

Labelling Small Clauses

Marcelo Amorim Sibaldo (UFPE/ Getegra)

The main goals of this paper are: (i) to argue that the exocentric labelling theory of phrase structure (Chomsky 2013, 2015) can explain case and inflectional morphology inside Small Clauses (SC) of copulative sentences; and (ii) to discuss data from Portuguese and Russian in which ϕ -features and case morphology have challenged theories on SCs.

It is well known that there have always been discussed in the literature the categorical status of SCs (SCs (Stowell 1981, Moro 2000 and others), PrP (Bowers 1993), PredP (Bailyn 2001), RP (Den Dikken 2006) etc.) and since an exocentric labelling theory of phrase structure demand that Syntactic Objects (SOs) have labels to Full-Interpretation interpreting them on CI, then it is important to ask what label a SC have.

In order to pursue this question, I will follow Chomsky's (2013, 2015) ideas that the simplest Merge takes (α, β) into $\{\alpha, \beta\}$ without labelling it. It is important to note that "[f]or a syntactic object SO to be interpreted at CI [...] it is necessary to know what kind of SO it is", so "if an object lacking an identified unique label appears at CI, it violates FI" (Epstein, Kitahara & Seely 2014:3).

Since each SO requires a label, for the derivation not to crash, what should be the label of SC below? That is, in order to derive the sentence in (1), how can a bare SC get a label, given the framework cited above?

(1) *John consider* [_{SC} [_{DP} *Mary*] [_{AP} *smart*]]

To make it clearer: what is the next step after (2b)?

(2) a. Merge(DP,AP) \rightarrow {_{DP} *Mary*, _{AP} *smart*}/ b. {_? {_{DP} *Mary*, _{AP} *smart*}}

According to Chomsky, in a {XP, YP} SO, the upwards head can see the two heads on SC, namely D and A, respectively, thus labelling cannot occur.

Departing from a very well-known set of data from Russian, presented in (3)-(4), I suggest that when the SOs share ϕ -features, SC is labelled as ϕ . On the other hand, in instrumental morphology, for example, subject-predicate case morphology does not match, then labelling algorithm cannot operate since they do not share "relevant" features for it to occur. In this case, I propose that a SO must raise upstairs and then only one head can be seen by the labelling algorithm. In addition, a category, like Pred, checks the Case of the predicate.

(3) Pu.kin byl velikij poët/ poëtom.
Pushkin was a great poet.NOM/poet.INSTR

Matushansky (2008:222)

(4) a. Vera assistent.
Vera assistente.NOM
"Vera é uma assistente."

b. *Vera assistentom.
Vera assistente.INSTR

Matushansky (2008:223)

I argued that in an exocentric labelling theory of phrase structure (Chomsky 2013, 2015), in which Merge does not add labels, SCs can be labelled as ϕ , when predicates share features. Otherwise, when they don't, one XP must raise, in order to Pred like categorie check the case of Predicate. Then we have the explanation for ϕ and case features (mis)matches in some languages through labelling algorithm. This proposal may also shed some light on the *status* of ϕ (and Q), on one hand, and categorial features (like v , T, C...), on the other hand, as far as it explains morphology variation across languages, as I argued here.

Selected references

Chomsky, Noam. 2013. Problems of projection. *Lingua* 130:33–49. / Epstein, Samuel, Kitahara, Hisatsugu, Seely Daniel. 2014. *What do we wonder is not syntactic?* Ms. University of Michigan/ University of Keio/ Matushansky, Ora. Predication: a case study. In: Marušič, F.; Žaucer, R. (eds.). *Studies in Formal Slavic Linguistics*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006. p. 213-239.