Summary of:

"A Smuggling Approach to Passive in English"

by Cris Collins

Syntax 8:2, August 2005, pgs 81-120

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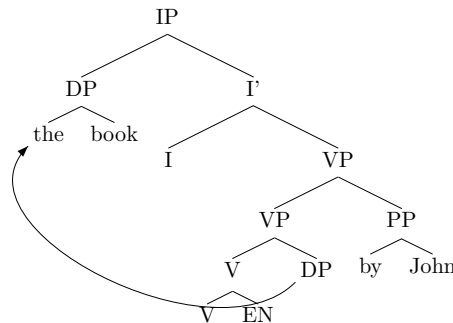for Topics in Syntax, October 26th 2005

1 Introduction

Severe problem with P&P: The external argument is generated in different positions for active and passive.

Solution from *Syntactic Structures*: external argument occupies the same underlying position in both active and passive

2 Principles and Parameters Meets Syntactic Structures

(1) P&P structure:

(2) P&P assumes the passive suffix -en absorbs

 a. accusative Case

 b. the external θ-role

This assumes that the passive suffix -en is itself an argument that is assigned Case and receives the external θ-role. Colin rejects both these implied claims.

2.1 The θ-role of the by phrase is different with different verbs

The θ-role of the postverbal DP is not agent but rather varies with the verb which suggests that *by* does not assign a θ-role.

(3) Examples of by phrases with a variety of θ-roles:

Agent "The book was written by John."
 The doer of an action (under some definition must be capable of volition).

Experiencer "Mary was respected by John."??
 The argument that perceives or experiences an event or state.

Theme "That professor is feared by all students."??
 The element that is perceived, experienced or undergoing the change of state

Goal ??
 The end point of a movement.

Recipient A copy of Guns, Germs, and Steel has now been received by each member of the incoming class.??
 A special kind of goal, found with verbs of possession (e.g., give).

Source A black smoke was emitted by the radiator.
 The starting point of a movement.

Location ??
 The place an action or state occurs.

Instrument ??
 A tool with which an action is performed.

Benefactive ??
 The entity for whose benefit the action is performed.

Proposition ??
 The thematic relation assigned to clauses.

idiom [1] "Ted was bitten by the lovebug."
 Passive idioms are not supposed to be capable of assigning agent (according to Marantz.)

2.2 How does the DP after the verb get its θ-role?

If the theta roles that are supposedly assigned by *by* are varied, how does the postverbal DP get assigned a θ-role in the passive?

Jaeggli (1986:590): First, the passive suffix -en absorbs the external θ-role of the verb. Second, the passive suffix assigns the PP headed by the preposition by the external θ-role (θ-role transmission). Third, the θ-role assigned to the PP percolates to the preposition by, and lastly by assigns the external θ-role to its DP complement.

Baker, Johnson, and Roberts (1989:223): the passive suffix -en transmits it theta role through a non-movement chain with the *by*phrase similar to clitic doubling.

 Cautionary Note Are these claims equivalent enough so that if Collins shows a better alternative to Jaeggli then it follows the alternative is superior to Baker et al?

2.3 Problem with Jaeggli's analysis

Violates UTAH the external argument in the passive is assigned a θ-role (via θ-role absorption and transmission) in a way that is totally different from how the external argument is assigned a θ-role in the active (in Spec,IP in the principles and parameters framework).

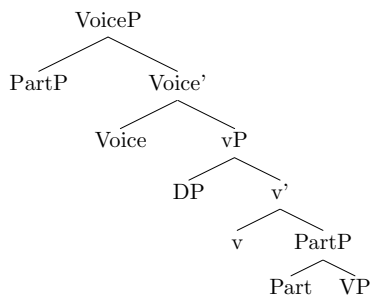(4) *UTAH* Uniformity of Theta-Assignment Hypothesis
 Identical thematic relationships between items are represented by identical structural relationships.
 In the Minimalist Program, the effects of UTAH follow from the fact that all θ-role assignment is configurational, in the sense that each syntactic position (e.g., Spec,vP, complement V) is associated with a particular θ-role (or set of θ-roles).

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[1]Earlier class discussion asks whether these NPs are really idiomatic.

2.4 Collin's Proposal

1. The external argument is merged into Spec,vP in the passive and in the active

2. Passive participle suffix and the past participle suffix are the same; no morphological difference in English.

3. *By* makes no semantic contribution, its presence must be forced by syntactic reasons.

4. The participle morpheme -en heads a PartP and that V raises and adjoins to Part.

5. Part takes a VP complement and

6. PartP is the complement of v

7. Languages either use a participle (non-finite form) (English) or not (Kiswahili)

8. If a language has a passive morpheme it will be generated in VoiceP (v)

9. If a language does not have a passive morpheme and uses a preposition like element, that element will be generated in VoiceP.

10. v assigns the external *theta*-role

11. voice checks accusative case

12. Freezing does not hold for all types of movement[2] "

13. Voice, not v, could be the strong phase head in the case of the passive

14. Even when the external argument is not phonologically present it must be syntactically present for binding and licencing reasons

15. Comp, not Infl, checks null Case.

16. The empty category in the passives without a by-phrase is simply arbitrary PRO.

17. If VoiceP undergoes movement, everything except Spec,vP must be evacuated.
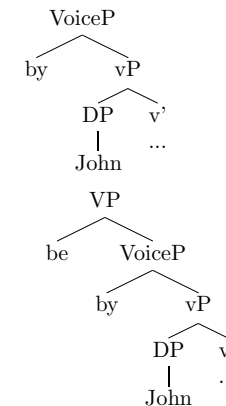
Structure:

```
              VoiceP
             /      \
         PartP      Voice'
                   /     \
               Voice      vP
                         /  \
                       DP    v'
                            /  \
                           v   PartP
                               /    \
                            Part     VP
```

(5)   Derivation for "The book was written by John."

1. John

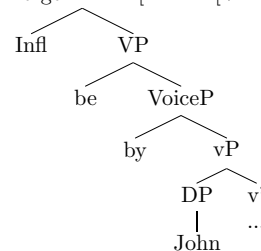2. Merge external argument → [vP [DP John] [.v' ...]]

```
        vP
       /  \
     DP    v'
     |      \
   John     ...
```
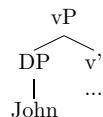
3. Merge Voice → [VoiceP by [vP [DP John] [v' ...]]]

```
       VoiceP
      /      \
    by        vP
             /  \
           DP    v'
           |      \
         John     ...
```

4. Merge be → [VP be [VoiceP by [vP [DP John] [v' ...]]]]

```
        VP
       /  \
     be    VoiceP
          /      \
        by        vP
                 /  \
               DP    v'
               |      \
             John     ...
```

5. Merge Infl → [IP Infl [VP be [VoiceP by [vP [DP John] [v' ...]]]]]

```
     /    \
  Infl     VP
          /  \
        be    VoiceP
             /      \
           by        vP
                    /  \
                  DP    v'
                  |      \
                John     ...
```

6. Internal Merge of [DP the book] into Spec,IP

```
            IP
          /    \
        DP       I'
       /  \
     the  book  Infl    VP
                       /   \
                     be     VoiceP
                           /      \
                         by        vP
                                  /   \
                                DP     v'
                                |     /  \
                              John   v    PartP
                                         /     \
                                      Part      VP
                                      [en]      |
                                                V
```
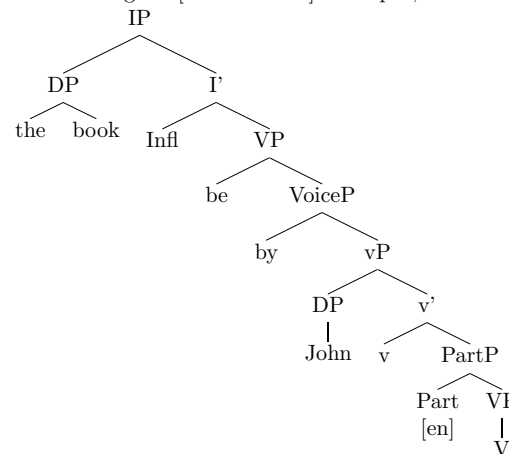
3   PartP Movement in the Passive

The derivation in (5) yields the wrong word order of a passive sentence

(6)   *The book was by John written.
       (Collins 9a)

## 3.1 Four ways to move to get the right order:

[Spec v'] instead of [v' Spec] rightward specifier analysis makes the wrong predictions about standard Barss and Lasnik (1986) c-command tests. It also wrongly predicts that a negative quantifier in the by-phrase should license a preceding negative polarity item and that each in the by-phrase should license a preceding the other.

Move PP rightward rightward movement (extraposition) analysis of by-phrases makes the same wrong predictions about c-command.

Move part head leftward particles would have to incorporate to move with the part head in order to get the correct order. Prepositions stranded in pseudo-passives also need to be next to the participal. Collins assumes incorporation is unlikely.

Move partP leftward Gives the correct order with particles[3], Collins 15b. "*The argument was summed by the coach up." What is the motivation of moving the PartP?

Head to head movement
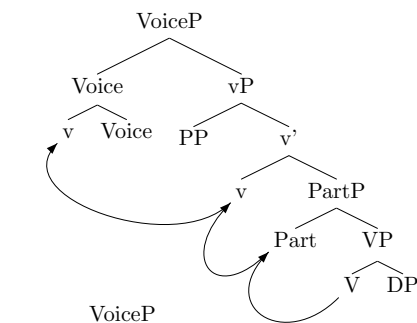
XP movement
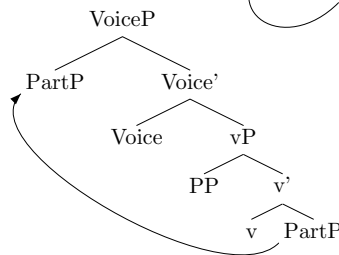
3.2 What causes PartP to move?

Collins draws an analogy between the licensing of a participle and structural Case. Both have the following features.

(7) A participle (PartP) must be licensed
     a. being c-selected by the auxiliary
     b. moving to Spec,VoiceP.

(8) a. The auxiliary verb *have* obligatorily c-selects for a participle.
     b. Voice requires a participle (PartP) to move to Spec,VoiceP.

3.3 Distribution of the -en participle

A passive participle, but not a past participle, can serve as a modifier of a noun phrase. see below??

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[3]particle are analyzed as being generated in the complement position of VP

3.3.1 Noun Modifier

?label? 28a. A book written by John is on the table.

?label? 28b. *The man written a book just came in.

?label? 28c. The man who has written a book just came in.

3.3.2 Absolute Constructions

What is absolute in generative terms??

Absolute Passive 28a. Written in only three days, this book sold millions of copies.

Absolute supposed to be?? 28b. *Written her dissertation in only three days, Sue took a break.

Absolute Past 28c. Having written her dissertation in three days, Sue took a break.

4 *By* as the Head of VoiceP

4.1 By seems to select a vP

"Dummy *b*y requires a vP (and not vice versa): if dummy *b*y appears, then it is certain that there is a vP in the structure. On the other hand, if vP appears, there is no guarantee that there will be a dummy *b*y in the structure...This asymmetry in selection suggests that *b*y subcategorizes for a vP, and not the other way around. In other words, the preposition by must be listed with the subcategorization frame [_vP]."

4.2 Three problems with *b*y as a PP in Spec vP

1. the strict UTAH problem,

2. the syntactic distribution

3. and the Case-absorption problem.

Collins addresses all three by postulating that *b*y doesn't form a consitituent with the following DP. Instead its a functional head consisting entirely of uninterpretable feature which checks the accusative Case of the DP in Spec,vP, in a way that is very similar to how the prepositional complementizer *for* checks the case of a DP in Spec,IP in phrases like [CP For John to win would be nice].

5 Smuggling

(9) Smuggling:
     "Suppose a constituent YP contains XP. Furthermore, suppose that XP is inaccessible to Z because of the presence of W (a barrier, phase boundary, or an intervener for the Minimal Link Condition and/or Relativized Minimality), which blocks a syntactic relation between Z and XP (e.g., movement, Case checking, agreement, binding). If YP moves to a position c-commanding W, we say that YP smuggles XP past W. This is illustrated as follows: In this example, YP is the smuggler, XP is the smugglee, and W is the blocker."

5.1 Problem with phases and strong heads

Problem Chomsky (2001a:12, 43, fn. 8; 2001b:25) suggests that v* (v with full argument structure) is a strong phase head. For Chomsky, the v found in passives and unaccusatives does not count as a strong phase head, because it lacks an external argument.

Solution(?) After PartP has moved to Spec,VoiceP, PartP is in a sense dissociated from the external argument that has been left behind in Spec,vP. So this PartP is like an unaccusative (for which vP does not have an external argument). Therefore, neither the moved PartP nor an unaccusative vP are strong phases.

5.2 Two ways to get what are traditionally a called passives

passive suffix the verb raises to v, which in turn raises to Voice. Verb movement to Voice does not allow for smuggling to take place. A Voice head must attract V: either V is embedded in PartP. If there is a preposition for the external DP it will probably function as a preposition in other environments or as a case marking postposition.

passive head a preposition is reanalyzed as a functional head which subcategorizes for a vP.

6 The Passive without the By-Phrase (Short Passives)

Even though the external argument in short passives is not phonetically overt it can bind a reflexive or license a depictive secondary predicate. Thus it is syntactically present:

(10) Such privileges should be kept to oneself.

6.1 Parallel between by-phrases and infinitivals

This is similar to the relationship between infinitivals clauses with an overt lexical subject and infinitival clauses with a PRO subject.

(11) a. For John to win would be exciting.
      b. PRO to win would be exciting.

6.2 Problems with the null Voice°

The Null case analysis suffers from many difficulties which can be solved if we postulate that Comp, not Infl, checks null Case.

| Has a Null comp: | "to win would be exciting" |
| Has no Comp: | "John seems to be nice" |

"Therefore, in (48b) the minimal Comp checks the null Case of PRO in Spec,IP under c-command. Extending this analysis to the null argument in the passive, we can say that null Voice checks the Case of the PRO found in the short passive. Therefore, the empty category in the passive in (48b) is simply arbitrary PRO. "

6.3 Differences between By and for

1. by takes a vP complement,

2. for takes an IP complement.

3. for does not trigger XP (PartP) movement to its specifier.

7 Remnant Movement and Stranding

Resltative secondary predicates are much better when they follow the external argument, which suggests they are pied-piped with the PartP.
    Consider resultative secondary predicates:

(12) a. The table was wiped clean by John.
      b. ??The table was wiped by John clean.
      c. The metal was hammered flat by John.
      d. ??The metal was hammered by John flat.

    For every possible test, the external argument c-commands what follows it (including PPs, IPs, and CPs) in the above structures.

8 Derived Constituent Structure

8.1 Problem: violation of the Minimal Link Condition or Relativized Minimality.

These data seem to show that the sequence by DP is a constituent and that, furthermore, it is a PP. But we see the same syntactic constraint with the complementizer for.

(13) For John to leave would be unfortunate.

8.2 Conjoined By phrase are elided PartPs

The underlying structure must be one where two VoiceP projections are conjoined:

(14) a. The book was written by John and by Bill.
      b. The book was written [ConjP [PP by John] and [PP by Bill]].

8.3 Difference between for and by

The DP following for cannot be extracted:

(15) a. *Who would you prefer for to win?
      b. Who was the book written by?

    if VoiceP undergoes movement, everything except Spec,vP must be evacuated.

9 The Binding Theory in the Passive

"The data involving reflexives and reciprocals in the passive are murky."

10 C-command of By-phrase

Since there is no principle C effect in the passive, then it must be the case that reconstruction is not obligatory.
    Because PartP is not a quantificational expression, reconstruction is not obligatory (and furthermore, only marginally possible) with participle movement.

11 Conclusion

"What are the parameters in my analysis? They are all of the form X (X a functional head, composed uniquely of uninterpretable features) exists in L (an I-language). One such parameter is the existence of the past/passive participle functional head -EN, which I have argued to be composed of uninterpretable features. Another is the existence of the VoiceP."