QR as an agent of vehicle change: evidence from Japanese and Hindi phrasal comparatives
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Fiengo & May (1994) discuss examples where Conditions A and C are obviated under ellipsis in subordinate clauses. F&M propose two analyses of these cases. In some, Condition C is obviated via QR of a phrase containing the offending r-expression (an analysis later refined in Fox 1995). In others, the offending r-expression or reflexive is replaced by a pronoun (“vehicle change”). The two analyses are respectively illustrated in (1) and (2)–(3). Hestvik (1995) argues against a vehicle change analysis of (3), proposing instead that the strict reading is derived via short QR of the reflexive to VP — (4). We first show that Hestvik’s analysis is bolstered by data from Japanese and Hindi phrasal comparatives (§1). We then argue that Hestvik’s analysis can be extended to explain apparent instances of vehicle change in subordinate clauses (§2).

1 Japanese and Hindi

Bhatt & Takahashi (2011) show that phrasal comparatives in Japanese and Hindi have a non-ellipsis derivation. B&T’s derivation exploits “parasitic scope”. Movement of the subject out of vP introduces a \(\lambda\)-abstractor over individuals. The degree phrase then “tucks in” between the subject and the \(\lambda\)-node to introduce an abstractor over degrees — (5b). The degree head first composes with the complement of \(\text{than}\), then with the predicate of degrees and individuals, and finally with the subject — (5c):

\[
\begin{align*}
(5) & \quad \text{Mary} [\text{VP introduced him}_1] \to [\alpha \text{everyone that John}_1 \text{’s mother wanted her to} [\text{VP e}]]. \\
& \quad [\alpha \text{everyone that John}_1 \text{’s mother wanted her to} [\text{VP introduce him to} t\alpha]] \text{ M} [\text{VP introduced him}_1 \to t\alpha]
\end{align*}
\]

On the face of it, a reflexive within comparative clause should be bound by the (trace of) the vP-internal subject, yielding a sloppy reading. Surprisingly, however, phrasal comparatives in Hindi and Japanese permit both strict and sloppy readings. This is shown for Japanese in (6) (Kishida 2012) and Hindi in (7):

\[
\begin{align*}
(6) & \quad \text{Mary-ga} \text{ John yorimo hageshiku zibun-o hihan-shi-ta} \\
& \text{John apnii hifaaazat Tim se behtar kartaa hai Mary John than severely self criticize-do John self’s defense Tim than better do is ‘M criticized M more severely than J criticized J/M.’ ‘J defended J better than T defended T/J.’}
\end{align*}
\]

In the absence of ellipsis a vehicle change analysis of the strict reading is impossible in principle. Hestvik’s analysis, on the other hand, combines neatly with B&T’s to derive the strict reading. The reflexive QRs above the degree operator and is bound by the raised subject. The internal and external arguments of \textit{criticize} then translate as distinct non-covarying variables. The LF for the strict reading of (6) is shown in (8):

\[
\begin{align*}
(8) & \quad [\text{VP Mary}_1 [\text{VP herself}_1 [\text{VP \lambda y} [\text{VP \text{DegP John}-than Deg}] \text{ \lambda d} [\text{\lambda x} [\text{\text{VP d}-many books read}]]]]] \\
& \quad \text{where Deg(x)(P)(y) } \leftrightarrow \exists d[P(y, d) \land \neg P(x, d)]
\end{align*}
\]

2 Extending the QR analysis

Hestvik assumes that DPs can freely undergo short QR regardless of semantic type. This makes it possible to derive the strict reading of (2) without vehicle change. The DP \(\alpha\) containing the offending r-expression undergoes QR before the antecedent VP is copied to the ellipsis site:

\[
\begin{align*}
(9) & \quad \text{John [VP loves [\text{VP Mary}_1 \text{’s mother}]] more than she}_1 \text{ does [VP e]]}. \\
& \quad \text{QR of } \alpha: \quad \text{John [VP [\text{\alpha M}_1 \text{’s mother}] [\text{VP loves} t\alpha] more than she}_1 \text{ does [VP e]]]. \\
& \quad \text{Inner VP copied: \text{John [VP [\text{\alpha M}_1 \text{’s mother}] [\text{VP loves} t\alpha] more than she}_1 \text{ does [VP love} t\alpha]].}
\end{align*}
\]
Following Fox (1995), Chomsky (1995, ch. 3), we assume that the Minimize Restrictors constraint requires the restrictor in an operator-variable chain to be deleted from all but one copy, preferably the lower copy. It follows that there is an LF for (9) where the restrictor deletes in the copy marked by the second tα, so that she1 subsequently does not c-command Mary:

(10) John [VP tx [VP [vp loves [x : x M1’s mother]] [more than she1 does [VP love x]]]].

In fact, there is reason to think that (10) is the only possible LF for (9). Traces of A’-moved phrases within elided predicates do not reconstruct for Condition C. This is illustrated for wh-movement in (11b):

(11) a. *[α how much fonder of John1’s friends] could he1 be tα?
    b. [α how much fonder of John1’s friends] than he1 is [AP fond of John1’s friends] could I be tα?

Typically, then, the preference for retaining the restrictor in the lower copy prevents QR from bleeding violation:

(3:211-237).

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Indices and Identity


