



From William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, act I, scene ii:

	It	was	Greek	to	me.
Parts of Speech	pron.	v.	n.	prep.	pron.
Parts of Sentence	subj.	LVP	S.C.		
Phrases				--prep. phrase--	
Clauses	-----independent clause----- a simple declarative sentence				

This sentence, by Casca in the first act of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, contains a classic example of a subject complement. The equation is straightforward and not obscured by pointless modifiers. This particular subject complement is a predicate nominative because it is a noun. Because the verb *was* is a linking verb, it cannot have a direct object or indirect object; it cannot be either transitive or intransitive, and it cannot be either active voice or passive voice. All of those terms refer to action verbs.

Verbisection:

Regular or irregular: irregular
 Action, linking, or being: linking
 Tense: past
 Person: third
 Number: singular
 Mood: indicative
 Transitive or intransitive: n/a
 Voice: n/a



The Logic of Sentence Analysis

First, find the **subject/predicate** set, which is the **simple subject** and the **simple predicate**. If the sentence is *The grass under the tree canopy grows more slowly*, the subject/predicate set is *grass/grows*. The simple predicate is the verb. Assuming the verb is not a true being verb, indicating existence, ask, **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

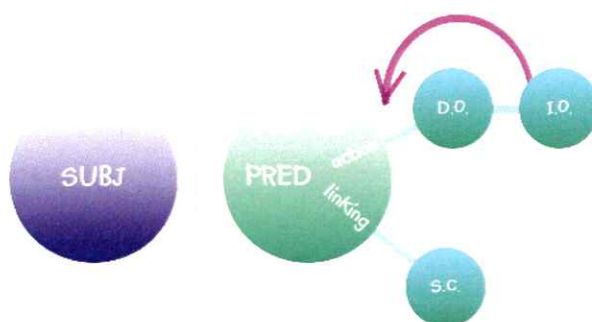
look for an **indirect object** *between* the action verb and the direct object.

If the verb is **linking**, then

Do not look for a direct object.

Look for a **subject complement**.

If there is another clause in the sentence, it will have its own subject/predicate set, so you will then repeat this process.



Sentences are binary; they have two sides, saying something about something. Most sentences are either action ideas or equations based on linking verbs. This shows us how our minds work.





Wuthering Direct Objects, and Wuthering Subject Complements: Look at this quotation from Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, and study the **direct objects**, which are in bold, and the **subject complements**, which are circled. Do you see how the direct objects switch pronouns to object case? Do you see that the first subject complement is a predicate nominative, and the second one is a predicate adjective? Can you see how direct objects only go with action verbs, and subject complements only go with linking verbs? Do you realize that you yourself make direct objects, indirect objects, and subject complements all day long in everything you say and write? The adjective *wuthering*, by the way, refers to wind that is fierce and roaring.

Possibly, some people might suspect **him** of a degree of underbred pride; I have a sympathetic **chord** within that tells **me** it is nothing of the sort; I know, by instinct, his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling—to manifestations of mutual kindness....I bestow my own **attributes** over liberally on him. Mr. Heathcliff may have entirely dissimilar **reasons** for keeping his hand out of the way when he meets a would-be **acquaintance**, to those which actuate **me**. Let me hope my constitution is almost peculiar.