

Lexical Categories

Lecture 2: Nominal Syntax

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Lexicalism vs. Non-Lexicalism

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- (1) a. Lexical entry 1: NOUN walk
b. Lexical entry 2: VERB walk

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- Answer 2. Lexical items (\approx words) are not specified as nouns, verbs (adjectives, adverbs) in the lexicon. They get their categorial identity as a result of syntactic operations (Non-lexicalist view)

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Under this view, what we find in the lexicon are uncategorized pieces, called roots

- (2)
- a. Lexical entry: $\sqrt{\text{walk}}$
 - b. Derivation 1. $[\text{n } \sqrt{\text{walk}}]_{\text{NP}}$
 - c. Derivation 2. $[\text{v } \sqrt{\text{walk}}]_{\text{VP}}$

DP and NP

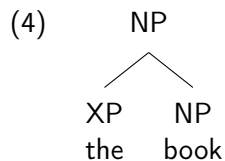
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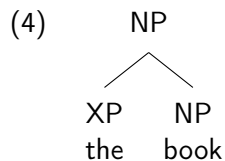
Option 1



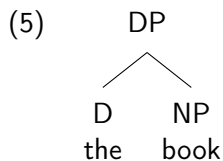
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Option 1



Option 2



DP and NP

Under standard assumptions, if Option 1 is correct, then the determiner (article) *the* must be a phrase

Evidence that *the* is a head, and not a phrase

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Evidence that *the* is a head, and not a phrase

- 1 *the* is not an argument of N
- 2 *the* is in complementary distribution with the possessive marker -'s which is clearly a head and may have its own arguments

(6) *Mary's the books

③ Portmanteau morphemes 'P+D'

(7) German *zur* 'zu+der', French *au* 'à+le', Hebrew *ba-* 'be+ha'

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④ Certain determiners may select for NP/PP. In some languages, determiners may assign case

(8) a. most books/of the books

b. both kids/*of the kids

(9) Russian

neskol'ko detej/**deti*

several kids.GEN/kids.NOM

'several kids'

D: Determiners and Demonstratives at large

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Many languages possess determiners which are more or less equivalent to the English *the*, *a*

- Hebrew, Arabic, Swedish, Hungarian, Bulgarian etc.

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However, many languages lack obligatory determiners

- Russian, Latin, Hindi, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese etc.

Whether the languages without obligatory determiners also always project a D which may be null is subject to a debate

D: Determiners and Demonstratives at large

Languages with obligatory determiners differ in which constructions they allow D-less arguments

(10) *Child is playing

(11) Children are playing

(12) **Modern Greek**

* *pedhja pezun*

children play

int. 'Children are playing'

D: Determiners and Demonstratives at large

In some languages, determiners are realized as affixes:

(13) **Danish**
hus-et 'house-DEF'

(14) **Egyptian Arabic**
?it-ṭajjaar-a
the-plane-F.SG

(15) **Hebrew**
ha-sefer

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How does N and D end up together (morphologically)?

D: Determiners and Demonstratives at large

Do determiners always denote definiteness?

Perhaps, not...

- Polydefiniteness

(16) **Modern Greek**
to paidhi to kalo
the boy the good

(18) **Romanian**
băiatul cel frumos
boy.the the good

(17) **Albanian**
i miri djalë
the good-the boy

(19) **Hebrew**
ha-yeled ha-tov
the-boy the-good

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What other phenomenon (that we have already talked about) does it remind you of?

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- Definite determiners with proper names

- (20)
- German: der Hans
 - Italian: la Maria
 - Greek: o Yannis

Note that languages differ in whether they require determiners with proper nouns (Greek) or allow them (German, Italian), that is to say, determiners are optional

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Why is this a piece of evidence against treating determiners as always semantically contentful?

D: Determiners and Demonstratives at large

Consider the following data from Italian:

- (21) a. *Il mio Gianni ha finalmente telefonato*
the my Gianni has finally called
- b. **Mio Gianni ha finalmente telefonato*
- c. *Gianni mio ha finalmente telefonato*

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How can we account for these facts?

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What about demonstratives?

(22) this/that book

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Demonstratives usually encode deictic oppositions:

- proximal – ‘close to the speaker’: **this**
- distal – ‘far from the speaker’: **that**

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- distal – ‘far from the speaker’: **that**

Some languages have a three-way opposition

- (23) a. Hunzib (Dagestan): bəd PROXIMAL – bəl MEDIAL – əg DISTAL
b. Japanese: kono ‘near speaker’ - sono ‘near hearer’ - ano ‘far from speaker and hearer’

D: Determiners and Demonstratives at large

While some languages (e.g. English) disallow determiners and demonstratives in the same DP, other languages do not:

- (24)
- a. *that the book
 - b. Greek: afto to vivlio lit. 'that the book'
 - c. Hungarian: ez a ház lit. 'that the house'
 - d. Javanese: ika n anak lit. 'this the baby'

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How can we account for facts like that?

Recall the doubly-filled filter idea

D: Determiners and Demonstratives at large

Are demonstratives heads or phrases?

Consider the following data from Italian:

- (25) a. *Di chi hai la foto sulla tua scrivania?*
of whom have-2SG the picture on-the your desk
Whose picture do you have on your desk?
- b. **Di chi hai questa foto sulla tua scrivania?*
of whom have-2SG this picture on-the your desk

While a *wh*-phrase can move over a determiner, it cannot move over a demonstrative. This data suggests that demonstratives create intervention effects for *wh*-movement.

D: Determiners and Demonstratives at large

Now consider the data from Romanian:

- (26) a. *acest băiat frumos*
this boy nice
- b. *băiatul (acesta) frumos*
boy-the (this) nice
- c. *frumos-ul băiat*
nice-the boy
- d. **frumos-ul acesta băiat*
nice-the this boy

How can you account for the ungrammaticality of the d example?

DP and Information Structure

Consider the following facts:

- (27) a. [How important]_{AP} is this decision?
b. [How important a decision]_{DP} is this?

Assuming that the AP in the first example moves to a Spec of a functional projection of a clause (perhaps, a CP), how can you account for the example?

Consider the following facts:

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Consider also:

- (28) a. So vivid a picture does this programme draw of the situation of these animals that the reader wants to react immediately.
b. The article had such an important impact that the proposal had to be withdrawn.

Sometimes nouns can have morphemes that mark tense:

(29) **Halkomelem (Salishan, British Columbia)**

- a. *tel xeltel*
my pencil
- b. *tel xeltel-elh*
my pencil-PST
'the pencil which was mine'

(30) **Somali (Cushitic)**

- a. *ardáy-da* students-D[-PST] 'the students (who are present)'
- b. *ardáy-dii* students-D[+PST] 'the students (I told you about)'

Number and NumP

There is evidence that, for at least in some languages, there is a functional projection between N and D which is responsible for number – NumP

Evidence for Num

- 1 Hebrew word order in DPs
- 2 Plural words

(31) **Haitian**

- a. liv la 'the book'
- b. liv yo 'the books'
- c. liv yo la 'the books' (some dialects)

- ③ Numerals in complementary distribution with plural marking
In many languages, such as English as Hebrew, numerals can (and – for any numeral more than ‘one’ – must) co-occur with plural marking on the noun. However, in many languages, nouns can be plural but in constructions with numerals they must be singular

(32) Hungarian

- a. ember ‘person’
- b. ember-ek ‘persons’
- c. nyelc ember ‘eight persons’
- d. *nyelc ember-ek

Classifiers

What are classifiers?

Consider the examples from English:

- (33) a. three bottles
b. ?? three waters
c. three bottles/glasses/liters of water

Some nouns (non-countable) cannot be combined with numerals directly, and a unit of measure must be used. With some uncountable nouns, some conventional classifiers are used:

- (34) a. *three cattle(s)
b. three heads of cattle
c. three *backs/?? units of cattle

In some languages, classifiers are obligatory with all nouns in numerical constructions

(35) Thai

- a. *nok saam tua*
bird three CL
three birds
- b. **nok saam*
- c. *nok lek (tua)* 'little birds'
- d. *nok *(tua) lek* 'a little bird'

How can you describe the distribution of classifiers?

Evidence for ClassP

- 1 Classifiers can be used independently of numerals

(36) Hmong

tus tsov tshaib tshaib plab

CL tiger hungry hungry stomach

'The tiger is/was very hungry'

- 2 In some languages classifiers can be disrupted from the numeral

(37) Nung, Tai-Kadai; Vietnam

an ahn tahng nuhng ma

take CL chair one come

'Bring a chair'

Numerals

Numerals

What is the syntactic status of numerals in constructions like *three houses*?

Two options:

- Numerals are heads
- Numerals are phrases in the specifier position

Numerals in world languages do not behave uniformly.

Numerals may/may not trigger plural marking on N, assign case, demonstrate concord etc.

G.Danon: Both structures are possible, sometimes even within one language

Hebrew

Two structures for numerical constructions:

- (38) a. *šlošà (sfarim)*
three books
'three books'
- b. *šlòšet *(ha-sfarim)*
three.CS the-books
'three books'

Claim: in the free form, the numeral is a specifier, in the construct state, the numeral is a head

Finnish

- (39) a. *yksi karhu*
one bear
- b. *kaksi/kolme karhu-a*
two/three bear-PART
- c. *kahde-lta karhu-lta*
two-ABL bear-ABL

In Nominative, the numeral is unmarked and assigns partitive to its N complement

In other cases (oblique cases), the numeral and N show concord in case

Russian

- (40) a. *odin dom*
one.M.NOM house.M.NOM
- b. *dva/tri/četyre dom-a*
two/three/four house.GEN.SG
- c. *pjat'/šest'/sem' ... dom-ov*
five/six/seven ... house-GEN.PL
- d. *v dvux/trex/pjati dom-ax*
in two.LOC/three.LOC/five.LOC house-LOC.PL

The pattern in Russian is similar to that in Finnish except that numerals from 2 to 4 trigger singular marking and numerals starting with 5 and greater trigger plural

Numerals

Numerical expressions can be branching:

- (41) a. around twenty [people]
b. between thirty and forty [participants]

What about complex numerals such as *two hundred* and *three million*? Can we assume that they are phrasal too?

Perhaps, not universally. In some languages, like Finnish, the complex numeral likes a structure with Head-Comp configuration:

- (42) a. *viisi tuhat-ta talo-a*
five thousand-PART house-part
b. *kuusi millona-a euro-a*
six million-PART euro-part

Numerals

G.Danon's idea: two structures for numerical constructions

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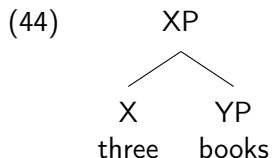
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Numerals

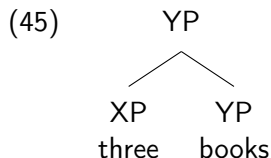
G.Danon's idea: two structures for numerical constructions

(43) three books

Head-Comp



Spec-Head



In many languages, nouns are specified for gender (noun classes)

(46) Gender is:

- (i) the sorting of nouns into two or more classes;
- (ii) assigned depending on biological sex, animacy, and/or humanness or other classification, for at least some animate nouns;
- (iii) reflected by agreement patterns on other elements (e.g. adjectives, determiners, verbs, auxiliaries).

Some languages have two genders (masculine and feminine, neuter and common) three genders (masculine, feminine, neuter), four genders or more

While in many Indo-European and Semitic languages, gender is primarily based on biological sex or humanness, in some other languages, gender may be based on other semantic characteristics. Such gender classification is usually referred to as **noun class**

Noun classes in Dyirbal, Pama-Nyungan, Australian

I (<i>bayɪ</i>)	II (<i>balan</i>)	III (<i>balan</i>)	IV (<i>bala</i>)
men	women		parts of the body
kangaroos & possums	bandicoots		meat
most snakes	dog		
most fishes	some snakes		
some birds	some fishes		
most insects	most birds		
	firefly, scorpion,		bees and honey
	crickets,		
	hairy mary grub		
	anything connected with		
	fire or water		
moon	sun and stars		
storms, rainbow			wind
boomerangs	shields		yamsticks
some spears	some spears		some spears
etc.	some trees	all trees with	most trees
	etc.	edible fruit	
			grass, mud, stones
			noises and language
			etc.

Things that look like gender but are not:

- Classifier categorization

Recall that nouns in numeral classifier languages are categorized into groups based on their lexical semantics. Such categorization has no bearing on other morphosyntactic phenomena, such as agreement

- Inflection classes

In German, masculine nouns can form plural by with suffixes -e and -n (among others). This difference has no bearing on agreement

- (47)
- der Hase 'hare' – Hasen (pl)
 - der Mönch 'monk' – Mönche (pl)

Why is gender special?

- 1 Gender is always present on categorizing nominalizers

Apparently, there are no languages with overt gender where nominalizers are not gendered.

- 2 Semantics of gender is much less transparent than of other phi-features

Think about the semantics of gender in Hebrew nouns like *pelefon*, *toxna*.

- 3 Gender assignment can be cyclic

Taking stock

- The Nominal Spine may contain several functional projections above N: Num, Class, D
- Functional material may be either phrasal (Spec) or non-phrasal (Head)
- Gender is different from other nominal features in that it doesn't project a separate functional head

Adjoined plurals

It seems that the simple **head** – **phrase** dichotomy might not be enough

In some languages, some morphemes, such as plural markers, might be non-phrasak but still optional. For example, in Halkomelem, a Salishan language spoken in British Columbia, Canada, plural morphemes are optional and do not trigger plural agreement

(48) Optionality

- | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| a. te | lhfxw | swíweles |
| DET | three | boy |
| 'the three boys' | | |
| b. te | lhfxw | swóweles ⁴ |
| DET | three | boy.PL |
| 'the three boys' | | |
| a. qe \bar{x} | te | s-th'ím ⁵ |
| many | DET | NOM-berry |
| 'many berries' | | |
| b. qe \bar{x} | te | s-th'eth'ím |
| many | DET | NOM-berry.PL |
| 'many berries' | | |

(49) No plural agreement

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|------------------------|--------|-----------|----|------------------------------------|-----|-----------|
| a. | t'flém | ye | s-í:wí:qe | b. | t'flém | te | s-í:wí:qe |
| | sing | DET.PL | man.PL | | sing | DET | man.PL |
| | ‘The men are singing.’ | | | | ‘The men are singing.’ | | |
| c. | t'flém | ye | swíyeqe | d. | t'flém | te | swíyeqe |
| | sing | DET.PL | man | | sing | DET | man |
| | ‘The men are singing.’ | | | | ‘The man is singing.’ ⁹ | | |

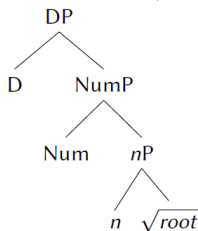
Idea: plurals in Halkomelem are non-branching morphemes that are adjoined to nominal structures

Modification in the Noun Phrase

In the previous lectures, we have looked at the structure of the functional projections of the Noun Phrase (Nominal Spine)

(50)

Simple DP structure



Cinque's 2005 hierarchy for modifiers
Dem > Num > Adj > NP

Modification in the Noun Phrase

However, in addition to functional morphemes, Noun Phrases may also contain modifiers, most importantly, adjectives (adjectival phrases). Let's look at the following example

(51) a. these three [**very large**]_{AdjP} [**black**]_{AdjP} boxes

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- (51) a. these three [**very large**]_{AdjP} [**black**]_{AdjP} boxes
b. these → demonstrative
c. three → numeral
d. very large → adjectival phrase
e. black → adjectival phrase

English vs. Hebrew adjectives

Let's look at English and Hebrew adjectives

- (52) a. the very large box
b. ha-kufs-a [ha-gdol-a meod]_{AdjP}

What are the difference between the two languages that we can immediately?

English vs. Hebrew adjectives

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- Word order: N-ADJ vs. ADJ-N

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What are the difference between the two languages that we can immediately?

- Word order: N-ADJ vs. ADJ-N
- Concord in Definiteness, Gender and Number in Hebrew vs. no concord (?) in English

How can we account for these differences?

What are adjectives (AdjPs)?

First, adjectives, as well as phrases that they project are phrases, rather than heads:

- (53)
- a. large
 - b. very large
 - c. very large indeed
 - d. proud
 - e. proud of their sons

Note that English seems to dislike large AdjPs before nouns: *proud parents*
– **proud of their children parents*

What are adjectives (AdjPs)?

What is the position of adjectives in the structure?

Let's look at the word order:

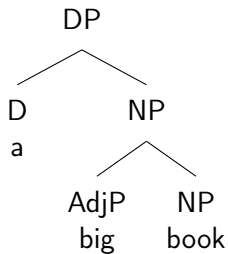
- (54) a. these three large boxes
b. ?? these large three boxes

This data shows us that adjectives are lower than D and Num but higher than N

Adjectives as modifier to NPs

Since adjectives are optional, they are best analyzed as adjuncts:

(55)



Adjectives as modifier to NPs

However, some people have argued that adjectives can actually be specifiers to additional functional projections (with null heads). The main piece of evidence to that effect is that adjectives often come in rigid orders:

- (56) a. a big white dog
b. $Adj_{size} < Adj_{color} < N$

You may think of adjectives as follows: adjectives are adjuncts, but unlike other adjuncts they come in rigid orders.

N-Adj vs. Adj-N

In English, most adjectives are prenominal, that is, the adjective precedes the noun.

- (57) a. large box
b. *box large

However, it is not always so. Some adjectives can follow the nouns (that is, be postnominal)

- (58) a. We can use all the [funds **available**]_{NP}
b. The [students **present at this talk**]_{NP}

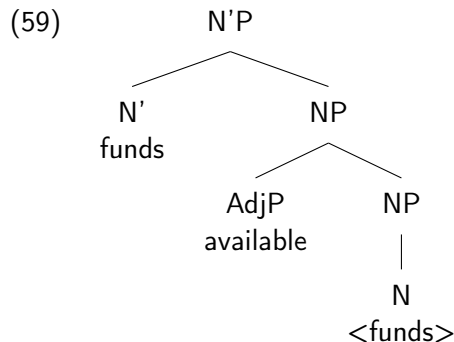
Is there something special about these adjectives?

Two analyses of N-Adj orders in English

Hypothesis 1. Head movement

We have seen that heads inside can sometimes move locally to higher heads (recall the *Gianni mio* examples)

Head movement analyses of N-Adj orders suggest that the noun moves to a head which is higher than the adjective



Hypothesis 2. Concealed relative clauses

This idea suggests that what looks like adjectives are in fact concealed relative clauses, that is, relative clauses where the verbal part is not pronounced

(60) all the funds available = all the funds ~~that are~~ available

Recap: what is a relative clause?

Roughly speaking, a nominal modifier which contains a clause

- (61) a. a black box
b. a box [which is black]_{CP}

Two analyses of N-Adj orders in English

Now we have an account for the postnominal position of such adjectives

For this system to fully work, we must also have an account for why relative clauses are postnominal, but let's leave it for now

Hebrew adjectives as relative clauses

Can the same analysis be applied to Hebrew relative clauses?

One piece of evidence to that effect is that the definite marker *ha-* can mark (some) relative clause like structures:

- (62) a. *ha-tmuna ha-tluya al ha-kir*
b. *tmuna ha-tluya al ha-kir*

Now, let's talk about concord. To recap, concord is copying of features of N to its dependents

- (63) a. kufs-a gdol-a
b. $N_{\text{fem}} \rightarrow \textit{Adj}_{\text{fem}}$
c. $N_{\text{sg}} \rightarrow \textit{Adj}_{\text{sg}}$
d. $N_{\text{def}} \rightarrow \textit{Adj}_{\text{def}}$

Concord: why syntax matters

Why can't we just say that features are copied to all of N's dependents?

- (64) No copying to PPs
a. ha-kufsa šel gilat

Concord is sensitive to the syntactic category of its dependent

What are the syntactic categories that are not subject to concord?

- (65) a. PPs
b. Adverbs

What features is concord in Hebrew sensitive to?

- Definiteness
- Number
- Gender

Does English have concord?

English adjectives have lost their ability to inflect for gender, number or case

The only type of phrase phrase that shows concord in English are demonstratives which only inflect for number:

- (66) a. this book – these books
- b. that book – those books

Concord is different from agreement

Note that agreement and concord involve different categories. In English, agreement involves person:

- (67) a. I am
b. you are

Concord never involves person. (Check this for your language)

Formulating the second hypothesis

We can assume that polydefiniteness (determiner spreading) is an instance of concord in definiteness.

We can now account for the difference between English and Hebrew by saying that Hebrew has concord in definiteness while English doesn't.

However, we still need to resort to head movement to derive the word order

Wrapping up: what have we learned about Nominal Syntax

- Nouns project large extended projections that involve Num, D, Class, among others
- Many languages involve overt determiners, many don't. English determiners are in the head of D
- Number inflection may project as NumP. Numerals can be realized as both heads and phrases
- Noun can appear either in the head of N or move up to different heads by head movement.
- Adjectives are adjuncts to NPs that are (most often) merged below functional projections. Some adjectives may be reduced relative clauses
- There are two approaches to N-Adj orders: head movement and reduced relatives
- NP-modifiers in the NP are often featurally dependent on N(P) by concord