

A Description of the Sentence: Sentence Patterns

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I

Humboldt says of the creative aspect of language: "Sie [die Sprache] muss ... von endlichen Mitteln einen unendlichen Gebrauch machen" (language must make infinite use of finite means).¹ This linguistic aspect is recognized on every level such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, etc. A typical example of this on the syntactic level is the so-called sentence pattern. It indeed has the drawback in that every sentence cannot be classified into any of the patterns of a limited number (like five as in Onions for example),² but it has the advantage of enabling one to quickly grasp or produce English sentences. The pattern reflects a remarkable characteristic which P (resent) E(nglish) has obtained that semantically diverse notions can be expressed in a specific pattern, as in:

- (1) a. I hit him. (agentive, experiencer)
- b. I saw it. (experiencer, objective)
- c. I climbed the hill. (agentive, locative)
- d. I suffered a great pain. (experiencer, source)
- e. The bus seats fifty. (locative, objective)

All the sentences of (1) are classified as SVO, though semantically so

multifarious. With respect to this, Hawkins says: "the directionality of change in English is towards increased semantic diversity for basic grammatical relations."³ Similarly the following sentences are SVO with different grammatical elements following "hope."

- (2) a. I hope that.
 b. I hope that they help me.
 c. I hope to be helped.

(1) and (2) exemplify such a sentence pattern as is based on the functions of the elements in the sentence. Another pattern would be that in which classification is made according to the grammatical categories (like adjective, noun, etc.) which follow the verb as in Hornby.⁴ It may not be appropriate to say which pattern is better, for their difference is that of point of view: function vs. category. But, if language has that attendant representation (*Begleitvorstellung*) which Funke mentions of *Innere Sprachform*:

[H]andelt es sich um Begleitvorstellungen, die mit der äußeren Sprachform verbunden sind und die auf die Bedeutung hinführen, sie zum Teil vorbereiten, vermitteln helfen oder... Bedeutung selbst ausmachen. (Important are attendant representations, which are connected with the outer speech form and help reach, partly prepare and mediate the meaning, or can make the meaning easier to understand, but which themselves do not represent the meaning.)⁵

Then Onions' is just the case as Nakajima mentions that five sentence patterns reveal the functional type of the inner speech form.⁶

This is obvious as understood in the description of sentences like (3):

- (3) a. The man made the girl a good wife.

- ...*god* (nom/acc) *scryt*.... (OSV)
- b. (VL): Si autem *faenum* (nom/acc) *agri*...*deus* (nom) sic
vestit.... (OSV)
- c. (PE): But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field....
(SVO) (Matt. vi. 30)
- (9) a. Ða þæra sacerda *ealdras* (pl(ural), nom/acc)...*hys big-sþel*
(sin(gular)/pl, nom/acc) *gehyrdon*.... (SOV)
- b. Et cum audissent *principes* (pl, nom/acc) sacerdotum...
parabolas (pl, acc) eius.... (VSO)
- c. And when the chief priests...heard his parables....
(SVO) (Matt. xxi. 45)⁸

The OE sentences in (8) and (9) are not morphologically distinctive regarding subjects and objects because of the same form for nom and acc; nevertheless, word order is rather free.⁹ In Matt., out of 50 sentences with nominal S and O, the following is the frequency of word order (the parenthesized number is for subordinate clauses):

(10)	SVO	SOV	VSO	OSV	total
	22(14)	1(3)	5(1)	3(1)	31(19)
	72%	8%	12%	8%	

The meaning of (11) can be expressed in 6 different word orders without arousing ambiguity because of the specific case forms for S and O:

- (11) ...*nan man* (nom) *ne can þone sunu* (acc).... (no one knoweth
the Son) (Matt. xi. 27)

This word order freedom provided by the OE case system theoretically allows sentences like (12), where S and O are determined by con-

text, not by morphology or syntax:

- (12) a. ...*ealle þas þing* (pl, nom/acc) *þeoda* (pl, nom/gen (itive)/
acc) *seceað*... (for after all these things do the Gentiles
seek) (OSV) (Matt. vi. 32)
- a'. *ealle þas þing seceað þeoda*. (OVS)
- a". *seceað ealle þas þing þeoda*. (VOS)

Miyashita mentions the relation between the sentence pattern and the loss of case forms: "The sentence pattern came out along with the loss of noun cases, being substitute for or equivalent to them. It is as it were a transparent frame of sentence, indicating a set of case relations."¹⁰ Although it is not wholly correct to regard the sentence pattern of PE as equivalently indicating case relations of OE, we cannot entirely deny the functional similarity between them as in (13) for example:

- (13) N(oun) (nom) N (acc) V ⇌ SVO

However, as mentioned above, SVO of PE is semantically more diverse than "N (nom) N (acc) V" of OE, so SVO for the description of PE and OE cannot be said to be the same. Thus the sentence pattern of PE should carefully be applied to free-word-order languages like OE or VL.

III

In PE the sentence is made up of SV as its core, being accompanied by other elements in some sentence types, and what element follows the core is determined by the feature of V, whereas in OE the sentence does not necessarily contain S (nom) as in impersonal constructions (*Me hungreð*), its core being V alone which determines what element and what case should be taken. In (14a) it is "þeowian" (serve)

that determines the number of terms (S and O) and case forms (nom and dat(ive)), just as "servire" in (14b); "serve" in (14c) determines two terms (S and O):

- (14) a. Ne mæg nan man (nom) twam hlafordum (pl, dat) þeowian.
 b. *Nemo* (nom) potest duobus *dominis* (dat/abl(ative)) servire.
 c. No man can serve two masters. (Matt. vi. 24)

The difference between (14a) and (14c) is that the function of "twam hlafordum" in (14a) is not recognized (whether O or adverbial) till one comes to the verb "þeowian," whereas in (14c) such a problem does not arise because of the core—SV as so fixed.

Since both in OE and PE (other European languages as well) V is the central element, the ideal word order (for easy comprehension) for OE would be like (15a)¹¹ where the elements (x, y) following V are well anticipated because of *konstruktive innere Sprachform* (constructive inner speech form) as Funke says of word order:

Dieser Bedeutung, die für den Hörer am Schlusse der Äußerung entsteht, gehen während des Aussprechens andere begleitende Vorstellungen voran, die das volle Verstandnis der Rede vorbereiten oder erleichtern. (The meaning which comes up to the hearer at the end of the speech is preceded during the speech by other accompanying representations that prepare or make easier the entire comprehension of the speech.)¹²

- (15) (x and y are any elements other than V.)
 a. V x y
 b. x V y
 c. x y V

But, in Matt., ch. 1-13, for instance, out of 100 examples with (a) nominal S and pronominal O and (b) pronominal S and nominal O,

V-initial (i.e. VSO or VOS) are only 11 as the following:

(16)	SVO	SOV	VSO	VOS	OSV	OVS	total
a.	3 14.2%	4(7) 52.3%	3 14.2%	2 9.5%	0	2 9.5%	14(7)
b.	41(17) 73.4%	1(9) 12.6%	6 7.5%	0	4 5%	1 1.2%	53(26)

In addition, as Jespersen says, "the boundaries between [different purposes of case] are far from being clear-cut,"¹³ so it might be assumed that OE does not fully realize the inner speech form.

For PE, as it has come to make good use of the inner speech form of word order, the important thing is the description of what follows V, that is, O, C(omplement)¹⁴ or adverbial. In this respect five sentence patterns are succinct and explicit compared with the others. One of the crucial points of the patterns is the nature of C. In 'Onions', as C is limited to "Predicate" adjective, noun or pronoun, (17 a, b) are taken as SV, and (17c, d) as SVO:

- (17) a. Tom is in trouble.
 b. Tom is in the room.
 c. We found Tom in trouble.
 d. We found Tom in the room.¹⁵

In this paper, (17a, b) are taken as SVC, and (c, d) as SVOC, for "in trouble" or "in the room" of each sentence is not omissible for the completion of a statement, and sentences in (18) are different from (17):

- (18) a. Tom is.
 b. We found Tom.¹⁶

IV

Of the five patterns the most difficult is the 5th, namely SVOC. In PE, because of the fixed word order as OC, the problem does not arise with the identification of O or C. In OE, on the other hand, it does with some cases where O or C is not morphologically or syntactically determined. In the sentence with nominal Cs for example:

- (19) a. And þu nemst hys naman (gen/dat/acc) hælend (nom/acc).
 b. Vocabis nomen (nom/acc) eius iesum (acc).
 c. And thou shalt call his name Jesus. (Matt. i. 21)

the identification of O or C is theoretically not given morphologically or syntactically, but dependent on the context. However, frequent word orders are seen: in VL, 6 examples of this type are all SVOC; in OE, so are 5 except one (SOCV) beginning with "gyf" (if) (Matt. xxii. 45).

A problem also arises when C is an adjective: whether the adjective agreeing with O in the accusative forms a junction (i.e. SVO) or a nexus (SVOC) as in:

- (20) a. opþe wyrceað god (nom/acc) treow (nom/acc)....
 b. Aut facite arborem (acc) bonam (acc)....
 (Either make the good tree (SVO); Either make the tree good (SVOC)) (Matt. xii. 33)

Out of 7 examples of this type, OC order are 5 in OE, 4 in VL as the following:

- (21) (C=adjective)

	OE	VL
VOC	3	2
OCV	(2)	(2)
VCO	2	0
CVO	0	2
COV	0	1

In some sentences, whether CO or OC order, the adjective form (of strong declension) reveals its relation to N to be a nexus (i.e. OC) as in (22a) unlike a junction as in (22b):

- (22) a. ...doð rihte (pl, nom/acc) his siðas. (make his paths straight) (Mark. i. 3)
- b. Doð rihtan (weak declension) his siðas. (make his straight paths) [Mine]

As for C of p(ast) p(articiple), there are 3 sentences with the order of VOC. The OE structure is "S V N (acc) pp"; VL is "V N (acc) pp (acc)" as in:

- (23) a. ...hi gemetton þone folan (acc)...getigcde....
- b. ...invenerunt pullum (acc) ligatum (acc)....
- c. ...[they] found a colt tied.... (Mark. xi. 4)

There are 24 examples of the pres(ent) p(articiple) as C. The dominant word order is VOC both in OE and VL as the following:

- (24) (C=pres p)

	OE	VL
VOC	21	23
OVC	1	1
OCV	(1)	0
VCO	1	0

As pres p is a sort of adjective, the same problem arises as (20):

- (25) a. ...geseah...hlydende menigeo (nom/acc).
 b. ...vidisset tibicines (acc) tumultuantem (acc).
 c. ...saw...the crowd making a tumult. (Matt. ix. 23)

(25a, b) are taken twofold like:

- (26) a. saw the bustling crowd
 b. saw the crowd bustling

Here can be recognized the significance of word order fixation as an inner speech form.

As for C of infinitive (Inf), 14 sentences are with "bear Inf" C. Some in VL have pres p (acc) as in:

- (27) a. ...we ge-hydron hine secgan....
 b. ...audivimus eum dicentem (acc)....
 c. ...we heard him say.... (Mark. xiv. 58)

This type in VL is seen with sensory verbs like "videre (see), andere (hear)," etc. VOC is dominant also here:

- (28) (C=bare Inf (OE))

	OE	VL
VOC	12	14
OVC	1	0
VCO	1	0

Three examples are with "to Inf" as C, the word order being all VOC like:

- (29) a. ...alyfe me ærest to farenne....
 b. ...permitte me primum ire....
 c. ...suffer me first to go.... (Matt. viii. 21)

In sum, OE and VL are generally thought of as inflectional languages, but their word orders are as seen here quite fixed:

- (30) (total 57; "OC" in (b) indicates the relative position of O and C, including VOC, OVC or OCV)

		OE	VL
a.	SVOC	48 84%	50 87%
b.	OC	53 92%	54 94%

Therefore, it can be said that the expression of OC in OE and VL in the Bible is very close to that in PE.

V

Of a variety of SVOC sentences, the most controversial is "S V O (to) Inf," traditionally called "accusativus cum infinitivo," as Mitchell says: "there lies a jungle of contradictory opinions."¹⁷ This sentence type (31a) is translated from (31b):

- (31) a. ...hwa geswutelode cow to fleonne....
 b. ...quis demonstraui vobis fugere....
 c. who warned you to flee...? (Matt. iii, 7)

VL (31b) can be analyzed as SVOO, for Inf was originally regarded as N, so "at the outset it must have been taken as double accusatives,"¹⁸ or as SVO, for "later [the acc] became closely associated with [the Inf] and the whole phrase was regarded as the object of [the verb]."¹⁹ This possibility of alternative analyses concerning the "SVO Inf" construction is found here and there. In Purdie, for instance, (32a) is SVOO, while (32b) is not:

is taken as most appropriate. In (37a) "me to examine her" is so closely united as to be regarded as a unit, i.e. O as a whole, unlike in (37b):

- (37) a. He wanted me to examine her.
 a'. He wanted her to be examined by me. (=a)
 b. He compelled me to examine her.
 b'. He compelled her to be examined by me. (\cong b)

(38a, b) are classified as "acc with Inf":

- (38) a. He wolde me bebyrigean deade. (he wanted me to bury the dead)
 b. He het me bebyrigean deade. (he commanded me to bury the dead) [Mine]

They would be analyzed the same way by most grammarians like the following:

- (39) a. (Nesfield)²³

S	Predicate		
	Finite V	O	C
He	wolde (het)	me	bebyrigean deade.

- b. (Harman)²⁴

		bebyrigean	deade
He	wolde (het)	me	

c. (Fries)²⁵

He	wolde (het)	me	bebyrigean	deade.

Onions would analyze them differently as:

- (40) a. He wolde me bebyrigean deade. (SVO)
 b. He het me bebyrigean deade. (SVOO)

due to the similarity with (41a-c) and (41d, e) respectively:

- (41) a. They know him to be a loyal. (SVO)
 b. They know that he is a loyal. cf. He wolde þat ic be-
 byrige deade.
 c. They know that. cf. He wolde þat.
 d. Conscience bids me speak. (SVOO)
 e. Conscience bids me that. cf. He het me þat.²⁶

Jespersen also would posit different analyses as:

- (42) a. He wolde me bebyrigean deade. (SVO(S₂IO₂)) [S₂≡
 S₂, I=Inf]
 a' I want him to sing. (SVO(S₂I))
 b. He het me bebyrigean deade. (SVO¹O(S₂^oIO₂')) [O¹=
 indirect O; Superscript "o" denotes "latent"]
 b'. I command you to follow me. (SVO¹O(S₂^oIO₂'))²⁷

VI

With respect to the notation of (42a', b') and (43),

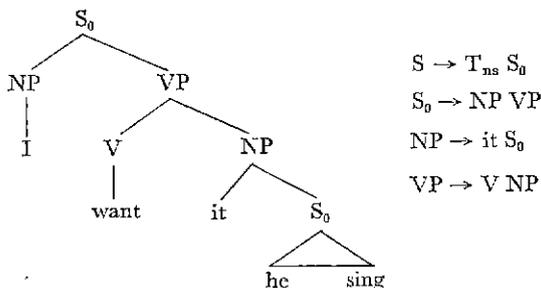
- (43) I want to sing. (SVO(S^oI))²⁸

Levin, estimating Jespersen highly, says:

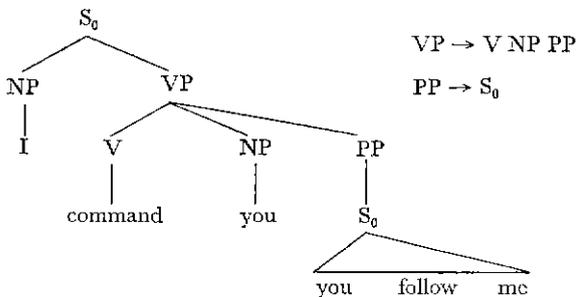
It is this concern with underlying grammatical relations with deep structure, that justifies claiming for Jespersen that the goal of his analysis was the explication of competence, that is, that which a native speaker intuitively knows to be grammatically (and semantically) operative in sentences, under and below the relations that appear in the surface form of those sentences.²⁹

In terms of the description of Transformational Grammar which has assumed the deep structure, (42a', b') and (43) are tree-diagrammatically like:³⁰

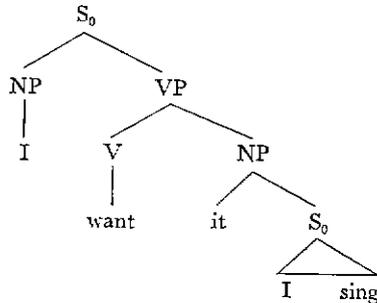
(44) a. (=42a')



b. (=42b')



c. (=43)

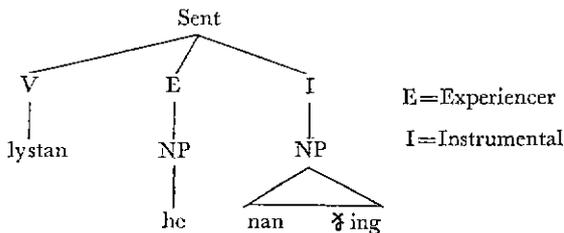


Judging from this, Levin's words may not be out of place. However, it is simply true that the strong position with respect to the importance of the assumed deep structure has been specifically put forth by Chomsky as he says: "We must be careful not to overlook the fact that surface similarities may hide underlying distinctions of a fundamental nature."⁸¹

The deep structure of the OE sentence may be described more validly in Case Grammar than in Transformational Grammar, for the reason that only V is central in OE as typically seen in impersonal constructions. The description is as follows:

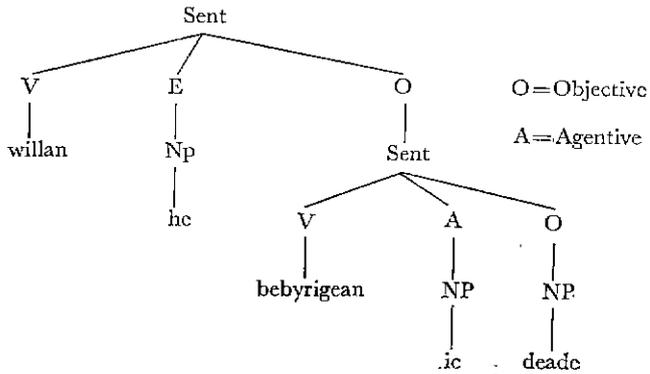
(45) a. Sent(ence) \rightarrow V + C₁ + ... + C_n
 C \rightarrow NP⁸²

b. (Hine nanas ðinges ne lyste. (it pleased him in respect of nothing))⁸³

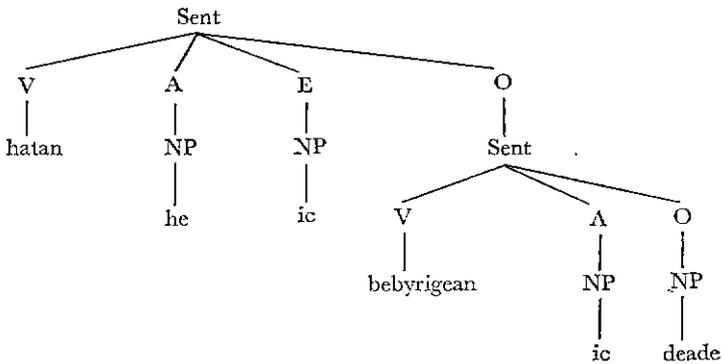


Thus deep structures of OE sentences in question are likewise diagrammed as:

(46) a. (He wolde me bebyrigean deade.)



b. (He het me bebyrigean deade.)



(46) manifestly reveals their different deep structures of the sentences which appear similar surface-structurally.

As Levin says that "it is precisely his [Jespersen's] having recourse to such covert characteristics of language structure that enhances his

value in the context of contemporary linguistic thought,"⁸⁴ Jespersen is outstanding for his description among traditional grammarians. However, as Chomsky says:

Jespersen's decision seems to me unquestionably correct from the point of view of descriptive adequacy, though internally unmotivated (i.e., deficient from the point of view of explanatory adequacy).⁸⁵

Jespersen's following classification of SVO(to) Inf, for instance, is not explicit:

- (47) a. SVO(S₂I) : I hear him sing. (cf. I hear his singing.)
 b. SVO¹O(I) : I allow her to sing. (cf. I allow her a hundred pounds.)
 c. SVO_pI : We forced him to obey. (cf. We forced him to obedience.)⁸⁶

He does not give convincing explanation for the criterion. Jespersen says that SVO¹O(S₂^oI) as "He allowed her to go" is "difficult to tell apart from"⁸⁷ SVO(S₂I) as "This caused the apple to fall," for both can have two objects as:

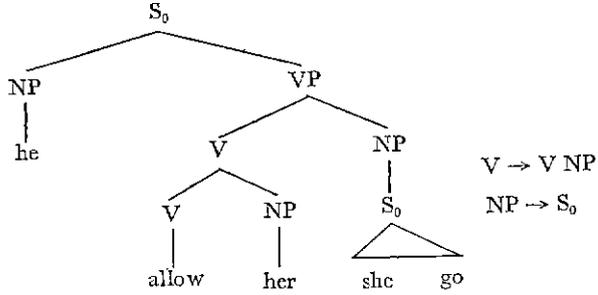
- (48) a. He allowed me six days' leave.
 b. This caused me much trouble.

Besides, this difficulty also holds with SVO_pI as "He persuaded me to go," for "persuade" can have the following structure:

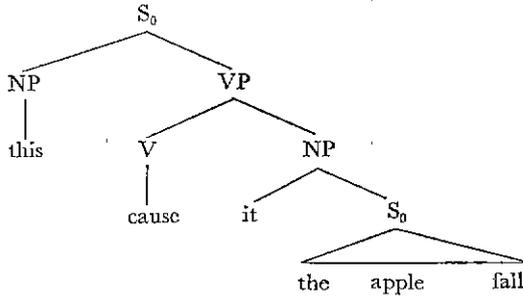
- (49) He persuaded me that I should go.

These problems might be descriptively solved if the following deep structures are assumed:

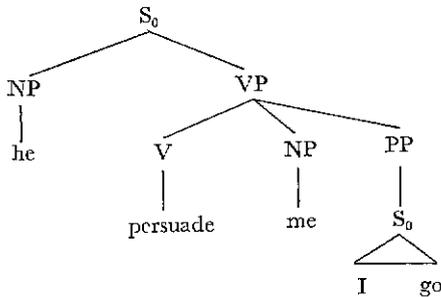
(50) a. (He allowed her to go.)



b. (This caused the apple to fall.)



c. (He persuaded me to go.)



Unlike with OE, PE is well described by Transformational Grammar.

VII

Yasui mentions the necessity of introduction of the deep structure to reduce weak points of sentence patterns,³⁵ and Ando likewise claims that the greatest shortcoming of the patterns is the difficulty of grasping such rules as lie deep behind because of being restrained by the surface structure.³⁹ Consideration of the deep structure is indeed of so great power as to reveal for example: the similarity in (51):

- (51) a. I think that she is kind.
 b. I think her to be kind.
 c. I think ker kind.

the covert difference in (52) because of the feature of each verb:

- (52) a. I expected Tom to check the man.
 b. I persuaded Tom to check the man.
 c. I taught Tom to check the man.

or the reasons for (53) and (54):

- (53) a. I expected the man to be checked by Tom. (=52a)
 b. I expected there to be many men in the room.
 c. I expected tabs to be kept on the man.
 (54) a. I persuaded the man to be checked by Tom. (≠52b)
 b. *I persuaded there to be many men in the room.
 c. *I persuaded tabs to be kept on the man.

But, in this country, five sentence patterns are used as a very effective scheme to teach English which is entirely different from Japanese. In other words, they are valuable from the pedagogical point of view as is commonly said: "the knowledge of five sentence patterns is effective in making rapid progress in learning."⁴⁰

Ito regards pedagogical grammar as that which is described to meet practical purposes of promoting the study or making the basis of working English knowledge, and as different from scientific grammar in that the former is not so adherent to logical consistency which the latter should have.⁴¹ There seems not to be much point in teaching or learning languages through Transformational Grammar, though it is important for good attention to be paid to what lies behind overt expressions. In this connection the analysis of (55), for example, might not be denied as irrelevantly mistaken:

- (55) a. He wants me to become a good student. (SVOC)
 b. I told him to come here again tomorrow. (SVOC)
 c. I saw a dog running in the yard. (SVOC)⁴²

Here lies the problem of the sentence pattern in terms of "pedagogic" and "scientific." Since the sentence pattern is thought of as one of the results brought about by the change in the inner speech form from morphological to syntactical that English has undergone, its significance is by no means negligible. Quirk et al. say, "Grammar is to some extent an indeterminate system."⁴³ The problem of sentence patterns seems to represent the search for a meeting point of "pedagogic" and "scientific."

NOTE

- 1 Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Über die Verschiedenheit des Menschlichen Sprachbaues* (1836), p. 122 in Noam Chomsky, *Cartesian Linguistics* (Lanham: Univ. Press of America, 1966), p. 20.
- 2 Charles T. Onions, *An Advanced English Syntax* (London: Kegan Paul, 1904).
- 3 John A. Hawkins, *A Comparative Typology of English and German* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), p. 69. He mentions the similarity between Old English and Modern German in terms of limited possibility of Raising and Tough Movement

- (p. 82).
- 4 Albert S. Hornby, *Guide to Patterns and Usage in English* (2nd ed.; London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1975).
 - 5 Otto Funke, *Innere Sprachform* (Reichenberg: Sudetendeutscher Verlag Frans Kraus, 1924), p. 26.
 - 6 Fumio Nakajima, *Eibunpô no Taikei* (The System of English Grammar) (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1939), p. 21.
 - 7 In a recent work Huddleston gives "five major patterns" or "central patterns" as the following:
 - I. S P (redicator): Intransitive (=SV)
 - II. S P P C^s (subjective predicative): Copulative (=SVC)
 - III. S P O^d (direct O): Monotransitive (=SVO)
 - IV. S P O^d P C^o (objective predicative): Complextransitive (=SVOc)
 - V. S P Oⁱ (indirect O) O^d: Ditransitive (=SVOO)
 (Rodney Huddleston, *English Grammar* [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988], p. 59.)
 - 8 The OE and Vulgar Latin versions are from Walter W. Skeat, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew* and *The Gospel according to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1887); the PE version from *The New Testament* (Tokyo: Japan Bible Society, 1978).
 - 9 As for the reliance of OE on both morphology (case) and syntax (word order) as the indicator of grammatical relations, see my paper "Case Representation: OE and Vulgar Latin," *Hikakubunka-Kenkyu* No. 9 (Hirosaki: Japan Association of Comparative Culture, 1987), 26-45.
 - 10 Shinji Miyashita, *Eigo wa Dôyu Gengo ka* (What Sort of Language is English) (Tokyo: Kiseitsusha, 1985), p. 42.
 - 11 Bynon, referring to J. Haiman (*Targets and Syntactic Change* [1974]), says that the OE deep structure is VSO on the ground of the simplicity of rules for generating surface structures. (Theodora Bynon, *Historical Linguistics* [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977], p. 156.)
 - 12 O. Funke, *Sprachform*, p. 83.
 - 13 Otto Jespersen, *The Philosophy of Grammar* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1924), p. 179.
 - 14 "Complement" here can be "noun, adjective or their equivalent (adverb, infin-

- itive, participle, phrase, clause, etc.) which is supplied to complete a statement when the mere combination of the incomplete verb and S or O does not bring about a complete meaning." (Harumi Tanaka ed., *Seibido's Dictionary of Linguistics* [Tokyo: Seibido, 1988], p. 107.)
- 15 Whether (17b) "Tom is in the room" is SVC or "SV adverbial" is still quite controversial.
- 16 Objects are also indispensable for the completion, but they lack in the characteristic of C that C: "gives a property of the ... participant" or "relates to" it (R. Huddleston, *English Grammar*, pp. 53, 56.); or "characterises" S or O (Noel Burton-Roberts, *Analysing Sentences* [London: Longman, 1986], p. 81.); or "describes an attribute of" S or O (Dennis Freeborn, *A Course Book in English Grammar* [Houndmills: Macmillan, 1987], p. 147.)
- 17 Bruce Mitchell, *Old English Syntax II* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985), p. 872.
- 18 Jean Collart, *Grammaire du Latin* (1966), trans. Jun Arita, *Raten Bunpō* (Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 1968), p. 101.
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