LING 819  Spring 2007

I. A Gap in an ellipsis paradigm [Based on Lasnik (1997)]

A. Main verbs vs. auxiliaries

(1) John slept, and Mary will too
(2a) *John slept, and Mary will slept too
    b  John slept, and Mary will sleep too

(3) Hypothesis 1: Any form of a verb V can be 'deleted under identity' with any form of V.

(4) *John was here, and Mary will too [See Warner (1986)]
(5a) *John was here and Mary will was here too
    b  John was here and Mary will be here too

(6) Hypothesis 2: A form of a verb V can only be deleted under identity with the very same form. Forms of be and auxiliary have (finite ones, at least) are introduced into syntactic structures already fully inflected. Forms of 'main' verbs are created out of lexically introduced bare forms and independent affixes, as in Chomsky (1955).

(7) John [Af] sleep, and Mary will sleep too

B. Motivation for the hybrid morphological account

(8) Lasnik (1995b) proposes this morphological difference between main and auxiliary verbs in English to account for the fact that finite auxiliaries show the full range of raising effects (like all verbs in French), while main verbs in English show none of them. The proposal is that the English finite auxiliaries (and all finite verbs in French) are lexically introduced with inflectional features which must be checked against a functional head (or heads). English main verbs are lexically uninflected, so they don't raise.

(9a) *John not left
    b  *John left not

(10) Just as in Chomsky (1955) and Chomsky (1957), the process associating the finite affix with the bare verb ('Affix Hopping') requires adjacency.

II. An alternative treatment of the gap?

(11) Note that in the crucial (4), the V (is)in the antecedent has raised to Infl. Thus:
(13) "...a trace of verb movement cannot serve as part of a VPE antecedent." Potsdam (1996)

(14) However, there is good evidence that V-raising is not incompatible with VP ellipsis, hence, that both (12) and (13) are too strong..
A number of languages with overt V raising to I nonetheless allow VP ellipsis, with the effect that everything in the VP except the V is deleted:

Q: Salaxt et ha-yel adi m l e- bei t-ha-sefer you-sent Acc the ki ds to school "Did you send the kids to school?"
A: Salaxti I sent "I did"

Hebrew Doron (1990)

A Martas deu um livro ao Joao? Sim deu. the Martha gave a book to the John yes gave "Did Martha give a book to John? Yes, she did."

Portuguese Martins (1994)

A possible interfering factor: These, and many languages with apparent V-raising and VP ellipsis, also have null objects, at least in certain environments. However, standard tests indicate that VP ellipsis is, indeed, a possibility.

First, there are no 'null manner adverbials' in Serbo-Croatian, yet the second conjunct of (21) is interpreted with the adverbial.

Ivan piše rad pažljivo, a i njegov asistent piše Ivan writes paper carefully and ('too') his assistant writes "Ivan is writing a paper carefully, and his assistant is (writing a paper carefully) too"

Serbo-Croatian Adapted from Lasnik (1997)

Second, the second conjunct of (23) can have a 'sloppy' reading.

Marko gradi sebi kucu, a i Marija gradi Marko builds himself house and ('too') Marija builds "Marko is building himself a house, and Marija is (building herself a house) too"

As far as I know, these phenomena are general in all the relevant languages.

Even English evidently has certain instances of V-raising with VP ellipsis:

John was here and Mary was too
A weaker version of (12) (and perhaps what Roberts actually intended):

\( [\text{VP} [V_e] X] \) cannot antecede VP-ellipsis of \( [\text{VP} [V] X] \) ((where V is lexical))

"...a raised V has fewer features than a non-raised V, assuming that the features that cause raising are not copied (this has to be assumed in a minimalist framework or the raising operation would not eliminate features and so would have no motivation, and so would be impossible given the general last-resort nature of movement)." Ms. version of Roberts (1998)

If (12) or (28) is correct, it should generalize to all heads, not be limited to V and trace of V:

\( [\text{YP} [Y_e] X] \) cannot antecede YP-ellipsis of \( [\text{YP} [Y] X] \).

But now we find still more counterexamples, based on Sluicing:

Speaker A: Never will \( [\text{IP} \text{Harry} \text{t} \text{go to a linguistics lecture again}] \)
Speaker B: Tell me why \( [\text{IP} \text{Harry will never go to a linguistics lecture again}] \)

Speaker B: Why \( [\text{IP} \text{Harry will never go to a linguistics lecture again}] \)

Speaker A: Never will \( [\text{IP} \text{Susan} \text{t} \text{understand some linguists}] \)
Speaker B: Tell me which linguists \( [\text{IP} \text{Susan will never understand}] \)

Speaker A: Never will \( [\text{IP} \text{Susan} \text{t} \text{understand some linguists}] \)
Speaker B: Which linguists \( [\text{IP} \text{Susan will never understand}] \)

III. Why isn't Roberts' line of reasoning valid?

Given that a raised \( X^0 \) has had a feature (or set of features) checked and deleted, why can it antecede the deletion of an XP with its head in situ (as in some occurrences of Sluicing and Pseudogapping (see Appendix))?

On my analysis of these constructions, the X in situ has had its features raised and checked.

But now, the major prima facie counter-examples to the revised version of Roberts’ proposal (31) are fully compatible with it.

So why not accept the (revised) Roberts account of the gap in the original ellipsis paradigm?

John slept, and Mary will too
*John was here, and Mary will too
John was here, and Mary will be here too
Here *be* does not raise at all, with or without pied-piping, whereas *was* obviously does raise, resulting in features being checked and deleted.

BUT what are those features? It is hard to see how they could be anything other than inflectional features. But checking and deleting the inflectional features of *was* makes it more like *be*, not less like *be*.

IV. Another kind of justification for (13)

[Under ellipsis] Corresponding X⁰ traces [unlike XP traces] must have the same binder in both the antecedent and target clauses. [This would not obviously explain the gap in the paradigm, even if correct.]

Chicken, *she*'ll eat, but ostrich, *she* won't

Potsdam (1996) claims that in Hebrew and Irish, both V-raising languages that have VP ellipsis, "the raised verbs in ellipsis antecedent and target clauses must be the same." He suggests that (46) is universal.

Q: *dina* soreget et ha- svederim *Se*- hi loveSet

Dina knits ACC the sweaters that she wears

"Does *Dina* knit the sweaters that she wears?"

A₁: lo, aval ima Sel a soreget

no, but *mother* hers knits

"No, but *her* mother does."

A₂: lo, ima Sel a kona (l)a

no, *mother* hers buys (to-her)

"No, *her* mother buys them (for her)." Hebrew Doron (1990)

A₁ is 'strict' or 'sloppy'. A₂ is only strict.

Ivan piše rad pažl divo, a njegov asistent čita

Ivan writes paper carefully and *his* assistant reads

"*Ivan* is writing a paper carefully, and *his* assistant is reading it carefully." Serbo-Croatian

Marko gradi sebi kucu, a Marija kupuje

Marko builds himself house and *Marija* buys

"*Marko* is building himself a house, and *Maria* is buying herself a house."

Q: Does Dina knit the sweaters that she wears?

A: *No* her mother, buys the sweaters that she, wears

The putative answer (53)A is strikingly unresponsive to the question.
Dina knits the sweaters that she wears while her mother buys them. 

Dina loves every sweater that she wears but her mother hates every sweater that she wears.

Appendix: Pseudogapping

(A1) a. If you don't believe me, you will Ø the weatherman
    b. I rolled up a newspaper, and Lynn did Ø a magazine
    c. Kathy likes astronomy, but she doesn't Ø meteorology

Levin (1978)

(A2) Not just deletion of V:

(A3) a. The DA proved Jones guilty and the Assistant DA will prove Smith guilty
    b. John gave Bill a lot of money, and Mary will give Susan a lot of money

(A4) Pseudogapping as VP ellipsis, with the survivor rescued by moving out of the elided VP.

Jayaseelan (1990)

(A5) You might not believe me but you will Bob


(A7) Pseudogapping as overt raising to Spec of Agr₀ (rather than Jayaseelan's Heavy NP Shift) followed by deletion of VP. [Lasnik (1995a), Lasnik (1999)]
(A9) *You will Bob believe

(A10) "For the most part - perhaps completely - it is properties of the phonological component that require pied-piping. Isolated features and other scattered parts of words may not be subject to its rules, in which case the derivation is canceled; or the derivation might proceed to PF with elements that are 'unpronounceable,' violating FI." Chomsky (1995, p.262)

(A11) "Applied to the feature F, the operation Move thus creates at least one and perhaps two "derivative chains" alongside the chain CH_F=(F,t_F) constructed by the operation itself. One is CH_FF=(FF[F],t_FF[F]), consisting of the set of formal features FF[F] and its trace; the other is CH_CAT=(α,t_α), α a category carried along by generalized pied-piping and including at least the lexical item containing F. CH_FF is always constructed, CH_CAT only when required for convergence...As noted, CH_CAT should be completely dispensable, were it not for the need to accommodate to the sensorimotor apparatus." [p.265]

(A12) "Just how broadly considerations of PF convergence might extend is unclear, pending better understanding of morphology and the internal structure of phrases. Note that such considerations could permit raising without pied-piping even overtly, depending on morphological structure..." [p.264]

(A13) In (A14), if only the attracted features raise, but the V does not raise, a PF crash will ensue, but only if the offending item exists at that level. Deletion provides another way to salvage the derivation. When the lower VP is deleted without the V having raised, a PF crash is avoided and the result is acceptable Pseudogapping.

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Once the matching feature of the lower lexical V is attracted, the lower V becomes defective (marked *, if you like). A PF crash will be avoided if either pied-piping or deletion of a category containing the lower V (VP Deletion = Pseudogapping in the relevant instances) takes place. [Lasnik (1999), developing the Ochi (1999) implementation of the Chomsky (1995) proposal]

Note, by the way, that it isn't easy to see how this result could be replicated if feature movement is eliminated from the theory in favor of long distance agreement - Agree, since Agree, unlike feature movement, never renders an item defective. [Łasnik (2002)]

References


