Part 1

In class, we concluded that expletive *it* is inserted into the subject position of sentences
like (1a-b) to satisfy the selectional requirements of T, which require a specifier. (I.e.
subject position in English (specifier of TP) must be filled.)

(1)   a.   It seems that Kim had a bad day.
        b.   It appears that George has trouble with complex ideas.

A number of people pointed out that (1a-b) are (more or less) synonymous with (2a-b).

(2)   a.   Kim seems to have had a bad day.
        b.   George appears to have trouble with complex ideas.

(2a-b) are different from (1a-b) in that the complement of *seem* and *appear* is a nonfinite
(tenseless) clause rather than a finite (present or past tense) clause. For the purpose of
this assignment, assume that the infinitive morpheme *to* is is of the category T, with the
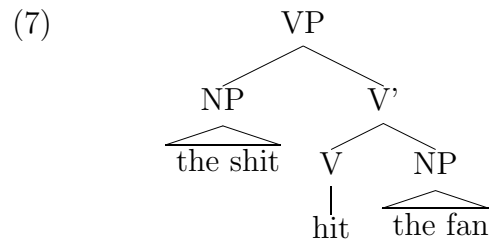lexical entry in (3). (Here -FIN means 'nonfinite'.)

(3)   *to*
$$
\begin{bmatrix}
\text{CAT} & \begin{bmatrix} \{\text{T, -FIN}\} \\ \text{INFL} \quad [\text{VFORM } bare] \end{bmatrix} \\
\text{INFL} & [\phi \ \_\_] \\
\text{SEL} & \begin{bmatrix} \text{COMP} & \text{V} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{N} \mid \text{C} \end{bmatrix}
\end{bmatrix}
$$

1. Taking our new assumptions about semantic roles and the relation between semantic
roles, syntactic positions and meaning as a starting point, propose an analysis of (3a-b)
that both accounts for the surface word order and explains the synonymy between these
examples and the corresponding sentences in (1). As usual, make any new assumptions
explicit; in particular, be sure to be completely specific about the lexical entries of the
verbs *seem* and *appear*. Feel free to construct additional examples as necessary to support
or develop your points.

2. Does your analysis also account for the fact that the (a) and (b) sentences in (4)-(5)
are synonymous? (To convince yourself of their synonymy, ask whether the (a) sentences
could be true and the (b) sentences false in the same context. The answer is no.) If
it does, say how; if it doesn't, modify it so that it does. To answer this question, you
should start out by saying precisely how our current set of assumptions accounts for the
fact that simple active/passive pairs like (6a) and (6b) are synonymous.

(4)   a.   Sally seems to have eaten the fish.
        b.   The fish seems to have been eaten by Sally.
(5)   a.   Sam appears to have damaged the car.
        b.   The car appears to have been damaged by Sam.
(6)   a.   Sally ate the fish.
        b.   The fish was eaten by Sally.

3. Idiomatic expressions like *pay attention to, keep tabs on, let the cat out of the bag, the shit hit the fan,* and *all hell break loose* are generally assumed to be listed in the lexicon as syntactic units. For example, *the shit hit the fan* is listed (along with its idiomatic meaning) as the VP in (7).

(7)

Taking this assumption about idioms as a starting point, use the fact that all of the examples listed below permit idiomatic interpretations to provide additional arguments in favor of the analysis you have developed so far.

(8)   a.   The shit seems to have hit the fan.
           b.   All hell appears to have broken loose in Congress.
           c.   A fair amount of attention seems to have been paid to this problem.
           d.   The cat appears to have been let out of the bag.

4. Extend your analysis to account for the following data, making explicit the lexical entries of the adjectives *certain, likely,* etc.

(9)   a.   It is certain/likely/unlikely/sure that the Tigers will win the Series.
           b.   The Tigers are certain/likely/unlikely/sure to win the Series.
           c.   The Series is certain/likely/unlikely/sure to be won by the Tigers.
           d.   The shit is certain/likely/unlikely/sure to hit the fan.

5. Finally, show how your analysis derives (10).

(10)   The Tigers appear to be certain to win the Series.

Part 2

The examples in (11) are completely ungrammatical, and the ones in (11) are too.

(11)   a. *It seems Kim to have had a bad day.
           b. *It appears George to have trouble with complex ideas.
           c. *It is unlikely the Cardinals to win the Series.
           d. *It is certain the Tigers to win the Series.

(12)   a. *Kim seems (that) has had a bad day.
           b. *George appears (that) has trouble with complex ideas.
           c. *The Cardinals are unlikely (that) will be win the Series.
           d. *The Tigers are certain (that) will win the Series.

Does the analysis you developed in Part 1 account for these facts? If so, say how; if not, try to modify it so that it does. Be very clear and explicit in your proposals, and be sure to carefully consider all the predictions and consequences of your claims!