

Salient unaccusatives

- b. Agus is [ag teacht ann]_i a bhí *t_i*
and is [PART come in-him] that was
"It's him growing that was happening" *or*
"Him growing is what was happening"

Subject of transitive verb

- c. *Is [na daoine ag imeacht]_i a bhí *t_i*
*is [the people PART leave] that were
"It's the people leaving that was happening" *or*
"People leaving is what was happening"

Object of transitive verb

- d. Is [ag tógáil tithe]_i a bhí siad *t_i*
is [PART build houses] that were they
"It's building houses that they were doing" *or*
"Building houses is what they were doing"

3. There is a contrast, too, between salient and putative unaccusatives as to whether their single argument is subject to Irish's "Highest Subject Restriction" (McCloskey's ex. 31 and 32).

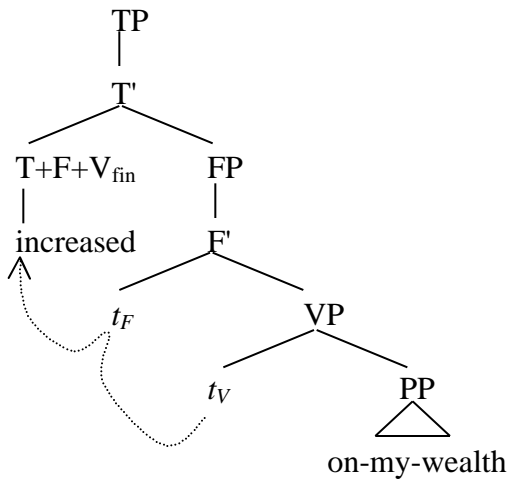
→ terminological clarification: what McCloskey calls "optional I-selection" (from Pesetsky) is what we called last time "subcategorization" — it's an idiosyncratic (and optional) syntactic restriction that the verb imposes on its complement.

→ conclusion from all this: the DP argument of putative unaccusatives occupies the same position as the subjects of transitive verbs, while the PP argument of salient unaccusatives occupies the same position as the objects of transitive verbs.

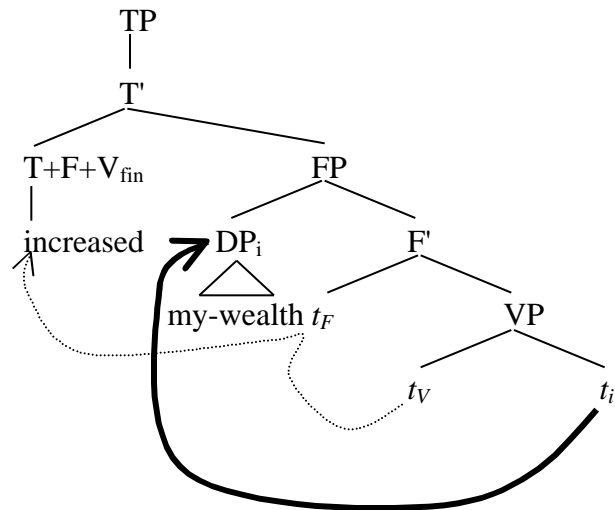
→ that is, the internal DP argument *raises* in the putative unaccusative to occupy the same position as the subject of a transitive — likely to check Case.

→ whatever this position is, it's *still* to the right of the verb...

4. *Salient unaccusative*



Putative unaccusative



6 **Another minimal pair: 'perfective' passives of verbs with DP objects vs. 'perfective' passives of verbs with PP objects**

5. *Passive of a regular transitive verb*

Finite auxiliary	DP _{Theme}	passive.participle	(PP _{Agent})
Tá	teach	ceannaithe	(agam)
Is	a house	bought	(by me)

"A house was bought by me"/ "I have bought a house"

6. *Passive of a verb with an external argument and a PP object*

Finite auxiliary		passive participle	(PP _{Agent})	PP object
Tá		labhartha	(aige)	le cúpla duine
Is		spoken	(by him)	with a.few people

"A few people have been spoken with by him"/"He has spoken with a few people"

→ note in 5 the DP appears to the left of the participle, and in 6 the PP object appears to the right of the participle — just like in the non-finite forms with the putative & salient unaccusatives. Apparently the DP object has had to move for some reason in 5, but not in 6. The likely reason is, of course, that the DP needs Case, while the PP doesn't.

7 **Expletive-DP chains and VP-internal DPs:**

→ As McCloskey stresses throughout, there is no form where the DP internal argument remains to the right of the participle and an expletive — overt or not — appears in subject position to the left of the participle. That is, there's no construction like *There was bought a house* — no *There*-expletive — in Irish.

→ remember that *There* expletives satisfy the EPP but don't check Case.

→ If Irish had an EPP requirement, then there should be a null *there* in any sentence without an overt Subject, and we should be able to generate such sentences (like *There was bought a house*), with the DP in object position, freely.

→ we *cannot* generate such sentences

→ not only that, we see the existence of sentences where an unaccusative verb takes a PP object

→ For theory-internal reasons, *there*-expletives must co-occur with an appropriate DP — this is usually called their *associate*. They form a 'chain' with that DP. Since chains are subject to something like the Structure Preservation Constraint, an expletive may not be associated with something that is not of its own category. That is, a "DP"-like expletive shouldn't be able to form a chain with a PP-argument

→ In Irish, we see PP-arguments object position in otherwise subjectless sentences

→ we can be confident there's no null DP expletive there because it wouldn't be able to form a chain with the PP object.

→ conclusion: there really ARE no expletives, null or otherwise, in Irish. Irish is not subject to the EPP!

→ McCloskey goes on to discuss CP-associated 'expletive' pronouns, equivalent to "It_i is certain [that blablablah]_i", concluding that they are not expletives in the relevant sense.

→ "It" expletives check case AND EPP features; "There" expletives just satisfy the EPP — if they checked Case, there'd be no Case left over for their DP associate. "There"-type expletives, then, are the ones we really want to look for if we're trying to detect the effects of the EPP. Irish doesn't have that kind.

8 Where is Case being checked on Irish subjects? More evidence for FP

→ there are a few adverbs in Irish that may occur left-adjoined to VP, like *often* in French and English

→ remember we used those adverbs to test the relative position of the verb in French and English:

- | | | | | | | |
|----|----|------|----------|---------|-------|----------|
| 7. | a. | John | | often | ate | pizza |
| | b. | John | has | often | eaten | pizza |
| 8. | a. | Jean | mangeait | souvent | | de pizza |
| | | John | ate | often | | of pizza |

b. Jean a souvent mangé de pizza
 Jean has often eaten of pizza

There is a similar set of adverbs in Irish: *riamh* 'ever' is one (it's a polarity item, like in English):

9. Ní bhfuair aon bhean riamh roimhe greim lámhe air
 NEG took any woman ever before-it a.grip hand.GEN on-him
 [CP C [TP T [FP S [VP Adv O]]]]
 "No woman had ever before taken (a grip of) his hand"

Although McCloskey does not give the examples in this paper, he makes a prediction (which turns out to be true):

→ the PP argument of salient unaccusatives should appear to the _____ of adverbs like *riamh* 'ever'

→ the DP argument of putative unaccusatives should appear to the _____ of adverbs like *riamh* 'ever'.

Review of crucial ideas for homework:

1. External arguments (typically subjects of transitive verbs) bear an underlined theta-role (often Agent or Experiencer) and are projected in the external position: Spec-VP
2. Internal arguments (typically objects of transitive verbs) bear a non-underlined theta-role (often Theme or Patient) and are projected in the internal position: sister-of-V (this position is also called the "complement of VP")
3. Passive is a lexical operation that deletes the underlined theta-role from a verb's theta-grid (as well as removing the verb's ability to assign accusative case, if it has it). Essentially, Passive changes a transitive verb into an unaccusative verb.
4. Unaccusative verbs are intransitive verbs which have no external argument — there is no underlined theta-role in their theta-grid, and their single argument is projected in the internal position -- sister-to-V.
5. Unergative verbs are intransitive verbs which have no *internal* argument. They *only* have an underlined theta-role in their theta-grid, and their single argument is projected in the external position -- spec-of-VP.
6. It may help to think of your homework as requiring you to *prove the existence of two different classes of intransitive verbs* — i.e. argue that one class of intransitive verbs only has an internal argument, while another class of intransitive verbs only has an external argument.

For next time: read the sections of Roberts that mention PRO and control, and pro for good measure:

section 2.2.1 (61-63), section 2.4, section 2.5 (81-95), section 3.2.2 (135-139), and section 3.3.3 (149-157)

Survey: taking 504?

→ if yes, would you prefer:

a) a course where you read "Classics" of generative grammar, from Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* on up?

b) a course where you learned more about modern syntactic theory, the ins-and-outs of checking theory, phrase structure, etc, and saw it applied to treat recalcitrant cross-linguistic phenomena?

c) a course where you picked a couple of important topics in modern syntax (e.g. "Case", "VSO-languages", "Islands", "Scrambling", "Polysynthesis", "Wh-movement"...) and treated them in-depth?