Subword RNR as Multidominance-Plus-Ellipsis

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Introduction. In Right-Node Raising (RNR), an element (the so-called pivot) is construed as being shared across conjuncts (1). In subword RNR, the pivot is smaller than a word (2).

(1)   Ahmed likes, but Amir detests, the *Paddington* movies.

(2)   a.   pre- and post-war   b.   over- and under-estimate

Recent research distinguishes between two types of properties exhibited by RNR: those associated with multidominance (RNR-MD) and those associated with ellipsis (RNR-E) (Barros & Vicente 2011; Belk et al. 2023). Under an RNR-MD account, the pivot is merged simultaneously in both conjuncts but is linearized only once. Under an RNR-E account, the syntactic constituent corresponding to the pivot is deleted in the first conjunct (Lobeck 1995; Merchant 2001; Aelbrecht 2010 a.o.). In addition, another deletion operation – prosodic deletion – has been proposed as a string-based operation that targets a prosodic constituent and requires strict phonological identity (Booij, 1985; Wilder, 1997; Chaves, 2008, 2014; Hartmann, 2001). We show that, parallel to phrasal RNR, subword RNR likewise requires a dual multidominance-plus-ellipsis analysis. While syntactic ellipsis is often assumed to be unavailable below the word level, we argue that subword material bearing contrastive focus can survive ellipsis in-situ, thereby enabling subword RNR-E. This ellipsis analysis accounts for data that cannot be captured by either RNR-MD or prosodic deletion.

Data I: Distributive readings. Like phrasal RNR (3), subword RNR allows for distributive readings of plural DPs in the pivot (5). For both, the reading is absent in the corresponding full-sized coordination (4), (6). Thus, (3) and (5) cannot be derived from (4) and (6), respectively, via ellipsis or prosodic deletion.

(3)   Ava will soon, and Habib is going to, study Oceanic languages.   (Belk et al., 2023:700)
    ✓ Ava and Habib are each going to study more than one Oceanic language.   *collective*
    ✓ Ava and Habib are going to study one Oceanic language each.   *distributive*

(4)   Ava will soon study Oceanic languages, and Habib is going to study Oceanic languages.

(5)   Ava and Habib are socio- and psycholinguists.   (adapted from Artstein, 2005)
    ✓ Ava and Habib are both sociolinguists and psycholinguists.   *collective*
    ✓ Ava is a sociolinguist and Habib is a psycholinguist.   *distributive*

(6)   Ava and Habib are sociolinguists and psycholinguists.

Analysis I: Multidominance. We take distributive readings as evidence for a multidominance analysis of subword RNR (see also Wilder 1999, 2008; see Abels 2004 for arguments against an ATB analysis of these data). We follow Belk et al. (2023) in assuming that the distributive reading obtains because the plural element in the pivot undergoes QR to a scopally high position. Here, we adopt Johnson's (2012) multidominance analysis of QR according to which only the NP is multidominated (7) (see also Citko, 2005). We assume that a linearization algorithm (e.g., Gracanin-Yuksek 2013, Johnson 2020) orders *linguists* after *psycho*, and that the two morphemes are realized as a single prosodic word either due to M-word formation via head movement or phase-based mapping onto PF. A challenge for (7) is that it violates the ban on extraction out of words.

(7)

We suggest that the island status of words stems from constraints on linearization of morphemes and thus does not apply for covert QR.

Data II: Morphological mismatches & vehicle change. Like phrasal RNR (8)-(9), subword RNR permits morphological mismatches (10) and vehicle change (11). For phrasal RNR, these properties have been analyzed as diagnostics of VP ellipsis (Bošković, 2004, a.o.). RNR-MD involves only a single token of the RNR pivot and thus cannot account for these data (Abels 2004, a.o.). Prosodic deletion predicts a string to delete under strict phonological identity (Wilder, 1997), also ruling out (10) and (11).

(8)   John has ~~under-estimated the cost of the plan~~ and Mary will <u>under-estimate the cost of the plan</u>.

(9)   a.   She$_1$ hopes that he won't ~~under-pay her$_1$~~, but I know that the boss will <u>under-pay Ava$_1$</u>.

        b.   John has ~~post-analyzed some of the data~~ but Mary hasn't <u>post-analyzed any of the data</u>.

(10)   John has over~~estimated the cost of the plan~~ and Mary will under-<u>estimate the cost of the plan</u>.

(11)   a.   She$_1$ hopes that he will over~~pay her$_1$~~, but I know that the boss will under-<u>pay Ava$_1$</u>.

        b.   John has pre-~~analyzed some of the data~~ but he hasn't post-<u>analyzed any of the data</u>.

However, under Aelbrecht's (2010) analysis of VP ellipsis, the entire vP is sent off to PF for deletion when the [E]-feature on Voice is checked via Agree with its licensor T. In (10) and (11), the vP is elided only partially. Thus, these data do not straightforwardly fall out as instances of VP ellipsis.

Analysis II: Ellipsis. In the absence of viable alternatives, we argue that (10) and (11) need to be analyzed as instances of VP ellipsis, and that therefore, the mechanism underlying VP ellipsis must be reconsidered. Consider first the phrasal examples in (12): whether a remnant can be stranded is closely tied to whether it can form a contrastive focus with its antecedent. Focus-marked material can be stranded.

(12)   a.   John will read THIS BOOK SLOWLY, and Mary ~~will read~~ THAT NEWSPAPER QUICKLY.

        b.   John will read this book SLOWLY, and Mary will ~~read this book~~ QUICKLY.

For both gapping (12a) and pseudo-gapping (12b), the standard view holds that remnants must undergo movement to be stranded, either by raising the focus-marked remnant out of a VP that is subsequently deleted (Stump 1977; Jayaseelan 1990; López & Winkler 2003; Toosarvandani 2012 a.o.), or by allowing the remnant to raise to evade the ATB movement of VPs under low vP coordination (Johnson 2009). However, overtly extracting a word part (e.g., *over-*) out of the VP is clearly problematic. Hence, we instead propose that focus-marked remnants can survive deletion while remaining in situ. In (10), *has* remains the licensor bearing the [E]-feature, but the ellipsis site is reduced to exclude only those constituents that are focus-marked (Rooth, 1992 a.o.), thereby removing them from the identity calculation.

Discussion. A challenge for our analysis is that VP ellipsis displays asymmetries between the two conjuncts. First, ellipsis in the second conjunct cannot strand word parts, (13). Second, unlike ellipsis in the first conjunct, ellipsis in the second does not need to obey the Right-Edge Condition (REC; Wilder, 2008 a.o.), which requires the gap corresponding to an RNR pivot to be right-peripheral, compare (14) with (12b).

(13)   *John has OVER$_F$-estimated the cost of the plan and Mary will UNDER$_F$-~~estimate the cost of the plan~~.

(14)   *Mary will ~~read this book~~ QUICKLY, and John will read this book SLOWLY.   *(violates the REC)*

This suggests that, although Wilder's multidominance-LCA account derives the REC in the way that material shared across conjuncts must be linearized at the right periphery to avoid conflicting ordering statements, the explanation remains incomplete. It is still unclear how RNR-E could yield the REC, given that ellipsis is insensitive to edge-based restrictions. We assume that these asymmetries arise from a deeper structural asymmetry in coordination, to which ellipsis must be sensitive, rather than treating ellipsis across conjuncts as distinct operations. Finally, we highlight two problems for a possible alternative analysis of (10) and (11), prosodic deletion. First, prosodic deletion is taken to be intolerant of morphological mismatches and vehicle change. Second, although prosodic deletion could potentially derive the REC, since prosodic processes

generally operate at the edges of phonological units (Selkirk 2011), different prosodic units have distinct edges, leaving it unclear why the REC is sensitive only to the intonational phrase edge of a conjunct.