PSEUDO RELATIVES IN MODERN HEBREW

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Introduction

The Pseudo Relative (PR) is an **event** denoting construction. It consist of a nominal head (of type DP or NP), followed by a complementizer and an embedded participle phrase, as shown in the following representation:

[$_{PR}$ DP\NP+ [$_{comp}$ ha + Participle Phrase]]

Despite the superficial structural resemblance to relative clauses (RC), PRs have more in common with embedded finite clauses, as they both denote properties of events rather than of individuals. Moreover, there are several significant syntactic and semantic differences between PRs and RCs (in tables no. 1 and 2, respectively)

PRs were studied before in the Romance languages (Cinque, 1992; Moulton and Grillo, in prep.) and Modern Greek (Angelopoulos, 2015), but were never noticed in Hebrew. This study aims to show that the PR construction exists also in Modern Hebrew and to suggest a structural analysis. The study also shows that Hebrew PRs share many features of the Greek and Italian ones, but also differ from them in certain respects, however, these differences are only superficial and stem from independent parametric differences between the languages, whereas the fundamental defining features of PRs in all three languages are shared among them. This finding is significant, as it means that the PR is a cross-linguistic phenomenon.
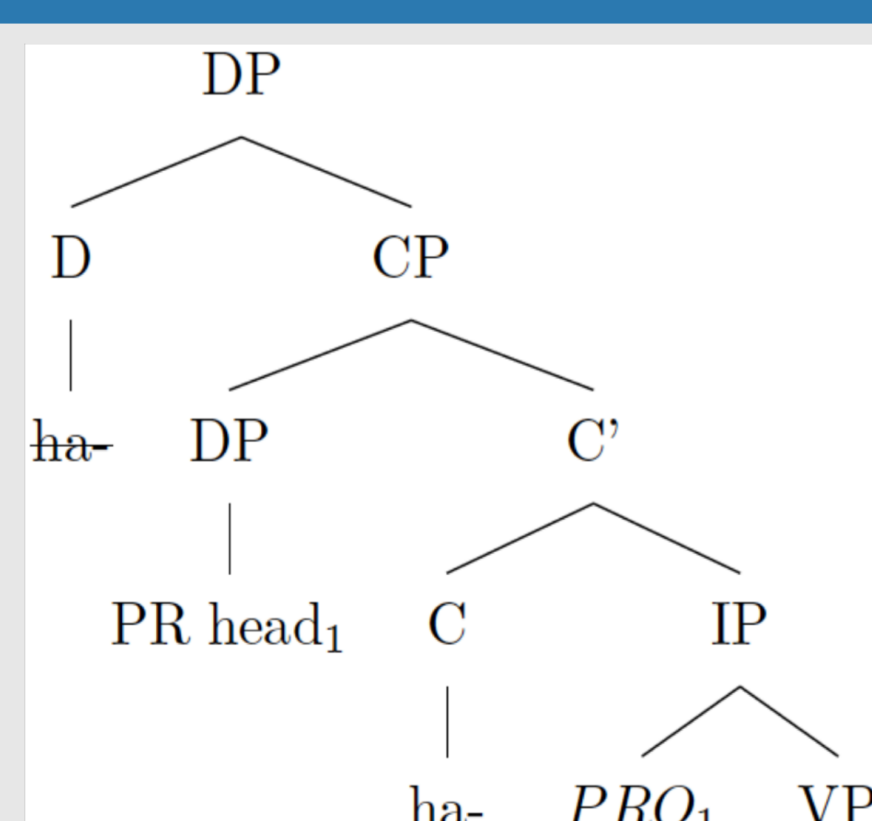
Table 1: Syntactic characteristics

	Pseudo Relatives	Relative Clauses
Possible complementizers	only *ha-*	*any comp.: ha-, aʃer* and *ʃe-*
Tense of the embedded verb	only a participle	any tense: past, present and future
Position of the relative gap	only the highest subject position	Subject, object or lower subject position
Type of distribution	DP	CP
Case assigned to the clause's head	according to the position of the entire PR: subject – NOM, object – ACC etc…	according to the position of the RC head: subject – NOM, object – ACC etc…
Matrix verb agreement	the matrix verb can agree with the PR head **or** with the PR as a whole	the matrix verb can only agree with the RC head
Possible clause heads	only proper and definite nouns	Proper noun, definite or indefinite noun, and even pronouns

Table 2: Semantic characteristics

	Pseudo Relatives	CP	Small Clause
Complementing attitude verbs (guess, deduce, claim)	Can't complement attitude verbs	Can complement attitude verbs	Can't complement attitude verbs
Epistemic perception	epistemically neutral	epistemically positive	epistemically neutral
Existence presupposition	Do generate the existence presupposition of the denoted event	Do not generate the existence presupposition of the denoted event	Do not generate the existence presupposition of the denoted event

Analysis

Like Moulton&Grillo, I argue that the PR head And the PR clause form a single constituent, with a DP distribution. This structure resembles the Italian one, suggesting a significant fundamental resemblance between Hebrew PRs and Italian PRs.

Analyzing the PR as a DP accounts for the differences between PRs and RCs and embedded finite clauses:
- The PR **event** denoting quality is explained by analyzing it as a single constituent, as opposed to RCs, which don't form one constituent.
- The D heading the PR accounts for the existence presupposition which the PR generates, as it functions as a definite expression.
- The DP is headed by the determiner *ha-*, which is only phonologically realized lower, at the C position. This is possible due to *ha-* being a clitic (Shlonsky, 1988) and its additional function as a complementizer.
- The default agreement is between the event denoted by the PR, hence 3rdSG. The agreement to the PR head is enabled when its phi-features, which cannot be realized on the silent *ha-* in D position, move onwards to the matrix verb, where they can be realized.
- The matrix verb assigns case to the D position, which contains a silent determiner. Since, as a null element, this determiner cannot bear case, it passes the case downwards to the PR head, where the case can be realized.

Data

1. lili   hitbonena   be-natan   ha-megalgel   ʔet   ha-ʃezif   be-kaf-yad-o
   Lili   watch.3.SG.PST   at-Natan   the-roll.PTCP.MS   ACC   the-plum   in-hand- his
   'Lili watched Natan rolling the plum in his hand…'
   (The Imposter Bride, Nancy Richler [Hebrew translation], 2014, p.6)

2. hi   hitbonena   be-xaver-ʃivt-a   ha-menase   ladug
   she   watch.3.SG.PST   at-friend.CS-tribe-hers   the-try.PTCP.MS   fish.INF
   'She watched her tribe member trying to fish.'
   (https://he.mypen.net/serialized-stories/6301, 12.11.2017)

Special agreement:
3. ben   ve-   dani   ha-rokdim   ʔet   ha-tango   **ze\hem**   maxaze   marhiv.
   Ben   and   Dani   the-dance.PTCP.PL   ACC   the-tango   **DEM.MS\MP**   sight   spectacular
   'Ben and Dani dancing the tango are a spectacular sight.'

Existence presupposition:
4. #be-hinaten   ʃe-dani   me-ʕolam   lo   rakad,   rina   lo   raʔata
   in-given   that-dani   since-always   NEG   dance.3.MS.PST,   Rina   neg   see.3.FS.PST
   ʔet   Dani   ha-roked   ʔet   ha-tango.
   ACC   Dani   the-dance.PTCP.MS   ACC   the-tango
   'Given that Dani has never danced, Rina hasn't seen Dani dancing the Tango.'

Conclusions

- PRs exists in (written) Modern Hebrew.
- PRs are an event denoting construction, not an individual denoting one.
- The PR analysis as a single constituent of type DP accounts for all of its syntactic and semantic characteristics.

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