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On the left periphery of Romance Interrogatives

Our talk will shed new light on the left periphery of interrogative clauses in Romance; it will do so by showing that the ingtriguing microvariations distinguishing French, Italian and a large number of Northern Italian Dialects ('NIDs') follow from the invariant, highly 'split' --cf. Rizzi (1997), Kayne and Pollock (2001), Poletto & Pollock (2000)-- structure of the interrogative (Romance) CP field and the morphosyntactic properties of specific lexical items in the various languages and dialects; if so the UG-imposed left periphery of Romance questions and the morphosyntactic properties of individual wh- words is all the language learners need to arrive at (the wide variety of) specific I-languages in the Romance domain.

We shall first focus on a rarely studied class of bare wh-items that display typical *clitic* properties (cf. Kayne (1975)). So, for example, French *que* (cf. Bouchard and Hirschbühler (1986)) and Friulian *do* (cf. Benincà (1983), Poletto (2000)) cannot be modified, coordinated, used in isolation or bear stress. This follows straightforwardly if *que*, *do* and the like are indeed *clitic* wh-items, the A' counterpart of pronominal clitics; as such we shall claim they must first move to some IP internal clitic position; from that clitic position they can only reach their target position in the CP field iff they are (first) pied-piped to the Comp domain by (Remnant) I(P)-Mvt to a position stucturally adjacent to their target. As can easily be checked, this suffices to explain the properties of *que* illustrated in (1):

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(1) a {Qu', qui} a-t-il vu? ({What, who} has he seen?)
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- b {Qu', qui} a vu Jean? ({What, who} has seen Jean?)
- c {*Que, Qui} il a vu ({What, who} he has seen?)
- d {*Que, Qui} a surpris Jean? ({What, who} has surprised Jean?)
- e {*Que, Qui}, à ton avis, il a vu? ({What, who}, in your opinion, he has seen?)
- f Il a vu {*que, qui} (He has seen {what, who}?

Que, unlike non clitic qui, requires SCLI --(1a)--, Stylistic Inversion (SI) --(1b)-- cannot occur in situ --(1f)--, be separated by parentheticals --(1e)--, or be extracted from subject position --(1d)--.

Pursuing this tack, we expect that *wh-clitic doubling* should surface in some Romance languages just as *pronominal* clitic doubling does. The North-Eastern Italian Dialects (NEIDs) do display the expected configurations, in particular in wh- *in situ*/ wh- doubling structures like (2):

(2) a S'a-lo fat che?

Illasi (Verona)

('what has-he done what?' What did he do')

b Ndo e-lo ndat endoe?

('where is-he gone where? 'Where did he go?')

On a par with *pronominal* clitic doubling cases, which display complex DPs of the form [clitic, DP], sentences like (2) contain a *wh- clitic* doubling structure in which a 'strong' wh-item is doubled by its clitic or weak counterpart; we shall claim that the two are merged as a complex lexical item in argument position: [wh [Cl sa], [Op che]], [wh [Cl ndo], [Op endoe]]; such complex wh- words are semantically motivated on the (standard) assumption that bare wh-words, though not complex wh-phrases or d-linked bare wh-items (see Pesetsky (1987)), are existential quantifiers ''--che in (2)-- in the scope of a wh- (disjunction, see Jayaseelan (2001)) operator --clitic s' and do in (2)--, as in Katz and Postal (1964), terminology aside.

In the NEIDs, wh in situ, on a par with wh-doubling, is possible iff the wh-item has a clitic analogue. Compare (2) vs (3):

- (3) a *Parché e-lo partio parché? Illasi (Verona) ('why is-he left why?')
 - b *E-lo partio parché ('Is-he gone why?')

Such pairs suggest that clitic doubling and wh -in situ arise when the wh- item involved can be analyzed as [wh-,]; If so, in this group of languages at least, the so-called wh- in situ strategy and the doubling strategy are intimately related; they can in fact be seen as one and the same phenopmenon, *modulo* an overt vs covert wh- (clitic) dimension illustrated in (4):

- (4) a A-lo fat che? ('has-he done what?') Illasi (Verona)
 - b E-lo ndat endoe? ('is-he gone where?')
 - c S'a-lo fat? ('What has he done?')
 - d No e-lo ndat? ('Where is he gone?')

Suppose bare wh-items in those languages *always* have a doubling structure whose elements bear two different features, each in need of checking in the CP field; each element may be phonetically realized or null. In (2) both are phonetically realized; in (4a, b) the 'lower' existential operators are spelled out but the higher (clitic) elements remain non lexical; in (1a, b) and (4c, d) only the ('high') clitic is spelled out and the lower existential quantifier remains null.

We can now characterize the properties of the NEIDs as follows:

C. In all doubling cases the clitic form must be adjacent to the verbal complex while its strong counterpart occurs at the right edge of the sequence

Granted our view that wh- doubling and wh- in situ are the two sides of the same coin, it must be the case that in all such contructions the clitic wh operator is attracted to a high position in the CP layer (call it Disj(unction)P) and the existential quantifier is attracted to a lower Exist(ential)P in the left periphery. If so the CP layer of interrogative clauses (in Romance) comprises at least two wh- layers and one IP layer, as sketched in (5):

Property A now follows: only those bare wh-items that may have a 'doubling' lexical entry can surface in the high and/or low ExistP; since by hypothesis complex wh-phrases and d-linked wh-words have no existential quantifier in their lexical entry, they can only raise to the 'highest' DisjP; property B also follows if in those languages the item that checks the high Disj feature is a clitic; as such it can only reach its target if it gets a free ride to a position adjacent to DisjP, i.e. if it is carried along as 'excess baggage' to ForceP, which (the Remnant IP analysis of) SCLI and SI ensures (cf. Pollock (2000), Kayne & Pollock (2001)); a Remnant Mvt analysis of SCLI will further be shown to reconcile the contradictory results that SCLI cannot be I movement to the CP field (cf. e.g. Hulk (1993), Kayne (1994)) AND that SCLI results from overt syntactic displacement to the C domain (cf. e.g. Poletto (2000), Pollock (2000)).

A second group of languages, including French and North Western Italian Dialects also exhibits wh- in situ and may have clitic wh-items (see (1)), but they differ from the NEIDs in the two crucial respects D and E, as (6) shows

D. Wh in situ configurations can occur freely with all wh-items including complex wh-phrases

E. If a wh- phrase occurs on the right edge of the sentence, the sentence cannot show SCLI.

- (6) a Pierre a rencontré {quelle femme, qui}? ('Pierre has met what woman, who?')
 - b * a-t-il rencontré quelle femme? ('Has he met what woman?')

Clearly, the tie between wh in situ and wh doubling observed in NEIDs does not hold in this language group. Yet we shall show that so-called wh in situ in those languages *also* involves overt movement to the left periphery; (6) and the like make use of a *truncated* left periphery, which only contains the DisjP position and a higher (Topic) position to which the whole IP moves:

(7) $[\text{TopP IP}_i \text{Top}^\circ [\text{DisiP wh Disj}^\circ [t_i]]]$

Plainly positing (7) accounts for (6a): all wh items check the high wh- (disjunction) feature. IP movement to the (optional) Topic position is possible because the functional layers other than DisjP are not activated in (6) and therefore do not need the sort of checking that results in SCLI or SI configuations. (5a) is NOT an option in the NEIDs on the view that subject clitics in those languages *must* check a feature in the fully fledged left periphery, perhaps because they count as 'interrogative inflection' and so require the merging of the various layers of Comp domain in (5), yielding the obligatory SCLI phenomenology.

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