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This book deals with scope, indefinites and anaphoric relations. Beside the excellent introduction by Klaus von Heusinger & Urs Egli, there are fifteen contributions. The volume starts with a very informative survey of the historical aspects of anaphora. The first paper, ‘Anaphora from Athens to Amsterdam’, is by Urs Egli, who presents sample texts that indicate that the Stoics were pioneers in describing both anaphora and quantifier raising (QR). In his paper ‘Understanding the semantics of “relativa grammaticalia”: medieval logicians on anaphoric pronouns’, Reinhard Hülsen argues that Geach’s (1962) well-known E-type theory of pronouns had in fact been anticipated by medieval logicians. ‘Meaning in motion’ by Jeroen Groenendijk & Martin Stokhof closes the historical section by going through the development of formal semantics and by illustrating facets of the modern dynamic view of definite and indefinite descriptions.

The discussion related to anaphoric expressions in intentional contexts spreads across two papers. In ‘Anaphoric relations across attitude contexts’, Robert van Rooy argues that neither the E-type theory nor the unselective binding view of inter-sentential anaphoric relations can give a satisfactory account of these relations across attitude contexts. He sketches a ‘pragmatic’ solution in which the notion of ‘speaker’s reference’ becomes crucial. Hartley Slater, in his contribution ‘The grammar of the attitudes’, proposes a purely grammatical explanation of these anaphoric expressions by using epsilon terms as representation for anaphoric pronouns.

Three papers deal with the relation between the concept of reference and that of inference. In ‘Reference and inference: the case of anaphora’, Jaroslav Peregrin argues that reference is parasitic on inference, and not vice versa, as is commonly assumed. In ‘Coreference and representationalism’, Paul Dekker postulates an additional level of representation in addition to the more familiar level of representation where discourse properties are encoded. In ‘Underspecified semantics’, Reinhard Muskens argues that ambiguities in natural language do not generate several representations. Rather, one ‘underspecified’ representation is generated and the full representations are spelt-out, not in the pragmatics, but in the semantics.

Quantification and scope is the topic of four papers. In ‘Scope matters’, Donka Farkas argues that the structural position of a variable underdetermines the possible readings and she proposes a non-movement based theory of scope. In her paper ‘Scope ambiguities with negative quantifiers’, Henriëtte de Swart argues against a lexical decomposition account of the German determiner kein ‘no’ and its Dutch counterpart geen ‘no’. Elena Paducheva in ‘Definiteness effect: the case of Russian’ argues that in order to give an account of combinability restrictions in there-sentences and their Russian
equivalents it is not sufficient to take into consideration the semantics of
determiners and the Topic-Comment structure. In ‘Persistence, polarity, and
plurality’, Stephen Neale decomposes the meaning of the definite article into a
complex phrase. This allows him to solve several puzzles left unexplained so
far.

Finally, three papers concentrate on choice functions. In his contribution,
‘What makes choice natural?’, Yoad Winter argues that choice-function
interpretation can be derived from general principles of natural language
semantics, in particular, the conservativity, logicality and non-triviality
universals of Generalized Quantifier Theory. Klaus von Heusinger’s article
‘The reference of indefinites’ concentrates on the dependent readings of
indefinites. He shows that indefinites are not only dependent on quantifiers,
but are also dependent on other indefinites. He models this dependency
structure by Skolem functions. Finally, he introduces the syntactic equivalent
of choice functions: epsilon terms. In ‘Some remarks on choice functions and
LF-movement’, Arnim von Stechow compares the in situ approach of choice
functions with the classical movement analysis of QR at LF. He then discusses
certain restrictions on the licensing of choice-function variables.

The fifteen contributions are revised versions of papers presented at the
workshop ‘Reference and anaphoric relations’, which was held at the University
of Konstanz in June 1996. There is much consistency within each section of the
book, but less so across sections in that the five themes addressed in the book
(Historical aspects of anaphoric relations, Quantification and scope, Anaphoric
reference, Choice functions and the semantics of indefinites, Representation and
interpretation) are very different. This means that, in the present review, I
cannot do justice to all the subject matters introduced in the volume. I will thus
concentrate on choice functions, mainly because it is a topic that has become
very popular in recent years, not only in semantics, but also in syntax. It is thus
very much opened to scrutiny. In particular, I will focus on von Stechow’s
paper. My reservations about choice functions will apply, not only to his views,
but to the two other contributions on the subject as well.

The choice-function trend goes against the traditional idea that indefinites
introduce an existential quantifier. The approach capitalizes on the fact that,
although universals behave like quantifiers in that they obey islands, existentials
are immune to them. Consequently, Reinhart (1997) proposes that (some, not all
- see below) indefinites do not raise at LF. These indefinites introduce, not a
simple, but a complex variable. This takes care of the so-called Donald Duck
problem:

(1) [Who will be offended] [if we invite which philosopher]?
   (a) ‘For which <x, y>, if we invite y and y is a philosopher, then x will be
       offended.’
   (b) ‘For which <x, y>, y is a philosopher, if we invite y, x will be
       offended.’
If, as in (1a), the semantic restriction is left in situ, the sentence ends up a necessary truth in every world lacking philosophers, because the semantic restriction occurs in the antecedent clause of an if-clause. A possible answer to (1) is thus: Lucie will be offended if we invite Donald Duck. Naturally, (1) requires that the answer involves a philosopher. We are left with a paradox: on the one hand, the semantic restriction needs to remain in situ; on the other, it cannot remain there. To resolve the quandary, Reinhart appeals to a semantic device: existential closure over a choice function. The latter is a function from a (non-empty) set of individuals (the restriction set) to a member of that set.

von Stechow agrees with Reinhart that this mechanism can be extended to plural existentials on their collective readings, but crucially, not on their distributive interpretations. In other words, QR is still needed:

(2) If three relatives of mine die, I will inherit a house.
   (a) ‘There are three relatives of mine, such that, if each of them dies, I will inherit a house.’
   (b) * ‘For each of three relatives of mine, if he dies, I will inherit a house.’

The interpretation in (2b) is not available, presumably, because three relatives of mine moves out of the island if-clause. According to Reinhart, the source of the distributivity in plural existentials is an invisible distributor D. On this view, both D and the indefinite expression undergo QR.

von Stechow proposes an alternative analysis. On his account, indefinites never introduce an existential. What undergoes QR in (2) is not D and an existential expression, but the complex D + a choice function f. D is a strong, i.e. universal, quantifier. The island effect stems from that fact. This analysis may turn out to be wrong, but it has the advantage of being rather elegant, since it generalizes the choice-function mechanism and does away with the dichotomy between quantificational versus choice-function indefinites.

Granted this positive aspect of von Stechow’s paper, let me now turn to the problems it faces. The first issue is his claim that the in situ approach to indefinites is fully compatible with the Minimalist Program. I think this is too hasty a claim. For a start, the choice-function analysis of non-interrogative indefinites faces many challenges, some of which may be intractable (see Geurts 2000 for discussion). As for interrogative indefinites, the choice-function account works well for multiple WH questions in English and for Chinese WH in situ in single WH environments, but something needs to be added for WH in situ in languages like French.

Suppose that, in Chinese Q binds, not a simple, but a choice-function variable. Then, the lack of intervention effect by negation in (3) is expected:

(3) [CP Yanhan bu xiquan shenme]?  
    Yanhan Neg like what

‘What doesn’t Yanhan?’
On the other hand, in French, a language, which allows WH in situ in single WH environments optionally, WH in situ is very restricted (Bošković 2000, Cheng & Rooryck 2000). In particular, such questions display intervention effects with a whole range of scopal elements. These effects are systematically absent with the movement alternative and in multiple WH contexts:

\[(4) (a) \text{*Tu ne fais pas quoi ce soir?} \]
\[\text{ne} \quad \text{Neg} \quad \text{do not} \quad \text{what} \quad \text{this} \quad \text{evening} \]
\[\text{you} \quad \text{Neg} \quad \text{do not} \quad \text{what} \quad \text{this} \quad \text{evening} \]
\[\text{Qui est-ce que tu ne fais pas ce soir?} \]
\[\text{what} \quad \text{that} \quad \text{you} \quad \text{Neg} \quad \text{do not} \quad \text{this} \quad \text{evening} \]
\[\text{What aren’t you doing tonight?} \]
\[\text{Qui ne fait pas quoi ce soir?} \]
\[\text{who} \quad \text{Neg} \quad \text{does not} \quad \text{what} \quad \text{this} \quad \text{evening} \]
\[\text{Who doesn’t do what this evening?} \]

Reinhart’s proposal implies that all nominal expressions should be able to introduce a choice function. However, since nothing prevents the WH phrase in (4a) from introducing such a function, it is no longer possible to understand why such phrases show intervention effects.

The conclusion must be that the existential closure over choice-function mechanism does not suffice in French single WH environments. In languages like French, which typically lack question particles, the [+ WH] feature of the WH phrase in situ must enter into a checking relation with the strong WH/Q feature of C. I assume that movement of a null WH operator with adjunct-like properties raises (overtly) in examples like (4a). In this case, movement is required for convergence. In the case, of (4c), movement of the lower WH phrase is not necessary, because convergence does not require it. This is in line with Ackema & Neeleman (1998) and Bošković (2000).

Let me now turn to some German facts discussed by von Stechow. In that language, unlike the case of English, multiple WH questions show intervention effects. In (5a), negation blocks the licensing of the WH phrase in situ. When scrambling takes place, the question is well formed, since LF movement of the lower WH phrase does not cross negation (cf. (5b)):

\[(5) (a) \text{[CP *Wann hat niemand wem geholfen]?} \]
\[\text{when} \quad \text{has no one} \quad \text{whom} \quad \text{helped} \]
\[\text{[CP Wann hat wem niemand t} \text{i geholfen]?} \]
\[\text{When did no one help who(m)?} \]

Under the choice-function account, the intervention effects are completely unexpected. Either one argues that the German WH phrase in situ raises at LF (alternatively a null operator raises) or one appeals to a special condition on choice functions. von Stechow attempts the latter by adapting Beck’s (1996) Minimal Quantified Structure Constraint, an island condition on traces.
In von Stechow’s version, the idea is that there must be no LF intervener between an existential quantifier \( \exists f \) and the choice-function variable \( f \) bound by it. But since, non-interrogative indefinites can outscope universal quantifiers, he restricts the principle to the existential generalization of WH variables (for lack of space, I’ve only discussed Neg, leaving Quant aside):

(6) The WH Filter
*\( \exists f \) … Neg or Quant … \( w_h \) … (where \( f \) is a variable for generalized choice functions.
(von Stechow 2000:217)

von Stechow’s filter has one advantage over Beck’s original condition. The latter is at odds with minimalist assumptions. In the MP, it is not possible to postulate a condition that holds only of processes in the LF-component (uniformity). von Stechow avoids this problem, since existential closure over choice functions need not happen at LF (Q binding may be prior to Spell-Out).

However, it seems to me that there is an inherent contradiction at work in von Stechow’s account. If choice functions are useful for something, they are useful to explain the lack of island sensitivity exhibited by (some) indefinites. To encode a condition on the choice-function mechanism that will account for intervention effects is to reduce the explanatory power of the existential closure over choice functions device to zero. How can we now account for the lack of intervention effects in English multiple WH questions and Chinese single WH in situ questions? Second, as far as I am aware, the conditions in (6) does not follow from anything and only amounts to a restatement of the facts. Third, von Stechow has to restrict his filter, not only to WH structures, but to WH structures in German (and Korean, since the same facts actually obtain in that language). This is not a promising avenue.

Despite my criticisms, the article by von Stechow, like all the other contributions, are first-class. This book is a gem. The layout is beautiful. There are typos here and there, but the editing is superb. The different contributions have been put into very coherent sections. I strongly recommend this book to all those who are interested in the syntax-semantic interface.
REFERENCES


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