

## Constraints on anaphor movement

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The Germanic verb-second clause pattern involves a constituent in clause-initial position, standardly identified as Spec-CP, followed immediately by the finite verb in C (e.g. Vikner 1995). Anderson (2000) proposes an Optimality Theoretic analysis that focusses on the positioning of the finite verb in second position (see also Legendre 2001). Based on the behavior of a Danish VP anaphor, I argue that fronting to initial position is also governed by violable ranked constraints.

Danish has an overt VP anaphor *det* (= *it*.3SG.NEUTER; here glossed DET), which like English VP ellipsis requires a linguistic antecedent and a licensing auxiliary. This VP anaphor participates in verb second as shown in (1a), where *det* occurs in clause-initial position followed immediately by the finite auxiliary. The ungrammaticality of (1b) shows that fronting of the VP anaphor is obligatory.

- (1) a. Han [bor i Brussell]<sub>i</sub> og det<sub>i</sub> gør jeg også.  
he lives in Bussels and DET do I too  
*He lives in Brussels and I do too.*
- b. \*Han [bor i Brussell]<sub>i</sub> og jeg gør også det<sub>i</sub>.  
he lives in Brussels and I do too DET

However, if the antecedent of *det* is contained inside the subject, we find the opposite pattern:

- (2) a. \*Det<sub>i</sub> gør de embedsmænd der ønsker at [bo i Brussell]<sub>i</sub>.  
DET do the civil.servants who wish to live in Brussels
- b. De embedsmænd der ønsker at [bo i Brussell]<sub>i</sub> gør det.  
the civil.servants who wish to live in Brussels do DET<sub>i</sub>  
*The civil servants who wish to live in Brussels do (so).*

I account for the distribution of initial elements in (1) and (2) as follows. The VP anaphor is a topic (Houser et al. 2007) and hence governed by TOPFIRST, a constraint that requires topics to appear clause-initially (Costa 2001). TOPFIRST outranks the constraint requiring subjects to appear clause-initially, accounting for the obligatory fronting of *det* in (1). As an anaphor, *det* is also governed by a general ANTECEDENT constraint that requires all anaphors to have an accessible antecedent. Crucially, ANTECEDENT outranks TOPFIRST. (2a) satisfies TOPFIRST (the VP anaphor appears clause-initially), but is ungrammatical because it violates the higher-ranked ANTECEDENT constraint: the anaphor precedes and c-commands its antecedent making the antecedent inaccessible (cf. Hankamer and Sag's 1976 Backwards Anaphora Constraint and Johnson 2001:448–9). In the grammatical (2b), *det* stays in situ in violation of TOPFIRST, but in accordance with the higher-ranked ANTECEDENT constraint.

The fronting pattern in (1) and (2) presents a challenge to the Minimalist assumption that movement is determined by the positions and featural contents of the head hosting the landing site (the probe, here C) and the moving element (the goal, here *det*), since the crucial difference between (1) and (2) is the position of the **antecedent** of *det*. Short of positing a look-ahead mechanism to suppress *det*-fronting in (2) (if fronting *det* would leave *det* without an accessible antecedent, don't front it), the contrast between (1) and (2) appears to elude a Minimalist account. Notably, the embedded antecedent VP in (2b) cannot intervene in the probe-goal relationship between C and *det*. In contrast, the OT analysis proposed here accounts for the data in (1) and (2) without further ado.