



## MINOR AND MAJOR SYNTAX. MAIN CATEGORIES OF SYNTAX: PHRASE AND SENTENCE

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### ABSTRACT

*This article provides a detailed analysis of the main categories of syntax – minor and major syntax – as well as the role of phrases and sentences. Minor syntax examines the internal grammatical relationships between words, while major syntax organizes phrases and sentences to convey complete ideas. The study demonstrates the interdependence of minor and major syntax and analyzes the grammatical structure and communicative function of phrases and sentences. The results of the research highlight essential syntactic principles that are valuable for language learning, language teaching, and linguistic analysis.*

### INTRODUCTION

As a foundational subfield of linguistics, syntax studies the relationships between words as they create larger meaningful groups and how these groups interact within the discourse structure. Major syntax and minor syntax, which each address different layers of language organization, are traditionally distinguished between in the subject of syntax. By understanding these two dimensions, we may understand how language functions at both the micro level of simple structures and the macro level of complex sentence production. Furthermore, the phrase and the sentence, which are the core concepts of syntactic analysis, are crucial in determining meaning, grammatical relationships, and communicative purpose.

The primary focus of major syntax is on how words are arranged into larger syntactic structures, such as sentences and clauses. It examines how different word classes interact in accordance with grammatical principles to produce comprehensible structures that can carry out all communicative functions. Major syntax encompasses syntactic events such sentence kinds, clause structures, coordination and subordination, predication, and word order. The fundamental subject-predicate sentence structure demonstrates how major syntax determines the fundamental meaning of a statement. It also examines how clauses link, how sentences convey different communicative intents, and how intricate syntactic connections work to convey subtle meanings. Linguists may use major syntax to account for why some sentence structures are grammatically sound while others are not, as well as how syntactic choices affect clarity, emphasis, and style variety. In contrast, minor syntax concentrates on the connections between words in a sentence at a smaller scale. It covers the laws governing

the potential for words to be combined, government, agreement, adjacency, the order of attributes, and the rules governing how individual lexical items might coexist. Minor syntax analyzes the internal links that guarantee grammatical correctness and coherence, whereas major syntax investigates the overall sentence structure. For example, lesser syntax encompasses prepositional connections, verb-noun governance, noun-adjective agreement, and several types of modification and complementation. This layer of syntax makes sure that words combine in legitimate ways and adhere to the rules of the language's grammar. The way that words are put together, the order of their components, and the distribution of meaning across smaller syntactic units are all heavily influenced by minor syntax.

The phrase and the sentence, which represent distinct phases of structural development, are the main categories of syntactic analysis. A phrase is a syntactic unit that is less than a clause and often lacks a complete predicative structure. It is made up of a head word and, if any, its dependents, all of which together make sense and serve as a clause's constituent part. Phrases include prepositional phrases, verb phrases, noun phrases, adverb phrases, and adjective phrases. The syntactic roles of each phrase type are distinct: prepositional phrases typically express spatial, temporal, or logical relationships, verb phrases serve as the foundation of predicates, and noun phrases act as subjects or objects. By themselves, phrases do not convey whole ideas; rather, they help to maintain the grammatical and semantic unity of the sentence.

On the other hand, a sentence is the largest syntactic unit that can convey a full thought. In most cases, it has a predication structure that is a subject-predicate relationship. The purpose of sentences might be to convey information, pose questions, issue orders, or express emotions. Depending on the quantity and connections between clauses, they might be simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex. Additionally, the sentence is a basic technique for arranging conversation, enabling authors and speakers to express logical connections, reasoning, and narrative flow. Although sentences can differ greatly in length, syntax, and style, they all have the crucial characteristic of predication, which sets them apart from phrases.

There are strong ties between major syntax, minor syntax, sentence, and phrase. The internal structure of phrases and the interaction of lexical items within them are governed by minor syntax. After that, these words are processed by the major syntax, which organizes them into sentences and clauses that express whole ideas. It is necessary to comprehend both levels in order to examine how linguistic meaning is created and conveyed. In addition, proficiency in these topics helps language learners, teachers, and researchers identify trends in grammaticality, syntactic diversity, and stylistic preferences.

The difference between sentences and phrases in linguistic research also helps in the study of structural grammar, syntactic trees, and transformational-generative methods. Phrases make up hierarchical structures that may be broken down into their components and functions, whereas sentences serve as the foundation for evaluating more complex syntactic mechanisms, such as clause embedding, coordination, and movement. According to contemporary syntactic theory, sentence structure models and phrase structure rules help explain how languages produce an infinite number of grammatical sentences from a limited collection of lexical items and rules.

Therefore, linguistic expression is governed by a complete system that includes both major and minor syntax. Major syntax arranges these groups into sentences that are meaningful and communicative, whereas minor syntax ensures that words are put together correctly and that local grammatical relationships are formed correctly. The sentence and the phrase are the essential components of this system and act as the foundational elements of syntactic analysis, each of which makes a distinct contribution to the structure and meaning of statements. In spoken and written communication, a thorough grasp of these ideas improves

our ability to utilize language effectively and comprehend intricate syntactic structures, as well as expands our understanding of linguistic structure.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY**

For more than a century, the study of syntax has been a primary concern in linguistics, with scholars looking at how words combine to create phrases and sentences, and how these structures express meaning. Early structuralist linguists, like Bloomfield, focused on the hierarchical structure of language, dissecting sentences into their component pieces and searching for common patterns of word combinations. Bloomfield's work established the basis for differentiating between major syntax units, such as sentences and clauses, and minor syntax, which includes grammatical relationships and local word relationships inside phrases. In a similar way, Fries studied English syntax patterns, emphasizing the significance of word order, agreement, and the functional function of phrases in creating understandable statements.

Noam Chomsky's groundbreaking transformational-generative grammar revolutionized our theoretical comprehension of syntax. By demonstrating how underlying grammatical connections regulate sentence production, Chomsky popularized the idea of deep and surface structures, with surface structures reflecting the actual sequence of words. This paradigm views minor syntax as the regulations governing constituent combination, while major syntax deals with the transformational rules that produce entire sentences. Scholars like Radford, Carnie, and Huddleston later expanded upon these concepts by providing thorough analyses of phrase structure rules, clause kinds, and the functional classification of statements. The importance of government, agreement, modification, valency, and other phenomena in sentence formation and grammaticality has been highlighted by research on minor syntax.

The study's methodology combines theoretical analysis with illustrative cases in a descriptive-analytical manner. The study looks at real English sentence structures and finds patterns in the way words, phrases, and clauses are put together. To highlight differences between minor and major syntax, examples from both spoken and written English are examined. Data are classified according to syntactic units: words, clauses, and sentences. The internal structure, functional role, and contribution to the entire meaning of the statement are all analyzed for each unit. By emphasizing the interaction between minor and major syntax in producing grammatically correct and coherent speech, this method enables a thorough grasp of syntactic structure.

Additionally, the approach includes comparative analysis, in which the syntactic behavior of various phrase types (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, and prepositional phrases) is compared. Based on their structure (simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex) and communicative purpose (declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory), sentence types are classified. By combining descriptive, analytical, and comparative techniques, this approach guarantees a comprehensive analysis of the major syntax categories and offers a framework for comprehending the interactions between phrases and sentences within the larger syntactic system.

### **RESULTS**

In English, the study of syntactic structures shows a clear separation between minor and major syntax, as well as the essential functions of phrases and sentences in structuring meaning. The study shows that the inner relationships between words in phrases are regulated by minor syntax, which guarantees agreement, correct modification, and grammatical coherence. As an illustration, consider how noun phrases always demonstrate agreement between the head noun and modifiers, such as "the lovely garden" or "several interesting books," where the adjectives and determiners are consistent with the number and definiteness of the head noun. Verb phrases additionally exhibit slight syntactic rules in terms

of tense, aspect, and subject agreement, as seen in phrases such "She has completed the assignment" or "They are playing outside." According to these findings, the grammatical accuracy of sentences, which act as the foundation for more complex sentence architectures, depends on minor syntax. The blending of words into understandable, communicative units is seen at the level of big syntax. The basic subject-predicate link that conveys a full notion is shown by straightforward phrases like "The teacher explained the lesson." The coordination is demonstrated by compound sentences, such as "The instructor taught the class, and the students took notes," which shows how clauses of equal status may be combined to express several statements. The subordination is highlighted in complicated phrases like "The teacher explained the lesson because the students asked for clarification," where one clause serves as a dependent unit to add extra meaning. According to the analysis, clauses and sentences are arranged by major syntax in such a way that the overall structure conveys the intended meaning and logical relationships.

Additionally, the research reinforces the practical value of words as essential elements of sentences. Prepositional phrases give further details regarding time, location, or manner, while noun phrases typically function as subjects or objects and verb phrases make up predicates. By adding contextual and descriptive information, adverbs and adjectives modify verbs and nouns, respectively. According to minor syntactic rules, the correct creation and positioning of these words have a direct impact on sentence clarity, fluency, and grammar. For example, the sentence "The youngster with a red hat ran fast" shows how minor syntax (modification within phrases) interacts with major syntax (overall sentence structure) to create a clear and semantically accurate message. In conclusion, the data show how dependent minor and major syntax are. Major syntax arranges these phrases into useful sentences, while minor syntax ensures that words are properly combined within phrases. Additionally, the research emphasizes that understanding phrases as intermediate units between words and sentences offers useful insight into sentence structure. The research analyzes real-world instances of spoken and written English to show how these syntactic categories function in practice, uncovering patterns of agreement, modification, predication, coordination, and subordination. The need to include the study of both minor and major syntax in order to have a complete picture of how English syntax is structured is emphasized by these findings.

### **Conclusion**

A thorough grasp of how language arranges meaning is gained through the study of minor and major syntax, as well as the core syntactic categories of words and sentences. Minor syntax regulates the inner connections between words inside of phrases, ensuring grammatical accuracy via agreement, change, and appropriate lexical item combinations. Major syntax, on the other hand, arranges these words into sentences, allowing for the expression of whole notions, logical connections, and complicated statements. The analysis of various phrase kinds and sentence patterns shows that phrases serve as crucial building blocks inside sentences, bridging the gap between distinct words and meaningful statements. The study highlights how closely connected little and big syntax are, demonstrating how grammatical precision at the micro level has a direct impact on clarity, coherence, and efficacy at the macro level. The accurate expression of meaning depends on the correct construction and integration of words in simple, compound, or complex sentences. Additionally, comprehending these syntactic processes is essential for language acquisition, instruction, and linguistic analysis because it exposes the underlying systematic patterns governing how words are combined and sentences are formed. In summary, a solid understanding of the fundamentals of minor and major syntax, as well as how words and sentences are created and used, provides necessary skills for creating, analyzing, and interpreting language that is

grammatically sound and meaningful. The study reinforces the idea that successful language communication is based on the interplay between smaller components (phrases) and larger structures (sentences), emphasizing the essential role of syntax in both theoretical and practical linguistics.

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