

Chapter 12

Control and Raising

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The distinction between raising and control predicates has been a hallmark of syntactic theory since [Rosenbaum \(1967\)](#) and [Postal \(1974\)](#). Unlike transformational analyses, HPSG treats the difference as mainly a semantic one: raising verbs (*seem*, *begin*, *expect*) do not semantically select their subject (or object) nor assign them a semantic role, while control verbs (*want*, *promise*, *persuade*) semantically select all their syntactic arguments. On the syntactic side, raising verbs share their subject (or object) with the unexpressed subject of their non-finite complement while control verbs only coindex them ([Pollard & Sag 1994](#)). We will provide creole data (from Mauritian) which support a phrasal analysis of their complement, and argue against a clausal (or small clause) analysis ([Henri & Laurens 2011](#)). The distinction is also relevant for non-verbal predicates such as adjectives (*likely* vs. *eager*). The raising analysis naturally extends to copular constructions (*become*, *consider*) and most auxiliary verbs ([Pollard & Sag 1994](#); [Sag et al. 2020](#)).

1 The distinction between raising and control predicates

1.1 The main distinction between raising and control verbs

In a broad sense, *control* refers to a relation of referential dependence between an unexpressed subject (the controlled element) and an expressed or unexpressed constituent (the controller); the referential properties of the controlled element, including possibly the property of having no reference at all,

expletives?

are determined by those of the controller ([Bresnan 1982](#): 372). Verbs taking non-finite complements usually determine the interpretation of the unexpressed subject of the non-finite verb. With *want*, the subject is understood as the subject

of the infinitive, while with *persuade* it is the object, as shown by the reflexives in (1). They are called *control verbs*, and *John* is called the *controller* in (1a) while it is *Mary* in (1b).

- (1) a. John wants to buy himself a coat.
- b. John persuaded Mary to buy herself / * himself a coat.

Another type of verb also takes a non-finite complement and identifies its subject (or its object) with the unexpressed subject of the non-finite verb. Since Postal (1974), they are called “raising verbs”. What semantic role the missing subject has if any is determined by the lower verb, or if that is a raising verb, an even lower verb. In (2a) the subject of the infinitive (*like*) is understood to be the subject of *seem*, while in (2b) the subject of the non-finite verb (*buy*) is understood to be the object of *expect*. Verbs like *seem* are called “subject-to-subject-raising verbs” (or “subject-raising verbs”), while verbs like *expect* are called “subject-to-object-raising verbs” (or “object-raising verbs”).

- (2) a. John seemed to like himself.
- b. John expected Mary to buy herself / * himself a coat.

Raising and control constructions differ from other constructions in which the missing subject remains vague (3) and which are a case of “arbitrary” or “anaphoric” control (Chomsky 1981: 75–76; Bresnan 1982: 379)¹.

- (3) Buying a coat can be expensive.

A number of syntactic and semantic properties show how control verbs like *want*, *hope*, *force*, *persuade*, *promise*, differ from raising verbs like *see*, *seem*, *start*, *believe*, *expect* (Rosenbaum 1967; Postal 1974; Bresnan 1982).² The key point is that there is a semantic role associated with the subject position with verbs like *want* but not with verbs like *seem* and with the post-verbal position with verbs like *persuade* but not with verbs like *expect*. The consequence is that more or less any NP is possible as subject of *seem* and as the post-verbal NP after *expect*. This includes expletive *it* and *there* and idiom-chunks

Stefan: Isn't the idiom-chunk the whole idiom? Then I would write here “parts of idiom chunks”

¹Bresnan (1982) proposes a non-transformational analysis and renames “raising” “functional control” and “control” (obligatory) “anaphoric control”.

²The same distinction is available for verbs taking a gerund-participle complement: *Kim remembered seeing Lee*. (control) vs. *Kim started singing*. (raising).

Let us first consider non-referential subjects: meteorological *it* is selected by predicates such as *rain*. It can be the subject of *start*, *seem*, but not of *hope*, *want*. It can be the object of *expect*, *believe* but not of *force*, *persuade*:

- (4) a. It rained this morning.
- b. It seems/started to rain this morning.
- c. We expect it to rain tomorrow.
- (5) a. # It wants/hopes to rain tomorrow.
- b. # The sorcerer forced it to rain.

The same contrast holds with an idiomatic subject such as *the cat* in the expression *the cat is out of the bag* ‘the secret is out’. It can be the subject of *seem* or the object of *expect*, with its idiomatic meaning. If it is the subject of *want* or the object of *persuade*, the idiomatic meaning is lost and only the literal meaning remains.

- (6) a. The cat is out of the bag.
- b. The cat seems to be out of the bag.
- c. We expected the cat to be out of the bag.
- d. # The cat wants to be out of the bag. (non-idiomatic)
- e. # We persuaded the cat to be out of the bag. (non-idiomatic)

Let us now look at non-nominal subjects: *be obvious* allows for a sentential subject and *be a good place to hide* allows for a prepositional subject. They are possible with raising verbs, as in the following:

- (7) a. [That Kim is a spy] seemed to be obvious.
- b. [Under the bed] is a good place to hide.
- c. Kim expects [under the bed] to be a good place to hide.

But they would not be possible with control verbs:

- (8) a. # [That Kim is a spy] wanted to be obvious.
- b. # Kim persuaded [under the bed] to be a good place to hide.

In languages such as German which allow them, subjectless constructions can be embedded under raising verbs but not under control verbs (Müller 2002: 48); subjectless passive *gearbeitet* ‘worked’ can thus appear under *scheinen* ‘seem’ but not under *versuchen* ‘try’:

- (9) a. weil gearbeitet wurde (German)
 because worked was
 'because work was being done'
 b. Dort schien noch gearbeitet zu werden.
 there seemed yet worked to be
 'Work seemed to still be being done there.'
 c. * Der Student versucht, gearbeitet zu werden
 the student tries worked to be
 Intended: 'The student tries to get the work done.'

All this shows that the subject (or the object) of a raising verb is only selected by the non-finite verb.

A related difference is that when control and raising sentences have a corresponding sentence with a finite clause complement, they have rather different related sentences. With control verbs, the non-finite complement may often be replaced by a sentential complement (with its own subject), while it is not possible with raising verbs:

- (10) a. Kim hoped [to impress Sandy] / [that he impressed Sandy].
 b. Kim seemed [to impress Sandy] / *[that he impressed Sandy].
 (11) a. Kim promised Sandy [to come] / [that he will come].
 b. Kim expected Sandy [to come] / *[that she will come].

With some raising verbs, on the other hand, a sentential complement is possible with an expletive subject (12a), or with no postverbal object (12b).

- (12) a. It seemed [that Kim impressed Sandy].
 b. Kim expected [that Sandy will come].

This shows that the control verbs can have a subject (or an object) different from the subject of the embedded verb, but not the raising verbs.³

³Another contrast proposed by Jacobson (1990)

add pages

is that control verbs may allow for a null complement (*She tried.*), or a non-verbal complement (*They wanted a raise.*), while raising verbs may not (**She seemed*). However, some raising verbs may have a null complement (*She just started.*) as well as some auxiliaries (*She doesn't.*) which can be analysed as raising verbs (see Section 4 below).

1.2 More on control verbs

For control verbs, the choice of the controller is determined by the semantic class of the verb (Pollard & Sag 1992: Chapter 3 and also Jackendoff & Culicover 2003). Verbs of influence (*permit*, *forbid*) are object-control while verbs of commitment (*promise*, *try*) as in (13a) and orientation (*want*, *hate*) as in (13b) are subject-control, as shown by the reflexive in the following examples:

Stefan: What about: “John promised his son to go to the movies together.”

- (13) a. John promised Mary to buy himself / * herself a coat.
 b. John permitted Mary to buy herself / * himself a coat.

The classification of control verbs is cross-linguistically widespread (Van Valin & LaPolla 1997), but Romance verbs of mental representation and speech report are an exception in being subject-control without having a commitment or an orientation component.

- (14) a. Marie dit ne pas être convaincue. (French)
 Marie says NEG be convinced
 ‘Marie says she is not convinced.’
 b. Paul pensait avoir compris.
 Paul thought have understood
 ‘Paul thought he understood.’

It is worth noting that for object-control verbs, the controller may also be the complement of a preposition (Pollard & Sag 1994: 139):

- (15) Kim appealed [to Sandy] to cooperate.

Bresnan (1982: 401), who attributes the generalization to Visser, also suggests that object-control verbs may passivize (and become subject-control) while subject-control verbs do not (with a verbal complement).

Stefan: Example (16c) is a mis-attribution. The example is due to Hust & Brame (1976) and this is stated in PS94. I removed the reference to (Pollard & Sag 1994: 285) and added the original source to the text.

- (16) a. Mary was persuaded to leave (by John).
 b. * Mary was promised to leave (by John).
 c. Pat was promised to be allowed to leave.

However, there are counterexamples like (16c) from [Hust & Brame \(1976\)](#) and the generalization does not seem to hold crosslinguistically (see [Müller \(2002: 129\)](#) for counterexamples in German).

1.3 More on raising verbs

From a cross-linguistic point of view, raising verbs usually belong to other semantic classes than control verbs. The distinction between subject-raising and object-raising also has some semantic basis: verbs marking tense, aspect, modality (*start*, *cease*, *keep*) are subject-raising, while causative and perception verbs (*let*, *see*) are usually object-raising:

- (17) a. John started to like himself.
 b. It started to rain.
 c. John let it appear that he was tired.
 d. John let Mary buy herself / * himself a coat.

Transformational analyses posit distinct syntactic structures for raising and control sentences: subject-raising verbs select a sentential complement (and no subject), while subject-control verbs select a subject and a sentential complement ([Postal 1974](#); [Chomsky 1981](#)). With subject-raising verbs, the embedded clause's subject is supposed to move to the position of matrix verb subject, hence the term "raising". They also posit two distinct structures for object-control and object-raising verbs: while object-control verbs select two complements, object-raising verbs only select a sentential complement and an exceptional case marking (ECM) rule assigns case to the embedded clause's subject of *expect* verbs). In this approach, both subject- and object-raising verbs have a sentential complement:

Stefan: Are there sources for these analyses?

- (18) a. subject-raising:
 $[_{NP} e] \text{ seems } [_{S} \text{ John to leave }] \rightsquigarrow [_{NP} \text{ John}_i] \text{ seems } [_{S} e_i \text{ to leave }]$
 b. object-raising (ECM):
 We expected $[_{S} \text{ John to leave }]$

However, the putative correspondence between source and target for raising structures is not systematic: *seem* may take a sentential complement (with an expletive subject) as in (12a) but the other subject-raising verbs (aspectual and modal verbs) do not.

- (19) a. Paul started to understand.
b. * It started [that Paul understands].

Similarly, while some object-raising verbs (*expect*, *see*) may take a sentential complement (12b), others do not (*let*, *make*, *prevent*).

Stefan: Why do you have (20) in addition to (21) and no such example in addition to (19)?

- (20) a. We expect Paul to understand.
b. We expect [that Paul understands].
- (21) a. We let Paul sleep.
b. * We let [that Paul sleeps].

Furthermore, in transformational analyses, it is often assumed that the subject of the non-finite verb is supposed to raise to receive case from the matrix verb. But the subject of *seem* or *start* need not bear case since it can be a non-nominal subject (7c). Data from languages with “quirky” case such as Icelandic, also show that subjects of subject-raising verbs in fact keep the quirky case assigned by the embedded verb (Zaenen et al. 1985), contrary to the subject of subject-control verbs which are assigned case by the matrix verb and are thus in the nominative. A verb like *need* takes an accusative subject, and a raising verb (*seem*) takes an accusative subject as well when combined with *need* (22b). With a control verb (*hope*), on the other hand, the subject must be nominative (22c).

Stefan: You attributed the examples in (22) to Pollard & Sag (1994: 138–139) but they are not from there. PS discuss other examples. Are they from Zaenen?

- (22) a. Mig vantar peninga.⁴ (Icelandic)
I.ACC need money.ACC
- b. Mig virdast vanta peninga.
I.ACC seem need money.ACC
- c. Eg vonast till ad vanta ekki peninga.
I.NOM hope for to need not money.ACC
'I hope I won't need money.'

Turning now to object-raising verbs, when a finite sentential complement is possible, the structure is not the same as with a non-finite complement. Heavy NP shift is possible with a non-finite complement, and not with a sentential complement (Bresnan 1982: 423; Pollard & Sag 1994: 113): this shows that *expect* has two complements in (20a) and only one in (20b).

- (23) a. We expected [all students] [to understand].
b. We expected [to understand] [all those who attended the class].
c. We expected [that [all those who attended the class] understand].
d. * We expected [that understand [all those who attended the class]].

Fronting also shows that the NP VP sequence does not behave as a single constituent, unlike the finite complement:

- (24) a. That Paul understood, I did not expect.
b. * Paul to understand, I did not expect.

This shows that object-raising verbs are better analysed as ditransitive verbs and that the subject of the non-finite verb has all properties of an object of the matrix verb. It is an accusative in English (*him, her*) (25) and it can passivize, like the object of an object-control verb (26).

- (25) a. We expect him to understand.
b. We persuaded him to work on this.
(26) a. He was expected to understand.
b. He was persuaded to work on this.

To conclude, the movement (raising) analysis of subject-raising verbs, as well as the ECM analysis of object-raising verbs are motivated by semantic considerations: an NP which receives a semantic role from a verb should be a syntactic argument of this verb. But they lead to syntactic structures which are not motivated (assuming a systematic availability of a sentential complementation) and/or make wrong empirical predictions (that the postverbal sequence of ECM verb behaves as one constituent instead of two).

1.4 Raising and control non-verbal predicates

Non-verbal predicates taking a non-finite complement may also fall under the raising/control distinction. Adjectives such as *likely* have raising properties: they do not select the category of their subject, nor assign it a semantic role, contrary to adjectives like *eager*. Meteorological *it* is thus compatible with *likely*, but not with *eager*. In the following examples, the subject of the adjective is the same as the subject of the copula (see Section 3 below).

- (27) a. It is likely to rain.

- b. John is likely / eager to work here.
- c. * It is eager to rain.

The same contrast may be found with nouns taking a non-finite complement. Nouns such as *tendency* have raising properties: they do not select the category of their subject, nor assign it a semantic role, contrary to nouns like *desire*. Meteorological *it* is thus compatible with the former, but not with the latter. In the following examples, the subject of the predicative noun is the same as the subject of the light verb *have*.

- (28) a. John has a tendency to lie.
 b. John has a desire to win.
 c. It has a tendency / * desire to rain at this time of year.

2 An HPSG analysis

In a nutshell, the HPSG analysis rests on a few leading ideas: non-finite complements are unsaturated VPs (a verb phrase with a non-empty SUBJ list); a syntactic argument need not be assigned a semantic role; control and raising verbs have the same syntactic arguments; raising verbs do not assign a semantic role to the syntactic argument that functions as the subject of their non-finite complement. We continue to use the term *raising*, but it is just a cover term, since no raising is taking place in HPSG analyses.

As a result

Stefan: of what?

, raising means full identity of syntactic and semantic information (*synsem*) (Abeillé & Borsley 2021, Chapter 1 of this volume)

Stefan: What for are you citing this chapter? Give the reader a clue. And me for linking to the page.

with the unexpressed subject, while control involves identity of semantic indices (discourse referents) between the controller and the unexpressed subject. Co-indexing is compatible with the controller and the controlled subject not bearing the same case (22c) or having different parts of speech (15), as it is the case for pronouns and antecedents (see Müller & Branco 2021, Chapter 20 of this volume). This would not be possible with raising verbs, where there is full sharing of syntactic and semantic features between the subject (or the object) of the matrix verb and the (expected) subject of the non-finite verb. In German, the nominal complement of a raising verb like *sehen* ‘see’ must agree in case with the subject

of the infinitive, as shown by the adverbial phrase *einer nach dem anderen* ‘one after the other’ which agrees in case with the unexpressed subject of the infinitive, but it can have a different case with a control verb like *erlauben* ‘allow’, as the following examples from Müller (2002: 47–48) show:

- (29) a. Der Wächter sah den Einbrecher und seinen Helfer
 the watchman saw the burglar.ACC and his accomplice.ACC
 einen / * einer nach dem anderen weglaufen (German)
 one.ACC one.NOM after the other run.away
 ‘The watchman saw the burglar and his accomplice run away, one after the other.’
- b. Der Wächter erlaubte den Einbrechern, einer nach dem
 the watchman allowed the burglars.DAT one.NOM after the
 anderen wegzulaufen.
 other away.to.run
 ‘The watchman allowed the burglars to run away, one after the other.’

Stefan: I think it would be good to give the reader some guidance here. Say what sub-sections you have and why they are here. I was a bit surprised to see the section on Mauritian since it looks like a specific case study. But it has some overall relevance and this could be made clear here.

2.1 The HPSG analysis of “raising” verbs

Subject-raising-verbs (and object-raising verbs) can be defined as subtypes inheriting from verb-lexeme and subject-raising-lexeme (or object raising-lexeme) types. Figure 12.1 shows parts of a possible type hierarchy.

As in Abeillé & Borsley (2021: Section 4.1), Chapter 1 of this volume, upper case letters are used for the two dimensions of classification, and *verb-lx*, *intr-lx*, *tr-lx*, *subj-rsg-lx*, *obj-rsg-lx*, *or-v-lx* and *sr-v-lx* abbreviate *verb-lexeme*, *intransitive-lexeme*, *transitive-lexeme*, *subject-raising-lexeme*, *object-raising-lexeme*, *object-raising-verb-lexeme* and *subject-raising-verb-lexeme*, respectively. The constraints on the types *subj-rsg-lx* and *obj-rsg-lx* are as follows:⁵

⁵⊕ is used for list concatenation. The category of the complement is not specified as a VP since it may be a V in some Romance languages with a flat structure (Abeillé & Godard 2003) and in some verb final languages where the matrix verb and the non-finite verb form a verbal complex (German, Dutch, Japanese, Persian, Korean, see Müller (2021a), Chapter 10 of this volume on constituent order). Furthermore, the same lexical types

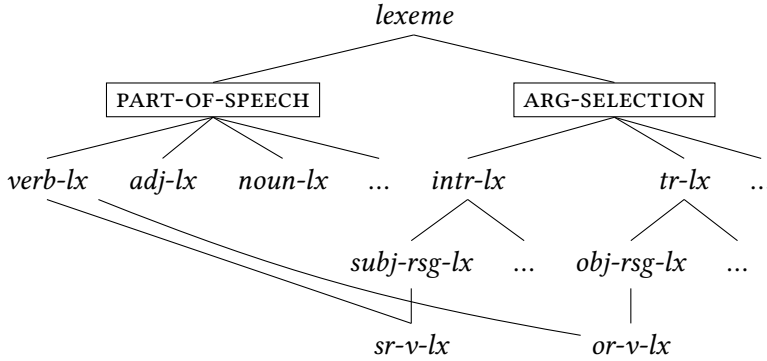


Figure 12.1: A type hierarchy for subject- and object-raising verbs

Stefan: What about “Kim seems to Sandy to be smart.”? *subj-rsg-lx* whould allow for an optional object.

- (30) a. *subj-rsg-lx* \Rightarrow
 $[\text{ARG-ST } \boxed{1} \oplus \langle [\text{SUBJ } \boxed{1}] \rangle]$
 b. *obj-rsg-lx* \Rightarrow
 $[\text{ARG-ST } \langle \text{NP} \rangle \oplus \boxed{1} \oplus \langle [\text{SUBJ } \boxed{1}] \rangle]$

The subject of the non-finite complement shares its *synsem* with the subject of the subject-raising verb in (30a), and with the object of object raising verb in (30b). This means that they share their syntactic and semantic features: they have the same semantic index (if any), but also the same part of speech, the same case etc. Thus a subject appropriate for the non-finite verb is appropriate as a subject (or an object) of the raising verb: this allows for expletive (4b, 4c) or idiomatic (6b, 6c) subjects, as well as non-nominal subjects (7c). If the embedded verb is subjectless, as in (9), this information is shared too ($\boxed{1}$ can be the empty list).

A subject-raising verb (*seem*) and an object-raising verb (*expect*) inherit from *subj-rsg-v* and *obj-rsg-v*

Stefan: Shouldn't these be *subj-rsg-lx* and *obj-rsg-lx*?

respectively; their lexical descriptions look as follows, assuming a MRS semantics (Copestake et al. 2005 and Koenig & Richter 2021, Chapter 22 of this volume):

Stefan: the “same”? You define new types in (79). Maybe better write “similar types”. But after all, the copula types should be subtypes. Here is an open issue.

will also be used for copular verbs that take non-verbal predicative complements, see Section 3.

Stefan: Why does the type *subj-rsg-v-word* exist? Usually one would assume the lexeme types and then there are inflectional lexical rules. The output of the lexical rule is of type *inflected-word* or something of this kind. In any case it is something that is the same for all verbs, not something specific to subject raising verbs. I would present a lexical item for the lexeme. This would make it possible to use the lexeme type.

(31) *seem*:

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{subj-rsg-v-word} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \langle [1] \rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \quad \left\langle [2] \text{ VP} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD} \quad [\text{VFORM } \textit{inf}] \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \langle [1] \rangle \\ \text{CONT} \quad [\text{IND } [3]] \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST} \quad \langle [1], [2] \rangle \\ \text{CONT} \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS} \quad \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{seem-rel} \\ \text{SOA } [3] \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

Stefan: Can we use numbers instead of the $[i]$ or just the index i ? $[i]$ looks strange ...

(32) *expect*:

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{obj-rsg-v-word} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \langle [1] \text{ NP}_{[i]} \rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \quad \left\langle [2], [3] \text{ VP} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD} \quad [\text{VFORM } \textit{inf}] \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \langle [2] \rangle \\ \text{CONT} \quad [\text{IND } [4]] \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST} \quad \langle [1], [2], [3] \rangle \\ \text{CONT} \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS} \quad \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{expect-rel} \\ \text{EXP } [i] \\ \text{SOA } [4] \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

They take a VP and not a clausal complement, which means that the complements expected by the infinitive are realized locally but not its subject. The corresponding simplified trees are as shown in Figures 12.2 and 12.3. Notice that the syntactic structures are the same.

Stefan: “Notice that the syntactic structures are the same.” They are not.

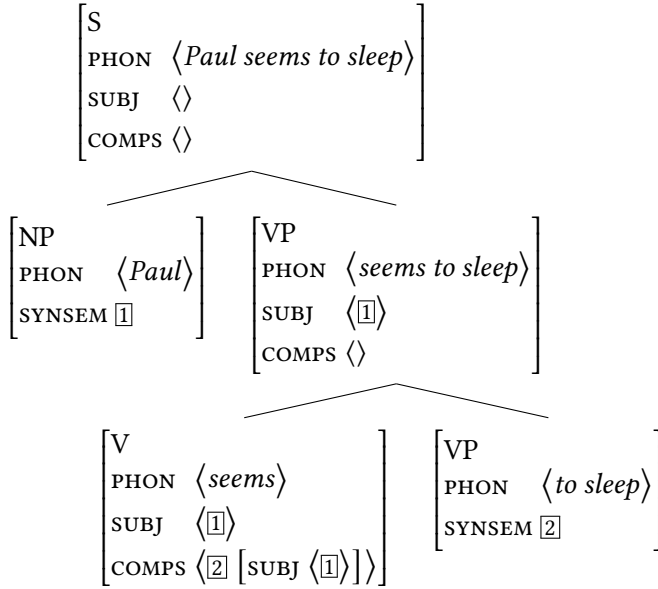


Figure 12.2: A sentence with a subject-raising verb

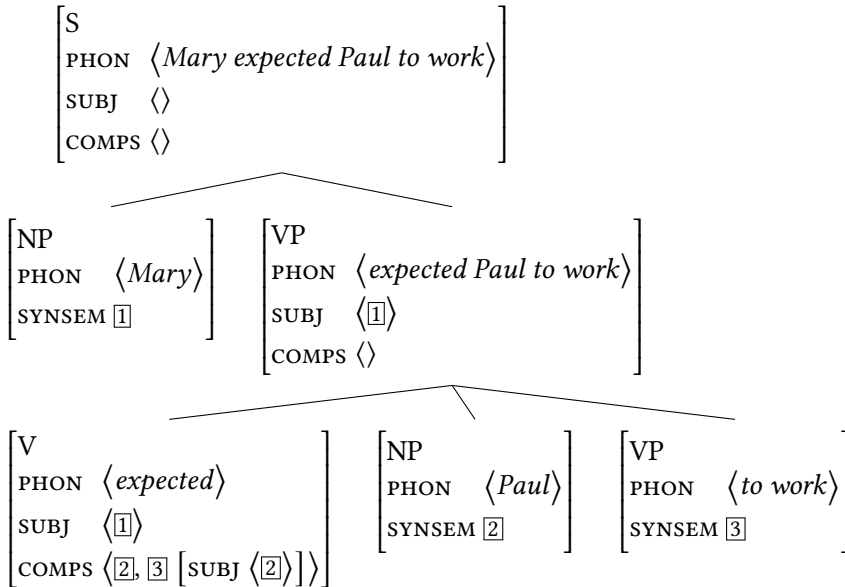


Figure 12.3: A sentence with an object-raising verb

Raising verbs have in common a mismatch between syntactic and semantic arguments: the raising verb has a subject (or an object) which is not one of its semantic arguments (its INDEX does not appear in the CONT feature of the raising verb). To constrain this type of mismatch, Pollard & Sag (1994: 140) propose the Raising Principle.

- (33) Raising Principle: Let X be a non-expletive element subcategorized by Y, X is not assigned any semantic role by Y iff Y also subcategorizes a complement which has X as its first argument.

This principle was meant to prevent raising verbs from omitting their VP complement, unlike control verbs (Jacobson 1990). Without a non-finite complement, the subject of *seem* is not assigned any semantic role, which violates the Raising principle. However, some unexpressed (null) complements are possible with some subject-raising verbs as well as VP ellipsis with English auxiliaries, which are analysed as subject-raising verbs (see Section 4 below and Nykiel & Kim (2021: Section 5), Chapter 19 of this volume on predicate/argument ellipsis). So the Raising Principle should be reformulated in terms of argument-structure and not valence features.

- (34) a. John tried / * seems.
b. John just started.
c. John did.

For subject-raising verbs which allow for a sentential complement as well (with an expletive subject) (12a), another lexical description is needed, and the same holds for object-raising verbs which allow a sentential complement (with no object) (12b). These can be seen as valence alternations, which are available for some items (or some classes of items) but not all (see Wechsler, Koenig & Davis 2021, Chapter 9 of this volume on argument structure).

- (35) a. *seem*: [ARG-ST ⟨ NP[*it*], S ⟩]
b. *expect*: [ARG-ST ⟨ NP, S ⟩]

2.2 The HPSG analysis of control verbs

Sag & Pollard (1991) propose a semantics-based control theory. The semantic class of the verb determines whether it is subject-control or object-control: they distinguish verbs of orientation (*want*, *hope*), verbs of commitment (*promise*, *try*)

and verbs of influence (*persuade*, *forbid*) based on the type of relation and semantic roles of their arguments. Relational types for control predicates can be organized in a type hierarchy like the one given in Figure 12.4.

Stefan: Where is this hierarchy from? It is not Pollard&Sag. Do you have a reference? Why is it different from what P&S did?

Stefan: Having the *forbid-rel* as a subtype of *persuade-rel* does not work in the model-theoretic world, since all type have to be maximal in models. This would mean that all relations of type *persuade-rel* are always automatically *forbid-rel*.

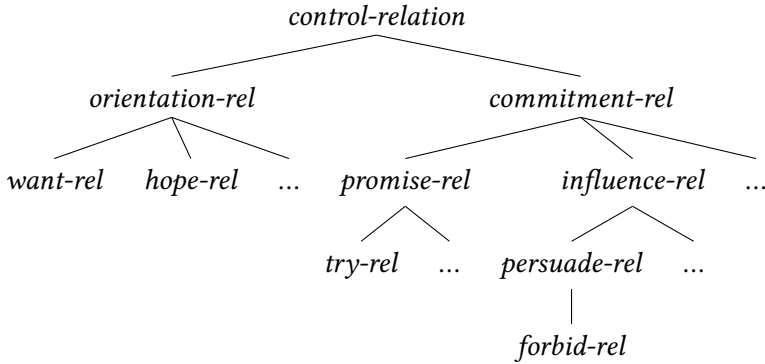


Figure 12.4: A type hierarchy for control predicates

For example, *want*, *promise* and *persuade* have a semantic content such as the following, with SOA meaning state-of-affairs and denoting the content of the non-finite complement:

Stefan: Stating *relation* in the lexical items seems redundant since this is the most general type for something having ARG as a feature and being the value of SOA.

- (36) a.
$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{want-rel} \\ \text{EXPERIENCER } \boxed{1} \\ \text{SOA } \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{relation} \\ \text{ARG } \boxed{1} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$
- b.
$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{promise-rel} \\ \text{COMMITTOR } \boxed{1} \\ \text{COMMITTEE } \boxed{2} \\ \text{SOA } \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{relation} \\ \text{ARG } \boxed{1} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

$$c. \begin{bmatrix} persuade-rel \\ INFLUENCER \boxed{1} \\ INFLUENCED \boxed{2} \\ SOA \begin{bmatrix} relation \\ ARG \boxed{2} \end{bmatrix} \end{bmatrix}$$

According to this theory, the controller is the experiencer with verbs of orientation, the commitor with verbs of commitment, and the influencer with verbs of influence. From the syntactic point of view, two types of control predicates, *subject-cont-lx* and *object-cont-lx*, can be defined as follows:

(37) a. *subj-cont-lx* \Rightarrow

$$\left[ARG-ST \left\langle NP_{\boxed{i}}, \dots, [SUBJ \langle [IND \boxed{i}]] \rangle \right\rangle \right]$$

Stefan: $\boxed{1}$ is not shared. Remove? Start with $\boxed{1}$ rather than $\boxed{0}$? Like (37c)?
Replace non-shared tags with $\boxed{}$.

b. *obj-cont-lx* \Rightarrow

$$\left[ARG-ST \left\langle \boxed{0}, \boxed{1} [IND \boxed{i}], [SUBJ \langle [IND \boxed{i}]] \rangle \right\rangle \right]$$

c. *obj-cont-lx* \Rightarrow

$$\left[ARG-ST \left\langle \boxed{1}, [IND \boxed{i}], [SUBJ \langle [IND \boxed{i}]] \rangle \right\rangle \right]$$

The controller is the first argument with subject-control verbs, while it is the second argument with object-control verbs. Contrary to the types defined for raising predicates in (30), the controller here is simply coindexed with the subject of the non-finite complement.

Stefan: “This means it must have a semantic role”. This is not correct. Expletives also have an index. A better formulation would be: “Since the controller is referential and since it is coindexed with the controlee, the controlee has to be referential as well”. I would also talk about “non-referential idiom parts” since there are decomposable idioms with referential parts.

This means it must have a semantic role (since it has a semantic index), thus expletives and idiom parts are not allowed ((5a), (5b), (6d), (6e)). This also implies that its syntactic features may differ from those of the subject of the non-finite complement: it may have a different part of speech (a NP subject can be coindexed with a PP controller) as well as a different case ((15), (22c)).

Verbs of orientation and commitment inherit from the type *subj-cont-lx*, while verbs of influence inherit from the type *subj-cont-lx*. A subject-control verb

(*want*) and an object-control verb (*persuade*) inherit from *subj-cont-v* and *obj-cont-v* respectively; their lexical descriptions are as follows:⁶

(38) *want*:

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{subj-cont-v-word} \\ \text{SUBJ} \left\langle \boxed{1} \text{ NP}_{\boxed{1}} \right\rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \left\langle \boxed{2} \text{ VP} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD} [\text{VFORM } \textit{inf}] \\ \text{SUBJ} \left\langle [\text{IND } \boxed{i}] \right\rangle \\ \text{CONT} [\text{IND } \boxed{3}] \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST} \langle \boxed{1}, \boxed{2} \rangle \\ \text{CONT} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS} \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{want-rel} \\ \text{EXP } \boxed{i} \\ \text{SOA } \boxed{3} \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

(39) *persuade*:

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{obj-cont-v-word} \\ \text{SUBJ} \left\langle \boxed{1} \text{ NP}_{\boxed{i}} \right\rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \left\langle \boxed{2} \text{ NP}_{\boxed{j}}, \boxed{3} \text{ VP} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD} [\text{VFORM } \textit{inf}] \\ \text{SUBJ} \left\langle [\text{IND } \boxed{j}] \right\rangle \\ \text{CONT} [\text{IND } \boxed{4}] \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST} \langle \boxed{1}, \boxed{2}, \boxed{3} \rangle \\ \text{CONT} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS} \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{persuade-rel} \\ \text{AGENT } \boxed{i} \\ \text{PATIENT } \boxed{j} \\ \text{SOA } \boxed{4} \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

The corresponding structures for subject-control and object-control sentences are illustrated in Figures 12.5 and 12.6:

⁶To account for Visser's generalization (object-control verbs passivize while subject-control verbs do not), Sag & Pollard (1991) analyse the subject of the infinitive as a reflexive, which must be bound by the controller. According to Binding Theory (see Müller & Branco 2021, Chapter 20 of this volume), the controller must be less oblique than the reflexive, hence less oblique than the VP complement which contains the reflexive: the controller can be the subject and the VP a complement as in (13a) and (16a); it can be the first complement when the VP is

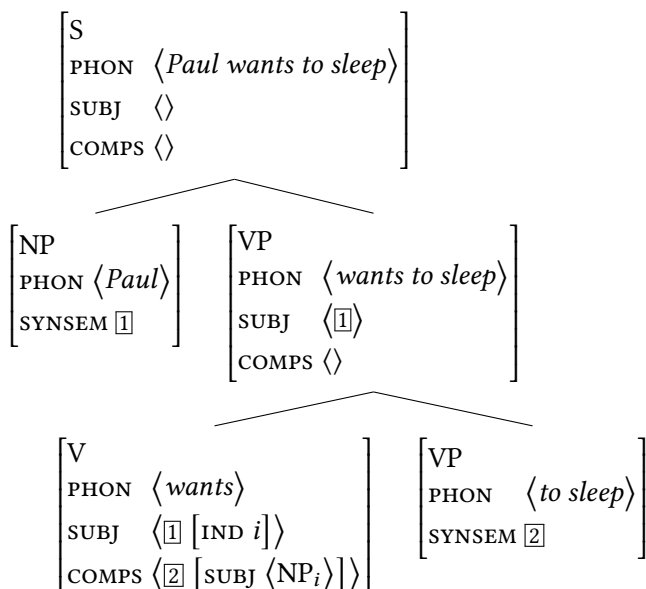


Figure 12.5: A sentence with a subject-control verb

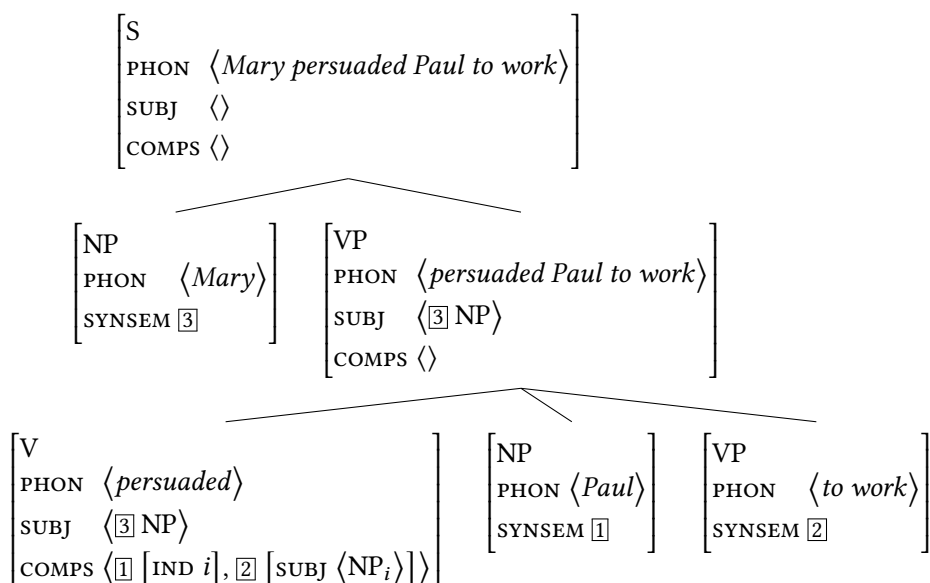


Figure 12.6: A sentence with an object-control verb

In some Slavic languages (Russian, Czech, Polish), some subject-control verbs may allow case sharing as well, as shown by predicate case agreement with quantified (non-nominative) subjects. As observed by [Przepiórkowski \(2004\)](#) and [Przepiórkowski & Rosen \(2005\)](#), coindexing does not prevent full sharing: so the analysis may allow for both cases, and a specific constraint may be added to enforce only case sharing and

Stefan: This is too dense. The reader is lacking lots of information.

Stefan: There was a problem with this analysis. I remember Adam giving a talk at the HPSG conference and I pointed out to him that it did not work, but the paper was published already.

prevent default (instrumental) case assignment to the embedded predicate.⁷

- (40) a. Janek chce byé miły. (Polish)

Janek.NOM wants be.INF nice.NOM

‘Janek wants to be nice.’

Stefan: It is unclear how this can work with both acc and gen, since the NP will be either acc or gen. Looking on Adam’s paper, there was no solution to this problem.

- b. Pięć dziewcząt chce być miłe / miłych.

five.ACC girls.GEN wants be.INF nice.ACC nice.GEN

‘Five girls want to be nice.’

For control verbs which allow for a sentential complement as well ((10a), (11a)), another lexical description of the kind in (41) is needed. These can be seen as valence alternations, which are available for some items (or some classes of items) but not all (see [Wechsler, Koenig & Davis 2021](#), Chapter 9 of this volume on argument structure).

- (41) a. *want*: [ARG-ST < NP, S >]
b. *persuade*: [ARG-ST < NP, NP, S >]

2.3 Raising and control in Mauritian

Mauritian is a French-based creole, which has raising and control verbs, belonging roughly to the same semantic classes as in English or French. Verbs marking

the second complement as in (13b), but it cannot be a *by*-phrase, which is more oblique than the VP complement, as in (16b) (the *by*-phrase should not be bound according to principle C, and the subject of the infinitive should be bound according to principle A).

⁷The examples in (40) are taken from [Przepiórkowski \(2004: ex \(6\)–\(7\)\)](#).

aspect or modality (*kontign* ‘continue’, *aret* ‘stop’) are subject-raising verbs and causative and perception verbs (*get* ‘watch’) are object-raising. Raising verbs differ from TMA (tense modality aspect) markers by different properties: they are preceded by the negation, which follows TMA; they can be coordinated unlike TMA (Henri & Laurens 2011: 209):

- (42) a. To pou kontign ou aret bwar? (Mauritian)
 2SG IRR continue.SF or stop.SF drink.LF
 ‘You will continue or stop drinking?’
 b. *To’nn ou pou aret bwar?
 2SG’PRF or IRR stop.SF drink.LF
 ‘You have or will stop drinking?’

If their verbal complement has no external argument, as is the case with impersonal expressions such as *ena lapli* ‘to rain’, then the raising verb itself has no external argument, contrary to a control verb like *sey* ‘try’:

- (43) a. Kontign ena lapli.
 continue.SF have.SF rain
 ‘It continued to rain.’
 b. *Sey ena lapli.
 try have.SF rain
 Literally: ‘It tries to rain.’

Unlike in French, its superstrate, in Mauritian, verbs neither inflect for tense, mood and aspect nor for person, number, and gender. But they have a short form and a long form (henceforth SF and LF), with 30 % verbs showing a syncretic form (*bwar* ‘drink’). The following list of examples provides pairs of short and long forms respectively:

- (44) a. manz/manze ‘eat’, koz/koze ‘talk’, sant/sante ‘sing’
 b. pans/panse ‘think’, kontign/kontigne ‘continue’, konn/kone ‘know’

As described in Henri (2010), the verb form is determined by the construction: the short form is required before a phrasal complement and the long form appears otherwise.⁸

⁸ *yer* ‘yesterday’ is an adjunct. See Hassamal (2017) for an analysis of Mauritian adverbs which treats as complements those triggering the verb short form.

- (45) a. Zan sant sega / manz pom / trov so mama / pans Paris.
 Zan sing.SF sega eat.SF apple find.SF POSS mother think.SF Paris
 ‘Zan sings a sega / eats an apple / finds his mother / thinks about Paris.’
 b. Zan sante / manze.
 Zan sing.LF eat.LF
 ‘Zan sings / eats.’
 c. Zan ti zante yer.
 Zan PRF sing.LF yesterday
 ‘Zan sang yesterday.’

Henri (2010) proposes to define two possible values (*sf* and *lf*) for the head feature *VFORM*, with the following lexical constraint (*nelist* stands for non-empty list):

- (46) [*VFORM sf*] \Rightarrow [*COMPS nelist*]

Interestingly, clausal complements do not trigger the verb short form (Henri (2010) analyses them as extraposed). The complementizer (*ki*) is optional.

add pages

- (47) a. Zan panse (ki) Mari pou vini.
 Zan think.LF that Mari FUT come.LF
 ‘Zan thinks that Mari will come.’
 b. Mari trouve (ki) so mama tro manze.
 Mari find.LF that POSS mother too.much eat.LF
 ‘Mari finds that her mother eats too much.’

On the other hand, subject-raising and subject-control verbs occur in a short form before a verbal complement.

- (48) a. Zan kontign sante. (subject-raising verb, p. 198)
 Zan continue.SF sing.LF
 ‘Zan continues to sing.’
 b. Zan sey sante. (subject-control verb)
 Zan try.SF sing.LF
 ‘Zan tries to sing.’

The same is true with object-control and object-raising verbs:

Stefan: *subj-rsg-lx*?

subj-rsg-v and *subj-cont-v* respectively.⁹ Henri & Laurens (2011: 197) conclude that “while Mauritian data can be brought in accordance with the open complement analysis, both morphological data on the control or raising verb and the existence of genuine verbless clauses put up a big challenge for both the clause and small clause analysis.”

The theory of raising and control presented above naturally extends to prodrop and ergative languages. Since [Bouma, Malouf & Sag \(2001\)](#), it is assumed

Stefan: Not everybody assumes this. I do not. See also [Levine & Hukari \(2006\)](#).

that syntactic arguments are listed in ARG-ST and that only canonical ones are present in the valence lists (SUBJ, SPR and COMPS). See for example

Stefan: I think the UDC chapter does not contain such a discussion.

Borsley & Crysmann (2021), Chapter 13 of this volume for an analysis of UDC with non-canonical *synsem*. For *pro*-drop languages, it has been proposed, e.g. in (Manning & Sag 1999: 65) that null subject sentences have an element representing the understood subject in the ARG-ST list of the main verb but nothing in the SUBJ list.

⁹Henri & Laurens use Sign-based Construction Grammar (SBCG) (see Abeillé & Borsley 2021: Section 7.2, Chapter 1 of this volume and Müller 2021b: Section 1.4.2, Chapter 33 of this volume), but their analyses can be adapted to the feature geometry of Constructional HPSG (Sag 1997) assumed in this volume. The analysis of control verbs sketched here will be revised in Section 2.5 below.

- (50) a. Vengo. (Italian)
 come.PRS.1SG
 ‘I come.’
 b. Posso venire.
 can.1SG come.INF
 ‘I can come.’
 c. Voglio venire.
 want.1SG come.INF
 ‘I want to come.’

Assuming the lexical types for subj-rsg-lexmes and subj-cont-lexemes in (30) and (37), the verbal descriptions for (50b) and (50c) are as follows:

- (51) a. *posso* ‘can’:

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SUBJ} \quad \text{elist} \\ \text{COMPS} \quad \langle [2] \rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST} \quad \langle [1][pro], [2][\text{SUBJ } [1]] \rangle \end{array} \right]$$

 b. *voglio* ‘want’:

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SUBJ} \quad \text{elist} \\ \text{COMPS} \quad \langle [2] \rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST} \quad \langle \text{NP}_{[1]}[pro], [2][\text{SUBJ } \langle [IND \ 1] \rangle] \rangle \end{array} \right]$$

Balinese offers an intriguing case of syntactic ergativity. It displays rigid SVO order, regardless of the verb’s voice form (Wechsler & Arka 1998). In the agentive voice (AV), the subject is the ARG-ST initial member, while in the objective voice (OV), the verb is transitive, and the subject is the initial NP, although it is not the first argument.

Stefan: This is confusing since it is unclear what “first” refers to. In the utterance the subject is first but not in ARG-ST. I would suggest “although it is not the first element of the ARG-ST list”.

(see Wechsler, Koenig & Davis 2021: Section 3.3, Chapter 9 of this volume):

- (52) a. Ida ng-adol bawi. (Balinese)
 3SG AV-sell pig
 ‘He/She sold a pig.’
 b. Bawi adol ida.
 pig ov.sell 3SG
 ‘He/She sold a pig.’

Different properties argue in favor of a subject status of the first NP in the objective voice. Binding properties show that the agent is always the first element on the ARG-ST list, see Wechsler & Arka (1998), Manning & Sag (1999) and Müller & Branco (2021), Chapter 20 of this volume. The objective voice is also different from the passive: the passive may have a passive prefix, an agent *by*-phrase, and does not constrain the thematic role of its subject. The two verbal types can be defined as follows (see Wechsler, Koenig & Davis 2021: Section 3.3, Chapter 9 of this volume):

Stefan: Both $\boxed{1}$ and $\boxed{2}$ may be the empty list or more generally lists of arbitrary length.

- (53) a. *av-verb* \Rightarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{SUBJ} & \boxed{1} \\ \text{COMPS} & \boxed{2} \\ \text{ARG-ST} & \boxed{1} \oplus \boxed{2} \end{bmatrix}$$
- b. *ov-verb* \Rightarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{SUBJ} & \boxed{1} \\ \text{COMPS} & \boxed{2} \\ \text{ARG-ST} & \boxed{2} \oplus \boxed{1} \end{bmatrix}$$

In this analysis, the preverbal argument, whether the theme of an OV verb or the agent of an AV verb, is the subject, and in many languages, only a subject can be raised or controlled (Zaenen et al. 1985). Thus the first argument of the verb is controlled when the embedded verb is in the agentive voice, and the second argument

Stefan: What about ditransitive verbs?

is controlled when the verb is in the objective voice.¹⁰

- (54) a. Tiang edot [_ teka]. (Balinese)
 1 want come
 'I want to come.'
- b. Tiang edot [_ meriksa dokter].
 1 want AV.examine doctor
 'I want to examine a doctor.'
- c. Tiang edot [_ periksa dokter].
 1 want ov.examine doctor
 'I want to be examined by a doctor.'

¹⁰The examples in (54) are taken from Wechsler & Arka (1998: ex 25).

Turning to *majanji* ‘promise’, in this type of commitment relation, the promiser must have semantic control over the action promised (Farkas 1988; Kroeger 1993; Sag & Pollard 1991). The promiser should therefore be the actor of the downstairs verb. This semantic constraint interacts with the syntactic constraint that the controllee must be the subject, to predict that the controlled VP must be in AV voice, which places the agent

add pages

Stefan: Actor or agent?

in the subject role:¹¹

- (55) a. Tiang majanji maang Nyoman pipis. (Balinese)
 1 promise AV.give Nyoman money
 ‘I promised to give Nyoman money.’
 b. *Tiang majanji Nyoman baang pipis.
 1 promise Nyoman ov.give money
 c. *Tiang majanji pipis baang Nyoman.
 1 promise money ov.give Nyoman

The same facts obtain for other control verbs such as *paksa* ‘force’.

Balinese also has subject-raising verbs like *ngenah* ‘seem’:¹²

- (56) a. Ngenah ia mobog. (Balinese)
 seem 3 lie
 ‘It seems that (s)he is lying.’
 b. Ia ngenah mobog.
 3 seem lie
 ‘(S)he seems to be lying.’

As predicted, the agent can be “raised” when the embedded verb is in the agentive voice, since it is the subject:¹³

- (57) a. Ci ngenah sajan ngengkebang kapelihan-ne.
 2 seem much AV.hide mistake-3POSS
 ‘You seem to be hiding his/her wrongdoing.’
 b. ?*Kapelihan-ne ngenah sajan ci ngengkebang.
 mistake-3POSS seem much 2 AV.hide

¹¹The examples in (55) are taken from Wechsler & Arka (1998: ex 27).

¹²The examples in (56) are taken from Wechsler & Arka (1998: ex 7).

¹³The examples in (57) are taken from Wechsler & Arka (1998: ex 9).

On the other hand, only the patient can be “raised” (because that is the subject) when the embedded verb is in the objective voice.¹⁴

- (58) a. Kapelihan-ne ngenah sajan engkebang ci.
 mistake-3POSS seem much ov.hide 2
 ‘His/her wrongdoings seem to be hidden by you.’
 b. ?* Ci ngenah sajan kapelihan-ne engkebang.
 2 seem much mistake-3POSS ov.hide

Turning now to object-raising verbs, like *tawang* ‘know’, they can occur in the agentive voice with an embedded AV verb (59a), and with an embedded OV verb (59c), unlike control verbs like *majanji* ‘promise’. They can also occur in the objective voice, when the subject of the embedded verb is raised. In (59b), the embedded verb (*nangkep* ‘arrest’) is in the agentive voice and its subject (*polisi* ‘police’) is raised to the subject of *tawang* ‘know’ in the objective voice; in (59d), the embedded verb (*tangkep* ‘arrest’) is in the objective voice and its subject (*Wayan*) is raised to the subject of

Stefan: The form of the verb was wrong. You had *nawang*. I changed it to *tawang* as it occurs in the example.

tawang ‘know’ in the objective voice (Wechsler & Arka 1998: ex 23).

- (59) a. Ia nawang polisi laku nangkep Wayan.
 3 AV.know police FUT AV.arrest Wayan
 ‘He knew that the police would arrest Wayan.’
 b. Polisi tawang=a laku nangkep Wayan.
 police ov.know=3 FUT AV.arrest Wayan
 c. Ia nawang Wayan laku tangkep polisi.
 3 AV.know Wayan FUT ov.arrest police
 ‘He knew that the police would arrest Wayan.’
 d. Wayan tawang=a laku tangkep polisi.
 Wayan ov.know=3 FUT ov.arrest police

In Balinese, the subject is always the controlled (or “raised”) element but it is not necessarily the first argument of the embedded verb. The semantic difference between control verbs and raising verbs has a consequence for their complementation: raising verbs (which do not constrain the semantic role of the raised argument) can take verbal complements either in the agentive or objective voice,

¹⁴The examples in (58) are taken from Wechsler & Arka (1998: ex 8).

while object control verbs (which select an agentive argument) can only take a verbal complement in the agentive voice. This difference is a result of the analysis of raising and control presented above, and nothing else has to be added.

2.5 XARG and a revised HPSG analysis

Stefan: XARG is never really introduced. You have to say that it is a *synsem* object structure shared with the subject (or whatever).

Sometimes, obligatory control is also attested for verbal complements with an expressed subject. As noted by Zec (1987); Farkas (1988) and Gerdts & Hukari (2001: 115–116), in some languages, such as Romanian, Japanese (Kuno 1976; Iida 1996) or Persian (Karimi 2008), the expressed subject of a verbal complement may display obligatory control. This may be a challenge for the theory of control presented here, since a clausal complement is a saturated complement, with an empty SUBJ list, and the matrix verb cannot access the SUBJ value of the embedded verb. Sag & Pollard (1991: 89) proposed a semantic feature external-argument (EXT-ARG), which makes the index of the subject argument available at the clausal level. Sag (2007) proposed to introduce a Head feature XARG that takes as its value the first syntactic argument of the head verb, and is accessible at the clause level.

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This is adopted by Henri & Laurens (2011) for Mauritian. After some subject-control verbs like *pans* ‘think’, the VP complement may have an optional pronominal subject which must be coindexed with the matrix subject.

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- (60) Zan_i pans pou (li_i) vini. (p. 202)
 Zan think.SF COMP 3SG come.LF
 ‘Zan thinks about coming.’

Stefan: You wrote “Using XARG, they propose for pans ‘think’ the following description.” This was wrong. What they suggest is totally different in details. I adapted the text so that it is correct and cites correctly.

Using XARG, Henri & Laurens (2011: 214) propose a description for *pans* ‘think’ that is similar to what is given in (61). The complement of *pans* must have an XARG coindexed with the subject of *pans*, but its SUBJ list is not constrained: it can be a saturated verbal complement (whose SUBJ value is the empty list) or a VP complement (whose SUBJ value is not the empty list).

- (61) *pans* ‘think’:

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SUBJ} \left\langle \text{NP}_{\boxed{1}} \right\rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \left\langle \begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{verb} \\ \text{XARG} [\text{IND } \boxed{1}] \end{array} \right] \\ \text{MARKING } \textit{pou} \end{array} \right\rangle \end{array} \right]$$

See also Sag (2007: 408–409) and Kay & Sag (2009) for the obligatory control of possessive determiners in English expressions such as *keep one’s cool*, *lose one’s temper*, with an XARG feature on nouns and NPs:

- (62) a. John lost his / * her temper.
b. Mary lost * his / her temper.

Raising may also involve verbs taking a finite complement with a pronominal subject. It is the case in English with *look like* which has been called “copy raising” (Rogers 1974; Hornstein 1999 a.o.): it takes a finite complement with an overt subject, but this subject must be coindexed with the matrix subject; it is a raising predicate, as shown by the possibility of the expletive *there*:

- (63) a. Peter looks like he’s tired. / # Mary is coming.
b. There looks like there’s going to be a storm.¹⁵

The verb *look like* can thus have the subject of its sentential complement be shared with its own subject:

Stefan: Just an interesting thought: This would not work in SBCG since whole signs are shared. So you have PHON available in $\boxed{1}$.

- (64) *look like*:
[ARG-ST $\langle \boxed{1}, S[\text{XARG } \boxed{1}] \rangle$]

This is also the case in English tag questions, since the subject of the tag question must be expressed and shared with that of the matrix clause:

Stefan: This would not work since the subject of the main clause has semantics if it is a full NP that is different from the semantics of a pronoun. So identification would fail. Ivan argued that agreement must be semantic. So syntactic features may differ as well.

- (65) a. Paul left, didn’t he?
b. It rained yesterday, didn’t it ?

¹⁵Sag (2007: 407)

The types for subject-raising and subject-control verb lexemes in (30a) and (37a) will thus be revised as follows:

- (66) a. *subj-rsg-lx* \Rightarrow $\left[\text{ARG-ST } \boxed{1} \oplus \langle \left[\text{X-ARG } \boxed{1} \right] \rangle \right]$
 b. *subj-cont-lx* \Rightarrow $\left[\text{ARG-ST } \langle \text{NP}_{\boxed{1}}, \dots, \left[\text{X-ARG } \langle \left[\text{IND } \boxed{i} \right] \rangle \right] \rangle \right]$

3 Copular constructions

Copular verbs can also be considered as “raising” verbs (Chomsky 1981: 106). While attributive adjectives are adjoined to N or NP, predicative adjectives are complements of copular verbs and share their subject with these verbs. Like raising verbs (Section 1.3), copular verbs come in two varieties: subject copular verbs (*be*, *get*, *seem*, ...), and object copular verbs (*consider*, *prove*, *expect*, ...).

Let us review a few properties of copular constructions. The adjective selects for the verb’s subject or object: *likely* may select a nominal or a sentential argument, while *expensive* only takes a nominal argument. As a result, *seem* combined with *expensive* only takes a nominal subject, and *consider* combined with the same adjective only takes a nominal object.

- (67) a. [A storm] / [That it rains] seems likely.
 b. [This trip] / * [That he comes] seems expensive.
 (68) a. I consider [a storm] likely / likely [that it rains].
 b. I consider [this trip] expensive/ * expensive [that he comes].

A copular verb thus takes any subject (or object) allowed by the predicate: *be* can take a PP subject in English (69a), *werden* takes no subject when combined with a subjectless predicate like *schlecht* ‘sick’ in German (69b):

- (69) a. [Under the bed] is a good place to hide
 b. Ihm wurde schlecht.¹⁶ (German)
 him.DAT got sick
 ‘He got sick.’

In English, *be* also has the properties of an auxiliary, see Section 3.2.

3.1 The problems with a small clause analysis

To account for these properties, Transformational Grammar since Stowell (1983) and Chomsky (1986) has proposed a clausal or *small clause* analysis: the predicative adjective heads a (small) clause; the subject of the adjective raises to the subject position of the embedding clause (70a) or stays in its subject position and receives accusative case from the matrix verb via so-called Exceptional Case Marking (ECM) (70b).

- (70) a. $[_{NP} e] be [_S John sick] \rightsquigarrow [_{NP} John] is [_S e_i sick]$
 b. We consider $[_S John sick]$

It is true that the adjective may combine with its subject to form a verbless sentence. It is the case in African American Vernacular English (AAVE) (Bender 2001), in French (Laurens 2008) and creole languages (Henri & Abeillé 2007), in Slavic languages (Zec 1987), and in Semitic languages (see Alqurashi & Borsley 2014), among others.

- (71) Magnifique ce chapeau ! (French)
 beautiful this hat
 ‘What a beautiful hat!’

But this does not entail that *be* takes a sentential complement.

Pollard & Sag (1994: Chapter 3) present several arguments against a (small) clause analysis. The putative sentential source is sometimes attested (72c) but more often ungrammatical:

- (72) a. John gets / becomes sick.
 b. *It gets / becomes that John is sick.
 c. John considers Lou a friend / that Lou is a friend.
 d. Paul regards Mary as crazy.
 e. *Paul regards that Mary is crazy.

When a clausal complement is possible, its properties differ from those of the putative small clause. Pseudo-clefting shows that *Lou a friend* is not a constituent in (73a).

- (73) a. We consider Lou a friend.

¹⁶Müller (2002: 72)

- b. * What we consider is Lou a friend.
- c. We consider [that Lou is a friend].
- d. What we consider is [that Lou is a friend].

Following [Bresnan \(1982\)](#), [Pollard & Sag \(1994: 113\)](#) also show that Heavy-NP shift applies to the putative subject of the small clause, exactly as it applies to the first complement of a ditransitive verb:

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- (74) a. We would consider [any candidat] [acceptable].
- b. We would consider [acceptable] [any candidate who supports the proposed amendment].
- c. I showed [all the cookies] [to Dana].
- d. I showed [to Dana] [all the cookies that could be made from betel nuts and molasses].

Stefan: Why quotes around subject?

Indeed, the “subject” of the adjective with object-raising verbs has all the properties of an object: it bears accusative case and it can be the subject of a passive:

- (75) a. We consider him / * he guilty.
- b. We consider that he / * him is guilty.
- c. He was proved guilty (by the jury).

Furthermore, the matrix verb may select the head of the putative small clause, which is not the case with verbs taking a clausal complement, and which violates the

Stefan: “locality of subcategorization” is not explained. Why is it important? What is it? cite Sag with various proposals.

locality of subcategorization ([Pollard & Sag 1994: 102](#)). The verb *expect* takes a predicative adjective but not a preposition or a nominal predicate (76), *get* selects a predicative adjective or a preposition (77), but not a predicative nominal, while *prove* selects a predicative noun or adjective but not a preposition (78).

- (76) a. I expect that man (to be) dead by tomorrow. ([Pollard & Sag 1994: 102](#))
- b. I expect that island *(to be) off the route. (p. 103)
- c. I expect that island *(to be) a good vacation spot. (p. 103)
- (77) John got political / * a success. (p. 105)
- (78) a. Tracy proved the theorem (to be) false. (p. 100)
- b. I proved the weapon *(to be) in his possession. (p. 101)

3.2 An HPSG analysis of copular verbs

Copular verbs such as *be* or *consider* are analysed as subtypes of subject-raising verbs and object-raising verbs respectively and hence, the constraints in (30) apply. They share their subject (or object) with the unexpressed subject of their predicative complement. Instead of taking a VP complement, they take a predicative complement (PRD +), which they may select the category of. The two lexical types for verbs that take a predicative complement are as follows:

Stefan: subj-prd-lx?

Stefan: This is unnecessary if these types are subtypes of (30). The only thing one would have to say is that the last element of the ARG-ST list of respective heads have to be PRD +. One type would be sufficient.

Stefan: pred-v or prd-lx?

- (79) a. *subj-pred-v* \Rightarrow
- $$\left[\text{ARGST } \boxed{1} \oplus \left\langle \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{SUBJ } \boxed{1} \\ \text{PRD } + \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \right]$$
- b. *obj-pred-v* \Rightarrow
- $$\left[\text{ARGST } \langle \text{NP} \rangle \oplus \boxed{1} \oplus \left\langle \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{SUBJ } \boxed{1} \\ \text{PRD } + \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \right]$$

A copular verb like *be* or *seem* does not assign any semantic role to its subject, while verbs like *consider* or *expect* do not assign any semantic role to their object. For more details, see Pollard & Sag (1994), Müller (2002: Section 2.2.7; 2009) and Van Eynde (2015). The lexical descriptions for predicative *seem* and predicative *consider* inherit from the *subject-pred-v* type and *object-pred-v* type respectively, and are as follows:

Stefan: fix these lexical items. Raise everything? Use append for consider. Should this be ARG-ST? it is easier to show a word that is later used in the figure ; AA: I use append in the types, but for English verbs, we can assume that there are no subjectless predicates.

Stefan: But this assumption is not in the theory. Hence you have to use append to reflect what you stated in the types, don't you?

AA arg-st added: the types are more general and the words are more specified.

Stefan: Yes, but then you have to explain it. Say something about additional constraints and where they come from.

Stefan: Doesn't *seem* take an optional PP? It also may add an argument to the *seem-rel*. I could refer to the lexical item from the binding chapter where I use *seem* with PP.

add pages

(80) *seem*:

<i>subj-pred-v-word</i>	
SUBJ	$\langle \boxed{1} \rangle$
COMPS	$\left\langle \boxed{2} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD } [\text{PRD } +] \\ \text{SUBJ } \langle \boxed{1} \rangle \\ \text{CONT } [\text{IND } \boxed{3}] \end{array} \right] \right\rangle$
ARG-ST	$\langle \boxed{1}, \boxed{2} \rangle$
CONT	$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS } \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{seem-rel} \\ \text{SOA } \boxed{3} \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right]$

(81) *consider*:

<i>obj-pred-v-word</i>	
SUBJ	$\langle \boxed{1} \text{ NP}_i \rangle$
COMPS	$\left\langle \boxed{2}, \boxed{3} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD } [\text{PRD } +] \\ \text{SUBJ } \langle \boxed{2} \rangle \\ \text{CONT } [\text{IND } \boxed{4}] \end{array} \right] \right\rangle$
ARG-ST	$\langle \boxed{1}, \boxed{2}, \boxed{3} \rangle$
CONT	$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS } \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{consider-rel} \\ \text{EXP } i \\ \text{SOA } \boxed{4} \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right]$

The subject of *seem* is unspecified: it can be any category selected by the predicative complement; the same holds for the first complement of *consider*:

Stefan: Say something about the fact that it has to be exactly one element. Where does this information come from?

it can be any category selected by the predicative complement (see examples in (67) above). *Consider* selects a subject and two complements, but only takes two semantic arguments: one corresponding to its subject, and one corresponding to its predicative complement. It does not assign a semantic role to its non-predicative complement.

Let us take the example *Paul seems happy*. As a predicative adjective, *happy* has a HEAD feature [PRD +] and its SUBJ feature is not the empty list: it subcategorizes for a nominal subject and assigns a semantic role to it, as shown in (82).

- (82) *happy*:
- $$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PHON} \langle \textit{happy} \rangle \\ \text{HEAD} \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{adj} \\ \text{PRD} + \end{array} \right] \\ \text{SUBJ} \langle \text{NP}_i \rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \langle \rangle \\ \text{CONT} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS} \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{happy-rel} \\ \text{EXP } i \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

In the trees in the Figures 12.7 and 12.9, the SUBJ feature of *happy* is shared with the SUBJ feature of *seem* and the first element of the COMPS list of *consider*.¹⁷

Stefan: Is \square a list or an element of a list? If the complete SUBJ value is supposed to be raised, my fix is technically not correct. AA seems ok to me, the numbers are synsem descriptions, these figures are similar to the previous ones. Stefan: In the type constraints you are sharing the whole SUBJ list. Here you are sharing elements. I think it should look like in my Figure 12.8.

AA: I prefer my figure 7 since it is the same as figure 2.

Stefan: But this is not a valid reason, if it is wrong.

add pages

Pollard & Sag (1994) mention a few verbs taking a predicative complement which can be considered as control verbs. A verb like *feel* selects a nominal subject and assigns a semantic role to it.

- (83) John feels tired / in a good mood.

It inherits from the subject-control-verb type (37); its lexical description is given in (84):

¹⁷In what follows, we ignore adjectives taking complements. As noted in section 1 ref adjectives may take a non-finite VP complement and fall under a control or raising type: as a subject-raising adjective, *likely* shares the SYNSEM value of its subject with the expected subject of its VP complement; as a subject-control adjective, *eager* coindexes both subjects. Such adjectives thus inherit from subj-rsg-lexeme and subj-control-lexeme type, respectively, as well as from adjective-lexeme type. In some languages, copular constructions are complex predicates, which means that the copular verb inherits the complements of the adjective as well, see Abeillé & Godard (2001).

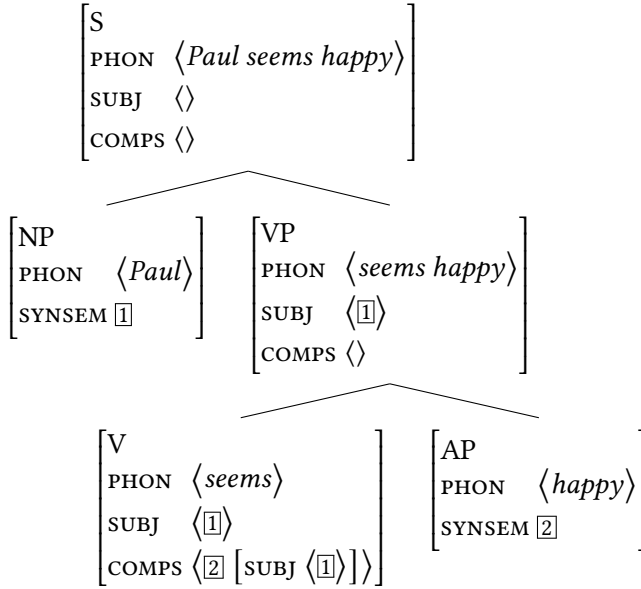


Figure 12.7: A sentence with an intransitive copular verb

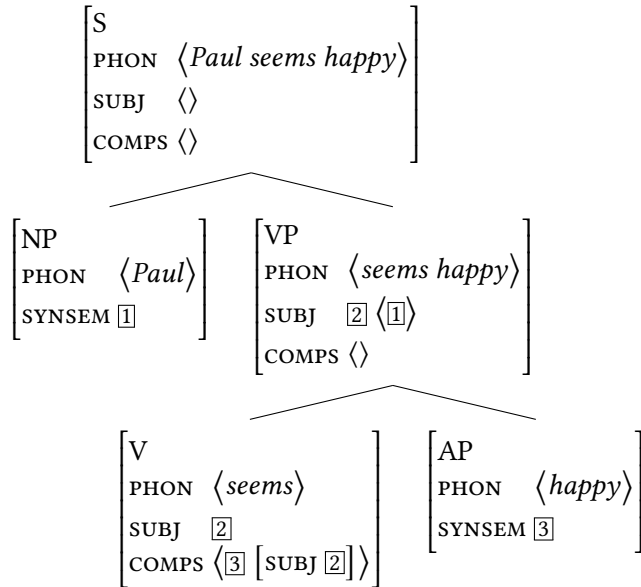


Figure 12.8: A sentence with an intransitive copular verb

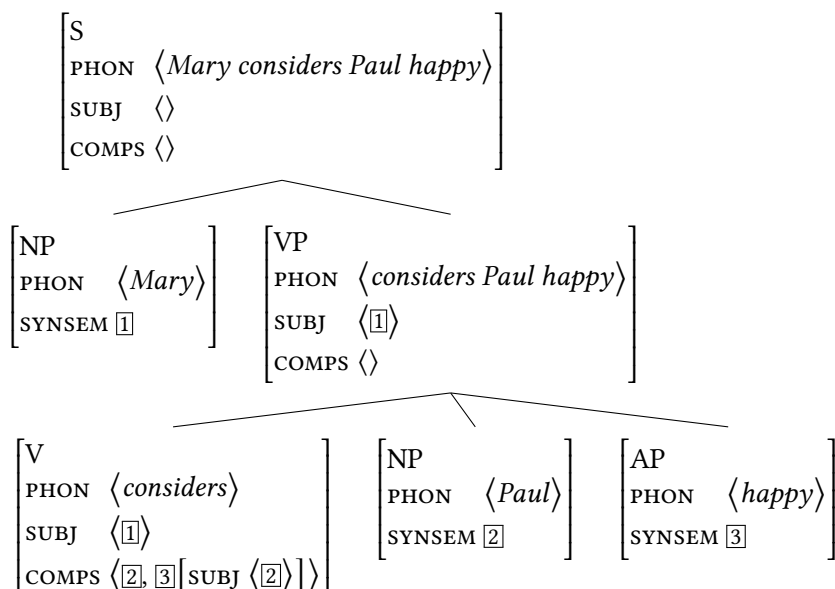
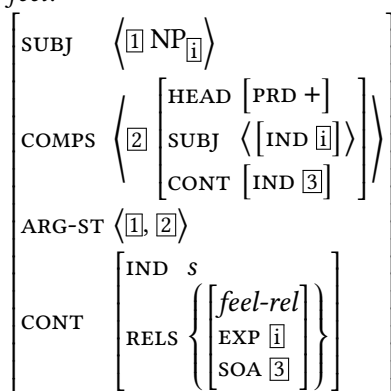


Figure 12.9: A sentence with a transitive copular verb

(84) *feel*:



3.3 Copular verbs in Mauritian

As shown by [Henri & Laurens \(2011\)](#), and as noted earlier, Mauritian data argue

Stefan: Data argue?

in favor of a non-clausal analysis.

Stefan: Where exactly did you show this? What you suggested in (61) was an embedded clause.

A copular verb takes a short form before an attributive

Stefan: predicative complement?

complement, and a long form before a clausal one.

Stefan: reference examples in (85).

Despite the lack of inflection on the embedded verb, and the possibility of subject prodrop, clausal complements differ from non-clausal complements by the following properties: they do not trigger the matrix verb short form (SF), they may be introduced by the complementizer *ki*, their subject is a weak pronoun (*mo* ‘I’, *to* ‘you’). On the other hand, a VP or AP complement cannot be introduced by *ki*, and an NP complement must be realized as a strong pronoun (*mwa* ‘me’, *twa* ‘you’). See Section 2.3 above for the alternation between verb short form (SF) and long form (LF).

- (85) a. Mari ti res malad. (Henri & Laurens 2011: 198)
 Mari PST remain.SF sick
 ‘Mari remained sick.’
 b. Mari trouv so mama malad
 Mari find.SF POSS mother sick
 ‘Mari finds her mother sick.’
 c. Mari trouve (ki) mo malad
 Mari find.LF that 1SG.WK sick
 ‘Mari finds that I am sick.’
 d. Mari trouv ki mwa malad
 Mari find.SF that 1SG.STR sick
 ‘Mari finds me sick.’

Stefan: The typo is in the original, but “clause” is singular and “small clauses” is plural.

Henri & Laurens (2011: 218) conclude that “Complements of raising and control verbs systematically pattern with non-clausal phrases such as NPs or PPs. This kind of evidence is seldom available in world’s languages because heads are not usually sensitive to the properties of their complements. The analysis as clause or small clauses is also problematic because of the existence of genuine verbless clauses in Mauritian which pattern with verbal clauses and not with complements of raising and control verbs.”

4 Auxiliaries as raising verbs

Following (Ross 1969; Gazdar et al. 1982a; Sag et al. 2020), *be*, *do*, *have*, and modals (e.g., *can*, *should*) in HPSG are not considered a special part of speech (*Aux* or *Infl*) but verbs with the head property in (86):

(86) *auxiliary-verb* \Rightarrow [HEAD [AUX +]]

English auxiliaries take VP (or XP) complements and do not select their subject,

Stefan: Well, they do. After all the subject is raised and then the auxiliary selects it. It does not assign it a semantic role.

just like subject-raising verbs. They are thus compatible with non-referential subjects, such as meteorological *it* and existential *there*. They select the verb form of their non-finite complements: *have* selects a past participle, *be* a gerund-participle, *can* and *will* a bare form.

- (87) a. Paul has left.
 b. Paul is leaving.
 c. Paul can leave.
 d. It will rain.
 e. There can be a riot.

In this approach, English auxiliaries are subtypes of subject-raising-verbs, and thus take a VP (or XP) complement and share their subject with the unexpressed subject of the non-finite verb.¹⁸ The lexical descriptions for the auxiliaries *will* and *have* look as follows:

¹⁸*Be* is an auxiliary and a subj-raising verb with a PRD + complement, see Section 3.2 above, or a gerund-participle VP complement, different from the identity *be* which is not a raising verb (see Van Eynde (2008) and Müller (2009) on predication). A verb like *dare*, shown to be an auxiliary by its postnominal negation, is not a raising verb but a subject-control verb:

Stefan: Why is this important?

- (i) a. He is lazy and sleeping.
 b. I dare not be late.
 c. # It will not dare rain.

(88) *will*:

HEAD	[AUX +]
SUBJ	$\langle [1] \rangle$
COMPS	$\left\langle [2] \text{ VP } \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD [VFORM } bse] \\ \text{SUBJ } \langle [1] \rangle \\ \text{CONT [IND } [3]] \end{array} \right] \right\rangle$
ARG-ST	$\langle [1], [2] \rangle$
CONT	$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS } \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{future-rel} \\ \text{SOA } [3] \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right]$

(89) *have*:

HEAD	[AUX +]
SUBJ	$\langle [1] \rangle$
COMPS	$\left\langle [2] \text{ VP } \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD [VFORM } past-part] \\ \text{SUBJ } \langle [1] \rangle \\ \text{CONT [IND } [3]] \end{array} \right] \right\rangle$
ARG-ST	$\langle [1], [2] \rangle$
CONT	$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{IND } s \\ \text{RELS } \left\{ \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{perfect-rel} \\ \text{SOA } [3] \end{array} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right]$

To account for their NICE (negation, inversion, contraction, ellipsis) properties, Kim & Sag (2002) use a binary head feature AUX, so that only [AUX +] verbs may allow for subject inversion (90a), sentential negation (90c), contraction or VP ellipsis (90e). See Müller (2021a: Section 5), Chapter 10 of this volume on subject inversion, Kim (2021: Section 2.3), Chapter 18 of this volume on negation and Nykiel & Kim (2021: Section 5), Chapter 19 of this volume on post-auxiliary ellipsis.¹⁹

- (90) a. Is Paul working?
 b. * Keeps Paul working?

¹⁹Copular *be* has the NICE properties (*Is John happy?*), it is an auxiliary verb with [PRD +] complement. Since *to* allows for VP ellipsis, it is also analysed as an auxiliary verb: *John promised to work and he started to*. See Gazdar, Pullum & Sag (1982b).

- c. Paul is (probably) not working.
- d. * Paul keeps (probably) not working.
- e. John promised to come and he will.
- f. * John promised to come and he seems.

Subject raising verbs such as *seem*, *keep* or *start* are [AUX −].

Sag et al. (2020) revised this analysis and proposed a new analysis couched in Sign-Based Construction Grammar (Sag 2012; see also Müller 2021b: Section 1.4.2, Chapter 33 of this volume). The descriptions used below were translated into the feature geometry of Constructional HPSG (Sag 1997), which is used in this volume. In their approach, the head feature AUX is both lexical and constructional: the constructions restricted to auxiliaries require their head to be [AUX +], while the constructions available for all verbs are [AUX −]. In this approach, non-auxiliary verbs are lexically specified as [AUX −]:

$$(91) \text{ non-auxiliary-verb} \Rightarrow \left[\text{HEAD} \begin{bmatrix} \text{AUX} - \\ \text{INV} - \end{bmatrix} \right]$$

Auxiliary verbs, on the other hand are unspecified for the feature AUX, and are contextually specified; except for unstressed *do* which is [AUX +] and must occur in constructions restricted to auxiliaries.

- (92) a. Paul is working. [AUX −]
- b. Is Paul working? [AUX +]
- c. * John does work. [AUX −]
- d. Does John work? [AUX +]

Subject inversion is handled by a subtype of head-subject-complement phrase, which is independently needed for verb initial languages like Welsh (Borsley 1999; Sag et al. 2003).²⁰ It is a specific (non-binary) construction, of which other constructions such as *polar-interrogative-clause* are subtypes, and whose head must be [INV +].

Stefan: Shouldn't the INV constraint be in (93)?

²⁰As noted in Abeillé & Borsley (2021: 30), Chapter 1 of this volume, in some HPSG work, e.g. Sag et al. (2003: 409–414), examples like (92b) and (92d) are analysed as involving an auxiliary verb with two complements and no subject. This approach has no need for an additional phrase type, but it requires an alternative valence description for auxiliary verbs.

$$(93) \quad \text{initial-aux-cx} \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{cc} \text{SUBJ} & \langle \rangle \\ \text{COMPS} & \langle \rangle \\ \text{HEAD-DTR } \boxed{1} & \left[\begin{array}{cc} \text{AUX} & + \\ \text{SUBJ} & \boxed{2} \\ \text{COMPS} & \boxed{3} \end{array} \right] \\ \text{DTRS} & \langle \boxed{1} \rangle \oplus \boxed{2} \oplus \boxed{3} \end{array} \right]$$

Most auxiliaries are lexically unspecified for the feature INV and allow for both constructions (non-inverted and inverted), while the 1st person *aren't* is obligatory inverted (lexically marked as [INV +]) and the modal *better* obligatory non-inverted (lexically marked as [INV –]):

- (94) a. Aren't I dreaming?
 b. * I aren't dreaming.
 c. We better be carefull.
 d. * Better we be carefull?

While the distinction is not always easy to make between VP ellipsis and null complement anaphora (*Paul tried*), Sag et al. observe that certain elliptical constructions are

Stefan: Ellipsis chapter (p. 835) points here and does not have any analysis on pseudogapping.

restricted to auxiliaries, for example pseudogapping (see also Nykiel & Kim (2021), Chapter 19 of this volume and Miller 2014).

- (95) a. John can eat more pizza than Mary can tacos.
 b. Larry might read the short story, but he won't the play.
 c. * Ann seems to buy more bagels than Sue seems cupcakes.

This could be captured by having the relevant auxiliaries optionally inherit the complements of their verbal complement.²¹ A revised version of *will* with complement inheritance could be the following:

²¹See Kim & Sag (2002) for a comparison of French and English auxiliaries, Abeillé & Godard (2002) for a thorough analysis of French auxiliaries as “generalized” raising verbs, inheriting not only the subject but also any complement from the past participle; such generalized raising was first suggested by Hinrichs & Nakazawa (1989; 1994) for German and has been adopted since in various analyses of verbal complexes in German (Kiss 1995; Meurers 2000; Kathol 2001; Müller 1999; 2002), Dutch (Bouma & van Noord 1998) and Persian (Müller 2010: Section 4). See also Godard & Samvelian (2021), Chapter 11 of this volume.

Anne: The VP should be typed *pro*. Stefan: I do not know how to do this. I did it like JBK, hope this is correct. But you should explain this somewhere.

- (96) *will* (pseudogapping):

$$[\text{ARG-ST } \langle \underline{1}, \text{VP}[\textit{pro}, \text{SUBJ } \langle \underline{1} \rangle, \text{COMPS } \underline{2}] \rangle \oplus \underline{2}]$$

As observed by Arnold & Borsley (2008), auxiliaries can be stranded in certain non-restrictive relative clauses such as (97a), no such possibility is open to non-auxiliary verbs (97b) (see also Arnold & Godard 2021: 612, Chapter 14 of this volume):

- (97) a. Kim was singing, which Lee wasn't.
 b. * Kim tried to impress Lee, which Sandy didn't try.

The HPSG analysis sketched here captures a very wide range of facts, and expresses both generalizations (English auxiliaries are subtypes of subject-raising verbs) and lexical idiosyncrasies (copula *be* takes non-verbal complements, 1st person *aren't* triggers obligatory inversion etc).

5 Conclusion

Complements of “raising” and control verbs have been either analyzed as clauses (Chomsky 1981) or small clauses (Stowell 1981; Stowell 1983) in Mainstream Generative Grammar. As in LFG (Bresnan 1982), “raising” and control predicates are analysed as taking non-clausal open complements in HPSG (Pollard & Sag 1994), with sharing or coindexing the (unexpressed) subject of the embedded predicate with their own subject (or object). This leads to a more accurate analysis of “object-raising” verbs as ditransitive, without the need for an exceptional case marking device. This analysis naturally extends to pro-drop and ergative languages; it also makes correct empirical predictions for languages marking clausal complementation differently from VP complementation. A rich hierarchy of lexical types enables verbs and adjectives taking non-finite or predicative complements to inherit from a raising type or a control type. The Raising Principle prevents any other kind of non-canonical linking between semantic argument and syntactic argument. A semantics-based control theory predicts which predicates are subject-control and which object-control. The “subject-raising” analysis has been successfully extended to copular and auxiliary verbs, without the need for an Infl category.

Abbreviations

AV	Agentive Voice
LF	long form
OV	Objective Voice
SF	short form
STR	strong
WK	weak

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Name the coeditors?

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