Swiping

(Sluiced Wh-word Inversion with Preposition In Northern Germanic)   Merchant (2002)

(1)   Peter went to the movies, but I don't know who with

(2)   Ross analyzed these as deletion of a discontinuous portion of the structure.

(3)   All existing alternatives (Kim (1997), Richards (1997), Merchant (2002), Craenenbroeck (2004), etc.) eschew this and have the PP move. The P is saved from deletion because it is outside the deletion site.

(4)   Merchant is especially concerned to capture two major properties of Swiping.

(5)   First, only very light wh's, X^0's, participate in the construction (the 'Minimality Condition'):

(6) Acceptable   Unacceptable
       who   which
       what   which one
       when   which composer
       where   whose
                                        how rich
                                        how rich of a guy
                                        what kind
                                        what time
                                        what town
                                        etc.

(7)a. * She bought a robe for one of her nephews, but God knows which (one) for.
     b. * They were arguing about animals, but we couldn't figure out what kind about.
     c. * This opera was written by an Italian composer in the 19th century, but we're not sure
          which (composer / one) by.
     d. * She's driving, but God knows what town to.
     e. * They were riding in somebody's car, but I don't know whose in.
                                        [Merchant 2002: (22a-c, f, h)]

(8)   Second, Swiping only shows up under Sluicing (the 'Sluicing Condition'):

(9)   *Peter went to the movies, but I don't know who with he went to the movies

(10)   Swiping involves head movement. The Minimality Condition falls out from Structure Preservation: Only a head can adjoin to a head.

Further properties of Swiping (discussion based on Sprouse (2005)

Fact 1: The prosodic prominence is head final:

(11)a. [who TO]
     b. [*WHO to]
     c. [to WHO]
     d. [*TO who]

Fact 2: Swiping is (usually) bad when the PP is in the antecedent, as first observed by Rosen (1976)

(12)   a. We were with somebody. I forget who (*with)
        b. Smersh intends to do away with someone. Find out who (*with)
        c. She got involved in something over her head, but I don't remember what (*in)

But there are better cases:

(13)   She fixed it with something, but God only knows what with

Merchant's System:

(14)   AVOIDF (Schwarzschild 1999): Focused word cannot be GIVEN (where GIVEN means something like 'said before')
(15)   HEADFINAL: The prosodic head should be final in the prosodic phrase

(16)   She fixed it, but God only knows …   (no antecedent)
        a. what WITH   satisfies both HEADFINAL and AVOIDF
        b. *WHAT with   satisfies AVOIDF but fails HEADFINAL

(17)   We were with somebody, but I forget   (antecedent)
        a. WHO   satisfies both
        b. *who WITH   fails AVOIDF

(18)   She [$_{VP}$ [$_{VPA}$ fixed it] with something], but God only knows what WITH
        i. The lower VP can be taken as antecedent.
        ii. This means the preposition will not have an antecedent, and thus can't be deleted.
        iii. This satisfies both HEADFINAL and AVOIDF

(19)   Is the the Sluicing Condition derived? Merchant does show that to state it at all, head movement should be a PF operation (as also argued by Boeckx and Stjepanovic (2001) for other reasons). But as far as I can tell, the Condition itself doesn't actually follow.

(20)   Proposed extension of Merchant's account, incorporating some aspects of that of Richards (1997):

(21)   Given that head movement is a PF process, it cannot precede wh-movement.
(22)   Movement leaves a copy (or copies). All but the highest copy usually must delete.
(23)   This deletion is under strict identity: If one copy is altered and another is not, deletion fails. (Takahashi (1994)). Linearization thus fails.

(24)   ... [with who] [he went to the movies [with who]]

(25)   ... [who+with] [$_{IP}$ he went to the movies [with who]]

(26)   Deletion of [with who] fails, hence linearization does.

(27)   But if Sluicing takes place, [with who] is eliminated along with the entire IP, so the linearization problem is 'repaired by ellipsis'.

(28)   One huge problem for either head movement account, discovered by Craenenbroeck (2004):

(29)   Mary is talking.
       Who do you think to?

Further examples, from Hartman (2007):

(30)   a. He wants us. --What do you suppose for?
       b. Besides, Jisao was "invited" here. Who do you think by?
       c. It looks like he's thinking pretty hard in the last two poses, what do you suppose about?
       d. Will I get married, and if so, who do you think with?
       e. Do Polynesians feel that they originated on the Islands of Polynesia, or do they think that they sailed there? If they sailed there, where do you think from?

Hartman also shows that the Minimality Condition does not always hold:

(31)   a. He fought in the civil war, but I don't know which side for.
       b. Pierre is an illegal immigrant. He's originally from France, but came here from Canada. He'll definitely be deported, but it's not clear which country to.
       c. A: He's one of the best players in the league. He plays shortstop.
          B: Which team for?
       d. It's appears to have been translated, but I can't tell what language from.

These facts make the focus movement plus wh-movement accounts more appealing.

References

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