"Bleeding" Condition C in Kanien'kéha

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Overview

A first glance at clause-internal Condition C judgments:

		Non-violations	
		Accept	Reject
Violations	Reject	English	Warlpiri (Legate 2002)
	Accept	Kanien'kéha (Baker 1996)	Chuj (Royer 2025)

If Condition C is universal (Reuland 2011), a typology is unexpected!

- Concerted effort to derive apparent violations from language-specific variation: object shift (Legate 2002; Royer 2025), anticataphora (Mohanan 1983; Royer 2025), anaphoric islands (Legate 2002), accidental coreference (Bruening 2001; Reinhart 1983).

➤ Baker (1996) proposes another way to account for unexpected Condition C behavior in Kanien'kéha (Mohawk): high adjunction of all overt nominals.

> **Proposal (in a nutshell):** Kanien'kéha Condition C **violations are illusory**, but against Baker (1996), they do **not** require all overt nominals to be high adjuncts. Instead, **structural ambiguity** is what results in apparent Condition C violations in Kanien'kéha.

Condition C is operative in Kanien'kéha

- Matrix *pros* may corefer with R-expressions in adjuncts but not those in complement clauses (Baker 1996).

(1) Wa'ewennahnó:ton ohén:ton ne Katerí: aonsaionhtèn:ti.
pro[i] wa'-ie-wennahnoton [ohenton ne **Kateri**[i] aonsa-ion-ahtenti]CP
FACT-FIA-read[PUNC] before NE Kateri OPT.REP-FIA-go[PUNC]
'She[i] read it before Katerí:[i] left.'

(2) Wa'è:ron tsi Sosén: teiekahrí:ios.
pro[*i/j] wa'-ie-ihron [tsi **Sosen**[i] te-ie-kahr-iio-s]CP
FACT-FIA-say.PUNC C Sosen DUP-FIA-eye-good-HAB
'She[*i/j] said that Sosén:[i] has nice eyes.'

This asymmetry follows from standard binding (e.g., Chomsky 1981; Reinhart 1976, 1983).

Apparent violations and Baker's (1996) analysis

!! Baker presents analogues of (3) as apparent Condition C violations, arguing *pro* subjects can be coreferential with R-expression possessors of objects...

(3) RBChne thá:iens ne Wishe raohwísta'.
RBC-hne **pro**[i] t-ha-ien-s [ne **Wishe**[i] rao-hwist-a']OBJ
RBC-LOC CIS-MSGA-lay-HAB NE Wishe MSGP-money-NSF
'He[i] keeps Wishe[i]'s money at RBC.' (parse and translation à la Baker 1996)

- Objects seem able to appear outside of c-command domain of subject *pro*.
⇒ Overt nominals are high adjoined (licensed by *pro* in argument position).

High adjunction at the sentential level allows overt nominals to escape c-command by *pros* in argument position = no Condition C effects.

Structural ambiguity: an analysis

Proposal: A combination of *flexible word order* and *robust* pro-*drop* leads to the illusion of Condition C violations.

Actual parse of the Condition C "violation" in (3):

(4) RBChne thá:iens ne Wishe raohwísta'.
RBC-hne t-ha-ien-s [ne Wishe[i]]SUBJ [*pro*[i] rao-hwist-a']OBJ
RBC-LOC CIS-MSGA-lay-HAB NE Wishe MSGP-money-NSF
'Wíshe[i] keeps his[i] money at RBC.'

Some repercussions:
(i) Condition C remains universal. Violations can be chalked up to surface properties.
(ii) Another crosslinguistic "tool" languages can use to "bleed" Condition C.
(iii) Condition C behavior in Kanien'kéha is *not* evidence for high adjunction of all nominals (contra Baker 1996; see also Flaim 2025; Coon 2025).
(iv) Condition C cannot always be reliably tested with simple sentences (Legate 2002; Royer 2025).

New evidence from conjoined possessed objects

Prediction: In cases where structural ambiguity does **not** arise, Condition C effects should be found as usual. ⇒ Enter conjoined possessed objects!

- Both orderings of possessors and possessa are well-formed.

(5) Wahiientéhrha'ne' ne {Warisó:se akóhskare. / akóhskare Warisó:se.}
wa'-hi-ientehrha'n-e' ne Warisose ako-hskar-e' ako-hskar-e' Warisose
FACT-1SG>MSG-meet-PUNC NE Warisose FIP-partner-NSF FIP-partner-NSF Warisose
'I met Warisó:se's boyfriend.'

Asymmetry of allowed coreference between subject and (apparent) R-expression possessor of an object conjunct **based on ordering** of possessor and possessum.

- **No** coreference when the R-expression occurs *after the first conjunct or before the second*.

(6) a. Wahó:ti ne raonhotónkwa Kó:r tánon' raò:sere.
pro[*i/j] wa-ho-ati ne rao-nhotonkwa **Kor**[i] tanon' *pro* rao-'sere
FACT-MSGP-lose[PUNC] NE MSGP-key Kor and MSGP-car
'He[*i/j] lost Kó:r's keys and his car.'

b. Wahó:ti ne raonhotónkwa tánon' Kó:r raò:sere.
pro[*i/j] wa-ho-ati ne *pro*[*i/j] rao-nhotonkwa tanon' **Kor**[i] rao-'sere
FACT-MSGP-lose[PUNC] NE MSGP-key and Kor MSGP-car
'He[*i/j] lost his[*i/j] keys and Kó:r[i]'s car.' (SUBJ ≠ OBJ poss'r)

- **Coreference** when the R-expression occurs *before the first conjunct or after the second*.

(7) a. Wahó:ti ne Kó:r raonhotónkwa tánon' raò:sere.
pro[i] wa-ho-ati ne **Kor**[i] rao-nhotonkwa tanon' *pro*[i] rao-'sere
FACT-MSGP-lose[PUNC] NE Kor MSGP-key and MSGP-car
'Kó:r[i] lost his[i] keys and his car.'

b. Wahó:ti ne raonhotónkwa tánon' raò:sere Kó:r.
pro[i] wa-ho-ati ne *pro*[i] rao-nhotonkwa tanon' rao-'sere **Kor**[i]
FACT-MSGP-lose[PUNC] NE MSGP-key and MSGP-car Kor
'Kó:r[i] lost his[i] keys and his[i] car.' (SUBJ = OBJ poss'r)

Analysis

The pattern: Coreference is not allowed when R-expression is on the *inside* edge of a conjunct but allowed when it is on the *outside* edge.

(8) ✗ Subject and possessor of object coreference
a. lose [[keys **Kó:r**] and [car]]OBJ
b. lose [[keys] and [**Kó:r** car]]OBJ

(9) ✓ Subject and possessor of object coreference
a. lose [**Kó:r**]SUBJ [[keys] and [car]]OBJ
b. lose [[keys] and [car]]OBJ [**Kó:r**]SUBJ

➤ This follows from structural ambiguity: Examples like (6) **are not** structurally ambiguous, while those in (7) are.
- The existence of a non-violating parse effectively voids Condition C effects.

> If the location of the R-expression is unambiguous, Condition C effects arise as expected. **Condition C remains universal.**
>
> The data only follow if the subject asymmetrically c-commands the object. ⇒ Not all nominals **must** be high adjoined.

Baker's tests are inconclusive

Baker (1996) argues against my parse, but his tests are **not conclusive**.
➤ **Test 1: Polar questions.** Polar question particle *ken* is second position, so the R-expression must be object-internal.
Problem: Third position *ken* is with a topicalized DP (Flaim 2025).

(10) Onwá:ri akóhskare' ken wa'thonwanoronhkwánion'?
Onwari[i] ako-hskar-e' **ken** *pro*[i] wa't-honwa-noronhkwanion-'
Onwari FIP-partner-NSF Q FACT.DUP-FI>MSG-kiss-PUNC
'Did she[i] kiss Onwá:ri[i]'s boyfriend?' (Baker's translation) (Baker 1996:46, K.)

(11) Katya só:ra ken én:ieke'?
Katya sora **ken** en-ie-k-e'
Katya duck Q FUT-FIA-eat-PUNC
'As for Katya, will she eat the duck?' (Flaim 2025)

➤ **Test 2: CNPs.** Subject *pros* corefer with R-expressions in CNPs.
Problem: Not replicable.

(12) Kaná:takon wa'(e)tshiseni:ken' í:se' tánon' Sá:k raóhskare'.
ka-nat-a-kon *pro* wa'-(e)tshiseni-ken-' ise' tanon' Sak rao-hskar-e'
NA-town-JR-in.LOC FACT-MSG>2DU-see-PUNC 2PRO and Sak MSGP-partner-NSF
'He[i] saw you and Sá:k[i]'s girlfriend in town.' (judgments collected by Baker)
'He[*i/j] saw you and Sá:k[i]'s girlfriend in town.' (judgments collected by me)

➤ **Test 3: Demonstrative-headed DPs.** Subject *pros* corefer with R-expression possessors inside demonstrative-headed objects.
Problem: Judgments for these constructions are not clear cut (Bruening 2001).

(13) a. Wa'e'níkhon' ne thí:ken Arisawe ako'whahsa'.
pro[*i/j] wa'-ie-'nikhon-' ne thiken Arisawe[i] ako-'whahs-a'
FACT-FIA-sew-PUNC NE that Arisawe FIP-skirt-NSF
'She[*i/j] sewed that skirt of Arisawe[i]'s.' (✗ coreference)

b. Waharà:ko' ne thí:ken Wishe raotó:ken.
pro[i] wa'-ha-rakw-' ne thiken Wishe[i] rao-atoken
FACT-MSGA-choose-PUNC NE that Wishe MSGP-axe
'He[i] picked that axe of Wishe[i]'s.' (✓ coreference)