**Introduction:** Beck & Kim (1997) suggests the intervention effect (Beck 1996) may serve as a diagnostic for covert wh-movement. Cheng & Rooryck (2000, 2002), Ko (2003), and Tsai (2004) point out that in Mandarin Chinese the intervention effect is also observed for wh-adverbs, though not for wh-nominals. Generally speaking, the intervener in question should be a scope bearing element (SBE), hence being able to block the wh-adverbs, also an SBE, moving across it. In this paper, I would like to show that due to its scope marking potential the aspectual head, Asp, in Mandarin Chinese can also serve as an intervener blocking the covert movement of wh-adverbs as sketched in (1) and consequently such proposal resolves an asymmetry between reason-weishenme ‘why’ and the manner-zenme(yang) ‘how’ when they surface with an aspectual marker (2).

(1) 

*wh₁… Asp … wh₁ …

where the wh-dependency is created by feature movement of a wh-adverb.

(2) a. Zhangsan zemen(yang) qu-le/-guo Riben? (*manner, method)
Zhangsan how go-Aspₚₑʳtf/-Aspₑₓ𝐩 Japan

‘In what manner did John go to Japan?’
‘By what means did John go to Japan?’

b. Zhangsan weishenme qu-le/-guo Riben? (reason, purpose)
Zhangsan why go-Aspₑₓᵖ/-Aspₑₓᵖ Japan

‘For what reason did John go to Japan?’
‘For what purpose did John go to Japan?’

**Asp as an Intervener:** I start from laying out a paradigm in (3) in which the Asp in a matrix clause can block the LF-movement of wh-adverbs, i.e., manner-zenme(yang)) ‘how’ and reason-weishenme ‘why’, in an embedded clause. Such is reminiscent of the intervention effect. Note that the purpose-why reading and the method-how reading are not ruled out by the Asp since they are encoded with the nominal property which does not induce LF-movement (Tsai 1994). Hence the lack of intervention effect.

(3) a. ta shuo-guo/-le [Lisi weishenme hui cizhi ] (ne)? (*reason, purpose)
   ta say-Aspₑₓᵖ/Aspₑₓᵖ Lisi why will resign Q
   #‘What was the reason x such that he said that Lisi would resign for x?’
   ‘What was the purpose x such that he said that Lisi would resign for x?’

b. ta cai-guo/-le [Lisi zenme(yang) duen niurou ](ne)? (*manner, method)
   he guess-Aspₑₓᵖ/Aspₑₓᵖ Lisi how stewed beef Q
   #‘What was the manner x such that he guessed that Lisi stewed beef in x?’
   ‘What was the means x such that he guessed that Lisi stewed beef by x?’
   (Aspₑₓᵖ = Experiential aspect marker;  Aspₑₓᵖ = Perfective aspect marker.)

Meanwhile, when we try to fix the wh-adverb in the embedded clause by replacing the matrix
predicate with an interrogative one, e.g., *wen ‘ask’, xiangzhidao ‘wonder’, as in (4), the intervention effect is gone since the wh-adverb in question can check its uninterpretable [wh] feature at the embedded CP and thus does not have to move across the matrix Asp.

(4) Zhangsan wen-guo/le Lisi weishenme hui cizhi.
    Zhangsan ask-AspExp/AspPerf. Lisi why will resign
    ‘Zhangsan asked what was the reason x such that Lisi would resign for x.’
    ‘Zhangsan asked what was the purpose x such that Lisi would resign for x.’

**Asp as an SBE:** I proceed to prove that the Asp in Mandarin Chinese does have the scope bearing potential in that it can mark the scope of an indefinite NP. A clear demonstration is given in (5)-(7) where the Asp head, -guo and -le, in (7) additionally marks a wide scope of an indefinite NP which is generally supposed to be “weak” when being selected by a verb of creation like *xie ‘write’.*

(5) wo dasuan xie [[[san-ge ren chang] de ge] (*wide, narrow)
    I plan write three-CL person sing DE song
    ‘There are three persons x such that I plan to write songs that x sing.’
    ‘I plan to write songs that three persons sing.’

(6) [[[san-ge ren chang] de ge] bijiao haoting (*wide, narrow)
    three-CL person sing DE song more melodious
    ‘There are three persons x such that songs that x sing are melodious.’
    ‘Songs that three persons sing are melodious.’

(7) wo xie-guo/le [[[san-ge ren chang] de ge] (wide, narrow)
    I write-AspExp/AspPerf three-CL person sing DE song
    ‘There are three persons x such that I’ve written songs that x sing.’
    ‘I’ve written songs that three persons sing.’

**The Asymmetry solved:** The peculiar behavior in (2) is then well accounted for if we treat the Asp as an intervener. That is, the manner-*how* is a VP-adverb lower than the Asp which blocks the LF-movement of the manner-*how*, whereas the reason-*why* is base-generated at SpecCP (Ko 2003) higher than the Asp, hence no intervention effect. See (8).

(8) a. *[[CP zemen [IP … Asp … ti … V …]]]
    b. [[CP weishenme [IP… Asp … V …]]]

**Conclusion:** If the our line of thought is on the right track, the refined version of Relativized Minimality developed in Rizzi (2002) may be added up one more member, i.e., Asp, to his Quantificational category, that is, Wh, Neg, measure, focus, and Asp.

**Selected References:**