Marko Hladnik

Mind the Gap

Resumption in Slavic Relative Clauses

This dissertation is concerned with the phenomenon of resumption and the syntax of relative clauses. Its aim is to provide a coherent account of resumption patterns in Slavic relative clauses, identifying the mechanisms that give rise to resumption and establishing what the analysed empirical data can tell us about the syntactic structure and derivation of relative clauses. Slovene, Polish, and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian data form the core of the empirical basis of this research. When we consider the four possible relative clause constructions varying in the choice between relative pronouns and complementizers and the presence or absence of resumption, we see that all of them are actually attested in Slavic languages. The dissertation teases apart the properties of the different constructions, establishes under which conditions they are available, and provides a derivation analysis for each of them. The approach furthermore demonstrates the necessity of maintaining a distinction between different types of resumption, despite their superficial similarities. While one of the types is driven by a morphosyntactic recoverability requirement, the presence of another is shown to be the result of processing constraints, rather than grammatical ones. In terms of typology, resumption in Slavic relative clauses with an invariant complementizer represents a new example of resumption as spellout of copies, a type only rarely identified in the literature previously.

This study is of interest to linguists researching resumption, recoverability, the syntax of relative clauses, and Slavic languages, as well as to the general syntactic audience.

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