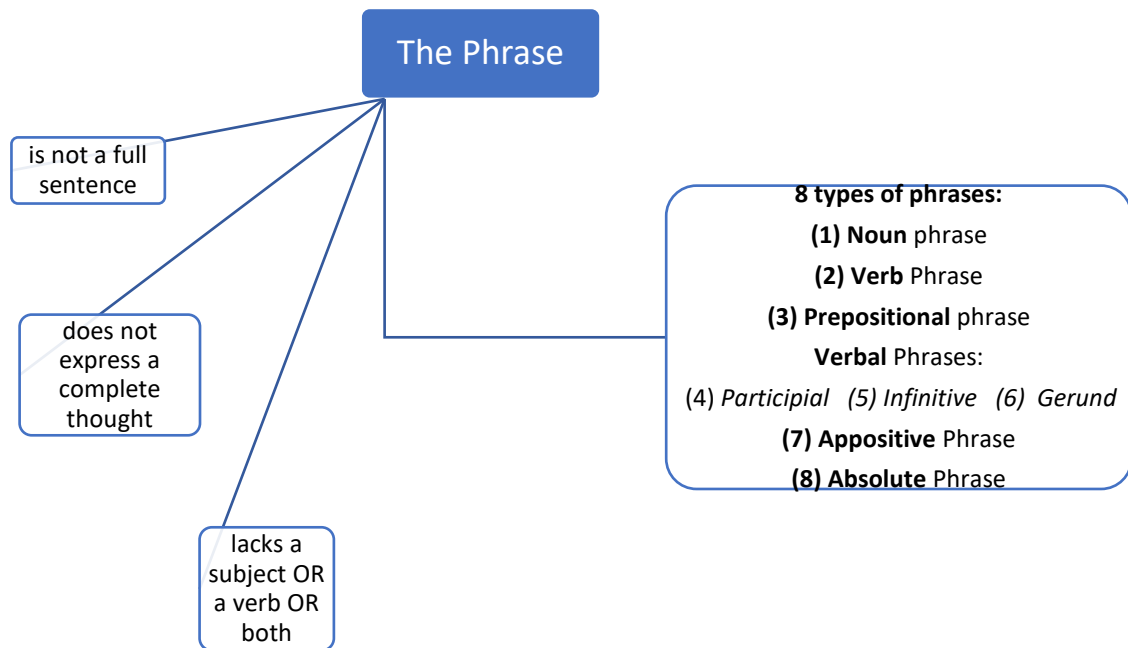


IDENTIFYING PHRASES

Definition

A phrase is a group of words that function as a **unit** (as modifier or noun). The phrase usually contains a head word and accompanying modifiers. **Head word**: the main word in a phrase.

Modifiers: words that describe the head word or give us more information about it •



Types of Phrases :

(1) Noun Phrase :

A noun phrase – or nominal (phrase) – is a group of words that usually has a noun or pronoun as its **head**, and has the same grammatical functions as a noun, typically consisting of a noun and its modifiers. The noun phrase can be subject, direct object, indirect object, subject complement, object complement or object of preposition.

(2) Verb Phrase:

A verb phrase is often defined as the main verb of a sentence along with any auxiliary or modal verbs. There are two types of verb phrase: simple and complex.

- **Simple verb phrases**

When a main verb is used without any modal or auxiliary verbs, it is a **simple verb phrase**.

- **Complex verb phrases**

The main verb in a sentence can be accompanied by modal verbs, auxiliary verbs, or a combination of these to express tense, mood, and voice. The main verb and any accompanying verbs make up a **complex verb phrase**.

(3) Prepositional Phrase:

It begins with a preposition and includes the object, plus any modifiers.

A prepositional phrase functions as an adjective (describing a noun) or adverb (telling where, when, why, how, or to what degree.)

Prepositional phrases function as adjectives or adverbs, so the adjective and adverb questions identify them.

When prepositional phrases act as **adjectives**, they answer one of the following questions:

Which?

What kind?

How many?

Whose?

However, most adjective prepositional phrases answer the question **which**.

When prepositional phrases act as adverbs, they answer one of the following questions:

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

to what degree?

VERBAL PHRASES

A **verbal** is a verb form that does not serve as a verb in the sentence. Instead, it functions as a noun, adjective, or adverb. There are three types of verbals: gerund, participle and infinitive.

A **verbal phrase** consists of a verbal and any objects and/or modifiers. There are three types of verbal phrases: gerund phrases, infinitive phrases and participial phrases.

(4) Gerund Phrases= Gerund + Object(s) and/or Modifier(s)

A gerund phrase is formed when a gerund (the “-ing” form of a verb used as a noun) is accompanied by any modifiers and/or objects. The entire phrase functions as a noun, meaning it can be the subject of a clause or an object of a verb or preposition.

(5) Infinitive Phrases= Infinitive + Object(s) and/or Modifier(s)

Infinitive phrases are composed of the infinitive of a verb (the base form + the particle *to*) along with any objects or modifiers associated with it. Infinitives and infinitive phrases can function as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs in a sentence.

(6) Participle Phrases= Participle + Object(s) and/or modifier(s)

Like gerunds and infinitives, participles are formed from verbs, so participle phrases are created when participles are accompanied by any modifiers or objects. Past and present participles (without modifiers or objects) can be used to create different verb tenses, but they can also function as adjectives.

Participle phrases, however, can only function as adjectives

(7) Appositive phrase

An appositive phrase is a noun phrase that serves to describe or rename another noun that appears directly before it in a sentence.

There are two kinds of appositives that give different kinds of information and are punctuated differently:

- A **nonrestrictive appositive** provides additional, nonessential information about the noun or pronoun. It adds descriptive detail but does not change the core meaning of the sentence. It's separated from the surrounding text with commas.
- A **restrictive appositive** is essential to the meaning of the sentence. It limits or restricts the meaning of the noun or pronoun it modifies. It is not set off with commas.

(8) Absolute Phrases

Most phrases modify a particular word in a sentence. However, an absolute phrase acts as an adverb that modifies an entire sentence instead of a single word.

Structure of an absolute phrase

Absolute phrases can have any of the structures shown below.

- Noun + participle (or participial phrase)
- Noun+ single word adjective
- Noun+ infinitive phrase