snippets

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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.