LING 101.03 Fall 2026
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Problem Session: Word Classes and Syntax

Tests from class: replacement (with a pronoun, or with *do* for a VP), coordination, cleft, surprise repetition, and the question test (*They did what?*) for VPs. Always use at least two tests. One test alone can give a false result.

A. Word classes: what is the evidence?

For each underlined word, name its word class. Give one piece of morphological evidence or one piece of syntactic evidence.

a. We <u>zoomed</u> with the whole family last night.

b. That was the longest <u>run</u> of my life.

c. Please <u>bottle</u> the olive oil before Friday.

d. <u>Yarın</u> görüşürüz. vs. <u>Yarın</u> çok önemli bir gün.

e. Köpek bana <u>doğru</u> koştu. vs. Bu <u>doğru</u> bir cevap.

f. Consider the two sentences below.

(i) She looked up the word.
(ii) She looked up the chimney.

In which sentence is *up* a preposition, and in which is it a verb particle? Show the test you used.

B. Constituency tests

Use at least two constituency tests to decide whether each boldfaced string is a constituent. For each string that is a constituent, name its category (NP, VP, PP, AdjP).

a. Fatih loves **his mother**.

b. The Oasis ticket was **very expensive**.

c. Cüneyt and Zeynep **met in the** dergah.

d. **The sudden return of Bihter** shocked the new cast.

e. The therapy sessions between Meryem and Peri **progress slowly**.

f. **The sudden return** of Bihter shocked the new cast.

g. Ezel ran **up the hill**.

C. Structural ambiguity

Each sentence below is ambiguous. For each one: (i) paraphrase each reading, and (ii) use brackets to show which words group together in each reading.

a. Steve hit the ugly Demogorgon with the metal bat.

b. Hande bought cheap shoes and bags.

c. Müge called the witness from the village in Kastamonu.
(This one has more than two readings. Find at least two.)

D. Inside the English NP

Here is a phrase structure rule for English NPs. Parentheses mean the part is optional, and + means one or more.

$$\text{NP} \rightarrow \text{(D) (AdjP+) N (PP+)}$$

a. Use the rule to explain why each NP is ungrammatical.

(i) *the my book
(ii) *big some books
(iii) *I saw those big them.

b. Find the head of each NP. Show one piece of evidence for your answer.

(i) [the girl in the movie]
(ii) [those long books]
(iii) [a cup of strong coffee]

c. Can the rule generate the NP [*the girl who came into the store*]? If not, change the rule so that it can.

d. The rule has no slot for numerals. Can it generate [*those three big books*]? If not, change the rule so that it can.

E. Inside the Turkish NP

Look at the Turkish NPs below.

(1)	şu üç büyük kitap	'those three big books'
(2)	*şu üç büyük kitaplar	(intended: 'those three big books')
(3)	güzel bir ev	'a nice house'
(4)	bir güzel ev	'a nice house'
(5)	*ev güzel bir	(intended: 'a nice house')
(6)	Ali'nin eski arabası	'Ali's old car'
(7)	masadaki kitap	'the book on the table'
(8)	*kitap masadaki	(intended: 'the book on the table')

a. Where is the head noun in a Turkish NP? Where are its dependents?

b. Compare (1) and (2). What is different from English *three big books*?

c. Compare (3), (4) and (5). Which language from the lecture shows the same pattern with *bir* 'a'?

d. Write one phrase structure rule for the Turkish NP that covers (1), (3), (4) and (6).

F. Tzotzil

Consider the data below from Tzotzil (a Mayan language spoken in Mexico). Answer the questions.

(1) 'ispet 'antz ti t'ule.
carry woman the rabbit
'The rabbit carried away (the) woman.'

(2) 'ibat xchi'uk smalal li Maruche.
go with her-husband the Maruche
'Maruche went with her husband.' (*Maruche* is a proper name.)

(3) Pas ti 'eklixa'une.
built the church
'The church was built.'

a. What is the basic word order of Tzotzil? Use (1) to answer.

b. Is *xchi'uk* 'with' a preposition or a postposition? How do you know?

c. Write the phrase structure rules for S, VP, NP and PP in Tzotzil.