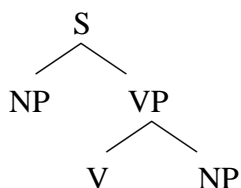


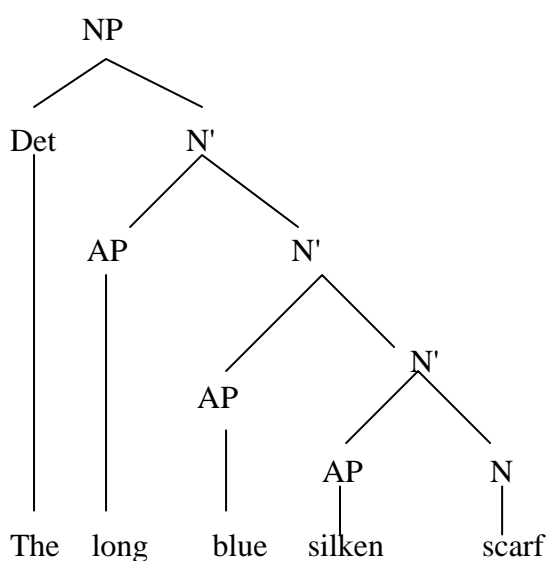
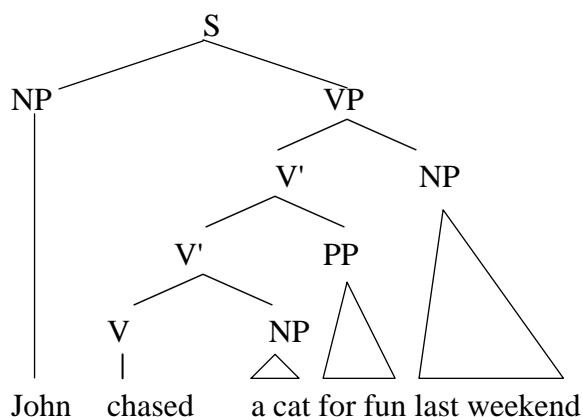
Handout 8: X-bar syntax and adverbials

1. Revision: Phrase structure

- In a syntactic tree structure constituents are represented as phrases of the types NP, VP, PP etc.



- X-bar theory allows additional levels between the level of the phrase and the level of the lexical items at the bottom



2. Adverbials

- Three types of adverbial are distinguished: adjunct, conjunct and disjunct adverbials
- #### 2.1 Adjunct adverbials

- adjunct adverbials modify the verb and its complements
- the most common meanings are manner, time, place and reason
- their placement is relatively free (with preferences for each subtype):

- (1) a. Last week, I ran a relay race.
 b. I ran a relay race last week.
 c. I always run well in the spring.
 d. I handed the baton quickly to the next runner.
 e. I have never given up.

- structurally, adjunct adverbials are optional sisters of V'

2.2 Disjunct adverbials ('sentence adverbs')

- disjunct adverbials denote the speaker's attitude toward or judgment of the proposition
- this is reflected syntactically in that they modify the entire S, not just the VP; typically, they appear at the beginning of the sentence.

- The same adverbs may be both adjuncts or disjuncts:

- (2) a. I told him seriously that I wouldn't join him.
 b. Seriously, I don't want to join him.

2.3 Conjunct adverbials ('conjunctive adverbs')

- the function of conjunct adverbials is to link clauses
- syntactically they are sisters of S (like disjunct adverbials)

3. Distinguishing adverbials structurally

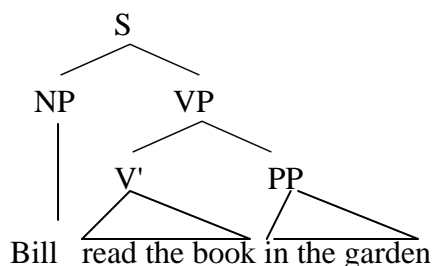
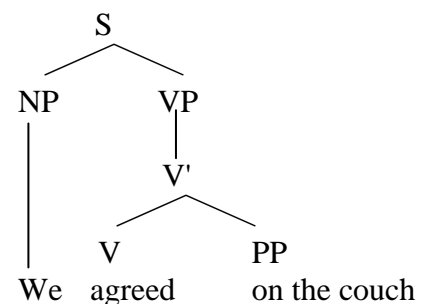
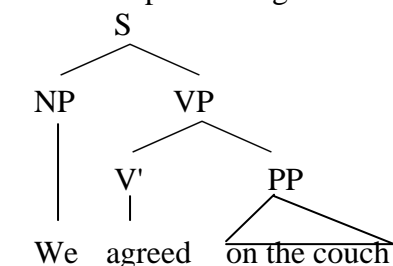
3.1 The multiple functions of postverbal PPs

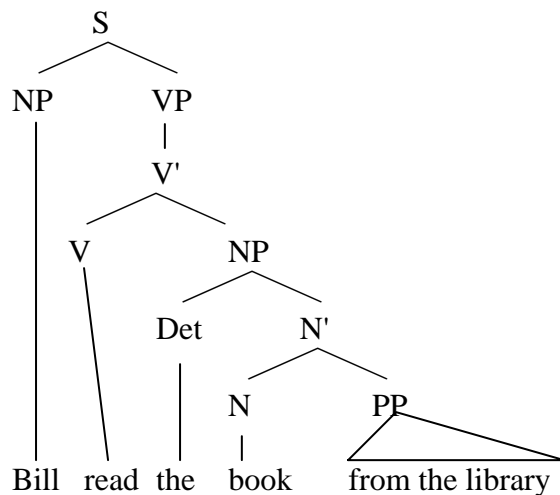
- PPs occurring after the verb can be prepositional complement, adjunct adverbial, or postmodifier of a N

- (3) a. Bill put the book on the table.
 b. Bill read the book in the garden.
 c. Bill read the book from the library.

- (4) We agreed on the couch.

- Tree structures clearly distinguish these different functions, even if one sentence allows multiple readings:





Exercise 1:

1. Identify the adverbial(s) in each of the following sentences. Label the phrasal category and identify the type of adverbial.

Example: The delegates arrive next week for the conference.

	<u>Category</u>	<u>Type</u>
<i>Answer:</i> next week	NP	aA
for the conference	PP	aA

- (a) Unfortunately, I've left my umbrella in the car.
- (b) By the way, have you seen my car keys?
- (c) He has refused to help, to my annoyance.
- (d) We finally made a decision about the carpeting.
- (e) Finally, I'd like to address the question of financing.
- (f) He was otherwise occupied.
- (g) Otherwise, I would help.
- (h) I answered the question stupidly.
- (i) Stupidly, I confided in her.
- (j) In my estimation, it could have been done better.

Exercise 2:

2. Explain the ambiguity of the following sentences. Draw generalized phrase structure trees.
- (a) I asked about the book in the library.
- (b) We passed over the site.
- (c) Verna wrote the paper for Marylou.