

Inverted and non-inverted constructions at the right edge

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The focus

- ▶ This presentation discusses a construction with similarities to English right dislocation.
- ▶ This construction has two forms, shown below.
 - ▶ He's a nice guy, [John is].
 - ▶ He's a nice guy [is John].
- ▶ The first example (henceforth called a NIRE construction) is found in both British and American English. It was briefly analysed in Kayne (1994).
- ▶ The second example (henceforth called an IRE construction) is restricted only to British English (Kayne, 2005). It has never been previously analysed.

Principle questions

- ▶ How does the derivation of (N)IRE constructions differ from the derivation(s) of right dislocation?
- ▶ How do the derivations of NIRE and IRE constructions differ from each other?

Properties of (N)IRE constructions

- ▶ With regards to both meaning and distribution, NIRE and IRE constructions are incredibly similar.
- ▶ (N)IRE constructions typically adjoin to the right edge of full, independent clauses, but may also adjoin to embedded ones.
- ▶ They must contain a DP that co-refers with the subject of the host clause. This DP is typically more descriptive than its antecedent, as in right dislocation (Ott and de Vries, 2014).
- ▶ They must contain an auxiliary identical to that in the host clause. If the host clause contains no auxiliary, do-support is used.
 - ▶ She likes cake, [Julie does].
 - ▶ She likes cake [does Julie].

Differences between NIRE and IRE constructions

- ▶ NIRE constructions, but not IRE constructions, may feature pronouns in place of r-expressions.
 - ▶ He's a nice guy, [he is].
 - ▶ *He's a nice guy [is he].
- ▶ While NIRE constructions do not typically feature adverbs, they are more receptive to them than IRE constructions are.
 - ▶ ?She likes cake, [Julie definitely does].
 - ▶ *She likes cake [does definitely Julie].

Differences between NIRE and IRE constructions

- ▶ Both constructions are somewhat contested when overtly negated, but IRE constructions are more obviously degraded.
 - ▶ ?He isn't a nice man, John isn't.
 - ▶ *He isn't a nice man isn't John.
- ▶ Positive IRE constructions may adjoin to negated host clauses. The apparent polarity mismatch does not disrupt the negative reading.
 - ▶ She doesn't like cake does Julie (=Julie doesn't like cake).
 - ▶ He's never let me down has John (=John has never let me down).
- ▶ Positive NIRE constructions are barred from doing the same.
 - ▶ *She doesn't like cake, Julie does.
 - ▶ *He's never let me down, John has.

Methodology

- ▶ Two surveys, 48 sentences in each. 24 of the sentences were for control purposes.
- ▶ The relevant sentences were split into three categories:
 - ▶ 8 featured ‘typical’ (N)IRE constructions, with names at the right edge. (He’s a nice guy, John is/is John).
 - ▶ 8 featured pronouns in place of the names. (He’s a nice guy, he is/is he).
 - ▶ 8 featured overt negation (He isn’t a nice guy, John isn’t/isn’t John).
- ▶ Participants responded to equal numbers of IRE and NIRE sentences.
- ▶ All sentences were presented as audio clips, recorded by the researcher.

Average acceptability scores across both surveys



Derivations of Right Dislocation and NIRE constructions

- ▶ Kayne (1994) claims that, as there can be no rightward movement, right dislocation and NIRE constructions are derived via ellipsis. They then have a full clause left-adjoined to them.
 - ▶ [He's a nice guy] [John ~~is a nice guy~~]
 - ▶ [He's a nice guy] [John is ~~a nice guy~~]
- ▶ The constructions only differ with respect to the ellipsis site.
- ▶ The connection between the host clause and the reduced clause is mediated by an 'empty functional head' (1994, p. 78).

IRE constructions - my claims

- ▶ Both IRE and NIRE constructions are reduced clauses. For now, I argue that they are connected to their host clauses via a null conjunction.
- ▶ The subject of an IRE construction resides in Spec TP.
- ▶ The auxiliary moves above it, into C or potentially Focus.
- ▶ The restrictions on IRE constructions can be explained via the Align constraint (Bruening, 2016) and the Unaccented Pronoun Constraint (Zwicky, 1986, Dowty, 1996).
- ▶ IRE constructions can be covertly negated in a manner reminiscent of fuck-inversion (Sailor, 2017).

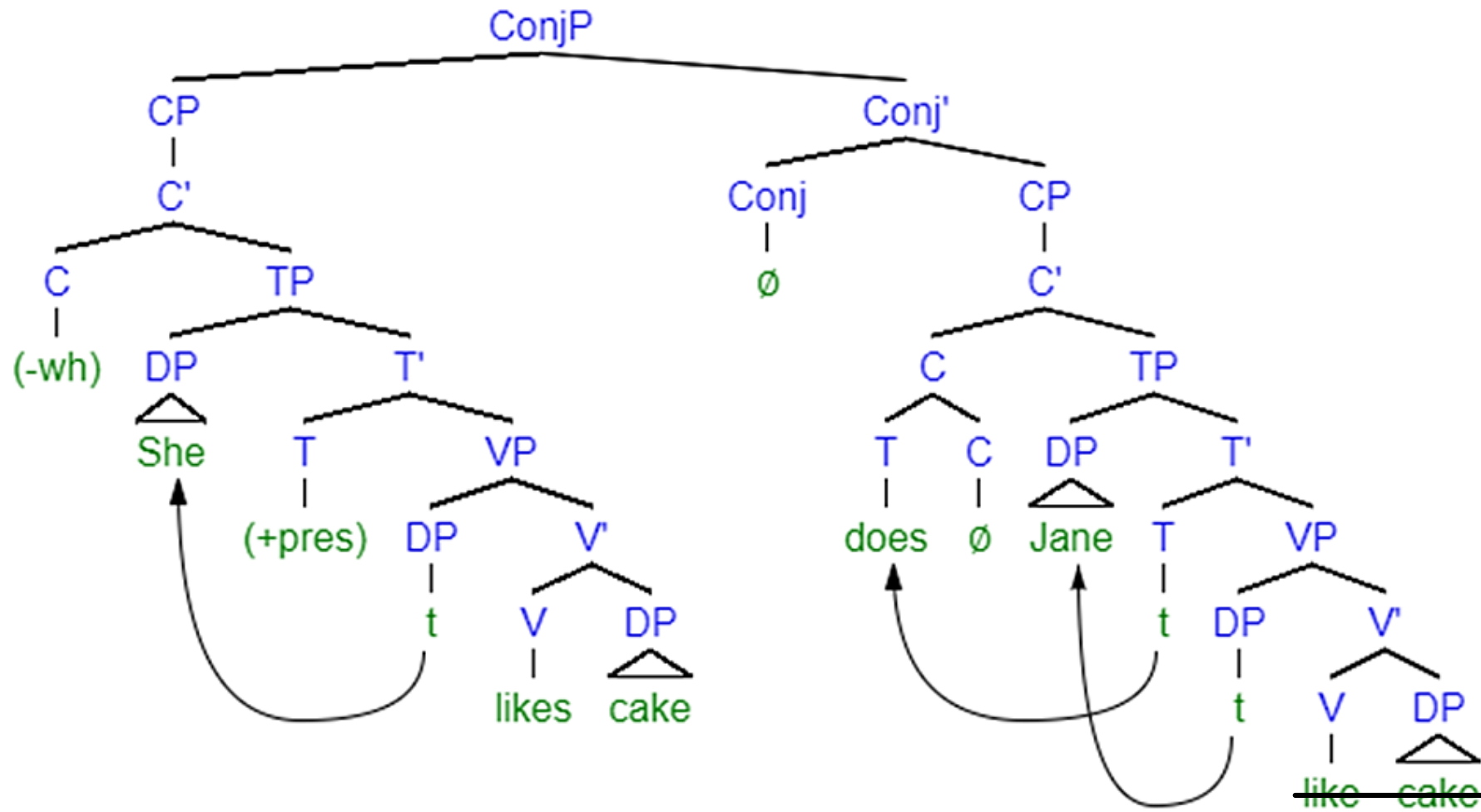
IRE constructions and the Align constraint

- ▶ Bruening (2016) claims that most SAI phenomena are subject to the Align(ment) constraint, which is defined as follows:
 - “Align V-C (English):
Align(Comp-C*, L, V_{tense}, L/R)
(The left edge of the complement of C* (i.e., TP) must be aligned with an edge of V_{tense}.)” (p. 111, 2016)
- ▶ In other words, nothing may overtly intervene between the left edge of TP and an edge of V_{tense}.
- ▶ He uses this to explain why, with quotative inversion (e.g. ‘said John’), the verb and the subject cannot be intervened by adverbs and negation.

IRE constructions and the Align constraint

- ▶ IRE constructions are also subject to this constraint, hence why they are incompatible with negation, adverbs and multiple auxiliaries.
 - ▶ *He doesn't like cake does not John/*doesn't John.
 - ▶ *He drives like a maniac does sometimes John.
 - ▶ *He will have been upset will have been John.
- ▶ These elements are all interventions between V_{tense} and the left edge of TP, preventing Alignment and prompting ungrammaticality.
- ▶ It is not fully clear why 'n't' should affect Alignment, as it does not in more classical cases of SAI.
 - ▶ What didn't he know?
- ▶ Nonetheless, use of 'not' is more strongly ungrammatical than use of 'n't', which is to be expected if Alignment is required.

Structure of an IRE construction



IRE constructions and the Unaccented Pronoun Constraint

- ▶ The Unaccented Pronoun Constraint is the condition that:
 - “A personal pronoun cannot constitute a prosodic phrase by itself unless it bears accent.” (Dowty, 1996, p.28).
- ▶ Zwicky (1986) identifies several structural positions that unaccented pronouns cannot occupy, while r-expressions can.
 - ▶ *Mary told John the plot of the book.*
 - ▶ **Mary told John it.*
 - ▶ *Sprawling on the sofa was a drunken man.*
 - ▶ **Sprawling on the sofa was he.*
- ▶ This bears similarity to the following contrast.
 - ▶ *He’s a nice guy is John.*
 - ▶ **He’s a nice guy is he.*

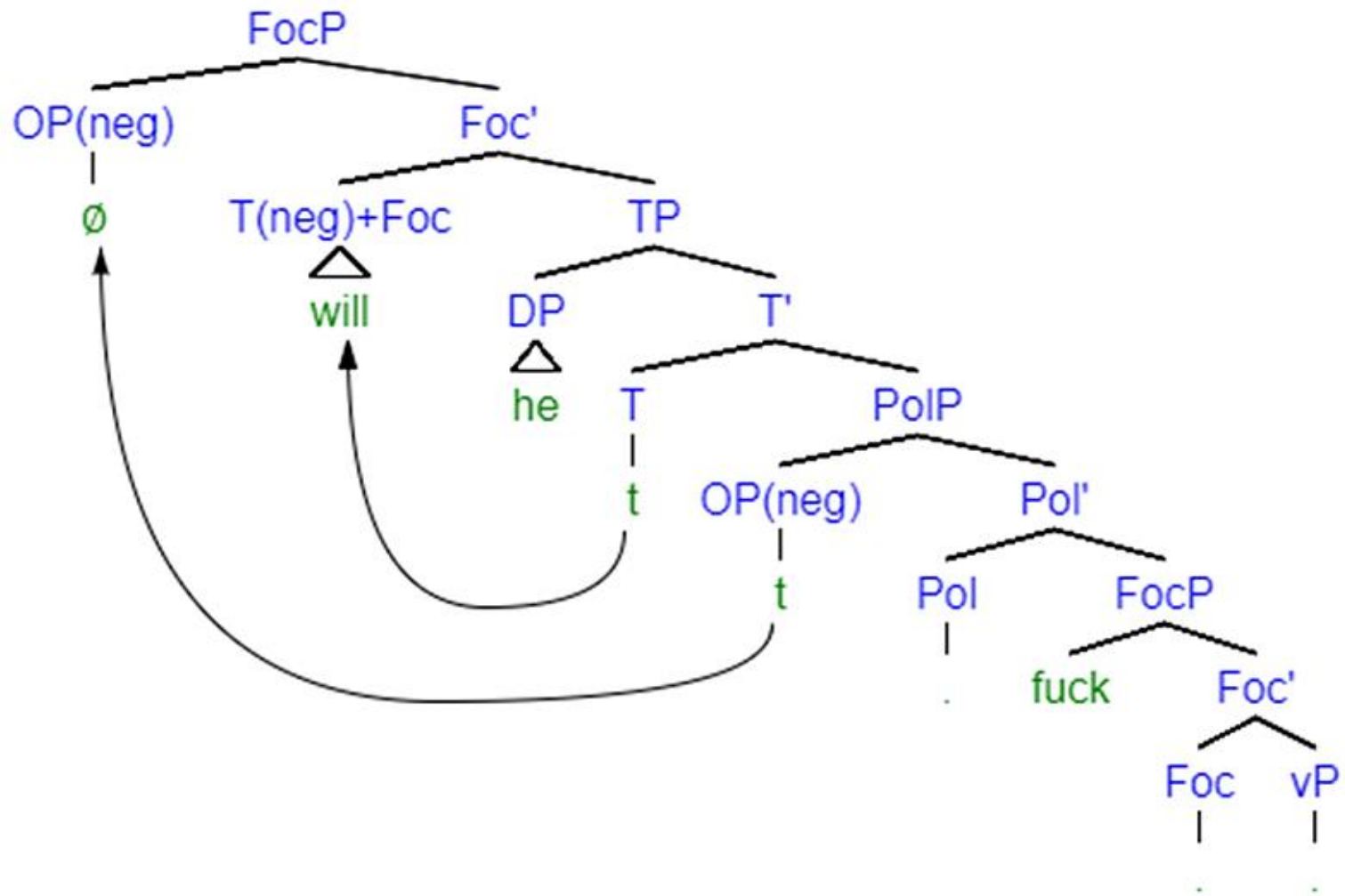
IRE constructions and the Unaccented Pronoun Constraint

- ▶ Both Zwicky's (1986) examples and IRE constructions are compatible with demonstrative pronouns, which bear accent.
 - ▶ John told Mary that.
 - ▶ It's too hot is that.
- ▶ IRE constructions' incompatibility with pronouns therefore occurs due to problems with prosody and accent.
- ▶ Zwicky claims that unstressed pronouns must combine with a preceding or following prosodic host. Combining with a following host 'is relatively unproblematic' (1986, p. 106-107).
- ▶ Combining with preceding hosts is more troublesome. Verbs, propositions and adjectives are testified preceding hosts, but not auxiliaries, hence why pronouns cannot feature in IRE constructions.

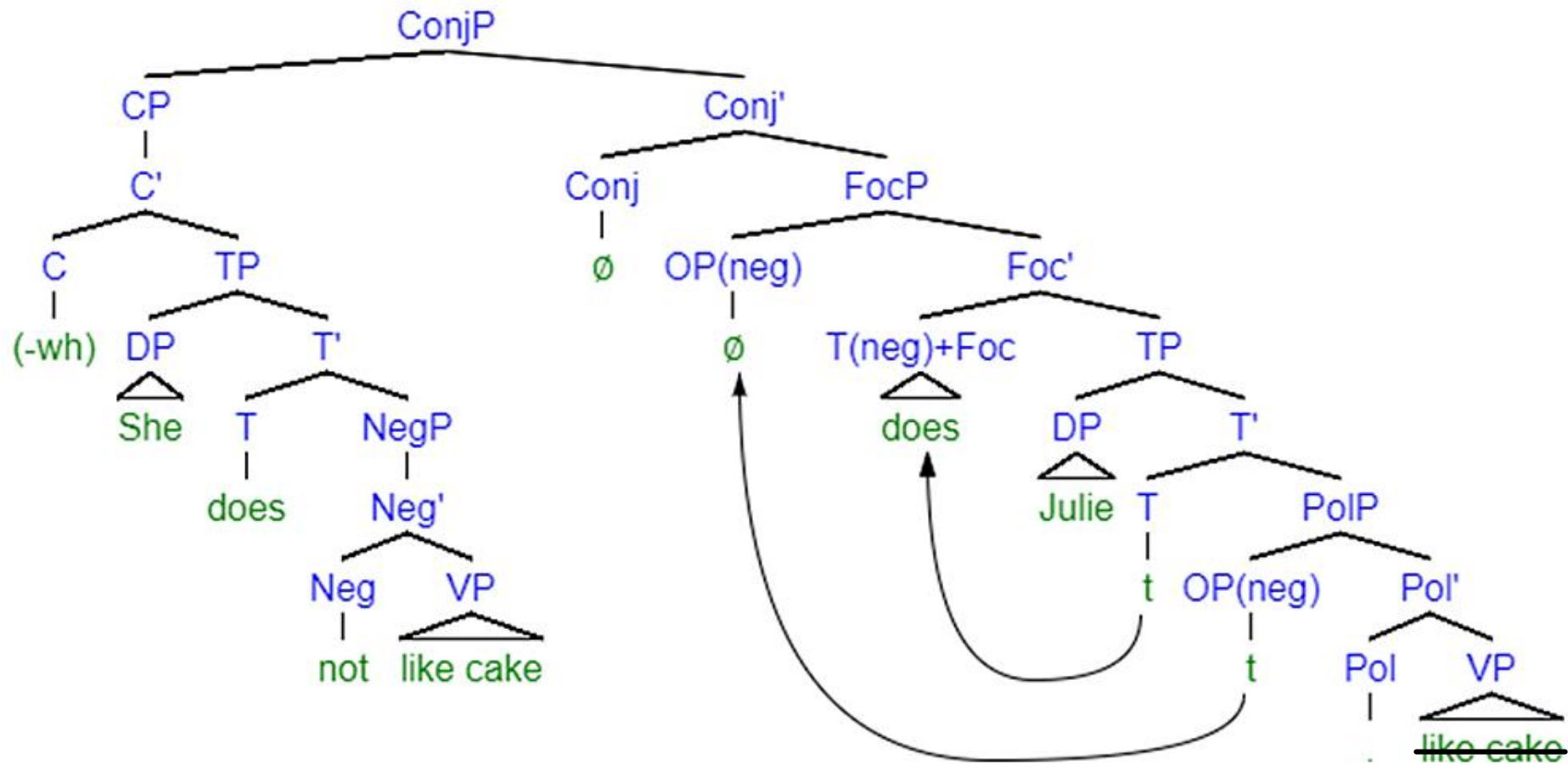
Mismatched polarity in IRE constructions

- ▶ IRE constructions may receive a negative reading without being overtly marked for negation. NIRE constructions may not.
 - ▶ She doesn't like cake [does Julie].
 - ▶ *She doesn't like cake, [Julie does].
- ▶ This bears similarities to 'fuck-inversion' (henceforth FI), which also has a negative reading despite lacking overt negative morphology.
 - ▶ Would he fuck go to that party (=He will not go to that party).

The Structure of FI (Sailor, 2017)



The structure of a covertly negated IRE construction



Mismatched polarity in IRE constructions

- ▶ Mismatched polarity is not available to NIRE constructions for the same reason that FI has no non-inverted counterpart.
 - ▶ *He would fuck go to that party
- ▶ Sailor (2017) states that the null negative operator must enter a Spec-Head relationship with the negative feature on the auxiliary.
- ▶ In IRE constructions, this relationship can be established, as the auxiliary moves above the subject.
- ▶ In NIRE constructions, it cannot. The auxiliary is too low in the structure.

Conclusions

- ▶ As proposed by Kayne (1994), (N)IRE constructions are derived similarly to Right Dislocation - both are reduced clauses with a full clause left-adjoined to them.
- ▶ NIRE and IRE constructions are derived almost identically, except that IRE constructions see the auxiliary move into C (or Focus).
- ▶ This movement subjects it to the Align constraint (Bruening, 2016), which bars overt negation, multiple auxiliaries and adverbs from intervening between the auxiliary and left edge of TP.
- ▶ The inversion also allows for covert negation of IRE constructions, as a null negative operator may rise to Spec FocP and enter a Spec-Head relationship with the negatively marked auxiliary.

References

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Questions?