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UHE3092 ENGLISH MECHANICS

TREE DIAGRAMS

by
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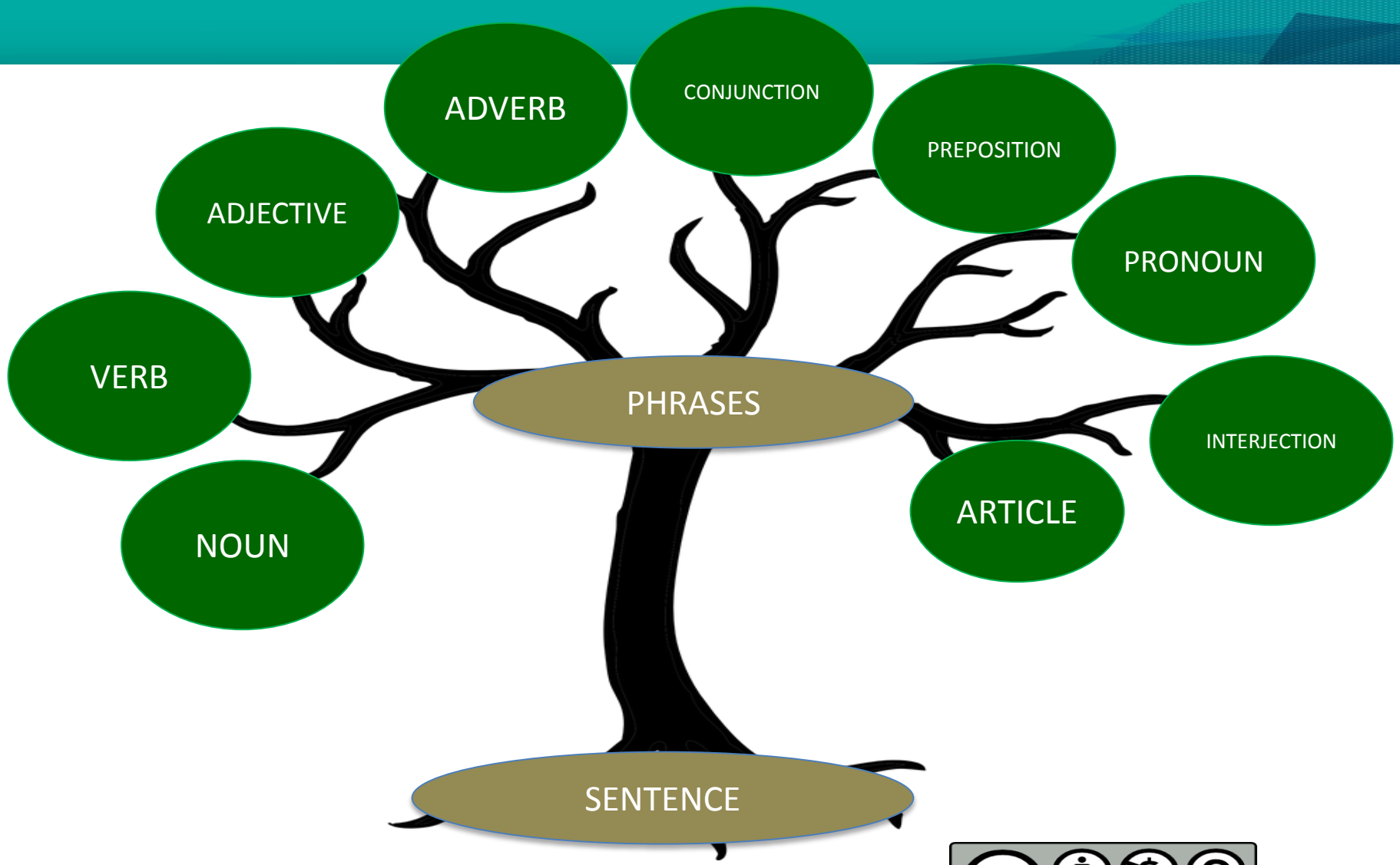
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Introduction

- Tree diagram is a representation of a phrase or sentence in a form of hierarchical relationships between one component to another.
- In linguistics, this tree diagram in under the analysis of sentence structure or SYNTAX.
- By learning the rules of sentence structure, a speaker can build endless sentences, which are meaningful to the speaker and grammatically correct.

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How to build a tree diagram

First, you have to know the basic structure of a sentence. Sentence is made of phrases and words.
The rules that we use to build tree diagram is called Phrase Structure Rules. Below are the common phrases in a sentence.

1. S → SUBJ PRED
2. SUBJ → NP
3. PRED → AUX VP $(Advl)^n$
4. NP → $(det)^3$ (AP) N (PP)
5. NP → pro
6. VP → AUX V (NP)
7. AUX → -past
8. AUX → -present
9. AUX → modal
10. PP → Prep NP
11. AP → $(intens)^n$ ADJ^n (PP)

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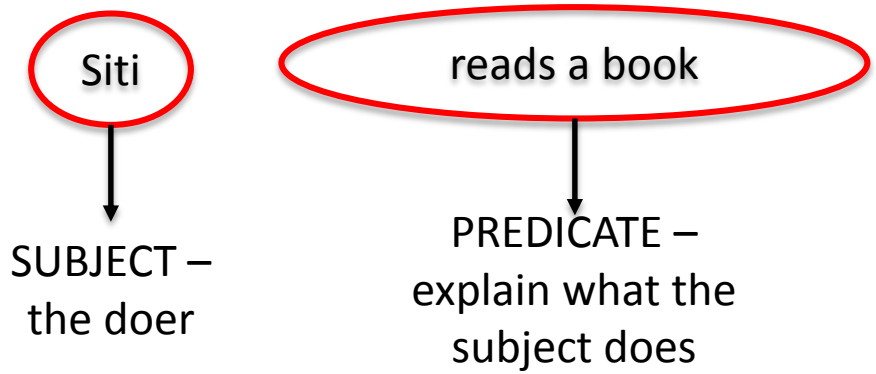
S → SUBJ PRED

Every sentence has a subject and a predicate.

For example:

Siti reads a book. ----- a simple sentence



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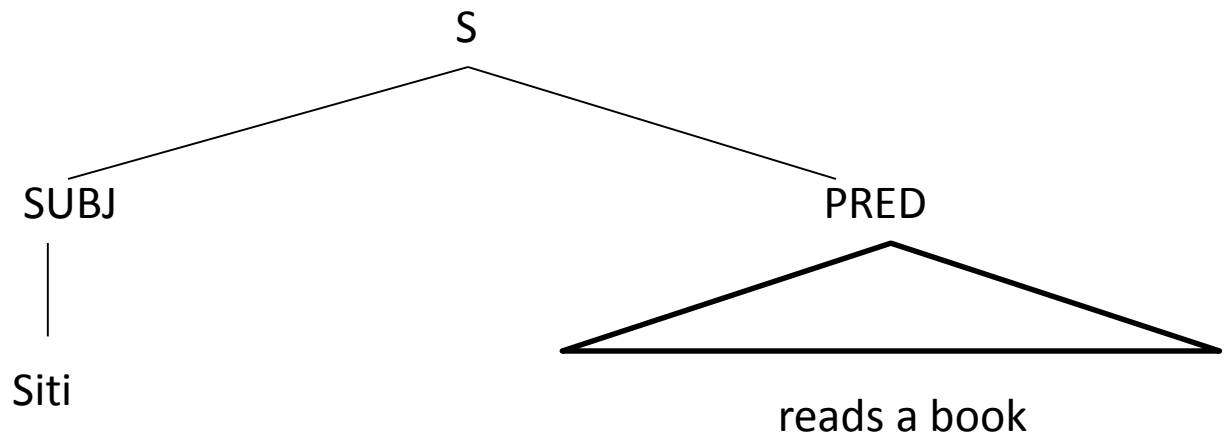
How to build S → SUBJ PRED tree diagram?

Siti reads a book.



*The triangle indicates that the analysis is not yet completed. It can be further broken down to a smaller units.

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SUBJ → NP

- Subject is a doer (person or thing) that performs an action (verb) in a sentence.
- A doer must always be a noun or pronoun. Below are the structures of noun phrases (NP):

1. NP → pro
   Eg: she

pronoun

2. NP → (det)^3 (AP) N (PP)
   Eg: all the other talented actors in the film

( ) – the parentheses means the category is optional in a noun phrase. If there is no (), in this example **'N',** it is the compulsory component in the phrase.

( )^3 – the power of 3 means that is the maximum number of determiner you can fill in the parentheses. You can write either 0,1,2 or 3 determiner in the noun phrase.

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Tree Diagram 1

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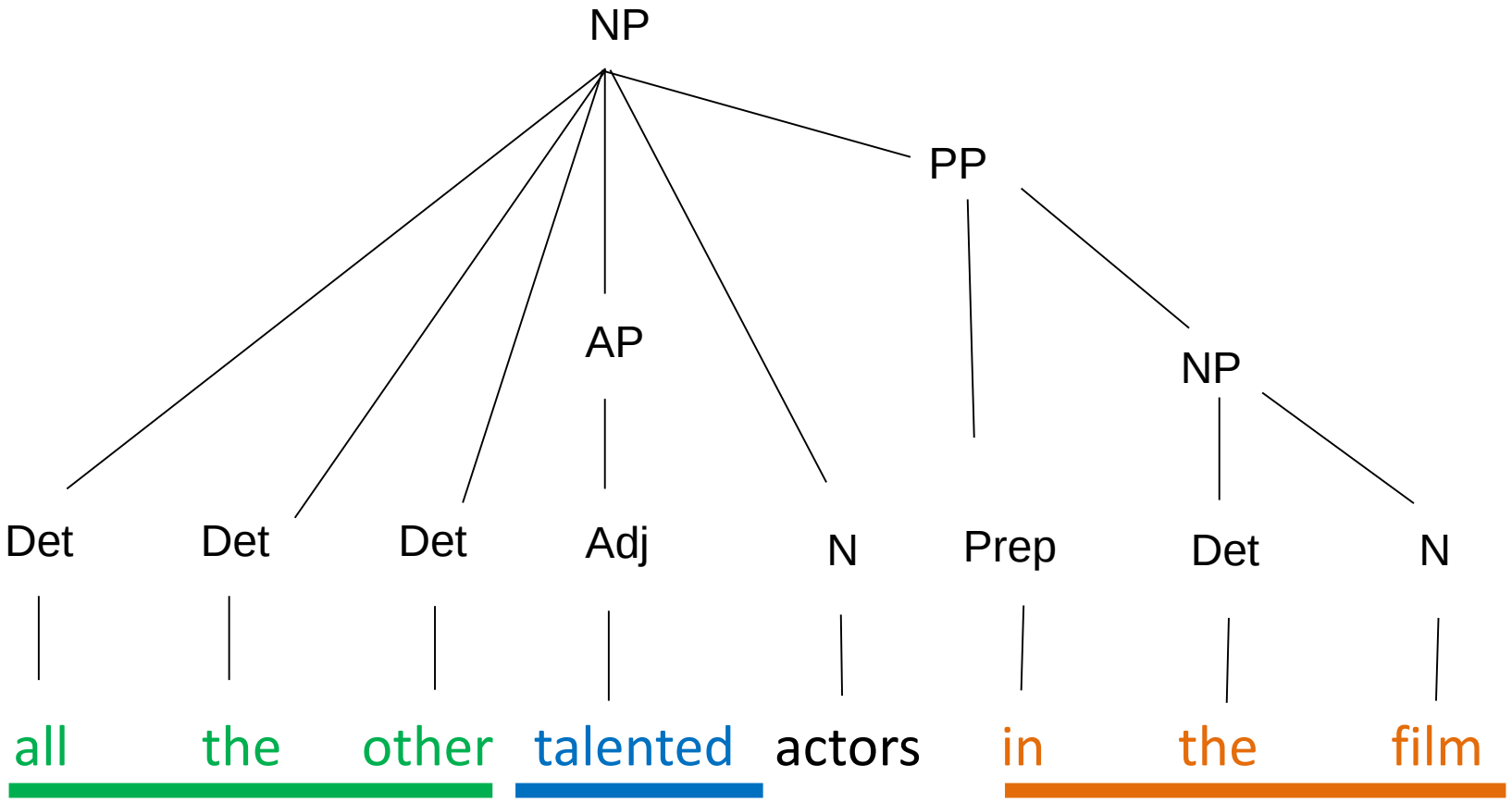
Tree diagram 2



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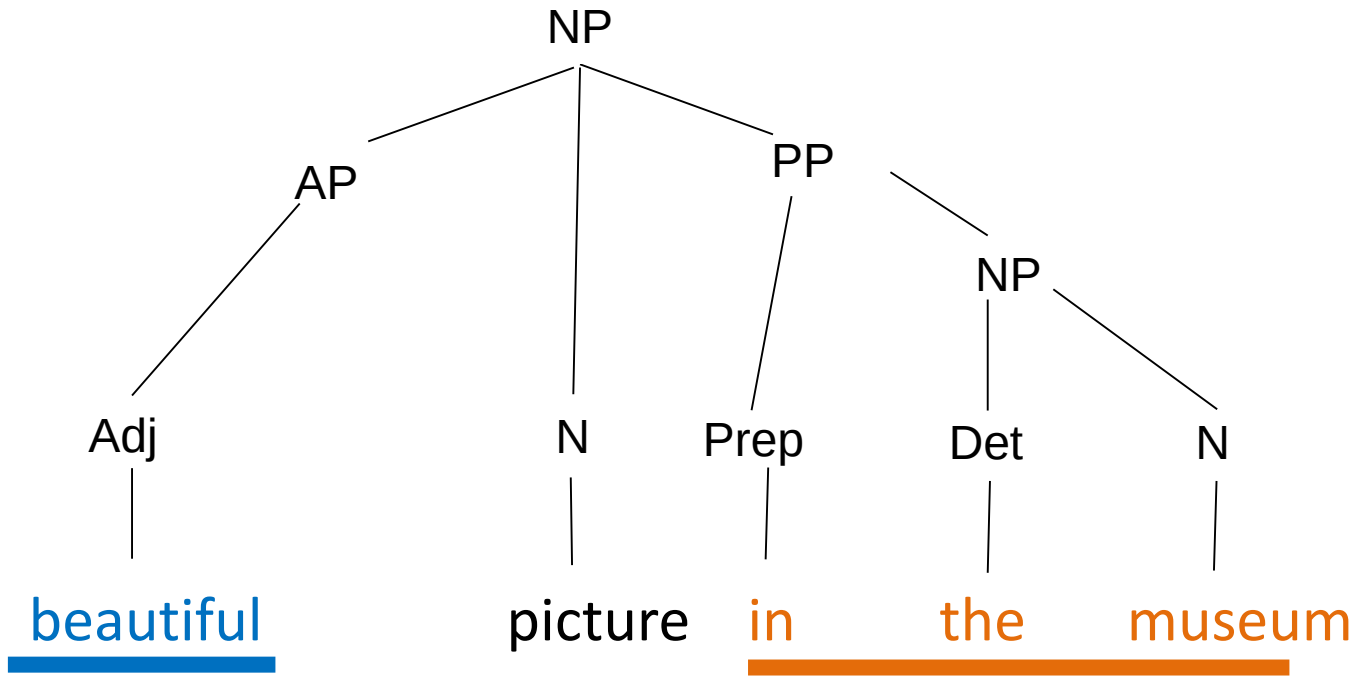
Other possible structures for NP

Example

1. NP → (AP) N (PP)

   Eg: beautiful picture in the museum



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More References

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http://people.umass.edu/scable/LING201-SP13/Slides-Handouts/Syntactic-Trees.pdf

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