

# ENGLISH SENTENCES WITHOUT OVERT GRAMMATICAL SUBJECT<sup>1</sup>

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There is an extensive literature dealing with English imperative sentences. As is well-known, these sentences have no overt grammatical subject:

- (1) Close the door.

There is general agreement among scholars<sup>2</sup> that these sentences have deep structures involving an underlying subject *you* which is deleted by a transformation.

There is a widespread misconception that utterances such as

- (2) Fuck you.

which also appear to have the form of a transitive verb followed by a noun phrase and preceded by no overt subject, are also transitive. This paper will study the syntax of sentences such as (2). While it will offer only a tentative conjecture as to what the deep structure of sentences such as (2) is, it will at least demonstrate conclusively that they are not imperatives.

One characteristic of sentences such as (2) which, as has been often noted,<sup>3</sup> is an anomaly if they are analyzed as imperatives, is the absence of reflexivization in (2): whereas

- (3) \*Assert you.

is ungrammatical, (2) is not. There are many other anomalies which are not so widely recognized. While there are a large number of structures in which imperatives appear either embedded in a matrix or with various adjuncts:

- (4) I said to close the door.
- (5) Don't close the door.
- (6) Do close the door.
- (7) Please close the door.
- (8) Close the door, won't you?
- (9) Go close the door.
- (10) Close the door or I'll take away your teddy-bear.
- (11) Close the door and I'll give you a dollar.

there are no such sentences corresponding to (2):

- (12) \*I said to fuck you.
- (13) \*Don't fuck you.
- (14) \*Do fuck you.
- (15) \*Please fuck you.

- (16) \*Fuck you, won't you?
- (17) \*Go fuck you.
- (18) \*Fuck you or I'll take away your teddy-bear.
- (19) \*Fuck you and I'll give you a dollar.

Further, while ordinary imperatives can be conjoined with each other, they cannot be conjoined with (2):

- (20) Wash the dishes and sweep the floor.
- (21) \*Wash the dishes and fuck you.
- (22) \*Fuck you and wash the dishes.

Similarly, sentences such as (20) can be reduced to sentences with a conjoined verb if the two conjuncts differ only in the verb; however, the *fuck* of (2) may not appear in such a construction:

- (23) Clean and press these pants.
- (24) \*Describe and fuck communism.

Likewise, there are sentences containing the word *fuck* which are ambiguous between a meaning parallel to (1) and a meaning parallel to (2):

- (25) Fuck Lyndon Johnson.

This sentence can be interpreted either as an admonition to copulate with Lyndon Johnson or as an epithet indicating disapproval of that individual but conveying no instruction to engage in sexual relations with him. When sentences with the embeddings and adjuncts of (4) to (11) and (20) are formed, the resulting sentences allow only the former of these readings:

- (12a) I said to fuck Lyndon Johnson.
- (13a) Don't fuck Lyndon Johnson.
- (14a) Do fuck Lyndon Johnson.
- (15a) Please fuck Lyndon Johnson.
- (16a) Fuck Lyndon Johnson, won't you?
- (17a) Go fuck Lyndon Johnson.
- (18a) Fuck Lyndon Johnson or I'll take away your teddy-bear.
- (19a) Fuck Lyndon Johnson and I'll give you a dollar.
- (20a) Fuck Lyndon Johnson and wash the dishes.

Consideration of these examples makes it fairly clear that the *fuck* of (12a)-(20a) (henceforth *fuck*<sub>1</sub>) and the *fuck* of (2) (henceforth *fuck*<sub>2</sub>) are two distinct homophonous lexical items. These two lexical items have totally different selectional restrictions, as is shown by the examples:

- (26) Fuck these irregular verbs.
- (27) \*John fucked these irregular verbs.
- (28) Fuck communism.
- (29) \*John fucked communism.

Moreover, *fuck*<sub>2</sub> has a peculiar restriction on the determiner of the following noun phrase, a restriction not shared by *fuck*<sub>1</sub>, namely, that the determiner must be either definite or generic:

- (30) Fuck these seven irregular verbs.  
 (31) Fuck irregular verbs.  
 (32) Fuck all irregular verbs.  
 (33) \*Fuck seven irregular verbs.  
 (34) \*Fuck any irregular verb.

but

- (35) Fuck seven old ladies by midnight or I'll take away your teddy-bear.  
 (36) Fuck any old lady you see.

(the latter two involving *fuck*<sub>1</sub>).<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that the word 'generic' must be interpreted in a sense such that *all* is generic (cf. example (32)) but *each* is not:

- (37) \*Fuck each irregular verb.

Indeed, substitution into the frame 'Fuck \_\_\_ irregular verb(s)' is an excellent diagnostic test for genericness. As example (35) makes clear, the two *fuck*'s also differ in their potential for co-occurring with adverbial elements: while (35) is normal,

- (38) \*Fuck you by midnight.

is not. Moreover, note the examples

- (39) Fuck my sister tomorrow afternoon.  
 (40) \*Fuck those irregular verbs tomorrow afternoon.  
 (41) Fuck my sister on the sofa.  
 (42) \*Fuck communism on the sofa.  
 (43) Fuck my sister carefully.  
 (44) \*Fuck complex symbols carefully.

Evidently *fuck*<sub>2</sub> does not allow any adverbial elements at all. This restriction suggests that *fuck*<sub>2</sub> not only is distinct from *fuck*<sub>1</sub>, but indeed is not even a verb. Chomsky<sup>5</sup> observes that the adverbial elements of (39)-(42) are outside of the verb phrase and that only elements within the verb phrase play a role in strict subcategorization of verbs. That principle would clearly be violated if *fuck*<sub>2</sub> were a verb. While the 'principle of strictly local subcategorization' proposed by Chomsky is in fact not valid in precisely that form,<sup>6</sup> the fact remains that no case has been reported of any English morpheme which is unambiguously a verb and which allows no adverbial elements whatever. Since the only reason which has ever been proposed for analyzing *fuck*<sub>2</sub> as a verb is its appearance in a construction (that of (2)) which superficially resembles an imperative but in fact is not, one must conclude that there is in fact not a scrap of evidence in favor of assigning *fuck*<sub>2</sub> to the class 'verb', and indeed, assigning it to that class would force the recognition of an anomalous subclass of verbs which violate otherwise completely valid generalizations about 'verbs!':

If *fuck*<sub>2</sub> is not a verb, then what is it? To make some headway towards answering this question, let us consider the following expressions, which have much in common with (2):

- (45) Damn Lyndon Johnson.
- (46) Shit on Lyndon Johnson.
- (47) To hell with Lyndon Johnson.
- (48) Hooray for Cristine Keeler.

These expressions likewise exclude adverbial elements and require the following noun phrase to be definite or generic:

- (49) Damn those irregular verbs.
- (50) \*Damn those irregular verbs tomorrow.
- (51) \*Damn seven irregular verbs.
- (52) Shit on all irregular verbs.
- (53) \*Shit on each irregular verb.
- (54) \*Hooray for an irregular verb last night.

Only rarely have hypotheses been advanced as to the deep structure of expressions such as (45)-(48). One hypothesis<sup>7</sup> has been that (45) has an underlying subject *God*, which is deleted. However, this proposal is untenable since it would exclude the completely acceptable sentence

- (55) Damn God.

and imply the grammaticality of the non-sentence

- (56) \*Damn Himself.

It is interesting that in this respect *goddamn* works exactly like *damn*:

- (57) Goddamn God.
- (58) \*Goddamn Himself.

While the assumption of a deleted subject *God* has semantic plausibility in the case of sentences such as (46) and (2), such an analysis must be rejected for the same reason as in the case of *damn*, namely the grammaticality of

- (59) Fuck God.
- (60) Shit on God.

and the ungrammaticality of

- (61) \*Fuck Himself.
- (62) \*Shit on Himself.

Consider now the semantics of *fuck*<sub>2</sub>, *damn*, *to hell with*, *shit on*,<sup>8</sup> *hooray for*, etc. A sentence consisting of one of these items plus a noun phrase has neither declarative nor interrogative nor imperative meaning; one can neither deny nor 'answer' nor 'comply with' such an utterance. These utterances simply express a favorable or unfavorable attitude on the part of the speaker towards the thing or things denoted by the noun phrase. The fact that they have such a semantic interpretation explains the restriction on the determiner of the noun phrase: the noun phrase must specify a thing or class of things in order for the utterance to be semantically interpretable. Note further the possibility of using most of the words in question without any following noun phrase:

- (64) Fuck!  
 (65) Damn!  
 (66) Shit!<sup>9</sup>  
 (67) Hooray!

These sentences indicate the attitude in question but do not specify what object that attitude is directed towards by the speaker.

The fact that sentences of the form *fuck*<sub>2</sub> plus NP are not known to be validly analyzable as NP & VP in deep structure, the fact that they are not embeddable in any sentences,<sup>10</sup> and the fact that they allow none of the adjuncts which all other sentences allow, makes highly plausible the hypothesis that they should not even be analyzed as sentences: that the category 'utterance' be divided into two subcategories, 'sentence' and 'epithet' (the latter class including utterances such as (2), (46), and (64)), that only 'sentence' and not 'epithet' be embeddable within an utterance, that 'epithet' involve a lexical category of 'quasi-verbs' (this category consists of *fuck*<sub>2</sub>, *shit on*, etc.<sup>11</sup>), that there be a phrase structure rule

Epithet → Quasi-verb NP

and that 'Quasi-verb' appear in no other phrase-structure rule.

In closing, I should mention certain problems which I have not dealt with and which the reader should be aware of. First there is the matter of stress in 'epithets'. I know of no non-ad-hoc treatment of the stress difference between

- (71) Fûck yôu.  
 (72) Dâmn yôu.

Moreover, quasi-verbs have a tendency to take primary stress: stress may disambiguate (63) (although the distinction is lost when contrastive stress is placed on the NP):

- (73) Shít on the cârpet. (=Fuck<sub>2</sub> the carpet)  
 (74) Shít on the cârpet. (=Defecate on the carpet)

A second matter which deserves a full treatment is the process of historical change whereby normal lexical items become quasi-verbs. I conjecture that *fuck*<sub>2</sub> arose historically from *fuck*<sub>1</sub>, although the paucity of citations of *fuck* makes the philological validation of this conjecture difficult. However, it is clearly no accident that many quasi-verbs are homophonous with normal morphemes.

#### NOTES

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<sup>2</sup> J.J.Katz and P.M.Postal, *An Integrated Theory of Linguistic Descriptions*

(MIT Press, 1964), pp. 74ff.; James P. Thorne, "English imperative sentences", *Journal of Linguistics* 2:69-77 (1966).

<sup>3</sup> Yuck Foo, "A note on English reflexives", Quarterly Progress Report No. 29 of the Research Laboratory of Experimental Theology, South Hanoi Institute of Technology (henceforth QPR of the RLET of SHIT), pp. 220-219, July 15, 1963.

<sup>4</sup> An exception to this generalization is provided by certain sentences with an indefinite pronoun:

Fuck anyone who doesn't like what I'am doing.

<sup>5</sup> *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (MIT Press, 1965), pp. 101ff.

<sup>6</sup> A criticism of this principle and of the claims which Chomsky makes about the constituent structure of the verb phrase is given in George Lakoff and John R. Ross, "Why you can't *do so* into the sink", Harvard Computation Laboratory Report NSF-17, pp. II-1 to II-11. Ross and Lakoff contest Chomsky's assertion that the manner adverb of (43) is part of the verb phrase.

<sup>7</sup> Barbara Hall Partee, personal communication (Nov. 29, 1962).

<sup>8</sup> Ambiguities are possible in sentences of the form *shit on NP*:

(63) Shit on the carpet.

may be either an expression of distaste for the carpet or an answer to the question "Where shall I shit?". The former meaning is to be understood throughout the remainder of the paper.

<sup>9</sup> The absence of the preposition in this example should be considered in the light of Lakoff's assertion (*On the Nature of Syntactic Irregularity*, Indiana University dissertation, 1965) that in verb-plus-preposition units the preposition is lexically a feature of the verb and is added to the noun-phrase by a 'segmentalization' transformation. Cf. Paul M. Postal, "On so-called 'pronouns' in English", Georgetown University Monograph Series on Language and Linguistics, 1966. I will argue below that *fuck*<sub>2</sub>, etc. are not verbs. However, they apparently share some properties with verbs, namely, that of causing prepositions to be inserted by the same segmentalization rule.

<sup>10</sup> An apparent exception is quotations such as

(68) John said, 'Fuck you'.

However, the object of verbs such as *say* not only is not restricted to be a sentence or a part thereof, but indeed is not even required to belong to the language to which the matrix sentence belongs: it may be something in a foreign language:

(69) John said, 'Arma virumque canō.'

or even something consisting of non-speech sounds:

(70) John said, (imitation of camel belching).

I do not take up here the interesting but difficult problem of deciding whether quotations involving sounds which the human vocal organs are incapable of producing (for example, a chord played FFF by a quartet of trombones) are to be considered ungrammatical or simply grammatical but non-occurring for performance reasons. This problem is of importance because it has bearing on the question of whether the (infinite) set of grammatical sentences in a language is denumerable or non-denumerable.

A more significant possible exception to the generalization that 'epithets' are not embeddable is the 'adjectival' *fucking*:

(71) Drown that fucking cat!

It might appear that an analysis with embedded 'fuck that cat' is excluded by the restriction on determiners: one can say

(72) I found seven fucking irregular verbs.

but not

(73) \*Fuck seven irregular verbs.

However, since Kuroda ("A note on relativization and certain related problems", *Language* 44:244-66 (1968)) has shown that relative clauses all go through an intermediate stage in which the relativized NP is made definite, that is no obstacle to the analysis. Moreover, a sentence such as (71) conveys the same attitude by the speaker towards the cat as does

(74) Fuck that cat.

thus giving much semantic plausibility to this analysis. However, one must keep three problems in mind: (a) many quasi-verbs do not allow such a construction:

(75) \*Drown that shitting cat.

(b) there is no corresponding relative clause:

(76) \*Drown that cat which fuck.

and (c) there is a problem with the semantic interpretation of certain occurrences of *fucking* in embedded sentences, since

(77) John says that his landlord is a fucking scoutmaster.

indicates the speaker's attitude towards scoutmasters and not John's.

<sup>11</sup> This is the same class of lexical items which Yuck Foo (op.cit.) designated as 'frigatives'. Note the further peculiar constraint on quasi-verbs that while epithets may be conjoined, quasi-verbs may not:

**Fuck Lyndon Johnson and shit on Mao Tse Tung.**  
**\*Fuck and shit on Lyndon Johnson.**

The following is a list of names and addresses of individuals who have been identified as being involved in the activities of the Lyndon Johnson and Mao Tse Tung organizations. The names are listed in alphabetical order.

1. [Name] [Address]  
2. [Name] [Address]  
3. [Name] [Address]  
4. [Name] [Address]  
5. [Name] [Address]

6. [Name] [Address]  
7. [Name] [Address]  
8. [Name] [Address]  
9. [Name] [Address]  
10. [Name] [Address]

11. [Name] [Address]  
12. [Name] [Address]  
13. [Name] [Address]  
14. [Name] [Address]  
15. [Name] [Address]

16. [Name] [Address]  
17. [Name] [Address]  
18. [Name] [Address]  
19. [Name] [Address]  
20. [Name] [Address]

21. [Name] [Address]  
22. [Name] [Address]  
23. [Name] [Address]  
24. [Name] [Address]  
25. [Name] [Address]

26. [Name] [Address]  
27. [Name] [Address]  
28. [Name] [Address]  
29. [Name] [Address]  
30. [Name] [Address]



## A NOTE ON CONJOINED NOUN PHRASES

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Two different proposals have been made which would relate pairs of sentences such as:

- (1) a. John and Harry are similar.
- b. John is similar to Harry.

According to Gleitman (1965:282), (1a) is derived from a conjoined structure also realizable as

- (2) John is similar to Harry and Harry is similar to John.

Gleitman proposes that the reciprocal transformation converts this structure into a structure realizable as

- (3) John and Harry are similar to each other.

and then 'The node dominating the reciprocal morpheme and everything that node dominates are deletable with certain kinds of verb [or adjective]'; the last clause has to do with the inapplicability of this putative transformation to e.g.,

- (4) John and Harry are afraid of each other.

Lakoff and Peters (1966) propose an opposite direction of derivation: that (1a) is a more basic structure than (1b) and that (1b) arises from the same structure that underlies (1a) through a transformation of Conjunction-Extrapolation, which moves one conjunct of a two-term<sup>2</sup> conjunction to the end of the verb phrase; the conjunction is realized as *to*, *from*,<sup>3</sup> *with*, or *zero*, depending on the verb or adjective.

The assumption of such a relationship is especially attractive in view of the enormous number of verbs and adjectives which can be used both intransitively with a conjoined subject and transitively with a simple subject, for example, *intersect*, *congruent*, *parallel*, *perpendicular*, *homologous*, *coincide*, *simultaneous*, *differ*, *different*, *unlike*, *(a)like*, *consistent*, *homophonous*, *rhyme*, *alliterate*, *compete*, *spar*, *clash*, *collide*, *collaborate*, *go steady*, *engaged*, *related*, *commit adultery*, *commit incest*, *hold hands*, *rub noses*, *play footsie*, *neck*, *pet*. Whatever is responsible for such pairs of transitive and intransitive clauses appears to be 'productive' in the sense that practically every verb or adjective in English which expresses either a symmetric relationship or a jointly performed action may be used in both ways; moreover, the few exceptions to this statement are transitive verbs such as *resemble*, *contradict*, and *equal*, which may not be used intransitively with conjoined subject as a full clause:

- (6) a. \*John and Mary resemble.
- b. John resembles Mary.

but which nonetheless exhibit a conjoined subject in nominalizations:

- (7) The resemblance between John and Harry is striking.,

thus supporting the Lakoff-Peters analysis of *resemble* as having an underlying conjoined subject but being subject to obligatory Conjoint-Extrapolation.

Unfortunately, there are apparently insuperable difficulties with both analyses, or at least, with treating all of the above verbs and adjectives Gleitman's way or treating all of them the Lakoff-Peters way. Indeed, there appears to be a verb which provides counterexamples to both accounts of conjoined subjects, namely the verb *fuck*.<sup>4</sup> This verb can be used both intransitively with conjoined subject and transitively:

- (8) a. Albert and Gwendolyn were fucking.  
b. Albert was fucking Gwendolyn.

However, there is an interesting restriction that I have observed in many (though far from all) speakers of English, namely, that the transitive verb *fuck* (subject to a qualification to be discussed later) requires a male subject:

- (9) \*Gwendolyn was fucking Albert.

Accordingly, the speakers who have this restriction likewise do not allow

- (10) \*Albert and Gwendolyn were fucking each other.,

thus making it impossible to derive (8a) according to the steps proposed by Gleitman. Moreover, these facts also present difficulties for the Lakoff-Peters proposal, since the speakers in question have no restriction on the order of conjuncts in the conjoined subject of intransitive *fuck*:

- (11) Gwendolyn and Albert were fucking.,

so that instead of merely allowing the second conjunct to be optionally extraposed, as in the case of *similar*, it would be necessary to restrict Conjoint-Extrapolation to a conjunct specified as male if the verb is *fuck* or one of its synonyms such as *screw*, *hump*, or *make love* (but not, N.B., *make love with* or *copulate with*: with these verbs the speakers in question have no restriction that the subject be male); if the extraposed conjunct is required in addition to be the second conjunct, this treatment would counter-intuitively treat (8b) as more closely related to (8a) than to (11); if it is not restricted to be the second conjunct, (8b) would be derivable in two ways, although there is no corresponding ambiguity.

There are much more serious objections to the Lakoff-Peters derivation. For example, Chomsky (personal communication) has rightly objected to the summary of Lakoff-Peters presented in McCawley (1968a), where McCawley treats

- (12) a. Lionel and Margaret embraced.  
b. Lionel embraced Margaret.

as deriving from the same underlying structure; Chomsky points out that there are many cases where only one member of a pair such as (12) is grammatical:

- (13) a. The drunk embraced the lamppost.  
b. \*The drunk and the lamppost embraced.

and that even when both sentences are grammatical, the intransitive but not the transitive one asserts a symmetric relation between the referents of the two noun phrases: (12a) entails

- (14) Margaret and Lionel embraced.,

but (12b) does not entail

- (15) Margaret embraced Lionel.

A similar fact has also been pointed out by Koutsoudas (personal communication): when *collide* is used intransitively with a conjoined subject it asserts that the referents of both conjuncts were in motion, whereas the transitive *collide* is noncommittal as to whether the referent of the direct object was in motion:

- (16) a. The tank and the bicycle collided.  
b. The tank collided with the bicycle.

- (17) a. The truck collided with the lamppost.  
b. \*The truck and the lamppost collided.

It is easy to construct innumerable such examples. For example,

- (18) a. Hubert Humphrey kissed Lyndon Johnson's ass.  
b. \*Hubert Humphrey and Lyndon Johnson's ass kissed.

Some especially interesting examples can be constructed using *fuck*. For example, in a report of an act of necrophilia, only a transitive version is possible:

- (19) a. Boris was fucking Susie's corpse.  
b. \*Boris and Susie's corpse were fucking.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, in a report of homosexual intercourse, the two noun phrases in the transitive version are not interchangeable *salva veritate*:

- (22) a. Boris was fucking Lionel

does not entail

- (22) b. Lionel was fucking Boris.

Moreover, while a version with conjoined subject is possible:

- (23) Boris and Lionel were fucking.<sup>6</sup>

it is not semantically equivalent to a reciprocal construction; while (23) is appropriate to report a single event of homosexual intercourse,

(26) Boris and Lionel were fucking each other.

is appropriate only to report a series of such events (e.g., as an answer to the question 'What were your neighbors doing from 7PM to 5AM?'). A similar observation holds in the case of *kiss*, although here the judgment is much more subtle than in the case of *fuck*:

(27) Rex and Pauline kissed.

may be a report of a single kiss, but

(28) Rex and Pauline kissed each other.

can only be a report of at least two kisses. Moreover, while the sentences with *each other* allow a locative of specification (this useful term is introduced in Yuck Foo (1967)):

(29) Rex and Pauline kissed each other on the cheek.

(30) Boris and Lionel fucked each other up the ass.

the intransitives with conjoined subject do not:

(31) \*Rex and Pauline kissed on the cheek.

(32) \*Boris and Lionel fucked up the ass.

Of particular interest is the fact that when *fuck* is used intransitively in sentences of the type often said to arise through a transformation of Object Deletion (e.g., *John is eating*; see Lees (1960)), there is no restriction that the subject be male:

(33) Max spent the whole evening fucking.

(34) Cynthia spent the whole evening fucking.

(35) Max enjoys fucking.

(36) Cynthia enjoys fucking.

I conjecture that the range of items which can occur as the subject of sentences such as these coincides with the range of items that can appear as conjuncts when *fuck* is used intransitively with conjoined subject.

(37) \*Cynthia's corpse spent the entire night fucking.

I tentatively propose to explain these facts in terms of the semantic notion of 'Agent'. An event of fucking may have either one or two agents;<sup>8</sup> speakers who reject (9) have a constraint that *fuck*, etc. have at least one male agent; sentences such as (34) have two underlying agents, one of which is an indefinite pronoun specified as 'Male', which is deleted. Since agents

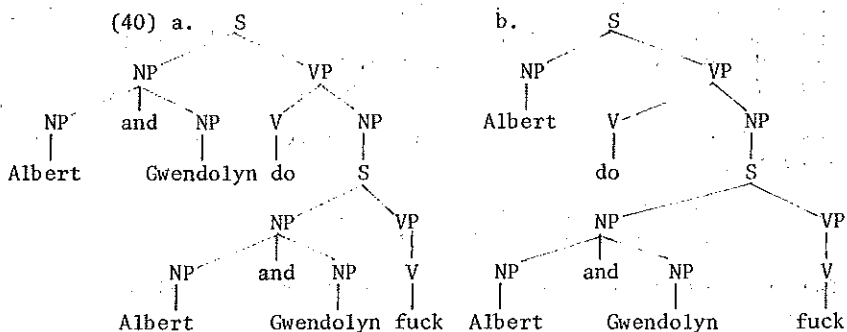
must always be animate (Fillmore 1968), this analysis automatically excludes (19b, 37). Moreover, it explains why (34) is appropriate to describe the activities of a prostitute but not to report what happened to the victim of a gang rape. Note in this connection the difference between

(38) The rapist fucked his victim five times.

(39) The rapist and his victim fucked five times.

While (38) may be a description of the rape that is alluded to, (39) would only be appropriate to report events subsequent to the rape and suggests that the victim became friendly with the rapist.

'Agent' is the name of a relation between a person (or persons) and an action; as noted in numerous lectures and unpublished papers by Lakoff and Ross, it can often be expressed by the verb *do* in English. My suggestion above thus is equivalent to setting up an underlying structure for (8b) which has *do* for its main verb, *Albert* for its subject, and an embedded sentence describing the action for its object. The embedded sentence may be paraphrased roughly as 'There is fucking between *Albert* and *Gwendolyn*'; it is a one-place predicate which takes a conjoined subject. I suggested above that the difference between (8a) and (8b) is whether *Albert* is the sole agent or *Albert* and *Gwendolyn* are joint agents. In the absence of reasons for doing otherwise, I will assume that setting up a conjoined subject for *do* adequately reconstructs the notion of multiple agent. Accordingly, I propose that (8a) and (8b) differ as follows in underlying structure (ignoring such irrelevancies as tense):



To derive (8b) from (40b), it will be necessary for there to be a transformation which is similar to the Lakoff-Peters Conjunct-Extrapolation but is obligatory rather than optional and is contingent on the next higher sentence having a subject which is identical to the first conjunct. This transformation will obviously have to precede Equi-NP-Deletion, which must delete the occurrence of *Albert* in the embedded clause of (40b) but cannot apply unless conjunct extrapolation has already applied.

Presumably, such a difference in underlying structures will also be found in pairs of sentences such as

(41) Sasha, Boris, Misha, and I were playing string quartets.

(42) I was playing string quartets with Sasha, Boris and Misha.

Note that (41) cannot be derived through a derivation such as that proposed by Gleitman for (1a): first, because of the ungrammaticality of

(43) \*Sasha, Boris, Misha and I were playing string quartets with each other.<sup>9</sup>

and secondly, because of the implausibility of the constraints which one would have to impose on sentences such as (42) to insure that the number of conjuncts in the subject and in the object of *with* added up to four.<sup>10</sup> Note, however, that if (42) is to be derived from an underlying structure along the lines of (40b), the revised version of Conjunct Extrapolation will have to allow more than two conjuncts in the subject of the embedded sentence. As far as I can tell, the restriction of Conjunct Extrapolation to two conjuncts which I alluded to in note 2 applies only to stative verbs and adjectives. I leave as an open question the problem of whether this restriction will cause different transformations to be necessary to derive sentences with statives such as *similar* than with actives such as *fuck*. The suggested revision of Conjunct Extrapolation makes reference to *do* and thus would not be applicable to statives, since statives do not allow *do* as the higher underlying verb.

#### NOTES

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<sup>2</sup> The restriction to two-term conjunctions is necessary because of the non-synonymy of

- (5) a. John, Harry and Bill are similar.  
b. John and Harry are similar to Bill.

While (5a) includes an assertion that John and Harry are similar, (5b) is non-committal about that point.

<sup>3</sup> The only examples I know of with *from* are *differ* and *different*.

<sup>4</sup> Throughout this paper I confine my attention to the true verb *fuck*<sub>1</sub> and will ignore the 'quasi-verb' *fuck*<sub>2</sub> (as in *Fuck Lyndon Johnson!*), which I treated in my earlier paper, Quang (1966).

<sup>5</sup> The only scientific or literary mention that I have found of female necrophiliacs is in a pornographic novel (Apollinaire 19 ) which unfortunately contains no examples similar to (19a). While some informants who reject (9) accepted analogues to (19a) that involved a female necrophiliac and a male corpse, they did so only with great reluctance and invariably added some comment such as 'It sounds odd, but that's the only way you could express it'. One other case in which these speakers accept

*fuck* with a female subject is in reports of lesbian acts involving a dildo; in this case the woman who is using the dildo as a substitute penis may appear as subject; indeed, under these circumstances the combination of female subject and male object is possible:

(20) Cynthia was fucking Gwendolyn with a dildo.

(21) Lady Bird was fucking Liu Shao Chi up the ass with a dildo.

<sup>6</sup> One unsolved problem which should be mentioned here is that despite the acceptability of (23), *bugger* does not allow a conjoined subject:

(24) a. Boris was bugging Lionel.

b. \*Boris and Lionel were bugging.

although *commit sodomy* does:

(25) a. Boris was committing sodomy with Lionel.

b. Boris and Lionel were committing sodomy.

<sup>7</sup> In making these observations, I am assuming that *Boris* and *Lionel* are the names of two men. If they were the names of two snails, there would be nothing odd about using (26) to refer to a single act of (in this case, hermaphroditic) intercourse. These facts are excellent illustrations of McCawley's conclusion (1968a,b): that judgments of grammaticality and semantic oddness depend on factual knowledge and beliefs. Thus, the conclusion that (26), when it refers to two men, cannot refer to a single act of homosexual intercourse involves one's knowledge of human (as opposed to snail) anatomy and of the limits on the ability of human beings to do contortions.

<sup>8</sup> I ignore here sexual acts involving more than two persons. Yuck Foo (1967) convincingly defends the Jakobsonian position (pun:unintentional) that all such acts can be decomposed into simultaneous binary acts.

<sup>9</sup> One might, however, try to salvage a Gleitman-type analysis by treating *together* as a positional variant of *with each other* and formulating some conditions under which the latter is obligatorily replaced by the former. Such a treatment might be necessary in order to explain the following data:

(44) Frog legs go well with artichokes.

(45) \*Frog legs and artichokes go well.

(46) Frog legs and artichokes go well together.

<sup>10</sup> An interesting ambiguity in the use of *with* which I note in passing is illustrated in the sentences

(47) I was playing K. 421 with the Budapest Quartet.

(48) I was playing K. 516 with the Budapest Quartet.

(47) implies that I was a member of the Budapest Quartet, whereas (48) has two interpretations, in one of which I was a member of the Budapest Quartet,

and in the other of which I was an extra violinist who joined the Budapest Quartet to play quintets.

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## A SELECTIONAL RESTRICTION INVOLVING PRONOUN CHOICE\*

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This note is concerned with a counterexample to the outrageous claim made by the bourgeois imperialist linguist McCawley that 'there is no verb in English which allows for its subject just those noun phrases which may pronominalize to *she*, namely noun phrases denoting women, ships, and countries... selectional restrictions are definable solely in terms of properties of semantic representation' (The role of semantics in a grammar, p. 135). Consider the idiomatic sense of *shove X up Y's ass*. As is well known, Y must be coreferential to the indirect object of the next higher clause (including the deleted indirect object of a deleted performative verb):

- (1) Shove it up your/\*my ass.
- (2) He told me to shove it up my/\*your ass.

For certain speakers, X may not be a 'full' noun phrase in surface structure:

- (3) Shove your foreign policy up your ass, you Yankee imperialist. (\*for some speakers)

but all speakers appear to allow X to be an anaphoric pronoun:

- (4) Take your foreign policy<sub>i</sub> and shove it<sub>i</sub> up your ass, you Yankee imperialist.

The pronoun may be *it* but may not be *he* or *she*:

- (5) \*Nixon, you imperialist butcher, take your lunatic Secretary of Defense and shove him up your ass.<sup>1</sup>
- (6) \*Nixon, you imperialist butcher, take your brainless daughter and shove her up your ass.
- (7) Rockefeller, you robber baron, take your 80-foot yacht and shove it/\*her up your ass.

Certain informants have reported that they find *them* acceptable but only when its antecedent is something whose singular would pronominalize to *it* rather than to *he* or *she*:

- (8) \*Nixon, you imperialist butcher, take your bourgeois lackeys in Taiwan and shove them up your ass.
- (9) ?Nixon, you oppressor of the masses, take your anti-crime bills and shove them up your ass.

To the extent that these informants allow full NP's as the Y of *shove X up Y's ass*, they allow only those which pronominalize to *it* or to a *they* which would correspond to a singular *it*:

- (10) \*Nixon, you imperialist butcher, shove your lunatic Secretary of State up your ass.
- (11) \*Nixon, you imperialist butcher, shove your brainless daughter up your ass.
- (12) Nixon, you oppressor of the masses, shove your anti-crime bills up your ass.
- (13) \*Nixon, you imperialist butcher, shove your bourgeois lackeys in Taiwan up your ass.

If (3) and (12) are grammatical but (10) and (13) ungrammatical, then the restriction on the object of *shove X up Y's ass* cannot be expressed by an output constraint and must be a constraint on deep structures, thus providing a counterexample to McCawley's claim.

#### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> The asterisk applies only to the idiomatic reading of *shove X up Y's ass*; the literal reading is grammatical but is aberrant for extralinguistic reasons.