An Anti-Homophonous Approach to English *as*

Alyssa Chen

Advisor: Raffaella Zanuttini

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Department of Linguistics
Yale University

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Abstract

Although *as* is a common word in English, it has not been extensively studied in many of its various constructions. The aim of this thesis is to provide empirical data on the distribution of the word *as*, make an argument that there is one *as* across these different usages of *as*, and analyze its syntactic properties in five of its constructions and usages. The first two *as*-phrases I will analyze are the two most frequent constructions, *as well as* and *as* used in comparatives. Next, I will discuss two additional constructions that can provide more insight into the ways *as* can be used, namely the *as though* and *as if* constructions. After that, I discuss the role of *as* as a functional head in small clauses. Finally, I will analyze the *as of* construction, something that has not been done extensively in past literature. A few analyses that will be considered include the degree head analysis of *as* in comparatives (Kennedy 1999; Rett 2013), the functional head analysis for *as*-phrases in general (Yokogoshi 2005), and the complementizer head analysis in *as though* and *as if* constructions (López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012). After exploring these different *as*-phrases, I will make the argument that although it looks like we have many different instances of *as* which have different meanings but share the same phonological representation, in fact, this is not the case: we do not have many homophonous instances of *as*. Rather, the same kind of *as* is being used in each of these constructions and the differences arise from the different structures with which *as* combines.

The research involves a corpus study using two of Sketch Engine's corpora of the English web, enTenTen 2013 and enTenTen 2021. This corpus study aims to capture the frequency of various *as*-phrases and the ways they are used. A frequency analysis will be applied to *as*-phrases in general, *as* used in comparatives, and *as* used in constructions where it is followed by a preposition. Additionally, I focus on the expression *as of* because of its understudied status, providing novel contributions to the field. To this end, I conducted a small survey asking for English speakers' judgments about words and phrases allowed after *as of* and gathered examples found on the web.

My overall goal is to reach a deeper understanding of *as*-phrases by arguing for a non-homophonous approach to English *as* and using this to analyze the syntax of various *as*-phrases.

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List of abbreviations

NP	noun phrase
DP	determiner phrase
PP	preposition phrase
SimP	similative phrase
DegP	degree phrase
Comps	complements
Pred	predication head
IP	inflectional phrase

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1 Introduction

The *as*-phrase is common in English, but it has not been extensively studied. Below are examples of a few *as*-phrases in various syntactic environments:

(1) a. My sister *as well as* my brother went to the concert.

b. He is *as tall as* his father.

c. It appears *as if* the rain had stopped.

d. It seemed *as though* nothing had happened.

e. *As of* this moment, I think we need to revise our plan.

Each of these examples features the *as*-phrase being used with a different semantic contribution. In example (1a), *as* is being used in the expression *as well as*. The entire phrase *as well as* functions similarly to a coordinator like *and*. In (1b), *as* functions as a comparative in the expression *as tall as*. I generalize this entire construction to *as * as* where the star represents an adjective or adverb. In (1c) and (1d), *as* is used in the phrases *as if* and *as though* respectively and both phrases function similarly to a complementizer like *that*. In (1e), *as* is used in the *as of* construction, a construction that has not been extensively researched and one that I will dive deeper into in section 5.

Before presenting my proposal and argument, it is crucial to cover the notion of homophony. In linguistics, homophony is defined as one sound that corresponds to more than one lexical item, that is, to lexical items that have different meanings, where each differs significantly from the others (as in the case of English *bank*, which is pronounced the same when it refers to a financial institution and when it refers to the land alongside a river). Thus, a case could be made that each of the different *as*-phrases shown in (1) involve a different type of *as*, making *as* homophonous. However, in this thesis, I unify the *as* seen in *as*-phrases and make the argument that *as* is not homophonous. I propose that the same *as* is seen in all of these different *as*-phrases: a similative head *as* that projects a similative

phrase. I expand on this in section 3.

1.1 Why *As*?

My interest in this topic originally came from my curiosity about the phrase *as of current*, which is one that I find acceptable but many other native speakers of American English do not. This grew into the general observation that *as* is used in a variety of syntactic environments and can play different roles depending on how it is being used, which made me wonder how one word could be used in so many different ways. In this thesis, I propose a new way of looking at *as* that unites different usages of *as*. I then apply this idea to my investigation of *as* in different syntactic environments and dive into the syntax of *as of* and *as of current*, constructions that are currently understudied.

1.2 Roadmap

This thesis is organized as follows. In section 2, I discuss the methodology used in the research and how I gathered my data, present the data, and provide some initial observations. In section 3, I argue against viewing *as* as being homophonous across all of its usages, that is, as an instance of different lexical items that happen to be pronounced the same way. I introduce the idea of *as* being a Sim head that projects a Similative phrase. In section 4, I delve deeper into three specific usages of *as*-phrases: *as * as*, *as well as*, and *as if* and *as though*. I discuss the literature involving these three uses of *as* and provide a syntactic analysis for each that utilizes the similative phrase structure. At the end of the section, I discuss a general analysis of *as* that argues for its role as a functional head in small clauses. In section 5, I focus on *as of* and its structure and interpretation, adding in data from two surveys. Finally, in section 6, I discuss potential problems and unanswered questions and conclude.

2 Distribution of *as*-phrases

In my thesis, I address a few questions about the structure and distribution of *as*-phrases. These questions include the following:

1. What sorts of words and phrases most frequently follow *as*?
2. What kinds of syntactic structures do various *as*-phrases have?
3. What ties *as*-phrases together?
4. Are *as*-phrases distributed similarly across all environments? If not, what stands out about their distribution?

2.1 Methodology

For this thesis, I will be employing two different methodologies for gathering empirical data. The first method involves using Sketch Engine and simple code in Python to gather data from corpora to analyze the frequency of various words and phrases that follow *as* to form an *as*-phrase. The second method involves collecting survey data from English speakers to get some judgments about a less studied type of *as*-phrase, *as of*.

To analyze the distribution of *as*, I did the bulk of my analysis by extracting data from corpora to compile frequency tables involving the various environments in which *as* appears. These tables list the frequencies of the most common words and phrases following *as* to the least frequent to paint a better picture of what kinds of words and phrases typically follow specific usages of *as*. I have elected to use the English Web 2021 and English Web 2013 corpora that already exist on Sketch Engine, both of which combine data from across the web. I have chosen these two specifically because they contain billions of data points, making them useful for general research with the caveat that only the first billion were used by Sketch Engine for the n-gram and c data. I extracted data from the corpora using Sketch Engine, first identifying general constructions like *as well as* and *as * as* and then narrowing the

focus down to more specific constructions like the types of adjectives most frequently used in *as * as* constructions. I ignored capitalization when gathering data and made sure each entry was only counted once. For example, I set the frequency minimum to 6 across all of the filters to keep things consistent and searched for trigrams specifically, mainly so that "*as * as*" constructions can be captured on their own. After gathering this data, I downloaded everything as CSV files, put them into Python, and used the pandas library to filter the results and draw the tables. For the expressions with *as* followed by a preposition, I filtered them in Python by combining rows that contain the same words but different capitalization.

I have also investigated the kinds of phrases that can follow the *as of* construction. I did this by conducting two small surveys that asked for native speakers' judgments of various types of phrases after *as of* and found examples on the web of the ways people used *as of*. One survey is ten sentences long and involves only sentences containing *as of*; the other survey is 30 sentences long, features 20 filler sentences, and uses similar *as of* sentences as the first survey, only with the order of constituents flipped (so, for instance, if the phrase containing *as of* occurred at the beginning of the sentence in the first survey, then in the second survey, this phrase was moved to the end of the sentence). Both surveys were only sent out to small groups of people: the first survey was sent to people in high school and college without a background in linguistics and the second survey was sent to college students taking a linguistics class. The results of the two surveys will be discussed separately because the difference in the attributes of the participants and the surveys' different formats make them incomparable.

2.2 Frequency Data for *as*-phrases

Below are the general results from gathering frequency data for all *as*-phrases, displayed as two tables showing the frequencies of *as*-phrases, one for the 2021 corpus and one for the 2013 corpus (only the top 12 entries are included per table for ease of viewing):

2013:

Item	Frequency
as well as	367084
as * as	356789
as a result	70765
as part of	59166
as it is	32117
as you can	27943
as one of	26119
as opposed to	18925
as they are	18164
as a whole	15587
as it was	12565
as a way	12119

2021:

Item	Frequency
as well as	357658
as * as	250578
as part of	102402
as a result	73140
as one of	29327
as it is	23100
as a whole	21476
as opposed to	14115
as they are	13239
as a member	12856
as in the	11268
as to the	10970

A preliminary glance at the data shows that the most common *as*-phrase is *as well as*, followed by *as * as* (where the star represents a parameter for comparison, such as an adjective or adverb). The most frequent items on the list are derived from common phrases and expressions that involve *as*, such as *as a result*, *as part of*, and *as it is*. Looking at the top items of both tables, the usage of *as* did not change much from 2013 to 2021. This is unsurprising because *as* is a function word (similar to *the* or *and*) and function words are generally less flexible in their usage compared to lexical words (such as nouns, which can easily be used like a verb and still be understood, or verbs, which can take morphology to become a different part of speech). Unlike lexical words, functional words don't derive meaning from something in the real world. Instead, as their name suggests, function words are primarily used to establish grammatical relationships between different parts of a sentence.

In the next two sections, I will be analyzing five functions of *as* and *as*-phrases: *as well as*, *as * as*, *as if* and *as though*, *as* as a functional head in small clauses, and *as of*. Some of these constructions are not as common in the data, but they provide some interesting insights into the various usages of *as* because each of these *as*-phrases plays different roles in a sentence. During my analysis of the syntax of these constructions and in section 3, I will build on the anti-homophonous analysis of *as*.

3 *As* and Similative Phrases

Before looking at the various usages of *as* in sections 4 and 5, I want to address one of the big questions posed at the start of section 2: What, if anything, ties *as*-phrases together? Is there a different *as* in each *as*-phrase or is there a single *as*?

3.1 Is English *as* Homophonous?

At first glance, *as* seems to take on many different roles. One way to look at the situation is to say that this is a case of homophony: the *as* seen in different *as*-phrases corresponds to different words that are pronounced the same. Following this analysis, the argument could be made that the first *as* in *as * as* is different from the second *as* and both of these kinds of *as* are different from the one seen in *as if* or *as though*. Thus, *as* could head various XPs. For example, the *as* heading a DegP is different from the one heading a CP, both of these are different from the one heading a PredP, and so on.

Though a homophonous approach to *as* could easily explain the different syntactic functions of various *as*-phrases, it leads to the idea that there are at least 4 different types of *as* in English. This seems redundant. Why would we use the same spelling and phonology for something that is supposed to have many different functions? Why don't we have separate words corresponding to elements with different syntactic and semantic properties?

There is an approach to function words proposed in Kayne (2005) that argues that function words are never homophonous. We can call this approach *anti-homophony*. *As* is a function word, something I discuss in section 3. I will adopt Kayne's approach and propose that, in *as*-phrases, *as* is always one and the same functional head: one that puts two entities in relation to each other. This is usually accomplished by linking one entity with another that has similar properties.

To demonstrate, consider the sentence below:

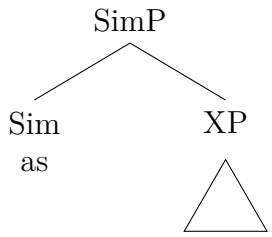
(2) She takes him as a liar.

What is really happening here is that *as* is drawing a comparison between the properties that he has and the properties of being a liar. This particular example is an instance of *as* taking a PredP complement, which I will expand on in section 4.4. The overall discussion of what is being related to what in different types of *as*-phrases will be expanded on throughout sections 4 and 5.

3.2 Similative Phrase Structure

Based on the comparative qualities of *as* and the observation that *as* is always putting something in relation to another, I argue that an *as*-phrase introduces the similative phrase (SimP) to the syntax. The similative phrase is headed by *as* and can take a variety of XP complements. The XPs that I will discuss in 4 and 5 are DegPs, CPs, PredPs, and PPs. The general structure of a SimP looks like the one below:

(3)



Throughout sections 4 and 5, I first discuss the way each *as*-phrase is used. After that, I cover some possible syntactic structures that have been proposed in the literature. Finally, I analyze each *as*-phrase as a SimP and argue that this is the *as* being used across these different *as*-phrases: a similative head, one and the same element, despite the differences in meaning that we observe.

4 Diving into the Usages of *as*

In this section, I dive into four different usages and functions of *as* and *as*-phrases: the comparative *as*-phrase *as * as*, the quasi-coordinator *as*-phrase *as well as*, the complementizer *as*-phrases *as if* and *as though*, and the role of *as* as a functional head in small clauses. I discuss the way each construction is used in sentences and, towards the end of each subsection, provide both a syntactic analysis drawn from previous literature and the sketch of a new analysis based on the SimP proposal that I outlined in section 3.

4.1 *"As * as"*

The *as * as* construction is the second most frequent *as*-phrase structure. After gathering the frequency data for the most common adjectives in the * position, I compiled two tables, one for each corpus. I decided to exclude *as well as* from these tables because section 4.2 is already dedicated to that particular expression and *as well as* is commonly used in a way that is different from the way most of the other *as * as* expressions are used, namely as a quasi-coordinator. This section is dedicated to comparative *as * as*, a construction that puts the attributes of two entities in relation to one another.

The tables for common phrases with the structure *as * as* are shown below and display only the top 12 entries for ease of viewing:

2013:

Item	Frequency
as long as	49888
as much as	48821
as soon as	48597
as far as	30832
as good as	12237
as many as	7719
as simple as	7153
as quickly as	6223
as early as	6136
as little as	5916
as high as	5523
as fast as	5053

2021:

Item	Frequency
as long as	35931
as soon as	34559
as much as	30144
as far as	24587
as early as	7902
as many as	7816
as good as	5500
as quickly as	5385
as high as	4187
as simple as	3793
as fast as	3649
as little as	3214

We can see that some of the most common usages of the *as * as* construction, such as *as much as*, *as soon as*, *as far as*, and *as long as*, are not instances of *as* with a noun phrase, but rather *as* with clauses. Some examples can be seen in the sentences below:

(4) a. *As much as* I would like to go to the party tonight, I need to study.

b. She left *as soon as* she saw him approaching.

c. *As far as* he knows, his neighbors are still on vacation.

d. I'll go with you *as long as* you agree to help fix my clock later.

In this section, I will focus on the *as * as* constructions that compare attributes of NPs or DPs, rather than the ones seen in (4). This usage of *as* has been analyzed as "comparative *as*" by both Kennedy (1999) and Rett (2013). While both of them focus more on the semantics of comparative *as* in *as * as*, Kennedy also offers some syntactic analysis.

4.1.1 A Brief Overview of the Semantics of *as * as*

A deep dive into the semantics of *as * as* is beyond the scope of my thesis. However, to understand the syntactic structure that will be discussed in section 4.1.2, a semantic analysis of *as * as* is necessary. Therefore, I will provide some semantic background based on Kennedy (1999) and Rett (2013).

Rett (2013) calls constructions where two objects are compared for equivalency "equation constructions". Equation constructions can be further broken down based on the type of comparisons they do. The two major types of equation constructions that Rett focuses on are similatives and equatives.

Similatives only have one *as* and can convey either an observation related to when an event is happening or a comparison of manner:

(5) a. She laughed *as they talked*. (Temporal)

b. He smiled *as his father does*. (Manner)

Equatives are the constructions that I call "*as * as*." These constructions use an adjective or adverb to compare properties of entities:

(6) a. She is *as tall as* the bookshelf.

b. He said he wanted to paint something *as good as* The Mona Lisa.

Rett's argument focuses on the difference between similatives and equatives, specifically that equatives denote degrees while similatives do not. This difference hinges on the extra *as* found in equative constructions. To make the distinction clear, Rett brings up the notions of "parameter markers" and "standard markers":

- **Parameter marker**: introduces the parameter that the comparison will be based on
- **Standard marker**: introduces the standard of comparison

In equatives, the first *as* is the parameter marker: it introduces an adverb or adjective

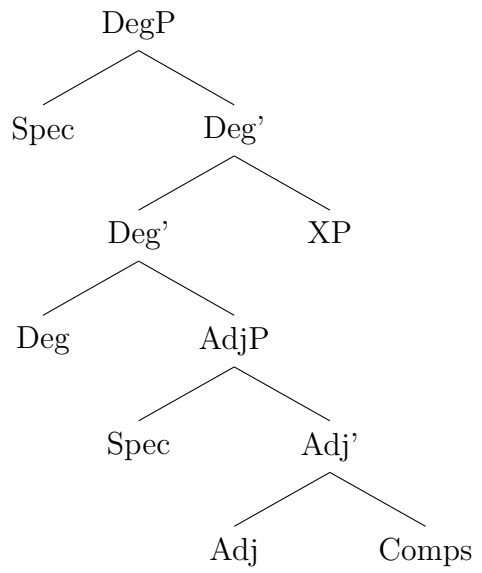
that provides the parameter the comparison will be based on. The second *as* is the standard marker, namely the element that introduces the standard of comparison. In contrast, in similatives, there is only one *as* and it functions as the standard marker. Rett argues that, since parameter markers are the ones that denote a degree, equatives take degrees and compare entities on a gradable scale. (Rett 2013:1111)

Much of Rett's arguments and analysis are also found in Kennedy (1999), who argues that gradable adjectives are involved in degree constructions and relate properties of individuals on a degree scale. Kennedy uses the degree construction argument to create his syntactic analysis of comparative *as*, which I cover in the next section.

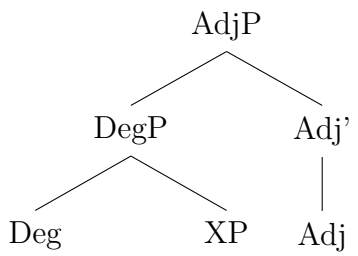
4.1.2 The Syntax of *as * as*

In his degree analysis of *as* in comparative constructions, Kennedy provides two potential structures for comparatives: one where the comparative is a DegP and one where it is an AdjP[1] that has a DegP in its specifier. We see these two options sketched below:

(7)



(8)



(Kennedy 1999:109, 110)

[1]Kennedy uses AP instead of AdjP in his trees, but I prefer the use of AdjP. I do want to note that in most of these cases, AdjP and AdvP are interchangeable, which is possibly the reasoning behind AP.

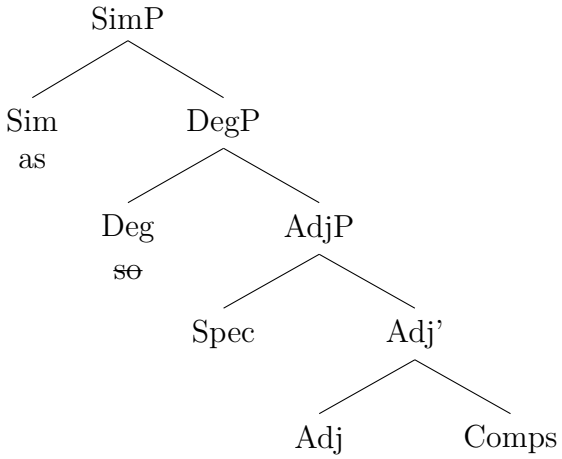
Regardless of which structure is used, *as* is interpreted as the degree morpheme and therefore is analyzed as the head of the DegP. However, this indicates that two different types of *as* are present in *as * as*: one that is a Deg head and one that is a different functional head.

From an anti-homophony standpoint, this cannot be the case. What, then, creates the degree reading noted by Rett and Kennedy? How can the two instances of *as* be the same?

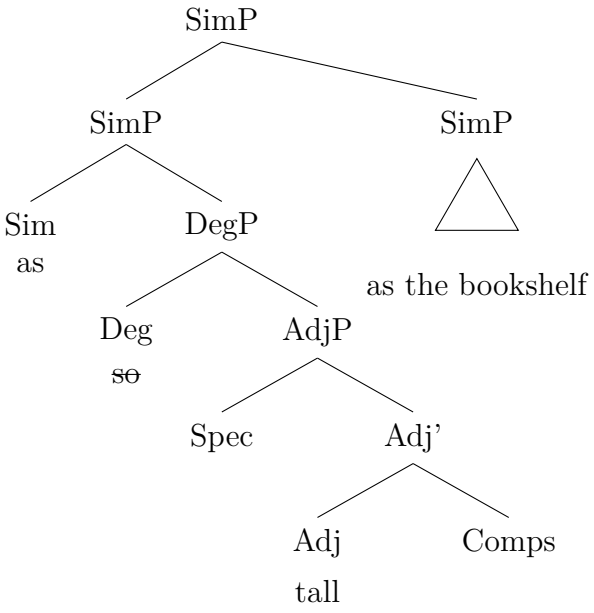
Kayne (2005:305,306) argues that the degree reading in *as * as* is due to a silent SO and not from *as* itself. In this way, the second *as* in a comparative is the same type of functional element as the first.

I propose that we combine Kayne's silent SO analysis and the SimP analysis to modify Kennedy's DegP structure. With a silent SO and SimP analysis, the structure of a similative would look like (9) and the structure of an equative or *as * as* would look like (10):

(9) Similative:



(10) Equative/*as * as*:



With the SimP analysis, the equative construction becomes simply an extension of the similative construction and *as* has the same similative function regardless of where it is or what complement it takes. The first *as* takes a DegP as its complement, while the second *as* takes a DP as its complement. In this way, we get the property that is being compared in the DegP and the standard of comparison in the DP.

4.2 *"As well as"*

Based on the analysis of the corpus data in section 2.2, the most frequent usage of *as*-phrases comes in the form of the expression *as well as*. Although this is the most frequent *as*-phrase, I'm discussing it after *as * as* because the analysis of *as * as* in terms of SimP can be extended to *as well as*.

Criado-Peña's (2019) analysis of *as well as* focuses on how its usage has changed over the history of the English language, particularly its role as a quasi-coordinator. (Criado-Peña 2019:6) notes three major functions of *as well as*:

1. Manner adverb:

   (11) I played *as well as* I could.

2. Conjunction similar to *and*:

   (12) England *as well as* Scotland are part of the United Kingdom.

3. An adjunct that introduces the subordinate clause:

   (13) He bought the piano *as well as* his friend did the previous week.

The fact that *as well as* can be used in these various ways likely contributes to its being the most frequent *as*-phrase. I view the first type, the manner adverb reading of *as well as*, as being an instance of the type of construction I covered in section 4.1, namely a comparative of the type that Rett called equative. I find examples of the last type ungrammatical.[2] Therefore in this section I will focus on the second type, where *as well as* acts as a quasi-coordinator.

4.2.1 Coordinators and Quasi-Coordinators

A traditional coordinator includes words like *and*, *or*, and *but*. They are primarily used to connect two related items that are syntactically and semantically parallel. Analyzed as a quasi-coordinator, then, *as well as* serves a similar function to *and* in that it can be used to join two things that share the same semantic and syntactic properties. This is shown in (14):

(14) a. The girl as well as her friend got a good score on the test.

   b. I told my brother as well as my sister what I saw while I was on the train.

   c. She seemed tired as well as stressed.

[2]This sentiment is shared by the other native English speakers I have asked.

If *as well as* is replaced by *and*, we get the sentences in (15):

(15) a. The girl and her friend got a good score on the test.

b. I told my brother and my sister what I saw while I was on the train.

c. She seemed tired and stressed.

When the sentences in (14) are compared to their corresponding sentence in (15), we interpret the sentences as equivalent in meaning, supporting the idea that *as well as* can serve a similar function to the coordinator *and*. (14a) shows *as well as* used to coordinate subject NPs, (14b) shows *as well as* used to coordinate indirect objects, and (14c) shows *as well as* used to coordinate adjectives, demonstrating the versatility of this construction.

Despite these similarities, quasi-coordinators are not fully considered to be coordinators. There are some behaviors quasi-coordinators exhibit that coordinators don't and vice versa.

For instance, the quasi-coordinator *as well as* can be used to introduce a subordinate clause (Criado-Peña 2019:12), but this particular function of *as well as* can't be mimicked by the coordinator *and*:

(16) a. I gladly kissed the outside *as well as* the inside of your letter.

(Thomas Meautys, 1630, as cited in Criado-Peña 2019:12)

b. I gladly kissed the outside *and* the inside of your letter.

(17) a. *[A]s well as* the inside of your letter, I gladly kissed the outside.

(Criado-Peña 2019:12)

b. * *And* the inside of your letter, I gladly kissed the outside.

As shown in (16a), *as well as* can function simply as a coordinator. In this case, it seems to have the same distribution as *and*, seen in (16b). However, when the phrase introduced by *as well as* is fronted to the beginning of the sentence, as seen in (17a), we see that the

parallelism with *and* no longer holds.[3]

Additionally, the interaction between *as well as* and the Coordinate Structure Constraint (CSC) is different from the interaction between *and* and the CSC, despite the two seemingly sharing the same meaning.

Coordinate Structure Constraint: Coordinate structures are islands that do not allow extraction of or from one of its conjuncts.

(Ross 1967)

In some sentences involving the coordinator *and*, the CSC can be violated, but this is not allowed if *as well as* is used as the coordinator:

(18) a. Jack and Jill went outside and bought milk.

b. What did Jack and Jill go outside and buy?

(19) a. Jack and Jill went outside as well as bought milk.

b. * What did Jack and Jill go outside as well as buy?

The coordinator *and* is interesting because it can serve purposes other than joining entities with like traits in certain coordinate structures. Altshuler and Truswell (2022) investigate the different kinds of coordinations with *and* that allow for extractions from their conjuncts. The relevant type here is extraction from the final conjunct in coordinations that denote a sequence of events. In the examples shown in (18), *and* is being used in a manner that suggests a sequence of events. Thus, (18a) is interpreted as Jack and Jill first going outside and then buying milk. Due to this, extraction from the final conjunct is possible, and *milk* is

[3]Though the distribution of *as well as* does not quite align with the distribution of *and*, it is interesting to note that the distribution of *as well as* is similar to that of another type of coordinate structure that is headed by a preposition, *in addition to*:

(i) a. I gladly kissed the outside *in addition to* the inside of your letter.

b. *In addition to* the inside of your letter, I gladly kissed the outside.

I'm not completely sure why this is the case. Perhaps it is related to both being phrases that have a coordinating function and not a single word that is a coordinator.

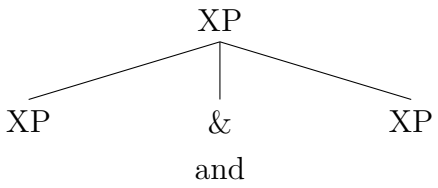
interpreted to be only a complement of *buy* and is not shared between the conjuncts. When the sentence is turned into a question like in (18b), *and* retains the sequential function, so *what* remains as only a complement of *buy*. This allows (18b) to be grammatical.

In the case of *as well as*, there is no sequential reading. (19a) is interpreted as Jack and Jill performing the actions of both going outside and buying milk, but there is no indication of the order the events occurred. Thus, when the sentence is turned into a question like in (19b), there is a sense that *what* should be a complement to both conjuncts. The issue occurs here, because *go outside* does not take a complement. This leads to (19b) being ungrammatical.

4.2.2 The Syntax of Quasi-Coordinator *as well as*

Coordination has long been thought of as a flat structure, looking something like the below:

(20)

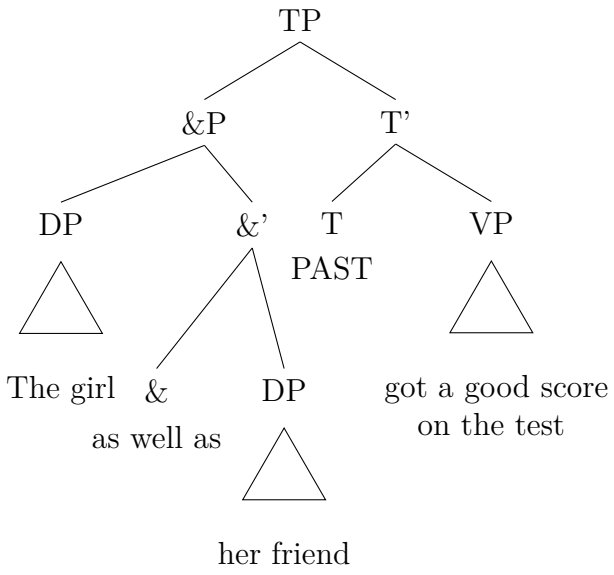


However, a different analysis of coordination proposed by Munn (1993) argues that coordination is not a flat structure. Rather, the conjuncts in coordination are involved in an asymmetric c-command relationship, and the resulting structure involves strictly binary branching. This analysis is known as the &P analysis. If we assume the &P structure, then the coordinator is the head of the &P, and the two conjuncts are its complement and specifier (Munn 1993; Zoerner 1995).

When there is a single coordinator such as *and* or *or*, the coordinator itself is the head of &P. For something like *as well as*, which involves multiple morphemes, the question arises of how these morphemes can fit into this structure. Do all three of them form a single unit that comprises the coordinator head in an &P, or can we use a different analysis where each morpheme has a different function? One possible analysis, where the three morphemes are

analyzed as a single unit, would look like (21):

(21) The girl *as well as* her friend got a good score on the test.

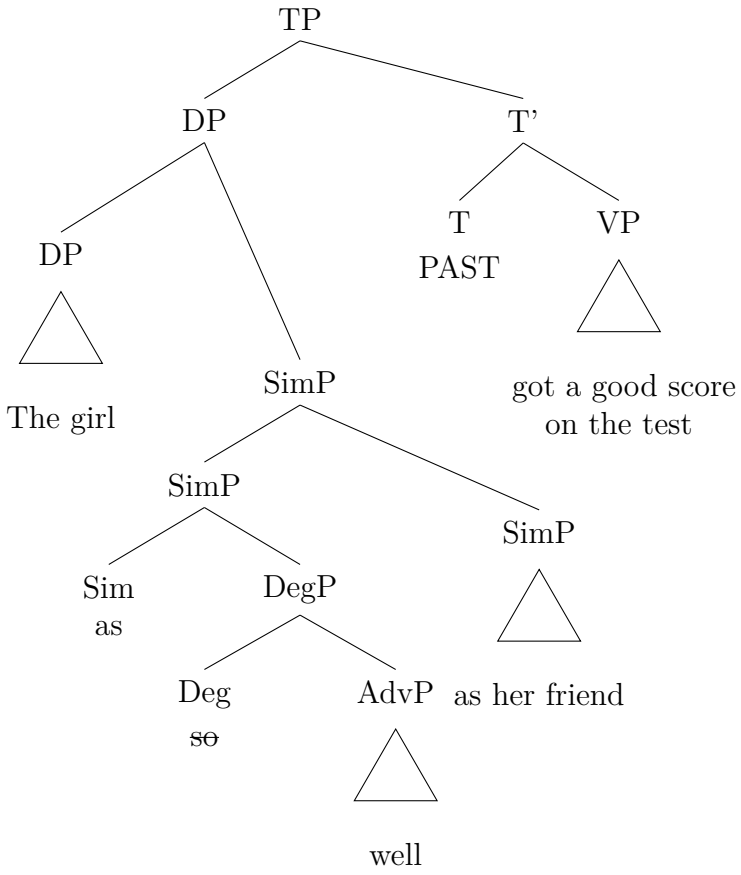


Going with the structure in (21) for *as well as*, if the coordinator in the sentence was *and* instead of *as well as*, then the head of the &P would be *and* instead but the overall structure of the sentence would still be the same. It is important to note that the observations about the similarities between *as well as* and *and* apply specifically to contexts where the coordinators are used to join two elements that share a trait.[4]

As an alternative, I propose a SimP analysis for *as well as* rather than an &P analysis. This ties into the breakdown of DegP in section 4.1 and takes *well* to be the adverb under DegP. SimP attaches to the larger DP as an adjunct, hence the constituent in Spec TP remains a DP. The structure looks like (22) below:

[4]The observation about shared complements in *as well as*, brought up at the end of the previous section, could suggest that a multi-dominance approach is better for *as well as* if we are trying to stick to a coordination structure because, unlike *and*, *as well as* seems to exclusively serve the function of linking two things with similar semantic and syntactic attributes and thus the asymmetric relationship seen in an &P seems unnecessary, but I will not be going over this in my thesis.

(22) The girl *as well as* her friend got a good score on the test.



If we go with the SimP analysis in (22), the structure of *as well as* is different from the structure of *and*. *As well as* can be broken down into *as well*, which carries the meaning of *also*, plus another SimP headed by *as*. There are two advantages to an analysis along these lines. One is that *as* maintains a similative function in all instances of *as well as*, supporting the idea that we do not have several homophonous instances of *as*. The other is that assigning a different syntactic structure to *as well as* can help to explain why *as well as* does not display the same behaviors as regular coordination.

4.3 *As if, as though, like*

As if and *as though* are two *as*-phrases that did not appear in the top few entries of the frequency charts shown in section 2.2.[5] However, since these two expressions can be used to illustrate another type of *as*-phrase, I decided to include a discussion of them.

4.3.1 An Argument for the Comparative Complementizer

Yet another usage of *as* can be observed when it is used in conjunction with *if* and *though* to form the phrases *as if* and *as though*. This usage seems to be similar to one of the ways *like* can be used, noted by López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2012), where *as if* and *as though* act as complementizers introducing a declarative clause:

(23) a. It looks *as if* the three of you will have a very cosy evening.
(FLOB P29, as cited in López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012:180)

b. Plus flawless skin, smooth brow and cheeks, lips that looked *as if* you could get a shock from them.
(Brown N17, as cited in López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012:182)

c. She felt *as though* her heart had been cut into pieces.
(FLOB P 14, as cited in López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012:182)

López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2012) used a corpus study to observe which functions were most common for *as if* and *as though* when they are used as complementizers. They make a distinction between the notion of a subject (seen in (23a), where they analyze *the three of you* as the subject of the sentence introduced by *as if*), object (seen in (23b), though they don't explain why this is an object function), and predicative (seen in (23c), where a predicate modifying a non-expletive subject is introduced by *as if*) function.

[5]They are, however, some of the most frequent examples classified as *as* followed by a preposition, something that can be seen in the charts in section 5.1. We should note that *if* is not considered a preposition based on linguistic analysis, it was simply grouped with the prepositions by Sketch Engine.

López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2012) acknowledge that *as if*, *as though*, and *like* are typically associated with comparisons, which means they usually introduce adverbial clauses that show similarity between two things. This can be seen in the examples in (24):

(24) a. They're marching *as if* they're part of the army.

b. She's stumbling around *as though* she were drunk.

c. You're staring at me *like* I grew another head.

What determines whether *as if*, *as though*, and *like* are used as adverbials or as complementizers is the type of clause they are found in. If the predicate licenses clauses involving these three phrases (such as predicates like *seem*), then these phrases would behave closer to complementizers; otherwise, if there is already something else fulfilling the argument role for the predicate, then *as if*, *as though*, and *like* would behave like adverbials.

López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2012) make their argument primarily based on the observation that *as if*, *as though*, and *like* are obligatory in sentences where they have a complementizer function, while they can be removed from sentences where they function as adverbials without making the sentence ungrammatical:

(25) a. She's stumbling around *as though* she were drunk.

b. She's stumbling around.

c. Plus flawless skin, smooth brow and cheeks, lips that looked *as if* you could get a shock from them.

(Brown N17, as cited in López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012:182)

d. * Plus flawless skin, smooth brow and cheeks, lips that looked.

(25a), which has *as though* acting like an adverbial, allows *as though* and the clause following it to be removed entirely to form (25b) and the result is not ungrammatical. On the other hand, (25c), where *as if* acts closer to a complementizer according to López-Couso and Méndez-Naya, requires *as if* and the clause following it to be included in the sentence

to keep the sentence grammatical. Attempting to remove *as if* and the clause it introduces results in the ungrammatical sentence seen in (25d).

Other than the obligatory nature of complementizer *as if*, *as though*, and *like* in certain sentences, when these three expressions are acting like complementizers, they can sometimes be replaced by a declarative complement clause without causing a change in meaning. One way to demonstrate this is by substituting the declarative complementizer *that* into the positions where *as if*, *as though*, and *like* appear:

(26) a. She felt *as though* her heart had been cut into pieces.

(FLOB P 14, as cited in López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012:182

b. She felt *that* her heart had been cut into pieces.

(27) a. It seems *like* she's accepted the outcome.

b. It seems *that* she's accepted the outcome.

(28) a. When they sat down, it felt *as if* they were on display, which Robin didn't seem to mind.

(Frown K 13 as cited in López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012:189)

b. When they sat down, it felt *as though* they were on display, which Robin didn't seem to mind.

c. When they sat down, it felt *like* they were on display, which Robin didn't seem to mind.

d. * When they sat down, it felt *that* they were on display, which Robin didn't seem to mind.

Although in many cases *that* substitutes nicely into the sentences using *as though* and *like* as their complementizer, this is not always the case, as we can see in (28d). However, when *as though* or *like* are used in the place of *as if* in (28a), the resulting sentences (28b) and (28c) are grammatical. This suggests that *as if*, *as though*, and *like* are not quite the

same as *that*. However, (28a) through (28d) also tells us that some predicates specifically select for *as if*, *as though*, and/or *like*, which to López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2012) is evidence that *as if*, *as though*, and/or *like* should be considered complementizers.

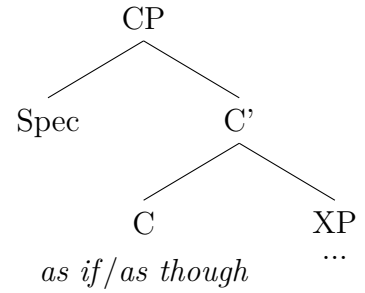
4.3.2 The Syntax of Complementizer *as*

López-Couso and Méndez-Naya did not go in-depth about the syntactic structure of *as if* and *as though*, so I will attempt to provide one myself. I see two ways to look at the structure of *as if* and *as though*:

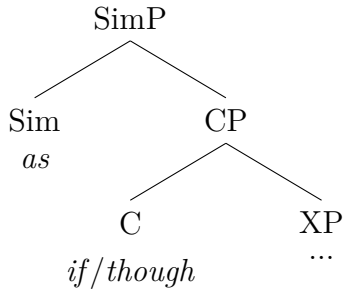
1. *As if* and *as though* are the complementizer heads of a CP and should be treated as one unit
2. The phrases *as if* and *as though* are formed when the similative head *as* takes a CP headed by *if* or *though* as its complement

The structure corresponding to the first analysis is shown in (29), while the one corresponding to the second analysis is shown in (30):

(29)



(30)



(29) may seem like the more straightforward approach since, intuitively, *as if* and *as though* appear to function as a complementizer when they are used together. However, I argue for the structure in (30) to continue exploring the possibility that the same *as*, a similative *as*, is used across different *as*-phrases.

In *as if* and *as though* constructions, SimP is used to compare situations. Consider the sentences below:

(31) a. It seems *as if* she won't be going.

b. She sounds *as though* she's got something stuck in her throat.

In these sentences, the properties of one situation are compared to the properties of a hypothetical situation,[6] suggesting that the inclusion of *as* in the complementizer phrase introduces an interpretation of the sentence that involves comparison. For example, in (31a), the properties of the current situation encompassed by the expletive *it* are compared to the properties of a hypothetical situation where *she won't be going.* In (31b), the way she sounds is compared to the hypothetical way she would sound if she had something stuck in her throat.

4.4 *"As"* in Small Clauses

The crux of my argument for *as* not being a homophone in *as*-phrases is an extension and modification of Yokogoshi's (2005) analysis of *as* in small clauses. A small clause is like any other clause in that it involves a subject and a predicate that assigns properties to that subject, but it lacks tense. *As* can be the head of a small clause, such as in the examples below:

(32) a. I consider him as a fool.

b. They imagined Mary as foolish.

(Yokogoshi 2005:83)

In these examples, Yokogoshi analyzes *as* as a Pred[7] head. Due to its primarily grammatical role in these sentences, where its usage emphasizes relationships between different

[6]There are also situations where *as* takes a CP complement that creates temporal comparisons, such as in sentences like *She's singing as he's dancing* where the time frame of the singing overlaps with the time frame of the dancing. I wanted to point this out to have it documented, but it won't be a major point of focus.

[7]Yokogoshi calls predicate heads Pr and predicate phrases PrPs, but I'm calling them Pred and PredP respectively.

components in each sentence, *as* in small clauses can be considered a functional head.

Although Yokogoshi (2005) analyzes the behavior of *as* in English to differentiate it from *for* and prove that when *for* heads a small clause, it is a preposition, as opposed to *as*, much of his arguments revolve around why *as* is a functional head, which I focus on. The main points Yokogoshi brings up regarding the behavior of *as* in small clauses and why it is a functional head are:

1. *as* does not behave like a preposition because it does not need to take an NP as its complement,
2. *as* does not behave like a complementizer because this would require movement from an A-bar position to an A-position in certain sentences, which is generally not allowed, and
3. *as* does not behave like the head of an IP because an overt *BE* is required in some sentences with an *as*-phrase to make the sentence grammatical.

Yokogoshi uses these points to argue that *as* is a functional head in small clauses, which I elaborate on in the next section.

4.4.1 Small Clause *as* as a Functional Head

First, let's review why *as* can't be a preposition, complementizer, or head of an inflectional phrase (IP).

To start with, Yokogoshi argues that prepositions like *for* need to take an NP as its complement,[8] but *as* does not have this property, as evidenced below:

(33) a. She took his remark as an insult.

b. They regard Mary as smart.

[8]Prepositions can also take other PPs as complements though, such as in phrases like *from below* or *out of*, so this observation does not appear to be completely accurate.

c. He considers his bag as stolen by the thief.

(Yokogoshi 2005:85)

The examples in (33) show three different types of XPs that can be complements of *as*: in (33a), *as* is followed by an NP, in (33b), *as* is followed by a VP, and in (33c), *as* is followed by an AdjP. The ability of *as* to take a variety of XPs as complements is, for Yokogoshi, evidence that it is not a preposition.

Next, Yokogoshi rejects the analysis of *as* as a complementizer by presenting passive sentences like the following:

(34) They were regarded as being clowns.

(Aarts (1992:15), as cited in Yokogoshi 2005:85)

In (34), *they* would need to first undergo movement to reach the Spec CP position of the CP *as being clowns*; since Spec CP is an A-bar position, *they* would need to undergo movement from an A-bar position to an A-position to get to the matrix Spec TP. Movement from an A-bar position to an A position is generally not allowed, so Yokogoshi argues that this indicates *as* can't be a complementizer.

Finally, Yokogoshi rejects the analysis that *as* is the head of an IP. Small clauses in IPs are argued to involve a null *BE* that is in a position following *as* (Aarts (1992), as cited in Yokogoshi (2005)). However, Yokogoshi presents the following sentences to counter this proposal:

(35) a. I consider there as being a lot of people.

b. * I consider there as a lot of people.

(Yokogoshi 2005:86)

These sentences are problematic for the IP analysis because if there is actually a null *BE*, (35a) should still be grammatical even if *BE* is not pronounced, yet (35b) being ungram-

matical shows this is not the case. The sentence is simply ungrammatical if *BE* is not overt.[9]

Having rejected the PP head, CP head, and IP head analyses for *as*, Yokogoshi settles on the PredP analysis proposed by Bowers (1993), where *as* is analyzed as a functional head. Specifically, *as* is argued to be the predicate (Pred) head of a predicate phrase (PredP).

One reason why Yokogoshi argues for *as* being a functional category is, as discussed earlier, the ability for *as* to take predicative phrases of any category (NPs, AdjPs, VPs, etc). A second reason is that *as* allows expletives like *there* and *it* to be the subjects of the predicate. This is significant because usually, expletives like *there* and *it* are inserted to satisfy the EPP features of functional categories. Some examples of expletives being used with *as* are illustrated in (36):

(36) a. I regard there as being a lot of people.

b. I regard it as foggy enough to cover our retreat.

(Postal (1974:242), as cited in Yokogoshi 2005:86)

Finally, the third reason Yokogoshi provides for why *as* is a functional head comes from the allowance of floating quantifiers in *as*-phrases, shown in (37):

(37) a. We regarded the pages as all missing.

b. The cat considers the kids as all hopeless cases.

(Starke (1995:242), as cited in Yokogoshi 2005:86)

Yokogoshi sees this as proof that *as* is a functional head by following Sportiche (1988), who argues that a floating quantifier gets left behind when a subject moves to the functional domain. In (37), this means that *the pages* and *the kids* moved out of the PredP to the specifier position of PredP, making *as all [the pages] missing* and *as all [the kids] hopeless*

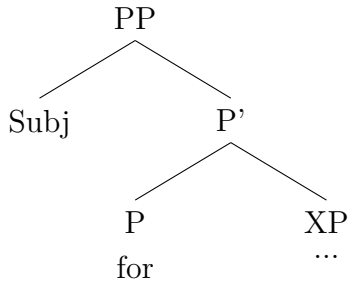
[9]Although Yokogoshi uses these examples to argue against the IP analysis, both of these sentences sound a bit weird to me.

cases functional domains and *as* the functional head.

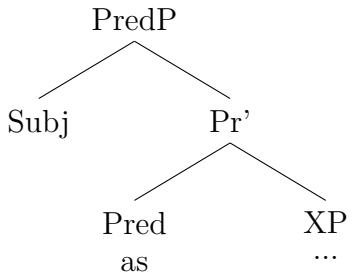
4.4.2 The Syntax of *as* in Small Clauses

After establishing *as* in small clauses as a PredP head as opposed to a PP head, Yokogoshi illustrates the modern-day structure for phrases headed by *for* and phrases headed by *as*, which look like the below (Yokogoshi 2005:88,93):

(38) Phrases headed by *for*:



(39) Phrases headed by *as*:



Yokogoshi follows from Bowers (1993) to call Pred head the functional category of *as* in small clauses. However, much like the other *as*-phrases I have discussed so far, the PredPs involving *as* involve a comparison of the properties of entities:

(40) I consider him as an angel.

In (40), the properties of "him" are associated with the properties of being an angel. A similar example can be found in section 3.1. *As* in these examples is taking a PredP and associating properties of one thing to the subject of the PredP. This is true even if the PredP involves a subject and an adjective, such as in the below:

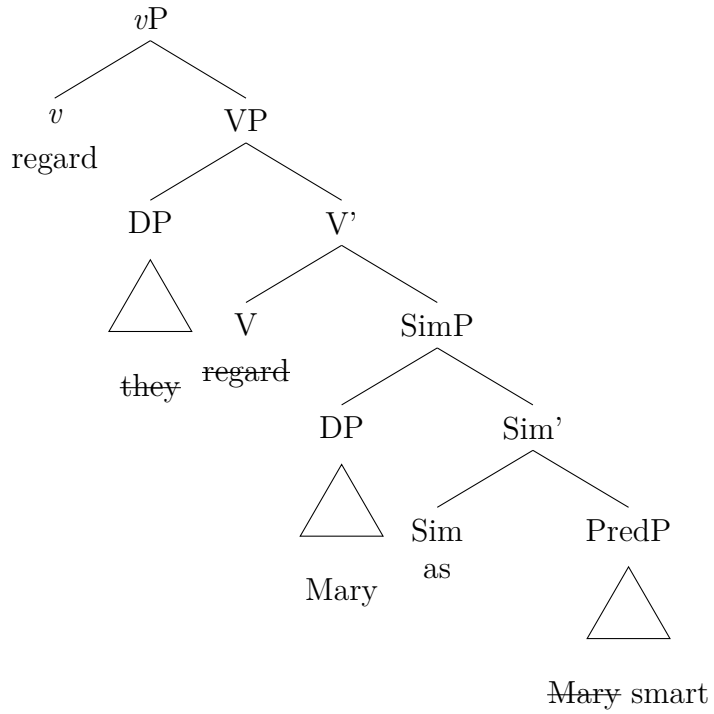
(41) They regard Mary as smart.

(Yokogoshi 2005:85)

In (41), the property of being smart is associated with Mary. Although *smart* is not an entity, it denotes a property that Mary can also possess, making the association possible.

Thus, I argue that *as* in small clauses is a similative that heads a SimP. The structure for this looks like (42):

(42) ...regard Mary as smart.



In this structure, the SimP has a Spec position to allow the DP *Mary* to move out of the PredP, thereby allowing us to get the proper surface derivation.

5 *As of*

5.1 An Overview of *as of*

As of is another frequent *as*-phrase that falls into the broader category of *as*-phrases where *as* is followed by a preposition. Among this category, *as of* is one of the most common constructions[10], as seen below:

2013:

Item	Frequency
as if	1242935
as to	950446
as in	718404
as of	390037
as though	327800
as for	302205
as with	221987
as per	148310
as on	111148
as at	79631
as from	59328
as by	58066

2021:

Item	Frequency
as if	2156103
as to	1963529
as in	1614658
as of	1151354
as though	564365
as for	496346
as per	462618
as with	387045
as on	226086
as at	181263
as by	126955
as from	119192

An expression starting with *as of* is often used to modify a clause to put the information preceding or following the expression on a timeline. According to the Oxford English Dic-

[10]We can also see that *as if* and *as though* are pretty high on the lists. This could be due to the different ways they can be used, which I discussed in section 4.3, but something else to note is that *as if* is at the top of both lists. Other than the adverbial and complementizer *as if* that I discussed in 3.3, *as if* can also be used on its own as an interjection, to express disbelief about a prior statement. Additionally, although Sketch Engine classified *if* in the same category as prepositions, I see *if* as closer to a complementizer.

tionary, *as of* can have the meaning of *from* or *as things stood on (a date)* (Oxford English Dictionary 2024a). What it is interpreted to mean depends on what complement it takes and what clause it modifies.

My judgment of *as of* is that it needs to be followed by a noun that denotes a unit of time. When *as of* is followed by a noun that denotes an entity that can enter a part-whole relation, this noun can be interpreted as a metaphor for time. Some examples of sentences containing *as of* are shown in (43):

(43) a. Classes have been canceled *as of this morning.*

b. *As of this episode*, I think she is the culprit.

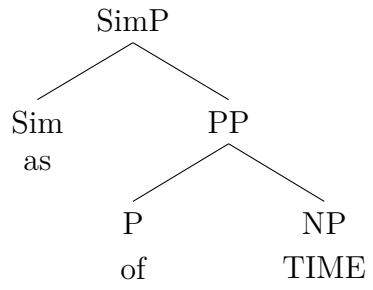
c. A: He's the team leader?

B: Yeah, *as of yesterday.*

In examples (43a) and (43c), the noun phrase following *as of* denotes a time, which can be thought of as the starting point of the event denoted by the predicate. In (43b), the noun phrase following *as of* denotes a part of a whole, one episode out of all the ones in the show, which indicates the point in the show when the speaker made their judgment. The noun *this episode* is a metaphorical representation of the time the speaker made their judgment. In each of these cases, *as of* serves to put the events of the matrix clause on a timeline relative to the DP introduced by *as of*. I would also like to note that *as of* appears to be part of a more formal register of English, something that could explain some of the survey results in section 5.2.

A general syntactic structure of these expressions, following the SimP analysis, is sketched in (44):

(44)



I use the TIME[11] label for NP because *as of* can take nouns with a temporal element as its complement, whether or not the temporal aspect is overt. Since SimP is taking a PP that contains a temporal element, the property being compared in *as of* constructions is time.

The complements of *as of* in (43) are all rather straightforward because they are all DPs with a temporal interpretation. Now consider the following:

(45) a. *As of current*, the situation doesn't look very promising.

b. I've been feeling a bit under the weather *as of late*.

The examples in (45) are interesting because *current* and *late* are not usually thought of as nouns that denote a unit of time on their own. In both of these examples, *late* and *current* show up in a position where a noun denoting a time or an entity that is a part of something larger is expected. This is surprising because both *late* and *current* are normally thought of as adjectives. If used on their own, they typically show up in their adverb forms *lately* and *currently* respectively. The question is, then, what is the structure of *as of late* and *as of current*, and how did these phrases come about?

One possible explanation is that both *as of late* and *as of current* involve a silent TIME that acts as the noun in their DP structures, and thus they remain adjectives that modify a noun.[12] A structural breakdown following this approach is sketched below:

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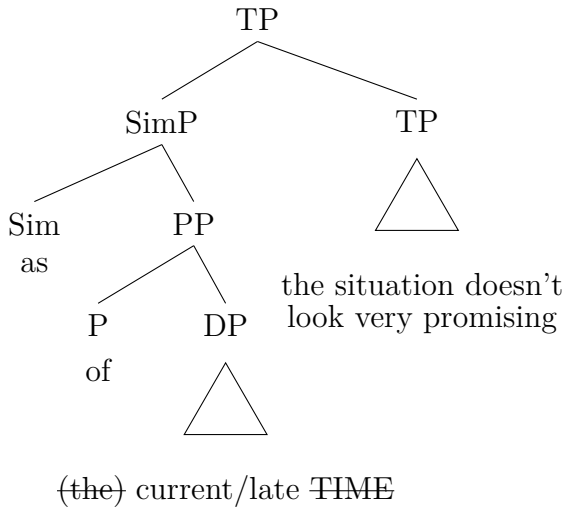
[11]This should not be confused with the word *time* itself, though that concept is discussed by Kayne in his 2015 and 2021 papers and I cover that a little later in this section.

[12]Whether or not a determiner is needed here depends on the speaker, though generally, we expect a determiner to occur with NPs in English.

(46) As of current, the situation doesn't look very promising.



We see that there is a silent TIME element in *as of late* and *as of current*, which represents some noun that *late* and *current* can modify so it can be placed on a timeline (such as *moment*, *time*, or *situation*). *Late* and *current* in these cases represent the entire DP that they are part of and are not acting as a DP on their own.

As I mentioned in a footnote earlier, the notion of TIME is not new. Kayne (2015, 2021) introduces the concept of silent TIME in *once*, *twice*, and negative polarity *long*. Silent TIME is strictly singular and can explain certain behaviors of these types of expressions: in *once* and *twice*, silent TIME makes it so they take singular agreement (Kayne 2015), and in negative polarity *long*, silent TIME makes it so that it can't occur with what Kayne calls a "post-indefinite article adjective" (Kayne 2021). I take this concept of silent TIME and expand it so that it is not restricted to the word *time*. Silent TIME can also cover other nouns that have a time property in them, including *moment* or *circumstances*. This explains the ability for *as of late* and *as of current* to compare temporal properties of clauses and can tell us why these phrases are acceptable for some English speakers.

Something to point out is that *as of late* is more common and better accepted than *as*

of current. If their underlying structures are the same,[13] then I'm not sure why this is the case, but it is possible that more speakers accept *late* with a silent TIME than *current*.

5.2 Survey Results

I conducted the surveys mainly to see if certain *as of* constructions existed for other English speakers at all, namely the ones where the Det is missing (like in *as of current chapter*) and *as of current*. Since these constructions involve at least one silent element, I expected the sentences containing them to do worse in terms of acceptability judgments compared to the others.

The first survey, with 10 sentences all containing *as of*, received 17 responses, while the second survey, with 30 sentences of which 10 were *as of* sentences and 20 were filler, received 12 responses.

Compared to the first survey, the *as*-phrases in the second survey were flipped in position. In other words, if the *as*-phrase occurred at the beginning of the sentence in the first survey, then it was moved to the end of the sentence in the second survey and vice versa. Though the results of this are not directly comparable due to the two surveys having different instructions and structures, they can still be analyzed individually.

I will begin by discussing the sentences that did the "best" for each survey and then the ones that did the "worst". I define "best" as the 2-3 sentences rated 4 or 5 by the highest percentage of participants and "worst" as the 2-3 sentences rated 1 or 2 by the highest percentage of participants.

In the first survey, these sentences did the best:

[13]It is also possible that, instead of taking *as of late* as *as of* plus *late*, we should take it as *as* plus *of late*. The phrase *of late* has been historically used to mean "recently" and it still retains that usage today (Oxford English Dictionary 2024b). Therefore, in this alternative interpretation, even though *as of late* looks like *as of* plus a temporal noun on the surface, it is really *as* combining with the temporal phrase *of late* to get the meaning *recently*. Since in this instance *as* combines with something that contains temporal properties, *as of late* still compares time.

(47) a. *As of this episode*, I think she is the culprit.

b. Classes have been canceled *as of this morning.*

In both of these sentences, the construction *as of* is followed by a noun that denotes a unit of time or represents some moment in time, which aligns with my judgment in the previous section.

In the second survey, these sentences did the best:

(48) a. I've been feeling a bit under the weather *as of late*.

b. *As of right now*, what are you thinking?

(48b) is not surprising because *right now* is a noun denoting a unit of time. (48a) doing so well might be considered interesting since, as discussed earlier, *late* is not a noun denoting time but an adverb; however, it is not too surprising, because the phrase *as of late* is a common expression. This means that people who know this expression are more likely to consider it acceptable. I am unsure why *as of late* did much better in the second survey compared to the first. One possibility lies in the demographic of the participants in each survey. The participants in the second survey were all college students, while the participants in the first survey were a mix of high school and college students. The college students may have had more exposure to formal registers of English, and as mentioned earlier, I see *as of* as part of a more formal register of English. Thus, it is possible that the participants of the second survey were more familiar with the expression *as of late* compared to the participants in the first, leading to the difference in acceptability judgments.

When it comes to the sentences that did the worst across the two surveys, there are some similarities. In the first survey, these sentences did the worst:

(49) a. *As of current chapter*, her status is still uncertain.

b. *As of current*, the situation doesn't look very promising.

In the second survey, these sentences did the worst:

(50) a. I'm unsure about what to do next *as of current moment*.

b. The situation doesn't look very promising *as of current*.

c. Her status is still uncertain *as of current chapter*.

In both surveys, the least acceptable sentences were the ones that either were missing a Det in the complement DP or ones that were missing both a Det and an overt noun. In cases where only a Det was missing, such as in (49a), (50a), and (50c), the ungrammaticality could be attributed to the fact that English generally does not allow for bare, singular count nouns. In the cases where both Det and an overt noun were missing, such as in (49b) and (50b), the ungrammaticality could be caused by several things:

- The lack of a Det with an NP
- The lack of an overt noun that can be modified by *current*; *current* is interpreted as an Adj only and the entire phrase is missing a noun
- A combination of both

Regardless of what the reasoning is, the sentences containing *as of current* received the lowest acceptability ratings. It is possible that the need to insert several different silent elements in some of the *as of* constructions contributed to the low ratings.

Overall, the results aligned with my initial expectations, but I was able to confirm that some native English speakers accepted a lack of a Det in the complement of *as of* and the expression *as of current*.

6 Conclusion

In this thesis, I argued that the *as* seen in different *as*-phrases is the same across the board. I looked at what appear to be five different types of *as*: *as* in the quasi-coordinator construction *as well as*, *as* in the comparative structure *as * as*, *as* in the complementizer structures *as if* and *as though*, *as* when it is the head of a small clause, and the *as of* construction. I argued that, in each of these constructions, *as* is a similative head. The differencs arise from the fact that it can take a variety of XPs as complements. The kinds of XPs that I discussed *as* combining with are listed below:

- *As* + DegP: *as well as*, *as * as*
- *As* + CP: *as if*, *as though*
- *As* + PredP: *as a fool*, *as foolish*
- *As* + PP: *as of*

There are still many *as*-phrases and usages of *as* that I was unable to cover, so an area for further research could involve investigating whether a SimP structure would fit for other types of *as*-phrases.

6.1 Initial Problems and Limitations

One initial problem I encountered with this topic is how broad it is. Since *as* is a rather common word, the scope of this project would have been way too large if I attempted to account for *as* in all of its possible contexts. As a result, I ended up cutting down on the scope of the project to focus on five specific ways *as* is used. Another problem I encountered with this topic was my inability to find previous research into it, which makes me think that I wasn't searching up the proper terms to get papers about *as*. It was difficult to find articles specifically about the word *as* and *as*-phrases due to how common the word is (this is probably similar to how it feels like trying to write about any specific preposition, though

as may or may not be used as a preposition). One of my professors brought up the point that much of the research about *as* may have been buried in research about a more general phenomenon that involves *as* but also many other words and expressions, though by that point in time I needed to focus more on framing my argument. Finally, perhaps one of the biggest issues was the two different survey formats making them incomparable. Rather than serving as data that could be compared and analyzed, they served more as tools for me to evaluate my own judgments. Since the main goal I had with the surveys was seeing if certain constructions of *as* were seen as grammatical in the first place, though, I feel they were sufficient for that purpose.

6.2 Conclusion

There are still many things about *as*-phrases that I don't understand and many areas that are beyond the scope of my thesis but warrant further study. However, I hope I was able to make a case for one *as* in *as*-phrases and make some contribution to this particular area in linguistics. Other than the investigation of other *as*-phrases and usages of *as* that I mentioned earlier in this section, another area for further study is the types of properties that *as* compares. Currently, it seems like *as* can compare any sort of property that can be shared by entities, but perhaps there is a way to narrow down the scope of comparison.

If *as* is truly not homophonous, then it would serve as further evidence for Kayne's argument that function words are not homophonous and prompts further investigations into other possible cases of homophony in English function words. This has implications for language acquisition, the interpretation of English function words, and English sentence structure.

Corpora References

Following is the citation for the TenTen Corpus Family, which enTenTen (2013) and enTenTen (2021) are part of:

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