



UTPL

La Universidad Católica de Loja

Vicerrectorado de Modalidad Abierta y a Distancia

English Syntax

Didactic guide





Facultad Ciencias Sociales, Educación y Humanidades

English Syntax

Didactic guide

| Carrera | PAO Nivel |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros | VII |

Autora:

Leidy Adriana Vivanco Ríos



Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja

English Syntax

Guía didáctica

Leidy Adriana Vivanco Ríos

Diagramación y diseño digital

Ediloja Cía. Ltda.

Marcelino Champagnat s/n y París

edilocialtda@ediloja.com.ec

www.ediloja.com.ec

ISBN digital -978-9942-39-210-7

Año de edición: septiembre, 2021

Edición: primera edición reestructurada en junio 2025 (con un cambio del 10%)

Loja-Ecuador



Los contenidos de este trabajo están sujetos a una licencia internacional Creative Commons **Reconocimiento-NoComercial-CompartirIgual** 4.0 (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0). Usted es libre de **Compartir** — copiar y redistribuir el material en cualquier medio o formato. *Adaptar — remezclar, transformar y construir a partir del material citando la fuente, bajo los siguientes términos: Reconocimiento- debe dar crédito de manera adecuada, brindar un enlace a la licencia, e indicar si se han realizado cambios.* Puede hacerlo en cualquier forma razonable, pero no de forma tal que sugiera que usted o su uso tienen el apoyo de la licenciante. *No Comercial-no puede hacer uso del material con propósitos comerciales. Compartir igual-Si remezcla, transforma o crea a partir del material, debe distribuir su contribución bajo la misma licencia del original.* No puede aplicar términos legales ni medidas tecnológicas que restrinjan legalmente a otras a hacer cualquier uso permitido por la licencia. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>



Índice

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Information data | 8 |
| 1.1 Subject presentation | 8 |
| 1.2 UTPL generic competencies | 8 |
| 1.3 Program specific competencies | 8 |
| 1.4 Issues addressed in the course | 8 |
| 2. Learning Methodology | 9 |
| 3. Didactic guidelines by learning outcomes | 11 |
| First bimester | 11 |
| Learning outcome 1: | 11 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 11 |
| Week 1 | 11 |
| Unit 1. Syntax and Lexical items | 11 |
| 1.1. Syntax and Grammar | 12 |
| 1.2. Word classes and their criteria..... | 12 |
| Recommended learning activities..... | 17 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 20 |
| Week 2 | 20 |
| Unit 1. Syntax and Lexical items | 20 |
| 1.3. Heads and Modifiers..... | 21 |
| Recommended learning activities..... | 26 |
| Self-assessment 1 | 26 |
| Learning outcome 2: | 29 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 29 |
| Week 3 | 29 |
| Unit 2. Subject, Complements and Subcategorization restrictions | 29 |
| 2.1. The Subject..... | 29 |
| 2.2. Complements | 34 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 36 |



| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Week 4 | 36 |
| Unit 2. Subject, Complements and Subcategorization restrictions | 36 |
| 2.2. Complements | 36 |
| Recommended learning activity | 42 |
| Self-assessment 2 | 42 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 45 |
| Week 5 | 45 |
| Unit 3. Syntactic Linkage according to the Grammatical functions | 45 |
| 3.1. Subjects and Objects | 45 |
| 3.2. Syntactic Linkage | 45 |
| Recommended learning activity | 50 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 51 |
| Week 6 | 51 |
| Unit 3. Syntactic Linkage according to the Grammatical functions | 51 |
| 3.2. Syntactic Linkage | 51 |
| Recommended learning activities | 57 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 59 |
| Week 7 | 59 |
| Unit 3. Syntactic Linkage according to the Grammatical functions | 59 |
| 3.2. Syntactic Linkage | 59 |
| Recommended learning activities | 64 |
| Self-assessment 3 | 65 |
| Learning outcomes 1 and 2: | 68 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 68 |
| Week 8 | 68 |
| Final midterm activities | 68 |
| Second bimester | 69 |
| Learning outcome 3: | 69 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 69 |



| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Week 9 | 69 |
| Unit 4. From Constituency to Sentence Construction | 69 |
| 4.1. Constituency | 70 |
| 4.2. Constituency Structure | 71 |
| 4.3. Syntactic Tree Diagrams | 71 |
| Recommended learning activities | 74 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 75 |
| Week 10 | 75 |
| Unit 4. From Constituency to Sentence Construction | 75 |
| 4.4. Review of Heads and Modifiers | 75 |
| 4.5. Clauses and Sentence Construction | 76 |
| Recommended learning activity | 79 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 80 |
| Week 11 | 80 |
| Unit 4. From Constituency to Sentence Construction | 80 |
| 4.5. Clauses and Sentence Construction | 80 |
| Recommended learning activities | 87 |
| Self-assessment 4 | 88 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 91 |
| Week 12 | 91 |
| Unit 5. Syntactic constructions | 91 |
| 5.1. Types of Constructions | 91 |
| Recommended learning activities | 101 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 102 |
| Week 13 | 102 |
| Unit 5. Syntactic constructions | 102 |
| 5.1. Types of Constructions | 103 |
| Recommended learning activities | 106 |
| Self-assessment 5 | 107 |



| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Learning outcome 4: | 110 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 110 |
| Week 14 | 110 |
| Unit 6. From Clauses and Sentences to Text and Syntax in Discourse | 110 |
| 6.1. Grammatical Devices | 111 |
| Recommended learning activities | 118 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 119 |
| Week 15 | 119 |
| Unit 6. From Clauses and Sentences to Text and Syntax in Discourse | 119 |
| 6.2. New and Given Entities | 119 |
| 6.3. Punctuation | 121 |
| 6.4. Topic and Theme | 124 |
| 6.5. Organizing and Writing Coherent Text | 125 |
| Recommended learning activities | 126 |
| Self-assessment 6 | 128 |
| Learning outcomes 3 and 4: | 131 |
| Contents, resources and recommended learning activities | 131 |
| Week 16 | 131 |
| Final midterm activities | 131 |
| Recommended learning activity | 131 |
| 4. Answer keys | 133 |
| 5. Bibliographic references | 139 |
| 6. Annexes | 141 |





1. Information data

1.1 Subject presentation



1.2 UTPL generic competencies

- Communication in English.
- Oral and written communication.
- Ethical behavior, organization and time planning.

1.3 Program specific competencies

To apply English language communicative competencies as a foreign language at a level that enables professional performance in teaching children and youth according to international standards, in order to address, respect, and value diversity through the creation of inclusive educational environments.

1.4 Issues addressed in the course

Limited methodological and didactic knowledge, as well as little development of critical and reflective thinking.

Limited knowledge on the design, application and evaluation of educational resources and strategies for the adaptation, flexibility and comprehensiveness of personalized learning experiences.





2. Learning Methodology

The methodology to be used during this course is Self-learning. This methodology has the purpose to allow students to become autonomous in their learning process by means of providing them with all the strategies and instruments to face the challenges of the distance study modality. It is worth mentioning that this methodology pretends to encourage learners to gain self-awareness on their role in the learning process, without this meaning they are in isolation throughout the study; thus, they are also supported by the tutor, who will facilitate the guidelines and reinforcement of knowledge through different means such as the continuous communication and interaction in the tutorials. This integrated work between learners and tutor will give them the opportunity to achieve their learning outcomes stated for this subject, which deal with the correct use of word classes, phrases, sentence structure, as well as the process of language development when it comes to its syntactic use.

Similarly, the activities proposed through the Self-learning methodology will give students a variety of options to enhance their knowledge of the different contents for the course. This means that the flexibility of this methodology will expand learners' opportunities to acquire knowledge autonomously at their own style and pace of study. In addition, being this an independent approach, it demands high commitment from students in order to do conscious performance and work even harder to achieve the goals of their professional profile.

Furthermore, the three components that make part of this course, namely Teaching, Application and Experimental, and Autonomous will give students continuous accompaniment throughout the learning process. Thus, the teaching component will offer them a space to interact and share their academic concerns with the tutor; the Application and experimental practice



will give them opportunities to put into practice the knowledge acquired on the different contents; and finally, the Autonomous component will challenge them to demonstrate their learning through different types of assessment.

Besides, all the activities carried out in each component will be timely monitored, guided, and feedback-delivered by classmates and the tutor in order to reinforce students' knowledge, who can contact the tutor through different communication means such as emails, telephone calls, and tutorials offered weekly.





3. Didactic guidelines by learning outcomes



First bimester

Learning outcome 1:

Recognizes word classes, heads and modifiers.

This learning outcome will be reached by having students analyze in-depth how this foreign language, English, is structured from the first stages such as word classes and the core components of phrases (Heads) and the parts to complete them coherently (modifiers).

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 1

Unit 1. Syntactic and Lexical items

Dear students, welcome to the study of this unit 1. In this unit, you will find information related to Syntax and the basics of language construction; from words (lexical items) to different types of phrases and clauses by using Heads and Modifiers.

With the purpose to understand in a better way the contents of this unit, you need to start by comprehending what lexical items are. In this regard, Belay (2018) states that lexical items refer to the list of words that a language



possesses. In other words, lexical items are those words with complete meaning that are part of a vocabulary (included in a dictionary), which are also called lexical units (referred to as “entries” in a dictionary).

Now, dear all, I invite you to check carefully each of the concepts explained below in order to facilitate the progress of understanding the Syntactic elements of this language.

1.1. Syntax and Grammar

Dear all, in this first part of the unit, you will learn the core concepts of Syntax and Grammar as well as the basics to understand the language and the different parts that make part of it. First, it is important to understand the difference between Syntax and Grammar. Hence, as stated by Surbhi (2019), “grammar is the entire system of rules that allows people to form and interpret words, clauses, phrases, and sentences in their language” (para. 1). On the other hand, **Syntax** refers to the set of principles that are in charge of defining word order, clauses, and phrases with the purpose to form accurate sentences.

With this in mind, let’s start by revising the basics for language construction, which refers to word classes. It is important to remember that each word is a lexical item with its specific characteristics and meaning.

1.2. Word classes and their criteria

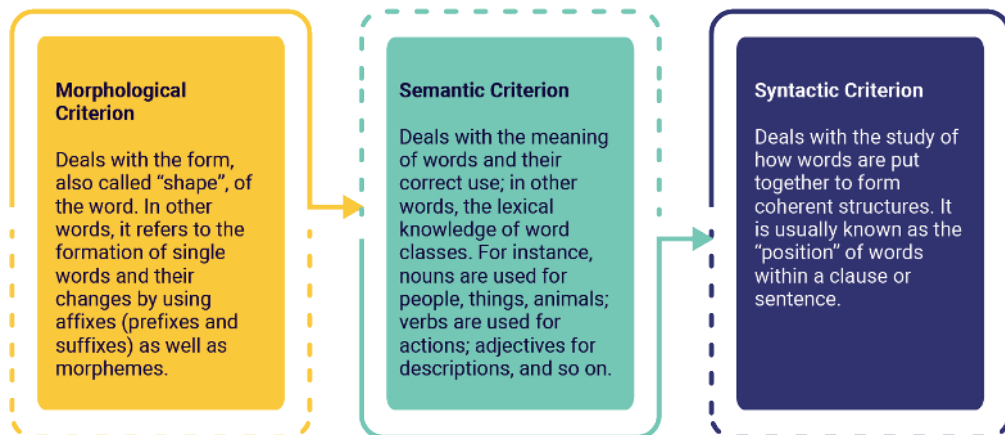
One of the first steps to learn a language is learning its lexicon (vocabulary words). Thus, becoming familiar with the different types of words that exist in English language is definitely essential.

First, let’s have in mind that there are three types of criteria to determine Word classes. We will review briefly all of them in the following figure, and will pay special attention to the syntactic one, which is the focus of this course.



Figure 1

Criteria of word classes



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

For more information, check [Annex 1. Morpho-Syntactic Criteria \(Shape\)](#).

Dear students, as aforementioned, we will focus and analyze in-depth the Syntactic criterion. Please, review the information below.

Word classes according to the Syntactic Criterion (Position)

Word Classes, also called "Parts of speech", are sets of words that display the same formal properties and which can be divided into two main groups (Burneo, 2015):

- **Lexical words (content words):** They give meaning, or primary lexical meaning, to the grammatical construction. These include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. These are also called Major word classes.
- **Function words (grammatical words):** These are words with little or no meaningful content; nevertheless, they serve to connect sentences and make the language more coherent. Some examples of these types of words are determiners, conjunctions, prepositions, auxiliaries, etc.

With the purpose to note more about the differences between them, let's think on this comparison with this figure:

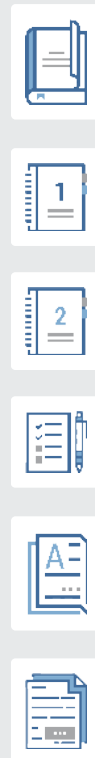
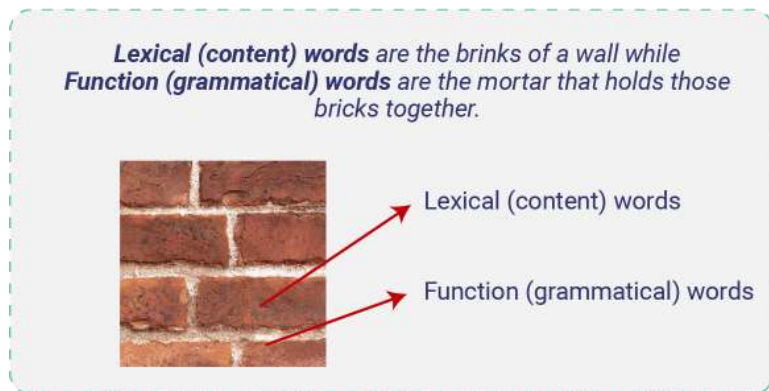


Figure 2

Lexical and function words



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

As you could see in the figure above, language is quite similar to a “wall” by means of the way in which it is constructed using both things, among other elements, to be coherent and meaningful. Here, the bricks can be compared to the lexical words (which hold complete meaning), and the mortar is compared to function words, which help to join lexical words in order to have coherent messages.

With this in mind, let’s now start reviewing the words that belong to each of these two groups.

Types of word classes

Dear all, as you could see above, within the two groups of word classes there are many other types, as you will see in the table below. In this unit, we will pay special attention to Nouns, and in the next units we will study how the lexical words work by analyzing them syntactically. Of course, function words will also be examined implicitly within sentences analysis.



Table 1
Word Classes

| Type | Word Class | Examples | Characteristics |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lexical (content) Words (major word classes) | Nouns | house, table, brother, Luis) | These might function as subjects, objects or complements. |
| Lexical (content) Words (major word classes) | Verbs | think, walk, drive,... | They show action or state and can be regular or irregular. |
| Lexical (content) Words (major word classes) | Adjectives | foolish, tall, smart, ... | They describe nouns, and can be used in their simple form, or in comparatives of superlatives. |
| Lexical (content) Words (major word classes) | Adverbs | very, every day, slowly, fast, ... | They show the frequency and answer to the questions how? when? where? why?.. |
| Function (grammatical) Words | Prepositions | in, of, under, on, ... | They show location, possession, etc. |
| Function (grammatical) Words | Conjunctions and complementizers | and, but,... | They connect ideas, nouns, adjectives, etc. |
| Function (grammatical) Words | Determiners/ demonstratives | this, that, those,... | They determine nouns. |
| Function (grammatical) Words | Pronouns (subject/ object/ possessive) | I, you, he, she, her, his, him, them, theirs, ... | They refer to the nouns used as subjects, objects, or show possession. |
| Function (grammatical) Words | Auxiliary verbs | be, have and do | They are used for negative statements, questions, or affirmations. |



| Type | Word Class | Examples | Characteristics |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Function (grammatical) Words | Modals | may, could, might,... | They are used to determine certainty, possibility, requests, etc. |
| Function (grammatical) Words | Quantifiers | some, any, a little,... | They are used to provide measures or quantify nouns. |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

This table shows how words are divided into different classes depending on their function; if they are lexical words such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; or if they are function words such as pronouns, modals, quantifiers, among others.

Dear students, it is important to be clear about the group each word class belongs to since it depends on the group the types of phrases, we form to construct clauses. In order to reinforce and recall knowledge on these types of word classes, I invite you to check the information of the following web pages: [Parts of Speech, Word Classes – what’s the difference?](#) and [Closed Class Categories \(FUNCTION WORDS\)](#), in which you will find the main characteristics of each type of word class as well as some examples that will clarify the differences among these types.

I am sure that after checking the resources above you recalled your knowledge on these word classes and that it was not difficult for you to understand the differences among them. Right? If so, remember you can contact me to clarify your doubts. As you could see in the web pages, lexical words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) are the ones that hold complete meaning; however, the function words are very helpful since they connect our ideas to communicate coherently, which makes them very important too.



In the second part of this unit, we will review how the identification of these word classes helps us to recognize the Heads of phrases (the word that holds the meaning in a phrase).

In this regard, and as it was mentioned before, Criteria are a set of rules and particular characteristics of phrases (also called *constituents*), clauses, and sentences. For instance, Nouns (or Noun phrases) have some characteristics, such as:

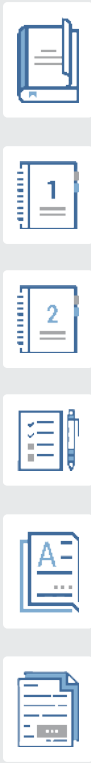
- They form Noun phrases; nouns can be preceded by a determiner. (E.g. a house, the pen, etc.)
- Nouns usually have a strict position in the word order (E. g: adjective + noun) and suborders.

As you know, dear students, Nouns can be of several types (concrete or abstract; common or proper, among others). In the table below, you will find some of the types of nouns with examples of each one. Now, I invite you to work on the following activities and provide your own examples.



Recommended learning activities

1. Please, complete the table below by writing your own examples (at least 3) for each type of noun listed.



Complete

| Nouns | Examples | Your examples |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Concrete | The priest | |
| Abstract: | Liberty | |
| Common | dogs | |
| Proper | Michael, December | |
| Countable | table-tables | |
| Mass/non-count: | Oxygen | |
| Animate | Daughter | |
| Inanimate | chair | |
| Human: | Fanny | |
| Non-human: | river | |
| Singular | The girl | |
| Plural: | Children | |
| Collective | Our army, the school | |

Note. copy the table into a Word document or notebook to fill it in.

Great job! As you could notice above, some nouns can be of two or more types at the same time; for instance, the noun **"table"** is a common, countable (singular), inanimate, and non-human noun.

However, as you could see, it remains being of the same word class: Noun.

2. I invite you to review the following topic, which is very important, and write your own examples (at least 3):

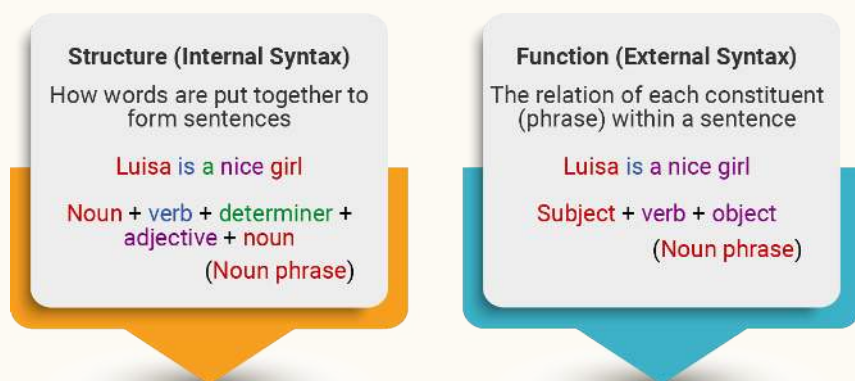


Similarly, some words can belong to more than one class; for example, the noun “water”, which is a noun and also a verb (e.g. “I want water”/ “Please, water my plants”). Then, it can be determined that the position (syntactic criterion) of this word within a sentence determines also its meaning (semantic criterion) and function.

With this in mind, it is important to mention that when making syntactic analysis of sentences, it is important to take into account both things: sentence **structure** and words **function**. Thus, let's analyze both in the following figure:

Figure 3

Example: Sentence structure and words function



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Put in words:

- **Structure (Internal Syntax):** It refers to the ways words/ constituents are put together to form sentences.
- **Function (External Syntax):** It refers to how constituents (Phrases) relate to one another. For instance: The Noun (or Noun Phrase) that is located before the main verb functions as the Subject; but a Noun Phrase located immediately after the verb functions as the object; and the Verb Phrase functions as the Predicate.

Note. Complete the activity into a Word document or notebook.

3. Please, write your own clause and analyze its structure and functions.

Complete

| Structure | Function |
|-----------|----------|
| Clause | |
| Analysis | |

Note. copy the table into a Word document or notebook to fill in.

I am sure you did a great job analyzing the differences between the structure and function of words. Remember that Structure refers to the arrangement of words to form sentences (and the class each word belongs to), and Function refers to how they are related to one another.

Dear students, as well as knowing the structure and function of words, it is necessary to identify which of them functions as the head of a phrase. Thus, let's analyze how Headwords (or simply Heads) and modifiers work.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 2

Unit 1. Syntax and Lexical items

Dear all, in this part of unit 1, you will find two very important (and one of the most essential) elements in the study of Syntax. These two elements are: Heads and modifiers. Let's check them in detail.



1.3. Heads and Modifiers

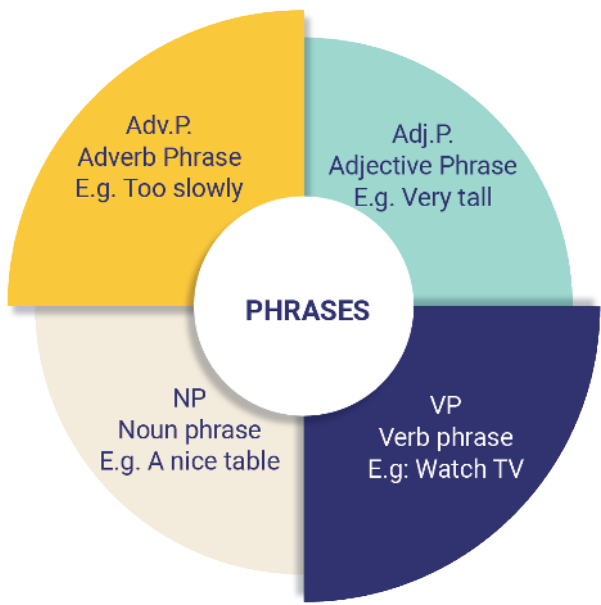
Dear all, in order to understand how to identify the types of phrases, first we need to learn to identify “Heads”. In this regard, let’s analyze what “Heads” Or “Headwords” refer to.

According to Burton-Roberts (2016), “The head of a phrase is the element that the phrase is centered on. It is the one essential – obligatory – element in that phrase” (p. 32). It depends on the “Headword” the number and type of modifiers that any syntactic construction has. Similarly, it depends on the headword to determine the type of phrase it is. For example, if the HEAD is a noun, then the structure that contains it is a NOUN PHRASE. Thus, word classes are the basis to construct Phrases such as Noun Phrase, Verb Phrase, Adjective Phrase, Adverbial Phrase, and so on.

Please, check the some of the types of phrases with their examples in the following figure:



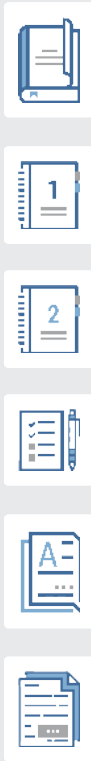
Figure 4
Phrases



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Heads and modifiers occur next to each other; they go together to express meaning. Nouns can be modified by different categories of words, such as adjectives, nouns, prepositional phrases, and relative clauses.

Heads or headwords are the most important element of any phrase. As explained there, heads are compared to the “sun” in the solar system since they define the elements that might accompany the phrase and will determine its type. Just as the sun holds the planets in orbit, the head governs the structure and grammatical features of the entire phrase. For instance, in a noun phrase like “the big red car,” the noun car is the head. It determines that the phrase is a noun phrase, and it influences what kinds of words can appear around it—such as determiners (the) and adjectives (big, red). The same logic applies to other phrase types: in a verb phrase, the main verb acts as the head; in an adjective phrase, the adjective is the head, and so on. Recognizing the head is crucial for



understanding how phrases are built and how they function in larger sentence structures. It also helps learners analyze sentence grammar more effectively and apply syntactic rules with accuracy.

Now, as a way to reinforce your knowledge, please review the information shown below about recognizing heads, and consider how the head shapes the phrase in each example provided.

Please, check this example:



Those

Determiner

blue

Adjective

eyes

Noun

Which is the most important word here? Which of them cannot be omitted because it would affect the idea?

Note. Write your answer in a notebook or Word document.

Now let's analyze it! (check if your analysis was the same).

1. If you omit the determiner "those", you would have "blue eyes", which makes sense. Right?
2. If you omit the adjective "blue", you would have "those eyes", which also makes sense. Right?
3. If you omit the noun "eyes", you would have "those blue", does it make any sense? Yes? No?

If you find that the answer is **No**, Then, well done! You got the Headword! The word that cannot be omitted is "eyes". Now, as the word "eyes" (which is the head) is a noun, then this phrase is called Noun Phrase.

Did you get it? I am sure you did! Now in order to practice the recognition of Heads, please work on the following activity:

Analyze these examples and write down which phrase they would become according to the head found. (*Tip: You can also cross out the word(s) that can be omitted in order to facilitate identifying the head.)



Example: very ambiguous = Adjective Phrase (The head is ambiguous since it holds complete meaning)

- too short answer = _____ Phrase
- do it = _____ Phrase
- the long road = _____ Phrase

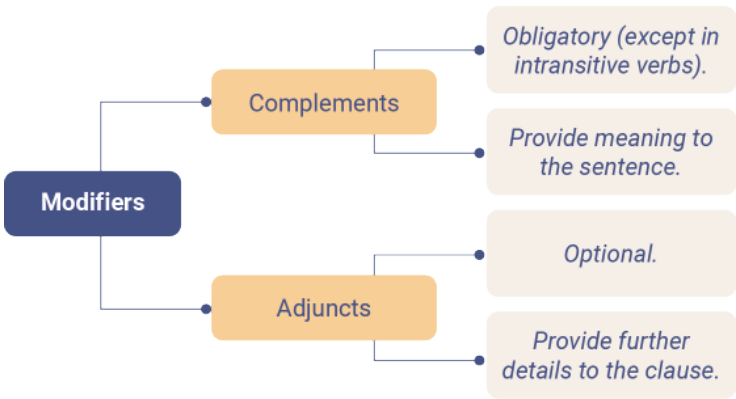
Note. Please complete the activity in a class notebook or Word document.

Good job! I bet that after doing the analysis you could determine quickly which were the heads of each phrase. As you saw, the answers would be Adj.P.; VP; and NP.

As you have seen, heads are the main part of a phrase; however, they need to be accompanied by another element called **Modifiers** in order to create coherent communication. Let’s start by mentioning that Modifiers, as you can understand by the same word, modify the headword. These are divided into Complements (arguments) and Adjuncts.

First of all, let’s check this division in the following figure:

Figure 5
Modifiers



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.



Let's first understand that Modifiers are words or phrases that provide additional information about the head of a phrase. As stated above, they can be complements or adjuncts. Below you will find the main characteristics of each type as a way to reinforce knowledge:

- **Complements:** Complements are necessary to complete the meaning of the head; without them, the sentence may be grammatically incomplete (e.g. She gave him a gift – him a gift is required). They are mandatory since they are essential to have a coherent sentence. Complements provide meaning to the sentence. These might include from one to several words that complete or modify subjects, verbs or objects. Note that complements can be omitted only when using intransitive verbs as predicates.
- **Adjuncts:** Adjuncts, in contrast, are optional elements that add extra details, such as time, place, or manner (e.g. She sang beautifully – beautifully adds information but is not required). They can be optional since the sentence can make sense without them; however, they provide extra information to the clause. They are optional since removing an adjunct can still leave a well-formed sentence.

Let's check the examples below to notice the difference between both Modifiers:

Paula told me her secret yesterday.

Subject Complement Adjunct

Sandra is always nice to me.

Subject Complement Adjunct

As you could see in the examples, the adjuncts are removable since the sentences still make sense without them. On the contrary, complements cannot be omitted since the sentence would be incoherent.

Dear students, with this division of modifiers we have reached the end of unit 1. You did it wonderfully!



It is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below.



Recommended learning activities



1. Now, dear students, please, write your examples using both modifiers: complements and adjuncts. Analyze carefully which parts would be the complements and which the adjuncts:

Note. Please complete the activity in a class notebook or Word document.

Great job! According to what was analyzed above, it can be stated that Modification is the use of a word or structure to tell more about the person, things, action or quality being modified.

2. Now, to reinforce your knowledge, I invite you to take self-assessment
1. You will find the answer key and feedback at the back of this guide.



Self-assessment 1

Dear student, check your knowledge by answering the following self-assessment. Good luck!

1. The definition of word order, clauses, and phrases that form accurate sentences have to do with...
 - a. Grammar
 - b. Syntax
 - c. Lexicon
2. An “entry” refers to...
 - a. Each word included in a dictionary.
 - b. Each main word in a phrase.
 - c. Each phrase in a clause.



3. Which of the following elements is NOT an obligatory element in a syntactic construction?

- a. Adjuncts
- b. Heads
- c. Complements

4. Identify the examples that belongs to Noun Phrases.

- a. Well done
- b. A tall boy
- c. Very fast

5. Choose TWO options.

Which of the following are part of modifiers?

- a. Head
- b. Complements
- c. Adjuncts
- d. Phrases

6. Identify the TWO examples that belong to Adverbial Phrases.

- a. Very well
- b. Right answer
- c. Every day
- d. The White House

7. Check True or False.

The structure and function of words in a sentence are synonyms.

- a. True
- b. False

8. Choose True or False.

One way to identify Heads within a phrase is by omitting them and checking coherence.

- a. True
- b. False

9. Find the adjuncts included in the following clause.

Clara works very hard every day.

10. What part of the following sentence functions as the complement?

Michael refused her arguments very strongly yesterday.

[Go to the answer key](#)



Congratulations, dear students! You have finished the study of unit 1. Remember that you can attend the weekly tutorials or contact me in case you have questions or concerns in regards to the contents! Let's start with unit 2! Keep working hard!



Learning outcome 2:

Identifies predicates, their properties, and their arguments.

This learning outcome will be reached by examining examples of the main components of a syntactic structure such as complements and adjuncts used as predicates as well as by analyzing carefully their subcategorization restrictions.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 3

Unit 2. Subject, Complements and Subcategorization restrictions

Dear students, welcome to unit 2. In this unit, you will find how word classes are used as subjects and complements. Similarly, you will find some of the restrictions that must be taken into account to form coherent structures.

Let's start!

2.1. The Subject

Dear all, in the previous unit, you learned about the different types of nouns. Now, you will learn how they are used as subjects, and also as objects in complements.

First, it is important to understand what subject is. In this regard, as stated by Burneo (2015), a subject refers to a word or string of words that are coherent and possess a definite structure. In other words, a Noun Phrase used as subject has complete meaning, which allows it to be moved to different



positions in the sentence, as in the case of active and passive voices. Therefore, it might change its grammatical relation depending on the type of structure used.

Examples of NP working as subject:

- A group of Russian scientists discovered the cure for cancer (ACTIVE)

NP

- The cure for cancer was discovered **by** a group of Russian scientists (PASSIVE)

NP

Subjects can be formed by different word classes, from a single word to a set of several words to form compound subjects. The following table presents each type with an example. Also, I invite you to complete it with your own examples.



Table 2
Types of subjects

| Subjects can be: | Example | Your examples |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Proper nouns | <i>Andrew</i> plays soccer. | |
| Pronouns | <i>I</i> want pizza. | |
| Article + common noun | <i>The teacher</i> just arrived. | |
| A plural common noun | <i>Doctors</i> work very hard. | |
| A singular common noun or abstract nouns | <i>Justice</i> is for everyone. | |
| A numeral + a common noun | <i>Five students</i> were selected. | |
| An article + a numeral + a common noun | <i>The ten prisoners</i> escaped from prison. | |
| A clause | <i>Students cheating in the test</i> will be punished. | |

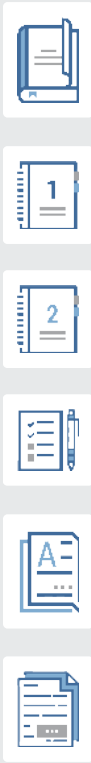
Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Note. copy the table into a Word document or notebook to fill in

In order to understand better how subjects are formed, it is imperative to analyze in-depth their configuration. Thus, please check the **complement configuration of nouns** used as subjects shown below.

Complement configuration for nouns are similar to the ones found in the table above. However, this time we will focus on their configuration (how they are formed).

- a. **No complement:** It refers to the use of a single noun (that can be accompanied by articles, determiners, or numerals) as subject. For example: *The book* is on the desk (BOOK: N).



b. **Prepositional Phrases (PP) as complements of nouns:** They contain a preposition (of, in, ...) to connect the main noun with its complement. For example:

- The **king of Spain** is very nice (**KING**: N + **PP**.)
- His **faith in God** is amazing (**FAITH**: N + **PP**.)

c. **Infinitival phrases (Inf.P.) as complements of nouns:** They use infinitives (to + verb) to complementize the noun. For example:

- Martha's **desire to become famous** is surprising. (**DESIRE**: N + Inf.P.)
- Her **ability to paint** is amazing (**ABILITY**: N + Inf.P.)

Now, I invite you to write your own examples in your notebook or Word document.

As you could check in the examples above, there are different ways in which subjects are constructed or formed. This is important since the subject also dictates the inflections in the verb to be used, especially in present tense (E. g: Gaby **works** in that school); and also, it controls the structure of tag questions. (E. g: **You** are tired, aren't you? **Karla's promise to save money** was a lie, wasn't it? **Notice that the subject of the question tag must agree with the subject of the statement in person, number and gender**)

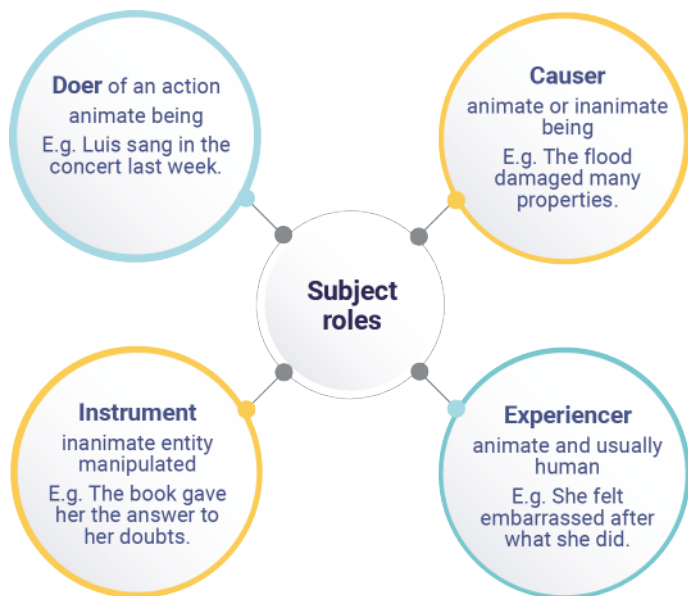
Dear students, after learning how subjects are formed, it is necessary to know the role they perform within a semantic structure. Therefore, please understand the four roles subjects perform by analyzing the figure 6.

Subjects can also play an important role, semantically speaking. In this regard, a subject can be:



Figure 6

Subject roles



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Dear students, as you could see in the figure above, a subject can perform different roles, such as being: the *doer*, *causer*, *experiencer*, or *instrument*. Now, how to recognize a Subject?

These are some of the tips:

1. Check their syntactic position (subjects are usually in the initial position before the verb)
2. Check agreement (the subject agrees with the verb in person and number. E.g. Andrea plays...)
3. Check its semantic role (the aforementioned roles a subject has in a construction)

*Within a clause or sentence, subjects can be complementized by other nouns (e. g. Mario is an architect), adjectives (Mario is nice),... as we will review in Complements.

2.2. Complements

Dear students, as we studied in unit 1, the complement is an obligatory element in a syntactic construction since without it, the subject would not transmit the action it performs or its state. In this unit, you will also find some examples of intransitive verbs, which do not require complements. Bear in mind that language learners need to have syntactic knowledge of the large number of small rules concerning the complement properties of individual words. These features are known as Subcategorization features. Subcategorization mainly refers to transitivity, but it can also be applied to nouns, verbs and adjectives. Hence, let's analyze which complements can serve to complementize subjects, verbs, objects, and adjectives.

2.2.1. Subject complements

The complement of subjects are usually preceded by a linking verb (predicate) which connects the subject with the complement. Complements used for subjects can be other nouns, pronouns, or adjectives, which rename or define in some way the subject. (The Writer's Dictionary, 2021)

Examples:

- *My mother* **is** *a doctor/beautiful*
- *Noun* + **copula verb (predicate)** + **subject complement**
- *Cats* **are** *domestic animals*
- *Noun* + **copula verb (predicate)** + **adjective** + **noun**

Dear students, in order to expand this short introduction about subject complements, please check the following web page available at [Subject-Predicate-Complement](#). In it, you will find many more examples of complements of subjects as well as some of the rules to be followed. Also, I invite you to take the quiz located at the end of this page in order to test your understanding on this topic.



Dear all, I am sure the information found in the link above helped you a lot to understand how the complement of subjects works. As you could see, a sentence contains basically these three parts: *Subject + Predicate (verbs) + Complement*; however, when analyzing them syntactically, they are referred only as two major parts, “Noun Phrase” and “Verb Phrase”. You will study this difference in-depth in upcoming units.

Now, based on what you understood from the contents above and from the educational tool, please work on the following activity to reinforce knowledge.

Complete the following clauses by adding a coherent complement:



1. Juan Pablo seems...
2. The Queen of England is ...
3. The house across the street looks...

Note. Use your notebook or Word document to complete this activity.

Great job! I bet it was not complicated to complement these subjects, was it? Your answers may vary, but could include something like “Juan Pablo seems tired”; “The Queen of England is one of the most influential people in the world”; “The house across the street looks scary”. As you can see, complements might vary; however, the important thing is that these syntactic constructions are coherent and well-formed.

Dear students, as you could read in the web page “[Subject-Predicate-Complement](#)”, it also depends on the verb the type of complement a sentence would need; for instance, if the verb that accompanies a subject is transitive, then this verb must contain objects. For this reason, in the following section you will find the details about Verb complements.





Week 4

Unit 2. Subject, Complements and Subcategorization restrictions

Dear students, this week we will continue studying complements. In this case, the complements and subcategorization restrictions of verbs, objects (briefly, since there will be a special unit to deepen in these), and adverbs. Let's start!

2.2. Complements

2.2.2. Verb complements

The complement of a verb refers are those constituents that are needed to make a syntactic construction comprehensible. It is important to take into account that complements are not needed in case of using intransitive verbs, since the message would be complete and coherent. For instance, in "*I sing*" the message is understood; however, the writer/speaker can add adjuncts to expand the message.

Complements can be formed by different types of clauses; from having no complement, to taking infinitive, gerund, and noun clauses. In the table below, each type is explained through an example, which I invite you to complement with your own examples:



Table 3
Types of verb complements

| Complement | Example | Your examples |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| No complement | She swims . | |
| With infinitives | I want <u>to go</u> home. | |
| With gerunds | Andrea enjoyed <u>doing</u> her task. | |
| With noun clauses | I didn't know (that) <u>you were here</u> . | |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Note. copy the table into a Word document or notebook to fill in.

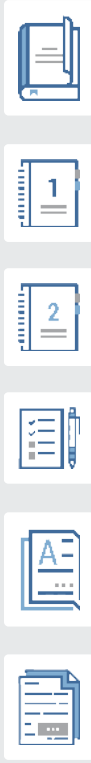
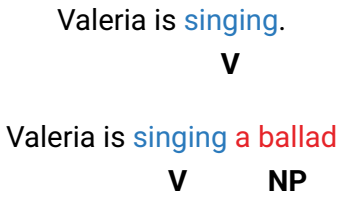
Dear students, here we will focus on transitive, intransitive, ditransitive, and copula verb complements.

Please bear in mind that Verbs are not only the “head” of “verb phrases”, but also the nucleus of the whole clause. It depends on the verb, the type of complement that might go with it. For example, in **transitive verbs**: I **need** advice (The noun “advice” is in direct object position as a complement of the verb “need”).

A **verb complement** is also a direct or indirect object of a verb. For example:

- DO = David **repaired** **the car** (What?)
- IO = They **sent** **him** **a card**. (To whom?)

Therefore, Subcategorization features specify the range of complements a given verb might take within the verb phrase. For example, with the verb “sing”:



Hence, these are some of the characteristics of verbs:

- As mentioned above, some verbs can have or not an object (e. g: She sings/ She sings romantic music)
- Verbs that take a direct object are called **transitive verbs** (e. g: I **made** a **mistake**)
- Some verbs are intransitive; they cannot use an object (e. g: we laughed a lot NOT we laughed you a lot)
- Some verbs are ditransitive; they have two objects (e. g: Luisa gave **me** **the letter**)
- Some verbs (transitive or intransitive can be complemented by prepositional phrases. (e.g: Give **the wallet** **to its owner**)

Dear all, in the infographic below you will find a set of general subcategorization restrictions of verbs, please check them carefully. Also, write your own examples in a notebook or Word document.

[Set of general subcategorization restrictions of verbs](#)

To sum up, as seen before, it is important to take into account that there are some verbs that can be transitive or intransitive. And, it is also important to choose the kinds of complement configurations individual verbs can be inserted in. The individual characteristics of other verbal categories like linking verbs and the verb BE (copula) have to be distinguished when choosing the configuration in which they can appear.

Based on what you have learned about this topic, analyze the following clauses and write their subcategorization restriction. Example:

Gloria **sent** the letter to Vincent. [**SEND**= V + NP + P.P]

- Fernando writes nice poems
- Valery disappeared
- Richard bought a house for his parents
- You look great!

Note. Please, complete this activity in a notebook or Word document.



Well done! I am sure this short practice helped you understand better the subcategorization restrictions of verbs. Remember that subcategorization deals with transitivity. Now, check your answers! (1. WRITE= V + NP; 2. DISAPPEAR= No complement; 3. BUY= V + N.P. + P.P; 4. LOOK= V + Adj.P.).

Dear all, as important as learning about the complements of subjects and verbs, it is the complements of objects. Let's review them.

2.2.3. Object complements

In the following section, you will find how we can complement objects. It is worth mentioning that Objects will be studied in-depth in unit 3; however, here we will emphasize their complements.

These are the elements that modify or complement the object. It can be a noun or adjective or any structure acting as a noun or adjective.

Examples:

- My mom made *me* *happy* (*happy* modifies/complements the object *me*). I had *my hair* *cut* (*cut* modifies/complements the object *my hair*).
- Anne threw him the ball (*The ball* (NP) modifies/complements the object *him*).

Dear students, in order to expand knowledge on this topic, please check the following article available at [Object Complement](#). In this resource, you will find the characteristics of object complements as well as several examples that will help you recognize them within a syntactic structure. Similarly, you will find an analysis and comparison between subject and object complements, which will allow you to avoid confusion between these two complements.

I am sure you found the information very helpful and easy to understand! Now, I invite you to work on your own examples of Object complements in order to have some further practice, with the following activity:





Write five clauses in which you include the complements of objects. Analyze them syntactically.

Example: Sebastian finds **me** *cute* and *smart*!

Object (Adj.P)

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document.

Dear students, let's finish this unit by analyzing the complements of adjectives. I am sure you will find this content very interesting and useful.

2.2.4. Adjective complements

Adjective complements, similarly to the complements studied previously, serve to provide meaning to the sentence/clause. Even though complement configuration for verbs is more varied than those found with adjectives, adjective phrases might also have different configurations, which are shown in the following table:



UTPL

cases in which complements are not strictly needed, such as in the case of intransitive verbs, and single adjectives; however, have in mind that complements are still considered an obligatory element in a syntactic construction, with these few exceptions.

Dear all, you have done a great job in this unit! I am sure the contents studied and practiced will help you understand better these elements of the English language.

Let's continue with your participation in the following recommended activity:



Recommended learning activity

Now, test your knowledge by taking self-assessment 2. Remember that you can always contact me in case you have questions or concerns about the contents! Keep working hard!



Self-assessment 2

Dear student, check your knowledge by answering the following self-assessment. Good luck!

1. Which of the following statements contains a subject that plays the role of “instrument” of an action?
 - a. Music usually helps me to unwind.
 - b. Ana was injured when she was trying to catch the ball.
 - c. The flood caused much property damage.
2. Which of the following statements contains a subject that plays the role of “doer” of an action?
 - a. Fat food makes me feel relaxed.
 - b. The earthquake was devastating.
 - c. Mary is studying very hard for the final tests.



3. Some English verbs are followed by noun phrases, which function as objects; however, some other verbs do not need them. These verbs are known as...

- a. Transitive
- b. Intransitive
- c. Ditransitive

4. Choose the appropriate Complement Configuration of the verb in the clause given below.

"You cry very often"

- a. CRY= V+Adj.P.
- b. CRY= V+Adv.P.
- c. CRY= N+V+NP

5. Choose the appropriate Complement Configuration of the verb in the clause given below.

"The boys play soccer every day"

- a. PLAY= V+NP+Adv.P.
- b. PLAY= NP+V+NP
- c. PLAY= V+Adv.P.

6. Oblique objects also receive the Direct Object as the Indirect Object does, but it occurs after a...

- a. Prepositional Phrase
- b. Noun Phrase
- c. Adverbial Phrase

7. Choose TWO options.



Which of the following could be used to complement the clause "Andrea looks.."

- a. anxious
- b. up her sister.
- c. very excited.
- d. she is enjoying the party.

8. Choose True or False

Adjectives can be used alone with no complements or they can be accompanied by other type of phrases.

- a. True
- b. False

9. Choose True or False

All nouns require the use of a complement for subjects.

- a. True
- b. False

10. Choose True or False.

The statements "Bryan played in the last concert last week" contains a subject that plays the role of "causer" of an action.

- a. True
- b. False

[Go to the answer key](#)





Dear students, congratulations for having finished successfully this unit 2!. Remember that you can attend the weekly tutorials or contact me in case you have questions or concerns in regards to the contents! Let's start with unit 3! Keep working hard!

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 5

Unit 3. Syntactic Linkage according to the Grammatical functions

Dear students, in previous units we have reviewed how to recognize Heads in phrases, the complements of different lexical words, as well as their subcategorization restrictions. In this unit, we will continue studying and analyzing two very important elements of language construction, which refer to Syntactic Linkage. Let's start!

3.1. Subjects and Objects

First, dear all, as we have seen, subjects and predicates must be connected coherently. It means, as language users, we have to know how Noun phrases that work as subjects are connected to the verb, and how this verb is linked to the objects. Therefore, as important as learning how a clause is formed, it is knowing the rules to connect all elements in a syntactic construction. Below you will find these two important linguistic phenomena of syntactic linkage known as Agreement, and Government.

3.2. Syntactic Linkage

Syntactic linkage refers to the way speakers can signal which words in phrases or clauses are linked to form coherent structures and provide meaning. As stated by Miller (2002), "English uses word order and prepositions to signal syntactic links" (p. 107). In this regard, let's start by analyzing what *Agreement* is.



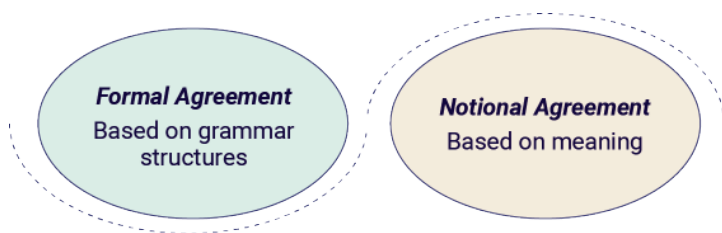
3.2.1. Agreement

Agreement, which is also called “concord”, is a form of cross-reference; it means the relationship between the different elements of a sentence or phrase (Burneo, 2015). This deals mainly with the agreement between NP and VP. For instance, if we are talking in the first person of singular “I”, then the verb Be corresponding to this Noun phrase should be “am” and not “is” or “are”. So, when we see the verb “am”, we automatically know that the noun phrase used as the subject must be “I”, as “is” must be for the third person of the singular “he”, “she”, or “it”.

Let’s deepen more on this phenomenon by mentioning that there are two types of agreement: Formal and Notional, shown in the figure below.

Figure 7

Agreement types



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Examples:

- The army **is** considering the proposal. (The Noun “Army” is interpreted as the unit- the institution)
- The army **are** discussing the proposal. (The Noun “Army” refers to the people/members)

As you can see, the grammar structure of each sentence uses a different verb, depending on the intended meaning to express. Another example is: The class **was** nice / The class **were** very noisy.

Some of the nouns that can be used as singular or plural are: Army, band, choir, class, club, crew, firm, gang, government, orchestra, party, staff.

Relations of agreement

Dear students, with the purpose of understanding how agreement works in sentence construction, it is important to review its relation to different parts of a sentence. Therefore, it can be stated that in English language, there are these different relations of agreement:

Subject-Verb Agreement and Subject Pronouns: It relates to number agreement (singular or plural). For instance, the Subject must agree with the Verb depending on the number of “doer/s”, and the verb performed. For example:

Fernanda play^s basketball very well

3rd (singular) V

BUT

Fernanda and her sister play basketball very well

3rd (They - plural) V

In the first case, as you can see, the NP Fernanda replaces the pronoun “she” (the third person of singular). Then, the verb PLAY is used with the “s” at the end, following the grammatical rule applied to the use of verbs with the third person of the singular in Simple Present Tense. In the second example, we use a plural Noun Phrase (They - Fernanda and her sister), which tells us that the verb needs to be in its base form.

It is important to mention that this agreement relation happens only in Simple Present Tense, since if we use Past tense, then all the verbs must take the same form in spite of the number of subjects they use. In English, we do not make any distinction in verb forms when they are in the past tense (They play^{ed} basketball yesterday / She play^{ed} basketball yesterday).



Remember that when talking about subjects, we need to use the subjects' pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they) or Nouns; but never the object pronouns. For example:

- I love music NOT **Me** love music.
- **Andres (He)** needs a new t-shirt NOT **Him** needs a new t-shirt

Dear students, I am sure that all of us have committed any agreement errors when starting learning English language. In this regard, I invite you to work on the following reflection activity.

Which are the common subject-verb agreement errors that people usually have (or you had) when learning English?



- Example 1:
Explain the error:
- Example 2:
Explain the error:

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document.

Great job! I am sure you got to remember at least two examples of lack of agreement in basic levels. Wasn't it interesting and encouraging proving yourself how much you have improved your English knowledge? I bet it was! Now, let's check carefully the different rules of agreement.

Rules on Agreement

As it was stated before, for any syntactic construction to be coherent, it needs to respect the rules of agreement; therefore, Burneo (2015) presents some of the rules of agreement.

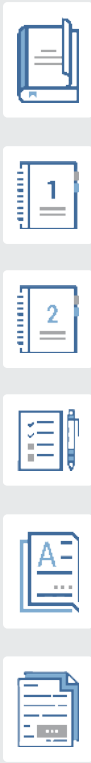
The following table shows some of the rules of Agreement and how verbs change depending on how the subject is presented. In addition, provide your own examples in your notebook or Word document.



Table 5
Rules of agreement

| N° | Rule | Example |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Check the subject before the Prepositional Phrase headed by “of”. | A group of students is .. NOT A group of students are .. |
| 2 | Two <u>singular</u> subjects connected by “or”, “either/or”, or “neither/ nor” require a singular verb. | <p>Mary or her father has to make a decision.</p> <p>Either the child or the mother has to sign the letter.</p> <p>Neither Jhon nor Luis is coming to the party.</p> |
| 3 | When having singular and plural as subjects, and we use “or”, “either/ o’r, or “neither/nor”; these must agree with the noun or pronoun closest to it. | <p>Neither the nurses nor the doctor knows what to do.</p> <p>Neither the doctor nor the nurses know what to do.</p> |
| 4 | When the subjects are singular or plural and are connected by “and”, use a plural verb form. | <p>My father and my mother need medical care.</p> <p>The students and the teacher have to be at the hall on Monday.</p> |
| 5 | In cases in which the singular subject is separated by phrases such as: “along with”, “as well as”; the verb remains in agreement with the subject since these phrases ARE NOT part of it. | <p>The president, as well as the citizens, needs to be responsible.</p> <p>Freddy, along with his brother, is going to attend the course.</p> <p>I, along with my sister, am going to the trip.</p> |
| 6 | If the Noun after “of” is singular, use a singular verb with words like: <i>percent, fraction, majority, some, all</i> , etc. If the nouns is plural, then use a plural verb form. | <p>Eighty percent of the group is not doing homework.</p> <p>Eighty percent of the students are not doing homework assignments.</p> |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.



Dear students, in order to expand knowledge on these rules and uses, please review the following web page: [Agreement](#), in which you will find not only the rules of agreement, but also examples and a short practice that can help you reinforce your knowledge on this matter.

I am sure the source suggested above helped you to expand your knowledge! As you could see, English language learners need to be careful when expressing messages and check for correct agreement, which does not refer only to subject-verb concord, but is also related to correct pronoun reference. Based on what you have learned about this topic, please work on the following activity.



Recommended learning activity

Correct the paragraph below based on the rules of agreement. Underline or highlight these mistakes and correct them:

Students who are learning a foreign language has to devote much quality time to the practice of them. Therefore, it depends on the time allotted to this practice the amount of learning they acquires. Similarly, it has been demonstrated that a high percentage of students who learns a foreign language usually obtain better employment and educational success.

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document.

Great job! I am sure it was any complicated at all to notice the agreement mistakes in the paragraph. The paragraph corrected would look like this:

Students who are learning a foreign language have to devote much quality time to the practice of it. Therefore, it depends on the time allotted to this practice the amount of learning they acquire. Similarly, it has been demonstrated that a high percentage of students who learn a foreign language usually obtain better employment and educational success.





Dear students, now it is time to continue with another important part of language construction, which refers to Government.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 6

Unit 3. Syntactic Linkage according to the Grammatical functions

3.2. Syntactic Linkage

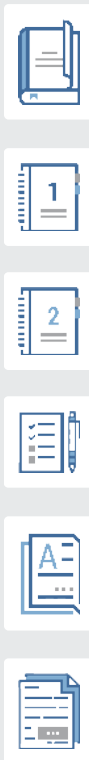
3.2.2. Government

Dear all, in English language, as in many other languages, “Government” refers to the relation between a word and its dependents. In English language, the only form of Government is referred to as CASE. It is worth mentioning that English does not have so many variations in Government as other languages, such as Spanish, do.

Let’s start by stating that case refers to the grammatical relationship of nouns and pronouns with other words in a sentence. Have in mind that Nouns and Pronouns can perform two **grammatical functions**; it means, they can be **Subjects** or **Objects** depending on their location within the sentence. There are three main case distinctions in English pronouns:

- a. **Nominative (or Subjective) Case:** It refers to the Nouns or pronouns used as subjects (E. g: *Michael* lost his watch) and for a subject complement (E. g: *Michael* is a *teacher*). Write your own examples in a notebook or Word document.
- b. **Genitive Case:** It is also known as the possessive case, and is used to show ownership. It can use apostrophes *’s, s’* (e.g. the student*’s* parents; students*’* parents); can use *of* (The parents *of* the student); and also forms like pronouns and determiners which are inflected to show the possessive case. The table below shows some examples of how possessive





determiners such as my, her, your, among others; and how possessive pronouns, such as mine, yours, among others, work through examples.

Table 6

Possessives

| Possessive determiners (function as modifiers) | as Possessive pronouns (replace a noun) |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| That is my coffee | That coffee is mine |
| Mary is reading your book | The book Mary is reading is yours . |
| Is this her new CD? | Is this CD hers ? |
| <i>Write your own examples</i> | <i>Write your own examples:</i> |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

c. **Accusative and Dative Case:** This Case refers to the use of Objective nouns or pronouns that receive the action in the sentence. Let's bear in mind that object refers to the person/thing/animal affected by the action described in the verb. As we have studied before, there are three types of objects: Direct Object, Indirect Object (also known as **Dative**), Oblique Object.

All these objects (which can be nouns or pronouns) are located in a predicate position after the main verb. For example:

- **D.O:** John wants a new computer – He wants **it**
- **I.O:** Ana bought **John** a new computer – She bought **him** a new computer.
- **O.O:** Ana bought a new computer for **John**. She bought a new computer for **him**.

Dear students, now let's analyze these examples, shown in the table below, to clarify how Government Cases, and especially objects, function within a syntactic construction.

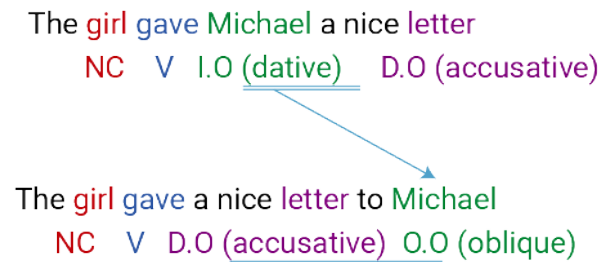
Table 7
Examples of Government Cases

| Sentence | Question |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The girl gave Michael a nice letter. | What did the girl give to Michael? – a letter = direct object |
| Subject (NC) V I.O (dative) D.O (accusative) | To whom did she give the letter? – Michael = indirect object |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

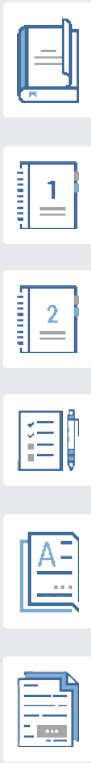
Another way to use *The Indirect object* is by changing its position within the sentence. Thus, when the indirect object is located at the end of the sentence after the preposition **to** or **for**, then this changes its name to **Oblique object** (also known as the “object of a preposition”). In other words, the Indirect object becomes the oblique object by changing its position.

Let’s analyze the example below:



Dear students, please take some time to check each object in detail:

1. **Direct Object:** It can be a noun or a pronoun directly affected by the action of a transitive verb. It answers the question *What?* Or *Whom?* after an action verb, and appears right after the main verb. For example:





Camilo **bought** a new TV

Simple **D.O** (What? entity affected by the action “buy”)

Beatriz **adopted** a boy and a girl

Complex **D.O** (Whom? entity affected by the action “adopt”)

Similarly, apart from nouns and pronouns, **clauses** can also function as Direct Objects. For example:

- **Complement clause:** Ana **thought** that your brothers were coming yesterday.
- **Relative/adverbial clause:** Michael **forgot** why he decided to become a chef.
- **To- infinitive clause:** Your children **need** to have some rest.
- **-ing clause:** Julian **enjoys** reading the newspaper.

As you could see, dear all, D.O. can have many different forms; however, remember that the easiest way to find them in a sentence is precisely to ask the questions mentioned above. In order to practice the use of D.O, use the table below to write your own examples with the different types of Direct Objects.

Complete

| Subject | Verb | Direct object |
|-------------|---------|--------------------|
| My students | visited | Buckingham Palace. |
| Michelle | wants | to buy a new hat. |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Note. copy the table into a Word document or notebook to fill in.



Well done, everyone! I bet it was very easy for you to use the table above to write down your own examples with the different types of Direct objects. Remember that they can be Simple objects, or complex objects which might include Complement, Relative, Infinitive, and –ing clauses. As you could realize, the examples shown in the table include a simple object, and infinitive clause as direct objects correspondingly.

Now, let's recall knowledge on Indirect objects. Check the information and examples shown below, please.

2. **Indirect Object:** It is a Noun phrase (noun or pronoun) considered the “beneficiary” of any action of the verb. It precedes the Direct Object and tells **to whom** or **for whom** the action of the verb is done, and are usually found with verbs of giving or communicating, such as give, bring, tell, show, take, offer, among many others. For example:

- Luisa gave **Peter** a nice surprise.

I.O

D.O

(Who received the surprise? Peter. He is the beneficiary)

- Andres showed **me** the final edition of our video.

Simple I.O

- Andres showed **me and all my family** the final edition of our video.

Complex I.O

Dear students, as you can see, indirect objects can also include simple or complex objects (nouns or pronouns), but it is not complicated to recognize the beneficiaries of the action.

Now, as a way to reinforce understanding, read the following sentences and underline ONLY the Indirect Objects you can find.



1. Give Marie the prize.
2. The delivery service charged us almost \$10.
3. I wished my friends a happy New Year and headed back into the house.
4. After reading the book, I asked my students to summarize the main ideas.
5. Carol's parents often lend her and her sisters money to pay her doubts.

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document

Dear students, how was the activity? I suppose it was not that complicated for you to find the indirect objects. As a way to check answers, please compare your answer with the ones here in the same order: Marie, us, my friends, my students, her and her sisters.

Remember! There must be a Direct Object in order to have an Indirect Object in a clause. Also, the last object refers to the change of position of Indirect objects which, as aforementioned, after this transposition is called "oblique object".

3. **Oblique Object/Object of a preposition:** It also receives the Direct Object as the Indirect Object, but it occurs in a Prepositional Phrase. Check the first example (the same example shown in Indirect Object is being used here so you can notice the difference).



Luisa gave Peter a nice surprise.
I.O.

Luisa gave (Peter) a nice surprise to Peter (him)
O.O.





Further examples:

- My sister sent some money **to** my parents (them)
- I caught a fish **for** the cat (it)
- Please, make a cup **of** coffee for me

As you can see, the transposition of the indirect object permits the use of an oblique object. Have in mind that in both cases, they are the beneficiaries of the action stated by the main verb.

Dear students, based on what you have studied about all types of objects, I invite you to work on the activities below to reinforce your knowledge.



Recommended learning activities

1. Let's work on this last activity about the Accusative (objective) Government Case. Circle the I.O, underline the D.O. Then, transform these examples into Oblique Objects.

- You gave him an apple last night.
- I bought my son a nice toy.
- Ana asked me an interesting question.

Great job! Remember that what is given or what is being done is for Direct objects, and who is affected by the action is the Indirect object. Thus, him/ my son/me are indirect objects, while what is after them are the direct objects.

2. Dear students, please relate these Government Cases with the following table, which shows a description of the types of words that are used for the different government cases; namely, nominative, genitive, and accusative cases.

Table 8*Government Cases*

| Nominative (subjective) | Genitive (possessive) | Accusative (objective) |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I | My / mine | Me |
| You | Your / yours | You |
| He | His / his | Him |
| She | Her / hers | Her |
| It | Its / its | It |
| We | Our / ours | Us |
| You | Your /yours | You |
| They | Their / Theirs | Them |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Remember that you can use Nouns instead of Pronouns in Nominative and Accusative cases and 's, s', of in the genitive case.

3. Dear students, in order to finish the topic "Government Cases", please write 2 examples using each of these Government cases.

- **Nominative Case:**
- **Genitive Case:**
- **Accusative (and dative) Case:**

Note. Complete these activities in a notebook or Word document.





Dear students, congratulations! you have worked wonderfully throughout these contents! I am sure all the activities proposed helped you to understand better each of the government cases as well as to practice them.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 7

Unit 3. Syntactic Linkage according to the Grammatical functions

Dear students, this last part of syntactic linkage deals with Number, Person, and Gender, which are also very important in English language learning. As important as learning the rules of *agreement* and *government*, it is knowing the agreement or concord that must exist between Number, person, and gender in syntactic constructions. With this in mind, please let's analyze each of them!

3.2. Syntactic Linkage

3.2.3. Number, Person, and Gender in English

The first element we will analyze in this section has to do with **Number**. First, it is important to mention that in English, there are two number categories; these are: Singular and plural. This grammatical category relates to Nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs, and how they are used in sentence construction, respecting the rules of agreement.

Shrives (n.d) summarizes how Number works in English language by using the table below, which shows how different words such as nouns, verbs, pronouns, among others, change depending on the number of nouns, if they are singular, or plural.



Table 9
Number

| Word Type | Number Category | |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| | Singular Example | Plural Example |
| Nouns | Chair, knife, person, Tatiana,... | Chairs, knives, people, Adrián and Marco,... |
| Pronouns (subject and object pronouns) | I - me You – you He - him She - her It - it | We – us You – you They - them |
| Adjectives (demonstrative, possessive,...) | this, that, a, an, my, your, his, her, its | these, those, our, your, their |
| Verbs | am, is, was, has, I jump, he jumps,... | are, were, have, they jump,... |

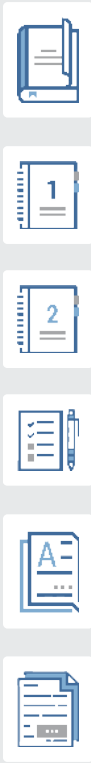
Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

As you can notice, when we write any clause or sentence, these elements must be considered since for the message to be understood, it needs to be well referenced by using the correct nouns, pronouns, verb forms, and so on. Let's check the following examples of how they would be used in a syntactic construction:

- Please, lend me **a** (1 – singular) NOT Please, lend me a knives.
- I have to fix **those chairs** over there. NOT I have to fix that chairs over there.

Number and Person are correlated. Respecting *number* and *person* is really important to avoid expressing a wrong message, such as in the following example:

*She took **her** phone and left quickly.* (It can be understood that she is the owner of the phone)



BUT

*She took **your** phone and left quickly.* (The message changes completely.

Now, it implies that she took a phone that does not belong to her. Maybe she stole it?)



As you can see, dear all, paying careful attention to how person and number are used is the only way to prevent misunderstandings when expressing any message.

Now, let's expand on the use of **Person**. Also called Grammatical Person, it identifies the relationship between the subject and its verb. It refers to the person we are talking about (First person: **I/we**; Second Person: **You**; Third Person: **He/she/it/they**). Reflexive pronouns are also related to the type of person used as a subject.

Please, analyze the following examples:

- **Antonio** *is* selling his house. (Third person of singular **He**)
- **I** *am* going home. (First-person of singular)
- **My sister and I** *feel* sorry for you (First-person of plural **We**)
- I will do it **myself** (First-person of singular **I/myself**)

Dear students, please review the glossary of [Grammatical person](#) in order to expand this content. In this source, you will find how the grammatical person is classified (first, second, and third of singular and plural), as well as several examples of each one of them. Similarly, you will find how person, number, and gender are related to one another.

I am sure you found the information very useful to analyze how Person functions within syntactic constructions such as clauses and sentences. As you could notice, one simple sentence can integrate these three elements: Number, Person, and Gender. In the last topic of this unit, we will review more about **Gender**, and finally, we will analyze some examples.



Dear students, I am sure most (if not all) of you have learned about what gender is in English language. It is worth mentioning that Gender (Male and Female) are considered as the “natural gender”, which means that human beings (and animals) are naturally born with a defined sex. (Mignot, 2012).

Let’s recall some knowledge on this matter by explaining that Gender refers to the grammatical category in which some nouns, pronouns, articles, or adjectives are defined as masculine, feminine, or neuter/neutral (adjectives are not restricted to gender and number). As we know, in English there is a little distinction in gender; however, this difference can be shown in some nouns such as the examples of Masculine, Feminine, and Neuter genders, shown in the following table:



Table 10
Gender

| | Masculine | Your examples | Feminine | Your examples |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Nouns that change | Man Father Uncle Boy husband | | Woman Mother Aunt Girl Wife | |
| Nouns that take different forms (inflected) | Actor Prince Hero Waiter Widower | | Actress Princess Heroine Waitress Widow | |
| Neuter | | | | |
| | Parent Teacher Friend Person Student | | | |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Dear students, let’s have in mind also that some nouns can change for both genders, even if they are generally used with the same noun due to, they are known for their species. This is the case of nouns such as:

- Rabbit Buck/Doe
 Male Female
- Chicken Rooster/Hen
 Male Female
- Pig Boar/Sow
 Male Female

What other examples like this can you think of?

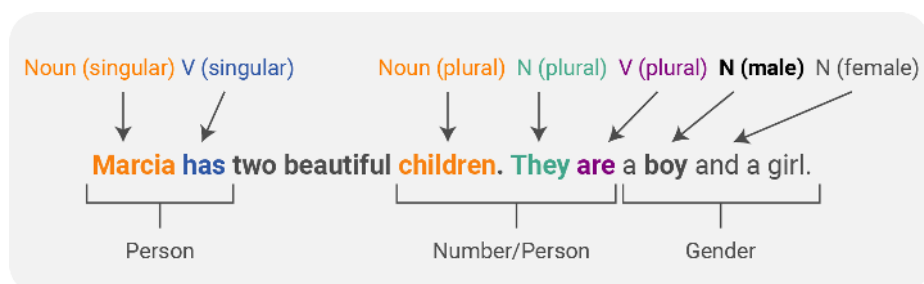


Remember that the pronoun “it” is usually used to refer to animals (in singular).
E.g.: *The **dog** is still barking despite I already fed it.*

When talking about syntactic structures, we have that these 3 elements might be integrated into one simple structure. Please, check the analysis of the example on the figure below:

Figure 8

Example person, number, and gender



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

As shown above, there is an agreement between all the parts of this syntactic construction to express a coherent message.

Dear students, with this we have reached the end of unit 3. I am sure that much of the content offered in this unit was very familiar to you; however, remember that this time you need to analyze it syntactically. To finish this section, I invite you to work on the activities below.



Recommended learning activities

1. Write a short story in which you integrate at least two examples of Number, person, and gender (2 of each one).

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document.

Well done! I am sure you demonstrated your creativity in writing this story! As you could see, it is not complicated to integrate person, number, and gender in communication since we usually do it naturally when holding conversations with other people, or when writing any message. Remember that Practice makes perfect!

2. Now, dear students, please assess your knowledge by taking the self-assessment 3 for this unit. I am sure you will do it wonderfully!



Self-assessment 3

Dear student, check your knowledge by answering the following self-assessment. Good luck!

1. Agreement is defined as a linkage between different parts of a phrase or clause. According to the definition above, the clause “This child cries all day” shows...
 - a. agreement between subject and verb in the simple present.
 - b. agreement between subject and object.
 - c. agreement between verb and the adjective phrase.
2. Complete the following statements by choosing the correct verb. Take into account the Rules of Agreement.

“Either the pilot or the flight attendant _____ apologize for the incident”

 - a. has to
 - b. have to
 - c. have
3. Complete the following statements by choosing the correct verb. Take into account the Rules of Agreement.



"Neither the priest nor the pilgrims _____ where to go.

- a. knows
- b. know
- c. to know

4. Complete the following statements by choosing the correct verb. Take into account the Rules of Agreement.

"Twenty percent of Latin students _____ to speak in English rather than in Spanish."

- a. prefers
- b. are preferring
- c. prefer

5. Some English verbs are followed by two noun phrases, which function as objects. These verbs are known as...

- a. Intransitive
- b. Ditransitive
- c. Transitive

6. By applying syntactic analysis to the clause "Manuel gave Susan the new books", it can be recognized that:

- a. "Susan" is the direct object.
- b. "The new books" is the indirect object.
- c. "The new books" is the direct object.

7. There are two types of agreement; these are: _____, which is based on grammar structures; and _____, which is based on meaning.

- a. Formal agreement/Notional agreement
- b. Informal agreement/Formal agreement
- c. formal agreement/informal agreement



8. Choose TWO options.

The object is...

- a. the person affected by the action described in the verb.
- b. the thing affected by the action described in the verb.
- c. the person who does the action described in the verb.

9. Write the gender "Feminine", "masculine", or "Neuter" for each Noun listed in the table below.

| |
|---------|
| Teacher |
| heir |
| Widower |
| Doe |
| Spouse |

10. Choose True or False

Gender is also applied for all adjectives

- a. True
- b. False

[Go to the answer key](#)



Dear students, congratulations for having finished successfully this unit 3! Remember that you can attend the weekly tutorials or contact me in case you have questions or concerns in regards to the contents. Keep working hard!



Learning outcomes 1 and 2:

- Recognizes word classes, heads and modifiers.
- Identifies predicates, their properties, and their arguments.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 8

Final midterm activities

Dear students, as you know, by the end of this week, you will have to take the Midterm test. I am sure you will do it wonderfully! All your efforts and hard work will generate positive results.

As a way to get ready for this evaluation, I invite you to reinforce your knowledge by participating in the following game.

[Interactive Resource_First Bimester](#)

Dear all, you have done a great job all throughout this First Bimester! Congratulations for having achieved your goals during this term! Keep working hard!





Second bimester

Learning outcome 3:

Analyses clauses, sentences and text through tree- diagrams.

To reach this learning outcome, students will examine different types of syntactic structures by using tree diagrams and analyzing each of the phrases that make part of clauses and sentences. Similarly, they will analyze in-depth the relationship between constituents of sentences and how their syntactic elements vary depending on their formation.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 9

Unit 4. From Constituency to Sentence Construction

Dear students, welcome to the Second bimester! I am sure you will work very hard and will do a great job as you did in the first one. In the contents of this unit 4, you will continue learning how to analyze different structures syntactically. Let's start!



4.1. Constituency

Dear students, in order to understand what Constituency is, it is important to start by studying what a **Constituent** is first. A constituent is a word or group of words that functions as a single unit within a hierarchical structure (Burneo, 2015). In other words, a constituent can be either a single word, or can be made up of several words, which are known as phrases. For example:

Peter (Noun phrase/Subject) = **individual constituent**

hit the ball (Verb phrase/predicate) = **individual constituent**

Similarly, in order to have a clear idea about how the structure of a clause works, it is necessary to remember that all clauses/sentences need to have these elements (head, modifiers) and a correct order so they are accurate. It means, if a sentence has the correct elements, but it does not have a good structure (arrangement), then it IS NOT correct even if the message can be understood. For example:

INCORRECT: Mary beautiful is

CORRECT: Mary is beautiful

Having this in mind, let's analyze what Constituency is.

As stated by Burneo (2015), "Constituency is the relation between a linguistic unit (a constituent) and the larger unit (clause) that it is part of" (p. 41).

It deals with the structured rules to follow in order to build grammatical clauses. In this sense, Tree diagrams are very useful to show the structure of a clause since they show the hierarchical structure that every constituent has in the clause. We will analyze their function and use below.



4.2. Constituency Structure

As it has been stated before, based on the hierarchy, clauses break down into smaller constituents known as phrases, and phrases break down into smaller pieces called words (Burneo, 2015). All of these are connected by nodes that show their relation within a clause. Dear students, let's analyze what syntactic tree diagrams are and how they are used to determine how the clause or sentence is structured.

4.3. Syntactic Tree Diagrams

Strömberg (n.d) defines a Syntactic tree as a “visual representation of language structure, in which the grammatical hierarchy is graphically displayed” (para. 2). Similarly, this author argues that as there is not an “only right way” to draw syntactic trees, they are still an area of debate in the linguistic field.

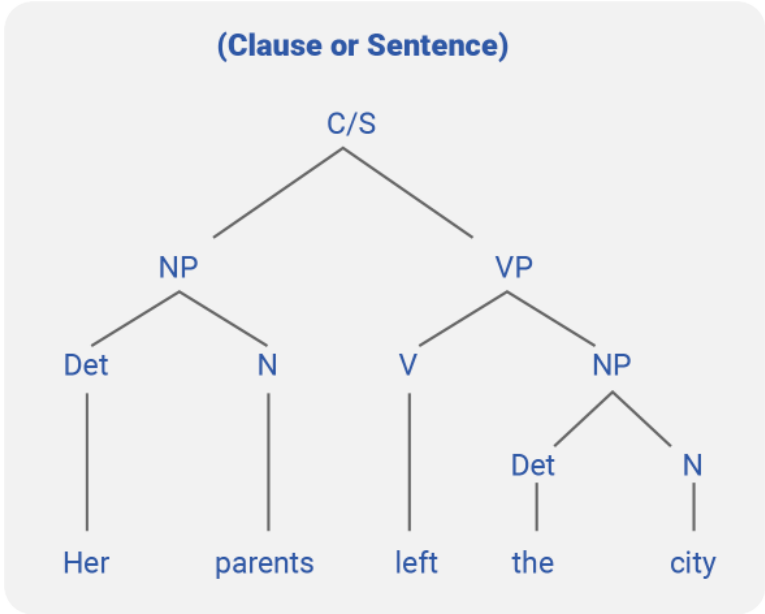
This gives us the idea that many times syntactic trees can be shown with a few variations; however, the main criteria for recognizing their constituents remain.

Tree diagrams serve to understand the arrangement of different phrases within a sentence according to their hierarchy. They visually represent how words group together into phrases and how those phrases relate to one another in a structured way, helping learners analyze sentence structure, identify grammatical roles, and grasp syntactic relationships.

Now, please check the examples shown in the figures below to understand how tree diagrams are used to analyze syntactic structures.



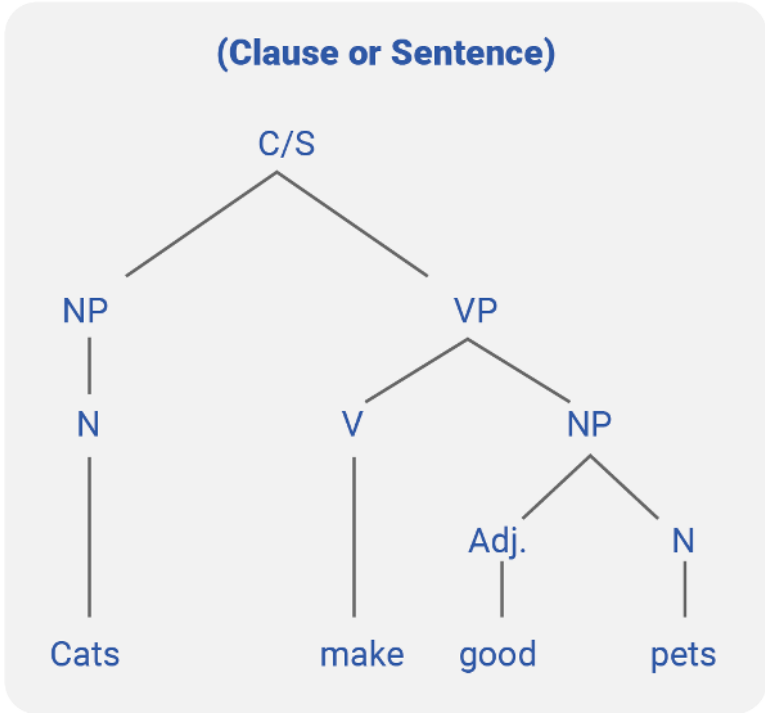
Figure 9
Example 1 of a Syntactic Tree Diagram



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.



Figure 10
Example 2 of a Syntactic Tree Diagram



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

As you can see in the figures above, sentences also keep a hierarchy in their structure, just as any company/institution does. Let’s compare how this would be in the following figure:

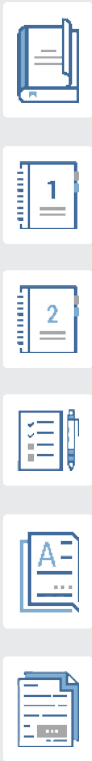
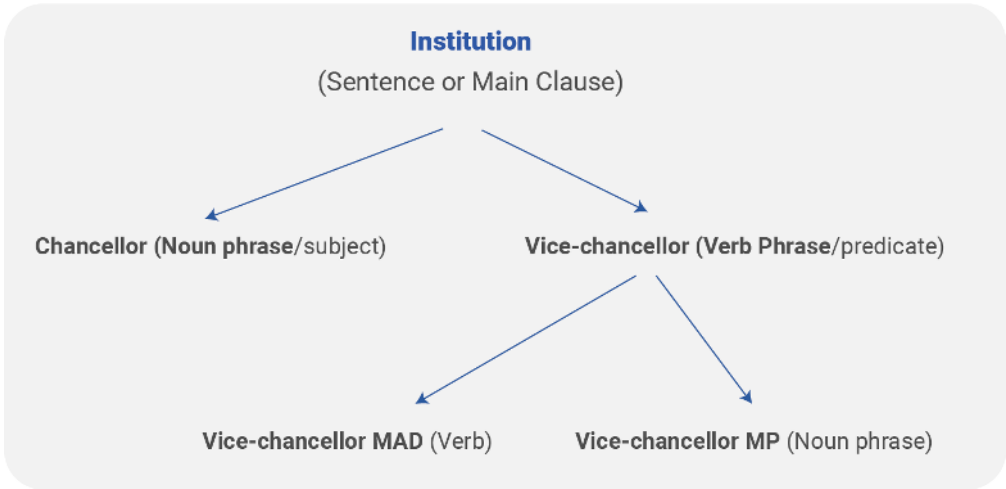


Figure 11
Comparison of a hierarchical structure



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

As you might realize, after the “Vice counselors” (Verb and NP) you would find many other members under the hierarchy. This is exactly how we use tree diagrams to analyze the structure of a sentence/clause.

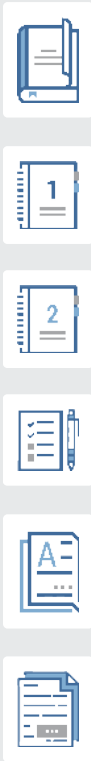
Dear students, based on what has been reviewed about Tree Diagrams, please work on the following activities to reinforce knowledge.



Recommended learning activities

1. Analyze the syntactic structure of the following clauses by using tree diagrams.
 - C: Karla and Vanesa are good friends
 - C: My children hate onions and vegetables

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document.



Great job! I hope this practice was not any complicated for you! Maybe at the beginning, it is a bit tricky to make this analysis; nevertheless, the more you practice, the more you will learn.

2. I invite you to review the tree diagram for each example in [Annex 2. Tree Diagrams](#).

Dear students, I am sure that learning about how to draw Tree diagrams helped you understand better how clauses are structured and of course, to understand better how English language works.

Now, it is time to recall briefly some knowledge on a topic we reviewed during the first bimester, which refers to Heads and modifiers. This is important since they are the basis to construct other syntactic constructions such as clauses and, therefore, to form sentences.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 10

Unit 4. From Constituency to Sentence Construction

Dear students, as it was mentioned before, we will start the contents for this week with a brief review of Heads and modifiers. Furthermore, I invite you to go back to unit 1 in order to revise these in depth if needed.

4.4. Review of Heads and Modifiers

In past units, you learned that Heads are the most important part of any phrase. Similarly, you learned that the Headword is which determines a type of phrase; for instance, if the headword is a noun, then the phrase is a NP; if the headword is a Verb, then we know it is an Adj.P., and so on.



To form clauses and sentences, we need to link these Phrases accurately. To write clauses and sentences, we also use Modifiers. In a previous unit, we also reviewed that modifiers are divided into two types: Complements and Adjuncts.

Which of these two types is obligatory? Which is optional?

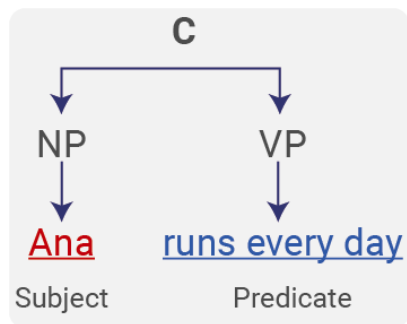
Right! Complements are the elements that should always be in the syntactic construction, while adjuncts are elements that can be omitted since they provide extra information to the clause, but they are not needed to understand the message.

4.5. Clauses and Sentence Construction

A clause is a large structure that is built out of phrases. Bear in mind that a clause consists of two parts: A Noun Phrase (NP) as the subject, plus a Verb Phrase (VP) predicate. The figure below shows an example.

Figure 12

Example of clauses and their parts



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Clauses are divided into two: Main Clauses (also called independent clauses) and Subordinate Clauses (also called dependent clauses).

The union of Dependent and Independent Clauses is called “Subordination”. Let’s analyze what each one of these is.



4.5.1. The Main Clause

In English grammar, the main clause is a group of words made up of a subject (NP) and a predicate (VP). The main clause, unlike a dependent or subordinate clause, can stand alone as a sentence. This is also known as “independent clause”, a “superordinate clause”, or a “base clause”. For example:

- **Mary** bought a car
- **Fernando's brother** got sick
- **Ana** has to study

As can be implied, a clause is constructed with phrases, which form a grammatical unit. In terms of Syntax, a clause contains two main constituents: a NP, which takes the subject position (e. g. Mary; Fernando's brother; Ana), and a VP, that functions as the predicate (e. g. bought a car; got sick; has to study).

Burneo (2015) explains this construction in terms of the two criteria; hence, she states that from the point of view of Semantics, a subject defines a topic, and the predicate provides comments or further information about this subject, while syntactically, it can be analyzed that the NP working as subject precedes the predicate. In some clauses, as in imperative constructions and non-finite clauses, the subject as a Noun phrase is omitted (e. g. do homework; to be late is impolite).

Example of a Main clause:



Luis completed the assignments.

NP

VP/Predicate

Write your example in a notebook or Word document.

Dear students, as you noticed, main clauses are constructions that have complete meaning and can stand alone since they are complete thoughts. Main clauses also have the purpose of constructing longer structures, which are known as Sentences. In this regard, please analyze the types of sentences we can find in English.



A **sentence** is a grammatical unit composed of one or more clauses. There are three main types of Sentences: Simple, Complex, and Compound; however, there is a fourth type called Compound-complex, which, as you might understand, is a combination of both complex and compound sentences.

Dear all, in order to understand each of these types, let's analyze them one by one.

1. **Simple:** This is an independent clause that expresses a single idea. It contains one statement known as the "main clause" whose meaning is expanded by adding adjuncts. For example:

- **Freddy enjoys playing the guitar** every day.

Main clause

Adjunct

- **Ana jumped the rope** in the park yesterday

Main clause

Adjunct

2. **Complex:** It consists of two parts: an **independent (main) clause** PLUS a **dependent (subordinate) clause** conjoined by a **subordinating conjunction**. Dependent or Subordinate clauses are introduced by a subordinating conjunction such as *after, although, as, as soon as, because, before, by the time, even if, even though, every time, if, in case, once, since, so that, than, unless, until, when, whenever, whether or not, while, why*, among others. Here are some examples:

- **Nella won't go anywhere** **because she is tired**. (*because she is tired* is the subordinate clause)
- **Fanny called me** **after getting home**. (*after getting home* is the subordinate clause)

Now, I invite you to write your own sentences in a notebook or Word document.



Have in mind that subordinate (or subordinating) clauses cannot stand alone since they do not make sense on their own.



3. **Compound:** It consists of two clauses of equal status (two independent/ main clauses) joined by a coordinating conjunction such as for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so. These conjunctions are better known for the acronym they form to facilitate remembering them: **FANBOYS**. For example:

- Ana will study in Quito **and** I will study in Guayaquil.
- Valeria came yesterday **but** I was not home.

Now, I invite you to write your own sentences in a notebook or Word document.

Dear students, as aforementioned, there is a fourth type in which complex and compound sentences are combined to share complete messages.

4. **Compound-complex** sentences contain at least 2 independent (main) clauses (compound sentence) + at least 1 dependent (subordinate) clause. For example: **After the children left the room, all parents made the decision and the teacher agreed with them.**

Let's analyze this example:

As you can see, the sentence above contains three clauses: the subordinate clause "After the children left the room"; and two independent clauses "all parents made the decision" and "the teacher agreed with them". If you analyze it, you will find that "**After the children left the room, all parents made the decision**" functions as a complex sentence; while at the same time, "**all parents made the decision and the teacher agreed with them**" functions as a compound sentence. Then this gives the name to this fourth type of sentence.

Dear students, now I invite you to analyze the example in the following activity with the purpose of clarifying this type of sentence.



Recommended learning activity

Analyze the compound complex sentence below and identify the clauses integrated in it.



Byron bought a new automobile last month, so he has to pay almost two thousand dollars monthly for it because it is high-tech car.

- ¿Which clauses would function as the complex sentence?
- ¿Which clauses would function as the compound sentence?

Note. Answer these questions in a notebook or Word document.

I am sure it was a piece of cake to recognize the two types of sentences included in the activity above! As you found, the compound sentence is *Byron bought a new automobile last month, **so** he has to pay almost two thousand dollars monthly for it* (**So** is the coordinating conjunction connecting the two independent clauses); and the complex sentence is *“he has to pay almost two thousand dollars monthly for it because it is high-tech car”* (**because** works as the subordinating conjunction).



As you can see, ¡clauses are the basis to form sentences! Now, let's examine in detail how Subordinate Clauses work and how they are used to construct Complex Sentences.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 11

Unit 4. From Constituency to Sentence Construction

4.5. Clauses and Sentence Construction

4.5.2. Subordinate Clauses

Dear students, as it was mentioned at the beginning of this unit, a subordinate clause cannot stand alone as a sentence because it does not provide a complete thought. If a subordinate clause is used alone, then the reader might not understand the message; in other words, as Burneo (2015) states, “the



reader is left wondering, “So what happened?” (p. 93). Therefore, all sentences must contain at least one main clause; otherwise, you will have written only a **fragment**, which is a major error in written compositions.

Let’s check this example in order to clarify the information above:



Let’s check this example in order to clarify the information above:

when she called. (fragment – this is a dependent/subordinate clause that must be part of an independent/main clause to be coherent)

Complete sentence:

I was sleeping when she called. (Main clause + subordinate clause = Complex sentence)

To better understand complex sentences, it is mandatory to learn about the types of subordinate clauses that can be part of them. Hence, please check the information about the types of subordinate clauses stated below.

TYPES OF SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

As we have studied, and as aforementioned, subordinate clauses cannot stand alone and require a main clause (independent clause) in order to be coherent. These subordinate clauses complementize main clauses and can occur in different types. First, it is important to bear in mind what subordinators and complementizers are. The **Subordinators** are subordinating conjunctions that can consist of a single word, which are called “**simple subordinators**” like: *After, although, as, before, if, once, since, that, until, when, where, while, etc.*, OR, they can appear as combinations of two or three words as: *So that, such that, in order that, provided that, considering that, as far as, as long as, rather than, as if, as though, whether...or.*



The **Complementizers**, on the other hand, also work as subordinating conjunctions. E. g: For, that, whether, if and the relative pronouns. Complementizers introduce Complement and Relative Clauses, and they are arguments of verbs; so, they function as subjects or objects of sentences).

With this in mind, let's analyze the types of subordinate clauses:

1. **Complement or noun clauses:** A complement clause (Noun clause) is a clause introduced by a complementizer like **that**, or **whether**. This is why sometimes it is also known as a THAT-clause. A complement clause is used as the complement of some other words (typically as the complement of a verb, adjective, or noun).

THAT and WHETHER are used to complement different word classes such as verbs, adjectives, and nouns. Below you will find a short analysis for examples of each one of these complement clauses:

- **Complement of a verb:**

- **Example 1:** *I always **knew** **that** **she was not a good girl**.*

Analysis: The clause **that she was not a good girl** serves as the complement of the verb **knew**.

- **Example 2:** *Many students don't **know** **whether** **they have to attend class tomorrow**.*

Analysis: Here, *whether they have class tomorrow* would be the complement of the verb **know**.

- **Complement of an adjective:**

- **Example:** *It's wonderful **that** **you are here today**.*

Analysis: In this case, *that you are here today* is complementing the adjective *wonderful*.



- **Complement of a noun:**

- **Example:** Parents love the idea **that** the school can offer them more facilities.

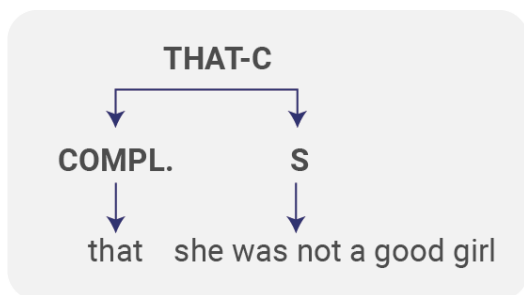
A noun complement clause completes the meaning of the noun to the left. This type of clause occurs after noun phrases, either in subject or object position. The number of noun phrases that can be followed by this type of clause is very small. Some examples are: “the fact”, “the rumor”, the suggestion”, “the idea”, among a few others.

Please, add your own examples in your notebook or Word document.

RULE: A complement clause consists of the word **THAT** + a sentence. Therefore, this clause has the status of a sentence (S) dominated by another sentence; as you can see in the figure below:

Figure 13

Example of complementary clause



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

2. **Relative clauses or adjective clauses:** Dear all, I am sure you have learned what relative clauses are since they are generally studied in basic levels of grammar. This time, we will analyze their characteristics and arrangement within a sentence. Thus, let's start by mentioning that a relative clause is also known as an adjective clause.



Some of the characteristics of this type of subordinate clauses are that they modify a noun or noun phrase. Similarly, they can be introduced by relative pronouns such as *where, who, which, whose*.

Furthermore, bear in mind that in English language there are two types of relative constructions; there are Restrictive (bound) and Nonrestrictive (unbound) relative clauses. As stated by Burton-Roberts (2016), “the difference between restrictive and non-restrictive lies in the way they relate to the head noun within the overall NP” (p. 208).

- **Restrictive clauses:** These are also called Essential clauses. They are used to give information that is necessary to define the meaning of the noun phrase (subject) in a sentence. They are introduced by the pronouns: *who, whom, whose, and which*. For example:
 - The girl **who** closed the door is my daughter.
 - Students **whose** parents work should attend the meeting.
- **Non-restrictive clauses:** Dear students, as you could notice, these clauses are similar to restrictive clauses in their structure but vary in the function they perform.

Nonrestrictive clauses provide extra information about the person or thing mentioned in the noun phrase, but this information does not restrict the noun phrase. Let's take the second example above:

- **RESTRICTIVE:** Students whose parents work should attend the meeting.
- **NON-RESTRICTIVE:** Students, whose parents work, should attend the meeting.

As you can see in the first case, the meeting is restricted to students who have parents that work only (*whose parents work* identify the group of students). On the other hand, non-restrictive clauses (usually with commas) provide an extra explanation about parents, but do not restrict this characteristic to a certain group of students.

Let's check another example:

- **The children who were chosen for the competition will travel with us.** (only children who were chosen will travel)
- **The children, who were chosen for the competition, will travel with us.** (all children will travel. The extra information is that they were chosen for the competition).

In this case, the information introduced by the relative pronoun “who” does not add necessary information to understand/complete the whole clause; so, it could also be omitted without altering the meaning of the sentence.

Now, let's finish this unit with this important last topic, which refers to Adverbial clauses.

ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

Adverbial clauses are a group of subordinate clauses that modify the main clause to which they are attached. These perform as adverbs of condition, manner, place, time, and reason or purpose. The entire clause modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

Adverbial clauses begin with a subordinating conjunction and words like: If, though, because, since, after, although, when, wherever, so that, among others. As stated by Burneo (2015) the relation that subordinators show is called the “perspective of subordinate clauses”. It means, we use each subordinator depending on the meaning we want to express. For instance, the subordinator *because* is used to provide a *reason*, while the subordinator *So* is used to express the *result* of something, and so on.

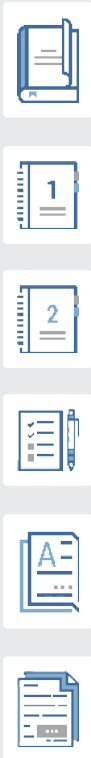
The content expressed by the subordinate clause depends on the content of the main clause to which it is attached. Please, check the table below, which shows how the use of subordinators depends on the message or the purpose we need to express; if it is to give reasons, conditions, results, and so on; which are called “perspectives”.



Table 11
Subordinators and their perspectives

| Subordinator | Perspective | Example (In a notebook or Word document write your own examples) |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Before While Until | Time | Fanny called me before leaving home. (Answers the question When?) You can study for the test while rewriting your notes. I will wait for my sister in the back yard until it rains. |
| Since Because | Time and reason | Andrew fell down because he was distracted. (Answers the question Why?) I have been feeling sick since I arrived. You have to apologize since it was your mistake. |
| As if/ As though As.....as | Manner and comparison | She's not singing as loudly as she can. (Answers the question How/In what manner?) He treats me as if I were his sister, not his girlfriend. The child gaped at me as though he were seeing a ghost. |
| So that | Purpose | I will plan the party to start at 10 so that you can come. |
| Although | Concession and Contrast | Although he didn't have enough money, he bought an expensive car. (Answers the question Under what circumstances?) Lisa is not popular with men although she is pretty. |
| Even though | Contrast | Most students did very well in the test even though it was not that easy. |
| So | Result | Mary didn't come to the party so I ate her piece of cake. Your example: |
| If | Condition | If you don't study, you will not pass the semester. (Answers the question Under what condition?) |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.



Dear students, a way to recognize if we found an adverbial clause is by checking if the clause can often be moved around in a sentence, at the beginning, or the end, and the sentence will still make sense. In contrast, **Noun clauses and adjective clauses cannot be moved**. This is another way to identify if you have an adverb clause.

Some further examples with this characteristic:

- When you get home, call me. (tells us when the person should call)
- Put the games up so that you can eat your dinner. (tells us why the games should be put away)
- Wherever you go, I'll be with you. (tells us where the person might be)

To summarize, Clauses are divided into Main Clauses (also called Independent or Superordinate Clauses), which is a syntactic structure that can stand alone since it makes sense itself. On the contrary, a Subordinate Clause (also called Dependent Clause) cannot stand alone since it requires a complete structure (main clause) to make sense. In this regard, we can infer that we cannot use only subordinate clauses to communicate.

Dear students, in order to reinforce knowledge, I invite you all to work on the following activities.



Recommended learning activities

1. Write at least one sentence with Restrictive and another with non-restrictive clauses. Explain the differences in their message.

- **Restrictive Clause:**
- **Non-restrictive:**

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document.

Great job! I am sure that the activity above was not complicated. Remember that restrictive clauses refer to those clauses which need the relative pronoun to define the Nouns used as subjects, while non-



restrictive clauses refer to the extra information we add to the sentence, but which is not completely necessary to understand the message and do not define subjects.

2. Write your own examples for each subordinator taking into account the perspective you want to express (choose only one perspective according to your example).

Complete

| Subordinator | Perspective | Example |
|--------------|-------------|---------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Note. copy the table into a Word document or notebook to fill in

Nice job! Bear in mind that each example should reflect the perspective you chose.

Dear students, you have done a great job in this unit! Congratulations!

3. Now, I invite you to take the self-assessment 4 in order to test your knowledge. Remember that you can contact me in case you have difficulties understanding any of this It will be a pleasure to help you!



Self-assessment 4

Dear student, check your knowledge by answering the following self-assessment. Good luck!

1. Syntactic tree diagrams have the purpose to...
 - a. represent the structure of the main grammatical constructions used to communicate.



- b. represent the roles of phrases within a sentence.
- c. represent the structure of a language showing the hierarchical structure of its constituents.

2. Perspective refers to...

- a. the relation of subordinators and the purpose they transmit in the message.
- b. the use of subordinating conjunctions needed to connect clauses.
- c. the description of the noun used as subjects in any construction.

3. The main difference between a Main Clause and a Sentence is that...

- a. a clause has a longer structure than a sentence.
- b. a sentence is a longer structure that includes modifiers such as complements and adjuncts.
- c. a clause contains several modifiers such as complements and adjuncts.

4. A complex sentence is characterized by...

- a. having two main clauses.
- b. using coordinating conjunctions.
- c. having a main and a subordinate clause.

5. Compound- complex sentences contain...

- a. at least one subordinate clause, plus at least two main clauses.
- b. at least one complex sentence and two complete compound sentences.
- c. aaAt least two coordinating conjunctions connecting one main clause and one subordinate clause.aaa





6. Which of the following sentences are using adjuncts? Choose TWO options.

- a. Carlos and Manuel decided to travel abroad next month.
- b. Cristian does not care his job.
- c. Cindy bought a cellphone.
- d. Juan Carlos left his fortune to his grandchildren before passing away.

7. Analyze the statement below and decide if it is True or False.

"Noun phrases can be used only as subjects in any syntactic construction"

- a. True
- b. False

8. Choose True or False

"A main clause holds complete meaning, which permits it to stand alone."

- a. True
- b. False

9. Choose True or False.

"Subordinate clauses are needed to form compound sentences"

- a. True
- b. False

10. Match each sentence with the type of subordinate clause they belong to:

1. Melisa learned that many things are not always as they seem.

a. Relative clause

2. Her mom is sad because she didn't call her last night.

b. Complement clause

3. She is the person who I saw in the park.

c. Adverbial clause

[Go to the answer key](#)



Dear students, you have done a great job all throughout this unit
4. Congratulations! Remember that you can attend the weekly tutorials or contact me in case you have questions or concerns in regards to these contents. Keep working hard!

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 12

Unit 5. Syntactic constructions

Dear students, welcome to the study of Unit 5. This unit deals with the analysis of different types of syntactic constructions that are needed to communicate coherently in English language. I am sure this unit will help you remember the way these constructions are formed and how they are used to express different messages. Let's start!

5.1. Types of Constructions

Dear students, all along these units you have studied what clauses and their types are: Main clauses and subordinate clauses (noun, complement, relative, adverbial). You know now that we have different types of clauses as well as different types of sentences (simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex). In this unit, we are going to review specifically the types of syntactic constructions there are in English language; namely, Active, Passive, and Middle Voice; Declarative and interrogative, Copula and non-copula constructions; and imperatives.



For sure, most of these terms might sound familiar to you since we have already studied them in previous subjects related to grammar. So, now you need to recall those basic concepts and be ready to acquire the new ones.

As you know, Syntax deals with the relation that every part (constituent) of a clause has. We know that in order to make sense, a sentence needs to have a subject (NP) (except in imperatives), a Verb Phrase (indirect object, direct object, etc.), and also some adjuncts that work as part of complements. So far, so good.

Let's start this topic by defining this term. A syntactic construction is any syntactic string of words ranging from sentences over clauses to phrasal structures and certain complex lexemes, such as phrasal verbs. (Wikipedia, 2020). Burneo (2015) also defines a syntactic construction as a group of words forming a single unit (constituent) and performing a part of a sentence. In this regard, it is important to have in mind these important characteristics:

- Constructions are not isolated structures, but they fit into a general system of patterns.
- Speakers use different types of constructions to communicate coherently, for example, to make statements, to ask questions, to issue commands, among others.
- Speakers and writers need different types of constructions with different functions in order to hold a conversation, to deliver a speech, to write a novel, or to comment on any topic.

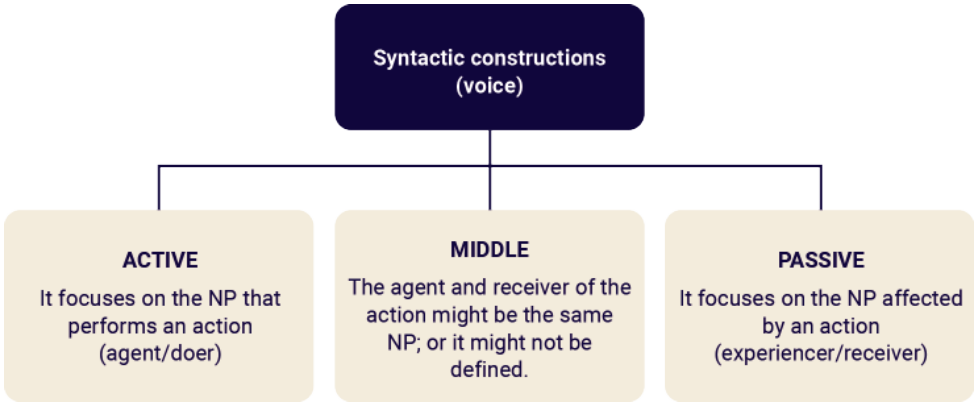
Having these characteristics in mind, let's start reviewing the first syntactic constructions grouped as Active, passive, and middle voice.



5.1.1. Active, Passive and Middle Voice

Before analyzing each of these first types of Constructions, let’s understand what they refer to. Voice focuses on different participants in an action or event. There are two main types of voice: active and passive; however, there is a third Voice, which is also used as “a result” of these two ones; this is the Middle voice. The following figure explains these types of voice:

Figure 14
Voice



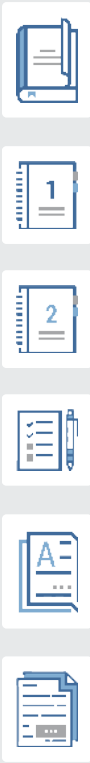
Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Dear students, as many of you have realized, when analyzing Active voice, it is very common to compare its structure and function with the Passive one. This is due to it is easier for learners to differentiate them through comparing and contrasting their structures. In this first part, we will analyze the two first well-known types, to then focus on the third one.

Active Voice focuses on the “agent/doer/performer” of an action while **Passive** focuses on the receiver of an action.

Having this in mind, let’s analyze the following example of both, Active and passive voice:

Active construction Passive construction



Someone **robbed** John

John was **robbed**

Doer/agent **action** receiver

Receiver **action**

As you can notice, the structure of both constructions changes when passing from active to passive. In this case, you can see that the Noun phrase used as the Object in the active construction now moves to the subject position, but remains a Noun phrase. According to the British Council (2018), **Transitive verbs** have both **active** and **passive** forms.

In order to practice, please, analyze the following structures and use the spaces below to write your own examples:

Complete

| Active | Passive |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Eva sent me the report yesterday. | The report was sent to me yesterday. |
| María took my phone without permission. | My phone was taken without my permission. |
| | |
| | |

Note. copy the table into a Word document or notebook to fill in.

Passive voice is usually used in the cases expose in the following table:



Table 12
Uses of passive voice

| When... | Example |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| we do not know who did the action. | <u>The tape</u> was edited <i>receiver action</i> |
| we do not consider important who did the action but the action done itself. | Paul was tricked <i>Receiver action</i> |
| it is clear who the agent is, so we do not need to mention it. | <u>A research study on cancer</u> was carried out last year. <i>Object affected action</i> |
| In cases when we consider that it is important/ relevant to mention who did the action, we introduce it with by . | <u>A research study on cancer</u> was carried out by the <u>International Agency</u> last year. |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

These are the cases in which it is better to use passive voice; for instance, when the doer of an action is unknown, irrelevant, implicit, and how the agent can be added if needed.

The passive forms are made up of the verb **be** with a **past participle**. To form sentences, you can also add some modifiers such as adverbs. Dear students, feel free to complete the table with your own examples.



Table 13
Construction of passive voice

| Noun | be | past participle | Modifiers (complements and adjuncts) | |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| English | is | spoken | all over the world | more and more each day. |
| The windows | have been | cleaned | perfectly | this morning |
| Lunch | was being | served | at 10am | until yesterday. |
| The work | will be | finished | soon | |
| They | might have been | invited | to the party | |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

In summary, all passive constructions follow this structure despite the tense: N + Be + Part participle + modifiers.

As it was mentioned above, if we want to define the agent doing the action we use **by**, for example:

- She was attacked **by** a dangerous dog.
- The money was stolen **by** her husband.

Similarly, we can use the **indirect object** as the subject of a passive verb, for example:

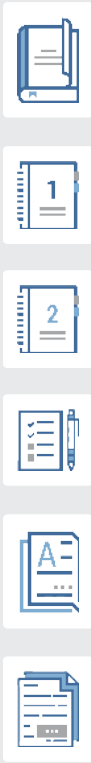
Active

Passive

Andrea gave me a nice scarf last week >> I was given a nice scarf last week.

Someone told Sara not to come to class >> Sara was told not to come to class.

These examples show how active constructions change when becoming passive ones. Note that the doer of the actions can be omitted.



Also, we can use **phrasal verbs** in the passive, for example:

Active

Passive

They **called off** the meeting. = The meeting **was called off**.

His grandmother **looked after** him. = He **was looked after** by his grandmother.

They **will send** him **away** to school. = He **will be sent away** to school.

As you can see, phrasal verbs have the same function of verbs and follow the same structure in passive voice constructions.



In order to practice, write your own examples into a Word document or notebook, about indirect object and phrasal verbs in the passive.

Some verbs very frequently used in the passive are followed by the **infinitive**: be supposed to, be expected to, be asked to, be scheduled to, be allowed to, be told to. For example:

- John has **been asked to** make a speech at the meeting.
- You **are supposed to** wear a uniform.
- The meeting **is scheduled to** start at seven.

Now, it is time to review the third (and maybe not so well-known) voice, which as Miller (2008) states, in English, there is a third voice, called "**Middle voice**". "In the middle voice, the subject may or may not be the agent; the focus is on the action affecting the subject, whereas the passive voice focuses on the recipient of the action". Encyclopedia Britannica (2018, para. 1)

The middle voice differs from active and passive voice in that we cannot categorize either the agent or the receiver of an action. Check the following examples:



Karla shaved Michel – Active voice
The focus is on the Agent/doer (Karla)

Michael was shaved by Karla – Passive voice
The focus is on the Receiver (Michael)

BUT in the **Middle voice**:

Michael shaved this morning (himself) – Middle voice Agent and receiver at the same time

As you can notice in the example above, the Middle voice is quite related to reflexive pronouns since the agent performs an action on himself (however, it is not always necessary to use them in the sentence since they are implicit). For example:

- Some birds hurt (themselves) when trying to fly again.
- Diego moved a couple of years ago.

Another case of the Middle voice can be as in the following example:

- This lasagna tastes delicious!

As you can see, in this case we do not have an explicit “doer” of the action “taste”; however, it is implicit that someone does the action, even if it is not directly stated. It is understood for the reader/listener that, in this case, the “lasagna” cannot taste itself, right? So, in this case we are also talking about of Middle voice.

*Middle-voice constructions might have the structure of active voice (Agent + V); however, semantically they function as passive constructions.

Dear students, I am sure you found this last section very interesting. Let's continue with the following syntactic constructions, which refer to Declarative and Interrogative structures.



5.1.2. Declarative and Interrogative

Dear students, as you might remember, in English language, as well as in many others, syntactic constructions can be of many types and all of them play an important role in language construction, and therefore, in communication. Two of these types of constructions are very well known since they are always present in interaction; these are Declarative, and Interrogative. To start with, it can be stated that Simple sentences can make either statements (declarative) or questions (interrogative).

Declarative statements are used to make assertions (affirmative or negative), while the interrogative forms can transform from statements into questions without making any difference in meaning.

To construct a declarative statement, **copula** (BE and stative/non-action verbs) and non-copula verbs (all action verbs except BE) are located after the NP used as subject; however, they might differ in their positions in interrogative constructions. The table below shows some examples:



Table 14
Declarative and interrogative examples

| Syntactic constructions | Examples | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Copula | Non-copula |
| Declarative (affirmative) | <p>Vanessa is tall and thin. (NP + VP + Adj.P.)</p> <p>Karla and Michael are singing. (NP + VP + V)</p> | <p>Karla wants to participate in the seminar. (NP + VP + Inf.P + PP)</p> <p>Luis looks sad. (NP + VP + Adj.)</p> |
| Declarative (negative) | <p>Vanessa is not tall nor thin. (NP + VP (neg) + Adj.P.)</p> <p>Karla and Michael are not singing. (NP + VP (neg) + V)</p> | <p>Karla does not want to participate in the seminar. (NP + VP (neg) + Inf.P + PP)</p> <p>Luis does not look sad. (NP + VP (neg) + Adj.)</p> |
| Interrogative | <p>Is Vanessa tall and thin? (VP + NP + Adj.P.)</p> <p>Are Karla and Michael singing? (VP + NP + V)</p> | <p>Does Karla want to participate in the seminar? (Aux + NP + VP + Inf.P + PP)</p> <p>Does Luis look sad? (Aux + NP + VP + Adj.)</p> |

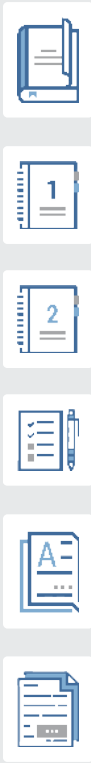
Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

As you could realize, the Noun phrase used in the subject position moves (transposes) to a second place to form interrogative constructions. In other words, the copula verb BE precedes the NP. In information questions, a subordinating conjunction (WH/H word) is added to the initial position of the clause. (e. g: *Why* is Vanessa tall and thin?)

Note that in **non-copula** constructions (and stative verbs), there is no movement (transposition) of phrases, but the addition of auxiliaries and the inflection of verbs.

Further examples:

Michael **went** to the copy shop to pick up the papers.



Did Michael go to the copy shop to pick up the papers? / Why did Michael go to the copy shop?

As you can see, declarative and interrogative constructions are closely related since the structure of the first also determines the structure of the other.

Now, dear students, I invite you to work on the following activities to reinforce knowledge about the Active and Passive voice and types of syntactic constructions.



Recommended learning activities

1. Let's practice! Now, please transform the following active sentences into passive voice.

Example: John collected the money = The money was collected by John

- a. Anna opened the window
- b. We have done our homework
- c. He can cut out the picture
- d. We do not clean our rooms
- e. William will not repair the car
- f. Did Sue draw this circle?

Great job! As you could see, the first step to transform sentences from active to passive (and vice versa) is to identify the verb used in the active voice, and then the receiver of the action in order to apply transposition (movement). Thus, what was collected/opened/done/cut/cleaned/repared/drawn? The answers are then the Noun Phrases used in the subject position in the passive voice.

2. Write a short story or anecdote in which you apply Active, Passive and Middle voice. You can choose the topic. Be creative!



Great job, deal all! I bet you showed all your creativity and comprehension of these syntactic constructions through your story. As you saw, active voice is very used in everyday situations; however, passive voice is also widely used in academic contexts in which the doer of the action is not directly stated, such as in research and thesis writing. Similarly, even though middle voice is not a so common structure, it is gaining more popularity in communication.

3. Write three declarative clauses and analyze their parts syntactically. Then, transform these constructions to interrogatives and explain the changes applied.

Great job, dear students! I am sure it was any complicated to identify the parts of each declarative statement and transform them to interrogatives. You could see that the changes are not many; nevertheless, they need to be done in order to have correct structures. Keep working hard on the following last syntactic constructions!

Note. Please, complete these activities in a notebook or Word document

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 13

Unit 5. Syntactic constructions

Dear students, continuing with the topic Syntactic construction, in this part of unit 5 you will study in detail what Copula and non-copula constructions are as well as how imperatives are structured. Let's start with these last constructions.



5.1. Types of Constructions

5.1.3. Copula and Non-copula Constructions

As aforementioned, Copula and non-copula constructions refer to the use of verb BE and stative verbs (also called non-action verbs); and action verbs correspondingly. Let's study the first one, which deal with the use of Copula verbs.

Copula Verbs

Verbs that are used to link subject and complement are known as "copula verbs". Please, bear in mind that the verb "BE" is the main copular verb in English.

Let's analyze the following examples:

The cake **is** delicious

NP (S) CV Adj.

The youngest children **are** playing on the grass.

NP (S) CV VP

Please, write your examples in notebook or Word document.

Some other verbs that can also be considered "copula verbs" (or *linking verbs*) since they fulfill a similar function as the verb BE as a stative verb; these are: *seem, appear, look, sound, smell, taste, feel, become* and *get*. These are also called "non-action (stative) verbs" since they show state, and not action. For example:

The salad **tastes** really good

S CV Adv. P

Janeth **seems** tired today

S CV Adj.P



Please, write your examples in notebook or Word document.

Within Copula verbs, three types are emphasized; these are: Ascriptive, Equative, and Locative. Let's check the structure and function of each one in the following table.

Table 15
Types of copula verbs

| Type | Characteristics | Examples |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ascriptive | This copula verb refers to the description of the NP used as subject. The structure of this type of constructions is NP + Copula V + Adj.P. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Magaly is tall• Children are happy <p>Notice how it is transformed to interrogative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Is Magaly tall?</u>• <u>Are children happy?</u> |
| Equative | This copula verb deals with the Noun Phrases used as complements, whose equivalent is the same as the NP used as Subject. This is used to identify the Nouns used as subjects. The structure of this type of constructions is NP + Copula V + NP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Magaly is a woman ("woman" is a NP that is equivalent to the NP "Magaly")• My father is a doctor ("doctor" is a NP that is equivalent to the NP "Father") |
| Locative | This type refers to the location of the NP used as subject. The structure of this type of constructions is NP + Copula V + PP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Magaly is at school• William is in California |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.



Great job! Now, dear students, please write your own examples in notebook or Word document, and review the verb [Be \(copular/linking verb\)](#) and take the quiz “Practice 2: Identifying, Describing and Locating” in order to reinforce knowledge of these three types of Copula verbs. Good luck!

I am sure the quiz was not complicated at all. As you could see, the three types of copula verb are easy to be recognized. As you saw, Equative copula is also referred to as an “identifying/specifying” copula verb. Bear in mind, Ascriptive is used to describe nouns; Equative is used to identify nouns; and Locative to show locations of nouns.

Dear students, now let’s review non-copula verbs and how they are used in sentence construction.

Non-copula verbs

Non-copula verbs are also called “DO” verbs because they need an auxiliary to build negative and interrogative structures. For example:

- Laura **has** two children
- Laura **doesn’t** have two children
- **Does** Laura have two children?



Have in mind that some verbs can be action and non-action verbs. It depends on the context the type they are performing, for example:

- Laura **looks** (state/non-action/copula)
- Laura is **looking** through the window. (action/non-copula)

Now, write your examples in notebook or Word document.

Let’s finish this unit with this last syntactic construction: Imperatives.



5.1.4. Imperative Constructions

As you might know, these constructions express commands or orders. They lack a subject; for that reason, the listener can convey that the message is being addressed as a “you”.

Examples:

- **Affirmative:** **Hurry up!** - (You) hurry up
- **Negative:** **Don't waste time!** (you) don't waste time.

Please, write your examples in notebook or Word document.

*It is also possible to use *do*-support in affirmative imperatives to show emphasis or politeness, for example:

Please, do be quiet.

Do take your time.

Based on what you have learned about these topics, work on the following activities.



Recommended learning activities

1. Write a funny story or anecdote from 200 – 250 words, in which you integrate all the types of constructions studied in this unit. Be creative!

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document

You have done an extraordinary job so far! I am sure you found the contents of this unit 5 somewhat familiar to you since they are topics you have studied before, but this time you have a new view of them from the perspective of Syntax. Remember that each of these types of syntactic constructions is important in language building and in coherent and natural communication.



2. Now, please take the self-assessment of unit 5 in order to assess your knowledge. Good luck!



Self-assessment 5

Dear student, check your knowledge by answering the following self-assessment. Good luck!

1. In English, the syntactic construction known as “passive voice” focuses on...
 - a. The doer of the action being done.
 - b. The agent of the action being done.
 - c. The receiver of the action being done.
2. Syntactic constructions take Nouns in the subject position; except...
 - a. Imperatives
 - b. Copulas
 - c. Active voice
3. The main characteristic of Active voice is that...
 - a. The performer of the action always takes the subject position.
 - b. The performer of the action always takes the object position.
 - c. The performer of the action is always a human being.
4. Passive voice is mainly used in cases in which...
 - a. we want to emphasize on who does the action and what is being done.
 - b. The doer of the action is most important to be mentioned.
 - c. the doer of the action is unknown or irrelevant.





5. The sentence “My students were asked to participate in the Olympics this year” belong to the _____ construction.

- a. Active voice
- b. Passive voice
- c. Middle voice

6. The subcategorization “NP + VP + NP” could be used for...

- a. Interrogative constructions.
- b. Declarative construction.
- c. Imperative constructions.

7. Which of the following sentences are in Middle voice? Choose TWO options.

- a. Ana sent me the copies last night.
- b. Byron was put in jail after his crime.
- c. This soup tastes salty.
- d. Charles shaved early morning.

8. Choose True or False.

Constructions are structures that can be used in isolated way.

- a. True
- b. False

9. Choose True or False

Copula constructions are always formed with the Verb BE

- a. True
- b. False

10. Match the clause with the corresponding type of Copula verb.

1. Lydia is tall

a. Equative

2. Lydia is over there

b. ascriptive

3. Lydia is my sister

c. Locative

[Go to the answer key](#)



Dear students, you did a wonderful job in this unit 5! Congratulations! Remember that you can attend the weekly tutorials or contact me in case you have questions or concerns in regards to these contents. Keep working hard!



Learning outcome 4:

Understands the role of syntax in discourse.

This learning outcome will be reached by studying the progress of language from its basics for clause and sentence formation to the construction of text and discourse. Besides, components such as grammatical devices will be applied in real contexts to note how English language is built in a coherent way.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 14

Unit 6. From Clauses and Sentences to Text and Syntax in Discourse

Dear students, as you know, we need to integrate many important syntactic elements in order to have coherent communication; some of these elements have already been studied in previous units. In this unit, we will study the ways in which language is produced by linking the categories of grammatical units such as words, phrases, clauses, and sentences.

In order to recall knowledge, let's check quickly the concepts of each one of these units through the following infographic.

[Structures to form language](#)

Before going to the creation of text and discourse, it is necessary to emphasize on the grammatical devices that are central to the organization of texts. These refer to the recognition of Aspect, Tense, and Voice.



6.1. Grammatical Devices

As you studied above, and in previous units, there are some elements that must be considered at the time of forming texts and discourse, such as using appropriate clauses and sentence structures.

These elements also deal with differentiating what Aspect, Tense, and Voice are. So, let's analyze what Grammatical Aspect refers to.

6.1.1. Grammatical aspect: Simple, Progressive, and Perfect aspect

Let's start by understanding what Aspect is. Burneo (2015) states that aspect is the name by which verbs are referred to, and the clauses in which they appear. In other words, aspect refers to the form verbs might take in different types of constructions. In addition, Miller (2008) argues that "aspect allows speakers and writers to present events as complete or as stretched out over time, as single occurrences or as repeated and habitual" (p. 158). Verbs play a very important role in aspect; that is why you need to be clear about the difference between stative (non-action) and dynamic (action) verbs (check again verbs studied in the previous unit, if needed).

In English, aspect has three main forms: Simple, Progressive and Perfect. However, some grammarian state also a Perfect-progressive Aspect. Let's study now what each one of them involves.

1. **Simple aspect:** It consists of the verb stem, considering the person used as subject (singular/plural); therefore, it determines if the verb should be inflected by using – s/-es in present; or –ed in past, or irregular verb forms. For example:

- Manuel **deserves** a second chance = Simple Aspect (present)
- Manuel **deserved** a second chance = Simple Aspect (past)
- Angela **sings** very well = Simple Aspect (present)
- Angela **sang** very well = Simple Aspect (past)



Dear students, you are invited to write further examples in your notebook or word document.

2. **Progressive aspect:** This is formed by verb phrases that include the verb *be* + *verb -ing (gerund)*. It occurs in continuous actions in present, past or future. It is important to mention that the progressive aspect does not refer only to the time of an event (this is also why it is closely related to Tense), but it also shows how the speaker perceives an event (ongoing or temporary; or as completed and permanent). As stated by Lessa and Salgado (2019), the progressive aspect is related to the idea of temporariness or extended duration of an event.

Examples:

- Lisa is playing the piano (ongoing action)
- Lisa is playing the piano very well (completed – in other words, she performs better now)

Now, you are invited to write further examples in your notebook or word document.



Dear students, remember that the progressive or continuous form includes both, tense and aspect (present or past) and aspect (verb -ing).

3. **Perfect aspect:** This aspect indicates the **completeness** of a verb. It includes the use of auxiliaries such as *have*, *has* (for present perfect) and *had* (for past perfect) + *verb in past participle*.
- **Present perfect:** It is used for actions that began in the past and continue into the present. As you will analyze, the time when the action happened is not directly specified, but sometimes the lapse of time is implicitly shown, and in some cases, it implicitly indicates that an action has been performed recently. For example:
 - Your students **have worked** really hard
 - Mary **has played** basketball for many years



- Luis **has run** all morning.

- **Past Perfect:** This tense is mostly used for actions that happened before a past event (indicates which happened first and second), in reported speech, and, in If-conditional sentences.

In **actions that happened before a past event**, check the analysis of the following sentence and then analyze the further examples presented, please:

When I arrived, Mary **had already fallen asleep**.

As you can see in this example, the first event that occurred was “María fell asleep” (1st action); then, “I arrived” (2nd action). That is how the order of events is presented.

Dear students, please identify the order of events in the examples below:



- George had not yet died by the time the police rescued him.
- Before I decided to move abroad, he had already made his decision.

Great job! I am sure it was no complicated at all! In the first case, the event 1 is *police rescued him*; then, *he died*; and in the other case, *he made his decision (action 1)*; then, *I decided to move abroad*.

Another case in which past perfect aspect is used in **reported speech**, such as in:

- Vanessa said that **you had already eaten** your piece of cake, so I ate the last one.
- She asked if **I had already sent the emails to all the staff**, but I couldn't reply.



And also, in **If-conditionals**, such as in:

If Ana had saved some money, she would have bought that beautiful house.

Now, write your own examples in a notebook or Word document, of this third aspect.

Dear students, it is important to know that some authors state that there is a fourth Aspect, which integrates the structures of Perfect Aspect and Progressive Aspect, which is called the “**Perfect-progressive aspect**”. This last one also takes a similar type of structure of perfect aspect; however, it also needs gerunds (progressive). For example:

- I have been working here since 1998. (The action began in the past but continues into the present)
- Mary had been crying when her mother got home. (Both actions occurred in an unspecific time in the past)

Write your examples in a notebook or Word document.

Good job, so far! Let's move please to the study of another important topic, which is Tense.

6.1.2. Tense: Past, Present, and Future

Tense and finiteness are very related since for a verb to be tensed (assigned a time of occurrence), it has to be finite. On the other hand, non-finite verbs (such as infinitives, gerunds, base forms) do not show the time when an action happens.

To understand *Time*, it is important to have in mind that the use of inflectional affixes added to some verbs determines the time when an action occurs (finite verbs). In this regard, please read the content of the following web page: “[Verbs: Tense](#)”, with the purpose of expanding your knowledge about verbal inflections in tensed structures.



Dear students, I am sure the review of this content helped you to comprehend better how verbs change (or are inflected) depending on the time an action occurs. As you could see, we may understand that most verbs change their morphological form in order to adapt to the semantic function the clause needs to express.

Let´s summarize some of the most general ideas about tense by analyzing the following table with concepts and examples:



Table 16
Past, present and future tense

| Tense | Characteristics | Examples |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Past tense | It is used for events or actions that have already been concluded at a specific time in the past. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fernando played football very well last weekend. (regular verb) Finished actions • José sent me a text message to apologize. (irregular verb) |
| Present tense | It is used for events that happen regularly as habits, routines, schedules, or are well known such as universal truths, and facts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luisa usually arrives early (habit) • Fred wakes up at 6 am. (routine) • Juan loves rock music (fact) • The Earth revolves around the sun (truth) • The meeting is at 11. (scheduled event) |
| | Another use is in performative actions (with performative verbs promise, sentence, pronounce, command), mainly in legal and religious affairs; however, they can also be used in more common situations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I pronounce you husband and wife. • The jury sentence you to life imprisonment. • "I promise to pay you back next week" (More common performative use) |
| Future tense | The verbs are not inflected; however, auxiliaries are used instead. This is used for events that have not taken place yet. As aforementioned, for this tense we need to use auxiliaries such as <i>will</i> , <i>be going to</i> , or use modals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlos will be a good engineer • Vicky is going to buy a new apartment this year. • My sister might come for my birthday |



| Tense | Characteristics | Examples |
|-------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | As evidenced, the verb remains in its base form since the auxiliary is the one that states that the action will occur. |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

As you can notice, verbs in past and present (3rd p. singular) are inflected (need a suffix/change form), which differs from future tense in which the verb keeps its base form.

*Please, bear in mind that, as we reviewed previously in Aspect, the present perfect is a combination of both, the present tense and the perfect aspect. For example:

The old man has died

Aux (present) past participle to show aspect

Wonderfully done! Let's finish this section by recalling knowledge about a topic that was studied in unit 5, which deals with Voice.

6.1.3. Voice: Active, Passive and Middle (review)

Voice: It refers to the different constructions available for taking an event or state and presenting it from different perspectives.

Dear students, as it was mentioned in the previous unit, when we talk about Voice, we talk about the focus of our message. In other words, what is the most important we need to express: Who does/did the action? Who receives/d the action? What is being/was done?

Dear students, I invite you to work on the following activities in which you can integrate the main characteristics of Past and Present tenses and with the purpose to recall this knowledge.





Recommended learning activities

1. Write a short paragraph (150 – 200 words) about “Ecuadorian customs”. Use structures that contain inflected verbs (past or present).

Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document

Wonderfully done! Apart from reflecting on some customs of our country, you have also applied Tense in a real context! As you could notice, actions that happened at a specific time are inflected in a different way to verbs that occur in the present, mainly in the third person of singular.

2. I invite you to participate in the following quiz titled:

[Interactive resource Second bimester](#)

Great job! As you learned in the previous unit, Active Voice focuses on the person/agent who does an action, while Passive constructions refer or give emphasis to those NPs who receive or are affected by the action.

Similarly, remember that the Middle voice has some specific characteristics that combine both, active and passive constructions. This is due to that the structure of the middle voice follows the same structure of an Active construction; however, the message is understood as if the NP in the subject position is also affected by the action being done.



Dear students, we have completed the section on grammatical devices, and with this, we get ready to start reviewing the last contents of this unit, which are also very important to end the cycle of coherent language construction. Let's start so you understand what I refer to!





Week 15

Unit 6. From Clauses and Sentences to Text and Syntax in Discourse

Dear all, so far you have learned that any language, in this case English, is constructed following a series of steps, and Syntax can help us to understand this process of construction in depth. Previously, you analyzed how simple words and constituents become phrases, and these become clauses, which are used to form different types of sentences and constructions. Now, the process of communication does not function only by integrating all of them; of course, this integration is part of communication; however, further elements must be also considered.

Therefore, in these last parts of the content, you will find very important elements that serve to connect all those constructions and make them coherent. One of these refers to Entities. Let's analyze what they refer to and how important they are in language production.

6.2. New and Given Entities

In composition, when we say "entities", we refer to the actors/nouns that intervene in a conversation/writing. The definite article "the" and indefinite articles "a/an" usually introduce a **new entity** (e. g: *The* new teacher came late. *the* is introducing the entity "teacher" (noun) for the first time; *A* nurse came in this morning – "*A*" introduces the entity (noun) nurse.

On the contrary, when we already know the entity we are referring to, we can replace it by using: pronouns instead of nouns, demonstratives that/this/those/these, adverbs there/here, so, etc. Having this in mind, let's check what a given entity refers to.



A given entity is the one that **is mentioned for a second time** in the same writing/conversation/speech. Please, check the examples shown in the conversation below to understand how they are used (Red = new entities – Blue = Given entities):

A: **Mario and I** think that the doctor is lying about the diagnosis **he** (the doctor) gave **us** (Mario and I) yesterday.

B: I am afraid that's (the fact the doctor lied) true. It cannot be possible that both of you (Mario and the speaker) suffer the same illness having different symptoms.

A: Yeah! They (the symptoms) are completely different.

B: I think **he** (the doctor) is mistaken, or maybe the lab you went to have the exams done is not so trustworthy.

A: But **he** (the doctor) told us to go there (the lab). So, I guess **we** (Mario and I) should not trust him (the doctor) anymore.

B: Well, all I know is that by doing so (lying), **he** (the doctor) could disappoint his (the doctor's) patients.

As you can see in the short conversation above, given entities help listeners to keep track of the nouns being referred to in the conversation. This also serves to avoid repetition. Nevertheless, when the structure/conversation is too long, then we should mention the entity again (once in a while) in order to prevent misunderstandings.

Dear students, I am sure that all of you have applied given entities in any everyday interaction, haven't you? Given entities also have the purpose of enriching our communication and making it more natural and coherent. Now, dear all, let's continue with another very important topic, which is also key for coherent communication. This has to do with "Punctuation".



6.3. Punctuation

When we talk about text building, it becomes fundamental to mention that punctuation plays a very important role. Punctuation has to do directly with the length of sentences and the correct ways to divide ideas and connect them coherently. Be careful, this is not only for text, but also for all forms of discourse (spoken, visual, audial, etc.).

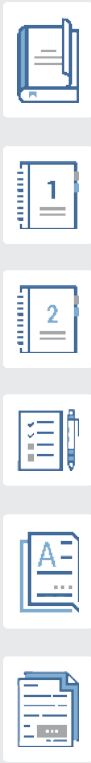
Dear students, please check the websites "[Punctuation](#)" and "[Basic Rules of Punctuation](#)" in order to analyze each of the rules for the different punctuation marks we normally use in English language. Both sources provide examples and complement each other in terms of explanation of each punctuation rule.

How was the review? I hope you got to clear up ideas about some of the rules and the use of accurate punctuation marks. You can check an example of a general set of punctuation marks applied in the table below. Check how the some of the rules (in colors) are applied in the example.



Table 17
Punctuation rules

| Punctuation rules | Example |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Always start a sentence with capital letter. | |
| 2. Use Capital letters when writing proper nouns and titles (official names like titles of books, movies, institutions, geographical areas, or honorific titles). | |
| 3. Use a period (.) at the end of declarative statements. | |
| 4. Use a question mark (?) at the end of interrogative constructions. | |
| 5. Use a comma (,) to indicate a break or pause within a sentence (in some cases, extra information is presented between commas) | <p>Today, there is a kind of fad or trend that people have started to use punctuation in the least possible manner. However, it doesn't matter if punctuation is used a lot or less, it should always be used in the correct manner so that the writer can convey to readers what he or she wants to actually tell or express. In this regard, the wrong use of punctuation can sometimes change the whole meaning of the sentence; therefore, it can be inferred that punctuation is powerful and holds one of the most important places in English language. Thus, the mastery of the use of punctuation is very important to know the subtle nuances of this foreign language. Also, it is worth mentioning that punctuation is made up of different parts called "punctuation marks", which include: apostrophes, periods, commas, question marks, exclamation marks, quotation marks, hyphens and dashes, parentheses, brackets, colons, semi-colons, among others. Is every punctuation mark governed by a different set of rules?</p> |
| 6. Use comma (,) when listing items in a series (in some cases, the comma can be omitted before the last item) | |
| 7. Use a comma (,) after an introductory phrase. | |
| 8. When a colon (:) introduces a list of things, do not capitalize the first word after the colon unless it is a proper noun. | |
| 9. Use a semicolon (;) to separate two related but independent clauses. It marks the end of one independent clause and the start of another within a single sentence. In cases in which the sentences are too | |



| Punctuation rules | Example |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | long, then it is better to split them up by using a period (full stop) instead of a semicolon. |

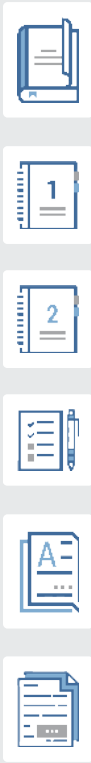
Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

As you could notice here and study in the websites, each mark has its specific characteristics and uses; therefore, all of them are important in communication. Dear students, having this in mind, please reinforce your knowledge by applying correct punctuation marks to the following paragraph:

Learning English as a foreign language has always been a challenging process however the benefits offered to the person who learns it really worth it first proficient English language users are more likely to get better job opportunities better academic results at school access to broader information among others furthermore all fields of study require a certain knowledge of this language which demands at least a basic domain of linguistic skills of learners in order to be capable to cope with different responsibilities therefore it can be said that English language proficiency is somehow mandatory for each person who wants to get personal and professional success.

Great job! I am sure this activity was any complicated for you! Remember that punctuation is very important to transmit well-structured and comprehensible messages. You may check the correction below in order to compare yours:

Learning English as a foreign language has always been a challenging process; however, the benefits offered to the person who learns it really worth it. First, proficient English language users are more likely to get better job opportunities, better academic results at school, access to broader information, among others. Furthermore, all fields of study require a certain knowledge of this language, which demands at least a basic domain of linguistic skills of learners in order to



be capable to cope with different responsibilities. Therefore, it can be said that English language proficiency is somehow mandatory for each person who wants to get personal and professional success.

Dear all, now let's move to the construction of longer language structures in which composition plays a fundamental role.

6.4. Topic and Theme

Even though these two terms might sound similar, there are some differences among them. Let's analyze what Topic and Theme refer to. According to Burneo (2015) "theme is a broad idea, message, or moral of a story" (p. 157) that often explores timeless and universal ideas based on a reflection about society, education, politics, values, human nature, among others.

The main difference between topic and theme is that the TOPIC is the explicit subject matter, while Theme is the implicit message reflected from a piece of writing (usually novels, stories, etc.). For instance, if the topic is Corruption and Poverty; the theme would be the reflections that can be stated from this topic; such as "Corruption is the worst social disease that causes poverty".

In order for a piece of writing to be relevant and meaningful, we need to think carefully about its "theme" and "end-focus" (conclusion). If we are clear about what we want to write, then the following steps become easier. For this reason, as the topic (and theme) is the starting point to construct a piece of writing, then it needs to agree with the arguments provided all throughout the text (we can also use sub-themes/topics) and of course, the concluding section. In other words, the focus has to be clear, relevant, and aligned from the beginning to the end of the writing.





Dear students, please think about a topic you would like to write about through an essay. Reflect also on the possible theme that will be the message of the text.

- Topic
- Theme

Now, dear all, let's start organizing this process to construct your text!

6.5. Organizing and Writing Coherent Text

In order to create a good piece of writing, we need to start by understanding what coherence is. According to Literary Devices (2018) "in a composition, coherence is a literary technique that refers to logical connections, which listeners or readers perceive in an oral or written text". In other words, coherence refers to a construction that is logical, consistent, meaningful, and can easily be understood as a whole by the listeners or readers.

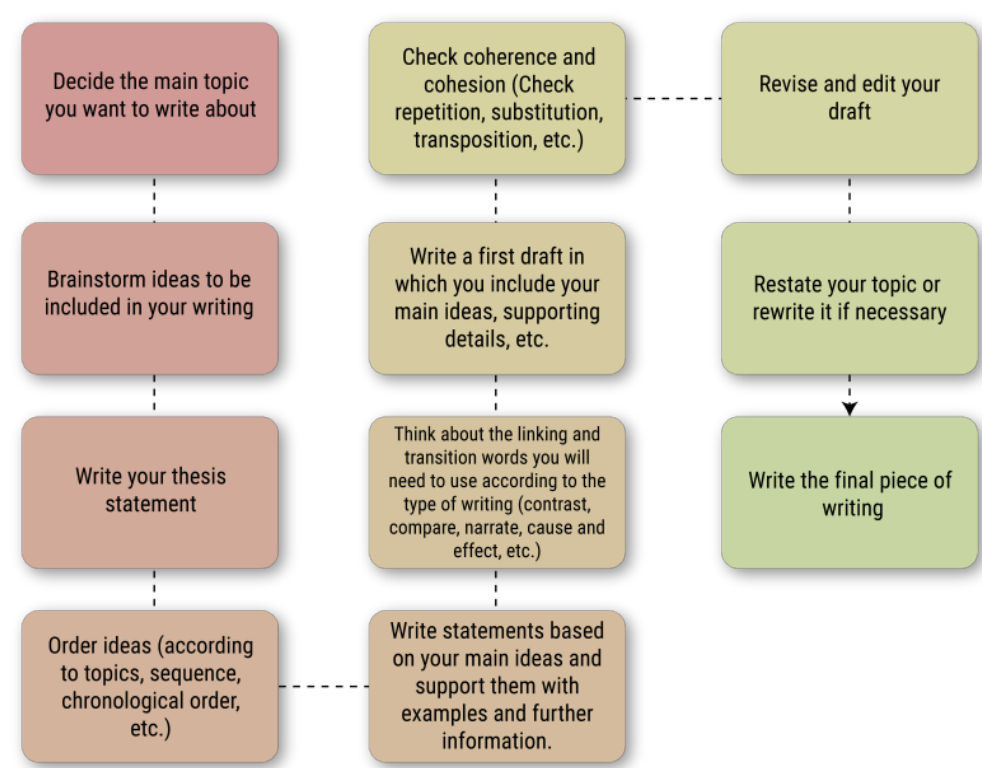
As stated in Literary Devices (2018), the types of coherence can be:

- **Local Level Coherent Text:** In this type of text, coherence occurs within small portions of a passage or a text.
- **Global level Coherent Text:** In this type of text, coherence takes place within the whole text of a story or essay, rather than in its few parts.

Similarly, another important point to have in mind when writing is to take into account the steps we need to follow in order to keep it coherent. These steps are expose in the following figure:



Figure 15
Steps for writing coherent text



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

*We can use synonyms, pronouns, possessives, etc., in order to avoid repetition and lack of coherence.

Now, as a way to practice on these topics, please work on the following activities.



Recommended learning activities

1. Write a short conversation (or anecdote, or any piece of writing) including new and given entities. Be creative! Remember, the more you practice, the more you learn!



Note. Complete this activity in a notebook or Word document

Greatly done! Applying new and given entities in any piece of writing or discourse is not a big deal since we normally do it naturally. Did you notice? I am sure you did!

2. Dear student, draft and brainstorm some ideas to write your own essay, you can use the first part of [Annex 3. Template](#) as guidance.

Now that you have already decided the topic to write the text, some key ideas about it, and after studying this unit, I invite you all to start working on your essay. This has to be done taking into account all the aforementioned contents. Use the topic you already wrote before to write a theme for your essay. Also, use the ideas you had previously in order to write the topic sentences and start providing arguments. To complete this part, you can use the template provided in the second part of the Annex 3.

Great job dear students! I am sure you worked wonderfully in this last activity. Make sure that your essay contains: appropriate constructions, good punctuation, good grammar structures, coherence, among other elements that can enrich your composition. Remember that language is constructed in accurate forms that contribute to proficient communication, either written or spoken.

So, dear all, this brings us to the end of the study of the contents of the second bimester. You have worked very hard! Congratulations! Remember that if you have questions or concerns about the contents, you can always contact me in the tutorials or through all the communication means established by the University.

3. Now, it is time to test your knowledge by taking the self-assessment 6. Good luck!





Self-assessment 6

Dear student, check your knowledge by answering the following self-assessment. Good luck!

1. Grammatical Aspect allows language users to...
 - a. Define the time when an action takes place.
 - b. Decide the relevance of the agents performing an action.
 - c. Present events as complete, stretched out over time, repeated or with single occurrence.
2. Which of the following options has to do with Tense?
 - a. Present, past, future.
 - b. Simple, progressive, and perfect.
 - c. Active, passive, middle.
3. Performative Constructions can be used in common situations in simple present tense; however, they are mainly used for...
 - a. actions that are habitual as routines
 - b. legal and religious affairs
 - c. actions that will happen at any time
4. Semantic units of language in use include Text and Discourse, both are fundamental in coherent communication, which means that they...
 - a. are semantically and pragmatically coherent in real communication.
 - b. are used to form correct grammatical structures.
 - c. are specific structures used to express a single message.
5. When a Noun needs to be referred back to for a second time in a piece of text or discourse, it takes the name of...
 - a. Repeated noun.



- b. Restated subject.
- c. Given entity.

6. One important characteristic of a good text construction deals with _____, which signals the length of ideas and appropriate division of ideas.

- a. Theme
- b. Punctuation
- c. Coherence

7. It is generally accepted that there are strong dependency relations between two phrases or two clauses; but, speakers of English cannot predict where sentences will occur in texts. However, speakers use some links to join sentences in order to produce coherent paragraphs. Examples of these links are:

- a. Due to, because, so that, and others
- b. Who, that, which, and others.
- c. Nevertheless, consequently, moreover, and others.

8. A text to be coherent must have a “theme (message)” and an “end-focus”. The theme is the starting point and the end-focus is the closing point. Therefore, ...

- a. the end-focus is what the text refers to.
- b. the end-focus is a bridge between two clauses.
- c. the theme is what the text refers to.

9. Choose True or False

The role of voice is to give emphasis on the purpose of a syntactic construction; if it is to highlight the doer or receiver of any action.

- a. True
- b. False



10. What is the difference between “Local Coherence” and “Global Coherence” in text construction?

Note. Please complete the question in a class notebook or Word document.

[Go to the answer key](#)



Dear students, Great job! I am sure this last self-assessment helped you reinforce your knowledge on the contents on unit 6. Congratulations! Remember that you can attend the weekly tutorials or contact me in case you have questions or concerns in regards to these contents. Congratulations for having finished all the contents of the second bimester successfully!



Learning outcomes 3 and 4:

- Analyses clauses, sentences and text through tree- diagrams.
- Understands the role of syntax in discourse.

Contents, resources and recommended learning activities



Week 16

Final midterm activities

Dear students, we have reached the end of unit 6, and therefore, the end of the second semester. First of all, I want to congratulate you for all your hard work all through this semester, I am sure all your efforts will allow you to obtain much success in your academic life.

As a way to recall the knowledge acquired during the second bimester, I invite you to work on this last recommended activity.



Recommended learning activity

Please, draw a graphic organizer in which you include the main contents studied during the second bimester. You can be as much creative as you prefer. Then, have this organizer at hand as a way to summarize relevant information that will help you to recall the acquired knowledge and be ready for the test. Feel free to use any other tool to design your graphic organizer.

Note. Please, complete this activity in a notebook, Word document or computer program.





Great job! I am sure that now you are ready to take the Second Bimester evaluation. I wish you the best of lucks! Remember you can contact me in case you need any further help. Keep working hard!





4. Answer keys

Self-assessment 1

| Question | Answer | Retroalimentación |
|----------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | b | Syntax deals with the order of words, clauses, etc., and how sentences are formed, while grammar deals with the rules and lexicon with word items. |
| 2 | a | Entries are all the words included in a dictionary |
| 3 | a | Adjuncts are optional since they provide extra information to the clause, but the meaning or coherence is not altered by their absence. |
| 4 | b | "Boy" is the Head since it holds full meaning; it is a Noun, then it is a Noun Phrase. |
| 5 | b, c | Modifiers include both complements and adjuncts, as they provide additional information to the main elements in a sentence. |
| 6 | a, c | "very well" = both are adverbs; "Every day" = every day is an adverb since it describes the frequency something is done. |
| 7 | b | They are not synonyms since they have different roles in sentence construction. Structure refers to the order of words and function to their relation within a sentence. |
| 8 | a | Omitting words is one form of knowing which of the words functions as the head of a phrase |
| 9 | "very", "every day" | Adjuncts: • "very" (modifying the degree of how hard Clara works) • "every day" (modifying the frequency of Clara's work) |
| 10 | "her arguments" | Complements can take various forms depending on the verb. In this case, "her arguments" is the direct object of the verb "refused," and it functions as the complement. |

[Go to the self-assessment](#)



Self-assessment 2

| Question | Answer | Retroalimentación |
|----------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | a | Music is the instrument that makes the person feel in such a way. |
| 2 | c | The subject "Mary" is the agent doing the action "study". |
| 3 | b | Intransitive verbs do not need to take objects since they have complete meaning, and in some other cases, they would be incoherent if added an object. |
| 4 | b | Very often are both adverb; therefore, the phrase is and Adv.P. |
| 5 | a | The verb Play is preceded by a Noun, and then an adverb |
| 6 | a | Oblique object is also known as the Object of a preposition since it introduced by a preposition after the direct object). |
| 7 | a, c | Both options <i>anxious</i> and <i>very excited</i> provide further information about the same subject, while the other options refer to actions being done. |
| 8 | a | Adjectives can be complemented by other phrases such as Noun phrases, Infinitival phrases, Prepositional phrases,... |
| 9 | b | Many nouns need No complement, such as in the case of "The cat..." while others can be complemented by prepositional and infinitival phrases |
| 10 | b | Bryan is the agent who did the action "play", he is not causing it |

[Go to the self-assessment](#)



Self-assessment 3

| Question | Answer | Retroalimentación |
|----------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | a | It shows agreement between the subject “the child”, which is third person of singular, with the verb “cry” which is inflected due to it is in third person of singular. |
| 2 | a | It is giving two options which are in singular. |
| 3 | b | The noun that is preceding the verb is in plural; therefore, the verb agrees with this one. |
| 4 | c | The noun that is preceding the verb is in plural; therefore, the verb agrees with this one. |
| 5 | b | In the case described, the verb is followed by two noun phrases (direct and indirect objects), indicating a ditransitive construction. |
| 6 | c | “the new books” answer to the question “What”; then, it is referred as to direct object within the sentence. |
| 7 | a | Formal = structure; Notional = meaning. |
| 8 | a, b | Objects can be people or things affected by the action of the verb. |
| 9 | Neuter, masculine, masculine, feminine, neuter | In English, nouns lack inherent gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter) as seen in some languages. Gender is often linked to biological sex or remains neutral. |
| 10 | b | Adjectives can be used independently of the number and noun described. |

[Go to the self-assessment](#)



Self-assessment 4

| Question | Answer | Retroalimentación |
|----------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | c | tree diagrams are used to illustrate the structure of a language and how constituents are arranged within a grammatical construction. |
| 2 | a | perspective refers to the intention the speaker has when transmitting a message and its relation of subordinators that make part of the sentence. |
| 3 | b | sentences are longer structures that also include adjuncts which provide them with further meaning |
| 4 | c | a complex sentence is composed by a main plus a subordinate clause connected by a subordinating conjunction. |
| 5 | a | they are formed by clauses from which at least one should be subordinate, and two main clauses. |
| 6 | a, d | “next month” and “before passing away” are adjuncts. In sentence (a), “next month” is an adjunct, providing information about when Carlos and Manuel decided to travel. In sentence (d), “before passing away” is an adjunct, specifying the timing of Juan Carlos leaving his fortune. |
| 7 | b | Nouns phrases can be located in any part of a syntactical/ grammatical construction, either as subjects or objects. |
| 8 | a | The main clause is a complete structure that can stand alone since it is coherent enough to be understood. |
| 9 | b | Compound sentences are formed by at least two Main clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction. |
| 10 | 1-b 2-c 3-a | “that” = complement of the verb learn. “because” = expresses the perspective reason. “who” = relative pronoun referred to “she” (subject). |

[Go to the self-assessment](#)



Self-assessment 5

| Question | Answer | Retroalimentación |
|----------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | c | In English, the syntactic construction known as “passive voice” shifts the focus from the doer or agent of the action to the receiver or target of the action. |
| 2 | a | Imperatives omit Nouns in the subject position; however, they are understood as having an implicit “you” as subject |
| 3 | a | Doer or performer of the action is located in the subject position in an active structure. |
| 4 | c | In passive voice, the focus is on the receiver of the action since who does it is unknown or not important. |
| 5 | b | “students” are the Nouns who received the action (message); that makes the clause a passive construction. |
| 6 | b | Declarative construction takes NP in the subject position, while interrogatives need verb BE, or auxiliary, WH-words; and Imperative take a Verb in the first position. |
| 7 | c, d | “This soup” takes the subject position (doer is not defined); however, it implies that this is also receiving the action “taste”; and “Charles” did the action and received the action. |
| 8 | b | Constructions are not isolated structures, but they fit into a general system of patterns. |
| 9 | b | Copula constructions can also use linking verbs |
| 10 | 1-b 2-c 3-a | The adj. “tall” is describing the noun Lydia; “over there” refers to a location; and the noun “Lydia” and the noun “my sister” are the same person; then they are equivalents. |

[Go to the self-assessment](#)



Self-assessment 6

| Question | Answer | Feedback |
|----------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | c | Aspect defines the types of events; if they routines, ongoing actions, etc. |
| 2 | a | In English three main tenses are recognized; these are Present, Past, and Future |
| 3 | b | Performative verbs such as “promise, sentence, pronounce, command” are mainly in legal and religious affairs. |
| 4 | a | The process of communication includes the correct use of language not only in terms of syntactic use, but also semantic and pragmatic use. |
| 5 | c | Given entities refer to the use of nouns that have been previously stated in the piece of discourse. |
| 6 | b | Punctuation is in charge of dividing ideas to make them understandable and make the whole text or discourse more coherent. |
| 7 | c | “a” and “b” are used to link subordinating clauses to form sentences; but option in letter “c” join those complete sentences to form paragraphs. |
| 8 | c | Theme refers to reflection or message being discussed or written. |
| 9 | a | Voice focuses on the role of the Noun used as subject; if it is the doer of receiver of an action |
| 10 | | Local Level Coherent Text: Coherence within small portions/parts of a passage or a text. / Global level Coherent Text: Coherence within the whole text of a story or essay. |

[Go to the self-assessment](#)





5. Bibliographic references

- Burton-Roberts, N. (2016). *Analyzing Sentences: An Introduction to English Syntax*. (4th Ed). Routledge.
- Burneo, R. M. (2015). *Didactic Guide for Syntax and Teaching Grammar: Restructured*. EdiLoja, UTPL.
- Carter, R. & McCarthy, M. (2006). *Cambridge Grammar of English*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lessa, A., & Salgado, M. (2019). Aspect in the English language: a comparative analysis of form and meaning in traditional descriptive grammars. *DELTA: Documentação de Estudos em Lingüística Teórica e Aplicada*. 35(4). <https://doi.org/10.1590/1678-460X2019350401>
- Miller, J. (2008). *An Introduction to English Syntax*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Mignot, E. (2012). The Conceptualization of Natural Gender in English. *Anglophonia/Sigma*. 16(32). 39-61. <https://doi.org/10.4000/anglophonia.140>
- Shrives, C. (n.d). What Is Number? (with Examples). <http://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/number.htm>
- Strömberg, S. (n.d). Syntax trees for visualizing language structure. <https://www.languagestructure.se/basic-syntax-trees.html>
- Surbhi, S. (March 7, 2019). Difference Between Syntax and Grammar. <https://keydifferences.com/difference-between-syntax-and-grammar.html>



The Writer's Dictionary (2021). What is a Subject Complement? Definition, Examples of Subject Complements. <https://writingexplained.org/grammar-dictionary/subject-complement>





6. Annexes



Annex 1. Morpho-Syntactic Criteria (Shape)

Deal with inflectional suffixes and the syntactic agreement (gender, number, person) or government. This means that complement and verb must agree in person and number in order to be coherent.

E.g:
A dog bark**s**
Dog**s** bark

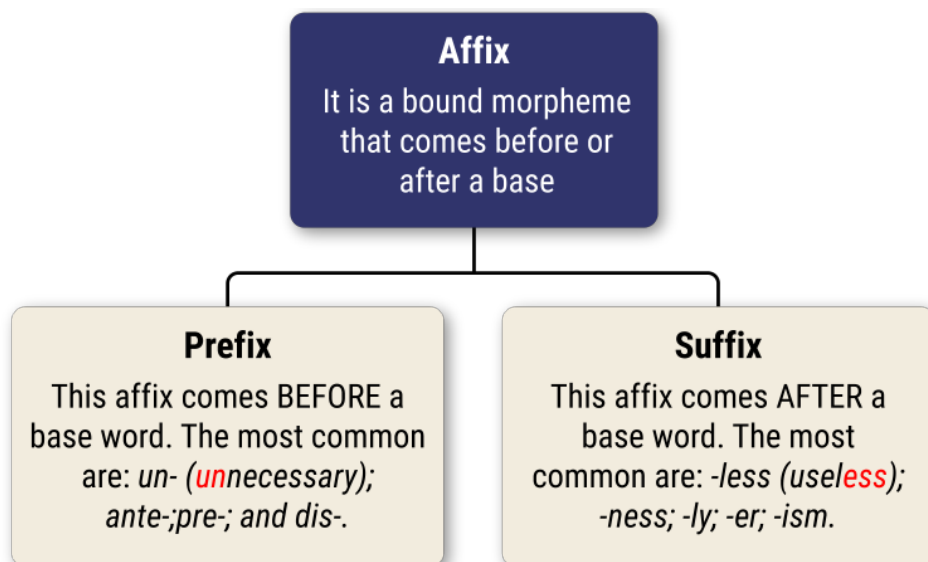
Plural
orpheme

But also in cases like plurals: Table = **TABLES**
N suffix

Here, it is necessary to bear in mind that words have morphological properties concerning to the use of morphemes. The morphological part of this criteria deals with word formation and with derivational and inflectional affixes (prefixes and suffixes).

Figure 1

Affixes



Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES

They deal with word derivation. These might alter the meaning of a word by building on a BASE. Therefore, some words can change the grammatical category or part of speech by using derivational morphemes (e. g: Beauty – beautiful, read - reader). However, they can merely change the meaning of the base, while leaving the category unchanged (write – rewrite, circle – encircle).

The number of derivational affixes is open-ended. Here are some derivational combinations:

Table 1
Derivational combinations

| Derivational combination | | Example |
|--------------------------|-------|---------------------|
| Adjective-to-noun | -ness | mad <u>ness</u> |
| Adjective-to-verb | -ize | Real <u>ize</u> |
| Adjective-to-adjective | -ish | Redd <u>ish</u> |
| Adjective-to-adverb | -ly | Personall <u>y</u> |
| Noun-to-adjective | -al | person <u>al</u> |
| Noun-to-verb | -fy | Identif <u>y</u> |
| Verb-to-noun (abstract) | -ance | Deliver <u>ance</u> |
| Verb-to-noun (agent) | -er | read <u>er</u> |
| Verb-to-adjective | -able | Read <u>able</u> |

Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

INFLECTIONAL AFFIXES

These are grammatical variants of the same word, but holding the same meaning. For instance, the “s” is added at the end of verbs in third person of singular.

E. g:

She plays – *plays continues* to have the same meaning as the base *play*.
Do – Doing

There are 8 Types of inflectional affixes (all are suffixes), they serve the following grammatical functions:

1. Noun plural (-s) =
2. Noun possessive ('s) =
3. Verb present tense in third person of singular (-s) =
4. Verb present participle/gerund (-ing) =
5. Verb simple past tense (-ed) =
6. Verb, past perfect participle (-en) =
7. Adjective comparative (-er) =
8. Adjective superlative (-est) =

SEMANTIC CRITERIA (MEANING)

It refers to what speakers do with words (to ask questions, issue commands, make statements, etc.). A key concern is how meaning attaches to larger chunks of text, possibly as a result of the composition from smaller units of meaning. Traditionally, semantics has included the study of **sense** and denotative **reference**, **truth conditions**, argument structure, **thematic roles**, **discourse analysis**, and the linkage of all of these to syntax.

According to the semantic rules, words are classified as:

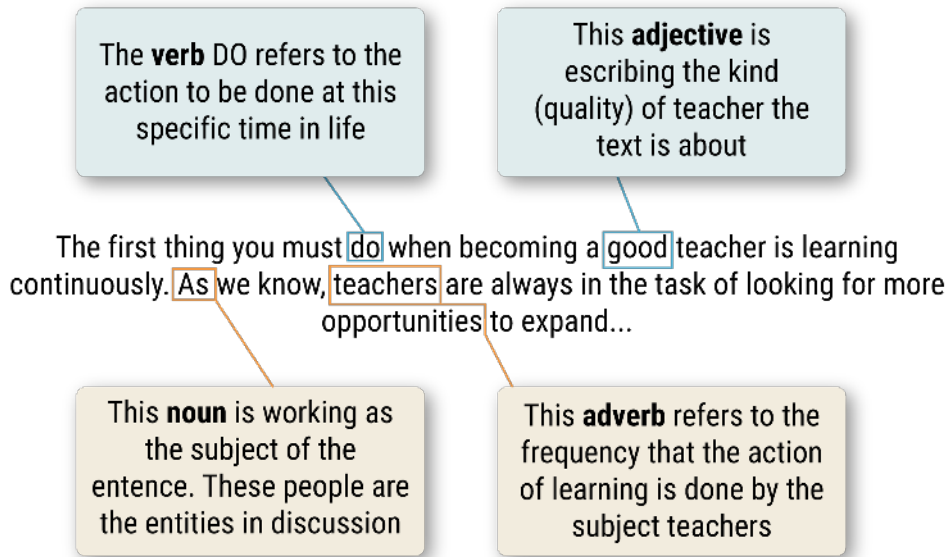
- **Verbs** – To denote actions
- **Nouns** – to denote entities
- **Adjectives** – to denote condition or state
- **Adverbs** – to denote place, manner, time, etc.
- **Prepositions** – To show different perspectives as time, location and place (in, at, over, etc).

Activity

Write a short paragraph in which you show the semantic criteria of the words aforementioned. For example:

Figure 2

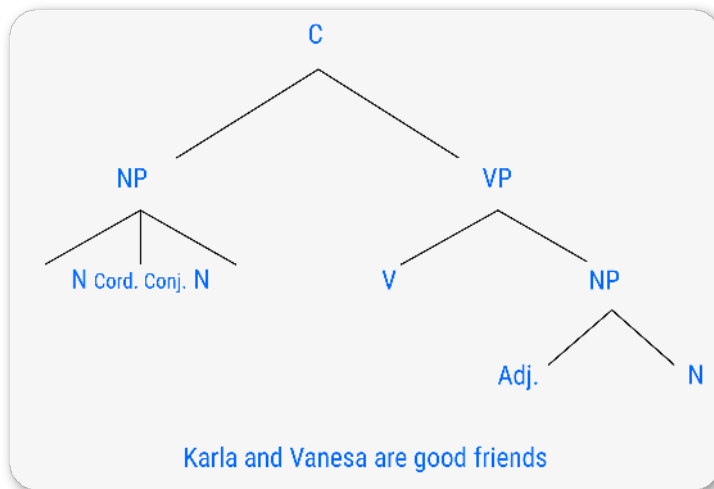
Example



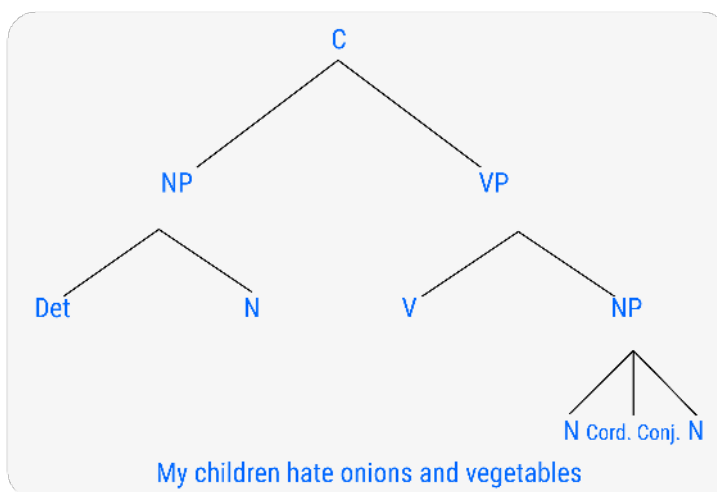
Note. Vivanco, L., 2024.

Annex 2. Tree Diagrams

C: Karla and Vanesa are good friends



C: My children hate onions and vegetables



Annex 3. Template

First part

Topic: _____

Idea 1: _____

Idea 2: _____

Idea 3: _____

Second part

Title: _____

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal lines spaced evenly down the page. Each set typically consists of three lines: two outer lines defining the height of capital letters and a middle dashed line indicating the height of lowercase letters. The entire page is otherwise empty, with no margins, text, or other markings.

References: