

Exceptional scope of universal quantifiers: An illusion of quantificational subordination
[joint work with [Haoze Li](#)]

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This talk examines apparent exceptional scope effects of universal quantifiers across canonical syntactic islands, including temporal adjunct clauses and relative clauses. Across languages, quantifiers embedded inside these islands can appear to take wide scope into the matrix clause and license covarying pronouns. At the same time, these exceptional scope effects are systematically constrained: they are blocked in Mandarin by the particle *dou*, unavailable across *if*-clauses, and subject to subject–object asymmetries in relative clauses.

We argue that the apparent exceptional scope effects do not require covertly raising the quantifiers out of islands; instead, they arise as an illusion of quantificational subordination. Implemented in a dynamic plural semantic framework enriched with event semantics, our core proposal is that quantifier-containing clauses establish dependencies between individuals and events, and these dependencies can propagate across clause boundaries, unless they are disrupted by a maximizing operation on the (sub)events. We further propose that Mandarin *dou* and intensional structures such as *if*-clauses impose such maximizing effects, thereby preventing quantificational dependencies from propagating further. This approach derives both the availability and the restrictions of the attested exceptional scope phenomena without appealing to (covert) movement out of syntactic islands, and suggests a broader connection between quantificational dependency, event-maximality effects, and dynamic information flow across clause/sentence boundaries.