

Participle Preposing in Bulgarian

Most Slavic languages show the following alternation concerning the position of the participle:

- (1) a) Toj e otgovoril na vaprosa im (Bulgarian, Caink 1999)
he be_{3SG} answer_{PASTPART} to question their
b) Otvoril e na vaprosa im
answer_{PASTPART} be_{3SG} to question their
“He answered their question”

Since Lema & Rivero (1989), the construction has been dubbed Long Head Movement (LHM), and analysed as raising of the non-finite participle from V to C. However, by skipping the intervening auxiliary in I it violates Head Movement Constraint, so it should be illicit. LHM has provoked a series of debates, which gave syntactic (Lema & Rivero 1989, Bošković 1997, and many others), prosodic (Embick & Izvorski 1995) or phonological accounts (Caink 1999) of the movement. For example, Rivero has argued that LHM parallels V2 constructions in Germanic and that the participle must move in order to provide a host for an auxiliary clitic. Conversely, Bošković has claimed that the participle cannot raise as high as to C, since crosslinguistically only finite verbs may target this position, and instead proposed that the participle is head-adjoined to the auxiliary. Still, his analysis involves a theoretically unwelcome idea of rightward adjunction.

In my presentation I will discuss an alternative analysis of participle fronting in Bulgarian and demonstrate that most of the previous accounts leave certain important empirical facts unnoticed. For example, it seems that the clitic nature of the auxiliary cannot be the trigger of the movement. As Krapova (1999) shows, there are instances where the auxiliary could be supported by a preceding adverbial or a wh-word, but nevertheless, the auxiliaries are unacceptable in this position:

- (2) ?*Kakvo e Ivan pročel ?
what be_{PRES3SG} Ivan read_{PAST.PART.MASC.SG.}
“What has Ivan read?”

Furthermore, as demonstrated by Embick and Izvorski (1995), Participle-Auxiliary patterns can be found in embedded contexts, which means that the participle does not target SpecCP:

- (3) Rasbrah če pročel beše knjigata.
understood that read_{PASTPART} be_{PAST3SG} book-the
“I understood you had read the book.”

I would also like to point to certain properties of the alternations that so far have not received enough attention. First of all, recall that in main clauses the participle-auxiliary complexes may not be preceded by any lexical material (c.f.(1)), which suggests that the participle moves to the right-most edge of the main clause. This observation cannot be predicted by an adjunction or a head movement analysis. Furthermore, notice that no phrasal elements may ever split the participle-auxiliary sequence, but an intervention of head elements, such as the question clitic *li*, is permitted. This implies that LHM in fact involves XP-movement, partly on a par with the widely-discussed participle movement to Spec, CP in Germanic (e.g. Den Besten & Webelhuth 1987).

However, there are important differences, as in Bulgarian participle preposing is possible in embedded clauses, as shown in (3). Moreover, in LHM contexts overt subjects are disallowed in any position in the clause:

- (4) (*Petur) pročel e (*Petur) knjigata (*Petur)
 Peter read_{PASTPART} be_{3SG} Peter book-the Peter
 “(Peter) read the book.”

Therefore, I will show that the participle XP-moves to the subject position, and that the movement is related to the stylistic fronting in Icelandic or the locative inversion (c.f. Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 1998, Holmberg 2000). I will also demonstrate that on this approach it is possible to explain the theoretically unexpected long distance agreement between the subject and the participle. Finally, I will investigate whether EPP can be the trigger for the movement.

References:

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