

snippets

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EDITORIAL STATEMENT

1. Purpose.

The aim of *Snippets* is to publish specific remarks that motivate research or that make theoretical points germane to current work. The ideal contribution is the ideal footnote: a side remark that taken on its own is not worth lengthy development but that needs to be said. One encounters many short comments of this kind in the literature of the seventies. We feel that there no longer is a forum for them. We want *Snippets* to help fill that gap.

2. Content.

We will publish notes that contribute to the study of syntax and semantics in generative grammar. The notes are to be brief, self-contained and explicit. They may do any of the following things:

- point out an empirical phenomenon that goes against accepted generalizations or that shows that some aspect of a theory is problematic;
- point out unnoticed minimal pairs that fall outside the scope of any existing theory;
- point out an empirical phenomenon that confirms the predictions of a theory in an area where the theory has not been tested;
- explicitly describe technical inconsistencies in a theory or in a set of frequently adopted assumptions;
- explicitly describe unnoticed assumptions that underlie a theory or assumptions that a theory needs to be supplemented with in order to make desired predictions;
- call attention to little-known or forgotten literature in which issues of immediate relevance are discussed.

We also encourage submissions that connect psycholinguistic data to theoretical issues. A proposal for a pilot experiment in language acquisition or language processing could make for an excellent snippet.

The earliest Linguistic Inquiry squibs exemplify the kind of note we would like to publish. Some of them posed unobserved puzzles. For instance, a squib by Postal and Ross in LI 1:1 ("A Problem of Adverb Preposing") noted that whether or not we can construe a sentence-initial temporal adverb with an embedded verb depends on the tense of the matrix verb. A squib by Perlmutter and Ross in LI 1:3 ("Relative Clauses with Split Antecedents"), challenging the prevailing analyses of coordination and extraposition, noted that conjoined clauses neither of which contain a plural noun phrase can appear next to an "extraposed" relative that can only describe groups. Other squibs drew attention to particular theoretical assumptions. For instance, a squib by Bresnan in LI 1:2 ("A Grammatical Fiction") outlined an alternative account of the derivation of sentences containing believe and force, and asked whether there were principled reasons for dismissing any of the underlying assumptions (among them that semantic interpretation is sensitive to details of a syntactic derivation). A squib by Zwicky in LI 1:2 ("Class Complements in Phonology") asked to what extent phonological rules refer to complements of classes. None of these squibs was more than a couple of paragraphs; all of them limited themselves to a precise question or observation.

3. Submission details.

Snippets is an electronic journal. We will solicit submissions twice a year: the submission deadlines are April 1 and October 1. The submissions that we accept will be posted on the journal website approximately 3 months after each deadline, and all accepted submissions will remain permanently on the website.

Snippets is intended as a service to the linguistics community. Consequently, authors are advised that, when they submit to *Snippets*, we understand them as allowing their submission to be reproduced if published. At the same time, the rights for the notes themselves will remain with the authors. As a result, citation of *Snippets* material will have to indicate the author's name and the specific source of the material.

We will accept electronic submissions at the address snippets@unimi.it. Electronic submissions may take the form of (a) the text of an e-mail message, or (b) an attached file. The attached file should be a simple text file, a Word file (Mac or Windows), or a Rich Text Format (RTF) file. All submissions must state the name and affiliation of the author(s), and a (postal or electronic) return address.

Submissions are to be a maximum of 500 words (including examples), with an additional half page allowed for diagrams, tables and references. Given that we envision the submissions themselves as footnotes, the submissions may not contain footnotes of their own. The ideal submission is one paragraph; a submission of five lines is perfectly acceptable. We will not consider abstracts.

4. Editorial policy.

Submissions will be reviewed by our editorial board, and review will be name-blind both ways. While we guarantee a response within 3 months of the submission deadline, we will only provide a yes/no response to the submitter. We will not request revisions (barring exceptional cases). We allow resubmission (once) of the same piece.

1.

David Adger – *Queen Mary, University of London*
Focused responses

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In English, it is possible, in a positive response to a yes/no question, to repeat certain constituents of the question:

- (1) a. Did everyone kiss Anson?
b. yes, everyone

An obvious approach would be to treat these in a parallel fashion to the similar responses discussed by McCloskey (1991) for Irish: they involve some kind of phrasal ellipsis, leaving behind just the verb in Irish, and the subject in English.

Unfortunately, a name usually makes a bad response irrespective of its syntactic position:

- (2) a. Did Kyle kiss Anson?
b. #yes, Kyle
c. #yes, Anson

In fact, a name (or a simple existential) *can* appear in a response, but only when the corresponding constituent in the question is in (contrastive) focus. The constituent in the response then has a particular reading, depending on what kind of a DP it is. Once again this reading is focal (specific or contrastive):

- (3) a. Did Anson kiss SOMEONE/KYLE at the party?
b. yes, someone (only specific) / Kyle (and no one else)
(small caps represents focal stress)

The answers to clefted yes/no questions are revealing, and again show that the constituent picked up in the response is in focus in the question:

- (4) a. Was it Anson that kissed everyone at the party?
b. yes, Anson
c. #yes, everyone

It seems that what can appear in the positive response is either a quantifier or a DP in focus. It would be interesting to investigate whether a unified characterization of the element in the response can be given.

Reference

McCloskey, J. (1991) "Clause structure, ellipsis and proper government in Irish." *Lingua* 85: 259-302.

2.

Faye Chalcraft – *University of Cambridge*

Right Node Raising as ellipsis: evidence from (what the) British do

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Despite their name and a large body of literature suggesting that they are derived by rightward Across-the-Board movement of the type schematized in (1) (e.g. Bresnan 1974; Hudson 1976; Postal 1998), there has long been a suspicion that the gap in the first conjunct of Right Node Raising constructions is due not to extraction, but to ellipsis (cf. (2)).

- (1) [[Wallace loves ti] and [Gromit hates ti]] [Wensleydale cheese]i
- (2) Wallace loves <Wensleydale cheese> and Gromit hates Wensleydale cheese.

The first part of this conclusion finds support in the observation that, conceived as a movement operation, Right Node Raising has a number of curious properties: not only does it fall foul of Kayne's (1994) Linear Correspondence Axiom, but it is also anomalous both in its failure to give rise to weak crossover violations and in its apparent ability to be both bounded and unbounded. Meanwhile, the assertion that the gap is really an ellipsis site has been strengthened by observations concerning the extent to which the behaviour of Right Node Raising parallels that of VP-ellipsis: it has been noted, for example, that both are island-insensitive (Wexler and Culicover 1980; Levine 1985), and, in the case of the Right Node Raising of a VP, that both pattern similarly with respect to the kinds of inflectional features they can ignore (Bošković 2004). In this note, I point out a further such parallel which has not previously been considered, but which nevertheless indicates the superiority of ellipsis-based accounts.

In certain varieties of British English, the site of VP-ellipsis, whether licensed by a modal ((3a)), periphrastic *do* ((3b-c)), perfective *have* ((3d)), progressive *be* ((3e)), sentential *not* ((3f)), or infinitival *to* ((3g)), is replaceable by a non-finite form of *do* (Trudgill 1984):

- (3) a. I don't know whether to go. I might do.
b. John said he would resign today. We'll have to see if he does do.
c. First, John talked to Mary. Then Bill did do too.
d. Mary left early, but she shouldn't have done.
e. None of his family would help him even though his friends are doing.
f. You can go to the meeting, but I'd recommend that you not do.
g. I haven't seen her yet, but I am planning to do.

Crucially, this *do* appears *only* in the context of VP ellipsis:

- (4) a. *They might do leave tomorrow.
b. *He could have done finished by now.
c. *It was doing blowing a gale.
d. *Bill said he would talk to Mary, and talk to Mary he did do.

It is of some significance, then, that in the relevant dialects, the gap in the first conjunct of constructions involving the Right Node Raising of a VP is vulnerable to *do*-replacement:

- (5) a. Tom said he would do, and Bill actually did, audition for the choir.
b. Mary should have done, and Michael probably already has, lit the fire.
c. John thinks he is doing, but I know he won't be, going to the party.

The conclusion here is simple: only if Right Node Raising involves ellipsis in the first conjunct can the availability of *do* in this context be explained.

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3.

Lawrence Y.-L. Cheung – *University of California, Los Angeles* *On certain (non-)violations of coordinate structure constraints*

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The Coordinate Structure Constraint (Ross 1967) prohibits the extraction of a conjunct from a coordinate structure, except in Across-the-Board extraction.

- (1) *What did John buy [a book and ___]? (English)

However, *wh*-phrases in a coordinate structure (henceforth, WhCS) are well attested in *wh*-in-situ languages like Chinese, Japanese and Korean, e.g. (2a)-(2b).

- (2) a. Ta mai-le shu he shenme (ne)? (Mandarin Chinese)
he buy-ASP book and what Q
'What is the thing x such that he bought some books and x?'
b. Taro wa niku to nani-o kattano? (Japanese)
Taro-TOP meat and what-ACC buy
'What is the thing x such that Taro bought some meat and x?'

It has often been argued that in-situ *wh*-phrases do not undergo *wh*-movement. They are licensed by the checking of the Q-feature in C0 by either a *wh*-particle (e.g. Chinese) or a moved *wh*-phrase (e.g. multiple *wh*-questions in English) (Cheng 1991, Tsai 1994 and Cheng and Rooryck 2000). As a result, in-situ *wh*-phrases can occur in syntactic islands, as in (2) and (3).

- (3) a. Who likes the book that who wrote? (English)
b. Nei yi ge xuesheng hui xuan nei yi wei jiaoshou jiao
which one CL student will choose which one CL professor teach
de ke (ne)? (Chinese)
DE class Q
'Which student will choose the class that which professor will teach?'

Nevertheless, the literature seems to have overlooked the importance of island type. Surprisingly, WhCS is unacceptable on the pair-list reading of multiple *wh*-questions in both *wh*-movement (English, German, Spanish) and *wh*-in-situ languages (Chinese, Japanese, Korean). The mechanism that licenses the WhCS's in (2) and (3) becomes unavailable in (4) and (5) respectively. (It should be noted that Reinhart (1997: 339) reports a different judgment for a sentence similar to (4a). My consultants found it rather bad, however.)

- (4) a. *Which detective saw [John and which student]? (English)
-

- b. *Cuál detective (de los detectives) vio [al profesor Ito y a cual estudiante]? (Spanish)
 ‘*Which detective saw [Prof. Ito and which student]?’
- (5) a. *Nei ge zhentan kanjian [Zhangsan he nei ge xuesheng]? (Chinese)
 which CL detective saw Zhangsan and which CL student
 ‘*Which detective saw [Zhangsan and which student]?’
- b. *Dono keiji-ga [Ito kyoju to dono gakusei-o mimasita-ka] (Japanese)
 which det.-NOM Ito prof. and which student-ACC saw-Q
 ‘*Which detective saw [Prof. Ito and which student]?’

The non-violability of CSC in (5) is particularly puzzling because the WhCS construction and multiple *wh*-questions are allowed independently in these *wh*-in-situ languages.

The results presented in the table below suggest that the well-formedness of the in-situ *wh*-phrase is dependent on the interaction of (i) the *wh*-question type (i.e. single vs multiple) and (ii) the type of island. D-linking (Pesetsky 1987) seems irrelevant here: the use of non-D-linked *wh*-phrases does not affect the judgment. It is also worth noting that the same pattern does not hold for weak quantified DPs (e.g. indefinites), which behave rather similarly to in-situ *wh*-phrases concerning the ability to take wide scope. Although the configuration QP ... [VP [...QP ...] and [... DP...]] is generally fine when QP is a weak DP (Ruys 1992), it is impossible when QP is a *wh*-phrase.

	<i>Wh-movement languages</i>	<i>Wh-in-situ languages</i>
Single Wh-Question involving WhCS	* (1)	OK (2)
Multiple Wh-Question involving WhCS	* (4a, b)	* (5a, b)
Multiple Wh-Question with a wh in a CNP island	OK (3a)	OK (3b)

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4.

Feng-hsi Liu – University of Arizona *Event measures in Chinese*

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Tenny (1994)'s Aspectual Interface Hypothesis assigns the direct object a privileged status: the direct object, but not other phrases, can measure out an event. On the other hand, Van den Wyngaerd (2001), on the basis of Dutch, claims that the resultative predicate is an event measure, providing minimal parts of an event. In this note, I will show that in Chinese the direct object is not necessarily an event measure; it is only so if it is indefinite. In contrast, a sentence containing a definite object does not have an event measure, but must rely on an indefinite adjunct phrase to perform the measuring function.

I assume that a telic sentence contains an event measure, while an atelic sentence does not. Following Tenny (1994), I also assume that an event can only be measured in one way, not multiple ways. It is now generally accepted that the notion of quantized object is relevant for telicity. In particular, objects that are definite or indefinite are quantized and contribute to telicity. However, in Chinese definite NPs behave differently than indefinite NPs with respect to telicity, as shown in (1):

- (1) Ni neng zai shi fenzhong nei gei women shuo (a) sange gushi ma?
you can at ten minute in to us tell three-cl story Q
(b) *naxie gushi
those story
'Can you tell us (a) three stories in ten minutes?'
(b) *those stories

While (1a) occurs with 'in ten minutes', (1b) doesn't. Since the definite phrase in (1b) is incompatible with 'in ten minutes', it does not contribute to a telic event and is not an event measure.

However, when (1b) is accompanied by a measure phrase, such as (V)-yi-V 'V a little', the result is a telic sentence, as in (2):

- (2) Ni neng zai shi fenzhong nei gei women shuo-yi-shuo naxie gushi ma?
you can at ten minute in to us tell-one-tell those story Q
'Can you tell us a little of those stories in ten minutes?'

The presence of *yi-shuo* turns an otherwise atelic predicate into a telic predicate; it is also the event measure of (2). Thus while (1a) shows that an indefinite object is an event measure, (2) shows that when the object is definite, the measuring function is taken up by an indefinite adjunct phrase. In both cases, it is an indefinite phrase that

serves as the measure.

On the other hand, given that an event can only be measured in one way, it is predicted that (1a) cannot be modified by the V-*yi*-V phrase. This is borne out in (3):

- (3) *Ni neng zai shi fengzhong nei gei women shuo-yi-shuo sange gushi ma?
you can at ten minute in to us tell-one-tell three story Q
*‘Can you tell us a little of three stories a little in ten minutes?’

Since the object itself is an event measure, it does not take another phrase serving the same function.

Thus the Chinese data show that the measuring function is taken up by an indefinite phrase, which can be an argument or an adjunct. It also shows that quantized objects don’t all behave the same in Chinese. While indefinite objects contribute to telicity, definite objects don’t.

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5.

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Binding of reflexive pronouns in German

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In this snippet, I intend to point out that the binding behavior of German reflexive pronouns shows some interesting peculiarities due to the fact that the German reflexive pronouns in 1st and 2nd person singular and plural are not distinct from the accusative personal pronouns, whereas there are separate forms for the 3rd person reflexive pronouns. As most research focuses on examples involving 3rd person reflexive pronouns, the irregularities I want to present here seem to have been neglected so far.

Consider the following sentence:

- (1) Karl hat sich gewaschen und Tobias auch.
- a. Karl hat sich gewaschen und Tobias hat sich gewaschen.
(Karl washed himself and Tobias washed himself.)
 - b. Karl hat sich und Tobias gewaschen.
(Karl washed himself and Tobias.)
 - c. # Karl hat sich gewaschen und Tobias hat Karl gewaschen.
(Karl washed himself and Tobias washed Karl.)

As the reflexive pronoun *sich* is bound by *Karl*, there are two possible readings available for (1) which are expressed in (1a) and (1b), although (1a) seems to be the preferred reading. The interpretation expressed in (1c) is not possible.

However, the situation is different in the case of a 1st or 2nd person singular or plural reflexive pronoun, as in

- (2) Ich habe mich gewaschen und Tobias auch.
- a. # Ich habe mich gewaschen und Tobias hat sich gewaschen.
(I washed myself and Tobias washed himself.)
 - b. Ich habe mich und Tobias gewaschen.
(I washed myself and Tobias.)
 - c. Ich habe mich gewaschen und Tobias hat mich gewaschen.
(I washed myself and Tobias washed me.)

In this case, the preferred reading is (2b), which corresponds to (1b). The

important difference is that the strict reading (2c), which was unavailable in (1), is possible, and the sloppy reading (2a), which was possible in (1), is ruled out.

This difference is expected if the ellipsis is filled in by literally copying the form of the preceding clause. The strict reading in (1c) is impossible because, to refer to Karl being washed by Tobias, we would have to use the 3rd person singular accusative pronoun *ihn* rather than the 3rd person singular reflexive pronoun *sich*. The strict reading in (2c) is possible because *mich* is not only a reflexive pronoun, but also the accusative of the 1st person singular personal pronoun in German.

Interestingly, there is a way of making the excluded interpretations available without filling in everything that has been left out in the ellipsis. German allows only the missing pronoun to be added, as these examples demonstrate:

(3) Karl hat sich gewaschen und Tobias ihn auch.

(4) Ich habe mich gewaschen und Tobias sich auch.

It should be noted that the unavailability of the sloppy reading in (2a) is subject to dialectal variation: a quick survey among six native speakers of German showed that for some of them the reading (2a) is available, although they regarded it as “grammatically imprecise.” Most subjects pointed out that in order to express the meaning of the sloppy reading in (2a), they themselves would prefer the sentence in (4).

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