

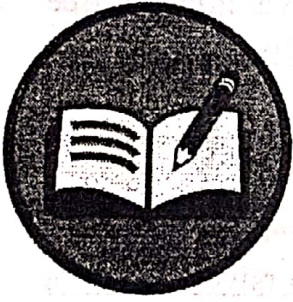
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3 + 4



Semantics

& Syntax

17.06.2022

24.06.2022

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Semantics & Syntax 3.3+4

AYDI 2022

## LECTURE NO. 3

17.06.2022

### HELLO EVERYONE!

Last time we started talking about "recursive rules". I gave you an example:

- *The girl walked down the street with a gun toward the bank.*

We said that we have three prepositional phrases included within and dominated by the verb phrase:

- 1) *The girl walked down the street*
- 2) *The girl walked with a gun*
- 3) *The girl walked towards the bank*

So three verb phrases with prepositional phrases. We drew a tree diagram for it. This is recursive rule. Recursive means to generate phrases. This is in generative grammar.

Can I apply the recursive rule for the **complement phrases** included within a verb phrase? For example:

- *The children hope that the teacher said that the exam will be easy.*

As you can see, we can also apply this recursive rule for complementizer phrases included within the verb phrase, not only the prepositional phrase.

Generative grammar means that language is **limitless**. You can generate limitless phrases.

What about the noun phrases? Prepositional phrases are not only for verbs. Let's see this example:

- *The man with a telescope in a box*

This is a phrase, not a sentence.

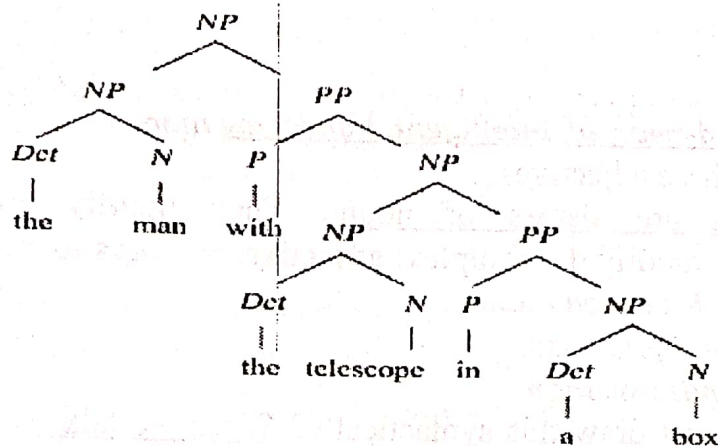
(*The man*) is a noun phrase. It includes a determiner (*The*) and a noun (*man*). This noun phrase is **post-modified** by a prepositional phrase. So the noun phrase dominates a noun phrase and a prepositional phrase. This is new according to phrase structure rules:

$NP \rightarrow NP + PP$

In our example we have a noun phrase that dominates two prepositional phrases. So we apply two prepositional phrases within the noun phrase.

\*

Let's draw the tree and see:



We have two prepositional phrases. These two prepositional phrases modifies (*The man*). This is how we can apply recursive rule for noun phrases and verb phrases.

I want to remind you of the phrase structure rules that we had so far:

$S \rightarrow NP + VP$

$NP \rightarrow Det. + N$

$VP \rightarrow V + NP$

$VP \rightarrow V + PP \Rightarrow$  with recursive rule:  $VP \rightarrow VP + PP$

$VP \rightarrow V$

$PP \rightarrow Prep. + NP$

$VP \rightarrow V + CP$

$CP \rightarrow C + S$

$NP \rightarrow NP + PP$

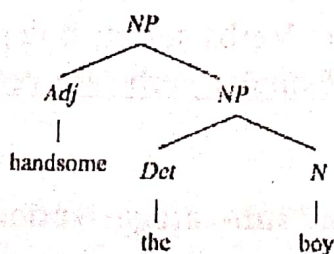
We will add three phrase structure rules today.

Back to recursive rule, what about adjectives? We talked about noun phrases and verb phrase. We can generate adjectives too. For example:

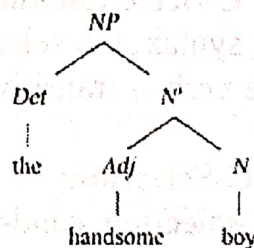
- *The handsome boy*

A noun phrase dominates a determiner and a noun. However, we cannot say "*The man handsome*". This is **WRONG**.

A noun phrase dominates an adjective and noun ( $NP \rightarrow adj. + N$ ). This is for one adjective.



NOT POSSIBLE!



But we want to make a recursive rule. What would we do? We have an

example:

- ***The kind-hearted, intelligent, handsome man***

We have three adjectives.

Adjectives are sisters of nouns. They **modify** nouns directly.

**Determiners** modify the complex: **adjectives + nouns** for each:

- ***The kind-hearted man***
- ***The intelligent man***
- ***The handsome man***

So how can I draw this syntactically? When we talk about sisters, we should talk about noun-bar. The symbol of it is [ N' ]. Noun-bars mean we have sisters.

A noun phrase dominates determiner and noun bar (adjective + noun):

NP → Det. + N' (noun-bar)

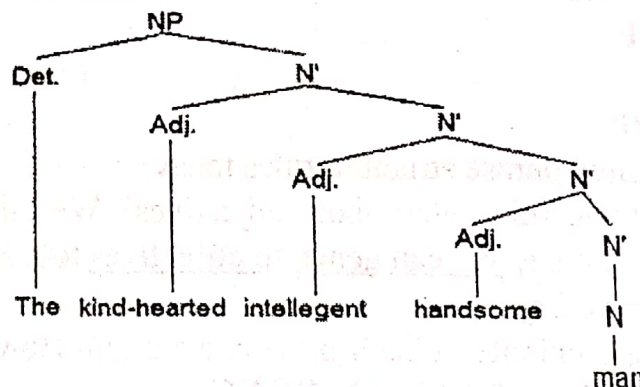
N' → Adj. + N

N' → N

The noun-bar dominates an adjective and a noun.

- ***The kind-hearted intelligent handsome man***

All these adjectives are sisters dominated by one noun phrase which is (*man*). Let's draw the tree:



There is nothing random in English. Everything is organized in syntax with rules.

#### ❖ C-Selection and S-selection:

In syntax, the selection depends on the phrase. Verbs select; it depends if the verb is transitive, intransitive or copular. Copular verbs are verb (to be).

#### • C-Selection:

C-selection stands for "category selection" or "sub-categorization".

This is very important in syntax.

C-selection means that we have some phrases like verb phrases select certain categories. It is not random. Here we will talk about heads and

complements.

☞ Copular verbs select adjectives OR prepositional phrases OR noun phrase OR adjective like (Sara is beautiful).

☞ Intransitive verbs select nothing like (Sara slept).

☞ Transitive verbs select complementizer phrases or prepositional phrases like (Sara thinks...)

Do noun phrases select or only verbs select? Everything selects.

☞ The verb (*put*) is a transitive verb. It selects a noun phrase and a prepositional phrase. It should dominates a noun phrase AND a prepositional phrase. For example we say:

- ***Sara put the milk in the fridge***

So it is mandatory. It is NOT optional.

☞ The verb (*think*) should dominates either a complementizer phrase OR a prepositional phrase.

☞ The noun phrase (*The belief*) should dominates either a prepositional phrase OR a complementizer phrase.

So here we have C-selection. We have certain categories that should be dominated by certain phrases. Of course we have many other things.

☞ The adjective phrase (*tired / proud*) should select a prepositional phrase.

☞ The verb (*feel*) should select either a complementizer phrase like (*I feel that...*) or adjective like (*I feel tired*). Here we have C-selection.

We have S-selection. It means "semantic selection".

- ***The rock murdered the cat.***

According to syntax, it is right. It doesn't violate the C-selection. The verb (*murder*) selects a noun phrase. So it is right according to C-selection.

BUT according to S-selection (semantic selection), it is NOT right. It is weird. Semantics deal with meaning. The word (*murder*) according to S-selection requires human. (*The rock*) doesn't murder! If I am talking about facts, a rock doesn't murder. So there is a violation for S-selection.

في كلمات تُستخدم للعاقل وكلمات لغير العاقل.

- ***The tree liked the boy.***

According to C-selection, it is correct. However, according to S-selection, it is NOT correct.

Next time I will repeat the same idea but under the title "Heads and Complements". We will finish syntax next time.

Thank You

## LECTURE NO. 4

24.06.2022

### HELLO EVERYONE!

Last time we talked about X' Syntax (X-bar syntax). We use X' (X-bar) when we have sisters, for example, when we have a noun phrase that includes an adjective. In this case we need to use the X'. The last two phrase structure rules were:

$NP \rightarrow \text{Det. } N'$

$N' \rightarrow \text{Adj. } N$

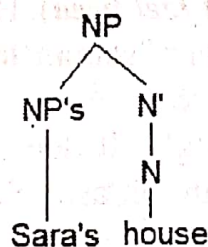
$N' \rightarrow N$

If we have for example this phrase:

- *Sara's house.*

This is a noun phrase. We have a new phrase structure rule for this kind of phrases:  $NP \rightarrow NP's + N'$

Let's draw it:



When we have possessive (-s), we express it by saying that the noun phrase dominates a noun phrase apostrophe ('s) [NP's] and a noun-bar [N']:  $NP \rightarrow NP's + N'$

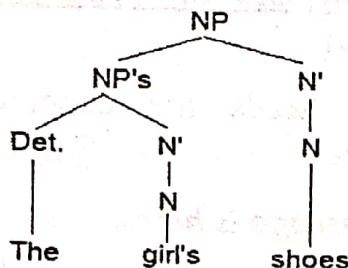
**Student:** why do we have a N' (noun-bar) here?

**Instructor:** because we have sisters. Whenever we have sisters we use the bar. Here (*house*) is sister to (*Sara*). That is why (*house*) is a noun-bar.

- *The girl's shoes*

According to phrase structure rules, we have noun phrase + 's and

noun-bar. In the noun phrase, we have determiner (*the*) + noun-bar (*girl's*):



The new version of the noun phrase is a determiner and a noun-bar. When you have such cases, always use the new version.

Again, when we have SISTERS, use the BAR. The bar is symbolized by ( ' ).

### ❖ Heads and Complements:

This is VERY IMPORTANT. If we have for example:

#### - *The boy*

How do you know that this is a noun phrase? We know that this is a noun phrase by its head. The **head-word** here is (*boy*). The head means the main word. The (*boy*) is a noun, so the phrase is a noun phrase. Of course (*The*) is not the head.

Phrases are determined by their heads.

#### - *In the garden*

This is a prepositional phrase. The head of this phrase is the preposition (*in*) because if you say (*garden*) alone, then it is a noun phrase. But when you used the preposition (*in*), it makes the phrase a prepositional phrase. That is why it is the head.

Heads are not related if they can stand alone or not.

In prepositional phrases, the prepositions are the head.

What about the complementizer phrase?

#### - *The teacher said that students passed the exam.*

In complementizer phrases, the complementizer is the head. In this case (*that*) is the head.

This is as far as heads are concerned. What about the complements?

- ***The boy with a telescope is here.***

This is a noun phrase.

"*with a telescope*" is the complement. The function of complements is to complete the meaning. They give additional meaning. If I say:

- ***The boy is here.***

It is right and grammatical. When I add the complement "*with a telescope*", I am just adding an extra information. It completes the meaning of (*The boy*). If you asked, which boy? It is the boy with a telescope. So the head of the whole phrase is (*boy*), so it is a noun phrase.

If I said only:

- ***With a telescope***

This is a prepositional phrase and the head of it is (*with*).

➤ **NOTE:** complementizer phrase is different from a complement.

So complements **complete the meaning.** Let's have more examples:

- **An argument over jelly beans.**

head            complement

This is a noun phrase. The head is the noun (*argument*). The complement is (*over jelly beans*).

If I ask you in the EXAM, **what kind of complement** we have in this example? Not what type of phrase.

This is a **noun complement**. Don't get confused because many students get confused at this point in the EXAM. The type of the



complement is different from the type of the phrase.

So (*over jelly beans*) is a noun complement because the head is a noun.

There is a relation between heads and complements.

If I asked you **what kind of phrase** is (*over jelly beans*), the answer is a prepositional phrase.

Please don't be confused, if I asked about the type of complement, focus on the head. If I asked you about the type of phrase, it is different.

- **his belief that justice will prevail**

head                  complement

This is a noun phrase. The head is (*belief*). It is a noun. The complement is (*that justice will prevail*). The kind of complement is a **noun complement**. The type of phrase is a complementizer phrase.

DON'T get confused between **complement** and **complementizer**. As symbols, both of them are [C]. They are totally different.

- **happy to be here**

head      complement

This is an adjective phrase. The head is the adjective (*happy*). The complement is (*to be here*). The type of complement is **adjective complement**. The kind of the phrase (*to be here*) is infinitive phrase [infP].

In the EXAM, focus on the details of the question.

- **about the war in Iraq**

head                  complement

This is a prepositional phrase. The head is (*about the war*) because the complement (*in Iraq*) completes the meaning of the (*war*). The kind of complement is a **prepositional complement** because the head is a preposition. The kind of phrase is a prepositional phrase.

- wrote a long letter to his only sister

head          complement

The head here is the verb (*wrote*). So the type of complement is a **verb complement**. The kind of phrase is a noun phrase (*a long letter*) and a prepositional phrase (*to his only sister*). These two phrases complete the meaning of (*wrote*). We have two modifiers.

- tell John that his mother is coming to dinner

head                  complement

The head is the verb (*tell*). The type of complement is **verb complement**. It completes the meaning of (*Tell*). What about type of phrases? We have a noun phrase (*John*) and a complementizer phrase (*that his mother...*).

You will face a lot of questions in the EXAM about heads and complements.

#### ❖ C-selection and S-selection:

**C-selection** stands for "category" or "sub-categorization".

**S-selection** stands for "semantic".

C-selection deals with constituents. For example if we have a verb, can we add any phrase after this verb? Of course No. It is not random. We have certain verbs that select their categories.

☞ The verb (*put*) selects a **noun phrase** AND a **prepositional phrase** after it. Without these two phrases, the sentence would be **ungrammatical**. For example:

- He puts the milk in the fridge.

NP                  PP

We cannot say (*He puts the milk*) and stop. It is incorrect. Even if you know where he does put the milk in the context, but grammatically it is incorrect. You should add a prepositional phrase.

Also I cannot say (*He puts in the fridge*). It is ungrammatical. We

need a noun phrase.

☞ The verb (*believe*) selects either a **prepositional phrase** OR a **complementizer phrase**. We say:

- **Believe in...**
- **Believe that...**

☞ The verb (*slept*) is **intransitive** verb. It selects **nothing**.

☞ The verb (*feel*) selects either an **adjective phrase** OR a **complementizer phrase**. For example:

- **I felt tired yesterday.**
- **I feel that...**

So for verbs, selection is obligatory except for intransitive verbs. For **transitive verbs, the selection is obligatory.** It is not optional.

What about noun phrases? Noun phrases also select, but it is optional. It is **not obligatory.**

☞ (*The belief*) selects either a **prepositional phrase** or a **complementizer phrase**. For example:

- **The belief in freedom**
- **The belief that...**

☞ (*sympathy*) selects either **complementizer phrase** or **prepositional phrase**. For example:

- **Sympathy that...**
- **Sympathy for...**

☞ (*proud*) selects only a **prepositional phrase**. For example:

- **Proud of...**

In this case we have selection, but what if I say:

- **All mothers are proud.**

We don't have selection here. It is grammatical. Selection is not obligatory. It is optional. So for noun phrases, selection is optional. **BUT for transitive verbs, selection is obligatory.**

- **All mothers are proud of their children.**

Here (proud) selects a prepositional phrase. So it is optional.

For adjective phrases, selection is optional too.

We talked about heads and complements in phrases. We said that the head of a noun phrase is a noun. The head of prepositional phrase is a preposition. The head of an adjective phrase is an adjective and so on. What about sentences?

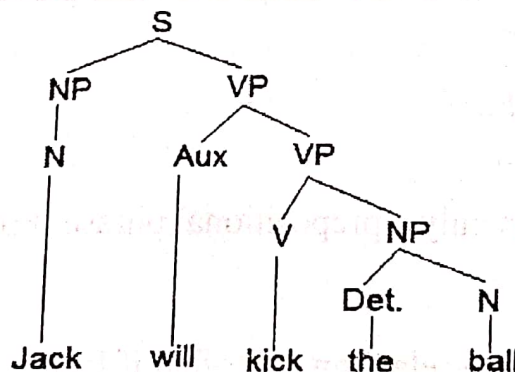
- **Jack will kick the ball.**
- **Jack has kicked the ball.**
- **Jack is kicking the ball.**
- **Jack may kick the ball.**

These are sentences. Each sentence consists of a noun phrase and a verb phrase. In each sentence we have a different auxiliary. In sentences, the auxiliary is the head of the sentence.

Auxiliaries and modal verbs are the head of sentences because they define the tense of the sentence and because agreement between the auxiliary and the subject.

Let's see how can we draw a tree diagram:

- **Jack will kick the ball.**



So we have a new phrase structure rule: **VP → Aux + VP**

The verb phrase dominates auxiliary and a verb phrase. This is the last phrase structure rule.

➤ **Why auxiliaries and modal verbs are the head?**

- 1) They determine the tense of the sentence
- 2) There is an agreement between subject and auxiliaries

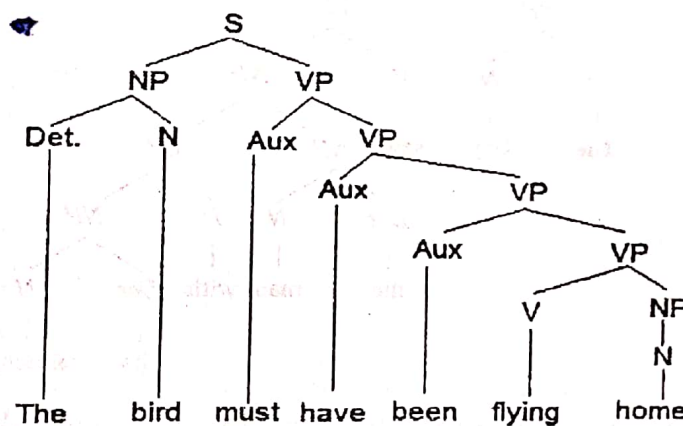
The modal verb (may) makes possibility. (Must) makes obligation. (can) makes ability. That is why auxiliaries and modal verbs are the head of sentences.

- *Jack must have been studying.*

Here we have more than one auxiliary. Here we should follow the recursive rule.

- *The bird must have been flying home.*

We have three auxiliaries. We should apply the recursive rule here.



### ❖ Ambiguity:

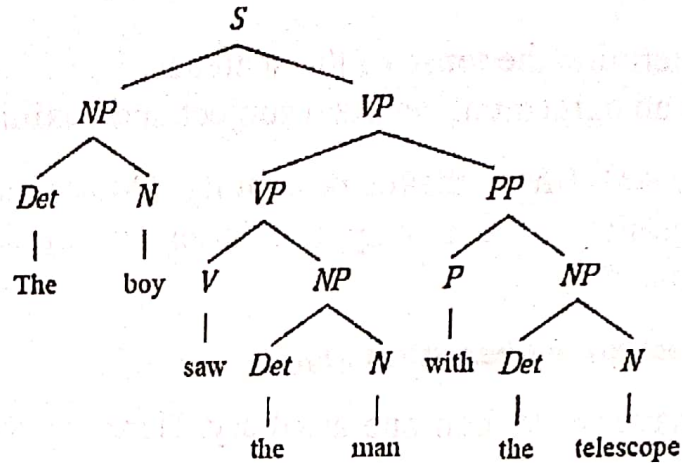
- *The boy saw the man with the telescope.*

This sentence has two meanings. This sentence is ambiguous because it has two meanings. We will analyze this sentence according to the two meanings:

1. The boy used the telescope to see the man.
2. The boy saw the man who was holding the telescope.

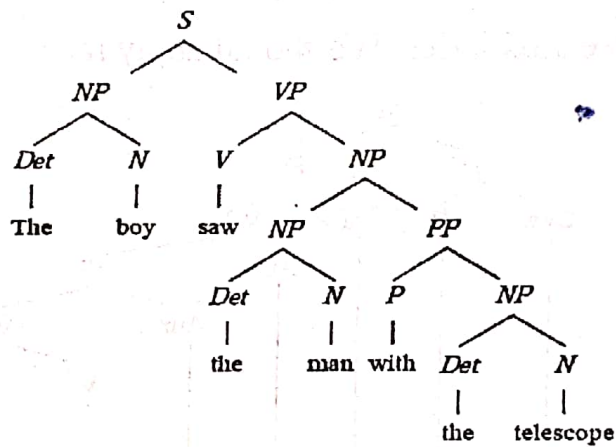
These are the two the meanings. Of course because we have two meanings, we have two different tree diagrams:

1.



This is the first meaning. The boy used the telescope to see the man.

2.



This is the second meaning. The boy saw the man who was holding the telescope.

This is ambiguity. It means we have two meanings for one sentence.

In the EXAM, you will face a question similar to this thing. You will have a tree diagram. There will be missing constituents and you should know what is missing. You just choose what is missing. It is MCQs. I would give you the meaning and you should follow the constituents according to this meaning.

انظروا إلى أسئلة الدورات...

➤ All Phrase Structure Rules that we had:

1.  $S \rightarrow NP \ VP$

2. NP → Det. N'
3. NP → N
4. NP → NP PP
5. NP → NP's N'
6. VP → V NP
7. VP → V
8. VP → VP PP
9. VP → V CP
10. VP → Aux VP
11. N' → N
12. CP → C S
13. PP → P NP
14. N' → Adj. N

We had 14 phrase structure rules.

*This is the end of the first part of our course: Syntax.*

\*\*\*\*

Let's start with an introduction to semantics:

## SEMANTICS

In syntax, we talked about the structure of sentences and how they are organized.

In semantics, we will deal with meaning. We will study with the meaning of morphemes, words, phrases and sentences.

We have types of semantics: **lexical semantics**, **phrasal semantics**, and **sentential semantics**. It depends. If you are studying the individual words, it means you are dealing with lexical semantics.

**Pragmatics** deals with the meaning beyond the words. We need context to understand the meaning. Pragmatics deal with **contextual meaning**; functional meaning and how do you employ this meaning in some situations.

For example, if I said "*I am cold*", it means turn off the AC. If I say

"I feel hot", it means please open the window or turn on the AC. So it depends on the context.

Pragmatics is very important to determine the meaning of the words beyond what is intended. We have something called "interference" (المعنى الضمني).

In pragmatics, you تستخلص المعنى المُتضمن . We will focus about this in the last two lectures.

We will start with semantics next time. We will have terms that are related to philosophy. It is interesting. Don't worry!

Thank You

...

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