

Complement clauses as (free) relatives, complementizers as *wh*-pronouns: refining the picture
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Background. In previous work (Manzini and Savoia 2003, 2005, 2011) we argued that the nominal nature of complementizers in many languages, points to the conclusion that this embedding layer is nominal (cf. Rosenbaum 1967). Specifically we have argued that the structures they create are more similar to free relatives than to headed relatives (Arsenijevic 2009, Kayne 2010). Here we concentrate on some of the empirical reasons that would recommend distinguishing between complementizers and *wh*- pronouns ó beginning with the finiteness restriction observed by Romance complementizer and relative pronoun *che*, but not by interrogative *che*.

Case study. Finiteness provided the basis for Kayneø (1976) distinction between *que/ che* as \neq complementizerø in declarative and relatives and as *wh*- item in questions. For instance in Italian, *che* \neq whatø introduces both finite and infinitival questions (1a). However complementizer *che* is restricted to finite contexts (1b) and the same is true of relative *che* (1c).

- (1) a. Che fai/ fare?
What you do/ to do?
b. Mi hanno detto che hanno/ *avere dormito
They have told me that they have/ to have slept
c. il libro che leggo/*leggere
the book that I read/ to read

In fact, finiteness has two components ó one relating to tense/ mood/ aspect, and another relating to agreement. Luckily, some Romance languages allow these two components to be distinguished, since they feature agreeing infinitives. In Sardinian varieties like (2), inflected infinitives also allow for the finite complementizer. The finite complementizer, then, is sensitive not to the temporal/ modal/ aspectual properties of the verb, but to the presence vs. absence of an agreement inflection.

- (2) ... innantis de/ ki 'ennere-(ne) 'iccoço *Paulilatino*
... before to/that come they

We assume that elements such as Italian *che* are lambda abstractors, and as such can lexicalize not only relative pronouns and *wh*- phrases in questions, (when introducing individual variables), but also complementizers (when introducing propositional variables). We assume further that the presence of an EPP variable (\neq PROø) within the infinitival sentence defines an open predicate, rather than a proposition. Therefore if the *wh*- pronoun, in so far as it is a complementizer, introduces a propositional variable, it will be incompatible with the open expression resulting from the presence of the EPP variable.

Various problems immediately arise. One of them can most clearly be seen in languages (again Sardinian dialects) where the same *wh*- pronoun *tʃi* in (3), introduces both complement clauses and yes-no embedded interrogatives. In complementation contexts it is restricted to finite sentences, (3a), while interrogative *tʃi* normally occurs in front of infinitival questions (3b).

- (3) a. bɔʒɔ tʃi ɛpdʒas kraza
I want that you come tomorrow
b. nɔ iʃʃiu tʃi ddu tserri'ai *Laconi*
I don't know whether him to call

We interpret the interrogative complementizer as a *wh*-element ranging over propositions in the scope of a question operator. We conclude that this interpretation makes it compatible with embedded EPP variables. Correspondingly we suggest that what removes the finiteness restriction is the question operator. If so, we can equally say that it removes the finiteness requirement on individual variable *che*, which can then introduce infinitival questions, as in (1a), though not relatives, as in (1c). This means that the contrast in (1a) vs. (1c) does not depend on *che* being a *wh*-

phrase in (1a) and a $\bar{\text{complementizer}}\emptyset$ in (1c) (*contra* Kayne (1976)); rather, *che* in (1c) is the $\bar{\text{relative pronoun}}\emptyset$ (i.e. individual variable) of traditional descriptions.

We present several pieces of data in favor of this approach. For instance, in several Italian varieties the presence of a negative operator licences an infinitival relative introduced by *che*. In early Italian in (4), it is fairly normal to find infinitival relatives introduced by *che* when the head is a bare N in negative polarity contexts (from Brambilla Ageno 1964: 402-403). We therefore propose that the non-veridical negation operator, like the non-veridical question operator (Giannakidou 1998), removes the finiteness (EPP-completeness) requirement on *che* in the headed relatives of early Italian

- (4) a. Non ho carlino che in borsa portare
not I.have penny that in my.purse to carry
b. Non avevano quasi pane che mangiare
not they.had almost bread that to eat

Further problems. As time allows we will consider the predictions that the present approach makes as to the *that-t* Filter, namely that the complementizer will not be able to embed even a finite sentence whose EPP requirement is satisfied by a variable \acute{o} and how this relates to $\bar{\text{repair}}\emptyset$ by the relative pronoun *qui* in French.