

Lecture 15: Raising.

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LIN 311: Syntax

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Outline

- ① Raising predicates
 - Elements with no θ -Roles
 - Expletive Subjects
 - Infinitival Clauses with Raising Verbs

Raising predicates

Verbs and Adjectives with no θ -roles

Recall that some verbs lack θ -roles at all.

- to rain
- to be likely, to be certain (only has a θ -role going to proposition)
- to seem, to appear (only has a θ -role going to proposition)

- (1)
- It rains.
 - It is likely that Josh is an alcoholic.
 - It is certain that he likes pizza.
 - It seems that Sue wins the race.
 - It appears that Bill doesn't understand syntax.

It does not receive any θ -roles.

Only **subordinate clauses** receive θ -roles (THEME) from such verbs!

Expletive subjects

It, there, etc.

- Elements like **it** and **there** have no meaning, and do not require any θ -roles.
- They are called **expletives**.

Dummy/Expletive *it*

- (2) a. **It** is cold.
 b. **It** is likely that John wins.
- (3) a. **Il** fait froid. (French)
 it does cold
 'It is cold.'
- b. **Il** est bizarre que tu n' étudies pas. (French)
 it is strange that you NE study_{SUBJ} not
 'It is strange that you don't study.'

Expletive subjects

It, there, etc.

- Elements like **it** and **there** have no meaning, and do not require any θ -roles.
- They are called **expletives**.

Dummy/Expletive *there*

- (4) a. **There** is a man in the garden.
 b. **There** is likely to be an explosion.
- (5) **Það** hafa margit jólasveinar borðað búaðing. (Icelandic)
 there have many Christmas-trolls eaten pudding
 'Many Christmas trolls have eaten the pudding.'

Expletive subjects

Summary

- Expletive subjects *it* and *there* do not receive θ -roles.
- They receive **nominative case** from the matrix T.
- The only reason they appear in the sentence is because of **EPP**:

- (6) **EPP**: **Spec,TP must be occupied**; or
 sentences must have subjects
 (this rule is active in English, and not active in Irish)

EPP stands for Extended Projection Principle; this is an unfortunate historical fact, we do not need to understand why it is called this way now.

Infinitival clauses

Now let's look at what happens if we use infinitival embedded clauses:

- (7)
- *It is likely **Josh** to be an alcoholic.
 - *It is certain **he** to like pizza.
 - *It seems **Sue** to win the race.
 - *It appears **Bill** to not understand syntax.

Why are these sentences starred? Think about **embedded subject**.

- Two modules to check: θ -theory and Case theory.
- Embedded subject **does not receive case**: embedded T is non-finite, and such verbs don't assign accusative! **XCase**
- Embedded subject **receives θ -role** from the embedded verb.
✓ θ -role

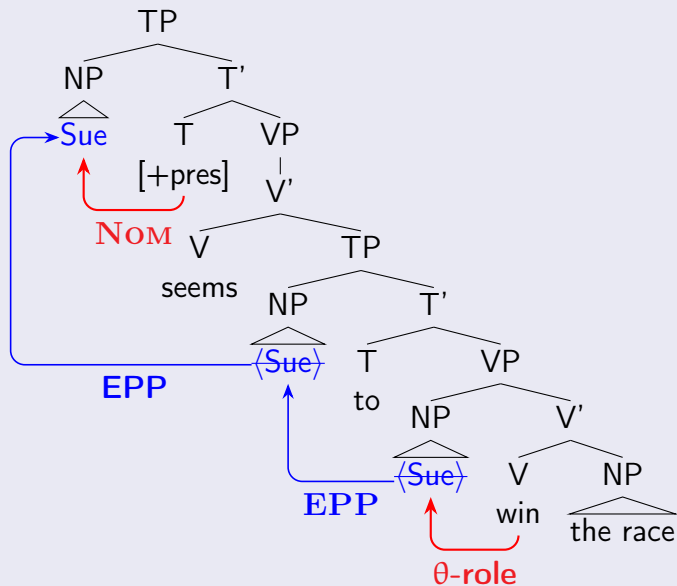
Infinitival clauses

- (8)
- It seems that Sue wins the race.
 - *It seems Sue to win the race.

How can we make a sentence with embedded non-finite clause grammatical?

- *Sue* needs to receive a Case.
- There is only one nominative case assigner: the matrix T!
- **Solution:** Raise the embedded subject to the matrix clause (and of course do not insert the expletive: EPP will be satisfied by the embedded subject, so no need for an expletive).

- (9)
- Sue seems to win the race.
 - Josh is likely to be an alcoholic.

(10) Sue_i seems to ____i win the race.

Absence of CP in Raising Constructions

Missing CP

Note that the tree above **did not have a CP layer** in the embedded clause.

- Absence of CP is a general property of raising constructions.
- If there were a CP, it would have been possible to have a complementizer *for* assign accusative case to the embedded subject, but it is not:

(11) *It seems *for* Sue to win the race.

Embedded infinitives under raising **lack CP layer**.

Locality of Selection

- We assumed that the embedded subject must have started in the embedded clause, where it is an argument of the verb.

(12) a. *Initial structure of raising construction:*

T seems [*Sue_i* to ____i win the race].

b. *Final structure of raising construction:*

Sue_i T seems [____i to ____i win the race].

- Why don't we start the subject directly in the matrix clause, and not do any movements?

- Locality of selection:** Arguments start in the projection of the verb that selects them;
- θ -roles are always assigned locally.
- This idea nicely agrees with the VP-internal subject hypothesis!

Idioms

- In idioms, such as *the shit hit the fan* or *the cat is out of the bag*, the subjects can only be interpreted in the presence of their verb, and don't have the literal meaning: they must be **selected** by the verb.
- However, in **raising constructions**, idioms are possible:

- (13)
- a. *The cat* seems to *be out of the bag*.
 - b. *The shit* is likely to *hit the fan*.

So they must be coming from the embedded non-finite clause!

No raising out of finite clauses

What is wrong with (14)?

(14) Sue_i seems that ____i wins the race.

- **θ-Theory:** Sue gets a θ-role from *win*. ✓θ-theory
- **Case theory:**
 - Embedded clause is finite, so Sue gets Case in the embedded clause.
 - Now we can have two possible explanations:

Explanation 1:

After movement, Sue also receives Case in the matrix clause.

- Maybe one NP cannot receive Case twice — violation. ✗Case

Explanation 2:

There is no need for Sue to move at all: it already has a θ-role and Case. To satisfy EPP, we need to insert an expletive.

Meteorological *it*

Meteorological *it*: *it* that is used with weather predicates or with some feeling predicates.

- (15) a. *It* is raining.
 b. *It* is boring here!

- Meteorological *it* does not need a θ -role, and can participate in raising, since it still needs case:

- (16) a. It seems that *it* is raining.
 b. *It* seems ____i to be raining.

- None of the positions occupied by *it* in (16-b) is a θ -marked position.

Raising verbs: Summary

- Verbs such as *to seem*, *to be likely*, etc. are called **Raising verbs**.
- They **do not assign θ -roles to their subjects** (no **external θ -role**):

(17) *Same meaning, **it** doesn't contribute anything:*

- It** seems that Sue has won the race.
- Sue seems to have won the race.

- They **do not assign accusative case** to their objects.
- They can take **non-finite complement TP (not CP)**.
- As a result, their subject is either
 - an expletive *it*; or
 - it must have raised from a position that is
 - XCase**, and
 - ✓ θ -role**.

Raising verbs: Summary

