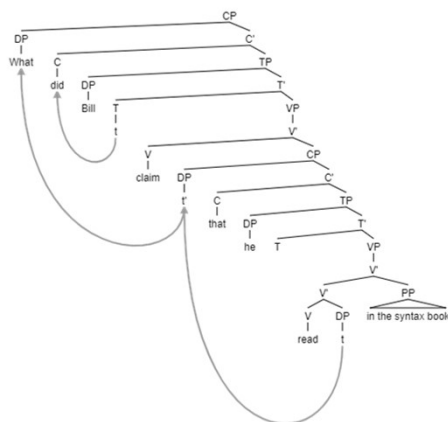# Islands
# &
# Bounding Theory

Xinyu Zhu

PhD student

Newcastle University

1

## A'-movement

● What$_i$ did Bill claim [CP that he read t$_i$ in the syntax book]? (Carnie, 2013)



Steps:
1. Complement of V to Spec of embedded CP
2. Spec of embedded CP to Spec of main CP
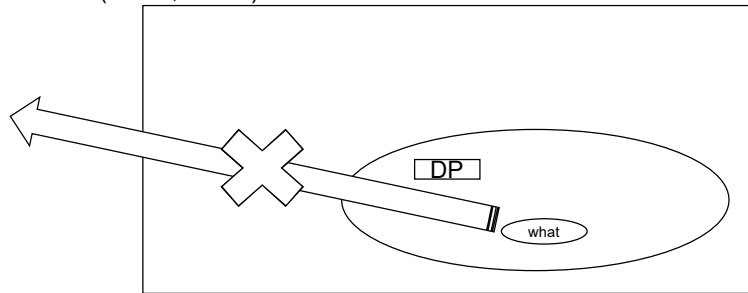3. T to C movement

A'-movement:
From an A/A'-position to an A'-position

Successive Cyclic Movement

2

# Island effect

● Sometimes A'-movement fails to happen:

*What$_i$ did Bill make [DP the claim [CP that he read t$_i$ in the syntax book]]?  (Carnie, 2013)

● In this situation, extraction of any phrase from DP is illicit.

● Syntacticians call this **island effect**. (Ross, 1967)



3

# Types of island

● **Wh-island:**

*How do you wonder [CP which problem John could solve t t]? (Haegeman, 1994:401)

● **Complex NP island:**

*Who did Poirot make [NP the claim that he saw t last week]? (Haegeman, 1994:401)

● **Adjunct island:**

*Which job did you speak to John [CP before you find t]?

● **Relative Clause island:**

*What did you meet a boy [CP who wears t]?

● **Subject Clause island:**

*Who was [TP [CP that the police would arrest t] t a certainty]? (Carnie, 2013:376)

● **Coordinate Structure island:**

*What did you [&P eat t and drink some soda]?
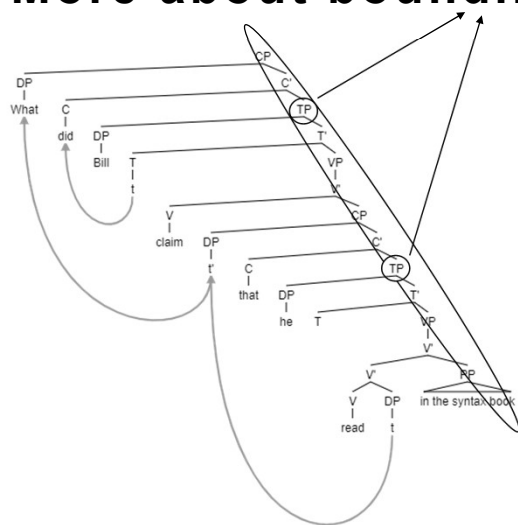
*What did you [&P eat some popcorn and drink t]?

4

# How to account for it?

- Bounding Theory (subjacency): a theory about the locality of movement (Chomsky, 1973, 1981)
  - Main principle: **Subjacency condition**
- **Subjacency:** movement cannot cross more than one bounding node.
  - A'-movements subject to subjacency
  - So, some islands are due to the violation of Subjacency

- Bounding nodes
  - TP(IP) and NP(DP)

- Violations of subjacency:
  - If movements cross:
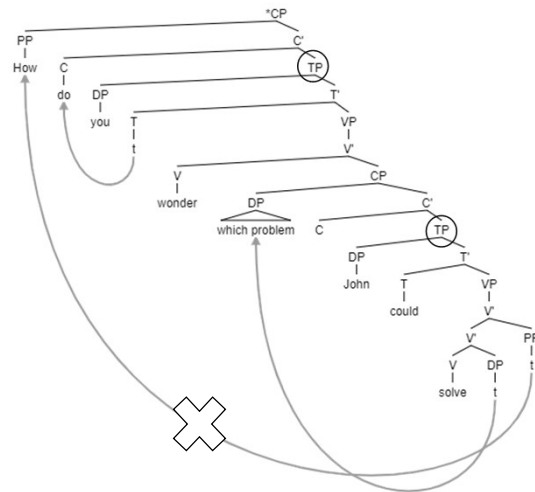    - TP + NP
    - TP + TP
    - TP + NP +...
  in one step.

5

# More about bounding node



6

# Drill - Wh island

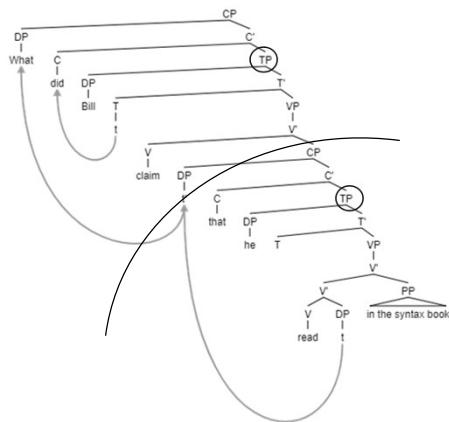*How do you wonder [CP which problem John could solve t t]?

Two bounding nodes (TP & TP) are crossed over in one step. Violate subjacency.

7

# How about non-island?

● What$_i$ did Bill claim [CP that he read t$_i$ in the syntax book]? (Carnie, 2013)

Only move across one bounding node in each step. Satisfy subjacency.

8

# Conclusion

- A'-movements subject to subjacency

- Subjacency can tell whether a sentence is an island or not.

- Some ungrammatical sentences with movements can be explained by subjacency.

- Why is Island effect important?
  - Generative Syntax focuses on:
    - What people will say
    - What people will not say

9

# References

Carnie, A. (2013). *Syntax: A generative introduction*. John Wiley & Sons.
Chomsky, N. (1973). *Conditions on transformations*. In: S.R. Anderson & P. Kiparsky, A festschrift for Morris Halle, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York.
Chomsky, N. (1981). *Lectures on Government and Binding*. Foris, Dordrecht.
Haegeman, L. (2020). *Introduction to government and binding theory*. Wiley-Blackwell.
Ross, J.R. (1967). *Constraints on variables in syntax*. doctoral dissertation, MIT.

# Thanks

10