There is reconstruction for Condition C in English questions

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SLIDE 1 "Condition C reconstruction"

It is theoretically foundational that the Condition C effect in (a),

> He framed the picture of Harry.

persists after A-bar movement in (b):

> Which picture of Harry did he frame?

However, recent experimental work has questioned the existence of Condition C reconstruction in English, especially at a distance, like in (c).

This paper reports a formal, large-scale acceptability rating experiment, which supports the claim that there is reconstruction for Condition C in English questions.

SLIDE 2 "Task"

Participants were tasked with imagining they were entering an ongoing conversation at a party – an 'eavesdropping' context, neutral as to co- or disjoint reference for the pronoun.

The target item, a prompt and two responses were presented simultaneously.

One response contained the same Name as the question, indicating a coreferential reading for the pronoun;

while the other contained Someone Else, indicating disjoint reference.

Participants were asked to rate the naturalness of each response on separate 1-7 sliding Likert scales.

SLIDE 3 "Design"

The design of our experiment was 2x2x2.

The first factor was the potential for a Condition C effect to arise, given the base position of A-bar movement:

Yes, with the base-position of A-bar movement below the pronoun, as in (1):

> Which picture of Harry did he frame?

And No, with the base-position above the pronoun, as in (3):

> Which picture of Harry made him laugh?

The second factor was Distance.

In Short, monoclausal sentences, the name and pronoun were separated by a single word, *did* or *made*.

Whereas in Long, biclausal sentences they were separated by three words and a clause boundary.

The third factor was Response:

Name, indicating coreference;

and Else, indicating disjoint reference.

SLIDE 4 "Analysis"

We ran 12 sets of items in a Latin square design across four lists.

Data from 223 native English-speaking undergraduates were analysed with mixed effects models using the lmerTest package in R.

12 baseline items were seen by every participant:

6 uncontroversially good with coreference, where Name was rated appropriately highly;

and 6 straightforward Condition C violations, where the low ratings for Name confirmed that our experiment was sensitive to Condition C.

SLIDE 5 "Results"

We found a significant three-way interaction between our three factors.

Mean ratings for the four main conditions are plotted on this slide, with 1 standard error of the mean.

The blue bars represent Name responses; the orange bars Else responses.

Starting with Yes, we found strong evidence of Condition C reconstruction at a Short distance.

In Long, the effect might at first look to have disappeared.

But turning to No, there is an equal preference for Name and Else in Short, and a strong preference for Name in Long.

In this light, we see that Condition C overturns the baseline Name preference in Long.

In sum, we found strong evidence for Condition C reconstruction of DPs in English, even at a distance.

SLIDE 6 "Comparison I: N and Task"

Our results thus differ from previous experimental work on English.

One reason might be that our number of participants provided greater statistical power – important considering many of the contrasts in Bruening and Al-Khalaf trend towards significance.

Moreover, our task posed separate questions about referential possibilities, along similar lines to Georgi et al., who found Condition C reconstruction in German.

Where Adger et al. forced a Yes/No response as to whether coreference was possible;

our task was more indirect, with the Else option raising the possibility of disjoint reference to salience.

And where Bruening and Al-Khalaf forced a preference between two referents for the pronoun, inside sentences complex enough to house them both;

our task asked separately about the possibility of Name and Else, while keeping the target sentences relatively simple.

SLIDE 7 "Comparison II: Accent"

Finally, our 'eavesdropping' context invited no special accent on the pronoun.

We suspect that accent may play a role, given that Georgi et al. found no evidence of Condition C reconstruction with strong demonstrative pronouns in German.

Indeed in English, we note that Yoshida et al., in investigating island repair, report clear experimental evidence of Condition C reconstruction in stripping, where the pronoun cannot be accented, because it is silent.

The contrast between:

> Her friends *and* she reported that the manager wrote to John.

> No, to Mary.

is attributable to reconstruction for Condition C of the remnant *to Mary* below the elided *she*.

SLIDE 8 "Conclusion"

In conclusion, Condition C reconstruction is experimentally observable with preposed DPs in English, even at a distance, plausibly validating the large theoretical literature that relies on its existence.

SLIDE 9 "References"