

## Noun Word-Groups In The English Language

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The phrase is a combination of two or more notional words which is a grammatical unit but is not an analytical form of some word. The main difference between the phrase and the sentence is in their linguistic function. The phrase is a nominative unit, the sentence is a predicative one. Nomination is naming things and their relations. A nominative unit simply names something known to everybody or a majority of native language speakers, recalling it from their memory, e.g.: a book, a departure. A phrase represents an object of nomination as a complicated phenomenon, be it a thing, an action, a quality or a whole situation.

Words are the constituent elements of the next rank, phrases. At the phrase rank, we discover that it is possible to analyze each structure in more than one way. To study this phenomenon more closely, we will look at phrase structure in English. English is a language with five classes of phrases, noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases, adverb phrases, and prepositional phrases. Word-groups can be classified on the basis of several principles:

a) According to the type of syntagmatic relations: coordinate (*you and me*), subordinate (*to see a house, a nice dress*), predicative (*him coming, for him to come*),

b) According to the structure: simple (all elements are obligatory), expanded (*to read and translate the text* – expanded elements are equal in rank), extended (a word takes a dependent element and this dependent element becomes the head for another word: *a beautiful flower - a very beautiful flower*). Subordinate word-groups are based on the relations of dependence between the constituents. This presupposes the existence of a governing.

Element which is called the head and the dependent element which is called the adjunct (in noun-phrases) or the complement (in verb-phrases).

According to the nature of their heads, subordinate word-groups fall into noun-phrases (NP) - *a cup of tea*, verb phrases (VP) - *to run fast, to see a house*, adjective phrases (AP) - *good for you*, adverbial phrases (DP) - *so quickly*, pronoun phrases (IP) - *something strange, nothing to do*. The formation of the subordinate word-group depends on the valency of its constituents. Valency is a potential ability of words to combine. Actual realization of valency in speech is called combinability.

Noun word-groups are widely spread in English. This may be explained by a potential ability of the noun to go into combinations with practically all parts of speech. A noun phrase has two parts: a noun, and any modifiers connected to that noun. Most often, these modifiers will be adjectives, articles, and prepositional phrases. The modifiers may also be determiners. Noun phrases often function as verb subjects and objects, as predicative expressions, and as the complements of prepositions. A noun group can also contain one or more modifiers. A modifier is an adjective, an adjectival phrase, a secondary noun, a prepositional phrase or a relative clause. Like all phrases, the constituents of the English noun phrase can be analyzed into both functional constituents and formal constituents. From a functional point of view, the noun phrase has four major components, occurring in a fixed order:

Three types of modification are distinguished here:

a) Premodification that comprises all the units placed before the head:

*two smart hard-working students.*

b) Post modification that comprises all the units all the units placed after the head: *students from Boston.*

c) Mixed modification that comprises all the units in both pre-head and post-head position: *two smart hard-working students from Boston.*

the *determinative*, that constituent which determines the reference of the noun phrase in its linguistic or situational context.

*In noun-phrases with pre-posed modifiers we generally find adjectives, pronouns, numerals, participles, gerunds, nouns, nouns in the genitive case. According to their position all pre-posed adjuncts may be divided into pre-adjectivals and adjectivals. The position of adjectivals is usually right before the noun-head. Pre-adjectivals occupy the position before adjectivals. They fall into two groups: a) limiters (to this group belong mostly particles): just, only, even, etc. and b) determiners (articles, possessive pronouns, quantifiers - the first, the last).*

Premodification of nouns by nouns (N+N) is one of the most striking features about the grammatical organization of English. It is one of devices to make our speech both laconic and expressive at the same time. Noun-adjunct groups result from different kinds of transformational shifts. NPs with pre-posed adjuncts can signal a striking variety of meanings:

*world peace - peace all over the world*

*silver box - a box made of silver*

*table lamp - lamp for tables*

*table legs - the legs of the table*

*river sand - sand from the river*

*school child - a child who goes to school*

The grammatical relations observed in NPs with pre-posed adjuncts may convey the following meanings:

- 1) *subject-predicate relations: weather change;*
- 2) *object relations: health service, women hater;*
- 3) *adverbial relations: a) of time: morning star,*  
*b) place: world peace, country house,*  
*c) comparison: button eyes,*  
*d) purpose: tooth brush.*

*It is important to remember that the noun-adjunct is usually marked by a stronger stress than the head.[1] special interest is a kind of 'grammatical idiom' where the modifier is reinterpreted into the head: a devil of a man, an angel of a girl.*

*NPs with post-posed may be classified according to the way of connection into preposition less and prepositional. The basic prepositionless NPs with post-posed adjuncts are: N adj. - tea strong, NVen - the shape unknown, NVing - the girl smiling, ND - the man downstairs, NVinf - a book to read, NNum - room ten.*

*The pattern of basic prepositional NPs is N1 prep. N2. The most common preposition here is 'of - a cup of tea, a man of courage. It may have quite different meanings: qualitative - a woman of sense, predicative - the pleasure of the company, objective - the reading of the newspaper, partitive - the roof of the house.*

Several forms classes can be "reused." For example, in the noun phrase it is possible to use quantifiers to function as pre-determiners or as post-determiners. This kind of "recycling" is known as *recursion*. Notice also that phrases and even whole clauses can be "recycled" into the noun phrase. This process of placing a phrase or clause within another phrase or clause is called *embedding*. It is through the processes of recursion and embedding that we are able to take a finite number of forms (words and phrases) and construct an infinite number of expressions. Furthermore, embedding also allows us to construct an infinitely long structure, in theory anyway. For example, the nursery rhyme "The House That Jack Built" plays on the process of embedding in English noun phrases. The nursery rhyme is one sentence that continuously grows by embedding more and more relative clauses as post modifiers in the noun phrase that ends the sentence.

This is the house that Jack built

This is the bread that lay in the house that Jack built  
This is the rat that ate the bread  
that lay in the house that Jack built  
This is the cat that killed the rat  
that ate the bread that lay in the house that Jack built

Finally, we can say that noun phrases have its own usage in English grammar and considered to be inseparable part of communication in our daily speech.

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