

Root Transformations & Quantificational Structure

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Hooper and Thompson (1973) suggest that the possibility of syntactic “Root Transformations” (RTs) correlates with semantic assertion: RTs occur in clauses corresponding to asserted, but not presupposed, material (cf. (1)-(3)):

- (1) a. *Mildred bought a Mercedes
[**when/before/after** her son, he purchased stock in Xerox].
b. Mildred bought a Mercedes
[**when/before/after** her son purchased stock in Xerox].
Presupposes: Mildred's son purchased stock in Xerox.
- (2) a. Mildred drives a Mercedes [**because** her son, he owns stock in Xerox].
b. Mildred drives a Mercedes [**because** her son owns stock in Xerox].
Asserts: Mildred's son purchased stock in Xerox.
- (3) a. *[**Because** her son, he owns stock in Xerox], Mildred drives a Mercedes.
b. [**Because** her son,owns stock in Xerox], Mildred drives a Mercedes.
Asserts: Mildred drives a Mercedes.

Semantic quantification theory also appeals to notions of presupposition and assertion (Partee 1991). In typical tripartite quantificational structures, including adverbial quantifications, the restriction corresponds to presupposed material, whereas the scope corresponds to asserted material (4):

- [illegible]

This picture suggests a potential explanatory connection between the semantic function of adverbial subordinate clauses and the availability of RTs within them. Specifically:

- Syntactic/semantic properties of RTs block them from quantificational restrictions, but permit them in scopes
- Adverbial clauses forbidding RTs are in quantificational restrictions.
- Adverbial clauses allowing RTs are in quantificational scopes.

In this talk we explore the extent to which such a connection might be made. As we argue, independent focal properties of quantificational adverbs, and of adverbial clauses themselves, appear to play a crucial role.