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 Großrosseln (transitional area of Rhine and Moselle Franconian, West Central German)
      As kind [CP voc: [ix mEn]] is grONg.
      theXen child that IXen mean is.3Sg sick
      ‘The child that I mean is sick.’
   c. Yiddish
      a fraynd [CP vos [ikh hob im shoyn etlekhe yor nit gezon]]
      a friend that IXen have.1Sg already several years not seen
      ‘A friend whom I have not seen for years’
   d. through a resumptive pronoun: (Yiddish)

(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 Großrosseln)
      As kind [CP das voc: [ix mEn]] is grONg.
      theXen child Rel.Sg.Acc that IXen 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
      theXen woman Rel.FSg.Acc youXen seen have.2Sg
      ‘The woman you have seen.’
   d. through a resumptive pronoun: (Yiddish)

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): Großrosseln, 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)
   ἀξίοι τῆς εὐθυρίας ἥσ κέκτησε
   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.’

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 NP3 [Rel2 Adv NP5 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, NP2 and Rel2 are morphologically unmarked for case.
d. NP₁ is also unmarked for case, but has a number specification different from NP₂.
e. The grammatical functions of NP₂ and NP₃ are determined by Aux₁.

(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 geschickt hat.
'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 geschickt hat.
'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 Buch geschickt hat.
'I believe that the woman who I just met, sent the book.'

c. Ich glaube, daß der Frauen, der ich gerade getroffen habe, das Buch geschickt wurde.
'I believe that the woman who I just met sent the book.'

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

