

Ling 566  
Nov 23, 2009  
Auxiliaries

# Overview

- What are auxiliaries?
- General properties of auxiliaries
- Lexical type/lexical entries for auxiliaries
- NICE properties (lexical rules)

# What Auxiliaries Are

- Sometimes called “helping verbs,” auxiliaries are little words that come before the main verb of a sentence, including forms of *be, have, do, can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, and would*
- They tend to be involved in the expression of time, necessity, possibility, permission, and obligation, as well as such things as negation, affirmation, and questioning

# Some Basic Facts about Auxiliaries

- They are optional  
*Pat tapdanced. Pat can tapdance. Pat is tapdancing.*
- They precede any non-auxiliary verbs  
*\*Pat tapdance can. \*Pat tapdancing is.*
- They determine the form of the following verb  
*\*Pat can tapdancing. \*Pat is tapdance.*
- When they co-occur, their order is fixed  
*Pat must be tapdancing. \*Pat is musting tapdance.*
- Auxiliaries of any given type cannot iterate  
*\*Pat could should tapdance.*

# A Little History

- Chomsky's first book, *Syntactic Structures* (1957), contained a detailed analysis of the English system of auxiliary verbs
- It showed how formal analysis could reveal subtle generalizations
- The power of Chomsky's analysis of auxiliaries was one of the early selling points for transformational grammar
  - Especially, his unified treatment of auxiliary *do*
- So it's a challenge to any theory of grammar to deal with the same phenomena

# Two Approaches to Analyzing Auxiliaries

- Treat auxiliaries as a special category, and formulate specialized transformations sensitive to their presence
- Assimilate their properties to existing types as much as possible, and elaborate the lexicon to handle what is special about them
- We adopt the latter, treating auxiliaries as a subtype of *srv-lxm*

# Consequences of Making *auxv-lxm* a Subtype of *srv-lxm*

- Auxiliaries should express one-place predicates
- Auxiliaries should allow non-referential subjects (dummy *there*, *it*, and idiom chunks)
- Passivization of the main verb (the auxiliary's complement) should preserve truth conditions
- Are these borne out?

# Why call auxiliaries verbs?

- *be*, *have*, and *do* exhibit verbal inflections (tense, agreement)
- *be*, *have*, and *do* can all appear as main verbs (that is, as the only verb in a sentence)
  - Their inflections are the same in main and auxiliary uses
  - *be* exhibits auxiliary behavior, even in its main verb uses
- Modals (*can*, *might*, *will*, etc.) don't inflect, but they occur in environments requiring a finite verb with no (other) finite verb around.



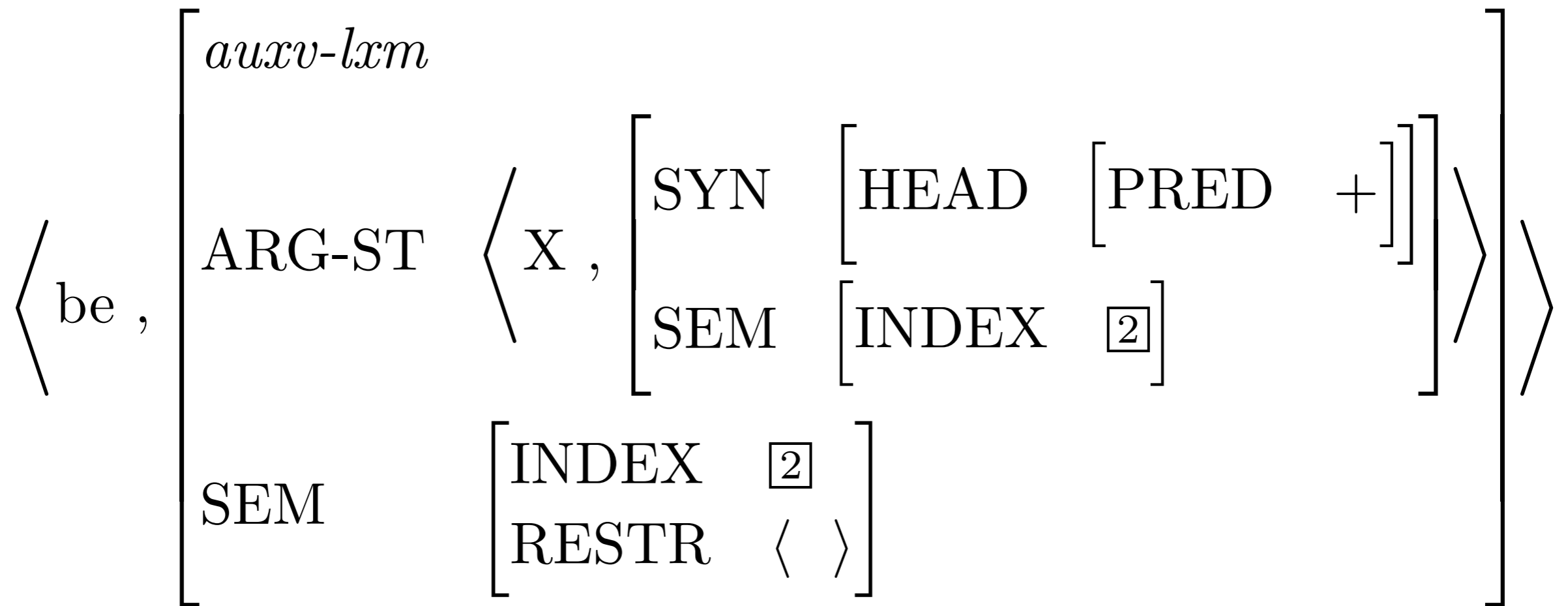
# What's special about auxiliaries?

- Unlike other subject-raising verbs we have looked at, their complements aren't introduced by *to*
- The modals and *do* have defective paradigms
- There are restrictions on the ordering and iterability of auxiliaries
- They have a set of special characteristics known as the NICE properties.

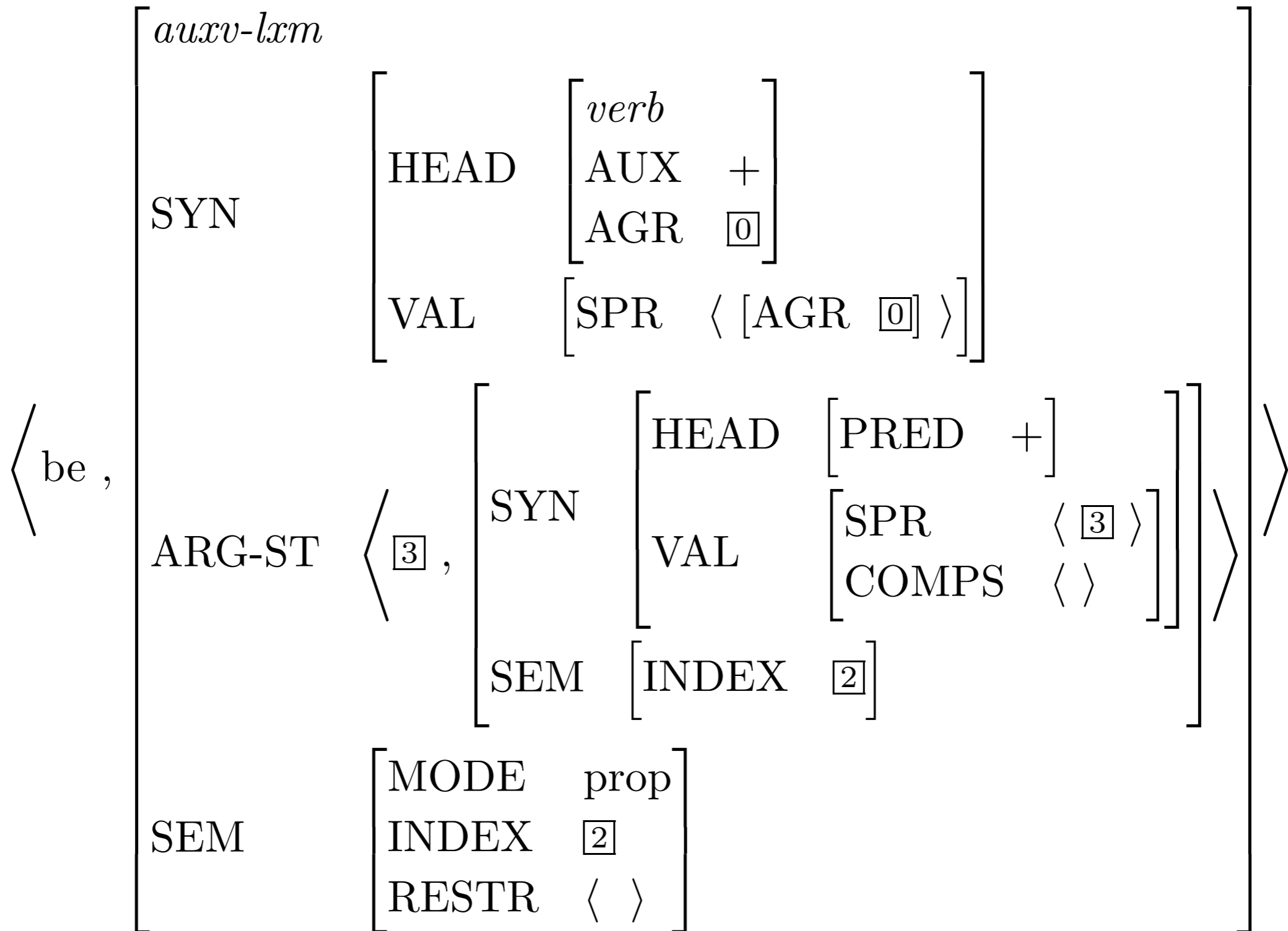
# Some Type Constraints

TYPE	FEATURES/CONSTRAINTS	IST
<i>verb-lxm</i>	$\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{SYN} \quad \left[ \text{HEAD} \quad \left[ \begin{array}{l} \textit{verb} \\ \text{AUX} \quad / \quad - \end{array} \right] \right] \\ \text{ARG-ST} \quad \langle [\text{HEAD} \textit{nominal}], \dots \rangle \\ \text{SEM} \quad \left[ \text{MODE} \quad \textit{prop} \right] \end{array} \right]$	<i>infl-lxm</i>
<i>srv-lxm</i>	$\left[ \text{ARG-ST} \quad \left\langle \boxed{1}, \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{SPR} \quad \langle \boxed{1} \rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \quad \langle \rangle \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \right]$	<i>verb-lxm</i>
<i>ic-srv-lxm</i>	$\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{ARG-ST} \quad \left\langle \text{X}, \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{VP} \\ \text{INF} \quad + \\ \text{INDEX} \quad s \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\ \text{SEM} \quad \left[ \text{RESTR} \quad \left\langle [\text{ARG} \quad s] \right\rangle \right] \end{array} \right]$	<i>srv-lxm</i>
<i>auxv-lxm</i>	$\left[ \text{SYN} \quad \left[ \text{HEAD} \quad \left[ \text{AUX} \quad + \right] \right] \right]$	<i>srv-lxm</i>

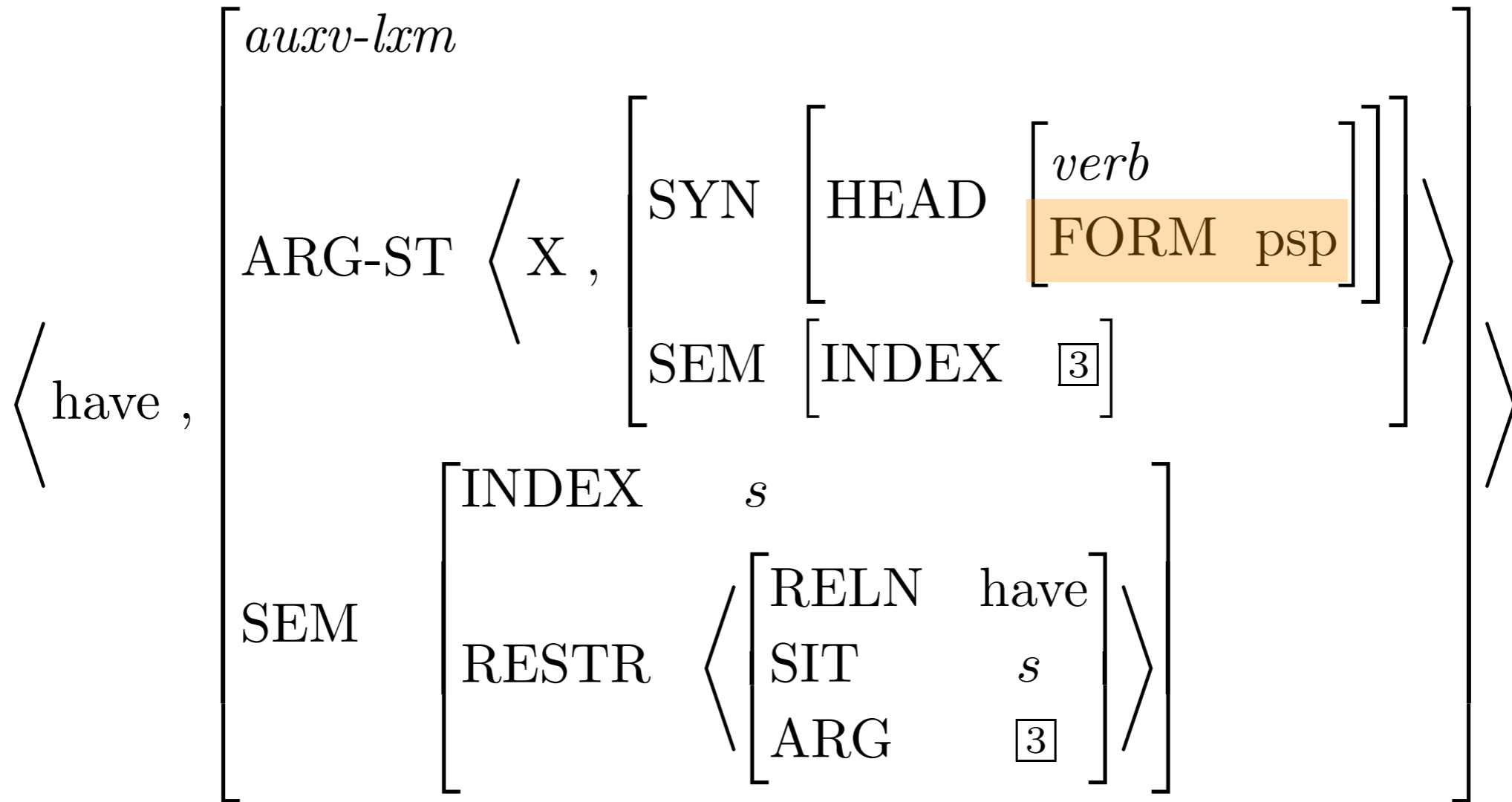
# A Lexical Entry for *be*



# The Entry for *be*, with Inherited Information

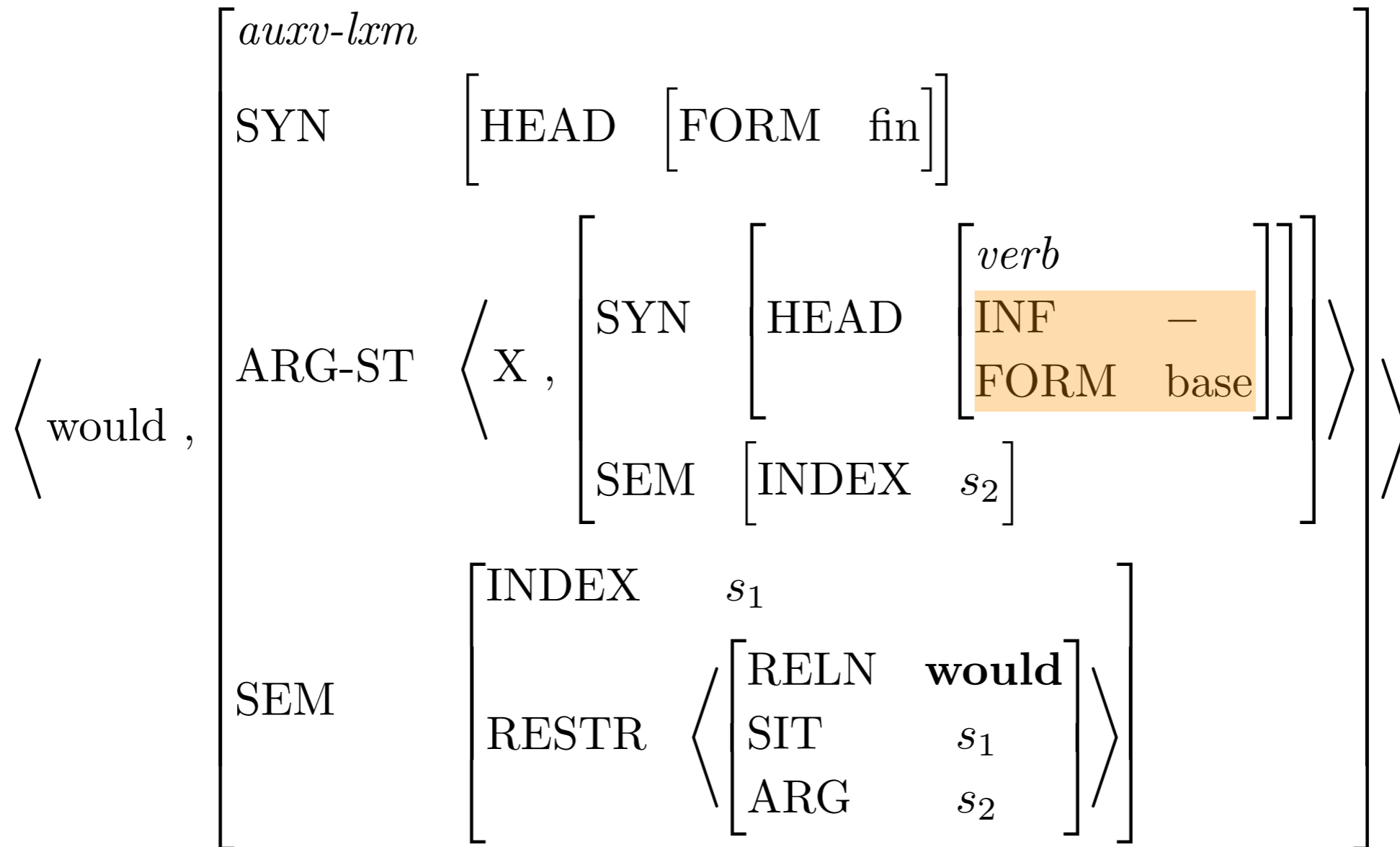


# Entry for *have*



- Note the FORM restriction on the complement VP
- What accounts for the analogous FORM restriction on verbs following *be*?

# Lexical Entry for a Modal



- Note the restriction on the form of the complement VP
- What inflectional lexical rules apply to this lexeme?

# Accounting for the Basic Facts Cited Earlier

- **Optionality of auxiliaries:**  
As raising verbs, their subjects and complements go together.
- **Auxiliaries precede non-auxiliary verbs:**  
Auxiliaries are heads, and complements follow heads in English.
- **Auxiliaries determine the form of the following verb:**  
This is built into their lexical entries.
- **When auxiliaries co-occur, their order is fixed:**  
Different explanations for different combinations; see next slide.
- **Non-iterability of auxiliaries:**  
Ditto.

# Accounting for Restrictions on Order and Iterability

- **Order**

- Modals are finite, and all auxiliaries take non-finite complements. Hence, modals must come first.
- Stative verbs (like *own*) don't have present participles, and auxiliary *have* is stative. Hence, *\*Pat is having tapdanced*.

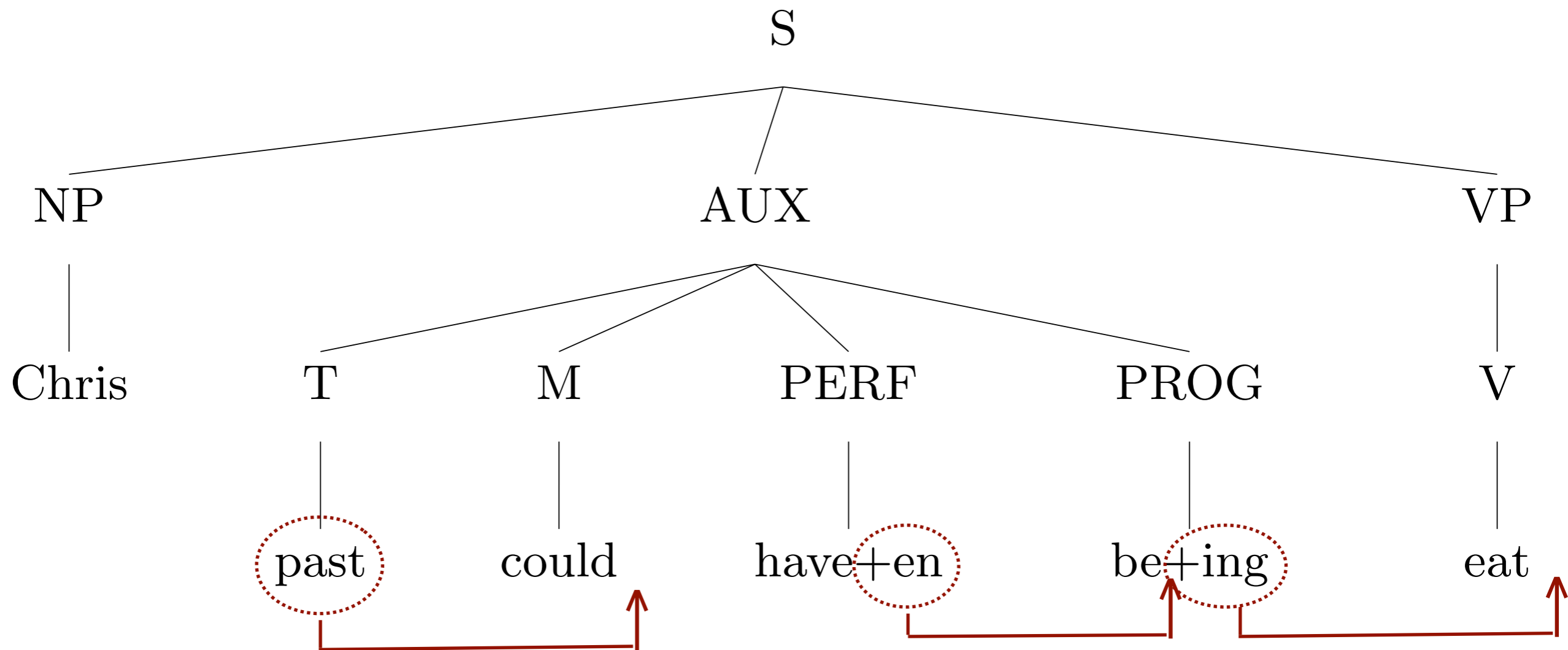
- **Iterability**

- Auxiliary *be* is also stative, so *\*Pat is being tapdancing*.
- Modals must be finite, and their complements must be base, so *\*Pat can should tapdance*.
- *\*Pat has had tapdanced* can be ruled out in various ways, e.g. stipulating that auxiliary *have* has no past participle.



# Sketch of Chomsky's Old Analysis

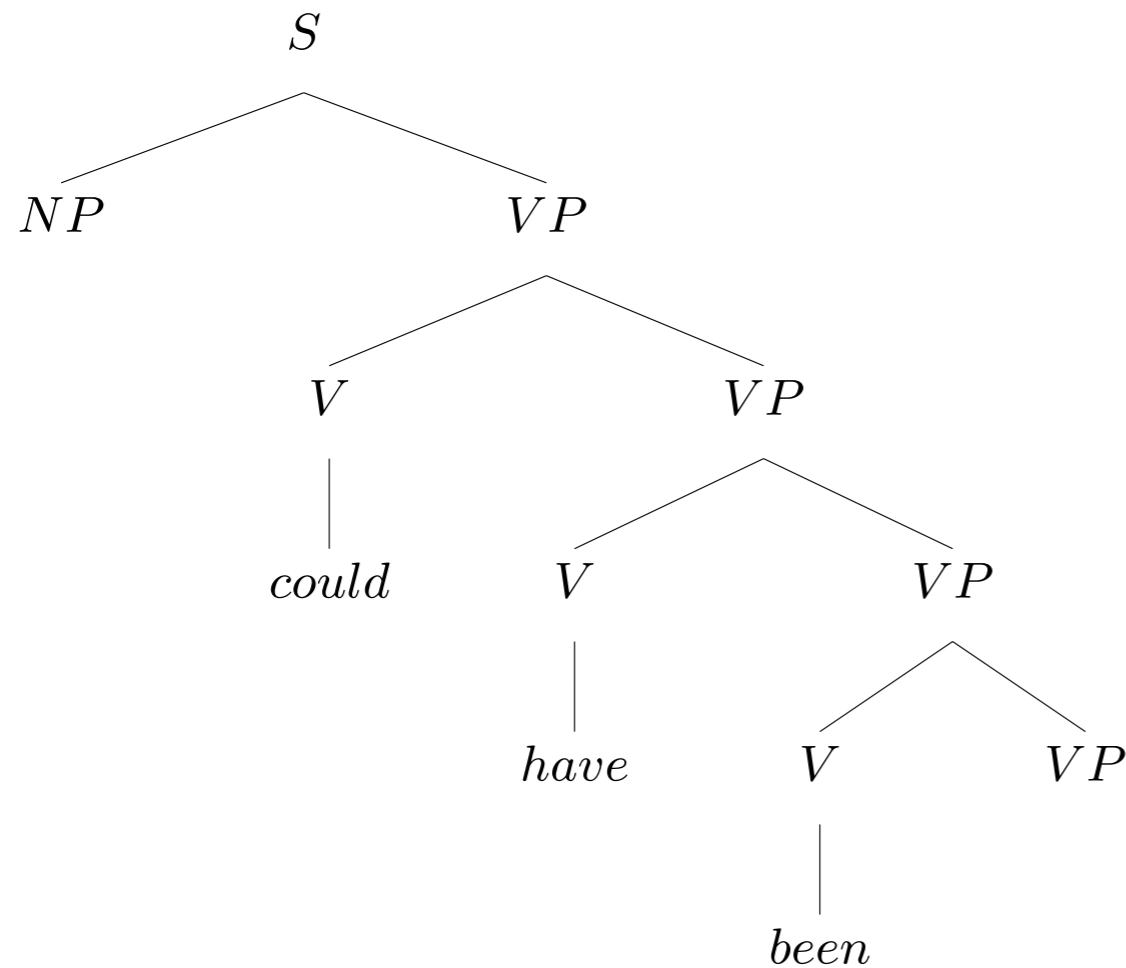
$S \rightarrow NP \text{ AUX } VP$   
 $AUX \rightarrow T(M)(PERF)(PROG)$



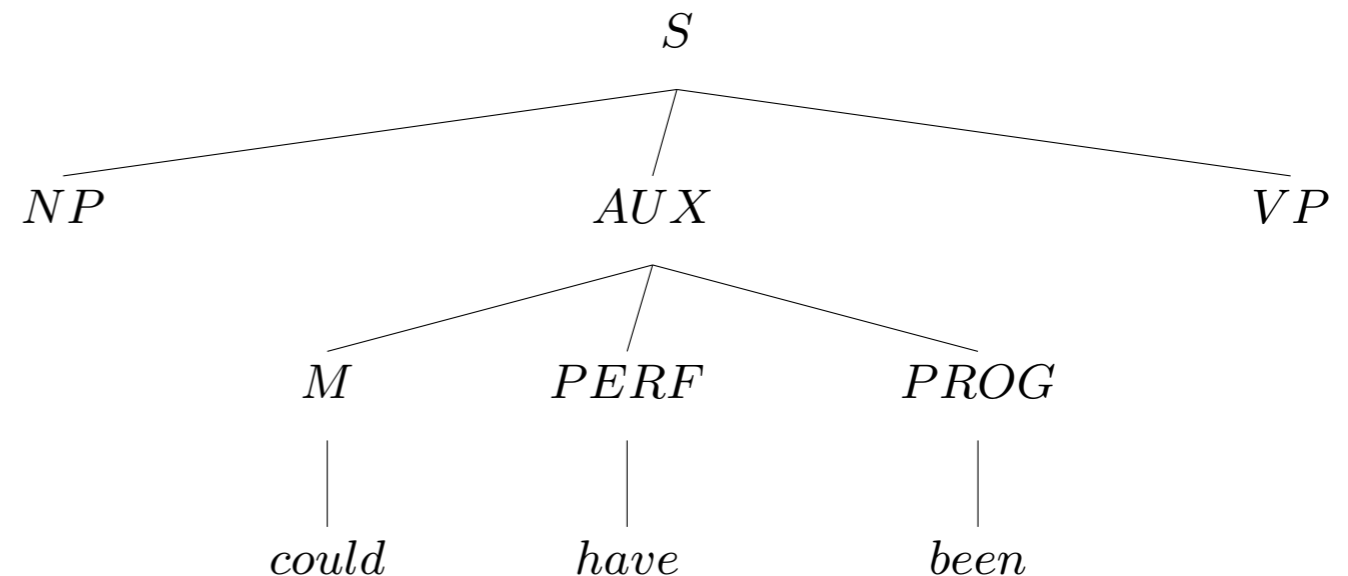
# How this Analysis Handles the Basic Facts

- **Optionality of auxiliaries:**  
Stipulated in the phrase structure rule (with parentheses)
- **Auxiliaries precede non-auxiliary verbs:**  
Built into the phrase structure rule, with AUX before VP
- **Auxiliaries determine the form of the following verb:**  
Inflections are inserted with the auxiliaries and moved onto the following verb transformationally.
- **When auxiliaries co-occur, their order is fixed:**  
Stipulated in the phrase structure rule for AUX
- **Non-iterability of auxiliaries:**  
Ditto.

# The two analyses assign very different trees



- *could have been* VP, *have been* VP, and *been* VP are all constituents
- *could have been* is not a constituent



- *could have been* VP, *have been* VP, and *been* VP are not constituents
- *could have been* is a constituent

# Ellipsis and Constituency

- Consider:

*Pat couldn't have been eating garlic, but Chris could have been*

*Pat couldn't have been eating garlic, but Chris could have*

*Pat couldn't have been eating garlic, but Chris could*

- On the nested analysis, the missing material is a (VP) constituent in each case
- On the flat analysis, the missing material is never a constituent
- This argues for our analysis over the old transformational one.

# Our Analysis of Auxiliaries So Far

- Auxiliaries are subject-raising verbs
- Most basic distributional facts about them can be handled through selectional restrictions between auxiliaries and their complements (that is, as ARG-ST constraints)
- Auxiliaries are identified via a HEAD feature AUX, which we have not yet put to use

# Descriptive Summary of the NICE Properties

## Negation

Sentences are negated by putting *not* after the first auxiliary verb; they can be reaffirmed by putting *too* or *so* in the same position

## Inversion

Questions are formed by putting an auxiliary verb before the subject NP

## Contraction

Auxiliary verbs take negated forms, with *n't* affixed

## Ellipsis

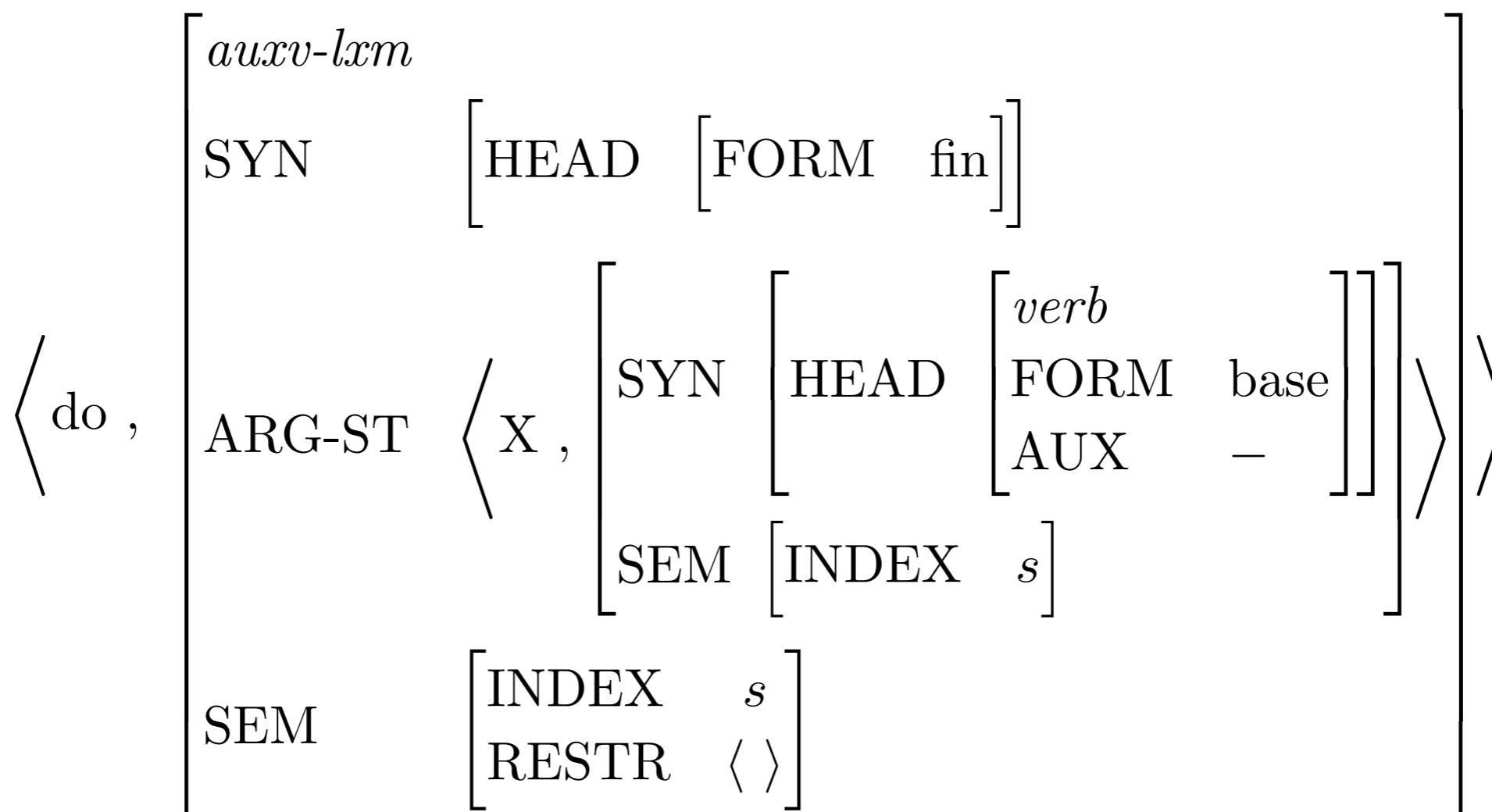
Verb phrases immediately following an auxiliary verb can be omitted

# Negation (and Reaffirmation)

- Polar adverbs (sentential *not*, *so*, and *too*) appear immediately following an auxiliary  
*Pat will not leave*  
*Pat will SO leave*  
*Pat will TOO leave*
- What about examples like *Not many people left*?
- What happens when you want to deny or reaffirm a sentence with no auxiliary?  
*Pat left*  
*Pat did not leave*  
*Pat did TOO leave*

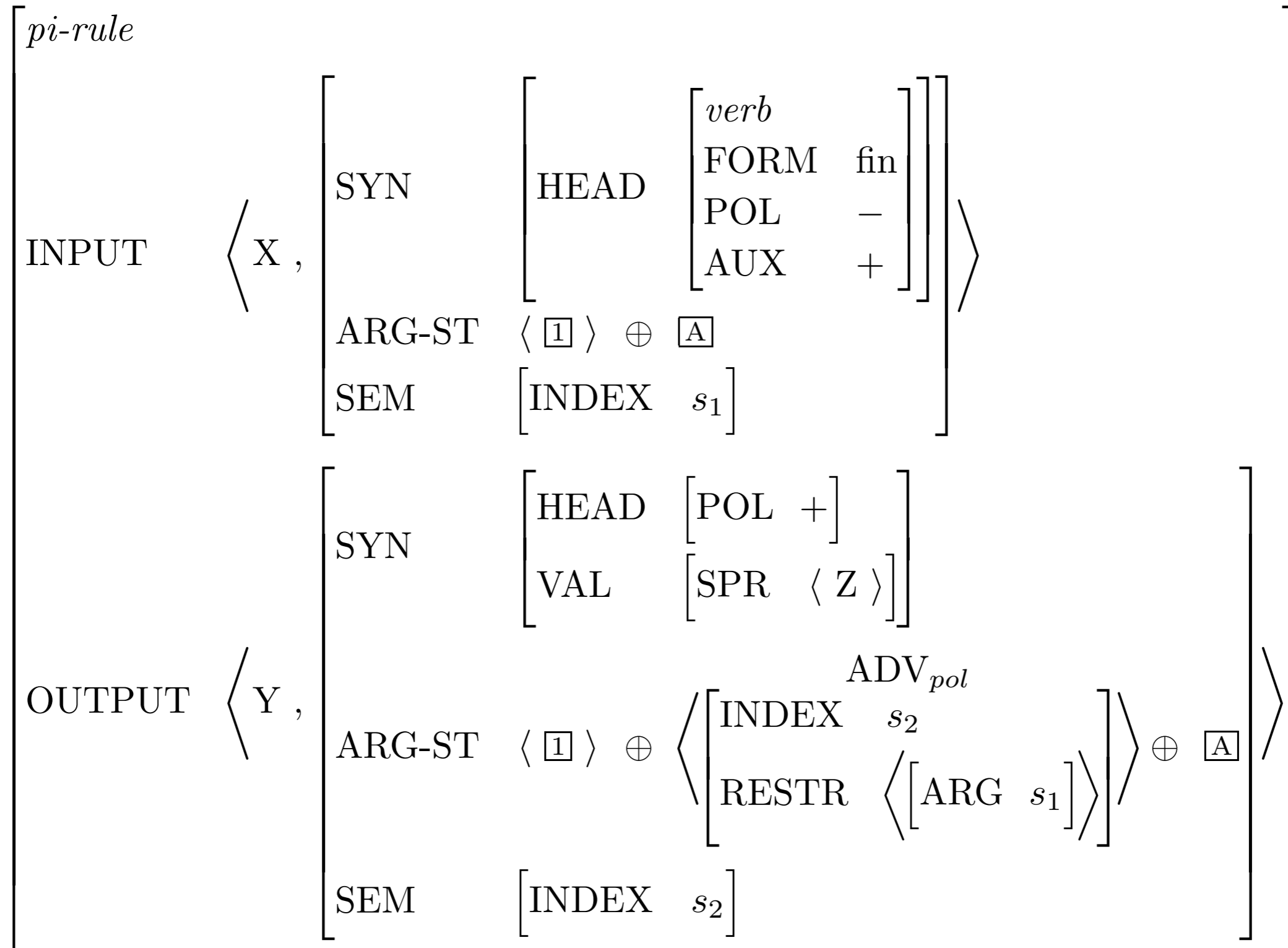
# The Auxiliary *do*

- Like modals, *do* only occurs in finite contexts:  
*\*Pat continued to do not leave*
- Unlike modals, *do* cannot be followed by other auxiliaries:  
*\*Pat did not have left*



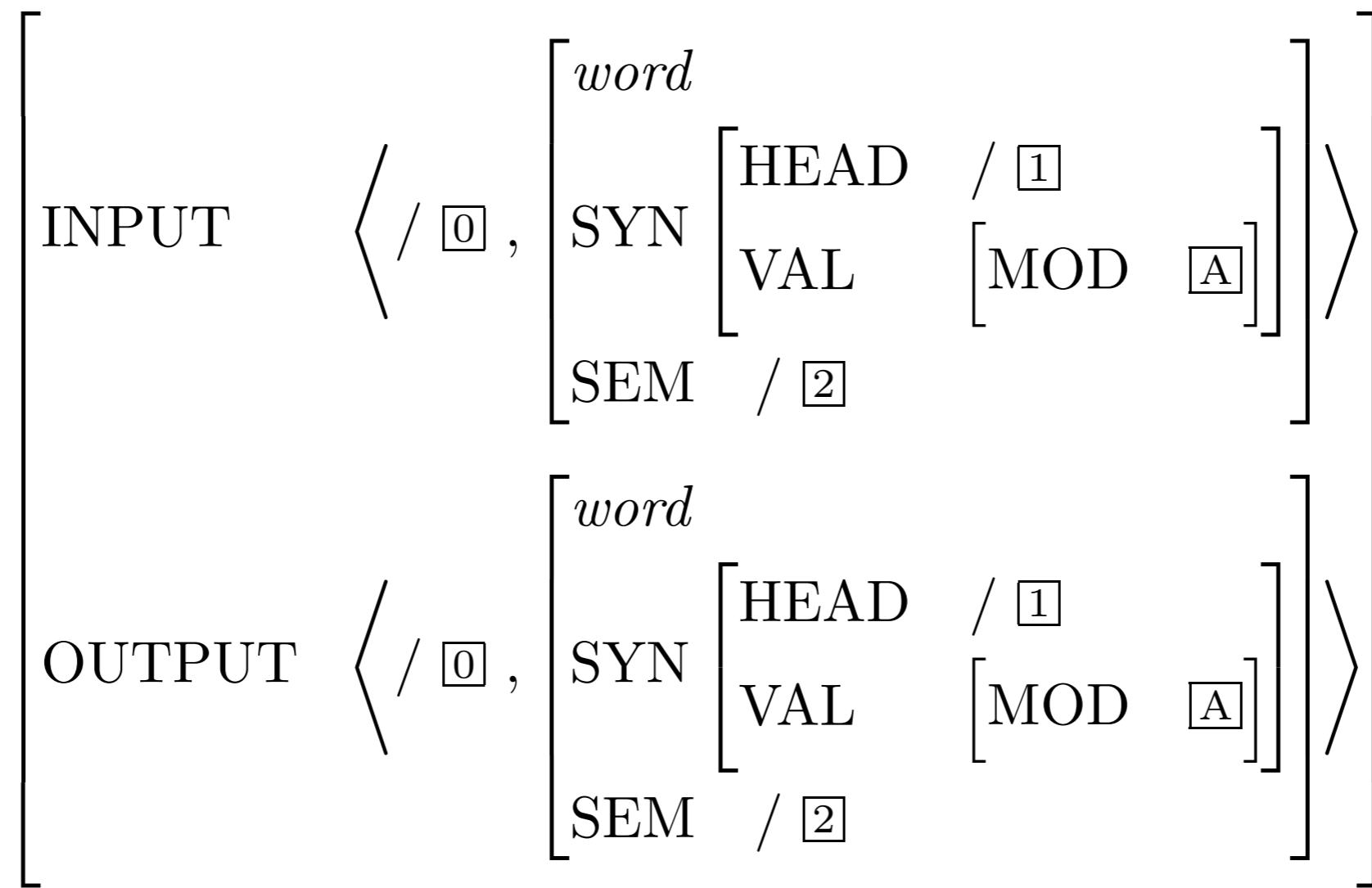


# The $ADV_{pol}$ -Addition Lexical Rule

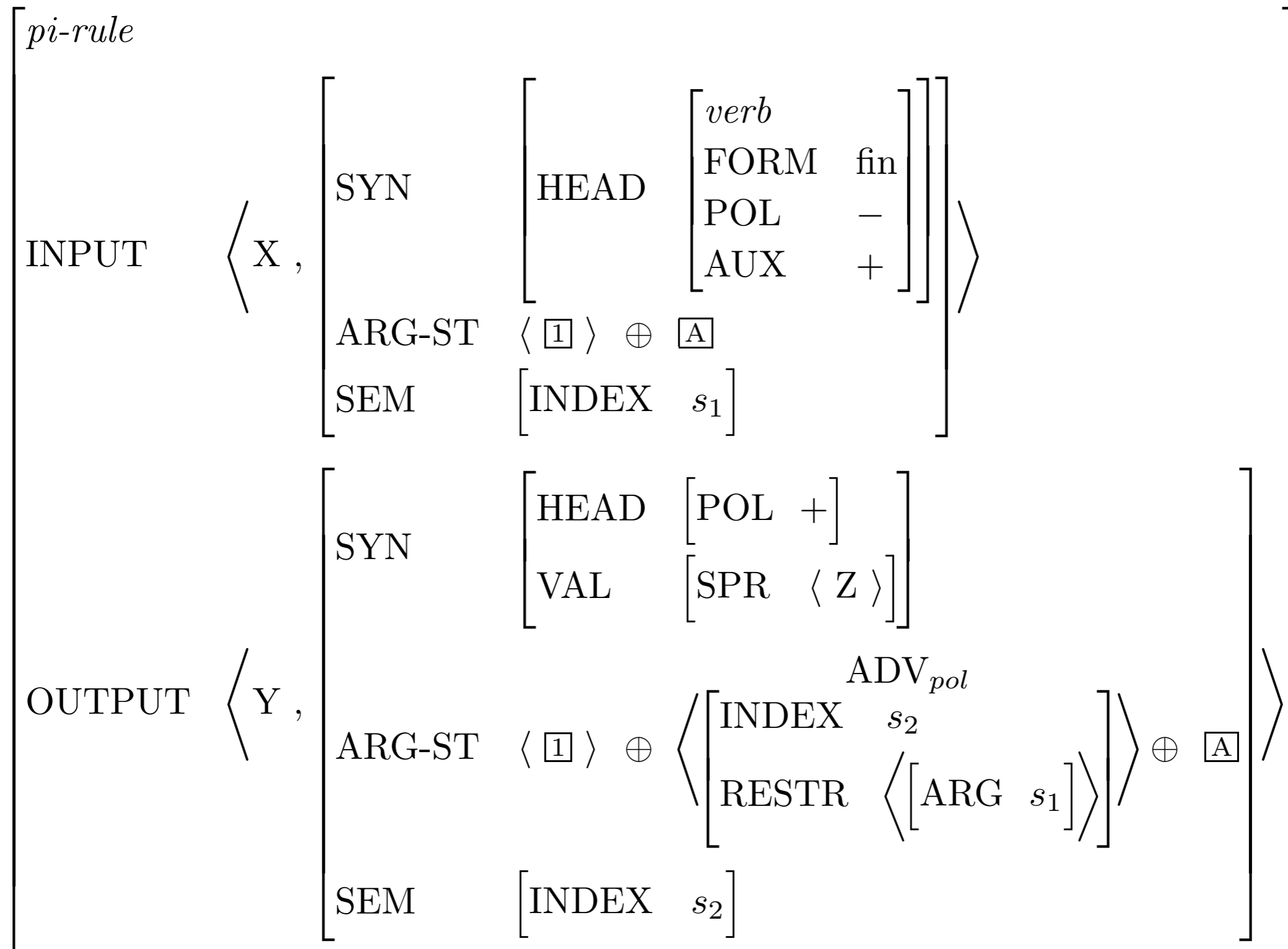


# What does the type *pi-rule* mean?

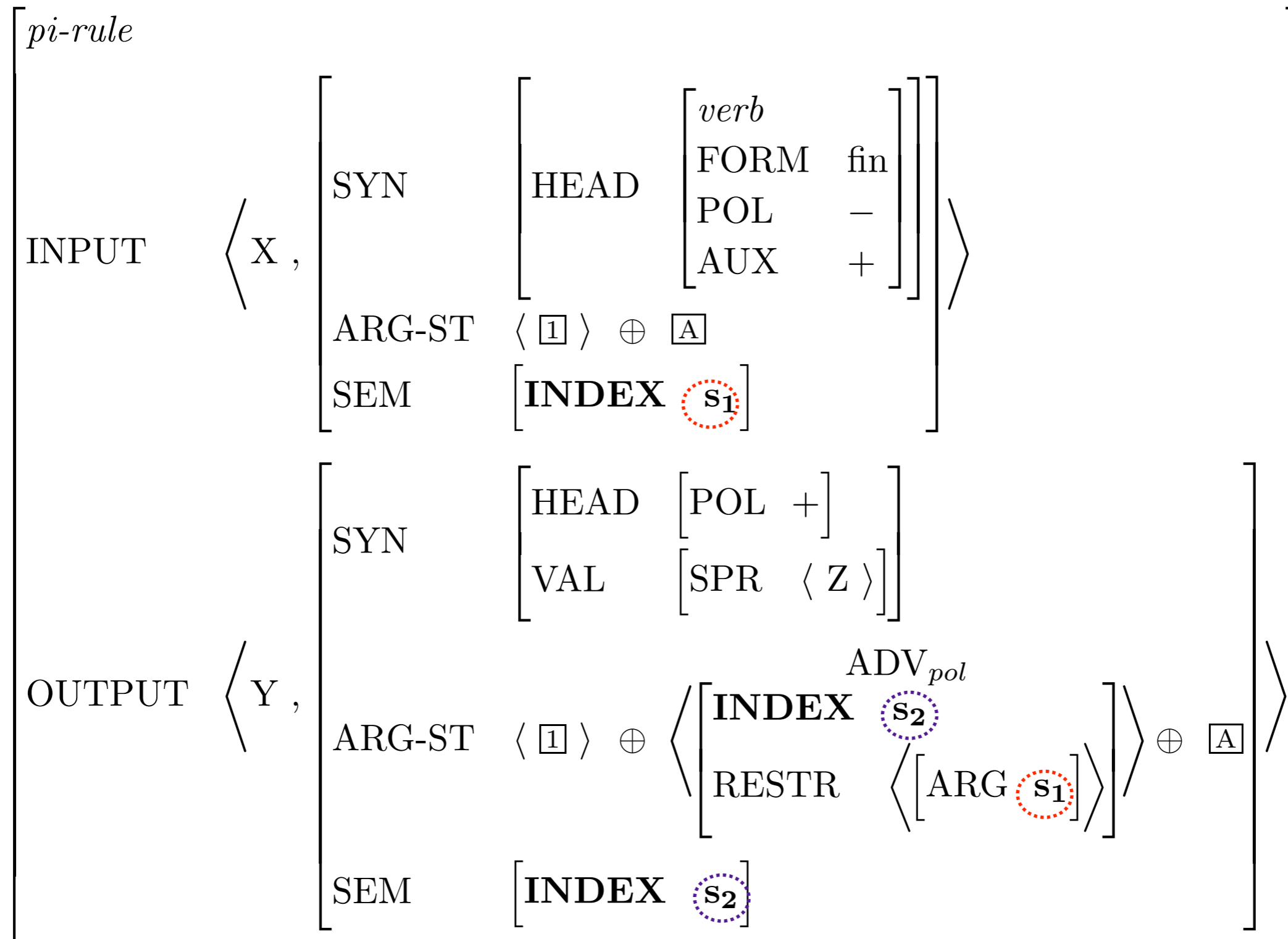
- It maps words to words (hence, “post-inflectional”)
- It preserves MOD values, HEAD values as a default, and (like other lexical rule types) SEM values as a default



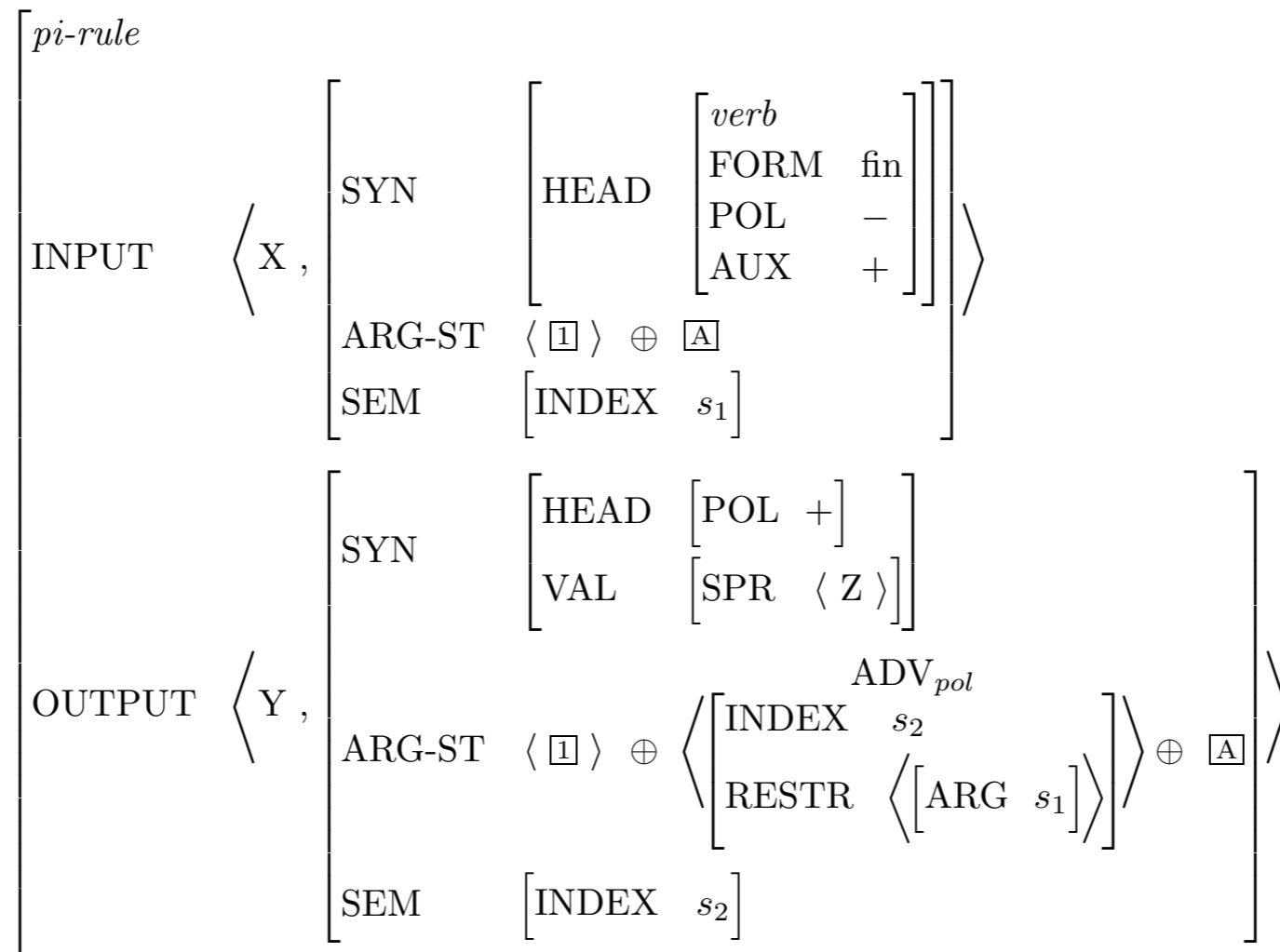
# Why doesn't $ADV_{pol}$ -Addition LR mention VAL?



# What is the role of these indices?



# Which *nots* does the rule license?



*Andy must not have been sleeping?*



*Andy must have not been sleeping?*



*Andy must have been not sleeping?*



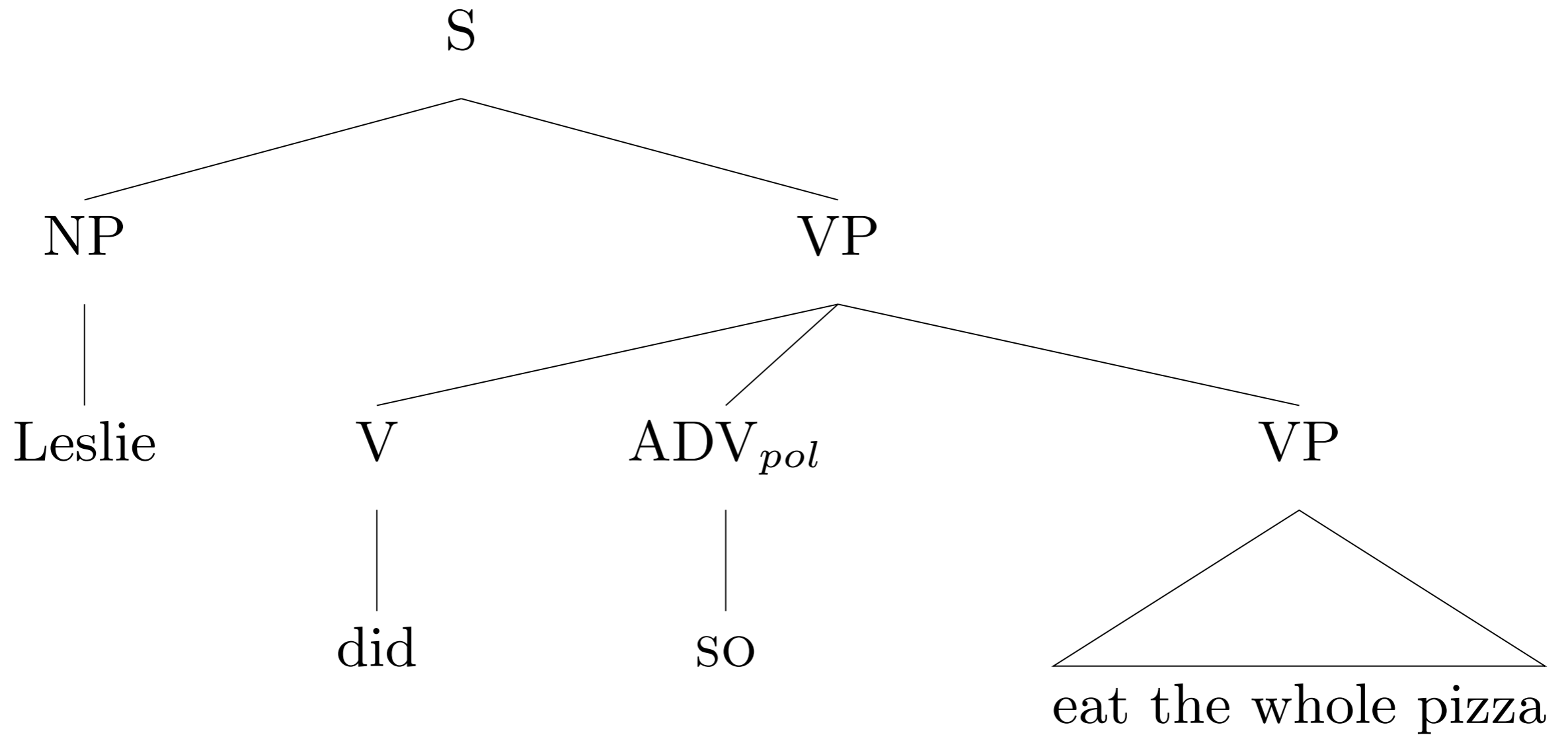
*Kleptomaniacs cannot not steal.*



*Kleptomaniacs cannot not steal.*



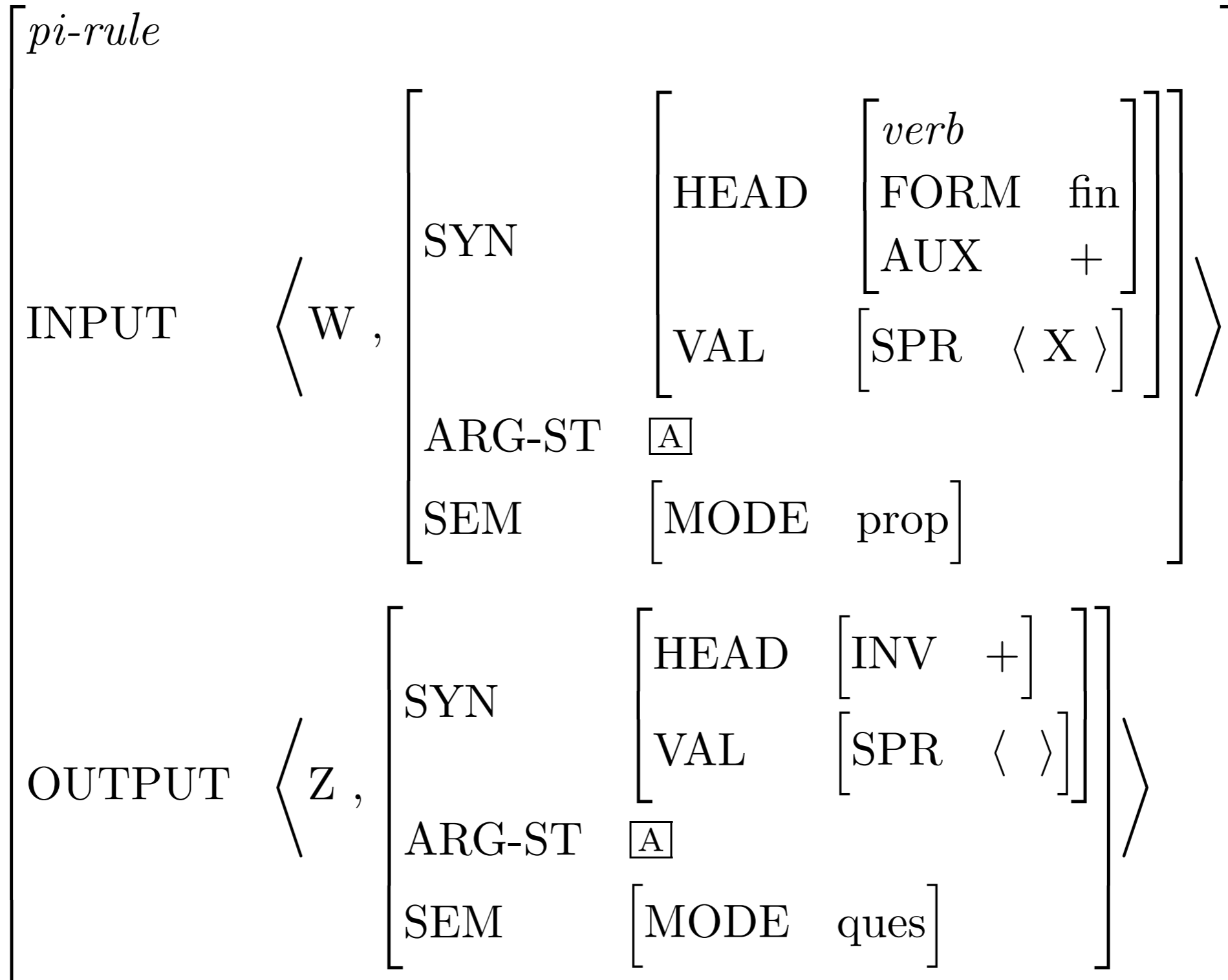
# Negation and Reaffirmation: A Sample Tree



# Inversion

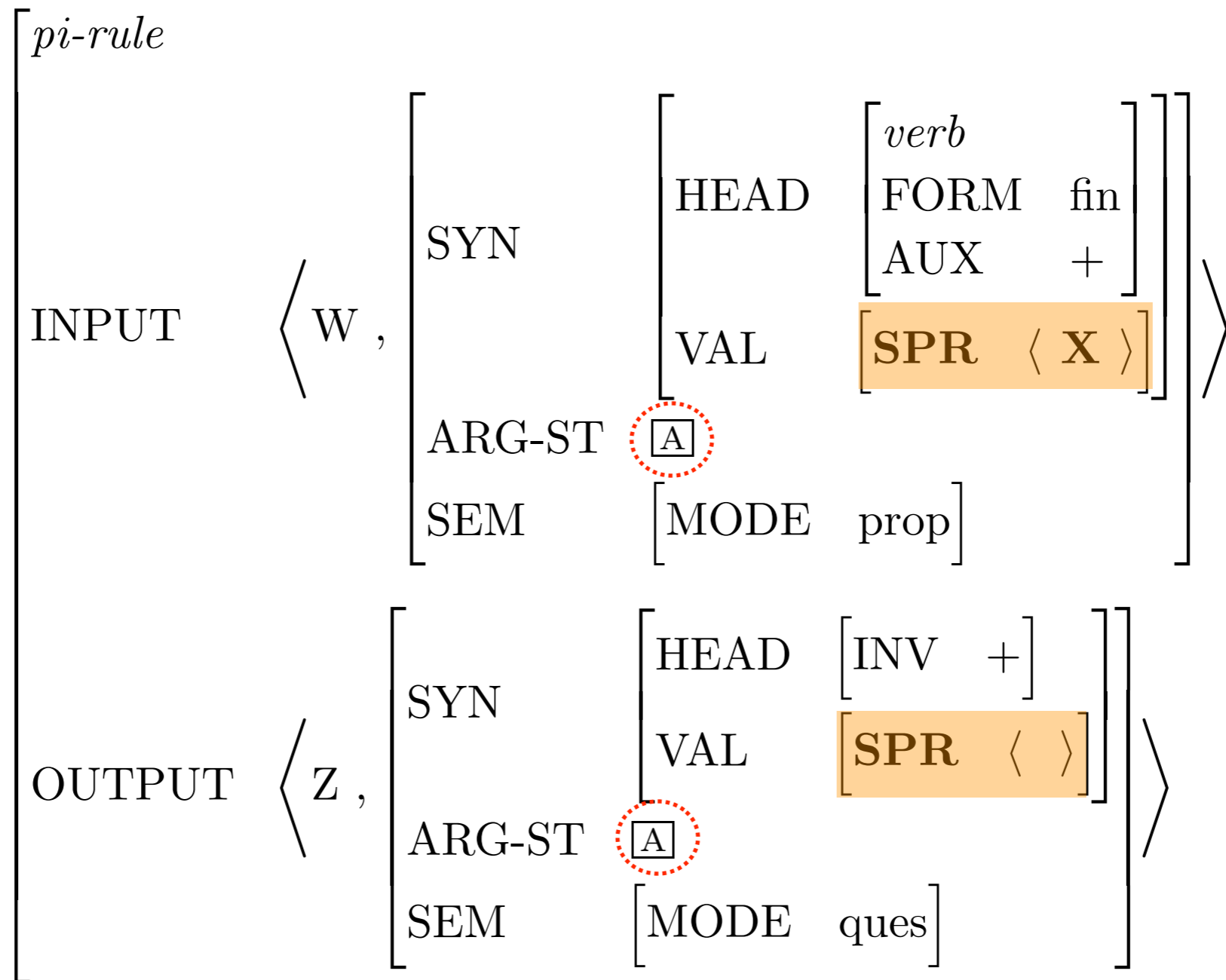
- Yes-no questions begin with an auxiliary:  
*Will Robin win?*
- The NP after the auxiliary has all the properties of a subject
  - Agreement: *Have they left?* vs. *\*Has they left?*
  - Case: *\*Have them left?*
  - Raising: *Will there continue to be food at the meetings?*
- What happens if you make a question out of a sentence without an auxiliary?  
*Robin won*  
*Did Robin win?*

# The Inversion Lexical Rule





# How the Rule Yields Inverted Order



...plus the ARP

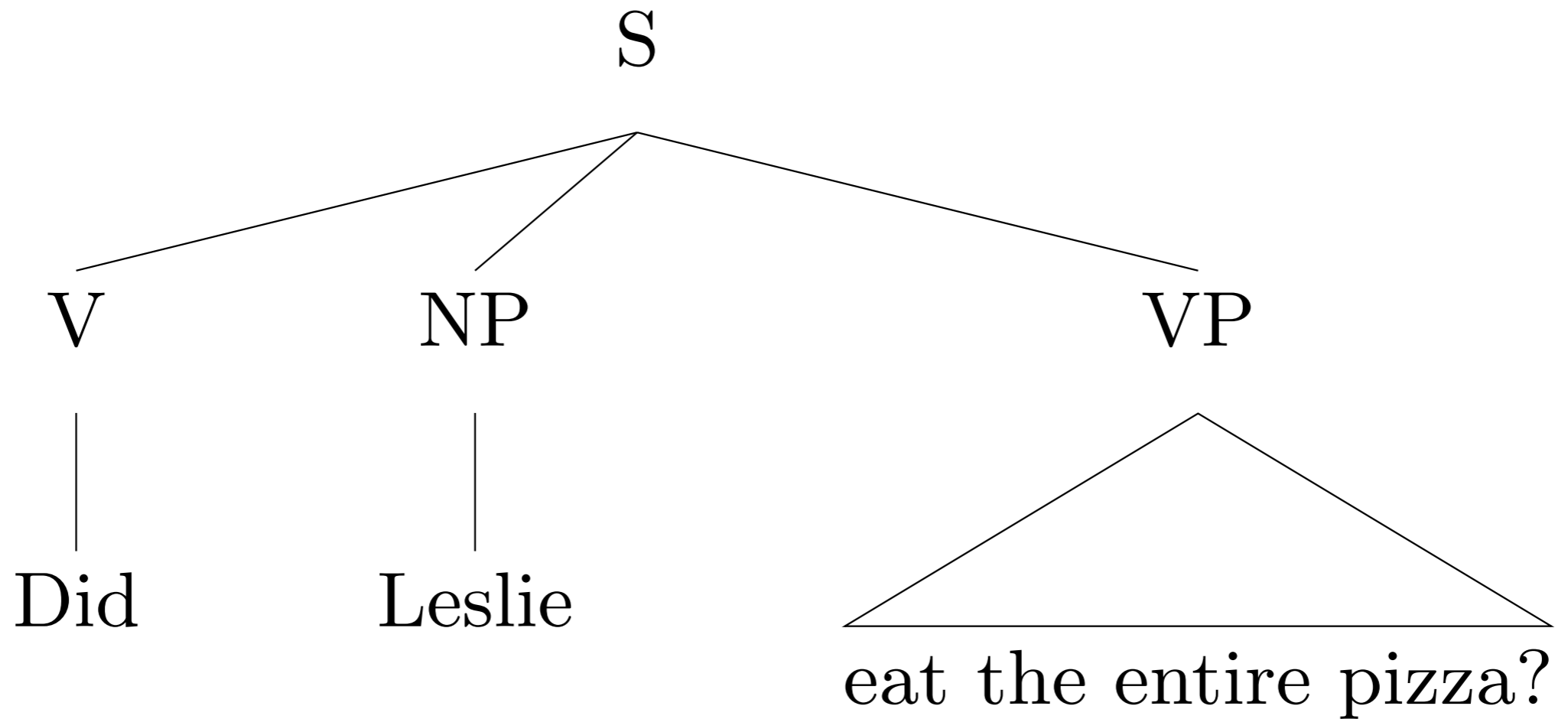
# The Feature INV

- What is the INV value of inputs to the Inversion LR?
  - Perhaps surprisingly, the input is [INV +]
  - Word-to-word rules (*pi-rules*) have default identity of HEAD features, and no INV value is given on the input
- Then what work is the feature doing?
  - It's used to mark auxiliaries that can't or must be inverted  
*You better watch out* vs. *\*Better you watch out*  
*I shall go* (*shall* ~ 'will') vs. *Shall I go?* (*shall* ~ 'should')

# Other Cases of Inversion

- Inversion is not limited to questions
  - Preposed negatives: *Never have I been so upset!*
  - Conditionals: *Had we known, we would have left.*
  - Exclamations: *May your teeth fall out!*
- Does our rule account for these?
  - No. Our rule's output says [MODE ques]. And each construction has slightly different idiosyncrasies.
- How might we extend our analysis to cover them?
  - Define a type of inversion lexical rules, sharing certain properties, but with some differences.

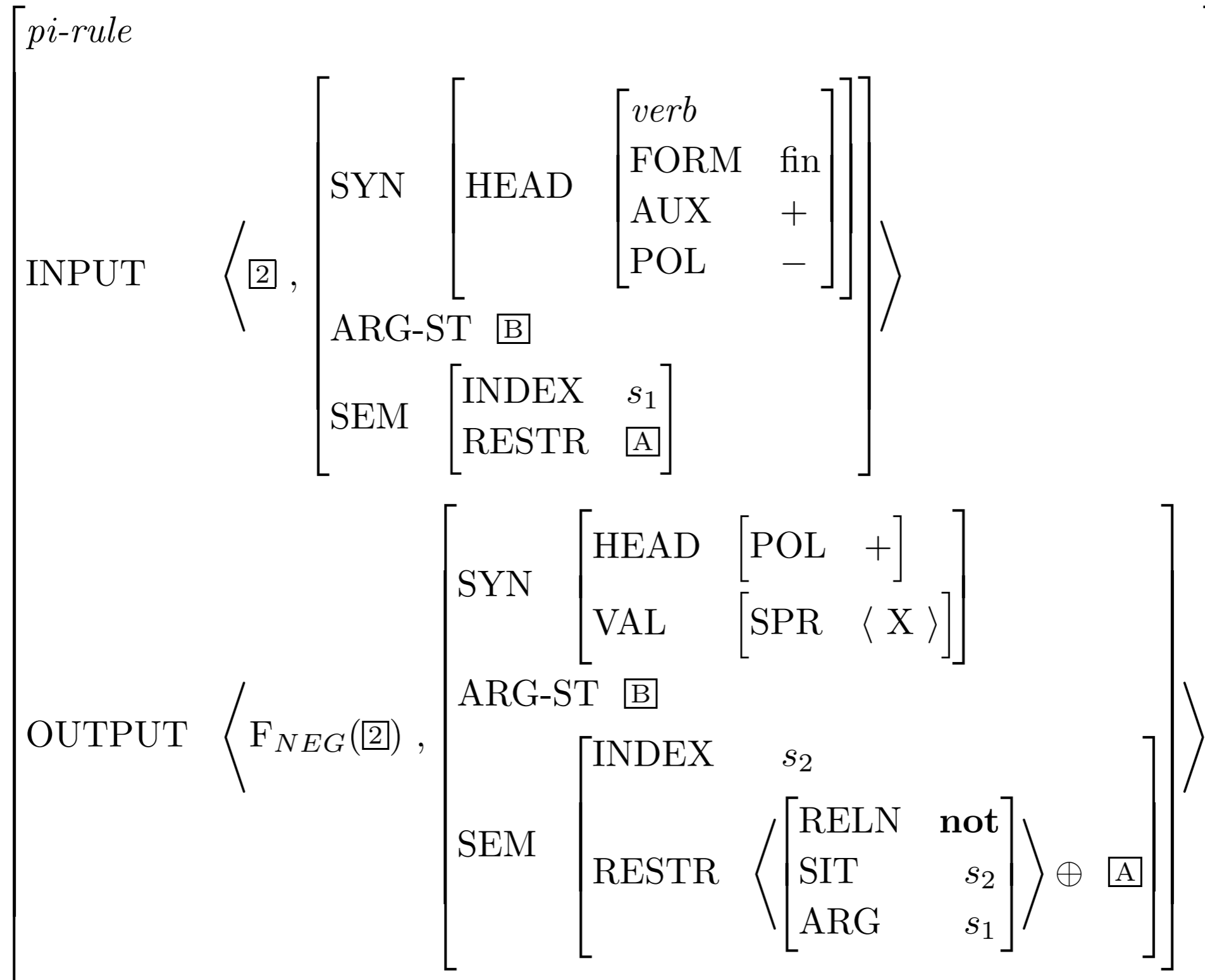
# Inversion: A Sample Tree



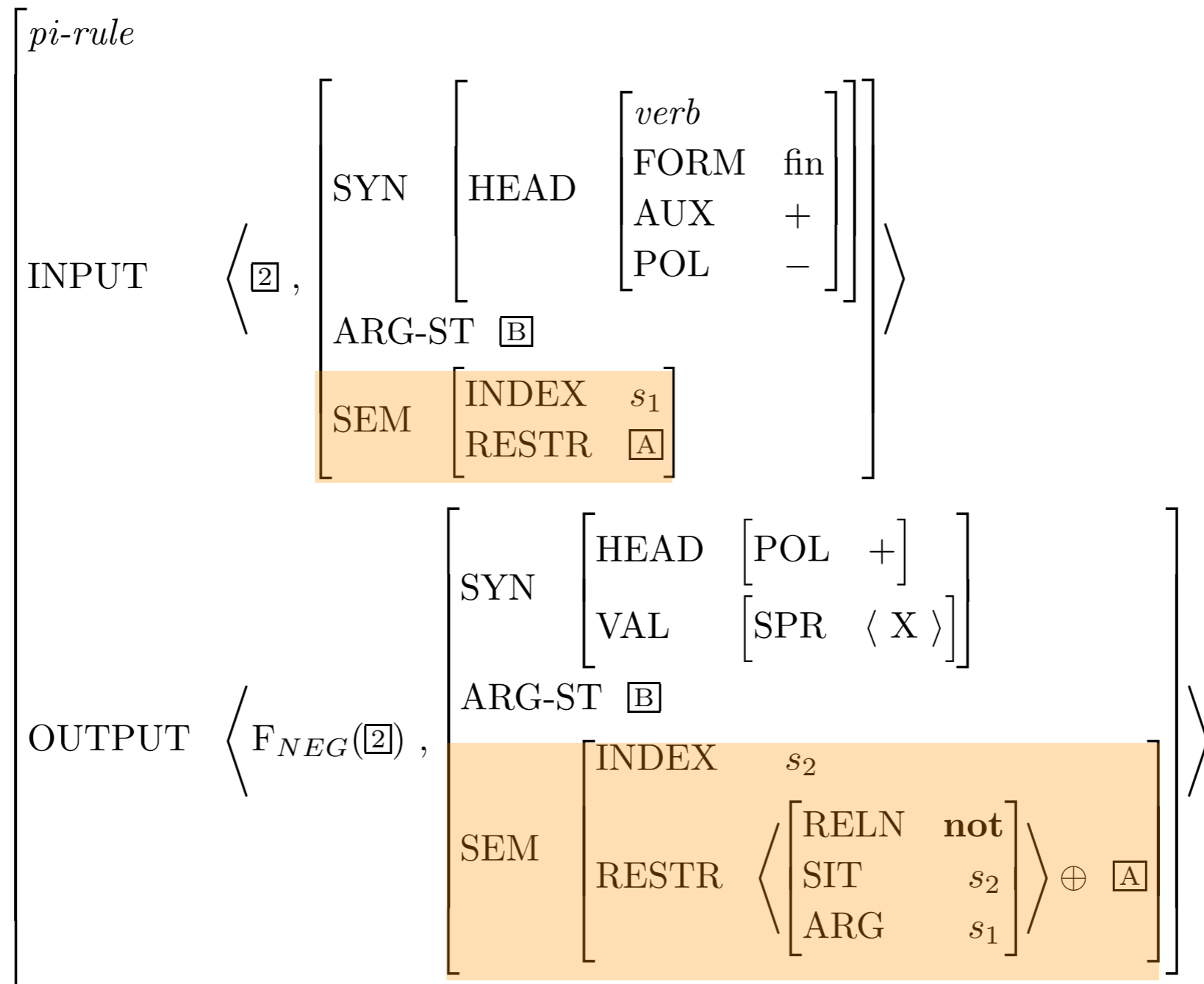
# Contraction

- There are several types of contraction in English, but we're only talking about words ending in *n't*
- It may seem like just *not* said fast, but there's more to it
  - Only finite verbs can take *n't*:  
*\*Terry must haven't seen us*
  - There are morphological irregularities:  
*won't*, not *\*willn't*      *%shan't*, not *\*shalln't*  
*mustn't* pronounced *mussn't*  
*don't* pronounced *doen't*, not *dewn't*  
*\*amn't*

# The Contraction Lexical Rule

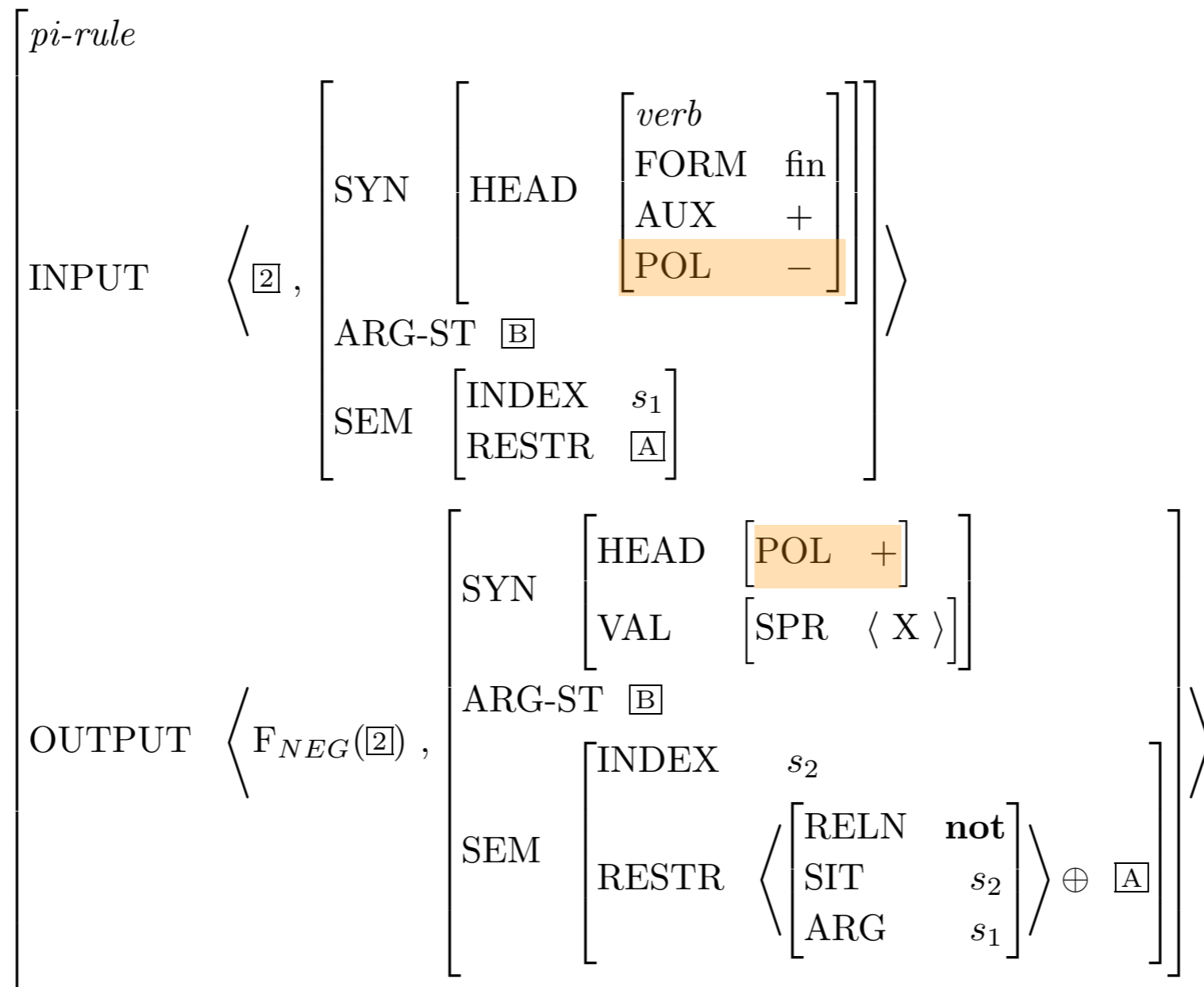


# Most of the work is in the semantics



Why?

# What does POL do?

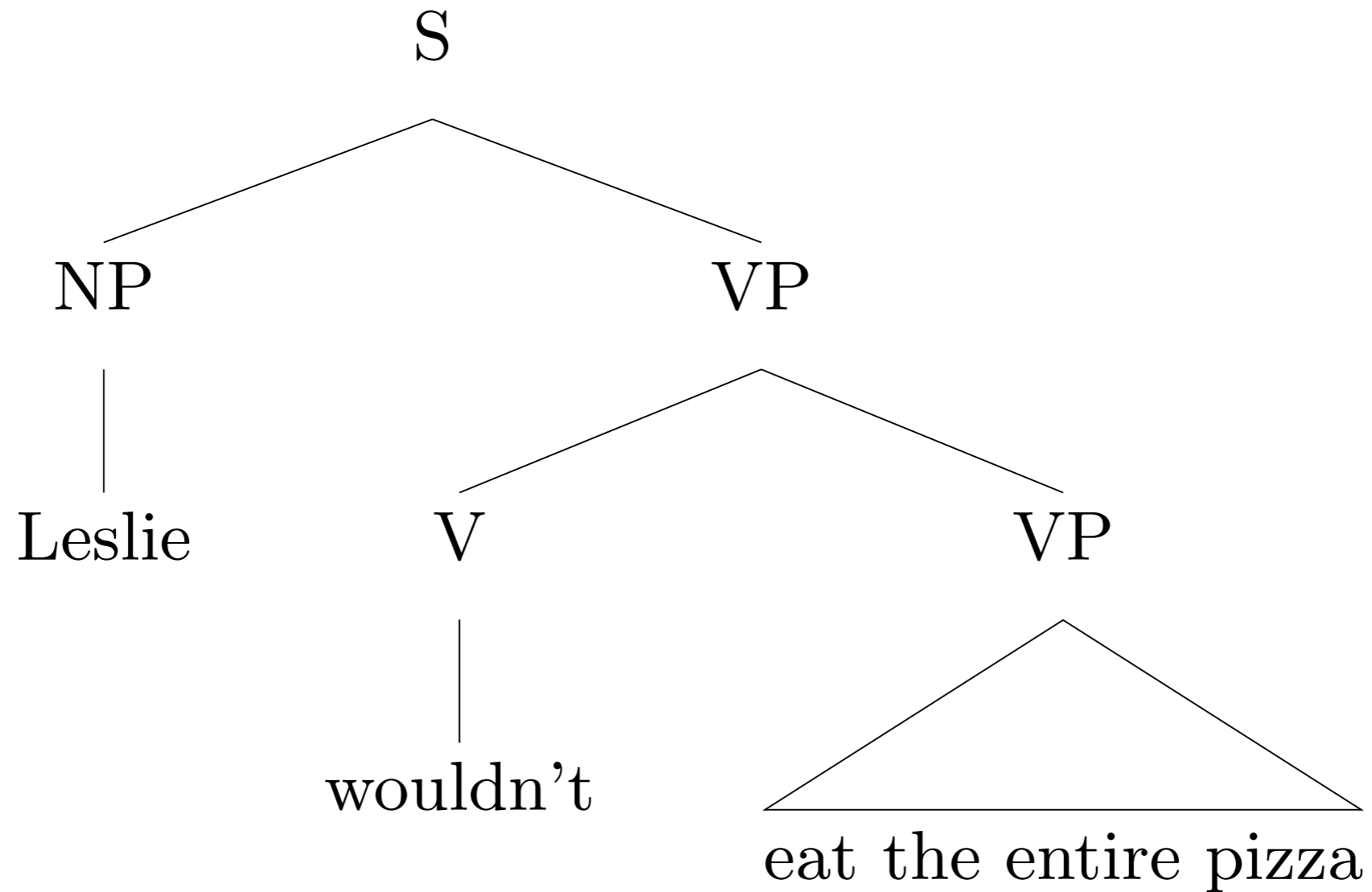


*\*We can't stop*

*\*They won't TOO mind*



# Contraction: Sample Tree



# Ellipsis

- Ellipsis allows VPs to be omitted, so long as they would have been preceded by an auxiliary

*Pat couldn't have been watching us, but  
Chris could have been watching us.*

- Unlike the other NICE properties, this holds of all auxiliaries, not just finite ones.
- What is the elliptical counterpart to a sentence with no auxiliary?

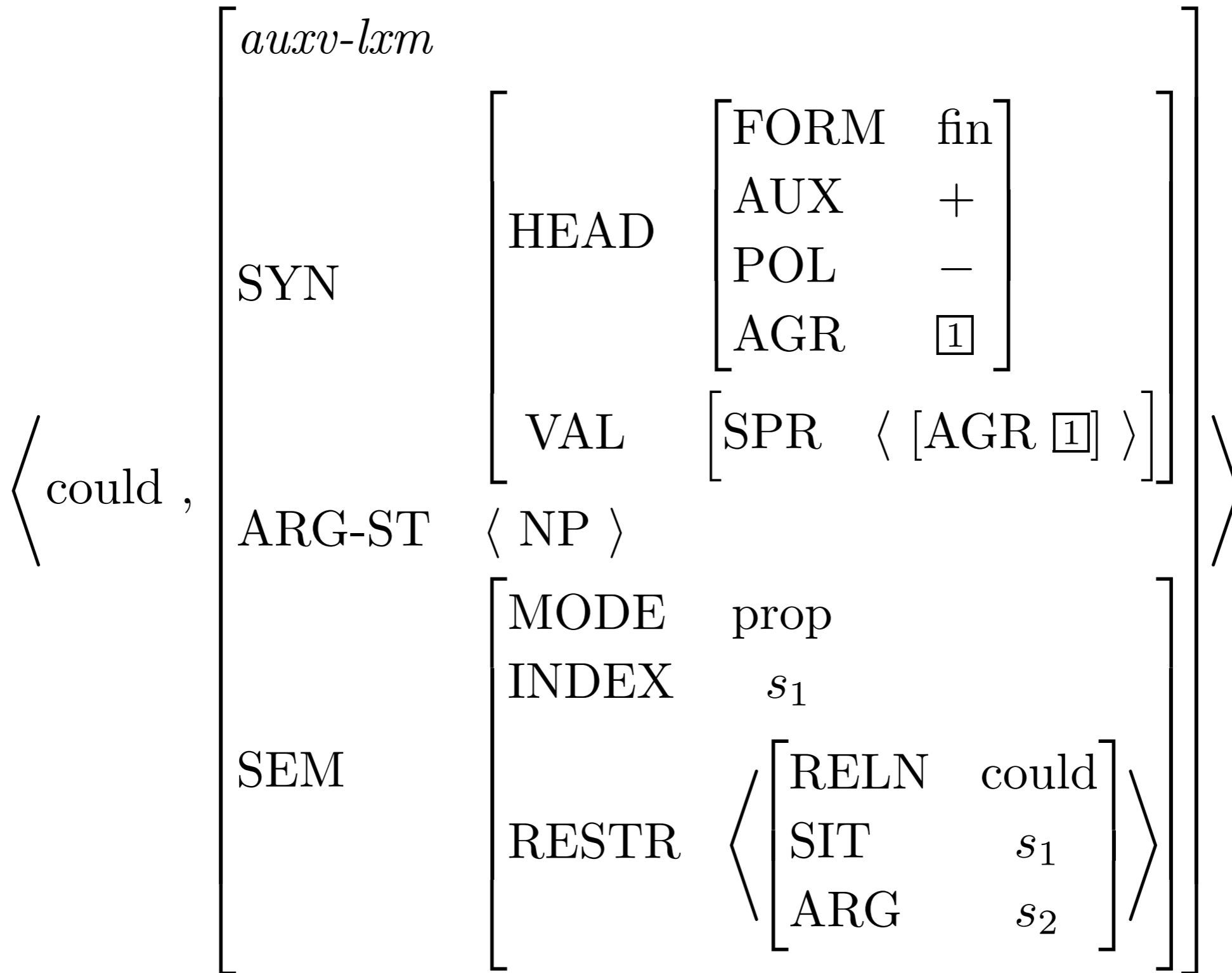
*Whenever Pat watches TV, Chris watches TV  
Whenever Pat watches TV, Chris does*

# The Ellipsis Lexical Rule

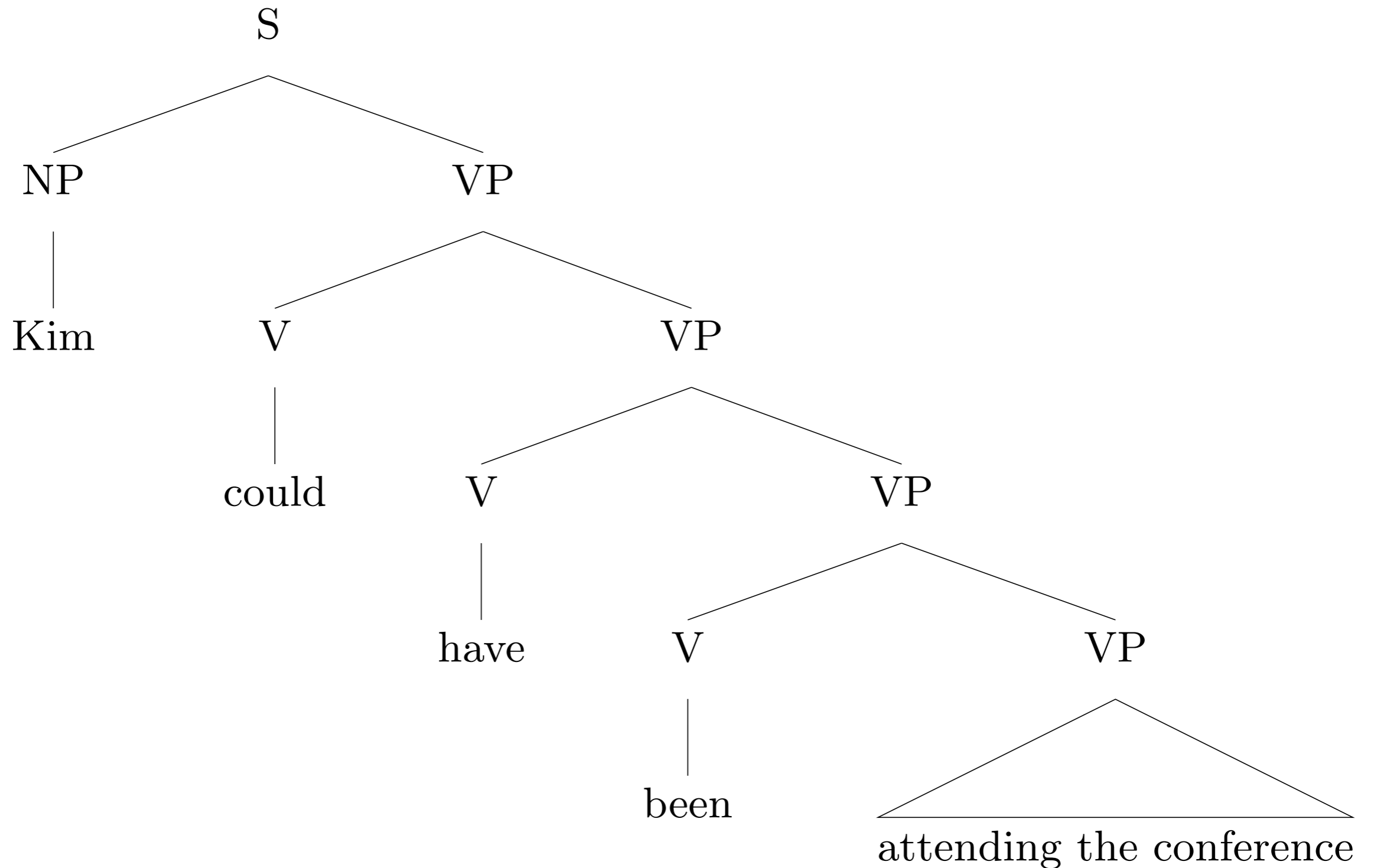
$$\left[ \begin{array}{l}
 d\text{-rule} \\
 \text{INPUT} \quad \left\langle \boxed{1}, \left[ \begin{array}{l}
 \text{auxv-}lxm \\
 \text{ARG-ST} \langle \boxed{2} \rangle \oplus \boxed{A}
 \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\
 \text{OUTPUT} \quad \left\langle \boxed{1}, \left[ \begin{array}{l}
 \text{deriv-}lxm \\
 \text{ARG-ST} \langle \boxed{2} \rangle
 \end{array} \right] \right\rangle
 \end{array} \right]$$

- Note that this is a derivational LR (*d-rule*) -- that is, lexeme-to-lexeme
- This means that SYN and SEM are unchanged, by default

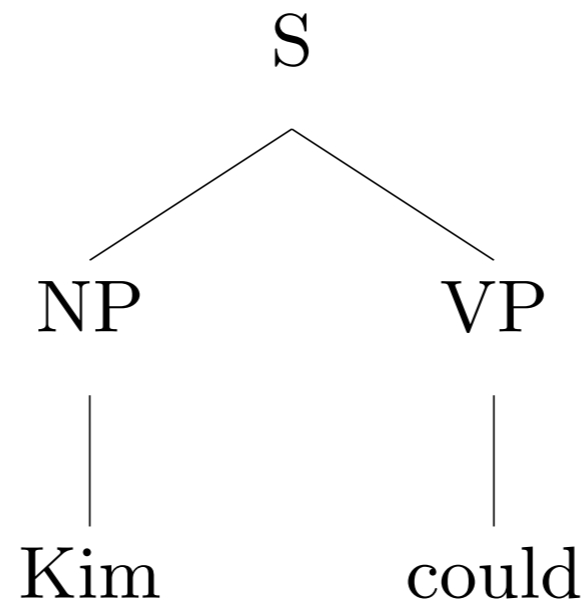
# Ellipsis: A Sample Output



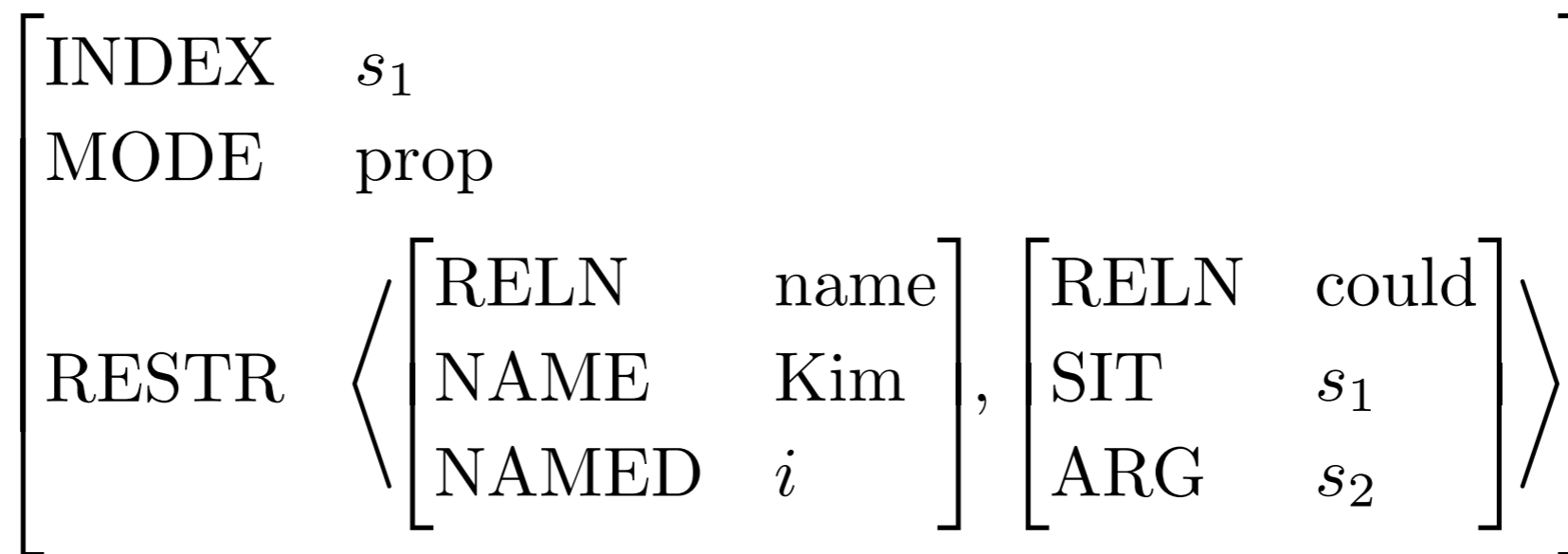
# Ellipsis: A Sample Tree



# Semantics of Ellipsis



What is the SEM value of the S node of this tree?



Note:  $s_2$  has to be filled in by context.

# Infinitival *to* Revisited

- VP Ellipsis can occur after *to*:

*We didn't find the solution, but we tried to.*

- This is covered by our Ellipsis LR if we say *to* is [AUX +].
- Since AUX is declared on type *verb*, it follows that *to* is a verb.

# *do* Revisited

- Chomsky's old analysis: in sentences w/o auxiliaries...
  - Tense can get separated from the verb in various ways
    - Negation/Reaffirmation inserts something between Tense and the following verb
    - Inversion moves Tense to the left of the subject NP
    - Ellipsis deletes what follows Tense
  - When this happens, *do* is inserted to support Tense
- Our counterpart:
  - NICE properties hold only of auxiliaries
  - *do* is a semantically empty auxiliary, so negated, reaffirmed, inverted, and elliptical sentences that are the semantic counterparts to sentences w/o auxiliaries are ones with *do*.



# Summary

- Our analysis employs straightforward mechanisms
  - Lexical entries for auxiliaries
  - 3 new features (AUX, POL, INV)
  - 4 lexical rules
- We handle a complex array of facts
  - co-occurrence restrictions (ordering & iteration)
  - the NICE properties
  - auxiliary *do*
  - combinations of NICE constructions