

CAS LX 522

Syntax I

θ -roles in DP,
and an introduction to little *n*
(7.3-7.6)

14

Deverbal nouns

- The structure inside the DP can be as complicated as inside a clause, as it turns out.
 - 1) Pat broke the vase.
 - 2) Pat's breaking of the vase startled me.
 - 3) The bees startled me.
- It seems to be possible to convert the whole clause *Pat broke the vase* into a "noun" (a DP).

Deverbal nouns

- What's more, the relationship between *break*, *Pat*, and *the vase* seems to be the same inside the DP as it is in the clause.
 - 1) Pat broke the vase.
 - 2) Pat's breaking of the vase made me angry.
 - *Pat* is an Agent, *the vase* is a Theme.
 - 3) Pat danced.
 - 4) Pat's dancing startled me.
- Just as the verb *break* assigns θ -roles, it seems as if the nominalized *breaking* assigns the same θ -roles. The DP is in a way like a little clause.

TPs and DPs

- One difference between clausal DPs and TPs is in the case realized by the arguments.
 - 1) I called him.
 - Agent is nom (from T), Theme is acc (from *v*)
 - 2) My calling of him was unplanned.
 - Agent is gen, Theme looks like a PP introduced by *of*.
- So, the case assigners within a DP are different from the case assigners within a clause.

Two kinds of N

- Not all N's assign θ -roles. Some do, some don't. Generally, the nouns related to a verb that assigns θ -roles will assign θ -roles. But something like *lunch* doesn't.
 - 1) Pat's lunch was enormous.
 - 2) Pat's eating of lunch was shockingly rapid.
- So, we can either find a DP with a θ -role with genitive case, or we can find a possessor with genitive case, in SpecDP.

Ditransitive N

- Consider the ditransitive verb *give* and the related noun *gift*. Just as *give* is responsible for three θ -roles (Agent, Theme, Goal), so can *gift* be:
 - 1) Pat gave an apple to Chris.
 - 2) Pat's gift of an apple to Chris was unexpected.
- The exact same problem arises with ditransitive nouns as arose with ditransitive verbs.
- Binary branching allows for just two arguments in NP. We need an additional projection for the third. Let's try doing this just like we did for verbs...

Little n

