Dependent Nexus
Subordinate Predication Structures in English and the Scandinavian Languages

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Abstract
Dependent Nexus:
Subordinate Predication Structures
in English and the Scandinavian Languages

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This dissertation investigates nexuses (subject-predicate structures) in subordinate contexts. Various patterns of data are analyzed using tools from formal syntactic theory. The bracketed sequences in (1) are argued to represent nexuses.

(1) a. Captain Haddock considers [Thompson to be a spy].
   b. Mr. Wagg wants [Professor Calculus to show him his invention].
   c. Tintin considers [Thomson a spy].
   d. Madame Castafiore wants [Nestor fired].

Differences between examples like (1a) and (1b) have been discussed extensively in the generative literature (e.g. Bresnan 1972); less so examples like (1c-d), which exhibit some of the same contrasts but also some different ones. For example, Pollard & Sag 1993 observe that the bracketed sequence in (1d), but not the one in (1c), can appear in a pseudocleft, as in (2a-b).

(2) a. * What Tintin really considers is [Thomson a spy].
   b. What Madame Castafiore really wants is [Nestor fired].

In Chapter 1, I argue that the relation between the subject and the predicate in a nexus is mediated by a a phonologically null head (called ‘Pred,’ for predicator). I also discuss the relation of c-selection (Pesetsky’s 1982 term for Chomsky’s 1965 ‘strict subcategorization’) and develop a system of head-chains (building on Sigurðsson 1990), which allow features and feature-values to be shared among heads. Finally, I propose a formal notion of dependency. Put briefly, a phrase X is dependent on a head Y if the mapping rules which translate LF (Logical Form) trees into logical representations cannot assign a value to X unless a head-chain is formed between Y and X.
The notions developed in Chapter 1 are applied in Chapters 2 and 3, focusing on examples like (1-2) above. For example, in (2b), *Nestor fired* is independent, because the mapping rules assign it an interpretation. But in (2a), *Thomson a spy* is dependent; it cannot be assigned an interpretation unless a head-chain is formed between Pred and a proposition-taking verb like *consider*. This is possible in (1c), where *consider* c-commands Pred, but impossible in (2a).

In Chapter 3, I take up the verb-particle construction, exemplified in (4).

(4)  
   a. Thomson and Thompson turned the radio on.
   b. Thomson and Thompson turned on the radio.

I show that the alternation in word-order and many other facts about the verb-particle construction achieve a natural account given the mechanisms developed in Chapter 1, when *the radio on* in (4a) is treated as a nexus. A novel aspect of the analysis is the fact that both orders turn out to be derived; in (4a), the postverbal noun phrase has moved leftward (string-vacuously), and in (4b) the particle has moved leftward (across the noun phrase). The complication introduced by the analysis is justified by the range of empirical coverage. A brief conclusion follows Chapter 3.

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This work marks the end of my formal career as a student; not that I plan to stop learning, but this is the end of discount journal subscriptions and cheap rail passes. Many people over the years have had an influence on what is contained herein, and this is my opportunity to implicate some of them publicly.

To begin at the beginning, as the King of Hearts advised, I thank my parents, who have always unwaveringly supported me and encouraged me, and who serve as an inspiration to me in ways I cannot begin to express.

My interest in linguistics developed during my struggle to make sense of Norwegian, Swedish, and Old Norse all at the same time, at the University of Trondheim in 1983-84. When I returned the next year to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst I began studying formal generative linguistics. I will always have fond memories of my time at that institution. Thanks to the faculty there for making linguistics fascinating, especially Roger Higgins, Barbara Partee, and Lisa Selkirk, and also Jim Cathey and Frank Hugus in the Germanic department.

The content of this dissertation closely reflects my studies over the past five years, most of which time has been spent here at the University of California at Santa Cruz. I can’t imagine a better place to be while writing a dissertation in linguistics, and not just because of the natural beauty, including the weather, the coastline, the hummingbirds, and this yard full of flowers. The faculty here have been outstanding, and I have nothing but good things to say about all of them. In class, Armin Mester and Junko Itô have made phonology challenging and interesting, Jorge Hankamer, Sandy Chung, Judith Aissen, and Jim McCloskey taught me the value of argumentation in syntax, and Bill Ladusaw and Peter Lasersohn helped me understand what I do about semantics. Outside of class, I have had occasion to come to every one of them with questions, and they have been exceptionlessly approachable and helpful, as have been the other regular members of the faculty, Geoff Pullum, Donka Parkas, Jaye Padgett, and Bill Shipley; so have Phil LeSourd, Philip Miller, and Marco Haverkort, who have taught here at one time or another during the past five years. The department staff are a model of competency and affability; without Tanya Honig and Sylvia Zito, I would have strangled in red tape or been smothered under forms years ago. Outside of the linguistics department, I have benefitted from discussions with instructors too numerous to mention, but I would like to single out Giulia Centineo, Rick Ott, and Holly Thomas in particular. Many people
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