French dont-relative clauses (and their gap)

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1 de-phrases

De-phrases (i.e. PPs - or genitive NPs - introduced by a de) can be:

- expansions of nouns (without subject-internal constraint, see example (1)) (Abellè et al., 2016) - i.e. arguments or adjuncts of N
- complements of verbs
- complements of adjectives (ignored here)

De-complements can be relativized (i.e. with dos).

(1) Cette crève très particulière, dont le lancement a eu lieu en 1995, est une épopée de victoires très spectaculaires (source: France-2 Jeu de l'Amour)

2 PPs[de] and NPs[de]

(2) les vacances dont le retour est douloureux

De-exactizations of deverbal nouns, when this expansion can be related to the de-exactization of an argument of a verb (example (2))

3 The HPSG analysis

de-phrases

(3) le téléphone avec la aide de la personne qui l'a appelé

- de-phrases complement of nouns
- the main verb of the RC has to be finite
- some expansions of nouns or PPs[de] (local origin, etc.)
- the antecedent of the relative pronoun has to be human

(4) Voici le pays dont Paul revient

- de-phrases complement of verbs
- the antecedent of the relative pronoun has to be human

Relative pronouns and complementizers

In French, que and que(de)[de] have been traditionally considered complementizers (Kayne, 1976). Abellè and Godard (2007) have shown that dos does not share the same properties in this respect.

Relative pronouns

- 1st possibility:
  - complements of nouns are[NP[de]]
  - pros: these accounts for examples like (5) and (6)
  - cons: this does not take into consideration examples like (7)

Dos relative clauses without gap

- 2nd possibility:
  - PPs are weak islands
  - pros: these accounts for examples like (5) and (7)
  - cons: overgeneralization

References

Abellè et al. (2006)


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