

5202 GRAMMAR (Übung; ECTS 3)

Winter Semester 2003-04

Tuesdays 16-18 in A3, Wednesdays 8-10 in C29

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**Direct Objects, Indirect Objects, Objective Complements
Subject Complements: Predicate Nominative, Predicate Adjective**

Complement: A complement is a word or group of words that completes the meaning of the predicate of a sentence. Complements can be nouns, pronouns, or adjectives. In the following sentences, the various complements are underlined.

- The invaders plundered the town.
- Allison told her a secret.
- The President appointed her Attorney General.
- That tree is an oak.
- The frozen lake looked smooth.

Some sentences require complements to be complete. Without the information provided by the complement they simply don't make sense.

- ? Grace sent.
- ? The people elected.
- ? Wild animals are.

Direct Objects: A direct object is a noun, pronoun or group of words acting as a noun that receives the action of a transitive verb. To find a direct object, ask What? or Whom? after an action verb.

- The carpenter is sanding the bookcase. → sanding what? → the bookcase = direct object
- The army blanket covered the soldier. → covered whom? → the soldier = direct object

A direct object may be a compound direct object. In this case you will get two or more answers to the What? or Whom? question.

- The carpenter is sanding the bookcase and its shelves. → bookcase, shelves = direct objects
- The blanket covered the soldier and his rifle. → soldier, rifle = direct objects

Only transitive verbs can have direct objects! (See handouts "Transitive and Intransitive Verbs" and "Action and Linking Verbs")

- The tidal wave sank the ship. → sank what? → the ship = direct object
- The wheels sank into the mud. → sank what? → no answer → intransitive verb, no direct object in this sentence

Direct Objects Exercise: Identify the direct objects in each of the following sentences.

1. No one heard the announcement on the radio.
2. His nephew searched closets, drawers, and cupboards for the will.
3. Torches lit the tunnels in the gloomy mine shaft.
4. Amy's mother invited most of her friends and relatives to the party.
5. The dog guarded his sleeping mistress and her sick child.
6. The mob threw rotten fruits and vegetables at the well-dressed duke.
7. Jackals gnaw bones with their powerful jaws.

Indirect Objects: An indirect object is a noun or pronoun that comes after an action verb and before a direct object. Its purpose is to name the person or thing that something is given to or done for. To find an indirect object, first find the direct object. Then ask To whom? or For whom? or To what? or For what? after the action verb.

- Camille promised her sister a reward for good behavior. → promised a reward to whom? → her sister = indirect object
- We should give Fred's idea a fair chance. → give a chance to what? → Fred's idea = indirect object

Direct Objects, Indirect Objects and Objects of Prepositions: Be careful not to confuse direct or indirect objects with objects of prepositions. A direct object is never the noun or pronoun at the end of a prepositional phrase. An indirect object is never preceded by *to* or *for*. Also, an indirect object never comes after the direct object.

- I photographed the woman with the children. → woman = direct object; with the children = prepositional phrase, children = object of a preposition
- We walked with the children through the zoo. → no direct object; with the children = prepositional phrase, children = object of a preposition; through the zoo = prepositional phrase, zoo = object of a preposition
- Angela told the news to her friends. → news = direct object; to her friends = prepositional phrase, friends = object of a preposition
- Angela told her friends the news. → news = direct object; her friends = indirect object

Direct and Indirect Objects and Objects of Prepositions Exercise: Identify the direct object in each of the following sentences (each sentence has a direct object). Also identify the indirect objects (not in all sentences) and objects of prepositions (not in all sentences).

1. Trading vessels brought people exotic spices.
2. Our committee distributed fliers to our neighbors.
3. Mr. Hinkle taught Harriet and Alberta a good lesson.
4. Please bring the children and me some ice cream.
5. The Constitution guarantees freedom to all.
6. She sold her home for very little profit.
7. When will Lena tell him the truth?
8. Higher education gives men and women better opportunities.
9. Lucille made herself some hot chocolate.
10. The article had a message for cigarette smokers.

Objective Complements: An objective complement is an adjective, noun, or group of words acting as a noun that follows a direct object and describes or renames it. They occur infrequently because they follow only such verbs as *appoint*, *name*, *make*, *think* or *call*. To find an objective complement, find the verb and the direct object, and then ask What?

- Ben called his dog Rover. → called dog what? → Rover = objective complement
- The beautician made Marlene's hair short and curly. → made hair what? → short and curly = compound objective complement

These can also be compound.

Objective Complements Exercise: Identify the objective complements in each of the following sentences.

1. The neighborhood bully considered Martin a sissy.
2. A card for Father's Day makes my dad very happy.
3. That unpleasant gentleman called me a fool and a liar.
4. The most stubborn of men, Mr. Fenston thinks other people obstinate.
5. John's uncle makes everyone welcome.
6. His close friends nominated him master of ceremonies.
7. The ointment made the wound less red and sore.
8. Tired of the same décor, she painted the doors to the dining room pink.
9. The boss appointed Ms. Brady chairwoman of the committee.
10. Such experiences make life worthwhile.

Subject complements. A subject complement is a noun, pronoun, or adjective that follows a linking verb and tells something about the subject of the sentence. They can be either predicate nominatives or predicate adjectives.

Predicate nominative. A predicate nominative is a noun or pronoun that follows a linking verb and renames, identifies, or explains the subject of the sentence. A subject and a predicate nominative are two different words for the same person, place, or thing. Acting like an equal sign, the linking verb joins these two parts and equates them. Predicate nominatives may be compound.

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Subject Complements: Predicate Nominative, Predicate Adjective:
The Answers**

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6. The mob threw rotten fruits and vegetables at the well-dressed duke.
7. Jackals gnaw bones with their powerful jaws.
8. His furious look frightened not only his boss but also his wife.

Bauer, Mary Beth, Lawrence Biener, Linda Capo, et al. *Grammar and Composition. Level 4.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982. 82-3.

Direct and Indirect Objects and Objects of Prepositions Exercise: Identify the direct object in each of the following sentences (each sentence has a direct object). Also identify the indirect objects (not in all sentences) and objects of prepositions (not in all sentences).DIRECT OBJECTS are UNDERLINEDINDIRECT OBJECTS are *ITALICS*OBJECTS OF PREPOSITIONS are **BOLD**

1. Trading vessels brought *people* exotic spices.
2. Our committee distributed fliers to our **neighbors**.
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4. Please bring the *children* and *me* some ice cream.
5. The Constitution guarantees freedom to **all**.
6. She sold her home for very little **profit**.
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Subject complements exercise: Identify the predicate adjectives and predicate nominatives in each of the following sentences.

1. The girl in the green sweater is my sister. (PN)
2. Bill's favorite sports were hockey and football. (COMPOUND PN)
3. Her voice on the telephone sounded muffled. (PA)
4. After hours of hard work, Eugene's muscles felt stiff and sore. (COMPOUND PA)
5. Possible sources of protein might be eggs, meat, or certain kinds of beans. (COMPOUND PN)
6. Agatha remained an athlete in spite of her illness. (PN)
7. The mayor's policy is important to our city's welfare. (PA)
8. Our sandwiches at the beach were gritty and inedible. (COMPOUND PA)
9. Joan grew kinder and more understanding with time. (COMPOUND PA)
10. The winning composition will be the one with the most originality. (PN)
11. Joseph Audubon was an American naturalist and artist. (COMPOUND PN)
12. A crossword puzzle should be fairly difficult. (PA)
13. Two valuable metals have always been gold and silver. (COMPOUND PN)
14. This item on the list appears unnecessary. (PA)
15. Peace of mind and a clear conscience are everything. (PN)
16. The lieutenant's criticism was harsh yet impersonal. (COMPOUND PA)
17. Bob's idea for the assembly seems the best. (PN)
18. My best friends are you and she. (COMPOUND PN)
19. Because of his frightening experience, Steve's face looked drawn and colorless. (COMPOUND PA)
20. Janice became successful overnight. (PA)