

Sluicing in Jordanian Arabic

In this paper, we analyze such constructions in Jordanian Arabic (JA) as (1).

- 1) *ʕumar itʕasal, bs ma b-a-ʕraf* {ʔəmta/ki:f/lə:f/ min wen}
 Omar call.3ms.PER, but not Asp-1-know.IMP {when, how, why/ from where}
 ‘Omar called, but I do not know {when, how, why, from where}.’

We demonstrate that JA exhibits sluicing and pseudosluicing based on the underlying source of the wh fronting (wh-sluice)/ wh-cleft (wh-pseudosluicing), and then we show that violating Preposition Stranding Generalization (PSG) in sluicing is a PF phenomenon as Sato (2011) proposed for Indonesian and not a violation in the narrow syntax. Our research questions are; i. what is the source of such elliptical constructions in (1)?, ii. what elliptical constructions does the JA exhibit, sluicing vs. pseudosluicing?, and iii. is PSG violation rescued by the resumption strategy?

Like other Arabic dialects, JA exhibits two types of wh-constructions; wh-fronting (2a,2b) and wh-cleft (2c).

- 2) a. *bi-ʔaj zamʕa /ke:f/ ʔemta daras-t lɪjʊstɪks*
 in-which university how when study-2ms.PER linguistics
 ‘At which university/how/when did you study linguistics?’
 b. *ʔaj kta:b qaraʔ-t*
 which book read.-2ms.PER
 ‘Which book did you read?’
 c. *fu /mi:n (huwe) elli ʔaxad-o ʕumar* Cleft Structure (Eid 1983)
 what/who 3ms.COP that pick.3ms.PER-RP ʕumar
 ‘What/who is it that Omar picked?’

Wh-cleft is not as common as wh-fronting; the latter occurs with any wh-expression including wh-words and wh-phrases, wh-PP, and wh-arguments and wh-adjuncts, as shown in (2a, 2b), whereas wh-clefts allow only bare wh-words and wh-arguments as in (2), excluding wh-PP (3a), which-NPs (3b), and wh-adjuncts (4).

- 3) a. **bi-ʔaj zamʕa hejjeh elli daras-t lɪjʊstɪks*
 in-which university 3ms.it.COP that study-2ms.PER linguistics
 ‘At which university is it that you studied linguistics?’
 b. **ʔaj kta:b huwe elli qaraʔ-t*
 which book 3ms.it.COP that read.-2ms.PER
 ‘Which book is it that you read?’
 4) **ki:f huwe elli xallas-t ir-risaleh*
 how 3ms.it.COP that finish-2ms.PER the-dissertation
 ‘how is it that you finished the dissertation?’

Accordingly, given that bare wh-expressions *fu* ‘what’ and *mi:n* ‘who’, and wh-adjuncts, wh-PPs, and which-NPs can be used with wh-fronting, then the underlying source of those wh-expressions in elliptical constructions (sluicing) is wh-fronting. Leung (2014) argues that in Emirati Arabic (EA) elliptical constructions, when copula is elided, there is no clear-cut evidence that it is a sluicing or pseudosluicing case. However, we argue that the independent droppability of the copula in (5) indicates that an example with *fu* ‘what’ or *mi:n* ‘who’, is plausibly analyzable as pseudosluicing. However, there is an independent evidence that a pseudosluicing analysis doesn’t work for the full range of cases (3 and 4).

- 5) *ma b-a-ʕraf fu (huwe) elli ftara-a ʕasan*
 not Asp-1-know.IMP what 3ms.it.COP that buy.3ms-RP.PER Hasan
 ‘I do not know what is it that Hasan bought?’

In addition, we argue that JA is another language that shows PSG violation at PF, not at the narrow syntax; it is non-preposition stranding language (6b), yet it allows p-stranding in sluicing (6a).

- 6) a. *ʕumar ʕaka maʕ hada, bs ma b-a-ʕraf mi:n* [*ʕumar ʕaka maʕ*]
 Omar talk.3ms.PER with someone, but not Asp-1-know.IMP who
 ‘Omar talked to someone, but I do not know who.’
 b. **mi:n ʕaka ʕumar maʕ*
 who talk.3ms.PER Omar with
 ‘who did Omar talk with?’

We also propose that preposition stranding is ungrammatical in the absence of ellipsis (7), and resumption does not rescue wh-movement from the complement of a preposition (7) and thus does not explain the PSG violation.

- 7) **ʔaj zamʕa daras-t lɪjʊstɪks fi-ha*
 which university study-2ms.PER linguistics in-it
 ‘In which university did you study linguistics?’

To conclude, the PSG is a PF phenomenon in JA, not part of the narrow syntax. We cannot appeal to pseudosluicing or to a resumption strategy to explain away the PSG violations observed under sluicing in this language."

References

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