Resumptive Pronouns and Competition

1. Introduction A Minimalist hypothesis about resumptive pronouns is that they should be no different from ordinary pronouns (McCloskey 2006). This paper substantiates the Minimalist hypothesis with respect to a particular view of ordinary pronouns: pronouns are ‘Elsewhere’ elements (Pica 1984, Burzio 1989, Safir 2004, Rooryck & Wyngaerd 2011, Reuland 2011; see also Hornstein 2001 and Grolla 2010 for resumptive pronouns). Just as the interpretation of ordinary pronouns, on this view, is determined by competition with anaphors (references above), it is argued that the interpretation of resumptive pronouns is determined by competition with gaps. Based on new facts in Hebrew and Jordanian Arabic I argue for the Economy principle in (1). In the spirit of earlier Economy treatments (Shlonsky 1992, Pesetsky 1998, McDaniel & Cowart 1999, Hornstein 2001, Grolla 2005, 2010), (1) expresses a preference for a gap whenever possible. Unlike previous accounts, the preference is restricted to Raising relatives, with consequences for interpretation. The analysis is based on systematic differences between obligatory and optional pronouns. In a variety of domains, obligatory pronouns behave like gaps, whereas optional pronouns behave differently. This is captured via the structural ambiguity of relative clauses (Sauerland 1998, 2004, Bhatt 2002, Bianchi 2004, among others): in the Raising RC (2a), the head is associated with the relativized position via movement, and in the head-external RC (2b), via binding. Given (1), only obligatory pronouns may occupy the Raising structure. (2a) allows reconstruction but (2b) does not.

2. Interpretive Asymmetries The analysis builds on a number of asymmetries between RCs with gaps and direct object pronouns (Doron (1982)), such as the availability of De Re and De Dicto readings: with a pronoun, the De Dicto reading is neutralized (3). This holds of reconstruction effects in general, such as the interpretation of idiom chunks and variable binding (4a-b). It is also observed in Free Relatives, which only have a Raising analysis (Grosu & Landman 1998, Grosu 2002): here the object pronoun is simply ungrammatical (Borer 1984), in (4c). Obligatory pronouns, within PP/NP, behave like gaps: reconstructed readings are possible, and so are Free Relatives, in (5). The possibility for reconstruction thus varies with choice of pronoun.

3. Extraction Asymmetries Extraction from a RC is sometimes possible (6), but it is blocked when there is a direct object resumptive pronoun (Doron 1982). Here too, obligatory pronouns behave like gaps and allow extraction (7). The correlation between reconstruction and extraction across pronoun types provides new evidence for the structural ambiguity of relative clauses and for the syntactic analysis of reconstruction effects. To the extent that extraction is purely syntactic, reconstruction must also be facilitated by syntactic factors, i.e. the Raising analysis (2a). Crucially, the correlation is independent of the presence of pronouns. I will show that, in the absence of pronouns, when the Raising structure is blocked by a potential Principle C violation (Sauerland 2004), extraction becomes impossible.

4. Competition While obligatory pronouns may surface in the Raising RC, optional pronouns are confined to (2b). This section argues that this mapping is due to competition with a gap alternative, and not to any inherent property of the pronoun. This is demonstrated on direct object pronouns which are obligatory, such as (I) in contexts of potential WCO violations, and (II) the Experiencer of an Obj-Exp predicate (Landau 2009). Here, the direct object pronoun is free to occur in a Free Relative (8) (cf. 4c) and it exhibits reconstruction effects (demonstrated in the talk). This suggests that when obligatory, the d.o. pronoun is realized in (2a). A related
competition-effect is observed in Jordanian Arabic (Malkawi 2009), and I will argue for a similar
treatment in terms of (1) & (2).
Examples:
(1) The extraction site in a Raising relative is realized by the least specified form available.
(2) a. Raising: b. Head-external structure:

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  DP       DP
 /\               /\ 
D      CP    D      NP
|      |     |      |
NP     C'    NP     CP
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that John read book

that John read it

(3) dani yimca et [ha-iSa₁  Se-hu mexapes t₁/ ota₁] Only De Re with pronoun
dani will.find ACC the-woman that-he searches
'Dani will find the woman he is looking for.'

(4) a. [ha-tmuna Sel acmo]₁ [Se-kol  gever haXi ohev (*ota₁)] halXa le-ibud
   the-picture of himself that-every man most likes it got lost
   'The picture of himself that every man likes the most got lost.'
   b. ha-xatul₁ Se-hocenu (oto₁ ) me-ha-sak Pronoun blocks idiomatic reading
      the-cat that-we.removed it from-the-bag
      'The cat that we pulled out of the bag'
   c. ze mi Se-pagaSti (*oto) be-hodu
      this who that.met.I him in-india
      'This is who I met in India.'

(5) a. dani yimca et [ha-iSa₁  Se-hu xolem aleya₁] De Re and De Dicto
dani will.find ACC the-woman that-he dreams of her
b. [ha-tmuna Sel acmo]₁ [Se-kol  gever hexlit  aleya₁] halXa le-ibud
   the-picture of-himself that-every man decided on-it got lost
   c. ha-eC₁ Se-hu tipes alav₁ Pronoun is compatible with Idiomatic reading
      the-tree that-he climbed on-it
      'the high position that he took'

(6) al lexem Saxor₂, yeS [rak gvina axat₁ [Se-keday limroach t₁ / *ota₁  t₂ ]]
on bread black is only cheese one that-worth to-spreading
   'On black bread there is only one cheese that is worth spreading.'

(7) im ha-baxur ha-ze₂ od lo macati [nose₁ PRO le-daber t₂ alav₁]
with the-guy this, yet not found topic to-talk about-it
   'With this guy, I haven't yet found a topic to talk about.'

(8) a. mi₁ Se-ha-horim Selo₁ metapxim *(oto₂) ba-yaldut macl’ax ba-bagrut
   who that-the-parents of him support him in-childhood succeeds in the-adulthood
   'Whoever is supported by his parents in childhood succeeds as an adult.'
   b. mi₁ Se-[margiz *(oto₂) [Se-[ha-harca’a be-anglit]] Se-yece
   who that-annoys him that-the-lecture in-english that-should.leave
   'Whoever is annoyed that lecture is in English should leave.'