

Syntax II – #21

Complement/Non-complement Asymmetries

- Certain non-islands for complement extraction are islands for non-complement extraction: French *wh*-islands, Chinese islands, English infinitival *wh*-islands, Factive Islands (?)
- Certain weak islands for object extraction become quite severe islands for non-complement extraction: English *wh*-islands
- Configurations that single out subjects: that-trace violations
- Configurations that single out adjuncts: Factive Islands (?), Negative Islands, Chinese *wh*-islands (?)

A. Extracting across *wh* in French

- (1) a. C'est le cadeau_i que_i je sais [quand [mon cousin a offert t_i à Jean]]
 It's the present that I know when my cousin has offered to John
 'It's the present_i that I know when my cousin offered it_i to John.'
- b. * C'est mon cousin que_i je sais [lequel_j [t_i a offert t_j à Jean]]
 It's my cousin who I know what has offered to John
 'It's my cousin_i who I know what he_i has offered to John.'

B. Although extraction from *wh*-islands starts out as not too great in English, we can still show contrasts between complement and non-complement extractions. Extraction from infinitival *wh*-islands

- (2) a. (?) What did you ask whether PRO to fix ___?
 b. * How did you ask whether PRO to fix the car ___?
 c. * How did you ask whether PRO to behave ___?
 d. * Who did you ask whether ___ fixed the car?

C. *Wh*-in-situ in Chinese (actually distinguishes subject and adjunct extractions)

- (3) a. Zhangsan yiwei Lisi mai-le shenme?
 Zhangsan think Lisi buy-ASP what
 'What_x does Zhangsan think Lisi bought t_x?'
 b. Zhangsan xiang-zhidao Lisi mai-le shenme
 Zhangsan wonder Lisi buy-ASP what
 'Zhangsan wonders what_x Lisi bought t_x.'
- (4) a. ni zui xihuan [she mai de shu]?
 you most like who buy prt book
 'Who is the x such that you like the books x bought?'
 b. [wo mai shenme] zui hao?

I buy what most good
'What is it best that I buy?'

- c. ni xiang-zhidao [wo weishenme mai shenme]?
You wonder I why buy what
'What is the x such that you wonder why I bought x?'
- (5) a. * Ni zui xihuan [weishenme mai shu de ren]?
You most like why buy book prt person
'Why_i do you like the man who bought the books t_i?'
- b. * [wo weishenme mai shu] zui hao?
I why buy book most like
'Why_i is [that I buy the books t_i] best?'
- (6) a. [ni xiang-zhidao [shei mai-le shenme]]
you wonder who buy-ASP what
'Who_x do you wonder what_y t_x bought t_y?'
'What_x do you wonder who_y t_y bought t_x?'
- b. [ni xiang-zhidao [shei weishenme mai-le shu]]
you wonder who why buy-ASP book
'Who_x do you wonder why_y t_x bought books t_y?'
* 'Why_x do you wonder who_y t_y bought books t_x?'

D. That-t violations: affects subjects only

- (7) a. Who do you think that John visited ___?
b. How do you think that John visited his mother ___?
c. *?Who do you think that ___ visited John?
d. Who do you think ___ visited John?

E. Factive islands

- (8) a. Who is it surprising that John visited ___?
b. Who is it likely that John visited ___?
- (9) a. * How is it surprising that John visited his mother ___?
b. ? How is it likely that John visited his mother ___?
- (10) a. * Who is it surprising that ___ visited his mother?
b. * Who is it surprising ___ visited his mother?
c. *?Who is it clear ___ visited his mother?
d. * Who is it likely ___ visited his mother?

- (11) a. ?? It is surprising John visited his mother.
b. ? It is clear John visited his mother.
c. ?It is clear John visited his mother.

F. Negative islands (?)

- (12) a. Who don't you think John visited ___?
b. * How don't you think John visited his mother ___?
c. (?) Who don't you think ___ visited his mother?

G. But: ECM subjects behave like direct objects for extraction (??)

- (13) a. ?? Who did you ask whether to expect ___ to be late?
b. ?? Who did you ask whether to believe ___ to be a spy?

- (14) a. * Who did you ask whether to expect ___ would be late?
b. * Who did you ask whether to believe ___ is a spy?

- (15) a. Who did you expect ___ to be late?
b. Who do you believe ___ to be a spy?

- (16) a. ?? Who did you expect ___ would be late?
b. ? Who do you believe ___ is a spy?