



The World of Languages and Languages of the World

The Importance of Word Order

Let's play with word order
in English.



Word order

All of these sentences contain the same words, but they may not all look like English:

- *The princess kissed the frog.*
- *The frog kissed the princess.*
- *Kissed the princess the frog.*
- *(The) princess (the) frog kissed.*

Which work in English?

Do any of them mean the same thing?

What is typical word order in an English sentence?

Word order in English



'In English is our word order follows a pattern.



Our sentences are SUBJECT, VERB, OBJECT (SVO).



All the other parts of speech get slotted in around these.



Think of three sentences, write them down and check the rule. Does it work?

Very important in English word order is.

If the word order rule SVO is not followed, we are guessing what is going on. We are unsure who or what is carrying out the action and who or what is receiving the action of the verb.

"Kissed the princess the frog". Who is being kissed?

The subject is the person doing the action.

The Object is the person receiving the action.

In other languages, word order is less important because they use CASES. We'll look at this later today.



Yodaspeak^{UK}Lo

What has Yoda been doing to English?:

'Take you to him I will.'

'A domain of evil it is.'

'Help them you could.'

'Always two they are.'

Let's think further about Yodaspeak: UKLO Worksheet



What is strange about the way Yoda speaks?

Can you find the subject and verb in each sentence?

What does the position of the subject and verb tell us about how Yoda forms his sentences?

What does he move, and to where?

Can you use your grammatical knowledge to explain what Yoda does to his sentences?
Can you explain the rule?

An Important Question

Thinking about today's lesson, your knowledge of other languages and your understanding of grammar, is word order the same in every language?

Tell us about other languages' word order rules.



Ιπποπόταμος
WoLLoW the HIPPO

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Wie ist es mit Deutsch?

German, for example, relies on **cases** to show what is the subject and the object. Word order, therefore, does not need to follow the subject, verb, object rule. These sentences both mean, "The boy eats an apple".

- Der Junge isst den Apfel.
- Den Apfel isst der Junge.

Both Junge (boy) and Apfel (apple) are masculine nouns in German.

Der is nominative = subject.

Den is accusative = object.

Who is doing what is therefore clear without the constraints of SVO.



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