

**Handout 3**

**Sub-categorization, Thematic Roles, X-bar**

BESE Chapter 1 (3.2 – 3.6), Chapter 2 (2), Chapter 3 (1)

**0. From the last class**

**Question 1.** *What about adverbs? Is there a lexical category 'Adverb'?*

**Exercise 1.** *Give an example:*

- a. VP → AdvP V NP
- b. NP → D AdjP+ N PP {+ = 1 or more}
- c. AdvP → (AdvP) Adv

**Exercise 2.** *Word category + an example: costs, fly, rings, water, talk*

**1. Thematic Roles and Sub-categorization**

Category ← Syntactic distribution.

Semantics & Syntax

Predicates and Arguments: one-place, two-place, three-place predicates

Arguments – thematic roles: theme, patient, agent, experiencer, beneficiary, instrument, etc.

Not only verbs can be predicates!

*Tall <Theme> Painting <Agent, Theme> On <Theme, Location>*

<> – **Theta Grid** (obligatory arguments) cf. Arguments vs. Modifiers

*Optional objects?*

**Exercise 3.** *Theta grids: sleep, escape, throw, wipe, say, think, thank, send, promise, kiss, arrive (verbs)*

Arguments in Syntax: internal vs external

**External argument** – subject (usually, Agent / Experiencer): obligatory, single, nominal.

**Internal arguments** – various, crucial for **sub-categorization**. ← **complements**

Verbs: intransitive, prepositional, transitive, ditransitive, complex transitive.

Nouns: count, mass, partitive, deverbal.

**Question 2.** *What about functional categories?*

**Exercise 4.** *Sub-categorization: sleep, escape, throw, wipe, say, think, thank, send, promise, kiss, arrive.*

**2. Structural representation and X-bar Theory**

Remember these three rules: (the second lecture by Professor Széchenyi)

- 1. the specifier rule: XP → Specifier X'
- 2. the complement rule: X' → X Complement
- 3. the adjunct rule (optional, recursive): XP → XP, Adjunct

**UTAH:** Uniformity of Theta Assignment Hypothesis.

**Exercise 6.** *Fill in*

