5

ON THE RIGHT PERIPHERY

5.1. RIGHT DISLOCATION

In previous chapters, we have looked at a range of phenomena in the pre-verbal, or left-peripheral, domain of the clause. In particular, a range of constructions associated with topic and focus effects has been provided with analyses using concepts of unfixed nodes and LINK structures. In this chapter, we explore certain constructions on the less commonly studied right periphery (post-verbal) domain (though see Beerman et al. 1997). As we shall see, essentially the same concepts of *ADJUNCTION and the building of LINKed structures used in analysing the left periphery can be used in analysing right-periphery phenomena. The result is a more unitary account of the two peripheral boundaries of the clause than is possible within Minimalism accounts or those based on Kayne’s (1994) antisymmetry thesis. However, as we shall see, constructions on the left and right peripheries are not fully symmetrical and the time-linear parsing approach of Dynamic Syntax provides an elegant and straightforward way of accounting for these.

We cannot, of course, explore the whole range of right-periphery phenomena here. In particular, we do not provide accounts of true afterthought and other elliptical constructions (though see Chapter 9). Such fragments display rather different properties from those generally discussed in this book, as they do not appear on the left periphery (5.1b) and involve a non-monotonic process of re-using processed structure, as illustrated in (5.1a) where only part of the content of the preceding utterance is used to derive the interpretation ‘Harry was not having a good time’: it notably cannot mean ‘I was relieved that Harry was not having a good time’.

(5.1)  a. I was relieved to see that everyone was having a good time.
       Except Harry/But not Harry.

       b. *Except Harry/But not Harry. I was relieved to see that
          everyone was having a good time.
The constructions we do analyse all involve pronominal elements, either explicitly as in Pronoun Doubling (5.2) and sentential Extraposition (5.3) or covertly as in Subject Inversion (5.4) and (we shall argue) Right Node Raising (RNR) (5.5).

(5.2)  a. He talks too fast, the new secretary.
       b. *lo conosco, Giovanni*
            *him I know Giovanni*
                *I know him, Giovanni.*

(5.3)  a. It is surprising that the Principal left so soon.
       b. I have proved it to my satisfaction that the analysis is watertight.

(5.4)  a. *ha telefonato Beatrice*
       has telephoned Beatrice
            *Beatrice has telephoned.*
       b. *è arrivato uno studente*
            is arrived one student
                *A student has arrived.*

(5.5)  a. Mary wrote, and I reviewed, several papers on resumptive pronouns.
       b. Every overseas student could answer, but most home students
couldn’t even understand, some questions on formal semantics.

The question of whether the tools of Dynamic Syntax can capture the near, but not perfect, symmetries between right- and left-periphery effects is a non-trivial one. In movement accounts, the close correspondence between c-command explanations and explanations based on linear order of left-periphery phenomena threatens to break down in addressing those on the right periphery. The correspondence can only be re-established by positing an array of movement processes and a number of additional projections whose sole motivation is to sustain a c-command analysis in the face of apparent counterevidence (see Ordonez 1997; Ceccheto 1999, for example). If the DS approach is to be shown to be superior to movement analyses, the theory must be able to account for the common properties of left and right dislocation phenomena in the same terms. It is to a demonstration of the theory’s ability to achieve just this that we now turn.

5.2. LINKED STRUCTURES AND RECAPITULATION EFFECTS

The primary attribute of right-periphery phenomena is that they occur as part of the process of completing the decoration on a tree structure already set; and at this point, the monotonic compositionality of the tree construction process imposes tight constraints on how the tree must be compiled. The concept of