Question Formation in Iraqi Arabic:

A GenerativeApproach

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the construction of question formation mainly in Iraqi Arabic (IA) dialect with reference to English adopting the Minimalist Program (MP). This study falls into two parts. The first part investigates the wh- movements in English and IA in the light of Chomsky's Minimalist Program. The second part of the study analyzes the strategies of wh-questions in IA which are the wh-in-situ, the intermediate Comp, and the wh-movement strategy with respect to Bounding Theory, the Split vP analysis, and Phase movement.

A new set of data concerning the behavior of wh-operators in Iraqi Arabic is represented. This data study that the Logical Form movement in IA must observe locality constraints. The wh-operator must move to the closest specifier (Spec) position of a [+WH] complementizer (Comp).

The study diagnoses a unique property of the wh-operator in IA. Unlike English where the wh-operator may occur in the Spec of the matrix Comp, or in-situ as in Chinese, in IA wh-operator may occur in any Spec of an intermediate Comp between the matrix Comp and the in-situ position. Whether the hosting Comp is [+WH] or [-WH], the wh-operator in IA exercises wide scope over the entire question having a main question reading. IA as a dialect has proven to be one which is rich in its analysis of question formation. The researcher empirically tries to prove this optionality of the wh-phrase in the light of MP analysis)

Chomsky's Minimalist Program captures a number of unrelated phenomena that pertain to the behavior of wh-questions in IA. Mostly, the behavior of the wh-operator that occurs in a [-wh] Comp in a main question. An enriched tree can smoothly capture the behavior of wh-questions in IA.

The minimalist tree, which is an input to the Phonetic Form (PF) and Logical Form (LF) components, may distinguish between the visibility and the invisibility of wh-operators. The IA wh-operator in a [-WH] Comp is visible at (PF) but invisible at LF. MP relies on feature checking to account for the movement of any element in the sentence. The uninterpretable feature of one element, called the Probe, needs to be checked by another element, called the Goal. A way of checking this

feature comes in the form of movement of the Goal to a position where it can get into a checking relation with the Prob.

The vP Split analysis and Phase theory are adopted for the successive cyclic movement of the wh-operator in mono, bi, and tri-clauses. The two phases, CP and transitive vP, are diagnosed in the analyses of the IA data.

Key words: Minimalism, Locality restrictions, Ross's constraints, wh-movement, Wh-in-situ, Logical Form (LF), Scope, phase, split vp analysis.

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The following is a list of the abbreviations used in the dissertation

A-Position	Argument Position
ACC	Attract Closest Condition
AF	Affix Feature
Comp	Complementizer
CNPC	Complex Noun Phrase Constraints
CP	Complementizer Phrase
C	Complementizer
C-Command	Constituent Command
DS	Deep Structure
D	Derivation
DP	Determiner Phrase
DFCF	Double Filled Complementizer Filter
ECM	Exceptional Case Marking
EPP	Extended Principle Projection
EF	Edge Feature
GB	Government and Binding
IA	Iraqi Arabic
IPC	Impentrability Condition
LCA	Linear Correspondence Axiom
LF	Logical Form
MP	Minimalist Program

NP	Noun Phrase
PF	Phonetic Form
PP	Prepositional Phrase
P&P	Principles and Parameters
P'	Intermediate Projection
PRN	Pronoun
PSC	Preposition Stranding Constraint
Q	Question
QF	Question Feature
S	Sentence
SPH	Structure Preserving Hypothesis
SBC	Structure Building Computation
Spec	Specifier
SS	Surface Structure
TG	Transformational Grammar
TP	Tense Phrase
TNS	Tense
-TNS	Minus Tense
+TNS	Plus Tense
T	Tense
TF	Tense Feature
UG	Universal Grammar
VP	Verb Phrase
WAC	Wh-Attraction Condition

-WH	Minus Wh
WIC	Wh Island Constraints
X	Head
X'	X-Bar
X*	Zero Projection
ϕ	Phonological Component
Σ	Semantic Component

Table 1. Abbreviations used in the dissertation.

The following is a chart of the IPA symbols used along with their corresponding Arabic letters:

		Labial	Pain		Emphatic		Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pha
			Dental	Alveolar	Dental	Alveolar				
Nasal		م m	ن n							
Stop	Voiceless		ت t		ط t			ك k	ق q	
	Voiced	ب b	د d		ض đ		ج (d_3) ~ g			
	Voiceless	ف f	ث θ	س S		ص ʂ	ش ʃ	خ x ~ X		
Fricative	Voiced		ذ ţ	ز z	ظ Ə ~ Z			غ ġ ~ ʁ		
Trill				ر r						
Approximant			ل l ~ l				ي j	و W		

Table2. Modern Standard Arabic Consonant Phonemes.

Due to space configurations, the following symbols are not present in the tableau:

a. The symbol for the Glottal Voiceless stop (ʔ) (ء).
b. The symbol for the glottal voiceless fricative (h) (ه).
c. The symbol for the Voiceless post-alveolar affricate(ʧ)

https://en.m.wikipedia.org,wiki,Arabic

Vowels	Description	Examples	Trans.
/i/	short high unrounded vowel	đid	against
/i:/	long high front unrounded vowel	tri:d	She wants
/u/	short high back rounded vowel	suʒa:d	a proper noun
/u:/	back close rounded vowel	ʃu:f	look
/a/	short mid unrounded vowel	ʒala	On
/a:/	long mid unrounded vowel	ra:dat	wanted
/o/	mid half close back rounded vowel	ʃeno	what
/o:/	back half open and half close rounded vowel	ʃloon	how

Table 3: Vowels in Iraqi Arabic

Adapted from (Ezzat, 1973 pp.XI-XIII)

- Length of a vowel is indicated by a (:) as (ra:dat)
- Gemination is indicated by doubling the consonant letter, as (tṡawwarat)

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