



**DERIVATION AND SYNTACTIC FUNCTION
TO DEAL WITH IELTS TEST
A MORPHOSYNTACTIC APPROACH**

Komang Astiari
Universitas Bali Dwipa
astikomang4@gmail.com

I Wayan Budiarta
Universitas Warmadewa
iw.budiarta@warmadewa.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research analyzed how the study of derivational morphemes could help students who take IELTS test to deal with listening questions. The data was taken from Cambridge books which shows a wide range of derivation that paraphrase the sentence in the questions; thus, test-takers could easily identify the answer in the audio. The theory was proposed by Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy in his book entitled “An introduction to English Morphology: Words and Their Structure” and Noel Burton Roberts in his book Analyzing Sentences; An Introduction to English Syntax. The method used was qualitative method whereas all data was analyzed using description and syntactic tree. The study found that there were some changes in lexical categories namely noun to verb, verb to noun, verb to adjective, adjective to verb, verb to adverb, and adverb to verb. Those changes of lexical categories resulted in the changes of syntactic structure in the sentences which could be helpful for the test-takers in dealing with the listening section.

Keywords: derivation; ielts; morphosyntactic; syntactic notation

INTRODUCTION

IELTS is one of the English proficiency tests which test students’ ability to use English practically. The test result will consist of a score of each of the four skills namely listening, reading, writing, and speaking that are averaged to give the overall band score. This test is beneficial to those who would like to know their test level whether they are good users, very good users or expert users. Besides, the result can be used to apply scholarships in English speaking countries.

As one of the skills tested, dealing with listening and reading test at IELTS requires a great understanding towards lexical categories as well as their morphological changes especially when the sentences are paraphrased using different lexical categories which will affect the syntactic function of that sentence. As the name suggest, paraphrasing is rewriting a piece of text using the writers’ own words, while retaining the meaning and the length is

usually the same as that in the original text (Lewis, P., & Foley, D. 2014). When understanding paraphrased strategies, the readers will be more likely to be able to match information in the questions with that in the audio or the passage.

Mastering paraphrasing techniques require knowledge in both morphology and Syntax. Morphology is the branch of linguistics that study the internal structure of words and how they are created (Katamba: 1993). This study focuses on the word forms and how they are related one another (Matthews 1991). In addition, the internal structures of words are analyzed based on the morpheme classification and how different morphemes can end up in new words (Mark Aronoff dan Kirsten Fudeman 2011). Thus, when the structures of words change, the syntactic structure of the sentences also experience similar thing. For example, when the word “presented” in “she presented the awards” is changed to

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“presentation”, the new sentence would be “she gave a presentation of the awards”; whereas, “presented” is the sister of noun phrase and “presentation” is the complement of the transitive verb “gave”. This analysis is based on the study of syntax. This study is discussing about the combination of words which form phrases and sentences (Radford 2004). Moreover, those combinations also follow the grammatical form of the sentences (Robert D. Van Valin, Jr 2001). It is said by people that syntax has certain rules that govern the structure of the sentences including the position of the words (based on their lexical categories) as well as phrases and what categories as complements of other categories (Aarts 2008)

Furthermore, in analyzing paraphrased sentences, test-takers must possess good knowledge in derivation as this is one of the strategies used in paraphrasing. Derivation is not the same with inflection. If inflection happens because of grammatical factors, derivation is used for all aspects of word structure involving affixation which is not inflectional. For example, *performance* and *perform* belong to different lexeme. The relation between those two words is not a relationship between word forms but rather between lexemes. Thus, derivational morphology focuses on one kind of relationship between lexemes. Its concern is mainly relationship involving affixation and the grammatical and semantic tasks that such affixation can perform. In the above example, *perform* is a verb and *performance* is a noun or in other words, they do not belong the same word class; therefore, they occur in different syntactic context (Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002). Related work of previous researchers should be presented. Minimum 10-15 good When derivation is applied, automatically the structure of the sentence change; as a result, both the function and the category of the words also change. This results in different syntactic functions as functions have closely related to category and constituency. Most categories of phrase have a variety of different functions. All subjects are centered on the same category of words namely noun and mostly are noun phrases (NP). The single words that can replace them are all nouns or pronouns. On the other hand, the phrases that contains predicates are centred on a verb; they are all verb phrases.

However, not all noun phrases function as subject. Take as an example, the noun phrase *the chiropodist* in the sentence *the pianist has rejected the chiropodist* is not a subject; instead, it is the constituent of the verb phrase and has a function as a complement of the verb. It is called head-complement relation. Another example can be seen in the sentence *Phil dreads affectionate cats*. The noun phrase is *Phil*; while the verb phrase is *dreads affectionate cats* whereas the relation between *dreads* (verb) and *affectionate cats* (NP) is called head-complement relation. It is a two-way dependency between the verb (as head) and the NP (as complement) because the use of *dreads* without being followed by *affectionate cats* is ungrammatical and so is the use of the NP without *dreads* (Noel Burton_Roberts,2011)

While *dreads* must take a NP, *sunbathe* cannot take an NP. It means that the presence of NP depends on what kind of verb it is. Both *dreads* and *sunbathe* are examples of two general categories of lexical verb. Lexical verbs are sub-categorized based on what other elements that must appear with them in the VP. They are sub-categorized in terms of what complements they demand but not all verbs have complements.

The six sub-categories of lexical verbs are transitive, intransitive, ditransitive, intensive, complex transitive, and prepositional. They require different categories.

Transitive verbs need a single Noun Phrase to be the complement which is usually called direct object. The NP is the sister of the V and the daughter of the VP as in the following example:

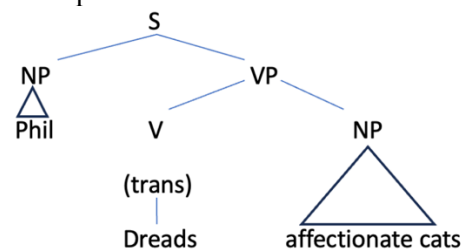


Figure 1.

(Source:Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002, Pg.37)

Intransitive verbs, on the other hand, do not require any further constituent as a sister of the VP as can be seen in the following triangle:

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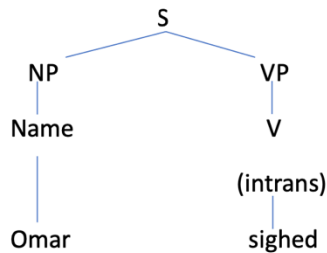


Figure 2.

(Source: Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002, Pg. 72)

Ditransitive verbs require two NPs as complements and more specifically called indirect and direct object. The former is called the recipients of the action and the latter is the complement of a transitive verb.

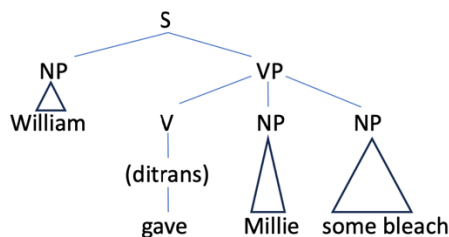


Figure 3.

(Source: Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002, Pg.72)

Additionally, the indirect object can take the form as NP or PP that contains *to* or *for*. It corresponds to a Prepositional phrase in a position following the direct object as presented in the following triangle:

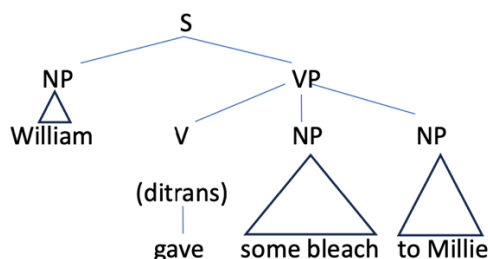


Figure 4.

(Source: Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002, Pg.73)

Intensive verbs need one complement either an adjective phrase, a noun phrase, or a prepositional phrase. The most commonly used intensive verb is *be*. The complement functions as predicative. In other words, it takes a subject-predicative. The following triangle is the example of an intensive verb:

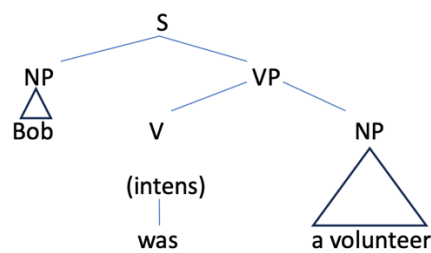


Figure 5.

(Source: Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002, Pg.75)

Complex transitive verbs have two complements; one as direct object (noun phrases) and another one as object-predicative (adjective phrases, noun phrases, or prepositional phrases). The object-predicative indicates the predicative characterizes the direct object not the subject. For example:

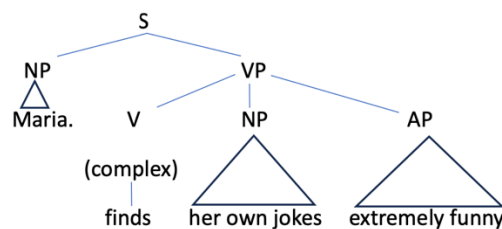


Figure 6.

(Source: Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002, Pg. 77)

Prepositional verbs are always complemented by a prepositional phrase. They are called prepositional verbs as they can only be complemented by a PP. For example,

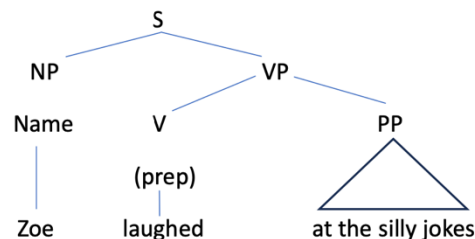


Figure 7.

(Source: Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002, Pg.78)

Sentences found in the IELTS audio and passage compared to the questions mostly belong to different categories of verbs because there are changes in the words choice as a result of morphological processes namely derivation. Derivation is forming words by using new lexemes which may change categories of words. Furthermore, derivative morphemes can be added into the base word to create new words

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with different categories (Kolanchery, 2015). In other words, there is a change in the grammatical category of a word.

This process is also called derivational process as new lexemes belonging to different categories are derived, although not all derivational processes change word classes. The morphological process such as derivation and affixation emphasizes the importance of understanding internal structure of words and how affixes can change both meaning and their grammatical functions. For instance, “teach” as verb when added with suffix -er will become noun “teacher” (Jovanovic 2014). Furthermore, Trevian described suffixes used

in derivational processes to form new words and their roles in word structures. For example, by adding suffix -ion, the verb “act” can become noun “action” and most of the suffix -ion function as this process.

Some common derivations are adverbs derived from adjectives, nouns derived from nouns, nouns derived from member of other word classes, adjectives derived from adjectives, adjectives derived from members of other word classes, verbs derived from verbs, and verbs derived from members of other word classes (Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002) that the list of the derivation is presented in table 1.

Table 1. English Derivation

No.	Lexical Categories	Suffixes / Affixes	Derived Lexical Categories	Examples
1	Adjective	-ly	Adverb	paradigmatically, significantly
2	Adjective	-ness	Noun	Goodness, Emptiness
3	Adjective	-ity	Noun	Purity, clarity
4	Adjective	-ism	Noun	Radicalism, realism
5	Adjective	-ence	Noun	Excellence, significance
6	Verb	-ment	Noun	Commitment, refurbishment
7	Verb	-(at)ion	Noun	Organisation, collocation

8	Verb	-al	Noun	Arrival, approval
9	Verb	-er	Noun	Painter, teacher
10	Verb	-able	Adjective	Breakable, readable
11	Verb	-ant	Adjective	Expectant, assistant
12	Verb	-ive	Adjective	Explosive, creative
13	Noun	De-	Verb	Deforest, decode
14	Noun	-ise	Verb	Organise, categorise
15	Noun	-ify	Verb	Beautify, clarify

In addition, Ingo Plag (2018) also cited that the word formation process like derivation can create new word classes with new meaning by the addition of prefixes or suffixes into the root words. For example, “happy” as adjective can be added with suffix -ness to become noun “happiness”

It can be investigated that a number of studies has been conducted in regards to relationship between morphology and listening skills; however, few have analysis in how derivational process change the syntactic features of the sentences. Research done by P.Vafae & Y.Suzuki (2020) explored the roles of syntactic knowledge and vocabularies in connection with the ability of listening second language audio; the result was that syntactic knowledge is not the only factor to help learners comprehend the audio, it is metacognitive knowledge, working memory, and listening anxiety that are significant predictors of language learners listening ability. Another research was conducted by Hongwen Cai (2020) that investigated measurement of lexical and syntactic knowledge but this study used quantitative measurement. Meanwhile, research about morphosyntactic agreement in English done by M.J.Pickering & S.Garrod (2020) only focused on the agreement in English morphosyntactic which help listeners to comprehend audios in a noisy environment and the result showed that this feature can make listeners process what they hear especially in a challenging situation. Then, another study conducted by Ni Kadek Yuni Antari & I

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Nyoman Sedeng (2018) Focused only on analysing suffix derivation in novel which form adjectives and change their syntactic function. While Akbari Motlaq, M.D. et al (2022) explored the impact of derivative morphology in language acquisition and the result showed that the understanding of derivational process increases the syntactic ability of students in using target language.

Thus, to give contribution to Linguistics area theoretically and practically, this research will discuss that issue in order to present clarity towards the sentences in IELTS listening test. As the changes of lexical categories affecting the syntactic structure of the sentences between the audio/ passage and the questions, the IELTS test-takers need to understand the morphological process (derivation) as well as the syntactic structure. Thus, it will be easier to recognize and find similarities between the sentences in the audio/ passage and the questions. As a result, the test-takers will be likely to be able to answer the questions correctly.

METHOD

The approach of this research was a descriptive qualitative in order to analyse derivational process can help IELTS test takers to deal with listening sections as this process can help them determining sentence structures. This approach is used to illustrate and understand natural and contextual phenomenon which is effective in linguistics research in order to explore language forms and functions. Qualitative research, in addition, aims at understanding these phenomenon deeply because it emphasises meaning, process, and elaboration. In other words, qualitative research that was applied as a research that helps understanding phenomenon happened by the research subject holistically (Moleong 2017). Moreover, Creswell (2014) defined qualitative research as an approach to explore and comprehend the meaning that people ascribe to issues regarding social and humanity.

The data was taken from authentic tests compiled in IELTS Cambridge books that contain a variety of words that appear showing paraphrased sentences. The data was then identified, classified, and matched when relevant. As the data type is texts, the method is textual analysis as it can interpret meaning as a

result on information gathered based on linguistics context (McKee 2003). The analysis focused on words internal structure and the word formation process namely derivation which can change the lexical categories (Carstairs-McCarthy 2002). Furthermore, the syntactic analyses are related to sentence structures and their correlation as syntax concerns with the ways how words combined to form phrases and sentences (Burton Roberts 2011)

The steps of analysing the data were divided into 3 namely morphological analysis, syntactic analysis, and data interpretation. Firstly, in morphological analysis, the theory proposed by Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy (2002) was used to identify and classify types of morpheme derivation and how they change lexical categories of the words. Then in syntactic analysis, theory applied was from Noel Burton Roberts (2011) that maps changes in syntactic function as a result of derivational processes. The analysis was conducted by presenting syntax notation or syntactic tree to illustrate sentence structures before and after the derivational changes. Finally, data interpretation explained how those morphological and syntactic changes can help IELTS test takers to understand paraphrased sentences in the question; therefore, their answers are more likely to be accurate.

The validity of the data can be ensured through triangulation theory as well as judgement from experts both in English morphology and syntax.

DISCUSSION

1. Noun to Verb Derivation

Table 2. Data 1
(Source: Cambridge 11)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	...Mr Evans, he will make the arrangements for entry
Question	You contact caretaker (Mr Evans) to arrange entry

Figure 8. Triangle Notation 1

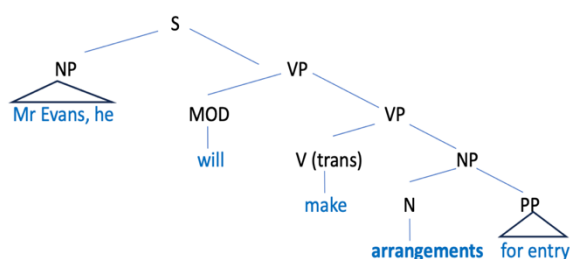
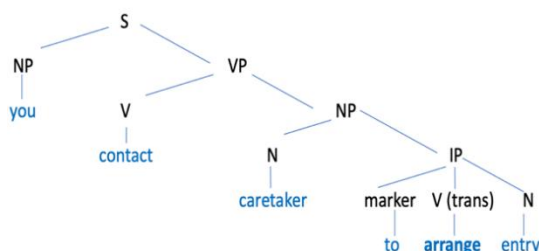


Figure 9. Triangle Notation 2



It can be seen that between the audio and the question, there is a similarity in the base form of the word arrange which passes the morphological process namely derivation. The root word “arrange” (verb) in triangle notation 1 is added with suffix -ment to become *arrangement* (noun) in the second triangle. In the second notation, “arrangements” is positioned after the transitive verb “make” as the function is as complement of the transitive verb. The noun “make” is preceded by modal verb “will” which is in the present tense and together with the noun phrase “Mr Evan; he” become sentence. Meanwhile, in the second notation, “arrange” is transitive verb and as an infinitive after the marker “to” and followed by noun “entry” (as its complement). When compared, those both sentences have similar meaning; it is the structure that change the entire syntactic analysis.

2. Verb to Noun Derivation

Table 3. Data 2
(Source: Cambridge 15)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	This encourages grass to grow afterwards

Question	It is resulting in the growth of grass
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Figure 10. Triangle Notation 3

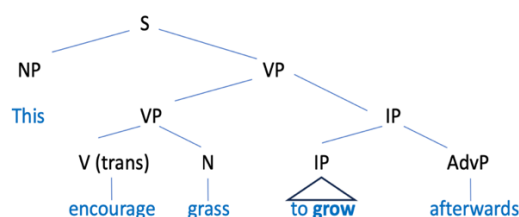
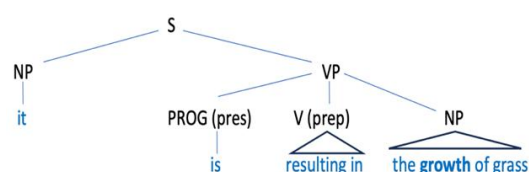


Figure 11. Triangle Notation 4



From the data 2 above, the verb “grow” has experienced morphological process to become noun “growth” by the addition of suffix -th. As the derivative result, the position of both words is also different as the lexical categories are also not the same. The verb “grow” comes after marker “to” and the function is as infinitive verb in that sentence’ this infinitive verb is the complement of the ditransitive verb “encourage”. Together is the verb phrase of the noun phrase “this”. On the other hand, the noun “growth” comes after prepositional verb “resulting in” to complement the verb. Although those two sentences have different syntactic structure, with similar root word, that has already been changed, those two sentences have similarity in meaning. Thus, it means that both sentences give same information.

Table 4. Data 3
(Source: Cambridge 15)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	In my last job, I had to manage the diary
Question	You do management of the diary

Figure 12. Triangle Notation 5

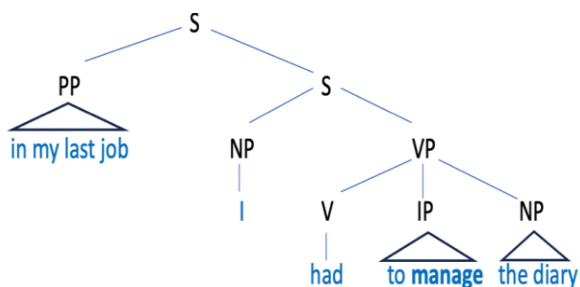
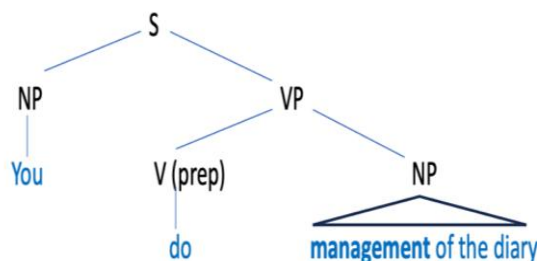


Figure 13. Triangle Notation 6



The data above shows that there is a change of lexical category from “manage” to “management” and affects the syntactic structure of both sentences. “Manage” belongs to verb and the position of the word is as the verb phrase of the sentence; more specifically, it functions as complement of the marker “to” in the infinitive phrase “to manage”. Preceding this, noun phrase “I” is followed by past verb “had”. “Management”, on the other hand, it is the complement of the verb “do” and together build a verb phrase. This word itself belongs to noun category as there is a suffixation by adding -ment after the verb “manage”. Therefore, the different lexical category will result in the different syntactic structure whereas the meaning remains the same. This understanding will be more likely to help test-takers gaining the correct answer as it will also help the understanding of the questions compared to the audio.

3. Adjective to Verb Derivation

Table 5. Data 4
(Source: Cambridge 13)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	That will help build up your bones and make them stronger
Question	Bond’s cookery school includes recipes to strengthen your bones

Figure 14. Triangle Notation 7

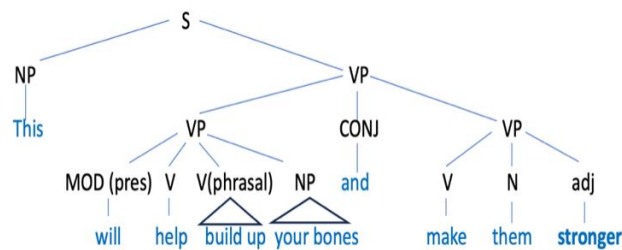
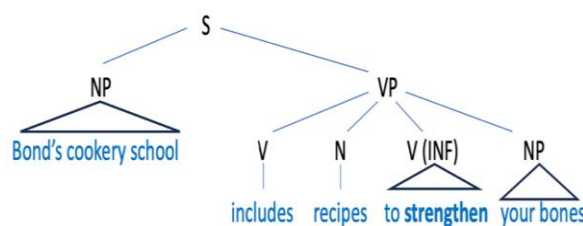


Figure 15. Triangle Notation 8



As the data present above, the word “stronger” in the first triangle notation belongs to adjective category and also the complement of the noun “them”; which together form the second verb phrase with transitive verb “make”. The first verb phrase as can be seen is “will help build up your bones”. Both verb phrases are connected with conjunction “and”. The root of its word is “strong” whereas in the second triangle notation, it is added with suffix -en which becomes “strengthen” and function as verb of the infinitive verb. The location in the sentence is as verb phrase. Therefore, as there is a change in the lexical category, the structure of both sentences also changes; however, the meaning of both sentences is the same. This strategy is effective in paraphrasing sentences by using different lexical categories in the sentence in order to maintain the original meaning.

4. Adjective to Noun Derivation

Table 6. Data 5
(Source: Cambridge 13)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	One species which is well-known as being highly adaptable is the crow
Question	The crow is well-known because of its general adaptability

Figure 16. Triangle Notation 9

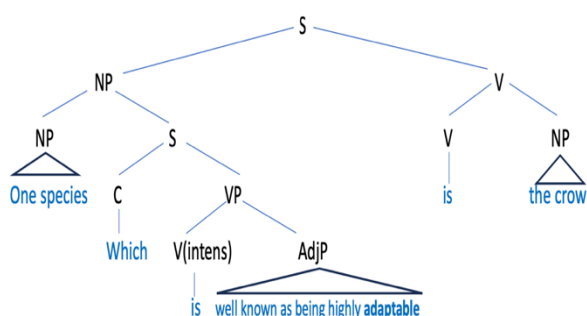
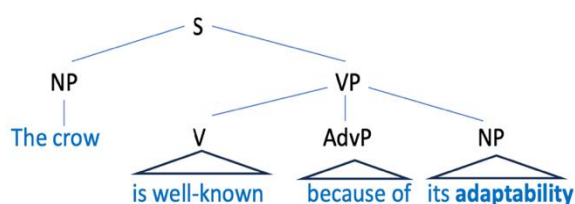


Figure 17. Triangle Notation 10



The data above presents different structures of sentences between the audio in IELTS listening test with that in the question. The first structure shows that the word “adaptable” belongs to adjective category in the adjective phrase, whereas it is the complement of the intensive verb “is” which is followed by adjective phrase “well known as being highly adaptable”. The word “adaptable” is then added with suffix -ity and changes the word class of the former to become noun “adaptability”. As it changes, the syntactic structure is also altered. The noun in the second structure is the complement of adverbial phrase “because of” and is positioned as the modifier of the verb “is well-known”

Table 7. Data 6
(Cambridge 18)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	You might have other general administrative duties
Question	The work involves general administration

Figure 18. Triangle Notation 11

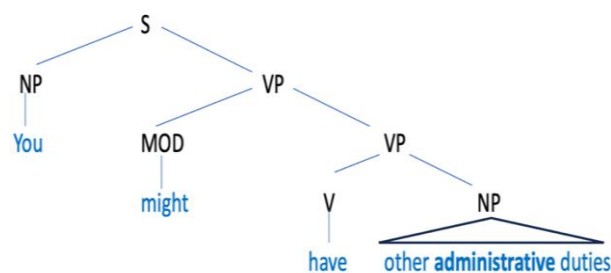
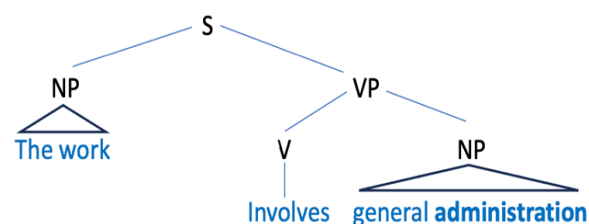


Figure 19. Triangle Notation 12



The data above gives information about changing in lexical categories from adjective to noun. In the first notation, the adjective “administrative” is derived from root word “administer” whereas this word has experienced a morphological process by the addition of suffix “-ive”. The root word itself can be changed into another word class in order to have a correlated paraphrasing. Added with suffix -ation, it becomes “administration”. Since the category change, the syntactic notation also changes. In the audio, “administrative” functions as modifier of the noun “duties” and together with modifier “other” they form noun phrase. This noun phrase is the complement of the verb “have”. However, it needs to be bear in mind that “administrative” modify the noun. It is not the main category of the noun phrase. Moving into the question, the word “administrative” which has been changed into “administration” is the complement of the verb “involves”

Another example of adjective to noun derivation can be seen in the table below:

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Table 8. Data 7
(Source: Cambridge 18)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	Victor Hugo created himself workspace using wooden furniture that he bought in the market
Question	He bought cheap furniture made of wood

As the data presented above, the motion of adjective “wooden” to become “wood” has passed derivational process whereas the root word of “wooden” is “wood” itself. Some noun can become adjective when added with suffix -en. This also affect the position in the triangle notation.

Figure 20. Triangle Notation 13

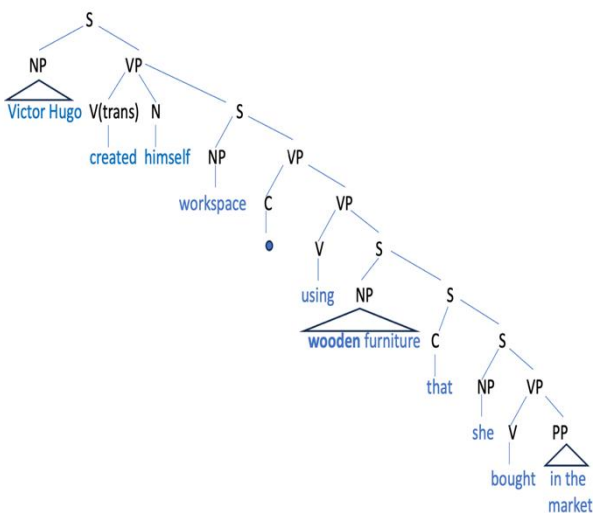
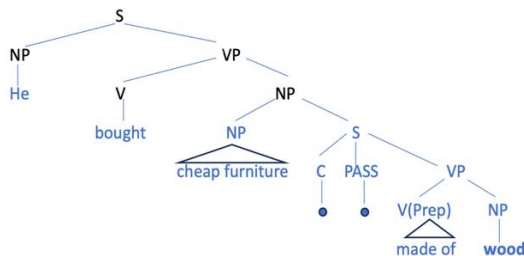


Figure 21. Triangle Notation 14



In the first notation, “wooden” functions as adjective or modifier of the noun “furniture” and together is the complement of the verb “using”. They are the relative clause in the sentence. Meanwhile, in the second triangle

notation, “wood” functions as noun and the complement of the prepositional phrase “made of”. It is a part of the noun phrase in the noun “furniture”. In short, the noun phrase “cheap furniture which is made of wood” is the complement of the verb “bought” in that sentence.

Both sentences show similar meaning regardless the difference in syntactic structures.

5. Verb to Noun Derivation

Table 9. Data 8
(Source: Cambridge 18)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	The house was owned by his relatives and they decided to donate it to the city of Paris
Question	Victor Hugo’s relatives gave ownership of the house to the city of Paris

Figure 22. Triangle Notation 15

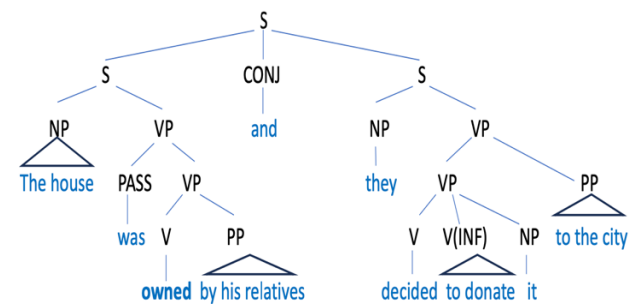
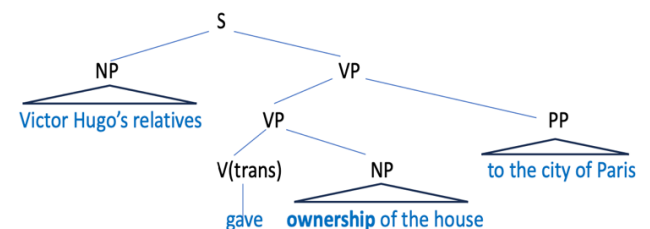


Figure 23. Triangle Notation 16



The data above presents the difference of lexical categories can impact the triangle notations of the sentences. In the first notation, the word “owned” is categorized as verb and the non-finite of the finite auxiliary verb “was” which is a passive sentence. Moreover, this

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verb phrase is the sister of the noun phrase “the house. “Owned” is derived from word “own” (the stem form) which is added with suffix -ed to form past participle as the non-tensed verb in the passive sentence. Meanwhile, in the second notation, this word has experienced derivational process twice; first, the addition of -er (own+er); secondly, the addition of -ship (owner+ship) which change the lexical category from verb to become noun. As a result, the position of the word also as complement of the transitive verb “gave” which is the part of verb phrase, the sister of the noun phrase “Victor Hugo’s relatives”

Table 10. Data 9
(Source: Cambridge 18)

Sources	Sentences
Audio	All three garments lined with material and pockets were sewn into this cloth by tailor
Question	A tailor sewed pockets into the lining of the garments

Figure 24. Triangle Notation 17

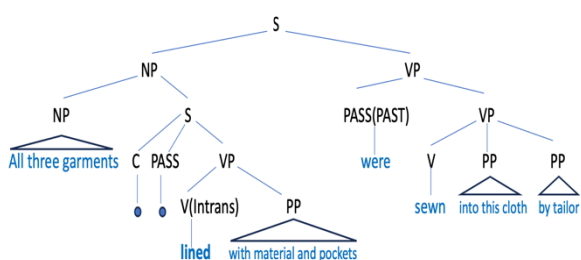
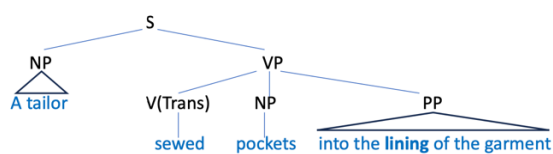


Figure 25. Triangle Notation 18



The data illustrates the verb “lined” in the audio is rendered to be noun “lining” in the question whereas both sentences have similar meaning; it is the triangle notations which change. In the first notation, the intransitive verb “lined” is complemented with prepositional phrase “with material and pockets”. Both of them create verb phrase as the non-finite verb in the passive sentence.

However, the passive sentence is reduced relative clause, that the complementizer “which” and finite passive auxiliary “were” are not presented in the sentence. Together with the noun phrase “all three garments” form noun phrase as the sister of the verb phrase “were sewn into this cloth by tailor”. Meanwhile, in the second triangle (in the question), the stem word “line” is added with -ing and become noun in the sentence. As the category is noun, the position in the sentence is also different. It is the complement of the preposition “into” in the prepositional phrase, the sister of transitive verb “sewed” and noun phrase “pockets”. They all form verb phrase of the sentence, the sister of the noun phrase “a tailor”

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is fundamental to know how morphological and syntactic structure of a sentence can affect the IELTS test-takers. In addition, mastering paraphrasing skill (a skill of changing sentence into another one by maintaining its meaning) is needed as this skill is fundamental in the success of the test. Besides, understanding how to change lexical category is also important. In order to change the category, a word must experience derivational processes as one of the morphological processes in English. This process of affixation to change the word classes. In the data, it is found that there is a change of verb to become noun, adjective to noun, noun to adjective, adjective to verb, verb to noun, and noun to verb. These changes also give impact to the initial syntactic notations of both sentences; in the audio and the question; as a result, it helps test-takers to answer the questions correctly. In other words, recognizing derivational patterns and their syntactic implications can assist test-takers identifying paraphrased information that can affect and improve their performance, as a result.

Since the study of morphology and syntax has a strong correlation, it is important for test-takers pay a close attention to how sentences are formed and what there are in every sentence (clause). Besides, it is also beneficial to learn the triangle notation as it will help them dealing with IELTS reading, writing and speaking questions as well. It is hoped that there will be

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another study that analyse the relation between morphology, syntax, and semantic as sentences always have meaning which can be affected by the changes of the syntactic triangle notation.

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