

最简方案框架下英语小 句中名词合法性研究

祁小雯 著

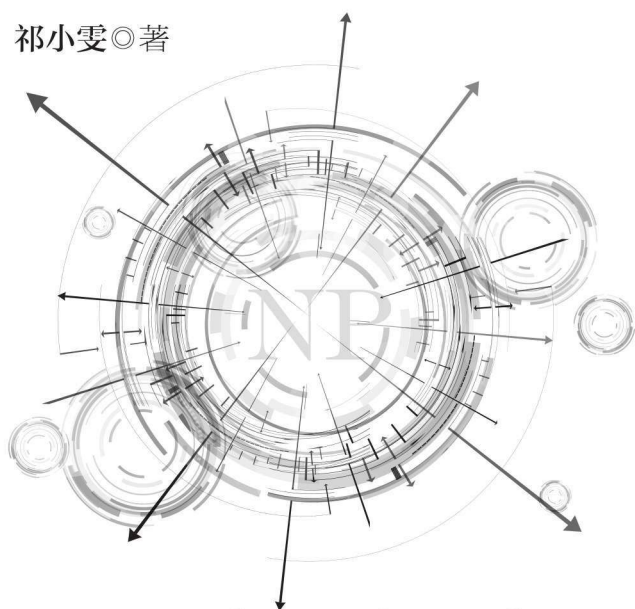


上海交通大学出版社



（英文版）
最简方案框架下
英语小句中
名词合法性研究

祁小雯◎著



NP LICENSING
IN ENGLISH
SMALL CLAUSES

—— A MINIMALIST APPROACH

内容提要

本书在最简方案框架下研究英语小句中名词性谓语的合法性问题,解释小句中位于谓词位置的非论元名词项合法性的检验机制。旨在进一步加强生成句法理论的一致性,并且验证最简方案解释的充分性。本书还从句法和语义两个方面讨论了小句结构特点,小句是一个功能中心语 F 的最大投射 FP,小句中的功能中心语 F 为 Pr,小句中的主语位于(Spec, PrP),谓语位于功能中心语的补足语位置。本书读者对象为高校语言学专业教师和句法学方向的研究生。

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

最简方案框架下英语小句中名词合法性研究 / 祁小雯著.

—上海:上海交通大学出版社,2017

ISBN 978-7-313-18002-5

I. ①最… II. ①祁… III. ①英语-句法-研究 IV. ①H314.3

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2017) 第 203711 号

最简方案框架下英语小句中名词合法性研究(英文版)

著 者: 祁小雯

出版发行: 上海交通大学出版社

邮政编码: 200030

出 版 人: 谈 毅

印 制: 凤凰数码印务有限公司

开 本: 710mm×1000mm 1/16

字 数: 229 千字

版 次: 2017 年 10 月第 1 版

书 号: ISBN 978-7-313-18002-5/H

定 价: 46.00 元

地 址: 上海市番禺路 951 号

电 话: 021-64071208

经 销: 全国新华书店

印 张: 11.25

印 次: 2017 年 10 月第 1 次印刷

版权所有 侵权必究

告 读 者: 如发现本书有印装质量问题请与印刷厂质量科联系

联系电话: 025-83657309

前言



本书在最简方案框架下研究英语小句中名词性谓语的合法性问题,解释小句中位于谓词位置的非论元名词项合法性的检验机制。旨在进一步加强生成句法理论的一致性,并且验证最简方案解释的充分性。

现有针对小句名词性谓词的格检验研究主要观点分为4类:无格假设、默认格假设、一致格假设和结构格假设,但都无法充分解释英语小句中名词性谓语的格位获得机制。最简方案中所有词项都带有由语项决定的特征进入句法运算,名词项则带有一致特征和格特征,其中一致特征在名词项上属于可解释特征,而格特征属于不可解释特征。不可解释特征在推导过程中必须通过一致操作被删除,否则到达语义接口的表达式得不到充分解释,会导致推导失败。因此,处于小句谓词位置的名词项的合法性应该得到应有的重视并在现有句法理论框架下得到解释。

本书认为,由于谓语名词的格地位在最简方案理论框架中得到证实,也应该可以在同一理论框架中得到解决。并且最简方案对语言推导过程的新认识为我们解决这一问题提供了理论基础和技术手段:首先,由于名词在进入推导时就带有格特征,因此不需要在结构中存在格来源,只是需要在带有相应格特征的功能节点处进行特征核查;其次,根据特征核查理论中的多重一致操作机制(Multiple Agree)和特征传递机制(Feature Inheritance),语段中心语所携带的核查特征可以在语段中传递,这样就增加了可以供谓语名词进行格特征核查的功能节点数量;第三,多层指示语结构(Multiple Specs)允许在中心语的核查域内嫁接外层节点,扩大了单个中心语的核查域范围。这些理论基础和技术手段

为在最简方案框架下进行谓语名词的格检验提供了保障。

本书还从句法和语义两个方面讨论了小句结构特点,认为小句是一个功能中心语 **F** 的最大投射 **FP**,小句中的功能中心语 **F** 为 **Pr**。小句中的主语位于 **[Spec, PrP]**,谓语位于功能中心语的补足语位置。**PrP** 短语被主句动词所选择,与主句动词结构 **vP** 组成一个语段。

本书目标读者为广大高校语言学专业教师及句法学方向研究生。

Abbreviation List

ACC	Accusative
A-CT	Agr-based Case Theory
AGR	Agreement
A-less CT	Agrless Case Theory
the A-P system	the articulatory-perceptual system
C_{HL}	the central computational system
the C-I system	the conceptual-intentional system
DAT	Dative
DS	the deep structure
ECM	the Exceptional Case Marking
FP	Functional Phrase
GB	Government and Binding
G-CT	Government-based Case Theory
IL-predication	individual-level predication
LF	logic form
MP	the Minimalist Program
NOM	Nominative
NP	Noun Phrase

NSC	nominal small clause
PF	phonological form
PPC	the Percolation Principle of Case
PrP	Predication Phrase
SC	small clause
SL-predication	stage-level predication
SS	the surface structure
TP	Tensed Phrase

CONTENTS



Chapter One	Introduction	1
1.1	The Anomaly of the Nominal Predicate Licensing in Small Clauses	3
1.2	Four Puzzles in NSCs	9
1.3	Our Proposal	12
1.4	Significance of the Study	12
1.5	Organization of the Book	13
Chapter Two	Literature Review	15
2.1	Predicate NP Licensing: an Understated Field	17
2.2	The Caseless Hypothesis	18
2.3	The Default Case Hypothesis	21
2.4	The Case Agreement Hypothesis	24
2.5	The Structural Case Hypothesis	28
2.6	Summary	31
Chapter Three	From Case-assignment to Case-checking	35
3.1	The Origin of Case	37
3.2	Term Definition	39
3.2.1	Morphological Case <i>vs.</i> Abstract Case	39
3.2.2	Structural Case, Inherent Case and Lexical Case	40
3.2.3	The Type of Case That Nominal Predicates	

Bear	44
3.3 Case-assignment within GB	46
3.3.1 Case-assigning Categories within GB	46
3.3.2 Configurations for Case-assignment	48
3.3.3 The Syntactic Level Where Case-assignment Occurs	51
3.3.4 Case Percolation	54
3.4 Case-checking within MP	57
3.4.1 Basic Concepts of the Minimalist Program	57
3.4.2 Feature-checking-based Case Theory	61
3.4.3 Configurations for Agr-Based Case Checking	64
3.4.4 Configurations for Agr-less Case Checking ...	70
3.4.5 Agree Operation	74
3.5 Summary	77
Chapter Four The Clausal Structure of NSCs	79
4.1 Term Definition	81
4.2 Basic Features of Nominal Small Clauses	83
4.2.1 Argument-like Predicate	84
4.2.2 Distribution: Only as Complement	85
4.2.3 Predication or Equation	86
4.2.4 Individual-level Predication	89
4.2.5 Non-specificity of Predicate NPs	90
4.3 The Categorical Node of Small Clauses	92
4.3.1 Unitary Constituent or Not	92
4.3.2 Lexical Head or Functional Head	101
4.3.3 Small Clauses as PrP	112
Chapter Five NP Licensing Mechanism in NSCs	127
5.1 Derivation and Feature Checking in NSCs	129
5.1.1 Merge	129
5.1.2 Multiple Agree by Moving	134
5.1.3 Locality in Agree	137

CONTENTS

5.1.4 Covert Movement or Copy	139
5.2 Answers to the Puzzles in NSCs	141
5.2.1 About the Acceptability of NSCs	141
5.2.2 About “as”	143
5.2.3 About “believe” and “think”	145
Chapter Six Conclusion	149
6.1 Summary	151
6.2 Findings and Implications	154
6.3 Limitations and Future Research	155
Appendix	157
Bibliography	158
Index	169



当代外语
研究论丛
FOREIGN
LANGUAGES
STUDIES

| 最简方案框架下英语小句中名词合法性研究 (英文版)

Chapter One Introduction





1.1 The Anomaly of the Nominal Predicate Licensing in Small Clauses

The main concern of this book is the nominal predicates in the following so-called “small clauses” selected by *consider*-type verbs, see (1).

- (1) a. I consider John (as) a teacher.
b. The general considered the attack (as) a failure.
c. The mother considered her son (as) a genius.
d. John considered Bill (as) a fool.

The term “Small Clause” (SC, henceforward) “refers to a string of XP YP constituents which enter into a predication relation, but the predicate YP, rather than containing a fully Inflected verb, contains an adjective phrase, noun phrase, prepositional phrase or an uninflected verb phrase” (Basilico, 2003). Examples in (1) contain a small clause whose subject is predicated by a nominal item. Hence, these kinds of small clause is named nominal small clause (NSC, henceforward).

Within the standard Case Theory as presented in Chomsky (1981, 1986b), examples like those in (1) pose a problem in terms of the θ -criterion and the Case-filter, which function

together as the basic principles determining the distribution of NPs. For the purposes of this research, we shall first assume the following formulation of these principles, see (2):

- (2) a. θ -criterion: Each argument bears one and only one θ -role, and each θ -role is assigned to one and only one argument.

(Chomsky, 1981: 36)

- b. Case-filter: * ^① NP if NP has phonetic content and has no Case.

(Chomsky, 1981: 49)

Taken together, these two principles impose a requirement that every NP, which is phonetically realized and has semantic content, must be assigned both a θ -role and Case, either directly or via a trace which it binds.

There are three NPs in each sentence in (1), the main subject, the subject in the embedded clause and the nominative predicate of the SC. Then main subjects are licensed perfectly as the external argument of the main verb and marked nominative case by the Infl (For convenience sake, the Split Infl will not be discussed in detail in this section, and will be considered in detail in later parts). The embedded subjects are licensed by being marked accusative case as the main verb *consider* is so-called ECM verb (Exceptional Case Marking verb), which selects an infinitival IP clause as its complement and case-marks the overt NP at the subject position in the embedded clause with a deficient T head. Semantically, the embedded subjects are assigned a θ -role by the predicates in the small clauses.

The story goes well until now, but when we examine the licensing of the third NP in the construction, the nominal predicate, problems rise. Semantically, there is no constituent that can assign a θ -role to it. It may be argued that as a predicate, this NP does not need a θ -role but rather assigns a θ -role. But there are two reasons to argue against this idea. First, at certain stage of derivation, two NPs, and only two NPs bearing the same categorial properties of [$+$ N, $-$ V], interpretable φ feature set and uninterpretable Case

^① The asterisk means this NP constituent is syntactically ungrammatical.

feature, are selected from the Numeration and enter the derivation. Which one should be selected to assign θ -role during the computational process and which should be the one to be in the argument position? It's implausible to assume the computation system select randomly because the sentences in (3) are not acceptable (hence the asterisk).

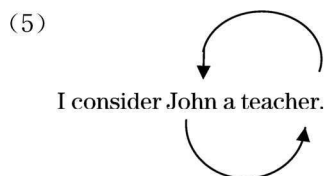
- (3) a. * I consider a teacher is John.
b. * I consider a teacher is him.

It is too hush to say that the ungrammaticality in (3) results from that *John* or *him* is pronominal and *a teacher* can denote one's job and show certain property of a person, and so the pronominals should be selected as subjects, and the rest predicate. The evidence against this argument lies in (1)-b, repeated as (4) here:

- (4) a. The general considered the attack a failure.
b. * The general considered a failure the attack.
c. * The general considered the failure a attack.

It's obvious that both *attack* and *failure* are not pronominals but *attack* cannot be the predicate no matter it's modified by definite or indefinite determiner. So it's worth probing into the semantic and syntactic rules that license an NP as a predicate.

Second, given that the predicate NP is licensed by the ability to assign θ -role to the subject NP and that the subject NP is licensed by being assigned this θ -role by the predicate, it seems that a licensing circle is formed as in (5) and a problem of circularity emerges.



With the circularity licensing pattern in (5), we cannot tell which item

licenses the other. If we regard the ability to assign θ -role to the subject NP as the licensing of predicate NP, then the prerequisite is that the subject NP should have been licensed by a licensed predicate. But the subject NP is waiting the would-be-licensed predicate NP to license it. So the ability to assign θ -role should not be regarded as the licensing of the predicate NP but the ability of predicate following the licensing. Therefore it is rational to assume that there is a mechanism in universal grammar to put *a teacher* at predicate position and *John* the subject position. We assume the mechanism is closely related to the nature of predication relations and the properties of different kinds of nominals. All the syntactic items like “teacher”, “a teacher”, “the teacher”, “many teachers”, and “all teachers” bear the same category “NP” (or “DP” along with the DP Hypothesis), but they have various internal structure, semantic references and syntactic behavior as follows. For example (6):

- (6) a. I consider him a teacher.
 b. * I consider him the teacher.
 c. I consider them teachers.
 d. * I consider them many teachers.
 e. I consider them all teachers.

Sentences in (6) show that the change of modifiers or determiners in NP phrases leads to the difference in grammaticality. We assume here that different determiners change the properties of the nominals and only certain kinds of nominals can be the predicate and trigger the predication relation in SC. This problem will be examined closely in Chapter 4.2.5.

Now, we turn to a more syntactic problem of the nominal predicate, the Case-marking problem. For convenience sake, we repeat (1) as (7):

- (7) a. I consider John as a teacher.
 b. I consider John a teacher.

In (7), the most possible case marker of predicative NP is the particle *as* preceding the predicate NP. Some linguists like Haegemman (1994) believe that the presence of *as* is the evidence of the existence of the functional head

Agr in small clause, so small clause is a maximal projection of this head. As the head of the project, Agr selects the predicate NP as its complement and case-marks it naturally. But this assumption is not tenable for three reasons. First, the notion that a nominal item enters computation without Case feature and the case is assigned by a case-assigner has been discarded under the framework of Minimalist approach. Case-assignment mechanism within GB framework heavily depends on the notion of government. But the notion has been doubted in MP. Under the framework of MP, case-marking is conducted in a totally different mechanism named feature checking. Second, there are lots of disputes on the internal structure of small clauses. Linguists have yet come to an agreement about whether small clause is a maximal projection or not, which means it's still a question whether there is a head in small clause, let alone the category label of it. So it seems that we should not rush into this case assignment pattern. Third, if we assume that "as" assigns case to the predicate NP, the situation in (7)-b is worse because the only potential case-assigner is missing. But we don't take it as the end of the story. On the contrary, it's the beginning of the story, because it means that the predicate NP is not licensed by "as" in case-assignment patterns but by some other syntactic mechanisms.

But before we probe into the syntactic mechanism licensing predicate NP, we need to tackle with a more fundamentally conceptual question: whether it is necessary for predicate NP being case-licensed since it is not an argument and bears no θ -role.

In the framework of Government and Binding, two views of Case have developed: the original Case Filter proposed by Rouveret and Vergnaud (1980) and Chomsky (1981) as listed in (1)-b rules out caseless noun phrases with phonetic content, regardless of their thematic status. However, this original view was quickly replaced by Chomsky's (1981: 336) alternative version which derives the Case Filter from the Theta Criterion and only applies to θ -marked noun phrases. This revision of the Case Filter became known as the Visibility Condition since case marking is treated as a condition making a noun phrase visible for Theta marking. Since most attention has been paid to argument nominals, it is not clear whether the theory extends easily to predicative phrases. However predicative NPs exist substantively not only in SC but also in copular sentences coming after copula "be". In copular sentence, the overt