

2009 Solutions

(F) Anaphora

In the following dialogues, the computer is misunderstanding the human because it is misinterpreting certain words:

Example 1

Human: There's this restaurant on Bancroft that's supposed to be really good that I heard about from my mother. Can you help me find it?

Computer: Where did you last see your mother?

Example 2

Human: My friend is looking for information about on-line movie databases. What should I tell him?

Computer: You can tell movie databases reviews of movies you've seen.

Example 3

Human: My parents are having a hard time choosing a new digital camera. How can I help them?

Computer: I'm afraid I don't understand your question. People don't help cameras.

A. What are the words that the computer is misinterpreting?

Ex1: _____ him _____ Ex2: _____ it _____ Ex3: _____ them _____

*** 1 correct: 0 points

2 correct: 1 points

3 correct: 2 points

B) What rule is the computer using to interpret those words? Interpret pronouns as referring to the last noun phrase in the previous sentence.

*** 2 points for any answer that states a generalization that applies to the final NP in each first sentence and nothing else.



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*** 1 point for any answer that applies only to the final noun in each sentence, or to some intermediate category that doesn't fit the data.

C) Give a better rule that would make the computer interpret the words correctly in these examples.

***1 point for just about anything that either works on all three given sentences or is distinct better than the computer's rule,

e.g.:

-Interpret pronouns as referring to the previous sentence's first noun.

-Interpret pronouns as referring to a noun in the previous sentence with the same number/gender properties.

-Interpret pronouns as referring to the previous sentence's subject.

-Check for sentences of parallel syntactic structure first, and refer to a noun (phrase) in the same place if there is one.

