

A non-cartographic approach to sentence architecture

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1. Introduction. The cartographic approach is currently the prevalent approach to sentence architecture (Rizzi 1997, 2004, Cinque 1999, Koopman 2000, Holmberg 2002 etc.). In my talk I will show that on closer inspection, implementing this approach as a minimalist analysis proves to be problematic. Focussing on the C domain, I propose an alternative and discuss its conceptual and empirical advantages.

2. Arguments against multiple heads. In the first part of my talk I address conceptual incompatibilities between cartographic and minimalist approaches. For example, feature inheritance and the motivations behind it (Chomsky 2006) have implications for sentence architecture that are potentially conflicting with cartography-based approaches: feature inheritance is a way out of the dilemma of how uninterpretable features of a phase head Φ can be transferred to the semantic component as soon as they are valued, while Φ itself is carried over to the next phase. Φ therefore needs a non-phase head N to discharge its uninterpretable features; however, it needs exactly *one* N. The existence of more than one non-phase head is therefore not motivated by the Strong Minimalist Thesis (Richards 2006). If this rationale is on the right track, then sequences of N–N or Φ – Φ on the spine of the syntactic derivation are out, and only sequences of the type Φ –N– Φ –N are possible. This necessity could still be integrated into a cartographic architecture by assuming that Φ s and Ns occur by turns in a fine-grained clause structure. This might not seem to be such a high price at first glance, but take into account the fact that derivation by phase enforces successive-cyclic movement. Thus, to derive even seemingly trivial constructions one would then be forced to postulate a high number of intermediate traces. The potentially infinite number of phases/subarrays significantly increases the computational burden while doing the same job as a simple C–v (T–V) phase system. The number of phases therefore has to be reduced in a certain manner, which ultimately boils down to the null hypothesis that the number of ph(r)ases is restricted to the core functional categories of the clausal skeleton.

3. New analysis. In the main part of my talk I propose an alternative making use of a single CP with multiple specifiers (see Chomsky 2005:9). Example (1) is therefore analysed as shown in (2).

- (1) Cresi de castanhas AL PÒRC que ne dona (Occitan)
 think.1SG DET chestnuts TO.THE PIG that of.it give.3SG.FUT
 ‘I think the chestnuts he’ll give TO THE PIG.’

- (2) [... [_V cresi] [_{CP} [_{DP_i} de castanhas] [_{C'} [_{PP_i} AL PÒRC] [_{C'} [_{C₀} que] [_{IP} ne_j dona t_j t_i]]]]]]

Ordering and compatibility constraints for functional categories are derived from a flexible feature hierarchy, a version of which has to be assumed independently anyway (Rice 2000, Starke 2001). Features of this hierarchy are mapped into the numeration retaining their hierarchical array, thus making up the functional head C^0 . Ordered merge operations are the result of hierarchy-driven feature satisfaction.

4. Differences between the analyses. One advantage of the new analysis is that the C domain does not contain a fixed cascade of projections, but exactly the minimal structure needed to host expressions. In addition, there is empirical evidence for the new analysis.

For example, in a split CP it is potentially possible that V raises to a head higher than Fin^0 , which allows the prediction that there are sequences of the type [V α P] in which V and α P are both in the C domain. This, however, is not borne out: cross-linguistically, left-peripheral XPs never occur lower than the finite verb. The striking absence of such a construction hints at an exclusion conditioned by the syntactic structure itself, and not just by a constraint. There is seeming counterevidence from languages in which C

heads seem to be overtly visible. However, I provide arguments for the view that overt markers are morphological markers on the displaced constituent: for example, the Split-C approach predicts that cross-linguistically overt topic or focus markers follow, but never precede displaced constituents. This is not borne out empirically, as (3) shows. The new analysis has an advantage in that it makes correct predictions without additional assumptions such as snowballing movement (Aboh 2004).

- (3) [DP ne mae] abdul a-ra-nyu-ir-ε (Kikuyu, Schwarz 2006)
 FOC 6.water Abdul SM-T-drink-ASP-PHON
 ‘Abdul drank WATER.’

5. Solutions for complementisers. In this approach, sentence-initial complementisers seem to pose a problem at first sight because there is no head position they could fill, as shown in (4).

- (4) Cresi que, a Joan, li an donat un bon plat (Occitan, Lahne 05)
 think.1SG that to Joan him have.3PL given a good meal
 ‘I think to Joan they have given a good meal.’

I will argue that they are best analysed as a morpho-phonological last resort phenomenon which occurs at the edge of the CP (see Pesetsky 1998). They are dealt with within the framework of Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993, Harley and Noyer 1999).

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