DYNAMIC CHANGE OF LANGUAGE STRUCTURE

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Sentences such as those in (1) are always a challenge for linguists who try to provide a formal accounting of them.

(1) a. <u>There</u> is a bank around the corner.

  b. <u>Do</u> you have any pets?

  c. My brother sometimes <u>plays</u> the piano.

(1a) makes us wonder why *there*, without any substantial meaning, is necessary in the sentence. In order to offer a formal account, the EPP feature is postulated, but what is the EPP feature? As in (1b), English has a rule that inserts *do* to make interrogative and negative sentences. But there is still a question about why *do* must be inserted. In classical generative grammar, (1c) was explained by the affix-hopping rule and is now explained under Agree. But such a rule and operation seem to be ad hoc and must be more constrained.

Historically, we face intriguing examples such as those in (2), which do not obey the above rules, and which beg the question why English underwent such diachronic changes.

(2) a. <u>On ælces sceatan ende</u> sindon beorgas.

    At each corner's end are   hills

    'At each corner there are hills.'   (Or. 1.21.3)

  b. and <u>cymst</u> ðu to me?

    and come you to me

    'and do you come to me?'   (WSCp Mt. 3.14)

  c. but thei <u>waisschen</u> ofte her hoondis,   (Wyclif Mk. 7.3)

In this presentation I offer new insights into such fundamental questions concerning language structure in the formal, functional and evolutionary perspectives of language. One of the most important tenets of this presentation is that language structure is not static but dynamic. Specifically, I propose that a functional projection (FP) is the result of emergent language structure and has been adaptive to computational and communicative efficiency. English is one of the languages in which we can trace the process of FP change rather successfully, which, on the contrary, adds difficulty in formalizing the aforementioned rule and principle. FP is considered to have extended its role from a

projection for topicalization and interrogation to a projection for case-checking and agreement. With this process clarified, the changes in (1) and (2) can be explained. The present cartographic approach to functional categories can also be given a more fundamental account under the assumption of dynamic FP. It is based on *Merge*, *abduction*, *exaptation, natural selection* and, more generally, *self-organization*, all of which are closely connected to language evolution. Language is always changing, sometimes affected by external factors such as language contact, and the mechanisms of change seem to vary among languages. I further argue that dynamic FP can provide a possible explanation of variation in languages without having to rely on parameters.

(446 words)