

# 1 About Movement, Agreement and Case

Quickly: Main content:

1. Some general proposal about syntactic architecture (Highlights: Predicate Internal Subjects; a modified Larsonian approach to VPs including the split VP hypothesis i.e. Case for Object is lower than thematic position of Subject).
2. A theory of constraints on movement (a modified, simpler version of Chomsky's Barriers)
3. An application of this theory of movement to Case and Participle Agreement in French (requires a particular theory of clitic movement – XP movement followed by head movement; a link between Agro and Accusative Case, a way to derive Burzio's generalization, etc..)
4. A Larsonian analysis of DP internal Structure

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A more detailed description of the content

This article entitled "Movement Agreement and Case" (Sportiche, 1990) had remained unpublished for a long time although some subparts of it appeared scattered among other published articles. It contains two distinct subparts. It now published in Sportiche 1998 basically unchanged (the references have been updated prior to publication).

The first part (sections 1, 2 and 3) deals with general questions of syntactic architecture. It grew out of a certain dissatisfaction with the particular form that the Barrier theory took in Chomsky (1986) which was itself an attempt to synthesize a variety of attempts to derive the constraints on movement and much else as is found for example in Stowell (1981) or Kayne (1984). This ms tried to implement the belief that a simpler and more elegant system could be constructed out of the same building blocks. This led to a series of progressively larger unpublished manuscripts successively the 1987 "Unifying Movement Theory", the 1988 "Conditions on Silent Categories" (a version of which was published in French as Sportiche, 1989) and parts of the article under discussion.

The research agenda this first part explores takes as central the question of why there exist these constraints on movement dependencies rather than others. It seeks to answer it by constructing a theoretical edifice in which all these constraints reduce to one: each individual constraint can be thought of as a view of a same general prohibition from a different angle, metaphorically a projection of the same multidimensional geometrical object on a different plane.

In order to implement this program most elegantly, a number of simplifying assumptions were necessary many of which have since become widely accepted. For example, Koopman's 1986 idea that agreement is always a specifier/head relationship is accepted. Total structural uniformity across categories was postulated. Naturally, the VP Internal Subject Hypothesis was adopted, and generalized to all categories. Larson's 1988 VP-shell proposal is also accepted (but in a modified version), and merged together with the Koopman and Sportiche's 1991 idea that the Case position for Direct Objects is lower than the VP Internal Subject. This is instrumental in preventing violations of the locality of A-movement and in deriving Burzio's generalization (see below). Larsonian shells are extended to NPs/DPs in section 6<sup>1</sup>.

From these assumptions, it becomes possible to restrict movement landing sites either to specifiers or to adjunct positions and to require it to always be strictly local. This is the essence of the Condition on Chain Link (CCL) informally stated below:

(1) Condition on Chain Link (informal statement)

Movement is always from a position P to a position governing P

The discussion of participle agreement in section 5 leads to a loosening of this requirement by allowing the local government domain of a head to be extended to that of the chain containing it. This means that if P is governed by a head H and H moves up the tree, direct movement from P can be to a higher position than if H had not moved. This idea is essentially identical to Baker's 1988 Government Transparency Corollary or to the notion of Dynamic Minimality explored in Deprez (1989).

The second part of this manuscript (sections 4, 5 and 6) was written in 1989 and 1990 and presented in seminars at UCLA. It includes a detailed examination of a variety of constructions. Sections 4 and 5 investigate Clitic movement and Participle Agreement phenomena, primarily in French, within the rather constrained system of movement developed in the first part. Modulo basic assumptions originating to a large extent with the work on these topics of Richard Kayne (e.g. Kayne, 1972, 1975, 1989a), such as the head nature of clitics and the existence of clitic movement, the idea of these sections is to let the theory of movement decide how clitic movement proceeds and, as a result, to predict the pattern of agreement found in participle constructions.

A number of conclusions regarding the specific syntax of clitics are reached in section 4:

- a) Non reflexive clitic movement is done in two steps: object XP movement possibly triggering agreement followed by head movement (incorporation of the clitic into its host) (thus arguing against a view of clitic movement as head movement throughout adopted by others).
- b) Participle agreement is obligatory when object movement must transit through [spec,AGRo]. This happens in case of A-movement of objects (passive) (due to the strict locality of movement) but not in case of A-bar movement (object clitics, wh-movement). This also happens in reflexive clitic constructions which are argued to involve object to subject movement (the reflexive clitic itself being base generated in the inflectional complex of its clause), an idea implicit in Marantz (1984) and explicit in a footnote of Bouchard (1984) and also pursued in Kayne (1988).

Section 5 examines the relationship between Agreement and Case. There, the fundamental question asked is why participle agreement is restricted to Accusative Clitics (or otherwise accusative objects). The answer given and the central idea of this section is one which is by now familiar:

- (2) Both Accusative Case and Participle Agreement are a property of the same position, namely [spec, AGRo].

In my own thinking, this idea finds its source in some data noted in Kayne (1989). This article was devoted to participle agreement and introduce the existence of an intermediate AGR projection that has come to be known as AGRo. In this article, Kayne also discussed the fact participle agreement with objects is impossible in constructions with expletive subjects:

- (3) a. Il a vu beaucoup de femmes/ Combien de femmes a-t-il vuES  
He has seen many women/ How many women has he seen-FEM-PL
- b. Il est arrivé beaucoup de femmes/ Combien de femmes est-il arrivé(\*ES)  
It is arrived many women/ How many women is it arrived (\*FEM-PL)

Kayne accounted for this impossibility by the necessity of the object replacing the expletive. Upon reading his article, I thought that instead, this could be related to the assumption that the object in impersonal constructions does not receive Accusative Case (a part of Burzio's generalization, discussed in Belletti, 1988). This correlation could be instantiated by making Accusative Case and Participle Agreement a property of the same position, namely [spec, AGRo]. Given Koopman's proposal that Agreement is always a specifier/head relation and the widespread assumption at the time that AGRs was responsible for Nominative Case, it is not surprising that the same conclusion could be reached independently by regularizing the paradigm: if AGRs is responsible for Nominative, it is natural to take AGRo to be responsible for Accusative. This is the way in which the same conclusion is reached in Chomsky (1991), and in Mahajan (1989) (who, however, also provides extensive empirical grounding for this idea based on Hindi).<sup>ii</sup> There is an important difference between the view of AGRo presented here (and also in Koopman and Sportiche, 1991) and Chomsky's or Mahajan's. They assume that AGRo is VP external, i.e. higher than the thematic positions of the subject and of the object. I propose (primarily on grounds of locality of movement) that it is VP internal, i.e. higher than the thematic position of the object but lower than the thematic position of the subject. The first approach would seem more consistent with the Partitioning idea given in Sportiche 1992: first a thematic layer, then a Case/Inflectional Layer. For this reason, I have changed my mind on these questions over the years and later articles such as Sportiche (1992) (Clitic Constructions) assume this first approach. More recently however, I have come to realize that consistency with this partitioning idea could be achieved under the second approach if it were made more radical. The layering and partitioning of properties is interrupted by clause boundaries (and for sound partitioning reasons not discussed here). Thus in *Sue thinks that John saw Mary*, the Nominative position of *Sue* is separated from that of *John* by the thematic position of *John*: an embedded clause starts a new cycle of layers. If the Accusative and Thematic positions of direct objects were part of a new clause, not containing the Case and Thematic position of subjects, the second approach mentioned above would just be an instance of clausal embedding. The germs of this idea is already found in the lexical decomposition approach discussed in Sportiche (1993b) (Sketch of a Reductionist Approach to Syntactic Dependencies and Variations), and in my ongoing work on Reconstruction.

The rest of section 5 is devoted to exploring this idea about Case and Agreement in conjunction with the Condition on Chain links. This leads to discussions of:

- a) Agreement in what I call Anti-movement constructions (which overlap with what are now called (Transitive) Expletive constructions).
- b) Burzio's generalization ( which is argued to be derivable)
- c) Movement and agreement in Reflexive constructions, particularly the problem raised by Indirect Object reflexive constructions.

Finally section 6 returns to the question of Locality of Movement, when it comes to extraction from NP/DP. It articulates a view of the Abney (1987) /Szabolcsi (1983) DP hypothesis and integrates it with a Larsonian view of the internal structure of NPs to derive the properties of movement out of NPs/DPs.

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<sup>i</sup> a previous version of this ms. also contained some notes extending this approach to APs.

<sup>ii</sup> It is however unclear whether what is called participial agreement morphology here corresponds to what Mahajan calls Agreement. Agreement in Hindi is triggered by Scrambling, which is itself limited to specific direct objects. This leads Mahajan to propose that Accusative Case is reserved for specific objects, a conclusion that does not appear tenable in a variety of languages marking Accusative Case overtly. This property of Hindi agreement morphology makes it closer to French (and Romance) clitic heads. This is

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what I argue extensively in Clitic Constructions (which would mean that the proper parallelism would take Hindi agreement morphology to be incorporated clitics). If Participial Agreement Morphology on Accusative licensing verbs is not intimately linked to Case as I suggest, an alternative explanation will be needed as to why, with such verbs, agreement is limited to (preposed) accusative objects.