Sluicing

Syntax III — UCSC

February 4, 2011

1   Is something missing?

(1)   a.   He bought something, but I don't know what.
      b.   Someone made a mess in the kitchen guys, and gee, I wonder who.
      c.   There's one of your students in the office, but I can't tell which.
      d.   He bought a painting of something. It was unclear (of) what.

A starter question:

- Is it deep or surface—syntactically or pragmatically controlled?

But is there independent evidence for syntactic deletion or not?

(2)   He invited someone, but I don't know
      a.   [$_{DP}$ who]   no deletion; just a wh-word
      b.   [$_{CP}$ who ~~he invited~~]   question with deletion of rest of CP

2   Maybe nothing is missing

Why not just a simple complement, like (2-a)? In fact, just a simple DP can sometimes give what seems like the meanings we're after here.

(3)   a.   I know the capitals of Europe ≈ I know what the capitals of Europe are.
      b.   I asked the time. ≈ I asked what the time was.

(4)   a.   He invited some people, but he didn't tell me [$_{DP}$ the people he invited].
      b.   He invited some people, but he didn't tell me [$_{DP}$ who]

(5)   a.   He bought the car for a lot of money, but I never knew [the price].
      b.   He bought the car for a lot of money, but I never knew [how much].

(6) a. They had left, and I asked [the reason].
     b. They had left, and I asked [why].

What about these?

(7) a. I had no idea what the capital of Saskatchewan is
     b. *I had no idea the capital.

(8) a. I inquired what time it was.
     b. *I inquired the time.

(9) a. I wondered who she invited
     b. *I wondered the invitees.

(10) Sal invited someone . . .
      a. I don't know who.
      b. I wondered who.
      c. I inquired who.
      d. She told me who.
      e. I had no idea who.

(11) Sally invited someone.
      a. I know who, but I don't know him.
      b. #I know him, but I don't know him.

(12) Predictions for languages with different 'knows'?

3 CP vs. DP position

(13) [Dass Elke ein Auto repariert hat] haben wir gewusst, aber . . .
      that Elke a   car   repaired has have we known   but
      'We knew that Elke repaired a car, but . . .'
      a. wir haben nicht geahnt,   [welches].
          we have   not   suspected which.
          'we had no idea which.'
      b. *wir haben [welches] nicht geahnt.
      c. *wir haben nicht [welches] geahnt.

(14) a. Wann hat [das auto] Elke gestern   repariert?
          when has the car   Elke yesterday repaired
          'When did Elke repair the car yesterday?'
      b. *Wann hat Elke gestern   repariert [das Auto]?
          when has Elke yesterday repaired the   car
          'When did Elke fix the car yesterday'

(15)   a.   Wann hat Elke gestern   welches Auto repariert?
            when has Elke yesterday which   car   repaired
            'When did Elke fix what car yesterday?'
       b.   *Wer hat gestern   repariert welches Auto?
            who has yesterday repaired which   car
            'Who fixed which car yesterday?'
       c.   *Wann hat welches Auto Elke gestern   repariert?
            when has which   car   Elke yesterday repaired
            'When did Elke fix which car yesterday?'

(16)   a.   Wir haben nicht gewusst [$_{CP}$ welches Auto Elke repariert hat]
            we have not known   which car   Elke repaired has
       b.   *Wir haben [$_{CP}$ welches Auto Elke repariert hat] nicht gewusst.
       c.   *Wir haben nicht [$_{CP}$ welches Auto Elke repariert hat] gewusst.
            'We don't know which car Elke repaired,'

4   What kinds of CPs

What other kinds of CPs are there? Do they allow parts of them to go missing in a similar way?

Some questions to think about:

(17)   a.   Does there need to be a *wh*-phrase?
       b.   Will any kind of *wh*-phrase do?
       c.   Does it need to be a question?
       d.   Does any kind of question do?

5   OK, it's a CP but where did the *wh*-word come from?

Construct an argument about where the *wh*-word originates using the following. (NOM = nominative case; ACC = dative case; DAT = dative case)

(18)   a.   Sie wissen nicht, {*wer   /*wen   /wem}   er schmeicheln will.
            they know   not   who.NOM /who.ACC /who.DAT he flatter   wants
            'They dont know who he wants to flatter.'
       b.   Sie wissen nicht, {*wer   /wen   /*wem}   er loben will.
            they know   not   who.NOM /who.ACC /who.DAT he praise wants
            'They dont know who he wants to praise.'

(19)   a.   Er will   jemandem   schmeicheln, aber sie wissen nicht, {*wer   /*wen   /wem}.
            he wants someone.DAT flatter   but they know   not   who.NOM who.ACC who.DAT
            'He wants to flatter someone, but they dont know who.'
       b.   Er will   jemanden   loben, aber sie wissen nicht, {*wer   /wen   /*wem}.
            he wants someone.ACC praise but they know   not   who.NOM /who.ACC /who.DAT
            'He wants to flatter someone, but they dont know who.'

And again with these:

(20)   a. Who was she talking with?
         b. With who(m) was she talking?

(21)   Mary was talking to someone,
         a. but I don't know who.
         b. but I don't know with whom.

(22)   Basque
         a. Nor ekin hitzegin zuen?
            who with talk-to   AUX
            'With whom did he talk with?'
         b. *Nor hitzegin zuen _____ ekin.
            who talk-to AUX   with
            'Who did he talk with?'

(23)   Basque[1]
         a. Ana-k   norbait ekin hitzegin zuen, baina ez dakit nor ekin.
            Ana-ERG someone with talk.to   AUX, but   not know who with
            'Ana spoke to someone, but I don't know with whom.'
         b. *Ana-k   norbait ekin hitzegin zuen, baina ez dakit nor.
            Ana-ERG someone with talk.to   AUX, but   not know who
            'Ana spoke to someone, but I don't know who.'

(24)   German
         a. Anna hat mit jemandem gesprochen, aber ich weiss nicht, *(mit) wem.
            Anna has with someone spoken   but I   know not   with who
            'Anna has spoken with someone, but I don't know who?
         b. *Wem hat sie mit gesprochen?
            who has she with spoken
            Who has she spoken with?

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

6   Some extras

(26)   a. *He bought a painting, but I don't know who.
         b. *There is a mess in the kitchen, guys, and gee, I wonder who.

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[1]ERG = ergative, a suffix for subjects of verbs with objects

c. *There are students in the office, but I can't tell which.
d. *He bought a painting. It was unclear (of) what.

(27)   a.   Sally's out hunting—guess what?
       b.   He bought something, but I don't know when.
       c.   They chose leather. It's pretty clear why.
       d.   John's serving his guests now, but I don't know what.
       e.   compare: John is serving some paella, but I don't know *(to) whom.