Reduced Pseudoclefts in Caribbean Spanish and in Brazilian Portuguese

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This paper discusses the so-called reduced pseudo-cleft sentences (RPC), a variety of clefts found in Portuguese and some Caribbean dialects of Spanish. I add structural evidences to support the idea that RPCs are not reduced versions of pseudoclefts. At the end, I conclude that the RPCs are monoclausal sentences and that they are derived by merging the copula as an adjunct of the focused constituent.

1. Introduction

The syntactic process known as clefting produces sentences that are formally complex, like the cleft in (1a) and the pseudocleft (PC) in (1b):

(1) a. É este carro que o João quer vender.
    ‘It is this car that João wants to sell’
    b. O que o João quer vender é este carro.
    ‘What João wants to sell is this car’

Although the sentences in (1) have the complementizer que (that), and the expression o que (what) exposes marks of embedding, they are truth-conditionally equivalent to the simple sentence in (2):

(2) João quer vender este carro.
    ‘João wants to sell this car’

From the functionalist perspective, the sentences in (1) are made to focus a constituent: este carro (this car).

In Brazilian Portuguese (BP) there are sentences that are similar to the ones in (1), regarding their role, but they show a small formal difference:

(3) a. Este carro que o João quer vender.
    This car that the João wants to sell
    ‘It is this car that João wants to sell’
    b. O João quer vender é este carro.

I am grateful to Mary Kato, Luigi Rizzi, Valentina Bianchi, Adriana Belletti, Mariana Resenes, Sandra Quarezemin, and the audience of the Brazilian-Italian Comparative Syntax, Semantics and Acquisition Workshop, who discussed this work with me.

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Enjoy Linguistics! Papers offered to Luigi Rizzi on the occasion of his 60th birthday
The João wants to sell is this car
‘It is this car that João wants to sell’

(3a) differs from (1a) because it doesn’t have the copula é (is) and because it looks like a simple sentence with the focus in the left periphery followed by a complementizer. (3b) is different from (1b) because it doesn’t have the Wh expression o que (what), but due to the presence of two finite verbs, namely, quer (wants) and é (is), it still preserves the appearance of a complex sentence.

The small formal differences between (1) and (3) have led linguists to consider that the sentences in (3) are reduced versions of the ones in (1); they have called (3a) reduced cleft (RC) (Kato et alii, 1996) and (3b) reduced pseudocleft (RPC) (Wheeler, 1982).

The goal of this paper is to study RPCs in Caribbean Spanish (CS) and in Brazilian Portuguese (BP). Without any objections to the hypothesis that a RC is the reduction of a full cleft, we intend to explore Bosque’s (1999) analysis and raise some doubts about whether a RPC is a reduced form of a PC. We will conclude that a RPC is a monoclausal sentence.

Besides being an interesting topic per se, RPCs are a very interesting domain to investigate the ties between the dialects of the Romania Nova and the ones of the Romania Velha. If we consider the Iberian parts, RPC are attested only in CS, but not in the other dialects (see Bosque 1999)². If we consider the Lusitanian parts, RPCs are attested both in Brazil and in Portugal, even though there are differences that can be related to specific properties of each dialect.

2. Pseudoclefts

Akmajian (1970) and Higgins (1973) pointed out that a string like the English one in (4) is ambiguous:

(4) What Mary is is scandalous.

(4) can have either a predicational (5a) or a specificational reading (5b):

(5) a. Mary is x and being x is scandalous.
   b. Mary is scandalous.

The superscript index in (6) is used to clarify the scope of the adjective predication:

(6) a. [What Mary is]¹ is scandalous¹.  (pred.)
   b. What Mary¹ is is scandalous¹. (spec.)

On the predicational reading, the adjective scandalous is a predicate of the free relative in brackets in (6a); on the specificational one it is a predicate of the subject of the free relative Mary in (6b).

Since Portuguese has gender agreement, (4) is no longer ambiguous:

²“This (the difference between Spanish and CS) might be a case of substratum influence from one or several West African Languages, since many of them have morphological markers for focalized constituents”. (p.26)
When the adjective is in the unmarked generic form, as in (7a), the only possible reading is the predicational reading; when it is in the marked generic form, as in (7b), the only available interpretation is specificational. Henceforth, I assume with Hankamer (1974) and Resenes (2009) that only the specificational sentence in (7) is a PC.

The structure of a predicational sentence like (7a) is trivial: the copula mediates the relation between the subject free relative \[ o \text{ que a Maria é } \] (What the Maria is) and the predicative adjective escandaloso (scandalousm). Since the free relative is the subject of the sentence, the agreement of the adjective is explained trivially: it gets the unmarked form. This analysis also explains why the predicate cannot include items whose licensing conditions require that they be c-commanded by an antecedent inside the free relative, as we see in (8):

(8) *O que a Maria é é digno de si mesma.
What the Maria is is deservingm of herself

Because of the lack of c-command, the phrase a Maria (‘the’ Maria) cannot be an antecedent for the anaphora si mesma (herself).

However, the syntactic structure of a specificational sentence like (7b) is a serious syntactic puzzle. First, there doesn’t seem to be any usual type of reconstruction, whereby the specifier-head configuration that accounts for the agreement of the predicate escandalosa (scandalousf) and the DP a Maria, could obtain. Secondly, in sentences like (9)4, there doesn’t appear to be any stage of the derivation in which the necessary c-command relation holds between John and himself, everyone and his, and n’t and any (examples from Boskovic, 1997):

(9) a. What John is is important to himself.
   b. What everyone proved was his own theory.
   c. What John didn’t buy was any picture of Fred.

Anaphors like himself in (9a), possessive pronouns interpreted as variables like his in (9b) and negative polarity items like any in (9c) need to be c-commanded by an antecedent in order to be licensed, and that is not apparent in (9).

An analysis that tries to solve the agreement and the c-command problem is the one proposed by Kato e Mioto (2010) (cf. also Boskovic, 1997; Boeckx, 2007). By assuming that the expression o que is a resumptive of the focus and, as

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3 Evidence that the free relative is a constituent can be seen in the following contrast:

(i) a. É o que a Maria é que é escandaloso.
   'It is what Maria is that is scandalousm.'
   b. *É o que a Maria é que é escandalosa.
   scandalousf

We know that only phrases can be focused in a cleft – that’s why only the free relative of the predicational sentences can be clefted, while the one of the specificational sentences cannot.

4 In order to save space, we used English examples because they are widely discussed in the literature and also because their grammaticality is consensual. For examples from BP, see Kato e Mioto (2010).
such, it doesn’t behave as a true relative pronoun, the authors merge it in a complex phrase, in parallel to clitic doubling constructions (Kayne, 2001). Then, assuming Rizzi’s (1997) characterization of the left periphery of the clause, the derivation of (7b) would be:

(10)a. \[IP \text{A Maria é } [AP \text{ o que [escandalosa]]}\]  
The Maria is what scandalous\(f\)  
⇒ Movement of \text{o que} (what) to CP  
b. \[CP \text{ o que } [IP \text{ a Maria é } [AP \text{ o que [escandalosa]]]}]\]  
⇒ Movement of the focus to FP  
c. \[FP \text{ escandalosa } [CP \text{ o que } [IP \text{ a Maria é } [AP \text{ o que [escandalosa]]}]\]  
⇒ Merge of the copula  
d. \[IP \text{ é } [FP \text{ escandalosa } [CP \text{ o que } [IP \text{ a Maria é } [AP \text{ o que [escandalosa]]}]\]  
⇒ Movement of the CP to GroundP  
e. \[GroundP \text{ [CP o que a Maria é] } [IP \text{ é } [FP \text{ escandalosa } [CP \text{ o que } [IP \text{ a Maria é } [AP \text{ o que [escandalosa]]}]\]  

By generating \text{o que} (what) as part of the complex AP, we have the appropriate configuration for gender agreement: since \text{a Maria} is the subject of the sentence, the adjective has to be in the marked form \text{escandalosa} (scandalous\(f\)). This configuration can also be exploited in order to account for the c-command in the PCs in (9), whose focus contains either an anaphor, a possessive pronoun interpreted as a variable, or a negative polarity item.

2. RPC

RPCs, like PCs, are sentences designed to focus the constituent that immediately follows the copula (henceforth “\text{ser as focus}” (SF), borrowed from Bosque 1999). Since the copula is always in the domain of the IP, the focalization that a RPC performs is known as \text{in situ} focalization. Compare the PC in (11a) with (11b):

(11)  
a. O que a Maria é é escandalosa. (=(7b))  
What the Maria is is scandalous\(f\)  
b. A Maria é é escandalosa.  
the Maria is is scandalous\(f\)

RPCs are specification sentences, so there is no reduced counterpart to the predicational sentences:

(12)  
a. O que a Maria é é escandaloso. (=7a))  
What the Maria is is scandalous\(m\)  
b. *A Maria é é escandaloso.  
the Maria is is scandalous\(m\)

The RPC corresponding to (12a) is (13), whose Wh-expression cannot be deleted\(^5\):

\(^5\) The PC counterpart of (13) should be the bizarre, but grammatical sentence in (i):

(i) O que o que a Maria é é escandaloso.
(13) O que a Maria é é é escandaloso.
What the Maria is is is scandalous.

The locus of the focused constituent via a RPC is the low area of the sentence, which can be defined as the c-command domain of Infl. Therefore, an RPC can focus complements of the verb or adjuncts of a VP individually ((14a) was taken from the e-journal Folha de São Paulo):

(14) a. Eu quero é [proteger a magistratura dos bandidos infiltrados]
I want is to protect the magistracy from the bandits intruder

b. Eu quero proteger é [a magistratura] (dos bandidos infiltrados).
c. Eu quero proteger a magistratura é [dos bandidos infiltrados].
d. Eu quero é [que a corregedoria proteja a magistratura dos bandidos infiltrados].

The constituent focused by the SF is aligned as the last one of the sentence. If this doesn’t happen, then the one that follows the focus is deaccented and is interpreted as an afterthought, such as the bracketed constituent in (14b).

Nonetheless, focalization by SF in the low area of the sentence is blocked under certain circumstances:

(15) Small clause complements to considerar (consider):

a. ??O João considera é [SC a Maria culpada].
The João considers is the Maria guilty

b. O João considera culpada é a Maria.
the João considers guilty is the Maria
c. O João considera a Maria é culpada.
the João considers the Maria is guilty

(16) Infinitival complements to verbs like ver (see)

a. A Maria viu foi os meninos vencerem a corrida.
The Maria saw was the boys wininflected the race.
b. *A Maria viu os meninos foi vencerem a corrida.
the Maria saw the boys was wininflected the race
c. A Maria viu os meninos vencerem foi a corrida.
the Maria saw the boys wininflected was the race

(17) Double complements of a verb:

a. ??O João deu foi um presente para a Maria6.
The João gave was a gift to the Maria

b. *A Maria persuadiu foi o João a viajar para a Grécia.
The Maria persuaded was the João to travel to Greece

(7) c. *A Maria disse foi para o João que ia viajar.

what what the Maria is is is scandalous.
The requirement of another Wh-expression at the beginning of the sentence shows that the o que of the predicational structure doesn’t behave the same way than the o que of the specificational structure.

6 Unless we have either an afterthought interpretation or an ordered pair.
Reduced pseudoclefts

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The Maria said was to the João that (she) would travel

\[(18)\] XPs inside strong islands\(^7\)

- a. *O João agrediu quem quebrou foi a janela.
  The João hit who broke was the window
- b. *O João agrediu a pessoa que quebrou foi a janela.
  the João hit the person that broke was the window
- c. *O João chorou quando a Maria beijou foi o Pedro.
  The João cried when the Maria kissed was the Pedro

\[(19)\] APs included in DPs:

- a. *Ele quebrou a mesa foi redonda.
  He broke the table was round.
- b. Ele comeu a carne foi crua.
  He ate the meat was raw
- c. *Le gusta la música es clásica. (Vallejo, s/d: 18)\(^8\)
  to-him pleases the music is classic
- d. ... me gusta más la música es moderna
  to-me pleases more the music is modern

(Sedano, 1990:93, apud Bosque 1999)

Focusing via SF cannot reach constituents sitting in the left periphery of the sentence (20a), nor the subject in Spec IP (20b), nor high adverbs (20c):

\[(20)\]

- a. *Foi o João a Maria beijou.
  (it) was the João the Maria kissed
- b. *Foi o João vendeu este carro.
  (It) was the João sold this car
- c. *É provavelmente o João vai chegar amanhã.
  (it) is likely the João Will arrive tomorrow

Camacho (2006) observes that adverbs like *francamente* (frankly), which are ambiguous between a speech-oriented and a VP-internal interpretation, only receive the vP-internal manner interpretation, not the speech-oriented one, if focused by an SF, as in (21) (his (9)):

\[(21)\]

Marta no debería hablar es francamente.
Marta not should talk is frankly
‘It is frankly that Marta should not talk’

\(^7\) The judgments vary when the focused constituents are inside weak islands.

\(^8\) According to Mioto & Foltran (2007), in the grammatical cases the adjectives would be represented as predicates of small clauses that are adjuncts of the VP; those small clauses would have a PRO as the subject, which is controlled by carne (meat) in (19b) or by música (music) in (19d). By representing the adjective that way we account for the fact that the adjective doesn’t belong to the DP and also for the stage level sense that the adjectives crua (raw) and moderna (modern) must have. On the other hand, the adjectives redonda (round) and clássica (classic) cannot be represented as adjuncts of the VP, since they are adjectives of the individual level type, they cannot have a circumstantial interpretation, as pointed out by Vallejo (ms).
The problem with this argument is that the only available interpretation in the case above is the only one available when those adverbs are focused in any type of cleft.

As for the postposed subject, the possibility of focusing via SF seems to depend on the dialect’s allowance of free inversion. This property puts together both European Portuguese and CS, languages that naturally allow the subject to be focused via SF, whereas it differentiates the two languages from BP, since in BP the postverbal subject is much more restricted:

\[(22)\]  
\[a. \text{Fez a trapalhada foi o João } \text{ okEP } ??\text{BP (light subject)}\]  
\[\text{made the mess was the João}\]  
\[b. ... \text{me gustaba más que todo era el estilo libre}\]  
\[\text{me pleased more than everything was the freestyle}\]  
\[\text{(Sedano 1990: 92)}\]  
\[c. \text{Me ajudou muito foi aquele livro sobre a histeria.}\]  
\[\text{me CL helped a lot was that book about the hysteria}\]  
\[\text{(Wheeler, 1982: 510) (heavy)}\]

As for the copula, it doesn’t have an independent value for tense: it reflects the tense of the c-commanding verb:

\[(23)\]  
\[a. \text{Eu quero } \text{ é/was.IMPERF./was.PERF. protect a magistratura.}\]  
\[\text{I want is/was.IMPERF./was.PERF. protect the magistracy}\]  
\[b. \text{Eu queria } \text{ é/was.IMPERF./was.PERF. protect a magistratura.}\]  
\[\text{I wanted.IMPERF. is/was.IMPERF./was.PERF. protect the magistracy}\]  
\[c. \text{Eu sempre quis } \text{ é/was.IMPERF./was.PERF. protect a magistratura.}\]  
\[\text{I always wanted.PERF. is/was.IMPERF./was.PERF. protect the magistracy}\]

3. Analysis of the RPCs

Basically, the analyses proposed for the RPCs were developed on two complementary bases. The first one is the existence of a null or deleted Wh-operator, whose distribution is the same as that of the Wh-operator that heads the free relative of PCs, as depicted in (24a):

\[(24)\]  
\[a. [XP [RL ON o João quer vender] é um carro].\]  
\[\text{the João wants to sell is a car}\]  
\[b. [XP O João quer comprar é um carro]\]  
\[\text{the João wants to buy is a car}\]

The second basis is the absence of an operator, as depicted in (24b). The structure of the RPC resulting from each of these bases shows an important point for the discussion we’ll engage on: the impossibility for the items inside the free relative in (24a) to c-command the focused constituent in the overt syntax.

3.1. The Null Operator (NO) Analysis

The analysis that assumes the existence of a NO (or a deleted Wh operator) seems to have been motivated mostly by the similarities arising from the
fact that the PCs and the RPCs are sentences designed to focus phrases. This common function might have led Wheeler (1982) (for PB), Toribio (1992) (for CS) and Costa & Duarte (2005) (for EP) to correlate the two types of sentences, analysing the RPCs as a reduced version of the PCs, since the former lacks the Wh-expression. For Wheeler (1982), the RPCs involve a free relative whose Wh-expression is deleted. For Toribio (1992), the RPCs involve a free relative with a null operator.

Making these hypotheses compatible with the analysis developed by Kato & Mioto (2009) (the linking could also be made with Boeckx’s (2007) analysis), we would have a derivation similar to (10), except for the starting point, which would be (25a):

(25) a. [IP A Maria é [AP NO [escandalosa]]]
   b. [GroundP [ NO a Maria é] é escandalosa]

In (25a), we’d have a NO instead of the Wh-expression o que (what). In the course of the derivation, the NO and the Wh-expression will behave in a similar way, and at the end of the derivation, we would obtain (25b). However attractive it may be for its simplicity, the analysis that assumes the RPC to involve a NO gives rise to some inconsistencies, which suggest that it can’t be right.

The first one comes from the different behavior of PCs and RPCs with respect to the possibility of expressing an information focus. This possibility is restricted to PCs (see also Bosque 1999 for CS):

(26) a. – O que a Maria comeu?
   What did Maria eat?
   b. – O que a Maria comeu foi um bolo.
   What Mary ate was a cake
   c. #– A Maria comeu foi um bolo.
   The Maria ate was a cake.

In the dialogue in (26), which requires information focus in the answer (see Zubizarreta, 1998), only (26b) is a proper answer to the question (26a).

Another inconsistency can be observed in (27):

(27) a. Quem fez a confusão foram os meninos/fui eu.
   who made the mess were.3PL the boys/ was.1SG I
   b. *NO fez a confusão foram os meninos/fui eu.
   made the mess were.3PL the boys/was.1SG I
   c. *Quem fizeram/fiz a confusão foram os meninos/fui eu.
   who made.3PL/made/1SG the mess were/3PL. the boys/was.1SG I
   d. Fizeram/fiz a confusão foram os meninos/fui eu.  okEP
   made.3PL/1SG the mess were/3PL the boys/was.1SG I

The presence of a NO, as well as the Wh-operator, leads the verb fazer (do) to be inflected in the third singular person, as shown in (27a), but this agreement is incompatible with the focused subject with a NO, as shown in (27b). Moreover, we see in (27c) that the first person singular or the third person plural agreement on the verb fazer (do) would be incompatible with the presence of a Wh-operator;
hence, it should also be incompatible with the null operator, which is not confirmed in (27d).

Besides that, the assumption that the RPC hosts a null Wh operator or a deleted Wh-operator is an \textit{ad hoc} solution, since it would be the only instance of embedding of a finite clause without formal markings in BP. In other words, either via a phonetic deletion of \textit{o que} or via a NO in (28a), we’d have (28b) as a biclausal structure:

9 Besides the lack of a Wh expression in the free relative, there is the lack of the complementizer \textit{que}, which is obligatory in nominal headed relatives with no Wh in Spec of CP. However, as pointed out in Mioto & Marchesan (ms), we don’t have free relatives with doubly filled Comp in BP:

(i) a. *O que que a Maria é é escandaloso.
what that the Maria is is scandalous$_{m}$

b. *O que que a Maria é é escandalosa.
what that the Maria is is scandalous$_{f}$

10 The mechanism couldn’t even be extended to the predicational sentences, given the ungrammaticality of (ib):

(i) a. [O que a Maria é] é escandaloso.
what the Maria is is scandalous$_{m}$

b. *A Maria é é escandaloso.
the Maria is is scandalous$_{m}$

It can always be argued that the free relatives in (ia) and in (28a) are different, but this doesn’t eliminate the \textit{ad hoc} nature of the proposal.
(32) Focus/Wh extraction
   a. ¿Qué era lo que Juan leía?
      ‘What was (it) that Juan was reading’
   b. *¿Qué era NO Juan leía?
      what was   Juan read

There is also evidence of structural type that doesn’t match the analyses that assume a NO. One relevant phenomenon, pointed out by Bosque (1999), concerns the scope of focal adverbs:

(33)  a. Solo leí este libro. (I only read/ I read only this book)
      I only read this book
   b. Lo que sólo leí fue este libro. (I only read/ *I read only ...)
      ‘What I only read was this book’
   c. Sólo leí fue este libro. (I only read/ I read only this book)
      only read was this book

The ambiguity of (33a) is attributed to the fact that solo (only) c-commands all that follows it. In (33b) there is no ambiguity, since solo doesn’t c-command outside the free relative: then, the only possible interpretation is that ‘the only thing I did with the book was read it’. Given that (33c) is ambiguous, we have to admit that solo (only) c-commands all that follows it, and it cannot be inside a free relative headed by a NO.

Another asymmetry that relates to the c-command condition is presented in (34):

(34)  a. ??Quem o João não respeita é ninguém.
      Who the João not respect is anybody
   b. O João não respeita é ninguém.
      the João not respect is anybody

In Portuguese, the lack of c-command in overt syntax prevents the licensing of the postcopular negative polarity item ninguém (anybody), as shown in (34a). However, in (34b) there is no problem of acceptability, which allows us to conclude that não (not) naturally c-commands ninguém (anybody).

Additional evidence that points in the same direction is brought by (35a), a sentence taken from the e-journal Folha de São Paulo:

(35)  a. O Lula tem é falado pouco e com poucos.
      The Lula has is spoken a little and with few (people)
   b. *O que o Lula tem é falado pouco e com poucos.
      what the Lula has is spoken little and with few

We can ascribe the ungrammaticality of (35b) to the fact that the trace that precedes falado (spoken) is not c-commanded by its antecedent o Lula (the Lula):

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11 This shows that the conditions that license a negative polarity item in Portuguese are different from the ones that hold for English, a language that has connectivity effects in pseudoclefts (see Boskovic 1997).
(36) [FR O que o Lula tem] é t₁ falado pouco e com poucos.
what the Lula has is spoken little and with few

Since (35a) is a well-formed sentence, we have to admit that the trace that precedes falado (spoken) is c-commanded by o Lula (the Lula), as represented in (37a), and hence, o Lula cannot be inside a free relative headed by a NO (37b):

(37) a. O Lula tem é t₁ falado pouco e com poucos
the Lula has is spoken little and with few
b. *[FR NO o Lula tem] é t₁ falado pouco e com poucos]
the Lula has is spoken little and with few

A pseudocleft like (35b) becomes grammatical if we insert the proform fazer (do) inside the free relative in order to focus the VP, as in (38a):

(38) a. O que o Lula tem feito é falado pouco e com poucos.
What the Lula has done is spoken little and with few

One of the effects of the insertion of the proform is to allow the trace t₁ to be c-commanded by its antecedent o Lula (the Lula). The insertion of the proform in (37a) to re-establish the c-command condition is unnecessary and causes problems of acceptability.  

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12 This situation is systematic in raising contexts:
(i) a. O Lula parece é ter sido descuidado.
the Lula seems is have been careless
b. *O que o Lula parece é ter sido descuidado.
what the Lula seems is have been careless
(ii) a. O Lula deve é tomar cuidado com os amigos.
the Lula must is take care with the friends
b. *O que o Lula deve é tomar cuidado com os amigos.
what the Lula must is take care with the friends
(iii) a. A casa vai é desabar.
the house goes is fall
b. *O que a casa vai é desabar.
what the house goes is fall

In control contexts, the insertion of the proform is optional:
(i) a. O Lula quer é controlar a câmara.
the Lula wants is control the chamber
b. O que o Lula quer (PRO fazer) é (PRO) controlar a câmara.
what the Lula wants (PRO do) is (PRO) control the chamber

13 The insertion of the proform in RPCs is more acceptable in sentences with simple verbs when the VP with adverbs like só is focused by SF, as in the following example (from the e-journal Folha de São Paulo):
(i) a. A falecida nossa mãe só fez foi esperar.
the dead our mother only did was wait
b. A falecida nossa mãe só esperou.
the dead our mother only waited
c. *A falecida nossa mãe fez foi esperar.
the dead our mother did was wait
3.2. Non-NO analysis

The vast majority of the analyses for the RPCs developed since Bosque (1999), as far as we know, don’t adopt the assumption that there is a NO. The main question raised by these analyses aims at the SF, its nature and the way it is merged in the structure.

3.2.1. Bosque (1999)

Bosque (1999) assumes that the SF is the head of a FocusP and the focused phrase is its complement. Thus, he gives (39b) as the structure of (39a):

\[(39) \quad \text{a. Juan comía era papas.} \]
\[
\text{Juan ate was potatoes} \\
\text{b. [IP Juani [VP ti [V' comía [FocusP [[F° era] papas]]]]]}
\]

Camacho (2006) points out that the main problem for Bosque’s proposal is that papas (potatoes) is the complement of the verb, and nothing explains why it’s not possible to extract a complement, as shown in (40):

\[(40) \quad *¿Quéi se comieron los pájaros fue ti? \]
\[
\text{What cl ate the birds was}
\]

Moreover, Camacho translates Bosque’s generalization that SF only takes constituents in the domain of the vP as in (41), where the SF selects vP:

\[(41) \quad \text{IP} \quad \text{Apud Camacho (2006)}
\]
\[
\text{I} \quad \text{FocP} \\
\text{era} \quad \text{vP}
\]

However, (41) raises another problem: the copula, being the head of FocP, would block the raising of the verb to I.

3.2.2. Camacho (2006)

Camacho (2006) assumes that SF is the head of IP_{COP}, which has the same minimal structural and argumental properties as other copular verbs. IP_{COP} is an equative structure whose subject is null and whose complement is the focused DP. As we see in (42b), IP_{COP} is merged as an adjunct of VP:

\[(42) \quad \text{a. Los pájaros se comieron fue las migas.} \]
\[
\text{The birds cl ate was the crumbs}
\]
The argument of the main verb is null, and it is coindexed with the null subject x of the copular verb. (43) maps to the syntactic structure in (42): the higher part of the tree denotes the presupposed clause los pájaros se comieron x ‘birds ate x’, and the adjoined structure provides the equative part x = migas ‘crumbs’.

(43) Los pájaros se comieron x & the x que los pájaros se comieron = las migas

Camacho thus reproduces the assertion structure of Zubizarreta (1998).

A problem for this analysis is the fact that an RPC can focus constituents other than VPs, e.g. arguments and adjuncts, as in (44), where the constituent focused by SF is bigger than VP, likely AspP.

(44) João pode é ter estado viajando pela Europa.

João may is have been travelling by the Europe

In (44) 3.2.3. Méndez-Vallejo (ms)

Mendez-Vallejo assumes that SF is the head of a FocusP, which is located in VP left periphery (Belletti, 2004) The problem with this account is that the filled Focus° should block the raising of the verb to Infl.

3.2.4. Kato and Mioto (forthcoming)

Kato and Mioto (forth) propose that the derivation of a RPC is as in (45):

(45) a. input : [TP João comprou [VP comprou batatas]]
⇒ Merge of the Copula and projection of FP at its VP periphery
b. [FP [VP foi [TP João comprou [VP comprou batatas]]]]
⇒ Remnant movement of VP:
c. [FP [VP tV batatas] [F' F [VP foi [TP João comprou [VP tVP ]]]]]
⇒ At this point, the Copula raises to T:
d. [TP foi [FP [VP tV batatas] [F' F [VP foi [TP João comprou [VP tVP ]]]]]]
⇒ In addition, the remnant TP moves to the TopP of the Left Periphery (Rizzi1997), where it is interpreted as the sentence’s presupposition:
e. [TopP [TP João comprou [VP tVP ]] [TP foi [FP [VP tV batatas] [F' F [VP foi [TP]]]]]
f. João comprou foi BATATAS.

[[[ Presupposition ]] [focus]]
The step (45.e) of this analysis raises a problem related to the c-command condition: when the remnant TP is moved, the subject fails to c-command the rest of the sentence. So, in (46) o Lula fails to c-command its trace\textsuperscript{14}:

\[(46) \text{[TopP [TP O Lula; tem] é ti falado pouco e com poucos.}}\]

The Lula has is spoken a little and with few (persons)

3.2.5. An alternative account

Because of (46), I would like to suggest an alternative account for PCRs according to which the SF is a focal particle which is merged as an adjunct of the focused constituent, as represented in (47), where the SF takes scope over the vP:

\[(47) \text{[TP O Lula; tem [vP é [vP ti falado pouco e com poucos]]]}\]

Thus, by staying in Spec of TP, o Lula c-commands its trace in vP. By being an adjunct, the SF does not block verb raising. What we have at the end of the derivation is a monoclausal sentence.

The copula can “stroll” in the low area of the sentence picking up the XP to be focused, and this stroll reflects the position of negation, in contrast to cases where we have contrastive focus:

\[(48) \begin{align*}
\text{a. A Maria quer é [chegar a Florianópolis no domingo], não [chegar a Joinville].} \\
& \text{The Maria wants is to arrive at Florianópolis on Sunday, not to arrive at Joinville} \\
\text{b. A Maria quer chegar é [a Florianópolis] no domingo, não [a Joinville].} \\
\text{c. A Maria quer chegar a Florianópolis é [no domingo], não [no sábado].} \\
& \text{Mary wants to arrive at Florianópolis is on Sunday, not on Saturday.}
\end{align*}\]

As for the focusing of a postverbal subject, recall that BP behaves differently from EP and CS, as we saw in (22), repeated here:

\[(22) \begin{align*}
\text{a. Fez a trapalhada foi o João} & \text{ [okEP ??BP (light subject)]} \\
& \text{made the mess was the João} \\
\text{b. ... me gustaba más que todo era el estilo libre} \\
& \text{me pleased more than everything was the freestyle} \\
\text{c. Me ajudou muito foi aquele livro sobre a histeria.} \\
& \text{me CL helped a lot was that book about the hysteria}
\end{align*}\]

While (22a) is acceptable in EP and (22b,c) in CS, (22a) is not natural and is rejected by many native speakers of BP.

\textsuperscript{14}The configuration in (46) is similar to that of an ordinary PC:

\[(i) \text{[TopP [O que o Lula; tem] é ti falado pouco e com poucos.}}\]

But (i) is an ungrammatical sentence.
4. Concluding remarks

This paper analyses the RPC. It shows that RPCs are not a reduced version of PCs with a Wh/NO heading a free relative. The conclusion at which we arrived is that RPCs are monoclausal sentences, designed to focus a phrase. The focusing is performed by the merging of the SF as an adjunct to the focused constituent.

References

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