

Derived Structures

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- **Noam Chomsky's Concepts- Basic and Derived Structures**

- **Four characteristics of Basic structures**

Declarative

Positive

Simple

Active

- **Derived Structures: Negatives, Imperatives, Interrogatives, Passives, Complex sentences, etc.**

- **These are systematic derivations**
- **Concept of Transformation-**

Transformation can have three results-

i) Inversion

ii) Addition

iii) Omission

Derived Structures:

I) Fronting and Inversion

- **Fronting can take place to give emphasis on certain clause element.**
- **This deviation is also called ‘transformation’ because it changes one clause element into another.**
- **Used when the speaker wants to say the most important thing that comes in his mind first.**
- **Most commonly used in an informal conversation.**
- **The shift gives the element a kind of psychological prominence.**

Basic Clause Pattern: S P O / C / A

Inversion:

- **Fronting is often accompanied by Inversion.**
- **Not only the topic but also the Verb Phrase or the part of it is moved before the subject.**
- **Inversion is of two types:**
 - i) Subject – Verb Inversion**
 - ii) Subject – Operator Inversion**

II) Negation

- **Chomsky: All negative sentences are derived structures**
- **Involves addition of ‘negators’/ negative markers.**

‘Not’ is inserted after ‘be’ Verb OR Operative Verb

e.g. I am hungry. - Basic structure I am not hungry. - Derived structure

- **When the Operator Verb is absent, the auxiliary ‘ Do’ is introduced and it is followed by Bare Infinitive.**

e.g. He likes tea. - Basic structure He does not like tea. – Derived

ii) Wh – Questions # Expect a reply – short or long.

- **Wh – questions are formed with one of the following Wh- words:**

Who/ Whom / Whose / What / Which / When / Where / How / Why

- **The Q – element generally comes first in the sentence.**
- **In a prepositional complement, the Q - word occurs second.**

iv) Exclamatory Sentences

- **Involves Fronting**
- **Begins with ‘ How’ for AjP / C and AvP**
- **Begins with ‘ What’ for NP / C**

e.g. i) The song is very beautiful.

How beautiful the song is!

ii) He tells awful lies.

What awful lies he tells!

V) Omission:

Ellipsis is most commonly used to avoid repetition.

i) Omission of Relative Pronoun:

**** A Relative Pronoun preceding the Subject can be omitted.**

e.g.

1. The report [which she submitted] was confidential.

ii) Omission of CCL:

1. Ann plays piano beautifully than John can play piano.

Ann plays piano beautifully [than John can play piano].

Ann plays piano beautifully [than John can].

Ann plays piano beautifully [than John].

iii) Tag Questions:

- **Positive sentence – Negative Tag Q.**
- **Negative Sentence – Positive Tag Q.**

e.g. She is busy, isn't she?

They are playing, aren't they?

I have not done this, have I?

They must not attend the programme, must they?

VI) Passivation:

- **The clauses which have NP as object can be converted into Passive Clauses.**
- **Auxiliary used in the Passive Voice depends upon the number (Singular of Plural) of the object in the Active form.**

e.g. I eat ice cream. ~ Ice cream is eaten by me.

VII) Fronting / Subject Raising:

Fronting of Subordinate Clause Object: NCI / M

1. It is difficult [to play **the flute].**

The flute is difficult to play.

Cleft Sentences:

- Begin with Introductory ‘ It’ .
- Useful for fronting the focused element.
- Structure: It + Verb be + Focused element.

e.g. :

John was wearing a blue shirt last night.

It was John who was wearing a blue shirt. [S]

It was blue shirt that John was wearing. [O]

It was last night that John was wearing blue shirt. [A]

Existential Sentences:

- **Begin with ‘ There’ .**
- **There + Verb be + remaining clause [SP/ SPO/ SPOO/ SPC/ SPOC/ SPA/SPOA]**
- **Notion of existence**

1. Something must be wrong. S P C

There (must be) (something) (wrong). [There + P + S + C]

2. Nobody was on the ground. S P A

There was nobody on the ground.

Extraposition:

- **NCL functioning as Subject is postponed to the end of the MCI and is replaced by an empty subject ‘ It’**

1. [To teach her] is a pleasure.

It is a pleasure to teach her.

2. [What you say to them] doesn't matter.

It doesn't matter what you say to them.

Postponement of Postmodifier:

- **NCL / CCL functioning as Modifiers are postponed at the end of the clause.**

1. The time [to think seriously of our health] has come.

The time has come to think seriously of our health.

2. He came late [than we expected] yesterday.

He came late yesterday than we expected.

3. The place [to take rest] is here.

The place is here to take rest.

Pseudo Cleft Sentences:

Focusing the underlined expression using ‘ What’

1. He promised me a job.

What he promised me was a job.

2. He decided to call a meeting.

What he decided was to call a meeting.

3. Gandhiji teaches us non-violence.

What Gandhiji teaches us is non-violence.

