snippets

Issue 3   **January 2001**

Contents

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.

The best examples of what we have in mind are the earliest *Linguistic Inquiry* squibs. Some of these 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.

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:

- a. point out an empirical phenomenon that goes against accepted generalizations or that shows that some aspect of a theory is problematic;
- b. point out unnoticed minimal pairs that fall outside the scope of any existing theory;
- c. point out an empirical phenomenon that confirms the predictions of a theory in an area where the theory has not been tested;
- d. explicitly describe technical inconsistencies in a theory or in a set of frequently adopted assumptions;
- e. explicitly describe unnoticed assumptions that underlie a theory or assumptions that a theory needs to be supplemented with in order to make desired predictions;
- f. propose an idea for a pilot experiment in language acquisition or language processing that directly bears on theoretical issues;
- g. call attention to little-known or forgotten literature in which issues of immediate relevance are discussed.

3. Submission details.

We will solicit submissions issue by issue. A new submission deadline will be announced for each issue, and the submissions that we receive we will consider only for that issue. The submissions that we accept will be printed in the upcoming issue; none will be scheduled for a later issue.

It is important to us that readers will be able to copy the newsletter and freely distribute its content. 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.

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.**

We will accept electronic submissions at the address

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and paper submissions at the address

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We strongly encourage electronic submissions. 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.

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 submission, **we will only provide a yes/no response to the submitter.** We will not request revisions (barring exceptional cases). Space constraints mean that we may reject a large proportion of submissions, but with this in mind we allow resubmission (once) of the same piece.

5. Distribution.

Our initial plan is to publish 2 or 3 times a year, with a maximum of 10 pages for each edition. Our goal in publishing the newsletter is to provide a service to the linguistics community, and *Snippets* will therefore be **free of charge**. There will be a limited number of copies, which we will send to institutions on request. Individuals who wish to take advantage of the newsletter should therefore ask their institutions to request a copy, and make their own copy of the institution's version. Individuals who are not affiliated with an institution and do not have access to the web version of the newsletter can request copies by writing to us at the postal address above. Further questions should be addressed to snippets@unimi.it.

1.

Tanmoy Bhattacharya
The puzzle of Bangla Comp-internal clauses

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Although Bangla is "SOV", the position of the complement clause and the complementiser is exactly as in English:

(1) John knew [$_{XP}$ **that** mother come-will]

However, if the whole of the complement clause is moved to a pre-verbal position, then curiously the Comp can no longer remain in the initial position of XP:

(2) John [$_{XP}$ mother **that** come-will] knew

As far as I can tell, this is not a common occurrence in the languages of the world. Two possible merely descriptive, therefore naïve, views are as in A and B:

A. Once something within the XP is re-arranged, the clause as a whole must also move.

This is supported by the simple fact that the complement clause cannot remain in-situ (here, post-verbal) if the Comp is not initial:

(3) *John knew [$_{XP}$ mother **that** come-will]

B．Once the clause moves, the Comp cannot remain in the initial position.

This is supported by the following where a Comp-initial complement is not acceptable in the pre-verbal position:

(4) *John [$_{XP}$ **that** mother come-will] knew

Although, A and B seem comparable there is a real difference. Given that derivation proceeds by phases (Chomsky 1998:20 and Chomsky, 1999:10) or in a multiple spell out fashion, it is unlikely that after the complement CP has been spelled out and moved, its internal structure can be tampered with, suggesting that option A (as shown in (5a)) is the favored option.

(5)a   b.
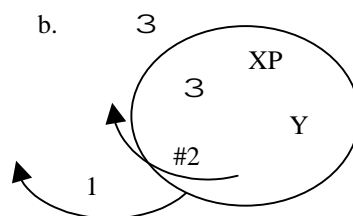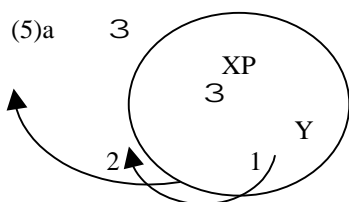
The question remains of how the exactly the geometry of the construction is derived. In fact, a combination of available syntactic operations allow its derivation. If *Tuck-in* (as in (6), derived from Richards 1997) is enforced on Remnant Movement, the combination will have the desired effect of inverting the precedence relation between, say, a and b in (7).

(6) *Tuck-in*

Later XP movement target inner specifiers, i.e., they tuck in.

(7)

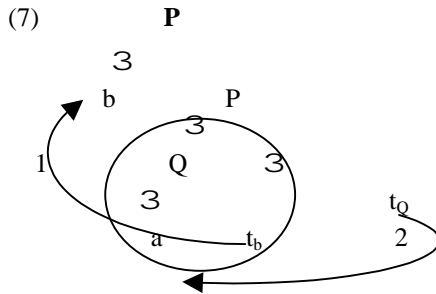At the same time, this derivation has a curious property. *Tuck-in* as originally conceived by Richards preserves the c-command relation between the elements involved. By contrast, in this derivation, *Tuck-in* achieves a very different effect.

References

Chomsky, N. (1998). Minimalist Inquiries: The Framework. Cambridge, MA: MIT, ms.
Chomsky, N. (1999). Derivation by Phase. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics 18.
Richards, N. (1997). What Moves Where When in Which Language? Cambridge, MA: MIT dissertation.

2.

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Against the Two Types of Tough Gaps: a Response to Jacobson

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In issue 1 of *Snippets*, Pauline Jacobson notes the difficulty in creating a deeply embedded gap in *tough* sentences. She speculates that there are two distinct types of *tough* gaps or gap licensing mechanisms, depending on whether the *tough* construction is bounded or unbounded. When the *tough* construction is unbounded, she writes, it creates a WH-island, and vice versa. She offers the following examples:

(1) a. Which violin is that sonata easy to play on? (Chomsky 1977)
      b. *Which violin is that sonata hard to imagine anyone playing on?

Jacobson conjectures that the difference in grammaticality shown in (1) is due to the distinction between a local *tough* gap and a non-local *tough* gap. When the *tough* gap comes under more than one embedded VP, the *tough* infinitive behaves like a WH-island, as shown by (1b).

There are a couple of problems with Jacobson's speculation. First, she omits a parallel ungrammatical example to (1a), illustrated in (2).

(2)   *Which sonata is this violin easy to play on?

Like (1a), (2) shows a local *tough* gap, but unlike (1a), it is ungrammatical.

Second, if Jacobson's speculation is correct, then (3a), like (3b), should also be ungrammatical, since the *tough* gap occurs under more than one embedded VP.

(3) a. Who was John hard for us to persuade to marry?
      b. *Who was John hard for us to expect to marry?

Rather, the difference in grammaticality in (3) seems to be related to the fact that *tough* gaps can occur in the complements of 'Control' verbs but not in those of 'Raising-to-Object' verbs. It seems necessary, then, to distinguish between the kinds of verbs from which an NP is *tough*-'moved': 'Raising-to-Object' verbs vs. 'Object-Control' verbs.

Furthermore, in parallel cases with more appropriate contextual information, the sentence becomes correct. Compare (1b) with (4).

(4)   What topic might Mary be hard to imagine anyone talking to about since she is conservative?

If the ungrammaticality of (1b) is due only to a syntactic structure, there is hardly any reason that (4) should sound more natural than (1b).

Third, Jacobson argues that the distinction between the unbounded vs. bounded gaps is found in the *too/enough* construction. Consider (5).

(5)   a.   This topic is too disgusting to talk to Mary about.
            b.   ?*This topic is too disgusting to imagine John talking to Mary about.

Even in cases like (5b), changing the embedded verb under *too* to a Control-type verb like *ask* would improve their acceptability. See (6).

(6)   This topic is too disgusting to ask John to talk to Mary about.

Thus, even though Jacobson's distinction is true in her provided examples, it is ad hoc because it cannot be found in constructions other than the *too/enough* construction.

In conclusion, contrary to Jacobson's argument, more complex aspects of lexical and pragmatic information interplay to affect judgements of acceptability in the unbounded dependencies of the *tough* construction.

References
Chomsky, N. (1977). "On Wh-movement", in P. Culicover, T. Wasow, and A. Akmajian eds., Formal Syntax, Academic Press.
Jacobson, P. (1992). "The Lexical Entailment Theory of Control and the *Tough* Construction", in I. Sag and A. Szabolcsi eds., Lexical Matters, CSLI publications.
Jacobson, P. (2000)."Extraction out of the tough", Snippets 1, 7-8.

3.

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WH- and Focus are not the same projection

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Wh- and focus movement have been argued to target the same projection across a range of languages (Italian (Rizzi 1995); Hungarian (Horvath 1986, Kiss 1988, 1994, Kenesei 1993); Standard Arabic (Ouhalla 1997)). However, data from San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec (SLQZ), an Otomanguean language of Mexico, suggests they are distinct operations involving two separate, but interacting, projections: FocP and WhP.

SLQZ superficially appears to pattern with other languages with focus movement. It is primarily VSO, but both wh-words and focused constituents appear immediately preverbally (1-2). In most cases, focus-fronting blocks wh-movement (3-4):

(1) Gye'eihlly y-tàa'az Li'eb
     Mike   irr-beat Felipe
     "MIKE will beat Felipe/Felipe will beat MIKE"

(2) Tu   y-tàa'az Li'eb?
     who irr-beat Felipe
     "Who will Felipe beat/Who will beat Felipe?"

(3) Xi   r-ralloh   lìu' [g-a'u Gye'eihlly t] ?
     what hab-think 2s   irr-eat Mike
     "What do you think Mike will eat?"

(4) *Xi r-ralloh   lìu' [Gye'eihlly g-a'u t] ?
     what hab-think 2s   Mike   irr-eat
     "What do you think MIKE will eat?"

There are contexts in SLQZ, however, where wh-movement is allowed, but focus movement is not. *A'ti'* negation is such as case: the negative marker *a'ti* is used to negate nonverbal predicates, which, like focused constituents, appear preverbally:

(5) Studya'aann n-àa   Gye'eihlly
     Student   neut-be Mike
     "Mike is a student"

(6) A'ti' studya'aann-dya'   n-àa   Gye'eihlly
     neg student   neg   neut-be Mike
     "Mike isn't a student"

A'ti' negation structures disallow focus-fronted constituents, but allow wh-fronting:

(7)   *Gye'eihlly a'ti' studya'aann-dya'   n-àa

     Mike   neg student   neg neut-be
     "MIKE isn't a student"

(8)   Tu a'ti' studya'aann-dya' n-àa?
     who neg student   neg neut-be
     "Who isn't a student?"

A second case involves sentences whose verbs are marked with the Definite aspect marker. The Definite marker is used to describe future events with emphatic assertive force:

(9)   S-tòo'oh Gye'eihlly ca'rr.
     def-sell   Mike   car
     "Mike will *definitely* sell the car"

Sentences with Definite-marked verbs disallow focused arguments, but allow wh-movement:

(10)   *Gye'eihlly s-tòo'oh ca'rr
      Mike   def-sell car
      "MIKE will definitely sell the car"

(11)   Tu s-tòo'oh ca'rr?
      who def-sell   car
      "Who will definitely sell the car?"

In Lee 1999, I argued that Definite verbs force TPs they head to raise to Focus: this provides their emphatic assertive force and accounts for their incompatibility with other focused constituents.

Since sentences with Definite-marked verbs raise to FocP themselves, there would be no landing spot for fronted wh-words if both wh- and focus movement targeted the same position. Likewise, *a'ti* negation targets constituents in focus position and thus blocks additional focus-fronting, yet permits wh-movement. The only option is to posit separate positions for focus and wh-movement, while seeking independent motivation for the cooccurrence restrictions in (1-4).

References

Horvath, J. (1986). FOCUS in the Theory of Grammar and the Syntax of Hungarian, Foris.

Kenesei, I. (1993). "A Minimalist Program for the Syntax of Focus." Ms., Department of English, University of Szeged.

Kiss, È. (1988). Configurationality in Hungarian, Studies in Natural Language and Linguistic Theory, Reidel.

Kiss, E. (1994). "Sentence Structure and Word Order", in Syntax and Semantics, Volume 27: The Syntactic Structure of Hungarian, Academic Press.

Lee, F. (1999). Antisymmetry and the Syntax of San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec, Doctoral dissertation, UCLA.

Ouhalla, J. (1997). "Remarks on Focus in Standard Arabic", in Mushira Eid and Robert R. eds, Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics X, John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Rizzi, L. 1995. "The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery", Ms.

4.

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(Only) Some crossover effects repaired

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Postal (1993: 549) observes that a properly placed *even*, *only*, or *own* can nullify <u>weak crossover effects</u>. He provides the data in (1) (his (32)).

(1) a. *the lawyer$_1$ who$_1$ his$_1$ clients hate t$_1$
    b. the lawyer$_1$ who$_1$ even his$_1$ clients hate t$_1$
    c. the lawyer$_1$ who$_1$ only his$_1$ older clients hate t$_1$
    d. the lawyer$_1$ who$_1$ his$_1$ own clients hate t$_1$

Call *even*, *only*, and *own* <u>repair particles</u>, and the effect they have of broadening the coreference possibilities in cases like (1b-d) the <u>repair phenomenon</u>. Importantly, although the repair particles are also <u>focus particles</u>, the repair phenomenon cannot be equated with focus: focusing either *clients* or *his* in (1a), in an attempt to reproduce the readings in (1b-d), is not sufficient to repair the crossover violation.

    It seems not to have been previously observed that repair particles can also remove the <u>secondary strong crossover effect</u>, exemplified in (2a); see (2b-c).

(2) a. *the artist$_1$ [whose$_1$ work]$_2$ {she$_1$ / SHE$_1$} {appreciates / criticizes} t$_2$.
    b. the artist$_1$ [whose$_1$ work]$_2$ only she$_1$ appreciates t$_2$.
    c. the artist$_1$ [whose$_1$ work]$_2$ even she$_1$ criticizes t$_2$.

In (2a,b), *only* and *even* have the natural effect of focusing their crossed pronouns. But a comparable focus on *she* in (2a) does not affect the status of the sentence, as indicated.

    In addition to *only* and *even*, a well-placed <u>emphatic reflexive</u> can repair the secondary strong crossover effect:

(3) a. the artist$_1$ [whose$_1$ work]$_2$ she$_1$ herself has criticized t$_2$.
    b. the artist$_1$ [whose$_1$ work]$_2$ she$_1$ has herself criticized t$_2$.

Emphatic reflexives are not weak crossover repair particles because they can't associate with genitive pronouns: e.g., *her$_1$ herself('s) work*, *her$_1$ work herself*. Similarly, the repair particle *own*, seen in action again weak crossover in (1d), isn't a possible secondary strong crossover effect repairer because it is lexically restricted from modifying non-genitive pronouns.

    Despite their muscle in the above cases, the repair particles are powerless against the <u>strong crossover effect</u>, (4a), as seen in (4b,c).

(4) a. *the artist$_1$ who$_1$ (you reported that) she$_1$ has criticized t$_1$

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b. *the artist$_1$ who$_1$ (you reported that) only she$_1$ (herself) has criticized t$_1$

c. *the artist$_1$ who$_1$ (you reported that) even she$_1$ has (herself) has criticized t$_1$

Although (4b,c) might constitute slight improvements over (4a), the sentences remain ungrammatical. A slight easing of the strong crossover effect is not surprising, given these particles' dramatic effects in the configurations of (1) - (3).

Postal (1993: §4) discusses cases of apparent weak crossover like (5), in which the crossed pronoun is not a genitive, but is embedded inside a DP (though not embedded in a clausal complement to that DP).

(5) *the artist$_1$ who$_1$ you said that criticism of her$_1$ would upset t$_1$

Such cases seem not to be repairable using the above strategies, but testing this is tricky, since for some speakers the repair particles cannot appear adjacent to the relevant pronoun. But they can appear outside the larger nominal in which the pronoun is embedded, with focus on the pronoun. Sadly, though, such focusing doesn't help the situation; see (6).

(6) a. *the artist$_1$ who$_1$ (you reported that) only criticism of HER$_1$ would upset t$_1$

b. *the artist$_1$ who$_1$ (you reported that) even criticism of HER$_1$ would fail to bother t$_1$

Even speakers who allow the repair particles to get in next to the "crossed" pronoun do not report a repair in this configuration:

(7) a. *the artist$_1$ who$_1$ you said that criticism of only him$_1$ would upset t$_1$

b. *the artist$_1$ who$_1$ you said that criticism of even him$_1$ would fail to bother t$_1$

A restriction blocking emphatic reflexives and *own* from associating with accusative pronouns means that these repair particles are non-starters in cases like (5) - (7).

The behavior of the repair particles is somewhat surprising, given the usual crossover nomenclature. With respect to this phenomenon, weak crossover and secondary strong crossover pattern together in being repairable, whereas strong crossover and the variety of weak crossover in (5) - (7) are alike in their resistance to repair. Although the weak/strong division is usually made on the basis of the embeddedness of the crossed pronoun, the repair particles seem to be insensitive to this distinction.

References
Postal, P. (1993). "Remarks on Weak Crossover", Linguistic Inquiry 24: 539-556.

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5.

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Back to the future

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German and English show a peculiar contrast concerning the distribution of temporal modifiers. In German (but not in English), modifiers that express an inherent *before* or *after* relation cannot occur in constructions that express the opposite temporal relation, even in cases that would result in a well-formed temporal interpretation. If an embedded clause receives a past future interpretation (i.e., an interpretation where the time of the embedded event is understood to be after the time of the matrix event but before the utterance time), past modifiers are impossible (cf. (1); the same appears to be the case in French in examples such as (1b) which was pointed out to me by Philippe Schlenker). The sentence in (1a) can be saved (in at least certain dialects) by changing *gestern* 'yesterday' to *so wie gestern* 'such as yesterday'.

(1) a. *Hans   hatte schon   vor einem Monat   angekündigt
         John   had   already a month ago   announced
         dass er gestern / vor zwei Tagen heiraten werde/würde/wird
         that he yesterday / two days ago get-married will-COND/would/will

      'John had already announced a month ago that he would get married yesterday/two days ago'

    b . *1986   hat   Hans   gedacht
         1986   has   John   thought
         dass er vor drei Jahren in Pension gehen werde/würde/wird
         that he three years ago   retire   will-COND/would/will

      'In 1986, John thought that he would retire three years ago'

   Note that this problem cannot be reduced to a tense clash in these examples or a special property of indexicals. As is evident from the well-formed paraphrases in (1), past modifiers are possible in the same past future contexts in English. Furthermore, the examples in (2)a,b demonstrate that past future interpretations are in principle possible in German, however, only if the sentence does not involve a past modifier (future oriented modifiers are licit). Finally, in (2)c, we find that future indexicals can be used in clauses that are dependent on a past event. The deictic adverbial tomorrow in (2)c can only be interpreted as 'the day after today' and not as

'the day after the announcement was made'. This example thus shows that indexicals in principle can access the utterance time in embedded contexts in German.

(2) a. *Hans   hatte   vor einem Monat   angekündigt*
         John   had   a month ago   announced
         dass er eine Woche später heiraten   werde/ würde/?wird
         that   he a week later   get-married will-COND/would/?will
         'John had announced a month ago that he would get married a week later'

    b.   *1986   hat   Hans   gedacht/gesagt/bschlossen*
         1986   has   John   thought/said/decided
         dass er 1997 in Pension gehen   werde/würde/?wird
         that he 1997   retire   will-COND/would/?will
         'In 1986, John thought/said/decided that he would retire in 1997'

    c.   *Hans   hatte   vor einem Monat   angekündigt*
         John   had   a month ago   announced
         dass er morgen   heiraten   werde/würde/?wird
         that he   tomorrow get-married   will-COND/would/?will
         'John had announced a month ago that he would get married tomorrow'