

# On Some Obligatory Non-Canonical Word Orders in Chinese and English

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Theoretical approaches to head-directionality parameters have rarely touched upon uniformities that lie beyond the FOFC, at least in its standard version. In this talk I examine empirical facts that can be regarded as instances of word order uniformities, but can neither be derived from standard head-directional parameters nor the FOFC. The empirical facts I will talk about include the following:

- (1) a. Obligatory object shift in Mandarin Chinese
- b. Obligatory object shift in Southern Min
- c. The lack of obligatory object shift in Archaic Chinese
- d. The syntax of Aux-adverb ordering in English
- e. The syntax of modal-negation ordering in English and Chinese
- f. The morphosyntax of infix-like clitics in Mandarin Chinese and Southern Min

In Mandarin Chinese, the direct object has to move to the preverbal position and be preceded by the morpheme *ba* if there is another postverbal complement, as is well known. However, linguists debate whether *ba* is a light-verb with lexical content or a type of accusative case-marker. I argue that the full range of facts regarding this debate can be better resolved by a branching-harmony-triggered syntactic movement. In Southern Min, in which obligatory object shift (OS) is more robust, the same branching-harmony-triggered movement is also in effect, and the robustness of the obligatory OS is due to its being a more analytic language (therefore treating postverbal phase markers as XPs instead of suffixes). The lack of the same kind of obligatory OS in Archaic Chinese and English is due to the fact that those languages have more robust right-branching structures, and therefore disharmony is in fact induced if OS applies. These facts further show that word order harmony may probably be a non-PF syntactic operation, and that it can apply at different syntactic positions in different languages.

(1d,e,f) involve a different set of uniformity effects that have nothing to do with branching harmony, the FOFC, or traditional directionality parameters. The standard analysis of (1d) assumes that auxiliary verbs occur at T or undergo *v*-to-T movement. However, this standard account fails to account for the typical post-auxiliary position of

sentence adverbs that have wide scope over tense, nor does it account for the fact that sentence adverbs have to precede stressed auxiliaries. On the other hand, although it has been noted that some modals scope over negation, while others don't, both of these modals usually precedes negation. This highly uniform syntax despite divergent semantic scopes is also unexpected under the standard cartographic approach (Cinque 1999). From the perspective of morphosyntactic templates (Shu 2012), the above facts are not at all surprising. Beyond typical structure building, within language a lexical item may 'borrow' its morphosyntactic distribution specifications from other lexical items of the same syntactic category, achieving word/morpheme order uniformity.