

The EPP and subject extraction

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Abstract

This article aims to account for *that-t* effects in terms of the EPP requirement under Chomsky's (2008) probe-goal system, thereby supporting the position that the EPP should incorporate a condition imposed by the PF interface to the effect that it must be satisfied by overt material. The account makes crucial use of the mechanism of parallel operations proposed by Chomsky (2008) that take place in the C-T domain. Further, Fox and Pesetsky's (2005) mechanism of linear ordering plays an essential role in this account. Under these mechanisms, it is further demonstrated that suspension of *that-t* effects occurs when the EPP is satisfied not by a *wh*-subject moving out of a *that*-clause complement but rather by other materials such as expletives, adverbs and rich morphology on T.

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1. Introduction

Since Chomsky (1981) proposed the Extended Projection Principle (henceforth, EPP), which requires that clauses have subjects, it has played significant roles in the development of phrase structure and in the consideration of triggering movement in the syntax of generative grammar. One of the important questions regarding the characterization of the EPP is what kind of elements can satisfy it. Recently, it has been claimed that the EPP is in fact a condition imposed by the PF interface to the effect that it must be satisfied by an element with phonetic content (see Holmberg, 2000 and Landau, 2007, among others). Along these lines, Hasegawa (2005) characterizes the EPP as something like (1) below, following Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's (1998) idea of this condition.

- (1) The EPP feature of T must be morpho-phonologically materialized.

According to Hasegawa (2005), there are at least two ways for T to be materialized: either it manifests itself with rich agreement morphology or its specifier is occupied by an overt phrase. Relevant examples are given below:

- (2) a. *Italian*
[e] parla.
b. *Spanish*
[e] habla.
- (3) *(He) speaks.

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Since so-call pro-drop languages such as Italian and Spanish can satisfy the EPP by way of a manifestation of rich agreement morphology on verbs, thereby materializing T, this allows a null subject to appear in Spec-TP (or simply a subject not to exist) in these languages, as shown in (2). In those languages that do not have such a rich agreement manifestation, such as English, on the other hand, the other way of materialization is mandatory. That is why in English, overt material must appear in Spec-TP to satisfy the EPP in question, as shown in (3).

This article aims to support the characterization of the EPP as given in (1) by examining the interaction between this version of the EPP and subject extraction by A'-movement. In particular, it is demonstrated that given this conception of the EPP, so-called *that*-trace effects, illustrated in (4) below, receive a natural explanation under the recent minimalist setting, in particular, the probe-goal system proposed by Chomsky (2008).

- (4) a. *Who_i do you think that *t_i* left?
b. Who_i do you think *t_i* left?

(4a) shows that the embedded subject cannot be extracted by A'-movement when the overt complementizer *that* is present, while (4b) shows that such A'-extraction becomes possible when the complementizer is null.

As originally observed by Perlmutter (1971), pro-drop languages such as Italian and Spanish do not exhibit *that*-trace effects, as illustrated below:

- (5) *Italian*
Chi_i credi [_{CP} che *t_i* partirà]?
who you-think that will-leave
'Who do you think will leave?'
- (6) *Spanish*
Quién_i dijiste [_{CP} que *t_i* salito temprano]?
who you-said that left early
'Who did you say left early?'

In the LGB era, Rizzi (1982) gives an ingenious explanation to the absence of *that*-*t* effects in pro-drop languages under an account of these effects in terms of the Empty Category Principle. Given that this principle is discarded in the framework of the Minimalist Program, however, a new account has been called for to capture the absence of *that*-*t* effects in pro-drop languages. In this article, it is argued that this fact immediately follows from the EPP characterized in (1) under the general setting of Chomsky's (2008) probe-goal system.

It is not uncommon nowadays to argue that satisfaction of the EPP-feature or something akin to it is responsible for *that*-*t* effects, as witnessed by such works as Rizzi (2006), Rizzi and Shlonsky (2007), and Mizuguchi (2008), among others. Following this line of pursuit, this article provides a new analysis of *that*-*t* effects in terms of the EPP given in (1) under the following two theoretical settings: (i) Chomsky's (2008) mechanism of parallel probing and (ii) Fox and Pesetsky's (2005) Order Preservation Condition. It is argued that this new analysis of *that*-*t* effects is superior to the works mentioned above on conceptual as well as empirical grounds.

The article has a somewhat unusual organization in that the discussions on the previous works are made after the account of the present work is provided and they are made in the context where the consequences of the present work are discussed. Section 2 outlines theoretical backgrounds that play crucial roles in explaining *that*-*t* effects. Section 3 provides not only an account of *that*-*t* effects in terms that are assumed in the previous section but also an account of why these effects are absent in pro-drop languages. Section 4 discusses some consequences of the account of *that*-*t* effects presented in Section 3. In the course of the discussion, major previous works are compared with the present work and put into critical scrutiny. Section 5 concludes with a summary and speculations on some remaining questions.

2. Theoretical backgrounds

2.1. On phases: Chomsky (2008)

One of the important claims made by Chomsky (2008) that enhance further development of the phase-based theory is expressed by him as follows¹:

¹ Under the phase theory assumed in Chomsky (2008), whenever all relevant operations are completed at a given phase domain, the syntactic object constructed at this domain is sent to both the phonological component ("Spell-Out") and the semantic component. This shipping operation is called Transfer. See the last paragraph of the next subsection for relevant discussion.

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