

Linguistics 5310 – Syntax
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Week One: Zellig Harris and the beginning of modern syntax. Harris's three fundamental insights:

- A. Big sentences are made up of little sentences (*Kernel*, or *atomic* sentences)
- B. Meanings of big sentences are formed from the meanings of the kernel sentences out of which the big sentences are formed.
- C. Languages are more similar in their kernel structures than in their surface structures.

Homework for January 12, 2020: due January 21.

Draw trees for the famous 72 sentences in Japanese, English, Brazilian Portuguese, and Urdu (handout)

The Category Scorecard: how to decide what *the parts of speech* [a.k.a. **lexical categories**] of the words in a sentence are. (handout)

How to draw basic syntactic trees over the words of a sentence: three steps: Labeling, Ballooning, Mother-Henning.

1. **label** each word in a sentence, Draw a vertical line above each word, at the top of which place one of these categories: N, V, A, Adv(erb), P(reposition), Q(uantifier)
 If you do not know what category a word is, don't label it in this first step.
2. **ballooning** – this is looking for phrases: NP's (noun phrases), VP's (verb phrases), AP's (adjective phrases), PP's (prepositional phrases) AdvP's (adverb phrases) and QP's (quantifier phrases). So connect each N to an NP above it – draw a balloon around the NP. Similarly for each of the other five categories that can be the **heads** of the phrases. The head of a phrase is the most important element of the number of nodes that make it up. In the six examples of phrases below, I will underline the head of the phrase:

NP: fluffy cats;
 VP: sing loudly;
 AP: very peaceful;
 PP: between meals;
 AdvP: unusually often;

QP: exactly five

3. **mother-henning** – just as a mother hen spreads her wings over her chicks to protect them, look to the left and right of each of the six major category labels, and connect each uncategorized word to the balloon above it. What should result is a syntactic tree which represents your best guess as to how strings of adjacent words can be grouped into phrasal unities.

What are kernel sentences? Here is a list of the possible types, each followed by an example.

1.	NP + V	Cats purr.
2.	NP + V + NP	Dogs chase cats.
3.	NP + V + PP	Workers dream of jackpots.
4.	NP + V + Particle	The car blew up
5.	NP + V + Particle + PP	We ran over across the bridge.
6.	NP + V + AP	Toby became furious.
5.	NP + V + NP + PP	Kim put a plate on the table.
6.	NP + V + NP + NP	They played Max a dirty trick.
7.	NP + V + PP + PP	She talked to us about our wages.
8.	NP + V + NP + PP + PP	Pat sold a car to us for \$40.
9.	NP + V + NP + PP + PP + PP	I sold her a car for \$29 for her mom.
10.	NP + be + NP	Tom is a crook.
11.	NP + be + AP	Snakes are sly.
12.	NP + be + PP	Jim is in Tokyo.

I believe these 12 to exhaust the possible types of kernels.

Note that a kernel can have only one main predicate – a true verb or a copula.

I believe that apparent exceptions to this generalization of one verb per clause (such as *Tony is working* or *Jo has eaten*) are best analyzed in such a way that the verbs *work* and *eat* are taken to be a complements of the “auxiliary verbs” *be* and *have*.

If this is correct, we can conclude that the set of all kernels is finite (though very large).

There are thus only four types of clauses:

A: Coordinate clauses: Infinite conjunction:

$S \rightarrow S (\text{Conj } S)^n$ There are 8 coordinate conjunctions (their first letters spell FANBOYS: *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*)

B: Subordinate clauses: there may perhaps be as many as 30 subordinate conjunctions: some are: *if, because, lest, (al)though, unless, as, while*, words in *wh* (like *when, where, whether, whereas*)

One important distinction between coordinate and subordinate clauses is that subordinate clauses may be moved around in the structures to which they are attached, rather like adverbs.

If he wins, Max will move back to San Juan.
 Max, if he wins, will move back to San Juan.
 Max will, if he wins, move back to San Juan.
 Max will move back, if he wins, to San Juan.

C: Restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses

Restrictive (no commas): The Maldropians who work hard are rich.
 Non-restrictive: The Maldropians, who work hard, are rich.

D. Complement clauses. As their name would suggest, complement clauses complete “matrix” predicates – they function as subjects or objects of the next higher predicates, or as objects of prepositions.

Subject complement: That you burped startled me.
 Object complement: I regret that you burped.
 Both: That you burped proves that you ate.
 Object of preposition: I saw to it that you got a demerit.

Some grammatical terms to commit to memory:

- I. Types of clauses: a clause is a **PREDICATE** with the required number of **ARGUMENTS**
- A. **COORDINATE CLAUSES** (the 8 coordinating conjunctions start with the initial letters FANBOYS)
- B. **SUBORDINATE CLAUSES** - three types
- i. **Adverbial clauses** - start with **ADVERBIAL CONJUNCTIONS** or with **PREPOSITIONS**
 e.g., *if / because / while he was lying* vs. *after/before/until/since he lied*
 - ii. **RELATIVE CLAUSES** - start with relative pronouns ((P) *who*, (P) *which*, etc.), *that* or \emptyset
 e.g., *the boy [to whom I spoke / that I spoke to / I spoke to]*
 - iii. **COMPLEMENT CLAUSES**: these clauses function as either subjects or objects (or both: e.g., *for him to lie* proves that he was guilty) of higher (matrix) predicates. These complements vary in degrees of *nouniness*: the higher a clause type in the following list, the more *sentency* it is; the lower, the more *nouny*.
 1. *that* clause (*that Kim sold them rapidly*)
 2. *for NP to VP* (*for Kim to sell them rapidly*)
 3. *wh*-clause (*who sold them rapidly, to whom I sold what rapidly*)
 4. *Acc Ing* (*Kim selling them rapidly*)
 5. *Poss Ing* (*Kim's selling them rapidly*)
 6. **ACTION NOMINAL** (*Kim's rapid selling of them*)
 7. **DERIVED NOMINAL** (*Kim's rapid sale of them*)

Five types of phrases can end with complements (they are underlined in the following examples):

NOUN COMPLEMENTS: (*the idea that Kim sold them rapidly*)

VERB COMPLEMENTS: (*depend on Kim selling them rapidly*)

ADJECTIVE COMPLEMENTS: (*proud of Kim's selling them rapidly*)

PREPOSITION COMPLEMENTS: (*[be] for Kim's selling them rapidly*)

ADVERB COMPLEMENTS: (*independently of Kim's selling them rapidly*)

II. Types of LEXEMES:

1. N boy, gunk, roster
2. V slink, trudge
2. A persnickety, afraid, suggestive, stark
3. P into, anent, than, within
4. Adv rather, waay, soon, often, far
5. Particle forth, up, in, around
6. Q many, few, several, numerous

III. Types of PREDICATES: Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Prepositions, Adverbs

Their VALENCES – the number of ARGUMENTS each requires

	1	2	3	4	5
Noun	stick	cousin	bonus	deal	
Verb	snore	swallow	give	swap	make
Adjective	snug	aware	(indicative)		
Preposition		in	between + NP*		
Adverb		often	independently		

IV. Types of nouns

Tests

Count:	pebble, compass	/ a __ , 5 __ plural
Mass:	slime, sand, sludge	/ [some [sm], much] __
Abstract:	idea, hypothesis, reach, area	?
Plural:	people, cattle	__ / {plural verb}
Collective:	committee, army, crowd	/five of __, several of __
Place:	beach, curve, field	__ / where S, /on, in __
Time:	vacation, interval, period	__ / when S, /during __

V. Thematic roles

(This part comes from Nancy Caplow's paper)

1. *Agent* = ag- "drive" + -er : conscious and volitional initiator of an act
2. *Patient* = pati "undergo" + -er : an NP affected by action
3. Instrument – inanimate object which aids in the accomplishing of the act

Open the door *with the key*

1. For motional clauses:

Theme: what moves (This term due to Jeffrey Gruber) *The egg fell*

Path = (Source NP) + (Trajectories NP) + (Goal NP)

from	along, by, past, etc.	to
out of		into
off of		onto

1. Percipient – Subjects of non-agentive verbs of perception, like *see, hear, taste*, etc.
2. Recipient – Animate NP's that receive Theme NP's, e.g., *I gave **Kim** a bagel*

Week Two: The fundamental structures necessary in the description of sentences and the phrases that they are composed of:

- A. Constituent structure — lexical categories (N, V, A, P, Adv, Q) and the phrases they form the heads of: NP, VP, AP, PP, AdvP, QP

N	-	noun	mouse	NP	-	a mouse
V	-	verb	scurry	VP	-	scurry fast
A	-	adjective	grey	AP	-	light grey
P	-	preposition	in	PP	-	in Denton
Adv	-	adverb	often	AdvP	-	rather often
Q	-	quantifier	numerous	QP	-	too numerous

Week Three: Grammatical relations: subject (1), direct object (2), indirect object (3), semi-object (4). The theory of relational grammar, and later outgrowths:

- A. Relational Grammar (RG – Postal and Perlmutter);
- B. Arc-Pair Grammar (APG – Postal and Johnson);
- C. Edge-based clausal syntax (Postal)

- A. Types of relation-changing rules – advancements, ascensions
- B. Chômage [French, for “unemployment”] and Chômeurs [French for “unemployed workers”] These ideas are central to Relational Grammar and its later developments.

Week Four: Thematic Roles: the legacy of Charles Fillmore, Jeffrey Gruber, Ron Langacker, Len Talmy, Claudia Brugmann, Ray Jackendoff, and George Lakoff

- A. Nancy Caplow’s list of thematic roles: Agent, Patient, Instrument, Recipient, Percipient, Beneficiary, Location, Time, Natural Cause
- B. Motional sentences: Theme and Path – Source, Trajectories, Goal
Theme: what moves (Jeff Gruber’s definition)
Path: (Source) (Trajectories), (Goal)

Source: [*from* NP / *out of* NP / *off of* NP]

Trajectories: *along* NP, *through* NP, *past* NP, *by* NP, *around* NP, etc.

Goal: [*to* NP / *into* NP / *onto* NP]

- C. Locative sentences: Figure (corresponds to Theme) and Ground
The Figure is what is located with respect to the background of the Ground. Figures can move, Grounds do not.

Figure	Ground
The chair	is on the stage

Motional sentences:

Path = (Source PP) (Trajectory PP)ⁿ (Goal PP)

Theme	Source	Trajectory	Goal
The fox	moved from her den	along the brook	onto the boulder

Week Five: Within-clause rules: Passive (2 → 1), Dative (3 → 2), Goal → 2, Source → 2, Source → 1, Raising, Possessor Ascension, Quantifier Ascension, *There*-Insertion, Conjunct Movement, Negative Attachment. Particle Movement. Reflexivization. PP Switch. Imperative Formation. Incorporation. Negative and positive polarity items.

Week Six: Complements: Object Complements, Subject Complements, Complements that are objects of Prepositions, bisentential verbs, Noun Complements. Extraposition. Extraposition from NP.

That-Deletion. Equi. Heavy NP Shift. “Auxiliary” verbs as main verbs.

- Week Seven: Nouniness. Presentential Preposition Deletion. Complementizer Deletion. *So*-Pronominalization. Sentential Pronominalization. Object Raising. Object Deletion. VP Preposing.
- Week Eight: Long-distance rules. Topicalization. Left Dislocation, Right Dislocation. Deictic Left Dislocation, Deictic Right Dislocation. Richard. Question Formation. Negative Term Preposing. Subject Verb Inverting. Slifting. Nicheing. Adverbialization. Sluicing.
- Week Nine: Relative Clauses. The differences between restrictive and non-restrictive clauses. Appositive Clause Swooping. Relative Clause Formation. *Whiz*-Deletion. Modifier Shift. *That*-Deletion. Strange NP Formation (a.k.a. Broganing). Sentential Relative Clauses.
- Week Ten: Islands. The Complex NP Constraint. The Coordinate Structure Constraint. The Immediate Self-Domination Constraint. The Influencer Constraint: Influence drips.
- Week Eleven: Coordinate Structures. Conjunction Copying. Conjunction Reduction. Right Node Raising. Gapping. Stripping.
- Week Twelve: The Architecture of Emphasis. The trisentential analysis of pseudocleft sentences. Pseudocleft Formation as an optional rule. Copula Switch. Presupposition Deletion.
- Week Thirteen: Illocutionary force. Performative verbs. The performative hypothesis. Performative Clause Deletion.
- Week Fourteen: Abstract syntax and Generative Semantics. *Remind*. Adjective phrases as deep object complements of *be*. Actions as deep object complements of *do*. *Do*-Gobbling.
- Week Fifteen. The Grammar of Space. The work of Charles Fillmore on case, and the elaborations of Jeffrey Gruber, Len Talmy, Ron Langacker, George Lakoff, Claudia Brugman, and Ray Jackendoff on the grammar of space.
The asymmetry of initial and final legs, on the one hand, and medial legs on the other. Strong and weak *there*. Particle paths.
- Week Sixteen: *Wh*-clauses. Conjunctive and disjunctive *wh*-clauses

Books

OPTIONAL: *Understanding Syntax*

Maggie Tallerman ISBN-13: 978-0415746984 or ISBN-10: 0415746981

Fourth Edition Routledge 711 Third Avenue, NY, NY 10017

Paper or hardback, whichever is cheaper.

OPTIONAL: *English Verb Classes and Alternations: A Preliminary Investigation*

Beth Levin Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (1993) ISBN 0-226-47533-6 (paper)

OPTIONAL: McCawley, James D. 1988a. *The syntactic phenomena of English*. Two

volumes. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 0-226-55629-8 (paper) (1988)

NB: This is the edition of Jim McCawley's book with two volumes bound into one book, but there are also editions in which the two volumes are in separate volumes. Either edition is fine by me.

OPTIONAL: Paul Kroeger: *Analyzing Grammar* Cambridge University Press 2005

ISBN: 978-0521016537

OPTIONAL: *The Seven Mysteries of Life – an Exploration of Science and Philosophy*

Guy Murchie, Houghton Mifflin (1978) 0-395-75791-5 (pbk)