Salient features of Head

a. The grammatical category of head determines the GC of the entire phrase. For example:

1.
   a. very bright [$_N$ **sunflowers**]
   b. [$_V$ **overflowed**] quite quickly
   c. very [$_{Adj}$ bright]
   d. quite [$_{Adv}$ **quickly**]
   e. [$_P$ **inside**] the house

b. The head must have the same 'distribution' as that of the phrase.

What does it mean to say 'distributional properties' of a lexical category?

For example, Noun is a lexical category and it can be the head of a phrase, so what are the distributional properties of a NOUN?

Distributional properties of a Noun

1. Noun, as a head word, should be able to occur at the subject and object (s) places.

2. It must be modifiable by some modifiers (i.e. descriptive VS genitive)

3. It should be able to go through the process of pluralization.

4. An article must be able to make it definite/indefinite

5. It must be quantifiable

6. It should be able to take numeral modifiers as well.

Examples:

We could take any noun in English to exemplify these distributions of Noun, however, we will take a derived nominal, so that we talk some other complex issues later.

1. a. Swimming is good for you.

1.b. I like swimming.

2. a. I like reverse swimming.

2.b. This swimming is dangerous.

?3. Swimming(s) are easy in the swimming-pool.

4. The swimming in a flowing river is funny.

5. Every swimming is different.

6. I could not follow even one step of his swimming lesson.

C. It is not possible to omit/delete the 'head' from the phrase.

There are some rare situations where the head might be omitted, but it is either due to the economy of the speech in some context,

Or may be that the head has just been mentioned and then omitted. For example:

In answering the question 'Are you angry?', one can just say, 'very' but this is not the usual answer in English.

D. The 'head' obligatorily has to select its 'dependent(s)'.

This means that there may be some contexts where even the dependents to a head cannot be omitted or deleted. For example:

a. The soldiers *released* the hostage.
b. The soldiers *killed* the enemies.
c. She lives *beside* the wood.
d. She went *into* the building.

These examples show that the heads in bold have to select their respective dependents, and without these dependents the sentences would be ungrammatical.

The influence of the head on their dependents

1. *The heads select their dependent from a particular class.*

Thus, in English a head noun can be modified by an adjective but not by an adverb. For example

a. ***Bright sunflowers*** is ok, but ***brightly sunflowers*** is not ok.

b. In Kamera (Austronesian) language an adverb *'lalu',* 'too' can modify a verb but not a noun.

a.   lalu   mbana-na   na   lodu
         too   hot–3sg   the   sun
         'The sun is too hot'.

b.   * lalu   lodu
           too   sun

2. Another influence that the 'head' of any phrase has on its dependents that it might require the dependents to ***agree*** with various grammatical features of the head.

One such grammatical feature is ***grammatical gender*** of the noun in NPs.

We know that not all languages make the distinction of the grammatical gender for every noun.

But in those where this distinction is made, the dependents to a head noun often display 'gender agreement' with the head.

Let us see the examples from French, Hindi and Punjabi

a. un   livre   vert   b. une   pomme   verte
    one-M   book-3MS   green-M   one-F   apple-3FS   green-F
    'One green book'.   'One green apple'.

:

a. sɑr-e   ləmb-e   əccʰ-e   lərk-e   b. ləmbi-yã   cʰəngi-yã   kuri-yã
    all-Pl tall-M-Pl   good-M-Pl   boy-M-Pl   tall-F-Pl   beautiful-F-Pl girl-F-Pl
    'All tall good boys'. (Hindi)   'Beautiful tall girls'.

3. In many languages, a head would want its dependents to occur in a particular grammatical case.

For example, in Japanese, in Hindi

a. kodomo-ga   hon-o   yon-da
    child-Nom   book-Acc   read-pst
    'The child read the book'.

Since the verb in the Japanese sentence is 'transitive' and thus will have two arguments; therefore two dependent NPs. These two NPs in Japanese must occur with Nominative and Accusative Case suffixes.

Let us examine the Hindi data:

a. bəcc^{h}e-ne   ma-ko   dek^h-a
    child-Erg   mother-Acc   see-3MS-pst
    'The child saw (her) mother'.

As we saw in case of Japanese, we see similar thing in the above example of Hindi,

The transitive verb of the clause which acts as the head for the sentential unification, and thus has taken two arguments; each of which bears the required grammatical cases i.e. Nominative (ergative) and accusative.

- Now let us evaluate the position of 'head' and 'dependents' available in a two-way system for the typology of languages in the world.

- It has been discovered cross linguistically that there is a very strong tendency of placing the head and dependent in almost fixed position.

- These two types are known as; **head-initial** VS **head-final.**

- A head-initial language would place its heads before the complements/dependents, while a head-final would do the reverse.

- Let us examine each of these systems:

Head-initial and Head-final languages :

- As we said the head in these languages would precede its complement/dependents. For example
- English:
- [$_{VP}$ *likes* chips]
- [$_{pp}$ *into* the water]
- [$_{AP}$ *fond* of chips]
- [$_{NP}$ *manufacturer* of tires]
- It is interesting to examine these sentences in English.
- The heads, *into* and *like* precede their complement NPs.
- And, the adjective head *fond*, and noun head *manufacturer* also precede their complement PP.
- Thus, English qualifies well for Head-Initial type.

- Welsh (Celtic language with VSO order) is a good example of head-initial language.

- Let us examine how P as a head precedes the NP and the verb as a head precedes its complement NP (the direct object) in the following sentence.

- Welsh:

a. [PP **dros**   y   ffordd]
         over   the   road

b. ddaru   ceri   [VP **yfed**   paned o   de]
    did   Ceri   drink   cupful of tea
    'Ceri drank a cup of tea'.

c. [GenP **paned** of tea]
         cupful of tea

Tinrin (an Austronesian language SVO) also qualifies as the head-initial language.

The examples below will prove the fact where we will see the verb (head) occurs before the complement clause and the head noun also precedes its complement PP:

Tinrin:

a. u   [VP **trɑmwâ**   mwâ   ke   mɑijɑ wɑke]
    I   know   that   you   much   work
    'I know that you work hard'.

b. [NP **kò**   rugi   beebòrrò   nrɑ̀   mwiê]
       news   about drowning   poss   woman
    'The news of the woman's drowning'.

- 'Head-final' languages would be the languages in which the head follows the complements/ dependents.

- Different kinds of structure of phrases in Japanese, Turkish and Hindi would exemplify the concept of 'Head-final':

- Japanese:

a. taro-ga   [VP tana-ni   hon-o   oita]
    Tora-Nom   shelf-Loc book-Acc   put
    'Tora put the book on the shelf'.

b. [PP tomodati-to]
         friend -with

c. [NP sono   esuto   e   no   zisin]
         that   test   to   poss   confidence
    'Confidence in that test'

In the above Japanese example (a), the verb is the head and the verb occurs at the end of the sentence,
 and other two dependents (complements) **shelf** and **table** precede the head word i.e. the verb.
Similarly in (b), the head is the postposition and it occurs after the complement NP.
Finally, the head noun follows its complements in example (c).
Turkish

a.   [AP koca-sın-a   sɑdik]
husband-3S-Dat   loyal
'loyal to her husband'

As we see in the above Turkish example, the complements of this adjective occur before the head word 'sɑdik' which occurs as the final word in the phrase.

Hindi:

a. rɑm-ne   [VP roti   kʰɑ-yi]
    Ram-3MS-Erg bread eat-perf-F
    'Ram ate the bread'.

b. [PP kɪtɑb   tebul-ke   upər]
         book   table-Loc
    'Book on the table'

The above Hindi examples prove that Hindi is a Head-final language.

The example (a) has the verb as the head and both the complement NPs occur before the verb.

In example (b), the PP which functions as the head of the phrase comes after its complement NPs.