Split Quantifiers and Countercyclic Adjunction

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There is, in French, a case of split quantification, which has gone virtually unnoticed in the literature. It consists of a quantifier semantically linked to a complex constituent that denotes its restrictor set. The latter is made up of the element comme ‘as’ + a bare common noun. These two components are often split in the syntax (1b) (discontinuous variant), but can appear together as a phrase (continuous variant) (1a). This construct will be referred to as QCN (= Quantifier + comme + Noun).

(1) a. Si rien comme solution n’est proposée/ne nous est apportée ...
   if nothing as solution NEG-is proposed/NEG to-us is brought
b. Si rien n’est proposé/ne nous est apporté comme solution ...
   'If no solution is proposed/is given to us …'

It will be first established that the properties of QCN markedly differ from those of the more well-known case of quantification at a distance involving de-phrases in French (QAD) discussed by Kayne (1975), Obenauer (1976, 1994) and Doetjes (1995). For example, while the restriction in QCN may be spelled out following a temporal adjunct (2a), this option remains unavailable in cases of QAD (2b).

(2) a. J’ai rien lu [cet été] comme articles.
   I-have nothing read this summer as articles
   'I read a lot of articles this summer.'

Next, it will be shown that QCN restrictor phrases exhibit the exact distributional characteristics of restrictive relatives. For example, extraposed relatives show a nested linear order (Rochemont & Culicover 1997 and Bianchi 1999), and so do extraposed QCN restrictor phrases (3).

(3) a. ?Personne n’a rien reçu hier [comme salaire] [comme travailleur].
   no one NEG-has nothing received yesterday as salary as worker
b. *Personne n’a rien reçu hier [comme travailleur] [comme salaire].
   'No worker received any compensation yesterday.'

A treatment of QCN along the lines of Kayne's (1994) promotion analysis of relatives will be considered, but will be shown to be unable to account (inter alia) for the existence of QCN "hydras" (cf. Link (1984) for restrictive relatives such as that in (4)).

(4) Ce tireur d’élite ne rate jamais [rien ni personne [comme cible]].
   this shooter of-elite NEG miss never nothing nor no one as target
   'This sharpshooter misses no one and nothing.'

Instead, an account of QCN will be explored that takes the restrictor phrase to be a QP-modifying adjunct whose distribution can be made to fall out of the theory of extraposition developed by Hunter and Frank (2011). In this theory, every XP counts as a phase and an XP modifying adjunct (labeled [*XP] because it is the kind of object that “looks for” an XP to combine with) can either be introduced during a phase where XP is being constructed (early option), or be introduced during a phase where XP is present as the complement or specifier of another head (late option). On these assumptions, we expect object-modifying QCN restrictor phrases to be introduced at the object QP phase (early option) or the VP phase (late option). As the examples in (5) suggest, this is, in fact, what we find.

(5) a. Ils ont accepté [QP n’importe qui] [comme bénévoles] hier. (early option)
   they have accepted anybody as volunteers yesterday
b. Ils ont [VP accepté [QP n’importe qui]] hier [comme bénévoles]. (late option)
   'They accepted anyone who volunteered yesterday.'

In those cases involving two instances of QCN in the same clause, we expect that each restrictor phrase should be able to avail itself of the early option and be linearized to the right of its host during the QP phase. For the object, this should occur in situ, for the subject, this should occur at the right edge of the higher copy. That this is in fact a legitimate option is illustrated in (6).

(6) On s’est aperçu que [QP rien] [comme uniforme] ne plaisait à [QP personne] [comme joueur].
   we SE-is realized that nothing as uniform NEG pleased to nobody as player
   'We realized that no uniform pleased any player.'

Thus, our goal will be to demonstrate that the locality restrictions observed for QCN can be captured if one assumes that QCN restrictor phrases are QP-modifying adjuncts that can be introduced in the syntactic workspace when their host is acting as the complement or specifier of some other projection.