
An OT Approach to Linearization and FOFC Effects

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The OT constraints (1) derive an elementary word order typology.

- (1) a. XP<HEAD: Heads follow their complements.
- b. OP<XP: operators (functional heads) precede their complements.
- c. C<XP: subordinating operators precede their complements.
- d. HARMONY: If A dominates B, then A, B have the same headedness.

The constraints are grounded in semantic composition. Predicates combine recursively with their direct arguments to discharge their Theta-roles. A lexical head is first merged with its internal direct argument, and finally with the highest, external Theta-role, realized as the subject. This order of composition determines the constituency and order of direct arguments. Thus OV order is a special case of subject-predicate order. Functional heads, having no Theta-roles, are *operators*, subject to their own subhierarchy (1b,1c) of the stringency hierarchy of constraints (1). This predicts the implicational relationships in mixed orders: head-final CP \Rightarrow head-final IP \Rightarrow head-final VP.

(1) predicts FOFC effects more accurately than previous formulations:

a. Languages with only right-headed functional categories, or with none, are predicted to be V-final (e.g. Japanese).

b. [[Op XP]_{YP} Head] is OK, although it is a FOFC violation. E.g. Er hat [[das Buch] gelesen]. Restricting FOFC to extended projections to allow it incorrectly allows [[Head₁ XP]_{NP} Head₂]_{VP}, where Head₁ is lexical.

c. Being defined on overt surface syntactic structure, (1) is consistent with both base-generation and movement, and cannot be subverted by PF operations (Lowering, Scrambling). Mixed structures in Bangla confirm this.

d. The constraints do not apply below the word level, correctly predicting that morphology does not obey FOFC, e.g. (contra Hein & Murphy 2020).

References: Biberauer, Holmberg, & Roberts. 2014. A syntactic universal and its consequences. *LI* 45:2, 169 - 225. Johannes Hein & Andrew Murphy. 2022. VP-Nominalization and the Final-over-Final Condition. *LI* 53: 2, 337-370. Sheehan, Michelle, Theresa Biberauer, Ian Roberts, & Anders Holmberg. 2017. *The Final-Over-Final Condition: A Syntactic Universal*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.