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## A Minimalist Analysis of Double Object Constructions in English from the Perspective of Comparative Syntax (Part I)

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# A Minimalist Analysis of Double Object Constructions in English from the Perspective of Comparative Syntax\*

(PART I)

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## Abstract

This study addresses the issue of diachronic development of passives in English double object constructions (DOCs) from the perspective of comparative syntax. Ditransitive passives have undergone changes since Old English (OE), i.e., from the passivization of the direct object (DO) in OE to that of the indirect object (IO) in Late Middle English and Modern English (ModE), including Present-day English. The present study is an attempt to account for this change within the Chomskyan Minimalist framework. The main conclusion of this article is that IO has always been a prepositional phrase, either with null preposition (P) in OE or with null or overt P (*to*) in Middle English (ME) and ModE.

I begin by identifying the “base” structure of DOCs as the DO-<sub>[pp]</sub> P-IO] frame. I then argue on the basis of facts about other Germanic languages that IO has often been introduced by null P in English. This preposition blocks passivization of a closer IO and instead allows for passivization of a more distant DO, as predicted by the Merge/Agree theory of the Minimalist Program.

I argue that null P in ditransitives is licensed by case morphology in OE and by preposition incorporation in ME and ModE. The last section deals with the vexing problem of a time lag between the emergence of direct passives and that of recipient passives in English and then addresses the issue of ditransitive passives in Icelandic and Faroese, showing that they do not constitute counterexamples to my analysis.

**Keywords:** Minimalist, comparative, diachronic, English double object constructions, passive

## 1. Introduction

In the present article I consider the diachronic development of Double Object Constructions (DOCs) of English from a crosslinguistic perspective, drawing on recent findings about and analyses of DOCs in some of its related languages, mainly Germanic languages. I thus look into the diachronic development of English DOCs from Old English (OE) to Middle English (ME) to Modern English (ModE), including Present-day English (PE), from the perspective of comparative syntax.

In recent years real progress has been made in diachronic syntax by combining traditional philological approaches with methods and principles of modern theoretical syntax. In fact, English historical syntax has developed into a thriving field of research much due to the advent of sophisticated models of language variation and of linguistic theory, as Fischer et al. (2000) put it in its preface.

In terms of database, the diachronic study of a historical language is inherently handicapped in two ways. First, it is solely based on its written texts, which are typically skewed in genres and registers. The reason is that they are haphazardly preserved remnants of the recorded materials, themselves products of accident, so they are vastly limited in scope and amount.

More importantly, as Los (2005, Introduction) observes, there is the issue of a gap between corpora of performance data, with which one has to work in diachronic studies, and constructed sentences based on native speaker intuitions, the most reliable source for exploring linguistic structure. In other words, in diachronic studies one cannot appeal to native speaker judgments on linguistic data. As is well known, these judgments are the most important source for uncovering a grammar, since they alone crucially contain negative data, which is essential to determining what linguistic operations are allowed or disallowed in the grammar that underlies performance data.

One possible way to remedy and save the situation is to appeal to a comparative approach, bringing the results of research into contemporary languages related and/or similar to the target historical language to bear on its study. This is a growing trend in diachronic linguistics: witness van Kemenade (1987), Koopman (1990), Pintzuk (1991), Roberts (1993), Allen (1995), Fischer et al. (2000), Los (2005), etc., just to name a few. This trend involves a renewed concern in modern linguistics with the need to take morphology seriously like traditional grammar, because morphology is closely correlated with syntax. For example, witness the correlation be-

tween subject-verb agreement for person and overt V-to-T movement as in Romance, German, Icelandic, etc., as opposed to English and the Mainland Scandinavian (MSc) languages (Falk 1993, Pollock 1997:162f.),<sup>1</sup> or that between rich subject-verb agreement inflection and a null subject as in Italian and Spanish as against French and English (see Gilligan 1987, among others).

Given sophisticated modern theory of syntactic structure therefore, if we can find living languages sufficiently similar and/or related to each historical stage of English and compare them to such stages of English, we might be better able to fill in data gaps in its historical developments than otherwise.

For OE, for example, modern languages like German and Icelandic might qualify as morphologically sufficiently similar languages since they both retain rich case and agreement morphology like OE, although they are different in other ways. German further shares the base SOV order with OE, following the standard view that OE is underlyingly an SOV language, or following Pintzuk's (1991, etc.) position that OE is "SOV" at least in one of its two alternative base orders.<sup>2</sup>

For Early Middle English (EME), one might consider Faroese, an Insular Scandinavian like Icelandic, which is morphologically similar to EME. The inflectional morphology of Faroese and EME is fairly rich, though less so than Icelandic and OE respectively, as they still retain case morphology and subject-verb agreement unlike the MSc languages.

These latter languages have completely lost case morphology in the nominal paradigm and subject-verb agreement. In this regard Modern English including Present-day English is similar to MSc, having also lost nominal case morphology and preserves only vestiges of subject-verb agreement. In this article I make a typographical distinction between abstract Case (e.g. Nominative) and morphological case (e.g. nominative) by means of the capital and the lower-case initial letter.

## 2. Double Object Constructions in the Active Voice

### 2.1. The underlying order of Double Object Constructions in English

Let us consider the underlying (or base) word order of Double Object Constructions (DOCs), particularly the order of the direct object (DO) relative to the indirect object (IO), in English and in language in general. I use the term "Double Object Constructions" to refer to both the IO-DO and the DO-[<sub>PP</sub> P-IO] frame in this study.<sup>3</sup> I restrict discussion to the predominant pattern of

DOCs, that is, those involving ditransitive verbs like *give*, which would select for a Dative (Dat) IO and for an Accusative (Acc) DO in languages like OE, Icelandic and German, which possess a rich system of case morphology. With this type of DOC, PE exhibits a systematic alternation between the  $DP_{IO}$ - $DP_{DO}$  frame and the  $DP_{DO}$ -[ $PP$  P- $DP_{IO}$ ] frame, as do modern MSc languages (see Herslund 1986).

There is some reason to believe that the base order in this type of DOC in English has always been “DO followed by IO” regardless of the placement of the finite verb in the clause. Before considering such evidence, let us first look at the facts in Early English.

As Koopman (1990) and Allen (1995) show for OE, the orders IO-DO and DO-IO in which IO is not introduced by an overt preposition and both objects are non-pronominal, are just about equally frequently attested (cf. Koopman’s (1990:176) 54% for IO-DO vs. 46% for DO-IO, and Allen’s (1995:48) 46% for IO-DO vs. 54% for DO-IO).

Observe (1) for Acc DO-Dat IO and (2) for Dat IO-Acc DO in OE:

- (1) a. He tæhte þa langlice geleafan þam folce (ÆLS (Thomas) 244) [main clause]  
           he taught then for a long time the faith the people  
           ‘for a long time he taught the people the faith’  
   b. þæt he nu todæg þa wynsumestan wununge his leofan meder forgeafe  
       (ÆCHom i.30.446.6) [subordinate clause]  
       that he now today the most pleasant dwelling his dear mother gave  
       ‘that he now today gave to his dear mother the most pleasant dwelling’  
   c. and þæt mære hus gode betæhte (ÆCHom ii.45.337.62) [coordinate clause]  
       and that great house God commended  
       ‘and commended that great house to God’
- (2) a. He sealde þam geswenctum mannum reste (HomU 9(VercHom 4) 166)  
       ‘he gave the oppressed people rest’ [main clause]  
   b. Gif þu geoffrast Gode ænige lac æt his weofode (ÆHom 16.19)  
       ‘if you offer God any sacrifice on his altar’ [subordinate clause]  
   c. and budon þæm Cristenum ðæs caseres geban (ÆLS (Maurice) 43)  
       and announced the Christians the emperor’s proclamation [coordinate clause]  
       ‘and announced the emperor’s proclamation to the Christians’  
       (Koopman 1990:177,178)

Koopman shows that both frames DO-IO and IO-DO are attested regardless of the placement of the finite verb ( $V_f$ ) (viz.  $V_f$ -O-O, O- $V_f$ -O or O-O- $V_f$ , where O stands for Object, either DO or IO). ME also exhibits both surface orders (Allen 1995), abstracting away from the presence of an overt preposition (P).

However, the DO-IO frame seems to be the underlying one in PE and perhaps universally, as Baker (1996) suggests, hence in OE and ME. He argues that although ditransitive verbs crosslinguistically give mixed evidence regarding the relative ranking of theme and goal on the thematic hierarchy and hence in syntactic structure, unaccusative verbs crosslinguistically rank theme higher than goal.

Consider so-called Dative Shift alternations in (3) in PE.

- (3) a. John passed the ring to Mary.  
b. John passed Mary the ring. (Baker 1996:8)

While in sentences like (3b) the goal clearly has prominence over the theme by a variety of syntactic tests (e.g., anaphor binding, QNP-Bound Pronoun relations, Weak Crossover (WCO), Superiority, Negative Polarity Items (NPI), *Each...the other*, etc.), in sentences like (3a) the theme has prominence over the goal by the same tests (see Barss & Lasnik 1986 and Larson 1988, among others). Further, some languages (e.g. Romance) have only the theme-dominant structure (3a), whereas some (e.g. German) have only the goal-dominant structure (3b), as noted by Baker.

All of this has led to the controversy over whether (3a) and (3b) are independently “base-generated”, or whether (3a) or (3b) more directly reflects the underlying structure in English and in language in general, assuming that one derives from the other. In this context Baker points out an important fact regarding the above alternation in (3) that for the most part there is no similar Dative Shift alternation with unaccusative verbs across languages. They invariably occur only in theme-dominant structures. He thus argues for the thematic hierarchy which places theme above goal. Observe (4)

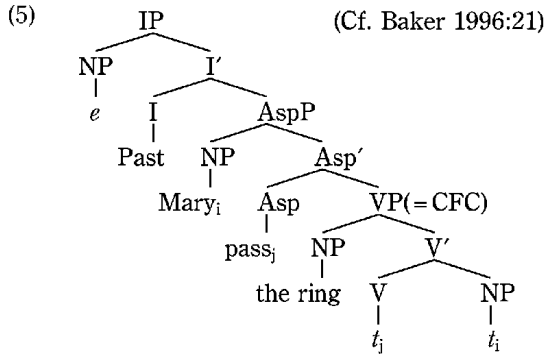
- (4) a. The ring<sub>i</sub> passed  $t_i$  to Mary.      b. \*The ring<sub>i</sub> passed Mary  $t_i$ .  
c. \*Mary<sub>i</sub> passed  $t_i$  the ring [ $t_i$ ]. (Baker 1996:9-10)

Baker shows that the deviance of examples like (4b) and (4c) generalizes to Dutch, Mohawk,

Japanese, and certain Bantu languages like Sesotho.

His account of the deviance of (4b) is couched in terms of Case Theory, while that of the deviance of (4c) relies on Condition A of the Binding Theory (appropriately revised as explicated below). The analysis crucially hinges on the assumption that goals project into a lower structural position than themes in accord with his thematic hierarchy with theme higher than goal. In the Larsonian binary-branching configuration then, theme asymmetrically c-commands goal in underlying structure, which nicely accounts for well-known facts about anaphor binding, NPI phenomena, WCO, Superiority, etc., in (3a)-type sentences.

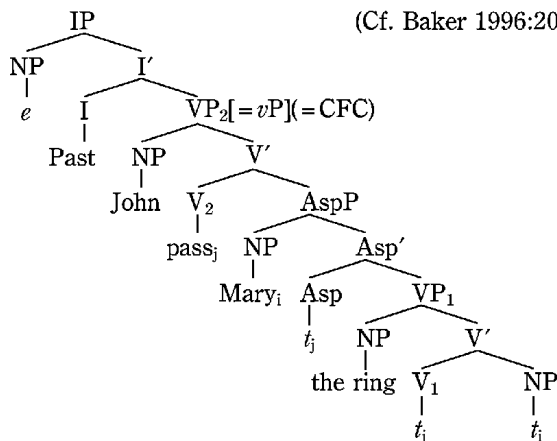
On this view, (4c) can be explained, he argues, in the following manner: *Mary* originates in a post-theme position (viz. the position of [ $t_i$ ] in (4c)), and raises across the theme *the ring* out of the VP structure, which is banned crosslinguistically because the VP is the binding domain for the trace of *Mary*, an anaphor:



The assumption here is that the complete functional complex (=CFC, cf. Chomsky 1986), viz. the VP in this case, is the binding domain. Raising then would leave the anaphor free in its binding domain in violation of Condition A. If this raising were allowed, then *Mary* could raise from [Spec, AspP] to [Spec, IP], yielding an unacceptable form (4c).

He then contends that transitive constructions have the additional structure of a higher VP shell. This makes the higher VP<sub>2</sub> in (6) containing the lower VP<sub>1</sub> a CFC, the binding domain, so raising of *Mary* will be licensed in (6), the transitive counterpart to (5):

(6) (Cf. Baker 1996:20)



An analysis in the Minimalist framework might appeal to the fact that the NP movement in (5) (cf. (4c)) as well as in (4b) violates the Shortest Move/Matching constraint, since the lower NP *Mary* moves out of VP, not the higher one *the ring*. The question then arises why the same movement is licensed in the transitive case, viz. Dative Shift.

One solution is to say that the IO is actually PP, whose head P is often null and introduces a goal argument, as we argue later in the present article. Further, assume that the double object configuration involves still another VP shell with the V head that bears a Dative-Case-checking feature. This feature, with which an EPP feature optionally cooccurs, enters into Agree with the null Dative P, viz. a Dative marker, and attracts the P, which in turn pied-pipes the goal argument (IO) across the theme argument. For evidence for the three-VP structure for DOCs, see Bobaljik (1995, Chap. IV), among others. I will return to this below in sections 3.1 and 3.2.

Whatever the correct account of Dative Shift in (6) may be, the above crosslinguistic fact about (4) lends credence to Baker's thematic hierarchy. So I assume with Baker that given the universal thematic hierarchy, (3a), not (3b), more directly reflects the base order in PE, Dutch, Japanese, Mohawk, Sesotho, etc., and perhaps universally, and that Dative Shift derives the IO-DO frame from the base DO-[<sub>PP</sub> P IO] frame in DOCs in PE, etc.<sup>4</sup>

This is all the more plausible in view of the fact that the type of DOC under study is identical in structure to the unaccusative construction except that the former contains an additional *v*P structure that hosts an agent argument in its Spec (cf. (3) vs. (4a)). Since theme clearly outranks goal in the unaccusative counterpart, it must do so in the DOC as well, given the universal status of the thematic hierarchy.

Snyder (2001) examines both written and oral texts in PE and offers discourse evidence in



favor of the position that the base order of DOCs is  $\text{DO-to}^{\wedge}\text{IO}$  rather than  $\text{IO-DO}$ . He shows that the pragmatic conditions of hearer-newness and heaviness together determine the surface ordering of DO and IO in ditransitive constructions, and that the “ $\text{DO-to}^{\wedge}\text{IO}$ ” order obtains in neutral contexts (viz. unmarked structures) where neither condition applies to influence the dative alternation. This fact also argues against the independent generation of both frames (see note 4 above).

Additional evidence for the view of the  $\text{DO-to}^{\wedge}\text{IO}$  frame as the underlying one comes from the contrast in PE between a derived nominal like “John’s gift of the ring to Mary” and an unacceptable one like “\*John’s gift of Mary (of) the ring”, as often noted (e.g. Jackendoff 1977:8). This fact supports the view on the grounds that nominalization is typically based on the underlying structure (Chomsky 1970). The Snyder and Jackendoff facts are highly suggestive in favor of the underlying frame “ $\text{DO-(to)}^{\wedge}\text{IO}$ ”, at least for PE.

## 2.2. The VP-internal structure of DOCs in OE

Let us begin by examining the internal structure of VP in OE ditransitives. OE DOCs typically involve apparently bare nominal phrases, not introduced by an overt preposition. The VP structure in DOCs in OE is apparently not flat, because the preceding object asymmetrically binds (into) the following object in both  $\text{IO-DO}$  and  $\text{DO-IO}$  structures, as Koopman (1990) shows.

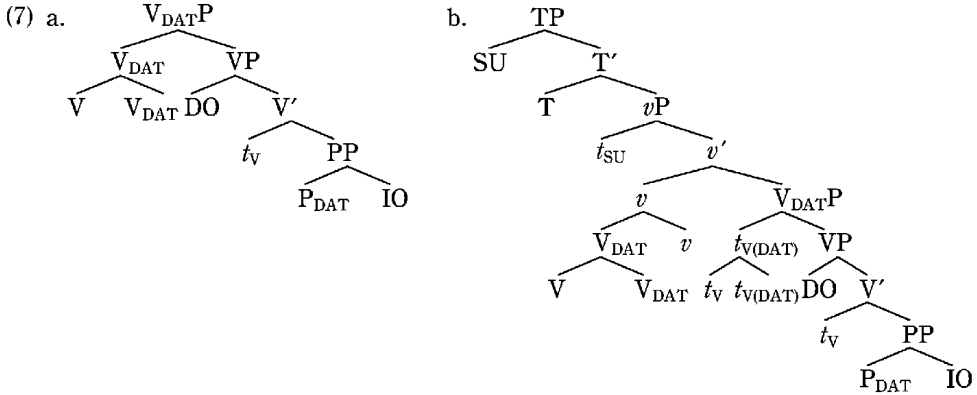
He reports that in his data he found 27 examples of IO binding DO in the  $\text{IO-DO-V}_f$  sentences (of the type “ $\text{pæt ic pæm men his wif geaf}$  ‘that I gave (to) the man his woman’”), while he found no example of DO binding IO in the same type of sentence. Next, he came up with one, though rather unreliable, he concedes, example of DO binding IO in the  $\text{DO-IO-V}_f$  sentences (of the type “ $\text{pæt ic pæt wif hire men geaf}$  ‘that I gave that woman (to) her man’”), whereas no case of the reverse binding was found in the same type of sentence.

The suggestion that the VP-internal structure of DOCs in OE is not flat but configurational is plausible in the light of the fact that in MSc and PE, IO has scope over DO but not vice versa in the  $\text{V-IO-DO}$  structure, while DO has scope over IO but not vice versa in the  $\text{V-DO-[PP overt P-IO]}$  structure. See Holmberg & Platzack (1995:191, 195) for this point.

## 2.3. A minimalist account of active DOCs in English

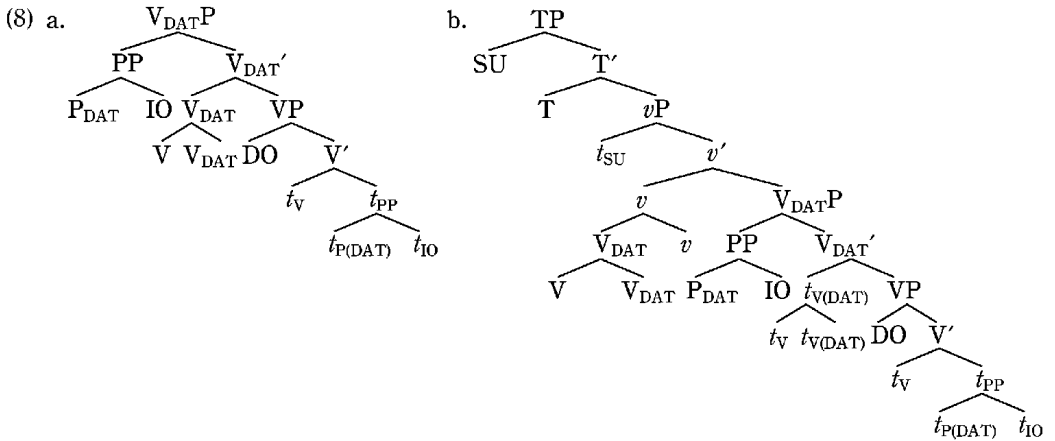
I will next spell out my analysis of DOCs by showing how they are derived in the Minimalist framework. They are generated by the bottom-up successive operation of External Merge, interwoven by Internal Merge. Consider (7a), an informal representation of the partial structure

of the verb phrase of the DOC that results from V-to- $V_{\text{DAT}}$  raising, among others. (7b) is a continuation of (7a), informally representing the DO-IO structure in which the raising of the V- $V_{\text{DAT}}$  complex and the subject (SU) has applied.



In PE,  $P_{\text{DAT}}$  in (7) is realized as a Dative marker *to*, whereas in OE it is typically realized as a null element (and sporadically as an overt P).

In case  $V_{\text{DAT}}$  takes the option of bearing an EPP feature, it will attract  $P_{\text{DAT}}$  via Agree, pied-piping IO across DO and yielding the IO-DO order, as illustrated in (8)



Contra Chomsky (2000, note 87), I assume that a DP with inherent Case does enter into Agree. For motivation for this assumption, see section 3.1. In the case of prepositional goal arguments, P *inherently* bears a Case feature value [DAT], while the IO DP itself is associated with an unvalued structural Case [uCase] to be valued via Agree. To be assigned the Goal role

by the ditransitive verb (e.g. *give*), the PP must bear (*inherent*) Dative ([DAT]) Case at the C-I Interface. Further, assume that the inherent Case on  $P_{DAT}$  must be licensed via Agree with a [DAT]-bearing element like  $V_{DAT}$ . Agree then consists in Match plus Valuation or Licensing.

Under these assumptions, in (8a) P agrees with IO in the First Merge position, valuing the *structural* Case feature of IO as Dat(ive) in OE, ME and ModE. At the stage of derivation where the  $V_{DAT}$  has merged with VP, it enters into Agree with the Dative marker  $P_{DAT}$  with regard to the inherent feature [DAT] and may attract  $P_{DAT}$ , which pied-pipes IO, to create its Spec. More on this in section 3.3, where this sketched portion of derivation will be elaborated and fleshed out. I assume that  $V_{DAT}$  optionally attracts  $P_{DAT}$  by virtue of optionally present EPP on it. DO does not intervene in this Agree, since it lacks the relevant Case feature value [DAT]. With pied-piping, PP raises and becomes [Spec,  $V_{DAT}P$ ]. Next,  $v$  merges with  $V_{DAT}P$  and attracts the  $V_{DAT}$  complex, yielding (8b) eventually.

Obviously, this object inversion is not to be confused with Object Shift, since the movement does not involve extraction of the IO out of the verb phrase  $vP$  nor is subject to the kind of condition (like the definiteness constraint) that holds of Object Shift.

### 3. DOCs in the Passive

#### 3.1. A null preposition for the indirect object in OE DOCs

Given something like the Shortest Move/Matching (see Chomsky 2001, 2004), one naturally expects the preceding Dative IO, not the following Accusative DO, to passivize in Dative Shifted (viz. IO-DO) sentences in OE. As a matter of fact, however, only the Accusative DO passivizes in OE, turning into a nominative (Nom) subject (Allen 1995:53, 54). This is a surprising fact, which calls for explanation.

Allen shows on the basis of the findings of a test dubbed the “coordinate subject deletion (CSD) test” that in OE, only the preposed nominative phrase, underlyingly an accusative DO, acts as the surface subject in the passive. By contrast, the preposed dative phrase does not do so, unlike such an oblique noun phrase in modern Icelandic. See section 4.2 below.

Her argument goes like this: In PE, the subject of a coordinated clause cannot be omitted unless it is coreferential with the subject of the preceding conjunct. So she argues that the control of CSD can be regarded as a property of the subject and hence may serve as a diagnostic for subjecthood in PE. Applying this diagnostic to OE, as CSD occurs only when the coordinate subject was coreferential with the nominative NP in the preceding conjunct, she concludes that

the preposed nominative NP, not the preposed dative one, is a true subject in DOCs (Allen 1995:50-59).

Assuming Allen's conclusion to be correct, we must answer the question why an Accusative DO passivizes, not a Dative IO, in our Dative Shifted DOC in OE in apparent violation of the Shortest Move/Matching condition, which states that a probe seeks a goal that is closest to it.<sup>5</sup>

Note that it will not do to suggest that inherent Case (e.g. DAT) on IO in OE bars its passivization in a structure like (8) where IO is apparently a bare DP, assuming that a DP with inherent Case cannot enter into Agree (as argued by Chomsky 2000, note 87). The reason is that the single Dative object of a monotransitive verb like *bjarga* 'rescue' truly undergoes passivization in Icelandic (and the Dative IO in ditransitive constructions does as well, as I will show later in section 4.2).

Observe (9):

- (9) *Þeim var bjargað.* (Icelandic)  
 them(Dat) was(3SG) rescued  
 (Holmberg & Platzack 1995:113)

A monotransitive verb *bjarga* assigns inherent Case (DAT) lexically. The nominal remains dative under passivization in (9), and yet demonstrably serves as the (quirky Case) subject, as is well known (see Zaenen et al. 1985). Sigurðsson (1989:204-209) has summarized a number of tests indicating that an oblique DP like the Dative *þeim* 'them' in (9) is the subject in [Spec, TP], not a topicalized object.<sup>6</sup> See section 4.2 for my analysis of the quirky Case phenomenon.

In order to solve the problem, one might entertain the not uncommon idea in the Germanic literature that IO is often a PP with null or overt P, while DO is a bare DP. We might then argue in Minimalist terms that the (null) P in effect prevents the operation Agree from applying to the head T and the IO embedded in PP in the IO-DO structures, as expected.

The idea that IO has always been a PP in English is plausible in view of the fact that a few ditransitive verbs do take *to*-IO even in OE DOCs (though its occurrences are rare). Cf. Fischer et al., (2000:74). Also in support of this idea is the fact that in ME a form like *I gave to Mary a book* is attested (Arnold 1995:118, 159). This distinction between prepositional IO and bare DO might be attributed to the dichotomy between a goal argument and a theme argument. Such a distinction is in fact proposed for those Germanic languages that allow only DO to passivize in the type of DOC under study. We will look at them in next section.

### 3.2. Evidence from other Germanic languages in support of prepositional IO in OE

In West Flemish DOCs, an obligatory overt preposition *an* ‘to’ introducing the IO in the passive blocks the passivization of the closer IO, and thus allows the more distant DO to passivize, overtly or covertly raising across the IO (cf. Haeberli 2002:229-230).

Observe the following DOC sentences in West Flemish, (10a) being in the active and (10b)-(10c) in the passive:

- (10) a. *dan-ze Marie nen boek goaven*  
           that-they Mary a book gave ‘that they gave Mary a book’  
       b. *dat-er \*(an) Marie nen boek gegeven is*  
           the-there to Mary a book given is ‘that a book is given to Mary’  
       c. *dat dienen boek \*(an) Marie gegeven is*  
           that that book to Mary given is (Haeberli 2002:229)

Notice that (10b) is an impersonal passive with a null expletive subject, as indicated by the inflected form of the complementizer *dat-er*, which does not agree with the thematic subject unlike a normal complementizer. An overt preposition *an* is required in the passive (10b) and (10c).

This leads Haeberli to propose that an overt P is inserted as the IO introducer in the ditransitive passive in West Flemish, assuming that no such P, either overt or covert, is present in the ditransitive active. I depart from his account here by assuming that DOCs always have IO in the form of PP in West Flemish, in which P is overt only in the passive. The technology exploited by Herberli for the blocking by the preposition is different from mine as well.

Haeberli contends that this account in terms of an IO-introducing preposition as a blocker can be extended to Dutch, except that in Dutch the preposition is always null and similarly bars the passivization of the closer IO, much as its overt counterpart *an* in West Flemish does. In Dutch the rigid order of “SU-IO-DO” obtains where IO is apparently a bare nominal, yet the more distant DO supersedes the closer IO in passivization of the DOC.

Consider the ditransitive passive in Dutch in (11), in which the theme argument determines agreement.

- (11) dat dit boek mijn oom toegestuurd is  
that this book(SU) my uncle(IO) sent is  
'that this book was sent to my uncle' (Haeberli 2002:225)

On this approach I must say that the Dative Shift obligatorily applies to the base-generated DO-[<sub>PP</sub> P IO]-V structure in a language like Dutch. This can be ensured by the obligatory presence of an EPP feature on V<sub>DAT</sub> in Dutch. Cf. (8).

This account carries over to German, which analogously allows only DO to passivize irrespective of its surface position relative to IO. Notice that German has scrambling, so it licenses six word order options in DOCs involving SU, IO and DO. Cf. Haeberli (2002:105, 149). Observe (12).

- (12) a. SU-IO-DO    b. SU-DO-IO    c. DO-SU-IO  
      d. DO-IO-SU    e. IO-SU-DO    f. IO-DO-SU

In contrast, Dutch licenses only the SU-IO-DO option in (12a) (see Haeberli 2002:106).

The examples in (13), which are due to my native informant, show that only the accusative DO passivizes in German:<sup>7</sup>

- (13) a. Man hat (dem) Hans den Film gezeigt.  
      One has (the(Dat)) Hans the(Acc) movie shown 'They showed the movie to Hans.'  
      b. Der Film wurde (dem) Hans gezeigt.  
      The(Nom) movie was (the(Dat)) Hans shown 'The movie was shown to Hans.'  
      c. \*(\*Der) Hans wurde den Film gezeigt.  
      (the(Nom)) Hans was the(Acc) movie shown 'Hans was shown the movie.'

(13c) is unacceptable whether the definite article *der* is present or not.

A similar analysis in terms of PP has been proposed for IOs by Czepluch (1982), Haegeman (1985/6), and Kayne (1984). Further, Holmberg & Platzack (1995:172ff; 219-221) argue that IO is a PP with a covert P in Norwegian and certain varieties of Swedish, and that IO has inherent Case. Baker (1988:286f.) argues for a null P that introduces IO in the V-IO-DO structure in PE. For a similar idea for PE, see Kayne (2004, section 2.5).

Thus, if this account of DOCs in terms of a prepositional IO with an overt or null P is on the

right track for these languages, we might adopt this analysis for passivization of our DOCs in a historical language OE in the absence of clear evidence to the contrary, given its limited database and similarities to these languages.

In OE then, typically a null P introduces an IO and is licensed by virtue of the case morphology on the IO, let us assume. When the morphological case system is lost in ME, the null P is no longer licensed by the dative morphology, which has disappeared by that time. It should not come as a surprise then that both the “V-*to*^IO-DO” construction and the “V-DO-*to*^IO” construction emerged as productive constructions in ME, through the replacement of the null Dative preposition by an overt one *to* (cf. Allen 1995:413f.), which obviously requires no licensing.

This scenario is consistent with the finding of McFadden’s (2002), that the full-blown emergence of the *to*-dative is simultaneous with the collapse of the morphological case system in most dialects of ME, viz. in the EME period (1150-1250). In particular, he reports that no example was found where one indirect object is marked with both *to* and distinctive dative case, which is highly suggestive in favor of the linkage between the loss of the dative-accusative distinction in nominals and the full-blown development of the Dative preposition *to*.

This account is plausible for Modern English (ModE), Mainland Scandinavian (MSc) and Romance languages, which have dismantled morphological case systems and now license the “V-DO-[<sub>PP</sub> IO]” frame in the active voice. In Romance only this frame is possible, whereas in ModE and MSc, it alternates with the frame “V-IO-DO”.

Illustrations are provided in (14) for MSc and in (15) for Romance:

(14) a. Han sendte sin sekretær blomster. (Danish)

He sent his secretary flowers.

b. Han sendte blomster til sin sekretær.

He sent flowers to his secretary. (Herslund 1986:125)

a’. Jag gav Johan en bok. (Swedish)

I gave Johan a book

b’. Jag gav en bok till Johan.

I gave a book to Johan (Holmberg & Platzack 1995:188)

a”. Vi ga Peter en bok (Norwegian)

we gave Peter a book

b”. Vi ga en bok til de fattige

we gave a book to the poor (based on the examples in Hellan (1991:69, 70))

- (15) a. Juan le vendió una casa a María (Spanish)  
John cl:dat sold a house to Mary  
'John sold a house to Mary.' (Montalbetti 1999:133)
- b. L'homme a donné le livre à la fille. (French)  
the-man has given the book to the girl
- b'. \*L'homme a donné la fille le livre.  
The-man has given the girl the book (Czepluch 1996:48) [The glosses are mine.]

### Notes

\*This paper is a much expanded version of Oshima (2006).

1. For a dissenting view with respect to German, that it does not have overt V-to-T raising, see Haider (1993).
2. In the Minimalist framework, which has abandoned the linguistic level of D-structure (as well as S-structure and LF), there is no concept of "base" or "underlying" structure unlike in the earlier theories of generative transformational grammar. What I mean by "base/underlying structure" here is only that structure which arises without the application of an operation that derives the alternating form of structure with the more or less identical semantics.
3. I believe that benefactive constructions like (i) and (ii), which resemble DOCs, do not fall under the rubric of DOCs, so I disregard them in this study.

(i) I baked (John) a cake. (ii) I baked a cake (for John).

The reasoning is that verbs denoting creation and acquisition like *bake*, *get*, etc. freely allow insertion of a benefactive argument in English and Germanic languages in general. The benefactive is not required in these constructions unlike the goal in *give*-type constructions. In Icelandic it is even disfavored, perhaps disallowed.

4. I do not adopt an approach according to which both the IO-DO structure and the DO-[<sub>PP</sub> (P)-IO] structure are independently generated, viz. 'base-generated'. The semantic evidence adduced for this position so far (cf. Oehrle 1976, etc.) is weak at best, as shown by Snyder (2001). I believe that the semantic differences between these constructions can be best accounted for in terms of semantic interpretation rules plus the discourse factors of information status ("hearer-new") and heaviness, which come into play in discourse grammar (see Snyder 2001). See also Arnold et al. (2000).

For a different view among recent studies, see Beck and Johnson (2004), etc., who advocate an



analysis in terms of lexical decomposition in syntax, base-generating both of these constructions. Even if this approach of base-generating both orders turns out to be correct, obviously it will not affect my central claim about the PP structure of the indirect object in OE, etc. in this article.

5. Revising the notion of the closest matching goal in Chomsky (2001), Chomsky (2004:115) relativizes it to phases so that the probe can find any matching goal in the phase that it heads, simultaneously deleting unintelligible features. However, in a structure like “T-be considered John (to be) Bill’s guardian,” T as probe must seek as goal the closest nominal “John” to yield “John was considered (to be) Bill’s guardian,” not the combination of “John” and “Bill’s guardian” or the more distant nominal “Bill’s guardian”, though “Bill’s guardian” is also found in the phase headed by C-T (cf. Chomsky 2005).
6. Sigurðsson (1989:204f.) gives a list of “eleven phenomena with respect to which oblique subjects behave like Nominative subjects, and unlike topicalized objects: Topicalization, Non-topicalization, Position in subordinate clause, Accusative-with-Infinitive, Nominative-with-Infinitive, Reflexivization, Control, Extraction, Heavy Subject Shift, Cliticization, and Conjunction Reduction” (Holmberg & Platzack 1995:114, fn 30).
7. The Dative IO is not susceptible to the regular passivization but may undergo the formation of so-called “Rezipientenpassiv” in German. See Czepluch (1996:84):

(i) Man hat dem Jungen einen Lolli geschenkt.

one has the(Dat) boy a(Acc) lollipop given

‘They gave the boy a lollipop.’

(ii) Der Junge bekam einen Lolli geschenkt.

the(Nom) boy received a(Acc) lollipop given

‘The boy had a lollipop given.’

[The glosses and translations are mine.]

The dative goal argument in a form like *Ihm wurde geholfen* ‘Him was helped’ is not the subject but a topic, as is well known. Cf. (32) in section 4.2.

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