

Syntactic analysis of an ambiguous noun phrase

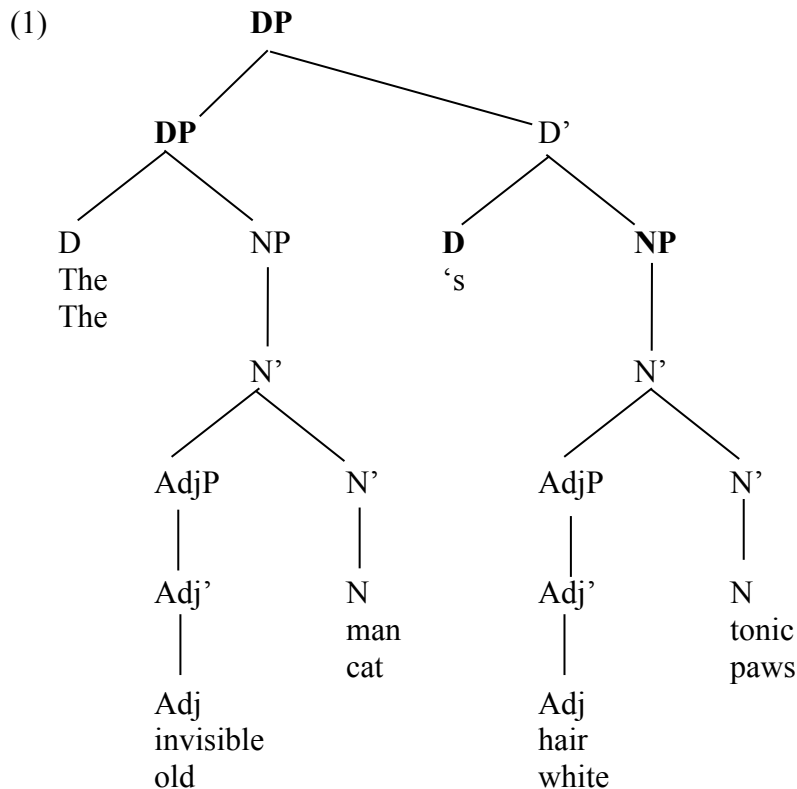
The invisible man's hair tonic is an ambiguous noun phrase which can mean:

- (1) The **hair tonic** of the invisible man
- (2) The invisible **tonic** of the man's hair
- (3) The **tonic** of the invisible man's hair

These various interpretations meanings can be disambiguated in syntactic trees. Note that the trees are NOT of the paraphrases, but of the original sentence *The invisible man's hair tonic*.

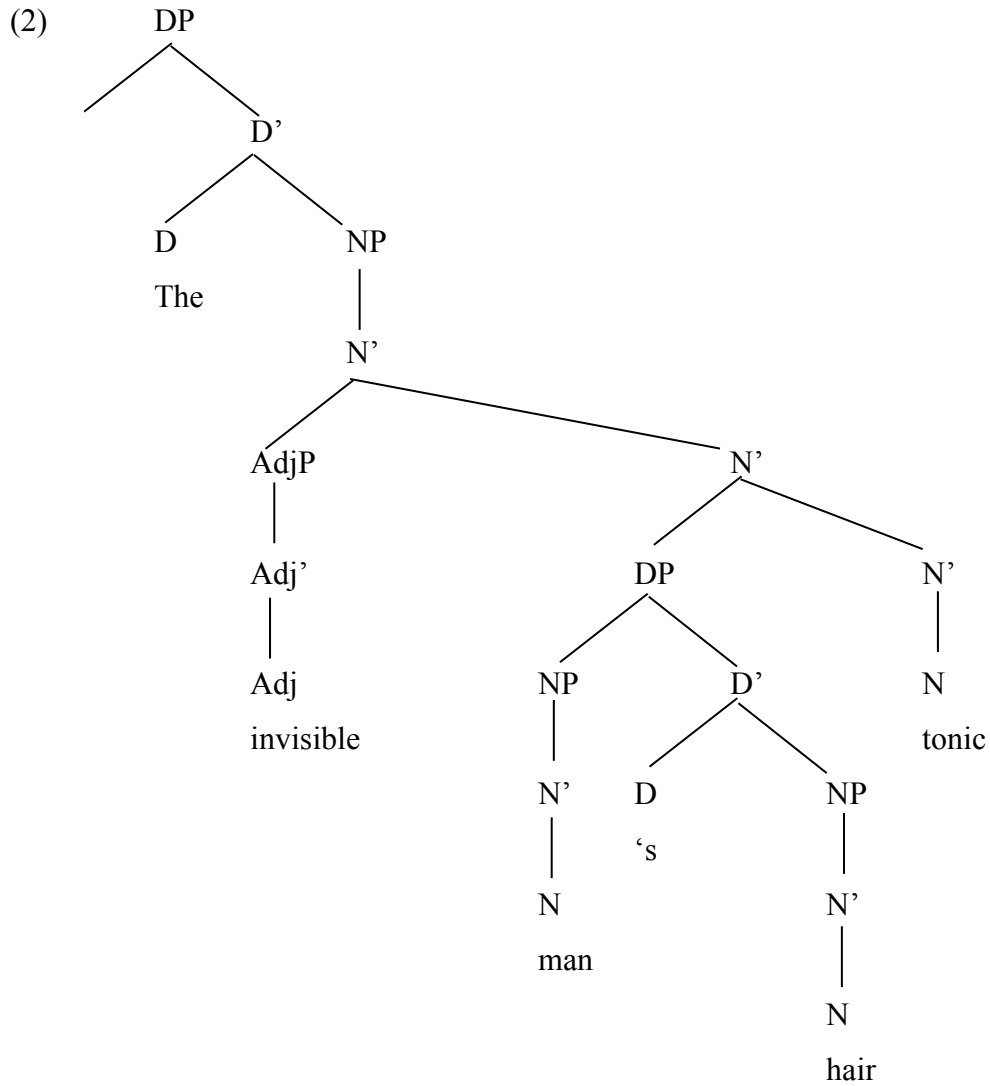
For paraphrase (1) think of a noun phrase (or Determiner Phrase - a **DP**) with a similar construction e.g.:

The old cat 's white paws.
DP **D** **NP**



In the case of Paraphrase (2) *The invisible tonic for men's (man's) hair*

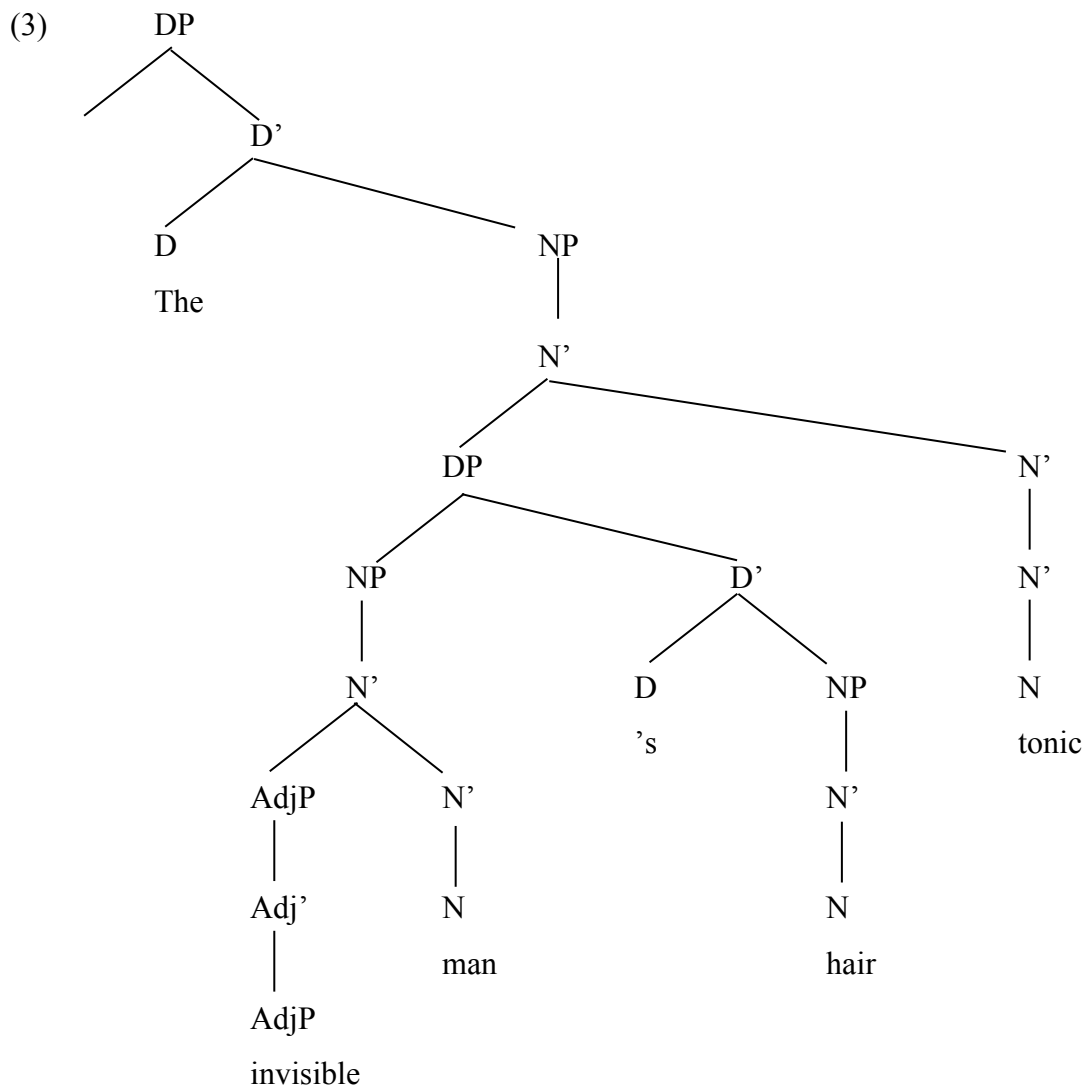
-Where the DP *men's hair* modifies the noun *tonic*, and the adjective *invisible* modifies the DP *men's* (*man's hair tonic*):



In the case of Paraphrase (3), *The tonic of the invisible man's hair* OR *The tonic of the hair of the invisible man*. (This is debatable)

Think of a similar noun phrase (DP) e.g.

The invisible man	's	hair	tonic
The old cat	's	fur	comb
DP	D	DP	NP



Your feedback is most welcome!