Sharing constructions: movement, multidominance or ellipsis?

Martin Salzmann

In this seminar we will look at sharing constructions (broadly construed) where – pre-theoretically – a constituent seems to belong to several positions simultaneously. Classical examples are ATB-movement, Right-Node-Raising and Parasitic Gaps.

1. What does John like __ and Mary dislike __? (ATB)
2. John likes __ and Mary dislikes vegetarian food. (RNR)
3. Which book did John file __ without reading __? (PG)

The analysis of such constructions is highly contested. The standard generative approach to establish a link between a filler and gaps is by means of movement. However, in the cases above, a solution in terms of movement is not obvious because there are either more gaps than fillers (ATB, PG) or the dependency is not subject to well-established movement constraints (locality, c-command, constituency: RNR). As a consequence, alternative proposals have emerged which either resort to ellipsis (the constituent is present in both locations and is deleted in one position under identity with the antecedent) or sharing/multidominance (the constituent is literally shared across the phrase-marker). What makes things even more complicated is that the constructions under discussion share a number of properties that suggest a common core. This has led to analyses where one construction is derived from the other (e.g., PG from ATB or vice versa or ATB form RNR).

In the first part of the seminar, we will examine various approaches to these constructions (based on ellipsis, multidominance, sideward movement). In the second part, we will tackle less familiar sharing constructions such as gapping:

4. John reads books and Mary magazines.

Determiner Sharing:

5. The duck is dry and ~~the~~ mussels ~~are~~ tough.

Coordinated wh-phrases:

6. What and when did Dana eat?

and Amalgams:

7. John invited [you'll never guess how many people] to his party.

Time permitting, we might have a look at parentheticals and ellipsis-based analyses of left-/right-dislocation and extraposition. Further possibilities include HPSG-approaches to sharing and work that investigates the more formal properties of multidominance.