

Free Relatives and *Grafting* in Serbian

The puzzling (internal and external) syntax of free relatives (FR) has been the subject of substantive linguistic work. The main problem has been the apparent argument-sharing illustrated in (1).

- (1) a. I will eat what you cook.
b. I will eat whatever you cook.

That the main clause and subordinate clause share an argument syntactically is supported by the Case-Matching-Constraint observed cross-linguistically, which is illustrated by the Serbian example (2). This fact has divided the field between the proponents of the DP and CP analysis.

- (2) a. Kupiću šta/ šta god preporučiš.
buy.fut what/what god recommend.2.Sg
'I will buy whatever you recommend.'
b. *Kupiću o čemu/čemu god je pričao.
buy.fut about what/ what god aux talked
'I will buy whatever he talked about'

In this talk I will discuss Serbian data. The interrogative-like analysis of FRs in Croatian has been proposed by Gračanin (2008). I will adopt her view that FRs are clauses. In addition, I propose that these clauses are headed by 'god' particle or its silent counterpart, which is responsible for the special interpretation of FRs (in argument and adjunct positions). The semantics of FRs will be approached in the spirit of Izvorski (2000).

The problem of CMS will be handled following Van Riemsdijk's () ideas on structure sharing. The type of merge ("grafting") he suggests for FRs in German and other languages can account for the problematic category ambiguity, which in the current proposal is the source of the optionality of clitic-placement in (3).

- (3) a. Kupiću šta/ šta god **mi** preporučiš.
buy.fut what/what god me.DAT recommend.2.Sg
'I will buy whatever you recommend to me.'
b. Kupiću šta/ šta **mi** god preporučiš.
buy.fut what/what me.DAT god recommend.2.Sg
'I will buy whatever you recommend to me.'

Also, the impossibility of the noun phrase splitting characteristic of FRs (4b) can be handled better on the current approach.

- (4) a. Vonegatovu knjigu ću poneti što si mi ti poklonio.
Vonnegut's book will take that aux me.DAT you gave
b. *Šta ću poneti si mi ti poklonio.
What will take aux me.DAT you gave

The analysis proposed here will provide the basis for the further distinction between the FR wh+god items (5a), and wh+god indefinites (5b) found in the North-Serbian dialect. Though the distinction is novel, it is supported by the distinct syntax, semantics and phonology of these elements.

- (5) a. Kupiću šta/ šta god preporučiš.
buy.fut what/what god recommend.2.Sg
'I will buy whatever you recommend.'
b. Ako šta god vidiš zovi me.
if what-god see.2.Sg call me
'If you see something call me.'

References:

1. Gračanin, M. (2008) Free Relatives in Croatian: Arguments for the COMP Account. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 39:2, 275-294.; 2. Izvorski, R (2006) Free adjunct free relatives. *WCCFL 19 Proceedings*. 3. Van Riemsdijk, H. C. (2006) Grafts follow from merge. *Phases of Interpretation*. Frascarelli, M. (ed), 17-45. Walter de Gruyter.