

Lexical-Functional Grammar & Flexible Composition

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Goals

- Provide an overview of Lexical-Functional Grammar
- Provide an overview of Glue Semantics
- Provide an introduction to an approach to argument structure that builds on these two theories, part of what I call Flexible Composition

Lexical-Functional Grammar

History

- LFG was developed by Joan Bresnan, a syntactician, and Ron Kaplan, a social psychologist by training but then a computational linguist, as a constraint-based/declarative alternative to transformational/procedural theories of the time.
- Desiderata:
 - Formal precision
 - Psychological plausibility
 - Computational tractability

Overview

- At the heart of LFG remain its two syntactic structures:
 - C(onstituent)-structure
 - ‘Concrete syntax’: Precedence, dominance, constituency
 - F(unctional)-structure
 - ‘Abstract syntax’: Morphosyntactic features, grammatical functions, predication, subcategorization, local dependencies (agreement, control, raising), unbounded dependencies, anaphoric syntax (binding)

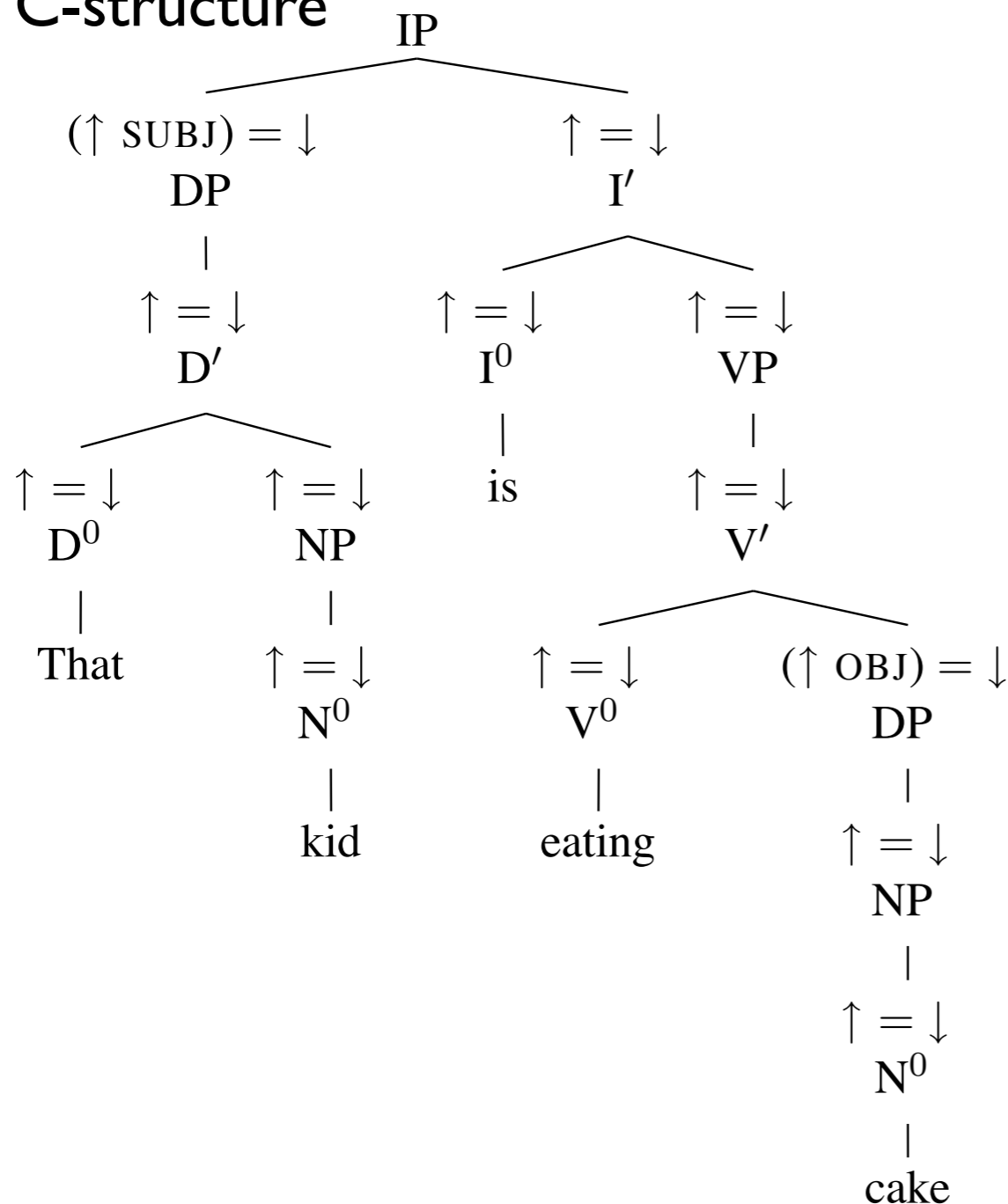
The ϕ correspondence function

- Elements of the c-structure are mapped to (put into *correspondence* with) elements of the f-structure by the ϕ *correspondence function* (sometimes called a *projection function*).
- This is accomplished by adding *functional descriptions* to the nodes in the c-structure tree.
- These equations use the \uparrow (“up arrow”) and \downarrow (“down arrow”) *metavariables*.
- A \uparrow on a c-structure node n refers to the f-structure of the (c-structure) mother of n .
- A \downarrow on a c-structure node n refers to the f-structure of node n .
- Examples:
 - $\uparrow = \downarrow$ on n means that n and n 's mother map to the same f-structure.
 - $(\uparrow \text{ SUBJECT}) = \downarrow$ on n means that the f-structure of n is the value of the SUBJECT attribute in the f-structure of n 's mother.

Example:

That kid is eating cake

C-structure

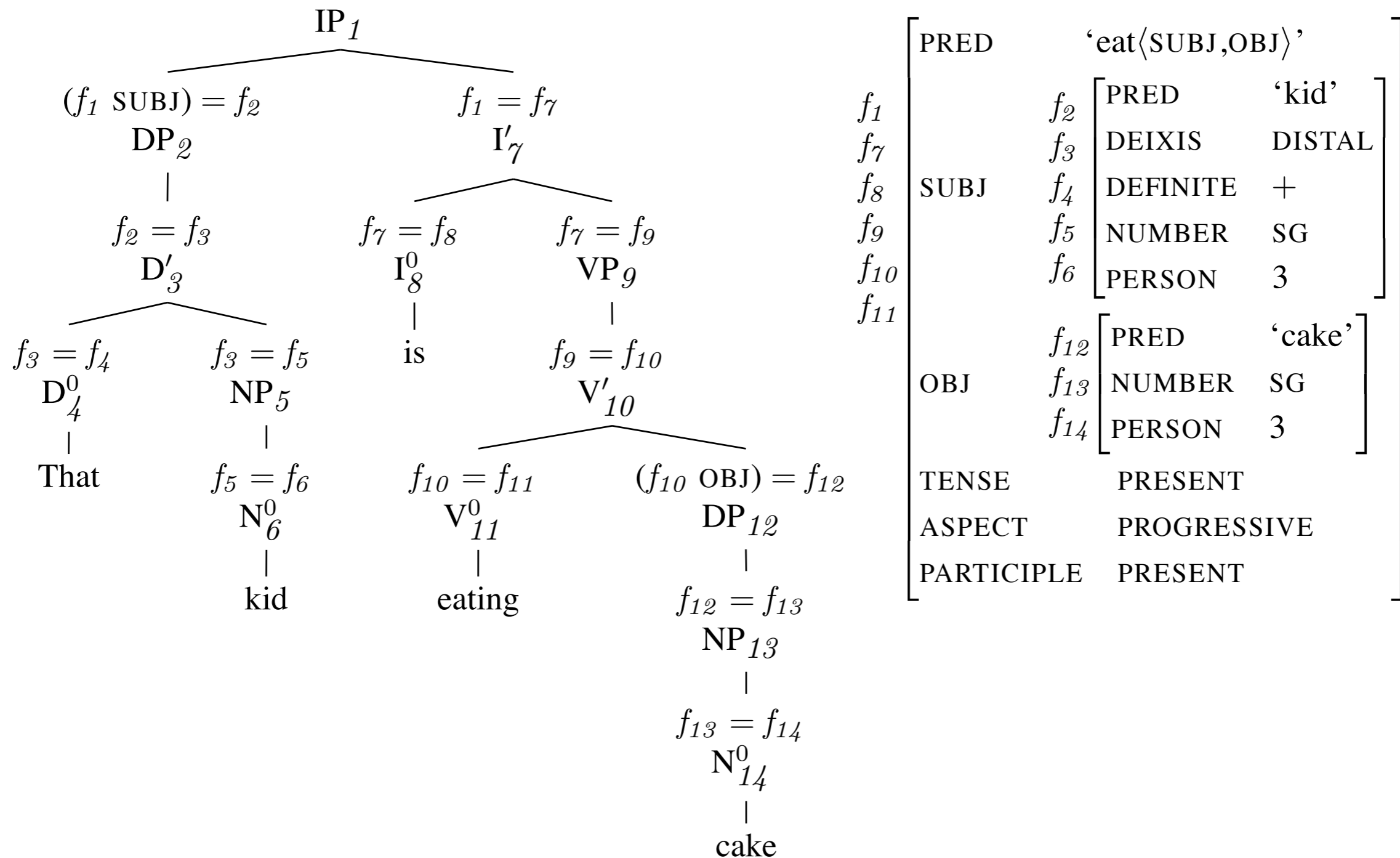


Lexical entries

<i>that</i> , D ⁰	(↑ DEFINITE) = + (↑ DEIXIS) = DISTAL (↑ NUMBER) = SG (↑ PERSON) = 3
<i>kid</i> , N ⁰	(↑ PRED) = 'kid' (↑ NUMBER) = SG (↑ PERSON) = 3
<i>is</i> , I ⁰	(↑ SUBJ NUMBER) = SG (↑ SUBJ PERSON) = 3 (↑ TENSE) = PRESENT (↑ PARTICIPLE) = _c PRESENT
<i>eating</i> , V ⁰	(↑ PRED) = 'eat⟨SUBJ,OBJ⟩' (↑ ASPECT) = PROGRESSIVE (↑ PARTICIPLE) = PRESENT
<i>cake</i> , N ⁰	(↑ PRED) = 'cake' (↑ NUMBER) = SG (↑ PERSON) = 3

Example:

That kid is eating cake



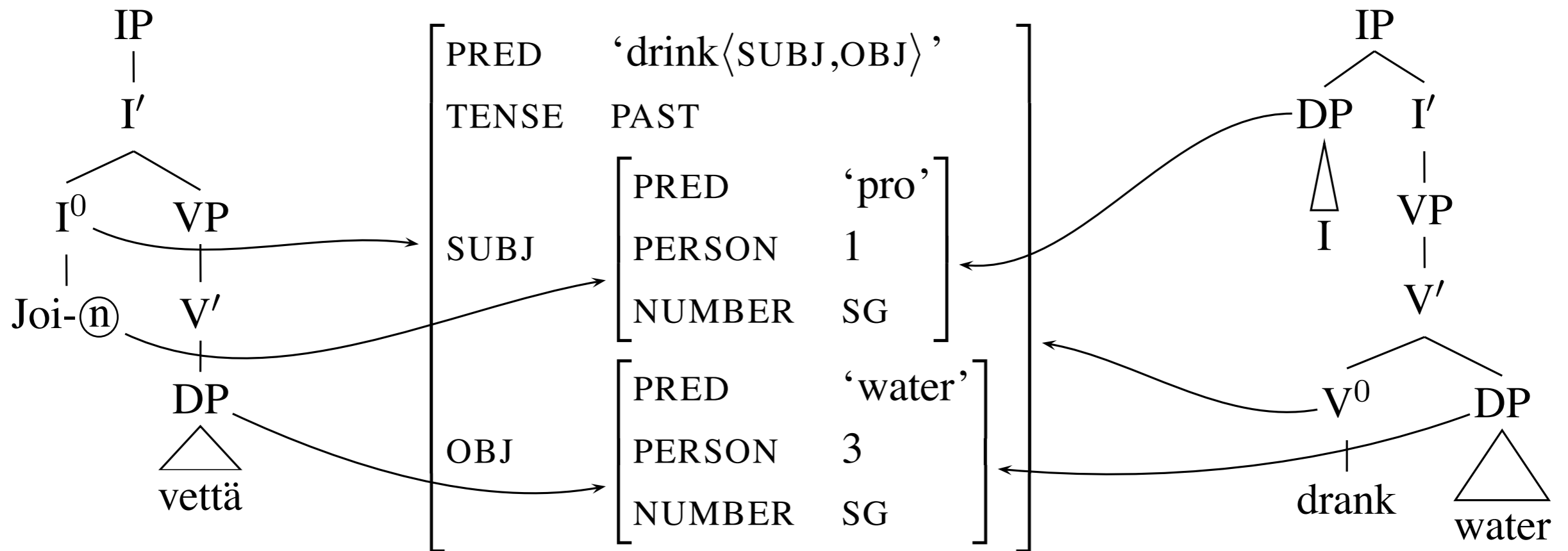
	PRED	'eat⟨SUBJ,OBJ⟩'
SUBJ	f_2	PRED 'kid'
	f_3	DEIXIS DISTAL
	f_4	DEFINITE +
	f_5	NUMBER SG
	f_6	PERSON 3
	OBJ	f_{12}
f_{13}		NUMBER SG
f_{14}		PERSON 3
TENSE	PRESENT	
ASPECT	PROGRESSIVE	
PARTICIPLE	PRESENT	

Flexibility in mapping

Finnish

Common (subsumptive) f-structure

English



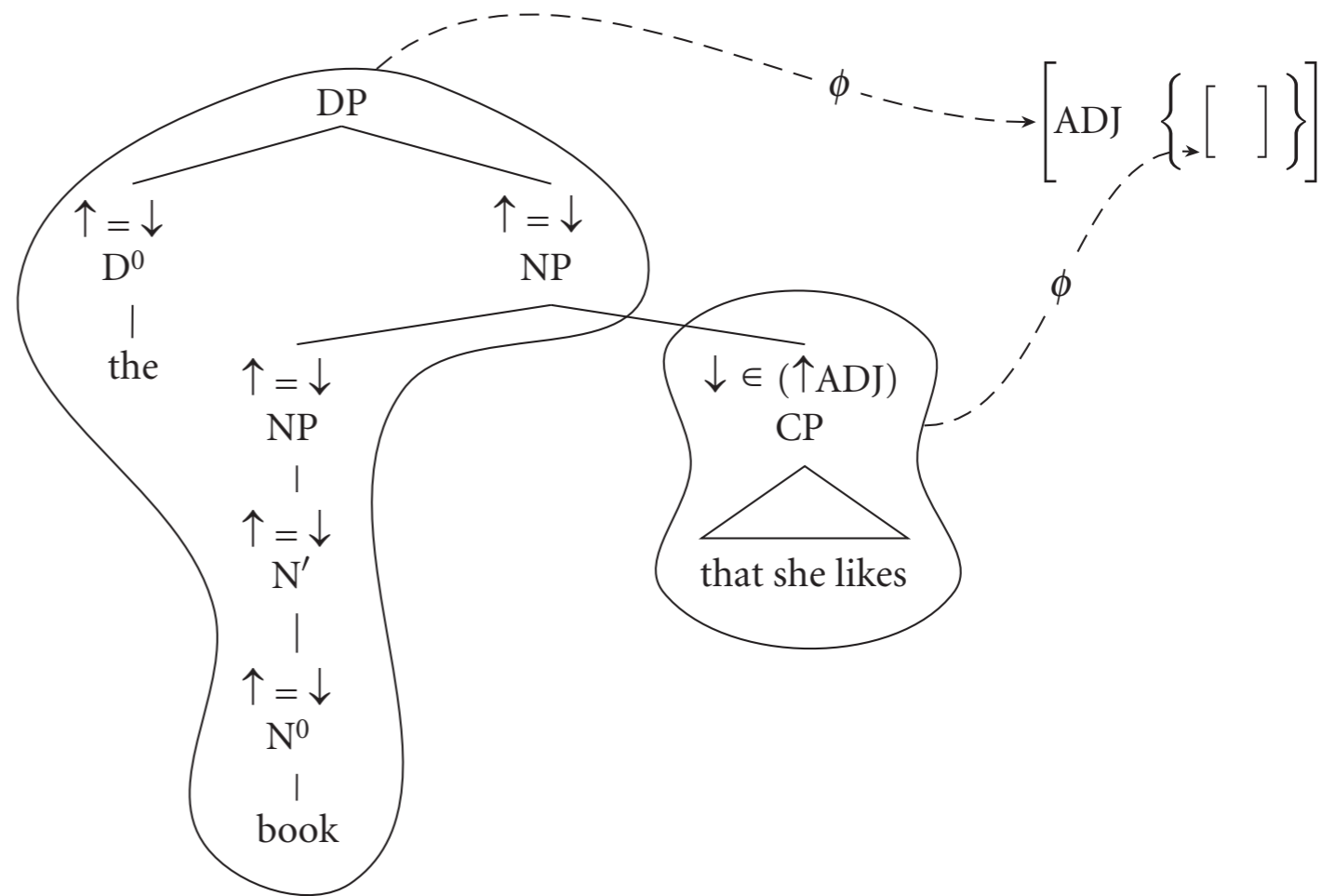
Example:

the book that she likes

C-structure rules

DP	→	D ⁰	NP
		↑ = ↓	↑ = ↓
NP	→	NP	CP
		↑ = ↓	↓ ∈ (↑ ADJ)
NP	→	N'	
		↑ = ↓	
N'	→	N ⁰	
		↑ = ↓	

C-structure and corresponding f-structure



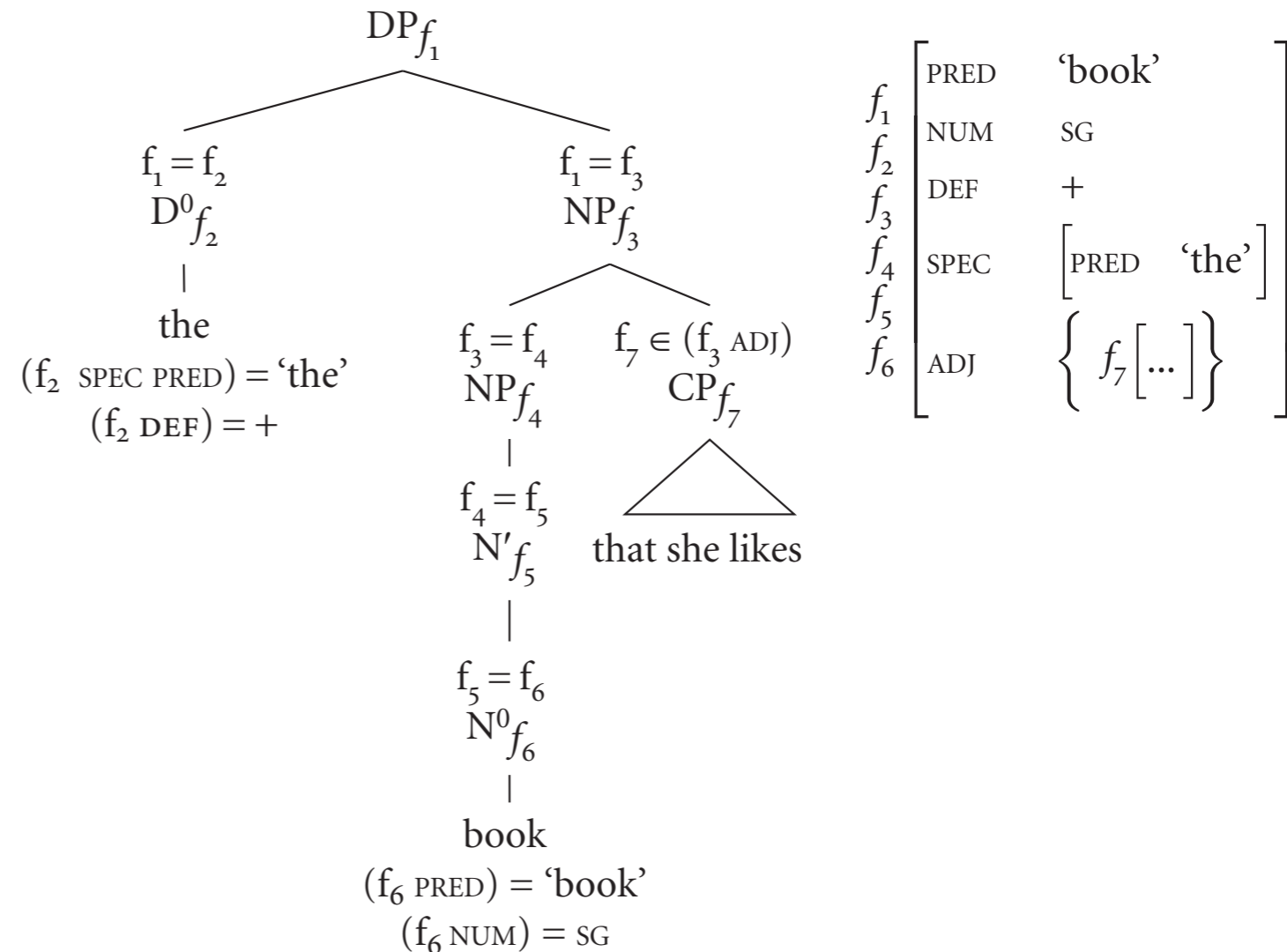
Example:

the book that she likes

Lexical entries

- she*, D^0 (\uparrow PRED) = 'pro'
 (\uparrow PERSON) = 3
 (\uparrow NUMBER) = SINGULAR
 (\uparrow GENDER) = FEMININE
- likes*, V^0 (\uparrow PRED) = 'like(SUBJ,OBJ)'
 (\uparrow TENSE) = PRESENT
 (\uparrow SUBJECT PERSON) = 3
 (\uparrow SUBJECT NUMBER) = SINGULAR
- the*, D^0 (\uparrow SPEC PRED) = 'the'
 (\uparrow DEFINITE) = +
- book*, N^0 (\uparrow PRED) = 'book'
 (\uparrow NUMBER) = SINGULAR

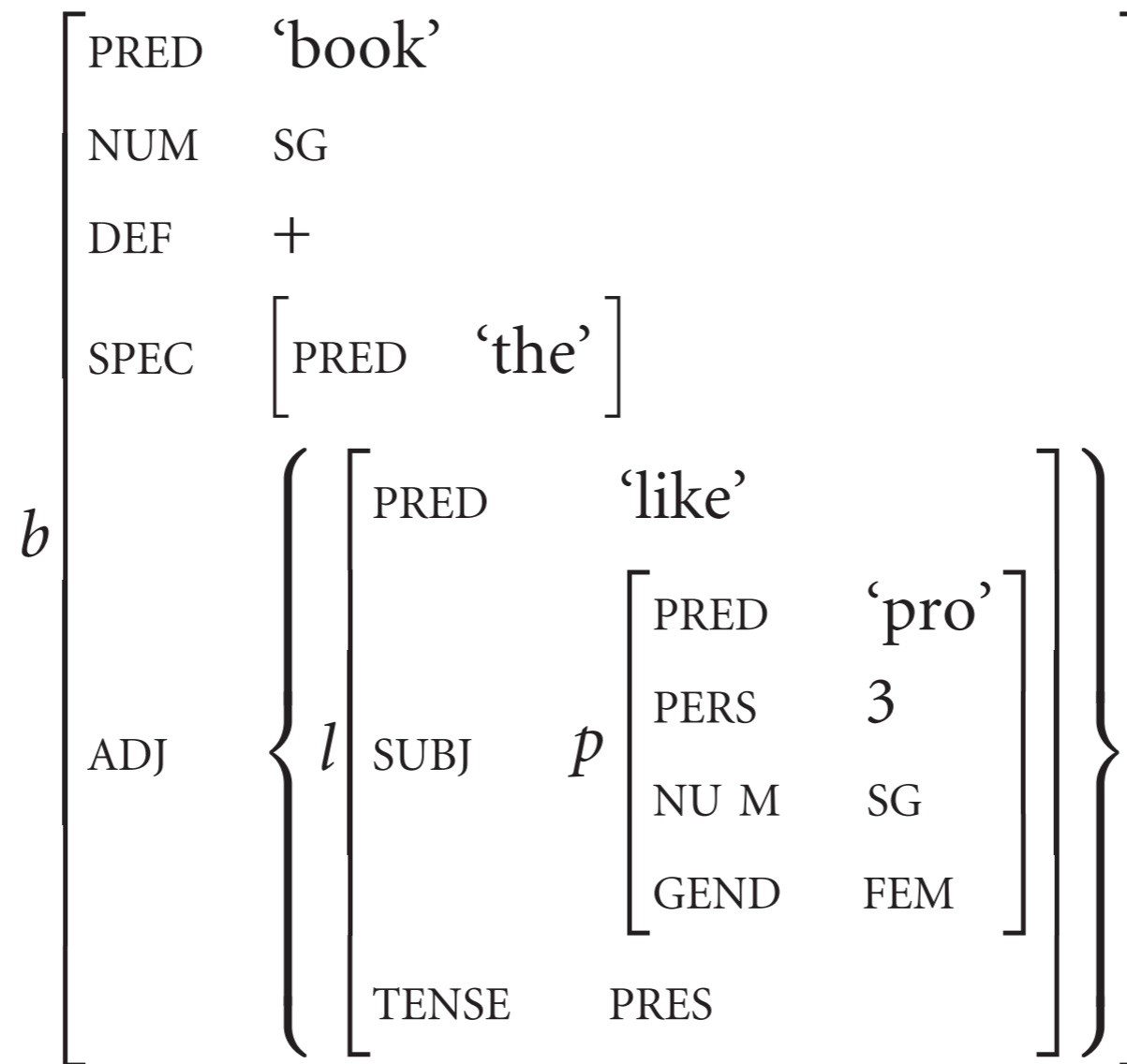
C-structure with lexical information and instantiated f-structure



Example:

the book that she likes

Penultimate f-structure



Notes:
 1. I often adopt the practice of labelling f-structures mnemonically with the first letter of the PRED value.
 2. I often leave the subcategorization out of the PRED. (There's a principled reason for this; we can discuss it in question time.)

General wellformedness constraints on f-structures

- *Completeness*
All subcategorized grammatical functions in a PRED feature must be present in the f-structure.
- *Coherence*
All grammatical functions that are present in the f-structure must be subcategorized by a PRED feature.
- *Consistency (a.k.a. Uniqueness)*
Each f-structure attribute has one value.

Example: Violations of *Completeness*, *Coherence*, *Consistency*

Completeness

PRED	'like ⟨SUBJ, OBJ⟩'
SUBJ	[]

Coherence

PRED	'like ⟨SUBJ, OBJ⟩'
SUBJ	[]
OBJ	[]
OBL	[]

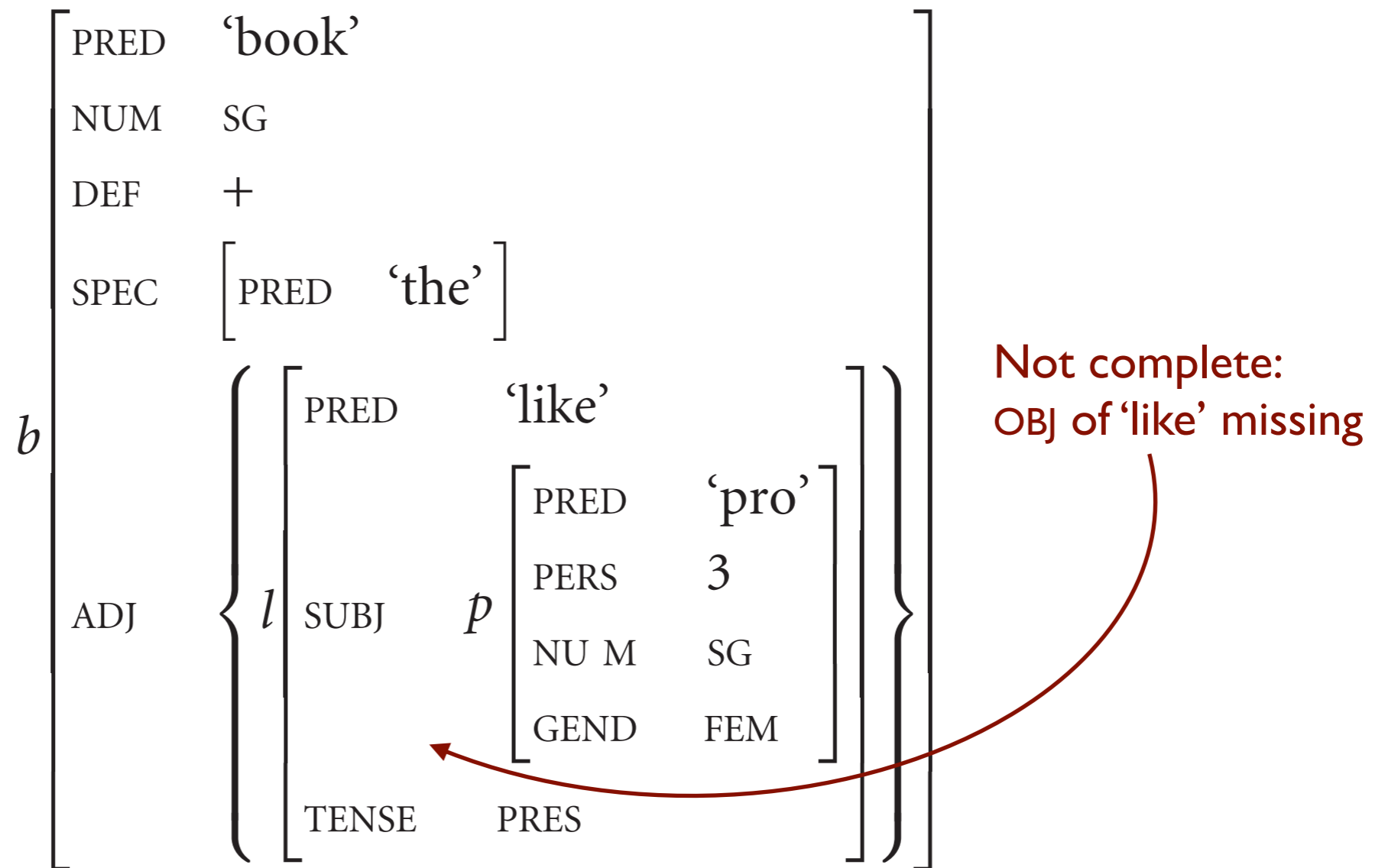
Consistency

NUM	SG
NUM	PL
SUBJ	[PRED 'hello']
SUBJ	[PRED 'world']

Example:

the book that she likes

Penultimate f-structure



Unbounded dependencies

- *Extended Coherence Condition*
An UNBOUNDED DEPENDENCY FUNCTION (UDF) must be linked to the semantic predicate argument structure of the sentence in which it occurs, either by functionally or by anaphorically binding an argument.

$$(\uparrow \text{UDFPATH}) = (\uparrow \text{COMP}^* \text{GF})$$

(1) Who did you see?

(2) Who did Kim say that you saw?

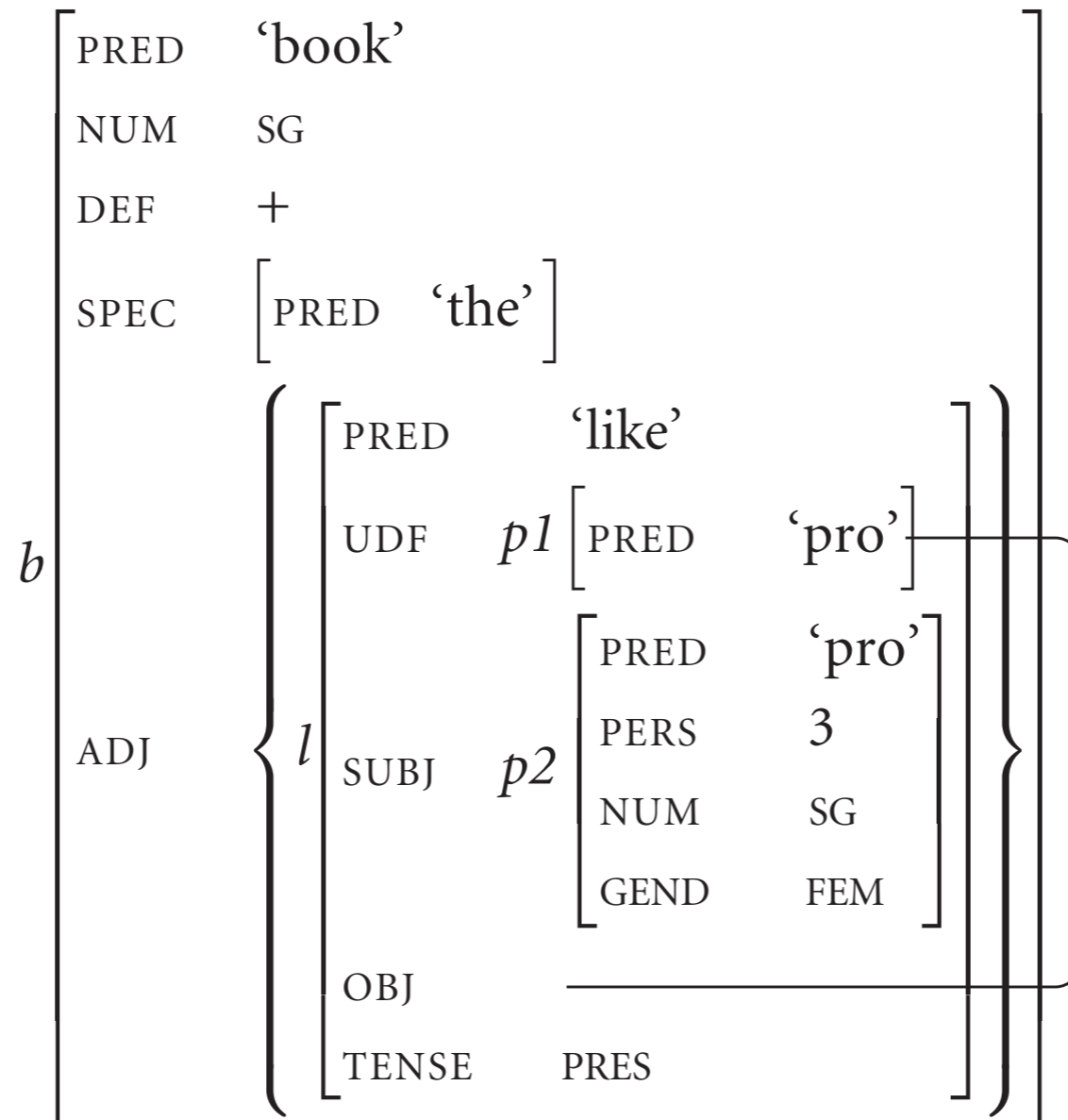
(3) Who did Kim claim that Sandy alleged that you saw?

$$\text{CP} \longrightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{XP} \\ (\uparrow \text{UDF}) = \downarrow \\ (\uparrow \text{UDF}) = (\uparrow \text{UDFPATH}) \end{array} \right. \mid \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \epsilon \\ (\uparrow \text{UDF PRED}) = \text{'pro'} \\ (\uparrow \text{UDF}) = (\uparrow \text{UDFPATH}) \end{array} \right\} \text{C}' \quad \uparrow = \downarrow$$

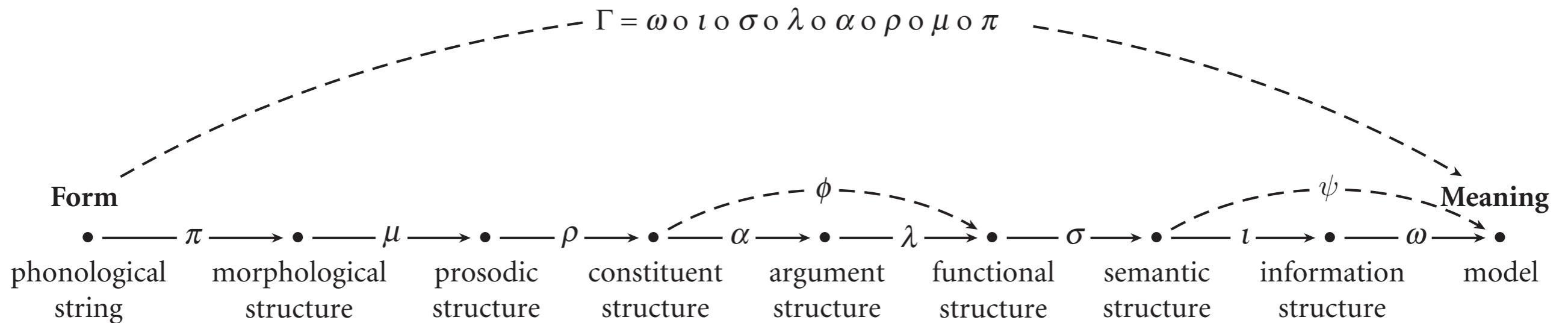
Example:

the book that she likes

Final f-structure



Language as a form–meaning mapping: The Correspondence Architecture



Templates:

Generalizations over named descriptions

- An LFG template is nothing more than a named functional description (i.e., a set of equations that describe linguistic structures).
- For any LFG grammar defined in terms of templates, we could construct a completely equivalent grammar which does not use templates, simply by replacing each template with the description that it abbreviates.
- The same grammatical descriptions would be associated with words and phrases in each of the two grammars, and the grammars would produce the same c-structures and f-structures for the words and phrases of the language.
- However, the grammar without templates would lack the means of expressing generalizations across lexical entries and grammar rules which templates make available.
- In sum:
 - Templates name LFG grammatical descriptions such that the same description can be used in different parts of the grammar.
 - The semantics of template calling/invocation is just substitution: The grammatical description that the template names is substituted where the template is called.

Example:

Present tense intransitive verbs

3SG = (\uparrow SUBJ NUM) = 3
 (\uparrow SUBJ PERS) = SG

laughs V (\uparrow PRED) = 'laugh<SUBJ>'
 (\uparrow TENSE) = PRESENT
 @3SG

laugh V (\uparrow PRED) = 'laugh<SUBJ>'
 { (\uparrow TENSE) = PRESENT
 \neg @3SG |
 \neg (\uparrow TENSE) }

INTRANSITIVE(X) = (\uparrow PRED) = 'X<SUBJ>'

BARE-V = { @TENSE(PRESENT)
 \neg @3SG |
 \neg (\uparrow TENSE) }

laughs V @INTRANSITIVE(laugh)
 @TENSE(PRESENT)
 @3SG

laugh V @INTRANSITIVE(laugh)
 @BARE-V

Templates: Lexical entries and phrasal configurations

- Templates can be associated with lexical entries, but as they are just named descriptions, they can also be associated with c-structure configurations by calling the template in the c-structure rule.

- Example: English relative clauses have bare and non-bare alternatives

(1) the book Kim read

(2) the book which Kim read

- Suppose we have a template REL that captures the relativizing information.

- $REL = \lambda Q.\lambda P.\lambda x.P(x) \wedge Q(x) : clause \multimap nominal \multimap nominal$

- This template can now be associated with a relative pronoun or with the rule for a bare/reduced relative clause

(3) *which* D @REL

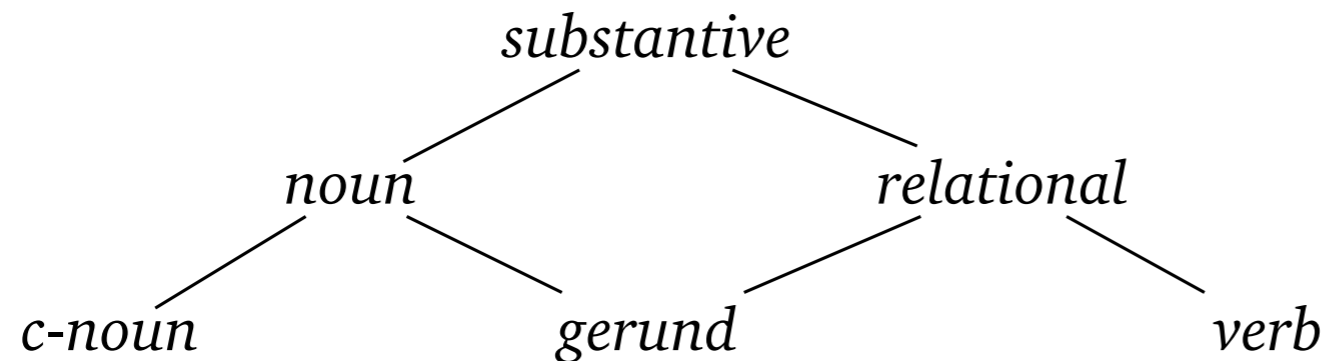
(4) CP \rightarrow $\left(\begin{array}{c} RelP \\ \dots \end{array} \right) \quad \begin{array}{c} C' \\ (@REL) \end{array}$

Template hierarchies & type hierarchies

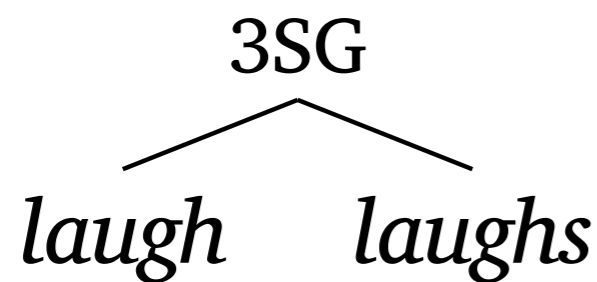
- As we've seen, template definitions may contain reference to other templates.
- This effectively creates a hierarchy of templates, similar to the type hierarchies of Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar.
- Differences:
 1. Type hierarchies represent relations between structures, whereas template hierarchies represent relations between descriptions of structures: Templates do not appear in the actual structures of the theory, but only in descriptions that the structures must satisfy.
 2. Type hierarchies represent *inheritance* in an *and/or* semilattice.
 - The daughters of a type represent disjoint subtypes (*or*).
 - Multiple mothers for a type represent conjoined super- types (*and*).

Template hierarchies & type hierarchies

Type hierarchy: Inheritance



Template hierarchy: Inclusion



laughs (\uparrow PRED) = 'laugh<SUBJ>'
@3SG

laugh (\uparrow PRED) = 'laugh<SUBJ>'
 \neg @3SG

Glue Semantics

Overview

- Glue Semantics is a method of semantic composition in which a potentially representationally rich meaning language is paired with a very constrained logic of composition that ‘glues’ pieces of meaning together to obtain larger meanings.
- You can think of the pieces of meaning like Lego pieces: They can only fit together in certain ways.
- The meaning language is some logic that supports the lambda calculus and has a model-theoretic interpretation.
- The glue logic is (a fragment of) Linear Logic, a logic originally developed for theoretical computer science.
- Linear Logic, and hence the glue logic, is a *resource logic*: All meanings obtained through the syntactic parse must be used exactly once.
- It’s like you have to use all your Lego pieces to build something and, obviously, no piece may be used more than once.

Meaning constructors

- Meaningful linguistic expressions, particularly but not necessarily lexical items, are associated with *meaning constructors* of the following form:

$$M : G$$

- The expression on the left is a term from the meaning language. The expression on the right is the associated term from the glue logic. The colon is an uninterpreted pairing symbol.

The logic of implication: Filling in missing pieces

- Linear implication is a cute *lollipop*.
- We can define its logical behaviour in terms of two simple proof rules.

Functional application : Implication elimination (modus ponens)

$$\frac{f : A \multimap B \quad a : A}{f(a) : B} \multimap\mathcal{E}$$

Functional abstraction : Implication introduction (hypothetical reasoning)

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c} [a : A]^1 \\ \vdots \\ f : B \end{array}}{\lambda a.f : A \multimap B} \multimap\mathcal{I},1$$

Example:

Kim hugged Robin

- Meaning constructors from lexical entries

<i>Kim</i>	e	$kim : \uparrow_{\sigma}$
<i>Robin</i>	e	$robin : \uparrow_{\sigma}$
<i>hugged</i>	$e \rightarrow (e \rightarrow t)$	$\lambda y.\lambda x.hug(x, y) : (\uparrow \text{OBJ})_{\sigma} \multimap (\uparrow \text{SUBJ})_{\sigma} \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

- F-structure

$$h \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{'hug'} \langle \text{SUBJ}, \text{OBJ} \rangle \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad k \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{'Kim'} \end{array} \right] \\ \text{OBJ} \quad r \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{'Robin'} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

Example:

Kim hugged Robin

- Instantiated meaning constructors

<i>Kim</i>	e	$kim : k_\sigma$
<i>Robin</i>	e	$robin : r_\sigma$
<i>hugged</i>	$e \rightarrow (e \rightarrow t)$	$\lambda y.\lambda x.hug(x, y) : r_\sigma \multimap k_\sigma \multimap h_\sigma$

- Proof

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \lambda y.\lambda x.hug(x, y) : r_\sigma \multimap k_\sigma \multimap h_\sigma \quad robin : r_\sigma \\
 \hline
 (\lambda y.\lambda x.hug(x, y))(robin) : k_\sigma \multimap h_\sigma \quad \multimap \varepsilon \\
 \hline
 \lambda x.hug(x, robin) : k_\sigma \multimap h_\sigma \quad \Rightarrow \beta \\
 \hline
 (\lambda x.hug(x, robin))(kim) : h_\sigma \quad kim : k_\sigma \quad \multimap \varepsilon \\
 \hline
 hug(kim, robin) : h_\sigma \quad \Rightarrow \beta
 \end{array}$$

Flexible Composition

Overview

- *Flexible Composition* is the name I've given to a theory of semantic composition, or more specifically how compositional meanings are packaged, that my collaborators (Mary Dalrymple, Gianluca Giorgolo, and Ida Toivonen) and I have been developing for a number of years.
- Basic intuition: Templates can be used to factor out common meanings across lexical items, e.g. argument structure regularities, and across phrasal configurations, e.g. so-called “constructional meanings” (but without actual constructions).

Some features of Flexible Composition

1. The representation of core semantic information, such that the same lexical entry can be involved in a number of valency realizations
 - (1) The hamster ate a sheet of newspaper this morning.
 - (2) The hamster ate this morning.
 - (3) The hamster ate its way through a sheet of newspaper this morning.
2. The representation of missing/understood arguments
3. The representation of additional/derived arguments
 - (4) *The performer laughed the children.
 - (5) The performer laughed a funny laugh.
4. The possibility of associating meanings with syntactic configurations
 - (6) The performer sang the children a song.
5. Templates as generalizations over lexically encoded meaning
6. Templates as the locus of specification of meanings which can be associated with lexical entries or c-structure rules

Some templates for Flexible Composition

AGENT =

@ARG1

$\lambda P \lambda x \lambda e. P(e) \wedge agent(e) = x :$
 $[(\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}] \multimap (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{ARG}_1) \multimap (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

PATIENT =

@ARG2

$\lambda P \lambda x \lambda e. P(e) \wedge patient(e) = x :$
 $[(\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}] \multimap (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{ARG}_2) \multimap (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

AGENT-PATIENT =

@AGENT

@PATIENT

PASSIVE =

($\uparrow \text{VOICE}$) = PASSIVE

@ADDMAP(PLUSR, ARG₁)

($\lambda P \exists x. [P(x)] : [(\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{ARG}_1) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}] \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$)

COGNATEOBJECT

$\lambda x \lambda P \lambda e. P(e) \wedge x = \varepsilon(e) :$
 $(\uparrow \text{OBJ})_{\sigma} \multimap [(\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}] \multimap (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

BENEFACTIVE =

@ARG3

$\lambda x \lambda y \lambda P \lambda e. P(y)(e) \wedge beneficiary(e) = x :$
 $(\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{ARG}_2) \multimap (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{ARG}_3) \multimap [(\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{ARG}_2) \multimap (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}] \multimap (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

UNDERSTOODOBJECT =

$\lambda P \exists x. [P(x)] : [(\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{ARG}_2) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}] \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

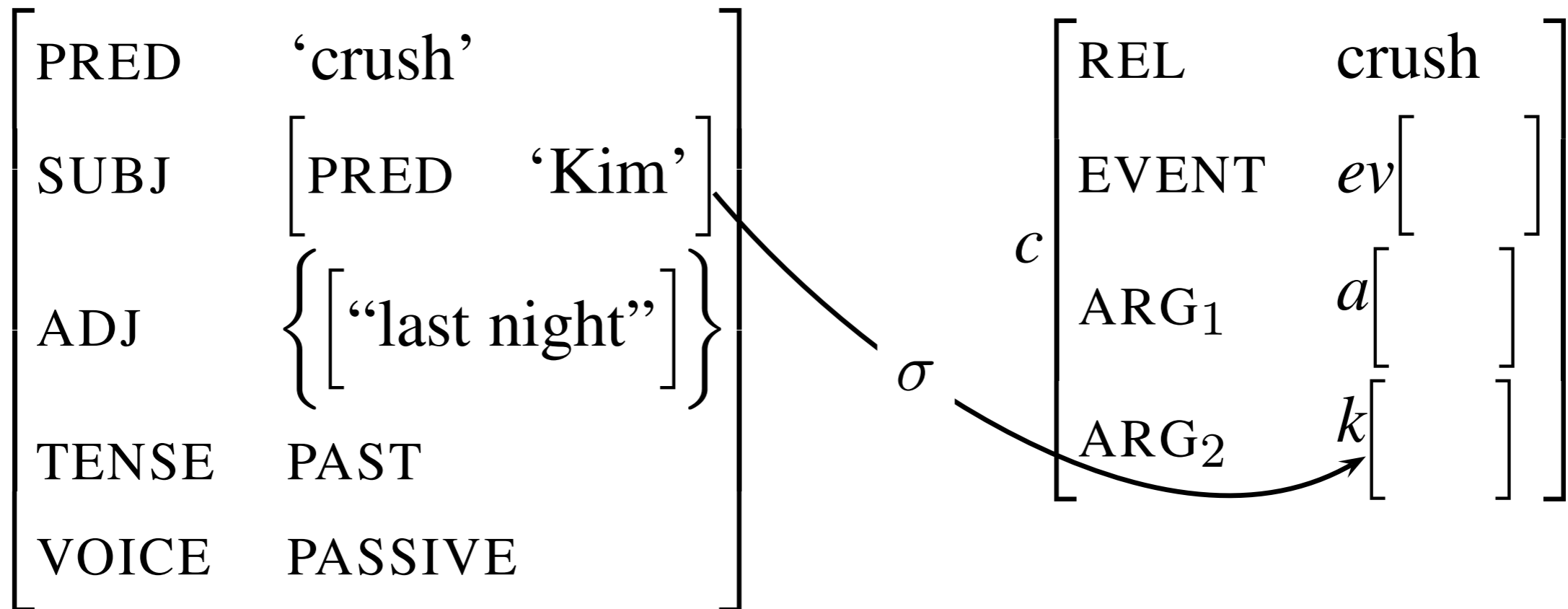
PAST =

($\uparrow \text{TENSE}$) = PAST

$\lambda P \exists e. [P(e) \wedge past(e)] :$
 $[(\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}] \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

Example:

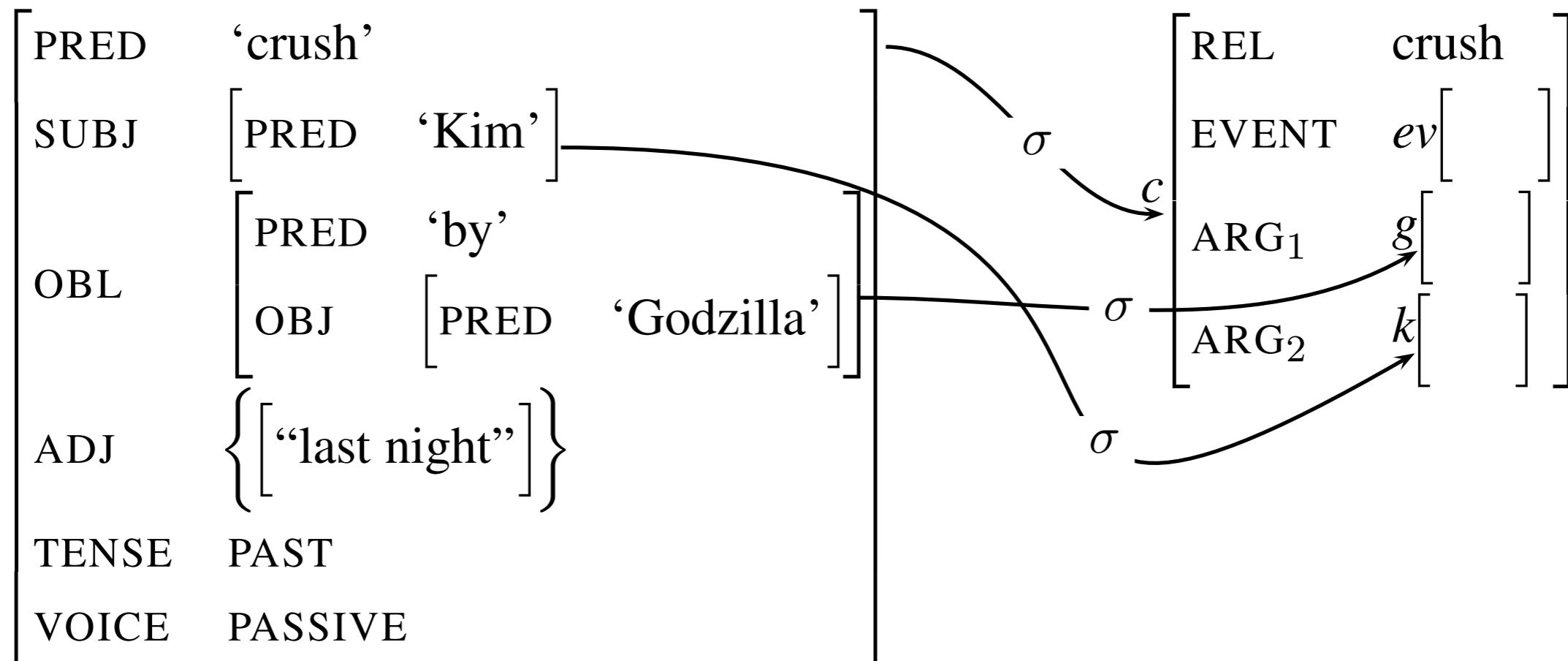
Kim was crushed last night



crushed V (\uparrow PRED) = 'crush'
 @AGENT-PATIENT
 { @PAST | @PASSIVE }
 $\lambda e.crush(e) : (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

Example:

Kim was crushed by Godzilla last night

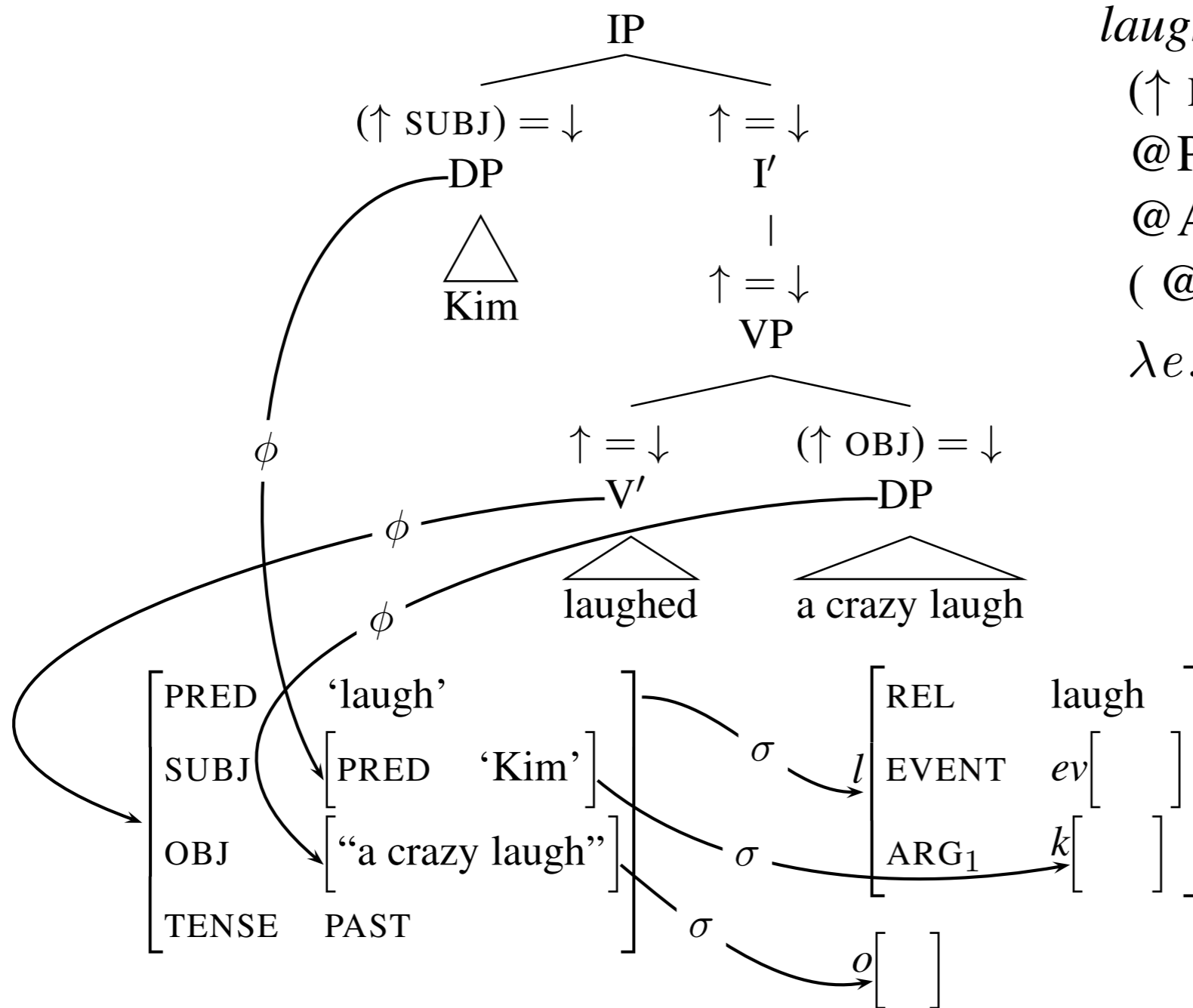


by P (↑ PRED) = 'by'
 ((OBL ↑) VOICE) =_c PASSIVE
 (↑ OBJ)_σ = ((OBL ↑)_σ ARG₁)

$\lambda x \lambda P. [P(x)] : (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{ARG}_1) \multimap [\uparrow_{\sigma} \multimap (\text{OBL } \uparrow)_{\sigma}] \multimap (\text{OBL } \uparrow)_{\sigma}$

Example:

Kim laughed a crazy laugh



laughed V

(\uparrow PRED) = 'laugh'

@PAST

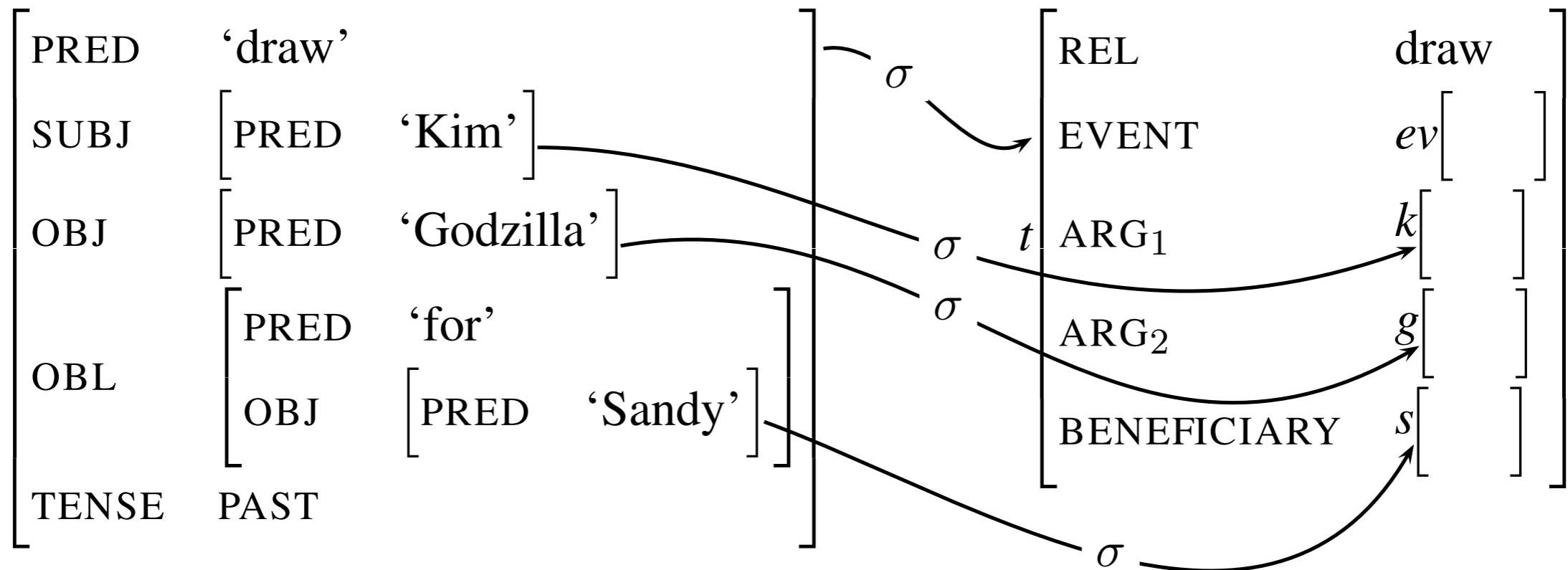
@AGENT

(@COGNATEOBJECT)

$\lambda e. laugh(e) : (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

Example:

Kim drew Godzilla for Sandy



drew V

(\uparrow PRED) = 'draw'

@PAST

@AGENT-PATIENT

$\lambda e. draw(e) : (\uparrow_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap \uparrow_{\sigma}$

for P

(\uparrow PRED) = 'for'

(\uparrow OBJ) $_{\sigma}$ = ((OBL \uparrow) $_{\sigma}$ BENEFCIARY)

$\lambda y \lambda P \lambda e. [P(e) \wedge beneficiary(e) = y] :$

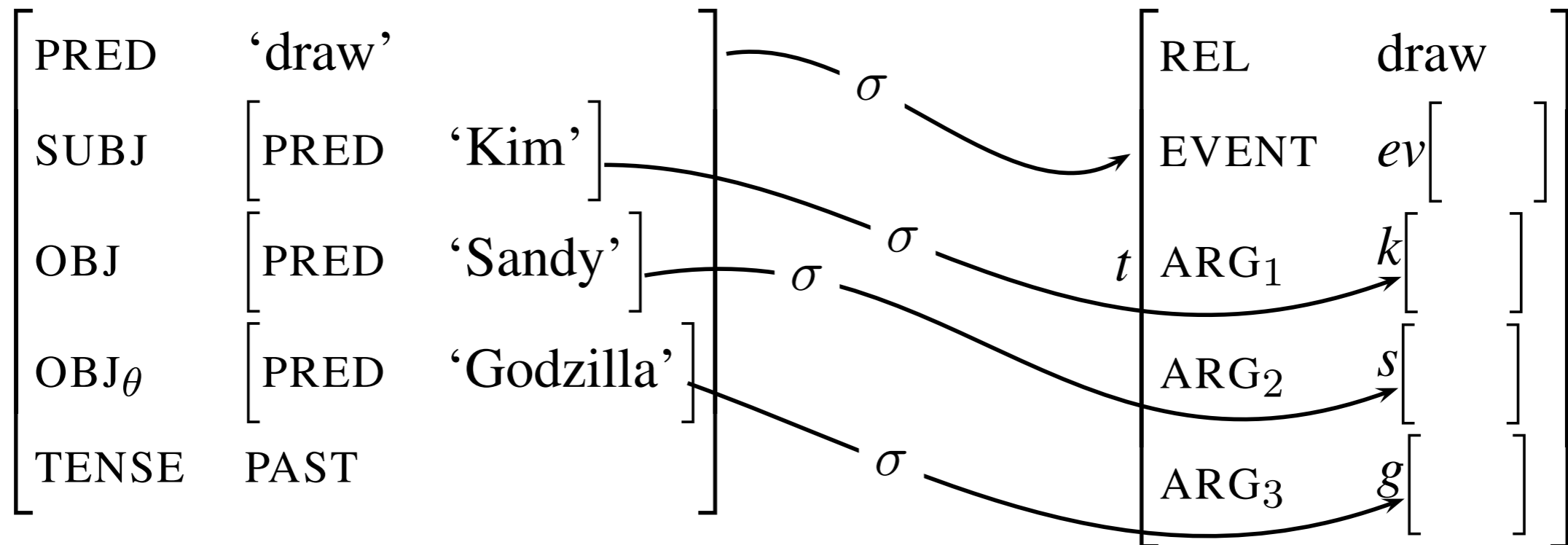
(\uparrow_{σ} BENEFCIARY) \multimap

$[[((\text{OBL } \uparrow)_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap (\text{OBL } \uparrow)_{\sigma}] \multimap$

$((\text{OBL } \uparrow)_{\sigma} \text{EVENT}) \multimap (\text{OBL } \uparrow)_{\sigma}$

Example:

Kim drew Sandy Godzilla



$V' \rightarrow$
 $\begin{matrix} V & DP & DP \\ \uparrow = \downarrow & (\uparrow OBJ) = \downarrow & (\uparrow OBJ_\theta) = \downarrow \end{matrix}$

 (@BENEFACTIVE)

Note: It is a normal assumption in LFG that elements of c-structure rules are optional. This rule therefore allows the passive verb to be inserted under V. (It would also have to have a PP node added for the oblique, but this is a trivial modification.)

Proof:

Kim was crushed last night

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{crush}' = \\
 \frac{\textcircled{\text{AGENT}} \quad \lambda P \lambda y \lambda e. P(e) \wedge \text{agent}(e) = y : (ev \multimap c) \multimap a \multimap ev \multimap c}{\frac{\textcircled{\text{PATIENT}} \quad \lambda P \lambda x \lambda e. P(e) \wedge \text{patient}(e) = x : (ev \multimap c) \multimap k \multimap ev \multimap c \quad \text{crushed} \quad \lambda e. \text{crush}(e) : ev \multimap c}{\lambda x \lambda e. \text{crush}(e) \wedge \text{patient}(e) = x : k \multimap ev \multimap c} [x : k]^1}{\lambda e. \text{crush}(e) \wedge \text{patient}(e) = x : ev \multimap c}} \\
 \frac{\lambda y \lambda e. \text{crush}(e) \wedge \text{patient}(e) = x \wedge \text{agent}(e) = y : a \multimap ev \multimap c}{\lambda x \lambda y \lambda e. \text{crush}(e) \wedge \text{patient}(e) = x \wedge \text{agent}(e) = y : k \multimap a \multimap ev \multimap c} \multimap_{I,1}
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{Kim} \\
 kim : \\
 k \\
 \frac{\text{crush}'}{\text{crush}'(kim) : a \multimap ev \multimap c [y : a]^2} \\
 \frac{\text{crush}'(kim)(y) : ev \multimap c [e' : ev]^3}{\text{crush}'(kim)(y)(e') : c} \multimap_{I,2} \\
 \frac{\lambda P \exists x. [P(x)] : (a \multimap c) \multimap c}{\lambda y. \text{crush}'(kim)(y)(e') : a \multimap c} \multimap_{I,2}
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{was} \\
 \lambda P \exists e. [P(e) \wedge \text{past}(e)] : (ev \multimap c) \multimap c \\
 \frac{\text{last night} \quad \lambda P \lambda e''. [P(e'') \wedge \text{last.night}(e'')] : (ev \multimap c) \multimap (ev \multimap c)}{\lambda e'' \exists x. [\text{crush}'(kim)(x)(e'') \wedge \text{last.night}(e'')] : ev \multimap c} \\
 \frac{\exists x. [\text{crush}'(kim)(x)(e')] : c}{\lambda e' \exists x. [\text{crush}'(kim)(x)(e')] : ev \multimap c} \multimap_{I,3}
 \end{array}$$

$$\frac{\exists e \exists x. [\text{crush}'(kim)(x)(e) \wedge \text{last.night}(e) \wedge \text{past}(e)] : c}{\exists e \exists x. [\text{crush}(e) \wedge \text{patient}(e) = kim \wedge \text{agent}(e) = x \wedge \text{last.night}(e) \wedge \text{past}(e)] : c} \Rightarrow_{\beta}$$

What just happened?

- Overview of Lexical-Functional Grammar
- Overview of Glue Semantics
- Introduction to Flexible Composition as an approach to argument structure

Thank you

Some key references

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