

Norwegian *gjøre det*: Deep or surface anaphora?

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Several Germanic languages have a predicate anaphora construction of the kind shown in (1) for English, Norwegian and German (López and Winkler 2000, Houser et al. 2007, Ström Herold 2009, Mikkelsen 2010, Anderssen and Bentzen 2012, van Craenenbroeck 2010):

- (1) a. Jan can solve the problem; Anja can't (do it).
b. Jan kan løse problemet; Anja kan ikke det. / Anja kan ikke gjøre det.
Jan can solve the problem Anja can not it Anja can not do it
c. Jan kann die Aufgabe lösen; Anja kann es nicht. / Anja kann es nicht tun.
Jan can the problem solve Anja can it not /Anja can it not do

The two kinds of VP-anaphora shown in English (1a) are typically distinguished as VP-ellipsis vs. *do it*. VP-ellipsis is classified as 'surface' anaphora, where syntactic properties of the anaphoric deletion site are relatively accessible, while *do it* exemplifies 'deep' anaphora, in which the anaphoric pronominal element has relatively opaque syntax (Hankamer and Sag 1976, Sag and Hankamer 1984). Surprisingly, applying the four standard diagnostics that distinguish VP-ellipsis from *do it* to other Germanic languages such as (1b)-(1c) yields mixed results.

The anaphoric properties of Norwegian *gjøre det* 'do it' appear to cross-cut the diagnostics for deep and surface anaphora: *gjøre det* shows some properties of syntactic transparency and other properties which are associated with an underlying opaque pronominal analysis. We show in this paper how the apparently conflicting results can be accommodated with a sophisticated view of the syntax of such anaphoric elements, and that this analysis is consistent with, and sheds light on, a restrictive view of the syntax-semantics interface.

'Deep' anaphoric properties: Two indications that *gjøre det* is a 'deep' anaphor are that it does not require a linguistic antecedent and that it does not allow extraction of subparts. For example, in a scenario where X's child is pantomiming breaking the window with a hammer, X can reassure an onlooker by saying (2) (cf. English *He won't do it*).

- (2) Han gjør det ikke.
he does it not
'He won't do it.'

With a modal verb, VP ellipsis alternates with *gjøre det*, as illustrated in (3a), but A' extraction is allowed only with VP ellipsis and not with *gjøre det*, as illustrated in (3b).

- (3) a. Jeg vil bake flere kaker, men han vil ikke (gjøre det).
I will bake several cakes but he will not (do it)
b. Hvilke kaker vil du bake, og hvilke kaker vil du ikke (*gjøre det)?
*which cakes will you bake and which cakes will you not (*do it)*

'Surface' anaphoric properties: Two indications that *gjøre det* is a 'surface' anaphor are that it supports missing antecedent anaphora (MAA) in (4) and that it allows inverse quantifier scope (IQS) in (5).

- (4) Guro skriver aldri med penn. Jens gjør alltid det. Den er grønn.
Guro writes never with pen_M. Jens does always it_N. It_M is green.
- (5) En av studentene i gruppe A svarte feil på hvert spørsmål, og en av studentene
one of the students in group A answered wrong on every question and one of the students
 i gruppe B gjorde også det. (scopally ambiguous)
in group B did also it

Object shift (OS) turns out to distinguish the deep anaphora cases from the surface anaphora ones. The weak pronominal object in deep anaphoric (2) shows the classic OS pattern in obligatorily preceding negation, while the pronominal element in MAA (4) obligatorily follows the adverb *alltid*, i.e. no OS. The same is true of IQS examples, as seen in (5), where *det* follows *også*. Thus, we may suppose that the pronominal element *det* in surface anaphoric examples in combination with *gjøre* does not undergo OS and is different from the pronominal element in deep anaphoric cases; these latter, parallel to English *do it*, cannot take stative antecedents.

The sum of these facts suggests an analysis along the lines of Sportiche's 1995 account of similar facts in French. The nonshifting pronominal element with light *gjøre* takes a null VP complement, which has the syntactic properties necessary to support MAA and IQS. The pronominal element itself acts as a blocker for A'-extraction, as argued for similar Danish facts by Houser et al. (2007) The shifting pronominal element, on the other hand, is simply a deep anaphor, and the verb *gjøre* in those cases is actually a main verb rather than a light verb. Exactly the same syntactic properties can be seen if *gjøre* in those cases is substituted by a similar lexical verb like *klare* 'manage' or *prøve* 'try'. Thus, 'surface' similarities can be deceiving.

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