

Free relatives, correlatives, probing algorithm and relabeling

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Cecchetto and Donati (henceforth C&D) (2015) claim that internally merged words can project (i.e. relabel the structure they are merged with; see also Donati 2006, Donati and Cecchetto 2011). This idea is based on (1) and (2) (from C&D 2015:45).

- (1) *Label*. When two objects α and β are merged, a subset of the features of either α or β become the label of the syntactic object $\{\alpha, \beta\}$.
- (2) *Probing Algorithm*. The label of a syntactic object $\{\alpha, \beta\}$ is the feature(s) that act(s) as a probe for the merging operation creating $\{\alpha, \beta\}$.

More precisely, an internally merged object is able to relabel the structure if (a) it is non-phrasal, and (b) Internal Merge is not triggered by a c-commanding probe (unprobed Merge). C&D use free relatives (e.g., *She cooks what I like*) as an empirical ground for their claim, assuming that a *wh*-word can relabel a CP. In this paper, we investigate free relative (FR) and correlative (CR) clauses in Russian and Bulgarian and offer an alternative perspective on relabeling.

Crosslinguistically, CRs have four basic properties (Lipták 2012:248): (i) peripheral position; (ii) association with a demonstrative (Dem) in the main clause; (iii) free relative nature; (iv) ability to host multiple relative pronouns. The fronted CP in (3) (from Russian) is a CR if there is Dem (property ii), and it is a FR otherwise. We exclude *pro* in (3) for two reasons: (a) Russian is not a canonical *pro*-drop language (Lindseth 1998), and (b) in the absence of Dem, the *wh*-word has to be nominative (see Izvorsky 1997 for a discussion of matching effects in subject FRs). The question is: are CR and FR different syntactic objects?

- (3) Kto pridët pervym, (tot) polučit bilet besplatno.
who.NOM will.come first that.NOM will.receive ticket for.free
[Lit.: 'Who comes first (that person) will receive a ticket for free.']

We can assume that both CR and FR are DPs, as a result of unprobed Merge involving a *wh*-word (D) and CP. This assumption is compatible with the semantics of CR: a generalized quantifier binding a variable (Srivastav 1991). However, the *wh*-fronting in CR and FR can also be phrasal, as shown in (4) (from Bulgarian). This fact is problematic for C&D's analysis of FRs.

- (4) a. Kojato kniga iskah neja si kupih.
which book I.wanted that REFL I.bought
[Lit.: 'Which book I wanted, that one I bought.']
b. Kupih si kojato kniga iskah.
I.bought REFL which book I.wanted
'I bought the book that I wanted to buy.'

Assume now that both CR and FR have an unvalued *wh*-feature in C. When C probes a *wh*-word/phrase, the latter's feature values are shared with C. As a result, C has what we call a "featural image" of the *wh*-word/phrase (FI_{wh}). Since C is a probing category, it should project (according to (2)). At the same time, C contains FI_{wh} , which is also part of C's label (according to (1)). If labeling is part of narrow syntax (as assumed in C&D 2015:30), it is more precise to say that the *wh*-word/phrase "co-labels" C instead of "re-labeling" it. However, if labeling is an interface process (Chomsky 2013:43), the C-label might not be relevant for interpretation (unless it has interrogative force), and what ultimately counts is only FI_{wh} (cf. Ott 2011). Our approach can also be extended to clauses with multiple *wh*-fronting.

To conclude, we do not make any difference between CR and FR in terms of labeling (the only label visible at the semantic interface is FI_{wh}). Our unified analysis sheds light on possible

mechanisms of relabeling (as a by-product of probing and feature sharing) and opens the door to further research on clausal types and their syntactic labels.

References

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