

Tutorial 5

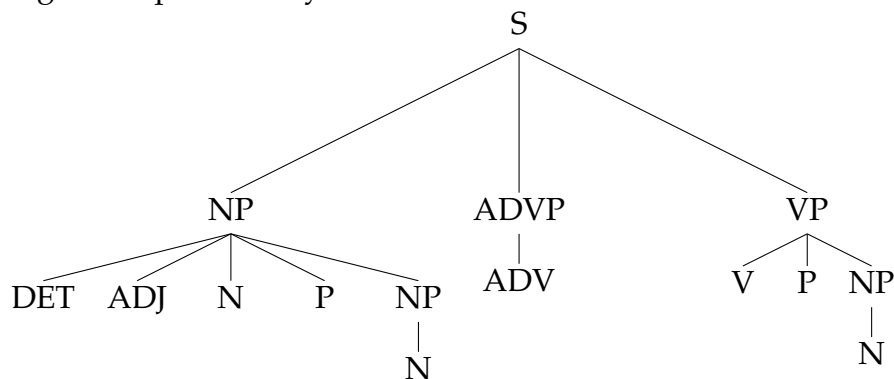
Oct. 15 2013

SYNTAX EXERCISES

Finding errors in trees

The following syntactic trees contain errors. Point them out and draw the correct tree.

1. The little dog in the park loudly barked at me.



Problems

no Adjective Phrase in NP

AdjP → Adj

no PP in either NP

PP → P NP

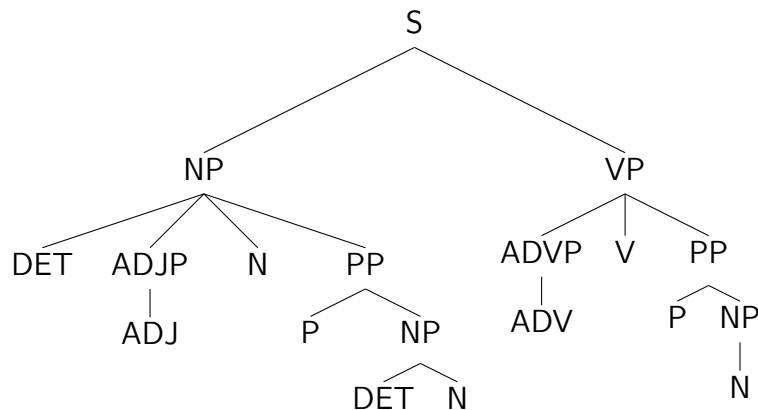
NP in first PP is missing a DET

NP → Det N

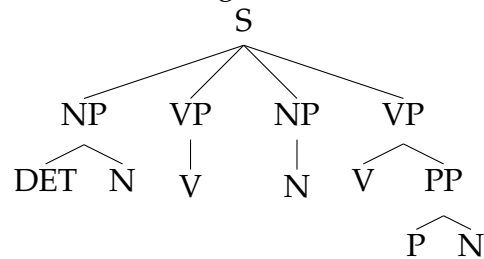
ADVP should come from VP, not S

S → NP VP

Correct tree:



2. The prince knows she left before midnight.



Problems

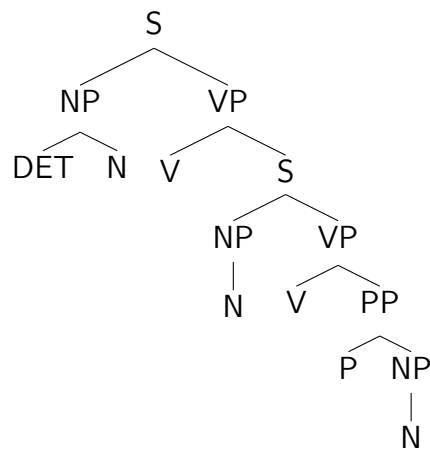
A flat structure. There's an embedded sentence that needs to come from the first VP.

$VP \rightarrow V \text{ (COMP) } S$

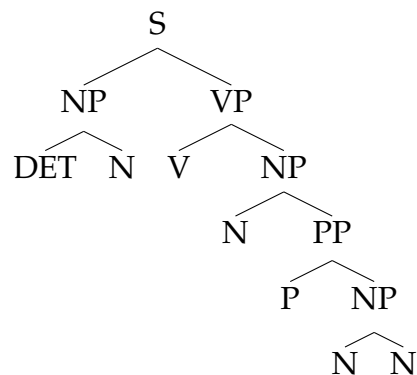
In the PP there's an N without an NP.

$NP \rightarrow N$

Correct tree:



3. The rabbit kissed Alice on her cheek.



Problems

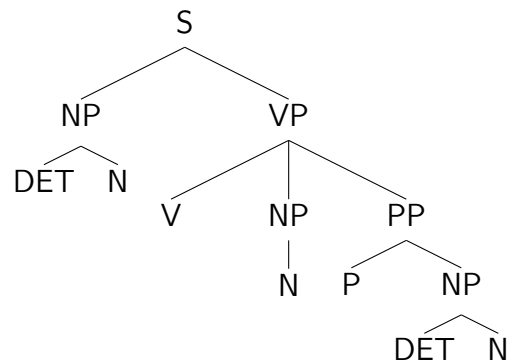
the PP should be attached to the VP, not NP. "Alice on her cheek" is not a good NP. We can't say for instance "[Alice on her cheek] ate the pie."

$VP \rightarrow NP \text{ PP}$

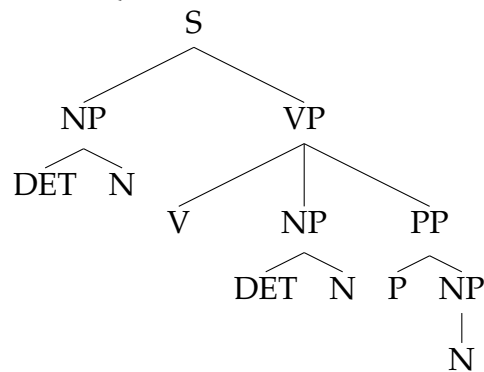
the NP inside of the PP has two Ns, should be a DET and an N

$NP \rightarrow \text{Det } N$

Correct tree:



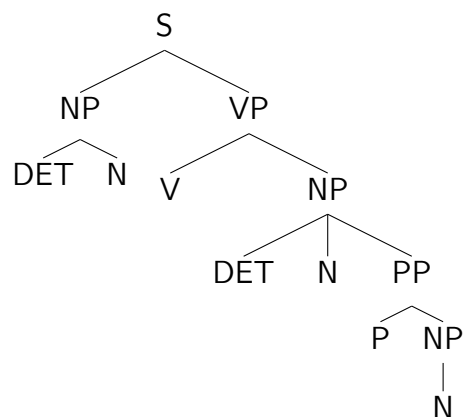
4. The rabbit ate the cheese from Quebec.



Problems

This tree has the reverse problem from the previous one. The PP should be attached to the NP, not VP. If we remove the NP in the VP the VP is no good: "ate from Quebec" (cf. "ate on the table" in which the PP "on the table" does attach to the VP).

Correct tree:

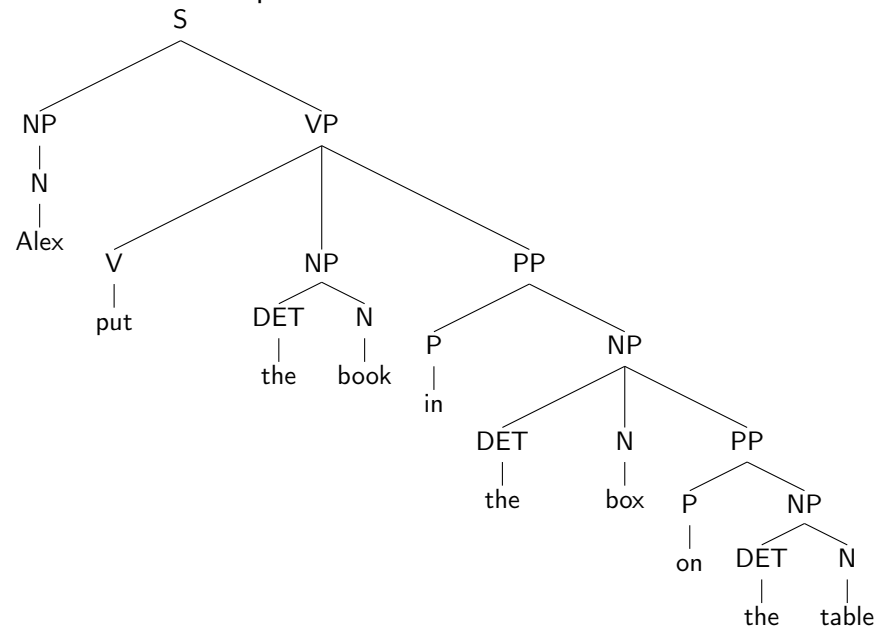


Ambiguous structures

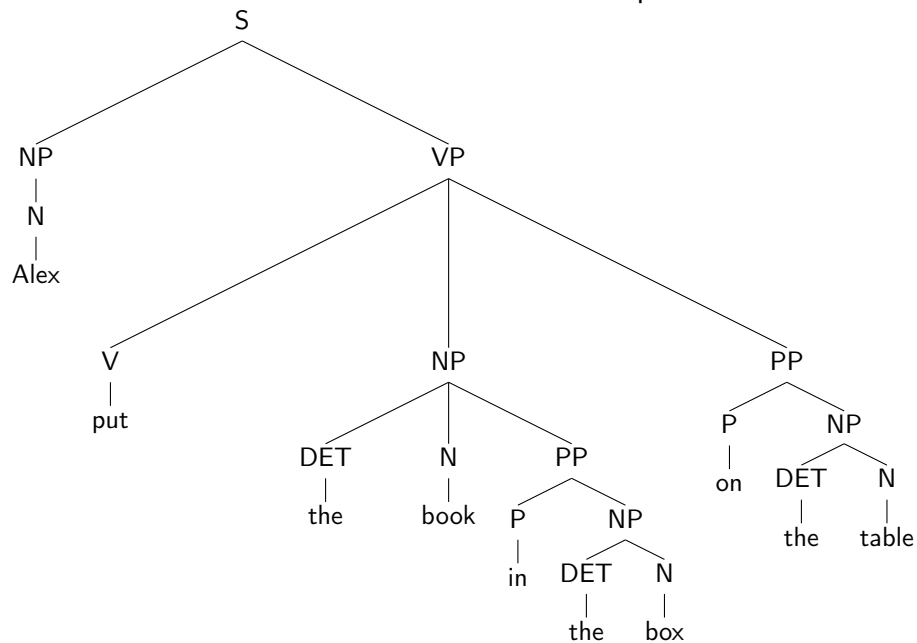
Draw the correct syntactic tree for each of the interpretations of the following structurally ambiguous sentence.

“Alex put the book in the box on the table”

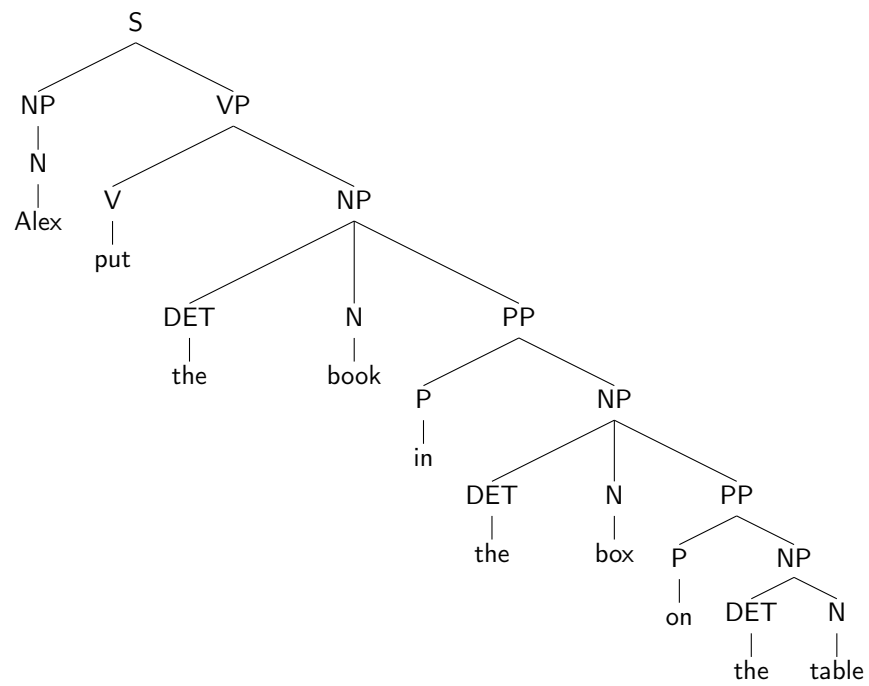
Interpretation 1: The book was put into a box and the box was located on the table.



Interpretations 2: The book was in a box and removed and put on to the table



Be careful! This structure is NOT good.



put requires a noun phrase and a prepositional phrase to come after it. In this try, we only have a noun phrase (that is heavily modified by PPs) but *put* doesn't have the required PP modifying it.