On the Predictability of PP Extraposition

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Guéron (1980) discusses the syntax and semantics of PP Extraposition. Its operation is exemplified in the derivation of the (b) sentences from the (a) sentences in (1) and (2):

(1) a. A man with green eyes appeared.

     b. A man appeared with green eyes.

(2) a. John read a book by Chomsky over the summer.

     b. John read a book over the summer by Chomsky.

She proposes that rules of SI-1 associate every PP Extraposition output with two logical forms, i.e., that of a *predication* and that of a *presentation S*.[1]

(3) *Predication*

   $(_S$ (NP) (VP) $_S)$

(4) *Presentation S*

   $(_S$ VERB$_i$ $(_S$ (NP) $(\cdots v_i \cdots)$ $_S)$ $_S)$

PP-Extraposed sentence (5)a, for example, is associated with the LFs in (5)b and (5)c :

(5) a. A man appeared from India.

     b. Pred: $(_S$ $(_S$ $(_{NP}$ a man) $(_{VP}$ appeared) $_S)$ $(_{PP}$ from India) $_S)$

     c. Pres: $(_S$ $(_S$ appeared$_i$ $(_S$ $(_{NP}$ a man) $(_{VP}$ $\cdots v_i \cdots)$ $_S)$ $_S)$ $(_{PP}$ from India) $_S)$

   The following rules are to apply disjunctively to LFs.

(6) *Focus Marking*

     a. Mark the last argument in the *c*-command domain of the verb "Focus of S".

     b. Mark the VP "Focus of S".

(7) *Complement Linkage*

   Mark the PP (or relative clause) to the right of S "Complement of Focus NP".

Applying these rules to the LFs (5)b and (5)c , we obtain (8)b and (8)c:

(8) a   A man appeared from India.

     b. Pred: $(_S$ $(_S$ $(_{NP}$ a man) $(_{VP}$ *appeared)* $_S)$ $(_{PP}$ *from India)* $_S)$

   　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Focus　　　　　　　Complement of Focus NP

     c. Pres: $(_S$ $(_S$ appeared$_i$ $(_S$ $(_{NP}$ *a man)* $(_{VP}$ $\cdots v_i \cdots$) $_S)$ $_S)$ $(_{PP}$ *from India)* $_S)$

   　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Focus　　　　　　　Complement of Focus NP

LF (8)b is ill-formed since in spite of the fact that the extraposed PP is marked "Complement of Focus NP", no NPs are marked Focus in it. LF (8)c, on the other hand, is well-formend since the extraposed PP is properly linked to the Focus NP.

   Roughly, only a PP in the rightmost argument of a sentence may be extraposed in this analysis. Thus, (9)b and (10)b are well-formed.

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(9) a. I saw a man from India yesterday.

    b. I saw a man yesterday from India.

(10) a. I saw a book from India yesterday.

    b. I saw a book yesterday from India.

Notice here that the same logic would predict that (11)c is synonimous with (11)a because the PP *from India* is extraposed from the last argument *a man* ···, but that it is not synonimous with (11)b because the PP is extraposed from a non-last argment.

(11) a. I gave a book to a man from India yesterday.

    b. I gave a book from India to a man yesterday.

    c. I gave a book to a man yesterday from India.

This prediction is actually not true. (11)c can be construed as synonimous with (11)b as well as with (11)a, i.e., it is ambiguous. There does not seem to be any nonadhoc way to amend this defect in Guéron's framework.

I will end this squib by pointing out that a functional analysis like Erteschik-Shir's (1979) appears to be what is needed to account for the above noted data. The notion of dominance plays a central role in her framework. It is defined as follows (p.443):

> DOMINANCE: A constituent C of a sentence S is dominant in S if and only if the speaker intends to direct the attention of his hearers to the intension of C by uttering S.

For instance, *wh*-questioning, relativization, clefting, or pseudo-clefting may not apply to an NP in a nondominant position.

According to Erteschik-Shir, neither the direct object position nor the indirect object position is nondominant in a sentence like (12) ; therefore, either of them can be interpreted as dominant. [2]

(12) I gave a book to a man yesterday.

I suggest that PP Expraposition may not apply to a PP in a nondominant NP. This would correctly allow (11)b , as well as (11)a, to undergo PP Extraposition to become (11)c (in surface form). Similarly, (13)b is well-formed and unambigouously corresponds to (13)a :

(13) a. I gave a book by Chomsky to a man yesterday.

    b. I gave a book to a man yesterday by Chomsky.

Footnotes

1. The LF of a predication corresponds term for term to its surface structure, while that of a presentation S is derived by a movement rule which Chomsky-adjoins a verb to the left of S. Note that in a predication, the VP is in the *c*-command domain of the subject, but that is a presentation S, on the other hand, the subject is in the scope of the verb.

2. The fact that either the direct object position or the indirect object position can be interpreted as dominant is supported by Erteschik-Shir's dominance test.

   (i) a. Speaker A: I gave a book to a man yesterday.

     b. Speaker B: Oh yes, I know who it was.

     c. Speaker C: Oh yes, I know what it was.

(i)a can be followed by either of (i)b or (i)c.

References

Erteschik-Shir, N. (1979) "Discourse Constraints on Dative Movement," in T. Givón, ed. *Syntax and Semantics Vol. 12, Discourse and Syntax,* Academic Press, New York.

Guéron, J. (1980) "On the Syntax and Semantics of PP Extraposition," *Linguistic Inquiry* 11. 637-78.