

problem set: ternary branching, NP structure (DP above PP)

review: Bare PS, selection, theta-criterion, EPP, Case (Nom in Spec TP, Acc “from verb”); movement. In fact, **A-movement**.

Idioms as an argument that **raising** exists; lets us maintain the generalization that idioms aren't discontinuous.

2. another type of A-movement: **passive**

I tickled the child mercilessly.
The child was tickled mercilessly.

subject theta-role gone, and object...?

how are we going to relate these?

- LFG-style: a lexical operation alters the argument structure of the verb.
- Case-driven movement.

how do we choose between these? what do they predict? subject's going to have some properties of an object; the theta-role, at least. LFG: that's it. Us: they also have a 'starting position' in common.

ECM

I believe John to be a liar (where's John getting his theta-role?)

I believe it to be obvious that Syntax is fun (not a theta-role from *believe*)

I believe her to be a genius (...but it is getting Case from *believe*).

She is widely believed to be a genius

what ends up in subject position of a passive isn't the NP that gets a theta-role from the verb; it's the NP that gets Case from the verb. Often these are the same NP, but not always.

resultatives

I painted the table red

*I painted the table sweaty (OK as depictive)

*I talked to John embarrassed (can't modify either one)

> must modify direct object

I shouted myself hoarse 'fake reflexives'

*I shouted myself

we laughed him off the stage

*we laughed him (not just 'an argument of the verb...'; direct object)

The table has been painted red → must start in DO position

so, conclusion: in passives, (1) the subject vanishes, (2) the object is deprived of its case, and therefore (thanks to EPP and the Case filter) the object moves to subject position. How do we know it moves? it has properties in common with unmoved objects; and some of these properties shouldn't be defined in terms of semantics, thematic roles, etc.

3. A-movement #3: Unaccusatives

several kinds of intransitive verbs:

John ate/drank (a rutabaga/a Slurpee)

vs.

John broke the window
the window broke

Mary froze the popsicles
The popsicles froze

class #1 we could handle with our theory of selection, plus some optional theta-roles. But what about class #2?

what are you adding when you make these transitive? well, an agent. We're used to thinking of the transitive/intransitive distinction as having to do with whether you've got an object; but for these pairs it seems to be about whether you have a subject. So why isn't *the window / the popsicles* the object in the intransitive sentences? one possibility is that theta-roles can be assigned in different places. But another possibility, given all the movement to Spec TP we've been positing, is that these NPs are moving too; they're subjects because something has to be, not because they start where agents start.