
Understanding Kazakh *Men*: Comitatives Revisited

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What are comitatives?

Comitatives are ‘with’ phrases that include an animate individual and are typically analyzed as adding a participant to the event:

(1) Alex wrote a paper **with Sam**

(2) Alex saw Sam **with Taylor**

What are NOT comitatives?

‘With’ phrases that do not include animate individuals:

(3) A woman **with a green hat** walked down the street.

(4) Sam hit the wall **with a hammer**.

(5) I ate a cheeseburger **with bacon**.

Previous discussions – Russian

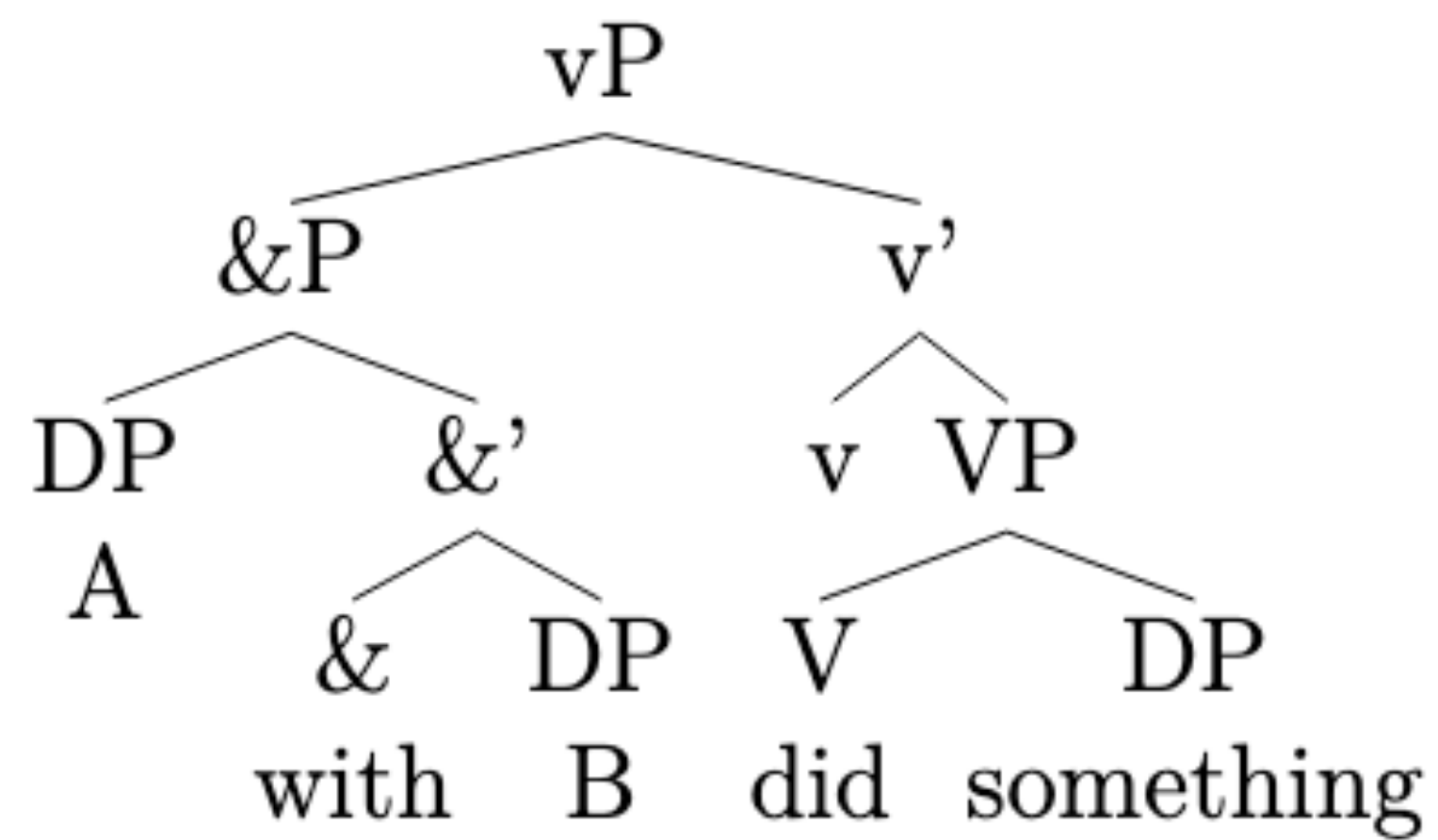
(6) a. Maša s Dašej pišet/pišut statju.
Masha with Dasha.INST write.3SG/3PL paper
‘Masha and Dasha are writing a paper.’

b. Maša pišet/*pišut statju s Dašej.
Masha write.3SG/3PL paper with Dasha.INST
‘Masha wrote a paper with Dasha.’

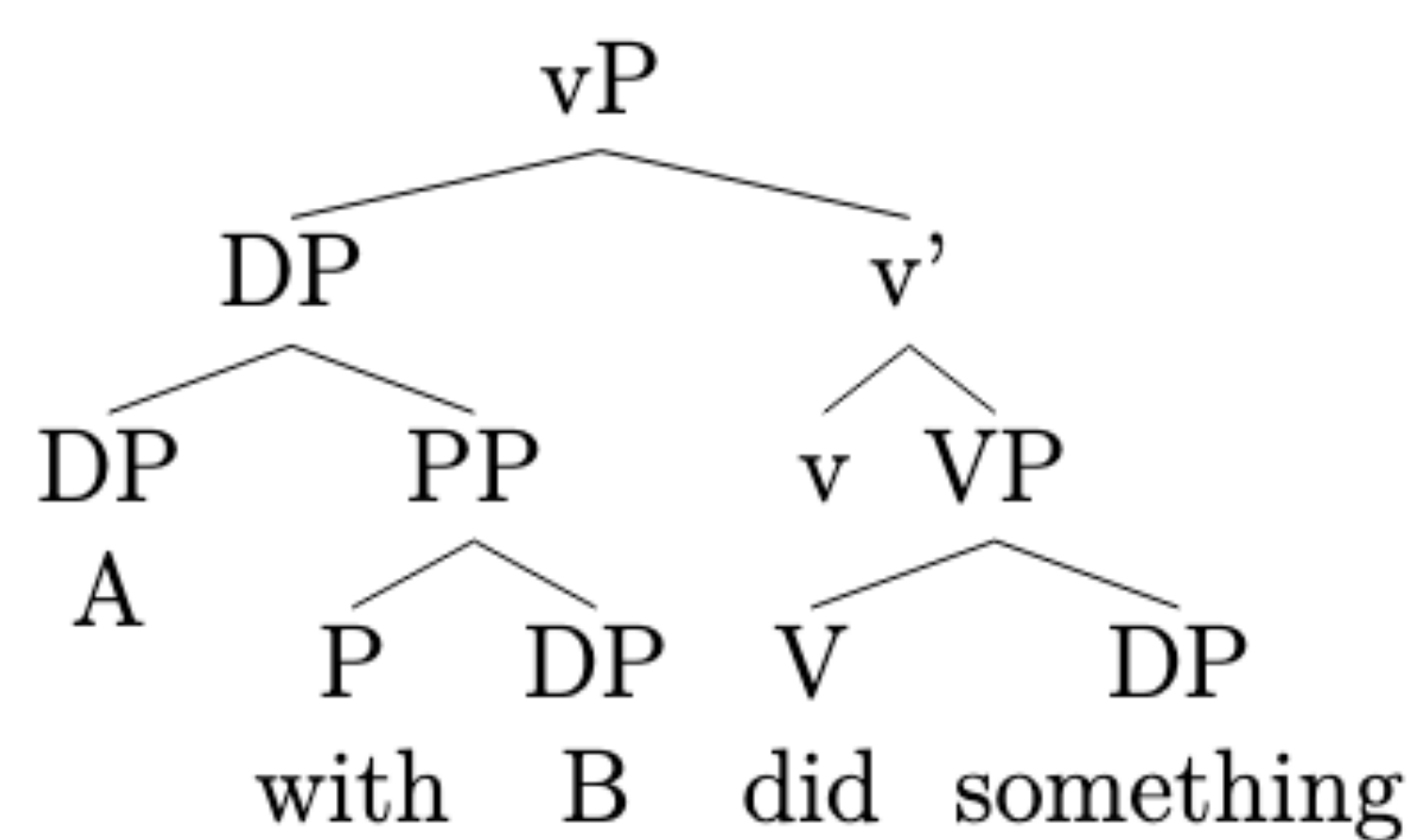
(Burukina 2024; Dylā & Feldman 2008; Ionin & Matushansky 2003; Vassilieva & Larson 2005, a.o.)

3 structures

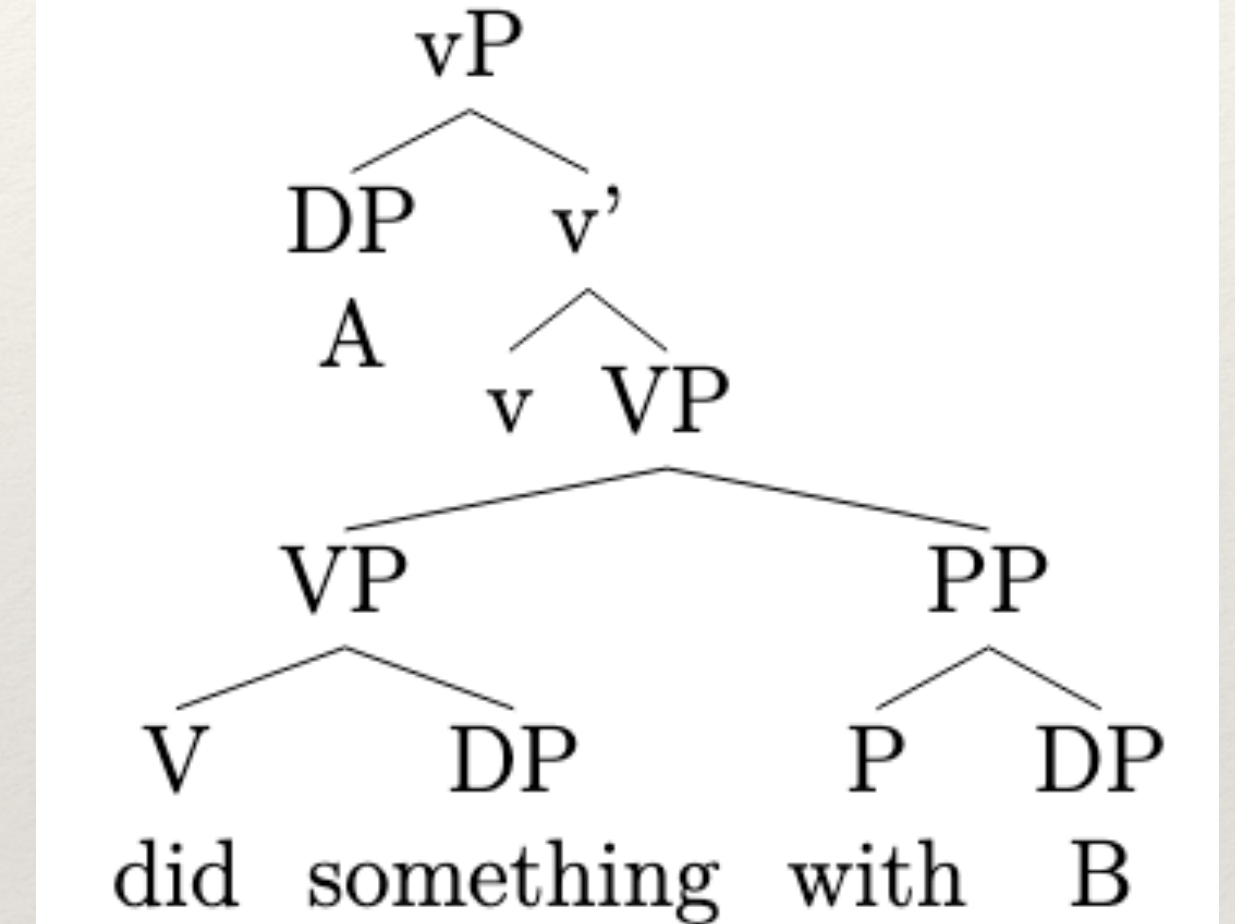
(a) DP conjunction



(b) DP adjunction

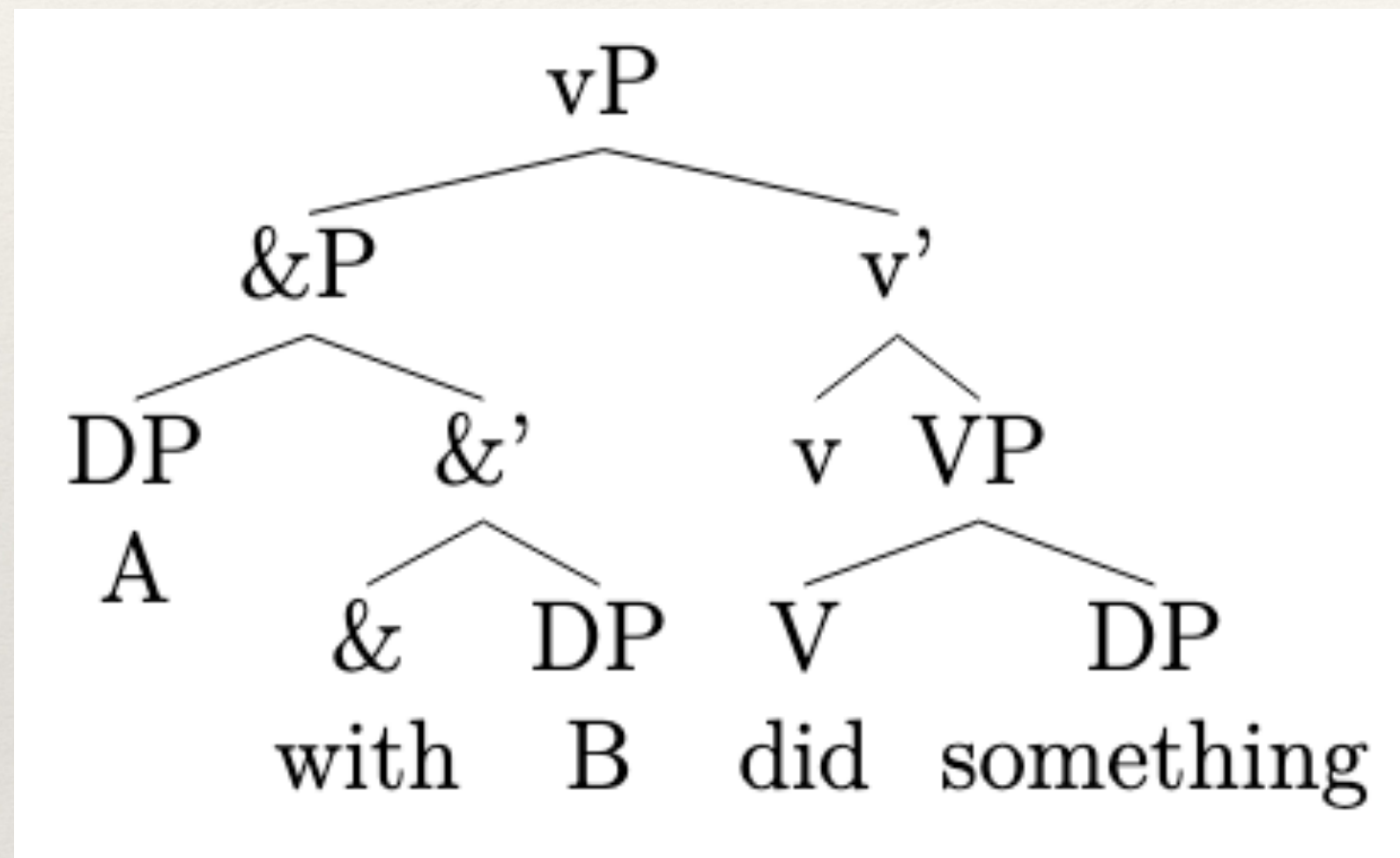


(c) VP adjunction

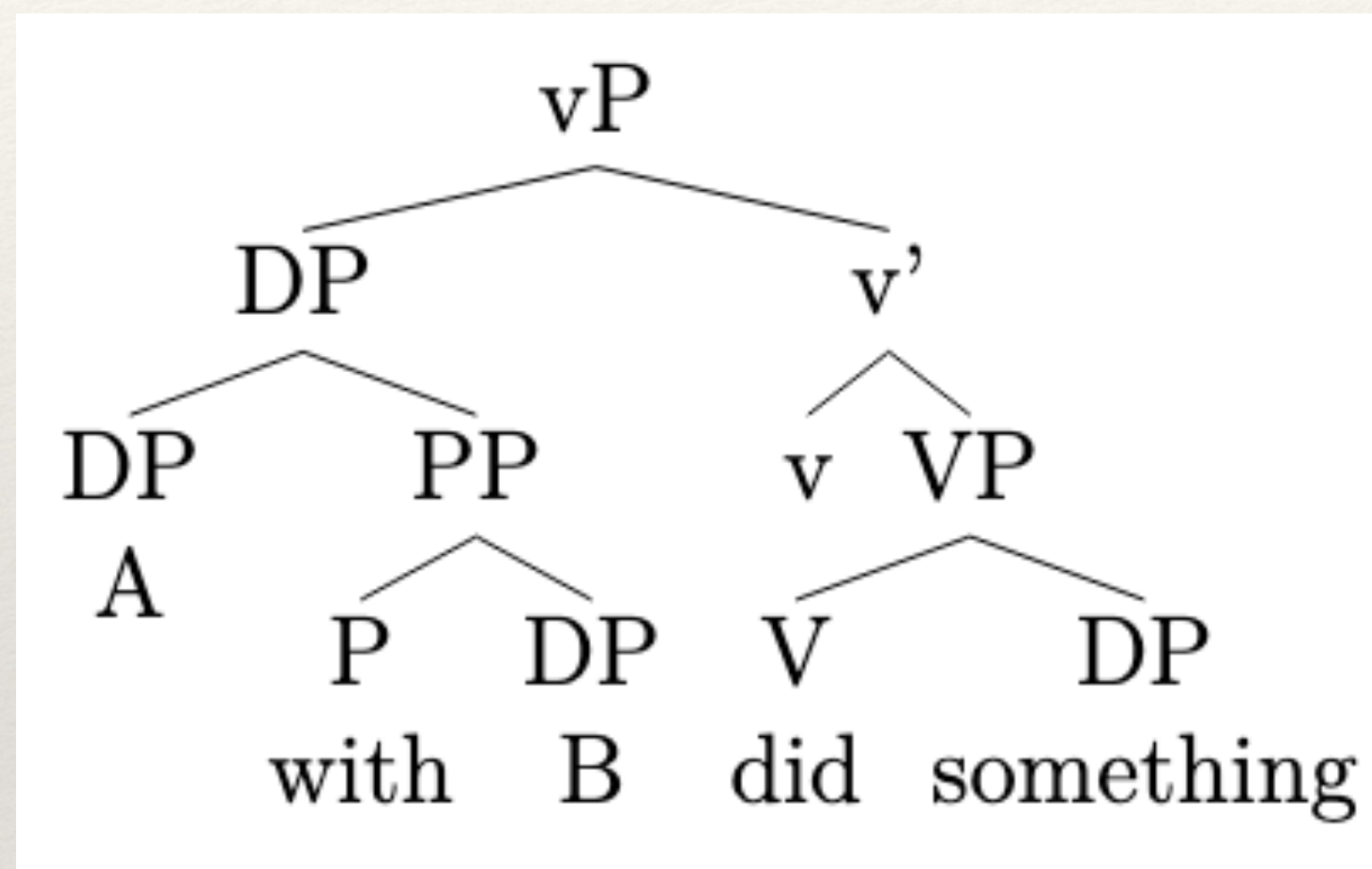


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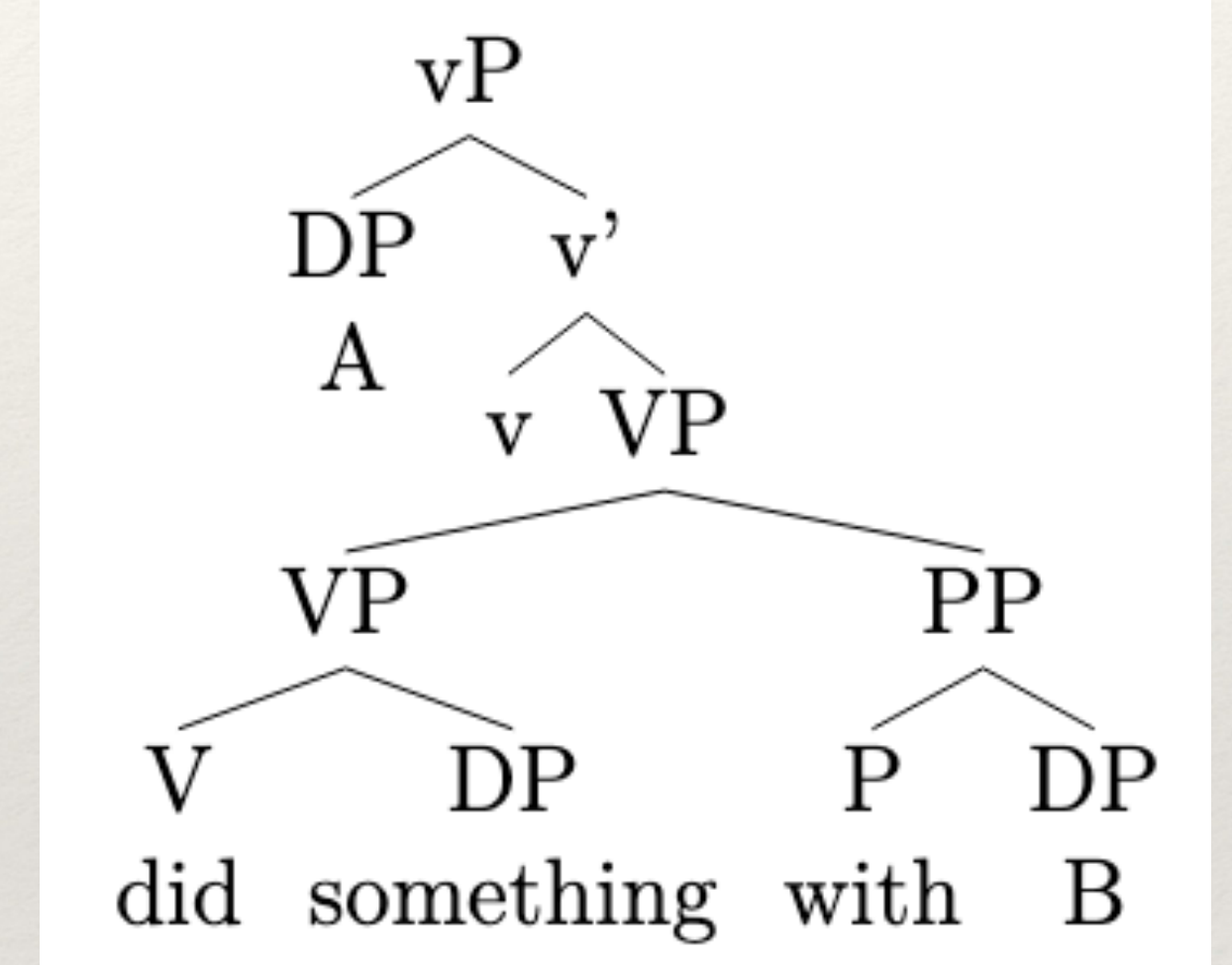
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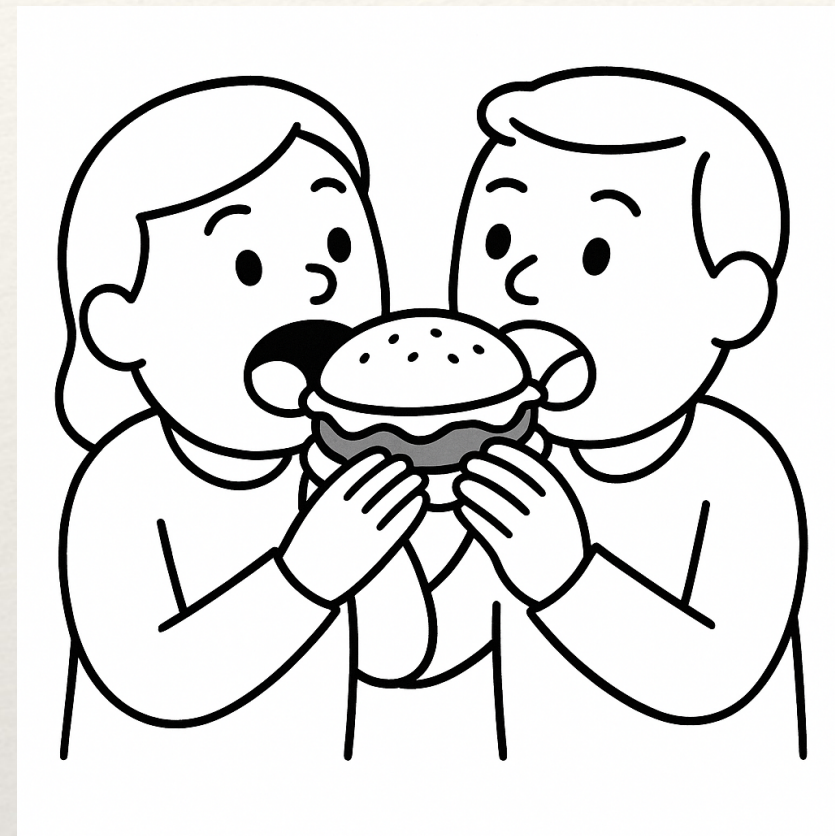


Proposal: all are needed!

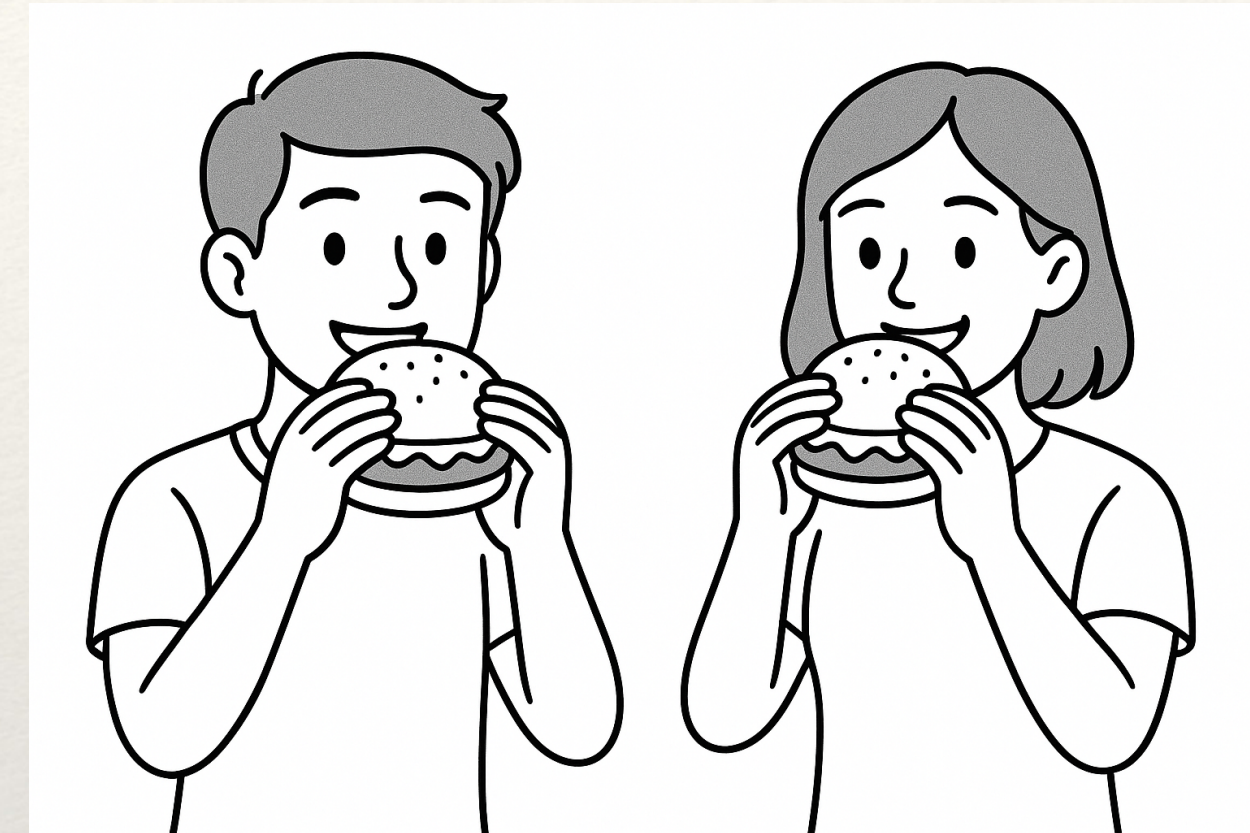
Proposal: Readings

■ symmetric
■ asymmetric

(a) Collective



(b) Proximate-distributive



(c) Accomplice



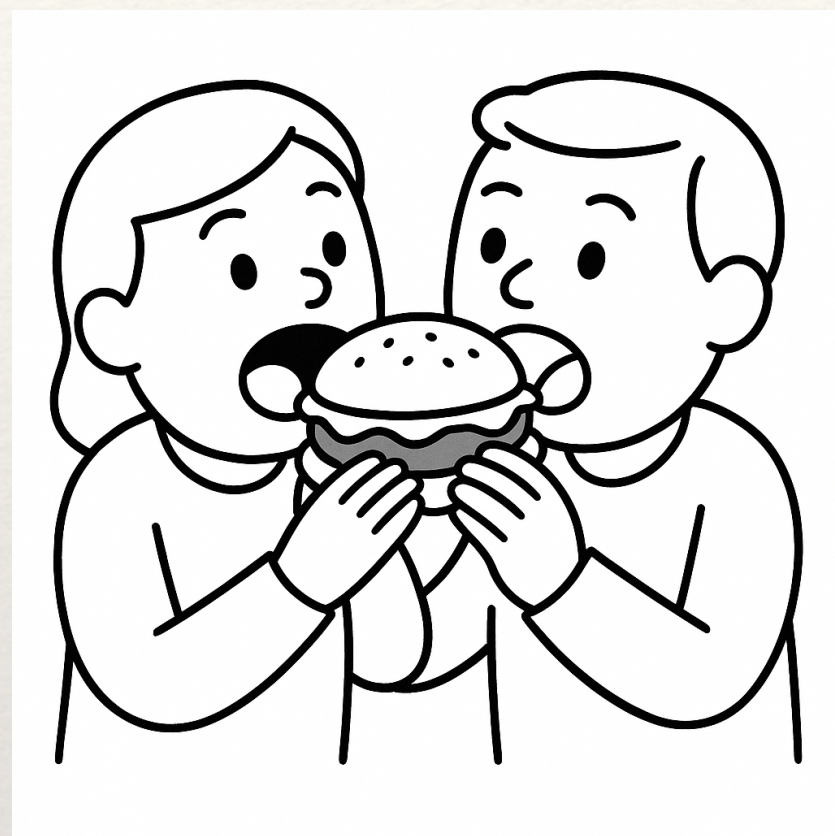
(d) Distal-distributive



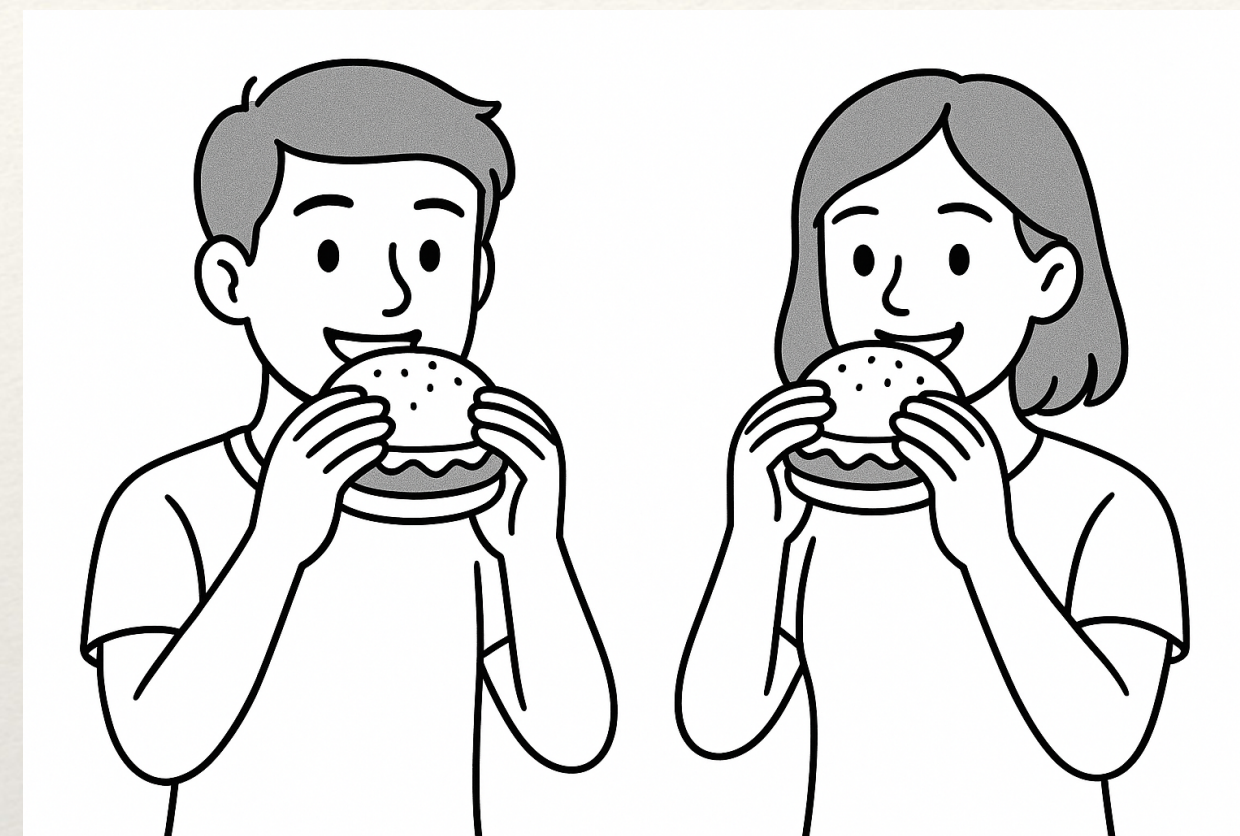
Comitative readings - “Alex ate a burger with Sam”

■ symmetric
■ asymmetric

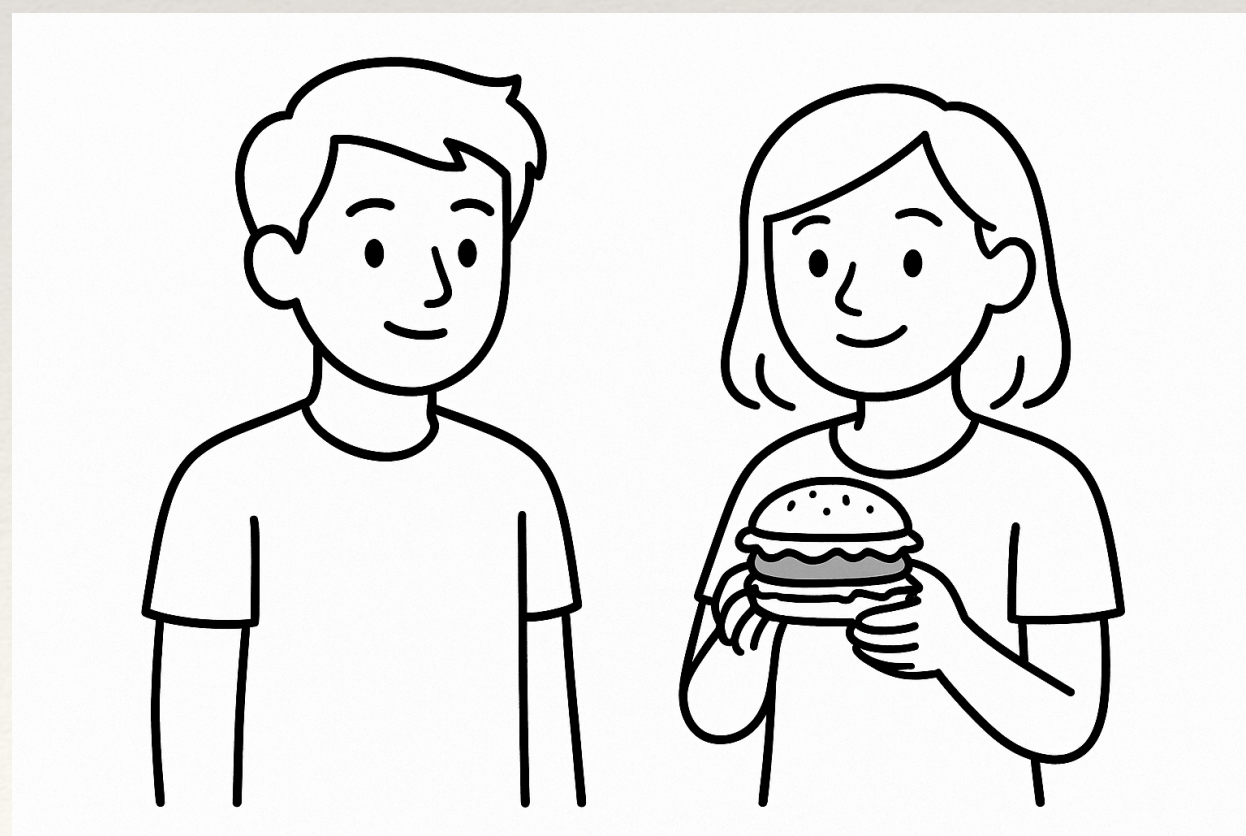
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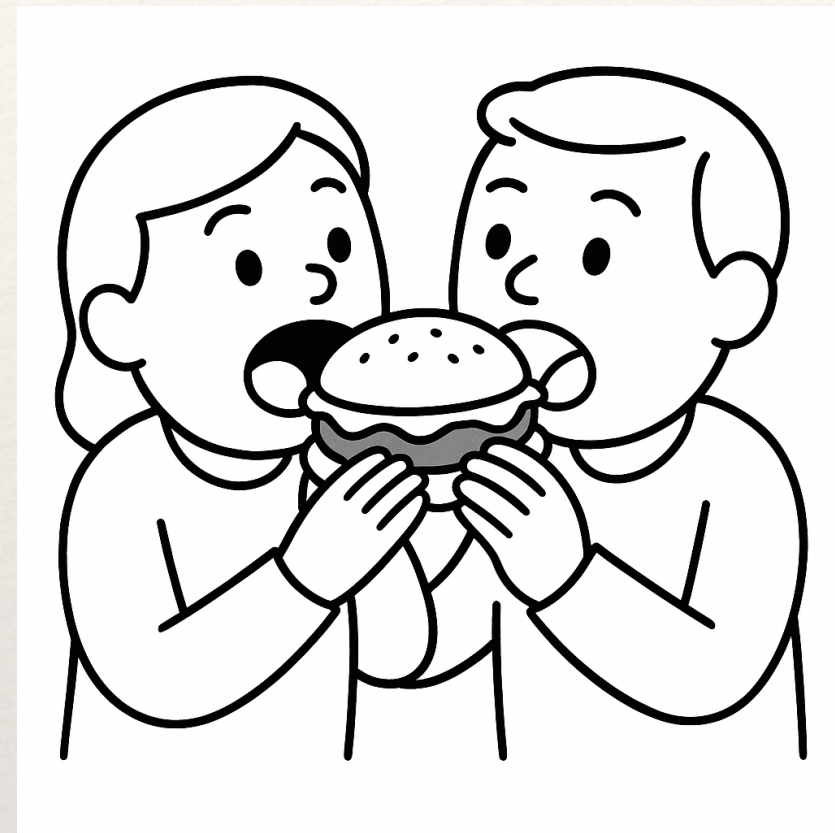
~~(d) Distal-distributive~~



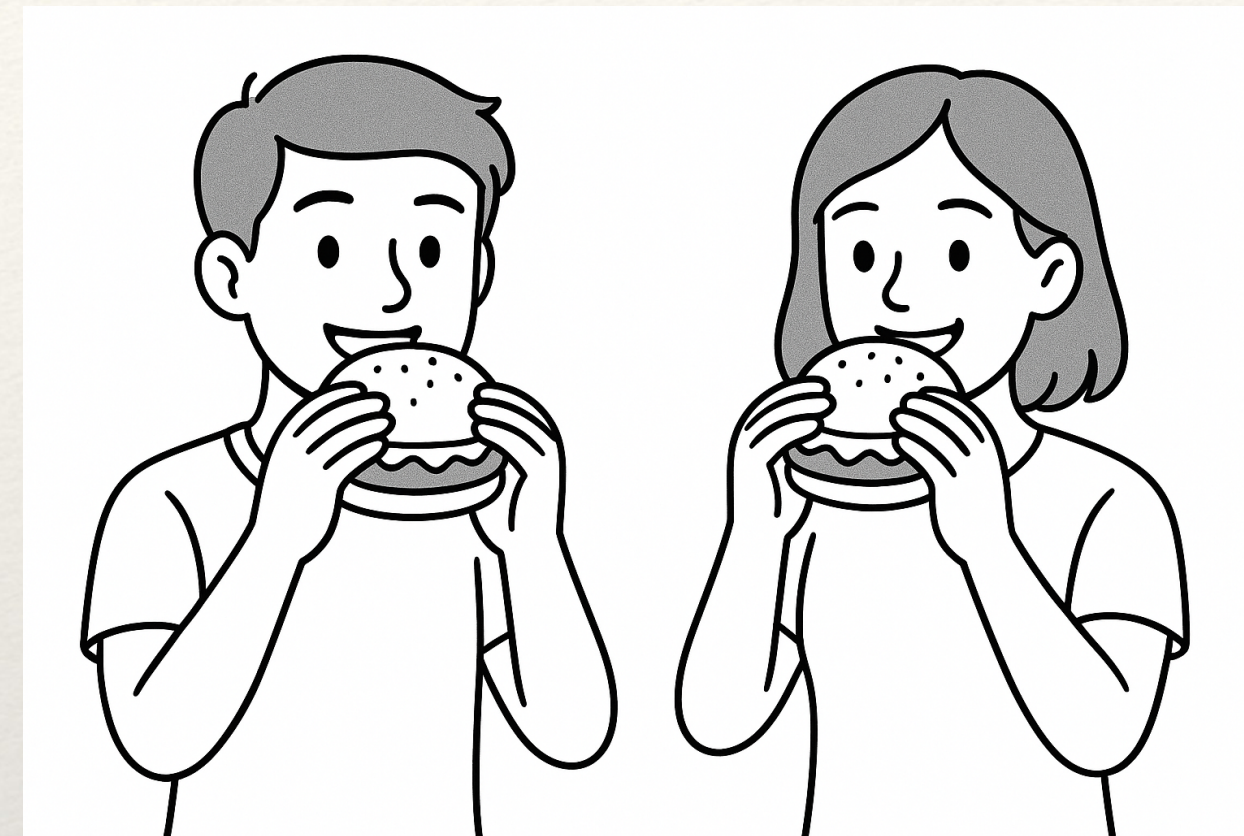
Conjunction readings - “Alex and Sam ate a burger”

■ symmetric
■ asymmetric

(a) Collective



(b) Proximate-distributive



~~(c) Accomplice~~



(d) Distal-distributive



The syntax of comitatives

English: VP adjuncts only

- (7) a. Alex ate a burger with Sam.
b. *Alex with Sam ate a burger.

Russian: DP conjunction and VP adjunction

(8) a. Maša s Dašej pišet / pišut statju.

Masha with Dasha.INST write.3SG / 3PL paper

‘Masha and Dasha are writing a paper.’

b. Maša pišet / *pišut statju s Dašej.

Masha write.3SG / 3PL paper with Dasha.INST

‘Masha is writing a paper with Dasha.’

(6a.PL) = DP conjunction

(6a.SG) + (6b) = VP adjunction

Russian – DP conjunction

Agreement:

(9) a. Maša **s** Dašej pišut statju.
Masha **with** Dasha.INST write.3PL paper.ACC
'Masha and Dasha are writing the paper.'

b. Maša **i** Daša pišut statju.
Masha **and** Dasha write.3PL paper.ACC

Against DP adjunction: adjuncts do not contribute to agreement.

Russian – DP conjunction

Discontinuity:

(10) a. *Maša pišut statju **s Dašej.**
Masha write.3PL paper.ACC with Dasha.INST
Int: 'Masha is writing the paper with Dasha.'

b. *Maša pišut statju **i Daša.**
Masha write.3PL paper.ACC and Dasha
Int: 'Masha and Dasha are writing the paper.'

Against DP adjunction: adjuncts can be discontinuous.

Russian – DP conjunction

Extraction:

- (11) S kem Maša napisala / ***napisali** statju?
with whom Masha wrote.3F.SG / 3PL paper.ACC
‘With whom did Masha write the paper?’

Russian – DP conjunction

Extraction:

- (11) S kem Maša napisala / ***napisali** statju?
 with whom Masha wrote.3F.SG / 3PL paper.ACC
 ‘With whom did Masha write the paper?’

Against DP adjunction: PPs in Russian can be extracted out of DPs.

- (12) [Na kakuju temu]**i** včera [doklad **ti**] vsex porazil?
 [on which topic]**i** yesterday [presentation.NOM **ti**] everyone.ACC shocked
 ‘A presentation on which topic shocked everyone yesterday?’

Russian – VP adjunction

Agreement:

- (8) b. Maša **pišet/*pišut** statju **s Dašej**.
Masha **write.3SG/3PL** paper with Dasha.INST
‘Masha is writing a paper with Dasha.’

An adjunctive comitative cannot contribute its phi-features to the agreement process.

Russian – VP adjunction

Discontinuity:

(13) a. Maša **s** **Dašej** **pišet.** statju.

Masha with Dasha.INST write.3SG paper

‘Masha and Dasha are writing a paper.’

b. Maša **pišet** statju **s** **Dašej.**

Masha **write.3SG** paper with Dasha.INST

‘Masha is writing a paper with Dasha.’

Russian – VP adjunction

Extraction:

- (11) S kem Maša **napisala** / *napisali statju?
with whom Masha **wrote.3F.SG** / 3PL paper.ACC
‘With whom did Masha write the paper?’

Novel data - Kazakh

The Kazakh morpheme *men* comes in two forms: as a suffix, it serves as both a comitative marker (14a), and an instrumental case marker, a common pattern cross-linguistically. When *men* is an independent word, it functions as a coordinator combining only nominals (14b), in contrast to the clausal ‘and’ *žæne* (15).

(14) a. *ajgøl men fatima samsa že-d₁*.

Aygul with Fatima Samsa eat-3PST

‘Aygul and Fatima ate Samsa.’

b. *ajgøl fatima-men samsa že-d₁*.

Aygul Fatima-with Samsa eat-3PST

‘Aygul ate Samsa with Fatima.’

(15) *fatima sənəp-qa žæne/*men ali keš-ke kel-d₁*.

Fatima class-LOC and/*with Ali party-LOC come-3PST

‘Fatima came to class and Ali to the party’



Kazakh: DP conjunction and adjunction

- (14) a. *ajgøl **men** **fatima** samsa že-d₁.* (DP conjunction)
Aygul with Fatima Samsa eat-3PST
'Aygul and Fatima ate Samsa.'
- b. *ajgøl **fatima-men** samsa že-d₁.* (DP adjunction)
Aygul Fatima-with Samsa eat-3PST
'Aygul ate Samsa with Fatima.'

Kazakh: DP adjunction

As previously mentioned, the coordinator *men* can only conjoin DPs. If so, (16) provides evidence for a DP-adjunction analysis. The fact that the two phrases in brackets can be conjoined by *men* indicates that they are DPs, and thus the suffixal *-men* comitative phrases inside them must be DP-internal. Since suffixal *-men* comitatives can be extracted, they are DP adjuncts and not conjuncts.

(16) [ajgøl **ralija-men**] **men** [fatima **aıžan-men**] tas-tə kōter-dı.

[Aygul Raliya-with] **with** [Fatima Aizhan-with] rock-ACC lift-3PST

‘Aygul lifted the Rock with Raliya, and Fatima lifted the rock with Aizhan.’

Kazakh: DP conjunction

A conjunction analysis suggests itself from the distribution and the agreement and ellipsis patterns of *men*. The coordinator *žæne* ‘and’ can occur wherever *men* occurs, both trigger plural agreement when combining DPs (17a), both are iterative (17b) and license ellipsis (17c).

- (17) a. *sen men/žæne ali bile-d₁-ŋ-der.*
you.SG with/and Ali dance-PST-2-PL
‘You and Ali danced.’
- b. *ajgøl (men/žæne) fatima men/žæne aižan bile-d₁.*
Aygul (with/and) Fatima with/and Aizhan dance-3PST
‘Aygul (and) Fatima and Aizhan danced.’
- c. *[ɣj sat-u] men/žæne [ɣj sat-əp aɭ-u].*
[house sell-INF] with/and [~~house~~ sell-CNV take-INF]
‘House selling and buying’

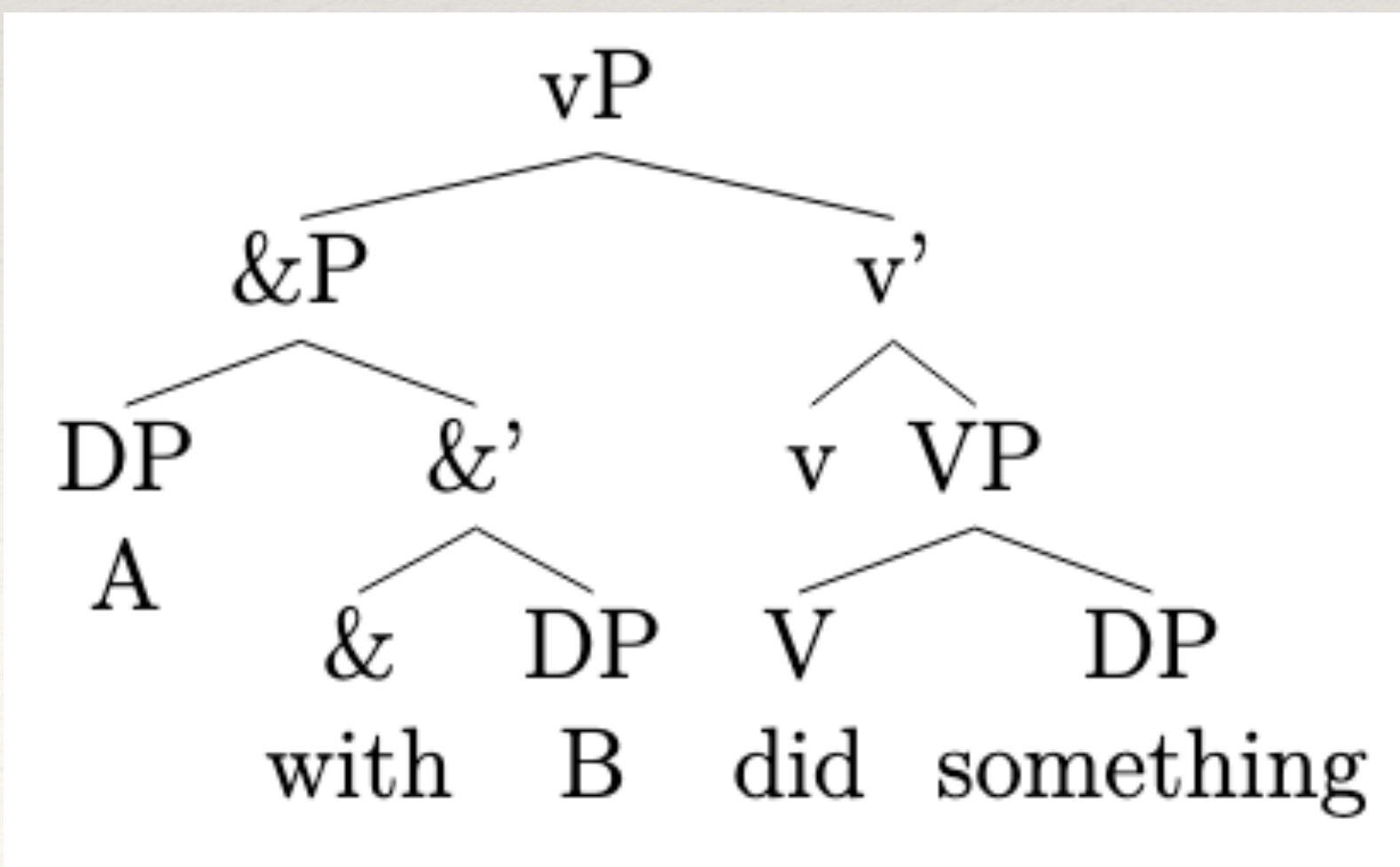
Structures summarized

English: VP-adjuncts only (Alex ate a burger **with Sam**)

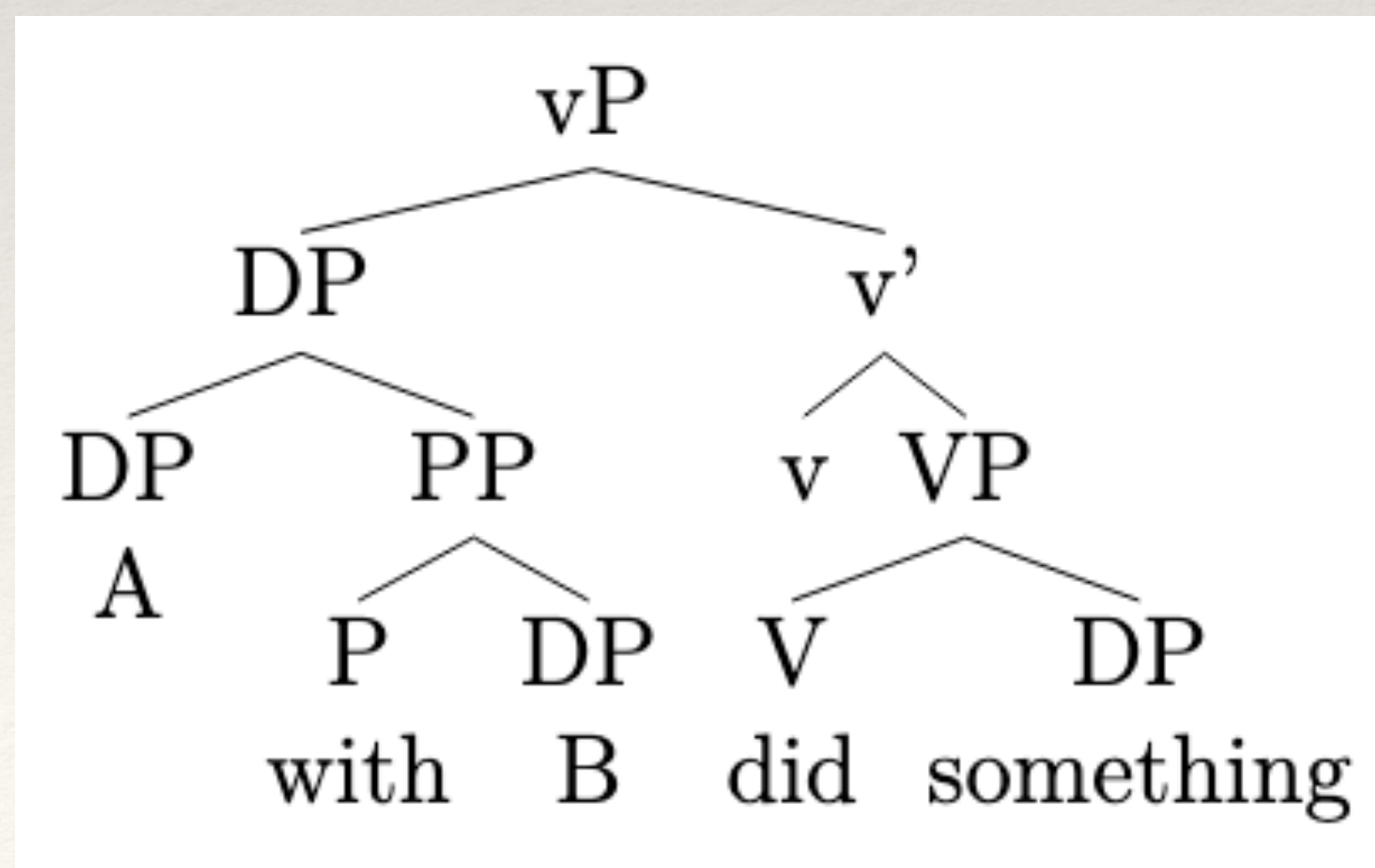
Russian: DP-conjuncts and VP-adjuncts (Maša **s Dašej...**, Maša... **s Dašej**)

Kazakh: DP-conjuncts and DP-adjuncts (Aygul **men Fatima**, Aygul **Fatima-men**)

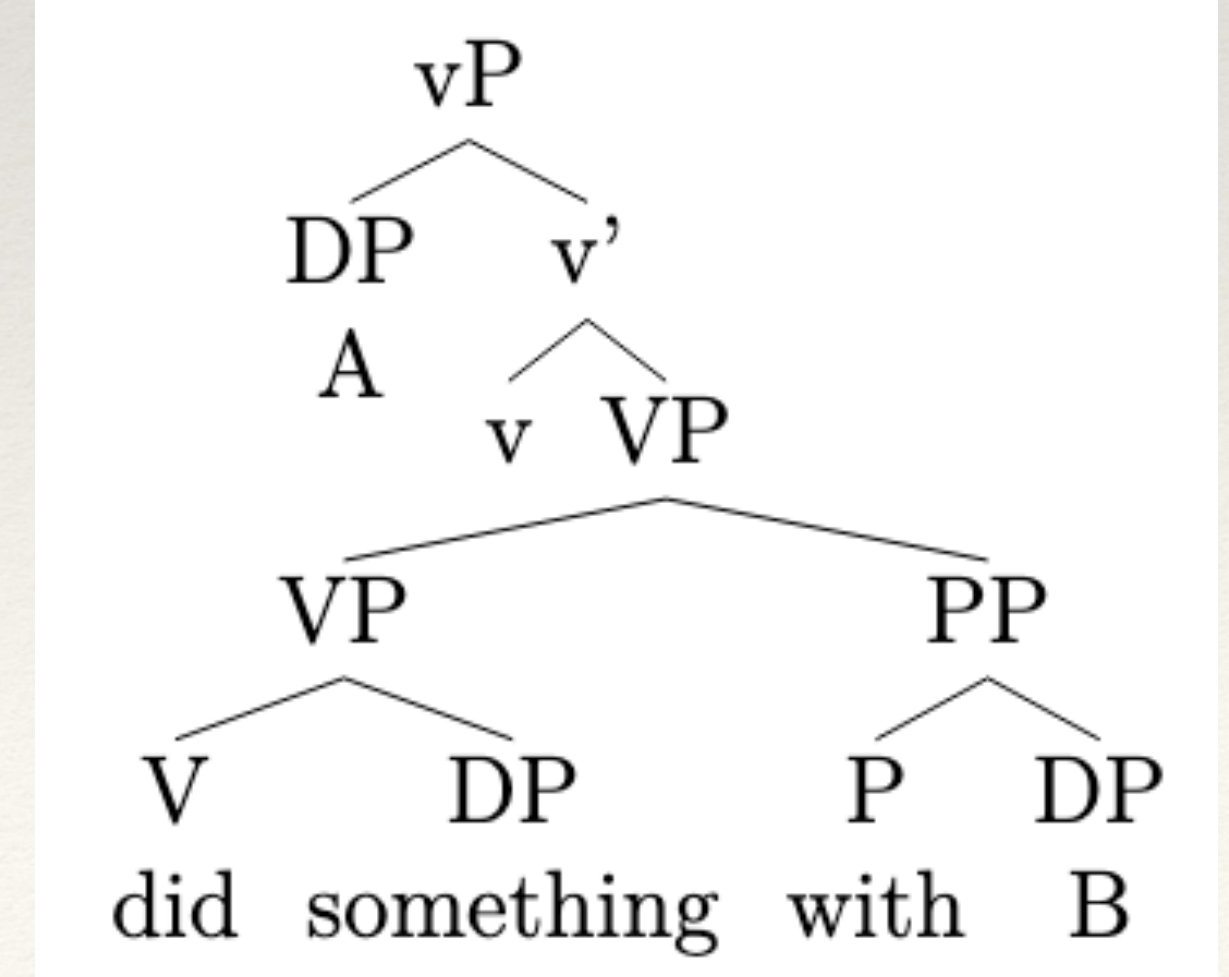
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(b) DP adjunction



(c) VP adjunction



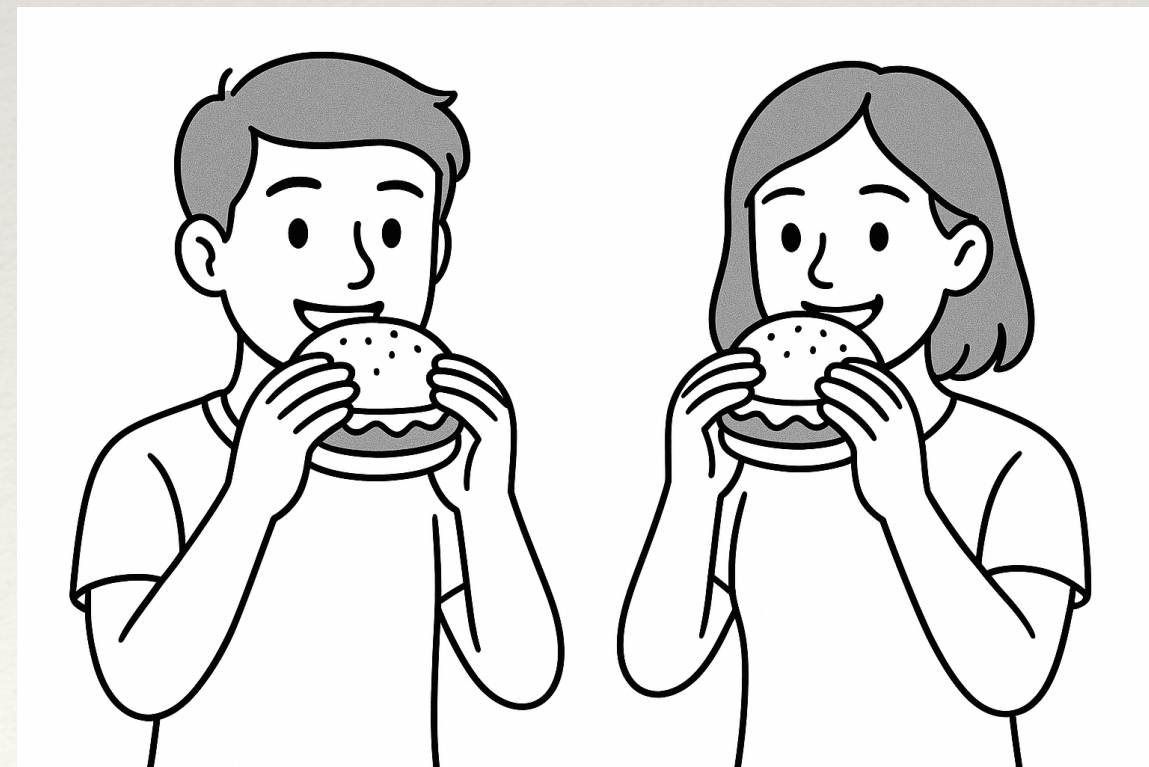
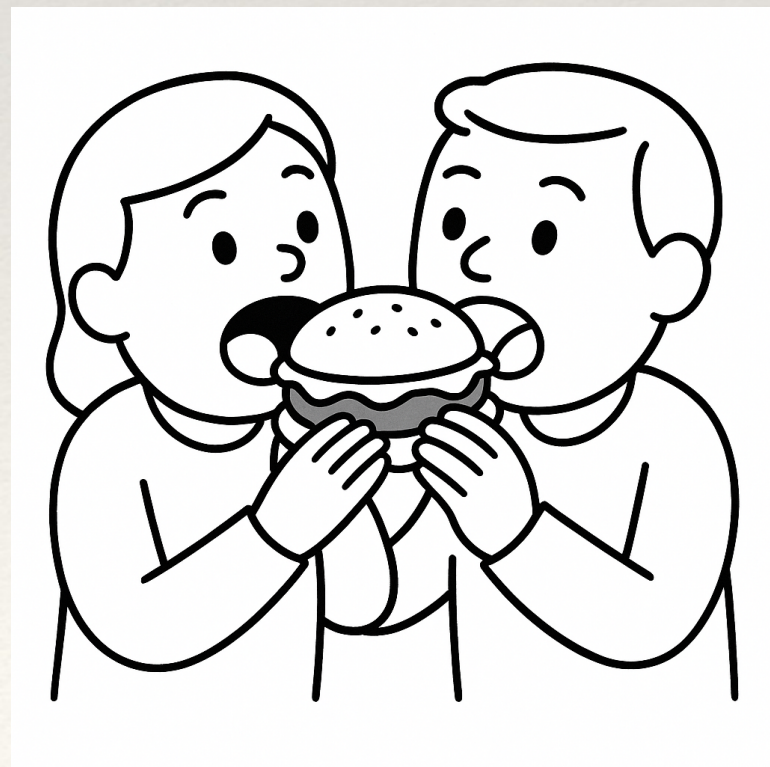
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(a) Collective (b) Proximate-distributive (c) Accomplice ~~(d) Distal-distributive~~



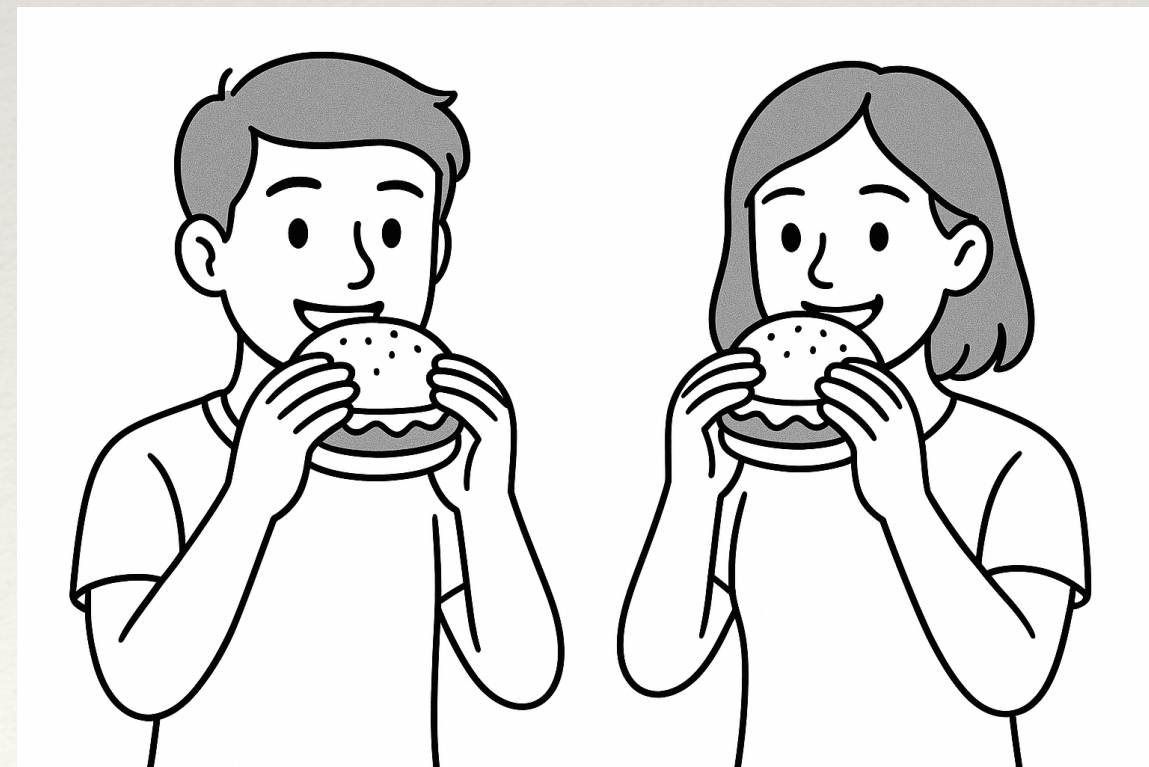
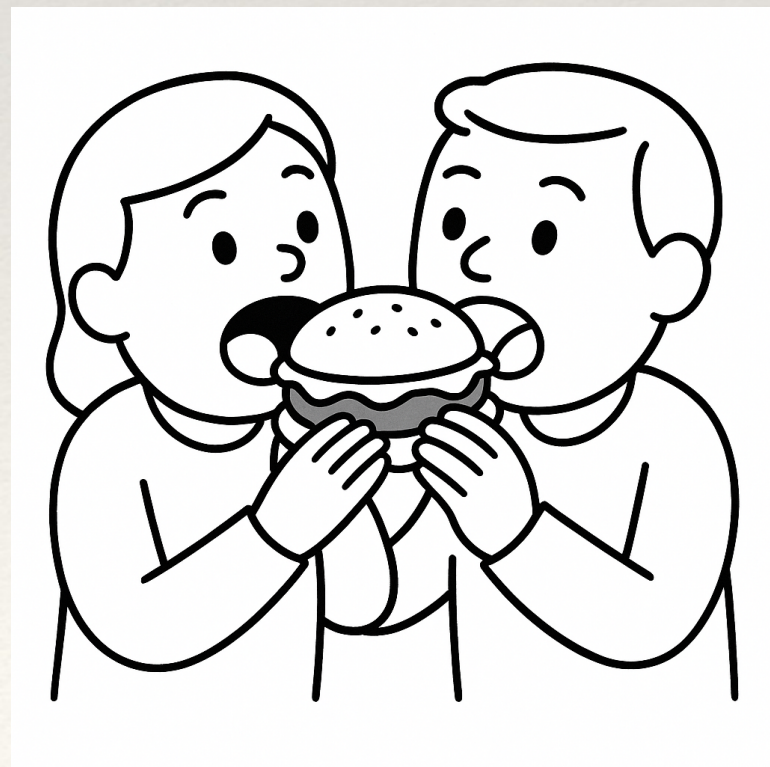
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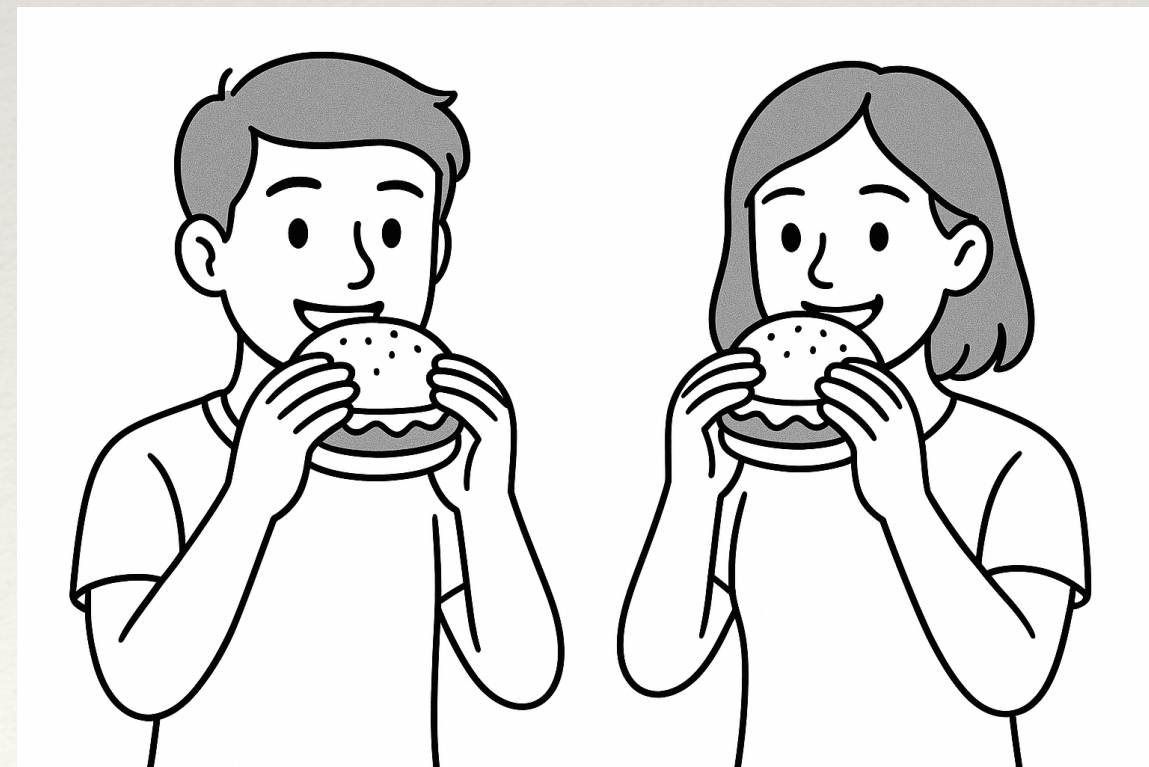
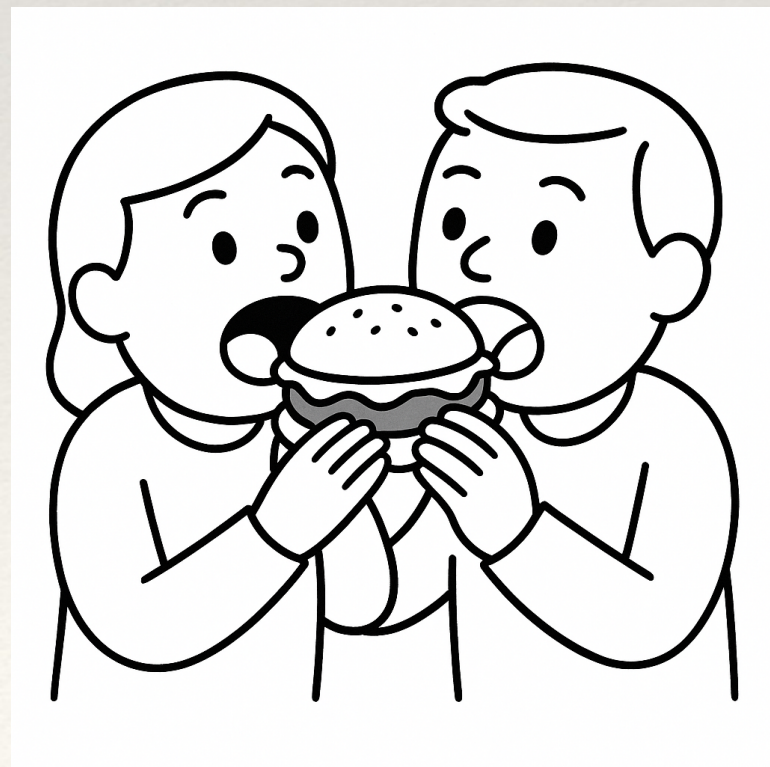
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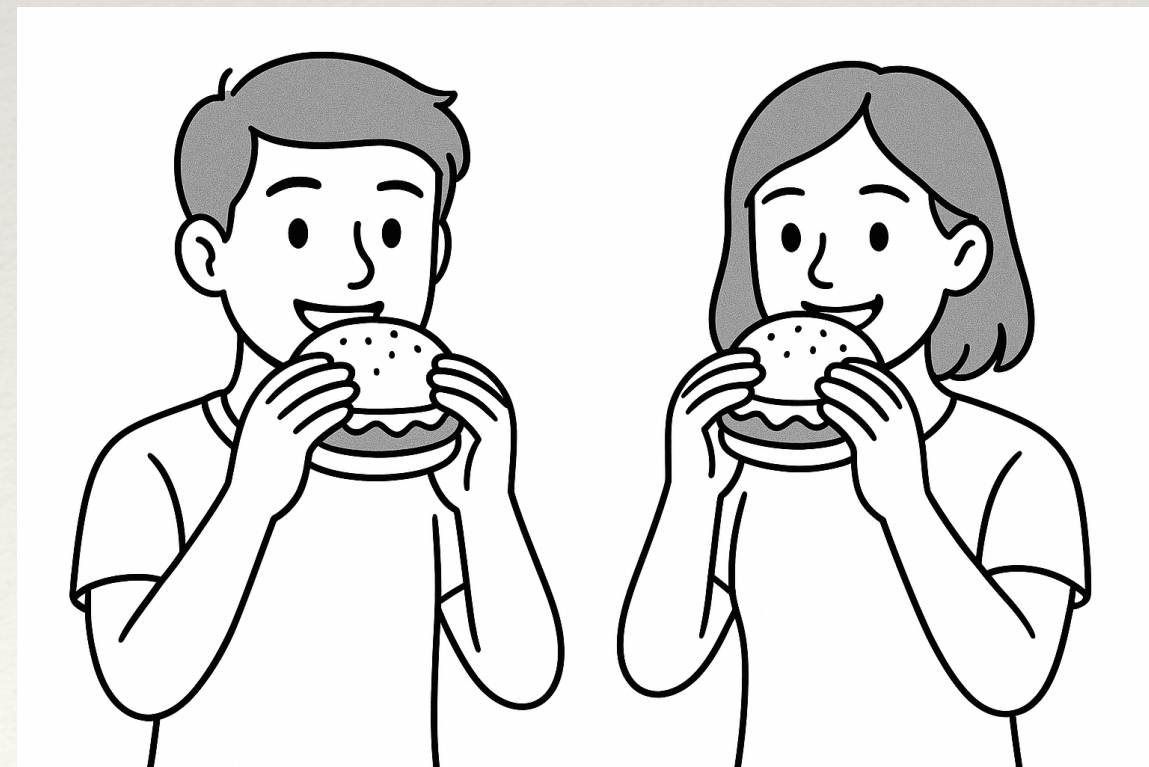
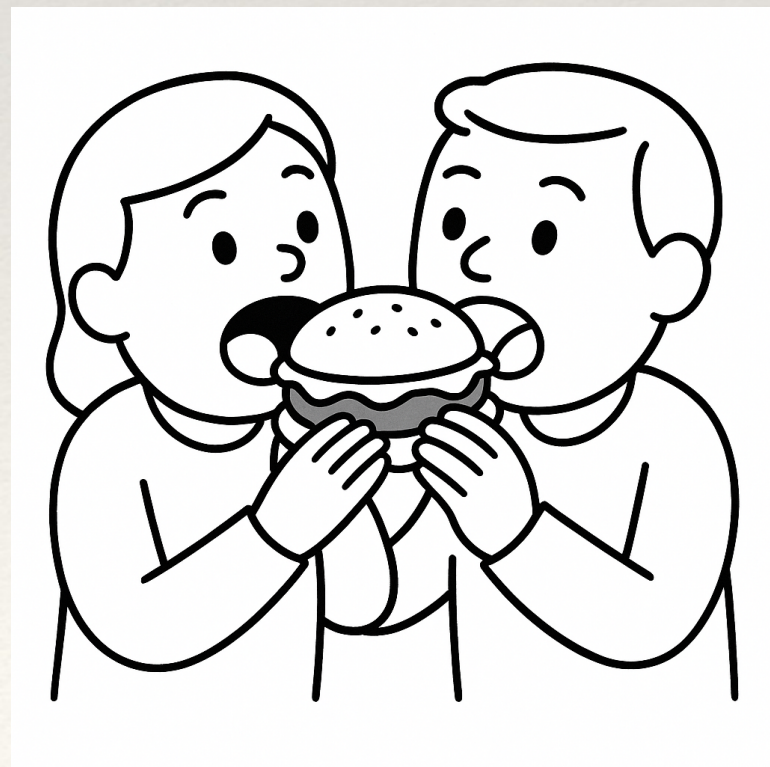
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Structures & Readings summary

	English	Russian	Kazakh
Structure	VP-adjunct	VP-adjunct	DP-adjunct DP-conjunct
Reading	Collective Proximate-distributive Accomplice	Accomplice	Collective Proximate-distributive
Structure		DP-conjunct	
Reading		Collective Distal-distributive	

Structures & Readings summary

	VP comitatives	DP comitatives
Symmetric readings (collective, distributive)	V	V
Asymmetric readings (accomplice)	V	X

Challenges: Uniform semantics

- DP comitatives and VP comitatives cannot have the same semantics.
- Only VP comitatives allow accomplice readings.
- Accomplice readings are asymmetric, all other readings are symmetric.
DP comitatives are syntactically symmetric, VP comitatives are asymmetric.
English comitatives have both symmetric and asymmetric readings, but only VP syntax.
- Russian DP conjuncts allow a distal-distributive reading, yet Kazakh DP conjuncts do not.

Previous semantic accounts: Kasyanenko (2017)

Comitatives form a plurality whose individuals are required to be related (groupable in some intuitive way).

$$\llbracket \text{Maša s Dašej} \rrbracket = \lambda X. X = m \oplus d \wedge R_1(m)(d) \wedge R_2(d)(m)$$

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$$\llbracket \text{Maša s Dašej} \rrbracket = \lambda X. X = m \oplus d \wedge R_1(m)(d) \wedge R_2(d)(m)$$

Issue:

- Only compatible with DP comitatives. Specifically, only with DP conjuncts, as in DP adjuncts (Kazakh) the individuals are not required to be related.

Previous semantic accounts: Schein (1999)

‘With’ introduces an accomplice whose participation is essential to the agent’s completion of the action.

$$\exists e \exists e' \exists e'' (\text{Agent}(e, m) \ \& \ \text{With}(e, e', d) \ \& \ \text{Cause}(e', e'') \ \& \ \text{write}(e'') \ \& \ \text{Patient}(e'', p))$$

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Issues:

- Unclear what ‘with’ does.
- The comitative’s participation is entailed, an undesirable result for sentences like “*Alex melted the chocolate with Sam*”, as Sam could have contributed nothing to the chocolate melting.
- The comitative is not given an agent role, so symmetric readings cannot be captured by this semantics (only compatible with accomplice VP comitatives).

Proposal: semantic analysis

DP comitatives: $\llbracket \text{with Sam} \rrbracket = \lambda x \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle v, t \rangle \rangle} \lambda e. P(x \oplus s)(e)$

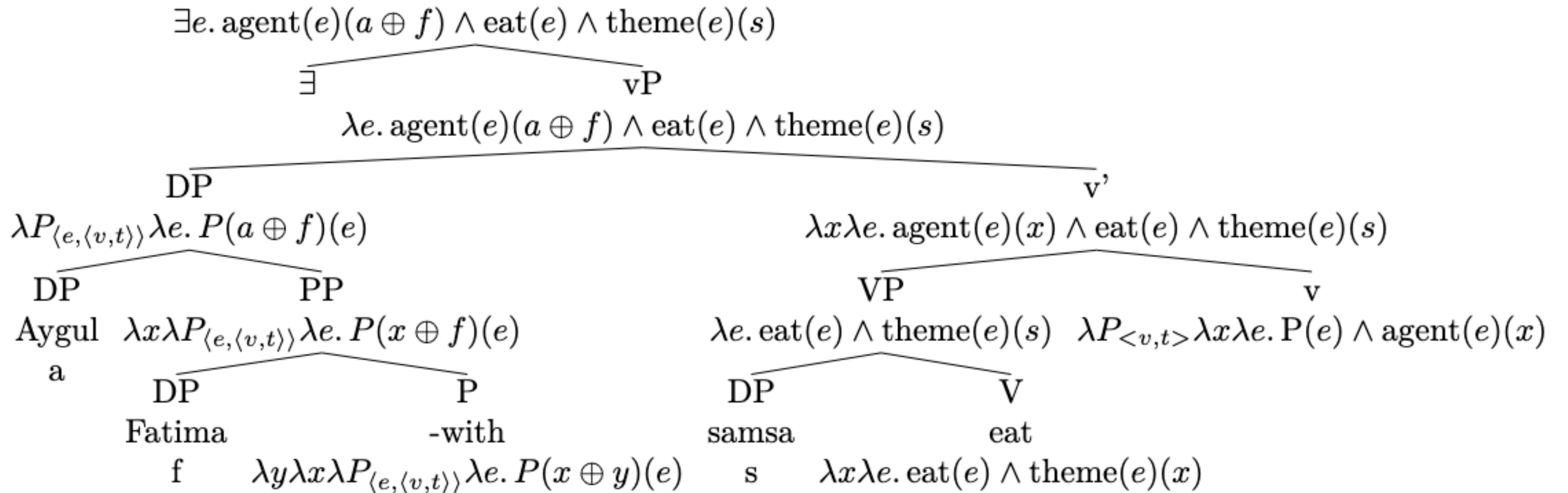
VP comitatives: **asymmetric**: a. $\llbracket \text{with Sam} \rrbracket = \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle v, t \rangle \rangle} \lambda x. \lambda e. P(x)(e) \wedge \text{With}(e)(x)(s)$

symmetric: b. $\llbracket \text{with Sam} \rrbracket = \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle v, t \rangle \rangle} \lambda x. \lambda e. P(x \oplus s)(e)$

$\text{With}(e)(x)(y) = y$ is present at the location and time as individual x during the runtime of event e

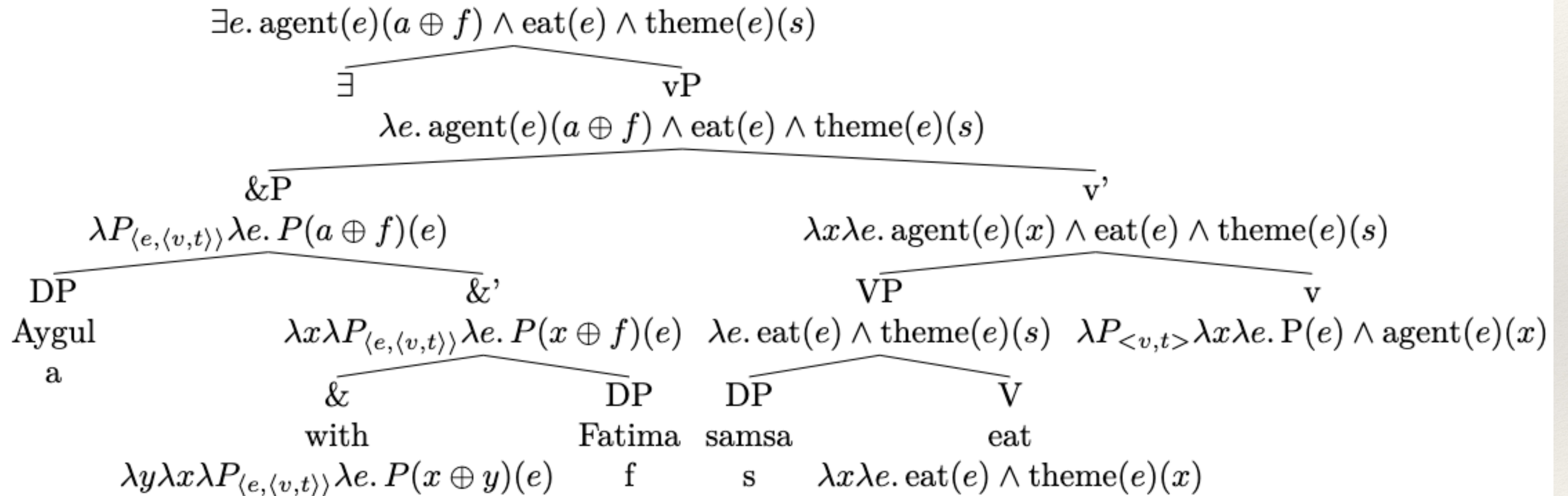
DP adjuncts (Kazakh)

DP comitatives: $\llbracket \text{with Fatima} \rrbracket = \lambda x \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle v, t \rangle \rangle} \lambda e. P(x \oplus f)(e)$



DP conjuncts (Kazakh)

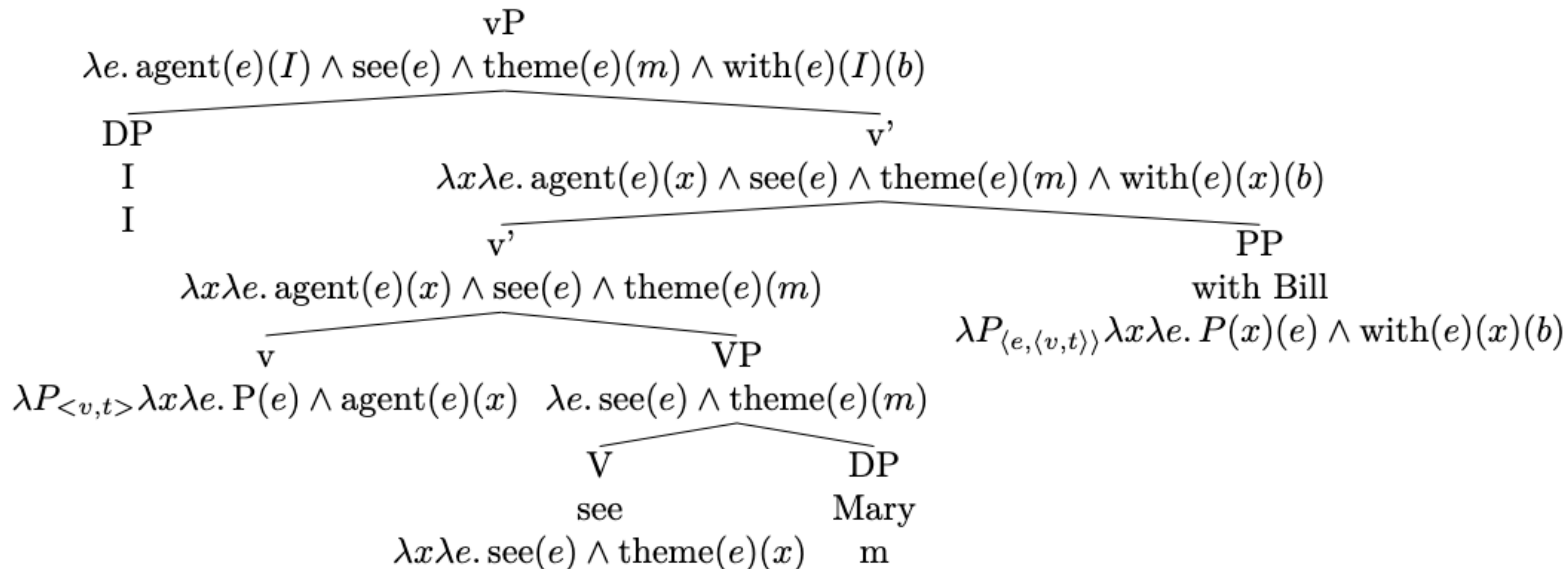
DP comitatives: $\llbracket \text{with Fatima} \rrbracket = \lambda x \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle v, t \rangle \rangle} \lambda e. P(x \oplus f)(e)$



Accomplice VP adjuncts

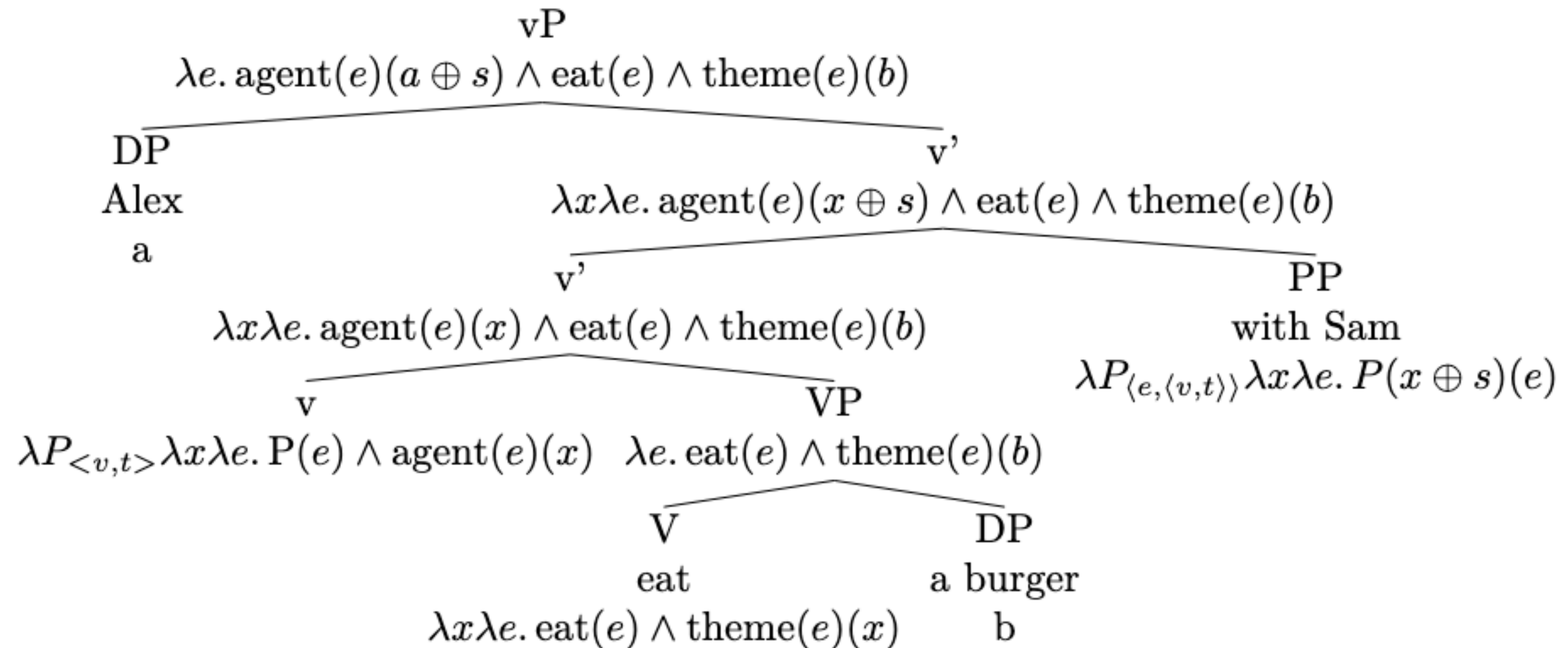
VP comitatives: **asymmetric**: a. $\llbracket \text{with Sam} \rrbracket = \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle v, t \rangle \rangle} \lambda x. \lambda e. P(x)(e) \wedge \text{With}(e)(x)(s)$

$\text{With}(e)(x)(y) = y$ is present at the location and time as individual x during the runtime of event e



Symmetric VP adjuncts

VP comitatives: **symmetric**: b. $\llbracket \text{with Sam} \rrbracket = \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle v, t \rangle \rangle} \lambda x. \lambda e. P(x \oplus s)(e)$



Theme- vs. Agent-related VP adjuncts

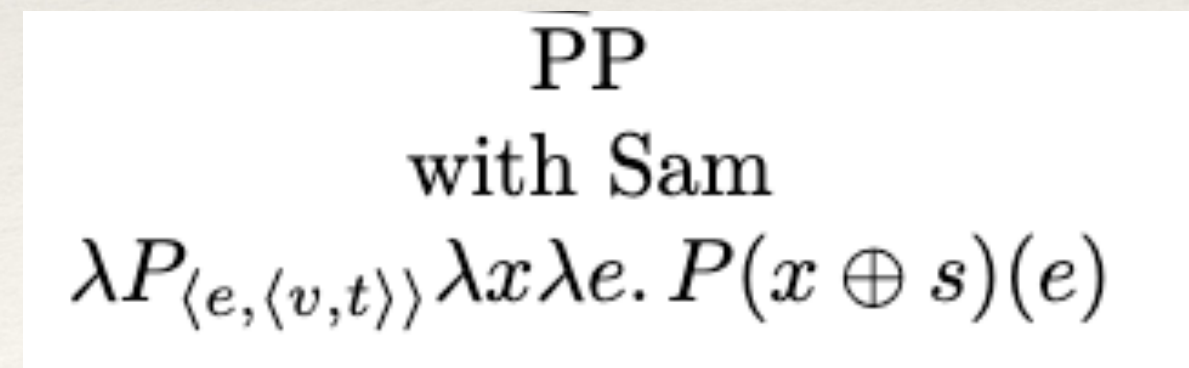
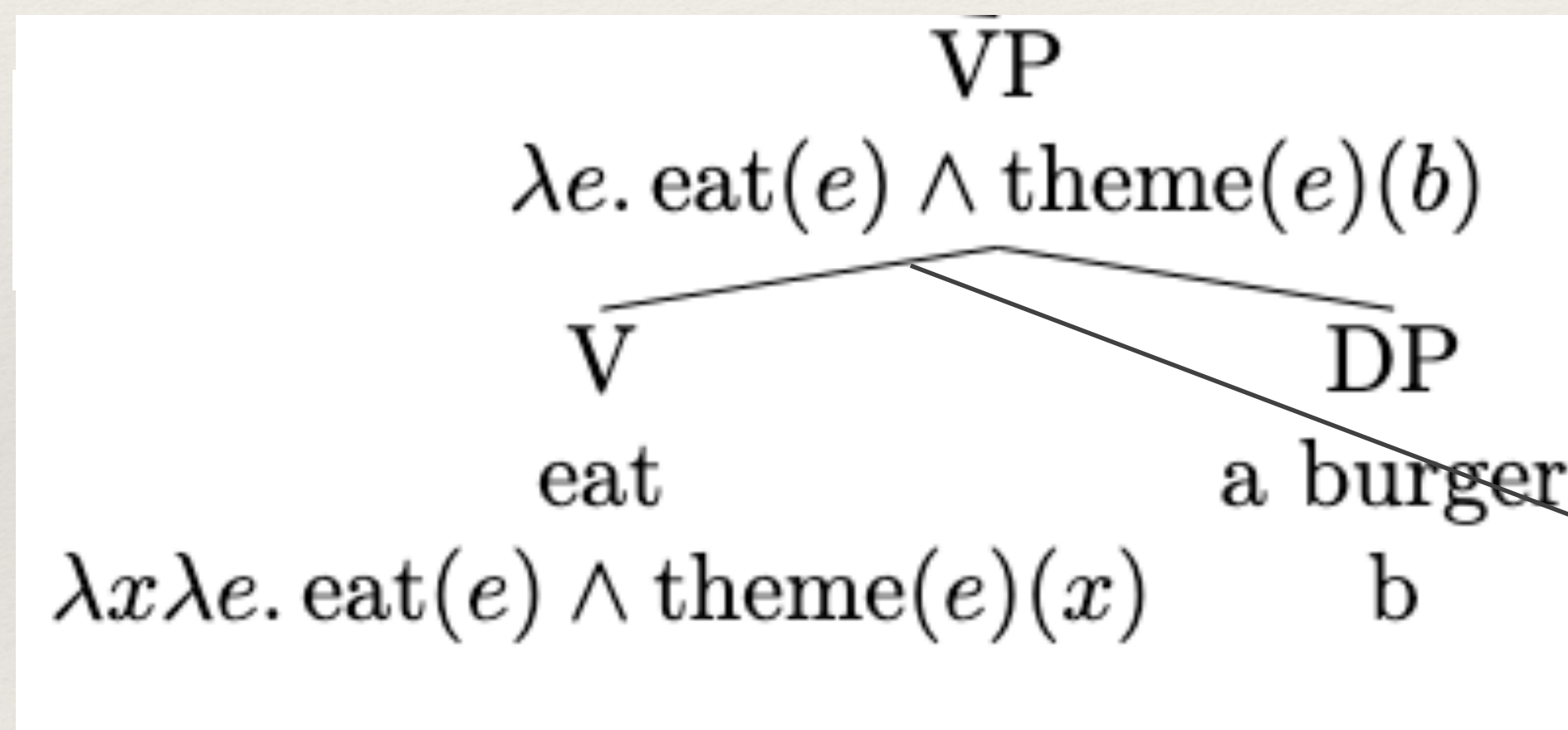
- (18) a. Theme: I saw [Mary with Bill]
 b. Agent: I saw Mary [with Bill]
- (19) a. Theme: I killed [Mary with Bill]
 b. Agent: I killed Mary [with Bill]

Theme- vs. Agent-related VP adjuncts

- (18) a. Theme: I saw [Mary with Bill] (Bill can**NOT** be an accomplice)
 b. Agent: I saw Mary [with Bill] (Bill can be an accomplice)
- (19) a. Theme: I killed [Mary [BE with Bill]] (Bill can**NOT** be an accomplice)
 b. Agent: I killed Mary [with Bill] (Bill can be an accomplice)

Theme-related VP adjuncts - problem

The comitative must be introduced before the theme individual but after the theme argument is presented into the structure.



Summary

- Data from Kazakh, English and Russian suggests that comitatives may be DP-conjuncts, DP-adjuncts and VP-adjuncts.
- Comitatives may have collective and proximate-distributive readings, with only conjuncts allowing distal-distributivity and VP-adjuncts allowing accomplicity.
- Comitatives have two functions:
 - (1) Forming a plural individual (symmetric).
 - (2) Adding an accomplice to an event (asymmetric).
- Challenges to a uniform semantics arise from type mismatches between DP and VP comitatives, and from their different functions.

Open questions

- Why do Russian DP conjuncts allow a distal-distributive reading, yet Kazakh DP conjuncts do not?
- If symmetric readings are available for VP comitatives, why aren't asymmetric readings available for DP comitatives?
- How are agent- vs. theme-related comitatives derived?
- Why can't theme-related comitatives be accomplices?

Thank you!

References

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