**On Partial Control in German**

It has been noted that in an obligatory control context, the controller either exhaustively determines the denotation of PRO ((1a); Exhaustive Control; EC henceforth), or the reference of PRO includes, but is not identical to the one of the controller ((1b); Partial Control; PC) (Landau 2000, 2004, 2013, to appear a,b; Wurmbrand 2003; Boeckx, Hornstein & Nunes 2010; Grano 2012, Pearson 2013 a.o.).

(1)  
   a. John, managed PRO, to open the door.  
   b. John, regretted PRO, gathering in the town hall.

Although the importance of PC for the theory of control in general has been frequently acknowledged (for example as a way to decide whether control is movement as suggested in Hornstein 1999 and much subsequent work; but see Bowers 2008), the actual empirical situation is far from clear. This fact, in our view, is responsible for the multitude of (often fundamentally) different analyses of PC. Moreover, the observation in Sheehan (2012, 2014) that PC into uninflected infinitives in the Romance languages is restricted to embedded predicates that license comitatives raises the possibility that languages differ wrt the availability of ‘true’ PC (i.e. PC not mediated via a covert comitative).

In this talk, we clarify the empirical picture for PC in German based on a questionnaire study carried out at the University of Stuttgart. The results show that German, like the Romance languages, allows for a PC-like interpretation in cases where the embedded predicate licenses a comitative. Interestingly, this is true independently of the type of matrix predicate involved, superficially giving rise to PC even with exhaustive control predicates (pace Landau 2000, 2004, 2013, to appear a, Sheehan 2012, 2014, White & Grano 2013, Haug 2013, a.o.). Furthermore, most speakers also allow combinations of a PC predicate and an embedded verb that disallows comitatives – a constellation that must be treated as ‘true’ PC – albeit the judgments are significantly more diverse than is the case if the embedded predicate can combine with comitatives.

We propose a dual analysis of PC that accounts for these facts. While syntactically, obligatory control always involves full identity between controller and controller (via an Agree relation and subsequent feature valuation, thus accounting for the observation that PRO in PC must match its controller’s phi-features (Landau 2000, 2004, 2013, to appear a,b; Schlenker 2003, a.o.)}, two options exist to nevertheless express a subset relation. This happens either indirectly via an embedded implicit comitative, or explicitly at the semantic-pragmatic interface. With respect to the latter mechanism, we follow Pearson’s (2013) analysis of PC, assuming that various factors (i.e. matrix predicate must be attitudinal; temporal independence of embedded and matrix event; etc.) conspire to render a PC-interpretation legitimate (see also White & Grano (2013)). We believe that treating true PC as a phenomenon that involves a special process in the semantics (Pearson’s extension of world-time-individual triplets) accounts for the strong inter-speaker variation observable only in the domain of true PC.

**References**


