Ling 610

The ECP

November, 2020

(1) ECP (Empty Category Principle) 1st version:
A trace must be governed

(2) *John is illegal [$_{CP}$[$_{IP}$ *t* to park here]] (CP is a barrier to government; non-finite Infl isn't a governor; null C isn't a governor)

(3) ECP 2nd version:
A trace must be **properly** governed (Proper government is government by a **lexical** head)

(4) *Who do you think [that [*t* solved the problem]] (*t* is not properly governed)

(5) Which problem do you think [that [John solved *t*]] (*t* is properly governed by solve)

(6) Who do you think [*t*' [*t* solved the problem]] (*t* is not lexically governed)

(7) α properly governs β if
i. α governs β and α is lexical ('lexical government')
OR
ii. α binds β and β is subjacent to α ('antecedent government')

(8) *Who do you think [$_{CP}$ *t*' [$_{C'}$ that [$_{IP}$ *t* solved the problem]]]

(9) Either that somehow blocks antecedent government
or
that somehow turns C' into a barrier for antecedent government (or turns C' into a bounding node, but only for ECP).

(10) ?*Which car did you leave [before Mary fixed *t*] Subjacency - an 'adjunct island'

(11) *How did you leave [before Mary fixed the car *t*] (*t* is not properly governed, so the ex. violates both Subjacency and the ECP; and maybe ECP causes extreme badness.)

(12) Similarly for all islands: extraction of an adjunct in violation of Subjacency always yields crashingly bad results.

(13) Chomsky (1986) modification of Lasnik and Saito (1984): A trace that is not properly governed is marked *.

<<(14) ✓How do you think [*t* [(that) [Mary fixed the car *t*]]] (Why no "that-trace effect with adjuncts?)

(15) Lasnik and Saito proposal: Adjunct traces are not ECP-marked in overt syntax (maybe because they aren't present yet). In LF (as in overt syntax) that can be deleted.

(16) Argument traces are ECP-marked in overt syntax (or we lose the that-trace effect for subjects).>>

(17)a *How$_2$ do you wonder [when$_1$ [John said t_1 [t_2' [Mary solved the problem t_2]]]]
vs.
b ??What problem$_2$ do you wonder [when$_1$ [John said t_1 [t_2' [Mary solved t_2]]]]

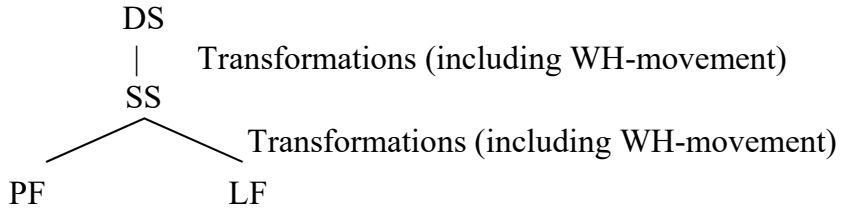
(18) Intermediate traces must be properly governed. (t_2 is antecedent governed by t_2'; so it must be the latter the is not properly governed in violation of the ECP.)

(19) Chomsky's proposal, from lectures in the mid-1980's: "Adjuncts must be fully represented". That is, following Lasnik and Saito, intermediate traces can be deleted. BUT (Chomsky's innovation) all the traces in the chain of a moved adjunct must remain.

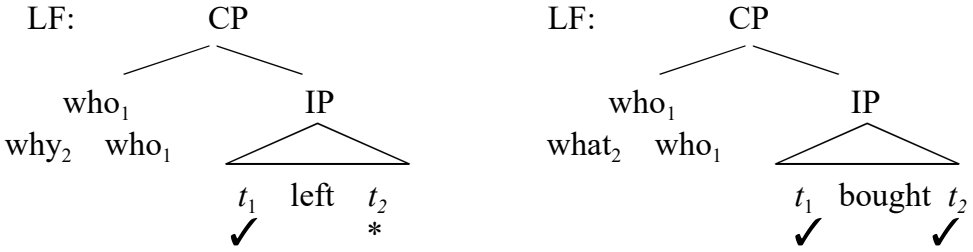
(20) *Who left why vs. ✓Who bought what

(21) Suppose, following Huang, that all WH-phrases move eventually, creating an adjunction structure in this instance.

(22)



(23)



(24) *Who t_1 said [[John left why]]

(25) Either 'why' covertly moves in one fell swoop, resulting in an initial trace that is *-marked. OR it moves first to the lower Spec of CP (which is fine) and then to the higher one, adjoining to 'who', leaving a *-marked intermediate trace.

(26) Again, intermediate traces must be properly governed.

(27) ?*Which car did you leave [before Mary fixed *t*]

(28) Who left [before Mary fixed which car]

(29) Subjacency doesn't constrain LF movement. (Huang)

(30) ?*What do you believe the claim that Lisi bought *t* (Subjacency: 'Complex NP constraint).

(31) ✓Ni xiangxin Lisi mai-le sheme de shuofa Chinese (a "WH-in situ" language)
you believe Lisi buy-Asp what claim

(32) *Why do you believe [the claim [that [Lisi left *t*]]]

(33) *Ni xiangxin [[Lisi weisheme likai] de shuofa Chinese
you believe Lisi why leave claim

(34) ??What$_1$ do [you wonder [why$_2$ [Lisi bought t_1 t_2]]] (Subjacency: 'WH-island constraint')

(35) *Why$_2$ do [you wonder [what$_1$ [Lisi bought t_1 t_2]]]

(36) ni xiang-xhidao [Lisi weisheme mai-le sheme] Huang
you wonder Lisi why bought what

(37) OK LF (36) can have the indicated interpretation.

[$_{S'}$[$_{COMP}$ sheme$_1$]$_1$ [$_S$ ni xiang-zhidao [$_{S'}$[$_{COMP}$ weisheme$_2$]$_2$
[$_S$ Lisi t_2 mai-le t_1]]]]
'what is the thing x such that you wonder why Lisi bought x'

(38) * LF (36) cannot have the indicated interpretation.

[$_{S'}$[$_{COMP}$ weisheme$_2$]$_2$ [$_S$ ni xiang-zhidao [$_{S'}$[$_{COMP}$ sheme$_1$]$_1$
[$_S$ Lisi t_2 mai-le t_1]]]]
'what is the reason x such that you wonder what Lisi bought for x,

(39) And similarly for **all** islands. This is by far the most powerful argument I know for covert movement (though it remains unclear why covert movement doesn't have to obey Subjacency).

(40) Mali renwei [[Yuehan weisheme likai]]
Mary thinks John why leave
"Why does Mary think [John left *t*]"

(41) Long distance interpretation (hence covert movement) of adjuncts is fine when there is no island.