论英语中进入Pro-XP的合并

On Merging into Pro-XP in the English Language

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序

乔姆斯基的生成语法曾经在中国相当流行，但是现在运用乔姆斯基的生成语法理论的中国学者不多了，常常见到的是对这个语言学理论的否定，一直也有人宣布乔姆斯基理论的破产。实际上从20世纪下半叶起就不断有人预言乔姆斯基理论马上要被抛弃了。不过，历史证明乔姆斯基的生成语法是一种具有强韧生命力的学说，这个学术生命力有几个源头。首先是乔姆斯基和他的学派在几十年来表现出非凡的创新能力，语言学史上还没有一种学说像乔姆斯基的生成语法那样从不满足于已经建立起来并得到广泛应用的理论模式，自我扬弃，从标准理论到最简方案，几十年来，一次一次地浴火重生，推陈出新。并且这种理论更新的动力基本上都来自理论内在发展的逻辑。批评者会指出，相比于《句法理论》的模式，目前的最简方案可以说是面貌全非了，怎么还能称作是同一个生成语法？但是无法否定的是，乔姆斯基提出的所有的理论模式都是建立在同一个理论基点上的，都是为了回答同一个理论问题，都是同一个理论取向的结果，技术框架的持续演化，表明的是一种自我完善的可贵努力。其次，乔姆斯基理论的生命力还在于它的可证伪性。作为一种形式主义的理论，乔姆斯基的生成语法具有内在的逻辑自洽性，其严密的逻辑论证一直在接受着语言经验材料的检验，这赋予了乔姆斯基生成语法研究以活力，导致了理论上不间断的探讨和修正，这也吸引了一大批仍然相信语言学是一门科学的学者加入乔姆斯基学派的研究队

伍。反观当代的一些其他的理论学派，因为不具备概念上和方法上的严谨性，也就没有可证伪性，仿佛能解释几乎一切语言现象，实际上提供不出科学的解释，因此其生命力也就有限得很。

徐浩是一位思维缜密的年轻学者，他在进入语言学领域时就喜欢上了乔姆斯基的生成语法，认为这是一种真正具有科学性的语言学理论。他的这部著作运用乔姆斯基的最简方案分析“there”句及有关句法结构，在广泛检验语言现象的基础上，提出了他的理论假说。我一直关注着他的研究和这部著作的撰写，深知这样一个形式语法研究的艰难之处。但是徐浩是一位知难而进的勇者，一旦确定了目标，他就绝不退缩也不肯降低标准，最终完成了他的研究。这部著作结构完整、推理严密、逻辑性强，是对最简方案理论的一个贡献，得到了许多专家的赞扬。现在这部著作出版了，能让更多对最简方案和形式语法感兴趣的同行和读者也能了解这项很有价值的工作。在形式语法研究比较薄弱的中国语言学界，出版这样一部专著更有其意义，对于热爱语言学的读者来说，阅读这部著作或许比读其他类型的语言学著作要更花功夫，但是获益也会更大。

这部著作的出版标志着徐浩的生成语法研究工作的一个重要的成果，他还在这条研究道路上继续前进，我衷心祝愿他在今后的研究中取得更大的成绩。

褚孝泉

2013 年 6 月 30 日

内 容 提 要

生成语法最简方案中的合并是建立句法结构的具有概念必要性的操作。本研究以此研究为基础，对合并加以发展，提出自然语言允许一种可作为合并子类的“进入合并”，它对代词和与之特征匹配的成分进行合并。其中，代词具有像箱子一样的内部结构，需要合适的特征填充，与之特征匹配的成分发挥特征携带者的作用。因此，可将这两者的合并类比为后者“进入”前者的合并，即进入合并。由进入合并构成的结构称为“箱子结构”，其中代词称为“箱子携带者”，与代词特征匹配的成分称为“箱子内容”。在进入合并的基础上，一系列英语结构得到更具有描写充分性的说明，这些结构包括代词—限定词结构、*there* 填充结构、*it* 填充结构、句子主语结构、外部动词结构和方位倒装结构。这些经验事实印证了将进入合并作为理论构件的必要性。

Abstract

Merge, as a virtual conceptual necessity, is an operation responsible for phrase structure building in the Minimalist Program of generative grammar. This book builds on the concept and proposes that natural grammar allows for what I call INTO-Merge as a subspecies of Merge, which combines a pro-element with a feature-matching element. The operation is called INTO-Merge in the sense that the pro-element provides a box-like internal structure with feature-designated slots in need of proper bearers and the feature-matching element performs the function of such feature-bearers, hence the metaphor of the latter being merged into the box the former provides. The structure thus formed is dubbed Box Structure with the pro-element as Box-bearer and the feature-matching element as Box-contents. The existence of INTO-Merge as a subtype of Merge, together with the Box Structure it forms, is proposed and defended with a series of constructions in the English language, such as the pronoun-determiner structure, the *there*-expletive construction, the *it*-expletive construction, the sentential subject structure, outside verbals and the locative inversion construction. To the extent that these constructions receive an adequate analysis on the basis of INTO-Merge, I conclude that INTO-Merge is a necessary construct of grammar.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction

This research is concerned with a special Merge operation, which combines a pro-element with a feature-matching element, and with a series of constructions in the English language, in which the said operation is argued to play a crucial part in their derivation. This chapter introduces the goals of the research (see § 1.1), reviews the related literature on Merge (see § 1.2), sets up the theoretical framework and core assumptions (see § 1.3) upon which the discussion is built, and lays out the organization of the book (see § 1.4).

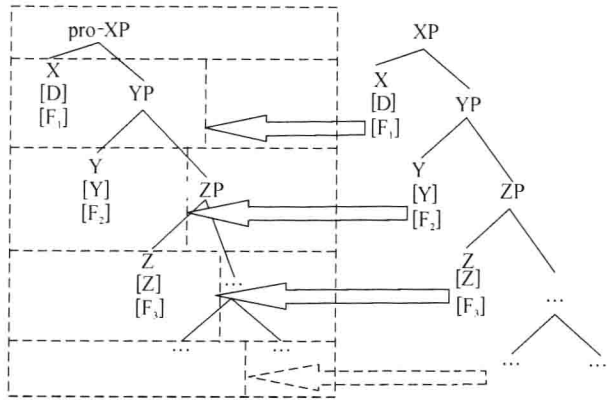
1.1 Goals

The theoretical goal of the research is to argue for the existence of INTO-Merge, which merges an XP, where X is a variable ranging over all possible syntactic categories, "into" a feature-matching pro-XP, hence INTO-Merge. The empirical goal of the research is to show that a series of English constructions can be properly analyzed with the proposed INTO-Merge.

The proposal of INTO-Merge is based on the idea that pro-forms have complex internal structures (Cardinaletti 1994; Déchaine and Wiltschko 2002; Ritter 1995; etc.), by reason of which the merger between pro-XP and XP can be visualized as the latter enters into the internal structure of the former. Specifically, I argue that the internal structure of a pro-XP is visible when merging with a feature-matching XP, and the features of the visible pro-XP are in need of proper bearers, which function the XP performs. The diagram in

(1) illustrates the merger operation:

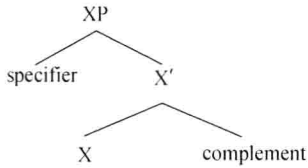
(1) Merging pro-XP and XP



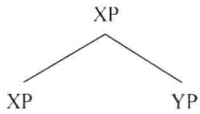
A feature-matching requirement between the pro-XP and the XP follows from the above exposition of INTO-Merge. If the XP does not match with the pro-XP in features, it will fail to perform the function of feature-bearers, and consequently the INTO-Merge fails. Metaphorically, the merger is like putting articles into a box with article-designated slots, with the requirement that all slots be occupied by appropriate items. For this reason, I term the structure thus formed as Box Structure, the pro-XP as Box-bearer and the XP as Box-contents. Taking the metaphor further, I argue that Box Structure is syntactically equivalent to the Box-bearer (Box Structure Corollary, see §2.3.4), or more theoretically, Box-contents is invisible in overt syntax, which suggests its Phase domain nature.

Apparently, INTO-Merge is unorthodoxy. For one thing, the operation as proposed does not create phrase structures of well-established forms, such as (2) for specifier-head-complement structure and (3) for adjunction. The structure it creates is something like that of (4), where the dotted box indicates the Box-contents status of XP.

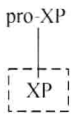
(2) specifier-head-complement structure



(3) Adjunction



(4) INTO-Merge



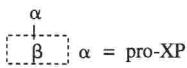
For another, the mechanism that underlies the operation is special in requiring feature-matching relationship between the two objects involved, which is undetected in other phrase structure building. For instance, the merger between V *kick* and DP *the ball* in (5a) does not require them to be feature-matching, and the adjunct of *fiercely* in (5b) is unlikely to match with the element it adjoins to in feature, given that its categorial feature [Adv] is unique in the structure.

(5) a. $[_{VP}[_{V}$ kick$]$ $[_{DP}$ the ball$]]$
b. John kicked the ball fiercely.

However, the Merge operation as proposed in Chomsky (1995, 2000, 2001, 2004) provides a theoretical possibility for the existence of INTO-Merge. Merge, as an effort-free operation, takes two syntactic objects α and β and combines them into a single element $K = \{\alpha, \beta\}$. In principle, any two objects can be merged in overt syntax as long as the merger can satisfy interface conditions, the effects of which may be equivalent to the pre-Minimalist concepts such as phrase structure rules, projection principle, subcategorization (c-selection)

and s-selection. Essentially, the INTO-Merge in the form of (6) is a subspecies of Merge in that it practically combines two objects into one with the Box-contents β merged into the Box-bearer α, and the underlying mechanism provides justification for the merger to satisfy interface conditions.

(6) INTO-Merge



With INTO-Merge established as a theoretical possibility, I show that a series of constructions in the English language can receive an adequate analysis with INTO-Merge. These constructions include the pronoun-determiner structure, the *there*-expletive construction, the *it*-expletive construction, the sentential subject structure, outside verbals and the locative inversion construction.

Concretely, for the pronoun-determiner structure in (7), I argue that the pronoun *we* and the nominal *linguists* form a pro-DP Box Structure with the pro-DP *we* as Box-bearer and the DP *linguists* as Box-contents. The distribution of the structure in English follows as a result of the feature-matching relation between Box-bearer and Box-contents.

(7) [We linguists] do not like [you mathematicians].

For *there*-expletive constructions like (8), I argue that the expletive *there* and the associate *several linguists* form a pro-DP Box Structure with the former as Box-bearer. The derivation of the structure can be roughly represented as (9), where *there* undergoes Agree with T and moves to specTP. On the assumption that *there* specifies for features of [Num: ∅] and [Definiteness: – definite], the feature-matching requirement of Box Structure ensures that the relevant finite T in the structure is valued the number feature of the associate and that the associate should be an indefinite expression, hence the long-distance agreement and the Definiteness Effect of the *there*-expletive

construction.

(8) a. There are several linguists in the room.

b. There remain several linguists in the room.

(9) [$_{TP}$ there [$_{T'}$ T ... [$_{Box}$ *t*-[several linguists]]] ...].

For *it*-expletive constructions like (10), I argue that the expletive *it* and the associate CP forms a pro-CP Box Structure. This analysis explains the non-argument and non-adjunct status of the associate CP. The derivation for (10a) is roughly represented as (11).

(10) a. It is likely [$_{CP}$ that John will win the competition].

b. It is reported [$_{CP}$ that John will win the competition].

(11) [$_{TP}$ it [$_{T'}$ T ... [$_{Box}$ *t*-[$_{CP}$ that John will win the competition]]]].

For sentential subject structures like (12), I argue that a null referential *it* (it_{null}) forms a pro-CP Box Structure with the subject CP at specTP. It follows from this analysis that the real subject in the structure is the null *it* rather than the so-called subject CP, which accounts for the major properties of the structure. The diagram in (13) roughly illustrates the derivation of (12a).

(12) a. [$_{CP}$ That John will win the competition] is possible.

b. [$_{CP}$ That John lost the competition] is a tragedy.

(13) [$_{TP}$[$_{Box}$ it_{null}-[$_{CP}$ that John will win the competition]] [$_{T'}$ is possible *t*]].

For outside verbals like (14), I argue that the expletive *there* as a species different from the expletive *there* in structures like (8) forms a pro-PP Box Structure with a locative PP. The analysis accounts for a group of differences between outside verbals and the *there*-expletive construction. The diagram in (15) roughly illustrates the derivation of (14a).