

# Evasion strategies save apparent island violations in stripping

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## Overview

**Clausal ellipsis:** movement of a constituent (“the remnant”) + deletion of the clause

- (1) Someone here speaks Wampanoag – guess who<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~t<sub>i</sub> speaks Wampanoag~~]. *Sluicing*  
(2) A: Who speaks Wampanoag? *Fragment answer*  
B: Pat<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~t<sub>i</sub> speaks Wampanoag~~].  
(3) Pat speaks Wampanoag,  
(but) not Chris<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~t<sub>i</sub> speaks Wampanoag~~]. *Stripping*

**The remnant movement in sluicing can appear to cross islands** (e.g. Ross 1969):

- (4) a. They hired someone who speaks a Balkan language – guess which! (Merchant 2001:209)  
b. ... guess which<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~they hired~~ [<sub>Relative-Clause</sub> ~~someone who speaks t<sub>i</sub>~~]]!

**Previous proposals:**

- Sluicing is **different** from the other clausal ellipses (Merchant 2004)
- Sluicing is the **same** as the other clausal ellipses (Griffiths & Liptak 2014; Barros et al. 2014; Yoshida et al. 2019)

**I argue:**

- Stripping behaves the **same** as other clausal ellipses wrt island violations
- The apparent ability of stripping to violate islands is an illusion created by **the evasion strategy** – a parse that does not involve any islands (Barros et al.’s (2014) analysis of sluicing)

## Evasion strategy 1: Short source

- Elided phrase is a subpart of the antecedent clause that doesn’t include the island (Merchant 2001; Barros et al. 2014)
  - Elided subject is an E-type pronoun
- (5) They hired someone who speaks French yesterday, not German.  
*Short source:* ... not German<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~she (=the person they hired) speaks t<sub>i</sub>~~]].

## Evasion strategy 2: Copular source

- Elided phrase is a predicational copular sentence (Barros et al. 2014)
  - Elided subject is an E-type pronoun
- (6) They bought a blue car, not green.  
a. They bought a blue car, not green<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~they bought a t<sub>i</sub> car~~]. *Long source*  
b. They bought a blue car, not green<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~it (=the car they bought) was t<sub>i</sub>~~]]. *Copular source*

## Argument 1

- (7) They said someone speaks French yesterday, and also German.  
a. ✓ ... and also German<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~they said someone speaks t<sub>i</sub>~~]]. *Long source*  
b. ✓ ... and also German<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~she speaks t<sub>i</sub>~~]]. *ShortS*

## Argument 2

- (8) They hired someone who speaks French yesterday, and also German  
a. \*... and also German<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~they hired~~ [<sub>RC</sub> ~~someone who speaks t<sub>i</sub>~~]]. *Long source*  
b. ✓ ... and also German<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~she speaks t<sub>i</sub>~~]]. *ShortS*
- (8) is fine, and only has the short-source reading

## Argument 3

- (9) \*They hired a monolingual who speaks French yesterday, and also German.  
a. \*... and also German<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~they hired~~ [<sub>RC</sub> ~~a monolingual who speaks t<sub>i</sub>~~]]. *Long source*  
b. #... and also German<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~she speaks t<sub>i</sub>~~]]. *ShortS*
- (10) \*They saw a clean car, and also dirty.  
a. \*... and also dirty<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~they saw a t<sub>i</sub> car~~]]. *Long S*  
b. #... and also dirty<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~it was t<sub>i</sub>~~]]. *Copular source*

## Argument 4

- Russian *a* coordinates opposing clauses
- (11) Oleg ljubit futbol, a Roma ne ljubit.  
Oleg likes football, whereas Roma not likes.  
‘Oleg likes football, whereas Roma doesn’t.’
- Stripping is generally allowed in *a*-coordination:
- (12) Oleg ljubit futbol, a Roma net.  
Oleg likes football, whereas Roma no.
- *A*-coordination is bad with any evasion strategy:
- (13) \*Oni vchera nanjali kogo-to, kto govorit They yesterday hired who-EI who speaks po-francuzski, a ona ne govorit po-nemecki. at-French, A she not speaks at-German. Intended meaning: ‘They hired someone who speaks French yesterday, whereas she does not speak German.’
- (14) \*Oni kupili sinuju masinu, a ona They bought blue car whereas she okazalas’ ne zelënoj turned.out not green Intended meaning: ‘They bought a blue car, whereas it turned out not to be green.’
- Stripping in *a*-coordination obeys islands:
- (15) a. \*Oni vchera nanyali kogo-to, kto govorit They yesterday hired who-EI who speaks po-francuzski, a po-nemecki net. at-French, whereas at-German no. Intended meaning: ‘They hired someone who speaks French, but not German.’  
b. Oni sinuju masinu kupili, a They blue.ACC car.ACC bought whereas zelënuju/\*zelënaja net. green.ACC/\*NOM no. ‘They bought a blue car, but not a green car.’

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References are available by email on request.