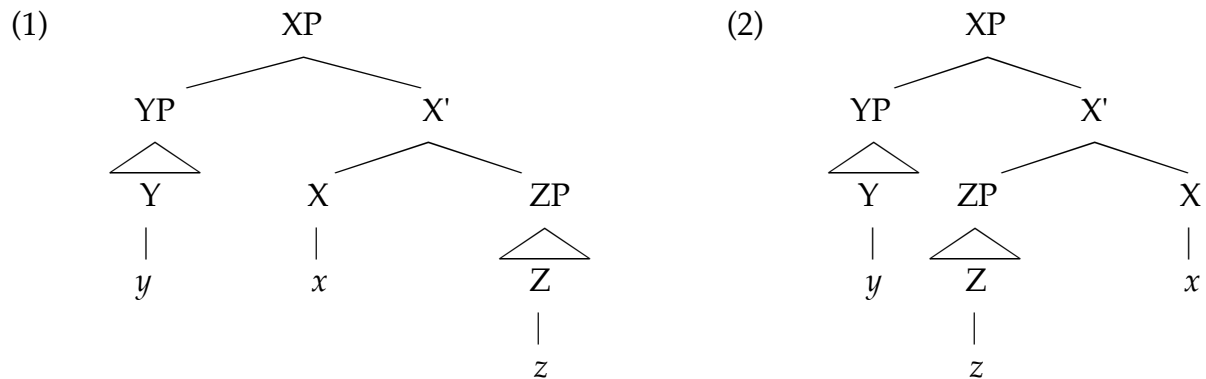


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HEAD PARAMETER REVISITED



Since (1) and (2) have the same hierarchical structure, $d(A)$ should be identical: $\langle y,x \rangle$, $\langle y,z \rangle$, and $\langle x,z \rangle$. Now, depending on whether the linear order relation is “precede” or “follow”, the antisymmetry approach allows only two possible linear orderings of the hierarchical structure in (1) and (2):

- (3) a. *Specifier-Head-Complement*, or
 b. *Complement-Head-Specifier*.

Kayne provides arguments that **the relation involved is actually precedence**, and that, accordingly, the only available word order is the *Specifier-Head-Complement* order. What is crucial is that the order *Specifier-Complement-Head* is undervivable under this approach. If that’s the case, then there can’t be a head directionality parameter (nor a subject side parameter for that matter) within this framework.

To explain the presence of *head-final structures*, Kayne proposes that these are the **result of movement operations**. In essence, every time we see what looks like a complement preceding its head, it must be that this complement has raised from its underlying post-head position to a specifier pre-head position.

One consequence of this approach is that **the “mixed” languages discussed earlier now pose no problem**: There is no need to assume different parameterization for categories (as in Huang 1994), or for θ -role or Case-assignment (as in Travis 1989).

Kayne’s antisymmetry approach must be considered good news for languages like German and Dutch, which exhibit “mixed” head directionality. Zwart (1993) argues that one advantage of the antisymmetry approach is that it allows us to get rid of the “ugliness” of “mixed directionality.” But Zwart also provides an interesting **empirical argument from the syntax of Dutch** that favors Kayne’s theory.

(4) **Generalization 1**

“In Dutch, when a head allows its complement to appear on one side only, the complement always follows the head.” [NB: The same holds for German.]

- (5) a. ... dat het regent buiten. C-IP
 that it rains outside
 b. de vader van Jan D-NP, N-PP
 the father of Jan
- (6) a. de verwoesting van de stad
 the destruction of the city
 b. *de van de stad verwoesting
 the of the city destruction

(7) **Generalization 2**

“When a head allows its complement to appear on both sides, head and complement do not need to be adjacent when the complement precedes the head.” [= German too]

- (8) a. ... dat Jan [zijn rubewus nooit halt]. *complement-X-V*
 that Jan his driver’s license never gets
 ‘... that Jan will never get his driver’s license.’
 b. Hij was [het Amhaars volledig machtig]. *complement-X-A*
 he was the Amharic completely in-command-of
 ‘He knew Amharic perfectly.’
 c. de weg [het boos weer in] *complement-X-P*
 the road the forest back into
 ‘the road back into the forest’

Of course, we still need to ask what makes complements of some heads move — while complements of other heads don’t. (In minimalism: (strong) features...)

You should also start wondering about “well-behaved” head final languages like Japanese and Basque, and whether they follow under Kayne’s theory. After all, the original insight about these languages has to do with their *systematic word order correlations* that we discussed last week (recall Table 1 from the previous handout).

How do these follow under the antisymmetry approach?

On a more conceptual level, is movement a free operation of natural language grammar, or is it a more costly operation? If movement is indeed costly — a minimalist postulate, if you remember (Chomsky 1995) — then the antisymmetry theory makes the grammar more complex by having to postulate “massive” movements everywhere. We will leave these issues open here, but feel free to pursue them if you want in your research paper and/or your class presentation.