The role of grammatical functions in transformational syntax
1999 LSA Linguistic Institute Workshop

Subjects, Objects, and the EPP

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(1) The DA proved [two men to have been at the scene of the
crime] during each other's trials
(2) The DA proved [no suspect, to have been at the scene of the
crime] during his trial
(3) The DA proved [noone to have been at the scene] during any
of the trials

(4) ?*The DA proved [that two men were at the scene of the
crime] during each other's trials
(5) ?*The DA proved [that no suspect, was at the scene of the
crime] during his trial
(6) ?*The DA proved [that noone was guilty] during any of the
trials

(7) The DA accused two men during each other's trials
(8) The DA discredited no suspect, during his trial
(9) The DA cross-examined none of the witnesses during any of the
trials

(10) Which book that John read did he, like
(11) *He, liked every book that John read
(12) *I don’t remember who thinks that he, read which book that
John, likes
(13) Chomsky (1981): S-structure is crucial to at least one of
the binding conditions, Condition C.
(14) Barsa (1986) draws the same conclusion for Condition A,
based on examples like the following:
(15) John, wonders which picture of himself, Mary showed to
Susan
(16) *John, wonders who showed which picture of himself, to
Susan

(17) Under the minimalist assumption that there is no level of
S-structure, the LF operations QR and wh-movement don't
exist or they apply in such a way that binding possibilities don't change.
(18) Lasnik and Saito (1991) and den Dikken (1995) draw the same
conclusion about the 'expletive replacement' operation
proposed by Chomsky (1986):
(19) *The DA proved [there to have been two men at the scene of
the crime] during each other's trials
(20) *The DA proved [there to have been no suspect, at the scene
of the crime] during his trial

(21) *The DA proved [there to have been noone at the scene]
during any of the trials

(22) Under the 'split-VP' hypothesis of Koizumi (1993) and
Koizumi (1995):

(23) She will prove Bob to be guilty

(24) \[\begin{array}{cc}
AgrP & \ \ \\
/ & \ \ \\
NP & AgrO'
\end{array}\]

(25) If the adverbials in (1)-(3) are attached in the vicinity
of the lower matrix VP, the binding and licensing receive
a natural account.

(26) It is now natural to assume that the 'EPP' feature driving
raising to 'subject position' resides in Agr, hence is
also responsible for raising to 'object position', under
the assumption of Chomsky (1991) that 'AgrO' and 'AgrO'
are merely mnemonic.

(27) An additional argument for overt raising of an object or an
ECM subject; Pseudogapping as VP ellipsis (Jayaseelan (1990)), with the remnant having raised to Spec of Agr,

Mary hired John, and Susan will hire Bill

The DA proved Jones (to be) guilty and the Assistant DA will prove Smith (to be) guilty

Unaccusatives show similar behavior, both for binding and for Pseudogapping:

There arrived two knights on each other's horses

?There arrived an instructor but there didn't arrive a professor

So object shift is possible. Is it obligatory?

*Joan believes him to be a genius even more fervently than Bob does

Joan believes he is a genius even more fervently than Bob does

Postal (1974)

But there are arguments that object shift does not always take place.

*Who was [a picture of t] selected

Who did you select [a picture of t]

If object and subject both raise overtly, to [Spec, Agr.,] and [Spec, Agr.,] respectively, the CED cannot distinguish (37) from (38).

Branigan (1992)

On the other hand, as already noted in Lasnik (1995), when the object is a Pseudogapping remnant, extraction from it is seriously degraded:

Bill selected a painting of John, and Susan should select a photograph of Mary

*Who will Bill select a painting of, and who will Susan select a photograph of

The special prosecutor questioned two aides of a senator during each other's trials

?Which senator did the special prosecutor question two friends of during each other's trials

Which senator did the special prosecutor question two friends of during the president's trials

The mathematician proved few theorems about Mersenne numbers during any of the lectures

Which numbers did the mathematician prove few theorems about during any of the lectures

Which numbers did the mathematician prove few theorems about during the conference lectures

These paradigms argue, contra Lasnik (1995), that when an object has overtly raised it is an island for extraction, and, therefore, since objects are not invariably islands, such raising is optional.
The DA proved no defense witnesses to be credible.

No defense witnesses were proved to be credible by the DA.

Note that if the ECM subject has to be 'high' in order to license some element in the higher clause, then the lower reading for that ECM subject becomes impossible:

The DA proved no defense witnesses to be credible during any of the trials.

*Joan believes him, to be a genius even more fervently than Bob, does.

It is not uncommon for 'object shift' to be obligatory with pronouns in a language even when it is optional with lexical NPs.

Mary made John out to be a fool.

Mary made out John to be a fool.

*Mary made out him to be a fool

The detective brought him in.

*The detective brought in him

Chomsky (1955)

Tanaka (1999) claims that when a simple sentence contains both an interrogative direct object and an interrogative temporal expression, it is necessarily the former that undergoes wh-movement:

?Whom did the DA accuse during which trial?

?During which trial did the DA accuse whom?

Tanaka observes that Superiority, as subsumed under the Minimal Link Condition, accounts for this, but only if the direct object is necessarily higher than the temporal adverb.

What did John buy when

When did John buy what

Bošković (1997)

Tanaka (1999) claims that when a simple sentence contains both an interrogative direct object and an interrogative temporal expression, it is necessarily the former that undergoes wh-movement:

?Whom did the DA prove to be innocent during which trial?

?During which trial did the DA prove whom to be innocent?

Whom did John prove to be guilty when

*When did John prove whom to be guilty

Bošković (1997)

Tanaka (1999)

One way to make the raising optional might be to abandon the idea that Agr₂ is the same item as Agr₁, assuming, instead, that only the latter obligatorily has an EPP feature.

Some of the discussion in Chomsky (1995, p.350) hints at an alternative possibility. Chomsky reasons that "If Agr has no strong feature, then PF considerations, at least, give no reason for it to be present at all, and LF considerations do not seem relevant." He thus suggests, in passing, that "Agr exists only when it has strong features."

Along these lines, suppose, then, that the optionality of raising is the optionality of Agr₁.

This leaves us with the question of why Agr₁ is obligatory. This is exactly the question of why the standard EPP holds.

References


Koizumi, Masatoshi. 1993. Object agreement phrases and the split


