

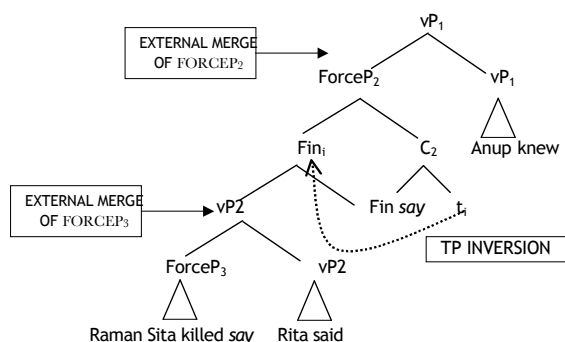
Root and Embedded Left Peripheries: Evidence from Malayalam and Meiteilon

An important historical ingredient for the development of an articulated structure of the left periphery has been the sustained scrutiny that the distribution of finite complement clauses (FCCs) was subjected to in the early years of Principles & Parameters approach. Investigations into the Germanic VO languages were the first to explore the idea that the left periphery of FCCs revealed distinct properties of the COMP projection in root vs. embedded contexts – root, but not embedded, COMPs house finiteness, selected-for COMPs may differ in the transparency/opacity (bridge/non-bridge verbs), as well as the tense (\pm Tense), of their IP complement to COMP. Rizzi's (1997) formulation of an articulated COMP periphery is therefore a culmination of a research agenda set out in pre-Minimalist generative syntax, but much more as well, as it enables us to see the C-domain as an interlocutor with the twin worlds of grammatical context and discourse. Our interest in this paper lies in the former, its cross-linguistic applicability, and the ways in which an articulated left periphery may be combined with newer ideas about the C-T connection in Chomsky (2001, 2005).

Empirical challenges. Rizzi's proposals make no concrete predictions for the distribution of FCCs. As has been widely observed, head-final C⁰s correlate with preverbal positioning of FCCs, while FCCs headed by an initial C⁰ occur postverbally. We examine this issue via Malayalam (a Dravidian language of southern India), and Meiteilon (a Tibeto-Burman language of north-eastern India), both of which support this generalization, as (1) from Malayalam and (2) from Meiteilon show. Meiteilon is especially interesting as it has another C⁰ – head-initial *mAdudi* – which forces a postverbal FCC, as (3) shows.

1. [[raaman siitaa-ye konnu enna] riitaa parañu enna] anup parañu
 Ram Sita-ACC killed thatRita said that Anup said
 'Anup said that Rita said that Raman killed Sita.'
2. [ngasi jon lak-e haybA] meri-nA khAngi
 today John came COMP Mary-NA knows
 'Mary knows that John came today.'
3. Ai-nA khAlli [mAdudi jon oja ni]
 I-NA know COMP John teacher COP
 'I know that John is a teacher.'

Notice the FCC is not only preverbal, but in fact initial in the matrix clause. What is also striking is that both *haybA* and *enna* C⁰s are grammaticalized report verbs – i.e. derived from the verb *say*. Kidwai &



Mathew (2005a,b) argue that clausal complements are assembled separately, and must check a [FORCE] feature of matrix *v* by External Merge of an FCC to its (left) edge. Arguing that such Agree-ing EM is restricted only to phases, we show that FCCs headed by grammaticalized report verbs are ForcePs that satisfy the relevant conditions for EM to *v*P. Further, we also show that the nesting configuration shown of Malayalam FCCs in (1) can only be predicted if we postulate an inversion of the category hosting tense to the specifier of ForceP prior to External Merge.

(Meiteilon *mAdudi* on the other hand, we argue, do not head ForcePs, and become associated with the matrix clause only as a last resort in service of the economy principle in (4).

4. All terms in the workspace must be reduced to a unique SO by the time a strong phase is reached.

Further investigation reveals that this is where the similarity between Malayalam and Meiteilon ends, as while Malayalam *enna* is invariant, the Meiteilon *say*-C⁰ can assume a number of other forms. One salient variation is that *haybA* (SAY+NOMINALIZER) as a factive C⁰ and *haynA* (SAY+ADVERBIAL) is a propositional one (Chelliah 1997). Both these forms are nominalized CPs, according to Chelliah, leading us to conclude that External Set-Merge at the edge of *v* can target only nominals.

Adopting the proposal in Kidwai & Mathew (2005b) that the factive interpretation of a CP involves Set-Merge with a Demonstrative, we propose that the *haybA* C⁰ involves this very process. -- the *-bA* suffix is a D that nominalizes by adding a DP layer over a bound verbal root. We argue that the adverbial suffix [*nA*], which also appears on adjuncts, and external arguments, yields not a DP, but a [+N] category. This straightforwardly explains the impossibility of a factive interpretation of the *haynA* clause – it is not a CP

set-merged with a Dem.

This also explains why FCCs headed by *haybA* may undergo “affixation” by proximate and distal determiners/deictics, or adverbial morphemes to yield forms that each have a distinct force or discursive interpretation. To list just two of many, in (5), enumerated by Chelliah (1997):

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|----|------------------|-------------|--|
| 5. | <i>hay-bA-du</i> | SAY-NOM-DEM | Eyewitness, Claim for sufficient evidence to infer future event/state |
| | <i>hay-bA-si</i> | SAY-NOM-DEM | Assertion |

We suggest that the “affixes” found in (5) are actually D/Dem heads in the root C-domain of Meiteilon, or in other words, D/Dem/Adv morphemes lexicalize Force, Top, Int, Foc, etc. in the left periphery. Arguing that the categorial nature of these heads allow them to be targeted by DPs alone, only a *haybA*, but not *haynA*, FCC can raise beyond *vP* to specifier positions in the C-domain because the *haybA* FCC is indeed a DP.

Theoretical consequences. Given Chomsky’s (2004, 2005) proposals about the C-Tns connection, it is interesting to speculate about the relation that left periphery heads have with Tns. Chomsky observes that “for T, ϕ -features and Tense appear to be derivative from C. In the lexicon, T lacks these features. T manifests them if and only if it is selected by C, ... so it makes sense to assume that Agree- and Tense-features are inherited from C, the phase head. If C-T agrees with the goal DP, the latter can remain in-situ under long-distance agree, with all uninterpretable features valued; or it can raise as far as SPEC-T, at which point it is inactivated, with all features valued, and cannot raise further to SPEC-C.”

Given the obviously discursive role of Topic/Focus heads, the question about the C-Tns connection effectively reduces to a choice between *Force* and *Fin*. We argue that Malayalam and Meiteilon throw some light on the issue, as both languages do not allow expletive-associate constructions, ECM verbs, raising predicates, or subject-verb agreement – in short, no evidence for [Spec,TP].

There is also little evidence for a Tns head internal to the IP. Although Amritavalli and Jayaseelan 2005 have claimed that Malayalam lacks Tns altogether, and encodes temporal reference using aspectual and mood distinctions, we argue, following Mathew (2005), that temporal reference is located at *Fin* in the C-domain. Meiteilon, however, lacks Tense altogether, accomplishing temporal reference with aspect and elaborate mood distinctions, as in (6), in combination with the heads in the left periphery, viz., *haybAdu*, which gives factivity+future, and *haybAsi*, yielding factivity+ non-future assertion.

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|----|-----------------------------|------|------------------------|-----|---------------|-------|
| 6. | Nonhypothetical declarative | -l | Prohibitive | -nu | Permissive | -sAnu |
| | Assertive declarative | -e | Optative/Desiderative | -ke | Interrogative | -lA |
| | Imperative | -u | Supplicative/Hortative | -si | Obligative | -tA |
| | Compulsive | -hAn | | | | |
- Adapted from Chelliah (1997)*

In conclusion, we examine the question as to why root vs. embedded left peripheries have a distinct character in both Meiteilon and Malayalam. That is, why does the only complement of a ForceP in embedded contexts undergo inversion? Why is the embedded Meiteilon left periphery relatively impoverished, as the D heads that we find articulating the root left periphery absent in embedded contexts? We suggest that both these facts are the consequence of an analysis of *say*-type Force heads as grammaticalized lexical heads.

According to Klamer (2000), quotative complementizers are ‘semantically bleached’ grammaticalized report verbs. This bleaching involves a loss of argument structure and results in a lexical representation of the report verb as a predicate without an external argument. In our view, the grammaticalization of *V^{SAY}* as a quotative complementizer implies detransitivization in the direction of *unaccusativization*, and that it is this property that motivates the inversion of the quotative’s complement into its specifier. In Meiteilon, the embedded C-domain is thus verbal in nature, which suggests that the conditions for licensing D/Dem heads are not met. In Malayalam, generally, the root C-domain is null, but there are contexts in which, particularly in emphatic assertions, *emmA* may be used as a root Force marker, and in such contexts, it appears finally, suggesting that the required inversion indeed takes place.