Contrastive Syntax

Week 2: Deconstructing the Subject: The English vs. Kurdish Noun Phrase (NP)

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Week 2 Overview: The Heart of the Subject

- Our Goal Today: To master the single most common structural difference between English and Kurdish.

- The Anatomy of a Noun Phrase (NP)

- Translation Drills - From Kurdish to English

- Workshop - Building NPs from Scratch

What is a Noun Phrase (NP)?

- It's not just a single noun. It's the noun AND all the words that describe or modify it.
  - The core of the NP is the HEAD (the main noun).
  - Everything else is a MODIFIER (adjectives, articles, clauses, etc.)

  Example: "the beautiful birds that we saw yesterday"
  - **HEAD**: birds
 - **MODIFIERS**: the, beautiful, that we saw yesterday

The Fundamental Difference: Word Order

- **English NP Structure: MODIFIERS come BEFORE the Head.**

- **Kurdish NP Structure: MODIFIERS come AFTER the Head (using** the Izafa).

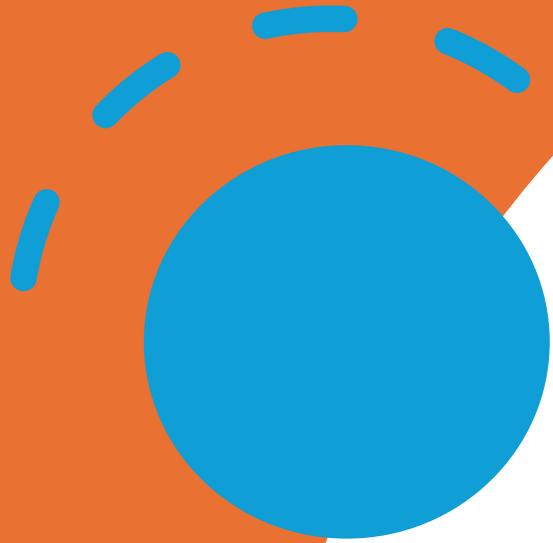| English (Modifier -> Head)	Kurdish (Head -> Modifier)
a big house	خانووه گەورەکە
the smart student	قوتابیه زیرەکەکە

Visual Demonstration

- English: the big **house**

- **Kurdish:** خانوه گەورەکە
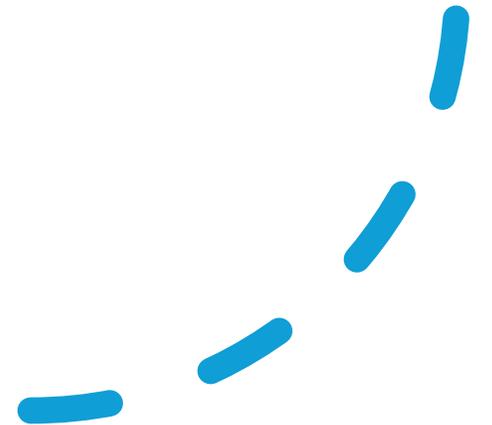
Takeaways

- To translate a Kurdish NP into English, you must REVERSE the order of its components.
- Find the HEAD first, then find all the modifiers and place them BEFORE the head in English.

Translation Drills (Kurdish -> English)

Let's apply the 'reversal' principle. We will work through these together.

Drill 1: Simple NP

Kurdish NP: پیاوه بەڕێزەکە

Step 1: Identify the HEAD

Step 2: Identify the MODIFIERS

Step 3: Rearrange for English

Drill 2: NP with a Clause

Kurdish NP: ئەو کتێبەی دوێنێ کڕیم

Step 1: Identify the HEAD

Step 2: Identify the MODIFIERS

Step 3: Rearrange for English

Your Turn: Translation Drill Worksheet

- Task: Translate the Kurdish Noun Phrases on your worksheet into **natural-sounding English.**

- Instructions:

- 1. Underline the HEAD noun in the Kurdish NP.

- 2. Write the correct English translation.

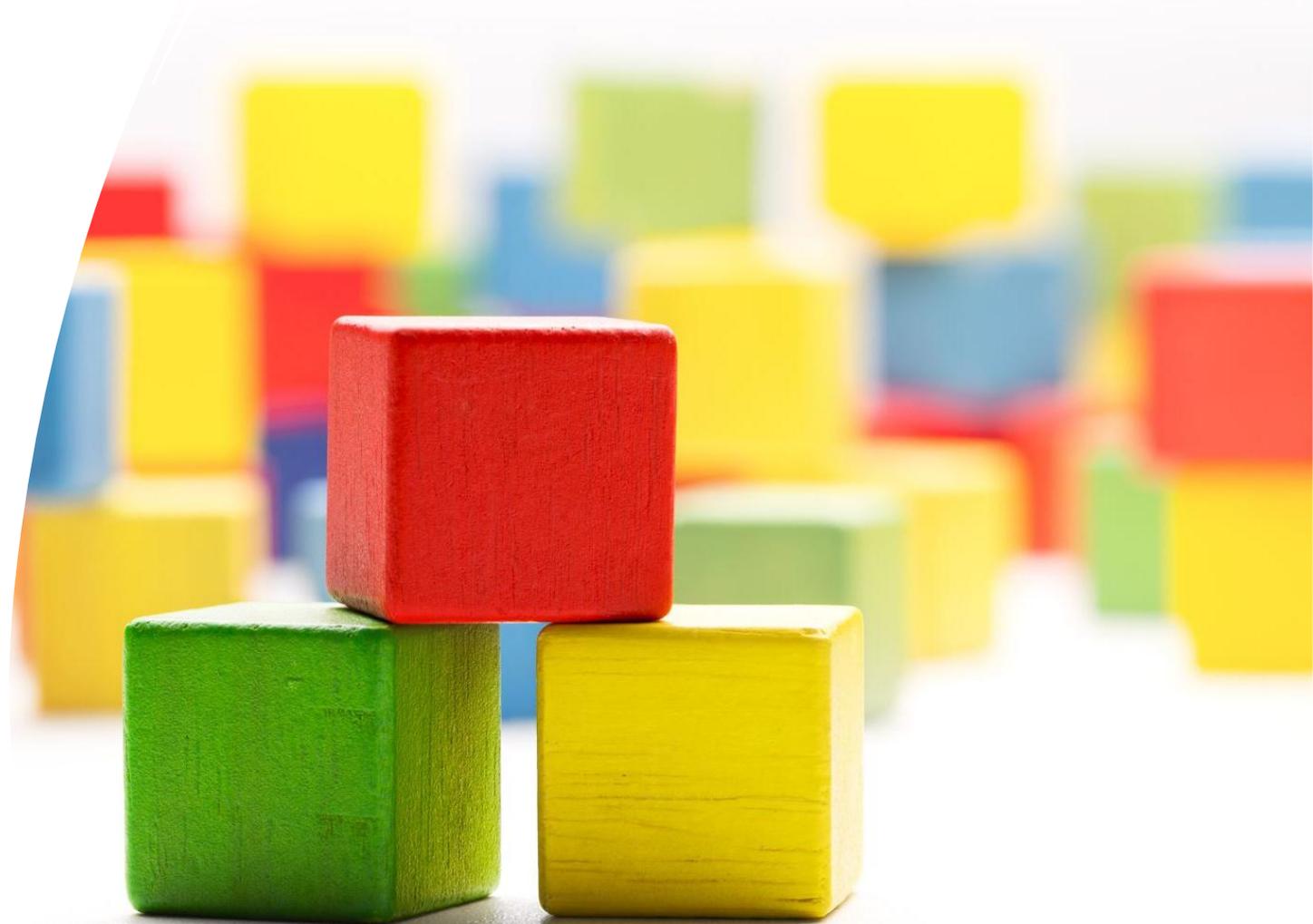- 3. Work individually for 5 minutes, then compare with a partner.

Key Takeaway

- The complexity of the modifier doesn't change the rule. Whether it's one adjective or a long clause, it must be moved.
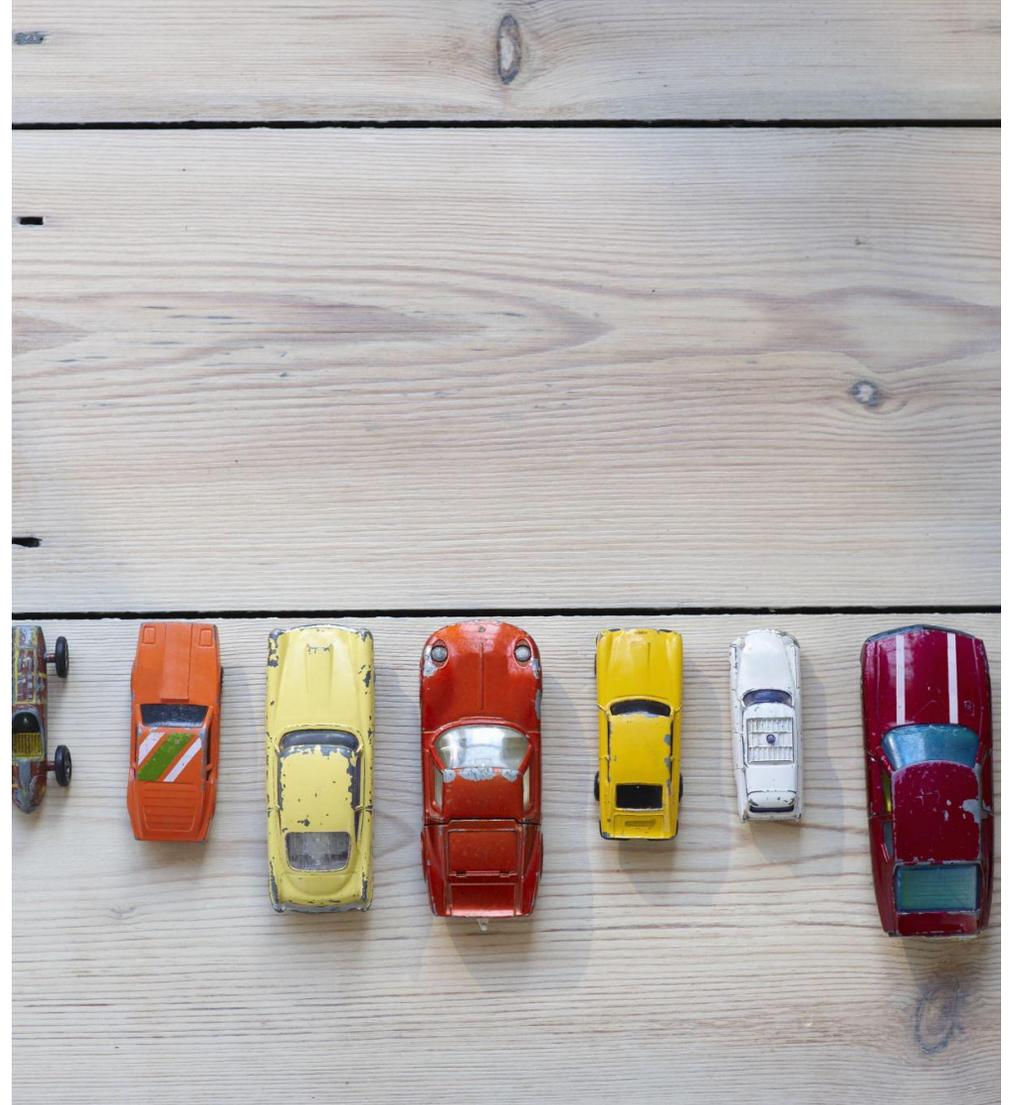
Building Blocks Workshop

- Now, let's work in the opposite direction. We will construct NPs in both languages from a set of components.

Task 1: Building an NP

- **Components:**
- HEAD: car (ئۆتۆمبێڵ)
  - MODIFIER 1: red (سور)
  - MODIFIER 2: fast (خێرا)
  - MODIFIER 3: the (ەکە)

- Your Task: Construct the full NP correctly in both English and Kurdish.

Task 1: Solution

English Construction (Modifiers first): the fast red car

Kurdish Construction (Head first): ئۆتۆمبێله سووره خێراکه

Your Turn: Building Blocks Worksheet

- Task: Use the components provided on your worksheet to build complex NPs in both English and Kurdish.

- This requires you to think about both word order and correct use of the Izafa construction.

- Work in pairs. (15 minutes)

Wrap-up & Next Week

Key Takeaway: Mastering the NP structure is 50% of the battle in Kurdish-English translation. Practice this 'reversal' until it becomes second nature.

Next Week: We will look at the other small but crucial elements: Articles, Pronouns, and Gender.

Reading Assignment: Review Pages 11-13 in your textbook.