The Special Session on Obliqueness

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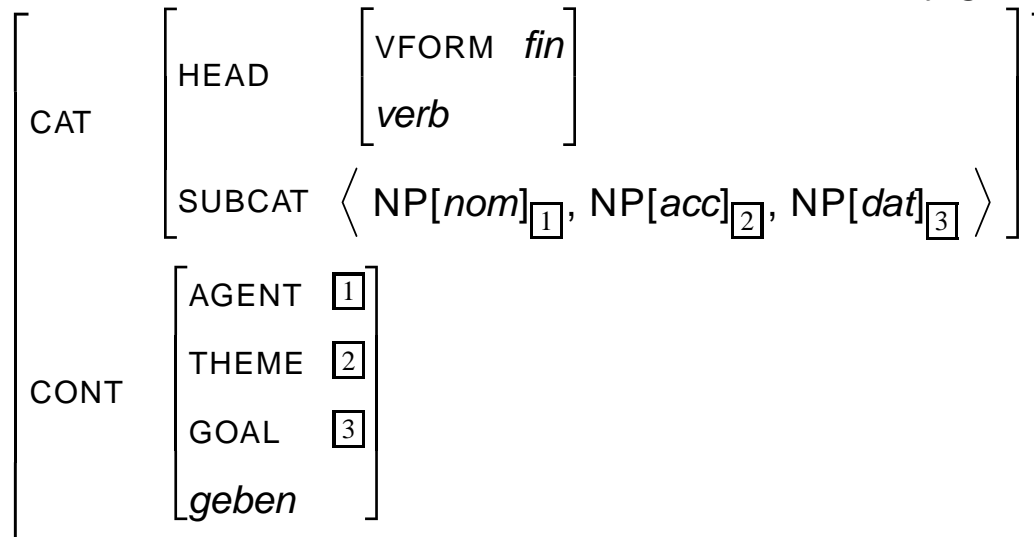
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Accessibility Hierarchy

- Keenan and Comrie (1977), Pullum (1977)

SUBJECT => DIRECT => INDIRECT => OBLIQUES => GENITIVES => OBJECTS OF
OBJECT   OBJECT   COMPARISON

- ellipses (Klein, 1985)

- topic drop (Fries, 1988)

- non-matching free relative clauses (Bausewein, 1990; Müller, 1999b)

- passive (Keenan and Comrie, 1977)

- depictive secondary predicates (Müller, 2001)

- Binding Theory (Grewendorf, 1985; Pollard and Sag, 1992; Pollard and Sag, 1994)

Lexical Entry for *gibt*

- order of the elments is as shown in the hierarchy *gibt* (finite Form):

$$
\begin{bmatrix}
\text{CAT} & \begin{bmatrix} \text{HEAD} & \begin{bmatrix} \text{VFORM} & fin \\ verb \end{bmatrix} \\ \text{SUBCAT} & \left\langle \text{NP}[nom]_{\boxed{1}},\ \text{NP}[acc]_{\boxed{2}},\ \text{NP}[dat]_{\boxed{3}} \right\rangle \end{bmatrix} \\
\text{CONT} & \begin{bmatrix} \text{AGENT} & \boxed{1} \\ \text{THEME} & \boxed{2} \\ \text{GOAL} & \boxed{3} \\ geben \end{bmatrix}
\end{bmatrix}
$$

According to Höhle (1982) the unmarked order for a sentence with *gibt* is Nom, Dat, Acc:

(1) weil   der Mann   der Frau   das Buch   gibt.
     because the man$_{nom}$ the woman$_{dat}$ the book$_{acc}$ gives

Some Facts About Constituent Order in German

Hoberg (1981): certain verbs allow for order NOM, ACC, DAT

(2) a.   weil   er   das Kind   der Kälte   aussetzt. (Wegener, 1985)
           because he$_{nom}$ the child$_{acc}$ the cold$_{dat}$ exposed

     b.   ? weil   er   der Kälte   das Kind   aussetzt.
           because he$_{nom}$ the cold$_{dat}$ the child$_{acc}$ exposed

Hoberg has shown with corpus data that: animated < unanimated

But also verbs with the same animatedness/unanimatedness of objects (Hoberg):

(3) a.   was im   Einzelfall   auch bedeuten kann, das persönliche dem allgemeinen
           what in.the single.case also mean   can   the personal$_{acc}$ the   public
           Wohl   einzuordnen.
           good$_{dat}$ to.fit.in
           'which can also mean to fit the personal good in the public good.'

     b.   er hatte den Tod   der Vertreibung von Heimat und Besitz   vorgezogen.
           he had   the death$_{acc}$ the repelling$_{dat}$ from home   and property preferred
           'He preferred the death over the repelling from home and property.'

So the constituent order seems to be related to verb classes.

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- according to Tibor the obliqueness order for *gibt* is NOM, DAT, ACC

- in order to see what predictions we make we have to check the phenomena that are related to the obliqueness hierarchy

- German is a verb second language:

  (4) a. Kennt er den Mann?
         know he$_{nom}$ the man$_{acc}$

         'Does he know the man?'

      b. Er kennt den Mann.
         he$_{nom}$ knows the man$_{acc}$

      c. Den Mann kennt er.
         the man$_{acc}$ knows he

- subjects, direct objects, inderict objects, genitives, PPs, adjuncts, ...
  can be fronted

Topic Drop (*Vorfeldellipse*)

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- The element in the position before the finite verb may be dropped:

  (5) a. _   kennt den Mann.
           he$_{nom}$ knows the man$_{acc}$

       b. _   kennt er.
           the man$_{acc}$ knows he

- details in (Fries, 1988)

Real Examples

(6) a. Ein Grauen war für Onkel unser Klopapier. Daher hielt er es bei späteren Reisen in die Vergangenheit immer so, daß er sich gleich sein eigenes mitbrachte. Das uns Kindern verboten war, damit es für ihn noch reichte. [Wir] Probierten es trotzdem heimlich. (taz, 01.10.97, Auszug aus „Ostgezeter" von Thomas Rosenlöcher)

   b. Gern hätte ich den jungen Rackern eine Kassette mit dem 3. Satz der b-Moll-Sonate von Chopin, volkstümlich bekannt als Trauermarsch, zur Verfügung gestellt – [eine solche] hatte ich aber gerade nicht dabei. (Max Goldt, *Die Kugeln in unseren Köpfen*)

Datives and More Oblique Elements

Fries (1988):

(7)   Was ist denn mit Sofia? (What about Sofia?)
        ? Vertrau' ich nicht. (I do not trust her.)
        ? Geb' ich nichts. (I do not give her something.)
        * Gratulier ich nicht zu ihrem Beinbruch. (I do not congratulate her for breaking her leg.)
        * Verdanke ich mein blaues Auge. (She is responsable for my blue eye.)
        * Geh' ich auf den Geist. (She cannot stand me.)

The accusative of *geben* may be dropped, but the dative cannot be dropped.

This is predicted by the NOM, ACC, DAT hierarchy.

Free Relative Clauses

Relative clause with dative relative phrase is the subject in the higher clause:

(8) Wem PB-Cache deshalb zu teuer in der Anschaffung ist, sollte darauf achten, zumindest ein Board mit einem sogenannten COAST-Sockel zu erwerben. (c't, 12/95, p. 145)

'If for this reason you cannot afford a PB-Cache, you should at least make sure you buy a board with a so called COAST-socket.'

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'If for this reason you cannot afford a PB-Cache, you should at least make sure you buy a board with a so called COAST-socket.'

Relative clause with accusative relative phrase is the subject in the higher clause:

(9) a. Wen solche Lehren nicht erfreun, verdienet nicht, ein Mensch zu sein. (Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*)

'He who is not gladdened by such teachings does not deserve to be human.'

b. Wen der Streß des Tages häufig nicht losläßt, sollte eine Entspannungsmethode erlernen, zum Beispiel Autogenes Training. (TK aktuell, 2/1997)

'Those who frequently fall prey to daily stress should make themselves familiar with a relaxation method like self hypnosis.'

Relative clause with PP relative phrase is the accusative object in the higher clause:

(10) Sie   kocht, worauf   sie   Appetit   hat. Bausewein (1990)
      she   cooks   where.on she   appetite has
      'She cooks what she feels like eating.'

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Relative clause with PP relative phrase is the subject in the higher clause:

(11) a. Worauf man sich mit einer Pro-form beziehen kann, ist eine Konstituente.
where.upon one self with a Pro-form refer can is a constituent
'If you can refer to something with a Pro-form, [. . .] it is a constituent.'

b. Aus wem noch etwas herausgequetscht werden kann, ist sozial dazu verpflichtet, es abzuliefern; . . . (taz, 01.08.97, p. 16)
'Those who have not yet been bled dry are socially compelled to hand over their last drop.'

More data in Müller (1999a,c)

Bausewein (1990); Pittner (1995)

(12) Nom > Acc > Dat/Prepositional Object

(13) a. * Er vertraut, wen er kennt.
he trusts who$_{acc}$ he knows

Intended: 'He trusts those he knows.'

b. * Er vertraut, wer ihn mag.
he trusts who$_{nom}$ him likes

Intended: 'He trusts those who like him.'

c. * Er lädt ein, wer ihm genehm ist.
he invites who$_{nom}$ him suits

Intended: 'He invites whoever he pleases.'

d. * Er begegnet, mit wem er rechnete.
he meets with who he reckon

Intended: 'He is meeting whom he expected.'

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Tibor's prediction: Nom $>$ Dat $>$ Acc

(14)   * Er gibt das Buch   wen   er kennt.
             he gives the book$_{acc}$ who$_{acc}$ he knows

A free relative clause with accusative should be possible as a dative object

Depictive Secondary Predicates

(15) a. Er liest   das Buch nackt.
          he reads the book naked

     b. Er ißt   die Äpfel   ungewaschen.
          he eats the apples unwashed

No Reference to Elements with Dative Case?

- Haider (1985); Wunderlich (1997): No Refeerence to Dative

    (16) a. Er_i sah sie$_j$ nackt$_{i/j}$.
             he saw her$_{acc}$ naked

          b. Er_i half   ihr$_j$ nackt$_{i/*j}$.
             he helped her$_{dat}$ naked

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- Rothstein (1985) for English:

  (17) a. Die Krankenschwester$_i$ gab John$_j$ krank$_{i/*j}$ die Medizin.
           the nurse   gave John$_{dat}$ ill   the medicine$_{acc}$

           'The nurse gave John the medicine ill.'

        b. Die Krankenschwester$_i$ gab John$_j$ die Medizin   krank$_{i/*j}$.
           the nurse   gave John$_{dat}$ the medicine$_{acc}$ ill

Reference to Dative Arguments

When no other overt argument is present, reference to dative NPs gets better:

(18) a. Ihr   wurde nackt geholfen.
           her$_{dat}$ was   naked helped

          'She was helped naked.'

      b. John   wurde die Medizin   nackt verabreicht.
           John$_{dat}$ was   the medicine$_{nom}$ naked given

          'John was given the medicine naked.'

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          'John was given the medicine naked.'

Even with overt nominative and accusitvie (marked):

(19) Mangos werden manchmal als 'Badewannenfrüchte' bezeichnet, weil das
      saftige Fruchtfleisch Flecken hinterlassen kann, die schwer oder gar nicht zu
      entfernen sind. In den Tropen gibt man sie den Kindern meistens nackt zu
      essen. ("Natur und Heilen")

      'Mangos are sometimes described as „bathtub fruits" because their juicy flesh
      can leave stains that are difficult to remove or even permanent. In tropical
      countries one gives them to the children usually when they are naked.'

Consequences

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- Binding → ?

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- Binding $\rightarrow$?

- May be we need two lists: One for depictives, free relative clauses, topic drop and one for Binding. Further research necessary.

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