

Chapter 14

Morphology and Syntax

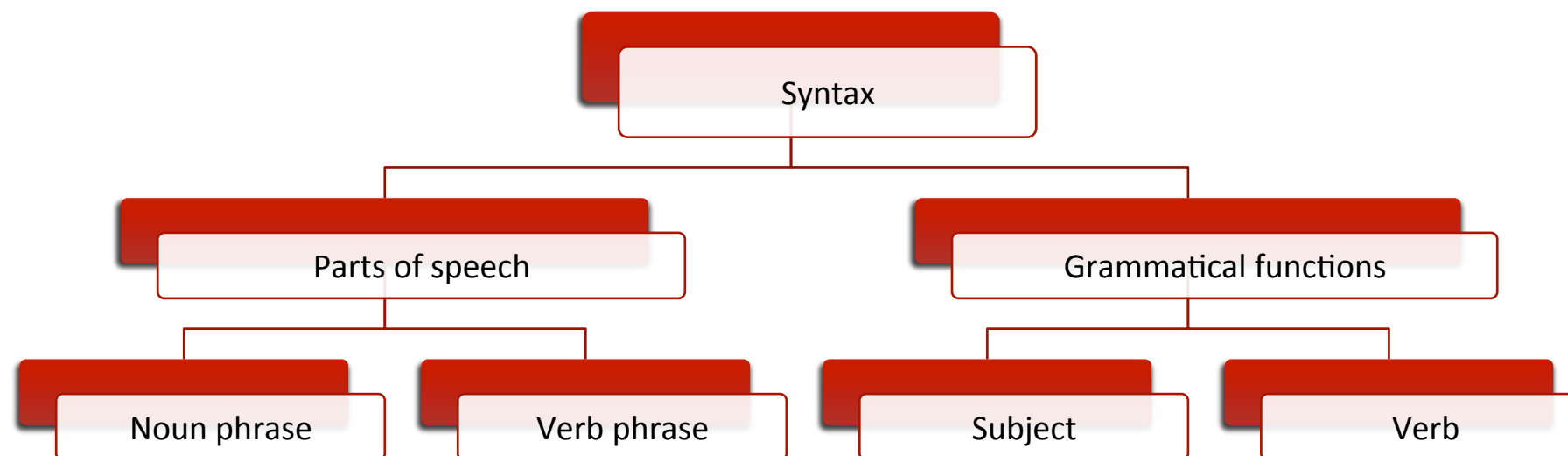
Engl 423

Hayfa Alhomaïd

Noun and Verb Phrases and Grammatical Functions



Syntax deals with how words are combined into larger structures – phrases, clauses, and sentences



Noun phrase

What do we mean by noun phrase?

A noun phrase consists of a noun and all the words and word groups that belong with the noun and cluster around it.

The noun itself is called the headword or the head, and the other words and word groups are modifiers of the noun.

E.g. The blue book / The blue book on the shelf / The blue book on the shelf which is about economics.

A noun phrase can be rather complex, containing other noun phrases, or it can consist of just one word (a noun) if that word can occur without any modifiers.

E.g. Jim wanted a car / Jim wanted a new sports car with wire wheels which would have a fast getaway.

Noun phrase

Some syntactic categories of Nouns:

Count nouns

- Countable nouns which can be either singular or plural
- If it is singular it must be preceded by a determiner.
- If it is plural, it might be or might be not preceded by determiner
- Modified by many

Mass nouns

- Uncountable nouns
- They have no plural forms.
- Modified by much

Proper nouns

- Names of particular persons, places, or things.
- Singular proper nouns appear without determiner unless they are modified.
- The proper nouns that are always plural are preceded by the.
- Certain proper nouns are usually singular and take the. They can also be used in plural.

Verb phrase

What do we mean by verb phrase?

A verb phrase consists of a verb and all the words and word groups that belong with the verb and cluster around it.

The verb itself is called the headword or the head, and the other words and word groups are auxiliaries, modifiers, and complements of the verb.

Complements → completers of the verb, such as direct object, indirect object, objective complement and subjective complement.

E.g. ate all his lunch / almost ate all his lunch.

Verb phrase

Some syntactic categories of Verbs:

Transitive verbs

- Followed by noun phrases or nominals.
- Receive the action of the verb
- The noun phrase or nominal that follows it is called object.

Intransitive verbs

- Involve an action
- do not require a following element to receive the action

Linking verbs

- Introduce a kind of equivalency or descriptive relationship.
- Such as be, become, seem, and look.

Grammatical Function

Lable of Function	Grammatical meaning
Subject of verb	That which performs the action of the verb, is described or identified, or about which as assertion is made.
Verb	That which asserts an action or state.
Subjective complement	That which follows be or a verb like become and identifies or describes the subject.
Direct object	That which undergoes the action of the verb.
Indirect object	That person or thing to or for whom an action is performed.
Objective complement	That which completes the direct object and describes or identifies it.
Object of preposition	That which is related to another word by a preposition.

Identifying the subject

There are many ways to determine the requirements for agreement in form between the subject and verb, which helps us in identifying the subject of a sentence or clause.

This noun-verb relationship can be described by saying that the noun phrase “is tied to” or “agrees with” the verb, And the noun phrase in the sentence that is tied to the verb is the subject of the verb.

When a noun phrase is in the subject position, it is the headword of the phrase that is tied to the verb and is therefore the headword subject, or “the simple subject”.

E.g. The **duties** of the center **depend** on the kind of offensive employed.

The **duty** of the center **depends** on the kind of offensive employed.

If a verb is preceded by auxiliaries, the subject is tied to the first auxiliary.

E.g. The **visitor** **has** gone

The **visitors** **have** gone

Identifying the subject

A test for locating the subject is what is called “ front-shift” test. Which means simply changing the statement into yes/no questions.

E.g. [That young lady with the black long jacket] is our teacher.

Yes/no question → Is [That young lady with the black long jacket] our teacher?

- The part of the statement that is switched with helping verb is the complete subject.

Another test is to locate the main verb and ask yourself who or what in the relation to the verb.

E.g. The doctor with the black thick glasses makes great operations.

Asking with who or what → Who makes great operations? The doctor with the black thick glasses.

The doctor → the simple subject.

The doctor with the black thick glasses → The complete subject

This is all for today

SEE YOU NEXT WEEK 😊