Syntax Seminar (BBN-ANG-252): Midterm test (KEY)

Ekaterina Georgieva
ekaterina.georgieva@nytud.hun-ren.hu

- The I-language is a finite system internal to the mind. **T**|F

- Word categories are determined based on syntactic, semantic and morphological properties. T|**F**

- The identity of the phrase is determined by its head. **T**|F

- Coordination is possible only between phrases of the same type; moreover, they must have the same function. **T**|F

- Theta-roles are lexically determined, while grammatical functions are purely syntactic. **T**|F

- External arguments are listed in the subcategorization frame of the verb. T|**F**

- In the X-bar theory, the specifier is the sister of X′. **T**|F

- In the X-bar theory, the mother of the head and the complement is X′. **T**|F

- According to the UTAH, a particular theta-role must always be assigned to the same syntactic position. **T**|F

- Provide an example from English that shows that syntactic rules can be recursive.

  (1) I thought you said you wanted to come.

- Insert English words that match the bracketed structure:

  (2) a. $[_{DP}$ the $[_{NP}$ book $]]$
       b. $[_{PP}$ with $[_{DP}$ the book $]]$
       c. $[_{DegP}$ most $[_{AP}$ interesting $]]$
       d. $[_{AP}$ fond $[_{PP}$ of the movie $]]$
       e. $[_{VP}$ believe $[_{PP}$ in the future $]]$

- Explain why the sentence in (3) is ambiguous.

  (3) John saw the girl with the binoculars.

  The PP *with the binoculars* can be interpreted as either modifying the noun phrase ('the girl with the binoculars') or as modifying the VP ('see with the binoculars').

- Answer the questions about the tree diagram in (4).

  (4)
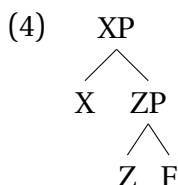
  What is the sister of X? ZP

  What are the immediate constituents of XP? X and ZP

  What is the mother of F? ZP

- Apply the constituency tests to the italicized elements in (5) and (6):

  (5) I met John *in Australia*.
    a. Substitution/replacement: I met John there.
    b. Movement/displacement: In Australia, I met John.
    c. Cleft: It is in Australia that I met John.

  (6) I met the *woman* with brown eyes.
    a. Substitution/replacement: I met the one with brown eyes.
    b. Movement/displacement: *Woman, I met the with brown eyes.
    c. Cleft: *It is woman that I met the with brown eyes.

  Q: Based on the tests, what can we conclude about the italicized elements in (5) and (6)?
  in Australia is a constituent, a PP. *woman* is an NP, and can be thus replaced with the pro-
  form *one*, but it is not a complete constituent: the complete DP is *the woman with brown
  eyes*. This is why movement and clefting give ungrammatical results.

- Consider (7). Which constituency test has been applied in (7b)? And what does the result
  tell us about the italicized element in (7a)?

  (7) a. I consider *Peter an idiot*.
    b. I consider *Peter an idiot* and *John a genius*.

  (7b) illustrats coordination. The fact that coordination between *Peter an idiot* and *John a
  genius* is possible shows that these are constituents of the same type, and this implies that
  Peter an idiot is also a constituent (and not two DPs juxtaposed to each other).

- Provide English examples that have the following categorial features:

  (8) a. [+F, +N, −V] determiners: the, a
    b. [−F, +N, +V] adjectives: tall, smart
    c. [+F, −N, −V] complementizers: that, if

- Give an English example of one-place, two-place and three-place predicates.
  sleep; buy; send

- Give an English example of intransitive, (mono)transitive, ditransitive and complex trans-
  itive verbs.
  dance; read; give; put

- What theta-roles are assigned to the arguments in (9)?

  (9) a. Peter gave two red roses to Mary.
        Peter: Agent, two red roses: Theme, Mary: Beneficiary/Goal
    b. There is a man at the front door.
        man: Theme, front door: Location
    c. The exam sheets were corrected by the teacher.
        exam sheets: Patient, teacher: Agent
    d. Peter doesn't know how to solve this.
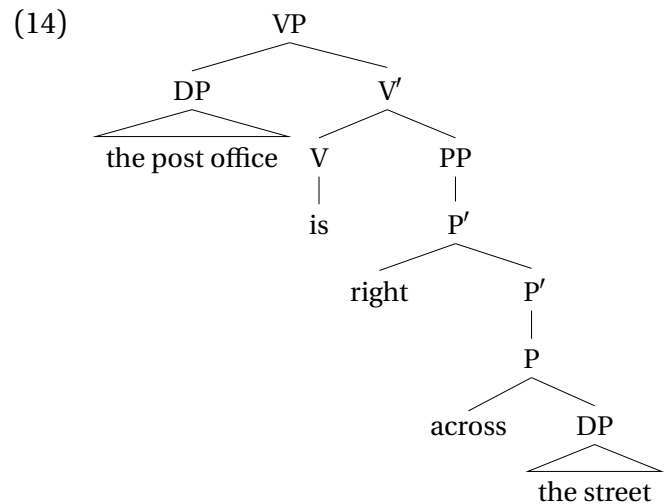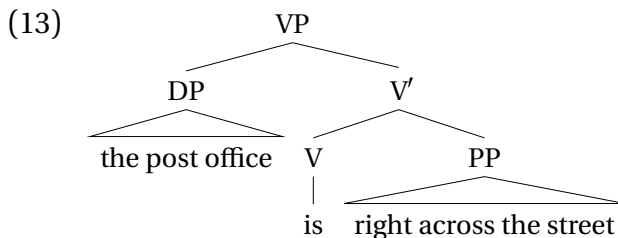   Peter: experiencer, how to solve this: proposition

- Why are the following sentences ungrammatical? Hint: the Theta Criterion is violated.

  (10) a. *John Simon met Peter.
       The verb *meet* requires an Agent and a Theme. Either the Agent role is assigned to more than one argument (*John, Simon*) or there is an argument without a role.
    b. *John put the book.
       The verb *put* requires an Agent, a Theme, and a Goal. The Goal is missing.
    c. *Sang in the afternoon.
       The verb *sing* requires an Agent. The Agent is missing.

- Provide the lexical entry (category, theta-grid, subcategorization frame) for the italicized predicates in (11).

  (11) a. Peter is *proud* of Mary.
          category: [−F, +N, +V]
          θ-grid: <experiencer, theme>
          subcat: [prepositional]
    b. Peter will *buy* a book.
          category: [−F, −N, +V]
          θ-grid: <agent, theme>
          subcat: [nominal]
    c. Peter *smiled*.
          category: [−F, −N, +V]
          θ-grid: <agent>
          subcat: [∅]
    d. Peter *sent* Mary a postcard.
          category: [−F, −N, +V]
          θ-grid: <agent, goal, theme>
          subcat: [nominal, nominal]

- Give examples of three types of phrases in which the specifier position is filled with a phrase.

  Possessors are in the specifier of DP (*John's book*)
  Agent/Experiencer/Causer arguments are in the specifier of vP (*John danced*)
  Theme/Patient arguments are in the specifier of VP (*the letter arrived*)

- For all sentences in (12): (A) list the arguments of the verbs; list the adjuncts; (B) draw the X-bar structures. When drawing the trees pay attention to: (i) the position of arguments, (i) verb movement (if any). If the PP is an adjunct, you can omit it from the tree. Use the triangle for the DPs and PPs. Bonus point for representing the internal structure of the PP in (12a) ☺
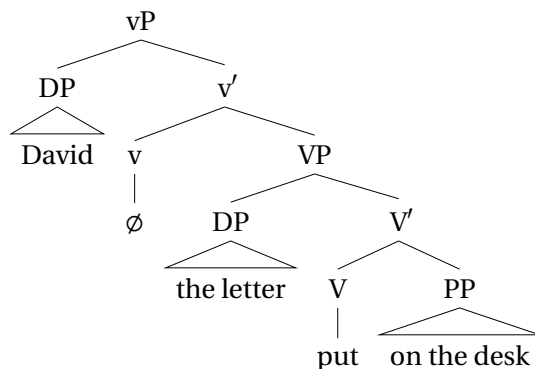
(12) a. The post office is right across the street.
Arguments: the post office (Theme); right across the street (Location)
b. David put a letter on the desk.
Arguments: David (Agent); a letter (Theme); on the desk (Path)
c. David wrote a letter on the desk.
Arguments: David (Agent); a letter (Theme)
Adjuncts: on the desk
d. Peter danced in the night club.
Arguments: David (Agent)
Adjuncts: in the night club

(13)

```
              VP
         /          \
       DP            V'
   the post office  /    \
                   V      PP
                   |     /    \
                   is  right across the street
```

(14)

```
              VP
         /          \
       DP            V'
   the post office  /    \
                   V      PP
                   |       |
                   is      P'
                        /      \
                     right      P'
                                 |
                                 P
                              /     \
                          across     DP
                                    /  \
                               the street
```

(15) David put a letter on the desk.

Here the PP is an argument: it is in the complement of V. Thus, it must be represented in the tree. (17) is the complete representation of the extendend verb phrase.

(16) without verb mvt

```
              vP
         /          \
       DP            v'
      / \          /    \
    David  v      VP
           |    /    \
           ∅   DP      V'
              / \    /    \
         the letter V      PP
                    |     /  \
                   put  on the desk
```

(17) with verb mvt

```
              vP
         /          \
       DP            v'
      / \          /    \
    David        v        VP
              /    \    /    \
            V_i    v   DP      V'
            |      |  / \    /    \
           put    ∅ the letter t_i  PP
                                   /  \
                                 on the desk
```
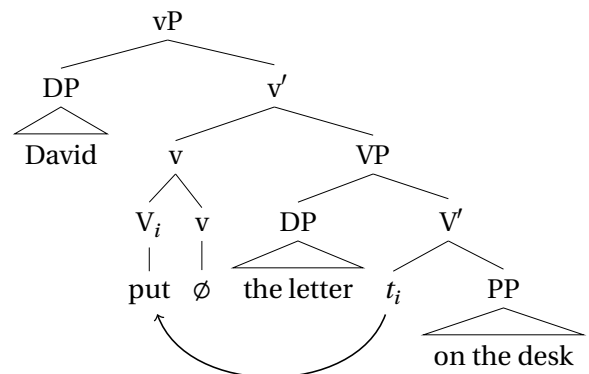
(18) David wrote a letter (on the desk).

Here the PP is an adjunct. In the final exam, you will be allowed to omit it from the tree, in other words, (20) is what you will be required to do (but adding the adjunct to the tree will give you a bonus point).

(19) without verb mvt

```
              vP
          ┌────┴────┐
         DP         v′
        ╱╲       ┌──┴──┐
      David      v      VP
                 │   ┌──┴──┐
                 ∅   DP    V′
                   ╱──╲    │
                the letter V
                          │
                        wrote
```
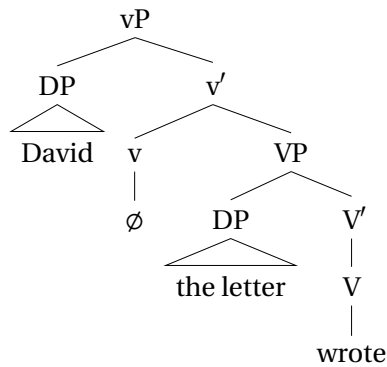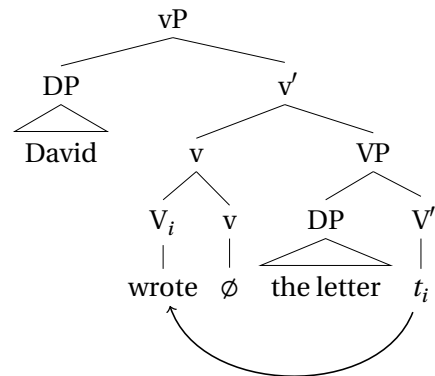
(20) with verb mvt

```
              vP
          ┌────┴────┐
         DP         v′
        ╱╲      ┌────┴────┐
      David     v         VP
              ┌─┴─┐    ┌───┴───┐
             V_i  v    DP      V′
              │   │   ╱──╲      │
            wrote ∅ the letter  t_i
```

In case you would like to represent the adjunct in the tree, you can right-adjoin it to either vP or VP, see (21) and (22), respectively. (We will practise adjunction later in this course.)

(21)
```
                         vP
              ┌──────────┴──────────┐
             vP                     PP
        ┌─────┴─────┐              ╱──╲
       DP           v′          on the desk
      ╱╲        ┌───┴───┐
    David       v       VP
             ┌──┴──┐  ┌──┴──┐
            V_i   v   DP    V′
             │    │  ╱─╲     │
           wrote  ∅ the letter t_i
```

(22)
```
              vP
          ┌────┴────┐
         DP         v′
        ╱╲      ┌────┴────┐
      David     v         VP
             ┌──┴──┐   ┌───┴───┐
            V_i   v    VP      PP
             │    │  ┌──┴──┐  ╱──╲
           wrote  ∅ DP    V′ on the desk
                  ╱─╲     │
               the letter t_i
```
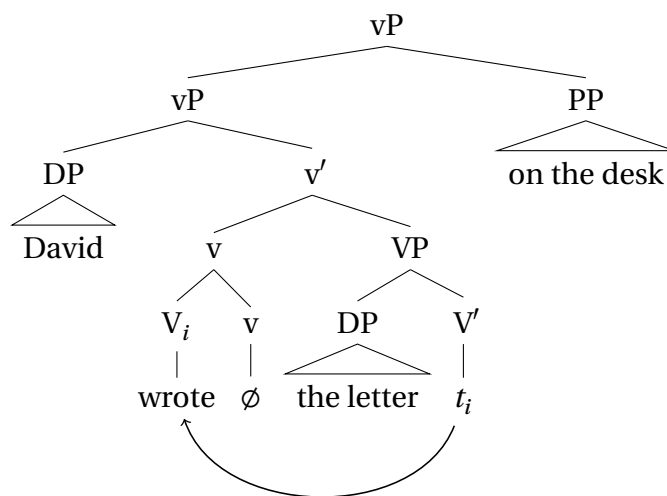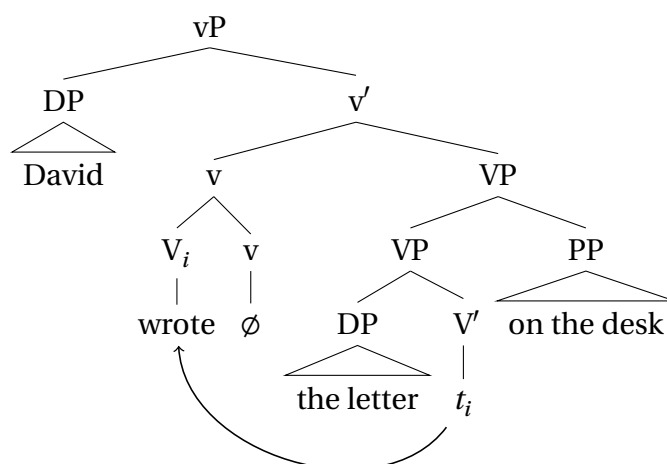
(23) Peter danced (in the night club).

(25) is the complete representation of the extended verb phrase for this sentence; this is how you are expected to draw such trees in the final exam. Adding the PP, which is an adjunct, will give you a bonus point. (Similarly to what we saw above, the PP can be right-adjoined to either vP or VP.)
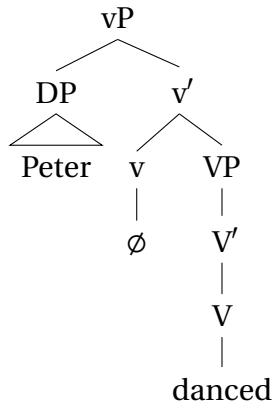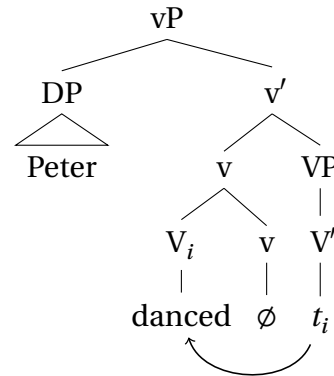
(24) without verb mvt

```
              vP
            /    \
          DP      v'
          /\     /  \
       Peter    v    VP
                |     |
                ∅     V'
                      |
                      V
                      |
                    danced
```

(25) with verb mvt

```
              vP
            /    \
          DP      v'
          /\     /  \
       Peter    v    VP
               /|\    |
             Vᵢ v    V'
              |  |    |
          danced ∅   tᵢ
```

- Find the adjuncts and put them in square brackets:

(26) a. The [little] boy gave a [nice] drawing to his mother [for her birthday].
      b. The teacher wanted to know whether the [new] students would know what to do [[when] they arrive].
      c. [Why] do you ask me whether I want to buy a [new] computer [next year]?
      d. The [new] [guest] professor of mathematics will [probably] arrive at the [[recently] renovated] [railway] station [at 2:15].
      e. [How] can you decide whether a loaf of bread [on the shelf] is fresh or not?

- Determine arguments and adjuncts in (27). For arguments, determine theta roles and grammatical functions.

(27) Yesterday the girl in a blue dress sent a nice postcard to the boy with glasses.

[Yesterday] [the girl [in a blue dress]] sent [a [nice] postcard] [to the boy [with glasses]].

Arguments of *send* <Agent, Theme, Goal>: Agent [the girl in a blue dress], Theme [a nice postcard], Goal/Beneficiary [to the boy with glasses]

Adjuncts: [yesterday], [in a blue dress], [nice], [with glasses]

Grammatical functions: Subject [the girl in a blue dress], Direct Object [a nice postcard], Indirect object [to the boy with glasses]

- Draw the trees for (28):

(28) a. a big evil vicious dog
     b. the teacher of English
     c. John's destruction of the city
     d. the ball drop on the floor

(29)

```
                DP
                │
                D′
              ╱    ╲
            D        NP
            │         │
            a         N′
                    ╱    ╲
                  AP       N′
                 ╱╲      ╱    ╲
                big    AP       N′
                      ╱╲      ╱    ╲
                     evil   AP       N′
                           ╱╲        │
                        vicious      N
                                     │
                                    dog
```

(30)

```
            DP
            │
            D′
          ╱    ╲
        D        NP
        │         │
       the         N′
                 ╱    ╲
                N       PP
                │      ╱╲
             teacher  of English
```

(31)

```
               DP
             ╱    ╲
          DP        D′
         ╱╲        ╱    ╲
      John's   destruction of the city
```

(32)

```
              VP
            ╱    ╲
          DP       V′
         ╱╲      ╱    ╲
      the ball  V       PP
                │        │
              drop       P′
                       ╱    ╲
                      P       DP
                      │      ╱╲
                      on   the floor
```

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