

The Partial and Complete Island Repair Of Stripping.

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The results of three acceptability judgment experiments reveal that non-contrastive stripping (1b) completely ameliorates the effects of a definite relative clause island violation, and that corrective stripping (2b) *partially* ameliorates these effects, whether the correlate was utterance final in the antecedent or not, replicating and extending Potter (2017). These results run counter to prior claims in the literature (Griffiths and Lipták 2014). The central theoretical contribution is that definite relative clause island constraints, at least, cannot be exclusively reduced to processing factors (Hofmeister and Sag 2010); there are some irreducible grammatical aspects to these locality constraints (Fox and Pesetsky 2005).

- (1) a. James met the student who speaks *a foreign language*.
b. Yeah, *Farsi*. // *Yeah, it was Farsi that James met the student who speaks.
- (2) a. James met the student who speaks *Arabic*.
b. No, *Farsi*. // *No, it was Farsi that James met the student who speaks.

Experiment 1, an aural acceptability judgment experiment, found that participants (N=41) rated the acceptability of island-violating it-cleft continuations (1b) worse than non-island-violating controls (3b; $\beta:3.67\pm0.43$; $p<0.001$), and found no island effect in the stripping conditions ($\beta:0.41\pm0.35$; $p\geq0.26$); English island violating non-contrastive stripping is as acceptable as non-island violating non-contrastive stripping.

- (3) a. James heard that the student speaks *a foreign language*.
b. Yeah, *Farsi*. // Yeah, it was Farsi that James heard that the student speaks.

Experiment 2 (N=44) examined corrective stripping and it-cleft continuations with correlates in definite relative clauses (2b) and complement clauses (4b). Results revealed reliable island effects in both it-cleft ($\beta:2.73\pm0.36$; $p<0.001$) and stripping ($\beta:1.37\pm0.31$; $p<0.001$) conditions, with a reliable interaction such that the island effect in the stripping conditions (~0.47 pt difference on 7pt scale) was smaller than that in the it-cleft conditions (~1.67 pt difference). Thus, English corrective stripping exhibits a *partial* sensitivity to island effects. Additionally, the results of Experiment 3, a written study manipulating the clause-finality of corrective remnants, revealed no effect of finality on stripping island sensitivity (N=53, $\beta:0.18\pm0.11$; $p\geq0.1$), contrary to the claims in Barros et al. (2013), Griffiths and Lipták (2014), and Griffiths (to appear).

- (4) a. James heard that the student speaks *Arabic*.
b. No, *Farsi*. // No, it was Farsi that James heard that the student speaks.

We can explain the partial island sensitivity of corrective stripping as a garden path effect (Frazier 1978). The contrastive focus on *Arabic* in, e.g., (2) could be preferred to be initially parsed as having spread to the entire relative clause, (5a; Selkirk 1996), as such a parse would not require a focus to scope out of the island. Then, upon encountering the stripping continuation, a reanalysis would be necessary. The only parse of the antecedent which is compatible with an island-violating stripping continuation is one in which focus has not spread (5b; Rooth 1992), because otherwise, the remnant, *Farsi* and the (misparsed) correlate *the student who speaks Arabic* would not be coherent alternatives to each other.

- (5) a. Focus spreading: James met [the student who speaks *Arabic*]_F.
b. Narrow focus: James met the student who speaks [*Arabic*]_F.

The insensitivity of English stripping to definite relative clause islands has strong implications for the proper analysis of island effects. If certain island effects could be reduced to the sum of a variety of processing effects (Hofmeister and Sag 2010), and if the ellipsis site were populated with elided syntactic structure isomorphic to the antecedent, (Potter 2017, Yoshida et al. 2018), the ellipsis island amelioration effect of stripping would be completely unexpected. Any movement of a remnant from within an island in the ellipsis site would involve structures and dependencies identical to those in their non-elliptical counterparts, and so such processing accounts of island effects would therefore predict equivalent processing difficulty in both; there should be no ellipsis island amelioration effect.

In sum, whether the correlate is utterance final or not, non-contrastive stripping demonstrates full island insensitivity, and corrective stripping shows partial sensitivity, the latter result following from extra-grammatical factors. We argue these results are strong evidence in favor of grammatical approaches to island effects.

References

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