Case attraction in headless relatives

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Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

The topic of this thesis is case attraction in headless relative clauses. First I talk about the role of case in language. Second I discuss regular headed relative clauses and how they handle case. Third I introduce a phenomenon called case attraction in headed relative clause. Finally, I get to headless relative clauses that show case attraction.

1.1   Case attraction

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 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.'

This pattern occurs in German, most other modern languages. In some ancient languages the relative pronoun did not take the case of the grammatical role in its own clause.

in other languages (mostly ancient, but also modern Greek) cases do not match within their clauses, but they match with each other. relative pronoun takes case from the NP in the main clause: case attraction example from old high german

there is a generalization here: more complex case wins

1.2   Headless relatives

proper attraction headless inverse attraction headless

1.3   The variation

Part I

Morphological case

Chapter 2

Case attraction

(1) a. Aer antuurta demo   zaimo sprah.
        he replied_{DAT} who.DAT to him spoke_{NOM}
        'He replied to the one who spoke to him.' Pittner 199
     b. Der bewîst   in d.es   er suochte.
        he showed_{GEN} him what.GEN he looked for_{ACC}
        'He showed him what he was looking for.' Pittner 199

2.1 Headless relative clauses

2.1.1 Proper attraction

(2) Old Saxon
     a. bôtta,   them   thar blinde uuârun
        comfort.3.SG.PRÄT_{DAT} that.PL.DAT there blind were_{NOM}
        'He comforted those that were blind'   (Old Saxon, Heliand 2358,
        Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
     b. them mannun, the hêr minniston sindun, [thero]   nu undar
        the men,   that here lowest   are.3PL_{GEN} that.PL.GEN now under
        thesaru menegi [standad]
        these   crowd stand.3.PL.PRÄS_{NOM}
        'To the men who are the least of those standing here 'mid the many,' (Old
        Saxon, Heliand 4411, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
     c. bethiu   he thes   uuiht   ne bisprak,
        therefore he that.M.SG.GEN something.SG.ACC not speak about.3.SG.PRÄT
        thes   sie imu thurh   inuuidnîð ôgean uueldun.
        that.M.SG.GEN they ?   through hostility   show want.3.PL.PRÄT
        'therefore he reproached them no whit, for that which they would do
        unto him in their hatred and anger.' (Old Saxon, Helian 4923, Behaghel
        1923-1932, p. 761)
     d. huat,   thu mahtis   man   uuesan, giungaro fan
        what.ACC 2.SG may.2.SG.PRÄT.CONJ man.NOM.SG be.INF   disciple from

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Galilea,   thes   the   thar genouuer
Galilee.DAT.PL that.M.SG.GEN that.NOM.SG.M there there
stêd
stood.3.SG.PRÄT
'what, you might have been a man, disciple from Galilee, of him who
stood there' (Old Saxon, Heliand 4957-4958, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

(3)   Old High German
   a.   ih bibringu fona Juda dhen mina berga chisetzit

        ''   (Old High German, Isidor 34,3, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
   b.   aer antwurta demo za imo sprah

        ''   (Old High German, Monsee Fragments 7,24, Behaghel 1923-1932,
        p. 761)
   c.   gaat uz diu halt za dem iz forchaufent

        ''   (Old High German, Monsee Fragments 20,14, Behaghel 1923-1932,
        p. 761)
   d.   thisiu fon thiu, iru wan ist, siu alla iru libnara santa (ex eo, quod)

        ''   (Old High German, Tatian 118,1, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
   e.   er spráh zi then   es rúahtun
        he spoke to those.DAT
        ''   (Old High German, Otfrid I,23,35, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
   f.   thaz iru thiu sin guati nirzigi, thes siu bati

        ''   (Old High German, Otfrid II,8,24, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
   g.   bistu furira Abrahame, ouh then man hiar nu zalta.

        ''   (Old High German, Otfrid III,18,33, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
   h.   thia laz ih themo iz lisit thar

        ''   (Old High German, Otfrid I,19,25, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
   i.   suachit thes nan sentit

        ''   (Old High German, Otfrid III,16,21, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
   j.   noh so neduohti in gnuoge des si habetin

        ''   (Old High German, Notker I,63,29, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)
   k.   tannoh pito ih tes noh fore ist (id quod)

        ''   (Old High German, Notker 193,19, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

(4)   Middle High German
   a.   der bewiset   in   des   er suochte
        he directed_GEN him that.GEN he sought_ACC

'He directed him to what he sought.' (Middle High German, Iwein 988, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761), trans. Hartmann von Aue-Portal

(5) ?

   a.   diu habe niemer niht entuot, des der seele schaden si

   ''   (?, Warn. 2490, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

   b.   des himels unt der erde und swes din kint dar inne begriffen hat

   ''   (?, R. v. Zw. 21,8, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

   c.   die bevogtet werden sollen mit dem nechsten vattermagen oder dem

        dazu erkoren wird

   ''   (?, Weist. 1,65, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

   d.   diese Handlung der Merope gefalle, wem da will

   ''   (?, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing 11,203, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

   e.   dem Wanderer zu bieten Schutz und Rast und wen's auch sei zu

        wärmen und zu laben

   ''   (?, Redwitz, Amaranth (Bl), Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 761)

(6) Magst gefallen wem du wilt

   ''   Adversus - Komm' oh Tod

2.2 Headless relative clauses

2.2.1 Proper attraction

(7) GEN instead of DAT?

(8) GEN instead of ACC

   a.   alles   des   ich ie   gesach
        all.GEN that.GEN I   ever saw
        'all that I ever saw.'   (Middle High
        German, Nibelungenlied 1698,1, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 756, glosses and
        translation by Pittner 1995, p. 199)

   b.   Do   sagete er Parziwale danc   prises   des   erwarp   sin
        there said   he Parzival   thanks$_{GEN}$ prize.GEN that.GEN acquired$_{ACC}$
        hant

        'he thanked Parzival for the prize that he acquired'   (Mid-
        dle High German, Parzival 3:1209, glosses and translation by Helgander
        1971, p. 174 after Pittner 1995, p. 198)

(9)   GEN instead of NOM

    a.   daz er […] alles   des   verplac des im ze   schaden
        that he all   that.GEN abandoned$_{GEN}$ that.GEN him to damage might
        mohte   komen
        come$_{NOM}$
        'that he abandoned all that might cause damage to him'   (Middle High
        German, Iwein 5338, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 756, glosses and translation
        by Pittner 1995, p. 198)

    b.   sie gedâht'   ouch maniger leide,   der   ir dâ héimé
        she thought$_{GEN}$ also some   sufferings.GEN that.GEN her at home
        geschach
        happened$_{NOM}$
        'she thought about some misfortunes that happened to her at home.'
        (Middle High German, Nibelungenlied 1391,14, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 756,
        glosses and translation by Pittner 1995, p. 198)

(10)   DAT instead of ACC?

(11)   DAT instead of NOM

(12)   ACC instead of NOM

    a.   unde ne wolden níet 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.'   (Mid-
        dle High German, Nibelungenlied 1391,14, Behaghel 1923-1932, p. 756,
        glosses and translation by Pittner 1995, p. 198)

Part II

Prepositional case

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