

PROGRESS REPORT NO. 3

from the office of:

D. T. LANGENDOEN

P. S. ROSENBAUM

IBM Research Center

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1. Some Complex complement constructions

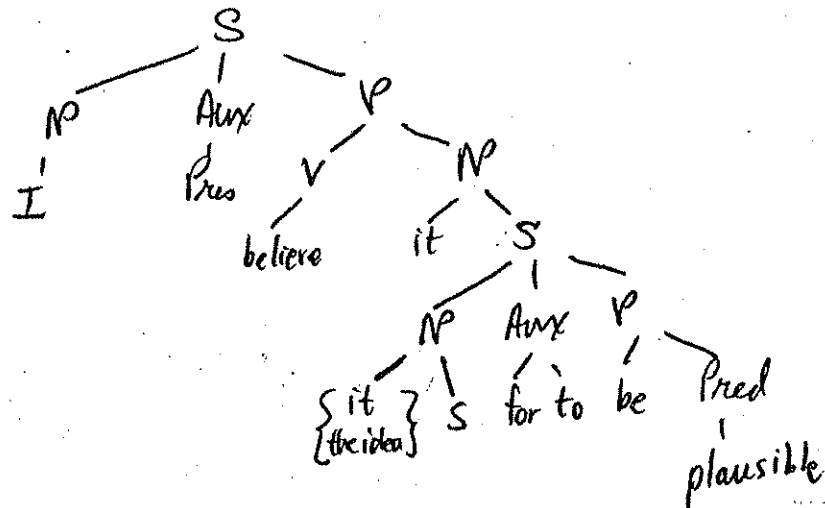
Consider the following sentences (1);(2), their base form

(3), and their derivation (4).

(1) I believe it to be plausible that S

(2) I believe the idea that S to be plausible

(3)



- (4) I believe [it[NP[it[that S] S to be plausible]] NP S NP **BASE**
- I believe [it[for [it that S] NP to be plausible]] S NP **T**
for separation
- I believe [it[for [it] NP to be plausible [that S]]] S NP **T**
comp sep
- I believe [[for it to be plausible [that S]]] S S NP **T**
it deletion
- I believe [[it to be plausible [that S]]] S S NP **T**
for deletion

At first blush it would appear that sentences like (5), having the base form (6), are to be analyzed in the same fashion as the above.

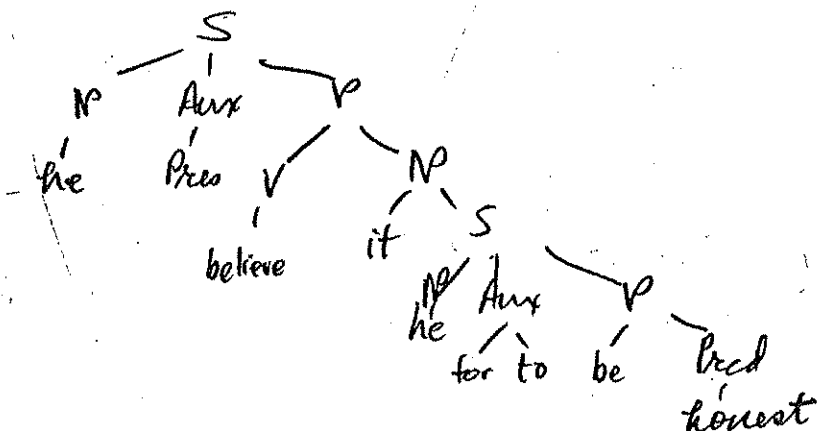
(5) I believe him to be honest

(6) I believe [it [him for to be honest]] BASE
S NP

The problem with this analysis is that it does not permit reflexivization, as in (7), since "he" and "himself" do not co-occur in the same including sentence, i.e., in the same phrase marker (8).

(7) He believes himself to be honest

(8)

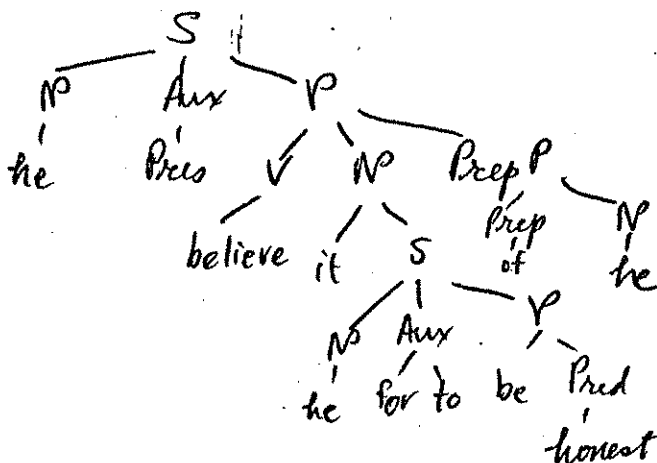


Since it is necessary to characterize sentences like (9), a possible solution is to analyze (7) as a case of (10) having (11) as an underlying form.

(9) I believe it of John that he will always fail examinations

(10) He believes [it[for he to be honest]] [of he]
S NP PP

(11)



Note that [of he]_{PP} is subject to reflexivization. The derivation of this sentence requires that the transformations used in deriving complement constructions be modified slightly. Consider these alterations in the light of the following derivation.

(12) he believes [it [for he to be honest]] [of he]_{PP} BASE

he believes [it]_{NP} [of he]_{PP} [for he to be honest]_S T S separation

he believes [of he]_{PP} [for he to be honest]_S T it deletion

It will be observed that the last operation above assumes that the environment for "it" deletion must be stated not as in PR No. 1, page 4, but rather as follows:

Y	it	(PP)	Z	S	Z	
1	2	3	4	5		⇒
1	∅	3	4	5		

Such a modification is not undesirable since it is required independently to account for (13) as a variant of (14).

(13) I expect of John that he will come early

(14) I expect it of John that he will come early

(12 continued)

he believes [of he] [he to be honest] T
PP S for deletion

Similarly, it is necessary to modify the environment of the "for" deletion transformation as follows:

Y	V	(PP)	[for	Z]	
1	2	3	4	5	S ⇒
1	2	3	∅	5	

Once again such a modification is independently motivated in adjectival complement constructions such as (15) where "for" deletion is also often obligatory in this environment.

(15) it was wise of John to come

(16) it was wise of John (for him) to come

(12 continued)

he believes [of he] [to be honest] Equivalence deletion
PP S Cf. PR No. 2

he believes [of himself] [to be honest] Reflexivization
PP S

he believes [himself] [to be honest] T
PP S of deletion

This analysis seems to provide a syntactic motivation for making the selection of "for to" and "that," the complementizing morphemes, dependent upon the feature representation of the pronominal "it." Note that the deletion of "of" is correlated with an infinitival complement. Thus sentences (17) and (18)

are correct while (19) and (20) are not.

(17) I expect of him that he will be here on time

(18) I expect him to be here on time

(19)*I expect of him to be here on time

(20)*I expect him that he will be here on time

A preposition deletion transformation sensitive to the complementizing morphemes in the contiguous complement is not out of the question, but it is necessarily more complex than a deletion transformation sensitive to the features of the pronominal "it." Thus we might compose the "of" deletion transformation as follows:

(21) X [it [-factive] [of NP] S] T of deletion
 1 2 3 4
 1 2 ∅ 4

It is now possible to make T dependent upon the output of T of deletion as follows?
 it deletion

(22) X it ((NP)) S T it deletion
 1 2 3 4 5 ⇒
 1 2 ∅ 4 5

Using these transformations reconsider the derivation of of (7).

(23) he believes [it [for he to be honest]] [of he] BASE
 S NP PP

he believes [it] [of he] [for he to be honest]
 NP PP S

he believes [it] [of he] [he to be honest] T
NP PP S for deletion

he believes [it] [of he] [to be honest] S
NP PP Equivalence deletion

he believes [it] [he] [to be honest] T
NP PP S of deletion

he believes [he] [to be honest] T
PP S it deletion

he believes [himself] [to be honest] T
PP S reflexive

This analysis, although only tentative, has several virtues. First, the transformations employed are unordered. Second, the distinction between the stylistic "it" deletion in "I expect of John that he will come early" and the obligatory "it" deletion in "I believe it of him to be honest" is expli-

cated. This is a very important point, for it shows that the "it" deletion in "I expect of John that he will come early" is stylistic, while the "it" deletion in "I believe it of him to be honest" is obligatory. This is because the "it" in "I believe it of him to be honest" is a subject, while the "it" in "I expect of John that he will come early" is an object. The "it" in "I believe it of him to be honest" is a subject because it is the subject of the verb "believes". The "it" in "I expect of John that he will come early" is an object because it is the object of the verb "expect".

Progress Report No. 1 states that "of" deletion is permissible after V (Cf. PR No. 2, p. 6). This is clearly wrong since it allows for sentences like (24) or (25).

(24) *it is expected John that he will come

(25) *John is expected that he will come

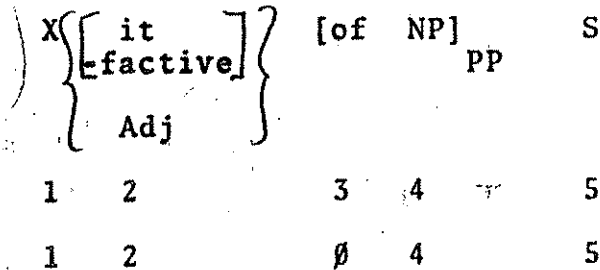
These sentences are ruled out by the transformation suggested above (21) since "of" deletion is no longer verb dependent.

But T is not quite complete since it is still of deletion necessary to account for the adjectival constructions where "it:" occurs in subject position.

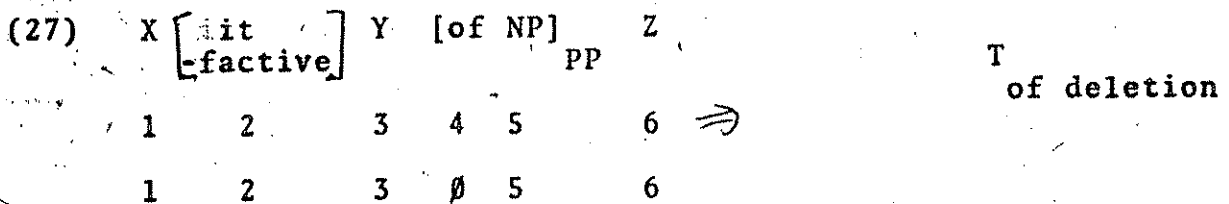
- (26) it was wise of John to come
- it was wise John to come
- John was wise to come

T
of deletion
T
adjunct

One way of completing the statement of the transformational environment would be as follows:



It would appear however that there is a deeper generalization which might be incorporated into the transformational statement. This is that it does not seem to matter what occurs between a factive pronominal head and [of NP] PP. * Thus it may be possible to simplify the above as follows:



* That is, one observes that adjectives followed by of NP are always preceded by a non-factive it.

TRANSFORMATIONS

Y NP that Z
 1 2 3 4
 1 3 2 4

T
 that

Y NP for to Z
 1 2 3 4 5
 1 3 2 4 5

T
 for separation

Y V (PP) [for Z] S
 1 2 3 4 5
 1 2 3 ∅ 5

T
 for deletion

X It (NP) S Z
 1 2 3 4 5
 1 ∅ 3 4 5

T
 it deletion

X it Y [of NP] PP
 -factive
 1 2 3 4 5
 I 2 3 ∅ 5

T
 of deletion

Y it S Z
 1 2 3 4
 1 2 4 3

T
 S separation

Y it AUX V [NP X] S
 1 2 3 4 5
 1 4 3 ∅ 5

T
 noun phrase subject

Y it AUX Adj [NP] S
 PP
 1 2 3 4 5
 1 4 3 ∅ 5

T
 Adjunct