

Multiple Wh-Movement in European Spanish

Exploring the Role of Interface Conditions for Variation *

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Abstract

In this paper I explore Multiple Wh-Movement (MWM) in European Romance, a syntactic pattern that has been regarded as impossible (all Romance languages but Romanian excluding it; cf. Escandell-Vidal 1999; RAE-ASALE 2009; Chernova 2015, among others). After reviewing some data that qualify this well-known observation, I argue that European Spanish can actually display MWM under specific discourse conditions, some of which have not been previously reported. The paper puts forward an analysis of the facts adopting Richards' (2010) *Distinctness*, a PF condition that requires for X and Y to be morphologically or featurally different (within the same domain) for them to be linearized, a solution that places the relevant parameter in the Syntax → PF wing of the grammar.

1. Introduction

This paper investigates a restricted pattern of Multiple Wh-Movement in Spanish (MWM, henceforth; cf. Rudin 1988; Richards 2001; Bošković 2002 and Chernova 2015, for up-to-date discussion) that is productive if the relevant discourse conditions are met. This goes against standard descriptive work, which take Romance languages to lack MWM, with the sole exception of Romanian (cf. Escandell-Vidal 1999; Richards 2001; Bošković 2002; RAE-ASALE 2009, and references therein). However, although a sentence

like (1) is ruled out in an out-of-the-blue context, it considerably improves if certain discourse conditions are provided:

- (1) *Quién qué dijo? (Spanish)
 who.nom what.acc said.3.sg
 ‘Who said what?’

Here I argue that structures like (1) become grammatical under two types of licensing conditions. On the one hand, specific interpretive conditions are required—more precisely, (1) is licensed to express surprise or ask for repetition, not as a true question (unless background considerations take part in specific ways, as I show in section 3.2.). On the other hand, the cluster of wh-words must also obey morpho-phonological restrictions of the type Richards (2010) discusses.

Apart from its relevance to the study of Wh-movement (cf. Chomsky 1977; Cheng & Corver 2006), these facts are also important for the study of parametric variation. The data to be discussed fall outside the boundaries of customary Romance syntax—and that of micro-parametric studies too, simply because the MWM parameter is supposed to be set negatively. This tells us (at least) two things. First, a given linguistic phenomenon can be found even in languages where it is not expected (though in a restricted fashion; cf. Mateu 2012; Svenonius & Son 2008). Second, the role played by

the interfaces is much more active than the original formulation of Principles and Parameters framework led us to believe (cf. Chomsky 2004, 2010).

Discussion is divided as follows. Section 2 reviews the previous discussion on MWM in Spanish. In section 3 I discuss the licensing conditions that MWM imposes, focusing on the interpretive factors. Section 4 provides an analysis of MWM based on Richards' (2010) Distinctness, an interface condition banning linearization statements containing objects that cannot be identified as different. Finally, section 5 summarizes the main conclusions.

2. Background discussion: the facts

With the exception of Romanian, Romance languages can only front one wh-phrase in interrogative sentences. If more than one is merged, then all but one stay in their first-Merge position—putting aside echo questions, where all wh-phrases can stay *in situ*. This state of affairs is well-known, and in fact there is no reference to MWM, which seems to be an exotic pattern, restricted to languages of the Slavic family (Bulgarian, Serbo-Croatian, or Russian; cf. Rudin 1988; Richards 2001; Bošković 2002; Chernova 2015, and much related work):

- (2) a. Koj kogo vižda? (Bulgarian)
 who.nom who.acc see.3.sg

‘Who sees whom?’ [from Rudin 1988: 472]

b. *Quién a quién ve? (Spanish)

who.nom A who.acc see.3.sg

‘Who sees whom?’

Perhaps not surprisingly, the MWM pattern is not even mentioned in reference grammars of Spanish (cf. Escandell-Vidal 1999: §31.2.1.6; RAE-ASALE 2009: §§42.9ñ-s), where only multiple interrogative (MI) sentences of the (3) type are considered:

(3) Quién ve a quién? (Spanish)

who.nom see.3.sg A who.acc

‘Who sees whom?’

This hegemonic view notwithstanding, the possibility that Spanish displays a restricted version of MWM has occasionally been considered. The first one to discuss this pattern in an explicit fashion is Campos (1999), who makes a brief comment on MWM while addressing some asymmetries between English and Spanish. According to Campos (1999), what makes MWM possible is specificity: only specific wh-phrases, headed by *cuál* (Eng. ‘which’), license MWM.

(4) a. *Quién a quién crees que vio? (Spanish)

who.nom A who.acc think.2.sg that saw.3.sg

‘Who do you think saw who?’

b. Cuál profesor a cuál estudiante (Spanish)

which teacher.nom A which student.acc

crees que vio?

think.2.sg that saw.3.sg

‘Which teacher do you think saw which student?’

[from Campos 1999: 333]

In the context of a broader study on adjuncts, Uriagereka (2005) provides the pair below to indicate that MWM is better with arguments than it is with adjuncts (an asymmetry reminiscent of the claims made by Torrego 1984 and Suñer 1994 in a different context).¹

(5) a. (?)No sé [CP quién a quién (Spanish)

not know who.nom to who.dat

ha enviado una carta]

¹ Uriagereka (2005) further argues that MWM is better under embedding. However, there does not seem to be much of a difference between (i) and (ii) in my idiolect:

(i) (?)No sé [CP quién a quién ha enviado una carta] (Spanish)

not know who.nom to who.dat have.3.sg sent a letter

‘I don’t know who to whom has sent a letter’

(ii) (?)¿Quién a quién ha enviado una carta? (Spanish)

who.nom to who.dat have.3sg sent a letter.acc

‘Who sent a letter to whom?’

- have.3.sg sent a letter.acc
 ‘I don’t know who to whom has sent a letter’
- b. *No sé [CP por qué cómo (Spanish)
 not know.1.sg for what.acc how
 han derrotado al Barcelona]
 have defeated A-the Barcelona.acc
 ‘I don’t know why how they have defeated Barcelona’
 [from Uriagereka 2005: 14]

Finally, Etxepare & Uribe-Etxebarria (2005) also observe that MWM is to some extent possible. Quite importantly, these authors argue that for MWM to be possible, the wh-phrases must be “strongly stressed” (which I signal with capital letters), an aspect that we will delve into in the next section. They provide the following example:

- (6) (?)QUÉ_i A QUIÉN_j dices [CP que le (Spanish)
 what.acc to whom.dat say.2.sg that to.him
 ha regalado Juan t_i t_j]?
 have.3.sg bought Juan
 ‘What do you say that Juan has bought to whom?’
 [from Etxepare & Uribe-Etxebarria 2005: 13-14]

Etxepare & Uribe-Etxebarria (2005) suggest a correlation between

phonological stress and MWM, but no specific details about this phonology-syntax interaction are offered (a clear indication that discussing MWM is not the goal of their paper). In fact, it is worth keeping in mind that none of these works are in-depth investigations of MWM, so reference to this pattern is done in passing. In the next section I discuss the ingredients required by MWM in Spanish, and consider their connection to the observations made in Campos (1999), Uriagereka (2005), and Etxepare & Uribe-Etxebarria (2005).

3. Licensing conditions of multiple wh-movement

We have just seen that MWM, though ruled out in Spanish under standard circumstances, is possible if certain conditions are met. In this section I would like to explore what those conditions are more precisely. A first question to ask is whether the key to license MWM is to be found in the syntax or the interfaces. I take the general ban on MWM to indicate that the relevant licensing conditions cannot be syntactic, and must thus have a different source.

As I show in the following pages, the source is interpretive but crucially morpho-phonological too—therefore, not a case of metalinguistic production, which can indeed license almost anything. I approach the interpretive conditions from the point of view of the cartographic project

(cf. Belletti 2004; Cinque 1999; Rizzi 1997, 2004, 2006; Poletto 2000, and references therein) where discourse conditions (background or new information) can readily captured by the syntactic representation (cf. Rizzi 1997, 2004; Poletto & Munaro 2012, and references therein).

As for the morpho-phonological conditions, I adopt the idea that interface conditions play a role in order to filter out the form of syntactic outputs (cf. Chomsky 1995; López 2009; Richards 2010).

3.1. Licensing conditions: the role of Case

In section 2 we saw that Campos (1999) first, and Uriagereka (2005) later, related MWM to interpretive factors, namely specificity and argumenthood. Specificity seems to be largely irrelevant, at least to speakers of my own dialect: European Spanish (E.Spanish, henceforth). Thus, there seems to be no substantial contrast between the pairs below: both are equally bad (or good).²

(7) a. *Quién a quién vio? (E.Spanish)

who.nom A who.acc saw.3.sg

² The grammaticality judgments for the sentences in this section were collected from a group of 56 native speakers of European Spanish (35 of them were 18-23 years old, and the other 21 were between 50 and 60; 35 females, 21 males). On average, only 2.5% gave judgments different from the ones indicated here. As for American Spanish, the speakers I have consulted seem to share the same intuitions, especially when it comes to discarding the asymmetry provided by Héctor Campos.

‘Who saw who?’

b. *Cuál a cuál vio? (E.Spanish)

which.nom A which.acc saw.3.sg

‘Which one saw which one?’

The argumental status of *wh*-phrases seems to be more relevant than specificity, on the other hand, as the contrast below reveals. Nonetheless, we should make a twofold distinction in this respect. On the one hand, MWM with arguments is in general better than it is with adjuncts and mixed patterns, an asymmetry reminiscent of ECP effects (cf. Lasnik & Saito 1992):

(8) a. *Quién qué dijo? (E.Spanish)

who.nom what.acc said.3.sg

‘Who said what?’

b. **Qué cuándo dijo Luis? (E.Spanish)

what.acc when said.3.sg Luis

‘What did say Luis when?’

c. **Cómo cuándo dijo eso Luis? (E.Spanish)

how when said.3.sg that Luis

‘How did Luis say that when?’

On the other hand, MWM with arguments displaying a PF-relevant different morphology seems to be much better—in fact, this will be the pattern I

return to in section 3.2:³

- (9) a. *Quién qué dijo? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom what.acc said.3.sg
 ‘Who said what?’
- b. ?Quién a quién vio? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom A who.acc saw.3.sg
 ‘Who saw who?’

In Uriagereka (2005), it is pointed out that the contrasts become more perspicuous in embedded contexts, presumably because root-like (residual V2) factors are weakened. However, the same contrasts seem to be found in both root and embedded contexts:

- (10) a. ?Nadie sabe [CP quién_i a quién_j vio t_i t_j] (E.Spanish)
 nobody know.3.sg who.nom A who.acc saw.3.sg
 ‘Nobody knows who saw who’
- b. *Nadie sabe [CP quién_i qué_j dijo t_i t_j] (E.Spanish)
 nobody know.3.sg who.nom what.acc said.3.sg

³ The judgments in (9) are relative, not absolute. That is to say, speakers agree that there is a difference between (9a) and (9b), but if the latter sentence is uttered in an out-of-the-blue scenario, it is also deviant. As I discuss in section 3.2, (9b) is fine if uttered as a presupposed (pair/single-list) or amazement question—that is, as a non-true question.

‘Nobody knows who said what’

c. **Nadie sabe [_{CP} cómo_i cuándo_j dijo eso Luis t_i t_j] (E.Spanish)

nobody know.3.sg how when said.3.sg that Luis

‘Nobody knows when Luis said that how’

Notice that the morphology that is key for MWM to be licensed is Case, not ϕ -features. Otherwise, we would expect the data in (11), which show a number-based asymmetry (gender is not expressed in wh-words), to be possible.⁴

(11) a. *Quiénes qué dijeron? (E.Spanish)

who.pl.nom what.sg.acc said.3.pl

‘Who said what?’

b. *Quién qué cosas vio? (E.Spanish)

who.sg.nom what things.pl.acc saw.3.sg

‘Who saw what things?’

What seems to be relevant for MWM is, therefore, Case morphology. In (9b), Case is expressed by the dative preposition that characterizes DOM (cf. Leonetti 2004; Torrego 1998; López 2012), but similar results obtain with other prepositions:

⁴ As noted by Richards (2010: 50), languages of the Serbo-Croatian type behave similarly, for a difference on ϕ -features does not allow for multiple wh-phrases to be brought together if they have the same Case.

- (12) a. ?Quién de qué se ha quejado? (E.Spanish)
 who of what SE have.3.sg complained
 ‘Who has complained about what?’
- b. ?Quién con quién ha hablado? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom with who have.3.sg spoken
 ‘Who has spoken to whom?’

Quite importantly, the amelioration of sentences like (9b), (12a), and (12b) disappears if the order of the wh-phrases is reversed, as shown in (13). This indicates that whatever the role of morphology is, it must also be sensitive to linear order:

- (13) a. *A quién quién vio? (E.Spanish)
 A who.acc who.nom saw.3.sg
 ‘Who saw who?’
- b. *De qué quién se ha quejado? (E.Spanish)
 of what who.nom SE have.3.sg complained
 ‘Who has complained about what?’
- c. *Con quién quién ha hablado? (E.Spanish)
 with who who.nom have.3.sg spoken
 ‘Who has spoken to whom?’

Descriptively, what the facts show can be expressed as in (14):^{5, 6}

- (14) MWM in Spanish
- a. Under MWM, the linear order <Wh, P, Wh> is possible
 - b. Under MWM, the linear order <P, Wh, Wh> is not possible

Of course, (14) does not *explain* why linear order should matter for MWM to be licensed, but it suffices to capture the asymmetries we have seen. To recap so far, although neither specificity nor the argument vs. adjunct distinction is directly relevant for MWM, the morphological Case of the wh-phrases seems to be. I go back to (14) in section 4. Meanwhile, I turn attention to those scenarios making MWM possible in Spanish, which, as noted, are not amenable to true-question interpretation (though see next section, where I consider background conditions in more details), but to questions of the echo sort.

3.2. *Licensing conditions: the background*

⁵ The facts that (14) is meant to cover seem to be related to the observation that obligatory inversion is not mandatory with certain PPs (cf. Torrego 1984; Uriagereka 1988; Gallego 2010). I put aside the specifics of such interaction in the present study.

⁶ I assume that P in (14) also covers Case markers participating in Differential Object Marking. Following López (2012) and Richards (2010) I take DOM-ed internal arguments to be K(ase)Ps.

As already mentioned, the standard descriptive work on Spanish is accurate: MWM is impossible. What I have been pointing out all along is that this only holds for out-of-the-blue questions, not for echo questions (EQ) or even true questions with a previous background. In particular, I claim that MWM in Spanish is possible under specific discourse conditions, displaying both true and echo interpretations. Therefore, a question like (15a) cannot be uttered in a context where the speaker does not know who said what: (15b) must be used instead.

- (15) a. *Quién qué ha dicho? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom what.acc have.3.sg said
 ‘Who said what?’
- b. Quién ha dicho qué? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom have.3.sg said what.acc
 ‘Who said what?’

Now, imagine you witness the following (and rather surprising) assertion, which provides us with the relevant background to react and ask back. In this context, (15b) is still possible, but so is (15a), crucially:⁷

⁷ The first pattern seems to align with what Escandell-Vidal (1999: §61.5.1.1.) dubs “summing-up echo questions,” since speaker B expresses her/his reaction to what speaker A said (surprise). Importantly, the informational packaging of speaker A’s utterance is not kept intact. A *bona fide* “summing-up echo question” would be closer to the following:

- (16) A: Zapatero ahora dice que (E.Spanish)
 Zapatero now say.3.sg that
 había armas en Irak
 there-be.3.sg weapons in Irak
 ‘Zapatero now says that there were weapons in Irak’
- B: Cómo? Quién QUÉ ha dicho? (E.Spanish)
 how who.nom what.acc have.3.sg said
 ‘What? Who said what?’

Notice the capital letters in QUÉ (Eng. ‘what’), which I use to indicate contrastive accent in the second wh-word, for it seems necessary to license MWM. This is important, as it turns out. The reader may in fact remember that a #Wh Wh# sequence is ruled out (cf. (14)), but it is somehow possible in (16). We will see why in section 4.2. Also important is the fact that this is not a true question: B heard the assertion A uttered perfectly, but she cannot believe that a given person (the former President of Spain, in the case at hand) said that there were weapons in Irak. Put differently, what surprises B is the ‘what’ more than the ‘who.’

A relevant question is what position the second wh-phrase is

-
- (i) ¿Cómo? ¿Que Zapatero ha dicho qué? (E.Spanish)
 how that Zapatero have.3.sg said what.acc
 ‘What? Zapatero has said what?’

occupying, assuming a unique [Spec, CP] position for languages of the Romance type. Although a more specific answer is provided in section 4.3, notice that such position appears to be available for contrastive (corrective) focus, as the following shows (strong stress in the focused element is necessary, as before):

- (17) A: María ha comido (E.Spanish)
 María have.3.sg eaten
 esta asquerosidad [showing something disgusting]
 this (disgusting) thing
 ‘María has eaten this disgusting thing’
- B: Cómo? Quién {QUÉ / ?ESO} ha comido? (E.Spanish)
 how who.nom what.acc that have.3.sg eaten
 ‘What? Who has eaten that?’

Similar MWM examples can be constructed, always involving non-true question interpretations. Consider the example in (18), where what surprises B is the indirect object (IO) in the sentence asserted by A. This is what makes the IO occupy the second position and bear contrastive accent:

- (18) A: Sarkozy le dijo (E.Spanish)
 Sarkozy to.him said.3.sg
 a Strauss Khan que le admiraba
 to Straus Khan that to.him admired.3.sg
 ‘Sarkozy told Strauss Khan that he admired him’
- B: Perdona, quién A QUIÉN (E.Spanish)
 sorry who.nom to who.dat
 dijo qué?
 said.3.sg what.acc
 ‘Sorry, who said what to whom?’

Most relevantly for our concerns, the context set by A above disallows the MWM pattern in (19), in accord with (14)—modulo (16), to which we return. This tells us that the wh-phrase that puzzles the speaker is the one that must occupy the second position.

- (19) *Quién qué dijo A QUIÉN? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom what.acc said.3sg to who.dat
 ‘Who said what to whom?’

For the punch line, notice that we must also note that MWM can be more complex. This can be seen with (20), where the surprise of B is increased by creating a threeway association among all the arguments.

- (20) A: Obama le dijo (E.Spanish)
 Obama to.him said.3.sg
 a Hugo Chavez que Bin Laden está vivo
 to Hugo Chavez that Bin Laden be.3.sg alive
 ‘Obama told Hugo Chavez that Bin Laden is alive’
- B: Cómo?! Quién QUÉ (E.Spanish)
 how who.nom what.acc
 A QUIÉN le dijo?
 to whom.dat to.him said.3.sg
 ‘What? Who said what to whom?’

All in all, the data above show that MWM in Spanish is possible if certain contextual conditions are met—similarly to what happens to other word orders that require contextual accommodation too (cf. Belletti 2004). We also saw that MWM in Spanish is not used to convey true questions, but actually questions of the echo type, expressing surprise by the speaker. Let me refer to this scenario as “EQ MWM.”

In the remainder of this section I would like to discuss a second scenario that licenses MWM in Spanish. To begin with, consider the following dialogue, given the background indicated:

(21) Background: The owner of a factory visits to check how everything is going, thinking that the working environment is ideal, every employee getting along with her workmates. When the owner meets the manager, the latter reports that some employees have complained about others.

Manager: Últimamente unos cuantos (E.Spanish)
 lately a some
 se han quejado de otros
 SE have.3.pl complained of others
 ‘Lately, some workers have complained about others’

Owner: A ver, me extraña: (E.Spanish)
 to see.inf to.me surprise.3.sg
 quién de quién se ha quejado?
 who of who SE has complained
 ‘Well, that’s weird: who has complained about whom?’

This time, the MWM in (21) does have a true question interpretation, for the owner does not know who complained about whom. Of course, the question must but associated with a presupposition that is dependent on the manager’s previous assertion—otherwise it is impossible. Importantly, and regardless of the interpretation, we see again that the order displayed by wh-phrases still obeys (14): (22) is not a possible MWM even with the same background:

- (22) *De quién quién se ha quejado? (E.Spanish)
of who who.nom SE have.3.sg complained
‘Who has complained about whom?’

Let us take stock. This section has explored the discourse conditions that are needed to license MWM in Spanish. We have seen that MWM is ruled out unless a certain background is used, allowing for MWM to be used to express true questions (with a strong presupposition) or echo questions. This raises different questions. A specific and a general one. The general one concerns the syntax-pragmatic interface, and boils down to what the limits are for contextual factors to ‘adjust’ syntactic constraints. We have seen that the use of MWM is not metalinguistic (certain orders are impossible, no matter the context), so the question is at right angles. The specific question is what the structure of MWM in Spanish is, assuming that this language has a unique [Spec, CP] position. I address the latter question in what follows.

4. A Distinctness-based account

This section argues that MWM in Spanish is licensed by a syntax-phonology interface condition. In particular, I submit that the MWM

patterns, apart from requiring a particular licensing context, must comply with Richards' (2010) Distinctness condition on linearization.

4.1. *MWM and Distinctness*

We have just discussed that MWM in Spanish can display both true and echo interpretations, discourse conditions being crucial in any event. We also argued that the syntactic disposition of wh-words is in accord with the descriptive generalization in (14), repeated here for convenience:

- (23) MWM in Spanish
- a. Under MWM, the linear order <Wh, P, Wh> is possible
 - b. Under MWM, the linear order <P, Wh, Wh> is not possible

The previous section showed that (23) can be circumvented if the second wh-phrase receives contrastive stress. Consequently, the following scenarios seem to be syntactically possible in the MWM pattern we are considering:

- (24) a. Wh P Wh . . .
- b. Wh (P) WH . . .

The availability of the options in (24) poses some questions. We should, to begin with, find out the parameter making MWM possible in Spanish in the

first place. I have insisted that MWM is allowed under rather specific discourse circumstances, but this is not enough: There must also be a parameter allowing (24) in Spanish, and not other Romance languages—Catalan, for instance, seems to impose more severe constraints on MWM, a situation that is reminiscent of a more limited word order flexibility of these Romance cognates.⁸

The syntax of multiple wh-languages has been explored in detail in the literature of the past decades, but an account based on customary parameters (e.g., [±MFS] [±CP/IP absorption], or [±focus movement]; cf. Rudin 1988; Bošković 2002; Richards 1997, 2001, and references therein) does not seem to be directly relevant here. A safer route of action, I believe, is to relate the restricted availability of MWM to a more general property of Spanish, namely its weakly configurational nature (cf. Uriagereka 1995; Zubizarreta 1998; Ordóñez 1997, among others).

⁸ Although Catalan speakers notice the contrast between (i) and (ii) below, which replicate Spanish (12a) and (13b) above, they point out that (i) is considerably contrived, even if the relevant discourse accommodation is provided.

- (i) ??/*Qui de què s' ha queixat? (Catalan)
 who of what SE have.3.sg complained
 ‘Who has complained about what?’
- (ii) **De què qui s' ha queixat? (Catalan)
 of what who.nom SE have.3.sg complained
 ‘Who has complained about what?’

Although more empirical work is needed in this area, these results are not unexpected, as they point to well-known parametric differences between Romance languages (cf. Gallego 2013; Uriagereka 1995, and references therein).

In particular, I would like to relate the richer CP syntax that is needed for MWM to a richer vP syntax, displaying more word order options (cf. Ordóñez 1997; Zubizarreta 1998; Gallego 2013 for details and references). If this is on track, whatever allows MWM must be something that the syntax of Spanish already has—plausibly associated to rich overt morphology, an old idea that has been exploited in the case of pro-drop (cf. Rizzi 1982; Uriagereka 1995; Biberauer et al. 2010). As a rough approximation, let me formulate this as (25).⁹

(25) If an SVO language allows VOS and VSO, it allows MWM^C

The “C” in (25) is meant to capture that MWM requires contextual accommodation, which plays a clear (and key) ameliorating effect. This is expected if, as in the case of other word order phenomena, we are dealing with the syntax-discourse interface. If we go back to the data, we see that (25) merely states that MWM is possible, but it is silent with respect to the grammatical conditions that must be met. These were described in (24),

⁹ A reviewer observes that (25) may be too strong, since European Portuguese does not allow MWM, although it licenses VOS and VSO under some circumstances. The fact that E. Portuguese behaves more like Spanish than Catalan or Italian is consistent with the facts behind Uriagereka’s (1988, 1995) and Raposo & Uriagereka’s (2005) work. At the same time, it has been noted that the word order options of this language are not entirely analogous to Spanish, which would account for the relevant asymmetry (cf. Gallego 2013, where it is argued that Catalan also licenses VOS, but through a different strategy from the one Spanish displays).

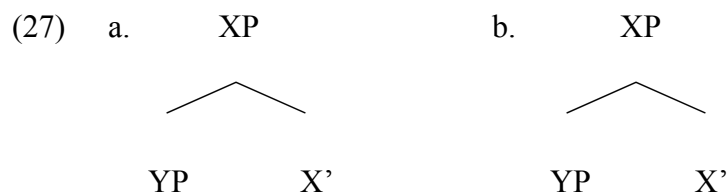
which we associated to Case in section 3.1. I would like to argue that (24) can be subsumed under a more general syntax-phonology condition about linearization. In particular, I assume that (24) follows from what Richards (2010) calls “Distinctness” (DIS henceforth):

(26) Distinctness

If a linearization statement $\langle \alpha, \alpha \rangle$ is generated,

the derivation crashes [from Richards 2010: 5]

As Richard (2010) points out, DIS rejects syntactic outputs in which two constituents of the same type are subject to Transfer (Chomsky 2004) within the same phase-domain. Notice that DIS is stronger than Kayne’s (1994) LCA, for the former already operates on objects that stand in an asymmetric c-command relation, ruling out those that are “of the same type.” So, Kayne’s (1994) LCA could in principle linearize $\langle YP, YP \rangle$ in (27a) and $\langle YP, ZP \rangle$ in (27b), but DIS would block the former linearization statement, given that YP and YP are of the same type.¹⁰



¹⁰ I assume standard label-based notation for the purposes of this paper, as the same observations can be made in a label-free system (cf. Collins 2002; Chomsky 2013).



PF linearization: <YP, YP> PF linearization: <YP, ZP>

LCA compatible LCA compatible

DIS non-compatible DIS compatible

YP asymmetrically c-commands YP in (27a), and it does ZP in (27b). That should be enough to grant the linearization of the terminal nodes contained within XP. It is under Kayne's (1994) proposal, but not under Richards' (2010) Distinctness. In support of his proposal, Richards (2010) provides convincing evidence from different domains (ellipsis, DOM, causatives, MWM, etc.) that something like DIS can account for the ungrammaticality of structures displaying constituents that are too similar. In this respect, Richards (2010: 5) conjectures that statements like <YP, YP> are uninterpretable, "perhaps because the linearization algorithm regards them as self-contradictory instructions to make nodes precede themselves."¹¹

It is important to bear in mind that DIS operates within certain

¹¹ The literature contains different conditions that have a flavor similar to DIS, going from Rizzi's (1990) Relativized Minimality to Abels (2003) Anti-locality, and of course Kayne's (1994) LCA itself. In all these proposals, something goes wrong, either in the syntax or at some interface, if two elements 'too similar' are together (an OCP effect; cf. van Riemsdijk 2008 and references therein). Cf. Colomina (2016) for up-to-date discussion, paying special attention to clitic clusters in Iberian Romance.

derivational windows, as it only affects whatever is transferred to the phonological interface (what Chomsky 2004 calls “complement domain”). This predicts that $\langle YP \dots YP \rangle$ will be licensed if the “[...]” part contains a phase boundary. More precisely, a phase-based account for DIS like Richards’ (2010) makes a series of predictions, which we can express as specific constraints, being instantiations of DIS. Consider (28) in this respect, taking P and N to stand for “phase” and “non-phase” head respectively.

- (28) a. $*[YP [YP P [\dots]]]$
 (YP and YP in the same transfer-domain)
- b. $*[P [YP [N YP]]]$
 (YP and YP in the same transfer-domain)
- c. $[P [YP [P YP]]]$
- d. $[YP [P [YP P [\dots]]]]$

Having introduced Richards’ (2010) DIS, let us see how this interface condition on linearization fits with the empirical evidence we considered in section 2.

4.2. Potential problems

By the logic of DIS, we should expect that linearization statements where the label of the wh-phrases is different to be licensed. This is largely

consistent with the first case of (14a), given that two [+wh] DPs are not licensed in Spanish MWM, but a DP and a PP are. This suffices to account for (9) and (12), repeated here as (29) and (30) (I use italic letters in the relevant wh-constituents):

- (29) a. **Quién* *qué* dijo? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom what.acc said.3.sg
 ‘Who said what?’
- b. ?*Quién* *a* *quién* vio? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom A who.acc saw.3.sg
 ‘Who saw who?’
- (30) a. ?*Quién* *de* *qué* se ha quejado? (E.Spanish)
 who of what SE have.3.sg complained
 ‘Who has complained about what?’
- b. ?*Quién* *con* *quién* ha hablado? (E.Spanish)
 who with who have.3.sg spoken
 ‘Who has spoken to whom?’

Apart from the examples in (29) and (30), there are two variants of MWM that are not, it would appear, consistent with what Richards’ (2010) DIS can buy us. These involve cases where the order of the wh-phrases above is

reversed and where the second wh-phrase is identical (has the same label), but is strongly stressed. Examples of each case are in (31):

(31) a. **A quién quién vio?* (E.Spanish)

A who.acc who.nom saw.3.sg

‘Who saw who?’

b. *Cómo? Quién QUÉ ha dicho?* (E.Spanish)

how who.nom what.acc have.3.sg said

‘What? Who said what?’

The problem in (31a) is that $\langle \text{DP}, \text{KP} \rangle$ (cf. note 6) should be as easily linearizable as $\langle \text{KP}, \text{DP} \rangle$, but it is not. As for (31b), as noted in section 3, it is not immediately obvious how (31b) is licensed, given that the linearization statement is presumably of the $\langle \text{DP}, \text{DP} \rangle$ form. To these cases, we have one final scenario that does not immediately follow from DIS, namely adjuncts. In section 2 we saw that MWM is ruled out in general in the case of adjuncts. The status of (8c), repeated as (32), was considered ungrammatical—in fact, much worse than (29a):

(32) ***Cómo cuándo dijo eso Luis?* (E.Spanish)

how when said.3.sg that Luis

‘How did Luis say that when?’

On a closer look, (32) is not actually problematic for a DIS-based approach to MWM. (33) is, though, for only it contains a linearization statement with two distinct labels, AdvP and PP. Also importantly, note that (33) is ruled out even if an appropriate context is provided:

- (33) A: Juan bailó desnudo (E.Spanish)
 Juan danced.3.sg naked
 en la tele porque perdió la apuesta
 in the TV because lost.3.sg the bet
 ‘Juan danced naked on TV because he lost the bet’
- B: **Dónde por qué* bailó Juan desnudo? (E.Spanish)
 where for what danced.3.sg Juan naked
 ‘Where did Juan dance why?’

Let us proceed step by step in order to tackle the facts in (31) through (33). Though different at first glance, I would like to provide a unitary solution for two of these cases. The idea I want to embrace is provided by Richards (2010: §2.3.), who argues that the label of a syntactic object may be determined by some feature (what is called “sublabel” in Chomsky 1995: 268).¹² Let us then slightly modify the definition of DIS as in (34):

- (34) Distinctness (final version)

¹² This proposal is also adopted by Chomsky (2013, 2015) for independent reasons.

If a linearization statement $\langle \alpha, \alpha \rangle$ is generated,

the derivation crashes

[α is the label or sublabel (feature) of a syntactic object]

The main advantage of this more fine-grained conception of DIS is that it can scan the internal structure of labels, so that certain features (Q, Case, number, focus, etc.) are relevant to determine whether A and B are distinct. This is enough to account for cases (31b) and (33), under the assumption that *quién QUÉ* (Eng. ‘who WHAT’) are featurally different and *dónde por qué* (Eng. ‘where WHY’) are featurally identical.

In the first case, I submit that the distinction arises from the assignment of a focus feature to QUÉ, which will make the projection of this wh-phrase different.¹³ In the second case, I follow different authors (cf. Mateu 2002; Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2002, 2004; Svenonius 2007, 2008) in the idea that PPs and AdvPs are morphological manifestations of the same abstract structure displaying a preposition.¹⁴ The upshot of all this

¹³ Notice that the outcome is the same, regardless of whether the feature is assigned in the syntax or the PF component. For concreteness, I assume that [+focus] feature is assigned in the syntax, following Rizzi (1997, 2004) and Irurtzun (2007).

¹⁴ Alternatively, one may simply assume that adverbs are intransitive prepositions, a fairly standard idea (cf. Jackendoff 1977, 1983); if so, then what appears to be $\langle \text{AdvP}, \text{PP} \rangle$ is actually $\langle \text{PP}, \text{PP} \rangle$. A reviewer argues that the intransitive preposition analysis would be too strong if applied to all prepositions, and mentions the cases of Portuguese *perto de* (Eng. ‘close to’) and *longe de* (Eng. ‘distant from’). However, I

is that DIS can be calculated over labels alone, or their features. This yields a double strategy to apply Richards' (2010) DIS, as depicted in (35):

- (35) Distinctness abiding strategies
- a. Label-based distinctness:
 - i. $\langle XP, YP \rangle$
 - ii. $*\langle XP, XP \rangle$
 - b. Sublabel-based distinctness:
 - i. $\langle XP, XP_F \rangle$
 - ii. $*\langle XP_F, XP_F \rangle$

Now, this makes the prediction that MWM could affect adjuncts as long as they are with respect to some feature. The simplest way to test this is to go back to (33) and add focus. As expected, the outcome is much better:

- (36) A: Juan bailó desnudo (E.Spanish)
 Juan danced.3.sg naked
 en la tele porque perdió la apuesta
 in the TV because lost.3.sg the bet
 'Juan danced naked on TV because he lost the bet'
- B: *Dónde POR QUÉ* bailó Juan desnudo (E.Spanish)
 where for what danced.3.sg Juan naked
 'Where did Juan dance WHY?'

think the proposal carries over to these cases too, since adverbs can dispense with their complement (which is always syntactically optional).

Before concluding, we must also explain what the problem with (31a) is. Notice that features will not be able to handle the facts this time, for arguably we have the same features in <Quién, a Quién> and <a Quién, Quién>. I would like to suggest that the problem with the former linearization statement is ruled out not because of a PF constraint, but because it displays a Superiority effect (cf. Chomsky 1973). If correct, this further indicates that wh-features are visible even if the wh-phrases are introduced by a preposition, as deviance obtains with different types of adjuncts, as we already noted in (13), repeated here for convenience.¹⁵

(37) a. *A quién quién vio? (E.Spanish)

A who.acc who.nom saw.3.sg

‘Who saw who?’

b. *De qué quién se ha quejado? (E.Spanish)

of what who.nom SE have.3.sg complained

‘Who has complained about what?’

c. *Con quién quién ha hablado? (E.Spanish)

with who who.nom have.3.sg spoken

‘Who has spoken to whom?’

¹⁵ The visibility of the Q-feature could be accounted for without a percolation mechanism, as in Cable (2010).

Let us stop here. In this section we have seen how Richards' (2010) DIS can be applied to the Spanish data. We have argued that DIS must sometimes be able to see not only the label of a constituent, but also its sublabels (features) in order to account for certain patterns that would not be excluded by the formulation in (26).

5. The position occupied by non-first wh-phrases in MWM

Once we have seen how the licensing mechanisms of MWM operate, in this final section I would like to address a key matter of this syntactic pattern: what positions non-first wh-phrases occupy. The answer may seem straightforward, but note that even assuming a full-fledged split version of the CP, it is not obvious where these XPs are, given standard constraints of non-MWM languages, which can displace only one wh-phrase. Given the key role played by context in the licensing of MWM, I argue that the first wh-phrase moves to [Spec, CP], the standard position of interrogative operators, whereas any other wh-phrase moves to the specifier of Uriagereka's (1995) FP:

$$(38) \quad [_{CP} \text{ Wh (1) C } [_{FP} \text{ Wh (1+) F } [_{TP} \text{ T . . . }]]]$$

Although I assume (38) here, the approach can be translated into more orthodox cartographic terms by replacing C and F by Force (or Int) and Focus (cf. Rizzi 2004) or C and Fin (cf. López 2009), nothing hinges on the specific labels we use. Likewise, one could argue that multiple specifiers of the CP layer can be licensed under MWM.¹⁶

In Uriagereka (1995), FP is defined as a projection that encodes syntax-pragmatics phenomena of the topic-focus sort, and is crucially active in Romance languages—in fact, Uriagereka (1995) shows that it is more active in the case of western varieties (like Spanish, Galician, and Portuguese), which fits with the evidence we have seen so far (see section 4.1.). I further assume that FP can resort to multiple specifiers (cf. Raposo & Uriagereka 2005 for additional supporting evidence), which allows us to account for the fact that MWM can front more than two wh-phrases (as long as DIS is satisfied).¹⁷

There are three strong empirical arguments in favor of the analysis in (38). The first one comes from obligatory subject inversion (cf. Torrego's

¹⁶ These options are discussed in Gallego (2009, in progress) and Bañeras (2016).

¹⁷ A reviewer points out that an analysis with two independent projections (CP and FP) is different from a proposal where multiple specifiers are licensed by the same operator. Although I do not elaborate on the semantic analysis here, I assume that all the wh-phrases are bound by a Q operator located in C. As I noted in the text, the proposal can be readily recast under an analysis where C licenses multiple specifiers, an option that seems to be reinforced by empirical evidence (especially so in the case of DIS compliance, given that FP would in principle be transferred with the TP in Chomsky's 2000, 2004 Phase Theory).

1984 verb preposing rule), which is taken to involve verb movement to F (or C). Notice that preverbal subjects are ruled out in MWM (cf. (39)), just like it is in standard cases of wh-movement (cf. (40)):¹⁸

- (39) Qué a quién (?*María) ha enviado (María)? (E.Spanish)
 what.acc to who.dat María have.3.sg sent María
 ‘What has María sent to whom?’

- (40) Qué libro (*María) ha leído (María)? (E.Spanish)
 what book María have.3.sg read María
 ‘What book has María read?’

A second piece of evidence comes from crossover effects. As is well-known wh-movement over a bound pronoun yields deviance after wh-movement:

- (41) *A quién_i regañó su_i madre? (E.Spanish)
 A who.acc scolded.3.sg her mother
 ‘Who did her mother scold?’

Now, interestingly, the same happens in MWM scenarios:

¹⁸ Similar results are obtained in the case of clitic left dislocation, which cannot appear after (the cluster of) wh-phrases (cf. Rizzi 1997).

- (42) *Qué a quién_i regaló su_i madre? (E.Spanish)
 what.acc A who.dat gave.3.sg her mother
 ‘Who did her mother gave to whom?’

The final argument comes from multiple sluicing (cf. Lasnik 2014; Rodrigues et al. 2006, and references therein). As (43) shows, this type of sluicing is possible with both one and more wh-phrases:

- (43) a. Alguien criticó al director, (E.Spanish)
 someone criticized.3.sg A.the chair
 pero no sé quién
 but not know.1.sg who.nom
 ‘Someone criticized the chair, but I don’t know who’
- b. Alguien criticó a alguien, (E.Spanish)
 someone criticized.3.sg A someone
 pero no sé quién a quién
 but not know.3.sg who.nom A who.acc
 ‘Someone criticized someone, but I don’t know who who’

Importantly, multiple sluicing seems to obey DIS. This is observed by Richards (2010) for English, but similar effects are found in Spanish. In particular, Lasnik (2014) notes that, in multiple sluicing “there is one additional requirement [...] The second wh strongly prefers to be a PP” (p. 8).

- (44) a. ?Someone talked about something, but I can't remember
who about what
b. ?*Someone saw something, but I can't remember who what
[from Lasnik 2014: 8]
- (45) a. I know everyone danced with someone, but I don't know
who with whom
b. *I know everyone insulted someone, but I don't know
who whom [from Richards 2010: 8]
- (46) a. Alguien habló de algo, (E.Spanish)
someone talked.3.sg of something
pero no recuerdo quién de qué
but not remember.1.sg who.nom of who
'Someone talked about something, but I don't remember
who about whom'
- b. *?Alguién vio algo, pero (E.Spanish)
someone saw.3.sg something but
no recuerdo quién qué
not remember.1.sg who.nom what.acc
'Someone saw something, but I don't remember who what'

Importantly, Lasnik (2014) puts forward an analysis that does not involve movement of the second wh-phrase to the left periphery, but rightward focus movement (that is, extraposition) plus TP deletion. This analysis can be depicted as in (47):

- (47) but I can't remember [_{CP} what_i [_{TP} Peter talked
about t_i t_j] to whom_j]

Lasnik (2014) provides one argument against a *bona fide* leftwards movement account. As this author notes, wh-phrases in multiple sluicing cannot be separated by a tensed clause in English, an option that is readily available in MWM languages. Thus, notice that (48) is impossible, having *which student* and *to which professor* moving from different clauses:

- (48) *One of the students said that Mary spoke to one of the
professors, but I don't know *which student to which professor*
[from Lasnik 2014: 6]

Not surprisingly, the same holds for Spanish, one other non-MWM language:

- (49) *Un banquero dijo que Blesa (E.Spanish)
a banker said.3.sg that Blesa
habló con un ministro, pero no sé

talked.3.sg with a minister but not know.1.sg

qué banquero con qué ministro

which banker with which minister

‘A banker said that Blesa talked with a minister,

but I don’t know which with which’

The connection with extraposition is strengthened the moment that, first, wh-movement cannot cross one sentence (so-called Right Roof Constraint) and, secondly, it is preferred in the case of PPs:

- (50) a. Some students spoke t_i yesterday to some professors;
 b. *Some students said t_i [_{CP} that Mary would speak
 yesterday to some professors_i]] [from Lasnik 2014: 10]

- (51) a. Some students met t_i yesterday with some professors;
 b. ?*Some students met t_i yesterday some professors;
 [from Lasnik 2014: 10]

All of this raises the critical question whether MWM in Spanish can still be accounted for by movement to the CP layer, or requires extraposition instead. There are arguments in favor of a standard leftward movement account that are also consistent with the constraint in (48-49), which I take to be the most

serious problem for the analysis in (38).¹⁹ The first argument comes from the fact that MWM is licensed both locally and long-distance. We have considered local cases so far, but (52) shows a long-distance extraction case:

(52) A: Juan dijo que María había (E.Spanish)

Juan said.3.sg that María had.3.sg

comprado un Ferrari

bought a Ferrari

‘Juan said that María had bought a Ferrari’

B: [_{CP} Quién_i QUÉ_j dijo t_i (E.Spanish)

who.nom WHAT.acc said.3.sg

[_{CP} que había comprado María t_j]]?

that had.3.sg bought María

‘Who said that María bought WHAT?’

In fact, the very case of (49) can be used to illustrate that there is no specific ban on wh-moving a constituent from the matrix clause and another one from the embedded clause:

¹⁹ A reviewer points out that an analysis of focus à la Cinque (1993) further supports a standard leftward movement account. Cf. Irurtzun (2007) for some qualifications to Cinque’s (1993) proposal.

- (53) [CP Qué banquero_i CON QUÉ MINISTRO_j (E.Spanish)
 what banker WITH WHAT MINISTER
 dijo t_i [CP que Blesa había hablado t_j]]?
 said.3.sg that Blesa had.3.sg talked
 ‘Which banker said that Blesa had talked
 to WHICH MINISTER?’

Finally, notice that MWM is subject to weak islands, as expected if we are dealing with standard wh-movement. Thus, compare (54a) (51B, slightly modified) and (54b):

- (54) a. [CP Quién_i QUÉ_j dijo t_i [CP que (E.Spanish)
 who.nom WHAT.acc said.3.sg that
 le había comprado María t_j a Juan]]?
 to.him had.3.sg bought María to Juan
 ‘Who said that María had bought WHAT to Juan?’
- b. *[CP Quién_i QUÉ_j dijo t_i (E.Spanish)
 who.nom WHAT.acc said.3.sg
 [CP a quién le había comprado María t_j]]?
 to who to.him had.3.sg bought María
 ‘Who said that to whom María had bought WHAT?’

Apart from these arguments, we should keep in mind that Lasnik’s (2014) evidence not only concerns wh-movement alone, but ellipsis. In fact, applying a rightward movement approach to MWM would require additional *ad hoc* adjustments—more notably, rightward TP remnant movement, as illustrated in (55):

- (55) $?[_{CP} \text{ Quién}_i C [_{YP} [_{XP} t_{TP} a \text{ quién}_k] [_{TP} t_i \text{ vio } t_k]]]?$ (E.Spanish)
 who.nom A who.acc saw.3.sg
 ‘Who saw who?’

The question left unsolved is what makes it possible for Serbo-Croatian to generate the ungrammatical counterpart of English (48) and European Spanish (49).

- (56) a. Neko misli $[_{CP} \text{ da je } \text{ Ivan} \text{ (Serbo-Croatian)}$
 someone think.3.sg that be.3.sg Ivan
 nesto pojeo]
 something ate.3.sg
 ‘Someone thinks that Ivan ate something’
 b. $?Pitam \text{ se ko sta} \text{ (Serbo-Croatian)}$
 ask.3.sg self who what
 ‘I wonder who what’

[from Lasnik 2014: 7]

Lasnik (2014: 7) actually reports that judgments in this domain are subject to variation, for both English and Serbo-Croatian speakers. In the Spanish case, all informants reject the (49) pattern, so I leave for further research to determine what factor is responsible in the licensing of Serbo-Croatian (56).

6. Conclusions

This paper has explored the possibility that wh-movement (MWM) is to some extent available in Spanish, contrary to standard assumptions (cf. Escandell-Vidal 1999: §31.2.1.6; RAE-ASALE 2009: §§42.9ñ-s). I have argued that, although a sentence like (1) (repeated here as 57) is ruled out in Spanish, it can be licensed under certain circumstances.

- (57) *Quién qué dijo? (Spanish)
 who.nom what.acc said.3.sg
 ‘Who said what?’

Such circumstances are both related to interface conditions (in Chomsky’s 1995, 2000 sense). On the one hand, MWM is licensed if the relevant context is provided (it is impossible in an out-of-the-blue context). On the other hand, MWM requires for the relevant wh-phases must qualify as ‘distinct’ for the

morpho-phonological component, either at the label or sublabel level, as indicated in (35), which is reproduced below as (58):

- (58) Distinctness abiding strategies
- a. Label-based distinctness:
 - i. <XP, YP>
 - ii. *<XP, XP>
 - b. Sublabel-based distinctness:
 - i. <XP, XP_F>
 - ii. *<XP_F, XP_F>

The first clause of (58) can account for the fact that (59b) is better than (59a) (in the relevant context):

- (59) a. *Quién qué dijo? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom what.acc said.3.sg
 ‘Who said what?’
- b. ?Quién a quién vio? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom A who.acc saw.3.sg
 ‘Who saw who?’

Whereas the second clause covers cases where contrastive focus (which has a clear prosodic impact in the relevant constituent) makes an otherwise impossible case of MWM grammatical. Take (59a) itself, for instance, which can be ‘repaired’ by assigning contrastive focus to the second wh-word:

- (60) Quién QUÉ dijo? (E.Spanish)
 who.nom what.acc said.3.sg
 ‘Who said what?’

Although the conclusions are tentative (and a more careful and detailed empirical study is in order), I take these facts to open a promising line of research not only for wh-movement within Romance languages (short of Romanian), but also for parametric variation. What this investigation clearly indicates is that a pattern that was believed to be impossible for the grammar of certain languages becomes possible under certain circumstances. The next step is to investigate what those are, which clearly takes us to the realm of the interfaces and their role in allowing / blocking certain options, not only to distinguish language L_1 (dialect D_1) from language L_2 (dialect D_2), but also to evaluate the impact of interface conditions for MWM in certain varieties of Spanish. This goes beyond what Chomsky (1995, 2000) discusses, making interfaces much more intricate objects, ones that clearly have a bearing on nuances of the parametric sort.

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