Clause internal wh-words and the Low Left Periphery of Valdôtain Patois

It is widely assumed that wh-words and Contrastive Foci (CF) target the same position both in the high and low peripheries (Rizzi & Bocci, 2017, Bonan, 2019; Kahnemuyipour, 2001). Such an approach is motivated by the complementary distribution of wh-words and CF in the high left periphery (HLP) across Romance languages (Rizzi & Bocci, 2017). In this paper, I use evidence from Valdôtain Patois (ValPa) to argue for a more nuanced approach. *On the empirical plane*, I show that **(i)** ValPa wh-words move to an operator position at the edge of the vP phase, then overtly to the highest A'-position and that **(ii)** wh-words are compatible with CF clause-internally, but not in the high periphery. *On the theoretical plane*, I argue that while wh-movement is operator-driven, while clause-internal CF undergo scrambling within the vP.
Data. In the ValPa variety spoken in the village Morgex in Aosta Valley (Italy) the unmarked argument order is DO>IO (1). All wh-words (except *perqué* 'why') can occur in two positions: fronted (FWh), (2a), and clause-internal (IWh), (2b). Both options differ from echo questions (2c) in terms of prosody and linear order. Topics can freely co-occur with both types of wh-words, (3). Contrastive Focus (CF) can co-occur with IWhs (4a), but not with FWhs (4b,c).

(1) Dz'ì   baillà lo   livro à Marco.
     1SG'have.1SG   given the book to Marco
     'I have given the book to Marco.'

(2) a. **À qui** t'à baillà lo livro?   c. T'à baillà lo livro À QUI?
     b. T'à baillà **à qui** lo livro?   'You gave the book to WHOM?'
         'To whom did you give the book?'

(3) a. *À Marco*   **quan**   te   'lli   predz-e?
         To Marco   when   2SG   CL.DAT.3SG   speak-PRS.2SG
     b. Te 'lli predze **quan** *à Marco*?
         'When will you speak to Marco?'

(4) a. Te predze **quan** À MARCO, pò à Luca?   c. ****Quan** À MARCO te predze, pò à Luca?
     b. *À MARCO **quan** te predze, pò à Luca?   'When do you speak to Marco, no to Luca?'

IWhs and the structure of the Low Left Periphery (LLP).

The following arguments show that IWh, (2b), has moved from its base position: (i) the order of arguments; (ii) crossover effects (5), (iii) parasitic gaps (PGs), (6), and (iv) lack of intervention effects (not shown here for space reasons). **(i)** Since the unmarked order of arguments is DO>IO (1), the IO>DO order in (2b) indicates that the IWh has moved. **(ii)** In 0, *à qui* 'to whom' induces a crossover effect if coindexed with the possessive *son*. **(iii)** PGs can only be licensed by wh-movement, thus *à qui* in (5) must have moved from its base position, more on PGs below.

(5) *T'à baillà [**à qui**$_j$]$_i$ son$_j$ livro t$_i$?
     'To whom you gave his book?'

(6) T'à   atsitò   **dequé**   ì   martsà   [san   agouté *pg*]?
     2SG'have bought   what   at.the   market   [without   tasting]?
     'What did you buy at the market without tasting?'

The IWh's landing position is relatively low; in particular, it must follow manner adverbs like *bien* 'well':

(7) a. Te   sonn-e   *bien*   **dequé**   avouë   la   fisa?
         2SG   play-2SG   well   what   with   the   accordion
         'What do you play well with the accordion?'
     b. *Te sonne **dequé** *bien* avouë la fisa?

This result suggests that the left periphery of the vP (LLP) in ValPa has an elaborate structural layering, which is consistent with several proposals concerning LLP structure and its parallels to the structure of the CP (Belletti, 2004; Bonan, 2019; Kahnemuyipour, 2001; Poletto 2014, a.o.). In the LLP, the highest A'-position is an operator position. This position is associated with the

[EXHAUSTIVE] feature and it can be occupied either by an IWh or exhaustive focus (Kiss 1988). The operator position is followed by freely adjoining topics in non-operator positions, (8). The ordering where the operator position appears first is crucial for the demarcation of the lower-phase edge.

(8) a. Te lo baille [$_{Op}$ **quan**] [$_{Top}$ lo livro] à Marco?　　　　b. *Te lo baille [$_{Top}$ lo livro] [$_{Op}$ **quan**] à Marco?
　　　'When do you give the book to Marco?'

Contrastive focus can co-occur with an IWh. The order is again fixed: IWh-(Top)-CF-(Top):

(9) a. Te lo baille **quan** lo livro À MARCO deman?　　　　b. *Te lo baille À MARCO **quan** lo livro deman?
　　　'When do you give the book to Marco tomorrow?'

Crossover effects show that the CF constituent also undergoes A'-movement:

(10) a. Te baille **quan** son$_i$ livro À MARCO$_i$?　　　　b. *Te baille **quan** À MARCO$_i$ son$_i$ livro?
　　　'When do you give to Macro his book?'

For several reasons, IWh and CF cannot be analyzed as multiple specifiers of FocP or ExhP (*pace* the Attract-All-F account, Bošković, 2022): (i) as it will be shown in the talk, ValPa disallows multiple wh-words; (ii) the order is strictly wh > CF; (iii) topic phrases can intersperse, cf. 0. Thus, IWh and CF target separate positions. Specifically, CF scrambles to a lower A'-position inside the verb phrase. This movement in the LLP is the result of local scrambling, with the scrambling position situated lower than the focus and topic positions at the LLP edge. Multiple scrambling in the vP is possible (cf. Poletto 2014 on Italian), and that in turn leads to multiple CFs (11). As shown in the talk, such scrambling is limited to the vP.

(11)　Te baille quan son$_i$ livro À MARCO$_i$ (pò à Luca) À L'ÉCOULA (pò à meison) deman?
　　　'When will you give his book to Marco (not to Luca) tomorrow at school (not at home)?'

FWh and the structure of the High Left Periphery (HLP). There is evidence from (a) the lack of intervention effects (IEs), presented in the talk, and (b) parasitic gaps (6) that that IWhs move to an A' position in the HLP. PGs can only be licensed by *overt* A' movement to a high position, where they can take wide scope (Nunes, 2004). Thus, *dequé* in (6) must have moved to the HLP, in the syntax. The Lebeaux effect (Lebeaux 1988) outlined in the talk supports a successive-cyclic movement analysis, transiting through the edge position in the LLP (12).

(12)　([$_{TopP}$]) [$_{OpP}$ XP$_i$ [$_{TP}$ … [$_{OpP}$ XP$_i$ ([$_{TopP}$]) [$_{vP}$…]]]

The different word orders, as in (2a-b), are obtained by deletion of different copies at PF (Bošković, 2011). The mutual exclusivity of FWhs and CF in the HLP (4b-c) suggests that, as opposed to the LLP, in the HLP wh-words and CF target the same position (12), lower than the phase edge, as Topics can precede (3a). While a definitive explanation of this asymmetry between the HLP and LLP in ValPa is outstanding, in the talk I will discuss possible analyses and their implications for the theory.

To sum up, I have presented evidence that: **(i)** ValPa IWhs move to an operator position at the edge of the LLP, whereas CF scramble within vP to a projection associated with contrastive interpretation; **(ii)** Whs successive-cyclically move further up, to an operator position in the HLP, then different copies can be deleted at PF (lower copy deletion: FWh; higher copy deletion: IWh); **(iii)** peripheries differ structurally: in the LLP the operator positions is at the phase edge, while in the HLP it is not the highest A' position.

Selected references: Belletti, A. 2004. Aspects of the low IP area, in Rizzi (ed) *The Structure of IP and CP: The Cartography of Syntactic Structures* OUP; **Bonan**, C. 2019. *On clause-internally moved wh-phrases. Wh-to-Foc, nominative clitics, and the theory of Northern Italian wh-in situ*, PhD Diss; **Bošković**, Z. 2011. Rescue by PF Deletion, Traces as (Non)interveners, and the That-Trace Effect, *LI* 42(1): 1-44; **Lebeaux, D.** 1988. Language acquisition and the form of grammar. Ph.D. Diss; **Poletto**, C. 2014. Word order in Old Italian; **Rizzi, L. & G. Bocci.** 2017. Left Periphery of the Clause; Primarily Illustrated for Italian, In Everaert M. & H. C. van Riemsdijk (Eds.) *The Wiley.*