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Pseudo-Relatives: Big but Transparent

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ABSTRACT: PSEUDO-RELATIVES (PRs)

We present new evidence that pseudo-relatives (PR) are transparent indefinite descriptions of situations. We argue that PRs are DPs headed by a choice-function determiner (Reinhart 1997, Matthewson 1999) and show that various semantic predictions are borne out (exceptional wide scope, specificity, anaphoric tense, DP distribution).

1. PR BASICS

PRs are finite constructions found in Italian (1), and many other Romance languages as well as Greek, that look superficially like relative clauses (RCs), but are naturally translated as English Acc-ing constructions (Cinque 1992).

(1) Ho   visto **Gianni che correva**.
I.have seen Gianni that run.IMPF
'I saw Gianni running.'

PRs can be constituents that refer to events/situations.

(2) **Ciò che**$_1$ /(***Chi**$_2$) ho   visto è **Maria**$_2$ **che piangeva**$_1$
That which/ (Who) I.have seen is Maria that cry-IMPF
'What /(*Who) I saw was Maria crying' (after Radford 1977: 160(98))

Ciò que/'that which' is inanimate; PR does not denote *Maria* in (2) but the event/situation described by the embedded clause.

PRs are DPs They can complement prepositions (3a), unlike standard finite CPs or infinitives (3b,c).

(3) a. La storia di [$_{PR}$ Gianni che balla] è fantastica.
The story of   G.   that dances is fantastic.
'The story of G. dancing is fantastic.' (Cinque 1992: (35b))
b. *La storia di che Gianni ballava /Gianni ballare non è vera.
The story of that G.   danced /G.   dance.INF not is true.
'The story that G. danced is not true.'

2. TRANSPARENT

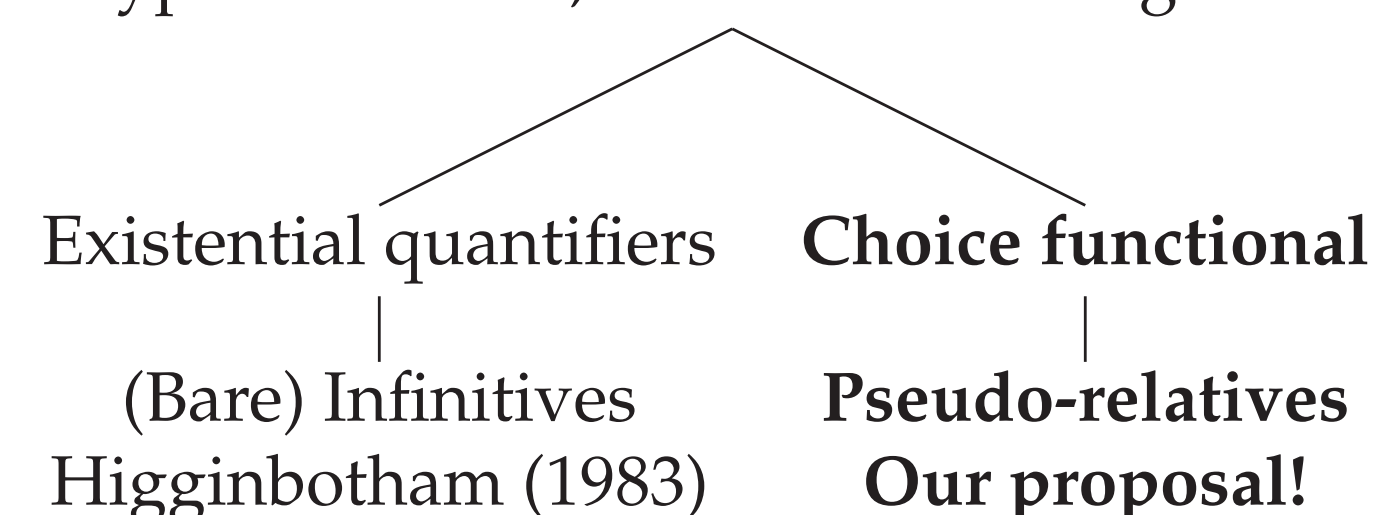**PRs, like infinitives, are transparent, epistemically neutral.**

(4) Ha visto **Lea piangere** /**che piangeva**, ma pensava ridesse.
Has seen L.   cry.INF   /that cry.IMPF, but thought laugh.SUBJ.
'He saw L. cry /crying but thought she was laughing.'

Normal finite clauses are epistemically non-neutral.

(5) Gianni ha visto dalle   lacrime **che Lea piangeva**, #ma pensava ridesse.
G.   has seen from.the tears   that L.   cry.IMPF, but thought laugh.SUBJ.
'G. saw from the tears that L. was crying, #but thought she was laughing.'

Barwise (1981): What ensures transparency in direct perception is that the verb *see* semantically selects an **individual situation** rather than a proposition.

Two types of clausal, situation-denoting indefinites

Existential quantifiers | **Choice functional**
(Bare) Infinitives | **Pseudo-relatives**
Higginbotham (1983) | **Our proposal!**

3. WIDE SCOPING BEHAVIOUR

PRs, but not infinitives, display wide scope behaviour in a variety of environments

(6) NEGATION (EXISTENTIAL ENTAILMENT FOR PRs)
Dato che Lea non ha mai ballato. . .

Max non ha mai visto **Lea ballare il tango**   /# **L. che ballava il tango**
M. NEG has never seen L.   dance.INF the tango / L. that dance-IMPF the tango
'M. never saw L. dance the tango / dancing the tango.'

(7) CONDITIONAL CLAUSES

Se Lea avesse visto Max ballare /che ballava,   si sarebbe arrabbiata.
If L. had   seen M.   dance   /that dance.IMPF, SE would.be angry.
'If L. had seen M. dance /dancing, she would have got angry.'
"but fortunately M. never danced and never will." # with PR

(8) ADJUNCT ISLANDS

Ogni professore ha esultato quando ha visto Max barare/che barava all'esame.
Every professor has exulted when   has seen M.   cheat/that cheat at.the'exam.
'Every professor exulted when he saw M. cheat.INF/cheating at the exam.'
Multiple Cheatings reading more readily available with infinitives

Multiple events interpretation easier with bound variable pronoun in PR

(9) Ogni professore ha esultato quando ha   visto Max che barava al suo esame.
Every professor has exulted when   has.he seen M.   that cheat at his exam.
'Every professor exulted when he saw M. cheating at his exam.'

Reminiscent of bound variables promoting intermediate scope for indefinites (Krater 1998).

4. PR TENSE IS VACUOUS

Is tense responsible for the wide-scoping behaviour of PRs compared to infinitives?

- If PRs bear **deictic** tense like (indicative) relative clauses (Kusumoto 2005), this could give the event description the effect of wide scope.

(11) John didn't see Mary/the woman who was running.

Tense is not deictic in PRs: PRs, unlike RCs, cannot have deictic future under future (12).

(12) Vedrò   [$_{PR}$ Max che corre/*correrà]   /il ragazzo [$_{RC}$che corre/correrà.]
I.see.FUT   M. that run.PRES/run.FUT /the boy   that run.PRES/run.FUT
'I will see Max/the boy that runs /will run'

PRs always show anaphoric tense:

(13) Vedo Marco che corre   /*correva   /*ha corso
I.see Marco that run.PRES /runs.IMPF /has run
'I see Marco running.'

(14) Ho visto Marco che correva /*corre   /*correrà
I've seen Marco that run.IMPF /run.PRES /will.run
'I saw Marco running.'

Conclusion: tense morphology in PRs is semantically vacuous.

- **Situation semantics** for tense (Portner 1992, Cipria and Roberts 2000)

- **SOT analysis:** complementizer abstracts over the Kleinian topic situation (à la SOT simultaneous interpretations in Kusumoto (2005))

5. A CHOICE FUNCTION APPROACH

Proposal: PRs are headed by a choice functional determiner, which is the standard treatment for wide-scoping "specific" indefinites (Reinhart 1997, Winter 1997). Choice functions select a member from a set.

$$f(\{s: \exists s'[s \leq s' \text{ \& } ballava(Lea)(s')]\})$$
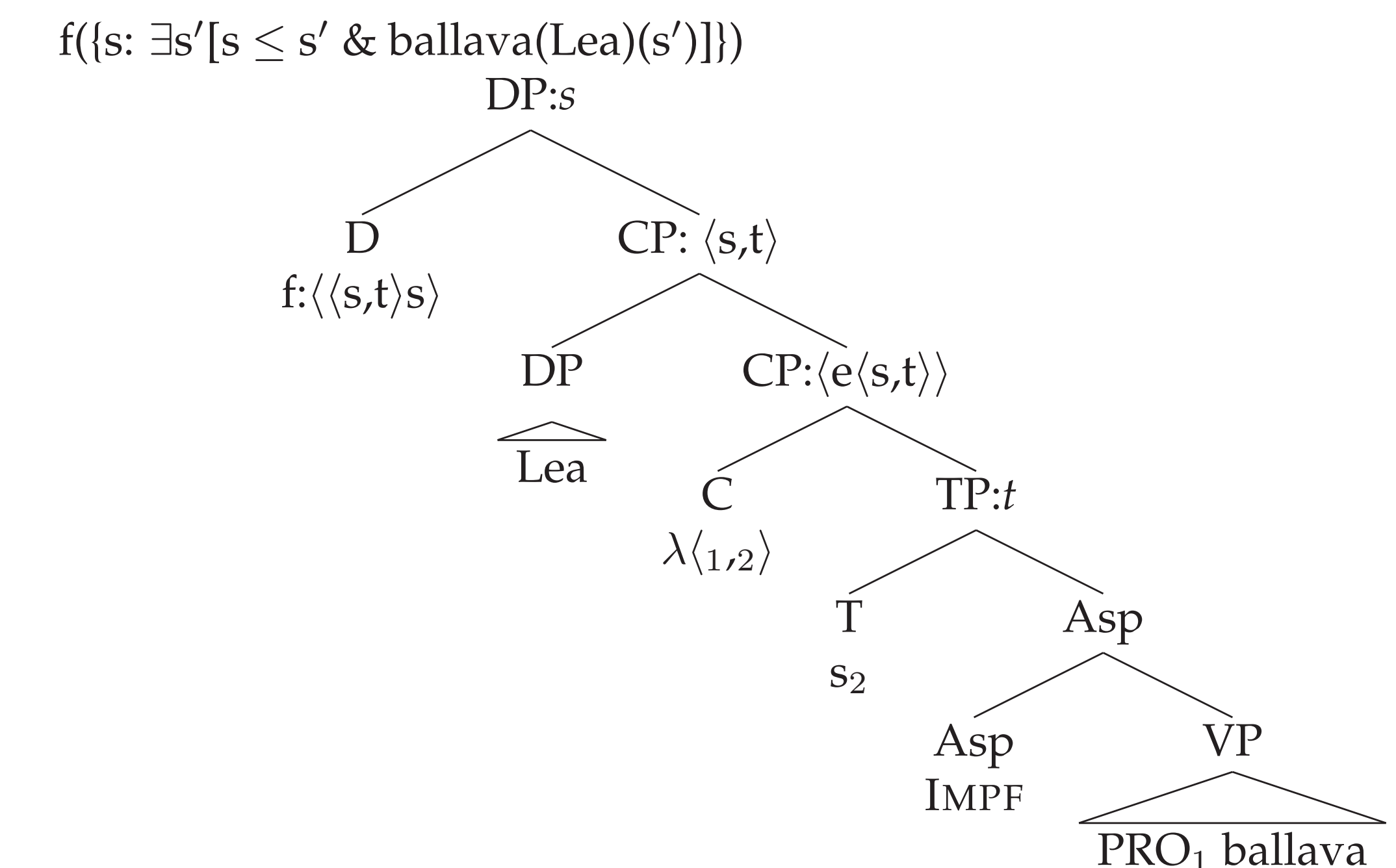
Matthewson (1999): CFs are existentially closed at the highest level → PRs outscope negation and other operators.

(10) Max non ha mai visto [**Lea che ballava**]
M.   NEG has ever seen [L. that dance.IMPF]
'M. saw L. dancing'
= $\exists f[CH(f) \text{ \& } \neg saw(G)(f(\{s : Lea \text{ is dancing in } s\}))$
'There is a choice function f and Max did not see **the situation picked out by that choice function** from the set of situations contained in an ongoing dancing by Lea.'

6. SPECIFICITY EFFECTS

PRs cannot describe 'just any' situation.

A: Max voleva proprio ballare con Lea al matrimonio
'M. really wanted to dance with L. at the wedding.'

B': Ma l'aveva mai vista Lea ballare?
But her'had ever seen L.   dance.INF
'But had he ever seen L. dance?'

B:??Ma l'aveva mai vista Lea che ballava?
But her'had ever seen L.   that dance.IMPF
'But had he ever seen L. dance?'

Under future operators PRs deliver a scheduled-event interpretation.

(15) Max vorrà   vedere Lea ballare.
M. want.FUT see   L. dance.INF.
'M. will want to see L. dance.' (L. might dance or not)
...wherever or whenever that may happen, if it does.

(16) Max vorrà   vedere Lea che balla.
M. want.FUT see   L. that dance.PRES.
'M. will want to see L. dancing.' (L. will dance, it is scheduled)
#...wherever or whenever that may happen, if it does.

Cf. English specific indefinites:

(17) a. I want to see a hockey match (any one will do).
b. I want to see a certain hockey match. (has not happened, but scheduled to)

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