

October 24 & 27, 2006

## CLASSES 15-16: THETA DOMAINS

### EXTERNAL ARGUMENTS

It is obvious that a **thematic** “object” can become a **grammatical** “subject”:

- (1) a. This man / these men **kisses** / **kiss** that woman.  
 b. That woman **was** kissed by this man / by these men.  
 c. Those women **were** kissed by this man / by these men.

• *dissociate grammatical function from thematic role — same for thematic subjects?*

- (2) a. She **took** the book. e. She **took** offence.  
 b. She **took** a rest. f. She **took** office.  
 c. She **took** a bus. g. She **took** her medicine.  
 d. She **took** a nap. h. She **took** her time.

(3) **Government**

$\alpha$  governs  $\beta$  iff

- (i)  $\alpha$  c-commands  $\beta$  and  
 (ii)  $\beta$  c-commands  $\alpha$ .

(4) **C-Command**

$\alpha$  c-commands  $\beta$  iff

- (i)  $\alpha$  does not dominate  $\beta$ ;  
 (ii)  $\beta$  does not dominate  $\alpha$ ;  
 (iii) the first branching node dominating  $\alpha$  also dominates  $\beta$ ; and  
 (iv)  $\alpha$  does not equal  $\beta$ .

- (5) a. [<sub>S</sub> John **INFL** [<sub>VP</sub> saw Mary ] ]  
 b. [<sub>IP</sub> John [<sub>I'</sub> **I**<sup>0</sup> [<sub>VP</sub> saw Mary ] ] ]

• *replace c-command by m-command (defined over “the first maximal projection”)*

- (6) [<sub>IP</sub> John [<sub>I'</sub> **I**<sup>0</sup> [<sub>AgrOP</sub> \_\_\_ [<sub>AgrO'</sub> **AgrO**<sup>0</sup> [<sub>VP</sub> saw Mary ] ] ] ] ]

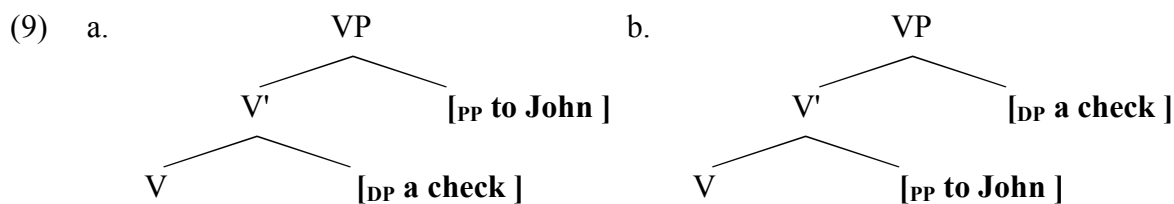
Solution: Predicate-Internal Subject Hypothesis (PISH)

- (7) [<sub>IP</sub> John [<sub>I'</sub> **I**<sup>0</sup> [<sub>VP</sub> **t**<sub>John</sub> [<sub>V'</sub> saw Mary ] ] ] ]

- (8) a. **The shit hit the fan.** *idioms and raising*  
 b. The girls will **write** a book and be **awarded** a prize for it. *coordinate structures*  
 c. Which stories about **each other** did they say the kids liked? *binding effects*  
 d. **All** the men have left the party. *floating quantifiers*  
 e. **Ain't** nothin' happenin'. *VSO order*

**DITRANSITIVE VERBS**

Another relevant issue in the thematic domain concerns the **structure of ditransitive verbs**.

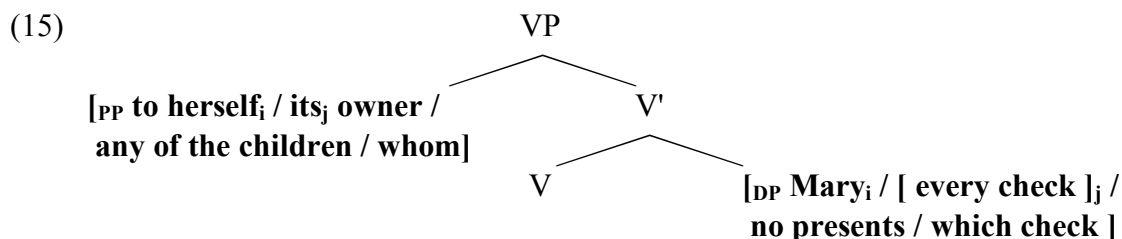
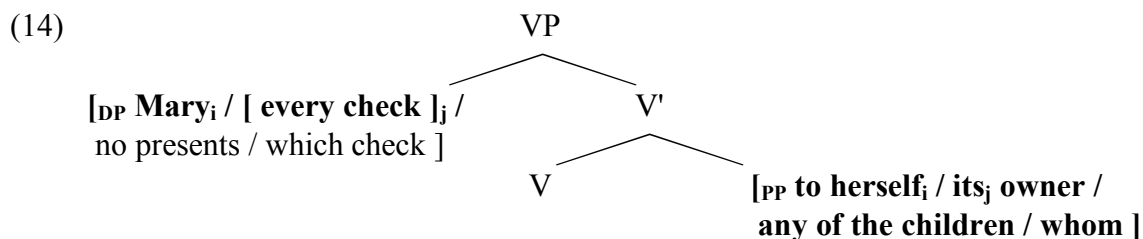


- (10) a. I presented/showed **Mary** to *herself*. *reflexive*  
 b. \*I presented/showed *herself* to **Mary**.

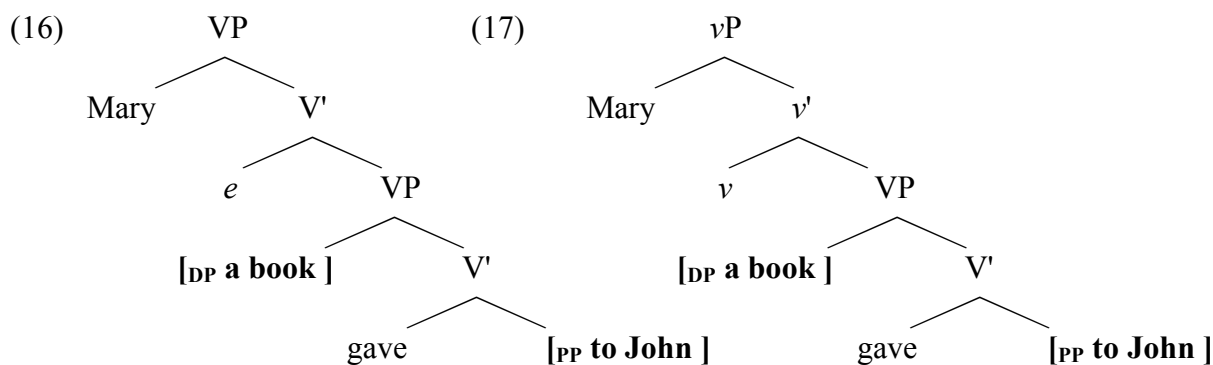
- (11) a. I gave/sent [ **every check** ]<sub>i</sub> to *its*<sub>i</sub> owner. *bound variable*  
 b. ??I gave/sent *his*<sub>i</sub> paycheck to [ **every worker** ]<sub>i</sub>.

- (12) a. I sent **no** presents to *any* of the children. *negative polarity*  
 b. \*I sent *any* of the packages to **none** of the children.

- (13) a. **Which check** did you send to *whom*? *superiority*  
 b. \**Whom* did you send **which check** to?



• where to put the **external argument**, and what to do with the **verb position** (word order)?





Lastly, we should discuss intransitives, namely **unaccusative verbs** and **unergative verbs**.

(27) **Italian**

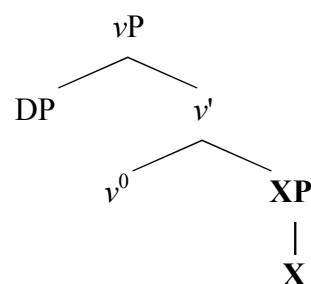
- a. Giovanni ha / \*è **comprato** un libro. *transitive*  
*Giovanni has/is bought a book*  
 ‘Giovanni bought a book.’
- b. Giovanni ha / \*è **telefonato**. *unergative*  
*Giovanni has/is called*  
 ‘Giovanni called.’
- c. Giovanni è / \*ha **arrivato**. *unaccusative*  
*Giovanni is/has arrived*  
 ‘Giovanni arrived.’

(28) **Portuguese**

- a. A Maria **comprou** os livros.  
*the Maria bought the books*  
 ‘Maria bought the books.’
- b. **Comprados** os livros, ... d. **Chegada** a Maria, ...  
*buy.PART.MASC.PL the books arrive.PART.FEM.SG the Maria*  
 ‘After the books were bought, ...’ ‘After Maria arrived, ...’
- c. \***Comprada** a Maria, ... e. \***Espirrada** a Maria, ...  
*buy.PART.FEM.SG the Maria sneeze.PART.FEM.SG the Maria*  
 ‘After Maria bought (something), ...’ ‘After Maria sneezed, ...’

- (29) a. John **smiled** (a beautiful smile).  
 b. John **arrived** (\*an unexpected arrival).

- (30) a. Unergative verbs: [VP DP [v' V ] ] (31)  
 b. Unaccusative verbs: [VP V DP ]



• *light verb paraphrase of unergative*:

- (32) a. John **sighed**.  
 b. John **gave a sigh**.

(33) **Basque**

- a. Jonek Mireni **min egin** dio. *transitive*  
*Jon.ERG Miren.DAT hurt do AUX*  
 ‘Jon hurt Miren.’
- b. Emakumeak **barre egin** du. *unergative*  
*woman.DEF.ERG laugh do AUX*  
 ‘The woman has laughed.’
- c. Kamioiak **etorri** dira. *unaccusative*  
*truck.DET.PL arrived AUX*  
 ‘The trucks have arrived.’