The Swedish VP anaphor (VPA) det 'it' occurs with the verb göra 'do/make' or with an auxiliary, (1a). On the basis of a cognate VPA in Danish, Houser et. al. (2007; 2011) analyze det 'it' as a surface anaphor (Hankamer & Sag 1976, that spells out vP, while they treat göra as an auxiliary, (1b).

(1) a Kalle har läst LGB och Lisa har också (gjort) det. Kalle has read LGB and Lisa has too (done) it.

   b … Lisa har gjort [det läst LGB] … vP → det

This account fails to capture a little discussed asymmetry in Swedish: An internal argument (IA) can be A-extracted in passives iff göra 'do/make' is absent, (2a) vs (2b). Yet, the presence of göra does not affect A-movement in unaccusatives, (3). Hence, an alternative solution is required.

(2) a Båten har sänkts och flotten har också det. √Passive det

   b *Båten har sänkts och flotten har också gjorts det. *Passive göra det

(3) Båten har sjunkit och flotten har också gjort det. √Unacc göra-det

We propose that (2a) and (2b) are structurally distinct, whereas the contrast between (2b) and (3) boils down to a matter of Case. We agree with Houser et. al. that (1) involves covert structure, a conclusion supported by several tests, such as missing antecedent effects and transparency to overt extraction. We add to the list of diagnostics that göra-det also allows inverse scope, (cf. Merchant to appear):

(4) En läkare undersökte alla patienter, och sedan gjorde en sjukläkarundersökning. A doctor examined every patient, and then did a nurse it 'A doctor examined every patient, and then a nurse did.' (∃nurse)(∀patient)(∀patient) ↛ (∃nurse)

Beginning with göra-det, drawing on Baltin’s (2012) analysis of British English do and do so, as a case of low VP ellipsis, we claim that the verb göra spells out v, and det is the exponent of a functional head F located between v and V. F hosts an [E] feature, that triggers elision of VP (Merchant 2008; 2013), (5). We hypothesize that since FP is selected by v and hosts the D det, the presence of a Case feature on F is implicated. Thus, det=F is a Goal that Agrees with the Probe v = göra for Case:

(5) … [VoiP Voi[+Active] [viP … göra-v [FP det-F[E] [VP √DP]]]] … Agree

In our view v = göra is an active Case Probe when Voi is [+Active], including unaccusatives. In unaccusatives, v = göra is equipped with an epp-feature, contingent on the lack of an external argument, in combination with the presence of a Case-feature. v = göra Agrees for Case with the D det, Agree I in (6). Once Agree I has been established, v = göra ignores det for further Agree relations (Rackowski & Richards 2005). The epp-feature on v = göra now Agrees with the IA and raises it to Spec,vP, Agree II in (6), and subsequently det raises to Spec,TP.

(6) Agree I: Case

   … [VoiP Voi[+Active] [viP, göra-v [FP det-F[E] [VP √DP]]]] … Agree II: epp+Move

In passives, v = göra has no Case-feature, by virtue of Voi[+Active]. However, imagine a scenario where both det and the IA has one, (7). By locality, an epp-feature on v cannot attract the IA because of the intervening pronominal element. Even if it could, the Case feature on det would fail to enter an Agree relation with an appropriate Probe. Thus, the IA cannot be A-extracted in passives of göra-det.

(7) *Case on det

   … [VoiP Voi[+Active] [viP, göra-v [FP det-F[E] [VP √DP]]]] … *Passive Agree I: epp+Move

Evidence that the FP headed by the D det has a Case feature, comes from the fact that det itself may raise to SpecTP in passives, (8). Notice that because det is a 3 singular neuter pronoun, it is clear that it is not coreferent with the plural object soporna 'garbage.pl.'
(8) Väktmästaren ska kasta ut soporna

\[\text{Passive: det-to-Subj}\]

janitor.the shall throw out garbage.the

när det är uppenbart att det måste *(göras).

when it is obvious that it must done.Pass

'The janitor must throw out the garbage, when it is obvious that it must be done.'

In sum, the asymmetry between unaccusatives and göra-det passives in Swedish follows straightforwardly if Göra 'do/make' is an exponent of V and det lexicalizes a functional head within the verbal complex that hosts [E]. Furthermore, this analysis carries over to British English do, as discussed in Baltin (2012), with the difference that FP in BrE is realized by small pro.

In contrast, (2a) above and its kin, where an internal argument may A-move, exhibit the properties of a bona fide VP ellipsis, suggesting the structure shown in (9), where det is the exponent of Voi:

(9) \[\text{... [Voi }DP \text{ det-Voi}[E]\{\text{Active}\} \{\text{det-fun+}\text{V-fun}\}] \text{...}\]

Here Voi hosts the [E] feature (cf. Merchant 2013), and crucially, det lacks Case, comparably to a predicate NP (as verified by the obligatory presence of göra in (8)). Therefore, the IA may internally merge with Voi, and raise to Spec,TP. A'-extraction of the object is also possible in these contexts, in contrast to göra-det. (10) exemplifies this by ellipsis of the ACD-variety ([wh] insertion of det). Also, as predicted, göra is illicit in vP in cases of vP ellipsis. Thus cases of optionality, like (1), reduce to structural ambiguity.

(10) Pelle ska besöka alla städer som Kalle ska (*göra).

Pelle will visit all cities that Kalle will (*do).

The outlined analysis sheds light on a peculiar restriction on pronominal Object Shift (OS) in Swedish. The generalized VPA det resists OS, even when unstressed, (11). For us, this follows from det being part of the extended projection of the verb, and therefore it fails to meet the conditions on OS. However, Danish and Norwegian appear more liberal in this regard, perhaps for independent reasons.

(11) Kalle läste LGB men Lisa gjorde (inte) det (*inte).

Kalle read LGB but Lisa did (not) it (not).

Finally, the analysis potentially has wider implications. While ellipsis universally results in non-pronunciation of constituents, we have proposed that the licensing [E] feature may be spelled out. In Swedish, it is lexicalized by det (proviso [wh]), regardless of its position in the verbal complex, with the consequence that the ellipsis is blurred. In V-stranding VPE languages (e.g. Goldberg 2005), VoiE could tentatively be viewed as being "lexicalized" by the main verb, which thus escapes deletion, whereas in other languages, such as English, [E] is null. If so, it follows why garden variety verb raising alone is not a sufficient condition on V-stranding VPE, as witnessed, for instance, by French.

References


