

PHRASE

= a linguistic unit at a level between a word and a clause

- in modern grammar various kinds of phrase are recognized: **verb phrase VP**, **noun phrase NP**, **adjective phrase AdjP**, **adverb phrase AdvP**, and **prepositional phrase PP**

CLAUSE

= a grammatical unit operating at a level lower than a sentence but higher than a phrase

a) in traditional grammar, a clause has its own subject and a finite verb, and is part of a larger sentence. Thus, *She was thirteen when she got her scholarship* consists of a **main clause** (*She was thirteen*) and a **subordinate clause** (*when she got her scholarship*).

b) in modern grammar, **non-finite** and **verbless clauses** also belong to clauses, so that the following, though containing only one finite verb, has four clauses:

My mother travelled by two buses each day / to get there on time, / leaving home at 5.30 am / and usually returning after 10 pm.

(- in more traditional analysis, non-finite and verbless clauses would be categorized as phrases)

SENTENCE

= the largest unit of language structure treated in traditional grammar; usually having a **subject** and a **predicate**, and (when written) beginning with a capital letter and ending with a full stop (BUT! not all sentences have a subject and predicate, e.g. imperatives usually lack an expressed subject)

- sentences are categorized into **simple**, **compound**, and **complex** sentences on the basis of the number and type of clauses they contain.

SIMPLE SENTENCE

= a **single independent clause** containing a **single finite verb phrase**

= consists of a **single independent clause**, which may be one of seven types (SV, SVO, SVC, SVA, SVOO, SVOC, SVOA); the types differ according to whether one or more clause elements are obligatorily present in addition to the subject (S) and verb (V); the V element in a simple clause is always a **finite verb phrase**

- all clause elements in a simple sentence are normally realized by **phrases**; however, a sentence containing another finite clause may also be simple provided that the sentence does not have a clause functioning as one of its elements (i.e. as subject, object, complement, or adverbial) – by this definition a sentence containing a postmodifying relative clause is still a simple sentence, e.g. *This presents a choice which will affect every aspect of your future.* – the relative clause is part of the noun phrase (which functions as object), so this sentence has a simple SVO structure.

COMPOUND SENTENCE

= a sentence containing **two or more coordinate clauses**

= **coordination**

COMPLEX SENTENCE

= a sentence containing **at least one subordinate clause**, in addition to **its main (matrix) clause**

= contains two or more clauses; one of these is a **main clause**, which is finite and can stand on its own; the other clause or clauses are **subordinate** to this or in some way dependent on it

= consists of **only one main clause**, and **one or more subordinate clauses** functioning as an element of the sentence

= **subordination**
