

COURSE TITLE: SYNTAX

WEEK 12: X-BAR SYNTAX

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INTRODUCTION

- ▶ We looked at TGG IN week 10 and 11,.
- ▶ We analyzed Phrases earlier and the knowledge of phrases is going to be important in this lesson.
- ▶ We also examined the relationship among constituents in ICA
- ▶ This week, we delve deeper into phrases and give them an additional level (X').
- ▶ We, thus, look at X- bar syntax.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- ▶ By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:
- ▶ i. Explain the relationship that exists among phrase constituents
- ▶ ii. Analyze phrases using X-BAR syntax
- ▶ iii. Discuss the relationship between heads and complements; heads and adjuncts

X-BAR THEORY

- ▶ All phrases have something in common- the fact that they must minimally contain a **Head**.
- ▶ Consider these sentences from Aarts (2001).
- ▶ There are different types of phrases
 - (1) The defendants denied the charge: they claim that they did [VP not **destroy** the garden]
 - (2) She proposed [NP an **analysis** of the sentence]
 - (3) Jake is [AP so **fond** of coffee]
 - (4) They are [PP quite **in** agreement]
 - (5) My sister cycles [AvP much **faster** than me]
- ▶ Aarts, B. (2001). *English sentence and argumentation*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.

X-BAR SYNTAX

- ▶ Apart from the obligatory presence of the Heads, there are further similarities between these phrases:
- ▶ there appears to be a strong bond between the Head and the constituent that follows it in each case.
- ▶ Thus, in (1) the verb *destroy* requires the presence of a Noun Phrase that refers to an entity that is destroyable.
- ▶ In (2) the PP of the sentence complements the noun analysis in that it specifies what is being analyzed.
- ▶ Notice that in this case the noun analysis with its associated Complement of the sentence can be contrasted with a verb + Complement sequence:
- ▶ She proposed to analyze the sentence.

X-BAR THEORY

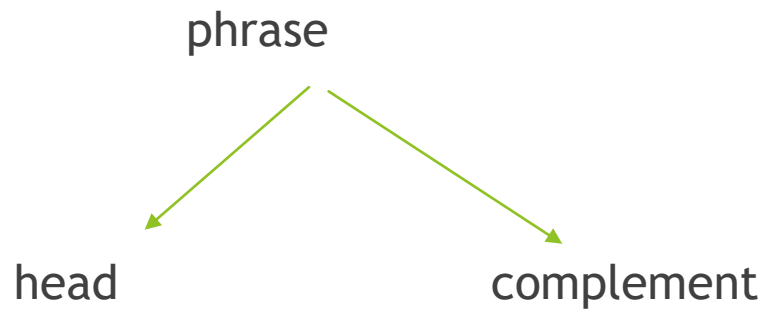
- ▶ X' -syntax is a theory of syntax which stipulates that all the major phrase types are structured in the same way.
- ▶ the labels:
- ▶ Specifier,
- ▶ Adjunct,
- ▶ Head
- ▶ Complement
- ▶ are functional notions,
- ▶ only the Head is always obligatory.

HEAD AND COMPLEMENT

- ▶ PHRASE= HEAD + COMPLEMENT
- ▶ Complement as a general term to denote any constituent whose presence is required by another.
- ▶ The defendants denied the charge: they claim that they did [VP not **destroy** the garden]
- ▶ She proposed [NP **an analysis** of the sentence]
- ▶ in each case the constituent that follows the Head is required to complete the sense of the Head

HEAD AND COMPLEMENT

- ▶ How can the close bond between Head and Complement be represented in a tree diagram?
- ▶ One way is to assume that the two together share a node (i.e. they are sisters).

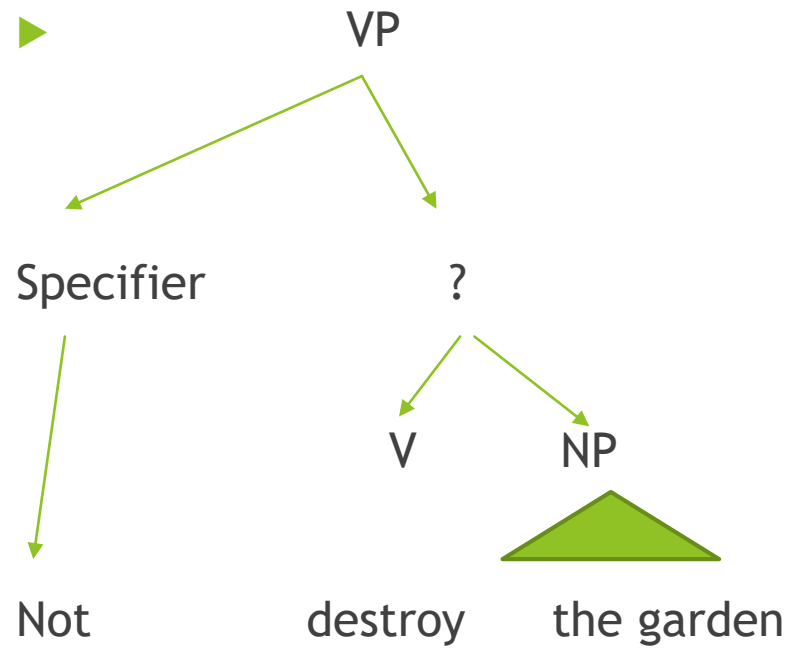


SPECIFIERS

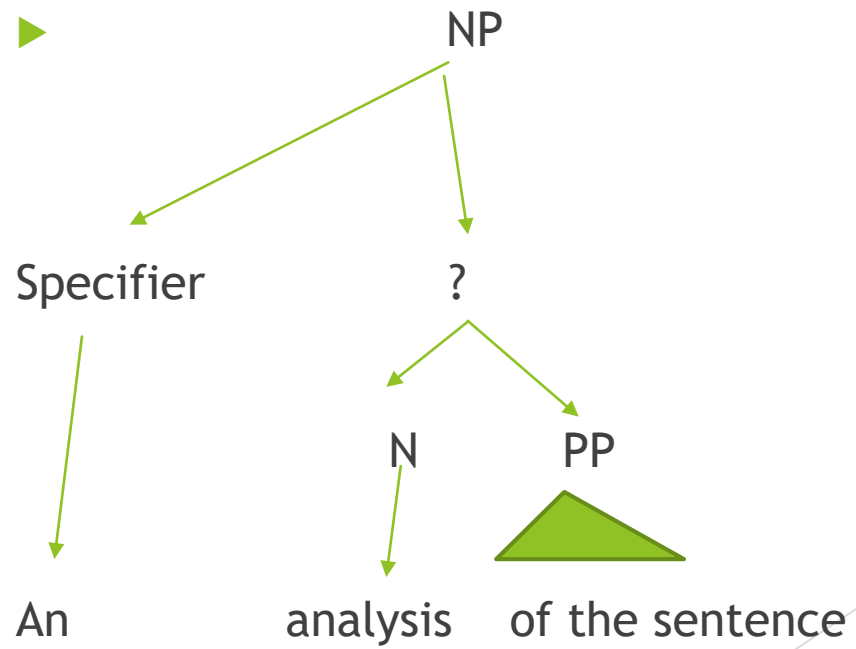
- ▶ Elements that precede the Head specify the Head + Complement sequence are referred to as Specifiers:
- ▶ (1) The defendants denied the charge: they claim that they did [VP **not** destroy the garden]
- ▶ (2) She proposed [NP **an** analysis of the sentence]
- ▶ (3) Jake is [AP **so** fond of coffee]
- ▶ (4) They are [PP **quite** in agreement]
- ▶ (5) My sister cycles [AvP **much** faster than me]

Specifiers

VP

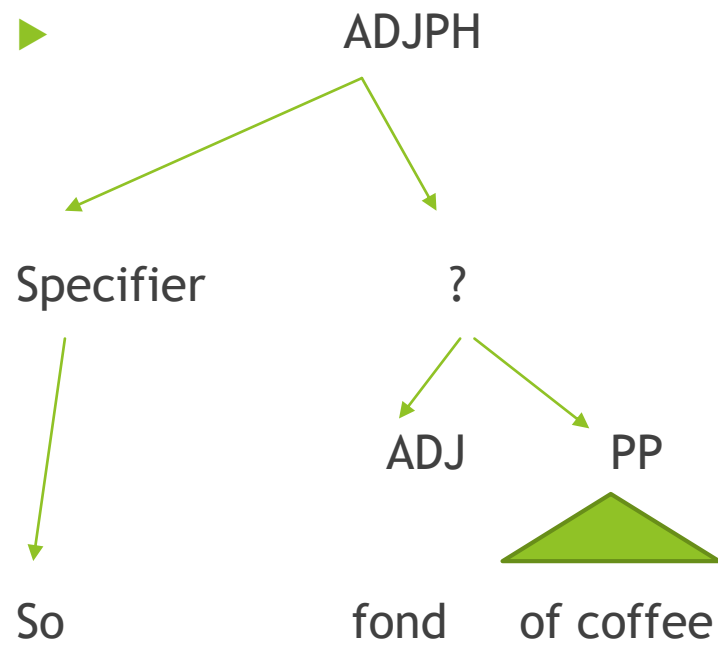


NP

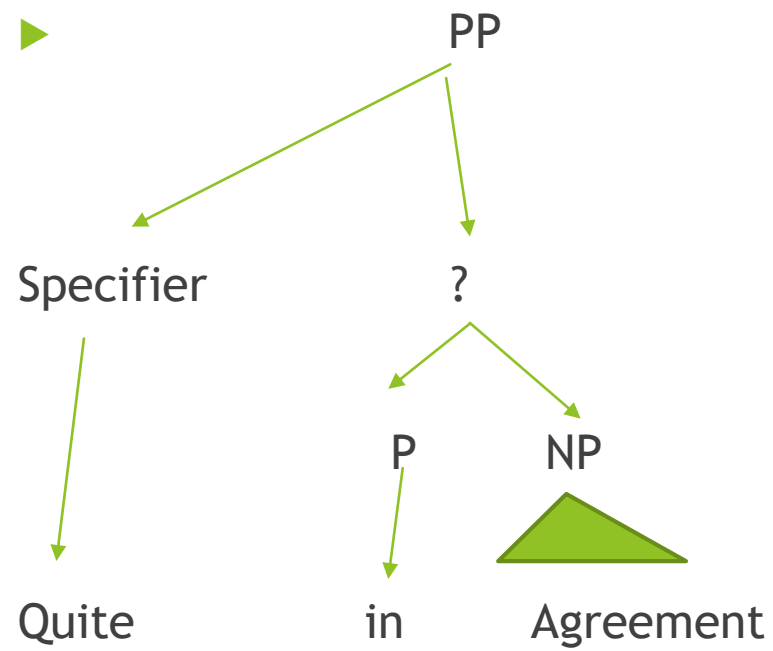


Specifiers

ADJPH

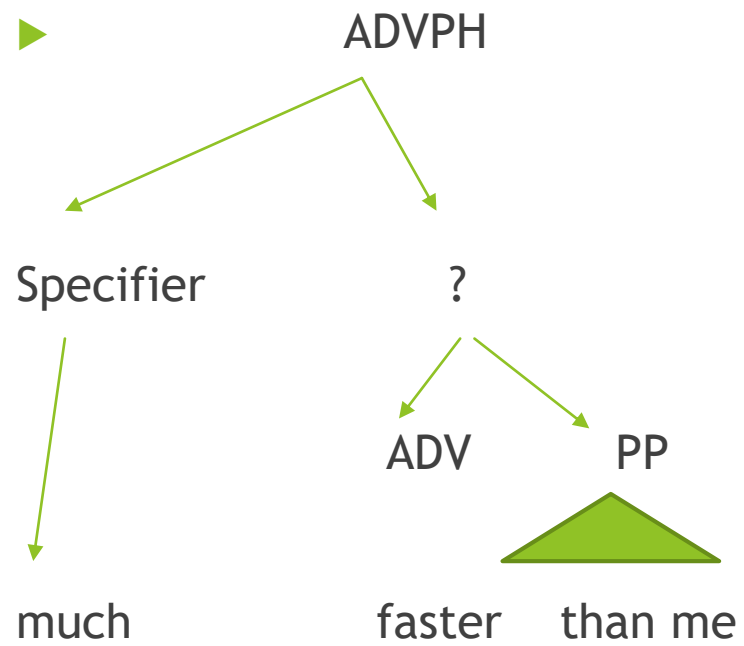


PP

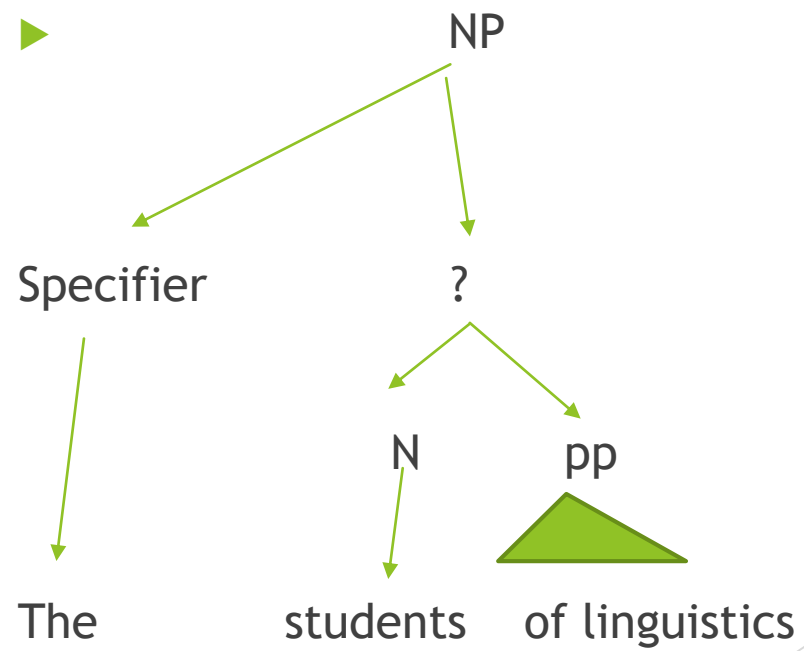


Specifiers

ADVPH



NP

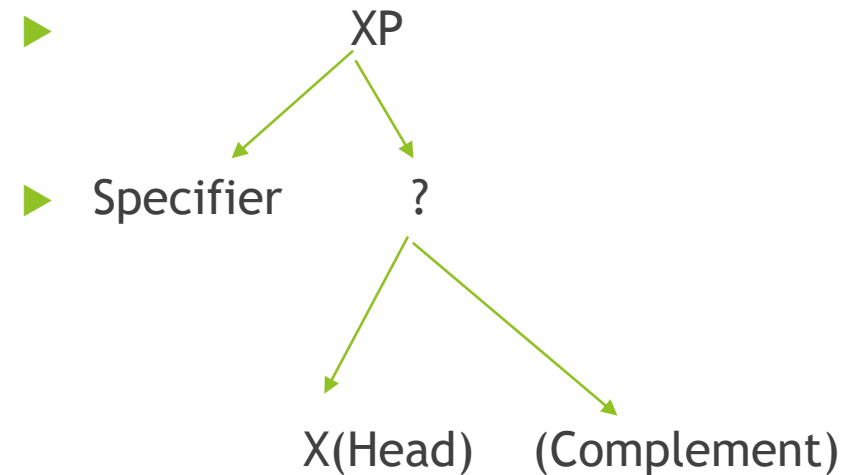


Generalized structure

Generalization

- ▶ Note:
- ▶ A generalization is made in each case-
- ▶ A configuration of the various phrasal components is identical;
- ▶ Hence, the generalized structure.

The structure



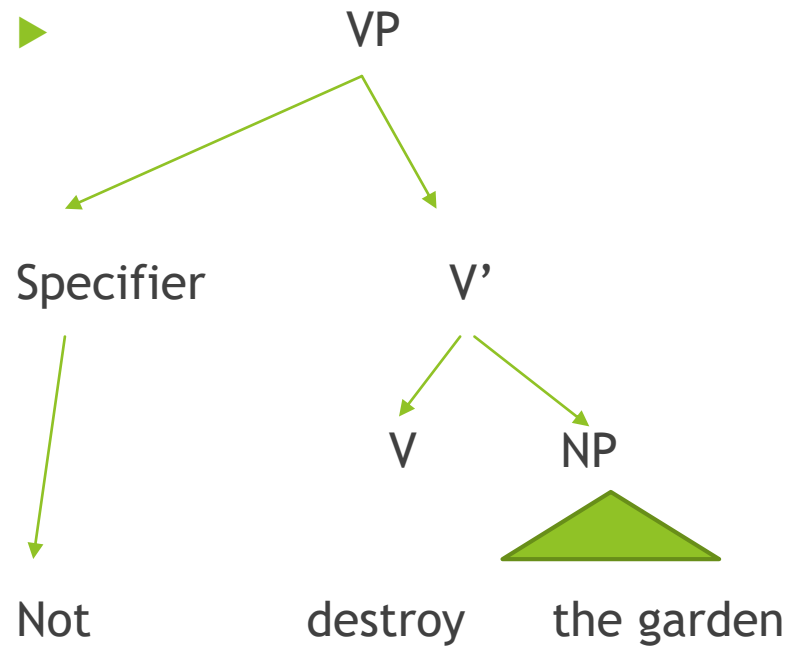
X-BAR

- ▶ In the tree 'XP' is a phrase headed by X,
- ▶ where X stands for V, N, A, P or Adv.
- ▶ The **Specifier** is a **sister** of the **node** that dominates the Head + Complement sequence, indicated by '?'.
- ▶ In the generalized diagram, there is an unlabeled category (?) - the one that dominates the Head + Complement string.
- ▶ What is the nature of this node?) it appears that '?' is at a level that is intermediate between the phrase level XP and the Head level X.
- ▶ This level is X' (read: X-bar) (Aarts, 2001)

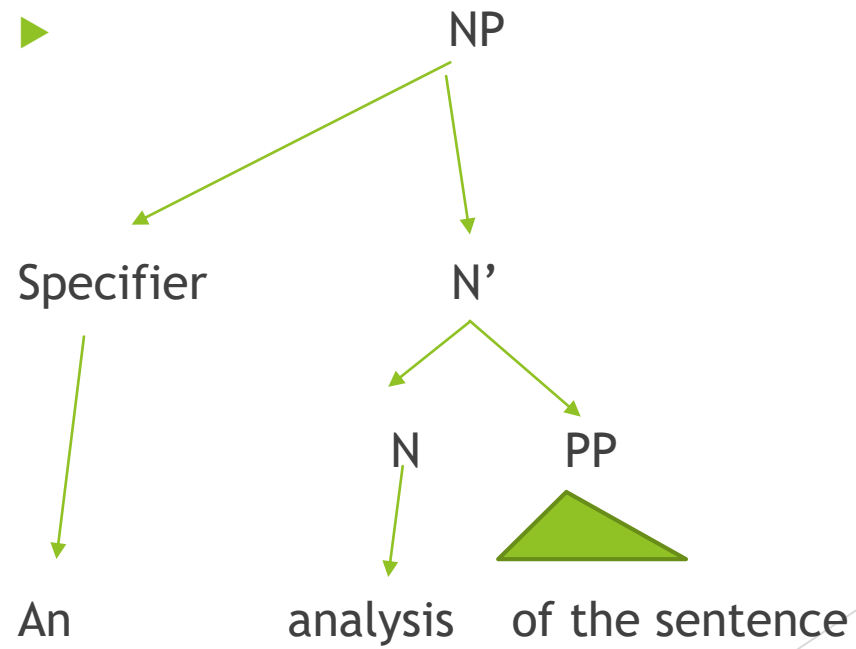
Aarts, B. (2001). *English sentence and argumentation*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.

Full X- BAR representations

VP

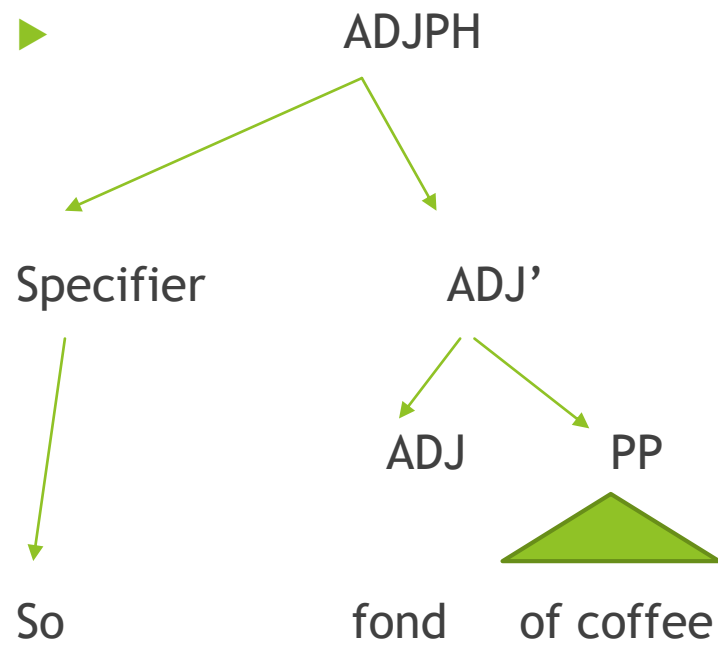


NP

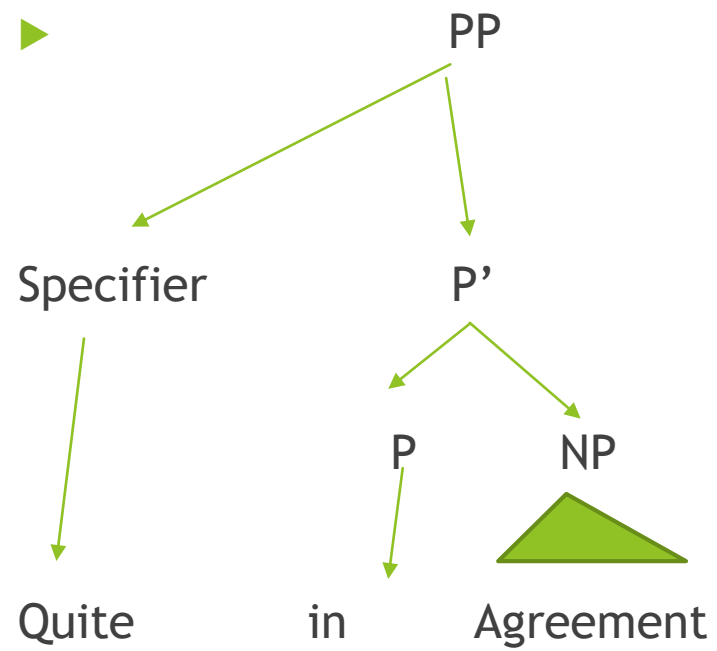


Specifiers

ADJPH

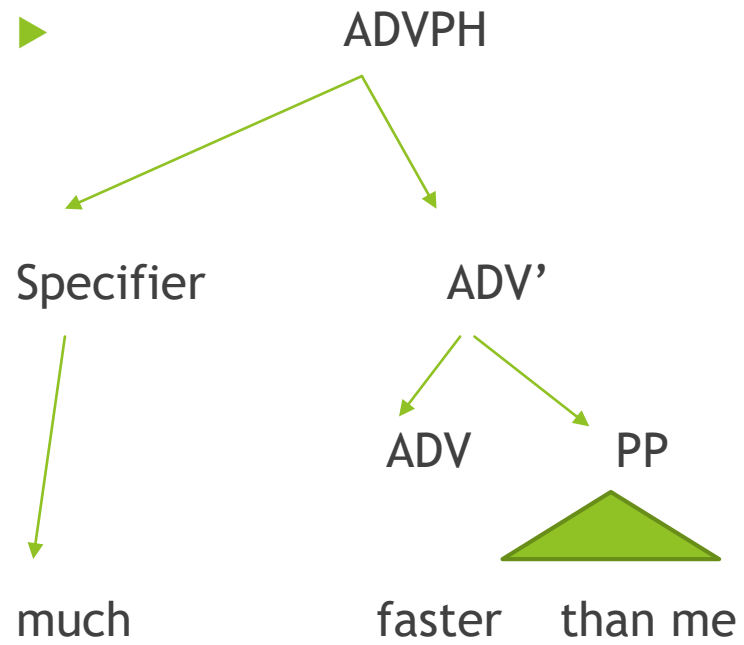


PP

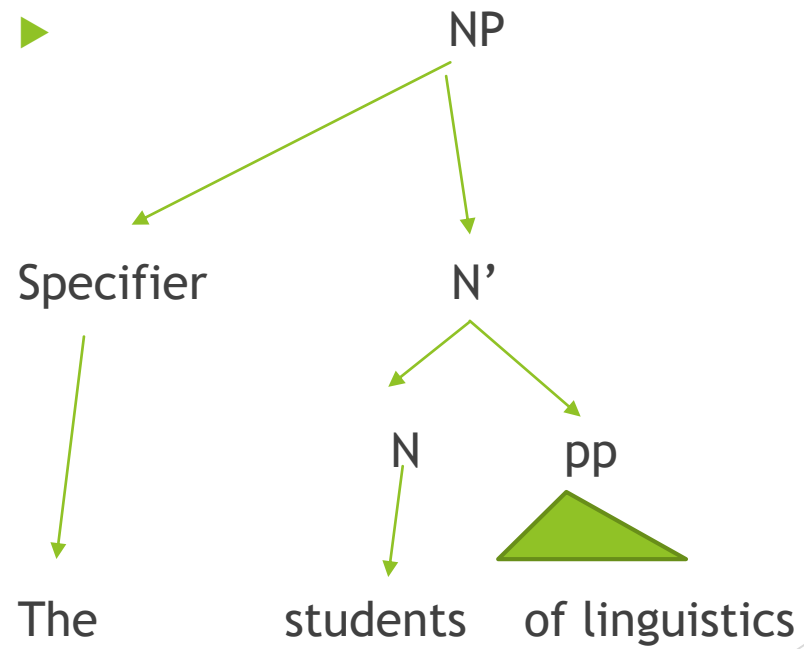


Specifiers

ADVPH



NP

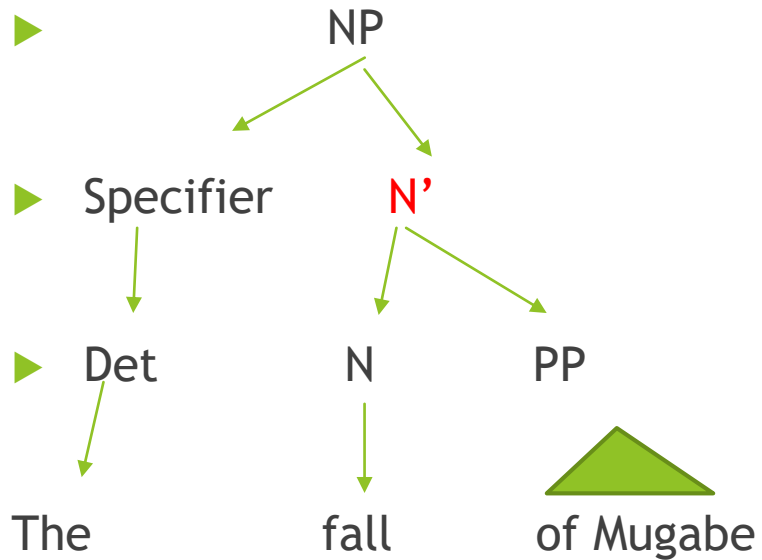


EXERCISES

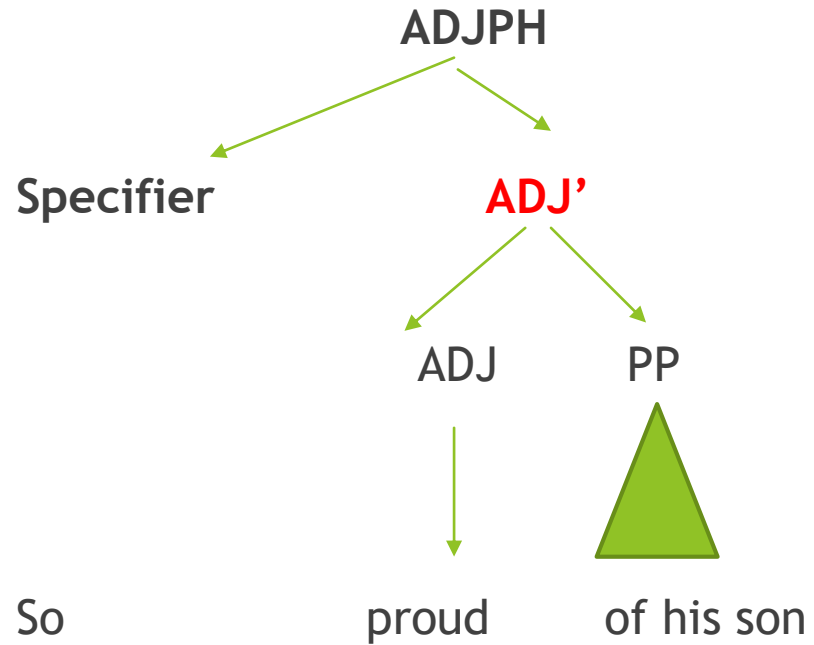
- ▶ Assign tree structures to the phrases in bold below:
- ▶ **the fall of Mugabe** (NP)
- ▶ **He so proud of his son.** (ADJPH)
- ▶ **We are citizens of the globe.**(NP)
- ▶ **She travelled to China.** (VP)
- ▶ **He ran right across the field.** (PP)

X-BAR TREE DIAGRAMS

- ▶ the fall of Mugabe (NP)

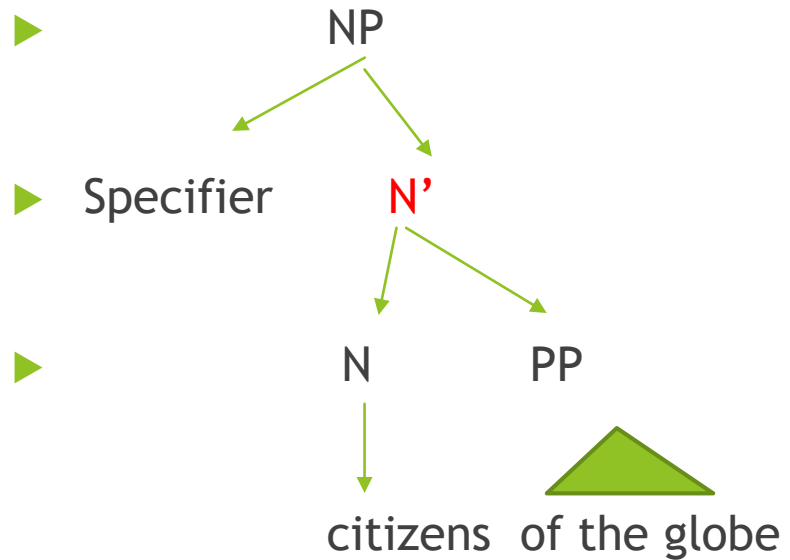


- ▶ so proud of his son. (ADJPH)

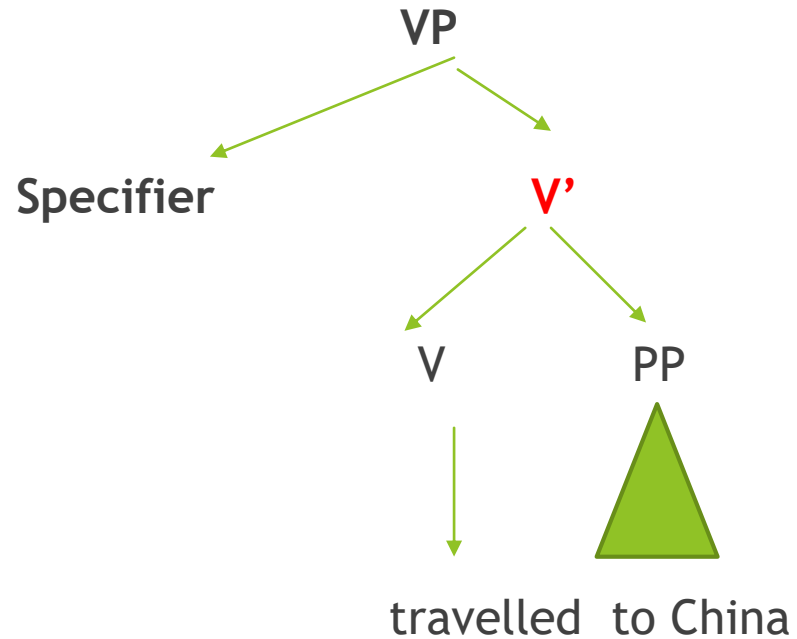


X-BAR TREE DIAGRAMS

- ▶ Citizens of the globe (NP)

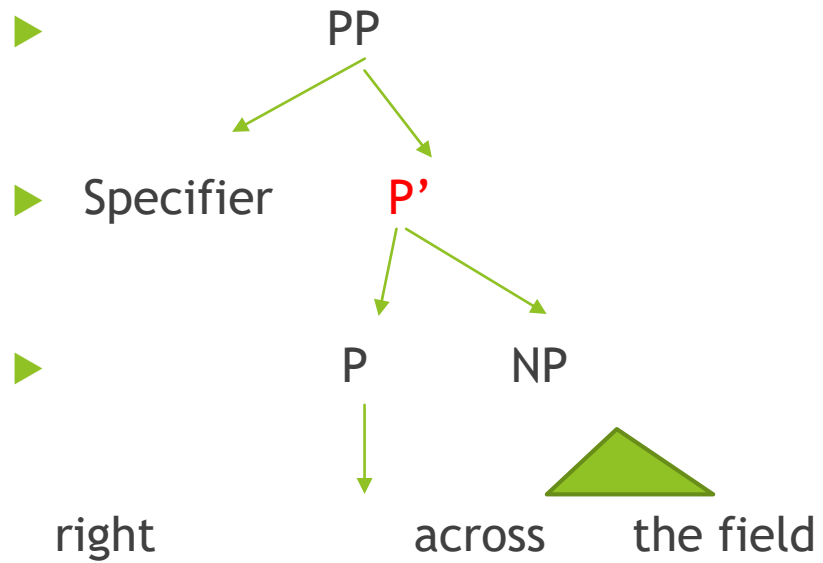


- ▶ Travelled to China. (VP)

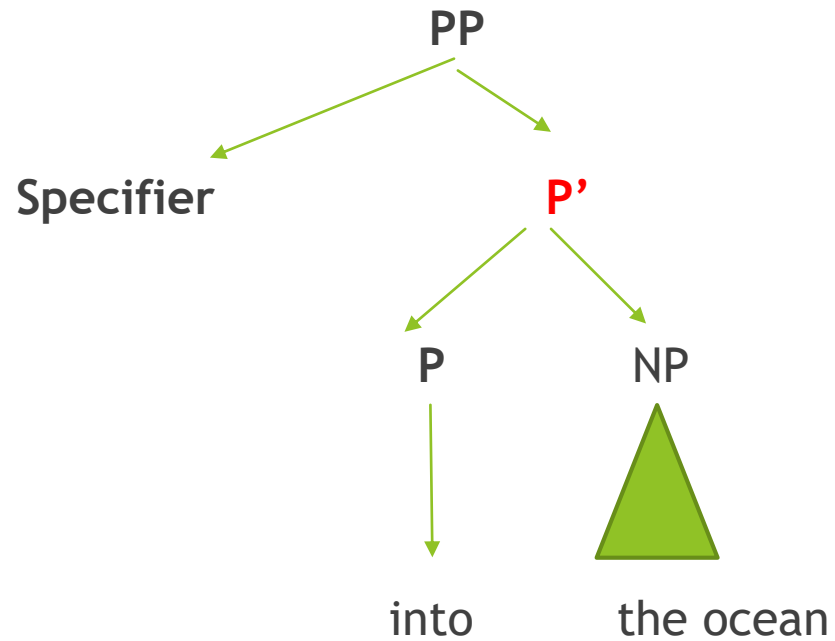


X-BAR TREE DIAGRAMS

- ▶ Right across the field (PP)



- ▶ Into the ocean. (PP)



Typical Specifiers for the Major Phrase Types NP, VP, AP and PP (Aarts, 2001)

<i>Phrase</i>	<i>Specifier</i>	<i>Example(s)</i>
NP	determiners	[<i>the</i> examination] [<i>our</i> car] [<i>many</i> answers]
VP	negative elements	He does [<i>not</i> like planes] She [<i>never</i> eats meat]
AP	degree adverbs	[<i>how</i> nice] They are [<i>so</i> eager to please] He isn't [<i>that/this</i> fat] [<i>too</i> bad] That's [<i>rather/quite</i> disgusting] She is [<i>as</i> rich as the Queen]
PP	adverbs	The supermarket is [<i>right</i> up your street] My office is [<i>quite</i> in disarray] The office is [<i>just</i> to your left]

Typical complements for the major phrase types

Phrase	Head	complement	Examples
NP	N	PP	Insistence on that arrangement
		Clause	Their realization that he is a bad leader
		NP	A history teacher
VP	V	NP	Submitted an application
		Clause	Republicans believe that they will win.
		PP	He looked at his watch.

Typical complements for the major phrase types

Phrase	Head	complement	Examples
ADJPH	ADJ	PP	Proud of his achievement
		Clause	Eager to work with you.
PP	P	NP	In the house
		PP	Out of pity
		Clause	Uncertain about what we will experience

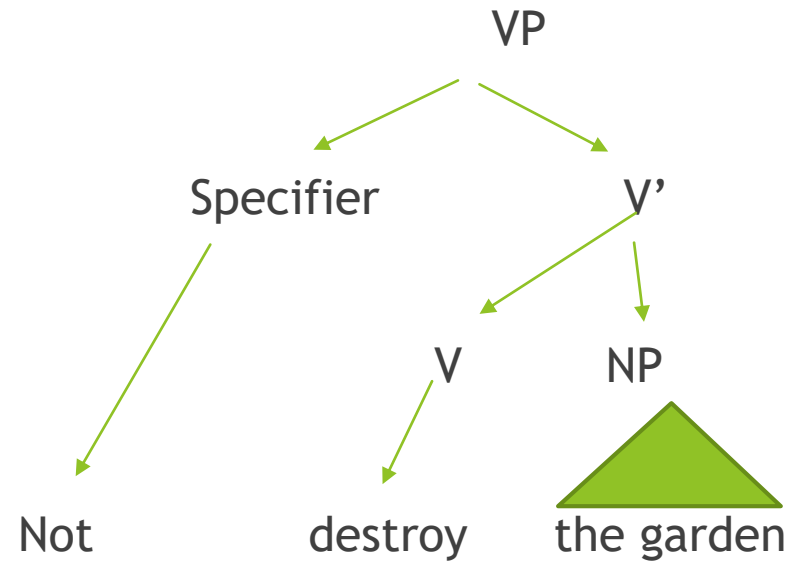
ADJUNCTS

- ▶ The defendants denied the charge: they claim that they did [VP not destroy the garden **deliberately**]
- ▶ The AdvP **deliberately** modifies the sequence *destroy the garden*, and is positioned after the Head *destroy* and its Complement *the garden*.
- ▶ This AdvP functions as an **Adjunct** in that it tells us how the defendants destroyed the garden
- ▶ (or rather, in this particular case, how they didn't destroy the garden

adjunct

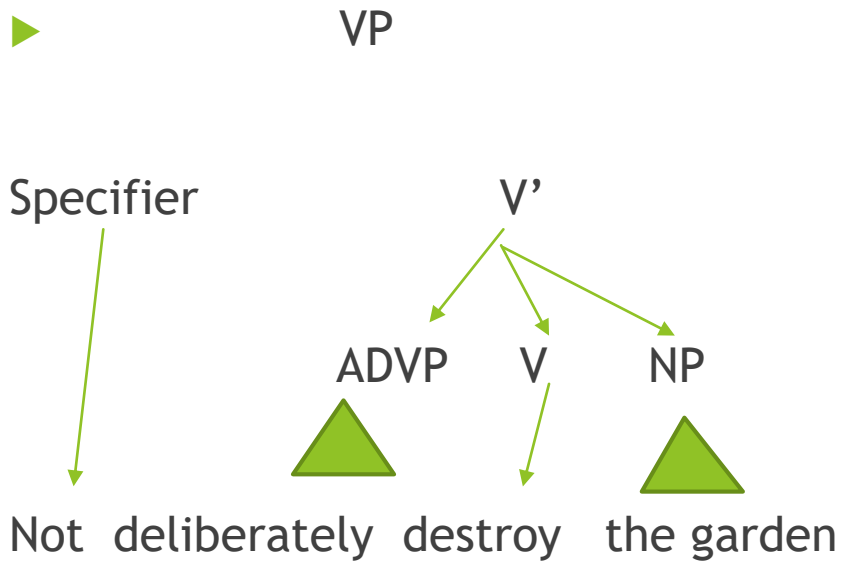
▶ not destroy the garden

▶

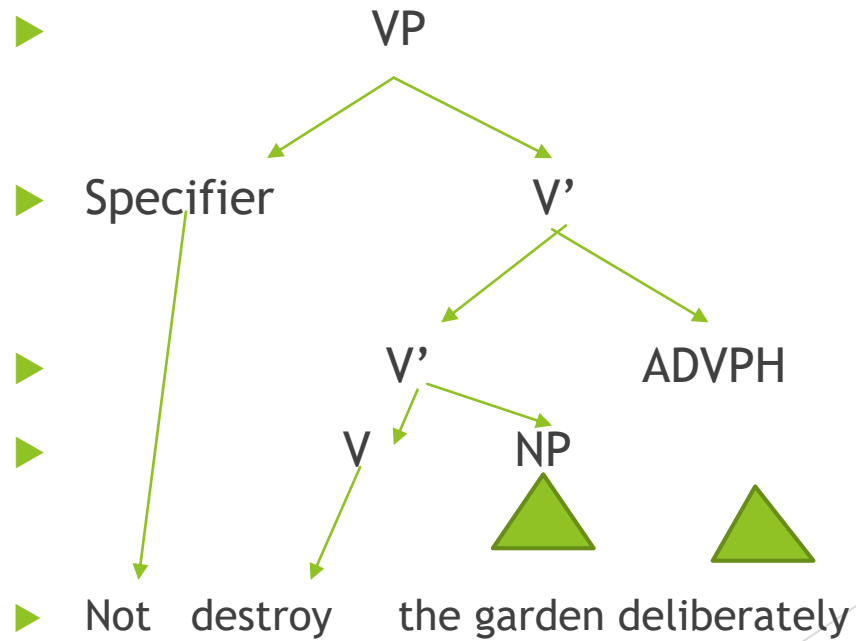


Representing the adjunct:

Simply to have a third branch coming from V' for the AdvP



Another way of positioning Adjuncts in VPs is to adjoin them to V'.



ADJUNCTION

- ▶ The repeating of the V' -node and adding the AdvP as its daughter is a process called Adjunction.
- ▶ Adjunction is defined as:
- ▶ Category B is adjoined to category A:
 - ▶ 1. by making B a sister of A and
 - ▶ 2. by making A and B daughters of a copy of the original node A.



ADJUNCT

- ▶ In both diagrams, we see that the Complement *the garden* is closer to the Head *destroy* than the Adjunct *deliberately*:
- ▶ the Complement is a sister of V,
- ▶ whereas the Adjunct is a sister of the V' that immediately dominates V.
- ▶ 'deliberately' is not an argument of 'destroy' and hence;
- ▶ more peripheral to it 'than the garden', which is an argument of the verb. (Aarts, 2001)

Aarts, B. (2001). *English sentence and argumentation*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.

More on adjuncts

- ▶ Other than the verbs, adjuncts also relate with other structures. Consider the following sentences from Aarts, 2001.

[NP an analysis of the sentence *with tree diagrams*]

[AP so fond of coffee *after dinner*]

[PP quite in agreement *about this*]

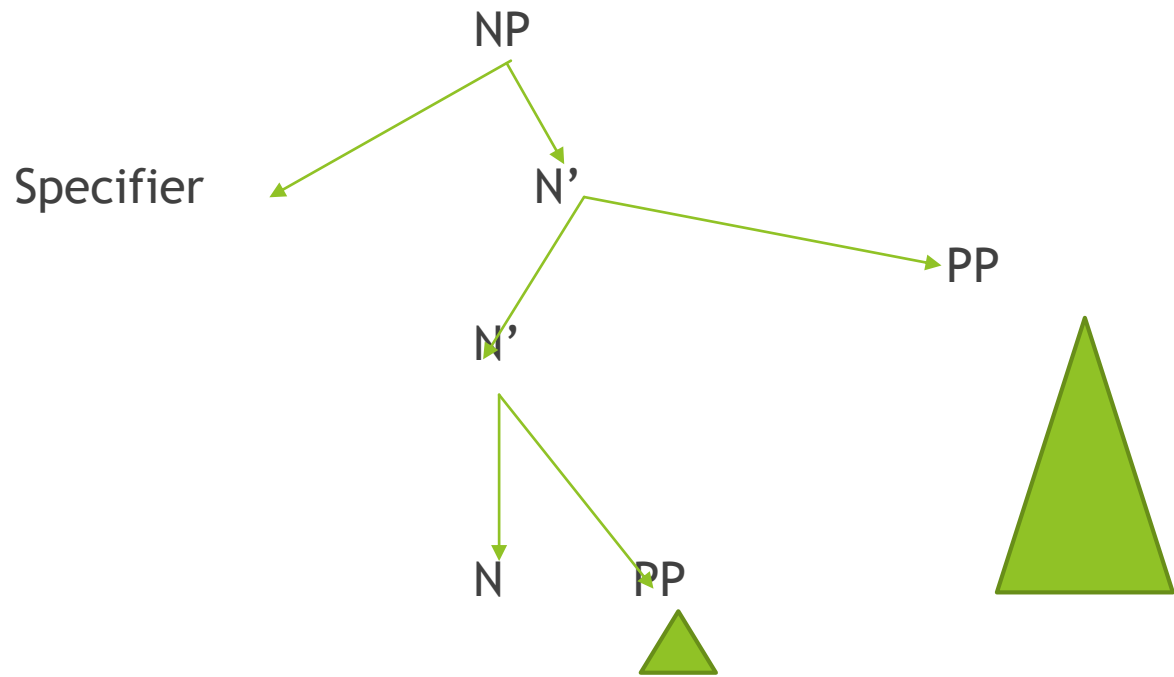
[AdvP much faster than me *by far*]

Aarts, B. (2001). *English sentence and argumentation*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.

More on adjuncts

- ▶ The italicized strings in the bracketed phrases have a modifying function and are therefore analyzed as Adjuncts.
- ▶ Like Adjuncts in VPs, they are adjoined to a bar level category in tree structures.
- ▶ The tree diagrams are represented in the following analyses.
- ▶ Through the diagrams, you will realize that the complements are closer to the head, the adjuncts are peripheral.
- ▶ This bond is so strong that a Complement must always be adjacent to its Head, and that an Adjunct may not intervene.
- ▶ Complements are sisters of their Heads, while Adjuncts are sisters of the single bar level above the Head.

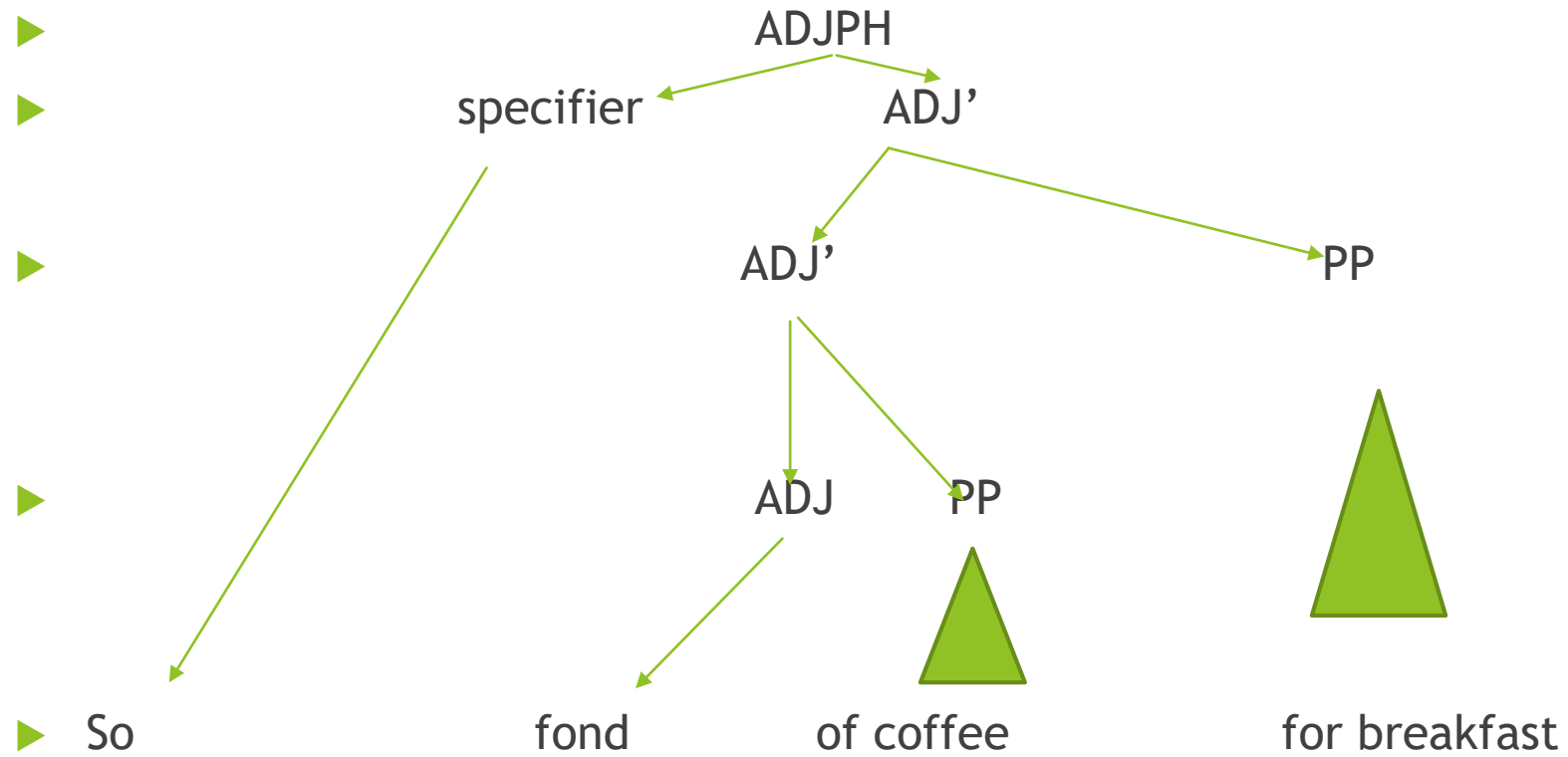
NP- an analysis of the sentence with tree diagrams



An

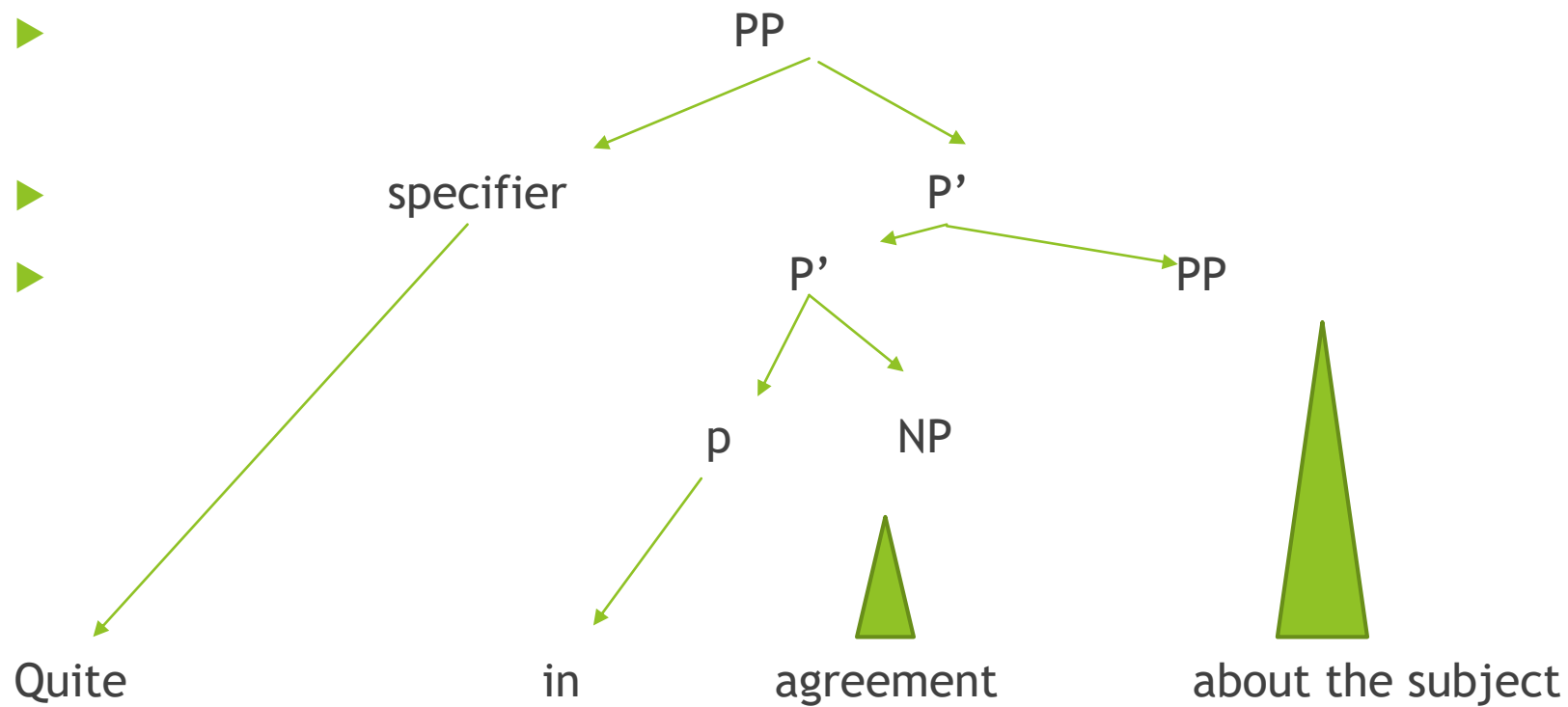
analysis of the sentence with tree diagrams.

ADJPH- So fond of coffee for breakfast

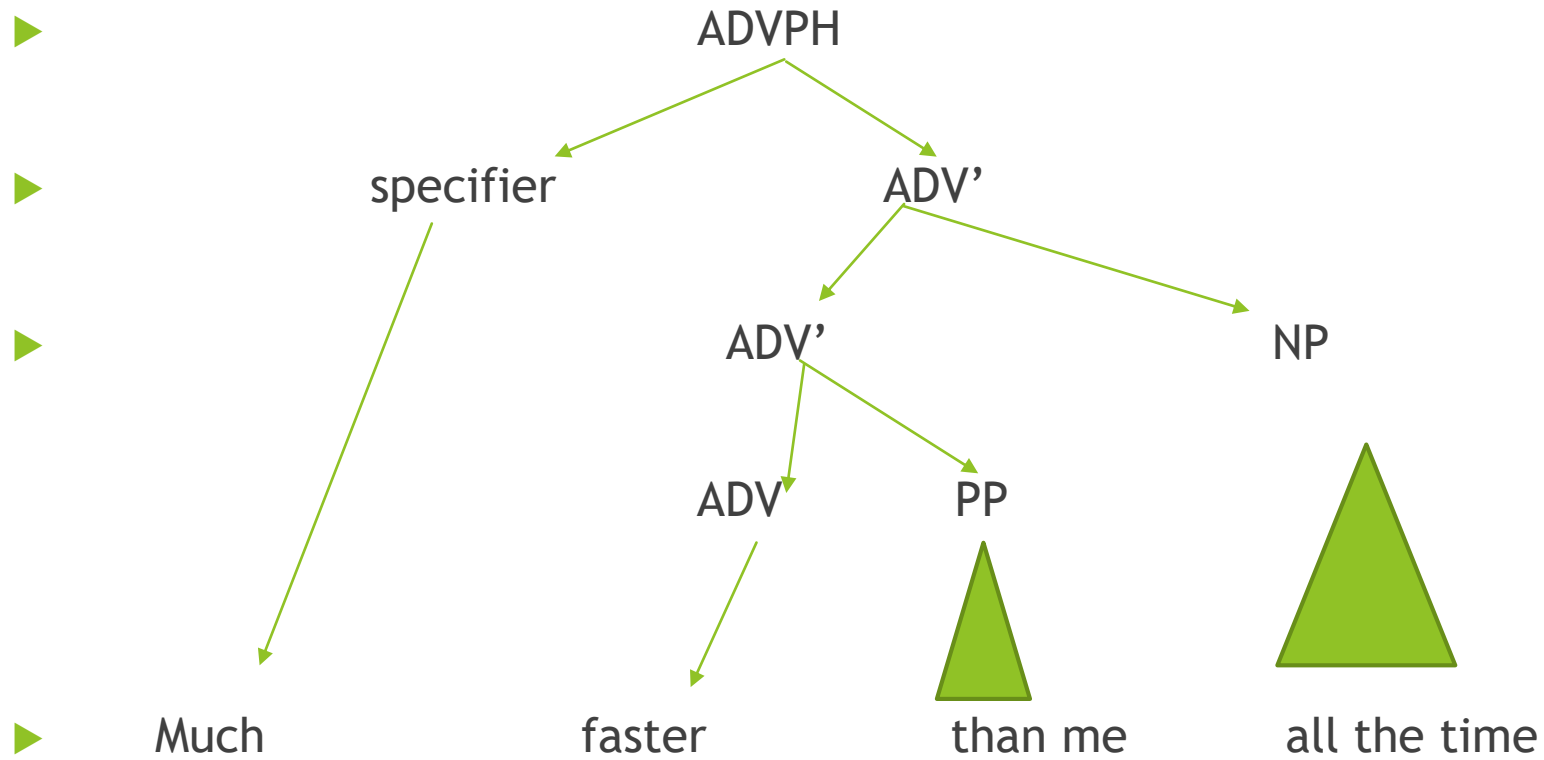


PP- quite in agreement about the subject

- ▶
- ▶
- ▶



ADVPH- Much faster than me all the time

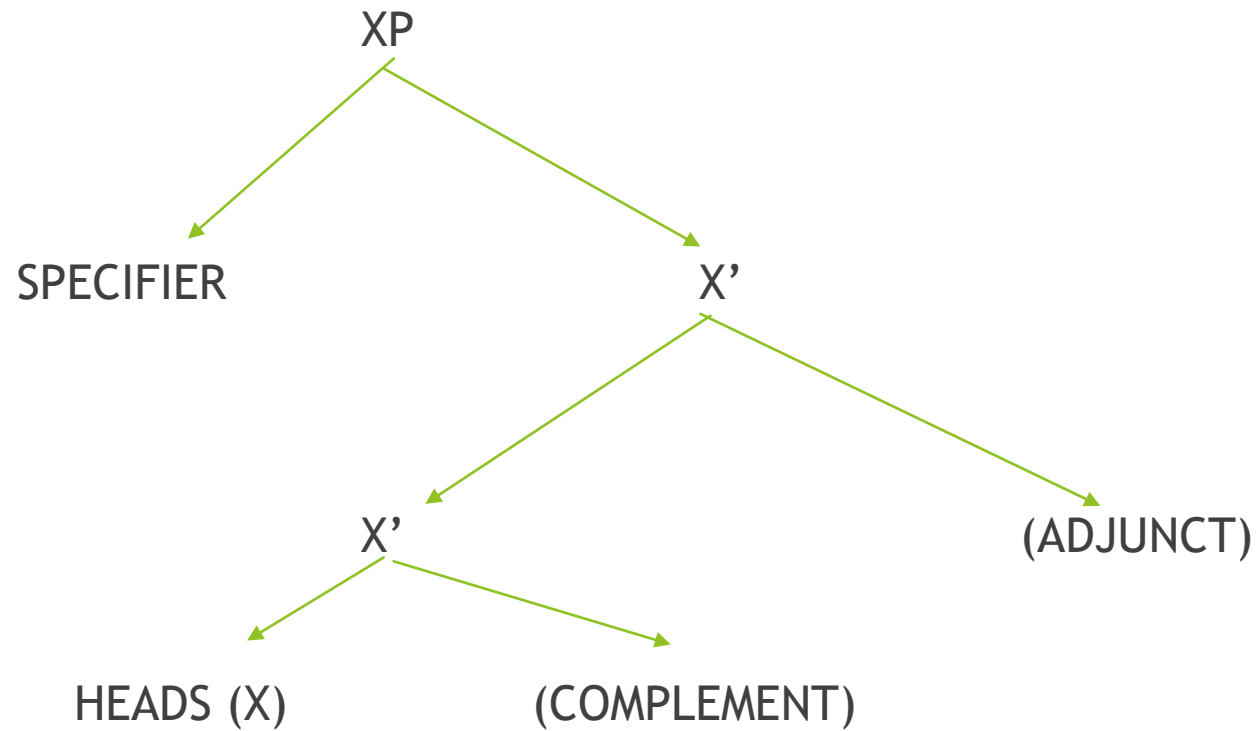


Typical Adjuncts for the Major Phrase Types NP, VP, AP and PP

<i>Phrase</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Adjunct</i>	<i>Examples</i>
NP	N	AP	The <i>warm</i> summer
		NP	The <i>woman</i> busdriver
		PP	The tiles <i>on the floor</i>
		clause	My youngest sister, <i>who lives in Italy</i> The information <i>that you supplied</i>
VP	V	AdvPs	He <i>quickly</i> absconded She read the prospectus <i>eagerly</i>
		PP	We came here <i>in the summer</i>
		Adjunct clauses	She phoned <i>because she likes you</i>
AP	A	PP	He was abusive <i>to the extreme</i>
		AdvP	We were <i>unconsolably</i> disappointed
PP	P	AdvP	I was <i>totally</i> over the moon She was in doubt <i>entirely</i>
		PP	They designed the museum in tandem <i>with an Italian architect</i>

- From Aarts, B. (2001). *English sentence and argumentation*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.

Head complement/ adjunct relationship.



SUMMARY

Today, we analyzed phrases using X-bar theory

Key concepts:

Specifier

Head

Complement

Adjunct

X-BAR

Node: sister- daughters

NEXT LESSON

- ▶ FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR
- ▶ SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

Reference

- ▶ Aarts, B. (2001). *English sentence and argumentation*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.