

# On the nature of the *that*-trace effect: insights from Igbo

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The *that*-trace effect (TTE, Perlmutter 1968) is a subject / non-subject extraction asymmetry attested in various unrelated languages. In languages with the TTE, long subject extraction requires morpho-phonological or syntactic repairs, e.g., the deletion or reduction of the complementizer, whereas non-subject extraction has no such effect. Despite intensive research on the topic, it is still unclear what causes the effect and whether it is a uniform phenomenon across languages (see Pesetsky 2017), also because in-depth studies of the TTE are available only for a few languages.

In this talk we will present novel data from Igbo (Benue-Kwa, Nigeria) to shed light on the nature of the TTE. The grammatical profile of Igbo is such that it allows us to apply some instructive diagnostics that could not be applied to other languages with the TTE. We argue for the following:

1. Based on language-internal variation involving the distribution of resumptive pronouns and the syntax of the dependencies in which they surface, we will show that the TTE has a syntactic cause (and is not a surface/PF-phenomenon) in Igbo.
2. We will present novel data that suggest an anti-locality-based approach to the TTE in Igbo. The data come from an area that has not been discussed in the anti-locality literature on the TTE: subextraction from subjects (which are not islands in Igbo).

## References

- Perlmutter, David M. (1968): Deep and Surface Structure Constraints in Syntax. Phd dissertation, MIT.
- Pesetsky, David (2017): Complementizer-trace effects. *In*: M. Everaert and H. van Riemsdijk, eds, *Blackwell Companion to Syntax, 2nd edition*. Wiley-Blackwell.