Ling 120B: Syntax I

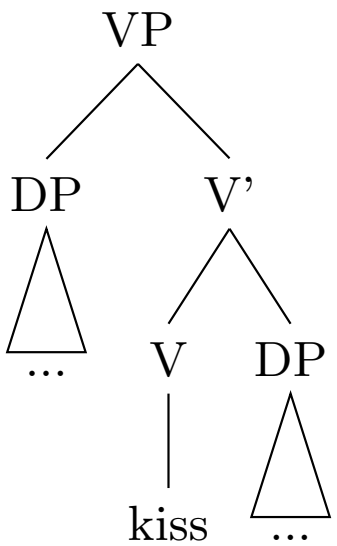
Nico(letta) Loccioni

May 23, 2022

Raising Verbs

The Locality Constraint on Argument structures:
Arguments are generated within the phrase headed by the predicate that selects them.

kiss V free <u>DP</u> DP



If the principle of locality of selection is correct, then (1) is a problem.

(1) John seems to have left

→ the agent of *leaving* is John, but it appears very far away from its predicate.

leave V free <u>DP</u>

→ also there seems to be no subject in the embedded clause.

→ what is/are the argument(s) of *seem?*

seem V free **?**

Well, we notice that *seem* can also take a CP argument:

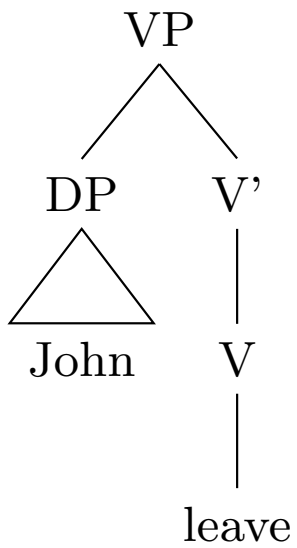
(2) It seems [that John will leave]

→ What is the relation between (1) and (2)?

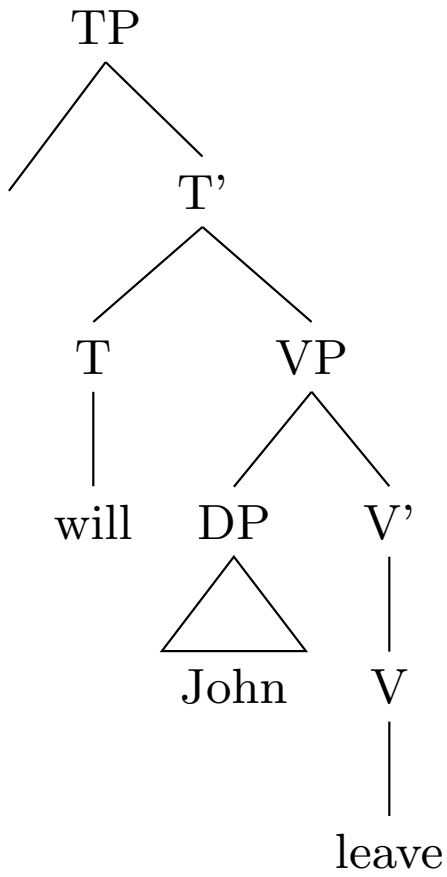
→ Why is there the expletive 'it' in (2)?

Let's start by drawing the tree for (2):

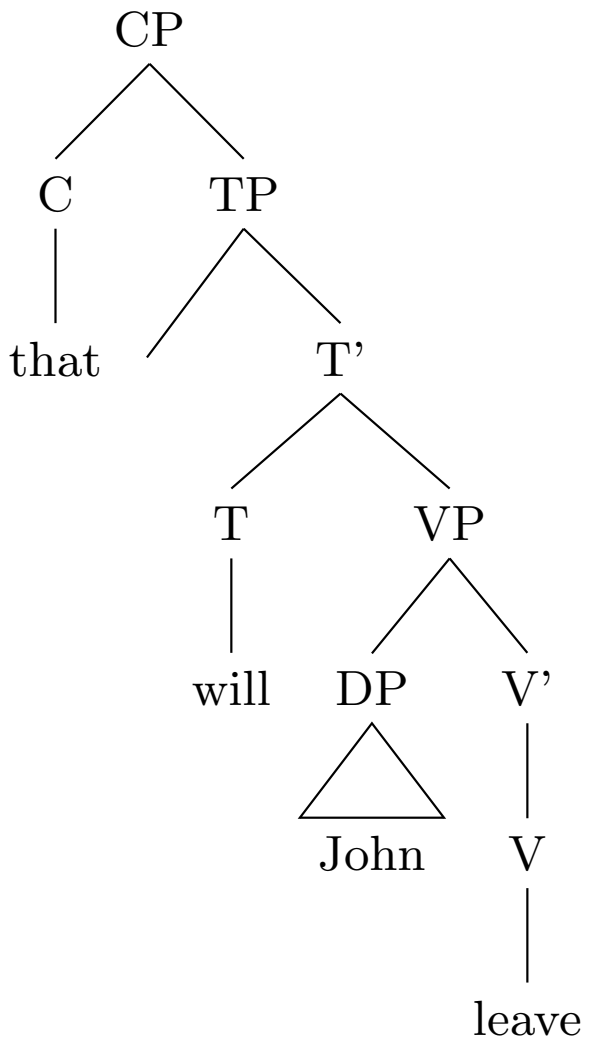
Step 1 The VP headed by the lexical verb 'leave':



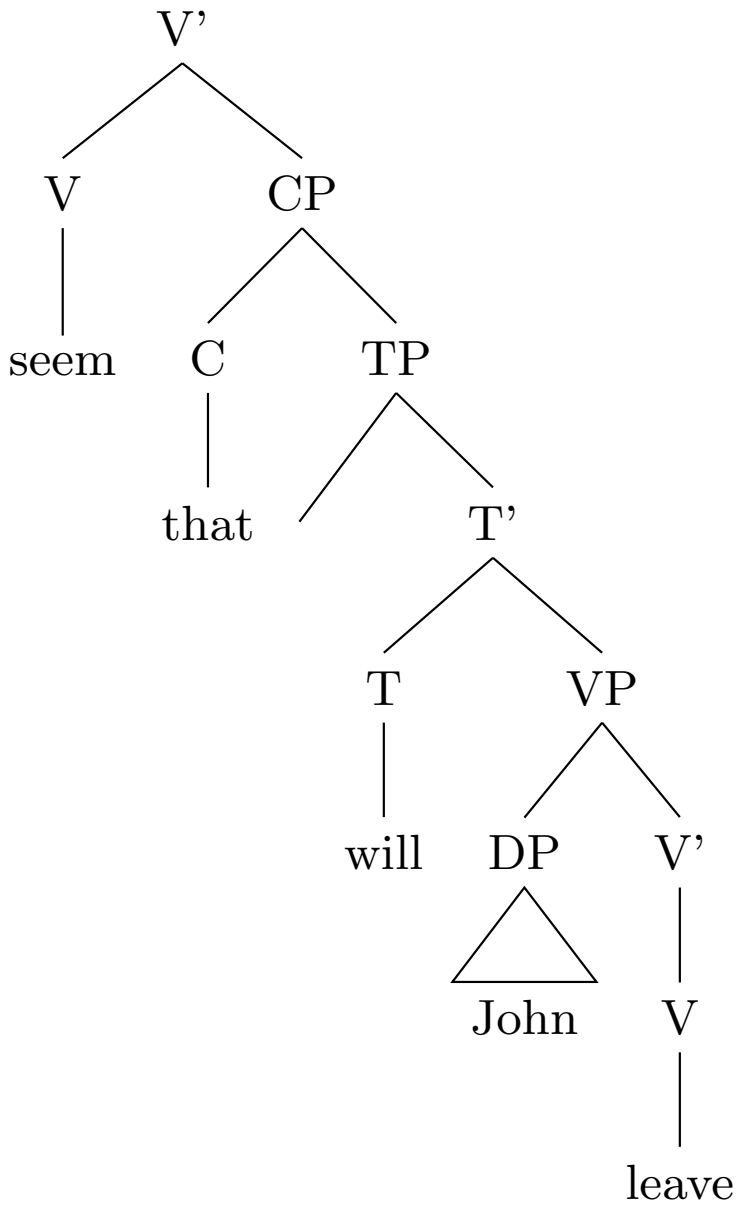
Step 2 The TP.



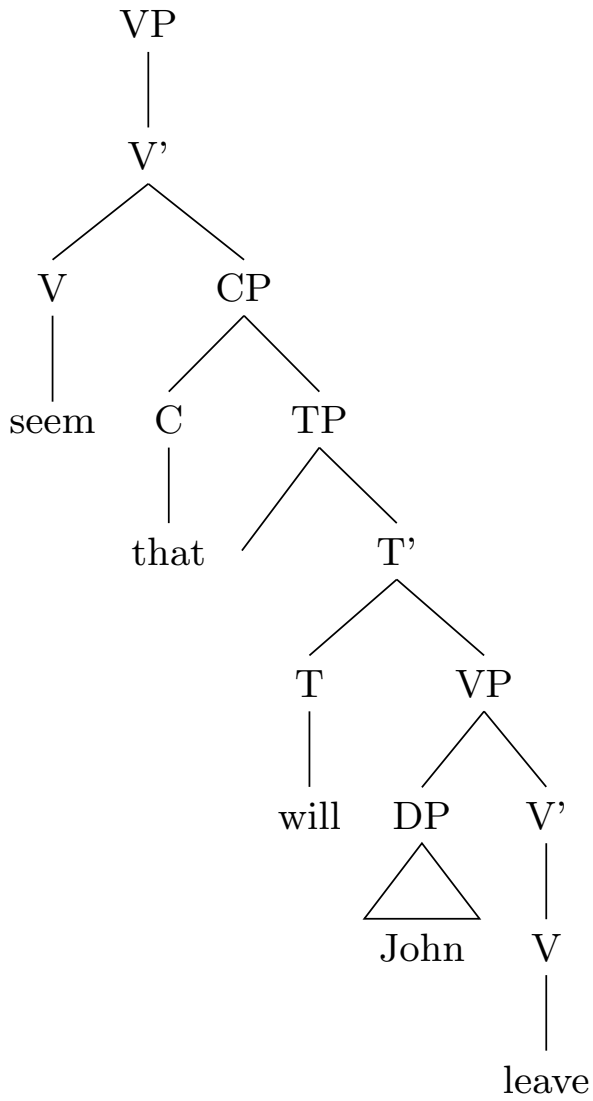
Step 3 The CP.



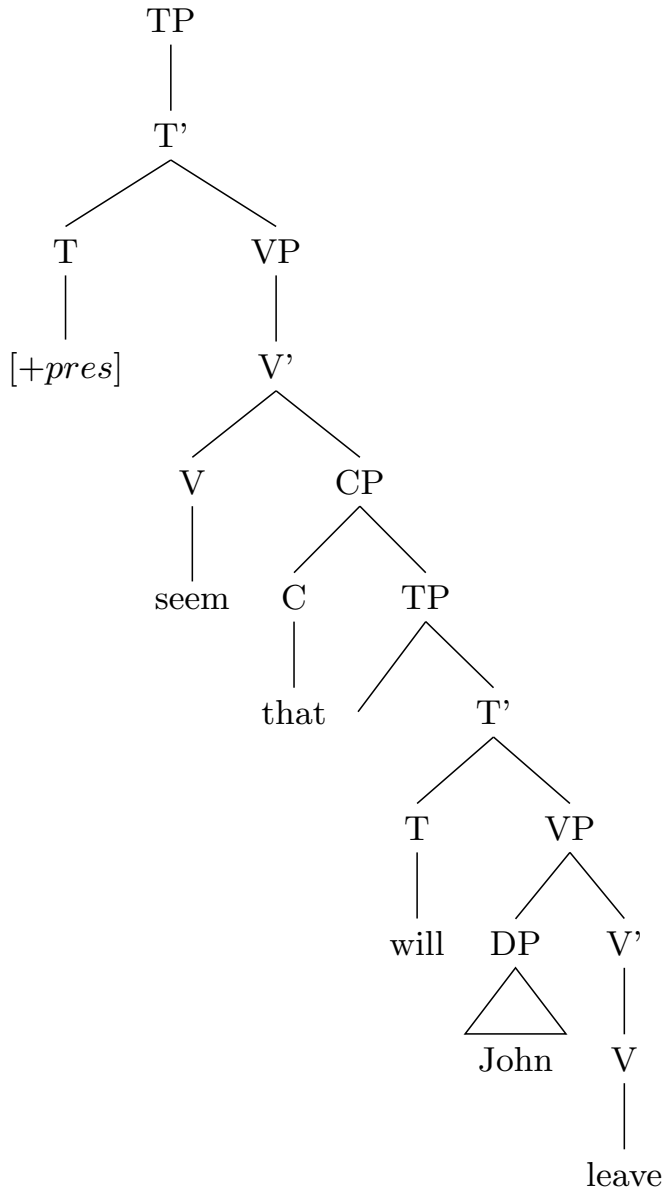
Step 4 The CP is selected by 'seem'.



Step 5 Predicates like 'seem' do not take any external arguments:

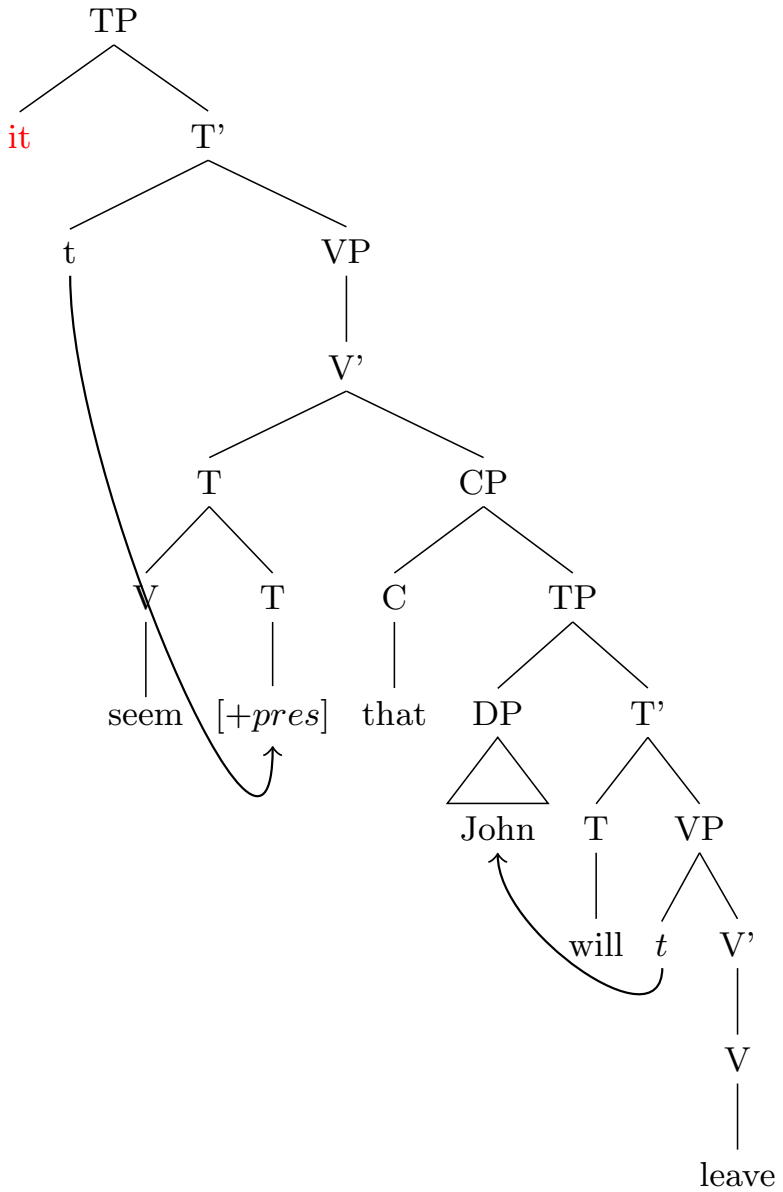


Step 6 The rest of the deep structure tree:



Step 7 T to V and Subject to Spec, TP.

Since the sentence needs a subject (to satisfy EPP) and no DP is available, an expletive is inserted.



Now, we can go back to (1). We said that the verb 'seem' does not select 'John'. How do we know that?

(i) Semantic requirements:

The selectional relation is between the V *elapse* and the DP *time*.

(3) a. Time seems to elapse slowly in the tropics.
b#Mary seems to elapse slowly in the tropics.

(4) a#Time seems to swim slowly in the tropics.
b. Sharks seem to swim slowly in the tropics.

Seem allows weather *it* (the subject of atmospheric verbs such as *rain*, *snow*...)

(5) a. It rains/snows.
b. It seems to be raining.
c.*It hopes to be raining.

(ii) Idiomatic meanings are available with *seem*.

The construction 'the cat is out of the bag' gets its idiomatic meaning (the secret is widely known) when the expression is generated as a whole. When is not generated as a whole, it can only get a literal interpretation ('the feline is out of the sack'). See ISAT, §8.4.2

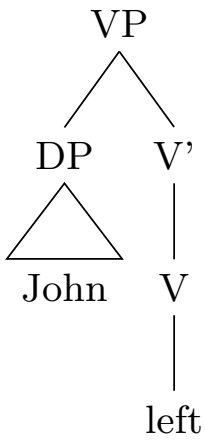
(6) The cat seems to be out of the bag. ✓ idiomatic interpretation

vs.

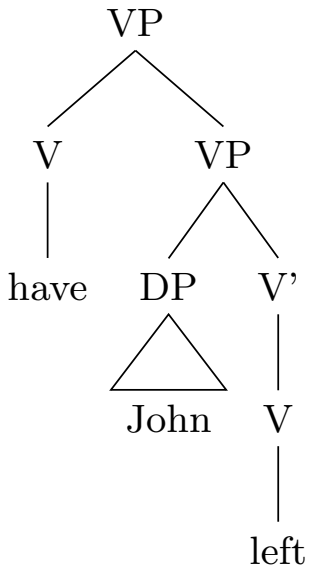
(7) The cat wants to be out of the bag. ✓ NO idiomatic interpretation

Let's diagram!

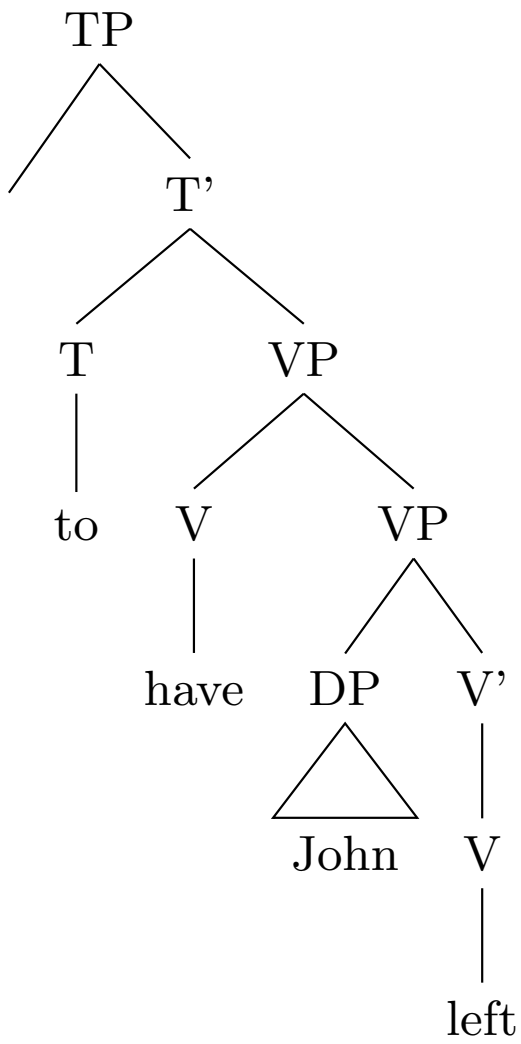
Step 1 The VP headed by the lexical verb.



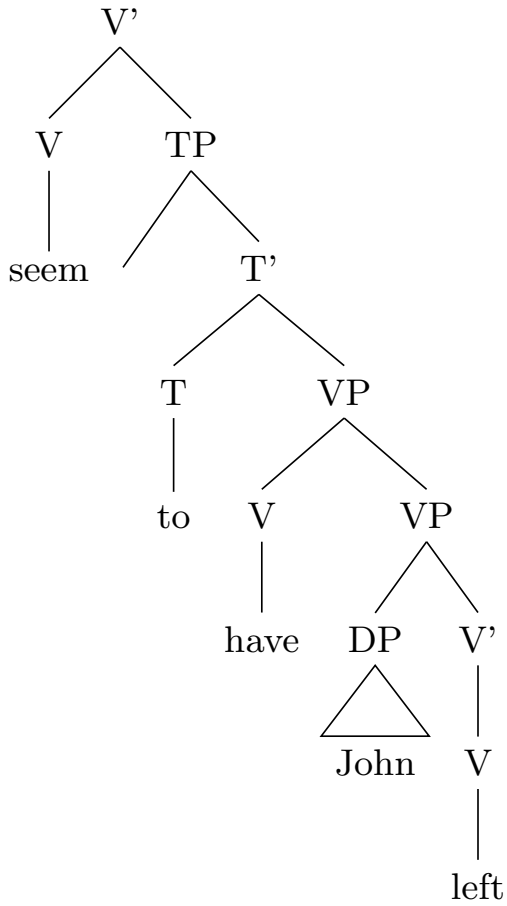
Step 2 The V headed by the auxiliary verb.



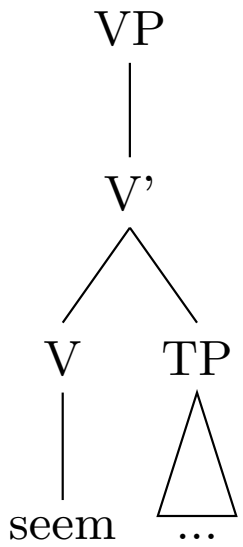
Step 3 The non-finite TP headed by the free morpheme *to*



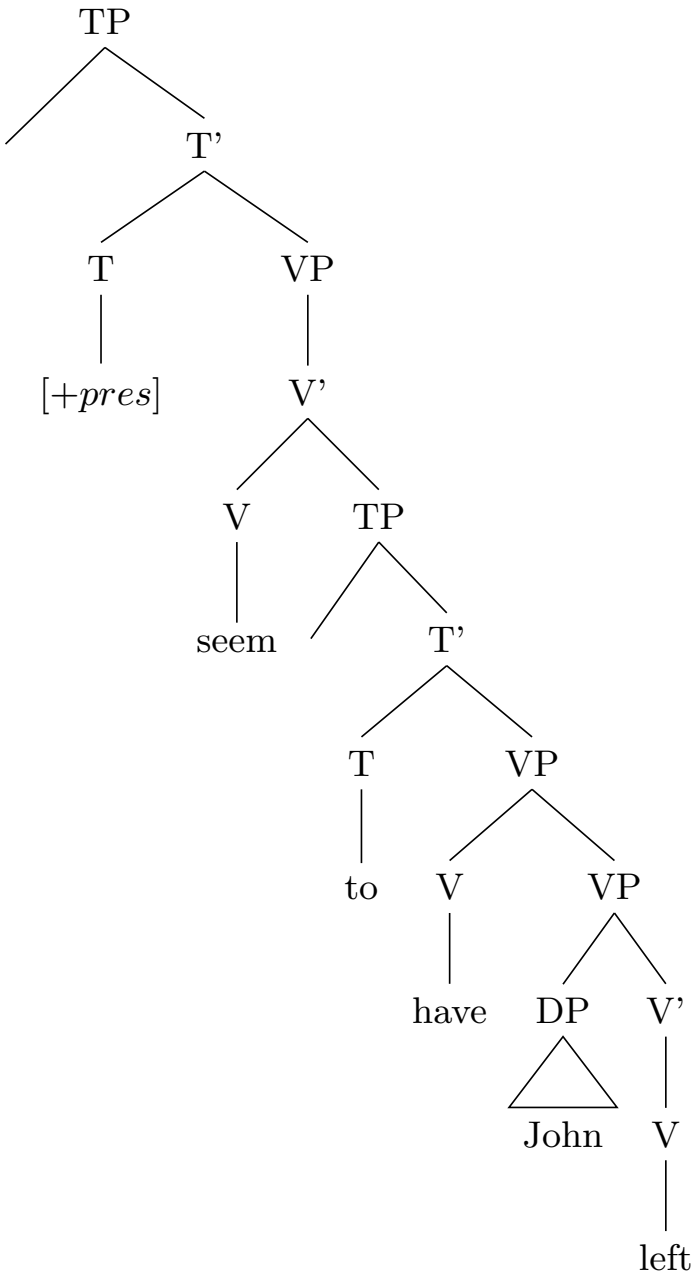
Step 4 The non-finite TP is selected by ‘seem’.
There is no evidence for a CP-layer and complementizers cannot appear between ‘seem’ and the TP:
*John seems that to have left



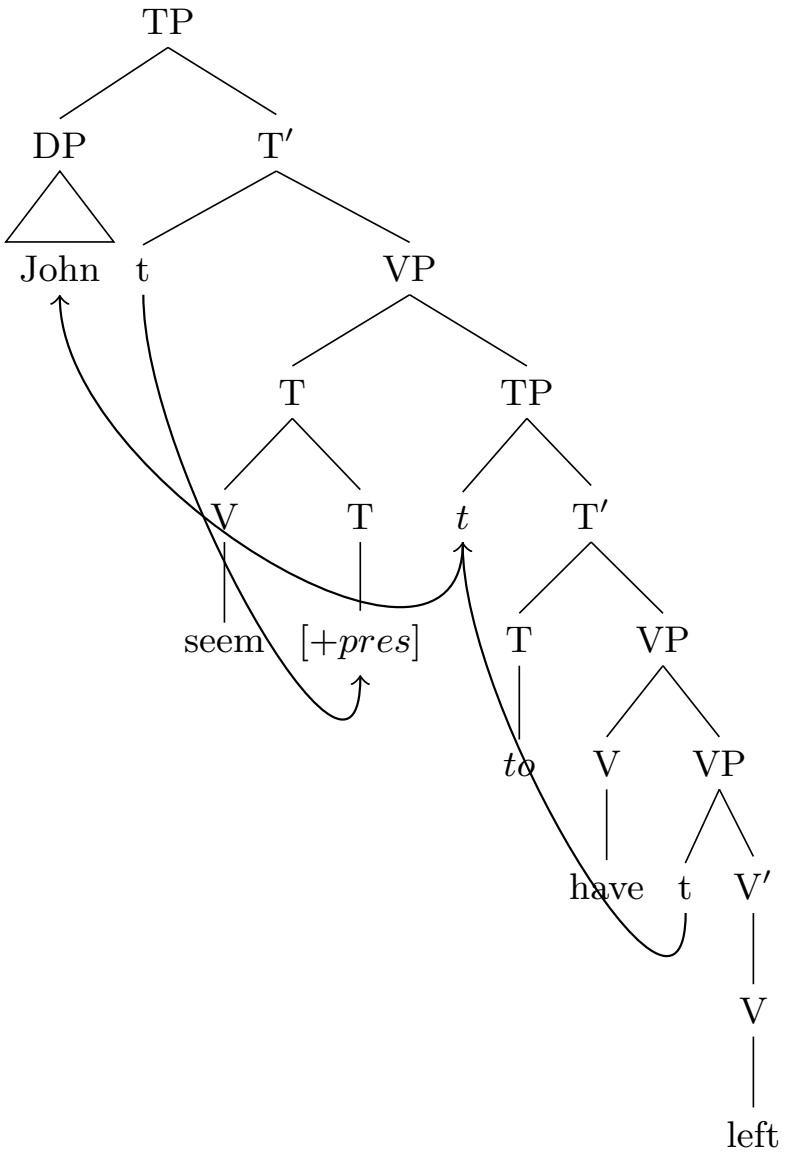
Step 5 No external argument: no specifier.



Step 6 The deep structure tree



Step 7 The surface structure tree



To sum up, *seem* can take CP or TP complements:

→ When it takes a tensed CP complement, raising cannot take place:

(8) *John seems that ~~John~~ left

and a expletive 'it' is inserted to satisfy EPP:

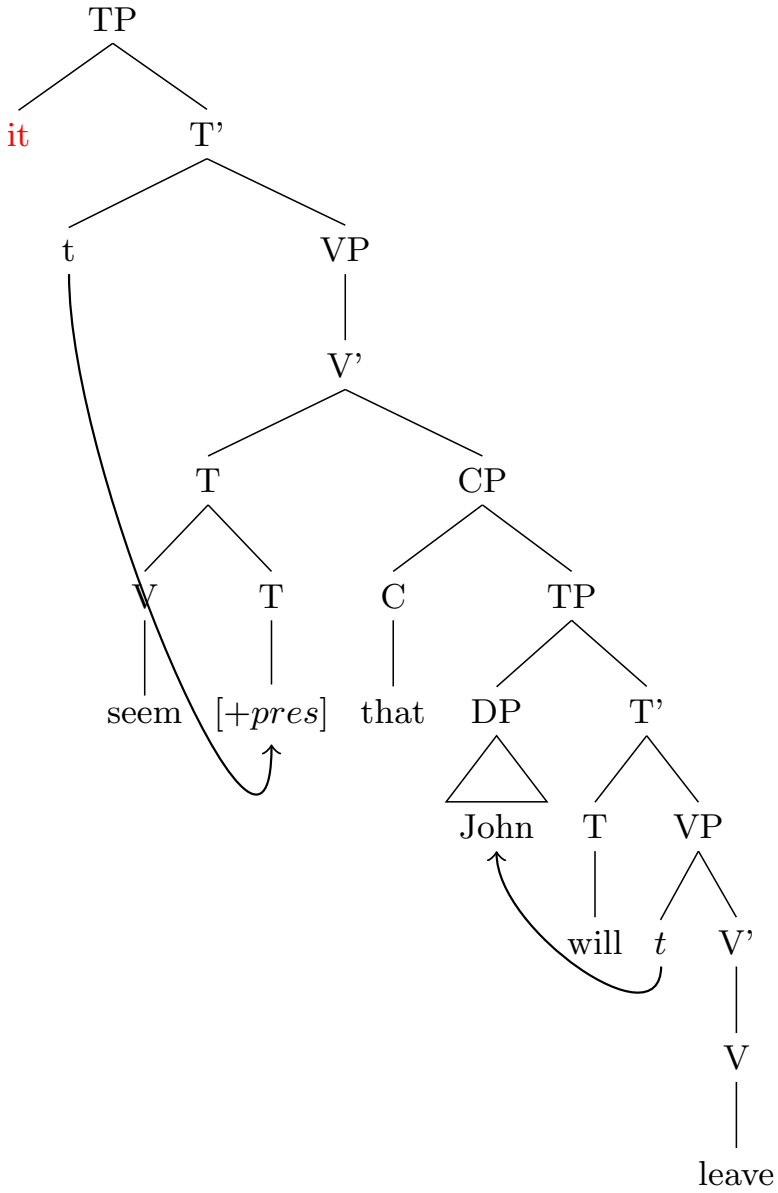
(9) It seems that John left.

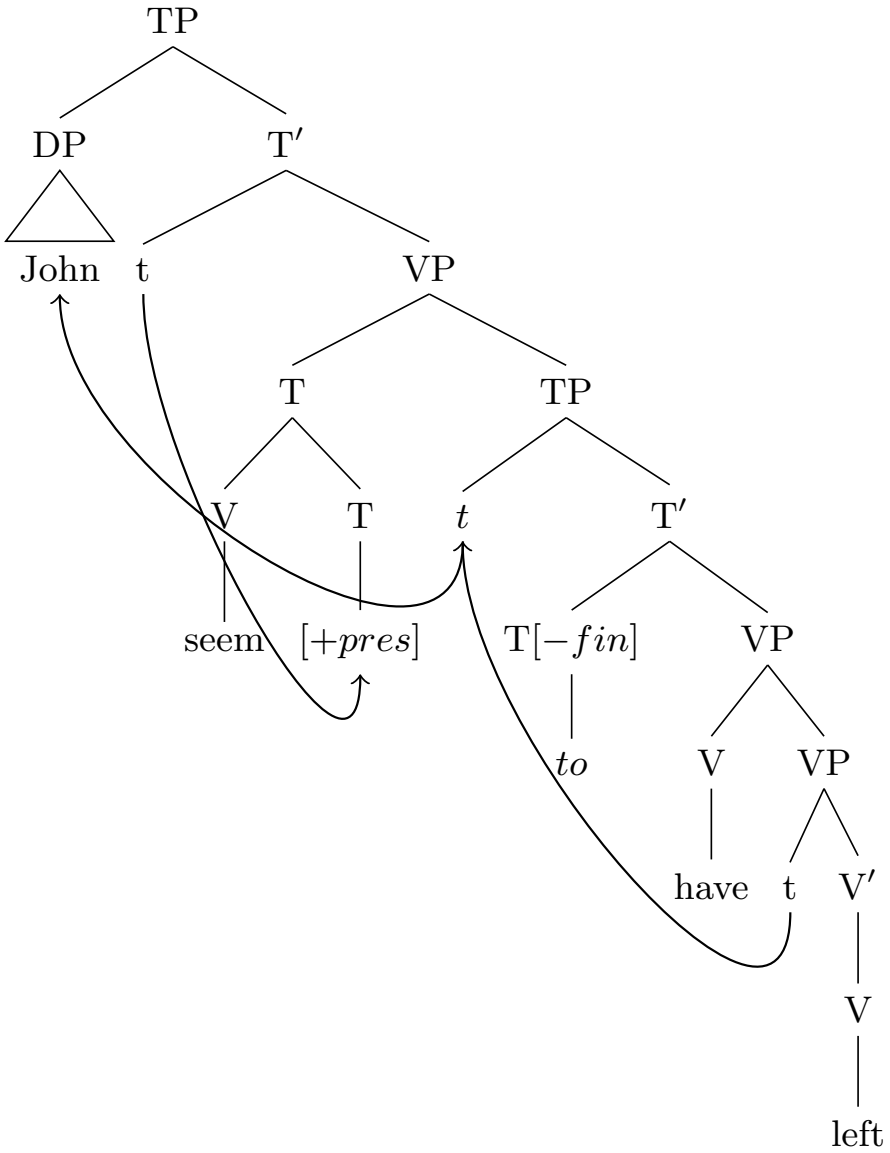
→ When it takes a -finite TP complement, the subject is taken from the complement of 'seem'

The movement of 'John' to [Spec, TP] is called **raising to Subject**. Verbs like *seem*, whose superficial subject comes from their complements are called **raising verbs**.

Other examples of raising verbs are: *appear* and *happen*.

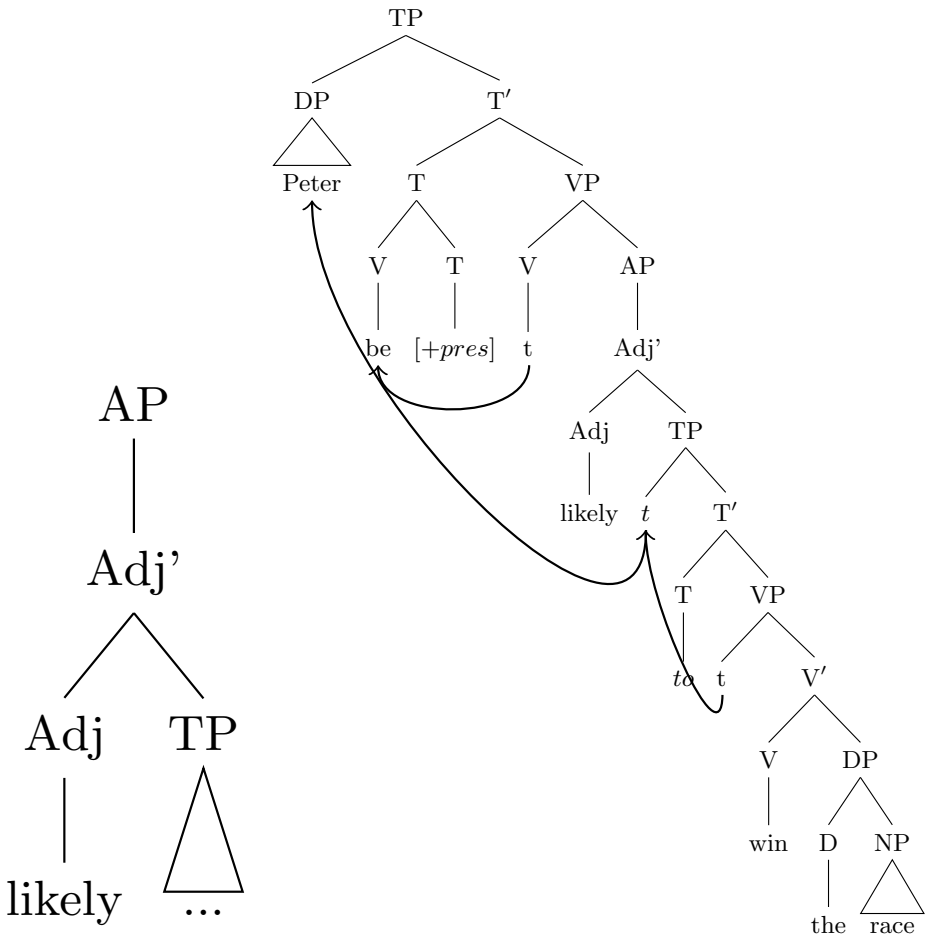
Examples of raising adjectives are: *likely* and *liable*.


TP
it
T'
t
VP
V'
T
CP
V
T
C
TP
seem
[+pres]
that
DP
T'
John
T
VP
will
t
V'
V
leave


TP
DP
T′
John
t
VP
T
TP
V
T
t
T′
seem
[+pres]
T[−fin]
VP
to
V
VP
have
t
V′
V
left

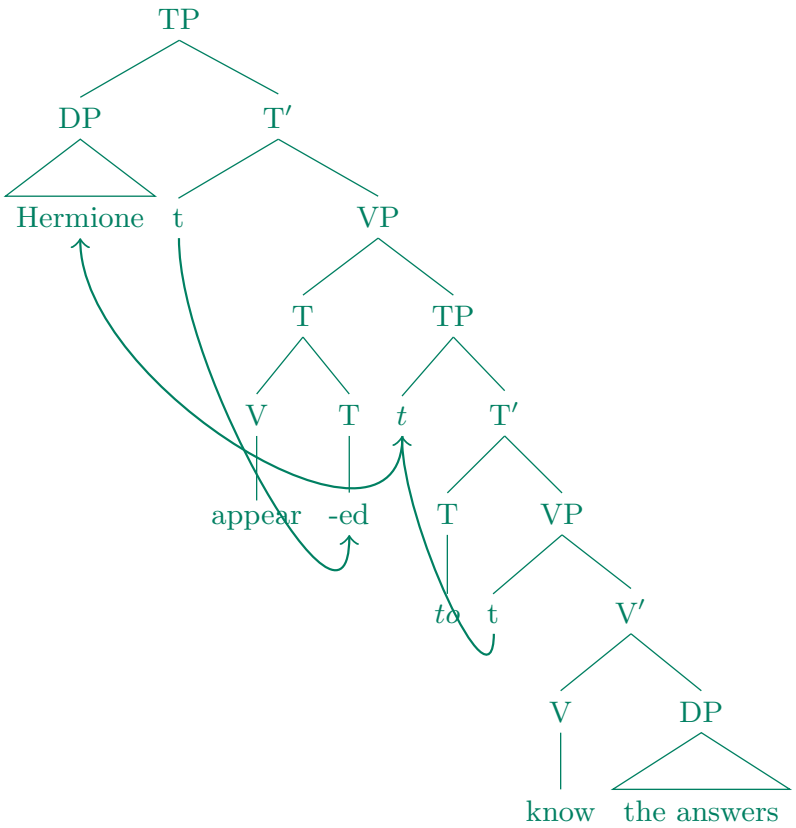
Here is an example of a raising adjective.

(10) Peter is *likely* to win the race.



Practice Draw a surface tree structure for the following sentence:

(11) Hermione appeared to know the answers.



Let's put together Raising to Subject and wh-questions!

(12) How often does Tim appear to be helping his sister?

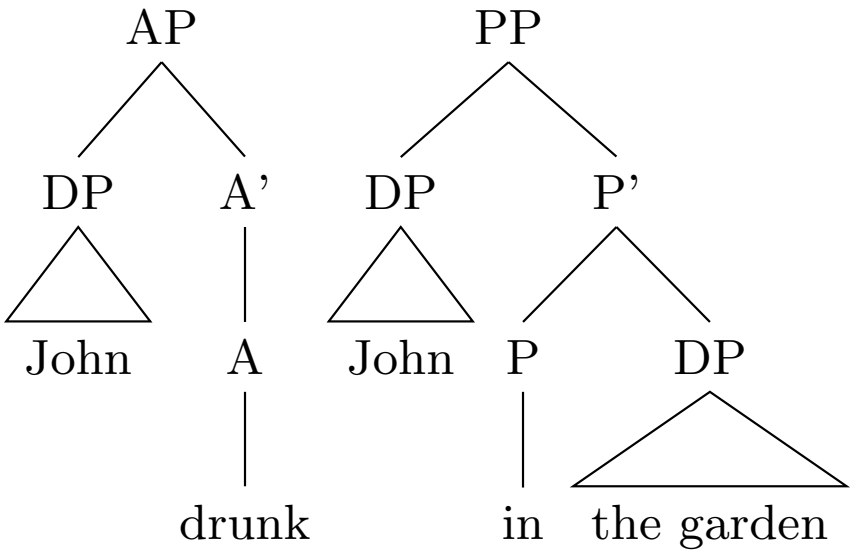
Copular Sentences

→ Copular sentences are sentences in which the predicate is not a verb and the two phrases (subject and non-verbal predicate) are linked by a copula, such as the verb *be* in English:

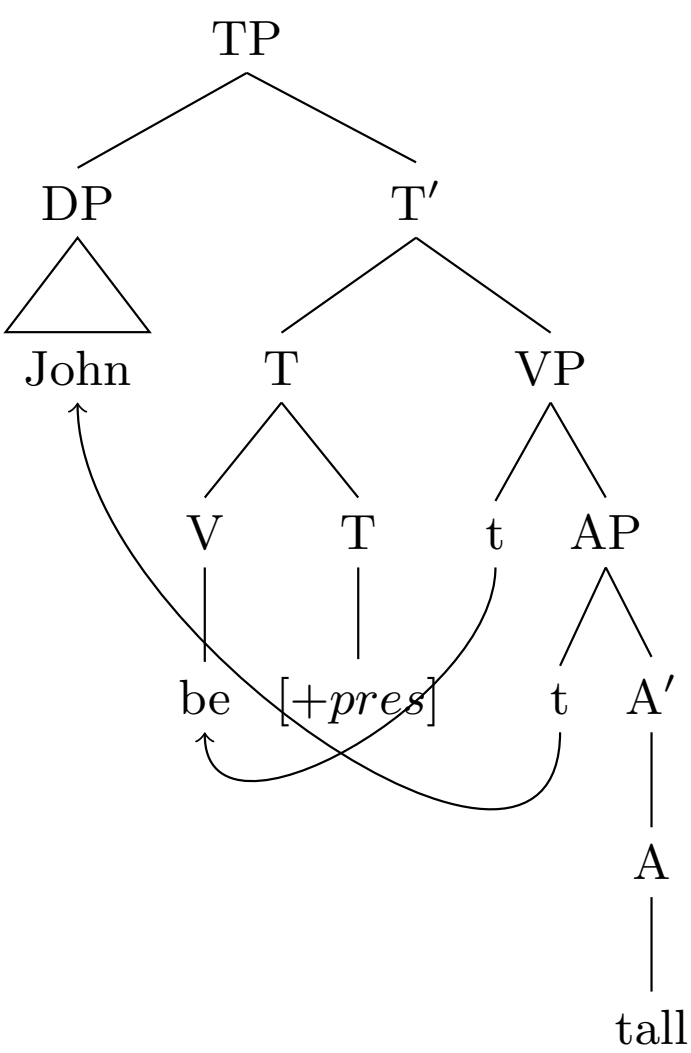
(13) a. [John] is [tall]
b. [John] is [in the garden]

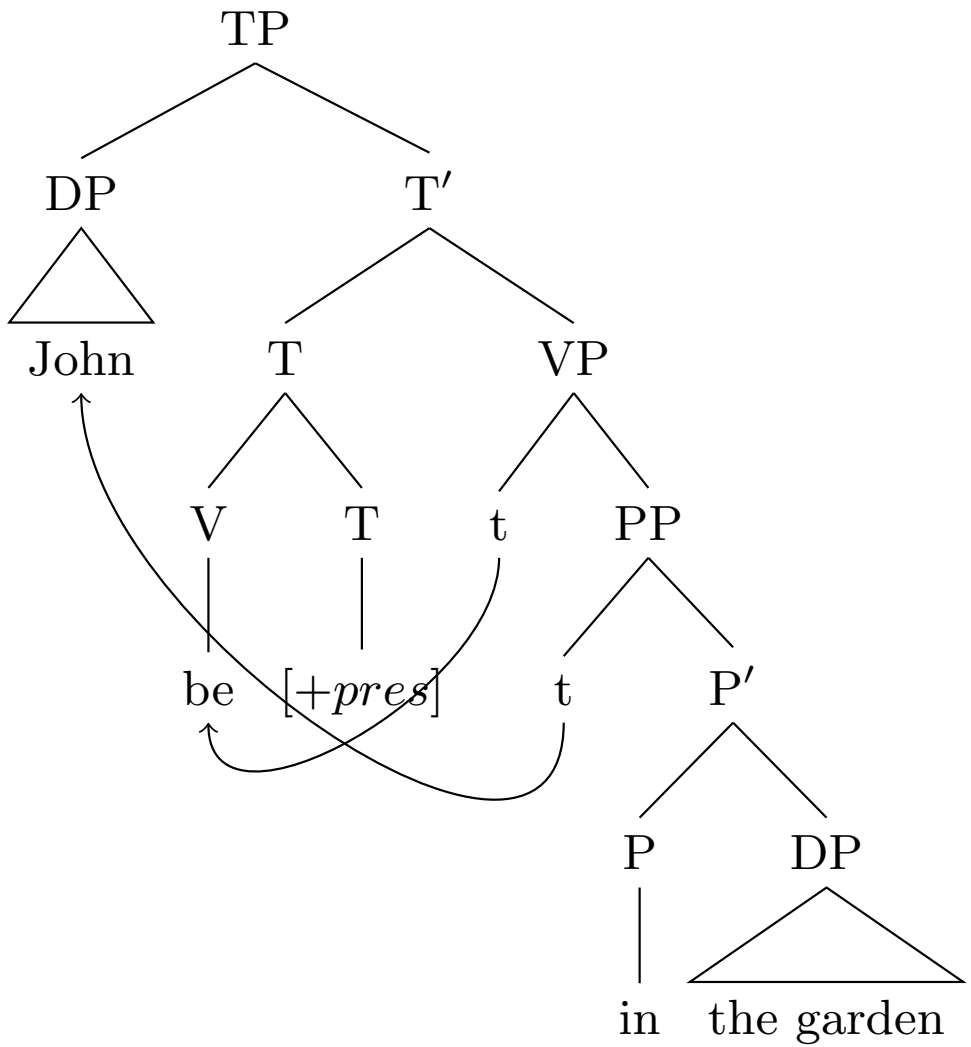
→ The verb (or copula) *be* in the examples above acts as a raising verb.

- It does not select any external arguments
- It c-selects a small clause complement (AP and PP in the examples above)



- the subject of the small clause selected by the copula raises to [Spec, TP]





Practice Draw the tree for the following sentence:

(14) Is Peter still at the gym?

(15) Jessica seems to be pregnant

Draw a fully labeled tree for (16). Don't pay attention to the 'ga' markers, just include them as part of the N they are connected to. Assume V to T & movement of the subject to spec, TP.

(16) Taroo-ga kappu-ga suite iru ka shirabete iru
Taroo cup empty be.pres whether investigating be.pres
'Taroo is investigating whether the cup is empty'

Control Verbs

→ The following two sentences look very similar:

(17) a. John seems to leave.
b. John hopes to leave.

→ But these sentences are structurally very different:

- (17-a) is a raising sentence.
- (17-b) is something different that does not involve any DP movement. That is what we call a **control sentence**

→ *John* is not selected by *seem* in (17-a) 'seem' does not assign a theta role to its subjcet.

→ *hope* is different: it takes two arguments: the person who hopes something and what is hoped by that person:

hope **V** $\underline{\text{DP}_{exp}}$ CP_{theme}

For this reason, the expletive construction is not possible with *hope*:

(18)*It hopes that John left.

→ There seems to be a problem in (17-b): both *leave* and *hope* need an external argument: leave needs an *agent* and *hope* needs an *experiencer*.

- In (17-b), John is understood to be both the agent of *leave* and the 'experiencer' of *hope*
- In fact, we can provide a very close paraphrase of (17-b) with a tensed clause complement instead of an infinitive.

(19) John$_i$ hopes that he$_i$ will leave

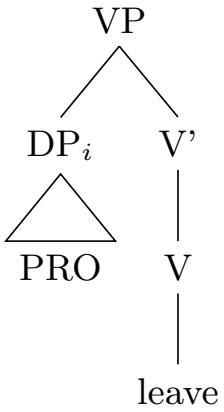
→ **Proposal** In (17-b) there is no movement and we need a silent anaphoric subject that is bound by the subject of the matrix verb.

- We'll call it **PRO**. The value of **PRO** is determined by the subject of the main clause: we say that PRO is controlled by the subject of 'hope'.
- Then, (17-b) would have the following structure:

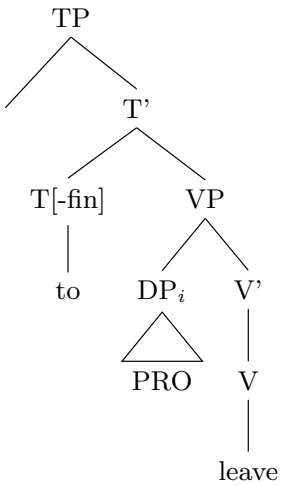
(20) John$_i$ hope [PRO$_i$ to leave]

Let's diagram!

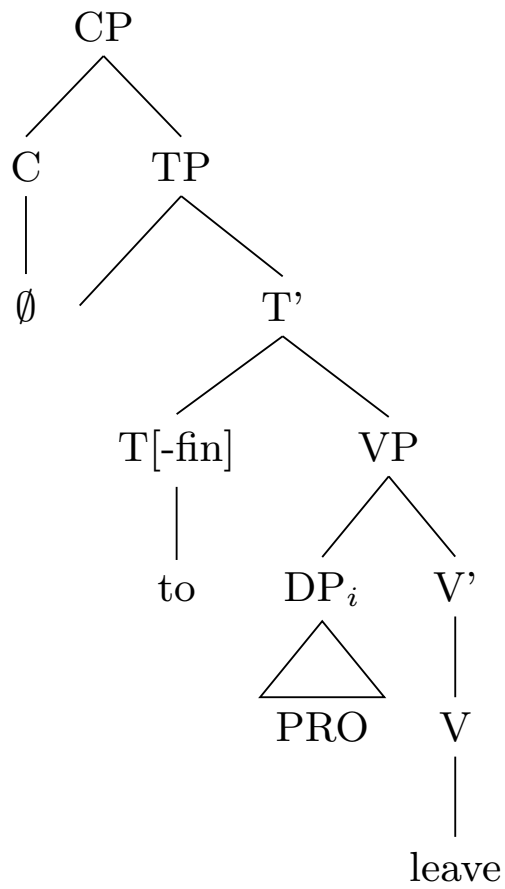
Step 1 The VP headed by the lexical verb. In this case the external argument will be PRO carrying the same index than the subject of the matrix clause



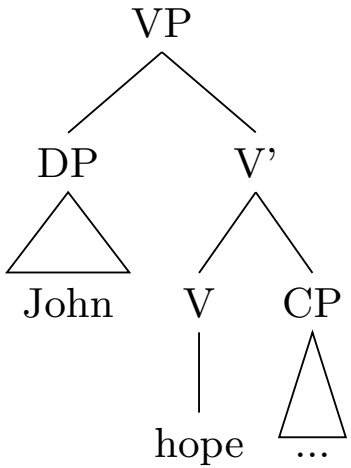
Step 2 The lower TP



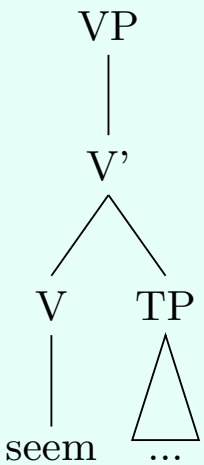
Step 3 The CP: unlike (17-a), in this case the verb *want* is selecting a CP-complement. We could say: 'John$_i$ hopes that he$_i$ will leave'

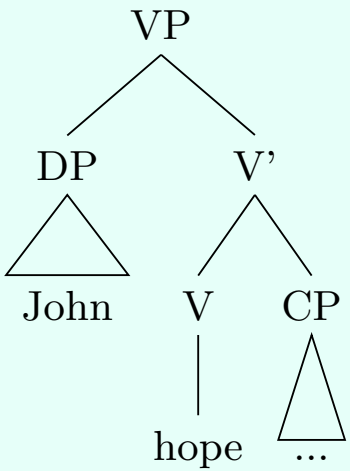


Step 3 The VP headed by the matrix verb *hope*. Unlike raising verbs, control verbs select subjects. So we expect to have the experiencer in [Spec, VP]

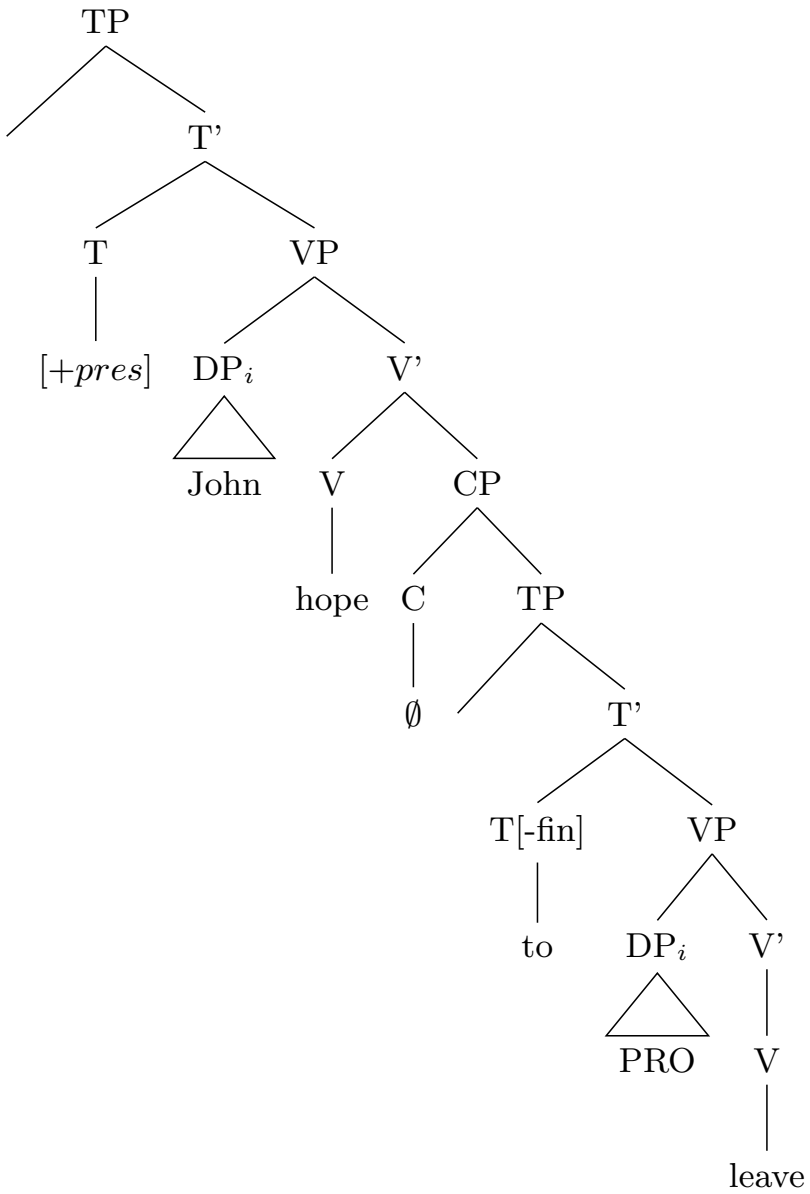


Note the difference between the phrase headed by 'seem' in (17-a) and the one headed by 'hope' in (17-b)

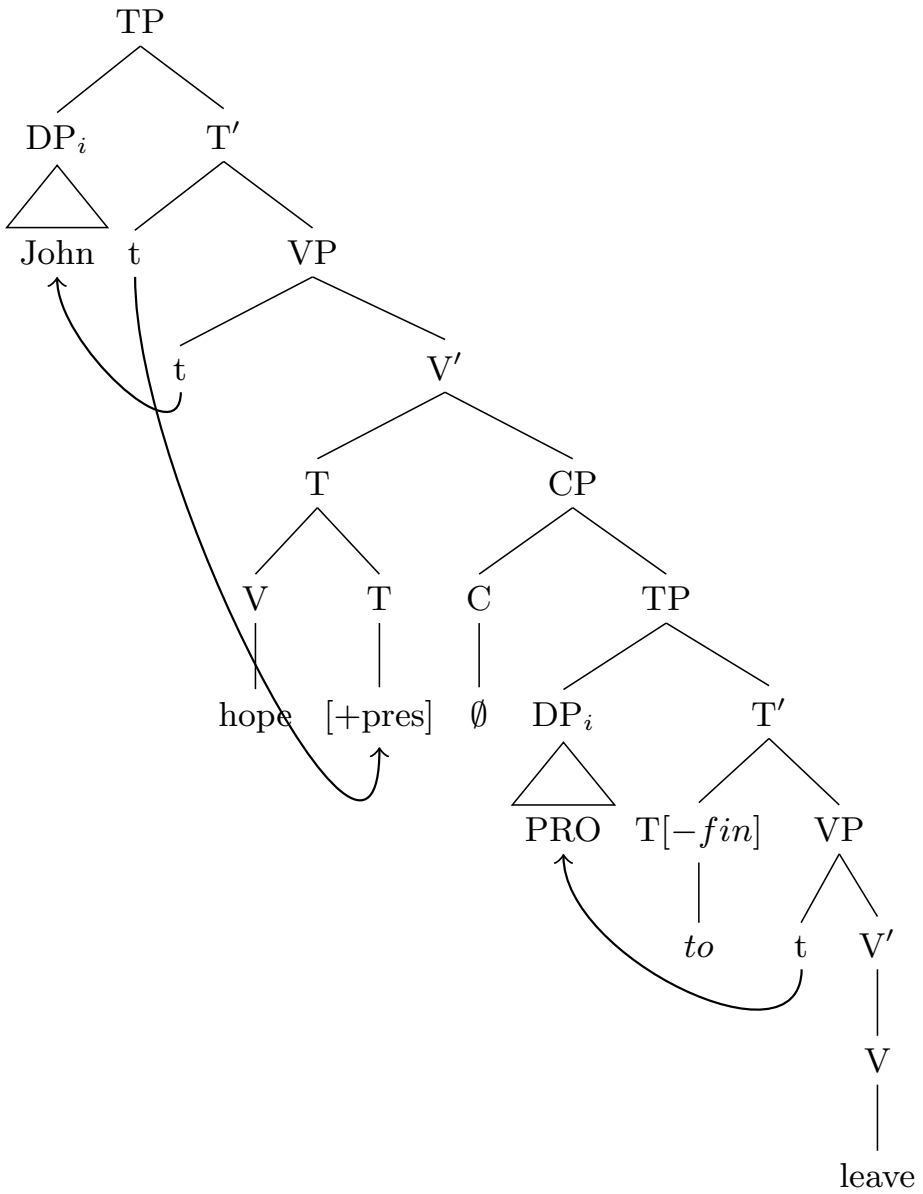




Step 4 The DP structure tree



Step 5 The surface structure tree



Practice Draw the tree for the following sentence:

(21) Penelope refused to perform at the party