On the Time-Course of Discourse Linking: Experiments with Turkish Wh-in-Situ Islands

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**Under the D-Linking Rubric**

As originally presented, D-linking (Pesetsky 1997, 2000) licenses which phrases in situ are allowed to maintain linkages with the matrix.

**What are all things “D-Linking” reflective of the same cognitive mechanism?**

- *You read which book?* (only acceptable as “reprise”)
- *When did you read which book?*

The term has since been applied to the discourse-licensed violation of island constraints in a number of constructions. What does D-linking mean?

- A syntactic feature?
- Requires pragmatic accommodation?
- Facilitates pragmatic accommodation?

To what extent do the cognitive mechanisms involved in establishing discourse linkage vary across phenomena grouped under the D-linking rubric?

**Study:** Compare in situ which to reprise which questions (Grüger & Sag 2000)

- A: “I went out with Pat last night?” B: “You went out with who?”

Turkish — canonical wh-in-situ

Complex noun phrase (CNP) constraint applies to adjuncts (b) but not arguments (a):

(a) Cem-∅ [kim-i̇n beğen-dil-i̇] ev-i̇
Cem now who-GEN like-NOM POSS house-ACC bought-PAST

Cem-∅ ALL-gen when write-NOM POSS letter-ACC read-PAST

Combined, reprise+which questions become as acceptable as the uncontroverted grammatical forms

**Example Paradigm**

- **Variant**
  - Baseline (o/o)
  - Adjunct
  - Which
  - Reprise
  - Reprise+Which

- **Which**
  - Göksel, Eymen’in pubbet ettiği işi durdurduğu bir kavgayı başlattı.
  - Göksel started a fight that Eymen stopped because he hates violence.

- **Reprise**
  - “Göksel, Eymen’in nıye durdurduğu kavgayı başlattı?”
  - “Why did Eymen stop the fight?”
  - “Fully OK, unacceptable”

**Meaning**

- English Effect:
  - Greater familiarity with English yields higher ratings.
  - Participant proficiency in English
  - Mean rating by English proficiency

**Regression Modeling**

- Confirms that the reprise and which effects are each significant and also independent (no interaction) while controlling for other factors.

**Confluence**

While each D-linked form facilitates linkage to preceding discourse, it may be that readers are able to recognize and establish such links at different points in incrementally processing sentential structure—an extension of Frazier and Clifton’s (2002) wh-word finding to encompass other “D-Linked” elements, here reprise forms.

A possible interpretation is that each variant involves the same kind of pragmatic accommodation—consistent with handling by the same cognitive mechanisms—with enabling context “consumed” as soon as possible.

**Conclusion**

**Selected References**


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