Verb Movement in English and French

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1. Introduction

The contrast in Verb Movement observed in French and English has originally been noted by Joseph Emonds. Among major differences is the fact that finite lexical verbs in English do not undergo overt Verb Movement while those in French do. Jean-Yves Pollock has investigated a large number of English and French sentences in his "Verb Movement, Universal Grammar and the Structure of IP" and developed his theory, under the framework of principles and parameters theory, that the substantial difference between English and French Verb Movement should be attributed to the difference in the parametric value for the transparency of θ-marking. In his account, notions such as government and the ECP have played a crucial role; if a tensed lexical verb raises to Agr in overt syntax in English, the trace cannot be properly governed. Since the ECP is violated, the sentence would be ungrammatical. In the minimalist approach, however, such notions as government and the ECP are abandoned. Noam Chomsky, in the framework of minimalist approach, argues that the parameter relevant to Verb Movement concerns V-feature of T ("A Minimalist Program for Linguistic Theory" 30). The impossibility of overt Verb Movement in English is imputed to weak V-feature of T. His proposal, however, seems to have some critical problems. By pointing out them, this paper aims to give a more extensive account of the contrast between English and French with respect to overt Verb Movement.

Section 2 is to illustrate main differences between English and French
overt Verb Movement. It covers both tensed and infinitival clauses in English and French. Section 3 will review Chomsky's account of Verb Movement and show its drawbacks. In Section 4, an alternative account proposed by Ian Roberts will be presented as a basis for my discussion and a process of Verb Movement in terms of overt Move F will be adopted. Considering the correlation of do in finite clauses and to in infinitival clauses, I will put forward a more unified account of Verb Movement in finite clauses and that in infinitives.

2. English vs. French Verb Movement

Emonds observes that verbs in a finite clause undergo Verb Movement to T ("Aux" in Emonds' terminology) in French while main verbs, but not auxiliaries, in a finite clause cannot raise to T in English.

(1) a. *John likes not Mary.
    b. Jean n’aime pas Marie.
    Jean loves not Marie
(2) a. *John kisses often Mary.
    b. Jean embrasse souvent Marie.
    Jean kisses often Marie
(3) a. *My friends love all Mary.
    b. Mes amis aiment tous Marie.
    My friends love all Marie

Assuming that TP optionally selects NegP and the latter is subcategorized for VP, Pollock develops Emonds' claim. (1a-b) show that English finite verbs cannot move to T beyond Neg. Assuming further that VP adverbs such as often/souvent are generated in an optional adverbial position to the left of the VP, and that, following Kayne, floating quantifiers move to adverbial positions, (2a-b) and (3a-b) indicate that English does not allow finite verbs to raise beyond the adverbial position to the
left of VP while French does. Moreover, the following sentences show the Verb Movement to T in French is obligatory:

(4) a. *Jean ne pas aime Marie.
    b. *Jean souvent embrasse Marie.

As for auxiliaries like English be and have and French être and avoir, the two languages behave in the same way, undergoing Verb Movement:

(5) a. He hasn't understood.
    b. Il n'a pas compris.
    he has not understood

(6) a. He is seldom satisfied.
    b. Il est rarement satisfait.
    he is seldom satisfied

Verb Movement is obligatory in this case as the following examples show:

(7) a. *He doesn't have understood.
    b. *Il ne pas a compris.

(8) a. *He seldom is satisfied.
    b. *Il rarement est satisfait.

Interestingly, lexical have in British English and existential be also undergo Verb Movement:

(9) a. John is not happy.
    b. *John doesn't be happy.

(10) John hasn't a car. (in British English)

In French infinitives with lexical verbs cannot raise to T overtly as
shown in (11) while infinitives with auxiliaries can as illustrated in (12):

(11) a. Ne pas regarder la télévision consolide l'esprit critique.
    not to watch television strengthens the spirit critical
    b. *Ne regarder pas la télévision sonsolide l'esprit critique.

(12) a. Ne pas avoir eu d'enfance heureuse est une condition
    not to have had a childhood happy is a condition
    pour écrire des romans.
    for writing novels
    b. Ne avoir pas eu d'enfance heureuse est une condition
    to have not had a childhood happy is a condition
    pour écrire des romans.
    for writing novels

Even infinitives with lexical être and avoir can undergo Verb Movement in French:

(13) a. Ne pas être heureux est une condition pour écrire
    not to be happy is a condition for writing
    des romans.
    novels
    b. Ne être pas heureux est une condition pour écrire
    to be not happy is a condition for writing
    des romans.
    novels

(14) a. Ne pas avoir de voiture en banlieue rend la vie
    not to have a car in the suburbs makes life
    difficile.
    difficult
    b. Ne avoir pas de voiture en banlieue rend la vie
    to have not a car in the suburbs makes life
    difficile.
    difficult
In English Verb Movement cannot apply to infinitives with lexical verb as in French.

(15) a. Not to seem happy is a prerequisite for writing novels.
   b. *To seem not happy is a prerequisite for writing novels.

Auxiliaries in English infinitives can move to T overtly with marginal acceptance unlike French infinitives, which will result in fully acceptable sentences if auxiliaries undergo Verb Movement overtly as in (12b).

(16) a. Not to have had a happy childhood is a prerequisite for writing novels.
   b. (?)To have not had a happy childhood is a prerequisite for writing novels.
   c. Not to be arrested under such circumstances is a miracle.
   d. ?To be not arrested under such circumstances is a miracle.

Applying Verb Movement to lexical be and have in English infinitives produces sentences with marginal acceptance, which are a little worse than (16b):

(17) a. Not to be happy is a prerequisite for writing novels.
   b. ?To be not happy is a prerequisite for writing novels.
   c. Not to have enough money made him feel uneasy.
   d. ?To have not enough money made him feel uneasy.¹

It appears that French infinitives are subject to the same lexical restrictions on Verb Movement as English tensed clauses: In English finite clauses, Verb Movement cannot apply to lexical verbs although it can apply to auxiliaries. In French infinitives, lexical verbs cannot undergo Verb Movement while auxiliaries can.
3. A Minimalist Analysis

As noted above, Verb Movement cannot be applied to English tensed main verbs while it needs to be applied to French tensed main verbs. Chomsky proposes that the essential differences between English and French verbs concerning Verb Movement is caused by the value of an abstract morphological feature called V-feature of T ("Minimalist Program" 30). The V-feature has to be deleted to satisfy Full Interpretation since it has no semantic content. The V-feature of T has two parametric values: strong and weak. T in French has strong V-feature, which is visible in PF and therefore it must be deleted before Spell-Out by being checked by V-feature that V has. Since checking has to take place in a local domain, V raises to T in order to check with T. Hence, Verb Movement to T takes place overtly in French. On the other hand, English T has weak V-feature, which is not visible in PF. Procrastinate prevents Verb Movement from applying before Spell-Out and puts off feature-checking to LF. Hence, English tensed main verbs do not raise overtly.

As for the fact that English auxiliaries must raise to T overtly, Chomsky claims that auxiliaries lack semantically-relevant features and therefore are not visible to LF rules. Since they cannot be seen by LF rules, they have to raise overtly. Otherwise they fail to get interpretation.

This proposal, however, seems to be problematic at least in three points. First, it cannot explain why lexical have in British English is permitted to raise overtly as in (18): despite the fact that it clearly has a semantic interpretation.
(18) a. John hasn’t a car.
b. Has John a car?

It is evident that lexical *have* (possibly lexical *be* as well) has a semantic interpretation as the following minimal pair indicate:

(19) a. John has a baby.
b. John is a baby.

As (19a) is different in meaning from (19b), it follows that either *have* or *be* (or both) has a semantic interpretation.

Second, in sentences like (20a-b), if, as Chomsky assumes, auxiliaries have raised because they lack semantically-relevant features, but not because the V-feature of T needs to be checked, a problem arises in sentences like (21a-b) and (22a-c):

(20) a. John haven’t read the book.
b. The story wasn’t written by John.
(21) a. John couldn’t have read the book.
b. The story might not have been written by John.
(22) a. *John could have not read the book.
b. *The story might have not been written by John.
c. *The story might have been not written by John.

In (21a-b), *could* and *might* have raised to T overtly so that LF rules can see them. *Have* in (21a) and *Have* and *been* in (21b), however, have not raised to T and therefore they are still invisible to LF rules, making the derivations crash. *Have* in (21a), *have* in (21b) and *have* and *been* in (21b) have raised to T in (22a), (22b), and (22c), respectively. Unlike those in (21a-b), *have* and *been* should be visible to LF rules in (22a-c), but the sentences are ungrammatical. These facts suggest that auxiliaries’ move-
ment to T is not driven by quest for their intelligibility.

Third, most crucially, the idea that auxiliaries’ raising to T is motivated by quest for their intelligibility is not compatible with the principle “Greed,” which tells derivations are driven only by morphological requirement. Consider the following sentences, which involve the LF affix *there*:

(23) There is a strange man in the garden.
(24) *There seems to a strange man that it will rain tomorrow.

At LF *there* has to be linked to a postverbal DP, which is called an “associate” to get interpretation. The postverbal DP also needs to be linked to *there* because it otherwise receives no Case-checking. To get Case-checking, a *strange man* raises to the SPEC of T and adjoins there at LF, consequently getting associated with *there*. In (24), in contrast, a *strange man* has already been Case-checked by the preposition *to*. Therefore, the DP *a strange man* does not raise to T since it needs not be Case-checked any more. As a result, *there* fails to be linked to *a strange man* and cannot get interpretation. The sentence thus yields ungrammaticality. (24) suggests that an element is not allowed to raise as a “last resort” to get interpretation and save the sentence. The idea that auxiliaries’ raising to T is motivated by quest for their intelligibility does not fit the principle “Greed.” Movement must be “driven by the narrow mechanical requirement of feature-checking only” (Chomsky, “Minimalist Program” 33) and any other reasons such as a search for intelligibility cannot induce movement.
4. An Alternative

4.1. Finite Clauses

Assuming, with Chomsky, that English T has weak V-feature and French T has strong V-feature, Roberts proposes overt Move F, against Chomsky, who claims only Move \( a \) is applied in overt syntax (113). Assuming, against Chomsky (*The Minimalist Program*, Chapter 4), that Move F is subject to Head Movement Constraint, Roberts notes that Move F set off by weak V-feature of English T does not induce Move \( a \) while the one set off by strong V-feature of French T triggers Move \( a \). V-feature of T, either strong or weak, is required to be checked overtly and thus Move F applies to the V-feature of a verb both in English and French. As Move F raises the V-feature of the verb, all the other features such as Q-feature and Neg feature are assumed also to move as "free riders." Since V-feature in French T is strong, Move F raises the whole category V as well while since V-feature in English T is weak, the category V is left in situ in overt syntax. Hence, it follows that V does not overtly raise in English while it does in French, yielding the contrast in (1)-(4).

Roberts further assumes that since the content of English auxiliaries like *have* and *be* is exhausted by formal features, checking the weak feature of the V-node causes the entire category to move, that is, Move \( a \), producing (5a) and (6a).

Taking Roberts' proposals as a starting point, I will explore a theory alternative to Chomsky's in this section. Roberts' assumptions that I will adopt are:

(25) a. V-feature of T, strong or weak, induces overt Move F.
   b. Weak features do not require pied-piping of \( a \), whereas strong features do.
   c. Move F is subject to Head Movement Constraint.
Assuming (25a-c), however, the following discussions will diverge from Roberts’.

Neg optionally appears between V and T illustrated as in the following:

\[(26) \quad [TP \ [NegP \ [vp \ ]] \ ]\]

Following Chomsky (The Minimalist Program, Chapter 4), between NegP and VP is vP, where light verbs lacking semantically-relevant features appear and main verbs overtly raises. Thus, the relevant phrase structure is as follows:

\[(27) \quad [TP \ [NegP \ [vp \ [vp \ ]]] \ ]\]

Since V-feature of T must be checked overtly, it attracts V-feature of like in (28a). The derivation would yield (28b), where FF indicates formal features:

\[(28) \quad a. \quad [TP \ \text{The boys} \ [NegP \ \text{not} \ [vp \ [vp \ [like \ the \ teacher]]]]].
\quad b. \quad [TP \ \text{The boys} \ \text{FF(like)} \ [NegP \ \text{not} \ [vp \ [like \ [vp \ [ti \ the \ teacher]]]]]]].
\]

However, the intervening Neg prevents FF(like) to move to the T since movement to T skipping Neg would violated the Head Movement Constraint, hence the derivation crashes and ungrammaticality of (29) results:

\[(29) \quad \ast \text{The boys not like the teacher.}\]

Suppose do has Neg feature and Q-feature, as well as other features like V-feature, while main verbs has V-feature but not Neg feature nor Q-feature. In (28a), Neg has to be checked but the V-feature of the verb
like cannot check it. If do is merged under v as in (30a) (cf. Section 4.2), V-feature of the main verb raises to v and checks with do as in (30b). At that time all the other formal features also move with V-feature as “free riders.” Then, Neg attracts Neg feature of do. When Neg feature of do is attracted, other features like V- and Q-features also attracted to the Neg as “free riders.” Since words like do are collections of formal features lacking inherent lexical content, the full category of do is pied-piped by move F as illustrated in (30c). In (30c), raised Neg feature checks with Neg. Then, T needs to be checked and attracts V-feature of do. The V-feature of do raises to T to check its V-feature, accompanying Q-feature as a “free rider.” Again, the full category of do is pied-piped to T since it lacks inherent lexical content as in (30d).

(30) a. [TP The boys [NegP not [vp do [vp like the teacher ]]]].
b. [TP The boys [NegP not [vp do FF(like) [vp like the teacher ]]]].
c. [TP The boys [NegP doi not [vp ti FF(like) [vp like the teacher ]]]].
d. [TP The boys doi [NegP ti not [vp ti FF(like) [vp like the teacher ]]]].

Consequently, the following sentence is derived:

(31) The boys do not like the teacher.

If the C has Q-feature, it attracts Q-feature of do, which has been raised to the TP. Again, the entire category of do is attracted and sentence (32) converges.

(32) Do the boys not like the teacher?
If *not* and *do* are amalgamated at the stage of (30c), Q-feature of C attracts the amalgamated category, producing (33).

(33) Don't the boys like the teacher?

Note that the following sentences are correctly derived under the present assumption:

(34) a. The boys like the teacher.
    b. The boys do like the teacher.

In the following derivation, which does not have an optional NegP, checking of Neg is, of course, irrelevant:

(35) \[TP \text{The boys} \ [vP \ [vP \text{like the teacher}]]\].

Therefore, the verb *like* raises to vP as in (36a). The V-feature of *like* raises to T to check V-feature of T as in (36b).

(36) a. \[TP \text{The boys} \ [vP \text{like} [vP \text{t} \text{e the teacher}]]\].
    b. \[TP \text{The boys} \text{FF(like)} [vP \text{like} [vP \text{t} \text{e the teacher}]]\].

Since *like* has inherent lexical content, Move F cannot raise the entire verb *like*. Thus, (34a) is derived. If *do* is contained in the numeration, it is merged into v in (35), deriving (37).

(37) \[TP \text{The boys} \ [vP \text{do} [vP \text{like the teacher}]]\].

As in (30b), V-feature of the main verb raises to v and checks with *do*, deriving (38a). Then, Neg feature of *do* moves to T, pied-piping *do* as well
as in (38b), finally yielding (34b).

(38) a. [TP The boys [vP do FF(like) [vP like the teacher ] ]].
   b. [TP The boys do [vP ti FF(like) [vP like the teacher ] ]].

Assume that, unlike English, French main verbs have Neg feature and Q-feature as well as other features like V-feature. Since V-feature of French T is supposed to be strong, it attracts the whole category V. The verb in (39a) moves to Neg via vP.

(39) a. [TP Jean ne [NegP pas [vP aime Marie ] ]].
   b. [TP Jean ne [NegP aimei pas [vP ti [vP ti Marie ] ]]].

After Neg feature of the verb checks Neg, it moves to T, deriving (40).

(40) Jean n'aime pas Marie.

Just like do, English auxiliaries such as be and have are assumed to have Neg feature and Q-feature in contrast to main verbs, which do not have such features. Also, like do, English auxiliaries lack lexical content. Therefore, English auxiliaries are expected to behave like do. This expectation is fulfilled as the following examples exemplify:

(41) a. *John not is reading a book. (cf. (29))
   b. John isn't reading a book. (cf. (31))
   c. Is John reading a book? (cf. (32))
   d. Isn't John reading a book? (cf. (33))
(42) a. *John not has finished it. (cf. (29))
   b. John hasn't finished it. (cf. (31))
   c. Has John finished it? (cf. (32))
   d. Hasn't John finished it? (cf. (33))
Auxiliaries merged under v has to raise to Neg to check as shown in (41a-b) and (42a-b). They raise to T to check the V-feature of T. If C has Q-feature, auxiliaries raise to C to check as shown in (41c) and (42c). The auxiliaries amalgamated with not can be raised to C as illustrated in (41d) and (42d).

4.2. Infinitives

The status of to in English infinitives is unclear. However, it would be worth noting that there is a significant correlation between to in infinitives and do in finite clauses. First, they must be accompanied by a verb.

(43) a. The children do love the teacher.
   b. *The children do the teacher.

(44) a. To watch TV is fun.
   b. *To TV is fun.

Verbs cannot move beyond do and to.

(45) a. *The children love do the teacher.
   b. *Watch to TV is fun.

A verb accompanying do or to must be a bare infinitive.

   b. *The child does loves the teacher.
   c. The child does love the teacher

(47) *To watches TV is fun.

Do and to allow VP-ellipsis.
(48) a. The children love the teacher and their mothers do, too.
   b. Mary wants to watch TV but John doesn’t want to.

*Do* and *to* move beyond Neg.

(49) a. The children do not like the teacher.
   b. To not watch TV allows you time to study.

*Do* and *to* pied-piping a lexical verb cannot move beyond Neg.

(50) a. *The children do like not the teacher.
   b *To watch not TV allows you time to study.

From the fact that *do* and *to* allow VP-ellipsis, it follows that *do* and *to* are generated somewhere above VP. Suppose *do* and *to* can be endowed with Neg feature but lack inherent lexical content. Then it is natural to assume that as light verbs such as *be* and *have*, which lack lexical content, are generated under *v*, so *do* and *to* are generated under *V*. The fact that *do* and *to* must be accompanied by a verb suggests that as they are kind of bound forms, which never occur by themselves, *do* and *to* must incorporate formal features of a verb. If a derivation does not include *do* nor *to*, an verb must raise to *v* to assign a *θ*-role to the specifier of vP. If *do* or *to* is included in a derivation, it assigns a *θ*-role to the specifier of vP for the sake of the verb, by incorporating its formal features. Let’s assume V-feature of *do* and *to* attracts formal features of the verb and they are copied by *do* and *to*. Note that in English *do* is an optional element in finite clauses while *to* is an obligatory element in infinitival clauses.
(51) a. The children do like the teacher.
    b. The children like the teacher.

(52) a. To watch TV is fun.
    b. *Watch TV is fun.

Therefore, the underlying structure for English would be something like (53a). If do or to is included, it attracts formal features of a verb, forming complex [v do/to FF(V)] in (53b).

(53) a. [TP [NegP [vp (do)/to [vp V NP ]]]]
    b. [TP [NegP [vp v do/to FF(V) [vp V NP ]]]]

We have seen in Section 2 that in French infinitives lexical verbs cannot undergo Verb Movement overtly as (11a-b), repeated here as the following sentences, attest:

(54) a. Ne pas regarder la télévision consolide l'esprit critique.
    not to watch television strengthens the spirit critical
    b. *Ne regarder pas la télévision consolide l'esprit critique.

However, infinitival lexical verbs seem to be able to raise beyond adverbs and quantifiers although they cannot move beyond Neg as (54a-b) show.

(55) a. Perdre complètement la tête pour les belles étudiantes,
    to lose completely one's head for pretty students
    c'est dangereux.
    that is dangerous
    b. J'ai entendu mes enfants raconter chacun une histoire
    I have heard my kids tell each a story
    différente.
    different
The sequence \( V + \text{Adv} + \text{NP} \) illustrated above is not obligatory as the following examples show.

(56) a. Complètement perdre la tète pour les belles étudiantes, c'est dangereux.
    b. J'ai entendu mes enfants chacun raconter une histoire différente.

From these facts it follows that French infinitives with lexical verbs undergo certain movement, long enough to go beyond adverbs and quantifiers, but not long enough to go beyond Neg. Adopting Kayne's view, as we have assumed in Section 2, that floating quantifiers move to adverbial positions, we can, more universally, suppose the following underlying structure for infinitives:

(57) \[
\text{TP} \left[ \text{NegP} \left[ \text{vp} \left( \text{TO} \right) \left[ \text{vp} \left( \text{Adv} \right) \left[ \text{vp} \text{V NP} \right] \right] \right] \right] \]
\]

Although French does not have anything explicit that corresponds to English \textit{to}, \([-\text{finite}]T\) is assumed to optionally take \text{vP} with abstract \text{TO} as its complement. \text{TO} is not explicitly realized in French while it is realized as \textit{to} in English. Universal Grammar allows it to lack phonological content in languages like French. Moreover, \([-\text{finite}]T\) is obligatorily subcategorized for \text{vP} having \text{TO} in English as in (52a-b), while it optionally does in French. As noted above, \text{TO} is a kind of bound form, whose V-feature attracts formal features of a verb, and it incorporates them. In French if \text{TO} is generated under \text{v}, it attracts the formal features of a verb and structure (58a), with a verb behind an adverb, is obtained. If \text{TO} is not generated, a verb raises to \text{v} for the \( \theta \)-role-assignment reason, yielding (58b), with a verb ahead of an adverb.
From the fact that infinitival lexical verb cannot raise beyond Neg in French, it follows that V-feature of infinitival TP is weak in French. Being weak, the TP can attract only FF(V) or the complex [v TO FF(V)] but not V itself. Thus, (59a) and (59b) are derived from (58a), forming sentences like (56a-b), which have an Adv + V + NP sequence. (59c) is derived from (58b), forming (55a-b)

(59) a. [TP [NegP [vP [v TO FF(V)] [vp (Adv) [vp V NP ] ] ] ] ]
   b. [TP [NegP [vP V_i [vp (Adv) [vp ti NP ] ] ] ] ]

Note (59a-b) are identical on the surface structure but their ways of derivation are different.

In English, as TO is obligatorily appear in infinitives as to, it is predicted that English does not have derivations like (58b) and (59b) and a V + Adv + NP sequence is not allowed. The prediction is fulfilled as the following examples exhibit.

(60) a. Frequently to take exercise is vital for your health.
   b. To frequently take exercise is vital for your health.
   c. *To take frequently exercise is vital for your health.

Obligatory occurrence of to in English infinitives further makes us expect that a to + V + not sequence is not permitted because to cannot attract V. This expectation is also fulfilled.

(61) *To take not exercise makes you gain weight.
When the derivation has reached to structure (58a), subsequent derivation can take two options: either the complex v or FF(V) raises to T.

(62) a. \[\text{TP} [v \text{ TO } \text{FF(V)}]i [\text{NegP } t_i [vP t_i [vP (Adv) [vP V NP ] ] ] ]\]
   b. \[\text{TP} \text{FF(V)}i [\text{NegP } t_i [vP [v \text{ TO } t_i ] [vP (Adv) [vP V NP ] ] ] ]\]

(62a) converges as (63a) and (62c) as (63b).

(63) a. To not watch TV allows you time to study.
   b. Not to watch TV allows you time to study.

Infinitives with auxiliaries optionally raise to T beyond Neg overtly in French as in (12a-b). As auxiliaries such as être and avoir are light verbs lacking lexical content, they are generated under v. Thus, the underlying structure is assumed to be as follows:

(64) \[\text{TP} [\text{NegP } [vP (TO) [vP être/avoir [vP V ] ] ] ]\]

If the derivation contains TO, it attracts formal features of a verb, or more precisely, something nearest carrying V-feature. In this case, formal features of the auxiliaries, être and avoir, are attracted to TO.

(65) \[\text{TP} [\text{NegP } [vP [v \text{ TO } \text{FF(être/avoir)] [vP être/avoir [vP V ] ] ] ]}\]

T attracts the complex v, \([v \text{ TO } \text{FF(être/avoir)]}\). The derivation yields structure (66a) and converges as sentence (66b).

(66) a. \[\text{TP} [v \text{ TO } \text{FF(être/avoir)]i [\text{NegP } t_i [vP t_i [vP être/avoir [vP V ] ] ] ]}\]
   b. Ne pas avoir eu d’enfance heureuse.... (= (12a))
If structure (64) does not contain TO, the auxiliary itself moves to T despite the weak T since auxiliary lacks lexical content. The derivation yields structure (67a) and converges as sentence (67b).

(67) a. \[TP \overline{être/avoir} [\overline{NegP ti} [\overline{vp ti} [\overline{vp V}]]]]
   b. Ne avoir pas eu d’enfance heureuse.... (= (12b))

In English infinitives, TO, which is obligatorily realized as to, attracts formal features of an auxiliary, deriving the following structure:

(68) \[TP [\overline{NegP} [\overline{vp [v to FF(be/have)]]} [\overline{vp be/have [vp V]]]]]]

If \([v to FF(be/have)]\) goes up to T via NegP, (69a) is produced. If FF(be/have) alone goes to T after \([v to FF(be/have)]\) has moved to NegP, (69b) is produced.

(69) a. To not have had a happy childhood...
   b. Not to have had a happy childhood.... (= (16a))

(Note that in French, unlike English, whether \([v TO FF(être/avoir)]\) or FF(être/avoir) goes up to T, only a Neg + auxiliary sequence exemplified in (66b) is produced.)

Auxiliaries in infinitives can move to T overtly with marginal acceptance in English as exhibited by the following examples (= (16b) and (16d)):

(70) a. (?To have not had a happy childhood is a prerequisite for writing novels.
   b. ?To be not arrested under such circumstances is a miracle.
These examples lead to suppose that V-feature of v in English infinitives is strong and to in v attracts not only formal features but also V. If to in v attracts an auxiliary, the following structure is formed:

\[(71) \quad [TP \ [NegP \ [vP \ [v \ to \ be/havei \ [vP \ t_i \ [vP \ V \ ]] \ ]] \]]\]

Despite its weak V-feature, T attracts [v to be/have] since both to and auxiliaries lack lexical content. Finally, a to + auxiliary + not sequence is derived.

\[(72) \quad [TP \ [v \ to \ be/havei \ ] \ [NegP \ t_j \ [vP \ t_i \ [vP \ V \ ]] \ ]]\]

The fact that (70a-b) are not fully acceptable makes us speculate that v is not strong enough. However, I will leave the marginal acceptability of (70a-b) an open question here.

5. Some Consequences

Following Roberts, I have assumed V-feature of T drives Move F and it triggers Move a if it is strong. I have also assumed that English lexical V does not have Neg feature and Q-feature although auxiliaries and French lexical V do. To make up for the absence for Neg feature and Q-feature of lexical verbs, English has do. English do in finite clauses and universal TO in infinitives are generated under v, attracting FF(V), copying them, and raising to T to check with it. If this line of argument is correct, it follows that every movement, including movement to an intermediate landing site, must be driven by morphological requirement as I claimed in The Nature of Feature-Driven Movement (107). Even strong feature is not powerful enough to attract an element in the long distance. That is, strong feature applies Move a only to an element in a local domain.
Notes

1. In British English this sentence is acceptable. The fact that verb movement is allowed in the case of infinitival lexical have in British English while it is not in American English exactly parallels that of tensed main verb have in British English and American English.

2. Another probably preferable analysis would be that do does not have features except Neg feature and Q-feature and is required to copy features of the main verb. This analysis can be applied to that of to in infinitives.

3. To and -ing make a complementary distribution in nonfinite clauses but I will not pursue -ing here.

4. The problem illustrated in (18)-(19) cannot be explained even under the present approach.

Works Cited


