Ministry of Higher Education

University of Babylon

College of Education for Human Sciences

Department of English

Wh – Movement in English

A paper

Submitted to the Council of Department of English, College of Education, University of Babylon in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of B.A in English Language and Linguistics

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe gratitude to my family for being with me throughout my studying years, to the teaching staff in the English department and to supervisor Dr. Raed Al-Janabi for consultation and guidance.

DEDICATION

To my family

whose support and intimacy grant me the impetus to go on and on

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Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

In linguistics, wh-movement (also known as Wh-fronting, Wh-extraction, or wh-raising) is the formation of syntactic dependencies involving interrogative words. An example in English is the dependency formed between *what* and the *object* position of doing in "What are you doing?" Interrogative forms are known in English as wh-words, such as *what, when, where, who, and why*, including *how***.**

The study tries to answer the following questions:

 1. What is meant by Wh- movement in English?

 2. What are the types of Wh- movements in English?

1.2 Aims of the study

The study aims to:

1. Discussing Wh-movement in English.

2. Shedding light on the types of Wh-movements in English.

1.3 Hypotheses of The Study

The hypotheses of the study are:

1. English exhibits Wh-movement.

2. There are many types of Wh-movements in English.

1.4 Limit of the study

This study is limited to present and discuss the various types of Wh-movements in English.

1.5 The value of the study

It is hoped that this study will be of value to those concerned in the field of linguistics as well as teachers of English seeking a detailed analysis of Wh-movement in this language.

Chapter Two

"Wh Movement in English"

2.1 General background

A type of movement operation whereby a wh-expression is moved to the front of a particular type of structure (e.g. to the front of the overall sentence in 'Where has he gone?') (Radford 2004, 562). In some languages Wh-movement is often an option for certain matrix clauses such as in French. Examples of languages with wh expressions without required wh movement are Chinese and Slavic. The most commonly used languages as examples are Mandarin and Russian. The name wh-movement comes from an analysis adopted in early versions of Generative grammar. In this analysis, the Wh expression appears in the standard position of the deep structure, moving to the left from that position, and the sentence / clause with the surface structure. Many theories of syntax do not use the mechanism of motion in a variant sense, but even in theories that do not model long-distance dependencies as motion, Movements often lead to discontinuities. Of the various types of discontinuities, movement is best studied. It has been observed in many languages of the world and plays an important role in the theory of long-distance dependence (Aarts1992:98).

2.2 Wh- questions

Question words are used to ask about specific qualities, times, places, people and so on. There are two main types of questions: Yes/No questions and WH- question. WH-questions are questions starting with Wh-words including: *what, when, where, who, whom, which, whose, why and how* (Akiyama, 2004:87).

Below is a list of question words and example sentences:

Question words	Usages	Examples
What	Used to ask about things	- What are you doing? - What do you think about the movie?
When	Used to ask about time	- When will the meeting start? - When are you leaving?
Where	Used to ask about places	- Where's my bag? - Where do you live?
Who	Used to ask about people	- Who do you love the most in your family? - Who told you that story?
Whom	Used to ask about people (object of verb)	- Whom did you see in the morning? I saw Mr. Mark, my English teacher. - Whom was Jim talking to? He was talking to Jack, his new roommate.
Which	Used to ask about choices	- Which one do you choose? The left or right? - Of all the drinks in the menu, which one would you like?
Whose	Used to ask about possession	- Whose pencil is this? Is it yours? - Whose books are these?
Why	Used to ask about reasons/ causes	- Why did it happen? I didn't understand. - Why is he crying?
How	Used to ask about manner/ process	- How can you explain this problem? Please tell us. - How can you get here

How to form Wh-questions? They are formed as follows:

1. with an auxiliary

Wh-word + auxiliary + subject + main verb …?

- Auxiliary verbs are helping verbs (not main verbs).
- Common auxiliary verbs include be, do, have. Others are will, shall, would, can, could, must, should, may, might, etc.

   A-What do you do for a living?
   B-Why should we read books?
   C-When is she coming?

2. without any auxiliary

(when Wh-words replace subjects already)

Wh-word + main verb …?

   A-What happened to Peter?
   B-A bad accident happened to him today.

   A-Who won the game?
   B-Tio won the game.

   A-Who gave you this present?
   B-My cousin gave me this present.

Cheng (1997:68)

2.3 Pied-piping

Many front-facing examples include pied-pipping. It occurs when the prefixed Wh-word drags the entire phrase containing it to the beginning of the sentence. The next two subsections consider both mandatory and optional piping. Required plumbing may be required. That is, to precede a we expression, it must be preceded by the entire inclusive phrase. In the following example, the relevant representation of Pied-pipes is underlined. These examples show that pied pipes are often needed when wh-word is in a noun phrase or adjective phrase. Pied-pipeping is partially motivated by barriers to production and islands. If the Wh word appears under a forbidden category or on an island, the entire inclusive sentence must be prefixed. Pied-piping was first identified by John R. Ross in 1967 (Aissen, (1996:65):

(a)You have done which assignment?

(b) *Which have you done assignment?

 (c) Which assignment have you done?

2.3.1 Optional pied-piping

Piping may be optional. In English, this mainly happens with prepositional phrases. Wh-word is the object of the preposition. The formal register is the preposition piedpipe, but more colloquial English prefers to leave the preposition in place. B. c. An example is the grounding of the preposition. This is possible in English, but not in many languages related to English.

For example, prepositions are rarely present in many other Germanic languages and may not be entirely present in Romance languages. Normative grammar often argues that even in English it is necessary to avoid prepositional grounding. However, in certain contexts, pipes of (Embick, 2004:32)

2.4 Types of Wh-clause

2.4.1 Exclamative clause

In English grammar, an *exclamatory sentence* is a type of main clause that expresses strong feelings in the form of an exclamation, as opposed to sentences that make a statement (declarative sentences), express commands (imperative sentences), or ask a question (interrogatory sentences). Also called an *exclamative* or an *exclamative clause*, an exclamatory sentence usually ends with an exclamation point. With the appropriate intonation, other sentence types—especially declarative sentences can be used to form exclamations.

Excellent! (How) *wonderful!*

"Oh wow, that concert was great!"

Jackendoff, (1972:43)

2.4.2 Relative clause

A relative clause is one kind of dependent clause. It has a subject and verb, but can't stand alone as a sentence. It is sometimes called an "adjective clause" because it functions like an adjective—it gives more information about a noun. A relative clause always begins with a "relative pronoun," which substitutes for a noun, a noun phrase, or a pronoun when sentences are combined.

Relative pronoun as subject:

A-I like the person. **The person** was nice to me.

B-I like the person **who** was nice to me.

C-I hate the dog. **The dog** bit me.

A--I hate the dog **that** bit me.

B-I am moving to Louisville, KY. **It** is home to the Muhammad Ali Museum.

C-I am moving to Louisville, KY, **which** is home to the Muhammad Ali Museum.

Relative pronoun as object:

A-I like the bike. My father gave me **the bike**.

B-I like the bike **that** my father gave me.

C-Klima (1964:45)

2.5 Wh-movement in the Logical Form (LF) component

We're going to take a look at two cases of Logical Form (LF) wh-movement; that is, wh-movement which takes place but which you don't 'see'. In languages like Chinese and Japanese, following a line of analysis started by Huang (1982), it turns out that all Wh-movement happens in the LF component. The idea of LF-movement differs from the null-operator analysis of relative clauses, because in these cases the wh-words aren't 'invisible'. They're there. They just don't look like they've moved anywhere. But we're going to argue that they do (McCawley 1993:24).

2.5.1 LF wh-movement in Chinese and Japanese

Chinese and Japanese represent two languages in which, on the surface, wh elements like what and why do not undergo wh-movement. Consider the following sentence from Japanese:

1.John-wa nani-o kaimashita ka?

   John-Top what-Ace bought

    'What did John buy?'

Japanese is a head-final language. Therefore, nani-o 'what' is in a standard direct object position as a sister to V.

However, notice that nani (a wh-word in Japanese) has not undergone any wh-movement in (1), despite (1) being the normal way to ask a wh-question in Japanese. The wh-word remains in situ, that is in its 0-Structure position. We can see this when we replace nani with a non-wh-word, as in :

2. John-wa hon-o kaimashita.

   John-Top book-Ace bought

   'John bought a book.'

Chinese and Japanese have covert wh-movement to Spec CP. Put another way, Chinese and Japanese are essentially identical to English with regard to their wh-questions. The difference between them is simply a matter of whether wh-movement takes place between 0-Structure and S-Structure (overtly) or between S-Structure and LF (covertly).

There are two kinds of arguments that we'll look at to support the idea of LF wh-movement. The first will be a more conceptual, cross-linguistic kind. In looking at other languages, we'll see that they have overt movements which correspond to the covert ones that we're postulating (as in English, for instance). We'll also try to make some of the same arguments for LF wh-movement in Chinese and Japanese as we made for overt wh-movement in English even though the elements in question don't seem to move anywhere, the elements are behaving as if they did move and are subject to some familiar constraints on movement.

(3) I asked whati John bought ti.

   I know what John bought ti.

(4) Zhangsan xiang-zhidao Lisi mai-le shenme.

   Zhangsan wonder Lisi bought what

   'Zhangsan wonders what Lisi bought.'

The obvious difference between (3) and (4) is that wh-movement does not appear to have taken place in (4), just like the Japanese case that we saw in (1) above. In the S-Structure in (4), shenme is in the same position that it's in at D-Structure. It has not moved to Spec CP (Milsark, 1974:87)

Chapter Three

3.1 Sentential complement to a noun:

Relative clause:

Non-bridge-verb islands

Extraction out of object that-clauses serving as complements to verbs may show island like behavior if the matrix verb is a non-bridge verb. Non-bridge verbs include manner-of-speaking verbs, such as *whisper* or *shout*.

3.2 Wh-movement in syntax

Syntax trees are visual breakdowns of sentences that include dominating heads for every segment in the tree itself. In the wh-movement, there are additional segments that are added: EPP and the Question Feature that represents a question sentence.

The wh-movement is motivated by a Question Feature/EPP at C, which promotes movement of a wh-word from the canonical base position to Spec-C. This movement could be considered as "Copy + Paste + Delete" movement as we are copying the interrogative word from the bottom, pasting it to Spec-C, and then deleting it from the bottom so that it solely remains at the top. Overall, the highest C will be the target position of the wh-raising:

5. Who ate what at the restaurant?

In the following example from English, a strikeout-line and trace-movement coindexation symbols——are used to indicate the underlying raising-movement of the closest wh-phrase. This movement produces an overt sentence word order with one fronted wh-question:

in the underlying syntax structure of this sentence, is positioned directly after the transitive verb because the VP selects a direct object DP as its complement, the closest wh-phrase is raised from its canonical position to Spec-CP, which produces sentence word order with a wh-question word at the beginning of the sentence. The farther away wh-phrase is kept in-situ

In the underlying syntax, the wh-phrase closest to Spec-CP is raised to satisfy selectional properties of the CP: feature requirements of C. The wh-phrase farther away from Spec-CP stays in its base position. This movement is tolerated and has less consequences than when compared with English. In other words, wh-words in Mandarin remain in their original position in their clause, contrasting with wh-movement in English where the wh-word would move in constituent questions.

3.3 Attract Closest

In reference to the Attract Closest principle, where the head adopts the closest candidate available to it, the overt wh-phrase in Mandarin moves to proper scope position while the other wh-phrase stays in-situ as it is c-commanded by the wh-phrase first mentioned. This can be seen in the following example, where the word for "what" stays in-situ since it is c-commanded by the phrase in Mandarin meaning "at where:"

As these examples show, Mandarin is a wh-in-situ language, exhibits no movement of wh-phrases at Surface structure, is subject to other conditions based on the type of wh-phrase involved in the question, and adheres to the Attract Closest principle.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

Wh-movement is the formation of syntactic dependencies involving interrogative words. An example in English is the dependency formed between *what* and the *object* position of doing in "What are you doing?" Interrogative forms are known within English linguistics as wh-words, such as what, when, where, who, and why, but also include interrogative words like how. This type of dependency has been used as a diagnostic tool for syntactic research because it is subject to a set of interacting grammatical constraints. Wh- Question is a sentence that decisively contains Wh- word somewhere. A wh-question is a sentence that crucially contains somewhere in it a wh-word. Words that are informally identifiable as wh-words are found across the languages of the world but the semantics of these elements is a complex and controversial topic .

In English, we can recognize a wh-word by the fact that it helps trigger wh-movement (yes I know that's circular) and, in general, by the presence of the wh-morpheme.

The term wh-phrase is generally used even when discussing languages in which the relevant morpheme has an entirely different shape.

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