CAS LX 522
Syntax I

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

13

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 <u>n</u>
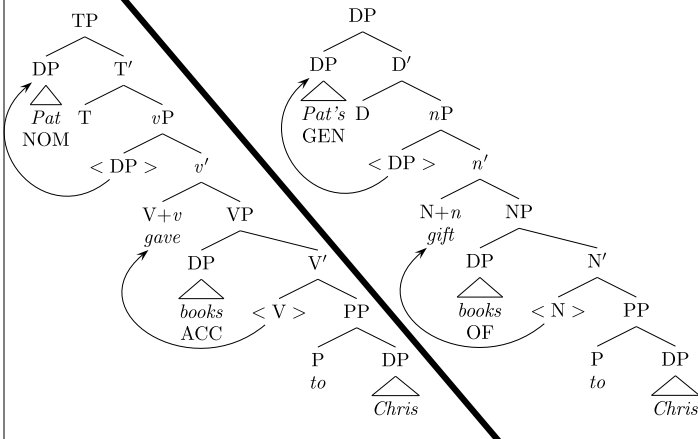
DP is like TP

If we suppose that DP works like TP, we can extend our theoretical machinery in an exactly analogous way.

Hierarchy of Projections
D > *n* > N

UTAH
DP daughter of *n*P: Agent
DP daughter of NP: Theme
PP daughter of N′: Goal

Case in the DP

In the DP, the "subject" appears with genitive case.

- Cf. The subject in TP, which has nominative case, due to a [nom] feature on T.

So, we say D can have a [gen*] feature.

- This checks the genitive case on the subject of the DP, and forces it to move into SpecDP.

In the DP, the "object" appears with the preposition *of*.

- Cf. The object in TP, which has accusative case, due to an [acc] feature on *v*.

So, we say that *n* has an [of] feature.

The <u>of</u> case

What's the deal with this "*of* case" that objects in DPs get? Isn't *of* a preposition? Shouldn't *of cheese* in *The gift of cheese to the senator was appreciated* be a PP?

This *of* is completely meaningless, it acts like a case marker. So, we're going to analyze it as such. *Of cheese* is a DP with the *of* case marking. Just like *Pat's* is a DP with the genitive ('s) case marking.

Treating *of* as case allows a complete parallel between TP and DP; *v* has an [acc] feature, *n* has an [of] feature.
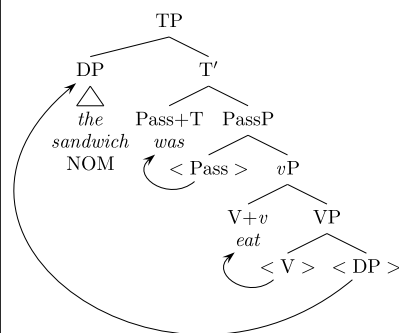
Passive nouns

Last week, we looked at the passive construction:

1) The sandwich was eaten

Here, the Theme *the sandwich* becomes the subject because the strong feature of T forces it to move to SpecTP. The *v* does not project an Agent.
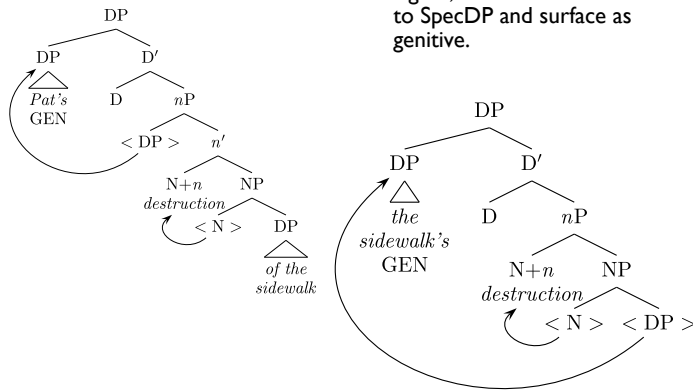
Passive

In the passive, *v* does not introduce an Agent, and does not have an [acc] feature.

T still has a [nom] feature, so it checks the [case] feature on *the sandwich*.

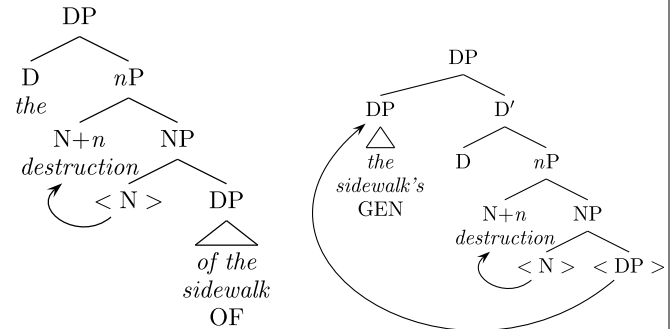T has a [*u*D*] feature, so the sandwich moves to SpecTP to check it.

Passive nouns

Very similar to the passive, if an *n* doesn't introduce an Agent, the Theme can move to SpecDP and surface as genitive.

DP
- DP → *Pat's* GEN
- D′
  - D
  - nP
    - < DP >
    - n′
      - N+n *destruction* → < N >
      - NP → DP *of the sidewalk*

DP
- DP → *the sidewalk's* GEN
- D′
  - D
  - nP
    - N+n *destruction* → < N >
    - NP → < DP >

Passive nouns

If the DP has a head D like *the* that does not check genitive case, then there can be no Agent (nothing could check its case), and the Theme stays unmoved (its *of*-case checked by *n*).

DP
- D *the*
- nP
  - N+n *destruction* → < N >
  - NP → DP *of the sidewalk* OF

DP
- DP → *the sidewalk's* GEN
- D′
  - D
  - nP
    - N+n *destruction*
    - NP → < N > < DP >

Case and θ-roles

We now predict the observation Adger makes: Either an Agent or a Theme can show up in the genitive, but only a Theme can show up with *of*-case.

1) Adger's analysis of the DP is simple.
2) The DP's analysis is simple.
3) *The analysis of Adger is simple.

This is essentially the same as the generalization that, in a clause, either an Agent or a Theme can show up with nominative case, but only a Theme can show up with accusative case.

1) I called her.   3) *Her tripped.
2) She tripped.   4) *Tripped her.

Back to possession

Prior to today, the genitive case was associated with the possessor. So far today we've been looking at deverbal nouns, where genitive case goes to the subject.
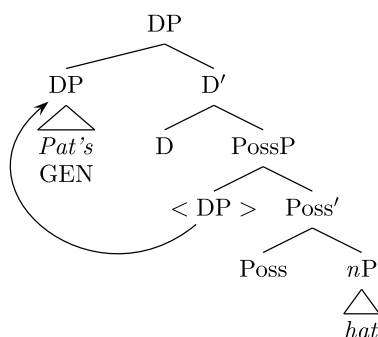
Our new improved UTAH says, among other things:

DP daughter of NP: Theme

DP daughter of *n*P: Agent

Possessors are neither of these, so possessors need to be initially Merged into a distinct place in the structure.

Possessors

DP
- DP → *Pat's* GEN
- D′
  - D
  - PossP
    - < DP >
    - Poss′
      - Poss
      - nP → *hat*

Adger proposes that Possessors are introduced by a new head, Poss.

HoP:
D > (Poss) > *n* > N

Hungarian possessors

1) Az en kalapom
the I hat
'my hat'

2) A Mari kalapja
the Mary hat
'Mary's hat'

3) A te kalapod
the you hat
'your hat'

4) Marinak a kalapja
Mary the hat
'Mary's hat'

Assuming that the DP in Hungarian has the basic structure we've been discussing, what is the structure of this kind of possessive construction?

How about that (person?) agreement on 'hat'?

Adjectives

Adjectives are to nouns as adverbs are to verbs. So what would the structure be for *Pat's complete destruction of the sidewalk*? Or *the silly idea*? Or *the pencil on the desk*?

In *Pat completely destroyed the sidewalk*, we adjoin *completely* to *v*P. The subject moves to SpecTP.

In the same way, we adjoin *complete* to *n*P, and *Pat* moves to SpecDP.

Adjuncts
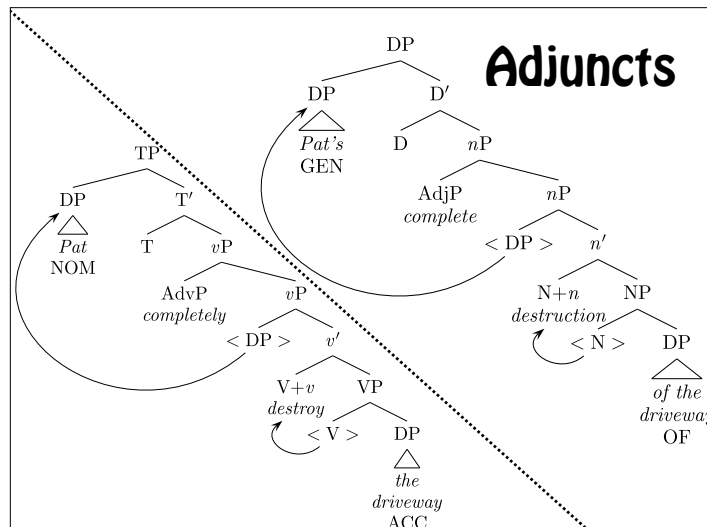
The Italian DP

In Italian, in many cases, there is simply an option (stylistically governed) as to whether you say *The Gianni* or just *Gianni*:

Gianni mi ha telefonato.
Gianni me has telephoned
'Gianni called me up.'

Il Gianni mi ha telefonato.
the Gianni me has telephoned
'Gianni called me up.'

The Italian DP

However, there is a difference with respect to the order of adjectives and the noun depending on which one you use.

1) L' antica Roma
the ancient Rome
'Ancient Rome'

2) *Antica Roma
ancient Rome

3) Roma antica
Rome ancient

4) E'venuto il vecchio Cameresi.
came the older Cameresi

5) *E'venuto vecchio Cameresi
came older Cameresi

6) E'venuto Camersi vecchio.
came Cameresi older

Generalization: If there's a determiner, the noun follows the adjective. If there isn't the noun precedes the adjective.

The Italian DP

- We can apply the same analysis to the order nouns and adjectives as we did to the order of adverbs and verbs.
  - Recall that in French, verbs precede adverbs, but in English, verbs follow adverbs. We conclude that in French, *v* moves to T.

In Italian, when the noun precedes the adjective it has moved over it, to D. The generalization is that this happens except if D is already filled.

  - L' antica Roma
  the ancient Rome

  - Roma antica   *Antica Roma
  Rome ancient   ancient Rome
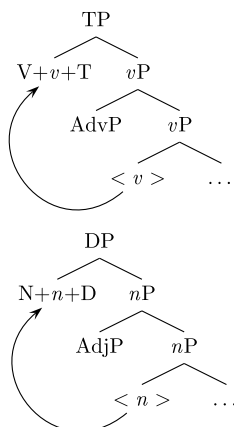
Parameters

Languages differ on whether *n* moves to D, yielding some languages where nouns precede adjectives, and some languages where nouns follow adjectives.

- Likewise, languages differ on whether *v* moves to T, yielding some languages (e.g., French) where verbs precede adverbs, and some languages (e.g., English) where verbs follow adverbs.

What governs whether *n* moves to D is the strength of an uninterpretable feature checked on D or *n* by the other. One such feature is [*unum*:].

Italian: [*unum*:*] is strong on null determiners.

English: [*unum*:] is weak, even on null determiners.

- [∅_{indef} Happy students] poured forth from the classroom.