

**POST-TO-TIMES** ELICITATION TECHNIQUE (Bradley, Fernández & Taylor, 2003)

- Participants combined two visually presented simple sentences (—), and uttered ( ) a complex sentence containing the N1-of-N2 ambiguity.
- Simplex sentences disambiguated for N2 attachment, always. The structure is thus uniformly rightbranching.
- Design: Matrix Weight (MX) x RC Length (RC).
- Study 1 (Prosody) analyzed critical region durations, for N=64x4 productions of N=6 American English speakers.
- Study 2 (Questionnaire) assessed preferred attachment, for N=36x4 target sentences read silently by N=11x4 speakers of American English.

**RESULTS**

Subjects

- From Bradley et al. (2003) finds that, in this language, an optional genitive preposition (cf. English) of attracts phrasing breaks and affects attachment preference. N1[od]N2 can compete with N2[RC].

Materials

- Materials
- The ambasador approved the color of the fabric.

Procedure

- Procedure Identical to the elicitation protocol of Bradley et al. (2003) attachment study
- RC Length (1/3 PWds) = Preposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N1 Region</th>
<th>N2 Region</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RC1—od</td>
<td>RC2—od</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC3—od</td>
<td>RC1—od</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC3—v</td>
<td>RC2—od</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC2—v</td>
<td>RC1—od</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**EXPERIMENT 1: CROATIAN**


- Procedure Identical to the elicitation protocol of Bradley et al. (2003) attachment study
- Materials N=10 quadruples from Lovric’s (2003) attachment study
- RC Length (1/3 PWds) = Preposition

- Subjects N=4 Croatian speakers

**RESULTS**

- Duration Data, Current Study
- Duration Data, Lovric (2003)

**POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS AND PLANS FOR PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT**

1. Might the elicitation protocol simply preclude phrasal breaks at sites other than N2[RC] — because the first sentence of the visual display presents N1-of-N2 sentence-finally?

For a language differing in its prosodic phonology, does the identical protocol elicit utterances with materials-triggered phrasal breaks at sites additional to N2[RC]?

2. Might elicited RCs emerge in the protocol of Bradley et al. (2003) under non-restrictive rather than restrictive interpretation — because N2 (host for RC modification) is introduced with definite determiner? When protocols are devised to bring out restrictive or non-restrictive readings, do phrasing patterns alter? (Systematically here can clarify the restrictiveness type of the original elicitation.)

**EXPERIMENT 2: ENGLISH**

- Procedure Two protocol variants, presented in fixed order:
- Restrictive Protocol (R)
- Non-Restrictive Protocol (NR)

- Materials N=8 quadruples from Bradley et al. (2003); N1/N2 inanimate Sentence Weight (Bare/Rich = 5/6 PWds) × Protocol (R/NR)

- Subjects N=6 American-English speakers

**RESULTS**

- Duration, N2 Region
- The likelihood of a phrasing break after N2 graded purely additively with matrix weight and RC length.

- Attachment-Preference Length (PWds)
- The likelihood of N1-attachment graded purely additively with matrix weight and RC length.

**CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

- Does American English offer any means at all for determining a speaker’s intent with respect to (non-)restrictiveness?
- Use of RelPro ortho and avoidance of Comp. that (obligatory for NR in some dialects of English) is not routinely in play in American English. Intuition suggests that very different tones normally accompany NR vs. R modification. Is that really so?
- Would non-restrictiveness affect attachment preference in the N1-of-N2-RC ambiguity?
- Prediction 1: R interpretation should neutralize the usual effect of weight variation. Note that Hermeth et al. (submitted) report just that result for extraposed RCs in German. Prediction 2: If prosodic breaks are packing cues for syntactic discontinuity (Fodor, 2002), N1-attachment should be more likely for NR- than R-modification.
The “Post-to-Times” protocol of Bradley, Fernández & Taylor (2003) (BFT) presents two short sentences, see (1), to elicit an utterance containing a complex NP with a modifying relative clause (RC); for the speaker, RC's attachment is disambiguated. BFT reported that their instrumental analyses of elicited utterances (N2-disambiguated, uniformly) showed remarkable systematicity in phonological phrasing: Whole-sentence length controlled the likelihood of phrasal breaks occurring at RC's left edge, i.e., N2||RC. They argued that the overt prosody facts support an implicit prosody explanation (Fodor, 2002) of RC-attachment preferences: When ambiguous sentences were read silently, attachment was higher both when matrix subjects were heavier and when RCs were longer; see (2).

We report research extending these preliminary findings. We first examine BFT's claim that N2||RC is the sole site of systematic variation in default phonological phrasing in English because it is privileged in the syntax/prosody interface of that language. We evaluate the possible objection that this break site has merely been picked out by a protocol presenting N2 sentence-finally. Data were collected in an overt prosody study of Croatian, a language in which a proclitic preposition 'od' (non-thematic, and similar to English 'of') optionally precedes N2 in the complex NP; Lovric (2003) shows N1||Prep-N2 to be a second site attracting phrase breaks in Croatian's default prosody. With materials factorially combining RC-Length (short/long) and Preposition (absent/present) and utterances elicited with BFT's protocol (see (3)), we explore whether phonological phrasing for this construction in Croatian involves a trade-off between two break-sites: RC's left edge, as in English, and Prep-N2's left edge. BFT's findings for English would not, therefore, be an artefact of the protocol. However, these data are moot.

In a second study, we explore effects of RC's (non-)restrictiveness on phonological phrasing in English, contrasting two variants of the elicitation protocol. Restrictive RCs are elicited when an introductory sentence is accompanied by a “Which X?” question and response, as in (4a) and (4b), and non-restrictive RCs, when (4c) accompanies (4a); note that RC predicates are segmentally identical across restrictive and non-restrictive types. We demonstrate that it is only for restrictive RCs that the likelihood of the N2||RC phrasing break reliably grades with whole-sentence length. This result suggests an implicit prosody account of the finding of Hemforth et al. (submitted), that extraposed RCs in German fail to exhibit length effects on preferred attachment. Separate phonological phrasing of RC is obligatory under extraposition; and where break-likelihood is at ceiling, length-sensitivity is ruled out.

(1) The plot concerns the guardian of the prince. The (guardian/prince) was exiled.
(2) The (unusual) plot concerns the guardian of the prince who was exiled (from the country for decades).
(3) Opisali smo bratica (od) rukometaša.
   Described are-[1st,PL] the cousin (of) the handball-player.
   Rukometaš studira (na odsjeku za arheologiju).
   The handball-player studies (at the department of archeology).
(4) a. The plot concerns the guardian of the prince.
   b. Which prince? The prince who was exiled.
   c. By the way, that particular prince was exiled.

References


