

# **RYTHMS AND INFORMATION IN SYNTAX, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PHRASE STRUCTURE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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**T**he phrase is usually one group of words that are pronounced together with a spirit and to convey a certain fact or information to the reader or interlocutor. The rhythm consists in the pause the speaker makes while pronouncing a sentence, where comes to expression the process of lowering and raising the voice between the phrases. In this situation comes also to expression the criterion for the number of information as well as the prevalence of the main information identifying the key word of the phrase, as a result of the theoretical question which is information or a firsthand fact that is being conveyed to the interlocutor during the conversation or in the written text, which falls more in the eye in relation to the others. These two criteria are in fact the key and the instrument for the scientific identification of the border between phrases.

**Keywords:** rhythmic group, headword, modifiers, diagrams, criteria, etc.

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## **1. Introduction**

The sentence as the biggest syntactic entity is a complexive relation of a group of phrases and clauses. On the other side, the phrase is the smallest syntactic entity, I usually one group of words that are pronounced together with a spirit and serve to convey a certain fact or information to the reader or interlocutor.

The boundary between phrases and clauses within the sentence is not very strict, since among them there is a broader semantic and syntactic interweaving, affecting among others, the relations of predominance and subordination between them. On the other side, the boundary between phrases is even more complex, having into the consideration that they must have only one key — i.e. headword, whereas the other words and group(s) of words are in the function of modifiers.

Still there are some decisive factors for identifying the dividing limits between phrases, related to the way of pronunciation and the number of information to be conveyed to the interlocutor or the reader of the text.

The phonetic criterion is one of these main factors for the creation of this special syntactic category, strictly related to the semantic criterion for identifying the key word within the phrase.

Namely, the number of rhythmical groups in the sentence or the group of words pronounced altogether i.e. in a breath gives the number of the phrases, similarly to the sentence constituents or the protagonists of the event, described with the sentence. These groups of words are pronounced by the reader spontaneously and self-consciously without paying attention where to stop and make a rest, before going on with the pronunciation. This is in fact the reason for the existence and the differentiation of the phrase(s) as a syntactic phenomenon and smallest syntactical unit, within a bigger unit called clause as well as the biggest syntactical unit, called sentence.

On the other hand, within a sentence, there is a certain number of information to be conveyed to the co-speaker or the text reader. This number of information gives in the same time the number of phrases within a sentence. Even more, there is a certain level of a chain of hierarchy between them, making some of them more relevant than the others, as a result of theoretical question which is information or a firsthand fact that is being conveyed to us during the conversation, which falls more in the eye in relation to the others?

Just the reading a certain group of words together i.e. at once, with one breath is only a theoretical starting point for the assumption of their actual existence. To verify this assumption we are left with the semantic criterion, which means the existence of the most relevant fact(s) or information, compared to the second hand and less relevant information used to specify and complement it/them.

To illustrate this, we can be analyze several factors that make up the structure of an event or situation within a sentence that reflects the same situation. Consequently, the protagonist of the event is reflected by the Nominal phrase (NPh), while the action i.e. the event or the actor's situation is reflected through the lexical verb expressed by the verbal phrase (VPh).

Based on this, we can find out which fact or what information is most relevant and important to the hearer or the lecturer-the fact that who performed the action as such? For example: Is it more important for the listeners that a certain theft has happened, or the person who committed the theft? What's more interesting and what

comes first to the reader, the fact that general elections are taking place or who organizes and who participates in the elections?! As a response, it is more than evident what is the more important and more obvious information for the human ears or eyes. So, no one cares about who has stolen something, but more interesting as a fact is the stealing action, or the held elections as a particular event.

This is also the reason that determines the relation of dominance or subject-matter to one another. Consequently, the pattern or the model is as follows: VP > NP, since the verb necessarily prevails over the name, as a necessary means of centralized communication, or as the indispensable and unavoidable element of a sentence, that transmits communication messages between people. After all, without the verb there can be no sentence, and as a result, without the sentence there cannot even be an inter-personal communication.

The Verbal phrase is at the top of the hierarchy of the phrases because it prevails over all others, due to the importance of the action itself against the actors as well as the object of the action and the circumstances in which the action occurs.

In fact, in terms of semantic and communicative criterion during the conversation between the interlocutors, the fact that draws more attention is the event or the occurred action i.e. the elections, than the fact that who has committed or organized it (the organizing Board, political parties and the voters) and in what circumstances the action has occurred (the time period and the manner or place), e.g. a theft, a murder, etc.

Another relevant fact is that the verb or the predicator is historically considered the pivotal or the key element of the sentence, without which we cannot utter even one word to communicate, which means that we cannot communicate without a sentence, which consequently means that with no verb we cannot "speak" i.e. (*verb*) ally communicate!

### **2. Morphologic relevance and hierarchy between words as parts of speech.**

This is crucial for defining relations of dominance and dependence between phrases and also coincides with the importance of parts of speech in relation to each other, particularly since even in the morphological level; the words have a certain hierarchy. So, the noun is more important in relation to the adjective, since the adjective serves to qualify and determine the noun.

e.g., this big rock, beautiful girl, scientific book

On the other hand, in the morphological level, the adjective phrase is in superior position in relation to an adverb, for the fact that the surname can be “escalated” or intensified by an adverb.

e.g. extremely high, very big, more determined

Consequently, in cases where we have two words of the same part of speech, e.g. N + N + PP or PP, is resolved with the use of semantic question: what is the topic of conversation in this case?

e.g. front door, computer desk, job advert, etc.

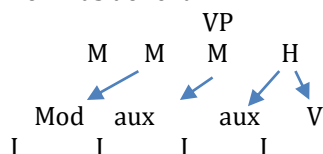
3. The semantic prevalence as a crucial role in determining the key phrase within a bigger group pronounced with a breath.

a. The verbal phrase prevails in relation to all the other phrases (VP>all Ph).

(PreM)	H	(PostM)
I	I	I
Paul	<u>has</u>	<u>worked</u>
		<u>hard</u>

Conclusion: VP=VP+Adv.Ph, because VP>Adv.Ph

Note: The fact that someone has worked hard prevails over the fact who has done and how has done it.



Might have been speaking(all the time) or (in the classroom)

Note: VP>NP>PP, therefore: VP=VP+NP, or VP=VP+PP;

The children /are all playing /joyfully/ in the schoolyard.

VP= are playing>NP=all>AP=joyfully>PP=P+NP

b. The nominal phrase prevails over the adjective phrase (NP<AdjP)

(PreM)	H	(PostM)
↙	↓	↓
I	I	I
All payments /related to the participation...		

Note: NP= NP+AdjP

Conclusion: The adjective always accompanies the noun, and is strictly placed close to the noun, because by its definition, it qualifies and determines the aspects of distance, possession, definition of the noun.

c. The nominal phrase prevails over the prepositional phrase (NP>PP)

e.g. The leg of the table.

(=the topic is about the leg, not the table)

Note: NP=NP+PP, because NP>PP

d. The adjective phrase prevails in relation to the adverbial phrase (AdjP>AdvP)

Entitled /fully and entirely/ to represent me.

H                      (PostM)

↑

↑

I                      I

Note: Adj=Adj.Ph>Adv.PH

Conclusion:

The adverbial phrase is always morphologically in the position of quantifier of intensifier of the adjective: e.g. very good, extremely strong, etc.

e. The Verbal Phrase prevails over the Prepositional Phrase (VP>PP)

e.g. The children playin the schoolyard.

Note: VP=VP+PP, because VP>PP

f. The Noun phrase becomes a part of the Verbal phrase only when succeeding it and never when preceded.

(The teacher) taughtthe students a new lesson.

(NP-                      VP+NP

Note: When the Nominal phrase is placed before the verbal phrase is never part of the Verbal phrase because it gives the doer of the action, as a sentence element, whereas the action itself is another relevant factor, and it's always pronounced separately, with a small pause between them.

Eventually, the number of sentence elements within the basic sentence patterns gives the number of the information and messages conveyed to the co-speaker or the text reader. Similarly the NP in the beginning of the sentence under the structural syntax

analysis is also a subject according to the functional syntax analysis, but simultaneously conveying one and single information about the doer of the action described with a transitive verb also followed by another NP now in the function of the Object, or the protagonist in the situation in case of an intransitive verb, followed by an adjunct according to the functional syntax.

On the other hand the Verbal phrase under the structural syntax analysis is in the same time the Predicator in the Sentence, as an information of the action or the situation of the Subject as the second fact or information conveyed or transferred to the interlocutor in the conversation.

Finally, the structural Prepositional phrase or the Adverbial Phrase presents in the same time the Adjunct according the functional syntax analysis as a third fact or information about the circumstances of the time, the place and the manner how an event has occurred.

Apparently, the aspect of the functional syntax analysis is only the other side of the medal, but the number of information or facts remains the same.

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