

SENTENCES FOR PROBLEM #1

- (i) What should your landlord *ask* me to fix?
- (ii) The cat seems to want to *bite* me.
- (iii) The incompetent mechanic was *persuaded* to retire.

Problem 1. For each of the sentences in (i-iii):**(42 points total, 14 for each sentence)**

- a. **(2 points)** For each *italicized* predicate, for each θ -role that the predicate assigns, list the θ -role (one of: Agent, Experiencer, Theme, Goal, Proposition) and indicate what constituent it is assigned to.

Notes: Include whatever θ -roles are assigned by v or n as well as whatever θ -roles are assigned by V or N—as in the example tree.

- b. **(8 points)** **Draw a tree**, showing where all the elements of the structure are after all of the movements are finished. **See the example tree.** Where something moves, put traces in the tree at each position occupied by the moving element (don't forget intermediate positions). **Connect** the initial trace (at the original Merge position) to each subsequent trace and to the final position of the moved element with arrows.

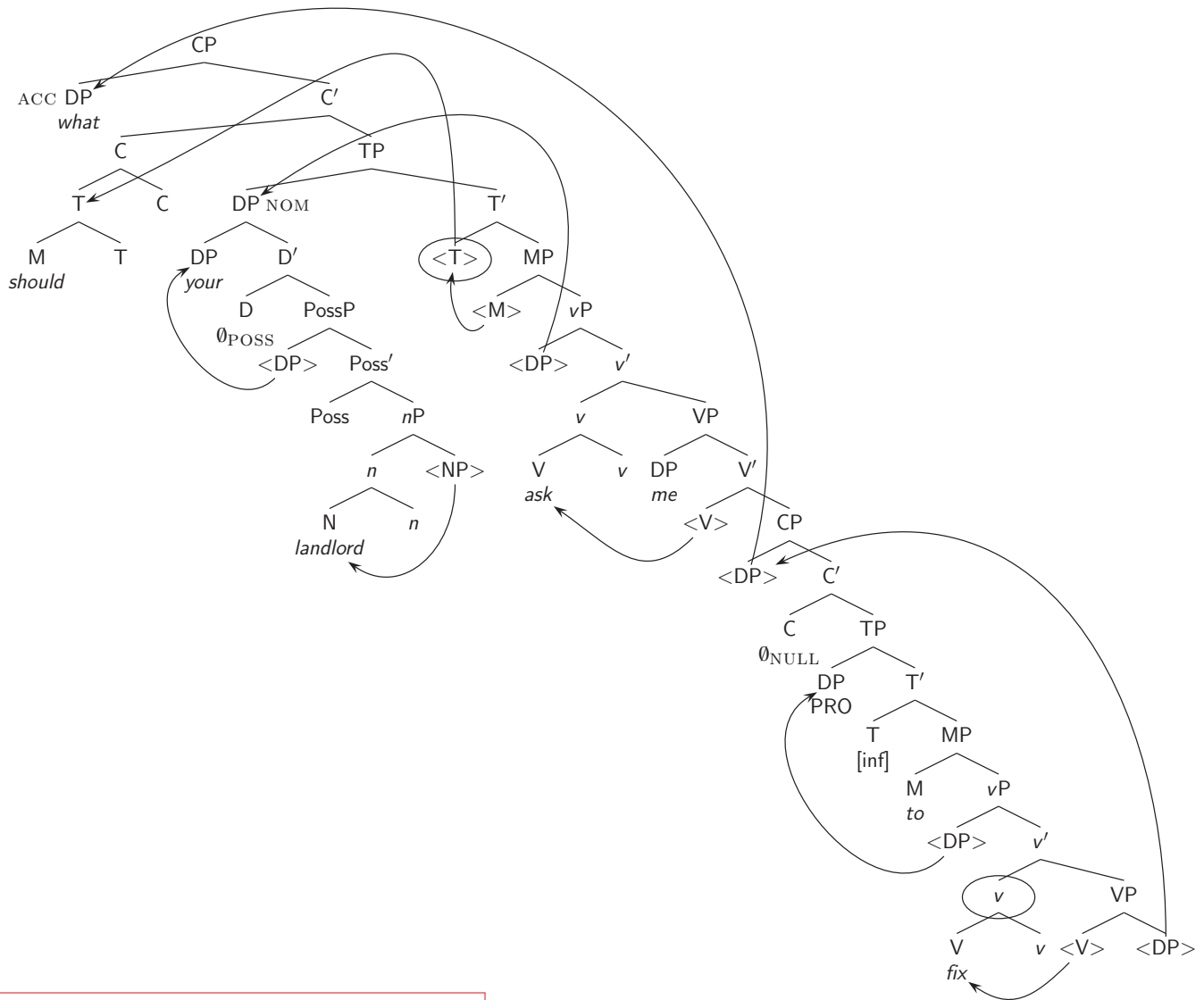
Notes: You do *not* need to list all of the features for each head. Draw everything in full (adjunction, DPs, etc.), as on the example tree. No triangles—*except*: If you have already drawn a similar DP in full (e.g., proper names), you may use a triangle for subsequent DPs with identical structure. Such triangles must be actually drawn (no “implicit triangles”).

- c. **(4 points)** On the tree you drew for part (b), for each underlined DP **circle the head** that checks its case feature. Then, **write the case it receives by the DP** (one of: nominative, accusative, genitive, of).

Notes: If the head is a complex head, circle the top node (see example tree). If the head has moved away after checking the case feature, circle the trace that is in the position where the case feature was checked.

Example tree on next page

Problem 1(i) What should your landlord ask me to fix?



a. ask
 AGENT: your landlord
 THEME: me
 PROPOSITION: (me) to fix (what)

A number of the things I'll mention here also apply to the later two trees as well.

If a verb has an Agent, that verb *must* have something in the specifier of vP. Particularly in the cases where the Agent was PRO, a lot of people just failed to put the Agent there. But that's the whole point of PRO, it is there because we need to assign the Agent to something.

When there is a PRO, there is a CP, necessarily. I didn't in general excuse people from the need for having a CP if they also failed to put in a PRO. The lower clause is a CP.

The *wh*-word moves from the lowest Theme position up to the specifier of the uppermost CP, but it *must stop along the way* in the specifier of the intermediate CP. Here, if you had a CP but didn't make it stop, I took a point off. If you already lost a point for not even including a CP, I didn't take an additional point off for not stopping in the middle, however.

The infinitive *to* (which is an M) *does not* move to nonfinite T. I took a half a point off per tree for this (even though it may have happened more than once in the later trees).

A surprising number of people failed to move the subject into the specifier of TP. Even in the *main* clause. No matter where the TP is, no matter whether it is finite or nonfinite, a DP *must move into the specifier of TP*.

In the possession structure, there were a few people who did treat *your* as a D. It is not a D (or, rather, it is not the head of *your landlord*). It is a possessor. There needed to be a PossP, in whose specifier the possessor (*your*) goes, and then it has to move into the specifier of DP.

Also: Pronouns have no internal structure. A pronoun is just a bare D. This goes for *your*, *me*, and also for *what*. I took one half-point off per tree for giving internal structure to the pronouns. See also the comments to Problem 4 for the same point.

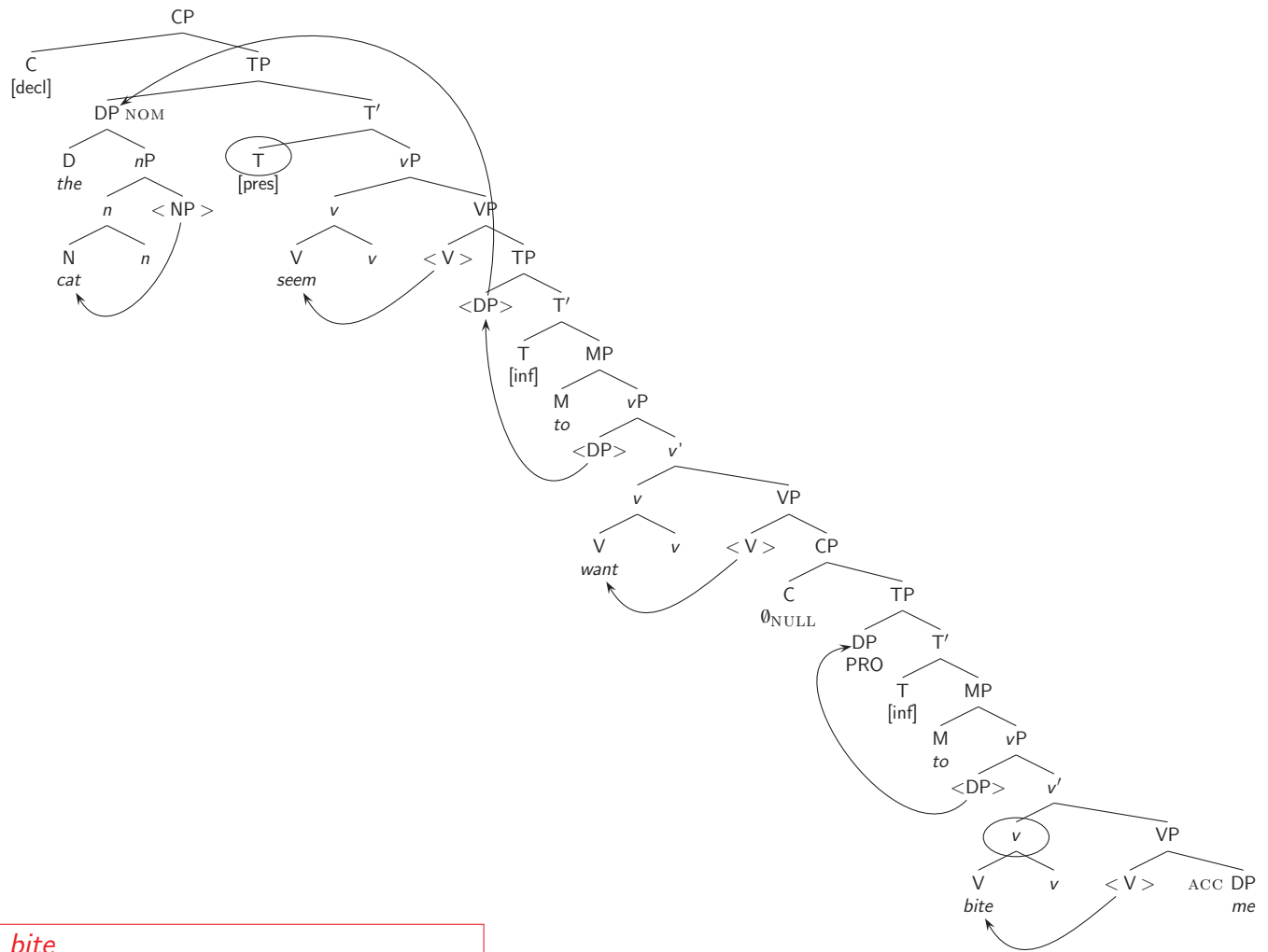
With respect to the θ -roles, I asked you to provide the θ -roles for the verb *ask*. I did this on purpose, because I wanted to call your attention to the fact that *me* is the Theme of *ask*. A lot of people correctly identified *me* as the Theme of *ask*, but then went on to draw a tree in which *me* was the Agent of *fix*. PRO is the Agent of *fix*. That's why I wanted to focus your attention on *ask*.

Quite a lot of people also forgot to include the Proposition θ -role for *ask*.

There were a couple of people who simply did not do Part (b) of these problems. You needed to indicate what case the underlined DPs got, and you needed to circle the head that valued the DPs case feature.

Average: 8.6 (3.4)

Problem 1(ii) The cat seems to want to bite me.



a. *bite*
 AGENT: PRO
 THEME: *me*

See the notes for the previous tree for a number of things that also apply here.

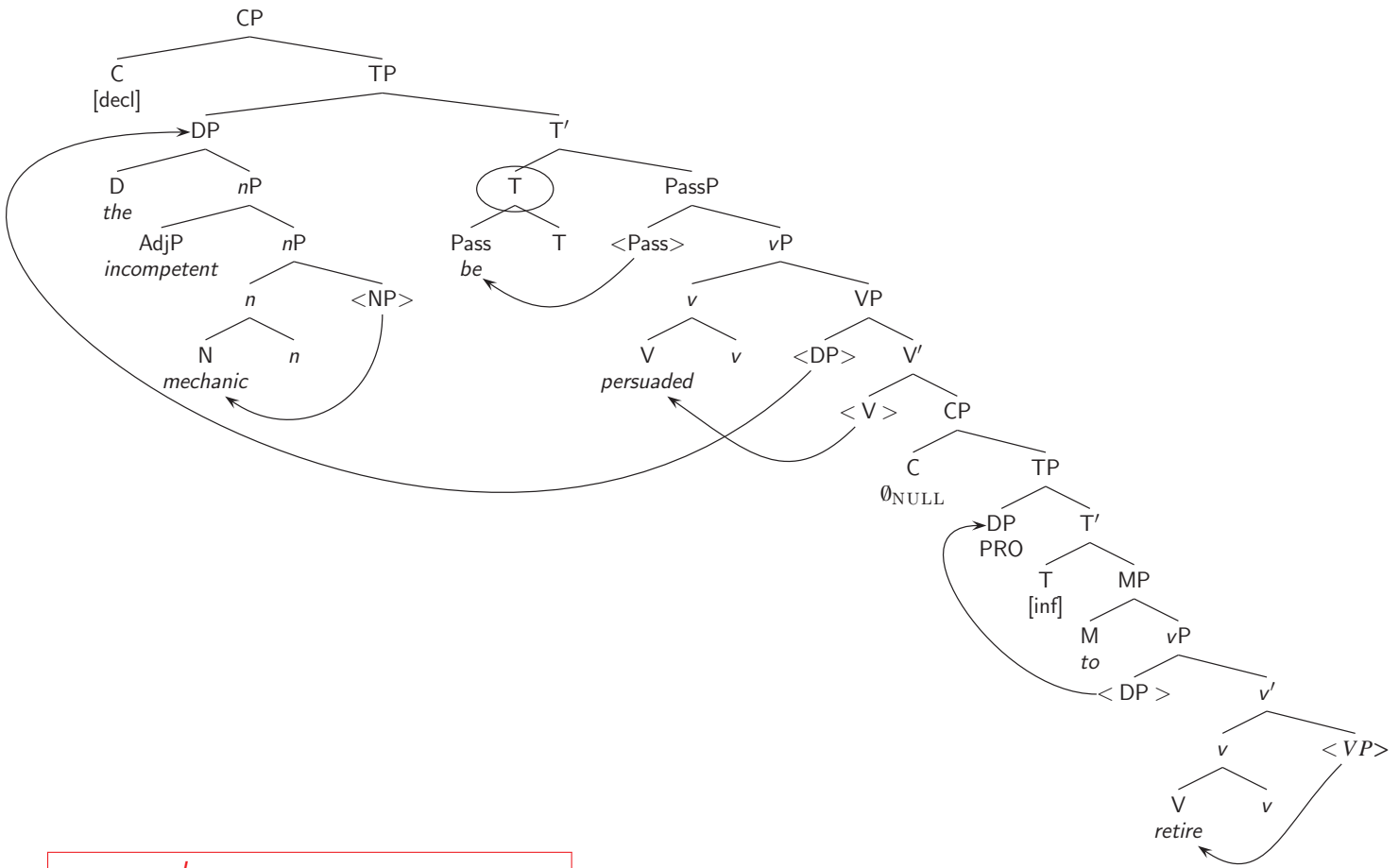
On the θ -roles: The Agent of *bite* is PRO, not *the cat*. I took a half-point off for people who said *the cat*. Again, I was trying to focus your attention on this verb in order to make it more obvious that there is a PRO there. Some people did in fact include PRO in the tree as Agent of *bite*, but I still took the half-point off if it was given for part (a) as *the cat*.

In this tree more than in the previous tree, a lot of people were leaving DPs out of the tree where a θ -role needed to be assigned. And there were also a lot of cases where the specifiers of TP were left unfilled.

Also: although this applied to the previous tree in a couple of cases, it was more pronounced in this tree that people would sometimes move a DP up *into* the specifier of VP or vP. You can't move a DP into either of those positions. Those are positions where a θ -role is assigned by Merge.

Average: 9.9 (3.0)

Problem 1(iii) The incompetent mechanic was persuaded to retire.



a. *persuade*
 THEME: *the incompetent mechanic*
 PROPOSITION: *PRO to retire*

I accidentally only provided one DP for you to give Case to, so the Case part (b) was only worth 2 points here.

Quite a number of people had Prog here instead of Pass, for some reason.

Far, far too many people drew the adjunction structure within the DP with the adjective *incompetent* projecting to an AdjP after taking the *nP* as a sister. The AdjP *incompetent* is *adjoined* to the *nP*.

On the θ -roles here, a lot of people left off the Proposition. Also, a lot of people called *the incompetent mechanic* an Experiencer.

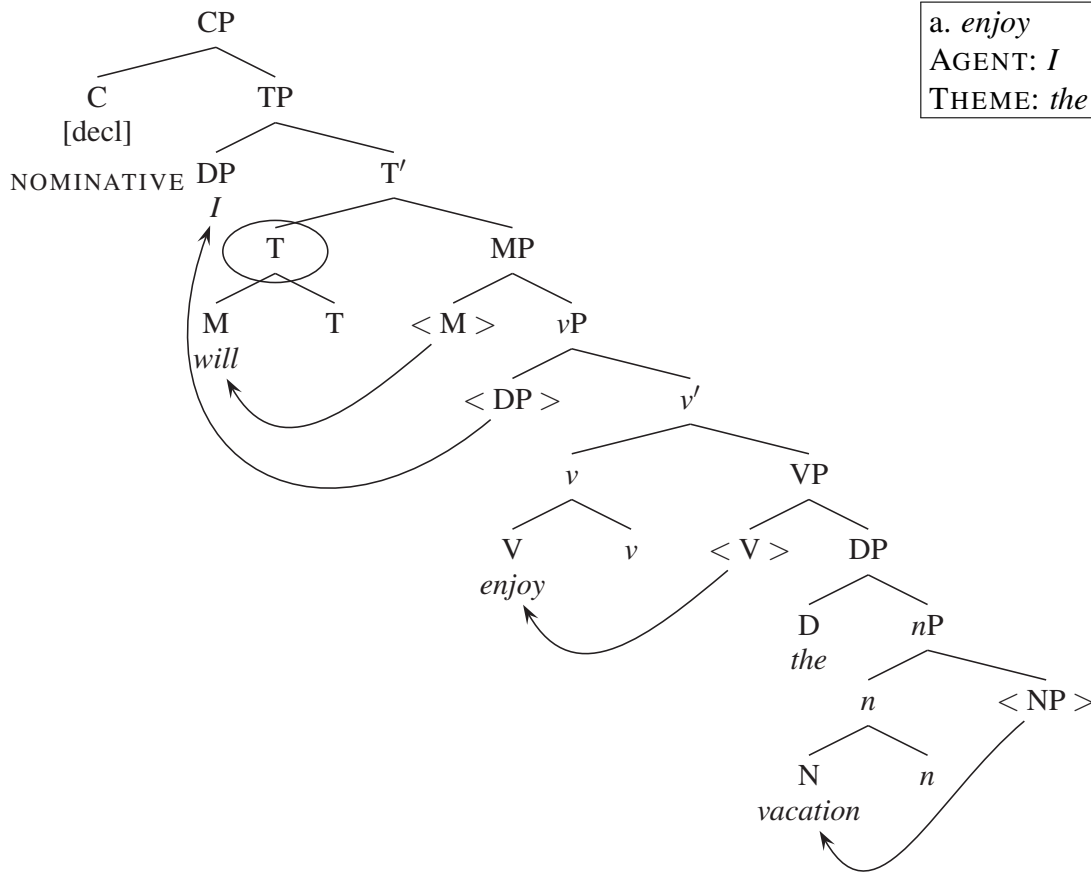
Quite a few people made *the incompetent mechanic* start off in the specifier of *vP*, which is where Agents and Experiencers go, when it should have been in the specifier of *VP*, which is where Themes go. However, if I'd already taken a point off in part (a) for calling *the incompetent mechanic* an Experiencer, I didn't that point off again (since the tree matched what you'd put for part (a)).

People overall seemed to fare better on this tree. There were quite a number of people who had it perfect.

Average: 8.8 (2.0)

Example for Problem 1: *I will enjoy the vacation.*

b.,c.



a. *enjoy*
AGENT: *I*
THEME: *the vacation*

Problem 2. (6 points) Suppose that there is a dialect of English, Snighel, that has all the same properties as English does (including vocabulary), except for the following:

- a. When valued by T, [*uInfl*:] is *not* valued as strong (not even for auxiliaries).
- b. Any silent D (\emptyset_{GEN} , $\emptyset_{\text{PLURAL}}$, \emptyset_{MASS} , ...) has a strong [*un**] feature (causing head-movement).

Write the Snighel translations of the following two English sentences (that is, put the words in the correct order for Snighel). *Note:* Snighel doesn't exist. But it could, in principle.

- (i) Will he have prepared my favorite sandwich?
Does he will have prepared my sandwich favorite?
- (ii) Depressing books of poetry were not assigned.
Books depressing of poetry did not be assigned.

As is often the case with these, I got nearly every permutation imaginable as answers here. However, it was a bit easier to assign partial credit this year for some reason, because it was easier to see where individual errors were.

On *do*-support. There were exactly two people who used *do* here. However, the rules were that this is just like English, and we have the rules in English for *do*-support, so the *do* should have been there. Because it was nearly universally omitted, I've given you all a pass on this. Those two of you who used *do*-support, an extra credit point for that.

I've provided the trees justifying the answers I gave here. The two aspects of Snighel are (a), auxiliaries do not raise to T, and, (b), the little *n* moves (*head-moves*) to D whenever D is silent.

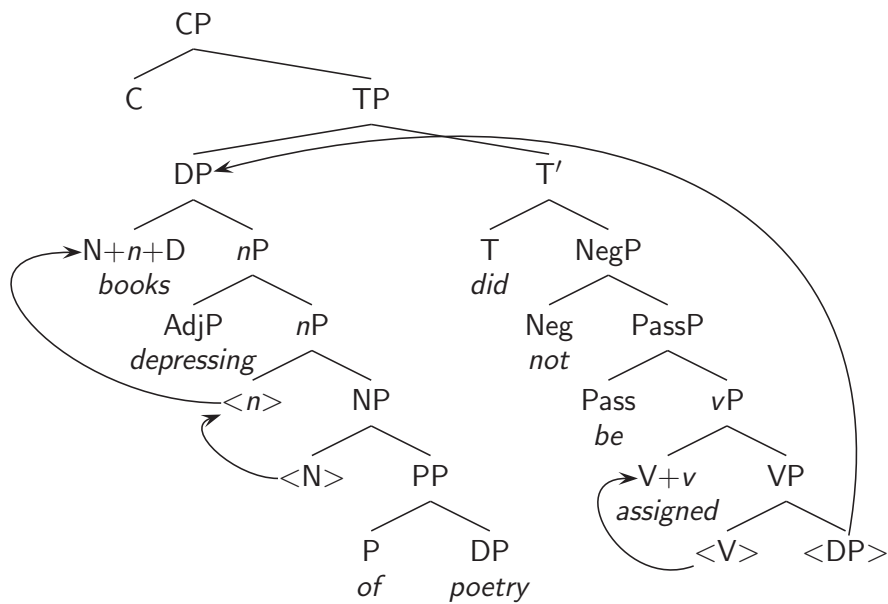
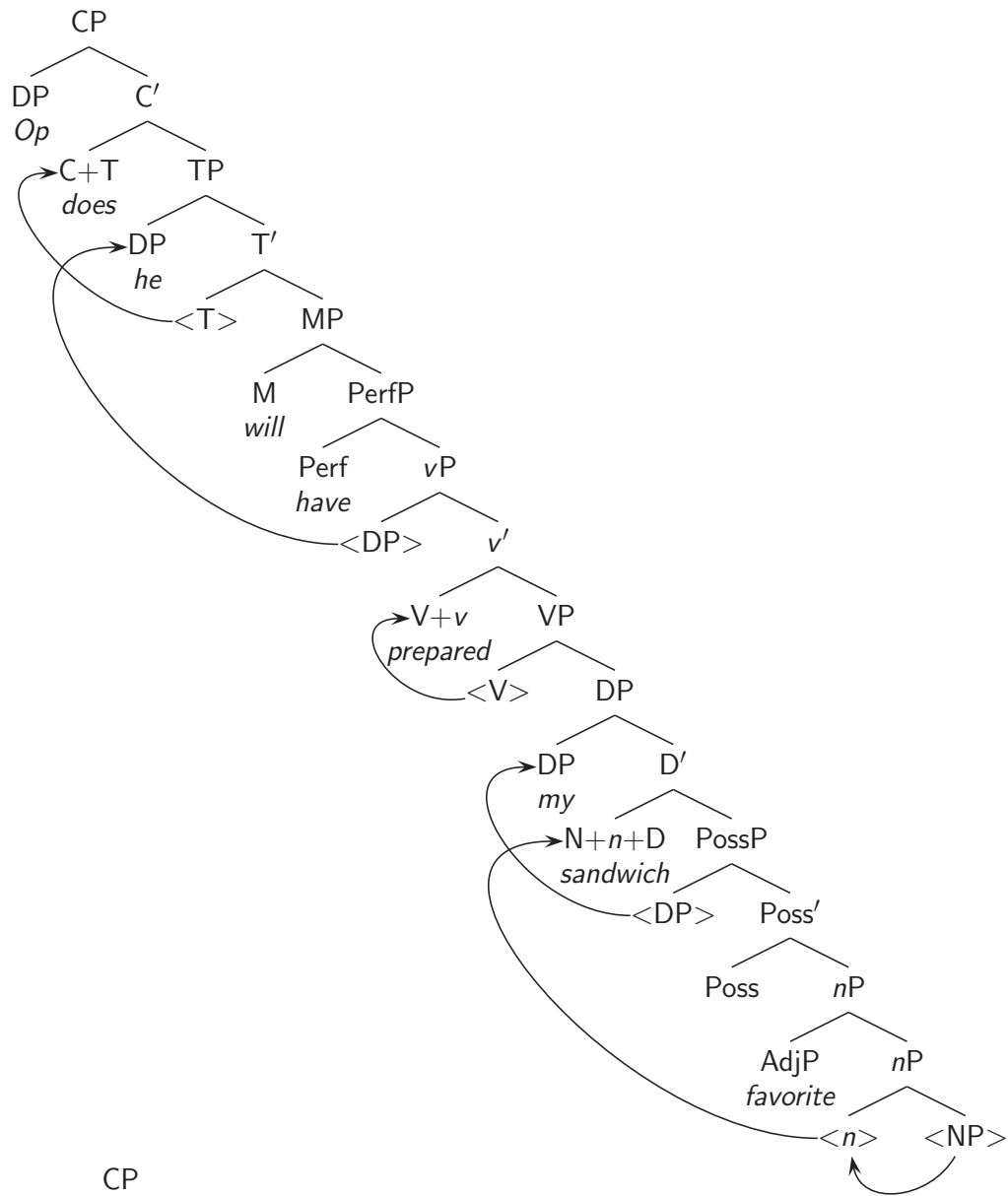
On the DP issue: in both full DPs here, there are silent Ds. In *depressing books of poetry*, we have $\emptyset_{\text{PLURAL}}$ and in *my favorite sandwich*, we have \emptyset_{GEN} . So in both cases, the little *n* should move up to D. Note that D precedes the *nP* and the adjectives *depressing* and *favorite* should be adjoined to *nP*, so that means that the head noun will wind up preceding the adjective. Hence: *books depressing of poetry*. As for the sandwich, the possessor *my* still moves into the specifier of DP, which still precedes D, so we have *my sandwich favorite*.

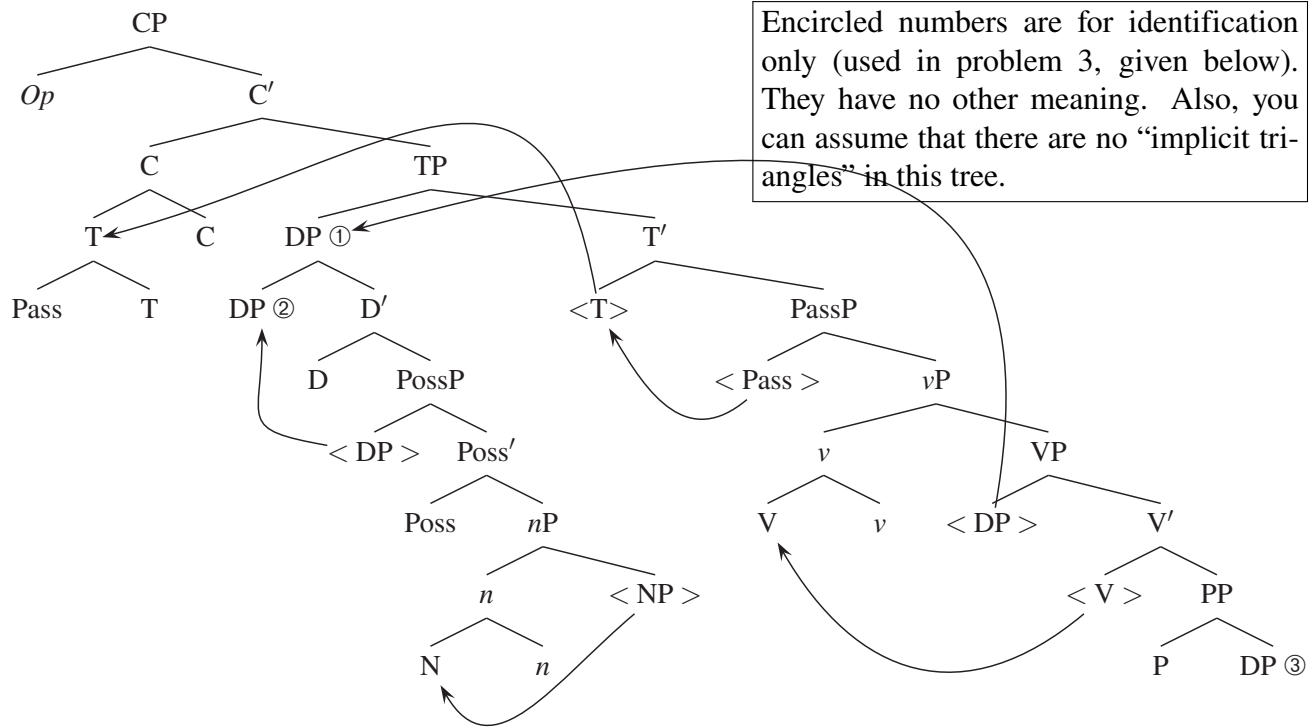
One interesting response I got here had *me sandwich's favorite*, which points to something that I want to highlight. Although we played very briefly with the idea that the D in possessive constructions was itself the 's morpheme, the fact that we don't have an 's in things like *my book* brought us to suppose that the D in possessive constructions is actually silent, and the 's is just the way genitive case is realized. However, if D had been 's, *me sandwich's favorite* would actually be correct if we assume that *sandwich's* arises from the *N+n sandwich* adjoined to the D 's. Except, at least, for the fact that if the D is pronounced as 's then it isn't silent after all, and so shouldn't have attracted *n* anyway.

The fact that auxiliaries do not move to T means that the modal *will* and the auxiliary *were* remain in their original position. In the first sentence, when T moves to C, that means that T is stranded, its sister is not *vP*, and so we should have *does*. Note that it is *does* and not *did* because the modal was *will* and not *would*, although perhaps this is a bit murky because it requires assuming that *will* is also the tenseless form. Maybe it should have been *does not woll he...*, if we assume that *woll* is the base form from which *will* (present) and *would* (past) is derived, but that's a bit out there. Anyway, apart from *do*-support, this means that *will* should follow the subject *he*. In the second sentence, *were* does not move past *not* to T, again leaving T stranded, and resulting in *did*. *Do*-support aside, *be* needs to follow *not*, and where people did not insert *do*, it should presumably wind up in the order *not were*.

There were a few kind of strange reversals of *of poetry*, but Snighel is not head final, so I'm not sure where that came from. To the extent that I could see that part of the answer was correct, even where one or another thing was overlooked, I tried to assign partial points here.

Averages: i) 1.7 (1.2), ii) 2.0 (1.0)





Problem 3. (14 points) Concerning the tree above, on each of the following statements, write T if it is true, or F if it is false.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> F DP ① is an Agent. | i. <input type="checkbox"/> T DP ③ was Merged with P to check a [μ D*] feature. |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> T DP ② is a pronoun. | j. <input type="checkbox"/> F T was merged with PassP to check a [μ Pass*] feature of T. |
| c. <input type="checkbox"/> F D' is adjoined to DP ②. | k. <input type="checkbox"/> T P values the case feature of DP ③ as accusative. |
| d. <input type="checkbox"/> F DP ① c-commands Poss. | l. <input type="checkbox"/> F C values the case feature of DP ① as accusative. |
| e. <input type="checkbox"/> T DP ② c-commands Poss. | m. <input type="checkbox"/> F Poss values the case feature of DP ② as genitive. |
| f. <input type="checkbox"/> F DP ③ is the specifier of P. | n. <input type="checkbox"/> T Pass values the [μ Infl:] feature of v . |
| g. <input type="checkbox"/> T DP ① is the specifier of T. | |
| h. <input type="checkbox"/> T TP is the complement of C. | |

Average: 12.1 (1.7). There was a big problem with (g), in that when I said “specifier of T” people took this to be wrong because DP ① is the specifier of TP. “The specifier of T” and the “specifier of TP” actually refer to the same thing, but nevertheless I think this was unduly confusing because I pretty much *always* refer to that position as the specifier of TP. So, I just gave everybody credit for (g).

(c) was kind of a trick question. It is false. But if you look at the tree, it does a little bit like an adjunction structure. However, the head of DP ② and the head of DP ① are different—they’re different DPs. I did indeed put this in in order to trip people up, but it did catch quite a few people.

A couple of other notes on these. (j) was false, because the reason that T was merged with PassP was not to check a [μ Pass*] feature, but rather to satisfy the Hierarchy of Projections. And (m) is false because the genitive case feature on a possessor comes not from Poss but from the D (\emptyset_{GEN}).

Problem 4. (4 points) Come up with an English sentence that the tree for problem 3 could be the structure for.

Was my sandwich given to you?

There are a couple of places where people goofed up on this. One major one is the fact that the final DP was not treated as a pronoun. The instructions here say that you can assume that there are no “implicit triangles” in the tree. That is specifically to make it clear that the possessor and the object of the preposition are pronouns. Pronouns are the only DPs we have without internal structure, they are both D and DP. If either the possessor or the object of the preposition had been a full DP, there would have had to be an *n* and N within it.

Another thing which a number of people did is ignored the fact that this is passive. There is a PassP right there in the tree. What it actually is is a passivized ditransitive. Some people used progressive, or perfective, forms. When people did this, I refrained from taking points off for not using a ditransitive if the verb used was unaccusative.

When people did use a passive, quite a number of people treated the goal PP as a *by*-phrase. We know where *by*-phrases go, they adjoin to PassP. And we know that a PP in the position we see it here in this tree must be a Goal, which a *by*-phrase isn't. So, it can't be a *by*-phrase. For people who put a *by*-phrase there, though, I didn't additionally count off for using a regular transitive verb (as opposed to a ditransitive).

There were a few cases where the verb used was transitive, and the PP was not a goal. I mostly counted off for doing this unless there was some degree of plausibility in taking the PP to be a goal.

I think this sentence didn't lend itself to a lot of creativity this time around, and most of the more creative examples I got wound up having an error somewhere, so I'll refrain from including them here.

Average: 2.6 (1.0)

Problem 5. (9 points; 1.5 per sentence x 6 sentences) For each of the ungrammatical sentences below, indicate what principle(s) of grammar is/are violated (there may be more than one).

- **Note:** Pay close attention to the *indices*.
- **Note:** Assume that the pronunciation matches the features: the problems are in the structures, not in the pronunciation of the features.
- **Note:** Principles will be one of: Superiority, *wh*-island, CNP island, Adjunct island, Principle A, Principle B, Principle C, Hierarchy of Projection, ~~Unique θ generalization~~, uninterpretable feature unchecked (name the feature).

Overall average for this problem: 5.0 (1.2)

- i. * Sonia_i promised Jon_j to recuse her_i.

Principle B.

This one should have been straightforward. Points for “Principle B,” and points off for anything else.

- ii. * Who did Trent bite the hand that feeds?

Complex noun phrase violation.

This one was a badly constructed problem. It involves a DP *the hand that feeds* <*who*>, that has a relative clause inside. We didn't really talk about relative clauses. But the problem here is that: if we *had* talked about relative clauses, we would have analyzed them as a CP adjoined inside the DP structure. What that means: this example is actually violating every island violation we

know about. It's an adjunct island, because the relative clause is a CP adjoined inside the DP. It's a *wh*-island because the specifier of that CP is filled with an operator. And it's a complex noun phrase violation because the whole thing is inside a DP. Accordingly: full credit was given for "complex noun phrase violation," since that is what we have talked about, and it is clearly that. Of the 1.5 points assigned to this, I gave 1 point for answers that included the other two island types as well, though. So, "*wh*-island" alone got 1 point, as did "adjunct island."

- iii. * Tony could not be having been monitored.

Hierarchy of Projections.

This one was pretty straightforward, most people got this. What we have here is a verb that is passive, perfective, and progressive, but the auxiliaries are in the wrong order (they are in the order M, Prog, Perf, Pass, but should have been in the order M, Perf, Prog, Pass: *could not have been being monitored*).

- iv. * Pat was persuaded Mary to leave.

Unchecked [*u*case:] feature on *Mary*. (Not counted.)

This was badly constructed enough that I decided to exclude it and (vi) below altogether. Many people said "Unique θ Generalization" here, which kind of sounds good, but isn't actually right. There are a couple of reasons why it isn't right. First, I shouldn't have included it in the list of options at all, because this isn't even really a principle. Adger introduces it, but ultimately derives it from other things. Second, even if it had been a principle, what it regulates is not having too many DPs for the number of θ -roles, but rather having too many θ roles for the number of DPs. *Mary* in (iv) and (vi) represents the case that the Unique θ Generalization does not cover.

The real answer, both for (iv) and for (vi) is that *Mary* doesn't get case. There is an unchecked [*u*case:] feature on *Mary*. If you got this answer—exactly—then you got an extra credit point for it. But otherwise, this sentence was basically excluded from the computation.

- v. * Who did John know whether Mary gave a trophy to?

***Wh*-island.**

This was straightforward. A number of people said this was an "adjunct island," but it is not. A few people said "Superiority" here as well, but it is also not that.

- vi. * John seems Mary to be happy.

Unchecked [*u*case:] feature on *Mary*. (Not counted.)

See the note for sentence (iv), which also applies to this one.