

# **Notes on Larson's Double Object Construction**

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要約

## Larson の二重目的語構文について

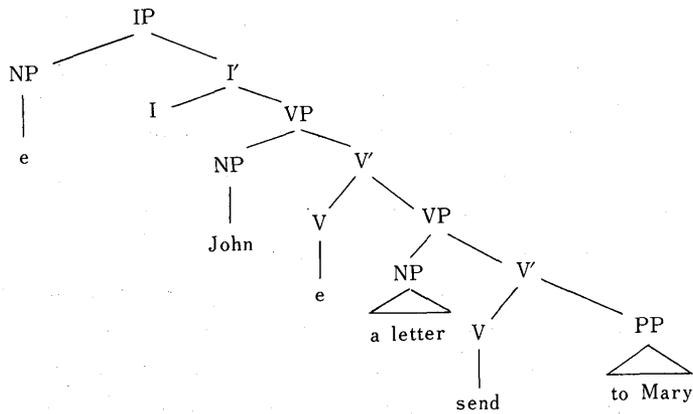
上 紀子

Larson (1988) は、与格構文と二重目的語構文における照応形束縛、数量詞束縛、弱交差、優先の効果、相互代名詞の分布、否定対極表現の認可等の現象にみられる二つの目的語名詞句の非対称的 C-統御関係を説明するために、基底では、間接目的語と動詞が述語を形成し、直接目的語がその述語の主語（二重目的語構文では付加部）として生成される分析を提案している。ここでの重要な仮定の一つは、他動詞は構造格と固有格の二つの目的格を与えるという格理論に関する前提であるが、この分析には、固有格付与に関する標準的な仮説が保持出来なくなるという問題及び、受動文二重目的語構文における固有格付与の可能性について問題があるように思われる。

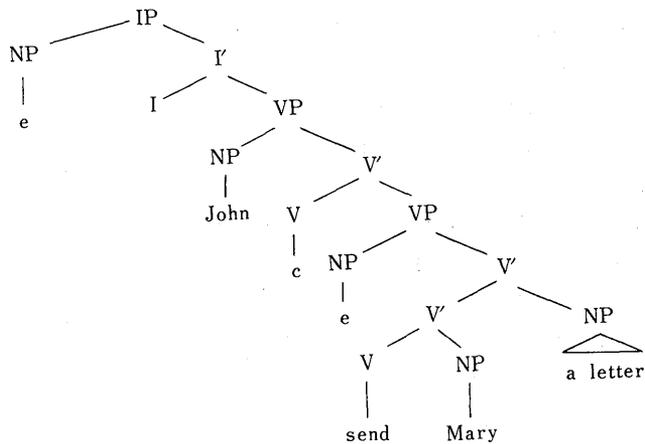
I

Larson(1988) assumes that the oblique datives (V-NP-PP) and the double object constructions (V-NP-NP) are derivationally related and makes an interesting, but controversial, claim that the oblique dative sentence like (1) and the double object sentence like (2) have the structures (3) and (4) in D-Structure respectively.

- (1) John sent a letter to Mary.
- (2) John sent Mary a letter.
- (3)



- (4)



The fundamental idea in this analysis is that the verb phrase *sent a letter to Mary* is assumed to be underlyingly clauselike with the two arguments being in the relation of subject and complement. Larson assumes the restricted X-bar theory in which just as

there can be at most one subject per maximal projection, so there can be at most one complement. Hence the verb phrase *sent a letter to Mary* is a binary branching structure, and it is headed by the verb *send* and takes a specifier *a letter* and a complement *to Mary*. The surface subject *John* appears as the specifier of VP headed by an empty V. The empty V takes the lower VP as its single complement.

In the double object construction, *a letter* appears in an adjunct position to the lower V'. Larson argues that the demotion of the VP subject to an adjunct position is parallel to the demotion of the IP subject to an adjunct *by*-phrase in the passive. The subject position of the lower VP in the double object construction is nonthematic and hence is empty in D-Structure and the  $\theta$ -role assigned by V' is assigned to the V' adjunct position under Argument Demotion.<sup>1</sup>

The surface form (1) derives from (3) by raising the verb *send* to the empty V position (i.e., head-to-head movement) and the VP subject *John* to the IP specifier position. Similarly, the surface form (2) derives from (4) by raising the verb and the VP subject. In addition to this, the inner object *Mary* raises to the empty VP specifier position. Larson states that these V Raising and NP Movements take place in order to satisfy general principles governing the assignment of Case and agreement.

One of the motivations for Larson's analysis of dative constructions is the observations made by Barss and Lasnik(1986). Barss and Lasnik point out six phenomena which show an asymmetrical relation between the two objects in the double object construction. They demonstrate that in those six anaphoric relations the second NP is in the domain of the first, but not vice versa. The six asymmetries are illustrated in the following. (The data are from Barss and Lasnik.)

- (5) 1. Anaphoric Binding
  - a. I showed John himself (in the mirror).
  - b. \*I showed himself John (in the mirror).
2. Quantifier Binding
  - a. I denied each worker<sub>i</sub> his<sub>i</sub> paycheck.
  - b. \*I denied its<sub>i</sub> owner each paycheck<sub>i</sub>.
3. Weak Cross-over
  - a. Which worker<sub>i</sub> did you deny his<sub>i</sub> paycheck?
  - b. \*Which paycheck<sub>i</sub> did you deny its<sub>i</sub> owner?
4. Superiority
  - a. Who did you give which book?
  - b. \*Which book did you give who?
5. Each ... the other
  - a. I gave each man the other's watch.
  - b. \*I gave the other's trainer each lion.
6. Negative Polarity Item
  - a. I gave no one anything.
  - b. \*I gave anyone nothing.

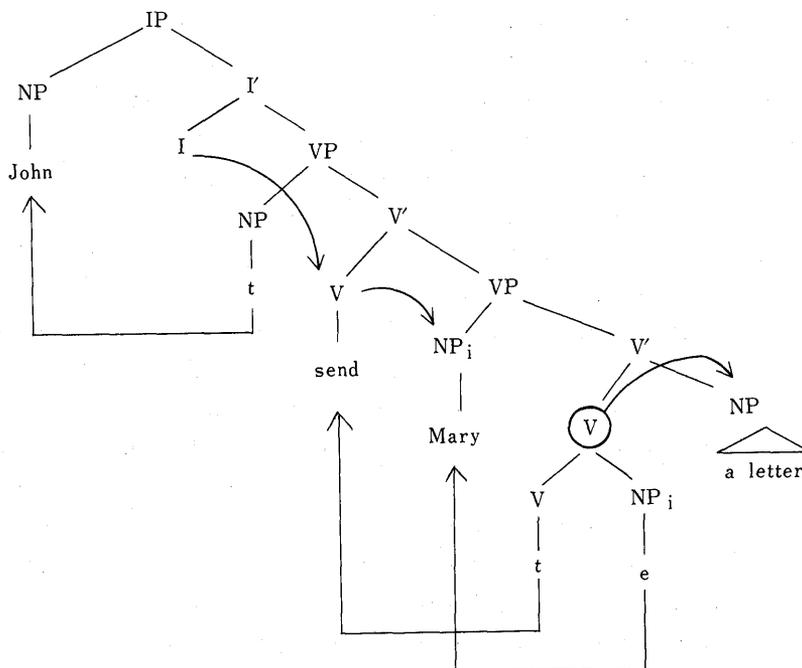
In Larson's proposed analysis, since the indirect object is raised to the specifier of the VP, it comes to asymmetrically C-command the direct object. This accounts for the facts observed by Barss and Lasnik. The oblique dative sentences show the same asymmetries: the first NP, namely the direct object, must C-command the second NP, the indirect object, not vice versa. This presents no problem at all under Larson's assumptions, either. In the structure (3), the direct object, which appears in the VP specifier position, asymmetrically C-commands the indirect object. In this way Larson proposes to solve the domain asymmetries between the two arguments of the dative verbs by distinguishing them structurally.

The analysis and assumptions presented by Larson for the double object structures are challenged by Jackendoff(1990). Jackendoff presents arguments that pose serious problems to Larson's analysis and argues against a rather complex and abstract syntactic structure that Larson assumes as the underlying structure of the double object construction. Instead he proposes a lexical treatment of oblique dative and double object constructions. As is pointed out by Jackendoff, Larson's analysis implies the possibility of one big change in the theory of grammar that has been standardly assumed in the literature. Specifically,  $\theta$ -marking is not a D-Structure property any more in his analysis.<sup>2</sup> Since whether or not to abandon the assumption that  $\theta$ -roles are assigned at D-Structure is a difficult question, we will have to leave this for future research. In what follows, we would like to point out that Larson's analysis has another problem which is somewhat similar to the problem of  $\theta$ -marking in nature: the problem with assignment of Case. We will take up two arguments that Larson gives in support of his analysis and show that they call his assumptions about Case assignment into question.

## II

In Larson's analysis, V Raising and NP Movement play an important role in producing the correct surface ordering of IP constituents from the D-Structure configuration. He states furthermore that the two processes follow from Case and agreement requirements. Now let us observe the assumptions that Larson introduces concerning Case assignment. First, he assumes that in transitive structures two Objective Cases are involved — one structural and one inherent. Second, he assumes that V assigns structural Objective Case in the configuration [<sub>min</sub>Infl [<sub>vp</sub>V...]] and that a verb may assign an inherent Objective Case to its highest internal argument as a purely lexical property. The conditions for Case assignment in either case are that V must govern and be adjacent to the Case recipient (360). Another crucial assumption that Larson introduces about Case assignment in the double object construction is that Case assignment to the outer NP, that is, to the direct object, is licensed by V' Reanalysis.<sup>3</sup> According to these assumptions, the assignment of Case to the two NPs in the double object construction is as shown in (6). He states that since *Mary* is governed by the raised verb *send* and the verb is governed by I, V assigns structural Objective Case to *Mary*. As for the outer NP *a letter*, it receives inherent Objective Case through V' Reanalysis. More specifically, V' Reanalysis optionally recategorizes the lowest V' as a V (shown as a circled V). This

(6)



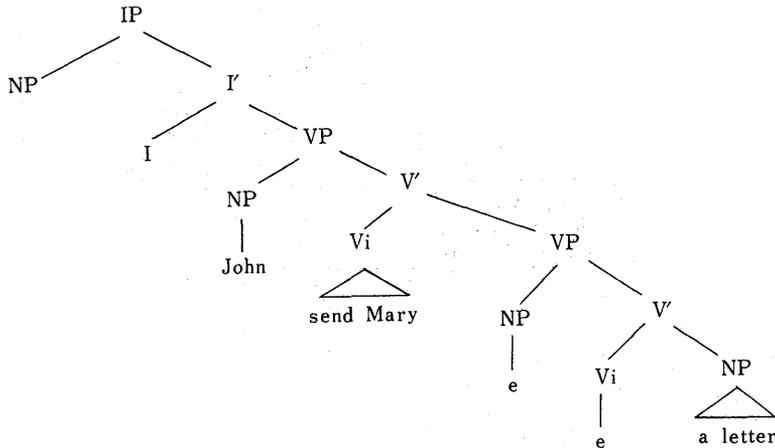
complex transitive verb [ $vt e$ ] inherits the Case-assigning properties of its head and thus can assign *a letter* the inherent Objective Case.

Now the question that arises at this point is the following: At what level does the assignment of inherent Case take place? When does it take place in relation to V' Reanalysis, V Raising and NP Movement?

Under the standard assumption based on a theory of Case along the lines of Chomsky (1986), structural Case is assumed to be assigned at S-Structure but inherent Case is assigned at D-Structure and realized at S-Structure. Notice, however, that in Larson's account the direct object *a letter* is assumed to be assigned inherent Objective Case by the recategorized complex verb [ $vt e$ ]. This means after V Raising, NP Movement and V' Reanalysis. Therefore, the assignment of inherent Case at D-Structure cannot be maintained any more in this treatment. This will be a radical shift in a theory of Case and we need further discussion about the consequence of the shift before we accept the shift. We might argue that we could apply V' Reanalysis at D-Structure and assign *a letter* the inherent Objective Case associated with *send* before Raising and NP Movement. In this way, we might be able to keep the standard assumption that inherent Case is assigned at D-Structure. However, this treatment poses serious problems as well. In order to see why, let us return to the structure (4). The lowest V' satisfies the condition for V' Reanalysis: the predicate V' has one undischarged internal argument. Therefore, the V' is subject to optional V' Reanalysis. If Reanalysis applies, this V' is recategorized as V. This means that the string *send Mary* now has the usual properties of V. This is why it can assign Case. Notice, however, that in addition to a status as a lexical category, the

string *send Mary* has a status as a syntactic atom. This means that it is not analyzable by syntactic rules (Larson 1989:8). NP Movement cannot apply to *Mary*, nor can V Raising to the verb *send*. Extraction of a component of the reanalyzed complex predicate is forbidden. If Raising is to apply at all, it now applies to the entire complex constituent *send Mary*. Hence the derived structure would be (7).

(7)



This result is, of course, problematic. *Mary* is Caseless. There is no way for *Mary* to receive Case in this raised position. Moreover, the structure is ill-formed because it has an unfilled, empty NP at S-Structure.

It is to be noted that it is an important assumption in Larson's analysis that it should be impossible to extract an element out of the reanalyzed string. Larson proposes to account for heavy-NP-shifted sentences like (8) and the ill-formedness of sentences like (9) in terms of V' Reanalysis.

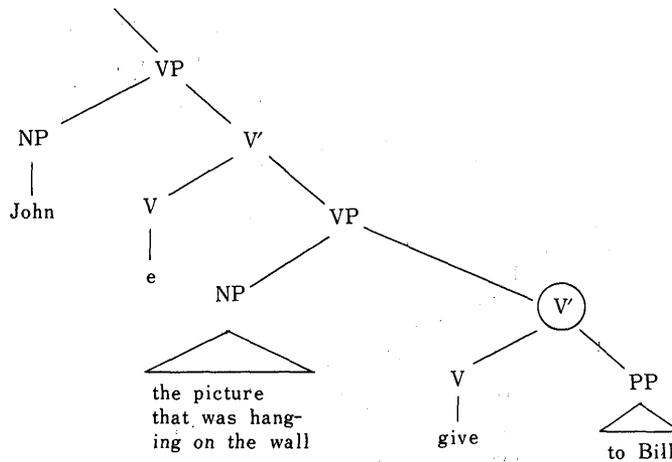
(8) John gave to Bill the picture that was hanging on the wall.

(9) \*Who did John give to the picture that was hanging on the wall?

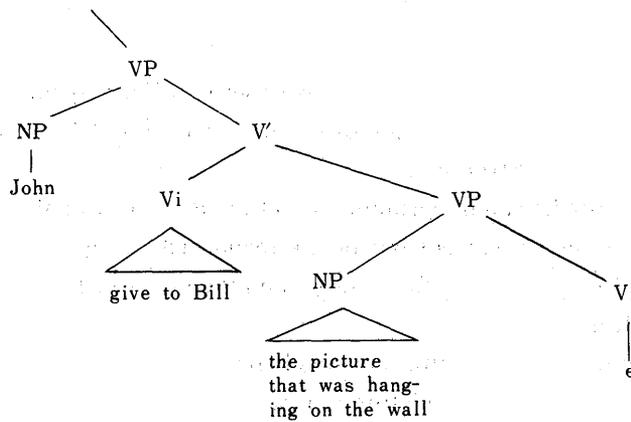
(from Larson 1989)

The D-Structure configuration of the sentence (8) is (10). V' Reanalysis and V Raising apply to (10), yielding the S-Structure (11). When V' Reanalysis applies in (10), head-to-head movement of V is now impossible. V and PP are to be raised jointly to the single category as is shown in (11). Thus islandhood of the string *give to Bill* as a result of V' Reanalysis and Predicate Raising account for the so-called Heavy NP Shift phenomenon as in (8).<sup>4</sup> Larson claims that this analysis predicts the ungrammaticality of (9) straightforwardly. Since the raised *give to Bill* is a syntactic atom, extraction as in (9) is not allowed.

(10)



(11)



Returning to the problem of inherent Case assignment in (7), it follows then that the alternative account cannot be accepted because of the problems indicated above. But if we follow Larson's original account, assignment of inherent Case cannot be carried out at D-Structure as is generally assumed. The shift of inherent Case assignment to S-Structure, just like the abandonment of  $\theta$ -marking in D-Structure, needs future research in the over-all theory of grammar. It is also to be noted that if we are to accept Larson's assumption that both structural and inherent Cases are assigned to the same argument in transitive structures, we will not be able to maintain the distinction between the inherent Case which is generally assigned to the bearer of a specific  $\theta$ -role and the structural Case which is thematically blind.

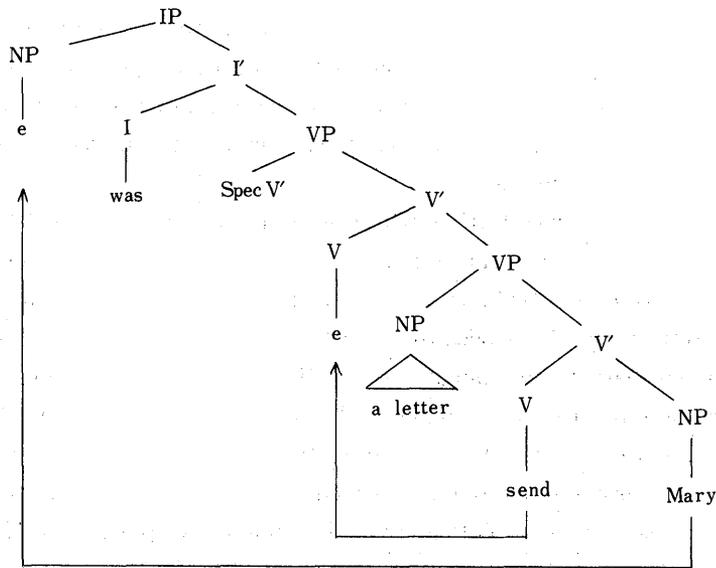
The second problem with the proposed analysis concerns dative passives. Observe the well-known contrast in the following sentences.

(12) Mary was sent a letter.

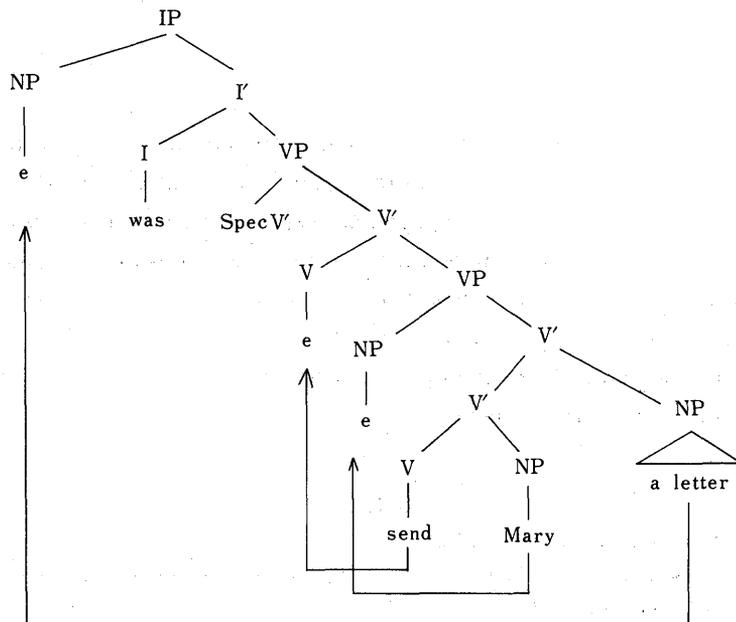
(13) \*? A letter was sent Mary.

When a direct object is passivized as in (13), the sentence is judged to be very marginal or ill-formed. Larson argues that the contrast is predictable by his analysis, attributing the unacceptability of (13) to the failure of Case assignment to *Mary* in (13). He claims that the sources for (12) and (13) are (14) and (15) respectively.

(14)



(15)



The passive (12), Larson argues, derives not from the double object structure but from the simple oblique dative (14) in which the Case is withdrawn from the indirect object *Mary*. PASSIVE applies, moving the Caseless *Mary* to the subject position. The verb raises as usual. The S-Structure of (14) is well-formed because *a letter* is assigned the inherent Case by the raised verb, hence satisfying the Case Filter. Larson states that the crucial point in this account is that although the assignment of the structural Case to *a letter* is blocked by PASSIVE, the inherent Case may be assigned to it. On the other hand, he derives the dative passive (13) from the double object structure (15). In (15), NP Movement by PASSIVE applies to the outer object *a letter*, moving it to the subject position. Inherent Case assignment to *Mary* has been suppressed as is assumed and hence it moves to the VP specifier position. Larson states that the sentence is ruled out because this moved *Mary* is Caseless: in a double object structure the (derived) direct object receives only structural Case but since the structural Case is suppressed because of the passive morphology here, *Mary* is without Case. Thus the sentence (13) is ill-formed because of the Case Filter violation.

Now, notice that the crucial difference in grammaticality between (12) and (13) is whether or not the raised verb can assign Case to the NP which it governs. Larson argues that it can assign *a letter* inherent Case in (14) but that in (15) it has no inherent Case to assign to the raised *Mary* because of suppression of inherent Case assignment to an object position in Dative Shift configuration. However, in the D-Structure configuration (14) too, he assumes that Case (namely, the preposition *to*) is withdrawn from the indirect object *Mary* just as with Dative Shift in (15). If so, why can the raised verb still have the property to assign inherent Case to *a letter*? In (15), Case assigning property of the verb is suppressed; besides V' Reanalysis has not been applied and therefore the lower V' has not inherited the Case assigning property of the head. And yet, can the raised verb *send* not assign inherent Case in this case? We consider this is somewhat inconsistent.

### III

In this paper, we have called attention to some of the problems with the assumptions about Case assignment that Larson makes in the analysis of the double object construction. His analysis is novel, and it is appealing despite various kinds of problems that Jackendoff reveals. At the present point, we are not in a position to make a definite conclusion either for or against it. However, we have seen that if it is to be adopted, the proposed analysis may require a radical change in the assumptions about the level of Case assignment and about the distinction between inherent Case and structural Case in addition to a shift in  $\theta$ -marking theory.

### NOTES

1. Argument Demotion (Larson 1988 : 352)

If  $\alpha$  is a  $\theta$ -role assigned by  $X'$ , then  $\alpha$  may be assigned (up to optionality) to an adjunct  $X'$ .

2. See Jackendoff 1990 : 450-52.

3. His optional rule of V' Reanalysis is as follows :

V' Reanalysis

Let  $\alpha$  be a phrase [<sub>v</sub> ... ] whose  $\theta$ -grid contains one undischarged internal  $\theta$ -role. Then  $\alpha$  may be reanalyzed as [<sub>v</sub> ... ]. (348)

4. We must note that, although Larson does not mention this clearly, the predicate raising in this case is subject to the heaviness constraint. Otherwise a sentence like the following would be generated.

\*John gave to Bill a picture.

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(Received September 14, 1990)