The structure of an exclamative construction in Brazilian Portuguese

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The main goal of this paper is to describe what the subjacent structure of an exclamative construction of Brazilian Portuguese, namely, Free Small Clauses (henceforth FSC) is, since in surface it seems to be smaller than a full-fledged sentence. Therein I will take FSC as a juxtaposition of a predicate and its subject, in that order, without any morphological specification for tense in the surface, exactly as in (1), despite of its basis seems to have a predicative copular structure without copula.

(1) a. *Linda   a sua roupa!*   b. *Uma droga aquele programa de televisão!*
    beautiful the your clothes   a   drug that   program of television
    "Your clothes are beautiful!"   "That TV program sucks!"

I will propose, based on some tests, that this structure of BP is a TP-Phase. For achieve this, I will assume that: (i) small clauses are configurational and nondirectional (Den Dikken 2006) and (ii) phase could not be only CP and v*P (against Chomsky 2000), adopting a Phase Extension (Den Dikken 2006, 2007) framework.

It is worth noting that FSC are restricted by the following algorithms: (i) FSC subjects must be specifics (cf. (2)); (ii) FSC predicate must be gradable and evaluative of individual level (cf. (3)); and (iii) FSC (non-morphological) tense must be subtended as present (cf. (4)).

(2) a. **chato(s)   menino(s)/ um menino qualquer/ nenhum menino/ poucos meninos!*
    boring(PL)boy(s) / a boy   any   / no   boy / few   boys
  b. *Chato esse menino!/* "This boy sucks!"

(3) **Bêbada/ *grávida/ *motorista/ *daçando/ legal a   Maria!*
   drunk/ pregnant/ driver / dancing / nice the Maria

(4) *Linda a sua roupa!* – "Your clothers are/ *were/ *will be beautiful"

Since (i) we can have subject with quantifiers and negative polarity items (NPI) in predicate position (cf. (5)), and (ii) we cannot have a locative PP or an adverb intervening between the predicate and the subject of a FSC (cf. (6)), I will assume that both the subject and the predicate are in an A-position.

(5) a. *Um amor cada um de vocês!/*   a'. *Muito lindos   todos esses seus sapatos!*
    a love each one of you   very   beautiful all   these your shoes
    "Each onde of you is lovely!"/   "All of these shoes are very beautiful!"
  b. *Nem um pouco bonita   a Maria!/* b'. *Nada legal a   sua irmã!*
    nor a little beautiful the Maria   nothing nice the your sister
    "Maria is not even a little bit beautiful!"/   "Your sister are nothing nice!"

(6)a. **Lindas na igreja/ ontem   as flores/* b. **Bonito na   festa/ ontem   o seu vestido*
    pretty in.the church/yesterday the flowers beautiful in.the party/yesterday the your dress
  a'. *Lindas as flores   na   igreja / ontem/*b'. *Bonito seu vestido na   festa/ ontem*
    pretty   the flowers in.the church/ yesterday beautiful your dress in.the party/ yesterday
    "Flowers were pretty in the church/ yesterday!"/ "Your dress was beautiful yesterday"

The fact that we cannot have a VP adverb intervening between the predicate and the subject of a FSC (as in (7)), seems to allow us to suggest that this structures are not the result of the raising of the predicate over the subject nor the subject adjunction to the right, that is, FSC subject and predicate seem to be *in situ*.

(7)a. *Sempre linda   a sua roupa!*   b. *Sempre uma droga aquele programa!*
    always beautiful the your clothes   always a   drug that program
    "Your clothes are always beautiful!"   "That program is always a shit!"
  a'. **Bonita   sempre a sua roupa!/* b'. **Uma droga sempre aquele programa!*

beautiful always the your clothes   a   drug   always that   program

When embedded in ECM verbs, "apparent" FSC can appear both in a subject-predicate and in a predicate-subject order (cf. (8)), while in a root way, they cannot appear in subject-predicate order (cf. (9)). This fact seems to suggest FSC cannot be embedded and what we have in these cases is an ordinary SC, given that BP FSC seem to have TP, as we can add a temporal adverb on it (cf. (10)). In view of the fact that we can have (11a) but not (11b), I will assume that FSC are in fact a root TP, without CP, that is, it is really "free".

(8) a. *Eu achei [horrível o dia]!*   b. *A Maria achou [bonita a sua roupa]!*
     a'. *Eu achei [o dia horrível]!*   b'. *A Maria achou [a sua roupa bonita]!*
     "I found awful the day/the day awful!"   "Maria found pretty your clothes/ your clothes pretty!"
(9)a. **O dia horrível!*   b. **A sua roupa bonita!*
(10)a. *Bonita a   sua   roupa ontem!*   b. *Muito lindo   o   dia hoje!*
       pretty the your clothes yesterday   very beautiful the day today
       "Your clothes were pretty yesterday!"   "The day is beautiful today!"
(11)a. *Hoje eu acho que a sua roupaᵢ 'tava [tᵢ bonita] ontem.*
       "Today I consider that your clothes were pretty yesterday."
   b. **Hoje eu acho [bonita   a   sua   roupa] ontem.*
       today I   think beautiful the your clothes yesterday

Taking all of these considerations into account, I will assume that FSC structure is the one represented in (12). What I am suggesting is that erasing of copula in BP is only allowed in (12) configuration, that is, a RP small clause emerged from a reverse predication, being selected by a root TP, adopting a configurational and nondirectional approach for SCs (Den Dikken 2006).

(12)   [$_{TP}$ T [$_{RP}$ PREDICATE [RELATOR [SUBJECT]]]]

Once Den Dikken's (2006, 2007) proposal: (i) do not consider C-T as a set (cf. Chomsky 2004), allowing that non-defective T has its own φ-features, and (ii) assume that TP can be a phase, *via* Phase Extension (raising of R to T), this framework seems to be more suitable for explain the empirical results we got earlier.

FSC derivation occurs as following: R selects the subject as its complement and after that the predicate as its specifier. TP enters in derivation and RP head is raised to T. This movement triggers Phase Extension from RP to TP, following Den Dikken's (2006, 2007) proposal. Phase Extension solves problems related to Phase Impenetrability Condition. T enters into an Agree relation with the subject, since the predicate cannot count for intervention effects as it has no person feature in its composition (cf. Maximization Principle, Chomsky 2001, 15). Once EPP feature is optional in romance languages (Nunes 2007), derivation stops in (13) with all uninterpretable features checked and is sent to spell-out.

(13)

TP   →   Phase - Φ

T   RP   →   Phase - Φ

R$_i$ DegP   R'

*u*NUM: ~~sing.~~

*u*PERS: ~~3a~~   *Predicate* t$_i$ DP

*u*GEN: ~~masc~~   *Subject*

                         *u*GEN: ~~masc.~~

          *u*NUM: ~~sing.~~ *i*GEN: masc. *i*NUM: sing. *i*PERS: 3a

                    *u*Case: ~~Nom~~
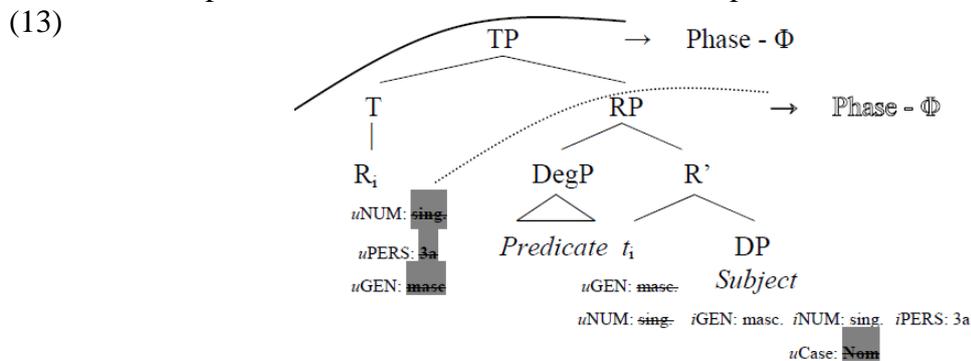
If the analysis proposed here is on the right track, it shows that FSC of BP seem to be an evidence that TP also can be considered a phase (and not only CP and *v**P, as considered in Chomsky, 2000 *et passim*), as already proposed, in a different and a independent way, in Gallego (2007) and Gallego and Uriagereka (2006).