Exceptives: An under-appreciated ellipsis construction

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1 Introduction

Exceptives are constructions that express exclusion. They typically consist of an EXCEPTIVE PHRASE, which excludes an element from the domain of a RESTRICTED QUANTIFIED NOUN PHRASE (QP). In the example in (1), *everyone* is the restricted QP, *except Mary* is the exceptive phrase, and *Mary* is the EXCEPTION XP.

(1) Everyone arrived [except [Mary]].
RESTRICTED QP — EXCEPTIVE PHRASE (EP) — EXCEPTION XP (EX)

Since Hoeksema 1987, the literature has recognized two kinds of exceptives, connected exceptives and free exceptives, (2). They differ on both semantic and syntactic grounds summarized in Table 1 (see Hoeksema 1987, 1995, Reinhart 1991, García Álvarez 2008, Pérez-Jiménez and Moreno-Quibén 2012, Soltan 2016). Connected exceptives contain a nominal modifier attached to a quantified noun phrase, which serves to subtract from the domain of the quantifier. Free exceptives, in contrast, express an exception to a generalization stated in the main clause. Exceptive phrases in free exceptives typically occur in clause-peripheral position.

(2) a. Everyone except Mary arrived. — CONNECTED EXCEPTIVE
b. Everyone arrived, except Mary. — FREE EXCEPTIVE

	CONNECTED EXCEPTIVE (CE)	FREE EXCEPTIVE (FE)
semantics	subtracts from the domain of a quantifier	expresses an exception to a generalization
syntax	DP modifier	main clause modifier/conjunct
position	adjacent to QP	clause-peripheral
constituency	forms a constituent with the restricted QP	not a constituent with the restricted QP
category of EX	DPs only	not restricted to DPs
realization of restricted QP	must be syntactically realized	may be implicit
types of antecedents	certain quantified noun phrases only (universals)	XPs in general statements (QPs, bare nouns, definite NPs, and others)

Table 1: Differences between connected and free exceptives

This paper is mainly concerned with free exceptives. In the examples below, the exceptive phrase is clause-peripheral and not adjacent to the restricted QP.

The claim of this paper is that free exceptives in some languages are derived by clausal ellipsis. The supporting data come from the Austronesian language Malagasy. A similar proposal has been made for Spanish (Pérez-Jiménez & Moreno-Quibén 2012) and Egyptian Arabic (Soltan 2016). Harris 1982 suggests this for English as well. If one accepts that exceptives are an ellipsis construction, they have implications for ellipsis theorizing such as questions about the missing syntactic structure and the source of island (in)sensitivity under ellipsis.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents an overview of exceptives in Malagasy. Section 3 provides evidence for elided clausal structure and briefly sketches out the ellipsis derivation. Sections 4 and 5 argue against two non-clausal alternatives: Quantifier Raising (Reinhart 1991) and Extraposition. Section 6 concludes with a brief discussion of some implications.

2 Malagasy basics

Malagasy is an Austronesian language spoken by approximately 18 million people on the island of Madagascar. The language is strongly head-initial and basic word order is predicate-initial and subject final, or VOXS in verbal clauses.

Exceptives in Malagasy look superficially like their English counterparts, modulo word order. The exceptive phrase *afa-tsy XP* 'except XP' can occur immediately after the restricted QP, (3a), or at the end of the clause, (3b).

(3) a. Mihinana voankazo rehetra **afa-tsy ny akondro** Rasoa
eat fruit all except DET banana Rasoa
b. Mihinana voankazo rehetra Rasoa **afa-tsy ny akondro**
eat fruit all Rasoa except DET banana
'Rasoa eats all fruit except bananas.'

The clause-final position of the exceptive phrase in (3b) instantiates a free exceptive, as the phrase is not adjacent to the QP. In addition, the exception need not be a DP and the restricted QP may be implicit, as illustrated in (4). These are two characteristics of free exceptives from Table 1.

(4) Tsy niteny izy **afa-tsy [tamin' ny fanoharana]$_{PP}$**
NEG spoke 3SG except PREP DET parable
'He didn't speak, except in parables.'

3 Evidence for clausal structure in free exceptives

This section argues, following a suggestion in Merchant 2001:107, that exceptions are derived from a full clause via ellipsis, as schematized below.

(5) Tonga ny vahiny rehetra [afa-tsy **[S ... Rasoa ...]**]
arrived DET guests all except Rasoa
'All the guests arrived except Rasoa.'

3.1 Unreduced variants

Straightforward evidence for missing clausal structure comes from the observation that the exception can in fact appear as a full, unreduced clause:

(6) a. Tonga ny vahiny rehetra, *afa-tsy* **Rasoa (no tsy tonga)**
arrived DET guest all except Rasoa FOC NEG arrive
'All the guests arrived except Rasoa (didn't arrive).'
b. Miasa isan'andro Rabe *afa-tsy* **ny alahady (no tsy miasa izy)**
work each.day Rabe except DET Sunday FOC NEG work 3SG
'Rabe works every day, except Sunday (he doesn't work).'

The missing clause in Malagasy must be spelled out using a cleft focus construction that has the opposite polarity of the main clause, two facts that I return to below.

3.2 Coordination

Additional evidence for a clause comes from patterns of coordination. Malagasy has two coordinating conjunctions (Rajemisa-Raolison 1969, Pearson 2001). To first approximation, *sy* coordinates DPs, PP, and VPs, while *ary* coordinates clauses. For example, *sy* must be used in (7) to coordinate two PPs.

(7) Niteny [tami-ny]$_{PP}$ **sy/*ary** [tamin' ny vadi-ny]$_{PP}$ aho
spoke PREP-3SG and PREP DET spouse-3SG 1SG
'I spoke with him/her and with his/her spouse.'

In contrast to the above situation in ordinary clauses, *ary* can be used to coordinate DP and PP exceptions in exceptives, (8a). Such data suggest that the individual exceptions must each be dominated by a clausal node to allow coordination with *ary*, as shown in (8b).

(8) a. Niteny tamin' ny mpampianatra rehetra Rabe
spoke PREP DET teacher all Rabe
afa-tsy **tami-ko sy/ary tamin-dRasoa**
except PREP-1SG and PREP Rasoa
'Rabe spoke with all the teachers except with me and with Rasoa.'
b. ... *afa-tsy* **[S ... tami-ko ...] ary [S ... tamin-dRasoa ...]**]
except PREP-1SG and PREP-Rasoa

3.3 Multiple exceptions

Multiple exceptions following 'except' are possible, (9). Although a full account of this pattern is beyond the scope of this paper (see Pérez-Jiménez and Moreno-

Quibén 2012 and Soltan 2016 for analyses), the presence of two exceptions suggests an underlying clause as they are unlikely to form any kind of sub-clausal constituent that 'except' would select.

(9) Nandihy daholo tamin' ny zazavavy rehetra ny zazalahy,
danced all PREP DET girl all DET boy
afa-tsy **Rabe** ***tamin- dRasoa***
except Rabe PREP- Rasoa
'Every boy danced with every girl, except Rabe with Rasoa.'

3.4 Principle B

Finally, the data below show that exceptions evidence Principle B effects, which require that a pronoun be free in its binding domain (Chomsky 1981). (10a) shows that DPs constitute a separate binding domain for Principle B in Malagasy. The pronoun inside the bracketed DP satisfies Principle B, even though it is c-commanded by the coindexed subject, because the two are not in the same binding domain. This is true for connected exceptives as well, (10b), where the QP modifier contains a pronoun that can be coindexed with the subject.

(10) a. Nanoratra [boky momba $azy_{R,k}]_{DP}$ $Rabe_R$
wrote book about 3SG.ACC Rabe
'Rabe wrote a book about him(self).'
b. Tsy nanakiana [n'iza n'iza afa-tsy $izy_{R,k}]_{DP}$ $Rabe_R$
NEG criticized anyone except 3SG Rabe
'Rabe didn't criticize anyone, except him(self).'

In free exceptives, in contrast, a pronominal exception cannot be coindexed with the matrix subject, (11). This difference follows if the exception contains missing clausal structure, which would be spelled out as in (12). The example constitutes a Strong Crossover violation, or a Principle B violation under reconstruction.

(11) Tsy nanakiana n'iza n'iza $Rabe_R$ *afa-tsy* **$izy_{??R,k}$**
NEG criticized anyone Rabe except 3SG
'Rabe didn't criticize anyone, except him/??himself.'

(12) **$Izy_{??R,k}$** no kianin- $dRabe_R$
3SG FOC criticize.PASS Rabe
'It's him/??himself that Rabe criticized.'

3.5 Derivation

I conclude that Malagasy free exceptives show evidence of hidden clausal structure in the exception. In Potsdam 2018, I argue that the missing clause is not an ordinary VOS structure but a cleft. Clefts in Malagasy are used for *wh*-questions and focus. An XP is fronted followed by the focus particle *no* 'FOC' and

then the remainder of the clause minus the focused element (Keenan 1976, Paul 2001, Law 2007). (13) illustrates a VOS clause and (14) are corresponding clefts.

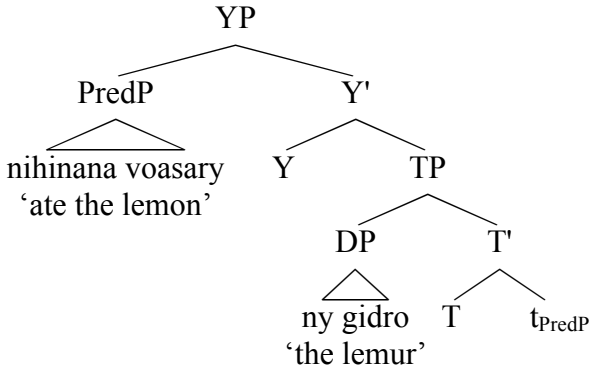
(13) Nihinana voasary ny gidro
ate lemon DET lemur
'The lemur ate the lemon.'

(14) a. Inona no nihinana voasary?
what FOC ate lemon
'What ate the lemon?'
b. Ny gidro no nihinana voasary
DET lemur FOC ate lemon
'It's the lemur that ate the lemon.'

There is general agreement in the literature (Paul 2001, Potsdam 2006, Law 2007) that the fronted element in a cleft is (part of) the matrix predicate, bringing the focus construction in line with the language's predicate-initial nature.

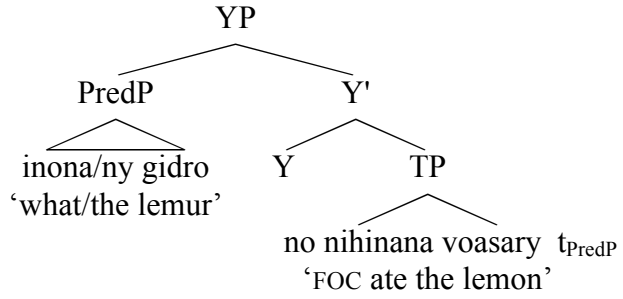
I assume that VOS clauses have the structure in (15). Predicate-initial word order is derived by fronting of the predicate to a high left-peripheral position (Rackowski & Travis 2000, Pearson 2001). The clause-final subject is in spec,TP.

(15)



Clefts have a similar predicate-fronting derivation, although I remain neutral on the structure of the non-predicate material inside TP:

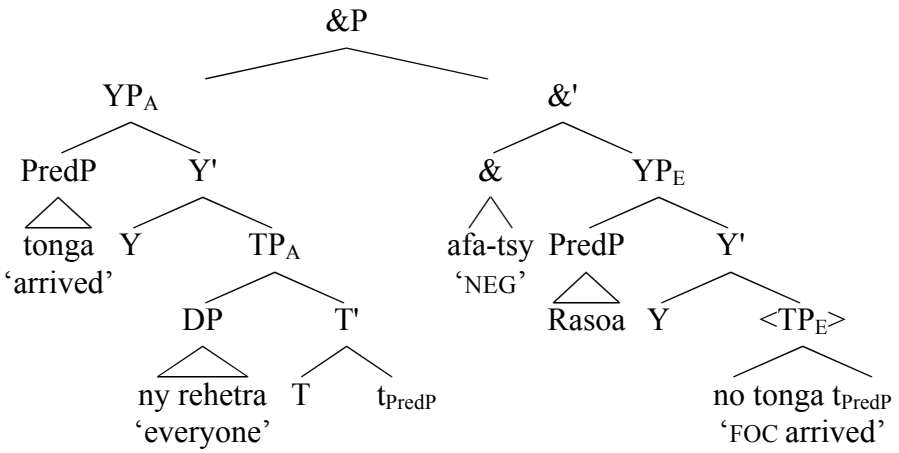
(16)



With this background on Malagasy clause structure, the tree in (18) represents the Spell Out representation of the free exceptive in (17).

(17) Tonga ny rehetra omaly afa-tsy Rasoa
arrived DET all yesterday except Rasoa
'Everyone arrived yesterday except Rasoa.'

(18)

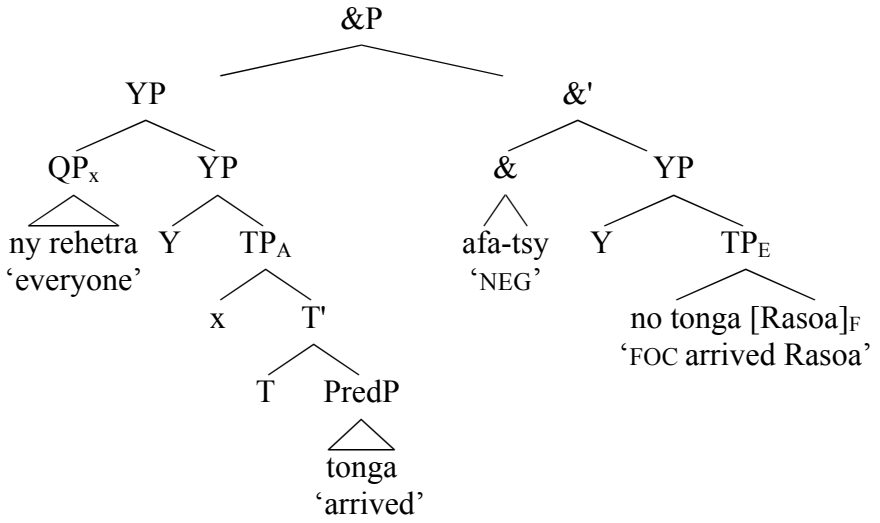


I assume that 'except' is a coordinating conjunction that coordinates the main clause, YP_A, and the exceptive clause, YP_E (Soltan 2016 and references therein). The exception particle *afa-tsy* 'except' is decomposed into *afa* (< *afaka* 'free from') and a negative head, *tsy* 'NEG', which is the clausal negator in Malagasy. This captures the observation that the exceptive clause and the main clause have opposite polarity, (19). *Tsy* 'NEG' triggers polarity reversal while still allowing the antecedent and elided TPs to be of the same polarity, because the negation is outside of the elided TP.

(19) *Polarity Generalization* (after García Álvarez 2008:129)
The propositions expressed in the main clause and exceptive clause must have opposite polarity

The exceptive clause is a cleft in which the exception, *Rasoa*, is the cleft predicate. Ellipsis is licensed by semantic identity, which is calculated over the Logical Form (LF) below. This LF is derived from the Spell Out in (18) as follows: PredP reconstructs back into TP (Massam 2001, Potsdam 2007, thus the fronted predicate is not shown), the restricted QP undergoes Quantifier Raising, leaving behind a variable, and the exception is focus-marked.

(20)



Ellipsis deletes the bracketed TP_E in the exceptive clause in (18) under semantic identity with the antecedent TP_A (Merchant 2001), licensed by Merchant's Focus Condition on TP Ellipsis given in (21), along with relevant definitions in (22) and (23).

(21) *Focus Condition on TP ellipsis* (Merchant 2001:26)
A TP E can be deleted only if E is e-GIVEN

(22) *e-GIVENness* (Merchant 2001:26)
An expression E counts as e-GIVEN iff E has a salient antecedent A and, modulo ∃-type shifting,
i. A entails F-closure(E), and
ii. E entails F-closure(A)

(23) *F-closure(X)* is the result of replacing focus-marked parts of X with ∃-bound variables of the appropriate type

That the Focus Condition is satisfied is demonstrated in (24).

(24) a. ⟦A⟧ = ⟦everyone arrived⟧ = ∀x[arrived(x)]
b. F-closure(⟦A⟧) = ∃x[arrived(x)]
c. ⟦E⟧ = ⟦Rasoa arrived⟧ = arrived(Rasoa)
d. F-closure(⟦E⟧) = ∃x[arrived(x)]

The derivation is almost identical to that which I have independently proposed for Malagasy sluicing (Potsdam 2007). Although there are non-trivial details to work out (see Potsdam 2018), I would like to instead consider, and reject, two non-ellipsis alternatives. With the ellipsis analysis on firmer ground, future work can address the derivational specifics.

4 Alternative 1: Quantifier Raising

The first non-clausal analysis that I will consider comes from Reinhart 1991. That work proposes that the exceptive phrase is base-generated in a clause-external position and the restricted QP undergoes covert Quantifier Raising (QR) at LF to adjoin to the exceptive phrase. This is schematized in (25). Reinhart 1991 proposes that a constituent consisting of the restricted QP and the exceptive phrase must be formed at LF; otherwise, the structure is uninterpretable. The following subsections present a range of arguments against this proposal, some from Hoeksema 1995.

Quantifier Raising

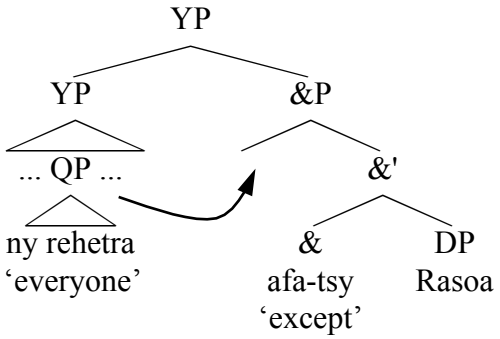
(25) Tonga **[ny rehetra]** omaly [**[ny rehetra]** [afa-tsy Rasoa]]
arrive DET all yesterday DET all except Rasoa
'Everyone arrived yesterday, except Rasoa.'

4.1 Illicit derivation

The first argument against the QR analysis is a theory-internal one: the posited movement does not obey the Proper Binding Condition (Fiengo 1977), which requires that traces be bound. May 1985 argued that LF traces are also subject to the PBC.

The structural derivation for (25) is shown below. I assume that 'except' is a coordinating conjunction whose projection is adjoined to the main clause. The restricted QP moves into the position of the first conjunct. This is an updated structure based on Reinhart 1991:(23a)). As can be seen, this derivation violates the PBC, as the trace of the QP will not be bound.

(26)



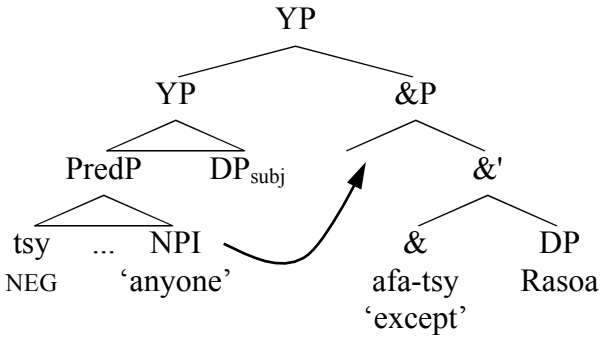
4.2 Negative polarity items

Ignoring the theory-internal concern, there are empirical reasons to reject the QR analysis. There are some quantificational elements that do not undergo QR, namely negative polarity items (NPIs), but are acceptable in free exceptives (Hoeksema 1995):

(27) Tsy nandoka **n'iza n'iza** Rabe afa-tsy Rasoa
NEG praised anyone Rabe except Rasoa
'Rabe didn't praise anyone, except Rasoa.'

I assume, with Merchant 2000 and other works, that NPIs must be in the scope of negation at LF. QRing the NPI to merge with the exceptive phrase as shown in (28) would place it outside of its licenser. Not QRing the NPI to the exceptive phrase leaves the structure uninterpretable.

(28)



Independent work on NPIs in Malagasy (Paul 2005) shows that negation does not scope over the subject in the main clause, (29), thus it clearly would not scope over the NPI after it has moved to the exceptive phrase.

(29) *Tsy marary n'iza n'iza
NEG sick anyone
('*Anyone isn't sick.') (Paul 2005:(13b))

4.3 Definite antecedents

One might think that free exceptives like (30) in which the antecedent is a definite DP argue against QR because definite DPs are not quantificational. However, it is generally accepted that definite DPs can optionally undergo QR (Heim and Kratzer 1998).

(30) Nandevilevy ireo ankizy aho afa-tsy Rasoa
scolded DEM children 1SG except Rasoa
'I scolded those children, except Rasoa.'

Instead, we need a definite DP that cannot QR. Harley 2002 argues that QR of a definite DP is unavailable if QR would result in a Weak Crossover (WCO) violation. The bolded definite DP in (31) cannot QR because it would cross over the coindexed pronominal possessor in the subject.

(31) Mandoka **ireo** **zanany** foana ny reni-ny
praise DEM offspring always DET mother-3
'Their$_i$ mother always praises those children$_i$.'

Such un-QR-able definite DPs can nonetheless license an exceptive, (32). The QR analysis cannot be correct if QR is unavailable to the restricted QP.

(32) Mandoka ireo zanany ny reni-ny afa-tsy i Koto
praise DEM offspring DET mother-3 except Koto
'Their$_i$ mother always praises those children$_i$, except Koto.'

4.4 Inverse linking

Another argument against QR comes from the Inverse Linking phenomenon illustrated in (33).[1]

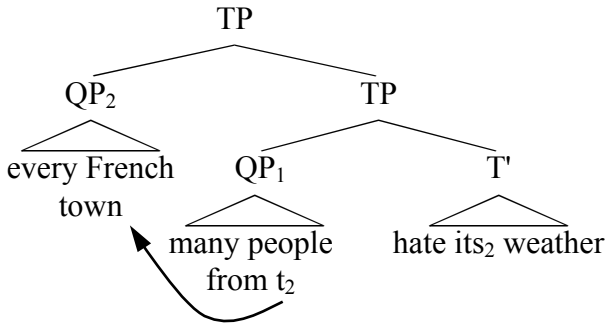
(33) Ny olona maro tamin' ny tanana frantsay rehetra
DET person many PREP DET town French all
dia mankahala ny toetrandro-ny
TOP hate DET weather-3SG
'Many people in every French town$_i$ hate its$_i$ weather.'
"Every French town is such that many people in it hate its weather"

The patterns are the same for the English data, so I illustrate with English trees for simplicity. The structure of an inverse linking example is schematized in (34) and the interpretation is such that QP_2 scopes over QP_1 and binds a pronoun outside of QP_1.

(34) $[_{TP}\ [_{QP1}\ \ldots\ [_{QP2}\ \ldots\ ]]\ \ldots\ \text{pronoun}_2]$

A widely offered analysis since May 1977 is that QP_2 undergoes QR out of QP_1 and adjoins to a clausal node where it can bind the pronoun and scope over QP_1, (35). Sauerland 2005 argues that this is the correct analysis and, as a consequence, a DP subject is not an island for QR.

(35)



Given this picture, QP_2 in an inverse linking configuration should license a free exceptive since QR can take place from this position, but it does not:

[1] The subject here and below is fronted via topicalization, yielding SVO word order. This is sometimes preferable when the subject is heavy. It does not affect the point of the examples.

(36) ??Ny olona maro tamin' ny tanana frantsay rehetra
DET person many PREP DET town French all
dia mankahala ny toetrandro-ny, afa-tsy Nice
TOP hate DET weather-3SG except Nice
('*Many people in every French town hate its weather, except Nice.')

It is worth noting that the corresponding connected exceptive is grammatical:

(37) Ny olona maro tamin' ny tanana frantsay rehetra
DET person many PREP DET town French all
afa-tsy Nice dia mankahala ny toetrandro-ny
except Nice TOP hate DET weather-3SG
'Many people in every French town except Nice hate its weather.'

On the reduced clause analysis from section 3, (36) is a Subject Island violation in the missing clause, (38). As we will see below in section 6, exceptives are island sensitive.

(38) *Many people in every French town hate its weather,
except.NEG Nice$_2$ <[$_S$ [many people in ~~Nice~~] hate its$_2$ weather]>

4.5 Implicit antecedents

A final argument against the QR analysis comes from implicit antecedents. Exceptives with implicit antecedents provide no QP which can move to the exceptive phrase to license it. Such sentences should be uninterpretable:

(39) Nanao ny enti-mody Rabe, **afa-tsy** **omaly**
did DET homework Rabe except yesterday
'Rabe did the homework, except yesterday.'

I conclude that the acceptability of free exceptives cannot be dependent upon scoping the restricted QP to the exceptive phrase at LF.

5 Alternative 2: Extraposition

A second, non-clausal alternative analysis of exceptives is that free exceptives are derived from connected exceptives via extraposition. The exceptive phrase originates as a modifier of the restricted QP and extraposes to a right-peripheral position, as schematized in (40). In other words, free exceptives are derived from connected exceptives via Extraposition from NP.

Extraposition from NP

(40) Tonga [ny rehetra **[~~afa-tsy Rasoa~~]**] omaly **[afa-tsy Rasoa]**
arrived DET all except Rasoa yesterday except Rasoa
'Everyone arrived yesterday, except Rasoa.'

Despite the availability of Extraposition from NP in Malagasy, (41), I present evidence against this analysis below. Reinhart 1991:364-365 provides further arguments based on English.

(41) a. Mahalala ohabolana **momba ny alika** aho
know proverb about DET dog 1SG
b. Mahalala ohabolana aho **momba ny alika**
know proverb 1SG about DET dog
'I knows proverbs about dogs.'

5.1 Implicit antecedents

Previous examples with implicit antecedents show that not all free exceptives cannot be derived from connected exceptives. In such examples, there is no QP from which the exceptive phrase can originate.

(42) Nanao ny enti-mody (***afa-tsy omaly**) Rabe (**afa-tsy omaly**)
did DET homework except yesterday Rabe except yesterday
'Rabe did the homework, except yesterday.'

5.2 Principle B

The earlier Principle B data further show that free exceptives cannot be derived from connected exceptives. The data repeated below show that pronominal exceptions can corefer with the subject in a connected exceptive but not in a free exceptive.

(43) a. Tsy nanakiana [n'iza n'iza afa-tsy $izy_{R,k}$] $Rabe_R$
NEG criticized anyone except 3SG Rabe
'Rabe didn't criticize anyone except him(self).'
b. Tsy nanakiana n'iza n'iza $Rabe_R$ [afa-tsy $izy_{??R,k}$]
NEG criticized anyone Rabe except 3SG
'Rabe didn't criticize anyone, except him/??himself.'

(44) demonstrates that extraposed phrases in Malagasy obligatorily reconstruct for Binding Theory purposes (Potsdam and Edmiston 2016), making this contrast unexpected. If (43b) were derived from (43a), the judgments should be the same.

(44) *Nampahatsiahy azy$_R$ (momba ny fivorian-dRabe$_R$) aho
reminded 3SG.ACC about DET meeting-Rabe 1SG
(momba ny fivorian-dRabe$_R$)
about DET meeting-Rabe
('*I reminded him$_R$ about Rabe$_R$'s meeting')

5.3 Coordination

Finally, the coordination contrast repeated in (45) has no explanation. The connected exceptive does not allow the clausal coordinator *ary* but it becomes acceptable in the free exceptive.

(45) Niteny tamin' ny mpampianatra rehetra
spoke PREP DET teacher all
(**afa-tsy tami-ko sy/*ary tamin-dRasoa**) Rabe
except PREP-1SG and PREP Rasoa Rabe
(**afa-tsy tami-ko sy/ary tamin-dRasoa**)
except PREP-1SG and PREP Rasoa
'Rabe spoke with all the teachers except with me and with Rasoa.'

I conclude that free exceptives cannot be derived from connected exceptives via extraposition of the exceptive phrase. The two must have distinct derivations.

6 Conclusions and implications

This paper has argued that free exceptives in Malagasy are not derived by extraposition from connected exceptives nor by scoping the restricted QP to the exceptive phrase at LF. Rather, free exceptives in Malagasy are derived by clausal ellipsis, echoing proposes for French (O'Neill 2011), Spanish (Pérez-Jiménez & Moreno-Quibén 2012), and Egyptian Arabic (Soltan 2016).

If this conclusion is correct, exceptives have implications for ellipsis theorizing. They can provide more information about the missing structure in elided clauses. For example, I have argued elsewhere (Potsdam 2018) that the missing clause in Malagasy exceptives is not a neutral VOS clause but a cleft.

Exceptives can equally inform the debate regarding the form of the identity requirement that holds between an elided clause and its antecedent.

Finally, exceptives will provide further clues regarding the inconsistent amelioriation of islands violations under ellipsis (Ross 1969, Merchant 2001, 2004, 2008, Chung, Ladusaw, & McCloskey 1995, Griffiths & Lipták 2014, others). While sluicing and non-contrastive fragments show island repair under ellipsis, contrast sluicing and contrast fragments do not (Griffiths and Lipták 2014). As was first noted in Reinhart 1991, free exceptives are island sensitive in the sense that the restricted QP cannot be inside an island:

(46) a. *Nihaona tamin' ny vehivavy [niantra ny olona rehetra]
met PREP DET woman pity DET person all
aho afa-tsy Rabe
1SG except Rabe
('I met the woman who had compassion for everyone, except Rabe.')
b. *Nalahelo [tamin' ny rehetra nandeha] aho,
sad PREP DET all went 1SG
afa-tsy ny ankizy
except DET kids
('I was sad when everyone left, except the children.')

The same lack of amelioration shows up in English:

(47) a. *I sold my car [that everyone likes] on eBay, except my mother.
b. *I will be happy [if everyone leaves], except my dog.

Under a clausal ellipsis analysis, the interpretation of these facts is that exceptive ellipsis does not repair islands either. I leave it for future work to determine the source of variable island repair; however, exceptives potentially provide another piece to the puzzle.

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