

Non-*wh* relatives in English and Kurdish: Constraints on grammar and use

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Introduction

Introduction

- Non-*wh* relatives in English (Germanic): bare or *that* relatives
- Sōrānī Kurdish (Iranian): analogous two types of relatives
- Grammatical restrictions but also restrictions on regional variety, register, ...
- Today: focus on the variation and the modelling of social meaning in HPSG

Overview

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Kurdish non-*wh* relatives
- 3 English non-*wh* relatives
- 4 Previous HPSG approaches to social meaning
- 5 Social meaning as implicature
- 6 Application to non-*wh* relatives
- 7 Conclusion

Kurdish non-*wh* relatives

Map of the area



Sōrānī Kurdish relative clauses

- (1) a. aw wišaya(y) (ka) damgiryenet
that.DEM word.3SG.DEM.(EZ) RLTVZ IPFV.1SG.cry.PRS.3SG
'the word that makes me cry'
- b. Ali kitēbakay (ka) Rezān nūsīwyatī dayxwenetawa
Ali book.DEF.EZ RLTVZ Rezān wrote.3SG read.3SG
'Ali read the book (that) Rezān wrote.'

- *Ka* is not a pronoun, it is a relativizer. It does not show number and person marking and it is syntactically restricted to the initial position (Fattah, 1997).
- *Ka* is obligatory in extraposed relatives and in non-restrictive relatives.

(2) Ānnā, *(ka) kič=ī min=a, lera=ya
Anna (that) daughter=3SG I=is here=is
'Anna, who is my daughter, is here.'

- Sōrānī relatives behaves very similarly to English bare vs. *that* relatives (Hassan, 2021).

Distribution of bare vs. *ka* relatives 1

- Consultants: Mukri (40) and Silemanī (20)
- Format: Informal interview; explicit discussion of spontaneously produced restrictive relative clause
- All consultants: *ka* relatives ok.
- Question: grammaticality of the bare form?

bare?	formal		colloquial	
	Mukri (<i>N</i> = 40)	Silemanī (<i>N</i> = 20)	Mukri (<i>N</i> = 40)	Silemanī (<i>N</i> = 20)
✓	3 (7.5%)	0 (0%)	39 (97.5%)	5 (25%)
✗	37 (92.5%)	20 (100%)	1 (2.5%)	15 (75%)

Distribution of bare vs. *ka* relatives 2

- Consultants: Mukri (10) and Silemanī (10)
- Format: Explicit discussion of the sentences collected in the first round.
- All consultants: *ka* relatives ok.
- Question: acceptability of the bare form?

bare?	formal		colloquial	
	Mukri (<i>N</i> = 10)	Silemanī (<i>N</i> = 10)	Mukri (<i>N</i> = 10)	Silemanī (<i>N</i> = 10)
✓	3 (30%)	0 (0%)	5 (50%)	3 (30%)
✗	7 (70%)	10 (100%)	5 (50%)	7 (70%)

Summary

- Silemanî:
 - ▶ Strong, prescriptive judgements
 - ▶ *Ka* relatives considered the preferred form
 - ▶ Bare relatives signal colloquial use and are banned from use in formal contexts.
- Mukri:
 - ▶ Less prescriptive influence on judgments, less categorical judgements
 - ▶ *Ka* relatives generally good
 - ▶ Bare relatives signal colloquial use.

English non-*wh* relatives

Bare and *that* relatives

- Form: Bare or *that* relatives
- In many cases, free variation. But:
- Grammar: Only *that* relatives in extraposed position
- Use: Finegan & Biber (1994): less explicit form (i.e. bare rel.) more likely in informal contexts; more explicit form (i.e. *that*) more likely in formal contexts.

Bare local subject relatives

- Often assumed: Bare relatives not possible with local relativized subject. (Pollard & Sag, 1994)

(3) I repaired the bike [that/* \emptyset had a flat tire]

- Huddleston & Pullum (2002, 1055)

(4) (between informal and non-standard)

a. ? It was my father [___]did most of the talking].

b. ? There is someone at the door [___ wants to talk to you].

(5) (non-standard)

! Anyone [___ wants this] can have it.

- Arnold & Godard (2021, 632): Permissible in “some non-standard varieties”

⇒ Bare local subject relatives not completely excluded, but strongly marked as non-standard

Non-restrictive relatives

- Not possible with non-*wh* relatives (Arnold, 2007)
- Quirk et al. (1972, 871): Sometimes ok with *that* relatives

(6) I looked at Mary's sad face, [that I had once so passionately admired].

- Huddleston & Pullum (2002, 1052): “some speakers do allow supplementary *that* relatives”
- Hassan (2021): Additional examples from COCA

(7) The big topic this week was this video that Mitt Romney uploaded on YouTube, that, according to reliable sources, had been filmed during a private party ...(COCA)

Ratings for “naturalness”: Use of *that* or *which* in (7):

that: natural: 13 undecided: 4 unnatural: 3

which: natural: 16 undecided: 4 unnatural: 0

⇒ Non-restrictive *that* relatives exist, but are banned prescriptively.

Kurdish and English

- Both languages: bare and *ka/that* relatives.
 - ▶ Relativized element can be of any grammatical function.
 - ▶ Bare relatives excluded in extraposition and with non-restrictive interpretation
 - ▶ Bare relatives: less explicit variant, therefore less formal
- Kurdish: Regional variation, coupled with influence of prescriptive grammar
- English: Bare local subject relatives strong marker of non-standard; non-restrictive *that* relatives prescriptively excluded.

⇒ Need for modelling of social meaning to capture the empirical patterns.

Previous HPSG approaches to social meaning

Basic architecture and challenges

Pollard & Sag (1994) CONTEXT:

- BACKGROUND: set-valued, contains backgrounded propositions
- Green (1994): Speaker attitude: mutual belief of speaker and addressee that it is normally believed within the speech community that an expression has a certain meaning (including social meaning)
- Only lexical elements introduce background elements
- Simple, global percolation (Principle of Contextual Consistency)
- Used for all types of backgrounded, projective meaning – presuppositions, conventional implicatures

Global percolation

- Paolillo (2000): diglossia in Sinhala (Indo-Aryan, Sri Lanka) as register variation
 - Utterance-percolation too much and too little
 - Register-consistency is a discourse-level phenomenon, not restricted to a single sentence.
 - Register-consistency not required if a sentence contains quotes, embedded speech etc.
- ⇒ How can this seemingly contradictory behavior be modelled?

Lexical/constructional introduction of attitudes

- Word-level constraints:

Green (1994): Hope that all relevant information can be introduced at the word level. But:

- ▶ Hassan (2021) single lexical entry for relative *ka/that*, independent of restrictive/non-restrictive relative.
- ▶ Social meaning of non-restrictive *that* relatives not triggered lexically but constructionally

- Constructional constraints:

Müller et al. (2022): Constructions can change the register value – but there can only be one register-sensitive constraint on any given structure. But:

- ▶ Constraint 1: Bare forms signal non-explicitness
- ▶ Constraint 2: Bare local subject relatives are highly non-standard.

⇒ More flexible mechanism to introduce social meaning needed

What information does social meaning express?

- Wilcock (1999): Single REGISTER value for entire utterance
 - Eckert (2012, 2019): Individual linguistic forms are indexical of properties of the speaker and/or the speech situation
⇒ Different forms can point to different properties within the same utterance.
 - Paolillo (2000):
Form signals stylistic aspect (edited, interactive, public, ...)
⇒ included in the grammar
Register follows from combination of stylistic aspects: colloquial register contains markers for interactive, but not edited and public.
⇒ inferrable from the grammatical style markers
- ⇒ Paolillo's (2000) architecture, but: in terms of standard pragmatic inferences

Social meaning as implicature

Sketch of the proposal

- Linguistic expressions can trigger social meaning inferences of the form proposed in Green (1994):
“X and Y mutually believe that community Z normally believes that expression U signals ϕ .”
- These inferences are conventional implicatures.
- Evaluation for adequacy/consistency of expressed social meanings is a *particularized conversational implicature*.

Projective properties of social meaning

Social meaning inferences are *conventional implicatures* (Grice, 1975; Potts, 2005)

- Projects over negation, believe contexts, but not necessarily over predicates of saying/quotes, ...
 - (8) *baba* 'bottle', child-directed speech, odd (“\$”) in inter-adult speech.
 - a. \$ Kim should (not) buy a new *baba*.
 - b. \$ Alex believes that Kim should buy a new *baba*.
 - c. Kim should buy a new “*baba*”.
- Speaker-oriented side message
- Conventionally attached to a linguistic expression.

Encoding of projective meaning

- Distinct attributes for different types of projective meaning (Sailer & Am-David, 2016; Rizea & Sailer, 2020)

$$\left[\text{CTXT} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRESUP} \dots \\ \text{CI} \quad \left\{ \dots \right\} \\ \text{CX-CI} \quad \left\{ \dots \right\} \end{array} \right] \right]$$

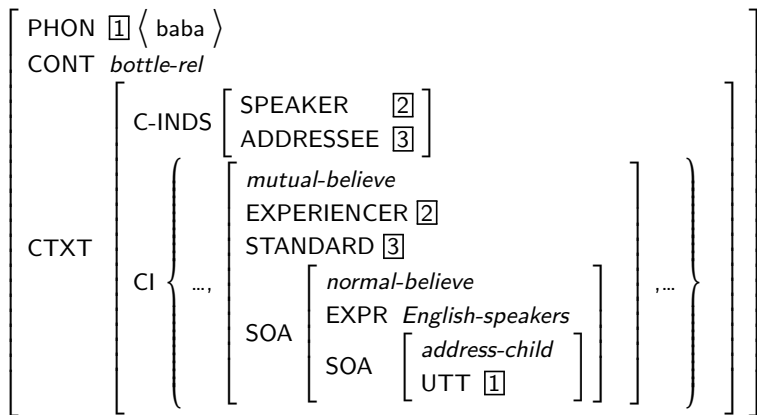
- Percolation:

(9) For each phrase:

The CI value of the phrase is the union of the CI values of the daughters and the phrase's CX-CI value, minus those that are integrated into the phrase's semantic representation.

- CI integration only possible in the scope of speech operators (unembedded utterances, complements of speech predicates, quotes)
- Paolillo's (2000) concern of embedded speech is taken care of by standard mechanism for conventional implicatures.

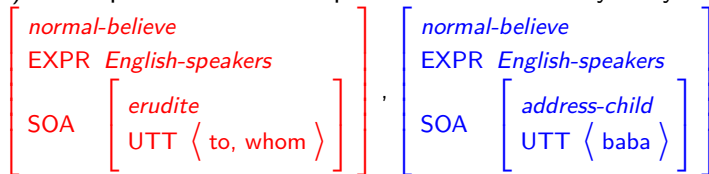
Example: *baba* 'bottle' – child directed speech



By using the word *baba* in the meaning of 'bottle', speaker and addressee mutually believe that the English speech community normally believes that the word is used while talking to a child.

Discourse assessment of social meaning

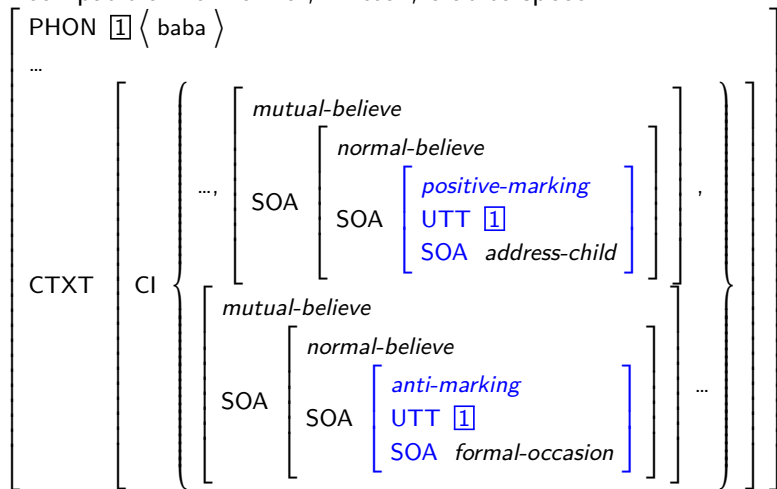
(10) The person **to whom** I passed the **baba** nearly dehydrated.



- Particularized conversational implicature (Grice, 1975):
 - ▶ Register mixing in conflict with the Maxim of Manner
 - ▶ Maxim can be flouted (irony, in-group talk, ...)
 - ▶ If no fitting particularized conversational implicature can be calculated and the utterance is infelicitous.
- Discourse effect: Cooperative speakers are expected to utter sentences that are in line with the properties of dialogue participants and situation.

Additional layer: Marking and anti-marking

- Linguistic expressions can not only indicate adequacy for a particular social meaning aspect but also incompatibility.
- Example: Elements of child-directed speech are also marked as incompatible with formal, written, erudite speech.



Application to non-*wh* relatives

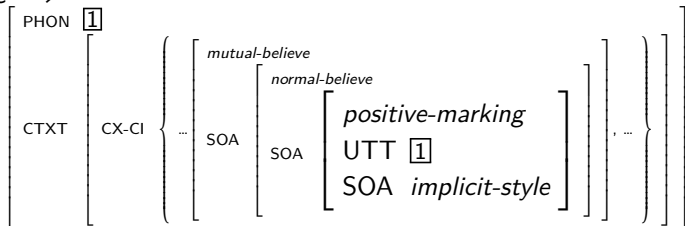
Remark on the syntactic analysis

- No commitment to a particular syntactic analysis here – but see appendix, based on Hassan (2021).
- Constraints of the form:
“description of a syntactic/semantic constellation” ⇒
“required social meaning CIs”

Bare and *ka/that* relatives: Basic social meaning difference

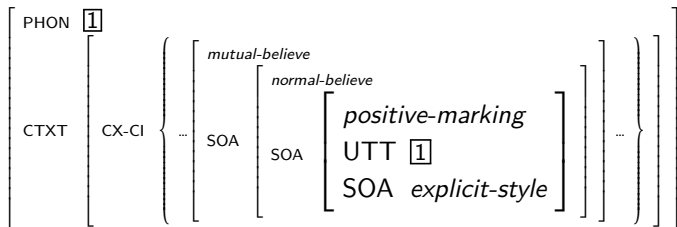
- Bare relatives are non-explicit structures:

“bare relative” ⇒



- *ka/that* relatives are explicit structures:

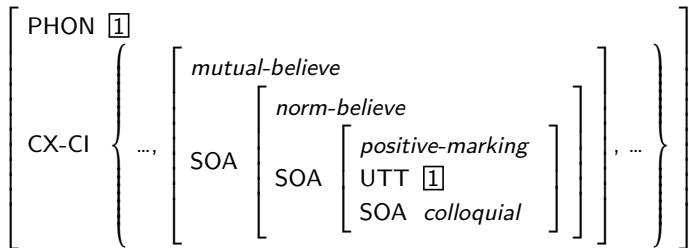
“*ka/that* relative” ⇒



Social meaning of bare relatives in Mukri

Mukri: bare relatives are marked as colloquial

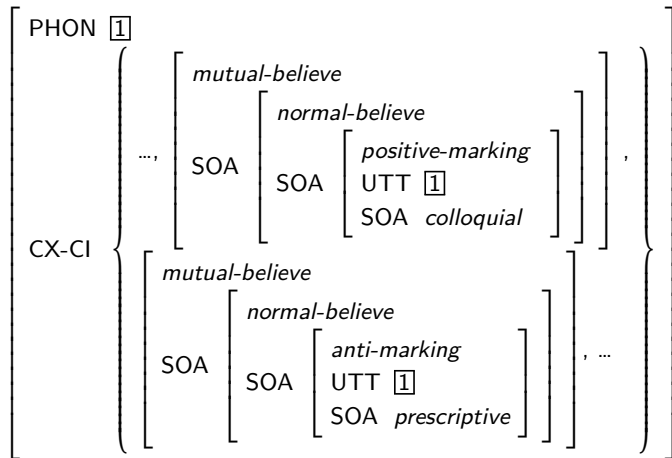
“Bare relative” \Rightarrow



Social meaning of bare relatives in Silemanī

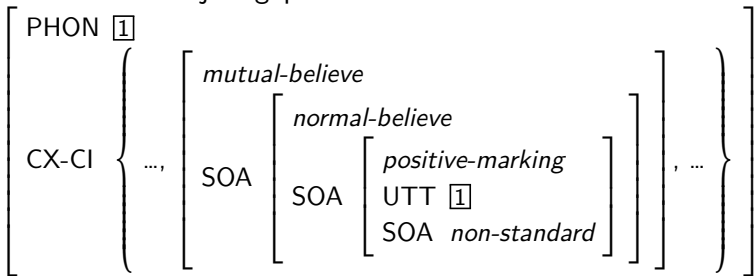
Silemanī: bare relatives are marked as colloquial and as prescriptively excluded.

“Bare relative” ⇒



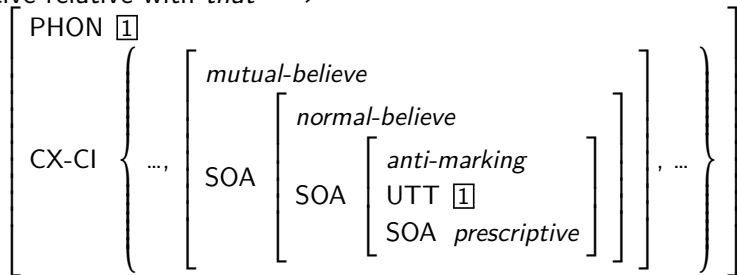
Social meaning of bare local subject relatives as non-standard (English)

“bare relative with local subject gap” ⇒



Anti-marking constraint on non-restrictive *that* relatives in prescriptive speech (English)

“Non-restrictive relative with *that*” ⇒



Conclusion

Summary

- Relative clauses as rich empirical domain for socially conditioned constraints on structures
- Inclusive modelling of grammatical structure
- Excluding some structures in some situations by social meaning constraints
- Positive marking and anti-marking
- Social meaning side messages as conventional implicatures
- Overall interpretation of social meaning as particularized conversational implicature

Further discussion

- Relation to the proposal in Müller et al. (2022)?
- Applicability to other phenomena
- Technical aspects: Restricting the CI/CX-CI sets to only include elements triggered by constraints.

Thank you!

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Appendix

General remarks

- Analysis is a variant of Hassan (2021)
- Analogous structure for Sōrānī Kurdish and English
- Relativizer as functional head
- No difference between subject and complement gap (Levine & Hukari, 2006)

Lexical entry of the relativizer

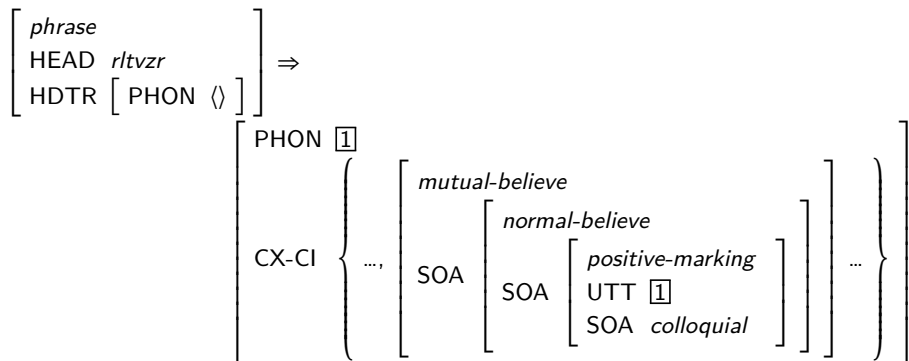
<i>word</i>	
PHON	$\langle (ka/that) \rangle$
HEAD	$\left[\begin{array}{l} rltvzr \\ MOD [INDEX \boxed{1}] \end{array} \right]$
SUBJ	$\langle \rangle$
COMPS	$\langle S [SLASH \{ \boxed{2} [INDEX \boxed{1}] \}] \rangle$
CONT	$\left[INDEX \boxed{1} \right]$
TO-BIND	$\left[SLASH \{ \boxed{2} \} \right]$
REL	$\{ \}$

and (*intersective-sem or global-scope-sem*)

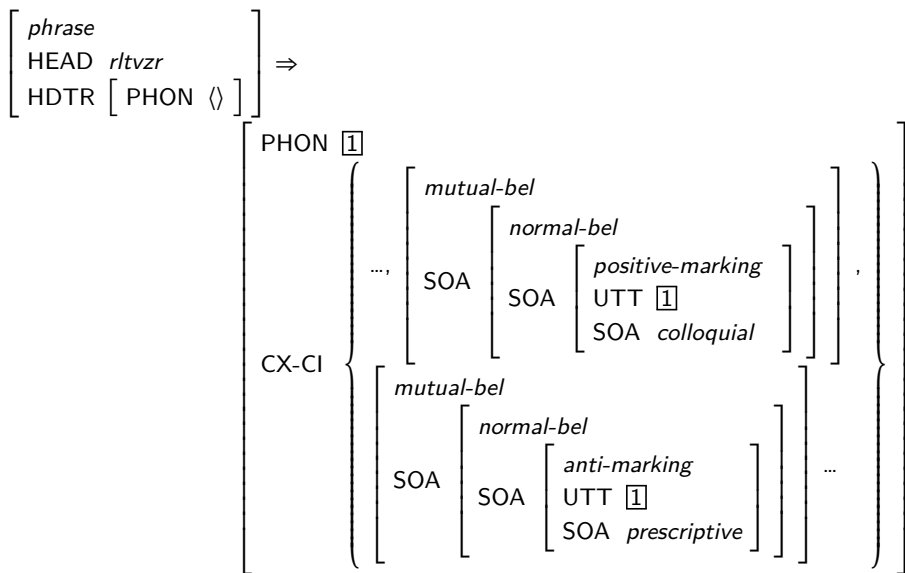
Ban on bare non-restrictive relatives (Sōrānī and English)

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{phrase and global-scope-sem} \\ \text{HEAD } rltvzr \\ \text{SUBJ } \langle \rangle \end{array} \right] \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PHON } \boxed{1} \\ \text{NDTR } \left[\text{PHON } \boxed{2} \right] \end{array} \right] \text{ and } \boxed{1} \neq \boxed{2}$$

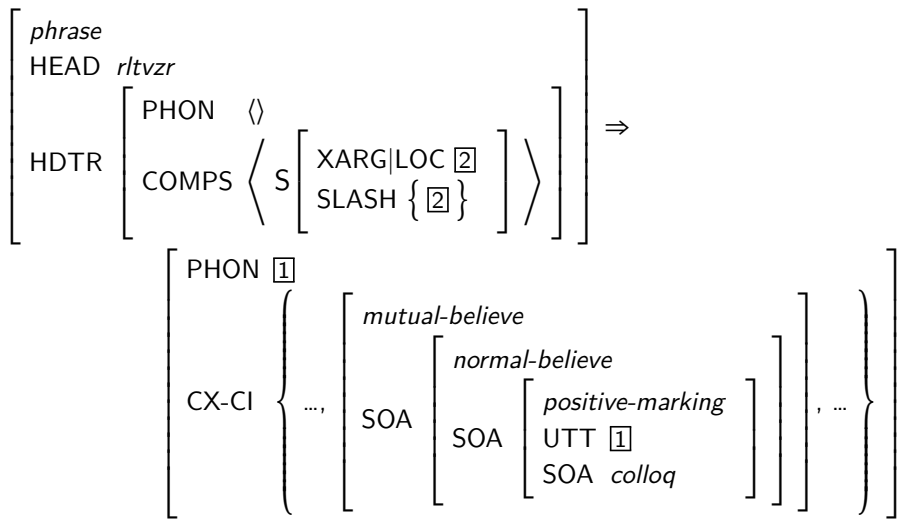
Constraint on bare relatives in Mukri Kurdish



Constraint on bare relatives in Silemanī Kurdish



Social meaning constraint on bare local subject relatives (English)



Anti-marking constraint on non-restrictive *that* relatives in prescriptive register style (English)

