IV: Chapter Four : Structure

4.1: Phrasal Merging

A. Radford (1997)says that "the structure of phrases and sentences " may be defined as "the way in which words are combined together to form phrases and sentences."(61) "The simplest way of forming a phrase is by **merging** (a technical term meaning 'combining') two words together: for example ,by merging the word *help* with the word *you* ... , we form the phrase *help you."* (A.Radford,1997:61) The resulting phrase *help you* seems to have verblike , rather than nounlike properties. This is shown by the fact that it can occupy the same range of positions as the simple verb *help* ;therefore, it can occur after the infinitive particle *to.*

(1)

(i) We are trying **to** *help*

(ii) We are trying **to** *help you*

By contrast, *help you* cannot occupy the kind of position occupied by a pronoun such as *you,* indicating that it has the grammatical properties of a verb and not those of nouns.

(2)

(i)***You** are very difficult.*

(ii)****Help you** are very difficult.*

Therefore ,we might say that the verb *help* is the **head** of the phrase *help you* ;and accordingly, the phrase *help you* is a **projection** of the verb *help* ,making this phrase a **verb phrase** (i.e. a **VP**).

(3)

[VP [V help] [D you]]