

Today

L2 Syntax Lecture 10: Raising and control

Robert Truswell

- Recap on raising
- Raising verbs without raising and expletive subjects
- Control
 - looks superficially like raising
 - structurally very different (no movement)

Today's reading

- Santorini & Kroch, ch.7 "Raising and Control" (OLD VERSION)
- Copies in DSB ground floor resource room and on WebCT

Object idiom chunks

Object idiom chunks:

- Combinations of verb and noun phrase with an idiosyncratic meaning
- 1) They're **making headway** on the problem
 - 2) They **kept tabs** on operations
 - 3) She had to **pull strings** to get the free tickets

Object idiom chunks

The same meaning can't be read from these phrases in subject position (1) or with other verbs (2):

- 1) {Vigilance, ***tabs**} is/are required at all times
- 2) They were rewarded for their {vigilance, ***tabs**}

Passives and object idioms

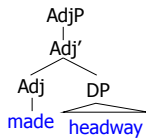
But they **can** appear in subject position in passives with the licensing verb:

- **Tabs were kept** on him at all times.
- **Some headway has been made** on the problem.

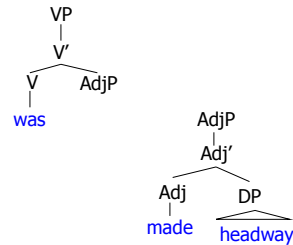
Local relationships again

•The DP gets its θ -role from V (active) or Adj (passive).

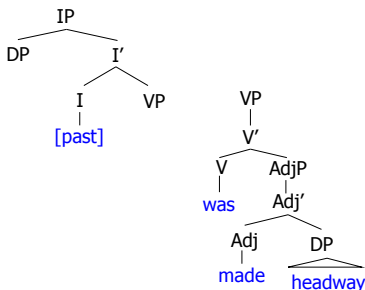
•Object idioms also get their special meaning from their particular relation to V or Adj



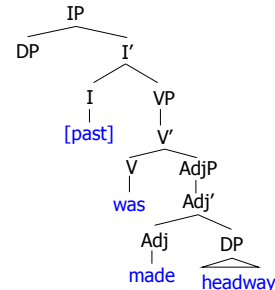
Piecing together a passive



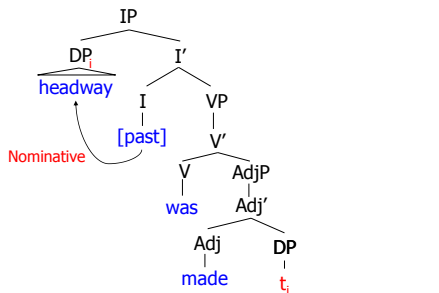
Piecing together a passive



Piecing together a passive



Piecing together a passive



Raising sentences

- {The boy / #the rock} **seemed** to cough
- {The rock / #the boy} **seemed** to be igneous
- {Chickens / #students} **tend** to lay eggs
- {Students / #chickens} **tend** to write essays

The embedded verbs are still imposing selectional restrictions on the matrix subject.

The raising verbs (*seemed, tend*) don't impose any restrictions on the matrix subject.

Idioms and *seem*

- The *cat* **seems** to be **out of the bag**
- The *pot* **seems** to be **calling the kettle black**

the cat and *the pot* still have their idiomatic interpretations here.

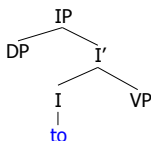
They must originate inside the embedded (idiomatic) VP.

Nonfinite subjects and case

1. [_{IP}He left]
 2. *_{[IP}He to leave] would be great
 3. *_{[IP}Him to leave] would be great
- In **nonfinite clauses**, *to* is the I head.
 - It **can't** assign nominative or objective case to [_{Spec,IP}]

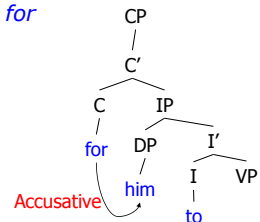
Infinitival I and case

- **Infinitival I (-tense)** can't assign case
- only **finite I (+tense)** can assign case



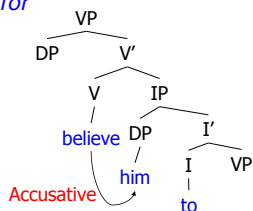
Nonfinite subjects and case

- A subject in nonfinite [_{Spec,IP}] must get case from somewhere else.
- Option 1: use *for*



Nonfinite subjects and case

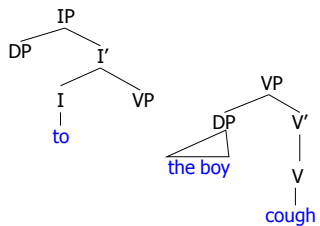
- A subject in nonfinite [_{Spec,IP}] must get case from somewhere else.
- Option 1: use *for*
- Option 2: ECM



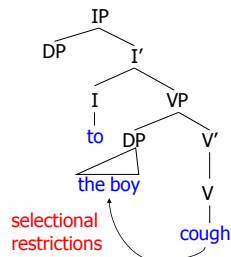
Nonfinite subjects and case

- A subject in nonfinite [_{Spec,IP}] must get case from somewhere else.
- Option 1: use *for*
- Option 2: ECM
- Option 3: More the subject to a place where it **can** get case. This is *raising*

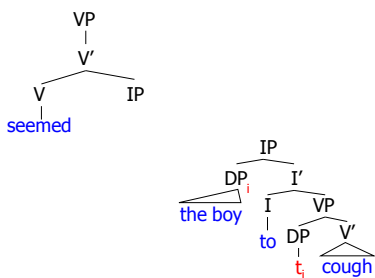
Raising in action



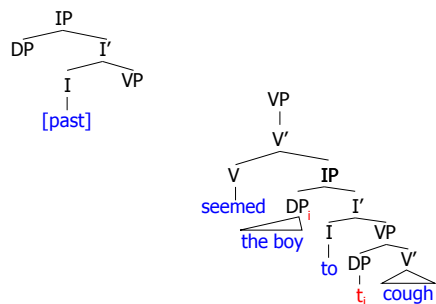
Raising in action



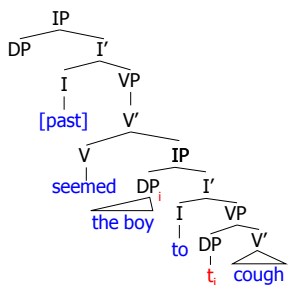
Raising in action



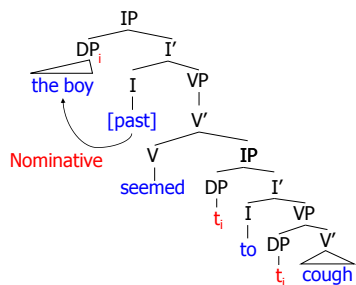
Raising in action



Raising in action



Raising in action



Raising: a summary

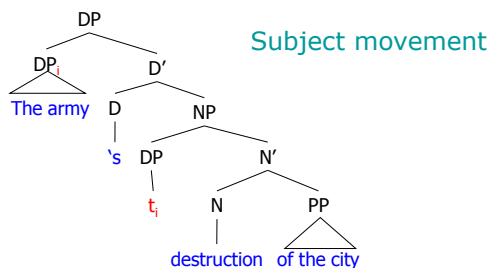
[_{IP} the boy seemed [_{IP} *t* to *t* cough]]

- *the boy* starts in [Spec, VP] of *cough*
 - selectional restrictions, idiomatic interpretation and θ -marking
- it moves to finite [Spec, IP] of matrix IP to get Nominative case

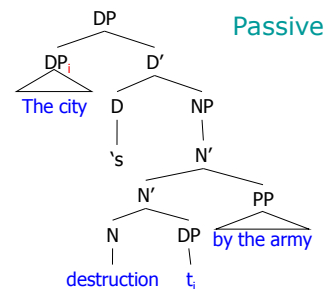
Iterated movement

1. [_{IP}The boy_i happened [_{IP}*t*_i to seem [_{IP}*t*_i to [_{VP}*t*_i smile]]]]
 2. [_{IP}The alarm_i appears [_{IP}*t*_i to have been [_{AdjP}destroyed *t*_i]]]]
 3. [_{IP}John_i is [_{AdjP}believed [_{IP}*t*_i to [_{VP}*t*_i dislike oysters]]]]
- Final landing site is the case position
 - Intermediate landing sites required because all clauses have subjects

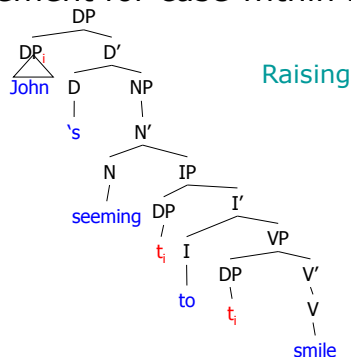
Movement for case within DP



Movement for case within DP



Movement for case within DP



Interlude: Economy of movement

- In subject movement, passive, and raising, the subject moves because it has to
- Only way to satisfy Case Filter and Theta Criterion
- Strong claim: movement **only** happens when it has to

Interlude: Economy of movement

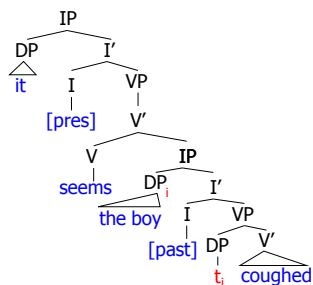
- Strong claim: movement **only** happens when it has to
- Easy for the above movements
- Less easy for **head movement** (e.g. V-I movement, V-I-C movement in tutorial)
- Other tricky cases in next lecture
- A major way of classifying movements is according to the reason for moving (see next lecture)

Raising verbs with finite complements

[_{IP} it seems [_{IP} the boy [past] coughed]]

- If the lower IP is finite, the subject of the lower VP doesn't need to move as far
- Movement only happens when it has to, so the subject can't move to higher [Spec,IP]
- The upper IP takes a **dummy subject** (pleonastic *it*)

Raising verbs with finite complements



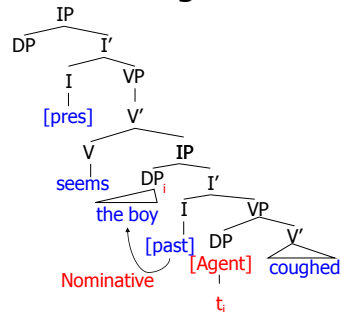
What is *it* doing there?

- Requirement that **every clause has its subject position filled**
 - *was hit John
 - *is raining
- Sometimes, we can fill this position by movement.
 - John_i was hit t_i
- **Expletives** like *it* appear when there is no other good option for filling this position.
 - It is raining

What is *it* doing there?

- *The boy_i seems t_i coughed
 - *The boy* won't move to the matrix subject position because it's got everything it needs in the embedded clause
 - Case from embedded [past]
 - Theta-role from *coughed*

What is *it* doing there?



What is *it* doing there?

- So the only option is to insert *it*.
 - *The boy_i seems [_{t_i} coughed]
 - It seems [the boy coughed]

The θ -criterion revisited

- Remember this?
 - Every DP must be assigned exactly one thematic role, and every thematic role must be assigned
- Where is *it*'s θ -role?
- It can't come from *seem*, because *seem* does not assign a θ -role to its subject

The θ -criterion revisited

- *Seem* does not assign θ -roles
 - The cat seems to be out of the bag
 - The pot seems to be calling the kettle black
- There are no other θ -assigners around
- So we must admit that *it* doesn't bear a θ -role

The θ -criterion revisited

- This requires revision of the θ -criterion
- The intuition: *it* doesn't mean anything, doesn't refer to anything, etc.
- *It* is **expletive**
- The θ -criterion only restricts the distribution of meaningful DPs

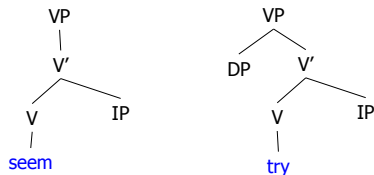
The θ -criterion revisited

- New formulation: "Every **semantically contentful** DP must be assigned exactly one thematic role, and every thematic role must be assigned"
- When *it* appears, it is semantically null, but fulfils a syntactic requirement that clauses have subjects
 - It seems [John coughed]
 - seem(cough(j))

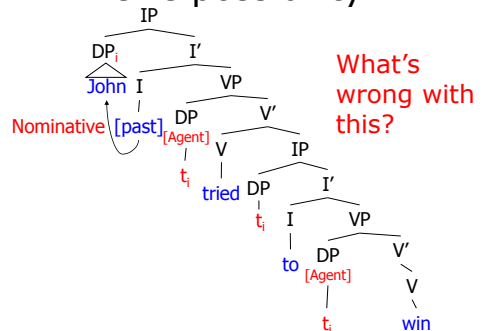
Control is different

- *Try* works differently
 - John tried [to win]
 - *It tried [(that) John wins]
- Also *want, hope, promise*
- One explanation: *John* is external argument of *try*, but not *seem*
 - John tried to win → John is trying
 - John seemed to win ✗ John is seeming

Control is different



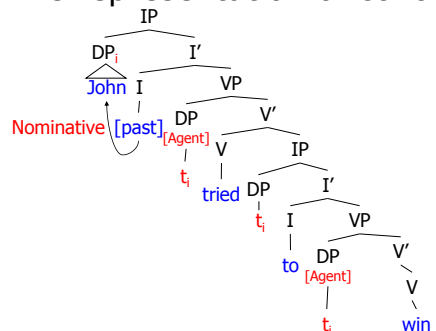
One possibility



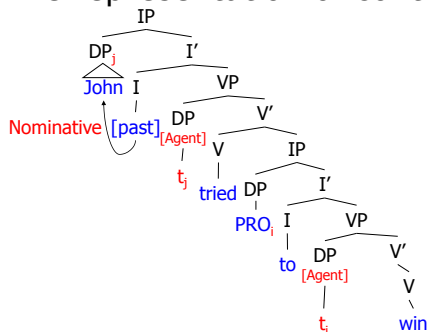
Control and the Theta Criterion

- There are two theta roles in a control sentence (**Agent** of *try* and **Agent** of *win*), but only a single overt DP
- The theta criterion: Every semantically contentful DP must be assigned **exactly one thematic role**, and every thematic role must be assigned
- We must assume a second DP in a control construction, even though we can't hear it.

The representation of control



The representation of control



Control and idioms

- Control does not preserve idiomatic interpretation
 - #The cat tried to be out of the bag
 - #The shit wanted to hit the fan
- This makes sense because the embedded VP never includes the matrix subject
 - [PRO be out of the bag]
 - [PRO hit the fan]

Control: open questions

- What restricts the distribution of PRO?
- Does PRO have case? If so, how? If not, why not?
- We have to leave it here. Santorini & Kroch address some of these issues. **Do the reading!**

Summary I

- Raising verbs with finite complements
 - DPs don't move unless forced to
 - Clauses must have a subject
 - Expletive *it* occurs when no other subject is available
 - e.g. raising verbs with finite complements
 - Forces slight revision of θ -criterion

Summary II

- Control
 - Control verbs have external arguments
 - Expletive *it* therefore is unavailable
 - They therefore only occur with finite complements
 - Raising of subject from subordinate clause to main clause would violate the Theta Criterion
 - We must therefore assume a second, null DP, PRO, in the subordinate clause

What comes next

- A very quick look at *wh*-movement
 - A type of movement with very different properties to everything we've seen so far
- Some English matrix clauses as CPs