

Formal/Syntax

What Exactly Intervenes What?

Analyses of intervention effect: A scope-bearing element (e.g. NPI) cannot precede a wh-phrase as in (1a). A wh-phrase must scramble before an NPI to be grammatical as in (1b). Two competing approaches have suggested accounts for the linear constraint, generally called 'intervention effect'. One attributes the unacceptable order to presence of an intervener: the NPI intervenes in association of a wh-phrase with $C_{[+wh]}$ (Beck & Kim 1997, Pesetsky 2000, among others). The other approach characterizes the intervention effect as violation of Linear Crossing Constraint (LCC) (Tanaka 1997, 2003). Tanaka assumes that the Operators of wh-phrases and NPI undergo invisible movements to Spec-CP and Spec-NegP at S-structure, respectively. LCC states that the path of a movement should not cross that of the other as in (2a).


Argument for intervener approach: There is a class of NPIs (henceforth VP-NPIs) which are part of a verb phrase and they need to be licensed by negation as in (3). According to Tanaka (1997), their Operator should move to Spec-NegP. These NPIs, however, can occur before a wh-phrase and does not show intervention effect as in (4b). From the fact that an NPI does not show intervention effect with a wh-phrase despite invisible movement, it follows that the intervention effect shown in (1a) is not due to linear crossing as Tanaka (1997) claims.

A characteristic of VP-NPIs is that they are not engaged in scope ambiguity as in (6), unlike *amuto* 'anybody' as in (5). From the fact that scope-sensitive NPIs show intervention effect, while scope-insensitive ones do not, we can pinpoint what is responsible for the intervention effect--scope interpretation. It is confirmed by the sets of data in which other scope-bearing elements such as *NP-only*, *NP-also* can cause intervention effect in S. Kim (2002), Pesetsky (2000), among others. A (interim) characterization may account for intervention effect, which is similar with the condition in Pesetsky (2000).

Generalized Intervention Effect: Intervention effect is not limited to the wh-phrases. A scope-bearing element like *NP-only* cannot intervene between an NPI and the negation associated with it as in (8). Linebarger's (1985) Immediate Scope Constraint states that an NPI must be in the immediate scope of negation. Wh-phrases and NPIs have in common that they cannot form an independent unit of meaning by themselves. Then, the proposals by Pesetsky and Linebarger state the same idea that two components of a semantic unit should be scopally adjacent: they should not be intervened by a scope-bearing element. I follow the idea for an account of intervention effect and propose (9).

Long-Distance Scrambling of a Wh-phrase: Tanaka (2003) points out that intervener approach cannot explain ungrammatical sentence with long-distance scrambling of a wh-phrase. This problem would disappear if we assume that feature checking between a wh-phrase and $C_{[+wh]}$ takes place derivationally and that LF representation takes care of scope interpretation.

(1) a. ***Amuto mues-ul** sa-ci an-ass-ni? b. **Mues-ul_i amuto t_i** sa-ci an-ass-ni?
 anybody what-ACC buy-NEG-PAST-Q what-ACC_i anybody t_i buy-NEG-PAST-Q

(2) a. *[amuto-t_i mues-t_j Op_i Op_j] b. [mues-t_j amuto-t_i Op_i Op_j]


(3) a. Mary-ka **han-palccak-to** wumciki-ci an-ass-ta.
 NPI NEG

b. * Mary-ka **han-palccak-to** wumciki-ess-ta.

(4) a. **Nuku-ka han-palccak-to** wumciki-ci an-ass-ni?
 Who-NOM one-foot-even move-NEG-PAST-Q ‘Who didn’t move even a foot.’

b. **Han-palccak-to_i nuku-ka t_i** wumciki-ci an-ass-ni?

(5) a. **Mary-man amuketto** sa-ci an-ass-ta. (only>-∃)
 M-only anything buy-NEG-PAST-DEC
 ‘Mary was the only person who didn’t buy anything.’

b. **Amuketto Mary-man** sa-ci an-ass-ta (¬∃>only)
 ‘There was nothing which was bought only by Mary.’

(6) a. **Mary-man UNICEF-e kibukum-ul han-pun-to** nae-ci an-ass-ta. (only>not)
 M-only UNICEF-to donation-ACC one-cent-even give-NEG-PAST-DEC
 ‘Mary was the only person who didn’t donate a red cent to UNICEF.’

b. Kibukum-ul **han-pun-to_i Mary-man UNICEF-e t_i** nae-ci an-ass-ta. (only>not)

(7) A scope-bearing element cannot intervene between a wh-phrase and C_[+wh] associated with it at LF.

(8) a. ***Mary-pakkey computer-to** sa-ci an-ass-ta.
 M-only computer-also buy-NEG-PAST-DEC

b. **Computer-to_i Mary-pakkey t_i** sa-ci an-ass-ta. ‘
 ‘There is an item which only Mary bought and as for, computer only Mary bought it.’

(9) **Scopal Adjacency**: A two-component semantic unit should be scopally adjacent.

(Selected) References

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