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Portuguese Relative Clauses in Synchrony and Diachrony

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Portuguese Relative Clauses in Synchrony and Diachrony

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Series preface

Modern diachronic linguistics has important contacts with other subdisciplines, notably first-language acquisition, learnability theory, computational linguistics, sociolinguistics, and the traditional philological study of texts. It is now recognized in the wider field that diachronic linguistics can make a novel contribution to linguistic theory, to historical linguistics, and arguably to cognitive science more widely.

This series provides a forum for work in both diachronic and historical linguistics, including work on change in grammar, sound, and meaning within and across languages; synchronic studies of languages in the past; and descriptive histories of one or more languages. It is intended to reflect and encourage the links between these subjects and fields such as those mentioned above.

The goal of the series is to publish high-quality monographs and collections of papers in diachronic linguistics generally, that is, studies focusing on change in linguistic structure and/or change in grammars, which are also intended to make a contribution to linguistic theory by developing and adopting a current theoretical model, by raising wider questions concerning the nature of language change, or by developing theoretical connections with other areas of linguistics and cognitive science as listed above. There is no bias towards a particular language or language family or a particular theoretical framework; work in all theoretical frameworks, and work based on the descriptive tradition of language typology, as well as quantitatively based work using theoretical ideas, also feature in the series.

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University of Cambridge

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Preface

Relative clauses pose many challenges to syntactic theory. Chomsky explicitly acknowledges this fact by noting that "we still have no good phrase structure theory for such simple matters as attributive adjectives, relative clauses, and adjuncts of many different types" (1995: 382 n. 22). Bianchi, in turn, regards relative clauses as an intriguing empirical domain "both because of the complexity of the data and of the theoretical relevance of the construction (especially with respect to the syntax-semantic interface)" (2002: 242).

To further obscure the matter, relative clauses display some syntactic structures that, despite all efforts, remain poorly understood (e.g. pied-piping and extraposition). Other limitations can be identified that are not exclusive to analyses of relative clauses but emerge from much research within the generative framework, namely: (1) an overemphasis on the study of English; (2) the predominance of theoretically oriented studies (as opposed to corpus-based and corpus-driven studies); and (3) the incomplete coverage of relevant properties. The last two limitations are perfectly expressed by Bianchi:

> Each analysis is designed to account for certain aspects of a domain, and leaves others unaccounted for. But the choice of the "core" data to be analysed is to some extent arbitrary, for we cannot know a priori which set of data is fully representative of the empirical domain under investigation; and . . . the way an analysis is designed is crucially affected by more general theoretical concerns. (Bianchi 2002: 242)

From these considerations it follows that many gaps remain in our understanding of relativization. This is not to say that little has been written about this topic; on the contrary, relative clauses have become a subject of extensive debate in the generative field (e.g. the Chomsky/Bresnan debate on unbounded dependencies and the Bianchi/Borsley debate on the antisymmetric/symmetric analyses of relatives) (see Bianchi 2002). However, most studies focus primarily on a specific contemporary language, neglecting the cross-linguistic and diachronic variation.

In the present book I try to fill some of these gaps by providing a comparative analysis of relative clauses in the diachrony and synchrony of Portuguese. In particular, I investigate three distinct phenomena: remnant-internal relativization (Ch. 2); extraposition of restrictive relative clauses (Ch. 3); and appositive relativization (Ch. 4). The data considered are mainly drawn from earlier stages of Portuguese and contemporary European Portuguese, but other languages are considered, including Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, English, Dutch, German, and Russian.

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The research reported is theoretically oriented, broadly falling within the premises of the generative Principles and Parameters approach to the study of human language (Chomsky 1981), under its Minimalist version (Chomsky 1993, 1995, and subsequent work). It also takes the comparative perspective as a central guiding line (Cinque and Kayne 2005, among others) while seeking to explain the contrasts found in different stages of the same language and different languages with respect to the syntax of relativization.

Potential readers of the book are academics, researchers, and advanced students interested in linguistics (particularly, in theoretical syntax, historical syntax, Romance syntax, and Portuguese syntax). Although the book stems from a particular theoretical framework, it is meant to be relevant and accessible to readers of different schools, not versed in formal syntax theories. For those readers, the book provides: (1) comprehensive descriptions of the linguistic phenomena under analysis; (2) background information regarding the framework used; and (3) overviews of the competing analyses proposed in the literature to account for the relevant syntactic structures (e.g. relative clauses, noun phrase discontinuity, extraposition, and apposition). Moreover, it is not a book that interests only Portuguese or Brazilian linguists (or other linguists working on Portuguese), but it is useful for a wider public. For those not familiar with Portuguese, all examples are followed by a word-for-word gloss with the relevant morphological information and by an English translation. Concerning examples from Portuguese, all glosses and translations are mine.

The book is a substantial revision of my doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Lisbon. The research was funded by Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia under the grant SFRH/BD/22475/2005. The present book was prepared within the research project *WOChWEL - Word Order and Word Order Change in Western European Languages* (FCT PTDC/CLE-LIN/121707/2010).

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations used in the main text:

A	adjective
A′-movement	non-argument movement
Adv	adverb
AdvP	Adverbial Phrase
Agr	agreement head
Agr-A	agreement adjectival head
Agr-A-P	Agreement Adjectival Phrase
AgrO	object agreement head
AgrOP	Object Agreement Phrase
AgrS	Subject Agreement head
AgrSP	Subject Agreement Phrase
AP	Adjectival Phrase
ARC	Appositive Relative Clause
Attract-all-F	Attract all features
C	complementizer/chain
c-command	constituent command
CEP	contemporary European Portuguese
CI	comparative inversion structure
C-NSR	Nuclear Stress Rule (sensitive to asymmetric c-command)
Co	coordination/coordinative head
CONJ	Conjunction
CoP	Coordination Phrase
CP	Complementizer Phrase
D	determiner
DegE	Degree Expression
DO	direct object
DP	Determiner Phrase
D-structure	deep structure
DPrel	Relative Determiner Phrase
Drel	relative determiner/pronoun

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e	Empty
E	Expression
E/CSR	Emphatic/Contrastive Stress Rule
EvaluativeP	Evaluative phrase
EPP	Extended Projection Principle
F	functional head
Fin	finiteness head
Foc	focus head
[F]	focus (diacritic used to mark focused elements)
FinP	Finiteness Phrase
[foc]	focus feature
FocP	Focus Phrase
ForceP	Force Phrase
FP	Functional Projection (unspecified)
FPR	Focus Prominence Rule
I	inflection
IntP/ip	Intonational Phrase
IO	indirect object
IP	Inflection Phrase
LCA	Linear Correspondence Axiom
LP	Lexical Projection
N	noun *or* nominal
Nom-P	Nominative Phrase
NP	Noun Phrase
NSR	Nuclear Stress Rule
O	object
Op	operator
P	Phrase
[P] feature	EPP-feature
p-movement	prosodically motivated movement
PF	Phonological Form
PP	Prepositional Phrase
Q	quantifier/question
QP	Quantificational Phrase, Question Phrase
QR	Quantifier Raising

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REL/rel	relative
RC	relative clause
RRC	Restrictive Relative Clause
S	subject/sentence
ScalW	scalar word
S-NSR	Nuclear Stress Rule (sensitive to selectional ordering)
Spec	specifier
S-structure	surface structure
t	trace
T	tense
Top	topic head/feature
TopP	Topic Phrase
TP	Tense Phrase
v	light verb ('little v')
V	verb
Voc	vocative
vP	Light Verb Phrase ('little vP')
VP	Verb Phrase
Σ-structure	sigma structure
wh-	*who, which, what, why, when*
X	unspecified head
XP	unspecified Phrase

Abbreviations used in the glosses:

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ACC	accusative case
C	complementizer
CL	clitic
COND	conditional
EXPL	expletive
F	feminine
FUT	future
GEN	genitive

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GER	gerundive
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
LIV	living entity
M	masculine
N	neuter
NOM	nominative
NR	nominalizing particle
PERF	perfect tense
PL	plural
PREP	preposition
PRS	present
PTCP	participle
PTL	particle
SBJV	subjunctive
SG	singular
SPC	specific
SR	subordinating particle
WEAK	weak inflection

Abbreviations denoting corpora:

CETEMP	*CETEMPúblico: a large corpus of Portuguese newspaper language* (Rocha and Santos 2000)
COCA	*Corpus of Contemporary American English* (Davies 2008–)
C-ORAL-ROM	*Corpus of Spoken Portuguese* (Bacelar do Nascimento, Gonçalves, Veloso, Antunes, Barreto, and Amaro 2005)
CORDIAL–SIN	*Syntax-oriented Corpus of Portuguese Dialects* (Martins, coord., 2000–10)
CP	*Corpus of Portuguese* (Davies and Ferreira 2006–)
CRPC	*Reference Corpus of Contemporary Portuguese* (Bacelar do Nascimento 2000)
DCMP	*Digital Corpus of Medieval Portuguese* (Xavier, coord., 1993–)
PPCEME	*Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English* (Kroch, Santorini, and Delfs 2004)
PPCMBE	*Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English* (Kroch, Santorini, and Diertani 2010)
P.S.	*P.S. Post Scriptum: A Digital Archive of Ordinary Writing (Early Modern Portugal and Spain)* (CLUL, ed., 2014)
TYC	*Tycho Brahe Parsed Corpus of Historical Portuguese* (Galves and Faria 2010)