

When reading squibs, some standard notations and abbreviations are used:

Abbreviation	Translation
$A(B)C$	ABC or AC (i.e, B is optional)
$A(*B)C$	AC is OK, ABC is bad (i.e, B is forbidden)
$A*(B)C$	ABC is OK, AC is bad (i.e, B is necessary)
\sim	Not
$\square A / \sim \square A$	A is necessary / A is not necessary
$\exists A$	There is A / A is grammatical
$\sim \exists A / \nexists A$	There is no A / A is ungrammatical (= *A) [I learned the latter meaning of this symbol from Zellig Harris]
$\#$	This symbol is used, in writing the structural description or change of a rule, to indicate that a node is Chomsky-adjoined to another. Thus, if A immediately dominates B, Chomsky-adjoining C to the left of A, will result in a structure with a new node A that immediately dominates C on the left, and also dominates the old node A on the right (which will continue to dominate B).