HW # 1 discussion

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Initial Specifications

- An adjective must be able to fill in the blanks
  - The ___ noun ... --- occur between “the” and a noun
  - The noun is ____ . --- a single word following “the” + noun and preceding the end of sentence marker (period)

- An adjective CANNOT (comfortably) fill the following blank
  - The ___ is --- be the subject of “is”
  - ___s --- become a plural
Generalizations of Initial Specifications

• One or more adjective phrases must be able to fill in the blank
  – Det ___ noun ... --- occur between Det and a noun
• An adjective phrase must be able to fill in the blank
  – The noun is ____ . --- a single word following “the” + noun and
    preceding the end of sentence marker (period)
• An adjective phrase CANNOT (comfortably) fill the following blank
  – The ___ is --- be the subject of “is”
  – ___s --- become a plural
• An adjective phrase is either
  – A single adjective (“big”, “awkward”)
  – An adjective modified by an adverb (“very big”, “slightly awkward”, “as”)
    • *She was as tall as Mary*
    – Conjoined adjective phrases (“very big, slightly awkward, and blue”)
• Det = the, a, this, that, every each, numbers, ….
Other Prenom Modifiers

• Disagreement about the status of pre-nominal modifiers.
  – Some 1920s-1940s grammar makes these all adjectives
  – More recent grammars tend to be more selective
  – For HW, consistency is the most important thing

• Prenominal modifiers that are nouns are not adjectives, e.g., *the ice cream truck*, *the scissors holder*, …

• Quantifiers are dets, rather than adjectives, e.g., *each, every, some*, …
  – Cases difficult to differentiate: *few, several*

• Cardinal Numbers (*one, two 1, 2, 3, 57, …*)

• Ordinal Numbers (*first, second, …*) – most consider these a subclass of adjectives

• Possessives (*his appearance, her appearance, the tan book's appearance, …*)

• Some take hyphenation as clue that a word is an adjective (e.g., Penn Treebank). I prefer to look at final word in hyphenated string.
Additional Predicative Environments

• Most adjectives occur either attributively (pre-noun) or predictively (post “be”)

• Exceptions:
  – *They were aware, The aware people
  – *The winner was actual, The actual winner

• More predicative environments than just post “be”
  – After copula-like verbs: appear, seem, remain, end up
  – Small clauses following: consider, make, turn, …
    • X turned a non-lethal activity lethal
  – After “as” in a similar construction licensed by verbs like: assess, characterize, portray, …
    • The actress portrayed Margaret Thatcher as unfriendly