

Relative Clauses in Croatian and Serbo-Croatian

The literature on relative clauses in Serbo-Croatian has grown considerably in recent years, while that treating the corresponding category in other European languages, Slavic and non-Slavic alike, as well as in general linguistic theory, has burgeoned to the point where it is difficult for a single researcher to encompass. One of the most significant contributions is contained in S. Kordić's 1995 volume on relative clauses in Croatian.* This characterization holds even in regard to a variety of questions for which the author was unable to furnish definitive answers, or concerning which a reader might be tempted to question her conclusions or hypotheses. Aside from the specific assumptions, methods and conclusions offered by Kordić, there are also some issues in regard to the structure of argumentation in her volume, and concerning the analysis and presentation of quantitative data, which invite discussion.

Given the sheer quantity of information contained in this volume, it is impossible to examine and evaluate all of its conclusions even in the extensive format of a review article. I will therefore restrict myself to an overview of the volume in regard to structure, content and methodology, and will reserve critical comment for several areas which: 1) seem unique or innovative; 2) lead the reader toward further questions; 3) allow also for interpretations different for those suggested by the author; or, in fewer instances, 4) contain some specific weakness. Even within these limitations I will be highly selective, so that a number of issues which deserve attention will have to remain for another forum. As the review will of necessity concentrate on those areas which demand critical attention, I wish to emphasize at the outset that this is a most serious and useful volume, which fills many gaps in our conceptual and factual knowledge of relative clauses in the Serbo-Croatian language(s) and general linguistic theory. Even among the already voluminous literature on the topic, this book will become obligatory reading for specialists in the former, and at least those in the latter field who wish their theories to be grounded in linguistic reality. As an index of the seriousness of Kordić's analysis and her familiarity with the state of research, I will cite here merely the list of references at the end of the volume, which an (albeit hasty) count showed to contain 481 entries.

The organization of the book and its constituent discussions does not follow a single pattern throughout. The first chapter attempts to define the category of relative clause in Croatian, as well as the theoretical basis of such a definition. The second and third chapters examine relative clauses introduced by the two (actually three, as we shall see below) most frequent relativizers: *koji* and *što*. The fourth and fifth chapters discuss relative clauses with formal (i.e., lacking lexical content) antecedent and free (i.e., lacking an expressed antecedent) relative clauses, respectively. The sixth chapter is devoted to relative clauses introduced by adverbial relativizers. The seventh chapter deals with extraposed (i.e., postposed) relative clauses. The final (eighth) chapter discusses the relationship between relative clauses and participial clauses/phrases.

* Snježana Kordić, *Relativna rečenica*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1995. 365 pages. In the following exposition I will use the term "Serbo-Croatian" as a cover term for all of those language varieties, both standard and nonstandard, which in the past have been encompassed by it—those of Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Hercegovina. I will use the term "Croatian," as does Kordić, to refer more narrowly to contemporary standard Croatian.

The initial chapter contains its own introductory (five page) section dealing with the category of relativeness, in which the author explores the relation between the rise and development of this linguistic category and that of human cognition. This is the sole portion of the book of which I have a generally negative evaluation, as it is based on an outmoded (though citing recent literature from the philosophy of language, especially Cassirer) speculative approach which seeks to link a rectilinear development of language—from simpler to more sophisticated forms—to an equally rectilinear development of human thought in the distant past of our species. The weakness of this section in no way detracts from the following discussions, except for the very real danger that some readers may choose not to continue with their examination of the volume, and thus miss out on the far more interesting and sophisticated discussions which follow, a number of which are also polemical in nature.

The remainder of this chapter is on more solid footing methodologically, though a terminological note is necessary. Kordić defines the category of relative clause within what she characterizes as a *typological* (tipološki) approach, which is in fact a reference to prototypicality theory. The term *typological* thus does not in this work refer to a criterion for language classification (opposed to genetic classification). Rather, it refers to the definition of some category or class by reference to the most frequent (i.e., typical) characteristics of its members. The category or class thus consists of a core of “typical” or “focal” members, and a periphery of less typical ones which contain some, but not all, of the typical features. This is, thus, one form of *positive* definition, and is distinct from negative definitions (i.e., based on the opposition of differential features), and, more generally, from those based on the concept of invariance (be they positive or negative in formulation). At the same time, Kordić does distinguish between a larger set of features which are typical of relative clauses in a variety of languages, including Serbo-Croatian, and a smaller set of three features which are present in all relative clauses in Serbo-Croatian. The latter (always present) characteristics in Serbo-Croatian are: 1) that the relative clause is a subordinate clause; 2) that it contains a relativizer (a word introducing and indicating the relative function of the clause); and 3) that the antecedent (or the pro-word standing in for it) has some syntactic-semantic and pragmatic function in the relative clause. The former characteristics (typical but not always present in Serbo-Croatian) are: 4) the attributive function of the relative clause (which, furthermore, implies the presence of an antecedent in the matrix clause, which is most often a substantive); and 5) the immediate juxtaposition of the antecedent and relativizer, with the relativizer appearing at the beginning of the relative clause. Kordić might also have included in the former (broader, non-obligatory) category the use of a pro-form to stand in for the antecedent in the relative clause, but this characteristic can be derived from more general principles.

Discussion in the following chapters is based on a corpus drawn, interestingly enough, from early twentieth-century written texts. These were chosen so as to reflect a variety of styles—administrative-legal, scholarly, journalistic, literary, and formal speech. The last category is excerpted from a single author (speaker), and is clearly considered to be of secondary importance. When discussing differences between styles, this one is sometimes cited, though other times it is not. I assume that this portion of the corpus was considered secondary precisely because it is transitional to conversational style. The choice of early 20th-century texts for the central corpus, from a period just after the standardization of the modern standard language (though many of the examples still

reflect features which were in principle eliminated by this standardization), allowed the author to more easily discern changes which have been ongoing during the course of the present century.

Kordić also compiled two smaller corpora of data—one from present-day texts and one from M. A. Reljković's *Satyr* (*Satir iliti divji čovik*, 1762; no further bibliographic citation is given), which she uses in some discussions to confirm trends in the development of the standard language. She also utilized for a number of discussions Savić and Polovina's published corpus of conversational (Vojvodina) Serbo-Croatian texts. In a majority of instances, Kordić was able to ascertain that the two secondary corpora are strikingly similar in their data, which leads to the conclusion that the standard language has been undergoing a progressive "intellectualization" or "formalization" yielding, for example, a far higher frequency of nonrestrictive relative clauses in the contemporary (i.e., early 20th century) standard language than in either contemporary conversational usage or Reljković's 18th-century prose. In both of these latter corpora, the lower frequency of nonrestrictive relative clauses correlates with a lower frequency of the relativizer *koji*, which in the main (early 20th-century) corpus introduces just as many nonrestrictive as restrictive relative clauses. While this and other results based on comparisons of these several corpora are highly suggestive and probably correct, they fall just short of being totally convincing in their present form: the 18th-century data are drawn from a single author who (as Kordić indeed notes) originated in an area (Slavonia) near to that (Vojvodina) from which Savić and Polovina drew their sample. Further study should demonstrate conclusively whether these results are generally valid.

The chapter on the relativizer *koji* also mentions the other adjectival relative pronouns (*čiji* 'whose,' *kakav* 'what kind of a ...,' *koliki* 'how big a ...'), but these latter are discussed only secondarily. In regard to the classification of relative pronouns, Kordić, in contrast to a majority of Croatian authors, notes correctly that while *koji* is by form an adjectival pronoun, in terms of function it is either adjectival or substantival, as it can "replace" (i.e., have as its antecedent) either an adjective or a substantive. In fact (and this is evinced by the fairly unnatural example which she cites of *koji* in adjectival function), her statement could easily have been so bold as to assert that relative *koji* is *primarily* substantival in function, only occasionally being used in adjectival function. This generalization can and should be checked during the course of future investigations.

In this chapter Kordić is interested, more than anything else, in factors which affect the restrictiveness vs. nonrestrictiveness of relative clauses introduced by *koji*. She thus employs a method of presentation distinct from that practiced in the following chapters. Specifically, while in later chapters she analyzes the syntactic properties of a given class of relative clauses, in this chapter her perspective is that of perception and interpretation—in other words, she is interested in determining what factors lead listeners/readers to interpret a given relative clause as restrictive or nonrestrictive. While this is, to be sure, an interesting and nontrivial issue, there is a danger that this approach can slide into the epistemologically misguided search for factors which "make" a relative clause restrictive or nonrestrictive. In reality, while a restrictive or nonrestrictive relative clause may be impossible, problematical, or uncommon in some definable contexts, the use of one or the other results nevertheless from a *decision* on the part of the speaker/writer. A restrictive (or nonrestrictive) relative clause does not, strictly speaking, *result* from the interaction of syntactic, semantic or pragmatic factors. While the author is surely aware of this, some of her statements are formulated loosely enough that they

border upon this epistemological error. For example, in the discussion of relative clauses whose antecedent is a proper noun or a phrase referring to a unique referent (66ff.), we read such formulations as:

“Ako bi se u navedenim primjerima na mjesto lične zamjenice *me, njemu, mi, vi* stavila neka opća imenica poput *čovjek, muškarac, ljudi*, odredba bi automatski postala restriktivna.”

If in the above-cited examples the personal pronouns *me, njemu, mi, vi* were replaced by a common noun such as *čovjek, muškarac, ljudi*, the attribute would automatically become restrictive.

Or, even more disturbing, on p. 77:

Restriktivnost ili nerestriktivnost relativne rečenice općenito je rezultat uzajamnog utjecaja više različitih činilaca, među kojima su najvažniji: sadržaj i sastav antecedenta ..., sadržaj i sastav relativne rečenice ..., znanje sugovornika o izvanjezičnoj stvarnosti ..., te kontekst.

The restrictiveness or nonrestrictiveness of a relative clause is in general the result of the mutual influence of a number of different factors, among which the most important are: the content and composition of the antecedent ..., the content and composition of the relative clause ..., the interlocutor's knowledge of extralinguistic reality ..., and context.

Similar statements occur throughout the sections dealing with this issue. It may appear to be splitting hairs to criticize such expressions when no informed reader can be seriously misled by them. Even if this is—hopefully—true, this approach inappropriately shifts our perspective, and can lead to an overly formal approach which makes reference to, say, proper nouns and personal pronouns as *causal* agents which trigger a nonrestrictive reading, when in reality the fact that such antecedents are regularly followed by nonrestrictive relative clauses is an entirely predictable *corollary*, which therefore hardly even needs to be stated, of the principle that a fully individuated and determined antecedent cannot, by definition, be followed by a restrictive relative clause. If a lexeme which is usually a proper noun is used in some nonindividuated, generic sense naming a set of individuals, rather than a single individual, then it too can be followed by a restrictive relative clause. Since a personal pronoun is not (or, more precisely, as we shall see just below, is rarely) used in such a generic, nonindividuated sense, of course it cannot (except—though again predictably—in the exceptional context mentioned just below) be modified by a restrictive relative clause.

The issue then arises whether there are instances, albeit infrequent, in which *koji* introducing a restrictive relative clause can have a personal pronoun antecedent. As examples demonstrating that this does indeed occur, Kordić presents several sentences of the type:

1 Ima *ih* više, *KOJE* VALJA OD NAVEDENOG BROJA ODBITI, ... (68)

There are *more/a number of them WHICH SHOULD BE SUBTRACTED FROM THE ABOVE-CITED NUMBER*

- 2 Ima *ih*, *KOJI KAŽU*, da ... (68)

There are *those* (literally, *them*) *WHO SAY* that ...

- 3 ... *koliko nas* ima, *KOJI NE POZNAME NI GLAVNIH TOČAKA HRVATSKO-UGARSKE NAGODBE* ... (68)

... *how many of us* are there *WHO ARE NOT ACQUAINTED WITH EVEN THE MAIN POINTS OF THE CROATIAN-HUNGARIAN COMPROMISE* ...

Kordić correctly rejects the idea that it is the personal pronoun which determines the type of attribution (restrictive), as well as the idea that it is third person personal pronouns, indicating as they do a referent which need not be present, and thus need not be fully determined in the minds of the participants in the dialogue (as example 3, Kordić's example 15 on p. 68, clearly demonstrates), which leads to the restrictive reading. The author quite correctly ascertains that the crucial factor here is the construction of the type *više ih je* 'there are more/a number of them,' *ima ih* 'there are those (literally them),' in which the partitive genitive of the personal pronoun indicates that the referent is being viewed as a set of individuals, out of which the relative clause will define a subset on the basis of the stated criterion. Thus, Kordić is able to conclude (p. 71) that: 1) it is true that personal pronouns as antecedents do influence the interpretation of relative clauses as nonrestrictive; 2) a partitive genitive of a personal pronoun, however, is correlated with restrictive relative clauses unless, however, 3) the content of the relative clause in some way precludes the restrictive interpretation, as in:

- 4 Rafinesque i Agassiz opisali su svaki po tri tobožnje nove, a kao da to ne bi već dovoljno bilo, dodao je Dumeril *još 16 njih, KOJE SVE VALJA STRPATI U DOSADNU SINONIMIJU*. (67)

Rafinesque and Agassiz each described three so-called new (ones), and as if that wouldn't already be enough, Dumeril added *16 more of them, WHICH SHOULD ALL BE STUFFED INTO THE CATEGORY OF TEDIOUS SYNONYMY*.

This is all perfectly true, to the extent that we are speaking of the *interpretation* of relative clauses by a speaker or reader, and this formulation already represents an important contribution. If, however, instead of setting out from the perspective of interpretation, and asking how certain specific antecedents affect that interpretation, we proceed instead from a *functional definition* of restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses and a *general statement* of the conditions or environments in which a restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clause is possible or impossible, likely or unlikely, stated in the broadest possible terms, (presumably at least in part in terms of individuation and definiteness of a potential nominal antecedent), and then ask what specific factors, be they lexical, syntactic, pragmatic or contextual, lead to the creation of these conditions or

environments, we arrive at a much more concise and intuitively satisfying statement of the factors which affect the interpretation of any given relative clause in any given environment. This is true because our statement proceeds in the preferred direction for purposes of exposition—from axiom to corollary. In the course of an account so ordered, the individual conditions enumerated just above should emerge as *predictable corollaries*. Once again, this is not to say that the organization of presentation adopted by the author is in any sense invalid (as long as one avoids the lurking epistemological error described above). This organization is useful, (indeed, necessary!) at a preliminary stage of analysis, where one is interested in *discovering* important correlations. What is missing is the *restatement in terms of general principles and corollaries derived from them*, which would have yielded a much more perspicuous presentation.

In common with other pro-word relativizers, nominal and non-nominal alike,¹ *koji* is shown to have a double function. It is, on the one hand, a relativizer (conjunction), and on the other the expression of the antecedent and of its function in the relative clause. This distinction between the conjunctive and representational functions provides the criterion for Kordić's most basic (or so it at least seems to the reviewer) classification of relativizers—viz., into those which combine both functions and those which are merely conjunctions.

Their different functions according to this criterion, combined with their (virtually) complementary distribution, allows Kordić to establish the distinctness of two homophonous (as well as homographic) *što* relativizers, which she labels *što_N* (*N* = *nesklonjivi* 'indeclinable') and *što_S* (*S* = *sklonjivi* 'declinable'). The latter appears primarily in restrictive relative clauses. It is a substantival pronoun, and thus combines the representational and conjunctive functions. It almost never takes a substantive as its antecedent, and can appear in "free" position (i.e., without an expressed antecedent). It is therefore in virtually complementary distribution with *koji*, which almost always takes a substantive as its antecedent, and that antecedent is in principle nonomissible. Exceptions to this complementarity are rare. *što_N*, in contrast, occurs almost exclusively in nonrestrictive relative clauses. It is a conjunction but not a pronoun. It serves as a stylistically marked alternate (*stilsko rezerva*) to *koji*. Its distribution is thus a subset of that of *koji*. As the use of nonrestrictive relative clauses, introduced primarily by *koji*, has increased over the past two centuries (at the expense of independent clauses), the use of *što_N* as a stylistic alternate for *koji* has also substantially increased.

An important factor which affects the restrictive vs. nonrestrictive interpretation of the relative clause is the determiner of the antecedent. This refers, we are told (72), to demonstrative, possessive, general, indefinite and negative pronouns, as well as the lexeme *jedan* 'one.' Kordić's definition of the function of determiners and the difference between this function and that of adjectives is perhaps not the most felicitous. Her positive statement concerning the function of these words is that:

¹Serbo-Croatian has a terminological advantage over English in that its term *zamjenica/zamenica* does not imply a nominal stem. One can thus refer to *gd(j)e* 'where,' *kad* 'when,' etc. as *priložne zam(j)enice*, where in English one could hardly refer to *adverbial pronouns*. In the latter language one is compelled to employ awkward formulations such as *adverbial pro-words*, or similar.

Svima njima je zajedničko da označavaju način na koji će se referiranje ostvariti: pokaznošću, posvojnošću, općošću, neodređenošću ili odricanjem postojanja referenata. Po tome se njihova uloga kad se jave uz imenicu i razlikuju [sic!, for razlikuje] od uloge pridjeva uz istu imenicu—dok pridjev precizira sadržaj imeničkog pojma (npr. *CRVENI šešir*), dotle ove riječi za tako preciziran sadržaj imeničkog pojma izriču način na koji će se ostvariti njegova referencija (npr. *OVAJ crveni šešir*) ... (72)

They all have in common that they indicate the manner in which reference will be realized: by demonstrativeness, possessivity, generality, indefiniteness, or denial of the existence of a referent. It is this that differentiates their role from that of an adjective which appears along with the same substantive—while the adjective defines the content of the substantival concept (e.g., *RED hat*), these words specify for the thus defined content of the substantival concept the manner in which its reference will be realized (e.g., *THIS red hat*) ...

In fact, what all of these determiners do is, primarily: to refer. What they indicate is, primarily: some class, set, or subset of objects (described by the substantive) and defined with respect to some broad criterion. It would thus be more accurate to differentiate between the roles of adjectives and determiners by stating that the former define, while the latter refer. It is not at all clear that what Kordić has described is a *način* (i.e., “manner in which something—in this case reference—is accomplished”), though perhaps one could describe the role of these determiners as an indication of the *manner of reference* in the other sense of the English word “manner,” (viz., “class, type, form”). In fact, there is a sense in which *način referiranja* (manner in which reference is accomplished) may be considered crucial to this discussion, and which Kordić discusses in detail later in this section (viz., the distinction between deictic/anaphoric reference, on the one hand, and cataphoric reference, on the other²). The designation *način referiranja*, if it is to be used at all, should be reserved for that discussion.

There is one further difficulty with the functional distinction between adjectives and determiners as drawn by Kordić in the above quote. Specifically, the distinction between the semantic roles of adjectives and determiners is hardly as clear as Kordić’s definition would indicate. For example, the adjectives *poznat* ‘(well-)known,’ *izvjestan* ‘certain,’ *(s)pomenuti* ‘(above-)mentioned,’ clearly express the meaning assigned by Kordić to determiners, as in the phrases:

²A crucial and necessary distinction in Kordić’s work is that between deictic and anaphoric reference of a determiner, on the one hand, and cataphoric reference of a determiner, on the other. In deictic and anaphoric reference, the determiner’s antecedent has been introduced into the utterance (in the case of anaphoric reference) or extralinguistic situation (in the case of deictic reference) prior to the determiner itself. Cataphoric reference is in fact a variant of anaphoric reference in which the antecedent of the determiner is introduced following it. It becomes crucial for a reader to distinguish simultaneously between, on the one hand, the antecedent of a determiner (functionally, an attributive phrase or clause), which in these discussions is a relative clause, and, on the other hand, the antecedent of the relative clause (functionally, a substantival phrase or clause), which in these discussions is the head noun modified by the determiner.

- 5a *spomenuta osoba* ‘the above-mentioned person’
 5b *izvjesna osoba* ‘a/the certain person’
 5c *poznata osoba* ‘a (well-)known person’

This overlap of function is illustrated by cooccurrence restrictions of the type:

- 6a *ovaj crveni šešir* ‘this red hat’
 6b *spomenuti crveni šešir* ‘the above-mentioned red hat’
 6c **/?ovaj spomenuti crveni šešir* ‘this above-mentioned red hat’

These latter adjectives, while differing formally (i.e., morphologically) from the determiners, and belonging, one might say, to a different part of speech, nevertheless fill the same syntactic slot or function as the determiners, rather than the slot or function reserved for qualitative adjectives.

In the following text Kordić distinguishes between the terms *imenica* ‘substantive (noun),’ *supstantiv* (a functional category), and *nominal*. On p. 74 we read in reference to the sentences:

- 7 [NS Njihov_{Det} [N čaj_{Sup}]] se ohladio (Kordić’s example 17)
 8 [NS [N Njihov_{Sup}]] se ohladio (Kordić’s example 18)

the following:

“U (17) zamjenica *njihov* je determinator, koji svojim stalnim sadržajem (posvojnošću) određuje način ostvarivanja referencije nominala. Imenica *čaj*, supstantiv i upravna riječ u nominalnoj sintagmi, projicira svoju sposobnost referiranja i vršenja rečenične funkcije subjekta na čitavu nominalnu sintagmu. U (18) zamjenica *njihov* više nije determinator. Kao jedini, konstitutivni član nominalne sintagme ona je supstantiv te ostvaruje i referenciju i sintaktičku funkciju čitave nominalne sintagme. Zbog toga se nalazi u paradigmatskom odnosu s imenicama kao vrstom riječi, dok se determinator u (17) nalazi u sintagmatskom odnosu s konkretnom imenicom.”

In (17) the pronoun *njihov* is a determiner, which by its invariant content (possessivity) determines the manner in which reference of the nominal is realized. The substantive *čaj*, a/the *supstantiv* and the head [literally, “governing word”] of the noun phrase, projects its ability to refer and to fulfill the sentential function of subject onto the entire noun phrase. In (18) the pronoun *njihov* is no longer a determiner. As the sole, constitutive member of the noun phrase it is a *supstantiv* and carries out both reference and the syntactic function of the entire nominal phrase. Because of this it is in a paradigmatic relation with substantives as a part of speech, while the determiner in (17) is in a syntagmatic relation with a concrete substantive.”

This would appear to be saying:

1) Since the word *zamjenica* ‘pronoun’ is applied to the lexeme *njihov* in both examples, this term refers to the part of speech (i.e., lexical class) of *njihov*, here defined morphologically.

2) “Determiner” and *supstantiv* refer to distinct syntactic functions. The latter term, *supstantiv*, apparently refers to the syntactic function usually expressed by a substantive—i.e., head of a noun phrase (though one wonders why we require the conjunction: “*supstantiv and* [emphasis added, A.C.] head of the noun phrase”). Kordić is, then, asserting that in the absence of a substantive the function of *supstantiv* can be filled by an adjectival pronoun such as *njihov*. (The question would remain as to whether, say, a substantival pronoun such as a personal pronoun is also conceived of as potentially filling the syntactic role of *supstantiv*, or whether this function is more narrowly defined.)

3) The term “nominal,” as indicated by the bracketing of the examples, refers to the “internal” noun phrase consisting of attribute plus *supstantiv*. The determiner is outside of this syntactic unit.

If this interpretation of her terminology is correct (as seems to be made clear by the discussion on p. 75), then the author’s assertion certainly is not. Surely example 8 (Kordić’s example 18) presents us with neither more nor less than a straightforward case of omission of a substantive which is still implicitly present in the same functional slot that it would occupy if it were expressed overtly. If anyone doubts that the pronoun *njihov* still *modifies*—i.e., indicates the (albeit implicit) presence of—the substantive *čaj*, they need look no further than to the masculine gender of the pronoun. This cannot be changed, even to neuter gender, without thoroughly altering the meaning of the sentence (specifically, without altering the substantive which the pronoun does, yes, still modify). If the pronoun were indeed filling the same syntactic slot or function as a substantive, there would be no criterion for assigning gender to it. Presumably, if this adjectival pronoun were at all possible in this function, it would *have to* appear in neuter gender (which, as we see, it cannot, at least without changing the meaning of the sentence).

We have the same problem in regard to Kordić’s examples (19), (20), and (21), here repeated as:

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------------|
| 9 | [_{NS} Ovaj] _{Det} [_N zidni _{Attr} sat _{Sup}]] je točan | ‘This wall clock is accurate.’ |
| 10 | [_{NS} [_N Ovaj] _{Sup}]] je točan | ‘This (one) is accurate.’ |
| 11 | [_{NS} [_N Zidni _{Sup}]] je točan | ‘The wall (clock) is accurate.’ |

As was the case with the above-cited examples, in these once again the pronominal determiner *ovaj* and the adjectival attribute remain in the same slot or function whether or not the substantive is expressed.

This apparent misinterpretation is particularly surprising if we bear in mind that in her later discussion of determiners of omitted substantives which (i.e., determiners) refer cataphorically to a following restrictive relative clause (i.e., to a relative clause which will define a subset of the already definite set of referents named by the noun phrase which precedes the relative clause), Kordić herself (193-194) argues that the omitted substantive is still implicitly present, and that it is precisely the agreement of the determiner with it which serves as the most obvious evidence of this.

The interesting point in this section is that, not unexpectedly, both between various classes of determiners as well as within a single class, some determiners correlate strongly with a restrictive reading of a following relative clause, others with a

nonrestrictive reading. It is also not surprising, given the previous literature on Serbo-Croatian and other languages, that the proximal demonstrative pronoun *ovaj* ‘this’ (other proximal demonstratives do not appear with the antecedents of relative clauses in Kordić’s corpus), indicating not only individuation and definiteness of the substantive, but also nearness to the speaker/writer, appear (if I properly interpret the author’s statement) only with relative clauses which either can or must be interpreted as nonrestrictive. As an example in which one can see clearly that it is precisely the proximal pronoun *ovaj* which is influencing the interpretation toward nonrestrictiveness, she gives:

- 12 ... sitničavosti, koja je upravo neponjatna baš *u ovo doba*, KAD JE NAŠA
NAUČNA KNJIŽEVNOST STALA TAKO BRZO NAPREDOVATI ... (81)

... pettiness, which is incomprehensible precisely *in this era(,)* IN WHICH
OUR SCHOLARLY LITERATURE HAS BEGUN TO ADVANCE SO RAPIDLY ...

Kordić notes that this relative clause can be interpreted as either restrictive or nonrestrictive; however, if one eliminates the demonstrative *ovaj*, the clause can only be interpreted as restrictive. It should be pointed out, though, that if one were to replace *ovaj* with *onaj*, the clause can again be interpreted as either restrictive or nonrestrictive. So, in this case at least it is not so much the *proximal* demonstrative *ovaj*, but merely the presence of a demonstrative pronoun, which is affecting the interpretation. Actually, one can question whether a restrictive reading is really possible for the example just cited. In the case of *onaj*, the crucial fact is, again, whether the pronoun is used demonstratively (deictically or anaphorically) or cataphorically. In the former case the reading is, predictably, nonrestrictive. In the latter it is, again predictably, restrictive.

An interesting question concerns the set of medial demonstratives: *taj* ‘that (near the interlocutor),’ *takav* ‘that kind,’ *toliki* ‘such a quantity.’ Kordić asserts that *taj* indicates an individuated and determined referent located in the vicinity of the interlocutor (and thus, in a sense, also of the speaker/writer). It therefore occurs only before nonrestrictive relative clauses. Once again, Kordić supports the claim that it is the pronoun *taj* which conditions the interpretation of a relative clause as nonrestrictive by presenting examples in which, if the pronoun *taj* were omitted, the interpretation could only be restrictive. However, as with the above-cited example with *ovaj*, even if we replace the medial *taj* with a distal *onaj*, a nonrestrictive interpretation is possible (though not obligatory or even likely, about which see just below). Nevertheless, the fact that replacing *taj* with *onaj* in the examples presented by Kordić on p. 82, e.g.:

- 13 ... priznalo se ovim imenovanjem, da je *ta predrasuda*, KOJA JE SKORO
POSTALA DRŽAVNIM PRINCIPOM, iz osnova pogrešna.

... by this nomination it was admitted that *that prejudice*, WHICH HAS
BECOME ALMOST A STATE PRINCIPLE, is fundamentally wrong.

leads to a spontaneous reinterpretation of nonrestrictive relative clauses as restrictive ones is quite significant, as it points to a possible developing complementarity between the

medial and distal demonstratives (viz., a way in which Serbo-Croatian can begin, to at least to a certain extent, to distinguish between demonstrative and cataphoric pronouns).

Concerning the distal pronoun *onaj* ‘that (one),’ Kordić first asserts that it indicates that the referent is distant from the speaker and that that distance implies the need for more precise determination of the referent. Therefore it is to be expected that *onaj* will appear primarily with restrictive relative clauses, and the corpus confirms that this is indeed the case.

But, of course, distance really does not in and of itself imply the need for further determination. Therefore, there must be some other factor which accounts for the preponderance of restrictive relative clauses following the determiner *onaj*. In fact, Kordić notes precisely what this factor is: in the examples with restrictive relative clauses, *onaj* is being used as a *selectional* (rather than demonstrative, i.e., with *deictic* or *anaphoric* reference) pronoun to refer *cataphorically* to a following relative clause, which defines a subset of referents from the already individuated (i.e., nonhypothetical) set of referents named by the relative clause’s substantival antecedent. It is this selectional, cataphoric function of *onaj* which differentiates it from *ovaj* and *taj*, which are used primarily with anaphoric or deictic reference. *onaj* thus appears with nonrestrictive relative clauses when used demonstratively (i.e., with anaphoric or deictic reference), and with restrictive relative clauses when used selectionally (with cataphoric reference). Thus, we can see that the generalization that *onaj* indicates an object distant from the speaker is itself, if asserted universally, false. *onaj* indicates distance when used demonstratively; not, however, when used selectionally. Thus it can hardly be the case that the distal meaning of this pronoun plays any role at all in accounting for the preponderance of restrictive relative clauses following it.

Once again, we can see that the perspective from which she presents her results prevents the author from reaching the most economical and, strictly speaking, accurate statement of her valuable results. What interests us is, in the final analysis, not how the form *onaj* affects the interpretation of a relative clause, but what factors indicate the individuation and full determination of a substantive or substantive phrase, and what factors indicate its incomplete individuation and determination. Any demonstrative pronoun indicates the former, while any selectional pronoun indicates the latter. The phonological form (i.e., signifiant) *onaj* expresses two (homophonous) pronouns, one demonstrative, the other selectional. The first therefore correlates with nonrestrictive relative clauses, the second with restrictive clauses. This is not to say that there is no conceptual or analytical difficulty to be overcome in reaching the correct analysis. As Kordić rightly points out, in some languages (e.g., German) the selectional pronouns are formally distinct from the demonstratives, so that no such difficulty arises.

Surprisingly, there is no discussion of the role of adjectival aspect (definite vs. indefinite) in signaling restrictiveness or nonrestrictiveness. Of course, to the extent that this syntactic category drops out of the language it loses its significance also for the discussion of relative clauses. However, it hardly appears to be the case that this category has entirely ceased to exist in contemporary standard Croatian (cf. Katičić 1986:384-385).

On pp. 89-91 Kordić discusses the phonetic cues which lead to a restrictive vs. nonrestrictive interpretation. She presents instrumental readings which suggest that it is not a pause, as has been thought in the past, which sets off a nonrestrictive relative clause, but rather a difference in tonal contour. In both Croatian and German sentences which she analyzed, the only phonetic difference was the fact that restrictive relative clauses

contained an initial sharp rise in tone on the preceding (selectional) determiner, which was lacking in the nonrestrictive relative clause. The instrumental readings from a single Croatian example and a single German one, presented by Kordić as illustrations, do indeed seem to confirm her assertion, though of course they cannot by themselves be considered conclusive. She does not discuss phonetic cues for the differentiation between restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses in the absence of a determiner. Since her finding, as far as it goes, does seem to support a growing body of evidence in this regard, a specialized study designed to seek confirmation of this result would be most useful.

On p. 94 Kordić again discusses the prosodic distinction between restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses preceded by the determiner *onaj*. She asserts that in the case of selectional (cataphoric) *onaj*, the antecedent and restrictive relative clause form an intonational unit, defined by logical stress and a sharp rise in tone on the determiner. Nonselectional *onaj* lacks logical stress and the jump in intonation, and thus the antecedent does not form an intonational unit with the following nonrestrictive relative clause. In and of itself this appears to be a weak argument, especially as neither the Croatian nor German examples on which her (illustrated) instrumental readings are based provide a minimal contrast (*ona žena* and *jede Frau* ‘that woman’ + restrictive clause vs. *moja žena* and *meine Frau* ‘my wife’ + nonrestrictive relative clause). Thus we can hardly be certain that it is the syntactic distinction with which the difference in logical stress is correlated.

However, in the following paragraph Kordić notes that in rare instances the order of *onaj* + substantive is reversed, as in:

- 14 Njemu valja bez ikakva zatezanja i krzmanja pripisati sva dobra i *zla ona*, KOJA JE TURSKA DOŽIVILA TIEKOM NJEGOVOG VLADANJA. (94)

To him should be ascribed without any hesitation or doubt all of the good and *all of the evil WHICH* TURKEY EXPERIENCED DURING HIS RULE.

She notes merely that this results in greater emphasis on the substantive, since it is no longer under the intonational domination of the determiner. This passage could benefit from a definition of what is meant by “intonational domination.” Kordić fails to discuss the syntactic significance of the reversal of determiner and substantive. Given the location of this paragraph, we can infer that she intends it as support for her contention that selectional *onaj* introduces an intonational unit consisting of antecedent substantival phrase plus restrictive relative clause. From the two examples given (one of which is reproduced here as example 13), it would appear that the inverted order does indeed (though the reviewer is admittedly not a native speaker) exclude logical stress on the determiner and a selectional reading for it, and thus also a restrictive reading for the relative clause. Inversion of the determiner and substantive does therefore appear to allow the reader or listener to unambiguously interpret *onaj* as nonselectional (and thus deictic/anaphoric), and the relative clause as nonrestrictive. This phenomenon clearly deserves further study, especially in regard to the syntactic significance of the inversion.

Kordić appears to have found relatively few examples of relative clauses whose antecedent contains the determiners *takav* ‘that kind of ... (medial)’ and *onakav* ‘that kind of ... (distal)’ (*ovakav* ‘this kind of ... (proximal)’ does not appear in this function

in her corpus), or *toliki* ‘that big a... (medial)’ (*ovoliki* and *onoliki* do not appear in this function). Surprisingly, while *toliki* introduces both restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses, *takav* and *onakav* appear only in selectional meaning, and thus introduce only restrictive relative clauses. We are left to wonder whether *takav* and *onakav* **necessarily** correlate with selectional meaning, though Kordić does cite literature on Russian and German in which it is stated that corresponding determiners in those languages do indeed regularly introduce restrictive relative clauses. In that case, we are still left with the question as to why it is that the qualitative determiners allow only selectional meaning, while the corresponding quantitative determiner has no such limitation.

Of especial significance are Kordić’s results concerning the phenomenon of genitive-accusative (henceforth A=G) syncretism. One interesting conclusion, at least as a break with tradition, is that in contemporary Croatian, use of the originally genitive form for both masculine and neuter genders, regardless of the animacy of the antecedent, is normal and fully acceptable. Though this represents a break with tradition, she appears to be amply supported by the data available to her, and she is able also to point to a trend among recent grammarians to cease condemnation of such usage. As further support she draws on similar results by Browne (1986:36-47, 145-147). Surprisingly, Kordić notes that A=G syncretism regardless of the animacy of the antecedent was already widespread in the 18th century (at least in her corpus drawn from M. A. Reljković), so that one must wonder whether grammarians’ injunctions against it were ever rooted in a constraint which existed also in popular usage.

It would be quite interesting to learn whether the same conclusion concerning the acceptability of A=G syncretism would be equally accurate for contemporary Serbian usage (beyond Kordić’s global assertion on p. 47 that all of her results concerning contemporary Croatian usage apply equally to all varieties of standard *Ítokavian*, as used in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, and Montenegro). She cites without especial comment (116) the view of Mrazović and Vukadinović (1990:318) that substandard use of *kojeg* for expected *koji* is more characteristic of Croatian or western, than of Serbian or eastern usage. Assuming the correctness of Kordić’s position concerning the acceptability of *kojeg* in contemporary Croatian, it is thus possible that this is one more area of syntactic divergence between standard Croatian and standard Serbian usage. In this regard it should be borne in mind (and we will return to this issue below), that Kordić has distinguished herself as one of the most outspoken opponents of attempts to purify the Croatian language of putatively (but only putatively!) non-Croatian elements and make it maximally distinct from other varieties of standard *Ítokavian*. Nevertheless, it is to be remembered that during the Communist period any assertion of differences between Croatian and Serbian was either repressed or at least discouraged. It would be highly surprising if subsequent research, conducted in a freer atmosphere (freed also from the perplexing political correctness which has prevented even western scholars from exploring this obvious area of research for fear of being labeled agents of Croatian linguistic extremism), did not uncover areas of syntactic divergence between contemporary Croatian and Serbian usage beyond those which are known to any first-year student of the language.³

³On one such obvious divergence (use of the predicative instrumental) and the history of its suppression, see Corin 1995.

Aside from the mere fact of innovation in favor of A=G syncretism, Kordić notes several specific hierarchies in its development. First, she notes Browne's claim that *kojeg* for expected *koji* does not occur if the substantive is repeated along with the relative pronoun (i.e., proximity of the antecedent inhibits syncretism). Kordić notes further that (at least in this century) syncretism occurs even where the antecedent is neuter. In other words, the relative pronoun is subject to syncretism even in a category where substantives are not. She ties this in with the fact that such a tendency is otherwise known precisely for personal pronouns, e.g., Russian neuter *ono*, genitive *ego*, but equally so (Serbo-)Croatian *ono*, genitive *ga*. On pp. 122-124 Kordić discusses a questionnaire survey which she carried out with a group of Croatian students. The responses showed that they in general favored the *kojeg* form, especially where: 1) *koji/koje* would have led to ambiguity; 2) the antecedent was definite, thus leading to a nonrestrictive reading. *koji* in a nonrestrictive relative clause is, in a sense, more separated (i.e., distant) from the antecedent (this thus ties in with the impossibility, noted above, of A=G syncretism where the antecedent is repeated alongside the relative pronoun), but this also correlates with the greater tendency of definite and concrete referents to demand formal differentiation of the subject and object functions. For a further motivation for this observation Kordić refers to other authors, but especially Comrie (1978:35), who also notes and explains the correlation of definiteness with A=G syncretism as due to the fact that the subject function is correlated with both definiteness and animacy, so that a direct object which is also definite and animate is most easily confused with the subject if they are identical in form. On p. 127 (including fn. 77), Kordić notes, citing again Comrie's earlier similar claims (1978:40), that A=G syncretism is more likely in direct object function than as a prepositional object. The fact that examples can indeed be found of *kojeg* for expected *koji/koje* in the latter environment, where the A=G syncretism has no syntactic motivation, indicates that the process of generalization of the form *kojeg* for the accusative case of both masculine and neuter genders is fairly far advanced.

Finally, an extensive section is devoted to another area of ongoing innovation—that of the possessive (this term being understood in the broad sense of “pertinential”⁴) use of the relative pronouns *koji* and *čiji*. Kordić discusses two purported changes, one of which she considers to be real, the other apparent. First, earlier grammars admit the use of relative *čiji* only in reference to a singular masculine human antecedent; in all other instances the genitive of *koji* is prescribed. Second, earlier grammars prescribe that the possessive genitive of *koji* must precede the substantive indicating the possessed object. Neither of these restrictions is found in new grammars, and both are ignored in practice. Kordić poses the question as to whether these changes in prescriptive grammars reflect actual language change. Concerning the first (*čiji* vs. genitive of *koji*), her corpus shows clearly that even early in this century the prescriptive restriction on the use of *čiji* had no basis in actual usage. The question remains as to the origin of the rule. Concerning the position of the genitive of *koji* in relation to the substantive indicating the possessed object, genuine change appears to have taken place from the beginning of the century to the present, with prepositioning of the relative pronoun predominant in the earlier period, but postposition clearly becoming predominant, indeed almost universal, subsequently. Still, the question remains unanswered as to whether the order genitive of *koji* +

⁴On the distinction between “possession” and “pertinence,” especially in regard to Serbo-Croatian, but with references to the seminal literature, see Corin 1997.

substantive was ever truly autochthonous, or resulted from an (albeit more successful) intervention in the language by grammarians. She does (136) mention the opinion of Dmitriev (1970:56) that in a pan-Slavic perspective the order “genitive of *koji* + substantive” is original. References to the language of Reljković might have been useful in this regard. Though Kordić does not take a firm position concerning the reason for this change, she does note that it involves the winning out of syntactic factors over communicative ones. Postposition of the relative pronoun places it in the same position as would be occupied by the substantive which it replaces, whereas preposition places it so that theme (it would have been better to say “old information”) precedes rheme (actually, new information). Kordić further notes Kovačević’s (1987:155-159) interpretation that the dual function of *koji* entails an inevitable tension when used possessively, as its connective role would favor placement at the beginning of the relative clause, while its pronominal function favors placement following the substantive which names the possessed object. Kovačević feels that this is one reason why *čiji* has largely supplanted *koji*.

In Chapter 3 Kordić returns to a discussion of the two *što* relativizers. Already in the previous chapter she had distinguished two subtypes of the *što_S* relativizer. Aside from the more frequent examples containing a pronominal antecedent, there is a second subtype (termed by Kordić *što_{S*}*), which has an entire clause as its antecedent. *što_{S*}* relative clauses, in contrast to *što_S* clauses, are regularly nonrestrictive. In this chapter Kordić develops the thesis, as well as its explanation (mentioned above) that the relative frequency of *što_N* clauses has been growing in the written language over the past two centuries.

In the chapter on extraposed relative clauses, Kordić finds herself in agreement with previous opinions that extraposition has been becoming less common in the history of the language, just as is believed to be the case in a variety of other languages. She also finds herself in agreement with Browne’s conclusion that extraposition is characteristic primarily of relative clauses introduced by substantival pronouns, but otherwise exceedingly rare. No reason for this striking fact is suggested.

As noted at the beginning of this review, it is impossible to discuss all those areas which would indeed merit attention. The preceding should already suffice to demonstrate that this is a volume which demands serious attention and a thorough reading by Slavists and general linguists alike. Before turning to some final general comments, I would like to discuss in some detail one further issue. In a number of locations in the volume, Kordić emphasizes that relative clauses are characteristically attributive in function (e.g., 24, 25ff.). She notes that this is not always the case, but largely limits her discussion of examples where it is not to those in which no antecedent is expressed (e.g., 32-33, and again in Chapter 5, which is devoted to free relative clauses), so that the relative clause fulfills (or at least appears to fulfill) the sentential or phrasal function of the omitted antecedent. Of course, adverbial relative clauses are attributive in the sense of having an adverbial antecedent—expressed or nonexpressed—which they can be said to modify.

There is, however, a class of relative clauses in which what is clearly a relative clause is not attributive under even an extremely broad definition of that function. Within this class fall Kordić’s examples from Reljković of the type:

- 15 Csovik molli *svoga novoga prijatelya*, da shnyne blaguie, KOY DRAGE
VOLYE KNYEMU PRISIDE. (265)

The man asks *his new friend* to dine with him, *WHO* GLADLY SITS DOWN WITH HIM.

- 16 csovik zovnu *Satyra* da snyme rucsa, *KOY* dok csovik zgotovi iexek, PRIPOVIDI NYEMU U VERSHE LIPOTU OD SLAVONYE. (266)

The man invited the *Satyr* to dine with him, *WHO*, while the man prepared the meal, RELATED TO HIM IN VERSE THE BEAUTY OF SLAVONIA.

as well as, probably, also the following 20th-century example:

- 17 O podne je stigao brzojav iz Tokija, da 28 *obsadnih topova* bombardira Port Artur, *KOJI* SU DO SADA BACILI 385 GRANATA. (268)

At noon a telegram/wire arrived from Tokyo, (saying) that 28 *siege cannon* were bombarding Port Arthur, *WHICH* HAD UP TO NOW LAUNCHED 385 SHELLS.

Kordić presents these sentences as examples of extraposed relative clauses (i.e., in which the relative clause is moved to a later position in the matrix clause, out of direct contact with the antecedent). She notes (and apparently agrees with) Lehmann's (1984:204-205) opinion that extraposition allows the position of the relative clause to be used to build the functional perspective of a sentence (i.e., to be placed in a rhematic position).⁵ Kordić does not comment on the examples from Reljković, while she cites the latter as a rare example in which the matrix clause verb intervenes between the antecedent and the relative clause, and, moreover, as an instance in which extraposition leads to syntactic ambiguity (though I believe that this last assertion is incorrect). In terms of function, she refers (268-269) to this as a maximally freed/independent (osamostaljena) and thus maximally emphasized nonrestrictive relative clause. In fact, the crucial distinctive functional characteristic of these clauses is that while they have a substantival antecedent, they do not describe that antecedent. Rather, they narrate what that antecedent (or, more precisely, its referent) does. In other words, rather than providing background information on the antecedent, they advance the story or plot line of the text. A striking corollary of the *narrative function* of these relative clauses is that, whereas an attributive relative clause relates facts or characteristics which held of the antecedent *already at the time referred to by the clause in which it appears*, these narrative relative clauses relate characteristics which come to apply to the antecedent only *subsequent to the time (or at least the beginning of the time) referred to in the matrix clause*. This is obviously true of the two examples from Reljković, less so of the 20th-century example (17). However, if we alter this latter example to read:

⁵Actually, Kordić cites two motivations for extraposition posited by Lehmann, the second being the avoidance of perceptual difficulties which would occasionally arise were the relative clause to remain in contact with the antecedent.

18 O podne je stiglo 28 *obsadnih topova*, KOJI SU DO SADA BACILI 385 GRANATA.

At noon there arrived 28 *siege cannon*, WHICH HAVE UP TO NOW LAUNCHED 385 SHELLS.

we will have an acceptable modern example in which this corollary is more obviously expressed.

The functional distinctness of the examples under discussion might have been more obvious had Kordić chosen a functional, rather than formal, organizational principle for her analysis. I do not put this forward as criticism, since no single approach allows all significant patterns to emerge clearly, and Kordić has otherwise shown a willingness to switch her perspective and methodology in a number of instances where the need arises.

Kordić makes good use of the chart-making capabilities of spreadsheet software. However, she has a tendency to use three-dimensional charts where a two-dimensional one with a grid set out on *x* and *y* axes would be superior. For example, in the chart on pp. 62, it is not possible for a reader to associate any given position in these ribbon graphs with numerical values, even though a numerical scale is provided on the left-hand side.

When comparing quantities of examples with one characteristic to those with another, Kordić follows the usual Slavistic practice of merely comparing the numerical results and reaching conclusions based on the raw arithmetic comparison. It would have been preferable if, for example, on p. 63, but more importantly, in the comparisons on 175 ff., she had applied a test of significance (such as X^2) in those instances where there was any doubt as to the significance of the differences noted. The dot diagrams by which Kordić illustrates her quantitative comparisons are not an adequate replacement for a test of significance.

Kordić has scrupulously avoided the politicization of her scholarship, as evinced by her willingness to cite Serbian as well as Croatian secondary literature, to appear at scholarly gatherings in Serbia as well as Croatia, as well as in her resistance to attempts to “cleanse” Croatian linguistic terminology. In the appendix entitled “On Terms and Somewhat More” (*O terminima i nešto šire*, 317-321), she chronicles this episode, including some of the difficulties which she has herself faced as a consequence of her stance.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that this rich work certainly deserves a far more extensive review than I am able to provide here. It is indeed the very seriousness and quality of Kordić’s research which has led me to devote so much space to the manner in which her results are formulated. The single most important criticism would therefore be that the structure of some of her discussions reflects the methodology which a researcher would utilize to *discover* patterns and correlations in the data, rather than a restatement in terms of *general principles* which have been inferred or elucidated. It is my expectation, and certainly my hope, that Kordić’s volume will play a fundamental role in shaping the future course of study of relative clauses in Serbo-Croatian and its various (albeit currently diverging) standard languages.

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