

1 The Phase Impenetrability Condition

The basic intuition behind the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) is that from beyond a certain distance, syntactic objects become invisible to further syntactic operations.

Previous instantiations of the same intuition:

- (1) a. The notion of the cycle
- b. Relativized Minimality
 - i. $H_1 H_2 XP$
 (* if H_1 and H_2 are heads of the same kind, ok otherwise)
 - ii. $H XP_1 XP_2$
 (* if XP_1 and XP_2 are phrases of the same kind, ok otherwise)

The Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) was proposed as a constraint on the operation **Agree** in Chomsky (1999) and Chomsky (2001).

- (2) HP, ZP, WP are strong phases.
 - a. PIC_{MI} : the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside HP; only H and its edge are accessible to such operations. (cf. Chomsky (1999))
 $Z^0 [XP X^0 [HP \alpha [H^0 [YP Y^0 [WP \beta [W^0 \dots$
 - b. PIC_{DbP} : the domain of H is not accessible to operations at ZP (the next strong phase); only H and its edge are accessible to such operations. (cf. Chomsky (2001))
 $Z^0 [XP X^0 [HP \alpha [H^0 [YP Y^0 [WP \beta [W^0$
 boldfaced area is visible for Agree from X^0 , the emphasized area is not.

PIC_{DbP} is less restricted than PIC_{MI} . We can think of it as the **relativized** version of PIC_{MI} .

Strong phases are taken to be finite CPs and agentive vPs (often indicated as C*P and v*P), but not TPs, defective CPs, or passive vPs.

2 The Data

Japanese has an exceptive-like construction that seems to require actual negation for its licensing.

- (3) a. John-ga **Mary-to-sika** awa-nakat-ta.
 John-Nom Mary-with-NPI meet-Neg-Tns
 'John met only Mary.'
- b. *John-ga **Mary-to-sika** at-ta.
 John-Nom Mary-with-NPI meet-Tns

(Question: is it perhaps more accurate to translate (3) as 'John didn't meet with anyone but Mary.' The two are semantically equivalent.)

The clause-mate condition on NPI licensing in Japanese:

- (4) *Bill-ga Pam-ni [John-ga **Mary-to-sika** atta to] tutae-nakat-ta
 Bill-Nom Pam-Dat John-Nom Mary-with-NPI met C tell-Neg-Tns
 *'Bill told Pam that John met only Mary.'

Background: it has been argued that subject scrambling does not exist in scrambling. So the NPI object in (4) must be in a position lower than [Spec,TP] in the embedded clause.

Two violations of the clause-mate condition:

- (5) a. Scrambling to the edge of the embedded clause:
 ?Bill-ga Pam-ni [**Mary-to-sika** John-ga t_i atta to] tutae-nakat-ta
 Bill-Nom Pam-Dat Mary-with-NPI John-Nom met C tell-Neg-Tns
 'Bill told Pam that John met only Mary.'
- b. Embedded subjunctive clause:
 ??Bill-ga [John-ga **Mary-to-sika** au yoo(ni)] nozoma-nakat-ta.
 Bill-Nom John-Nom Mary-with-NPI meet C hope-Neg-Tns
 'Bill hoped that John meet only Mary.'

(Question: how accurate are the translations here? The exceptives/only equation does not obviously hold in the cross clausal cases.)

Background: scrambling in Japanese has been argued to not cross clausal boundaries. Hence the scrambled object is not in the matrix clause.

Yamashita (2003) argues that the above cases can be handled by assuming that NPIs in Japanese involve an Agree relationship between Negation and the NPI, with the relationship constrained by the 'relaxed' Derivation by Phase version of the PIC.

A puzzle for Yamashita if passive vPs are not strong phases:

- (6) *Pam-ga [John-ga **Mary-to-sika** atta to] tutae-rare-nakat-ta.
Pam-Nom John-Nom Mary-with-NPI met C tell-Pass-Neg-Tns
'Pam was told that JOhn met only Mary.'

References

- Chomsky, N. (1999) *Derivation by Phase*, MIT Occasional Papers in Linguistics 18, MITWPL, Cambridge, MA.
- Chomsky, N. (2001) "Beyond Explanatory Adequacy," unpublished manuscript, MIT.
- Yamashita, H. (2003) "On the distribution and licensing of Negative Polarity Items in Japanese and the Phase-Impenetrability Condition," in *Proceedings of the IVth Tokyo Conference on Psycholinguistics*, Hitozi Syobo Publishing Company, Tokya.