Don’t repair that island! It ain’t broke.

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Introduction

(1) Ever since J. R. Ross, 1969, island repair under sluicing has been used to argue that island constraints are global derivational constraints or must be understood representationally:

a. “What this means is the following: the constraints on chopping rules proposed in J. Ross, 1967 cannot be locally defined — rather, they must be derivational constraints, in the sense of Lakoff, 1969” (J. R. Ross, 1969, p. 276).

b. “[I]t is assumed that there is a designated symbol # which cannot appear internally to a well-formed surface structure” (Chomsky, 1972, p. 71. Because the island bearing # is deleted under sluicing, relevant derivations are “not ‘filtered out’ as deviant by the output condition that # cannot appear internally in a surface structure. […] The point is of some interest…” (Chomsky, 1972, p. 72).

(2) The strongest syntactic arguments for hidden structure at ellipsis sites comes from constraints imposed by such structure which are hard to capture without assuming the presence of such structure.

a. case-matching

b. preposition (non-)stranding

c. syntactic islands

1 Stripping

(3) Case
Er ist des Albanischen mächtig, und auch {des Griechischen | *das Griechische | *dem Griechischen} Greece the.ACC Greek the.DAT Greek He masters Albanian and also Greek. German

(4) Preposition (non-)stranding see Fukaya, 2007
a. Ich habe gestern mit Anna geredet und mit Sakis (auch).
   I have yesterday with Anna spoken and with Sakis (too).
   I spoke with Anna yesterday and with Sakis, too. German
b. Ich habe gestern mit Anna geredet und Sakis (auch).
   I have yesterday with Anna spoken and Sakis (too).
   I spoke with Anna yesterday, and Sakis did, too.
c. Ich habe gestern mit Anna geredet, und (mit) Sakis. German
d. Milisa me ton Saki xthes, kai *(me) tin Anna. English
   I spoke with the Sakis yesterday and with the Anna.
   I spoke with Sakis yesterday, and with Sakis, too. Greek
   Merchant, 2003
e. Milisa me ton Saki kai tin Anna xthes.
   I spoke with the Sakis yesterday and Anna did, too Greek
   Merchant, 2003
f. Juan escribe para Clarín y *(para) La Nación también.
   Juan writes for Clarin and for The Nation too.
   Juan writes for Clarin and for La Nación as well. Spanish
   Depiante, 2000

(5) Long movement²
a. Lucie will admit that she stole the diamonds if you press her, but not the car. Reinhart, 1993
b. Ingrid gibt bestimmt zu, dass sie das Auto gestohlen hat, wenn du sie etwas unter Druck setzt, aber den Diamanten niemals.
   Ingrid will admit that she stole the car if you press her, but no the diamond German

¹Nakao, 2009 also discusses many of these issues. Nakao’s Japanese paradigms are less well controlled than Fukaya’s, whose thesis, strangely enough, is not cited at all.
²For relevant discussion of locality issues in stripping see also Fukaya, 2007; Merchant, in press and for fragment answers Merchant, 2004; Temmerman, to appear.
(6) Complex NP/subject condition

a. *The fact that some politician has resigned got much publicity, but not the defense minister.
   Depiante, 2000

b. Die Tatsache, dass von Guttenberg abgeschrieben hat, hat die Gehirne erregt, aber Koch-Mehrin nicht.
   = The fact that von Guttenberg plagiarized has caused a big stir, but Koch-Mehrin hasn’t caused a big stir.
   ≠ The fact that von Guttenberg plagiarized has caused a big stir, but the fact that Koch-Mehring plagiarized hasn’t caused a big stir. German

(7) Complex NP (relative clause)

a. I met a boy who ate an apple and also an orange. Nakao, 2009, p. 99
   = I met a boy who ate both an apple and an orange.
   ≠ I met a boy who ate an apple and I also met a (different) boy who ate an orange

   = one boy eats both
   ≠ two boys eat one each German

(8) Adjunct condition

a. John left because you played this song, but not that song Nakao, 2009, p. 99
   ≠ He left because you played this song; the reason for his leaving was not that you played that other song, which you did.
   = The reason for his leaving was that you played this song and failed to play that other song.

b. Hans ist gegangen, weil du Yesterday gespielt hast, aber Iron Man nicht.
   ≠ Hans left because you played Yesterday. The reason for his leaving was not that you played Iron Man, which you did.
The reason for Hans leaving was that you played Yesterday and failed to play Iron Man.

2 VP ellipsis

I consider only English data here. Relevant examples illustrating case connectivity and prepositional pied-piping can be found in the literature on remnant VP ellipsis (e.g., Goldberg, 2005). Unfortunately, the possibility of A-moving from elided VPs in Dutch Modal Complement Ellipsis is severely restricted (Abels, 2012; Aelbrecht, 2010).

(9) a. Short movement Fox and Lasnik, 2003; Merchant, 2008; Park, 2004; Shuyler, 2002
   I know what I like and what I don’t. Shuyler, 2002

   b. Long movement based on Fiengo and May, 1994, 229, fn. 31
   ? I know which book MAX thinks Mary wants, and which book BILL does. tracecolorthink Mary wants

(10) Complex NP (relative clause)
   * Abby {wants | does want} to hire someone who speaks {GREEK | a certain Balkan language}, but I don’t remember what (kind of) language she DOESN’T. tracecolorwant to hire anybody who speaks

(11) Adjunct condition
   a. *BEN left the party because Carlene/some guest insulted him, but God only knows which guest ABBY did. tracecolorleave the party because insulted her

   b. *John will leave if more people come to the party than you will. tracecolorleave if come to the party

3 Contrast Sluicing

(12) Case
    Hans hat der Frau geholfen, aber ich weiss nicht, Hans.NOM has the.DAT woman helped but I know not
    {wer | wen | *wen} noch. who.NOM who.DAT who.ACC else
    who.NOM Hans helped the woman but I don’t know who else helped her.
who.DAT Hans helped the woman but I don’t know who else he helped.

(13) Preposition Stranding

a. John talked with the woman but I don’t know who else.
   . . . John talked with
   . . . talked with the woman
b. Hans hat mit der Frau geredet, aber ich weiss nicht
   Hans has with the.DAT woman talked but I know not
   *(mit) wem noch.
   with who.DAT else
   Hans talked with the woman, but I don’t know with who else
   he talked.

(14) Long movement

Veronika glaubt, dass Hans seine Schwester
Veronika believes that Hans his.ACC.F.SG sister
umgebracht hat, aber ich weiss nicht, wen noch.
killed has, but I know not who.ACC else
Veronika believes that Hans killed his sister, but I don’t know
who else Veronika believes that Hans killed.

(15) Complex NP/subject condition

a. *The fact that von Guttenberg plagiarized has caused a big stir,
   but I don’t know who else.
   = . . . he was eating.
   ≠ . . . for what other thing x I met a (different) boy who was eating x.

b. Ich habe einen Jungen getroffen, der einen Apfel gegessen
   I have a boy met who an.ACC apple eaten

(16) Complex NP/relative clause

a. I met a boy who was eating an apple, but I won’t tell you what
   else.
   = . . . he was eating.
   ≠ . . . for what other thing x I met a (different) boy who was eating x.

b. Ich habe einen Jungen getroffen, der einen Apfel gegessen
   I have a boy met who an.ACC apple eaten

\(^3\)For careful and particularly insightful discussion see Fukaya, 2007.
hat, aber ich sage dir nicht, was noch.
has but I tell you not what acc else
= one boy eats both things
≠ two boys eat one thing each

(17) Adjunct Condition
a. John went to the headmaster after he had had a fight with Mr Miller, but I don’t know with who else.
= . . . he had had a fight with (on that occasion).
≠ . . . but I don’t know who else is such that there is some (other) occasion where John went to the headmaster after he had had a fight with that other person.
b. Hans ist zum Direktor gegangen, nachdem er sich mit Frau Paraskewas gestritten hatte, aber ich weiss nicht mit wem noch.
= one trip to the headmaster, one fight with several people
≠ two trips to the headmaster, two fights with one person each

4 Sluicing

(18) Case J. R. Ross, 1969, 253, ex. 4 for much cross-linguistic data see Merchant, 2001
Er will jemandem schmeicheln, aber sie wissen nicht
He wants somebody dat flatter but they know not
{*wen | wem}.
who acc who dat
He wants to flatter somebody, but they don’t know who. German

(19) Preposition (non-)stranding see Merchant, 2001 for cross-linguistic data
a. English
(i) Peter was talking with someone, but I don’t know (with) who.
(ii) Who was Peter talking with?
b. German
(i) Peter hat mit jemandem geredet, aber ich weiss
Peter has with someone dat talked but I know
(ii) *Wem hat Peter mit geredet?
who.DAT has Peter with talked

(20) A number of empirical challenges have been raised for Merchant’s generalization that all and only those languages that allow P-stranding under wh-movement allow P-stranding under sluicing:

a. Serbo Croatian (Stjepanović, 2008)
b. Polish (Szczegielniak, 2005, 2008)
c. Brazilian Portuguese (Almeida and Yoshida, 2007; Rodrigues, Nevins, and Vicente, 2009)
d. Spanish (Rodrigues, Nevins, and Vicente, 2009; Vicente, 2006)
e. Indonesian (Fortin, 2007; Sato, 2007, 2010)
f. Amis (Wei, 2011)
g. English (Fortin, 2007; Nykiel and Sag, 2009)

(21) Complex NP (relative clause)

a. They wanted to hire someone who speaks a Balkan language, but I don’t remember which.
b. Sie wollten jemanden anstellen, der einer (bestimmten) Balkansprache mächtig ist, aber ich weiss nicht mehr welcher (Balkansprache). which.DAT Balkan language

(22) Complex NP (complement clause)

a. The administration issued a statement that it is willing to meet with one of the student groups, but I’m not sure which one.
b. Die Verwaltung hat das Gerücht bestätigt, dass sie mit einer Gewerkschaft verhandeln wird, aber ich bin nicht sicher mit welcher. with which

(23) Clausal subject

a. That certain countries would vote against the resolution has been widely reported, but I’m not sure which ones.

4Unless mentioned otherwise, the English examples are from Merchant, 2001.
That the text of the resolution would not please certain countries has often been claimed, but I am not sure which countries.

Adjunct condition

a. Ben will be mad if Abby talks to one of the teachers, but she couldn’t remember which.

b. Ben wird sich ärger, wenn Andrea mit einem der Lehrer spricht, aber sie konnte sich nicht erinnern, mit welchem. (Lehrer).

c. Ben left the party because one of the guests insulted him, but he wouldn’t tell me which.

d. Ben ist abgehauen, weil er mit einem der Gäste Streit hatte, aber er wollte mir nicht verraten, mit welchem.

Coordinate Structure Constraint

a. They persuaded Kennedy and some other Senator to jointly sponsor the legislation, but I can’t remember which one.

b. Sie haben Arnim und einen Syntaktiker dazu überredet, gemeinsam einen Sammelband herauszubringen, aber ich weiss nicht mehr welchen Syntaktiker.

c. Bob ate dinner and saw a movie that night, but he didn’t say which (movie).

d. Fritz hat gestern Abend Chips gegessen und einen Film.
The Polish, Brazilian Portuguese, and Spanish cases have been analyzed away in terms of a pseudo-sluicing source, i.e., a source involving an underlying copular structure.

a. There is a cautionary tale here about the possible sources for sluices, which may differ on a case-by-case basis (Craenenbroeck, 2010).

b. These analyses are problematic for approaches to identity under ellipsis which require very detailed syntactic identity (e.g. Fox and Lasnik, 2003 – for further comments see also Potsdam, 2007; Wei, 2011).

⇒ To rule out pseudo-sluicing as the source, all crucial examples here will be given in German with case morphology that is incompatible with pseudo-sluicing sources.

Reflection

The vast majority of English data on island amelioration show nothing or serve to increase our suspicions about island-amelioration under sluicing.

a. Adjuncts and implicit arguments probably do not participate in island amelioration (possibly because of scope)

b. prosody irrelevant

c. aggressive non-D-linking irrelevant

d. mention some modification no relevant data (probably no island amelioration because of scope)

e. all modification irrelevant

f. else modification no island amelioration, see above

g. SWIPING (...who with) no relevant data available, possibly limited to sprouting, for which see (a) above

h. limited cleft strategy not relevant for English, except see (a)

i. case matching not relevant for English

j. Left Branch Extraction does not repair islands (Grebenyova, 2005)
5 Island effects under sluicing

German

(29) Jeder Spieler schreibt einen Satz auf, aber er verrät den anderen nicht welchen. Every player writes one sentence up but he discloses the others not which.

(30) Complex NP (relative clause) *Jeder Spieler schreibt alle Konsonanten auf, die in einem (bestimmten) Wort enthalten sind, aber verrät den anderen nicht in welchem.

Every player writes down all consonants that some word contains, but doesn’t tell the others which.

(31) Complex NP (complement clause) *Die Tatsache, dass einem Politiker sein Doktortitel entzogen worden ist, hat die Gemüter stark erregt, aber ich weiß nicht mehr welchem (Politiker).

The fact that a (certain) politician had his doctorate revoked caused a big stir, but I don’t remember which politician.

5The example is based on Reinhart’s (i), who gives it as good. My own informants do not agree.

(i) Reinhart, 1997, 346 ex. 223
   a. Each player must write down all the consonants that some word contains, when properly pronounced, and let the others guess which word.
   b. Each player x must...let the others guess for which word y, [x wrote down all the consonants y contains when properly pronounced].

6This spring several German politicians had their doctorates revoked because of plagiarism. Only for one, the then minister of defense, was there a big public scandal as a
(32) Subject island
a. *Dass einem Politiker der Doktortitel entzogen worden ist, that a.DAT politician the doctor title revoked become is hat die Gemüter stark erregt, aber ich weiss nicht mehr has the souls strongly stirred but I know not longer welchem (Politiker).
which.DAT politician
That a (certain) politician had his doctorate revoked caused a big stir, but I don’t remember which politician.

(33) Adjunct condition
Situation: Many people have quarreled with many guests. Many people left as a result of these quarrels. But there is one guest who quarreled with many people but these quarrels caused almost nobody to leave. Silke was unwilling to disclose the identity of that special guest.

#Fast niemand ist abgehauen, weil er mit einem almost nobody is left because he with one {der Gäste | bestimmten Gast} gestritten hat, aber Silke the.gen guests particular guest quarreled has, but Silke wollte nicht verraten mit welchem (Gast) wanted not tell with which guest
Almost nobody left because he quarreled with one {of the guests|particular guest}, but Silke didn’t want to disclose which guest.

Spanish

(34) Complex NP (relative clause)
*Cada jugador tiene que escribir todas las consonantes que every player must that write all the consonants that tenga alguna palabra, y dejar que los otros averigüen holds some word and let that the others guess qué palabra which word
Every player must write down all consonants that some word contains and let the others guess which word.

(35) Complex NP (complement clause)/Subject Condition
El hecho de que le quitaran el carnet de conducir a the fact of that to.him revoked the license of driving to
un parlamentario causó un gran escándalo, pero no me acuerdo {a cuál | a quién}.

The fact that the driver's license of a member of parliament was revoked caused a big scandal, but I don't remember {which (politician) | who}.

= I don't remember {whose | which MPs} driving license was revoked

≠ I don't remember for which MP the revocation of that MP’s driving license caused a scandal (while I do remember which MPs had their licenses revoked).

Adjunct condition

Casi nadie se marchó porque discutiera con cierto invitado, pero José no me quiso decir {con quién | con cuál}.

Almost nobody left because he had a fight with a particular guest, but José didn’t want to tell me with which.

? in context where many people fought with many people at the party and many people left as a result, as well. But there was one guest who fought with many other people but these fights didn’t not cause the guests to leave.

! The sentence is judged better in this context than expected. I don’t know why.

Other languages

Elicitation for other languages is ongoing...

6 Towards an analysis

The literature on P-stranding under sluicing suggests that pseudo sluicing is an option, but only as a last resort (Craenenbroeck, 2010). The conditions under which case parallelism is obviated in this context remain mysterious.

Short sources are sometimes required as well.
(40)  
a. I confirmed the rumor that Mary married someone important,  
but I haven’t been able to find out who.  
b. *I confirmed the rumor that Mary married someone important,  
but I haven’t been able to find out who I confirmed the rumor  
that Mary married.  
c. I confirmed the rumor that Mary married someone important,  
but I haven’t been able to find out who she married.

(41)  
a. Mary met a man who had worked for someone famous, but he  
wouldn’t tell her who.  
b. *Mary met a man who had worked for someone famous, but he  
wouldn’t tell her who she met a man who had worked for.  
c. Mary met a man who had worked for someone famous, but he  
wouldn’t tell her who he had worked for.

(42)  
Note the mismatch between the antecedent, which contains the trace  
of a relative operator in subject position and the presumed short  
sluice, where there is a pronoun.

(43)  
Changes in the I-domain must be licit under sluicing.

(44)  
A Amuse me!  
B With what?  
What with?  
= What should I amuse you with? G. Thoms (p. c.)

(45)  
Bill seems to be doing away with someone, but he won’t say {who |  
*with whom}  
a. Bill won’t say who he is doing away with.  
b. #Bill won’t say who he seems to be doing away with. J. R. Ross,  
1969, 275, ex. 67–68

(46)  
Bill mentioned his plans to do away with someone, but he didn’t  
mention {who | with whom}  
Bill didn’t mention who he plans to do away with  J. R. Ross,  
1969, 275–6, ex. 69–70

(47)  
Together these considerations allow short construals  
We need them for the else cases anyway.

(48)  
Sie hat einen Jungen getroffen, der einen Apfel gegessen hat, aber  
she has a boy met, who an apple eaten has, but  
ich weiß nicht, was noch.  
I know not what else  
She met a boy who was eating an apple, but I don’t know what else  
(he was eating).
Short construals with changes of modal are a powerful device:

Complex NP (Complement clause)

Die Firmenleitung hat das Gerücht bestritten, dass sie mit der IG Metall die rumänische Gewerkschaft, aber ich den metallurgical trade union will, but I know not with which other union management has denied the rumor that it will negotiate with the metallurgical union, but I don’t know what other union.

\[\neq \quad \text{...I don’t know for what other union management denied the rumor that it will negotiate with that union.}\]

German actually has a modal, sollen, which can be used in the second paraphrase and which obviates the need for an explicit according to the rumor.

Claim: When pseudo sluicing and modal subordination can be ruled out, island repair goes away.

Pseudo sluicing is ruled out because of case and PP-pied piping. Short construals are ruled out semantically.

Complex NP (relative clause)

*a* Jeder Spieler schreibt alle Konsonanten auf, die in einem every player writes all consonants up that in a (bestimmten) Wort enthalten sind, aber verrät den anderen particular word contained are but discloses the others nicht in welchem.

not in which

Every player writes down all consonants that some word contains, but doesn’t tell the others which word.

a. . . . in which they MODAL? are contained.

For speakers who do accept this, there is a bit of wiggle room by using the contextual restriction on which word.
The fact that a politician had his doctorate revoked caused a big stir, but I don’t remember which politician.

Almost nobody left because he quarreled with one of the guests, but Silke didn’t want to disclose which guest.

I suspect that the systematic surface ambiguity of island-violating sluices in English with a pseudo sluicing source leads to a considerable amount of phantom-goodness.
Again compare Fanselow and Frisch, 2006:

(59)  a. Wem glaubst du, dass er geholfen hat?
    who.DAT believe you that he helped has
    Who do you believe he helped.
b. ?Wen glaubst du, dass er gesehen hat?
    who.ACC believe you that he seen has
    Who do you believe that he has seen.

(60)  a. Wem glaubst du?
    who.DAT believe you
    Who do you believe?
b. *Wen glaubst du?
    who.ACC believe you

References

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