

snippets

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Extraction of R-pronouns via an intermediate position within the prepositional domain

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In this snippet, I argue that extraction of R-pronouns proceeds via an intermediate position within the prepositional domain in Danish. An R-pronoun, a term coined by van Riemsdijk (1978), is a locative element that precedes a preposition or leaves it stranded (but see Noonan 2017). In Danish, such R-pronouns are *her* ‘here’, *der* ‘there’, and *hvor* ‘where’.

In Danish, there is a class of (near-)synonymous prepositions. These prepositions can be divided into *i*-prepositions (because they contain an *i*) and non-*i*-prepositions. The *i*-prepositions take R-pronouns; the non-*i*-prepositions do not:

- | | | |
|-----|---|------------------------------|
| (1) | der- i -mellem
there-in-between | *der-mellem
there-between |
| (2) | der- i -gennem
there-in-through | *der-gennem
there-through |
| (3) | der- i -mod
there-in-towards | *der-mod
there-towards |
| (4) | der- i -blandt
there-in-among | *der-blandt
there-among |

It remains unclear whether *i*-prepositions are segmentable into *i* ‘in’ + another preposition. Both *i*-prepositions and non-*i*-prepositions can be introduced by a directional element, little *p*, which I assume is a functional head above the lexical PP (e.g. Koopman 2000 and van Riemsdijk 1990). *p ned* ‘down’, for instance, can introduce a PP (5), but not a nominal (6):

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| (5) | Vi kørte ned
we drove down | } | mellem / i-mellem træer-ne. |
| | | | between / in-between trees-the |
| | | | gennem / i-gennem skov-en. |
| | | | through / in-through forest-the |
| (6) | *Vi kørte ned
we drove down | } | mod / i-mod træer-ne. |
| | | | toward / in-toward trees-the |
| | | | blandt / i-blandt træer-ne. |
| | | | among / in-among trees-the |

If *p* does not introduce a PP, it may independently take an R-pronoun, see (7). If *p* does introduce

a PP, an R-pronoun can only appear if selected by the preposition, see (8) versus (9):

- (7) der-ned/ud/op ...
 there-down/out/up
- (8) *Vi kørte der-ned mod / gennem / blandt / mellem.
 we drove there-down toward / through / among / between
 ‘We drove down toward/through it/there.’
 ‘We drove down among/between them.’
- (9) Vi kørte der-ned i-mod / i-gennem / i-blandt / i-mellem.
 we drove there-down in-toward / in-through / in-among / in-between
 ‘We drove down toward/through it/there.’
 ‘We drove down among/between them.’

Since non-*i*-prepositions do not take R-pronouns, see (1-4), and since *p* (for some reason) does not take an R-pronoun, no R-pronoun can appear in (8). The examples in (8) are thus ungrammatical.

Crucially, *i*-prepositions do take R-pronouns—see (1-4)—and an R-pronoun can in fact be generated and appear to the left of *p*, see (9).

It is therefore plausible that the R-pronoun is generated as the sister of the *i*-preposition *igennem* — we need not decide on linear ordering here — and subsequently moves to the left of *p ned*, as illustrated in (10).

- (10) \downarrow
 der_i ned [t_i i-gennem]
 there down in-through

Since the R-pronoun can be topicalized with *ned* and *igennem*, they form a constituent, which is most likely a prepositional constituent:

- (11) \downarrow
 [Der-ned-i-gennem]_i kørte vi t_i.
 there-down-in-through drove we

Thus, the R-pronoun undergoes movement within the prepositional domain. Furthermore, the R-pronoun can leave the prepositional domain altogether:

- (12) [Der] kørte vi ned i-gennem.
 there drove we down in-between

The facts above suggest that R-pronouns move via a position within the prepositional domain in a bona fide P-stranding language like Danish. This is important since it is conceivable that extraction in such languages does not proceed via an intermediate position (cf. Abels 2003).

Note that Koopman (2000) makes a similar argument for intermediate movement of R-pronouns in Dutch, which, however, is not a bona fide P-stranding language. Under the null hypothesis that P-stranding patterns alike cross-linguistically, we can predict more generally that P-stranding does involve such movement. Given the data here from Danish, we now have some support for this prediction. That this would be the case, though, is not necessarily evident at first glance. To see this, first consider an alternative view, according to which anti-locality blocks such movement of the complement of a P-head (cf. Abels 2003). Under such a view, P-stranding languages result

from the possibility of (perhaps non-successive-cyclic) extraction from the prepositional domain (i.e. without movement via this intermediate position). Non-P-stranding languages, then, would be those that do not allow for this type of extraction. When it comes to Dutch, then, which does not generally allow P-stranding, but does allow it with R-pronouns, we might suppose that the intermediate movement discussed in Koopman is some exceptional property of R-pronouns, but that it does not extend more generally to all cases of P-stranding (cf. Abels). Returning now to Danish, which does generally allow P-stranding, under the null hypothesis that all P-stranding in a language behaves similarly, we have evidence against this alternative view. That is, on the basis of the R-pronoun movement documented here in Danish, we have some support for P-stranding resulting in general via movement internal to the prepositional domain. It should be noted, however, that an alternative hypothesis still exists, namely that all R-pronouns are exceptional in undergoing such intermediate movement, such that Dutch and Danish (and perhaps all P-stranding languages) behave similarly in not generally allowing such movement.

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