From *sooner* to *rather* up the LF of comparison constructions
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The paper analyzes the unidirectional change or *rather* as a consequence of syntactic structure, movement, and interpretation principl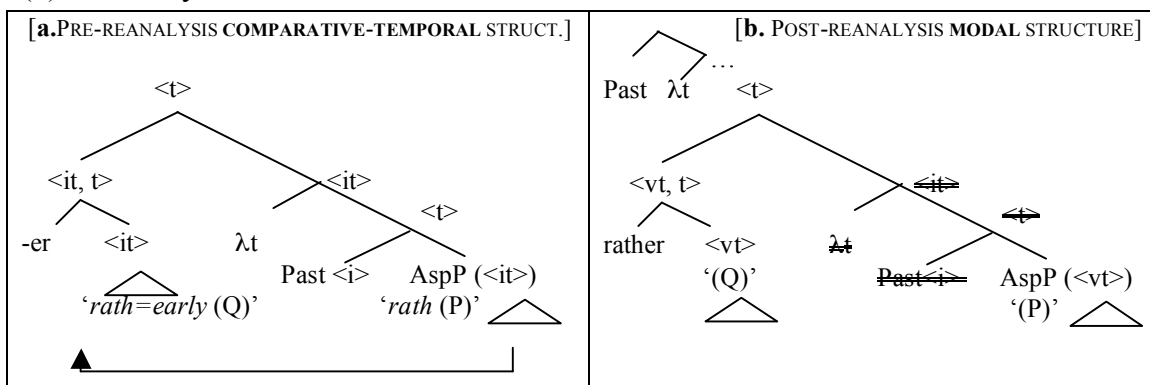es at the syntax-semantics interface. **Claim**: *rather-than structures* (RTSs) develop capitalizing on a temporal scale, using it in an ordering (degree-) structure, and reinterpreting the output as a modal structure.

<u>Ingredients</u> RTS are comparatives (Dieterich & Napoli 1982). Semantic reasons why RTSs resemble comparatives have been neglected. Doxastic weighing of alternatives is available: In (1), instead of the logically following q from the expectations-background, a doxastic alternative - p - is closer to the truth-evaluation of the (fictious) situation. This is a modal reading in terms of possible situations, not worlds (adopting Kratzer 2007). (2) bouletic readings exist; (3) temporal *rath(er)* existed.

<u>Proposal:</u> 1. OE/ME *rath(er)* induced a temporal scale (Mitchell 1985). In comparatives, this involves QR (Heim 2006, Stechow 2006): see (4a). **2.** Situations which are preferred or more likely are frequently communicated through 'earlier, faster' (cf. German *eher* a.m.o.). The set of times denoted by the Asp phrases in (4) are not sets of times ($<i,t>$) after the change, but sets of situation in a modal ordering (e.g. desires). See Heim 1992, though the alternative to *p* is not necessarily *non-p* (Villalta 2006). RTSs are a cheap way to order distinct *p* and *q*. **3.** The change from times to situations for the AspPs becomes fatal for interpreting the structure. Without the set of times, *Past* can serve no function, no IFA (Heim & Kratzer 1998) can apply. One is stuck with two sets of situations and the *rather* predicate "in-between", in an originally moved dependency. The moved generalized quantifier of times is re-interpreted as a first-merged relation. The semantic movement index has no application (no compositional rule can use it) and is erased. With the movement-dependency lost, a modal structure obtains. The *than* clause is its "restrictor".

<u>Summary:</u> While *Merge over Move* is historically widely present, the case study shows and explains how it obtains on LF trees.

(1)   She heard Spanish and Korean, Russian and Chinese, Arabic and Greek,…
        but **rather** [$_q$ than feel intimidated …],
        [$_p$ she exulted in this variety of human sound] (P. Auster *The Brooklyn Follies*)

(2)   Harry [$_p$ <u>walked</u> to work] **rather** [$_q$ than <u>drive</u>]. (Dieterich & Napoli 1982)

(3)   a.   sterres of the north [arisen] **rather** than the degre of her longitude
        b.   … for Cristes swete tree, / **Why ryse ye so rathe**, ey, benedicite!
              (PPCME2 and Chaucer, *The Miller's Tale*, respectively)

(4)   Analysis in a nutshell:

(5) $[[rather]]^g$ (p)(a)(s) = 1 iff $\forall q$: $q \neq p$ & $q \in g(C)$: p $>_{DESa,s}$ q (where $>_{DESa,s}$ is suitably defined; cf Heim 1992; Villalta 2006; with p, q sets of situations here)