

Constraining deletion: Discontinuous noun phrases in Iquito

It is well-known that many languages allow for split NP constructions in which a moved noun phrase has a discontinuous realization. There is an ongoing debate in the literature about the best way to analyze such constructions (e.g. sub-extraction, remnant movement, distributed deletion). In this talk, we discuss discontinuous noun phrase constructions in the Zaparoan language Iquito (spoken in Peru) and argue that the complex patterns of discontinuous realization we find are best accounted for by deletion applying in a scattered fashion across copies generated by movement (e.g. Fanselow & Cavar 2002). While distributed deletion is a powerful mechanism, we make a novel proposal about how to constraint it based on the internal configuration of the noun phrase. We will show that this straightforwardly accounts for an otherwise puzzling generalization about the amount of material realized in the higher copy of the dependency and also allows us to provide a unified account of clause-level and NP-level word order in the language.