
Modification Markers and Meaningless Movement

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This talk explores the relation between the presence of a modification (mod) marker and the availability of meaningless movement that derives various orders in nominal modification. I assume that a modifier is not a sister of the modified element; it is a J-set that is merged with the modified element. A J-set is headed by the categoryless functional element J (Junk), which can take a modifier as its complement. J is realized by a mod marker (null in languages like English) or coordinator. The merger of a J-set and a modifier is that of categorization (cf. the merger of a root and its categorizer) (Zhang 2023). I discuss four constructions.

① A non-canonical position of a complete modifier can be derived by the raising of the modified NP (*the man proud of his son* <*man*>; Cinque 2010: 26). The unacceptability of the base-order in some languages (**the proud of his son man*) is parallel to the unacceptability of the base-order in extraposition, which comes from the raising of the modified XP (Cinque 2010: 133; cf. Larson 1989, Barbiers 1995). In a language that has mod markers (e.g., Mandarin; Rubin 2003), this is possible only in the absence of such a marker (also subject to some language-specific conditions; cf. Zhang 2008).

② The split of a complex modifier (e.g., *a smart sofa to buy*; Fleisher 2008; Cinque 2010: 127) can be derived by the raising of the complement of the adjective followed by the remnant movement of the whole NP. In a language that has mod markers (e.g., Mandarin), such a split does not occur.

③ A manner modifier (Japanese; Kitagawa 1986, Mandarin) can be integrated by
① the raising of the NP to VP, ② the merge of the manner modifier to VP, ③ the remnant movement of the object, ④ the V-to-v movement. No mod marker occurs.

④ An event kind-level modifier (e.g., *An occasional sailor strolled by.*) can be integrated by the sideward movement of the predicate from another working site to the modifier position of an NP (Zhang 2022). No mod marker occurs with such a modifier in Mandarin.

Conclusion Meaningless movement can derive the observed various non-base orders in modification, in the absence of an overt mod marker. This shows that there are interactions between the overtness of the functional element J and meaningless movement in linearization.

References: • Cinque, G. 2010. *The syntax of adjectives*. MIT Press. • Kitagawa, Y. 1986. More on bracketing paradoxes. *Linguistic Inquiry* 17(1), 177-183. • Zhang, N. 2022. Kind-level predicates of events inside another predication. *Studia Linguistica* 76(2), 315-353. • Zhang, N. 2023. *Coordinate Structures*. Cambridge University Press.