Head Movement

Introduction to Syntax
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Head Movement

- Movement of X to a position Y where there is no PF material
  - Movement is not word formation
  - Head movement adjoins head to a head
  - Head movement is triggered by the features of the destination position
    - Features include for example: +Q on C, Tense on T
- Note we would not talk about head movement without phonetically null LI’s
Case 1 semantics

- Two structures have the same
  - theta roles
  - Arguments
  - Lexical items
  - One structures asks about the truth value of the other

Q. Will John go home?
A. John will go home

Deep structure

- If one expression is the answer to the question of another expression, we assume they share a common deep structure

- Deep Structure:
  - Same theta roles
  - Same case, tense features
  - Same lexical items,
    - modulo functional markers
    - One expression might have a subset of lexical items
  - Same truth conditions (a question’s truth conditions is their answers)
Movement transformation

- Movement is an operation on Deep Structure
- Layers of grammar representation
  - Deep Structure (theta roles)
  - Transformations (feature driven movement)
  - Surface structure (Q features, EPP, case and wh, and other features satisfied)
- Different surface Structures can be related at Deep Structure
- This is the case with Yes/No questions
DP movement

- EPP/CASE
  - DP2 gets case satisfies EPP on T
  - For now do not worry about XP move or CASE for DP1

T->C

- Q feature on C
  - T adjoins to C to satisfy Q feature
  - Note this is a problem for X-bar – two heads
Is yes/no T movement to C?

- Embedded questions
  - had John go home
  - I wonder will John go home
  - I wonder if John will go home
  - *I wonder if will John go home

- Complementizer blocks inversion in subordinate clauses.
No head movement if PF material

- Neither T->C
- Or v->T is possible

Morphological triggers

- DP movement is for case so we already see that there a morphological trigger for movement
- An example of head movement that is morphologically driven is movement of v to Tense.
Tense on Prog and Perf and passive

• We see tense of \( v \)
  – John had/has danced (perf)
  – John is/was dancing (prog)
  – Mary is/was photographed (passive)

• When tense occupied the following \( v \) infinitival
  – John will have danced (perf)
  – John will be dancing (prog)
  – Mary will be photographed (passive)
v(prog) -> T

v(pass) -> T
v->T feeds T->C

- Had John danced
  - John had danced (perf)
- Was John dancing
  - John was dancing (prog)
- Was Mary photographed
  - Mary was photographed (passive)
- We see that the v that raises to T can then be moved with T to C.

v(pass)->T->C
v(perf)→T→C

v(prog)→T→C
What if there is more than one v

- Had John been dancing
- * Been John had dancing
- Only the topmost v moves to T and then to C
- Head movement is blocked if there is a head filled position on the way
- Head movement has to proceed through every possible landing site
- That is why when
  - Passive is present this is the top head, unless
  - Progressive is present, then this is the top head, unless
  - Perfective is present, then this is the top head

Relativized Minimality

- head movement must pass through every potential landing site
  - The above combined with the inability of head movement to a position where there is PF material rules out anything but the topmost head moving
What about the main verb?

- Can the main verb move to T and then to C
- Not in English
  - *Danced John?
- But in French
  - *Dansez vous ?
    - Dance you
    - Do you dance

English verbs

- English main verbs (V) do not undergo head movement
- French Main verbs do
- Movement is parameterized
- However the variation is not free
- In French when there is an Auxiliary it block movement of the main verb
  - Avez vous dansé
    - Have you danced
  - *Dansé vous avez
    - Danced you have
- Relativized Minimality is universal
This is verb movement not VP movement - Adverbs

- John *lit souvent des livres*
  John reads frequently the books
  ‘John frequently reads books’
- French adverbs can separate ‘read’ from its complement ‘books’. English cannot
- Verb moves leaving the VP behind
- When aux this is no longer possible
  – John *avait souvent lu des livres*
  John has frequently read the books
  “John has frequently read books”

DO-support

- So what happens when we want to ask a yes/no question in English when there is no overt v?
- We insert Do in T and move T to C

- John *did dance*
- *Did* John dance?

- Do- here has no meaning or function other than mark past tense and satisfy Q in C