

Sluicing in Hindi-Urdu: Additional Evidence for Top Copy Availability

The primary goal of this analysis is to present some novel data in regard to focus and sluicing in Hindi-Urdu in support of the copy theory account provided by Manetta (2013). Following from Manetta's claims that normal wh-questions in Hindi-Urdu are instances of lower copy pronunciation, and sluices are exceptional instances of top-copy pronunciation; here, I make the additional supporting claim that top copy pronunciation is linked heavily to recoverability of the wh-feature. By examining instances of TP elision with subjects raised to focus, it is apparent that where the overt realisation of the wh-phrase is not needed for recoverability it can be deleted, in accordance with a preference against pronouncing the highest wh-phrase copy.

In (1) we can see that when the subject is raised to a focus position in the second conjunct it is not necessary to pronounce the top copy of the wh-phrase. Following work by Déprez, Syrett and Kawahara (2013) on wh-prosody in French; I argue, that while phonological pronunciation is not needed for recoverability, the obligatory rising contour in the prosody of these types of constructions is an overt PF realization of a high wh-phrase copy.

- (1) is-ka nam Ali hai, aur us-ka nam (~~kyaa hai~~)?
this-GEN name Ali be.M.prs and that-GEN name (what be.M.prs) 'this
one's name is Ali, and that one's?'

For this analysis, it is necessary to distinguish wh-sluicing, and elisions of the type seen in (1) from vP-elision, stripping, and reduced copular constructions. Manetta (2013) uses tests of embedding and backward anaphora to show that constructions of the type seen in (2) cannot be stripping or reduced copular constructions. Additionally, she notes that the auxiliary 'hai' is obligatorily elided in these constructions; as this has been posited to be the overt realization of a finite T⁰, generated in T⁰ (Bhatt, 2005), she concludes that the elision site is at least as large as TP. Using similar tests, I show that the data given in (1) matches all the same criteria, differing only in the focus raising of the subject to the SPEC of FocP (between CP and TP).

- (2) a. Ali koi kitaab caah-taa hai. Hum-eN nahiiN pa-taa kaunsii
Ali some book want.HAB AUX. We.DAT NEG know.HAB which.F
(~~kitaab caah-taa hai~~) book
want.HAB AUX.
'Ali wants to buy a book. We don't know which one.' (Bhatt, 2005)

Drawing on Deprez, Syrett and Kawahara (2013), I posit that while there is no overt realization of a wh-phrase, there is a high copy of the wh-feature that is realized as prosody in sluices such as the one seen in (2). With the realization of the wh-feature as prosody, and the focus fronting of the contrasting subject, all of the material that contrasts the antecedent and the sluice is recoverable and the derivation is grammatical.

References

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