

In Search of Case Attraction 2

1 A Markedness Generalization

- discussion from Fleischer (2005)

Fleischer (2005) classifies relativization structures in German dialects as being +/- case.

- (1) -case: case is not overtly expressed internal to the relative clause CP
 - a. the book [_{CP} (that) [I like]]
 - b. dialect of Großbesseln (transitional area of Rhine and Moselle Franco-
 nian, West Central German)
 As kind [_{CP} vo: [ix mEn]] is grONg.
 the_{Nom} child that I_{Nom} mean is.3Sg sick
 'The child that I mean is sick.'
 - c. Yiddish
 a fraynd [_{CP} vos [ikh hob shoy'n etlekhe yor nit gezen]]
 a friend that I_{Nom} have.1Sg already several years not seen
 'A friend whom I have not seen for years'
- (2) +case: case is overtly expressed internal to the relative clause CP
 - a. the person [_{CP}whom [I like]]...
 - b. on the relative pronoun 1 (dialect of Großbesseln)
 As kind [_{CP} das vo: [ix mEn]] is grONg.
 the_{Nom} child Rel.Sg.Acc that I_{Nom} mean is.3Sg sick
 'The child that I mean is sick.'
 - c. on the relative pronoun 2 (dialect of Altenburg (East Central German,
 Thuringian))
 die Frau, die du gesehen hast
 the_{Nom} woman Rel.FSg.Acc you_{Nom} seen have.2Sg
 'The woman you have seen.'
 - d. through a resumptive pronoun: (Yiddish)

a fraynd [_{CP} vos [ikh hob im shoy'n etlekhe yor nit
 a friend that I_{Nom} have.1Sg him_{Acc} already several years not
 gezen]]
 seen
 'A friend whom I have not seen for years'

- 2 vs. 3 case dialects of German:
 - (3) a. 3 case dialects - nominative, accusative, dative.
 This is the case with High German dialects (central and southern areas).
 - b. 2 case dialects lose the dative/accusative distinction. So we are left with the Nominative/Non-Nominative distinction.
 This is the case with Low German dialects (northern areas).
- (4) Unattested systems:
 - a. 1 case dialects
 - b. 2 case dialects which merge nominative with dative

How do [+/-case] relativization strategies correlate with the element that is being relativized?

- (5) a. DO[+case], IO[+case]: Altenburg, North Saxon
- b. DO[+/-case], IO[+case]: Yiddish, Palatinate
- c. DO[-case], IO[+case]: Wissembourg
- d. DO[+case];[-case](match), IO[+case];[-case](match): Großbesseln, Bavarian
- e. DO[-case], IO[+case];[-case](match): Zurich
- f. DO[-case], IO[-case]: Saarbrücken, North Frisian, Zaisenhausen

- 2 case dialects treat IO and DO the same w.r.t. the case requirement:

North Saxon → both DO and IO use a [+case] strategy

North Frisian → both DO and IO use a [-case] strategy

- Implicational Generalization: no dialect permits an unrestricted [-case] strategy for IOs while requiring a [+case] strategy for DOs.

2 Case Attraction as Case Agreement

- Discussion from Fanselow et al. (1999)

In many languages, predicative NPs appear with the case of the DP they are predicated of.

- (6) a. nominative:
er wird ein guter Mann
he.Nom becomes a.Nom good.Nom man
'He becomes a good man.'
- b. accusative:
wir lassen ihn einen guten Mann werden
we let him.Acc a.Acc good.Acc become
'We let him become a good man.'

Fanselow et al. (1999) explore the possibility that cases like (6) could be related to instances of case attraction.

- (7) Ancient Greek: (external: genitive, internal: accusative, realized: genitive)
áksioi tes eleutherías hes kéktesthe
worthy the freedom.Gen which.Gen possess
'worthy of the freedom you possess.'

Case attraction of the above sort is not possible in every language:

- (8) German: relative pronoun cannot appear in matrix case
*wegen des Mannes dessen du siehst
because the.Gen man.Gen who.Gen you see
'because of the man who you see.'
- (9) Two Constraints:
a. GOVCASE: An NP must realize the case it is governed for.
b. AGRCASE: if NP1 and NP2 are semantically coindexed, they agree in Case.

AGRCASE as stated seems too unrestricted to me - but let's set aside that complication for now.

- (10) a. Ancient Greek: AGRCASE >>, << GOVCASE
b. German: GOVCASE >> AGRCASE

2.1 The role of low ranked constraints

For grammaticality purposes, in case there is a conflict between two constraints, it is the higher ranked constraint that wins.

Fanselow et al. (1999) explore the possibility that lower ranked constraints like AGRCASE can nevertheless play a role during processing.

- (11) a. Left to right processing
b. Information about GOVCASE is not yet available
c. Information about AGRCASE is available
d. AGRCASE guides processing
e. Finally, information about GOVCASE becomes available and AGRCASE leaves the room.

An expectation:

- (12) *die* is FSg, but unspecified for case:
die Frau die....
the woman who
'the woman who....'

- If we know that the external determiner *die* is accusative, AGRCASE would bias us towards an accusative interpretation of the relative pronoun *die*.

- Background: case ambiguous structures in German display a subject preference.

Expectation: we expect an object preference to arise when (12) is embedded in an environment where the external case is accusative.

2.2 An Experiment

- (13) NP₁ V₁ [_{NP2} Det₂ N₂ [Rel₂ Adv NP₃ V₂ Aux₂]] Adjunct-Clause....
a. NP₁ is marked nominative.
b. V₁ is either a transitive verb in which case NP₂ is formally accusative, or it is *sein* 'be', in which case NP₂ is formally nominative.
c. Det₂, N₂ and Rel₂ are morphologically unmarked for case.

- d. NP₃ is also unmarked for case, but has a number specification different from NP₂.
- e. The grammatical functions of NP₂ and NP₃ are determined by Aux₂.

(14) Test Examples

- a. (subject relative, with *be*)

Das ist die Frau, die glücklicherweise die Soldaten besucht hat,
that is the woman who fortunately the soldiers visited has
obwohl...
although

'That is the woman who has fortunately visited the soldiers, although...'

- b. (object relative, with *be*)

Das ist die Frau, die glücklicherweise die Soldaten besucht
that is the woman who fortunately the soldiers visited
haben, obwohl...
have although

'That is the woman who the soldiers have fortunately visited, although...'

- c. (subject relative, with a transitive verb)

der Soldat überrascht die Frau, die glücklicherweise die Männer
the soldier surprises the woman who fortunately the men
besucht hat,...
visited has

'The soldier surprises the woman who has fortunately visited the men.'

- d. (object relative, with a transitive verb)

der Soldat überrascht die Frau, die glücklicherweise die Männer
the soldier surprises the woman who fortunately the men
besucht haben,...
visited have

'The soldier surprises the woman who the men have fortunately visited.'

- If AGRCASE plays a role in processing, we expect (14a, d) to have the fastest reading times on the disambiguating auxiliary.
- The preference for Subject-Object order would favor (14a, c).

Results:

- (15) Reading times for auxiliary:

- a. (14a): [N=nom, Rel=nom]: 611ms.
(14b): [N=nom, Rel=acc]: 736ms.
- b. (14c): [N=acc, Rel=nom]: 639ms.
(14d): [N=acc, Rel=acc]: 594ms.

(the a vs. b, c vs. d differences are significant.)

- Note that the AGRCASE preference overrides the preferences for Subject-Object order (14c vs. 14d).

3 Attraction Errors

Bader and Meng (2002) explore the relationship between Case Attraction effects in processing and attraction errors of the sort indicated below:

- (16) Speech Error:

- a. Common: The editor of the history books are...
- b. Rare: The editors of the history book is...

Intuition: singular is unmarked, only marked features are attracted.

Bader and Meng (2002) (and more generally the Bader/Bayer research group) are interested in the representation of case, in particular the dative. There is evidence that compared to nominative/accusative, the dative is a marked case.

So the question is: do all cases participate in Case Attraction, or only marked cases?

3.1 Background

Locally Ambiguous Structures:

- (17) a. S-O

(Ich glaube,) daß Fritz das Buch geschickt hat.
I believe that Fritz the book sent has
'I believe that Fritz has sent the book.'

- b. O-S

(Ich glaube,) daß Fritz das Buch geschickt wurde.
I believe that Fritz the book sent was
'I believe that the book was sent to Fritz.'

Self-Paced reading exhibits preference for S-O word order.

This preference can be overturned by a relative clause whose relative pronoun is marked dative.

- (18) Ich glaube, daß Maria, **der** ich gerade begegnet bin, das Buch
I believe that Maria who.Dat I just met am the book
geschickt hat.
sent has
'I believe that Maria, who I just met, sent the book.'

The presence of the relative clause causes a sharp drop in the percentages of correct answers in a speeded-grammaticality experiment.

Bader's Proposal:

- (19) The Case Attraction Hypothesis (CAH):
A marked case feature can erroneously migrate within the CPPM (Current Partial Phrase Marker).

An alternate proposal:

- (20) The Parallel Function Hypothesis (PFH):
If the syntactic function of the head noun is ambiguous, the parser assumes that the syntactic functions of the head noun and the relative pronoun are identical.

3.2 CAH vs. PFH

- (21) a. Ich glaube, daß Maria, **der** ich gerade begegnet bin, das Buch
I believe that Maria who.Dat I just met am the book
geschickt hat.
sent has
'I believe that Maria, who I just met, sent the book.'
- b. *die* is ambiguous between Nom/Acc, but cannot be Dat:
Ich glaube, daß die Frau, **der** ich gerade begegnet bin, das
I believe that the woman who.Dat I just met am the
Buch geschickt hat.
book sent has
'I believe that the woman who I just met sent the book.'
- c. Ich glaube, daß der Frau, die ich gerade getroffen habe,
I believe that the.Dat woman who.Acc I just met am
das Buch geschickt wurde.
the book sent was

'I believe that the book was sent to the woman who I just met.'

Bader and Meng (2002) assume a directionality to Case Attraction: they expect (21a, b), but not (21c), to not display Case Attraction effects,

- To avoid the active-passive distinction, the test sentences involved active transitive and psych-verb sentences.

Results:

- (22) a. Dative relative pronouns induce Case Attraction errors in both (21a, b) (i.e. irrespective of whether we have a 3-way ambiguous Proper Name, or a 2-way (Nom-Acc) ambiguous Definite Description.)
b. Case Attraction effects were found only with (21a, b) but not with (21c), suggesting that only marked cases participate in Case Attraction
- Bader and Meng (2002) relate this to their proposal that dative case is represented by a case flag (a KP) within the CPPM, while the nominative/accusative are not.

Additional experiments show that case attraction is not dependent on the head noun being ambiguous. Case attraction occurs as frequently with ambiguous head NPs as with unambiguous head NPs.

References

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