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NOUNS AND NOUN GROUPS

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Abstract: Definition of Noun Group and Noun A noun group is a linguistic sequence which may function as subject, object, subject complement, complement of a preposition or in a PossG structure, or as dependent element of another noun head.

Key words: Nouns, aspects of nouns, categories.

The Nouns are the heads in the structure of a NG. They have the following properties:

a) Typical nouns refer semantically to those aspects of our experience which we perceive as "things" or "entities": concrete entities, names of actions, relationships, emotions, qualities, phenomena and many other classes of entities.

b) The categories of number, gender and case are generically applied to nouns.

c) The distinctive dependents are: determinatives,

 Determiners

They are used to identify a headword functioning deictically or simply as quantifiers, that is, they serve as definite or indefinite reference or to give information about quantity and proportion.

There are five main kinds of determiners:

 1. the articles a (an) and the;

2. the demonstratives;

3. the possessives and PossG;

4. the numerals and

5. the indefinite determiners

. Modifiers

 The main function of a modifier is to describe a headword. So a modifier is an element that depends on the head. It is a "one-way dependency". Adjectives are the most common modifiers in English. However, adjectives may have their own modifiers as in "a definitely necessary person". Determiners precede modifiers except when the modifier is preceded by how, so, too as in "so fine a story!" It is also frequent in English the modification of a noun by another noun, as in the brick wall. The possessive determiner can also be realised as a possessive group (PossG) as in "the boy's parents are in Canada". This PossG or genitive takes the sentence position normally occupied by determiners. However, a PossG may also function as a modifier: Contrast these two examples: "the young Mozart's symphony" and "a disabled children's hospital" About the analysis of the PossG, if we consider that possessive 's is similar to of in "the house of Peter", then the 's must be treated as a head.

Complements

Complements are also dependent elements of a head. A complement expands the semantic contents of the noun. In English adjectives are not so common in post-head complementation as in pre-head modification. However, the indefinite pronouns (somebody, everybody...) accept postcomplementation. Present, proper and some adjectives ending in –able and -ible have different connotations when used predicatively, as in "the present members" and "the members present". In the same way, a few a-adjectives (available, ablaze, afloat, absent, etc.) and concerned and involved do not strictly occur attributively (pre-head modification). In broad terms, complementation may be realised by an adjective or AdjG, a noun or NG, a PG and a finite or non-finite subordinate clause.

The noun is the central lexical unit of language. It is the main nominative unit of speech. As any other part of speech, the noun can be characterised by three criteria: **semantic** (the meaning),**morphological** (the form and grammatical catrgories) and **syntactical** (functions, distribution).

Semantic features of the noun. The noun possesses the grammatical meaning of thingness, substantiality. According to different principles of classification nouns fall into several subclasses:

1. According to the type of nomination they may be **proper** and **common**;

2. According to the form of existence they may be **animate**and **inanimate**. Animate nouns in their turn fall into **human** and **non-human.**

3. According to their quantitative structure nouns can be **countable** and **uncountable.**

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