

Questions in Dan tell us *what* about the optionality of *wh*-movement?

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This talk aims to a) reveal that a language called Dan has true optionality between the overt *wh*-movement strategy and the *wh*-in-situ strategy in question formation, against the proposal by Bobaljik & Wurmbrand (2014) and b) propose that the optionality in Dan is derived from the interaction of two interrogative Cs and two kinds of *wh*-phrases.

Dan allows both questions with overt *wh*-movement and *wh*-in-situ questions. The example in (1) shows that this optionality is seen not only in matrix questions but also in embedded questions. The optionality of these two strategies is not a disguised one: First, the *wh*-fronting is caused by overt *wh*-movement, not by scrambling or clefting or other fronting strategies. I will show this by the impossibility to front non-*wh* phrases, the existence of *wh*-agreement and the possibility of multiple *wh*-questions. Second, the *wh*-in-situ questions in complement positions are truly embedded questions, not directly-quoted matrix questions. I will show this by using a 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronoun coreferential with the matrix subject in the embedded questions .

- (1) a. Zõtǎ      è      ɛ̃      dẽ́ékpó      dēē      Músò      ɛ̃      mā̃  
Zota 3sg   self   ask   who   Muso   3sg   hit  
“Zota wonders who Muso hits”  
b. Zõtǎ      è      ɛ̃      dẽ́ékpó      Músò      è      dēē      mā̃  
Zota 3sg   self   ask   Muso   3sg   who   hit  
“Zota wonders who Muso hits”

This observation itself has a theoretical consequence. While some languages allow both *wh*-fronted questions and *wh*-in-situ questions (e.g. French, English, German), Bobaljik & Wurmbrand (2014) (B&W, henceforth) point out that those languages do not allow *wh*-in-situ questions as embedded questions. This is in contrast with languages without *wh*-movement such as Mandarin Chinese, which allow *wh*-in-situ questions in embedded contexts. B&W argue that *wh*-in-situ questions in languages with optional *wh*-movement are not questions in terms of their syntax, and hence cannot be selected by question-embedding predicates. That is, languages either require overt *wh*-movement because of the interrogative C with uninterpretable *wh*-features or never allow overt movement of *wh*-phrases for various reasons, and crucially no languages mix these options. The Dan examples in (1) are counter-examples to B&W’s generalization.

I will analyze the paradigm of *wh*-questions in Dan as the result of the interaction of interrogative Cs, i.e. C<sub>Q</sub> with uninterpretable *wh*-features and C<sub>Q</sub> with interpretable *wh*-features, and two kinds of *wh*-phrases, i.e. *wh*-phrases with *wh*-features and those without *wh*-features. If *i*C<sub>Q</sub> occurs with either of the *wh*-phrases, *wh*-in-situ questions will be derived by the unselective binding of *wh*-phrases by the C<sub>Q</sub>. If *u*C<sub>Q</sub> occurs with [+*wh*] *wh*-phrases, overt *wh*-movement occurs. If *u*C<sub>Q</sub> occurs with [-*wh*] *wh*-phrases, the derivation will crash. I will show that this analysis can correctly predict the apparent lack of superiority effect, the morphological form of *wh*-phrases and the interaction of these two phenomena in Dan.

Thus, the Dan data provide a counter-example to B&W’s generalization and show that not only C but also the nature of *wh*-phrases can be at work in deriving the *wh*-movement paradigm.