The Sentential *Not* is not a VP-ellipsis Licensor.*

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Lee, Jeong-Shik. 2002. The Sentential *Not* is not a VP-ellipsis Licensor. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal, 10*(3), 43-56. This paper argues that in English the sentential negator *not* is not a VP-ellipsis gap licensor in finite clauses, and offers an alternative proposal that can accommodate the examples that motivated the claim that this *not* is a VP-ellipsis gap licensor. The core suggestion is that only a morphologically overt tensed auxiliary verb licenses the following VP-ellipsis gap (nonlocally) in finite clauses, with no head with a Case feature intervening.

Key Words: VP-ellipsis, sentential *not*, licensor, Case Minimality

1. Introduction

In this paper I argue that in English the sentential negator *not* is not a VP-ellipsis (henceforth, VPE) gap licensor in finite clauses, and offer an alternative proposal that can accommodate the examples that motivated the claim that this *not* is a VPE gap licensor (Baltin, 1993; Potsdam, 1997; Merchant, 1999; and others).

It has been noted since Bresnan (1976) that a VPE gap in English must be immediately preceded by some head with morphological content,

as illustrated by the following examples.

> (1) a. John might leave England and Mary might ____ too.
>   b. John will buy the book if Mary does ____.
>   c. A baby llama will go anywhere its mother has ____.
>
>   (Potsdam, 1997)
>
>   d. No one else will support the candidate despite the fact that
>   the mayor is ____.   (Potsdam, 1997)

The examples in (1) contain the VPE gaps in finite clauses, and their licensors are morphologically overt heads, namely, the modal *might* in (1a), the periphrastic *do* in (1b), and the aspectual auxiliaries *have* and *be* in (1c,d).

Potsdam (1997, p. 534(3)) offers the following local licensing condition to the effect that a null VP requires syntactic selection by an overt head (for similar local licensing conditions, see Sag, 1980; Lobeck, 1987, 1995; Zagona, 1988; Saito & Murasugi, 1990; among many others).

> (2) *VP-Ellipsis Licensing Condition* (Potsdam, 1997):
>   An elided VP must be the complement of a morphologically
>   realized head.

By this condition the example (3) containing a VPE gap is correctly ruled out since there is no proper licensor for the gap.

> (3) *John didn't come to school but Mary ___.

In addition, it has been observed that the VPE gap in English can apparently be licensed by the sentential *not* as well (Baltin, 1993; Potsdam, 1997; Merchant, 1999; and others), as illustrated by the following examples.

(4) a. Mary wants to drink a dry white wine but John might not ___.
　　 b. Mary tried a California chablis but John did not ___.
　　 c. Mary is here even though John is not ___.

It appears that the VPE gaps in (4) are licensed by the sentential *not*. In view of the licensing condition (2), then, *not* may be viewed as a head. But it is not clear what is really responsible for licensing the VPE gaps in (4) in that the presence of usual licensing heads (e.g., the modal *might*, the periphrastic *do*, or the auxiliary *is*) is also obligatorily required.

　　In this paper, I argue that the VPE gap is licensed only by a morphologically overt tensed auxiliary verb in finite clauses. Thus, it will be shown that the VPE gaps in (4) can be nonlocally licensed.

　　But this does not necessarily mean that the sentential *not* is not a head. Actually, I assume that it is a head, as may be supported by examples like (5) below.

(5) a. *John not eats snails.
　　 b. *John eats not snails.

The ungrammaticality of (5a,b) may be handled under the Head Movement Constraint (Travis, 1984) if *not* is a head under the Affix Hopping analysis for (5a) and verb raising analysis for (5b) (see Lasnik, 1995a; Potsdam, 1997; among others).

2. Sentential *not* in Subjunctives

　　At this point, it is worth discussing subjunctive complements where the sentential *not* appears to license a VPE gap in the absence of potential licensors seen in (4) above. It is well-known that predicates such as *suggest*, *demand*, and *require* take a subjunctive complement in which its VP is headed by a bare verb, with no overt element in Infl, as illustrated by the following examples.

(6) a.   He demanded that the successful candidate reject bribery.
      b.   He required that the axis of evil stay calm.
(7) a. *He demanded that the successful candidate can reject bribery.
      b. *He required that the axis of evil must stay calm.

This lack of overt verbal morphology may be predicted if a subjunctive clause lacks an Infl projection (Zanuttini, 1991) or the head of a subjunctive clause is a morphologically null modal (Baltin, 1993; Lasnik, 1995a; Potsdam, 1997). (In the latter case, Infl may be specified as [+modal, +subjunctive].) From either hypothesis follows the fact that the aspectual auxiliaries resist raising to Infl and remain in VP, as illustrated by the following examples (Potsdam, 1997).

(8)   a. *I urge that Tom *be not* promoted because of his attitude.
            (cf. I urge that Tom *not be* promoted because of his attitude.)
         b. *It is crucial that we *be absolutely* paying attention to his every word.
            (cf. It is crucial that we *absolutely be* paying attention to his every word.)

Interestingly, the sentential negator *not* appears to license the VPE gap for itself in subjunctives (Potsdam, 1997):

(9) a. I desire that Mary be here and that John not _____.
        (cf. *I desire that Mary be here and that John _____ also.)
      b. Kim needs to be there but it is better that the other organizers not ___.
        (cf. *Kim needn't be there but it is imperative that the other organizers ____.)

   Things, however, are not so simple. In the next section, I discuss one problematic situation where the sentential negator *not* does not license a VPE gap.

3. Feature Movement

Under the recent feature movement hypothesis (Chomsky, 1995a; Ochi, 1999), Lasnik (1999a, in press) discusses the following pseudogapping:

(10) You might not believe me but you will _____ Bob.
     (= .... but you will v[F] Bob$_i$ *(believe t$_i$))

For the purpose of discussion I assume with Lasnik (1995b) that pseudogapping is reduced to VPE, with remnant raising to Spec AgrO out of VP (cf. Levin, 1978; Jayaseelan, 1990), and with Lasnik (1999b) that the pseudogap, a VPE gap now, is licensed by an overt tensed auxiliary verb (see also Lee, 2002). In (10) the strong feature on v can be checked simply by raising the features of the verb *believe*, and then the deletion of the VP containing the phonologically defective verb *believe* (due to feature movement) and the trace of the remnant *Bob* yields good pseudogapping, salvaging the otherwise bad structure.

In this connection, consider the following contrasts left unaccounted for in Lasnik (in press):

(11) a. Mary isn't here even though John is$_i$ (t$_i$ here).
     b. Mary isn't here even though John Infl[F] *(is here).
         (feature movement from V to Infl)
(12) a. Mary is here even though John is$_i$ not (t$_i$ here).   (=(4c))
     b. *Mary isn't here even though John Infl[F] not (is here).
         (feature movement from V to Infl)

The strong feature on Infl can be checked simply by raising the features of the verb *is* in (11b, 12b). Unlike in (10), however, the same VP-deletion in (11b, 12b) cannot salvage the structure. Although the contrast in (11) may follow from the licensing condition (2), the contrast in (12) poses a problem in that the sentential *not* here is not able to license the VPE gap, unlike in the subjunctives in (9). To the extent that the feature movement hypothesis remains valid (see Lasnik, in

press; and his related works), the difference between (9a,b) and (12b) should be taken into consideration.

4. Licensing and Case

I first show that nonlocal licensing of the VPE gap is possible in examples like (4a-c), and then, claim that the sentential negator *not* is not a VPE gap licensor. To motivate nonlocal licensing, observe the following examples (Lasnik, 1995b, 1999b; Boeckx & Stjepanović, 2001).

(13) a. *John gave Bill a lot of money, and Mary will give Susan ___.
     b. John gave Bill a lot of money, and Mary will ___ Susan ___.
     c. John might have done it, and Mary might have ___ too.

The apparent discontinuous VP in (13b) can be deleted by pseudogapping after the raising of the remnant *Susan*, and the pseudogap, namely, the VPE gap now, is licensed by the overt tensed auxiliary verb *will*. Thus, Lasnik (1999b) is led to look for "some version of Relativized Minimality" to rule out (13a) (cf. Rizzi, 1990). That is, another intervening head *gave* blocks the licensing of the VPE gap in (13a).

Presenting examples like (13c) where the intervening head *have* does not block the licensing of the VPE gap, however, Boeckx & Stjepanović (2001) claim that Lasnik's account for (13a) relying on "some version of Relativized Minimality" cannot be maintained and they go on suggesting that head movement is a PF process. They could not imagine a possible solution to rule out (13a) on the one hand but to rule in (13c) on the other.

Lee (2001) in fact presents such a solution based on Case Minimality put forward in Lee (1992), the leading idea of which is that Case plays a crucial role in imposing locality. According to this approach, only an intervening head that has Case invokes a minimality effect, for example, in head licensing, Case assignment, A-movement, and so on (see Lee, 1992; Lee & Maling, 1993 for details). Under Case Minimality, then, in

(13a) the morphologically overt tensed auxiliary verb *will* cannot license the VPE gap over the Case verb *gave*, whereas in (13c) the auxiliary verb *might* can nonlocally do so over the auxiliary verb *have* with no Case. The following example lends an additional support to the present Case-based solution.

    (14) Bill was given a lot of money, and Susan was given _____ too.

Here the VPE gap in the second clause can be nonlocally licensed by the overt tensed auxiliary verb *was* since the intervening passive verb *given* is not a Case verb under standard assumptions.[1]

    Lee (2002) also observes a syntactic head movement in pseudogapping examples like (15), adapted from Baltin (2000).

    (15) I couldn't persuade Mary to vote for Bill Florex, but I could
        ____ John to vote for Hillary Florex.

In (15) the verb *persuade* must move out of the remnant in syntax before the raising of the remnant *[John to vote for Hillary Florex],* as seen in the following derivation.

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  1) It is observed that an auxiliary *to* appears to license the VPE gap in nonfinite clauses as in (i), but being an auxiliary is not enough to license it as in (ii), an infinitival purpose clause (see Johnson, 2001).

  (i) Mag Wildwood wants to read Fred's story, and I also want to ___.
  (ii) *Mag Wildwood came to read Fred's story, and I also came to ___.

  Lobeck (1995, and her related works) argues that it is necessary that the ellipsis site be head governed by a term related to tense (see also Johnson, 2001 for relevant discussion). In this approach, *to* in the complement in (i) can be associated with tense, but *to* in the adverbial infinitive clause in (ii) cannot. Since tense possibly bears a Case, then, the above contrast can be ultimately reduced to the present Case-based analysis.

  From another perspective, *to* in (i), being selected by the control verb *want*, has a null Case for the PRO subject in the sense of Chomsky & Lasnik (1993). In (ii), however, since *to*, being in the adverbial infinitive clause, is not selected by the verb, it may not have a null Case for the PRO subject of this clause (so there may be a null Comp responsible for its Case). This appears to be in accordance with the present Case-based analysis in part.

(16) a. ..... but I could John persuade [PRO to vote for Hillary Florex]

b. ..... but I could persuade John t$_{persuade}$ [PRO to vote for Hillary Florex]   <verb movement>

c. ..... but I could <John t$_{persuade}$ [PRO to vote for Hillary Florex]>$_i$ persuade t$_i$ <remnant raising>

d. ..... but I could <John t$_{persuade}$ [PRO to vote for Hillary Florx]>$_i$ _____   <pseudogapping>

In (16a) the verb *persuade* first takes the infinitival complement under the binary branching, and then it raises over the object *John*, as seen in (16b) (see Lee, 2002 for reasons for the above derivation in detail.) Thus, Boeckx-Stjepanović's claim that head movement is a PF process is rendered inconclusive.

In addition, examples like (13a) show that nonauxiliary heads cannot license the VPE gap. If any morphologically realized head can license the gap in question, for example, *not* in (12b) and *gave* in (13a), it is not obvious how to rule out examples like these.

5. What Really Counts as a Licensor of the VPE Gap?

Under the present approach, the sentential *not* is not an ellipsis licensor since it is not a tensed auxiliary verb. Notice also that the licensor now has Case since it is under Infl. In this regard, this *not* is not an ellipsis licensor either since it has no Case. The (un)grammaticality of (12a,b) with elliptic VPs, repeated below, now directly follows from the present Case Minimality analysis.

(12) a.   Mary is here even though John is$_i$ not (t$_i$ here). (=(4c))

b.   *Mary isn't here even though John Infl[F] not (is here). (feature movement from V to Infl)

In (12a) the overt tensed auxiliary verb *is* licenses the VPE gap over the sentential negator *not* having no Case, likewise in examples like

(4a–c), whereas the VPE gap in (12b) is not licensed due to the lack of an overt licensor.

Now I turn to the subjunctives in (9), repeated below.

(9) a. I desire that Mary be here and that John not _____.
         (cf. *I desire that Mary be here and that John _____ also.)
     b. Kim needs to be there but it is better that the organizers other not ___.
         (cf. *Kim needn't be there but it is imperative that the other organizers ____.)

The question here is what licenses the VPE gap despite the lack of a licensing overt tensed auxiliary verb. Recall that two hypotheses were considered above, that is, in English a subjunctive clause lacks an Infl projection or the head of a subjunctive clause is a morphologically null modal. In line with the latter hypothesis, suppose that subjunctives have a null tensed modal auxiliary verb, namely 0_{should}, the null counterpart of *should*. This is not implausible in that sometimes only *should* may appear in its place, and that its subject has a Nominative Case.

Now turning to the problematic examples in (9), I suggest that the sentential *not* cliticize onto this null tensed modal 0_{should} put under the Infl node somewhat idiosyncratically just like it does onto another host *can*, as in *cannot*. The cliticization of the sentential *not* to the null tensed modal in question results in the Infl complex, as seen in (17).

(17) [$_{Infl}$ 0_{should}–not] (where 0_{should} may be specified as [+modal, +subjunctive, +tense, +Nom] in detail)

This Infl complex now becomes morphologically overt, and thereby it qualifies as a proper licensor.

The cliticization of the sentential *not* may have to occur at PF (see Radford, 1997, p. 261) in consideration of the following contrast:

(18) a.   He cannot smoke at home.
      b.   Can he not smoke at home?
      c. *Cannot he smoke at home?

The modal *can* and the sentential *not* are separate words in the syntax, and thus, (18b) can be derived. But (18c) cannot be derived in the syntax since the cliticization in question can only apply at PF. Thus *cannot* in (18a) is regarded as one word at PF.

   Crucially, this process does not apply to (12b) with an elliptic VP, repeated below, since there is no null modal onto which *not* can cliticize.[2]

(12) b. *Mary isn't here even though John Infl[F] not (is here).
          (feature movement from V to Infl)

   This analysis thus predicts that if no element cliticizes to the null tensed modal in subjunctives, VP-ellipsis is not possible. Indeed, the

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2) It has been argued that the sentential negator *not* licenses a VPE gap, as indicated in (i) (see Johnson, 2001; and the references cited there).

(i)   a.   John is leaving but Mary is ___.
      b. *John is leaving but Mary's ___.
      c.   John is leaving but Mary's not ___.

The defect incurred by the contraction in (ib) is remedied by the negator *not*, as seen in (ic). I have no clear idea about this amelioration effect. This exceptional licensing ability of *not* is also found in (ii)-(iii).

(ii) a. *I consider Bill intelligent and I consider Sally ___.
      b.   I consider Bill intelligent and I consider Sally not ___.
(iii) a. ?*Mag left, and Sally ___.
      b.   Mag left, and not Sally ___.

The processes responsible for the above contrasts in (ii) and (iii) are different from the VPE proper. (iib) is an example of "predicate ellipsis" in Baltin's term and (iiib) is an example of stripping. Johnson (2001, ft. 15) also states that they do not meet the diagnostic properties of VPE, due to Anne Lobeck -- the gaps here are not the typical VPE gaps to begin with and there is no overt auxiliary verb that licenses a VPE gap. In this connection, (ic) might be treated in the same way as (iib, iiib).

prediction is borne out, as illustrated by the following examples left untouched in Potsdam (1997).

(19) a. *We can't count on Josh to be waiting for us at the airport so we request that you be ___ instead.
b. *The bridges were repaired before the engineers could even insist that the supporting structure be ___ first.
c. *When the laborers have reached a decision, it is important that the leader have ____ as well.

The aspectual auxiliaries *have* and *be* in examples like (19a,b,c) are not (PF) clitics that attach to the null modal. If they were clitics, examples like (8b) would be undesirably allowed, contrary to fact. Note also that there are no overt instances of forms like the following:

(20) *canhave, *canbe, *musthave, *mustbe, *shouldhave, *shouldbe

It is obvious that these auxiliaries do not qualify as proper licensors of the VPE gap since they are not in tensed forms (and thus have no Case), to begin with. If any morphologically realized head can license the gap in question, it is not obvious how to rule out examples like (19a,b,c).

6. Conclusion

I have so far argued that the sentential negator *not* is not a VP-ellipsis gap licensor in English finite clauses. From this result, the following VP-ellipsis licensing condition was obtained:

(21) An elided VP must be licensed by an overt tensed auxiliary verb in English finite clauses.

This condition also relied on one locality principle based on Case, namely, Case Minimality.

A more general VP-ellipsis licensing condition could be formulated in terms of Case (in consideration of the discussion related to nonfinte clauses in English in ft. 1) in the following direction: An elided VP must be licensed by an overt auxiliary element that has Case in English. I leave it for my work in progress.

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