

# Doubly Filled COMP in Czech and Slovenian interrogatives\*

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## 1 Introduction

interrogatives in Standard English:

- (1) a. **Which book did** she buy?
- b. **Did** she buy a book?
- c. I don't know **which book (\*that)** she bought.
- d. I don't know **if** she bought a book.

ban on the insertion of *that* in (1c): “Doubly Filled COMP Filter” prohibiting lexical material in both the specifier and the head of the same XP projection (Chomsky & Lasnik 1977: 446, see also Koopman 2000)

but: Doubly Filled COMP Filter not obeyed in main clause interrogatives – (1a) and (1b)

non-standard dialects show violations of the Doubly Filled COMP Filter (cf. the data in Baltin 2010):

- (2) I don't know **which book that** she bought.

similar patterns attested across Germanic

question: why Doubly Filled COMP patterns arise in Germanic and cross-linguistically

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proposal:

- Doubly Filled COMP patterns in Germanic: finite complementiser inserted to lexicalise [fin] in C, but lexicalisation can be carried out by other elements, too – insertion of *that* causes no interpretive differences
- lexicalisation requirement on [fin] more generally attested in the syntactic paradigm, related to the property of V2 and to T-to-C movement
- Slavic languages: no such lexicalisation requirement in general – insertion of a complementiser causes an interpretive difference (echo)
- *wh*-movement in Germanic driven by a [wh] feature on the C head, no such feature in Slavic Doubly Filled COMP structures

## 2 Doubly Filled COMP in Germanic

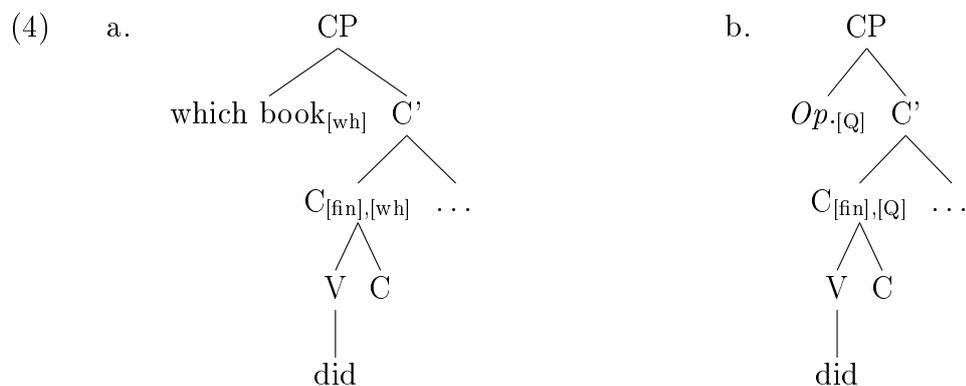
general idea (Bacskai-Atkari 2016a): C with [fin] specification regularly lexicalised

- English: applies to interrogatives (T-to-C movement)
- German: applies to declaratives as well (V2)

matrix interrogatives in English:

- (3) a. **Which book did** she buy?  
 b. **Did** she buy a book?

structures:



distinction between [wh] and [Q] – cf. Bayer (2004): [Q] essentially stands for disjunction; *wh*-elements are [Q] but not all element with [Q] specification are [wh] (see Bacskai-Atkari 2016b for Germanic)

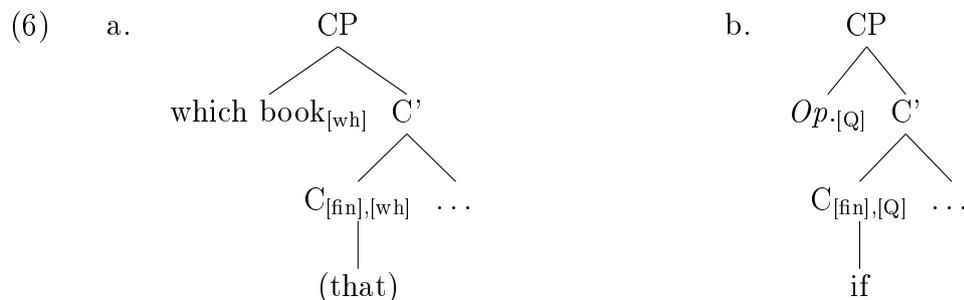
operator in (4b):

- overt or covert (corresponds to *whether*), marks the scope of a covert *or* (Larson 1985)
- inserted into [Spec,CP] (Bianchi & Cruschina 2016), hence no *wh*-movement necessary

embedded interrogatives in English:

- (5) a. I don't know **which book** (% **that**) she bought.  
 b. I don't know **if** she bought a book.

structures:



lexicalisation:

- verb movement – head adjunction – (4)
- insertion of an interrogative complementiser – (6b)
- insertion of the regular finite subordinator, if [wh] is checked off by an overt complementiser: in nonstandard varieties – (6a)
- lexicalisation generally attested in the syntactic paradigm, standard varieties in West Germanic have an exception in (6a) by not lexicalising the C head
- no insertion of an interrogative complementiser – feature checking would prevent movement of the *wh*-element, [Q] a subset of [wh]

insertion of the complementiser: in line with general V2 property (T-to-C in English) – no interpretive difference, several dialects show optionality

doubling possible in polar interrogatives as well (Bacskai-Atkari 2016c) – if operator overt; see Van Gelderen (2009) for modern substandard varieties

- (7) a. **Whether did** he open the Basket?  
 (*The Tryal of Thomas Earl of Macclesfield*; source: Salmon, Thomas and Sollom Emlyn (1730) A complete collection of state-trials, and proceedings for high-treason, and other crimes and misdemeanours: 1715–1725)
- b. I wot not **whether that** I may come with him or not.  
 ‘I do not know whether I may come with him or not.’ (*Paston Letters XXXI*)

again: no interpretive difference between version with *that* and version without *that*

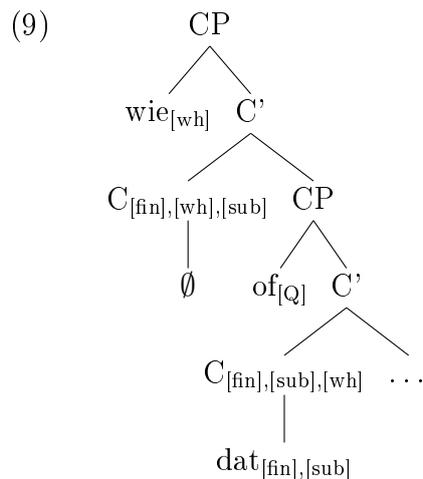
separation of [wh] and [Q] elements: co-occurrence of two interrogative elements possible in certain languages (Bayer 2004)

Dutch dialects:

- (8) Ze weet **wie of dat** hij had willen opbellen  
 she knows who if that he had want call  
 ‘She knows who he wanted to call.’  
 (Bayer 2004: 66, ex. 17, citing Hoekstra 1993)

again, no interpretive difference – clauses with *wie dat* ‘who that’ and *wie* ‘who’ have the same interpretation

structure:



polar operator in the scope of a *wh*-operator, clause specified as [wh] (Bacskai-Atkari 2016a;b)

→ Doubly Filled COMP patterns in Germanic interrogatives follow from requirement on lexicalising [fin] on C, ultimately following from V2 property (English slightly exceptional, no V2 but T-to-C)

→ expectation: Doubly Filled COMP should be different or not available in languages where there is no lexicalisation requirement on [fin] in main clause interrogatives

### 3 Czech

constituent questions:<sup>1</sup>

- (10) a. **Kdo** přijel?  
 who arrived.3SG  
 ‘Who arrived?’
- b. Ptala se, **kdo** přijel.  
 asked.3SG.F REFL who arrived.3SG  
 ‘She asked who arrived.’

<sup>1</sup>I owe many thanks to Jiri Kaspar and Mojmir Dočekal for their indispensable help with the Czech data.

*wh*-element moves to [Spec,CP] – following Rudin (1988), Kaspar (2015)

insertion of *že* ‘that’ possible – echo questions (see Kaspar 2015, Gruet-Skrabalova 2011):

- (11) a. **Kdo že** přijel?  
who that arrived.3SG  
‘Who is said to have arrived?’
- b. Ptala se, **kdo že** přijel.  
asked.3SG.F REFL who that arrived.3SG  
‘She asked who was said to have arrived.’

sentence in (11a) an appropriate reaction to a statement such as “*Peter arrived*”

status of *že*: located in C, following see Kaspar (2015) → Doubly Filled COMP effect possible

polar questions:

- (12) a. Přijel Marie?  
arrived.3SG Mary  
‘Has Mary arrived?’
- b. Ptala se, **jestli** Marie přijel.  
asked.3SG.F REFL if Mary arrived.3SG  
‘She asked if Mary arrived.’

insertion of *že* ‘that’ impossible:

- (13) \*Ptala se, **jestli že** Marie přijel.  
asked.3SG.F REFL if that Mary arrived.3SG  
‘She asked if Mary arrived.’

*že* and *jestli* in complementary distribution → *jestli* in C – in line with the fact that if C is filled by the clitic *-li*, the verb moves up to C to host the clitic (Schwabe 2004), and *jestli* is a grammaticalised form containing ‘be’

*wh*-elements may appear in polar questions (echo):

- (14) a. **Kdo jestli** přijel?  
who if arrived.3SG  
‘Did WHO arrive?’
- b. Ptala se, **kdo jestli** přijel.  
asked.3SG.F REFL who if arrived.3SG  
‘She asked about whom the question arose whether they arrived.’

sentence in (14a) an appropriate reaction to a question such as “*Did Peter arrive?*”

insertion of *že* ‘that’ again impossible:

- (15) a. \***Kdo jestli že** přijel?  
who if arrived.3SG  
‘Did WHO arrive?’
- b. \*Ptala se, **kdo jestli že** přijel.  
asked.3SG.F REFL who if arrived.3SG  
‘She asked about whom the question arose whether they arrived.’

patterns in Czech:

- Doubly Filled COMP effects possible with *že* ‘that’ and *jestli* ‘if’
- insertion of complementiser not obligatory in ordinary constituent questions
- insertion of either complementiser triggers an echo interpretation
- complementiser available in main clause echo questions, contrary to ordinary main clause questions, echoed statement/questions embedded pragmatically ( $\leftrightarrow$  Germanic)
- clause type defined by the complementiser, not by the *wh*-element ( $\leftrightarrow$  Germanic)

## 4 Slovenian

constituent questions:<sup>2</sup>

- (16) a. **Kdo** pride?  
who comes  
‘Who is coming?’  
(Hladnik 2010: 13, ex. 9)
- b. Vprašal je, **kdo** pride.  
asked.3SG.M PTCP.3SG who comes  
‘He asked who was coming.’  
(based on Hladnik 2010: 14, ex. 11)

*wh*-element moves to [Spec,CP] – following Hladnik (2010)

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<sup>2</sup>I owe many thanks to Moreno Mitrović for his indispensable help with the Slovenian data.

insertion of *da* ‘that’ possible – echo questions (see Hladnik 2010):

- (17) a. **Kdo da** pride?  
who that comes  
‘Who is said to be coming?’  
(Hladnik 2010: 13, ex. 9)
- b. Vprašal je, **kdo da** pride.  
asked.3SG.M PTCP.3SG who that comes  
‘He asked who was said to be coming.’  
(based on Hladnik 2010: 14, ex. 11)

sentence in (17a) an appropriate reaction to a statement such as “*Peter is coming*”

status of *da*: located in C, following see Hladnik (2010) → Doubly Filled COMP effect possible

polar questions:

- (18) a. **A** pride?  
Q comes  
‘Is he coming?’  
(based on Hladnik 2010: 15, ex. 12)
- b. Vprašal je, **če** pride.  
asked.3SG.M PTCP.3SG whether comes  
‘He asked whether was coming.’  
(based on Hladnik 2010: 15, ex. 12)

insertion of *da* ‘that’ possible – echo reading (cf. Hladnik 2010):

- (19) a. **A da** pride?  
Q that comes  
‘Is it true that he is said to be coming?’  
(based on Hladnik 2010: 15, ex. 12)
- b. Vprašal je, **če da** pride.  
asked.3SG.M PTCP.3SG whether that comes  
‘He asked whether it was true that he was said to be coming.’  
(based on Hladnik 2010: 15, ex. 12)

sentence in (19a) an appropriate reaction to a statement such as “*he is coming*”

*da* and *a/če* not in complementary distribution → *a/če* not C, they are rather operators in [Spec,CP], similarly to English *whether*

*wh*-elements may appear in polar questions (echo; dialectal):

- (20) a. **Kdo če** pride?  
who whether comes  
'Is WHO coming?'  
(based on Hladnik 2010: 15, ex. 13)
- b. **Kdo če da** pride?  
who whether that comes  
'Is WHO said to be coming?'  
(based on Hladnik 2010: 15, ex. 13)

sentence in (20a) an appropriate reaction to a question such as “*Is Peter coming?*”, sentence in (20b) an appropriate reaction to a question such as “*Is Peter said to be coming?*”

in (20), the Q-element is *če* and not *a*, as opposed to ordinary main clause interrogatives – difference from proper questions encoded morphosyntactically

patterns in Slovenian:

- Doubly Filled COMP effects possible with *da* ‘that’ and *a/če* ‘if’
- insertion of complementiser not obligatory in ordinary constituent questions and ordinary polar questions
- insertion of complementiser triggers an echo interpretation
- double echo possible
- complementiser available in main clause echo questions, contrary to ordinary main clause questions, echoed statement/question embedded pragmatically ( $\leftrightarrow$  Germanic)
- clause type defined by the complementiser (Hladnik 2010: 15–16), not by the *wh*-element or by the polar operator ( $\leftrightarrow$  Germanic)

## 5 The analysis

various patterns of *wh*-elements, Q elements and finite subordinators

Germanic combinations (embedded clauses):

- sequence WH Q FIN  $\rightarrow$  clause type [wh] – constituent question
- sequence WH Q  $\rightarrow$  clause type [wh] – constituent question
- sequence WH FIN  $\rightarrow$  clause type [wh] – constituent question
- sequence Q FIN  $\rightarrow$  clause type [Q] – polar question

Slavic combinations (embedded and matrix clauses):

- sequence WH Q FIN → clause type [FIN] – declarative, double echo
- sequence WH Q → clause type [Q] – polar question, echo
- sequence WH FIN → clause type [FIN] – declarative, echo
- sequence Q FIN → clause type [FIN] – declarative, echo

Germanic Doubly Filled COMP:

- movement of the *wh*-operator or insertion of the polar operator into [Spec,CP] for clause-typing, question semantics, feature checking with C
- insertion of the finite complementiser: to lexicalise [fin] in C

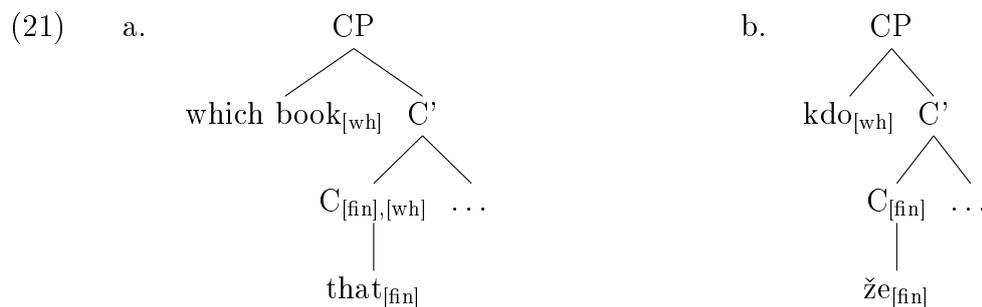
Slavic Doubly Filled COMP:

- insertion of the operator (either *wh* or polar) into [Spec,CP] due to an [EDGE] feature on the C head containing the particles introducing the echoed question, no feature checking with C
- insertion of the particles into C: typing the echoed clause

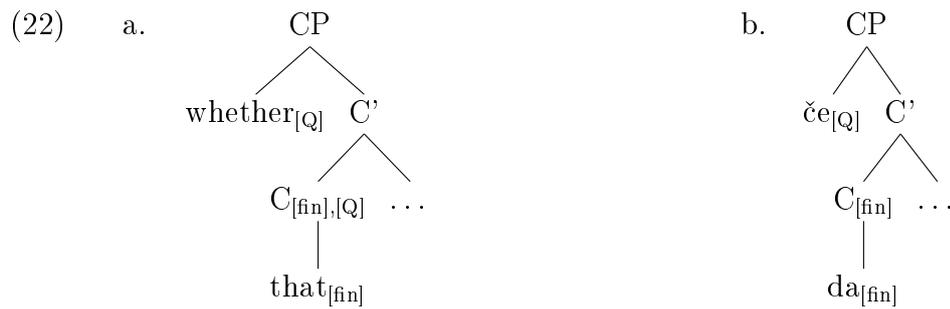
echo questions: not true questions, closer to focus constructions (cf. Artstein 2002) – interrogative interpretation locally (as in English, where there is no *wh*-movement in these cases: no [wh] feature on the head)

feature percolation: the features of the element in the specifier can percolate up – the clause can be taken by a predicate taking interrogative complements (e.g. *ask*), but no percolation downwards, hence echoed clause not affected

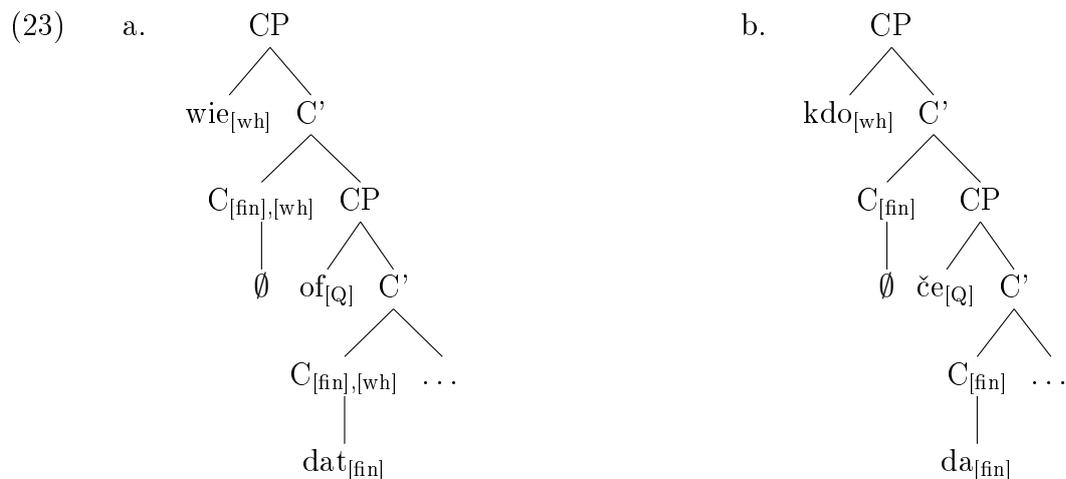
structures for WH FIN sequence:



structures for Q FIN sequence:



structures for WH Q FIN sequence:



differences between Germanic and Slavic go back to differences in the requirement of lexicalising [fin]

## 6 Conclusion

Doubly Filled COMP effects in Germanic and Slavic (Czech and Slovenian)

- Germanic: Doubly Filled COMP arises due to a requirement on filling a C head specified as [fin] – in line with the general properties of V2 and T-to-C; no interpretive difference from complementiser-less clauses
- Slavic: Doubly Filled COMP arises in echo questions – complementiser inserted to type the clause; interpretive difference from complementiser-less clauses

differences can be accounted for in a principled way

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