

# Case competition in headless relatives

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# Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>List of tables</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>List of abbreviations</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>I The constant case complexity</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2 A reoccurring pattern</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Case competition in Gothic headless relatives . . . . .	13
2.2 The accessibility hierarchy . . . . .	15
2.3 Case in morphology . . . . .	15
2.3.1 Morphological containment . . . . .	15
2.3.2 Suppletion patterns . . . . .	16
2.3.3 Syncretism patterns . . . . .	17
2.4 Why the genitive is excluded . . . . .	18
<b>3 Case decomposition meets ellipsis</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Case decomposition . . . . .	19
3.2 Ellipsis . . . . .	19
3.3 Phrasal spellout . . . . .	20
3.4 The intuition . . . . .	20

<i>CONTENTS</i>	3
<b>II The direction that differs</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>4 The variation</b>	<b>25</b>
4.1 The different patterns . . . . .	25
4.1.1 Both: Gothic . . . . .	25
4.1.2 Only from external: Old High German . . . . .	25
4.1.3 Only from internal: Modern German . . . . .	28
4.1.4 None: Italian . . . . .	30
4.2 Shape of relative pronoun . . . . .	30
4.2.1 D in Old High German . . . . .	30
4.2.2 D + COMP in Gothic . . . . .	30
4.2.3 WH in Modern German . . . . .	30
<b>5 Connecting morphology and syntax</b>	<b>33</b>
5.1 Background: relative clause theory . . . . .	33
5.2 Analysis . . . . .	33
5.2.1 Old High German . . . . .	33
5.2.2 Modern German . . . . .	34
5.2.3 Gothic . . . . .	34
<b>III Details</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>6 Technical implementation</b>	<b>37</b>
6.1 Background . . . . .	37
6.2 Derivations . . . . .	38
<b>7 Conclusion</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Primary texts</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>43</b>

# List of tables

## Chapter 2

2.1	Case attraction in headless relatives in Gothic . . . . .	14
2.2	Transparent case containment in Khanty . . . . .	15
2.3	Transparent case containment in Kalderaš Romani . . . . .	15
2.4	Transparent case containment in West Tocharian . . . . .	16
2.5	ABB patterns in suppletion . . . . .	16
2.6	ABC patterns in suppletion . . . . .	17
2.7	AAB patterns in suppletion . . . . .	17

## Chapter 3

3.1	DAT vs. ACC . . . . .	20
3.2	DAT vs. NOM . . . . .	20
3.3	ACC vs. NOM . . . . .	21

## Chapter 4

4.1	INT vs. EXT in MG and OHG and Gothic . . . . .	25
4.2	Case attraction in headless relatives in Gothic . . . . .	26
4.3	Case attraction in headless relatives in OHG . . . . .	28
4.4	Case attraction in headless relatives in MG . . . . .	30
4.5	Relative pronouns in headless relatives in OHG . . . . .	31
4.6	Relative pronouns in headless relatives in Gothic . . . . .	31

<i>LIST OF TABLES</i>	5
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4.7 Relative pronouns in headless relatives in MG . . . . .	31
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# List of abbreviations

1	first person
3	third person
ACC	accusative
AN	animate
DAT	dative
EXT	external case
F	feminine
INAN	inanimate
INT	internal case
M	masculine
MG	Modern German
N	neuter
NOM	nominative
OHG	Old High German
PL	plural
SG	singular





# Chapter 1

## Introduction

–general intro–

Languages can use case to mark the grammatical role of a noun phrase in a clause. Consider the two Modern German sentences in (1). In (1a), *der Lehrer* ‘the teacher’ is marked nominative, and it is the subject. *Den Schüler* ‘the student’ is marked accusative, and it is an object. In (1b), the roles are reversed: *der Schüler* ‘the student’ is marked nominative and it is the subject, and *den Lehrer* ‘the teacher’ is marked accusative and it is the object. Notice also that the subject precedes the predicate *mag* ‘likes’ and the object follows it.

- (1) a. Der            Lehrer mag den            Schüler.  
         the.M.NOM teacher likes the.M.ACC student  
         ‘The teacher likes the student.’  
     b. Der            Schüler mag den            Lehrer.  
         the.M.NOM student likes the.M.ACC  
         ‘The student likes the teacher.’

Not only full noun phrases, but also other elements can be marked for case, such as relative pronouns. Modern German marks relative pronouns, just like full noun phrases, for the grammatical role they have in the clause. Consider the two sentences in (2). In (2a), the relative pronoun *der* ‘that.M.NOM’ introduces a clause that modifies *den Schüler* ‘the student’. *Der* ‘that.M.NOM’ is marked masculine and nominative. The relative pronoun is marked masculine, because it agrees in gender with

its antecedent *den Schüler* ‘the student’. It is marked nominative, because of its grammatical role: it is the subject in the relative clause. In (2b), the relative pronoun *den* ‘that.M.ACC’ is marked masculine and accusative. Again, the relative pronoun is marked masculine, because it agrees in gender with its antecedent *den Schüler* ‘the student’. It is marked accusative, because of its grammatical role: it is the object in the relative clause.

- (2) a. Der Lehrer mag den Schüler, der nach draußen  
           the.M.NOM teacher likes the.M.ACC student that.M.NOM to outside  
           guckt.  
           looks  
           ‘The teacher likes the student that is looking outside.’  
       b. Der Lehrer mag den Schüler, den er beim  
           the.M.NOM teacher likes the.M.ACC student that.M.ACC he at the  
           Verstecktspiel sucht.  
           hide-and-seek game seeks  
           ‘The teacher likes the student that he is looking for playing hide-and-  
           seek.’

If there is no head, we have a headless relative in these, there is only one place for the case.

–give example of a matching one–

then the cases can differ then, there is a case conflict

there we have case competition in headless relatives this thesis discusses different aspects of this phenomenon

first, what holds for all languages is that there is a single order: highest in the hierarchy wins in the first part, I..

secondly I adress an aspect that differs across languages that is, not all languages are like gothic I connect this crosslinguistic variation to morphology.. so i reduce it to differences in the lexicon

finally, i show how all of this can be derived in derivations

## **Part I**

# **The constant case complexity**



## Chapter 2

# A reoccurring pattern

### 2.1 Case competition in Gothic headless relatives

(1) INT:NOM, EXT:ACC

a. NOM not attested

b. jah [po -ei ist us Laudeikaion] jus ussiggwaid  
and what.ACC -COMP is<sub>[NOM]</sub> from Laodicea you read<sub>[ACC]</sub>  
'and read that which is from Laodicea'

(Gothic, Col 4:16, after Harbert 1978: 357)

(2) INT:NOM, EXT:DAT

a. NOM not attested

b. [paim -ei iupa sind] fraþjaip  
what.DAT -COMP above are<sub>[NOM]</sub> think on<sub>[DAT]</sub>  
'set your mind on those which are above'

(Gothic, Col 3:2, after Harbert 1978: 339)

(3) INT:ACC, EXT:NOM

a. [þan -ei frijos] siuks ist  
who.ACC -COMP love<sub>[ACC]</sub> sick is<sub>[NOM]</sub>  
'the one whom you love is sick'

(Gothic, John 11:3, after Harbert 1978: 342)

b. NOM not attested

- (4) INT:ACC, EXT:DAT
- a. ACC not attested
- b. hva nu wileiþ ei taujau [þamm -ei qipþ þiudan Iudaie]?  
 what now want that do<sub>[DAT]</sub> who.DAT -COMP say<sub>[ACC]</sub> king of Jews  
 ‘what now do you wish that I do to him whom you call King of the  
 Jews?’ (Gothic, Mark 15:12, after Harbert 1978: 339)
- (5) INT:DAT, EXT:NOM
- a. iþ [þamm -ei leiril fraletada] leiril frijod  
 but who.DAT -COMP little is forgiven<sub>[DAT]</sub> little loves<sub>[NOM]</sub>  
 ‘but the one whom little is forgiven loves little’  
 (Gothic, Luke 7:47, after Harbert 1978: 342)
- b. NOM not attested
- (6) INT:DAT, EXT:ACC, is with a preposition
- a. ushafjands [ana þamm -ei lag]  
 picking up<sub>[ACC][DAT]</sub> on what.DAT -COMP lay  
 ‘picking up that on which he lay’  
 (Gothic, Luke 5:25, after Harbert 1978: 343)
- b. ACC not attested

Table 2.1: Case attraction in headless relatives in Gothic

EXT INT	[NOM]	[ACC]	[DAT]
[NOM]	NOM	ACC ?NOM	DAT ?NOM
[ACC]	?NOM ACC	ACC	DAT ?ACC
[DAT]	?NOM DAT	?ACC DAT	DAT

(7) NOM < ACC < DAT

## 2.2 The accessibility hierarchy

(8) NOM < ACC < DAT

## 2.3 Case in morphology

### 2.3.1 Morphological containment

Nikolaeva 1999: 16

Table 2.2: Transparent case containment in Khanty

	1SG	3SG	1PL
NOM	ma	luw	muŋ
ACC	ma:- <b>ne:m</b>	luw- <b>e:l</b>	muŋ- <b>e:w</b>
DAT	ma:- <b>ne:m-na</b>	luw- <b>e:l-na</b>	muŋ- <b>e:w-na</b>

Boretzky 1994: 31-46

Table 2.3: Transparent case containment in Kalderaš Romani

	‘brother’	‘brothers’	‘girl’	‘girls’
NOM	phral	phral-(á)	rakl-í	rakl-já
ACC	phral- <b>és</b>	phral- <b>én</b>	rakl- <b>já</b>	rakl-já- <b>n</b>
DAT	phral- <b>és-kə</b>	phral- <b>én-gə</b>	rakl- <b>já-kə</b>	rakl-já- <b>n-gə</b>

Gippert 1987: 23-24

Table 2.4: Transparent case containment in West Tocharian

	‘horses’	‘men’
NOM	yakwi	eñkwi
ACC	yakwe- <b>m</b>	eñkwe- <b>m</b>
DAT	yäkwe- <b>m-ts</b>	eñkwe- <b>m-ts</b>

(9) NOM < ACC < DAT

### 2.3.2 Suppletion patterns

(10) NOM < ACC < DAT

#### 2.3.2.1 ABB

cognates widespread in Indo-European - Icelandic

cognates across Slavic - Russian

cognates across Slavic - Serbian

Table 2.5: ABB patterns in suppletion

	Icelandic	Russian	Serbian		
	1SG	1PL	3SG.F	3SG.M	3SG.N
NOM	ég	my	ona	oni	on
ACC	<b>mig</b>	<b>nas</b>	<b>nju</b>	<b>njih</b>	<b>nje-ga</b>
DAT	<b>mér</b>	<b>nam</b>	<b>njoj</b>	<b>njima</b>	<b>nje-mu</b>



Table 2.6: ABC patterns in suppletion

Khinalugh	
1SG	
NOM	zi
ACC	jä
DAT	as(ir)

## 2.3.2.2 ABC

## 2.3.2.3 AAB

Table 2.7: AAB patterns in suppletion

	Yurok	Wardaman	
	3SG	3SG	3PL
NOM	<b>yoʔ(o-t), woʔ(o-t)</b>	<b>narnaj</b>	<b>narnaj-bulu</b>
ACC	<b>yoʔo-t, woʔo-t</b>	<b>narnaj-(j)i</b>	<b>narnaj-bulu-yi</b>
DAT	weyazik	gunga	wurrugu

## 2.3.3 Syncretism patterns

## 2.3.3.1 ABB

## 2.3.3.2 ABC

## 2.3.3.3 AAB

(11) NOM < ACC < DAT

## 2.4 Why the genitive is excluded

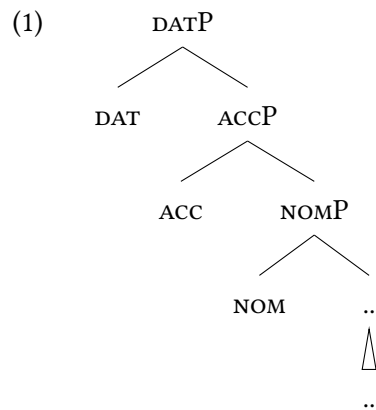
- possessive
- accessibility hierarchy
- not available

## Chapter 3

# Case decomposition meets ellipsis

### 3.1 Case decomposition

Syntax = morphology



### 3.2 Elipsis

Elipsis targets phrases

## Single morphemes spell out phrases

### 3.4 The intuition

The image shows two syntactic tree diagrams for German noun phrases. The left tree is for the dative case (DAT) and the right tree is for the accusative case (ACC). Both trees show a hierarchical structure of projections (P) and their arguments (DAT, ACC, NOM). The trees are drawn with lines connecting the nodes, and the arguments are labeled with their respective case markers.

**DAT Tree (Left):**

- Root: DATP
  - Left child: DAT
  - Right child: ACCP
    - Left child: ACC
    - Right child: NOMP
      - Left child: NOM
      - Right child: .. (ellipsis)

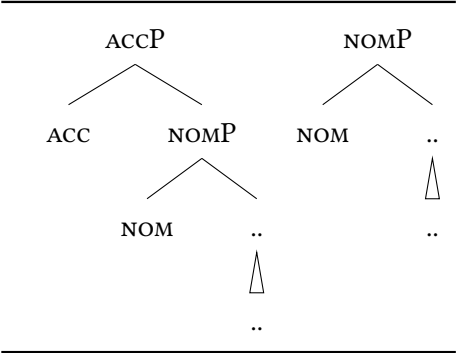
**ACC Tree (Right):**

- Root: ACCP
  - Left child: ACC
  - Right child: NOMP
    - Left child: NOM
    - Right child: .. (ellipsis)

Diagram illustrating the structure of the DATP (Data Transfer Phrase) and NOMP (Nominal Phrase) components:

- DATP** (Data Transfer Phrase) branches into **DAT** (Data) and **ACCP** (Accusative Phrase).
- ACCP** branches into **ACC** (Accusative) and **NOMP** (Nominal Phrase).
- NOMP** branches into **NOM** (Nominal) and an ellipsis (**..**).
- NOMP** (Nominal Phrase) branches into **NOM** (Nominal) and an ellipsis (**..**).

Table 3.3: ACC vs. NOM





## **Part II**

# **The direction that differs**





## Chapter 4

# The variation

### 4.1 The different patterns

In Gothic, the more complex case wins. In OHG, the more complex case wins, only if it is external. In MG, the more complex case wins, only if it is internal.

Table 4.1: INT vs. EXT in MG and OHG and Gothic

	INT>EXT	EXT>INT
	inverse attraction	proper attraction
MG	✓	*
OHG	*	✓
Gothic	✓	✓

#### 4.1.1 Both: Gothic

#### 4.1.2 Only from external: Old High German

- (1) INT:NOM, EXT:ACC
  - a. NOM not attested

Table 4.2: Case attraction in headless relatives in Gothic

EXT INT	[NOM]	[ACC]	[DAT]
[NOM]	NOM	?NOM ACC	?NOM DAT
[ACC]	?NOM ACC	ACC	?ACC DAT
[DAT]	?NOM DAT	?ACC DAT	DAT

- b. ih bibringu fona Juda [dhen mina berga chisetzit]  
 I educate<sub>[ACC]</sub> about Juda who.ACC my mountains through pull<sub>[NOM]</sub>  
 ‘I educate the one who wanders through my mountains about Judas’  
 (OHG, Isid. 34:3, Behaghel 1923-1932: 761)

(2) INT:NOM, EXT:DAT

- a. NOM not attested  
 b. aer antuurta [demo zaimo sprah]  
 he replied<sub>[DAT]</sub> who.DAT to him spoke<sub>[NOM]</sub>  
 ‘he replied to the one who spoke to him’  
 (OHG, Mons. 7:24, Behaghel 1923-1932: 761, after Pittner 1995: 199)

(3) INT:ACC, EXT:NOM

- a. ACC not attested  
 b. NOM not attested

(4) INT:ACC, EXT:DAT

- a. ACC not attested

- b. istû furira Abrâhame, ouh [thên man hiar nû  
are you superior<sub>[DAT]</sub> to Abraham also who.DAT one here now  
zalta]?  
named<sub>[ACC]</sub>  
‘are you superior to Abraham to those which they just mentioned?’  
(OHG, Otfrid III 18:33, Behaghel 1923-1932: 761)

## (5) INT:DAT, EXT:NOM

- a. DAT not attested  
b. NOM not attested

## (6) INT:DAT, EXT:ACC

- a. DAT not attested  
b. ACC not attested

Don’t know:

## (7) OHG

- a. gaat uz diu halt za dem iz forchaufent  
  
“ (OHG, Monsee Fragments 20,14, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)  
b. thisiu fon thiu, iru wan ist, siu alla iru libnara santa (ex eo, quod)  
  
‘hæc autem ex eo quod deest illi, totum victum suum quem habuit misit.’  
(OHG, Tatian 118,1, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)  
c. thaz iru thiu sin guati nirzigi, thes siu bati  
  
“ (OHG, Otfrid II,8,24, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)  
d. thia laz ih themo iz lisit thar  
  
“ (OHG, Otfrid I,19,25, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)  
e. noh so neduohti in gnuoge des si habetin  
  
“ (OHG, Notker I,63,29, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

f. tannoh pito ih tes noh fore ist (id quod)

“

(OHG, Notker 193,19, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

So, to sum up:

Table 4.3: Case attraction in headless relatives in OHG

EXT INT	[NOM]	[ACC]	[DAT]
[NOM]	NOM	?NOM ACC	?NOM DAT
[ACC]	?ACC ?NOM	ACC	?ACC DAT
[DAT]	?DAT ?NOM	?DAT ?ACC	DAT

#### 4.1.3 Only from internal: Modern German

(8) INT:NOM, EXT:ACC

a. \*Ich lade ein, [wer mir sympathisch ist].

I invite<sub>[ACC]</sub> who.NOM me nice is<sub>[NOM]</sub>

‘I invite who I like.’

(Vogel 2001: 344)

b. \*Ich lade ein, [wen mir sympathisch ist].

I invite<sub>[ACC]</sub> who.ACC me nice is<sub>[NOM]</sub>

‘I invite who I like.’

(Vogel 2001: 344)

(9) INT:NOM, EXT:DAT

a. \*Ich vertraue, [wer Hitchcock mag].

I trust<sub>[DAT]</sub> who.NOM Hitchcock likes<sub>[NOM]</sub>

‘I trust who likes Hitchcock.’

(Vogel 2001: 345)

- b. \*Ich vertraue, [wem Hitchcock mag].  
 I trust<sub>[DAT]</sub> who.DAT Hitchcock likes<sub>[NOM]</sub>  
 'I trust who likes Hitchcock.' (Vogel 2001: 345)
- (10) INT:ACC, EXT:NOM
- a. Uns besucht [wen Maria mag].  
 Us visits<sub>[NOM]</sub> who.ACC Maria.NOM likes<sub>[ACC]</sub>  
 'Who visits us likes Maria likes.' (Vogel 2001: 343)
- b. \*Uns besucht [wer Maria mag].  
 Us visits<sub>[NOM]</sub> who.NOM Maria.NOM likes<sub>[ACC]</sub>  
 'Who visits us likes Maria likes.' (Vogel 2001: 343)
- (11) INT:ACC, EXT:DAT
- a. \*Ich vertraue [wem auch Maria mag].  
 I trust<sub>[DAT]</sub> who.DAT also Maria likes<sub>[ACC]</sub>.  
 'I trust whoever Maria also likes.' (Vogel 2001: 345)
- b. \*Ich vertraue [wen auch Maria mag].  
 I trust<sub>[DAT]</sub> who.ACC also Maria likes<sub>[ACC]</sub>.  
 'I trust whoever Maria also likes.' (Vogel 2001: 345)
- (12) INT:DAT, EXT:NOM
- a. Uns besucht [wem Maria vertraut].  
 us visits<sub>[NOM]</sub> who.DAT Maria trusts<sub>[DAT]</sub>  
 'Who visits us, Maria trusts.' (Vogel 2001: 343)
- b. \*Uns besucht [wer Maria vertraut].  
 us visits<sub>[NOM]</sub> who.NOM Maria trusts<sub>[DAT]</sub>  
 'Who visits us, Maria trusts.' (Vogel 2001: 343)
- (13) INT:DAT, EXT:ACC
- a. Ich lade ein [wem auch Maria vertraut].  
 I invite<sub>[ACC]</sub> who.DAT also Maria trusts<sub>[DAT]</sub>.  
 'I invite whoever Maria also trusts.' (Vogel 2001: 344)
- b. \*Ich lade ein [wen auch Maria vertraut].  
 I invite<sub>[ACC]</sub> who.ACC also Maria trusts<sub>[DAT]</sub>.  
 'I invite whoever Maria also trusts.' (Vogel 2001: 344)

Table 4.4: Case attraction in headless relatives in MG

EXT INT	[NOM]	[ACC]	[DAT]
[NOM]	NOM	*ACC *NOM	*DAT *NOM
[ACC]	*NOM ACC	ACC	*DAT *ACC
[DAT]	*NOM DAT	*ACC DAT	DAT

#### 4.1.4 None: Italian

## 4.2 Shape of relative pronoun

OHG has a d-pronoun. MG has a wh-pronoun. Gothic has a d-pronoun plus a caseless relativizer.

#### 4.2.1 d in Old High German

#### 4.2.2 d + COMP in Gothic

#### 4.2.3 wh in Modern German

Table 4.5: Relative pronouns in headless relatives in OHG

	N.SG	M.SG	F.SG
NOM	d-az	d-ër	d-iu
ACC	d-az	d-ën	d-ea/-ia/(-ie)
DAT	d-ëmu/-ëmo	d-ëmu/-ëmo	d-ëru/-ëro
	N.PL	M.PL	F.PL
NOM	d-iu/-ei	d-ē/-ea/-ia/-ie	d-eo/-io
ACC	d-iu/-ei	d-ē/-ea/-ia/-ie	d-eo/-io
DAT	d-ēm/-ēn	d-ēm/-ēn	d-ēm/-ēn

Table 4.6: Relative pronouns in headless relatives in Gothic

	N.SG	M.SG	F.SG
NOM	þ-at-ei	s-a-ei	s-ō-ei
ACC	þ-at-ei	þ-an-ei	þ-ō-ei
DAT	þ-amm-ei	þ-amm-ei	þ-izái-ei
	N.PL	M.PL	F.PL
NOM	þ-ō-ei	þ-ái-ei	þ-ōz-ei
ACC	þ-ō-ei	þ-anz-ei	þ-ōz-ei
DAT	þ-áim-ei	þ-áim-ei	þ-áim-ei

Table 4.7: Relative pronouns in headless relatives in MG

	INAN	AN
NOM	w-as	w-er
ACC	w-as	w-en
DAT	-	w-em





## Chapter 5

# Connecting morphology and syntax

### 5.1 Background: relative clause theory

Standard raising, probably Cinque's double-headed structures

### 5.2 Analysis

#### 5.2.1 Old High German

In OHG, proper attraction in headless relatives can be derived from headed relatives. The relative pronoun is the determiner from the main clause. Under a double-headed Cinque-analysis, it is the internal DP that is deleted.

(1) ACC instead of NOM

- a. unde ne wolden nîet besên den mort        den        dô        was  
and not wanted not see the murder.ACC that.ACC there had  
geschên  
happened  
'and they didn't want to see the murder that had happened.'  
(MHG, Nib. 1391,14, Behaghel 1923-1932: 756, after Pittner 1995: 198)

### 5.2.2 Modern German

In German, inverse attraction in headed relatives can be shown to be very different from inverse attraction in headless relatives. I am not set on an analysis yet. Under a double-headed Cinque-analysis, it is the external DP that is deleted. Grafting is also still an option.

### 5.2.3 Gothic

In Gothic, ?

## **Part III**

# **Details**



## Chapter 6

# Technical implementation

### 6.1 Background

- (1) **The Superset Principle** Starke (2009):  
A lexically stored tree matches a syntactic node iff the lexically stored tree contains the syntactic node.
- (2) **The Elsewhere Condition** (Kiparsky 1973, formulated as in Caha 2019):  
When two entries can spell out a given node, the more specific entry wins.  
Under the Superset Principle governed insertion, the more specific entry is the one which has fewer unused features.
- (3) **Spellout Algorithm:**  
Merge F and
  - a. Spell out FP.
  - b. If (a) fails, attempt movement of the spec of the complement of F, and retry (a).
  - c. If (b) fails, move the complement of F, and retry (a).

When a new match is found, it overrides previous spellouts.

- (4) **Cyclic Override** (Starke, 2018):  
Lexicalisation at a node XP overrides any previous match at a phrase contained in XP.

If the spellout procedure in (3) fails, backtracking takes place.

(5) **Backtracking** (Starke, 2018):

When spellout fails, go back to the previous cycle, and try the next option for that cycle.

If backtracking also does not help, a specifier is constructed.

(6) **Spec Formation** (Starke, 2018):

If Merge F has failed to spell out (even after backtracking), try to spawn a new derivation providing the feature F and merge that with the current derivation, projecting the feature F at the top node.

## 6.2 Derivations

## **Chapter 7**

## **Conclusion**





# Primary texts

Col	Colossians, New Testament
Isid.	Der althochdeutsche Isidor
John	John, New Testament
Luke	Luke, New Testament
Mark	Mark, New Testament
Mons.	The Monsee fragments
Nib.	Das Nibelungenlied
Otfrid	Otfrid's Evangelienbuch



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