24.902 Problem set #10
[DueWednesday, November 19]

Part 1: Overlapping Reference/Disjoint Reference

Let us imagine that Mary and John are a couple. Many people have the following judgments when *them*/*they* refers to the couple:[1]

(1)   a. *Mary admires them.
         b. *Mary considers them to be lucky.

(2)   a. Mary considers us to admire them a bit too much.
         b. Mary thinks that we admire them too much.
         c. Mary resented my criticism of them.

(3)   a. Mary's father admires them.
         b. Mary's best friend considers them to be lucky.

Many people also have the following judgments:

(4)   a. *I admire us.
         b. *We used to admire me.

(5)   a. I consider him to admire us.
         b. I believe that Tom admires us.
         c. I resent your criticism of us

More data. Imagine I am not only a member of the MIT Department of Linguistic and Philosophy but also a member of a rock band. (Not true, by the way.) For many speakers, (6a) is impossible (and (6b) possible) not only when *we* and *us* both refer to the linguistics department or both refer to the rock band, but also when *we* refers to the linguistics department and *us* refers to the rock band (or vice-versa):

(6)   a. *In past years, we used to hire us for the department party.
         b. We decided that the Department Head should hire us for the party.

Question 1: The effects above look sort of like Principle B effects, but there is a twist, if we don't rewrite Principle B itself. The twist requires you to interpret coindexation in a way different from the way we have been interpreting them in class. Explain.

---

[1] Obviously the sentences are all fine when *them*/*they* refers to some other group. I have not indicated any indices for reasons that should become obvious.

Terms you may wish to use include *overlapping reference* and *disjoint reference* -- terms whose meanings you can figure out from the examples.

Question 2: Here is a twist on the twist. Explain the issue.

(7)   a. *I admire ourselves.
         b. *We admire myself.
         c. *The drummer in the rock band admires themselves.
         d. *As for the drummer, all the members of the band admire himself.

Keeping the actual statement of Principles A and B the same as what was developed in class, but possibly changing other things (e.g. the interpretation of indices, the nature of the indices, etc.), present a revision that accounts not only for the facts about coreference and non-corefence that we discussed in class, but also the new facts presented in this section. Make sure your revision works!

Part 2: PRO, *to* and case

Our case assignment rules as stated so far do not identify infinitival *to* as a case assigner. Infinitival *to* in an ECM or raising infinitival certainly is not a case assigner. But there are some open questions:

   1. What about infinitival *to* in a control clause? Does it assign some sort of case?
   2. And does PRO need case, like other DPs?

Examine the following examples (and others like them that you might make up) and use them to address these questions directly. If you feel that our case assignment rules must be revised, state the revision explicitly.

(8) a. John promised Mary [to seem to himself to be a genius].
    b. *John promised Mary [to seem to him to be a genius].

(9) a. John$_i$'s greatest desire is [to seem to himself$_i$ to be a genius].
    b. *John$_i$'s greatest desire is [to seem to him$_i$ to be a genius].
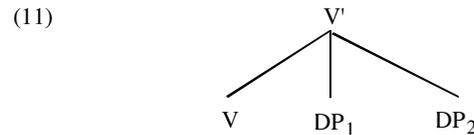

Part 3: Double-object constructions

Consider the construction seen in the VPs of (10):

(10)a. Bill gave Sue a book.
   b. Mary showed my friends her new house.
   c. The linguist handed the chemist a copy of the problem.
   d. We faxed John the contract.

This is often called the "Double Object Construction", because the verb appears to take two DP objects.   The Double Object Construction raises problems for some proposals that have been discussed in class. In the following questions, you will be asked to state clearly *what* the problems are, and to make suggestions about how to solve them.

Assume that the VPs in (10) immediately dominate the verb and two objects (i.e. that the VPs are ternary-branching). The question asked in this problem concerns the nature of the two objects.

Question 1: If the correct structure for the V' in (10a-d) were (11) below, what problem is posed by the acceptability of (10a-d)?

(11)

```
            V'
         /  |  \
        /   |   \
       V   DP₁   DP₂
```

(11)

$$
\begin{array}{ccc}
 & V' & \\
 & | & \\
V & DP_1 & DP_2
\end{array}
$$

Question 2: The following data help localize the problem to one of the two objects in (10a-d). Explain:

(12)a. Jonathan was given a book.
   b. *A book was given Jonathan .[2]

(13)a. My friends were shown the new house.
   b. *The new house was shown my friends .

Question 3: What additional problem do the facts given below pose for the structure in (11)?

(14)   a. I showed John$_i$ himself$_i$ (in the mirror).
        b. *I showed himself$_i$ John$_i$ (in the mirror).

(15)   a. I showed the kids each other's parents.
        b. *I showed each other's parents the kids.

Extra credit: Suppose someone were to claim that what goes wrong in (14b) and (15b) is simply the fact that the anaphor in each case *precedes* its antecedent. Have you ever encountered data that might bear on the question of whether anaphors are allowed to precede their antecedents? If so, tell me more!

Question 4: The problems discovered in Questions 1-3 may be solved quite simply if one posits a structure for double-object constructions that is a bit different from (11). Hold constant the idea that verbs like *give* take two complements, but conisder the possibility that there is also some unpronounced element in the structure that makes all the difference. Call this element *G*, just to give it a name.

Here is a crucial hint as to the nature of *G*.   Many verbs that allow the Double Object construction have an alternative form with the preposition *to*. The phenomenon as a whole is often called the "double object alternation". Do not attempt to relate these two alternants by movement (i.e. don't ponder UTAH right now); that is a task for another day. Just examine the alternations themselves.

(16)   a. Mary gave Sue a book.
        b. Mary gave a book to Sue.

(17)   a. Tom sent the students an e-mail.
        b. Tom sent an e-mail to the students.

(18)   a. Mary showed her friends the new house.
        b. Mary showed the new house to her friends.

Now note that certain other verbs (e.g. *provide*, *supply*) display a similar alternation, but with an interesting difference:

(19)   a. Bill provided Sue with books.
        b. Bill provided books to Sue.

(20)   a. Mary supplied my friends with money.
        b. Mary supplied money to my friends.

---

[2] There is some dialect variation on the unacceptability of the (b) examples.   Speakers from the north of Engliand, for example, report that the (b) examples are fine for them, and you may feel that they are not completely impossible — especially if the unmoved object receives low stress. Ignore this, and assume the judgments given.

With these facts in mind, offer an alternative to (11). Show how your alternative solves the problems raised in Questions 1-3 , and explain the relevance of the new data introduced above to your solution.

Question 5: What kind of a verb is *get*, as used in the examples below? What is its relation to verbs like *give*?

(21)   a. Tom got my e-mail.
         b. My e-mail got to Tom.
         c. *My e-mail was got by Tom.
         d. *Tom was got to by my e-mail.[3]

(22)   a. The coach gave him hell for that.
         b. *The coach gave hell to him for that.
         c. He got hell for that.
         d. *Hell got to him for that.

(23)   a. Hey kid, I'm gonna give you a lucky break.
         b. *Hey kid, I'm gonna give a lucky break to you.
         c. Wow, I got a lucky break.
         d. *Wow, a lucky break got to me.

(24)   a. That story gives me the shivers.
         b. *That story gives the shivers to me.
         c. I get the shivers (from that story).
         d. *The shivers gets to me (from that story).

---

[3] We *have* seen passives in which a preposition is stranded before! [Note: (21d) is marginally ok with the irrelevant slang meaning of 'bothered'. Ignore this.]