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 buŋx
this big white horse
b. asə štər wurš buŋx-t-ɐn
‘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 χetɐg-əl rašəg-ɐj=dɐr ɐwwɐndə
Soslan Khetag-SUP drunk-ABL=EMP trusts
‘Soslan trusts Khetag even drunk.’
b. Postposition complement as a non-controller
šošlan [χetɐdž-ə aχχošɐj] rašəg-ɐj ɐrbasədiš
Soslan Khetag-OBL because.of drunk-ABL s/he.arrived
‘Soslan came because of Khetag drunk.’
 Possessors as non-controllers
c. External (dative) possessor
šošlan-ɐn jɐ=ɐfšymɐr rašəg-ɐj
Soslan-DAT POSS.3SG=brother drunk-ABL
‘Soslan’s brother arrived drunk.’

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 as signers, 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 tDNP 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 based 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. šoslan-əl rašog-ŋj=dɐr pro ɐwwəndə
Soslan-SUP drunk-ABL=EMP I.trust
‘I, trust in Soslan, even drunk.’
b. šošlan-ɐn jɐ=ɐfšymɐr-ɐj rašəg-ɐj pro tɐ+'_son
Soslan-DAT POSS.3SG=brother-ABL drunk-ABL I.am.afraid.of
‘I am afraid of Soslan’s brother, drunk.’
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, nude.*
   b. *The brain surgeon had to operate on the patient, wide-awake.*

References
Deal, A.R. 2012. Possessor raising. Ms, UCSC.