

Parser Evaluation and the BNC

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What is this work about?

1. Creating a set of gold standard parse trees for 1,000 sentences from the BNC
2. Using these trees as a test set to evaluate various parsers

Outline

BNC Gold Standard

Parser Evaluation

The Parsers

The Metrics

Evaluation Results

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The British National Corpus

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The BNC is a one hundred million word balanced corpus of British English (Burnard, 2000)

- ▶ 90% of the BNC is written text
 - ▶ 75% factual
 - ▶ 25% fiction
- ▶ The 10% spoken component consists of
 - ▶ informal dialogue
 - ▶ business meetings
 - ▶ speeches

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BNC Test Set: Choosing the sentences

1,000 sentences in test set

- ▶ Not chosen completely at random
- ▶ They are *different* from WSJ training data:
 - ▶ Contain a verb in BNC but not in WSJ2-21
 - ▶ 25,874 verb lemmas in BNC but not in WSJ2-21
 - ▶ 14,787 occur only once in BNC (e.g. *jitter*, *unfade*, *transpersonalize*, *kerplonk*)
 - ▶ 537 occur greater than 100 times (e.g. *murmur*, *frown*, *damn*)
 - ▶ Likely to represent a difficult test for WSJ-trained parsers

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BNC Test Set: Some examples

Text Type	#	Example
Spoken	10	The seconder of formally seconded
Poem	9	Groggily somersaulting to get air- borne
Caption	4	Community Personified
Headline	2	Drunk priest is nicked driving to a fu- neral

Average sentence length: 28 words

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BNC Test Set: Annotation Process

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- ▶ One annotator
- ▶ Two passes through the data
- ▶ Approximately 100 hours
- ▶ As references, the annotator used
 1. Penn Treebank bracketing guidelines (Bies *et al* 1995)
 2. Penn Treebank itself
- ▶ Functional tags and traces not annotated

BNC Test Set: Annotation Difficulties

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What happens when the references clash?

- ▶ The noun phrase *almost certain death* occurs in BNC gold standard sentence
- ▶ According to the guidelines, it should be annotated as
(*NP (ADJP almost certain) death*)
- ▶ A search for *almost* in the Penn Treebank yields the following example
(*NP almost unimaginable speed*)
- ▶ In such cases, annotator chose the analysis set out in the guidelines

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69 sentences marked as difficult

- ▶ Attachment ambiguities

He has had to come to terms with the tragic loss of friends from the very start of his climbing career.

- ▶ Adverbials

*a few seats **down** from them*

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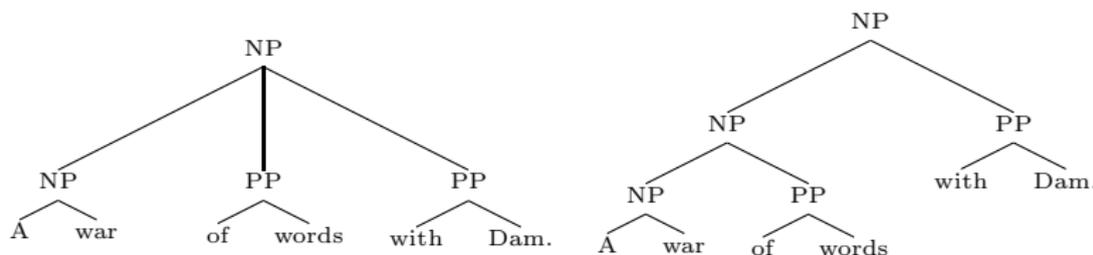
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BNC Test Set: Annotation Difficulties

► Noun phrase structure

a war of words with Damascus



► Miscellaneous

- *As likely to be queuing at a supermarket checkout as at a communion rail*
- *day in day out*
- *Other than that he showed up Giggs...*

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Which Parsers?

Various versions of the Charniak parser

- ▶ History-based generative statistical parser (Charniak, 2000)
- ▶ Reranking parser (Charniak and Johnson, 2005)
 - ▶ First-stage generative parser
 - ▶ Discriminative reranker re-orders n -best list returned by first-stage parser

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- ▶ NANC self-trained parser (McClosky et al, 2006)
 - ▶ Reranking parser parses NANC sentences
 - ▶ First-stage parser is retrained with NANC trees plus WSJ gold standard trees
- ▶ BNC self-trained parser (Foster et al, 2007)

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Any other parsers?

Berkeley parser (Petrov et al, 2006)

- ▶ Unlexicalised PCFG parser
- ▶ To learn PCFG:
 1. Start with x-bar grammar read from Penn Treebank
 2. Split each nonterminal category into two subcategories
 3. Train a grammar (using Expectation Maximisation learning)
 4. For each pair of subcategories
 - ▶ Merge the subcategories
 - ▶ Measure the information loss after the merge
 - ▶ If loss is small, keep the merge
 5. Repeat steps 2-4
- ▶ We use PCFG obtained using 5 split/merge iterations

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Evaluation Metrics

Phrase-structure evaluation

1. Parseval (evalb implementation) (Black et al, 1991)
2. Leaf Ancestor (Sampson and Barbarczy, 2002)
3. Tree Distance (Emms, 2008)

Dependency evaluation

Relies on constituent to dependency conversion

Parseval

- ▶ Tree as a set of *labelled spans*
- ▶ Precision, recall and f-score over gold and test sets

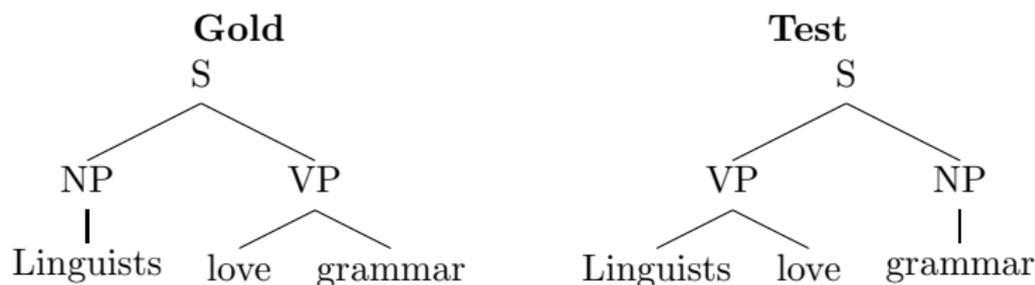


Gold: { (S Linguists love grammar), (NP Linguists), (VP love grammar) }

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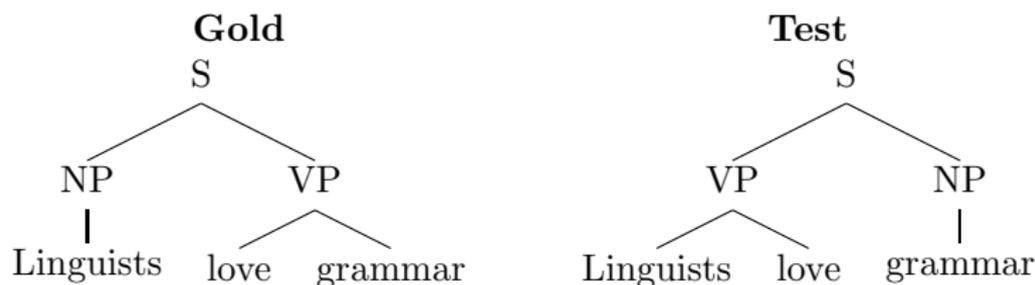


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Leaf Ancestor

- ▶ Tree as a set of *lineages*
- ▶ Each lineage in test set assigned a score
- ▶ Score based on edit distance from gold lineage
- ▶ Lineage scores are averaged

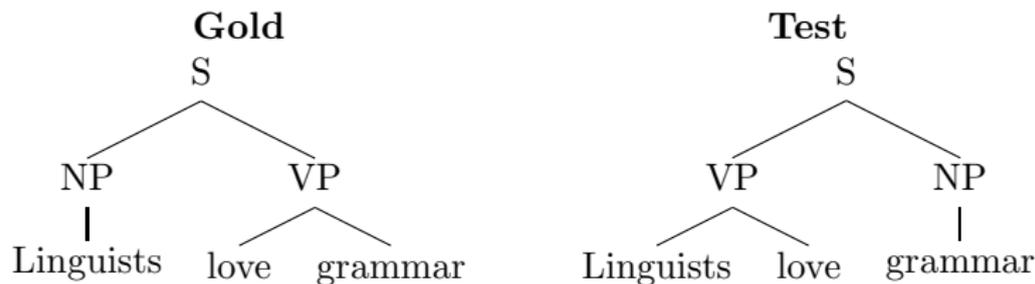


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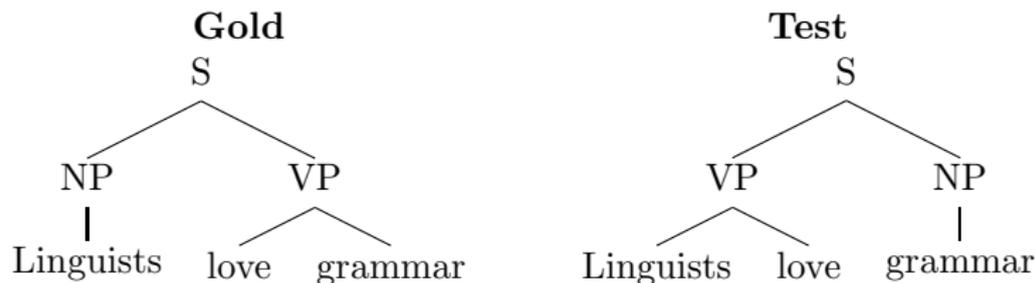


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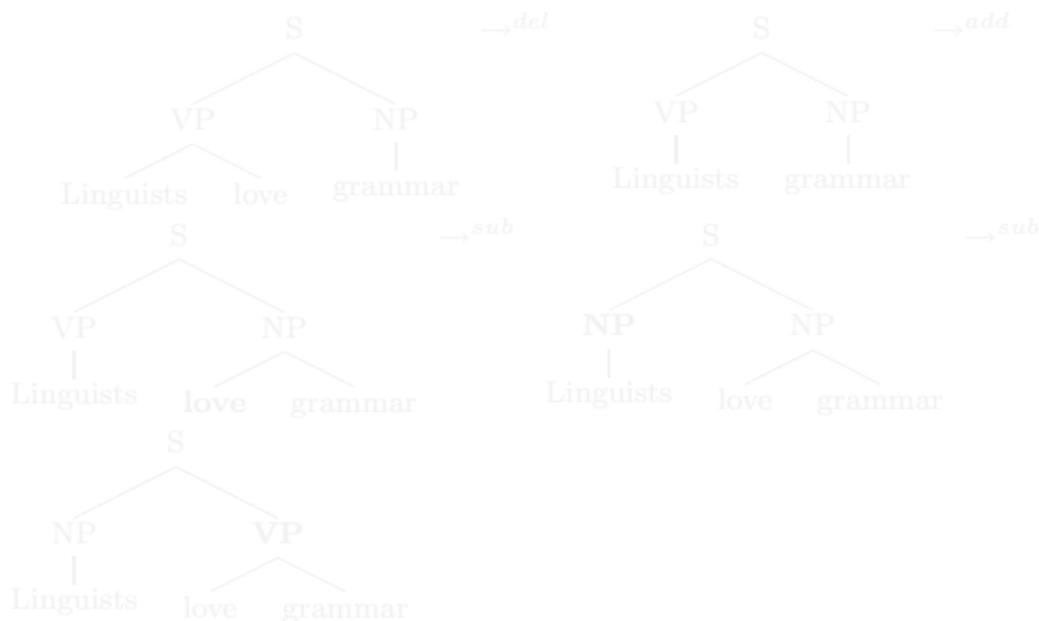


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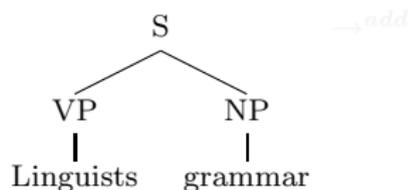
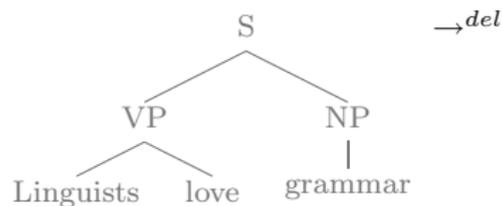
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- ▶ Edit distance on actual trees
- ▶ Calculate the minimum cost of transforming test tree to gold tree



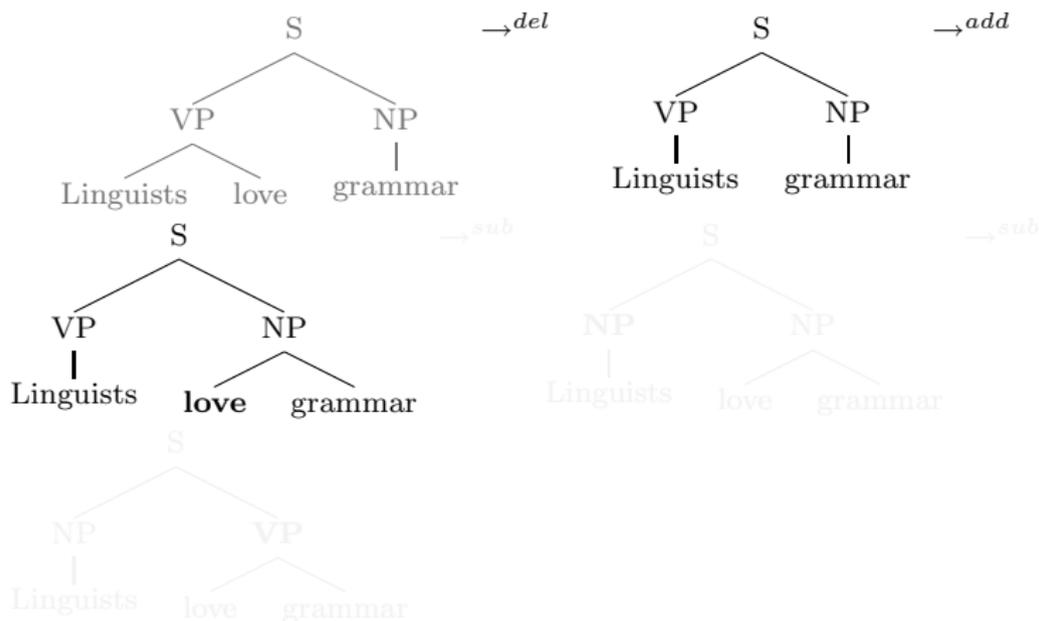
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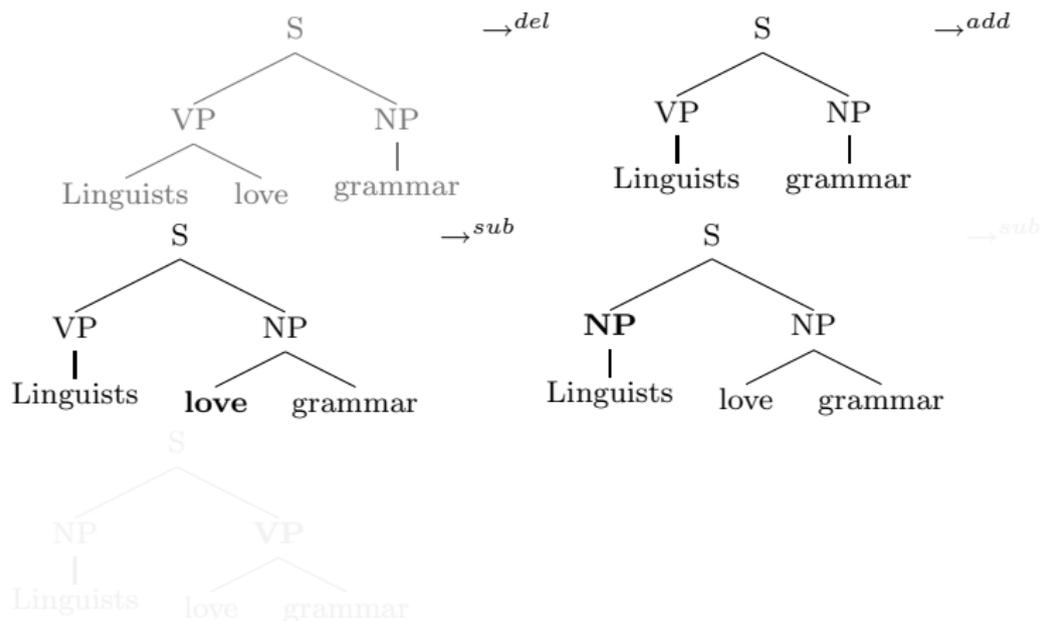
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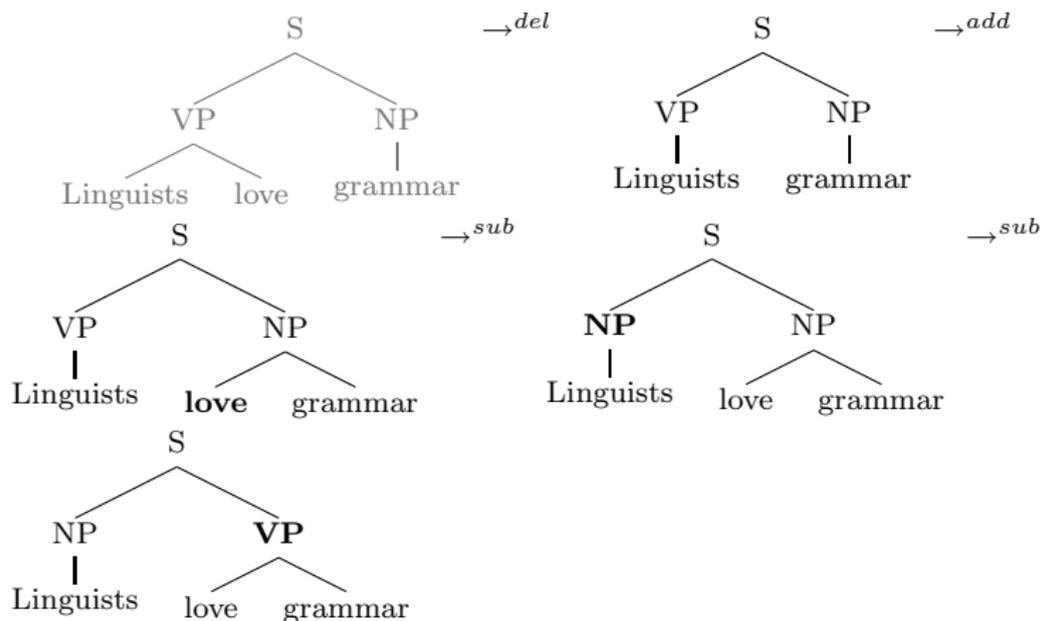
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Dependency Evaluation

- ▶ Tree as a set of word-word dependency tuples
 <word,head,label>
 (Linguists,love,subj), (grammar,love,obj)
- ▶ Automatic conversion procedure (Johansson and
 Nugues, 2007)
- ▶ Works better when Penn-II functional tags are
 available
- ▶ Use automatic functional tag labeller of Chrupala
 et al, 2007

Evaluation Results

Parser	Parseval	TreeDist	LA	Dep
<i>Berkeley</i>	82.0	89.8	91.1	81.6
<i>Charniak</i>	82.5	90.0	91.6	82.5
<i>C&J Rerank</i>	83.4↑	90.3	91.8	82.8
<i>C&J NANC</i>	83.9	90.6	91.7	83.0
<i>C&J BNC</i>	85.4↑	91.3	92.6	84.2

- ▶ Approx 7% drop moving from WSJ23 to BNC
- ▶ Evaluation metrics tell roughly the same story
- ▶ Reranking improves performance
- ▶ Best parser on the BNC test data is BNC self-trained parser
- ▶ Using *in-domain* data for self-training appears to be more effective

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Problematic areas for all parsers

- ▶ Coordination

The pistol had been a prop in the film in which my father had starred and after filming was over he forgot to return it.

- ▶ Adverbs

Incidentally Ciccolini also plays several works for piano 4 hands

- ▶ Noun/verb confusions

*In winter that **walk** back home must have been hell.*

*This faithful rig has been served to **ground-run** engines.*

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More problematic areas

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