

# Homework 3: Phrase structure

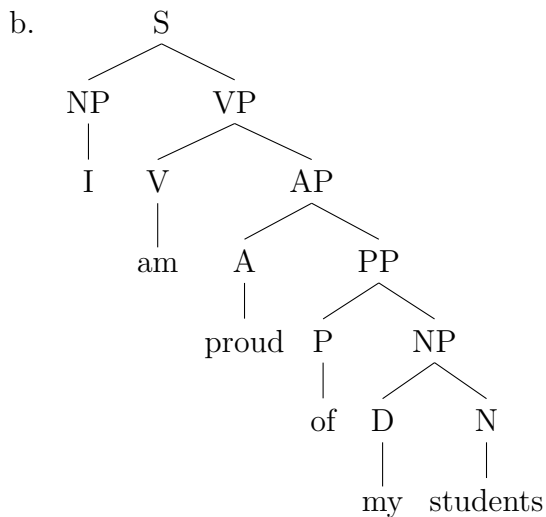
LING 20201 Introduction to Syntax

**(Due 30 January 2017)**

## Problem 1 (50 points)

Certain verbs such as *be* and *become* can take an adjective phrase (AP) as a complement. For example, the structure of the sentence in (1a) is presented in (1b).

(1) a. I am proud of my students.



The AP in (1a) behaves as a phrasal constituent based on movement constituency tests:

- (2) a. What I am is proud of my students.  
b. Proud of my students, I am.

Now consider the following examples:

- (3) I am very proud of my students.  
(4) I am always proud of my students.

## Part 1 (10 points)

For the sentences in (3)-(4) test for constituency the following strings (the two movement tests shown in (2) are sufficient):

- (5) a. proud of my students
- b. very proud of my students
- c. always proud of my students

Explicitly write out the application of the tests and the achieved results.

## Part 2 (30 points)

Based on the results of the constituency tests, provide an analysis for the structural positions of the words *very* and *always* in the sentences in (3)-(4). Assume that both words are of the category Adv. Providing an analysis means the following:

1. Draw the trees for (3)-(4).
2. For each of the two words, specify whether it is acting as a complement, specifier or adjunct. Justify your answer by appealing to the criteria for differentiating between them that we have discussed in class. You may need to provide additional data (if you are not a native speaker of English, consult an English-speaking friend).
3. Explain how your analysis accounts for the constituency test results.

## Part 3 (10 points)

Are the following data predicted by your analysis? (Hint: they should be.)

- (6) a. I am always very proud of my students.
- b. \*I am very always proud of my students.

Draw the tree for (6a) and explain how your analysis predicts the impossibility of (6b).

### Extra credit (5 points)

Given our current system with complements, specifiers and adjuncts, is it possible that the sentence in (4) has a structure wherein the following string is a constituent?

- (7) am always

Draw the tree that would correspond to this structure. Explain why it is or isn't possible. You will need to take into consideration the structural role of *always* (i.e. whether it is an adjunct, specifier or complement), but you don't need to apply any constituency tests.

## Problem 2 (50 points)

Consider the following sentences:

- (8) a. We study the English syntax.
- b. We study the syntax of English.
- c. We study the difficult syntax of English.

### Part 1 (20 points)

For the underlined words or strings of words, specify whether each of them is a complement, specifier or adjunct. Use the criteria we have discussed in class. The following data will help with this task; reference it in your argumentation.

- (9) \* We study the syntax.
- (10) \* We study the English syntax of French.
- (11) \* We study the English French syntax.
- (12) \* We study the syntax of English of French.
- (13) We study the difficult English syntax.
- (14) We study the difficult complicated English syntax.

### Part 2 (15 points)

Does the word *English* belong to the same syntactic category in all the examples above? Use the additional data below to justify your answer:

- (15) a. \* We study the unabashedly English syntax.
- b. We study the unabashedly complicated English syntax.
- c. We study the colloquial English syntax.
- d. \* We study the colloquial syntax (of English).

### Part 3 (15 points)

Based on the data presented here, what are the selectional properties of the word *syntax*? How many arguments does it take and of what syntactic category? Draw the trees for the sentences in (8).