Non-subcategorized CP arguments in German

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German syntax allows sentential arguments to be distributed sentence final or sentence initial, depending only on information structure.

(1) Ich glaube, dass Maria reich ist.
    I believe that Maria rich is.

(2) Dass Maria reich ist, glaube ich.
    That Maria rich is, believe I.

    'I believe that Maria is rich.'

However, there is a class of predicates which allows only for sentence final argument clauses, for instance *ärgerlich sein* 'be angry'; see (3) vs. (4). This observation goes back to Webelhuth (1992). He calls them class II predicates, a term which I will borrow here.

(3) Ich bin ärgerlich, dass Maria reich ist.
    I am annoyed that Maria rich is.

(4) *Dass Maria reich ist bin ich ärgerlich.
    That Maria rich is am I annoyed.

    'I am annoyed that Maria is rich.'

In generative frameworks, it is generally assumed that the predicate selects its argument clause, which is base-generated in the argument position of the verb, i.e. in the same position as a nominal object. Nominal objects usually receive their case from the verbal head. With his *Case Resistance Principle*, Stowell (1981) claimed that, since clauses cannot be case-marked, they have to be moved out of the scope of the embedding predicate, into an extraposed position at the right of the embedding clause or into the position preceding the finite verb. (German is a verb-second language, i.e. in main clauses, exactly one phrase is distributed left to the finite verb.) Why would it be that class II predicates allow only sentence final subordinate clauses?

Often, class II predicates subcategorize prepositional objects, like *erfreut sein über* 'be delighted about', *dankbar sein für* 'be thankful for'; see (5). Note that the argument clause may occur sentence initial within the PP-correlate; see (6).

(5) *Dass du da bist, bin ich erfreut.
    That you here are, am I delighted.

(6) Darüber dass du da bist, bin ich erfreut.
    about-it that you here are, am I delighted.

    'I am delighted that you are here.'

There have been attempts to explain the behavior of class II predicates as PP-ellipsis (for instance Sternefeld, 2006, working in a generative framework, argues that CP cannot be topicalized alone because the PP is an island for topicalization of CP. Neither can it be topicalized together with the PP-shell because the invisible lexical head disqualifies the PP-CP for movement). However, there are also class II predicate which subcategorize for arguments marked with genitive (i.e. oblique case), like (7). As shown in (8), the argument clause is distributed like with all class II predicates.

(7) Ich bezichtige ihn des Hochverrats.
    I accuse him the.GEN high treason.GEN

    'I accuse him of high treason.'

(8) *Dass er Tiere quält, bezichtige ich ihn.
    That he animals tortures, accuse I him.

    'I accuse him of torturing animals.'

Furthermore, there are predicates which I take to be class II predicates and which, however, do not seem to subcategorize for any nominal/prepositional argument: *böse sein* 'be angry' does not subcategorize for a PP-argument but is well-formed with a 'plain' sentence final subordinate clause.

(9) Peter ist böse (*darüber/*darauf/*...) dass Anna zu spät   kommt.
     Peter is mad about-it/at-it/...that   Anna too   late comes.
     'Peter is mad that Anna is late.'

This suggests an analysis which takes the clausal arguments as something which is 'added' without being subcategorized. In generative grammar, these clauses have to be considered adjuncts, i. e. they are not generated in a object position but are adjoined higher in the tree. So-called Principle C effects seems to support this. Given a generative tree structure, proper names are illicit in the scope ('c-commanded by') of coreferential pronouns. Under the assumption that phrases can be moved but can be reconstructed in their former position, it can be explained why subcategorized clauses show effects of Principle C violation while class II argument clauses don't. Only the former are reconstructed in a position in the scope of the coreferential pronoun — an illicit configuration; see (10). Class II predicate argument clauses like in (11) are adjoined higher in the tree and are never in the scope of the coreferential pronoun:

(10) *Ich glaube ihm$_1$, dass Peter$_1$ die Prüfung bestanden hat.
      I   believe him   that Peter   the exam   passed   has.
      'I believe Peter that he (Peter) passed the exam'

(11) Ich bin ihr$_1$ böse, dass Maria$_1$ die Prüfung bestanden hat.
      I   am her mad that Maria   the exam   passed   has.
      'I am mad at her that she passed the exam.'

Since the clausal argument can only be subcategorized in the canonical argument position (adjacent to the predicate), and class II predicate argument clauses are not generated in that position, this means that they are not subcategorized. This fits well with the observation that it is often hard to determine their subcategorized features anyway; see (9).

Thus, we have to give up the assumption that all thematic clausal arguments are subcategorized. There is a very similar phenomenon with verb second argument clauses, which show the same distributional constraints like class II predicates with all predicates; see Frank (2000). She assumes non-canonical subcategorization for verb second argument clauses. This means that during the derivation, one argument role remains empty and the 'additional' clausal argument is mapped onto this argument position later. Under this view, the mapping is constrained only by the semantic interpretation (i. e. only verb second clauses are possible because they are of the correct type for attitudes). On the other hand, this raises the question why non-canonical 'recognition' as an argument is available only for sentential arguments. Assuming a propositional denotation for nominals like *Annas Zuspätkommen*, (12) is not well-formed either, neither extraposed nor in the structural position for nominal arguments.

(12) *Peter ist {Annas Zuspätkommen} böse {Annas Zuspätkommen}.
      Peter is {Anna's being late}   mad {Anna's being late}.
      'Peter is mad at Anna's being late.' (intended)

Thus, while class I argument clauses are subcategorized by the embedding predicate, class II predicates do not subcategorize clausal arguments in a strict sense. Semantic approaches, however, are too weak to explain the data because they make wrong predictions for nominal arguments. I assume that the fact that clauses are not case-marked opens the option of non-canonical objects, which allows clauses to occur isolated and receive an interpretation only based on semantic grounds. One unsolved question is why we can only map these 'superfluous' clauses onto argument roles when they occur in sentence final position and not in a position preceding the clause. Approaches working in a generative framework do not give any (obvious) answer to this question.

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