Eastern Lombard interrogatives: successive-cyclicity at the phase edges

This paper analyzes A-bar phenomena, particularly wh-interrogatives, in Eastern Lombard (EL), an endangered Romance language spoken in Northern Italy (Moseley, 2010). Three main patterns can be found in EL interrogatives: wh-doubling (1a), wh-fronting (1b) and clause-internal whP (1c).

(1) a. '**Ngo** se-t   nasciut '**ngont**?   (Monnese)
      where be.2SG.PRS=CL.2SG born   where
    b. '**Ngo** se-t   nasciut?
      where be.2SG.PRS= CL.2SG born
    c. Se-t   nasciut '**ngont**?
      be.2SG.PRS=CL.2SG born   where
      'Where were you born?'

In most EL varieties, there is usually optionality between at least two of the three strategies illustrated in (1) for Monnese, which allows for optionality between all three constructions. Similar constructions have already been analyzed within the cartographic framework by Poletto & Pollock (2004) and Munaro & Pollock (2005), inter alia, and within the minimalist framework by Manzini & Savoia (2011) et seq. The former approaches claim that all whPs raise into the extended CP field, with the rest of the clause undergoing remnant movement, while the latter approaches analyze the fronted whP in spec,CP and the clause-internal whP *in-situ*. I depart from both analyses, by suggesting that the two positions occupied by the wh-elements constitute phasal boundaries: the fronted wh-item occupies spec,CP, while the clause-internal one occupies a position at the edge of the *v*P phase.
The position of the fronted wh-element can be observed in (1a; 1b), where subject clitic inversion takes place: the inflected verb raises to C (see Poletto, 1993 for Northern Italian dialects and Rizzi & Roberts, 1989 for French), thus I suggest that this wh-item occupies spec,CP. The analysis of the position of the clause-internal wh-element comes from its distribution with respect to the lexical verb in different constructions: example (2) shows that the lower whP is always right-adjacent to the lexical verb, which raises into C when finite, and into the IP domain when a participle; example (3) represents its distribution with respect to the subject; while example (4) illustrates the behaviour of the whP in distransitives (note that the direct and the indirect object can be freely reordered in declarative clauses).

(2) Hkrie-l   **ki**   a   la   pina?   (Darfense)
    write.3SG.PRS=CL.3SG who to the child
    'Who writes to the little girl?'
(3) He   ciame-j   **come** i   to   genitur?   (Darfense)
    REFL call.3PL.PRS=CL.3PL how   det your parents
    'What are your parents' names?'
(4) a. (**K'**) e-t   dat   **kwé** a   Paolo al   sera?   (Monnese)
      what have.2SG.PRS=CL.2SG given what to Paolo the evening
    b. E-t   te   scrit   **a ki**   esta letera   se bé?
      have.3SG.PRS=CL.2SG you written to whom this letter   so well
      'To whom did you write this letter so carefully?'

I thus suggest that the lower whP is located at the edge of *v*P, meaning that there is a parallel between the fronted and the clause internal whPs: both occupy a position at a phase edge.

I propose an analysis of these constructions in terms of partial copying (Barbiers et al., 2010): i) the two wh-elements enter the derivation as a layered XP [whP kwé [QP ke]], and undergo short movement to the edge of vP; ii) partial copying targets only the operator portion [QP ke], which undergoes a further step, raising into spec,CP; iii) the wh-element [whP kwé], which I analyze as the restriction, is realized as an intermediate copy stranded at the lower phase edge; iv) when only one of the two elements is phonetically realized, the other is dealt with at LF.

Evidence for this analysis can be observed in the following examples: the free relative clause in (5) shows that the dislocated element can be used as an operator in other A-bar dependencies, meaning that this is the operator portion of the chain; example (6) shows that doubling structures are sensitive to weak islands (Rizzi, 1990), which I take to indicate that the two whPs are part of the same A-bar chain (see Beck, 1996; Miyagawa, 2004 for the role of intervening quantifiers, when the operator is separated from the rest of the whP).

(5) Varda   **'ngo** te mete-t   i pé.   (Monnese)
    look.IMP where you put.2SG.PRS=CL.2SG the feet
    'Watch where you're walking.' (lit. 'Look where you put the feet.')

(6) ***Ke** fe-t   miga majà **kwé**?   (Monnese)
    what do.3SG.PRS=CL.3SG NEG eaten what
    'What hasn't he eaten?'

If this analysis is on the right track, it provides further evidence supporting theories of A-bar movement as phasal and successive-cyclic, e.g. the one provided in van Urk (2020), where it is shown that successive cyclicity targets not only the edge of the clause (CP), but also the edge of the vP phase.

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