Structured predictions: trees and graphs

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- Syntactic parsing
  - Phrase structure (or constituent) trees
  - Dependency trees
- Graph-based semantic parsing
  - Abstract Meaning Representations
- Needs a grammar that dictates admissible or non-admissible trees for a sentence
- Requires an efficient decoding algorithm (e.g., CKY), like sequence labeling
- Same statistical or neural models extended to parsing, e.g., Naïve Bayes, Perceptron, Neural networks.

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Syntactic Parsing

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- Syntactic parsing is the task of assigning a syntactic structure (typically in the form of a tree) to a sentance
- The grammar formalism dictates what a tree looks like syntactically
- The main technical challenge is ambiguity (like many other NLP problems), the fact that multiple trees are possible for a sentence given a grammar
- The general solution to the problem is to build a model that assigns a "score" to each possible tree, and using a decoding (search) algorithm to find the best tree (or top-k trees)
- Syntactic parsing is one of the core problems in NLP, and syntactic structures are useful for a wide range of NLP applications

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Two broad schools of thought on the syntactic structure

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- Phrase structures
  - The building blocks of phrase structures are "phrases" that are consecutive groups of words that make sense linguistically
  - Each phrase receive a syntactic category (e.g. "NP", "VP")
  - The phrases are hierarchically organized into a tree structure
- Dependency structures
  - The fundamental building blocks of a dependency structure are relations between words in a sentence that may or may not be consecutive (They are non-consecutive more often than not)
  - Dependency relations are thus naturally lexicalized
  - The relations are hierarchically organized
  - The syntactic relations between the words are typically labeled
- Each category of syntactic structures also have different flavors

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Phrase-structure parsing based on context-free grammars

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Context-free grammars

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Context-free languages are specified by context-free grammars, which are tuples of (N, Σ, R, S) consisting of

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- a finite set of **non-terminals** N;
- a finite alphabet Σ of **terminal symbols**;
- a set of **production rules** R, each of the form $A \to \beta$, where $A \in N$ and $\beta \in (\Sigma \cup N)^*$
- a designated start symbol S

Example CFG: mathematical operations

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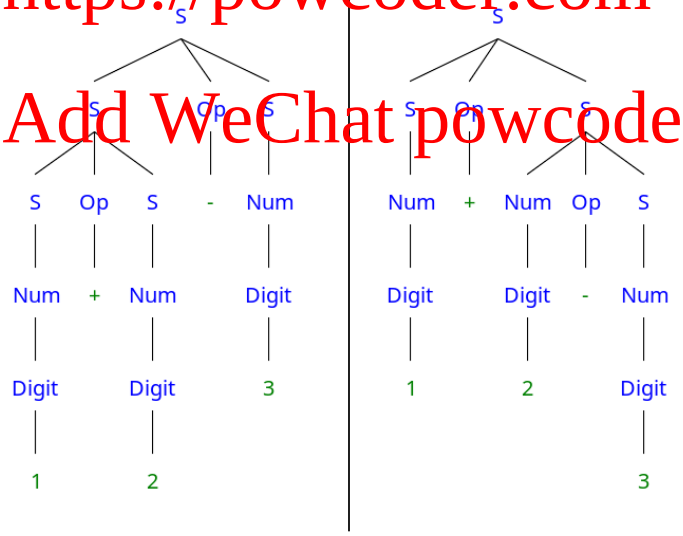
$S \rightarrow \text{S OP S} | \text{NUM}$

$\text{OP} \rightarrow + | - | \times | \div$

$\text{NUM} \rightarrow \text{NUM DIGIT} | \text{DIGIT}$

$\text{DIGIT} \rightarrow 0 | 1 | 2 | \cdots | 9$



Is natural language context-free?

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- Context-free grammars can be used to represent syntax, which is the set of rules that determine whether an utterance is judged to be grammatical.
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- If this representation were perfectly faithful, then a natural language such as English could be transformed into a formal language, consisting of exactly the (infinite) set of strings that would be judged to be grammatical by a fluent English speaker.
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- Contemporary theories generally do not consider natural languages to be context-free, yet context-free grammars are widely used in natural language parsing.
- The reason is that context-free representations strike a good balance: they cover a broad range of syntactic phenomena, and they can be parsed efficiently.

A phrase-structure grammar

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A phrase-structure grammar is one in which sentences are broken down into constituents (phrases), which are contiguous sequences of words that function as coherent units for the purpose of linguistic analysis.

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Phrases are labeled with a type that are determined by their **heads**: noun phrases (NP), verb phrases (VP), etc.

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$S \rightarrow NP\ VP$

$NP \rightarrow NP\ PP \mid we \mid sushi \mid chopsticks$

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$NP \rightarrow NP\ CC\ NP$

$VP \rightarrow V\ NP \mid VP\ PP$

$PP \rightarrow IN\ NP$

$V \rightarrow eat$

$CC \rightarrow and$

Chomsky Normal Form

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- In **Chomsky Normal Form (CNF)**, the right-hand side of every production includes either two nonterminals, or a single terminal symbol.

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- CNF can be parsed efficiently in cubic time.

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- But some CFG productions are not naturally CNF, e.g., NP $\rightarrow$ NP CC NP.

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- The general practice in syntactic parsing is to convert CFGs to CNF during training and decoding.

Ambiguity of different types

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Even with a grammar, multiple parses (trees) for a sentence are often possible due to ambiguity:

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- Attachment ambiguity: e.g., We eat sushi with chopsticks, I shot an elephant in my pajamas.

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- Modifier scope: e.g., southern food store, plastic cup holder

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- Particle vs preposition: e.g., The puppy tore up the staircase.

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- Complement structure: e.g., The students complained to the professor that they didn't understand.
- Coordination scope: e.g., "I see," said the blind man, as he picked up the hammer and saw.

Spurious ambiguity

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In practice, a grammar often allows parses that do not correspond with human intuition at all. Such cases are called **spurious ambiguity**

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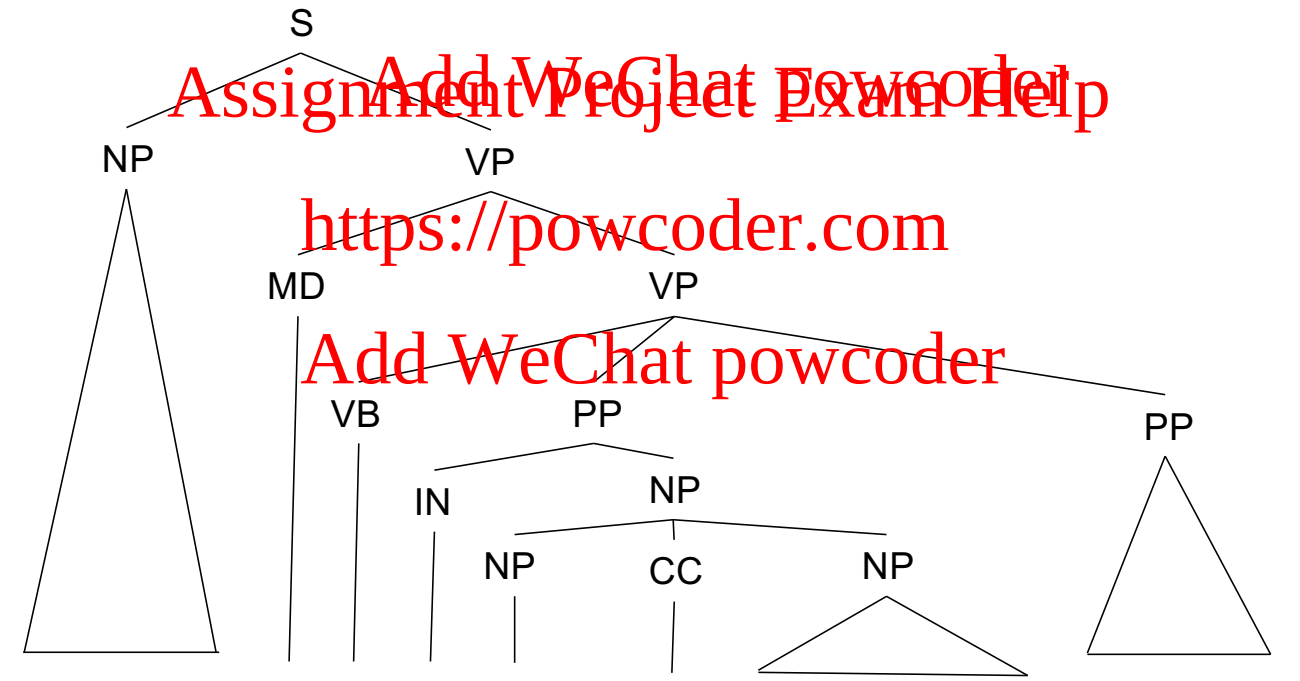

The post office will hold out discounts and service concessions as incentives

Weighted context-free grammars

The major challenge in syntactic parsing is not just to find a possible tree for a sentence, but to find the best tree among all possible trees. One way to do that is to have weighted grammar so we can weight the trees...

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S → NP VP	S → NP VP
NP → NNP	NP → NNP
NP → NP CC NP	NP → NP1 NP
	NP1 → NP CC
NP → ADJP NP	NP → ADJP NP
NP → NNS	NP → NNS
NP → NN	NP → NN
NP → NP PP	NP → NP PP
VP → VBZ NP	VP → VBZ NP
VP → VBD NP	VP → VBD NP
VP → VP PP	VP → VP PP
PP → IN NP	PP → IN NP
ADJP → JJ	ADJP → JJ
NNP → John	NNP → John

-2
-1
-0.5
-0.5
-0.5
-1
-1
-0.3
-0.5
-0.5
-0.2
0
0
0

Probabilistic context-free grammars

And one special form of weighted context-free grammars is **probabilistic context free grammars** where the sum of all rules with the same left hand side is 1:

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S → NP VP	S → NP VP	1.0
NP → NNP	NP → NNP	0.1
NP → NP1 NP	NP → NP1 NP	0.2
NP → NP CC NP	NP → NP CC NP	0.1
NP → ADJP NP	NP → ADJP NP	0.2
NP → NNS	NP → NNS	0.1
NP → NN	NP → NN	0.1
NP → NP PP	NP → NP PP	0.3
VP → VBZ NP	VP → VBZ NP	0.2
VP → VBD NP	VP → VBD NP	0.3
VP → VP PP	VP → VP PP	0.5
PP → IN NP	PP → IN NP	1.0
ADJP → JJ	ADJP → JJ	1.0
NNP → John	NNP → John	1.0
NNS → apples	NNS → apples	0.4
NNS → oranges	NNS → oranges	0.4
NNS → noodles	NNS → noodles	0.2
NN → gravy	NN → gravy	1.0
JJ → green	JJ → green	1.0
IN → with	IN → with	1.0
VBZ → likes	VBZ → likes	1.0
VBD → ate	VBD → ate	1.0

The probability model of a phrase structure tree

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Independence assumptions:

- Place invariance: Location of a subtree does not impact the probability of the subtree
- Context Free-ness: Probability of a subtree not impacted by words outside of the subtree
- Ancestor Free-ness: Probability of a subtree does not depend on non-terminals outside of the subtree

Given these assumptions, the probability of a tree (the joint probability of the tree and the input sentence) is:

$$P(\mathcal{T}) = \prod_{i=1}^{m} P(RHS_i|LHS_i)$$

The decoding process is to find the tree that has the highest probability:

$$\hat{\mathcal{T}}(s) = \underset{\mathcal{T} s.t. s=yield(\mathcal{T})}{\text{argmax}} P(\mathcal{T})$$

Probability of an example tree

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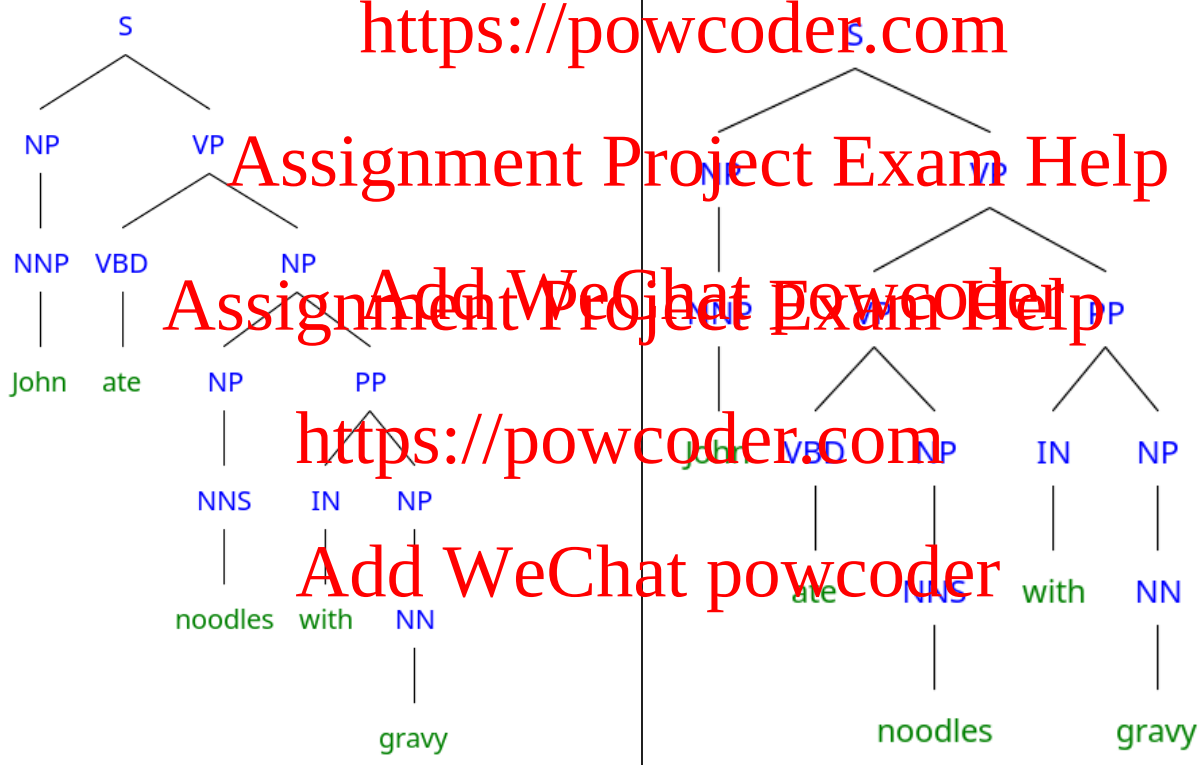

$P(T_1) = 1.0 \times 0.1 \times 1.0 \times 0.3 \times 1.0 \times 0.3 \times 0.1 \times 0.2 \times 1.0 \times 1.0 \times 0.1 \times 1.0 = 0.000018$

$P(T_2) = 1.0 \times 0.1 \times 1.0 \times 0.5 \times 0.3 \times 1.0 \times 0.1 \times 0.2 \times 1.0 \times 1.0 \times 0.1 \times 1.0 = 0.00003$

Probability of an example tree

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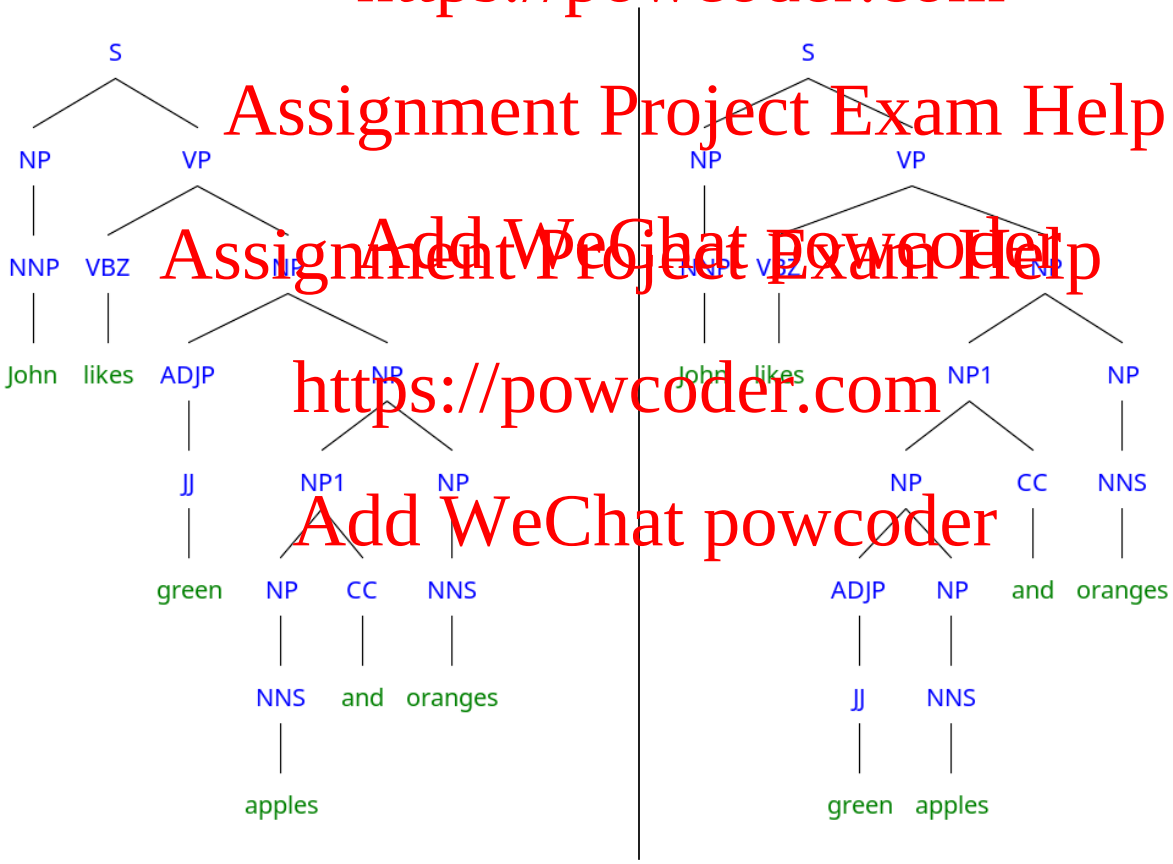

Parsing with PCFGs: the CKY algorithm

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1: **procedure** $\mathrm{WCKY}(\boldsymbol{w}, G = (N, \Sigma, R, S))$
2: **for all** i, j, X **do**
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3: $t[i, j, X] \leftarrow 0$
4: $b[i, j, X] \leftarrow \emptyset$
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5: **for** $m \in \{1, 2, \cdots, M\}$ **do**
6: **for all** $X \in N$ **do**
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7: $t[m, m+1, X] \leftarrow \psi(X \rightarrow w_m, (m, m+1, m))$
8: **for** $\ell \in \{2, 3, \cdots, M\}$ **do**
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9: **for** $m \in \{0, 1, \cdots, M - \ell\}$ **do**
10: **for** $k \in \{m+1, m+2, \cdots, m+\ell-1\}$ **do**
11: $t[m, m+\ell, X] \leftarrow \max_{k,Y,Z} \psi(X \rightarrow Y\ Z, (m, m+\ell, k)) + t[m, k, Y] + t[k, m+\ell, Z]$
12: $b[m, m+\ell, X] \leftarrow \operatorname{argmax}_{k,Y,Z} \psi(X \rightarrow Y\ Z, (m, m+\ell, k)) + t[m, k, Y] + t[k, m+\ell, Z]$
return $\textsc{TraceBack}(\mathrm{S}, 0, \mathrm{M}, \mathrm{B})$

CKY example

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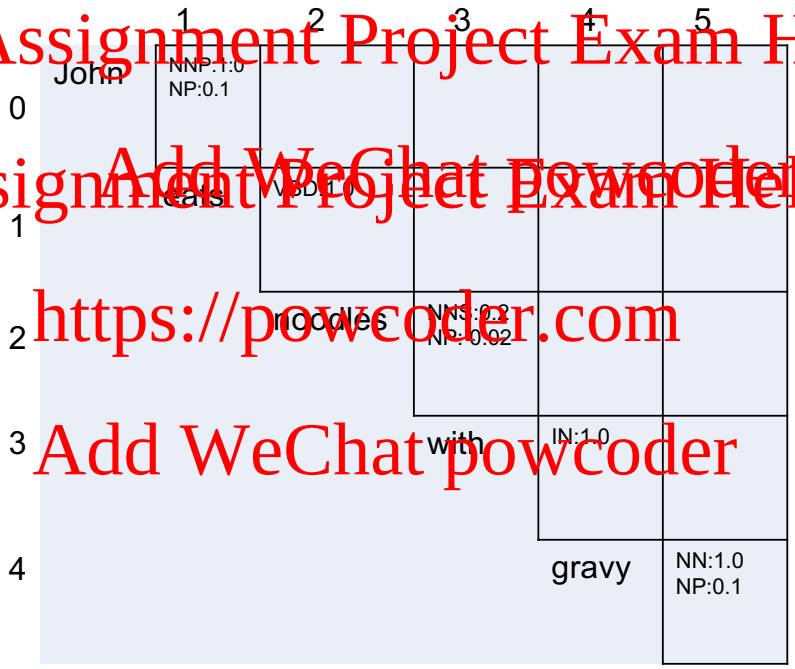

CKY example

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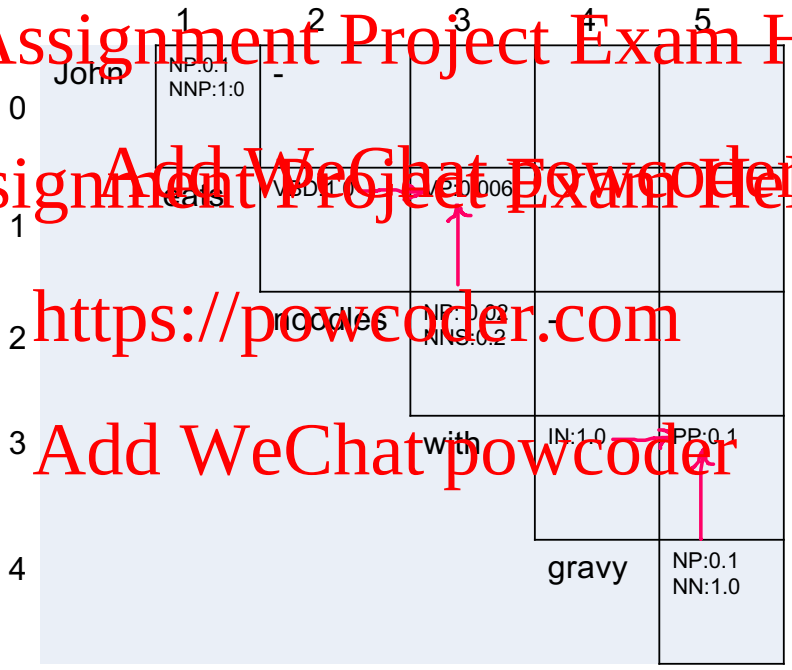

CKY example

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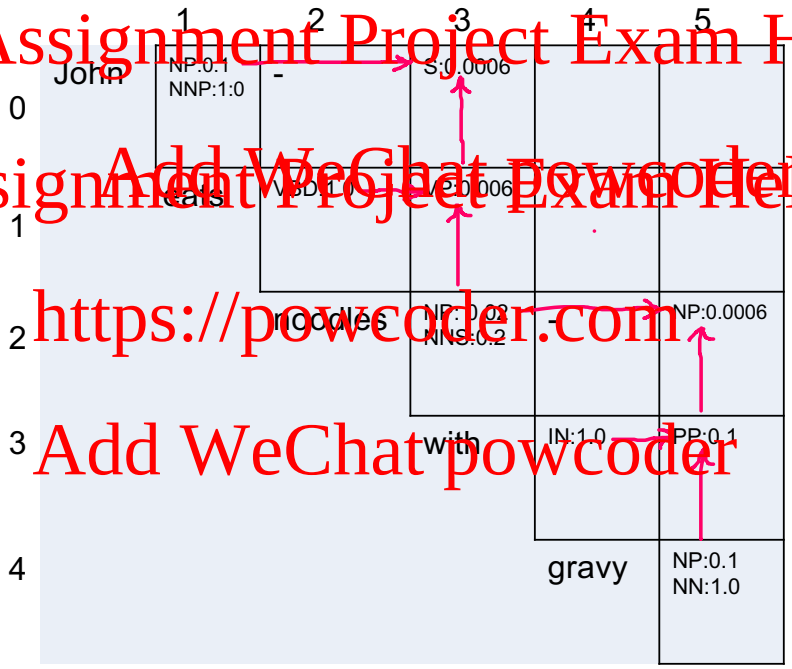

CKY example

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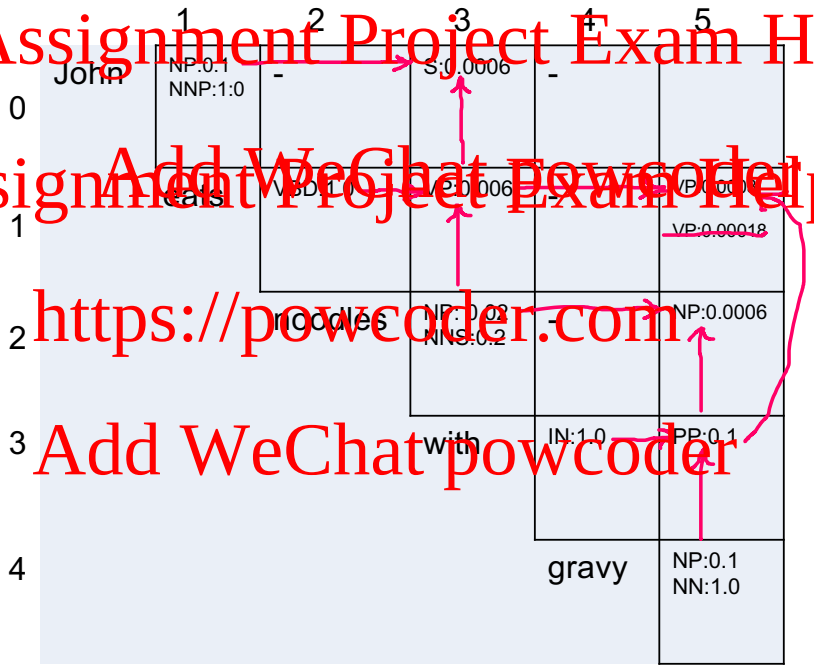

CKY example

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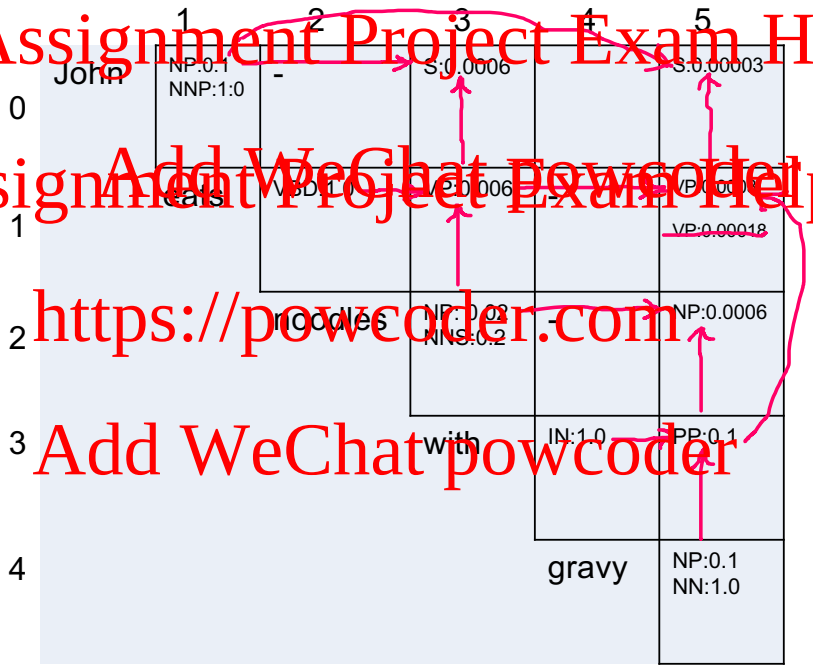

Learning PCFGs

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Parameters in probabilistic context-free grammars can be estimated by relative frequency, as with HMMs:

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$$\psi(X \rightarrow \alpha) = \log P(X \rightarrow \alpha)$$

$$\hat{P}(X \rightarrow \alpha) = \frac{count(X \rightarrow \alpha}{count(X)}$$

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E.g., the probability of the production NP $\rightarrow$ DET NN is the corpus count of this production, divided by the count of the non-terminal NP. This applies to terminals as well.

Grammar Refinement

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- Grammars extracted from treebanks (e.g., the Penn TreeBank) are often sensitive to ambiguities in the parses, even with the weighted productions
- There are various attempt to augment with the vanilla PCFG with more expressive productions
  - Parent annotation
  - Lexicalization

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Parent annotation

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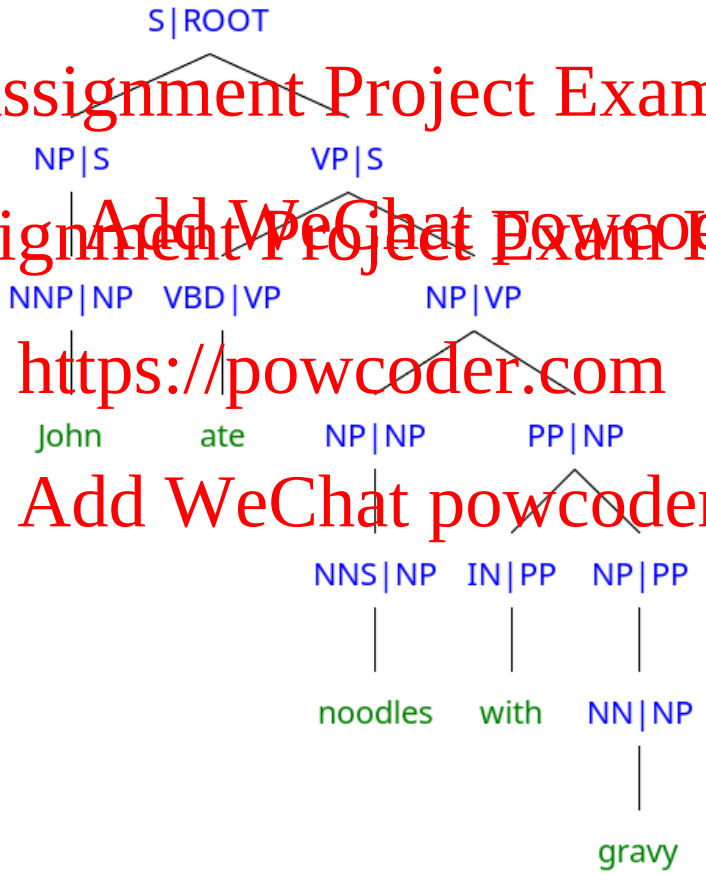

Lexicalized CFGs

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