



Merge Position of Floating Quantifier "Hame" in Persian

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(77-100)

Abstract

This paper investigates the External Merge position of the floating quantifier “hame” (all) in Persian. Quantifier floating has received two major analyses: stranding adverbial. In this paper, the former approach is shown to be more explanatorily justified. The paper provides evidence to indicate that “hame” is adjoined acyclically to the argument DP after the DP moves from its θ -position, along the lines of Boskovic (2004). More specifically, quantifier floating is shown not to be possible from θ -positions. The evidence comes from the prosodic pattern of Persian unmarked sentences as well as the scope interaction of negation and the floating quantifier “hame”. In regard to prosodic pattern of Persian unmarked sentences, main sentence stress has been argued by Kahnemuyipour (2009) to mark the left edge of vP. Floating quantifier is shown to occur before the element bearing main sentence stress in unmarked sentences, so it is claimed to be outside of vP, and therefore outside of the θ -position. As regards the second evidence, i.e. scope interaction, in negative sentences containing floating “hame” when negation is not focused, ‘hame’ is constantly out of the scope of negation, and this means that in such sentences, neither the floating quantifier nor its copies are within the c-commanding domain of NegP. To put it another way, the base position of the floating quantifier is higher than NegP, which is argued to be between TP and vP. To determine the position of NegP in Persian, evidence is provided from negation in gerund phrases in Persian, and the scope interaction between manner and speaker-oriented adverbs on the one hand and between these adverbs and negation on the other. Showing that NegP is located between vP and TP within the scope of “hame”, it is concluded that the External Merge position of quantifier is higher than vP, and therefore is outside the θ -domain.

Keywords: floating quantifier “hame”, θ -position, negation, quantifier scope, scope interaction.

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1. Introduction:

Quantifiers in Persian, like in other languages, are a kind of modifier that normally appear immediately before the nominal phrases that they modify. However, there are sentences in which these quantifiers occur separated from their associated nominal phrases. This phenomenon is referred to as quantifier floating (Q-floating), and the stranded quantifier in such sentences is known as the 'floating quantifier'. A quantifier is an operator that refers to the portion of a specific domain that satisfies a proposition. There are different types of quantifiers, and the two most frequently used ones are universal (exemplified by 'all' in English) and existential quantifiers (like 'some' in English). In this paper, we are concerned with the floating universal quantifier 'hame' (all). This paper investigates the base position of floating quantifier 'hame' in Persian, and provides evidence in support of Boskovic's (2004) idea, according to which quantifiers may not be stranded in θ -positions.

2. Literature review:

There are two major approaches to quantifier floating in the literature: adjunction and stranding approaches. The adjunction approach, supported by May (1977), Kayne (1981), Belletti (1982), Dowty and Brodie (1984) and Miyagawa (1989), considers quantifiers as adjuncts: the floating quantifiers as adverbial adjuncts and the non-floating quantifiers as adnominal adjuncts. Under this approach, floating quantifiers are base-generated in the adverbial position in the sentence since the positions occupied by floating quantifier canonically belong to adverbs. According to this approach, there is no shared base structure for floating and non-floating quantifier structures. Under this proposal, the floating quantifier and the nominal phrase are not related to each other by movement. This approach assumes that floating quantifier is a kind of anaphoric adverbial and needs to be bound by an antecedent.

Considering the shortcomings of the adjunction (adverbial) approach, Sportiche (1988) developed a stranding approach as an alternative approach to quantifier floating. According to this approach, the quantifier and the adjacent nominal phrase together form a single constituent, and in the course of the derivation, the nominal phrase moves to a higher position, leaving the quantifier stranded in situ; in other words, the stranding analysis considers the floating quantifier construction as the result of a transformation from non-floating quantifier construction. Boskovic (2004), contrary to the basic version of the stranding analysis, maintains that floating and non-floating quantifier constructions do not have a base structure in common, i.e. there is no transformational relation between floating and non-floating quantifier constructions. He argues for the late adjunction of floating quantifier 'all'. According to him, adjunction of floating quantifier to the nominal phrase is not possible in θ -positions. In other words, floating quantifier is a late adjunct to a copy of its associated DP. Put differently, in the derivation leading to quantifier floating, a DP moves from its θ -position and then receives a QP as an adjunct, then it further moves to a higher position and strands the quantifier in situ.

3. Methodology

This article employs a descriptive-analytic method and is based on the minimalist program.

4. Result

In the current paper, we first examine two opposing approaches to quantifier floating with reference to Persian data. We show that the stranding approach provides a more powerful explanatory account of the Persian quantifier floating construction. We address the base position of the floating quantifier in Persian and provide evidence in support of Boskovic's (2004) ban on the adjunction of floating quantifier to the nominal phrase in θ -positions. The first piece of evidence comes from the prosodic pattern of unmarked Persian sentences. According to Kahnemuyipour (2009), the main stress of an unmarked sentence marks the left edge of the vP. We show that the floating quantifier 'hame' occurs before the element bearing the main sentence stress in unmarked sentences, so the floating quantifier is claimed to be outside of vP, and therefore outside of the θ -domain.

The second piece of evidence comes from the scope interaction of negation and the floating quantifier 'hame' when negation doesn't bear the focal stress. First, we need to determine the position of NegP in the derivation of Persian negative sentences. Negative gerund phrases provide evidence for NegP to be situated lower than TP in the hierarchical structure of the sentence. It's also shown that in Persian negative sentences, sentence negation takes scope over manner adverbs, whereas subject-oriented adverbs are out of the scope of negation. Thus, NegP is concluded to be somewhere between manner and subject-oriented adverbs. Considering these adverbs' positions, we come to the conclusion that NegP occupies a position between vP and TP.

Given the position of NegP in the derivation of Persian sentences, we try to determine the position of the floating quantifier 'hame' relative to the NegP. We then show that in negative sentences where Neg is not focused, the floating quantifier 'hame' has a scope wider than the scope of negation, and this indicates that there is no copy of 'hame' below the negation. So, the floating 'hame' enters the structure in a position higher than negation, and thus, higher than the vP, which includes the θ -positions.

5. Conclusion

In sum, we present data from Persian to support Boskovic's (2004) ban on adjunction of the floating quantifier to its associated nominal in θ -positions.