LING2005 Syntax I

Tutorial: X-bar Theory

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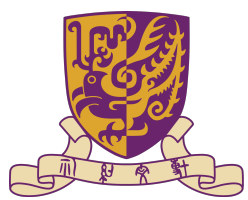
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Based on tutorial handouts by Dr. Zhuo Chen

March 1, 2023



Miscellaneous

- Masks are no longer required in the classroom
  - Thanks for your cooperation in the past few weeks
  - Feel free to wear your masks if you prefer to do so
- Answer key to HW1 is available
  - It will **not** be posted on Blackboard
  - Please kindly don't distribute
  - I will not go through HW1 in the tutorial

Miscellaneous

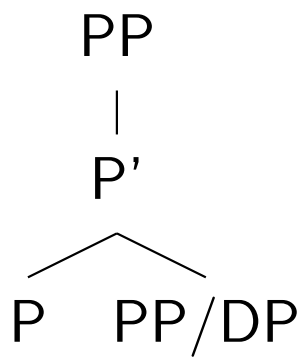
- **Midterm exam this Friday, Mar 3 (in class)**
  - The midterm covers all we've learned till **this tutorial**
  - Prof. Chen will hold extra office hours online tomorrow 5 – 6 pm (see last week's lecture handouts)
  - Please arrive on time
- You can also make appointments with me if you have any questions
  - Available time slots: 15:00 - 17:00 today, 14:00 - 16:00 tomorrow
  - Either in person or online
  - Please send me an email to schedule a meeting first (instead of coming to my office without notice - I might not be there)
- Good luck!

...What's Left in the Last Lecture

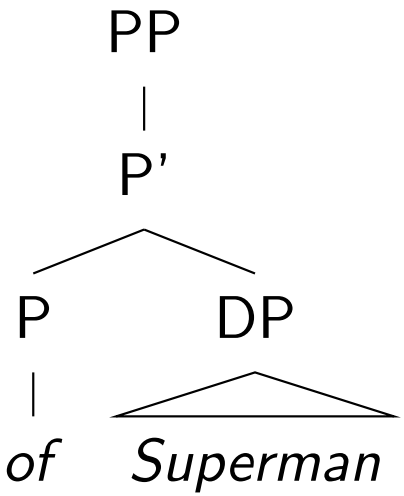
- Prepositional Phrases (PPs)

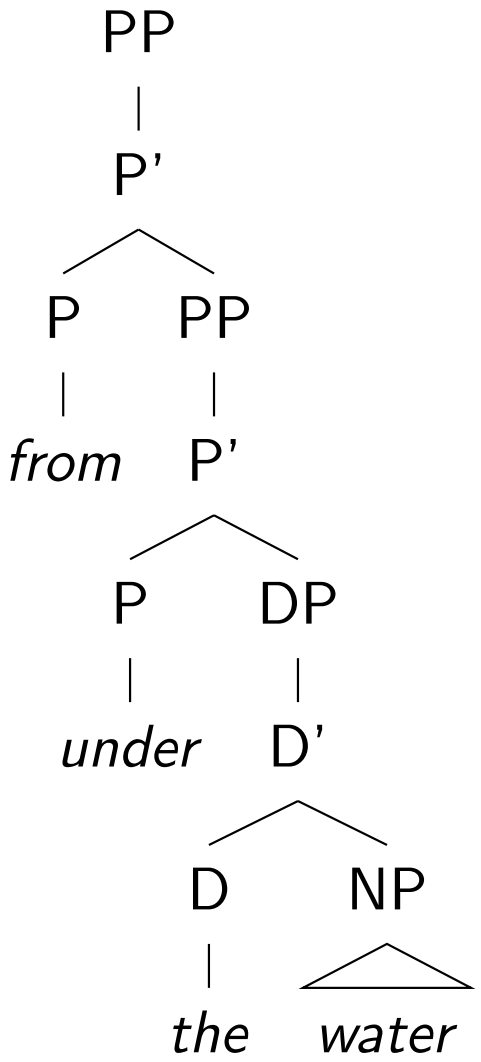
Prepositional Phrases

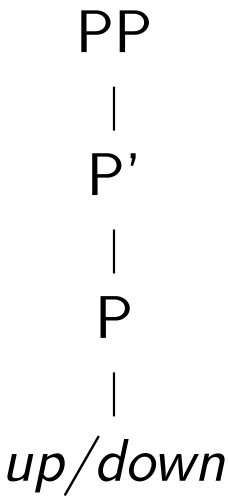
- The X' schema applies to PPs as well:
  - The head: P
  - Complement(s): PPs or DPs
  - Specifier: none (for now)



Prepositional Phrases

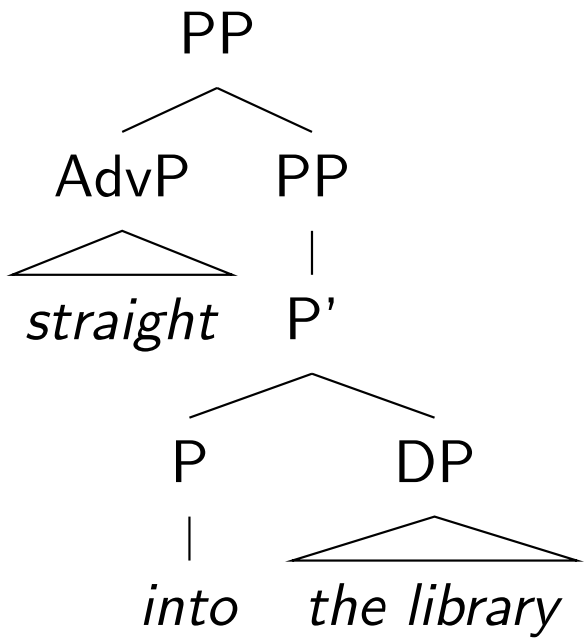






Prepositional Phrases

- PPs allow adjuncts as well



Prepositional Phrases

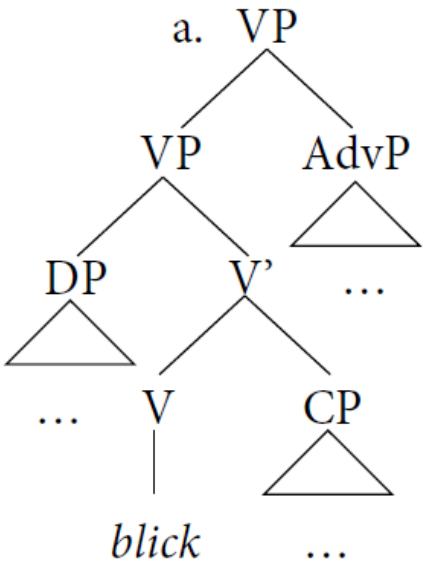
The lexical entries for Ps:

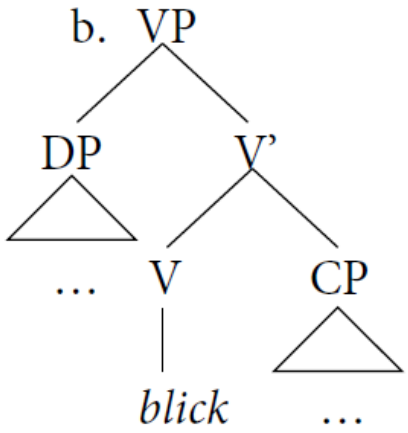
up	P	free	(c-selects DP)	"up" or "up the rope"
of	P	free	c-selects DP	"of linguistics"
from	P	free	c-selects DP or PP	"from Italy" or "from under the rug"

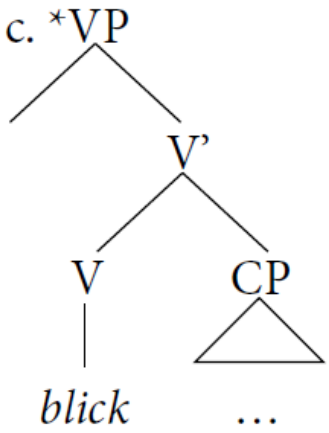
Lexical Entry and X-bar Theory

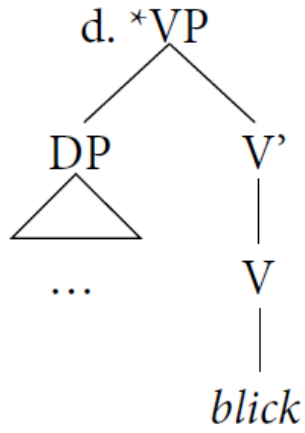
- Consider the following structures that can/cannot be generated by a hypothetical word "blick" in English. Based on the X-bar schema of English and these (un)grammatical structures, please posit a lexical entry for "blick".

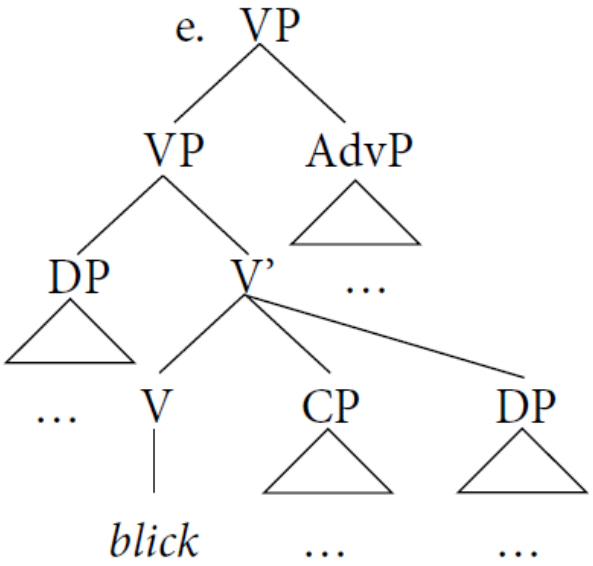
Lexical Entry and X-bar Theory

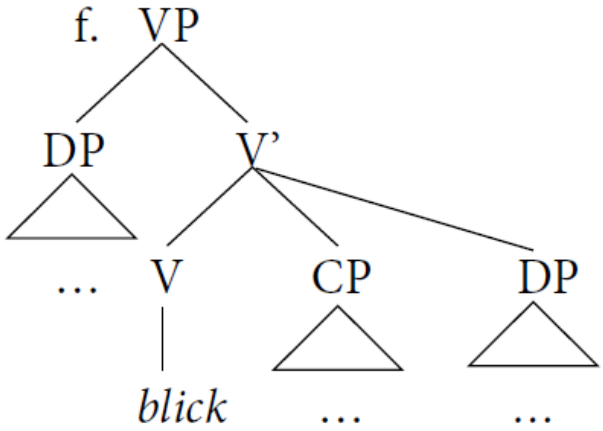


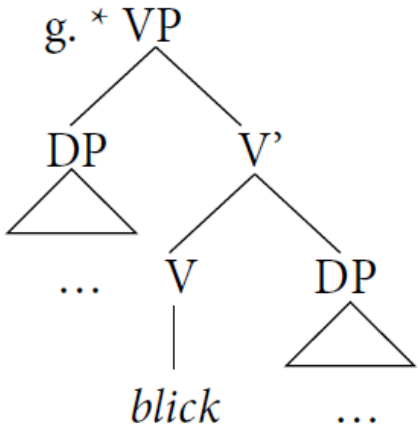












Lexical Entry and X-bar Theory

blick V free selects DP c-selects CP (and DP)

The following is the reasoning which helps us understand the answer and is not necessarily part of the answer:

- (1a) shows that blick selects a DP specifier, and c-selects a CP complement, and the VP headed by blick can take an AdvP adjunct
- (1b) shows that blick selects a DP specifier, and c-selects a CP complement. The contrast between (1a) and (1b) suggests that the AdvP adjunct is optional
- (1c) shows that the structure is ungrammatical if there is no DP specifier within the VP headed by blick, suggesting that blick must select a DP specifier, i.e., it is not optional.
- (1d) shows that the structure is ungrammatical if there is no CP complement of the V head blick, suggesting that blick must select a CP complement, i.e., it is not optional.
- (1e) and (1f) show that blick may c-select a CP complement and a DP complement. Since (1a) and (1b) are both grammatical without a DP complement, the DP complement must be optional.
- (1g) shows that the structure is ungrammatical if there is only a DP complement and no CP complement of the V head blick, confirming that blick must select a CP complement, i.e., it is not optional.

Ambiguous Sentence

The following sentence is two-way ambiguous.

Lady Gaga revealed that she would sing Bad Romance over Zoom.

Ambiguous Sentence

Please identify the two interpretations and provide an unambiguous paraphrase for each reading (make sure that your paraphrase is actually unambiguous!)

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Please identify the two interpretations and provide an unambiguous paraphrase for each reading (make sure that your paraphrase is actually unambiguous!)

1. What Lady Gaga revealed was that she would sing Bad Romance over Zoom.
2. Lady Gaga revealed over Zoom that she would sing Bad Romance.

Ambiguous Sentence

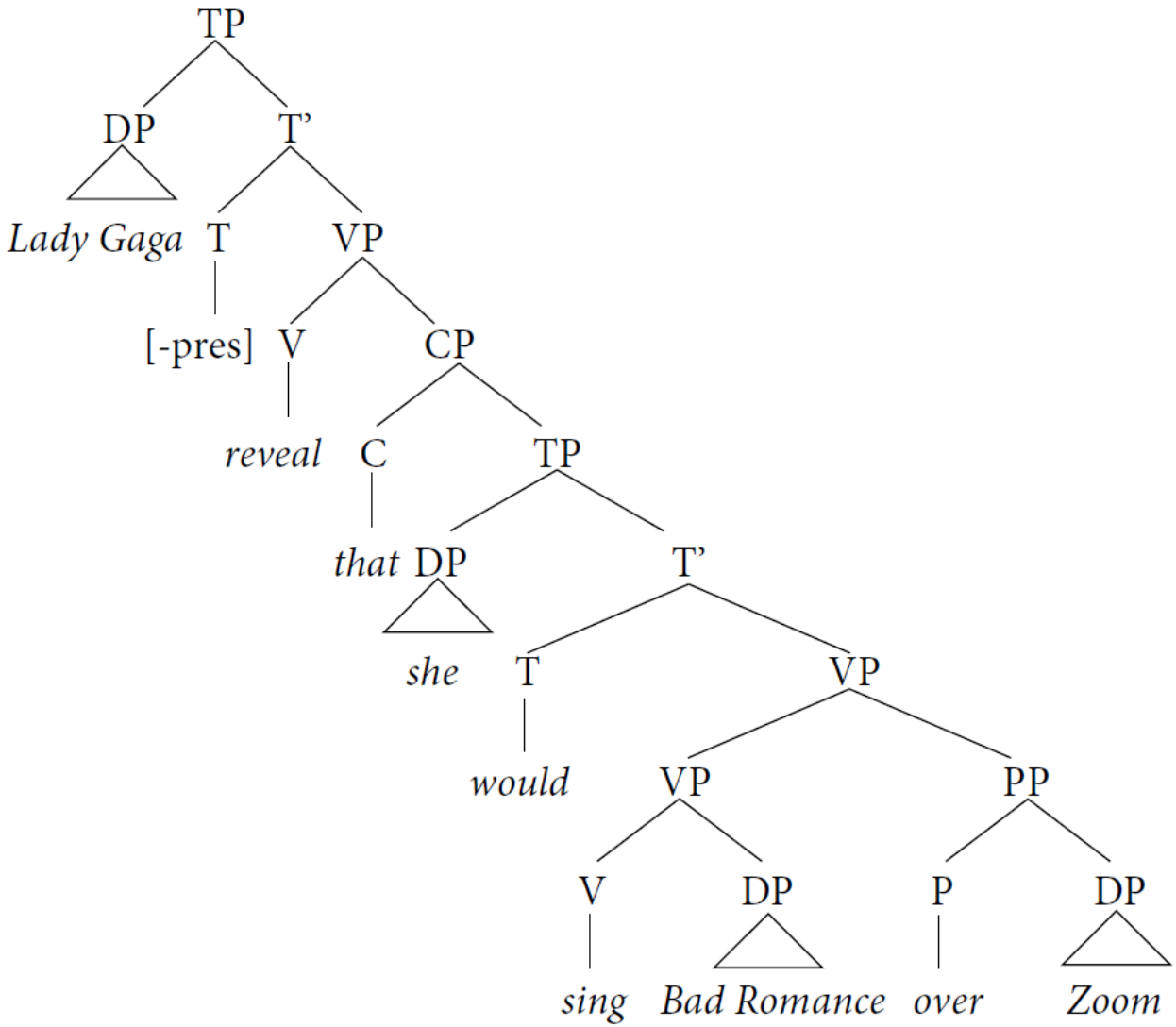
Please draw an X-bar compliant tree corresponding to each of the meanings you have identified (You may use triangles for proper names like *Lady Gaga*, *Bad Romance* and *Zoom*, and pronoun *she*; and you may assume that *over* is a preposition.)

Ambiguous Sentence

Tree for reading (i): What Lady Gaga revealed was that she would sing *Bad Romance* over Zoom.

Note that this paraphrase also involves a pseudo-cleft test which shows that [that she would sing *Bad Romance* over Zoom] is a constituent. This is the case in this tree but not the other one.

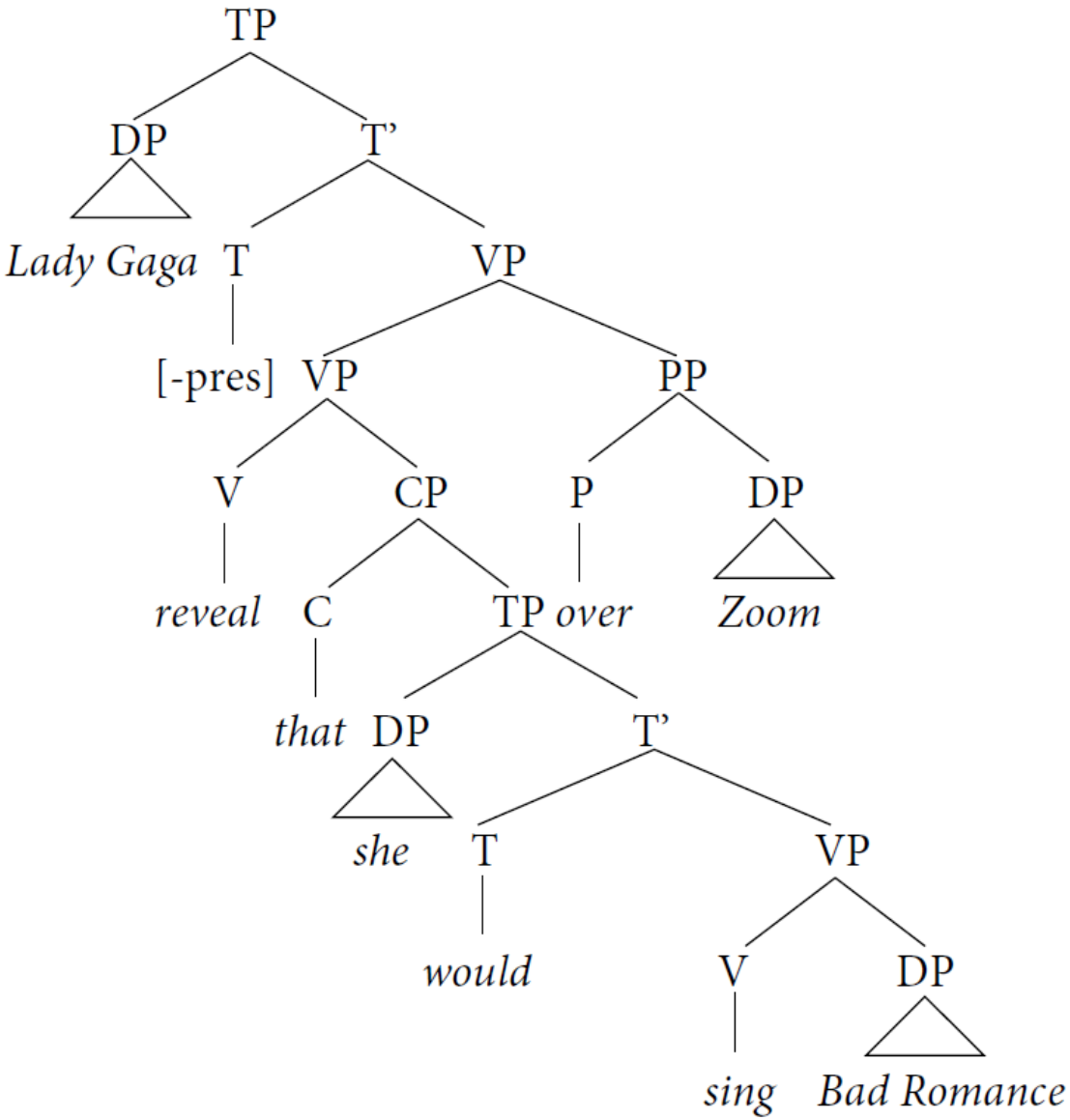
Ambiguous Sentence



Ambiguous Sentence

Tree for reading (ii): Lady Gaga revealed over Zoom that she would sing Bad Romance

Ambiguous Sentence



Attendance

- Please scan the QR code and complete the attendance form