Raising, uncased

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1 Overview

Nunes (2008, 2019) argues that hyperraising in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) is mediated by inherent case assignment. He maintains that for A-movement out of a CP to be licit, the CP itself needs to be assigned inherent case and thus rendered inactive for A-movement in order to preserve Minimality. However, I call this analysis into question with new BP data in which an embedded CP is both active for A-movement and able to be hyperraised out of.

2 Nunes' contrast

Nunes shows that **(i)** hyperraising is possible with some predicates (1), but not with others, (2), and **(ii)** the predicates that permit hyperraising *dis*allow raising the whole CP to subject (3) while the predicates that disallow hyperraising do allow the whole CP to raise (4).

(1) ^{OK}Os meninos parecem [$_{CP}$ que ~~os meninos~~ estão doentes].
^{OK}the boys seem-PL [$_{CP}$ that ~~the boys~~ are sick-PL]
"The boys seem to be sick." (Nunes 2008)

(2) * Os meninos foram ditos [$_{CP}$ que ~~os meninos~~ estão doentes].
* the boys be.PAST-PL said-PL [$_{CP}$ that the boys are sick]
Intended: "The boys were said to be sick." (Nunes 2008)

(3) * [$_{TP}$ [$_{CP}$ Que os meninos estão doentes] parece]].
* [$_{TP}$ [$_{CP}$ that the boys are sick seems
Intended: "It seems that the boys are sick." (Nunes 2008)

(4) ^{OK}[$_{TP}$ [$_{CP}$ Que os meninos estão doentes] foi dito].
^{OK}[$_{TP}$ [$_{CP}$ that the boys are sick was said]]
"That the boys were sick was said." (Nunes 2008)

Accordingly, Nunes proposes that this asymmetry is caused by the fact that *parecer* assigns inherent case while *foi dito* doesn't.

3 Counterexamples

The above correlation doesn't obtain when other predicates are considered. For example, *é certo* 'to be certain' takes a CP that can itself raise to subject (6), and for 8 out of 10 BP speakers I consulted it can also host a hyperraised matrix subject that triggers plural agreement on the verb (7):

(5) [$_{TP}$ É certo   [$_{CP}$ que esses lugares existem]].
    [$_{TP}$ is certain [$_{CP}$ that these places exist]].
    "It is certain that these places exist."

(6) [$_{TP}$ [$_{CP}$ Que esses lugares existem] é certo]].
    [$_{TP}$ [$_{CP}$ that these places exist-PL] is certain]]
    "That these places exist is certain."

(7) [$_{TP}$ Esses lugares são certos   [$_{CP}$ que ~~esses~~ ~~lugares~~ existem]].
    [$_{TP}$ these places are certain-PL [$_{CP}$ that ~~these~~ ~~places~~ exist-PL]].
    "These places are certain to exist."

Finally, 5 of 6 BP speakers asked to confirm an idiomatic reading in (8) declared it available:

(8) O   bicho é certo   [$_{CP}$ que ~~o~~ ~~bicho~~ vai   pegar].
    the bug   is certain [$_{CP}$ that ~~the~~ ~~bug~~ goes grab-INF]
    Lit. "The bug will certainly grab", equivalent to "Shit is certainly going to hit the fan".

4   Conclusion

The novel data provided here suggest that hyperraising is possible in BP even when the CP being raised out of is active for A-movement (e.g. movement to Spec,TP), weakening Nunes' inherent case account. These data also pose a potential problem for phase-deactivation based accounts of hyperraising (Carstens and Diercks (2013), Halpert (2019); Zyman (2023) for overview), in which barrierhood is directly related to whether the constituent to be raised out of is itself able to raise. To reach a satisfactory account, further work should examine the syntax of predicates that do and don't allow hyperraising in BP, as well as the syntactic profile of the CPs they embed.

References

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