Comparative Syntax and the Lexicon

Richard S. Kayne
New York University
June, 2008

The development of comparative syntax over the past thirty years or so[1] has had a considerable effect on how syntactic work is done. It has become more usual to take into simultaneous account multiple languages, not simply to get a broader view of the human language faculty, but more specifically to use close cross-linguistic comparison as a tool for unearthing properties of the language faculty that might otherwise have been (more) difficult to bring to the fore. It has become more common to ask why some property found in language A is not also found in language B, with the resulting answer often shedding notable light on the syntax of both languages. In the case of what we call the lexicon, this sometimes amounts to asking why some morpheme that appears in both language A and language B nonetheless has partially different properties in the two languages. Or it may involve asking why some morpheme found in A appears to be missing entirely from B.

Answers require questions. The proper doing of syntax depends on asking harder and harder questions. The fact that some may turn out not to be fruitful cannot be used as justification for unambitiously pulling back from asking any. In this paper, I will be interested in a range of questions involving comparative syntax (primarily across English, French and Italian), with an emphasis on questions about the lexicon, i.e. about apparent differences between the lexicon of one language and that of the next. I will attempt to show that in a number of cases interesting answers are available.

Let me begin with pronominal possessives of the sort exemplified by French:
  (1)  son livre ('his/her book');  leur livre ('their book')
In French the form in *s-* indicates a third-person singular possessor. A third person plural possessor requires *leur*. In this respect, Italian is like French:
  (2)  il suo libro ('the his/her book');  il loro libro ('the their book')
Spanish is different. In:
  (3)  su libro ('his/her/their book')
the possessor can be either singular or plural.

Is Spanish *s-* in possessives 'simply' different from French *s-* and Italian *s-*? There must ultimately be some parametric difference at stake, involving at least one irreducible parameter of some form. Yet there are questions to be asked and answered. For example, there seems to be no Romance language that would be the reverse of French and Italian in having *s-* for a plural possessor but not for a singular possessor. Why not?

The (beginning of an) answer takes us beyond possessives. A similar singular vs. plural asymmetry holds for reflexive *s-*. Although reflexive *s-* is often neutral between singular and plural, as in French:

----------------------------------

(4)  Il s'achète un livre. ('he refl. buys a book')
(5)  Ils s'achètent un livre. ('they refl. buy a book')
it is occasionally limited to taking a singular antecedent, as in the case of Italian non-clitic reflexive *sé* when *sé* has a long-distance antecedent:[2]
(6)  ?Il ragazzo mi ha convinto a parlare di sé. ('the boy me has convinced to speak of refl.=him')
(7)  *I ragazzi mi hanno convinto a parlare di sé. ('the boys...')
There is also an asymmetry of the same sort even with short-distance antecedents:
(8)  Il ragazzo ha parlato di sé. ('the boy has spoken of refl.')
(9)  ?I ragazzi hanno parlato di sé. ('the boys have...')
French *soi*, less widely found than Italian *sé*, also displays a similar asymmetry in:[3]
(10)  Tout linguiste parle de soi. ('every linguist...')
(11)  *Tous les linguistes parlent de soi. ('all the linguists speak of refl.')

   Notable is the fact that there are no cases, as far as I know, of reflexive *s-* being limited to taking a plural antecedent.  In other words, reflexive *s-* and possessive *s-* share the property that, depending on the language and on the particular syntactic context, they are, with respect to their antecedent, either number neutral or limited to singular.

   This property, in turn, is not specfic to *s-*, but is shared by first person *m-*.  In Romance, *m-* is often limited to first person singular, but not always.  In Milanese, the following are possible, with *m-* compatible with a first person plural interpretation (Milanese *m-* can also be first person singular):
(12)  El me véd nun. ('he me sees us' = 'He sees us')
(13)  La vegnarà a toeumm. ('she will-come to get-me' = 'She will come to get us')[4]
Apart from the *m-/j-* alternation, these recall some dialectal French.[5]  The following is from the dialect described by Fougeu-Fontaine (1986, 52):[6]
(14)  J èm ('I love')
(15)  J èmô ('I love-1pl' = 'We love')
in which *j* is first person, but compatible with either singular or plual.  The similarity between *s-* and *m-* is emphasized by the absence of any Romance language in which *m-* as a pronoun or reflexive is limited to first person plural.

   At the very least, then, the difference concerning number illustrated in (1)-(3) between French and Italian on the one hand, and Spanish on the other, is not an isolated one, and is not specific to possessive *s-*, contrary to what one might have thought.

-----------------------------------

[2]  As brought to my attention by Luigi Rizzi.
[3]  Examples due to Jean-Yves Pollock.  See also Kayne (1975, chap. 5, note 4).
[4]  The double *mm* is an orthographic convention indicating a preceding short vowel, not a doubled consonant - v. Nicoli (1983, 49).  For further details, see Nicoli (1983, 142, 146, 150, 358).
[5]  Milanese and dialectal French share the property that a plural interpretation for *m-/j-* seems to be available only with clitics.  In the terms of Kayne (2003a), this means that the type of *-oi* morpheme that *m-* can combine with to yield a non-clitic imposes a singular antecedent.
[6]  Cf. Butler (1962, 39, 42), Chauveau (1984, 190), Ditchy (1977, 21), Gesner (1979, 17), Hervé (1973, 51), Maze (1969, 41, 66, 83, 85) (who notes that *je* cannot invert, and that *nous* can appear with inversion), Rouffiange (1983, 115), Vey (1978, 186), Villefranche (1978, 24), Féral (1986, 68, 73-5), Hauchard (1994, 137) and Hull (1988).

Within Romance, this number property of *s-* (either number neutral or limited to a singular antecedent) appears to have no counterpart with gender, in that all instances of *s-* seem to be gender neutral. I know of no cases of either possessive *s-* or reflexive *s-* limited to a masculine antecedent (or to a feminine antecedent). Again, there is a link to *m-* (and to second person *t-*), which also is never anything other than gender neutral. Thus the gender neutrality of *s-* is properly to be thought of as a property of the class of elements *m-/t-/s-*.[7]

A further question is whether it is an accident that it is Spanish (as opposed to French and Italian) whose possessive *s-* is number neutral with respect to its antecedent. A possible negative answer, to the effect that it is not an accident, would go as follows. Possessive *s-* in French is actually per se number neutral. The limitation to having a singular antecedent comes about as the result of possessive *s-* cooccurring with the *-on* of *son livre* in (1); it is this *-on* that is the real locus of association with a singular antecedent.[8]

Although this *-on* is visible in French only in the masculine singular and (when the following word begins with a vowel) in the feminine singular, I take there to be an unpronounced counterpart of it in the plural and in other instances of feminine singular.[9] This silent *-on* is in turn followed by overt gender and number agreement in:

(16)  sa maison ('his/her house');  ses enfants ('his/her children')

where the agreement is  *-a* in the feminine singular and, in the plural, *-es* (which I take to be *-e-* + *-s*, with *-e-* a neutral gender vowel/word marker[10]).  (16) is therefore to be thought of as:

(17)  s+ON+a maison;  s+ON+e+s enfants

where capitalized ON stands for silent *-on*.

Italian prenominal possessors show gender and number agreement, too (here *-a* for feminine singular, *-oi* for masculine plural):

(18)  la sua casa ('the his/her house');  i suoi bambini ('the his/her children')

whereas Spanish prenominal possessors (of the *m-/t-/s-* type) show only number agreement:

(19)  su(*a) casa;  su(*a)s casas

Assume that the presence of prenominal possessive *-on* or a silent counterpart of it invariably requires prenominal gender agreement in Romance. Then it follows that

------------------------------------

[7]  The *s-* of this class covers both the possessive one and the reflexive one, which Kayne (2003a) argues to be the same element.

Possibly, the absence in English of this *s-* and of (second person familiar singular) *t-* is a single fact.

German possessive *sein* appears to be limited to masculine (singular), contrasting with feminine *ihr*. Possibly, *ihr* is always accompanied by a silent *sein*; for relevant discussion, see Leu (2008).

[8]  As is the *-é* of *sé* in (6)-(9) and the *-oi* of *soi* in (10)-(11).

[9]  When the lexical noun is itself unpronounced, *-on* is replaced in French by *-ien*, in both genders and in both singular and plural:

  i)  le sien, la sienne, les siens, les siennes ('the his/hers')

[10]  On word markers, see Harris (1991). For a different view, see Ferrari (2005).

Spanish must lack (silent) -on in (19),[11] whereas we can take Italian to have it in (18), i.e. Italian (18) is really:[12]

  (20)  la su+ON+a casa;  i su+ON+o+i bambini

    If Italian has this silent -on consistently and if Spanish lacks it consistently (even in non-prenominal contexts), then we can tie the Spanish vs. Italian/French contrast with respect to the number neutrality of possessive s- directly to the absence vs. presence of (silent) -on; and less directly to the difference between these languages concerning prenominal gender agreement.  No irreducible contrast specific to possessive s- is at issue.  In Italian and French, possessive s-, by virtue of being associated with -on/-ON, is not compatible with a plural antecedent; in Spanish there is no -on/-ON,[13] so a plural antecedent is allowed.

    A second example of an intra-Romance contrast in which a particular morpheme behaves differently in two (or more) languages comes from French *besoin* vs. Italian *bisogno*.  French and Italian are similar in having:

  (21)  Jean a besoin de chanter. ('J has need to sing')
  (22)  Gianni ha bisogno di cantare.

Both allow nominal *besoin/bisogno* to act as the object of 'have'.  Yet only Italian allows *bisogno* to incorporate into a verbal structure yielding the impersonal sentence:[14]

  (23)  Bisogna cantare. ('needs to-sing' = 'it's necessary to sing')

French has no:

  (24)  *Il beso(i)gne chanter.

I have put a subject clitic *il* in this example to respect the non-pro-drop character of French.[15]  French does, however, have, with an interpretation close to that of (23):

  (25)  Il faut chanter. ('it needs to-sing' = 'it's necessary to sing')

    Although similar in interpretation, (23) and (25) differ when it comes to replacing the infinitive by an object clitic pronoun *lo/le*:

  (26)  *Lo bisogna. ('it needs')
  (27)  Il le faut. ('it it needs' = 'it's necessary')

A possible account of (26) vs. (27) is that the infinitive in (23) is actually (a postverbal) subject of the matrix verb (and so cannot give rise to an object clitic), whereas the infinitive in (25) is not subject-like, but object-like, with this difference in turn related to the pro-drop character of Italian vs. French.  Put another way, French (25) already has a subject apart from the infinitive, namely the subject clitic *il*.  Italian (23) arguably does not.

----------------------------------

[11]   Many North Italian dialects are like Spanish in lacking gender agreement with prenominal possessors (of the *m-/t-/s-* type), and also like Spanish in having number neutral *s-*.  See Pelliciardi (1977, 70) and Rohlfs (1968, 123).

[12]   The status of the *-u* that appears in both Italian and Spanish needs to be looked into.

[13]   The next question is why Spanish does not need -ON.

[14]   A separate question is why Italian (like French) disallows a personal form of *bisogna*:

  i)  *Io bisogno cantare. ('I need to-sing')

On this and the contrast with English:

  ii)  I need to sing.

see Harves and Kayne (2008).

[15]   Which may be what underlies the absence of clitic climbing in French with (non-causative) infinitives - cf. Kayne (1989).

On the reasonable assumption that clitic climbing is (sometimes) possible out of object infinitives, but  never possible out of subject infinitives, we now have an account of:

(28)  Bisogna parlarne. ('needs to-speak of-them')

(29)  *Ne bisogna parlare. ('of-them needs to-speak')

in terms of the subject status of the infinitive that accompanies *bisogna*.  Conversely, we expect clitic climbing to be possible out of the object-like infinitive that accompanies *il faut*.  This expectation cannot be tested in contemporary colloquial French, which disallows clitic climbing in general (apart from causatives, or out of past participle phrases).  But in a more literary French, where clitic climbing is allowed with the clitics *y* and *en*, we do have:[16]

(30)  Il en faut parler. ('it of-it needs to-speak' = 'it's necessary to speak of it')

Assume now that impersonal (23) has a derivation of the sort suggested in Hale and Keyser (1993; 2002), in which nominal *bisogn-* is incorporated into a light verb, and furthermore (thinking also of Baker (1988)) that *bisogn-* must be the object of that light verb.  In (23), this is possible since we can take the infinitive to be the (postverbal) subject of the light verb.  But by the same reasoning, there is a problem with (24), insofar as the infinitive there cannot be the subject, given the presence of *il*;[17] yet if the infinitive is the object, nominal *besoin/besogn-* cannot occupy the object position from which it must incorporate.  (If *besoin/besogn-* did occupy object position, then there would be no satisfactory place for the infinitive (see also note 17).)  Consequently, (24) is excluded, as desired.  If so, what appeared to be differential behavior of the same morpheme (*besoin/besogn-*) in French vs. Italian has turned out to be a side effect of an independent difference between those two languages concerning the filling of subject position.

Given the sharp contrast between (24) and (25), it must be the case that (25) does not involve incorporation of the sort found in (23).[18]  This in turn suggests that the gloss and translation in (25), (27) and (30) is incorrect; instead of 'need' for *faut*, we should have 'must':

(31)  Il faut chanter. ('it must to-sing' = 'one must sing')

It is possible here to add a dative clitic:

(32)  Il me faut chanter. ('it me must to-sing' = 'I must sing')

with an interpretation very close to that of:

(33)  Je dois chanter. ('I must to-sing')

In effect (32) has a dative (clitic) subject comparable to the nominative subject of (33).

Of additional comparative interest, Italian has no sentence that is a good match for (32) at all.  This might follow from the (straightforward) fact that Italian lacks any overt

------------------------------------

[16]   Similarly for accusative and dative clitics in earlier French - see Galet (1971) and de Kok (1985).

[17]   This will need to be refined in the light of cases (from Pollock (1981)) like:

  i)  Il a pris forme dans ce pays un grand nombre de... ('it has taken form in this country a large number of...')

It may be that infinitival subjects are excluded from playing the role played by the postverbal subject-like DP in (i).

[18]   This correlates with the fact that *faut* (infinitive: *falloir*) has no corresponding morphologically related noun or nominal root like *besoin*.

counterpart of French *il*, combined with the proposal that Italian lacks any silent counterpart of this *il*.

Alongside (32), French also has, with a DP object instead of an infinitival one (and with no agreement between object and verb):[19]

(34)  Il me faut ces livres. ('it me must those books' = 'I must have those books')

in which the postverbal DP can be replaced by an object clitic:

(35)  Il me les faut. ('it me them must' = 'I must have them')

Again, Italian has no good match to these.[20]

In conclusion, then, differences concerning how Italian and French treat subjects and objects in (certain kinds of) impersonal sentences provide a plausible account of various (at first glance lexical) differences between Italian and French modal constructions.

As a third example of an intra-Romance contrast between corresponding morphemes in French vs. Italian, consider briefly:

(36)  *Jean ne sait pas si partir. ('J neg knows not if to-leave')

(37)  Gianni non sa se partire.

French *si* ('if') disallows control, whereas Italian *se* ('if') allows it.  What is at issue is not a property of *si/se*.  Rather, the contrast here is a side effect of a separate difference between the two languages having to do with the fact that objects clitics in Italian follows infinitives, but in French precede them.[21]

A fourth example of an apparently arbitrary lexical difference that is in fact not arbitrary (one that also involves modal expressions) has to do with:

(38)  You are to be home by midnight.

which is possible in English, but impossible in French, Italian and the rest of Romance, as well as in the rest of Germanic.  Although one might initially think that this is a fact about the English lexicon that 'simply' needs to be registered, one can do better.  It turns out that (38) is a disguised instance of a particular subtype of English ECM construction closely related to:

(39)  You are expected to be home by midnight.

except that in (38) the passive past participle is unpronounced (and probably in a different position from overt *expected*).  Put another way, the existence of (38) in English is not an irreducible fact about the English lexicon, but (again) a side effect of

----------------------------------

[19]  This is not the case with (33):

i)  *Je dois ces livres.

which is impossible in the relevant sense of *dois*, for reasons that need to be elucidated.  Cinque's (2006, chap. 1) proposal for (the Italian counterpart of) (i) would appear not to allow for (34), given (30).

[20]  Italian *volerci* ('to-want there') has something in common with French *falloir*, but the two differ sharply in two ways that fit into the text discussion.  One is that the verb in Italian agrees in number with the following DP, while in French it does not.  The second is that an accusative object clitic is not at all possible in Italian (whether the verb agrees with it or not):

(i)  *Mi ce li vogliono/vuole. ('me there them want/wants')

[21]  For a detailed proposal, see Kayne (1991).  The proposal there was formulated in terms of 'government' and depended in part on taking *si/se* to be a complementizer-like head, an assumption that might need to be revisited.

something else, namely, in this case, the existence in English of sentences like (39). These are in turn available in English (but not in the rest of Germanic or in Romance) as a result of English having a complementizer *for* with unusual Case properties. (There is a silent counterpart of *for* in both (38) and (39).)  The lexicon in English may have to be specified as having such a *for*,[22] but it does not need to be specified as having the *is to* of (38).

    Moving away from modal expressions, we can find another example of an only apparent lexical difference between French and Italian by considering:
   (40)  Le bateau a coulé. ('the boat has sunk')
   (41)  La nave è affondata. ('the boat is sunk')
French and Italian both have a *have/be* alternation that in many cases works in exactly the same way in the two languages.  Yet with a certain class of (anticausative) verbs exemplified in (40) vs. (41) French uses *have* where Italian uses *be*.  Although it might seem that this must be a lexical fact about such verbs (or conceivably about *have* and *be*) in the two languages, it turns out that it is not.  Rather, the contrast between (40) and (41) is ultimately derived from a difference between French and Italian that has to do with past participle agreement and passivization in causative constructions.  Italian allows passives of causatives to show past participle agreement in sentences like:
   (42)  La mela è stata fatta mangiare al bambino (da Maria). ('the apple(fem.) is been(fem.) made(fem.) to-eat to-the child (by M)')
but French does not:
   (43)  *La pomme a été faite manger à l'enfant (par Marie). (Fr: same)
(41) is in fact close to being a disguised version Of (42).  In a way I discuss elsewhere,[23] French, then, cannot use its *be* in (40) because it does not allow (43). There is a real difference between French and Italian at stake (having to do with past participle agreement), but it is not at bottom a difference concerning any of the verbs seen in (40) or (41).

    A second difference that holds for French vs. Italian with respect to their *have/be* alternation concerns existentials, where French has *have* and Italian *be*:
   (44)  Il y a un livre sur la table. ('it there has a book on the table')
   (45)  C'è un libro sul tavolo. ('there is a book on-the table')
As in the discussion of (23) and (25), it seems likely that the presence of *il* in French is important here.  *Il* in (44) is a quasi-argument possessor whose presence in nominative subject position correlates with the presence of *have*.[24] In (45) in Italian, there is no comparable element in subject position, so *be* is allowed (and required).  Again the choice of *have/be* is arguably a side effect of a difference between French and Italian

------------------------------------

[22]  Even that may be unnecessary, if the presence of *for* in English can be traced back to English not having any infinitival suffixal morphology - cf. Kayne (2005c); for a more detailed discussion of *is to*, see Kayne (2007).  This *is to* is clearly distinct from:
   i)  Ce travail est à refaire. ('this work is to redo')
in which there is an object gap, rather than a subject gap.
[23]  See Kayne (2008b).
[24]  For details, see Kayne (to appear).

concerning the syntax of subject position, and is not an irreducible property of those verbs themselves.

French and Italian have in common a comparative/superlative morpheme *plus*/*più* that in superlatives shows the following difference:

   (46)  le livre le plus intéressant ('the book the most interesting')
   (47)  il libro più interessante

In French, superlative *plus* is preceded in such examples by a definite article, whereas Italian superlative *più* is not.  As I argue elsewhere,[25] this is not a fact about *plus/più*, but rather a fact about definite articles, or more exactly, a fact about the conditions under which the definite article must or must not be pronounced in French and Italian. (46) vs. (47) is related to:

   (48)  Lequel veux-tu lire? ('the which want you to-read')
   (49)  Quale vuoi leggere? ('which want-you to-read')

French interrogative argumental *quel* ('which') must be preceded by the definite article when the lexical noun is not visible.  In the corresponding Italian example, the definite article must not appear.  Again, this is not a differential property of *quel/quale*, but rather (the same) one concerning definite articles, which in certain configurations are pronounced in French, but left silent in Italian.

In all of the preceding, I have attempted to show that what appear to be arbitrary lexical differences are amenable to analysis of a familiar comparative syntax sort.  It is not that there are no lexical differences between French and Italian (or French and English, etc.), but rather that the number of such irreducible differences (parameters) may be well below the number suggested by an initial survey.

Comparative syntax work of this sort applied to questions of the lexicon may in addition lead to a more refined characterization of the set of possible parameters. Consider, for example, the preceding discussion of *plus/più* and *quel/quale* starting at (46), and the conclusion suggested there that the underlying parametric difference is not to be understood as a property of those functional elements, but rather as a property related to the syntax of definite articles.  It might (or might not) turn out more generally that parameters are limited to only a subset of what we think of as the functional elements of the universal lexicon.

In most of the preceding examples, it was quite clear how to match up lexical items across French and Italian (or French and English, etc.).  On the other hand, we saw in the case of French *faut* in (25)-(35) that sometimes the matching is not straightforward (initially *faut* seemed more like *need*, but later *must* seemed like a better choice). Another French-English example in which lexical matching (which is of central importance to the doing of comparative syntax) is challenging in an interesting way involves French *peu*, as in:

   (50)  Jean a un peu d'argent. ('J has a *peu* of money')

which (abstracting away from the presence of the preposition *de*) would appear to have as a very natural translation:

-----------------------------------

[25]   See Kayne (2008a) for details.

(51)  John has a little money.

Yet it other cases, English *little* seems to match French *petit*:

(52)  They have a little boy.

(53)  Ils ont un petit garçon.

Moreover, *petit* can cooccur with *peu*:

(54)  Jean a un petit peu d'argent.

suggesting that a better match for *peu* is English *bit*, in which case (50) is to be thought of as corresponding closely to:

(55)  John has a bit of money

more so than to (51).  From this perspective (54) now corresponds to:

(56)  John has a little bit of money.

There remains, however, the question of (51).  The word for word French counterpart:

(57)  *Jean a un petit argent.

is ill-formed.  The optimal interpretation of these facts, I think, is that English (51) is not exactly as it seems, in that it contains an unpronounced element corresponding to *bit*. Using capitals again for silent elements, this means that (51) is really:

(58)  John has a little BIT money.

The fact that (57) is not possible means that French does not allow silent PEU in the way that English does with BIT.

By postulating silent BIT in (51) we can maintain a mapping between *peu* and *bit* and between *petit* and *little*.[26]  The expectation is that this state of affairs is widespread. A given element in one language will have a counterpart in the next language that is sometimes silent (or in some cases always silent).  Put more generally, the lexicon of one language will be more readily matchable to the lexicon of the next, and our likelihood of success in discovering a universal lexicon (of functional elements) will be correspondingly greater, if we recognize that silent elements of this sort (of which BIT is one example) are a key part of the human language faculty.

In addition to facilitating cross-linguistic lexical matching, the postulation of silent elements can facilitate interpretation.  A straightforward example involves the following contrast between English and French:

(59)  At the age of seven, Mary...

(60)  A l'âge de sept *(ans), Marie...

In expressions of age of this type, English preferably omits *years*, in a way that French cannot.  It is hard to avoid taking (59) to be:

(61)  at the age of seven YEARS...

with unpronounced YEARS.[27]  The presence of YEARS in (59) allows semantic interpretation to proceed easily.  The logically possible alternative of allowing a bare numeral to itself be interpreted as an expression of age is hardly plausible to begin

----------------------------------

[26]  For further details, see Kayne (2005a).  An account will have to be found for:

  i)  a tiny little *(bit of) money

as well as for the fact that *peu* does not pluralize, contrary to *bit*.

[27]  For a finer-grained analysis and a proposal as to why French and English differ in this way, see Kayne (2003b).

with, and in any event would run into severe difficulty when confronted with the fact that English does not systematically allow *year(s)* to go unpronounced:

(62)  Mary is seven *(years) old.

(63)  They have a seven-*(year) old child.

A promising way to understand the contrast between (59) and (62)/(63) is to tie it in with the long tradition studying the distribution of other silent elements, for example, the PRO subject of infinitives, as in (37) vs. (36), for which the proposal in Kayne (1991) amounted in part to saying that the presence of PRO in such examples could be detected through its sensitivity to the position of the infinitive (in Italian vs. French).  In a similar way, the presence of PRO can be detected through the following English-French contrast:

(64)  *John believes to be intelligent.

(65)  Jean croit être intelligent. ('J believes to-be intelligent')

PRO is available as the subject of the infinitive in (65), but is excluded in (64), the reason being that English *believe* is an ECM verb and ECM contexts are in general incompatible with PRO (essentially for the same reason that PRO is not available in object position).[28]

The structural conditions relevant to (59) and (62)/(63) do not seem to match in their details those relevant to PRO.  Rather they recall more strongly left-branch constraints on syntactic movement.  As a first approximation, if *seven years* is contained within a left branch (as in (62)/(63)), then replacing it by 'seven YEARS' is not possible.  This is not a property specific to *years*/YEARS, as we can see from the following (baseball) examples:

(66)  John hit a home run in the seventh (inning).

(67)  John hit a seventh-*(inning) home run.  (impossible with the intended interpretation, if *inning* is unpronounced)

It may be that silent YEARS or INNING are subject to movement of the sort that is sensitive to left branch configurations, yielding a violation in examples like (62)/(63), and (67).  (Possibly, the lesser or greater availability of silent elements in different languages is in part due to differences in the degree to which movement is allowed.[29])

The comparative study of the lexicon across languages will involve examples of many different kinds, only some of which have been touched on in this paper.  Many different properties will be relevant, including the property of being pronounced or not.  Although we do not yet know exactly how to characterize the set of cross-linguistic

----------------------------------

[28]   English *claim* will have to be treated as being an ECM-verb only optionally, given the availability of both (see Postal (1974)):

i)  John claims there to be a problem with our analysis.

ii)  John claims to be intelligent.

For a finer-grained discussion of French, see Pollock (1985).

The relevant notion of ECM will have to be refined if the following English-French contrast belongs together with the text one:

(i)  *It seems to me to have understood the question.

(ii)  Il me semble avoir compris la question.

(ii) can have a control interpretation, while (i) cannot.

[29]   On the relation between silent elements and movement, see Kayne (2006).

lexical differences that are amenable to comparative syntax work of the sort illustrated here, it seems clear that many more fruitful questions are waiting to be asked.

References.

Baker, M.C. (1988) *Incorporation: A Theory of Grammatical Function Changing*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Butler, A.S.G. (1962) *Les parlers dialectaux et populaires dans l'oeuvre de Guy de Maupassant (Publications romanes et françaises LXXII)*, Droz, Geneva and Minard, Paris.

Chauveau, J.-P. (1984) *Le gallo: une présentation*, Faculté des Lettres de Brest, Université de Bretagne Occidentale (Section de Celtique).

Cinque, G. (2006) *Restructuring and Functional Heads. The Cartography of Syntactic Structures, Volume 4*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Ditchy, J.K. (1977) *Les acadiens louisianais et leur parler*, Slatkine Reprints, Geneva (Droz, Paris, 1932).

Ferrari, F. (2005) *A Syntactic Analysis of the Nominal Systems of Italian and Luganda. How Nouns Can Be Formed in the Syntax*, Doctoral dissertation, New York University.

Féral, R. (1986) *Le patois de Saussey*, Association Bourguignonne de Dialectologie et d'Onomastique, Fontaine lès Dijon.

Fougeu-Fontaine, M. (1986) *Le patois de Chaumont Le Bois*, Association Bourguignonne de Dialectologie et d'Onomastique, Fontaine lès Dijon.

Galet, Y. (1971) *L'évolution de l'ordre des mots dans la phrase française de 1600 à 1700*, PUF, Paris.

Gesner, B.E. (1979) "Etude morphosyntaxique du parler acadien de la Baie Sainte-Marie, Nouvelle-Ecosse (Canada)," Publication B-85, Centre international de recherche sur le bilinguisme, Québec.

Greenberg, J.H. (1966) "Some Universals of Grammar with Particular Reference to the Order of Meaningful Elements," in J.H. Greenberg (ed.) *Universals of Language*, second edition, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 73-113.

Hale, K. and S.J. Keyser (1993) "On Argument Structure and the Lexical Expression of Syntactic Relations," in K. Hale and S.J. Keyser (eds.) *The View from Building 20. Essays in Linguistics in Honor of Sylvain Bromberger*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 53-109.

Hale, K. and S.J. Keyser (2002) *Prolegomenon to a Theory of Argument Structure*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Harris, J.W. (1991) "The Exponence of Gender in Spanish," *Linguistic Inquiry*, 22, 27-62.

Harves, S. and R.S. Kayne (2008) "Having Need and Needing Have in Indo-European", ms., Pomona College and New York University.

Hauchard, V. (1994) *Vie et Parler traditionnels dans le canton de Condé-sur-Noireau, Calvados*, Presses Universitaires de Caen, Charles Corlet, Caen/Condé-sur-Noireau.

Hervé, B. (1973) *Le parler de Plouguenast*, Master's thesis, University of Haute Bretagne.

Hull, A. (1988) "The First Person Plural Form: *Je Parlons*," *The French Review* 62, 242-247.

Kayne, R.S. (1975) *French Syntax. The Transformational Cycle*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Kayne, R.S. (1989) "Null Subjects and Clitic Climbing", in O. Jaeggli and K. Safir (eds.), *The Null Subject Parameter*, Reidel, Dordrecht, 239-261 (reprinted in Kayne (2000)).

Kayne, R.S. (1991) "Romance Clitics, Verb Movement and PRO," *Linguistic Inquiry*, 22, 647-686 (reprinted in Kayne (2000)).

Kayne, R.S. (2000) *Parameters and Universals*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Kayne, R.S. (2003a) "Person Morphemes and Reflexives in Italian, French and Related Languages", in C. Tortora (ed.) *The Syntax of Italian Dialects*, Oxford University Press, New York, 102-136 (also in Kayne (2000)).

Kayne, R.S. (2003b) "Silent Years, Silent Hours", in L.-O. Delsing et al. (eds.) *Grammar in Focus. Festschrift for Christer Platzack. Volume 2*, Wallin and Dalholm, Lund, 209-226 (reprinted in Kayne (2005)).

Kayne, R.S. (2005a) "Some Notes on Comparative Syntax, with Special Reference to English and French" in G. Cinque and R. Kayne (eds.) *Handbook of Comparative Syntax*, Oxford University Press, New York, 3-69 (reprinted in Kayne (2005)).

Kayne, R.S. (2005b) *Movement and Silence*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Kayne, R.S. (2005c) "*For* and ECM", paper presented at the Workshop on the Internal Structure of PPs - University of Venice.

Kayne, R.S. (2006) "On Parameters and on Principles of Pronunciation", in H. Broekhuis, N. Corver, R. Huybregts, U. Kleinhenz and J. Koster (eds.) *Organizing Grammar. Linguistic Studies in Honor of Henk van Riemsdijk*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, 289-299.

Kayne, R.S. (2007) "On the Salient Absence of *You are to be home by midnight* in Italian Dialects (and Various Other Languages)", paper presented at the 2nd Cambridge Italian Dialect Syntax Meeting,  Cambridge, England.

Kayne, R.S. (2008a) "Some Preliminary Comparative Remarks on French and Italian Definite Articles", in R. Freidin, C.P. Otero and M.L. Zubizarreta (eds.) *Foundational Issues in Linguistic Theory. Essays in Honor of Jean-Roger Vergnaud*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 291-321.

Kayne, R.S. (2008b) "A Note on Auxiliary Alternations and Silent Causation" in L. Baronian and F. Martineau (eds) *Le français, d'un continent à l'autre*, Presses de l'Université Laval (collection Voies du français), Quebec.

Kayne, R.S. (to appear) "Expletives, Datives, and the Tension between Morphology and Syntax" in T. Biberauer (ed.) *The Limits of Syntactic Variation*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam.

Klima, E.S. (1964) "Relatedness between Grammatical Systems," *Language*, 40, 1-20 (reprinted in D.A. Reibel and S.A. Schane (eds.) (1969) *Modern Studies in English*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 227-246).

Kok, A.C. de (1985) *La place du pronom personnel régime conjoint en français: une étude diachronique*, Doctoral dissertation, University of Amsterdam.

Leu, T. (2008) *The Internal Syntax of Determiners*, Doctoral dissertation, New York University.

Maze, C. (1969) *Etude sur le langage de la banlieue du Havre*, Slatkine Reprints, Geneva (1903).

Nicoli, F. (1983) *Grammatica milanese*, Bramante Editrice, Busto Arsizio.

Pelliciardi, F. (1977) *Grammatica del dialetto romagnolo*, Longo, Ravenna.

Pollock, J.-Y. (1981) "On Case and Impersonal Constructions," in R. May and J. Koster (eds.) *Levels of Syntactic Representation*, Foris, Dordrecht, 219-252.

Pollock, J.-Y. (1985) "On Case and the Syntax of Infinitives in French," in J. Guéron, H.-G. Obenauer and J.-Y. Pollock (eds.) *Grammatical Representation*, Foris, Dordrecht, 293-326.

Postal, P.M. (1974) *On Raising. One Rule of English Grammar and its Theoretical Implications*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Rohlfs, G. (1968) *Grammatica storica della lingua italiana e dei suoi dialetti. Morfologia*, Einaudi, Turin.

Rouffiange, R. (1983) *Le patois et le français rural de Magny-Lès-Aubigny (Côte-d'Or)*, Association Bourguignonne de Dialectologie et d'Onomastique, Fontaine lès Dijon.

Vey, E. (1978 (1911)) *Le dialecte de Saint-Etienne au XVIIe siècle*, Laffitte Reprints, Marseille (Paris).

Villefranche, J.-M. (1978) *Essai de grammaire du patois lyonnais*, Slatkine Reprints, Geneva (Bourg, 1891).