

The Direct Object (DO)

The direct object is the receiver of the action expressed by the predicator. The headword of the VP of the sentence must be a transitive verb.

The main principles of identifying the direct object are:

- a) It is realized by a nominal phrase or any structure in nominal function.
- b) When referring to persons it can be replaced by a nominal phrase with a personal pronoun in the objective case.
- c) Its position is normally immediately after the predicator (if there is no indirect object in the sentence).
- d) It becomes the subject of passive transforms.

I wrote a letter.

The direct object is realized by:

A) Noun phrases-are the most usual way of realizing the direct object.

We met Bill.

He took his wife to the concert.

Robin Hood helped the poor.

B) Infinitive or Infinitive Clauses:

He asked everyone to come to party.

He helped her (to) wash the dishes.

C) Gerunds or gerundial Clauses:

He likes skating.

Have you finished reading the newspaper.

They have considered selling their house.

D) Finite Clauses

She said that she had lost her purse.

They will employ whoever is willing to work hard.

He asked why she had not taken better care of it.

The Indirect Object (IO)

The Indirect Object is a second object to which the action of the verb is directed. The indirect object is placed before the direct object.

The headword of the VP of the sentence must be a ditransitive verb.

The indirect object can be realized:

a) Noun phrases with a headword denoting a person such as:

John bought Jane some roses.

S P IO DO

B) Noun phrases with a headword denoting a personal pronoun which must be in the objective case.

He gave us a bad news.

S P IO DO

She bought herself a new bag.

S P IO DO

Mrs Brown sent Bob and Mary a nice present.

S P IO DO

C) If the DO is a pronoun then the IO must follow it.

I'll tell itto the students.

DOIO

Bring herto my mother.

DOIO

If the DO is a long phrase or clause the IO may come before it.

He pointed outto us the importance of the new plan.

IO

DO

In interrogative and exclamatory sentences the IO is used at the beginning of the sentence.

To whom did you give your passport?

IO

D) The IO is rarely realized also by finite clauses

He told whoever he met the glad news of his promotion.

IO

When the IO comes after the DO, it becomes a PP by structure.

He bought himself a new coat.

IO

DO

He bought a new coat for himself.

DO

IO

He gave the beggars some apples.

IO

DO

He gave some apple to the beggar.

DO

IO