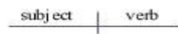# DIAGRAMMING SENTENCES

Visualizing their Basic Parts

Every sentence must contain two parts: a subject and a verb. All the other words in a sentence merely describe, limit or modify the subject or the verb of the sentence. A technique known as diagramming is used to visualize the pattern of a sentence. Diagramming involves discovering and displaying the skeleton of a sentence.

I. THE BASIC PATTERN: Subjects and Verbs

The standard pattern in English is for the subject or noun of the sentence to be listed first, followed by the verb or action word of the sentence. The basic pattern for diagramming a sentence involves writing the subject on a horizontal line followed by the verb with a vertical line separating them.

subject	verb

Thus, sentences such as "Maria cooked" and "Maria is cooking" would be diagrammed as:

Maria	cooked		Maria	is cooking

As we shall soon see all the other words in a sentence revolve around the two essential parts of every sentence --the subject and the verb.

II. ADDING TO THE BASIC PATTERN

A. Diagramming Adjectives and Adverbs. The words which modify or describe the subject and verb of the sentence are diagrammed by placing them on slanted lines beneath the words which they modify. Thus, adjectives are placed beneath the subject and adverbs are placed beneath the verb according to the following pattern: