

Head Words and Phrases

Tallerman: Chapter 4

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Heads and their Dependents

- **Properties of heads**
 - Head bears most important semantic information of the phrase.
 - Word class of head determines word class of entire phrase.
 - [_{NP} very bright [_N sunflowers]]
 - [_{VP} [_V overflowed] quite quickly]
 - [_{AP} very [_A bright]]
 - [_{AdvP} quite [_{Adv} quickly]]
 - [_{PP} [_P inside] the house]

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- Head has same distribution as the entire phrase.
 - Go inside the house.
Go inside.
 - Kim likes very bright sunflowers.
Kim likes sunflowers.
- Heads normally can't be omitted
 - *Go the house.
 - *Kim likes very bright.

- Heads select dependent phrases of a particular word class.
 - The soldiers released the hostages.
 - *The soldiers released.
 - He went into the house.
*He went into.
 - bright sunflowers
*brightly sunflowers
 - Kambera
 - **Lalu** mbana-na na lodu
too hot-3SG the sun
'The sun is hot.'
 - ***Lalu** uma
too house

- Heads often require dependents to agree with grammatical features of head.
 - French
 - un livre vert
a:MASC book green:MASC
'a green book.'
 - une pomme verte
a:FEM apple green:FEM
'a green apple'
- Heads may require dependent NPs to occur in a particular grammatical case.
 - Japanese
 - Kodomo-**ga** hon-**o** yon-da
child-NOM book-ACC read-PAST
'The child read the book.'

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• More about dependents

– Adjuncts and complements

- Adjuncts are always optional; complements are frequently obligatory
- Complements are selected by the head and therefore bear a close relationship with it; adjuncts add extra information.
- Adjuncts:
 - very bright** [_N sunflowers]
 - [_V overflowed] **quite quickly**
 - [_V talks] **loudly**
 - [_V sings] **in the bath**
 - right** [_P outside]
- Complements:
 - [_V admires] **famous linguists**
 - [_V wondered] **whether to leave**
 - [_A fond] **of chips**
 - [_P inside] **the house**
 - [_V resorted] **to the instructions**
- When a head selects the exact preposition within a dependent PP, the PP is a complement of the head.

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- In English, a complement typically occurs closer to the head than any adjuncts:
 - We met the new students yesterday.
*We met yesterday the new students.
 - that picture of John on the table.
*that picture on the table of John
- Passivization test:
 - Direct object complements of verb can be passivized
 - » All our friends admired Mel.
Mel was admired by all our friends.
 - » The magician disappeared the next day.
*the next day was disappeared by the magician.
 - NPs can be passivized out of complement PPs:
 - » Jack laughed at the clown.
The clown was laughed at by Jack.
 - » Jack worked at the office
*The office was worked at by Jack.
 - » Jack decided on the boat. (ambiguous)
The boat was decided on by John. (unambiguous)

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- Adverbs are usually adjuncts but can be complements:
 - I wrote the report (carefully)
Kim practices (carefully)
 - You should treat sensitive people *(carefully).
You have to tread *(carefully).
- Verbs and their complements
 - Intransitive verbs take no complements
 - *fall, elapse, capitulate, expire, disappear*
 - Transitive verbs take an NP complement (the direct object)
 - *assassinate, rewrite, imitate, cultivate*
 - Often a verb can be transitive or intransitive
 - Lee left Kim. Lee left

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- Ditransitive verbs take two complements, either an NP and a PP, or two NPs
 - *send, show, write, buy, give*
 - Kim gave the chips to Lee.
Kim gave Lee the chips.
 - Direct object (*the chips*), indirect object (*(to) Lee*)
- Some verbs take an NP and a PP complement, but don't have the NP NP alternation:
 - Kim put the potatoes into the pan.
*Kim put the pan the potatoes.
- Prepositional verbs take a PP complement headed by a specific preposition.
 - This cake consists of fruit and nuts.
I applied for a new job.
Bill laughed at the clown
Sue relied on Mary.

- Some verbs select both an NP and a clausal complement (finite, non-finite, or either)
 - Kim persuaded Bill that he should leave.
Kim persuaded Bill to leave.
 - *convince, allow, encourage, force, permit*
- Often a verb can appear in more than one subclass
 - Chris couldn't remember that long shopping list.
 - » NP complement
 - Chris remembered that they'd left it on the shelf.
 - » Finite clause complement
 - Chris usually remembers to pick up the list.
 - » Non-finite infinitival clause complement
 - Chris remembered leaving it on the shelf.
 - » Non-finite participial clause complement

– Other heads and their complements

- Prepositions have variety in their complement structure but less than verbs
 - Intransitive:
She lives nearby (*the bank).
 - Transitive
She went into *(the house).
 - Either transitive or intransitive:
He went inside (the house).
 - Clausal complement
We left before Mary arrived.
 - PP complement
The spider emerged from under the bed.

- Adjectives have less variation

- Obligatory complement
 - » John is fond *(of Mary).
 - » This speech is totally devoid *(of sense).
- Optional PP complement with a specific preposition:
 - » good at spelling
 - » free from any doubts
 - » sorry for your friend
- Optional clausal complement
 - » Kim felt sorry that she had been late.
 - » *sorry, happy, angry, glad, delighted*

- Nouns never take obligatory complements
 - Optional PP complements with a specific preposition
 - » a manufacturer of tires
 - » Lee's belief in extraterrestrials
 - Optional clausal complements
 - » the fact that Bill was late
 - » their demand for the library to stay open later
- Complementizers (C) can be viewed as heads selecting the clause they introduce to form a Complementizer Phrase (CP).
 - Mel said [_{CP} **that** she was leaving]
 - [_{CP} **For** Kim to go too] would be surprising.
 - I don't know [_{CP} **whether** you should go]
 - I don't know [_{CP} **whether** to go]

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– Determiners and nouns

- Traditionally determiners are considered dependents of the head noun in a noun phrase.
 - They are sometimes called 'specifiers', a sort of adjunct occurring in a fixed position in the phrase, and other closed class words that occur with heads of different types are also termed 'specifiers':
 - » **this** man
 - very** happy
 - very** happily
 - right** inside
- Recently, linguists have proposed that the determiner is the head of the "noun phrase", and that this should be considered a Determiner Phrase (DP) which has an NP complement to the head D:
 - [_{DP} this [_{NP} box of dates]]

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- Determiners fulfil a number of criteria for head status.
 - Many determiners can have the same distribution as the entire phrase.
 - » I'll have *this/that/these/those/either/some*.
 - Determiners are frequently obligatory.
 - » *I'll have *box of dates*.
 - The head D requires its NP complement to agree with certain properties of the head:
 - » this box of dates
 - » these boxes of dates
- The “DP hypothesis” is a controversial one still, and we will continue viewing the noun as head of the phrase in question.

- **Where does the head occur in a phrase?**

- Head-initial languages

- English

- [_{VP} **likes** chips] [_{PP} **into** the water]
- [_{AP} **fond** of chips] [_{NP} **admiration** for Mary]

- Welsh

- [_{PP} **dros** y ffordd]
 over the road
- Ddaru Ceri [_{VP} **yfed** paned o de]
 did Ceri drink cupful of tea
 ‘Ceri drank a cup of tea’

- Tinrin

- u [_{VP} **tramwâ** mwâ ke maija wake]
 I know that you much work
 ‘I know that you work hard.’
- [_{NP} **kò** rugi beebòrrò urá mwîê]
 news about drowning POSSESSIVE woman
 ‘the news about the woman’s drowning’

– Head-final languages

• Japanese

- Taro-ga [_{VP} Hanako-ni hana-o **ageta**]
Taro-NOM Hanako-DATIVE flower-ACC gave
‘Taro gave Hanako flowers.’
- [_{PP} tomodati-**to**]
friend-with
‘with a friend’
- [_{NP} sono tesuto e no **zisin**]
that test to POSSESSIVE confidence
‘confidence in that test’

• Lezgian

- Adaz [_{NP} mektebda k’el-da-j **mumkinwal**] xa-na-c
he in.school study-FUT-PARTICIPLE possibility be-PAST-NEG
‘He did not have the possibility to learn in school.’
- Adaz [_{VP} zun cpi-z klig-zawa-jdi **aku-na**].
He I selves-DATIVE look-IMPF-PARTICIPLE see-PAST
‘He saw that I was looking at them.’

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Head-Marking and Dependent-Marking Languages

• **Definitions and illustrations**

- Syntactic relationships between heads and dependents

Head	Dependent
postposition/preposition	object NP
verb	arguments (subject, object)
(possessed) noun	possessor NP
noun	adjective

- English

• in [_{NP} the shower]	(P + NP)
Kim loves Lee	(Su + V + Obj)
Kim’s house	(possessor NP + N)
red book	(modifying A + N)

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– Head preposition/postposition and its NP object

• **Dependent-marking**

- German: prepositions ‘govern’ the case of their object
 - » Für meinen Freund mit meinem Freund
for my:ACC friend with my:DATIVE friend
‘for my friend’ ‘with my friend’

- Chechen

- » Beera-na t’e
child-DATIVE on
‘on the child’

• **Head-marking**

- Kaqchikel

- ru-ma ri-achin
3SG-by the-man
‘by the man’

- Welsh

- » arna i arno fo arni hi
on:1SG me on:3M:SG him on:3F:SG her
‘on me’ ‘on him’ ‘on her’

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– The clause: a head verb and the arguments of the verb

• **Dependent-marking**

- Japanese

- » Taroo-**ga** tegami-**o** kaita
Tarro-NOM letter-ACC wrote
‘Taroo wrote a letter.’

- German

- » Der Hund sah den Vogel
the:NOM dog saw the:ACC bird
‘The dog saw the bird.’
 - » Den Vogel sah der Hund.
The:ACC bird saw the:NOM dog
‘The dog saw **the bird**.’

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- **Head-marking**

- Kambera

- » Hi **ku**-palu-ya
so 1SG:SU-hit-3SG:OBJ
‘So I hit him.’
 - » I Ama_S, **na**_S-kei-**ya**_O na ri muru_O
the father 3SG:SU-buy-3SG:OBJ the vegetable green
‘Father buys the green vegetables.’
Lit., ‘Father he-buys-it the green vegetable’

- Kaqchikel

- » Per ma x-**e-r**-komsaj-ta
but NEG CMPL-3PL:OBJ-3SG:SU-kill-IRREALIS
‘but he didn’t kill them’

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- Head noun and dependent possessor NP

- **Dependent marking**

- English

- » Kim’s house

- Finnish

- » tytö-**n** kissa
girl-GEN cat
‘girl’s cat’

- **Head-marking**

- Saliba

- » Sine natu-**na**
woman child-3SG
‘the woman’s child’

- Kaqchikel

- » ri-ya-Ros i ru-k’in ri-Enrik **ki**-te **ki**-tata
the-FEM-Rosa and 3SG-with the-Enrique 3PL-mother 3PL-father
‘Rosa and Enrique’s mother and father’

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– Head noun and dependent AP

- **Dependent-marking**

- Spanish: adjective agrees with noun in gender

» el niño pequeño la niña pequeña
the:MASC boy small:MASC the:FEM girl small:FEM
‘the small boy’ ‘the small girl’

- **Head-marking**

- Persian: noun is marked as having a dependent

» kûh-e bolând
mountain high
‘high mountain’

- **Some typological distinctions between languages**

- **Head-marking languages**

- Abkhaz, Mayan (Jacaltec, Tzotzil, Cakchiquel), Athabaskan (Navajo), Iroquoian (Mohawk, Cherokee), Algonquian (Cree, Blackfoot), Siouan (Crow, Lakota), Salish (Squamish)

- **Dependent-marking languages**

- Indo-European (German, Greek, Armenian, Slavic [Russian, Polish, Czech, Bulgarian]), Pama-Nyungan (Dyirbal, Yidiny), Northeast Caucasian (Chechen), Dravidian (Malayalam).

- **Neither head-marking nor dependent-marking**

- Chinese

Wo changchang jian ta	Ta changchang jian wo
I often see he	he often see I
‘I often saw him’	‘He often saw me’

- English

- A little dependent-marking
 - » Kim's house Possessor marker 's
 - » **He** met **him** Case-marking in pronouns
 - » **these** books Determiner-noun number agreement
- A little head-marking
 - » Bill smokes Subject-verb agreement
 - I **am**, she **is**, we **are**

- Mixtures are not unusual

- German: dependent-marking plus subject-verb agreement
 - » Ich **sehe** den Vogel
I:NOM see:PRES:1SG the:ACC bird
'I see the bird.'
 - » Wir **sehen** den Vogel
we:NOM see:PRES:1PL the:ACC bird
'We see the bird.'