

Introduction to Syntax: 24.951

Recitation #12

Suzana Fong
sznfong@mit.edu

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Today's topics and goals

- Look at different types of control structures.
- Description of a novel form of control, proxy control.
- Compare proxy control to other, more well-known forms of control.

- Constructions with similar linear order, but different behavior:¹
 - (1) *Subject control vs. raising*
 - a. Rosie_k is likely [_{NonFin} ec_k to have run a marathon].
 - b. Rosie_k wants [_{NonFin} ec_k to run a marathon].
 - (2) *Object control vs. ECM*
 - a. Rosie believes Seema_k with all her heart [_{NonFin} ec_k to have run a marathon].
 - b. Rosie convinced Seema_k [_{NonFin} ec_k to run a marathon].

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 - a. Rosie_k is likely [_{NonFin} *t*_k to have run a marathon].
 - b. Rosie_k wants [_{NonFin} **PRO**_k to run a marathon].
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 - a. Rosie believes Seema_k with all her heart [_{NonFin} *t*_k to have run a marathon].
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- a. Rosie believes the doctor to have examined Seema.
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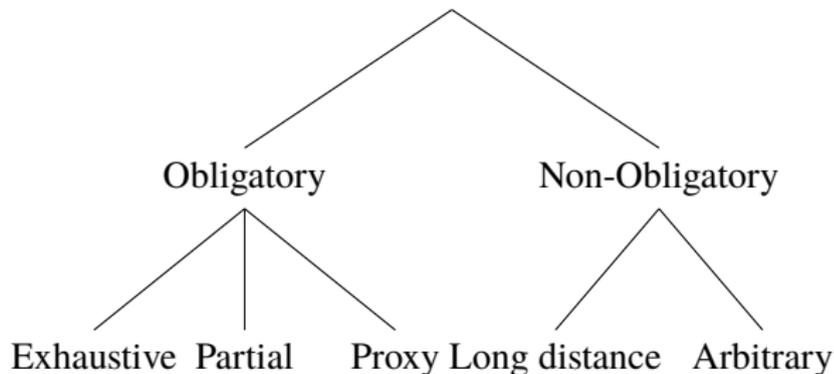
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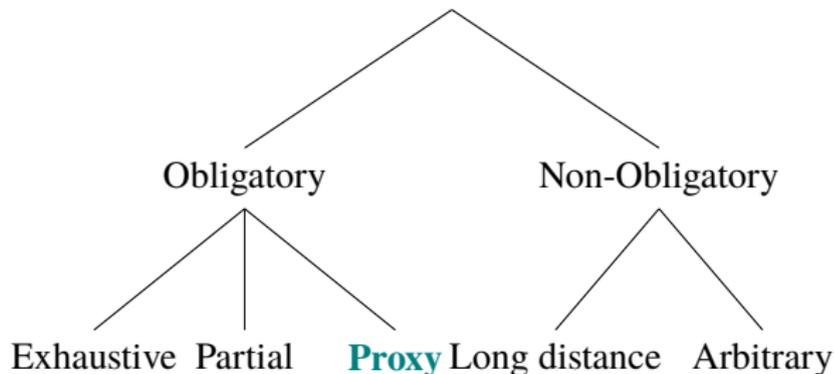
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Bound variable

Term given to contexts where a pronominal anaphor functions like a logical variable in that its interpretation co-varies with the value assigned to its antecedent in a given universe of discourse.

- (8) *Context: Math class with four girls (Alice, Beth, Carol, and Diane).*
- a. Every girl in math hopes that she will be an astronaut.
 - b. $[\forall x, x \text{ hopes that } x \text{ will be an astronaut}]$
- The interpretation of the pronoun *she* varies according to which girl is picked out.
 - For such a sentence to be evaluated as true it must be the case that each substitution of the pronoun for a constant yields a true proposition: Alice hopes that Alice will be an astronaut, Beth hopes that Beth will be an astronaut, and so on.

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- What does it have to do with control?
 - ▶ **Premise:** A standard test for the bound variable status of pronouns is whether they yield only sloppy readings or whether they can yield both strict and sloppy readings, under ellipsis.
 - A bound variable is predicted to yield only the former, but a deictic form is compatible with the latter.

- **Sloppy reading:** the identity of the referent is not preserved (i.e. it is sloppy) across the two conjuncts.
- **Strict reading:** the identity of the referent is preserved across the two conjuncts.

(9) Peter likes his picture, and Joan does Δ too.

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(10) Mary expected [_S *PRO* to attend the ceremony], and Sue did Δ too.

i. Sue expects *PRO*_{Sue} to attend the ceremony.

sloppy

ii. # Sue expects *PRO*_{Mary} to attend the ceremony.

strict

- Takeaway: under the assumption that bound variables exhibit only a sloppy reading under ellipsis, (10) shows us that *PRO* behaves like a bound variable.

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- **Exhaustive control:** PRO must be identical to the controller.
- **Partial control:** PRO must include the controller.

- Why (7b) is clever:

- (11) a. The student*(s) met/gathered in the hallway.
b. Rosie collects mug*(s).

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Exercise

The OC Signature (6) states that *PRO* must be interpreted as a bound variable and, furthermore, that partial control is a type of OC. Construct examples that demonstrate that *PRO* in partial control has a bound variable reading.

(12) *Grossetano dialect of Italian*

La maestra ha chiesto al contadino [_S di *PRO* poter
the teacher has asked to.the farmer [C may.INF
accarezzare l' asino].
pet.INF the donkey]

‘The teacher asked the farmer for permission to pet the donkey.’

- i. Exhaustive Scenario: There is a donkey next to the elementary school. The teacher would like to pet it and asks the farmer if she is allowed to do that.
- ii. Partial Scenario: There is a donkey next to the elementary school. The teacher and her students would like to pet it. The teacher asks the farmer if she and the kids are allowed to do that.
- iii. **Proxy Scenario:** There is a donkey next to the elementary school. The kids would like to pet it. The teacher asks the farmer if they are allowed to do that.

(13) *Southern standard dialects of German*

Der Wärter hat den Gefängnisdirektor gebeten, [_S *PRO* bei
the warden has the prison.director asked [with
schönem Wetter die Pause draußen verbringen zu dürfen].
nice weather the break outside spend.INF to may.INF]
‘The warden asked the director for permission (for the prisoners)
to spend the break outside when there is good weather.’

Proxy Scenario: The prisoners of a prison want to spend their breaks outside when there is good weather. A warden does them the favour of asking the director for permission for them to do so.

Some properties of proxy control

- A central property of proxy control sentences is that they all involve some sort of permission semantics (deontic modality).
 - ▶ Proxy vs. partial control: the latter can occur outside of deontic modality (cf. (7b)).
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- (14) La maestra_k ha pregato suo marito_i [di *PRO*_{i,*j,*k} chiedere
the teacher has asked her husband [C ask.INF
al contadino_j [di poter accarezzare l' asino]].
to.the farmer [C may.INF pet.INF the donkey]]
'The teacher asked her husband to ask the farmer for permission
to pet the donkey.'

Potential proxy-proxy scenario: There is a donkey next to the elementary school. The kids would like to pet it. The teacher asks her husband if he could do her the favour on the way back from dropping her off at school, of asking the farmer if the kids are allowed to pet the donkey.

- (15) La maestra_i ha pregato il contadino_j [di *PRO* poter
the teacher has asked the farmer [C may.INF
accarezzare l' asino] e suo marito_k uguale Δ.
pet.INF the donkey] and her husband too
'The teacher asked the farmer for permission to pet the donkey
and her husband, too.'

Potential strict ellipsis proxy scenario: There is a donkey next to the elementary school. The kids would like to pet it so the teacher asks the farmer if the kids are allowed to do so. And on the way back from dropping his wife off at school, thinking that his wife had forgotten, the teacher's husband also asks the custodian if the kids are allowed.

Only reading available: the husband will ask for permission on someone else's behalf to pet the donkey.

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Brigado ♥