Apparent Vehicle Change Phenomena in the Absence of Ellipsis

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1 Introduction: vehicle change phenomena
1.1 Vehicle change phenomena
This paper is concerned with so-called vehicle change phenomena that are found in unexpected places. Let us first present two well-known examples of vehicle change phenomena. First, Condition A effects are sometimes obviated in elided VPs, as shown in (2). In the strict identity reading of (2) paraphrased in (3b), it is as if in the elided constituent, himself was replaced by him as shown in (4b).

(1) John1 defended himself1 better than his lawyer2 defended himself2.
   (unambiguous)
(2) John1 defended himself1 better than his lawyer did. (ambiguous)
(3) a. John1 defended himself1 better than his lawyer2 defended himself2.
    (sloppy identity reading)
   b. John1 defended himself1 better than his lawyer2 defended John1.
    (strict identity reading)
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(4) a. John$_1$ defended himself$_1$ better than his lawyer$_2$ did [defend himself$_2$].
   b. John$_1$ defended himself$_1$ better than his lawyer did [defend himself$_1$ ⇒ him$_1$].

Further, the example in (6) shows that Condition C effects are sometimes obviated in elided VP. Without ellipsis, the sentence is ungrammatical due to a Condition C violation, as shown in (5). In this case, it is as if in the elided constituent, John’s was replaced by his as in (7).

(5) *I like John$_1$’s friends more than he$_1$ likes John$_1$’s friends.
(6) I like John$_1$’s friends more than he$_1$ does.
(7) I like John$_1$’s friends more than he$_1$ does [like John$_1$’s ⇒ his$_1$ friends]

As far as we are aware, such phenomena have been identified only in elided structures (VP or larger).

1.2 “Vehicle Change” analysis

Fiengo and May (1994) propose that when an antecedent VP is copied into an ellipsis site, reflexives and R-expressions may indeed be replaced by pronominal correlates. This process is known as Vehicle Change. Given only the data above, Vehicle Change would appear to be an ad-hoc mechanism. There is, however, significant evidence favouring a Vehicle Change analysis. For instance, as shown in (9a), Condition B effects appear to be triggered by the pronominal correlate him of John as a result of Vehicle Change.

(8) a. *I like John$_1$ more than he$_1$ does.
   b. I like John$_1$ more than he$_1$ wants me to.
(9) a. *I like John$_1$ more than he$_1$ does [like John$_1$ ⇒ him$_1$].
   b. I like John$_1$ more than he$_1$ wants me to [like John$_1$ ⇒ him$_1$].

In this paper, we will first present a movement analysis of the Condition A obviation phenomenon by Hestvik (1995), which builds on Heim (1993) (section 2). We then observe that apparent vehicle change phenomena are found even in the absence of ellipsis, namely in phrasal comparatives in Japanese and Hindi-Urdu (section 3), as well as in superlative constructions in English and Japanese (section 4). We show that only the Hestvik/Heim analysis of the Condition A obviation phenomenon extends straightforwardly to such cases with no ellipsis. We also explore an alternative analysis based on Kennedy and Lidz (2001) and conclude that it does not extend to Japanese (section 5). Section 6 summarizes the paper.
2 Strict readings of reflexives in VP ellipsis

2.1 Deriving strict readings via QR

Hestvik (1995), building on Heim (1993), argues against a Vehicle Change analysis of the Condition A cases in subordinate structures, proposing instead that a reflexive undergoes short QR to VP so that it binds traces in both the antecedent and elided VPs following LF copying.

(10) a. John₁ defended himself₁ before his lawyer did.

   b. John₁ defended himself₁ before his lawyer₂ defended John₁.
      (strict)

   c. John [VP himself [VP defended t] before his lawyer did [VP
defend-t]].

The derivation of (4a) has two steps: First, the reflexive undergoes short QR to adjoin to VP; second, the VP containing the trace of himself is copied into the ellipsis site at LF. The tree in (13) illustrates Hestvik (1995:226)’s analysis in more detail. We use the double indexation system of Heim (1993), as indicated in (11). The intuition here is that we want to create a non-reflexive predicate in the antecedent VP while making sure that John binds himself.

(11) [himself₁]₂
   a. Inner indices encode what they are bound by.
   b. Outer indices encode what they bind.

(12) John₁ λ₁[himself₁ λ₂[λ₁[t₁ defended t₂]] before his lawyer λ₁[λ₁[t₁ defended t₂]]]
2.2 Subordination effect

One of Hestvik’s main arguments for the movement analysis above is a difference in the availability of strict readings in coordinate vs. subordinate structures. In general, syntactic coordination disfavors strict interpretation of reflexives, while subordination facilitates it (see Hestvik (1995) for a review of the literature). This is illustrated in the examples of subordination structure in (14) and those of coordination structure in (15) below.

(14) a. John defended himself better than Bill/his lawyer did. (subordination-comparative)
   b. John defended himself before Bill did. (subordination-temporal adjunct)
   c. John laughed at himself because Bill did. (subordination-causal adjunct)
   d. John introduced himself to everyone that Bill did (subordination-ACD)

(15) John defended himself well, and Bill did, too.

a. John defended John well, and Bill defended Bill well, too. (sloppy)
b. *John defended John well, and Bill defended John well, too. (strict)

Hestvik’s QR-based analysis of strict readings for reflexives captures the asymmetry between coordination and subordination structures: *himself cannot be high enough in the coordination structure to generate the strict reading.\(^1\)

\[(16)\] a. John defended himself well, and Bill did, too.
b. *John [himself\(1\) [defended \(t_1\) well]], and Bill did [defended \(t_1\) well]

3 Vehicle change phenomena in the absence of ellipsis

Support for the availability of Heim/Hestvik-style derivations comes from Hindi-Urdu and Japanese phrasal comparatives. Phrasal comparatives in Hindi-Urdu and Japanese have been argued to have non-ellipsis derivations (Bhatt and Takahashi 2011; Heim 1985). Surprisingly, however, they allow strict readings of reflexives. A Vehicle Change analysis of this phenomenon is impossible in principle in the absence of ellipsis. The Heim/Hestvik analysis applies straightforwardly to derive the unexpected strict reading.

3.1 Phrasal comparatives in Japanese and Hindi-Urdu

Bhatt and Takahashi (2011) argue that some phrasal comparatives in Japanese and all phrasal comparatives in Hindi-Urdu have a “direct” analysis, or non-ellipsis derivations (Heim 1985). One type of argument comes from binding facts. An ellipsis analysis predicts that the remnant (the complement of \(\text{than}\)) is c-commanded by everything that c-commands the associate, as schematically illustrated in (18b) for ditransitive V (Lechner 2004).

\[(17)\] Takumi likes \([\text{associate natto}]\) more than \([\text{remnant chocolate}]\).

\[(18)\] a. DP\(_{\text{subj}}\) V DP DP\(_{\text{associate}}\) than DP\(_{\text{remnant}}\) (direct)
b. DP\(_{\text{subj}}\) V DP DP\(_{\text{associate}}\) than DP\(_{\text{subj}}\) V DP DP\(_{\text{remnant}}\) (ellipsis)

As Bhatt and Takahashi (2011) show, in Hindi-Urdu and Japanese, binding properties of the remnant do not correlate with the structural position of its associate. Rather, the remnant PP patterns with other PPs with respect to binding properties. We can see this by looking at the example in (22) from Bhatt and Takahashi (2011). A simpler sentence in (20) is added here just to show

\(^1\) The analysis is too strong, however, as it would rule out any strict readings in coordinate structure as ungrammatical.
the basis for (22). Coreference between *Taroo* and *kare* ‘he’ is fine in (22). This is not expected in an ellipsis analysis, as (23) below is ungrammatical.²

(19) \[ \text{DP}_{\text{subj}} \left[ \text{DP}_{\text{remnant}} \right] - \text{than} \left[ \text{DP}_{\text{ind.obj}} \right] \text{DP}_{\text{associate}} \text{ Adv V} \]

(20) \[ \text{Hanako-wa} \left[ \text{remnant kono shashin}\right] - \text{yori} \text{ Taroo-ni} \left[ \text{associate ano} \right] \text{ Hanako-TOP this picture-than} \text{ Taro-DAT that picture-ACC frequently showed} \]

‘Hanako showed that picture more frequently to Taro than this picture.’

(21) \[ \text{DP}_{\text{subj}} \left[ \text{R-Expression}_{\text{remnant}} \right] - \text{than} \left[ \text{Pron}_{\text{ind.obj}} \right] \text{DP}_{\text{associate}} \text{ Adv V} \]

(22) \[ \text{Hanako-wa} \left[ \text{remnant Taroo-i no imooto-no} \text{ shashin}\right] - \text{yori} \text{ Hanako-TOP Taro-GEN younger.sister-GEN picture-than kare-i-ni} \left[ \text{associate Keiko-no} \text{ imooto-no} \text{ shashin}\right] - \text{o} \text{ he-DAT Keiko-GEN younder.sister-GEN picture-ACC hinnpanni miseta. frequently showed} \]

‘Hanako showed him Keiko’s sister’s picture more frequently than (Hanako showed him) Taro’s sister’s picture.’

(23) \[ *\text{Hanako-wa kare-i-ni} \left[ \text{Taroo-i no imooto-no shashin}\right] - \text{o} \text{ hinnpanni} \text{ Hanako-TOP he-DAT Taro-GEN sister-GEN picture-ACC frequently miseta. showed} \]

‘Hanako showed him, Taro’s sister’s picture frequently.’

Bhatt and Takahashi (2011)’s derivation exploits “parasitic scope” (Nissenbaum (2000); Barker (2007); Kennedy and Stanley (2008)). Using example (24a), we see in (25) that (i) movement of the subject out of vP introduces a λ-abstractor over individuals; and (ii) the degree phrase then “tucks in” between the subject and the λ-node to introduce an abstractor over degrees. As shown in (24b), the degree head first composes with the complement of than, then with the predicate of degrees and individuals, and finally with the subject.

² See Bhatt and Takahashi (2011) for more arguments for the non-ellipsis analysis of phrasal comparatives in Hindi-Urdu and Japanese, based on scopal properties of quantifiers in the than-complement. Phrasal and clausal comparatives show distinct patterns there.
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   ‘The mother criticized the child more severely than the father.’

b. $\text{Deg}(\text{Father})(\lambda d \lambda x. \text{x criticized Child } d\text{-severely})(\text{Mother})$
   (where $\text{Deg}(x)(P)(y) \leftrightarrow \exists d[P(y,d) \land \neg P(x,d)]$)

c. $\exists d[\text{Mother criticized Child } d\text{-severely} \land \neg[\text{Father criticized Child } d\text{-severely}]]$

(25) TP
    /\    /
   /\    /
  /\    /
 Mother
    /\    /
   /\    /
  /\    /
  DegP
    /\    /
   /\    /
  /\    /
 Deg than Father 2
    /\    /
   /\    /
  /\    /
 1 vP
           /\    /
          /\    /
         /\    /
         t_1 criticized Child t_2,d-severely

On the face of it, a reflexive in VP should be bound by the (trace of) the subject, yielding a sloppy reading. Surprisingly, however, phrasal comparatives in both Japanese and Hindi-Urdu permit both strict and sloppy readings. This is shown for Japanese in (26) from Kishida (2012) and Hindi-Urdu in (27).3

(26) Mary-ga Bill yorimo hageshiku zibun-o hihan-shi-ta.
   Mary-NOM Bill than severely self-ACC criticize-do-PAST
   a. ‘Mary criticized Mary more severely than Bill criticized Bill.’
      (sloppy)
   b. ‘Mary criticized Mary more severely than Bill criticized Mary.’
      (strict)

(27) John apnii hifaazat Tim se behtar kartaa hai. (Hindi-Urdu)
   John self’s defense Tim than better do is
   a. ‘John defended John better than Tim defended Tim.’ (sloppy)
   b. ‘John defended John better than Tim defended John.’ (strict)

3 We thank Dave Kush and Rajesh Bhatt for providing Hindi-Urdu data.
As a side note, Korean and Chinese phrasal comparatives also seem to allow strict readings in the following examples. If phrasal comparatives in these languages had non-ellipsis derivations as well (Xiang 2005; Lin 2009; Sung 2011), then they also present a puzzle for ellipsis-based analyses.

(28) John-un pyunhosa-pota cal caki-lul pyunho-haet-ta. (Korean)
    John-TOP lawyer-than well self-ACC defended
    ‘John defended himself better than the lawyer.’

(29) Mary duidai ziji bi John hao. (Chinese)
    Mary treat self compare John well.
    ‘Mary treats herself better than John.’

3.2 Extending Hestvik’s analysis to non-ellipsis derivations

In the absence of ellipsis, a Vehicle Change analysis of the strict reading is impossible in principle. Hestvik’s movement analysis, on the other hand, combines neatly with Bhatt and Takahashi (2011)’s analysis of phrasal comparatives to derive the strict reading. The reflexive QRs above the degree operator and is bound by the raised subject, as in (30). The internal and external arguments of criticize then translate as distinct non-covarying variables.

(30) [Mary [vP herself [vP λy [vP [DegP y Deg than John]] [λd [λx [vP x criticize y d-severely]]]]]]

(30) can be derived as shown in (33)/(34) using the indexation system of Heim (1993). We assume the variant of Heim’s system in which a binder need not delete its outer index immediately once this index is copied to a λ, so long as all outer indices are eventually deleted from NPs. The key assumptions are (31) and (32).

We use superscripts for outer indices, and subscripts for inner indices.

(31) All outer indices must delete (consequence of Heim’s requirement that all indices be variables, p. 230).

(32) In the configuration [α^+ [λ_1 . . . ]] the outer index of α may (but need not) delete.

(33) [vP Mary^1 criticized herself^2 more severely [Deg than Bill]^3] (i)
    ‘Mary’ raises from vP-internal subject position:
    [TP Mary^1 [λ_1 [vP t_1 criticize herself^2 more severely [Deg than Bill]^3]…]]
Before we end this section, let us make a few side-notes. First, the strict reading disappears when we use a morphologically reflexive verb, e.g. self-criticize, as observed by Kishida (2012). A similar behavior is reported for Kannada in Lidz (2001).

(35) Mary-ga Bill-yorimo hageshiku ziko-hihan-shi-ta.
    Mary-NOM Bill-than severely self-criticism-do-PAST
a. ‘Mary criticized herself more severely than Bill criticized himself.’
   (sloppy)
b. *‘Mary criticized herself more severely than Bill criticized her’
   (strict)

Second, a question that requires investigation is how complex reflexives
such as *zibun-zisin ‘self-self’ and kare-zisin ‘he-self’ are interpreted in the
context under discussion, as in (36) and (37). Judgments are not as clear-cut
as one wants them to be, and we leave further examination for future research.

(36) John-ga Bill-yorimo hageshiku zibun-zisin-o
    John-NOM Bill-than severely zibun-zisin-ACC
    criticize-do-PAST
a. ‘John criticized himself more severely than Bill criticized himself.’
   (sloppy)
b. ?‘John criticized himself more severely than Bill criticized John’
   (strict)

    John-NOM Bill-than severely he-zisin-ACC criticize-do-PAST
a. ?‘John criticized himself more severely than Bill criticized himself.’
   (sloppy)
b. ?‘John criticized himself more severely than Bill criticized John’
   (strict)

A final note before moving on is that strict readings are possible with
bound variable uses of reflexives in both English and Japanese (*himself* and
*zibun*).

(38) Every defendant defended himself better than his lawyer did.
    a. Every defendant\textsubscript{1} defended himself\textsubscript{1} better than [his\textsubscript{1} lawyer]\textsubscript{2} def-
       fended himself\textsubscript{2} (sloppy: local)
b. Every defendant\textsubscript{1} defended himself\textsubscript{1} better than his\textsubscript{1} lawyer def-
       fended him\textsubscript{1} (strict: non-local)

(39) Dono oya-mo zibun-no kodomo-o Tanaka-sensei-yori
    which parent-every zibun-GEN child-ACC Tanaka-teacher-than
    umaku bengo-shi-ta.
    well defend-do-PAST
a. ‘Every parent\textsubscript{1} defended his\textsubscript{1} child better than Mr. Tanaka\textsubscript{2} def-
    fended his\textsubscript{2} child.’ (sloppy: local)
b. ‘Every parent\textsubscript{1} defended his\textsubscript{1} child better than Mr. Tanaka defended
    his\textsubscript{1} child’. (strict: non-local)
3.3 Some consequences to be explored

In this section, we note two empirical areas that need to be explored in future research. First, if the QR analysis of reflexives is on the right track, we should be able to see some consequences of a reflexive raising to a high position. For instance, a high reflexive should take scope over other materials in a sentence, as suggested to us by Mitcho Erlewine (p.c.). One way of testing this is to take the example in (26) and create a variation of it that has the structure in (40). One might expect that in the strict reading in (41b) the inverse scope reading would become available if ‘every student of self’ needs to undergo QR. The result, however, is that in both the sloppy reading in (41a) and the strict reading in (41b), only the surface scope interpretation is available.

(40) Mary [than Bill] QP1 QP2 ...self... V

(41) Mary-wa Bill-yori hayaku nanika-o {[dono zibun-no Mary-TOP Bill-than quickly something-ACC which self-GEN gakusee]-ni-mo/[zibun-no [dono gakusee]]-ni-mo} okutta.
student-DAT-every/self-GEN which student-DAT-every sent
a. ‘Mary$_1$ sent something to every student of self$_1$ more quickly than Bill$_2$ sent something to every student of self$_2$’ (sloppy; surface scope $\exists > \forall$ only)
b. ‘Mary$_1$ sent something to every student of self$_1$ more quickly than Bill$_2$ sent something to every student of self$_1$’ (strict; surface scope $\exists > \forall$ only)

In this particular example, one could say that only the reflexive zibun ‘self’ is moving, hence it does not affect the scope relation between the two quantificational phrases. The scope rigid nature of Japanese is also a confounding factor here. We thus need to construct better examples to test the prediction made by the QR analysis.

Another area where further investigation needs to be left for future research has to do with the example in (42), brought to our attention by Satoshi Tomioka (p.c.). The strict reading of the sentence is perfectly fine, and is even the more pragmatically natural reading than the sloppy reading. In the QR analysis of the strict reading of reflexives, it seems that the structure (43b) must be assumed, which is a weak crossover configuration. (43b) is derived from (43a) by raising [t$_2$’s mother] to the position between $\lambda$2 and DegP, and the non-c-commanding pronoun kanojo-no ‘she-GEN’ ends up intervening between zibun-no hahaya ‘self-GEN mother’ and its trace.

(42) Daremo-ga zibun-no hahaya-o kanojo-no bengoshi-yori everyone-NOM self-GEN mother-ACC she-GEN lawyer-than umaku bengoshita.
well defended
‘Everyone\textsubscript{1} defended \[(\text{self}\textsubscript{1} \text{’s mother})\textsubscript{4} \] better than her\textsubscript{4} (=the mother of 1’s) lawyer defended her\textsubscript{4}.’ (strict)

(43) a. \(\text{everyone}\textsubscript{1} \text{self}\textsubscript{1} [\lambda_2[[\text{Deg} \text{ than } \text{her}\textsubscript{4} \text{ lawyer}]] [\lambda_3 [\lambda_1 t_1 \text{ defended } [t_2 \text{’s mother}] \text{ t}_3, d\text{-well } ]]]]

b. \(\text{everyone}\textsubscript{1} \text{self}\textsubscript{1} [\lambda_2 [[\text{Deg} \text{ than } \text{her}\textsubscript{4} \text{ lawyer}]] [\lambda_3 [\lambda_1 t_1 \text{ defended } t_4 t_3, d\text{-well } ]]]]

One thing we need to investigate is the nature of the overt pronoun \textit{kanojo} ‘she’ in (42), which is receiving a bound-variable-like interpretation in this example, while it usually cannot be interpreted as a bound variable pronoun.\footnote{The weak crossover effect shows up with \textit{zibun} ‘self’, which allows bound variable interpretation (Saito and Hoji 1983).}

As far as we could see, the English correlate of (42) in (44) in its strict reading raises similar issues.

(44) Every boy defended his mother better than her lawyer.
   a. Every boy\textsubscript{1} defended [his\textsubscript{1} mother\textsubscript{4}] better than her\textsubscript{4} lawyer (direct analysis)
   b. Every boy\textsubscript{1} defended [his\textsubscript{1} mother\textsubscript{4}] better than her\textsubscript{4} lawyer defended her\textsubscript{4} (ellipsis analysis)

4 VC effect without ellipsis structure elsewhere

If the extension of Hestvik’s analysis to non-ellipsis derivations that we just presented is on the right track, we make a prediction. If we find other constructions where no ellipsis structure is involved but an apparent ‘ellipsis copy’ is created in the semantics, the prediction will be that strict readings of reflexives should be available, if we follow Hestvik’s analysis. A case in point is the superlative construction in English and Japanese. An apparent vehicle change phenomenon (strict reading of reflexives) is observed in (45)–(47), where it is reasonable to assume that no ellipsis structure is involved. Instead, in the meaning assigned to the superlative degree operator \texttt{Deg}\textsubscript{sup} in (48), the degree predicate is ‘recycled’ in semantics, just as in the case of the three-place degree operator in (24b) (see, for example, Heim 1999; Sharvit and Stateva 2002; Aihara 2009).

(45) Out of all the boys, John painted the best picture of himself.
   a. ..., John painted the best self-portrait. (sloppy)
   b. ..., John painted the best picture of John. (strict)

(46) Out of all the boys, John defended himself most skillfully.
   a. ..., John did the most skillful self-defending. (sloppy)
   b. ..., John defended John most skillfully. (strict)
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(47) We all love to google John since he won the Nobel prize, but John googles himself the most.⁷ (strict)

(48) \[ \text{Deg}_{\text{sup}}(C)(P)(y) \leftrightarrow \exists d \left[ P(y,d) \land \forall x \left[ x \in C \land x \neq y \rightarrow \neg P(x,d) \right] \right] \]
\[
\text{(C for comparison set)}
\]

The strict reading of (46), for instance, is expected to be derived from the structure in (49a) (or (52)).

(49) a. John himself\_1 \lambda 2 \left[ \text{most} \_ C \_ 3. \lambda 1. \left[ t \_ 1 \text{defended} t \_ 2 t \_ 3, d \text{skillfully} \right] \right]

b. John defended himself more skillfully than any one else [defended John].

c. \[ \exists d \left[ \text{John defended John d-skillfully} \land \forall x \left[ x \in C \land x \neq \text{John} \rightarrow \neg \left[ x \text{defended John d-skillfully} \right] \right] \right] \]

(50) Hanako-ga zibun-o mottomo umaku bengoshita.
Hanako-NOM self-ACC most well defended

a. ‘Hanako did the most skillful self-defending.’ (sloppy)
b. ‘Hanako defended Hanako most skillfully among the defenders of Hanako.’ (strict)

(51) Hanako-ga mottomo umaku zibun-o bengoshita.
Hanako-NOM most well self-ACC defended

a. ‘Hanako did the most skillful self-defending.’ (sloppy)
b. (?)‘Hanako defended Hanako most skillfully among the defenders of Hanako.’ (strict)

⁷Thanks to Maayan Adar for this example.
5 Ellipsis analysis for Japanese phrasal comparatives?

What we have shown so far is that, given the non-ellipsis derivations of Japanese and Hindi-Urdu phrasal comparatives (and of Japanese and English superlatives), the availability of the strict reading of reflexives provide evidence for the Hestvik/Heim-style analysis. A Vehicle Change analysis is not an option there. The big assumption made, of course, is the non-ellipsis analysis of Japanese and Hindi-Urdu phrasal comparatives. If these phrasal comparatives did indeed have ellipsis derivations, the Hestvik analysis and the Vehicle Change analysis would work equally well (though even in such a case, the observation on the superlatives can only be handled by the Hestvik analysis).

In this final section we look at a third possible analysis of the strict reading of reflexives in Japanese within an ellipsis analysis of phrasal comparatives that capitalizes on the long distance nature of zibun ‘self’. We conclude that even though such an analysis is proposed for English phrasal comparatives by Kennedy and Lidz (2001), the analysis does not successfully extend to Japanese.

5.1 Exploiting the long distance nature of zibun

Kennedy and Lidz (2001) propose that English possesses an inaudible long distance anaphor, a counterpart of audible ziji in Chinese. According to their

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8 In Drummond and Shimoyama (2013) we show that Condition C obviation cases can be handled by a Hestvik-style analysis, in a more satisfactory way than by a Vehicle Change analysis.
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analysis, English phrasal comparatives involve ellipsis structure, in particular, stripping. For the strict reading of (53a), the Hestvik-style analysis is not possible because the elided constituent is clausal rather than verbal, and therefore includes an occurrence of the moved reflexive, which leads to a sloppy reading.

(53)  
\[ a. \] John defended himself better than the lawyer.  
\[ b. \] John \{himself \[defended t better\]} than the lawyer \{himself \[defended t better\]} (stripping)

Therefore the long distance \textit{ziji} (inaudible in English) has to be used in order to derive a strict reading, as in (54), according to Kennedy and Lidz (2001).

(54) John\textsubscript{1} defended himself\textsubscript{1} better than the lawyer \{FP \{VP defended \textit{ziji}\} \} (stripping)

This is an intriguing proposal for English, and it does seem to make sense to extend the analysis to Japanese, namely to assume ellipsis derivations for phrasal comparatives and take advantage of the long-distance nature of \textit{zibun} ‘self’ to account for its strict reading. It turns out, however, that an immediate prediction of this analysis is not borne out.

5.2 Predictions on the Blocking Effect

Japanese \textit{zibun} shows a number of properties similar to Chinese \textit{ziji}. A prediction is made then that the so-called Blocking Effect would show up in Japanese phrasal comparatives. We will show below, however, that the Japanese phrasal comparatives do not exhibit the expected behaviour. This leads us to conclude that an ellipsis analysis combined with the long distance nature of \textit{zibun} is not a viable alternative to the QR analysis of strict readings of \textit{zibun}.

Example (55) illustrates what is known as a Blocking Effect caused by intervening 1st person or 2nd person subject in Chinese: the long distance anaphor \textit{ziji} cannot be bound by Zhangsan due to the intervening 1st or 2nd person pronoun (see, for example, Huang and Liu 2001).

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Thanks to Takeo Kurafuji (p.c.) for pointing out another reading available in (53a) where \textit{than} is interpreted more or less like \textit{compared to}, giving rise to the interpretation of the complement of \textit{than} as setting up an appropriate standard, as in ‘compared to how lawyers defend in general’ (See, for example, Beck, Oda, and Sugisaki 2004). The same observation applies to its Japanese counterpart.

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(55) Zhangsan danxin wo/ni hui piping ziji.
Zhangsan worries I/you will criticize self
‘Zhangsan is worried that I/you will criticize myself/yourself/*him
(=Zhangsan).’

Similar Blocking Effects are found in Japanese, as shown in (56) and (57).11

(56) Sota-wa watashi/anata-ga zibun-o urikonda yori umaku zibun-o
Sota-TOP I/you-NOM self-ACC promoted than well self-ACC
urikonda.
  a. ‘Sota promoted himself better than I promoted myself/*him.’
  b. ‘Sota promoted himself better than you promoted yourself/*him.’

(57) Takashi-wa watashi/kimi-ga zibun-o kizutsukeru kamoshirenai
Takashi-TOP I/you-NOM self-ACC hurt may
to shinpaishiteiru yo
  that worried PRT
  a. ‘Takashi is worried that I might hurt myself/?him (=Takashi).’
  b. ‘Takashi is worried that you might hurt yourself/?him (=Takashi).’

Note that Kennedy and Lidz (2001) report that the same kind of Blocking
Effect is found in English phrasal comparatives (their (15)). A strict reading
is reported to be unavailable in (58a), which is attributed to the intervening
second person pronoun you blocking the inaudible ziji to be bound by the
lawyer, as shown in (58b). This is supposed to contrast with the situation
in sentence (59a), where a strict reading is available because there is no 1st
or 2nd person pronoun in the than clause blocking the long-distance bound
interpretation of inaudible ziji as in (59b).

(58) a. The lawyer defended himself better than you.
   b. The lawyer_3 defended himself_3 better than you_2 [defended \( ziji_{2/3} \)]
      (strict reading blocked)

(59) a. You defended yourself better than the lawyer.
   b. You_2 defended yourself_2 better than the lawyer_3 [defended \( ziji_{2/3} \)]

Going back to Japanese, the prediction now is that we should find the same
pattern of Blocking Effects. That is, we should find the following pattern:

11 The effect is felt to be weak in (57), especially if one sets up a context properly. This seems to
relate to the use of the psych verb shinpaisuru ‘worry’ and empathy. (See Oshima 2004, 2007).
Also, the 2nd person pronoun may be a weaker blocker than the 1st person pronoun in Japanese.
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(60) a. DP_{3rd} defended zibun better than DP_{1st/2nd}. ⇒ should lack a strict reading
b. DP_{1st/2nd/3rd} defended zibun better than DP_{3rd}. ⇒ should be ambiguous

It turns out that the prediction is not borne out. Despite the intervening first person pronoun watashi in (61), the sentence is ambiguous – crucially, it allows for a strict reading. Thus, whether we have a first person pronoun in the complement of yori ‘than’ as in (61) or a third person pronoun as in (62), the availability of the strict reading is not affected, contrary to the prediction.

(61) Sota-wa watashi-yori umaku zibun-o urikonda.
Sota-TOP I-than well self-ACC promoted
a. ‘Sota promoted himself better than I promoted myself.’ (sloppy)
b. ‘Sota promoted himself better than I promoted him (=Sota).’ (strict)

(62) Sota-wa Yuya-yori umaku zibun-o urikonda.
Sota-TOP Yuya-than well self-ACC promoted
a. ‘Sota promoted himself better than Yuya promoted himself.’ (sloppy)
b. ‘Sota promoted himself better than Yuya promoted him (=Sota).’ (strict)

The data above show that the strict readings of zibun in phrasal comparatives in Japanese do not arise from long-distance binding of zibun in the putative ellipsis site. Note that it is telling that strict readings of zibun in overt clausal comparatives do show the Blocking Effect, as illustrated in (56) above, as well as in the contrast between (63) and (64) below.

(63) Mary-wa John-ga zibun-o hihan-shi-ta-yorimo hageshiku
Mary-TOP John-NOM self-ACC criticize-do-PAST-than severely
zibun-o hihan-shi-ta.
self-ACC criticize-do-PAST
a. ‘Mary criticized herself more severely than John criticized himself.’ (sloppy)
b. ‘Mary criticized herself more severely than John criticized her’ (strict)

(64) Mary-wa watashi-ga zibun-o hihan-shi-ta-yorimo hageshiku
Mary-TOP I-NOM self-ACC criticize-do-PAST-than severely
zibun-o hihan-shi-ta.
self-ACC criticize-do-PAST
a. ‘Mary criticized herself more severely than I criticized myself.’
(sloppy)
b. ‘Mary criticized herself more severely than I criticized her’ (strict)
The following Chinese example in (65) is from Erlewine (2010). In a similar sentence in Japanese, the sloppy reading is preferred, but with appropriate contexts and the choice of lexical items, the strict reading seems to be available also.

(65) Yuehan₁ bi wo₂ geng xihuan zi₁₂-de xuesheng.
John bi I even more like self-DE student
‘John likes his own students more than I like my own students.’ (sloppy)

6 Summary
In this paper, we presented evidence for a Heim/Hestvik-style analysis of strict readings of reflexives. More specifically, we observed the availability of strict readings of reflexives in non-ellipsis derivations (phrasal comparatives in Japanese, Hindi-Urdu, Korean and Chinese; superlatives in English and Japanese). In the absence of ellipsis structure, a Vehicle Change analysis is not an option. We also presented evidence that strict readings of zibun in Japanese phrasal comparatives do not arise from a long-distance binding relation between zibun in a putative elided constituent and its matrix antecedent. Many important questions remain. For example, are we in a position to dispense with the ‘Vehicle Change’ analysis all together? In an attempt to provide a partial answer to this question, in Drummond and Shimoyama (2013), we examine vehicle change phenomena in Condition C obviation cases, as well as vehicle change phenomena outside of subordicate structure.

Acknowledgments
For valuable feedback, we would like to thank the audience at the 23rd Japanese/Korean Linguistics Conference (October 2013, MIT) and the McGill Syntax-Semantics Research Group, in particular, Maayan Adar, Marcel den Dikken, Mitcho Erlewine, Sayaka Goto, Takeo Kurafuji, Jeff Lidz, Bernhard Schwarz, and Satoshi Tomioka. We would also like to thank Symon Stevens-Guille for help with type-setting. The research reported here is supported in part by research grants from SSHRC (410-2010-1264 and 435-2013-0103), for which we are grateful. All remaining errors are our own.

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