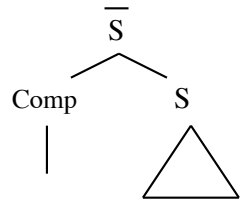


VII. Nonfinite Clauses

Nonfinite clauses

Nonfinite clauses have verbs that are not marked for person, number, or tense. They often lack overt subjects and occur in embedded positions. English does not admit nonfinite clauses as main clauses. The AUX of nonfinite clauses is marked [-tense] and Comp is empty when there is no explicit complementizer.



Types of verbs

The verbal element in a nonfinite clause may take four forms:

- bare infinitive
- *to*-infinitive
- *-ing* participle
- *-en* participle
- *for* NP *to* infinitive

PRO

PROs are phonetically null NPs. They can be ‘indefinite’ or ‘controlled’. A ‘controlled’ PRO has a co-referent in the upper clause. An ‘indefinite’ PRO does not have a co-referent in the upper clause and stands for a general ‘you’ or ‘one’. The abbreviation PRO (big pro) stands for ‘null pronoun’ whereas ‘pro’ (little pro) stands for an overt pronoun.

- They want_S [PRO to travel]. (controlled PRO)
- We persuaded the children_S [PRO to eat vegetables]. (controlled PRO)
- This book is too complicated [PRO to understand]. (indefinite PRO)

Bare infinitives

Bare infinitives occur in two types of constructions: causative constructions and with verbs of perception. The subject is expressed.

Causative constructions

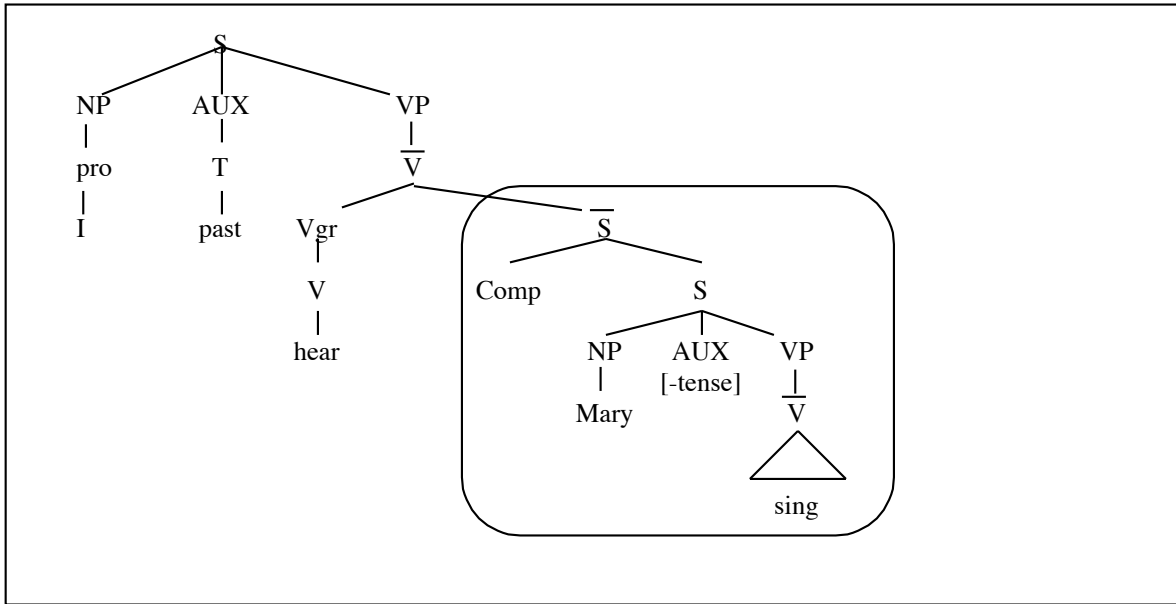
- John’s parents made_S [him do his homework every night].
- They let_S [us return late].

Verbs of perception

- I saw_S [them get on the train].
- I heard_S [Mary sing a song].

Example

I heard Maria sing.



to-infinitive

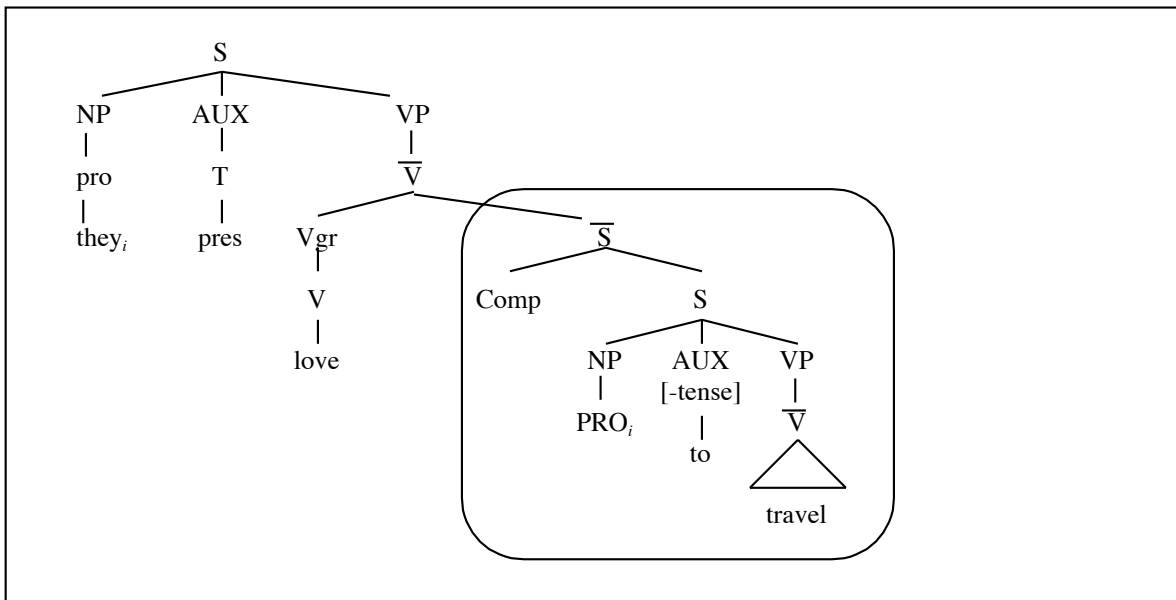
In *to-inf* clauses, AUX includes *to*. AUX can also include ‘perfect’, ‘progressive’, ‘passive’. Modals are excluded in nonfinite clauses because they do not have nonfinite forms. Some of the verbs that command *to*-infinitive are: *want, wish, love, hate, appear, seem, expect, happy, sad, anxious, etc.*

We want_S[you to be happy].

They expected_S[us to have been doing the readings].

I hate_S[to be doing this to you].

They love to travel



-ing participle

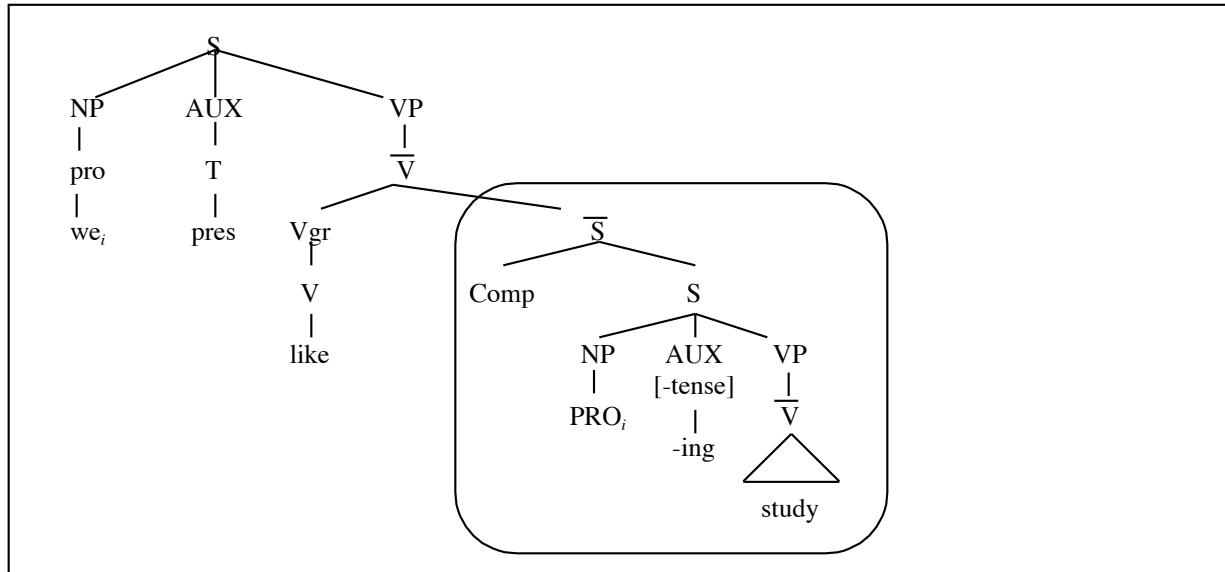
In *-ing*-participle clauses, AUX includes *-ing*. It may also include ‘perfect’, ‘progressive’, ‘passive’. Modals are excluded because they do not have *-ing* forms.

We like [doing trees].

_S[Having missed their plane], they arrived late.

Example

We like studying.

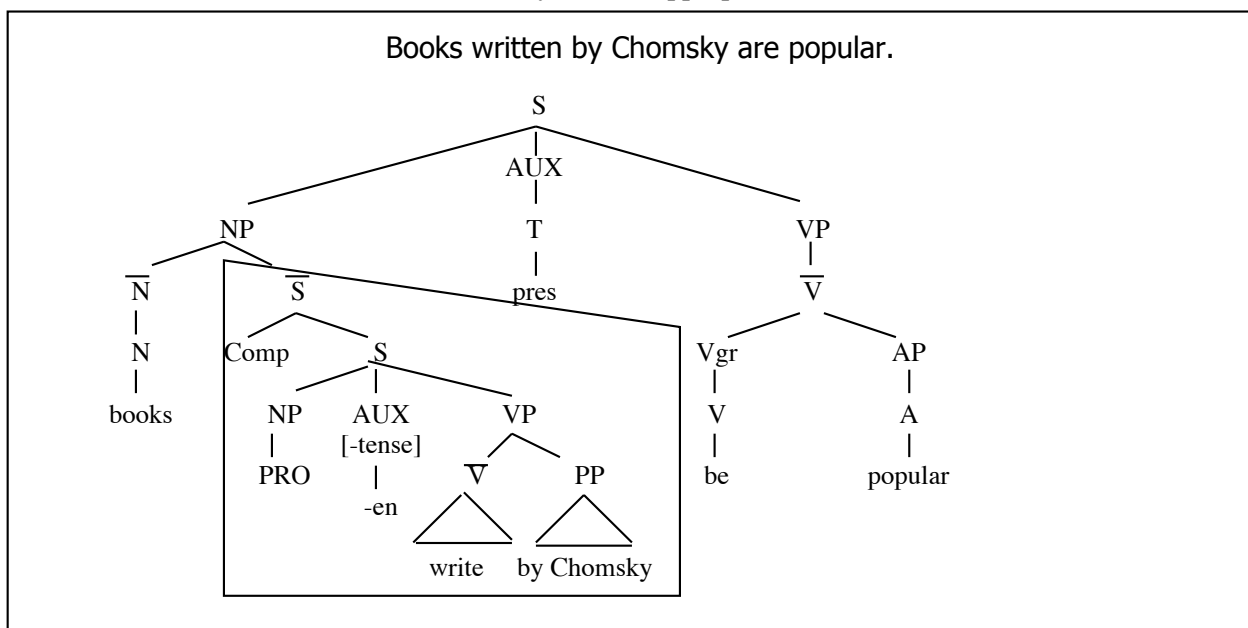


-en participle

It has only one form, the simple passive. (Modals do not have *-en* forms.)

The car _S[driven by Mary] is fast.

This book, _S[written in the 17th century], is still appropriate.



Complementizers

Nonfinite clauses do not usually have complementizers. However, there are two nonfinite clause complementizers: *for* NP *to*-infinitive and *wh* infinitive. The complementizer *for* occurs in a *to*-infinitive clause with a nonnull subject (the subject is expressed).

s [For the teacher to have said that] is surprising.

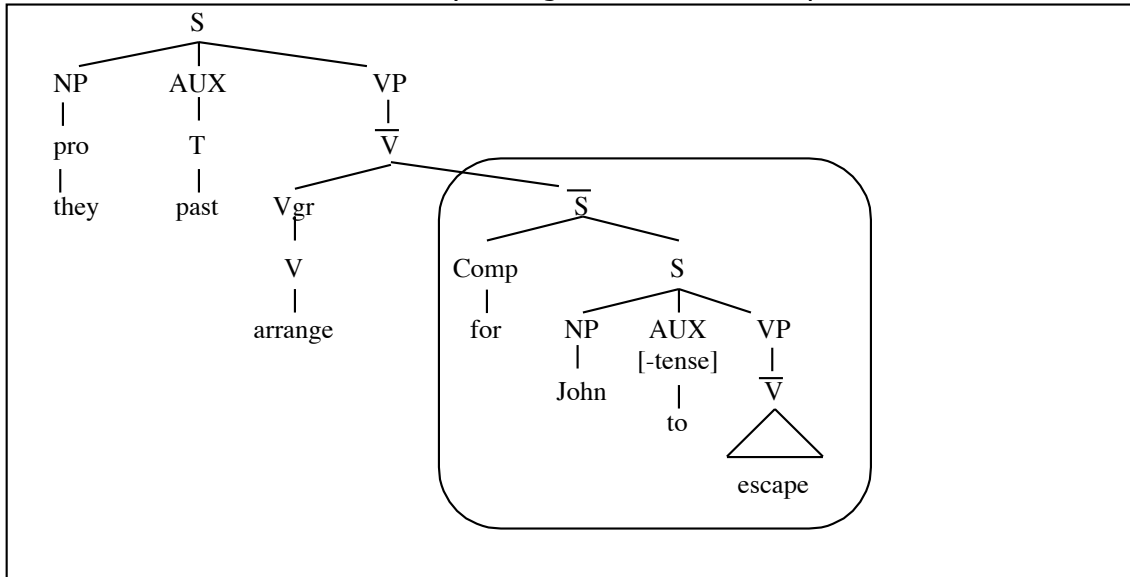
They are anxious s [for you to accept].

In *wh*-infinitive, the *wh* word is fronted in the complementizer position.

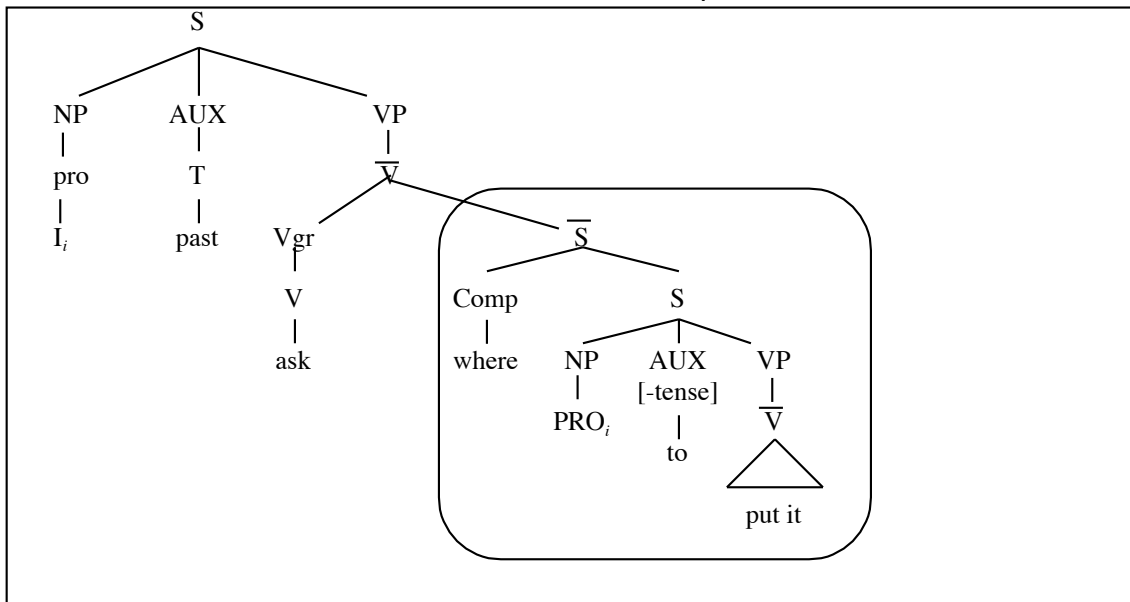
s [What students PRO to reward *t*] is our major concern.

We don't know s [what PRO to do *t*].

They arranged for John to escape.



I asked where to put it.



Homework

Underline the embedded clauses and a) label the verbs, b) indicate if PRO is present, and c) indicate if PRO is controlled or indefinite.

1. The question is too difficult for Bill to answer.
2. She made him do his homework.
3. I wondered when to call them.
4. Doing homework every night is a chore.
5. Do you want to do lunch?
6. I saw a picture painted by Renoir.

Homework

Draw the tree structure for the following sentence.

We expected Paul to succeed.

Functions of Nonfinite Clauses

Subject

Running a small business is difficult.

Su_S [PRO *-ing* run a small business] is difficult.

To run a small business is difficult.

Su_S [PRO to run a small business] is difficult.

It is difficult to run a small business.

eSu It is difficult_S [PRO to run a small business].

For him to be well prepared is important.

Su_S [For him to be well prepared] is important.

It is important for him to be well prepared.

eSu It is important_S [for him to be well prepared].

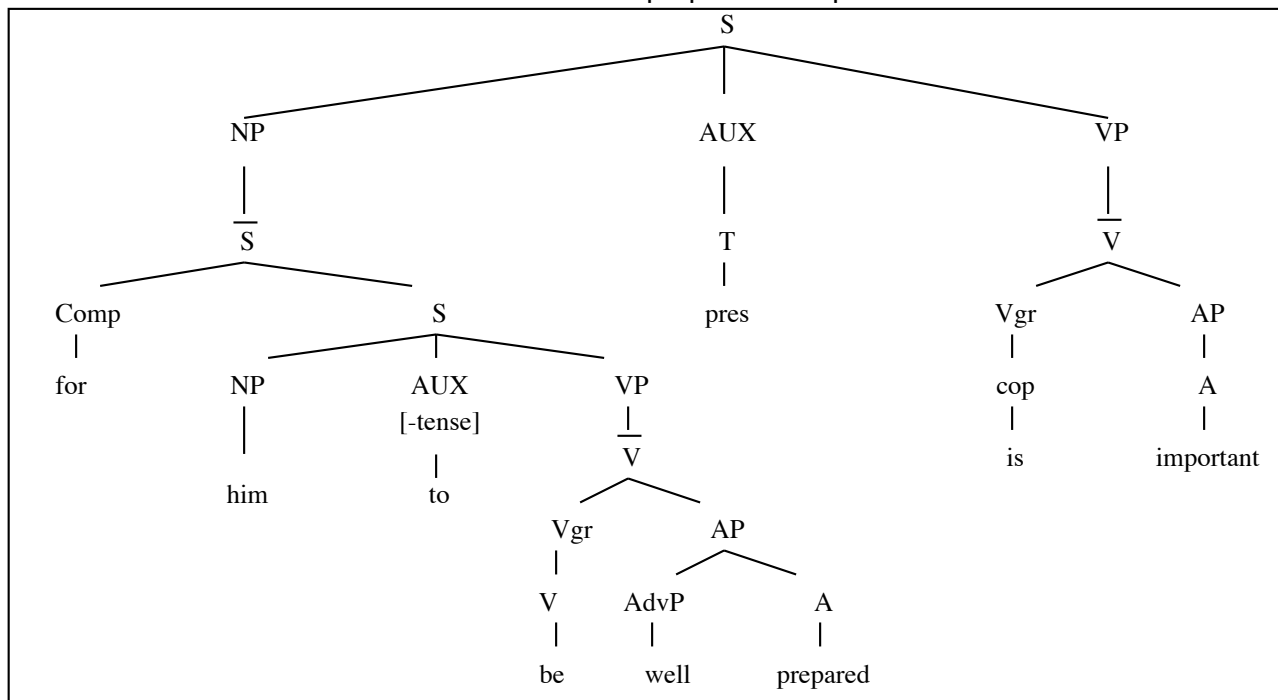
What to do with her money preoccupied her.

Su_S [What PRO to do *t* with her money] preoccupied her.

It preoccupied her what to do with her money.

eSu It preoccupied her_S [what PRO to do *t* with her money].

For him to be well prepared is important



Homework

Rewrite the sentences doing the following: a) bracket the subject clauses, b) insert PRO or trace if needed, and c) indicate if PRO is controlled or indefinite.

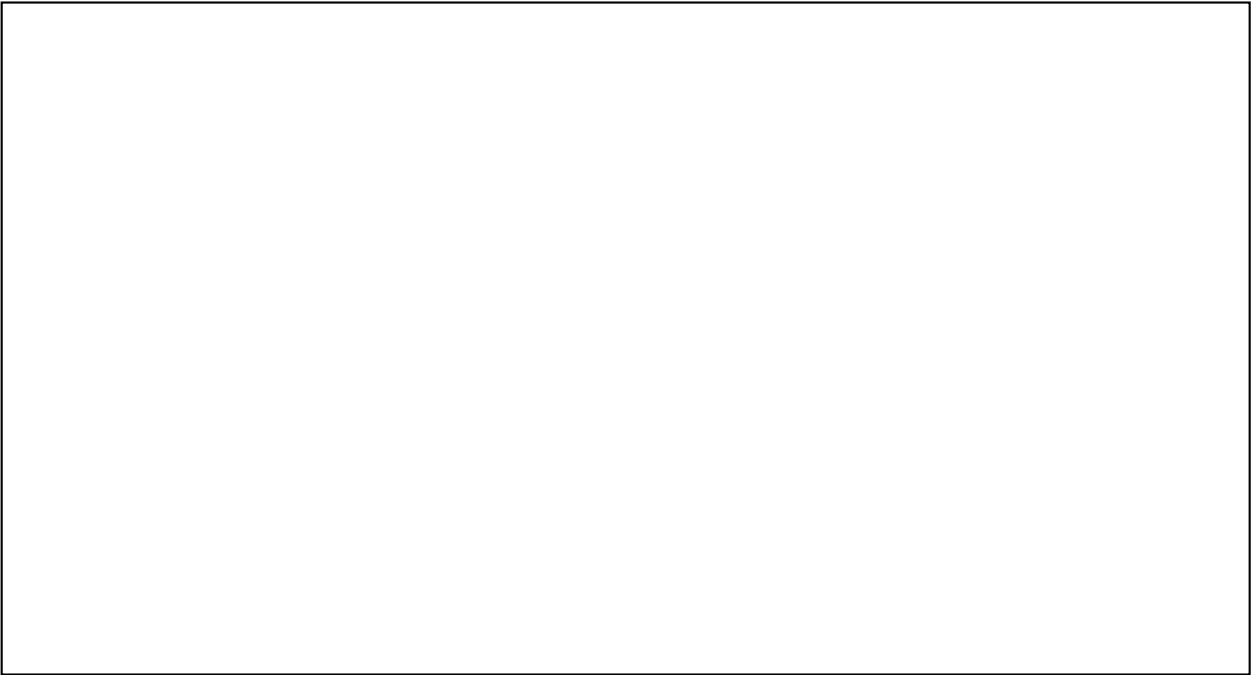
1. Running five miles is not difficult.
2. It is exhausting running the marathon.
3. They wonder what to do with the money.
4. What to say in such circumstances is a delicate matter.
5. It should not be a problem for you to finish on time.

6. We want to finish on time.
7. She gave John the book to return.

Homework

Draw the tree structures for the following sentences.

Studying at night can be exhausting.



What to reply is not easy.



Subject Complement

Her first job was selling computers.

SC Her first job was S [PRO *-ing* sell computers].

What you must do is rewrite the sentence.

SC What you must do t is S [PRO rewrite the sentence].

Your first task is to read the chapter.

SC Your first task is S [PRO to read the chapter].

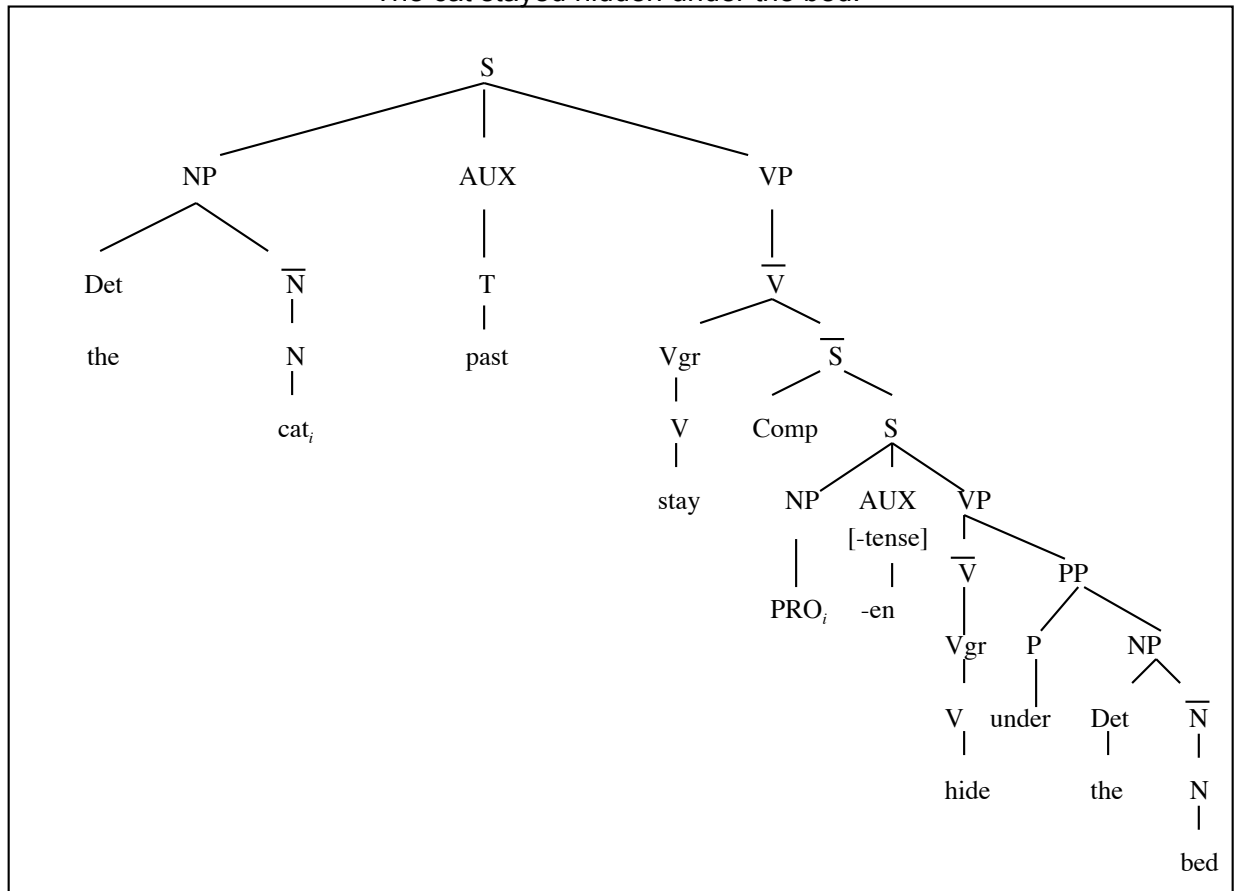
The question is where to eat in this town.

SC The question is S [where PRO to eat in this town $[t]$].

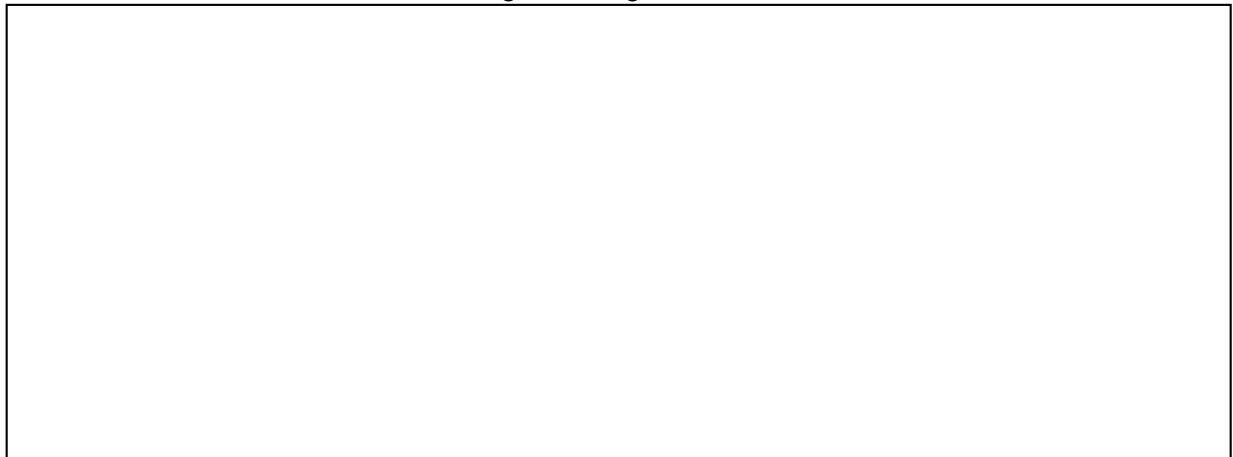
The cat stayed hidden under the bed.

SC The cat stayed S [PRO *-en* hide under the bed].

The cat stayed hidden under the bed.



I forgot locking the door.



Complement of Adjective

He is happy attending school.

AC He is happy_S[PRO -ing attend school].

He is determined to do well.

AC He is determined_S[PRO to do well].

We are anxious for the semester to end.

AC We are anxious_S[for the semester to end].

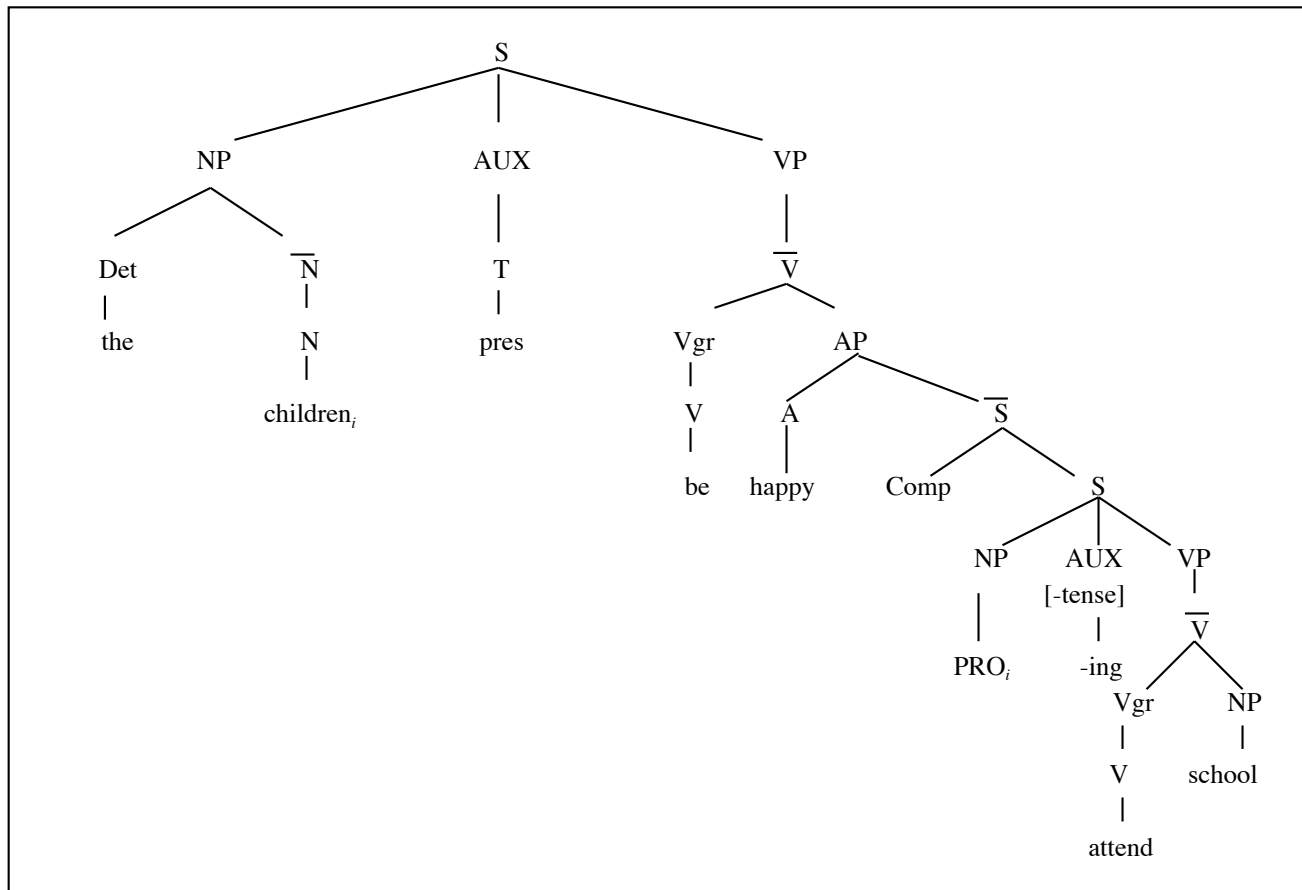
The game is enjoyable for children to play.

AC This game is enjoyable_S[for children to play [t]].

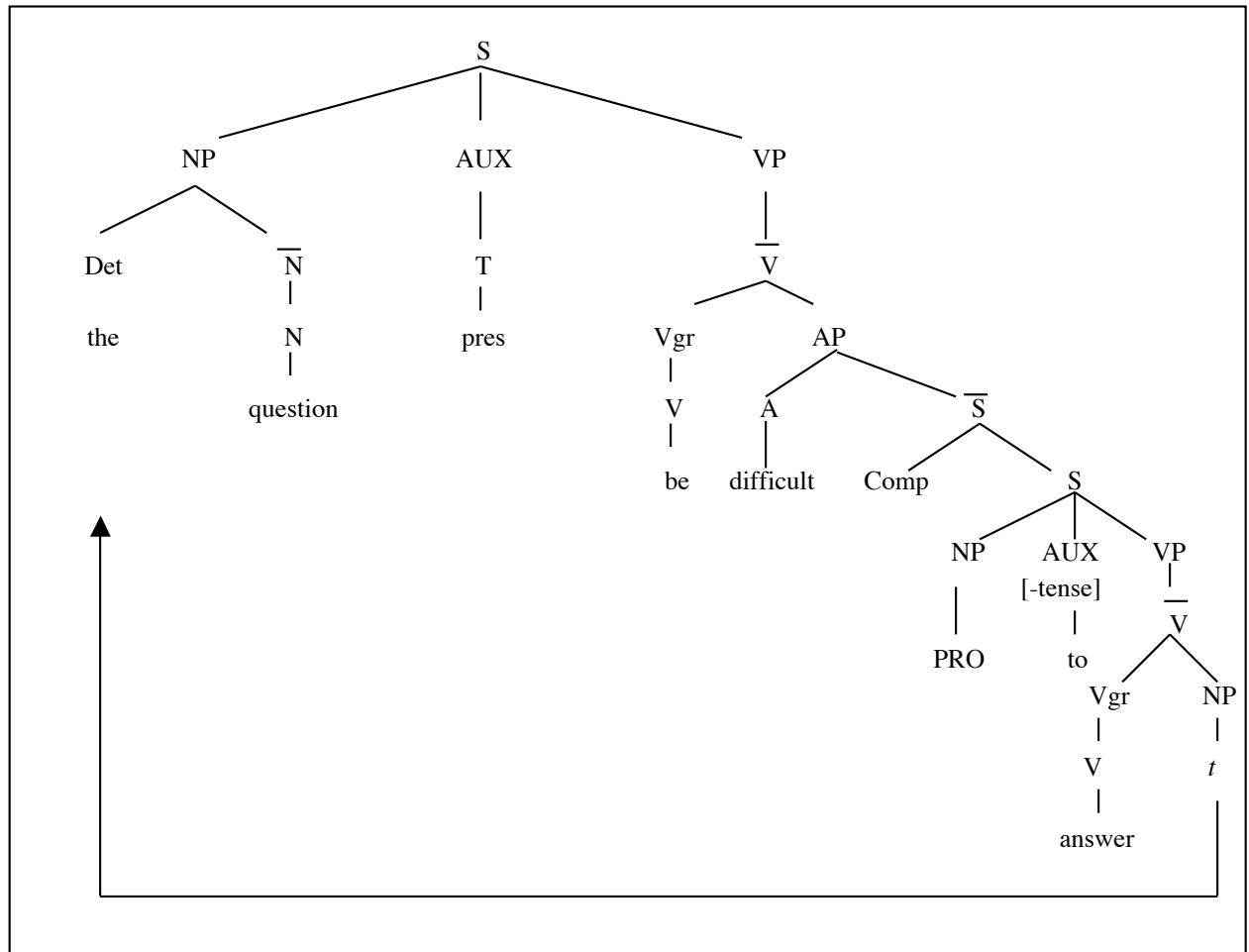
Two classes of Adjectives

1. In one case, the subject PRO is controlled by the subject of the upper clause. Some adjectives are: *determined* - *eager* - *unwilling* - *happy* - *quick* - *likely* - *afraid* - *able* - *anxious* - *hesitant* - *furious* - *liable* - *reluctant* - *bound* - *delighted*.
2. In the other case, the subject PRO is not controlled and the adjective allows extraposition. Some of the adjectives are: *easy* - *hard* - *tough* - *boring* - *difficult* - *impossible* - *tiresome* - *enjoyable*

The children are happy attending school.



The question is difficult to answer.



Homework

Bracket the embedded clauses and a) indicate the type of verbs in the clauses, b) the functions of the embedded clauses, and c) include PRO and trace if necessary.

1. I am delighted to meet you.
2. It was nice meeting you.
3. Jane('s) doing her homework is surprising.
4. The children stayed hidden in the tree house.
5. For anyone to say that is inconsiderate.

Object of a Preposition

We talked about going to a movie.

OP We talked_{pp}[about_s[PRO *-ing* go to a movie]].
(The PP is Complement of V)

You will find the answer by turning the page.

OP You will find the answer_{pp}[by_s[PRO *-ing* turn the page]].
(The PP is Adjunct Adverbial expressing manner)

The results of studying were noticeable.

OP The results_{pp}[of_s[PRO *-ing* study]] were noticeable.
(The PP is Modifier of N-bar)

He was close to finding the answer.

OP He was close_{pp}[to_s[PRO *-ing* find the answer]].
(The PP is Complement of A)

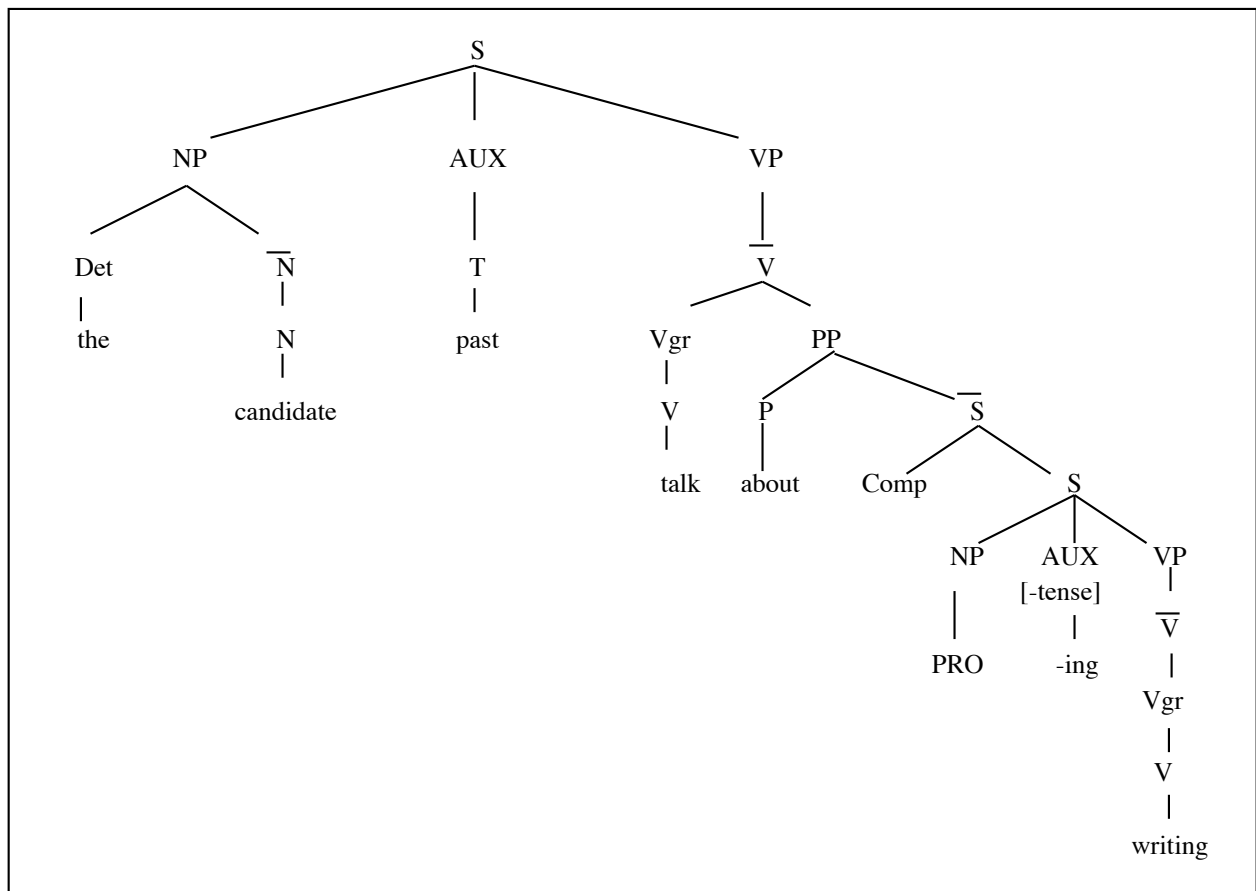
He was happy about Mary('s) being chosen.

OP He was happy_{pp}[about_s[Mary('s) *-ing* be chosen]].
(The PP is Complement of A)

With his parents visiting, he is too busy to attend class.

OP_{pp}[With_s[his parents *-ing* visit]], he is too busy to attend class.
(The PP is Adjunct Adverbial expressing reason)

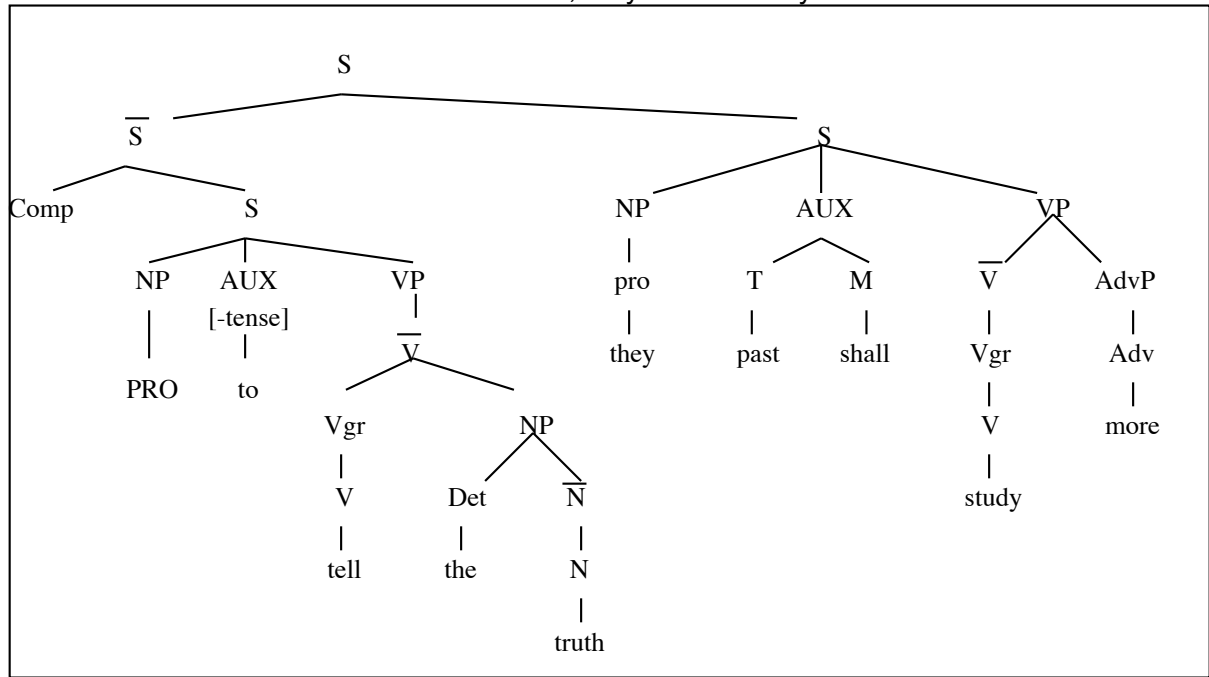
The speaker talked about writing.



Adverbial

To get ahead, you need to work hard.	AA _S [PRO To get ahead], you need to work hard.
He used PPT to illustrate his point.	AA He used PPT _S [PRO to illustrate his point].
For him to win, he must campaign hard.	AA _S [For him to win], he must campaign hard.
The plane arriving late, we missed our connection.	AA _S [The plane <i>-ing</i> arrive late], we missed our connection.
Disappointed by the results, he quitted.	AA _S [PRO <i>-en</i> disappoint by the results], he quitted.
To tell the truth, I am not ready.	DA _S [PRO To tell the truth], I am not ready.
To change the subject, are you coming with us?	DA _S [PRO To change the subject], are you coming with us?
Putting it briefly, your car cannot be repaired.	DA _S [PRO <i>-ing</i> put it briefly], your car cannot be repaired.

To tell the truth, they should study more.



Homework

Bracket the embedded clauses and a) indicate the function of the embedded clauses (conjunct or adjunct adverbials) and b) insert PRO and trace when necessary.

1. Having arrived late, we were not seated until the intermission.
2. The plot discovered, they left town.
3. To keep us informed, they will send a newsletter.
4. For students to get ahead, they need to take their studies seriously.
5. To tell you my honest opinion, this plan will not work.

Modifier of N-bar

The letters for you to mail are on the table.

Mod The letters S_s [for you to mail], are on the table.

The letters lying on the counter are for you.

Mod The letters S_s [PRO *-ing* lie on the counter], are for you.

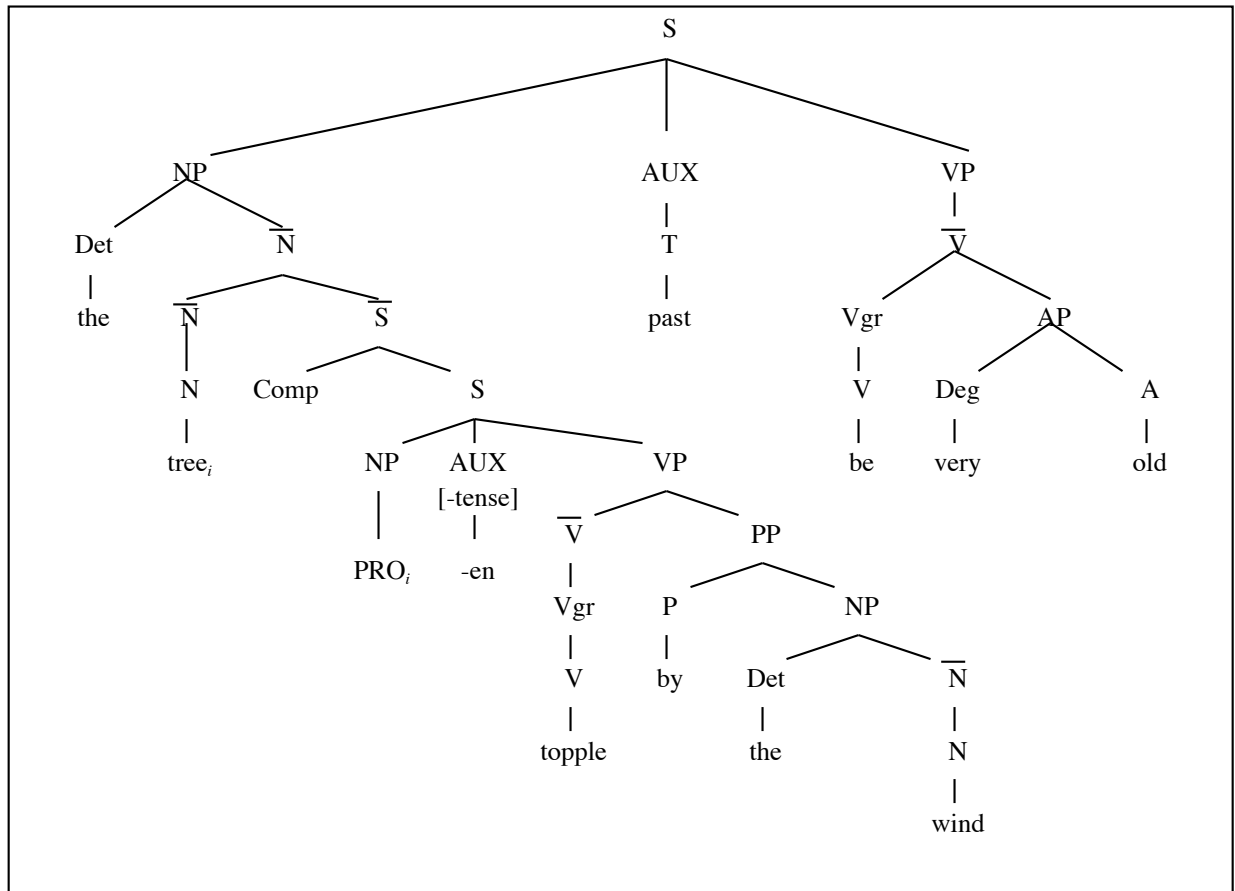
There are many people to feed here.

Mod There are many people S_s [PRO to feed] here.

The book, written by Chomsky, has arrived.

Mod The book S_s [PRO *-en* write *t* by Chomsky] has arrived.

The tree toppled by the wind was very old.



Complement of N-bar

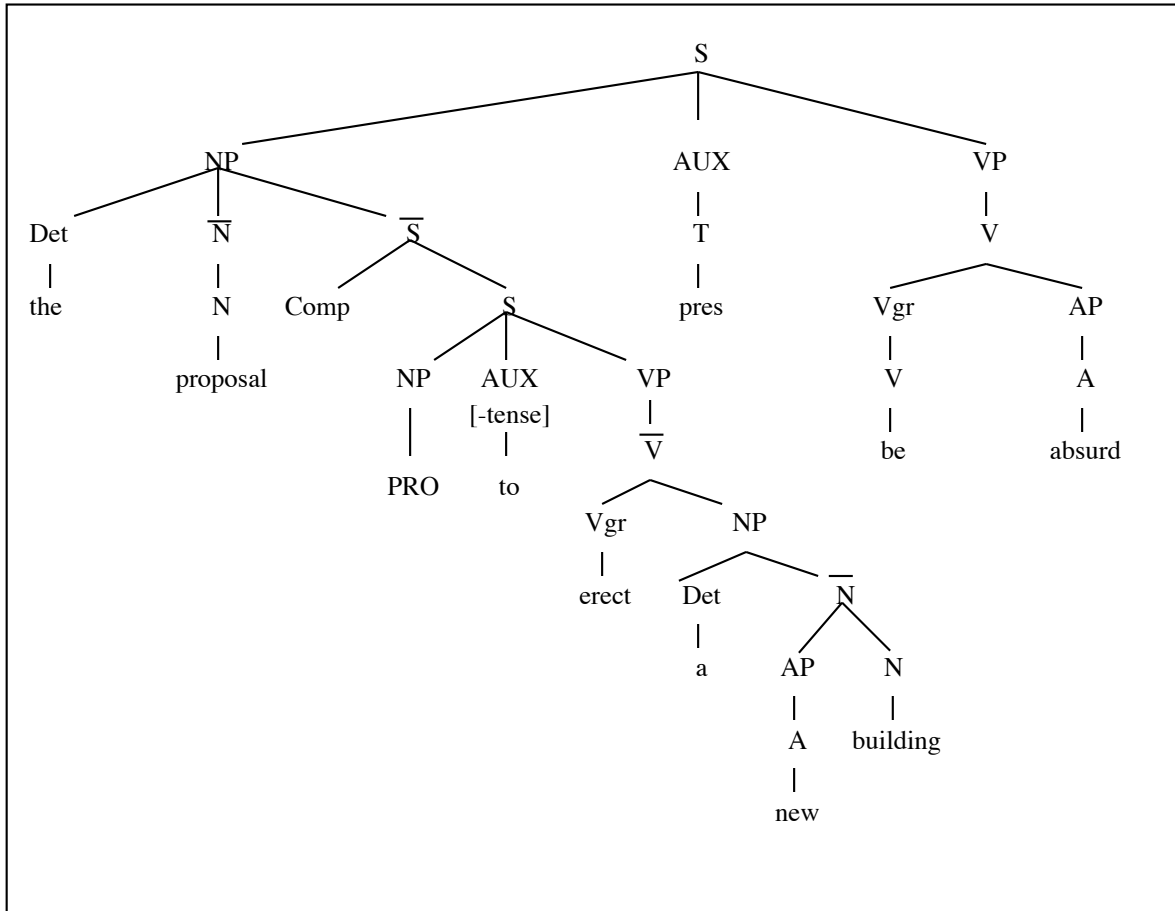
The suggestion to go home was well received.

The suggestion_S[PRO to go home] was well received.

We thought it was good policy to warn them.

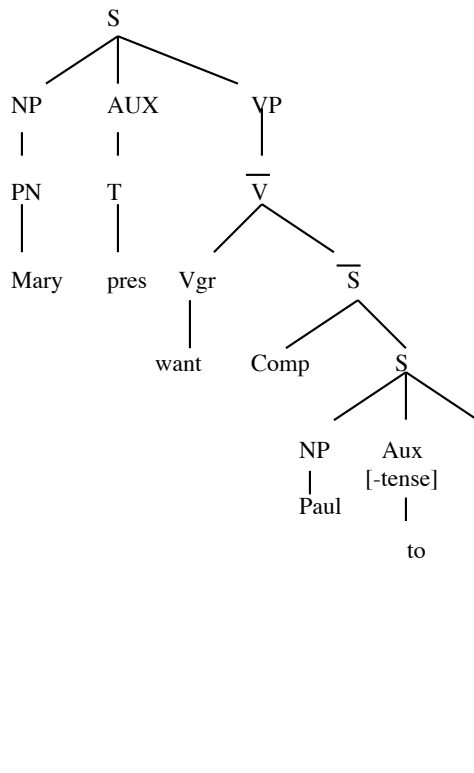
We thought_S[it was good policy_S[PRO to warn them]].

The proposal to erect a new building is absurd.

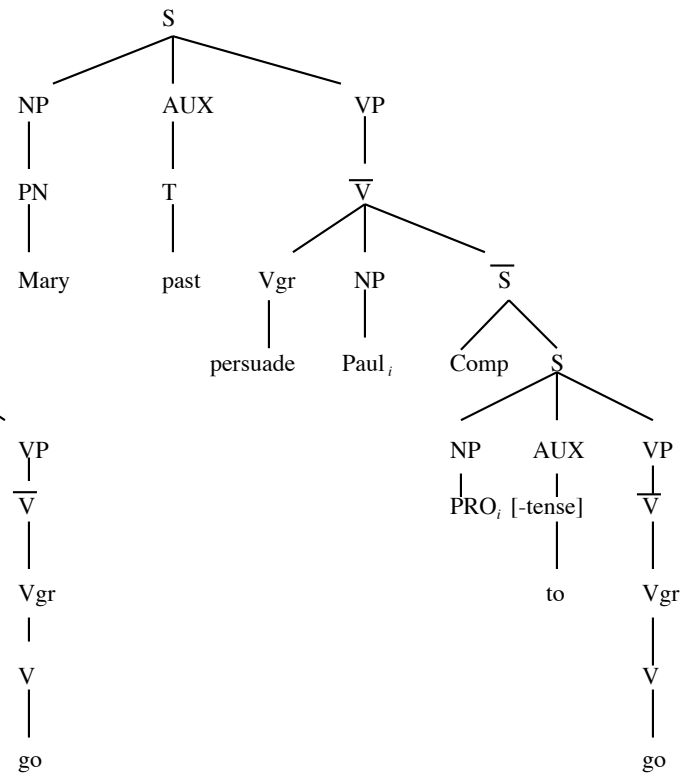


Complement of V

Mary wants Paul to go.



Mary persuaded Paul to go.



<i>want</i> -type verbs	<i>expect</i> -type verbs	<i>persuade</i> -type verbs
<u>V NP to V</u>	<u>V NP to V</u>	<u>V NP to V</u>
wish hope	believe assume	tell order
prefer like	understand consider	ask dare
love hate	suppose know	forbid beg
desire dread	think imagine	coax advise
	find help	convince encourage
<u>V NP V-ing</u>	<u>V NP V-ing or NP V</u>	permit allow
resent	see hear	oblige force
regret	witness observe	cause
<u>V NP V-en</u>	notice feel	<u>V NP V</u>
want have	taste	make
see get		have
need see	<u>V NP V-ing</u>	
hear	discover catch	
	send find	
	leave	