



Parenthesis and the boundaries of sentence grammar: Evidence from appositives

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Parentheticals raise delicate questions about the division of labor between Sentence Grammar (SG) and Discourse Grammar (DG). Recent proposals incorporate parenthesis into SG, by enriching either semantics (Potts 2005) or syntax (Ackema & Neeleman 2004, de Vries 2007). By contrast, Kaltenböck et al. (2011) contend that parenthesis falls within the purview of DG, which "coopts" elements of SG: parentheticals are "not licensed by canonical rules of SG, [but] their internal structure rests on principles of SG." Focusing on non-restrictive nominal appositives (*I met an old friend*, *John Smith*, *at the pub today*), I provide new arguments in support of this latter position.

Formally, appositives show clear parenthetical properties: they are prosodically and semantically isolated expressions, fail to satisfy/violate V2, are strongly opaque for subextraction, etc. Nevertheless, appositives differ from sentential parentheticals (1) in that they do enter into binding/scope relations with elements of their hosts (2).

- (1) Every guest,—he, just arrived—was complaining.
- (2) Every man, talks to one person, (probably) his, mother, once a week.

Similarly, in languages with case morphology nominal appositives agree in case with their host-internal anchor (Heringa 2012). *Prima facie*, facts of this kind are at odds with the aforementioned indications of the clause-external status of appositives.

I show that this tension is only apparent. The paradoxical behavior of appositives is a general property of dislocated constituents, such as 'afterthoughts' (*I met an old friend at the pub today: John Smith*). Building on Ott & de Vries (2013), I argue that appositives, like peripheral dislocates, are surface remnants of underlying clausal "repetitions," reduced by deletion. (2') illustrates for (2); strikethrough indicates ellipsis, **②** the target of insertion.

(2') $[_{CP_I}$ every man talks to one person \odot once a week]

[CP2 every man talks to his mother once a week]

In addition to explaining the observed binding connectivity, now understood to reflect a dependency within the elliptical clause, this analysis more generally accounts for the propositional nature of appositives (cf. Hannay & Keizer 2005), evidenced e.g. by sentence adverbs (2), their negatability, etc.

Concerning the interpolation of the fragment into CP₁, the analysis requires it to occur extra-syntactically. Deletion is recovered under identity with an antecedent (Merchant 2001). On the assumption that appositives are structurally embedded within their hosts, this renders deletion in CP₂ antecedent-contained, since the deleted material would be contained within its own antecedent (= CP₁), yielding a regress. Given that deletion in appositives *is* resolvable, it follows that appositives must be interpolated discursively, not syntactically.

Overall, the convergence of functional and formal investigations of appositives strongly corroborates Kaltenböck et al.'s view of the division of labor between SG and DG concerning parenthetical phenomena more generally.

References

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