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07 - Syntactic Functions

Nick Riches

Try to learn the following artificial language

1. Gugo bikavit lamnok = 'The cat chased the dog'
2. Lopo bikavit tunglish = 'The cat ate the food'
3. Lopo gugo shuback = 'The dog likes the food'

What does the following sentence mean?

1. Bikavit gugo tunglish

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Behaviour of phrases in different positions

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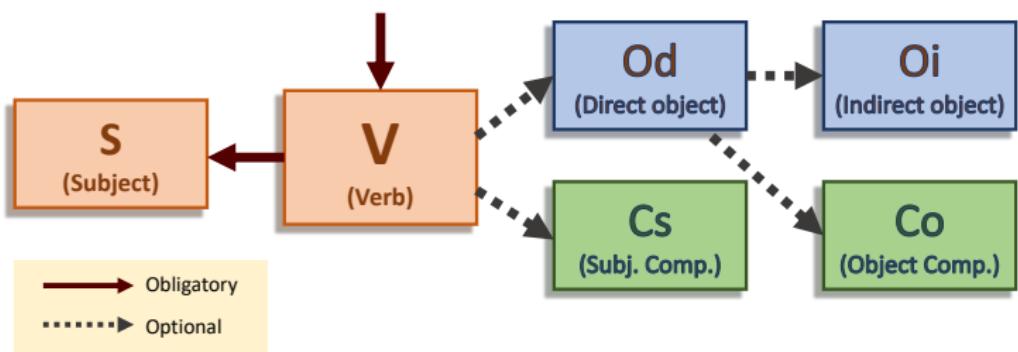
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NB these are the functions which are defined in relation to the verb.



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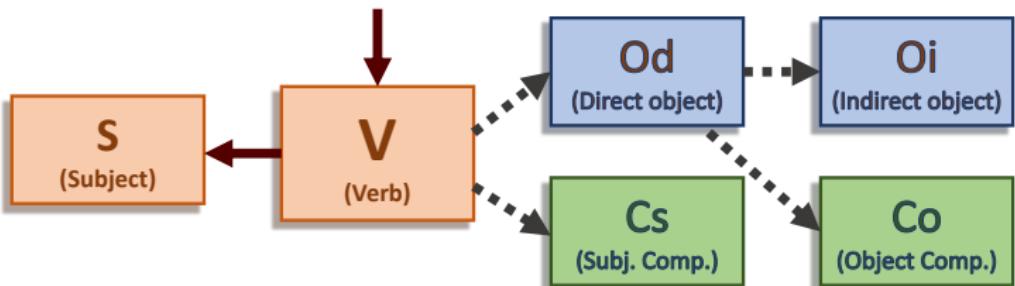
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She swims



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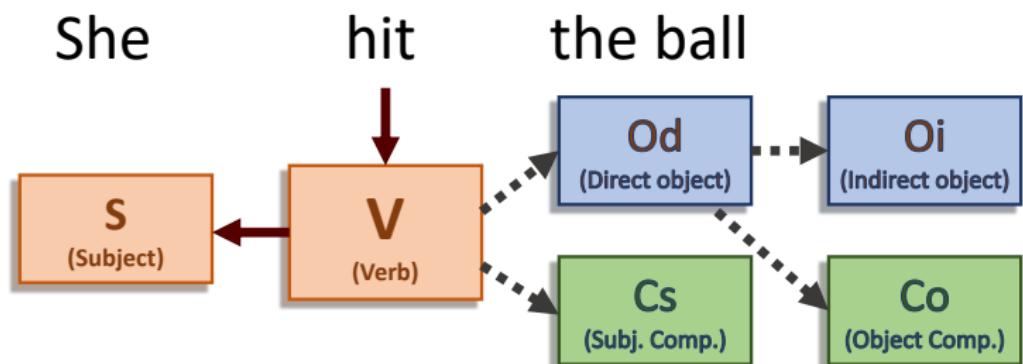
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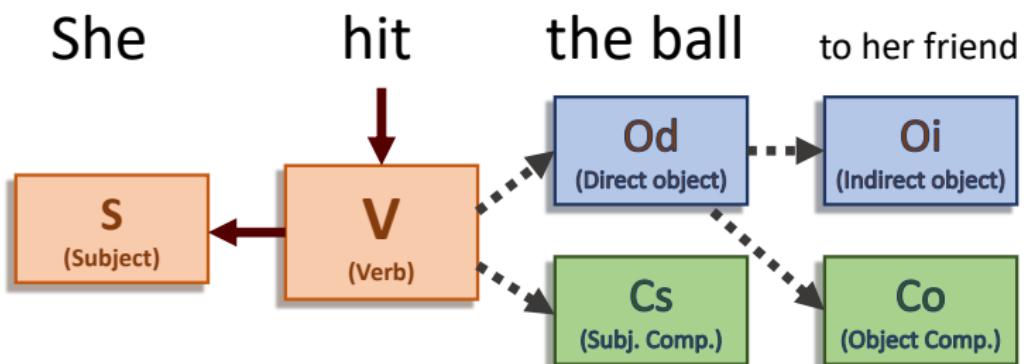
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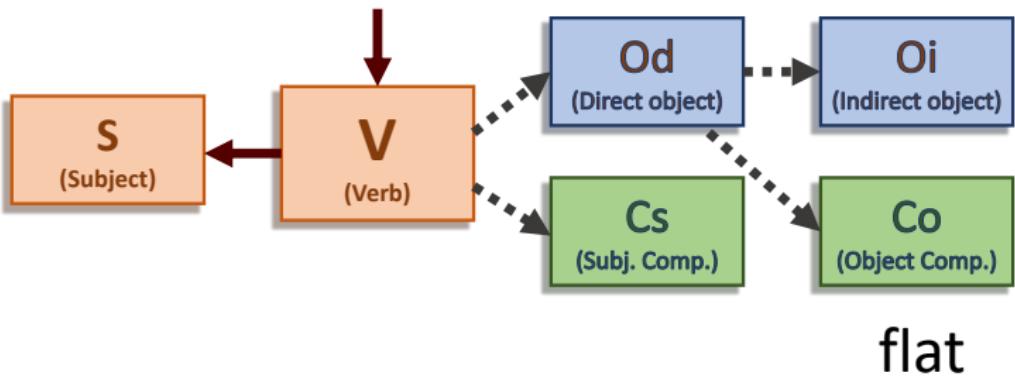
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She crushed the can



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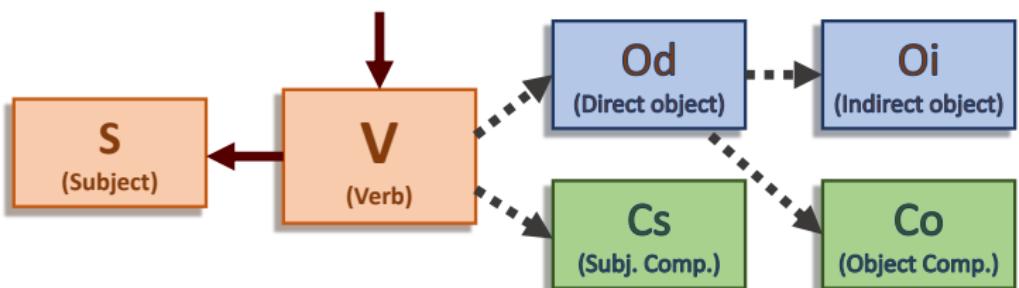
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She is happy

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Function is derived from position

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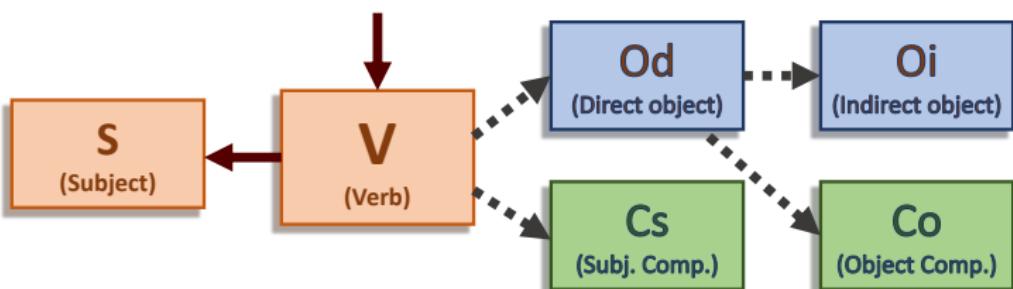
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(a) Subject

All obligatory functions are determined in relation to the verb.

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(a) Subject

1. [Syntax *SUBJECT*] **rocks!** *VERB*
2. [Madonna *SUBJECT*] **sings** *VERB*
3. [That donkey *SUBJECT*] **kicks!** *VERB*

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(a) Subject

Subject is typically the do-er!, e.g.

(1) [Jane SUB.] stroked the dog

but not always, e.g.

[Breakfast SUB.] is served

Functions are derived from **position** and are indirectly linked to semantics.

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(a) Subject

Only type of sentence where subject can be omitted is the **imperative**

1. (You) stop that!
2. (You) don't forget your hat!

Subject-Verb Agreement

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Agreement can exist between other words, e.g.

(2) She likes herself / *himself

Gender agreement between pronouns

(3) She had many apples and much cheese

Agreement between determiner and noun
(mass/count distinction)

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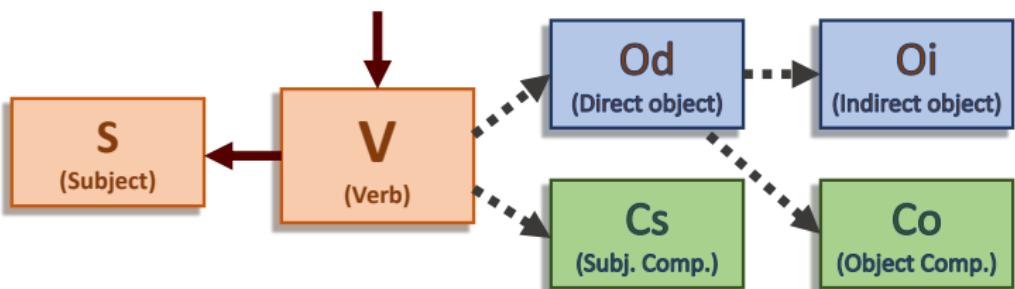
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(b) Objects

She hit the ball to her friend



(b) Objects

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(b) Objects

Some verbs take two objects, in which case we have a **direct** and an **indirect object**.

	Direct Object (Od in LARSP)	Indirect Object (Oi in LARSP)
Meaning	The thing which changes location / possession, e.g. <i>She gave the ball to Jack</i>	The thing which receives the transferred entity, e.g. <i>She gave the ball to Jack</i>
Animacy	Often inanimate	Often animate
Syntax	Does not come after a preposition	Often comes after a preposition

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(b) Objects

Note that the Indirect Object is “parasitic” on the Direct Object

1. Janet gave [a book *Dir. Object*]
2. Janet gave [a book *Dir. Object*] [to Mary *Ind. Object*]
3. ?? Janet gave [to Mary *Ind. Object*]

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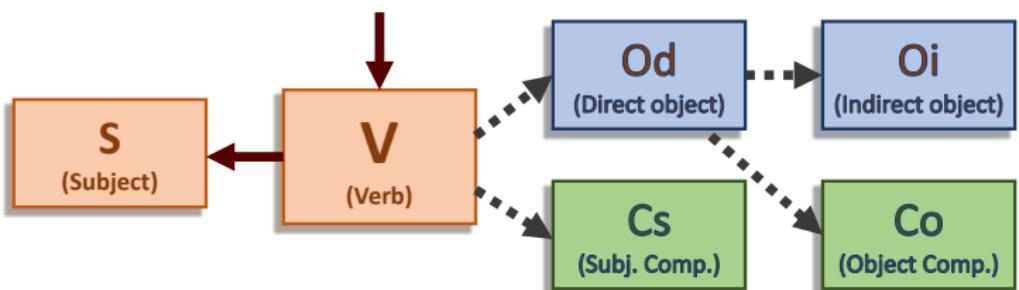
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(b) Objects

For the following sentences, which are the direct and indirect objects?

1. Albert showed Victoria his stamp collection
2. Ennis brought a book for Angie
3. Could you rustle me up an omellete?
4. Patricia sent her friend a letter

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1. Albert showed Victoria his stamp collection

Albert showed Victoria O_i his stamp collection O_d

2. Ennis brought a book for Angie

3. Could you rustle me up an omellete?

4. Patricia sent her friend a letter

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2. Ennis brought a book for Angie

Ennis brought a book Od for Angie Oi

3. Could you rustle me up an omellete?

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Could you rustle me Oi up an omelette Od

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- Ennis brought a book for Angie

Ennis brought a book Od for Angie Oi

- Could you rustle me up an omellete?

Could you rustle me Oi up an omelette Od

- Patricia sent her friend a letter

Patricia sent her friend Oi a letter Od

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(b) Objects

1. Abdul sent Josh **oi** a letter **Od**
(called the “Double Object Dative”)
2. Abdul sent a letter **Od** **to** Josh **oi**
(called the “Prepositional Dative”)

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(b) Objects

Verbs taking 3 arguments:

Verbs of physical transfer (*give, take, receive, lend, borrow, deliver, donate, show*)

Verbs of metaphorical transfer (*tell, explain*)

(b) Subject and Object complements

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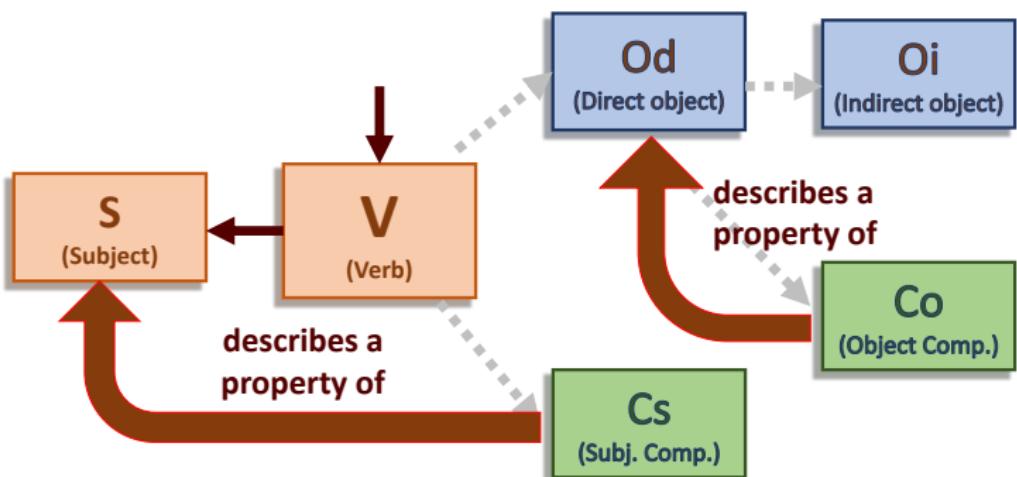
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(b) Subject and Object complements

1. Jack is [terrible at maths]
2. Ali appears [in a mood] at the moment
3. I consider him [my best friend]
4. I want that bedroom [cleaned] by tomorrow
5. Genevieve painted her bedroom walls [dark green]
6. The mechanic hammered the panel [flat]

Complements can be realised by a **variety** of different phrases, e.g. Noun Phrase, Adjective Phrase, Prepositional Phrase.

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1. Jack is [terrible at maths] = Cs describing Subject *Jack*
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(b) Subject and Object complements

Verbs which can take subject complements

- ▶ The copula - *is/are/was/were*
- ▶ Verbs of appearance - *seem, appear, look*, e.g. *she seems / looks / appears tired*
- ▶ Verbs of perception - *feel, smell, sound, taste*, e.g. *the food smells / tastes funny*
- ▶ Verbs of persistence - *stay, remain*, e.g. *You must stay / remain calm*

Verbs which can take object complements : *appoint, call, certify, consider, crown, declare, elect, find, hold, imagine, keep, like, make, name, prefer, proclaim, profess, pronounce, prove, report, send, think, turn*

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(b) Subject and Object complements

Complements are less moveable than Objects.

1. Jack gave Peter the book →
The book was given to Peter by Jack
2. Jack gave Peter the book →
Peter was given the book by Jack
3. Jack resembles Paul →
* Paul is resembled by Jack
4. Magda named her daughter Isobel →
* Isobel was named her daughter by Magda

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(d) Adverbials

Object and Complement Functions determined by verb.

1. Jack sat
2. * Jack sat [the chair *OBJECT*]

(d) Adverbials

Adverbials are **not** chosen by verb.

1. They are **optional**.
 2. They are **moveable**.
 3. They appear at the sentence **periphery** (right or left edge of sentence)
 4. They modify the *entire sentence*
-
1. [On Tuesday] we should have a picnic [in my opinion]
 2. [With a bit of luck] we will have good weather [from tomorrow]

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(d) Adverbials

1. We [luckily had *VERB COMPLEX*] good weather

Not an 'adverbial' as it does not come in adverbial position (at periphery).

It is an 'adverb'.

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(e) Postmodifiers

Postmodifiers modify the Noun. They come **after** the noun,
e.g.

1. The **man** [with the red hat] followed me down the street
2. The **dog** [that scratched me] was a Border Collie

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	Adverbial	Postmodifier
What do they modify?	The entire sentence	The NP
Where are they found?	At the "periphery"	After the NP
Are they movable	Yes	No

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Label all the functions in the following sentences. Label the verb complex **V**.

1. I want James Bond dead
2. Last night we had a marvellous meal
3. Janice sent her boss the email yet again
4. The tramp threw the bottle at the policeman

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A **S** **V** **Od**

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	Singular		Plural	
Person	NOM	ACC	NOM	ACC
1st	I like her	You like me	We like it	It pleased us
2nd	You like him	They like you	You like him	It pleases you
3rd	He / she / it likes fish	The dog likes him / her / it	They liked it	It pleases them

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3. Incorrect use of case morphology (accusative case in subject position)

(4) (He) went there.

(5) **Him** go es there.

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EXERCISE

Funcsts & morph

Case-marking

Funcsts & Lang.Imp.

Language-impaired children

LARSP framework

5 minute exercise

What are functions?

What are functs?

5 minute exercise

Phrases in diff posns

A typology of functions

Typology of functs

Functs & posn

Functs & posn

Functions and sentence position

Oblig. functs

(a) Subject

Subject-Verb Agreement

Obligatory functions - the Subject

Post-verbal functs

(b) Objects

(c) Sub & Ob comps.

Post-verbal functions

Optional functs

(d) Adverbials

(e) Postmodifiers

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Optional modifying functions

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What is wrong with the following sentences?

1. Jack gave Mary
2. Petula put the beans
3. Julie laughed Peter

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