# Island sensitivity in Brazilian Portuguese *quem nunca?* constructions

## *Sensibilidade a ilhas nas construções com* quem nunca? *do Português Brasileiro*

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper provides an account of why the remnant of the ellipsis site is not able to have a correlate within an island constituent in the antecedent, as attested in Brazilian Portuguese *Quem nunca?* (literally "Who never?") constructions. By arguing that *Quem nunca?* involves clausal ellipsis, I show that ellipsis licensing in this case is sensitive to islandhood. This is discussed in view of Griffiths and Lipták (2014) approach to island repair under ellipsis based on the notion of scopal parallelism, in which lack of parallelism implies island effects. Their idea is that variables in the ellipsis site and in the antecedent must be bound from parallel positions. I argue that a contextual notion of parallelism is required, in the sense that different projections from the same domain count as parallel. I adopt Bošković's (2021) contextual approach to EPP, in which EPP is satisfied in the highest projection of a domain, and not invariably by T. I have also claimed that under certain conditions the EPP domain can be expanded for the purpose of parallelism.

**KEYWORDS:** Structural parallelism. Ellipsis. Left periphery. Islands.

**RESUMO**

Este artigo oferece uma abordagem para o fato de que o item remanescente de elipse não é capaz de ter como correlato no antecedente um elemento presente em uma ilha, tal como atestado nas construções com *Quem nunca?* do Português Brasileiro. Argumentando que *Quem nunca?* envolve elipse sentencial, eu mostro que o licenciamento de elipse é sensível à ilha. Isto é discutido à luz da proposta de Griffiths e Lipták (2014) para reparo de ilha baseada na noção de paralelismo de escopo, em que a ausência de paralelismo implica efeitos de ilha. A ideia dos autores é a de que variáveis no sítio de elisão e no antecedente devem ser presas de posições paralelas. Eu argumento que uma noção contextual de paralelismo é necessária, no sentido de que diferentes projeções de um mesmo domínio contam como paralelas. Eu adoto a abordagem contextual do EPP de Bošković (2021), em que o EPP é checado na projeção mais alta de um domínio, e não invariavelmente por T. Eu também alego que sob certas condições o domínio do EPP pode ser expandido para os propósitos de paralelismo.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE**: Paralelismo estrutural. Elipse. Periferia esquerda. Ilhas.

## Introduction

In this paper I propose an account of why the remnant of the ellipsis site is unable to take a correlate in an island constituent in the antecedent, as attested in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) *Quem nunca?* ("Who never?") constructions (QNC). This is intriguing in view of the known fact that island effects are usually ameliorated under deletion. The expression *Quem nunca?* is commonly used as a follow-up comment to a declarative statement, as in (1). The crossed-out elements correspond to the elided material.

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(1)  A:    Maria beijou João.

        M.     kissed J.

    B:    Quem nunca? [t̶ b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ J̶o̶ã̶o̶]

        who    never    kissed  J.

        'Who did never kiss João?'

(1B) is felicitous in a context where speaker B is not at all surprised by the statement uttered by speaker A, being a type of rhetorical question. The continuation in (2), for instance, seems to simply restate the meaning expressed by the *Quem nunca?* (QN) proposition in this context.

(2)    Quem nunca? Ele é um mulherengo!

      who   never   he   is a   womanizer

      'Who did never kiss João? He is a womanizer!'

A curious fact about these constructions is that *Quem* cannot have a correlate with a DP sitting within an island. So, given an antecedent such as *John said* [$_{ISLAND}$ *when Mary kissed John*], the wh-element in *Who never?* cannot have the embedded subject as its correlate; i.e., *Who never?* in this case means *Who has never said when Mary kissed John?*, but it cannot mean *Who has never kissed John?*. The latter interpretation is available if the embedded clause in the antecedent is not an island, e.g., *John said* [*that Mary kissed John*]. To account for this contrast, I will propose that the wh-remnant of the ellipsis site can only be associated with a DP from a parallel position in the antecedent. I will adopt a dynamic approach to parallelism, in a sense to be defined, that doesn't require the remnant and its correlate to be in the same category.

In section 1 I show these constructions are better understood as clausal ellipsis. In section 2 I show that ellipsis licensing is sensitive to islandhood. In section 3 I review an approach to island repair under ellipsis and then I present the proposal of island repair based on structural parallelism developed by Griffiths and Lipták (2014). In section 4 I present my analysis, and in section 5 I conclude.

## 1. *Quem nunca?* as TP ellipsis

In this section I will provide evidence that QNC are better characterized as clausal ellipsis licensed by the word *nunca*, thus militating against the idea of some sort of lower licensing (e.g., VP ellipsis). It is well known in the ellipsis literature that pronouns give rise to an ambiguity between a sloppy (cf. 3a) and a strict (cf. 3b) reading in the VP ellipsis site, a phenomenon first observed in Ross (1967, p. 348).

(3)    John$_1$ likes his$_1$ car and Peter$_2$ does, too.

    a.     John$_1$ likes his$_1$ car and Peter$_2$ likes his$_2$ car, too.

    b.     John$_1$ likes his$_1$ car and Peter$_2$ likes his$_1$ car, too.

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The same ambiguity is tolerated in QNC (cf. 4), which I take as evidence that such constructions do indeed involve ellipsis, in addition to the fact that the linguistic antecedent in (1A) controls the interpretation in (1B).

(4)    A:    João$_1$ beijou sua$_1$ patroa.
                  'João kissed his boss'
    B:    Quem$_2$ nunca? [~~beijou sua~~$_{1/2}$ ~~patroa~~]
                  who    never    kissed his    boss
                  'Who has never kissed his boss?'

Another interesting sentence is given below.[2]

(5)    As pessoas raramente criticam o Biden. Já    o Trump, quem nunca [~~t critica t~~]?
           the people rarely    criticize the B.    already the T.    who never    criticize
           'People rarely criticize Biden. As for Trump, who never criticizes him?'

Notice that the object of the elided verb in the QN clause is topicalized. Considering topics are derived via movement,[3] (5) shows that the DP *o Trump* originates as the complement of the elided verb in the silent structure.

Now let's discuss which category is actually being elided. I will show that it is TP. According to Merchant (2013), voice mismatches are not allowed under clausal ellipsis, as observed in (6).

(6)    *Joe was murdered, but we don't know who [~~t murdered Joe~~].

                                      (MERCHANT, 2013, p. 81)

Lower cases of ellipsis, such as VPE (cf. 7), do allow such mismatches because the target of deletion is arguably below a Voice head.

(7)    The system can be used by anyone who wants to [~~use it~~].

                                      (MERCHANT, 2013, p. 79)

As we can see in (8), QNC and clausal ellipsis behave alike in this respect, since a voice mismatch is not allowed in the former as well.

(8)    A:    João foi beijado pela Maria.
                  'João was kissed by Maria'

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[2] I thank Renato Lacerda for bringing this sentence to my attention.

[3] The same point could be made here if one argues that topics are base generated in the left periphery binding a *pro* as the object of the elided verb. The relevant claim is the need to assume silent structure.

B:    Quem nunca? [~~foi beijado pela Maria~~]/*[~~beijou o João~~]
      'Who has never been kissed by Maria?'/*Who has never kissed John?'

Tense mismatches between the antecedent and the ellipsis site are an even more straightforward way to diagnose TP ellipsis. An example from Hungarian is provided below.

(9)    *Mari tegnap      vásárolt a    piacon,   **és**  nem holnap
       Mari yesterday shopped the market.on and not  tomorrow
       'Mari was shopping at the market yesterday, and not tomorrow.'
                                                (GRIFFITHS; LIPTÁK, 2014, p. 214)

As shown in (10), QNC also don't allow tense mismatches. Notice that, given a past tense antecedent (10A), the tense in QNC must follow (10B,B'), suggesting an obligatory tense match between the ellipsis site and its antecedent.[4]

(10)  A:    Maria beijou João na      festa  (ontem)
            Maria kissed João at.the party yesterday
            'Maria kissed João at yesterday's party'
      B:    Quem nunca? [~~t beijou João~~] Ele já       beijou todo mundo!
            who    never     kissed João  he  already kissed everybody
            'Who did never kiss João? He's already kissed everybody!'
      B':   #Quem nunca? [~~t vai   beijar João~~] Ele beija / vai  beijar todo mundo!
            who    never     will kiss  João  he  kisses will kiss  everybody
            'Who will never kiss João? He kisses/will kiss everybody!'

Additionally, there is another property QNC share with typical cases of sluicing, a well-known case of clausal deletion: the ban against a non-null C under ellipsis, even though this element is arguably out of the ellipsis site.[5] Notice that the overt version of (11) in (12) does allow the sequence *quem que*.

(11)  *Sluicing*
      Alguém     beijou João, mas eu não sei     quem (*que).
      Somebody kissed John  but I  not know who     that
      'Somebody kissed John, but I don't know who.

---

[4] An anonymous reviewer pointed out that the "tense mismatch" argument is weakened when we consider that QNC doesn't work in the future (cf. *i*). I agree with this judgment. I believe, however, that this is an independent issue. The argument would have been weakened in case a future antecedent were compatible with a past tense reading, which is not, or if a past tense antecedent were compatible with a future tense reading. In any case, this tense contrast is very interesting and should be investigated further, as *Quem nunca?* seems to force a past interpretation, therefore requiring a past antecedent (i.e., a tense matching antecedent).
(*i*)       A: A Maria vai beijar o João. (*Mary will kiss John*)
            B: #Quem nunca? [~~t vai beijar o João~~] (*Who will never kiss John?*)

[5] See Ross (1969) and  Merchant (2001) for discussion.

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(12) Alguém    beijou João, mas eu não sei    quem (que) beijou João.
      Somebody kissed John but I   not  know who   that  kissed John
      'Somebody kissed John but I don't know who kissed John'
      Now let's take a look at the *Quem nunca?* case.


(13) A:    Maria beijou João
      B:    Quem nunca?
      B':   *Quem nunca que.
      B'':  ?/%Quem que nunca.


The presence of the complementizer *que* is never totally acceptable in (13), which I take to indicate QNC pattern with sluicing in the unavailability of a non-null C under ellipsis. The difference in acceptability between (13B') and (13B'') will not be discussed here due to limitations of space. For some BP speakers, however, (13B'') is completely acceptable. So, in view of the evidence presented above, I will assume QNC are an instance of TP ellipsis.

## 2. Island sensitivity in *Quem nunca?* constructions

Ross (1969) has first observed that clausal ellipsis constructions tolerate island violations, claiming that deletion of the crossed constituent – an island – is responsible to repair the island effect that would have been otherwise observed in the non-deleted version of the sluice. He noticed that sluicing constructions are insensitive to islands such as (*i*) the Coordinate Structure Constraint, (*ii*) the Complex NP Constraint, and (*iii*) the Sentential Subject constraint. Here I exemplify with a case of sluicing alleviating the Coordinate Structure Constraint.

(14) Irv and someone were dancing together, but I don't know who [~~Irv and t were dancing together~~].

(ROSS, 1969, p. 276)


*Quem nunca?* constructions, however, show sensibility to islands, a seemingly surprising fact under the proposal that they encompass clausal ellipsis. In the following data, the remnant of QNC can have a correlate in a complement clause (cf. 15), but not in a Wh-island (cf. 16). The remnant corresponds to the Wh-element in the sluice, and its correlate refer to the element in the antecedent occupying a parallel position. The notion of parallelism will be discussed in more detail later on.

(15) A:    Pedro contou pro   Renato que  a   Maria beijou o   João.
            P.    told    to.the R.        that the M.     kissed the J.
            'Pedro told Renato that Maria kissed João.'

B:  Quem nunca [t̶ ̶c̶o̶n̶t̶o̶u̶ ̶p̶r̶o̶ ̶ ̶ ̶R̶e̶n̶a̶t̶o̶ ̶q̶u̶e̶ ̶a̶ ̶ ̶ ̶M̶a̶r̶i̶a̶ ̶b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ ̶o̶ ̶ ̶ ̶J̶o̶ã̶o̶]?
who   never   told   to.the R.   that the M.   kissed the J.
'Who did never tell Renato that Maria kissed João?

B':  Quem nunca [t̶ ̶b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ ̶o̶ ̶ ̶ ̶J̶o̶ã̶o̶]?
who  never   kissed the J.
'Who did never kiss João?'

(16) A:  Pedro contou pro  Renato quando a  Maria beijou o  João.
P.   told   to.the R.   when  the M.   kissed the J.
'Pedro told Renato when Maria kissed João.'

B:  Quem nunca? [t̶ ̶c̶o̶n̶t̶o̶u̶ ̶p̶r̶o̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ ̶R̶e̶n̶a̶t̶o̶ ̶q̶u̶a̶n̶d̶o̶ ̶a̶ ̶M̶a̶r̶i̶a̶ ̶b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ ̶o̶ ̶J̶o̶ã̶o̶]?
who  never   told   to.the R. when the M. kissed the J.
'Who did never tell Renato when Maria kissed João?'

B':  *Quem nunca [t̶ ̶b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ ̶o̶ ̶ ̶ ̶J̶o̶ã̶o̶]?
who   never   kissed the J.
'Who did never kiss João?'

As we can see, the island constituent is opaque for the ellipsis resolution in (16B'). In other terms, the ellipsis remnant *quem* in QNC can never take a correlate that sits within an island in the antecedent. Another example is given below with a relative clause.

(17) A:  O  João aprendeu a  língua   que a  Maria descreveu.
the J.   learned   the language that the M.   described
'João has learned the language that Maria described'

B:  Quem nunca [t̶ ̶a̶p̶r̶e̶n̶d̶e̶u̶ ̶a̶ ̶ ̶ ̶l̶í̶n̶g̶u̶a̶ ̶ ̶ ̶q̶u̶e̶ ̶a̶ ̶ ̶ ̶M̶a̶r̶i̶a̶ ̶d̶e̶s̶c̶r̶e̶v̶e̶u̶]?
who   never   learned   the language that the M.   described
'Who has never learned the language that Maria described?'

B':  *Quem nunca [t̶ ̶a̶=̶d̶e̶s̶c̶r̶e̶v̶e̶u̶]?
who   never   it=described
'Who did never describe it (=the language that Maria described)?'

Once again, the island constituent is opaque for ellipsis resolution, and it cannot serve as an antecedent. This is puzzling because the ungrammatical B' cases in (16) and (17) do not seem to be instances of island violations, since there are no island constituents at all involved in the putative ellipsis site. Notice that the non-elliptical versions of (16B') and (17B') are fully acceptable as replies to (16A) and (17A), respectively. This means that we shouldn't consider this case as a failure in island repair, as there are no islands to be repaired. The issue is that it seems to exist a restriction on what in the antecedent is a legitimate correlate for an ellipsis remnant, and how it relates to the remnant in the ellipsis site. Whatever blocks (16B') and (17B') has to refer to the structure available

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in the antecedents (16A) and (17A). In the following, I will propose an analysis based on Griffiths and Lipták's (2014) theory of island repair, but first will reject an alternative approach to the island sensitivity phenomenon, claiming they are unable to account for the above data.

# 3. Island repair proposals

## 3.1 The "star" approach

Accounts like Lasnik (2001) and Merchant (2001) propose that island nodes are rendered PF-uninterpretable by being assigned an ill-formedness star (i.e. ∗-marker) whenever crossed by a moving element (cf. 18). Crucially, the star makes them unpronounceable, so overt realization of such structures makes the derivation crash at PF. Since islands are treated as a PF phenomenon, deletion of the star marked island node is able to repair the island effect.

(18)  a.      ... $X_i$ ... ∗[$_{ISLAND}$ ... $t_i$ ... ] (not a PF-legitimate object)
      b.      ... $X_i$ ... ∗[$_{ISLAND}$ ̶.̶.̶.̶ ̶$t_i$̶ ̶.̶.̶.̶ ̶] (a PF-legitimate object)

Such a treatment to the cases at hand would wrongly predict that QNC would allow      ∗-marked island nodes, contrary to fact:

(19)  A:     Pedro contou pro   Renato quando a   Maria beijou  o   João.
            P.    told   to.the R.      when   the M.     kissed the J.
            'Pedro told Renato when Maria kissed João.'
      B:     *Quem o   Pedro nunca [̶contou pro̶   ̶Renato̶ *[$_{ISLAND}$ ̶quando t beijou o̶    ̶João]̶]?
            who   the P.    never told    to.the R.             when      kissed the J.
      B':    *Quem o   Pedro nunca [̶contou pro̶   ̶Renato̶ *[$_{ISLAND}$ ̶quando a̶    ̶Maria beijou t]̶]?
            who   the P.    never told    to.the R.             when     the M.     kissed

The problem with this approach is that it predicts an unavailable interpretation such as 'who has Peter never told to Renato when kissed John?', given that PF deletion should repair the island violation, and it also remains clueless about the contrast attested between the B' statements in (15) and (16), namely, why can a clausal complement serve as an antecedent, but an embedded Wh-island cannot?

In a different perspective, Merchant (2008) argues that island sensitivity is derived due to PF-uninterpretable copies of the moving element that is crossing the island node. In this approach, what is marked as ill-formed is not the island constituent itself, but the copy moving across the island node. However, as argued by Griffths and Lipták (2014), Merchant's (2008, p. 193) proposal doesn't account for the fact that contrast sluicing is island-sensitive, and it is also unable to account for sprouting, a type of clausal ellipsis with an antecedentless Wh-remnant in which escaping copies are not found, but these constructions are nevertheless island-sensitive.

## 3.2 Island repair and contrastiveness

Griffiths and Lipták (2014) (G&L) argue that there are two types of TP ellipsis (TPE): TPE of the repairing type and TPE of the non-repairing type. The former has a noncontrastive remnant and it is island insensitive, whereas the latter has a contrastive remnant and it is island sensitive. First, they propose the following felicity condition on contrastive fragments (another type of clausal ellipsis), with an example in (21).

(20) "Contrastive fragments are only felicitous if their correlate is contrastively focused."

(GRIFFITHS; LIPTÁK, 2014, p. 202)

(21)   A:   Of all the things he likes, John decided that he will eat [$_{\text{Contrastive Focus}}$ A PIZZA] in his favorite restaurant on his way home.

B:   No, a salad$_1$ [$_{\text{TP}}$ ~~he had t$_1$ in his favorite restaurant on his way home~~]

(GRIFFITHS; LIPTÁK, 2014, p. 202)

Based on Merchant's (2008) observation that sluicing repairs islands when the Wh-phrase is noncontrastive, but not otherwise, G&L formulated the generalization in (22), with the relevant examples in (23).

(22)   **Generalization on island repair**

"Contrastive fragments cannot repair islands. Noncontrastive fragments can potentially repair islands."                  (GRIFFITHS; LIPTÁK, 2014, p.207)

(23)   a.   *Noncontrastive fragment*
Abby wants to hire someone who speaks a Balkan language, but I don't remember which.

b.   *Contrastive fragment*
∗Abby wants to hire someone who speaks GREEK fluently, but I don't remember WHAT other language.

But which properties noncontrastive fragments have, which is lacking in contrastive ones, that allows them to alleviate island effects? Their answer is: the former obey a parallelism requirement, whereas the latter don't.

## 3.3 Parallelism in island repair

G&L propose that island repair is only successful when the ellipsis remnant and the correlate are parallel in LF. The definition of parallelism they adopt is given in (24).

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(24) *Scopal Parallelism in ellipsis*

"Variables in the antecedent and the elided clause are bound from parallel positions."

(GRIFFITHS; LIPTÁK, 2014, p. 210)

The authors claim that this condition is always satisfied for noncontrastive remnants under sluicing. For contrastive ones, on the other hand, it varies. Let's consider the former situation, a case of island repair under sluicing.[6] The LF representations of (25a) are given in (25b).

(25) a. They want to hire someone who speaks a Balkan language, but I don't remember which.

b. [a Balkan language]$_1$ $\lambda x$ ([$_{TP}$ they want to hire someone who speaks $x_1$]) (antecedent)

[which1 $\lambda x$ ([$_{TP}$ they want to hire someone who speaks $x_1$]) (remnant + ellipsis)

(p. 212, ex. 70)

They assume with May (1985) that the weak quantifier (i.e. the indefinite) raises to a TP external position at LF, and the base-generated copy is replaced with a variable bound by a $\lambda$-operator scoping over TP. Crucially, the variables of the correlate and of the remnant must be bound from parallel positions by the $\lambda$-operator.

Contrastive fragments, on the other hand, do not observe scopal parallelism and, as a consequence, don't alleviate island effects. Let's take the example in (26a), with its LF representations in (26b). Notice that movement of the contrastive correlate in A pied-pipes the island in which it is contained at LF.

(26) a. A: Did John introduce the man that JILL admires to Sue?

B: *No, HEATHER.

B': No, the man that HEATHER admires.

b. A: [[the man that JILL admires ]$_1$ $\lambda x$ ([$_{TP}$ John introduce $x_1$ to Sue])]

B: *No, [Heather$_1$ $\lambda x$ ([$_{TP}$ John introduced the man that $x_1$ admires to Sue])]

B: No, [the man that HEATHER admires]$_1$ $\lambda x$ [TP John introduced $x_1$ to Sue]

(GRIFFITHS; LIPTÁK, 2014, p. 217)

As we can see, the variables $x$ are not bound from parallel positions between (26b.A) and (26b.B), which blocks island repair. We now know that scopal parallelism is required for island repair, but what is the motivation behind this? The authors propose that contrastive fragments need to "minimally spell out the island itself" (p. 220), claiming this requirement follows from the scopal parallelism restriction. So, summing up: contrastive fragments require pied-piping of the island, whereas noncontrastive ones don't. Also, scopal parallelism is a necessary condition for island repair.

In the next section I will show that *Quem nunca?* constructions are island sensitive because of a lack of scopal parallelism between the correlate and the remnant *quem*, as attested for contrastive fragments dealt with by G&L.

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[6] The fact that sluicing requires scopal parallelism was already observed in Merchant (2001).

# 4. Scopal parallelism in *Quem nunca?* constructions

## 4.1. *Quem nunca?* structure

Before proceeding to the discussion on parallelism in the relevant data, I will present my assumptions regarding clause structure and then propose a structure for QNC. Following work by Gribanova (2017), I will assume there are two positions associated with polarity (i.e., negation, affirmation) in the clausal structure: PolP (above TP) and NegP (below TP). The higher one is able to host focus features in addition to polarity features. Neg, on the other hand, hosts the morphosyntactic features responsible for sentential negation.[7] She claims these projections are connected by *Agree*. The sentence skeleton is, provisionally, as follows:

(27)  $[_{CP} [_{PolP} [_{TP} [_{NegP} [_{vP} ]]]]]$

In languages with verb-stranding ellipsis in polarity focus contexts (e.g., Russian (cf. 28), Hungarian (cf. 29), Brazilian Portuguese (cf. 30)), it is assumed that the verb head-moves to Pol, from where it licenses TP ellipsis. Also relevant is Martins (2016), who argues for a polarity phrase ΣP above TP able to license ellipsis after verb movement to the Σ head.

(28)  A:  Evgenija otpravila     posylku     v Moskvu?
       Evgenija send.$_{PST.3SG.F}$   package.$_{ACC}$ to Moscow
       'Did Eugenia send the package to Moscow?'
      B:  (Net,) ne otpravila. / (Da,) otpravila.
       '(No,) she didn't.' / '(Yes,) she did.'

(GRIBANOVA, 2017, p. 1080)

(29)  A:  Látta János a    szomszédokat?
       saw  János  the neighbours
       'Did János see the neighbours?'
      B:  Látta.
       saw
       'He did.'

(LIPTÁK, 2012, p. 85)

(30)  A:  Maria beijou João?
       'Did Mary kiss John?'
      B:  (Sim,) beijou. / (Não,) não beijou.
       yes    kissed    no    not kissed
       '(Yes,) she did.' / '(No,) she didn't.'

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[7] See also Zanuttini (1997).

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I will then assume that PolP is also projected in BP, thus being able to host a head that needs to check focus features in responsive constructions. First, let's derive the declarative sentence *Maria nunca beijou João* ("Mary never kissed John"), where no focus feature is involved. I will take *nunca* to head the "NegP" projection, which I will label here as *Never*P for the matter of exposition.[8] *Nunca* is licensed via *Agree* with the polarity head, which can be either null or host an emphatic negation (cf. 31; V-movement not represented). The subject checks nominative and the EPP feature on T as usual.

(31)  (Não,) Maria nunca beijou João.

$[_{CP} [_{PolP} (\text{Não}) [_{TP} \text{Maria}_i [_{NeverP} \text{nunca} [_{vP} t_i \text{beijou João}]]]]]$

Gribanova (2017) claims that the lower polarity (complex) head moves to Pol to derive VSO word orders in Russian, where the movement is motivated by the need to check focus features. The same movement operation followed by TP ellipsis derive responsive ellipsis[9] as we saw in (28)-(30). In cases where *nunca* serves as the fragment answer to the antecedent, I propose *nunca* head-moves to Pol to check its focus feature prior to TP deletion.[10]

(32)  A:  Maria beijou João?
          'Did Mary kissed John?'
      B:  Nunca.
          'Never.'

$[_{CP} [_{PolP} \text{Nunca}_i [_{TP} \text{Maria} [_{NeverP} t_i [_{vP} \text{beijou João}]]]]]$

Now let's go back to *Quem nunca?*. I propose that QN-*nunca* licenses TP ellipsis in the position represented in (32B), that is, heading a PolP projection after movement motivated by checking of its focus feature. In this sense, *Quem nunca?* would be an instance of responsive ellipsis, where speaker B adds a comment to a previous statement in the discourse. Considering we have two specifiers available, namely, Spec,C, and Spec,Pol, we need now to account for the position of the Wh-remnant.

Bošković (2021,in press) argues there are two distinct Wh-positions in the left periphery of clause structure, one confined to locally moved Wh-subjects, to the exclusion of Wh-objects, embedded Wh-arguments, and Wh-adjuncts, which all move to Spec,CP in his analysis. In particular, it is argued that *who* in (33b) is lower than *who* in (33a), but higher than *Amy* in (33c).

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[8] The sentential negation and *nunca* seem to distribute alike in BP. Both *não* and *nunca* are able to license a redundant negation at the end or the beginning of the sentence, for instance:
    (i) (Não,) Maria **não** beijou João (não). (*No, Mary did **not** kiss John, no*)
    (ii) (Não,) Maria **nunca** beijou João (não). (*No, Mary **never** kissed John, no*)

[9] I have borrowed this term from McCloskey (2017).

[10] The derivation in (25B) is based on Merchant's (2004) proposal to fragment answers, which he claims to be ellipsis remnants.

(33)  a.     I wonder [**who** Amy met].
      b.     I wonder [**who** left].
      c.     I think [**Amy** left].

He has independently argued for the existence of a subject-dedicated position above TP and below CP[11]. He shows this position hosts local Wh-subjects which move straight to this position without passing through Spec,TP. As an A/A' position, it can (i) satisfy EPP, (ii) check nominative Case, and (iii) check A' features, e.g., [+Wh], [+Focus]. I will label such projection as $_L$CP, which stands for "lower CP", and will call the other Wh-position $_H$CP, i.e., "higher CP". So, in his approach local Wh-subjects move to $_L$CP, and non-local-Wh-subjects move to $_H$CP. Regular subjects, on the other hand, occupy Spec,TP as usually assumed.

(34)  $[_{HCP} [_{LCP}$ *Wh-Subj*$_{LOC} [_{TP} ...$

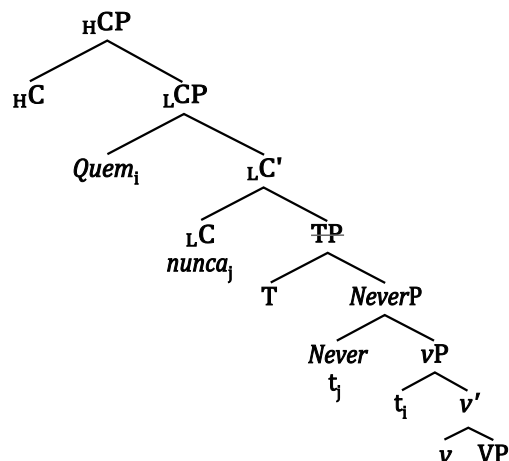To illustrate, let's take a look at the structure for *Who left?* in (35):

(35)  $[_{LCP}$ *who*$_i [_{TP}$ T $[_{vP}$ t$_i$ *left*$]]]$

Under this approach, EPP is treated contextually, and not as an intrinsic property of T: "there is an EPP domain, with the highest projection in this domain the locus of the EPP" (BOŠKOVIĆ, 2021, p. 14). Such domain corresponds to the clausal domain to where Wh(A/A'), regular, and quirky subjects move. Therefore, $_L$CP and TP correspond to the EPP domain, and I will take $_L$CP to subsume the aforementioned PolP/ΣP. Therefore, I assume the following structure for QNC when *Quem* corresponds to the Wh-subject:

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[11] For instance, he shows that non-subject Wh-elements, contrary to Wh-subjects, can occupy a position above the topic. We can observe the same distribution in BP:
(i)  a. Maria quer saber qual livro, pra Pedro, João deve comprar. (*Mary wants to know which book, for Peter, John should buy*)
     b. *Maria quer saber qual aluno, pra Pedro, deve comprar aquele livro. (*Mary wants to know which student, for Peter, should buy that book*)
(ii) a. ??Eu quero saber em qual mesa, aquele livro, Maria colocou. (*I want to know in which table, that book, Mary put*)
     b. *Eu quero saber qual homem, aquele livro, colocou na mesa. (*I want to know which man, that book, colocou na mesa*)

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(36)  *Quem nunca?* structure



**Fonte:** elaboração do autor

The polarity item *nunca* is generated in the lower "Neg" position (i.e., relabeled here as *Never*), being licensed via *Agree* with $_L$C (our old Pol), in the sense of Gribanova (2017) as discussed above. In order to check its focus feature, *nunca* moves to $_L$C, where ellipsis of its complement TP will be licensed.[12] The Wh-subject is base-generated in the Spec,*v* position and then it moves to Spec,$_L$C, where it checks EPP. Notice that there is no need for *Quem* to step by Spec,T in the system I am assuming.

In the following I will make the notion of scopal parallelism more precise by proposing what it takes to count as structurally parallel.

## 4.2. Scopal parallelism in *Quem nunca?*

As we saw in (24), scopal parallelism takes place when the variables in the antecedent and the ellipsis site are bound from parallel positions. In other terms, parallelism is "an LF constraint which requires that fragments and their correlates occupy a parallel left-peripheral position" (GRIFFITHS; LIPTÁK, 2014, p. 229). We also saw I am adopting a contextual approach to the EPP, in which its satisfaction requirement is tied to the highest phrase in the EPP domain; see discussion in Bošković (2021). Therefore, I propose that the highest EPP phrase in the antecedent counts as parallel to the highest EPP phrase in the ellipsis site, even though they may correspond to distinct categories. So, a TP in the antecedent, for instance, counts as parallel to an $_L$CP in the ellipsis site provided they correspond to the highest phrase in the EPP domain in their own structure, as stated in (37) below. A parallelism fail will thus block ellipsis.

(37)  **Contextual scopal parallelism**

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[12] TP ellipsis is represented as T̶P̶ in the tree, where TP and all the nodes it dominates are PF-deleted.

The highest phrase of a domain in the antecedent counts as parallel to the highest phrase of the same domain in the ellipsis site.

First, I would show how scopal parallelism obtains in the simple case in (1), repeated below as (38).

(38) A:  Maria beijou João.

   M.   kissed J.

 B:  Quem nunca? [~~t beijou João~~]

   who  never   kissed J.

   'Who did never kiss João?'


(39) A:  $[_{TP}$ Maria$_1$ $[_{vP}$ t$_1$ beijou João]]

   $[_{TP}$ Maria$_1$ $\lambda x$ $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ beijou João]] (LF)

 B:  $[_{LCP}$ Quem$_1$ nunca $[_{TP}$ [vP t$_1$ beijou João]]]

   $[_{LCP}$ Quem$_1$ $\lambda x$ nunca $[_{TP}$ [vP $x_1$ beijou João]]] (LF)


Under our contextual approach to scopal parallelism, the variables in the LFs of A and B are bound from parallel positions (TP and $_L$CP, respectively), thus allowing for TP ellipsis in (39B). The analysis predicts that QNC will not allow a Wh-object or a Wh-adjunct remnant, since it occupies $_H$CP, being unable to parallel with its correlate in $v$P. This is indeed borne out.

(40) A:  Maria beijou João

   M.   kissed J.

 B:  *Quem Maria nunca? [~~beijou t~~] (cf. *Quem Maria nunca beijou?*✓)

   who  Maria never   kissed


(41) A:  $[_{TP}$ Maria$_1$  $[_{vP}$ t$_1$ beijou João]]

   $[_{TP}$ Maria$_1$ $\lambda x$    $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ beijou João]] (LF)

 B:  *$[_{HCP}$ Quem$_2$     $[_{LCP}$ Maria$_1$  nunca $[_{TP}$ $[_{vP}$ t$_1$ beijou t$_2$]]]]

   *$[_{HCP}$ Quem$_2$ $\lambda y$ $[_{LCP}$ Maria$_1$ $\lambda x$ nunca $[_{TP}$ $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ beijou $y_2$]]]] (LF)


Notice that parallelism doesn't obtain in the relevant sense since the object variable *y* doesn't have a suitable correlate in (41A). In order to (41A) and (41B) to be parallel, a variable should be in place of *João* and should be bound by an operator from $_H$CP.

Now I turn to the island sensitive cases of QNC. Let's start with (16), repeated as (42). In (42B) *quem* takes the matrix subject *o Pedro* as a correlate and, in (42B''), it takes the subject in the embedded Wh-clause. The LF representations are given in (43).

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(42) A:  Pedro contou pro   Renato quando a   Maria beijou  o   João.
P.    told    to.the R.     when   the M.    kissed the J.
'Pedro told Renato when Maria kissed João.'

B:  Quem nunca? [t̶ ̶c̶o̶n̶t̶o̶u̶ ̶p̶r̶o̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ ̶R̶e̶n̶a̶t̶o̶ ̶q̶u̶a̶n̶d̶o̶ ̶a̶ ̶M̶a̶r̶i̶a̶ ̶b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ ̶o̶ ̶J̶o̶ã̶o̶]?
who   never    told    to.the R. when the M. kissed the J.
'Who did never tell Renato when Maria kissed João?'

B':  *Quem nunca [t̶ ̶b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ ̶o̶ ̶ ̶ ̶J̶o̶ã̶o̶]?
who   never    kissed the J.
'Who did never kiss João?'


(43) A:  $[_{TP}$ O Pedro$_1$ λ$x$ $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ contou pro Renato $[_{LCP}$ quando $[_{TP}$ a Maria$_2$ λ$y$ $[y_2$ beijou o João]]]]]

B:  $[_{LCP}$ Quem$_1$ λ$x$ nunca $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ contou pro Renato quando a Maria beijou o João]]?

B':  *$[_{LCP}$ Quem$_2$ λ$y$ nunca $[_{TP}$ $[_{vP} y_2$ beijou o João]

In (43B) parallelism is obtained since matrix TP and matrix $_L$CP are parallel under the system I am adopting: they both correspond to the highest projection in their EPP domains. Notice that the ellipsis site in (42B') cannot recover its content from the embedded clause in (42A), a Wh-island. This is surprising considering that the remnant *quem* in matrix Spec,$_L$CP takes the DP *a Maria* in the embedded Spec,TP of the antecedent as correlate, which means that parallelism seems to be satisfied. However, remember that in order to count as parallel, it is the <u>highest</u> projection of the same domain in each sentence that needs to be taken into consideration. Also remember that $_H$CP is responsible to host A'-moved elements, which are absent in the antecedent in (43A). Therefore, I propose that *quando* ("when") is base generated in the Spec of $_L$CP, the highest projection of the EPP domain. With Spec,$_L$CP filled, the subject satisfies EPP in Spec,TP, possibly via $_L$C. The crucial thing here is that the highest projection of the relevant domain in the ellipsis site, i.e., embedded $_L$CP, does not count as parallel to the embedded TP in the antecedent, since the latter is not the highest projection, which now is $_L$CP. In other words, I am assuming that the merging of a specifier to $_L$C expands the EPP domain, even though a DP could still satisfy EPP in Spec,TP. That being so, it's easy to see why scopal parallelism fails: the variable $y$ in (43B') is bound from $_L$CP, whereas $y$ in (43A) has no operator binding it within embedded $_L$CP. By the end of this section we will see that treating Wh-words like *quando* ("when") as base generated in $_L$CP instead of $_H$CP helps capture the complement/Wh-island asymmetry we observed in section 2 (cf. 15 vs. 16/17).

In (17), repeated as (44), we have a similar issue, being impossible to obtain scopal parallelism when *Quem* has the subject of the relative clause as its correlate.

(44)  A:    O  João aprendeu a   língua    que a   Maria descreveu.
            the J.    learned   the language that the M.     described
            'João has learned the language that Maria described'

      B:    Quem nunca [t̶ ̶a̶p̶r̶e̶n̶d̶e̶u̶ ̶a̶   ̶l̶í̶n̶g̶u̶a̶    ̶q̶u̶e̶ ̶a̶   ̶M̶a̶r̶i̶a̶ ̶d̶e̶s̶c̶r̶e̶v̶e̶u̶]?
            who   never   learned   the language that the M.      described
            'Who has never learned the language that Maria described?'

      B':   *Quem nunca [t̶ ̶a̶=̶d̶e̶s̶c̶r̶e̶v̶e̶u̶]?
            who    never   it=described
            'Who did never describe it (=the language that Maria described)?'

(45)  A: $[_{TP}$ o João$_1$ $\lambda x$ $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ aprendeu $[_{DP}$ a língua$_3$ $[_{CP}$ que $[_{TP}$ a Maria$_2$ $\lambda y$ $[_{vP}$ $y_2$ descreveu $z_3]]]]]]]$
      B: $[_{LCP}$ Quem$_1$ $\lambda x$ nunca $[_{TP}$ $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ aprendeu a língua$_3$ que a Maria descreveu $z_3]]]$?
      B': *$[_{LCP}$ Quem$_2$ $\lambda y$ nunca $[_{TP}$ $[_{vP}$ $y_2$ a=descreveu]]]$

In (45B) the variable is bound from (matrix) Spec,$_L$CP, whereas in (45A) its correlate is bound from matrix Spec,TP, so parallelism is observed - they are parallel because they correspond to the highest projection in their domains. In (45B'), the remnant *quem* in Spec,$_L$CP takes the DP in the embedded Spec,TP as its correlate. Considering the variable *y*, parallelism is also satisfied, since embedded TP in (45A) and matrix $_L$CP in (45B') are the highest projection of their EPP domain: notice that in (45A) *que* heads C, so it really doesn't matter if it is generated under $_L$C or $_H$C, since no specifier is projected above TP in the embedded clause, which qualifies TP as the highest projection, thus parallel to $_L$CP. But still, (44B') is ungrammatical. The absence of parallelism here is due to the lack of an additional variable *z* in the ellipsis site in (45B'). The variable *z* in (45A), therefore, is unable to find a parallel in the ellipsis site, thus blocking parallelism. Notice that if we assume that an Op is the actual object of the embedded verb in (45A), it would still not find a suitable remnant in (45B'), which doesn't enclose a relative clause.

Lastly, I will discuss the cases of complement non-Wh clauses, in which the remnant is able to take an embedded element as its correlate, as we saw in (15), repeated below as (46).

(46)  A:    Pedro contou pro   Renato que a   Maria beijou o   João.
            P.    told     to.the R.      that the M.    kissed the J.
            'Pedro told Renato that Maria kissed João.'

      B:    Quem nunca [t̶ ̶c̶o̶n̶t̶o̶u̶ ̶p̶r̶o̶    ̶R̶e̶n̶a̶t̶o̶ ̶q̶u̶e̶ ̶a̶    ̶M̶a̶r̶i̶a̶ ̶b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ ̶o̶    ̶J̶o̶ã̶o̶]?
            who   never   told     to.the R.      that the M.     kissed the J.
            'Who did never tell Renato that Maria kissed João?

      B':   Quem nunca [t̶ ̶b̶e̶i̶j̶o̶u̶ ̶o̶    ̶J̶o̶ã̶o̶]?
            who   never    kissed the J.
            'Who did never kiss João?'

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(47)   A: $[_{TP}$ Pedro$_1$ $\lambda x$ $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ contou pro Renato $[_{CP}$ que $[_{TP}$ a Maria$_2$ $\lambda y$ $[_{vP}$ $y_2$ beijou o João$]]]]]$

         B: $[_{LCP}$ Quem$_1$ $\lambda x$ nunca $[_{vP}$ $x_1$ contou pro Renato $[_{CP}$ que $[_{TP}$ a Maria$_2$ $\lambda y$ $[_{vP}$ $y_2$ beijou o João$]]]]]$

         B': $[_{LCP}$ Quem$_2$ $\lambda y$ nunca $[_{TP}$ $[_{vP}$ $y_2$ beijou o João$]]]$

In (47B), the variable $x$ in the ellipsis site is bound from matrix $_L$CP, and the variable $x$ in the antecedent is bound from matrix TP. Scopal parallelism is then obtained, allowing ellipsis to be licensed by *nunca*. (47B') is also grammatical, so we expect it to obey parallelism as well. By comparing the matrix $_L$CP in (47B') with the embedded CP in (47A), we see that the variables $y$ are bound from Spec,$_L$CP and Spec,TP, respectively, thus parallelism is satisfied, since each correspond to the highest projection in their EPP domains. Without postulating that merging of a specifier in $_L$C is able to expand the EPP domain, which might still be satisfied at a lower position, it seems it would be impossible to capture the asymmetry observed between (42)/(44) and (46).

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper I have shown that *Quem nunca?* constructions in Brazilian Portuguese are better understood as an instance of clausal ellipsis, instead of a lower ellipsis, licensed by the polarity head *nunca*. I have also shown that remnants in QNC are unable to have a correlate in an island antecedent. This empirical generalization was discussed in light of the theory of island repair proposed by Griffths and Lipták (2014), which have claimed that island sensitivity emerges from the lack of scopal parallelism between the remnant element and the correlate, more specifically, due to variables failing to be bound from parallel positions. I have proposed that the notion of parallelism should be contextual based on Bošković's (2021) contextual approach to the EPP, in the sense that the highest projections of the same domains may count as parallel. I have also claimed that merging of a specifier to $_L$C is able to expand the EPP domain for the purpose of parallelism, while EPP satisfaction can still take place downstairs.

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