

Verb movement and *do*-support

CAS LX 422 ~ GRS LX 722 Intermediate Syntax

Lecture 7

French v. English

In English, adverbs cannot come between the verb and the object.

- (1) * Pat eats often apples.
- (2) Pat often eats apples.

In French, it's the other way around.

- (3) Jean mange souvent des pommes
Jean eats often of.the apples
'Jean often eats apples.'
- (4) * Jean souvent mange des pommes.

If we suppose that the basic structures are the same, why might that be?

French v. English

Similarly, while only auxiliaries in English show up before negation (*not*)...

(5) John does not love Mary

(6) John has not eaten apples

...all verbs seem to show up before negation (*pas*) in French.

(7) Jean (n') aime pas Marie
Jean (ne) loves not Marie
'Jean doesn't love Marie.'

(8) Jean (n') a pas mangé des pommes
Jean (ne) has not eat of.the apples
'Jean didn't eat apples.'

V raises to T in French

What it looks like is that both main verbs and auxiliaries raise to T in French. (Unlike in English, where only auxiliaries and not main verbs raise to T.)

This is a **parametric difference** between English and French. A child's task is to determine whether V moves to T and whether auxiliaries move to T

- English: T values [*uInfl*:] on Aux: strong
- English: T values [*uInfl*:] on *v*: weak
- French: T values [*uInfl*:] on Aux: strong
- French: T values [*uInfl*:] on *v*: strong

Swedish

Looking at Swedish, we can see that not only do languages vary on whether they raise main verbs to T, languages also vary on whether they raise auxiliaries to T.

(9) ... om hon inte köpte boken
 whether she not bought book-the
 ‘... whether she didn’t buy the book’

(10) ... om hon inte har köpt boken
 whether she not has bought book-the
 ‘... whether she hasn’t bought the book’

So both parameters can vary. However, it seems that weak on Aux but strong on *v* is not attested (raising main verbs but not auxiliaries).

Irish

In Irish, the basic word order is VSO.

- (11) Phóg Máire an lucharachán
 kissed Mary the leprechaun
 ‘Mary kissed the leprechaun.’

We distinguish SVO from SOV by supposing that the head-complement order can vary from language to language (heads precede complements in English, heads follow complements in Japanese). Perhaps we can distinguish other languages (OVS, VOS) by a parameter of specifier order.

But no combination of these two parameters can yield VSO.

Irish

- (12) Tá Máire ag-pógáil an lucharachán
is Mary ing-kiss the leprechaun
'Mary is kissing the leprechaun.'

We find that if an *auxiliary* occupies the verb slot at the beginning of the sentence, the main verb appears between the subject and the verb:
Aux S V O.

What does this suggest about

- the head-parameter setting in Irish?
- how VSO order arises?

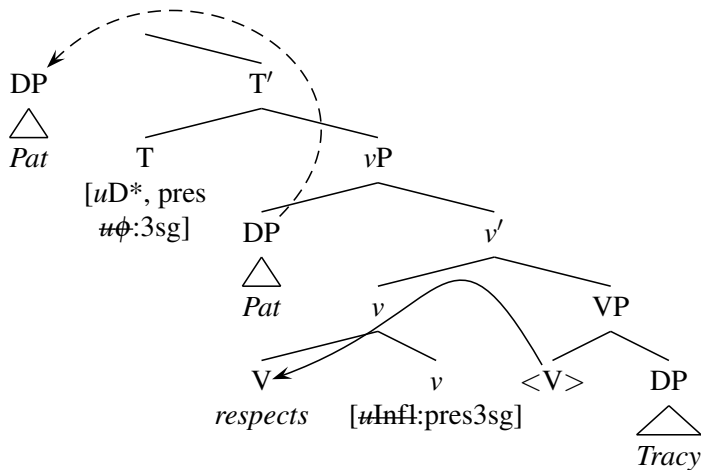
SVO to VSO

Irish appears to be essentially an SVO language, like French. Verbs and auxiliaries raise past the subject to yield VSO.

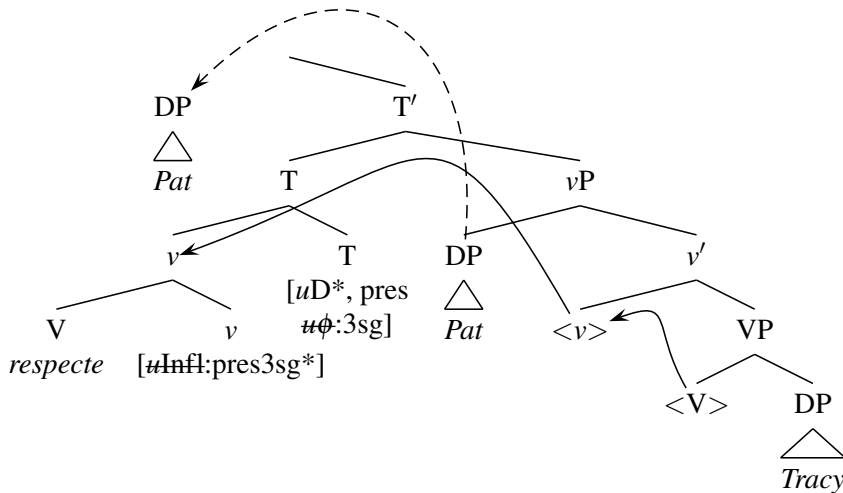
We can analyze the Irish pattern as being minimally different from our existing analysis of French—just one difference, which we hypothesize is another parametric difference between languages.

V and Aux both raise to T (when tense values the [μ Infl:] feature of either one, [μ Infl:] is strong) in Irish, just as in French.

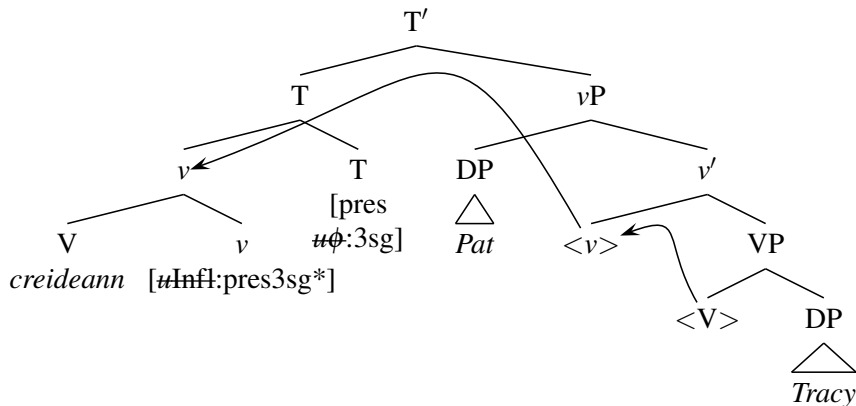
Pat respects Tracy



Pat respecte Tracy



Creideann Pat Tracy



Parametric differences

So far, we might say languages can vary in, at least:

- Head-complement order
- (Head-specifier order?)
- Whether [*uInfl*:] on [Aux] is strong when valued by T
- Whether [*uInfl*:] on *v* is strong when valued by T
- Whether T has a [*uD**] feature

do-support

In French verbs move to T, in English they **don't** move to T.

What this **doesn't** explain is why *do* appears sometimes in English, seemingly doing nothing but carrying the tense and subject agreement.

The environments are complicated:

- Tom **did** not **commit** the crime.
- Tom did not commit the crime, but someone **did**.
- Zoe and Danny vowed to prove Tom innocent, and prove Tom innocent they **did**.
- Tom (has) never **committed** that crime.

Where is *do*?

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 - Tom did not commit the crime, but someone **did**.
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- When *not* separates T and *v*, *do* appears in the T position to carry the tense/agreement morphology.
 - When T is stranded due to VP ellipsis or VP fronting, *do* appears in T to carry the tense/agreement morphology.
 - When *never* (or any adverb) separates T and the next verbal element, tense morphology appears on the next verbal element.
 - So, *do* appears when T is separated from the verbal element, but adverbs like *never* are not “visible” and do not get in the way.

Technical difficulties

How do we generally know to pronounce $V+v$ as a past tense verb?

- T values the [$u\text{Infl:}$] feature of v . The presumption is that $eat+v[\text{uInfl:past3sg}]$ sounds like “ate” and T doesn’t sound like anything.
- But this happens whether or not v is right next to T. v still has a [$u\text{Infl:}$] feature that must be checked. And, so, is.
- How do we keep from pronounce the verb based on v ’s [$u\text{Infl:}$] feature if T **is not** right next to it?
- How do we keep from pronouncing T as *do* if v **is** right next to it?
- We need to connect T and v somehow.

Connecting T and ν

The main connection between T and ν (or, the highest verbal element) is that T values its [μ Infl:] feature.

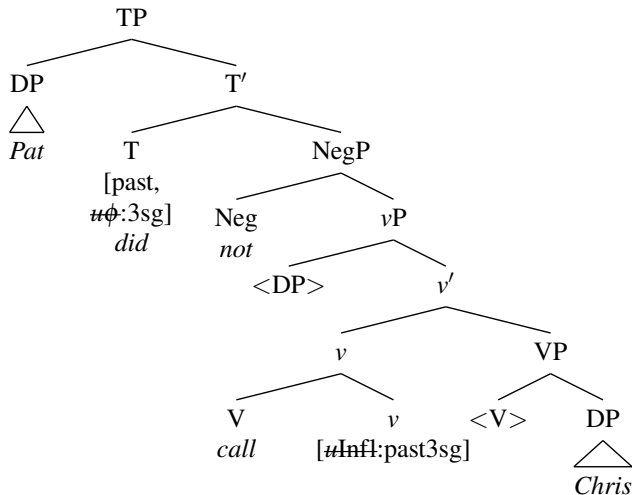
This sets up a relationship between the two heads. We can follow Adger's textbook in calling this a “chain.”

We want to ensure that tense/agreement features are pronounced in exactly one place in this chain. If the ends of the chain are not close enough together, tense/agreement is pronounced on T (as *do*). If the are close enough together, tense/agreement is pronounced on the lower end (the verbal element).

Pronouncing Tense Rule

In a chain (T[F], X[~~μ~~ Infl:F]), for a verbal element X, pronounce the tense features on X only if X is the head of T's sister.

Pat did not call Chris



Pat never called Chris

