I. Observation: The same x exhibits ambiguity

(1) I saw the same girl.
(2) I wore the same dress.
- (1) assumes a single girl, but (2) can be one entity seen on different occasions, or two different entities of the same kind
- These can be explained in terms of the formal semantic notions of extension and intension:
  (1) \( \exists x \exists y [S(x, y) \leftrightarrow x = y] \) (extensional reading only)
  (2) \( \exists x \exists y [S(x, y)] \leftrightarrow x \neq y \wedge x = y \) (intensional reading)
- (2’) (two dresses) is the definition of what makes that dress “itself” at all world-time pairs, and composed of the relevant properties that make it identifiable as such
  - The intension is the “sense” of a thing, or concept; also, a set of sets, which allows here for multiple copies of the NP
  - (2’) (one dress) is the physical referent evaluated at the time of speech
- The availability of readings is determined by the NP type being modified
- See Gorian (2007) for a classification of types (Natural, Artifactory, Aesthetic, Intellectual, etc. and the uses of same that they license)
- N.B.: NP modifier same also shows transitivity—see (II) below—(2) refers to a second dress, or dress-seeing event

II. Analysis: Is the same x a two-place predicate

A formal representation of the syntax and semantics:
- I argue that both arguments are themes, due to the nature of the adjectival predicate
- Whether or not this violates the Theta criterion is controversial; if it does, it is justified as per Haegeman (1991), Parsons (1995), Dowty (1989)
  - [N.B.: As per Chierchia & McConnell-Ginet (2000), theme can be used for animate arguments (cf. patient)]
- The two arguments make it obligatorily transitive as in (3), although only one theme need be overt, as in (4):
  (3) This dress is the same as Jane’s dress.
  (4) This dress is the same.
  - By definition, the dress in (4) must be “the same,” as another dress—either itself at another time, or a numerically distinct one. When only one NP is overt, we see a phenomenon similar to “obligatorily” transitive verbs with deleted arguments, such as the classic ‘I ate’. I formalize this transitive/intransitive alternation as per Jackendoff (2002):

| Semantics: | X SAME Y/X |
| Syntax: | NP same (NP) |

- N.B.: is the same also shows ambiguity—see (I) above—(3) and (4) may refer to one or two dresses/intensional or extensional

III. Analysis Applied to the Observation

- When one argument is not overt, it is because same has undergone a derivation to license this
- I propose Chierchia’s (2004) Reflexivization (R) operator in extensional cases of missing arguments, and Detransitivization (D) operator in intensional cases, outlined by Chierchia as follows (applied to same here):

  - \( \neg[R(is \ the \ same \ as)](x) \leftrightarrow \neg[is \ the \ same \ as](x) \)
- The same type—intensional or extensional—selects the operator
  - (R) operator applies when x fills both roles (extensional uses):
    (5) That girl is the same.
  - A pragmatic account of valency reduction is not satisfactory
    - These accounts claim that null arguments are obtained contextually, e.g., ‘This dress is the same [as that one]’ = pointing at a second dress, or an prior utterance in the discourse
  - Yet, with no pragmatic reference, utterances such as (6) are still grammatical; conversely, context cannot make (7) grammatical
    (6) Mary’s car is the same.
  - (7) *Mary devoured.
    - Context in fact provides comprehension for the interlocutor; it doesn’t explain the argument’s absence from the grammar
  - Conversely, even contextually provided arguments must sometimes be still overt, as in Port’s (2010) example:
  (8) Where is my sandwich?
  #The dog ate.

IV. Open Questions

- This ambiguity is not limited to the word same!
  (9) I have seen that dress (before/already), (extensional or intensional)
  (10) I have seen that girl (before/already), (extensional only)
    - Do these ambiguity-triggering expressions (same, before, already) form a class?
    - = Dyadic predicates?
    - This suggests the importance of the NP type (girl vs. dress) as a more significant ambiguity trigger than “sameness”?
  - Are reciprocal cases exceptions to transitivity, or can same take two VP arguments?
  (11) Both teachers [have/favor the same dress/student].
    - Why does same require a definite determiner in all uses, like superlatives (cf. identical, unique)?
    - This cannot be a reflex of its semantic feature [+uniqueness]
  - Cross-linguistic comparisons of sameness?

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References
