

Absolute vs relative locality

Hedde Zeijlstra
University of Goettingen
heddezeijlstra.org

Based on joint work with Stefan Keine (UCLA)

1. Introduction

- According to standard phase theory (Chomsky 2000, 2001, 2008), syntactic structure is subject to period Spell-Out (or Transfer), which renders it unavailable for further syntactic processes (the Phase Impenetrability Condition or PIC)
- The traditional view (Chomsky 2000, 2001 and much subsequent work) holds that CPs and (transitive) vPs are phases, at least in the verbal domain, but more recently a number of alternatives has been explored in the literature, including that every phrase is a phase (Bošković 2002, Boeckx 2003, Müller 2004, 2010, 2011, Boeckx and Grohmann 2007; see also Manzini 1994 and Takahashi 1994), that every syntactic operation constitutes a phase (Epstein and Seely 2002), that phasehood is determined contextually (Bošković 2005, 2014, Den Dikken 2007, Gallego and Uriagereka 2007a,b, Takahashi 2010, 2011), and that CP is a phase but vP not (Keine 2016, 2020a,b, Grano and Lasnik 2018).
- Across these proposals, there is broad (though not universal, see Den Dikken 2017) consensus that CP is a phase, a view that goes back to Chomsky (1973, 1977, 1981). But the identity and distribution of other phases, most notably vP, is less securely established and hence more controversial.
- But, as with every issue in locality, we can think of the requirement that underlies the intermediate landing sites either in terms of absolute domains or in terms of intervention/minimality. The phase-based analysis amounts to the former: there exists a clause-internal absolute locality domain (i.e., vP), which enforces movement through its edge. A conceivable alternative approach is in terms of intervention by the external argument DP: the external argument DP intervenes between C and the internal argument DP and thereby blocks attraction. The internal argument must therefore move to a position above the external argument—so-called “leapfrogging” (see Bobaljik 1995, McGinnis 1998, and Branagan 2021)—in order to be closer to C.
- These two approaches as stated in general terms as follows:
 - *Domain/phase-based approach:*
Obligatory successive-cyclic movement through a clause-internal position is the result of a clause-internal phase.
 - *DP-intervention approach:*
Obligatory successive-cyclic movement through a clause-internal position is the result of leapfrogging around an intervening DP.
- This talk: at least vP-phasality effects are best captured in terms of DP-intervention.
- The crucial question we face, then, is whether and how we can reduce CP-phasality effects to relativized minimality as well.

2. An argument that v is a phase

- Evidence for phasality comes from *obligatory* successive cyclic movement.
- The rich literature on vP-phasality contains a substantial number of arguments for vP phases. In this talk, we focus in particular on one argument: *ké*-morphology in Dinka, though similar things can be said about *meN*-deletion in Indonesian or *kè*-morphology in Defaka. All three arguments have been taken as clear evidence that elements that are extracted out of a vP must pass through [Spec,vP], and hence as evidence for vP phases.
- The arguments from morphological reflexes seem to us to be particularly compelling. As [Keine \(2020b\)](#) points out, other arguments are less convincing because they involve an optional phenomenon. In a nutshell, these phenomena establish that it is possible for a movement to pass through an intermediate landing site in the vP region. While this is compatible with vP phases, it does not require vP phases and as such it does not constitute direct evidence that vP is a phase.

2.1 *ké*-morphology in Dinka

- [Spec,vP] and vP phasehood is developed for the Nilotic language Dinka by [Van Urk \(2015, 2018\)](#) and [Van Urk and Richards \(2015\)](#). The argument is two-pronged. First, extraction has an empty-position effect within the vP; second, such extraction leads to the appearance of the special marker *ké* in the vP region. The two aspects of the argument are interrelated, and we will present them in turn.
- As illustrated in (9), Dinka is a V2 language, with exactly one constituent preceding a verbal element in the second position of the clause.

- (9) a. Àyén à-càm cuḷin nè p̄aal.
Ayen 3P-eat food P knife
'Ayen is eating food with a knife.'
- b. Cuḷin à-c̄ɛ̄m Àyèn nè p̄aal.
food 3P-eat.OV Ayen.GEN P knife
'Food, Ayen is eating with the knife.'
- c. P̄aal à-c̄ɛ̄m̄ Àyèn cuḷin.
knife 3P-eat.OBLV Ayen.GEN food
'With a knife, Ayen is eating food.'

[[Van Urk 2018:942](#), ex. (6a–c)]

- Turning to the Dinka vP, [Van Urk \(2015, 2018\)](#) and [Van Urk and Richards \(2015\)](#) argue that here too we find a V2 property such that exactly one constituent precedes the verb in the vP. For example, in a transitive clause, the object must occur in a preverbal position, as shown in (10).

- (10) a. $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\eta$ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ $m\grave{i}ir$ $t\grave{i}\eta$.
 I PFV giraffe see
 ‘I saw a giraffe.’
- b. * $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\eta$ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ _____ $t\grave{i}\eta$ $m\grave{i}ir$.
 I PFV see giraffe
 ‘I saw a giraffe.’ [Van Urk and Richards 2015:122, ex. (14a,b)]

- If the vP is ditransitive, one of the two objects must occupy the preverbal position, as (11a–b) illustrates. It is not possible for both objects to occur postverbally (11c–d), nor is it possible for both objects to occur preverbally (11e–f).

- (11) a. $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\eta$ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ $Ay\acute{e}n$ $yi\grave{\epsilon}n$ $kit\acute{a}p$.
 I PFV Ayen give book
- b. $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\eta$ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ $kit\acute{a}p$ $yi\grave{\epsilon}n$ $Ay\acute{e}n$.
 I PFV book give Ayen [Van Urk and Richards 2015:122, ex. (15a,b)]
- c. * $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\eta$ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ _____ $yi\grave{\epsilon}n$ $kit\acute{a}p$ $Ay\acute{e}n$.
 I PFV give book Ayen
- d. * $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\eta$ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ _____ $yi\grave{\epsilon}n$ $Ay\acute{e}n$ $kit\acute{a}p$.
 I PFV give Ayen book [Van Urk and Richards 2015:122–123, ex. (16a,b)]
- e. * $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\eta$ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ $kit\acute{a}p$ $Ay\acute{e}n$ $yi\grave{\epsilon}n$.
 I PFV book Ayen give
- f. * $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\eta$ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ $Ay\acute{e}n$ $kit\acute{a}p$ $yi\grave{\epsilon}n$.
 I PFV Ayen book give
 ‘I gave Ayen a book.’ [Van Urk and Richards 2015:122n11, ex. (i.a,b)]

- Van Urk (2015, 2018) and Van Urk and Richards (2015) analyze this preverbal position as [Spec,vP], though we will diverge from this view in our own analysis.
- If there is a movement dependency, every [Spec,CP] and preverbal position along the movement path must be empty. This is shown for [Spec,CP] in (13) and for the preverbal position in (14). As (14a) shows, it is possible for movement to target the preverbal object in a ditransitive configuration (whether it is a direct or indirect object). By contrast, (14b) shows that it is not possible to move the postverbal DP.

- (13) a. $Ye\eta\grave{a}$ $\acute{c}\acute{u}kk\grave{u}$ $lu\acute{e}el$, [_{CP} _____ $\acute{c}\acute{e}$ $kit\acute{a}p$ $\gamma\grave{o}\acute{o}c$]?
 who PFV.IPL say PFV book buy.TR
 ‘Who did we say bought a book?’
- b. * $Ye\eta\grave{a}$ $\acute{c}\acute{u}kk\grave{u}$ $lu\acute{e}el$, [_{CP} $kit\acute{a}p$ (à-) $\acute{c}\acute{i}i$ _____ $\gamma\grave{o}\acute{o}c$]?
 who PFV.IPL say book 3SG-PFV.NSV buy.TR
 ‘Who did we say bought a book?’ [Van Urk and Richards 2015:125, ex. (21a,b)]

- (14) a. *Yeṇà c̄i m̄oc _____ yiṇ kitáp?*
 who PFV.NSV man.GEN give book
- b. **Yeṇà c̄i m̄oc kitáp yiṇ?*
 who PFV.NSV man.GEN book give
 ‘Who did the man give the book to?’ [Van Urk and Richards 2015:125, ex. (20a,b)]

- Van Urk (2015, 2018) and Van Urk and Richards (2015) analyze both effects in terms of phases. (13) follows from CP phases. And based on the analysis of the preverbal position as [Spec,vP], (14) is attributed to vP phases: only an object that has shifted to [Spec,vP] is accessible for further movement to [Spec,CP]. One-fell-swoop extraction as in (14b) is therefore ruled out.
- As investigated in detail by Van Urk (2015), Van Urk and Richards (2015), and in particular Van Urk (2018), in addition to this empty-position effect, A-extraction out of vP in Dinka yields special morphology, as we now discuss. Whenever a plural element is moved out of vP in Dinka except for local subjects, the element *ké* (or *kêek*) must appear next to every verb that is crossed by the movement. This element is homophonous with (and, depending on the analysis, identical to) the 3rd person plural personal pronoun. The appearance of *ké* is illustrated in (15), where A-movement of *yeyínà* ‘who.pl’ and *kêek* ‘them’ requires a preverbal *ké*, which is impossible in the absence of such movement.

- (15) *Object \bar{A} -movement triggers ké*
- a. *Yeyínà c̄i B̄ol ké t̄iṇ?*
 who.PL PFV.NSV Bol.GEN PL see
 ‘Who all did Bol see?’ [Van Urk and Richards 2015:127, ex. (23b)]
- b. *Kêek áa-c̄i Áyèn ké t̄iṇ.*
 them 3PL-PFV.OV Ayen.GEN PL see.NF
 ‘Them, Ayen has seen.’ [Van Urk 2018:947, ex. (19c)]

- The marker *ké* is restricted to the vP region—it cannot appear in C or [Spec,CP]. Furthermore, *ké* is ϕ -sensitive in that it only appears if the moving element is plural, as (16) demonstrates, where the corresponding 3sg element *yé(en)* may not occur and *ké* would also be ungrammatical.

- (16) *Singular DPs do not trigger a corresponding sg marker*
- Yè ṇà [CP c̄i B̄ol [vP (*yé(en)) t̄iṇ]]?*
 be.3SG who PFV.OV Bol.GEN 3SG see.NF
 ‘Who has Bol seen?’ [Van Urk 2018:940–941, ex. (5a,b)]

- The appearance of *ké* exhibits the hallmark property of obligatory successive cyclicity: it appears in every clause that is crossed by movement, as (17) illustrates.

(17) *ké* appears in every clause crossed by movement

Yeyínà yé ké tàak, [_{CP} cǐ Ból ké t̃ɪŋ]?
who.PL HAB.2SG PL think PFV.NSV Bol.GEN PL see

‘Who all do you think Bol saw?’ [Van Urk and Richards 2015:128, ex. (25b), (26a–c)]

- There is furthermore a subject-object asymmetry in that A-bar-extraction of a local subject does not lead to *ké*, as (18) shows. But in crossclausal A-bar-extraction of a plural subject, *ké* appears in higher clauses, as in (19).

(18) \bar{A} -movement of local subject does not trigger *ké*

Ròòòr áa-cé (*ké) ỵin t̃ɪŋ.
men 3P-PFV PL you see.NF

‘The men have seen you.’ [Van Urk 2018:950, ex. (25a)]

(19) \bar{A} -movement of nonlocal subject triggers *ké* in higher clauses

Ròòòr áa-yùukù ké tàak [_{CP} cé (*ké) ỵin t̃ɪŋ].
men 3PL-be.1PL PL think.NF PFV PL you see.NF

‘The men, we think have seen you.’ [Van Urk 2018:950, ex. (26a)]

- Finally, certain adjuncts that contain a plural DP also trigger *ké*. This is shown in (20a,b) for movement of the *ek-ko* ‘(at) which times’ and *tóony kê dí* ‘(with) how many pots’, respectively.

(20) \bar{A} -moved adjunct PPs trigger *ké*

a. Yè thèek-kò [_{CP} b̃ɪ pèl ké dhuòŋ]?
be times-which FUT.OV knives PL break.NF

‘At which times will the knives break?’ [Van Urk 2015:168, ex. (81)]

b. Yè tóony kê díi [_{CP} cǐ Ból ké cụj̣in tháal]?
be pots QUANT.PL how PFV.OV Bol.GEN PL food cook.NF

‘How many pots has Bol cooked food with?’ [Van Urk 2015:169, ex. (83b)]

- In a nutshell, Van Urk (2015, 2018) and Van Urk and Richards (2015) propose that *ké* is the realization of an intermediate copy in [Spec,vP], and they conclude that vP must therefore be a phase. Abstracting away from the details of the implementation, they treat the preverbal object position as [Spec,vP], as already mentioned. Because v has an EPP requirement, this position must be filled if an object exists. Due to vP’s phasehood, an element that is to be moved out of the vP must first move to this [Spec,vP], from where it can then continue to move to [Spec,CP]. If it is plural, this intermediate copy in [Spec,vP] is then realized as *ké*. Because of vP’s phasehood, movement through [Spec,vP]—and hence *ké*—is required in every clause crossed by movement.
- At the same time, the analysis faces several complications. The first complication is that A-bar extraction of a local external argument does not lead to *ké* (see (18)). All else being equal, this is surprising given that external arguments are typically taken to be base-generated in [Spec,vP]. As a consequence, they too should leave a copy in [Spec,vP], which we would then expect to be realized as *ké*, contrary to fact.

- One is that the external argument is not actually base-generated in [Spec,vP], but in a higher specifier. In this case, it is no longer evident that the Dinka data provide evidence for vP phases, at least if by “vP” we mean the projection that generates the external argument, as is standard.
- The other analysis suggested by Van Urk is that only copies of elements that appear in [Spec,vP] as a result of attraction by (i.e., Agree with) v are realized as *ké*. This analysis raises the question how the morphological realization of a copy in [Spec,vP] can be conditioned by whether Merge of this copy was the result of attraction by v or not.
- A second complication concerns the status of unaccusative vP. In Dinka, A-bar-extraction of an internal argument of an unaccusative verb does not lead to *ké*, as shown in (21), where movement of *pě̀eɛl-kó* ‘which knives’ does not leave a *ké*.

(21) *Argument movement out of unaccusative vP does not strand ké*

Yè [CP pɛ̀eɛl-kó bɛ̃ [vP (*ké) dhuòɔŋ]]?
 be knives-which FUT PL break.NF

‘Which knives will break?’

[Coppe van Urk, p.c.]

- At first glance, this restriction might be taken to indicate that unaccusative vP is not a phase and hence that there is no intermediate copy in [Spec,vP] (Chomsky 2000, 2001). However, A-bar-extraction of a PP adjunct out of such vPs does lead to *ké*, as (22) demonstrates, where movement of the *ek-kó* ‘which times’ strands *ké*.

(22) *PP-adjunct movement out of unaccusative vP strands ké*

Yè [CP thèek-kó bɛ̃ pɛ̀eɛl [vP ké dhuòɔŋ]]?
 be times-which FUT.OV knives PL break.NF

‘At which times will the knives break?’

[Van Urk 2015:168, ex. (81)]

- Van Urk (2018) sketches two possible approaches to the latter generalization: either (i) the external argument is generated outside of vP or (ii) only copies in [Spec,vP] that are the result of movement are realized as *ké*. Neither account generalizes to the fact that unaccusative subjects also do not strand *ké* because they are clearly generated vP-internally and move to [Spec,vP]. Further stipulations are therefore necessary to derive the full distribution of *ké*.
- A third challenge for this account is that *ké* only realizes intermediate copies in [Spec,vP], not intermediate copies in [Spec,CP]. All else being equal, if both CP and vP are phases and intermediate landing sites are created in their respective specifiers, then additional assumptions are again required to prevent the two domains from patterning analogously (Van Urk 2018: 975–976 appeals to impoverishment in CP). This is certainly feasible, but it raises the question why there seem to be no languages that realize lower copies in both CP and vP. If vP is a phase in the same way that CP is, we might expect this to be the default pattern, and yet it appears to be unattested.

2.2 Alternative analyses

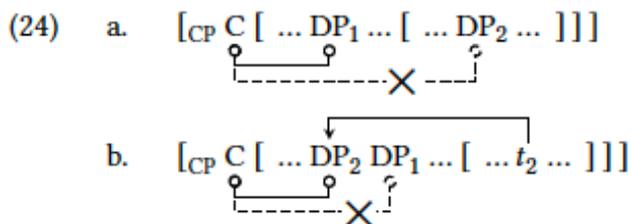
- The different challenges these vP-phase-based accounts for extraction morphology face, call for alternative analyses. In this paper, we argue that all phenomena reduce to the

fact that C can only target the closest DP to move into its specifier position. To derive configurations where lower DPs end up in [Spec,CP] at an earlier derivational stage, they need to raise across the subject. Extraction morphology is the reflection of (optional) probes that do so.

- We broadly agree with analyzing *ké* as a reflex of successive-cyclic movement. Where we differ from Van Urk (2015, 2018) and Van Urk and Richards (2015) is in whether this successive cyclicity is to be analyzed in terms of vP phases. Doing so faces the challenges just mentioned, and more generally calls for an explanation of the various CP–vP asymmetries discussed before. Instead, we explore an account of the Dinka pattern that does without vP phases. We propose that the successive cyclicity that *ké* is a reflex of is instead caused by the restriction in (23).

(23) **Dinka C may only attract the structurally closest DP.**

- Restrictions like (23) have been proposed independently in the recent literature, and they may be implemented in a number of ways. Aldridge (2004, 2008a) proposes a restriction like (23) to account for A-bar-extraction restriction in certain ergative languages. Analogous restriction are proposed and explicitly argued for by Erlewine (2018), Branam and Erlewine (2020), and Coon et al. (2020). We therefore take (23) to be independently motivated. Our goal is to further broaden its scope by assimilating apparent vP-phase effects to this restriction instead.
- The restriction in (23) underlies not only our account of Dinka, but also the accounts of Indonesian and Defaka. In a nutshell, (23) expresses is a minimality/intervention effect. Because C can only attract the structurally closest DP, any DP that is separated from C by a higher DP cannot be attracted, as schematized in (24a). We suggest that this gives rise to “leapfrogging” (a term due to Bobaljik 1995 and McGinnis 1998): the lower DP first moves to a position above the higher DP, from which it is then the closest goal to C, enabling movement to [Spec,CP] that conforms with (23), as shown in (24b).



- The key difference between vP phases and (23) is that it is an intervening DP, rather than the vP, that gives rise to the locality effect. We then analyze *ké* as the reflex of the probe that gives rise to this leapfrogging.
- For the sake of illustration, we will assume here that external arguments do not have to raise to [Spec,TP] in Dinka (see Cable 2012 for arguments that the related Nilotic language Dholuo does not show EPP effects), though nothing hinges in it, and a view where subjects do end up in [Spec,TP] can be entertained as well. Leapfrogging must therefore move a DP across the external argument in [Spec,vP]. We propose that this leapfrogging in Dinka is triggered by v, which optionally bears a ϕ -Agree feature [$u\phi$]. This feature triggers movement of the goal to an outer [Spec,vP]. [$u\phi$] agrees with the closest ϕ -bearing element c-commanded by v and attracts this element to an outer [Spec,vP], a position above the base position of the external argument, resulting in

leapfrogging. Because *ké* only appears if the moving element is plural, we take it to be the realization of plural agreement with $[u\phi]$, as stated in (25).

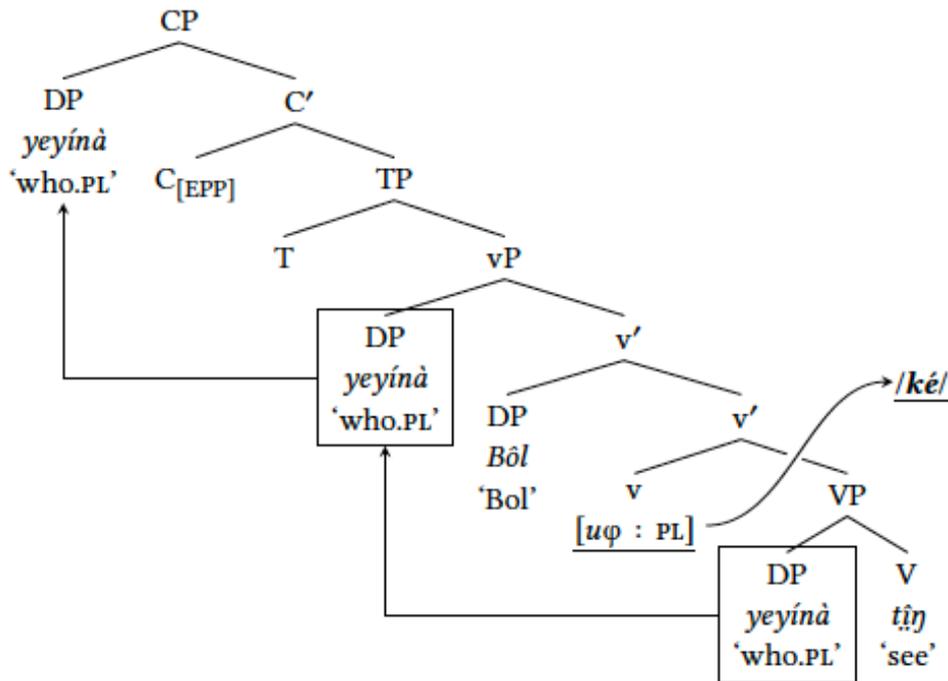
(25) $/k\acute{e}/ \leftrightarrow [PL]$

- In contrast to Van Urk (2015, 2018) and Van Urk and Richards (2015), we hence do not analyze *ké* as the realization of an intermediate copy, but rather as agreement on *v*.
- Let us apply this proposal to a configuration in which an object undergoes A-bar-movement, such as (27). The resulting derivation is given in (28). In order for the object to be attractable to C, it must be closer to C than the external argument. *v* must therefore bear $[u\phi]$, enabling leapfrogging and subsequent movement of *yeyínà* ‘who.pl’ to [Spec,CP]. The plural agreement on $[u\phi]$ is then realized as *ké*.

(27) **Yeyínà cĭi Ból ké tĭŋ?**
 who.PL PFV.NSV Bol.GEN PL see
 ‘Who all did Bol see?’

[Van Urk and Richards 2015:127, ex. (23b)]

(28) *Derivation of (27)*

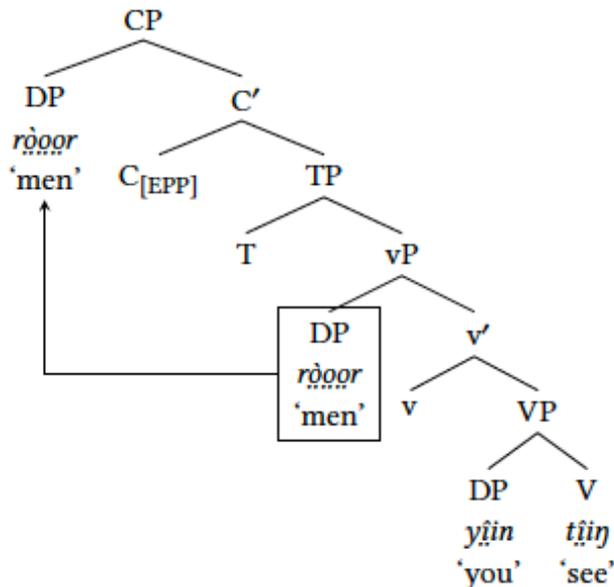


- By contrast, if a local subject is extracted to [Spec,CP], as in (29), no *ké* appears. This is because in order for C to attract the external argument, it must be the closest element to C. This is the case only if no leapfrogging of a lower DP takes place, hence if *v* does not bear $[u\phi]$. Because *ké* is the realization of $[u\phi]$, it follows that no *ké* appears in such configurations.

(29) **Ròòòr áa-cĕ (*ké) yĭin tĭŋ.**
 men 3P-PFV PL you see.NF
 ‘The men have seen you.’

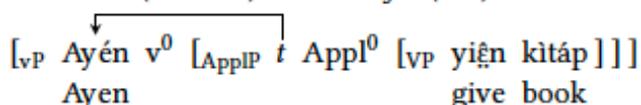
[Van Urk 2018:950, ex. (25a)]

(30) *Derivation of (29)*

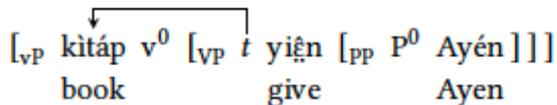


- Note that there is no look ahead: if v bears $[u\phi]$, leapfrogging will take place and a DP other than the external argument will move to $[\text{Spec},\text{CP}]$. By contrast, if v does not bear $[u\phi]$, no leapfrogging takes place and the external argument moves to $[\text{Spec},\text{CP}]$. The choice of whether to equip v with $[u\phi]$ is free, with different consequences for what DP will move to $[\text{Spec},\text{CP}]$. In this way, the analysis derives the basic split between subjects and lower DPs from intervention instead of $v\text{P}$ phases.
- Let us turn next to the empty-edge effect. Such effects appear with ditransitive verbs. Recall that in such constructions, one object must appear before the verb and one following the verb (see (32)). Furthermore, if A-movement of an object out of this $v\text{P}$ takes place, it must empty the preverbal position and cannot empty the postverbal position.
- As noted [Van Urk \(2015, 2018\)](#) and [Van Urk and Richards \(2015\)](#) analyze this restriction in terms of $v\text{P}$ phases. On their analysis, v bears an EPP property, requiring one of the two objects to move to $[\text{Spec},v\text{P}]$. Subsequent A-movement can then only target this element, not the VP-internal, postverbal object.
- Interestingly, [Van Urk \(2015:151–154\)](#) argues that $[\text{Spec},v\text{P}]$ may only be filled by the structurally closer object and that configurations in which the indirect object appears preverbally are derived from a different base configuration than configurations in which the direct object appears preverbally. In other words, he argues that such constructions differ in their base structure as shown in (34) and (35), respectively. Whichever object occupies the preverbal position is base-generated as the higher object within the VP.

(34) *Van Urk's (2015:153) structure for (32a)*

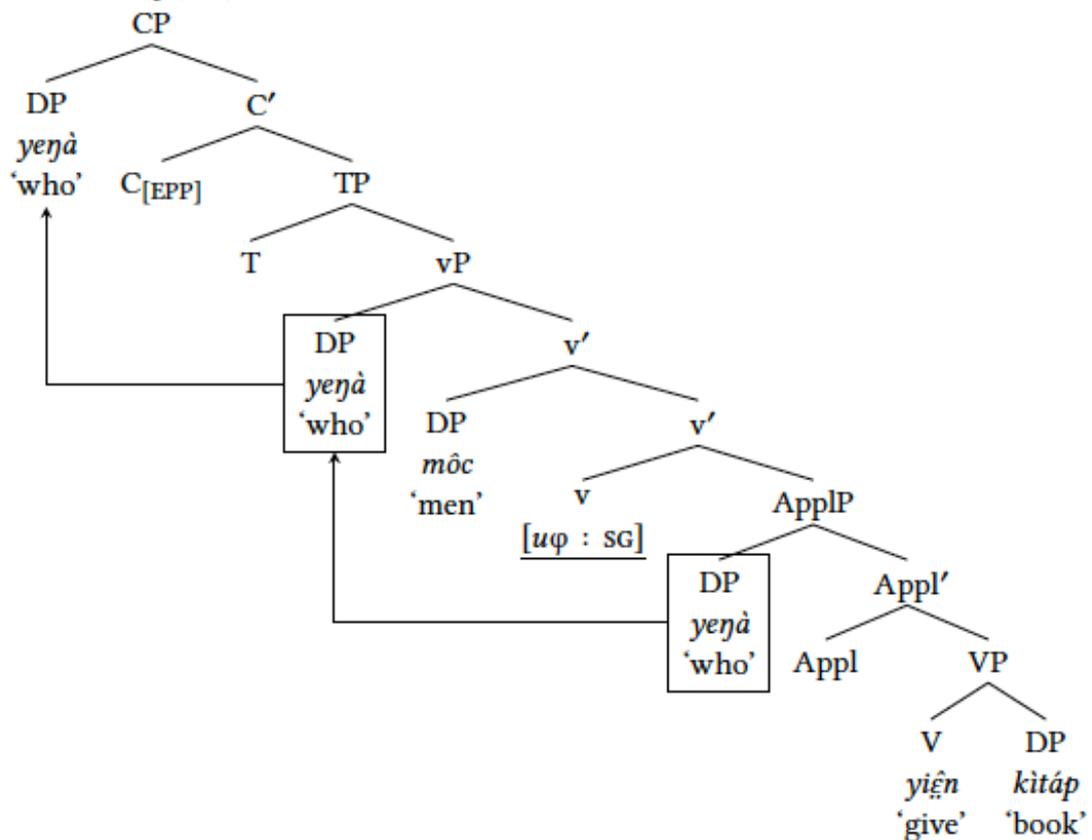


(35) *Van Urk's (2015:154) structure for (32b)*



- In these structures, the displacement to [Spec,vP] is string-vacuous, driven only by the assumption that vP is a phase. If we question this assumption, the possibility emerges that in fact no displacement to [Spec,vP] takes place in (34) and (35) and that the two object DPs remain in their base positions.
- Let us suppose so. Let us furthermore suppose that [$u\phi$] on v may only agree with the closest ϕ -bearing element. If v's search space contains two ϕ -bearing DPs, only the higher one may be attracted and hence leapfrog over the external argument. This has the effect that in ditransitive constructions, only the higher object may move to [Spec,CP] (as such movement requires leapfrogging over the external argument). This is schematized in (36), where [$u\phi$] may only attract the higher object *yeŋà* 'who' to the outer [Spec,vP]. This derives the contrast from *Van Urk's (2015)* structure for ditransitives and relativized minimality in the probing of [$u\phi$].

(36) *Derivation of (33a)*



- Finally, let us now turn to unaccusatives. Recall, as (47), that A-bar-extraction of the subject of an unaccusative does not lead to *ké*.

(47) Yè [_{CP} pĕĕĕl-kó bĕ (*ké) dhuôoŋ]?
 be knives-which FUT PL break.NF
 'Which knives will break?'

[Coppe van Urk, p.c.]

- But extraction of an adjunct out of an unaccusative vP does induce *ké* if plural, as shown again in (48). This demonstrates that unaccusative v may carry [$u\phi$].

(48) Yè [_{CP} thèek-kó bji pèel ké dhuôon]?
 be times-which FUT.OV knives PL break.NF

'At which times will the knives break?'

[Van Urk 2015:168, ex. (81)]

- The question is why in (47) v may not carry [$u\phi$]. Here, we argue that the distribution of [$u\phi$] is subject to economy, its appearance being licensed only if has an “effect on outcome” (Chomsky 2001:34) by enabling an otherwise impossible extraction. Because extraction to [Spec,CP] is possible in (49) regardless of the presence of [$u\phi$], its appearance is then prohibited.

(49) Derivation of (47)

[_{CP} pèèel-kó C_[EPP]⁰ [... [_{VP} t v_[EPP]⁰ [_{VP} t dhuôon]]]]
 which knives break

3. How's bout CP phases?

- Evidence for (CP-)phasality comes from *obligatory* successive cyclic movement (which shows that certain elements *must* land in a phase edge before they move out). That is, a configuration like (1) is ungrammatical, while (2) is fine.

(1) *[_{CP} XP_i C ... [_{CP} C ... XP_i ...]]

(2) [_{CP} XP_i C ... [_{CP} XP_i C ... XP_i ...]]

- As Abels (2003) already pointed out, the difference between (1) and (2) can be partially understood in terms of Relativized Minimality. Relativized Minimality forbids syntactic movement across interveners where an intervener is a c-commanding element that shares some feature with the moved goal and the higher probe, as in (3).

(3) *[Z_{i[F]} Z_[F] Z_{i[F]}]

- Now, in (1), given that the highest C head attracts XP, an intervention effect will arise. The highest C and the XP must share some feature (otherwise C couldn't attract XP). If the lower C and the higher C share this feature as well, a Relativized Minimality effect arises: the lower CP is an intervener for XP-movement (provided C and XP share some feature). By first raising XP into the specifier of the lower CP, as in (2), this intervention effect no longer arises, and the XP can move up to higher Spec,CP. For Abels, the question arises as to what makes phase heads, like C, special in the sense that these, unlike other heads, always give rise to such Relativized Minimality configurations that trigger successive cyclic movement. He addresses this question by arguing that phase heads like C are special because of certain (clause-type-related) properties of the features that they bear, which cause them to behave as general interveners

- However, it is far from clear that C must be special in this sense. It is indeed a given fact that every instance of cross-clausal movement into some Spec,CP requires an intermediate landing site. But it is less straightforward that this is something that is restricted to heads like C only. In this paper, I argue that (1)-(2) are actually special instances of (4)-(5) (where $H \dots H$ stands for any set of two similar heads). This way, there is no reason to assume that CPs or any other XPs, form phases and all instances of obligatory successive cyclicity can be taken to be due to Relativized Minimality.

(4) $*[{}_{HP} XP_i H \dots [{}_{HP} H \dots XP_i \dots]]$

(5) $[{}_{HP} XP_i H \dots [{}_{HP} XP_i H \dots XP_i \dots]]$

- In order to evaluate the validity of (4)-(5), of which (1)-(2) are then instances, as the sole source of successive cyclic movement, (4)-(5) first need to be verified for movement into Spec,HP where H crucially is not a phase head. Moreover, to show that successive cyclicity in CP is purely due to Relativized Minimality along the lines of (1)-(2)/(4)-(5), it also needs to be shown that in absence of movement into a higher Spec,CP, no intermediate landing site in an embedded CP is targeted either. I.e., (6) should be fine.

(6) $[{}_{CP} [{}_{HP} XP_i H \dots [{}_{CP} \dots [{}_{HP} XP_i H \dots XP_i \dots]]]]$

- Let me discuss each in turn. Baltin (1995) has shown that subjects in infinitival clauses do not move into embedded Spec,TP unless they raise into matrix Spec,TP, as shown in (7) (where I take floating quantifiers to diagnose the position of (copies of) embedded subjects):

(7) a. The students hoped $\{*\text{all}\}$ to $\{\text{all}\}$ win the race
 b. The students seemed $\{\text{all}\}$ to $\{\text{all}\}$ win the race

- Given that embedded T does not require subject movement into Spec,TP (otherwise higher *all* should be fine in (7a)), (7b) must reflect an instance of successive cyclic movement of the type in (6) (where H is T and XP is the subject).

- In addition, support for (5) can be given as well. As Kobayashi (2020) shows, in Brazilian Portuguese, CPs don't block A-movement, a phenomenon known as hyperraising. But strikingly, CP does not bleed *Wh*-movement (8) either. That is unexpected under a CP-phasality approach where the raised subjects and the *Wh*-term should compete for the landing site in embedded Spec,CP, but this follows straightforwardly from the account presented here.

(8) $[{}_{\text{Quais livros}}]_1 \text{ elas}_2 \text{ parec-em } [{}_{\text{que } t_1 \text{ ler-am } t_2}]?$
 Which books they seem-pl that read-pl
 'Which books do they seem to have read?'

- As Keine (2018) points out, many (though not all) approaches to hyperraising, for instance Zeller's (2006) and Halpert's (2019) accounts of Bantu, argue that hyperraising does not proceed through the edge of the lower clause. That is in full accordance with my proposal. Note that in order to make (8) compatible with CP-phasality, one should assume that the embedded CP should contain at least two specifiers, one for A-extraction and one A-Bar-extraction. However, while there is strong evidence in favor

of successive cyclic A-Bar movement in embedded Spec,CPs, the presence of additional landing sites for A-movement in embedded Spec,CPs is motivated primarily by theory-internal considerations concerning phasality and is not independently motivated.

- Naturally, the theoretical move proposed here renders hyperraising no longer incompatible with the ban on improper movement and would require alternative explanations for the ban on hyperraising in many other languages. Here, I crucially follow Carstens & Diercks (2013) and Halpert (2019) who argue that hyperraising can be understood in terms of a CP's (in)ability to act as a possible raiser as well. For instance, Halpert (2019) shows that in Zulu, infinitivals can be hosted in a preverbal subject position (9), but finite clauses cannot (10):

(9) uku-xova ujeqe ku-mnandi
 AUG.1S-make AUG.1steamed.bread1S-nice
 'Making steamed bread is nice.'

(10) *[ukuthi w-a-thatha umhlala phansi] ku-ya-ngi-mangaza
 that 1S-PST-take AUG.1sit down 1S-ya-1SG.O-surprise
 Intended: 'That he retired surprises me.'

- Strikingly, subject-to-subject raising out of an infinite TP-clause is not allowed in Zulu (11), but subject-to-subject raising out of a finite CP-clause is fine (12). Again, such facts lend themselves very well to a Relativized Minimality analysis. Only if the intervening CP/TP is not a potential raiser to subject position itself, is subject-to-subject raising allowed.

(11) *uZinhle_i u-bonakala [_{TP} t_i uku-(zo)-xova ujeqe]
 AUG.1Zinhle_i 1S-seem t_i INF-(FUT)-make AUG.1bread
 Intended: 'Zinhle seems to make steamed bread'

(12) uZinhle_i u-bonakala [_{CP} ukuthi t_i u-zo-xova ujeqe]
 AUG.1Zinhle_i 1S-seem that t_i 1S-FUT-make AUG.1bread
 'It seems that Zinhle will make steamed bread.'

- To sum up, the proposal in (4)-(5) opens up a way to rethink phasality in terms of Relativized Minimality, makes predictions that appear correct and renders the attested phenomenon of hyperraising less of a problem in terms of syntactic locality.
- At the same time, there are many other CP-locality/phasality effects. Naturally, the question arises as to how to account for those in terms of relative locality.
- The hypothesis here would be that CPs in various respects compete with DPs. Evaluating this hypothesis is left for future work.