The diachrony of Italian free relative clauses

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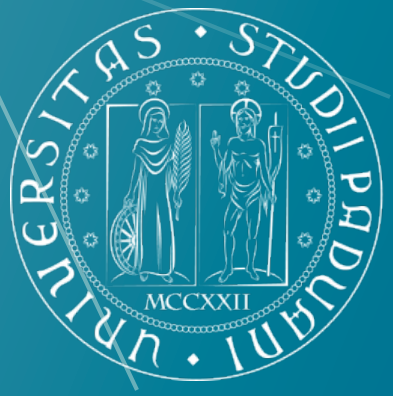
20th Diachronic Generative Syntax Conference
University of York
18-21 June 2018



Our talk in a nutshell: general claim

(Q) How does Agree probe-goal work?

- It has been claimed that the Probe agrees with the Goal that has the highest number of matching features.

  Maximize Matching Principle (Chomsky 2001: 15): "If local (P,G) match and are active, their interpretable features must be eliminated at once, as fully as possible; partial elimination of features under Match, followed by elimination of the residue under Match, is not an option."

- Our claim:
  - The probe and the goal can stand in an inclusion configuration such that the features on the probe can contain those on the goal.
  - We show that only downward Agree is allowed in relative clauses

Our talk in a nutshell: the case study

- Free RCs in Old and Modern Italian
  - We focus on Case resolution in configurations where the Case assigned by the matrix clause to the DP containing the free RC (henceforth, external Case) conflicts with that assigned within the RC (henceforth, internal Case).
  - Both Modern and Old Italian are mismatching languages, both respect the Case Containment hierarchy but they differ with respect to the direction of Case resolution.
  - Old Italian allows mismatch configurations with resolution of Case in favor of either the **internal or external** Case.
  - Modern Italian allows mismatch configuration with resolution of Case in favor of the **external** Case.

Our talk in a nutshell: research questions

(Q1) Why do languages differ with respect to the direction of Case resolution?

(Q2) How can this variation be modeled under Cinque's derivation of free RCs?

Our talk in a nutshell: the framework

- Framing Chomsky's proposal in terms of Ouali's (2008) operations KEEP, SHARE, and DONATE, we argue that:
  a) languages can resolve mismatch configurations in favor of the internal Case if and only if there is a SHARE or DONATE operation between D^0 and d(P)
  b) languages can only resolve mismatch configurations in favor of the external Case if KEEP on D^0

- We claim that Italian underwent a diachronic change from being a language in which SHARE/DONATE between D^0 and d(P) was a viable option (Old Italian) to a language where the only option is KEEP on D^0 (Modern Italian) in accordance with the development of a strong D.

Outline of the talk

- Section 1. Introduction:
  - The derivation of RCs (Cinque's analysis)
  - Case resolution in free RCs
- Section 2. The data:
  - Free RCs in Modern Italian
  - Free RCs in Old Italian
- Section 3. Our proposal
- Section 4. Conclusion

1.1. Introduction: The derivation of free RCs

- We adopt a derivation of free RCs as proposed in Cinque (2008, 2013), and refined in Poletto & Sanfelici (2014, to appear).

- Free RCs are merged as CPs in the specifier of a prenominal functional projection above the specifiers which host attributive adjectives and numerals and below the projection hosting determiners and demonstratives (Kayne 1994, Cinque 2013: 172, 197):

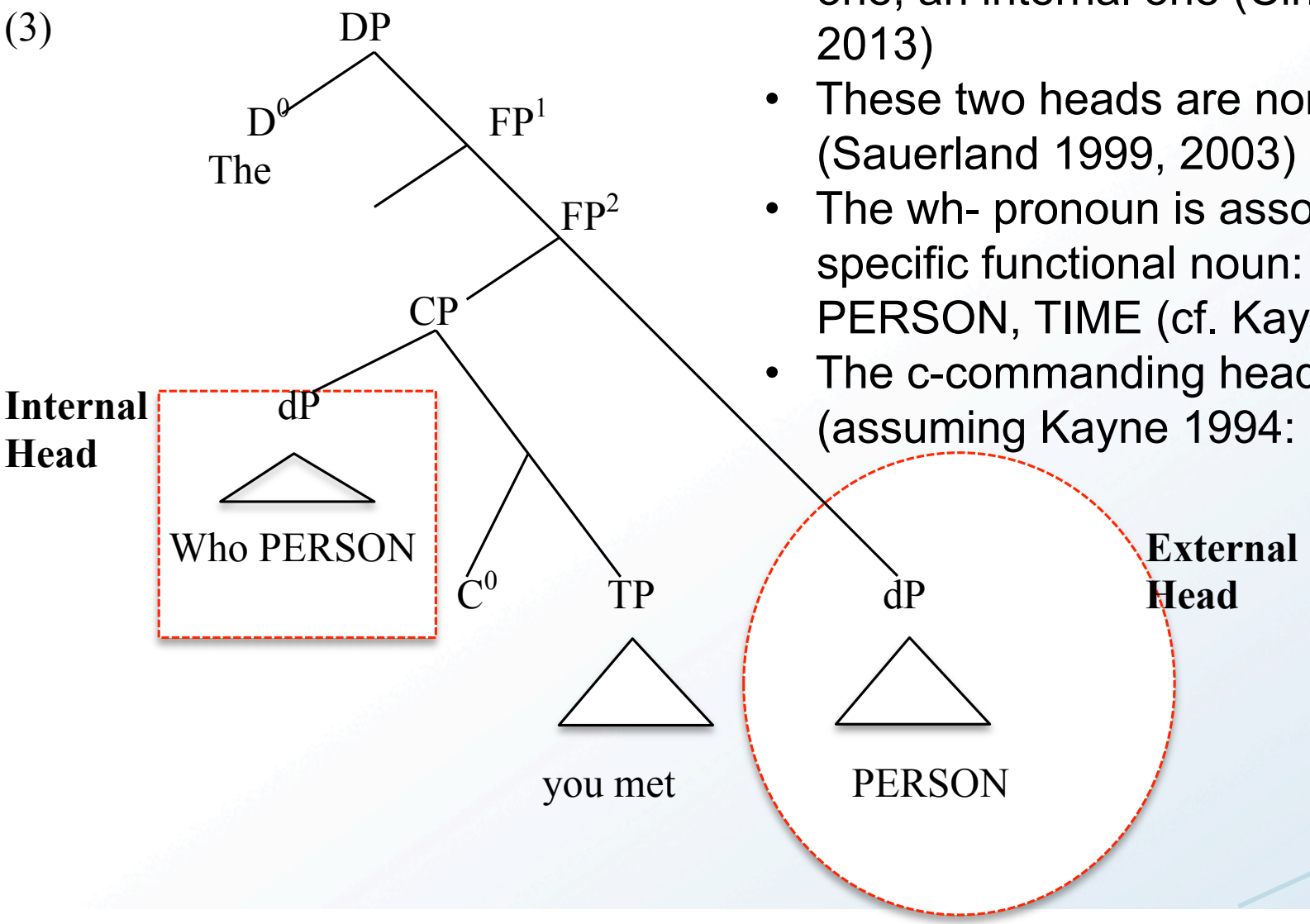
(2) [DemP D° [**RC** X° [NumP Y° [AP. . . Z° [NP]]]]]

→ restrictive and free RCs

1.1. Introduction: The derivation of free RCs

- All RCs are double headed: an external one; an internal one (Cinque 2003, 2008, 2013)
- These two heads are non-distinct copies (Sauerland 1999, 2003)
- The wh- pronoun is associated with a specific functional noun: THING, PERSON, TIME (cf. Kayne 2004)
- The c-commanding head is lexicalized (assuming Kayne 1994: 16)

(3)



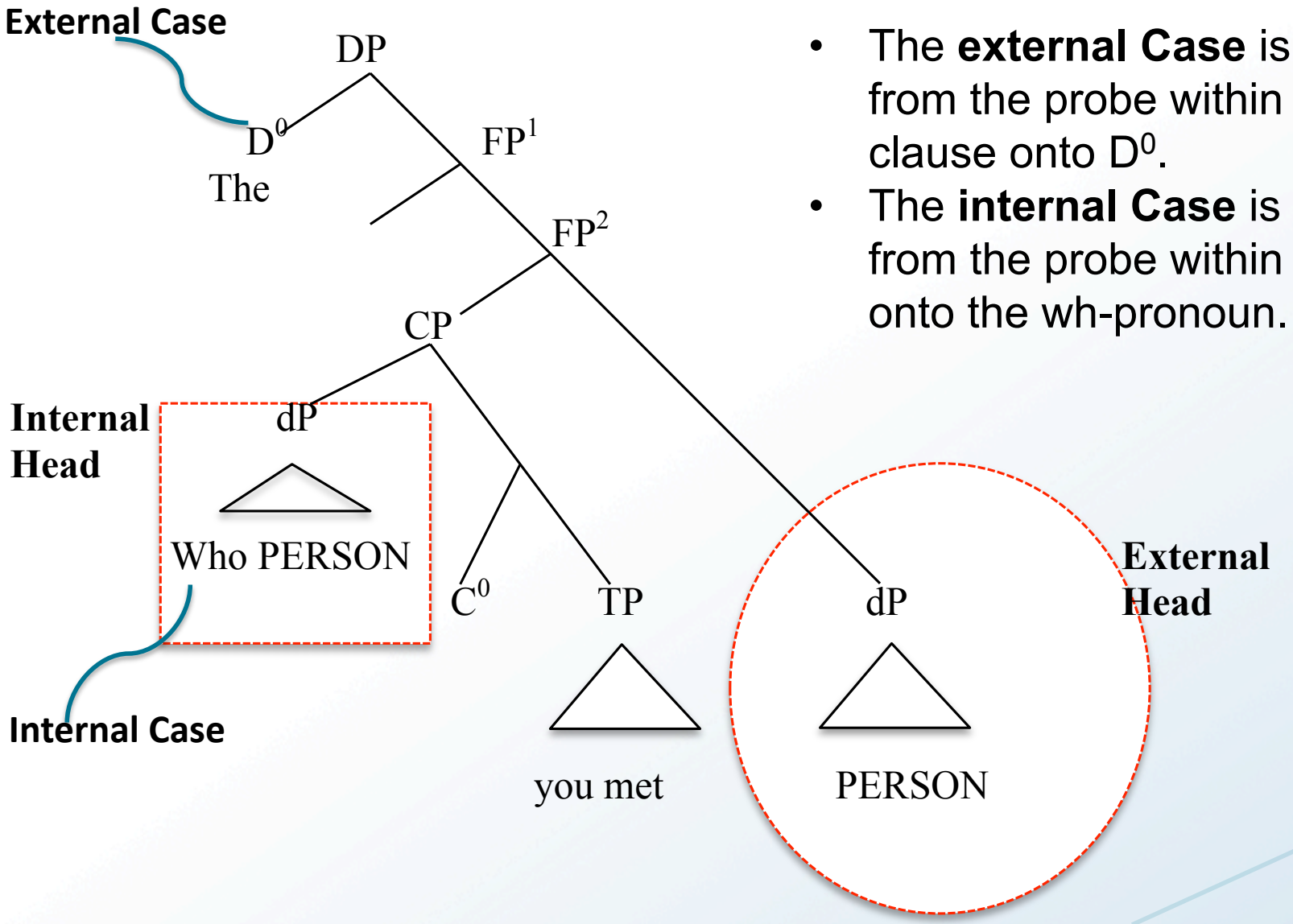
1.2. Introduction: Case resolution in free RCs

- Focus on Case resolution in configurations where the Case assigned by the matrix clause to the DP containing the free RC conflicts with that assigned within the RC

- **Case Containment hierarchy** as proposed in Caha (2009) (cf. Blake 1994, 2001; Grosu 2003): the marking of Cases on the right can morphologically contain Cases on the left, but not viceversa.

(4) NOMINATIVE > ACCUSATIVE / ERGATIVE > GENITIVE > DATIVE > LOCATIVE > ABLATIVE / INSTRUMENTAL > OTHER

1.2. Introduction: Case resolution in free RCs



- The **external Case** is assigned from the probe within the matrix clause onto D^0.
- The **internal Case** is assigned from the probe within the RC onto the wh-pronoun.

1.2. Introduction: Case resolution in free RCs

Languages differ as to:

- whether they allow conflicting configurations in free RCs (obligatory matching vs. mismatching languages)
- if mismatching languages, as to whether the Case resolution is in favor of the internal Case or the external one

Table 1. Typology of languages wrt Case resolution in free RCs

Matching	same Case on the RC wh- pronoun and on the DP
Mismatch1	the wh- pronoun spells out the external Case
Mismatch2	the wh- pronoun spells out the internal Case

(cf. Bresnan & Grimshaw 1978; Groos & van Riemsdijk 1981; Pittner 1991, 1995; Grosu 1994, 2003; van Riemsdijk 2006; Fuß & Grewendorf 2012; Cinque 2016, a.o.)

1.2. Introduction: Case resolution in free RCs

Matching (e.g., English)

(5) ***Who*** *arrives first wins the competition*

Mismatch1 (Classical Greek, Hellenic Greek; cf. Hirschbühler 1976; Kakarikos 2014)

(6) εἶδον καὶ τὸ κάτ᾽ Εὐρύλοχον καὶ **ὅ** κράτιστον ἦν (Thuc. 3.108.1)
saw and Eurylochus's (troops) and **what.ACC** the most brave was
"they saw Eurylochus's (troops) and what was the most brave"

Mismatch2 (e.g., Latin, Gothic, Old Saxon, Old, Middle and New High German; cf. Grimm 1866; Paul 1920)

(7) ***Cui*** *permittit necessitas sua, circumspiciat exitum mollem*
who.DAT allows necessity his, looks exit easy
"The person to whom his personal situation allows it, has to look for an easy way to go out of this" (Sen., Ep. 70, 24)

2. The data: Modern Italian free RCs

- The paradigm of the wh- pronoun in Modern Italian free RCs is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Paradigm of wh-pronouns in Modern Italian free RCs

Case	**Animacy**	
	+	-
NOMINATIVE	*Chi*	*0*
ACCUSATIVE	*Chi*	*0*
OBLIQUE	*P Chi*	*0*

- Free RCs with inanimate referents are not a legitimate option in Modern Italian.

2. The data: Modern Italian free RCs

- Case matching is usually present in Italian.
- Mismatch can be tolerated if there is synchretism between the forms.

		Matrix	RC	Config.	
(8)	[Free-RC ***Chi arriva per primo***] *vince la gara* "Who arrives first wins the competition"	NOM	NOM	Matching	✓
(9)	*Maria bacia* [Free-RC ***chi vince la gara***] "Maria kisses who wins the competition"	ACC	NOM	Mismatch	✓
(10)	[Free-RC ***chi Maria ha baciato***] *vince la gara* "Who Mary kissed wins the competition"	NOM	ACC	Mismatch	✓

2. The data: Modern Italian free RCs

- If there is no synchretism between the two Cases, the mismatch is resolved in favor of the external Case

		Matrix	RC	Config.	
(11)	*Ho parlato* ***con chi ha fatto questo*** "I talked with whom did this"	OBL	NOM	Mismatch	✓
(12)	**Ho incontrato* ***con chi hai parlato***	ACC	OBL	Mismatch	*

- Modern Italian is usually a Case-matching language
- Case mismatch in Modern Italian is resolved in favor of the external Case if and only if the external Case contains the internal one according to the Case containment hierarchy

2. The data: Modern Italian free RCs

- When the external Case does not contain the internal one but it is the internal Case that contains the external one, free RCs cannot be licensed (13) and Modern Italian has to resort to light-headed RCs as in (14).

		Matrix	RC	Config.	
(13)	**Ho incontrato* [$_{\text{Free-RC}}$ ***chi hai parlato***] "lit. I met who you spoke"	ACC	OBL	Mismatch	*

(14) *Ho incontrato* [$_{\text{Light-headed-RC}}$ ***la persona con cui*** *hai parlato*]
"I met the person with whom you spoke."

2. The data: Old Italian free RCs

- The paradigm of the wh- pronoun in Modern Italian free RCs is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. Paradigm of wh-pronouns in Old Italian free RCs

Case	**Animacy**	
	+	-
NOMINATIVE	*Chi*	*Che*
ACCUSATIVE	*cui*	*che*
OBLIQUE	*(P) cui*	*P che*

2. The data: Old Italian free RCs

- OVI database via Gattoweb and we searched for the occurrences of *che, chi, cui* when tagged for the grammatical category "relative pronoun" (*rel.*).
- The search was conducted on the Old Florentine sub-corpus obtained selecting the specific area as Florentine (*fior.*, from 1211 to 1400 a.C.).
- The extracted occurrences were manually coded according to : (a) type of RC, (b) Case assigned in the RC, (c) Case assigned in the matrix clause.

Table 4. Overview of Case resolution configurations in Old Italian free RCs

Configurations	**Chi (N=348)**	**Cui (N=55)**	**Che (N=89)**
Matching	217 62.4%	33 60%	49 55%
Mismatch > Internal Case	127 36.5%	18 32.7%	32 36%
Mismatch > External Case	4 1.1%	4 7.2%	8 9%

2. The data: Old Italian free RCs

- Old Italian is usually a Case-matching language
- Mismatch configurations are resolved in favor of the internal Case and in a small portion in favor of the external Case

2. The data: Old Italian free RCs

- Case mismatch in Old Italian is resolved in favor of the internal Case if the internal Case contains the external one according to the Case containment hierarchy, (cf. ex. (16))
- Case mismatch in Old Italian is resolved in favor of the external Case if the external Case contains the internal one as in (17)

Case Mismatch > Internal Case

(16) [$_{\text{Free-RC}}$ ***cui*** *l'ira dà di piglio*], *perde senno e consiglio*.

to.whom anger gives of grab looses sense and judgement

"Who is taken by anger looses good sense and judgement."

(Brunetto Latini, Tesoretto, v. 2681 - pag. 268, l. 16)

Case Mismatch > External Case

(17) *Chi darae le sue terre* [$_{\text{Free-RC}}$ ***a cui*** *egli non conosce*]?

"Who will give his lands to those who he does not know?"

(Ceffi, Epistole eroiche, pag. 63, l.16)

2. Comparison between Old and Modern Italian

Table 5. Case resolution configurations in Old and Modern Italian

	Old Italian	Modern Italian
Matching	✓	✓
Mismatch > External Case	✓	✓
Mismatch > Internal Case	✓	*

(18)*Donna, invano labora* [$_{\text{Free-RC}}$ ***in cui*** *non è dirittura*]
Madam in vain works in whom not is rectitude
"Oh madam, the person in whom there is no rectitude works in vain"
(Monte Andrea, Rime, vv.25-26)

(19)**Ho incontrato* [$_{\text{Free-RC}}$ ***con chi*** *hai parlato*]
"lit. I met with whom you spoke" Modern Italian

→ A change occurred from Old to Modern Italian in the mismatch configuration where the internal Case contains the external one.

3. Our proposal

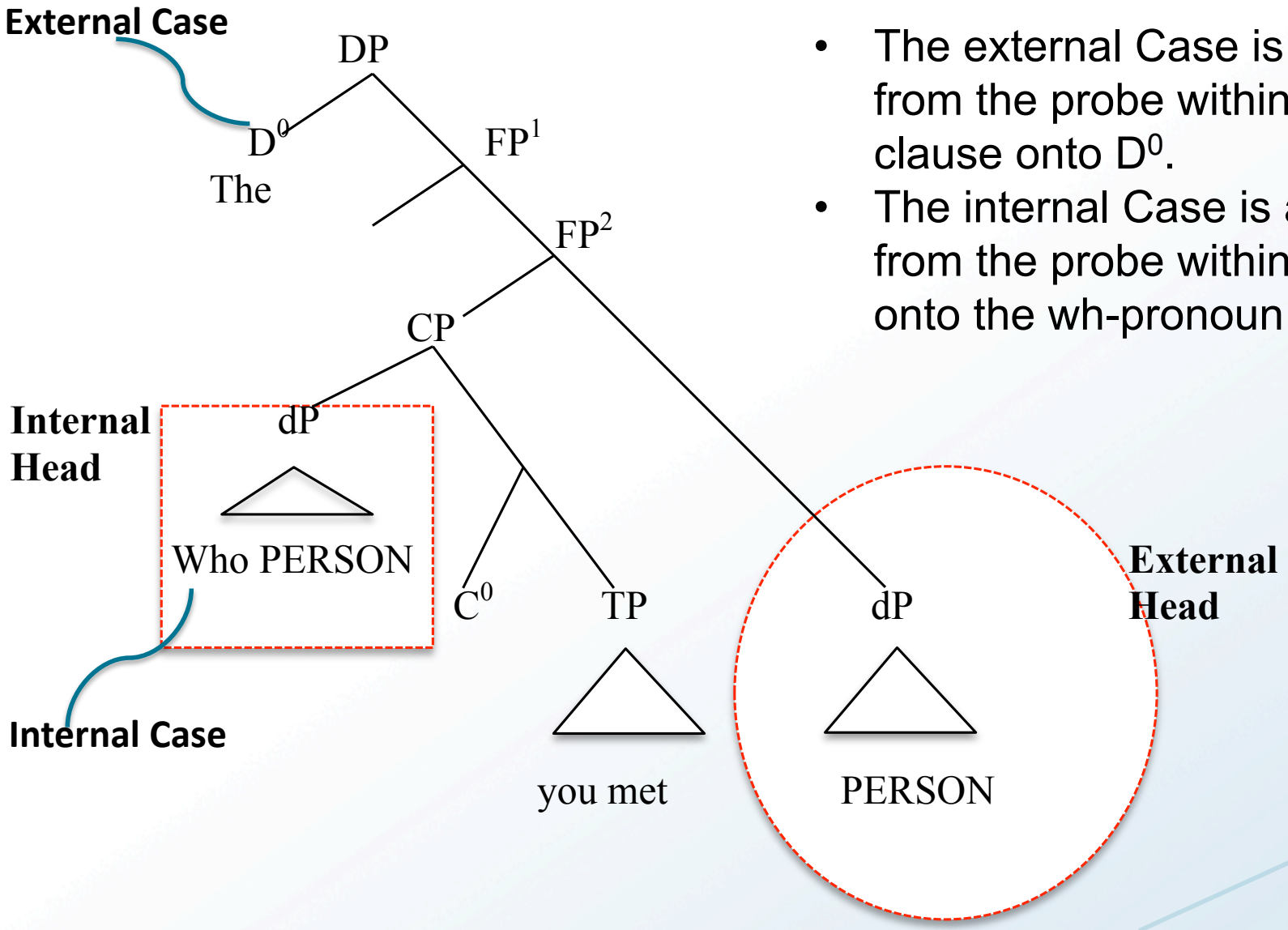
- Assuming that Case containment as in (4), repeated here as (20) applies under **c-command** since it is an instance of the Agree operation (cf. Caha 2009, Cinque 2016, a.o.): the features of the cases to the left are contained in the features of the cases to the right of the scale.

(20) NOMINATIVE > ACCUSATIVE / ERGATIVE > GENITIVE > DATIVE > LOCATIVE > ABLATIVE / INSTRUMENTAL > OTHER

- The probe and the goal stand in an inclusion configuration, such that the probe can contain more features than the goal

- Agree always apply under c-command → Downward Agree

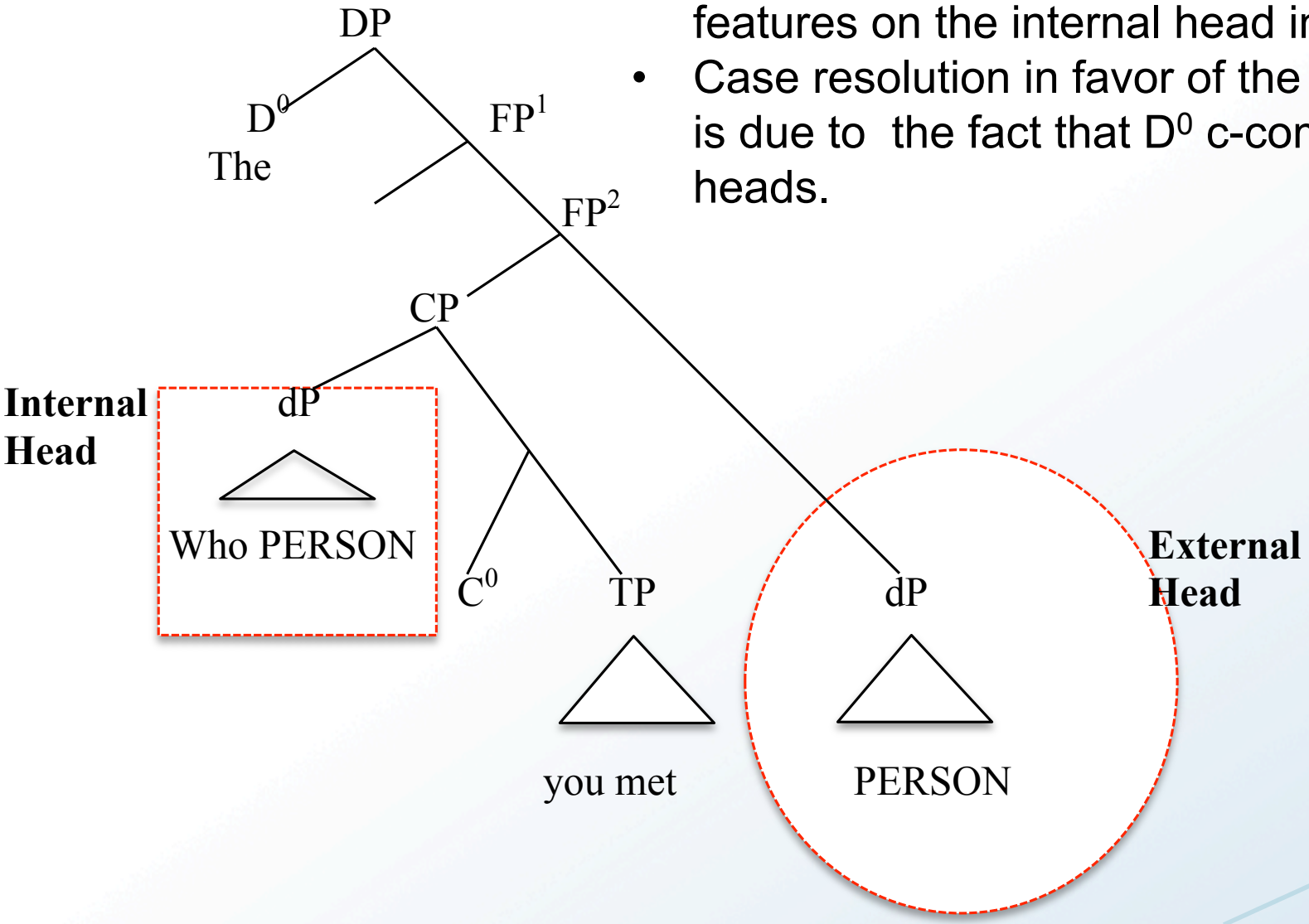
3. Our proposal



- The external Case is assigned from the probe within the matrix clause onto D^0.
- The internal Case is assigned from the probe within the RC onto the wh-pronoun.

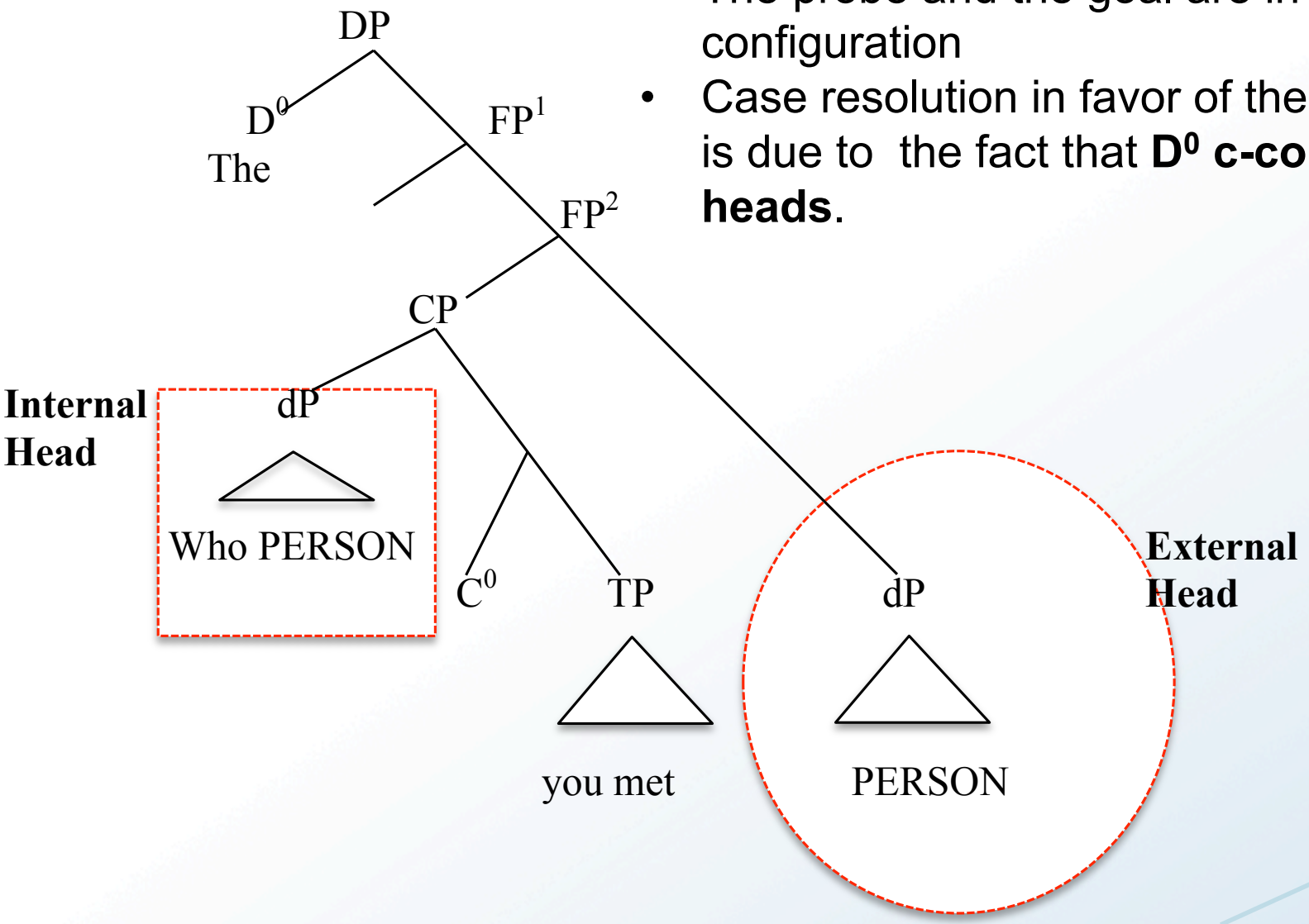
3. Our proposal: Matching Languages

- The features on D^0 must be identical to the features on the internal head in terms of Case
- Case resolution in favor of the external head is due to the fact that D^0 c-commands both heads.



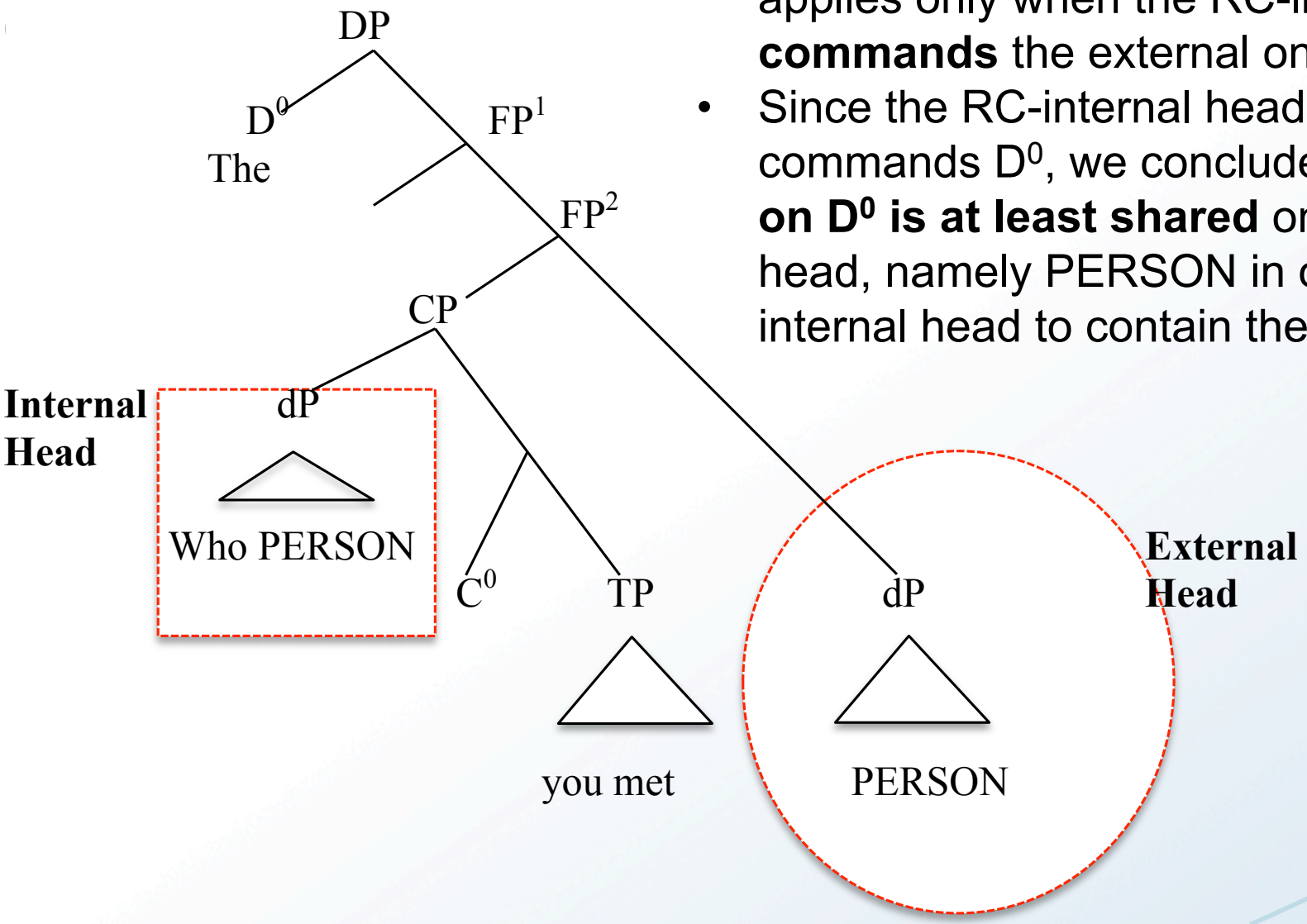
3. Our proposal: Mismatch Languages > External Case

- The probe and the goal are in an inclusion configuration
- Case resolution in favor of the external head is due to the fact that **D^0 c-commands both heads**.



3. Our proposal: Mismatch Languages > Internal Case

- Case resolution in favor of the internal head applies only when the RC-internal head **c-commands** the external one
- Since the RC-internal head never c-commands D^0, we conclude that the **Case on D^0 is at least shared** onto the external head, namely PERSON in order for the internal head to contain the external Case.



3. Our proposal

- In Old Italian D^0 shares its Case feature with PERSON, thus allowing for internal Case resolution: the internal head c-commands the external head

- On the contrary in Modern Italian this option is not viable: since in Modern Italian D^0 and the external head PERSON never share Case, the internal head will never c-command the Case of the external one; the Case feature remains on the higher D°, which will always c-command the internal head

- Framing Chomsky's proposal in terms of Ouali's (2008) operations KEEP, SHARE, and DONATE, we argue that:

  (a) languages can resolve mismatch configurations in favor of the internal Case if and only if there is a SHARE or DONATE operation between D^0 and d(P) which allows the internal head to c-command at least one instance of the external Case feature;

  (b) languages can resolve mismatch configurations in favor of the external Case only if there is a KEEP on D^0 operation

3. Our proposal

- In Old Italian there was an operation of (at least) SHARE between the phase head D^0 and its complement d(P)

- Modern Italian only has KEEP, such that D^0 retains all its features (rephrasing Longobardi's (1994) proposal of Modern Italian having a strong D^0).

- Italian underwent a diachronic change:

(21) *Diachronic Change*

Old Italian		Modern Italian
Share/Donate D^0 and N(P)	>	Keep on D^0

4. Conclusion

- We investigated the syntax of free RCs from Old to Modern Italian, focusing on the phenomenon of Case Resolution in configurations where the external Case does not match the internal one.

- We showed that whereas Modern Italian allows mismatch configurations resolved in favor of the external Case, in Old Italian resolution in favor of the Internal Case was a grammatical option.

- The cross-linguistic variation in terms of Case resolution in free RCs is determined by Agree and transfer between the phase head, D^0, and its complement, d(P), available to a given language (Chomsky 2007, 2008).

- We argued that languages can resolve mismatch configurations in favor of the internal Case if and only if there is a SHARE or DONATE operation between D^0 and d(P) in the sense of Ouali (2008).

4. Conclusion

- We demonstrated that the Case containment hierarchy can only be explained if:
  - Agree proceeds downward through c-command
  - We admit the possibility of an inclusion relation of the features of the probe and the goal

- The Agree relation exhibited in free RCs between a probe and a goal shows that the Probe does not maximize agree with the Goal that has the highest number of matching features, as proposed by Chomsky (2001)

- On the contrary, we showed that:
  - The probe is either identical in terms of feature to the goal → Matching
  - The probe can contain more features than the goal → Mismatch

THANK YOU!