German clause structure:
evidence for Split-CP and its implications for *es*

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1. Some remarks on German clause structure

1.1 Two subject positions in the *Mittelfeld*
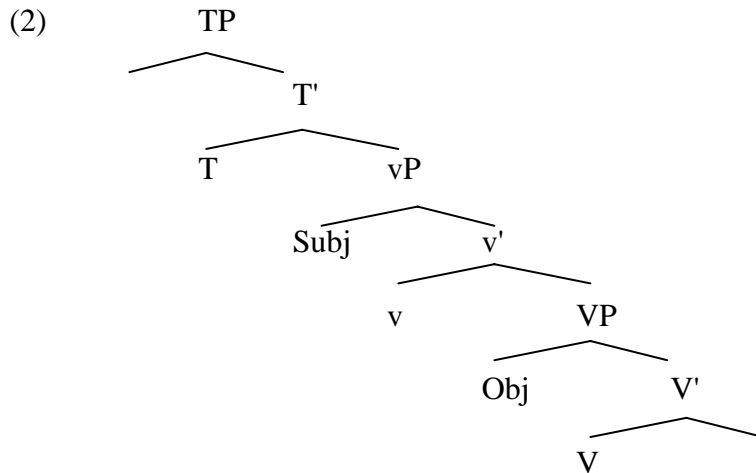
(1)   a.   Diesen Satz haben **schon immer** <u>alle Studenten</u> gehaßt.

        b.   *Diesen Satz haben **schon immer** <u>die Studenten</u> gehaßt.

        c.   [?]Diesen Satz haben <u>alle Studenten</u> **schon immer** gehaßt.

        d.   Diesen Satz haben <u>die Studenten</u> **schon immer** gehaßt.

Assuming that adverbs occupy a fixed position (without making any further assumptions about AdvPs), the above examples show that there are two subject positions in the *Mittelfeld* in German, one above the adverb and associated with definite subjects (and marginally with indefinite and quantified subjects) and one lower than the adverb and associated with indefinite and quantified subjects, but never with definite subjects.

I propose that these positions are SpecRefP (cf. Koopman & Szabolcsi 2000) and SpecvP. As I further argue that in German, the (remnant) vP moves to SpecTP, the lower subject position is actually embedded in SpecTP. This "double nature" of the lower subject position, i.e. the fact that lower subjects are at the same time in SpecvP and in SpecTP, both accounts for the vP-internal character of low subjects (Diesing 1992) and allows for Nom-Case checking in SpecTP. Definite subjects have to move to SpecRefP via SpecvP/SpecTP.

1.2 Feature checking on T and the EPP (Mohr 2002a, b)

I assume that (2), as given in Roberts (2000), is the underlying structure of all languages.

(2)
```
            TP
           /  \
              T'
             /  \
            T    vP
                /  \
             Subj   v'
                   /  \
                  v    VP
                      /  \
                    Obj   V'
                         /  \
                        V
```

In German, we get movement of the complete vP to SpecTP (in the case of complex tenses) or V-movement to T followed by movement of the remnant vP to SpecTP (in the case of simple tenses). As looking into Spec is possible, the vP-internal subject in SpecTP checks the Nom Case feature on T.
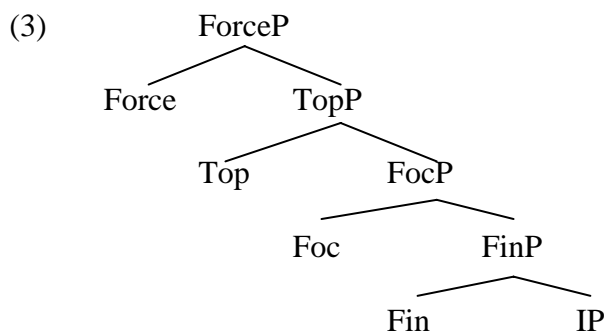
In English, however, we only get V-to-v movement (=> identification of category) and the subject moves to SpecTP to check Nom. If there is no nominative subject, T is associated with an EPP-feature which is usually checked by an expletive.

German as well as the other Germanic V2-languages, has an additional EPP-feature on Fin (in main clauses) which leads to V2. To account for the root-embedded asymmetry observed in the Germanic V2-languages, I adopt a mechanism developed in Roberts & Roussou (1998) and Roberts (2000). Fin is associated with the diacritic * (similar to Holmberg's (2000) [P]-feature) which requires phonological realisation of Fin. If Fin* is satisfied by Merge, e.g. in embedded clauses by merging the complementiser *daß*, everything is fine. However, if Fin* is satisfied by Move, here V-movement, then Fin has an EPP-feature because of the need to satisfy the Extension Condition (Mohr 2002a, b).

2. Split-CP

The analysis developed here is a kind of compromise between the asymmetric approach to V2 (i.e. subject-initial main clauses are IPs, while non-subject-initial clauses are CPs, cf. Travis 1984, Zwart 1997) and the symmetric approach (i.e. all V2-clauses are CPs, cf. Vikner 1995, Schwartz & Vikner 1996).

I want to argue that V2 uniformly is a phenomenon of the C-system but that it involves different phrases within the Split-CP (3).

(3)

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            ForceP
          /        \
     Force          TopP
                  /      \
               Top        FocP
                        /      \
                     Foc        FinP
                              /      \
                           Fin        IP
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(Rizzi 1997)

There is, however, good evidence that we do not simply have the dichotomy "subject vs. all other possible XPs" but that we need a finer-grained distinction.

(4) a. Der Minister übernahm die Verantwortung für den Skandal.

  b. Diesen Minister hat die Presse schon lange kritisiert.

  c. Heute hat es ohne Unterlaß geregnet.   (Haider 1993)

  d. OHNE UNTERLASS hat es heute geregnet.   (Haider 1993)

  e. Unter diesen Umständen kann ich nicht arbeiten.

(5) a. Peter liebt Maria.

  b. PETER liebt Maria.

  c. Den Peter liebt Maria.

(6) a. Die Regierung betrachtet das Volk als korrupt.

> b.   Das Volk betrachtet die Regierung als korrupt.

As one can see in (4) - (6), some XPs, namely

- subjects (4a)
- adverbs which create a setting, esp. some temporal and locative adverbs[1] (4c)

can show up in sentence-initial position having "neutral stress and interpretation".[2] I assume that these XPs occupy SpecFinP.

Other adverbs, esp. adverbial PPs (4d, e) can only occur in sentence-initial position if they are stressed (contrastive stress), topicalised or forced by any other discourse requirement to show up in this position.

Objects have to be stressed or topicalised (or both) to be able to show up in sentence-initial position.[3] This is illustrated by the examples in (5) and (6):

In (5a) and even in (5b), where it is stressed, *Peter* can only be interpreted as the subject/agent of the sentence. Only when one adds the article (which is clearly accusative and which as a by-product forces the whole NP to be stressed) *Peter* will be interpreted as the direct object/beneficiary.

In (6), both NPs, *die Regierung* and *das Volk*, could be either nominative or accusative but one will almost always get the reading in which the sentence-initial NP is the considerer, i.e. the sentence-initial NP gets the default interpretation "subject" and even focussing does not have any influence on interpretation. However, people might accept an object-reading for *die Regierung* in (6a) because it is part of our knowledge of the world that usually people consider the government corrupt, not the other way round. In (6b) on the other hand, there are no semantic reasons that favour or even force an object-reading of *das Volk*.

In view of these facts I assume that these XPs can only go into sentence-initial

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[1] Probably all those adverbs that fall into Frey & Pittner's (1998) categories of *Bereichsadverbiale* and *Frameadverbiale*.

[2] Of course, all these XPs CAN be stressed or topicalised, hence occur in one of the higher Specifiers, SpecFocP and SpecTopP respectively.

> (4')   a.   Der MINISTER übernahm die Verantwortung (nicht der Kanzler).
>   c.   HEUTE hat es ohne Unterlaß geregnet (nicht gestern).

[3] This finer-grained system and the distribution of the various types of XPs within this system holds for Norwegian as well (Arne Lindstad, p.c.).

Morphological Case-marking may play a role as well because (i) objects which are unambiguously marked as such can go into sentence-initial position much more easily than NPs which have the same form in the Acc and in the Nom, (ii) in Norwegian, which does not have Case-marking, objects are hardly found in sentence-initial position.

position if they carry a Top/Foc-feature[4] and therefore target SpecTopP or SpecFocP respectively (moving through SpecFinP and checking Fin's EPP-feature).

Table 1

	SpecTopP/SpecFocP	SpecFinP
subject NPs	✓	✓
adverbs which create a setting	✓	✓
object NPs	✓	X
other adverbs, PPs, etc.	✓	X

3. *Es* in sentence-initial position

3.1 Pronominal *es*

The question of why weak object pronouns cannot occur in sentence-initial position (7a' vs 7b') has been a topic of much research (for an overview see Schwartz &Vikner (1996)).

> (7)   a.   Das Mädchen hat sich den Arm gebrochen.
>
>   a'.   Es hat sich den Arm gebrochen.
>
>   b.   Das alte Brot hat er an die Pferde verfüttert.
>
>   b'.   *Es hat er an die Pferde verfüttert.

As I have argued above, NPs that are ambiguous (i.e. either Nom or Acc) will always receive the default/subject interpretation unless they are stressed and probably disambiguated by some discourse-feature. As *es* has the same form in the Nom and Acc it would have to be stressed or topicalised to get an object-reading, but being a weak pronoun *es* cannot be stressed or topicalised and has to be interpreted as Nom. Therefore we can never get a weak object pronoun in sentence-initial position.

      In constructions where *es* would have to be stressed or topicalised, it has to be replaced by *das* as in (8).

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[4] I do not distinguish between Topic- and Focus-features here, because the mechanism is exactly the same no matter whether the NP in question targets SpecTopP or SpecFocP. The crucial point is that they carry an extra feature and target a position higher than SpecFinP.

(8)   a.   Das regnet!

          b.   Das mach' ich nicht.

3.2 Expletive *es*

The *es*-construction does not lead to a Definiteness Effect (DE) in German, at least not to a strict one. The only requirement is that the subject be rather specific (cf. Haeberli 1999). So (9a) is ungrammatical because the subject is not specific enough, whereas (9b, c) are perfectly fine.

(9)   a.   *Es kam der Mann.

          b.   Es kam der Pfarrer.

          c.   Es kommt der Mann, über den wir gerade gesprochen haben.

The absence of a DE in German supports the idea that in German the expletive is merged only in SpecFinP to satisfy Fin's EPP-feature and does NOT move from SpecTP to SpecFinP. Instead, the subject checks Nom on T and, if definite, moves on to SpecRefP. As SpecTP is always filled by vP and as the subject can occupy SpecRefP there is (a) no need and (b) no way for *es* to be merged in a position lower than SpecFinP. Therefore it is simply merged in SpecFinP.

       The requirement that the associate NP be rather specific can be explained as follows. *Es*-constructions create a presentational context/are thetic judgements and therefore have to convey a certain amount of information.

Interestingly enough, the *here-comes-...* construction in English (and probably Locative Inversion in general) patterns exactly like the *es*-construction with respect to specificity requirements and DE[5], whereas the *there*-construction leads to a DE but does not require specific NPs.

(10)   a.   *Here comes the man.

           b.   Here comes the priest.

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[5] Thanks to Peter Svenonius (p.c.) for pointing this out to me.

      c.   Here comes the man we have been talking about.

(11)   a.   There arrives a man.

      b.   *There arrives the priest.

However, this parallelism and difference is not so surprising as it may look. Locative Inversion can be analysed as a V2-construction, i.e. as targeting the C-domain.[6] So, as in the *es*-construction, the subject can move to SpecRefP (therefore no definiteness effect) and *here* goes into SpecFinP. The specificity requirement is again imposed by the presentational context.

The *there*-construction on the other hand, can be analysed as involving the I-domain only. The subject stays in a low position (probably SpecvP) and therefore is subject to a DE and expletive *there* is merged in SpecTP to check the EPP-feature on T.

4. Some speculations about impersonal passives

The framework developed above allows for an explanation of why, in German, we can get impersonal passives of unergatives but not of unaccusatives and possibly of why English does not allow for any impersonal passives at all.

Adopting Hale & Keyser's (1993) analysis that unergative verbs are always associated with a(n abstract) cognate object, we can say that in impersonal passives like (12) the cognate object (which like any other object turns into a derived subject when the verb is passivised) checks Nom on T. *Es* and *gestern* respectively are merged in SpecFinP to satisfy Fin's EPP.

(12)   a.   Es wurde (ein Tanz) getanzt.

      b.   Gestern wurde (ein Tanz) getanzt.

In unaccusative constructions, however, the single argument of the verb is demoted by passivisation and therefore there is no argument left – not even an abstract one – to check the

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[6] Collins (1997) points out that Locative Inversion and Quotative Inversion are the only instances where the verb moves out of vP in English.

Nom-Case feature on T and the derivation crashes.

(13)   *Es wurde angekommen.

Consider English now:

(14)   a.   *It was danced (a dance).

        b.   *There was danced (a dance).

        c.   There was dancing.

(15)   a.   *There was arrived.

        b.   *There was arriving.

The analysis of these examples is a bit more difficult because the English expletives impose some additional requirements. *It* either has to be a quasi-argument or has to go together with a clausal argument (that's why (14a) is out) and *there* needs an associate NP (Chomsky 1995).

In (14b), we passivise a transitive verb and therefore the cognate object is associated with a Nom-feature. In English, however, the expletive is merged in SpecTP (because English is no longer a V2 language) and blocks movement of the cognate object to this position. So the cognate object cannot check its Nom-feature and the derivation crashes.

The only way to derive a grammatical structure is by identifying the category of the root *dance* not by little v but by little n (Marantz 1997, Chomsky 2001), thus creating a nominal (14c).

In (15), however, the root *arrive*, no matter whether it is identified as a verb or as a nominal, is associated with a Partitive-Case feature because it is unaccusative. As the single argument of *arrive* is demoted because of passivisation, this Partitive-Case feature cannot be checked and the derivations crash.
Hence we cannot derive impersonal passives in English at all.

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