

External arguments and the Mirror Principle: On the distinctness of Voice and v

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Received 24 June 2011; received in revised form 10 September 2012; accepted 14 September 2012

Available online 11 December 2012

Abstract

Evidence from the Uto-Aztecan language Hiaki (Yaqui) shows that the internal structure of the verb phrase is tripartite, made up of (at least) VoiceP, vP and a lexical projection (\sqrt{P} or VP). The interaction of applicative and causative morphology, the existence of two kinds of causatives, and the interaction of passive and verbalizing morphology show that the external-argument introducing projection VoiceP (Kratzer, 1996) must be distinct from the verbalizing head vP (Marantz, 1997), as first proposed by Pytkäinen (2002) and subsequently by Cuervo (2003), Collins (2005), Alexiadou et al. (2006), Merchant (2008) and Harley (2009), among many others. This result stands in opposition to earlier proposals in which a single projection, vP, serves both to verbalize and to introduce the external argument, as in Chomsky (1995), Marantz (1997), and Harley (1995). It also challenges the conclusions of Coon and Preminger (2010), who give explicit arguments for the identity of external-argument-introducing Voice and verbalizing v.

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Keywords: Passive; Causative; Applicative; Yaqui; A-movement; Verb phrase

1. Introduction¹

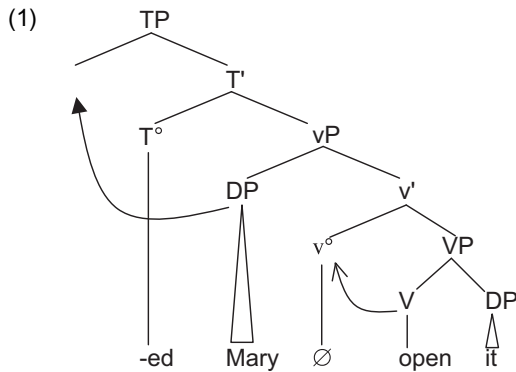
In this paper, two primary questions concerning the syntactic position of external arguments will be considered. First, where are such arguments introduced into the syntactic structure? Evidence from the interaction of applicatives and causatives will be presented that indicates that they are not selected by their predicates which semantically require them. Second, how are such arguments “suppressed” by morphology like the passive? In a syntactocentric theory of morphology, the addition of morphological material cannot produce the deletion of extant syntactic structure and thus explain the absence of the external argument. The solution to both these issues is argued to be VoiceP, a dedicated functional projection which makes no lexical-semantic contribution whatever. VoiceP is a projection distinct from, and necessarily in addition to, the vP projection which hosts causative and verbalizing morphology.

In the past decade and a half, the conclusion that the VP is made up of at least two projections has become standard among Chomskyan linguists. Building on the VP-shell proposal of Larson (1988), the work on verbal morphology and argument structure of Hale and Keyser (1993), and the work on idioms and subject selection of Marantz (1984, 1997) and Kratzer (1996), the erstwhile VP came to be understood as a cover term for two substructures: a functional or semi-lexical projection, vP, in whose specifier external arguments are introduced, and a lexical VP or \sqrt{P} , which introduces selected internal arguments. This structure is illustrated in (1):

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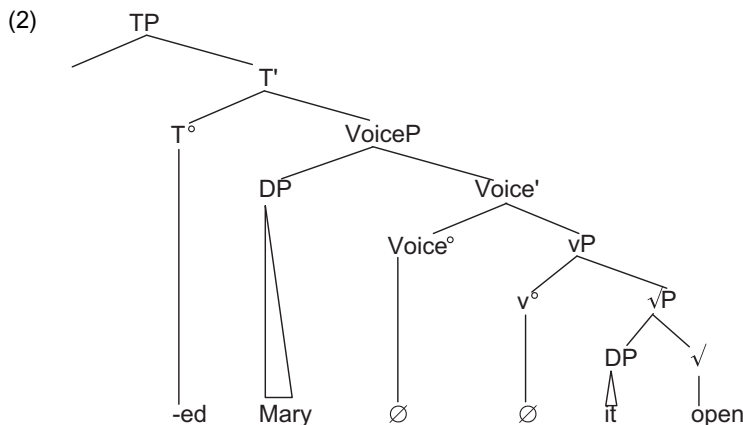
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¹ Abbreviations: 1sgS = 1st person singular subject; recip = reciprocal; 3pS = 3rd person plural subject; pl = plural; appl = applicative; prf = perfect; acc = accusative; refl = reflexive; pass = passive; $\sqrt{}$ = root; vrb = verbalizer; caus = causative; ppl = participle; s.rel = subject relative; compl = complete; fut = future; sg = singular; ♀ = female; desid = desiderative; caus.indir = indirect causative.



In previous work, e.g. [Harley \(2005, to appear\)](#), I have argued that an explanatory theory of argument structure needs only this much VP decomposition, and that additional functional categories are unnecessary.

In this paper, however, I present evidence that more structure is indeed needed, namely, at least a VoiceP in addition to an external-argument-less vP, as in (2), as originally proposed by [Pylkkänen \(2002\)](#):



The central argument is based on a Mirror Principle problem in Hiaki² verbal derivational morphology. The three-layered structure VoiceP–vP–√ which is motivated by this data is isomorphic to several other three-layered structures for the verb phrase in modern theories of argument structure, albeit with differently named projections, mostly closely mirroring that of [Alexiadou et al. \(2006\)](#) but also that of [Ramchand \(2008\)](#), [Borer \(2005\)](#), [Cuervo \(2003\)](#), [Merchant \(2008\)](#) and [Harley \(2009\)](#). This result also challenges the conclusions of [Coon and Preminger \(2010\)](#), who give explicit arguments from Chol for the identity of external-argument-introducing Voice and verbalizing v.³

The paper is structured as follows: First, we briefly review some of the original arguments for the Mirror Principle ([Baker, 1985](#)), and the syntactic theory of morphological structure building that it motivated, in section 2. We then review the analysis of applicative structures within the split-vP architecture ([McGinnis, 2001](#); [Pylkkänen, 2002](#)), showing how applicatives provide strong evidence for at least the split-vP, in section 3. The central argumentation follows in sections 4 and 5. First, we briefly review the relevant Hiaki verbal derivational morphology and syntax, including lexical causatives, productive causatives and applicatives. Subsequently, we see how the interaction of productive causatives and applicatives argues for the more elaborate VP structure in (2), including VoiceP. The key argument for the separation of Voice and v is a minor variation on the argument presented by [Pylkkänen \(2002:122–125\)](#). The key point is that the behavior of the applicative

² Hiaki is also known as Yaqui, Yoeme and Jiaki. “Hiaki” is the spelling in the official orthography adopted by the Pascua Yaqui Tribe in Arizona (explicitly reflecting the presence of the initial glottal fricative), and is the spelling preferred by my consultants; consequently, we will refer to the language by this name throughout.

³ Note that element labelled √P here is semantically and syntactically a ‘small clause’; although I espouse the ‘small clause’ label for these and other similar structures (resultatives, directed-motion constructions), the category of this lowest phrase in the tripartite tree is not crucial to the argument developed in the paper, and the small-clause structure is only appropriate for change-of-state verbs, not verbs of creation or unergative activity verbs which happen to form the bulk of the exemplification in this paper. See Emonds (in this issue) for a succinct and compelling presentation of the case against the small clause as a constituent, which deserves a response that it will not get here.

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