Adversative but and the proper treatment of gapping

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1 Introduction

• Where does the gap in gapping come from?
  
  (1) Max brings gin to parties, and vodka, too.
      ‘Max brings gin to parties, and Max brings vodka to parties, too.’
  
  (2) Max brings gin to parties, and Liz vodka.
      ‘Max brings gin to parties, and Liz brings vodka to parties.’

• Two main types of analyses:
  
  1) remnant movement followed by across-the-board movement (Johnson 2004, 2009)
  2) deletion

• A disclaimer: I will not explicitly consider sharing (e.g. Moltmann 1992), copying (Repp 2009), or base-generation (Sag et al. 1985, Oehrle 1987) approaches.

• Almost all work on the proper analysis of gapping has focused on and and or (though see Schwarz 1999 on either…or).

• But gapping does show up with other coordinators, in particular adversative but (McCawley 1991, Repp 2009:158–172, Toosarvandani 2010:27–42);

  (3) Max doesn’t bring gin to parties, but vodka.
      ‘Max does not bring gin to parties, and Max brings vodka to parties.’

• Unlike other coordinators, adversative but requires that its two conjuncts contrast in polarity: the first must contain a negative element.

⇒ For this reason, I argue that an across-the-board movement treatment of gapping is not possible for adversative but.

• This is a somewhat regrettable conclusion since the across-the-board approach has a lot to recommend for itself:

  – It explains why gapping only occurs in coordination structures.
  – It derives in a straightforward fashion the somewhat stricter identity constraint that holds of gapping relative to verb phrase ellipsis (Johnson 2004:31f.).

• Nonetheless, across-the-board movement cannot be responsible for the gap in gapping structures with adversative but, because the first conjunct always contains a negative element.

• Deletion makes exactly the right predictions about what can go missing, and when.

⇒ In particular, I show that deletion can account for a mysterious constraint on remnants with adversative but. As McCawley (1991:192) observes, some subject remnants are impossible:

  (4) * Max doesn’t bring gin to parties, but Liz.
      Intended: ‘Max does not bring gin to parties, and Liz brings gin to parties.’

• The ungrammaticality of (4) follows from a failure of identity between the constituent that is deleted in the second coordinate and its antecedent in the first coordinate.

• In the remainder of this talk, I will:

  1. set apart the adversative use of but from its denial-of-expectation use;
  2. review arguments for gapping with adversative but;
  3. show that across-the-board movement cannot derive gapping with adversative but;
  4. argue for a deletion account, instead; and
  5. demonstrate that the deletion account, which allows for variable-sized coordinate structures, correctly predicates when subject remnants are possible.

2 Two types of but

• There is a semantic difference between the ADVERSATIVE USE of but and the DENIAL–OF–EXPECTATION USE (Anscombe and Ducrot 1977, Lang 1984:236–262, Horn 2001:402–413):

  (5) Shaq is huge but agile.
      ‘If Shaq is huge, it is expected that he is not agile; he is both huge and agile.’ denial-of-expectation
  (6) Shaq isn’t huge but agile.
      ‘Shaq isn’t huge; he is agile.’ adversative

• In addition, adversative but requires a negative element in its first conjunct—here sentence negation.

• Often, adversative but is said to be ‘corrective’ (most recently, see Vicente 2010 and Repp 2009:149–158). This is incorrect: adversative but does not require that its first conjunct ‘correct’ a previous utterance (McCawley 1991, Toosarvandani 2010:49f.).

• Given the position of negation, adversative but must coordinate constituents larger than we see on the surface:

  (7) Max doesn’t bring gin to parties, but vodka.
      ‘Max does not bring gin to parties, and Max brings vodka to parties.’

• Since sentence negation adjoins to VP, and negation is only interpreted inside the first conjunct, adversative but must coordinate AT LEAST vPs.
• There is only a DP following adversative but, though, since gapping has applied to the second coordinate to reduce it to a fragment (McCawley 1991, Repp 2009:158–172, Toosarvandani 2010:27–42):

  1. Like gapping with and, it is possible to have more than one fragment following adversative but:

     (8) A: Sally took her son to the park on Sunday.
     B: Sally didn’t take her son to the park on Sunday, but her daughter on Saturday.

  2. Like gapping with and, the remnant with adversative but obeys various island constraints:

     (9) a. Coordinate Structure Constraint
     * Alfonse didn’t cook the rice and the beans, but the potatoes. (=... but Alfonse cooked the rice and the potatoes.)
     b. Sentential Subject Constraint
     * That Alfonse ate the rice isn’t fantastic, but the beans. (=... but that Alfonse ate the beans.)
     c. Complex NP Constraint
     * Alfonse didn’t smash the vase that Sonya had brought from China but from Japan. (=... but Alfonse smashed the vase that Sonya had brought from Japan.)
     d. Adjunct Island
     * Jasper didn’t choke when he saw Sally, but John. (=... but Jasper didn’t choke when he saw John.)

⇒ Some sentences with adversative but involve coordination at least of vP and gapping of the second coordinate.

3 Gapping is not across-the-board movement

• In Johnson’s (2004, 2009) influential theory of gapping, the main verb in the second vP coordinate goes missing because the two vP coordinates have across-the-board moved:

     (10) Max brings gin to parties, and vodka, too.
     (11) TP

• The steps in the derivation of this ‘complex gap’:

  1. The remnant DP1, vodka too, and its correlate DP2, gin, raise to adjoin to the vPs containing them.
  2. The now identical vPs undergo across-the-board movement to Spec-PredP.
  3. The subject DP1 Max raises out of this VP to Spec-TP.

• Such a derivation for adversative but is not possible, since then we would expect that negation would only be able to end up to the right of the main verb—contrary to fact:

     (12) Max doesn’t bring gin to parties, but vodka.
     (13) a. Step 1
There are two crucial components to the across-the-board movement analysis of gapping:

- Some segment of each of the coordinated phrases across-the-board moves to a position outside the entire coordinate structure (Spec-PredP).
- Since the main verb surfaces below T, the target of the across-the-board movement must be located below T. Coordination is therefore even lower—vP.

But it is exactly this combination of coordination and movement that is impossible with adversative *but*.

Because adversative *but*'s first conjunct contains negation, across-the-board movement of vP's to a higher position will never produce the correct linear order for the main verb and negation.

4 ...but deletion

The deletion approach, in contrast, *can* derive gapping with adversative *but* since the main verbs of the two conjunct do not move anywhere.

For concreteness and ease of comparison, I assume that the remnant, or remnants, raises and adjoins to the vP containing it, which subsequently deletes (Jayaseelan 1990, Coppock 2001, Lin 2002):

(14) TP

![Diagram](image)

The deleted vP (boxed) must be identical to an antecedent vP in the first coordinate (also boxed).

The correlate DP *gin* must be factored out of this identity calculation: either by string-vacuous movement (Jayaseelan 1990) or because the correlate is focused (Sag 1976, Coppock 2001).

Crucially, there is a vP in the first coordinate, which, except for the correlate, is identical to the deleted vP.

Negation is adjoined to the antecedent vP, and so it is not included in the identity calculation with the deleted vP.

5 Subject remnants

- The deletion account explains an unexpected restriction on gapping with adversative *but*.
- McCawley (1991:192) observes that matrix subjects usually cannot be remnants:

\[(15) ^* Max doesn’t bring gin to parties, but Liz.\]

Intended: ‘Max does not bring gin to parties, and Liz brings gin to parties.’

- Assuming that subjects—including subject remnants— are case-licensed in Spec-TP, then coordination in (15) must be of TPs.
- We know independently that gapping can apply to larger coordination structures since elements in Spec-CP can serve as remnants:

\[(16) Gin, Max brought to the party, and vodka Liz.\]

- So, for the sentence in (15), we would have the following parse:

![Diagram](image)

But now, the deleted TP does not have an identical antecedent in the first coordinate: sentence negation is contained within the antecedent TP (boxed) but not the deleted TP (also boxed). Consequently, the sentence is ungrammatical.

Crucially, this is not a universal ban on subject remnants. Nonmatrix subjects, for instance, can be remnants as long as the antecedent phrase does not contain negation.

- This is the case when vPs headed by an ECM predicate like *want* are coordinated. The embedded subject can be a remnant:

\[(18) ^* Max always bring cheap gin to parties (Gordon’s); Liz always brings nice gin (Hendrick’s).\]

He doesn’t want Max to bring gin to the party, but Liz.
6 Other negative elements and gapping

• When the negative element is the negative adverb never, a matrix subject remnant is still impossible:

(23) a. Max never votes for Democrats, but for Republicans.

• Unless, that is, never is a correlate contrasting with a remnant, always:

(24) Max never votes for Democrats, but Liz always.

(25) The deleted TP (boxed) is identical to the antecedent TP in the first coordinate (also boxed) after factoring out the correlates Max and never.

⇒ When the negative element can be factored out of the identity calculation, the restriction on matrix subject remnants is obviated.

⇒ This follows from the deletion account, which treats subject remnants as arising through deletion of the second TP coordinate under identity with the first TP coordinate.

7 Conclusion

⇒ Gapping with adversative but cannot be derived through across-the-board movement, unlike similar gapping structures with and.

⇒ Deletion, on the other hand, is able to derive the right word order between negation and the main verb in gapping sentences with adversative but.

⇒ The deletion account derives McCawley’s (1991:192) observation that many matrix subject remnants are not possible.
References

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