Staying in shape in Norway

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In recent generative literature, cross-linguistic variation in passive symmetry—the (non-) availability of theme passivisation out of double object constructions (DOCs)—has typically been explained in terms of locality (Anagnostopoulou, 2003; McGinnis, 1998; Ura, 1996). According to this model, in languages without theme passivisation, theme-raising to T is blocked by the intervening goal. Languages *with* theme passivisation differ minimally in the availability of short theme movement to an outer spec of the same projection hosting the goal, enabling the theme to subsequently raise to T without crossing the goal, as in (1).

In support of this approach, Anagnostopoulou (2003) notes a cross-linguistic correlation within Mainland Scandinavian between the availability of theme-goal orders in object shift (OS) and theme-goal orders in passive contexts, as in (2) and (3) respectively from Norwegian. In Norwegian/Swedish which allow theme-passives, *some* speakers accept theme-goal orders in OS. In Danish, theme-goal orders are disallowed in both contexts. Anagnostopoulou takes this correlation as evidence that short theme movement feeds theme passivisation. Anagnostopoulou's approach makes a strong prediction about cross-speaker variation: speakers should accept (2b) iff they accept (3b). We test this with an acceptability judgment experiment with 505 native speakers of Norwegian. The experiment crossed object order (*theme-goal/goal-theme*) with context (see (2)-(4)). Subjects judged four lexicalisations of these six conditions via a web-based application. Results revealed no correlation in acceptability of theme-goal orders between the passive and either of the two active conditions. However, acceptability of theme-goal orders in active OS and non-OS conditions *did* correlate (r=.57, p<.00001, see (5)). Assuming a structure for DOCs with the goal merged above the theme, these results suggest that theme movement above the goal in active non-OS contexts, feeds theme-goal orders in OS, i.e. speakers accept the latter iff they accept the former. Importantly, theme-goal orders in active and OS contexts appear *not* to feed theme-goal orders in passives. An initially appealing approach is that some movement permutes the objects low in the structure and a constituent containing these objects in the order theme-goal raises them in OS contexts. The fact, however, that shifted objects can be separated by an extra-VP adverb, as in (6), suggests they do not raise as a constituent.
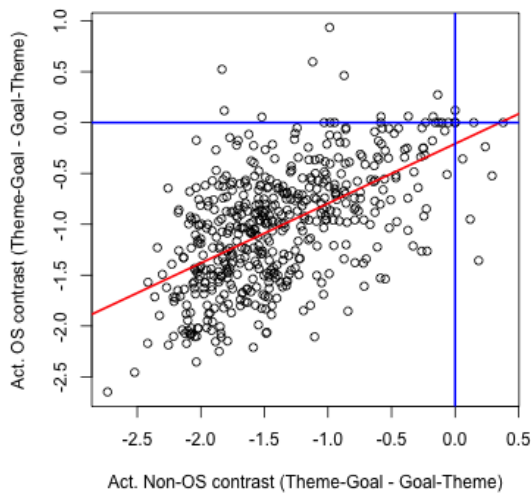
We propose that these facts are best expressed not in terms of locality but in terms of shape conservation, i.e. derivational constraints on linearization of syntactic objects, following Fox and Pesetsky's 2005 (FP) cyclic linearization proposal (see also Anagnostopoulou, 2005). FP propose that precedence relations among syntactic objects are established phase-by-phase, and extra-phasal movement cannot permute the linear order of two syntactic objects, since this would entail conflicting ordering relations (7). We propose that theme-goal orders in active contexts reflect optional movement of the theme to an outer spec of Appl, as in (8). We further assume that, in active but not passive contexts, little-v is a phase head (Chomsky, 2000), and that transitive-v therefore freezes the order of arguments in its c-command domain. Theme-passivisation is not fed by this short theme movement but rather reflects variation in whether the "extra" probe in applicative structures is located on Appl or a linker head above ApplP, where it probes the goal. In passives, where v is not a probe and not a phase head, the T will probe and attract the theme across the previously probed goal, as in (9).

Examples:

(1) [$_{\text{TP}}$ theme T...[$_{\text{XP}}$ ~~theme~~ goal X ...[$_{\text{YP}}$ Y ~~theme~~]]] (Theme passives-locality approach)

(2) **Passive**   (3) **Active OS**   (4) **Active non-OS**

a. Per ble gitt bok-en.   a. Jeg ga ham den ikke.   a. Jeg har ikke gitt ham den.
    Per was given book-the   I   gave him it   not   I   have not given him it
    'Per was given book-the.'   'I didn't give him it.'   'I haven't given him it.'

b. Bok-en ble gitt Per.   b.%Jeg ga den ham ikke.   b.%Jeg har ikke gitt den ham.

(5) **Acceptance of theme-goal orders in active OS and non-OS contexts**
    (Axis units are z-scores)

Act. OS contrast (Theme-Goal - Goal-Theme) [y-axis]
Act. Non-OS contrast (Theme-Goal - Goal-Theme) [x-axis]

(6) Jeg ga   ham sjølsagt   den ikke.
    I   gave him obviously it   not
    'Obviously I didn't give it to him.'

(7) **Cyclic linearization (Fox & Pesetsky, 2005)**

a.   [$_{\text{Phase2P}}$ X Y [$_{\text{Phase1P}}$ ~~X Y~~]]
b. *[$_{\text{Phase2P}}$ Y X [$_{\text{Phase1P}}$ ~~X Y~~]]

(8) [$_{\text{TP}}$ T [$_{\text{vP}}$ v [$_{\text{ApplP}}$ theme goal Appl [$_{\text{VP}}$ V ~~theme~~]]]]

(9) [$_{\text{TP}}$ theme T [$_{\text{vP}}$ v-passive [$_{\text{LkP}}$ Lk [$_{\text{ApplP}}$ goal Appl [$_{\text{VP}}$ V ~~theme~~]]]]]

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