

## 1 Constituents

- (1) I got a box of chocolates from Belgium.

**Part 1.** Show that *from Belgium* is a constituent by creating test sentences using the topicalization and clefting tests.

**Part 2.** Show that *a box of chocolates from Belgium* is a constituent by creating test sentences using the topicalization and clefting tests.

**Part 3.** Show that *a box of chocolates* is a constituent by creating test sentences using the topicalization and clefting tests.

- (2) John told Mary the news that Pat kissed Chris.

**Part 4.** Use the same kind of examples to show that *the news that Pat kissed Chris* is a constituent, but that *Chris* seems not to be. Give the test sentences as above and a sentence that says how you reach the conclusion about what is and isn't a constituent.

Now, of course, *of course*, *Chris* is a constituent in (2). So why is it failing the constituency tests? It turns out that the topicalization and clefting test *systematically fail* when trying to test a constituent that is inside a noun phrase (like *the news that Pat kissed Chris*, which is ultimately a noun phrase headed by *news*). In other words, something about this is incompatible with the *test* and therefore we can't trust its results.

**Part 5.** Back to Belgium and chocolates. The sentence in (1) is ambiguous in a couple of different ways, having to do with what it is that is *from Belgium*. So, it might be that the *chocolates* are Belgian (from Belgium), or it might be that *box* is Belgian (from Belgium), even if what's inside are Mexican chocolates. And it might be that the *sending* was from Belgium—so I might have gotten a Dutch box filled with Mexican chocolates, but (1) could still be true if that box were sent to me from Belgium. Notice that the test sentences you create in parts 1–3 are not quite as ambiguous. Specifically, the sentences in parts 1 and 3 have to mean that the sending originated in Belgium (it can't be just the box or just the chocolates that are Belgian), but the sentence in part 2 has to mean that either the chocolate or the box is Belgian, regardless of where the sending originated. Speculate briefly about why that might be.

(3) One morning I shot an elephant in my pajamas.

**Part 6.** That was fun, let's do that again. Now, using (3), perhaps the most famous structurally ambiguous sentence in English. This has two meanings, one makes sense, and the other was what Groucho Marx meant when he followed this up with "How he got in my pajamas, I don't know." For each of the two meanings (one where Groucho is in his pajamas, the other where the elephant is in Groucho's pajamas), provide a cleft sentence (that is, test something as a constituent with the clefting test) that disambiguates the sentence to that meaning. Then, write a couple of sentences that explain why the cleft sentences disambiguate in the way that they do. The easy one is probably going to be the "Groucho-in-pajamas" meaning, you will need to guess a bit I think about the "elephant-in-pajamas" meaning—and speculations are fine. You don't have to say exactly what I would have, just say something sensible.