

STACKING SUPPLEMENTS (HIERARCHICALLY)

In this talk, I argue that the influential semantic approach to parentheticals championed by Potts:LCI cannot account for some special cases of stacked supplements. Therefore, I conclude that we are still in need of a syntactic explanation of many special properties of these kinds of supplementary material.

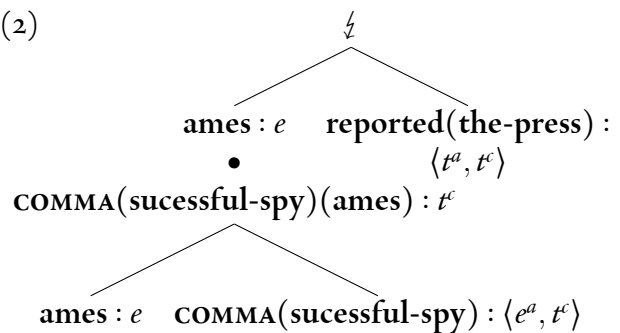
Potts:LCI uses a multi-dimensional logic L_{CI} that is based on two core components. First, he distinguishes between *at-issue* and *CI* types for conventional implicatures, which are used for parentheticals. The types are defined in a way such that CI content can only be in the output of a semantic combination, but never serve as an argument. The other crucial ingredient of L_{CI} is how CI content is handled in the semantic derivation: once CI content is formed, it becomes isolated from the surrounding material and thus is kept from interacting with other expressions. Taken together, both features of L_{CI} do a good job at accounting for the independent, secondary nature of supplements, both regarding their syntax and semantics.

However, in this talk, I show that his system is too rigid insofar as it cannot deal with some special cases of stacked supplements, namely those in which the supplements are stacked hierarchically. By this, I mean cases in which a supplement that takes a propositional argument (e.g. *as*-parentheticals, or continuative appositive relative clauses) is applied to a supplement with a nominal anchor (e.g. nominal appositives).

- (1) a. Ames, a successful spy, as the press reported, is now behind bars.
- b. Yesterday, I saw Chuck, who smiled at me, what made me shudder.

The problem for L_{CI} is that there is no order of combining the two supplements with their respective anchor to yield the desired result.

We first must combine the nominal appositive (2) with its anchor in order to get the proposition to which the second supplement shall apply. However, once we do this, the nominal appositive gets isolated (as indicated by the •) and does not take part in any further derivation. Hence, the second supplement cannot apply to it and the entire derivation is predicted by L_{CI} to be ill-formed, as shown in (2).



Crucially, to combine both supplements first before applying to the nominal anchor is not possible either since L_{CI} does not allow for one CI expression to modify another.

To overcome this problem, I suggest to use a more rich type system similar that allows for more interaction by employing what can be called *compositional multidimensionality* (Gutzmann2012). With such a system, it is possible to define a multidimensional variant of function composition as used in categorial grammars (Steedman2000). We then can first combine the two supplements to yield a complex supplement that needs an individual argument in order to express a secondary, coordinated proposition.

However, this move loses some of the generalization about supplementary material that could be derived from Potts:LCI who argues that the disintegrated status of supplementary material stems from their semantics instead of any special syntactic structure. Against this, I conclude that we are still in need for some syntactic reasons to explain the special behavior of unintegrated material.