

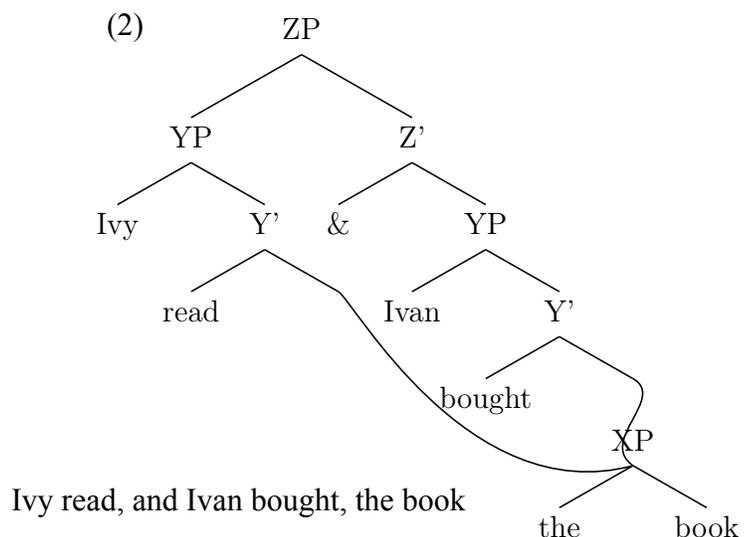
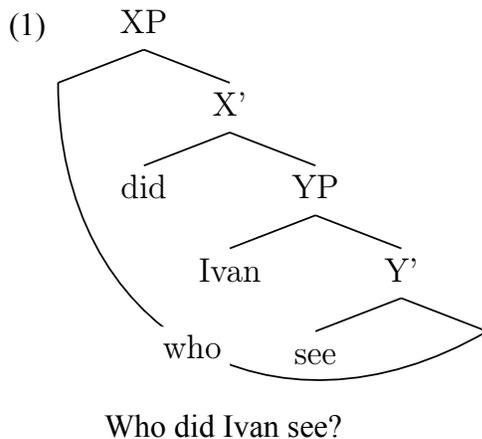
# What can Multidominance tell us about islands?

Islands in Contemporary Linguistic Theory  
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## 1 Introduction

There has been much interest recently in a re-conception of movement operations and phrase structure in Minimalist generative syntax: Multidominance (MD)



Syntactic Islands have long played an important role in syntactic theorizing. In this talk I will investigate what must be said about islands when MD-style movement is assumed. Conversely, I will investigate what must be said of MD in light of various island-related phenomena.

## 2 Movement

A distinctive feature of human language is that of displacement: phrases can be interpreted in places they are not pronounced. Below, movement is portrayed as leaving behind traces.

- (3)a. *Prior to Movement:* Ivan did<sub>i</sub> see who<sub>j</sub>
- b. *After Movement:* who<sub>j</sub> did<sub>i</sub> Ivan t<sub>i</sub> see t<sub>j</sub>

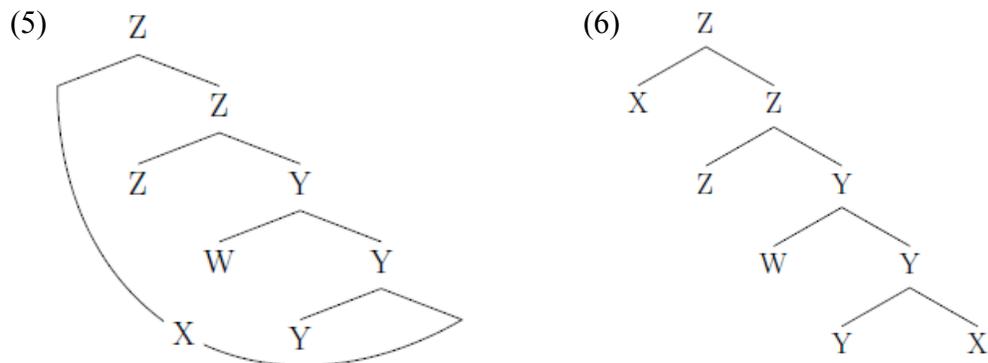
### 2.1 Copy Theory of Movement

At the advent of the Minimalist program, Traces were supplanted by Copies (Chomsky, 1995)

- (4)a. *Prior to Movement:* Ivan did<sub>i</sub> see who<sub>j</sub>
- b. *After Movement:* who<sub>j</sub> did<sub>i</sub> Ivan did<sub>i</sub> see who<sub>j</sub>
- c. *Deletion:* who<sub>j</sub> did<sub>i</sub> Ivan ~~did<sub>i</sub>~~ see ~~who<sub>j</sub>~~

### 2.2 Multidominance<sup>1</sup>

Dissatisfaction with the Copying procedure has led to theories of Multidominance. The differences between the two options are shown below:



<sup>1</sup> Chomsky seems to distinguish Multidominance from the Re-Merge concept. He (2001:10) states that "... an application of IM [internal Merge or Re-Merge] yields two *copies* of X" (his italics).

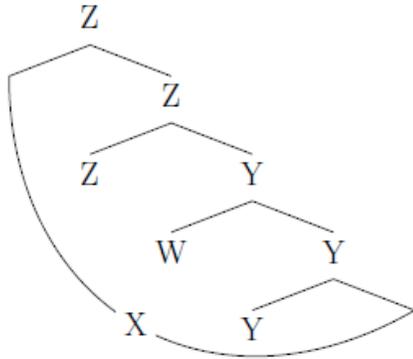
For explications of Multidominance see Epstein et al. 1998, Starke 2001, Gärtner 2002, Zhang 2004, Frampton 2004, Citko 2005, Fitzpatrick and Groat 2005, Svenonius 2006, van Riemsdijk 2006, Gracinin-Yuksek, 2007, de Vries 2010, and Johnson 2011, among many, many others.

### 3 How not to distinguish between the two

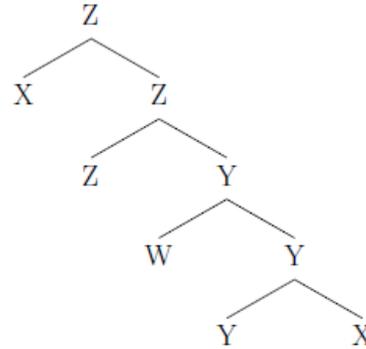
#### 3.1 Linearization

In both (5) and (6) above, there is an X in two positions. Where should it be pronounced? How to avoid “X>Z>W>Y>X”?

**Traverse the tree (de Vries 2009)**



**Delete all but most checked copy (Nunes 2001)**

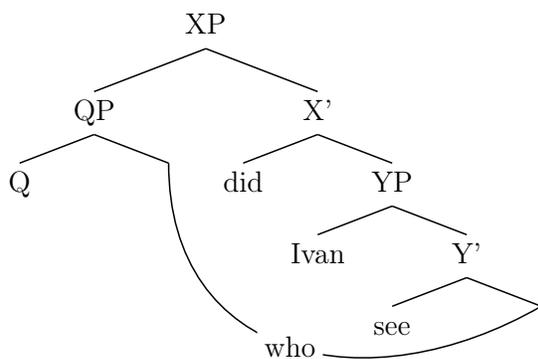


Both approaches require a stipulation that forces the lower X to be ignored wrt linearization

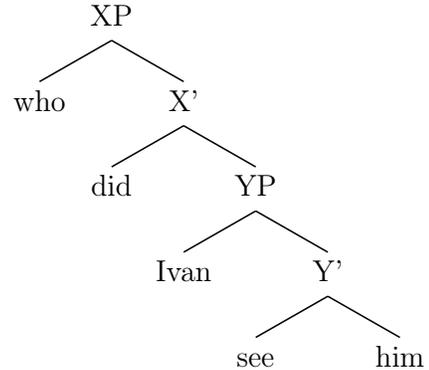
#### 3.2 Interpretation

We generally want wh-displacement to result in logical forms with an operator-variable pair. How to get an X with two interpretations: one operator, one variable?

(7)



(8)



**Q-particle as operator (Johnson 2011)**

**Conversion to definite description (Fox 2003)**

## 4 Licit Movement

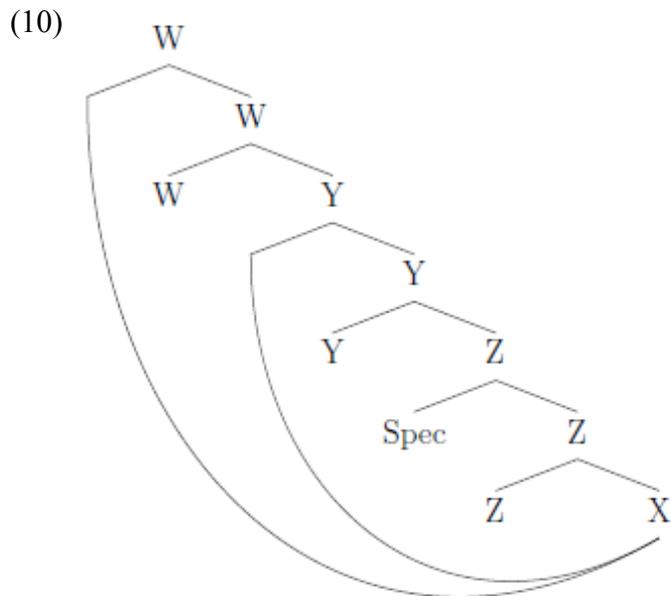
### 4.1 Successive Cyclic Movement

There is ample evidence suggesting that movement occurs in successive cyclic steps and cannot move over too great a distance in one fell swoop. (see the wealth of argumentation and data found in McCloskey 1979, Torrego 1984, Henry 1995, and McCloskey 2001 among others).

For the Copy Theory, successive movement works like this:

(9)  $[_{WP} X W \dots [_{YP} X Y \dots [_{ZP} [_{Z'} Y X ] ] ] ]$

For Multidominance, successive movement works like this:



But X seems to be moving rather far in a single step. In fact, arbitrarily far

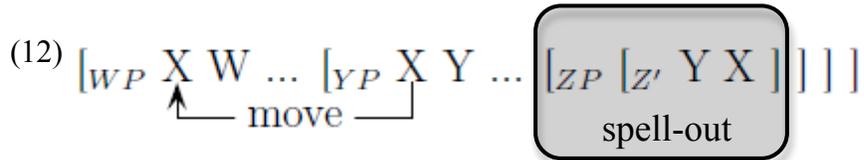
(11) What did Ivan say that ... Ivy heard that Iris hated?

**This seems to violate Chomsky's (1973) Subjacency condition on movement. There is 'movement' over an arbitrary number of intervening categories.**

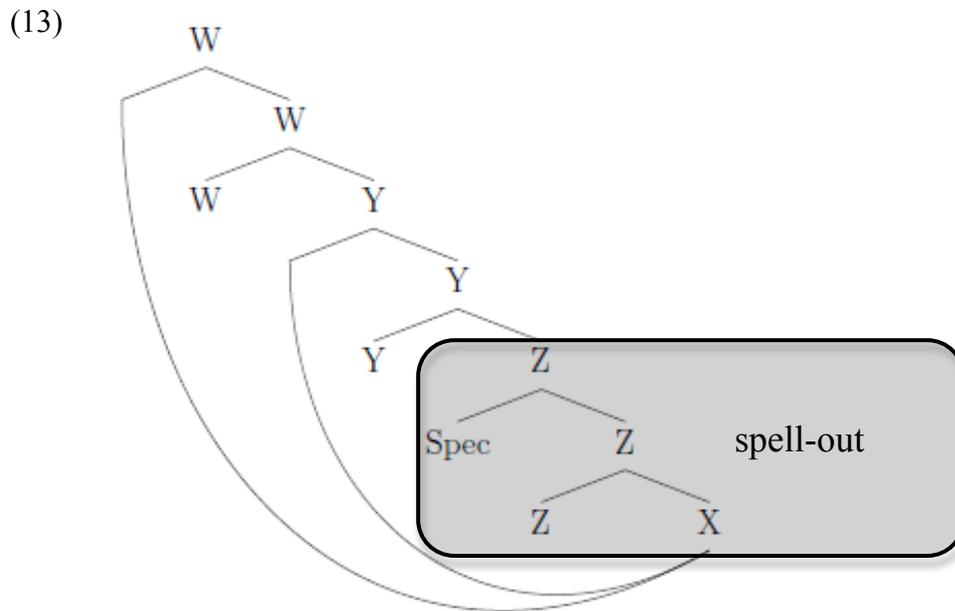
## 4.2 Phases

A current bounding node-type approach is that of phases (Chomsky, 2001). Throughout the derivation, lower portions of phrase structure are spell-out (i.e. made opaque to syntactic operations).

For the Copy Theory, the moving element can easily avoid spell-out:



The same cannot be said for MD-style movement:



The X is either spelled-out or it isn't. If it *is* spelled-out, any PIC approach to islands seems to rule out all movement from phases. If it is somehow *not* spelled-out, any PIC approach to islands seems to have to say something additional.

### How to rule in successive cyclic Multidominance?

Phases don't seem to work. Perhaps (8) is ruled in because such long distance movement is actually licensed. No island has been derived.

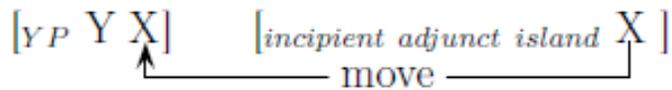
## 4.3 Parasitic Gaps

### 4.3.1 Copy Theory and Parasitic Gaps

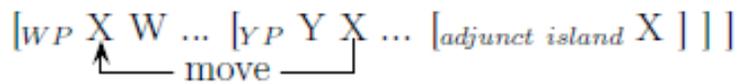
Nunes (2001,2004) argues for a sideward movement account of parasitic gaps in which an element sideward moves from an incipient adjunct island into the matrix clause (15)

(14) What did Ivan read before buying?

(15)a.



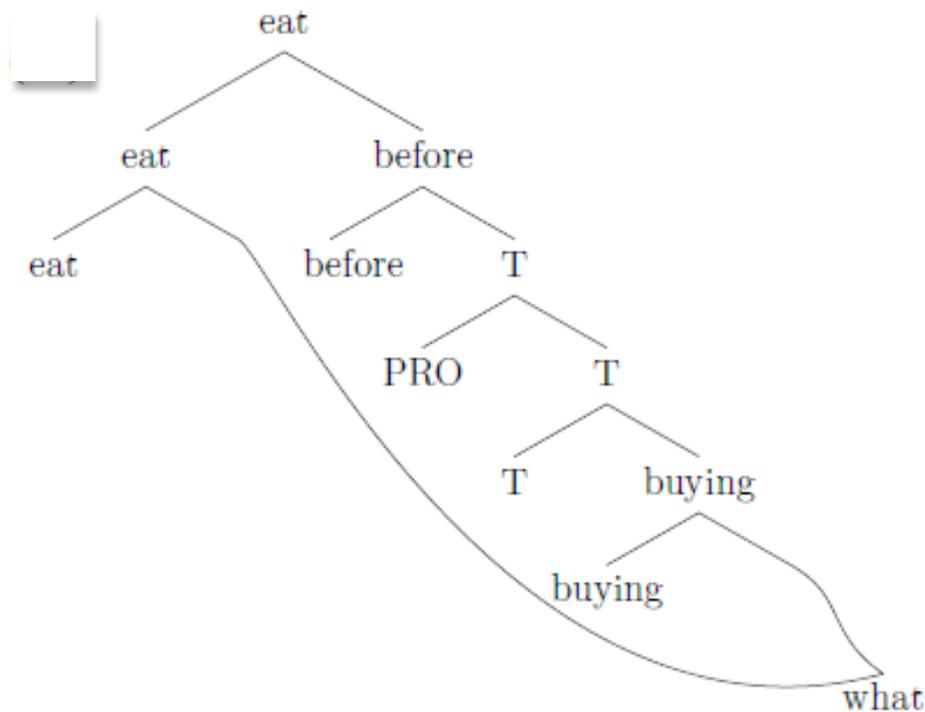
b.

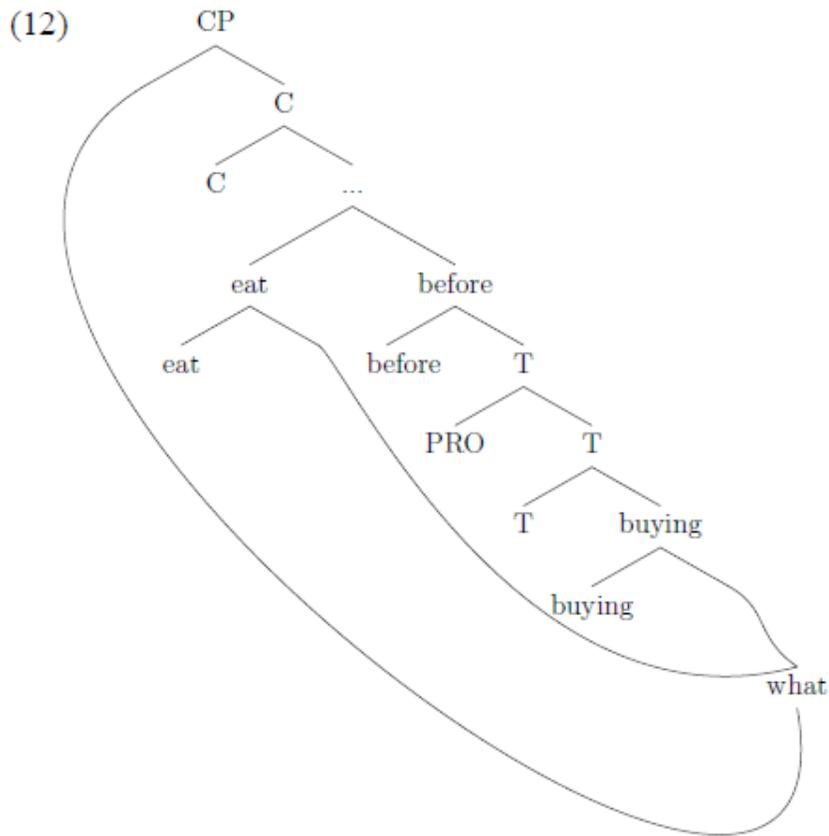


### 4.3.2 Multidominance and Parasitic Gaps

The initial movement from the adjunct clause results in (16), the subsequent movement results in (17). Unlike the example in (10), an island is obviously derived here. Yet the sentence is still acceptable.

(16)





### 4.3.3 How to rule in Multidominance?

Three options:

(18)a. **Most Recent:** Only the most recent position of the moving element is relevant for computing the subsequent movement.

b. **Closest Occurrence:** Only the closest position of the moving element to the target is relevant for computing the subsequent movement.

c. **Whatever Works:** Only the position from which movement would not violate movement strictures is relevant for computing the subsequent movement.

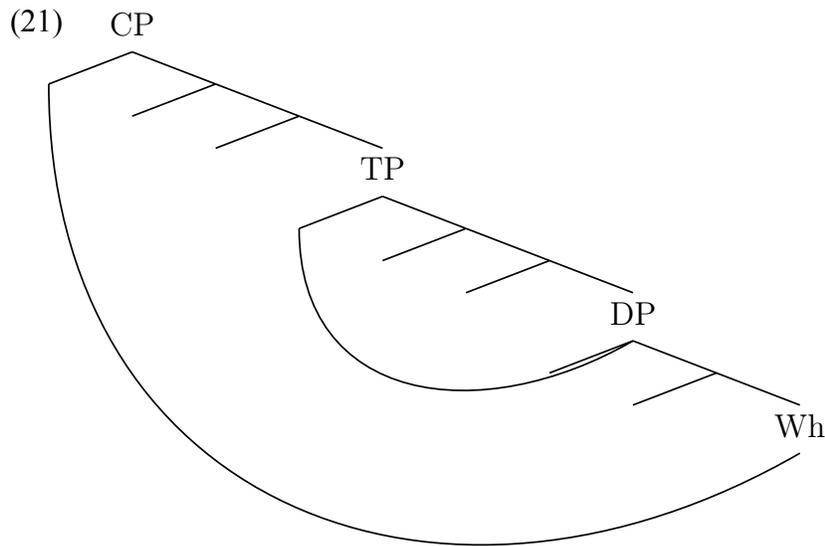
## 5 Winnowing Options

### 5.1 Freezing Effects

It is a fairly robust empirical fact that movement is not allowed from within an element that itself has already moved (pace Chomsky 2005).

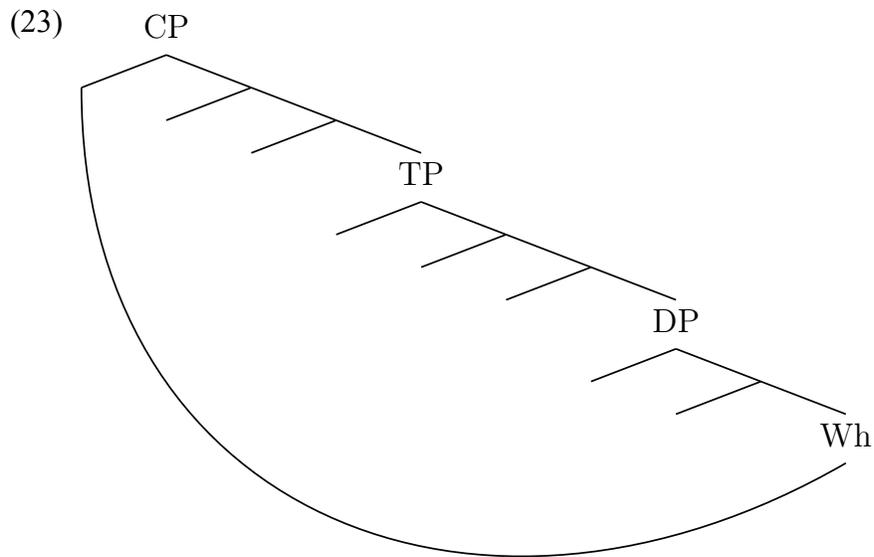
- (19) \*Who<sub>i</sub> was [a book about ~~who<sub>i</sub>]~~<sub>j</sub> about read [a ~~book about who<sub>i</sub>]~~<sub>j</sub>?  
 (20) \*Who was a book about read?

This sentence would be represented like (21) under an MD theory of movement.



However, movement from the base position would be licit.

- (22) Who does one read books about?



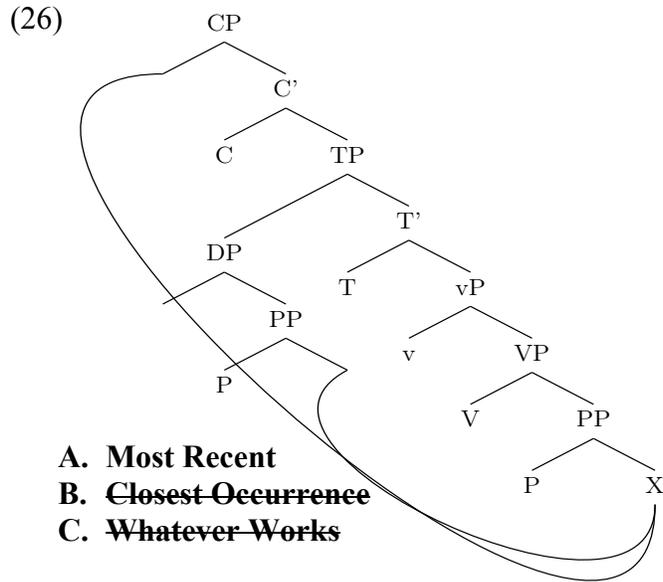
- A. Most Recent
- B. Closest Occurrence
- C. ~~Whatever Works~~

## 5.2 Subject Parasitic Gaps

(24) \*[Which motion]<sub>i</sub> did even supporters of t<sub>i</sub> leave?

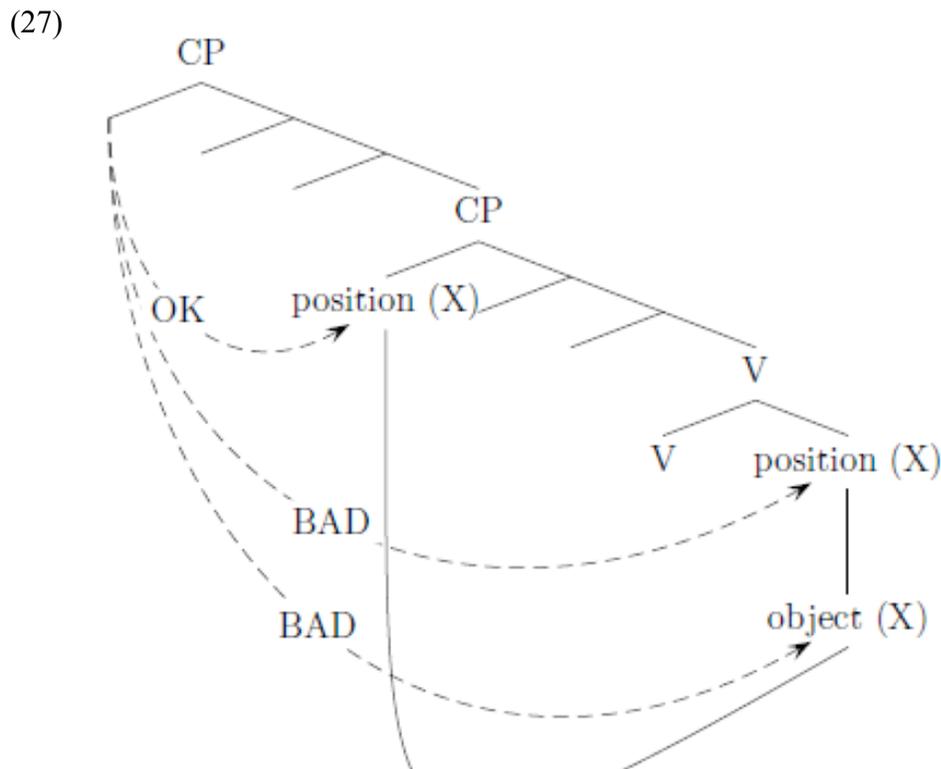
(25) [Which motion]<sub>i</sub> did even supporters of t<sub>i</sub> suggest amendments to t<sub>i</sub>?

An MD-approach to the construction would look like (26)



## 6 Results

The **Most Recent** account is the only one that captures the data. It can be stated visually:



Is it possible to target a position to the exclusion of the element in it? In Bare Phrase Structure (Chomsky, 1995), there are only positions in virtue of something being there.

If this is not possible, then distance-based approach to islands cannot work with MD.

If MD is assumed, islands must be accounted for in a different way.

## 7 Terms and Occurrences

In CTM approaches term and occurrence are one and the same. Take term to be an object manipulated by the grammar. Take occurrence to be a unique structural position.

(28)  $[_{XP} Wh_i \ [_{YP} Wh_i \ [_{ZP} Wh_i] ] ]$       Terms:  $Wh_i, Wh_i, Wh_i$   
Occurrences:  $\langle Wh_i, X' \rangle, \langle Wh_i, Y' \rangle, \langle Wh_i, Z' \rangle$

In MD approaches there may be an avenue to separating the two

(29)  $[_{XP} \begin{array}{c} [_{YP} \quad [_{ZP} \\ | \\ Wh_i \end{array} ] ] ]$       Terms:  $Wh_i$   
Occurrences:  $\langle Wh_i, X' \rangle, \langle Wh_i, Y' \rangle, \langle Wh_i, Z' \rangle$

What is the grammar manipulating here? If Occurrences are granted every characteristic of copies, it is utterly unsurprising that they are indistinguishable.

**This is however a radical split from tradition. It needs to be explicated and motivated.**

### 7.1 A potential problem for a Term/Occurrence split

Any featural change on the ‘moving’ element will have downward ripple effects

(30)  $[_{XP} \begin{array}{c} [_{YP} \quad [_{ZP} \\ | \\ Wh_{i-F} \end{array} ] ] ]$       Terms:  $Wh_{i-F}$   
Occurrences:  $\langle Wh_{i-F}, Y' \rangle, \langle Wh_{i-F}, Z' \rangle$

(31)  $[_{XP} \begin{array}{c} [_{YP} \quad [_{ZP} \\ | \\ Wh_{i+F} \end{array} ] ] ]$       Terms:  $Wh_{i+F}$   
Occurrences:  $\langle Wh_{i+F}, X' \rangle, \langle Wh_{i+F}, Y' \rangle, \langle Wh_{i+F}, Z' \rangle$

We might assume that features that drive successive cyclic movement are ‘unchecked’ and seeking to be licensed.

### **Topicalization:**

(32) Ivan likes Ivy-top

(33) [<sub>CP</sub> Ivy+top [<sub>TP</sub> Ivan likes t-top]]

### **Some spec,CP positions cannot abide +topicalize subjects in them (Lasnik and Saito 1992)**

(34) \*Ivan, t likes Ivy

(35) \*Someone said Ivan, t likes Ivy.

### **But they can generally check –top features.**

(36) Ivy, Ivan likes

(37) Ivy, someone said Ivan likes

### **That is:**

(38) \* [<sub>CP</sub> Ivan+top [<sub>TP</sub> t-top likes Ivy]]

### **But what happens in long-distance subject topicalization under MD?**

(39) Ivan, someone said t likes Ivy

(40) [<sub>CP</sub> Ivan-top [<sub>TP</sub> t-top likes Ivy]]

(41) [<sub>CP</sub> Ivan+top [<sub>TP</sub> someone said [<sub>CP</sub> t+top [<sub>TP</sub> t+top likes Ivy]]]]

### **There is a +top occurrence in a local position. Yet the sentence is good.**

### **There may be downsides to splitting terms and occurrences.**

## **8 Conclusion**

Multidominance forces us to either fail to capture many robust island effects or to adopt a non-distance related approach to them. If we want to maintain a distance type approach, MD should be dropped.

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