

Transformational Grammar

4th stage/second course

النحو التحويلي/مرحلة رابعة/الفصل الثاني/صباحي

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The structure of the sentence

Word order and tree diagram will be explained with examples:

Abbreviations:

Nuc nucleus

S sentence

SM sentence modifier

NP noun phrase

VP verb phrase

DET determiner

N noun

Pl plural

MV main verb

An apple lay on the ground

Those pearls look genuine

Surely you can go with us

The ducks are noisy

Certainly those sheep ran fast

VP.....AUX+MV manner place time reason

AUX.....tense

Tense.....present/past

MV (main verb).....be or V

MV is written as any one of the following structures:

1-be+NP

2-be+PLACE

3-Be+AP

4-V

5-V+NP

.....

AP is an abbreviation for adjective phrase, which consists of an optional intensifiers such as very, extremely, rather, etc... and ADJ adjective such as old, happy, green.

AP.....(intens) Adj

Sm is sentence modifier which is a word or group of words like yes,no,certainly,naturally,maybe,perhaps,possibly,in fact,to be sure,or obviously. Example:woman drinks coffee

Certainly, I know the answer.

Apparently tom is sick

Unfortunately the fish died

Yes,.....

Ofcourse,.....

-kinds of adverbials:

1-adv (rapidly, cheerfully)

2-Prepositional phrase (in the yard)

3-Uninflected word (here,there,today)

4-Noun phrase (we walked a mile)

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The Auxiliary

Different auxiliaries in the sentence structure will be explained with examples. The main point here is that the aux reflects the tense of the sentence.

1-AUX.....tense (be+ing)

The bird is singing

The bird was singing

I am eating sandwiches

I was eating sandwiches

2-AUX.....TENSE (HAVE +EN)

We have taken medicine

We had taken medicine

Ann has drunk milk

Ann had drunk milk

I have been here

I had been here

He has had the answer

He had had the answer

3-AUX.....M (modal)

I can give the answer

I could give the answer

They will stop soon

They would stop soon

She may be joking

She might be joking

We shall be leaving

We should have been leaving

You must be going

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Present participle and future tenses

We notice the expansion in the right using auxiliaries.

We take medicine	we have taken medicine
We took medicine	we had taken medicine
Ann drinks milk	Ann has drunk milk
Ann drank milk	Ann had drunk milk
I am here	I have been here
I was here	I had been here
He has the answer	he has had the answer
He had the answer	he had had the answer

Future tense can be expressed by other means than just by will and shall by using present simple, present continuous, if clause, about to,...

We leave for New York tomorrow

If she says, we must leave

Ask her if she will stay

Ask her if she is going to stay

He is leaving soon

When she comes, we will leave

He is about to go

She is accompany him

What would you do if you had a flight tonight

Time in English is often expressed by other means than the tense of the verb. by form there are only two tenses in English: present and past. Tense means the form of the first auxiliary that follows the symbol tense.

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Lexical Features

Phrase structure rules will be the main point in this lecture. These rules will enable us to produce the sentences of English.

1- There are 8 rules:

1-S.....(SM) Nuc

2-NUC.....NP+VP

3-VP.....AUX+MV

4-AUX.....TENSE

5-TENSE.....PRESENT PAST

6-MV.....BE OR V

7-NP.....DET N PL

8-AP.....INTENS ADJ

In English, the sentence consists of a sentence modifier (SM) and a nucleus (Nuc); a nucleus consists of a noun phrase and a verb phrase.

1- TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE RESTRICTIONS

It deals whether the verb needs a noun phrase or not. we write them in this way:

-.....NP (it doesn't need a np) OR +.....NP (it needs)

For examples:

He shot a rabbit

I waxed the car

Someone tore the page

Larry ate

The students wrote

He drove

The bird flew out

The angry woman flew out in a rage

Last week I flew in an airplane

The dust flew everywhere

He flew off the handle

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Subject verb restrictions

The relation between the verb and subject in the sentence required specific restrictions for the subject, for example:

The coffee prayed

Those ants talked to me

The umbrella coughed

A door sneezed

The above examples have nonhuman subjects and their verbs require human subjects.

For example:

The woman prayed

Those children talked to me

My uncle coughed

There are some features for the noun to represent human, we say +human and the nonhuman will be -human.

Another feature is whether the noun refers to human or animal, the feature will be used is +animate and –animate.

The feature of being a concrete or abstract noun will be +concrete and -concrete

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Determiner and noun restrictions

the point here is the relation between nouns and determiners that is the kind of determiners the noun needs in a sentence.

Here we have other noun features like being count, non count, common or proper noun. such as water, pen, horse, William, honesty.....and we will have feature as:

+count -count +common -common

Pen +common (cuz its not a proper noun) and its +count

William -common (cuz its a proper noun)

For examples:

*I saw bug on floor

I saw bugs on the floor

*i saw honesty is an admirable trait

Honesty is an admirable trait.

*The William entered the room

William entered the room

Nouns are either common (+common) or proper (-common). the traditional definition of the a proper noun as the name of a particular person, place, or thing and of a common noun as any one of a class work in

many cases such as boy,city.the names of months are considered proper nouns while seasons of the year are considered common and not capitalized.

Some nouns name objects that can be counted, whereas others do not.the sentence (I read a book) can be altered without changing the structure to (I read two books or three books or four books). Book has both a singular and a plural form,and various numbers can be placed in front of it.we call book a (count noun) and it has the feature +count.

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The negative transformation

The phrase-structure rules can produce the structures underlying such sentences as :

Those boys might have been swimming in the lake.

The manager wrote a letter.

Those sentences cannot produce such structures as the following:

The manager didn't write a letter

Did the manager write a letter?

Who wrote a letter?

What did the manager write?

A letter was written by the manager.

Because the manager wrote a letter.....

The manger's having written a letter.....

All those structures seem to be related in some way to :

The manager wrote a letter.

The same relationships are found in all of them: the manager is the one who performed the act of writing, and a letter is the result of this action. In spite of the differences in form, there is a similarity in meaning in all the structures. Transformational rules are used to produce these changes in form.

1-deep and surface structures

Deep structure is a structure generated only by phrase structure and lexical rules, such as (not past johne can sing well).

Surface structure: is the deep structure that has transformed into a grammatical English sentence, such as John could not sing well.

All grammatical sentences are surface structures, underlying each one is a deep structure.

Examples:

Not jerry could hear me	jerry couldn't hear me
Not bill has received it	bill has not received it
Not they are going with us	they are not going with us
We present not play often	we do not play often
They present not taste the salt . They do not taste the salt.	

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The negative transformation

The man present not see me the man doesn't see me

Not we play often we do not play often

not the janitor did it the janitor did not do it

We need to formulate a rule to transform the deep structures on the left to the surface structure on the right.

In the surface structure, the negative particle not follows part of the auxiliary, but not all of it. In "not Jerry could hear me", could is a case of "past+can".

Can is the first occurring auxiliary; therefore, not follows it in the surface structure.

Other examples:

Not those apples were smelling rotten.

Not Sara would have done that.

Not you are reading fast enough.

Not Tom will have finished by then.

Not we had heard the news.

Transform the following deep structures into surface structures:

1- Not John present be in the room

John is not in the room

2- not of course the children past can go with us.

Of course, the children could not go with us.

3- not we present jump here

We do not jump here.

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The question transformation

Transformation is the process that converts deep structures into surface structures. the negative transformation involves a rearrangement of structure, as when we move "not" to the position after the first occurring auxiliary or after be.

English has two main kinds of questions: those that are answered yes or no (are you ready?) and those that are answered by other words (where are you going), they are yes/n questions and WH questions.

A principle of our grammar is that transformations affect the form of a structure but not the meaning.

Tom is sick cannot be the deep structure for is tom sick? Although the two are similar. I need the idea of the interrogation in the deep structure which SM Q which indicates that the structure is a question.

Q she could sing well	Could she sing well?
Q the book has become wet	Has the book become wet?
Q the bell is ringing now	is the bell ringing now?

Yes/no questions

They have already left	have they already left?
He heard us	did he hear us?

Q the men are lucky	Are the man lucky?
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Q he was our supervisor was he our supervisor?

Q betty is at home is betty at home?

Q John read my letter did john read my letter?

Q the teacher eat here do the teachers eat here?

Q she knows my name does she knows my name?

The WH transformation shifts the NP with WH attached to it to the beginning of the sentence and substitutes what/who/whom/whose/which

Are u reading np-wh what are you reading?

Has she torn np-wh what has she torn?

Were you giving it to np-wh who(m) were you giving it to?

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Compounding,deletion,and forms

In this lecture, three topics will be explained with examples:

1-Compounding: is to join two sentences using conjunctions like (and,or,nor,but,yet,for) to produce a compound sentence

For example:

Alice wrapped the package,and susan addressed the card.

In compounding,we sometimes have deletion of identical elements.

For example:

We went to the exhibition,but (we) did not stay long. (deletion of the second we is possible.

2-Deletion: like deleting the repeated VP

Example:

Edward was at the ball game and don was at the ball game

Edward and don were at the ball game

Or

Edward was at the ball game and don

2-Pro form: is the substitution of a generalized word.

Example:

A- Do: used for VP or a verb

I saw the accident,and bill saw the accident,too

I saw the accident,and bill did,too.

B- there: for adv of place

We were sitting in the balcony,and they were sitting in the balcony,too.

We were sitting in the balcony,and they were sitting there,too.

C- then: for adverbial of time

He saw tom yesterday,and we saw fred yesterday,too

He saw tom yesterday,and we saw fred then,too.

D- One: for a noun or a noun phrase

I have a sister,and you have a sister,too.

I have a sister,and you have one,too.