

English syntax

SECTION 2 – VERB PHRASES

English verbs

- Two tenses (thì): present and past
- Four aspects (thể): simple, progressive, perfect, perfect-progressive
- Three moods (thức): indicative, subjunctive, imperative
- Two voices (thái): active and passive

Indicative mood

- The indicative mood (thức chỉ định) is a verb form that makes a statement or asks a question. For example:
- Jack **sings** every Friday. → It's a statement.
- **Is** Jack the lead vocalist? → It's a question.

Compare the examples above with this:

- **Sing** us a song, Jack.

This verb is not in the indicative mood.

It is in the imperative mood.

It's an order. It's not a statement or a question.

Subjunctive mood

- The subjunctive mood (thức giả định) is the verb form used to explore a hypothetical situation. **Examples:**
 - If it were me, I'd go. (As this explores a hypothetical situation, *was* becomes *were*.)
 - I wish it were real. (As this expresses a wish, *was* becomes *were*.)
 - It is imperative that the game begin at once. (As this expresses a demand, *begins* becomes *begin*.)
 - I propose he work full time. (As this expresses a suggestion, *works* becomes *work*.)

Imperative mood

- The imperative mood (thức cầu khiến) is a verb form that gives a command. For example:

- Run!

- Get out!

- Empty the bin, John.

- *Compare the examples above with this:*

- John **empties** the bin.

This verb is not in the imperative mood. It is in the indicative mood.

- Commands can include orders, requests, advice, instructions, and warnings.

Verb phrase

- A VERB PHRASE must contain is the VERB GROUP, in the verb group contains one **lexical verb** and may have up to four auxiliary verbs, besides the negative word *not*:

EX: He may *not* have been being **interrogated**.

- In other words, the verb phrase in English consists of a verb group and all the words and word groups which belong with the verb group and cluster around it. The **verb group** itself is called **the head**, and the other words and word groups are the **modifiers** and/or the **complements** of the head.

Verb phrase

- The modifier is the generic term for all the adverbial adjuncts that *optionally* provide **further information** about the action, the process, the event, etc. talked about in the clause in which they occur.
- The relation between the verb group and the adverbial adjunct is one of modification: there is a **one-way dependency** between the verb group (as *head*) and the adverbial adjunct (as *modifier*). Thus, the use of the verb group without any adverbial adjunct is grammatically acceptable.

Verb phrase

- The complement is the generic term for all the completers of the verb, which are usually known as *the direct object, the indirect object, the subjective complement, the objective complement*.
- The relation between the verb group and the NP is one of complementation: there is a two-way dependency between the verb group (as *head*) and the NP (as *complement*).

Complements of verb phrase

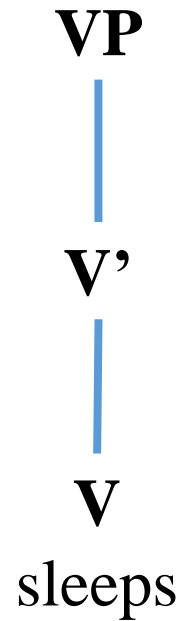
- Intransitive verbs
- (Mono)transitive verbs
- Prepositional verbs
- Ditransitive verbs
- Verbs with NP – PP complements

Type	Verb	Example	Elements
SV	intransitive	<i>The sun is shining.</i>	subject, verb
SVO	monotransitive	<i>That lecture bored me.</i>	subject, verb, object
SVC	copular	<i>Your dinner seems ready.</i>	subject, verb, subject complement
SVA	copular	<i>My office is in the next building.</i>	subject, verb, adverbial
SVOO	ditransitive	<i>I must send my parents an anniversary card.</i>	subject, verb, indirect object, direct object
SVOC	complex-transitive	<i>Most students have found her reasonably helpful.</i>	subject, verb, object, object complement
SVOA	complex-transitive	<i>You can put the dish on the table.</i>	subject, verb, object, adverbial

The structure of verb phrase

An intransitive verb

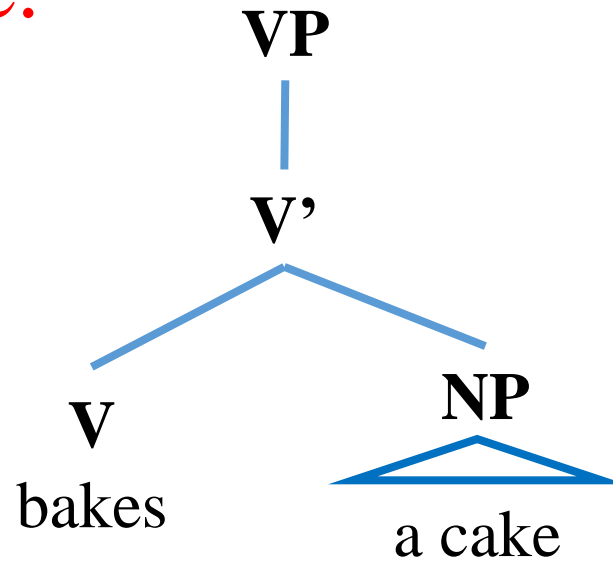
(John) sleeps.



The structure of verb phrase

A (mono)transitive verb

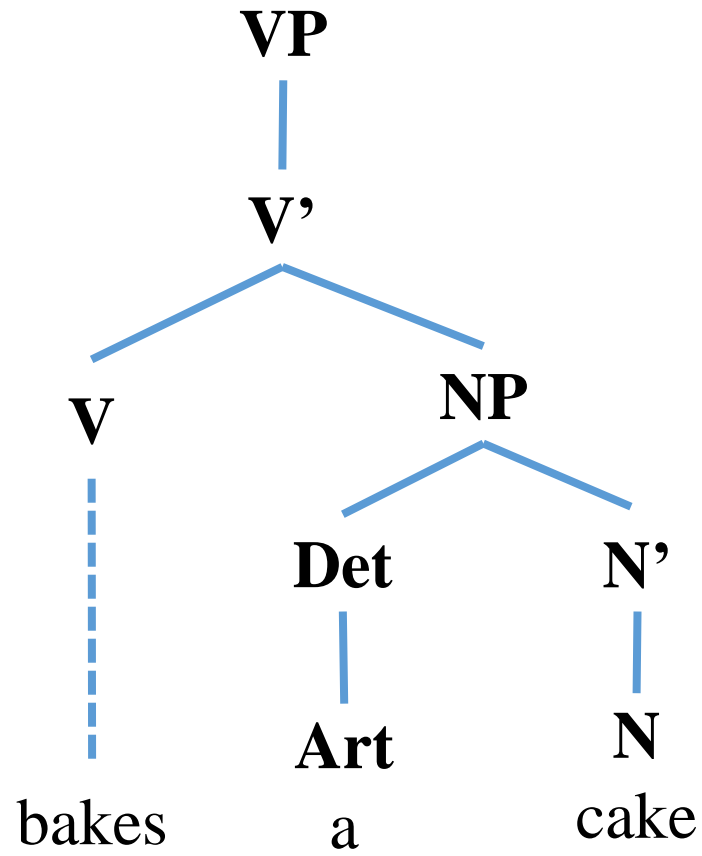
(John) bakes a cake.



The structure of verb phrase

A (mono)transitive verb

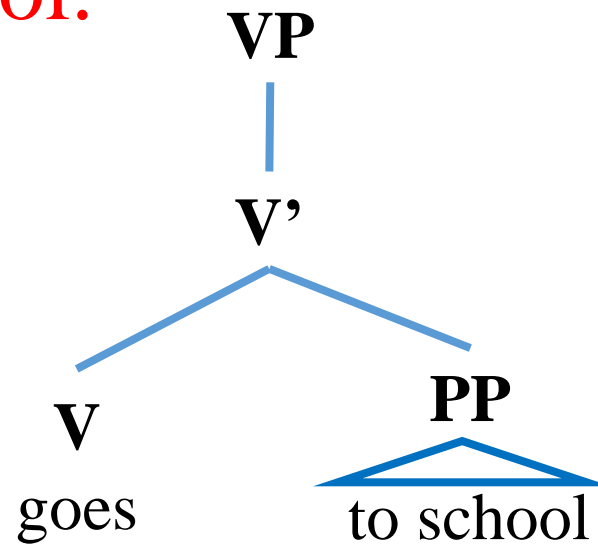
(John) **bakes a cake.**



The structure of verb phrase

A prepositional verb (V + adverbial)

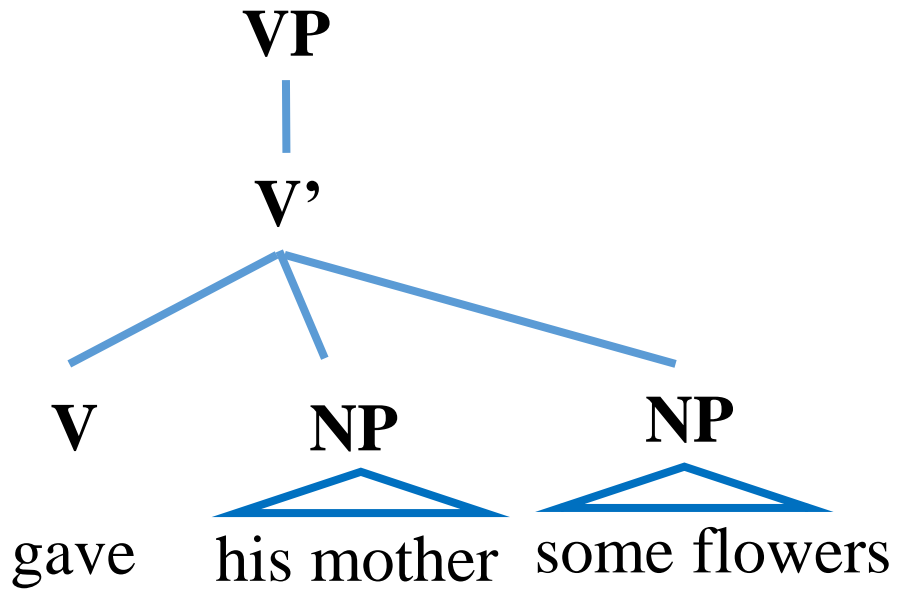
(John) goes to school.



The structure of verb phrase

A ditransitive verb

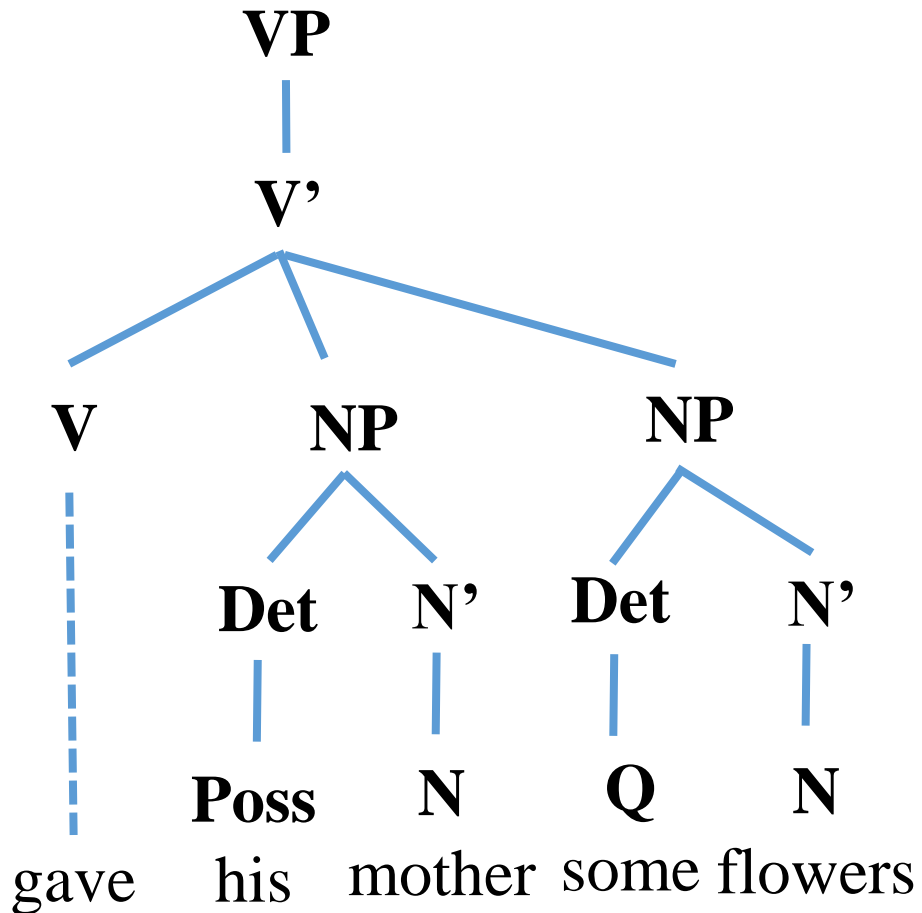
(John) gave his mother some flowers.



The structure of verb phrase

A ditransitive verb

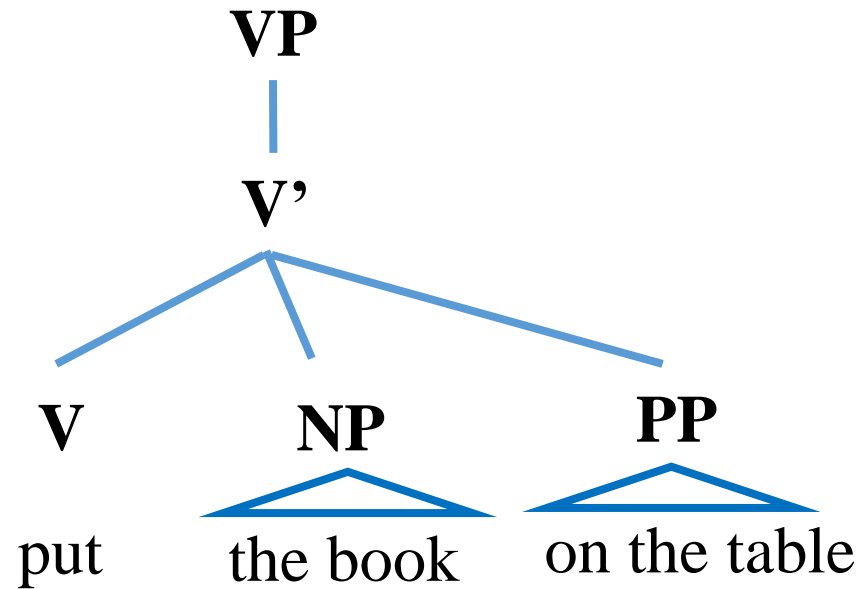
(John) gave his mother some flowers.



The structure of verb phrase

Verb with NP-PP complement (V + O + Adverbial)

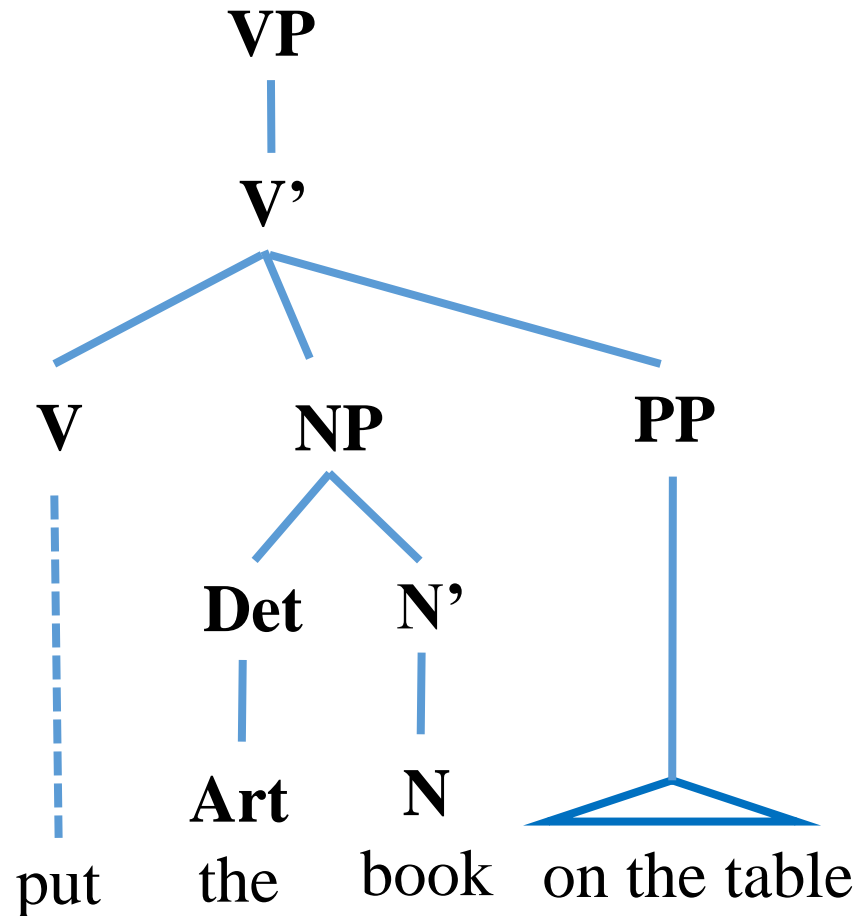
(John) put the book on the table.



The structure of verb phrase

Verb with NP-PP complement (V + O + Adverbial)

(John) put the book on the table.



Modifiers in verb phrase

- **Post-verbal** modifiers:

Ex: John works quietly in his room in the morning.

- ▶ Order of post-verbal adverbs:

MANNER → PLACE → TIME

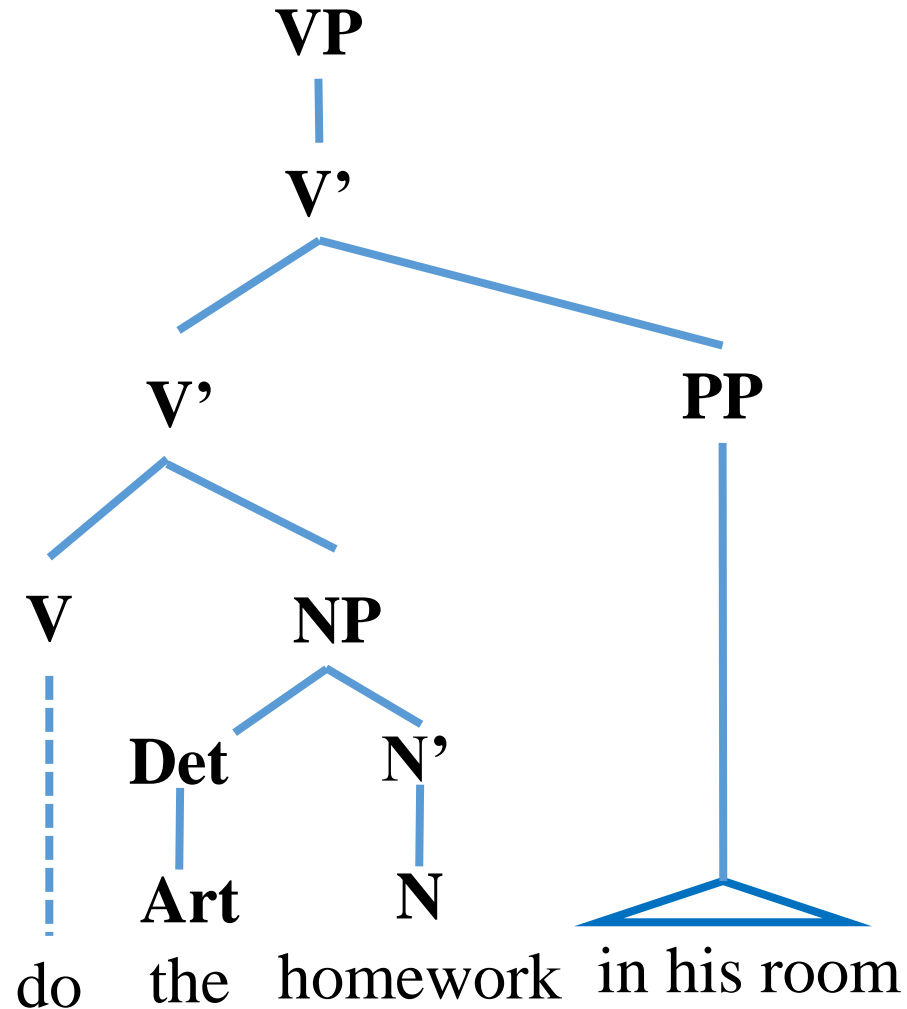
- **Pre-verbal** modifiers

Ex: John always visits his grandma at weekend.

The structure of verb phrase

Post-verbal modifier

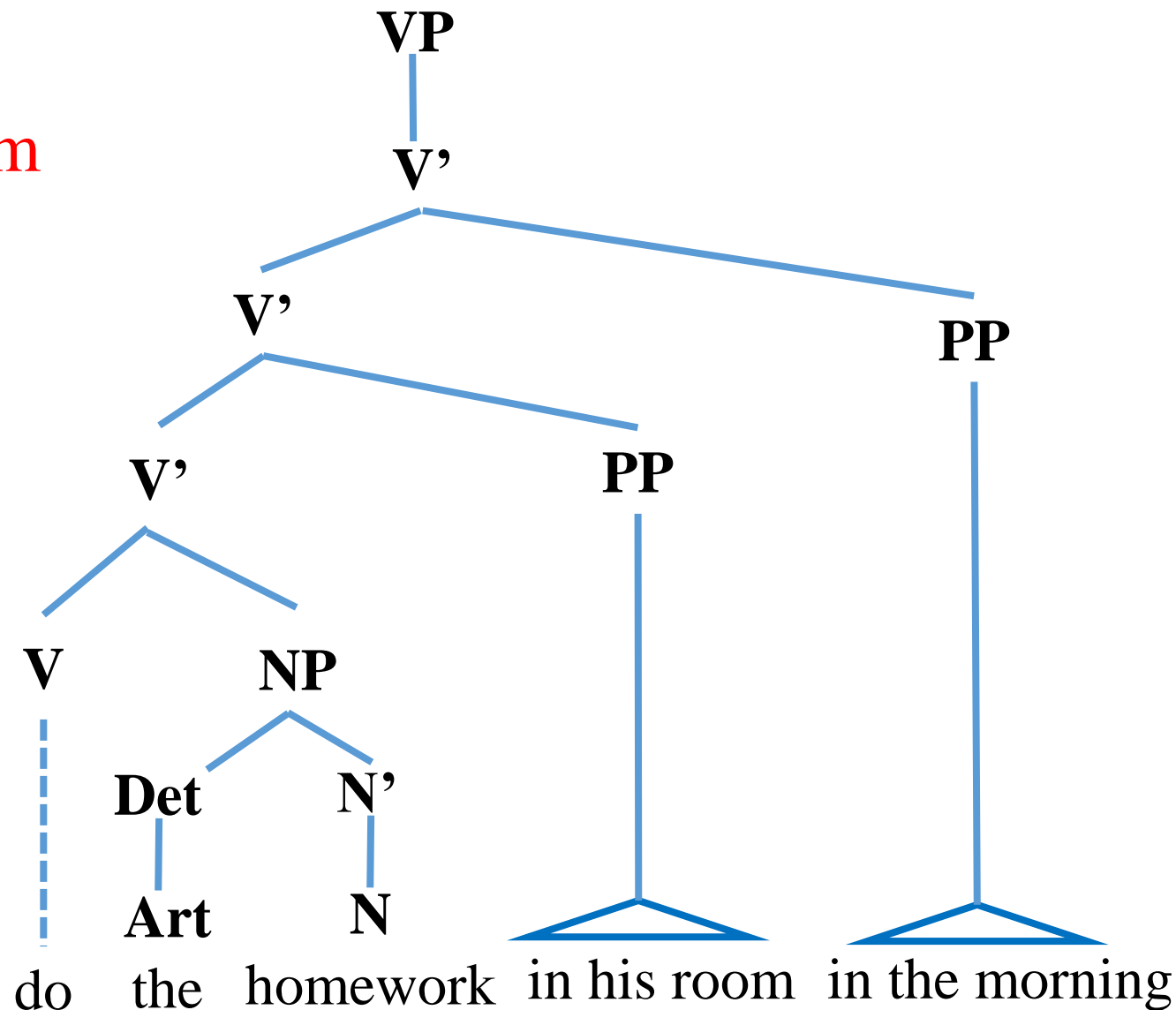
(John) does the homework in his room.



The structure of verb phrase

Post-verbal modifiers

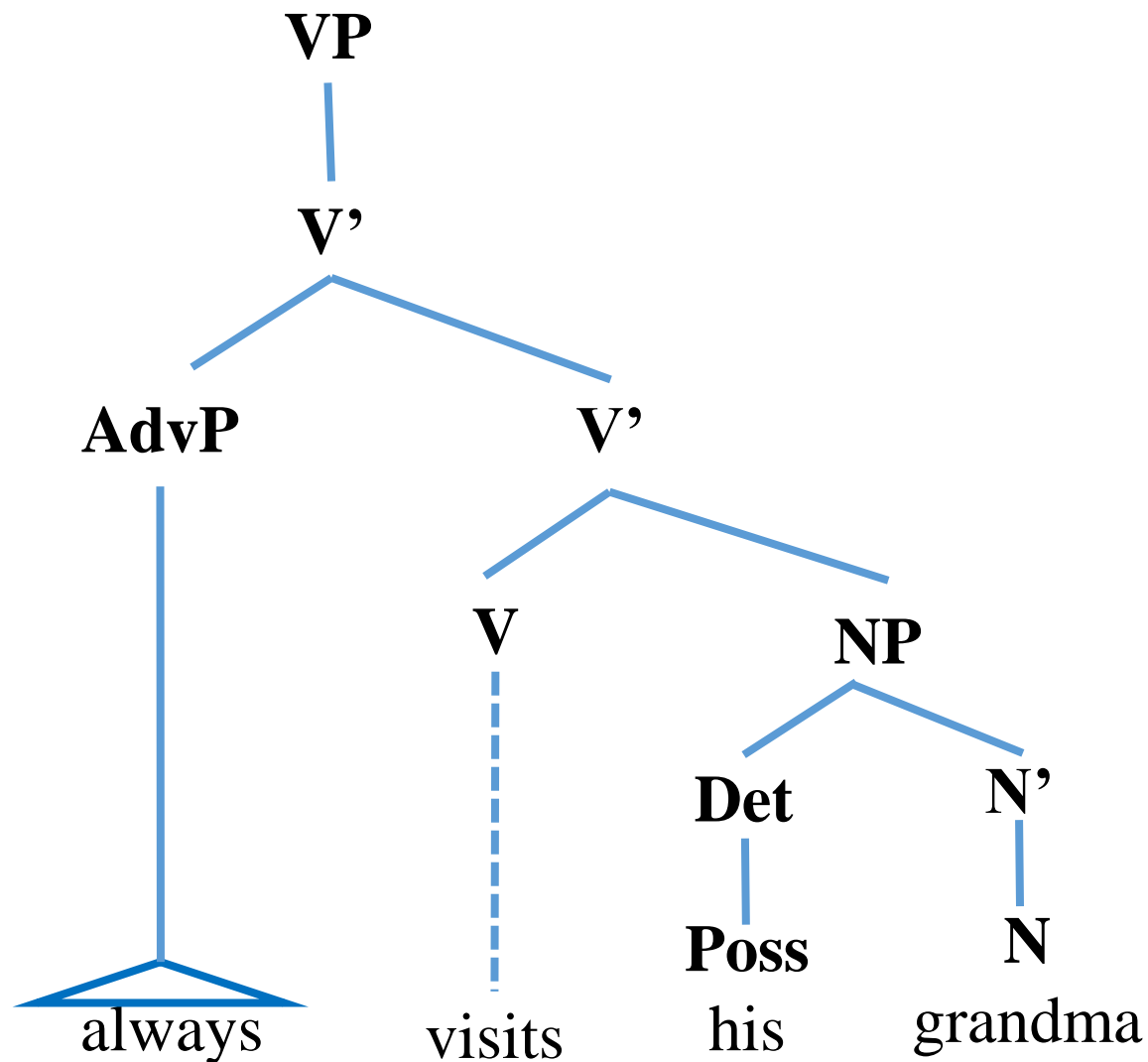
(John) does the
homework in his room
in the morning.



The structure of verb phrase

Pre-verbal modifier

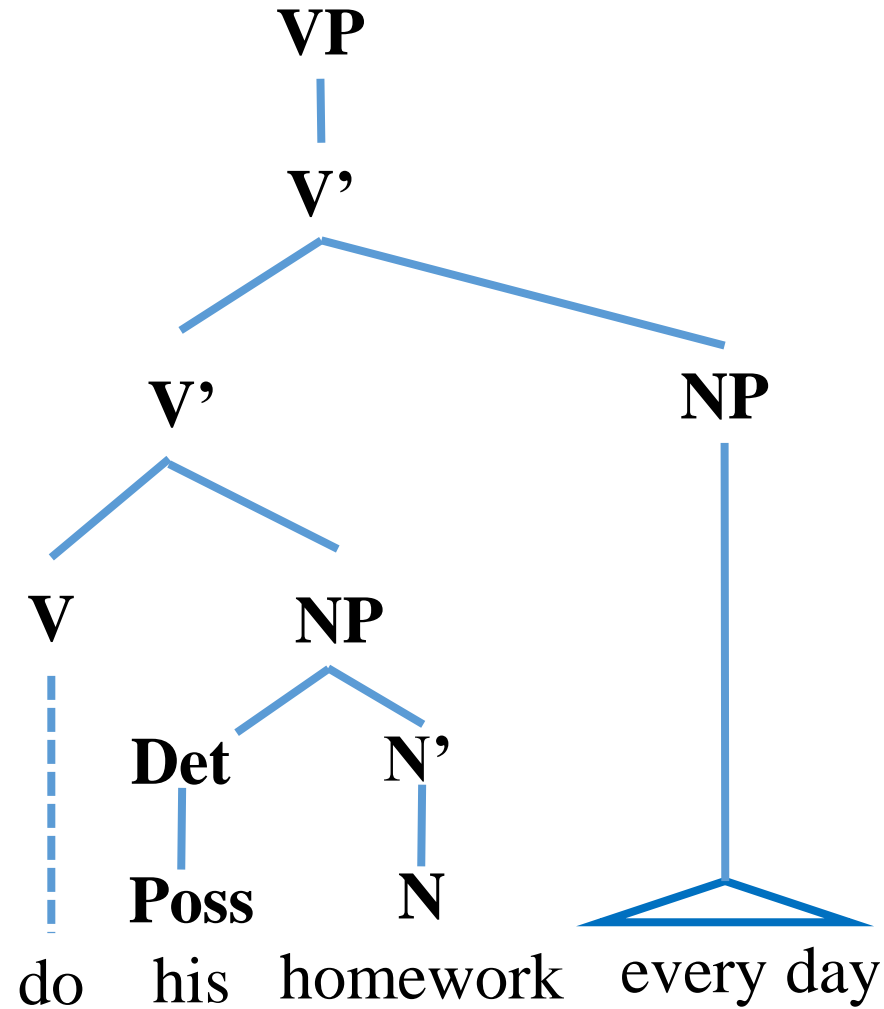
(John) always visits his grandma.



The structure of verb phrase

An important note on NP as adverbs

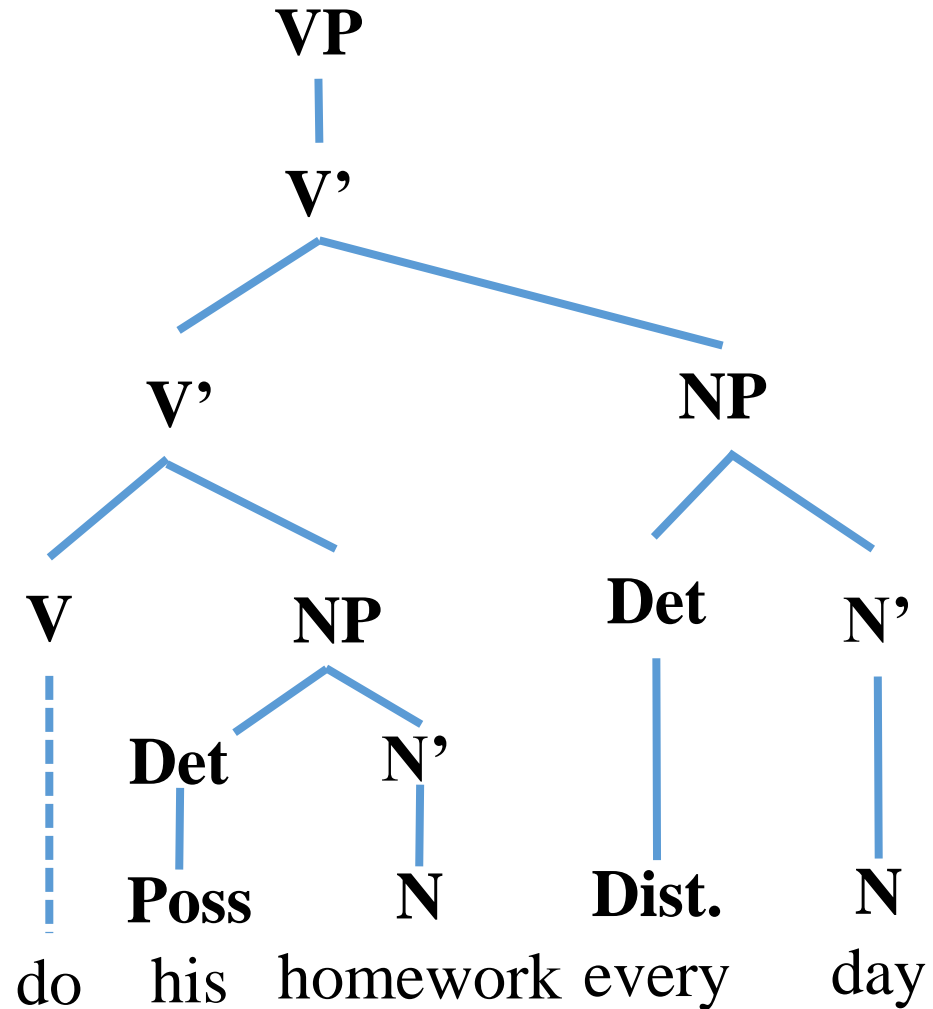
(John) does his homework every day.



The structure of verb phrase

An important note on NP as adverbs

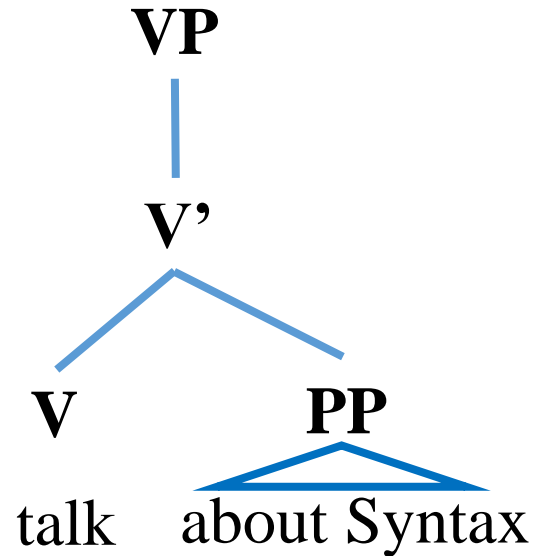
(John) does his homework **every day**.



Phrasal verb & Prepositional verb

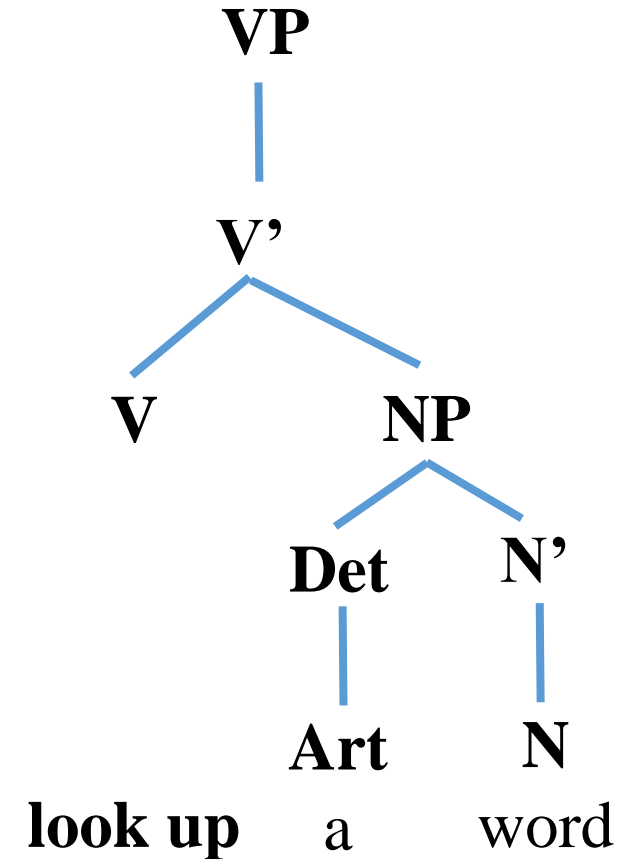
(We) talk about Syntax.

(We) look up a word.



(We) talk about **it**.

(We) look up a word.



➔ ***(We) look up it.** ➔ **(We) look IT up.**

Exercise 1 - Draw the tree diagram of the following phrases

1. wash your face
2. study a new lesson
3. eat breakfast every day
4. put sugar in my coffee
5. always worry about her weight
6. go to the cinema at the weekend
7. sing loudly in their garden last night
8. gave my girlfriend a new dress

Exercise 2 - Draw the tree diagram of the following phrases

1. cook dinner every day
2. withdraw money from the bank
3. always complain about the work
4. go to the park in the morning
5. walk quietly in my garden in the evening
6. sent my little daughter a new toy

