

LING2005 Syntax I

Tutorial: Constituency II

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- Office hours rearranged
 - Time: **Tuesday & Wednesday 13:00 – 14:00**
 - Location: G19, Leung Kau Kui Bldg. or via Zoom

Q1. Infinitival Phrase

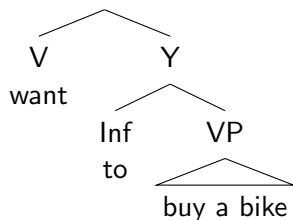
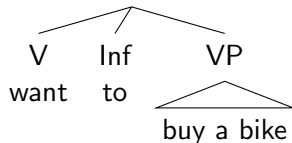


(1) John may want to buy a bike.

- Assume that “want to buy a bike” and “buy a bike” in (1) are constituents.

Two structures have been proposed, as shown in I and II.

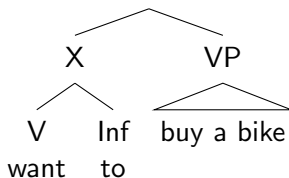
(Inf = Infinitive)



- Apart from Structure I and II, there is a third possible structure for “want”, “to” and “buy a bike”. Please provide the third structure.



- Apart from Structure I and II, there is a third possible structure for “want”, “to” and “buy a bike”. Please provide the third structure.





- Discuss how you will apply five constituency tests (topicalization, clefting, pseudo-cleft, coordination and ellipsis) to find out which structure (i.e. I, II and III) is better supported.



- To distinguish between Structure I, II and III, one wants to check whether “want to” and “to buy a bike” are constituents.
 - If “to buy a bike” is a constituent, the result supports Structure II because “to buy a bike” is a constituent only in Structure II but not Structure I or III.
 - If “want to” is a constituent, the result supports Structure III because “want to” is a constituent only in Structure III but not Structure I or II.
 - If the results for “want to” and “to buy a bike” are all negative, Structure I is favoured. (In other words, we can only find support for Structure I by elimination.)



- Constituency Test Sentences for “to buy a bike”:
 - ① Topicalization: Many of us believe that John may want to buy a bike, and to buy a bike, John may (really) want.
 - ② Clefting: It is to buy a bike that John may want.
 - ③ Pseudo-cleft: What John may want is to buy a bike.
 - ④ Coordination: John may want to buy a bike and to do more exercise.
 - ⑤ Ellipsis: John may want to buy a bike, and Mary may want too.



- Constituency Test Sentences for “want to”:
 - 1 Topicalization: Many of us believe that John may want to buy a bike, and want to, John may buy a bike.
 - 2 Clefting: It is want to that John may buy a bike.
 - 3 Pseudo-cleft: What John may buy a bike is want to.
 - 4 Coordination: John may want to and manage to buy a bike.
 - 5 Ellipsis: John may want to buy a bike, and Mary may buy a bike (too).
- [Reminder: Some of the test sentences are ungrammatical. But this exercise is about constructing test sentences rather than constructing grammatical sentences.]

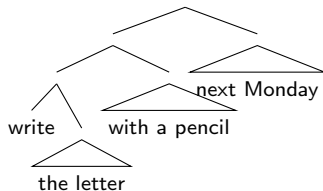
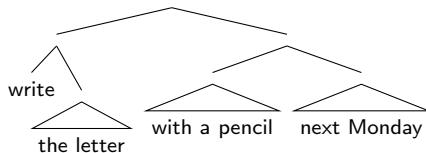
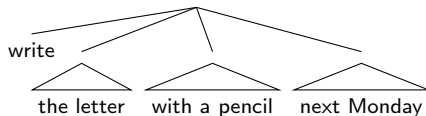


(2) Peter will write the letter with a pencil next Monday.

- Consider the sentence in (2). It has two modifiers “with a pencil” and “next Monday”.

Assume that “the letter”, “with a pencil”, “next Monday” and “write the letter with a pencil next Monday” are all constituents. Which of the three structures below is the better analysis? Discuss the strategy of analysis (i.e. which string of words you want to test). Provide the constituency test sentences and your judgment.

Q2. Modifiers





- To distinguish the three structures, we can test whether the following strings are constituents
 - ❶ “with a pencil next Monday”
 - ❷ “write the letter with a pencil”
 - ❸ (Optional) “write the letter”
- If (i) is a constituent, Structure B is the best analysis as (i) is not a constituent in Structure A & C.
- If (ii) is a constituent, Structure C is the best analysis as (ii) is not a constituent in Structure A & B.
- If neither (i) nor (ii) are constituents, Structure A is the best analysis as neither (i) nor (ii) are constituents in Structure A.
- (Optional) If (iii) is a constituent, the result gives support to both Structure B & C. That is why testing the constituency of (iii) is comparatively not as helpful. However, it could give confirmatory support to Structure B & C.



[Reminder: Some of the test sentences are ungrammatical. But this exercise is about constructing test sentences rather than providing grammatical sentences.]

- “with a pencil next Monday”
 - Substitution: [No appropriate proform for “with a pencil next Monday” can be found in English.]
 - Topicalization: The supervisor suggested that Peter should write the letter with a pencil next Monday. With a pencil next Monday, Peter will write the letter.
 - VP Ellipsis: [VP ellipsis is not applicable as the string involves no verb.]
 - Clefting: It is with a pencil next Monday that Peter will write the letter.
 - Pseudo-cleft: What Peter will write the letter is with a pencil next Monday.
 - Coordination: Peter will write the letter with a pencil next Monday and with a pen next Wednesday.



- “write the letter with a pencil”
 - Substitution: The supervisor suggested that Peter should write the letter with a pencil next Monday. Peter will do so next Monday (too).
 - Topicalization: The supervisor suggested that Peter should write the letter with a pencil next Monday. write the letter with a pencil, Peter (definitely) will next Monday.
 - VP Ellipsis: The supervisor suggested that John should write the letter with a pencil next Monday. Peter will next Monday (too).
 - Clefting: It is write the letter with a pencil that Peter will next Monday.
 - Pseudo-cleft: What Peter will do next Monday is write the letter with a pencil.
 - Coordination: Peter will write the letter with a pencil and draw a sketch with a pen next Monday. [Note: It is better to also check with native speakers whether the sentence is equivalent to “Peter will write the letter with a pencil next Monday” and “Peter will draw a sketch with a pen next Monday.”]



- “write the letter”
 - Substitution: The supervisor suggested that Peter should write the letter with a pencil next Monday. Peter will do so with a pencil next Monday (too).
 - Topicalization: The supervisor suggested that Peter should write the letter with a pencil next Monday. Indeed, write the letter, Peter will with a pencil next Monday.
 - VP Ellipsis: The supervisor suggested that John should write the letter with a pencil next Monday. Peter will with a pencil next Monday (too).
 - Clefting: It is write the letter that Peter will with a pencil next Monday.
 - Pseudo-cleft: What Peter will do with a pencil next Monday is write the letter.
 - Coordination: Peter will write the letter and draw a sketch with a pencil next Monday. [Note: It is better to also check with native speakers whether the sentence means “Peter will write the letter with a pencil next Monday” and “Peter will draw a sketch with a pencil next Monday.”]



- Please scan the QR code and complete the attendance form
- Attendance does not count towards your final grades
- Wishing you all a great Mid-Autumn Festival!