Assignment 12

1.1. The following examples illustrate the phenomenon of **Comparative Deletion**.

(1) a. John is taller [than Mary is].
   b. John is taller [than Mary told us that Bill is].

These examples are said to involve **Comparative Deletion (CD)** because they are perceived to be semantically related to the (ungrammatical) examples in (2). Most speakers strongly prefer the examples in (1) to the examples in (2). This could plausibly be related to a general principle of natural language that avoids redundancy.

(2) a. (*) John is taller [than Mary is tall].
   b. (*) John is taller [than Mary told us that Bill is tall].

In certain dialects of English, it is acceptable to say the following:

(3) a. John is taller [than what Mary is].
   b. John is taller [than what Mary told us that Bill is].

This phenomena is also found in the following sentences.

(4) a. Mary isn’t taller [than [what she was 5 years ago]].
   (ok for some speakers).
   b. Mary isn’t taller [than [she was 5 years ago]].
   c. Mary isn’t taller [than [what John believes [that Bill claimed [that she was 5 years ago]]]].
      (ok for some speakers).
   d. Mary isn’t taller [than [John believes [that Bill claimed [that she was 5 years ago]]]].
   e. *Mary isn’t taller [than [John believes [Bill’s claim [that she was 5 years ago]]]].
   f. *Mary isn’t taller [than [what John believes [Bill’s claim [that she was 5 years ago]]]].
   g. *Mary isn’t taller [than [what I wonder [whether she was five years ago]]].
   h. *Mary isn’t taller [than [I wonder [whether she was five years ago]]].

Provide an analysis of Comparative Deletion. Does Comparative Deletion involve $A'$-movement? If CD does involve $A'$-movement, what is moving from where to where? Using constituency tests (e.g. coordination, fronting etc.), determine the structural location of the than-clause with respect to the matrix clause.

Your analysis should account for the following contrasts. Demonstrate that it does.

(5) a. More students$_i$ flunked than anyone/*they$_i$ thought would flunk.
   b. More students$_i$ flunked than thought they$_i$ would flunk.
(6) a. More Democrats \(_i\) voted than anyone/\(\ast\)they\(_i\) expected to vote.
b. More Democrats \(_i\) voted than had expected that they\(_i\) would vote.

(7) a. More Democrats \(_i\) voted than anyone/\(\ast\)their\(_i\) friends expected to vote.
b. More Democrats \(_i\) voted than had expected that anyone/their\(_i\) friends would vote.

(8) a. More books were published than the editor said (\(\ast\)that) would be.
b. Mimi published more books than her publisher said (that) she would.
c. More students flunked than I predicted (\(\ast\)that) would pass.
d. Mimi flunked more students than I predicted (that) she would.

(9) a. I thought that there was more meat than there is/\(\ast\)’s.
b. John was more upset then than he is/\(\ast\)’s now.
c. She was as happy about it then as she is/\(\ast\)’s now.

(10) a. I threw away more books than I kept [without reading].
(\text{ok:} \# \text{of books thrown away} > \# \text{of books kept without reading})
(\text{unavailable:} \# \text{of books thrown without reading} > \# \text{of books kept})
b. Jerome followed more suspects than Arthur interrogated [without arresting].
(\text{ok:} \# \text{of suspects followed} > \# \text{of suspects interrogated without arresting})
(\text{unavailable:} \# \text{of suspects followed without arresting} > \# \text{of suspects interrogated})
(Focus on the licensing of the object gap within the without clause.)

1.2. Consider now the phenomenon of \textbf{Comparative Subdeletion} (CSD).

(11) a. Michael Jordan has more scoring titles than Dennis Rodman has tattoos.
b. The shapes seem to be wider than they are thick.
c. My sister drives as carefully as I drive carelessly.

Unlike CD, it may not be obvious that CSD involves a gap/deletion of any sort. But there is good
evidence that there is a gap in CSD (cf. 12).

(12) a. *Michael has more scoring titles than Dennis has two/many tattoos.
b. *The shapes seem to be wider than they are 2 inches/that thick.
c. *My sister drives as carefully as I drive so/very carelessly.

CSD is similar to CD in certain ways. CSD behaves like CD with respect to extraction.

(13) a. *Michael has more scoring titles than Dennis is a guy who has. (CD)
b. *Michael has more scoring titles than Dennis is a guy who has tattoos. (CSD)
(14)  a. *The shapes were longer than I wondered whether they would be. (CD)
b. *The shapes were longer than I wondered whether they would be thick. (CSD)

(15)  a. *My sister drives as carefully as I avoid accidents when I drive.
b. *My sister drives as carefully as I get into accidents when I drive carelessly.

CSD also behaves like CD with respect to the interpretation of pronouns.

(16)  a. More Democrats$_i$ voted than anyone/*they$_i$ expected to vote. (CD)
b. More Democrats voted than anyone/*they$_j$ expected Republicans$_j$ to vote. (CSD)

(17)  a. More Democrats$_i$ voted than anyone/*?their$_i$ friends expected to vote. (CD)
b. More Democrats voted than anyone/*?their$_j$ friends expected Republicans$_j$ to vote. (CSD)

However, CSD does not always behave like CD. The following data illustrates some cases where CSD and CD do not behave alike.

• The presence of that:

(18)  CD
    a. More books were published than the editor said (*that) would be.
b. More boys flunked than I predicted (*that) would pass.

(19)  CSD
    a. More books were published than the editor said (that) articles would be.
b. More boys flunked than I predicted (that) girls would pass.

• The possibility of auxiliary contraction:

(20)  CD
    a. I thought there was more meat than there is/*’s.
b. John was more upset then than he is/*’s now.
c. She was as happy about it then as she is/*’s now.

(21)  CSD
    a. There’s more meat than there’s rice.
b. John was more upset then than he’s angry now.
c. She was as happy about it then as she’s sad now.
• The possibility of adjunct gaps:

(22) CD
   a. I threw away more books than I kept without reading.
   b. Jerome followed more suspects than Arthur interrogated without arresting.

(23) CSD
   a. *I threw away more books than I kept magazines without reading.
   b. *Jerome followed more leads than Arthur interrogated suspects without arresting.

• The possibility of multiple comparisons:

(24) CSD
   a. Christmas makes as many children as happy as it makes adults unhappy.
   b. Max persuaded more men to buy more cars than you persuaded women to buy trucks.

(25) CD
   a. *Christmas makes as many children as happy as birthdays make.
   b. *Max persuaded more people to buy more cars than you persuaded to buy.

Provide an account of CSD that captures the above data. Show that it does so. Your account should reveal why CSD behaves like CD with respect to certain tests but not others. If you assume that CSD involves $A'$-movement, indicate what you think moves from where to where and when.


2. The following data concerns the interaction between Movement and Binding Theory. On the basis of the following examples, you have to determine which copy of the movement chain seems to be relevant for the purposes of the binding theory. You might find for example that the copy which matters (highest copy, intermediate copy, lowest copy) depends upon (i) whether the movement is $A$-movement or $A'$-movement, (ii) whether the moved phrase contains an anaphor, pronoun, or R-expression, and (iii) whether the anaphor, pronoun, or R-expression is contained inside an argument or an adjunct.

I have provided one set of judgements that has been reported in the literature. It is also well known that these judgements are not shared by all speakers. So as part of the exercise, I would like you to provide your own judgements and compare them with the judgements I have provided. Construct an account that predicts the pattern of grammaticality that we find. If your judgements differ from the ones provided, you could construct an account that would be able to handle both sets of judgements, or else you could just account for your own judgements.

(26) a. You said he$_{i_{/j}}$ liked [the pictures [that John$_j$ took]].
   b. [How many pictures [that John$_j$ took]] did you say he$_{i_{/j}}$ liked?
   c. Who said he$_{i_{/j}}$ liked [how many pictures [that John$_j$ took]]?
(27) a. [Which claim [that John_{j} was asleep]] was he_{i,j} willing to discuss?
b. [Which claim [that John_{j} made]] was he_{i,j} willing to discuss?

(28) [the claim [that John_{j} was asleep]] seems to him_{i,j} to be correct.
(the to in seems to does not count for the binding theory. e.g. “It seems to him_{i} that John_{i} was asleep.’ i.e. him seems to c-command into the complement clause of seem. )

(29) a. John_{i} seems to himself_{i} to be intelligent.
b. John_{i} seems to admire himself_{i}.

(30) a. i. John_{j} wondered [[which picture of himself_{j/s} Bill_{b} saw]].
   ii. The students_{s} asked [[what attitudes about each other_{s/l} the teachers_{t} had noticed]].
b. i. John_{j} wondered [who_{w} saw [which picture of himself_{w/s,j}]].
   ii. The students_{s} asked [who_{w} had noticed [what attitudes about each other_{w/s,s}]].
The sentences of (a) are ambiguous, with the anaphor taking either the matrix or embedded subject as antecedent; but those of (b) are unambiguous, with who as the only antecedent for himself/each other.

(31) a. Which of his_{i} students did every professor_{i} talk to?
b. *Which of his_{i} students talked to every professor?
c. Which student of his_{i} did no professor_{i} talk to?
d. *Which student of his_{i} talked to no professor_{i}?

(32) a. Which of the papers that he_{i} gave to Ms. Brown_{j} did every student_{i} hope that she_{j} would read?
b. *Which of the papers that he_{i} gave to Ms. Brown_{j} did she_{j} hope that every student_{i} would revise?

References