

# Information structure – QP Scope Interaction Patterns as a Source of Novel Insights into IS-driven Movement and the Mechanisms of Scope Freezing

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In this talk I will discuss the effects of two distinct information-structural phenomena, Contrastive Focus and Specificity-related Object Shift, on the interpretation of scopally ambiguous and scopally frozen ditransitive sentences in Russian and Ukrainian, arguing that studying such relations can help us better understand what scope freezing is as well as what it is not, in addition to gaining novel insights into the relevant IS categories.

Russian ditransitives have been shown to exhibit the same patterns of scope fluidity (2a-3a) and scope freezing (2b-3b) (Antonyuk 2015) as those known from English (1) since Larson (1990).

- (1) a. The teacher gave a book to every student. (E>V, V>E)  
 b. The teacher gave **a student every book**. (E>V, \*V>E)  
 (2) a. Maša dala [kakuju-to otkrytku] [každomu posetitelju] (E>V, V>E)  
 Masha gave some postcard every visitor  
 ‘Masha gave some postcard to every visitor’  
 b. Maša dala [kakomu-to posetitelju] [každuju otkrytku] (E>V, \*V>E)  
 Masha gave some visitor every postcard  
 ‘Masha gave some visitor every postcard’  
 (3) a. Maša obozvala [DP kakim-to prozviščem] [DP každygo mal’čika] (E>V, V>E)  
 Masha called some nickname.INSTR every boy.ACC  
 ‘Masha called every boy by some nickname’  
 b. Maša obozvala [DP kakogo-to mal’čika] [DP každydym prozviščem] (E>V, \*V>E)  
 Masha called some boy.ACC every nickname.INSTR  
 ‘Masha called some boy by every nickname’

Introduction of contrastive focus (marked by a pitch accent) alters this picture in certain cases. Focusing the outer object determiner in an ambiguous order creates a strong wide scope bias for the focused QP (4) (contra Neeleman and Titov 2009). By contrast, focusing the outer object in a frozen order yields no change in interpretation, with scope remaining surface frozen (5).

- (4) a. Maša dala [kakuju-to otkrytku] [kaAždydomu posetitelju] (\*E>V, V>E)  
 Masha gave some postcard every visitor  
 ‘Masha gave some postcard to every visitor’  
 b. Maša obozvala [DP kakim-to prozviščem] [DP KAždygo mal’čika] (\*E>V, V>E)  
 Masha called some nickname.INSTR EVERY BOY.ACC.  
 ‘Masha called every boy by some nickname’  
 (5) a. Maša dala [kakomu-to posetitelju] [kaAždyju otkrytku] (E>V, \*V>E)  
 Masha gave some visitor every postcard  
 ‘Masha gave some visitor every postcard’  
 b. Maša obozvala [DP kakogo-to mal’čika] [DP kaAždydym prozviščem] (E>V, \*V>E)  
 Masha called some boy.ACC EVERY NICKNAME.  
 ‘Masha called some boy by every nickname’

These facts, together with the empirical observation that the two predicates exemplified in (2)-(5) belong to different groups of ditransitives in Russian, which show mirror-image, contrastive behavior on a number of syntactic tests and which have been argued to have distinct syntactic structures (Antonyuk 2015, 2017) strongly suggest that the scope effects in (4) vs (5) are specifically due to the interaction between scope and Contrastive Focus. Thus,

the conclusion these data afford is that whereas focus can disambiguate a scopally ambiguous structure (4a-b), focus apparently cannot “ambiguate” a frozen scope structure (5a-b). This, in turn, strongly suggests that while IS-relevant phenomena can affect scopally ambiguous sentences (e.g., creating a bias in favor of a particular interpretation, something previous literature has noted), whatever mechanism is responsible for the scope freezing effect found in ditransitives does not seem to interact with or be affected by information-structural phenomena. Thus, the scope disambiguating effect observed in (4) and that due to the mechanism responsible for scope freezing in ditransitives (1b, 2b, 3b) seem to comprise independent ways of disambiguating scopal relations. Additionally, I will also present novel data on scope freezing and Specificity-Related Object Shift in Ukrainian *Spray-Load* verbs and will argue that the complex data patterns observed strongly suggest the following general conclusions:

- 1) While Specificity and (wide) QP Scope converge to a point, they are nevertheless independent phenomena that should not be conflated (supporting Enç 1991).
- 2) Specificity-related Object Shift (conceptualized as middlefield scrambling) cannot be a feature-driven type of movement.
- 3) To the extent that Object Shift can be considered an Information-Structural phenomenon (see, for instance, Josefsson 2010), the combined conclusion from the data on Ukrainian and Russian is that scope freezing found in ditransitives and in the *with*-variant of the *Spray-Load* alternation is an independent syntactic phenomenon that can be neither derived through nor affected by Information-Structural means.

I then argue that the QP scope-Focus interaction patterns observed in the Russian data provide a strong novel argument for the movement analysis of Focus (in the sense of Chomsky 1976). Furthermore, I discuss the constraints imposed by the data on the possible accounts of QP scope freezing and discuss one such account that is capable of accounting for the IS-QP scope interaction patterns observed in the data, which treats scope freezing as being due to a syntactic binding relation between the two QPs (due to Antonyuk 2015).

## References

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