Complex
- The card Ken sent to the man was nice but the man was rude.
Compound-complex
- Mary was staying with her friend in a big house in Scotland.
Simple

Q4. Identify whether the following phrases below are NP, VP, AdjP, AdvP or PP. (15 marks)

- just before 6 o'clock *PP*
- am making an omelette *VP*

- the happiest period of my life AdjP
- disappointed by the film AdjP
- harder than her sister does AdvP
- opposite the cinema PP
- told me to wait in front of her office VP
- the last fence of the farm NP
- extremely tiring AdjP
- worse than me AdjP

Q5. Put the words in the right order to make meaningful sentences. (15 marks)

- ill - who - treat - are - people - doctors.
Doctors treat people who are ill.
- weather - like - country - a - live - people - cold - don't - hot - in - who.
People who live in a hot/cold country don't like cold/hot weather.
- invitation - receive - as - as - should - you - the - soon - reply - you.
You should reply as soon as you receive the invitation.
- yet - in - a - you - London - hotel - booked - have?
Have you booked in a hotel in London yet?
- lunchtime - coast - reach - hoping - we - by - the - to - are.
We are hoping to reach the coast by lunchtime.
- paper - your - hand - your - check - when - question - in - answers - all - you.
Hand in your paper when you check all your answers.
- book - very - like - it - depressing - a - sounds.
It sounds like a very depressing book.
- world - in - beautiful - the - Venice - say - many - the - city - most - is - that - people.
Many people say that Venice is the most beautiful city in the world.

- closed - area - in - all - anything - not - we - were - the - shops - because - buy - could.
We could not buy anything because all shops in the area were closed.
 - information - got - have - because - to - decide - can - enough - not - I - do - what - not - I.
I cannot decide what to do because I have not got enough information.
-

Final examination - 2015/2016 - Course: -Syntax - Examiner: Dr Albashir Ahmed
- Time allowed: 2 hours only

Answer all of the following questions (60 marks)

Q. Indicate whether the pronoun between brackets has a subjective form (Su) or an objective form (O) in each of the following sentences. Use the abbreviations (Su) and (O) to answer. (5 marks)

- [He] was going to fall down. Su
- She struck [him] on the face. O
- [We] are doing our best to pass the exam. Su
- She said hello to [them] before she left. O
- [It] was taken to the end of the corridor. Su

Q. Put the subject of each of the following sentences between square brackets. (5 marks)

- [People who live in glass houses] should not throw stones.
- [Those who are late] will not be allowed to come in.
- [Which color] goes with which color?
- [The couple we met at the party last night] got married a year ago.
- [We] have been waiting for two hours when they came.

Q. Put the predicate of each of the following sentences between square brackets. (5 marks)

- The meeting [was cancelled because of the heavy rain].
- The roses that girl has in her hands [are red].
- His wife [was nagging all the time because he could not buy her precious presents].
- The Libyan people [are suffering because of instability in the country].
- Those who cheat in the exam [will be punished].

Q. Put the sentence adjuncts in the following sentences between square brackets. (5 marks)

- [Unfortunately], I will not be able to be there in time.
- When the chance to talk to her came, he did not have the courage, [however].
- [In fact], he did not do it properly.
- She is lazy and, [therefore], she will never finish her task.
- [In my opinion], you should see a doctor.

Q. Put the predicative complements in the following sentences between square brackets. (5 marks)

- Nadia seemed [a good student].
- Jane looked [ugly] in that suit.
- He is [an engineer].
- They were [in a good mood] at the party.
- Salah is [in love with that blonde girl].

Q. Put the direct object in the following sentences between square brackets. (5 marks)

- She said [something] to the old woman who was standing in the street corner.
- They have forgotten [what he did] last summer.
- His parents gave him [no money] when he travelled abroad.
- Please let [me] go by myself.
- The baby did [it] on his own.

Q. Put the indirect object in the following sentences between square brackets. (5 marks)

- He told [her] his secrets.
- This boring exam gives [me] a headache.
- Dr Albashir taught [you] the tricks of syntax but you never cared.
- The rich man donated all his money [to the poor family].
- They gave [us] a valuable piece of advice.

Q. Put the adverbial complements in the following sentences between square brackets. (5 marks)

- The tired girl leaned [against the wall].
- The exam takes [two hours].
- The party was organized [very carefully].
- I put the money [in a briefcase].
- She drove her car [dangerously].

Q. Put complements which have a complex function (Pc+Ac) in the following sentences between square brackets. (5 marks)

- The police set the accused man [free].
- She called her twins [Tom and Jerry].
- Who left the window [open] when we left.
- He considered the whole affair [a joke].
- He was elected [president] last year.

Q. Give a sentence as an example for each of the following things. (5 marks)

- Dative Movement

The boy showed the mouse to the cat -
the boy showed the cat the mouse.

- Zero complementation

He is writing OR They are eating OR Hana is reading

- Intransitive verb+PP

Hani pointed at the driver OR Hana referred to the dog.

- Transitive verb+PP

Ahmed put the book on the table. OR Muna took a pen from the box.

- Subject verb agreement

He likes apples and they like apples too.

Q. Give an example for each of the following verb types and put it in a sentence of your own. (10 marks)**DO NOT USE SENTENCES FROM THE PREVIOUS QUESTIONS**

- *Intransitive verb* smiled: The baby smiled happily.
- *Monotransitive verb* understand: The students understood the lesson.
- *Ditransitive verb* show: She showed him a false photo.
- *Complex transitive verb* choose: The players chose him captain.
- *Copula verb* look: You look different today.

Final examination - 2016/2017 - Course: -Syntax - Examiner: Dr Albashir Ahmed - Time allowed: 2 hours only

In the space provided give LABEL and FUNCTION of the [constituent] between square brackets in each of the following sentences. Use abbreviations. (30x2=60 marks)

<i>Function</i>	<i>Label /</i>
• [The electricity company] sent the costumer a bill.	NP/Su
• His son was the only boy in [the research group] .	NP/PrepC
• [The] staff members chose Dr. Ali head teacher.	Det/Spec
• Inspector Johnson [will] question the suspect first.	Mod/Spec
• She [is] looking forward to travel to Canada.	Prog/Spec
• The police [have arrested the criminal] .	VP/Pred
• The letter [was] sent to the university a month ago	Pass/Spec
• The Americans elected Trump [president of the US] .	NP/PC+AC
• Olive [trees] do not grow in the Green Mountain.	N/H
• Two of the boys [in that class] finished their exam.	PP/Postmod.
• The head teacher gave [that] clever girl a present.	Det/Spec
• The soldiers were [ordered] to stay awake all night.	V/H
• They went to Benghazi a month [ago] .	P/H
• Dr Albashir will examine [the second group] first.	NP/Od
• My aunt was waiting for her [favorite] program.	AdjP/Premod

- All the students have completed their exam [**very**] quickly.
AdvP/Spec
- My husband brought [**me**] some clothes from Paris. *NP/Oi*
- They were still in the museum [**when I saw them**]. *S/Av*
- The scouts choose her captain of [**their**] team. *Det/Spec*
- You must search for it [**very carefully**] everywhere. *AdvP*
- They were playing football when their dad [**came**]. *VP/Pred*
- She [**has**] praised him for what he did. *Perf/Spec*
- He was told not to be absent [**again**]. *AdvP/Ac*
- The baby is crying because he is [**hungry**]. *AdjP/Pc*
- The mechanic has fixed the car [**since four o'clock**]. *PP/Av*
- Please give her some help with [**that heavy suitcase**]. *NP/PrepC*
- They are ashamed [**of what they have done**]. *PP/Comp*
- She travelled [**to**] the capital by train. *P/H*
- You might not need [**that**] in the short run. *NP/Od*
- The plane was landing when [**it**] was hit by a rocket. *NP/Su*

Final exam 2017/2018 - Fourth year – Course: Syntax - Time: 2 hours

Answer all of the following questions (60 marks)

☐ **Indicate the underlined verb type in each of the following sentences: Copula, Intransitive, Monotransitive, Ditransitive, Complex transitive. (5 marks)**

- She handed me what was there *Ditransitive*
- Muna groaned sadly when her boyfriend left her. *Intransitive*
- The class chose him their speaker. *Complex transitive*
- They clean the room daily. *Monotransitive*
- Marwan is a hard working student. *Copula*

2 **Give the kind of constituency test used in each of the following sentences: Clefting, Pseudoclefting, Passivisation, Substitution, interrogation. (5 marks)**

- The little kid stopped crying when he saw me. *Substitution*
- It is me who gives permissions for leaving. *Clefting*
- What was she doing when you came in? *Interrogation*
- The syntax exam is being sat at the moment. *Passivisation*
- What you should do after finishing the exam is leave the room.
Pseudoclefting

2 **Put the first noun phrase in each of the following sentences between square brackets and underline its head. (10 marks)**

- [The little child hiding there] is mine.
- [A beautiful bunch of roses] was taken away today.
- [That man sitting over there] is my uncle.
- [You] are too stupid to pass.
- Please leave me alone. *(The first head in this sentence is [you] is omitted because the sentence is an imperative one.)*

2 **Put the first verb phrase in each of the following sentences between square brackets and underline its head. (10 marks)**

- They [must have finished their exam by the time you got there].
- I [wonder if I can do it without your help].
- It [has already been sent to him].
- You [are such a fool].
- Naji [is skillfully taking part in the discussion].

2 **Put the prepositional phrase in each of the following sentences between square brackets and underline its head. (10 marks)**

- Nour lives [three miles away].
- Look [inside] and you will see everything.

- The hunter shot the animal [right in the head].
- The classroom is [in a terrible mess].
- Put a circle exactly [around the right answer].

☐ ***Put the adjective phrase in each of the following sentences between square brackets and underline its head. (10 marks)***

- She is [terribly depressed].
- Are you [interested in going with us]?
- His parents are [worried that he may not be found].
- That movie was [really fantastic].
- I am [optimistic about your chance of passing syntax].

☐ ***Put the adverb phrase in each of the following sentences between square brackets and underline its head. (10 marks)***

- My two-year child can speak [very fluently].
- We are [very] tired after such a long exam.
- That fat lady dances [extremely skillfully].
- I am [terribly] sorry for lack of warning.
- They were [quite] certain that she will fail.