

A Lacuna in Adjunct Extraposition

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An overview: Covert movement has sometimes been analyzed as movement where the tail of a chain is chosen to be pronounced. Among others, Fox and Nissenbaum (F&N) (1999) argue that adjunct extraposition like (1)a involves movement of a host DP followed by late merger of an extraposed constituent (EC). The discontinuity of the host DP and the EC in (1)a is yielded by pronouncing the tail of the host DP chain, as in (1)b. If the head of the chain is determined to be pronounced, it results in so-called heavy NP shift. While this appears to suggest that a choice of which copy to pronounce is unconstrained, we propose a condition in (2). An initial motivation for (2) comes from the fact that an EC associated with an object DP cannot be stranded in VP-ellipsis, as in (3). A widely accepted interpretation of (3) is that the smallest constituent that VP-ellipsis can target is the one that dominates an EC (see Baltin 2006). We argue that (3) is excluded because it violates (2) in that the lower copy that is chosen to be pronounced is elided via VP-ellipsis, as in (4). Below we will see more evidence for (2). (Our focus below is on extraposition from an object DP.)

- (1) a. We saw a painting yesterday by John. (Fox and Nissenbaum 1999:134)
b. we [[saw [a painting] yesterday] [~~a painting~~] [by John]]
- (2) The tail of a chain that is instructed to be pronounced must be overtly realized.
- (3) *Although he didn't call people up from Boston, he did [~~call people up~~] from New York. (Baltin 2006:241)
- (4) *... he did [[~~call [people] up~~] [~~people~~] [from New York]]

Evidence I: We argue that even if an EC resides in a position outside a constituent that is independently shown to be deletable, VP-ellipsis cannot strand an EC, as in (5). In F&N's analysis, the host DP in (5)b moves to a position higher than the adjunct (i.e., *while searching*) where it is late merged with the relative clause (RC). While the lower copy is instructed to be pronounced, a constituent containing it is elided, which violates (2).

- (5) a. I found an article while browsing but you didn't [~~find an article~~] while searching.
b. *Although I saw an article while browsing which interested me, you didn't [~~see an article~~] while searching which interested you. (Sheehan 2010:243)

Evidence II: In F&N's approach, an EC occupies the same position as the scope position of a host DP. It is known that positive polarity items (PPIs) must take scope over negation. Thus, a host DP that contains a PPI in (6)a and an EC as well must be in a position higher than negation. As Overfelt (2015) argues, this structural relation is corroborated by the fact that a negative polarity item within the EC is not licensed, as in (6)b. As shown in (7), even when an EC is clearly outside negation, which is higher than the VP, it cannot be stranded in VP-ellipsis. This is explained in the same way as (5)b.

- (6) a. Tim didn't invite some people to his party who work in his office.
b. *Sam didn't invite some people to his party who have ever teased him. (Overfelt 2015:162)
- (7) *Sam didn't invite some people to the party who work in his office and Kim didn't [~~invite some people to the party~~] who work in her office. (Overfelt 2015:163)

Evidence III: As mentioned above, the head of a host DP chain can be pronounced. VP-ellipsis is predicted to be permitted in such cases. This is fulfilled by (8)a, where a Condition C violation is obviated. We take it to indicate that the stranded DP is a result of "overt" movement of the host DP and late merger of the RC. Note that the same effect is not found when a name is within a complement, as in (8)b. This is because it is claimed that complements cannot be late merged (Lebeaux 1988).

- (8) a. While some granted/told him_i everything, others did [~~grant/tell him_i~~] only the story that John_i had evidence for.
 b. *While some granted/told him_i everything, others did [~~grant/tell him_i~~] only the story that John_i had met aliens. (adapted from Sauerland 1998:144)

Evidence IV: As we have just seen, late merger is not applicable to complements. Thus, F&N postulate a different analysis for complement extraposition. More specifically, they propose that it is derived by movement of complements. They present various arguments for this claim, one of which is the contrast between complement and adjunct extraposition with regard to the definiteness effect, a signature of movement. This is shown in (9). Given this treatment of complement extraposition, we predict that it must be compatible with VP-ellipsis because its derivation does not involve the pronunciation of a lower copy of a host DP chain. This is indeed the case, as in (10). This fact lends further support to F&N's dichotomy and analyses of extraposition as well as our proposal.

- (9) a. ??I saw the (best) picture yesterday of the museum.
 b. I saw the (best) picture yesterday from the museum. (Fox and Nissenbaum 1999:138)
 (10) I haven't painted pictures yet of celebrities, but I might of politicians. (Drummond 2009:50)

A further issue: In addition to the VP-ellipsis fact in (3), Baltin (2006) provides another argument that can be taken to indicate the structural height of an EC: an EC cannot be stranded in VP-fronting, as in (11). We have argued that a VP excluding an EC can be elided to the extent that a host DP is overtly realized (see (8)a). If we assume that the same size of a VP can be fronted, the ungrammaticality of (11) is unexpected in our proposal especially because a lower copy of the host DP is pronounced in this case. While we cannot go into any detail, we suggest that a constituent that reflexively dominates a host DP cannot undergo topicalization, one variant of which is VP-fronting. This is independently shown to be the case by (12)c. See Postal (1998) for a possible explanation of this fact.

- (11) *John said that he would call people up from Boston, and [~~call people up~~]_i he did t_i [~~from Boston~~]. (Baltin 2006:241)
 (12) a. He handed something other than the gun to Rita. (Postal 1998:31)
 b. He handed something to Rita [~~other than the gun~~].
 c. *[~~Something (dangerous)~~]_i, he might have handed t_i to Rita [~~other than the gun~~].

Conclusion: Capitalizing on F&N's approach, we proposed (2) and reappraised the interaction between extraposition and ellipsis or fronting. The desideratum here is to develop a rationale for it. While we are not in a position to do it, we suggest one ramification of our proposal for the architecture of the grammar. The presence of object wide scope in (13) suggests that "covert" QR out of an elided constituent is possible. (2) appears to block this kind of QR if it is derived by pronouncing a lower copy of a QR'd DP. Thus, we need to develop a system that allows us to make a distinction between QR of this sort and "covert" movement of a host DP in extraposition. This is also a topic left for further research.

- (13) Ken Hale doesn't speak more than three languages. Rob Pensalfini doesn't as well.
 (not>more than three; more than three>not) (Fox 2000:45)

Selected References

- Fox, Danny, and Jon Nissenbaum. 1999. Extraposition and scope: A case for overt QR. In *Proceedings of WCCFL 18*, 132-144. Cascadilla Press.
 Overfelt, Jason. 2015. On the subclausal locality of extraposition from NP. In *Proceedings of WCCFL 32*, 159-170. Cascadilla Press.