Thesis plan

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Introduction

This first chapter will serve to fulfil the following tasks:

- introduce the problem (which I'm having difficulties with in the sense that it's hard for me to formulate a *theoretical* rather than just empirical issue)

- summarise the solution

- present the structure of the thesis

Preliminaries (essentially a literature review of sorts)

This second chapter contains both theoretical and empirical preliminaries on the framework, the language, methods and similar stuff.

The language

Essentially a version of my 1st year report, where I presented a brief sketch of Avar grammar. This will have to be made more precise and concise. I might also want to add a bit more on the history of academic inquiry into the language, starting from the 19th century.

The framework

Minimalism

1. Narrow syntax is Merge

2. Merge is unrestricted

3. Information structure

4. Scope

5. Externalisation: FWO languages and discourse configurationality

Syntax-to-Semantics Mapping

1. The semantic component: available theories

2. LF: what is it?

The Avar clause

This chapter develops the functional sequence for the Avar clause and also addresses the head-finality issue. Moreover, it introduces several word-order- and scope-related puzzles such as virtually free placement of wh-phrases, ex- and in-situ focus marking, as well as the most salient restrictions on word order (mandatory head finality in relative clauses and the order of arguments in the biäbsolutive construction).

Avar relative clauses

Which kind of analysis: HEA, HRA or MA?

See what kind of analysis is the most compatible one with what we observe in Avar: the data for this are still to be elicited

Where do restrictions on word order come from? The *V-init generalisation

I already have the relevant observation but don't quite know what to do with it: I somehow find the most intuitive answer (*ie* that certain orders are excluded because certain movements to certain information structure-related functional projections are impossible because these projections only appear in root clauses) profoundly unsatisfactory, since it's loaded with assumptions one has to take on faith. Besides, this line of analysis would hit the roadblock of Avar actually allowing non-verb-final orders in *other* kinds of non-root clauses such as converbial adjunct clauses.

Questions and focus

Very clear morphosyntactic parallels between wh-questions and sentences with focus particles.

- Aims:

  - develop a unified syntax for both

  - show how this unified syntax maps to semantics

- Side effects:

  - uncover a new problem, ie absence of crossover effects in questions and focus sentences which still remains unresolved on the theory developed in this chapter.

  - address this problem in the following chapter

This chapter runs the risk of getting rather long, since in addition to what I already have on matrix wh-questions I'm planning to add the discussion of embedded questions as well as contrastive focus, whose behaviour more or less resembles that of wh-phrases with some important differences.

Crossover effects: towards an account

Do crossover effects result from movement or can they be reduced to the Binding Principles?

Is there anything specific that has to do with movement which is responsible for crossover effects arising? Apparently the question of reconstruction must be addressed here as well, since as far as crossover is concerned, it's usually the pre-movement configuration that matters for the purposes of binding.

Are crossover effects a scope phenomenon?

This alludes to Eddie Ruys' LI paper on WCO as a scope phenomenon from several years back. I'm not sure I fully understand his proposal (let alone of WCO being explained the same way as SCO—I'm in full agreement with you there).

No crossover effects in Avar: how can that be?

In the preceding chapter we were faced with the fact that in Avar, the ex-situ wh-phrases didn't display any crossover effects, other things being equal. I used this observation to

argue for a base-generation analysis of such constructions with the wh-phrase forming the predicate of a pseudocleft. Whilst this move could explain the absence of crossover effects in principle, it still doesn't say much about why Principle C effects are absent in this context as well.

What else?..

There's more stuff I'd like included but I'm not quite sure how to incorporate it. Hopefully as I write things up this will become clearer.

This other stuff is from two domains: anaphora and indexicality (so far I've got at least the data and pieces of a proposal about binding but sadly not enough data for a proposal regarding indexicality and indexical shifting).