



snippets

Issue 17

May 2008

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ISSN 1590-1807

Published in *Led on Line* - Electronic Archive by
LED - Edizioni Universitarie di Lettere Economia Diritto - Milano - Italy
<http://www.ledonline.it>

May 2008

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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.

Marco Nicolis – Georgetown University - Queen’s University On case marking of PRO in Italian

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Cecchetto and Oniga (2004) -- whose concern is specifically with Latin -- take sentences (1) and (2) to show that PRO bears regular case in Italian and a Null Case approach should be dispensed with.

- (1) a. (Io) promisi [di PRO essere io/*me il vincitore]
I promised COMPL to-be I / *me the winner
'I guaranteed that the winner would be me'
- b. (Io) ordinai a lui [di PRO essere me/*io nel film]
I ordered to him COMPL to-be me/*I in-the movie
'I asked him to play me in the movie'
- (2) a. (Io) dissi a lui [di PRO essere io nel film]
I told to him COMPL to-be I in-the movie
'I told him that the person in the movie was me'
- b. (Io) dissi a lui [di essere me nel film]
I told to him COMPL to-be me in-the movie
'I told him to play me in the movie'

The authors propose that the case on the pronoun in the embedded clause in (1)-(2) ultimately comes from the Controller (via the mediation of PRO). Hence, in Subject control contexts (1a) the Nominative form of the pronoun *io* surfaces, while in an oblique control context like (1b) the accusative form *me* is used. The authors further show that with a verb like *dire* ('to say') ((2)), which allows for both a subject control and an object control complement, both a NOM and an ACC pronoun are grammatical.

The analysis of (1b), (2b) as Case transmission structures is questionable.

The verb *essere* ('to be') in (1b), (2b) is used transitively with the meaning "to play," "to interpret." The accusative object in fact also surfaces in finite matrix clauses, where no Case transmission can be postulated. ACC is assigned by the verb "*essere*" ('to be').

- (3) Nel prossimo film di Gianni, tu sarai me/*io
In-the next movie of Gianni, you will-be me/*I
'In the next movie by Gianni, you will play me'

The controller in (1b), (2b) is a PP, but the authors “do not discuss whether and how the whole PP *a lui* is assigned dative” (Cecchetto and Oniga 2004: 145, fn. 3) “since it is irrelevant for our purposes” (ibid.). What matters is that “*lui* checks accusative through the preposition *a*” (ibid.). However, if the PP is cliticized, the clitic is dative marked, as shown in (4), but the pronoun in the embedded clause can still only be Accusative marked.

- (4) Io gli ordinai di [PRO essere me/*a me/*essergli nel film]
I to-him ordered COMPL to-be me/ to me/ to be.to-me in-the movie
'I asked him to play me in the movie'

I conclude that the structures in (1b), (2b) cannot be analyzed as Case transmission structures and therefore PRO cannot be taken to be ACC marked in these sentences. Since Nominative is the default Case in Italian, the NOM on the embedded clause pronoun in (1a) and (2a) is expected under both a Case transmission analysis and under a Null Case approach to PRO.

References

Cecchetto, C. and R. Oniga. 2004. A challenge to null Case theory. *Linguistic Inquiry* 35:141–149.

2.

Dorian Roehrs – University of North Texas ***High floating quantifiers: syntactic or ‘delayed’ V2?***

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As is well-known, personal pronouns must precede floating quantifiers in German:

- (1) a. Sie alle kommen.
 they all are coming
 b. * Alle sie kommen.

The grammaticality of (1a) is of particular interest as examples like this, at least on the surface, seem to violate the much-discussed Verb-Second phenomenon in German.

There are basically two analyses: one account (e.g., Giusti 1991) argues that the pronoun moves across the quantifier inside a complex noun phrase ((2a)); the other account (e.g., Boskovic 2004: 723) claims that certain light elements are invisible to the Verb-Second constraint ((2b)). In other words, the first analysis proposes a syntactic and the second a “delayed,” that is, PF account of Verb-Second:

- (2) a. [QP sie_i alle t_i] kommen (V2 in narrow syntax)
 b. [DP sie]_i alle t_i kommen (V2 at PF)

This squib shows that certain, heretofore unnoticed data raise questions about the second type of analysis but not the first.

In (usually) informal discourse, a spatial element can follow certain pronominal elements: *die da* vs. **da die* ‘those there.’ Interestingly, when a floating quantifier is added, there are three grammatical options with different stress pattern:

- (3) a. all(e) DIE da
 all those there
 b. DIE da all*(e)
 c. die ALL*(e) da

While the examples in (3a-b) are not unexpected under certain assumptions, (3c) is surprising as the quantifier is between the pronominal and spatial elements.

There are two arguments that these data should be accepted: first, it is a hallmark of floating quantifiers in German dialects without apocope that the ending on *all* is optional when preceding the nominal but obligatory when following. This is exactly

what one finds in (3). Second, these data are accepted by many speakers and are even attested in writing, as a Google-search has revealed. I will cite only two attested examples for (3c) that involve elements preceding the finite verb:

- (4) a. **Die alle da** nennst Du nichtmal eine Hand voll..?
those all there call you(NOM) not.PRT a handful
b. **die alle da unten** sind jetzt matsch
those all there below are now mush

Considering these data, the first analysis could propose that the entire structure below the quantifier has moved in (3b) but only the pronominal element in (3c). In each case, the verb would be, syntactically, in second position. In contrast, while the second analysis could suggest similar (but longer) movements, the phonological constraint has to be relaxed, such that two or more elements (cf. (4b)) are allowed between the pronominal element and the verb. While this does not disprove the “delayed” V2 analysis, it does beg the question what the exact conditions and upper limit on these intervening elements are.

References:

- Boskovic Zeljko. 2004. Be careful where you float your quantifiers. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 22 (4): 681-742.
Giusti, Giuliana. 1991. The categorial status of quantified nominals. *Linguistische Berichte* 136: 438-454.

3.

Yosuke Sato – *University of Arizona*

Case-stranding nominal ellipsis in Japanese: a preliminary sketch

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This squib documents a new type of nominal ellipsis in certain dialects of Japanese that has not been reported in the literature. I dub it Case-Stranding Nominal Ellipsis (CSNE). The null argument in CSNE does not fit into the generative inventory of empty categories. I propose a tentative direction to take in face of this ellipsis.

CSNE is illustrated in (1d).

- (1) a. A: Hanako-wa kuukoo-ni tuki-masi-ta ka?
Hanako-Top airport-to arrive-Pol-Past Q
'Did Hanako arrive into the airport?'
- b. B: Hai, tuki-masi-ta.
yes arrive-Pol-Past
'Yes, (she) arrived.'
- c. A: Mary-mo tsuki-masi-ta ka?
Mary-also arrive-Pol-Past Q
'Did Mary also arrive (into the airport)?'
- d. B: [_{NP} e]-ga mada tuki-mase-n.
-Nom yet arrive-Pol-Neg
'(She) has not arrived yet.'

In (1d), the null NP, intended to refer back to *Mary*, is elided but with the nominative Case overly realized. This type of ellipsis has not been reported in any other language. CSNE is also found in (in)direct objects and objects of prepositions, though space limitations prevent inclusion of the relevant data. My survey shows that this ellipsis has characteristics in (2a-d).

- (2) a. obligatory pitch accent on the stranded case marker
b. focus/topic interpretation on the elided NP
c. no multiple CSNEs
d. matrix clause phenomenon

What is the identity of the null argument as in (1d)? The elided NP cannot be PRO because this formative can only be found in control structures which (1d) does not involve. It also cannot be a trace of A or A'-movement because there is no movement involved in (1d). It also cannot be *pro* because it has been commonly assumed in the literature on null subject languages like Italian (Rizzi 1982) that this null element is

internally Case-marked. CSNE is different from Italian *pro*-subjects because the Case is overtly stranded. Therefore, the elided NP does not fit into the generative inventory of empty categories.

I suggest here a possible analysis of CSNE, though detailed investigation of this ellipsis pattern is left as an important task to be undertaken. Recent work on Japanese ellipsis (Oku 1998) shows that this language allows reconstruction of the elided element by LF copying. This analysis allows the case to be stranded as the LF copying process permits reconstruction of the NP without accompanying case. As for the properties in (2a-d), I believe that they are related to one another. Specifically, the properties in (2b-d) result from that in (2a). Pitch accent feeds focus/topic interpretation ((2b)). Though multiple focus constructions are fine in Japanese, the same phonetic cue singles out the most salient focused/topic NP, blocking multiple occurrences of CSNE ((2c)). As reported in Hungarian (Kiss 1998), focus/topic interpretation is sensitive to the surface matrix position of the elided NP (2d).

I have documented CSNL here in a preliminary form because careful examination of this ellipsis pattern necessitates reconsideration of the standard inventory of empty categories and provides a new avenue of research toward identifying the possible type of null elements in natural language.

References

- Kiss, K. E. 1998. Identificational focus versus information focus. *Language* 74: 245-268.
Oku, S. 1998. *A theory of selection and reconstruction in the minimalist perspective*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, Storrs.
Rizzi, L. 1982. *Issues in Italian syntax*. Dordrecht: Foris.

4.

Michael Wagner – *Cornell University*

And, or, and ∅

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In English coordinate structures with more than two coordinates, either all coordinators can be pronounced or all but the last coordinator can be dropped:

- (1) a. Weapons, (and) drugs, and money were found at the sight of the crime.
- b. Weapons, (or) drugs, or money were found at the sight of the crime.

Dropping a coordinator is illicit if the coordinators are not identical in meaning, or if the structure is not a ‘flat’ coordinate structure with an associative interpretation and prosodic boundaries of equal strength separating the coordinates (cf. Lasersohn 1995, Wagner 2005, Winter 2007):

- (2) a. John or Mary and Sue ≠ John, Mary and Sue.
- b. Both John *(and) Mary and Sue.

A common assumption in work on coordination is that the dropped coordinators correspond to the overt coordinators ‘and’ and ‘or’ respectively. Zoerner (1995, 27-29), e.g., analyzes the additional instances of ‘and’ and ‘or’ as identical copies of the head, which are pronounced only if optional overt head movement through the coordinate structure takes place. The interaction of negation with coordinator-drop, however, shows that this is not so. In the case of ‘and,’ dropping the first instance of the coordinator is possible, as would be expected:

- (3) No weapons, (and) no drugs, and no money were found there.

The relative scope between the coordinator and negation is not affected:

- (4) $(\neg a) \wedge (\neg b) \wedge (\neg c)$

In the case of ‘or,’ however, dropping a coordinator and using a bare coordinate changes the syntactic structure in a fundamental way, e.g., it is impossible to license an NPI from a coordinate including a negative quantifier into a bare coordinate:

- (5) a. No weapons or any drugs or any money were found there.
- b. * No weapons, any drugs, or any money were found there.

(According to a reviewer, some speakers prefer the use of the coordinate ‘nor’ in (5a). Instances of the pattern in (5a) are readily found in text corpora and seem to be fairly widespread, and at least the native speakers I consulted for this paper found the examples reported here entirely acceptable.)

The difference between (5a) and (5b) is not due to a difference in the c-command relation between the first two coordinates, which remains unaffected:

- (6) Until an award is paid, no participant, (or) his beneficiary or any other person shall have any vested right or interest in such award.

The difference resides in the interpretation of the first coordinator.

A coordination with a single coordinator similar to (5b) can express the meaning of (5a) if the negative quantifier is repeated in the second coordinate, as in (7b). The version with two overt coordinators (7a), however, means something entirely different:

- (7) a. \neq (5a): No weapons, or no drugs or any money were found there.
b. = (5a): No weapons, no drugs, or any money were found there.

The meaning of (7b) is identical to that of (8), where the first coordinator is ‘and’:

- (8) No weapons, and no drugs or any money were found there.

The unpronounced coordinator in (7b) behaves just as if it was ‘and,’ taking wide scope over negation, as illustrated in (9a). It is not interpreted as low scope ‘or,’ (illustrated in (9b)), as would be expected if it was a deleted instance of underlying ‘or’:

- (9) a. $(\neg a) \wedge \neg (b \vee c)$
b. $\neg (a \vee b \vee c)$

One property that distinguishes (7b) from (8) is that the former requires a ‘flat’ prosody, while the latter seems to require an articulated prosody, with a stronger boundary after the first coordinate, similar to the examples in (2).

The observed facts suggest that ‘Ø’ cannot serve as an elided version of ‘or’, and the interaction of coordinator drop and scope provides a puzzle for current theories of coordination.

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