# Guidelines for the Syntactic Annotation of Latin Treebanks (v. 1.2) 

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## 1 Introduction

Treebanks - large collections of syntactically parsed sentences - have recently emerged as a valuable resource not only for computational tasks such as grammar induction
and automatic parsing, but for traditional linguistic and philological pursuits as well. This trend has been encouraged by the creation of several historical treebanks, such as that for Middle English (Kroch and Taylor [5]), Early Modern English (Kroch et al. [4]), Old English (Taylor et al. [9]), Early New High German (Demske et al. [1]) and Medieval Portuguese (Rocio et al. [7]).

The Perseus Project and the Index Thomisticus are currently in the process of developing treebanks for Latin (Perseus on works from the Classical period and IT on the works of Thomas Aquinas). In order for our separate endeavors to be most useful for the community, we must come to an agreement on a common standard for the syntactic annotation of Latin - and not only for the two projects under development now, but for any other Latin treebanks focussing on different eras that may arise in the future.

In what follows we present a preliminary set of annotation guidelines. The annotation style proposed here is predominantly informed by two sources: the dependency grammar used by the Prague Dependency Treebank [3, 2] (itself based on Sgall et al. [8]), and the Latin grammar of Pinkster [6].

## 2 Dependency Grammar

Dependency Grammar (DG) differs from constituent-based grammars by foregoing non-terminal phrasal categories and instead linking words themselves to their immediate head. This is an especially appropriate manner of representation for languages with a moderately free word order (such as Latin and Czech), where the linear order of constituents is broken up with elements of other constituents. A DG representation of ista meam norit gloria canitiem, for instance, would look like Figure 1.


Figure 1: Dependency graph of ista meam norit gloria canitiem (Prop. I.8.46). Arcs are directed from heads to their dependents.

Dependency grammar is also appropriate for Latin since it is not too theoretically distant from Classical pedagogical grammars, where the highly inflected nature of the language leads to discussions of, for example, which adjective "modifies" which noun in a sentence. A dependency grammar simply assigns one such "modification" to every word.

## 3 Annotation Style

Different treebanks and grammars, however, assign syntactic functions differently. The general model for our style of representation is that used by the Prague Dependency Treebank, with several important departures arising from Pinkster's [6] Latin grammar. The following table lists all of the tags currently in use; the following subsections further elaborate each.

| PRED | predicate |
| :--- | :--- |
| SBJ | subject |
| OBJ | object |
| ATR | attributive |
| ADV | adverbial |
| PNOM | predicate nominal |
| COORD | coordinator |
| APOS | apposing element |
| AuxP | preposition |
| AuxC | conjunction |
| AuxV | auxiliary verb |
| AuxX | commas |
| AuxG | bracketing punctuation |
| AuxK | terminal punctuation |
| AuxY | sentence adverbials |
| AuxZ | emphasizing particles |

Table 1: Complete Latin tagset.

### 3.1 PRED (predicate)

Every complete sentence (i.e., non-elliptical with at least one predicate) has one word unattached to any other; this is attached to the root of the sentence with the relation PRED.

spectat inter occasum solis et septentriones
If a sentence begins with an initial conjunction (either coordinating or subordinating), the main verb is dependent on that conjunction and the conjunction then depends on the root.

et stetit super harenam maris

### 3.2 SBJ (subject)

Subjects are dependent on their verb (which is the predicate of either a main or subordinate clause), and come in a variety of parts of speech and phrases, including:

### 3.2.1 Nominative nouns



Belgae ab extremis Galliae finibus oriuntur

### 3.2.2 Accusative nouns

These are typically found in indirect discourse and other accusative + infinitive constructions. ${ }^{1}$


### 3.2.3 Ablative nouns

Since ablative absolutes are treated as an embedded predication, the ablative noun in such constructions should be annotated as the subject of the participle. ${ }^{2}$

[^0]

His rebus cognitis Caesar Gallorum animos verbis confirmavit This is also the case with $a b$ urbe condita constructions.

regnavit ab urbe condita

### 3.2.4 Infinitive verbs


dulce et decorum est pro patria mori

### 3.2.5 Subordinate clauses


datum est illis ne occiderent eos

### 3.2.6 Relative clauses



### 3.2.7 Pronouns


ea autem quae dicuntur per modum formae inhaerentis, non recipiunt dictorum pronominum additionem

### 3.3 OBJ (object)

Likewise, objects are also dependent on their verb, and come in as large a variety of phrase types as subjects, including:

### 3.3.1 Accusative nouns



Caesar Gallorum animos verbis confirmavit

### 3.3.2 Accusative + infinitive constructions

The infinitive verb is the head of the accusative + infinitive construction, and depends on the verb introducing the construction via OBJ.
dicebas
PRED
te
Contentum te esse dicebas

### 3.3.3 Relative clauses


quod vides scribe

### 3.3.4 Subordinate clauses


dicit ... quod usia significat compositum ex materia et forma

### 3.3.5 Gerunds



### 3.3.6 Infinitive verbs

This include both verbs that function as traditional direct objects (as in dabo ei edere de ligno vitae) as well as those that complete verbs like possum, volo or incipio.

dabo ei edere de ligno vitae

post haec vidi turbam magnam quam dinumerare nemo poterat

### 3.3.7 Gerundives


quae ad effeminandos animos pertinent
Our notion of object, however, follows that used by the PDT, and includes a wider range of phrases than traditional direct objects. OBJ should also be used to annotate the complements of a verb (i.e., those required arguments that cannot become subjects if the verb is made passive). Examples (all taken from Pinkster [6]) include:

- miseretur pater filii (filii -> miseretur)
- nupsit Sempronia Scipioni (Scipioni -> nupsit)
- pater gladio utitur (gladio -> utitur)
- pater litteris studet (litteris -> studet)
- abundat Germania fluminibus (fluminibus -> abundat)
- contendunt Romani cum Germanis (OBJ, Germanis -> cum; AuxP, cum -> contendunt)
- accusavit pater me avaritiae (avaritiae -> accusavit)
- docet magister me linguam Latinam (linguam -> docet)


### 3.3.8 Indirect objects

Traditional indirect objects are also included in this category, and can show up either as prepositional phrases or as dative nouns:


dabo ei edere de ligno vitae

### 3.3.9 Passive agents

And as in the PDT, actors in passive constructions should also be annotated as OBJ.

mittuntur ad Caesarem confestim ab Cicerone litterae
In practice, OBJs are often confused with ADV. Objects are obligatory arguments of verbs, while adverbials are always optional. If an object is left out of the sentence, one of two things happens: the sentence becomes ungrammatical or a different sense of the verb is implied (one with a reduced valency). In the sentence contendunt Romani cum Germanis, the phrase cum Germanis cannot be left out - one must contend with something. In the following examples, all of the italicized phrases should be annotated with OBJ.

- ex urbe profugerat (to flee x )
- periculis ereptam esse (to snatch x from y )


### 3.4 ATR (attribute)

Attributes are those phrases that attributively specify (or delimit) the meaning of their head. Most commonly these are adjectives, but can include other classes as well, such as nouns, relative clauses and prepositional phrases.

### 3.4.1 Adjectives



### 3.4.2 Participles


et post haec vidi alium angelum descendentem de caelo

### 3.4.3 Prepositional phrases



### 3.4.4 Agreeing nouns



### 3.4.5 Non-agreeing nouns

Possessive genitives, objective genitives and partitives all fall in this category.


Belgae ab extremis Galliae finibus oriuntur

faciam initium narrandi


Ex eo numero compluris ... in vincula coniecerat


### 3.4.6 Relative clauses


mercatores ... ea quae ad effeminandos animos pertinent important

### 3.4.7 Relative pronouns


quam ob rem discede atque hunc mihi timorem eripe

### 3.4.8 Pronouns



### 3.5 ADV (adverbial)

Similarly, adverbials further specify the circumstances under which a verb, adjective or adverb takes place. These include adverbs, prepositional phrases, nouns in oblique cases, participles and subordinate clauses.

### 3.5.1 Adverbs


mittuntur ad Caesarem confestim ab Cicerone litterae

### 3.5.2 Prepositional phrases


ceteri sine mora veniunt

### 3.5.3 Nouns



Caesar Gallorum animos verbis confirmavit

### 3.5.4 Participles

Just as prepositional phrases can either modify a noun (with ATR) or a verb (with ADV), so can participial phrases as well. When a participial phrase delimits the possible reference of a noun phrase (as in section 3.4.2 above), it should depend on that noun via ATR. When it further specifies the action of a verb, it should depend on the verb via ADV.

et cantant novum canticum dicentes dignus es accipere librum

### 3.5.5 Subordinate clauses



Helvetii quoque reliquos Gallos virtute praecedunt, quod fere cotidianis proeliis cum
Germanis contendunt

### 3.5.6 Gerunds


querebatur ... illos dubitando et dies prolatando magnas opportunitates corrumpere

### 3.6 PNOM (predicate nominal)

Predicate nominals (subject complements) depend on a verbal head.

simplex forma subjectum esse non potest
Predicate nominals are not limited, however, to noun phrases and adjectives in the same case as the sentence subject. They can also appear in a variety of other constructions, such as genitives.

es bonae voluntatis
PNOMs most often appear with inflections of sum, but can appear with any "linking" verb, including videor and fio.

## 3.7 "Bridge" structures

In the annotation style adopted by the Prague Dependency Treebank, coordinators (including punctuation), "apposing" words, prepositions, and subordinate conjunctions (all described below) function as "bridges" between their children and their own heads. In the phrase contendunt cum Germanis, for example, the noun Germanis depends on the preposition, but with the relation it would bear to contendunt - namely, OBJ. The preposition is assigned a sort of "dummy" relation AuxP, meant to signify that the true relationship is that between Germanis and contendunt, and that the preposition simply acts a mediator between the two. The advantage of this method is that it preserves the lexical association between pairs of words, regardless of intermediate structure, as between differunt and the words lingua, institutis and legibus in the two examples below.

- hi omnes lingua, institutis, legibus inter se differunt
- hi omnes in lingua, institutis, legibus inter se differunt

This method therefore recognizes the "omissibility" of prepositions in certain contexts: given Latin's rich inflection, a noun in the ablative case can function as if a preposition were included in its morphology.

In the following subsections, we delineate the different methods by which this approach annotates coordination, apposition, prepositional phrases and subordinate clauses.

### 3.7.1 COORD (coordinator)

An example of a coordinated structure is given below.

hi omnes lingua, institutis, legibus inter se differunt
Here, lingua, institutis, and legibus all depend on the single final coordinator that separates them: the final comma (that separating institutis from legibus). Each of these words depends on that comma with a complex tag comprised in part of the relation they bear to the coordinator's head: since each would individually modify differunt as an ADV, each depends on the coordinator with the tag ADV_CO. The coordinator then depends on differunt with the tag Coord. See section 3.9.1 (AuxX) on how to annotate the non-final coordinator in lists.

### 3.7.2 APOS (apposing elements)

An example of apposition is given below.


In iis erat Fulvius, senatoris filius, quem retractum ex itinere parens necari iussit Here the two phrases in apposition to each other are Fulvius and senatoris filius; the appositional-coordinating element that separates them is the comma between Fulvius and senatoris. Both Fulvius and senatoris filius depend on the apposing comma via the relation they each individually bear to the phrase's head (erat). Since they are both the subjects of erat, they modify the apposing word via the complex tag SBJ_AP; the apposing word then modifies erat via Apos.

### 3.7.3 AuxP (preposition)

An example of a prepositional phrase is given below.


- contendunt cum Germanis

Our method of annotation sees prepositions as acting as a functional bridge between their child and head. Here the object of the preposition (Germanis) would depend on the preposition (cum) via the relationship it would hold to the preposition's head if the preposition were absent (OBJ). The preposition then depends on its head via the relation AuxP.

### 3.7.4 AuxC (conjunction)

Subordinate (non-relative) clauses are annotated in a manner similar to prepositional phrases, with the subordinating conjunctions acting as a functional bridge between the embedded verb and the parent of the phrase.


Helvetii quoque reliquos Gallos virtute praecedunt, quod fere cotidianis proeliis cum Germanis
Here the subordinate verb contendunt depends on its head (quod) via the relationship ADV. quod then depends on praecedunt via the "bridge" relationship AuxC.

### 3.8 AuxV (auxiliary verb)

Auxiliary verbs (mostly seen with passive participles) depend on the tensed verb.


Ea res est Helvetiis per indicium enuntiata

### 3.9 Punctuation

Our methods of annotating punctuation follow that established by the PDT, which assigns several different functional tags.

### 3.9.1 AuxX (commas)

If a comma is not the head of a coordinated or appositional phrase, it should be annotated with AuxX and depend on the head of its clause. In coordinated lists, this head is the final comma.

hi omnes lingua, institutis, legibus inter se differunt
Here, lingua, institutis, and legibus all depend on the final comma (that separating institutis from legibus) via ADV_Coord. The remaining comma (that separating lingua from institutis) should then depend on the final comma via AuxX. Note that if the coordinator is a content word (e.g., et), it depends on the final coordinator via AuxY; if it is punctuation, it depends via AuxX.

If a comma is used to separate a subordinate clause, it should depend on that clause's head.

collis ab summo aequaliter declivis ad flumen Sabim, quod supra nominavimus, vergebat


Helvetii quoque reliquos Gallos virtute praecedunt, quod fere cotidianis proeliis cum Germanis contendunt

### 3.9.2 AuxG (bracketing punctuation)

"Bracketing" punctuation surrounds an enclosed phrase, and most frequently appears as quotation marks or parentheses (not commas). These punctuation marks should depend on the head of the bracketed phrase via AuxG.


In this example, the quotation marks surrounding refer should both depend on refer via AuxG; those surrounding ad senatum should depend on $a d$.

AuxG should also be used to annotate abbreviation, with the period depending on the abbreviated word.

libertatem et consulatum L. Brutus instituit

### 3.9.3 AuxK (terminal punctuation)

Final punctuation (if present) should depend on the root via AuxK.


Vrbem Romam a principio reges habuere;

libertatem et consulatum L. Brutus instituit.
In all of these examples above, the terminal punctuation mark (the question mark, semicolon and period, respectively), should depend on the root via AuxK.

### 3.10 AuxY (sentence adverbials)

Sentence adverbials (also called disjuncts) are those that pertain to the entire sentence and often express the author's opinion about the validity of what's being said. These include words like sane, certe, vero, and also question markers such as num and utrum. A full list includes adhuc, alias, consequens, contra, enim, ergo, ideo, igitur, inde, ita, item, postea, praeterea, propterea, sic, tamen, tum, tunc, unde, utrum, and vero. Note that some words are ambiguous between sentence adverbials and subordinating conjunctions: when enim, for instance, means "certainly" or "indeed," it should be annotated with AuxY; when it introduces a subordinate clause ("for ...") it should be annotated with AuxC.


These also include exclamations.

statim fui in spiritu et ecce sedis posita erat in caelo
AuxY should also be used to annotate coordinators that are not commas (e.g., et, -que) when they are not the head of the coordinated phrase. (Non-head commas in these structures should be annotated with AuxX.)


### 3.11 AuxZ (emphasizing particles)

AuxZ should be assigned to particles with a "poor" meaning content that emphasize one specific word in the sentence (as distinct from AuxY, which emphasizes the sentence as a whole). This occurs most often with words such as only, as well as, also, etc, and also with negation such as non. A full list includes adeo, etiam, ita, item, nec, non, nondum, numquam, omnino, praecipue, quanto, quantum, quasi, statim, tanto, tantum, and umquam.

ab Lentulo, Cethego, Statilio, item Cassio postulant ius iurandum
Here the four names are coordinated on the comma between Statilio and item; item (as well as) should depend on Cassio via AuxZ.

Negative particles should depend on the word that is being negated (whether a verb, adjective, etc.).


## 4 How to Annotate Specific Constructions

### 4.1 Ellipsis

Ellipsis - the omission of words in a sentence that are recoverable from contextual cues - is a ubiquitous phenomenon in literary texts. Our method of representing ellipsis attempts to preserve the structure of the tree as much as possible. We accomplish this by assigning a complex tag to orphaned words. This tag preserves the path from the word itself to the elided word's head. Consider the example of unam incolunt Belgae, aliam Aquitani (Caesar, De Bello Gallico 1.1) given in the figure below. Here, the verb incolunt is missing from the second clause. We can preserve the structure of the
tree by assigning the head of aliam and Aquitani to be the head that incolunt would have if it were in the sentence (the coordinating comma), and by assigning tags to each that preserve the path: aliam should be the object (OBJ) of incolunt, which should then depend on the coordinating comma via by Pred_Co; it therefore receives the tag OBJ_ExD0_PRED_CO (like the PDT, ExD here signifies an external dependency; the following numeral indexes the ellipsis, since in some sentences multiple words are elided). Likewise, Aquitani should be the subject (SBJ) of the elided word; it therefore receives the tag SBJ_ExD0_PRED_CO. This method allows us to use the complex tags to reconstruct the tree as necessary.

unam incolunt Belgae, aliam [incolunt] Aquitani

### 4.2 Relative Clauses

Different relative clauses must be annotated differently based on their syntactic function in the sentence. Relative clauses with antecedents, as in the following examples, are generally attributive, and should modify the antecedent via ATR. The head of a relative clause is the subordinate verb; this is the element that depends on the antecedent.

et septem angeli qui habebant septem tubas paraverunt se ut tuba canerent

collis ab summo aequaliter declivis ad flumen Sabim, quod supra nominavimus, vergebat
Not all relative clauses have antecedents. These should be annotated according to the syntactic function of the entire relative phrase:

qui habet aurem audiat

quod vides scribe
In the first example, the subject of audiat is the entire phrase he who has an ear (qui habet aurem). Since habet is the head of this phrase, it depends on audiat as the SBJ (within the phrase, qui is the SBJ of habet and aurem is its OBJ). In the second example, the object of scribe is the phrase what you see (quod vides). Since vides is the head of this phrase, it depends on scribe as the OBJ (within the relative phrase, quod is the OBJ of vides).

Note that this method of annotation is structurally different from that for subordinate clauses, in which the subordinate verb depends on the subordinating conjunction, which then depends on a word outside of the clause. See section 3.7.4 (AuxC) for
information on annotating subordinate clauses.
Also, not all relative pronouns signal a relative clause; some are simply attributive and modify their head via ATR.

quam ob rem discede atque hunc mihi timorem eripe

quibus rebus confectis omnia propere per nuntios consuli declarantur

### 4.3 Indirect Questions

Since the interrogative word in indirect questions has a syntactic function within the subordinate clause, it should be annotated in a manner similar to self-contained relative clauses. In the sentence below, quid is the direct object of sentiam [ = "what I think I will explain"] and should therefore depend on it via OBJ.


### 4.4 The Ablative Absolute

The ablative absolute is a grammatical construction similar to the English nominative absolute, where a noun and (typically) a participle form a phrase that is disjoint from the grammar of the rest of the sentence; in Latin both the noun and participle are inflected in the ablative case, as in the following:

- his rebus cognitis Caesar Gallorum animos verbis confirmavit

Following Pinkster [6], we treat ablative absolutes as an embedded predication that functions as an adjunct. In common absolutes (with a noun + participle), the noun should be annotated as the subject of the participle, with the participle (as the head of the ablative absolute phrase) depending on the main verb as an adverbial. We would annotate the example above in the following way:

his rebus cognitis Caesar Gallorum animos verbis confirmavit

### 4.5 Direct Speech

Direct speech should be annotated the same way as indirect discourse, by attaching the head of the "spoken" phrase to the predicate that introduces the speaking.

audivi secundum animal dicens "veni"

### 4.6 Direct Address

As in the PDT, vocatives should depend on their verbal heads via ExD.

habemus senatus consultum in te, Catilina

### 4.7 Accusative + Infinitive

In indirect discourse and other accusative + infinitive constructions, the infinitive verb is the head of its phrase. This verb represents the entire clause and should depend via OBJ on the word that introduces the discourse. Within the phrase, standard annotation applies (so that the subject, while accusative, still depends on the indirect infinitive via SBJ).

- contentum te esse dicebas

This sentence should be annotated in the following way:

contentum te esse dicebas

### 4.8 Gerunds and Gerundives

As a verbal noun, gerunds are relatively straightforward to annotate: they should simply be treated as nouns and annotated according to their syntactic function in the sentence:

querebatur ... illos dubitando et dies prolatando magnas opportunitates corrumpere Gerundives, on the other hand, behave more like participles in that they can function either as an attribute or in a dominating construction. When attributive, gerundives should be labeled ATR; when dominating, they should be annotated according to their specific role in the sentence. A test for which tag is appropriate is whether or not the gerundive can be omitted: if it can be left out of the sentence without changing the lexical meaning of the predicate, it's ATR; if not, then it is dominating. In the example below, effeminandos cannot be left out of the sentence since quae pertinent ad animos ("which pertain to the minds") doesn't make sense on its own.

quae ad effeminandos animos pertinent
Our intuition here may be to treat the noun animos as the direct object of the gerundive (since we idiomatically translate the phrase with such a sense: "which pertain to effeminating the mind"), but we should keep in the mind that a gerundive is a passive form, which then makes animos a subject.

An attributive use of a gerundive can be seen in the fragment privatio formae inducendae ("the privation of the form to be inserted"). Here inducendae is omissible and should therefore be labeled with ATR.

principium vel initium generationis est privatio formae inducendae
When a gerundive appears in a passive periphrastic construction, it should be treated as a predicate nominal:


Carthago delenda est

### 4.9 Comparison

Adjectives that signify comparison can appear with an overt quam or without one (where the compared object appears in the ablative case). These should both be annotated similarly: when quam is present, it is the head of an embedded predication
and should be annotated with AuxC. The subordinate verb should then modify quam via ADV. If quam is present but the subordinate verb is not (as in puella est laetior quam puer), it should be annotated as an instance of ellipsis. When quam is absent and an ablative noun is compared instead, it should modify the comparative adjective via ADV.

luce sunt clariora nobis tua consilia omnia


### 4.10 Participles

Active and passive participles can ambiguously modify both nouns and verbs. When attributively modifying nouns, they restrict the reference of the noun phrase: in the example below, what is seen is not simply any angel, but an "angel descending from the sky." The possible referent of "angelum" here is restricted from the set of all possible angels to the one satisfying this particular attribute.

et post haec vidi alium angelum descendentem de caelo
Ambiguity arises with nominative participles: are they attributively restricting the reference of the noun phrase (=ATR), or do they further qualify the circumstances of the verb (=ADV)? In the following example, this difference can be captured in two different translations.

- et angeli cantant novum canticum dicentes dignus es accipere librum
- ATR, modifying angeli: "those angels who were saying 'you are worthy to accept the book' are singing a new song"
- ADV, modifying cantant: "the angels are singing a new song, saying 'you are worthy to accept the book'"

In this case, the participial phrase further expresses the conditions under which the main verb takes place: it should then modify that verb via ADV (the second option).

et angeli cantant novum canticum dicentes dignus es accipere librum
Active participles are not the only kind that can modify verbs via ADV - passive participles can as well. In the following example, the ATR/ADV ambiguity produces two different translations as well.

- his nuntiis litterisque commotus Caesar duas legiones in citeriore Gallia novas conscripsit
- ATR, modifying Caesar: "the Caesar who was bothered by these announcements and letters drafted a new army in hither Gaul."
- ADV, modifying conscripsit: "Having been bothered by these announcements and letters, Caesar drafted a new army in hither Gaul."

Again, the participial phrase here further expresses the conditions under which the main verb takes place and should depend on the verb via ADV.

his nuntiis litterisque commotus Caesar duas legiones in citeriore Gallia novas conscripsit

### 4.11 Names

The praenomen and nomen in all names should depend on the cognomen via ATR (if the cognomen is deficient, the praenomen should depend on the nomen). Any abbreviating periods should depend on the word they abbreviate via AuxG.

C. Servilius Ahala Sp. Maelium novis rebus studentem manu sua occidit

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[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ For more information on this construction, see section 4.7, "Accusative + Infinitive."
    ${ }^{2}$ See section 4.4, "The Ablative Absolute."

