

Resumptive Pronouns

1. Resumptive Pronouns in English

Very restricted distribution (maybe only in Islands)¹

- (1) a. This is the guy that we wondered whether he is sane.
- b. *This is the guy that he is sane.
- c. *This is the guy that we hate him.

What does this teach us about the nature of RPs?

Chomsky 1977, Shlonsky 1992 and much subsequent work:

- (a) Structures with RPs do not involve movement.
 - (b) Structures with RPs are licensed only when corresponding structures without RPs are blocked. (Statement of (b) is going to be a bit involved, my attempt in (2))
- (2) **RP as Last Resort (under base generation theory of RPs):** A binder index i can be merged with a node φ only if (a or b hold).
- a. Movement: φ dominates a constituent α with index i and this constituent moves to merge with $[i \varphi]$ yielding the structure $[\alpha_{(i)} [i \varphi]]$
 - b. Base Generation as Last Resort: φ dominates a pronoun α with index i and α *cannot move* to merge with $[i \varphi]$.

An alternative perspective (Pesetsky 1998 based on Perlmutter 1972): Structures with RPs involve movement with trace pronounced as a pronoun.

If so, movement itself is not sensitive to islands. What is sensitive to islands is the non-pronunciation of a trace (shadow pronoun deletion).

- (3) **RP as Last Resort (under movement theory of RPs):** A trace can be pronounced as a pronoun only if deletion is impossible.

Under both approaches we need to explain why RPs are limited to specific environments (for example only in relative clauses in English and various other languages).

2. Shlonsky's extension of Last Resort to Hebrew (and Irish)

- (4) a. ha-iSa Se (*hi) bikra et yosef
 the-woman that she visited acc yosef.
- b. ha-iSa Se yosef biker (ota)
 the-woman that y. visited her

¹ From Wikipedia (with reference to McKee and McDaniel (2001):

- (i) This is the camel that he likes Oscar.
- (ii) This is the camel that maybe, maybe, maybe, maybe, he likes Oscar

RPs in Hebrew and Irish are licensed anywhere besides matrix subject position.

Shlonsky 1992 argues nevertheless that RPs in Hebrew compete with traces (and are constrained by Last Resort). Specifically: Hebrew is the union of English and Palestinian Arabic, in which traces in RCs are only possible in matrix subject position (and RPs are obligatory elsewhere).

Shlonsky's analysis is presented under the assumption that RP representations do not involve movement, but it can be restated under the Pesetsky/Perlmutter conception as well.

2. Evidence against movement

Insensitivity to Islands: (1)a.

Same in various other languages (including Hebrew and Irish). Here are examples from Aoun and Benmamoun (Lebanese Arabic), where resumption is good also in questions.

In contrast with *wh*-interrogatives involving gaps, *wh*-interrogatives involving clitics do not obey island conditions. *Wh*-phrases can be related to clitics within adjunct clauses (21), complex NPs (22), and *wh*-clauses (23). In this respect, they behave like CLLDed elements.

(21) *Adjunct islands*

Baddkun taʕrfo ʔayya masrahiyye rəht mən duun ma juuf-a.
want.2P know.2P which play left.1s without COMP see.1s-her
'You want to know which play I left without seeing it.'

(22) *Complex NP islands*

Baddkun taʕrfo ʔayya kteeb hkiit maʕ zzalame yalli katab-o.
want.2P know.2P which book talked.1s with the-man who wrote.3SM-him
'You want to know which book I talked with the man who wrote it.'

(23) *Wh-islands*

Tseeʔalto ʔayya walad byaʕrfo ʔəza Kariim ɖarab-o.
wondered.2P which boy know.3P whether Karim hit.3SM-him
'You wondered which boy they know whether Karim hit him.'

The facts in (21)–(23) are represented as follows:

- (24) a. *Wh*-phrase_i ... [Adjunct ... X + Clitic_i]
b. *Wh*-phrase_i ... [CNP ... X + Clitic_i]
c. *Wh*-phrase_i ... [*Wh* ... X + Clitic_i]

Different interpretation for RPs and traces (Doron 1982):

- (3) a. dani yimca et [ha-iša₁ še-hu mexapes t₁]. (de re/de dicto)
Dani will.find ACC the-woman that-he searches
b. dani yimca et [ha-iša₁ še-hu mexapes ota₁]. (de re)
Dani will.find ACC the-woman that-he searches her
'Dani will find the woman he is looking for.'

This contrast has been taken to argue that there are “reconstruction effects” with traces

but not with RPs (to be revisited).²

Another contrast from Doron, which might involve both reconstruction and QR (Sichel argues that given reconstruction – or the raising-structure that allows for it – there is no island for QR here.)

- (5) a. ha-ʔiSa₁ Se [kol ʔiS]₂ yivxar t₁ tiSlax lo₂ tmuna
 the-woman that every man will-choose t will-send him picture
 For every man,
 the woman who the man will choose will send the man a picture.
 b. *ha-ʔiSa₁ Se [kol ʔiS]₂ yivxar ota₁ tiSlax lo₂ tmuna
 the-woman that every man will-choose her will-send him picture

No Parasitic Gap Licensing:

- (6) a. This is the guy that one should meet ___t after reading an article about ___{pg}
 b. *This is the guy that if one meets him_{RP} after reading an article about ___{pg} one is
 deeply disappointed.

- (32) a. ʔelu ha-sfarim še-Dan tiyek ʔotam_i bli likro ʔotam_i.
 these the-books that-Dan filed *them* without to-read *them*
 ‘These are the books that Dan filed without reading.’
 b. ʔʔelu ha-sfarim še-Dan tiyek t_i bli likro p_i.
 these the-books that-Dan filed without to-read
 c. *ʔelu ha-sfarim še-Dan tiyek ʔotam_i bli likro p_i.
 these the-books that-Dan filed *them* without to-read
(33) ʔelu ha-sfarim še-ʔotam_i Dan tiyek bli likro p_i.
 these the-books that-*them* Dan filed without to-read
 ‘These are the books that Dan filed without reading.’

-
- (7) a. ʔelu ha-sfarim Se-Dan natan ___t lexa mi-bli letaxnen lakaxat ___{pg} bexazara
 These are the book that Dan gave__ to you without planning to take __ back.
 b. *ʔelu ha-sfarim Se-Dan natan **otam** lexa mi-bli letaxnen lakaxat ___{pg} bexazara
 These are the book that Dan gave them to you without planning to take __ back.

3. Evidence in favor of movement

Sometimes parasitic gap licensing is possible (Sells 1984). Here is the discussion from a footnote in Shlonsky’s paper.

² See Bassi and Rasin 2017 for a possible interpretation of reconstruction in relative clauses : <https://semanticsarchive.net/Archive/GE4MWViN/Bassi.pdf>. The proposal will not suffice to derive the intended meaning of (5)a.

- (v) ?Zo-hi ha-baxura še-ha-?anašim še-te?aru p_i lo hikiru ?ota_i heitev.
this-is the-girl that-the-people that-described not knew *her* well
'This is the girl that the people who described her did not know her well.'

Sells concludes that resumptive pronouns do in fact license parasitic gaps but that the unacceptability of (32c) is due to a leftness restriction, which is violated in (32c) but respected in (v). He shows that the distribution of resumptive pronouns in across-the-board extraction configurations is subject to a similar leftness restriction.

Although I find Sells's observations cogent and worthy of further study, I do not share his conclusions. It is perfectly conceivable that a leftness condition is at work above and beyond the other independently motivated mechanisms that serve to license parasitic gaps, but it is hardly the case that the properties of this construction can all be reduced to it.

Not following the last sentence here and I find Sells's conclusion to be reasonable.

Sometimes we find reconstruction effects (A&B):

- (47) a. **Təlmiiz-a** **ʃʃitaan** btaʔrfo ʔənno kəll mʔallme ʔaaʃaʃət-o.
student-her the-naughty.MS know.2P that every teacher.F punished.3SF-him
'Her naughty student, you know that every teacher punished him.'

When we find reconstruction effects, we find sensitivity to islands (A&B):

- b. ***Təlmiiz-a** **ʃʃitaan** fallayto ʔablma kəll mʔallme tʔaaʃaʃət-o.
student-her the-naughty.MS left.2P before every teacher.F punished.3SF-him
'Her naughty student, you left before every teacher punished him.'

A&B's Conclusion from LA: RP constructions are ambiguous; they have a movement analysis and a base generation analysis. If we disambiguate the construction by reconstruction, we get island effects.

Sichel will end up adopting this assumption, but I am not sure she presented the necessary data (specifically no cases of optional RPs within islands, but I think the facts go as expected).

4. Conclusion reached in the literature (I think)

Island-sensitivity is a property of movement not of the deletion of a trace/pronoun. When an RP is a spell-out of trace, it will be island-sensitive; when it is not island-sensitive, it is a simple pronoun. We can force a non-movement analysis by an appropriately placed island, and we can force a movement analysis by reconstruction. The predicted correlation, which are not at all trivial, corroborated (e.g. in A&B (47), but much more).

Can we force a movement analysis by pg licensing? I don't think we get the predicted results...

In Sells's Hebrew example, I think one can add an island, say embed everything in the antecedent of a conditional without affecting the judgment. (*This is the woman that we are in trouble if the people who described didn't know her well.*). Also in English, I think.

- (8) a. This is the woman that we can forget about the senate if most people who

- approve of Trump vote for her
- b. This is the woman that we can forget about the senate if most people who approve of__ vote for her
- c.??This is the woman that we can forget about the presidency if most people who approve of__ vote for Trump

Conclusion: either pg licensing does not diagnose movement, or islands do not. A similar dilemma is discussed in the literature re-strong crossover (WCO judgments are controversial as discussed in Sichel):

- (29) a. *Ze ha-baxur še- yidaʕti ʔet ha-ʔidiot_i še-ha-more yaxšil t_i.
this the-guy that- (I) informed ACC the-idiot that-the-teacher will flunk
'This is the guy that I informed the idiot that the teacher will flunk.'
- b. *Ze ha-baxur še- yidaʕti ʔet ha-ʔidiot_i še-ha-more
this the-guy that- (I) informed ACC the-idiot that-the-teacher
yaxšil ʔoto_i.
will flunk him
(same as (29a))

Shlonksy Hebrew based on McCloskey Irish

An alternative to consider: Structures with RPs are always derived by movement and island sensitivity arises only when the tail of the movement chain is deleted (or some part of it, as in Van Urk).

This will predict that we find properties of movement even when islands are crossed and is therefore corroborated (maybe) by pg licensing.

The difficult tasks will be to explain:

- (a) lack of reconstruction in Doron's examples.
- (b) sensitivity to islands in various cases where deletion is not obviously present (e.g. verb copying constructions reviewed by Van Urk)
- (c) the emergence of islands when reconstruction is forced as in A&B's (47b) (as well as other interesting observations made by A&B).

5. Sichel 2014

5.1. The lack of reconstruction (Doron's effect)

5.1.1. ACC marked RPs

- (3) a. dani yimca et [ha-iša₁ še-hu mexapes t₁]. (de re/de dicto)
Dani will.find ACC the-woman that-he searches
- b. dani yimca et [ha-iša₁ še-hu mexapes ota₁]. (de re)
Dani will.find ACC the-woman that-he searches her
'Dani will find the woman he is looking for.'

- (5) a. ha-tik₁ še-tafru t₁ / #oto₁ la-sar haya kašur le-nadlan.
the-case₁ that-they.sewed t₁ / #it₁ for.the-minister was related to-real.estate
'The case that they pinned on the minister was related to real estate.'
- b. tahalix ka-ze rak yagdil et ha-uga₁ še-yexalku t₁ / #ota₁ ben
process that only enlarge ACC the-cake₁ that-will.divide t₁ / #it₁ among
ha-sarim ba-kneset.
the-ministers in.the-parliament
'That sort of process will only enlarge the pie they divide among the ministers in the parliament.'
- c. biglal ha-xatul₁ še-hoci'u t₁ / #oto₁ me-ha-sak holxim legalot
because the-cat₁ that-they.took t₁ / #it₁ from-the-bag going to.discover
od harbe.
more much
'Because of the cat that was let out of the bag, they are going to discover much more.'
- (7) [ha-šmu'a al acmo₂]₁ [še-kol politikai₂ hikxiš t₁ / #ota₁] hufca
[the-rumor about himself₂]₁ that-every politician₂ denied t₁ / #it₁ was.spread
al yedey ha-yošev roš.
by the-chair
'The rumor about himself that every politician denied was spread by the chair.'

5.1.2. Nominative Marked RPs

- (18) a. anaxnu lo yexolim le-šalem avur ha-axot₁ še-ha-pacient doreš še-t₁
we NEG can.PL to-pay for the-nurse that-the-patient demands that
tevaker eclo ba-bayit. (de dicto and de re)
will.visit at.his in.the-house
'We cannot pay for the nurse that/who the patient requests should visit him.'
- b. anaxnu lo yexolim le-šalem avur ha-axot₁ še-ha-pacient doreš še-**hi**₁
we NEG can.PL to-pay for the-nurse that-the-patient demands that-she
tevaker eclo ba-bayit. (only de re)
will.visit at.his in.the-house
'We cannot pay for the nurse who the patient requests that she visit him.'
- (19) a. [ha-šmu'ot al acmo₁]₂ še-xašavti še-t₂ / ??**hen**₂ yexolot leha'aliv et
[the-rumors about himself₁]₂ that-thought.I that-t₂ / ??they₂ could to.offend ACC
dani₁ hufcu al yedey rani.
Dani were.spread by Rani
'The rumors about himself that I thought could offend Dani were spread by Rani.'
- b. samti ba-arnak et ha-kesef₁ še-xašavti še-t₁ / ***hu**₁ yaxol lehikanas.
put.I in.the-purse ACC the-money₁ that-thought.I that-t₁ / *it₁ can go.in
'I put in my purse the money that I thought could fit.'

5.2. But sometimes reconstruction is possible

- (8) a. dani yimca et [ha-iša₁ še-hu xolem aleya₁].
Dani will.find ACC the-woman that-he dreams of.**her**
'Dani will find the woman he is dreaming of.'

De-dicto possible with RP in contrast to (3)

- (10) a. ha-ec₁ še-hu tipes alav₁
the-tree that-he climbed on.it
'the high position he took'
b. ha-ec₁ še-hu yarad mimen₀₁
the-tree that-he came.down from.it
'the high position he came down from'

Idiomatic interpretation possible with RP (in contrast to (5))

- (11) [ha-šmu'a al acmo]₁ [še-kol more xašaš mimen_a₁] hufca al yedey
the-rumor about himself that-every teacher feared of.it was.spread by
ha-axot.
the-nurse
'The rumor about himself that every teacher feared was spread by the nurse.'

Variable/anaphor binding possible with RP by reconstruction (in contrast to (5))

5.3. +/- optionality

The initial generalization is that an RP block reconstructions unless it is a complement of a preposition. But Sichel argues that this is not the governing factor.

What is special about prepositions is that they block deletion of their complements (no P-stranding in Hebrew). But there are also other environments where deletion is blocked and these reveal the nature of the governing factor: +/- optionality.

5.3.1. RP sisters of P are Obligatory.

All of the RPs in (8-11) are obligatory, as Hebrew does not allow preposition stranding.

Table 1
Optional direct object pronouns versus obligatory pronouns in PP/NP

	Optional direct object	Obligatory pronoun in PP/NP
<i>De dicto</i> readings	—	+
Principle A	—	+
Embedded idiomatic readings	—	+
Variable binding	—	+
Amount readings	—	+
Free relatives	—	+

- (16) Optional resumptive pronouns block reconstruction; obligatory pronouns allow reconstruction.

Sichel's claim about Lebanese Arabic: RPs are obligatory hence reconstruction possible.

5.3.2. Obligatory ACC and Nom RPs

(24)

- b. ele ha-anašim₁ še-margiz **otam**₁ / *t₁ še-ha-harca'a be-anglit.
these the-people₁ that-annoys them₁ / *t₁ that-the-lecture in-English
'These are the people who it annoys that the lecture is in English.'
- c. zot ha-xavera₁ še-zihiti rak **ota**₁ / *t₁ ba-tmuna.
this the-friend₁ that-identified.I only her₁ / *t₁ in.the-picture
'This is the friend who I identified only her in the picture.'

- (26) ze ha-baxur₁ še-basof hayiti crix le-calcel la-horim šel ha-idiot₁
this the-guy₁ that-in.the.end was.I need to-phone to.the-parents of the-fool₁
ve-lesaper lahem še-ha-mora betax taxšil **oto**₁ / *t₁.
and-to.tell them that-the-teacher definitely will.fail him₁ / *t₁
'This is the guy who in the end I had to phone the fool's parents to tell them that
the teacher will definitely fail him.'

Heterogeneous set of environments where RPs are obligatory and for all of them we expect reconstruction to be possible if the governing factor is +/- obligatory.

- (27) a. *Free relatives*: A direct object pronoun, typically excluded in a free relative, becomes grammatical in a WCO configuration, as an object experiencer, and in the complement of 'only'.
- b. *Bound variable anaphora*: A direct object pronoun, typically excluded in contexts of bound variable anaphora, is compatible with bound variable anaphora in a WCO configuration, as an object experiencer, and in the complement of 'only'.⁹
- c. *Embedded idioms*: A direct object pronoun, typically excluded in the presence of an embedded idiom, is compatible with reconstruction in the context of WCO.¹⁰

Experiencer object

- (34) [xaver ha-yaldut šelo₂]₁ še-kol politikai₂ xašad še-ha-seret yargiz
[friend the-childhood his₂]₁ that-every politician₂ suspected that-the-film will.annoy
oto₁ / *t₁ katav mixtav la-orex.
him₁ / *t₁ wrote letter to.the-editor
'The childhood friend of his who every politician suspected that the film would annoy wrote a letter to the editor.'

Complement of 'only'

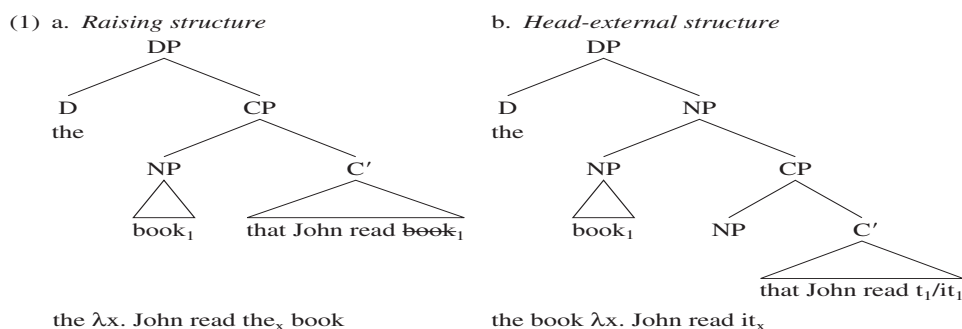
- (35) [[ha-tmuna šel acma₂]₁ še-kol yalda₂ baxra rak **ota**₁ / *t₁] hudpesa be-šaxor
[the-picture of herself₂]₁ that-every girl₂ chose only it₁ / *t₁ printed in-black
lavan.
white
'The picture of herself that every girl chose only it was printed in black and white.'

5.3. Proposal

Assumptions:

1. RCs are ambiguous between a raising/head-internal and a matching/head-external analysis. Reconstruction requires the raising analysis (This is an assumption made fairly often. See e.g. Sauerland 1998 and references therein. See Bassi and Rasin

2017 for a detailed semantic analysis).



2. Preference for deletion of a trace, which can be formulated in two different ways:
 - a. to be active only for the Raising Structure
 - b. to be active everywhere (predicting that RPs will be allowed only when obligatory), as in Van Urk. the principle, however, will be masked by noise, by the fact that a matching structure has a counterpart where there is no movement. (Pg facts will not all be accounted for.)

The less ambitious (a) version is stated as follows.

- (17) The tail of the chain in the raising structure is realized as a null copy whenever possible; a pronoun is possible only if a null copy is impossible.

The more ambitious (b) version can be extracted from the following:

Table 5

The distribution of pronouns and gaps across relative clause structures II

	Head-internal	Head-external	
	Raising	Matching	Nonmovement
Gaps	+	+	–
Obligatory pronouns	+	?	+
Optional pronouns	–	?	+

Table 5 leaves open the compatibility of pronouns with the matching structure. As discussed above, having pronouns inhabit the matching structure would be consistent with their reconstruction properties. However, a pronoun in this structure would incorrectly be associated with locality effects. This is not really a problem as long as the nonmovement RC is also available to host pronouns, since any violation incurred in the first structure would be repaired in the second structure. Given the facts considered so far, we simply cannot tell whether pronouns are compatible with this structure or not.¹⁸ For simplicity, I will assume that they are not, and that an optional pronoun is confined to a nonmovement head-external RC. With this in place, I turn to discuss the nature of competition in RCs.

Assume that the more ambitious (b) version is successful. What we have is the unrestricted version of (17) in (17')

(17)' The tail of the chain is realized as a null copy whenever possible. If impossible, it is realized as a pronoun.

Something like (17)' is also argued for by Van Urk (below). We should ask such principle relate to the overall distribution of resumptive pronouns, e.g. to the fact that in English they appear only in islands and to the fact that they cannot appear in matrix subject position in English.

Perhaps...:

1. There is a last resort condition that determines whether there is movement or true resumption as in (2) above (maybe coupled with Shlonsky's assumption about Palestinian Arabic and Hebrew/Irish).
2. Some languages (Hebrew, Dinka,...) can also realize traces as pronouns but only when necessary. Reasons for the necessity: ban on P-stranding, EPP property of certain heads...

6. Van Urk (2018)

Studies A-bar constructions in Dinka in which pronouns appear in vP edges along the path of movement, but only when the moved element is plural. Important property: stranded pronouns don't carry person features (always 3rd which is taken to be default).

Proposal:

1. delete as much as possible from the "non-pronounced" copy of a chain (the largest phase dominated by the trace).
2. Not everything can be deleted from the edge of vP.

From 1+2 it follows that the largest phase properly dominated by the "non-pronounced" copy deleted, which is assumed to be a phrase dominated *person* but not *number*. (realized morphologically as a pronoun). Hence what is pronounced will not contain person distinctions. Special morphological assumptions block deletion in the singular case...