

On raising-to-subject as a free syntactic operation

Maša Bešlin, University of Maryland

mbeslin@umd.edu

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1. Introduction

1.1. Raising in generative grammar

- The analysis of raising to subject constructions has changed relatively little since the seminal work of Rosenbaum (1967)
- **Main insights** (English-type raising):
 - Raising verbs are unaccusative verbs which take a clausal complement
 - The embedded subject moves to the subject position of the matrix clause
 - The subject in (1a) must move because it cannot get Case in its original position and/or because of the EPP feature on matrix T (Chomsky 1981, 2008)
 - The embedded subject in (1b) cannot move because the PIC makes it inaccessible to operations outside the embedded CP (Chomsky 2000, 2001) and/or because nominals whose Case/phi-features have been checked cannot move (Activity Condition, Chomsky 2001)

- (1) a. John seemed [_{TP} <John> to like Mary].
b. It seemed [_{CP} that John liked Mary].

1.2. Raising in Serbo-Croatian (SC)

- I will argue that both (2a) and (2b) involve subject-to-subject raising
 - NB: hyper-raising?
- The lack of agreement in (2b) arises because the NP raises too late for the matrix agreement probe to see it
- Failure to agree = ‘default’ agreement on the verb/participle
- In order to account for the full range of data with *trebati* ‘need’, I will argue for an analysis on which (this type of) A-movement is ‘free’

- (2) a. Studentkinje **su** treba-l-**e** da peva-ju.
 students.FEM **AUX.3PL** need-PTCP-FEM.PL DA sing-PRES.3PL
- b. Studentkinje **je** treba-l-**o** da peva-ju.
 students.FEM **AUX.3SG** need-PTCP-NEUT.SG DA sing-PRES.3PL
 ‘The (female) students needed to sing’

1.3. Outline of the talk

§2 Overview of agreement in SC

§3 *Trebati* 'need' is a raising verb; it is an unaccusative verb that takes a clausal complement

§4 The preverbal NP with non-agreeing *trebati* 'need' is (also) a raised subject

§5 Analysis & discussion; a discussion of why other theories will struggle to account for the data

§6 Extending the analysis to English raising-to-subject

§7 Conclusion

2. SC Agreement

- Agreement in SC is generally not optional; transitive predicates agree with their subjects (3a) and intransitive predicates with their sole argument (3b-c)

(3) a. Marij-a i Jovan-a vid-e Milic-u.
 Marija-NOM and Jovana-NOM see-PRES.3PL Milica-ACC
 'Mary and Jovana see Milica'

b. Student-i su stig-l-i. (unaccusative)
 student-NOM.PL AUX.3PL arrive-PTCP.MASC.PL
 'The students have arrived'

c. Student-i su trča-l-i. (unergative)
 student-NOM.PL AUX.3PL run-PTCP-MASC.PL
 'The students have run'

- This makes the pattern in (2), now (4), exceptional; *trebati* 'need' can either agree with (what I will show to be) the subject as usual or not
- In fact, (4b) is the pattern observed when the verb fails to agree with a nominal argument (which has ϕ -features to transmit), as in (5)

(4) a. Studentkinje su treba-l-e da peva-ju.
 students.FEM AUX.3PL need-PTCP-FEM.PL DA sing-PRES.3PL

b. Studentkinje je treba-l-o da peva-ju.
 students.FEM AUX.3SG need-PTCP-NEUT.SG DA sing-PRES.3PL
 'The (female) students needed to sing'

(5) Seva-l-o je.
 flash-PTCP-NEUT.SG AUX.3SG
 'There was lightning'

3. *Trebati* 'need' as a raising verb

3.1. Bi-clausal structure

- *Trebati* 'need' takes a clausal complement

- Wurmbrand (1999): Only verbs with underlying external arguments can be passivized
- Control verbs, but not raising verbs, have thematic external arguments
- *Trebati* cannot be passivized → it is a raising (unaccusative) verb

- (9) a. Biljka je zalive-n-a.
 plant AUX.3SG water-PPTCP-FEM.SG
intended: 'The plant has been watered'
- b. Ovde je trča-n-o.
 here AUX.3SG run-PPTCP-NEUT.SG
'There was running here'
- c. *Ovde je dođe-n-o.
 here AUX.3SG arrive-PPTCP-NEUT.SG
intended: 'There was arriving here'
- d. *Treba-n-o je da se zalij-u biljk-e.
 need-PPTCP-NEUT.SG AUX.3SG DA SE water-3PL plant-NOM.FEM.PL
intended: 'Watering the plants was needed'

- Evidence from idioms (see Appendix)

4. The preverbal NP is a subject

- Recall (2), repeated here as (10):

- (10) a. Studentkinje su treba-l-e da peva-ju.
 students.FEM AUX.3PL need-PTCP-FEM.PL DA sing-PRES.3PL
- b. Studentkinje je treba-l-o da peva-ju.
 students.FEM AUX.3SG need-PTCP-NEUT.SG DA sing-PRES.3PL
'The (female) students needed to sing'

- **UNANSWERED QUESTION:** Why is *trebati* in (10b) not agreeing with the preverbal NP?
- **POSSIBLE ANSWER:** The NP in (10b) is A'-moving (e.g., to a topic position)

→ This idea seems immediately suspect since the NP does not show any of the usual properties of topics; for example, it can be a universally/negatively quantified NP and it can occur in a new information context (see Appendix for examples)

- We can use facts about relativization to argue for the subject status of the preverbal NP
- In SC relative clauses, it is generally impossible to place an NP between the relative pronoun and the subject (11a)
- The NP that precedes (both personal and impersonal) *trebati* is still possible (11b)

- (11) a. *[Čovek [kog [Marija i Jovana]_i pro/Marko tvrdi-Ø da t_i
 man who Mary and Jovana pro/Marko claim-3SG DA
 vid-e]] je visok.
 see-3PL is tall
 'The man who Mary and Jovana s/he/Marko claims see is tall'
- b. [Čovek [kog [Marija i Jovana]_i treba-Ø/-ju da t_i vid-e]]
 man who Mary and Jovana need-3SG 3PL DA see-3PL
 je visok.
 is tall
 'The man who Mary and Jovana need to see is tall'

- Assume that SC relative clauses have the structure in (12a) and that SC CPs project only one specifier (see Richards 1997)
- In the offending structure, spec CP is occupied by the relative pronoun *kog* 'whom', but *Marija i Jovana* 'Marija and Jovana' is trying to fit in the same position (12b)
- The fact that *Marija i Jovana* 'Marija and Jovana' in (12c) is not competing with the relative pronoun strongly suggests that it is in an A-position, e.g., spec TP (23c)

- (12) a. [NP man [CP whom C [+rel] [TP ...Marija see-3SG...]]]
 b. [NP man [CP **whom** // [Marija and Jovana]_i C [+rel] [TP claim-3SG... t_i]]]
 c. [NP man [CP **whom** C [+rel] [TP [Marija and Jovana]_i need(-3PL)... t_i]]]

NB: See the Appendix for scope-related and binding evidence to the same effect

5. Analysis

5.1. First, some more data

- The subject can stay in the embedded clause if *trebati* is in the non-agreeing form (13a), but not if it is in the agreeing form (13b)
- This data poses a problem for analyses on which raising applies in order to satisfy unvalued features on the nominal (e.g., Case, Chomsky 2008)
- Motivating the raising though a movement probe on matrix T will have difficulties explaining why the subject in (13a) can remain in situ
- Possible timing analyses, which rely on the presence of two features (e.g. [N*] and [uφ]) on T and capitalize on the order in which these features are satisfied, will also have trouble accounting for the availability of (13a)

- (13) a. Trebal-o je da Marija i ja ide-mo na pijacu.
 needed-NEUT.SG AUX.3SG DA Mary and I go-1PL on market
 'Mary and I should have gone to the market'
- b. *Trebal-e smo da Marija i ja idemo na pijacu.
 needed-FEM.PL AUX.1PL DA Mary and I go-1PL on market

5.2. A-movement is free

INGREDIENTS:

- i Suppose that assume that **probing for agreement is only downward, and based on c-command**
 - ii Suppose also that the agreement probe on T cannot ‘see’ the subject NP in its base generated position (phasal complement?); (13) points to this conclusion
 - iii Assume further that **there is no movement probe**—A-movement is ‘free’; more precisely, (this kind of) A-movement fully optional, it can occur at any stage of the derivation (or not), and it is constrained only by the requirement that the output be well-formed (see Baker & Vinokurova 2010 and Rezac et al. 2014 for explorations of this idea in different domains)
 - So, why is raising optional?
 - Because there is no movement probe; the subject NP can move or stay in situ
 - Why can the subject stay low and unagreed with?
 - Because the subject-NP can clearly be licensed in situ, and agreement probing is free to happen and fail (Preminger 2011, 2014)
 - Why does it look like agreement with the preverbal NP is optional?
 - Because movement (of this kind) can freely occur at any step of the derivation, ipso facto it can occur before or after agreement probing
 - Precisely when or where is the subject (in)visible to the agreement probe?
 - In answering this question, we first need to determine the identity of the embedded complement’s topmost projection
 - Fortunately, Todorović & Wurmbrand (2020) have devised diagnostics that split BCS *da*-complements into three groups: *vP*, TP and CP; according to all of these, *trebati* behaves like a verb that takes a TP complement
 - If the embedded clause is a TP, why can’t the matrix verb agree with the subject in situ (13)?
 - One possible answer: because the embedded clause is a phase
 - If this is the case, agreement should be possible when the subject is at the phase edge (i.e. in spec TP), but not when the subject stays low (e.g. in spec *vP*)
 - If *da* ‘da’ is in T, then the subject in (13b) is indeed lower than spec TP, and therefore inaccessible to the agreement probe
 - When the subject and *da* ‘da’ switch places, the sentence becomes grammatical (14) *with the agreement on the matrix predicate*
- (14) Trebal-e smo **Marija i ja da** idemo na pijacu.
 needed-FEM.PL AUX.1PL Mary and I DA go-1PL on market
 ‘Mary and I should have gone to the market’

- However, SC is a language that allows rampant scrambling; therefore, we cannot know from (14) alone whether the subject is in spec TP of the embedded clause, or whether it has A-moved to the matrix, and everything else (basically the participle) was scrambled to the left of it
- Recall SC has a class of NPIs (*i*-NPIs) that can only be licensed by superordinate negation; furthermore, there is another class of NPIs (*ni*-NPIs) that are licensed only by clause-mate negation (Progovac 1991)
- We can use this to test whether the subject in (14) is at the edge of the embedded clause, or whether it has moved to the matrix
- In fact, it seem that both options are possible
- In (15a), the subject is in spec TP of the embedded clause; the *i*-NPI is licensed by the superordinate negation, and the matrix verb can agree because the subject is at the edge of the phase
- In (15b), the subject has raised into the matrix clause and the other matrix material has been scrambled to the left of it; the *ni*-NPI is licensed by clause-mate negation, and the matrix verb agrees with the subject

(15)	a.	Ne	bi	treba-o	i-ko	da	to	uradi.
		NEG	AUX.AOR.3SG	need-LPTCP.MASC.SG	i-who	DA	that	do.3SG
		'No one should do that'						
	b.	Ne	bi	treba-o	ni-ko	da	to	uradi.
		NEG	AUX.AOR.3SG	need-LPTCP.MASC.SG	ni-who	DA	that	do.3SG
		'No one should do that'						

- Sanity check:

→ (16a) is good because the *i*-NPI is licensed by superordinate negation + default agreement

→ (16b) is bad because the agreement probe can't reach the low subject

→ (16c) is bad because the *ni*-NPI is not licensed by clause-mate negation

(16)	a.	Ne	bi	treba- lo	da	i-ko	to	uradi.
		NEG	AUX.AOR.3SG	need-LPTCP.NEUT.SG	DA	i-who	that	do.3SG
		'No one should do that'						
	b.	*Ne	bi	treba- o	da	i-ko	to	uradi.
		NEG	AUX.AOR.3SG	need-LPTCP.MASC.SG	DA	i-who	that	do.3SG
		'No one should do that'						
	c.	*Ne	bi	treba-(l)-o	da	ni-ko	to	uradi.
		NEG	AUX.AOR.3SG	need.LPTCP-NEUT/MASC.SG	DA	ni-who	that	do.3SG
		'No one should do that'						

SUMMARY:

- If probing for agreement occurs when the subject is in spec *v*P of the embedded clause, it will fail
- Since A-movement is 'free', it is also free to not occur; the subject-NP can clearly be licensed in situ (cf. (13a))

→ The NP can stay low, out-of-reach of the higher agreement probe, which fails to find a target and therefore shows the characteristic morphology associated with unvalued ϕ -features (17a)

- If movement to spec TP of the embedded clause applies first, the relevant NP will be in the domain of matrix T when agreement probing takes place

→ The result is ϕ -feature agreement between the subject and the matrix T (17b)

→ As before, movement of the subject to the matrix clause is free to apply after this or not

- This analysis explains the 5-out-of-6 grammaticality pattern I represent schematically in (18)

(17) a. *agreement first*: T[$u\phi$] need-3SG ... [TP da [vP Marija and Jovana ...

b. *movement first*: T[ϕ : 3PL] need-3PL ... [TP [Marija and Jovana]_{*i*} da [vP *t_i*...

(18)	NP.3PL – need-3SG – DA	need-3SG – NP.3PL – DA	need-3SG – DA – NP.3PL
	NP.3PL – need-3PL – DA	need-3PL – NP.3PL – DA	*need-3PL – DA – NP.3PL

5.3. Evidence from hybrid forms

- Hybrid forms, where one member of {auxiliary, participle} agrees with the subject, and the other one does not, are not at all uncommon (see Klikovac 2011:8)
- Crucially, the element that agrees in these hybrid forms is always the auxiliary and never the participle (19)

(19) a. Sada bi-h ja treba-l-o da se naljutim.
 now AUX.AOR-1SG I need-PTCP-NEUT.SG DA SE be-angry
 'Now I should become angry at you'

b. Iako su koncerti treba-l-o da predstavljaju...
 although AUX.3PL concerts need-PTCP-NEUT.SG DA represent
 'Even though the concerts were supposed to represent...'

c. Takođe bi-ste treba-l-o da budete pažljivi prilikom
 Also AUX.AOR-2PL need-PTCP-NEUT.SG DA be careful when
 korišćenja rumenila...
 using blush
 'You should also be careful when using blush...'

- Assuming that agreement probing happens in lockstep with structure building, our analysis predicts the pattern in (19)
- In the first step of deriving the pattern in (19c), the subject is low; the participle probes for agreement and does not find a goal—the ϕ features of the participle stay unvalued and are spelled-out as neuter singular (20a)
- Before matrix T is merged, the subject can either move or stay in situ
- If the subject stays in situ (or moves *after* agreement probing), we get the familiar non-agreeing pattern, e.g. (10b) and (13a)

- If the subject moves to the specifier of the embedded clause *before* agreement probing, matrix T will agree with the subject, and we will get the hybrid pattern in (19c), see (20b)

(20) a. *first step: [u ϕ] on Part spelled-out as NEUT. SG.*

[PARTP Part [u ϕ] need-PTCP-NEUT.SG [TP DA you...]]

b. *second step: T agrees with the moved subject*

[TP T [ϕ :2pl] AUX-2PL [PARTP Part [u ϕ] need-PTCP-NEUT.SG [TP [you]_i DA t_i...]]

6. Beyond SC

- Recall the English pattern in (1), repeated here as (21): the embedded subject must raise out of a non-finite clause, and it cannot raise out of a finite clause

(21) a. John seemed [TP <John> to like Mary].

b. It seemed [CP that John liked Mary].

- Recall also our definition of ‘free’ A-movement: it is fully optional, it can occur at any stage of the derivation (or not), and it is constrained only by the requirement that the output be well-formed
- Are there independent reasons to think that the output in (21a) would not be well-formed had the subject not moved out of the embedded clause?

→ Yes, since non-finite T cannot license a DP in its specifier position¹

- Are there independent reasons to think that the output in (21b) would not be well-formed had the subject moved out of the embedded clause?

→ Yes; assuming that the embedded CP is a phase, the subject would have to A'-move from spec TP to spec CP, and then A-move to spec TP of the matrix clause—this would be a case of improper movement (Chomsky 1973, May 1979, Williams 2003, Abels 2008)

- Why does the SC case not constitute a case of improper movement?

→ Because it seems that the complement clause is a TP, according to the diagnostics in Todorović & Wurmbrand 2020

7. Conclusion

- I have argued that the SC verb *trebati* ‘need’ is a raising-to-subject verb
- Accounting for the full range of data observed with *trebati* does not seem possible with ‘mainstream’ generative analyses of raising-to-subject
- Instead, I showed that the data is best accounted for under an approach where (this kind of) A-movement is fully optional, it can occur at any stage of the derivation (or not), and it is constrained only by the requirement that the output be well-formed

¹This is also true of the SC infinitive, but recall that the DA-complement of *trebati* ‘need’ is finite

- I also showed that this approach can be extended to English-type raising → there is no trigger for raising per se; rather, independent factors (Case licensing and improper movement) filter out the impossible constructions

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8. Appendix

8.1. Restructuring?

- *Trebati* forms part of a bi-clausal structure throughout its syntactic life
- Restructuring verbs allow long object movement, (Wurmbrand 2014); *trebati* does not (22b)

(22) a. Estas paredes están siendo terminadas de pint-ar.
 these walls are being finished to paint-INF
 'They were finishing painting these walls'

b. *Ovi zadaci su treba-n-i da urad-imo.
 these tasks AUX.3PL need-PPTCP.MASC.PL DA do-1PL
 'We should have done the tasks'

- Restructuring verbs allow clitic climbing, cf. (13a) from Wurmbrand 2014; *trebati* with a finite complement does not (23b)

- *Trebati* can also take an infinitival complement – clitic climbing is then allowed (23c)

(23) a. Marek ją zdecydował się przeczytać tCL.
 Marek it decided REFL read.INF tCL
 'Marek decided to read it'

b. ??Jovana ga je trebal-a/-o da kup-i tCL.
 Jovana it AUX.3SG needed-FEM.SG/NEUT.SG DA buy-3PL tCL
intended: 'Jovana should have bought it'

c. Jovana ga je trebal-a kupi-ti tCL.
 Jovana it AUX.3SG needed-FEM.SG buy-INF tCL
 'Jovana should have bought it'

8.2. Raising: Evidence from idioms

- It is well known that idioms can survive under raising, but not under control (24a-b)
- The explanation that is given for this contrast is that the idiom is introduced as a syntactic constituent in the raising structure, but not in the control structure.
- For the BCS idiom in (25a), we observe that the idiomatic meaning is preserved with *trebati* 'need' (25b), but not with *želiti* 'want' (25c), further showing that *trebati* is a raising verb

(24) a. [The cat]_i seemed t_i to be out of the bag.

b. [The cat]_i tried PRO_i to be out of the bag.

(25) a. I vrapci na grani to već znaj-u.
 even sparrows on branch that already know-3PL
 'Everyone knows that'

b. I vrapci na grani treba-(ju) da to već znaj-u.
 even sparrows on branch need-3PL da that already know-3PL
 'Everyone should know that'

c. I vrapci na grani žel-e da to već znaj-u.
 even sparrows on branch need-3PL da that already know-3PL
 'Even the sparrows on the branch want to know that', *no idiomatic meaning*

8.3. The preverbal NP is not a topic

- Topics need to be under the scope of existential quantification (Reinhart 1976, a.o); universally and negatively quantified NPs are topic resistant, but they occur freely with *trebati* (26)

- (26) a. Svi treba(-ju) da prim-e vakcinu.
 everyone need-3PL DA get-1PL vaccine
 'Everyone needs to get the vaccine'
- b. Ni-ko ne treba(-Ø) da prim-i vakcinu.
 NEG-who NEG need-3SG DA get -3SG
 'No one should get the vaccine'

- Topicalization is also impossible in a new information context (27a), but sentence-initial NPs with *trebati* are fine in this same context (27b)

(27) Context: "What's happening?"

- a. #[Marija i Jovana]_i pro misli-m da t_i id-u.
 Mary and Jovana pro think-1SG DA t go-3PL
 'Mary and Jovana, I think they are going'
- b. [Marija i Jovana]_i treba(-ju) da t id-u.
 Mary and Jovana need-3PL DA t go-3PL
 'Mary and Jovana need to go'

8.4. The preverbal NP is a subject

8.4.1. Evidence from scope

- While it is not (cross-linguistically) unheard of that A'-movement can change scope relations, A-movement regularly does so
- (28) has two readings resulting from the interaction of the negation and the quantifier
- The inverse scope reading, where the negation scopes over the quantifier, may result from the quantifier's position in the embedded clause before raising
- Additionally, the quantifier may scope over the negation, suggesting that the NP *svi vakcinisani* 'all vaccinated (people)' has moved to an A-position above the negation

- (28) [Svi vakcinisan-i]_i ne treba(-ju) da t_i se oseća-ju sigurno.
 all vaccinated-PL NEG need-3PL DA SE feel-3PL safe
 'It is not the case that all vaccinated people should feel safe' NEG > ALL
 'For all vaccinated people, it is the case that they shouldn't feel safe' ALL > NEG

8.4.2. Evidence from binding

- *Svoj* 'own' is a subject-oriented anaphor; in (29a), I show that *svoj* is bound by the subject even though another NP (*Jovani*) is structurally closer to the anaphor
- The sentence-initial NP in the non-agreeing *trebati* construction also binds this anaphor (29b), suggesting that it is a subject

- A potential problem: the adverbial containing the reflexive *svoj* ‘own’ in (29b) may be modifying the lexical verb *naslikati* ‘paint’ and being bound by the trace of *Marija* ‘Mary’ in the embedded clause
- However, we can be certain that the adverbial containing the reflexive *svoj* ‘own’ in (29b) is modifying *trebati* and not the lexical verb because the two adverbials in (29b), namely ‘of her own accord’ and ‘on the authorities’ order’ cannot modify the same predicate—the result is a semantic anomaly (29c).

- (29) a. [Marija_i i Milica]_i daju [[Jovani]_j [svoj-u]_{i/*j} torb-u.
 Marija.NOM and Milica.NOM give Jovana.DAT own-FEM.ACC bag-FEM.ACC
 ‘Marija and Milica are giving Jovana their bag’
- b. [Marija]_j treba(-∅) svoj-om_j volj-om da t_i naslika mural
 Marija need-3SG own-FEM.INS will-FEM.INS DA paint mural
 na naređenje vlasti.
 on order authorities
 ‘It needs to be of her own accord that Milica paints a mural on the authorities’ order’
- c. #[Marija]_j je naslikala mural svoj-om_j volj-om na
 Marija AUX.3SG painted mural own-FEM.INS will-FEM.INS on
 naređenje vlasti.
 order authorities
 ‘Mary painted a mural of her own accord on the authorities’ order’

8.5. Relativization

- Recall that the contrast in (11) was used to argue that the preverbal NP with *trebati* does not occupy the same position as A’-moved NPs
- In some cases, the acceptability of sentences similar to (11a) improves, e.g. (30)
- The crucial (and only) difference between (11a) and (30) is that the matrix verb has an overt agreement marker, which may make the presence of *pro* (and, concomitantly, the fact that *Marija i Jovana* is not the subject) more salient
- I would argue, however, that the contrast between (11) and (30) is purely about *acceptability*, not about *grammaticality*; more specifically, (30) may be easier to parse than (11a), but it is not more grammatical than (11a)
- If the structure with *trebati* (11b) and the one in (30) were parallel, we would expect (30) to be perfect, contrary to fact

- (30) ??Čovek kog Marija i Jovana *pro* tvrđi-**mo** da vid-e je
 man who Mary and Jovana *pro* claim-1PL DA see-3PL is
 visok.
 tall
 ‘The man who Mary and Jovana we claim see is tall’