

A. *v*P-fronting

Before the session started, Iwo confronted us with a generalisation from Huddleston's grammar concerning VP-fronting. The problem was the inflectional form of the verb in the fronted VP in case of Aux°–VP combinations – must the fronted V be a past participle, as demanded by the perfect Aux° *have* (cf. 1b), or can it be infinitival (cf. 1c). Huddleston appears to prescribe the infinitive.

- (1) a. Iwo has finished his M.A. thesis.  
 b. <sup>?</sup>Finished his M.A. thesis, Iwo has.  
 c. Finish his M.A. thesis, Iwo has.

Although to my ears, the infinitive first sounded more natural, this intuition was rather quickly overridden by my 'theoretical competence', which was in favor of the participle. Even if our judgments are somehow biased, and thus not as natural as they ought to be – as Iwo rightly pointed out –, I think the very fact that the infinitive might be the best choice here (as is Huddleston's) begs for a syntax-theoretical explanation in any case (although my suspicion would be that both are good somehow, to different extents).

Within a minimalist framework, the major problem is the inflectional past-participle-feature (call it [PERF(ECTIVE)]) on Perf°, as in Adger 2003), or rather the optionality of its assignment to *v*° (its morphophonological realisation). More specifically, it is not clear to me how *v*° can be prevented from receiving the feature by Perf°, since an appropriate local AGREE-configuration for Perf°–*v*° is established at one point in the derivation in any case.

- (2) a. [<sub>PerfP</sub> have [<sub>VP</sub> Iwo finish [his M.A. thesis ] ] ] → *have*[Infl:PERF]...*finish*[uInfl: ]  
 b. [<sub>PerfP</sub> have [<sub>VP</sub> Iwo finish+**ed** [his M.A. thesis ] ] ] → *have*[Infl:PERF]...*finish+ed*[uInfl:PERF]

Put differently, for the fronted *v*° to be provided with a default feature [uInfl:INFINITIVE], it has to remain derivationally unvalued.

Turning things around, as Adger (2003) does for *v*P-fronting involving simple past tense (*Finish his M.A. thesis, he did.*), doesn't help here very much regarding the mentioned optionality. Adger invokes a *Pronouncing Tense Rule* (PTR), which accounts for *do*-support in case the verbal chain (V–*v*–T) is interrupted by an intervener like Neg° *not*. Essentially, the PTR boils down to PF-Merger, i.e. to recent reformulations of Head-movement as a post-syntactic PF/Morphology-process that assembles inflectional and lexical elements (cf. e.g. Boeckx & Stjepanović 2001, Chomsky 2001). A PF-Merger requires PF-adjacency (cf. the PTR), which is not given if e.g. *not* intervenes between the T°-affix and *v*°, resulting in *do*-support.

- (3) a. Finish his M.A. thesis, Iwo did.  
 b. [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> **finish his M.A. thesis** ]<sub>i</sub> C [<sub>TP</sub> Iwo T<sub>PRES</sub> *t*<sub>i</sub> ] ]  
 c. PF: finish<sub>[INF]</sub> his M.A. thesis Iwo did<sub>[PRES]</sub>

The derivation of the fronted infinitival *v*P in the perfect case could proceed analogously, with *has* syncretically realising tense *and* perfect.

- (1) a. Finish his M.A. thesis, Iwo has.  
 b. [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> **finish his M.A. thesis** ]<sub>i</sub> C [<sub>TP</sub> Iwo T<sub>PRES</sub> [<sub>PerfP</sub> Perf *t*<sub>i</sub> ] ] ]

c. PF: finish his M.A. thesis Iwo PRES PERF → finish<sub>[INF]</sub> his M.A. thesis Iwo has

Of course, problems remain: Perf°–T° raising, which must occur (cf. Neg°), but which can hardly be construed as a PF-Merger, for obvious reasons; one could argue for some head-movements to be syntactic, and some others to occur at PF, but then, things get tricky again.

One way of overcoming this problem is to assume (*contra* Adger 2003) that the auxiliaries *have*<sub>PERF</sub> and *be*<sub>PROG</sub> are introduced as V° into the syntax, selecting for a functional category corresponding to the participle affixes *–en* and *–ing* (aspectual in nature, perfective and imperfective), thus creating some kind of verbal shells (if I understand it correctly). One such proposal is Omaki 2007 (building on Lasnik 2000; also, Adger 2003 mentions the affixal theory in one subsection).

(2) ...<sub>[AUXP]</sub> have <sub>[PerfP]</sub> en <sub>[vP]</sub> finish ] ] ]

(adapted from Omaki 2007:101)

Then, in conjunction with PF-Merger, the two derivations could differ in the category that is fronted – either vP or PerfP (but not what I have called PerfP).

(3) a. Finish his M.A. thesis, Iwo has.

b. [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>PerfP</sub> en [<sub>vP</sub> finish his M.A. thesis ] ] ]<sub>i</sub> C [<sub>TP</sub> Iwo T<sub>PRES</sub> [<sub>AUXP</sub> have t<sub>i</sub> ] ] ] ]

c. PF: PERF finish his M.A. thesis Iwo PRES have → finished his M.A. thesis Iwo has

Unlike dependent morphemes, stranded (free) affixes receive a null interpretation (similar to Lasnik's 1995 *Stranded Affix Filter*).

(4) a. Finish his M.A. thesis, Iwo has.

b. [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>vP</sub> finish his M.A. thesis ] ]<sub>i</sub> C [<sub>TP</sub> Iwo T<sub>PRES</sub> [<sub>AUXP</sub> have [<sub>PerfP</sub> en t<sub>i</sub> ] ] ] ] ]

c. PF: finish his M.A. thesis Iwo PRES have PERF → finish<sub>[INF]</sub> his M.A. thesis Iwo has ~~PERF~~

Even if this is what really happens, the proposal remains language-specific. Some quick thinking suggests that affixes behave differently in German...

## B. Word Interpretation

Browsing the web for information on Word Interpretation (WI), the only useful, easy-to-handle thing I could come up with is the following excerpt from a dissertation on “the syntax of heads and phrases” (i.e. Vicente 2007). I know this might not qualify as a ‘scientific’ method, but then I ask (in Benni’s words): Is there a thing such that it qualifies for what we refer to as *science*?

However, there are several cases where heads look like they have internal structure – for instance, all the incorporation cases discussed in Baker (1988) and subsequent literature. Chomsky (1995a:322) gets around this problem by stipulating a word interpretation (WI) component. The key characteristics of WI are that (a) it takes two  $X^{\min}$  as its input and returns another  $X^{\min}$ , and (b), the internal structure of its output is not accessible to the syntactic component. Or in other words, once WI is assumed, a head is no longer definable as a terminal element, but as an atomic element for syntactic purposes. Technically, the WI component does the work it is designed to do (i.e., marking a complex structure as syntactically indivisible), but

it is conceptually quite unappealing in that it misses the whole point of eliminating bar levels in the first place, namely, to develop a theory of phrase structure based on geometric relations alone, without reference to diacritics. Empirically, WI is also suspicious as it predicts that complex heads should be impenetrable for subsequent syntactic operations. However, we saw in section 2.2.2 that this is incorrect, and that the internal structure of complex heads is accessible. A final problem stems from Julien's (2002) claim that words need not correspond to syntactic constituents. As we shall see below, she shows that some complex words are simply a series of string-adjacent morphemes, but which do not necessarily form a constituent. However, Chomsky states that WI necessarily applies to a constituent (specifically, an  $X^{\circ}$  [...]). Therefore, WI cannot cover Julien's cases of non-constituent words.

(Vicente 2007:23f.)

### C. Two base-positions for one adverb (polysemy/homomorphy)

- (5) a. Texans often drink beer.  
 b. Texans drink beer often.

(Cinque 1999:26)

The higher aspectual adverb *often* ( $Asp_{\text{frequentative(I)}}$ ) has quantificational properties (in Lewis's 1975 sense). Being able to unselectively bind the subject *Texans*, it induces the reading 'Most Texans drink beer', without saying anything about the frequency of drinking. A clearer example is the following (Cinque 1999:26, fn. 70, citing McCawley 1990:426): *Nineteenth-century composers frequently died young* (*Most 19<sup>th</sup> century composers died young, they didn't do so on a regular basis...*). The lower *often* ( $Asp_{\text{frequentative(II)}}$ ), however, cannot bind the subject, but indicates that the beer-drinking takes place more often than is usual.

That the two seemingly identical adverbs quantify over different semantic/logical objects – a complete EVENT ( $vP$ ) in the first case, the internal structure of an EVENT in the second (Cinque refers to it as ACT) – is shown by their licit co-occurrence:

- (6) John twice (often/rarely/...) knocked on the door twice (three times/often/...).

(Cinque 1999:27)