

Variation and Uniformity in the Grammar of Alternatives: Intervention Revisited

In this talk, we revisit the range of variation that we might expect to find across languages when it comes to the way that the grammar treats the alternatives that intuitively feature in the interpretation of a question or of a focused constituent (see also Beck 2016, *Oxford Handbook of Information Structure*). These alternatives are known to interact in interesting ways (for a recent overview, see Mayr 2020, *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Semantics*). For instance, in (1) from Korean, inserting a focus-sensitive operator in a position c-commanding an in-situ WH-phrase results in uninterpretability.

- (1) *Minsu-man nuku-lûl manna-ss-ni? -- KOREAN --
 NAME-EXCL who-ACC meet-past-Q
 `Whom did only Minsu_F meet?`
 (Kim 2002: p.619, ex.11-a)

Reporting data from the Tübingen Fieldwork Hub and the Manchester Linguistic Diversity Collective, we provide further evidence that such intervention effects indeed appear to robustly surface across languages. We conclude that there might be an interesting, potentially stable asymmetry across languages in how different types of alternatives are evaluated (Howell, Hohaus et al. 2022, *Linguistic Variation*). However, we also observe variation in the set of elements that give rise to intervention effects. We explore the consequences of these findings for one of the languages in the sample, Turkish, and discuss two options for lexical variation the semantics of focus particles that would account for the variability observed. We end with some methodological reflections on investigating the nature of variation in the interpretative component of the grammar of alternatives and beyond.