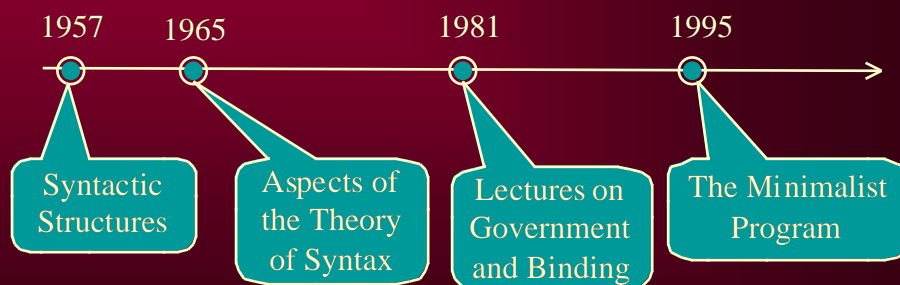
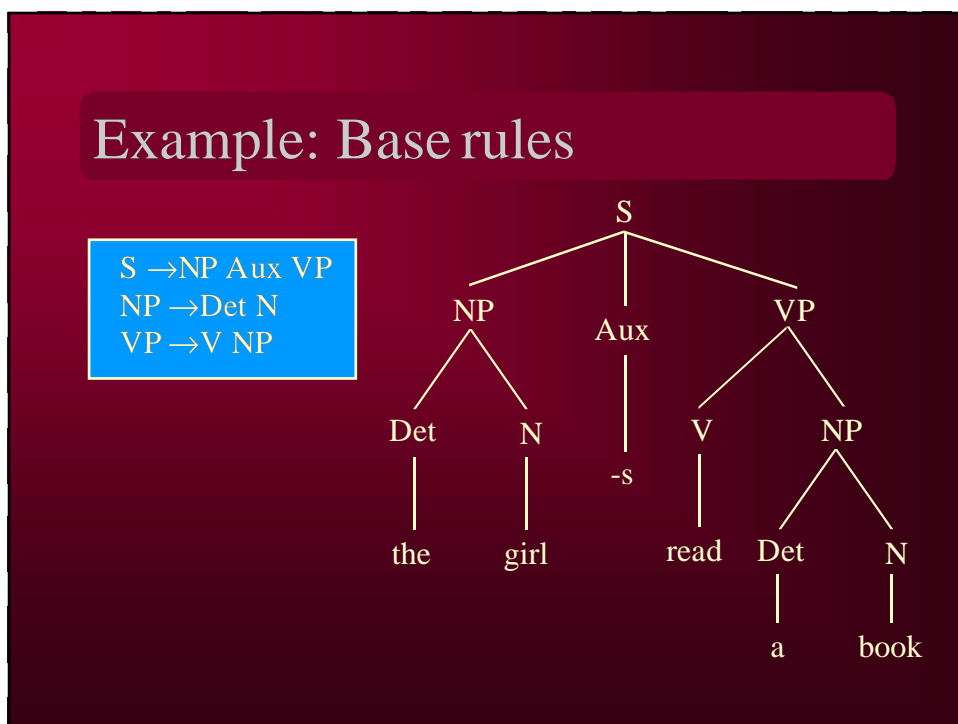
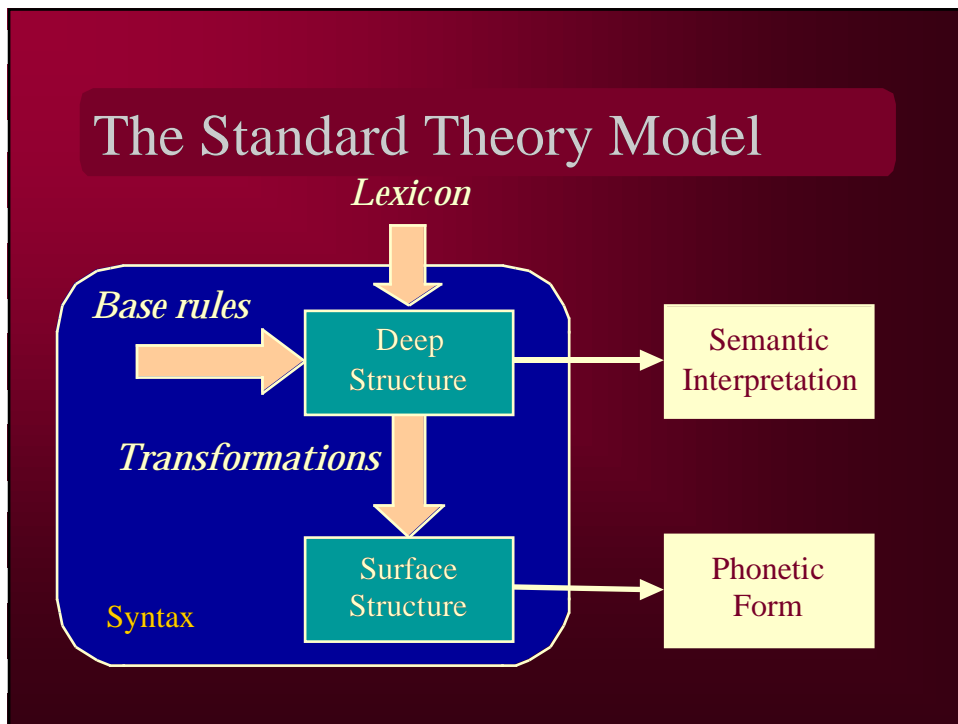


Language Acquisition and Universal Grammar

Week 2: Chomsky's theory of UG

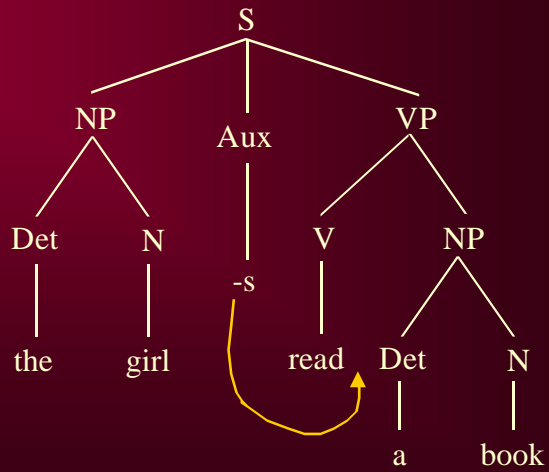
Landmarks in Chomsky's Theory





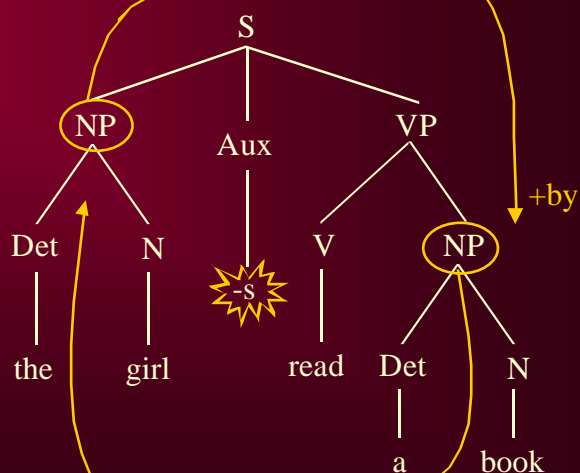
Example: Transformation

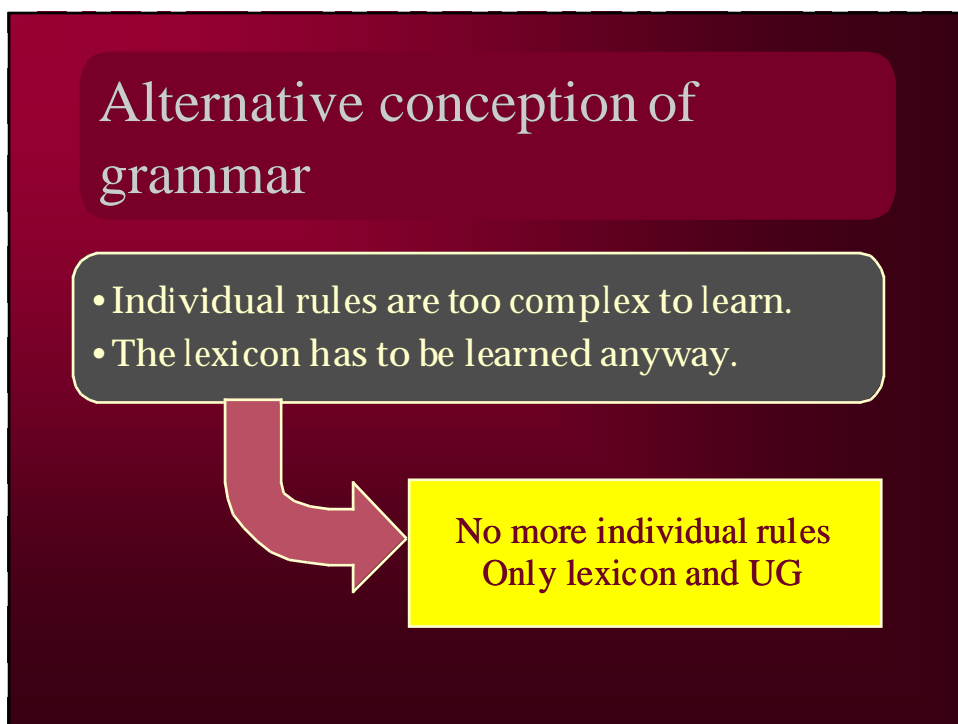
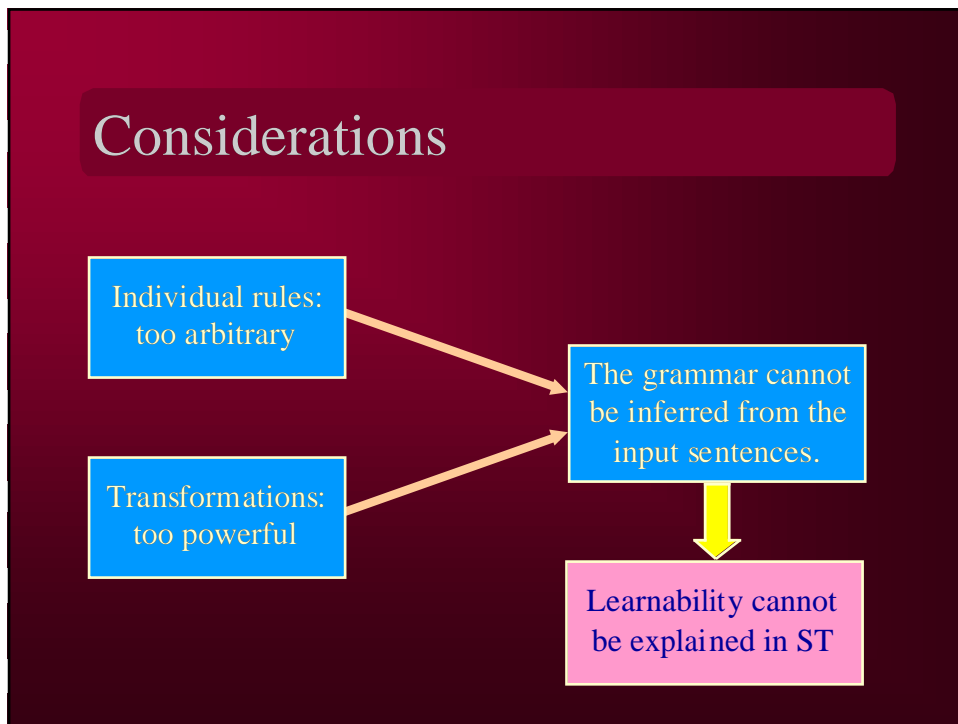
Affix hopping:
obligatory

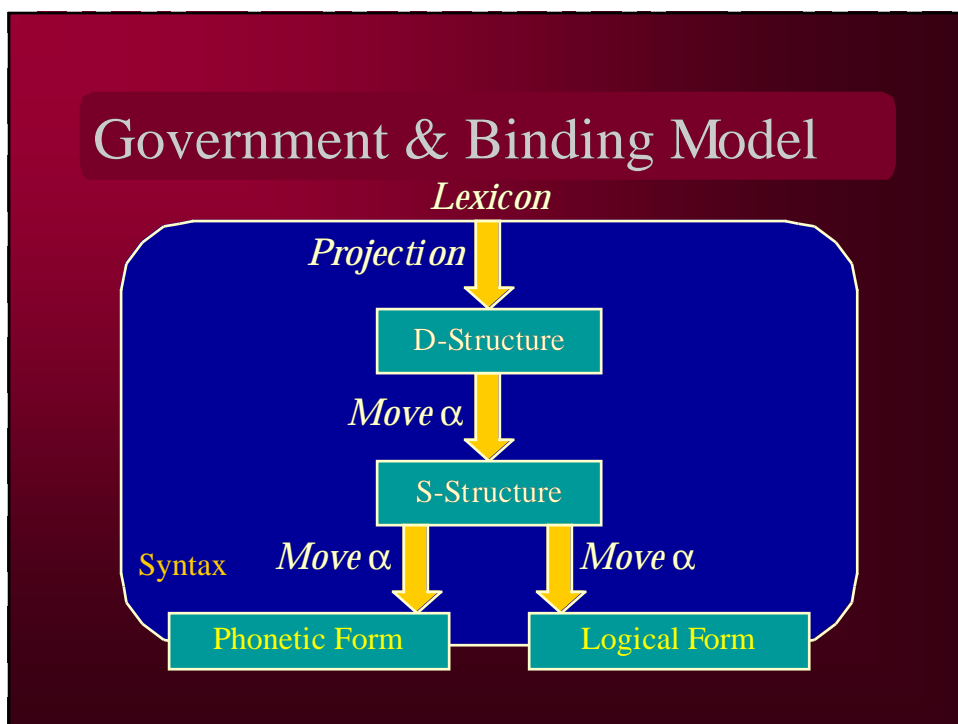
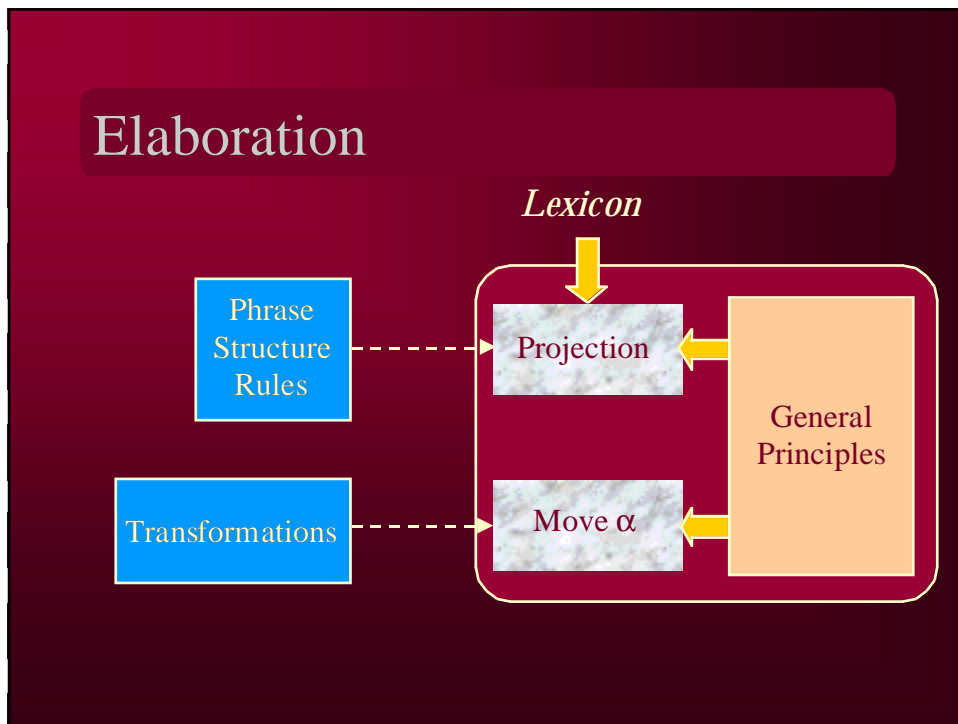


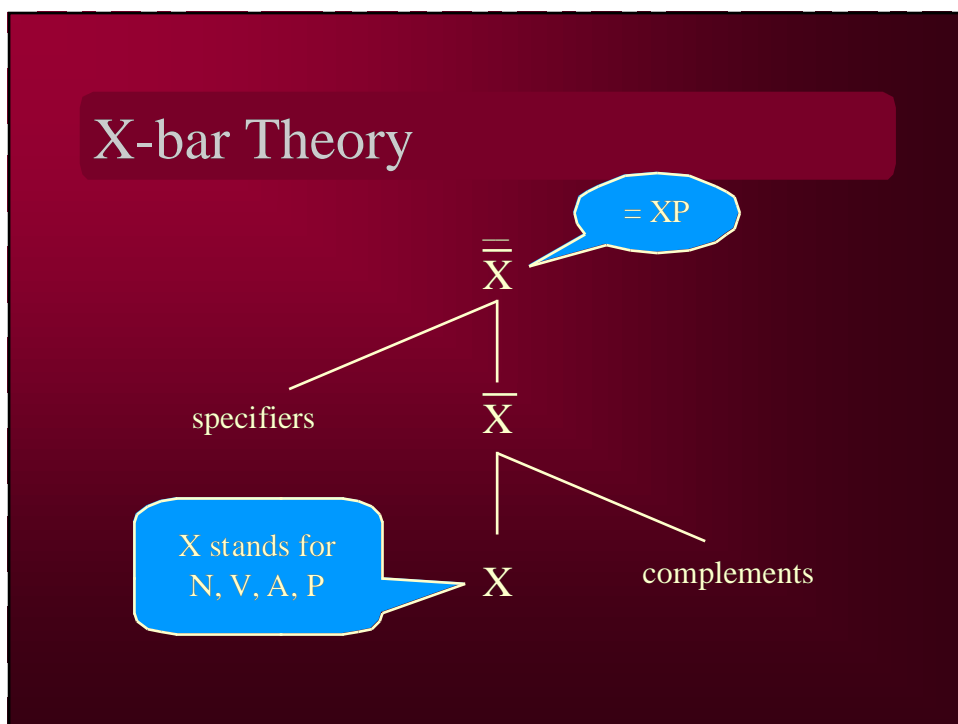
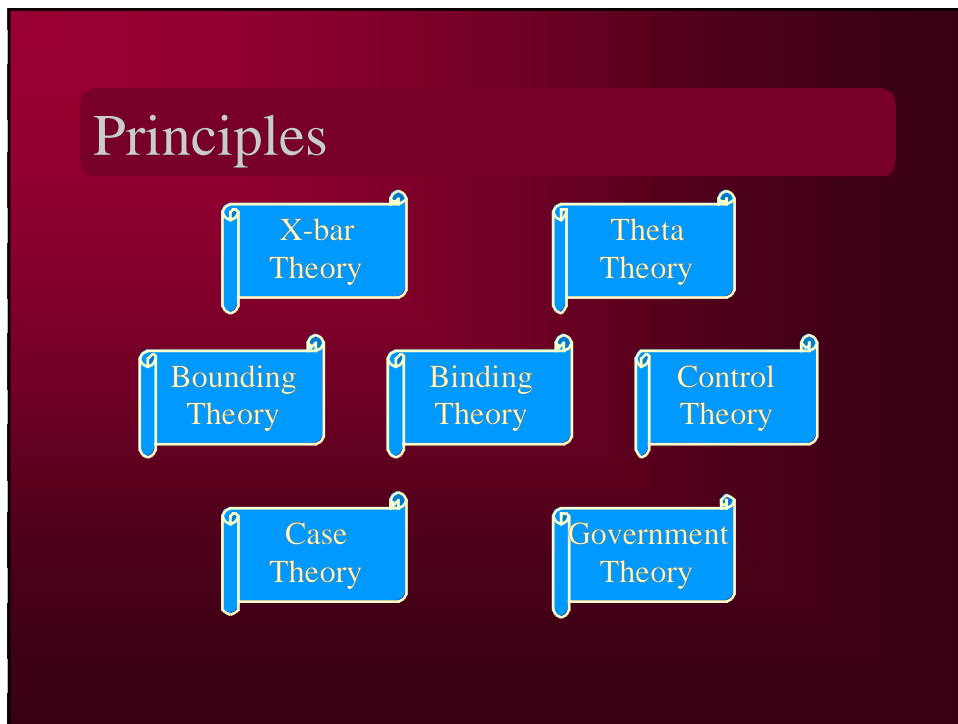
Example: Passive

Passive:
optional

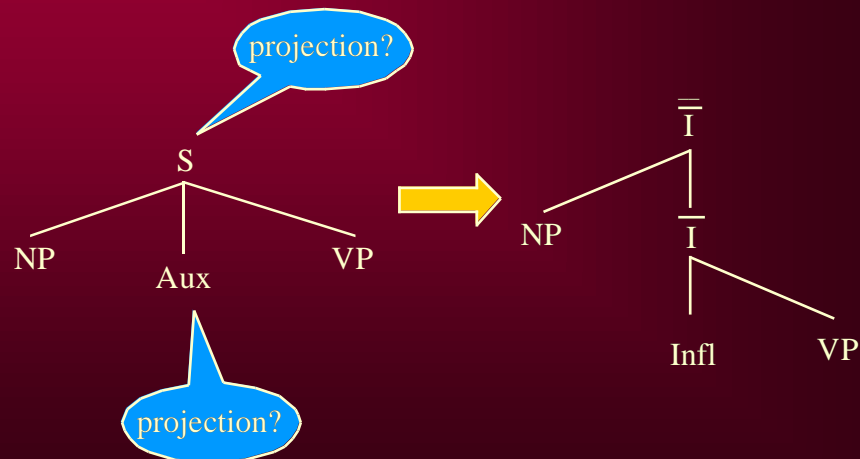








Infl as Head of S



Theta Theory

- Thematic roles (ϑ -roles):
 - agent, patient, experiencer, etc.
- Predicates assign ϑ -roles
 - specification in the lexicon
 - each ϑ -role must be assigned to one NP
- NPs receive ϑ -roles
 - each NP must receive one ϑ -role

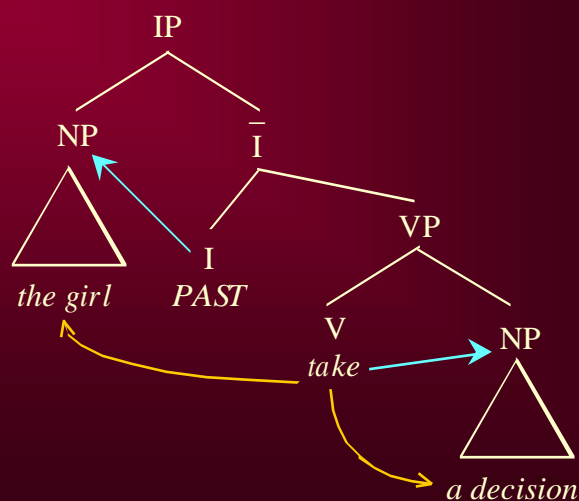
Case Theory

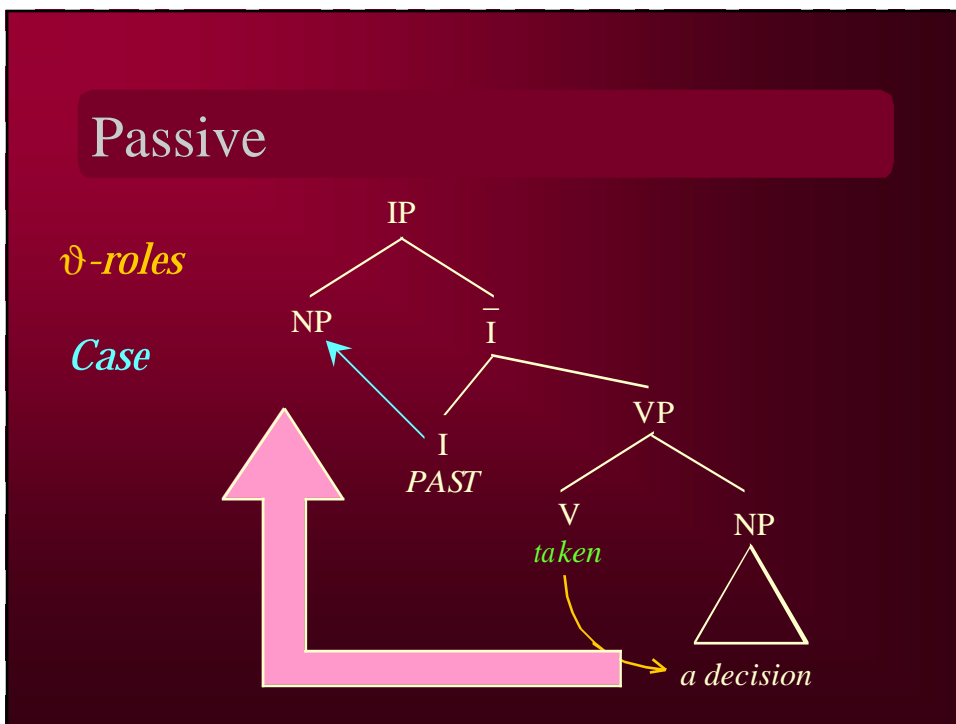
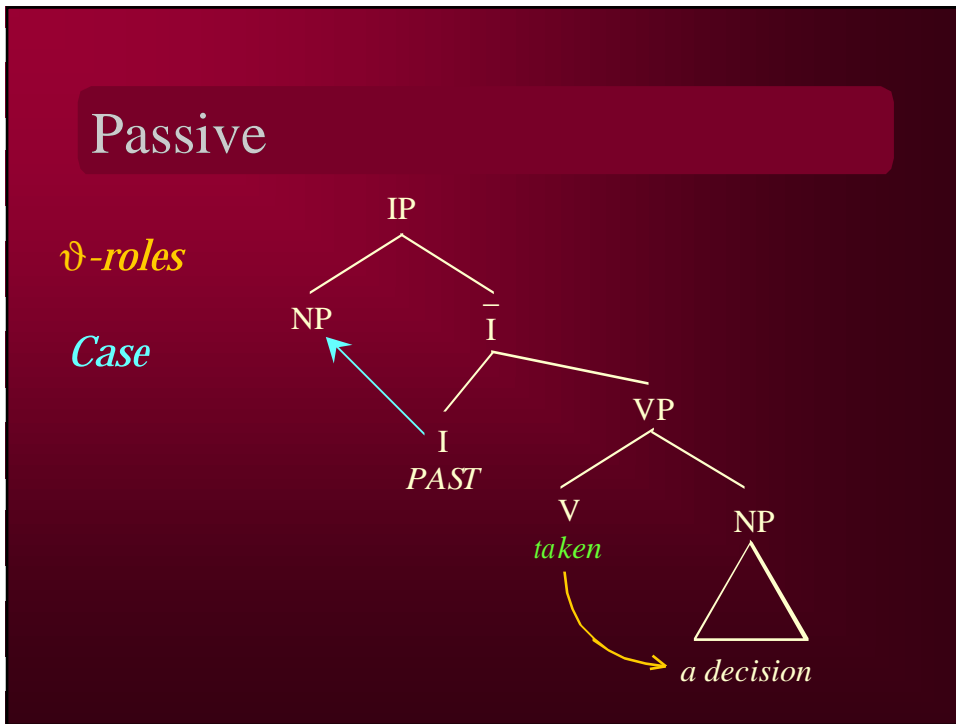
- Cases:
 - nominative, accusative, oblique
 - NPs receive Case
 - each NP must receive Case
 - Case assignment:
 - I assigns nominative
 - V assigns accusative
 - P assigns oblique
- } depending on lexical specification

Active (vs. Passive)

θ-roles

Case





Passive

ϑ-roles

Case

The chain (a decision, t) has Case and a ϑ -role

Binding Theory

Anaphor: *himself, each other*
 *John_i thinks [Mary_i loves himself_i]
 John thinks [Mary_i loves herself_i]

Pronominal: *she, them*
 John_i thinks [Mary_i loves him_i]
 *John thinks [Mary_i loves her_i]

R-Expression: *Mary, the man*
 *John_i thinks [Mary_i loves John_i]
 *John thinks [Mary_i loves Mary_i]

Control Theory

John promised Mary PRO to leave



John persuaded Mary PRO to leave



Bounding Theory

Who do you believe that John thought
that Bill saw *t*

*Who do you believe the claim that Bill
saw *t*

trace of
who

Parameters

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| ● he comes | ● viene |
| – *comes | – lui viene |
| ● it seems that ... | ● sembra che ... |
| – *seems that ... | – *cio sembra che ... |
| ● it rains | ● piove |
| – *rains | – *cio piove |

±Prodrop

Tendencies in the Minimalist Program

- many functional categories
- movement must be triggered
- feature checking in syntax
- binary branching and anti-symmetry
- fewer, more general principles