

Rescue by PF deletion, intervention effects, and head movement

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Ross (1969) observed that island violations can be rescued by applying ellipsis.

- (1) a. *Ben will be mad if Abby talks to one of the teachers, but she couldn't remember which (of the teachers) Ben will be mad [if she talks to]
b. Ben will be mad if Abby talks to one of the teachers, but she couldn't remember which (of the teachers) ~~Ben will be mad [if she talks to]~~ (Merchant 2001)

Recent approaches (Merchant 2001, Lasnik 2001) to the rescuing effect are based on Chomsky (1972): a * is assigned to an island when movement crosses it. If the * remains in the final PF representation, a violation occurs. However, if a PF operation, like ellipsis, deletes a category containing the *-marked element, the derivation is rescued. While further reduction is obviously needed here (see Hornstein et al 2003 for an interesting attempt), in this talk I simply adopt the broad outline of this approach, my goal being to show that the rescue-by-PF-deletion mechanism can be successfully extended to deduce Chomsky's (1995) generalization in (2) as well as the generalization in (3), which reduces (2) and (3) to (1) and resolves a serious problem for the copy theory of movement, once we allow the rescuing effect to arise not only through ellipsis deletion but also through copy deletion. (2) is illustrated by Italian (4), where raising across an experiencer is blocked (4a), but the blocking effect is voided if the experiencer is turned into a trace (4b).

(2) Traces do not count as interveners for relativized minimality effects.

(3) A phrase that is normally an island for movement ceases to be an island if headed by a trace

- (4) a. *Gianni_i sembra a Maria [t_i essere stanco] b. A Maria_j, Gianni_i sembra t_j [t_i essere stanco]
Gianni seems to Maria to- be ill to Maria Gianni seems to-be ill
'Gianni seems to Maria to be ill.' 'To Maria, Gianni seems to be ill' (Boeckx 2007)

(3) is illustrated by the Galician data in (5). Wh-movement is not possible from a DP headed by a definite article in Galician (5a), i.e. such DPs are islands/barriers in Galician. Significantly, as demonstrated by Uriagereka (1988,1996), wh-movement from such DPs is possible when the article head of the DP undergoes incorporation into the verb ((5b); the incorporation has morphological effects, see Uriagereka 1988). In the talk I will provide a number of additional arguments (from Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, and Chichewa) for the generalization in (3), showing that the island-voiding effect of traces as heads of islands is quite general.

- (5) a. *De quén_j liches os mellores poemas de amigo t_j?
of whom read (you) the best poems of friend
b. (?)De quén_j liche-los_i [DP [D' t_i [NP mellores poemas de amigo t_j]]]
of whom read (you)-the best poems of friend
'Who did you read the best poems of friendship by?' (Uriagereka 1996)

Focusing first on the generalization in (2), I give the following account of the rescuing effect in (4): Pursuing the general approach where a * is assigned to an element that has caused a locality-of-movement violation, the intervener (*a Maria*) in both (4a) and (4b) gets a * when subject movement crosses it (just like the adjunct *if*-clause gets a * in both (1a) and (1b) under this approach).

(6) Gianni_i sembra a Maria* [Gianni_i essere stanco]

However, the *-marked intervener is deleted under copy deletion in (4b), where the intervener moves, but not in (4a) (again on a par with (1), where the adjunct is deleted via ellipsis only in (1b))

(7) A Maria Gianni_i sembra ~~a Maria*~~ [Gianni_i essere stanco]

Since a * is then present in the final PF representation only in (4a), only (4a) is a locality violation. Under this analysis, the contrast in (4) is treated in exactly the same way as the contrast in (1). This is accomplished by using the repair-by-PF-deletion mechanism, which provides a uniform account of the saving effect of ellipsis and movement (i.e. traces) on locality violations. Most importantly, the generalization in (2) is deduced in a way that is fully consistent with the copy theory of movement, resolving a serious problem for this otherwise quite successful approach. Under the copy theory of movement, there is nothing surprising about (2); the relevant cases involve deletion

