Some interface conditions (ICs)

A preliminary note. While digging up information on ICs, I grew aware of the actually vague definition of what exactly an IC is, more precisely, of where exactly it is supposed to hold: Provided that the levels of representation PF and LF are the interfaces, are ICs ***(a)*** *narrow syntactic, derivational conditions ensuring the well-formedness (in terms of interpretability) of a* ***derivational*** *output when reaching the interfaces?;* ***(b) representational*** *conditions imposed on the derivational output by the interfaces?;* ***(c) external*** *conditions (say, a pragmatic condition dictating the order Focus > Topic) imposed on the interfaces.*

Although the dividing line seems to be hard to draw here, I think it is relevant to determine the locus of ICs: Obviously, (a) and (b) have to do with the ***representationalism vs. derivationalism*** *dichotomy, i.e. whether it is representational filters and constraints, or rather derivational conditions and principles that ensure well-formedness. Option (c), however, clearly identifies an IC being imposed onto a derivational output by an* ***external system*** *(like C-I, A-P). In the latter case, the question arises whether an IC is somewhat redundantly imposed on the (interface) levels of representation PF and LF, or, quasi-dynamically, directly onto the derivation (as in a strongly derivational LF- and PF-less theory).*

A. Syntax-morphophonology IC on P-stranding (cf. Law 2006)

- **P-stranding**

  ex. [That book]$_i$ has been talked [$_{PP}$ about t_i]

  but: not possible (to the same extent) in German and Romance

  ex. *[Ce livre]$_i$ a été parlé de t_i

  ?Wo$_i$ redest du von t_i (*colloquial*)[1], *Was$_i$ redest du von t_i

- availability of P-stranding seems to correlate with that of syntactic **D-to-P-incorporation** (**suppletion**)

  ex. an dem → am de le → du
  at the-DAT → **P+D** about the → **P+D**

  → suppletive P+D might explain the lack of P-stranding in German, Romance

- syntax-morphology-interface condition (cf. Law 1998):

  (1) **Syntactic constraint on suppletion**:

  Elements that undergo suppletive rules must form a syntactic unit X^0.

- [$_{PP}$ P [$_{DP}$ **D** [$_{\mathbf{NP}}$ N]]]] → [$_{PP}$ [P+**D**$_i$] [$_{DP}$ t_i [$_{\mathbf{NP}}$ N]]]

  D and NP don't form a constituent any longer → P cannot be stranded (ban on non-constituent movement)

  ex. J'ai parlé [$_{PP}$ de le livre] → J'ai parlé [$_{PP}$ du$_i$ [t_i livre]]
  P D P+D$_i$

  Je lui ai demandé [$_{CP}$ de [$_{TP}$ T [le lire]]] → *Je lui ai demandé [$_{CP}$ du lire]

Law, Paul (1998): "A Unified Analysis of P-Stranding in Romance and Germanic". In: Pius Tamanji and Kiyomi Kusumoto (eds) (1998). *Proceedings of the North Eastern Linguistic Society* 28. Amherst: Graduate Linguistics Student Association, 219–234.

—— (2006): "Preposition Stranding". Chapter 51 of: Martin Everaert, Rob Goedenmans, Bart hollerbrandse, Henk van Riemsdjik (eds) (2006). *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax. Volume III.* Oxford: Blackwell, 631-684.

B. A syntax-information structure IC on co-occurrence restrictions (cf. López 2006, 2008)

- there exist restrictions on the **co-occurrence of left-peripheral constituents**

- **multiple (topical) dislocations** possible in Romance (here: Catalan), but not in e.g. English

  ex. [Els llibres]$_i$, [a la Maria]$_j$, els$_i$ hi$_j$ vaig donar.

  #[The books]$_i$, [to Maria]$_j$, I gave (them$_i$ [to her]$_j$).

- restrictions: **multiple (fronted) foci** never occur

  ex. #ELS LLIBRES, A LA MARIA vaig donar.

  #THE BOOKS, TO MARIA, I gave.

- instead of arguing that there is only one SpecFocP (according to the split C-domain of Rizzi 1997: ForceP > TopP* > FocP >TopP* > FinP >…)[2] that accounts for the restriction, topics, foci, and *wh*-expressions are multiply stacked into SpecFinP

- co-occurrence restrictions are not syntactic but interpretive problems; information structure features come about as the result of the dynamic interaction of pragmatics and syntax in a phase-based system

- the problem: how can a pragmatic/information-structural condition restricting #Foc > Foc be adequately formulated?

López, Luis (2008). *A Derivational Syntax for Information Structure.* Ms.

—— (2007): "Syntax and Information Structure, Uncharted". Handout from *The Second Brussels Conference on Generative Linguistics*, "Alternatives to Cartography".

[1] I suppose the relative well-formedness of this has to do with the infamous expletive 'repair *da*' (≈ *there*) of colloquial German (i.e. both *wo* 'where' and *da* 'there' share a locative value), a spell-out phenomenon (copy spell-out). Cf. *Da$_i$ muss man nich' reden d(a)$_i$rüber* t$_i$.

[2] The asterisks indicate recursiveness of topics, as attested in several Romance languages.