Anti-Locality from the Top Down

Much work has made use of a ban on movement that is too short --- spec-to-spec anti-locality --- barring movement from a specifier position to the next specifier up. While analyses making use of this ban are empirically successful, questions remain about how the ban is to be implemented formally. In this talk, I suggest that a top-down syntactic derivation like that proposed by Philips (1996) and Richards (1999), augmented by a ban on merging the same element twice within a given maximal projection like that proposed by Abels (2002) allows us to derive many of the effects of a spec-to-spec anti-locality constraint. I show how this allows us to understand that-trace effects and anti-that-trace effects, certain differences between Japanese and Korean with respect to long scrambling of a subject, and certain morphological signatures of agent extraction in Mayan languages, and discuss loose ends and avenues for future inquiry.