Reduced Parenthetical Clauses and the syntax-discourse interface*

Orações parentéticas reduzidas de comentário e a Interface sintaxe-discurso

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ABSTRACT

Reduced parenthetical clauses (RPCs) in European Portuguese have not been systematically studied until recently. Focusing on comment RPCs, a preliminary classification of the most common verbal predicates in this context is set up for this language, and their pragmatic values established. The distribution of comment RPCs, especially their floating status and the blocking of c-command from the host sentences, indicates that they are syntactically related to their hosts by a paratactic link, as parenthetical modifiers. As for the internal structure of the comment clause, island effects reveal that, in European Portuguese, the argument gap of the verb results from movement of a null category to an A-bar position of the parenthetical clause. Also, adverb placement shows that the verb and the subject occupy high discursive projections in the left periphery of the RPC, suggesting that the post-verbal subject is focalized in specifier of FocP. The contrasts between comment RPCs with null and overt subjects shows that in European Portuguese the mitigative value of the RPC is not exclusively drawn from the epistemic, evidential or evaluative predicates, but also relies on the post verbal use of the subject.

Keywords: Reduced Parenthetical Clauses, comment parentheticals, Subject placement

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RESUMO

As orações parentéticas reduzidas só recentemente têm sido sistematicamente estudadas em português europeu. Com foco nas parentéticas reduzidas de comentário, é estabelecida uma classificação preliminar dos predicados verbais que ocorrem nestes contextos nesta língua. A distribuição destas orações, em especial o seu estatuto flutuante e o bloqueamento de c-comando a partir da frase hospedeira, indicam que estabelecem com o seu hospedeiro uma relação paratática de modificador parentético. Quanto à estrutura interna da oração comentário, efeitos de ilha revelam que, em português europeu, o argumento omitido do verbo resulta do movimento de uma categoria nula para uma posição A-barra da oração parentética. Por seu turno, a colocação de advérbios mostra que o verbo e o sujeito ocupam projeções discursivas altas na periferia da parentética e sugerem que o sujeito pós-verbal ocorre em especificador de FocoP. Os contrastes entre parentéticas reduzidas comentário com e sem sujeitos omitidos mostram que, em português europeu, o valor pragmático mitigativo não decorre apenas dos predicados epistémicos evidenciais ou avaliativos, mas também da realização do sujeito em posição pós-verbal.

Palavras-chave: Orações parentéticas reduzidas, parentéticas de comentário, colocação do sujeito.

1. Introduction

The designation *comment clause* appears in Jackendoff (1972) applied to parenthetical clauses involving verbal predicates, such as *belief* and *though*, whose main semantic import is to express the speaker's comment on the related clause, as shown in (1) and (2) for English and European Portuguese.

(1) John is, I believe, an excellent violinist.

(2) *Este estudante leu, penso eu, todos os artigos sobre esse assunto.*
     this student read,   think   I, all the papers on that   subject
     'This student read, I think, all the papers on that subject.'

The term comment parenthetical has been extended to other kind of clauses (e.g. QUIRK *et al.* 1972, 1985; GIORGI, 2016), as, for instance, to "*as-parentheticals*" or "*-ing parenthetical clauses*" (cf. (3)), which are outside the scope of this paper.

(3)

    a. I'm a pacifist, as you know.

    b. I doubt, speaking as a layman, whether television is the right medium.

<div align="right">(QUIRK et al., 1972)</div>

Comment parentheticals like those in (1) and (2) are syntactically characterized by the omission of an argument of the verb, usually its complement, which is related to the content of the host clause. In addition, in some languages, for instance in European Portuguese, they typically exhibit subject inversion. These comment parentheticals share their structural shape with direct speech report parentheticals, illustrated in (4), also known as *quotative parenthetical clauses* (COLLINS, 1997; COLLINS; BRANIGAN, 1997):

(4)

    a. "Don't turn back!" warned Marcel   (COLLINS; BRANIGAN, 1997)

    b. *"O João leu todos os artigos sobre esse assunto"*, disse eu.   (EP)
       the John read all the   papers on that subject, said I
       'João read all the papers on that subject, I said.'

Comment and quote parentheticals presenting this configuration have also been named Parenthetical Verbs (URMSON, 1952), Reduced Parenthetical Clauses (SCHNEIDER, 2007a, 2007b) or Parenthetical Verb Clauses (KLUCK; DE VRIES, 2015). I will adopt the designation Reduced Parenthetical Clauses (henceforth, RPCs).

Comment and quote RPCs have been correlated by their structural similarity, but also by their semantic and pragmatic value (QUIRK *et al.*, 1972, 1985; ROORYCK, 2001; KLUCK; DE VRIES, 2015; GRIFFITHS, 2015). When trying to differentiate them, some authors remark that *comment RCPs* are speaker oriented (e.g. REINHART, 1983) and typically present subjects in the first person, referring to the speaker.

However, even taking these properties into account, the ambiguity between direct reporting speech RPCs and comment RPCs may arise, as in (5). Thus, Kluck and de Vries (2015, p. 105) claim that "a parenthetical verb construction is necessarily an epistemic or evidential comment if the host is not a direct quote". The examples in (6) illustrate this claim: in (6a), the parenthetical clause reports what was said by Anna in quotation marks, while the parenthetical in (6b) may be interpreted as a speaker's comment on the whole utterance, meaning according to Anna.

(5) It's late, I admitted.   (QUIRK *et al.*, 1985)

(6)

    a. "Bob is a real charmer", said Anna.

    b. Bob is a real charmer, said Anna.

<div align="right">(KLUCK; DE VRIES, 2015)</div>

In this paper, I will focus on comment RPCs in European Portuguese, comparing their behavior in this language variety with English and V2 languages.

Several questions emerge in the study of verb *comment RPCs*, some of them correlated: (i) How do recent RPC typologies account for comment clauses and which verbal predicates may occur in comment RPCs? (ii) What is the nature of the omitted argument of the verb (iii) How is the parenthetical clause connected with its host, given its syntactic behavior and pragmatic value? (iv) What is the internal structure of comment parenthetical clauses, considering the word order patterns allowed and the verbs involved?

These questions will guide the current analysis. In section 2, on the basis of the existing literature, I will try to establish the discursive classes related to Comment RPCs and the classes of predicates that may be correlated with them in European Portuguese; in section 3, I will discuss the nature of the omitted argument in the RPC and its correlation with the host clause; in section 4, I will sketch a proposal to account for the structural connection of the parenthetical with the host sentence; in section 5, the internal structure of the parenthetical and its relation with its pragmatic value will be analyzed. In section 6, some final remarks will be presented.

2. The RPC typologies and the classes of verbal predicates in comment clauses

In order to account for comment RPCs in European Portuguese, the specific discourse properties that they exhibit and the classes of predicates that usually occur in these clauses must be established. To my knowledge, no such study exists for EP. So, I will review proposals presented for other languages, in particular for English, and try to establish their most usual correlates in European Portuguese.

2.1 Typologies on RCPs

Although several studies on RPCs assume the existence of comment clauses (KLUCK; DE VRIES, 2015; GIORGI, 2016), recent typologies on RPCs by Schneider (2007a, 2007b) and Griffiths (2015) do not explicitly refer to them.

Schneider (2007a, 2007b) proposes a pragmatic typology taking as main criterion the speaker´s responsibility. He classifies RPCs into three types, the third of which is divided into four subtypes:

(7) Type 1 - Phatic RPCs: the speaker invites the addressee to cooperate.
Type 2 - Reporting RPCs:the speaker reports something said by another or by him/herself, without reflecting his/her judgment.
Type 3 - Mitigative RPCs downgrade speaker's commitment, by alleviating, removing or sharing his/her responsibility:
Subtype 1 mitigates the host propositional content.

Subtype 2 mitigates the host propositional content and the speaker's commitment.

Subtype 3 mitigates the speaker's commitment to the truth of the host clause.

Subtype 4 mitigates the speaker's commitment by attributing knowledge to the hearer or others.

Although the expression comment clause is not mentioned, mitigative RPCs are the most closely related to comment RPC. In fact, type 1 deals with phatic expressions and type 2, as defined, applies to quotative parentheticals. The following data, presented by Schneider, illustrate each one of the mitigation subtypes:

(8) Mitigation of the host propositional content
ça faisait partie de ces _disons_ _donnés culturelles_
'That was part of these, let's say, cultural data.'
<div align="right">(SCHNEIDER, 2007b, p. 245)</div>

(9) Mitigation of the host propositional content and the speaker's commitment
Porque si a mata<(d)>o a una mujer será   cirurjano   de
Because if has killed to   a woman be.FUT.3SG surgeon   for
mujeres,   digo   yo.
women   say   I
because if he has killed a woman he must be a surgeon for women, I say.'
<div align="right">(cf. SCHNEIDER, 2007b, p. 246-247)</div>

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(10) Mitigation of the speaker's commitment to the truth of the host clause
la   cosa   su cui voglio intervenire su questo spero primo intervento
the thing on which want intervene.INF on this hope.1SG first intervention
è   questo concetto   di   democrazia.
is   this   concept   of   democracy
'The issue I'd like to address in this, I hope, first talk is this concept of democracy.'
<div align="right">(SCHNEIDER, 2007b, p. 247)</div>

(11) Mitigation by attributing knowledge to the hearer or others
para mí, los tíos, ya ves, son todos amigos mios.
For me   the guys,   now see, are all friends my
'For me the guys, you see, are all my friends.'
<div align="right">(SCHNEIDER, 2007b, p. 248)</div>

Schneider's proposal to sharply distinguish report/quote from mitigative RPCs is too radical, as we saw by the cases in (5) and (6), and a more flexible approach would be preferable.

Griffiths (2015) presents an alternative typology. He assumes that RPCs are definable along two dichotomies: 1) quote vs. speaker's use, 2) report vs. attitude, characterized as follows:

(12)
  a. Quote RPCs voice utterances over which content the speaker takes no responsibility.
  b. Speaker RPCs modify propositions used by the speaker to commit a speech act. These RPCs fall into three pragmatic subtypes:
    1) Mitigatives, which diminish the speaker's responsibility with respect to the truth of the host proposition.
    2) Speech Act, which states the illocutionary force of the host.
    3) Evaluative, which expresses the speaker's emotional attitude regarding the host.
  c. Report RPCs describe the action of the speaker or another agent.
  d. Attitude RPCs expresses the attitude of the speaker concurrent with the speaker's utterance time.

Some of the Griffiths' examples are presented below:

(13) Quote RPCs
  a. "Orson," I {*think / say*}, "must be fired."
  b. "Orson" Mank thinks/ says "must be fired."

(GRIFFITHS, 2015, p. 74)

(14) Mitigative RPCs
  a. John will, *I believe*, be late.
  b. John will, *Mary heard*, be late.

(GRIFFITHS, 2015, p. 75)

(15) Speech act RPCs
  I will, I {*promise / swear / declare*}, always love you.

(GRIFFITHS, 2015, p. 75)

(16) Evaluative RPCs
  a. My article should, I {*hope / pray*}, be accepted.
  b. John will, I regret to say, be late.

(GRIFFITHS, 2015 p. 75-76)

The values presented in the first dichotomy may, in certain cases, combine with those of the second one: *quote* may combine with *report*; and *speaker's use* may combine with *report* or *attitude*. Thus, the examples (13) combine quote and report values; (14a) reveals speaker's use and attitude; (14b) evidences speaker's use and reports values.

Trying to establish a correlation between Griffiths' typology and comment RPCs, we would say that these ones mainly correspond to speaker's use RPCs, in particular, to the mitigative subtype, which Griffiths assumes to present an epistemic or evidential value, and to the Evaluative subtype, including Speech Act RPCs, when they exhibit an evaluative value.

Previous studies on comment predicates in English seem to be compatible with these assumptions.

2.2 Comment predicates

Some attempts have been made to establish a list of predicate expressions used in comment RPCs in in English (e.g. QUIRK *et al.*, 1985; BRINTON, 2008). QUIRK *et al.* (1985) range the expressions occurring in comment RPCs, as opposed to report parenthetical clauses, into four classes, according to the attitude of the speaker with respect to the content expressed by the related clause:

(17)

    (i) Class 1 – s*peaker's tentativeness over the truth value of the related clause*
I believe, I think, I expect, I presume, I suspect, I guess, I assume, I suppose, I consider, I understand, I feel, I hear, I have read, I can see, I may assume, I dare say, I venture to say, one hears, they tell me, they allege, they say

    (ii) Class 2 – *speaker's certainty over the truth value of the related clause*
I know, I claim, I see, I remember, I agree, I admit, I'm sure, I'm convinced, I have no doubt. I must say, I must admit, I must tell you, I have to say

    (iii) Class 3 – *speaker's emotional attitude*
I hope, I wish, I fear, I regret, I' m afraid, I regret to say, I'm sorry to say, I'm glad to say, I'm happy to say, I'm pleased to say, I'm delighted to say.

    (iv) Class 4 – *speaker's claim for hearer's attention or agreement*
You know, you see, you realize, you can see, you can know, you may have heard, you must admit.

Classes 1 and 2 present *epistemic* and *evidential* predicates, class 3 includes *evaluative* predicates and class 4 involves *epistemic* and *evidential* predicates in expressions with a *phatic* import.

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Relating this classification to Griffiths' typology and leaving aside the expressions which present a phatic value, I will tentatively propose a non-exhaustive classification of the *verbs* that occur in comment RPCs in European Portuguese.

(18)

    (i) Epistemic/Evidential predicates

        achar 'believe', *crer* 'believe', *julgar* 'believe', *pensar* 'think', *dizer* 'say', *supor* 'suppose', *suspeitar* 'suspect, *calcular* 'reckon', *deduzir* 'deduce', *presumir,* 'presume', *pressupor* 'presuppose', *ouvir* 'hear'.

    (ii) Evaluative predicates

        esperar 'hope', *temer, recear* 'be afraid', *lamentar* 'regret/be sorry'

The following data exemplify these two classes:

(19) *O   conflito — penso   eu —   não   está   superado.*

      the conflict   think1Sg   I   not   is   overcome

      'The conflict — I   think   — is not overcome.'

(20) *(…) ele   ainda não   foi   contratado, espero   eu.*

      he   yet   not   has   been hired,   hope   I

      'he has not yet been hired, I hope.'

                                              (CETEMPÚBLICO 1.7, v. 9.1)

These examples present the most characteristic structure of RPCs in European Portuguese: the object of the verb is missing and the subject occurs in post-verbal position. However, in EP, Subject omission is also frequent in comment RPCs, as in (21):

(21)

    a. *O   conflito — penso —   não   está   superado.*

       the conflict   think1Sg   not   is   overcome

    b. *ele   ainda não   foi   contratado, espero*

       he   yet   not   has   been hired,   hope

These two aspects of RPCs will be analyzed in the following sections.

3. The nature of the omitted argument

The omitted argument of the verb in RPCs denotes the content of the host, both in comment and in quote parentheticals. This raises the question of its nature as a null pronoun that retrieves the content of its host, or a category resulting from movement of the host sentence or a constituent related to the host sentence. Although this problem is common to quote and comment RPCs, I will center the discussion on the second type of parentheticals.

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RPCs typically present the omission of the verb argument related to the host clause. However, in some languages a pronominal may overtly occur on a par with the missing argument. According to Fortman (2007), such is the case of German. Thus, Fortman (2007) proposes that in this language the argument of the parenthetical verb is always a (null or overt) pronominal:

(22)

    a. *Theo kam – Paul sagt **es** – mit   seinen Hund.*   (German)
        Theo came Paul says it – with   his   dog
        'Theo brought – says Paul – his dog,'

    b. *Theo kam – sagt Paul **e**$_{pro}$ – mit   seinen Hund.*
        Theo came says *Paul* **e**$_{pro}$ – with   his   dog
        'Theo brought - Paul says – his dog,'

                                              (FORTMAN, 2007, p. 100)

In European Portuguese, a clitic like *o* 'it' and a non-clitic pronoun like *isso* 'that' may retrieve the content of a sentence, as shown in (23), but the presence of an overt pronoun produces marginal results in comment RPCs, as illustrated in (24), although, with certain evaluative predicates, acceptability improves slightly when no post-verbal subject occurs, as in (25b):

(23) *O tornado vai afetar o país. Os meteorologistasjá (**o**) disseram,*
     the tornado will affect the country. The meteorologists already it.CL said
     *mas muitas pessoas não acreditam (**nisso**).*
     but many people not believe   in that
     'The tornado will affect the country. The meteorologists have already said it, but many people do not /believe it/that.

(24)

    a. *O conflito — {penso/acho/suspeito/deduzo/ouvi} (eu) — não está superado.*
      the conflict think/believe/suspect/deduce/heard I not is overcome

    b. *O conflito — {*penso-o /*acho-o /*ouvi-o   (eu) — não está superado.*
      the conflict think - it.Cl / believe - it.Cl /heard- it.Cl (I) not is overcome

    c. *O conflito — *deduzo isso (eu) / *supeito **isso** (eu) — não está superado.*
      the conflict deduce that I /   suspect that I   not is overcome

(25)

    a. *A crise — receio (eu) — não está   superada   ainda.*
      the crisis fear.1Sg I   not is   overcome   yet
      'The crisis — I'm afraid — has not been overcome yet.'

    b. *A crise   — ??receio-o /*receio-o   eu — não está superada.*
      the crisis   fear.1Sg - it.Cl / fear.1Sg - it.Cl I   not is overcome

This behavior shows that in European Portuguese comment RPCs present a null argument that is not pronominal. Also, in these contexts, comment RPCs show island effects:

(26) *O tornado — reitero a suspeita   em que creio eu _ —   afetará Coimbra.*
the tornado — reiterate.1Sg the suspicion in which believe I — will affect Coimbra

(27) *O desemprego   é — saliento o facto de que penso eu _ — o*
the unemployment is emphazise the fact of that think I the
maior   problema   do   país.
biggest problem   of.the   country

This behavior seems to indicate that the missing argument is a deleted copy of a moved constituent. How is this argument related to the host sentence? The answer to this question depends on the way we conceive the connection of the parenthetical with its host.

4. The connection of the comment RPC and the status of the moved constituent

Since the seventies of the last century, two major analyses have been proposed to account for null complements of the verbal predicate in RPC and its connection with the host clause: the *Complement Fronting analysis* and the *Modifier analysis.* The *Complement Fronting analysis* takes the parenthetical as the initial main clause and the host clause as its complement; during the derivation, the sentential complement is fronted, and is interpreted as the host sentence (EMONDS, 1973; ROSS, 1973). The *Modifier analysis* assumes that the host clause and the null complement are independently derived, despite being semantically related. The parenthetical clause is a modifier of the host clause (JACKENDOFF, 1972; QUIRK *et al.*, 1972) and behaves like an adverbial.

Adopting Cinque's (1999) work, which relies on a specifier-head-complement analysis of adverbials, Rooryck (2001) proposes a renovated implementation of the Fronting analysis. He claims that the host sentence is a CP complement of the parenthetical verb that moves to the specifier of a modal evidential projection, MoodEvidP, followed by covert or overt raising of the verb to the head of this projection, thus, surfacing the V-S (28b) or S-V (28c) order:

(28)
    a. John said [$_{CP}$ Mary will see you tomorrow]
    b. [$_{CP}$ [$_{MoodEvidP}$ [$_{CPi}$ Mary will see you tomorrow] [$_{MoodEvid\ said}$] [$_{TP}$ John ~~said cp$_i$~~]]
    c. [$_{CP}$ [$_{MoodEvidP}$ [$_{CPi}$ Mary will see you tomorrow] [$_{MoodEvid}$ -] [$_{TP}$ John said ~~cp$_i$~~]]

This approach seems attractive for comment RPC given their epistemic, evidential or evaluative value. For Rooryck, all RPCs merge in Mood EvidentialP, because, according to him, all of them involve a *source* of evaluation or reliability, and the information status of the sentence is often measured with respect to reliability, probability, expectation, desire (cf. ROORYCK, 2001, p. 125).

Notice, however, that the Fronting analysis is problematic, since it seems to reverse the communicative purpose of the speaker: it suggests that the parenthetical, which is taken as extra-information, is the most prominent clause.

In addition, as Rooryck remarks, this analysis does not easily deal with interpolated parenthetical clauses. However, *comment RPCs* are floating parentheticals: they may occur right appended to their host sentence, or interpolated, affecting one of its constituents:

(29)

    a. *O artigo de Clara Alves esclarece a situação, <u>creio eu.</u>*
        the article by Clara Alves clarifies the situation, believe I
        'The article by Clara Alves clarifies the situation, I believe.'

    b. *O   artigo de Clara Alves esclarece, <u>creio eu</u>,   a   situação.*
        the   article by Clara Alves clarifies, believe I,   the situation
        'The article by Clara Alves clarifies, I believe, the situation.'

    c. *O artigo de Clara Alves, <u>creio eu</u>, esclarece   a   situação*
        the   article by Clara Alves believe I clarifies   the situation
        'The article by Clara Alves, I believe, clarifies the situation.'

    d. *O artigo, de Clara Alves (<u>creio eu</u>),   esclarece a   situação*
        the article by Clara Alves (believe I), clarifies   the situation
        'The article, by Clara Alves (I believe), clarifies the situation.

This floating has repercussions on the pragmatic import of the RPC with respect to the host clause, but also on the syntactic structure of the host sentence, given that in these examples the scope of the parenthetical differs: in (29a) the RPC modifies and mitigates the whole preceding host clause; in (29b) the RPC mainly mitigates the verbal phrase of the host clause *clarifies the situation*; in (29c) the RPC may be interpreted as modifying/mitigating the subject, *o artigo de Clara Alves*, or the predicate of the host sentence, '*esclarece a situação*', in (29d) the RPC affects *de Clara Alves*, mitigating the speaker's responsibility in attributing the authorship of the article to Clara Alves.

An alternative analysis which also assumes that the host clause is the complement of the parenthetical verb is proposed by Giorgi (2016). She claims that RPCs are merged at the left periphery of the host sentence in a comma projection, KP, as illustrated in (30b). Merge of the host clause into Spec KP, followed by deletion of the identical complement of the verb would derive (30a), as shown in (30c):

(30)

    a. I will leave tomorrow, said John.

    b. [KP [said John [K [I will leave tomorrow]]]]

    c. [KP [I will leave tomorrow] K [said John [~~I will leave tomorrow~~]]]

In case of interpolation, illustrated, for instance in (31a) where the non-constituent *I will* precedes the RPC, a double deletion applies backwards (leave tomorrow) and forwards (I will), operating on non-constituents, as shown in (31b):

31)

    a. I will, John said, leave tomorrow.

    b. [KP [I will ~~leave tomorrow~~] K [said John [~~I will~~ leave tomorrow]]]

This proposal apparently solves the main difficulty of the Fronting analysis. Still, it is not exempt of problems[1]. First of all, in languages like European Portuguese, the *comment RPC* may never precede the host sentence:

(32)

    a. *Eu acho, a solução   está na correta análise da   situação.*
        I believe the solution is in the correct analysis of the situation

    b. *Penso eu, a solução está na correta análise da   situação.*
        think I the solution is in the correct analysis of the situation

Also, in this position, Subject-Verb inversion is unacceptable (cf. (32b)), although it is required in European Portuguese in mitigative comment RPCs, as shown in (33):

(33) *A solução   está na   correta análise da situação,* {√penso *eu/* eu penso*}
     the solution is in the correct analysis of the situation think I/I think

In addition, it is difficult to see how this approach accounts for (29d), repeated in (34), where the comment RPC is embedded in another parenthetical constituent, *de Clara de Alves* 'by Clara de Alves'.

(34) *O   artigo, de Clara Alves (creio eu), esclarece a   situação*
     the article by Clara Alves (believe I), clarifies the situation
     'The article by Clara Alves (I believe) clarifies the situation.

Considering these problems, the *Modifier approach to RPCs* appears as a plausible alternative, and the most compatible proposal with the parenthetical status of the RPCs.

    As it has been claimed, parenthetical clauses present significant syntactic autonomy with respect to their hosts. In particular, they block c-command of constituents included in the hosts. Comment RPCs exhibit this property. As shown in (35), they do not exhibit principle C effects, thus allowing the subject pronoun to be co-referent with the pronominal in the host clause (cf. (35a)), and block bound anaphora readings, preventing a quantifier phrase in the host to bind a pronoun inside the parenthetical (cf. *(ele)*$_{*i/*}$*j* in (35b)):

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1 The proposed use of ellipsis in interpolation may virtually be subject to difficulties, since it is usually assumed that ellipsis applies to fully expanded constituents.
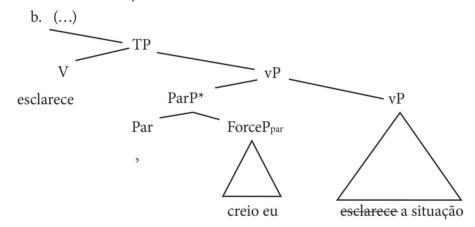
(35)

    a. *Ele$_i$ era demasiado novo nessa altura – pensou o rapaz$_i$.*
       He was too   young at that time thinks the boy

    b. *Cada aluno$_i$ – acha   (ele)$_{*i/\sqrt{j}}$, – sabe o que pro$_i$ deve fazer.*
       each student believes he   knows what he must do
       'Each student – he$_{*i/\sqrt{j}}$ believes – knows what he$_i$ must do.'

Thus, Matos (2009, 2013) proposed that parentheticals are paratatic constituents, syntactically merged in their hosts as adjuncts marked with a specific feature that assigns them a parenthetical status (see MATOS, 2013, p. 124-125; for quotative RPCs). Kluck and de Vries (2015) implement this proposal in a different way, assuming the existence of *Parenthetical Merge*, an operation that adjoins a non-restrictive adjunct to its host, blocks c-command relationships ensuring semantic 'orphanage', but enables linear integration at the PF-interface. Accepting this proposal, the sentence in (36a) is represented as in (36b):

(36)

    a. *O artigo de Clara Alves esclarece, <u>creio eu</u>, a   situação.*
       the article by Clara Alves clarifies, believe I, the   situation
       'The article by Clara Alves clarifies, I believe, the situation.'

    b. (…)

However, a problem arises: how to account for the fact that the null argument inside the parenthetical typically results from movement and display island effects, indicating that its copy must be locally c-commanded? Considering quotative RPCs, Matos (2013), following Ambar (1992), relates the null complement of the parenthetical to the classical analysis of Null Object by Raposo (1986): the null argument of the verb A'-bar moves to the left periphery of the sentence and leaves a copy which is interpreted as a variable bound by a null topic. I assume that this analysis can be extended to Comment RPCs, as illustrated for (36a) in the following representation, in terms of the split CP system proposed by Rizzi (1997) and following work:

(37) o artigo esclarece, [...ForceP [TopP Ø$_i$][creio eu __$_i$ …]], a situação.

Notice that a similar proposal has been advanced for comment (and quote) RPCs in Dutch by Kluck and de Vries (2015). They argue that a null operator, optionally spelled out as *zo,* occurs in the left periphery of the sentence:

(38)

    a. *Bob is, (zo) vermoed ik al   lange tijd, een echte charmeur*

         Bob is so   suspect I already long time a true   charmer

         'Bob is, I've suspected for a long time, a true charmer.'

    b. $[_{Host} - [_{Parenthetical} [\ Op_i \ [\ V \ldots \_\_\_i \ \ldots] \ldots.]$

In sum, in these proposals the null argument is seen as a variable bound by an A'-operator in the left periphery of the RPC itself.

5. Word order patterns and the structure of the RPC in EP

A final question must be answered: what is the structure of comment RPCs in European Portuguese considering the position of the subject with respect to the verb, and how does it contributes to the pragmatic meaning of the parenthetical?

5.1 Word order patterns in RPC

Comment and quote RPCs display Verb-Subject order in German (FORTMAN, 2007; STEINBACH, 2007) and Dutch (CORVER; THIERSCH, 2002; KLUCK; DE VRIES, 2015; GRIFFITHS 2015), both with full DPs (R-expressions) and pronominals:

(39)

    a. *Theo kam* –   *sagt   Paul* – *mit   seinem Hund* (German)

         Theo came   says   Paul   with   his   dog

         'Theo brought – says Paul – with his dog

                                      (FORTMAN, 2007, p. 90)

    b. *Hans beweit ein Theorem, das, glaube ich, Martin aufgestelli   hat*

         Hans proves a   theorem which believe I   Martin established   has

         'Hans proves a theorem that, I think, Martin established.'

                                          (STEINBACH, 2007, p. 77)

(40)

    a. *Bob is, vermoed ik, een echte charmeur.*   (Dutch)

         Bob is suspect I a   true charmer

         'Bob is, I suspect, a true charmer.'

                                  (KLUCK; DE VRIES, 2015, p. 104)

    b. *"Bob is" (zo) zei Anna, "een   echte   charmeur".*

         Bob is so said Anna a true   charmer

         '"Bob", (so) *said Anna,* "is a real charmer.'

                                  (KLUCK; DE VRIES, 2015, p. 109)

Kluck and de Vries show that the inversion is obligatory in Dutch RPCs, a fact that they impute to the V2 requirement:

(41)

    a. *Bob is, (zo) ik vermoed, een echte charmeur.

    b. *"Bob is", (zo) Anna zei, "een echte charmeur."

<div align="right">(KLUCK; DE VRIES, 2015, p. 110)</div>

In turn, English allows Verb-Subject order with full DP (R-expressions) in quote RPCs, especially in the written language (COLLINS; BRANIGAN, 1997, p. 2), but with pronominal subjects, subject inversion produces marginal results (QUIRK *et al.*, 1985; COLLINS; BRANIGAN, 1997), as shown in (42). Since comment RPCs mainly exhibit pronominal subjects, Verb/Subject Inversion does not typically occur (see (43)):

(42)

    a. I wonder', said John, 'whether I can borrow your bicycle.'

    b. ? "I've lost my keys" said he.

<div align="right">(COLLINS; BRANIGAN, 1997, p. 7)</div>

(43) There were no other applicants, I believe, for that job.

<div align="right">(QUIRK *et al.*, 1985, p. 1112)</div>

In European Portuguese, with overt DPs and pronominals, the Verb-Subject order is obligatory in quotative RPCs (see (44)) and the usual order in comment RPCs (cf. (45)) and (46a), although the Subject-Verb pattern is also acceptable with certain predicates, as, for instance, the evaluative verb *esperar* 'hope', especially when the whole RPC is stressed, see (46b):

(44)

    a. *A minha pátria é a língua portuguesa - disse Pessoa e digo eu*.

        the my homeland is the language Portuguese – said Pessoa and say I.

        'My homeland is the Portuguese language –said Pessoa and I (also) say it.'

<div align="right">(CETEMPÚBLICO, 1.7, v. 9.1)</div>

    b. *A minha* pátria   *é a língua portuguesa* – *Pessoa disse e eu digo*.

        the my homeland is the language Portuguese – Pessoa said and I say.

(45)

    a. *Não há espaço para o empenho do escritor (…), penso eu*.

        not there is space for the commitment of the writer think I

        'There is no room for the writer's commitment, I think'.

<div align="right">(CETEMPÚBLICO, 1.7, v. 9.1)</div>

    b. *Não há espaço para o empenho do escritor (…), eu *penso*.

        not there is space for the commitment of the writer I think

        'There is no room for the writer's commitment, I think'.

(46)

a. *O tribunal decidirá, espero eu, quem tem razão no   conflito* (…)

the court   will decide hope   I who has   reason   in.the conflict

'The law court will decide, I hope, who is right in this conflict.'

(CETEMPÚBLICO, 1.7, v. 9.1)

b. *O tribunal decidirá,   EU ESPERO, quem tem razão*

the court   will decide, I hope,   who has   reason

'The court will decide, I hope, who is right.

Thus, in European Portuguese, there are differences in the placement of the subject with respect to the verb in quote vs. comment RPCs, and some variation within the latter. This behavior diverges from Dutch, a V2 language, which systematically requires subject inversion, and from English, where the preverbal position of the subject is prevalent in RPCs with full DPs and required with pronominal subjects.

I assume that the different patterns of subject placement in RPCs in a language like European Portuguese correspond to syntactic differences between comment and quote RPCs and I believe that these differences are related to their discursive structure and pragmatic meaning.

5.2 Pragmatic, discursive and syntactic differences between comment and quote RPCs

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Comment and quote RPCs pragmatically differ, since only the former may present a mitigative value, as shown in (47), where *dizer* 'say' occurs both in a quote parenthetical, *diz a Bennett* 'Bennett says', and in a comment RPC, *digo eu* 'I say', that mitigates the speaker's commitment regarding the quote's authorship:

(47) «E *tinha razão», diz   a   Bennett, digo   eu.*

and has   reason   said   the   Bennett, say   I

'and (s)he/I was right, said Bennett, I say.'

(CETEMPÚBLICO, 1.7, v. 9.1)

These different values may be explicitly evidenced in the follow up of the mitigative and quote RPCs. While a comment expressing the uncertainty implied by the mitigative use of *say* is available, it is impossible to doubt that a quote has been expressed by using quotative *say*:

(48)

a. *… diz   a   Bennett, digo eu mas não tenho a certeza.*

says   the   Bennett, says I, but not have the certainty

'Says Bennett, I say, but I am not sure.'

b. #*«E *tinha razão», diz a   Bennett mas   não   afirma.*
And has reason   says the Bennett, but   not   state
'"And (s)he was right", says Bennett, but she did not state that.'

From a syntactic point of view, comment and quote RPCs also differ. The post verbal subject in comment RPCs occurs in adjacency to the verb and interposition of low or high adverbials produces marginal results, as in (49). This does not happen in quotative RPCs, as shown in (50):

(49)

a. *Não há espaço para o empenho do escritor*
not there is space for the commitment of the writer
1. * — *penso tristemente / francamente eu.*
think sadly   / frankly   I
2. √ — *penso   eu   tristemente /francamente.*
think   I   sadly   / frankly
'There is no room for the writer's commitment — I frankly/sadly think (so).'

b. *O tribunal decidirá — {??espero evidentemente eu/√ espero eu evidentemente}*
the court will decide   hope   evidently   /   hope I   evidently
— *quem tem   razão.*
who   has   reason
'The law court will decide, I evidently hope (so), who is right.'

(50)   *"O tsunami devastou a ilha. "*   — *noticiou claramente o repórter.*
the tsunami devastated the island   announced clearly the reporter
'"The tsunami devasted the island — the reporter clearly announced.'

The contrasts in acceptability between quote and comment RPCs in European Portuguese show that in a comment RPC adverb interposition between the verb and subject does not occur and suggest that these elements occupy higher functional projections than in quote RPCs.

In European Portuguese, the subject position with respect to the verb may vary and determine different informational interpretations (AMBAR, 1992; COSTA, 2004; DUARTE; FIGUEIREDO SILVA, 2016). In this language variety, as in Spanish and Italian, informational focus subjects occur in post-verbal position[2], either because they have been raised to FocP in the sentence low periphery (BELLETTI, 2004), or because they stayed in their original position inside vP (COSTA, 2004). The interposing of a low adverbial between the verb in T and the subject is, thus, expected, as shown in (51) for the sentence in (50):

(51) Host — [ForceP$_{parent}$ [TopP Øop$_i$ [TP noticiou$_j$ [AdvP claramente [o reporter t$_j$ t$_i$]]]]]

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In contrast, in comment RPCs high adverbs occur after the verb and the post-verbal subject.

The cartographic approach to the left periphery of IP and CP, respectively, proposed in Rizzi and Cinque (2016) and Rizzi and Bochi (2017), offers a way to deal with the internal structure of comment RPCs:

(52)

a. CP[$_{IP}$ Mood-speech act >Mood-evaluative >Mood-evidential >Mod epistemic> TP…]

(RIZZI; CINQUE, 2016, p. 149)

b. [Force [Top* [Int [Top* [Foc [Top* [Mod(ification) [Top* [Q_emb [Fin [IP …

(RIZZI; BOCHI, 2017)

Considering that speech act adverbials (e.g. *sinceramente* 'sincerely') and evidential adverbs (e.g. *evidentemente* 'evidently') may follow the post-verbal subject, I consider that, in comment RPCs, the subject moves to spec, FocP, the position of contrastive focus and the verb may raise from T to Fin and then to Force, as represented in (52b).

(53)

a. *Isso até nos atrasou um bocadinho, creio eu sinceramente…*
that even us delayed a little bit, believe I sincerely
'That has even delayed us a bit, I believe.'

b. Host − [ForceP$_{parent}$ [$_{Force}$ creio$_j$] [FocP EU$_i$ [TopP Ø$_{op\_k}$ [FinP t$_i$ [IP sinceramente [t$_i$ t$_j$ t$_k$

Given this configuration, the non-interposition of adverbs between the verb and the subject is explained: these adverbs occur lower in the sentence structure.

Notice that the possibility of stressing the whole RPC in sentences with preverbal subjects like (46b), repeated in (54a), also corroborates that contrastive focus is at stake in comment RPCs. Thus, I assume that the parenthetical in (54a) exhibits the structure in (54b):

(54)

a. *O tribunal decidirá,* EU ESPERO, *quem tem razão*
the court will decide, I hope, who has reason
'The court will decide, I hope, who is right.

b. Host − [ForceP$_{parent}$ [FocP EU$_i$ [Foc° ESPERO$_j$] [TopP Ø$_{op\_k}$ [FinP [IP t$_i$ tj t$_k$

In (54) both the subject and the verb are interpreted as the contrastive focus and merged in FocP in the left periphery of the RPC, the subject in spec, FocP and the verb in Foc°.

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5.3 Interactions between Syntax-Discourse and Pragmatics in comment RPCs

In V2 languages and in English, the mitigative reading of RPCs seems to be only related to the epistemic/evidential and evaluative content of verbs. However, in European Portuguese, the syntactic and discursive structure of the sentence is also relevant to establish the pragmatic value of the comment RPC. I believe that contrastive focus post-verbal subjects contribute to establish the mitigative value of the RPC.

In fact, the contrast between comment RPCs with and without an overt subject shows that the overt focused post-verbal subject favors the mitigative interpretation while omitted subjects produce a weakening of the mitigative value (see (55a) vs. (55b) and (56a) vs. (56b)).

(55)

    a. *A   publicidade alivia   a   depressão, acho eu*
       the   publicity mitigates the depression, believe I
       'Publicity mitigates depression, I think/believe'

                                      (CETEMPÚBLICO, 1.7, v. 9.1)

    b. *a publicidade alivia   a   depressão, acho.*
       the   publicity mitigates the depression believe
       'Publicity mitigates depression, I believe.'

(56)

    a. *O   tribunal decidirá, espero eu, quem tem   razão.*
       the   court will decide,   hope I   who   has   reason
       'The law court will decide, I hope, who is right.'

    b. *O   tribunal decidirá, espero, quem tem razão.*
       the   court   will decide, hope who   has   reason
       'The law court will decide, I hope, who is right.'

This is corroborated in RPC with *lamentar* 'to be sorry'. This verb has a factive meaning and cannot head a mitigative RPC, as shown by the marginality of (57b). In correlation *lamentar* in its evaluative reading precludes a post-verbal subject, as illustrated in (57a). When a post verbal subject occurs, the parenthetical clause is interpreted as quotative RPC, meaning 'I say with regret', as in (57c):

(57)

    a. *Não conheço   ninguém,   lamento.*
       not   know.1SG nobody,   regret/ I'm sorry
       'I don't know anybody, I'm sorry.'

                                        (CETEMPÚBLICO, 1.7, v. 9.1)

    b. #/?? *Não conheço ninguém, lamento   mas posso estar enganado*
         not know.1SG nobody, regret/I'm sorry but (I) might be wrong

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c. #*Nãoconheço   ninguém,   lamento eu*
    not   know.1SG nobody,   regret   I
    'I don't know anybody, I regret.'

In sum, focused post-verbal subjects in comment RPCs headed by verbs with no factive content favor the mitigative interpretation.

Turning now to comment RPCs with preverbal subjects, which arise with some epistemic and evaluative predicates in European Portuguese, we find that this word order may also consequences in the pragmatic value of the RPC:

(58)

a. *As fotos não tinham a ver com a minha pintura ou desenho, eu acho.*
    the photos not had to see with the my painting, or drawing, I think
    'The photos had nothing to do with my painting or drawing, I think.'
    (CETEMPÚBLICO, 1.7, v. 9.1)

b. *Será   difícil,   eu receio bem, falar de justiça   internacional.*
    will be difficult I fear   well, speak of justice international
    'It will be difficult, I'm afraid, to speak of international justice.'

c. *O tribunal decidirá,   eu espero, quem tem razão*
    the court   will decide, I hope,   who has   reason
    'The court will decide, I hope, who is right.

In these sentences, the preverbal subjects express a greater degree of certainty of the speaker in his/her opinion, and the RPC is meant to mainly emphasize this attitude rather than to mitigate its host. This is particularly evident in the sequences that may follow the sentences containing stressed comment RPCs, as illustrated bellow:

(59) *O tribunal decidirá, {eu acho / eu espero}, quem tem razão, e   esta é*
     the court will decide, I believe / I hope,   who has reason, and this is
     a minha posição.
     the my position
     'The court will decide,{I believe /I hope}, who is right, and this is my position.'

In sum, in European Portuguese the pragmatic value of Epistemic/Evidential and Evaluative RPCs does not exclusively rely on the content of the verbal predicates, but is also determined by the Verb/Subject order patterns. With verbs with no factive content, mitigative interpretations are stressed by post-verbal subjects contrastively focalized.

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6. Final remarks

This paper dealt with a specific type of comment parenthetical clauses, the reduced parenthetical clauses, confronting European Portuguese and V2 languages and English.

Two main achievements have been attained: a first attempt to establish the most common predicates that occur in these clauses in European Portuguese and an analysis of their behavior in this language variety.

We have seen that European Portuguese RPCs share with Dutch (and English) RPCs the fact that the null argument of the verb is the result of a moved constituent that merges to the left periphery of the parenthetical clause and A'-binds its copy.

However, these languages differ with respect to how the discursive and pragmatic values of the comment RPCs are established. Apparently, in V2 languages and in English the pragmatic value of the RPCs is only determined by the classes of predicates that occur in these parentheticals, and the subject – verb order plays no role. In contrast, in European Portuguese, in addition to the verb classes involved, the word order patterns are also relevant to set the discursive and pragmatic value of the comment RPCs: post-verbal focused subjects stress the mitigative meaning of the parenthetical clause.

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