

Syntax & Morphology: A Summary

(or: Everything in 12 pages)¹

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¹ This is a summary handout for the introductory course in GB syntax based on Haegeman & Guéron (1999) *English Grammar. A Generative Perspective* and Huddleston & Pullum (2005) *A Student's Introduction to English Grammar*.

1 Morphology

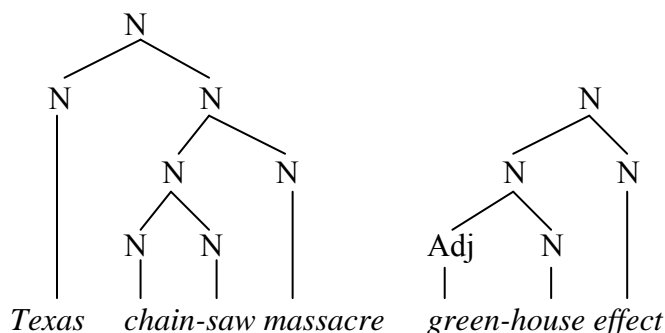
1.1 Word classes: Categories

Lexical categories: V, N, P, Adj, Adv
 Functional categories: D, I, C

1.2 Morphemes, roots, and affixes

1.2.1 Compounding

Root + Root → Stem

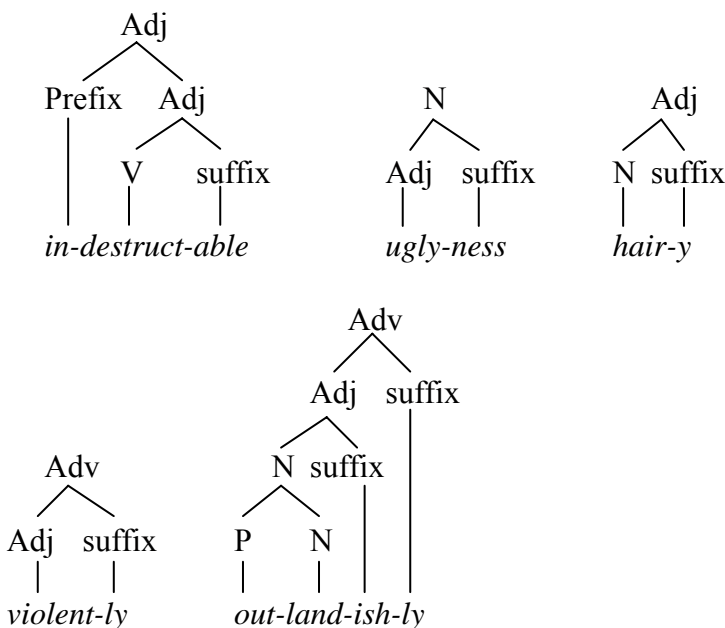


1.2.2 Derivation

Forms new words / changes meaning

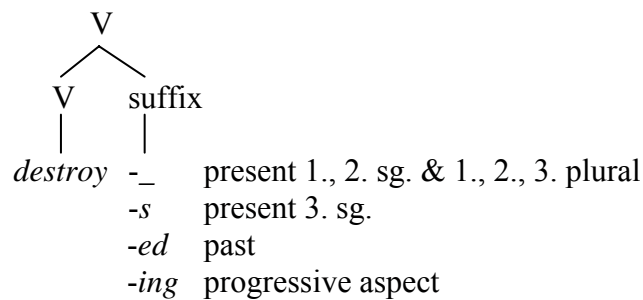
Root + affix → Stem

- affixes are *bound* morphemes.
- Some roots are also bound (e.g. *destruct-* which is a bound allomorph of *destroy*, formed by backformation from *destruction*, see 1.2.5):

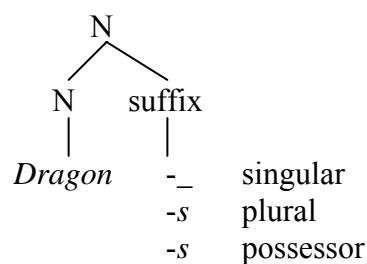


1.2.3 Inflection

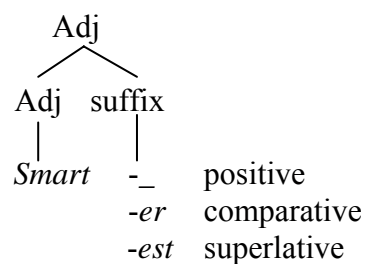
Verbs: tense (past, present), progressive aspect, person



Nouns: number (plural/singular), possession (-s), case (pronouns)



Adjectives: positive, comparative, superlative



1.2.4 Blends

smoke+fog=smog

breakfast+lunch=brunch

1.2.5 Backformation

N: *editor* → V: *edit*

N: *destruction* → V: *destruct-* (e.g. *self-destruct*)

2 Syntax

2.1 Lexical entries: Subcategorization and Theta-grids

Predicate:	<i>Sleep</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Seem</i>	<i>Green</i>
Category:	V	V	V	Adj
Subcategorization:		[_ DP/IP]	[_ IP/CP]	
Theta-grid:				
External argument	1:Agent	1:Agent		1:Theme
Internal argument		2:Theme	2:Theme	

To a large extent, the properties of the verb determine the composition of the clause.

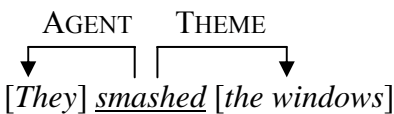
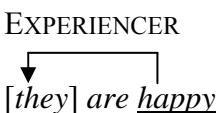
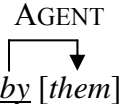
2.2 Subjects

- a. Arguments (+theta role): *Carl bought beer*
 b. Quasi/weather-arguments (-theta role): *It snows*
 c. Expletives (-theta role): *There were many people in the house*
It is Elvis leaving the building

2.3 The Theta-criterion

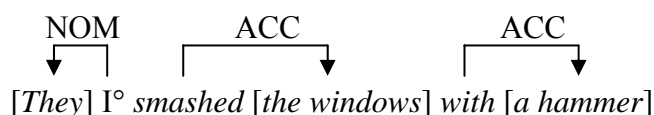
Each argument must be associated with one and only one theta-role
 Each theta-role must be associated with one and only one argument

2.4 Theta-role assigners

- a. Verbs: 
 b. Adjectives: 
 c. Prepositions: 

2.5 Case assigners

- a. NOMINATIVE: Finite I° (past/present tense)
 b. ACCUSATIVE: Lexical V°, P°



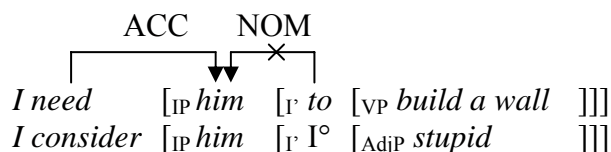
2.6 The Case Filter

*DP_[-case]: All overt (i.e. non-empty) DPs must have case.

2.7 Exceptional Case Marking: ECM

Case assignment into a non-finite clause in order to assign case to the subject (to obey the case filter).

Non-finite I° does NOT assign case.



2.8 Constituency tests

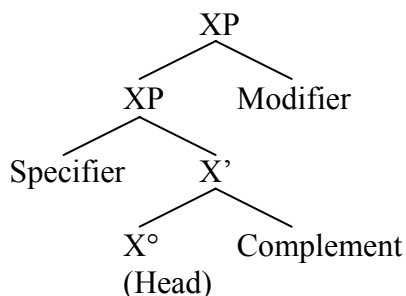
- a. Movement
 - i. Fronting (topicalization, see 2.14.4)
 - ii. Clefting (“It is X that ... t_X ...”)
 - iii. Pseudo-clefting (“What ... t_X ... is X”)
 - iv. Passivisation (see 2.14.5)
 - v. Heavy NP shift (... t_X ...X)
- b. Substitution
- c. Deletion

Rule:

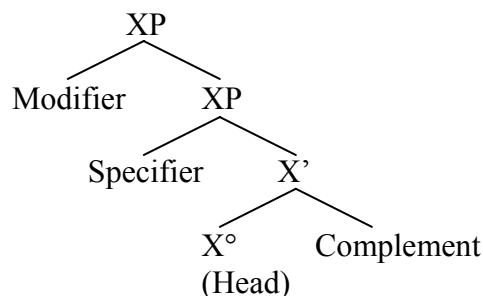
If something passes at least one constituency test, it is a constituent. If it fails a test, it may or may not be a constituent.

2.9 X-bar structure

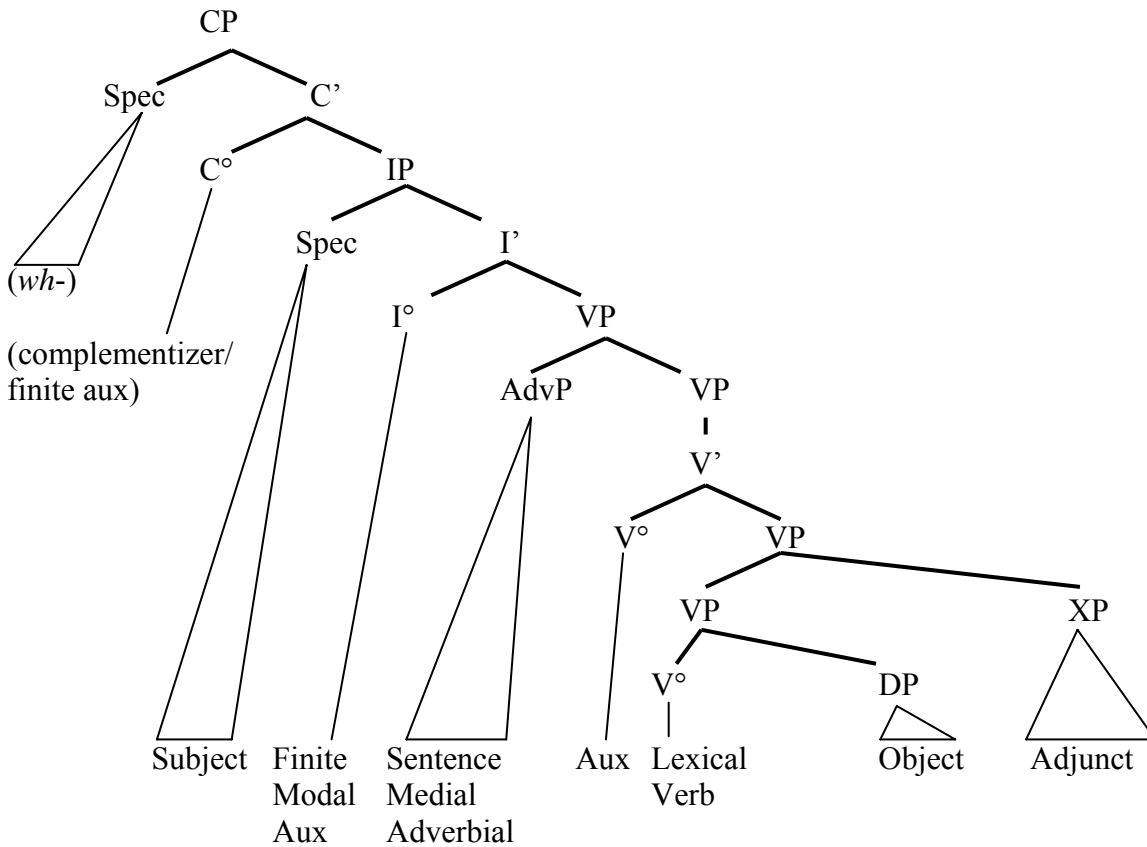
Right-adjoined modifier



Left-adjoined modifier



2.10 Structure of the clause



2.11 Verb types

Base-generated in V°:

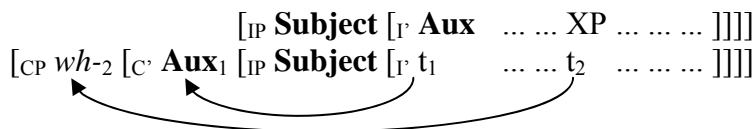
- 1) Lexical verbs: NEVER leave V°
- 2) Auxiliary verbs: move to I° (when finite)
 - a. aspectual auxiliaries: *have* (perfect), *be* (progressive)
 - b. copula verb: *be*

Base-generated in I°:

- 1) Modal auxiliaries: *will, shall, can, may, must*
- 2) Dummy auxiliary: *do*

2.12 Subject Auxiliary Inversion: SAI

Wh-elements move to spec-CP and the auxiliary verb (Aux) moves from I° to C°, inverting the order of Subj and Aux:



2.13 The subject requirement

ALL clauses have subjects:

- a. DP, PP, Expletive *it / there*, Weather *it*, or *ec*: Spec-IP
- b. Clausal subjects: CP or IP: Adjoined to IP and co-indexed with the empty category *ec* in spec-IP.

[_{IP} [_{IP1} *ec to solve the problem*] [_{IP} *ec*₁ *will be difficult*]]

2.14 Clause types and movement

2.14.1 Declarative

[_{IP} *We* I° [_{VP} [_{AdvP} *just*] [_{VP} *heard the news*]]]?

2.14.2 Yes/no question

Movement of the auxiliary from I° to C° → SAI:

[_{CP} *Did*₁ [_{IP} *you* t₁ [_{VP} *hear the news*]]]?
 [_{CP} *Have*₁ [_{IP} *you* t₁ [_{VP} t₁ [_{VP} *heard the news*]]]]?

2.14.3 Wh-question

Movement of the *wh*-element into spec-CP:

a. **Object:**

[_{CP} *What*₂ *did*₁ [_{IP} *you* t₁ [_{VP} *hear* t₂]]]?
 [_{CP} *What*₂ *have*₁ [_{IP} *you* t₁ [_{VP} t₁ [_{VP} *heard* t₂]]]]?

b. **Subject:**

[_{CP} *who*₁ C° [_{IP} t₁ I° [_{VP} *saw the movie*]]]?
 [_{CP} *who*₁ *has*₂ [_{IP} t₁ t₂ [_{VP} t₂ [_{VP} *seen the movie*]]]]?

c. **Adjunct:**

[_{CP} *how*₂ *did*₁ [_{IP} *you* t₁ [_{VP} [_{VP} *open the door*] t₂]]]?
 [_{CP} *when*₂ *did*₁ [_{IP} *you* t₁ [_{VP} [_{VP} *open the door*] t₂]]]?

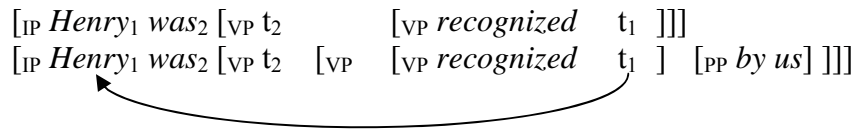
2.14.4 Fronting

Topicalization – adjunction to IP:

[_{IP} *Henry*₁ [_{IP} *we already* [_{VP} *know* t₂]]]

2.14.5 Passivisation

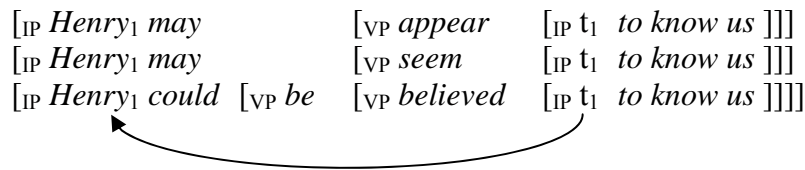
Movement from VP-compl to spec-IP: Object→Subject



2.14.6 Raising

Raising predicates have no external argument

Movement from spec-IP to spec-IP: Subject→Subject



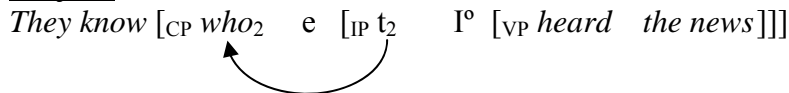
2.14.7 Embedded declarative

I know [CP [C' that [IP they I° [VP heard the news]]]]

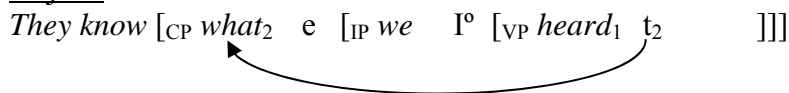
2.14.8 Embedded *wh*-question

Movement of the *wh*-element into spec-CP; C° is empty.

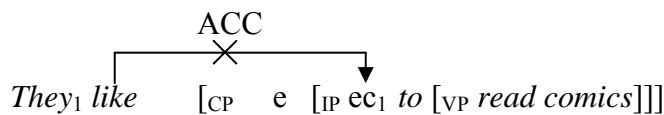
a. Subject:



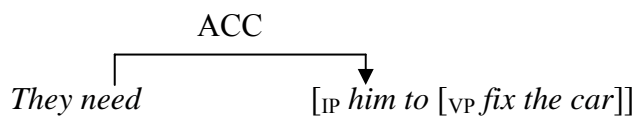
b. Object:



2.14.9 Embedded infinitival clauses



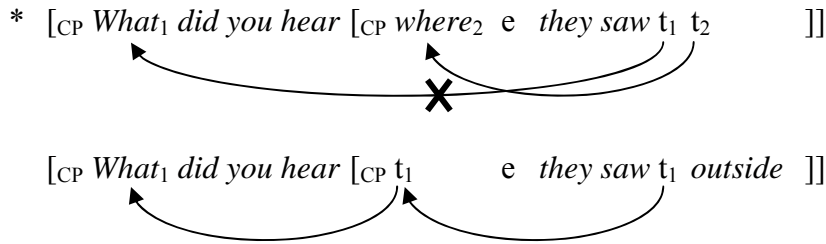
(empty categories do not need case, see 2.6 above)



(Exceptional Case Marking, see 2.7 above)

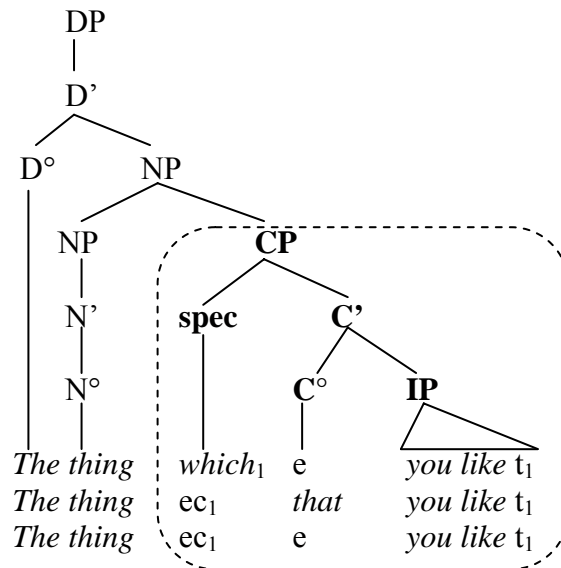
2.14.10 Wh-islands:

Movement is local:

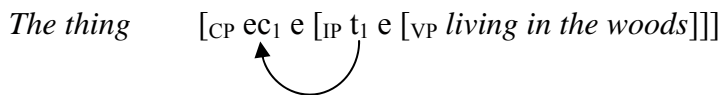


2.15 Relative clauses

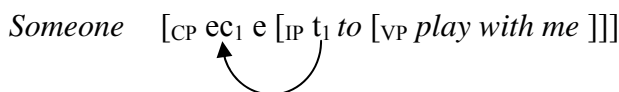
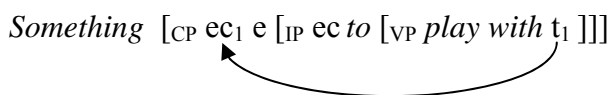
Adjoined clausal modifiers of NP



2.15.1 Non-finite relative clauses



2.15.2 Infinitival relative clauses



2.16 Particles

Test: **Prepositions** (P°) always precede the complement;
Particles (Prt°) may appear either before or after the complement (but the particle always follows a pronominal complement)

Prepositions:

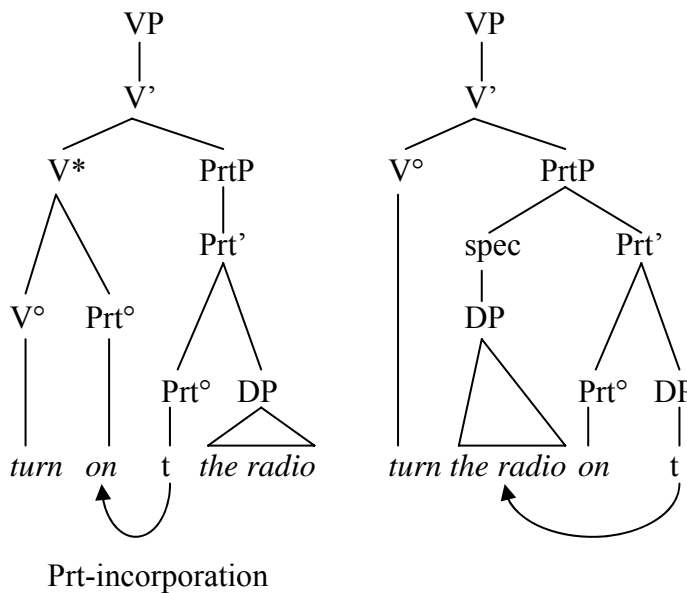
*Jacob climbed **up** the ladder*
 * *Jacob climbed the ladder **up***

*The vampire went **into** the coffin to sleep*
 * *The vampire went the coffin **into** to sleep*

Particles:

*Edward will probably turn **on** the radio*
*Edward will probably turn the radio **on***

*He never throws **away** old papers*
*He never throws old papers **away***



3 Grammatical Function

3.1 Subject (Subj / S)

The thing/action/entity the clause is about.
 The element associated with spec-IP (see 2.13 above)

Subject	Predication
<i>Kevin</i>	<i>read a book about nuclear physics yesterday</i>

3.2 Direct object (Obj / DO / Od)

Typically associated with the theta-role of THEME/PATIENT

- a. The complement of V°

DP: *I love chocolate*

CP: *I know that you love chocolate*

IP: *I like to go shopping*

VP: *I like swimming*

- b. The complement of P°

DP: *I looked at the statue*

CP: *I pointed out that she was wrong*

3.3 Indirect object (IO, Oi)

Typically associated with the theta-role role of RECIPIENT/BENEFICIARY

- a. Part of a double object construction (see 3.4 below):

DP: *Harry bought Sally a bunch of flowers*

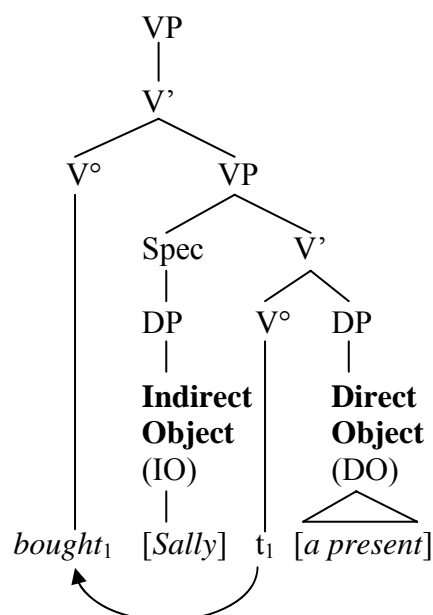
DP: *I'd like to give someone this present*

- b. Complement of P°:

DP: *Harry bought a bunch of flowers for Sally*

DP: *I'd like to give this present to someone*

3.4 The double object construction



3.5 Subject predicate (SPred)

(Also called *Subject oriented Predicative Complement*, PCs)

The relation between the subject (Subj) and the subject predicate (SPred) is something like “=”.

a. With the copula verb *be*:

	Subj	=	SPred
AdjP:	<i>They are</i>		<u><i>quite tired</i></u>
AdjP:	<i>She is</i>		<u><i>very beautiful</i></u>
DP:	<i>He is</i>		<u><i>an idiot</i></u>
PP:	<i>He is</i>		<u><i>in the toilet</i></u>

b. With other verbs meaning *be, become, look like, appear, be called...*

	Subj	=	SPred
DP:	<i>I am called</i>		<u><i>Dannyboy</i></u>
DP:	<i>Bill became</i>		<i>the president</i>
AdjP:	<i>They look</i>		<u><i>absolutely stupid</i></u>
AdjP:	<i>She seems</i>		<u><i>nice</i></u>
AdjP:	<i>He is presumed</i>		<u><i>dead</i></u>
IP:	<i>She appears</i>		<u><i>to be smiling</i></u>

3.6 Object predicate (OPred)

(Also called *Object oriented Predicative Complement*, PCo)

The relation between the object (Obj) and the object predicate (OPred) is something like to “=”.

Note the close parallel with the subject complement:

<i>She drove</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>crazy</i>	◀cause & effect▶	<i>I</i>	<i>am</i>	<i>crazy</i>
Subj		Obj		Subj		SPred

		Obj	OPred
DP:	<i>They call</i>	<i>me</i>	<u><i>Dannyboy</i></u>
AdjP:	<i>I'll keep</i>	<i>the beer</i>	<u><i>cold</i></u>
AdjP:	<i>We consider</i>	<i>the case</i>	<u><i>solved</i></u>