

DISCOURSE LEVEL

Sentence Connectivity

larger than the sentence text

We arrived at the shop just as the butcher was clearing away. As a result the big dogs enjoyed their unexpected bones, and the little puppies liked the scraps.

SENTENCE LEVEL

Sentence

the big dogs enjoyed their unexpected bones, and the little puppies liked the scraps.

CLAUSE LEVEL

Clause

the big dogs enjoyed their unexpected bones

PHRASE LEVEL

Phrase

their unexpected bones

WORD LEVEL

Word

un- expect -ed

PHRASES

Phrases are larger structural units that come between the word and the clause (or sentence).

They can be groups of words or single words behaving as a unit. As such they can be substituted, moved, extended or reduced, without modifying the meaning of the sentence.

PHRASES

Jane loves reading. She loves 'Pride and Prejudice'.

The young girl who lives next door loves reading.
She loves 'Pride and Prejudice'.

We call the underline unit **a noun phrase**, because the central word, GIRL, is a noun.

Usually phrases are made up of a central word, or **HEAD** – a noun, adjective, verb, adverb, clause or pronoun - which **classifies** the phrase.

PHRASES

Phrases are normally multi-words, but also single words can be regarded as phrases, as long as they are expandable into a larger unit:

SUPPER, OUR SUPPER, THE BIG
SUPPER

The second and third examples must be considered as expansions of a central element or HEAD.

PHRASES

There are 5 phrase types:

Phrase Type	Examples	Main word (HEAD)
NOUN PHRASE	The young girl	Noun GIRL
VERB PHRASE	Has been reading	Verb READING
ADJECTIVE PHRASE	Very noisy	Adj. NOISY
ADVERB PHRASE	Too quickly	Adv. QUICKLY
PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE	After the match	Prep. AFTER

Usually phrases are made of a **HEAD** and a series of **MODIFIERS**, i.e. words that give extra information about the HEAD. They can precede (**PREMODIFIERS**) or follow (**POSTMODIFIERS**) the head.

PHRASES

The table below shows all five phrase types used in a single clause:

he	is jumping	over	the	very lazy	dog	as fast as possible
NP	VP	PrepP				AdvP
			NP			
				AdjP		

Noun phrase - Determiners

The young girl who lives next door

IF THE CENTRAL WORD - OR HEAD- OF A PHRASE IS A NOUN, THEN WE CALL IT A NOUN PHRASE.

Determiners introduce noun phrases and come before any **PREMODIFIERS**.

- Definite and indefinite articles
- Possessive pronouns
- Demonstrative pronouns
- Numerals
- Quantifiers (each, every, all, both, some, many, more, most)

DETERMINERS ARE UNIQUE TO NOUN PHRASES.

WHY?

Exercises

Exercise 3.1 Noun phrases (section 3.2)

Bracket the noun phrases in each of the following sentences. If a noun phrase has another noun phrase within it, use double bracketing. For example:

[the old man with [the grey beard]]

- 1 Strong easterly winds are expected later.
- 2 The cost of insurance has doubled in the last year.
- 3 The kids really enjoyed their visit to Disneyland.
- 4 His first movie was about the siege of Krishnapur.
- 5 The weapon was found at the bottom of the lake.
- 6 Harry Potter books are his favourites.
- 7 The concert was cancelled due to poor ticket sales.
- 8 The director of the company has resigned.

Exercise 3.2 Determiners (section 3.2.1)

Underline the determiners in the following sentences.

- 1 His second attempt at the title was much more successful.
- 2 Many people expected him to win the first race easily.
- 3 Some people felt that he needed more time to prepare.

- 4 One journalist even suggested that he should take a break from all competitions.
- 5 After the second race, he was congratulated by his wife and two children.
- 6 His many loyal fans chanted his name from the grandstand.
- 7 The fans will remember that victory for many years.
- 8 For Roberts, it was an emotional climax to a career that began twenty years earlier.

Noun phrase - Premodifiers

The young girl who lives next door

They occur before the noun and after any determiners.
In a noun phrase the premodifier is typically an adjective.

Young girls, a young girl, some young girl;

Premodifiers can co-occur (more than one adj.):

Lovely young girls; a mature young girl; some intelligent young girls.

Other words can function as premodifiers in a noun phrase:

Nouns: bathroom door; our history professor

Genitive: the teacher's office; our child's games

Noun phrase - Postmodifiers

Prepositional phrases usually occur after a noun, generally introduced by *of*:

A box of chocolate, a piece of mind, a biography of Hitler
The Tower of London.

✓ Other prepositions: The cottage on the beach, the museum in New York, the road to Calcutta, a room with a shower, people without cell phone...

✓ Postmodifiers of noun phrases can also be:

- Relative clauses; To-clauses:

The shop [in via Roma] [that sells shoes];

The phone [you borrowed] [from my mother.]

The tool [to open the gate]

✓ Co-occurring postmodifiers:

A room [for two] [in a bed & breakfast];

The function of noun phrases

1. SUBJECT: Four men got killed
2. SUBJECT COMPLEMENT: Grace is my niece
She seems a young girl
3. DIRECT OBJECT: He bought a new car
4. INDIRECT OBJECT: She told her husband the truth
5. OBJECT COMPLEMENT: She called him an idiot
6. ADJUNCT OR ADVERBIAL:
One day you'll know what to do; She's going to China next month.

Verb phrases

Verb phrases usually contain lexical verbs as main verbs.
Lexical verbs may be preceded by one or more auxiliary verbs:

	1	2	3	MAIN VERB
That car	may	have	been	stolen

When two or more auxiliary verbs appear before the main verb in a verb phrase they observe the following order:

MODAL-PERFECTIVE-PROGRESSIVE-PASSIVE

Modal-Passive: The car can be parked

Progressive-Passive: The car is being parked

Perfective-Progressive: She has been parking her car for years;

Perfective-Passive: The car has been parked

Modal-Perfective-Passive: The car should have been parked

Verb phrases - Aspect

While TENSE refers to the absolute location of an event in time - either past or present - ASPECT refers to how an event must be viewed with respect to time.

Aspect is a grammatical category that expresses how an action, event or state, denoted by a verb, relates to the flow of time.

1. Mary lost his dog 3 months ago
2. Mary has lost his dog.

In the second example, the auxiliary has is a **perfective auxiliary** and expresses **perfective aspect** in the verb phrase *has lost*. It indicates that an event occurred prior to (but has continuing relevance at) the time of reference.

Verb phrases - Aspect

Mary had lost her dog

In this case, the event occurred in the past, but we know that it was still relevant at some later time:

Mary had lost her dog, so she could not take him to the show.

The idea of RELEVANCE is important when we want to distinguish TENSE and ASPECT.

Other examples of aspectual auxiliary is the progressive auxiliary be:

Mary is taking her dog out (present tense, progressive aspect)

Mary was taking her dog out when he got lost (past tense, progressive aspect)

Verb phrases - Mood

Mood refers to distinctions in the form of a verb phrase that express the speaker's attitude towards what is said (for example, whether it is intended as a statement of fact, of desire, of command, etc.).

In linguistics, **grammatical mood** (sometimes **mode**) is a grammatical (usually morphologically marked) feature of verbs.

There are three moods: **INDICATIVE, IMPERATIVE AND SUBJUNCTIVE**

Indicative mood: **declarative, interrogative, and exclamative sentences;**

Imperative mood: **orders and exhortations;**

Subjunctive mood: **non-factual, hypothetical situations.**

Verb phrases - Mood

Subjunctive mood: non-factual, hypothetical situations:

1. Were-subjunctive:

If I were you, I wouldn't accept the job.

If my brother were President of the Republic, what would he do?

2- Mandative subjunctive (with such verbs as: *ask, insist, recommend, decide, suggest* when followed by that):

His professor suggested (that) he take up writing classes;

The board insisted that she resign immediately;

The judge asked he be given a life sentence.

The use of the mandative subjunctive is more common in American English. However, it has made a considerable comeback in British English in recent years, probably under American influence. Yet in all varieties of English, the mandative subjunctive is far more common in writing than in speech.

Exercise 3.4 Tense (section 3.3.2) and aspect (section 3.3.5)

In each of the following sentences, describe the tense and aspect that are expressed by the underlined auxiliary verb. For example:

The children are leaving = Present tense, Progressive aspect

- 1 Amy was watching TV when we arrived.
- 2 Paul is working very hard.
- 3 The government has supported the banks for years.
- 4 I have never met your brother.
- 5 I am looking for a better job.
- 6 We were staying with friends at the time.
- 7 The train had already left.
- 8 All the money has disappeared.

Adjective phrases

Adjective phrases usually have the following structure:

Premodifier	Adjective (HEAD)	Postmodifier
VERY	SORRY	TO GO

The premodifier in an adjective phrase is most commonly an adverb (intensifier), or another adjective:

It is extremely/very/ fairly/quite cold;

Or, a noun phrase (in measurements and age):

three months old; a metre long

Postmodifiers:

Happy you can make it; delighted to meet you; guilty of murder

Fond of animals;

Function of adjective phrases

1. Subject complement:

My father is quite ill; I was really lucky; My old professor was happy to see me.

2. Object complement:

The air con keeps our house cool;

The new floor makes the room much brighter;

3. Premodifier of a noun:

She bought a wonderful long dress;

He's a rather boring person;

They've used a slightly different approach.

Underline the adjective phrases in the following sentences:

- 1 In much earlier times Antwerp had been one of the largest cities in western Europe.
- 2 The vibrant atmosphere of the sprawling city was very exciting for residents and visitors alike.
- 3 Antwerp became an increasingly important financial centre as time went on.
- 4 Prices for works of art were incredibly high, and even fairly mediocre artists could make a reasonably good living.
- 5 The Church was a very significant contributor to the vast wealth of the city.
- 6 The Bishop of Antwerp commissioned expensive paintings and statues, and the artists were usually very happy to accept the commissions.
- 7 The Church had always been acutely aware of the need to patronise artists.
- 8 In turn, the artists produced some of the most magnificent masterpieces that Europe has ever seen.

Adverbial phrases

Adverbial phrases usually present an adverb as the HEAD:

The child cried loudly

The child cried very loudly

The child cried very loudly indeed

The **Premodifier** in an adverb phrase is always an intensifier:

VERY, TOO, EXTREMELY, QUITE

Postmodifiers in adverb phrases are RARE. Apart from **indeed**, only **enough** is commonly used:

Strange enough, funnily enough, oddly enough, naturally enough..

The function of adverbial phrases

1. Premodifier of an adjective phrase:

Extremely loud and incredibly close;

Lord of the Rings was a very successful film;

The meat was too salty.

2. Premodifier of an adverb:

I spoke to her very recently;

She talks far too slowly;

The temperature rose far more quickly than expected.

3. Adjunct:

Suddenly the police broke into the room;

Students will receive an i.d. badge automatically;

He died quite recently.

Underline the adverb phrases in the following sentences:

- 1 Global warming has recently become a major concern for governments.
- 2 Previously, many people felt that governments did not take the issue seriously.
- 3 Now, it seems that the voice of the people is finally being heard.
- 4 Governments have gradually realised that climate change is a reality.
- 5 Some governments are obviously uncertain about how to proceed.
- 6 Many people feel strongly that international cooperation is the only solution.

Prepositional phrases

Premodifier (rare)	Preposition	Complement (noun phrase)
soon/just	after	the match
	around	the world
straight	across	our street
	from	the town
	through	the open door

Clauses can also function as the complement in a prepositional phrase:

It's a good way of reducing the debt; He won by playing better

Function of prepositional phrases

1. Postmodifier of a noun:

The population of Cagliari is growing

The demand for more jobs has increased

I'm reading a book on Japanese paintings

2. Adjunct:

I'll see him on Monday;

Before the war, he worked as a clerk

We met Sophie along the river

3. Subject complement:

Your hat is on the sofa

That book is for Adam

Michael Jackson sang in a band called the Jacksons

Function of prepositional phrases

4. Object complement:

She has a job placing bottles in regional order

Don't keep me in suspense

5. Postmodifier of an adjective:

I am extremely happy of your results

The man was found guilty of wrong conduct

Both adverb and prepositional phrases function as ADVERBIALS OR ADJUNCTS, giving additional information on time, mode and time.

Ex. p. 96

Underline the prepositional phrases in the following passage:

Marco Polo was born in Venice in 1254. At that time, Venice was one of Europe's wealthiest cities. At 17, Marco travelled with his father and uncle from Italy to China. That journey eventually opened trade routes between the east and the west. In his book, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, he described the immense size of Chinese cities and the many splendours to be seen at the Emperor's court. His book contains stories about many wonders: bandits in desert hideaways, snakes with legs, and an Emperor who kept a tamed lion at his feet. No one is quite sure how many of these stories are true. Did he really see everything he described, did he hear the stories from other travellers, or did he just make it all up? Some scholars think he never travelled to China at any time. For them, the fact that he never once mentioned tea, the national drink of the Chinese, is proof that his book is a collection of fables. Just before his death, Marco was asked how much of his book was really true. He replied that he had described only half of what he had actually seen.