

Welsh preposition stranding again: Gap and resumption in PP

Ryuichiro Hirata

Bangor University, r.hirata@bangor.ac.uk

17th Welsh Syntax Seminar, Gregynog, 6 July 2010

1. A'-dependencies in Welsh PP

1.1 Gap vs Resumptive strategy

Gap strategy:

(1) **the people_i** they gave the prize to *t_i*

Resumptive strategy:

(2) **y bobol_i** naethon nhw roi 'r gwobrau iddyn **nhw_i** (King 2003: 308)
the man do.PAST.3P they give the prizes to.3P them

A resumptive pronoun duplicates the role of a phrase which has the same reference.

A resumptive strategy is licensed by the rich agreement of preposition (Willis 2000):

If a preposition agrees with its complement, even if there is no overt pronoun, it is assumed that the resumptive strategy is involved, i.e. that there is an empty pronoun.

1.2 Literary Welsh

Prepositional relatives require the resumptive strategy.

(3) **y dyn y siarades i amdano fo/pro** ddoe
the man C.REL talk.PAST.1S I about.3SM him yesterday
'the man I talked about yesterday'

The relative marker *y(r)* may be present in literary Welsh.

A resumptive pronoun is usually absent in literary Welsh.

In *wh*-question, the entire prepositional phrase is pied-piped.

(4) **O le dach chi 'n dod yn wreiddiol?**
from.∅ where be.PRES.2P you PROG come originally
'Where do you come from originally?'

1.3 Colloquial Welsh

The use of stranded uninflected preposition is possible colloquially especially among young speakers.

(5) [%] **y dyn ∅ wnes i siarad am ddoe**
the man C.REL did. PAST.1S I talk.INF about.∅ yesterday

The relative marker is rare in colloquial Welsh, but a zero relative marker *∅S* triggers soft mutation on the following verb (Willis 2000).

(6) [%] **Lle dach chi 'n dod o yn wreiddiol?**
where be.PRES.2P you PROG come from.∅ originally

2. Gap / Resumption asymmetry

2.1 Resumption as base-generation

It has been argued that resumptive pronouns have to be regarded as base-generated rather than derived by movement (McCloskey 2006).

The resumptive strategy in Welsh generally shows no sensitivity to general constraints on movement.

A resumptive pronoun *hi* 'it (fem.)' within complex DP is acceptable in (7), but a trace within complex DP in (8) is very marginal (Borsley et al. 2007: 149).

- (7) Pa ddinas_i glywaist ti [DP 'r si [CP y byddwn ni 'n ymweld â **hi**_i]]?
 which city hear.PAST.2S you the rumour that be.FUT.1P we PROG visit with it
 'Which city did you hear the rumour that we'll visit (it)?'
- (8) ?? I ba barti_i glywaist ti [DP 'r si [CP y byddai hi 'n dod t_i]]?
 to which party hear.PAST.2S you the rumour that be.COND.3S she PROG come
 'To which party did you hear the rumour that she'd come?'

2.2 McCloskey (2002)

A relation of A'-binding determines the form of complementizers in Irish.

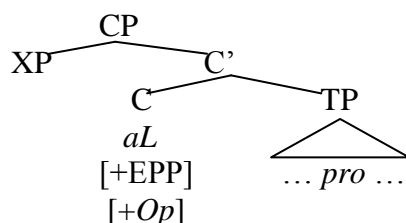
- (9) a. *aL* is associated with A'-binding of a trace
 b. *aN* is associated with A'-binding of a resumptive pronoun
 c. *go* is associated with the absence of A'-binding

- (10) a. an ghirseach a ghoid na síogaí
 the girl *aL* stole the fairies
 'the girl that the fairies stole away'
- b. an ghireach a-r ghoid na síogaí í
 the girl *aN-PAST* stole the fairies her
 'the girl that the fairies stole way'
- c. Creidim gu-r inis sé bréag.
 I-believe *go-PAST* tell he lie
 'I believe that he told a lie.'

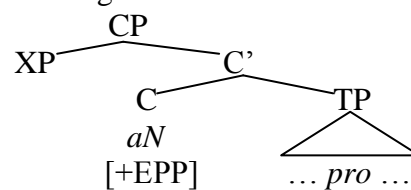
Different C head possess different properties. It is assumed that *Op*-feature appears on *wh*-operators and on null pronominal operators, and EPP-feature demands that specifier position needs to be filled.

- (11) a. C which bears both the *Op*-feature and the EPP-feature is realized as *aL*
 b. C which bears only the EPP-feature is realised as *aN*
 c. C which bears neither the *Op*-feature nor the EPP-feature is realised as *go*

- (12) a. Move



- b. Merge



Spec CP is filled by way of Move in a gap structure, whereas it is filled by way of Merge (insertion from the lexicon) in a resumptive structure.

3. Analysis

3.1 Gap as Move; Resumption as Merge

Unlike Irish, the straightforward mapping between presence or absence of movement and a form of complementizers does not work in Welsh (Willis 2000).

However, following McCloskey, I assume that both $y(r)$ and its colloquial counterpart $\emptyset S$ bear EPP-feature which simply states that the spec CP needs to be filled.

Since resumptive pronouns, inserted from the lexicon, are base-generated, the resumptive structure is mediated by way of Merge.

The gap structure which has no pronominal elements at the foot of the dependency involves *wh*-operator movement.

3.2 Superiority effect

Adger and Ramchand (2005) proposed that Celtic languages do not make use of Move operation at all, based on a semantic Agree-based analysis.

One of their arguments comes from a lack of multiple *wh*-questions in those languages.

(13) *Cò a bha a' pògadh cò? Gaelic
who C.REL be.PAST kissing who
'Who kissed who?'

(14) *Cé a rinne caidé? Irish
who C.REL do.PAST what
'Who did what?'

Nevertheless, this is not the case in Welsh (Borsley et al. 2007: 118):

(15) Pwy ydy pwy?
who be.PRES.3S who
'Who's who?'

Superiority effect is generally assumed as a property of movement (Pesetsky 1987; Aoun & Li 2003).

Superiority effects prevent a *wh*-word from being preposed, crossing over another *wh*.

(16) a. Who ___ bought what?
b. *What did who buy ___?

Superiority effects can be observed in Welsh as in English.

The subject *wh*-word must take precedence over the object *wh*-word in determining which moves to initial position.

(17) Pwy sy 'n gwneud beth?
who be.PRES.REL PROG do.INF what
'Who's doing what?'

(18) *Beth mae pwy yn ei wneud?
what be.PRES.3S who PROG 3MS do.INF
('What's who doing?)

Existence of multiple *wh*-questions supports that operation Move is involved in the Welsh gap strategy.

Moreover, Superiority effect disappears with D(iscourse)-linked *wh*-phrases (Pesetsky 2000).

- (19) a. Which person ___ bought which book?
b. Which book did which person buy ___?

Indeed, it seems that D-linked *which* phrases often involve the resumptive strategy which does not have movement properties.

- (20) a. Pa un ydy 'r lle poetha dach chi wedi bod iddo?
which one be.PRES.3S the place hottest be.PRES.2P you PERF be-INF to.3SM
'Where is the hottest place you have ever been to?'
b. 'I ba un ydy 'r lle poetha dach chi wedi bod?
to which one be.PRES.3S the place hottest be.PRES.2P you PERF be-INF

4. Relative clause / *Wh*-interrogative asymmetry

4.1 Resumption in prepositional relatives; Pied-piping in prepositional *wh*-Q

In literary Welsh, the resumptive structure signalled by rich agreement on preposition is involved in relative clauses, whereas pied-piping is required in *wh*-question.

Borsley et al. (2007) mention that the resumptive structure in *wh*-question can be found in colloquial Welsh. However, this pattern seems to be rare even in colloquial Welsh.

- (21) 'Pwy gest ti 'r llythyr 'na ganddo (fo)?
who get.PAST.2S you the letter that with.3SM
'Who did you get that letter from?'

Some assume that pied-piping is an instance of resumptive strategy using an additional notion Last Resort (see Shlonsky 1992 in Hebrew; Heck 2009; Willis 2000 and 2008 in Welsh). However, in the simplest theory it should be analysed that pied-piping is an instance of phrasal movement which involves a gap.

4.2 Comparison of pied-piping (like) behaviour between Welsh and Irish (and Gaelic)

In Irish, the resumptive structure is the neutral pattern in prepositional *wh*-questions.

- (22) Cé a raibh tú ag caint leis?
who aN were you talk PROG with-him
'Who were you talking to?'

Pied-piping like pattern is also possible, however, this possibility is limited by a number of prosodic factors (McCloskey 2002).

- (23) Cé leis a raibh tú ag caint?
who with-him aN were you talk PROG
'Who were you talking to?'

An inflected preposition whose agreement properties reflect the presence of a resumptive pronoun may appear to the right of the *wh*-element and to the left of the complementizer.

This resembles the pied-piping pattern. McCloskey however argues that the identification of (23) with pied-piping as being derived by movement is mistaken. McCloskey views this phenomenon as PP Preposing.

Similar phenomenon as PP Preposing also can be found in Scottish Gaelic. Even though he does not mention a prosodic environment, Adger (2008) shows that there is no contrast in interpretation or grammaticality between the two below:

- (24) a. Cò a bhruidhinn thu ris?
 who that talked you to._{3MS}
 ‘Who did you talk to?’
 b. Cò ris an do bhruidhinn thu?
 who to._{DEF} that talked you

In Welsh, however, it is very difficult to analyse (4) as PP Preposing.

First, Welsh shows no prosodic restriction as in Irish. Second, more crucially, Welsh differs from Irish and Gaelic in the respect that a preposition appears left of *wh*-elements in a bare form not a (default) agreement form.

Therefore, the Welsh case should be analysed as a genuine case of pied-piping which presumably involves movement.

5. Conclusion and further issues

5.1 Conclusion

- As Superiority effect is observed, a gap structure in Welsh is mediated by way of Move.
- Since base-generated pronouns are inserted from the lexicon, a resumptive structure is mediated by way of Merge.
- Colloquial Welsh seem to make more use of the Move operation.

5.2 Analysis of pied-piping

The proposed analysis still does not account for what factor exactly influences the choice between p-stranding and pied-piping in *wh*-questions where both presumably involves operation Move.

5.3 English influence?

Borsley et al. (2007: 116): P-stranding involving a gap strategy is a twentieth-century innovation resulting from English contact, modelled on p-stranding found in English.

Adger and Ramchand (2005) argue that what makes Move languages as in English different from Merge languages as in Celtic is just the difference in their lexical inventories.

Wh-elements overtly show up in relative clauses in English, but not in Celtic.

(25) illustrates availability of the *wh*-word in English, whereas the corresponding types of examples in Gaelic is completely ungrammatical in (26).

(25) the man who I saw

(26) *am fear cò a chunnaic mi Scottish Gaelic
 the man who C._{REL} saw I
 ‘the man who I saw’

In Welsh, however, it seems that *wh*-elements are available for some speakers.

(27) y ddynes i **bw**y werthodd Ieuan y ceffyl
 the woman to who sell._{PAST,3S} Ieuan the horse
 ‘the woman that Ieuan sold the horse to’

Surprisingly, some young speakers use English relative markers *who* and *which*.

(28) Dyna un peth **which** dw i ddim yn edrych ymlaen at.¹
that's one thing which be.PRES.1S I NEG PROG look forward to
'That's one thing which I am not looking forward to.'

Furthermore, the distinction between *aL* and *aN* is not observed in the speech of many younger speakers in Irish (McCloskey 2002: fn.3).

References:

- Adger, D. and G. Ramchand (2005) Merge and Move: Wh-Dependencies Revised. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36-2, 161-193.
- Adger, D. (2008) *Bare Resumptives*. Ms., Queen Mary, University of London.
- Aoun, J. and Li, Y. A. (2003) *Essays on the Representational and Derivational Nature of Grammar: The Diversity of Wh-constructions*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Borsley, R. D., M. Tallerman, and D. Willis, (2007) *The Syntax of Welsh*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heck, F. (2009) On Certain Properties of Pied-Piping. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40-1, 75-111.
- King, G. (2003) *Modern Welsh: A comprehensive grammar*. London: Routledge.
- McCloskey, J. (2002) Resumption, Successive Cyclicity, and the Locality of Operations. In *Derivation and Explanation in the Minimalist Program*, ed. by S. D. Epstein and T. D. Seeley, Oxford: Blackwell, 184-226.
- McCloskey, J. (2006) Resumption. In *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax*, Vol.4., ed. by M. Everaert and H. V. Riemsdijk, Oxford: Blackwell, 94-117.
- Pesetsky, D. (1987) Wh-in-Situ: Movement and Unselective Binding. In *The Representation of (In)definiteness*, ed. by E. J. Reuland and A.G.B ter Meulen, The MIT Press: London, 98-129.
- Pesetsky, D. (2000) *Phrasal Movement and Its Kin*. The MIT Press: London.
- Shlonsky, U. (1992) Resumptive Pronouns as a Last Resort. *Linguistic Inquiry* 23-3, 443-468.
- Willis, D. (2000) On the distribution of resumptive pronouns and wh-trace in Welsh. *Journal of Linguistics* 36, 531-573.
- Willis, D. (2008) *The limits of resumption in Welsh wh-dependencies*. Ms., University of Cambridge.

¹ I would like to thank Elwyn Hughes for reporting this example from a 24 years old male speech.