

Reassessing the argument for tucking-in



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INTRODUCTION

Rudin (1988) observes that in Bulgarian multiple questions, the order of the moved *wh*-phrases preserves the “base c-command order”, as shown in (1). These facts appear to be difficult to reconcile with the superiority effect in English, shown in (2).

- (1) a. Koj kogo vizda
who whom sees
Who sees whom?
b. *Kogo koj vizda
whom who sees
Who sees whom?
- (2) a. Who saw whom?
b. *Whom did who see?

To get the correct word order in (1), one cannot keep both assumptions in (3).

- (3) **ExtCond**: Movement is always to the root of the tree.
Sup: The highest XP attracted to a certain head moves first (and the lowest such XP moves last).

Richards (1999) argues, largely on the basis of the Principal of Minimal Compliance (PMC), that **Sup** is true in (1), and that therefore **ExtCond** is the assumption that must be dropped.

We propose an alternative account of (1) and (2) via a re-interpretation of “superiority” phenomena, maintaining **ExtCond**.

OVERVIEW OF RICHARDS (1999)

According to the PMC (Richards, 1998), a *wh*-movement can disobey subadjacency if a subadjacency-obeying movement to the same projection has **already** occurred.

- (4) a. * [Which car]_i did John persuade [the man [who bought *t_i*]] to sell the hubcaps?
b. Who_j *t_j* persuaded [the man [who bought [which car]_i]] to sell the hubcaps?
c. * [Which car]_i did John persuade [the man [who bought *t_i*]] to sell [which hubcaps]_j ?

The illicit movement (index *i*) in (4a) is improved in (4b) when a licit *wh*-movement (index *j*) to the same projection **precedes** the problematic longer (now covert) movement. But not in (4c) when the licit movement follows the problematic movement.

The violation in (5a) is also improved by the presence of a licit *wh*-movement to the same projection in (5b). This suggests that the licit *wh*-movement of ‘*koj senatorat*’ **precedes** the problematic movement — as per **Sup**.

- (5) a. * [Koja kniga]_i otrece senatorat [malvata ce pravitelstvoto iska da zabrani *t_i*] ?
which book denied the senator the rumour that the government wanted to ban
Which book did the senator deny the rumour that the government wanted to ban?
b. ? [koj senatorat]_j [koja kniga]_i otrece *t_j* [malvata ce pravitelstvoto iska da zabrani *t_i*] ?
which senator which book denied the rumour that the government wanted to ban
Which senator denied the rumour that the government wanted to ban which book?

This means that the **first** movement step was to the **higher** specifier position in (5b) — contra **ExtCond**.

The best way to resolve the tension created by (1) and (2) therefore seems to be to maintain **Sup** and abandon **ExtCond**.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO TUCKING IN — OVERVIEW

We explore the other of the two logical possibilities (shown in (6)) that can account for (1) and (2) (i.e. **StartLow**). (The data in (5) can plausibly be explained without reference to the PMC; see final section.)

- (6) **TuckIn**: Maintain **Sup**
Abandon **ExtCond**: When a head overtly attracts multiple XPs, subsequent movement steps “tuck in” under the first.
StartLow: Maintain **ExtCond**
Abandon **Sup**: When a head overtly attracts multiple XPs, the lowest attracted XP moves first (and the highest last).

The big idea to get **StartLow** to work can be summarised as follows:

- “By default”, the **most remote** attractee moves **first**; this produces Bulgarian (1).
- English “overrides” this default in (2) because by doing so it reduces the total cost (length) of the **overt** movements.

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AN ALTERNATIVE TO TUCKING IN — IN MORE DETAIL

Richards (1999, p.135) notes the alternative we explore here: “If we wish to maintain the idea that movement always expands the tree [**ExtCond**], creating a specifier higher than all the existing structure, we must apparently conclude ... that the lower of the two *wh*-words ... must move first”.

When the C head becomes active, the choice arises of which *wh*-word to move first. Bulgarian and English choose differently.

- In Bulgarian (1), both *wh*-words must move overtly. No matter which moves first, the other will also move overtly, and so the total cost/length of overt movements will be the same. The default occurs.
- In English (2), only one *wh*-word must move overtly. The total cost/length of overt movements will be precisely the cost/length of the one *wh*-word that moves. The default is overridden.

	Move Furthest First (default)	Move Closest First	Result of Comparison
Bulgarian	<p>Total cost: long + short</p>	<p>Total cost: short + long</p>	Costs equal; go with default
English	<p>Total cost: long</p>	<p>Total cost: short</p>	Costs not equal; ignore default

This requires that derivational costs are compared **at the end of each maximal projection**, rather than after every merge/move step.

Both of the options in (6) entail departing from the assumptions in (3) **in the case where one head overtly attracts multiple specifiers**. Why should this case stand out?

- **StartLow** provides some insight into why the one-specifier case should differ from the multiple-specifier case in the way that it does
- **TuckIn** leaves this question largely unanswered, we think; attempts to derive it rely on (i) non-equidistant specifiers, and (ii) a problematic reformulation of Shortest Move/Attract (Richards, 1999).

REANALYSING THE CRUCIAL CASE IN (5)

If we reject **TuckIn**, the PMC account of the contrast in (5) is no longer valid; this fact needs some other explanation. We sketch some possibilities here.

Bošković (1999, 2002) argues for a distinction in Bulgarian between (i) the *wh*-phrase that is pronounced first, and (ii) all other *wh*-phrases; specifically, that only the former undergoes *wh*-movement, and the others undergo focus movement. If only *wh*-movement is subject to island effects, the facts would fall as predicted by the PMC.

Bošković’s proposal seems to extend to Serbo-Croatian (SC) better than Richards’s: in SC, ordering of *wh*-phrases is generally free **except under sluicing, where it behaves like Bulgarian** (Stjepanović, 2003). This can be explained if we follow the account of Bošković (2002) that SC questions involve only focus movement normally, but *wh*-movement in cases of sluicing (IP deletion).

- (7) a. Neko je nekog nekako prevario
somebody is someone somehow cheated
Somebody cheated someone somehow
b. Ko koga kako ?
who whom how
Who cheated whom how?
c. Ko kako koga ?
d. *Kako ko koga ?
e. *Koga ko kako ?

Some other points also bear on the argument for **TuckIn** from (5):

- Repair by the PMC sometimes produces partial acceptability (as in Bulgarian (5)), and sometimes complete acceptability (as in English (4)).
- Repair by the PMC sometimes seems not to occur at all (data from Hindi, Japanese):
(8) a. *John-ko [ye baat [ki Mary-ne kya khaya] pata hai ?
John-DAT this fact that Mary-ERG what ate knows be
What does John know the fact that Mary ate?
b. *kis-ko [ye baat [ki Mary-ne kya khaya] pata hai ?
who-DAT this fact that Mary-ERG what ate knows be
Who knows the fact that Mary ate what?
- (9) a. ?? John-wa [Mary-ga nani-o katta ka dooka] siritagatte-iru no ?
John-TOP Mary-NOM what-ACC bought whether know-want Q
What does John want to know whether Mary bought?
b. ?? John-wa [Mary-ga nani-o katta ka dooka] dare-ni tazuneta no ?
John-TOP Mary-NOM what-ACC bought whether who-DAT asked Q
Who did John ask whether Mary bought what?