snippets

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The interaction of Right Node Raising and extraposition

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Right Node Raising (RNR) is subject to a strict right edge constraint: the shared material must be right-peripheral in each conjunct. (1) seems to circumvent this constraint but isn't a genuine violation. In such sentences, as Wilder (1997) noticed, Heavy NP Shift feeds RNR.

(1) John bought _ YESterday _ and Mary sold _ toDAY *the complete works of Charles Dickens*.

What has gone unnoticed – as far as we know – is that extraposition *in general* can feed RNR. Moreover, the reverse is also possible. We will illustrate this with Dutch, which is verb-final (modulo V2 in main clauses), so that extraposition can be conveniently investigated.

The examples in (2) and (3) show that extraposition can feed RNR. In both cases, the italicized constituent has been extraposed across the participle in both conjoined clauses, after which it can be right node raised without violating the right edge constraint.

(2) Joop   heeft   iemand   _   beWONderd   _   ,   maar   Jaap   heft
Joop   has   someone   admired   but   Jaap   has
iemand   _   verGUISD *die vorig   jaar   meer   dan twee ton*
someone   maligned   who last   year   more   than 200,00
verdiend   had.
earned   had
'Joop admired someone who earned more than 200,000 last year, but Jaap maligned someone who earned more than 200,000 last year.'

(3) Joop   heft MINder _ geKOCHT _ , maar   MEER _ geHUURD *dan   hij*
Joop   has less   bought   but   more   rented   than he
aanvankelijk wilde.
initially   wanted
'Joop bought less than he initially wanted, but rented more than he
initially wanted.'

To see that RNR can also feed extraposition, consider (4), which contains a relative clause belonging to two conjoined NPs:

(4) Het verbaast me dat Mieke [niet alleen de LElijke MAN _ , maar ook de
it surprises me that Mieke not only the ugly man but also the
KNAPpe JONGen _] verafschuwt *die nog geen vriendin heeft*/*hebben*
handsome boy detests who yet no girlfriend has/*have
'It surprises me that Mieke detests not only the ugly man who does not have a
girlfriend, but also the handsome boy who does not have a girlfriend.'

(4) is derived from a structure with two relative clauses. Its interpretation
suggests this, and moreover, since the relative clause's verb (*heeft*) is singular, we can
rule out an analysis with a single relative clause and an antecedent (NP + NP). We
claim that (4) is derived as follows: first, the relative clauses (which are at the right
edge of their respective NPs) are right node raised within the nominal coordination
phrase, forming *not only the UGly MAN _ but also the HANDsome BOY who does not
have a girlfriend*; then, the one visible relative clause is extraposed across *verafschuwt*.
Similarly, in (5), N + RC (*boek over de golfoorlog*) is right node raised, and after that,
the relative clause is extraposed across *vergeleken*. (One might wonder if an
alternative analysis of (4) is possible involving VP coordination, and non-constituent
RNR (of V + RC) after extraposition of the relative clause within each VP. Note that
this kind of alternative is not available for (5).)

(5) Mieke heft in haar essay het ENE met het ANdere *boek* vergeleken *over*
Mieke has in her essay the one with the other book compared about
de golfoorlog.
the gulf.war
'In her essay, Mieke compared one book about the gulf war with the other
book about the gulf war.'

Thus, extraposition can feed RNR, and vice versa. These facts are problematic
for a rightward movement account if, as Sabel (2002) argues, successive-cyclic
adjunction is impossible. Such an account would have to involve successive rightward
movement via a right-adjoined position. Note in this connection that (6) shows that
extraposition, even if it is fed by RNR (which is known to be island-insensitive), is
subject to the Right Roof Constraint (that is, it cannot cross a finite clause boundary).
If successive-cyclic movement to the right were possible, we would not expect such
limitations. The facts we discussed here are also problematic, we believe, for a base-
generation account in terms of right-adjunction, since the intended meaning cannot be
read off the syntactic structure. However, the interaction of extraposition and RNR can
be explained straightforwardly if RNR is analyzed in terms of multidominance
(McCawley 1982, and recently Kluck 2007), and extraposition in terms of specifying
coordination (De Vries 2002, to appear).

(6) [Dat Joop het artikel van de MAN _ en het boek van de VROUW _ verbrand heeft
that Joop the article of the man and the book of the woman burnt has
(die gisteren op tv was)] vind ik vreemd. *(*die gisteren op tv was)*
who yesterday on tv was find I strange who yesterday on tv was
'I find it very strange that Joop burnt the article of the man and the book of the
woman who was on tv yesterday.'

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