

5. Phrase & Clause

PHRASE:

A group of words that expresses some meaning though not complete meaning, is called a phrase. Phrases generally function like parts of speech. Phrases can be classified according to the functions they perform. They are 3 in numbers.

- **Noun Phrase:** A phrase that functions like a noun.

Example:

- How to do it ("How to do it" is a subject or noun phrase) is a difficult question ("a difficult question" is a complement)
- The black cow ("The black cow" is a subject or noun phrase) gives (verb) several litres of good milk ("several litres of good milk" is an object or noun phrase)
- One of my friends in Delhi ("One of my friends in Delhi" is a subject or noun phrase) has won ("has won" is a verb) a gold medal in the national sports meet ("a gold medal in the national sports meet" is a object or noun phrase – complement)
- The teacher with his children ("The teacher with his children" is the subject or noun phrase) has visited ("has visited" is the verb) the science exhibition ("the science exhibition" is object or noun phrase)
- In 1991, Dr. Manmohan Singh ("In 1991, Dr. Manmohan Singh" is the subject), the then finance minister ("the then finance minister" is an appositive or noun phrase) introduced (verb) Economic Reforms in India ("Economic Reforms in India" is an object or noun phrase)

Note:

- When a noun phrase is subject to a verb, one word in that phrase becomes the chief subject word (CSW) with which the verb must agree. Such subject word is always before the first preposition in the phrase. (look at above examples C and D)
- To learn about Appositive, refer to "NOUN CASE"
- In example (C) "one of my friends in Delhi" the word ONE before the first preposition is CSW so the verb "has won" agrees with it.
- In above example (D) the word "teacher" is the CSW in the noun phrase, with which the verb "has visited" agrees.
- **Adjective Phrase:** A phrase, that functions like an adjective is called an adjective phrase.

Example:

- We (subject) like (verb) stories (COW) with a happy ending ("with a happy ending" is an object or noun phrase)
- In the above noun phrase the word "stories" is the chief object word, which is qualified by the group of words, "with a happy ending" which is called adjective phrase.
- Women (subject) like (verb) flowers (COW) with a sweet scent ("with a sweet scent" is an adjective phrase or noun phrase)
- The 10th class ("The 10th class" is an adjective phrase) children (COW) of St. Josephs convent ("of St. Josephs convent" is an adjective phrase) at Khoti in Hyderabad ("at Khoti in Hyderabad" is an adjective phrase) ("The 10th class children of St. Josephs convent at Khoti in Hyderabad" is a subject or noun phrase) went (verb) on an excursion ("on excursion" is a complement)

- **Adverb Phrase:** A phrase that functions like an adverb is called an adverb phrase.

Example:

- The sun rises in the east ("in the east" is an adverb phrase of place)
- I waited for him for a few hours ("for a few hours" is an adverb phrase of time)
- He shouted at the top of his voice ("at the top of his voice" is an adverb phrase of manner)

CLAUSE:

A group of words that contains a subject & predicate is called a clause whether the meaning is complete or incomplete. So the clauses are of 2 kinds:

- **Principal (or) Main (or) Independent Clause:** A clause that could make its sense complete without support of any other clause is a principal clause.
- **Subordinate (or) Dependent Clause:** A clause that could make its sense complete only by depending on a principal clause through a conjunction is called a subordinate clause.

Example:

We shall not play tennis ("We shall not play tennis" is a principal clause) if it rains ("if it rains" is a subordinate clause)

Though he worked hard ("Though he worked hard" is a subordinate clause), he could not succeed in the university examinations ("he could not succeed in the university examinations" is a principal clause)