

November 25, 2008

MOTIVATION FOR SPLITTING INFL

There may have been some confusion last class, so let's **backtrack** what we did, and why.

BACKGROUND

- ❶ subject agrees in $[\phi]$ (**phi-features**: person, number, gender) with finite verb form in IP

- (1) a. This one boy has / *have left home.
 b. These two boys *has / have left home.
- (2) a. This one boy $\emptyset_{[3SG, +PRES]}$ leaves / *leave home.
 b. These two boys $\emptyset_{[3PL, +PRES]}$ *leaves / leave home.

- ❷ subject also checks $[NOM]$ (**nominative case feature**) with finite (verb form) in IP

- (3) a. He / *Him has left home.
 b. He / *Him $\emptyset_{[3SG, +PRES]}$ leaves home.
- (4) a. Mary expects *he / him to have left home.
 b. Mary expects *he / him to leave home.

- ❸ observation: $[NOM]$ and $[\phi]$ go together between subject and finite Infl (head of IP)

- (5) $[IP \text{ subject } [I' I^0_{[+FINITE]} \dots]]$

- ❹ desideratum: we want to find as few **structural feature-checking relations** as possible

- (6) $[YP_{[F]} \dots X^0_{[F]} \dots]$

- ❺ hypothesis: generalize subject-finite I relation and assume **checking to be Spec-Head**

- (7) a. $[XP \ YP_{[F]} \ [X' \ X^0_{[F]} \ \dots]]$
 b.
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- ```

graph TD
 XP --> YP
 XP --> X_prime[X']
 YP --- F1[F]
 X_prime --> X0[X^0]
 X_prime --> dots[...]
 X0 --- F2[F]

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where  $[F]$  = *some feature to be checked* and  $[F] \dots [F]$  = *matched features checked*

## EXTENSIONS

- ① (i) the lexical verb **V moves to I<sup>0</sup> in French**, but not beyond  $v^0$  in English  
(ii) the **infinitival verb may move a little lower** than  $I^0$  in French, but above  $v^0$

*this was shown through the examples (1) and (3) from last class's handout with the additional assumptions that (some) adverbs and negation are adjoined to vP/VP — NB: negation seems to be a bit different, so that it might be a little higher: (3a) vs (3c)*

- ② (i) since **Infl expresses tense (TNS) and agreement (AGR)**, let's split them  
(ii) since the finite verb expresses “more” TNS than the infinitival, **TNS above AGR?**

(8) [TP ... T<sup>0</sup> ... (*pas*) ... [AgrP ... Agr<sup>0</sup> (*à peine*) [vP ... v<sup>0</sup> ... [VP ... V ... ]]]]

- ③ (i) the **finite verb in French moves to T<sup>0</sup>**, the infinitival may move lower (Agr<sup>0</sup>)

(9) a. [TP ... V<sub>[+FIN]</sub>-T<sup>0</sup> ... (*pas*) ... [AgrP ... Agr<sup>0</sup> (*à peine*) [vP ... ]]]  
b. \* [TP ... T<sup>0</sup> ... (*pas*) ... [AgrP ... V<sub>[+FIN]</sub>-Agr<sup>0</sup> (*à peine*) [vP ... ]]]  
c. \* [TP ... V<sub>[-FIN]</sub>-T<sup>0</sup> ... (*pas*) ... [AgrP ... Agr<sup>0</sup> (*à peine*) [vP ... ]]]  
d. [TP ... T<sup>0</sup> ... (*pas*) ... [AgrP ... V<sub>[-FIN]</sub>-Agr<sup>0</sup> (*à peine*) [vP ... ]]]]

(ii) **English has the same clause structure**, but V doesn't move beyond  $v^0$  (overtly)

(10) [TP ... T<sup>0</sup> ... (*not*) ... [AgrP ... Agr<sup>0</sup> (*hardly*) [vP ... V<sub>[±FIN]</sub>-v<sup>0</sup> ... ]]]]

- ④ Problem 1: if we extend this approach to capture object agreement (and Case checking) as well, **we get new Agr-phrases below AgrP and we should place AgrSP above TP**

(11) [AgrSP ... AgrS<sup>0</sup> ... [TP ... T<sup>0</sup> ... [AgrOP ... AgrO<sup>0</sup> ... [vP ... v<sup>0</sup> ... [VP ... V ... ]]]]]]

- ⑤ Problem 2: if we now want to designate specific **positions for adverbs and negation**, we'll have to expand our clause structure into a humungous tree (mentioned in passing) — **or find an alternative solution (to be done today, on Friday at the latest)**

## UPSHOT

We can **generalize all Case-checking and agreement** to

- (i) go **hand in hand** with one another and  
(ii) be done in a **single structural configuration**

— **Spec-Head**: • **[NOM] in AgrSP** (incl. subject-agreement in English and others)  
• **[ACC] in AgrOP** (incl. object-agreement in some languages)  
• **[DAT/GEN] in AgrIOP** (which we won't bother with here)

Open question for now: where in the tree do we put AgrOP — **above or within vP?**