

Escape hatches are phase edges, but not all phase edges are escape hatches



References, data,
and more info...

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Main empirical observation

- When *wh*-elements, NPs, and APs move to Spec,DP, there is **variation** with respect to whether further movement can occur.
- i. Dutch *what-for*-constructions (WFCs): [wh-movement \(1\)](#)
 - ii. Dutch Split Topicalization (ST): [movement of NP \(2\)](#)
 - iii. Malayalam adjective fronting (AdFr): [movement of AP \(3\)](#)



Main theoretical claim

Edges of DPs are sometimes transparent and sometimes opaque.

Proposal

Once a phase merges a specifier, two competing instructions must be followed:

1. Sets generated by merge must be **Labeled** (in order for any set to be selected), and retain Labels even when fully transferred.
2. As much of a phase as possible must be **Transferred**; transferred material cannot be used for Labeling.

By default, the grammar prioritizes **Labeling**, so phase edges are opaque. In exceptional cases: prioritize **Transfer** or no priority.

1

Label >> Transfer

Default

Spec is transferred with the phase = Opaque edge

H'

H⁰ OK! → ΦP

Spec Φ'

Φ⁰ ...

✓

2

Transfer >> Label

Exception

Spec cannot be transferred with the phase = Transparent edge

H'

H⁰ ...? → ?

Spec Φ'

Φ⁰ ...

✗

H'

H⁰ OK! → ΦP

Spec Φ'

Φ⁰ ...

✓

3

Label ≈ Transfer

Exception

Extension to CPs

Hungarian: [wh-expletive constructions \(WHEs\) \(4\)](#)

- i. Regular successive cyclic movement (SCM) → (4a).
 - ii. Movement of *wh*-elements ends in embedded Spec,CP → (4b).
- ➡ **No priority of Labeling or Transfer:**
Spec can avoid Transfer (4a), or not (4b).

Mongolian: [embedded subject variants \(ESVs\) \(5\)](#)

- i. Accusative case: Condition B effect (+ optional hyperraising) (5a).
 - ii. Nominative case: no such effect (5b).
- ➡ **No priority of Labeling or Transfer:**
Spec can avoid Transfer (5a), or not (5b).

DP data

(1) a. [DP *Wat voor wijnen*]_i heeft Emma t_i uitgezocht?
what for wines has E. chosen
'What kind of wines did Emma choose?'

b. [*Wat*]_i heeft Emma [DP t_i voor wijnen] uitgezocht?
what has E. for wines chosen
'What kind of wines did Emma choose?'

(2) [*Boeken van Chomsky*]_i heb ik maar [DP een t_i] gelezen.
books of Chomsky have I but one read
'As for books by Chomsky, I have read only one.'

Dutch

Group A N=32
1a✓ 1b✗ 2✗

Group B N=188
1a✓ 1b✓ 2✗

Group C N=56
1a✓ 1b✓ 2✓

(3) a. *Rāman* [DP *bhaṃgiyulla*]_i orū t_i vīṭṭu vanṇi.
R. beautiful INDEF house bought
'Raman bought a beautiful house.'

b. **Bhaṃgiyulla* Rāman [DP t_i orū t_i vīṭṭu] vanṇi.
beautiful R. INDEF house bought
'Raman bought a beautiful house.'

Malayalam

CP data

(4) a. *Kivel*_i akarod t_i hogy beszéljek
with_whom want;2SG;DEF_OBJ that speak;SBJV;1SG
'With whom do you want me to talk?'

b. *Mit gondolsz, hogy kit látott János*
what think;2SG that who;ACC see;PST;3SG John;NOM
'Who do you think that John saw?'

Hungarian

(Horvath, 1997, pp. 533, 510)

(5) a. *Odgerel*_i [margaash tüün-iig_{i/j} ir-ne ge] khel-sen
O. tomorrow 3SG-ACC come-N.PST COMP say-PST
'Odgerel_i said that (s)he_j is coming tomorrow.'

b. *Odgerel*_i [margaash ter_{i/j} ir-ne ge] khel-sen
O. tomorrow 3SG-NOM come-N.PST COMP say-PST
'Odgerel_i said that (s)he_{i/j} is coming tomorrow.'

Mongolian

(Fong, 2019, p.13)

Examples of instruction prioritization by phase type

	Label >> Transfer	Transfer >> Label	Label ≈ Transfer (both options generable)	
			Label first	Transfer first
CP phases	Embedded Qs?	Canonical SCM	WHE constructions, nominative ESVs	Non-WHE SCM, accusative ESVs
DP phases	Unsplittable WFCs, AdFr	ST	Optional pied-piped WFCs	Split WFCs
Other phases	Midfield scrambling?	Other SCM	Low topicalization?	High topicalization?