

Seminar 17312

Introduction to Linguistics

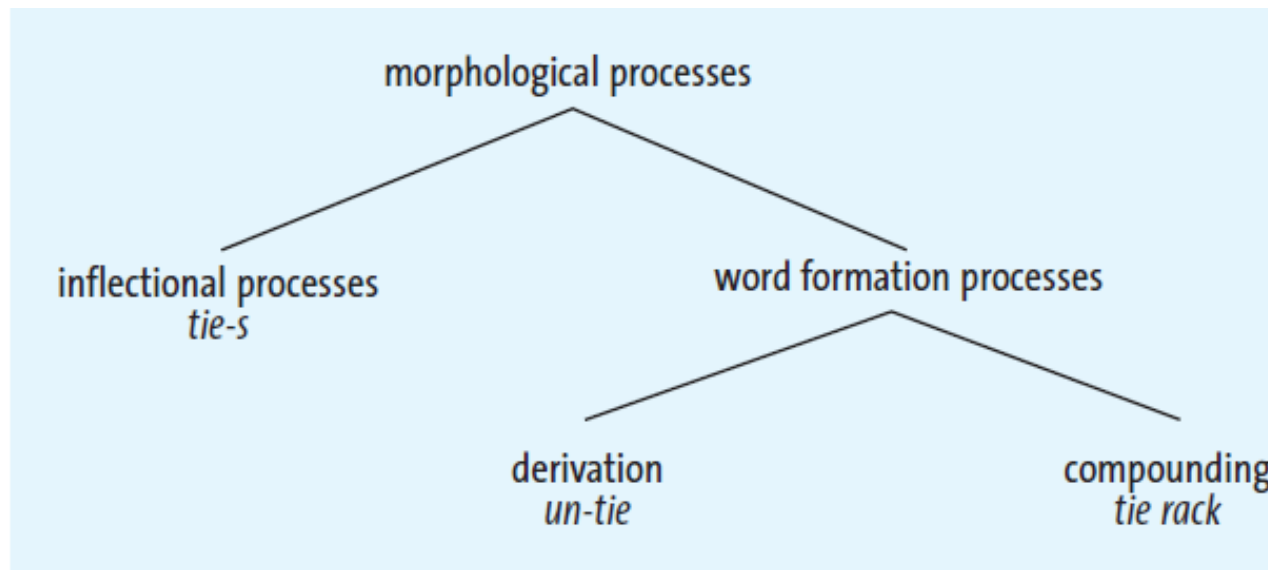
Institute for English Philology
Winter Semester 2020/2021

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Syntax I: Words and phrases

Recap: Morphology: Word-formation

Morphological processes



Inflection vs. derivation

inflection	derivation
Only suffixes (in English)	Both suffixes and prefixes
Creates WORD-FORMS or grammatical words (e.g. <i>bake</i> – <i>bakes</i> - <i>baked</i>)	Creates new LEXEMES (e.g. <i>bake</i> - <i>baker</i> - <i>bakery</i>)
Grammatical function	Primarily ‘lexical’/‘content’
NEVER changes WORD-CLASS	CHANGE WORD-CLASS prefix: rarely (e.g. <i>large</i> - <i>enlarge</i>) suffix: often)
can be attached to almost every word of a given class	can be attached to certain words of a given class
have the same meaning in all words they attach to	do not always have the same meaning

Inflection

- **NOUNS**
 - {-s} plural
 - {-s} genitive
- **VERBS**
 - {-s} 3. person singular
 - {-ed} past
 - {-ing} present participle
 - {-ed} past participle
- **ADJECTIVES**
 - {-er} comparative
 - {-est} superlative

DECLENSION

CONJUGATION

COMPARISON

(Kortmann 2005: 117)

affix	function	examples
-s	creates the plural form of nouns	<i>cats, days</i>
's	creates the genitive form of nouns	<i>Peter's, John's</i>
-ed	creates the past tense form of verbs	<i>played, stopped, cared</i>
-s	creates the third person singular present tense form of verbs	<i>(he/she/it) plays, stops, cares</i>
-ing	creates the progressive form of verbs	<i>(is/are) playing, going, writing</i>
-er	creates the comparative form of adjectives	<i>warmer, colder</i>
-est	creates the superlative form of adjectives	<i>warmest, coldest</i>

Types of prefixes

Most prefixes do not change the word class of the base. However, a few prefixes can do so.

obey – ***dis****obey* (verb – verb)

manage – ***mis****manage* (verb - verb)

witch – ***be****witch* (noun – verb)

large – ***en****large* (adjective – verb)

forest – ***de****forest* (noun – verb)

(Plag et al 2009: 96-97)

Types of prefixes

dis-: *disobey*

non-: *non-scientific, non-American*

semi- *semi-desert, semi-conscious*

mal-: *malformation, malnutrition*

pre-: *pre-war, pre-historic*

ultra-: *ultra-light*

negative prefix

negative prefix

prefix expressing 'half of something'

'wrong'

'before'

augmentative prefix

(Plag et al 2009: 96-97)

Types of suffixes

Verbal (verb-forming) suffixes:

-ize *modern – modernize*

-ify *class – classify*

-en *strength – strengthen*

-ate *active – activate*

Adverb-forming suffixes:

-wise *moneywise*

-ly *quick – quickly*

-wards *north – northwards*

Adjectival (adjective-forming) suffixes:

-al *fiction – fictional*

Kortmann (2005: 97); Plag et al. (2009: 95)

Types of suffixes: meaning

- er: 'a person who Xes': agentive suffix: *commander, preacher*
- er: instruments: instrumental suffix: *mixer, cutter, toaster*
- ette: 'small X': diminutive suffix
- ess: female X': gender marking suffix
- able: 'capable of being Xed': *movable, changeable*
- en: 'make more' X: *blacken, broaden*

(Plag et al 2009: 96)

Semantic types of compounds

- **Endocentric compounds** (modifier-head compounds): 'A+B denotes a special kind of B': *small talk, medical student, blackboard* (Kortmann 2005: ; Mair 2012: 45);
- **Exocentric compounds**: 'A+B denotes a special kind of an unexpressed semantic head', a metonymic character; none of the components refers to the referent directly: *pickpocket, redhead, paperback, egghead* (Mair 2012: 46);
- **Copulative compounds** (a sum of two qualities): *stir-fry, bitter-sweet, sleep-walk*
- (Kortmann 2005: 101; Mair 2012: 45);
- **Appositional compounds**: 'A + B provide the same descriptions for the same referent': *actor-manager, writer-director, actor-director* (Kortmann 2005: 101).

CONVERSION (zero-derivation, zero-affixation, syntactic homonymy) is the creation of a new word without any formal or external change to the base.

The most common types are **NOUN-TO-VERB**, **VERB-TO-NOUN**, **ADJECTIVE-TO-NOUN** and **ADJECTIVE-TO-VERB CONVERSION**.

NOUN TO VERB **bottle** > **to bottle**

VERB TO NOUN **to coach** > **a coach**

ADJECTIVE TO NOUN **heavy** > **a heavy**

Other types include: **ADVERB TO VERB**: *down* > *to down*

PREPOSITION TO VERB: *up* > *to up*: *The kept upping the price.*

ADJECTIVE TO VERB: *narrow* > *to narrow*

PREPOSITION TO NOUN: *up* > *up ups and downs*

Derivatives have usually more complex meaning than their base and relay on base for their meaning.

This process is **extremely productive** in present-day English due to few inflectional endings.

(Plag et al 2009: 105; Mair 2012: 47-48)

Back-formation

Removal of a final part of a word, which was wrongly taken as a derivational ending:

governor – *govern*

dictator – *dictate*

perpetrator – *perpetrate*

editor – *edit*

Mair (2010: 49-50)

Syntax I: words and phrases

What is **syntax**?

- "Syntax is the study of how speakers/writers combine smaller linguistic units into larger ones and how hearers/readers are able to interpret novel complex linguistic expressions" (Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2019: 1);
- "[...] term used for the study of the rules which help us combine words into sentences" (Mair 2012: 57);
- "the rule system itself" (Kortmann 2005: 124);

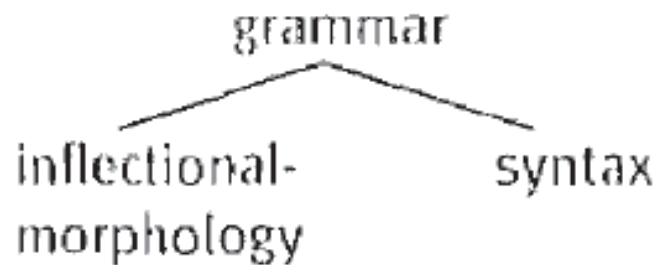
MORPHOLOGY: "the study of the internal structure of words" (Middeke, Stefanowitsch 2019: 1) .

SYNTAX: "internal structure of phrases, clauses and sentences" (ibid.).

MORPHOSYNTAX = these two terms together

Grammar

1. "the study of the rule-based structure [...] of a language;
2. "the object of study itself, i. e. the system of rules according to which a given language may combine words and morphemes they consist of into larger units";
3. "the book in which these rules are formulated and described" (Kortmann 2005: 115).



(ibid.)

Inflectional morphology

- **NOUNS**
 - {-s} plural
 - {-s} genitive

DECLENSION

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CONJUGATION

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COMPARISON

(Kortmann 2005: 117)

MORPHOSYNTAX

INFLECTION depends on **grammatical categories**, i.e. the position or function of the unit within the clause or sentence.

- ✓ *he walks* **PERSON**
- ✓ *mother's dress* **CASE**
- ✓ *two cars* **NUMBER**
- ✓ *we played football* **TENSE**

Inflectional morphology is studied as part of **MORPHOSYNTAX**.

Levels of Analysis

SENTENCE

Jack played in the garden while I was working

CLAUSE

Jack played in the garden

while I was working

PHRASE

Jack

played

in the garden

while

I

was working

WORD

Jack

played

in

the

garden

while

I

was

working

- "A linguistic unit at a level between the word and the clause" (Oxfordreference.com);
- Obligatory element (the **HEAD**) + usually modifying elements (modifiers);
- May consist of a single word or several words;
- The whole phrase is categorised according to the syntactic category of its head;
- The head also determines its position in a sentence (Kortmann 2005: 128);
- Noun phrase (NP), verb phrase (VP), adjective phrase (AP), adverb phrase (ADvP), prepositional phrase (PP) (Oxfordreference.com 2019);
- Elements that stay together after we change the order of clause's elements (Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 2).

Constituency test

- How to identify constituents (phrases) of a clause?

1. W-questions:

The cat on the wall outside showed no sign of sleepiness.

- Who showed no sign of sleepiness?

2. Substitution test.

The cat	showed	no sign of sleepiness.
Our mysterious cat	had displayed	a sense of humour.
It	will be showing	

(Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 3-4).

Constituency test (Plag)

[Many people][will go][to the station][every morning]

1. **Pronominalisation:** substitution of a constituent by a pronoun (pro-form);

- **They** will go **there** every morning.
- They will go there **when**?
- **When** will they go there?

(Plag et al. 2009: 115-116)

2. **Movement:** "if a string of words can be moved to other sentential positions, it is proof of the string's being a constituent" (ibid., p. 116)

Constituency test (Plag)

3. **Coordination test:** constituents are only those that can be coordinated by the coordinating conjunction "and". It combines constituents of the same kind. (Plag et al. 2009: 116).

- [[Many people] and [my friends] will go to the station every morning.
- Many people will go [[to the station] and [into the woods] every morning.
- Many people will go to the station [[every morning] and [every evening]].

4. **Gapping:**

Many people will [go to the station every morning], won't they _? (ibid. p. 117).

Constituency test (Plag)

4. Sentence-fragment test:

- a) Who will go to the station every morning?
- b) Where will many people go every morning?
- c) When will many people go to the station?
- d) What will many people do?

- a) [Many people]
- b) [To the station]
- c) [Every morning]
- d) [Go to the station every morning]

[Many people]

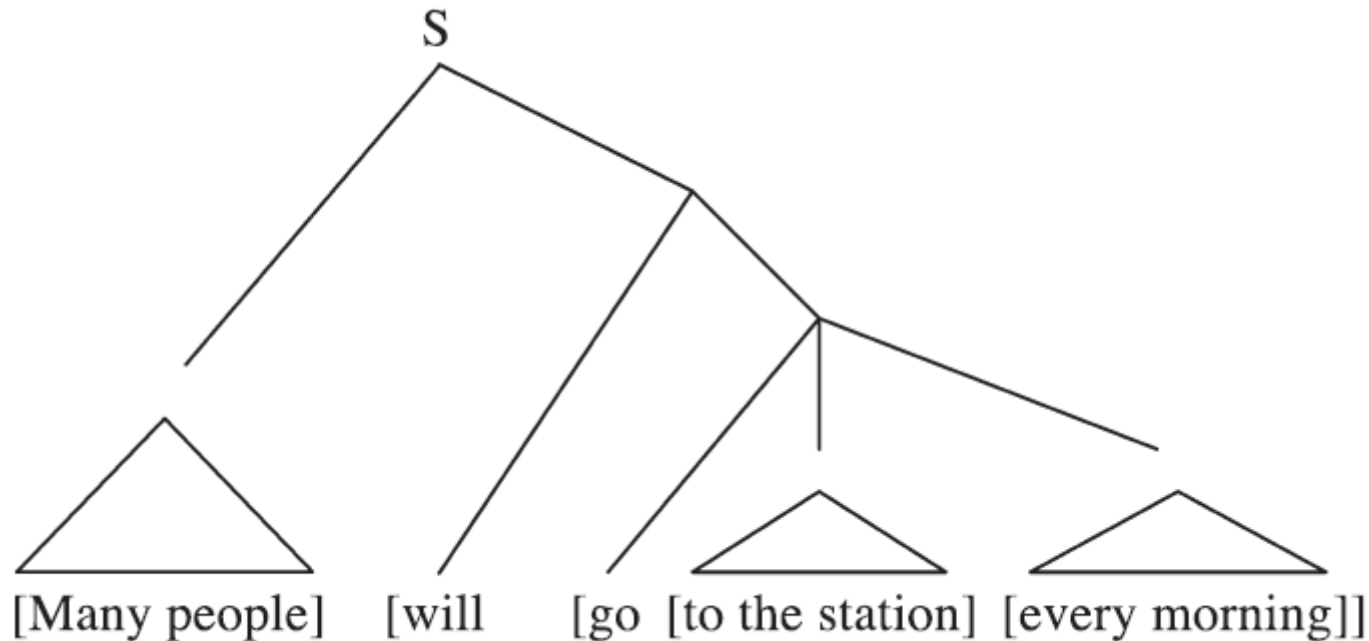
[will go to the station every morning]

[go to the station every morning]

[to the station]

[every morning] (Plag et al. 2009: 117-118)

Tree diagram for the sentence [Many people will go to the station every morning]



Plag et al. (2009: 118)

Types of phrases

- VERB PHRASES (**VP**): verb, modal verb, auxiliary;
- NOUN PHRASES (**NP**): contain at least one noun, may contain an adjective and determiner:
- ADJECTIVE PHRASES (**AdjP**): adjective + may contain a modifying adverb
- PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES (**PPs**)
- ADVERB PHRASE (**AdvP**)

Head is VERB, NOUN, ADJECTIVE, PREPOSITION, ADVERB

(Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 3; Kortmann 2005: 128)

Parts of speech or word classes

LEXICAL/CONTENT	GRAMMATICAL/FUNCTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nouns: <i>child, apple, love</i> • verbs: <i>eat, think, deny</i> • adjectives: <i>little, angry, abstract</i> • adverbs: <i>slowly, yesterday, usually</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pronouns: <i>you, his, them</i> • determiners: <i>the, a</i> • prepositions: <i>at, to, under</i> • conjunctions: <i>and, while, since</i> • auxiliaries: <i>be, do, have</i>

How do we determine word classes?

1. **Meaning** (semantic criterion): for instance: action (verbs), things (nouns)
2. **Inflection** (morphological criterion): morphological properties of a word, for instance, tense marking, plural marking
3. **Distribution** (syntactic criterion): position/function within a phrase, clause or sentence

Problems:

1. Words can be part of one or more word classes;
2. Alternative classifications are possible;
3. Some members do not exhibit features in the same manner as other members of the class

(Kortmann 2005: 125-126; Middeke & Stefanowitsch 2020: 5-6)

Grammatical categories

GENDER grammatical vs. natural gender	PRONOUNS
CASE nominative/common case, possessive/genitive, object case	NOUNS, PRONOUNS
NUMBER singular, plural	NOUNS, PRONOUNS, VERB (BE)
PERSON 1st/2nd/3 rd	VERB (BE)
TENSE past, non-past	VERB
ASPECT (non-)progressive,(non-)perfect	VERB
MOOD indicative, subjunctive	VERB
VOICE active, passive	VERB
COMPARISON absolute – comparative – superlative	ADJECTIVE, ADVERBS

Table IV.2 Grammatical categories in English

categories	formal contrasts	kind of marking	marked on/ relevant for
gender	masculine – feminine – neuter	no inflectional category neither synthetic nor analytic	only pronouns (<i>he-she-it, his-her-its</i>), natural gender (<i>the man-<u>he</u>, the girl-<u>she</u>, the table-<u>it</u></i>) and metaphorical gender (<i>sun-<u>he/it</u>, moon-<u>she/it</u>, ship, truck-<u>she/it</u></i>)
case	common case – possessive	synthetic; possessive also analytic	nouns (possessive: <i>the kids' toys – the toys <u>of the kids</u></i>); some pronouns additional object case: <i>he-his-<u>him</u>, who-whose-<u>whom</u></i>
number	singular – plural	synthetic	nouns, pronouns, verbs (<i>he put-<u>s</u></i> , plural only for <i>be</i> : <i><u>are/were</u></i>)
person	1st/2nd/3rd person	synthetic	verbs: only 3SG ind. pres. active (<i>he sing-<u>s</u>, is/has/does</i>); only for <i>be</i> : also 1st and 2nd person: <i>I <u>am</u>, you <u>are</u></i>
tense	past – non-past	synthetic	verbs (<i>walk-<u>ed</u> versus walk</i>)

(Kortmann 2005: 123)

Grammatical categories

Table IV.2 Grammatical categories in English

categories	formal contrasts	kind of marking	marked on/ relevant for
aspect	(a) progressive – non-progressive (b) perfect – non-perfect	analytic	verbs (<i>be + V-ing</i>) verbs (<i>have + V-ed</i>)
mood	indicative – subjunctive	marginally synthetic, analytic	verbs: ind.; subj. only marginally (for <i>be</i> : <i>I wish I <u>were</u>...</i> ; <i>I insist that he <u>go/should go</u></i>)
voice	active – passive (– mediopassive)	analytic	verbs (<i>be + V-ed</i>)
comparison	absolute – comparative – superlative	synthetic, analytic	adjectives (<i>-er, -est, more, most</i>), adverbs (<i>more, most</i>)

(Kortmann 2005: 124)

Analytic vs. synthetic marking

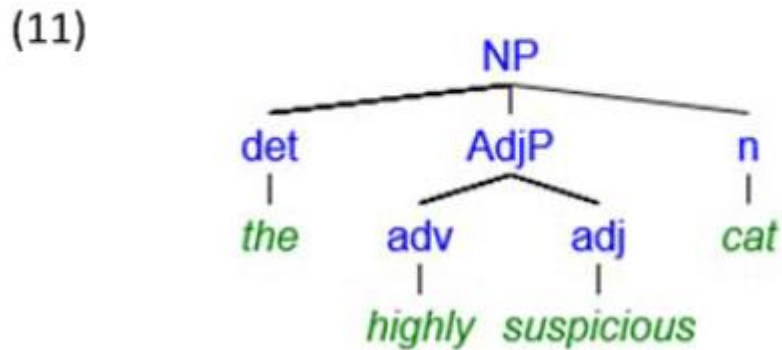
GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES	SYNTHETIC	ANALYTIC
gender: masculine/feminine/neuter	<i>pronouns only</i>	NONE
number: singular/plural	<i>cat-s, dog-s</i>	NONE
case: possessive/non-possessive	<i>their</i>	<i>of them</i>
tenses: past/non-past	<i>went</i>	<i>did go</i>
comparison: comparative/superlative	<i>easier</i>	<i>more difficult</i>
aspect: (non)-progressive; non-perfect	<i>goes,</i> <i>went</i>	<i>is going</i> <i>has gone</i>
mood: indicative/subjunctive	<i>only were</i>	<i>may go</i>
voice: active/passive	<i>does</i>	<i>was done</i>

A tree diagram (dendrogram)

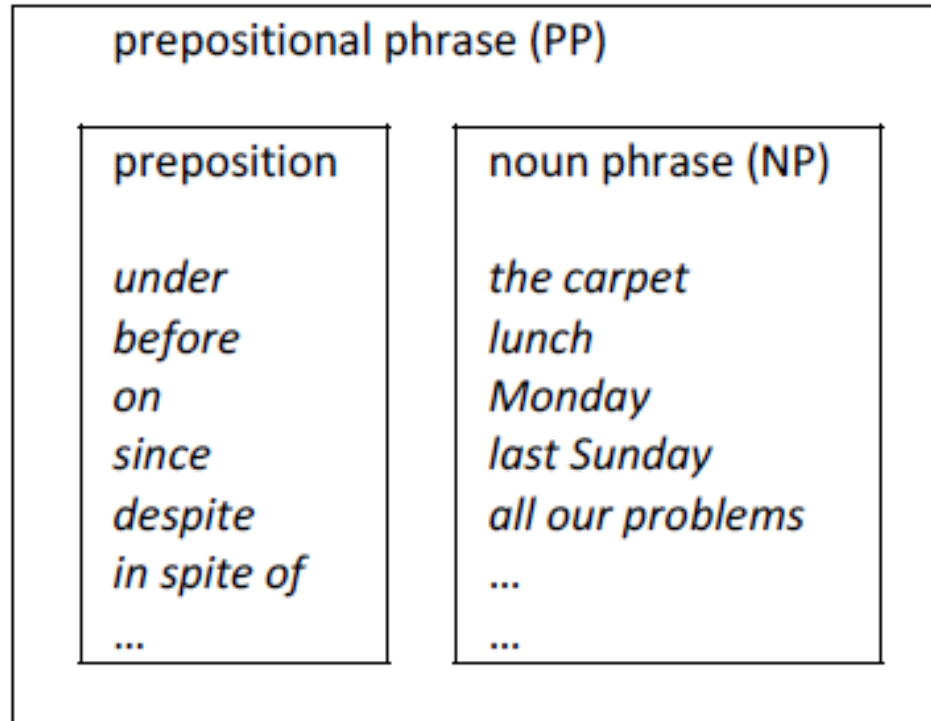
(8) *the highly suspicious cat*

(9) [*the [highly suspicious] cat*]

(10) [*the_{det} [highly_{adv} suspicious_{adj}]_{AdjP} cat_n]_{NP}*



Prepositional phrase

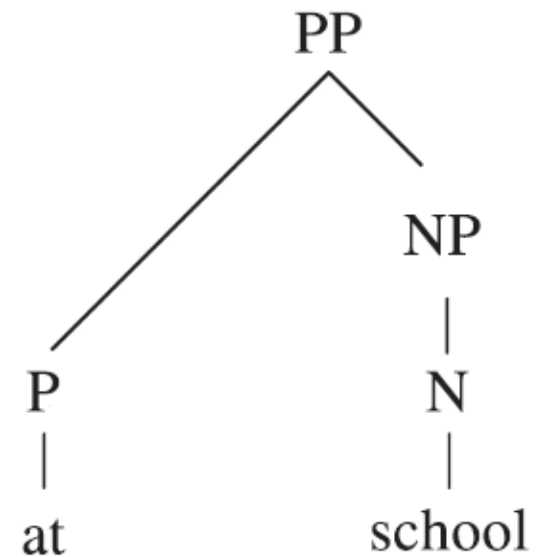
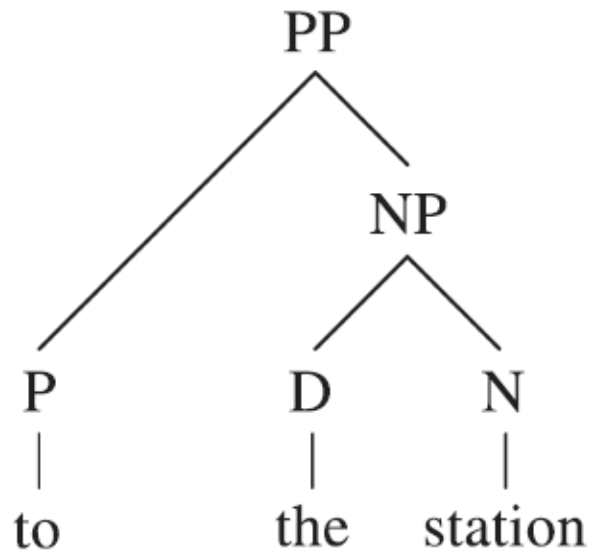


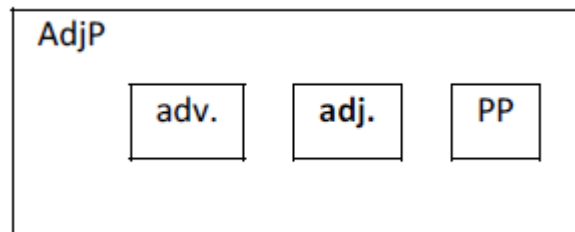
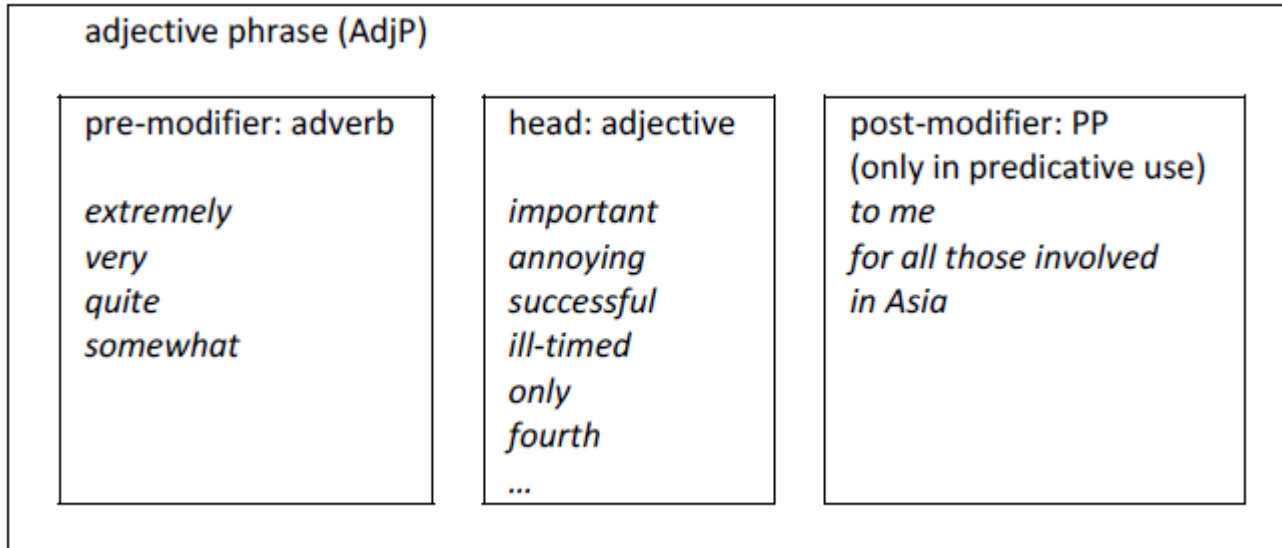
PP = P + NP

Stefanowitsch, Middeke (2020: 6)

Prepositional phrases

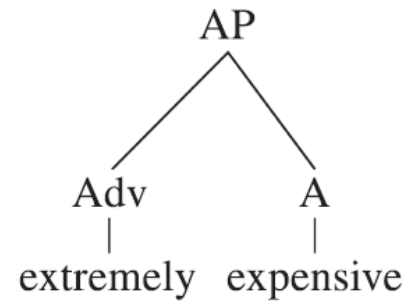
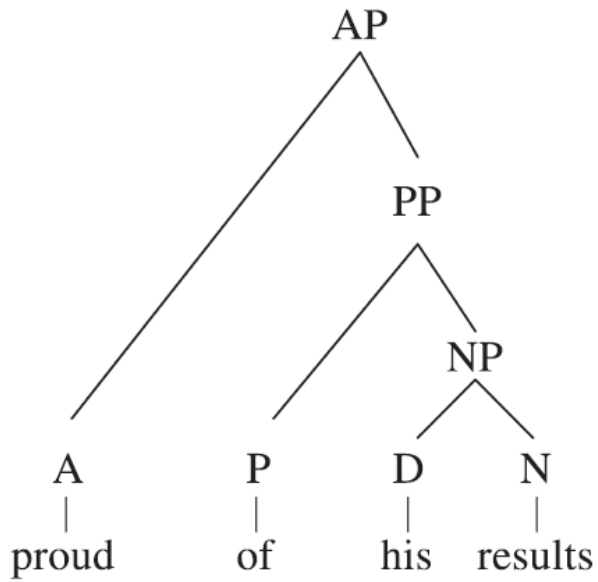
(32) a. prepositional phrases





Stefanowitsch, Middeke (2020: 8)

b. adjective phrases



Adverb phrase

- A phrase headed by an adverb;
- Adverbs modify verbs: *He has been acting **odily**.*

but also adjectives and noun phrases:

pretty *unusual*

quite *a few*

entire clauses:

Clearly, he was wrong.

Stefanowitsch, Middeke (2020: 11)

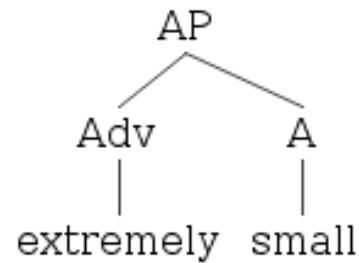
AdvP → adv adv

(ibid., p. 11)

Syntax trees or tree diagrams

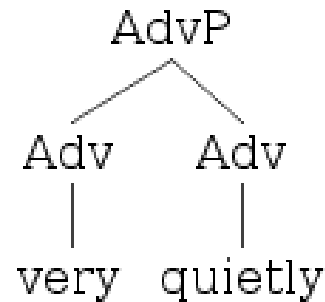
AP → Adv + Adj

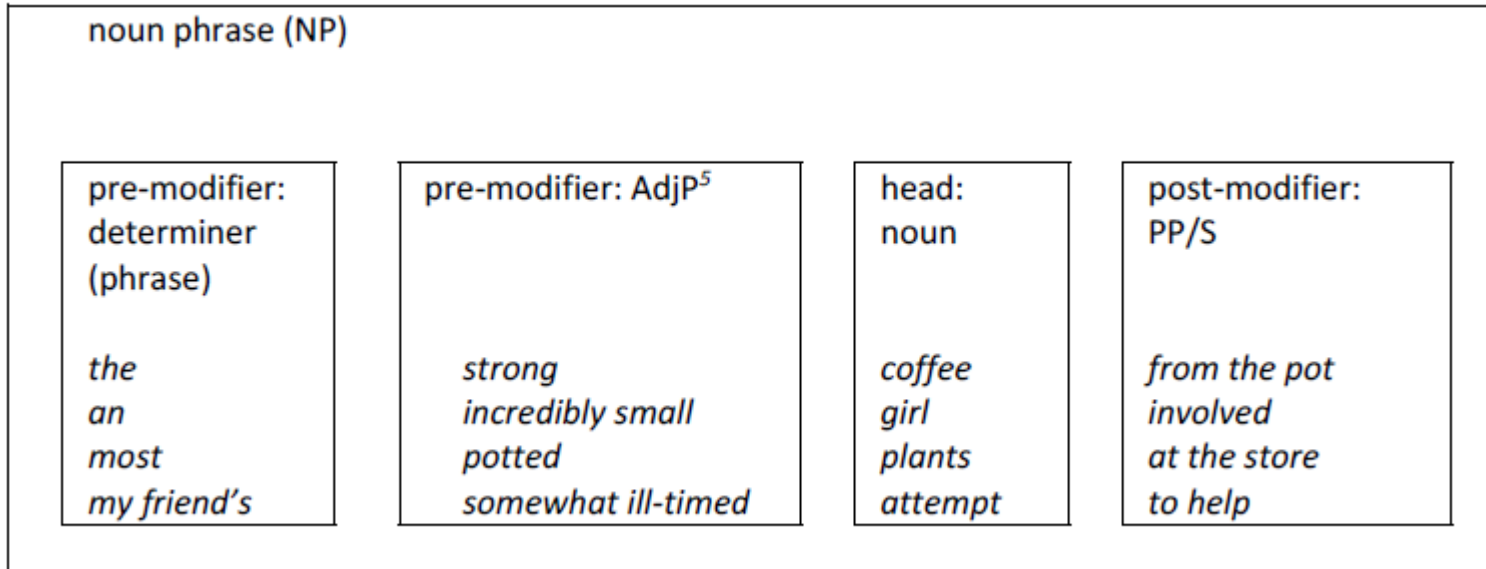
[_{AP} [_{Adv} extremely] [_{Adj} small]]



AdvP → Adv + Adv

[_{AdvP} [_{Adv} very] [_{Adv} quietly]]





NP -> DetP AdjP N PP/S

Stefanowitsch, Middeke (2020: 9)

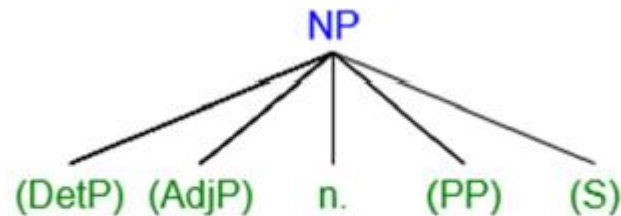


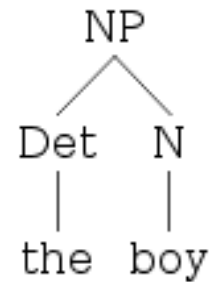
Figure 10: Noun phrase (dendrogram)

Ibid, (p. 9)

Syntax trees or tree diagrams

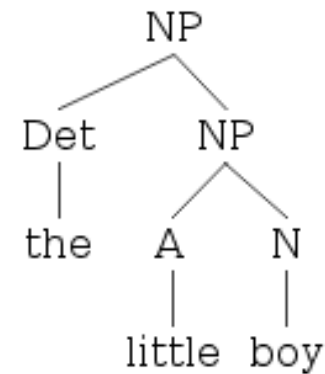
NP → **Determiner + Noun**

[NP [Det the][N boy]]



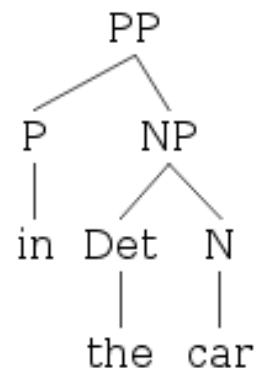
NP → **DET + ADJ + NOUN**

[NP [Det the][NP [Adj little][N boy]]]



PP → **Preposition + NP**

[PP [P in] [NP [Det the][N car]]]

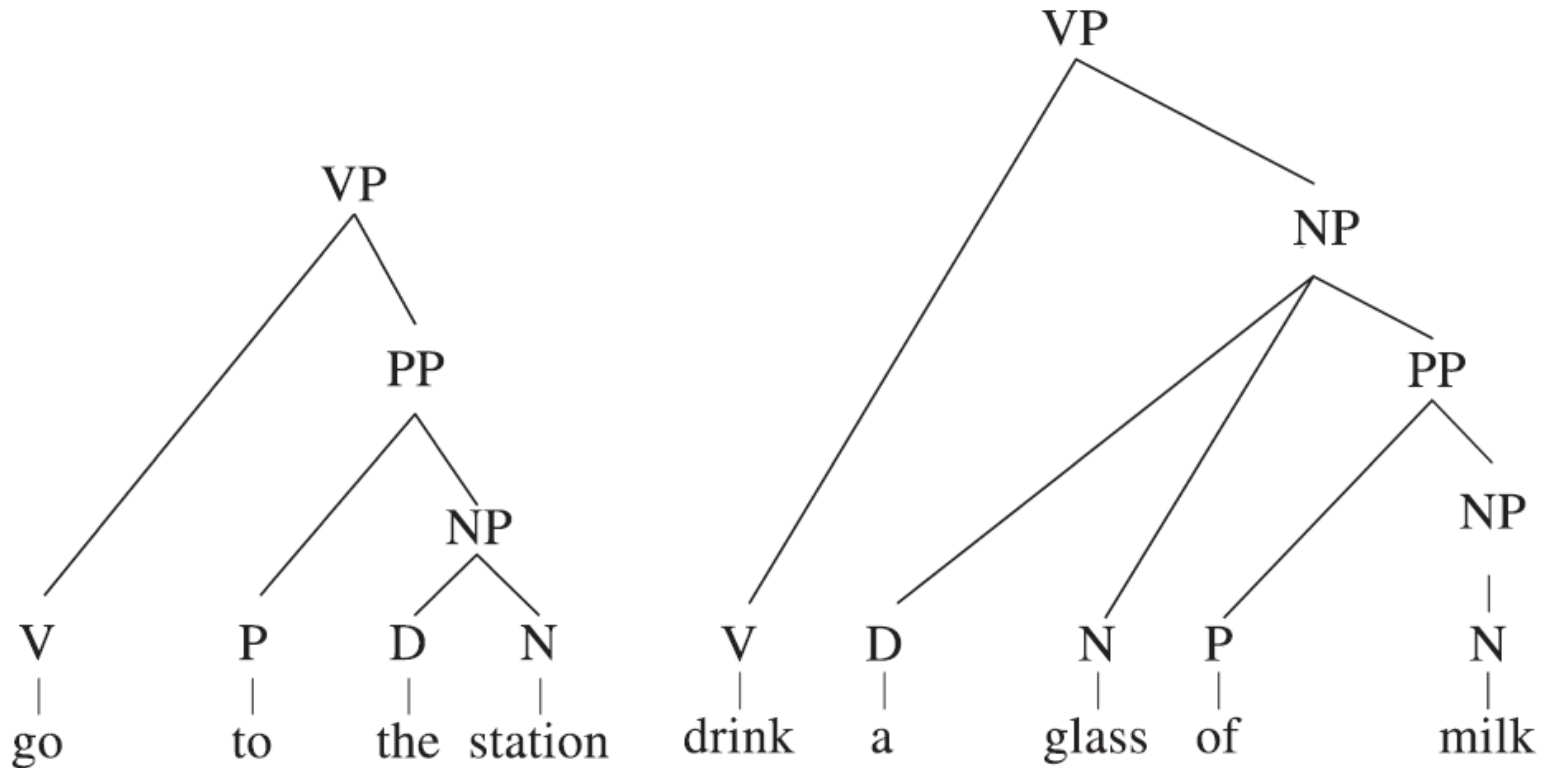


Verb phrase

Head of a verb phrase: verb form;

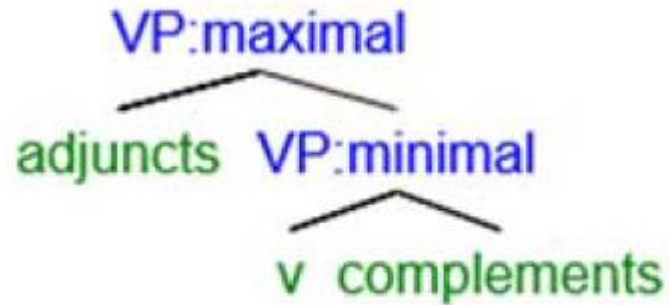
Verb form: one lexical verb + optionally an auxiliary (be, have, will) or modal verb (can, must, etc.)

c. verb phrases

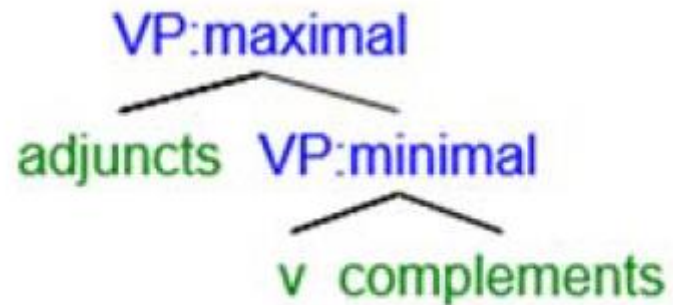


Minimal verb phrase

Minimal verb phrase = verb + all of its complements



Maximal verb phrase



Minimal verb phrase + adjuncts

Middeke & Stefanowitsch (2020: 20)

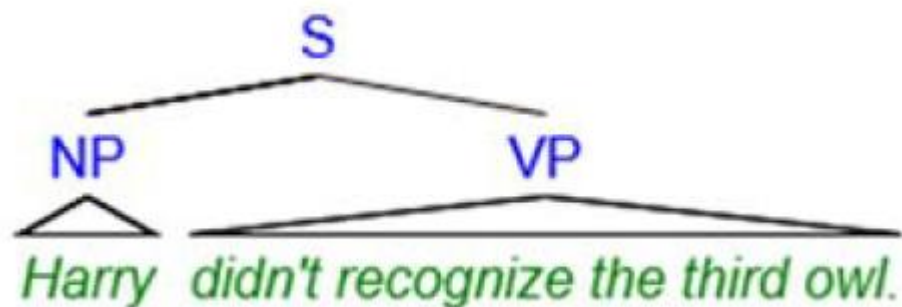
Clauses and sentences

- "A unit of speech that consists of **one main verb plus all of its dependents** – subject, object(s), predicatives and adjuncts" (Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 14).
- A subject-predicate structure (Bieswanger & Becker 2017: 107).
- can be a sentence by itself (simple sentence) or combine with other clause and form compound or complex sentences (ibid., p. 107-108).

Clause structure

- VP headed by the main verb;
- NP serving as a subject;
- They are in grammatical relation: syntactic function of NP to VP;
- The subject precedes the main verb in English (Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 15).

Harry didn't recognise the third owl.



- Subject = Harry;
- Predicate = all the remaining structures (the rest of the clause);
- Subject-predicate structure is fundamental in the English language;
- **S -> NP VP**
- Triangle = we do not analyse the structure (out of choice);
(Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 15).

- "Other noun phrases that complement the verb" (Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2019: 16);
- Three kinds of objects:
 - **DIRECT OBJECTS** (in case-marking languages accusative objects);
 - **INDIRECT OBJECTS** (in case-marking languages dative objects);
 - **PREPOSITIONAL OBJECTS** (remember that not all prepositional phrases are prepositional objects!)

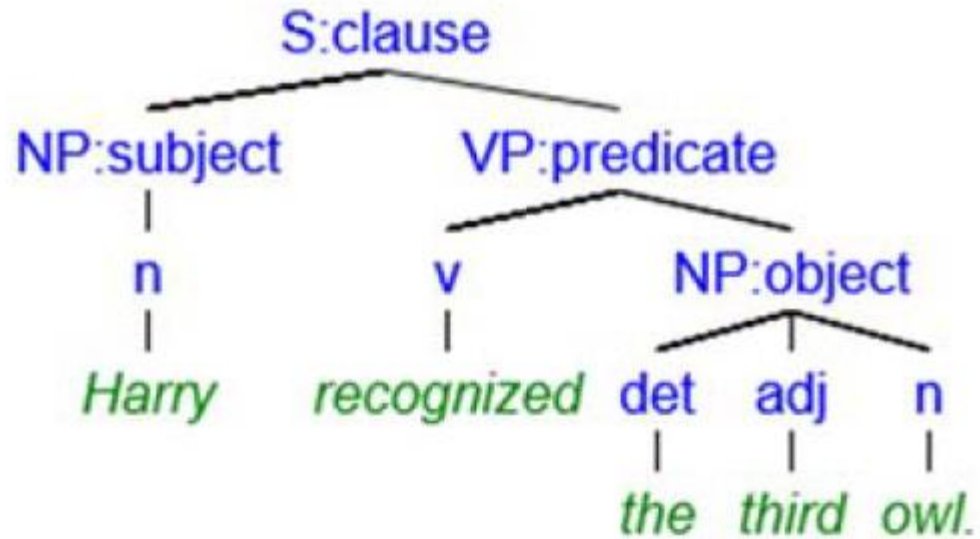
Tom gave Anna flowers.

The first object is direct (*Anna*), and the second is indirect object (*flowers*).

Tom gave flowers to the girl.

(ibid., p. 16-17).

Sentence structure



Complements and arguments of a verb

- Subjects and objects = complements/arguments of a verb;
- Argument: a term from logic and mathematics;
- Predicate requires arguments to be able to form a true or false statement;
(Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 18).

Predicative complement (in short: predicative)

- **SUBJECT COMPLEMENT:** object of a copular verb (be, become, consider) that refers to the subject

He is *a teacher*.

He wants to be *a pilot*.

(Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 18);

- **OBJECT COMPLEMENT:** "constituent co-referential" with the direct object (ibid.).

Anna considers the day *wasted*.

The class has elected Helen *team captain*.

- They "complete the verb by specifying participants of an event" (ibid.).

Adjuncts: adverbials

- Adjunct: can be omitted without leaving the clause incomplete;

ADVERBIAL ADJUNCTS:

- specify the circumstances;
- Often described according to their semantic function:

ADVERBIALS of **TIME, PLACE, MANNER**

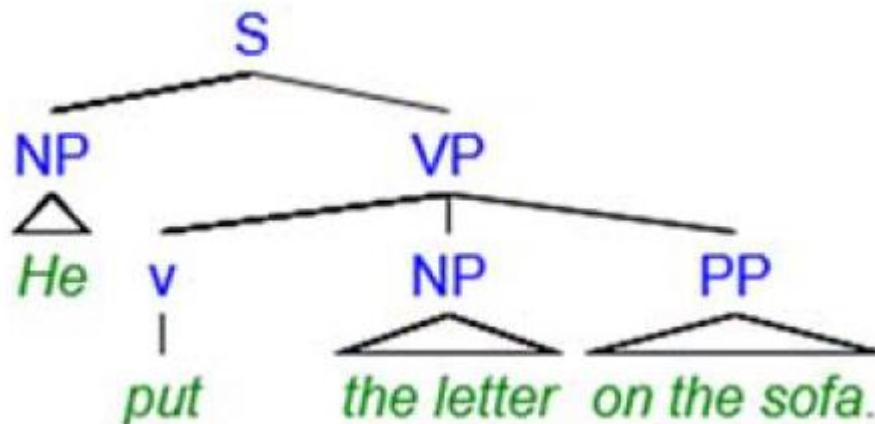
Last night, Jane slept at home.

- come in various forms: NPs (*last night, next Monday*); PPs (*on Monday, with an evil grin*) (Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 19)

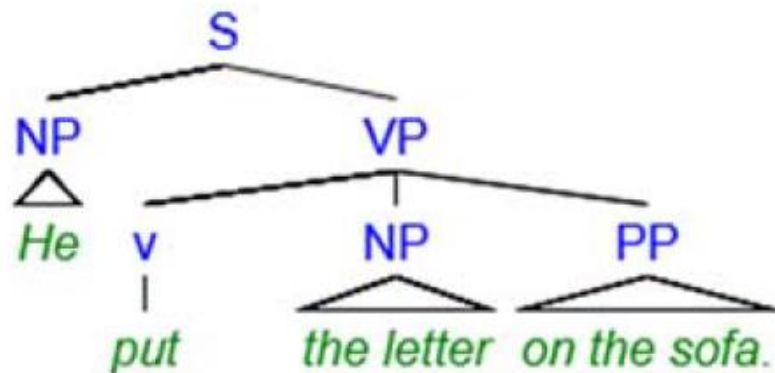
Adverbial complements or obligatory adjuncts?

- AdvP or PP that is required to complete a verb which is not considered transitive; usually the verb of motion and location (Stefanowitsch, Middeke 2020: 20).

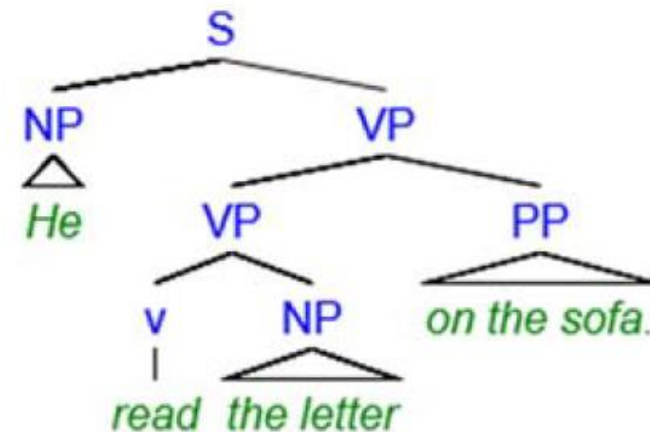
He put a letter *on the sofa*.



Adverbial complement vs adjunct adverbial

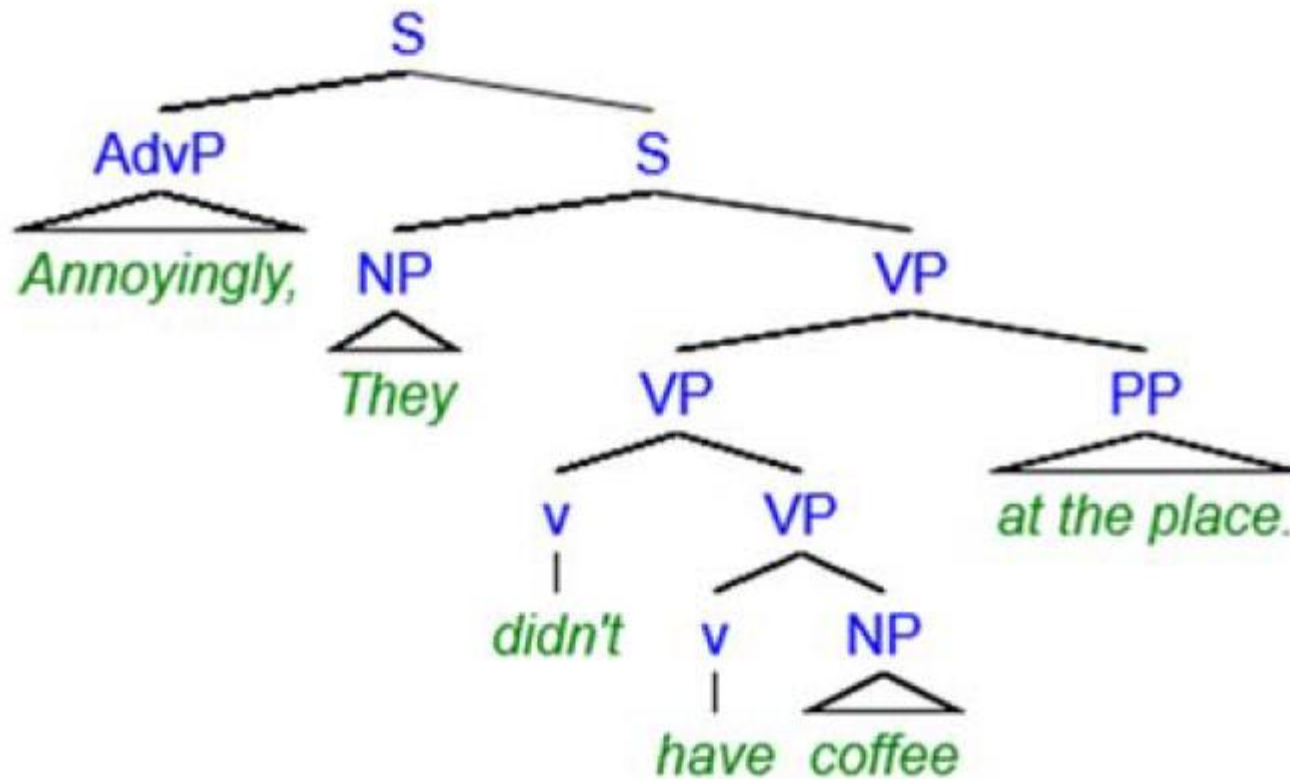


(Middeke, Stefanowitsch 2020: 20)



(ibid., p. 21)

Sentence-level adverbials



Stefanowitsch, Middeke (2020: 21)

Subject (S)	A syntactic element seen as representing someone or something of which something is said. <i>e.g. John came. The car is red. The flower was given.</i>
Verb (in Bieswanger & Becker 2010 called predicate in a narrow sense (P))	A syntactic element which represents what is said (or predicated of) the subject./ some linguistist refer only to the verb. <i>e.g. John came. The flower was given.</i>
Object (O)	An element which represents someone or something other than the person/thing represented by the subject. Direct objects: immediately involved in a subject's activities: I met him . Indirect object: benefit from or receive the direct objects involved in these activities. <i>e.g. Tom gives her (indirect object) flowers (direct object).</i> Prepositional object: <i>He looked at him.</i>

Syntactic elements

Complement (C) or predicative	A syntactic element seen as “complementing” the construction of another element, usually the subject (object complement/predicative) or the object. <i>e.g. Mary seems happy. That present will make her happy.</i>
Adverbial (A)	A syntactic element usually providing information about the time, place or manner of the action or state referred to in a sentence. <i>e.g. I will do it tomorrow/ on Monday/ when I am back home.</i>

VERB PHRASES can be divided into **SIMPLE & COMPLEX** phrases. The complexity depends on the **TYPE OF HEAD VERB**.

Intransitive head verbs = simple verb phrases.

Ditransitive verbs form = complex verb phrases.

verb type	required other constituents	example verbs	EXAMPLE CLAUSE	CLAUSE PATTERN
INTRANSITIVE	none	sleep, swim, sing	<i>She is sleeping.</i>	SP
(MONO) TRANSITIVE	one object NP	like, love, hate, sing	<i>I like books.</i> <i>She sings a song.</i>	SPO
DITRANSITIVE	two object NPs	give, offer, send, sing	<i>I sent you flowers.</i>	SPOO

(S = subject, P = predicate/V = verb, O = object)

(Bieswanger & Becker 2017: 116-117)

Valency of verbs

- A verb might combine with a certain number of arguments – it is called **valency**;
- Predicates with intransitive verbs are monovalent; with transitive (or monotransitive verbs) which require an object and a subject are **divalent**;
- Predicates with ditransitive verbs which require three arguments (subject, direct object and indirect object) are **trivalent**;

Predicate type	Examples	Arguments
AVALENT	It is raining.	<i>rain, snow</i>
MONOVALENT	She was sleeping.	she
DIVALENT	I read a book.	I, a book
TRIVALENT	We sent them a parcel.	We, a parcel, them

(Bieswanger & Becker 2010: 118)

Additional types

- Copular verbs
- Complex transitive verbs

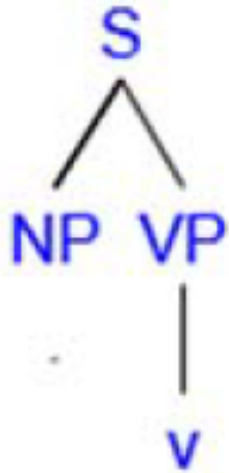
verb type	required other constituents	example verbs	example clauses
COPULAR/ LINKING	one complement or an adverbial	become, be	He became the President of the United States We were too early.
COMPLEX TRANSITIVE	one object NP and one complement or one object NP and adverbial		We find clause patterns fascinating. I put the book on the shelf.

(Bieswanger & Becker 2017: 119)

The seven basic clause patterns in English

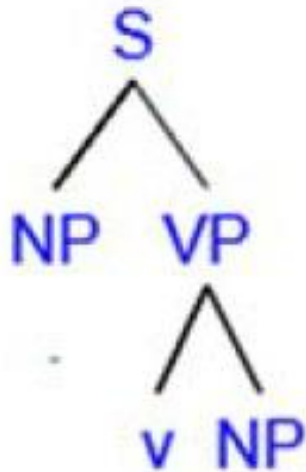
verb type	example clause	valency	clause pattern
INTRANSITIVE	<i>She was working</i>	monovalent	SP
TRANSITIVE (OR MONOTRANSITIVE)	<i>I read a book</i>	divalent	SPO
DITRANSITIVE	<i>We sent them a parcel</i>	trivalent	SPOO
COPULAR	<i>He became the President of the United States</i>	divalent	SPC
	<i>We were too early</i>	divalent	SPA
COMPLEX TRANSITIVE	<i>We find clause patterns fascinating</i>	trivalent	SPOC
	<i>I put the book on the shelf</i>	trivalent	SPOA

Intransitive clauses



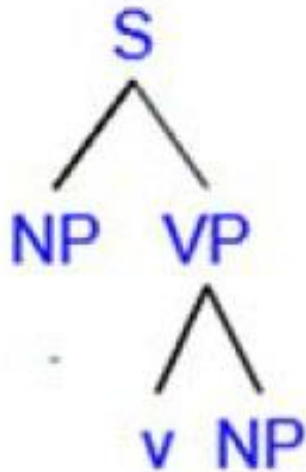
He was swimming.

Monotransitive clauses (S+O)



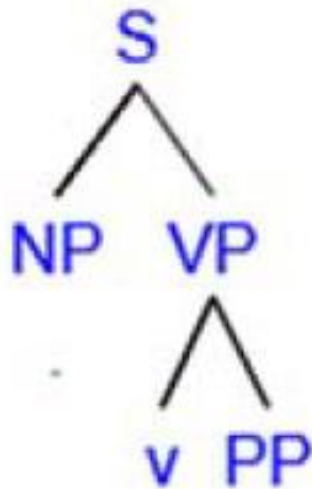
He bought a car.

Monotransitive clauses with a bare NP object



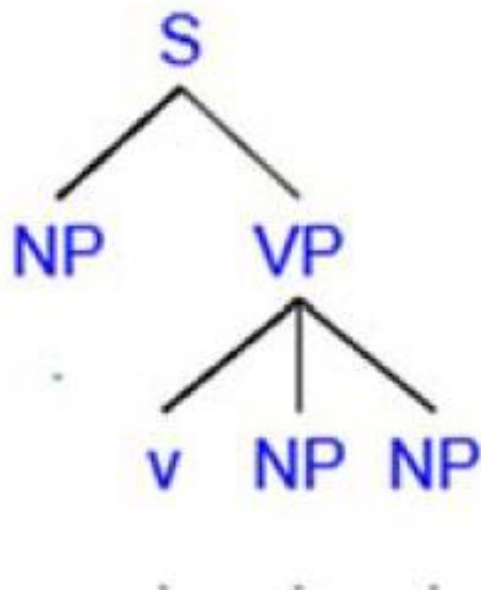
He bought a car.

Monotransitive clauses (S + AdvC)



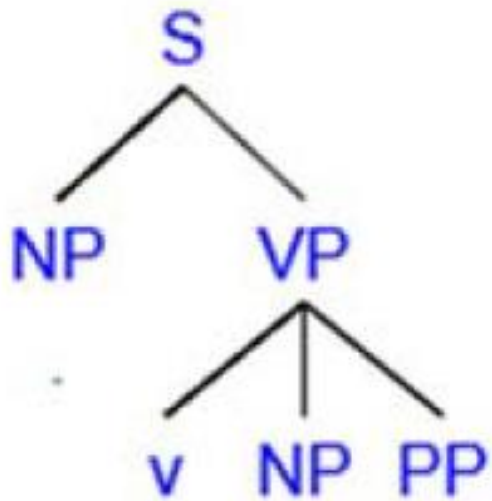
She went to the cinema.

Ditransitive clauses (S+O+O)



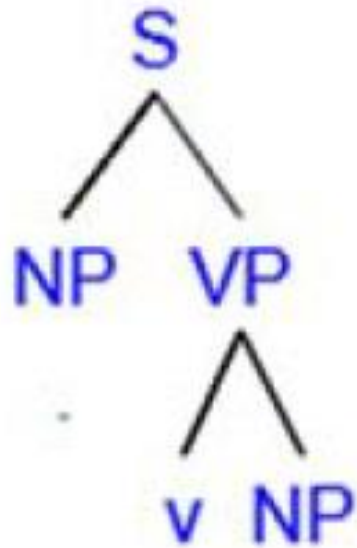
He gave her a flower.

Ditransitive clauses (S+O+AdvC)



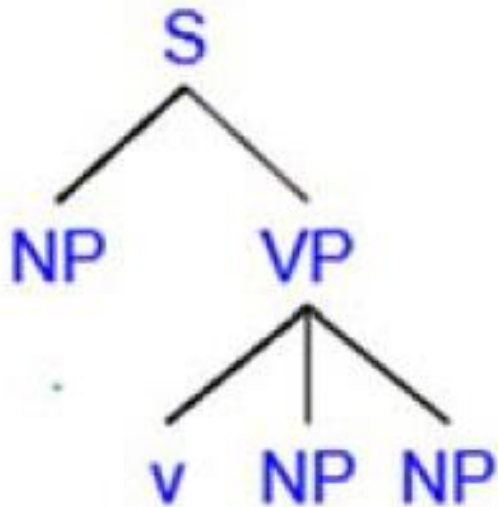
He put a drink on the table.

Clauses with subject complements (S+SCpl)



He was appointed new president.

Clauses with object complements (S+OCpl.)



He called her a liar.

References

1. Carstairs-McCarthy, Andrew. 2002. An introduction to English morphology: words and their structure. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
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