

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

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

(PART II)

Shin Oshima

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.

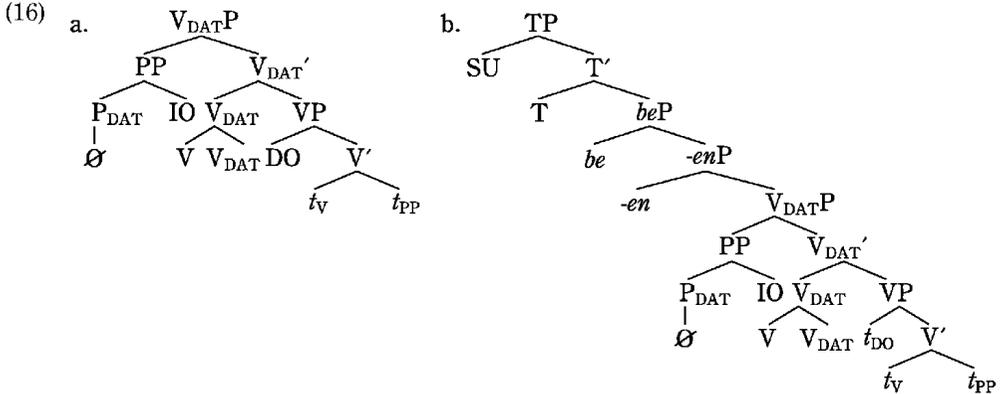
I begin by identifying the “base” structure of DOCs as the DO-_[*pp*] P-IO] frame. I then argue on the basis of facts about other Germanic languages that IO has often been introduced by null P in English. This preposition blocks passivization of a closer IO and instead allows for passivization of a more 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

3.3. A Minimalist analysis of passivization of DOCs

In OE then, a typically null P in prepositional IO blocks the closer IO from raising to [Spec, TP] in passivization of the Dative Shifted structure. Let us see how this account can be implemented in Minimalist terms. Consider (16), where I abstract away from linear ordering, as always. So it is immaterial that VP is not head-final.



(16a) is identical to (8a), so it requires no further comment. Further application of Agree and Merge will turn (16a) into (16b), which is an informal representation of the structure of the ditransitive passive, abstracting away from the raising (viz. Internal Merge) of V-V_{DAT} to *-en* and of *be* to T. At the stage of derivation where T has merged with *beP*, T enters into Agree with DO and the EPP feature on T attracts DO to create [Spec, TP], viz. a surface Nom subject (SU in (16b)), which derives from DO.

As noted in section 2.3., I assume that inherent DAT(ive) Case in OE, etc. is represented by a lexically selected null prepositional Case marker, which enters into Agree with its object DP (IO), and that the object requires Case valuation just like the direct object. Put another way, the IO itself does bear a sort of structural Case to be valued. Modern English lacks morphological case but does have inherent Case, DAT(ive) in DOCs as a lexically selected one.

Under these assumptions, in (16b) the IO embedded in PP has its uninterpretable Case feature already valued (as Dat) by this time and is no longer ‘active’ (in the sense of Chomsky 2004), but it can agree with T under Chomsky’s (2004) theory that Agree operations take place simultaneously within the same phase, CP in this case. However this application of Agree leads to Case conflict for the IO, two distinct *structural* Case values assigned by P and T. So IO cannot agree with T, in effect. Notice that an inherent Case value and a structural Case value do

not end up in Case conflict: the former always wins out in case realization.

IO itself does not intervene in Agree of T with DO, as it is embedded in PP and fails to c-command DO in [Spec, VP]; hence no defective intervention effect arises. This shows that only an element that c-commands another candidate for Agree intervenes in such Agree, as Chomsky argues. Thus, in OE only DO agrees with T and passivizes.

3.4. Preposition incorporation (PI)

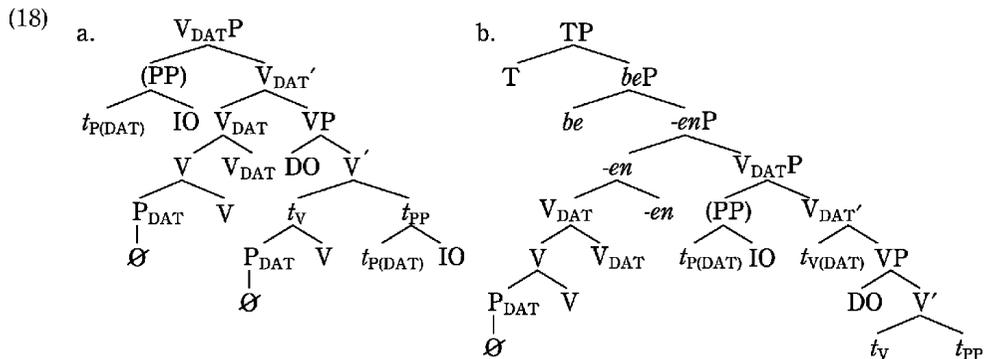
The present account leaves unexplained the presence of the “modern type” of DOC, viz. the V-null P-IO-DO construction, in ME, alongside of the “V-*to*-IO-DO” construction. The modern type is apparently a continuation of a similar OE structure. This means that a new means of licensing a null P arose in ME, given the absence of case morphology on IO, a null P licenser.

I propose that the incorporation of P to V, viz. PI (Baker 1988), is another such strategy, which became available in ME.⁸ This incorporation may be due to the affixal nature of the preposition as a Case marker; see Arnold (1995:124f.) for this view. For evidence for the rise of PI in ME, note the emergence of pseudopassives with P-stranding in ME (Denison 1993:125, Fischer et al. 2000:78), which are sometimes analyzed as involving PI. See Oshima (2002) for such an analysis of pseudopassives with P-stranding in PE. See also next section 3.5. PI derives (17b) from (17a) in the ditransitive.

(17) a. SU V [_{PP}[_P∅] IO] DO

b. SU [_VV-_P∅][_{PP}*t_P* IO] DO

I assume that as a result of PI, PP becomes transparent, that is, missing in effect. Let us now turn to the passive version of (17b) in ModE, including PE.



In (18a) P_{DAT} enters into Agree with IO valuing the Case of IO as Dat at First Merge, and null P_{DAT} incorporates into V. The verb raises to V_{DAT} (as in (18a)) and then on to *-en* (as in (18b)). Though IO is ‘inactive’ as it has its Case valued, it can still participate in Agree with T within this same phase, as noted above, to be promoted to [Spec, TP] to yield a form like “John was given *t* a book,” so-called “Recipient Passive” (Allen’s (1995) term) in ModE including PE.

In passing, Kayne (2004) suggests that P acts as a probe, heading a phase PP on a par with C and *v*, as I claimed in Oshima (2001, 2002). Even on this approach, PI nullifies the phase status of PP as I showed there, so the above derivation of the Recipient Passive holds.

To return to the main thread of our discussion, in accord with Chomsky’s (2004) theory of simultaneous application of operations within a phase, P_{DAT} agrees with IO and incorporates to V simultaneously, assuming that CP, *v*P and PP are phases. As a consequence of PI, P may not value IO as Dat, because PI causes V to absorb the Case value from P, as standardly assumed. At the same time T agrees with and attracts IO, which becomes the nominative subject. Thus, no Case conflict arises. The other operations in (18a) and (18b) also apply simultaneously within the phase. I will address the issue of the absence of the Recipient Passive in ME in section 4.1.

3.5. Implications and consequences of the PI account

The possibility of the incorporation of null P suggests that the incorporation of overt P may be possible. Oshima (2002:10-17) argues that overt P may be incorporated to \bar{V} in languages like English, Norwegian and Swedish, thus enabling the object of the preposition to passivize and raise to [Spec, TP]. This yields pseudopassives, stranding the preposition, a reformulation of the celebrated reanalysis account of pseudopassives (cf. Baker 1988).

The general correlation of the possibility of pseudopassives with that of the Recipient Passive supports my analysis of the latter in terms of PI, since PI underlies the former as well as the latter on my approach. OE and German exclude PI, hence preclude both pseudopassives and Recipient Passives, whereas ModE (including PE), Norwegian and Swedish allow PI, hence have both pseudopassives and Recipient Passives.⁹

Observe pseudopassives (19) and Recipient Passives (20) in MSc (Holmberg & Platzack 1995:215, 217, 218) and also in contemporary English.

- (19) a. at Petter ble ledd av. (Norwegian)
that Peter was laughed at
- b. (?att Peter skrattades åt. (Swedish)
- c. *at Peter blev grinet af. (Danish) Cf. Peter was laughed at. (PE)
- (20) a. Jon ble gitt en bok. (Norwegian)
Jon was given a book
- b. Johan förärades en medalj. (Swedish)
Johan was-presented a medal
- c. Jens blev givet bogen. (Danish)
Jens was given the-book Cf. John was given a book. (PE)

Note, however, that Danish allows the Recipient Passive (20c), but not the pseudopassive (19c). We may take this to mean that Danish verbs incorporate only null P, whereas verbs in PE, Norwegian and Swedish allow for incorporation of both null and overt P into V.

Next, I will address the issue why DO also passivizes in Norwegian, Swedish and Faroese, while it does not in Danish and (most dialects of) contemporary English. Observe (21).

- (21) a. En bok ble gitt Jon. (Norwegian) b. Medaljen förärades Johan. (Swedish)
a book was given Jon the-medal was-presented Johan
- c. Hestarnir voru givnir honum. (Faroese)
the-horses(Nom) were given him(Dat)
(Holmberg & Platzack 1995:218)
- d. *at bogen blev vist Sofie (Danish)
that book-the was shown Sofie
(Vikner 1991:305)
- e. (*)A copy of the letter was sent Jack. (* for most speakers of English)

In our terms an obvious solution suggests itself. In languages like Norwegian, Swedish, etc. the incorporation of null P is indeed obligatory as required for the null P licensing but the trace it leaves behind is optionally ‘active’ in the relevant sense. If the trace is active, DO passivizes much as in OE, whereas if not, IO passivizes (Recipient Passive). On the other hand, in Danish the trace is never active, so IO invariantly passivizes parallel to most dialects of PE. I will return to this below.

Our PI analysis provides a natural account for the well-known fact that Romance languages have only the “V-DO-[_{PP} overt P-IO]” type of DOC, lacking the “V-[_{PP} null P-IO]-DO” structure. In Romance, the morphological case system is absent, and PI is excluded (witness the absence of P-stranding/pseudopassives, as in (22a)). Since Romance languages lack in both devices of licensing null P, viz., morphological case and PI, they are correctly predicted to proscribe the “V-[_{PP} null P-IO]-DO” type of DOC (e.g. (15b’), (22b’)) as well as V-DO-[_{PP} null P-IO] and preclude Recipient Passives (e.g. (22b)) in striking confirmation of my theory of Recipient Passives in terms of prepositional IO and PI.

(22) a. *Jean a été telephone avec t̄

Jean has been telephoned with
(Czepluch 1996:42) [The glosses are mine.]

b. *Marie a été donnée un livre par Jean
Marie has been given a book by Jean
(Kayne 1984:199) [The glosses are mine.]

Cf. b’. Jean a donné un livre a Marie b’’. *Jean a donné Marie un livre
Jean has given a book to Marie Jean has given Marie a book
(Kayne 1984:193) [The glosses are mine.]

4. Some Residual Problems

4.1. The delayed advent of Recipient Passives

A significant problem remains with our analysis of the emergence of the modern Recipient Passive in English. Pseudopassives appeared in ME, first sporadically in the thirteenth century and increasingly in the fourteenth century (see note 9), and Recipient Passives much later (Fischer et al. 2000:78, 84). The first attestation of a clear case of the Recipient Passive is dated 1375 by Allen (1995:393). They were not frequent even in the fifteenth century (Fischer et al. 2000:78). That is, there is a time lag of about two hundred years between the emergence of pseudopassives and that of Recipient Passives.

Consider (23) and (24).

- (23) a. *heo schal beo greattre ibollen, leafdiluker leoten of ten a leafdi of hames*
 she shall be greater honoured, lady-liker thought of than a lady of homes
 ‘she shall be more greatly honoured, thought of as more ladylike than a housewife’
 (AW, 58, 7) (van Kemenade 1987:209)
- b. *þer wes sorhe te seon hire leoflich lich faren so reowliche wið*
 there was sorrow to see her dear body dealt so cruelly with
 c1225 *St. Juliana* (Roy) 22.195 (Denison 1993:125)
- (24) a. Item as for the Parke she is a lowyd Every yere a dere
 ‘Item: as for the park, she is allowed a deer each year’
 AwardBlount p. 205 (1375)
 (Allen 1995:393, quoting from Visser 1963-73: § 1968)
- b. *playnly þu art forbodun boþe*
plainly thou-NOM art forbidden both
 ‘Plainly, you are forbidden both.’
 Wyc.Wks XXVI 383.24 (Allen 1995:393)

(23a) is “the only thirteenth-century example of preposition-stranding in a passive construction”, van Kemenade (1987:209) states. Actually, there are a few more rare examples of pseudopassives from the first half of the thirteenth century, as evidenced by (23b). In contrast, Recipient Passives appeared for the first time only in 1375, as Allen (1995:393) noted, citing (24a). More examples of this sort come from approximately the same time (witness (24b)).

The problem that my account faces then is this: since the null P in [_{PP} P IO] continued to be licensed when the dative morphology disappeared in EME (around 1200), PI must have become available as a new licensing mechanism at the same time, which predicts *ceteris paribus* the concurrent introduction of the Recipient Passive, contrary to fact. Therefore, something beyond PI must be implicated in Recipient Passives.

The same problem confronts other analyses. So Allen (1995) proposes that the fixing of the word order in DOCs as “V-IO-DO” is responsible for the rise of Recipient Passives, for they took place more or less at the same time. Fischer et al. rather relate it to the demise of Verb Second (V2), which coincides with the emergence of Recipient Passives. The jury is still out on this, I believe, but I am more inclined to follow in Allen’s footsteps in this regard for the following reason.

Let us see how Fischer et al.’s analysis is not quite persuasive. In the first place, their anal-

ysis, according to which the loss of V2 in late ME led to the rise of the Recipient Passive, implies *ceteris paribus* that if the V2 constraint is retained, the Recipient Passive will not arise. This implication is not empirically supported, however: the MSc languages have preserved the constraint as have all the other Germanic languages except English (see Vikner 1995, Chap. 3) and yet possess Recipient Passives.

Observe the sentences in (25) and (26) in MSc, which illustrate the V2 constraint and Recipient Passives respectively.

- (25) a. (English) *This book has Peter read
 b. (Danish) Denne bog har Peter læst
 this book has Peter read
 (Vikner 1995:39) [The glosses are mine.]
 c. (Norwegian) Dette spørsmålet *skjønte* Jens ikke.
 this question understood Jens not
 (Taraldsen 1985:7)
 d. (Swedish) Den boken *köpte* Erik i London.
 that book bought Erik in London
 ‘That book, Erik bought it in London.’
 (Platzack 1985:27)
- (26) a. (Danish) Jens blev givet bogen.
 Jens was given the-book
 b. (Norwegian) Jon ble gitt boken.
 Jon was given the-book
 c. (Swedish) Johan förärades en medalj.
 Johan was-presented a medal.
 (Holmberg & Platzack 1995:215, 218)

Further, whereas the VP-internal word order of the DOC in Old Norse¹⁰ was not fixed, as illustrated in (27), that of one of its descendants, Norwegian, has become fixed strictly as “V-bare IO-DO” as in (28a). The other MSc languages, Swedish and Danish, have the same fixed surface order as Norwegian (note the unacceptability of (28b’) and (28c’) with the “V-DO-bare IO” order). In other words, in MSc the surface order of the two objects in DOCs is strictly ‘bare’ IO followed by DO, as observed by Holmberg & Platzack (1995:189).

- (27) a. ok veitt Óláfi konungi lið (Old Norse) [V-IO-DO]
 and given Olaf.Dat king support.Acc
 ‘and given King Olaf support’ (Hkr II.95.11)
- b. ok bera öl vikingum (Old Norse) [V-DO-IO]
 and carry ale.Acc vikings.Dat
 ‘and bring ale to the vikings’ (Hkr I.68.3)
 (Faarlund 2004:165)
- (28) a. De ga Marit ikke blomstene. (Norwegian)
 they gave Marit not the-flowers
 (Holmberg & Platzack 1995:218)
- b. Jag gav Johan en bok. (Swedish)
 I gave Johan a book
 (Holmberg & Platzack 1995:188)
- b’. *Jon ska ge boken något bibliotek. (Swedish)
 Jon will give the-book some library (Holmberg & Platzack 1995:189)
- c. Han sendte sin sekretær blomster. (Danish)
 He sent his secretary flowers. (Herslund 1986:125)
- c’. *Han sendte blomster sin sekretær. (Danish)
 He sent flowers his secretary (my native informant)

In brief, the retention of V2 is compatible with the existence of Recipient Passives in MSc, a surprising fact on Fischer et al.’s analysis of the rise of Recipient Passives in late ME. By contrast, the change from the free order of IO relative to DO to the invariant “V-bare IO-DO” order goes with the presence of Recipient Passives in MSc, which is just as it should be on Allen’s analysis.¹¹ Taken together, these facts render something along the lines of Allen’s analysis more plausible than Fischer et al.’s. I tentatively conclude then that the fixing of the surface order of the two objects in DOCs has given rise to Recipient Passives in late ME.

To return to the point at hand, PI seems to be a necessary, but not a sufficient, prerequisite for Recipient Passives. More work is clearly called for in order to bring to light what else is involved in these passives beyond PI. One possibility is to suggest that in English at least, the trace of P left behind in PP may remain ‘active’ in the relevant sense in the presence of another object, which is functionally explainable in terms of the need to distinguish IO from DO by some means other than word order so long as the relative order of IO with respect to DO is not fixed,

that is, until late ME.

This line of explanation is an adaptation of Allen's (1995) account to our generative transformational framework. With the order fixed in late ME, there was no longer any need for retaining 'the other means' of determining which is IO and which is DO. Thus, the trace of the incorporated P becomes invisible.

This account is supported by the well-known fact that while scrambling reorders IO and DO freely in German with rich nominal morphology, it strictly preserves the IO-DO order in Dutch lacking such inflectional morphology, even though it moves an object across *v*P-peripheral adjuncts. As it appears that Dutch lacks PI, our analysis correctly predicts that Recipient Passives are unavailable to Dutch (see the text discussion in section 3.2 and the example (11)). Note that Dutch allows P-stranding, which is however restricted to *wh*-movement and does not involve PI (cf. Oshima 2001, 2002).

Note that the unique Dative object of a verb like *þancian* 'thank' in OE became passivizable in EME (around 1200), when the dative morphology was lost, giving rise to the "direct passive" in Allen's (1995, Chap.8) terminology, in which the earlier Dative object is promoted to the Nominative subject in [Spec, TP] in the passive. There is no chronological gap between the loss of the dative morphology and the emergence of the direct passive (Allen 1995:351, 353). This is only natural in view of the fact that there is no issue of distinguishing IO from DO here, since there is only one object involved.

Consider (29a) and (29b), examples of the direct passive taken from Allen (1995:349). The direct passive derives from the earlier impersonal passive:

(29) a. Iþanked bie he!

thanked be he-Nom

'May he be thanked!' V&V 97.5

b. for he nes þeo noht iquemed

for he-Nom not-was then not pleased

'for he was not then pleased' BrutC 1529

(29a) comes from the early thirteenth century and (29b) from the late thirteenth century. The earlier dative object is most likely reanalyzed as an accusative object due to syncretism in this case.

4.2. Passives in DOCs in Icelandic

Another remaining problem concerns the puzzle why both IO and DO passivize in our *give-type* DOC in an inflectional language like Icelandic, whose dative morphology should license null P as do OE and German. Consider (30):

- (30) a. Jón gaf ambáttina_i konungi sínum_i.
Jon gave the-maidservant (Acc) king(Dat) REFL(Dat)
'Jon gave the maidservant to her king.'
(Holmberg & Platzack 1995:210)
- b. konunginum voru gefnar ambáttir.
the-king(Dat) were given(f.pl.) maidservants(Nom.f.pl.)
'The king was given female slaves.'
- c. Ambáttin var gefin konunginum
the-maidservant(Nom.sg) was given(f.sg.) the-king(Dat)
(Zaenen et al. 1985:460)

In (30c) the preposed nominal, which bears the nominative case morphology, is obviously the grammatical subject in [Spec, TP], as indicated by the change in Case under passivization (cf. the accusative case morphology on the DO nominal in (30a)). Notice that in (30b), despite its Dative Case the preposed nominal is the subject in [Spec, TP] again, not a topicalized IO, by a battery of tests, as shown by Zaenen et al. (1985), etc. See note 6.

Given that Icelandic disallows pseudopassives, hence PI, (Vikner 1995:246, fn. 14; Herslund 1984:61), my analysis predicts, other things being equal, that only DO should passivize in Icelandic as in OE and German, since the null P preceding IO bars IO from entering Agree with T, blocking the passivization of IO, if the Icelandic IO is also a PP with null P. But other things are not equal here. Icelandic is famous for the phenomenon of 'quirky Case' unlike OE and German. Consider the following Icelandic examples in (31), especially (31b) (and also (9), cited earlier).

- (31) a. Ég hjálpaði honum. b. Honum var hjálpað.
I helped him(Dat) him(Dat) was helped
(Zaenen et al. 1985:442, 445)

As Zaenen et al. convincingly show, the preposed pronominal *honum* in (31b) serves as a bona fide subject, though marked dative. When a verb assigns ‘quirky Case’ (say, Dative) to its object as in (31a), this Case is preserved in the passive as in (31b).

Some verbs in Icelandic lexically assign Genitive, Dative or Accusative, viz. inherent Case, as in OE, German, etc. Thus, one might say that inherent Case comes in two varieties: (i) quirky Case as in Icelandic, and (ii) ‘non-quirky Case’ as in German. Quirky Case is preserved under passivization: an object with quirky Case is passivizable with its Case retained (see (31b)). In contrast, an object with non-quirky Case in a language like German cannot be passivized to become the subject but can only be topicalized. In (32), the preposed Dative theme *ihm* acts as a topicalized object, not as the subject, an empirically well-established fact (see Zaenen et al. 1985:476-479, among others).

- (32) Ihm wurde geholfen. (German)
 him(Dat) was helped
 (Zaenen et al. 1985:444)

It is not clear whether in the passive the Dative theme of a monotransitive verb like ‘help’ in OE behaves as a true subject like its counterpart in Icelandic. See Allen (1995:127 and footnote 31), who speculates that the theme argument is a true subject merely on the grounds that an expletive subject does not occur in the construction: the theme must be occupying the subject position, thus excluding an expletive from the position. In the ditransitive passive however, the preposed Dative nominal of a ditransitive verb like ‘give’ in OE does not behave as a subject (rather, it does as a topic, in this case), just like the Dative theme of a monotransitive passive in German. See Zaenen et al (1985). To account for the distinction between Icelandic on the one hand and German and Old English on the other with respect to the passivizability of the oblique object, we might appeal to a special device associated with ‘quirky Case’ inherent Case as opposed to ‘non-quirky Case’ inherent Case.

More attractive in frameworks pursuing Minimalist goals and particularly in my framework, however, is to propose that the IO in Icelandic is a bare DP, not a PP with null P as head. This simple assumption immediately allows for the passivization of an oblique object in ditransitive constructions, just as in monotransitive ones, in Icelandic. It is tempting to relate this assumption to the availability of quirky Case on IO in Icelandic, which might be taken to serve as a marker of beneficiary, rendering P redundant.

Thus, the Dative theme object in (31a) is accessible to passivization via Agree, yielding (31b). Similarly for (9) in section 3.1. An account parallel to this extends to the passivization of IO in the Dative Shifted counterpart of (30a) with the IO-DO order, which results in (30b). The IO-DO order itself is derived by the now familiar mechanism of V_{DAT} attracting an inherent Case value [DAT] on IO. (30c) is a straightforward case of passivization of (30a). This approach dispenses with the idea of two varieties of inherent Case (viz. quirky and non-quirky) along with a mechanism associated with quirky inherent Case that would be required.

This approach carries over to the quirky Case phenomenon in a variety of ergative constructions in Icelandic (cf. Holmberg & Platzack 1995:105, 112):

- (33) a. *Hafði einhverjum bátum hvolft.* b. *Hana vantar peninga.*
 had some boats(Dat) capsized her(Acc) lacks money(Acc)
 ‘Some boats had capsized.’
- c. *Hafði þér ekki leiðst*
 had you(Dat) not bored
 ‘Were you not bored?’
- d. *Henni þykir bróðir sinn leiðinlegur.*
 her(Dat) thinks brother(Nom) her(REFL) boring
 ‘She thinks her brother is boring.’

In (33) the only or first nominal with inherent Dative or Accusative Case occurs in the [Spec, TP] position (later raised to [Spec, CP] in some cases): it is a true subject, not a topic, which has been demonstrated beyond doubt (cf. Holmberg & Platzack 1995). Faroese shares the quirky Case phenomenon with Icelandic (see Barnes 1986, referred to by Holmberg & Platzack 1995:112), and so does Old Swedish (Holmberg and Platzack 2005:448). The same account may extend to these cases.

It is important to note that Holmberg & Platzack’s analysis in terms of the GB theory is inadequate with respect to the quirky Case phenomenon, because OE and German constitute serious counterexamples to their analysis. According to Holmberg & Platzack (1995, Chap. 3, 4), V2 languages have a feature [+F] associated with the head C, which must be licensed by the presence of a Nominative element in the positions governed by the [+F] C, that is, [Spec, TP] or T. Further, in languages like Icelandic and Faroese, which have rich subject-verb agreement, ‘nominative Agr’ is present in T, while in languages like MSc, which have no such agreement,

‘nominative Agr’ is absent in T.

Thus, since the feature [+F] on C can always be licensed by ‘nominative Agr’ in T in Icelandic and Faroese, the [Spec, TP] position need not be occupied by a Nominative subject, so it can host a non-Nominative nominal, viz. a quirky subject, in Icelandic and Faroese. By contrast, a Nominative subject must occupy the position to satisfy the licensing condition for [+F] in MSc languages, which lack rich subject-verb agreement, hence lack the ‘nominative Agr’ in T. Therefore, no quirky Case phenomenon is possible in MSc. So far, so good.

OE and German however pose a problem for this scenario. They are V2 languages (see van Kemenade 1987:42-48, etc. for the evidence that OE is a V2 language), so their C must bear the feature [+F]. They clearly have a rich subject-verb agreement system parallel to those of Icelandic and Faroese, hence they should have ‘nominative Agr’ in T on Holmberg & Platzack’s theory. Therefore, these languages are predicted to countenance the quirky Case phenomenon, a Dative subject in passives for example, which is contrary to fact. On the other hand, my Minimalist analysis, which does not appeal to the notion “government” as their analysis does, can provide an account straight away for the contrast between OE and German on the one hand and Icelandic and Faroese on the other in terms of the presence/absence of the null IO-introducing P.

4.3. Licensing of a null preposition in Dutch

Dutch chooses the IO-DO option, as noted in section 3.2., yet allows only DO to passivize, not a closer IO, which means on our analysis that IO is introduced by a null P that prevents IO from being passivized, as I argued there.

A problem for this account is that Dutch lacks the two strategies of licensing a null P that I have so far proposed, viz. morphological case and PI. Thus, as it stands, this analysis predicts, contrary to the above argument, that IO is a bare DP and hence, contrary to fact, that IO should be susceptible to passivization rather than DO.

We must say then that there is a third device of allowing a null P to meet the empirical condition of the Dutch fact. What springs to mind is the well-known fact that Dutch has so-called *r*-pronouns (e.g. *er* ‘there’, *daar* ‘there’), which occur on the left of an overt or null P. This null P must be independently licensed in the absence of morphological case and PI in Dutch.

Consider (34):

- (34) a. Ik heb enkele boeken [_{PP} er [_P over]] gelezen
I have some books there about read
'I have read some books about it.' (Bennis 1987:176)
- b. Jan koopt [_{PP} er [_P Ø]] een boek
John buys there Ø a book
'John buys a book at it (=at that place).' (Bennis 1987:177)

It is clear that in (34b) a null locative P is licensed by some other means, which we might say extends to a null dative P. This conjecture is purely speculative, calling for empirical evidence in future work.

5. Conclusion

I have proposed in the present study that the diachronic development of passivization in English lies in the replacement of one strategy of licensing a null P (morphological case for OE) by another (PI for ME and ModE), on the assumption that IO has been introduced by P, null or overt, at all the historical stages of English. This argumentation has heavily relied on facts about living languages related or similar to English, mostly Germanic languages.

Some apparent problems for this account includes the fact about the delayed appearance of the Recipient Passive in ME, the Icelandic one about passivization of both IO and DO in DOCs, and the recalcitrant one about Dutch lacking both mechanisms of licensing a null P, morphological case and PI. I offered solutions to the first two problems but only a speculation on a possible solution to the last.

Notes

8. Baker (1988, Chap.5) proposes an operation called "Preposition Incorporation" (PI), which consists in the syntactic movement of an X° category P to adjoin to the governing verb V. He shows that PI is crucially involved in "Applicative" and "Dative Shift" constructions in many languages in the world.

He (1988:229) cites the following examples from Chichewa, a Bantu language.

- (i) Mbidzi *zi-na-perek-a* msampha *kwa* nkhandwe
zebras SP-PAST-*hand*-ASP trap *to* fox
‘The zebras handed the trap to the fox.’
- (ii) Mbidzi *zi-na-perek-er-a* nkhandwe msampha
zebras SP-PAST-*hand-to*-ASP fox trap
‘The zebras handed the fox the trap.’

In example (i), the verb selects a prepositional phrase (PP) complement as well as a noun phrase complement. In contrast, in (ii) the verb takes a noun phrase (‘fox’) in place of the corresponding PP (‘to fox’) in (i), and is morphologically complex, ‘appearing with a suffix which is traditionally called the APPLIED or APPLICATIVE suffix’ (Baker 1988:230). This structure is known as the applicative construction.

He contends that the operation of applicative is also found in languages like Modern English, arguing that Dative Shift in DOCs is an instantiation of PI, in parallel with the Chichewa paradigm in (i) and (ii), except that the incorporated preposition is null in Modern English. Note that the identical paradigm is found in the English translations in (i) and (ii).

9. The incorporation of an overt P into V did not occur in OE: pseudopassives were absent in OE and emerged in the early to mid thirteenth century (van Kemenade 1987:209f.; Denison 1993:125-127). German also excludes pseudopassives and P-stranding, as in (i):

- (i) *Hans ist mit *t* telefoniert worden.
Hans is with telephoned been
‘Hans has been telephoned with’ or ‘Hans was telephoned with.’
(Czepluch 1996:42) [The glosses and translation are mine.]

See (32) below for evidence for the absence of Recipient Passives in German and Los (2005) for the absence of Recipient Passives as well as pseudopassives in OE. See also the text discussion in section 4.1.

10. ‘Old Norse’ is a North Germanic language. In the medieval era the North Germanic languages (viz. Old Scandinavian) come in two varieties, East Nordic (Danish and Swedish) and West Nordic (Norwegian and Icelandic). Old Norse is often taken to mean Medieval West Nordic, the language which was spoken in Norway, Iceland, and the Faroes, and in the Norse settlements in the British Isles and Greenland, as in this study. Cf. Faarlund (2004, Introduction).

11. It is unknown whether Old Norse (or Old Scandinavian in general) allowed Recipient Passives. An example like (i) seems to suggest that Old Norse licensed a quirky subject; if so, it perhaps excluded Recipient Passives:

(i) var þeim gefit ol at drekka
was them.Dat given.Neu.Nom ale.Nom to drink
'They were given ale to drink' (Eg 234.8)
(Faarlund 2004:215)

Old Norse apparently respects the V2 constraint and clearly allows so-called V1 declaratives (or “narrative V1”), as illustrated in (i). As Vikner (1995:90) points out, this is consistent with the account given in Diesing (1990:56, footnote 14), according to which the determining factor is the existence of “an empty element with the meaning of *therefore*”. The underlying assumption here is that V2 is the movement of the finite verb to the second position of the clause (viz. the head C of CP), with the first (viz. Spec of CP) occupied by some phrasal constituent.

On this view, in (i) the initial position is occupied by a null phrase denoting “therefore”, and the second position by the verb. If Old Norse patterns with Icelandic regarding the quirky Case phenomenon, it looks like the dative recipient argument *þeim* ‘them’ is in the subject ([Spec, TP]) position, acting as a quirky subject in (i). This may mean that Old Norse proscribed Recipient Passives but allowed quirky subjects in passives, much like modern Icelandic. Incidentally, V1 declaratives are widely found in Germanic languages like Old English, Old Norse, Yiddish, Icelandic, colloquial Dutch, colloquial German, and Malmö Swedish.

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