Complements vs. Adjuncts Review

I. Notes taken partly from Hedberg's 222 class on Tallerman chapter 4:

- Adjuncts are always optional; complements are frequently obligatory.

- Intuitively, complements 'complete' the meaning of the head, filling semantic slots that are associated with the head; adjuncts just add 'extra information'.

- Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjuncts</th>
<th>Complements</th>
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<td>very bright [N sunflowers]</td>
<td>[V admires] famous linguists</td>
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<tr>
<td>[V overflowed] quite quickly</td>
<td>[V wondered] whether to leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>[V talks] loudly</td>
<td>[A fond] of chips</td>
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<tr>
<td>[V sings] in the bath</td>
<td>[P inside] the house</td>
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<tr>
<td>right [P outside]</td>
<td>[V resorted] to the instructions</td>
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- Heads 'govern' their complements, i.e. have the power to select the exact form of their complements:
  - Heads determine whether a given complement will be an NP, PP, or CP, etc.
  - Heads determine whether a given complement is obligatory or not.
  - In case-marking languages, heads dictate what case (e.g. accusative, dative, genitive) a given complement will take.
  - In English, heads can select the exact preposition heading a PP complement (thus when a head selects the exact preposition of a PP dependent, the dependent is a complement).

- Complements are often optional (and are always optional in NPs):

  John laughed at the clown.
  *John laughed by/for/to the clown.
  John laughed.

  A book of poems.
  *A book by/for/to poems.
  A book.

II. Notes taken partly from Hedberg's 222 class on Tallerman chapter 5:

A. Pro-N' one test

  I like the student with short hair.  Adjunct
  I like the student of chemistry.    Complement
The student with long hair is smarter than the one with short hair.
*The student of physics is smarter than the one of chemistry.

- The pro-N' one must replace a whole N', not just a head noun.
- The one-replacement test is problematical because some dialects allow one to replace just the head N.

B. Pro-V' do so test

Sue worked at her house.  Adjunct
Sue laughed at the giraffe.  Complement

John worked at the office, and Sue did so at her house.
*John laughed at the clown, and Sue did so at the giraffe.

- *Do so must replace a whole V', not just a part of one.

C. V' Pseudocleft test

What Sue did at her house was work.
*What Sue did at the giraffe was laugh.

- Only a whole V', not just part of one, can move to the focus position of a V' pseudocleft and be replaced by do.
- Only an adjunct can be “left behind” in a V' pseudocleft.
- The pseudocleft test sometimes results in sharper intuitions than the do-so test.

III. What you need to know in LING 322:

- You DO need to understand the ordering test: If you have both a complement and an adjunct of a given head, the complement appears closer to the head.
- You DO need to understand the one-replacement test for N' and the do-so replacement test for V', and be able to use these tests to argue that a given phrase is a complement versus an adjunct.
- You DON'T have to decide in any given case whether a dependent is a complement or an adjunct, since that requires subtle native speaker intuitions and consideration of dialects.
- You DO need to know how to place complements versus adjuncts in the syntactic tree. (Complements are sister of X, daughter of X'; adjuncts are sister of X', daughter of X'.)