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Abstract

The study explores the morphosyntactic properties of the elliptical structure of sluicing in Ta'izzi Arabic, a dialect spoken in the southwestern part of Yemen, with a particular focus on sluicing in preposition-stranding contexts within the generative grammar paradigm. The Arabic dialect under study seems to allow sluicing with preposition stranding, thus constituting, in principle, counterevidence to Preposition Stranding Generalization (PSG) proposed by Merchant (2001). That is, Arabic permits a preposition to be stranded under sluicing, though this is not allowed in regular wh-movements. The paper demonstrates that what gives the impression of sluicing in P-stranding contexts is actually pseudosluicing. Such a structure is not generated from a typical wh-question. Instead, it is originally derived from a wh-cleft source in which the relative clause containing the preposition and the copular pronoun are elided. This suggests that the language has two potential elliptical structures: true sluicing, which originates from regular wh-questions and TP ellipsis at PF, and pseudosluicing, which stems from a wh-cleft source where the ellipsis of the relative clause containing the preposition and the copular pronoun occurred at PF. It also suggests that, despite their distinct origins, the two elliptical derivations can be straightforwardly derived through the movement of the remnant wh-phrase from the specifier position of TP (Spec; TP) to the specifier position of CP (Spec; CP) in the sluiced clause.

Keywords: Sluicing; Pseudosluicing, Preposition stranding, Wh-movement, Wh-cleft

Introduction:

Sluicing, introduced by Ross (1969), is one of the most widely observed types of elliptical constructions in syntax across languages. It refers to the elliptical structure where a remnant wh-phrase serves as an embedded wh-question, which generally has an explicit counterpart in the antecedent clause. In embedded clause (1), which illustrates sluicing, the stricken part is phonetically silent but is interpreted as a fully articulated wh-question.

1) Bill wrote something, but I don't know/remember **what**_i [Bill wrote t_i]

In (1), the whole wh-question in the embedded clause 'what Bill wrote' is viewed to be phonologically reduced to the wh-phrase 'what'. The remnant phrase is overtly correlated with the NP 'something' in the antecedent clause.

The current paper seeks to examine the syntactic aspects of sluicing in Ta'izzi Arabic from a generative grammar point of view. It aims to identify the morpho-syntactic characteristics of sluicing and tries to uncover this elliptical phenomenon is traced. Furthermore, it aims to determine whether empirical data shows a case of sluicing or pseudosluicing. If it is indeed sluicing, the question arises as to whether it can be analyzed as an unpronounced wh-question resulting from the phonetic omission of the TP projection, which originally functions as the complement of the moved wh-phrase. Since this linguistic phenomenon remains unexplored in Ta'izzi Arabic, the study aims to provide a preliminary explanation of sluicing and then suggest a principled account of sluicing within the framework of generative grammar.

The study employs a judgement task to assess the acceptability as well as the grammaticality of sentences. In the task, participants rate each sentence's acceptability using a numerical scale that reflects the degree of acceptability. Data were collected from the native speakers living in southwestern Yemen, particularly in Taiz governorate and neighbouring towns. Informants of the study were solicited to judge and evaluate the grammaticality and acceptability of sentences involving sluicing constructions. Thus, the obtained data were phonemically transcribed, glossed, and analyzed. Generalizations about the language regarding P-stranding under sluicing are made based on data analysis.

This paper has the following structure. The first section introduces the study by outlining the nature of sluicing, the methodology, and the

organization of the paper. The second section presents an overview of the syntactic analyses competing to account for the phenomenon of sluicing. The third section discusses sluicing and its typology in Ta'izzi Arabic, examining the internal syntax of sluicing based on diagnostic tests to determine whether it can be analyzed as sluicing or pseudosluicing. It also focuses on the possibility of sluicing in preposition stranding contexts in the dialect and sheds light on similar studies conducted on other modern dialects of Arabic. The fourth section provides the analysis of the elliptical phenomenon of Ta'izzi Arabic in P-stranding contexts. Finally, the fifth section concludes the study.

The Syntax of Sluicing: Theoretical Background

There are two main schools in the literature of linguistics that studied the elliptical phenomenon of sluicing: nonstructural and structural schools. One perspective holds that there is no syntactic structure for the unpronounced material in the ellipsis site of sluicing (Riemsdijk, 1978; Ginzburg & Sag, 2000; Culicover & Jackendoff, 2005; among others). In contrast, another perspective argues that a syntactic structure does exist for the material in the elided site of sluicing, a view supported by most scholars (Ross, 1969; Chung, Ladusaw, & McCloskey, 1995; Chung, 2006; Merchant, 2001; Merchant, 2006; Merchant, 2008; Merchant, 2019; Aelbrecht, 2010; Craenenbroeck, 2010; Leung, 2014; Abels, 2019). Nevertheless, there are two approaches in the structural school: LF-Copying and PF-Deletion. The LF-Copying approach assumes there is a null category [], which is taken from the lexicon and filled at LF by mirroring the semantic content of the clause preceding the unpronounced one. Such a derivation is structurally represented in (2), where the semantic material substitutes the elliptical [e] in (2a) at Spell-Out as in (2b).

2) a. At Phonological Form (PF):

Bill wrote something, but I do not remember [CP what C⁰ [TP e]].

b. At Logical Form (LF):

Bill wrote something, but I do not remember [CP what C⁰ [TP **Bill wrote something**]].

The structures like the one in (2) are based on the assumption that the remnant phrase is initially generated in the specifier position of the Complementizer Phrase (Spec; CP) and is not a result of movement from the embedded TP. The primary motivation for this approach was the appearance

that sluicing violates the island conditions, i.e., it is possible for the sluiced wh-phrase to be linked to a variable that positionally co-refers to a counterpart located within the preceding TP. However, this motivation proves to be untenable. Merchant (2006) contends that islands are a part of the PF component where the ellipsis can repair a structure that would otherwise be grammatically incorrect. By contrast, the PF-deletion approach, which is advanced in the works of Ross (1969), Lasnik (2007), Merchant (2001, 2006, 2008), Aelbrecht (2010), Craenenbroeck (2010), Leung (2014), and Abels (2019), posits that after a wh-movement operation the syntactic structure that exists within the null TP is deleted. In other words, a sluiced clause involves a wh-question movement before TP deletion takes place, as illustrated in (3).

3) Bill wrote something, but I do not remember [CP **what**_i [TP **Bill wrote** t_i]]

In the PF-deletion approach, the elliptical wh-question [CP **what**_i [TP **Bill wrote** t_i]] gets derived by the movement of the wh-phrase ‘what’, which occupies the specifier position of the embedded TP, to Spec; CP, followed by the deletion of the entire TP which functions as a complement of the moved wh-phrase ‘what’. This means that the sluiced TP is structurally generated during narrow syntax and is deleted in the phonological component, specifically at Spell-out. However, Pollman (1975) and Erteschik-Shir (1977), as noted in Merchant (2001), propose that sluiced clauses, like the one in (3), are not a result of derivation from an underlying wh-question source, but from a pseudo-wh-question, specifically a wh-cleft clause, as in (4).

4) Bill wrote something, but I do not remember what [**it was**].

The underlying structure of the ellipsis site of clause (4) is therefore derived from the omission of the subject ‘it’ and the copula verb ‘was,’ which is why such a source is referred to in the literature as a copular source. This structure is mainly a form of cleft construction, specifically a reduced cleft structure where the pivot is an extracted wh-phrase and such form is what Merchant (2001) refers to as ‘pseudosluicing’ which is superficially different from ‘true sluicing’ as demonstrated in (5).

5) a. Someone laughed. Tell who [**it was that laughed**]. Pseudo-sluicing
b. Someone laughed. Tell who [**laughed**]. Sluicing

Merchant (2001) draws a distinction between two types of sluicing: true sluicing, if the elided clause is underlyingly derived from a wh-question, and pseudosluicing, if the elided clause is resulting from a cleft-like construction.

The identical structure of the elided clause and the antecedent clause is supported by evidence from connectivity-related effects. The residual wh-phrase in the sluiced clause displays a similar behavior across various syntactic dependencies when compared to its fully sentential, non-elliptical wh-phrase counterpart. Case-matching effects, binding phenomena, and preposition-stranding parallelisms are some of these connectivity effects. The preposition-stranding parallelism effects is discussed in detail for relevance to the paper's scope.

Sluicing in (non)preposition stranding languages:

Languages vary in how head prepositions and complement objects are linearly structured, particularly in the case of wh-question structures. Pied piping and preposition stranding strategies are the two parameters that capture this cross-linguistic variation. Preposition stranding allows a preposition to be isolated from its object to remain in its original position. In contrast, the object moves, whereas pied piping forbids the separation of a preposition from its object (a technique that is common in many languages, such as Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, and Arabic) (a technique used in several languages, such as English, Norwegian, and Scandinavian languages). To illustrate this typological characterization, consider examples (6) from Spanish and (7) from English as pied-piping and preposition-stranding languages, respectively:

Spanish:

- 6) a. ***Quién_i** hablaba Pedro **con t_i**
 who was-talking Peter **with**
 b. **Con quién_i** hablaba Pedro **t_i**?
 with who(m) was-talking Peter

English:

- 7) a. **Who_i** was Peter talking **with t_i**?
 b. **With whom_i** was Peter talking **t_i**?" (Sugisaki, 2011, pp. 4-5)

The data above indicate that while both (7a) and (7b) are grammatical, preposition stranding is allowed whereas pied piping sounds unnatural in spoken English. In contrast, preposition stranding is illicit in Spanish, making pied piping mandatory. In this vein, Merchant (2001) draws a parallel between the possibility of sluicing in preposition stranding contexts and sluicing in wh-questions, as outlined in generalization (8):

8) Preposition Stranding Generalization (PSG):

A language L will allow preposition stranding under sluicing iff L allows preposition stranding under regular wh-movement. (Merchant,2001, p.92)

PSG, Merchant also argues, is applicable across languages and its applicability is empirically verified in more than twenty languages. Examples (9) and (10) are given for P-stranding languages, while (11) and (12) are for non-P-stranding languages:

Frisian:

- 9) a. Piet hat mei ien sprutsen, mar ik wyt net (mei) wa.
Piet has with someone talked but I know not with who
b. Wa hat Piet mei sprutsen?
Who has Piet with spoken

Norwegian:

- 10) a. Per har snakket med noen, men jeg vet ikke (med) hvem.
Per has talked with someone but I know not with who
b. Hvem har Per snakket med?
Who has Per with spoken with

German:

- 11) a. Anna hat mit jemandem gesprochen, aber ich weiß nicht, *(mit) wem.
Anna has with someone spoken but I know not with who
b.*Wem hat sie mit gesprochen?
who has she with spoken

Serbo-Croatian:

- 12) a. Ana je govorila sa nekim, ali ne znam *(sa) kim.
Ana AUX spoken with someone but not I.know with who
b.*Kim je govorila Ana sa?
who aux spoken Anna with (Merchant,2001, pp.92-99)

The examples above indicate that P-stranding languages like Frisian, as shown in (9), and Norwegian, as in (10), permit prepositions to be stranded in both situations: typical wh-questions and sluiced wh-questions. This evidence corresponds to the fact that sluicing in such languages is derived from complete wh-questions and obtained via wh-movement plus TP deletion. By the same token, languages, in which P-stranding is illicit, such as German, as illustrated in (11) and Serbo-Croatian, as in (12), permit P-stranding neither with regular wh-questions nor with sluicing.

Similarly, Standard Arabic, a pied-piping language, prohibits preposition stranding in overt wh-movements and sluicing as illustrated in (13).

13) a. **mafa** man safara Xaalid -un

With whom travelled-3SM khalid-nom.

'Who did Khalid travel with?'

b. safara Xaalid-un **mafa** šaxs^sin, lakin laa ?ataðakar *(**mafa**) man.

travelled Khalid-nom with someone-gen but Neg remember.I (with) who

'Khalid travelled with someone but I don't remember who.'

Example (13a) demonstrates that a preposition in regular wh-questions cannot be stranded from its object; it must be pied-piped. In addition, stranding a preposition in contexts involving sluicing, as shown in (13b), is not permissible. Therefore, Standard Arabic, as predicted, complies with the PSG generalization in regular wh-questions and sluicing. However, this compatibility with the generalization may not be extended to its modern dialects of Arabic. Ta'izzi Arabic, the dialect under study, appears to contradict the PSG by licensing preposition stranding under sluicing, as shown in (15), although it is prohibited in typical wh-questions, as indicated in (14).

14) ***min** safar Mubarak **mafa**?

who travelled.3SGM Mubarak with

'Who did Mubarak travel with?'

15) Mubarak safar **mafa** waħid, bas ma ?ataðakarš **minuh**

Mubarak travelled with one, but Neg remember-I (with) **who.he**

'Mubarak travelled with someone, but I don't remember who.'

Ta'izzi Arabic reveals in (15), that although a preposition is forbidden in a typical wh-movement scenario, can be stranded under sluicing. Such an instance can be considered apparent evidence against the PS generalization. This raises the crucial question of whether this instance of sluicing constitutes a challenge to Merchant's PSG or is merely an apparent violation of the PSG that requires reanalysis.

Sluicing in Ta'izzi Arabic:

Ta'izzi Arabic (TA), alongside other modern dialects of Arabic, exhibits sluicing in main clause as well as embedded clause contexts, as shown in (16) and (17), respectively. In main clauses, it is licensed by regular wh-questions

such as *minuh* 'who' and *mahu(h)/eiš* 'what,' whereas in embedded clauses, it is licensed by predicate verbs that take CP complements, such as *yaquul* 'say', *yaxamin* 'guess', *yašrif/yadri* 'know', *yatađakar* 'remember', and so forth.⁽¹⁾

16) A: Mubarak řazəm waħid.

Mubarak invited.3SM someone.

'Mubarak invited someone.'

B: Minuh?

Who

'Who?'

17) Waħid řazəm Obaid, bas ma řašrifš minuh

Someone invited Obaid, but Neg-know.I who

'Someone invited Obaid, but I don't know who.'

Sluicing Typology in Ta'izzi Arabic:

Merchant (2001) identifies sluicing constructions of four different types: sluicing with adjunct wh-phrases, sluicing with overt correlates, sluicing with implicit arguments, and contrast sluices. Let us examine whether these types are attested in Ta'izzi Arabic. In sluicing with adjuncts wh-phrases, as shown in (18), the residual phrase is a non-argument wh-expression that occurs without a correlation in the antecedent clause.

18) Anwar safar, bas ma řašrifš fein/mata

Anwar left.3MS but NEG-know.I where/when

'Anwar travelled, but I don't know where/when.'

In (18), the adjunct wh-phrases *fein* 'where' (referring to place expression) and *mata* 'when' (referring to time expression) have adverbial functions. Furthermore, since adjuncts are included in the verb argument structure, they do not correspond to a correlate in the antecedent clause. As demonstrated in

(1) Ta'izzi Arabic uses several wh-words and phrases to form interrogative questions, including *min(uh)* 'who/whom', *mahu(h)/eiš* 'what', *ayin(uh)/wein(uh)/fein* 'where', *bitan/mata* 'when', *keif* 'how', *kam* 'how many', and *lemma(h)/leiš* 'why.' Notably, the choice of wh-forms often varies among speakers from rural and urban areas. For example, wh-expressions like *mahu(h)* 'what', *lemmah* 'why', and *ayin* 'where' are commonly used in rural areas, while wh-expressions like *eiš* 'what', *leiš* 'why' and *fein* 'where' are preferred in urban settings.

(19) for sluicing with overt correlates, the antecedent clause contains an indefinite overt correlate for the remnant wh-phrase.

19) Anwar laʿam waḥid bas ma ʕaraftiṣ minuh

Anwar slapped one, but Neg knew.I who

'Anwar slapped someone, but I do not know who/whom'

In (19), the remnant wh-phrase *minuh* 'who' refers to *waḥid* 'someone' which functions as the indefinite overt correlate within the antecedent clause. The indefinite correlate and the remnant wh-phrase, in this instance, need to belong to the same syntactic category.

For sluicing involving implicit arguments, unlike the earlier instance, an overt correlate is not required in the antecedent clause. Rather, the wh-phrase implicitly matches a covert argument governed by the verb's argument structure, as depicted in (20).

20) Anwar yakul bas muš ʕaarif mahu/eiṣ

Anwar eat.3SG but NEG knowing what.pro/what

'Anwar is eating, but I don't know what.'

In (20), the verb *yakul* 'eat' licenses an implicit object (a food item) to the remnant wh-phrase *mahu/eiṣ* 'what'.

Regarding contrast sluicing, the remnant wh-phrase's descriptive qualities are incompatible with its correlate in the antecedent clause, as (21).

21) Ayman maʕuh ʔax bas ma ʔaʕriṣ kam xawat.

Ayman has.pro brother but NEG know.I how sisters

'Ayman has a brother, but I don't know how many sisters.'

In (21), the descriptive attributes of the wh-expression *kam xawat* 'how many sisters' mismatches with those of the correlate *ʔax* 'brother' within the antecedent clause.

Sluicing Identifying Tests in Ta'izzi Arabic:

I suggest, conforming to Merchant's (2001) criteria for identifying sluicing, sluicing and pseudosluicing in Ta'izzi Arabic are distinct in multiple respects. Fundamentally, like other Arabic dialects, Ta'izzi Arabic does not exhibit morphological case marking; therefore, this diagnostic test is inapplicable. Further, the prosodic diagnostic between sluicing and pseudosluicing is that the pitch accent falls on the wh-phrase in the former, but on the copula in the latter. Additionally, adjunct wh-questions are compatible with sluicing but incompatible with wh-clefts. Conclusively, a

structure is considered an instance of sluicing if prepositional phrase (PP) clefting is not allowed. For illustration, consider each diagnostic test to examine whether it indicates true sluicing or pseudosluicing in Ta'izzi Arabic.

Adjunct Wh-questions: *Allowed*

- 22) a. Mubarak aštra lih bait bas ma ʔaʕrifš fein/ayina.
Mubarak bought for.her house but Neg know.I where.
'Mubarak bought a house for her, but I don't know where'
- b. Qasim risab bi-l-ixtibar bas maʔaʕrifš leiš/lemmah.
Qasim failed in-the-exam but Neg know.I why.
'Qasim failed in the-exam but I don't know why'.

Explicit arguments: *Allowed*.

- 23) ʕubaid ʕazəm waħid, bas muš ʕaarif minuh.
Obaid invited one, but NEG-knowing.I who.
'Obaid invited someone, but I don't know who.'

Implicit Arguments: *Allowed*.

- 24) Mohammed kan yaðakir bas muš ʕaarif eiš.
Mohammed was studying but NEG-knowing.I what.
'Mohammed was studying but I don't know what.'

Prepositional Phrase clefting: *Disallowed*.

- 25)bas muš ʕaarif maʕa min(uh) illi safar Mubarak.
.....but Neg knowing.I with who(m) that travelled Mubarak.
'.....but I don't know with whom that Mubarak travelled.'

Table (1) Sluicing-identifying Tests

Diagnostic Test	Sluicing	Pseudosluicing
Adjuncts wh-phrase	✓	*
Prosody-based Test	✓	*
Argument PP remnants	✓	*
Implicit arguments	✓	✓
Overt Correlates	✓	✓

Table's sluicing-based test results demonstrate that instances of sluicing with argument prepositional phrases (PPs) and adjunct wh-phrases are derived from standard wh-questions. In contrast, sluices that include adjunct wh-phrases and argument PPs are derived from either regular wh-questions or wh-clefts. This is supported by the evidence that these constructions

accommodate copular pronouns, suggesting that a copular source in its underlying structure is also an option.

Previous Studies:

To my knowledge, neither Yemeni Arabic nor Ta'izzi Arabic have yet to examine the elliptical phenomenon of sluicing, especially in preposition-stranding contexts. However, a similar linguistic phenomenon has been adequately investigated in other dialects or varieties of Arabic. In this regard, two contrasting views have been advanced. One view has posited that the P-stranding effects observed in some dialects of Arabic cannot be considered counterevidence to Merchant's (2001) PSG; they are merely instances of pseudosluicing. Another has claimed that the P-stranding effects in these dialects actually contradict the PSG. Algryani (2010) for Libyan Arabic, Abuarabi (2019) for Iraqi Arabic, and Algryani (2019) for Omani Arabic are examples of the former, whereas Leung (2014) for Emirati Arabic, Alshaalan & Abels (2020) for Saudi Arabic, Alkahtani (2021) for Najdi Arabic, and Alaowffi & Alharbi (2021) for Hijazi Arabic are examples of the latter.

Algryani (2010) concluded that in Libyan Arabic sluicing can be derived, like in other languages, from typical *wh*-questions by moving the *wh*-phrase from the embedded TP to the embedded CP, followed by omitting the entire TP at PF. He contended that the effects of preposition stranding in sluicing are apparent and not genuine in Libyan Arabic; it does not allow sluicing with P-stranding. That is to say, the instance that looks like sluicing with P-stranding in the language is actually pseudo-sluicing, i.e., a case of reduced *wh*-clefts, and that instance of true sluicing in the language does not allow P-stranding. Algryani argued for two types of TP ellipsis in Libyan Arabic: sluicing aligning with Merchant's generalization and pseudosluicing resulting from cleft deletion. The two forms of TP ellipsis are products of *wh*-movement and TP deletion at the PF component.

In another work by Algryani (2019), it has been argued that Omani Arabic cannot be considered a counterevidence to Merchant's (2001) PSG since the cases of sluicing under P-stranding in Omani Arabic are mere apparent; they are actually pseudo-sluicing. In addition, Algryani suggested that the apparent P-stranding effects in Omani Arabic sluicing are caused by removing the relative clause carrying the preposition and the copular pronoun. These effects give rise to the confusion that this variety allows prepositions to be stranded under sluicing.

Abuarabi (2019) determined that Iraqi Arabic does not provide counterexamples to the PSG, since there are two underlying sources of IP ellipsis in Iraqi Arabic: sluicing and pseudosluicing. Both result from wh-movement and IP/TP deletion, with the former originating from cleft structures involving preposition stranding, leading to pseudosluicing, which is allowed even when P-stranding is disallowed in regular wh-questions. This may pose a challenge to the PSG. However, this is a mere appearance, as sluicing involves wh-fronting, while pseudosluicing is derived from wh-clefting. In addition, Abuarabi (2019) has argued that Moroccan Arabic (MA), like Standard Arabic, displays the predictable characteristic of being a non-P-stranding language, as it disallows P-stranding under regular wh-movement as well as under sluicing. Therefore, Moroccan Arabic has been regarded as compatible with Merchant's generalization, as the PSG prediction is borne out.

In Emirati Arabic, Leung (2014) found that P-stranding is permitted under sluicing despite being strictly prohibited under wh-movement, a finding that constitutes counter-evidence to Merchant's PSG. Leung offered empirical data that includes which-NPs stranding prepositions, followed by IP deletion. The effects of P-stranding in sluicing in the language are determined at PF, allowing sluicing to rescue violations of P-stranding.

In their experimental study on Saudi Arabic, Alshaalan & Abels (2020) discovered that the language violates Merchant's generalization by allowing the omission of prepositions in sluicing, leading the object of a preposition to appear alone. According to their analysis, which suggests a syntactic identity between the antecedent TP and the elided TP, P-stranding is acceptable in sluicing even though Saudi Arabic is categorized as a non-P-stranding language. In this context, the remnant wh-phrase may be linked to a resumptive pronoun in the antecedent clause.

Alkahtani (2021) argued that preposition stranding is attested in Najdi Arabic regular wh-questions and sluicing, which is, in fact, inconsistent with Merchant's (2001) generalization. Following the essence of Abel's (2003) generalization on functional structure within prepositional phrases (PP). Likewise, Alkahtani argued for the presence of a functional projection within PP in Najdi Arabic (that is not present in other Arabic dialects) that licenses preposition stranding in Najdi Arabic sluicing and blocks the possibility of the preposition being stranded in wh-questions.

Alaowffi and Alharbi (2021) argued, based on empirical data from Hijazi Arabic (HA), that the PSG does not hold in the language. Their observations suggest that HA shares similarities with Emirati Arabic in disallowing preposition stranding in regular wh-movements while permitting it in sluicing. They proposed that it optionally accommodates both preposition rules in sluicing: pied-piping and stranding, but contended that HA constitutes counterevidence to this generalization.

Analysis and discussion:

As a non-P-stranding dialect of Arabic, Ta'izzi Arabic is predicted, according to Merchant's (2001) PSG, to disallow sluices in regular wh-questions as well as in contexts with preposition stranding. However, this prediction holds for the former, as shown in (26), but not for the latter, as illustrated in (27).

26) a. **maʕa min** Mubarak safar?

With whom Mubarak travelled.3SGM

'With whom did Mubarak travel?'

b. ***min** Mubarak safar **maʕa**?

who Mubarak travelled.3SGM with

'Who did Mubarak travel with?'

27) Mubarak safar maʕa waḥid, bas ma ʔaʕrifš **minuh**

Mubarak travelled with one, but Neg know-I who-pro

'Mubarak travelled with someone, but I don't know who/whom.'

Examples given in (26) prove that the dialect under study, like other non-P-stranding languages, does not allow sluicing in a regular wh-question; that is why (26b) is ungrammatical. However, example (27) is apparently a counterexample to Merchant's (2001) generalization; Ta'izzi Arabic appears to allow sluices to be derived from regular wh-questions, as is the case in P-stranding languages. However, I argue instances like the one in (27) do not violate the Preposition Stranding Generalization; what appears to be preposition stranding under sluicing is not real but pseudosluicing. That is, the source of wh-sluices in P-stranding contexts cannot originate from a typical wh-question; rather, they should be derived from a copular source where a copular pronoun is morphologically attached to the wh-phrase. Failing to do so, the sentence will be grammatically starred, as in (28).

28) *Mubarak safar maʕa waḥid, bas ma ʔaʕrifš **min**

Mubarak travelled with one, but Neg know-I who

*'Mubarak travelled with someone, but I don't know **who/whom**.'*

In (28), the presence of the copular pronoun clitic *-uh* on the wh-phrase *min* 'who' to become *minuh* 'who.pro' is obligatory for the wh-phrase to be sluiced in P-stranding contexts; otherwise, preposition pied-piping is the viable option to rescue the derivation from crashing, as illustrated in (29)

29) Mubarak safar maʕa waḥid, bas ma ʔaʕrifš **maʕa min**

Mubarak travelled with one, but Neg know-I with who

*'Mubarak travelled with someone, but I don't know **maʕa who/whom**.'*

Examples (26–29) suggest that P-stranding under sluicing requires a copular pronoun to be appended to a displaced wh-phrase. Otherwise, preposition pied-piping is the typical pattern observed in the dialect being studied. The morphosyntactic requirement of a copular pronoun for wh-sluices in P-stranding contexts is what first distinguishes it from the derivation of regular wh-sluices as shown in examples (30) and (31):

30) **maʕa min(*uh)** Mubarak safar?

With who/who.pro Mubarak travelled?

'Who did Mubarak travel with?'

31) Mubarak safar maʕa waḥid, bas ma ʔaʕrifš **min*(uh)**

Mubarak travelled with someone, but I don't know **who.pro**

'Mubarak travelled with someone, but I don't know who.'

The examples above show that a wh-phrase inflected with a copular pronoun *minuh* 'who.pro' cannot be headed by a preposition; they permit the pied-piping of a preposition in either wh-questions or sluicing. This implies that there are two distinct variants of the wh-phrase form in Ta'izzi Arabic: a cliticized form, where a pronominal clitic or other features are added, and a non-cliticized form, which refers to the base form. Interestingly, the dialect under study permits preposition stranding under sluicing only if the remnant wh-phrase bears additional features, particularly a pronominal clitic. Moreover, the occurrence of the remnant wh-phrase in P-stranding contexts under sluicing without additional features would result in an ungrammatical structure. This necessitates further investigation into the nature of the additional features the remnant wh-phrase requires to be licit in the elided clause. What is interesting about the remnant wh-phrase *minuh* is that it is composed of two morphological parts: the wh-phrase *min* 'who' plus some

agreement pronominal features. The displaced wh-phrase *minuh* should match in nominal features with the corresponding counterpart in the antecedent clause. It is worth mentioning that even the correlate *waḥid* 'someone' in the language has two variants based on gender: *waḥid* 'someone.M' and *waḥidah* 'someone.F', which correspond with *minuh* 'who.3SM' and *mini(h)* 'who.3SF'. To illustrate sluicing in P-stranding contexts, consider the examples given in (32), whereby the remnant wh-phrase *min* 'who' must agree in nominal features with the (overt) correlate in the antecedent clause:

- 32) a. Mubarak safar maṣa waḥid, bas ma ḥaṣrifš **minuh**/*min
Mubarak travelled with someone.M, but Neg who.3SM/who
b. Mubarak safar maṣa waḥidah, bas ma ḥaṣrifš **minih**/*min
Mubarak travelled with someone.F, but Neg know.I who.3SF/who
c. Mubarak safar maṣa ṣiyaal, bas ma ḥaṣrifš **minhum**/*min
Mubarak travelled with boys, but Neg know.I who.3PLM/who
d. Mubarak safar maṣa banaat, bas ma ḥaṣrifš **minhin**/*min
Mubarak travelled with girls, but Neg know.I who.3PLF/who

In (32), the residual wh-phrase *min* 'who' in the sluiced clause will be ungrammatical if it does not match in agreement features with the (explicit or implicit) correlate in the antecedent clause.

Apparent P-stranding under sluicing: Possible Sources:

Merchant (2001 & 2006) proposed in the literature on sluicing that there are two possible underlying causes of P-stranding: regular wh-questions (true sluicing) and copular sources (pseudosluicing). The former is derived by moving the wh-element *min* 'who' from the TP's specifier position to the CP's specifier position, along with the deletion of the entire TP that is a complement to the displaced wh-phrase. The elided TP is wholly represented in the course of narrow syntax but omitted in the phonological component, i.e., Spell-out. The latter appears similar to a sluice due to the availability of the displaced wh-phrase but has the structure of a cleft construction, which is fundamentally different from that of a regular embedded.

Technically speaking, a wh-sluice in preposition-stranding contexts is governed by an interrogative head C, where the omission of the TP results from the valuation of uninterpretable features on C, specifically the E(llipsis) feature bearing the uninterpretable [*u wh*, Q]. Once the wh-element moves to

the specifier position of Complementizer Phrase (Spec; CP) [uE] feature is checked, leading to the omission of the embedded TP at PF. Following the PF-deletion approach, I propose the instances of P-stranding in sluiced clauses observed in Ta'izzi Arabic, such as the one in (33), are merely apparent; they cannot be originated from a typical wh-question, as in (34), but rather from a wh-cleft question, as in (35).

33) Mubarak safar waḥid bas ma ḥaḥrifš **minuh**

Mubarak travelled with one, but Neg know-I who-pro

'Mubarak travelled with someone, but I don't know who.'

34) *Mubarak safar **maḥa** waḥid, bas ma ḥaḥrifš [CP **minuh**_i [TP Mubarak safar **maḥa** t_i]]

Mubarak travelled with one, but Neg know.I [CP who.pro_i [TP Mubarak travelled **with** t_i]]

'Mubarak travelled with someone but I don't know who(m) he travelled with.'

35) Mubarak safar **maḥa** waḥid, bas ma ḥaḥrifš [CP **minuh**_i [TP t_iT [C illi Mubarak safar maḥuh]]

Mubarak travelled with one, but Neg know.I [CP who.pro_i [TP Mubarak travelled **with** t_i]]

'Mubarak travelled with someone but I don't know who it is that he travelled with.'

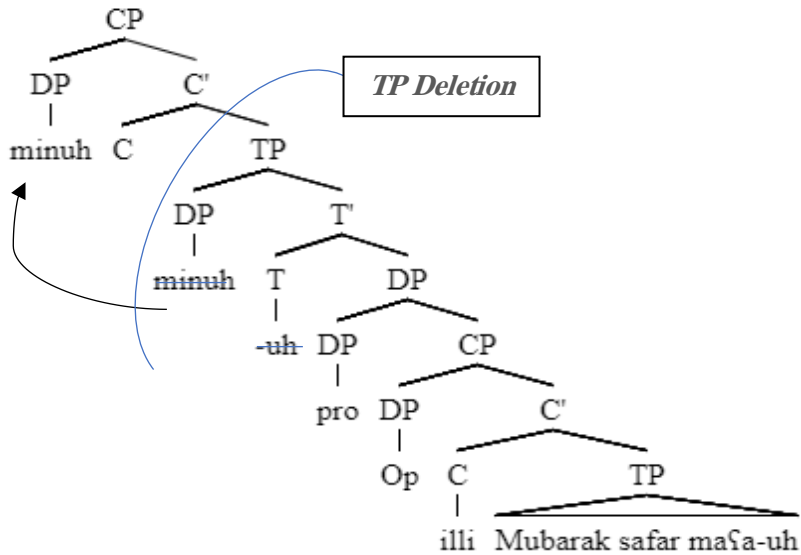
The two representations of (33), given in (34) and (35), indicate that the underlying source of the ellipsis in the sluiced clause does not stem from a regular wh-question but from a resumptive one. This is because the underlying structure of a resumptive wh-question requires the presence of three elements: (i) the complementizer *illi* 'that', (ii) a resumptive pronoun to mark the original site of the relocated wh-phrase, and (iii) a copular pronoun usually attached to the displaced wh-phrase. Therefore, the illicit structure in (34) results from the absence of the necessary relative pronoun *illi* 'that' in the sluiced structure. In addition, the language under study employs a resumptive pronoun strategy to ensure that a preposition is not stranded, or left alone. The resumptive pronoun *-uh* '3SM' acts as the object of the preposition *maḥa* 'with'. The requirement that the antecedent and sluiced clauses have the same structure is not met by the sluiced clause's mandatory use of the relative pronoun *illi* 'that,' which is not present in the corresponding antecedent clause. Evidently, the source of the underlying structure of P-stranding under sluicing, such as that in (33), does not stem from proper wh-questions

represented by the base form of the wh-phrase *min* ‘who’. Instead, it derives from a copular source (wh-clefts) represented by the presence of the relative wh-element *illi* ‘that’ or from the resumptive wh-question. In this vein, there are two PF-deletion-based hypotheses that seek to explain P-stranding effects in sluicing. The first theory, put forth by Cheng's (1997) examination of Egyptian Arabic, contends that wh-movement is not necessary to develop resumptive wh-questions. Instead, these are cleft structures where the wh-phrase is co-indexically linked to a null operator displaced to Spec; CP after being generated at Spec; a TP-external position. Therefore, no P-stranding occurs in these questions, and this aligns with crosslinguistic evidence that P-stranding effects originate from a copular source in non-preposition-stranding languages. Yet, the question of how sluicing is licensed within the deletion approach, given that Ta'izzi Arabic permits wh-movement, remains unclear. The second hypothesis, proposed in Shlonsky's (2002) analysis of resumptive wh-questions in Palestinian Arabic, posits that the wh-slucies in p-stranded instances are derived from copular-structured clauses by moving the wh-element from Spec-TP to Spec-CP, followed by TP deletion. Essentially, these instances of wh-questions are viewed as copular nominal clauses, where the wh-slucie functions as the subject and a free relative clause, such as *illi* ‘that,’ acts as the predicate. The wh-slucie is initially generated in Spec; TP and then moves to Spec; CP. While the two analyses treat resumptive questions as copular-structured clauses, Cheng (1997) asserts that the wh-slucie is generated in its surface position of CP domain, whereas Shlonsky (2002) proposes it moves from the TP to the CP domain, the view I follow in the current analysis.

Based on the explanation of apparent P-stranding under sluicing in Libyan Arabic by Algryani (2010), which expands upon Shlonsky's (2002) study of resumptive wh-questions, I suggest that apparent P-stranding under sluicing in Ta'izzi Arabic is a copular-structured construction where the wh-slucie is the subject and the nominal relative clause is the predicate. The subject wh-phrase is then moved to Spec; CP to satisfy the requirement of the uninterpretable wh-feature on Q, which requires the wh-phrase to occupy the specifier position of CP, where the uninterpretable feature gets valued. Subsequently, the embedded TP is omitted at PF. The assumption that the wh-movement is present in this copular construction is supported by the

occurrence of the pronominal element on the displaced wh-phrase, without which the merger between the wh-sluced phrase and the pronominal element cannot occur. Therefore, the (underlying) structure of sentence (33), which illustrates the apparent P-stranding under sluicing, is syntactically represented as shown in (36).

36)



The proposed structure in (36) indicates that the displaced wh-phrase *minuh* is originally created within the nominal predicate, where it occupies the subject position, but ultimately moves to Spec; CP via the TP position, where the pronominal element is morphologically merged with the displaced wh-phrase *min-uh* ‘who-pro’. Once the displaced wh-phrase, cliticized with a pronominal element, moves to Spec; CP for the feature checking reasons, the complement TP is phonologically omitted. The presence of the preposition within a relative clause in a cleft wh-question, which is subsequently deleted at PF during pseudosluicing, creates the impression that preposition stranding is involved in sluicing in the dialect being investigated. However, this is merely an appearance.

Conclusion:

The study has examined the morpho-syntactic properties of sluicing in Ta'izzi Arabic. It finds that the superficial appearance of sluicing in preposition-stranding contexts can be confusing, as Ta'izzi Arabic contradicts

Merchant's (2001) generalization by permitting P-stranding under sluicing, despite such stranding being prohibited in regular wh-movement. The study reveals that what might appear to be an instance of sluicing in P-stranding contexts is an instance of pseudosluicing derived from a wh-cleft rather than a regular wh-question. The lack of prepositions in the relative clause and the copular pronouns in the sluiced clause add to the misrepresentation that Ta'izzi Arabic may exhibit sluicing with P-stranding effects. The implication of the study is that there are two potential elliptical structures in the language, each derived from a distinct source: true sluicing from a regular wh-question source and pseudosluicing from a reduced wh-cleft source. Similar to sluicing, pseudosluicing arises from wh-movement combined with TP deletion. The study will contribute to ongoing discussions about sluicing within linguistic theory, particularly in developing a unified analysis of this intriguing ellipsis construction. It calls for a revisit of proposals made regarding similar phenomena in non-P-stranding languages, such as Brazilian Portuguese, as well as in other modern varieties of Arabic, including Emirati Arabic, Najdi Arabic, and Hijazi Arabic. These varieties have been claimed to be counterexamples to Merchant's generalization, as they disallow sluicing in regular wh-questions but allow it in P-stranding contexts.

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