

Relative Clauses in Cimbrian*

GUENTHER GREWENDORF, CECILIA POLETTA

University of Frankfurt

grewendorf@lingua.uni-frankfurt.de, poletto@em.uni-frankfurt.de



In this work we intend to provide an analysis of the left periphery of relative clauses in the Cimbrian variety of Luserna, a linguistic island located in the North-East of Italy, in the Trentino region. Cimbrian has recently attracted attention in syntactic studies because, although it is a Bavarian variety, nonetheless generally displays VO and at the same time has typical properties of an asymmetric V2 language. In Grewendorf and Poletto (2011) we analyzed its complementizer system reaching the conclusion that Cimbrian has two types of complementizers; one (such as *ke*) that is located in such a high position in the left periphery so that it has no influence onto the internal structure of the embedded clause, which thus behaves as a normal root clause. The second type (represented by *az*) is located in a low position of the left periphery, where it blocks movement of the inflected verb to the C-domain, as is generally the case in asymmetric V2 languages. Independent empirical evidence for a split complementizer system comes from several empirical domains. We mention here only the three major ones: a) the fact that clitics are attached to the right of the verb in main clauses (and *ke*-clauses) while they are enclitic on complementizers of the *az*-type; b) the fact that the negative marker is preverbal in *az*-type clauses but postverbal in main and *ke*-type clauses; c) the fact that prefixes are always postverbal in main and *ke*-type clauses, but can be preverbal in *az*-type clauses.

Since movement in relative clauses often targets a high position in the left periphery, as shown by Rizzi (1997), the question arises which of the two complementizer

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systems Cimbrian makes use of in restrictive and appositive relative clauses. Furthermore, the sentential particle *da*, which behaves like clitics (i.e. it attaches to the right of the inflected verb in main and *ke*-type clauses but to the right of the complementizer in *az*-type clauses) has a rather peculiar distribution in relative clauses. Bidese et alii (2012) report that restrictive relative clauses are introduced by the complementizer of the *az*-type *bo* (etymologically related to Bavarian *wo* through a regular phonological process) followed by the particle *da*, while appositive relative clauses can either be introduced by *bo-da* as well as by the complementizer *ke* without *da*. While they analyze the distribution of the two possible complementizers, we will concentrate on relative clauses introduced by *bo-da* (cf. (1)):

- (1) a. Dar libar bo da ze lesan herta
 the book that prt. they read always
 ‘The book that they always read’
- b. Dar Giani und dar Peter bo da die Maria hot gerueaft,
 The Giani and the Peter that prt. the Mary has called
 ‘Giani and Peter, whom Maria called’

Furthermore, we will also investigate free relative clauses, where the particle *da* is also present, as shown in (2), although the complementizer *bo* is not:

- (2) Ber-da votart vorimen is a stock
 Who.prt. votes for.him is a stupid
 ‘Who votes for him is stupid’

We will first show that *bo* in fact behaves like a complementizer, since it can neither be inflected nor can it be combined with a preposition. Then we will show that the complex form "bo da" introduces a non-V2 clause like complementizers of the "az"-type on the basis of the tests already proposed in Grewendorf and Poletto (2011). Given that the particle *da* is reported by Bidese et alii (2012) to be obligatory in restrictive relative clauses when the subject is a full DP but impossible when the subject is a pronoun, we will examine its distribution with respect to all pronoun types (clitic, tonic and weak pronouns) in restrictive, appositive and free relative clauses to pin down its exact syntactic position and function in the left periphery and its relation with respect to the subject and clitic pronouns.

References

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