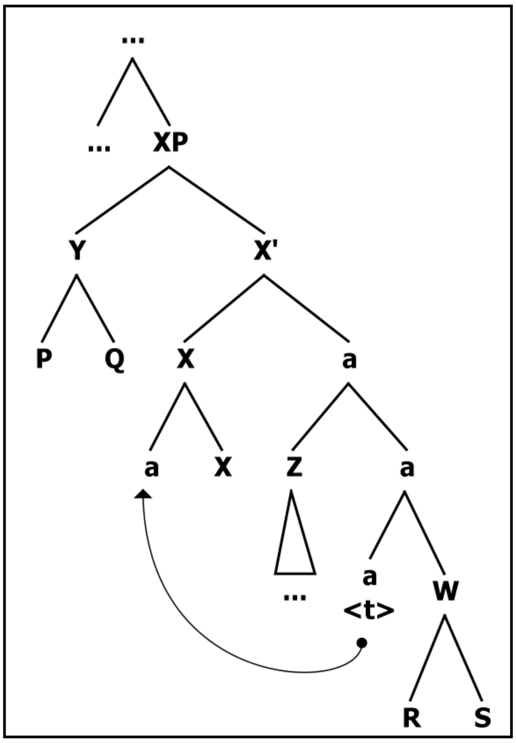
Notes on Session 24 (28.05.2009)

These Notes is just a short summary of some of the, admittedly quite speculative, topics touched during the session.

Since we started with the **Minimal Link Condition (MLC)**, it immediately became apparent that something of the nature of "closeness" was to be defined. In this case, this means a definition in terms of **domains** and the corresponding notion of **equidistance**. We already had this issue some time ago, but since they were subject of inquiry, I will repeat them here in an informal tree representation. The relevant definitions are given in CT: 299 (86), or, in a more elaborate fashion in Uriagereka (1998: 414 (9)). Let's look at a tree:



In Uriagereka, we can find an absolutely helpful gloss of Chomsky's (86). I mainly took Uriagereka's tree representation.

Definition of minimal domain (final version). Where α is a feature matrix or a head, and CH is a given chain (α, t) or the (just) trivial CH α.[1]

(a) Max(α) is the smallest maximal projection dominating α.

This means in our case that Max(α)=XP. The "umbrella" or, if you will, the "event horizon" for α is XP. Irrelevant for α is everything that goes beyond XP.

(b) The domain D(CH) of CH is the set of categories/features dominated by Max(α) that are distinct from and do not contain α or <t>.

Note that what matters are the dependants of CH(α, t), which is why α and <t> are excluded in (b). Since Max(α)=XP, D(CH(α, t))={Y, P, Q, Z, W, R, S}. This is also what one might call the maximal domain of the chain (Max(D(CH(α, t)))),[2] or simply the D(CH).

(c) The minimal domain Min(D(CH)) of CH is the smallest subset K of D(CH) such that for any x belonging to D(CH), some y belonging to K dominates x.

Uriagereka writes: "This still limits the minimal domain to the dependents of the chain (α, t) *and none of their descendants*" (p. 415, emphasis mine). In our case this means Min(D(CH))={Y, Z, W}.

So far, this seems to be it, at least this is what we need for CT.[3] Now we are in a position to define "closeness". CT: 299 (87) is relevant here. Looking at the tree, again, we find that **X is closer to XP than α because X c-commands α and is not in the same Min(D(CH(α, t)))**. The same seems to be true for X', but not for P or Q, since they don't c-command α. I hope this suffices for a definition of "closeness". One of the general implications of this interpretation of "closeness" is a less strict version of the **MLC**. As we once said: **Domains flatten hierarchies**.

As we have seen, CHs are taken for granted in that they establish dependencies via movement of the CH head. Michael then came up with a very fundamental question as to the LF nature of CHs. **What does it mean for a CH to be an (arguably primitive) LF object?** Since Burzio (1986) and Chomsky (1986)[4], the notion of Chain has been established. The relevant passage in Hornstein et al. exemplifies the need for Chain via the sentence:

[$_{IP}$ [There]$_i$ is [$_{Small\ Clause}$ [a cat]$_i$ on the mat]].

Since it is usually assumed that the associate of the expletive can only receive case in matrix IP, here, at least at first glance, the associate would be left without case and thus the structure would

[1] I believe that "trivial" simply means "one-membered".

[2] Please keep in mind that this notation did not really occur in the literature. It just intuitively tries to grasp everything that is in the "domainhood-umbrella" for the given chain.

[3] I will here leave out the internal domain (ID) and the checking domain (CD). Essential here is only the Min(D(CH)).

[4] For Burzio the monograph is *Italian Syntax* and for Chomsky it is his *Knowledge of Language*.

incorrectly be ruled out as ungrammatical, which is indeed not the case. In the present analysis, however, [a cat] moves covertly and adjoins to IP where it will have its case features checked:

> $[_{IP}$ [a cat]$_i$ $[_{IP}$ there is $[_{\text{Small Clause}}$ t_i [on the mat]]]].

What is semantically interpreted is the trace of [a cat]. With regard to intermediate traces that are the result of cyclic transformations, intermediate traces can also play into semantic interpretation. Chomsky's relevant example is (88), CT: 300. In fn. 75 (p. 387), he writes:

> "Depending on how exactly interface operations are understood, the semantic features of intermediate traces could be accessible to interpretive operations before they become invisible for further interpretation […]."

One more on this can be found in Uriagereka (1998: 333):

> "Strictly, a chain could be seen as a relation between two configurations: that existing between the moved element and its sister, and that existing between the copy of the moved element and its sister [see sec. 4.3]."

So much for that from me. As Michael furthermore pointed out: **What does it mean for LF to deal with copies?** And I am thinking of the following question: Does it take computational effort to make copies? Could LF not just move α and then forget about the whole chain thing? Shipping over what is "left behind" to the C-I system? Speculations abound, rereading is advisable.