

A pseudocleft analysis of two types of interrogatives in Patzicía Kaqchikel

This research presents data from fieldwork on Patzicía Kaqchikel arguing that at least some ‘which’ interrogatives and some possessor interrogatives should be analyzed as pseudoclefts. Wh-pseudoclefts are constructions that can contain a wh-word, a copula and a relative clause (Potsdam and Polinsky, 2011; Van Luven, 2018). I suggest that certain interrogatives exhibit exactly these properties and thus should be analyzed as pseudoclefts.

Examples (1)-(3) from ‘which’ interrogatives and a type of possessor interrogative in Patzicía Kaqchikel give the empirical data (with the pre-analysis data after the translation), followed by a wh-pseudocleft structure schema in (4).

- (1) Ø chike [_{DP}ri mes [_{RC}ri Ø ko'ol]]?
3SG.COP which DET cat REL 3SG.COP small
'Which is the cat that is small?' Chike ri mes ri ko'ol?
- (2) E chike [_{DP}ri kar [_{RC}ri e ko'ol-oq]]?
3PL.COP which DET fish REL 3PL.COP small-SUF
'Which are the fish that are small?' Echike ri kar ri eko'oloq?
- (3) Achoj ichin Ø [_{DP}ri wuj [_{RC}ri x-a-log']]?
who of 3SG.COP DET book REL COM-A2SG-buy
'Whose book did you buy?' Achoj ichin ri wuj ri xaloq?
- (4) WH-WORD COP [_{DP} D Noun [_{CP} REL.CL.]] (Potsdam & Polinsky, 2011; Den Dikken, 2006)

Comparing (4) to (1)-(3) shows striking parallels (though the order of elements may differ). All three examples contain a DP with a relative clause (note the relative marker and determiner are homophonous (e.g. Erlewine, 2016)). As far as a copula, the 3SG singular copula in Kaqchikel is null. However, the 3PL copula can be overt. Example (2) contains the 3PL copula. This can occur before predicates in statives (García Matzar and Rodríguez Guaján, 1997: 289). I suggest this is the correct analysis for (2), with the wh-word functioning as a predicate. I follow GM/RG (1997) and mark the null copula before the wh-word in (1) as well for consistency. Example (3) is a possessor question that I also argue is a pseudocleft. For one, it also includes a relative clause. Furthermore, in Kaqchikel, directionals are noted to occur after predicates (GM & RG, 1997: 292). Example (5) shows the morpheme *pe*, considered a directional (Henderson and Coon, 2017; GM & RG, 1997), occurring after the wh-phrase. This suggests that the wh-phrase is functioning as a predicate in (3) and (5), which would make sense on a pseudocleft analysis.

- (5) Choj ichi pe Ø [_{DP}ri mes [_{RC}x-r-il ri a Xwan]]?
who of DIR 3SG.COP DET cat COM-A3SG-find DET CL Juan
'Whose cat did Juan find?' Choj ichi pe ri mes xril ri a Xwan?

Patzicía Kaqchikel has received less attention in the literature than other dialects and so this research also seeks to contribute to a better understanding of this particular dialect and to a better understanding of wh-questions in Kaqchikel in general.

References

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