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The Hows and Whys of *How* and *Why*: Merger and licensing of wh-adjuncts

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In this study (joint with W. T. Dylan Tsai) we explore cross-linguistic aspects of syntactic licensing of the prototypical wh-adjuncts *how* and *why*. The work has two major foci. On the one hand, we explore the "cartographical" issue of structural placement of *how* and *why*. The non-trivial character of this issue becomes clear once it is realized that each of these items encodes more than one lexical entry in some languages, and, furthermore, different lexical entries display different syntactic distribution. One goal is then to provide a universal characterization of the syntactic distribution of *how* and *why* controlling for their different cross-linguistic varieties.

Once the "cartographical" issue is clarified, a number of novel questions arise concerning the mode of licensing of different varieties of *how* and *why*. This brings us to the second, theoretical, focus of the paper, namely, a proper mechanism for licensing wh-in situ, and, in broader sense, wh-items "lower than CP". On the basis of diverse cross-linguistic material, we provide a number of arguments strengthening the approach to licensing wh-in situ known as "unselective binding" as advanced in Reinhart 1998 and Tsai 1994/1999 and show how potential challenges to this approach can be met in a revealing and explanatory manner.

In exploring cross-linguistic aspects of licensing *how* and *why*, we will concentrate in particular on their behavior in multiple wh-questions, with special emphasis on Slavic, Chinese and Germanic. The distribution of *how* and *why* in multiple wh-questions across languages is not uniform, contrary to what one might expect. We will then see how the existing cross-linguistic variation can be explained by reconciling the "cartographic" insights with the existing theories of multiple wh-fronting, and unselective binding.