Exceptives: An Under-Appreciated Ellipsis Construction
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This paper shows that exceptives in some languages are derived by clausal ellipsis and thus are an under-utilized construction for ellipsis theorizing. I argue that exceptives in the VOS language Malagasy (Austronesian, Madagascar), (1), involve ellipsis, and that the missing syntactic material is part of a focus construction. I consider two non-ellipsis alternatives and show that they are inferior.

(1) Tonga   ny   vahiny   rehetra   omaly,   afa-tsy   Rasoa
     arrived   DET   guest   all   yesterday   except   Rasoa
     'All the guests arrived yesterday, except Rasoa.'

Analysis. Malagasy free exceptives (Hoeksema 1987) as in (1) involve a clause expressing a generalization followed by an exceptive phrase which indicates an exception to this generalization. This exceptive phrase consists of *afa-tsy* 'except' and an XP exception. The proposed analysis is that this exception XP is the remnant of a clausal focus construction in which the exception moves to a left-peripheral position followed by deletion of the unfocused material:

(2) Tonga   ny   vahiny rehetra omaly,   afa-tsy [Rasoa no   tsy   tonga   omaly   Rasoa]CP
     arrived DET   guest all   yesterday except   Rasoa FOC   NEG   arrived yesterday
     'All the guests arrived yesterday, except Rasoa.'

Initial evidence for a clausal source is that the shaded elided material in (2) can be pronounced. Further arguments come from multiple exceptions, which require a full clause, (3), and coordination.

(3) Nandihy daholo tamin' ny   zazavavy rehetra ny   zazalahy afa-tsy Rabe tamin-dRasoa
     danced all   PREP   DET   girl   every   DET   boy   except Rabe PREP Rasoa
     'Every boy danced with every girl except Rabe with Rasoa.'

Malagasy distinguishes two coordinating conjunctions: *sy* coordinates phrases and *ary* coordinates clauses (Rajemisa-Raolison 1969). DPs can only coordinate with *sy*, (4a), but *ary* becomes possible with DPs in exceptives, (4b). This is expected if each exception conjunct can be a reduced clause.

(4) a. Mihinana ny   akondro **sy/*ary** ny   manga   Rabe
         eat   DET   banana   and   DET   mango   Rabe
         'Rabe eats bananas and mangoes.'
     b. Mihinana ny   voankazo rehetra Rabe, afa-tsy ny   akondro **sy/ary** ny   manga
         eat   DET   fruit   all   Rabe except DET banana   and   DET   mango
         'Rabe eats all fruits except bananas and mangoes.'

The derivation in (2) proceeds as follows: the missing clausal material cannot be a neutral VOS clause but must be a focus construction—realized as a (pseudo)cleft in Malagasy (Paul 2001, Law 2007). This claim is further supported by a correlation between (im)possible exception XPs and (im)possible cleft pivots. For example, both must appear in the so-called strong case form:

(5) a. ***Aho/*Ahy/Izaho**   no   nolevileven-   dRasoa   CLEFT
         1SG.NOM/ACC/STRONG   FOC   scolded.PASS   Rasoa
         'It's me that Rasoa scolded.'
     b. Nandevilevy ny   rehetra Rasoa afa-tsy ***aho/*ahy/izaho**   EXCEPTIVE
         scolded   DET   all   Rasoa except   1SG.NOM/ACC/STRONG
         'Rasoa scolded everyone except me.'

Ellipsis then proceeds the same as for Malagasy sluicing (Potsdam 2007). The exception XP is the cleft predicate that undergoes predicate fronting (Pearson 2001) to a high left-peripheral position. TP ellipsis is licensed under semantic identity with the antecedent TP (Merchant 2001) and the non-predicate material deletes. The polarity reversal seen in the antecedent versus the elided clause arises because the exceptive marker *afa-tsy* contains an incorporated negative morpheme *tsy* 'NEG'.

Alternative analysis 1. An alternative, non-clausal analysis is shown in (5), in which the exceptive phrase originates as a modifier of the antecedent QP and *the exceptive phrase extraposes to the right*:

(6)   Tonga **[ny   vahiny   rehetra   ~~[afa-tsy   Rasoa]~~]**   omaly,   [afa-tsy   Rasoa]
arrive DET guest   all   except   Rasoa   yesterday except   Rasoa
'All the guests arrived yesterday, except Rasoa.'

Evidence against this analysis comes from the coordination fact above, as well as implicit antecedents and non-DP exceptions. Examples with an implicit antecedent, (7), cannot be generated with an extraposition analysis because the unextraposed version is ungrammatical. The exceptive phrase has no QP to modify. Similarly, a PP exception, as in (8), although grammatical, cannot have originated as a modifier of the clause-internal PP antecedent.

(7)   Nanao   ny   enti-mody   (***afa-tsy omaly**)   Rakoto   (**afa-tsy   omaly**)
did   DET homework   except yesterday   Rakoto   except   yesterday
'Rakoto did the homework, except yesterday.'

(8)   Tsy   nitoriteny   tamin'   ny   olona   (***afa-tsy**   [**tamin'ny   Jiosy**]_{PP})   izy
NEG preach   PREP   DET person   except   PREP   DET Jews   3SG.NOM
(**afa-tsy**   [**tamin'ny   Jiosy**]_{PP})
except   PREP   DET Jews
'He didn't preach to anyone, except to the Jews.'

Alternative analysis 2. Reinhart 1991 proposes that exceptives are derived by base-generating the exceptive phrase right-adjoined to the clause and then *QR-ing the antecedent QP at LF*:

(9)   [_{IP} [_{IP} Tonga **[ny   vahiny rehetra]** omaly,]_{IP} [[ny   vahiny rehetra] afa-tsy   Rasoa]]_{IP}
arrive DET guest   all   yesterday DET guest   all   except   Rasoa
'All the guests arrived yesterday, except Rasoa.'

Evidence against this alternative comes from implicit antecedent examples as in (7), where there is nothing that can undergo QR to host the exceptive phrase. For Reinhart, this leaves the example uninterpretable. Examples with a negative polarity item (NPI) antecedent, (10), also cannot be generated. The NPI cannot QR outside the scope of negation and still be licensed (Hoekstra 1995).

(10)   Tsy   mihinana   n'inona n'inona   aho   [afa-tsy   anana]
NEG eat   anything   1SG   except   greens
'I don't eat anything except greens.'

Conclusion. Soltan 2016 and Pérez-Jiménez & Moreno-Quibén 2012 argue in favor of ellipsis derivations for exceptives in Arabic and Spanish, respectively. This paper proposes that exceptives in Malagasy are also derived by clausal ellipsis. If exceptives, at least in some languages, involve clausal ellipsis, they can inform various aspects of ellipsis theory. The talk concludes with a consideration of island (in)sensitivity. While sluicing is famously island insensitive (Merchant 2001), (11a), exceptives are, perhaps unexpectedly, island sensitive, (11b) (Reinhart 1991).

(11)   a.   Nalahelo tamin'   ny   lahy lasa nody   Rabe   fa tsy   fantatro   hoe   lahy iza
was.sad PREP   DET son   left   Rabe   but NEG know.1SG COMP   son   who
'Rabe was sad when a son left, but I don't know which son.'
   b.   *Nalahelo tamin'   ny   rehetra nandeha   aho   afa-tsy   ny   ankizy
was.sad PREP   DET all   went   1SG.NOM except   DET children
('I was sad when everyone left, except the children.')

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