Syntax Notes

CSCI-GA.2590 – Lecture 2B

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Prepositions vs Particles

• a particle can change places with the NP:
  He looked up the number.
  He looked the number up.

• a preposition must precede the NP:
  He walked into the room.
  * He walked the room into.
• Why do we care about distinguishing prepositions from particles?
Prepositions vs. particles

• The two constructs may have very different meanings
• This is evident in ambiguous examples
  • He looked up the street
Adjuncts vs. complements

• adjuncts and complements may also have different readings:
  
  • He seemed to please his teacher
  
  • He appeared to please his teacher
  
  • He disappeared to please his teacher
Adjuncts vs. complements

- Adjuncts and complements may also have different readings:
  - He seemed to please his teacher  [complement]
  - He appeared to please his teacher  [ambiguous]
  - He disappeared to please his teacher  [adjunct]
Relative Clauses

• A relative clause is like a sentence with a missing NP:

  the man who ate the popcorn

  the popcorn which the man ate
Relative Clauses

• The gap can be filled in with the head of the larger NP:

the man such that [the man] ate the popcorn

the popcorn such that the man ate [the popcorn]