

Coherence-Driven Constraints on the Placement of Accent

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Example (1a) is ambiguous. On one reading, the two clauses are related by a Parallel relation, where both instantiate a common topic akin to *things that one politician did to another* (here, paraphrase *and as and similarly*). In this case, the unaccented pronoun *him* must refer to Cheney. On a second reading, the clauses are related by a Result relation, in which the defiance is interpreted as the direct cause of the punishment (here, paraphrase *and as and as a result*). In this case, the unaccented pronoun preferentially refers to Powell. If the pronoun is accented as in (1b), the interpretations switch: The Parallel interpretation requires Powell to be the referent, whereas the Result interpretation requires Cheney, the latter denying an expectation about who was punished.

- (1) a. Colin Powell defied Dick Cheney, and George Bush punished him. (Kehler 2002)
b. Colin Powell defied Dick Cheney, and George Bush punished HIM.

The fact that *him* must be accented to refer to Powell for the Parallel reading but not the Result reading (and vice versa for Cheney) is surprising for Schwarzschild's (1999, henceforth S) otherwise attractive analysis, since the contextual factors his system is sensitive to are invariant between the two relations. Two systems of F-marking and accentuation licensed for the second clause of (1a) are shown in (2a) and (2d), based on the existential F-closures in (2b) and (2e), and on analogy with S's treatment of (2c) and (2f) respectively.

- (2) a. [GEORGE BUSH]_F [[PUNISHED]_F him]_F.
b. $\exists X \exists R [X \text{ R-ed}]$
c. { What did John's mother do? } She [[PRAISED]_F him]_F.
d. [GEORGE BUSH]_{F₁} [PUNISHED]_{F₂} [HIM]_{F₃}.
e. $\exists X \exists R \exists Y [X \text{ R-ed } Y]$
f. { John cited Mary, but } he DISSED_{F₁} SUE_{F₂}.

While S does not give a metric for selecting between the competing F-markings in (2a) and (2d), they are in any case not freely interchangeable. As such, top-down influences of coherence relations in part determine F-marking and accentuation.

The establishment of Parallel prohibits accenting on a phrase that is coreferent with its parallel element and requires it otherwise, regardless of the Givenness status of the phrase in the rest of the discourse. For the Parallel reading of (1a) in which the pronoun is assigned to Powell, this gives rise to the multiple focus structure in (2d) and corresponding Existential F-Closure in (2e), which can be seen as an impoverished representation of the common topic. Unlike S's (2f), the pronoun in (1a) is not parallel to its antecedent, and thus must receive accent despite its status as Given. Crucially, this phenomenon is not specific to ambiguous pronouns – it remains even if the pronoun is unambiguous or if a proper name is used instead (de Hoop 2004). That is, assuming Parallel, we get:

- (3) Condi Rice defied Cheney and Bush punished HER/#her/CONDI/#Condi.

As such, these facts cannot be the result of a pronoun-specific disambiguation mechanism (e.g. Kameyama (1999), Beaver (2004)). These facts thus argue strongly against the existence of a purely grammatical-role-based parallelism constraint guiding pronoun interpretation (Smyth 1994, *inter alia*), since the accent required for the pronoun to refer to Powell in the Parallel reading of (1a) comes from a source independent of pronoun interpretation *per se*, and the Result reading of (1a) simply falsifies the constraint (cf. Venditti et al. (2002)).

The Result interpretation of (1a), on the other hand, is licensed by the world knowledge expressed by the causal relation shown in (4).

$$(4) \text{ defy}(P, C) \wedge \text{ etc}(P, C, B) \supset \text{ punish}(B, P)$$

This rule captures the default relationship that the person who does the defying is typically the one who gets punished. The Givenness relations in the consequent align with the F-marking in (2a), which in turn licenses the resolution of the unaccented pronoun in (1a) to Powell. (*Etc* is a catch-all for applicability conditions irrelevant to our purposes, e.g., that B has to be in a position to punish P). This again creates a congruence condition if the pronoun is to refer to Cheney instead: The contrast with expectation must be indicated by accenting the pronoun, regardless of the Givenness status of the referent in the rest of the discourse. And as before, this occurs independently of whether an ambiguous pronoun is used, that is, assuming Result we get:

$$(5) \text{ Condi Rice defied Cheney and Bush punished HIM/\#him/CHENEY/\#Cheney.}$$

We therefore enrich S's model with constraints derived from a theory of coherence that are required to accurately predict F-marking and accentuation. The relationship of the analysis to question-under-discussion models (e.g., Roberts, Büring) is also discussed.

References

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