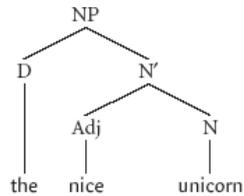


## Syntax: Phrases

- Sentences can be divided into **phrases**.
- A phrase is a group of words forming a unit and united around a **head**, the most important part of the phrase. The head can be a noun NP, a verb VP, an adverb AdvP, an adjective AdjP, or a preposition PP. Grammatical categories (determiner, auxiliary, coordinator..) don't form phrases on their own but function inside them.
- We can represent phrases in different ways:
  - By putting brackets (this kind of representation is not so clear)
  - Using the tree-representation

Es. *The nice unicorn*



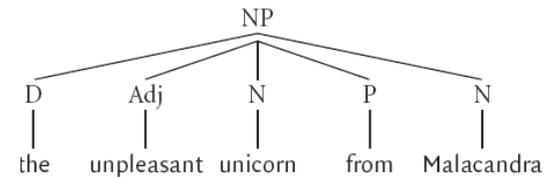
- The lines connecting parts of the **trees** are called **branches** and indicate how the phrase is divided up.
- Branches come together in **nodes**, which are usually labelled.
- The node between NP and N is called N' (N-bar) and it's an intermediate node: there can be one or two intermediate nodes.
- We can have flat or hierarchical trees. Hierarchical trees are more clear.

## 1. The phrase

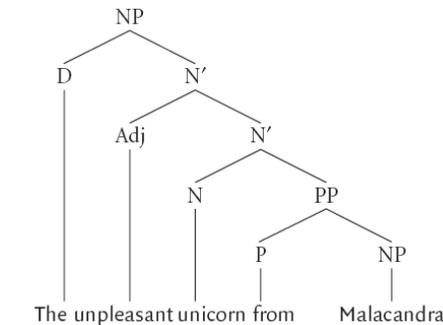
### 1.1 Noun Phrase (NP)

- NPs are built around nouns.
- NPs can be modified to the left or to the right by different elements such as determiners, adjectives.
- Sometimes finding the head is easy and spontaneous, sometimes is harder because NPs can be extended.
- NPs can be pronominalized by pronouns.

Es. *The unpleasant unicorn from Malacandra.*



Flat structure

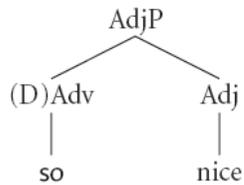


Hierarchical structure

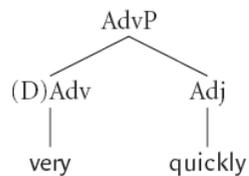
**1.2 Adjective Phrase (AdjP) and Adverb Phrase (AdvP)**

- AdjPs are built around adjectives which indicate properties of nouns.
- AdjPs can be pronominalized: *I was happy and so she was.*
- AdvPs are built around adverbs which indicate properties of verbs.
- Pronominalizing AdvPs can be strange: *He behaved nicely, and she behaved so.*

Es. *So nice*



Es. *Very quickly*



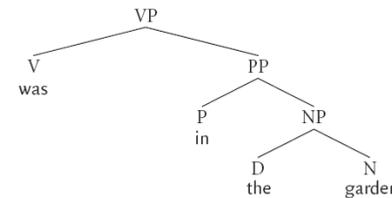
- AdjPs and AdvPs can be accompanied by degree markers such as *very, too, extremely, really* which

are adverbs of a special kind and can be comparable to determiners in the NP.

**1.3 Verb Phrase (VP)**

- VPs are built around verbs, which can indicate actions, states, sensations in a present or past tense.
- Some VPs include other material that explain when, where, why and how the action or state described takes place.
- VPs can be pronominalized : *John washed the dishes and Maija **did so** as well.*

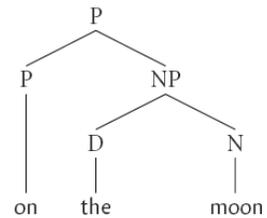
Es. *Was in the garden*



**1.4 Prepositional Phrase (PP)**

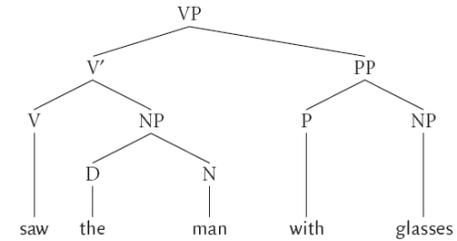
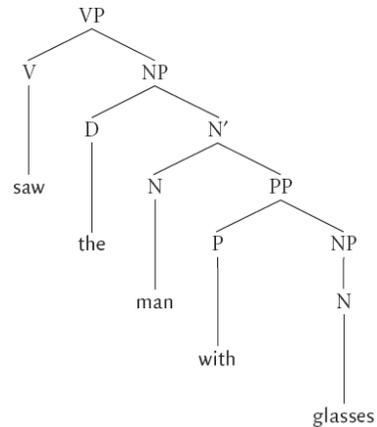
- PPs are built around a preposition.
- PPs include always a P and a NP.
- PPs can be pronominalized by adverbs such as *then, there.*

Es. *On the moon*



- It is not always easy to understand role and function of PPs in the sentence. There are ambiguous sentences where it is not possible to understand if the PP function is inside the NP or is independent.

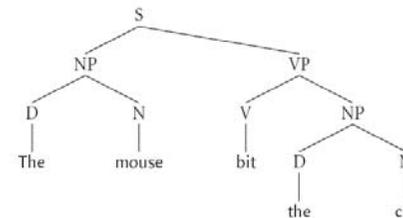
Es. *She saw the man with glasses.*



## 2. Phrases in the sentence

- Phrases combine into sentences.
- The initial element in the sentence is generally a NP, the rest of a sentence is a VP which can be complex, as can NP.
- The important relationships in a tree are **sister** and **daughter/mother**.

Es. *The cat bite the mouse*

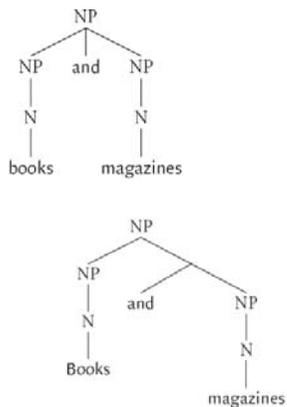


- NP and VP are daughters of the sentence S and are sisters to each other.

### 3. Coordination of Phrases

- Phrases can be coordinated when they are the same kind.
  - *[She] and [I] got together.* (two pronouns are coordinated)
  - *I [read books] and listen to [music].* (two VPs are coordinated)
- When the elements coordinated are not the same the sentence becomes ungrammatical.
  - I read a [book] and [to Janet]
- Some linguistics believe that the relationship between the coordinated phrases is equal, others feel that the first is somewhat more important.

Es. *Books and magazines*



### 4. Finding Phrases

- There are rules used to recognize Phrases such as **pronominalization** and **coordination** (if two Phrases can be coordinated it means that they belong to the same category).

Es. *She ran to the store.* **To the store** is a PP with to as head because:

- It can be pronominalized: *she ran there.*
- It can be coordinated with a phrase of the same kind: *she ran to the store and to the library.*
- It can be deleted: *she ran.*
- It can be replaced by a wh-element: *Where did she run?*
- It can be moved: *to the store she ran.*

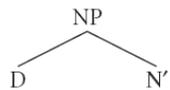
- All phrases can be **pronominalized** or **coordinated**.
- Not all phrases can be **deleted**: the initial NP is important in English, sentences are ungrammatical without it.
- Not all phrases can be **replaced** by a wh-element: VPs cannot.
- The possibility to **move** depends on the function of the elements: optional elements can be moved more easily than obligatory ones. Sometimes when the non-optional element is moved the result is ungrammatical.
  - *to the store she ran*
  - *\*ran to the store the woman*
  -

**5. Building trees**

- Trees can be built from top to bottom or from bottom to top.

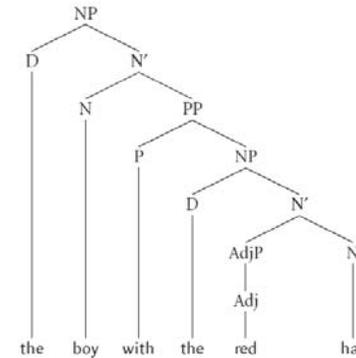
Es. *The boy with a red hat*

- Starting from the top** we first need to decide what the head is. To the left we put D and to the right N' which can be expanded for both the N and the PP. D and N' are daughters of NP. At the end we develop the PP with P and NP.



- Starting from the bottom** we first need to understand the category of each word and to find what goes with what.

<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Adj</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>The</b>	<b>boy</b>	<b>with</b>	<b>the</b>	<b>red</b>	<b>hat</b>



**Special Topic: Negative concord**

- Two negatives in one sentence make the sentence positive.
- Swan: “In standard English *nobody, nothing, never* are enough to make the sentence negative and *not* is unnecessary.”
- We use types of multiple negatives:
  - *No, I don't want to go* correct: the negatives are independent
  - *I paid **nothing** for that* correct
  - *Five dollars is **not nothing*** correct: two negatives make a positive
  - *They **don't** have **no** problems* incorrect: but used in spoken, informal English