

How is an Adjunct Conjoined With an Argument?

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In this talk, I present a sideward movement approach to coordinate WH complexes in which the two conjuncts look like an adjunct and an argument, respectively.

- (1) a. What and when does John (normally) eat? (Grosu 1985, Whitman 2002)
b. How and what does John eat?
c. I need to know where and what Emerson taught after graduating from Harvard.
- (2) a. Ko i čime je razbio staklo? (Serbo-Croatian, Browne 1972)
who and with-what 3SG.AUX broke glass 'Who and with what broke the glass?'
b. Kdo a kdy napsal tu knihu? (Czech, Browne 1972)
who and when wrote that book 'Who and when wrote that book?'
c. Shui (yiji) cong nali tingshuo-le zhexie yaoyan? (Chinese, Zhang 2004)
who and from where hear-PRF these rumor 'Who and from where heard these rumors?'

Following Kazenin (2001), I call the construction CwhC (construction of wh coordination).

Against a base-generation approach. The coordinate complex in a CwhC cannot be base-generated at the base-position of either an argument or an adverbial. The theta relation between a verb and an argument must be established in a minimal domain. If [*how and what*] in (1b) were base-generated as an adverbial of the predicate in the clause, the theta-role relation between *eat* and *what* would fail to be established, since the latter is inside an adjunct. If [*how and what*] in (1b) were base-generated as an internal argument of *eat*, because of the intervention of *how*, the theta-role relation between *eat* and *what* would not be able to be established, either.

The coordinate complexes of CwhCs cannot be base-generated at their surface positions, either. In (1a), the thematic relation between *eat* and *what* cannot be licensed if the latter is base-generated to the left of the auxiliary *does*, since the position is not a theta-position.

Against a pro dependency approach. Adger & Ramchand (2005) argue that clausal-initial wh elements can be base-generated there and semantically related to a bound variable *pro* in the thematic position. Since the antecedent of a *pro* must be nominal, if a wh nominal and a wh adverb are conjoined, only the former can be the antecedent of the *pro*. However, *pro* never takes a single conjunct as its antecedent.

Against a deletion approach. Browne (1972) claims that CwhCs are derived by clausal coordination followed by deletion of identical parts. Suppose (3B1) and (3B2) are possible representations of (3a).

- (3) a. What and when does John (normally) eat?
b. What ~~does John (normally) eat~~ _{BWD} and _{B1} when does John (normally) eat ~~what~~ _{FWD}?
B2 when does John (normally) eat?

(3B1) violates the constraint on Backward Deletion (BWD) that the licensing string must be right-peripheral in its conjunct (Wilder 1997, among others). Before the assumed FWD in (3B1), the [*does John (normally) eat*] is not the right-edge element in the second conjunct, since it is followed by *what*. In order for the string to license the BWD, FWD must apply first. However, before any deletion, the word *what* in the first conjunct is at the left-edge position and the word *what* in the second conjunct is at the right-edge position. According to the parallelism requirement in deletion, the licensing string and the deleted string cannot occur in opposite edge positions. (3B2) is also problematic, since *eat* is transitive in the first conjunct but intransitive in the second conjunct; conjunct reduction (including gapping) requires a parallelism of the transitivity of the affected verbs (**Fred eats at Arby's, and my brother-in-law eats pickled beets*) (Stilling 1975).

In Chinese, the only coordinator that occurs in CwhCs is *yiji*, which cannot conjoin matrix clauses. This restriction indicates that no CwhC is derived from two matrix clauses.

A plausible derivation of an CwhC is that the two conjuncts first undergo sideward movement independently, and then form a coordinate complex with a conjunction in a new working site, and later the newly built coordinate complex is integrated into the clause.

The derivation of CwhCs thus provides evidence for sideward movement, in addition to Bobaljik & Brown (1997), Nunes (2001), Hornstein (2001), and Nunes & Uriagereka (2000).

Main References

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