

Toward an understanding of Condition C effects

As suggested in *The Antisymmetry of Syntax* (pp. 96/97/158), standard Condition C violations resemble the ban against downward movement. This resemblance can be captured by taking antecedent-pronoun relations to be instances of movement, starting from a doubling structure akin to that underlying clitic doubling. Thus, 'John thinks he's smart' involves movement of 'John' from within a constituent '[John-he]' up into the subject theta position of 'think'.

On the assumption that the pronominal part of '[DP-he]' cannot move out of that constituent, it follows that 'He thinks John is smart' could be derived, with 'John' as antecedent of 'he', only via strongly countercyclic movement, which is illicit. Hence this Condition C effect is accounted for without there being any need to stipulate the existence of any Condition C in UG. (From this perspective, there is no such thing as 'accidental coreference', apart from the familiar 'amnesia'/'mistaken identity' examples; all cases of 'intended' coreference (as well as variable binding) (in intrasentential environments and perhaps more generally) must involve syntactic movement.)

Condition C effects are found with 'reconstruction', in cases like 'How many pictures of John did he take yesterday?'. Some such effects are even found with resumptive pronouns (in English), and then, even when the resumptive pronoun is within an island, as in 'What picture of a famous linguist is his wife unaware of the fact that it's going to be published in the Times?' (fairly acceptable with 'a famous linguist' taken as antecedent of 'his') vs. 'What picture of a famous linguist is he unaware of the fact that it's going to be published in the Times?' (impossible with 'a famous linguist' as antecedent of 'he').

However, as Valentina Bianchi has brought to my attention, this last example contrasts with the fairly acceptable 'What picture of a famous linguist were you unaware of the fact that he doesn't want it published in the Times?' A classical Condition C reconstruction account fails to distinguish these last two examples.

The generalization seems to be, rather, that 'what picture of a famous linguist...he...it...' is excluded if 'he' is too close to 'a famous linguist'. The account I will propose will again (as in the case of 'He thinks John's smart') have the property that it does not require UG to contain any Condition C.