



**IIT Madras**  
ONLINE DEGREE

# **PHRASE STRUCTURE**

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- Any sentence in any language uses a variety of words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, etc.

- Audio Link: Speech by Indra Nooyi, CEO of Pepsico

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mkK3CeLGndz6SRUA492u3NeEyz9XVU\\_p/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mkK3CeLGndz6SRUA492u3NeEyz9XVU_p/view?usp=sharing)

# TRANSCRIPT

First, please be a lifelong student. You know when we are kids we ask questions like, why is the sky blue? Why is the bird flying so high? But for some reason as we get older, that curiosity goes away, and if we are happy with the knowledge we have, then we are actually going to atrophy. So, please remain a lifelong student, don't lose that curiosity.

- Second, whatever you do throw yourself into it throw your head, heart and hands into it. I look at my job, not as a job, I look at it as a calling, as a passion and I don't care about the hours, I don't care about the hardship because to me everything is a joy. So, whatever you do, please look upon it as a calling and a passion not as a job not as something temporary.
- The third, and the most important one, please help others rise.
- **Try and see which words on this slide are nouns, verbs, etc. Check your work with a dictionary.**

# ACTIVITY

1. Look at the following extract and mark nouns by writing (N) in the parentheses next to them, adjectives by (A), Verbs by (V) and adverbs by (adv.).

It was Monday morning. Swaminathan was reluctant to open his eyes. He considered Monday specially unpleasant in the calendar.

# ANSWERS

It was (V) Monday (N) morning (N).  
Swaminathan (N) was (V) reluctant (A) to open  
(V) his eyes (N). He considered (V) Monday (N)  
specially (Adv.) unpleasant (A) in the calendar  
(N).



- “Monday” occurs between “was” and “morning”. Is “Monday”, therefore, equally closely related to both the words? No! “Monday” is first related to “morning” rather than to “was”. Together “Monday morning” is related to “was”. But first “Monday” and “morning” come together.

- This can be better understood by enclosing words in the sentence within brackets [        ].

1. S [ It was Monday morning.]

NP [It]

VP [was Monday morning]

NP [Monday morning.]

2. S[Swaminathan was reluctant to open his eyes]

NP [Swaminathan]

VP [was reluctant to open his eyes]

Adj P [reluctant to open his eyes]

Prep P [to open his eyes]

VP [ open his eyes]

NP [his eyes]

- A phrase can have only one word, as “It”, or it can have more words, as in “was Monday morning”.
- Here again there is a phrase within a phrase, as in Verb Phrase, verb “was” heads the phrase, but it has another phrase “Monday morning”.
- These two words coming together behave like one word, and complete the meaning of “was”.

- So one word or more, a phrase is part of a sentence that performs a function in it.
- But why can “It” be a phrase by itself , but “his” cannot be a phrase by itself? That is because “his” by itself is incomplete, “eyes” by itself is incomplete; Questions like “his” what?, whose “eyes”? , etc. arise.

Phrases can be of many kinds. They can be noun phrases headed by nouns and working like nouns; or, there can be verb phrase, adjectival phrase, adverbial phrase and prepositional phrase.

# ACTIVITY

2. Look at the following extract from *Swami and Friends*. Let us see how many phrases you can identify. Put related words together within square brackets in the manner shown earlier.

*He considered Monday specially unpleasant in the calendar.*

# ANSWERS

S[He considered Monday specially unpleasant in the calendar.]

NP [He]

VP[considered Monday specially unpleasant in the calendar.]

NP [Monday specially unpleasant in the calendar.]

Adv P [specially unpleasant in the calendar]

Adj P [unpleasant in the calendar]

Prep P [in the calendar]

NP [the calendar]



# ACTIVITY

- Look at the jumbled words below. Rearrange the words to make a sentence. The first one is done for you.

*calendar considered he in Monday specially the unpleasant*

**He considered Monday specially unpleasant in the calendar.**

- Now try and reassemble the jumbled words below in a meaningful sentence.

*and day eyes day for he his his had on recollect  
sat shut stool the to what work*

Remember these words can be put together. Do not use any word more than once, and use every word.

# ANSWERS

He sat on his stool and shut his eyes to recollect what work he had for the day.

Thank You!