An Argument for Symmetric Coordination
A Replication Study

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COORDINATION

Asymmetric

- **Bouquet/Stanford** (Universal Dependencies):

Homer loves Lisa, Bart, and Maggie.

- **Chain/Moscow**:

Homer loves Lisa, Bart, and Maggie.

Symmetric

- **Conjunction-headed/Prague**:

Homer loves Lisa, Bart, and Maggie.

- **Multi-headed/London**:

Homer loves Lisa, Bart, and Maggie.

OUTLINE

Aim

Provide an **argument for symmetric structures of coordination** in English.

How

- Confirm that **left conjuncts tend to be shorter**.
- Show that **this tendency grows with length difference** between the conjuncts...
- ...**but** only when the governor is on the left or absent...
- **not when the governor is on the right**.
- Assume the principle of **Dependency Length Minimization** (DLM; see below).

Data

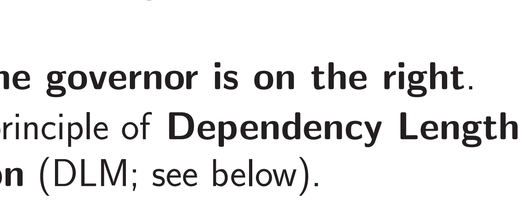
- large parts of **Corpus of Contemporary American English** (COCA)
- automatically **parsed with Stanza**.

DLM

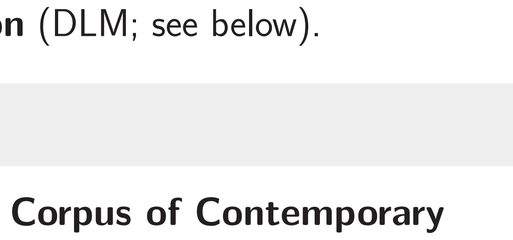
Illustration

Natural languages prefer structures which minimize lengths of dependencies.

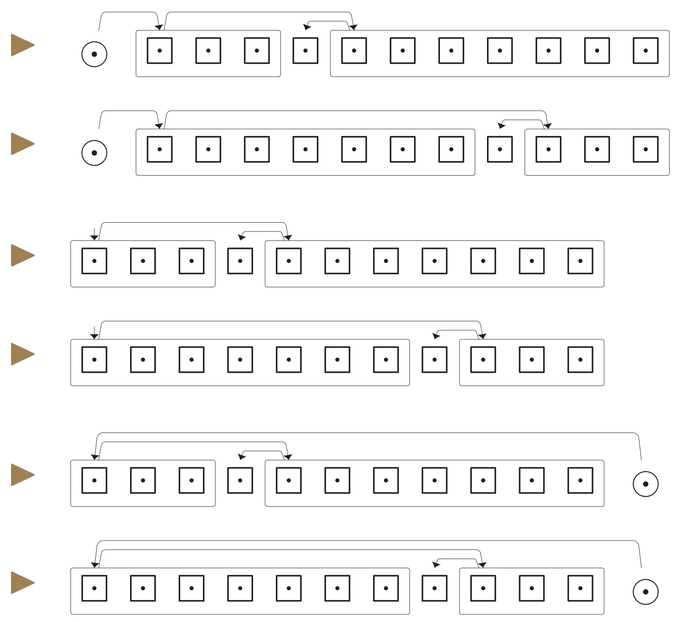
Better:



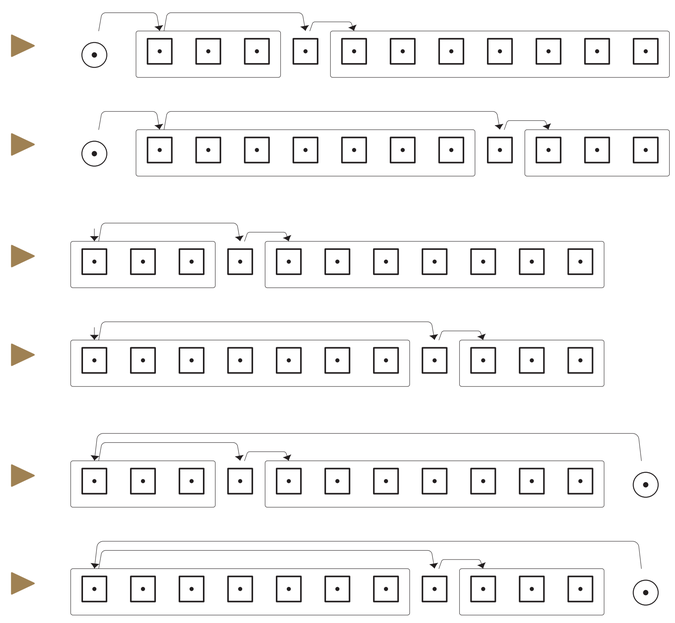
Worse:



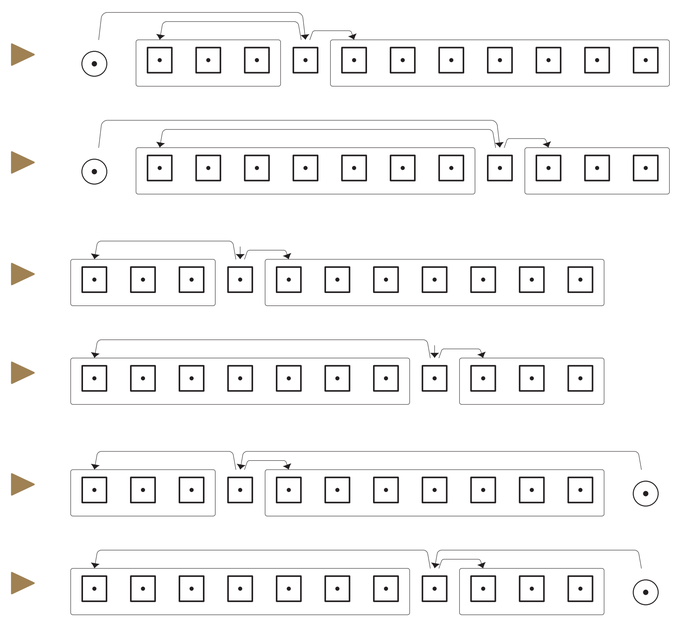
Bouquet/Stanford



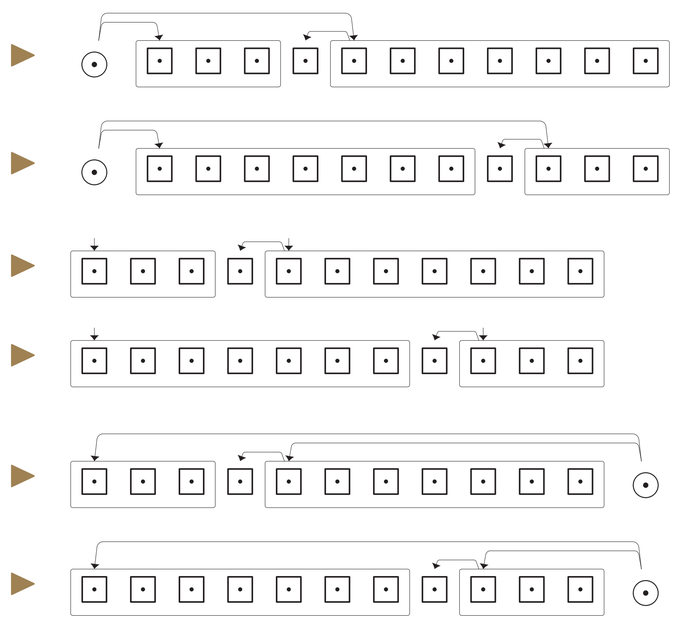
Chain/Moscow



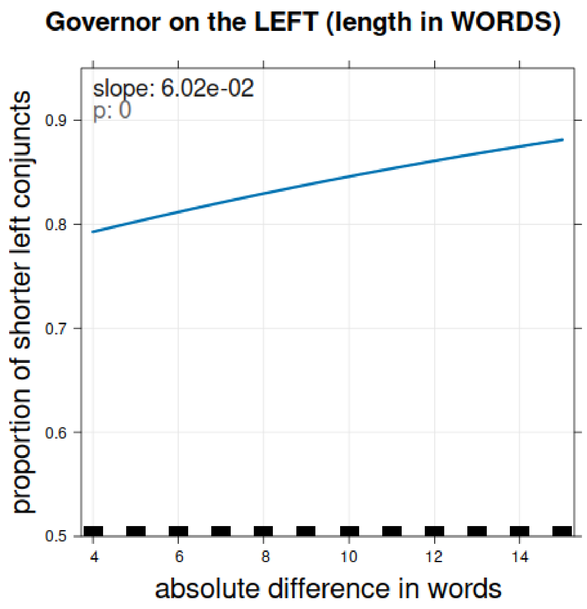
Conjunction-headed/Prague

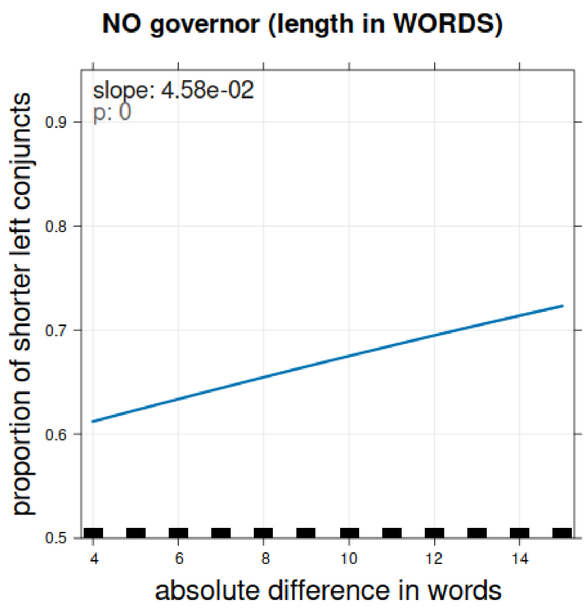


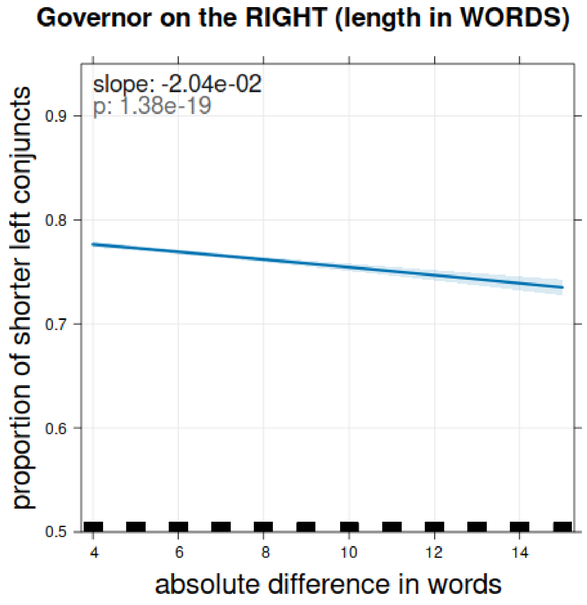
Multi-headed/London



OBSERVATIONS







CONCLUSIONS

Asymmetric

- **Bouquet/Stanford** (Universal Dependencies):

Homer loves Lisa, Bart, and Maggie. NO

- **Chain/Moscow**:

Homer loves Lisa, Bart, and Maggie. NO

Symmetric

- **Conjunction-headed/Prague**:

Homer loves Lisa, Bart, and Maggie. ???

- **Multi-headed/London**:

Homer loves Lisa, Bart, and Maggie. YES

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