

Syntax presentation

Due Thursday, November 10th

For this presentation, please create a new document answering the questions contained here. As usual, please print 15 copies for the class. You'll have 3 minutes to present the information here in class. If you do hand-write your answers to the questions, make sure to write very clearly, so that everyone can read it even after it has been photocopied.

Basic word order: In class, we've discussed the structure of English sentences in quite a lot of detail, but syntacticians also care about languages' 'basic word order', meaning the typical order of a sentence's subject, verb, and object. English is 'SVO' meaning subjects precede verbs, which precede objects. Korean, on the other hand, is 'SOV', while Irish is 'VSO'.

- (1) Labhraíonn Micheal Gaeilge le Cait go minic.
speaks Micheal Irish with Cait often
Verb Subject Dir.Obj Ind.Obj
Micheal speaks Irish with Cait often.
- (2) nae-ga sangja-reul yeo-nda.
I-NOM box-ACC open-PRES
Subject Object Verb
I open the box.

Give at least two example sentences from your language illustrating the basic word order of your language, with each word translated, as above. Also state the basic word order in 'SVO' style terms.

Structure:

Different grammars focus on different things. Based on what's in your grammar, and what you're interested in, choose **two** of the following topics to describe.

(a) **Questions:** How does your language form questions? Consider (i) Yes/No questions (ii) wh-questions of as many types as you can find (types: 'who', 'what', 'why', 'how'). Provide examples of declarative sentences, and their corresponding questions to illustrate the difference in structure.

(b) **Negation:** How does your language form negative sentences? Give examples of positive and negative versions of each sentence, for example "The man ate the candy.", "The man didn't eat the candy." Notice that in English there's more going on than just the addition of 'not' - we also have to add 'do', and that gets tense instead of the verb. Watch out for such things in your language as well!

(c) **Adjunct ordering:** Where do adjuncts come relative to the head of a phrase? Do adjectives come before or after nouns? Do adverbs come before or after verbs? Is there optionality? Also check out the behavior of prepositional phrases, if your language has them, and relative clauses. (Recall: relative clauses are embedded sentences that describe something in the sentence, for example "The man *who Sally loved* went to sea.")

(d) **Passives:** Passives are sentences in which the recipient of an action is the subject (where usually it is the object) and the doer of the action is either not in the sentence, or included in an adjunct. For example, "The tuna was eaten by the cat." is a passive version of "The cat ate the tuna." How do passives work in your language?

(e) **Commands:** How does your language form commands? (Note: these are also called 'imperatives') Does your language allow commands to have subjects? What form does the verb take in commands? Do any parts of the sentence appear out of order relative to your language's basic word order?

(f) **Topicalization, or other word order variations:** In English, we can draw attention to a constituent by moving it to the front of a sentence. For example: "*Beans*, I like." Does your language have something like this? Can parts of a sentence occur out of the basic word order, for emphasis or for any other reason? If a constituent can occur out of order, where does it occur?