

# المحاضرة الرابعة

المادة: قواعد

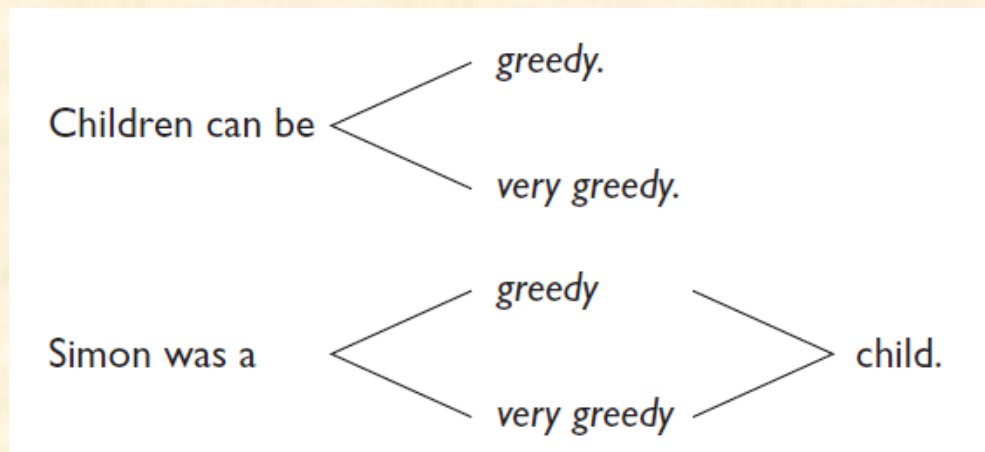
الفرقة: الثانية – لغة انجليزية – عام

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# **Noun Phrases**

**In a noun phrase, the main word is a noun, in a verb phrase, the main word is a verb and so on. Before looking at each of the five phrase types, a brief note on the word ‘phrase’.**

**In grammar, a ‘phrase’ can consist of just one word, the main word alone. For instance, we say that both *greedy* and *very greedy* are adjective phrases. Why not simply say that *greedy* is an adjective? This is because the same rules apply to adjectives and adjective phrases. The same positional rules apply to *greedy* and to *very greedy*:**



**Instead of saying each time ‘adjective or adjective phrase’, it is simpler to say ‘adjective phrase’, and thereby include adjectives. So when we talk about phrases, remember that they may consist of just one word.**

## I. Noun Phrases

**Noun phrases have the following basic structure:**

Determiner	Premodifier	Noun	Postmodifier
the	young	<i>boy</i>	who lives beside us

3.2

**A noun phrase can be described as any phrase consisting of a noun as its head (or central constituent) and is capable of functioning as an argument (e.g. Subject or object) in a sentence examples in which the head nouns are in bold type, are:**

- **My big green table**
- **The butter on the table**

**Some linguists argue that noun phrases are headed by nouns while others maintain that the head of a noun phrase should be determined (e.g. the definite article the in the butter on the table)**

## **The forms of the Noun Phrase**

**Determiners introduce noun phrases. Premodifiers and postmodifiers depend on the main word – the noun – and may be omitted.**

### ***1. Determiners***

**The most common determiners are the articles – the definite article *the* and the indefinite article *a/an*.**

***the*      tree**

***the*      books**

***a*        newspaper**

***an*      optician**

**Other determiners include:**

***1.1. Possessive pronouns***

***my*      **books****

***your*      **ideas****

***his*      **diet****

***our*      **house****

***their*      **problem****

***1.2. Demonstrative pronouns***

***this*      **book****

***that*      **car****



*these* buildings

*those* children

### *1.3. Numerals*

*one* page

*two* books

*second* chance

*fourth* paragraph

### *1.4. Each, every, all, both and some*

*each* child

*every* time

*all*      **types**

*some*      **sugar**

*both*      **children**

### *1.5. Many, more and most*

*many*      **years**

*more*      **food**

*most*      **people**

**With certain restrictions, determiners can co-occur in a noun phrase:**

*all the* **children**

*our first* **home**

*every second* week

*his many* talents

*all my many* relatives

**Determiners are unique to noun phrases. They do not occur in any of the other phrase types.**

## ***2. Premodifiers***

**Premodifiers in a noun phrase occur before the noun, and after any determiners which may be present. In a noun phrase, the premodifier is typically an adjective:**

*green* eyes

a *young* child

**some**     *beautiful* flowers

**Premodifiers can co-occur, that is, more than one adjective can premodify the same**

**noun:**

*Lovely*     *green* eyes

**an** *innocent* *young* child

**some** *beautiful* *yellow* flowers

**As well as adjectives, the following words can function as premodifiers in a noun phrase:**

### ***2.1. Nouns***

*bank* manager

*bedroom* window

*computer* manuals

the *Science* Museum

## **2.2. Genitive nouns**

***David's* homework                      the *President's* office**

**the *company's* accounts              our *child's* school**

## **3. Postmodifiers**

**Postmodifiers in a noun phrase occur after the noun, and are most commonly prepositional phrases introduced by *of*:**

**a piece *of cheese*                      the rotation *of the earth***

**the top *of the hill*                      a biography *of Mozart***

**a view *of the sea*                      the Museum *of Mankind***

**The postmodifier may also be introduced by other prepositions:**

**the house *on the hill***

**the Museum *in Kensington***

**a coat *with a brown collar***

**people *without computer skills***

**As well as prepositional phrases, postmodifiers of noun phrases can be:**

### ***3.1. Relative clauses***

**the boy *who lives beside us***

**the books *which you bought***

**the film *that I enjoyed most***

### ***3.2. To-clauses***

**a valve *to regulate the airflow***

**a place *to store your clothes***

**the first man *to walk on the moon***

**Postmodifiers in a noun phrase can co-occur. The following examples illustrate noun phrases with two postmodifiers each:**

**a holiday [*for two*] [*in Rome*]**

**the shop [*in the High Street*] [*that sells fish*]**

**the photograph [*you took*] [*of Napoleon's tomb*]**

**4. *Restrictive and non-restrictive postmodifiers***

**A postmodifier in a noun phrase may be restrictive or non-restrictive. A restrictive postmodifier serves to define the noun:**

**The student *who got the highest grade* was given a prize.**

**Here, the postmodifier, *who got the highest grade*, is used to define exactly which student was given a prize. The postmodifier is therefore strictly necessary to the meaning of the sentence. Compare this with:**

**The student, *who comes from Birmingham*, was given a prize.**

**Here, the postmodifier, *who comes from Birmingham*, does not define exactly which student, from among all the students in the class, was given a prize. It simply conveys additional, optional information. This is a nonrestrictive postmodifier.**



**In writing, non-restrictive postmodifiers are usually marked off with commas, as in the example above. In speech, the intonation pattern usually indicates their status.**

### ***5. Postmodifiers and complements***

**Complements are a type of noun-phrase postmodifier, but they have a much closer link with the noun than ordinary postmodifiers. Compare the following:**

#### ***5.1. Postmodifier***

**The news *that he gave us today* was welcomed by everyone.**

#### ***5.2. Complement***

**The news *that he intends to resign* was welcomed by everyone.**

In [1], the postmodifier *that he gave us today* does not define the news.

It does not tell us what the news was. In contrast with this, the complement in [2], *that he intends to resign*, plays a defining role. It tells us precisely what the news was (he intends to resign).

The distinction between a postmodifier and a complement is not just one of meaning.

There is also a grammatical difference. In the postmodifier, we can usually replace *that* with *which*:

[1] Postmodifier:

The news *which he gave us today* was welcomed by everyone.

We cannot replace *that* with *which* in the complement:

**[2a] Complement:**

**\*The news *which he intends to resign* was welcomed by everyone.**

**In general, nouns which take complements tend to have abstract reference.**

**Here are some more examples:**

**the realisation *that it wouldn't work***

**the fact *that no one came***

**the idea *that secularisation means something***

**the theory *that light is a wave motion***

**6. *Apposition***

**Apposition is a relationship between two noun phrases which have identical reference:**

**the poet, Andrew Motion**

**The two noun phrases, *the poet* and *Andrew Motion*, refer to the same person, and are said to be in apposition to each other. Further examples of apposition include:**

**the Yugoslav capital, Belgrade**

**John's favourite food, pasta**

**the SAC's chairman, Sir Alan Peacock**

**our good friends, the Browns**

**Apposition is often used as a device for clarifying the meaning of the first noun phrase:**

**the SB (the Polish secret police)**

**the larynx (voice box)**

**230 litres (50 gallons)**

**In this type of ‘clarifying’ apposition, the word *or* is sometimes introduced between the two noun phrases:**

**phototaxis, *or* light-directed motion**

**vexillology, *or* the study of flags**

**The syntactic functions of the NP**

**The Noun Phrases are grammatically very versatile; they are the most flexible phrase type as far as various syntactic functions are concerned. Noun phrases. They can perform a**

**wide range of functions in sentence structure. We illustrate the main functions of noun phrases here:**

***1. Subject***

***A large tile* fell from the roof.**

***Four people* entered the room.**

***The man who lives beside us* is unwell.**

***2. Subject complement***

**Paul is *my nephew*.**

**She is *a teacher of English*.**

**That is *the wrong way to wire a plug*.**

### ***3. Direct object***

**The plane left *the runway*.**

**I bought *a jar of coffee*.**

**Our teacher writes *detective stories*.**

### ***4. Indirect object***

**She told *the chairman* the bad news.**

**I offered *the girl beside me* a drink.**

**It gives *people with disabilities* more independence.**

### ***5. Object complement***



**He called her *an idiot*.**

**They appointed him *President of the Board of Trade*.**

**The unions made Britain *the country it is today*.**

## **6. *Adjunct***

***Last week*, our freezer broke down.**

**She's going to Harvard *next year*.**

***One day* you'll regret quitting college.**