

Princeton 10/18/91

Operators and Obviation
Howard Lasnik
University of Connecticut

- (1)a John is too stubborn to talk to
b John is too stubborn to talk to Mary
- (2) *John_i is too stubborn [Op_i [PRO_i to talk to t_i]]
- (3)a ?John is too stubborn to tell Bill to talk to
b John is too stubborn to tell Bill to talk to Mary
- (4) John_i is too stubborn [Op_i [PRO_i to tell Mary_j [PRO_j to talk to t_i]]]
- (5) John_i is too stubborn [Op_i [PRO_j to talk to t_i]]
- (6) An R-expression is A-free (in the domain of the head of its maximal chain).
- (7) *Who left after you spoke to
- (8) *Who_i [t_i left [after [Op_i [you spoke to t_i]]]]
- (9) Fred has himself to blame
- (10) Fred_i has himself_i [Op_i [PRO_i to blame t_i]]
- (11) Fred has Mary to blame
- (12) Fred has his high-school physics teacher to blame
- (13) Fred has himself to thank
- (14) Fred has Mary to talk to
- (15) For a chain C=(a₁,...,a_n), and for an expression Z where Z is not a member of C and Z is in an A position, if Z is dependent upon a_i, then Z does not c-command any member a_j of C.
- (16) X is dependent upon Y if:
(i) Y is an antecedent of X, or
(ii) for some Z, X is dependent on Z, and Z is dependent on Y.

- (17) John is too stubborn [Op [PRO to talk to t]]
↑
↑
- (18) *John is too stubborn [Op [PRO to talk to t]]
↑
↑
- (19) Who [t left after [Op [you spoke to t']]]
↓
↑
- (20) Fred has himself [Op [PRO to blame t]]
↓
↑
- (21) John is easy for himself to talk to
- (22) John_i is easy [for himself_i] [Op_i [PRO_i to talk to t_i]]
- (23) John is easy [for himself] [Op [PRO to talk to t]]
↓
↑
- (24) For a chain C=(a₁,...,a_n), and for an expression Z where Z is not a member of C and Z is in an A position, if Z is linked to a_i, then Z does not c-command any member a_j of C.
- (25) *Who [did you say [t' [t left [after [Op [you spoke to t']]]]]]
↑
↑
- (26) In (25), C is (Who, Op, t'), and t = Z c-commands t' and is dependent upon Who. But t apparently is not linked to Who.
- (27) *Who [did you say [[t left [after [Op [you spoke to t']]]]]]
↑
↑
- (28) John is easy [Op [for [himself to talk to t]]]
- (29) ??John is too boring for himself to talk to
- (30) John is too boring for Mary to talk to
- (31)a John is easy for Mary to talk to
b John is easy to talk to, for Mary
- (32)a John is eager for there to be an investigation
b *John is eager to be an investigation, for there

Bibliography

- Barss, A. (1986) Chains and Anaphoric Dependence MIT diss.
 Browning, M. (1987) Null Operator Constructions MIT diss.
 Chomsky, N. (1977) "On WH-Movement" in Culicover, Wasow, and Akmajian, Formal Syntax Academic Press.
 Chomsky, N. (1981) Lectures on Government and Binding Foris.
 Chomsky, N. (1986a) Knowledge of Language Praeger.
 Chomsky, N. (1986b) Barriers MIT Press.
 Cinque, G. (1990) Types of A-Dependencies MIT Press.
 Contreras, H. (1984) "A Note on Parasitic Gaps" LI 15,4.
 Epstein, S. D. (1983) "On the Interpretation of the Base-Generated Empty Categories in English" ms. UConn.
 Higginbotham, J. (1983) "Logical Form, Binding, and Nominals" LI 14,3.
 Higginbotham, J. (1985) "On Semantics" LI 16,4.
 Lasnik, H. (1985) "A Note on Illicit NP Movement" LI 16,3.
 Lasnik, H. and R. Fiengo (1974) "Complement Object Deletion" LI 5,4.
 Lasnik, H. and T. Stowell (1991) "Weakest Crossover" LI 22,4.
 Lasnik, H. and J. Uriagereka (1986) A Course in GB Syntax MIT Press.
 Rizzi, L. (1986) "On Chain Formation" in Borer, The Grammar of Pronominal Clitics Academic Press.
 Safir, K. (1987) "The Anti-C-Command Condition on Parasitic Gaps" LI 18,4.
 Saito, M. (1991) "Extraposition and Parasitic Gaps" in Georopoulos and Ishihara, Interdisciplinary Approaches to Language: Essays in Honor of S.-Y. Kuroda Kluwer.
 Williams, E. (1986/1987) "The ATB Theory of Parasitic Gaps" The Linguistic Review 6,3.

- (33)a John is too boring for Mary to talk to
 b ??John is too boring to talk to, for Mary
- (34) Mary believes John to be too boring to talk to
- (35) John believes himself to be too boring to talk to
- (36) John_i believes [himself_i to be too boring [Op_i [PRO_i to talk to t_i]]]
- (37) John believes himself to be too boring to tell himself about
- (38) It is important [PRO to wash oneself/*himself]
- (39) John believes [himself to be too boring [Op [PRO to talk to t]]]
- (40) John believes [himself to be too boring [Op [PRO to talk to t]]]
- (41) John believes Mary to be too boring to talk to
- (42) John believes Mary to be too boring to tell himself about
- (43) John believes Mary is too boring to talk to
- (44) John believes he is too boring to talk to
- (45) *The man who_i I hired t_i because Op_i he_i said t_i would work hard