

Double Genitives in English

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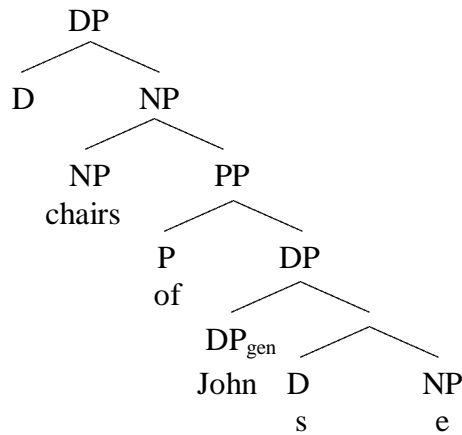
1. Introduction

Double genitives are postnominal genitive phrases which are marked with the preposition *of*:

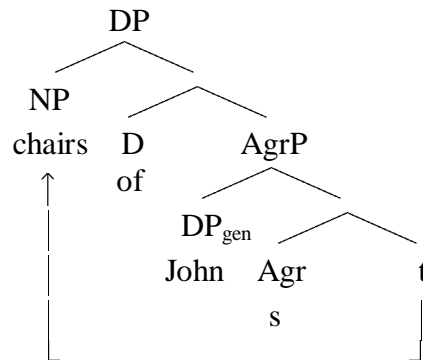
- (1) a. chairs of John's
 b. a picture of Bill's
 c. some books of mine

Two analyses: the 'adjunct' analysis (Anderson (1983), Aoun et al. (1987), Lasnik & Saito (1992)), as in (2a), and the 'movement' analysis (Kayne (1993, 1994)), as in (2b).

(2) a. Adjunct



b. Movement



Objectives:

- Show that the structure of double genitives involves movement, as in (2b). Evidence for this comes from extraction from double genitives and from binding relations that are established inside this construction.
- Show that the movement analysis can explain certain restrictions on the possible thematic roles of DP_{gen}.

2. Extraction from Double Genitives

Wh-extraction from double genitives is not allowed. Compare (3b) and (3c).

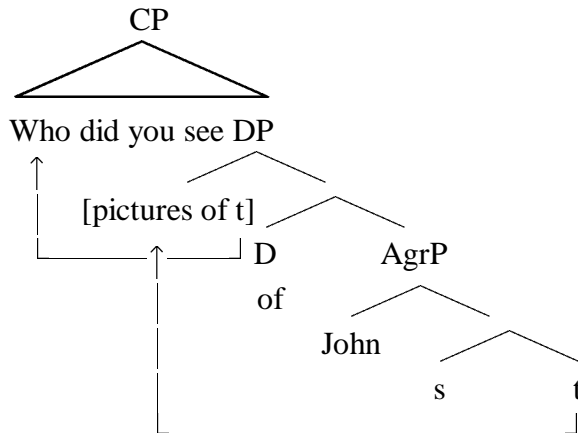
- (3) a. I saw pictures of Bill of John's
 b. ?Who did you see pictures of t of John's
 c. Who_i did you see pictures of t
- (4) a. I read a book about Africa of Conrad's
 b. ??What did you read a book about t of Conrad's
 c. What did you read a book about t

In the adjunct analysis, the only difference between (3b, 4b) and (3c, 4c) is the presence of an adjunct in the former sentences. This should not have an effect on wh-extraction, as shown in (5a, b).

- (5) a. Who did you see pictures of with a gold frame?
 b. Who did you see at John's?

In the movement analysis, [pictures of t] and [a book about t] in (3b, 4b) are in [Spec, DP]:

(6)



Thus, (3b, 4b) involve extraction from specifiers, which are usually islands to movement, just as in extraction from subjects:

- (7) *Who was [a picture of t] on the table

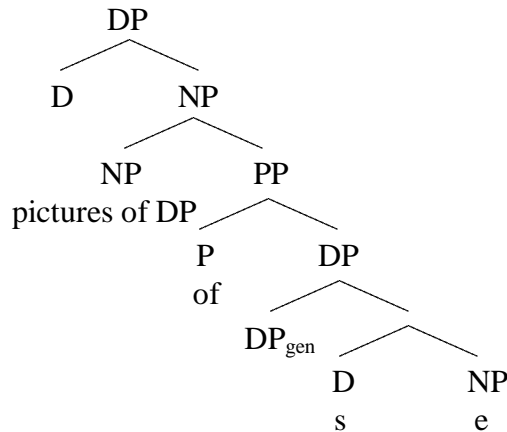
3. Binding Theory and Double Genitives

The genitive phrase in double genitives can bind a complement of the head noun:

- (8) a. I saw pictures of himself of John's
 b. *I saw pictures of him_i of John_i's
 c. *I saw pictures of John_i of his_i

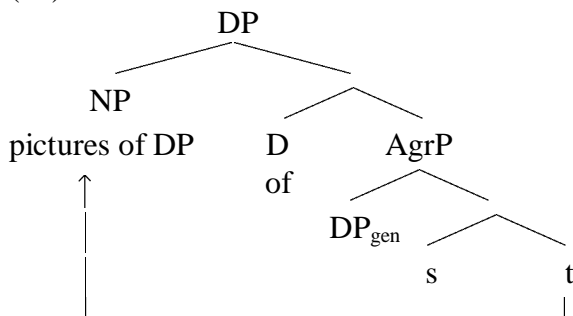
In the adjunct analysis this is unexpected, since the genitive phrase does not c-command the complement of the head noun:

(9)



In the movement analysis the structure is the following:

(10)



DP_{gen} does not c-command the complement of the head noun in (10), but if we allow for reconstruction, we have the same configuration as in prenominal genitives. Thus, the examples in (8) have the same status as those in (11).

- (11) a. John's picture of himself
 b. *John_i's picture of him_i
 c. *his_i picture of John_i

4. Thematic Roles in Double Genitives

The possible thematic roles of DP_{gen} in double genitives are only a subset of the ones available in prenominal genitives:

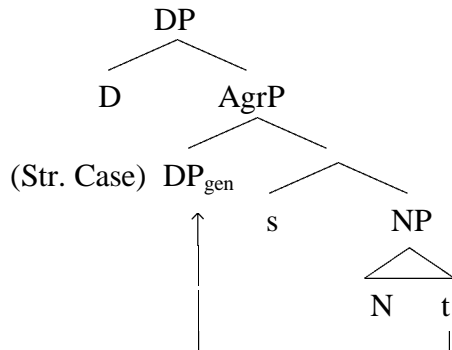
- (12) a. John's picture
 b. a picture of John's
 c. a picture of John

(12a) has a possessive reading and also a 'relational' reading, i.e. (12c). (12b) only has the possessive reading (Chomsky (1970)).

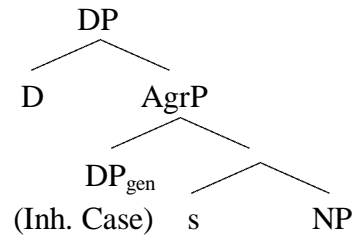
Anderson (1983) proposes that in prenominal possessive genitives DP_{gen} is assigned its thematic role by the genitive morpheme, and in prenominal relational genitives by the head noun. Stowell (1989) adapts this to the DP-hypothesis (Fukui & Speas (1986), Abney (1987)): DP_{gen} is generated inside the maximal projection of the head noun ([Spec, NP]) when it is relational, and it is generated in its surface position ([Spec, DP], or [Spec, AgrP] in Kayne (1993)) when it is possessive.

Furthermore, Ura (1996) proposes that in possessive genitives DP_{gen} has inherent case, and in relational genitives it has structural case.

- (13) a. Relational:

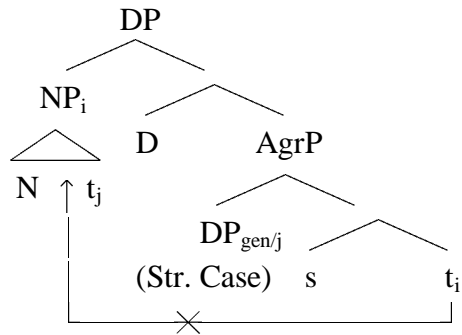


- b. Possessive:

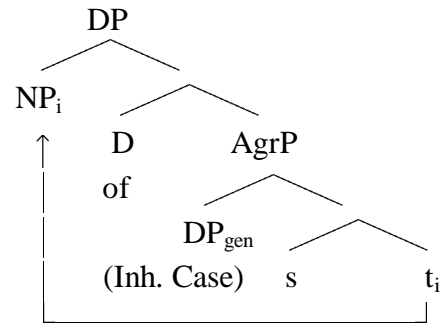


In double genitives the structures would be:

(14) a. Relational:



b. Possessive:



If we assume that the movement of NP to [Spec, DP] is some type of A-movement, the contrast in (14) follows. In English A-movement is blocked by an intervening DP with structural case, but it is not blocked by an intervening DP with inherent case:

- (15) a. John seems to me t to have left
 b. *John seems that it is likely t to have left

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