

'Presuppositional Islands'

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Data

This talk presents an analysis of the observation that presuppositional¹ expressions (e.g. complements of factive verbs (e.g. *regret*, *realize*...)) block different dependencies (e. g. filler-gap or antecedent-trace dependencies (e.g.(1)) Operator-variable dependencies, e.g. (2a and 3b), (universal) quantifier-indefinite dependencies (e.g. 2b)).

Theoretical background

A pragmatic analysis according to which a gap is ruled out from constructions with a backgrounded or presuppositional property² (Ambridge & Goldberg 2008) cannot explain syntactic differences (e.g. 4 and 5) and the data in (6). However, previous syntactic analyses are very controversial. Müller & Sternefeld 1995 assume that a factive complement CP has an NP shell (see 7). Wh-extraction in (1b) is ruled out for the same reason as (1a). This syntactic analysis goes hand in hand with the semantic analysis of factive complements proposed by Kiparsky & Kiparsky 1970. Contrary to Müller & Sternefeld 1995, de Cuba 2006 assumes less structure for factive complements than for bridge-verbs (e.g. *believe*) (in 8).

Proposal

I agree with Ambridge & Goldberg 2008 in that the difference between presuppositional and non-presuppositional complements is not a matter of more or less structure but a matter of a semantic or pragmatic property.³ However, I disagree with Ambridge & Goldberg 2008 simply because not all factive complements are islands (4a) and not every gap or every wh-element behaves alike (see 5 and 6).

I follow partially Rizzi's (1990) Relativized Minimality, RM.⁴ However, the island property is argued to be coded by means of a feature, say [FACT], which passes its property on to the finite complement and interacts with c-commanded dependent categories (see 9). This analysis will be corroborated by cross-linguistic data of strongly presuppositional finite complements in different constructions (wh-clefts, wh-exclamatives, ...).

- (1) a. *Who did she realize the fact that he saw?
b. ??Who did she realize that he saw?

(Ambridge & Goldberg 2008)

¹ Presuppositions can be defined in terms of Stalnaker's (1978) *common ground*: "the set of propositions mutually held as true, for purposes of the conversation, by the participants in a conversation at a given time" (Portner & Zanuttini 2003:51).

² "§ Backgrounded constituents may not serve as gaps in filler-gap constructions. (Backgrounded constructions are islands: BCI)" (Ambridge & Goldberg 2008).

³ It depends on how you define presupposition.

⁴ Relativized Minimality (Rizzi 1990):

X -governs Y only if there is no Z such that

a. Z is a typical potential -governor for Y, and

b. Z c-commands Y and does not c-command X.

(2) a. *How come [_{Fact} Joe ate what]? (Conroy 2006:6)

b. How come [_{Fact} everyone likes Joe]? (*everyone > how come; how come > everyone) (Fitzpatrick 2005)

(3) a. John didn't give a red cent/any cent to the beggar.

b. *John didn't regret [_{Fact} that Mary gave a red cent to the beggar] (Honcoop 1998)

(4) a. Who do you regret having sex with?

b. ??Who did she realize that he saw?

(5) a. * Qui regrettes-tu qui _ châtie les enfants? (French)
 who regret you that punish the children

b. ?Qui regrettes-tu que Marie châtie _?
 who regret you that Marie punish

(Zubizarreta 1983)

(6) a'.?Which book do you regret that I bought _?

b'. *Who do you regret (that) t bought this book?

c'. *How do you regret that John solved this problem _?

(Hoekstra 2004:193)

(7) a. [VP regret [NP [CP ...]]]

b. [VP believe [CP ...]]

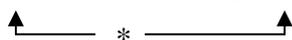
(8) a. [VP believe [cP [CP ...]]]

b. [VP regret [CP ...]]

(9) a. [binder_J [C_[FACT] [TP_[FIN] bindee_J]]]

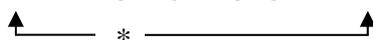


b. [C[Q]_J [C_[FACT] [TP_[FIN] wh_J]]]



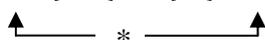
C[Q]= marks the illocution of an expression

c. [combien_J [C_[FACT] [TP_[FIN] de NP_J]]]



combien 'how much' / de 'of' NP

d. [wh_J [C_[FACT] [TP_[FIN] t_J]]] except for pronoun-like traces⁵



⁵ A wh-element which binds a pronoun-like trace can be translated into a D-linked wh-element in Cinque's 1990 sense or a wh-element which refers to a particular entity from a well defined set (Szabolcsi et al 1993). However, D-linking does not capture the subject/object-asymmetry in (5). I will be discussing the question whether a theta-theoretical distinction of the subject-object asymmetry makes sense.

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e.[every_{[distributive]J} [C_[FACT] [TP_[FIN] XP_J]]], iff XP = a *non-specific* wh-element or indefinite.

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