Chipping Away at Levels of Representation/Modules of Theory Part II: S-Structure

1. An Aside / Very Brief Review
The Split Infl Hypothesis: IP = TP + AGR, in that order (Pollock, 1989 (cited in your syllabus, but see Rizzi’s (1990) monograph Relativized Minimality for a different take.)

MP, Chomsky (1993): AGRS + TP + AGRO (not MP, Chomsky 1995, so take care not to reify this structure)

*Note Marcel’s comment that AGR is C:
• What he most likely means by this is that CP is often used as a cover term for any and all functional projections that arguably exist above TP.

➢ For your purposes, just be careful not to conflate:
(A) A-movement to spec,AGR for case and agreement which is covert (i.e. @LF) in English (unless you are willing to consider English AGRS strong and AGRO weak, which is clearly not ideal) with
(B) A’- operator movement to spec,C, which is usually overt (i.e. pre-spell-out) in English.

2. Principle C and Binding at Surface Structure
2.1 Brief Review of BT
Binding = coindexation with a c-commanding antecedent.
Principle A: An anaphor must be bound in its governing category.
Principle B: A pronoun must be free in its governing category.
Principle C: An R-expression must be free everywhere.
2.2 Setting Up the Problem

PRACTICE: Tree the following sentences in (1) (Marcel’s (78)) under a copy theory of movement, with strikethrough lines for the copies that are traces of movement. Then, discuss the questions that follow.

(1) a. You said he\textsubscript{1}\textsuperscript{\textasciitilde} liked the pictures that John\textsubscript{i} took
b. How many pictures that John\textsubscript{i} took did you say he\textsubscript{1}\textsuperscript{\textasciitilde} liked?
c. Who said he\textsubscript{1}\textsuperscript{\textasciitilde} liked how many pictures that John\textsubscript{i} took?

Questions:

- What does (1a) indicate about Principle C with respect to levels of representation? How can we explain its ungrammaticality under the coreferential reading?

- What does (1b) tell us about Principle C with respect to levels of representation? Why is the coreferent reading allowed? (Hint: recall from last week that the RC is merged after movement.)

- How does (1c) compare to (1b)?
  - To what level of representation must we apparently refer to explain the difference in judgment?
  - If we say Principle C applies at LF (which is our ultimate goal), can we explain this difference?

2.2 A Solution

BUT,

- Recall the crucial difference in structure between (1b) and (1c). How do we know that the RC in (1c) is definitely not merged after movement, in contrast with (1b)?
Given this structural distinction, what level can we appeal to in order to explain the grammaticality difference between (1b) and (1c)?

SO, What is the outcome of this discussion with respect to Principle C and levels of representation?

2.3 Interim Summary
We’ve seen two sets of data that take away support for DS and SS (recall last week’s discussion of BT-C and D-structure). We previously thought BT-C was a module of the theory that specifically applied to (and therefore specifically supported) DS and SS as levels of representation, but that’s actually not the case. We can capture the facts by referring to LF (which we know we need) instead of DS or SS in explaining BT-C effects.

• BUT, can we take it further, and show:
  ➢ not only that these levels of representation are not needed,
  ➢ but that they’re actually harmful in that an appeal to them makes the wrong predictions about a particular data set?

3. Principle A, Idiom Fixing, and Levels of Representation
3.1 Setting up the Problem
PRACTICE: Tree the following sentences in (2) (Marcel’s (80)) under a copy theory of movement, with strikethrough lines for the copies that are traces of movement. Then, discuss the questions that follow.

(2)  
a. John does not know that Bill took pictures of himself.
b. John does not know how many pictures of himself Bill took.
c. How many pictures of himself does John think Bill took?
Questions:

- What is the only interpretation available for (2a), and how is this explained? What level(s) are relevant for this explanation?

- What are the two positions that copy theory gives us for the anaphor in (2b)? What reading is associated with each? What level(s) are relevant for these facts?

- What interpretations are available for (2c)? What does this tell us about BT-A with respect to levels of representation, and S-structure in particular?

  ➢ Synthesize our observations thus far, and articulate the state of affairs that has now emerged with respect to BT-A and levels of representation.

3.2 The Plot Thickens

Pre-SS? What if we say BT-A applies derivationally, prior to the formation of the complete S-structure representation?

That should work to account for the data in (2). Explain how.

BUT there’s a further distinction to be made between the two readings that isn’t captured by a purely derivational explanation:
Idiomatic vs. literal

The predicate “take pictures” can mean either (literally) to retrieve photographs, or (idiomatically) to photograph someone or something.

Crucially, it has been observed that:

➢ In (2), literal reading is available throughout.

➢ In (2a) the literal and the idiomatic readings should both be available.

➢ In (2b) and (2c), the idiomatic reading should only be available for the Bill reading. (Take some time to reflect on this.)

PROBLEM: How to account for these observations?

3.3 A Solution

Idiom Fixing

An idiom is “fixed”/interpreted as a whole unit at LF, so in order for an idiomatic reading to obtain, the “chunk” must be present at LF.

Reduction of Copies

Reduction of copied material can proceed to ‘thin out’ the representation. (Two copies are superfluous – reduce, reduce, reduce.)

PRACTICE: Illustrate the following two options for reduction, one at a time, on the tree you drew for (2b), then discuss the questions that follow.

Reduction 1

Keep upstairs copy complete, and reduce entire lower copy.

Questions:

• What binds the anaphor in this configuration?

• What has happened to the ‘idiom chunk’? Does this structure
capture the observation about (2b) discussed in 3.2?

Reduction 2  *Keep the wh-operator in the upstairs copy, and keep the restriction in the downstairs copy.*

Questions: (Same as above)

- What binds the anaphor in this configuration?

- What has happened to the ‘idiom chunk’? Does this structure capture the observation about (2b) discussed in 3.2?

SO  What *must* we conclude about BT-A and levels of representation?

PRACTICE: Take some time to articulate, in writing, your response to this last question. Decide which facts are most important, and synthesize elements from our discussion of sections 2 and 3 of this handout.

Next Week: ‘Further Issues in Binding Theory’ (Preference Principle, anaphor movement, etc.)