Ellipsis and Reduced Registers

Day 1

Syntax crash-course #2:

Structural dependencies (3 case studies)
&
Syntactic Movement

Last time…

Constituency
- Syntactic phrases
- Syntactic heads
- Projection

Structural dependencies
- Negative polarity items
- Referential binding
- Syntactic case

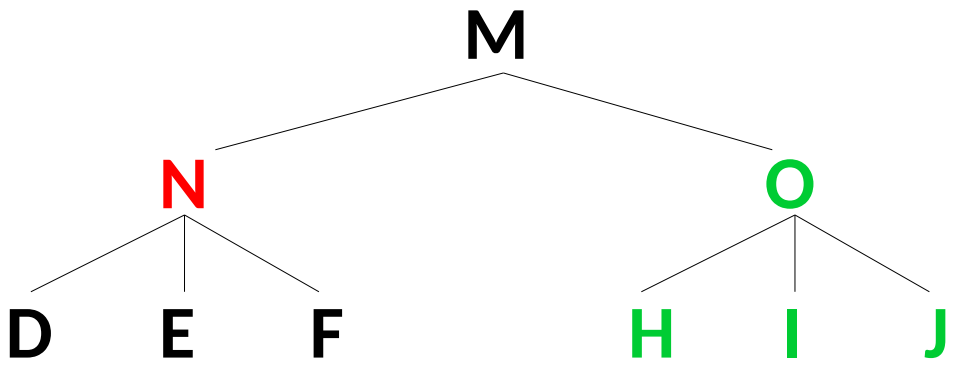
Syntactic trees
- X'-theory
- C-command
- Dominance
- Complements
- Specifiers

Syntactic movement
- Islands

The Y-model of grammar

Structural dependencies

- The presence of a linguistic object X is often **dependent** on the presence of linguistic object Y.
- "X is **licensed** by Y"
- X and Y must enter into a particular **structural relationship** for Y to license X.



C-command =
If N1 has sisters, then N1 c-commands its sisters and their descendants

If N1 doesn't have sisters, then N1 c-commands everything its mother c-commands

Example #1: *any*

(1) a. John didn't buy anything.

b. * John bought anything.

Any-rule: 1st attempt, based on (1)

any is licensed by the presence of negation

(2) * Anyone didn't buy a book.

Any-rule: 2nd attempt, based on (2)

any is licensed by the presence of a preceding negation

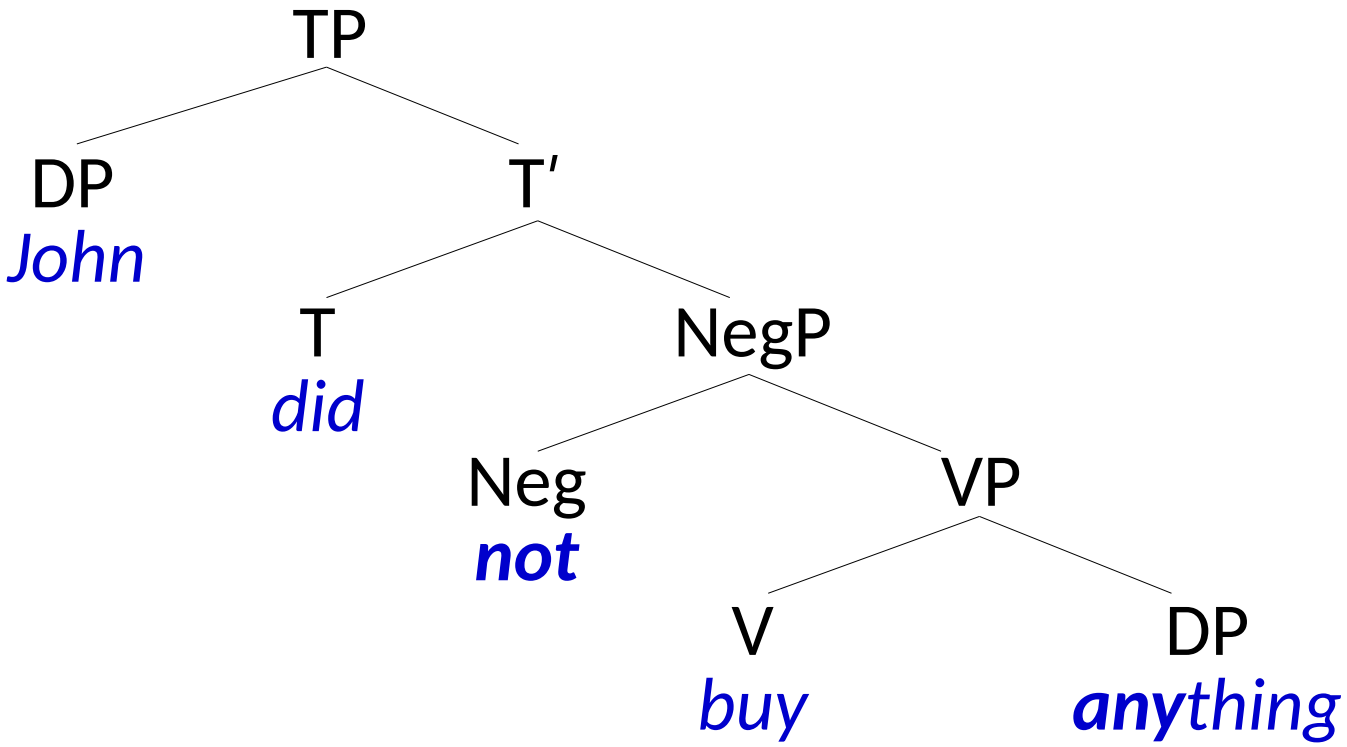
Example #1: *any*

(3) * [$_{DP}$ The man that didn't remove his hat] bought anything.

- The licensing of *any* isn't based on simple precedence: negation precedes *any* in (3), but (3) is still ungrammatical!

- There must be a more complicated structural dependency between *any* and negation…

(1) a. John didn't buy anything.

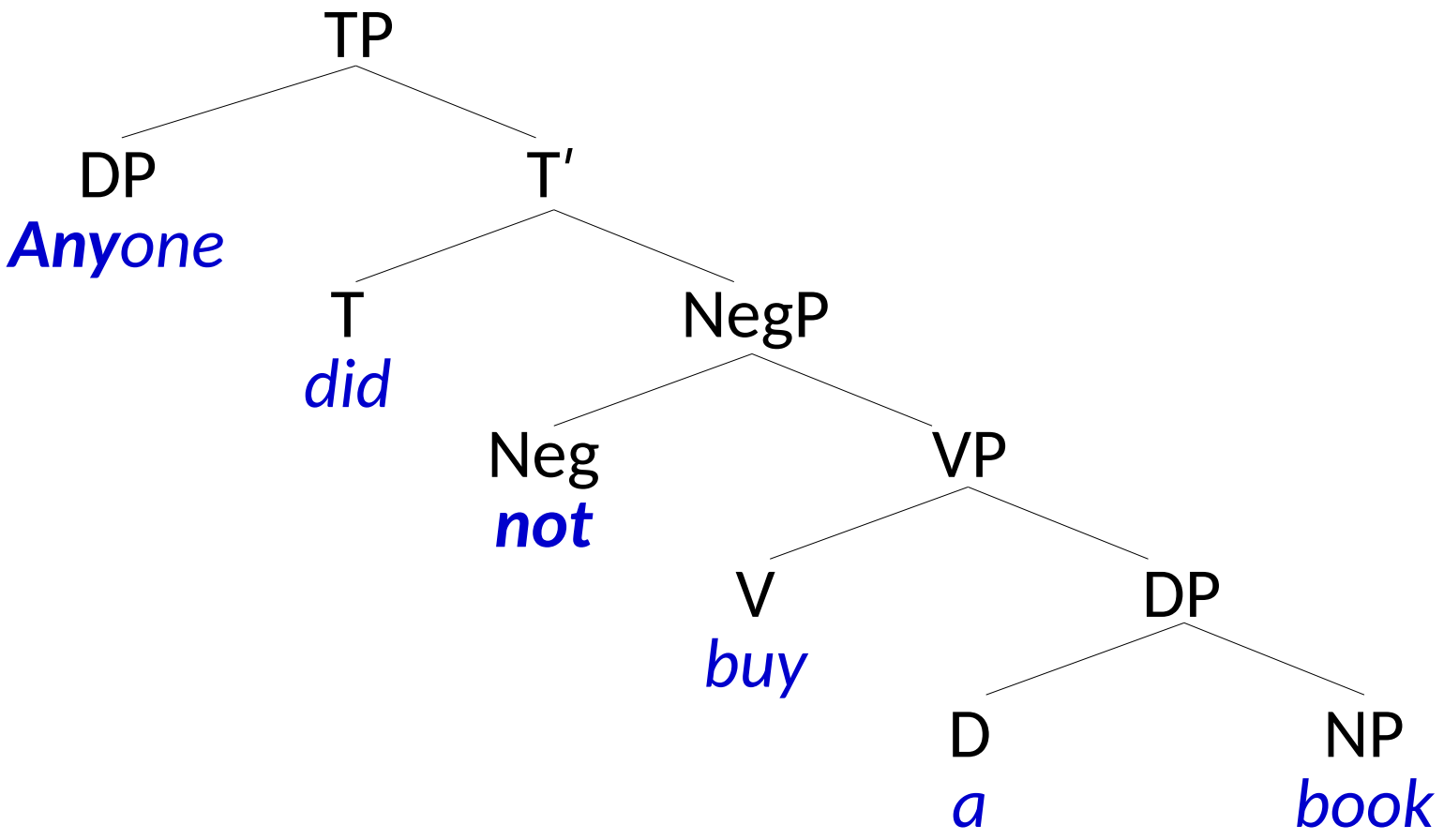


Q: What structural relation obtains between ***not*** and *any*?

Any-rule

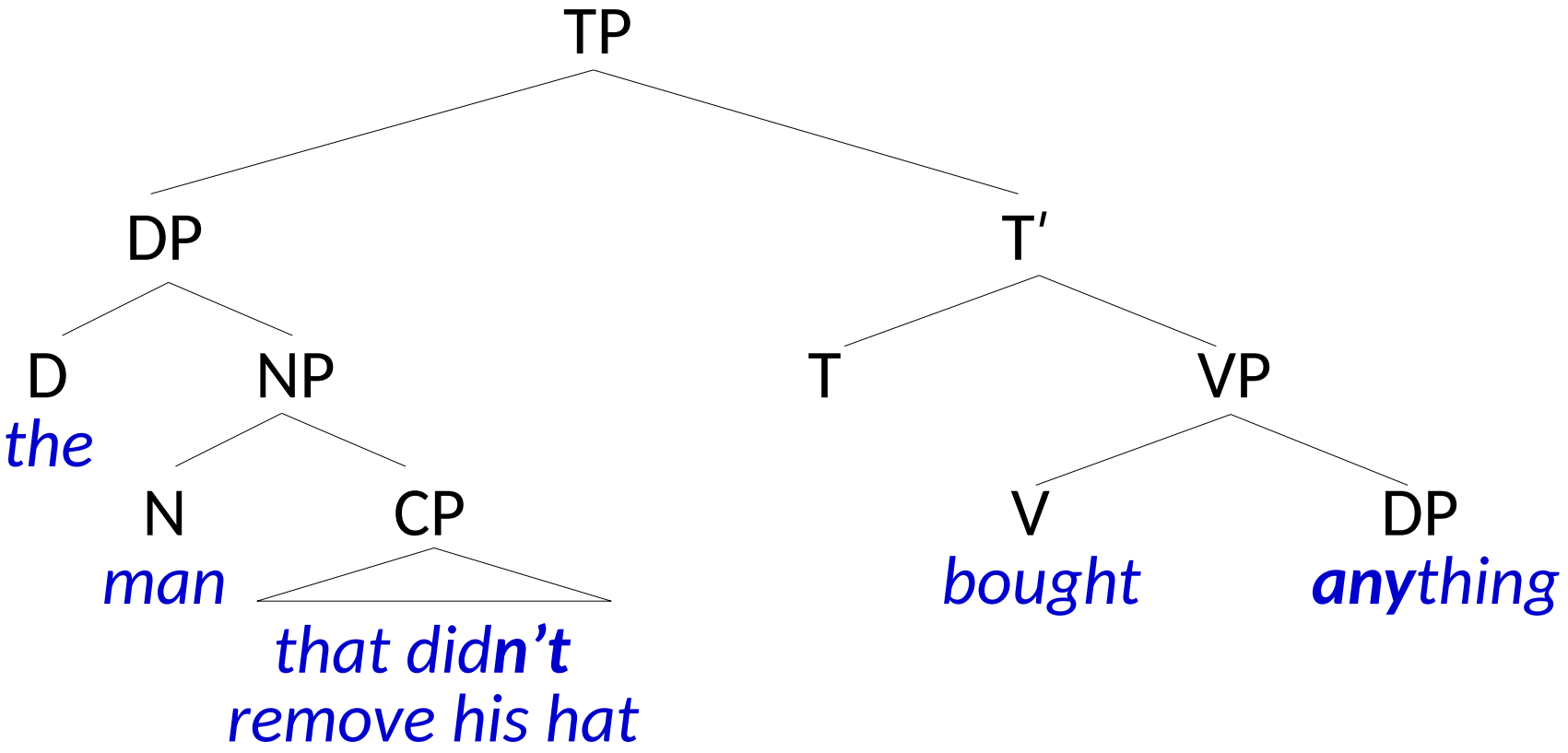
any is licensed in the presence of a ***c-commanding*** negation

(2) * Anyone didn't buy a book.



- *Any* is <u>not</u> c-commanded by negation
- Example (2) is correctly predicted to be ungrammatical

(3) * [$_{DP}$ The man that didn't remove his hat] bought anything.



- *Any* is <u>not</u> c-commanded by negation

- Example (3) is correctly predicted to be ungrammatical

Take-home message:

- To capture the licensing condition on *any*, we need to make reference to syntactic structure (c-command)

- This shows that the presence of certain linguistic items is conditioned by their syntactic environment

(4) a. Bob didn't lift a finger to help me. (*make an effort*)
b. * Bob lifted to finger to help me.

(5) a. I don't give a fuck about the price. (*care*)
b. * I give a fuck about the price.

Negative polarity Items (NPIs, e.g. *any*, *give a fuck*, etc…)

NPIs are licensed in the presence of a ***c-commanding*** negation

Example #2: Referential binding

- Three types of nominal expressions:

[1] R-expressions: *the table*, *Donald*, *an angry dog*, …

[2] Anaphors: *herself*, *myself*, *each other*, …

[3] Pronouns: *I*, *her*, *my*, *them*, …

Q: How do these nominal expressions get their ***reference***?

[1] R-expressions

- R-expressions always get their reference from world-knowledge or from the conversational context:

(6) Donald Trump fired his secretary.

(7) [*Context:* A is showing B around her new house]

A: The floor is made of expensive wood.

[2] Anaphors

- Anaphors always get their reference from another nominal in a sentence:

(8) Mary thinks that **John**$_i$ loves himself$_i$.

(9) [**Frank and Sally**]$_i$ kissed [each other]$_i$ last night.

(10) A: Have you met Sally?
B: * Yes, herself is really nice person.

[3] Pronouns

- Pronouns get their reference from:
  - (i) world-knowledge or the conversation (like R-expressions)
  - (ii) from another nominal in the sentence (like anaphors)

(11) **Mary**$_i$ thinks that **John** loves her$_{i\,/\,k}$.

Two interpretations of (11):

- ***k*** **=** M thinks J loves another woman (e.g. Sally) (R-expression)
- ***i*** **=** M thinks J loves M (anaphor)

- The position of R-expressions, anaphors, and pronouns is syntactically constrained:

(12) * **He**$_i$ thinks that Mary loves John$_i$.

(13) * **John**$_i$ thinks that Mary loves himself$_i$.

(14) * Mary thinks that **John**$_i$ loves him$_i$.

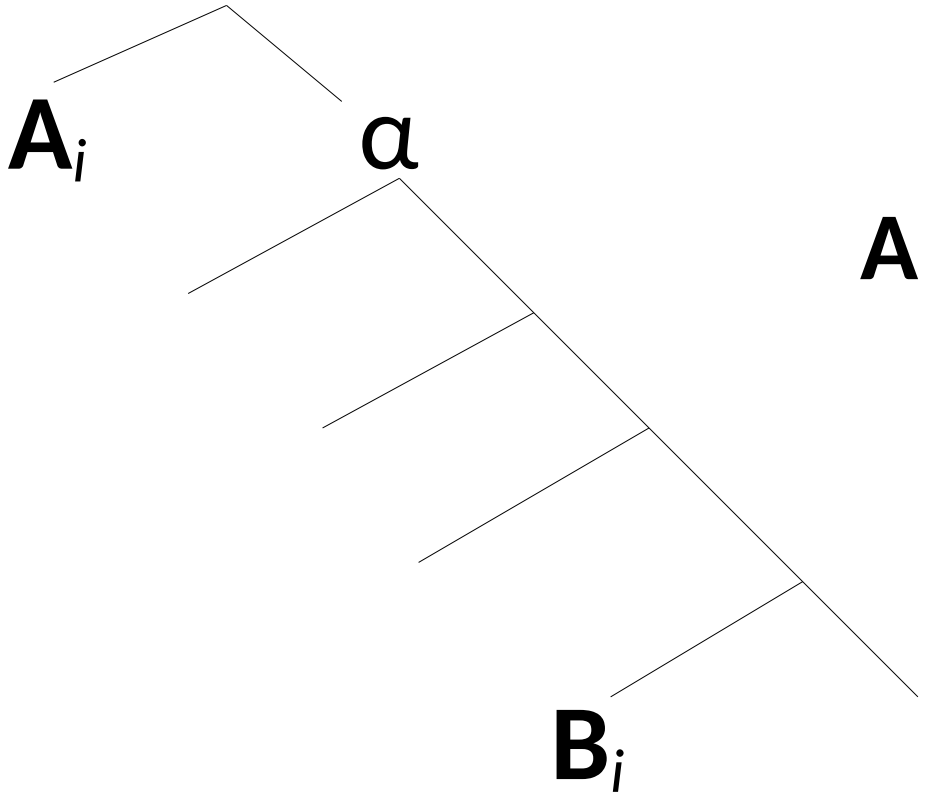
- We must refer to the idea of **structural dependency** to capture this distribution.

Syntactic Binding

A **<u>binds</u>** B iff:

(i) A and B have the same referent, and

(ii) A **c-commands** B.



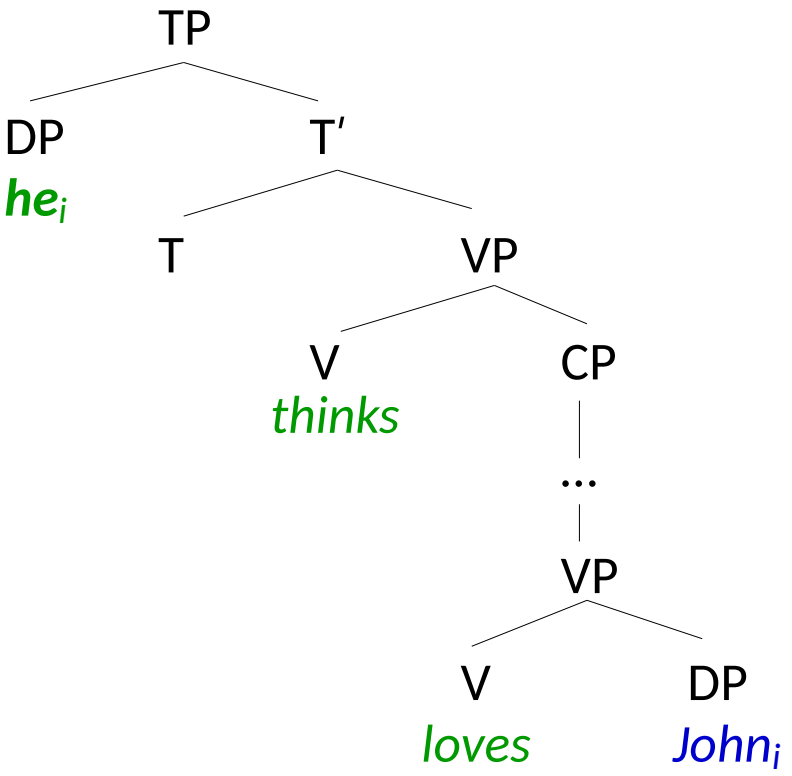
A binds **B**

R-expressions and Binding:

- R-expressions cannot be bound (Principle C)

(6) Donald Trump fired his secretary. ← R-expression not bound

(12) * **He**$_i$ thinks that Mary loves John$_i$. ← R-expression bound

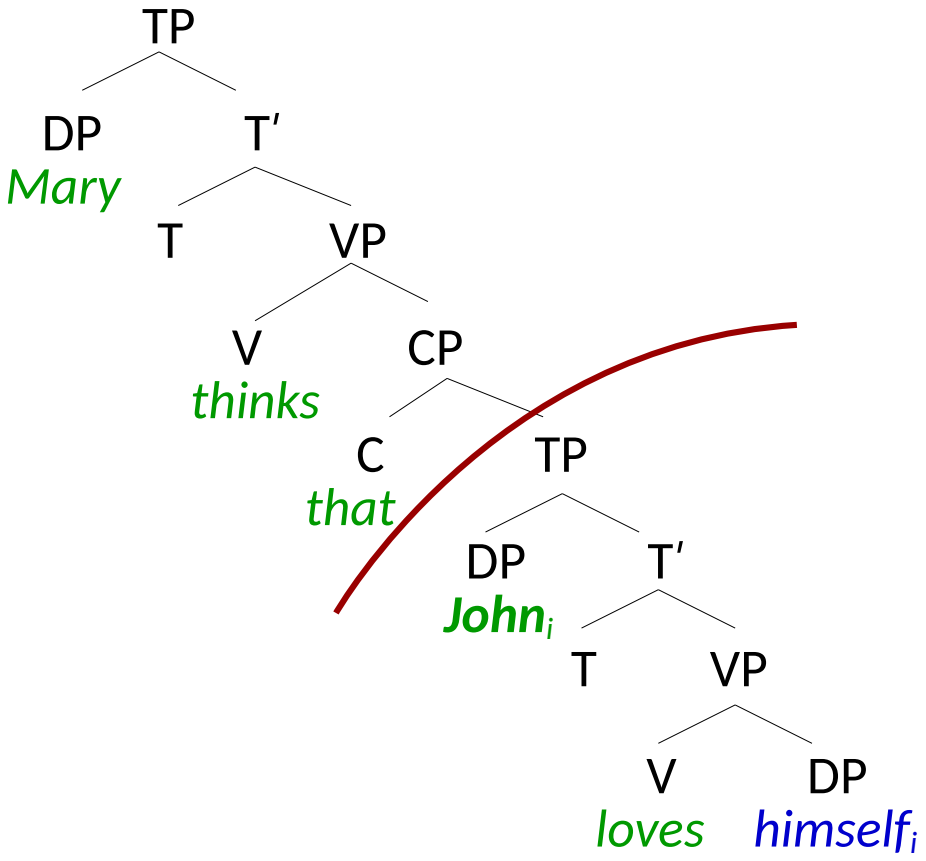


Anaphors and Binding:

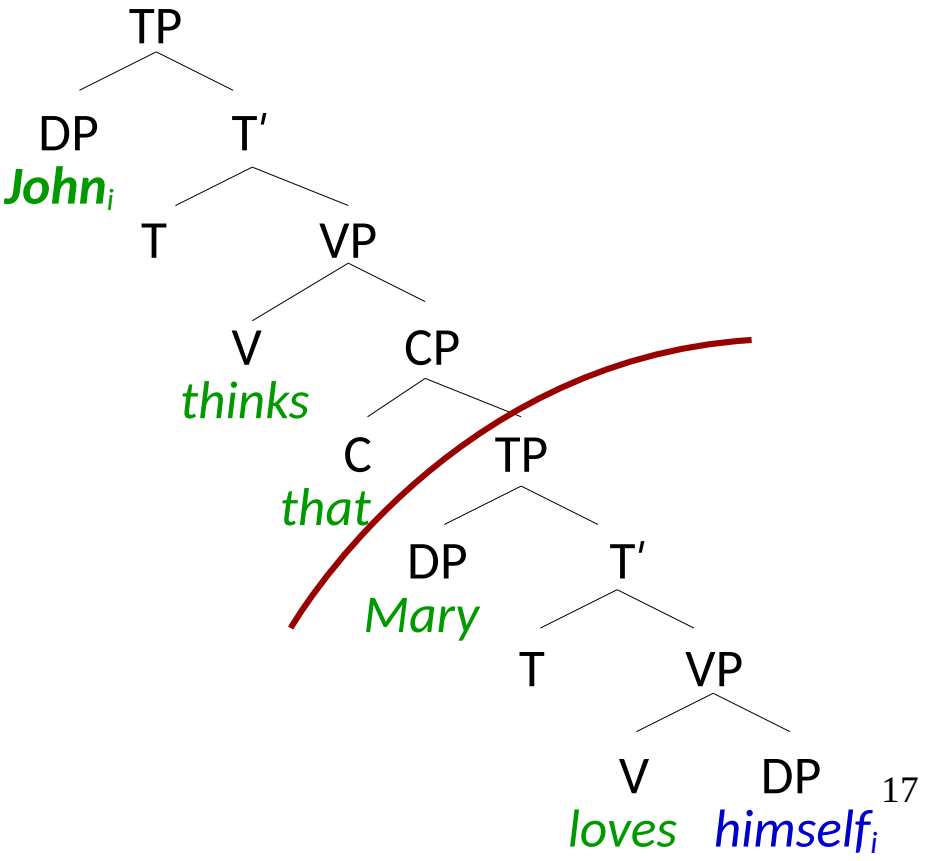
- Anaphors must be bound within the same clause (TP)

(Principle A)

(11) Mary thinks that **John**$_i$ loves himself$_i$.



(13) * **John**$_i$ thinks that Mary loves himself$_i$.

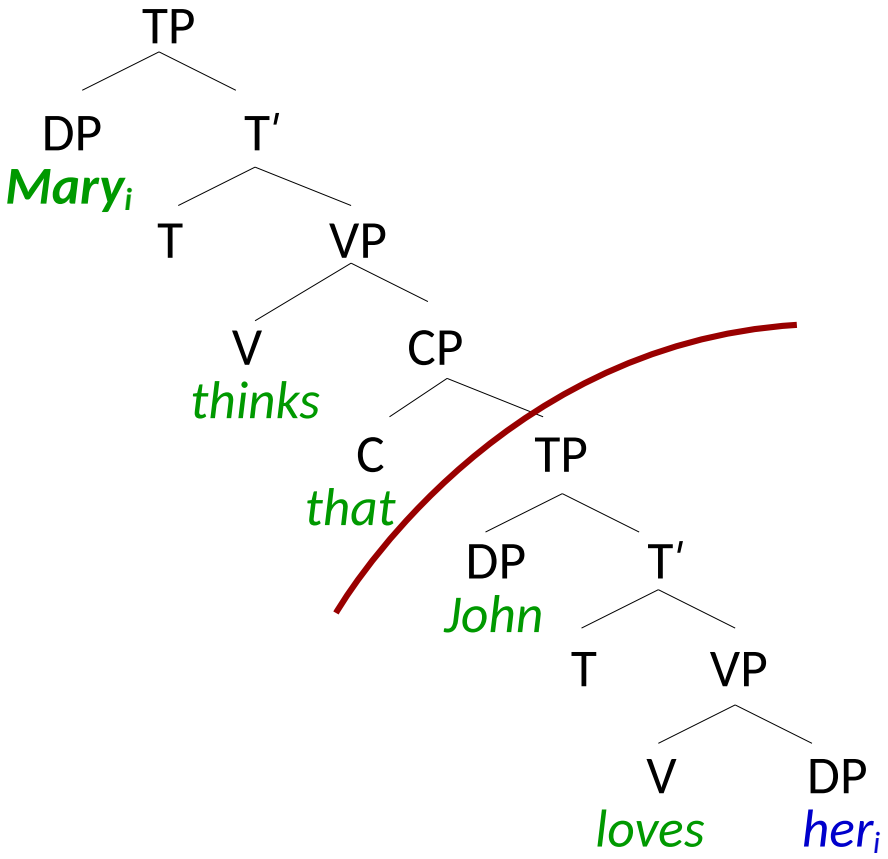


Pronouns and Binding:

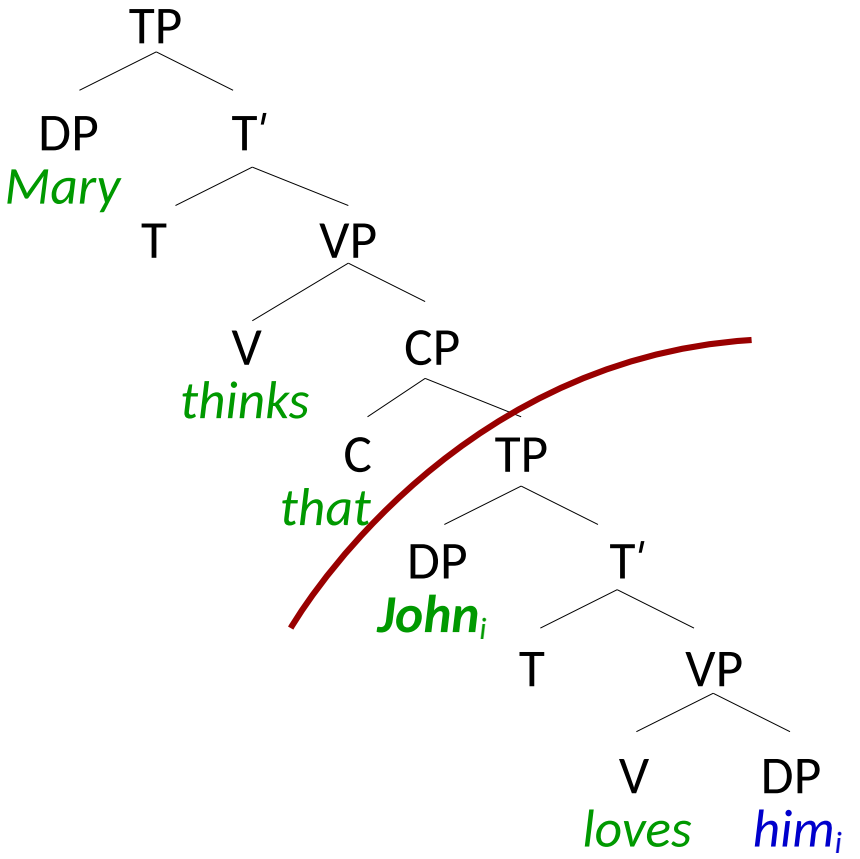
- Pronouns cannot be bound within the same clause (TP)

(Principle B)

(8) **Mary**$_i$ thinks that John loves her$_i$.



(14) * Mary thinks that **John**$_i$ loves him$_i$.



Take-home message:

- To capture the distribution of nominal expressions, we must make reference to structural dependencies (i.e. ***binding***)

- This again shows that the presence of certain linguistic items is conditioned by their syntactic environment

Example #3: Case

- Agglutinative languages (e.g. Turkish) have rich **case-morphology**

(15)

Ali	mektub-**u**	Ayşe-**ye**	Londra-**dan**	gönder-di.
Ali	letter-ACC	Ayşe-DAT	London-ABL	send-PST

'Ali sent the letter to Ayse from London.'

- Analytic languages have poor case morphology. In English, only pronouns show case distinctions

(16) a. **We** want Bill to take a picture of **us**.

b. **She** likes **her** new smartphone.

Example #3: Case

- Intuitive idea: case marks grammatical arguments

I, *she*, *he*, *they*, *we* = mark subjects (agents of events)

(17) { I / she / he / they / we } played football for hours.

me, *her*, *him*, *them*, *us* = mark objects (patients of events)

(18) The boss promoted { me / her / him / them / us } on Friday.

Example #3: Case

- The correspondence between case morphology and grammatical argument isn't exact:

(19) a. It was me that stole the car. (me = agent of stealing)

b. Me give a lecture? No way! (me = agent of lecture-giving)

- In reality, the case morphology of on a nominal expression is determined by a **structural dependency**

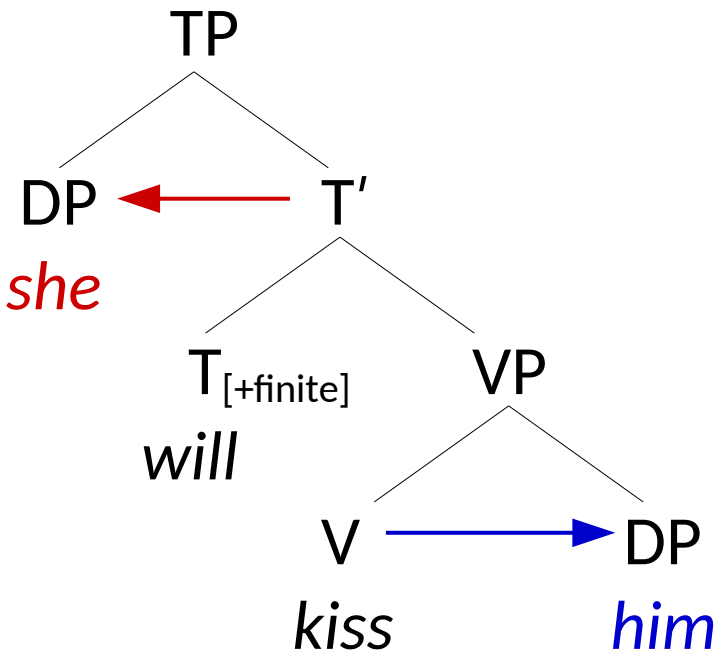
Roughly…

Nominative (*I*, *she*, *he*, …) → syntactic sister of finite verb (**T**)

Accusative (*me*, *her*, *him*, …) → syntactic sister of main verb (**V**)

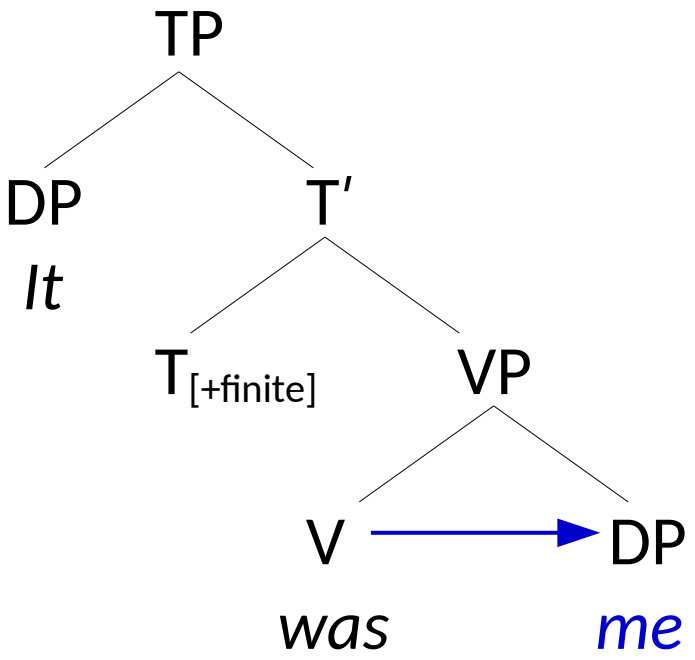
Example #3: Case

(20) She will kiss him.



Example #3: Case

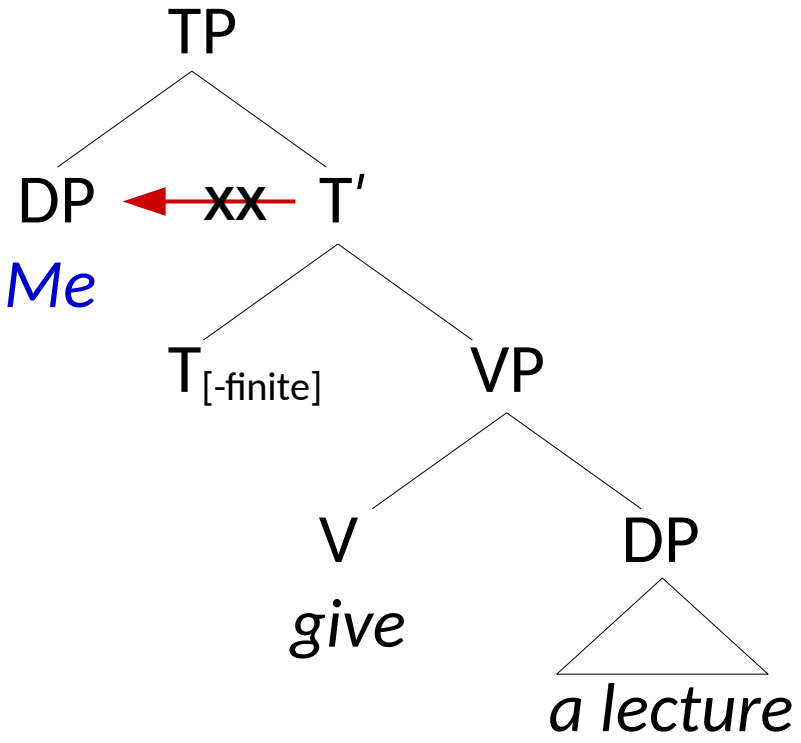
(19) b. It was me (that stole the car).



Example #3: Case

Recall: Nominative case (*I*, *she*, *he*, …) is assigned only if the clause is **finite**

(19) a. Me give a lecture?



This is an infinitival clause.

Nominative case cannot be assigned to subject.

In some cases, like (19a) **default** case can be used.

This is accusative case in English

All nominal expressions need case

Jean-Roger Vergnaud (1977) and Chomsky (1980):

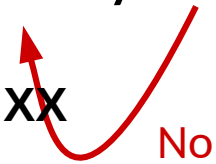
- **All** pronounced nominal elements need to enter into a syntactic **Case** dependency, not just pronouns.

- This explains why infinitival *to*-clauses cannot have subjects:

(21) a. It seems that [Mary will$_{[+finite]}$ kiss John].

Nominative case assigned to *Mary*

b. * It seems [Mary to$_{[-finite]}$ kiss John].



xx

Nominative case **not** assigned to *Mary*

(NB: no default case can be assigned in infinitival *to*-clauses)

Take-home message:

- To capture the distribution of case morphology, we must make reference to structural dependencies

- We can also use the idea of syntactic case-assignment to explain why certain configurations involving infinitival to-clauses are ungrammatical.

- This again shows that the presence of certain linguistic items is conditioned by their syntactic environment

At current…

Constituency
- Syntactic phrases
- Syntactic heads
- Projection

Structural dependencies
- Negative polarity items
- Referential binding
- Syntactic case

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- Specifiers

Syntactic movement
- Islands

The Y-model of grammar

Part II: Syntactic movement

movement → when certain linguistic items fulfil two syntactic functions simultaneously

(22) Mary will fire John tomorrow.

(23) Who will Mary fire __ tomorrow?

- *Who* performs two functions:
  - → Question phrase
  - → Object of the verb '*kiss*'
- There's a "gap" in object position

The gap is often called a "trace", and is represented by "t_1"

Three types of syntactic movement

Phrasal movement

- Moving item = a syntactic phrase (**DPs**, **PPs**, **NPs**, …)
- Two types of phrasal movement

→ **A′-movement** movement to a position that arguments don't appear in (e.g. subject or object position)

Example: Who will John kiss __ tomorrow? (*wh*-questions)

→ **A-movement** movement to a position that arguments do appear in (e.g. subject or object position)

Example: Mary seems [__ to kiss John often].

Three types of syntactic movement

Head movement

- Moving item = the head of a syntactic phrase (**V**s, **N**s, …)

Example: Who will$_T$ [$_{TP}$ Mary ___ fire tomorrow]?

A′-movement

- Some examples of A′-movement:

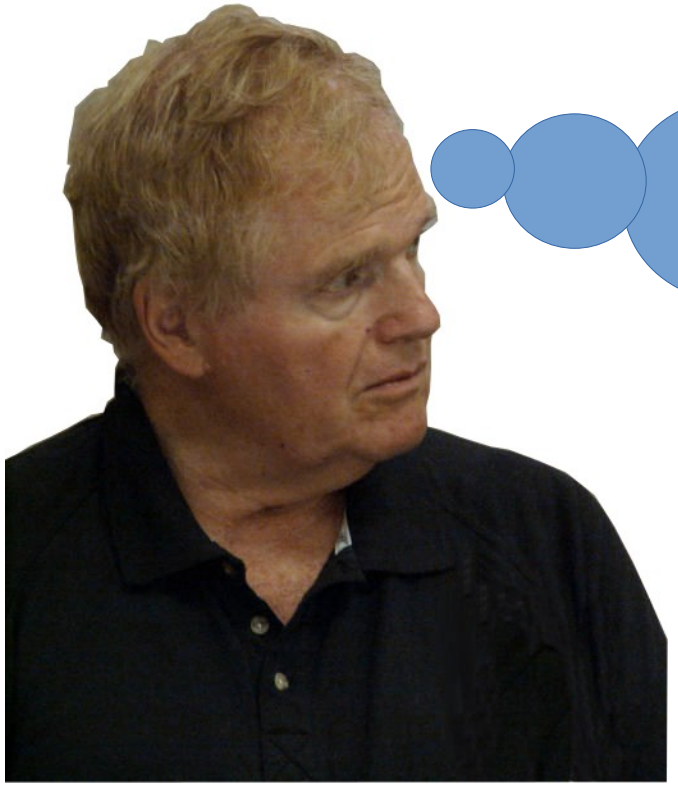
(24) [$_{DP}$ Which student] will Mary fire __ tomorrow? (*wh*-movement)

(25) Sam ignored [$_{DP}$ [$_{DP}$ the student] that Sally hates __]]. (relativisation)

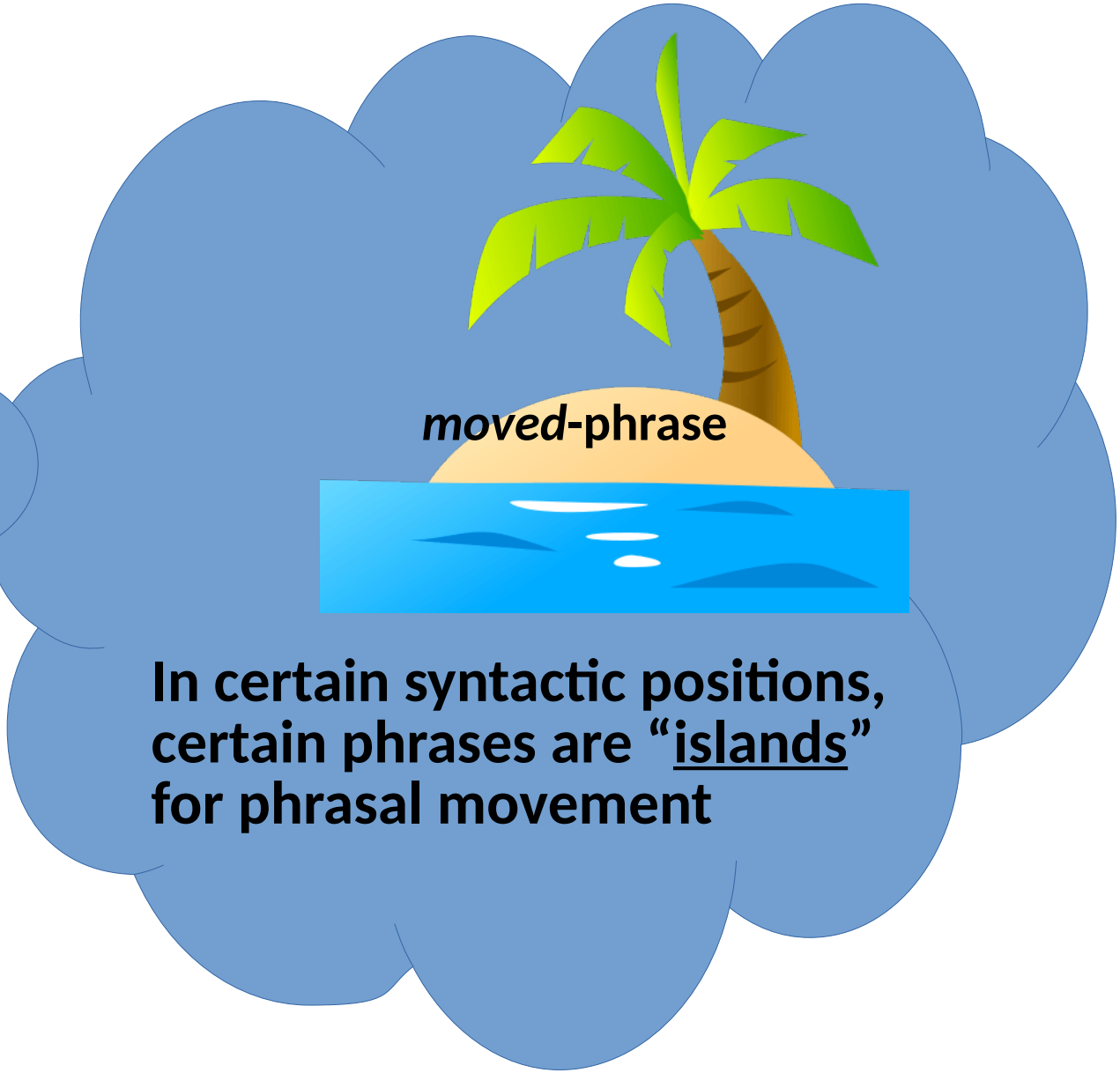
(26) Frank wants to write a novel, so
[$_{VP}$ write a novel] he will __. (topicalisation)

A syntactic constraint on A′-movement

Ross (1967):
(his PhD dissertation)



John ‘Haj’ Ross



Some islands

(27) a. [$_{CP}$ That Sue kissed Sally] is really sweet.

b. * Who is [$_{CP}$ that Sue kissed __] really sweet?

(Sentential Subject island)

(28) a. John left [$_{PP}$ before [$_{CP}$ Bill finished his food]].

b. * What did John leave [$_{PP}$ before [$_{CP}$ Bill finished __]]?

(Adjunct island)

(29) a. I heard [$_{DP}$ the rumour that Bill broke a vase].

b. * What did you hear [$_{DP}$ the rumour that Bill broke __]?

(Complex NP island)

A-movement

Recall: nominative case can't be assigned in infinitival *to*-clauses.

(21) a. It seems that [Mary will$_{[+finite]}$ kiss John].

Nominative case assigned

b. * It seems [Mary to$_{[-finite]}$ kiss John].

XX Nominative case **not** assigned

- Ungrammaticality in (21b) can be avoided by moving '*Mary*' from the embedded subject position to the main clause subject position:

(30) Mary seems$_{[+finite]}$ [___ to$_{[-finite]}$ kiss John].

Nom case

A-movement

Head-movement

- Examples of head-movement

[1] **Auxiliary-inversion** (also known as 'T to C movement')

(31) Will you __ come to the party? (polar questions)
(32) Who will John __ invite to the party? (*wh*-questions)

[2] **Verb-raising** (also known as 'V to T movement')

(33) a. [$_{TP}$ John should not [$_{VP}$ **be**$_{V}$ late]].
b. [$_{TP}$ John was$_{V}$ not [$_{VP}$ __ late]].

(34) a. [$_{TP}$ John does not [$_{VP}$ **have** any money]]. (all dialects)
b. [$_{TP}$ John has$_{V}$n't [$_{VP}$ __ any money.]] (British English)

Take-home message about movement:

- Syntactic movement is a pervasive aspect of natural language

- Movement comes in three flavours:
  - → **A′-movement** (phrasal movement to a non-argument position)
  - → **A-movement** (phrasal movement to an argument position)
  - → **head-movement** (movement of the head of a syntactic phrase)

- Movement is constrained
  → most notably, A′-movement is **sensitive to islands**

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