

## Today

### L2 Syntax Lecture 9: More on passives, and Raising

Robert Truswell

- Recap on the  $\theta$ -criterion, the Case filter, and movement for Case
- More on passives in English
- A useful diagnostic: object idiom chunks
- Introduction to Raising

### Today's reading

- Santorini & Kroch, ch.10 (up to, but not including, "The passive and nonfinite complementation")
- <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~beatrice/syntax-textbook/ch10.html>
- Links from WebCT and from the course website.

### Movement, thematic roles and case

- Local relationships
  - **Thematic roles** assigned by lexical heads within elementary trees
  - **Objective case** assigned by V or P to their complement
  - **Nominative case** assigned by I to its specifier
- Two constraints
  - **Theta criterion**
  - **Case filter**

### The theta criterion

- Every DP must be assigned exactly one thematic role, and every thematic role must be assigned
  1. The butler killed the maid
  2. \*The butler killed the maid the pantry
  3. The butler killed the maid in the pantry
  4. The woman devoured the cake
  5. \*The woman devoured  $\emptyset$
  6. John bit himself
  7. \*John<sub>i</sub> bit t<sub>i</sub>

### The case filter

#### All DPs must bear case

- Case, unlike  $\theta$ -role, can be assigned after movement
- **Subjects move** to [Spec,IP] to get **nominative case**

## The case filter and $\theta$ -criterion

- Two constraints on the distribution of DPs
  - $\theta$ -criterion restricts initial DP substitution positions (base positions)
  - Case filter restricts positions after some movements
- There must be as many case positions as  $\theta$ -positions
- Needn't be the same positions.
- Some movements occur to satisfy both constraints.

## Passives

The prince denied the rumours  
The rumours were denied (by the prince)

- The **active subject**:
  - Becomes **optional** in the passive (an adjunct)
  - Introduced with *by*
- The **active object**:
  - Becomes the **subject** of the passive

## Passives

The prince denied the rumours  
The rumours were denied (by the prince)

	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
AGENT	Subject (NOM)	Optional PP (ACC)
THEME	Object (ACC)	Subject (NOM)

## Passive participles

ACTIVE  
The prince **denied** the rumours

PASSIVE  
The rumours **were denied**

- Be + Passive Participle

## Passive Participles

The **passive participle**:

- Doesn't have an object (doesn't assign objective case):
  - They saw **us**
  - \*We were seen **them**
  - \*It<sub>expl</sub> was seen **us**
- Doesn't bear tense inflection:
  - The song was/is/will be sung
  - \*The song sunged/sungs/will sung

## Passives and adjectives

- Adjectives also don't bear tense inflection:
  - \*He prouded (He **was proud**)
  - \*He proude (He **is proud**)
  - \*He will proud (He **will be proud**)
- Adjectives also don't assign objective case:
  - \*He is proud his son
  - He is proud **of** his son

## Passives and adjectives

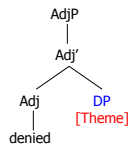
- Participles can become full-fledged adjectives:
  - **Comparatives:**  
*More enlightened, interested, satisfied...*
  - **Superlatives:**  
*The most educated, committed people...*
  - **Negation using un-**  
*unhurried, uncombed, uninterested...*

## Passives and adjectives

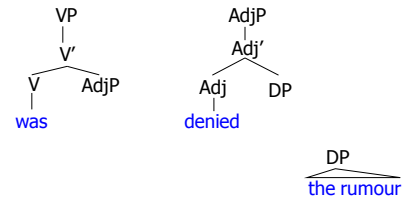
- Verbs can't really do any of this
  - \*John **more** built (builder) the house
  - \*John (the) **most** built (builtest) the house
  - John **un**built the house [means "John dismantled the house", if anything, not "John did not build the house"]
- Passive participles are at least **more adjectival** than regular verbs

## Elementary trees for passives

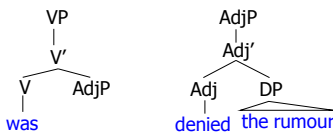
- Premise: The theme argument originates in same place for active and passive
- Why?
- Because it gets its thematic role from its relationship to the verb or adjective
- Regularities across lexical items: Themes are complements, Agents are specifiers



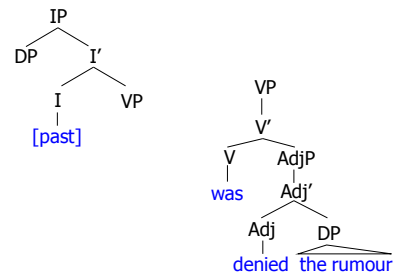
## Piecing together a passive



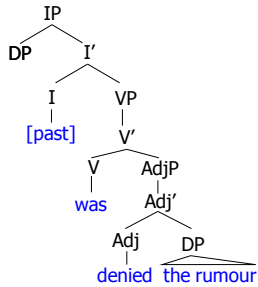
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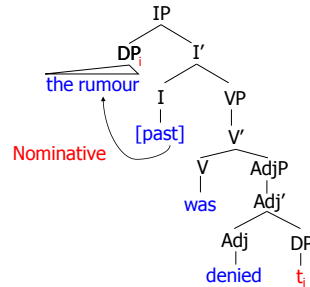
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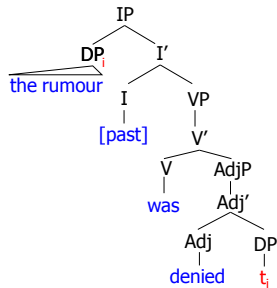


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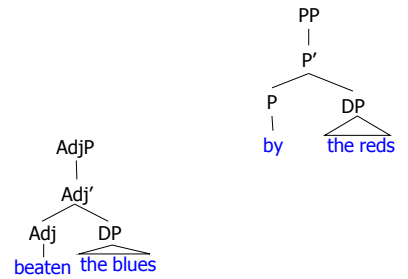


## Piecing together a passive

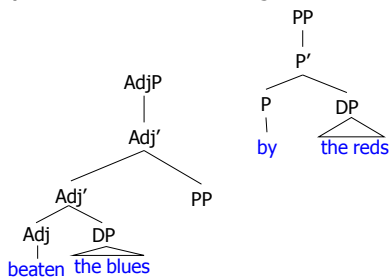
- Correct word order
- $\theta$ -role given by original position
- Grammatical function given by final position
- Case assignment as before



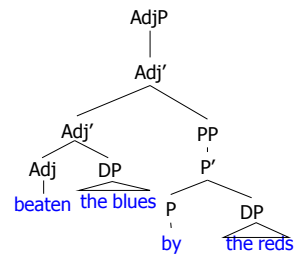
## The by-phrase as an adjunct



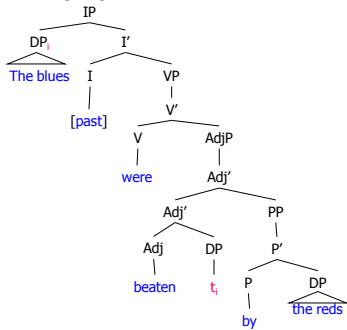
## The by-phrase as an adjunct



## The by-phrase as an adjunct



## The *by*-phrase as an adjunct



## More evidence: 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**}

## Object idiom chunks

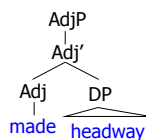
But they **can** appear in subject position in passives with the licensing verb:

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

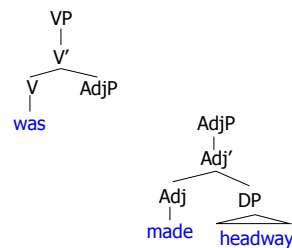
## Local relationships again

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

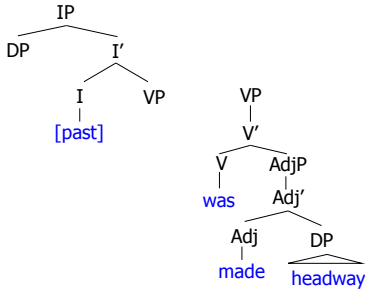
• Object idioms also get their special meaning from their particular relation to V or Adj



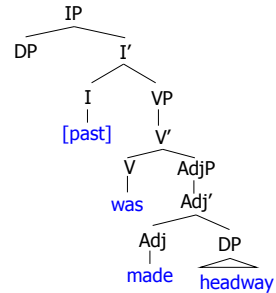
## Piecing together a passive



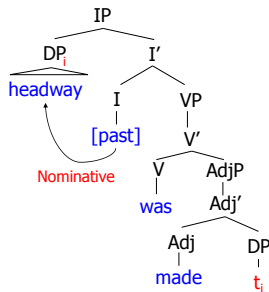
## Piecing together a passive



## Piecing together a passive



## Piecing together a passive



## Idioms and passives: summary

- Idiomatic interpretation,  $\theta$ -role assignment, and case are all local phenomena
- Movement allows a constituent to interact locally with two different heads
- Receive case from I, without losing idiomatic interpretation or  $\theta$ -role determined within VP

## Raising constructions

Sentences which involve longer movement, still to get case

Involve a raising verb

- *seem, appear, happen, ...*

## Raising: some examples

- The boy **seemed** to cough
- Lions **happen** to chase zebras

The matrix subject is an argument of the lower verb

- selectional restrictions
- idiomatic subjects

## Raising: some examples

- The boy seemed to cough
- Lions happen to chase zebras

The matrix subject is an argument of the lower verb

- selectional restrictions
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## Selectional restrictions

Verbs impose selectional restrictions on their subjects

- {The boy / #the rock} coughed
- {The rock / #the boy} is igneous
- {Chickens / #students} lay eggs
- {Students / #chickens} write essays

These are semantic restrictions on what can appear as subject of *coughed*, *lay*, *igneous* and *write*

## 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.

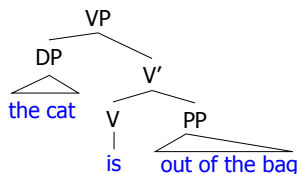
The raising verbs (*seemed*, *tend*) don't impose any restrictions on the matrix subject.

## Idioms again

- 1) The cat is out of the bag  
"the secret is out"
- 2) The pot called the kettle black  
"the hypocrite said something hypocritical"

The subjects of these idioms get their special meaning from being in [Spec, VP] of the idiom VP

## The structure of an idiomatic VP



- fully specified in lexicon
- idiomatic interpretation specified for entire VP
- subject moves to [Spec, IP] as usual

## Idioms

These idioms don't work with different verbs.

- 1) The cat is safe with her  
[can't mean "The secret is safe with her"]
- 2) The pot apologized  
[can't mean "The hypocrite apologized"]

*The cat* and *the pot* only have their idiomatic interpretation when they come from the idiom VP

## Subject idioms and passive

These idioms don't preserve their special meaning under passivization:

- 1) The kettle was called black by the pot  
[can't mean "The hypocrite said something hypocritical"]
- 2) The fan was hit by the shit  
[can't mean "The situation became serious"]

The entire VP must be present for the idiomatic meaning to arise

## 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.

## Summary of evidence

- 1) The *boy* *seemed* to *cough*
- 2) *Chickens* *tend* to *lay eggs*
- 3) The *cat* *appears* to be *out of the bag*

Matrix subject is argument of lower verb

- *selectional restrictions* (*cough, lay*)
- *subjects of idioms* (*the cat*)

## Analysis

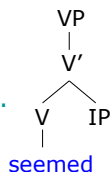
These examples involve two IPs

[<sub>IP</sub> the boy seemed [<sub>IP</sub> to cough]]  
[<sub>IP</sub> the cat seems [<sub>IP</sub> to be out of the bag]]

The subject originates within the lower VP, and moves to the upper [Spec, IP]

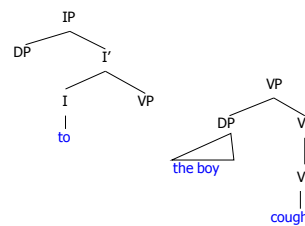
## Analysis

- *seem* doesn't select a subject.
- It selects an *IP complement*.

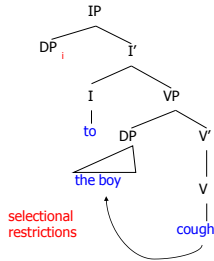


The subject of the sentence comes from the lower IP

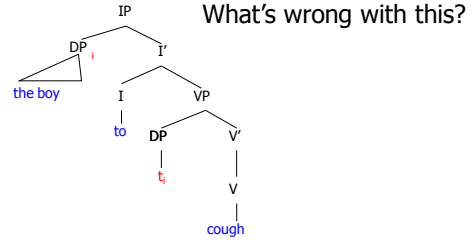
## Raising in action



## Raising in action



## Raising in action



## Nonfinite subjects and case

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

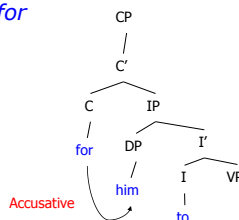
## Nonfinite subjects and case

- A subject in nonfinite [<sub>Spec,IP</sub>] must get case from somewhere else. Three options:
  1. Use **for**: [<sub>CP</sub>**For** him to leave] would be great

## Nonfinite subjects and case

- A subject in nonfinite [<sub>Spec,IP</sub>] must get case from somewhere else.

Option 1: use **for**



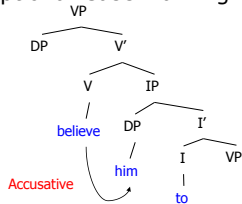
## Nonfinite subjects and case

- A subject in nonfinite [<sub>Spec,IP</sub>] must get case from somewhere else. Three options:
  2. Exceptional Case Marking: I [<sub>VP</sub>**believe** [<sub>IP</sub> **him** to have left]

## Nonfinite subjects and case

- A subject in nonfinite [Spec,IP] must get case from somewhere else.

Option 2: Exceptional Case Marking

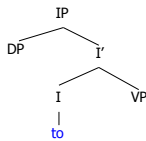


## Nonfinite subjects and case

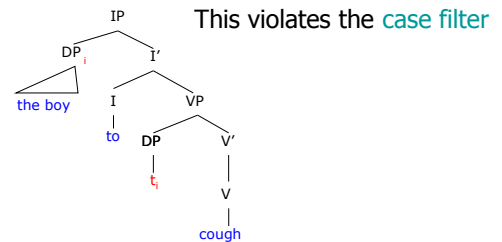
- A subject in nonfinite [Spec,IP] must get case from somewhere else. Three options:
- More the subject to somewhere else where it **can** get case. This is raising

## Infinitival I and case

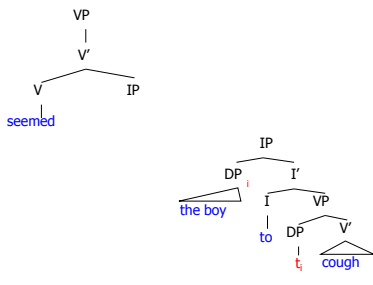
- Infinitival I (-tense) can't assign case
- only finite I (+tense) can assign case



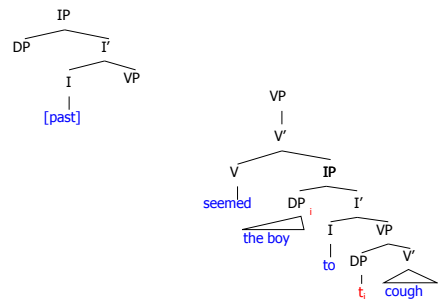
## Infinitival IP



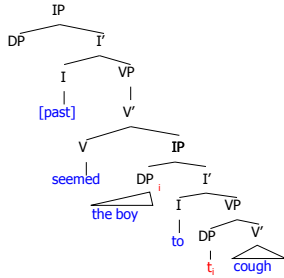
## Raising in action



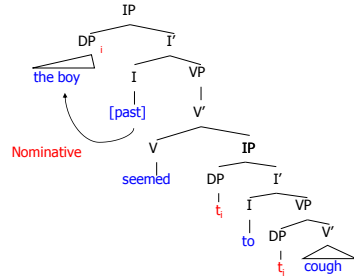
## Raising in action



## Raising in action



## Raising in action



## Raising: a summary

[<sub>IP</sub> the boy seemed [<sub>IP</sub> *t* to *t* cough]]

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

## Subject movement, passives, and raising

[<sub>IP</sub> He [<sub>VP</sub> *t* caught the fish]]

[<sub>IP</sub> The fish [<sub>VP</sub> was [<sub>AdjP</sub> caught *t*]]]

[<sub>IP</sub> He [<sub>VP</sub> seemed [<sub>IP</sub> *t* to [<sub>VP</sub> *t* catch the fish]]]]]

All extend a strict **local** relationship, and maintain the relationship after movement  
Movement is driven by need for **case**

## What's next

- More on raising verbs
- Expletive subjects
- Control – looks like raising, but isn't