snippets

Contents

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The ban on rightward P-stranding is a global constraint

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English does not permit Heavy DP Shift (HDPS) of the complement of a preposition:

(1) * I talked to t_1 yesterday [someone I'd met before]$_1$.

This snippet will present evidence that there is a dialect of English in which this constraint cannot be stated in a "Markovian" fashion. Instead, it must be stated as a "global" constraint along the following lines:

(2) Heavy DP Shift may not apply to a DP which has been — at any stage in the derivation — the complement of a preposition.

Evidence for (2) comes from ECM subjects, which marginally undergo HDPS:

(3) ? I expect t_1 to do well [every boy who enters the competition]$_1$.

The complement of P can be promoted to ECM subject position via pseudopassivization:

(4) I believe [every prisoner who tried to escape]$_1$ to have been shot at t_1.

Surprisingly, however, in the dialect of English under consideration, such derived ECM subjects cannot subsequently undergo HDPS ((5)). In this respect they contrast with the derived ECM subjects of ordinary passives ((6)):

(5) a. * I believe t_1' to have been shot at t_1 by snipers [every prisoner who tried to escape]$_1$.
     b. * I'll have t_1' shot at t_1 by snipers [any prisoner who tries to escape]$_1$.

(6) a. ? I believe t_1' to have been shot at t_1 by snipers [every prisoner who tried to escape]$_1$.
     b. ? I'll have t_1' shot t_1 by snipers [any prisoner who tries to escape]$_1$.

This cannot be because A-movement in general fails to feed HDPS, as (7)-(8) demonstrate:

(7) * I gave t_1 free books [every student in the class]$_1$.

(8) ? I expect t_1' to be given t_1 free books [every student in the class]$_1$.

Here we see that although the first object in the English double object construction cannot undergo HDPS, promotion of the first object to ECM subject position renders subsequent HDPS much more acceptable in (8) than it is in (7). Thus, it is only the ban on rightward P-stranding which cannot be obviated via A-movement. Consequently, (1) cannot be unified with (7) (as proposed e.g. by Kayne (1984 : 200), who argues that the first object in (7) is the complement of a null P).

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