

Verb movement in embedded clauses in Norwegian dialects

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1 Introduction

- Norwegian generally does not have verb movement in non-V2 contexts, such as embedded clauses:

(1) ... ettersom hun **vanligvis**₂ måtte₁ kjøpe₃ de dyreste skoene. Norwegian
as she usually must buy the expensive.est shoes.the
‘... as she usually had to buy the most expensive shoes.’

- However, in Tromsø Northern Norwegian (TrNN) and Regional Northern Norwegian (ReNN) verbs may precede adverbs that they are merged above:¹

(2) ... ettersom ho måtte₁ **vanligvis**₂ kjøpe₃ de dyreste skoan. TrNN, ReNN
as she must usually buy the expensive.est shoes.the
‘... as she usually had to buy the most expensive shoes.’

- In addition, ReNN allows verb movement past outscoping adverbs:

(3) ... ettersom ho kjøpte₂ **vanligvis**₁ de dyreste skoan. ReNN
as she bought usually the expensive.est shoes.the
‘... as she usually bought the most expensive shoes.’

- Outline:

- Section 2: Briefly discuss the patterns found in (1) and (2), suggesting that they involve remnant movement operations driven by verb cluster formation.
- Section 3: Discuss two potential remnant movement accounts for the verb movement exhibited (3).
- Section 4: Face the two proposals with some further empirical facts in ReNN.
- Section 5: Summary and concluding remarks.

¹Here and in the following, the TrNN and ReNN examples are written in approximate dialectal form.

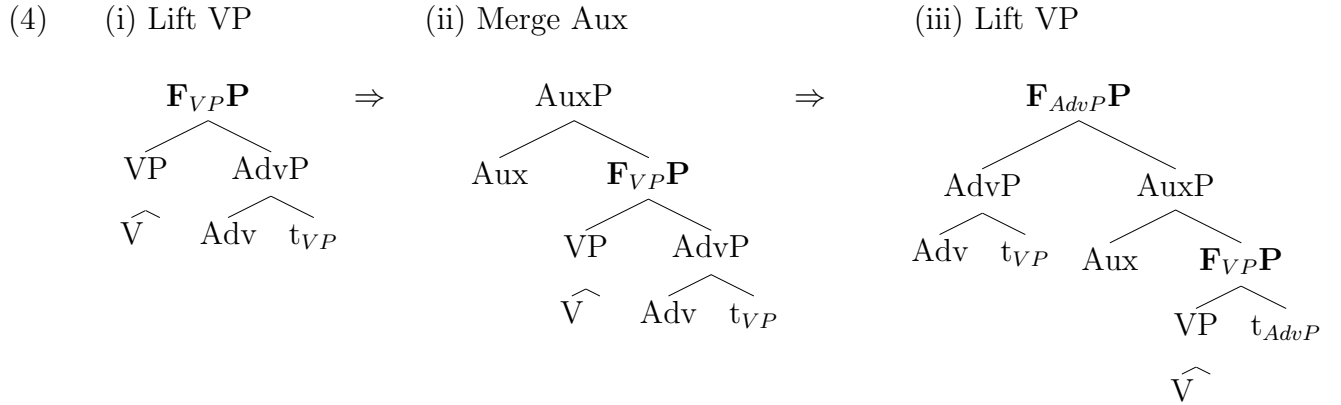
2 Verb cluster formation

- Nilsen (2003): A remnant movement account for the order of verbs and adverbs in (1):
 - scope-based merge: adverbs are merged immediately above the verb they scope over
 - adverbs attract the closest verbal projection
 - verbs attract the closest adverb projection
- Bentzen (2005): reformulating Nilsen (2003) somewhat:

Generalisation 1:

Every auxiliary has a VP lifter ($F_{VP}P$) below it and an AdvP lifter ($F_{AdvP}P$) above it.

- An auxiliary with these lifters will end up following adverbs that it takes scope over:

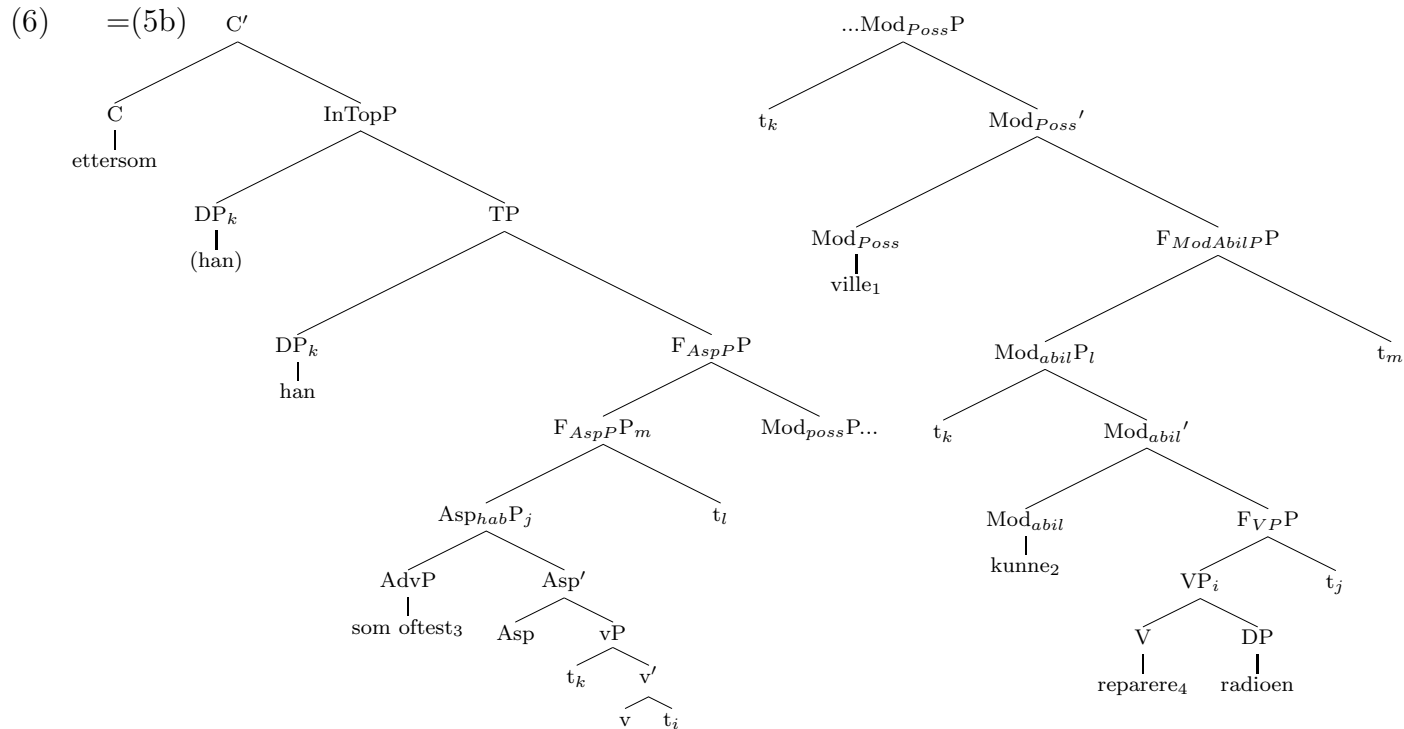


- **EastN:** Generalisation 1 is obligatory for all auxiliaries, (1) and (5):²

- (5) a. ... ettersom han **alltid**₁ hadde₂ reparert₃ radioen.
 as he always had repaired radio.the
 ‘... as he had always repaired the radio.’
- b. ... ettersom han **som oftest**₃ ville₁ kunne₂ reparere₄ radioen.
 as he as often.est would could repair radio.the
 ‘... as he would usually be able to repair the radio.’

²In the following, examples not marked for any specific dialect are allowed in all the varieties discussed here.

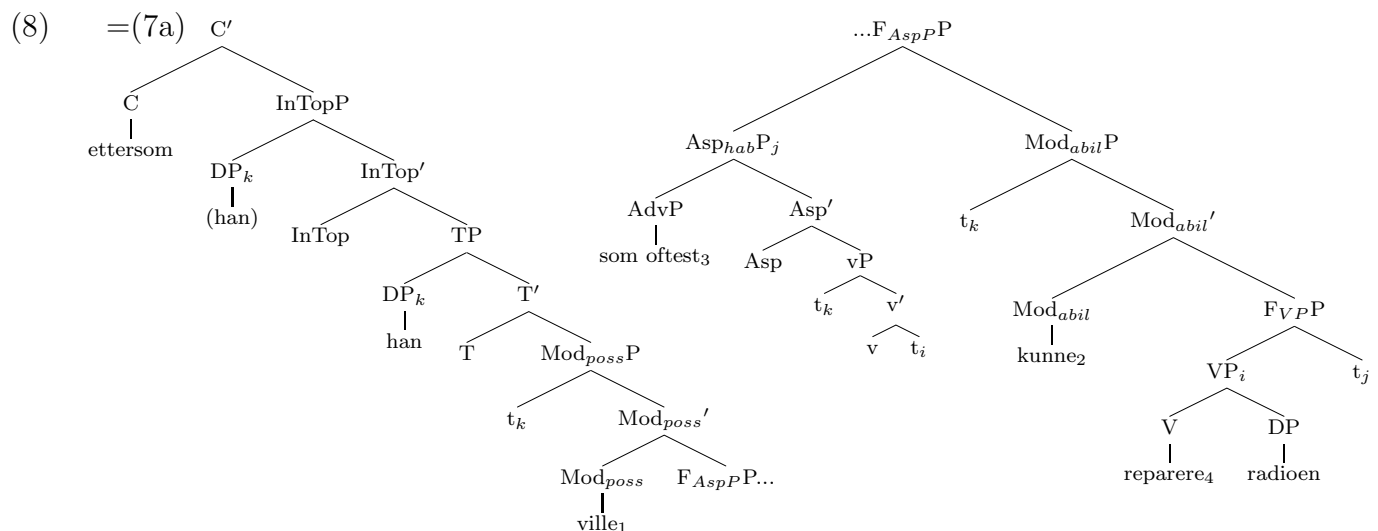
- The derivation of (5b) is shown in (6):



- An auxiliary lacking the lifters will end up preceding adverbs that it takes scope over.
- **TrNN:** Generalisation 1 is obligatory for non-finite auxiliaries, (thus (7b) is ruled out), but optional for finite auxiliaries, (2) and (7a).
- **ReNN:** Generalisation 1 is optional for both non-finite and finite auxiliaries, (2) and (7).

- (7) a. ... ettersom han ville₁ **som oftest**₃ kunne₂ reparere₄ radioen. ReNN, TrNN
 as he would as often.est could repair radio.the
 b. ... ettersom han ville₁ kunne₂ **som oftest**₃ reparere₄ radioen. ReNN
 as he would could as often.est repair radio.the

- The derivation for (7a) is shown in (8):



- (7b) shows the order of merge, which is the result when none of the auxiliaries have the lifters. Hence, there is no verb movement involved in (7b); the auxiliaries only precede adverbs they are merged above.

- The remnant movement operation with the lifters is driven by (verb) cluster formation.
 - Verb cluster formation is generally obligatory in Norwegian $\Rightarrow$ lifters are obligatory for all auxiliaries.
 - Verb cluster formation is optional in TrNN and ReNN $\Rightarrow$ lifters are optional for some auxiliaries.

3 Verb movement in embedded clauses

- Some *real* examples of embedded (non-V2) verb movement (cf. also (3)):

- (9) a. ... ettersom han {kunne₂} **muligens**₁ {kunne₂} spille₃ piano. ReNN
 as he {could} possibly {could} play piano
 ‘... as he could possibly play the piano.’
 b. ... ettersom han {hadde₂} **som oftest**₁ {hadde₂} reparert₃ radioen.
 as he {had} as often.est {had} repaired radio.the
 ‘... as he had usually repaired the radio.’

- I suggest that this is movement of a remnant vP to SpecTP. Sections 3.1 and 3.2 present two possible instantiations of such movement.

3.1 Embedded verb movement as movement of [_{vP} Subj v t_{Obj}] to SpecTP

- Nilsen (2003), Müller (2004): V2 involves movement of a remnant verbal projection to the clause-initial position.

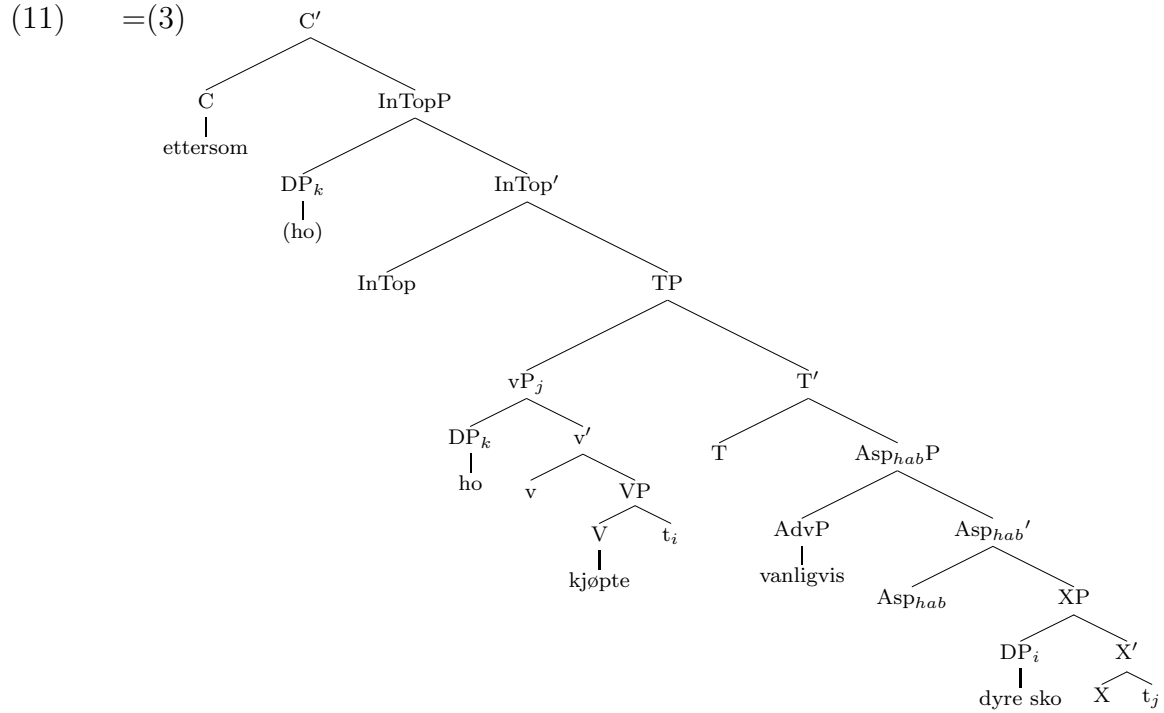
- Müller (2004): V2 is remnant vP movement to SpecCP:
 - Movement from one phase to another $\Rightarrow$ subject to the *Phase Impenetrability Condition* (PIC) (cf. Chomsky 2000, Chomsky 2001)
 - The PIC identifies the *edge* as exactly one specifier and one head.
 - Everything else has been evacuated out of vP prior to vP movement. Such evacuation is forced by the *Edge Domain Pied Piping Condition* (EPC) (Müller 2004:186):

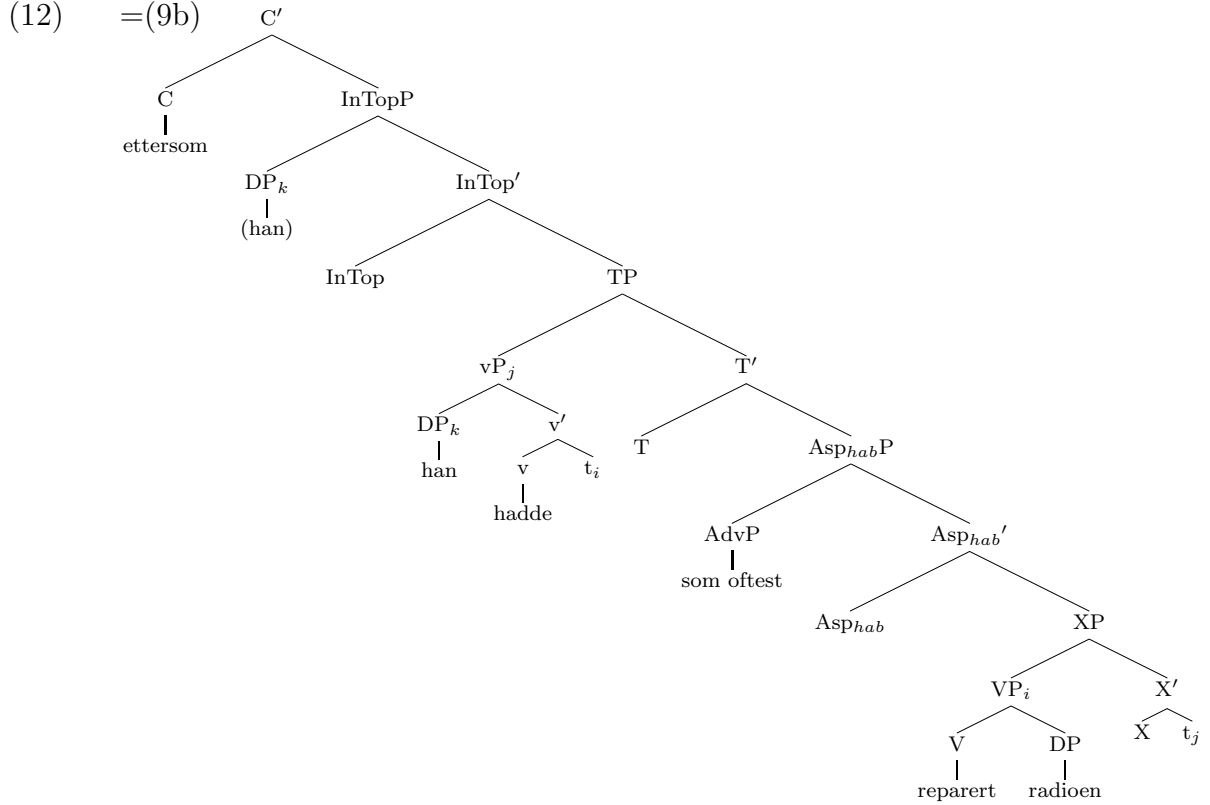
- (10) *Edge Domain Pied Piping Condition* (EPC)
 A moved vP contains only the edge domain of its head.

- Elements evacuated out of vP move to (an iterative) TP.

- Nilsen (2003): V2 is remnant Σ P movement to initial position:
 - A Σ P containing the finite verb and the topic moves to initial position.
 - The VP must be evacuated out of the scope of Σ , and moves to a position immediately above Σ P prior to movement of Σ P to initial position.

- Biberauer (2003): vP movement to SpecTP in Afrikaans embedded clauses:
 - Subjects moving to SpecTP to satisfy the EPP-features in T may optionally pied-pipe the whole vP along with them in some languages.
- **Proposal here:** verb movement in ReNN embedded clauses is movement of a remnant vP to SpecTP:
 - Following Biberauer (2003): Subjects moving to SpecTP may pied-pipe the vP. However, crucially only the *edge* of vP, i.e. the finite verb may be pied-piped.
 - Following Nilsen (2003), Müller (2004): All other material apart from the *edge* within moving projection must be evacuated prior to movement.
- This yields the following derivation of examples such as (3) and (9b):





3.2 Embedded verb movement as movement of $[_{vP} t_{Subj} v t_{Obj}]$ to SpecTP

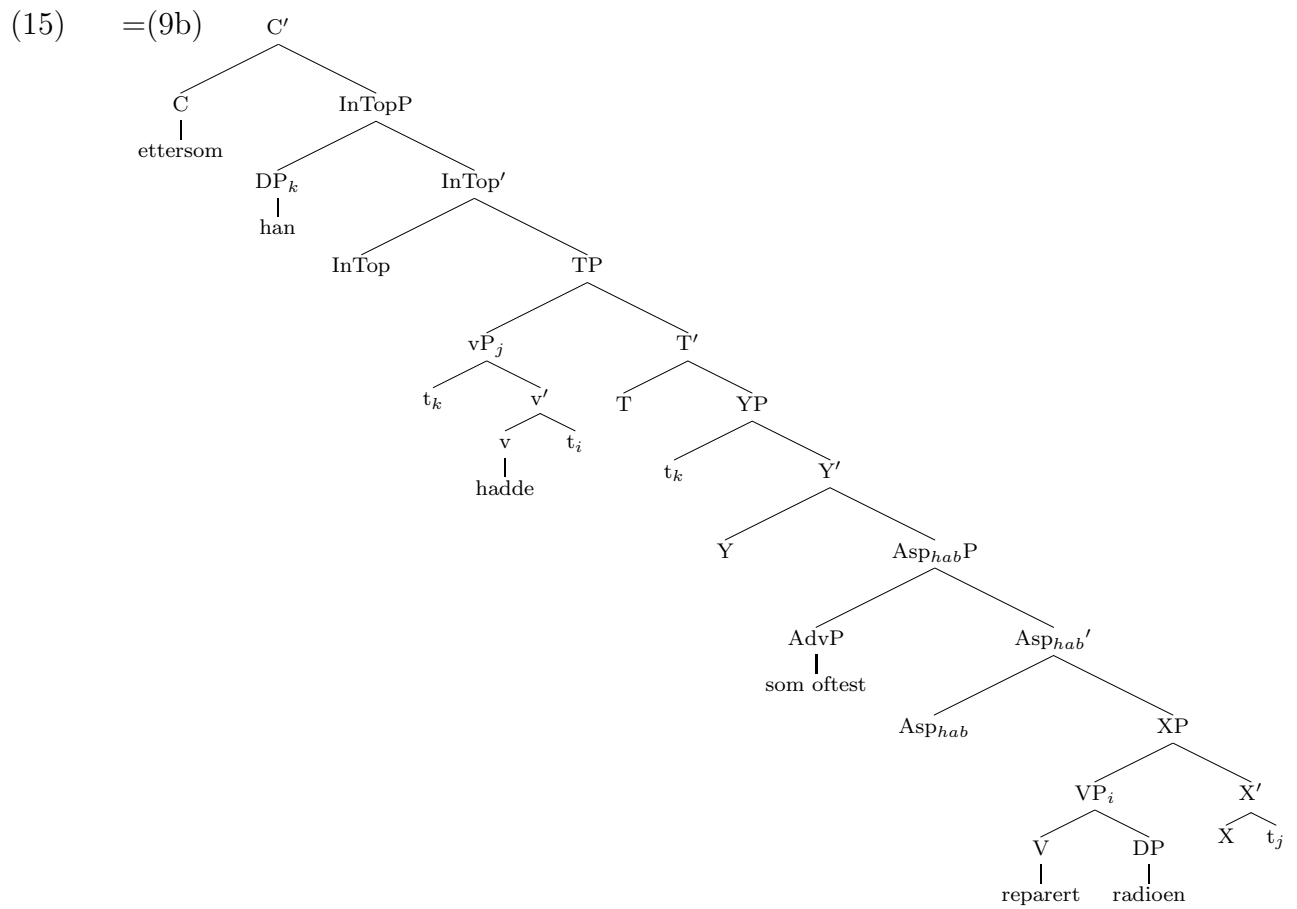
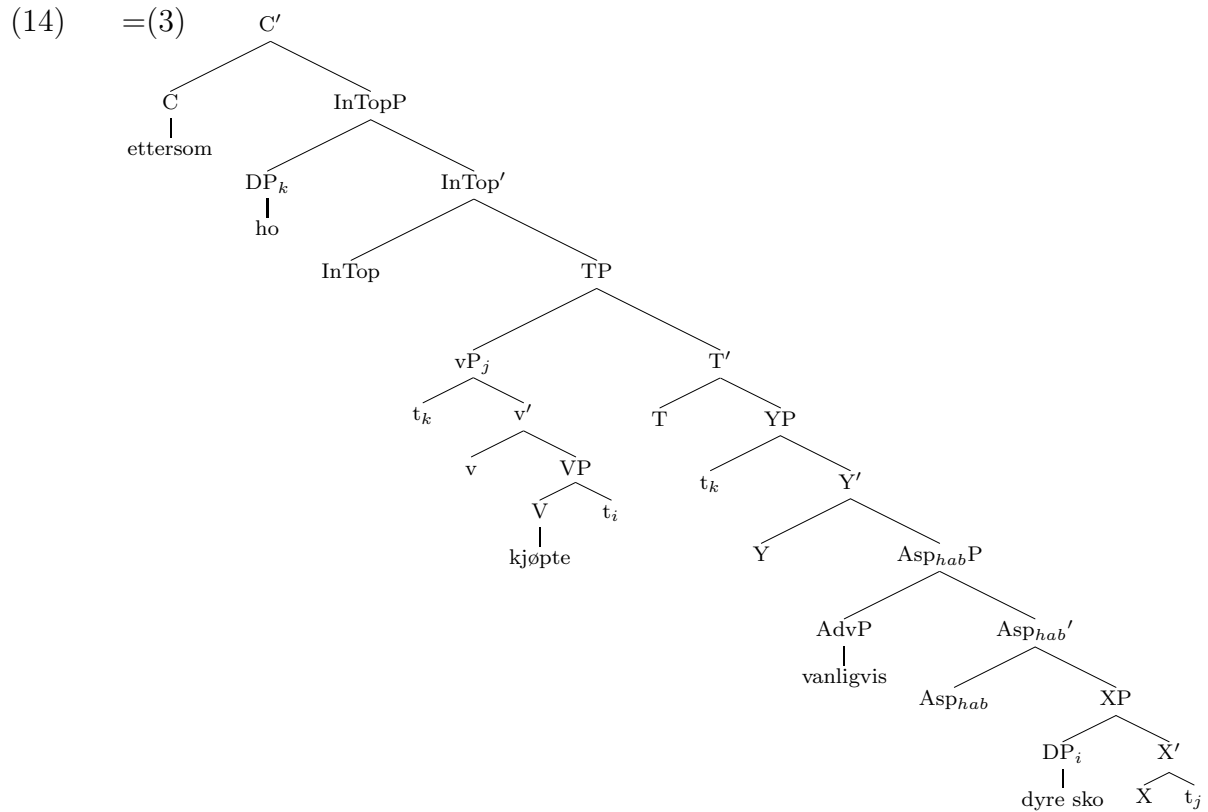
- Mahajan (2003): The EPP-features in T can be checked by a VP moving to SpecTP (his SpecIP), seemingly without the subject, although it may contain the object (Hindi example from Mahajan 2003:226):³

- (13) [raam-ne [_{IP} [_{VP} saare phal khaaye t_{obj}] the [_{PreDP} t_{VP}]]]
Ram-ERG all fruits(masc) eat-PERF-masc-pl be-masc-pl-PAST
 'Ram had eaten all the fruits.'

- **Proposal here:** verb movement in ReNN embedded clauses is movement of a remnant vP containing only the verb to SpecTP:
 - Following Mahajan (2003): The EPP-features in T can either be satisfied by moving the subject to SpecTP, or by moving a remnant vP, containing only the verb, to SpecTP.
 - The subject moves to SpecTP in the ReNN cases without verb movement, whereas the remnant vP will move there in the cases with verb movement.
 - Following Nilsen (2003), Müller (2004): All other material than the verb (both the subject and the object) has been evacuated prior to vP-fronting.
 - vP-fronting has to be followed by movement of the subject to a Spec position above SpecTP, e.g. SpecInTopP.

³Biberauer and Roberts (2003) also hint at this possibility.

- Within this approach the derivations of (3) and (9b) will look like the following:



- At first sight $[_{vP} \text{ Subj } v \dots]$ to SpecTP seems more elegant than $[_{vP} t_{Subj} v \dots]$ to SpecTP:

(i) **Number of evacuated elements:**

$[_{vP} \text{ Subj } v \dots]$: Only the object needs to evacuate prior to vP movement.

$[_{vP} t_{Subj} v \dots]$: Both the object *and* the subject need to evacuate prior to vP movement.

(ii) **Strict S-V order:**

$[_{vP} \text{ Subj } v \dots]$: The subject will always precede the verb, since the two move together as one constituent.

$[_{vP} t_{Subj} v \dots]$: Something like shape conservation is needed in order to make sure that vP-fronting is followed by movement of the subject to a higher position.

(iii) **Restrictions on subject positions:**

$[_{vP} \text{ Subj } v \dots]$: The subject can either be in SpecTP (within the vP) or move on to some higher projection.

$[_{vP} t_{Subj} v \dots]$: The subject has to occupy SpecInTopP when the vP has moved to SpecTP.

4 The two approaches meet some more data

4.1 Verb movement without adjacent subject and verb

- ReNN cases in which both the subject and the verb have moved, but the two elements are still not adjacent:

(16) ... ettersom ho **etter sigende** kjøpe **alltid** de dyreste skoan. ReNN
as she allegedly buys always the expensive.est shoes.the
 ‘... as she allegedly always buys the most expensive shoes.’

- **The $[_{vP} \text{ Subj } v \dots]$ account:**

Such constructions are potentially problematic. Assuming that the adverb *etter sigende* ‘allegedly’ is merged above TP, the subject has to move out of the vP-in-SpecTP to move across this adverb. This will involve movement out of an already moved constituent, (17):

(17) ... $[_{InTopP} ho_k [_{MoodEvidP} etter sigende [_{TP} [_{vP} ho_k kjøpe] [_{AspPerfP} alltid \dots]]$

- **The $[_{vP} t_{Subj} v \dots]$ account:**

Such constructions are not surprising. When the vP has moved to SpecTP, the subject has to move to a higher position, which in this case is a position above *etter sigende* ‘allegedly,’ (18):

(18) ... $[_{InTopP} ho_k [_{MoodEvidP} etter sigende [_{TP} [_{vP} t_k kjøpe] [_{YP} ho_k [_{AspPerfP} alltid \dots]]$

- Thus, if one wants to exclude the possibility of moving something out of an already moved constituent, the $[_{vP} t_{Subj} v \dots]$ approach appears to better account for examples such as (16).

4.2 Subject readings

- In embedded ReNN clauses without verb movement subjects can get either a strong or a weak reading (strong and weak in the sense of Milsark 1977).
- In embedded ReNN clauses with verb movement subjects can only get a strong reading.

Strong vs. weak indefinite subjects

- Without verb movement: Specific or non-specific subject readings, (19a).
- With verb movement: Specific subject reading only, (19b).

- (19) Læreren starta aldri med en gang... ReNN
teacher.the started never with one time
- a. ... ettersom når eleva **vanligvis** kom for seint til timen.
as some pupils usually came to late to classes.the
 ‘The teacher never started at once, as some pupils usually were late for class.’
 (ambiguous)
- b. ... ettersom når eleva kom **vanligvis** for seint til timen.
as some pupils came usually to late to classes.the
 ‘The teacher never started at once, as some (specific) pupils usually were late for class.’ (unambiguous)

Strong vs. weak partitive subjects

- Without verb movement: Specific or non-specific subject readings, (20a).
- With verb movement: Specific subject reading only, (20b).

- (20) Læreren tok alltid med når ekstra brødskeiver... ReNN
teacher.the took always with some extra sandwiches
- a. ... ettersom en av guttan **som oftest** glemte matpakken
as one of boys.the as often.est forgot packed-lunch.the
 hjemme.
home
 ‘The teacher always brought some extra sandwiches, as one of the boys almost always forgot his lunch at home.’ (ambiguous)
- b. ... ettersom en av guttan glemte **som oftest** matpakken
as one of boys.the forgot as often.est packed-lunch.the
 hjemme.
home
 ‘The teacher always brought some extra sandwiches, as one specific boy almost always forgot his lunch at home.’ (unambiguous)

Generic vs. existential subjects

- Without verb movement: Generic or existential subjects possible, (21a) and (21b).
- With verb movement: Only generic subjects possible, (21a); existential subjects are impossible, (21b).

- (21) Vi følte oss i trygge hender ... ReNN
we felt us in safe hands
- a. ... ettersom brannmanna {e} **vanligvis** {e} modig.
as firemen {are} usually {are} brave
 ‘We felt safe as firemen usually are brave.’ (generic)
- b. ... ettersom brannmanna {*e} **vanligvis** {e} tilgjengelig.
as firemen {are} usually {are} available
 ‘We felt safe as firemen usually are available.’ (existential)

- In both approaches, cases without verb movement are unproblematic.
 - The subject moves to SpecTP, and if it stops there, it gets the weak reading.
 - The subject is free to move on to some higher Spec position, and presumably moves to SpecInTopP when it gets the strong reading.

- For cases with verb movement...

• The [_{vP} Subj v ...] account:

- The subject moves out of the vP-in-SpecTP to SpecInTopP to receive the strong reading. Again, this involves movement out of an already moved constituent.
- In addition, why is it impossible for the subject to remain within the vP-in-SpecTP and get the weak reading?
- And why cannot generic subjects move with the vP to SpecTP?

• The [_{vP} t_{Subj} v ...] account:

- These restricted subject readings are actually predicted!
- vP (with only the verb) occupies SpecTP, so the subject cannot move there, but has to move to some higher position.
- Assuming that the weak subject readings are licensed in SpecTP, they are expected to be incompatible with verb movement.

4.3 Coreference with possessive pronouns

- In ReNN, subjects often can be coindexed with either an anaphor/reflexive pronoun (*sin/si/sitt/sine*) or with a possessive pronoun (*hannes/hennes/demmes* ‘his, her, their’), as in the main clause in (22):

- (22) Gitaristen_i glemte **ofte** utstyret sitt_{i/*j} / hannes_{i/j} etter konserta. ReNN
guitarist.the forgot often gear.the REFL his after concerts
 ‘The guitarist often forgot his gear after concerts.’

- Coreference between the subject and a possessive pronoun is also possible in embedded clauses but only without verb movement, (23a). When the verb has moved past the adverb, coreference is not available (23b):

- (23) Trommisen blei irritert... ReNN
drummer.the became annoyed
- a. ... ettersom gitaristen_i ofte glemte utstyret sitt_{i/*j} / hannes_{i/j} etter
as guitarist.the often forgot gear.the REFL his after
 konserta.
concerts
- b. ... ettersom gitaristen_i glemte ofte utstyret sitt_{i/*j} / hannes_{*i/j} etter
as guitarist.the forgot often gear.the REFL his after
 konserta.
concerts
 ‘The drummer got annoyed as the guitarist often forgot his gear after con-
 certs.’

• In both approaches, cases without verb movement are potentially problematic. The subject moves alone to SpecTP under either account, and from here it can presumably bind the pronoun. Hence it is surprising that the subject and the pronoun can be coindexed.

• For cases with verb movement...

• The [_{vP} Subj v ...] account:

– The lack of coreference when there is vP movement is also quite unexpected. The subject is in SpecvP inside SpecTP, arguably a position from which it cannot bind the pronoun. Still, exactly when the subject is in this position, coreference is ruled out.

• The [_{vP} t_{Subj} v ...] account:

— As vP is in SpecTP, the subject must have moved to a position above TP, viz. SpecInTopP. Could it be that subjects cannot bind pronouns from this position?

– Subjects with contrastive stress cannot be coindexed with a possessive pronoun, cf. (24) vs. (25):

- (24) Gutten_i pusse aldri tennern sine_{*i/j} / hannes_{i/j}. ReNN
boy.the brushes never teeth REFL his
 ‘The boy never brushes his teeth.’ (ambiguous)
- (25) Den HER gutten_i pusse aldri tennern sine_{i/*j} / hannes_{*i/j}. ReNN
this here boy brushes never teeth REFL his
 ‘THIS boy never brushes his teeth.’ (unambiguous)

– Embedded subjects moved to a matrix topic position cannot be coindexed with a possessive pronoun, (26):

- (26) Han Jens_i trur æ [t_i ofte pusse tennern sine_{i/*j} / hannes_{*i/j}]. ReNN
he Jens think I often brushes teeth REFL his
 ‘I think Jens often brushes his teeth.’

• Prediction: A subject in SpecInTopP in embedded clauses without verb movement cannot be coindexed with a possessive pronoun.

- (27) ... ettersom den HER gutten_i **aldri** pusse tennern sine_{i/*j} / hannes?_{i/j}. ReNN
as this here boy never brushes teeth REFL his
 ‘... as THIS boy never brushes his teeth.’

- Based on the empirical findings presented in this section, I suggest that the approach inspired by Mahajan (2003) provides the more plausible analysis of verb movement in ReNN embedded (non-V2) contexts.

5 Summary and concluding remarks

- Verb cluster formation is obligatory in Standard Norwegian and EastN, but only optional in certain dialects, such as TrNN and ReNN.
- Verb clusters are formed through a remnant movement operation involving a pair of *lifters* below and above auxiliaries (a VP lifter below and an AdvP lifter above).
- In dialects where verb cluster formation is optional, the lifters are consequently optional, and the order of merge may surface (which in some cases leads to verbs preceding adverbs, without involving verb movement).
- Verb movement in ReNN embedded (non-V2) contexts is argued to be instances of vP movement to SpecTP.
- It is further suggested that the ReNN data favour an approach in which the vP moving to SpecTP only contains the verb, and the subject moves separately, over an approach in which the subject and the verb move together in the vP to SpecTP.

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