

Partial Control, inflected infinitives and defective intervention

Partial Control (PC), of the kind seen in (1), presents a non-trivial problem for the Movement Theory of Control (MTC):

(1) John_i would prefer PRO_{i+} to separate

As Landau (1999, 2000, 2003, 2004) has argued at length, PC patterns with Exhaustive Control (EC) in being sensitive to locality/island conditions, in yielding only a sloppy reading under ellipsis and functioning as a bound variable - the diagnostics used by Hornstein (1999) et seq. to argue that EC involves movement. Unlike EC, however, PC cannot easily be analysed as movement as the connection between controller and controllee is a non-exhaustive subset-superset relation wholly untypical of A-chains. There is no partial raising/passivisation, notably. In this paper I discuss apparent examples of PC in European Portuguese (EP) with both inflected and uninflected infinitives and argue that they shed important light on the PC problem. While Boeckx, Hornstein and Nunes' (2010) (BHN) covert commitative approach provides a plausible account of PC with uninflected infinitives in EP, this analysis does not extend to PC with inflected infinitives. These data, moreover, are also problematic for Landau's (2000, 2004) Agree-based approach, and Rodrigues' (2007) subextraction account. A new analysis is put forth whereby PC arises where a thematic head establishes an Agree relation with a DP in its c-command domain but that DP cannot move to raise to receive a theta-role as it already bears Case. As such, PC can be viewed as a kind of defective thematic intervention, in the sense of Chomsky (2000).

Virtually all EP speakers tested permit PC with uninflected infinitives in tensed non-finite complements, as per Landau's (2000) PC-generalisation. Thus desiderative verbs like *preferir* 'prefer' permit PC whereas implicative verbs like *conseguir* 'manage' disallow it:

(2) The PC-generalization

In tensed complements, PRO inherits all phi-features from the controller, including semantic plurality, but not necessarily semantic singularity.

- (3) a. *O Pedro conseguiu reunir=se hoje de manhã
the Pedro managed.3S meet.INF=self.3 today of morning
b. O João preferia reunir=se às 6.
the João preferred meet.INF=self.3 at.the 6

Examples like (3b) have the properties of OC (being subject to locality (4) and yielding a sloppy reading under ellipsis for example, hence the condition B violation in (5)):

- (4) *O Pedro acha que eu preferia reunir=se mais cedo
the Pedro believes that I preferred meet.INF=self.3 more early
'Pedro_i believes that I would prefer PRO_{i+} to meet earlier on.'

- (5) *O João preferia reunir=se de manhã, e a Maria_i também preferia (mas sem ela_i).
the João preferred meet.INF=self.3 of morning, and the Maria also preferred (but without her)
'João_i would prefer PRO_{i+} to meet in the morning and so would Maria (but without her).'

There are, nonetheless, several reasons to believe that such examples are not true instances of PC but rather involve a covert commitative of the kind discussed by BHN.

(6) The chair_i hoped [PRO_i/t_i to meet *pro*_{commitative} at 6]

While (6) is actually problematic for English, for various reasons, examples like (3b) in EP are plausibly instances of EC, derived via movement, with a covert commitative creating the mirage of PC. Firstly, unlike 'true PC', 'fake PC' examples such as (3b) are universally accepted. Secondly, they are compatible with restructuring for many speakers, unlike true PC (cf. Landau 2000: 80). Thirdly, a covert commitative analysis is the only way to reconcile the syntactic and semantic properties of PRO in such cases. The reflexive clitic always agrees for person and number with its antecedent, in line with Landau's PC-generalisation:

- (7) a. Eu preferia reunir=me mais tarde.
I preferred.1SG meet.INF=self.1SG more late
'I preferred/would prefer to meet later on.'
b. *Eu preferia reunir=nos às 3
I preferred.1SG meet.INF=self.1PL at.the 3
c. *Eu preferia reunir=se mais tarde
I preferred.1SG meet.INF=self.3 more late

Crucial to Landau's (2000, 2004) Agree-based analysis is the idea that PC results from a mismatch between the syntactic *singularity* and semantic *plurality* of PRO. Further EP data show, however, that there is more to PC than this mismatch in semantic plurality. In fact, in instances of fake PC in EP, PRO can receive a reading wholly distinct from its syntactic phi-specification, both in terms of number *and* person:

- (8) Preferias reunir=te mais tarde?
prefer.2SG meet.INF=self.2SG more late
i. 'Would you prefer PRO_{2PL} to meet later on?'
ii. 'Would you prefer PRO_{1PL} to meet later on?'
- (9) O João preferia reunir=se às 6.
the João preferred.3SG meet.INF=self.3 at.the 6
i. 'João would prefer PRO_{3PL} to meet at 6.'
ii. 'João would prefer PRO_{1PL} to meet at 6.'

In both cases, the reading under (ii), whereby the speaker is included in the referent of PRO, cannot be derived from a mismatch in semantic/syntactic plurality alone. It can be derived, however, from the presence of a null first person commitative. Finally, there is a very close match in EP between those verbs which can surface with a *comP* complement and those permitting PC (unlike in English).

Interestingly, many EP speakers (around half those surveyed) also permit what looks like PC with inflected infinitive complements (cf. also Modesto 2010 on Brazilian Portuguese and Rodrigues and Hornstein 2011 for a critique):

- (10) %Eu preferia reunirmo=nos mais tarde.
I preferred.1SG meet.INF.1PL=self.1PL more late
'I would prefer to meet later on.'

This second phenomenon appears to be a true instance of PC, hence its more variable status and the fact that it is incompatible with restructuring predicates. Here, there is clearly no requirement for the syntactic number *or* person features of the controlled subject to match those of the controller, contrary to Landau's PC-generalisation. All that is required is for the controlled subject to semantically contain the controller:

- (11) %O João preferia reunirmo=nos mais tarde.
the João preferred.3SG meet.INF.1PL=self.1PL more late
'João_i would prefer for us_{i+speaker(+)} to meet later on.'

Although there is evidence that the subject of inflected infinitivals is *pro* not PRO (following Raposo 1989: 297, Quicoli 1996: 59), there is nonetheless evidence that such examples involve OC. Crucially, desiderative Control predicates do *not* permit inflected infinitival complements with referential subjects, as Raposo (1987) shows, and so (11) cannot be an instance of accidental co-reference. This is further confirmed by (12), where a condition B violation indicates that *pro* must be partially controlled:

- (12) *O João_i preferia reunirem=se sem ele;
the João preferred.3S meet.INF.3PL=self.3 without him

Examples like (11) also display the properties of OC (e.g. sensitivity to locality, sloppy reading under ellipsis). In such cases, however it is clear that the phi-features of the embedded subject are fully syntactically specified and distinct from those of the controller. In such cases, I argue that the PC relation arises because the thematic head *v* establishes an Agree relation with *pro*, formally valuing its [D:] feature with *pro*'s referential index. However, as *pro* has a valued Case feature, it is defective and cannot raise to merge with *v*. As theta-roles are configurationally determined at LF (essentially theta-roles can be 'assigned' via either external or internal merge), it follows that *pro* cannot receive an additional theta-role from *v*. As such a distinct DP_j must be merged in *v*'s specifier to avoid a thematic crash at LF. This means that at LF the referential index of DP_j must be non-distinct from the referential index of *pro*, yielding PC:

- (13) [_{vP} DP_j v_[D: i] V [*pro*_i T...]] where *j* is non-distinct from *i*

The case of identity (EC) is ruled out by economy as movement provides a more parsimonious derivation. As such, this defective thematic intervention leads to PC. I provide a tentative extension of this analysis to other languages which either lack PC (Greek, Romanian) or have PC but lack inflected infinitives (English), based on the availability of Case in non-finite clauses.