

## Questions on Adjectives, Common Nouns, Definite DPs, and Presuppositions

### (1) An Exercise on the Semantics of Adjectives, Common Nouns and Definites

Please use an ‘annotated tree’ to compute the T-conditions that our system derives for the following sentence:

- a. The friendly doctor is an unwed man.

Before providing the T-conditional proof itself, please state the lexical entries you will assume for “friendly”, “doctor”, “unwed” and “man”. *Be especially mindful of which adjectives are intersective and which are subsective.*

### (2) A Short Question on ‘Presupposition Projection’

The (proto-)theory of presupposition that we developed in class makes the following prediction.

- a. *Prediction:*  
If a sentence S contains a DP of the form [ *the NP* ], then any larger sentence S\* containing S will presuppose that there exists exactly one entity  $x$  such that  $[[NP]](x) = T$ .

With this in mind, consider the sentence in (b) below.

- b. Either there is no Loch Ness Monster, or the Loch Ness Monster is very good at hiding.

Please identify a problem that (b) poses for our (proto-)theory of presupposition.

### (3) Interpretability and Well-Formedness Again

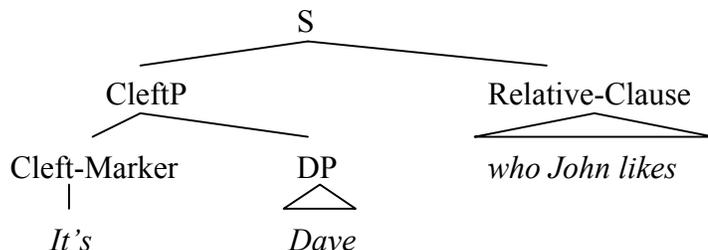
Consider the ill-formed structure below.

- a. The married to Michelle Obama smokes.
- b. **Question:**  
Can our semantic system interpret this sentence? Why or why not?
- c. **Question:**  
Briefly discuss any cross-linguistic predictions that follow from your answer to (b).

(4) **An Exercise on Presuppositions in the English Cleft Construction**

The English cleft construction is exemplified by sentences like those in (a)-(b) below. We will assume that it has the (oversimplified) syntax in (c).

- a. It's Dave who John likes.                      b. It's Sue who likes Dave.
- c. Assumed Syntax of the English Cleft Construction



In this exercise, you'll be working out a compositional semantics for the English cleft construction. To begin with, let us simply stipulate the extensions in (d)-(e) below.

- d. [[ who John likes ]] = [  $\lambda x_e : \underline{\text{John likes } x}$  ]
- e. [[ who likes Dave ]] = [  $\lambda x_e : \underline{x \text{ likes Dave}}$  ]

Linguists and grammarians have long observed that the English cleft carries a particular presupposition. As indicated below, a cleft of the form *It's DP Relative-Clause* presupposes that there is exactly one thing that the relative clause is true of. For example:

- h. "It's Dave who John likes" presupposes that there is exactly one  $x$  such that John likes  $x$
- i. "It's Sue who likes Dave" presupposes that there is exactly one  $x$  such that  $x$  likes Dave
- j. **Question 1**  
Please use our test for presupposition to verify the claims in (h) and (i).

Linguists and grammarians have also long observed that, aside from its special presupposition, the English cleft construction doesn't seem to differ much in meaning from 'non-clefted' English sentences. That is, the following truth-conditional statements seem to be accurate.

- k. "It's Dave who John likes" is T if and only if Dave is the unique  $y$  such that John likes  $y$
- l. "It's Sue who likes Dave" is T if and only if Sue is the unique  $y$  such that  $y$  likes Dave
- m. **Question 2**  
Please provide a lexical entry for the 'cleft-marker' *it's*, and show that it predicts:
- (i) the T-conditional statements in either (k) or (l)
- (ii) the presuppositions in either (h) or (i)