X
NP(S)  VP(c)
NP(O)  NP(C)
[p]   [past]   [cs]   [nc]
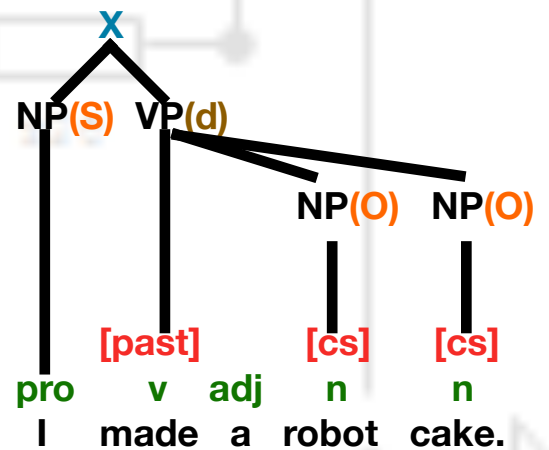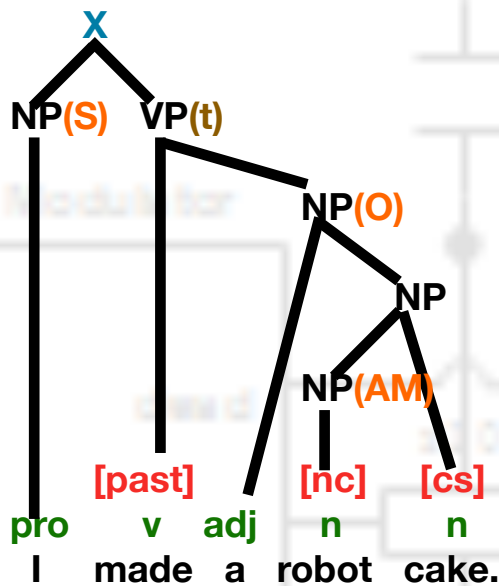pro    v   adj    n    n
I    made  a   robot  cake.

An ambiguous sentence admits of two or more possible interpretations. This can either be the result of an ambiguous word or an ambiguous structure. The sentence, *I made a robot cake*, has ambiguous structure. What are the three possible meanings? Diagramming can help students parse these possible meanings and think about rephrasing.

This unique diagramming system is based loosely on Chomsky's X-Bar Theory but it not dependent on it. The technique aims to help students learn how to identify, chunk, and relate the parts of a sentence to better understand meaning and develop better grammatical skills.

X
NP(S)  VP(t)
NP(O)
NP
NP(AM)
[past]   [nc]   [cs]
pro    v   adj    n    n
I    made  a   robot  cake.

X
NP(S)  VP(d)
NP(O)  NP(O)
[past]   [cs]   [cs]
pro    v   adj    n    n
I    made  a   robot  cake.

This sentence diagramming technique is still a work in progress. A textbook using the technique is in development. This poster is a way to get constructive feedback and improve the text. We welcome your comments.

# Using Sentence Diagramming to Understand Multiple Meanings of Ambiguous Sentences

The system involves identifying *parts of speech, phrases, clauses, functions, details, predicate patterns* and making connections between them. Doing this, raises grammatical consciousness and provides a scaffold from which to teach students IN the target language. This visual technique appeals to many engineers and lends itself well to teaching in the target language to students largely educated via the grammar translation technique.

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