

# ARGUING FOR MOVEMENT THEORY OF DEPICTIVE CONTROL

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Languages vary as to the ability of nominals to control depictives. While in English this is only possible for subjects and direct objects, other languages show a much wider variety of options (Nichols 1978; Shibagaki 2011). To account for this, I propose a movement-based theory of depictive control reducing the variation to language-specific restrictions on movement. This extends a program launched in Hornstein (1999) and continued, a.o., in Hornstein (2001) and Hornstein, Polinsky (2010).

The bulk of my evidence comes from Ossetic. Here, possessors and adposition complements fail to control depictives, whereas any other nominal is able to do so. The case is marked on the left edge of the nominal. Nominal phrases are rigidly ordered and unsplittable; they do not display overt agreement, either in case or in number. Articles are absent.

- (1) a. *asə štər wurš bəχ*                      b. *asə štər wurš bəχ-t-en*  
          this   big   white   horse                      this   big   white   horse-PL-DAT  
          ‘this big white horse’                                      ‘for these big white horses’

Depictives are marked with the ablative, no matter what is the case of the controlling nominal. That rules out the possibility that an alleged depictive and its controller are mere fragments of a single split phrase. Example (2) illustrates the main contrast:

- (2) a. Case-marked nominal as a controller  
          *šošlan χetəg-əl                      rašəg-əj = dər                      ɐwwəndə*  
          Soslan Khetag-SUP                      drunk-ABL=EMP                      trusts  
          ‘Soslani trusts Khetagi even drunki/j.’  
       b. Postposition complement as a non-controller  
          *šošlan [χetədž-ə                      aχχošəj]                      rašəg-əj                      ɐrbasədiš*  
          Soslan Khetag-OBL                      because.of                      drunk-ABL                      s/he.arrived  
          ‘Soslani came because of Khetagi drunki/\*j.’  
       c. Possessors as non-controllers  
          External (dative) possessor  
          *šošlan-en                      jə = ɐfšymər                      rašəg-əj                      ɐrbasədiš*  
          Soslan-DAT                      POSS.3SG=brother                      drunk-ABL                      s/he.arrived  
          ‘Soslani’s brother arrived drunki/\*j.’

I propose the following derivation scenario: first, a depictive and the nominal that controls it are base-generated within a single small clause:

- (3) [SC DP/NP depictive-ABL]

Then, the SC is merged low in the clause. In this my proposal agrees with Marušič et al. (2008). However, SCs cannot be directly merged with case assigners, and, in order to receive case, the nominal must move out of the SC into a position where it can have its case features checked.

- (4) [[VP DP/NP-CASE V] [sc tDP/NP depictive-ABL]]

This accounts for the ability of any nominal phrases to control depictives.

The multiple spell out approach to derivation predicts the contrast between non-embedded nominals and complements of adpositions and possessors. Given that Ossetic allows neither split DP/NPs nor adposition stranding, I adopt the proposal of Abels (2003) that PPs are phases in languages of this type. Consequently, PPs participate in further derivation fully assembled. Therefore, they cannot serve as targets for movement, a fact which explains the contrast between (2a) and (2b). On the other hand, SCs can merge with VPs and thus nominals moving out of SCs can occupy the respective positions. The failure of an external possessor to control a depictive, (2c), follows from an assumption that the external possessor is base generated within a nominal phrase and then moves out through an escape hatch, Deal (2012).

The analysis I propose makes a *prediction*: Unlike overt arguments, *pro* does not move and, under this analysis, will not be expected to control depictives. This prediction is borne out:

- (5) a. *šošlan-əl                      rašəg-əj = dər                      pro                      ɐwwəndən*  
          Soslan-SUP                      drunk-ABL=EMP                      I.trust  
          ‘Ii trust in Soslani even drunki/j.’  
       b. *šošlan-en                      jə = ɐfšymər-əj                      rašəg-əj                      pro                      təršən*  
          Soslan-DAT                      POSS.3SG=brother-ABL drunk-ABL                      I.am.afraid.of  
          ‘Ii am afraid of Soslani’s brotherk drunki/\*j/k.’

For English, a language that allows preposition stranding, my proposal will predict that PPs will be able to control depictives, a prediction that is borne out to some extent, Maling (2001).

- (6) a. *The perverted orderly liked to look at female patients<sub>i</sub> nude<sub>i</sub>*  
b. *The brain surgeon had to operate on the patient<sub>i</sub> wide-awake<sub>i</sub>*

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