

Absolute vs. relative locality

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Traditionally, syntactic theory distinguishes two types of locality: absolute locality and relative locality. Absolute locality, going back to Ross' (1967) strong islands, Huang's (1985) Constraint on Domain Extraction and Chomsky's (1986) Barriers, involves domains that are opaque for extraction, such as sentential subjects or adjuncts. In more recent theories, absolute locality is often implemented in terms of phasality (most notably, Chomsky 2001). Relative locality (going back to Rizzi's 1990 Relativized Minimality) states that certain domains are not opaque by themselves but that particular syntactic dependencies cannot apply across interveners of the relevant kind. This kind of locality is relative because it only blocks certain dependencies from applying across clauses and not all dependencies.

Recently, several attempts have been made to reduce absolute locality to relative locality, for instance concerning adjunction (Truswell et al. 2022) or vP-phasality (Rackowski & Richards 2005, and Keine & Zeijlstra 2021 who follow ideas by Branan and Erlewine 2021). In this paper, I propose an attempt to reduce the crown jewel of absolute locality, the alleged phasality of CPs, to Relative Minimality.