Towards a restrictive theory of transformations

Wish List Theory of Transformations against the backdrop of the classic theory ('CT') of Chomsky (1955) [The changes are all in the direction of greater explanatory adequacy. The resulting theory was formalized by Lasnik and Kupin (1977) and used by Lasnik (1981) to re-analyze English auxiliary phenomena. It is essentially the 'Government-Binding' (GB) theory of the 1980s. In this model, if nothing else is said, we will tend to have massive over-generation. This was largely corrected by the introduction of filters and other general principles.]

SAs:

Already present in CT

(1) The 'autonomy of syntax'. The primitives of syntactic description are entirely syntactic (not phonological, semantic, pragmatic, etc.).

(2) No 'counters'. No rules like 'Permute the 5th and 9th words' 'Move every prime numbered NP to the front' etc. The effect of some such fake rules could be attained if we permitted universal quantifiers in SAs but ...

(3) No (universal) quantifiers. [Almost certainly assumed in CT, and made explicit in Aspects.]

(4) Structure dependence (but sometimes not enforced)

Innovations

(5) Strict structure dependence (every term a single symbol: constant or variable)

(6) No stipulations of adjacency (i.e., variables everywhere - beginning, end, and between any two constants

(7) No Boolean conditions. 'Not' and 'and' were seldom used, and when they were, they had to be quantificational to be efficacious. 'Or' was widely used, and apparently useful, but it raised Ross's problem very clearly. Complex symbols, particularly decomposition into feature matrices, allow us to deal with partial overlap between categories (Ross's solution).

SCs

Already present in CT

(8) There is a very limited number of elementary operations. SCs are combinations of these.

Innovations

(9) Just one elementary per T [Therefore under very plausible assumptions, maximum of three terms in an SA - at most two affected terms and at most one catalyst term.]

Traffic rules

(10) None!

a. Free rule ordering

b. All rules optional

c. No non-Markovian conditionality