A feature-based approach to Doubly Filled Comp effects

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My talk presents a feature-based analysis of Doubly Filled Comp structures in embedded interrogative clauses and in relative clauses, with a special focus on German. I argue that cartographic approaches (e.g. Baltin 2010) do not offer an explanatory account for the phenomenon by postulating that there is necessarily a split CP with distinct designated layers for diverse functions, following the template developed by Rizzi (1997). Instead, I propose that the size of the CP-periphery is flexible, and is defined by the availability of overt lexical items that can encode certain clause-typing features. In particular, I assume that operator movement targets the lowest possible CP, in line with the Minimal Link Condition of Chomsky (1995), and the necessity/impossibility of filling the head of the same CP can be explained in a principled way by taking independent language-specific (or dialect-specific) properties into consideration.

The Doubly Filled Comp pattern (in interrogatives) is illustrated for Bavarian in (1):

(1) I frog-me, **fia wos dass-ma** an zwoatn Fernseher braucht.
I ask-REFL for what that-one a second TV needs
'I wonder what one needs a second TV for.' (Bayer and Brandner 2008: 88, ex. 3)

The effect stems from the co-occurrence of the complex *wh*-phrase *fia wos* 'for what' and the general finite subordinating complementiser *dass* 'that'. Two possible representations are given in (2), where (2b) represents a single CP, in line with the flexible feature-based approach proposed here and the analysis given by Bayer and Brandner (2008), and (2a) represents a cartographic approach with a functionally split CP (as in Baltin 2010):

(2) a. [$_{CP}$ **fia wos** [$_{C'}$ **dass** …]]
b. [$_{CP}$ **fia wos** [$_{C'}$ Ø [$_{CP}$ [$_{C'}$ **dass** …]]]]

Under the analysis in (2b), it is assumed that the two CPs denote two distinct subtypes of CP, one specifically hosting *wh*-elements (FocP or IntP), and one hosting a finite subordinator (FinP). This is supposed to explain why the *wh*-element targets a higher CP (rather than the lowest one): it moves to a designated position encoding [wh]. However, such an analysis faces a number of problems. First, the postulation of designated layers while maintaining that all of them are subtypes of CP is problematic in terms of selectional restrictions, as not all of the possible projections are claimed to be present in all structures, while the cartographic template does not offer an immediate link to the particular semantic properties of individual constructions. While a 'collapse' of the CP-layer is assumed by Rizzi (1997), too, the non-separation of designated CPs immediately raises the problem of the *wh*-operator not moving to the lowest [Spec,CP], and hence violating the Minimal Link Condition. Second, the analysis in (2b) cannot explain why the lower C head is not filled in other varieties of German in constructions like (1), and generally, in languages/dialects prohibiting Doubly Filled Comp, since the Fin head should be available in other finite embedded interrogatives, too. Third, if (2b) were the structure underlying (1), it would be left unexplained why speakers of the same dialects regularly do not accept doubly filled Comp patterns with word-sized *wh*-elements, such as *wer* 'who.NOM', as described by Bayer and Brandner (2008).

To avoid these problems, I propose an analysis represented by (2a). I assume that the relevant C head is equipped with the feature [wh], which is checked off by the operator moving to the specifier. Further, as the complement of the matrix predicate, the C head is specified as a finite subordinate clause, conveniently represented here as [sub]. The insertion of the head *dass* is due to a phonological requirement, in that the subject pronoun cliticises onto an element in C (cf. Bayer and Brandner 2008). The inserted lexical item has to match the specification [sub],

but it is not specified for [wh], as the insertion of a [wh] head would check off the [wh] feature on C, and the movement of the *wh*-element would not be triggered. As the complementiser is inserted because of the requirement from the subject, it follows naturally that an overt *dass* or *that* is not observed with sluiced remnants; hence one does not have to hypothesise that *dass* heads a lower CP. On the other hand, if the *wh*-pronoun is head-sized, in certain dialects it may target C and not [Spec,CP], see Bayer and Brandner (2008), and hence *dass* does not have to be inserted: the subject can cliticise onto the *wh*-element in C. If, however, one were to adopt the structure in (2b), there would be no explanation for why certain *wh*-elements prohibit *dass*-insertion.

The Doubly Filled Comp pattern in relative clauses is illustrated in (3) for South German (Alemannic, Bavarian):

(3) … der Mann, **(der)** **wo** seine Schu verlora hot
the man REL.PRONOUN REL.PART his shoes lost has
'the man who has lost his shoes' (Brandner & Bräuning 2013: 132, ex. 2)

The candidate structural representations would be similar to the ones in (2), with the optional relative pronoun *der* in a specifier position, and the relative head *wo* in a C. Since both of these overt elements encode the relative property of the clause, a cartographic representation in the vein of (2b) is highly problematic, as postulating two relative CPs is not in line with the idea of a one-to-one match between distinct positions and distinct functions. Given this, the movement of the operator to a higher CP is clearly a violation of the Minimal Link Condition. While English uses *that* in both constructions like (1) and (3), the functional difference between the two kinds of complementiser is clearly shown by (Southern) German, where the general subordinator *dass* is used in embedded interrogatives (with an obligatory *wh*-element), and the relative complementiser *wo* in relatives (with an optional relative pronoun).

Again, I propose an alternative, feature-based account, and a representation similar to (2a). The C head is equipped with the feature [rel], which can be checked off either by an operator in [Spec,CP], or by inserting a [rel] head into the C head. Contrary to (1), where only the operator was equipped with the feature [wh], in relative clauses I assume that both *wo* (or *that*) and the operator are [rel]: these varieties have the relative complementiser as the default relative clause formation strategy, and the insertion of an overt operator is an instance of reinforcement (cf. Van Gelderen 2009). The movement of the operator is triggered because the [rel] feature is uninterpretable on the operator itself (no "relative in situ"), irrespective of whether the C head is filled: [rel] always comes with [EDGE]. Doubly Filled Comp effects can hence be analysed as instances of a minimal CP, in line with the assumption that movement targets the lowest CP, and the relevant features are responsible for the presence/absence of true doubling patterns. It is predicted that a further CP is generated only if certain features cannot be lexicalised by the elements in a single CP: this will be shown for comparative clauses in several languages, showing C head + operator, or C head + C head orders.

References

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