



Cukier-Goldstein-Goren Center for Mind, Cognition and Language,  
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Department of Linguistics

## THURSDAY INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

Thursday 08/12/2022

16:15-17:45

Kenyon Branan, Universität Göttingen

### Situational Transparency

This talk is centered around a curious set of facts involving extraction: certain domains are transparent for extraction, of both the A and  $\bar{A}$  varieties, just in cases where some semantic relationship holds between variables in the two domains. Such a relationship could involve an individual (Grano & Lasnik 2018), event (Truswell 2007 et seq.), time (Hiraiwa 2005, Huang 2019) or situation variable --- stands in some sort of semantic relationship with a comparable variable in the domain containing the landing site for extraction. I will review a number of cases from a variety of languages to try and convince you that this generalization does indeed hold. Having convinced you that it does, I'll then note that this presents a puzzle for the commonly adopted Y-model of the grammar: a semantic dependency here seems to condition the availability of a syntactic one, yet the syntactic calculation must, on this model, proceed blindly with respect to the semantics.

I will then discuss options that we might consider for resolving this puzzle. I will focus on particular on what I view, at the moment, as a particularly promising candidate: that the generalization mentioned in the previous paragraph reflects a constraint on the semantics, rather than the syntax, of movement dependencies. The working idea is that there is a general condition on the interpretation of movement chains that requires them to be evaluated with respect to the same context (see Gluckman 2018 for a similar idea). In the cases where movement is not allowed, the absence of a semantic relationship between variables in the two domains results in the insertion of an operator at LF at the edge of the relevant domain which a) assigns a value to situation variables contained within the domain, and b) requires this value to be distinct from the value assigned to situation variables in other domains. One consequence of this is that the head and tail of a movement chain spanning such a domain will necessarily be evaluated with respect to different contexts, violating the aforementioned condition on the interpretation of movement chains. In contrast, the presence of a prior semantic relation spanning the relevant domain will block insertion of the relevant operator --- perhaps for reasons of economy --- and as a consequence extraction from the domain will be licit, as both tail and head of the movement chain will be evaluated with respect to the same context.

Click [here](#) to see the colloquium program.

