

Wh-agreement as Anti-intervention

Masanori Nakamura
Senshu University

1. Basic Proposal. Under Bošković's (2007) theory, successive cyclicity is forced by the PF linearization requirement. It is then predicted that null operators, lacking phonological features, do not move successive-cyclically. The *tough*-sentence in (1) has been assumed to have the successive-cyclic derivation in (1'). Our proposed analysis of (1) is given in (1''): first, the probe enters into an Agree relation (indicated by the arrow) with *OP* in t_i because phases are irrelevant to Agree (Bošković 2007), and then *OP* moves in one fell swoop to Spec of its probe to function as a probe for its probe (Epstein and Seely 2006).

2. Intervention Effects. Putting aside islands, then, null operator movement is constrained exclusively by Agree, subject to intervention effects. This immediately accounts for (2), which only received an *ad hoc* treatment in Stowell 1986. Bošković (2007) argues that an intervener blocks Agree when it has the same type of feature as the one involved in probing the goal. Suppose that D and T, in light of their similarities (Enç 1987 among others), have the same type of feature when they qualify as "operators" in need of fixing their references. Then (2) is ruled out, as shown in (2') where the necessary Agree operation is blocked by the finite T. This analysis also explains why *as*-parentheticals involving null operator movement (Potts 2002) tolerate long-distance dependencies, as in (3), another problem for Stowell (1986). In (3') the null operator is of the category CP and hence the finite T does not count as an intervener. This Agree-based account predicts that no intervention effects would arise if a DP null operator can move to a position higher than a potential intervener T for an independent reason. In this respect, (4) would be a relevant example but is ruled out by the EPP: null elements cannot occupy Spec of TP in English.

3. Wh-agreement. The present analysis makes the following general prediction: in constructions where null operators of the category DP are used, extraction can take place only out of a position higher than T, typically Spec of TP, as long as the position in question accepts null elements. This prediction is fulfilled by "*wh*-agreement" constructions in languages of the Tagalog type. Tagalog is a case in point, because (a) it lacks the EPP requirement, and (b) in questioning arguments, it uses a *wh*-word predicate predicated onto a headless relative clause involving null operator movement. (5a) is a Tagalog transitive clause, where the Theme 'fish' is the structural subject and the Agent 'Juan' bears ergative Case. (5b) is the antipassive counterpart of (5a), in which the Agent is the structural subject and the Theme gets inherent Case. The Theme in (5a) is extractable, as shown in (6) with the "*wh*-agreement" morpheme *-in-* on the verb, but the one in (5b) is not, as shown in (7). In (7'), as in (2'), the probe *C* cannot establish an Agree relation with *OP* due to the intervening finite T. In (6') the Case-driven movement into Spec of TP over the finite T voids the potential intervention effect. Note that a non-absolute DP is expected to be able to exceptionally undergo extraction if (a) it can somehow reach a position above T and (b) there is no potential intervener in the first place. These two possibilities are in fact attested. The first possibility is realized in sentences with certain non-verbal predicates such as (8). As shown in (9), the ergative DP in (8) can be extracted. This is because the non-verbal predicate and the ergative DP together can raise over the T (Richards 1998), allowing the probe *C* to Agree with the null operator, as in (9'). The second possibility manifests itself with certain adjectival predicates, as in (10), where no absolute DP is licensed and there is arguably no finite T. (11), an example of "*ay*-inversion," shows that the ergative DP can be extracted, being able to enter into an Agree relation with its probe, as in (11'). Movement of phonologically overt operators is not blocked by the presence of finite T (see (12)). It automatically follows that *wh*-movement of adjuncts in Tagalog with no use of null operators does not require "*wh*-agreement" morphology on the verb, as in (13a, b).

4. Implications. Our analysis lends significant empirical support to the theory of cyclic linearization that dispenses with the Phase Impenetrability Condition. Furthermore, syntax must be sensitive to the presence/absence of phonological features, which refutes the hypothesis of Late

Insertion (Halle and Marantz 1993).

Examples

- (1) John is easy to convince Bill to work with.
 (1') John is easy [_{CP} *OP*_i [_{TP} PRO to convince Bill [_{CP} *t'*_i [_{TP} PRO to work with *t*_i]]]]
 (1'') John is easy [_{CP} *OP*_i C [_{TP} PRO to convince Bill [_{CP} C [_{TP} PRO to work with *t*_i]]]]
- (2) *John is easy to believe (that) Mary kissed.
 (2') *John is easy [_{CP} *OP*_i C [_{TP} PRO to believe [_{CP} (that) [_{TP} Mary **T**_{finite} kissed *t*_i]]]]
- (3) We should resign right away, as I'm sure you'll agree.
 (3') [_{PP} as [_{CP} *OP*_i C [_{TP} I am sure [_{CP} C [_{TP} you will agree *t*_i]]]]]
- (4) *John is easy to believe (that) is kissed by Mary.
- (5) a. **B-in-ili** ni Juan ang isda. b. **B-um-ili** si Juan ng isda
 bought ERG-Juan ABS-fish bought(APASS) ABS-Juan INH-fish
 'Juan bought the fish.' 'Juan bought fish.'
- (6) Ano ang **b-in-ili** ni Juan? (6') [_{DP} the [_{CP} *OP* C [_{TP} *t'* bought [Juan *t*]]]]
 what the bought ERG-Juan
 Lit. 'What is the thing Juan bought?'
- (7) *Ano ang **b-um-ili** si Juan? (7') * [_{DP} the [_{CP} *OP* C [_{TP} Juan bought [*t* *t*]]]]
 what the bought(APASS) ABS-Juan
 (Lit. 'What is the thing Juan bought?')
- (8) Kasama ni Juan ang tao. (9) Sino ang kasama ang tao?
 be with ERG-Juan ABS-man who the be with ABS-man
 'Juan is with the man.' 'Who is the one that is with the man?'
- (9') [_{DP} the [_{CP} *OP* C [_{XP} [be with *t*] X [_{TP} the man [*t*]]]]]
- (10) Napakaganda ng baro.
 very beautiful ERG-dress
 'The dress is very beautiful.'
- (11) Ang baro ay napakaganda.
 the dress AY very beautiful
 'The dress is very beautiful.'
- (11') [_{CP} *OP* C [_{TP} very-beautiful [*t*]]]
- (12) Who do you believe (that) Mary kissed *t*?
 (13) a. Saan **b-in-ili** ni Juan ang damit? b. Saan **b-um-ili** si Juan ng damit?
 where bought ERG-Juan ABS-dress where bought(APASS) ABS-Juan INH-dress
 'Where did Juan buy the dress?' 'Where did Juan buy a dress?'

References

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