

A-bar Interveners in WH Questions

Beck (1996) and Beck & Kim (1997) argued that in-situ WH is not licensed under an intervening quantifier (Q), e.g. *John-man* (Korean) ‘only John’ in (2) on the back side, since the Q induces a barrier to LF WH movement into a scope position (viz. Hagstrom 1998’s “intervention effect”), as the schema in (1) shows.

(1) *[[... WH_i ... [_{Barrier} Q ... [... t_i^{LF} ...]]]]

In Pesetsky (2000), (1) has been modified into a constraint on WH feature movement, rather than on WH phrasal movement, ascribing the intervention effect to the illegitimate separation of the semantic restriction of WH quantification by Q elements in (1) from the moved WH feature.

However, the configuration itself in (1) as well as the feature movement version is too vague a constraint to capture a cross-linguistic variation regarding the Q-interveners: for instance, unlike in German or French, in Korean, sentential negation alone is not enough to be an intervener, but it requires a polarity sensitive item like *amwu-to* (Korean) ‘anyone’ to form an intervening boundary (Hoji 1985 for Japanese, Soh 2005 for Chinese, i.a.). Further, (1) erroneously rules out the cases where non-intervening quantifiers sit in the Q position, such as adverbs of quantification, e.g., *hangsang* ‘always’ (cf. French *toujours* is an intervener). As an alternative to (1), Kim (2001) proposed “focus intervention effect” for Korean WH licensing, but it restricted Q-interveners only to focus phrases including *to*-NPIs (‘even’-based). In parallel to focus items, universal/existential quantifiers (*nwukwu-na/nwukwu-nka* (Korean), *dare-mo/dare-ka* (Japanese) ‘everyone/someone’, etc.) belong to a set of cross-linguistically core interveners. In a nutshell, Q-interveners in Korean (and Japanese) constitute a subset of French interveners (Bošković 1998, Cheng & Rooryck 2000 for French), which consists of focus phrases (‘only’, ‘also’, ‘nothing but’), NPIs (‘anyone’, ‘anything’), and genuine universal/indefinite quantifiers. Interestingly enough, these all have a Q-particle attached to a host phrase. Thus, our puzzle is concerned with the defining property of the subset, i.e. a characteristic that distinguishes the subset from quantifiers in general and what’s so crucial for our analysis is the syntactic position that Q-interveners in Korean occupy in overt syntax: namely, A-bar specifier (Rizzi 1992).

The analysis relies on the following key assumptions: (i) Korean WH-DP decomposes into an indefinite WH and a null operator with Q-force (Watanabe 1992, etc.) (ii) negation, focus (additivity and exhaustivity), distributivity and indefiniteness each projects an additional phrasal boundary like NegP, which blocks antecedent government between a moved null operator and its non-referential variable. That is, Q-particles (affix-like) in Korean, all equally appear in spec position of a functional projection headed by an abstract null head (Koopman 2005, Lee 2004, Sohn 1995, Yoon 2004, etc.). By the Mirror principle (Baker 1985), a host phrase picks up the affixes in A-bar spec through derivation and the order of the affixes reflects the derivational steps. Therefore, the intervention effect in (2) directly follows from a violation of Rizzi’s (1990) relativized minimality: the Q-intervener like *John-man* ‘only John’, in spec of MAN phrase, is regarded as potential antecedent governor to the trace of the null question operator, thereby yielding a minimality violation, as in (2a), whereas the pied-piping of the whole WH-DP occurs as a last resort, as in (2b). The intervening Q-particles are in spec-head agreement with an associated functional head: the evidence comes from multiple specifier licensing. Due to the properties of Agreement (Kuroda 1992), Korean and Japanese allow more than one specifier to enter into an agreement relation (see (3): two negations do not cancel each other, but yield one negation, as in negative concord).

We will also show that invisible operator movement analysis is superior to Pesetsky’s feature movement analysis with respect to both the Superiority Effect in Japanese (Richards 1997) and Takahashi’s (1993) data where one WH comes from a higher clause than the other.

Data

- (2) a. ***John-man** *mwues-ul* sa-ss-ni? b. $\sqrt{mwues-ul}$ **John-man** __ sa-ss-ni? (Korean) **J-man: Q**
 J-ONLY WHAT-acc bought-C_[+WH] WHAT-acc J-ONLY __ bought-C_[+WH]
 ‘What did only John buy?’ (cf. (1) does not apply to overt movement of WH in (2b))
- (3) a. amwu-**to** amwu-kes-**to** meok-ci anh ass-ta (Sells 2001)
 anyone anything eat-CI NEG PST-DEC
 lit. Anyone did not eat anything. (‘No one ate anything’)
- b. **John-man** sakwa-**man** mekesse. (Lee 2004)
 J-only apple-only ate
 ‘Only John ate only apples.’
- (i) John is the only one who ate only apples. Others ate other fruits as well as apples.
 (*man*-phrases are each in spec of a focus projection)
- (ii) John is the only one who ate something and John ate only apples (not other fruits).
 (*man*-phrases are in multiple specifiers of a single focus head)

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