

Ambiguity

Find at least 5 meanings of this sentence:

I made her duck

- I cooked waterfowl for her benefit (to eat)
- I cooked waterfowl belonging to her
- I created the (plaster?) duck she owns
- I caused her to quickly lower her head or body
- I waved my magic wand and turned her into undifferentiated waterfowl

Ambiguity is Everywhere

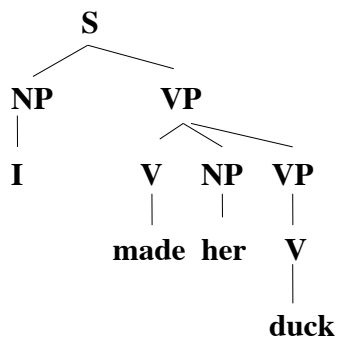
- Lexical category: part of speech
 - ▶ **Duck** can be a **Noun** or **Verb**
 - **V:** *Duck!* I caused her to quickly lower her head or body.
 - **N:** I cooked waterfowl for her benefit
 - ▶ **Her** can be **possessive** (of her) or **dative** (for her)
 - **Possessive:** I cooked waterfowl belonging to her.
 - **Dative:** I cooked waterfowl for her benefit
- Lexical Semantics:
 - ▶ **Make** can mean **create** or **cook**
 - **create:** I made the (plaster) duck statue she owns
 - **cook:** I cooked waterfowl for her benefit

Really Everywhere

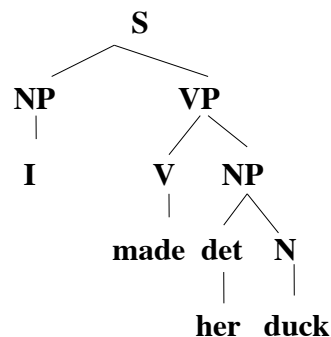
- Grammar: **Make** can be:
 - ▶ Transitive: (**verb** has a **noun direct object**)
 - I cooked [waterfowl belonging to her]
 - ▶ Ditransitive: (**verb** has **2 noun objects**)
 - I (magically) made [her] (into) [undifferentiated waterfowl]
 - ▶ Action-transitive (**verb** has a **direct object and another verb**)
 - I caused [her] [to move her body]

Syntactic Ambiguity

- Structural ambiguity: one sentence can have many syntactic representations



*I caused her to quickly
lower her head or body*



*I created her plaster
waterfowl*