

## OVERT OBJECT MOVEMENT & INTERNAL STRUCTURE of vP in ENGLISH

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1 Introduction<sup>1</sup> The minimalist program (Chomsky (1993, 1994), Chomsky and Lasnik (1993)) does not allow any overt operation of verbs and objects before Spell-Out in languages like English. It is because covert movement at LF is more economical. However, there are interesting English data that avoid explanation by the covert verb/object movement approach. They are the cases of backward binding observed only in the dative construction but not in the double object construction. This contrast is not well explained by Larson (1988) or Chomsky (1993). Fujita (1996)'s well constructed theory has also some theoretical weaknesses in its explanation. In order to explain the contrast between double object construction and dative construction, first I assume an alternate Thematic hierarchy with Non-Themes in the Spec of the second-highest VP (Johnson (1991), Koizumi (1993), Lasnik (1997), and Stroik (1996)). Second, based on the alternate thematic hierarchy, I suggest a proliferated VP-Shell structure which has maximally two functional maximal projections between vP<sub>1</sub> and VP<sub>2</sub>. Under this framework I argue that in English all verbs and objects move overtly in order to have actual surface word order. The binding theory as a global principle monitoring entire derivation from D<sub>1</sub> to D<sub>N</sub> will be discussed.

### 2 VP-Shell Structure and Thematic Hierarchies

2.1 The Second-highest *Theme* and Covert Object Movement Larson (1988) explains the asymmetries in syntactic domains between the double object construction (1a&b) and the dative construction (2a&b) by suggesting the single complement hypothesis and the VP-Shell structure

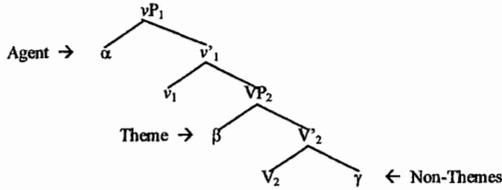
- (1) a I showed Mary<sub>i</sub> herself<sub>i</sub>,  
b \*I showed herself<sub>i</sub> Mary<sub>i</sub>,
- (2) a I showed Mary<sub>i</sub> to herself<sub>i</sub>,  
b \*I showed herself<sub>i</sub> to Mary<sub>i</sub>,

To satisfy the binding principle A for anaphor binding, the indirect object *Mary* of the double object construction (1) needs to c-command the direct object *herself*, while in the dative construction of (2) the direct object *Mary* needs to c-command the indirect object *herself* in PP. Larson's "pseudo passive-like movement" illustrating the derivation of the double object construction from the dative construction is an attempt to maintain an argument with the thematic role of '*Theme*' in the second-highest SPEC of VP when there are more than two arguments. The following structure shows the hierarchy of argument assignment.

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(3)



The thematic hierarchy and subsequent derivation on the VP-Shell structure (3), however, do not correctly capture the backward binding relation found in the dative construction of (4a', b' & c'). Consider

- (4) a \*John showed each other's parents the boys  
 a' ? John showed each other's boys to the parents ← Backward Binding
- b \*John gave each other's mothers the babies  
 b' ? John gave each other's babies to the mothers ← Backward Binding
- c \*John sent his owner every paycheck.  
 c' ? John sent his book to every author. ← Backward Binding
- (Data from Fujita 1996 146-148)

In the pre-movement structure of (4a), which is shown as (5) in the following, Larsonian VP-Shell structure will locate *the boys* (Theme) in the Spec of VP<sub>2</sub>. Given that at LF *showed* covertly moves to Agrs via Agro and *the boys* in the Spec of VP<sub>2</sub> covertly moves up to the Spec of AgroP external to vP<sub>1</sub>, we have an LF structure (6) in which the reciprocal pronoun *each other* is bound by the antecedent *the boys* in the Spec of AgroP. (Note that in the minimalist program the binding relation is checked at LF). Consider

(5) Pre-Movement Structure of (4a)

\* [<sub>AgroP</sub> Spec [<sub>Agro</sub> Agro [<sub>vP1</sub> John [<sub>v1</sub>' v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>VP2</sub> the boys [<sub>v2</sub> showed [<sub>DP</sub> each other's parents ] ] ] ] ] ]

(6) LF-Structure of (4a)

\*John<sub>k</sub> showed<sub>k</sub> [<sub>AgroP</sub> the boys<sub>j</sub> [<sub>Agro</sub>' t'<sub>k</sub>+Agro [<sub>vP1</sub> t<sub>i</sub> [<sub>v1</sub>' t'<sub>k</sub> [<sub>VP2</sub> t<sub>j</sub> [<sub>v2</sub> t<sub>k</sub> each other's parents ] ] ] ] ] ]

However, different from expectation, the resulting sentence is not only ungrammatical, but also it is not even identical with the actual word order (4a). In addition, instead of the structurally Case-marked object *each other's parents* the so-called inherently Case-marked object *the boys* has moved to the structural Case checking position, the Spec of AgroP, shown in (6).

Concerning (4a') where the opposite binding relation to (4a) is shown, the LF structure is judged 'marginal', not 'ungrammatical'. The other data from (4b) to (4c) also show a marginal reading, which is contra to the expectation of the grammar. Thus, these data raise a question about the thematic hierarchy adopted by Larson (1988) and Hale & Keyser (1993), calling for further discussion.

2.2 The Second-highest *Non-Theme(s)* and Covert/Overt Object Movement      The fuzzy binding relation of (4) might look properly handled by employing an alternate thematic hierarchy of Agent>Non-Theme(s)>Theme under the same covert movement approach of verbs and objects as in 2.1, though we will reject the idea immediately. Pre-movement structures (or roughly D-structures) of (4) obeying the alternate thematic hierarchy with *Non-Themes* in the Spec of VP<sub>2</sub> are shown in the following (7) and (8). Data (4) are rearranged according to grammaticality. Consider the pre-movement structures

- (7) a. \* [<sub>VP1</sub>John [<sub>V</sub> v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>VP2</sub> each other's parents [<sub>V</sub> showed the boys]]]] (for (4a))  
 b. \* [<sub>VP1</sub>John [<sub>V</sub> v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>VP2</sub> each other's mothers [<sub>V</sub> gave the babies]]]] (for (4b))  
 c. \* [<sub>VP1</sub>John [<sub>V</sub> v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>VP2</sub> its author [<sub>V</sub> sent every book]]]] (for (4c))
- (8) a. ? [<sub>VP1</sub>John [<sub>V</sub> v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>VP2</sub> to the parents [<sub>V</sub> showed each other's boys]]]] (for (4a'))  
 b. ? [<sub>VP1</sub>John [<sub>V</sub> v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>VP2</sub> to the mothers [<sub>V</sub> gave each other's babies]]]] (for (4b'))  
 c. ? [<sub>VP1</sub>John [<sub>V</sub> v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>VP2</sub> to every author [<sub>V</sub> sent his book]]]] (for (4c'))

Ungrammaticality of the sentences (4a-c) which are derived from (7a-c) might be explicable correctly. First movement of the verbs *showed*, *gave*, and *sent* to v<sub>1</sub> before Spell-Out will produce actual surface order (4a-c). Second covert movement of the verbs to Agro after Spell-Out should be followed by covert movement of Non-Theme arguments such as *each other's parents* and *its author* to the Spec of AgroP. This derivation does not produce a configuration in which reciprocals are bound by their possible antecedents such as *the boys*, *the babies*, and *every book*, since it is reciprocals that keep moving higher than their possible antecedents. Thus, the grammar correctly judges the sentences of (4a-c) ungrammatical.

However, this approach does not work for the dative constructions (4a'-c'). Unlike (4a-c), movement of the verb to v<sub>1</sub> before Spell-Out cannot provide the expected actual word order (4a'-c') from the initial structures (8a-c).

We may stipulate for overt verbal movement to Agro passing over vP<sub>1</sub> so that *Theme* arguments such as *each other's boys* and *his book* may be located higher than *Non-Theme* arguments. However, this movement is rejected immediately due to illegitimate operation: the minimal complement domain<sup>2</sup> that is formed by the verb movement from v<sub>1</sub> to Agro no longer includes the innermost arguments, that is, *Themes*, thus making movement of *Theme* argument unlicensed.

The problem we have here actually cannot be solved only by overt/covert distinction of movement. The problem is that regardless of which thematic hierarchy we adopt, as far as we maintain the VP-Shell structure of (3), we come to have (some) outputs that do not reflect actual surface word order of the sentences at hand. This observation leads us to reconsider the VP-Shell structure of (3) for modification.

<sup>2</sup> See Chomsky (1993: 12) for reference.







DP<sub>1</sub> that has already moved to the Spec of AgrpP, only the marginal reading is available

One important question here is how DP<sub>2</sub> moves up to the Spec of AgrpP external to VP<sub>2</sub>. In order to move the second object *the boys* from its original position, it is required for its head *to* to move upwards to somewhere it can adjoin, so that the minimal domain should be formed

In order to make P move, Fujita adopts “reanalysis”, by which he argues that P adjoins to V<sub>3</sub> like an instance of incorporation. Then the V-P complex raises to Agrp and Case-checks the second object DP<sub>2</sub> which moves to [Spec, AgrpP]. He provides the following as evidence for adjunction of P to V (ibid., 156-157). Consider

- (16) a John talked to Mary  
 b Mary<sub>i</sub> was talked to t<sub>i</sub>  
 c P adjoins to V, the V-P complex raises to Agrp, Obj *Mary* in (b) moves to [Spec, AgrpP]

We, however, should be very careful in adopting “reanalysis” as syntactic evidence. We may take advantage of P to V incorporation based on reanalysis, for which the stranded P after V in (16b) can be good evidence. However, it is a different story when it comes to the so-called transitive constructions like the dative construction. Consider the difference between the following two sets of sentences

- (17) a John talked to Mary  
 b Mary<sub>i</sub> was talked to t<sub>i</sub> (= (16b))
- (18) a ?John showed each other's boys to the parents (= (4a'))  
 b \*The parents<sub>i</sub> were shown each other's boys to t<sub>i</sub>

The ungrammaticality of (18b) indicates that P to V incorporation may not occur so freely as Fujita assumes. If P to V incorporation is not allowed for (18b) as it is in (17b), then we do not have any way to move P to Agrp via V in (15b), which will be a big problem for Fujita's theory with AgrpP external to VP<sub>3</sub>. The location of AgrpP external to VP<sub>3</sub> in (15) is crucial because it is supposed to guarantee the VP-internal backward binding. Consider why he denies the conventional position of AgrpP immediately over PP

- (19) a. [<sub>VP</sub> V DP<sub>1</sub> P DP<sub>2</sub> ]  
 b. [<sub>VP3</sub> DP<sub>1</sub> [<sub>V'</sub> V<sub>3</sub> [<sub>AgrpP</sub> Spec [<sub>Agrp</sub> Agrp [<sub>PP</sub> P DP<sub>2</sub> ] ] ] ]

(19a) stands for a backward binding dative construction in which syntactically lower DP<sub>2</sub> binds the trace of DP<sub>1</sub> at LF, resulting in a marginal reading. If AgrpP were built immediately over PP as in (19b), then after P moves to Agrp and DP<sub>2</sub> to Spec of AgrpP, DP<sub>2</sub> cannot c-command DP<sub>1</sub> (or the trace of DP<sub>1</sub>). Therefore, he constructs AgrpP external to VP<sub>3</sub> based on the weak evidence of P to V incorporation

Both Chomsky (1993) and Fujita (1996) are able to produce the actual surface word order of the double object construction (4a-c) from their initial structures. Both of them could also explain why there is no backward binding phenomenon occurring in the double object construction (recall discussion from (11) to (14)). However, as we have discussed, their



Recall that as is discussed in (15) and below, Fujita explains the marginal reading of the dative construction (4a'-c') based on the observation that at LF, covertly moved DP<sub>2</sub> *the parents* in the Spec of AgrpP c-commands the trace of NP<sub>1</sub> *each other's boys*, partially satisfying binding theory A. Under our theory assuming the alternate thematic hierarchy, DP<sub>2</sub> in the PP *to the parents* should remain in-situ, or it should go up to the Spec of AgrpP immediately dominating the PP for accusative Case checking against P adjoined to Agrp (23a) in the following shows the initial structure of (4a'), and (23a') is the detailed structure of AgrpP over PP occupying the Spec of VP<sub>2</sub> (23b) has the partial LF structure of (4a') under our theory

- (23) [VP V DP<sub>1</sub> P DP<sub>2</sub>] ?*John showed each other's boys to the parents* (= (4a'))
- a. [<sub>VP1</sub> John [<sub>V</sub> v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>AgrpP</sub> Spec [<sub>Agrp'</sub> Agro [<sub>VP2</sub> to the parents [<sub>V</sub> showed each other's boys] ] ] ] ]
- a' [<sub>VP1</sub> John [<sub>VP2</sub> [<sub>AgrpP</sub> [<sub>DP2</sub> the parents<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>Agrp</sub> to<sub>j</sub>+Agrp [<sub>PP</sub> [<sub>P</sub> t<sub>j</sub>] [<sub>DP2</sub> t<sub>i</sub>]]]] showed EO's boys] ] ]
- b. [<sub>VP1</sub> John [showed<sub>j</sub>+ v<sub>1</sub> [<sub>AgrpP</sub> EO's boys<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>Agrp'</sub> t<sub>j</sub>' [<sub>VP2</sub> to the parents [<sub>v2</sub> t<sub>j</sub> t<sub>i</sub> ] ] ] ] ]

As is shown in (23a'), DP<sub>2</sub> in the Spec of VP<sub>2</sub> remains within VP<sub>2</sub> during entire derivation, thus not being able to c-command DP<sub>1</sub> in the Spec of AgroP. However, we have very important information that we can depend on to explain the marginal reading: the initial c-commanding relation in which the *Non-Theme* object DP<sub>2</sub> binds the *Theme* object DP<sub>1</sub> as depicted in (23a). The subsequent derivation from the initial structure (23a) just disturbs the original structural relation between DP<sub>2</sub> and DP<sub>1</sub>. Under the copy theory of movement in the minimalist program, the trace is a complete copy of the moved element. Thus, we can stipulate that though the original binding relation gets disturbed as we approach the LF, basically DP<sub>2</sub>'s c-commanding DP<sub>1</sub> is still said to be maintained. DP<sub>2</sub> c-commands the trace of DP<sub>1</sub> at LF. Thus, we can say that the marginal reading is due to the disturbed c-commanding relation between DP<sub>2</sub> and DP<sub>1</sub> when DP<sub>1</sub> *each other's boys* moves to the higher Spec of AgroP external to VP<sub>2</sub> and c-commands DP<sub>2</sub>.

The explanation given above is very different from that of Fujita in that our binding theory monitors binding relation 'cumulatively during entire derivation'<sup>10</sup> from Derivation<sub>1</sub> to Derivation<sub>N</sub> until it reaches LF. This might look against the minimalist spirit which maintains that all syntactic principles including the binding theory apply at LF.

Concerning this issue, one idea is that we may consider the binding theory like the inclusiveness condition (Chomsky 1995: 225)<sup>11</sup> which is about the requirement of the outputs at LF but actually influences entire derivation from D<sub>1</sub> to D<sub>N</sub>. I will leave this issue open for further discussion.

Next let us discuss the production of double object construction (4a-c) which do not show backward binding phenomenon. Initial and partially derived structures of (4a) are listed as (24a-c) in the following. Consider

<sup>10</sup> (23b) shows that at LF we have two opposite binding relations between DP<sub>2</sub> and DP<sub>1</sub>: (1) DP<sub>1</sub> c-commands DP<sub>2</sub>, and (2) DP<sub>2</sub> c-commands the trace of DP<sub>1</sub>. In this paper, this bazaar situation is taken to be a main reason to cause a marginal reading because the original binding relation of DP<sub>2</sub> c-commanding DP<sub>1</sub> is blurred.

<sup>11</sup> Inclusiveness Condition (Chomsky (1995: 225))

"Outputs consist of nothing beyond properties of items of the lexicon (lexical features). I.e., the interface levels consists of nothing more than arrangements of lexical features."



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