

## On Syntactic Distinctness and Phase Head in English Relative Clause<sup>1</sup>

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In this paper, I propose that Rel, Top and Force, which are functional heads in the Cartographic approach, are phase heads whereas Foc and Fin are not, by exploring some problems of *Distinctness* introduced by Richards (2010). Distinctness is a condition that bans two identically labeled constituents from being linearized in the same syntactic domain. This condition can uniformly explain a variety of syntactic phenomena. However, when Topicalization occurs in relative clauses, it has two problems. First, in this case, a linearization statement  $\langle \alpha, \alpha \rangle$ , such as  $\langle \text{PP}, \text{PP} \rangle$ , are in the same Spell-out domain, so it is the violation of Distinctness. Therefore, Richards wrongly predicts that this sentence is ungrammatical. Second, multiple Topicalization of English is banned. I address two problems by modifying his approach.

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