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STRUCTURE SHARING—THE CASE OF FREE RELATIVES IN SERBIAN*

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Abstract: The puzzling syntax of free relative clauses (FRs) has been the subject of substantive linguistic work. The core issue, which has divided the field, has been to determine whether this type of relative clause is a complex DP whose head is a *wh*-pronoun or a *wh*-clause without the overt external head. Lately, some theoretical reconsiderations of the nature of phrase structuring or, more precisely, of the nature of the syntactic operation **Merge** allowed for a fresh start in this matter. In this paper, I will follow the proposal put forward by Riemsdijk (2006b) that FRs are structurally ambiguous and that they are derived through **grafting**, a special type of Merge. As the relevant data in Serbian show, this—still unorthodox, though theoretically legitimate—move is also empirically sound. It also provides us with a new insight into another related phenomenon in this language—the optionality of clitic placement in FRs. The analysis will also reinterpret the status of the particle *god* typically occurring in this type of clauses, showing why it could be viewed as a complementizer.

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1. Introduction to the syntax of free relatives

In comparison with regular relative clauses, free relative clauses apparently lack an external nominal head. In addition, there is syntactic

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evidence they are integrated into the higher clause in a distinct and curious fashion, which is in many languages reflected in the Case Matching Constraint (CMC)—a requirement that the *wh*-relative pronoun satisfies case requirements of both the higher and the embedded clause. As shown by the grammaticality contrast in (1), this is also true of Serbian.¹

- (1) (a) Kupiću šta god ti preporučiš. buy-fut-1sg what-acc god you recommend-pres-2sg 'I will buy what(ever) you recommend.'
 - (b) *Kupiću čemu god se obradovao. buy-fut-1sg what-dat *god* self made-happy 'I will buy whatever he got excited about.'
 - (c) *Prihvatiću ko god joj treba. accept-fut-1sg who-nom god her-dat needs 'I will accept whoever she needs.'
 - (d) *Kupiću šta god se obradovao. buy-fut-1sg what-acc *god* self made-happy 'I will buy whatever he got excited about.'
 - (e) *Prihvatiću koga god joj treba. accept-fut-1sg who-acc god her-dat needs 'I will accept whoever she needs.'

While (1a) is grammatical, since the accusative case on the wh-word satisfies case requirements of both the higher verb kupiti 'buy' and the lower verb preporučiti 'recommend', in (1b) the verb in the embedded clause requires a dative complement, which clashes with the case requirements of the main clause verb. Example (1c) is similar—the nominative case on the wh-pronoun meets the case requirements within the embedded clause but not those of the main clause verb prihvatiti 'accept'. Also, in (1d) and

¹ In glosses, the following abbreviations are used: 1, 2, 3—1st, 2nd, 3rd persons, sg—singular, pl—plural, fut—future tense, pres—present tense, aux—auxiliary, nom—nominative case, acc—accusative case, dat—dative case, inst—instrumental case, C—complementizer. Glosses occasionally contain the Serbian particle god in its original form, in order to avoid misinterpretations regarding its status and meaning.

² CMC can be violated when the two distinct case specifications happen to have the same phonological form. Case syncretism plays the same role cross-linguistically, and can be handled on the assumption that lexical items are underspecified for

(1e) we can see that satisfying the case requirements of the matrix verbs ('buy' and 'accept') in the relevant examples is equally ungrammatical.

Defying the usual fundamental assumptions about structure building rules, a single wh-word seems to have an argument status in both clauses. This is why, on one approach (the so-called **Head account**), it has been analyzed as the external nominal head of the FR clause (2a). On the other hand, the extraposition facts in languages such as German³ point to the conclusion that the wh-word is part of the relative clause (the so-called **Comp account**), and the external head can only be an empty nominal element (2b).

- (2) (a) **Head account** (Bresnan–Grimshaw 1978; Larson 1987): [DP whatever [CP/TP you recommend]]
 - (b) **Comp account** (Groos–van Riemsdijk 1981; Grosu–Landman 1998): $[_{\mathrm{DP}}\ pro\ [_{\mathrm{CP}}\ whatever\ [_{\mathrm{TP}}\ you\ recommend]]]$

On both approaches some stipulations are necessary to explain the facts. In Head accounts it is either necessary to explain how come the DP is projected once the wh-word is re-merged with its clause, or, alternatively, why the wh-word base-generated outside the relative clause obligatorily coincides with the gap in the argument position, or pro (cf. Bresnan–Grimshaw 1978).⁴ Comp accounts also require some kind of stipulation to explain the case matching effect, and the obligatory occurrence of pro in the main clause.

case and undergo late insertion. Thus, the CMC is actually met at the point of spell out.

- (i) Der Hans hat [das Geld] zurückgegeben [das er gestohlen hat]. the Hans has the money returned that he stolen has 'Hans returned the money that he had stolen.'
- (ii) *Der Hans hat zurückgegeben, [das Geld, das er gestohlen hat].
 the Hans has returned the money that he stolen has
- (iii) *Der Hans hat [was] zurückgegeben, [er gestohlen hat]. the Hans has what returned he stolen has

(i) $[_{DP} whatever [_{CP/TP} you recommend pro]]$

³ In German, the extraposition of a relative clause never includes the external nominal head. This is illustrated by the contrast between (i) and (ii) (taken from Riemsdijk 2006a, 344). Therefore, the impossibility of (iii) is completely unexpected under the head account of the *wh*-relative.

⁴ Thus, the account of Bresnan-Grimshaw (1978) of the English FR structure would, in fact, be:

Riemsdijk (2006b) proposes, however, that instead of trying to explain away the unexpected properties of FRs by resorting to stipulations, we should reconsider the basic assumptions about the properties of Merge. He proposes that the derivation of syntactically ambiguous structures (or, in his terms, **grafts**) is, in fact, possible and that FRs are, among other constructions, derived in such a way (3).

(3) [DP/CP] whatever you recommend]

(Riemsdijk 2006b)

The claim put forward here is that this approach is empirically supported by the Serbian facts. In what follows, I will first present the author's theoretical assumptions about "grafting",⁵ and then turn to the analysis of FRs in Serbian.

2. Grafting

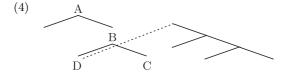
Since Chomsky's (2001) paper, the view of the syntactic Merge in minimalist program takes External and Internal Merge as equally available/logical options. External Merge is the merging of two complete syntactic objects. Internal Merge takes a subpart of a syntactic object and remerges it with its host. In Chomsky's view, it would be wrong to ponder over the existence of the 'second' or Internal Merge, since it is logically possible and only a stipulation would exclude it.

As Riemsdijk (2006b) points out, this also implies that any other logical versions of Merge are in principle available as syntactic operations unless excluded by a stipulation. One such option is merging a subpart of a syntactic object with a different host (as if it was merged for the first time, see (4)).

This type of merging would combine the properties of the External and Internal Merge, and Riemsdijk refers to it as **grafting**. The term puts

⁵ Citko (2005) reaches the same conclusion regarding the availability of a third type of Merge—parallel Merge in her terminology. However, in her theory, parallel Merge is not constrained in a distinct fashion. Namely, further internal Merge is allowed, which raises a range of theoretical concerns. The range of constructions that Riemsdijk views as structure-sharing, seem not to allow a grafted element to be moved further, which suggests a theoretically plausible constraint on this type of syntactic Merge. Since a more in-depth consideration of these issues exceeds the purposes of this paper, I continue to work within the grafting framework and the assumptions presented therein.

emphasis on the kind of structure derived in this fashion. It is such that it combines two parallel syntactic trees, which share a constituent.



In his analysis of FRs, the *wh*-pronoun first undergoes Internal Merge (movement to the Spec of CP) inside the relative clause and is then externally merged with a main clause verb (as its argument). Thus, it becomes a DP element shared between two independent clauses.

3. FRs in Serbian

In this section, I propose that FRs in Serbian are grafts. Once the wh-clause is formed via movement of the wh-word to the Spec of CP, the specifier is externally merged with the higher verb as schematically represented below. It becomes the shared element between two syntactic trees, or in Riemsdijk's terminology **callus**. The fact that the callus is by the end of the derivation a doubly dominated syntactic phrase can account for the fact that it behaves both as FR-external and FR-internal element.

First, I will consider the evidence that a wh-word undergoes movement to the Spec position of the relative clause (in this part, the derivation of the FR is analogous to the derivation of wh-interrogative clauses). Gračanin-Yuksek (2008) provides evidence from the binding of the reflexive in Croatian that supports this stand. The main support for the grafting analysis presented here comes from the clitic placement facts, and it will be shown that the apparently optional clitic placement inside an FR clause in Serbian is a direct consequence of the way the structure is interpreted at PF (Phonetic Form). Finally, another claim put forward here is that the particle god that follows the wh-element is an independent prosodic and syntactic unit—a complementizer head.

3.1. Gračanin-Yuksek (2008): The anaphoric possessive in Croatian

Croatian (hence, Serbian too) has a subject oriented anaphora *svoj* (possessive 'self'), which must be bound by a subject antecedent within the same clause. The non-anaphoric, regular possessive pronoun is bound outside its domain.

(6) Roditelji $_k$ vole svoju $_i$ / njihovu $_{i/k}$ decu. parents love self-poss/ their children. 'Parents love their children.' (Gračanin-Yuksek 2008, 278)

In FRs the raised NP reconstructs into its base position (7a). The relevant/accessible subject for the anaphoric element is the embedded subject. At the same time, the regular possessive cannot be bound by the embedded subject (7b).

- (7) (a) Vid_i će nagraditi koje god $\operatorname{svoje}_{k/^*i}$ dete Dan_k preporuči. Vid aux reward which god self-poss child Dan recommends 'Vid will recommend whichever of his (Dan 's) children Dan recommends.'
 - (b) Vid_i će nagraditi koje god njegovo $_{i/j/*_k}$ dete Dan_k preporuči. Vid aux reward which god his child Dan recommends 'Vid will recommend whichever of his children Dan recommends.' (ibid., 279)

Both pieces of evidence provided by (7) point to the same conclusion: that the raised NP is raised to the A-bar position and obligatorily reconstructs.

The binding pattern of the anaphoric possessive is reverse in the externally headed relatives. The exclusive domain for binding of the anaphoric element is obviously the higher clause.

(8) Vid_i će nagraditi ono $\operatorname{svoje}_{i/*k}$ dijete koje Dan_k preporuči. Vid aux reward that self-poss child which Dan recommends 'Vid will reward that child of his which Dan recommends.'

The contrast between (7) and (8) conclusively shows that the wh-constituent in FRs is raised to an A-bar position in its clause.

3.2. Grafted FR and the optionality of the clitic placement

It seems reasonable to assume that the parallel structures (clauses), which do not undergo proper clausal embedding but share an element instead,

do not get unique phonological interpretation. As will be shown below, this assumption receives justification in an analysis of optional clitic placement in Serbian FRs.

The phenomenon in question is illustrated by (9). The dative clitic can, unexpectedly, be placed either before or after the particle *qod*.

- (9) (a) Kupiću šta god \mathbf{mi} preporučiš. buy-fut what C_2 me-dat recommend-2sg 'I will buy whatever you recommend to me.'
 - (b) Kupiću šta \mathbf{mi} god preporučiš. buy-fut what me-dat C_2 recommend-2sg 'I will buy whatever you recommend to me.'

To provide some background for this phenomenon, let me briefly present the general view on clitic placement in Serbian. It is a standard assumption that clitics in this language take the second position in the clause. Radanović-Kocić (1988) phonologically defines it as the second position within the clitics' Intonational Phrase (IP), where the IP is a prosodic unit that corresponds to the syntactic notion of a clause. In strictly phonological approaches (Halpern 1995; Radanović-Kocić 1988; 1996), clitics attach to the first phonologically independent unit—a word, and it is the operation of Prosodic Inversion (Halpern 1995) that provides the host for the clitic(s) when necessary. In other words, if nothing precedes the clitics in a sentence the first available phonological word will move to the initial position. Thus, a "subjectless" sentence such as (10) is derived by PF movement of the demonstrative in front of the auxiliary clitic ('am').

(10) Ovu **sam** haljinu obukla. this am dress put on 'I put on this dress.'

Syntactic approaches, on the other hand, convincingly argue that it is not the PF, but the syntactic movement that provides a host for a clitic. The host is not a prosodic word but a phrase, since syntactically immobile elements cannot serve as appropriate hosts in the sentence-initial position (cf. Bošković 2001; 2004; Progovac 1996; Ćavar–Wilder 1994). While Leftbranch extraction leads to the derivation of (10), a preposition (even when stressed) cannot move and support the clitic in (11), regardless of the fact that it is phonologically adequate for this purpose.

(11) *Prema sam tebi krenula, ne od tebe. towards am you-dat started not from you-gen 'I moved towards you, not from you.'

However, the notion of IP, rather than a clause (CP) is still necessary in accounting for the position of clitics in Serbian, since there are exceptions to the general "second position in a clause" rule. Namely, clitics can be delayed when preceded by constituents that, arguably, project their own intonational phrase, independently of the root clause, and are set off by pauses (cf. Selkirk 1984; 1986). These constituents include parentheticals, appositives, appositive relative clauses, heavy constituents, and certain preposed elements. The apparent clitic delay in these circumstances is illustrated by (12), where an appositive causes a redefinition of the prosodic properties of the root clause, and the IP boundaries within it.

(12) Džon Lenon, muzičar i pesnik, imao **je** pravi talenat. John Lennon musician and poet had is-cl real talent 'John Lennon, a musician and poet, had a real talent.'

The relevant prosodic domain of the clitic je in (12), or, in other words, its IP, does not coincide with the boundaries of the entire root clause, but a smaller syntactic domain within it (13).

(13) Džon Lenon, ($_{\rm IP}$ muzičar i pesnik), ($_{\rm IP}$ imao **je** talenat). John Lennon musician and poet had is-cl talent 'John Lennon, a musician and poet, had talent.'

With an IP as a relevant domain for the clitic placement account, we are able to maintain the second-position generalization throughout (cf. Bošković 2001; 2004)

However, the problem of the optionality of clitic placement in FRs remains unresolved as a *wh*-word is not the type of a constituent that projects its own IP. Just like other *wh*-pro-forms in Serbian, *wh*-words that occur in FRs are prosodically entirely integrated in their clause. The delayed clitic placement in (9a), repeated below in (14), does not involve the break that characteristically occurs after the IP boundary (14b).

- (14) (a) Kupiću šta god \mathbf{mi} preporučiš. buy-fut what C_2 me-dat recommend-2sg 'I will buy whatever you recommend to me.'
 - (b) *Kupiću šta # god mi preporučiš.

The grafting account of FRs, on the other hand, provides us with an alternative solution for the problem. In this approach, the wh-element belongs to two independent clauses simultaneously, and therefore to potentially two independent IPs. We can, therefore, assume that the PF component disambiguates the parallel tree-structure presented here, using both options for setting the IP boundaries of the grafted structure. This helps us avoid any stipulations regarding the optionality of the clitic movement. In other words, in both (9a), where the clitic is in the third position in its clause, and (9b), where it takes the second position, the relevant place of the clitic is second within its IP. The difference stems from the phonological disambiguation that takes place. These two possible phonological interpretations of the ambiguous structure are given below.

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(15)\ (a)\ \ the\ phonological\ interpretation\ of\ the\ structure\ in\ (9a): (_{\rm IP}\ Kupi\acute{c}u\ [\breve{s}ta]) (_{\rm IP}\ |\ C\text{-god}\ \mathbf{mi}\ [_{\rm TP}\ preporu\check{c}i\breve{s}]) (b)\ \ the\ phonological\ interpretation\ of\ the\ structure\ in\ (9b): (_{\rm IP}\ Kupi\acute{c}u\ |\ ) (_{\rm IP}\ [\breve{s}ta]\ \mathbf{mi}\ C\text{-god}\ [_{\rm TP}\ preporu\check{c}i\breve{s}])
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3.3. The particle god as a complementizer

In Serbian, the particle that can only show up in FRs is god. Its semantic contribution is similar to the English ever in the same type of constructions—it forces a free-choice (FC) reading regarding the variable introduced by a wh-word. As noticed by Dayal (1997), an FC reading is peculiar in that it is only at first sight that it appears to involve proper universal quantification over individuals. Rather, the quantification seems to involve possible worlds in which the choice of an individual denoted by a wh-pronoun varies across worlds. Without going into the semantics of the construction, it suffices to say for the purposes of this account that the quantification involved is peculiarly similar to that induced by modals, and that it is not implausible to analyze the FC element in FR relatives as expressing some kind of modality.

Traditional accounts of the morphosyntactic status of this element are ambivalent, as reflected by the fact that its prescribed spelling allows

⁶ For a semantic insight regarding the FC pro-forms I refer the reader to the semantic account of Dayal (1997). However, the semantic account of the FC element in an FR as a type of modal falls beyond the scope of this paper.

treating it both as an independent word and as a bound morpheme. Gračanin-Yuksek (2008) points out that the boundaries of a prosodic word do not necessarily coincide with those of a morphological word, and treats god as a separate morphological unit that can form a prosodic word with the wh-word.

However, the single word approach is not acceptable even from the prosodic perspective. More precisely, there is a good prosodic reason not to perceive god as bound or, alternatively, as a clitic: it carries stress. In Serbian multisyllabic words, stress can never fall on the last syllable (cf. Lehiste–Ivić 1986). Hence, treating a wh-word + god string (in (14a), for instance) as a lexical unit would force us to treat the particle as its final syllable, which also regularly happens to be the most prominent one prosodically, and thus an odd exception to the rule. Also, since clitics are by definition prosodically weak, unstressed elements, it is very likely that god is not involved in clitic clustering at all.

Finally, the analysis of god proposed here also allows us to distinguish between two types of wh-god items in Serbian. The type not previously formally distinguished occurs in the northern dialect(s), and (16) shows that it occurs in an entirely different type of constructions as well.

- (16) (a) Ako štagod vidiš zovi me. if what-god see-2sg call me 'If you see something, call me.'
 - (b) Hoćeš kadgod doći? will-2sg when-god come 'Will you drop by some time?'

In this case, god is clearly a bound morpheme, part of the indefinite nominal expression. It is unstressed and inseparable from the wh component of the expression, which in turn has an interpretation of a regular indefinite. In addition, such an expression has a distinct distribution. It is licensed in the scope of a conditional and question operator.

As far as the syntactic status of *god* in FRs is concerned, I propose that it should be viewed as a high functional clausal head, plausibly with a type of modal semantic input, characteristic of FRs. Essentially, I suggest it is an FR complementizer.

There are several syntactic reasons for this approach. First of all, unlike *ever*, Serbian *god* cannot have phrasal status. It can never be modified or occur in non-clausal constituents.

- (17) (a) What did he hardly ever see?
 - (b) *Šta je skoro god video? what aux hardly god see 'What did he hardly ever see?'
- (18) (a) This feeling is growing ever stronger.
 - (b) *Ovo osećanje postaje god jače this feeling becomes *god* stronger 'This feeling is growing ever stronger.'

The syntactic status of god is similar to the complementizer li (also referred to as the focus particle), which shows up in one type of interrogative clauses illustrated below.

(19) Koju li knjigu želi? which C book wants 'Which book, I wonder, does she want?'

As (20) and (21b-d) show, neither li nor god can be separated from a wh-word by an intervening phrase, even when the phrase in question can otherwise easily show up in the higher domain of a clause (21c).

- (20) (a) *Koju knjigu li želi? which book C wants
 - (b) *Koju sad li knjigu želi? which now C book wants 'Which book, I wonder, does she want now?'
 - (c) *Koju on li knjigu želi?
 which he li book wants
 'Which book, I wonder, does he want?'
- (21) (a) Koju god knjigu želi... which C_2 book wants 'Whichever book she wants...'
 - (b) *Koju knjigu god želi which book C_2 wants
 - (c) *Koju sad god knjigu želi dobiće. which now C_2 book wants get-fut-3sg 'Whichever book she wants now, she'll get.'

(d) *Kupiću šta ti god preporučiš. buy-fut-1sg what-acc you *god* recommend-pres-2sg 'I will buy whatever you recommend.'

However, unlike li (22), god can be preceded by pronominal clitics (23b).

- (22) (a) Kojom li ga je knjigom udarila? which-inst C him aux book-inst hit 'Which book did she hit him with?'
 - (b) *Kojom ga je li knjigom udarila? which-inst him aux C book-ins hit
- (23) (a) Kojom god ga je knjigom udarila... which-inst C_2 him aux book-inst hit 'Whichever book she hit him with...'
 - (b) Kojom ga je god knjigom udarila... which-inst him aux C_2 book-inst hit 'Whichever book she hit him with...'

This additionally speaks in favor of giving god an independent syntactic status. At the same time, the facts in (21b-d) and (23), taken together, point to the conclusion that wh + god do not make a constituent at any point in the derivation. If it were so, given that Serbian allows a constituent split via Left-branch extraction, (21b-d) would be grammatical. The best conclusion that can be drawn from this is that god has an independent syntactic role—that of a head in the highest domain of a clause. As an anonymous reviewer points out, this point is strengthened by the impossibility of co-occurrence of god and the complementizer li.⁷

(i) Uzeće šta god da mu ponudiš. take-fut-3sg what god that him offer-pres-2sg 'He will take whatever it is that you offer him.'

However, the position of da in certain environments in Serbian is quite controversial, and we seem to be dealing with homophonous elements that can head lower projections in the clause. Stjepanović (2004), for instance, proposes that with 'subjunctive-like' finite clauses it can even head a projection below TP.

In (i), although we are not dealing with a 'subjunctive-like' finite clause, we observe a distinct semantic contribution of da, which is not the case with the uncontroversial complementizer li. It places focus on the wh-word (as suggested

⁷ The reviewer also points out that another member of the Serbian complementizer class, da, can co-occur with god.

- (24) (a) *Kupiću šta god li ti preporučiš. buy-fut-1sg what-acc *god li* you recommend-pres-2sg 'I will buy what(ever) you recommend.'
 - (b) *Kupiću šta li god ti preporučiš. buy-fut-1sg what-acc *li god* you recommend-pres-2sg 'I will buy what(ever) you recommend.'

To conclude, there are good reasons to analyze FR particle god as an independent syntactic unit, C^0 of the FR clause.

4. Some thoughts on theoretical consequences of grafting

It is important to mention that grafting is one of the attempts to introduce the possibility of shared or multiply dominated structures into syntactic theory (cf. also Citko 2005; de Vries 2005). Citko (2005) explored the possible types of Merge and arrived at basically the same conclusion as Riemsdijk: Internal Merge is unnecessarily taken as the sole avatar of Re-Merge since nothing commits us to an underlying assumption that a subpart of a syntactic tree cannot be merged with a different syntactic host.

Introducing a "multi-dimensional" complex tree structure is no more unorthodox or challenging than assuming that a moved constituent can project after merging with a host tree (as in the accounts where the internally re-merged $\it wh$ -word heads the entire construction). What is more, the latter option is, unlike grafting, clearly a stipulation.

As Riemsdijk points out, the real challenge we are facing is to constrain the application of grafting in the same fashion we search for constraints on other types of Merge, and as such it can only be welcome.⁸

A more particular concern that may arise in the current account of FRs is the treatment of "double" case requirements in a feature-based theory. In other words, we need to explain how a single lexical item can match the case requirements of both the main clause and the embedded clause verb.

in the translation of the relevant example). It is for these reasons that I am not taking da as a 'reliable' complementizer for testing the status of god in the main discussion.

⁸ Needless to say, such an enterprise by far exceeds the purposes of this paper.

Ever since the satisfaction of case requirements was divorced from movement in Chomsky (2000; 2001), the commonly used model has been one of feature-valuation, in which, instead of case-checking driven by movement, uninterpretable features get valued under proper structural conditions, that is, via agreement. This model allows for multiple feature valuation. In the current account of FRs, the necessary conditions for the valuation of φ and structural case features are met twice in the course of the derivation. Following Citko (2005), I assume that the valuation of the structural case feature on the wh-word happens under agreement with the lower verb prior to grafting, as well as the valuation of the verb's uninterpretable φ features. After grafting the same wh-word with a valued case feature enters an identical structural relation with the main clause verb and, this time, only the valuation of the verb's ϕ features takes place. In a situation when the matching case is inherent, it is not necessary to assume that licensing of the NP in a certain position requires agreement in the first place. We may take it to be a kind of a selectional restriction on Merge, which means that no valuation takes place anyway.

5. Conclusion

FRs in Serbian show a range of properties that are best accounted for if we analyze the characteristic particle god as a complementizer, and if we consider the wh-word to be a shared element between two independent clauses. The grafting analysis makes use of a theoretically available type of Merge that combines the properties of both Internal and External Merge, and more straightforwardly derives the related, otherwise incompatible, case-matching and reconstruction effects. This analysis also allows us to account for the peculiar clitic placement in Serbian FRs, on the assumption that syntactically shared elements have dual phonological status within the relevant phonological phrases.

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