

# GRAMMAR

A Magic Lens  
for Understanding  
Our Own Ideas

**Michael Clay Thompson**

**[mith@mac.com](mailto:mith@mac.com)**

**Royal Fireworks Press**  
**845 726-4444**  
**[www.rfwp.com](http://www.rfwp.com)**

# a term total

## 8 PARTS OF SPEECH

### noun

proper / common  
singular / plural

### pronoun

subject / object  
relative  
demonstrative  
person, 1, 2, 3

### adjective

degree  
pos, compar, superl  
article

definite

indefinite

### verb

tense  
perfect tenses  
helping verb  
singular / plural  
active / passive voice  
action / linking  
mood

### adverb

### conjunction

coordinating  
subordinating  
correlative

### preposition

object of prep

### interjection

## 3 PHRASES

### phrase

### prepositional

### appositive

### verbal

gerund

participle

infinitive

## 5 PARTS OF SENTENCE

### sentence

### fragment

### subject

### predicate

simple / complete

### direct object

### indirect object

### subject complement

### predicate nom

### predicate adj

## 2 CLAUSES

### independent

### dependent

### sentence structure

### simple

### compound

### complex

### compound-complex

### sentence purpose

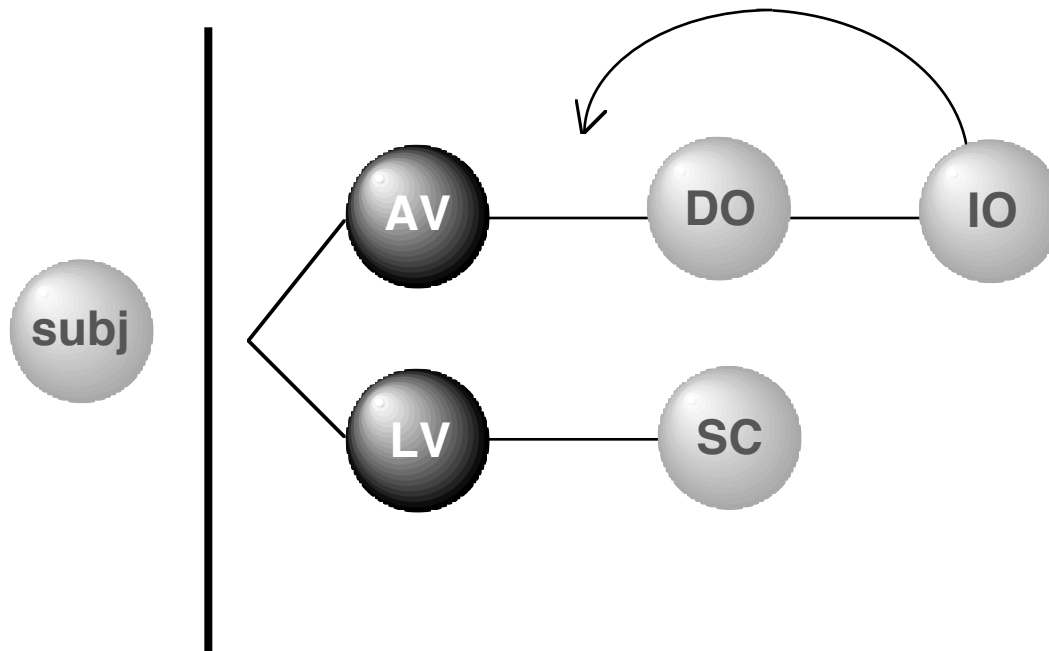
### declarative

### imperative

### interrogative

### exclamatory

A **subject**  
is a **subject**  
and  
an **object**  
is an **object.**



### The Logic of Sentence Analysis

**Find the subject/predicate set.**

**Is the verb ACTION or LINKING?**

**If the verb is *action*, then**

Do not look for a subject complement.

Look for a direct object.

**If you find a direct object, then**

Look for an indirect object.

**If the verb is *linking*, then**

Do not look for a direct object.

Look for a subject complement.

Look for the next subject/predicate set and repeat.

# Four-Level Analysis

Michael C. Thompson

**These fragments I have shored against my ruins.**

**Parts of Speech:** adj. n. pron. v. v. prep. adj. n

**Parts of Sentence:** direct obj. subj. ---predicate---

**Phrases:** --prepositional phrase--

**Clauses:** -----one independent clause, simple, declarative sentence-----

**Fumy, spiritous mists inhabit this place.**

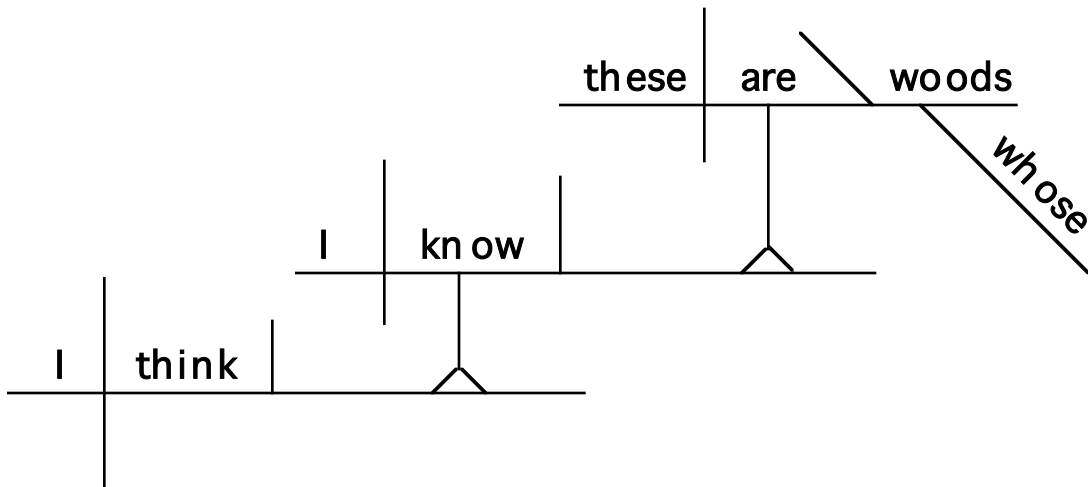
**Parts of Speech** adj adj n v adj n

**Parts of Sentence** subj pred dir obj

**Phrases** --no prepositional, appositive, or verbal phrases--

**Clauses** ---one independent clause, simple declarative sentence---

## Traditional Sentence Diagram

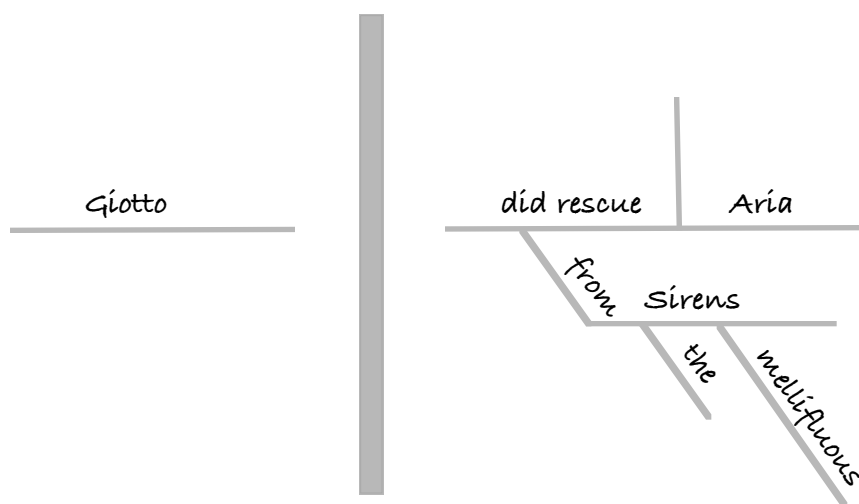


## FOUR-LEVEL ANALYSIS

**Did Giotto rescue Aria from the mellifluous Sirens?**

<b>Parts of Speech:</b>	v.	n.	v.	n.	prep.	adj.	adj.	n.
<b>Parts of Sentence:</b>	pred.	subject	predicate	direct object				
<b>Phrases:</b>					-----prepositional phrase-----			
<b>Clauses:</b>	one independent clause, simple interrogative sentence							

## BINARY DIAGRAM



# Sample Sentences

## for *4-level Analysis*

from *The Magic Lens 2*, Michael C. Thompson

- 1. Much madness is divinest sense to a discerning eye.  
-Emily Dickinson**
- 2. In the room the women come and go talking of  
Michelangelo. - T.S. Eliot**
- 3. Earth, receive an honored guest; William Yeats is laid to rest.  
-W.H. Auden**
- 4. People are not going to dream of baboons and  
periwinkles. -Wallace Stevens**
- 5. And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes  
dropping slow. -W.B. Yeats**
- 6. Clouds are flowering blue and mystical over the face of the stars.  
-Sylvia Plath**
- 7. I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the  
difference. -Robert Frost**
- 8. He disappeared in the dead of winter. -Auden**

# Mystery Sentences

From *The Magic Lens*, Michael C. Thompson

**1. A children's story contains a famous compound declarative sentence distinguished by three independent clauses. A coordinating conjunction is used twice to join the three clauses together. Each clause contains a contraction of the first person singular subject pronoun and the helping verb *will*. The third clause contains a direct object and an adverb. The first two clauses contain only subjects and verbs. What is the sentence?**

**2. A famous sentence from Shakespeare begins with a compound infinitive and ends with a clause that contains a demonstrative pronoun as a subject, a present tense linking verb, a definite article, and a singular common noun as a subject complement. What is the sentence?**



1. In the end we capitulated and the Zone Council reduced its holdings.
  - a. a comma after the prepositional phrase
  - b. a comma after the dependent clause
  - c. a comma after the independent clause
  - d. an apostrophe in the contraction
  - e. commas before and after the appositive
  
2. Near New Lima Venus the elders erected Abduls monument.
  - a. a comma after the city
  - b. a comma after the planet
  - c. an apostrophe in the plural noun
  - d. an apostrophe in the possessive noun
  - e. a comma after the dependent clause
  
3. The pilot expostulated when Newton our only navigator jumped out.
  - a. a comma to separate the adjectives preceding the noun
  - b. a comma after the dependent clause
  - c. a comma after the independent clause
  - d. commas around the appositive
  - e. commas around the noun of direct address
  
4. Whitman's novel Digital Self is about a roboship named Meson.
  - a. italics on the ship title
  - b. an apostrophe in the possessive noun
  - c. quotation marks around the book title
  - d. italics on the book title
  - e. commas around the appositive
  
5. The well intended remark and the retort caused twenty one disputes.
  - a. a comma between the adjectives that precede the noun.
  - b. a hyphen in the compound adjective that precedes the noun.
  - c. a comma after the dependent clause
  - d. a hyphen in the compound number
  - e. an apostrophe in the possessive noun
  
6. In the ascetic decor of the cabin the Spartan said At least its gray.
  - a. a comma after the prepositional phrases
  - b. an apostrophe in the contraction
  - c. a comma before the direct quotation
  - d. quotation marks around the direct quotation
  - e. a period inside the closing quotation marks
  
7. As the poet wrote Umbra he imitated Virgils meter.
  - a. a comma after the independent clause
  - b. an apostrophe in the possessive noun
  - c. a comma after the dependent clause
  - d. italics on the poem title
  - e. quotation marks around the poem title
  
8. A one fourth minority ate sunspice moonmeal and coolship.
  - a. a hyphen in the compound adjective
  - b. a colon at the beginning of the list
  - c. a comma after *sunspice*
  - d. a comma before the coordinating conjunction
  - e. a comma after the dependent clause

**D,I**

**I D**

**I ,cc I**

**I;I**

**I,I** - comma splice  
**IccI** - run-on sentence

### Landlo Floppyla

Your ship crashes and you find yourself in a strange, alien land, with green clouds and yellow mountains. Navy blue streams traverse the landscape, and pink fish jump from the water. A crisp, cool wind blows the mauve trees to the west, or is it the east? The three suns shine down from the crimson sky, casting a triple shadow. Strange, yes, but the strangest part is yet to come: the grammar.

In this land, the language is just like English, except that certain rules are different. For example:

1. Singular nouns all end in *-lo*, and plural nouns all end in *-lolo*, not *-s*. The subject complement suffix is attached after the singular/plural suffix.
2. Adjectives immediately follow nouns, and end in *-la*.
3. Adverbs immediately follow what they modify, and end in *-loo*.
4. The first word of every sentence is the verb, unless the sentence is interrogative. Verbs begin with the hissing sound *sss-*.
5. There are no object pronouns, only subject pronouns; everything is thought to be alive.
6. All subject pronouns begin with the prefix *lee-*
7. Direct objects and objects of verbals begin with the prefix *lum-*.
8. Subject complements begin with *lim-* and end with *-mil*.
9. The preposition begins with the prefix *ner-* is the last word of the prepositional phrase.
10. Interrogative sentences begin with the word *hooop*.
11. The second person pronoun is never spoken, out of respect. This missing word is indicated by the humming sound, *mmmm*.
12. The definite article is *rach* and the indefinite article is *roop*.

As you gaze around in mute stupefaction, a creature flops flappily across the ground to you, peers intensely into your eyes, his nose almost touching yours. He blinks, and says in Floppy:

**Hooop sssare what rach hecklo limmmmmmil. Ssssaw neverloo beforeloo  
leeI lumanythinglo strangela soloo as mmmm. Hooop sssare mmmm roop  
limmonsterlomil. Hooop sssis why mmmm noselo mmmm eyelolo nirbelow.  
Ssshave leeI lumscalololo nicela tummylo myla neron. Hooop ssswould ssslike  
mmmm to pat lumheadlo myla.**

Translate the alien's language into ordinary English. Then translate a well known saying in English into Floppy. You might choose a famous paragraph from a historical document, or a humorous dialogue in a television commercial.

---

What the heck are you? I never saw anything so strange as you before. Are you a monster?  
Why is your nose below your eyes? I have nice scales on my tummy. Would you like to pat  
my head?

## *Someone Dropped Their Banana*

### *A Solecism Play*

Michael Thompson, *The Magic Lens*

*Fred and Joe enter. Fred looks down, and picks up a banana.*

Fred: Look, someone dropped their banana.

Joe: How did you know many people own that banana?

Fred: Hopefully, they don't!

Joe: It makes those people feel *hopeful* to not own the banana?

Fred: Are you trying to aggravate me?

Joe: No, I'm not trying to make you worse; you said it was "their banana," I just want to know who they are, and why they're so hopeful about their banana.

Fred: I ain't never said they were hopeful about no banana.

Joe: Oh, so you admit you said it.

Fred: I ain't never said it.

Joe: Let me get this straight: You said the people don't own a banana hopefully.

Fred: I'll not discuss this farther. I said someone dropped their banana.

Joe: You won't discuss this farther?

Fred: Right.

Joe: Then how close do you want me to stand, so we can talk about it?

Fred: I want you to stand a-ways over there, and leave me alone.

Joe: But you said you didn't want to discuss it farther.

Fred: I ain't gonna discuss it no farther.

Joe: Then why are you sending me farther?

Fred: Your trying to aggravate me, for sure.

Joe: No, I'm just trying to improve you.

Fred: Now, what're you inferring?

Joe: I can't infer anything, you have me confused.

Fred: If you ask me, you are literally a bird.

Joe: I am a mammal.

Fred: I see I can't learn you nothing.

Joe: What do you want to learn about me?

Fred: Your nonsense is making me feel nauseous.

Joe: No, I think you look fine.

Fred: I didn't say nothing about how I look!

Joe: You said you made me sick.

Fred: I didn't never say that.

Joe: That's right, you did.

Fred: See here, even with a lot of dark, rotten places, I'm gonna eat this banana.

Joe: I didn't realize you were sick. What disease do you have?

Fred: I ain't got no disease!

Joe: I'm so sorry to hear it. Where do you have these dark, rotten places, on your stomach? Let me see.

Fred: I never said I had no dark, rotten place, I said there were rotten places on the banana.

Joe: You mean you got a skin disease from a banana?

Fred: This conversation is literally splitting my head.

Joe: Oh, no! Now I understand why you said you were nauseous.

*Fred runs away screaming, and Joe sits down, peels the banana, and eats it.*

*finis*