Unit 5: Negative Transformation

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Unit 5: Negative Transformation

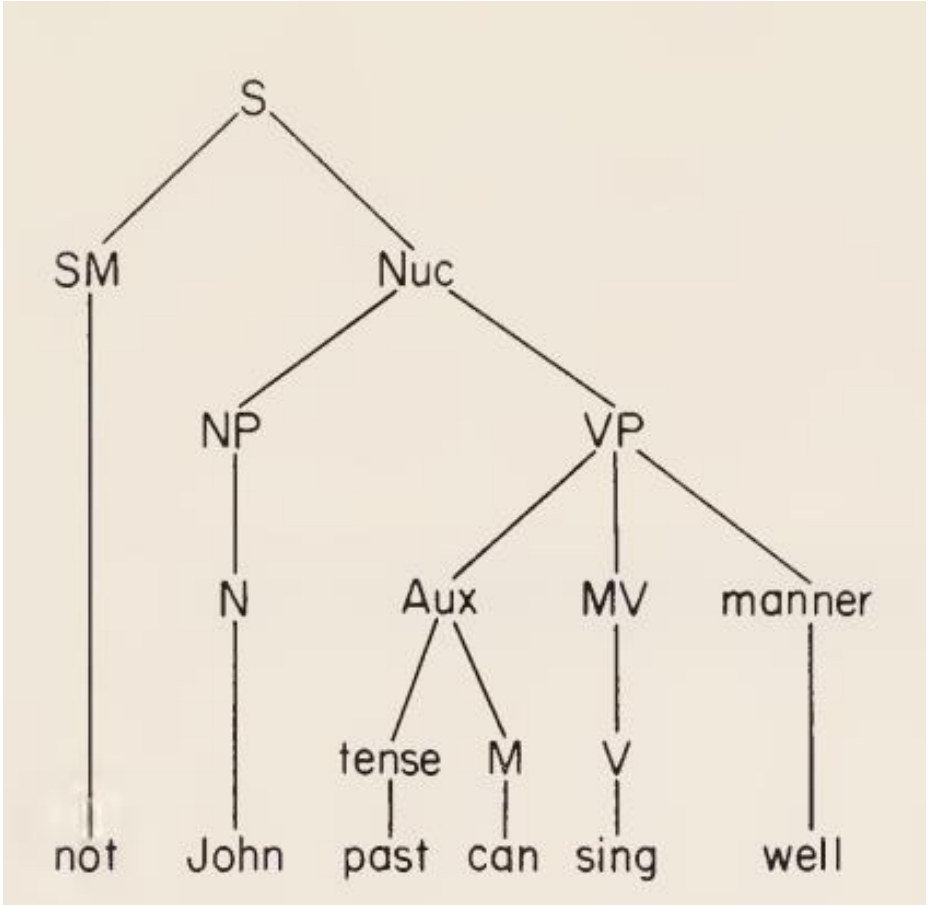
- **Transformational grammar** is a theoretical framework for understanding the structure of sentences in natural languages. It includes both phrase structure rules, which describe the hierarchical structure of sentences, and transformational rules, which account for the relationships between different sentence structures.
- Negation in transformational grammar is often addressed through the use of transformational rules that involve the movement of elements within a sentence. For example, consider the transformation from an affirmative to a negative sentence:
- Affirmative: John has read the book.
- Negative: John has not read the book.

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

- In transformational grammar, the concepts of deep structure and surface structure were introduced by Noam Chomsky as a way to account for the relationship between the meaning of a sentence and its actual linguistic form. These concepts are part of Chomsky's generative grammar framework.
- **Deep Structure:**
  - **Definition**: Deep structure represents the underlying, abstract, and meaning-based representation of a sentence. It reflects the core syntactic and semantic relationships between words and phrases.
  - **Function**: Deep structure is the level at which the essential meaning of a sentence is captured. It abstracts away from the specific word order and surface-level details.
- **Surface Structure:**
  - **Definition**: Surface structure is the actual arrangement of words and phrases in a sentence. It represents the visible or audible form of a sentence that is produced or perceived.
  - **Function**: Surface structure is the level at which the sentence is realized in terms of word order, inflections, and other surface-level features. It is what we observe or hear when someone speaks or writes.

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

- For example, the deep structure for ‘John could not sing well’. Is the following tree:
- To make negative transformations there are three methods we can use for the sole purpose of inserting the ‘not’ part in a sentence.
- **Rule number one:**
- Move not to the position following the first auxiliary after tense.



Unit 5: Negative Transformation

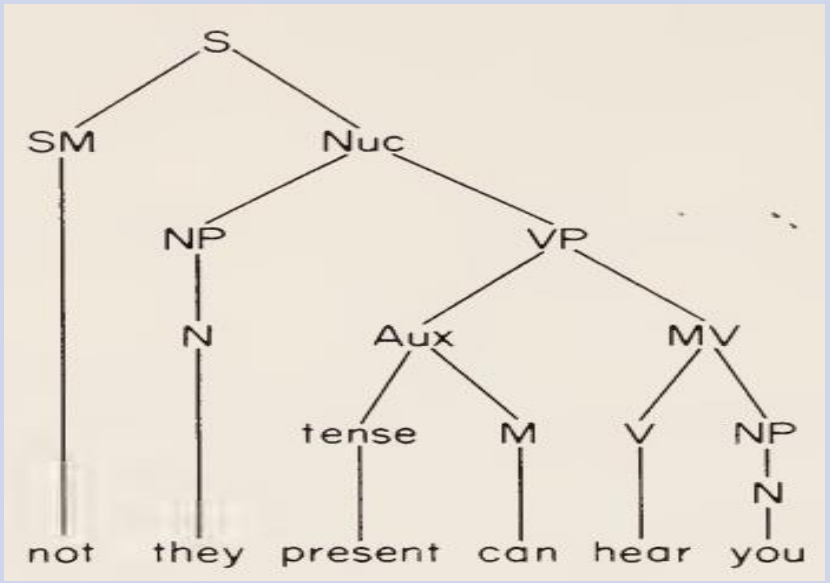
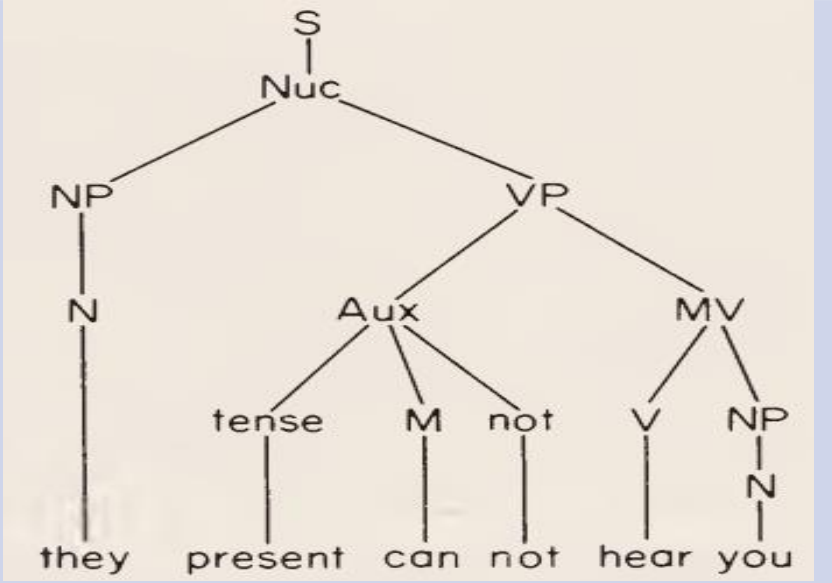
- **The rule can be stated as follows:-**

$$\text{not} + X + \text{tense} + \text{Aux}^1 + Y \Rightarrow X + \text{tense} + \text{Aux}^1 + \text{not} + Y$$

not	X	tense	Aux^1	Y	$\Rightarrow$	X	tense	Aux^1	not	Y
not	they	present	can	hear you		they	present	can	not	hear you

- **For example:-**
- They cannot hear you.

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

Deep Structure	Surface Structure
	

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

- Practice:-

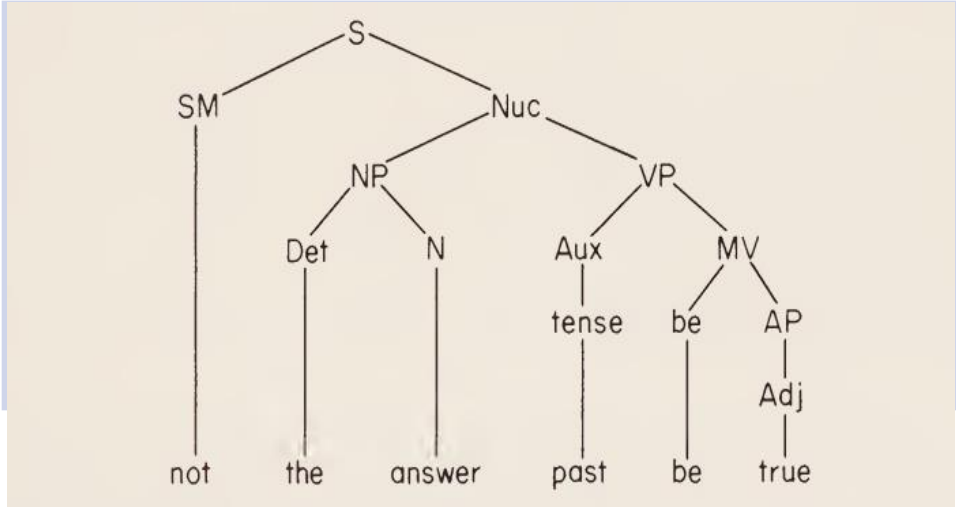
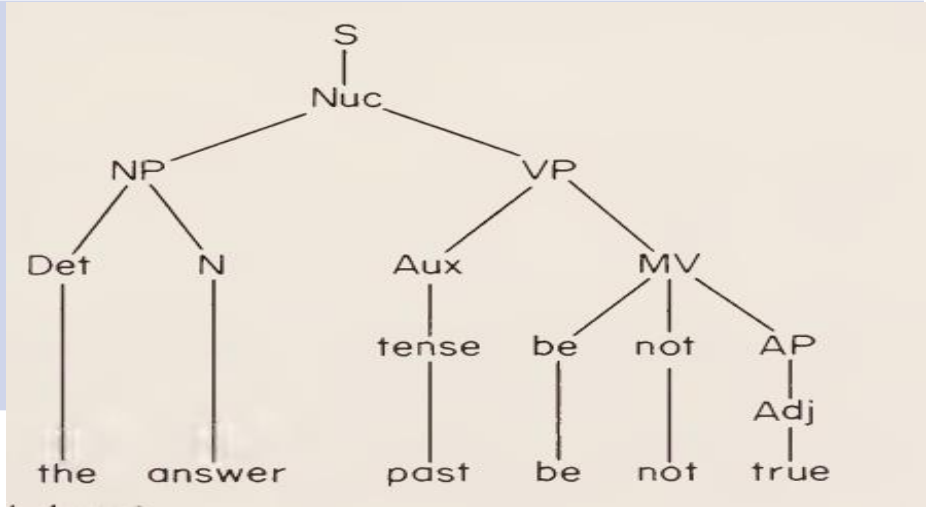
1. not those apples were smelling rotten
2. not Estelle would have done that
3. not you are reading fast enough
4. not Lucille will have finished by then
5. not we had heard the news

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

- **Rule number two**:
- If a sentence only has tense in the auxiliary, then the ‘not’ will be placed after ‘be’ as part of the main verb:-

$$\text{not} + X + \text{tense} + \text{be} + Y \Rightarrow X + \text{tense} + \text{be} + \text{not} + Y$$

- Check the following example for the sentence ‘the answer was not true’

Deep Structure	Surface structure
	

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

- **Practice**:

1. not they are our friends
2. not Jane was friendly
3. not the bird was there

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

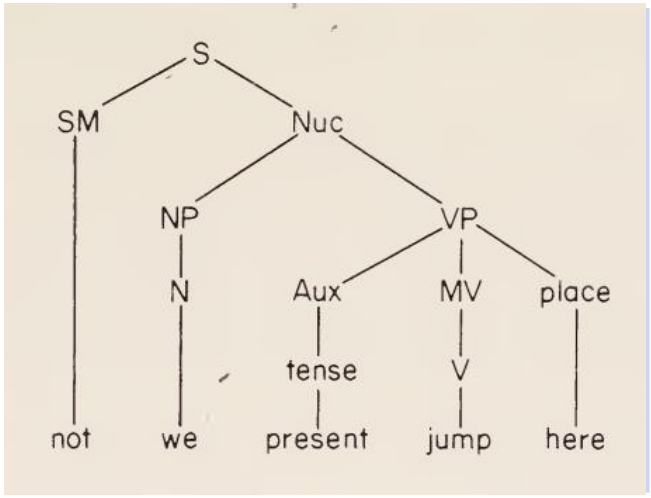
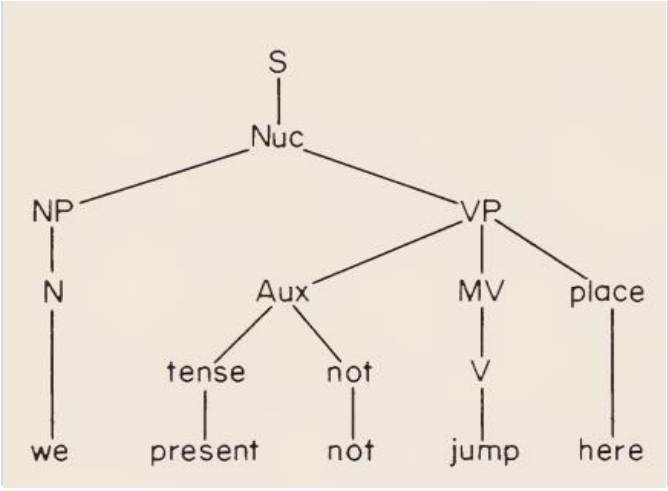
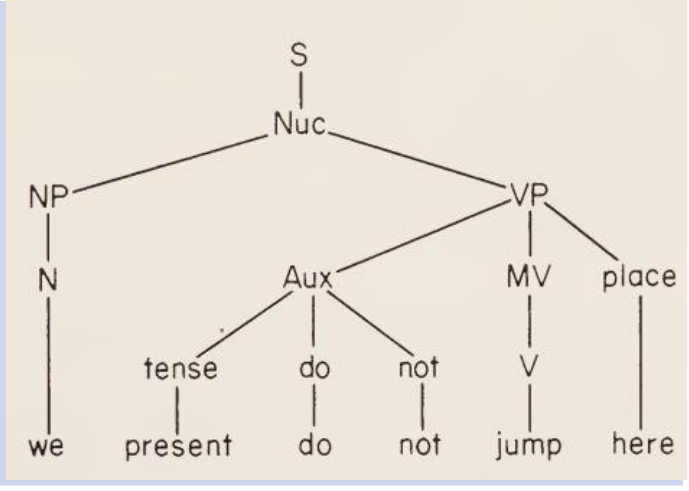
- **Rule Number 3**
- If negation is signalled by the addition of ‘do’ then we add ‘not’ between the tense and the verb.

$$\text{not} + X + \text{tense} + \text{V} + Y \Rightarrow X + \text{tense} + \text{not} + \text{V} + Y$$

$$X + \text{tense} + A + Y \Rightarrow X + \text{tense} + \text{do} + A + Y$$

- **For example:**
- We jump here.

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

Deep Structure 1	Deep structure 2	Surface Structure
		

Unit 5: Negative Transformation

- **Practice:**

We do not play often.
They do not taste the salt.
Terry does not eat early.
The janitor did not do it.
The man does not see me.

- The overall rules for negative transformation can be stated as follows:

$$\text{not} + X + \text{tense} \begin{bmatrix} \text{Aux}^1 \\ \text{be} \\ \text{V} \end{bmatrix} Y \Rightarrow X + \text{tense} \begin{bmatrix} \text{Aux}^1 + \text{not} \\ \text{be} + \text{not} \\ \text{not} + \text{V} \end{bmatrix} Y$$