

An Early Minimalist Approach to Certain ECP Effects

- (1) ??Who do you wonder [_{CP} whether [_{IP} John said [_{CP} \bar{t}' e [_{IP} \bar{t} solved the problem]]]]
- γ (=*)

<<For ease of exposition, I'm leaving out traces adjoined to VPs. The fundamentals of the story are unchanged even when they are added in.>>

- (2) We take Subacency for granted here. The question is why certain violations, such as (1), are not as bad as others, such as (12).
- (3) When a step of movement crosses a barrier, the resulting trace is marked *. [For Chomsky, *-marking (Lasnik and Saito's γ -marking) happens on-line, in the course of the derivation.]
- (4) What follows is Chomsky's attempt to deduce his slightly earlier approach to the “argument-adjunct asymmetry” which relied on the stipulation that intermediate traces of adjuncts can't be deleted (“Adjuncts must be fully represented.”).
- (5) Deletion is an operation, just as Move is. All operations are constrained by economy: Only perform an operation if you have to.
- (6) Deletion is possible only to turn an illegitimate LF object into a legitimate one, where the legitimate LF objects are:
- (7) a Uniform chains (all of whose members are in A-positions; A'-positions; or X⁰-positions)
b Operator-variable pairs.
- (8) Deletion in the chain (Who, \bar{t}' , \bar{t}) is permissible since the chain is neither uniform (Who and \bar{t}' are in A'-positions, \bar{t} in an A-position) nor is it an operator-variable **pair**.
- (9) More generally, in the case of successive-cyclic A'-movement of an argument, an intermediate trace (starred or otherwise) can (in fact must) be deleted in LF, voiding an ECP violation when the trace to be deleted is starred.
- (10) ECP effects arise when the final syntactic representation, the LF, contains a *.
- (11) So, contrary to the situation in (1), barrier crossing movement of an adjunct as in (12) **will** be an ECP violation, since the movement chain in this instance is uniformly A', so economy prevents the deletion of \bar{t}' :
- (12) *How do you wonder [_{CP} whether [_{IP} John said [_{CP} \bar{t}' e [_{IP} Mary solved the problem \bar{t}]]]]
- γ
- (13) Similarly, ultra-long A-movement will also be properly excluded, even when the first step is 'short', as in (14):
- (14) *John seems [that [it is likely [\bar{t}' to be arrested \bar{t}]]]]