

Semantics in Support of the Quantifier Float

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Baltin (1980) rejects Jackendoff's (1977) posited constituency structure in (1) in favor of the Quantifier Phrase structure in (2).

- (1) all [three of the men]
- (2) [all three] of the men

Baltin points out that if three were properly the constituent of the NP three of the men, then (3) below should not be possible, since it would involve the movement of a nonconstituent:

- (3) The men had all three been in love with Garbo. (Baltin's (21))

Baltin's constituency structure in (2) is based on the existence of a Quantifier Phrase (QP) that floats, as proposed by Bresnan (1973).

A brief examination of the constituency structures in (1) and (2) reveals that the heads of the NPs are three and men respectively. In either case, the syntactic and semantic properties of both phrases spell out as plural. Consider the following, however.

- (4) Each [one of the children] runs.
- (5) [Each one] of the children runs.

The syntactic properties of (4) and (5) spell out as singular. The semantic properties, on the other hand, spell out as singular for (4) and plural for (5). The semantic alternation in (4) and (5) is attributed to their respective heads: one, which is singular, and children, which is plural. Since the semantics of the NP each one of the children is plural – more than one child ran – and only the constituency structure in (5) affords a plural semantic reading, the better constituency structure for the NP is obviously the Quantifier Phrase structure, as argued by Baltin.

References

- Baltin, Mark. 1980. On the notion 'Quantifier Phrase'. *Linguistic Inquiry* 11, 247-249.
Bresnan, Joan. 1973. Syntax of the comparative clause construction in English. *Linguistic Inquiry* 4, 275-343.
Jackendoff, Ray. (1977) *X Syntax: A study of phrase structure*. Linguistic Inquiry Monograph 2, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

