Against the in situ account of sluicing: the case of French
Jeroen van Craenenbroeck & Tanja Temmerman

KU Leuven/CRiSSP/Meetens Institute & Université Saint-Louis–Bruxelles/CRiSSP/SeSLa
jeroen.vancraenenbroeck@kuleuven.be & tanja.temmerman@gmail.com

The data: unmovable sluicing remnants
French allows wh-phrases as sluicing remnants that must remain in situ in non-elliptical clauses:

quoi-sluicing

(1) Il faut faire quelque chose, mais quoi?
It must do something but what?

(2) *Quoi faut-il faire?*
What must we do?

spading

(3) A: Je veux que tu fasses quelque chose.
B: Qui ça?
I want you to do something, who?

(4) *Quoi ça as-tu vu?*
What have you seen?

(5) *Qui ça?*
Who?

The analysis (I): quoi-sluicing and spading

A possible analysis: in situ sluicing

(10) The in situ account of sluicing posits that:

"sluicing does not require wh-movement, and [and] can delete around" wh-phrases and other remnants in situ (p. 675).

(11) a. Moline, Jean. 1997. Que voulait-il faire?
who intended to do what?

2009. Que voulait-il faire?
who intended to do what?

Arguments against the in situ account

embedded sluicing

Embedded wh in situ is disallowed in French (Cheng and Rooryck 2003).

(12) *Je ne sais pas (quoi)*
I do not know what.

But sluicing in the same context is perfectly fine:

(13) Il faut faire quelque chose, mais je ne sais pas quoi.
I must do something, but I don’t know what.

intervention effects

For all intents and purposes, French wh in situ is subject to intervention (Cheng and Rooryck 2003).

(14) *Quoi peut acheter quel ce coupon au Carrefour?*
What can you buy in the Carrefour supermarket?

But under sluicing these intervention effects disappear:

(15) A: Avec ce coupon on peut acheter quelque chose.
B: Qui ça?
With this coupon you can buy something.

The analysis (II): comment-sluicing

Open questions and further issues

1. What is the nature of the F-head spelled out as qui in French spd-

2. What about “true degree” readings of comment-sluicing?

References

Against the in situ account of sluicing: the case of French

1. The data: unmovable sluicing remnants

French allows wh-phrases as sluicing remnants that must remain in situ in non-elliptical clauses:

quoi-sluicing

Il faut faire quelque chose, mais quoi?
It must do something but what?

Quoi faut-il faire?
What must we do?

spading

A: Je veux que tu fasses quelque chose.
B: Qui ça?
I want you to do something, who?

Qui ça?
Who?

The analysis (I): quoi-sluicing and spading

A possible analysis: in situ sluicing

The in situ account of sluicing posits that:

"sluicing does not require wh-movement, and [and] can delete around" wh-phrases and other remnants in situ (p. 675).

Arguments against the in situ account

embedded sluicing

Embedded wh in situ is disallowed in French (Cheng and Rooryck 2003).

*Je ne sais pas (quoi)*
I do not know what.

But sluicing in the same context is perfectly fine:

Il faut faire quelque chose, mais je ne sais pas quoi.
I must do something, but I don’t know what.