PREVENT-TYPE VERBS IN A GB FRAMEWORK[1]

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Abstract

This paper deals with the properties of constructions containing verbs like **prevent** in English. It is argued that the NP following **prevent**-type verbs in [**prevent** NP **from** -**ing**] strings is not a direct object argument, but rather the subject of a subordinate clause introduced by the complementiser **from**. This subject is raised from its Spec-of-IP position at D-Structure (where it receives a θ-role) to its S-Structure Spec-of-CP position (where it is assigned Case by the matrix verb). Thus, the D-Structure for a sentence like **I prevented the cake from being eaten** is **I prevented from the cake being eaten**. In order to account for the fact that inanimate NPs following **prevent** cannot be fronted under Passivisation (cf. ***the cake was prevented from being eaten**), whereas animate NPs can (cf. **Andrew was prevented from leaving**), it is claimed that **prevent** has two subcategorisation frames, namely [- , CP] when the postverbal NP is inanimate, and [- , NP [+animate] CP] when this NP is animate.

1 Introduction

In this article I would like to investigate the properties of a small group of fairly infrequent verbs whose prototypical member is **prevent**. The constructions in which these verbs occur have been dealt with in Standard Theoretical studies, but have never been studied in detail in current Government-Binding (GB) theory. What I propose to do in this paper is the following: in order for the reader to get some idea of the previous treatments of these constructions I will discuss, in the next section, the Standard Theoretical analyses of Rosenbaum (1967) and Postal (1974). This discussion will be followed by an account, largely descriptive, of the properties of **prevent**-constructions in section 3. In section 4 a possible analysis of these constructions in GB terms will be presented. I will suggest that **prevent**-type verbs are dyadic predicates when they are followed by an NP. When they are followed by an [NP from -ing] string two possible situations obtain: if the NP in question is inanimate **prevent**-type verbs are again dyadic predicates. If the NP is animate these verbs are triadic predicates. Section 5 discusses a set of verbs related to **prevent** including **discourage**, **deter**, **dissuade** and **restrain**. The final section is the conclusion.

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2 Standard Theoretical accounts

Rosenbaum (1967:89-91) argues that constructions in which prevent-type verbs occur are derived from an underlying structure in which the postverbal NP is a subject.

(1) **Base (=Deep Structure):**

I prevented [$_{NP}$ [$_{N}$ it] [$_{S}$ [$_{NP}$ John][$_{VP}$ go]]]

↓

Complementizer Placement

↓

I prevented [$_{NP}$ [$_{N}$ it] [$_{S}$ from [$_{NP}$ John][$_{VP}$ ing go]]]

↓

Extraposition

↓

I prevented [$_{NP}$ [$_{N}$ it]] [$_{S}$ from [$_{NP}$ John][$_{VP}$ ing go]]

↓

Auxiliary Transformation
(=Affix Hopping)

↓

I prevented [$_{NP}$ [$_{N}$ it]] [$_{S}$ from [$_{NP}$ John] [go+ing]]

↓

Pronoun Replacement

↓

I prevented [$_{NP}$ John] [$_{S}$ from [$_{VP}$ go+ing]]

↓

Surface Structure:

I prevented John from going

(Rosenbaum 1967:90)

This subject is raised to the matrix clause. In Rosenbaum's account this rule is

termed Pronoun Replacement as the subject replaces a base-generated it-element. This underlying subject ends up in the Surface Structure direct object position. **From** is a complementiser. In (1) above it is shown how Rosenbaum derives the sentence **I prevented John from going.** The treatment of **prevent**-type verbs is similar in Postal (1974): the constructions in which these verbs (which he calls N-verbs, i.e. verbs of negative causation) occur are analysed as being the output of the rule of Subject-Raising-to-Object. Curiously, the question of the exact position of **from** (which he regards as a preposition) is completely ignored. Bresnan, in her otherwise negative review of Postal's book, remarks that "[a] Raising analysis is quite plausible for these constructions" (1976:497). In Pullum and Postal (1988) Postal's original claim is reasserted: a Raising-to-Object analysis is considered the best account for **prevent** constructions. I will return to what they have to say in that article in the next section and in section 4. In what follows I will argue for a different analysis of **prevent**-constructions.

3 *Prevent*-constructions

Consider the patterns in which **prevent**-type verbs may occur:

(1) I prevented the accident.

(2) I prevented Andrew's leaving.

(3) I prevented Andrew's leaving the house.

(4) They prevented language theory from influencing the students.

(5) They prevented language theory influencing the students.

It would seem that verbs like **prevent** are dyadic predicates, i.e. predicates taking two arguments: a subject argument and a direct object argument. For (1) and (2) this claim is uncontroversial: **prevent** assigns a θ-role to the NPs **the accident** and **Andrew's leaving.** For (3) - (5), however, it is less obvious that the strings following the main verb are to be analysed as single constituents. Let us look at each of these sentences in turn.

In (3) it would appear that the nonfinite clause **Andrew's leaving the house** functions like an NP in more than one respect. Firstly, it contains the genitive construction, which is characteristic of NPs. Secondly, this string can occur in typical NP slots: subject position, object position, prepositional complement position etc. It is therefore reasonable to analyse it on a par with (1) and (2).

Sentences (4) and (5), which are my main concern, are more problematic. At first glance it would appear to be unlikely that the strings **language theory from influencing the students** and **language theory influencing the students** are constituents and arguments of the verb. Yet, that is the position I would want to defend here. First, let us establish that in (4) and (5) the postverbal NP-position following **prevent** is not a position in which an argument of the matrix verb may occur. Consider the sentences in (6) and (7):

(6) I prevented the committee from taking a bad decision.

(7) I prevented a bad decision from being taken by the committee.

These sentences are synonymous[3]. In other words, the passivisation process which applies to the postverbal string in (6) does not affect the propositional content of the resultant sentence (7). This strongly suggests that the postverbal NPs in (6) and (7) are not arguments of the matrix verb; that is, prevent does not assign a θ-role to NP the committee in (6), nor to the NP a bad decision in (7), but rather to the whole string that follows it.

Consider next (8) - (11):

(8) He prevented there from being a riot.

(9) Nobody can stop it from snowing in the Himalayas.

(10) Harry kept tabs from being kept on Joan's movements.

(11) We must prevent any heed from being taken of his suggestion.
(all from Postal 1974:159)

In (8) and (9) there and nonreferential it occur in the postverbal NP position. As they are dummy elements they cannot be arguments of the preceding verbs. Sentences like (8) and (9) are not wholly uncontroversial, however. Chomsky has discussed the sentence in (12):

(12) They prevented it from raining.

He has the following to say about it:

(13) ...quite apart from its dubious status, it is difficult to see how any arguments can be based on it, since the rules for generating it would appear to be idiosyncratic, even if it is accepted as grammatical.
(Chomsky 1981:147 fn 108)

Postal and Pullum comment as in (14) on this:

(14) Two comments are relevant. First, nothing about [12] is dubious. It is perfectly grammatical for everyone we know of, and belongs to an example category that has long been noted in the grammatical literature,...Second, and more important,...the allegedly "idiosyncratic" character of the rules defining structures with verbs like prevent is, as a matter of logic, irrelevant to the key issue, which is the existence of (even a single example of) a sentence type for which the optimal account is a Raising-to-Object analysis (1988:655).

One thing is clear: the fact that (12) is a possible sentence of English at least for certain groups of speakers is significant in itself. I would agree with Postal

[3]Pragmatically there may of course be differences of focus.

and Pullum that Chomsky's claim that sentences like the one above are 'derivatively generated' is an easy way out of a difficult problem. I believe that (12) is grammatical, and I will make a proposal below regarding its analysis. I will not, however, accept Postal and Pullum's claim that **prevent**-constructions are best analysed as involving Raising-to-Object.

With respect to (10) and (11) we can draw the same conclusion as above, namely that the postverbal NP positions, which are occupied here by idiomatic phrases, typically not arguments, are not assigned a θ-role by the matrix verb.

(6) - (9) especially are crucial evidence for the claim that prevent-type verbs do not assign a θ-role to the NPs which immediately follow them, but rather to the following proposition as a whole. We will see below, however, that this claim will need to be qualified somewhat. It will be seen that if the postverbal NP is animate a different situation obtains.

4 A GB analysis

The question now arises how to analyse the constructions in which verbs like **prevent** occur, or rather, how to analyse the propositional complement of prevent-type verbs. I will concentrate on the analysis of sentences (4) and (5).

Let us first observe that in view of the fact that the NP **language theory** in (4) is not an argument of the matrix verb, it cannot be the direct object of that verb, and so must be the subject of the clause **language theory from influencing the students**. Semantically this is obvious. There is also some syntactic evidence to support the conclusion that this string must be a clause. Firstly, notice that we can coordinate the bold strings in (15), which indicates that they function as units.

(15) They prevented **language theory from influencing the students** and **semantics from being studied.**

However, this is not conclusive evidence. Secondly, notice that it is possible to apply Right Node Raising (RNR) to a sentence like (16a) below, deriving (16b). (16c) is dubious.

(16) a They wanted to prevent language theory from influencing the students, but they couldn't prevent language theory from influencing the students.

b They wanted to prevent - but they couldn't prevent - **language theory from influencing the students.**

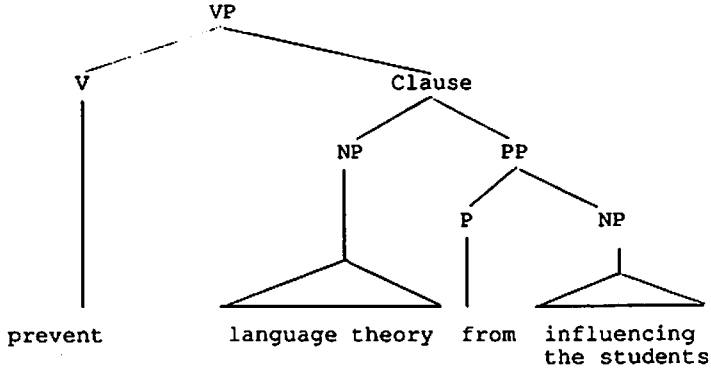
c ?*They wanted to prevent language theory - but they couldn't prevent language theory - **from influencing the students.**

This process has been used as a test for constituenthood. It suggests that the bold shared strings function as units in (16b), but not in (16c). With animate postverbal NPs RNR of this type does not appear to be possible. I will return to this issue below.

The combined syntactic, semantic and thematic evidence for the claim that the string **language theory from influencing the students** is a constituent is quite conclusive.

Let us now address the question how to analyse the postverbal string in (4). One possible treatment is shown in (17) (only the relevant VP is shown)[3]:

(17)



In this analysis the NP **language theory** is a subject and the PP **from influencing the students** is a predicate. **From** is a preposition which takes a gerundival clausal NP complement. This treatment is semantically odd. Unlike in some other V-NP-PP constructions (like e.g. **I want you in the car**) there is clearly no subject-predicate relation between the NP **language theory** and the PP **from influencing the students**, although there is such a relation between **language theory** and **influencing the students**. Another objection to (17) is that it does not provide us with an explanation for the fact that the element **from**, if it is indeed a preposition, does not normally take a regular NP as its complement, as can be seen in (18) below:

(18) *I prevented John from murder[4].

Also, if we assume that there is a close relationship between (4) and (5), then how can we explain that **from** is optional? Given the fact that the heads of phrases cannot normally be omitted, we must conclude that (17) is a highly unlikely configuration.

On the basis of sentences like (6) and (7), among others, Rosenbaum concluded that **from** "is not an instance of PREP but a complementizer of the basic form "from-ing" " (Rosenbaum 1967:90). In the present analysis we have also been led to conclude that **from** is a complementiser. The question we must now ask is whether there is any further evidence for claiming that this is indeed the case. The answer is affirmative, and the evidence is quite convincing.

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[3]No movement has taken place here so (17) is both a D-Structure and an S-Structure.

[4]Dick Hudson has pointed out to me that in **keep...from** constructions **from** can be followed by an NP. For example: **I kept John from murder.** However, we could argue here that **keep** subcategorises a PP in addition to an NP.

Firstly, the element **from** is meaningless[5]. This is a characteristic of most complementisers. There is no way in which we can say that a clause introducer like, for example, **that** carries meaning. Rather, such elements signal the presence of a subordinate clause.

Secondly, it has often been observed that there is a close relationship between complementisers and the kind of clauses they introduce. Thus, note that the complementiser **that** always introduces a finite clause, and that the complementiser **for** always introduces a nonfinite clause. In this connexion it is significant that **from** always takes a nonfinite **-ing** clause, as is shown in (19), but not a finite clause as in (20), nor a nonfinite **to**-infinitival clause, as in (21):

(19) I prevented Kate from eating the biscuits.

(20) *I prevented Kate from ate the biscuits.

(21) *I prevented Kate from to eat the biscuits.

Thirdly, with active subordinate clauses **from** in **prevent**-type constructions can be omitted, as in (5). This parallels the behaviour of prototypical complementisers like **that** and **for** which can also be left out, as (22) and (23) show:

(22) a I believe that she is marvellous.
b I believe Ø she is marvellous.

(23) a I want for her to leave.
b I want Ø her to leave.

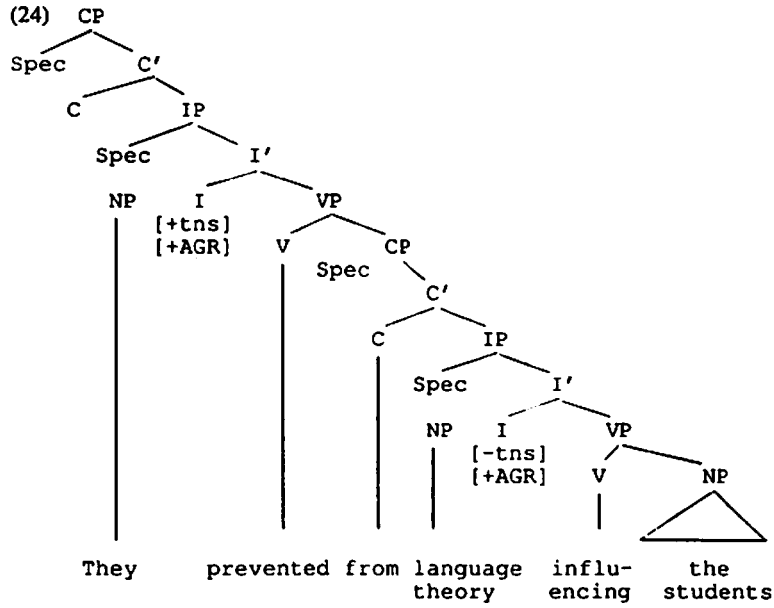
Observe that complementisers seem to behave idiosyncratically with respect to whether they can be omitted or not in case the subordinate clause they introduce is passivised. The complementiser **that** is optional both with an active and with a passive complement, whereas **whether** is obligatorily present in active and in passive complement clauses. **For**, as in (23a) above, is optional in the active, but must be left out in the passive. **From** also behaves idiosyncratically in this regard in that it is optional in active complement clauses but obligatory in passive complement clauses.

It would seem, then, that there is ample evidence to support the claim that **from** in **prevent**-type constructions is a complementiser.

Having argued for a clausal analysis of the string **language theory from influencing the students** in (4) and having claimed that **from** is a complementiser, we are now in a position to analyse this sentence. I propose the D-Structure representation in (24) for (4), using the Chomsky (1986) analysis of sentence structure:

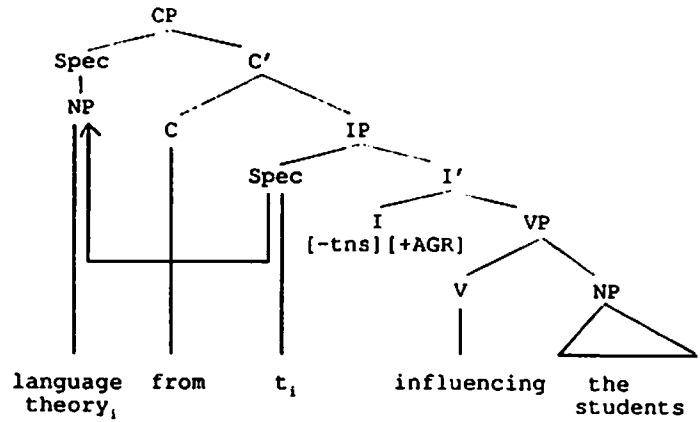
[5]This claim is controversial. See e.g. Bresnan (1970) and Jackendoff (1976:123) who claims that **from** is a meaning-carrying preposition.

(24)



In this phrase-marker **from** is positioned in the complementiser position 'C'. In order to arrive at the surface form (4) [=**They prevented language theory from influencing the students**], I propose that the NP **language theory** moves from the Deep Structure subject slot in the Specifier-of-IP position to the Specifier-of-CP position in the lower clause. We then have the structure in (25), where only the lower CP is shown:

(25) They prevented [$_{CP}$ language theory$_i$ from t_i influencing the students]



Notice that in moving up the NP **language theory** crosses no barriers: only IP is crossed which cannot intrinsically be a barrier. As the string **they prevented from language theory influencing the students** in (24) is not a possible surface form, we must conclude that movement of the NP is obligatory. We may wonder how this can be motivated theoretically. Let us first look at the assignment of θ-roles. This would seem to be straightforward in that the VP assigns an agent θ-role to the NP **language theory** in its D-Structure position. The mechanism of Case assignment is more intricate. At first glance it would appear that the complementiser **from** is like **for** in that it could be said to assign Case to the subject in the IP-Specifier position. However, if this were the case there would be no motivation for the NP **language theory** to move higher up. As this movement takes place obligatorily we must conclude that unlike the preposition **from**, the complementiser **from** is not a Case assigner. **From** is then like e.g. **while** which also occurs in 'C', but does not Case-mark its complement. Observe that if we assume that this is indeed the case we can explain why sentences like (18) do not occur: they violate the Case Filter.

But now the question arises how, if not from **from**, the NP **language theory** receives Case. Let us assume that verbs like **prevent**, and perhaps a few others, may assign Case to an element in the CP-Specifier position. The movement shown in (25) is then as in (26a).

(26) a

A'		A	
θ'	<--	θ	prevent-constructions
C		Ø	
position		position	

b

A'		A	
θ'	<--	θ	Wh-constructions
Ø		C	
position		position	

c	A		A	
	θ'	<--	θ	Raising-to-Subject
	C		C	constructions
position		position		

That is, there is movement from an A-position and a θ-position to an A'-position and a θ'-position and from a non Case-marked position to a Case-marked position. This movement resembles the situation we have in Wh-movement, as in (26b), which is also movement from an argument position and from a θ-position to an A' and θ'-position. The movement in (26a) differs from the movement in (26b) in that it constitutes movement from a non Case-marked position to a Case position. In this respect it resembles Raising-to-Subject movements, as in (26c).

There appears to be some independent empirical support for the possibility of Case being assigned to the Specifier-of-CP position. Consider the sentence in (27a) discussed in Radford (1988:574f) and its derivation in (27b):

(27) a He is someone whom I think it is obvious will be a problem.

b He is someone $[_{CP}$ whom $[_{IP}$ I think $[_{CP}$ t_3 $[_{IP}$ it is obvious $[_{CP}$ t_2 $[_{IP}$ t_1 will be a problem]]]]]]

Radford observes that for many speakers it is possible for the objective Wh-pronoun **whom** to be used in sentences like (27a) rather than the nominative form **who**. His explanation for the problem how the Wh-pronoun receives objective Case runs as follows: in moving successive cyclically from its subject position in the lowest IP (i.e. t_1) to the CP-Specifier positions t_2 and t_3, the Wh-element is assigned objective Case by the verb **think**. Notice that this account crucially relies on the possibility of Case being assigned to elements in the CP-Specifier position. This possibility was first considered in Kayne (1984). If this is indeed what is happening it constitutes independent empirical support for this type of Case assignment being permitted and hence it makes the treatment of **prevent**-constructions given above more plausible in that that too assumes this to be a possible option. As Radford acknowledges, his account is not without problems. For one, the chain t_1 - t_2 - t_3 - **whom** is assigned Case twice: once by the I-node of the lowest IP, and a second time by the verb **think**.

Observe that in the account above of **prevent**-constructions Spec-of-CP is an A'-position, as required. This position is governed, but not θ-governed by **prevent** so in principle Case marking of this position is not ruled out. In general we would want to exclude movement of non Wh-phrases to an embedded Spec-of-CP as this leads to ungrammaticality, cf (28):

(28) *We arranged $[_{CP}$ $[_{Spec}$ doughnuts$_i$] for $[_{IP}$ Rudolph to buy t_i]]

In the present framework we can easily explain why this sentence is out: the NP **doughnuts** has moved from a Case position in the lower clause to another Case position higher up. There therefore occurs a Case clash.

If the account presented here is correct, i.e. if **prevent**, and the other verbs like it, do exceptionally assign Case to the CP-Specifier position, then we would expect it not to be possible for Wh-elements to occupy this slot. This is exactly what we find in (29); we cannot have

(29) *I prevented [$_{CP}$ what$_i$ John from eating t_i]

As the CP-Specifier position is already filled by **John**, Wh-elements cannot be moved there. Furthermore, there would again be a Case clash.

One might wonder what rules out structures like (30):

(30) *We prevented from PRO leaving the house.

As **from** is not a governor it should be possible for PRO to appear as the subject of **leaving**. There are cases where this is indeed possible, as we will see below. However, (30) needs to be ruled out. One way of doing this is to argue that **prevent** in this sentence must obligatorily assign objective Case to some lexically realised Noun Phrase. As there is no such phrase available, the sentence is ungrammatical.

Consider now (31):

(31) I prevented you from chewing the tobacco.

Pullum and Postal (1988) (from which this sentence is taken) argue that "[u]nder the view we would take, word sequences like **you from chewing the tobacco** are never clauses, but rather are NP-PP sequences. They therefore will only appear where NP-PP sequences are syntactically permitted". One piece of evidence they cite against a clausal analysis of strings like **you from chewing the tobacco** in (31) is the possible intervention of parenthetic material in **prevent**-constructions, as in (32).

(32) We can prevent it, I assure you, from becoming known that we are here. (Postal and Pullum's (30a))

In straightforward complements such material may not intervene, as can be seen in (33):

(33) *We can prove that, I assure you, we are here.
(Postal and Pullum's (30c))

Thus, Postal and Pullum's claim is that the (im)possibility of insertion of lexical material in these sentences shows that (32) does not involve a clausal complement of the form **it from becoming known that we are here**, whereas (33) does involve a clausal complement (namely **that we are here**). Under the analysis presented here examples like (32) are not problematic. In such sentences the clause **I assure you** occurs between an element in the Specifier position and an element in the complementiser position of the lower CP. As can be seen in (34), parenthetical clauses can freely occur here:

(34) What, I wonder, can one do about it?

We will see presently that apart from the parenthetical clause there are differences between the syntactic structures of sentences (31) and (32).

Postal and Pullum also cite the ungrammatical sentence (35):

(35) *We can prevent, I assure you, it from becoming known that we are here. (Postal and Pullum's (30b))

They claim that its non-occurrence shows that the sequence **it from becoming known that we are here** is not a clause. However, the unacceptability of this sentence too can be straightforwardly explained in the present framework: we have analysed the string **it from becoming known that we are here** as the propositional object of **prevent**. In normal circumstances this verb would assign Case to the element **it**. However, in (35) **prevent** cannot assign Case to **it** because, as is standardly assumed, Case can only be assigned under adjacency.

The passive of **prevent**-constructions is somewhat problematic. Notice that in order to derive (36a) from (36b) we cannot allow the NP **Andrew** to move from the Spec-of-IP position in the lower clause to the Spec-of-CP position of that same lower clause and then on to the Spec-of-IP position of the matrix clause, as in (37):

(36) a Andrew was prevented from leaving the house.
b $[_{NP}$ e] was presented from Andrew leaving the house.

(37) Andrew_i was prevented $[[_{Spec}\ t_i]$ from t_i leaving the house

This would involve movement from an A-position to an A'-position and then back into an A-position. We could of course argue that such movement is exceptionally allowed, or that movement takes place in one swoop (i.e. from the lower Spec-of-IP position to the Spec-of-IP position of the matrix clause), but neither of these options is satisfactory as they allow for an ad hoc enrichment of the grammar in that normally such movements are not possible.

For an account of the passive of **prevent**-constructions I would like to follow a suggestion made to me by Rita Manzini. She suggests that possibly **prevent** and verbs like it have two subcategorisation frames, namely those in (38):

(38) a [- , CP]

b [- , NP CP]
[+animate]

The default subcategorisation frame is (38a) for reasons discussed above. Notice that when this frame is selected it is predicted that the subject NP of the complement CP cannot be fronted under Passivisation as this would involve the kind of illicit movement shown in (37). In view of sentences like (39) - (41) this prediction would appear to be borne out:

(39) a *There$_i$ was prevented $[_{CP}$ t_i from t_i being a riot]
b *It$_i$ was prevented $[_{CP}$ t_i from t_i snowing]

(40) ?*Language theory$_i$ was prevented $[_{CP}$ t_i from t_i influencing the students]

(41) *$[_{NP}$ The cake]$_i$ was prevented $[_{CP}$ t_i from t_i being eaten t_i]

Here neither the pleonastic elements **there** and **it** nor the NPs **language theory** and **the cake** can be passivised[6]. However, Passivisation is perfectly possible in some cases. Consider (36a), repeated here as (42), which is a grammatical sentence:

(42) Andrew was prevented from leaving the house.

Sentences of the type in (42), i.e. with an animate subject NP, are derived from a D-Structure which conforms to subcategorisation frame (38b). That is, the D-Structure for (42) is (43):

(43) [e] was prevented Andrew$_i$ [$_{CP}$ from PRO$_i$ leaving the house]

This is a control structure in which the PRO subject in the subordinate clause is coindexed with **Andrew** in the matrix clause. There is empirical evidence which suggests that (43) is the correct structure. Consider the data in (44):

(44) a I prevented him myself from going there.
b *I prevented there myself from being a problem.
c ?*I prevented language theory myself from influencing the students[7].

The position of the reflexive NP in these sentences indicates, on the one hand, that the animate NP **him** and the string **from going there** are separate arguments of **prevent** in (44a), and, on the other hand, that **there from being a problem** and **language theory from influencing the students** form constituents in (44b) and (44c). Consider also (45) and (46):

(45) Jack prevented Jackie - and Fred prevented Freda - from going to the party.

(46) *I wanted to prevent - but I couldn't prevent - **Bob from leaving**. (from Postal 1974:157)

The grammaticality of (45) and the ungrammaticality of (46) again suggest that if the postverbal NP is animate it is a separate argument of the verb. If these observations are correct, verbs like **prevent** are structurally ambiguous between being dyadic predicates and triadic predicates the latter of which contain an

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[6](39a) appears to be worse than (39b), and, in turn, (39b) is worse than (i), which is marginal at worst:

(i) It was prevented from being known that Thatcher is anti- European.

There does not seem to be a satisfactory explanation as to why this sentence is not too bad. Cf. also Postal and Pullum (1988:657). The solution to this problem is very likely to be related to the fact that the **it** in (i) is 'extraposition it'. Note also that (41) seems slightly worse than (40). Again, it is not clear why.

[7]Slightly amended versions of the a and b-sentences and the sentence in (45) below were pointed out to me by Andrew Radford.

animate NP. Perhaps in (38b) animateness is not the only relevant factor. Sentence (47) shows that this feature is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for an NP to be able to front under Passivisation. It appears to show that indefinite NPs cannot be passivised:

(47) a I prevented anyone from leaving.
b *Anyone was prevented from leaving by me.
(from Postal 1974:159-160 fn 55)

However, consider (48):

(48) a I prevented someone from leaving.
b Someone was prevented from leaving.

Here too an indefinite NP has been fronted, but this time the result is fine. This indicates that definiteness is perhaps not the relevant factor here. I suggest that animate NPs following **prevent**-type verbs cannot be passivised if they are what Quirk et al. (1985:83 and 376-7) have called nonassertive forms, i.e. forms that do not assert truth-values for the sentences in which they occur.

Naturally, in the overall account presented here, which incorporates (38), we would have to allow for some enrichment of the lexicon, but this is to be preferred to an enrichment of the syntactic component of the grammar.

Let us now turn to the constructions where **from** is absent, as in (5) [=**they prevented language theory influencing the students**]. It seems reasonable to assume that at some point in the derivation of such sentences there is a **from** complementiser. This element is then deleted at a later stage in much the same way as **for** is assumed to have been deleted in sentences such as (23b).

The analysis presented here has the important and advantageous consequence that it allows for a uniform treatment of **prevent**-constructions. That is, the sentences (4) and (5) above are analysed as being syntactically the same, differing only with respect to the presence of the complementiser **from**. Semantic and syntactic considerations have led us to an analysis which has resulted in a more compact treatment of this area of English verb complementation. This is a desirable consequence.

I would like to briefly discuss an alternative approach to the type of constructions we are dealing with here. Consider the possibility of positioning the element **from** in INFL. Under such an analysis **from** would be regarded as an inflectional element much like the infinitive marker **to** which is also base-generated in INFL. Misi Brody has suggested to me that if we take such a tack we can regard verbs like **prevent** as Exceptional Case Marking (ECM) verbs, i.e. the postverbal NPs in **prevent**-constructions receive Case directly from the matrix verb. Brody notes that in the passive **from** is obligatorily present just as **to** is obligatorily present in the passive versions of sentences containing perception verb complements (cf. **I saw him leave/ He was seen to leave**). Although this approach has its merits, it does suffer from a number of problems. Firstly, it seems odd to regard **from** as an inflectional element because there is no evidence elsewhere in English syntax that this element functions in that way. Secondly, we would have to add a new group of verbs to the class of ECM verbs. In view of the fact that the concept of exceptional Case marking is not uncontroversial this might not be such a good move.

Thirdly, and more importantly, if **from** is indeed an inflectional element, how can we explain that in the active structure (5), repeated here as (49), it can be freely omitted?

(49) They prevented language theory Ø influencing the students.

The inflectional element **to** certainly cannot normally be omitted in ECM environments:

(50) a I believe John to be a fool.
b *I believe John be a fool.

Furthermore, the putative parallelism with sentences containing perception verb complements is less than perfect. Although **to** is obligatory in the passive of such structures, it cannot be present in the active:

(51) *I saw John to leave.

All these matters require explanation. Naturally we could claim that (49) is syntactically different from (4) [=**they prevented language theory from influencing the students**], but if we pursue that line of reasoning we have to set up two different analyses, one for (4) and one for (49). The analysis given in this paper is to be preferred on grounds of economy.

5 *Discourage*-type verbs

In this section I would like to discuss verbs like **discourage, deter, dissuade** and **restrain** which also occur in [**NP from -ing**] constructions. Postal included these in his class of N-verbs. This seems odd, especially in view of the fact that he did seem aware of the differences between these verbs and **prevent**-constructions such as those exemplified in sentences (4) and (5). Thus, in his 1974 book he notes that the pairs of sentences in (52) and (53) are not synonymous:

(52) a I discouraged the nurse from moving the patient.
b I discouraged the patient from being moved by the nurse.

(53) a I deterred the nurse from moving the patient.
b I deterred the patient from being moved by the nurse.
(Postal 1974:260 fn 2)

It is clear why the a and b-sentences in each case are not equivalent in meaning: the matrix verbs **discourage** and **deter** assign a θ-role to the postverbal NPs, which, for this reason, are arguments of these verbs. Note furthermore that pleonastic elements like nonreferential **it** and **there** cannot occupy the NP position following verbs like **discourage** and **deter**, as can be seen in (54):

(54) a *I discouraged there from being a meeting.
b *I deterred it from raining today.

This lends further support to the claim that these verbs behave syntactically differently from prevent-verbs such as those in (4) and (5). It is plausible that verbs like **discourage** in a sentence like (55)

(55) We discouraged him from writing a thesis.

take an NP complement, and that there is an additional clausal adjunct introduced by **from**. This clause has a null PRO subject which is coindexed with the direct object **him**, as in (56):

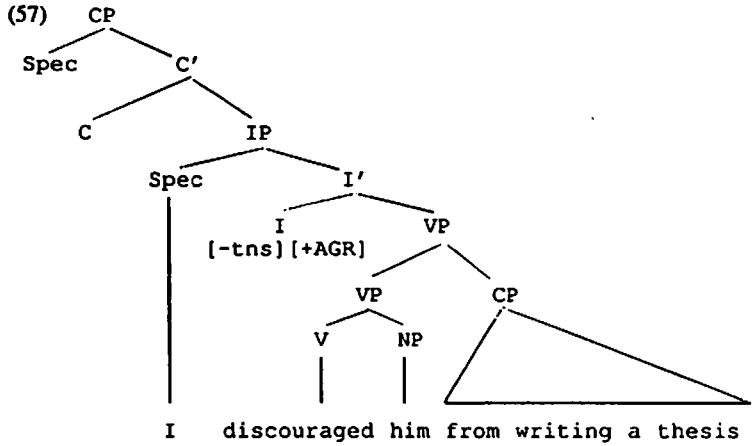
(56) We discouraged him$_i$ [$_{CP}$ from PRO$_i$ writing a thesis]

As **from** is not a possible governor, PRO may appear in the IP-Specifier position. The above observations beg the following questions 'why is the clause introduced by **from** an adjunct?' and 'where is this clause positioned?'. In answer to the first question, notice that whereas the NP is obviously a complement, the CP is clearly not part of the VP: as it can be left out we must conclude that **discourage** does not subcategorise a CP in addition to the NP. As for the second question: the following are the two possible positions for the adjunct CP:

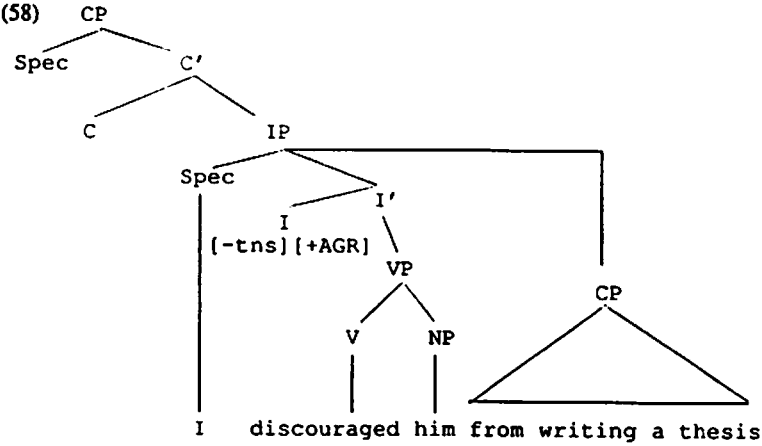
1 it is adjoined to VP, as in (57), or

2 it dangles from IP, as in (58)

(57)



(58)



Let us apply some of the well-known VP-constituency tests to see where the CP is located.

***Though*-Preposing**

(59) a Discourage him from writing a thesis though we may, he will nevertheless embark upon the project.
b Discourage him though we may from writing a thesis, he will nevertheless embark upon the project.

VP-Preposing

(60) a We said we would discourage him from writing a thesis and discourage him from writing a thesis we will.
b ?*We said we would discourage him from writing a thesis and discourage him we will from writing a thesis.

***Do-so* Substitution**

(61) a We discouraged him from writing a thesis and Mary did so too.
b *We discouraged him from writing a thesis and Mary did so too from writing a thesis.

Pseudoclefting

(62) a What I did was discourage him from writing a thesis.
b *What I did from writing a thesis was discourage him.

The results of applying these tests do not unambiguously show where the CP **from PRO writing a thesis** ends up. (59b) appears to be grammatical and thus constitutes empirical evidence for positing the CP directly under IP. Sentence

(59a) and the other three tests, however, clearly support an analysis in which the CP belongs inside VP, in the adjoined position shown in (57). I will take (57) to be the correct representation of (55).

On a general note, it is worth stressing that the constructions in which prevent-type verbs select frame (38a) and the constructions which contain verbs like discourage differ fundamentally syntactically despite the structural similarities.

6 Conclusion

I hope to have shown that prevent-type verbs are verbs which are structurally ambiguous. In the unmarked case subcategorisation frame (38a) is selected. However, when the postverbal NP is animate, frame (38b) is chosen. The element **from** is best regarded as a complementiser. I have argued that in deriving sentences like (4) [=**they prevented language theory from influencing the students**] the subject **language theory** moves from the Spec-of-IP position in the lower clause to the Spec-of-CP position in the same clause. **Discourage**-type verbs subcategorise an NP argument only. The adjunct clause introduced by **from** is adjoined to VP in a base-generated position.

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