

## How *Why* is Different: *Wh*-in-situ in Krachi

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Several varieties of *wh*-in-situ have been documented. One type is found in multiple questions in languages like English, where one *wh*- expression moves and the other remains in-situ. In languages like Chinese and Japanese, *wh*-in-situ is not limited to multiple questions. Languages that employ this strategy often have dedicated interrogative particles. A third variety is found in French, where the option to move or freeze the interrogative exists outside the domain of multiple questions and no overt question particle appears in the clause. Krachi, a Kwa language of Ghana, employs this strategy. As illustrated below, a *wh*- expression may either appear in-situ or in a left-peripheral position. When moved, the constituent accompanies the focus marker *jí*, which is also found outside interrogative clauses.

- (1) a.    **ɔʃíw**    ε-mò            **bwaté mòmò?**  
          woman 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST chicken which  
          ‘Which chicken did the woman kill?’
- b.    **Bwaté mòmò** jí ɔʃíw    ε-mò?  
          chicken which FOC woman 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST  
          ‘Which chicken did the woman kill?’

In Krachi, there is a striking asymmetry with respect to the merge possibilities of *wh*- constituents. Unlike all other interrogatives in the language, *why* may not appear in-situ. It must surface pre-verbally in a left-peripheral focus position.

- (2) a.    **Ŋse**    ε-mò            **bwatéó?**  
          who 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST chicken  
          ‘Who killed the chicken?’
- b.    **ɔʃíw**    ε-mò            **ne?**  
          woman 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST what  
          ‘What did the woman kill?’
- c.    **ɔʃíw**    ε-mò            **bwatéó nene?**  
          woman 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST chicken how  
          ‘How did the woman kill the chicken?’
- d.    **Nání** jí ɔʃíw    ε-mò            **bwatéó (\*nání)?**  
          why FOC woman 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST chicken why  
          ‘Why did the woman kill the chicken?’

Similar facts obtain in embedded domains, as illustrated below. Space limitations preclude an enriched paradigm, but see Kandybowicz & Torrence (2010) for a

comprehensive data set covering all *wh*- expressions and a variety of embedded contexts.

- (3) a. Fe nu fé ɔʃíw ε-mò ne?  
 2<sup>ND</sup>.SG hear COMP woman 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST what  
 'What did you hear that the woman killed?'
- b. Fe nu fé ɔʃíw ε-mò bwatéo nene?  
 2<sup>ND</sup>.SG hear COMP woman 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST chicken how  
 'How did you hear that the woman killed the chicken?'
- c. \*Fe nu fé ɔʃíw ε-mò bwatéo náni?  
 2<sup>ND</sup>.SG hear COMP woman 3<sup>RD</sup>.SG-kill.PST chicken why

This asymmetry suggests a fundamental difference between *why* and the other interrogatives of Krachi, namely, that *why* alone is native to the left periphery. This finding dovetails with similar asymmetries observed for *why* cross-linguistically. Rizzi (2001) argues that unlike other *wh*- expressions in Italian, *why* is base-generated in the left periphery and surfaces higher than the positions occupied by other moved interrogative constituents in the language. Ko (2005) shows that Korean *why* is base-merged in the left periphery and unlike other interrogatives in the language, does not undergo covert movement to the clausal edge. Buell (to appear) demonstrates that post-verbal *why* in Zulu occupies a structurally distinct (left-peripheral) position than the other post-verbal *wh*- expressions in the language that surface vP/TP-internally.

Krachi thus furnishes additional evidence that among *wh*- expressions, *why* is different. It does not have low or high merge variants, but is rather a dedicated peripheral operator.

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