

**1** Den Dikken & Giannakidou (2002) establish that *wh-the-hell* is a polarity item dependent, like *any*-NPIs, on a *c*-commanding nonveridical licenser (cf. (1)–(2)). For root *wh*-questions featuring *wh-the-hell* in the highest specifier position, such as (3), this entails that the landing-site of *wh*-fronting is below the only possible licenser of the polarity item: the *Q*-operator in *C* (cf. (4)). That *wh*-fronting in English root questions targets a position lower than SpecCP is supported by the fact that fronted topics precede the *wh*-phrase (as in (5a)). The fact that in English embedded *wh*-questions, fronted topics must follow the *wh*-phrase (cf. (5b)) suggests (on the assumption that the position of fronted topics is constant) that *wh*-phrases higher in embedded contexts than they do in root contexts: in particular, *wh*-phrases raise to SpecCP in embedded clauses, beyond the *c*-command domain of any potential licenser of *wh-the-hell* within the embedded clause (including the *Q*-operator in the CP's head). This explains the fact that in the embedded *wh*-clauses in (1), the legitimacy of *wh-the-hell* is dependent on the presence of some nonveridical licenser in the matrix clause.

**2** The unavailability of a pair-list reading for (6b) (in contradistinction to (6a)) can be made to follow from the analysis of *wh-the-hell* as a polarity item as an *intervention effect*: with *everyone* raising to SpecDistP, above *wh-the-hell* (which on Den Dikken & Giannakidou's 2002 analysis is in SpecFocP), thereby gaining scope over *wh-the-hell* and setting up a pair-list interpretation, the QP will intervene between the *Q*-operator (in *C*) and *wh-the-hell* (in SpecFocP) (cf. (7)) and thus block the licensing of the latter in the same way that the QP blocks the licensing of *any*-PIs in Linebarger's cases like (8a) (analysed as in (8b)). The intervention effect in (7) manifests itself only at LF, after raising of the QP — apparently too late to spoil the licensing of *wh-the-hell* qua polarity item: with the exception of the contexts isolated by Linebarger and Uribe-Etxebarria, PI are standardly deemed to be licensed 'at *S*-structure'; thus, reconstruction, while successfully allowing anaphor binding, does not salvage the *any*-NPI in (9). The facts in (6b) and (9) can be brought in line, however, with a minimalistically desirable approach to PI-licensing that confines it to LF: (i) reconstruction only affects the restriction of a quantified expression, not the operator; (ii) the PIs in (6b) and (9) are themselves (part of) the operator (cf. *what the hell books* vs. \**what books the hell*). With PI-licensing taken care of at LF, the emergence of LF-intervention effects on PI-licensing is thus as expected.

**3** The ban on *wh-the-hell in situ* in double *wh*-questions such as (10) is blamed by Den Dikken & Giannakidou (2002) on an intervention effect as well: the overtly moved *wh*-phrase (*who*) intervenes between the *Q*-operator in *C* and *wh-the-hell*, thus obstructing the requisite licensing relationship between these two (cf. (11)). With the licensing of *wh-the-hell* taken care of at LF, this means that *wh-the-hell* does not undergo LF-movement to a position above the overtly moved *wh*-phrase in double *wh*-questions — which confirms that a *wh-in-situ* does not undergo covert phrasal movement. Huang & Ochi (2003) point out that the ban on *wh-the-hell in situ* can be lifted in triple *wh*-questions (cf. (12)). Refining the empirical generalisation, I show that this effect manifests itself only if *wh-the-hell* is the middle of the three *wh*'s: the *a*-examples in (13)–(15) contrast with their *b*-counterparts. The interpretation of triple *wh*-questions (Fiengo 1998) helps us understand this: the first *wh* in a triple *wh*-question can be interpreted as a specific indefinite (*where did who buy what?* = 'for a particular location *l*, tell me for every person *x* what *x* bought'), corresponding to a topic in the answer. On such a construal, *wh*<sub>1</sub> is outside the scope of the *Q*-operator in *C*, not binding a variable but instead being construed with a resumptive pronoun (cf. (16)), which predicts that it should not have to give rise to WCO effects (correctly, it seems: (17)). The first 'real' *wh* in a triple *wh*-question may thus be the *second* one; the fact that triple *wh*-questions with a non-initial *wh-the-hell* are legitimate only if *wh-the-hell* is the middle *wh* patterns with the fact that, in double *wh*-questions, *wh-the-hell* must be the first *wh*.

**4** In German *wh*-copying and *wh*-scope-marking constructions, *wh-the-hell* is grammatical with *the-hell* occurring in the root (cf. (18)–(19)). If '*wh*-copying' is literally copying, *the-hell* in (18) is merged only with the top copy (cf. Huang & Ochi 2003). That *the-hell* is impossible on the *wh* in the embedded clause is an intervention effect: in (20), the matrix *wh* (which, being an eligible host for *the-hell* in German, as in English, lands below the root *C*<sub>Q</sub>) harmfully intervenes between *wh-the-hell* and its licenser, root *C*<sub>Q</sub>. That in *wh*-scope-marking (19) *the-hell* is welcome on the scope marker *was* argues that *was* is not an expletive; that (19) with downstairs *the-hell* cannot be saved by 'expletive replacement' (LF-raising of the 'real' *wh* up to *was*, which should eliminate the intervention effect in (20)) strengthens this conclusion. Hungarian *wh*-scope-marking reproduces the ban on downstairs *the-hell*, but does not allow *the-hell* on the scope marker. The implications thereof for the typology of *wh*-scope-marking (see also Bruening 2004) will be addressed.

**Examples**

- (1) a. I \*(don't) know who the hell would buy that book  
 b. nobody knows who the hell has bought that book  
 c. only John knows who the hell has bought that book  
 d. I would like to know who the hell has bought that book  
 e. if John knows who the hell has bought that book, he should tell us
- (2) a. I \*(didn't) know that anyone had bought that book  
 b. nobody knows whether anyone has bought that book  
 c. only John knows whether anyone has bought that book  
 d. I would like to know if anyone has bought that book  
 e. if John knows whether anyone has bought that book, he should tell us
- (3) what the hell did you buy?  
 (4)  $[_{CP} C_Q [_{FocP} [what\ the\ hell] [_{Foc_x} Foc [_{IP} \dots]]]]$
- (5) a. <sup>?</sup>a book like this, why should I buy?  
 b. <sup>?</sup>he does not know why a book like this, he should buy
- (6) a. what did everyone buy for Max? [pair-list reading available]  
 b. what the hell did everyone buy for Max? [pair-list reading *unavailable*]
- (7) \*[C<sub>Q</sub> (...) [*everyone* (...) [*what the hell* ...]]]  
 (8) a. \*he didn't give every charity a red cent  
 b. \*[Neg (...) [*every charity* (...) [*a red cent*]]]
- (9) [(<sup>\*</sup>any) pictures of himself<sub>i</sub>]<sub>j</sub>, John<sub>i</sub> does not like *t<sub>j</sub>* / nobody<sub>i</sub> likes *t<sub>j</sub>*
- (10) \*who is in love with who the hell?  
 (11) \*[C<sub>Q</sub> [*who* (...) [*who the hell*]]]
- (12) <sup>?</sup>who gave what the hell to who?  
 (13) a. who gave what (<sup>?</sup>the hell) to who? who bought what (<sup>?</sup>the hell) where?  
 b. who gave what to who (<sup>\*</sup>the hell)? who bought what where (<sup>\*</sup>the hell)?
- (14) a. what did who (<sup>?</sup>the hell) give to who? what did who (<sup>?</sup>the hell) buy where?  
 b. what did who give to who (<sup>\*</sup>the hell)? what did who buy where (<sup>\*</sup>the hell)?
- (15) a. who did who (<sup>?</sup>the hell) give what to? where did who (<sup>?</sup>the hell) buy what?  
 b. who did who give what (<sup>\*</sup>the hell) to? where did who buy what (<sup>\*</sup>the hell)?
- (16)  $[_{CP} wh_1 \parallel [_{C_Q} \dots pro_1 \dots]]$
- (17) a. what<sub>i</sub> did its<sub>i</sub> author give to whom {when/where/for what reason}?  
 b. who<sub>i</sub> did his<sub>i</sub> mother give what to {when/where/for what reason}?
- (18) wer <zum Teufel> glaubst du, wer <\*(zum Teufel)> du bist? [wh-copying] (German)  
 'who the devil do you think you are?'
- (19) was <zum Teufel> glaubst du, wer <\*(zum Teufel)> du bist? [wh-scope-marking]
- (20) \*[C<sub>Q</sub> [*wh* ... [*wh-zum-Teufel*]]]

**References**

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