

Modulprüfung 04-046-2002: Phonology, Morphology, Syntax

Answer the following questions as briefly and concisely as possible. You need 80 points to get a 4.0. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you encounter any problems.

Excercise 1 (vP-structure): [10]

(i) Assuming that branching is always binary, draw a vP (you can ignore the TP-level) for the English example in (1) that exhibits the correct c-command relations as they are suggested by the facts of reflexivization (Principle A of the binding theory).

(ii) Explain (again, assuming binary branching) why (1) may serve as an argument for the idea that (agentive) subjects are introduced by a separate verbal head (i.e. “little” v).

(1) Martha showed Kurt_i himself_i (in the mirror).

Excercise 2 (vP/TP-structure): [10]

Consider the following examples from Navajo (Na-Dene, Apache, USA) in (2-a), from Seediq (Atayalic, Taiwan) in (2-b), from Ditidaht (Wakashan, Canada) in (2-c), and from Xavante (Ge, Brasil) in (2-d).

(i) Concentrating on the vP-level, and assuming that subjects (bearing the θ -role agent) are merged in SpecvP while objects (bearing the θ -role patient) are merged as the sister of the lexical verb, there is a complication that arises from the surface order of the examples in (2-c,d). Explain what the complication is.

(ii) Solve the complication posed by (2-c,d) by postulating appropriate movement rules (assuming more syntactic structure above vP) that derive the surface word orders in (2-c,d).

- (2) a. Ashkii at'éd yiyiiltsá.
boy girl saw
“The boy saw the girl.”
- b. M-n-ekan bunga ka Pawan
ACTV-PRAET-eat potatoe NOM Pawan
“Pawan has eaten potatoes.”
- c. Tsasiiks be'itlqats hupey'k
hunt boy ball
“The boy was hunting the ball.”
- d. Uzâ te oto da-te 're-pré-za'ra
fire N1 now people Leute-LTR IMPERF-make-PL
“Now, people usually make fire.”

Excercise 3 (Infinitives and binding): [20]

(i) What type of infinitives are involved in (3-a-d), respectively (i.e. raising, control, ECM, or *for*-infinitive)? Briefly justify your answer by referring to assumptions pertaining to θ -role assignment and case assignment (i.e., explain which head in each example assigns a θ -role to which argument, and which argument receives case from which head).

(ii) Give the definition of (syntactic) binding that we assumed.

(iii) Assuming that the (linearly) first anaphor in (3-a) is in SpecT of the embedded clause suggests that the definition of Principle A that we made use of in the course (repeated in (4)) is

too simplistic. Give an alternative formulation of Principle A that accounts for the distribution of the reflexive pronouns in (3-a-d) and briefly explain how it derives the facts. Hint: There are (at least) two possible ways to go. First, one may invoke the notion of finiteness to draw the right distinctions. (This approach presumably requires making reference to some additional, very prominent, syntactic principle.) Second, one may analyze S in (3-a-d) as belonging to different syntactic categories (i.e., TP or CP, depending on the type of construction, including differences between infinitives) to explain the differences in grammaticality in (3-a-d).

- (3) a. Martha_i believes [_S herself_i to like herself_i].
 b. *Martha_i persuaded Kurt [_S to like herself_i].
 c. *Martha_i expected [_S that Kurt would like herself_i].
 d. Martha_i promised Kurt [to like herself_i].

(4) *Principle A:*

An anaphor must be bound within its minimal clause.

Excercise 4 (Raising):

[15]

(i) Give one argument for the claim that finite clauses in English obligatorily involve movement of some NP to SpecT (“raising”). Give another argument that the same raising process applies in infinitival clauses in English.

(ii) Briefly discuss which of the two examples in (5-a,b) from Icelandic (and which not, and why) provides conclusive evidence *against* the idea that raising to SpecT is connected to/triggered by agreement/case assignment with/by T. (Note: Recall that Icelandic is a V2-language; *það* is an expletive.)

- (5) a. það hefur maður dasað in garðinum.
 EXPL has man.NOM danced in garden.the
 “There has a man danced in the garden.”
 b. það voru konunginum gefnar ambáttir um vetturin.
 EXPL were.PL king.the.DAT given slaves.NOM in winter.the
 “There were slaves given to the king in the winter.”

Excercise 5 (Breton):

[10]

(i) Consider the examples from Breton in (6-a-c). Abstracting away from the particle *o*, what phenomenon (familiar from Germanic) do (6-a-c) recall, and how is it usually analyzed?

(ii) Is Breton underlyingly OV or VO (telling from (6-a-c))?

- (6) a. Ar vugale o deus gwalc’het ar wetur dec’h.
 the children PART have.3p washed the car yesterday
 “The children washed the car yesterday.”
 b. Ar wetur o deus ar vugale gwalc’het dec’h.
 the car PART have.3p the children washed yesterday
 “The children washed the car yesterday.”
 c. Dec’h o deus ar vugale gwalc’het ar wetur.
 yesterday PART have.3p the children washed the car
 “The children washed the car yesterday.”

Excercise 6 (Agree): [10]

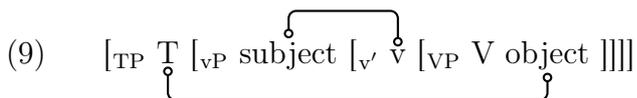
Background: a) Subject-verb agreement is due to an operation Agree that involves unvalued person and number features on T “probing” for valued person and number features of some NP; b) SC in (7-a,b) stands for a “small clause”, a projection the head of which takes the PP *in the garden* as its complement and an NP (*an elephant* in (7-a)) as subject.

- (i) Explain why the contrast in (7-a,b) provides an argument for Agree being able to apply in a “downward” fashion (i.e., the probe features search for the corresponding features on an NP within the probe’s c-command domain).
 (ii) Given the facts in (8-a,b), can one hypothesize that probing is *always* downward? (Justify your answer.)

- (7) a. [TP There_i seems/*seem [TP ____i to be [SC an elephant in the garden]]].
 b. There *seems/seem to be some elephants in the garden.
 (8) a. [TP An elephant_i seems/*seem [TP ____i to be [SC ____i in the garden]]].
 b. Some elephants *seems/seem to be in the garden.

Excercise 7 (Case): [15]

- (i) In the theory that we discussed, what functional head assigns nominative case, and which assigns accusative case?
 (ii) One theory of ergative languages has it that ergative case is assigned by v to the subject in Specv while absolutive case is assigned by T to the object (sister of V, see (9)). What general constraint of grammar appears to be in conflict with this theory (and why)?
 (iii) Consider the examples in (10), from the ergative language Dyirbal (Dixon 1994). What kind of solution for the conflict mentioned in (ii) do these examples suggest (keyword “leapfrogging”)? Also briefly suggest how the facts from the ergative language Tagalog in (11) (from Aldridge 2012) can be made compatible with this solution.



- (10) a. η uma- \emptyset jaja- η u η amba-n.
 father-ABS child-ERG hear-NONFUT
 “The child heard father.”
 b. yabu-ABS η uma- η u bura-n.
 mother-ABS father-ERG see-NONFUT
 “Father saw mother.”
 (11) a. Bumili ang babae ng isda.
 buy ABS woman OBL fish
 “The woman bought a/*the fish.”
 b. Binili ng babae ang isda.
 buy ERG woman ABS fish
 “The woman bought the/*a fish.”

Excercise 8 (Classic constraints):

[10]

For each of the ungrammatical sentences in (12-a-h), name one constraint of grammar that is violated.

- (12) a. *What_i did you tell whom [CP to buy ____i]?
 b. *Martin_i believes [CP that we find himself_i smart].
 c. *Karl's_i I like [NP ____i books] a lot.
 d. *Karla_i does not want to see her_i.
 e. *This picture_i I did not believe [NP the claim [CP that Martha painted ____i]].
 f. *She_i said [CP that Maria_i has to leave].
 g. *Which book_i did you buy [&P which newspaper and ____i]?
 h. *Such bicycles_i I wonder [CP who manufactures ____i].

Excercise 9 (Minimality and strict cyclicity):

[20]

Background: a) Movement across a CP must make an intermediate touchdown in SpecC (“successive cyclic” movement); b) infinitival CPs in English provide more than one SpecC-position.

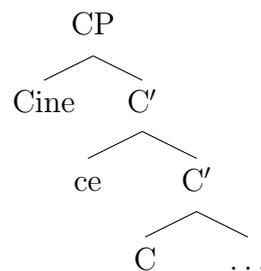
(i) Show how under these background assumptions the contrast in (13-a,b) follows from the interplay of the Minimal Link Condition (MLC) and the Strict Cycle Condition (SCC). Hint: In order to show this, first illustrate that there is a derivation of (13-a) that does not violate either MLC or SCC. Then show that every conceivable derivation that seeks to generate (13-b) either violates MLC or SCC.

(ii) The examples in (14-a,b) illustrate multiple *wh*-movement in Romanian. By assumption, in this language all *wh*-phrases in a multiple question move to multiple SpecC-positions of the same C-head (see (15) for (14-a)). Explain why the facts from (14-a,b) appear to be incompatible with a theory that incorporates both MLC and SCC if one assumes that every branching node is a cyclic node in the sense of the SCC (i.e., Merge can only target the root of a syntactic object).

(iii) In order to be able to derive the contrast in (14-a,b), it has been proposed to weaken the SCC in such a way that Merge to an inner specifier position below an outer specifier position is allowed (“tucking-in”) and indeed forced. Show that by assuming tucking-in the explanation (discussed in (i)) for the contrast in (13) is lost.

- (13) a. What book_i don't you know [CP who_j to persuade ____j to read ____i]?
 b. *Who_j don't you know [CP what book_i to persuade ____j to read ____i]?

- (14) a. Cine_i ce_j ____i a spus ____j?
 who what has said
 “Who said what?”
 b. *Ce_j cine_i ____i a spus ____j?
 what who has said
 “Who said what?”



Excercise 10 (Freezing): [15]

(i) The ungrammaticality of (16) is often attributed to a condition on “Freezing” (17). Which more general constraint that we mentioned may subsume the Freezing Condition (and why)?

(ii) It has been observed that an explanation of (16) in terms of (17) is lost once one allows for derivations that involve “chain interleaving” (see Browning 1991). What would a chain interleaving derivation of (16) look like? Under what theoretical concept (that was introduced 2000/2001 into the minimalist program) would one expect such a derivation to be possible (indeed inevitable)?

(iii) Restore the explanation of (16) in terms of (17) by formulating a constraint (derivational or representational) that, in general, blocks derivations that involve chain interleaving.

(16) * $[_{PP}$ About what topic $]_i$ are $[_{NP}$ articles $_i]_j$ never published $_j$?

(17) *Freezing Condition:*

Movement of α out of a category β is not allowed if β has already undergone movement before.

Excercise 11 (Phases): [15]

Background: a) Some of the evidence for successive-cyclic movement via the specifier of a phase (enforced by the Phase Impenetrability Condition, PIC, in (19)) involves morphological reflexes on the phase head. (18-b) illustrates this for Irish: a declarative C-head takes the form a^L (instead of its usual form go , (18-a)) if, by hypothesis, *wh*-movement passes through its specifier. b) Phases are CP and vP. c) The fact that the agreeing T-probe in (20) penetrates the complement domain of the v-phase heads ((20-b) is from Icelandic) led Chomsky (2001) to reformulate the PIC as in (21).

(18) a. Deir sé $[_{CP}$ **go** dtuigeann sé an scál $]$.
says he C understands he the story
“He says that he understands the story.”

b. Cén t-úrscéal $_i$ a^L mheas mé $[_{CP}$ $_i$ a^L dúirt sé $[_{CP}$ $_i$ a^L thuig sé $_i$ $]]$?
which novel C thought I C said he C understood he
“Which novel did I think he said he understood?”

(19) *Phase Impenetrability Condition (strong):*

In a phase α with head H the complement of H is not accessible to operations/probes outside α ; only H and its specifier are accessible.

(20) a. $[_{TP}$ There T $[_{vP}$ arrive/*arrives many trains (at the station) $]]$.

b. $[_{CP}$ Henni höfðn $[_{TP}$ T $[_{vP}$ leiðst þeir $]]]$.
her.DAT had.3.PL bored they.NOM
“She was bored by them.”

(21) *Phase Impenetrability Condition (weak):*

In a phase α with head H the complement of H is not accessible to operations/probes at β , β being the next higher phase; only H and its specifier are accessible.

(i) What is Legate’s (2005) counter-argument against motivating (21) on the basis of (20-a)?

(If you do not recall Legate’s argument, modify (20-a) in such a way that it involves successive-cyclic raising and think about what that means for Chomsky’s 2001 account of (20-a) in terms of (21).)

(ii) What does the definition in (21) predict for a language such as Irish (under the above assumptions) given a case where *wh*-movement does not affect an object (as in (18-b)) but a subject? (Aside: It is commonly assumed that VSO in Irish arises by verb movement to T, leaving the subject in Specv; i.e., there is no subject raising to SpecT in Irish.)

(iii) Go and take a look in the literature whether the prediction from (ii) is borne out. Provide a relevant example that either verifies or falsifies the prediction.

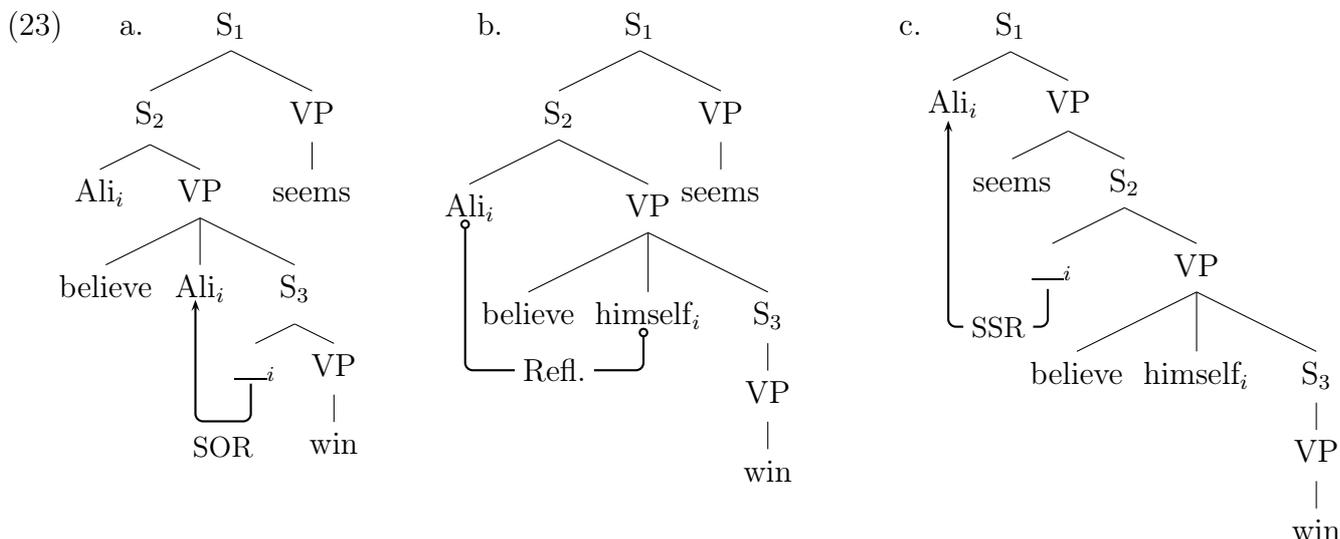
Excercise 12 (Strict cyclicity):

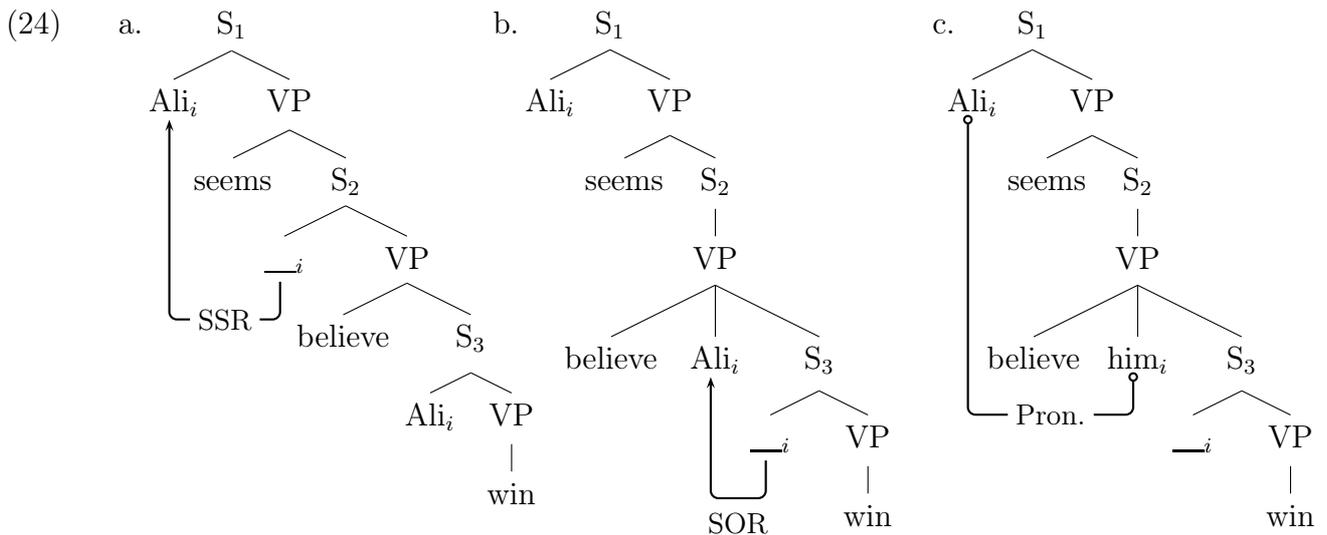
[10]

Background (from the 1960s/1970s): a) Reflexive pronouns and personal pronouns are not merged into the structure but come about via the transformations of Reflexivization and Pronominalization, respectively, which apply to NPs with appropriate (reference identical) antecedents; b) Reflexivization applies to an NP with antecedent if NP and antecedent are dominated by the same minimal S-node; otherwise Pronominalization applies. c) ECM-constructions involve raising of the embedded subject into the object position of the next higher clause, see (23-a). This is called “subject-to-object-raising” (SOR). d) Raising constructions first generate the clause out of which subject raising applies as the daughter of the clause of the raising verb (see (23-a,c)); raising itself then makes the subject of the embedded clause to become subject of the higher clause while the embedded clause itself becomes the daughter of the higher VP; this is called “subject-to-subject-raising” (SSR).

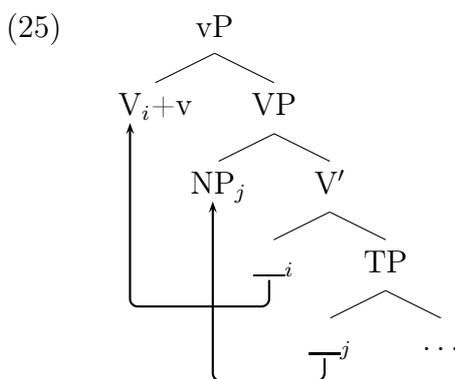
Under these assumptions, Perlmutter and Soames (1979) construct an argument for the SCC on the basis of the contrast in (22-a,b). The idea is that the ungrammatical (22-b) can be generated by the derivation in (23-b) if the SCC does not hold. In contrast, the grammatical (22-a) is generated by the derivation in (23-a), which obeys the SCC.

- (22) a. Ali_i seems to believe himself_i to win.
 b. *Ali_i seems to believe him_i to win.





- (i) Perlmutter and Soames assumed that every S-node is a cyclic node (in the sense of the SCC). Can their argument be maintained if every (branching) node is cyclic (justify your answer)?
- (ii) Suppose that the analysis of ECM in terms of SOR is rephrased in more modern terms: the embedded subject moves to SpecV of the ECM verb (= *believe*) in the higher clause, and the ECM verb itself undergoes head movement to v (see (25); TP in (25) = S₂). Given this analysis, can the argument for the SCC of Perlmutter and Soames (1979) be translated into the theory of the minimalist program?



References

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- * Perlmutter, David and Scott Soames (1979): *Syntactic Argumentation and the Structure of English*. The University of California Press, Berkeley.