

Overview

Today I want to look at several cases of (apparent) verb–argument adjacency where we also see verb movement.

1. Verb–object agreement in English
2. Pronoun–Complementizer/Verb adjacency in Germanic
3. Subject movement and adjacency in Irish
4. Potential subject movement in Spanish vSO orders
5. Verb–subject adjacency in locative inversion

These are the things that I want to think about:

This is really to prefigure our discussion of Object Shift.

- Are these really the same sorts of phenomena?
- How many of these are just incidental? That is, do the verb and argument happen to just move to nearby positions, or are the movements linked?
- How many of these might be related to verb movement in earnest?

1 Stowell

- [Stowell \(1981\)](#) notes that DP objects must be adjacent to verbs in English. Adverbs may not intervene between a verb and its object.

[Stowell 1981:113, \(19\)](#)

- (1) a. Paul quickly opened [the door].
b. Jenny quietly read [her book].
- (2) a. Paul opened [the door] quickly.
b. Jenny read [her book] quietly.
- (3) a. * Paul opened quickly [the door].
b. * Jenny read quietly [her book].

- In Italian, however, this is not always true.

[Stowell 1981:114, \(20b\)](#)

- (4) Mario legge spesso dei libri.
Mario reads often of.the books
'Mario often reads books.'

- This leads to [Stowell's \(1981:110ff.\)](#) conjecture that Case must be assigned under adjacency to a Case-assigner.

(5) *Case assignment under Government:*

In the configuration [$a \beta \dots$] or [$\dots \beta a$], a Case-marks β , where

- i. a governs β , and
- ii. a is adjacent to β , and
- iii. a is [-N].

Stowell 1981:113, (18)

- Since CP objects need not receive Case, they need not appear adjacent to the verb.

(6) Mary said t_i quietly [_{CP} that she wanted to drive].

Stowell 1981:161, (90a)

- Now we have some explanation of this: Verbs move in Italian but not in English.
- If we assume (a) that English VPs are left-headed, (b) that objects merge as complements to the verb, and (c) that adverbs adjoin to ν P, then the difference between English and Italian can be reduced to verb movement.
- This suggests, then that the adjacency requirement of DP objects in English might just be accidental – they must be adjacent to the verb because that's where they merge, and verbs don't move that far.
- But there are some hints of some sort of adjacency requirement.

Stowell 1981:114 suggests that manner adverbials in some languages are simply invisible for the purposes of case assignment. This seems to imply some sort of parametric variation.

1. It is widely assumed that English exhibit V^o -to- ν^o movement. If it does, why can't we left-adjoin material to (big) VP? If we could, we predict that the verb and the object should be able to be separated by this adjoined material.
2. Adverbs can intervene between a verb and a PP complement, which is part of the reason that this was (is?) thought to be a consequence of case:

We can right-adjoin adverbs to VP, so why not left-adjunction?

- (7) a. The students quickly dined on the kale.
 b. The students dined quickly on the kale.
 c. The students dined on the kale quickly.

2 Pronoun adjacency in Germanic

- den Besten (1977) discusses adjacency of weak pronominal subjects to C^o in Dutch. We also saw this in Vikner (1995).
- While weak pronouns must be adjacent to a complementizer, as in (8), strong pronouns (9) and full DPs need not be.

(8) ... dat {ze} gisteren {*ze} ziek was
 that she yesterday ill was
 '...that she was sick yesterday.'

den Besten 1981/1977:9, (25)

(9) ... dat {zij} gisteren {zij} ziek was
 that she yesterday ill was
 '...that she was sick yesterday.'

den Besten 1981/1977:9, (26)

- In V2 clauses, the same pattern recurs, except here the weak pronouns must be adjacent to the finite verb:

(10) Toch was {ze} gisteren {*ze} ziek
 Yet was she yesterday ill
 ‘She was still sick yesterday.’

den Besten 1981/1977:10, (30)

(11) Toch was {zij} gisteren {zij} ziek was
 Yet was she yesterday ill
 ‘She was still sick yesterday.’

den Besten 1981/1977:10–11, (35)

- This looks like it really is adjacency to a particular position: These pronouns need to directly next to whatever material is in C°.
- Vikner (1995:55) suggests two possibilities for why this occurs:
 - This could be caused by an adjacency requirement on case assignment, following Stowell (1981). We would have to say that C° assigns case.
 - (Weak) pronominal subjects are actually clitics and must cliticize to their case assigners, following (?).

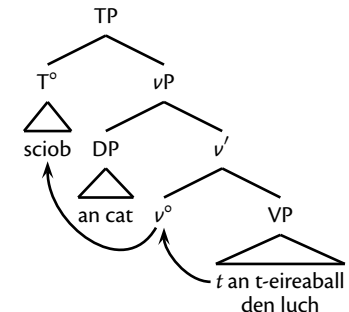
Vikner (1995:45, (26)–(27)) also discusses a similar pattern for pronouns in Swedish.

These ideas are not mutually exclusive of each other.

3 Subject movement and adjacency in Irish

- We saw last week that the most general assumption for Irish VSO order is that subjects remain in Spec ν P and verbs move to T° (McCloskey 2011).

(12) Sciob *an cat* an t-eireaball den luch.
 cut the cat the tail off.the mouse
 ‘The cat cut the tail off the mouse.’



- As discussed in McCloskey (2001), the facts are a bit more complicated than this. Some subjects are clearly not in their base positions, and evidence from adverb placement suggests subjects external to Spec ν P.

3.1 There needs to be some subject movement for passives and unaccusatives.

- There is movement to some subject position, and this is visible in unaccusatives and passives.
- In a simple unaccusative like (13a), it may appear that the subject *a ghlór*, ‘his voice’, could remain internal to VP.
- However, in cases with auxiliaries, it is clear the subject moves to a position between the auxiliary and the main verb, as in (13b).

(13) a. Neartaigh *a ghlór*.
 strengthened his voice
 ‘His voice strengthened.’

McCloskey 2001:170, (27b)

- b. Tá *a ghlór* ag neartú.
is his voice strengthen.PROG
'His voice is strengthening.'

McCloskey 2001:170, (28b)

- A similar pattern is observed in passives. The subject must move to a position external to VP, as in (14):

(14) *Subject adjacency in Irish passive:*

McCloskey 2001:171, (31)

- a. Tá sé críochnaithe againn.
Is it.NOM finished by.us
'It has been finished by us.'
- b. *Tá críochnaithe sé againn.
Is finished it.NOM by.us
'It has been finished by us.'

- For comparison, a PP in an impersonal passive like (15), does not move at all, remaining in VP.

(15) *No adjacency in Irish impersonal passive:*

McCloskey 2001:171, (32)

- a. Tá labhartha agam leo.
Is spoken by.me with.them
'I have spoken to them.'
- b. *Tá *leo* labhartha agam.
Is with.them spoken by.me
'I have spoken to them.'

- All of this suggests that (true) subjects cannot remain VP-internal in Irish. Internal arguments must move to some position outside of VP.

3.2 Adverbs and external arguments

- Additionally, McCloskey (2001) shows that subjects must appear adjacent to finite verbs, both in transitive clauses like (16) and unaccusatives like (17).
- Crucially, no adverbs may intervene between the subject and the verb.

This observation goes back at least as far as McCloskey 1991:260.

These include 'ever', 'still', 'always', and 'often', a set which overlaps with Germanic medial adverbs.

- (16) Ní bhfuair *aon bhean riamh roimhe* greim lámhe air.
NEG took any woman ever before.it grip hand.GEN on.him
'No woman had ever taken his hand.'

McCloskey 2001:(33a)

- (17) Fásann *na préataí i gcónaí* sa lagán.
grow.PRES the potatoes always in.the hollow.
'The potatoes always grow in the hollow.'

McCloskey 2001:173, (37a)

- Assuming that these are *v*P adverbs, this would seem to indicate that the subjects are moving to a position above the adverb.

4.1 Subject Movement in vso clauses

- As we discussed last time, Spanish post-verbal subjects are often thought to be Spec ν P, assuming the verb moves to some position above the subject:

(22) $[_{TP} \text{comió } [_{\nu P} \text{Juan } t [_{VP} t \text{ las manzanas }]]]$

- There may be some evidence that subjects move even in Spanish vso order, depending on your assumptions. This argument is from [Ordóñez \(2007\)](#).

- There are floating object quantifiers in Spanish. These object quantifiers can be associated with object clitics:

(23) Juan se lo había comido todo.
 Juan CL.REFL CL.3 had.IMPF eaten all.
 ‘Juan had eaten everything.’

- Assume that ν P adverbs like *bien*, ‘well’, are left-adjoined.

(24) ... $[_{\nu P} \text{bien } [_{\nu P} \dots]]$

- Object quantifiers must come to the left of these adverbs. This indicates that the quantifier has moved out of ν P.

(25) Lo entendió todo bien.
 CL.3 understood all well
 ‘He understood everything well.’

(26) $[_{TP} \text{lo entendió } [\text{todo } [_{\nu P} \text{bien } [_{\nu P} t_V t]]]]$

- When there is an object quantifier, a ν P adverb, and a post-verbal subject, the quantifier must precede the adverb, and the subject must precede the adverb: SUBJ \prec QUANT \prec ADV.

(27) a. Ayer lo encontró él todo bien.
 yesterday CL.3.MASC.SG found he all well.
 ‘Yesterday he found it all well.’

b. *? Ayer lo encontró todo él bien.
 yesterday CL.3.MASC.SG found all he well.
 ‘Yesterday he found it all well.’

Assuming, as above, that floated object quantifiers must be outside ν P, the subject must also be external to ν P. I will label this SpecFP.

(28) $[_{IP} \text{lo encontró } [_{FP} \text{él}_i [\text{todo}_k [_{\nu P} \text{bien } [_{\nu P} t_i \dots t_k \dots]]]]]$

Most dialects of Spanish do not permit object clitic doubling in this configuration.

This is the Achilles heel of this argument. There’s no clear evidence that the adverb cannot right adjoin. As I warned, [Kayne \(1994\)](#) is everywhere in this literature.

The quantifiers can appear to the right if they receive focus intonation.

Again, the subject can appear all the way to the right if it receives focus intonation.

I have chosen not to preserve [Ordóñez’s \(2007\)](#) labels.

- It is pretty unclear to me why this should happen. [Ordóñez's \(2007\)](#) approach is fairly cartographic – do we really want a clause-medial SubjP?
- One reason it is interesting, and notably different from the Irish case above, is that the subject does not move to a position between the auxiliaries.
- Note, though, that VOS orders tell us that there is no true adjacency requirement holding between the verb and the subject. They must be separable.

4.2 Pronoun adjacency

- Spanish post-verbal subjects may not intervene between an auxiliary and a main verb:

(29) *Ayer no nos lo había tu hermana dicho.
 yesterday not CL.1.DAT.PL CL.1.DAT.PL had your sister said
 ‘Your sister had not told us it yesterday.’

- As I’ve mentioned a few times, [Ordóñez \(2007\)](#) claims that subject pronouns may intervene between verbs in Spanish, but not regular DPs may not.

(30) Había usted dicho que lo lograría.
 had you.FORM said that CL that achieve.COND
 ‘You had said that you would achieve it.’

(31) Ya les había yo dicho a éstos que...
 already CL.3.DAT.PL had I said to these that
 ‘I had already said to these guys that ...’

- [Ordóñez](#) suggests that these are in fact weak pronouns (in the sense of [Cardinaletti and Starke 1999](#)), since they can’t be coordinated or modified:

(32) *Había usted y él dicho que lo lograría.
 had you.FORM and he said that CL achieve.COND
 ‘You had said that he and you would achieve it.’

(33) *Había sólo usted dicho que lo lograría.
 had only you.FORM said that CL achieve.COND
 ‘Only you had said that you would achieve it.’

- If this is true, and [Ordóñez](#) is right in thinking these are weak pronouns, then this looks somewhat similar to what we see with subject pronouns in Germanic. The difference may be that these need to be adjacent to T° rather than to C°.

5 Subject–verb adjacency in locative inversion

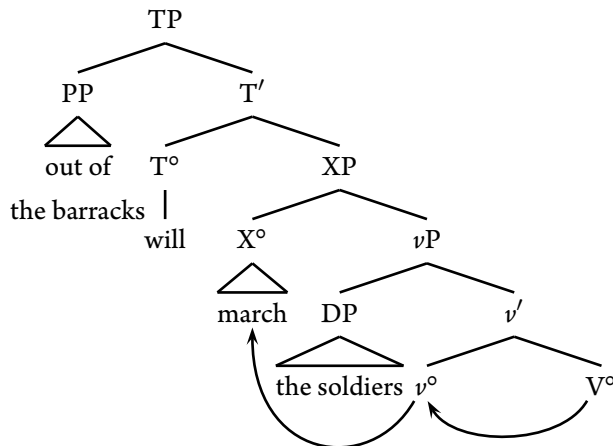
- [LaCara \(2016\)](#) proposes that certain cases of locative inversion in English are derived via head movement.

[Ordóñez \(2007\)](#) makes a specific connection to Scandinavian object shift here. [Jon Ander Mendiá \(p.c.\)](#) says these are grammatical.

[Ordóñez](#) cites [Sánchez López \(1993\)](#) for facts about the pronoun *usted*. However, the [Sánchez López](#) paper suggest that *usted* is exceptional in many ways.

This is also ungrammatical because he does not change the number agreement in this example; the verb should be *habían*.

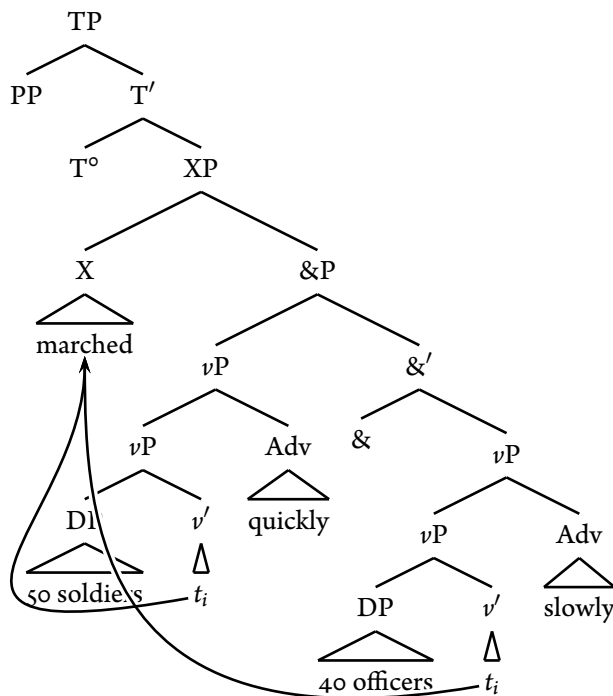
(34) Out of barracks will march the soldiers.



- Part of the evidence for this comes from right-adverbs, which appear to form coordinateable constituents with subjects.
- The most sensible way to account for this fact is to ATB-move the verb out of the two conjuncts to some higher position.

Johnson (1991:584–585) and Larson (1988:345, n. 11) make a similar point about coordination of objects with adverbs.

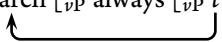
(35) ? Out of the barracks marched [fifty soldiers quickly] and [forty officers slowly]



- If this analysis is on the right track, then one might expect it to be possible for adverbs to intervene between the verb and the subject, assuming adverbs right-adjoin to νP as in (36).
- Yet, this does not occur, as shown in (37).

(36) The soldiers will [_{νP} always [_{νP} march out of the barracks]].

(37) *? Out of the barracks will [march [_{vP} always [_{vP} t the soldiers]]].



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