Relative Clauses in Yiddish: A Case for Movement

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A relative clause is an embedded complement to a noun phrase (the head) which contains, at least in deep structure, a noun phrase co-referent to the head. A fairly popular account of relative clause formation is as stated in Keyser (1974):

> " i. replace the commanded coreferential noun phrase by the appropriate relative pronoun.
> ii. move the relative pronoun to the front of its clause.
> iii. optionally delete the relative pronoun subject to certain constraints."

Thus a sentence containing no relative pronoun is derived by movement of an underlying relative pronoun followed by its deletion. This is the position advocated in Chomsky (1973). So in a sentence like

. . . the man (that) Bill thought Mary said you saw . . .

the relative pronoun is cyclically moved from its direct object of saw

position up to a position adjacent to its antecedent man and then deleted. That is later introduced by a separate rule.

Recent work by Bresnan (1974) puts this in doubt. She contends that no movement is involved and that the relative pronoun is erased by an unbounded rule of deletion under identity with its antecedent. Along the same lines, Gimshaw (1974) puts forth an argument to the effect that such a rule of deletion over a variable is part of the rule of relative clause formation in Chaucerian English.

In this paper I argue that a "movement in all cases" analysis is to be preferred over a "deletion in situ" analysis to account for relative clause formation in Yiddish. In the first section of the paper I present a picture of relative clauses in Yiddish. In the second section, a particular analysis of vos is argued for. In Section 3 the interaction of Topicalization and relative clause formation is examined. In Section 4 I propose that this analysis be incorporated in a particular way in a grammar of Yiddish.

1. Relative Clauses in Yiddish.

There are four types of relative clause in Yiddish.

A. "velkh" relatives.

The relative pronoun is the word velkh, inflected for case, number and gender, its paragigm not being defective. This type of relative is illustrated in (1) - (3).

1. der yid velkher gayt iz mayn khaver
   [the man who (nom sing masc) walks is my friend]
2. di froyen velkhe ikh ze zaynen basheftikt
   [the women (acc pl fem) I see are busy]
3. der yid oyf velkhn ikh farloz zikh iz mayn shokhn
   [the man on whom (obl sing masc) I depend is my neighbor]

B. "vos" relatives.

This construction is exemplified in (4) - (7).

4. der yid vos gayt iz mayn khaver
   [the man who walks is my friend]
5. di froy vos ikh ze iz basheftikt
   [the woman who I see is busy]

vos is uninflected and cannot be found as the object of a preposition, as can be seen from (6), if the head noun is a human.

6. * der yid oyf vos ikh farloz zikh iz mayn shokhn
[the man on who I depend is my neighbor]

There is no such restriction however if the head of the clause is non-human:

7. di teme af vos er redt iz amerike
[the subject on which he is speaking is America]

C. "vos + pronoun" relatives.

In this construction, due to the presence of a resumptive pronoun,[2] the relative clause entirely retains its sentential status, ie, it is by itself a well-formed sentence. So consider (8) - (10) and (11) - (13) where the latter set of examples are well-formed.

8. der yid vos er gayt iz mayn khaver.
[the man that he walks is my friend]
"the man who walks is my friend."

9. di froy vos ikh ze zi iz zayer basheftikt.
[the woman that I see her is very busy]
"the woman who I see is very busy."

10. der yid vos ikh farloz zikh oyf im iz mayn shokhn.
[the man that I depend on him is my neighbor]
"the man on whom I depend is my neighbor."

11. er gayt
[he walks]

12. ikh ze zi
[I see her]

13. ikh farloz zikh oyf im
[I depend on him]

D. "vemen" relatives.

This paradigm is a very defective one. vemen can be an accusative, singular, human as in (14) or in the oblique case as the object of a preposition as in (15) or a genitive as in (15').

14. di froy vemen ikh ze iz zayer basheftikt
[the woman who I see is very busy]

15. der yid mit vemen mir hobn geshmuest iz mayn shokhn.
[the man with whom we chatted is my neighbor]

15'. di froy vemens kinder shpiln zikh, . . .
[the woman whose children are playing, . . .]

Notice that vemen is impossible if the head of the relative clause is a non-human. Thus (16) is bad.

16. * dos ferd oyf vemen er zitst iz a shvartser.
[the horse on which he is sitting is a black one]

Notice further that a resumptive pronoun is only possible with vos. So (17) and (18) are impossible.

17. * di froy velkhe ikh ze zi iz basheftikt
[the woman who I see her is busy]

18. * di froy oyf vemen ikh farloz zikh oyf ir, . . .
[the woman on whom I depend on her, . . .]

2. The Relative Pronouns and "vos".

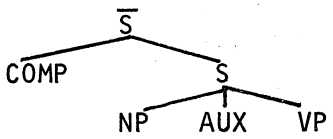
In this discussion, I assume, following Bresnan (1972) that the base component of a transformational grammar of Yiddish contains the following rules for the expansion of the category "Sentence".

19. $\overline{S} \rightarrow$ COMP S

20. S → NP AUX VP

The structure generated by (19) and (20) can be represented by diagram (21).

21.



The position dominated by the COMP node is filled by various complementizers (az, khotsh, etc), relative and question words, etc.

A. In this framework, the description of "velkh" is straightforward. It is generated in subject, object and post-prepositional positions, and moved into COMP by a rule of Wh-Movement. In (2) for instance, velkhe was moved from its direct object position into COMP.

B. "vos + pronoun"relatives, on the other hand, are base generated; that is, no movement transformation is involved in their derivation. The COMP node is filled by the Complementizer vos and the sentence following it is particular in no respect. This matches the observation made by Mark (1942) that those sentences are regular subordinate clauses introduced by the subordinating conjunction vos.

C. "vemen" relatives are derived in the same way as velkh relatives. vemen is moved from its direct object or post prepositional position into COMP.

D. "vos" relatives. Several scholars (Zaretski (1926), Falkovitsch (1940), Mark (1942), Rekhtman (1965), Weinreich (1968)) have repeatedly claimed that in vos relatives, vos is a relative pronoun.

One problem for this claim is immediately apparent: the badness of (6).

6. * der yid oyf vos ikh farloz zikh iz mayn shokhn.

If vos is a relative pronoun, one certainly expects it to be able to be the object of a preposition. This is, however, impossible, as exemplified in (6).

An attempt to preserve the claim that vos is a relative pronoun can be found in Wolf (1974). Wolf notices an interesting complementarity between vos relatives and vemen relatives. Both paradigms are defective (vemen lacks a nominative and the plural forms; vos lacks postprepositional forms) and seem to complement each other. From there Wolf draws the conclusion that vos and vemen are actually members of one and the same paradigm. One merit of this analysis is that it gives us an explanation of the badness of (6). The vos-vemen paradigm indicates that the right postprepositional form is vemen and that therefore (22) is correct but not (6).

22. der yid oyf vemen ikh farloz zikh iz mayn shokhn.

The paradigm we get by collapsing the vos and the vemen forms is as indicated in (23).

23.

	sing	pl
nom	vos	vos
acc	vos/vemen	vos
gen	vemens	
obl	vemens	

The alleged complementarity of vos and vemen however, appears to be fictitious. First, we miss forms in the plural section of the paradigm. Second, we have two forms for the accusative singular so that the forms that are meant to complement each other appear to be cooccuring.

Another fact casts additional suspicion on the existence of a vos-vemen paradigm. Consider (24) - (31).

24. ver redt rusish
25. * vos redt rusish

"Who speaks Russian ?"

26. ikh freg zikh ver es hot zikh ongeshikert nekhtn bay nakht
27. * ikh freg zikh vos es hot zikh ongeshikert nekhtn bay nakht

"I wonder who got drunk last night ."

28. vemen hostu gezen
29. * vos hostu gezen

"Who did you see ?"

30. ikh vil visn vemen du host gezen
31. * ikh vil visn vos du host gezen

"I wonder who you saw."

Some members of the vos-vemen paradigm lend themselves to direct and indirect questions, whereas others consistently refuse to show up elsewhere than in relatives. It is surprising that that distinction in behavior is exactly the one between vos and vemen forms. In particular, if vos and vemen are actually variants of each other, one does not expect such a difference as the one between (28) and (30) on the one hand, and (29) and (31) on the other, where vemen stands for a human in direct and indirect questions, and where equivalent sentences with vos are bad.

Consider by contrast the regularity of velkh in the same range of environments.

32. [Direct questions]

velkher iz gekumen
"Which one came ?"

33. [Indirect questions]

ikh vays nisht velkher es iz gekumen
"I don't know which one came."

Compare these with the relative clauses, as in (1).

This array of facts removes plausibility from Wolf's hypothesis about a vos-vemen paradigm. If this hypothesis is to be abandoned, then there is no explanation any more for the badness of vos in postprepositional position when the head of the clause is a human. In other words, the badness of (6) remains mysterious.

It could be, on the other hand, that all those facts are accidental and that a grammar of Yiddish has merely to state them as idiosyncracies. If however a grammar of Yiddish showed those facts to follow from a regularity of the language, and explained, for instance, why we find vos in relatives only and not in questions only, it would be more highly valued than one that would simply list them.

In fact such a regularity exists. If we look at the distribution of vos, we notice that vos introduces tensed embedded clauses in a whole range of environments. These clauses may be noun phrase complements, as in (34) and (35).

34. a marokhe vos es regnet
[a good thing that it is raining !]

35. es iz a glik vos er redt khinezish
[it is a good thing that he speaks Chinese]

They can also be verb phrase complements, as in (36) and (37).

36. er hot zikh gerisn di hor fun kop vos zayn zun iz a ganef
[he has self torn the hair from head because his son is a thief]
"He tore out his own hair because his son was a thief."

37. ikh bin mekhaye zikh vos du bist sof kol sof gevorn an advokat
[I rejoice (my)self that you are eventually become a lawyer]
"I am glad that you eventually became a lawyer."

Adjectives also subcategorize such complements, cf (38) and (39).

38. zi iz tsebrokhn vos du host zi nisht lib
[She is upset that you have her not fond]
"She is upset because you do not like her."

39. ikh bin tsufridn vos zi hot nisht opgeshpilt a khasene
[I am glad that she has not played a wedding]
"I am glad she did not make a scene."

So does the indefinite pronoun dos; see (40).

40. dos vos er iz a shleper art zey nisht
[It that he is a bum bother them not]
"It does not bother them that he is a bum."

Finally, remember that there is a special case where the sentence introduced by vos is an adnominal complement. This is the case of the vos + pronoun relatives. Recall that in that case there is general agreement on the subordinate clause marker status of vos, the fact that the clause introduced is a relative one notwithstanding.

I therefore propose that this analysis of vos be extended to vos relatives. That is, vos is introduced by a rule like (41).

41. Vos Introduction. (Obligatory)

$$NP - [_{COMP}\ \emptyset - X\ ]_{COMP} - Y$$
$$1 - 2 - 3 - 4 \rightarrow 1 - \text{vos} - 3 - 4$$

Condition: 'X' contains no wh-word.

The condition in (41) rules out ungrammatical vos-wh-word sequences.

By introducing this rule the grammar achieves significant economy. In particular, we save the statement of the above-mentioned idiosyncracies which would duplicate another statement already contained in the grammar, namely, that under certain conditions tensed embedded clauses are introduced by vos. Moreover, in this framework we are in a position to explain the badness of (6) or, more generally, why vos cannot be the object of a preposition if the head of the relative clause is a human (whether singular or plural). vos is introduced in an empty COMP by rule (41) and never generated within S (see (21)) in postprepositional position, like the v emen of (15). Since vos does not originate in S and is at no point in

the derivation associated with a preposition, we do not expect it ever to appear flanked by one.

Notice that by recognizing the subordinate clause marker status of vos, we are simply recognizing that Yiddish for that matter patterns according to a widely used strategy of relative clause formation across languages. Bach (1965) observed that relative clauses differ less between languages than one might expect. In particular, it has been pointed out by Keenan (1972) and others that it is fairly common among unrelated languages (Hebrew, modern Arabic, Welsh, Farsi, Dari (see Bing (1974)), French, English etc) to have relative clauses introduced by an uninflected morpheme used otherwise in the language as a subordinating conjunction (in other words in these languages relative clauses are treated in that respect as regular subordinate clauses).

It could be objected that Yiddish vos is or seems to be morphologically related to question and relative words.[3] But in spite of the same similarity it has persuasively been argued by Kayne (1974) that French que is a complementizer and not a relative pronoun.

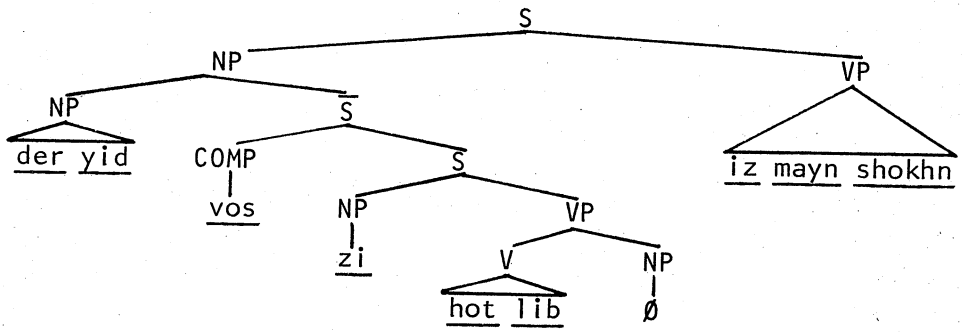
Let us now consider a consequence of this analysis. Take a sentence like (42).

42. der yid vos zi hot lib iz mayn shokhn
[the man that she loves is my neighbor]

If vos in (42) is a complementizer, and does not originate in object of verb hot lib position, what happened to this direct object, given that lib hobn [love] obligatorily subcategorizes one ?

Clearly the surface structure of (42) is that represented in (43),

43.



where, in the relative clause, we have in direct object position a deletion site. In the next section, I consider how the presence of this deletion site is to be accounted for.

3. What are the competing analyses ?

A. Two analyses of a relative clause such as the one in (43) are a priori possible. Both of them acknowledge the complementizer status of vos. An analysis by movement and deletion according to which deletion is possible only after wh-Movement moves the item to be deleted into the COMP; in other words, deletion is possible only in COMP: or an analysis by movement or deletion where an item is moved (as in (2) or (15)) or deleted without being moved.

Grimshaw (1974) worked out an analysis of the latter type for relative clauses in Middle English. Generalizing from her analysis, Grimshaw proposes:

> "The 'movement or deletion hypothesis'.
> Movement has occurred only if a relative pronoun appears in surface structure (ie only in wh-relatives). In all other cases [...] the NP in the relative clause has been deleted 'in situ' under identity to the head by a rule which deletes across a variable. Once a relative pronoun has been fronted it is never possible to delete."

Grimshaw's two rules are (44) and (45).

44. Relative Clause Movement. (Optional)

NP- that - X - NP - Y
+wh
1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
→ 1 - 4+2 - 3 - Ø - 5

45. Relative Clause Deletion. (obligatory)

NP - that - X - NP - Y
+wh
1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
→ 1 - 2 - 3 - Ø - 5

The range of facts encompassed by this statement is almost exactly that of Yiddish (except for the existence of vos+pronoun relatives in Yiddish; but we saw that neither movement nor deletion is involved in their derivation, so that they are neutral with respect to the two competing analyses). According to Grimshaw velkh- and vemen-relatives would be derived by movement, vos-relatives by deletion in situ. There is no way of chosing a priori between these two analyses, but the interaction of Topicalization with Relative Clause Formation offers good evidence in favor of one of them.

B. Topicalization, a very productive phenomenon in Yiddish, has been studied in some detail in Waletzky, 1969. Waletzky observes that a wide

range of constituents can be fronted by this rule. Consider the following sentences, taken from Waletzky, 1969.

46. yedn tog geyt dokh unter di zun
[every day goes down the sun]
"Every day the sun goes down."

47. di mayses hobn dertseylt oysgedinte zelners
[these stories told veterans]
"These stories, veterans told."

48. lang oyf eyn ort zitsn ken ikh nisht
[long in one place sit can I not]
"Sit long in one spot, I can't."

49. der mamen vern di oygn faykht
[of the mother become the eyes moist]
"Mother's eyes become moist."

50. gerufn hot men im deriber berishl
[called one him therefore Berishl]
"He was therefore called Berishl."

Topicalization can front an adverbial,(46), a direct object NP,(47), a verb phrase,(48), and indirect object NP,(49), a verb,(50), a prepositional phrase (see (51) below):

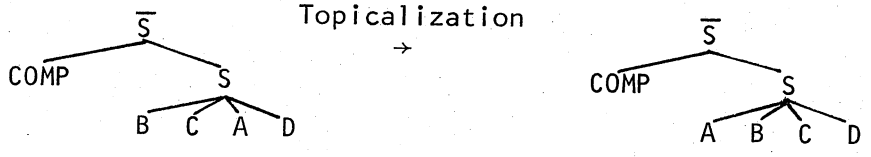
51. in nuyork voynen mir
[in New York live we]
"In New York, we live."

Topicalization triggers inversion of the subject and the tensed verb. Unlike in English, it is possible both in matrix and in embedded sentences. So all of (46) - (51) would be good if preceded by, say,

ikh bin tsufridn vos . . .
[I am glad that . . .]

A sentence containing a topic is usually thought of in the following way. The topic (A) is reordered within the S node. This is illustrated in (52).

52.



Another possibility is to think of the topic as moved into the COMP node. This is illustrated in (53).

53.

C. Topicalization and Relative Clause Formation. In what follows I will bringtwo pieces of evidence that the second analysis of Topicalization is to be favored. I shall assume that the rule of Topicalization can be stated as follows:

Topicalization (Optional)

$$[_{COMP}\ \emptyset\ ] - X - B - Y$$
$$1 - 2 - 3 - 4$$
$$\rightarrow\quad 3 - 2 - \emptyset - 4$$

Condition: X contains no sentence boundaries
B is a variable ranging over the categories ADVP, NP, PP, VP, V.

For the time being, consider (54).

54. der yid vos mir hobn im gezen in boston iz a groyser lamdn
[the man that we have him seen in Boston is a great scholar]
"The man that we saw in Boston is a great scholar."

Alongside (54) we have the equivalent sentence without a resumptive pronoun,

55. der yid vos mir hobn gezen in boston iz a groyser lamdn.

Let us now topicalize the prepositional phrase in (54).

56. der yid vos in boston hobn mir im gezen iz a groyser lamdn.

The prepositional phrase in boston has been fronted triggering inversion of mir and hobn.

Interestingly, if something has been topicalized ina sentence like (54), no deletion is possible anymore, so that (57) is ungrammatical, where the sentence contains both a topic and a deletion site corresponding to the absence of an item coreferent to the head of the clause, der yid.

57. * der yid vos in boston hobn mir gezen iz a groyser lamdn.

This is immediately a problem for a rule of deletion over a variable like (45). How is the rule going to know that it can analyze the string mir hobn in (54) as the "X" of its structural description, but not the string

in boston hobn mir in (56) ?

There are several ways to fix this, by building additional information into the rule. For instance the rule of deletion could stipulate that subject and auxiliary have to be in that order, so that, Topicalization triggering subject-aux inversion, the structural description of the deletion rule would not be met after topicalization took place. The trouble with such a way of getting the rule of Deletion to work is that no particular relationship is claimed between Topicalization and Deletion, but rather between a consequence of Topicalization (namely inversion) and Deletion. Things are no easier if one assumes another order relation between Topicalization and Deletion, namely Deletion and then Topicalization, as the rule of Topicalization will then have to know that it can take place in adnominal subordinate clauses only in case that clause contains a personal pronoun coreferent to its head. This is clearly undesirable as it would remove any kind of generality from such a rule.

A movement in all cases analysis, on the other hand, explains in a very natural way, the badness of pronoun deletion in a relative clause containing a topic. Remember that for the latter analysis, deletion is possible only after movement into COMP. It follows in a straightforward way that deletion will be impossible if movement into COMP is blocked by prior occupation of that position by the topicalized item.

That this generalization is correct is further reflected in the following examples, where (b) a constituent was moved into COMP thus blocking topicalization, and (c) a topic blocks further movements into COMP.

58. a. vemen hostu gezen in paris
[whom did you see in Paris ?]

b.* vemen in paris hostu gezen

c.* in paris vemen hostu gezen

59. a. ver hot gekoyft ot dem vogn mus zayn a nar
[whoever bought that car must be a fool]

b.* ver ot dem vogn hot gekoyft mus zayn a nar

c.* ot dem vogn ver hot gekoyft mus zayn a nar

60. a. der yid velkhn zey hobn geharget in vilne iz geven a balmoyfes
[the man whom they killed in Vilna was a miracle worker]

b.* der yid velkhn in vilne zey hobn geharget iz geven a balmoyfes

c.* der yid in vilne velkhn zey hobn geharget iz geven a balmoyfes

I take this range of facts ((58) - (60)) as evidence that a topicalized item is moved into COMP. A structure like (53) predicts the badness of (58b,c), (59b,c) and (60b,c). An analysis like (52) where a topic and a relative pronoun are moved into different positions leaves this badness unexplained.

In the next section, I discuss how this analysis can best be reflected in a grammar of Yiddish.

4. How does the grammar incorporate this analysis ?

In the preceding section it is claimed that a movement analysis is to be preferred to a deletion *in situ* analysis. It has to be made clear, however, exactly what undergoes movement. The wh-words *ver* and *vemen* are potential candidates, but we know from Section 2 that their paradigm lacks the plural forms, so they could not possibly be involved in the derivation of a sentence like (61).[4]

61. di froyen vos mir hobn gezen in nuyork zaynen zayer basheftikt
[the women that we saw in New York are very busy]

In (61) the deleted item has to be plural as its antecedent is plural. I therefore propose that it is the personal pronoun itself that moves into COMP.

We can tentatively assume that it is done the following way. A rule of assignment of the feature [+ wh] will assign that feature to the pronoun under coreference with the head of the clause. The pronoun will then be fronted by wh-Movement as a regular relative pronoun. It is then deleted by a rule of WH-PRO Deletion.

62. WH-PRO Deletion.

	NP	-	$[_{COMP}$	PRO $_{[+wh]}]$	-	X
	1	-		2	-	3
→	1	-		ø	-	3

In this analysis I am assuming that the rule of wh-Movement is an optional one.[5] So the pronoun will optionally be moved into COMP. If it is not moved, we have a *vos + pronoun* relative; if it is, it deletes by WH-PRO Deletion.

If wh-Movement does not apply, Topicalization could still front the pronoun marked [+ wh]. In that case, the rule of WH-PRO Deletion makes an interesting prediction. It rules out an ungrammatical sentence where a relative clause contains a topicalized pronoun coreferent to the head of the clause, such as (63).

63. * der bokher vos im ken ikh iz a kliger
[the boy that him know I is a sharp one]
"The boy that I know is a sharp one."

In (63) Topicalization fronted the pronoun *im*, coreferent to the head of the

clause, der bokher. Inversion later took place. This is illustrated in the following sample derivation (64).

64.

	der bokher ikh ken im iz a kliger
Wh-assign (obl)	der bokher ikh ken im [+wh] iz a kliger
Wh-Mvt (opt)	der bokher ikh ken im [+wh] iz a kliger
Topical (opt)	der bokher im [+wh] ikh ken iz a kliger
WH-PRO Del (obl)	der bokher ikh ken iz a kliger
vos-Insert (obl)	der bokher vos ikh ken iz a kliger

If the pronoun moved by Topicalization was not coreferent (ie did not carry a [+ wh] feature) it would not delete, and indeed (65) is perfectly good.

65. der bokher vos zi kent er iz a kliger
[the boy who her knows he is a sharp one]
"The boy who knows her is a sharp one."

In (65) the presence of a topic in COMP triggered inversion of subject and tensed verb.

Notice that the facts of (63) - (65) are crucial evidence for the claim that a topic moves into COMP. If a topic was simply reordered within S and not moved into COMP, the structural description of WH-PRO Deletion would not be met in (64) and another rule would be necessary to rule out (63). But we see here that the outputs of both wh-Movement and Topicalization satisfy the structural description of WH-PRO Deletion.

Notice also that WH-PRO Deletion will only delete bare pronouns, so that if an entire prepositional phrase is moved into COMP as in (66), the topicalized version of (10), no deletion takes place, which is the desired result.

66. der yid vos oyf im farloz ikh zikh iz mayn shokhn.

At this point it is clear that the grammar can achieve much greater simplicity. If we compare wh-Movement and Topicalization, we see that both rules can be collapsed into a rule of Leftward Movement, identical to Topicalization. (A) Whatever wh-Movement can front, Topicalization also can; (B) Both rules are optional. It is not necessary to attribute a [+ wh] feature to pronouns coreferent to the heads of their clauses any longer; if the fronted pronoun is coreferent it will delete under a slightly revised version of WH-PRO Deletion, given in (67).

67. PRO Deletion (Obligatory)

	NP	-	[$_{COMP}$	PRO]	-	X
	1	-		2	-	3
→	1	-		Ø	-	3

Condition: NP and PRO are coreferential.

If PRO is not coreferent to the NP, then it is a topic and Inversion[6] is triggered. This is illustrated in the sample derivations (68) - (70).

68.					
		der bokher		ikh ken im	iz a kliger
	Leftward Mvt	der bokher	im	ikh ken	iz a kliger
	PRO-Delet	der bokher		ikh ken	iz a kliger
	vos-Insert	der bokher	vos	ikh ken	iz a kliger
	Inversion	DNA			

In (68) PRO Deletion applies, as the pronoun in COMP is coreferential with the head of the relative clause, der bokher. vos is introduced in a COMP containing no wh-word. And finally, Inversion cannot take place as the variable "Y" of its structural description is null.

69.					
		der bokher		ikh ken vemen	iz a kliger
	Leftward Mvt	der bokher	vemen	ikh ken	iz a kliger
	PRO-Delet	DNA			
	vos-Insert	DNA			
	Inversion	DNA			

In (69), even though COMP contains an item coreferential to the head of the relative clause, PRO-Deletion does not apply as this item is not a pronoun, but rather a regular lexical item (see fn 4). vos cannot be introduced as COMP contains a wh-word and Inversion does not take place precisely because vos was not introduced.

70.					
		der bokher		er kent zi	iz a kliger
	Left ward Mvt	der bokher	zi	er kent	iz a kliger
	PRO-Delet	DNA			
	vos-Insert	der bokher	vos zi	er kent	iz a kliger
	Inversion	der bokher	vos zi kent	er	iz a kliger

In (70) PRO-Deletion did not take place, because the pronoun fronted is not coreferential to der bokher. vos is introduced as COMP contains no

wh-word. COMP now contains vos and Inversion can analyze it as its "Y", so Inversion takes place.

In conclusion, I have tried to establish the following points.

A. The vos of vos-relatives is a subordinate clause marker. It follows from this that a deletion site is present in vos-relatives.

B. Deletion is to be explained by a "movement in all cases" analysis.

C. There is in Yiddish a single rule of Leftward Movement.

Footnotes.

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[1] The claim here is that that in that particular case is a subordinate clause marker.

[2] According to Keenan it is rather unusual for a language to display a subject resumptive pronoun.

[3] And indeed there is a question word vos in Yiddish. Consider a sentence like

vos zogt er ?
[what say he]
"What does he say ?"

The claim here is that there are two vos's in Yiddish: one of them is a subordinate clause marker; the other one is a wh-word standing for a non-human NP as exemplified in (7).

[4] This I take as an indication that wh-words are regular lexical items and do not result from an operation of wh-Pronominalization, where personal pronouns would be turned into wh-words, and we would expect a complete paradigm.

[5] It may seem strange to assume that wh-Movement is optional given the badness of sentences with an unmoved wh-word. See, for instance,

* der yid ikh ken velkhn . . .

where, if wh-Movement had obligatorily taken place, we would have the good

der yid velkhn ikh ken . . .

However, a system of COMP interpretation such as the one developed by Chomsky (1973) guarantees that unmoved wh-words receive no interpretation.

6 Inversion is of limited relevance to this paper and is thus not discussed in the text. Simply notice that Inversion takes place in matrix sentences whenever the word order is not SVO and in embedded clauses when a topic is present. That is, a topic but not a wh-word triggers Inversion in an embedded clause.

I propose the following statement of Inversion:

Inversion (Obligatory).

X - [$_{COMP}$	vos	-	Y]	-	NP	-	V / AUX	-	Z
	1	-	2	-	3	-	4	-	5	-	6
→	1	-	2	-	3	-	5	-	4	-	6

Condition: X is non-null
Y is non-null

The requirement that X be non-null restricts the application of this rule to embedded clauses. It would be tempting to try to state Inversion for matrix as well as embedded clauses by postulating in matrix sentences the presence of a vos which would later be deleted and whose function would simply be to trigger the desired Inversion. Notice however that in addition to the ad-hoc-ity of introducing a vos in matrix sentences and always deleting it later on, this solution leads to an ordering paradox: vos-Deletion would have to follow Inversion in matrix clauses in order to trigger inversion whenever a wh-word is moved into COMP, but it would have to precede Inversion in embedded clauses in order not to trigger it when a wh-word is moved into COMP in them.

Also notice that Inversion necessarily follows PRO-Deletion and vos-Insertion, the latter two rules operating on the cycle of the head NP of the clause. If Inversion was to be stated without a nonnull variable to the left of COMP it would violate strict cyclicity as it would affect a proper subdomain of the cycle which preceding transformations are operating on.

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