

Chap 3: exercises

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Exercises 1

Discuss the categorial status of each of the words in the following sentences, giving detailed reasons (based on meaning, form, or function) in support of your analysis.

- (i) a. Oil companies will have to pass on all of the benefits of tax reform to the consumer.
- b. Attached to the plastic frame is a mesh covering that will prevent a child from rolling off of the bed onto the floor.
- c. That young child in the corner probably will fall off his bed onto the cold, hard floor early in the morning.

Exercises 2

Consider the lexical category status of italicised *nonsense words* in the following sentences and provide arguments in support of your analysis.¹

- (i) a. John *blonks* on Sundays. V
- b. John likes to *blonk* in the afternoons. V
- c. John was feeling *murgy*, but happy. Adj
- d. He's *murgier* than anyone I know. Adj
- e. John is a *garoon*, and so is Fred. N
- f. In fact, they're both typical *garoons*. N
- g. She put the car *ong* the garage. Prep
- h. She made sure that it was right *ong* the track. Prep

¹This exercise is adopted from Radford (1988).

Exercises 3

Determine the lexical category of *for* and *that* in the following examples and decide what kind of PS rule(s) we need to account for them.

- (i) a. It is important *for* us to spend time with children.
- b. He was arrested *for* being drunk.
- c. I think *that* person we met last week is insane.
- d. We believe *that* he is quite reasonable.
- e. I forgot to return the book *that* I borrowed from the teacher.

Exercises 4-1

Consider the following data carefully and describe the similarities and differences among *that*, *for*, *if* and *whether*. In so doing, first compare *that* and *for* and then see how these two are different from *if* and *whether*. Finally, see how *if* and *whether* are similar or different from *wh*-words like *what* and *where*.

- (i) a. I am anxious that you should arrive on time.
b. *I am anxious that you to arrive on time.
- (ii) a. I am anxious for you to arrive on time.
b. *I am anxious for you should arrive on time.

These two tell us that *that* selects a finite S whereas *for* selects a nonfinite S.

Exercises 4-2

- (iii) a. I don't know whether/if I should agree.
- b. I wonder whether/if you'd be kind enough to give us information.

- (vi) a. If students study hard, teachers will be happy.
- b. Whether they say it or not, most teachers expect their students to study hard.

This means 'whether' and 'if' also select a finite S as a C or can function as a subordinate conjunction.

Exercises 4-3

- (iv) a. I don't know whether/*if to agree.
b. I don't know *that to agree.
c. I don't know what to do.
d. I don't know where to go.

This tells 'whether, what, where' can combine with an infinitival VP whereas 'if' cannot.

- (v) a. I am not certain about when he will come.
b. I am not certain about whether he will go or not.
c. I am not certain about *if he will go or not.

This tells us 'when and whether' are different from 'if' in that the former can be the object of the preposition whereas 'if' cannot.

Exercises 5

Check if the underlined parts form a constituent or not with at least two constituenthood tests (e.g., cleft, pronoun substitution, stand-alone, etc). Also provide tree structures for each of the following sentences.

- (i) a. John bought a book on the table.
- b. John put a book on the table.

- (ii) a. She turned down the side street
- b. She turned down his offer.

- (iii) a. He looked at a book about swimming.
- b. He talked to a girl about swimming.
- c. He talked with a girl about swimming.

- (iv) a. I don't know the people present.
- b. John called the president a fool.

Exercises 6

Explain why the examples in (i) are ungrammatical. Do this by drawing trees for each sentence while referring to the PS rules related to particles and coordination.

- (i) a. *Could you turn off the fire and on the light?
- b. *A nuclear explosion would wipe out plant life and out animal life.
- c. *He ran down the road and down the President.
- d. *I know the truth and that you are innocent.
- e. *Lee went to the store and crazy.

Exercises 7

Provide a tree structure for each of the following sentences and suggest what kind of rules for VP will be necessary. In doing so, pay attention to the position of modifiers like *proudly*, *by the park*, and so forth.

- (i) a. John refused the offer proudly.
- b. I consider Telma the best candidate.
- c. I saw him leaving the main building.
- d. He took Masako to the school by the park.
- e. John sang a song and danced to the music.
- f. John wants to study linguistics in near future.
- g. They told Angelica to arrive early for the award.
- h. That Louise had abandoned the project surprised everyone.

Exercises 8

Each of the following sentences is structurally ambiguous. Represent their structural ambiguities by providing different tree structures for each string of words.

- (i) a. I know you like the back of my hand.
- b. I forgot how good beer tastes.
- c. I saw that gas can explode.
- d. I saw her duck.
- e. Time flies like an arrow.
- f. I need to have that report on my desk by tomorrow.

Exercises 9

Provide tree structures for each of the following sentences. See if there are any PS rules that we need to introduce.

- (i) Different languages may have different lexical categories, or they might associate different properties to the same one. For example, Spanish uses adjectives almost interchangeably as nouns while English cannot. Japanese has two classes of adjectives where English has one; Korean, Japanese, and Chinese have measure words while European languages have nothing resembling them; many languages don't have a distinction between adjectives and adverbs, or adjectives and nouns, etc. Many linguists argue that the formal distinctions between parts of speech must be made within the framework of a specific language or language family, and should not be carried over to other languages or language families.