

Spoken French non-fronted wh-utterances

Ramona Wallner

Universität Konstanz

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In this talk I present the core concepts from my dissertation on French non-fronted *wh*-utterances. Spoken (Continental) French exhibits inquisitive utterances with a non-fronted *wh*-word (1).

- (1) *Tu fais quoi ?*
you do what
'What are you doing?'

There have been different approaches to French non-fronted *wh*-utterances in the literature, with no consensus on what contextual restrictions truly govern them (i.e. whether constraints concerning presupposition, givenness or intervention).

I argue that a lot of confusion can be uncloaked by separating two different constructions for non-fronted *wh*-utterances in French: (regular) interrogatives and inquisitives. For *interrogatives*, I propose an analysis which is cashed out in terms of Contiguity (Richards, 2016). It combines syntax with the distinctive French prosody as the driving factor. There are no contextual restrictions for interrogatives.

For *inquisitives*, I show that they have specific discourse requirements and propose an analysis of them as WhDeclaratives (following Biezma 2020). However, they are not subject to restrictions by Contiguity.

I present empirical evidence supporting these claims.

References

- Biezma, M. (2020). Non-informative assertions: The case of non-optional *wh*-in-situ. *Semantics and Pragmatics* 13.
Richards, N. (2016). *Contiguity Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.