

Multiple Sluicing in English?  
Howard Lasnik  
University of Maryland

For a few years, I have been exploring situations where a syntactic violation is seemingly 'repaired' by ellipsis, as in Ross's (1969) cases of island violation repair by Sluicing:

(1) Irv and someone were dancing together, but I don't know who \*(Irv and \_ were dancing together)

Recently, it has been suggested (Richards (1997) and Merchant (2001)) that another sort of violation can be repaired by ellipsis - situations where an item moved that shouldn't have. For example, in English, no matter how many wh-phrases there are in a question, only one moves to clause initial position:

(2) \*They didn't tell me which boy from which girl got something

The Sluiced version is much improved:

(3) I know that in each instance one of the girls got something from one of the boys.

?But which from which Example from Bolinger (1978)

I will explore this phenomenon further and point to evidence that examples like (3) do not involve multiple wh-movement, but instead single wh-movement of the first survivor and rightwards movement of the second. This then will lead to consideration of the nature of the Right Roof constraint on rightwards movement (Ross (1967)).

Bolinger, Dwight. 1978. Asking more than one thing at a time. In *Questions*, ed. Henry Hiz, 107-150. Dordrecht: Reidel.

Merchant, Jason. 2001. *The syntax of silence: Sluicing, islands, and the theory of ellipsis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, Norvin. 1997. *What moves where when in which language?* PhD, MIT, Cambridge, Mass.

Ross, John Robert. 1967. *Constraints on variables in syntax*. Doctoral dissertation, MIT, Cambridge, Mass. Published as *Infinite syntax!* Norwood, N.J.: Ablex (1986).

Ross, John Robert. 1969. Guess who? In *Papers from the Fifth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*, ed. Robert I. Binnick, Alice Davison, Georgia M. Green, and Jerry L. Morgan, 252-286. Chicago Linguistic Society, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.