

## Selectional Asymmetries between CP and DP Suggest that the DP Hypothesis is Wrong

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The DP Hypothesis (Szabolcsi 1983, Abney 1987) appears to have now been largely accepted as correct. Nearly every researcher in generative grammar now adopts the position that the head of the noun phrase is not N, but is some higher functional projection, entirely parallel to clauses, where higher functional projections dominate the lexical verb. One version of this involves the notion of an *extended projection* (Grimshaw 1991, van Riemsdijk 1998), where clauses are in some sense extended projections of verbs, and DPs are in some sense extended projections of nouns. However, all facts regarding complement selection and the determination of form indicate that the head of the clause is *not* the verb; C is (and the head of its complement is not the verb, but some other functional head; and so on down). But the same types of facts indicate that the head of a nominal phrase is *not* a functional projection like D; it is N. This asymmetry calls into question the correctness of the DP hypothesis.

Verbs that select for clausal complements commonly select for C, or other things that are usually regarded as residing high in the functional domain of the clause. They select for questions versus declaratives (\**Sue thinks what time it is*); finite versus nonfinite (\**Bertrand wants that the world is round*); subjunctive versus indicative (*Sue asked that the answer be/\*is two*). In other languages they may select V2 clauses (German) or illocutionary force (exhortative in Korean, imperative in Japanese). No verb ever selects for the verb in the embedded CP, or for modals, auxiliaries, or negation, which can generally appear in any complement CP whose other functional elements they are compatible with. (No verb ever selects for embedded topics or focus, either, suggesting that Topic and Focus do not head the extended CP, contra Rizzi 1997.) Hence, the verb is not the head of the CP in any sense, C (or a similarly high functional element) is.

In contrast, verbs that select nominal arguments *never* select for particular determiners, or numbers, or possessors, or anything else. Generally, if a verb admits an NP, any sort of NP is allowed: quantificational, deictic with demonstrative, definite or indefinite, number, adjective, and so on. Certain classes of N may be selected: animate or inanimate, sentient or not, volitional or not, and so on. Singular versus plural number may also be selected, but it is not at all clear that that distinction should be registered on a functional projection (selection is generally for *semantic* number); if it is, that projection is not D.

Now, given the generally accepted position that selection is strictly local, probably limited to a sisterhood relation, these facts indicate that the head of the CP is in fact C, but the head of the NP is not D. A DP theory (particularly one that included multiple other functional layers, like NumP, QP, etc.) would need to be augmented with a complicated theory of feature percolation, which to my knowledge has not been given. That theory would also have to explain why the features of V (or other things) do not percolate up to CP.

Form determination also shows an asymmetry between CP and DP. In the noun phrase, the head noun determines the form of everything else (particularly in languages other than English, where there is much more agreement): article, adjective, demonstrative, possessive pronoun, etc. In contrast, in the clausal domain, functional elements are generally not determined by the verb; in fact the verb form is determined by the functional elements: *I broke the vase*, *I was **breaking** the vase*, *I have **broken** the vase*, etc. Form selection in the CP generally seems to be downward: the *for* complementizer selects a nonfinite clause, the *that* one a finite clause; modals and auxiliaries determine the form of what immediately follows them (*I might have been breaking the vase*). (This asymmetry is in fact noted by van Riemsdijk (1998), but it is ignored in that paper and clauses and NPs are treated as equivalent in being extended projections.)

One might say that this asymmetry is only apparent, and choosing a functional element in DP actually determines the form of the noun. That does not appear to be right, though, because a noun will just be incapable of combining with functional elements that mismatch: *these scissors* vs. \**this scissors*. But there are no cases of verbs that simply cannot combine with certain auxiliaries or modals: there is no verb *geat* that simply cannot appear with *have* as \**I have geaten*.

Selectional asymmetries therefore indicate that the head of the CP is in fact the C; but the head of nominal elements is not D, it is N. Finally, a review of the evidence for the DP Hypothesis reveals that said evidence is entirely superficial.

## References

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