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Neglect: Benign in Relative Clauses

To produce LF representations transparently interpretable for binding and scope principles, syntax has been enriched to include a variety of mechanisms or assumptions, including the possibility of Late Merging (Lebeaux, 1991) substantially used since (Fox and Nissenbaum, 1999, Hulsey and Sauerland, 2006, Bhatt and Pancheva, 2004, Takahashi and Hulsey, 2009, Stanton, 2016). While the effects of late merging on these representations are desirable, I will discuss why the availability of the late merge mechanism itself to reach these effects is not. I will instead discuss why current assumptions already justify the existence of selective blindness at the syntax /semantics interface, which I call Neglect, that makes Late Merge unnecessary. To show this, I will discuss some of the extensive literature motivating or using Late Merging, concentrating on the syntax and interpretation of relative clauses (Sauerland and Hulsey, 2006). I will discuss why, even if late merge were available, it could not do the work it is intended to do, which Neglect can handle. And I will discuss why Late merge can't be available anyway because, I will argue, relative clauses should all be derived by promotion (Head raising), which is incompatible with Late Merge.