

## Chapter 11 How Phrases Stick Together: Sentence Patterns

### Additional paper or project ideas

1. Take a look at Fiveable’s description of the ways that structure differs across languages: [Cross-linguistic Syntactic Variation](#). Choose one of the features of language (e.g., morphological marking, placement of adjectives, use of determiners), and compare that feature with what you now know about English and its many dialects. Write up a paper or create a presentation to share with your class that informs us about those similarities and differences. Make sure to add a section on how we can use this information as learners of languages, as teachers of languages, as creative writers, or in other ways.
2. Dialect patterns: Pick a pattern from non-standard dialects you learned about from this chapter. Ask several people to give you a “grammaticality judgment” about sentences of those patterns. See format below. Then, discuss your participants’ answers in a short write-up. What do their grammaticality judgments reveal about “Standard English,” “non-Standard English” and attitudes toward dialects and language?
  - a. Please rate the following sentences as correct or incorrect.
    - i. He funny.                      Correct                      incorrect
    - ii. They learned them a lesson                      Correct                      incorrect
3. Watch 30 minutes of your favorite TV show or movie or pick a few pages of your favorite book or article. Try to find examples of the sentence patterns you were introduced to in this chapter. Which ones are common? Which ones are harder to find? Did you find sentences that you couldn’t fit into the patterns? If so, write them down and explain why they’re hard to fit. Finally, discuss what was hard/easy about this particular assignment.
4. Analyze the sentences in your own writing. Pick a writing assignment you are proud of or at least feel good about! Then, try to break down your sentences based on the sentence patterns you learned about. Did you find all the patterns? This is likely an activity that you will find less straightforward than you might expect. What makes it hard to figure out which pattern your sentences follow? Which sentences are harder to break down? Which ones are easier? Compare your work with at least one peer.

## Answer key for additional exercises

### Exercise 1

- a) phrase: *about the war*
- b) phrase: *your office*

### Exercise 2

- a) Tag question test: The parrot laughed at their shenanigans, didn't it?
  - *The parrot* = subject (*it* refers back to it)
- b) Tag question test: John was a-talkin' so loud my eardrums hurt, wasn't he?
  - *John* = subject; *he* refers back to *John*

### Exercise 3

- a) DO: *the dogs*  
  
question test: *Who chased the cats?* A: *the dogs*  
  
additional evidence: same as for b)
- b) Interpretation 1: DO: *her cats*  
  
question test: What did we buy? A: *her cats*; additional evidence: *We bought them* (one object only)  
  
Interpretation 2: IO: *her*; DO: *cats*  
  
test: rephrase IO as in *We bought cats for her*; additional evidence: same as a)

### Exercise 4

- a) *my neighbor*
- b) *none*
- c) *very frightened*
- d) *a huge success*

e) none

### Exercise 5

a) *successes*

b) none

### Exercise 6

a) *on what was called Desolation* = AC; evidence: incomplete without AC (\**They was up* is part of expressing where they were, not that they were awake)

## Answer Key for Supplemental Exercises

1. **Sentence Constituents.** Decide how many constituents (i.e., chunks) there are in the following sentences. Simply add vertical lines (or a forward backslash “/”) to separate the constituents.
  - a. We / drove. 2
  - b. We / drove / to Detroit. 3
  - c. The youth group / rode / the train / to Detroit. 4
  - d. My friends /funny. 2
  - e. Ice cream cakes / are / super yummy. 3
  - f. They / learned / them / well. 4
  - g. My friends and I / bought / some ice cream cakes. 3
  - h. The teacher / explained / the main ideas / to the students. 4
  - i. The newspaper editors / gave / the readers / an interesting article. 4
  - j. The chef / baked / two humongous cakes /for his most loyal customers. 4
  - k. The cats / ate / all the food. 3
2. **Identify the subject in each sentence.** Demonstrate the test you used.
  - a. We drove.  
Test: Who drove? – We. => “We” is the subject  
Test: We drove, didn’t we? => “we” is the subject
  - b. We drove to Detroit.  
Test: Who drove to Detroit? – We. => “We” is the subject  
Test: We drove to Detroit, didn’t we? => “We” is the subject
  - c. The youth group rode the train to Detroit.  
Test: Who rode the train to Detroit? – The youth group. => “The youth group” is the subject  
Test: The youth group rode the train to Detroit, didn’t they? => “They” refers back to “the youth group” – “the youth group” is the subject
  - d. My friend funny.  
Test: Who funny? – My friend. => “My friend” is the subject  
Test: My friend funny, ain’t she? => “she” refers back to “My friend” – “my friend” is the subject
  - e. Ice cream cakes are super yummy.  
Test: What is super yummy? – Ice cream cakes. => “Ice cream cakes” is the subject  
Test: Ice cream cakes are super yummy, aren’t they? => “They” refers back to “ice cream cakes” – “ice cream cakes is the subject
  - f. They learned them well.  
Test: Who learned them well? – they. => “They” is the subject  
Test: They learned them well, didn’t they? => “They” refers back to “they” – “they” is the subject
  - g. My friends and I bought some ice cream cakes.

- Test: Who bought some ice cream cakes? – My friends and I. => “My friends and I” is the subject  
 Test: My friends and I bought some ice cream cakes, didn’t we? => “We” refers back to “my friend and I” – “my friend and I” is the subject
- h. The teacher explained the main ideas to the students.  
 Test: Who explained the main idea to the students? – The teacher. => “The teacher” is the subject  
 Test: The teacher explained the main ideas to the students, didn’t they? – “They” refers back to “the teacher” (singular they!) – “the teacher” is the subject
- i. The newspaper editors gave the readers an interesting article.  
 Test: Who gave the readers an interesting article? – The newspaper editor. => “The newspaper editor” is the subject  
 Test: The newspaper editors gave the readers an interesting article, didn’t they? => “they” refers back to “the newspaper editors” – “the newspaper editors” is the subject
- j. The chef baked two humongous cakes for their most loyal customers.  
 Test: Who baked two humongous cakes for their most loyal customers? – The chef. => “The chef” is the subject  
 Test: The chef baked two humongous cakes for their most loyal customers, didn’t they? => “they” refers back to “the chef” (singular they!) – “the chef” is the subject
- k. The cats ate all the food.  
 Test: Who ate all the good? – The cats. => “The cats” is the subject.  
 The cats ate all the food, didn’t they? => “they” refers back to “the cats” – “the cats” is the subject
- l. It was the cat that went to sleep.  
 Test: It was the cat that went to sleep, wasn’t it? => “It” is the subject
- m. There were many youth groups in Detroit.  
 Test: There were many youth groups in Detroit, weren’t there? => “there” is the subject
- n. Yesterday, the young artist sold their first painting.  
 Test: Who sold their first painting yesterday? – The young artist. => “The young artist” is the subject  
 Test: Yesterday, the young artist sold their first painting, didn’t they? => “they” refers back to “The young artist” (singular they!) – “the young artist” is the subject
- o. More and more, people are getting bored by reality TV.  
 Test: Who is getting bored by reality TV more and more? – people. => “People” is the subject  
 Test: More and more, people are getting bored by reality TV, aren’t they? => “they” refers back to “people” – “people” is the subject

**3. Sentence patterns.** Identify the sentence patterns of the following sentences.  
 Demonstrate a test that proved your answer.

- a. My awesome sister / jumped.  
                   S        /        V  
                   Who cooked dinner? – My awesome sister (S)
- b. Derek / walked / the adorable cats.  
           S        /    V        /    DO  
           Who walked the adorable cats? – Derek (S) [or Derek walked the adorable cats, didn't **he**?]  
           Whom did Derek walk? – the adorable cats (DO); there is also only one object, and when there is only one object, it is the DO
- c. I /baked /him /banana bread.  
       S/    V    /    IO    /    DO  
           Who baked him banana bread? – I (S)  
           What did I bake him? – banana bread (DO)  
           Whom did I bake banana bread? – him (IO) [or: I baked banana bread *for* him]
- d. She /became /a professor.  
       S /    V        /    SC  
           Who became a professor? – She (S)  
           She = a professor; “a professor” completes “she,” so it's a SC
- e.     She / a professor  
       S    /    SC  
           Who became a professor? – She (S)  
           She = a professor; “a professor” completes “she,” so it's a SC
- f. Mr. Kitty / chased / Norma Jean.  
           S        /        V        /    DO  
           Who chased Norma Jean? – Mr. Kitty (S)  
           Whom did Mr. Kitty chase? – Norma Jean (DO) or “Mr. Kitty” chases whom? – “Norma Jean”
- g. Daisy May / wanted / a belly rub.  
           S        /    V        /    DO  
           Daisy May wanted a belly rub, didn't she? (S)  
           Daisy May wanted what? – a belly rub. (DO)
- h. I / love / ice cream.  
       S /    V    /    DO  
           I love ice cream, don't I? (S)  
           I love what? – ice cream (DO)
- i. My mother / is teaching /physics.  
       S                /    V                /    DO

My mother is teaching physics, isn't **she**? (S)  
My mother is teaching what? – physics (DO)

- j. She / made / her intentions /clear.  
S / V / DO / OC  
Who made her intentions clear? – she (S)  
What did she make clear? – her intentions (DO)  
Her intentions = clear: “Clear” – OC, since it complements the DO
- k. They / invited the guests.  
S / V / DO  
Who invited the guests? – they (S)  
They invited whom? – the guests (DO)
- l. Cats /purr.  
S / V  
Who purrs? – Cats (S)
- m. Daisy May/ a good cat.  
S / SC  
Who a good cat? – Daisy May (S)  
“A good cat” completes “Daisy May,” so it's a SC; Daisy May = a good cat.
- n. Daisy May / is / a good cat.  
S / V / SC  
Who a good cat? – Daisy May (S)  
“A good cat” completes “Daisy May,” so it's a SC  
Daisy May = a good cat.
- o. The teacher / called / us / extremely brilliant.  
S / V / DO/ OC  
The teacher called us extremely brilliant, didn't he? – “The teacher” = S  
The teacher called whom extremely brilliant? – us (DO)  
“Extremely brilliant” completes “us” => OC  
\*The teacher called extremely brilliant *for us* = “us” = DO and not IO
- p. The performance / will be / next month.  
S / V / AC  
What will be next month? – the performance (S)  
DO/SC-tests don't work:  
\*The performance will be what/whom?  
\* The performance isn't the same as “next month,” so no SC  
“next month” tells us about when the performance will be, so it's an adverbial, and it is necessary to complete the sentence, so it's an AC
- q. I / adopted / a cat.

- S / V / DO  
Who adopted a cat? – I (S)  
I adopted what? – a cat (DO)
- r. The cats / got / their fuzzy paws / wet.  
S / V / DO / OC  
The cats got their fuzzy paws wet, didn't they? – “the cats” = S  
What did the cats get wet? – their fuzzy paws (DO)  
Their fuzzy paws = wet (OC)
- s. Your professor / is / in their office.  
S / V / AC  
Your professor is in their office, aren't they? – “your professor” (S)  
“in their office” completes the sentence, gives information about location,  
and is an AC (SC-test doesn't work)
- t. The presidential candidates / gave / the press / several interviews.  
S / V / IO / DO  
Who gave the press several interviews? – “the presidential candidates” (S)  
Whom gave the presidential candidates several interviews? – “the press” (IO)  
What did the presidential candidates give the press? – “several interviews” (DO)
- u. Everyone / watched / the Superbowl.  
S / V / DO  
Who watched the Superbowl? – “everyone” (S)  
What did everyone watch? – “the Superbowl” (DO)
- v. The Pats / won / the game.  
S / V / DO  
The Pats won the game, didn't they? – “the Pats” (S)  
The Pats won what? – the game (DO)
- w. The game / lasted / forever.  
S / V / SC  
What lasted forever? – the game (S)  
SC-test doesn't work: “the game ≠ forever”  
“forever” completes the sentence, so it's an AC
- x. The halftime show / was / amazing.  
S / V / SC  
The halftime show was amazing, wasn't it? – “The halftime show” (S)  
The halftime show = amazing – amazing (SC)



- y. The advertisers / made / their products / successes.  
 S                    V /        DO            /    OC  
 Who made their products successes? “the advertisers” (S)  
 What did the advertisers make successes? – “their products” (DO)  
 OC-test: “their products = successes”  
 Ruling out IO/DO pattern: \*The advertisers made successes for their products.
- z. The students / asked /me / a question.  
 S                    /    V        /    IO / DO  
 Who asked me a question? “the students” (S)  
 What did the students ask me? “a question” (DO)  
 Whom did the students ask a question? “me” (IO)
- aa. The cute cats / eat.  
 S                    /    V  
 The cute cats eat, don’t they? – “the cute cats” (S)
- bb. The cats / are / cute.  
 S                    /    V/ SC  
 The cats are cute, aren’t they? “the cats” (S)  
 SC-test: The cats = cute
- cc. My spouse / baked / cookies.  
 S                    /    V        / DO  
 Who baked cookies? – My spouse (S)  
 My spouse baked what? – cookies (DO)
- dd. The drive / took / forever.  
 S                    /    V        / AC  
 What took forever? – the drive (S)  
 Ruling out DO: What did the drive take? - \*forever  
 “forever” completes the sentence, it’s an AC
- ee. The board / named / the new hire / executive vice president.  
 S                    /    V            / DO                    / IO  
 What names the new hire executive vice president? – the board (S)  
 The board names whom executive vice president? – the new hire (DO)  
 “the new hire” = “executive vice president” (OC)
- ff. The cats / watched / the stink bug.  
 S                    /    V        /    DO  
 Who watched the stink bug? – the cats (S)  
 What did the cats watch? – the stink bug (DO)
- gg. We / bought /the cats / several treats.

S/ V / IO / DO

Who bought the cats several treats? We (S)

We bought whom several treats? The cats (IO)

What did we buy the cats? Several treats (DO)

hh. The cats / seem / calm.

S / V / SC

The cats seem calm, don't they? – the cats (S)

“The cats” = “calm” (SC)

ii. They / learned / the students / a lesson.

S / V / IO / DO

Who learned the students a lesson? – They (S)

What did they learn the students? – A lesson (DO)

Whom did they learn a lesson? – the students (IO)

4. **Direct and Indirect Objects.** How many and which objects do the following sentences contain? Provide a test of how you know.

a. The cats / chased / the dogs.

S / V / DO

b. The cats / caught / the owner / two mice.

S / V / IO / DO

c. We / bought / her cats.

S / V / DO

Or

We /bought / her / cats

S / V / IO / DO

d. We / bought / Gregory / two cats.

S / V / IO / DO

