

# How to survive an † MLC violation

† minimal link condition

---

Lei Liu

Leipzig University

Cyclop retreat 2024 Spring

slides updated on May 30, 2024

**The presentation in one sentence:**

## **The presentation in one sentence:**

- Languages exhibiting MLC violations can be modeled using the constraint ranking:

ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK

# Outline

---

1. Introduction
2. MLC violations and how to survive them
  - Nez Perce
  - Luganda
  - Niuean
3. Conclusion

# Introduction

---

- Other names of the Minimal Link Condition:
  - *Attract closest*
  - *Shortest move*
- Shortest
  - If a head H attracts an element of category X, move the element of category X that H c-commands and that is not c-commanded or dominated by another element of category X that is also c-commanded by H.

Branan (2022)

- Shortest
  - If a head H attracts an element of category X, move the element of category X that H c-commands and that is not c-commanded or dominated by another element of category X that is also c-commanded by H.
- MLC explains:

Branan (2022)



- Shortest

- If a head H attracts an element of category X, move the element of category X that H c-commands and that is not c-commanded or dominated by another element of category X that is also c-commanded by H.

Branan (2022)

- MLC explains:

- (1) Superiority

- a. I wonder who ate what
- b. \*I wonder what who ate

- Shortest

- If a head H attracts an element of category X, move the element of category X that H c-commands and that is not c-commanded or dominated by another element of category X that is also c-commanded by H.

Branan (2022)

- MLC explains:

- (1) Superiority

- a. I wonder who ate what
- b. \*I wonder what who ate

- (2) Asymmetry in passives

- a. John was given the book
- b. \*The book was given John

## **MLC violations** and how to survive them

---

## MLC violations in Nez Perce

- (3) Raising to ergative Deal (2019)

Taamsas-nim pee-'leese-nuu- $\emptyset$ -ye Harold-ne  
Taamsas-ERG 3/3-make.noise-APPL-P-REM.PAST Harold-ACC

'Taamsas made noise at Harold.'

## MLC violations in Nez Perce

- (3) Raising to ergative Deal (2019)

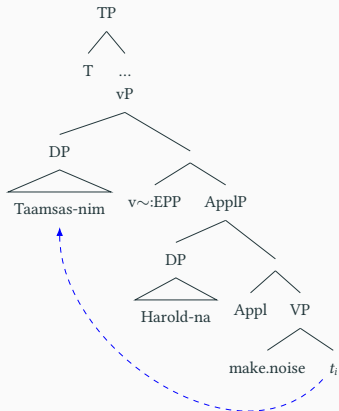
Taamsas-nim pee-'leese-nuu- $\emptyset$ -ye Harold-ne  
Taamsas-ERG 3/3-make.noise-APPL-P-REM.PAST Harold-ACC  
'Taamsas made noise at Harold.'

# MLC violations in Nez Perce

- (3) Raising to ergative Deal (2019)

Taamsas-nim pee-'leese-nuu- $\emptyset$ -ye Harold-ne  
Taamsas-ERG 3/3-make.noise-APPL-P-REM.PAST Harold-ACC  
'Taamsas made noise at Harold.'

- (4)



- Antilocality » MinLink

## MLC violations in Nez Perce

- Antilocality » MinLink
  - ANTILOCALITY: don't land too close



- Antilocality » MinLink


- ANTILOCALITY: don't land too close
  - Generalized spec-to-spec Antilocality Deal (2019) and ref. therein
    - Movement of a phrase from Spec,XP must cross a maximal projection other than XP.
    - Movement from position A to position B crosses C if and only if C dominates A but not B.

- Antilocality » MinLink

- ANTILOCALITY: don't land too close
  - Generalized spec-to-spec Antilocality Deal (2019) and ref. therein
    - Movement of a phrase from Spec,XP must cross a maximal projection other than XP.
    - Movement from position A to position B crosses C if and only if C dominates A but not B.
- MINLINK: don't attract too far

- Antilocality » MinLink

- ANTILOCALITY: don't land too close
  - Generalized spec-to-spec Antilocality Deal (2019) and ref. therein  
Movement of a phrase from Spec,XP must cross a maximal projection other than XP.  
Movement from position A to position B crosses C if and only if C dominates A but not B.
- MINLINK: don't attract too far

[...v[...ACC[...ERG]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [ACC <sub>i</sub> ...v[...t <sub>i</sub> [...ERG]]]	*!	
 b. [ERG <sub>i</sub> ...v[...ACC[...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		*

(5) Symmetry in ditransitive passive Branan (2022)

- a. Abaana<sub>i</sub> ba-a-w-ebw'  $t_i$  ekitabo  
2.child 2-pst-give-pass 7.book  
'The children were given the book.'
- b. Ekitabo<sub>i</sub> ky-a-w-ebw' abaana  $t_i$   
7.book 7-pst-give-pass 2.child  
'The book was give to the children.'

(5) Symmetry in ditransitive passive Branan (2022)

- a. Abaana<sub>i</sub> ba-a-w-ebw' t<sub>i</sub> ekitabo  
2.child 2-pst-give-pass 7.book  
'The children were given the book.'
- b. Ekitabo<sub>i</sub> ky-a-w-ebw' abaana t<sub>i</sub>  
7.book 7-pst-give-pass 2.child  
'The book was give to the children.'

## Optionality

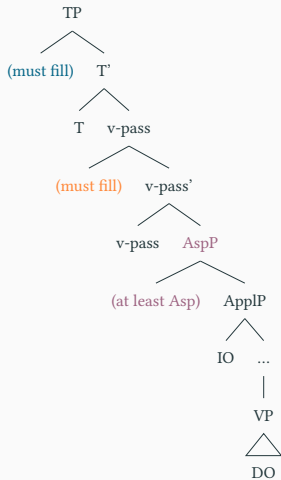
(5) Symmetry in ditransitive passive Branan (2022)

- a. Abaana<sub>i</sub> ba-a-w-ebw'  $t_i$  ekitabo  
2.child 2-pst-give-pass 7.book  
'The children were given the book.'
- b. Ekitabo<sub>i</sub> ky-a-w-ebw' abaana  $t_i$   
7.book 7-pst-give-pass 2.child  
'The book was give to the children.'

Optionality?

# MLC violations in Luganda

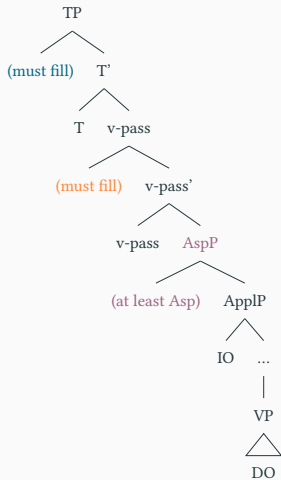
(6) Branan (2022)



# MLC violations in Luganda

(6) Branan (2022)

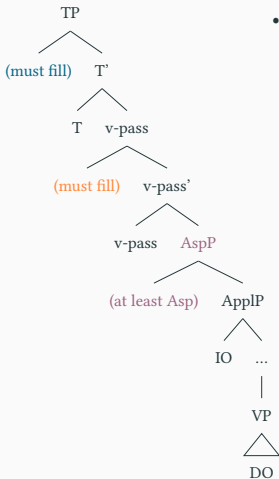
- must fill TP spec: EPP subject





# MLC violations in Luganda

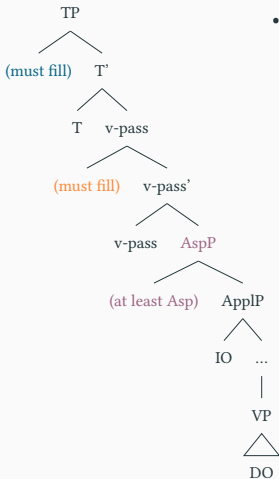
(6) Branan (2022)



- **must fill TP spec:** EPP subject
- **must fill v-pass spec:** EPP v-pass

# MLC violations in Luganda

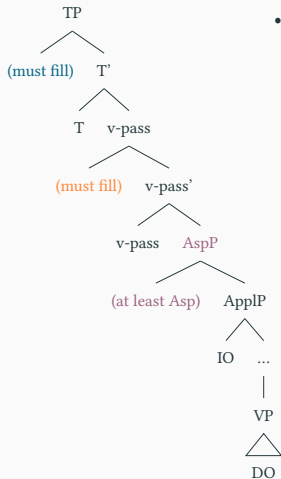
(6) Branan (2022)



- **must fill TP spec:** EPP subject
- **must fill v-pass spec:** EPP v-pass
  - $(\emptyset)$ Ext.Ag

# MLC violations in Luganda

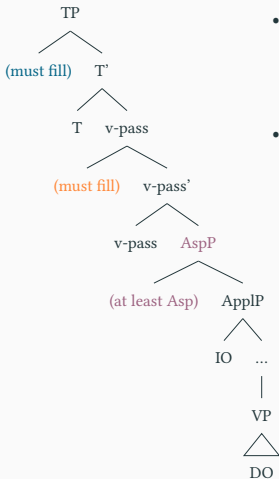
(6) Branan (2022)



- **must fill TP spec:** EPP subject
- **must fill v-pass spec:** EPP v-pass
  - $(\emptyset)$ Ext.Ag
  - Appl argument

# MLC violations in Luganda

(6) Branan (2022)



- **must fill TP spec:** EPP subject
- **must fill v-pass spec:** EPP v-pass
  - $(\emptyset)$ Ext.Ag
  - Appl argument
- **at least an AspP intervene:** antilocality

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK

## MLC violations in Luganda

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK
- $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag

# MLC violations in Luganda

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK
- $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag

[...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		*!
☞ b. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]		

# MLC violations in Luganda

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK
- $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag

[...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		*!
☞ b. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]		
[...v-pass – [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass t <sub>i</sub> [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]	*!	
☞ b. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass IO <sub>j</sub> [...t <sub>j</sub> [...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		



# MLC violations in Luganda

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK
- $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag

[...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		*!
☞ b. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]		
[...v-pass – [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass t <sub>i</sub> [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]	*!	
☞ b. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass IO <sub>j</sub> [...t <sub>j</sub> [...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		

- ✓ Different interpretation

# MLC violations in Luganda



- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK
- $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag

[...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		*!
☞ b. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]		
[...v-pass – [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass t <sub>i</sub> [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]	*!	
☞ b. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass IO <sub>j</sub> [...t <sub>j</sub> [...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		

- ✓ Different interpretation (supported with agent-oriented adverbs Branan 2022)

# MLC violations in Luganda

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK
- $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag

[...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...IO[...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		*!
 b. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass $\emptyset$ Ext.Ag [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]		
[...v-pass – [...IO[...DO]]]	ANTILOCALITY	MINLINK
a. [IO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass t <sub>i</sub> [...t <sub>i</sub> [...DO]]]	*!	
 b. [DO <sub>i</sub> [...v-pass IO <sub>j</sub> [...t <sub>j</sub> [...t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		

- ✓ Different interpretation (supported with agent-oriented adverbs Branan 2022)
- ✗ Optionality

(7) Equidistance for raising Longenbaugh and Polinsky (2018)

a. *baseline*

To maeke [ke lagomatai he ekekafo a Sione]  
FUT possible SBJ help      ERG doctor ABS Sione

‘It is possible the doctor can help Sione.’

(7) Equidistance for raising Longenbaugh and Polinsky (2018)

a. *baseline*

To maeke [ke lagomatai he ekekafo a Sione]  
FUT possible SBJ help           ERG doctor   ABS Sione  
'It is possible the doctor can help Sione.'

- b. To maeke a Sione<sub>i</sub> [ke lagomatai he ekekafo *t<sub>i</sub>*]  
FUT possible ABS Sione SBJ help           ERG doctor  
'The doctor can help Sione.'

(7) Equidistance for raising Longenbaugh and Polinsky (2018)

a. *baseline*

To maeke [ke lagomatai he ekekafo a Sione]  
FUT possible SBJ help           ERG doctor ABS Sione

‘It is possible the doctor can help Sione.’

b. To maeke a Sione<sub>i</sub> [ke lagomatai he ekekafo *t<sub>i</sub>*]

FUT possible ABS Sione SBJ help           ERG doctor

‘The doctor can help Sione.’

c. To maeke e ekekafo<sub>i</sub> [ke lagomatai *t<sub>i</sub>* a Sione]

FUT possible ABS Doctor SBJ help           ABS Sione

‘The doctor can help Sione.’

fut = future; sbj = subjunctive!!

## MLC violations in Niuean

- FAITH-ERG = MINLINK

## MLC violations in Niuean

- FAITH-ERG = MINLINK
  - FAITH-ERG: keep ergative case



## MLC violations in Niuean

- FAITH-ERG = MINLINK
  - FAITH-ERG: keep ergative case

[v-raising [v erg-agent abs-patient]]]	FAITH-ERG	MINLINK
a. [v abs-patient <sub>i</sub> [v erg-agent t <sub>i</sub> ]]]		*
b. [v abs-agent <sub>i</sub> [v t <sub>i</sub> abs-patient ]]	*	

# Conclusion

---

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK models languages exhibiting MLC violations

## Conclusion

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK models languages exhibiting MLC violations
- Next:

## Conclusion

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK models languages exhibiting MLC violations
- Next:
  - Deep dive into the constraints ( $EPP_{vpass}$ , FAITH-ERG,...)

## Conclusion

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK models languages exhibiting MLC violations
- Next:
  - Deep dive into the constraints ( $EPP_{vpass}$ , FAITH-ERG,...)
  - MLC as *Shortest Move Constraint* (SMC) in MGs

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK models languages exhibiting MLC violations
- Next:
  - Deep dive into the constraints ( $EPP_{vpass}$ , FAITH-ERG,...)
  - MLC as *Shortest Move Constraint* (SMC) in MGs
    - SMC: the paring of movement licensor and licensee features is unique in any well-formed derivation (Stanojević and Stabler 2018)

- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK models languages exhibiting MLC violations
- Next:
  - Deep dive into the constraints ( $EPP_{vpass}$ , FAITH-ERG,...)
  - MLC as *Shortest Move Constraint* (SMC) in MGs
    - SMC: the pairing of movement licenser and licensee features is unique in any well-formed derivation (Stanojević and Stabler 2018)
    - => no violation is possible; all violations are possible



- ANTILOCALITY » MINLINK models languages exhibiting MLC violations
- Next:
  - Deep dive into the constraints ( $EPP_{vpass}$ , FAITH-ERG,...)
  - MLC as *Shortest Move Constraint* (SMC) in MGs
    - SMC: the pairing of movement licenser and licensee features is unique in any well-formed derivation (Stanojević and Stabler 2018)
    - => no violation is possible; all violations are possible
    - ++ constraints and features are interchangeable in Minimalist syntax (Graf 2017)

Thank you!

## References

---

- Branan, K. (2022). Locality and antilocality: The logic of conflicting requirements. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 54(1):1–38.
- Deal, A. R. (2019). Raising to ergative: Remarks on applicatives of unaccusatives. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 50(2):388–415.
- Graf, T. (2017). A computational guide to the dichotomy of features and constraints. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics*, 2(1).
- Longenbaugh, N. and Polinsky, M. (2018). Equidistance returns. *The Linguistic Review*, 35(3):413–461.
- Stanojević, M. and Stabler, E. (2018). A sound and complete left-corner parsing for minimalist grammars. In *Proceedings of the Eight Workshop on Cognitive Aspects of Computational Language Learning and Processing*, pages 65–74.