

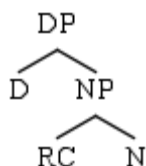
The DP structure of the prenominal relative clauses

This study is concerned with the DP of the prenominal relative clauses. The following DP structures with prenominal relative clauses are found DET RC N, RC DET N, RC N DET, DET RC REL N, RC REL DET N, RC REL N DET, DET [...REL...]_{RC} N, [...REL...]_{RC} DET N.

First, concerning the mutual linearization of the determiner, the prenominal relative clause and the head noun, all three aprioristic possibilities are found in natural languages, i.e. RC DET N, RC N DET and DET RC N, but they differ considerably in frequency: DET RC N > RC DET N > RC N DET. Secondly, some languages have more one order in DP. Thirdly, if the languages with two DP structures are excluded, we now have DET RC N > RC N DET > RC DET N in terms of frequency in the languages in our corpora.

To explain the above discoveries, we adopt a dynamic (i.e. derivational) point of view. The crucial difference between DET RC N and RC DET N/RC N DET is that in the first DP, the determiner must have large scope over the NP consisting of RC and N. We can see this as a two-step combination: first the prenominal relative and the noun combine to form NP, and second, this NP and the determiner merge to give DP:

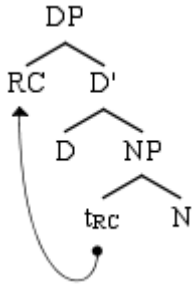
(1) [DET [RC N]_{NP}]_{DP}



One of the arguments in favor of this dynamic/derivational analysis is that prenominal relatives are often, if not always, restrictive by default (Mallinson & Blake 1981:364-366, Vries 2001:237, 2002:29, 217, 2005:135).

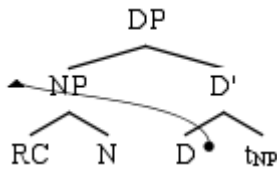
In order to derive RC DET N and RC N DET, we would have to assume that further operations are needed: from DET RC N to RC DET N, the prenominal relative must raise again to be above (or on the left of) of the determiner:

(2) [RC DET [t_{RC} N]_{NP}]_{DP}



And for RC N DET:

(3) [[RC N]_{NP} DET t_{NP}]_{DP}



DET RC N and RC DET N are less economical than DET RC N, in that further operations are necessary. The economy of the derivation explains why the linear order DET RC N is the most recurrent DP in prenominal relatives.

References

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