Problem Set Three

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Advances in Logical Grammar

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This problem is due by Tuesday July 17.

Problem

Welsh is a rigidly V-S-O (verb-subject-object) language in the sense that, in finite clauses, no matter whether root or embedded, the finite verb comes first, followed by the subject and then by other arguments (i.e. complements)and adverbials, if any, e.g.

(1) Dywedodd Gwyn y gwelodd ef y bechgyn.

said-3s Gwyn that saw-3s he/him the boys (plu.)

'Gwyn said that he saw the boys.'

Some other basic facts about Welsh include the following:

- There is no case (not even for pronouns).

- There are distinct masculine (*e* in southern Wales, *o* in northern Wales) and feminine (*hi*) third-person singular pronouns.

- All nouns are lexically assigned gender (masculine or feminine), and pronouns agree in number and gender with their antecedents (even when they are nonhuman).

- There is no indefinite article, so (common) noun(phrase)s without articles, even singular count nouns, can function as indefinite NPs.

- As in many languages, the second-person-plural pronoun (*chi*) is used as a polite singular form, as opposed to the familiar second-person plural form (*ti*).

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- Finite verbs inflect for person (1, 2, or 3) and number (s or p), but nonpronominal NP subjects take third-person *singular* agreement on the finite verb, even if the NP is (semantically) plural (see (2) below).

(2)   a.   Dysgais i 'I learned'

        b.   Dysgaist ti 'you (sing. fam.) learned'

        c.   Dysgodd e/o 'he/it learned'

        d.   Dysgodd hi 'she/it learned'

        e.   Dysgon ni 'we learned'

        f.   Dysgoch chi 'you (plu. or polite) learned'

        g.   Dysgon nhw 'they learned'

        h.   Dysgodd y plant 'the children (plu.) learned'

The problem is to write lexical entries for all the words appearing in (1) and (2) that are consistent with all the facts described above, and then to give a complete *syntactic* LG derivation for (1).

Hints:

1. The only rule needed to analyze these examples is Modus Ponens.

2. The complementizer y and the definite article y are different words.

3. Don't worry about explaining why the pronoun in (1) has the form *ef*; this is a purely morphophonemic effect and is not syntactically relevant.

4. 'Complete syntactic derivation' means giving the pheno and tecto for each node in the proof tree.

5. Be sure not to ignore the tricky facts (2)g-h!

6. Use dependent typing for the 'features' on the NPs.