
Wh-in-situ and sluicing like constructions in English

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Although considered to be a canonical *wh*-fronting language, English has semantico-pragmatically and prosodically distinguished *wh*-in-situ constructions (e.g., Pires & Taylor 2009, Sobin 2010, Beck & Reis 2018, Biezma 2020):

- (1) a. Wendy invited Dracula.
b. Wendy invited ↗**WHO**?
- (2) a. Wendy is having a party this weekend.
b. And she invited ↘**who**?

This talk investigates understudied Sluicing-Like Constructions (SLCs) in English that arise in the context of particular embedded *wh*-in-situ configurations, including the complement clause of non-factive predicates (3a)/(3b).

- (3) Wendy invited someone and Susie thinks (a.) [she invited **who**] ?
(b.) [**who**] ?
(c.) *[**who** she invited] ?

Standard connectivity diagnostics converge on a Move-and-Delete analysis (Ross 1969, Merchant 2001, et seq.) in which the bare *wh*-remnant of an SLC (3b) is extracted from elided clausal structure; see (4a).

- (4) a. ... and [CP C⁰_[-Q] Susie thinks [CP **who**_i C⁰_[-Q] she invited <**who**>_i]]
b. ... and [CP C⁰_[-Q] Susie thinks [CP <**who**>_i C⁰_[-Q] she invited **who**_i]]

A salient concern with a Move-and-Delete analysis is the apparently obligatory *wh*-in-situ nature of this environment (3c). We will see, however, that intricate intervention effects suggest that the in-situ *wh*-constituent undergoes what is otherwise covert partial *wh*-scrambling (4b) (Kotek 2019, Abels & Dayal 2022). This observation forms part of the motivation for an analysis in which the displacement in (4a), contrary to genuine sluicing, is movement that is rendered exceptionally overt in the content of ellipsis (e.g., Richards 1997, Temmerman 2013, Gribanova & Manetta 2016; cf. Abe 2015, among others).

References: Abe, J. 2015. *The in-situ approach to sluicing*, John Benjamins. • Abels, K. & V. Dayal. 2022. *Linguistic Inquiry*. • Beck, S. & M Reis. 2018. *Journal of Semantics* 35:369–408. • Biezma, M. 2020. *Semantics & Pragmatics* 13. • Gribanova, V. & E. Manetta. 2016. *Linguistic Inquiry* 47:631–668. • Kotek, H. 2019. *Composing questions*, MIT Press. • Merchant, J. 2001. *The syntax of silence*, Oxford University Press. • Pires, A. & H. L. Taylor. 2009. In *Proceedings of CLS* 43, 201–215. • Richards, N. 1997. Ph.D. Diss., MIT. • Ross, J. R. 1969. In *Proceedings of CLS* 5, 252–286. • Sobin, N. 2010. *Linguistic Inquiry* 41:131–148. • Temmerman, T. 2013. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 31:235–285.