

## **Minigrammar(s) and cartography: two ways to build a sentence**

In recent joint work with Carlo Cecchetto (Cecchetto & Donati 2023; Viganò et al. 2024), we unravelled the existence of a « minigrammatic way » of generating very reduced structures with full sentential force. In Italian, simple VPs with an agreeing unaccusative participial and a moved internal argument (as in *Problem solved*) can be used in spontaneous face to face conversations to express full sentential meaning. We argue on the basis of a number of descriptive, theoretical and experimental evidence, that these structures are not elliptical but rather the fruit of a very simple derivation exploiting internal merge and agreement between basic elements instead of externally merging the full cartographic skeleton expressing sentencehood in full fledged clauses. In this talk, I shall develop on these first observations in two directions. On one hand, I will show that this minigrammar coexisting with cartography interacts with variation parameters and gives rise to different reduced structures across languages. A case in point will be French, which does exhibit participial reduced structures, but only with topicalized full DPs, due to the impoverished feature endowment of French nouns. On the other hand, I shall explore the possibility that the minigrammar which is responsible for reduced sentences in adults' conversation is the same that is exploited by younger children in their first sentence production. I will discuss the possibility that there are two grammars available from the start, one, compatible with restricted resources, mostly exploiting internal merge and one, associated with a growing functional lexicon, fully exploiting external merge.

## **Merge and Minimal Search: A Preliminary Sketch from GK to MC and Beyond**

In this talk, we start our discussion by reviewing the form and function of Merge under SMT, in particular Minimal Search. We will focus on the problem confronting Chomsky (2021)'s GK system (outlined in "Minimalism: Where are we now, and where can we hope to go", *Gengo Kenkyu*), and the important revision, incorporated in Chomsky (2023)'s MC system (outlined in "The Miracle Creed and SMT", in press). We will elaborate the MC system with new ideas, simplifying a unified analysis of the v\*P/CP phases. Our primary goal is to present a preliminary sketch of the generative system from GK to MC, and beyond. This is part of the ongoing joint research with T. Daniel Seely.

## **More than one way to spell out a phase**

Evidence from a number of phonological/PF phenomena indicates that what is sent to spell-out is phases, not phasal complements (see Bošković 2016), which is in fact what is expected given that only phases have theoretical status, phasal complements don't. Spelling out phases, however, raises an issue for successive-cyclic movement. If what is sent to spell-out is a full phase and what is sent to spell-out is inaccessible to syntax, if successive-cyclic movement were to target phases, i.e. phasal edges, as is standardly assumed, an element undergoing movement would get frozen with the first step of successive-cyclic movement since it would be part of a spelled-out unit hence no longer accessible. The talk shows that the conundrum can be resolved under the labeling theory; under the labeling theory, we can have spell-out correspond to a phase and successive-cyclic movement can still target a phase (i.e. phasal edge). Importantly, under the conception of spell-out argued for in the talk, spell-out is contextual in the sense that phase XP with YP in its Spec does not always behave in the same way regarding spell-out. The system will be shown to resolve a number of outstanding issues/puzzles, e.g. certain stress assignment puzzles in English and the seeming C'-deletion with sluicing. It also deduces criterial freezing.

## **DOMains**

This talk will address the issue of domains of computation, and argue that heritage languages offer important insights in this respect. First, evidence will be provided that verb movement is indeed a domain-extending device. Through the observation of Romance heritage language as well as diachronic syntax, it will become clear that when verb movement disappears some other phenomena also vanish (like participial agreement and DOM in situ) and some repair strategies start emerging (one of them being DOM ex situ). Then, it will be shown that one of the role of DOM is also to mark long-distance dependencies. It will be argued that, like clitics, DOM marks the crossing of a phase boundary in topicalization structures.