

GENERATIVE LINGUISTICS AND DIDERICHSEN

Comparing the approaches



SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

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DEFINING THE FIELD ANALYSIS

No universal agreement on the exact structure of the field analysis, but they build on the analysis by Diderichsen.

I have mostly used Diderichsen (1946) and Lundskær-Nielsen and Holmes (2010) as representative of the analysis:

	Nexus field			Content field			Fields (<i>felter</i>)
F	v	n	a	V	N	A	
-	<i>Har</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>aldrig</i>	<i>villet møde</i>	<i>hende</i>	<i>før?</i>	Slots (<i>pladser</i>)
	<i>Have</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>never</i>	<i>wanted to meet</i>	<i>her</i>	<i>before?</i>	

Use of the conjunction field, *k*, and differences between main clauses and embedded clauses are not crucial for my analysis.

- The main point is that one or more fields precede the nexus field.



STRUCTURE OF THE ANALYSIS

Three areas where there is a difference between the two models of analysis:

1. Coreferential DPs

Defining c-command and binding theory

2. Forming constituents

Fields and slots as constituents

3. Movement

Topicalisation and passivisation



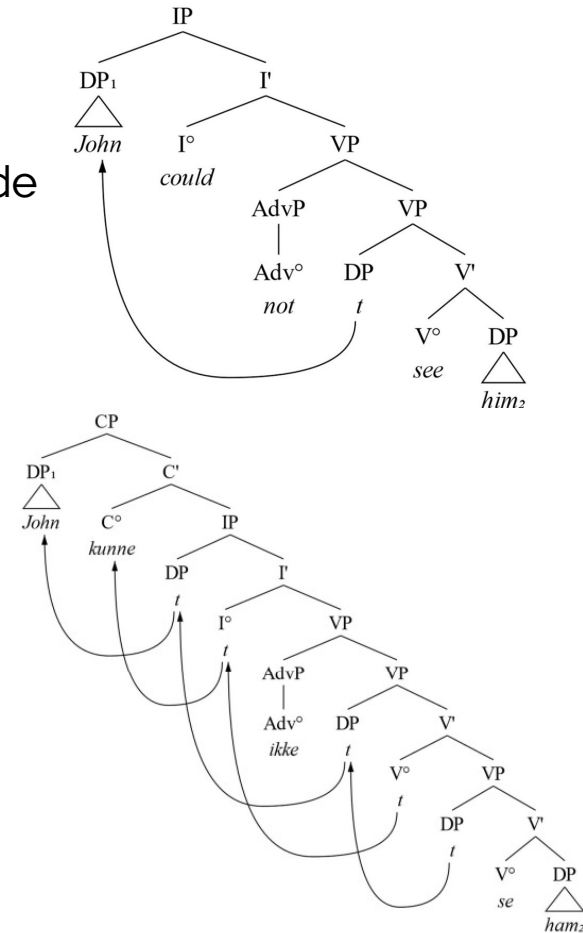
COREFERENTIAL DPs - GENERATIVE

Defining c-command:

- “[n]ode X c-commands node Y iff the first branching node dominating X also dominates Y.”

Haegeman and Guéron (1999, 214).

Notably, c-command is asymmetric, while any definition in the field analysis would be symmetric.



BINDING THEORY

Principles of binding theory can predict grammaticality in Danish and English:

(A) An anaphor is bound in its governing category.

(B) A pronominal is free in its governing category.

(C) An R-expression is free.

Chomsky (1993, 184).

Binding theory can also be used to predict the reflexive features [\pm selv] and [\pm sig] in Danish.

Vikner and Ehlers (2017).

- Da. a. *John₁ kunne ikke se ham₁
John could not see him
- b. John₁ kunne ikke se sig selv₁.
- c. *John₁ kunne ikke se sig selv₂
John could not see REFL self
- d. *Han₁ kunne ikke se John₁
- e. Han₁ kunne ikke se John₂
He could not see John
- f. *Sig selv₁ kunne ikke se John₁
- g. *Sig selv₁ kunne ikke se John₂
REFL self could not see John

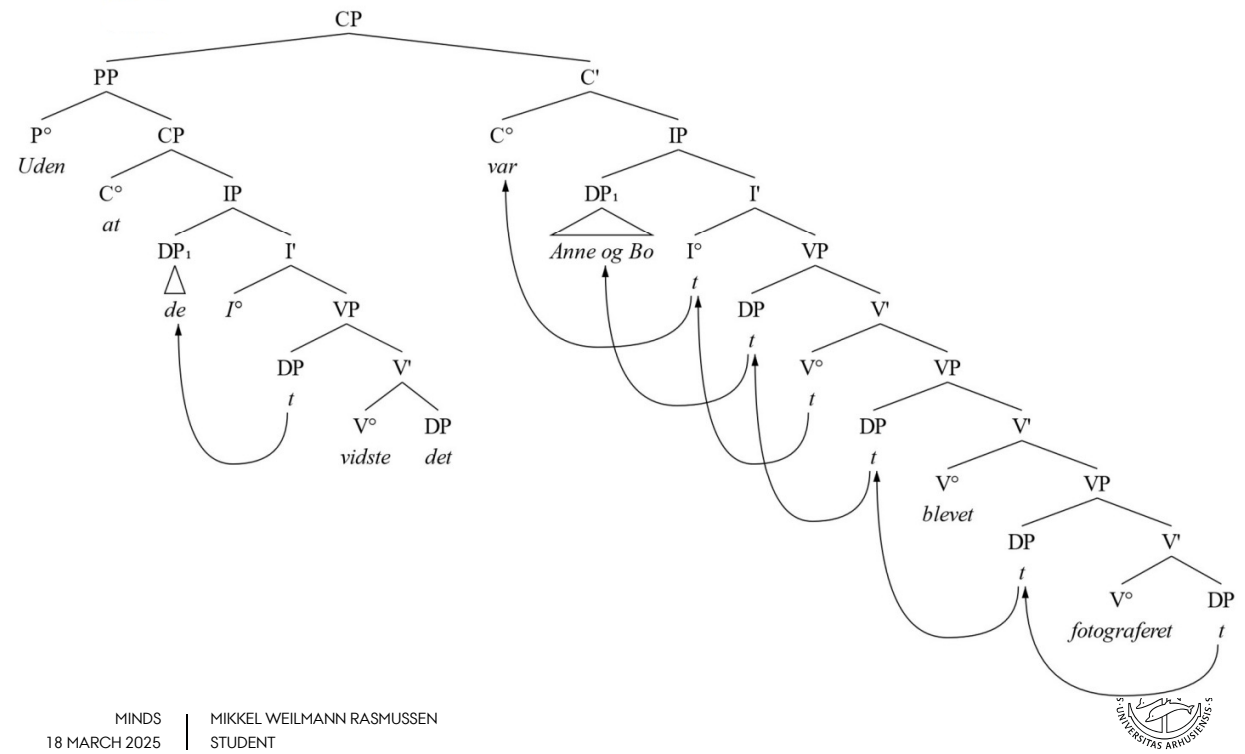


COREFERENTIAL DP_s – FIELD ANALYSIS

The field analysis relies on rules about the order of DPs to predict the grammaticality of coreferential DPs:

- E.g. an R-expression cannot succeed a coreferential pronoun:

Vikner (2013) posits that such generalisations, even if correct, can only apply to Danish.



FORMING CONSTITUENTS - SLOTS

According to Vikner and Christensen (2024, 217), fields and slots in the field analysis must be susceptible to the same types of constituent tests that are used in the generative approach.

Examples from Bjerre et. al. (2008, 148):

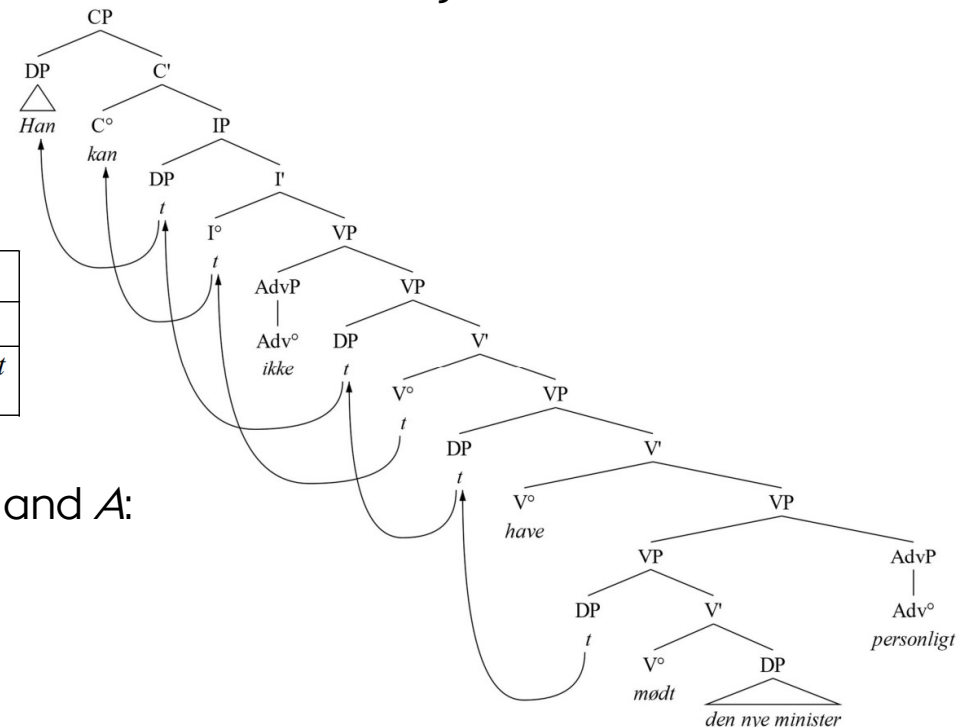
Da. a. Han kan ikke have mødt den nye minister personligt
He can not have met the new minister personally

b.

	Nexus field			Content field		
F	v	n	a	V	N	A
<i>Han</i>	<i>kan</i>	-	<i>ikke</i>	<i>have mødt</i>	<i>den nye minister</i>	<i>personligt</i>

The *V*slot can be divided and manipulated with *N* and *A*:

Da. [Mødt den nye minster personligt] kan han ikke have
[Met the new minister personally] can he not have



FORMING CONSTITUENTS - FIELDS

The fields also do not act as constituents:

- Examples from Vikner and Jørgensen (2017, 150):

Jeg kan kun lave en anstændig lasagne ved hjælp af en kogebog
I can only make a decent lasagna by help of a cookbook

[Lave en anstændig lasagne] kan jeg kun ved hjælp af en kogebog
Make a decent lasagna can I only by help of a cookbook

Content field: V N A

This analysis is also made by proponents of the field analysis, Lundskær-Nielsen and Holmes (2010, 598):

Købe klaveret vil han måske i morgen
Buy piano-the will he maybe tomorrow

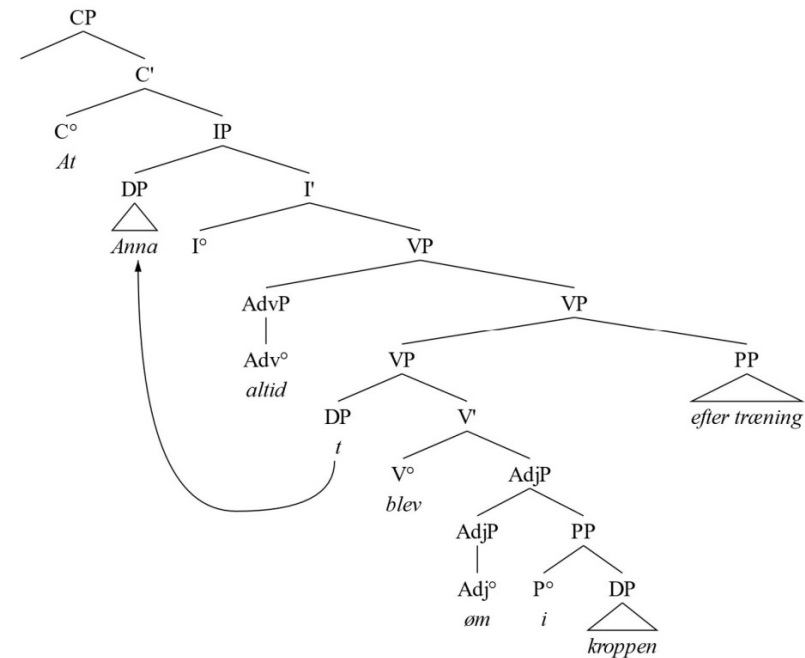
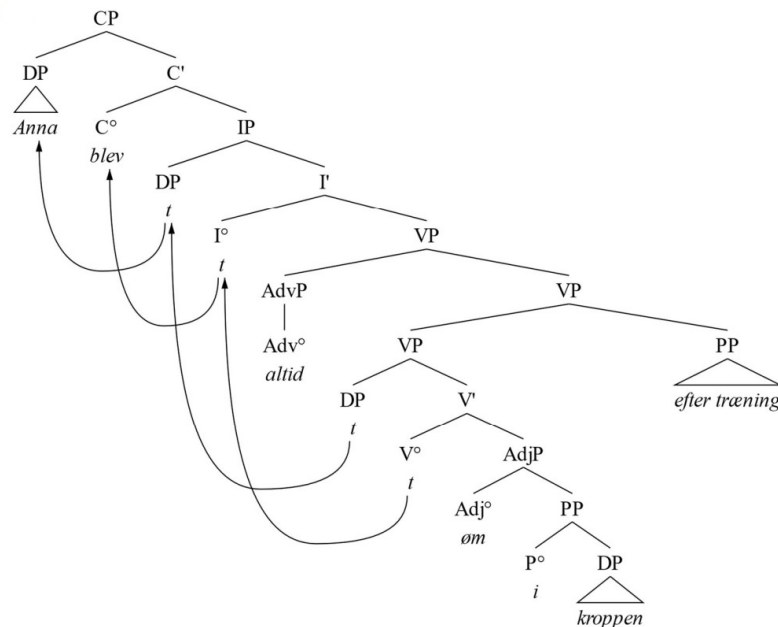
	Nexus field			Content field		
F	v	n	a	V	N	A
<i>Købe klaveret</i>	<i>vil</i>	<i>han</i>	<i>måske</i>	-	-	<i>i morgen</i>



MOVEMENT - TOPICALISATION

Both generative linguists and proponents of the field analysis agree that movement happens when topicalising and in V2.

Making the movement explicit helps illustrate parity of meaning between variations of the same clause, and the trace, *t*, explains why nothing else can occupy the initial position.



MOVEMENT - PASSIVISATION

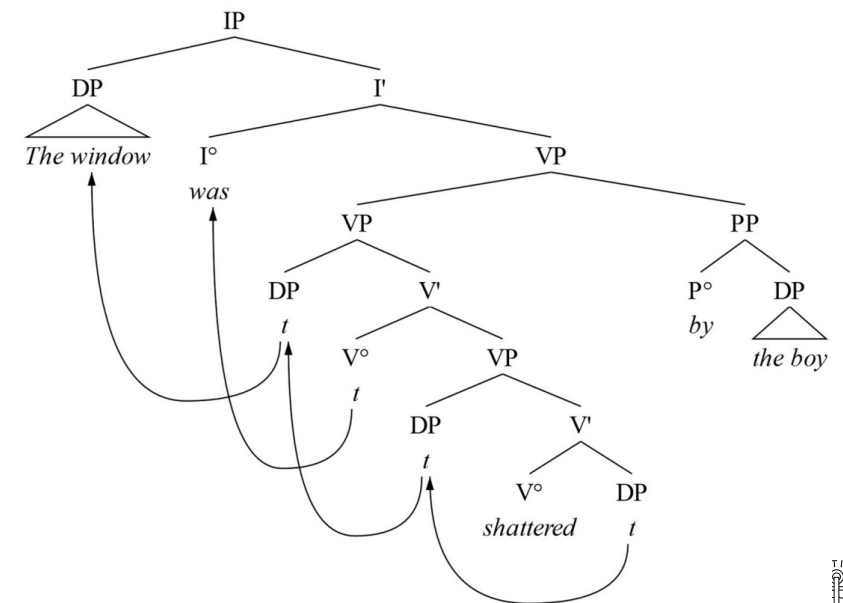
Passivisation is a “syntactic change, which does not change the basic meaning of the sentence” while “the semantic roles of agent ... and patient ... are unaffected by the change.”

Lundskær-Nielsen and Holmes (2010, 352).

θ -roles are applied by the main verb and is maintained in the subject position:

- This is explained by explicit movement

- En. a. [AGENT The boy] shattered [THEME the window]
 b. [THEME The window] was shattered by [AGENT the boy]
 Da. c. [AGENT Drengen] balrede [THEME ruden]
 Boy-the shattered window-the
 d. [THEME Ruden] blev baldret af [AGENT drenge]
 Window-the was shattered by boy-the



MOVEMENT - FLOATING QUANTIFIERS

Movement into the subject position is further supported by floating quantifiers:

- En.
- a. *All* the windows were broken by the boy
 - b. The windows were *all*broken by the boy
 - c. *The windows were broken *all* by the boy

- Da.
- e. *Alle* vinduerne blev baldret af drengen
 - g. Vinduerne blev *alle* baldret af drengen
 - h. *Vinduerne blev baldret *alle* af drengen

Bošković (2004, 685) argues that *c.* and *h.* are ungrammatical because floating quantifiers cannot appear in θ -positions.



CONCLUSION

The field analysis is tailored to a specific language, in this case Danish, whereas the generative approach is (ideally) applicable to every language.

- The field analysis does not support c-command and binding theory but must rely on language-specific generalisations to account for coreferential DPs.
 - Generative linguistics can use asymmetric binding theory to make accurate predictions about the use of coreferential DPs across languages.
- Neither the slots or fields of the field analysis fully satisfy the constituent tests used by the generative approach.
 - Tree structures accurately reveal why certain words can be manipulated together, most notably the VP consisting of both verb and object.
- While the field analysis uses implicit movement, making the movement explicit supports the way topicalisation, passivisation, and floating quantifiers behave.



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