Feature inheritance beyond the phase head complement

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This paper argues that features introduced into a syntactic derivation by one head may be inherited by multiple heads in its c-command domain, not only by the highest head in the domain. We provide three pieces of evidence for this claim.

Chomsky (2008) proposes that a phase head inherently bears features that can be transferred via *feature inheritance* (FI) to the head of its complement in the course of the derivation. The question, then, arises whether the features of a head can be inherited only by its closest c-commanded head. We claim that the answer is negative.

The first case concerns German modal particles. Struckmeier (2014) shows that modal particles (MP) in German, such as *eigentlich* in (1), are functional heads generated between T and v and are sensitive to C-related features such as $[wh]$, $[u\varphi]$, and [V-to-C].

(1) Gestern   haben die Studenten **eigentlich** alle geifert.
     yesterday have   the students   MP   all   celebrated

Accordingly, Struckmeier (2014) argues that these particles spell out subsets of C's features. This is akin to the proposal that C transfers (some of) its features to these particles.

The second case concerns an asymmetry in Ojibwe verbal morphology. Independent (IND) and conjunct (CONJ) clause types in Algonquian show different verbal inflection.

(2) gi-waabm-**igw**   (3) waabm-**in**-g
     2-see-TS(IND)   see-TS(CONJ)-3
     "he/she sees you"   "that he/she sees you"

McGinnis (1999) describes an asymmetry between one agreement morpheme, the theme-sign (TS), in IND vs. CONJ: CONJ TS encode features of only the object whereas IND TS encode features of both the subject and the object. In order to explain this asymmetry, we adapt Lochbihler and Mathieu's (2016) claim that IND C introduces $u\varphi$ but CONJ C introduces discourse features. Specifically, CONJ TS correspond to $u\varphi$ on v, valued by the object, but IND TS correspond to a complex of $u\varphi$ on v, valued by the object, and $u\varphi$ on Infl (between T and v), valued by the subject and transferred to Infl from C.

The third case deals with the nominal domain. Measure constructions in languages such as Azeri are argued to receive their [#] from the numeral. In these cases, both the noun and the classifier are considered to have features valued by the numeral, as in (4).

(4) **iki yumurta** al-dı-m
     two egg   buy-PAST-1SG

Borer (2005) argues that examples like (4) are possible when the numeral both atomizes and pluralizes the noun. That is to say the noun checks its [u#] and [udiv] features with the numeral. For Borer, feature assignment occurs on only one lexical head, and in cases like (5), the numeral values [u#] only on the closest c-commanded head (*boxes*) and not the lower one (*apples*).

(5) Two boxes of apples.

However, (6), from Azeri, poses a problem for Borer's argument. If the numeral can assign number only to the classifier, then the noun should not be licensed by the numeral.

(6) **iki dana kitap** oku-du-m
     two CL   book   read-PAST-1SG

To resolve this issue, we argue instead that the measure word and the head noun are both licensed by the same functional head, the numeral in this case.

We have argued with three distinct syntactic phenomena that a head may transfer features not only to its closest head but to lower nodes in its domain. Furthermore, this work is in line with Branigan (2016), where FI applies cyclically to remote heads.