

The Word-Group Theory

Lecture 9

Lecture outline

- Syntactic relations.
- The definition and general characteristics.
- Classification of word-groups.



The syntactic notions

□ **Syntactic relations:** the syntagmatic (linear) relations between the syntactic units.

- 1) Coordination and subordination (traditionally);
- 2) + predication;
- 3) + accumulation (Burlakova et al.).

Barkhudarov: on the basis of equality/inequality of the syntactic function of the whole group and its IC (immediate constituents)



The syntactic relations

Coordination (independence):

- word group, sentence, text;
- the syntactic function of the whole group **coincides** with the syntactic function of every IC: *pens and pencils were purchased* (*pens were purchased, pencils were purchased*);
- symmetric and asymmetric (pens and pencils, ladies and gentlemen);
- copulative (you and me), disjunctive (you or me), adversative (strict but just), causative-consecutive (He didn't come, because...).



The syntactic relations

Subordination (dependence, difference linguistic rank):

- word-group and sentence;
- the syntactic function of the whole coincides with the function of one of ICs: A tall boy came in (A boy came in, * Tall came in);
- adverbial (to run slowly), objective (to help a friend); attributive (a new house) (Burlakova, the functions in a sentences);
- the head and the adjunct.



Syntactic relations

Predication (interdependence):

- ✓ the syntactic function of the whole group is different from the syntactic function of every IC: **The boy reads** well (*the boy well, * reads well);
- ✓ primary (the subject and the predicate): men worked;
- ✓ secondary (non-finite forms of the verb and nominal elements): his reading, for me to know, the boy running, I saw him run;
- ✓ Burlakova: the term is not very good (in not consistent with coordination and subordination; **interdependence – the relation b/w the IC**).



Syntactic relations

Accumulative

- ✓ The relations b/w the constituents can be identified only with regard to the word which is not the part of the word combination: (write) his friend a letter; these important (decisions);
- ✓ the positions of the components are fixed (*important these);
- ✓ **and** cannot be used (*these and important; not coordinate).



The word-group. The definition.

- the basic unit of syntax (as well as the sentence);
- 2 components minimum;
- grammatical structure.

No generally accepted definition; negative approach (sth the word-group is not or does not have);

✓ Non-communicative (vs. the sentence).



The views on word-groups

- Broad (every syntactically organized group, the relations do not matter);
- Narrow (two notional words).

General characteristics:

- ✓ As a naming unit it differs from a compound word: two constituents = two denotates (a blackbird, a black bird);
- ✓ A dependent syntactic unit; non-communicative, no intonation.



The broad view: syntagmatic groupings (by Blokh)

- **Notional words (notional phrases):** denote complex phenomena and their properties in their interconnection (a caring mother);
- **Notional word + functional word (formative combinations):** equivalent to separate words in terms of their nominative function, can be expanded (in a box = in an old box);
- **Functional words:** used as connectors or specifiers of notional elements of various status: up to, must be able.

Burlakova supports the broad view.



The notional phrases (classification)

- **Equipotent** (words are related on equal rank);
- **Dominationnal** (words are syntactically unequal).
- Equipotent syndetic and asyndetic (prose and poetry vs. dark, gloomy);
- Equipotent coordinative (quick and careless) and cumulative (agreed, but reluctantly; quick – and careless): equal formally, not in terms of domination.



Domination connection (Blok)

- The principal (dominating) – kernel, kernel element, head word – and the subordinate constituents (adjunct, adjunct-word, expansion).
- Domination consecutive (a careful observer);
- Domination cumulative (an observer, seemingly careful).



Domination connection (Blok)

- **Domination bilateral (reciprocal, two-way):** predicative (complete and incomplete) – the train arrived, the arrival of the train, the pupil understanding his mistakes.
- **Domination mono-lateral (completive):** the syntactic status of the whole element is determined by the nature of the head-word.



Domination connection (Blok)

- **Domination complete connection:** objective and qualifying.
- **Objective:** direct non-prepositional (saw me), indirect non-prepositional (show me), indirect prepositional (sympathised with the child).
- **Qualifying:** attributive (the woman of strong character; a beautiful ring); adverbial primary (verb+ adverbial modifier = receive with surprise); adverbial secondary (non-verbal kernel + adverbial modifier+ strikingly alike).



The narrow view (Barkhudarov)

- Word-group (phrase) is a group of **syntactically related notional words**, which is the component of a sentence, but **does not constitute a sentence** on its own.
- According to syntactic relations: **subordinate** (ready to go, politically active, cold water), **co-ordinate** (pens and pencils, strict but just), **predicative** (for you to go).
- According to the number of types of relations expresses: elementary (three black dogs – subordination); compound (red and blue pencils – coordination and subordination).



The subordinate phrase

- ✓ Syntactically unequal;
- ✓ The head and the adjunct.

Types:

- ✓ **The word class to which the head belongs:** noun phrases (wonderful weather), verb phrases (run fast), adverb phrases (extremely quickly), pronoun phrases (nothing interesting).



The subordinate phrase: types

ICs represented with a word or a word phrase:

- ✓ simple (cold water);
- ✓ with the expanded head (saw him there, three black dogs);
- ✓ with the expanded adjunct (politically active youth);
- ✓ with the expanded head and adjunct (the reception of the delegation by the President of the republic).



The subordinate phrase: types

ICs separated / non-separated from each other:

- ✓ Continuous: nicely dressed;
- ✓ Discontinuous: Slowly, Mr Johnson got out of the chair; Of the threat she said nothing.



Noun Phrases

The place of the adjunct:

- ✓ Noun phrases with pre-posed adjuncts: cold water, her shoulders, thirty-five minutes, slanting stroke, quoted material, Paul's room, consonant change.
- ✓ Noun phrases with post-posed adjuncts: the roof of the house, the people present, every creature alive, a man hard to please, desire to come, my life as an artist.



Verb Phrases

According to the class of the verb:

- ✓ Verb phrases with transitive head;
- ✓ Verb phrases with the intransitive head;
- ✓ Verb phrases with the transitive or intransitive verb head.

The adjuncts are divided accordingly:

- ✓ Extensions (can be used with any head – transitive or intransitive);
- ✓ Complements (the distribution is limited, with the verb of a particular class only).



Verb phrases

Adjuncts (complements):

✓ **object complements (transitive head):**

prepositional and non-prepositional (wait for John, insist on doing vs. says not to worry, read a book, turn the page).

!!! Prepositional complements vs. extensions !!!

the preposition is determined by the verb vs. the preposition does not depend on the verb

He believes in God vs. He lives in Chicago.

!!! Non-preposition complements vs. extensions !!!

I came to speak with you vs. I wanted to speak with you

Extension can be substituted for 'in order to'



Verb phrases

Adjuncts (complements):

- ✓ **qualifying complements** (intransitive head): rise slowly: seemed quite the best plan, died an old man, look severe, become proficient in.



Verb phrases

According to the number and type of adjuncts:

- ✓ simple (see a boy, walk slowly);
- ✓ verb phrases with two extensions: He ran hastily downstairs;
- ✓ verb phrases with an extension and a compliments: I watched her closely;
- ✓ verb phrases with two non-prepositional object complements: gave Tom a book;
- ✓ verb phrases with a propositional and non-prepositional object complements: explained the whole affair to Mr Jones;
- ✓ verb phrases with an object complement and a qualifying complement: consider it a privilege.



Other types of phrases

Adjective phrases:

Politically active; rich in possible modulations; larger units than the sentence; loudest of all.

Adverb phrases:

Awfully quickly, rather sharply, high in the air.

Pronoun phrases:

Some of the workers, nothing to do, something personal.



Coordinate phrases

According to the means used to connect the constituents:

- ✓ **Syndetic (with the conjunction):** simple syndetic phrases (with the continuous conjunction) – *and, but, yet, or, rather, than, as well as* – and correlative syndetic phrases (with the discontinuous conjunction): *both ... and, either ... or, neither ... not, from ... to*.

Harsh and loud, precious not remote, structural rather than historical.

Either a gerund or a participle, neither reading nor writing.



Coordinate phrases

According to the means used to connect the constituents:

- ✓ Asyndetic: copulative (the co-ordinate conjunction can be used) and appositive (conjunction cannot be used).
- ✓ Hot, dusty, tired...
- ✓ Bill, the dean's boy; you young people; the young man Edgar.



Predicative phrases

- ✓ The combinations of the subject and the predicate are not included; The head is only NON-FINITE!
- ✓ Infinitive predicative phrases (for John to go, for her daughter to look at her);
- ✓ Gerund predicative phrases (John's going, John being late);
- ✓ Absolute predicative phrases: all things considered; (with) his voice trembling.
- ✓ Other opinions: predicative phrases of two times: primary (the boy runs) and secondary (the boy's running).



Conclusion

- The word-group is a combination of at least two notional words (?) which do not constitute the sentence but are syntactically connected.
- The type of syntagmatic relations: coordinate, subordinate, predicative.
- The internal structure (simple, expanded – to read and translate the text, extended – a very beautiful flower).
- Subordinate word-groups: the head and the adjunct; noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun phrases.

