CSCI 544: Applied Natural Language Processing

# **Constituency Parsing**

Xuezhe Ma (Max)



### Recap: Sequence Labeling

#### A type of structured prediction tasks

$$Y = < y_i, y_2, \ldots, y_n > \\ \\ X = < x_i, x_2, \ldots, x_n > \\ \\ \\ \text{USC} \qquad \text{in} \qquad \text{California}$$

Assigning each token of X, e.g.  $x_i$  a corresponding label  $y_i$ 

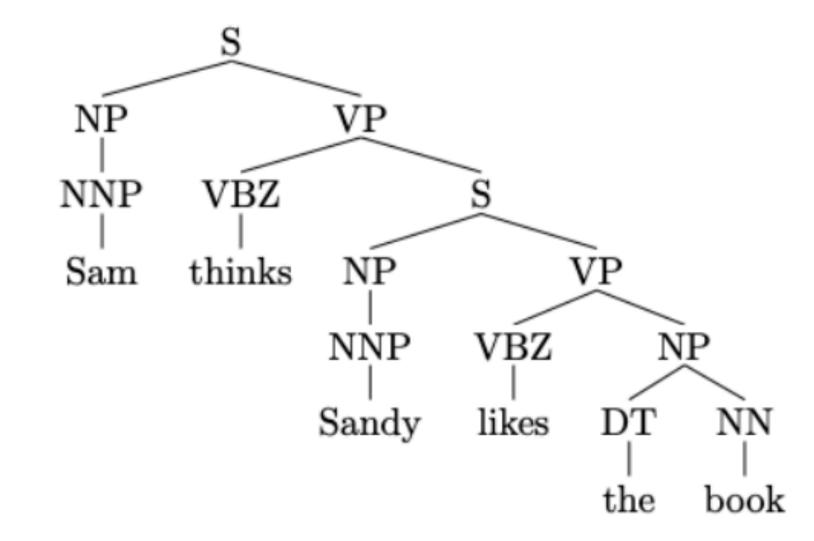
### Syntactic Structure: Constituency vs. Dependency

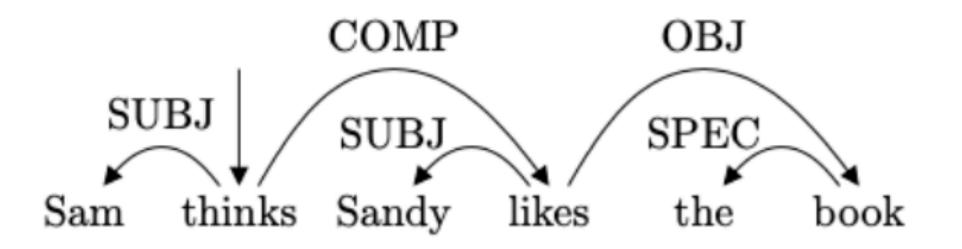
Theme: How to represent the structure of sentences using (syntax) trees?

### Two views of linguistic structures

- Constituency (this lecture)
  - = phrase structure grammar
  - Based on context-free grammars (CFGs)

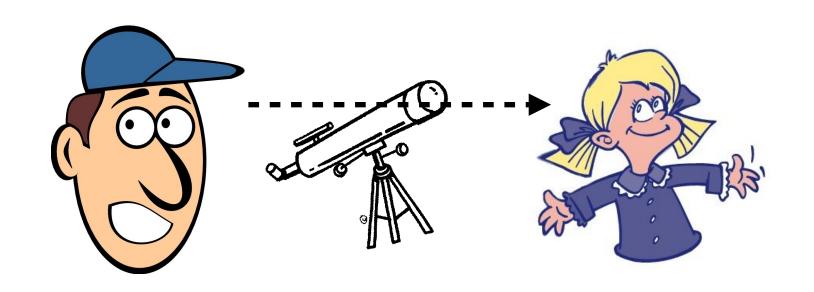
Dependency (next lecture)

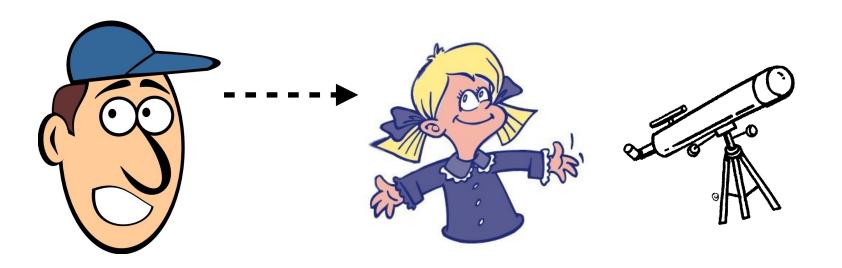




# Why Syntactic Structures?

### I saw a girl with a telescope





## Why Syntactic Structures?

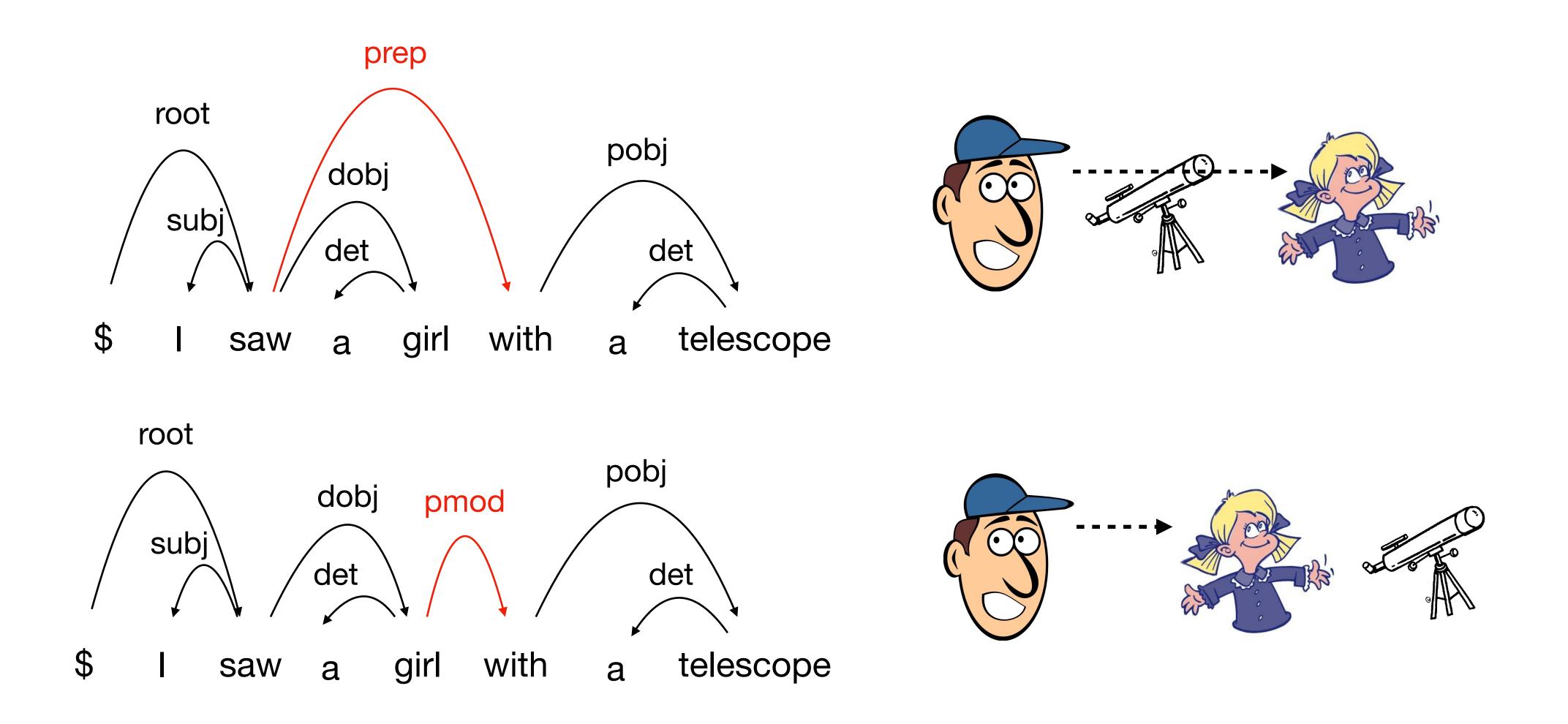
Kids Normal People

Watching a Watching a

Model Train Model Train



# Syntactic Structures Resolve Ambiguity



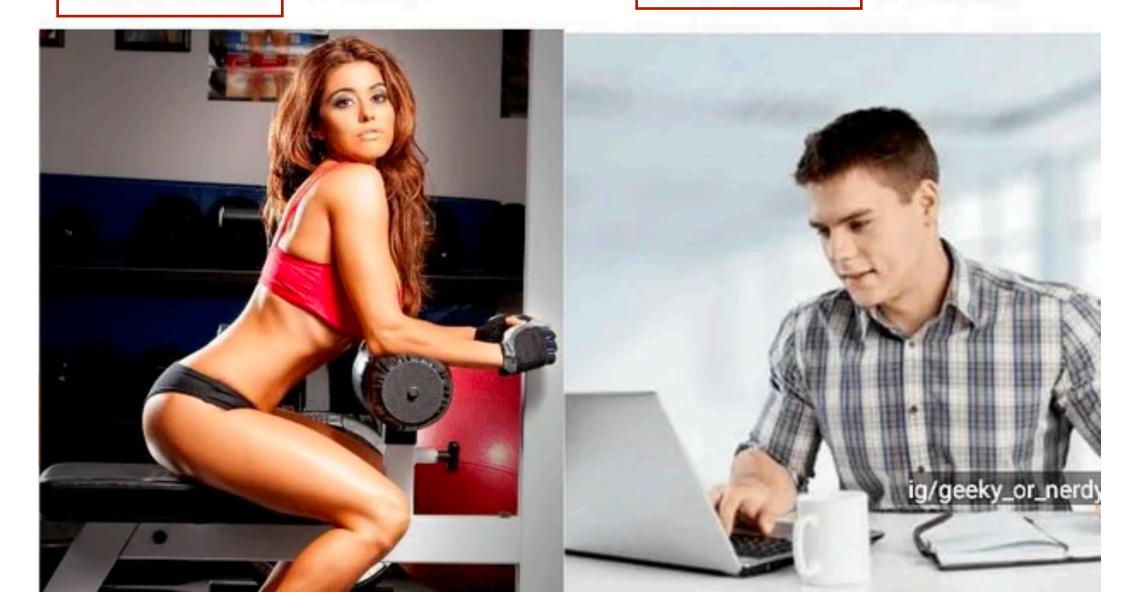
# Limitation of Syntactic Structures

Syntax structures cannot resolve semantic ambiguities

Normal People Software Engineers

Watching a Model Train

Watching a model Train



The same syntactic structures

Different semantic meaning of "model"

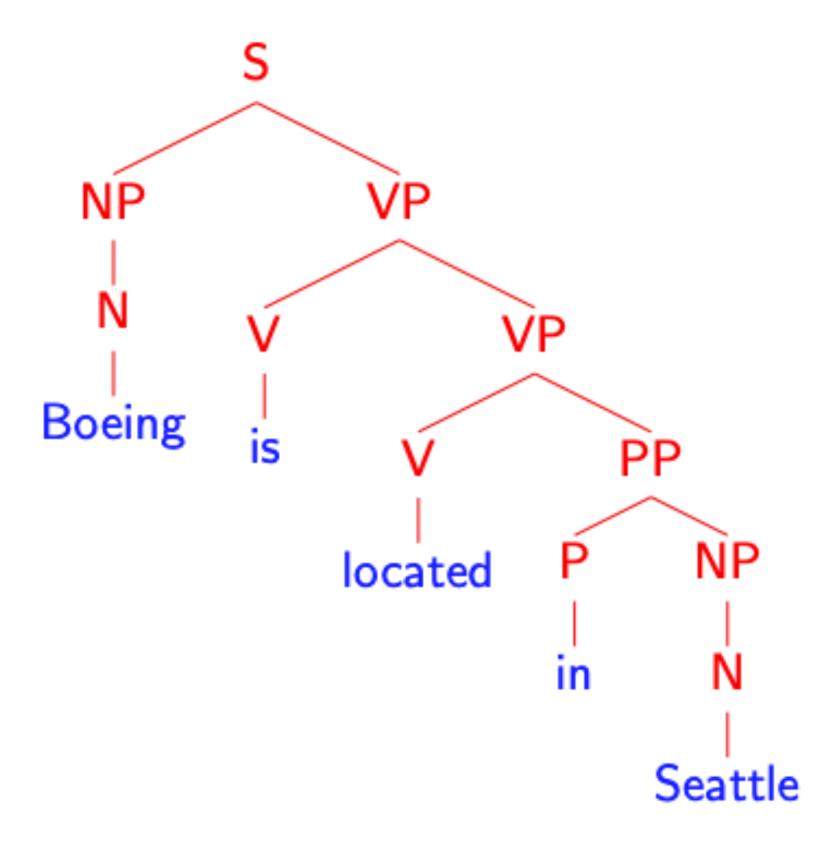
## Syntactic Tree Parsing

### A type of structured prediction tasks

Input X: a sentence

Boeing is located in Seattle.

Output Y: a parsing tree



### Syntactic Formalisms

Work in formal syntax goes back to Chomsky's PhD thesis in the 1950s

#### Examples of current formalisms:

- Minimalism
- Lexical Function Grammar (LFG)
- Head-driven Phrase-structure Grammar (HPSG)
- Tree Adjoining Grammar (TAG)
- Categorial Grammars

\_ ... ...

### Syntactic Parsing: Application

#### Grammar Checking

- If a sentence cannot be parsed, it may have grammatical errors (or at least hard to read)

#### Machine Translation

English word order is subject – verb – object

► Japanese word order is subject – object – verb

English: IBM bought Lotus

Japanese: IBM Lotus bought

English: Sources said that IBM bought Lotus yesterday

Japanese: Sources yesterday IBM Lotus bought that said

#### Overview

#### Constituency Parsing

- Constituency Structure
- Context-free Grammar (CFG) & Probabilistic Context-free Grammar (PCFG)
- The CKY algorithm
- Lexicalized PCFGs

#### Dependency Parsing

- Dependency Structure
- Graph-based Dependency Parsing
- Transition-based Dependency Parsing

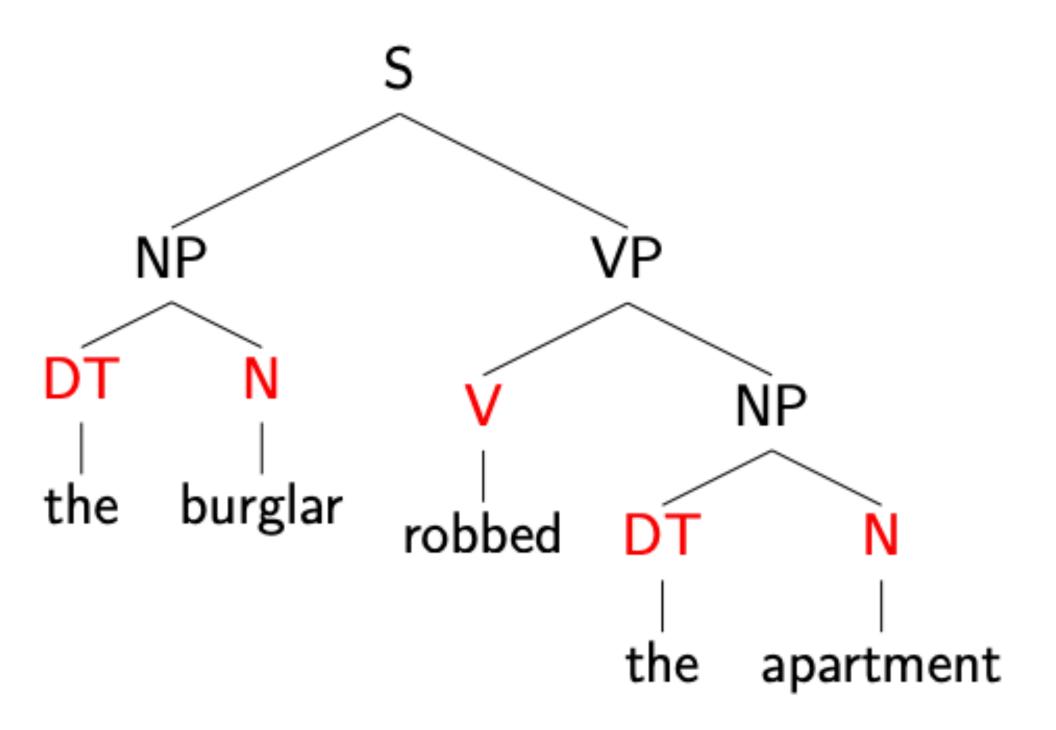
# Constituency Parsing





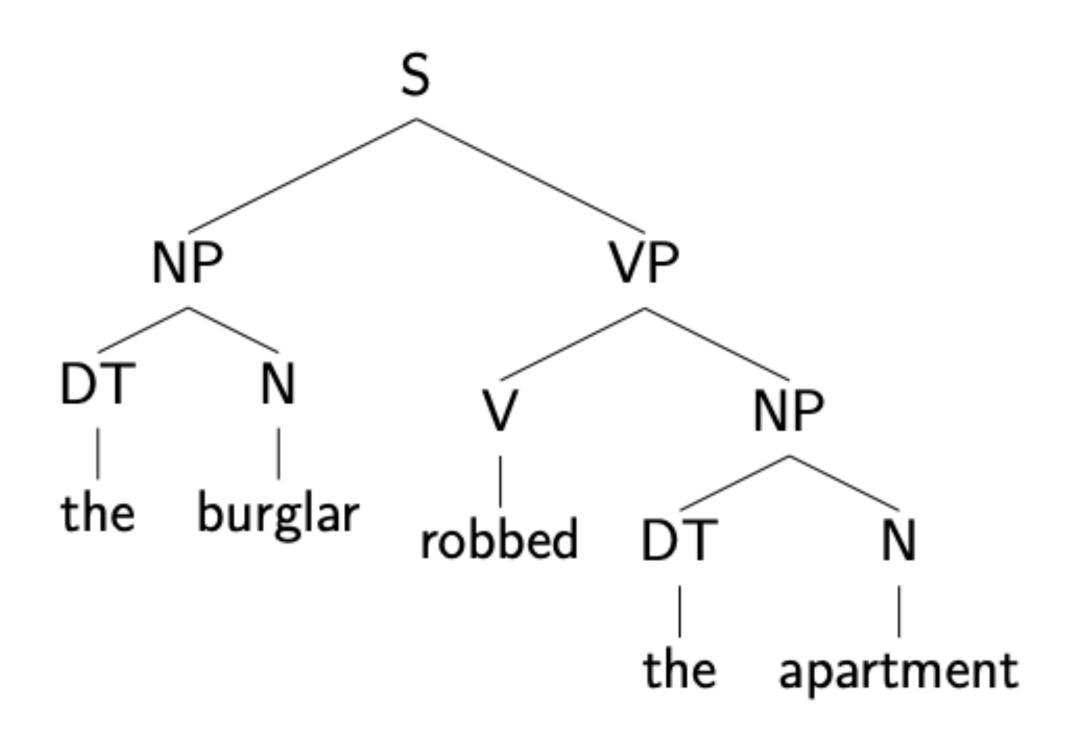
### **Constituency Structure**

- Starting units: words are given a category: part-of-speech tags
  - N = noun, V = verb, DT = determiner



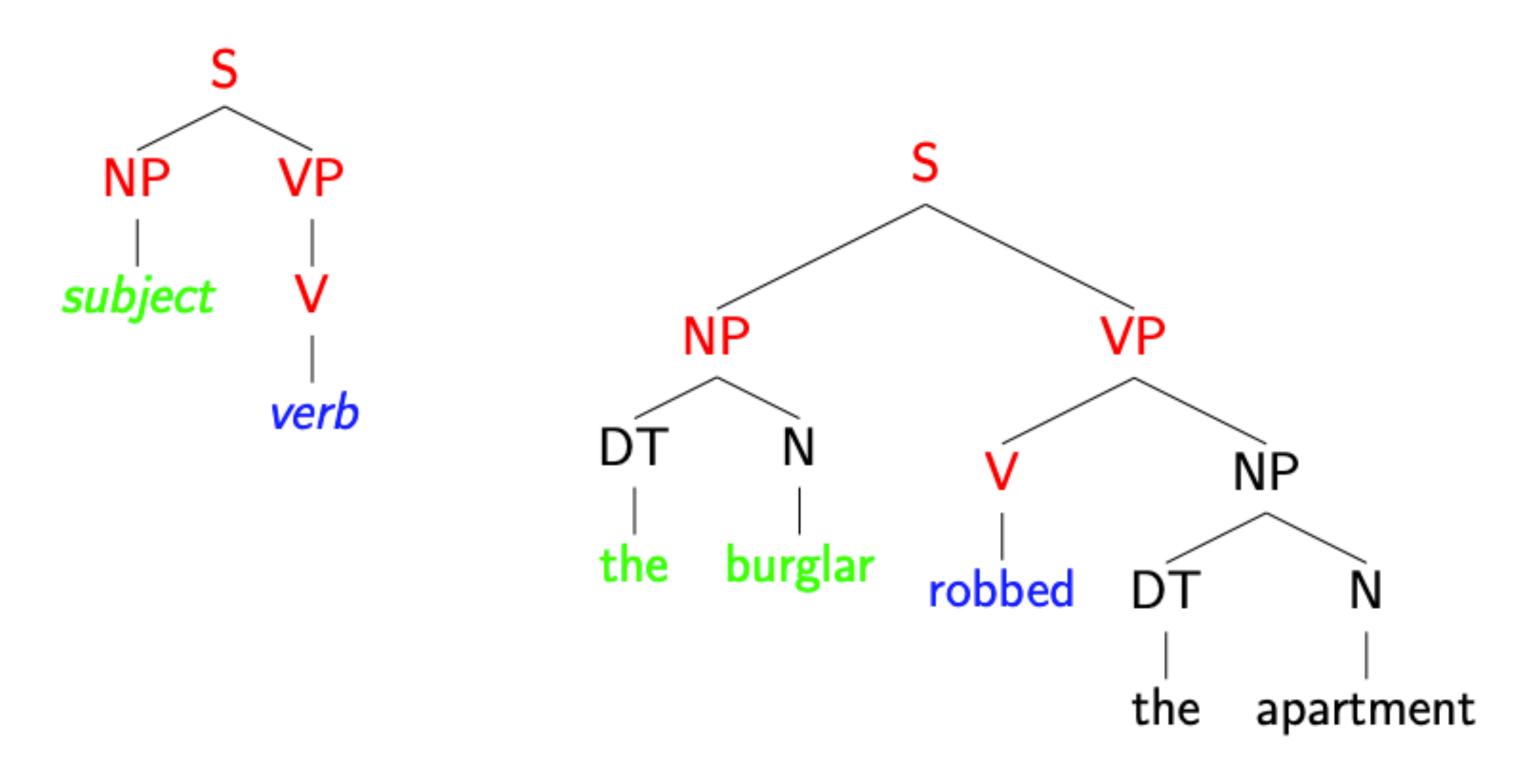
### **Constituency Structure**

- Starting units: words are given a category: part-of-speech tags
  - N = noun, V = verb, DT = determiner
- Phrases: words combine into phrases with categories
  - NP = noun phrase, VP = verb phrase, S = sentence
  - Phrases can combine into bigger phrases recursively



## **Constituency Structure**

### Useful Relationships



⇒ "the burglar" is the subject of "robbed"

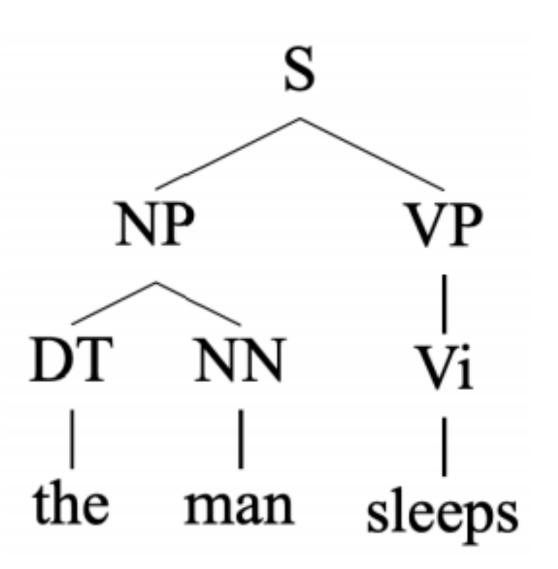
# Context-free Grammar (CFG)





# Context-free Grammars (CFGs)

- The most widely used formal system for modeling constituency structure in English and other natural languages
  - Hopcroft and Ullman, 1979
- A context free grammar (CFG)  $G = (N, \Sigma, R, S)$  where:
  - ightharpoonup N is a set of non-terminal symbols
    - ◆ Phrasal categories: S, NP, VP, ...
    - ◆ Part-of-speech: DT, NN, Vi, ... (pre-terminals)
  - $\Sigma$  is a set of terminal symbols: the, man, sleeps, ...
  - R is a set of rules of the form  $X \to Y_1 Y_2 ... Y_n$ , for  $n \ge 0$ ,  $X \in N, Y_i \in (N \cup \Sigma)$ 
    - ◆ Examples: S -> NP VP, NP -> DT NN, NN -> man
  - $S \in N$  is a distinguished start symbol



### A Context-free Grammar for English

```
N = \{ \text{S, NP, VP, PP, DT, Vi, Vt, NN, IN} \} S = \text{S} \Sigma = \{ \text{sleeps, saw, man, woman, telescope, the, with, in} \}
```

sleeps Vi ۷t saw NN $\rightarrow$ man NN  $\rightarrow$ woman NNtelescope  $\rightarrow$ DT the IN  $\rightarrow$  with IN in  $\rightarrow$ 

Grammar

Lexicon

Note: S=sentence, VP=verb phrase, NP=noun phrase, PP=prepositional phrase, DT=determiner, Vi=intransitive verb, Vt=transitive verb, NN=noun, IN=preposition

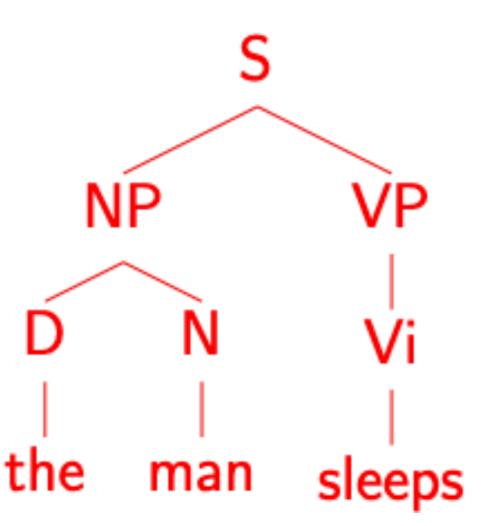
### **CFG: Left-Most Derivations**

A left-most derivation is a sequence of strings  $s_1 \dots s_n$ , where

- $ightharpoonup s_1 = S$ , the start symbol
- $s_n \in \Sigma^*$ , i.e.  $s_n$  is made up of terminal symbols only
- ▶ Each  $s_i$  for  $i=2\dots n$  is derived from  $s_{i-1}$  by picking the left-most non-terminal X in  $s_{i-1}$  and replacing it by some  $\beta$  where  $X \to \beta$  is a rule in R

For example: [S], [NP VP], [D N VP], [the N VP], [the man VP], [the man Vi], [the man sleeps]

Representation of a derivation as a tree:



DERIVATION RULES USED S

DERIVATION

**RULES USED** 

S

 $S \rightarrow NP VP$ 

NP VP

DERIVATION

**RULES USED** 

S

 $S \rightarrow NP VP$ 

NP VP

 $NP \rightarrow DT N$ 

DT N VP

#### DERIVATION

**RULES USED** 

S

 $S \rightarrow NP VP$ 

NP VP

 $NP \rightarrow DT N$ 

DT N VP

 $\mathsf{DT} \to \mathsf{the}$ 

the N VP

#### DERIVATION

**RULES USED** 

S

 $S \rightarrow NP VP$ 

NP VP

 $NP \rightarrow DT N$ 

DT N VP

 $\mathsf{DT} \to \mathsf{the}$ 

the N VP

N o dog

the dog VP

#### DERIVATION

**RULES USED** 

S

 $S \rightarrow NP VP$ 

NP VP

 $NP \rightarrow DT N$ 

DT N VP

 $\mathsf{DT} \to \mathsf{the}$ 

the N VP

 $N \to dog$ 

the dog VP

 $VP \rightarrow VB$ 

the dog VB

#### DERIVATION

**RULES USED** 

S

 $S \rightarrow NP VP$ 

NP VP

 $NP \rightarrow DT N$ 

DT N VP

 $\mathsf{DT} \to \mathsf{the}$ 

the N VP

 $N \to dog$ 

the dog VP

 $\mathsf{VP} \to \mathsf{VB}$ 

the dog VB

 $VB \rightarrow laughs$ 

the dog laughs

#### DERIVATION

S

NP VP

DT N VP

the N VP

the dog VP

the dog VB

the dog laughs

#### **RULES USED**

 $S \rightarrow NP VP$ 

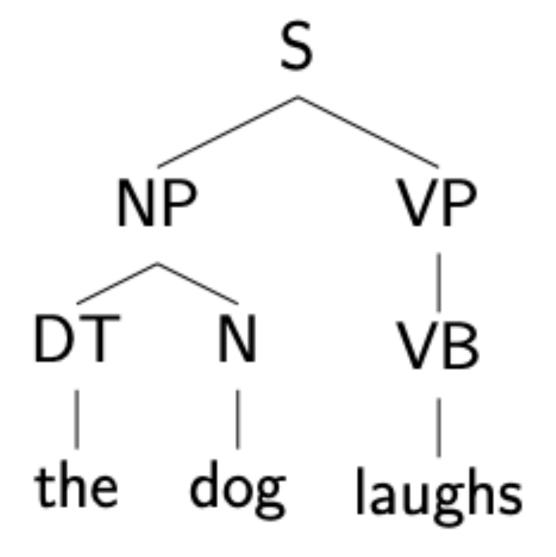
 $NP \rightarrow DT N$ 

 $\mathsf{DT} \to \mathsf{the}$ 

 $N \to dog$ 

 $\mathsf{VP} \to \mathsf{VB}$ 

 $\mathsf{VB} \to \mathsf{laughs}$ 



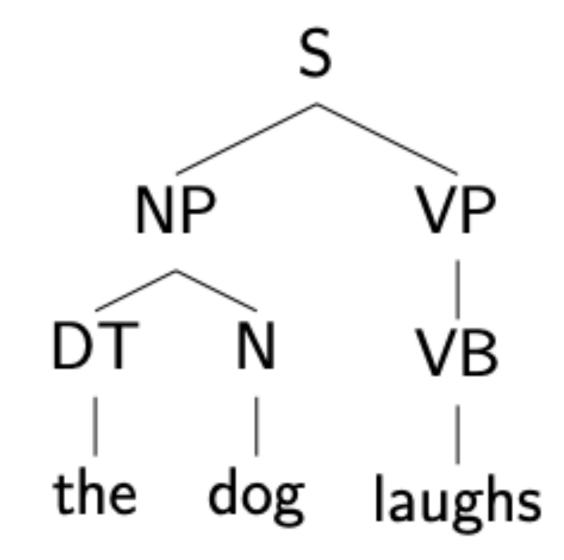
A derivation can be represented as a constituency tree

### Properties of CFGs

- A CFG defines a set of possible derivations
- A string  $s \in \Sigma^*$  is in the *language* defined by the CFG if there is at least one derivation that yields s
- Each string in the language generated by the CFG may have more than one derivation ("ambiguity")

A derivation -> a sentence

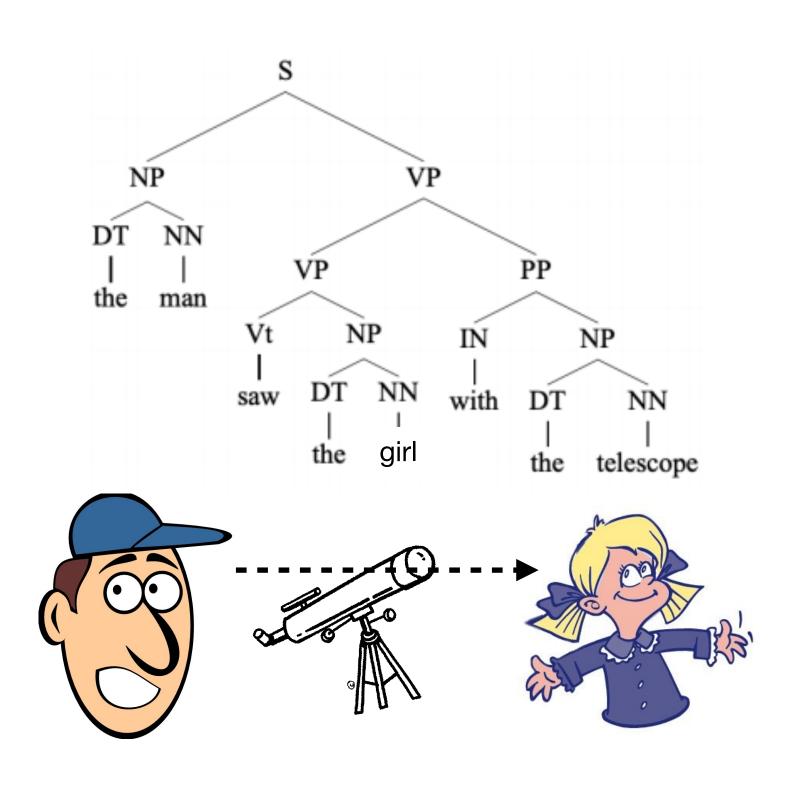
A sentence -> multiple derivations

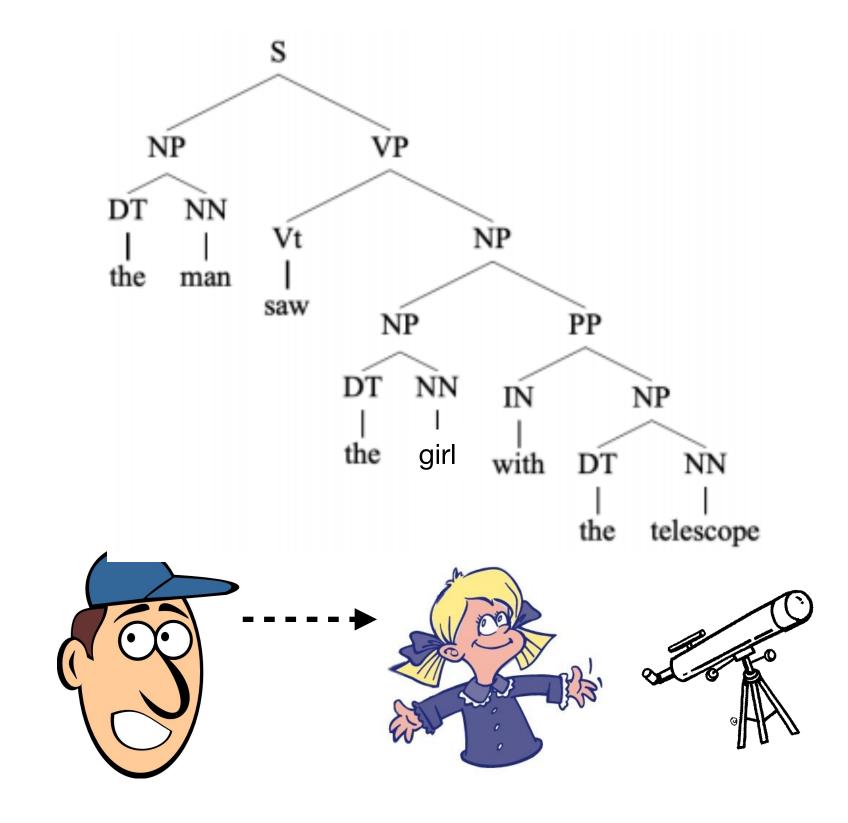


A derivation can be represented as a constituency tree

# The Problem with Parsing: Ambiguity

### The man saw the girl with the telescope

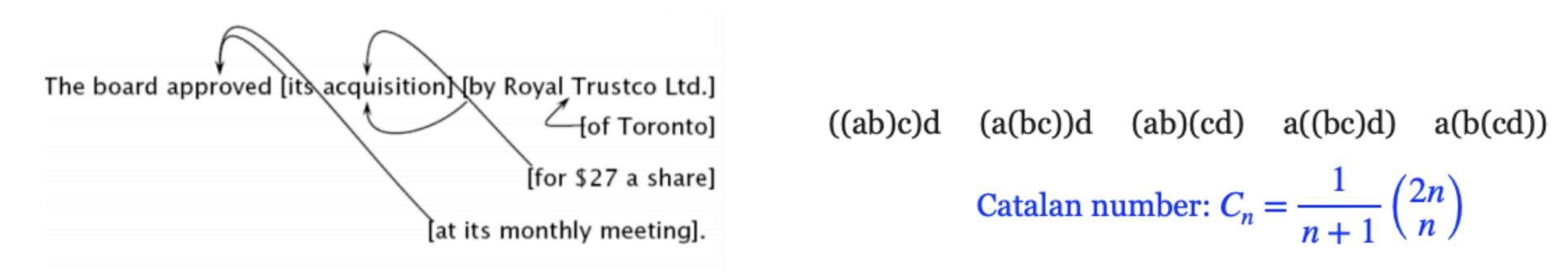




# The Problem with Parsing: Ambiguity

In fact, a sentences can have a very large number of possible parses

The board approved [its acquisition] [by Royal Trustco Ltd.] [of Toronto] [for \$27 a share] [at its monthly meeting].



- There is no way to choose the right one!
- Constructing a grammar is difficult a less constrained grammar can parse more sentences but result in more parses for even simple sentences

Since it is hard to avoid ambiguity in grammars, is it possible to model ambiguity?

# Probabilistic Context-free Grammars (PCFGs)





### Probabilistic Context-free Grammars (PCFGs)

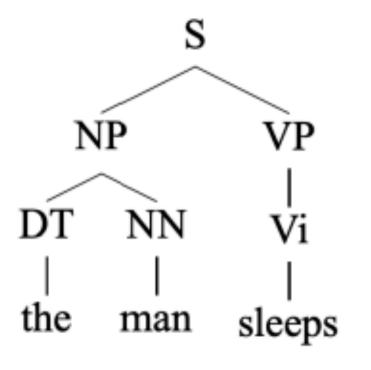
#### A PCFG consists of

- A context free grammar (CFG)  $G = (N, \Sigma, R, S)$
- For each rule  $X \to Y$ , there is a parameter  $q(X \to Y) \ge 0$ :

$$\sum_{Y \in N \cup \Sigma} q(X \to Y) = 1$$

• For any derivation (parse tree) containing rules:  $X_1 \to Y_1, \dots, X_n \to Y_n$ 

$$P(t) = \prod_{i=1}^{n} q(X_i \to Y_i)$$

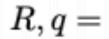


Vi	$\rightarrow$	sleeps	1.0
Vt	$\rightarrow$	saw	1.0
NN	$\rightarrow$	man	0.1
NN	$\rightarrow$	woman	0.1
NN	$\rightarrow$	telescope	0.3
NN	$\rightarrow$	dog	0.5
DT	$\rightarrow$	the	1.0
IN	$\rightarrow$	with	0.6
IN	$\rightarrow$	in	0.4

$$P(t) = q(S \rightarrow NP \ VP) \times q(NP \rightarrow DT \ NN) \times q(DT \rightarrow the)$$
  
  $\times q(NN \rightarrow man) \times q(VP \rightarrow Vi) \times q(Vi \rightarrow sleeps)$   
  $= 1.0 \times 0.8 \times 1.0 \times 0.1 \times 0.3 \times 1.0 = 0.024$ 

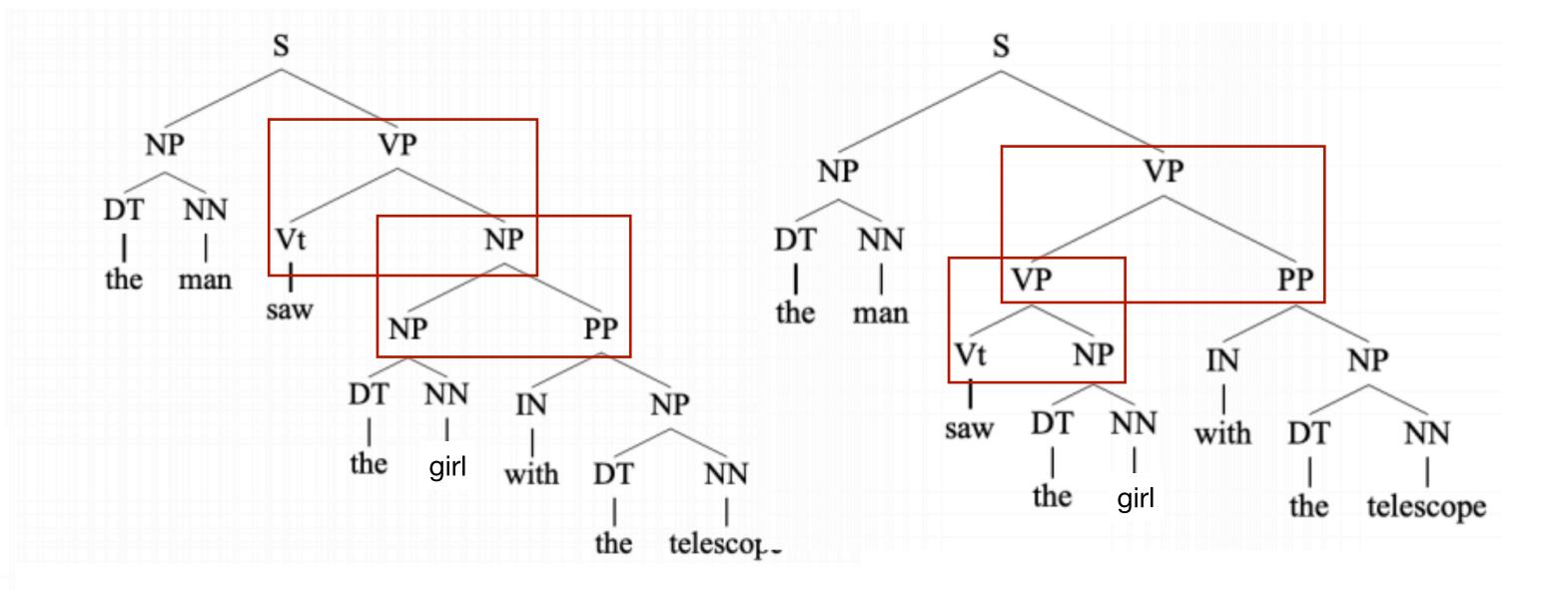
Q: Why do we want 
$$\sum_{Y \in N \cup \Sigma} q(X \to Y) = 1$$
?

### Handling Ambiguity with Probability



S	$\rightarrow$	NP	VP	1.0
VP	$\rightarrow$	Vi		0.3
VP	$\rightarrow$	Vt	NP	0.5
VP	$\rightarrow$	VP	PP	0.2
NP	$\rightarrow$	DT	NN	0.8
NP	$\rightarrow$	NP	PP	0.2
PP	$\rightarrow$	IN	NP	1.0

Vi	$\rightarrow$	sleeps	1.0
Vt	$\rightarrow$	saw	1.0
NN	$\rightarrow$	man	0.1
NN	$\rightarrow$	woman	0.1
NN	$\rightarrow$	telescope	0.3
NN	$\rightarrow$	girl	0.5
DT	$\rightarrow$	the	1.0
IN	$\rightarrow$	with	0.6
IN	$\rightarrow$	in	0.4



$$q(VP \rightarrow Vt NP) \times q(NP \rightarrow NP PP) = 0.5 \times 0.2 = 0.1$$

$$q(VP \rightarrow VP PP) \times q(VP \rightarrow Vt NP) = 0.2 \times 0.5 = 0.1$$

### **Properties of PCFGs**

- Assigns a probability to each left-most derivation, or parse-tree, allowed by the underlying CFG
- Say we have a sentence s, set of derivations for that sentence is  $\mathcal{T}(s)$ . Then a PCFG assigns a probability p(t) to each member of  $\mathcal{T}(s)$ . i.e., we now have a ranking in order of probability.
- ightharpoonup The most likely parse tree for a sentence s is

$$\arg\max_{t\in\mathcal{T}(s)}p(t)$$

#### The Rise of Annotated Data

- Learning from data: treebanks
- Adding probabilities to the rules: probabilistic CFGs

**Treebanks**: a collection of sentences paired with their annotated parse trees

```
((S
  (NP-SBJ (DT That)
                                    ((S
    (JJ cold) (, ,)
                                       (NP-SBJ The/DT flight/NN )
    (JJ empty) (NN sky) )
                                       (VP should/MD
  (VP (VBD was)
                                         (VP arrive/VB
    (ADJP-PRD (JJ full)
                                           (PP-TMP at/IN
      (PP (IN of)
                                             (NP eleven/CD a.m/RB ))
        (NP (NN fire)
                                           (NP-TMP tomorrow/NN )))))
           (CC and)
           (NN light) ))))
  (. .) ))
               (a)
```

The Penn Treebank Project (Marcus et al, 1993)

#### Penn Treebank

#### Standard setup

- 40,000 sentences for training
- 1,700 for development
- 2,400 for testing

#### Phrasal categories

ADJP Adjective phrase
ADVP Adverb phrase
NP Noun phrase

PP Prepositional phrase

S Simple declarative clause

SBAR Subordinate clause

SBARQ Direct question introduced by wh-element

SINV Declarative sentence with subject-aux inversion

SQ Yes/no questions and subconstituent of SBARQ excluding wh-element

VP Verb phrase

WHADVP Wh-adverb phrase WHNP Wh-noun phrase

WHPP Wh-prepositional phrase

X Constituent of unknown or uncertain category

\* "Understood" subject of infinitive or imperative

O Zero variant of that in subordinate clauses

Trace of wh-Constituent

#### Penn Treebank

#### Part-of-speech tagset

CC	Coordinating conj.	TO	infinitival to
CD	Cardinal number	UH	Interjection
DT	Determiner	VB	Verb, base form
EX	Existential there	VBD	Verb, past tense
FW	Foreign word	VBG	Verb, gerund/present pple
IN	Preposition	VBN	Verb, past participle
JJ	Adjective	VBP	Verb, non-3rd ps. sg. present
JJR	Adjective, comparative	VBZ	Verb, 3rd ps. sg. present
JJS	Adjective, superlative	WDT	Wh-determiner
LS	List item marker	WP	Wh-pronoun
MD	Modal	WP\$	Possessive wh-pronoun
NN	Noun, singular or mass	WRB	Wh-adverb
NNS	Noun, plural	#	Pound sign
NNP	Proper noun, singular	\$	Dollar sign
NNPS	Proper noun, plural		Sentence-final punctuation
PDT	Predeterminer	,	Comma
POS	Possessive ending	:	Colon, semi-colon
PRP	Personal pronoun	(	Left bracket character
PP\$	Possessive pronoun	)	Right bracket character
RB	Adverb	"	Straight double quote
RBR	Adverb, comparative	4	Left open single quote
RBS	Adverb, superlative	"	Left open double quote
RP	Particle	,	Right close single quote
SYM	Symbol	,,	Right close double quote

# Learning a PCFG from a Treebank

- Given a set of example trees (a treebank), the underlying CFG can simply be all rules seen in the corpus
- Maximum Likelihood estimates:

$$q_{ML}(\alpha \to \beta) = \frac{\mathsf{Count}(\alpha \to \beta)}{\mathsf{Count}(\alpha)}$$

where the counts are taken from a training set of example trees.

If we have seen the rule VP  $\rightarrow$  Vt NP 105 times, and the the non-terminal VP 1000 times,  $q(\text{VP} \rightarrow \text{Vt NP}) = 0.105$ 

## Learning a PCFG: An Example

```
((S
  (NP-SBJ (DT That)
                                    ((S
    (JJ cold) (, ,)
                                       (NP-SBJ The/DT flight/NN )
    (JJ empty) (NN sky) )
                                       (VP should/MD
  (VP (VBD was)
                                         (VP arrive/VB
    (ADJP-PRD (JJ full)
                                           (PP-TMP at/IN
       (PP (IN of)
                                             (NP eleven/CD a.m/RB ))
         (NP (NN fire)
                                           (NP-TMP tomorrow/NN )))))
           (CC and)
           (NN light) ))))
  (. .) ))
                                                     (b)
               (a)
```

```
( (S ('' '')
   (S-TPC-2
     (NP-SBJ-1 (PRP We) )
     (VP (MD would)
       (VP (VB have)
          (S
            (NP-SBJ (-NONE- *-1) )
            (VP (TO to)
             (VP (VB wait)
               (SBAR-TMP (IN until)
                   (NP-SBJ (PRP we) )
                    (VP (VBP have)
                     (VP (VBN collected)
                       (PP-CLR (IN on)
                         (NP (DT those)(NNS assets))))))))))))
   (, ,) ('' '')
   (NP-SBJ (PRP he) )
   (VP (VBD said)
     (S (-NONE- *T*-2) ))
   (. .) ))
```

## Learning a PCFG: An Example

```
((S
   (NP-SBJ (DT That)
                                    ((S
     (JJ cold) (, ,)
                                       (NP-SBJ The/DT flight/NN )
     (JJ empty) (NN sky) )
                                       (VP should/MD
   (VP (VBD was)
                                         (VP arrive/VB
     (ADJP-PRD (JJ full)
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                                             (NP eleven/CD a.m/RB ))
         (NP (NN fire)
                                           (NP-TMP tomorrow/NN )))))
           (CC and)
           (NN light) ))))
   (. .) ))
                                                      (b)
               (a)
```

```
Grammar
                                                                    Lexicon
S \rightarrow NP VP.
                                            PRP \rightarrow we \mid he
S \rightarrow NP VP
                                            DT \rightarrow the \mid that \mid those
S \rightarrow "S", NP VP.
                                            JJ \rightarrow cold \mid empty \mid full
S \rightarrow -NONE-
                                            NN \rightarrow sky \mid fire \mid light \mid flight \mid tomorrow
NP \rightarrow DTNN
                                            NNS \rightarrow assets
NP \rightarrow DT NNS
                                            CC \rightarrow and
NP \rightarrow NN CC NN
                                            IN \rightarrow of \mid at \mid until \mid on
NP \rightarrow CD RB
                                            CD \rightarrow eleven
NP 
ightarrow DT JJ , JJ NN
                                            RB \rightarrow a.m.
NP \rightarrow PRP
                                            VB \rightarrow arrive \mid have \mid wait
NP \rightarrow -NONE-
                                            VBD \rightarrow was \mid said
VP \rightarrow MD VP
                                            VBP \rightarrow have
                                            VBN \rightarrow collected
VP \rightarrow VBD ADJP
VP \rightarrow VBD S
                                            MD \rightarrow should \mid would
VP \rightarrow VBN PP
                                            TO \rightarrow to
VP \rightarrow VB S
VP \rightarrow VB SBAR
VP \rightarrow VBP VP
VP \rightarrow VBN PP
VP \rightarrow TO VP
SBAR \rightarrow INS
ADJP \rightarrow JJPP
PP \rightarrow IN NP
```

# Parsing with PCFGs: CKY Algorithm





# Parsing with a PCFG

- Given a PCFG and a sentence s, define T(s) to be the set of trees with s as the yield.
- ightharpoonup Given a PCFG and a sentence s, how do we find

$$\arg \max_{t \in \mathcal{T}(s)} p(t)$$

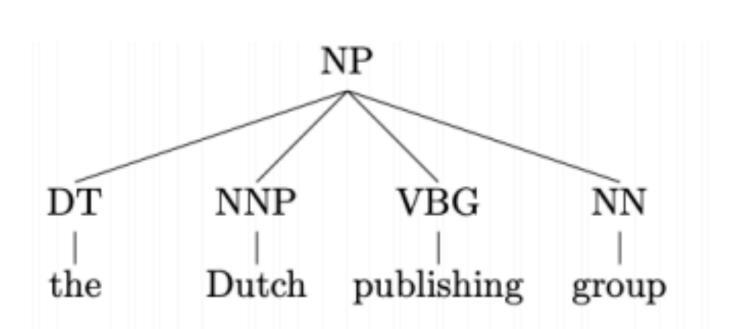
# Chomsky Normal Form (CNF)

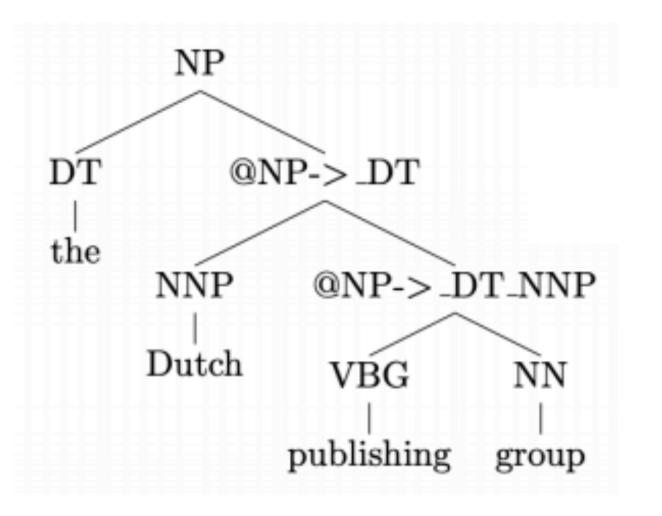
A context free grammar  $G = (N, \Sigma, R, S)$  in Chomsky Normal Form is as follows

- ightharpoonup N is a set of non-terminal symbols
- $ightharpoonup \Sigma$  is a set of terminal symbols
- R is a set of rules which take one of two forms:
  - $X \to Y_1Y_2$  for  $X \in N$ , and  $Y_1, Y_2 \in N$
  - ▶  $X \to Y$  for  $X \in N$ , and  $Y \in \Sigma$
- $ightharpoonup S \in N$  is a distinguished start symbol

# Converting PCFGs into CNFs

• n-ary rules (n > 2): NP  $\rightarrow$  DT NNP VBG NN





## The CKY Algorithm

Notation:

n= number of words in the sentence  $w_i=i$ 'th word in the sentence N= the set of non-terminals in the grammar S= the start symbol in the grammar

Define a dynamic programming table

 $\pi[i,j,X]=\max \max probability of a constituent with non-terminal <math>X$  spanning words  $i\ldots j$  inclusive

• Our goal is to calculate  $\max_{t \in \mathcal{T}(s)} p(t) = \pi[1, n, S]$ 

## The CKY Algorithm

▶ Base case definition: for all  $i = 1 \dots n$ , for  $X \in N$ 

$$\pi[i, i, X] = q(X \to w_i)$$

(note: define  $q(X \to w_i) = 0$  if  $X \to w_i$  is not in the grammar)

▶ Recursive definition: for all  $i = 1 \dots n$ ,  $j = (i + 1) \dots n$ ,  $X \in N$ ,

$$\pi(i, j, X) = \max_{\substack{X \to YZ \in R, \\ s \in \{i...(j-1)\}}} (q(X \to YZ) \times \pi(i, s, Y) \times \pi(s+1, j, Z))$$

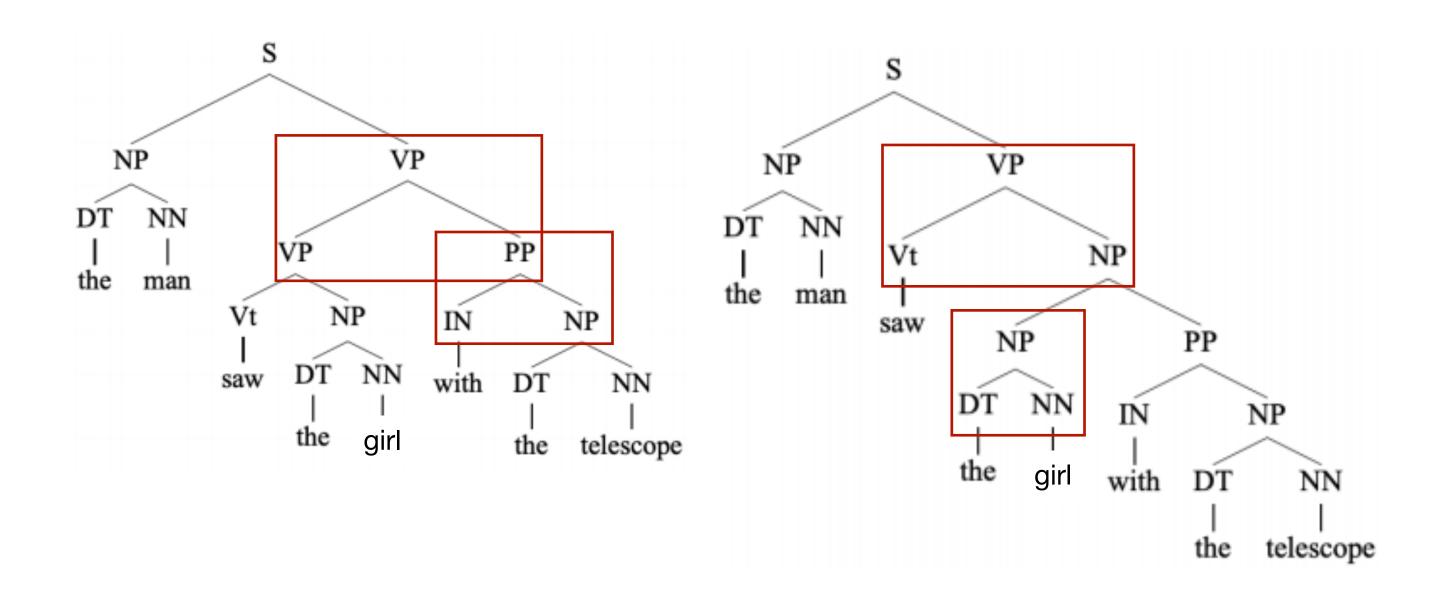
Q: Running time?

 $O(n^3|R|)$ 

#### Weaknesses of PCFGs

• Lack of sensitivity to lexical information (words)

The man saw the girl with the telescope



The only difference between these two parses:

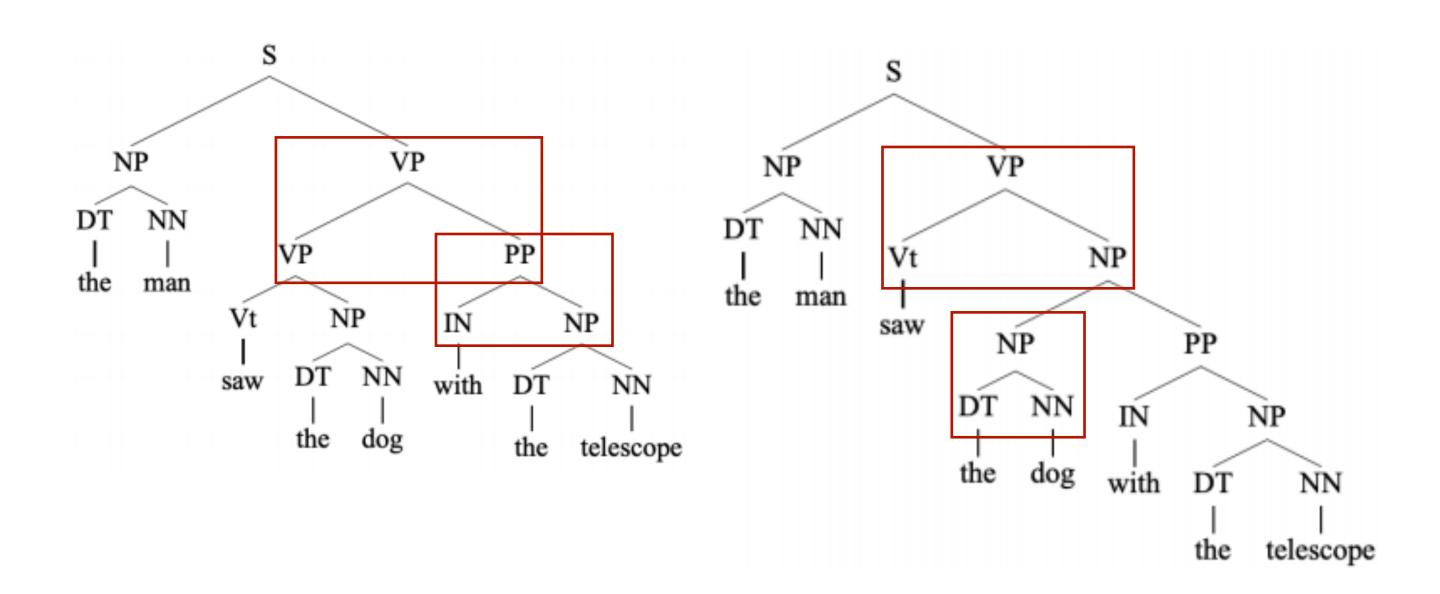
$$q(VP \rightarrow VP PP) \text{ vs } q(NP \rightarrow NP PP)$$

... without looking at the words!

#### Weaknesses of PCFGs

• Lack of sensitivity to lexical information (words)

The man saw the dog with the telescope



The only difference between these two parses:

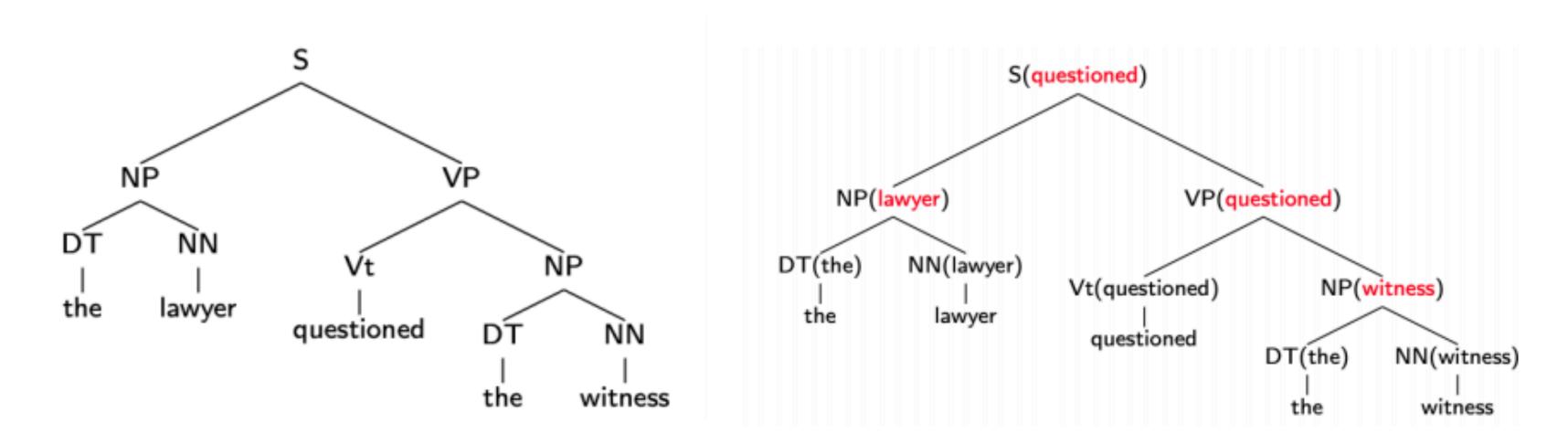
$$q(VP \rightarrow VP PP) \text{ vs } q(NP \rightarrow NP PP)$$

... without looking at the words!





Key idea: add headwords to trees



• Each context-free rule has one special child that is the head of the rule

$$S \Rightarrow NP VP$$
 (VP is the head)  
 $VP \Rightarrow Vt NP$  (Vt is the head)  
 $NP \Rightarrow DT NN NN$  (NN is the head)

#### The heads are decided by rules:

If the rule contains NN, NNS, or NNP: Choose the rightmost NN, NNS, or NNP

Else If the rule contains an NP: Choose the leftmost NP

Else If the rule contains a JJ: Choose the rightmost JJ

Else If the rule contains a CD: Choose the rightmost CD

Else Choose the rightmost child

If the rule contains Vi or Vt: Choose the leftmost Vi or Vt

Else If the rule contains a VP: Choose the leftmost VP

Else Choose the leftmost child

```
S(saw)

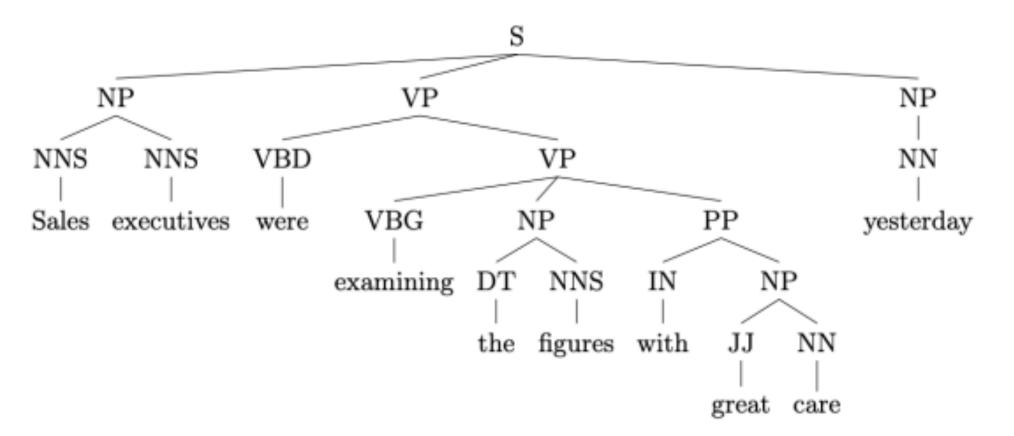
ightarrow_2 NP(man)
                              VP(saw)
VP(saw) \rightarrow_1 Vt(saw) NP(dog)
NP(man) \rightarrow_2 DT(the) NN(man)
NP(dog) \rightarrow_2 DT(the) NN(dog)
Vt(saw)
            \rightarrow
                  saw
DT(the)
            \rightarrow
                  the
NN(man) \rightarrow
                  man
NN(dog)
                  dog
            \rightarrow
```

- Further reading: Michael Collins. 2003. Head-Driven Statistical Models for Natural Language Parsing.
- Results for a PCFG: 70.6% recall, 74.8% precision
- Results for a lexicalized PCFG: 88.1% recall, 88.3% precision

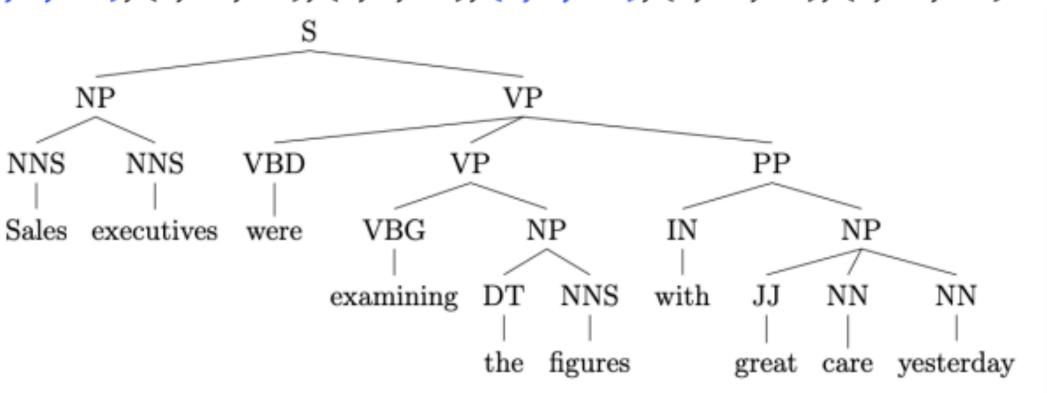
## **Evaluating Constituency Parsing**

Comparing the predicted tree against the gold-stand one

Gold: (1, 10, S), (1, 2, NP), (3, 9, VP), (4, 9, VP), (5, 6, NP), (7, 9, PP), (8, 9, NP), (10, 10, NP)



Predicted: (1, 10, S), (1, 2, NP), (3, 10, VP), (4, 6, VP), (5, 6, NP), (7, 10, PP), (8, 10, NP)



## **Evaluating Constituency Parsing**

- Recall: (# correct constituents in candidate) / (# constituents in gold tree)
- Precision: (# correct constituents in candidate) / (# constituents in candidate)
- Labeled precision/recall require getting the non-terminal label correct
- F1 is the harmonic mean of precision and recall = (2 \* precision \* recall) / (precision + recall)
- Part-of-speech tagging accuracy is evaluated separately

# Reading Materials

- Notes from Michael Collins:
  - Probabilistic Context-free Grammars (PCFGs)
  - Lexicalized PCFGs