Intervention Effects in Palestinian Arabic: How question formation becomes degraded

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Abstract. This paper provides novel results from semantic fieldwork on Palestinian Arabic (PA) on intervention effects. Theoretically, intervention effects can arise in simple and multiple wh-questions, in alternative questions and in scope marking constructions. It will be clarified why this is the case and why PA only exhibits effects in the latter two. Based on the empirical findings, it will be argued that grammaticality is not a binary phenomenon and that intervention effects, rather than turning a grammatical target sentence into an ungrammatical one, downgrade the judgements but do not necessarily make the target sentence ungrammatical. In this sense, intervention effects do exist, but the effect might not be as strong as predicted by the current theory.

1 Background: diagnosing intervention effects

Semantic explanations of intervention effects (Beck 2006, 2016; Howell et al. Ms. 2017; Hohaus & Howell 2015) predict intervention effects to be cases of ungrammaticality caused by the interaction of different semantic operators that evaluate alternatives.

In more detail, we expect that certain constructions do not surface because a wh-phrase may not be separated from its associated Q-operator by an intervener, e.g. negation, a focus sensitive operator or certain quantifiers, as exemplified in (1).

(1) *[Q_i [...[intervener [...wh-phrase,...]]]]

Finding such intervention effects in a language is a special quest as it requires looking at constructions that would normally not be uttered in everyday conversations.

In order to understand intervention effects as they are observed cross-linguistically as well as their theoretical underpinning, the important questions to ask are:

(2) What kind of ingredients do we need in order to construct intervention effects in a language?

(3) Are there intervention effects in the language we are interested in?

(4) Are the predictions of the semantic theory met, i.e. is there empirical evidence that intervention leads to ungrammaticality of the whole construction?

I would like to thank Team Lambda from Tübingen and especially Anna Howell and Vera Hohaus for their amazing support. A special thanks also goes to Susan Rothstein from Bar Ilan University who helped me to finalise this paper. Thanks a lot!

This paper is based on my BA-thesis on intervention effects in Palestinian Arabic and short passages from it might be used in this paper.

The set of problematic interveners can be different for each language, see Beck (2006)

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The plot for this paper is as follows: Section 1.1 provides a more detailed explanation of intervention effects and section 1.2 discusses ways to elicit intervention effects in Palestinian Arabic. In section 2, I will present data on PA and the results from studies on intervention effects in PA, which will be discussed in section 2.3. In the outlook in chapter 2.4, I will mention some issues that should be taken into account for future research. The appendix provides the meaning rules and lexical entries of the relevant ingredients of intervention effects.

1.1 What are intervention effects?

Intervention effects have been elicited in a large number of languages including German, Korean, Hindi, Turkish (Beck 1996), English, Japanese, French (Pesetsky 2000), Mandarin, Malayalam (Kim 2002), Dutch (Honcoop 1998), Passamaquoddy (Bruening & Lin 2001), Thai (Ruangjaroon 2002), Amharic (Eilam 2011), Samoan, Yoruba, (Howell et al. to appear). Consider the examples in (5) and (6) below:

(5) *Minsu-man nuku-lül po-ass-ni? (Korean)
    Minsu-only who-Acc see-Past-Q
    ‘Who did only Minsu see?’ (Beck, 2006, p.1)

(6) *Wen hat niemand wo gesehen? (German)
    whom has nobody where seen
    ‘Where did nobody see whom?’ (Beck, 2006, p.4)

Although the examples in (5) and (6) have a different syntactic structure, they are predicted to be ungrammatical because of the same underlying principle: what makes these constructions unacceptable is the way that the compositional interpretation of alternatives happens (cf. Beck 2006, 2016). Note that in both the Korean and the German question, there is a wh-phrase which has stayed in-situ and which is c-commanded by an intervener. As described above, this constellation separates the wh-phrase from its associated Q-operator at LF and thus leads to ungrammaticality. In a compositional account of this ungrammaticality (Beck 2006), it is assumed that focus like in (7) and questions (8) both introduce alternatives.

(7) Only Samira[F] plays the piano. \(\rightarrow\) focus on ’Samira’ introduces alternatives \{Beth, Ken, Ronja\}
(8) Who plays the piano? \(\rightarrow\) question word also introduces the alternatives \{Beth, Ken, Ronja\}

To include these alternatives into the calculations, every node receives two different values: the ordinary semantic value and an additional alternative semantic value (Rooth 1985, 1992). Both the focused phrase as well as the question word are assumed to be evaluated by an operator. Rooth (1985,1992) assumes a \(~\)-operator to evaluate focused phrases in its scope, wh-phrases are evaluated by a Q-operator (Beck 2006). Beck’s (2006) explanation of intervention effects is based on the binding properties of these two operators. Her theory shows that the \(~\)-unselectively evaluates all alternatives\(^4\) in its scope including those that are introduced by the wh-phrase. Since the Q-operator cannot bind an undefined value relative to g,h, the whole calculation collapses and the

\(^4\)Or in Beck’s framework, all distinguished variables. In the following explanations, I will assume a distinguished variable framework.
structure becomes uninterpretable. Applied to the example in (5), we would get the LF in (9) below.

(9) \[
\begin{aligned}
CP & \text{Q}_2 \ [\text{IP}_3 \text{ only}_C \ [\text{IP}_2 \sim C \ [\text{IP}_1 \text{ Minsu}_F \text{ saw who }_2 \ ]]]
\end{aligned}
\]

As explained in Beck (2006) and Beck & Kim (2006), since \([\text{who}]^g\) is undefined, \([\text{IP}_1]^g\) is also undefined. The \(\sim\) then resets the value relative to \(g,h\) to the value relative to \(g\) which implies that \([\text{IP}_2]^g\) inherits the undefinedness from \([\text{IP}_1]^g\) and that \([\text{IP}_2]^g,h\) also gets undefined. Both \([\text{IP}_3]^g\) and \([\text{IP}_3]^g,h\) also inherit the undefinedness. And because \([\text{IP}_3]^g,h\) is undefined, \([\text{CP}]^g\) is also undefined which means that the whole structure is undefined and thus uninterpretable.

1.2 ...and how can we find them in PA?

There are four different question types that lend themselves to the elicitation of intervention effects. In the following, I will briefly mention them all and illustrate why they are good candidates to test intervention effects.

**Simple wh-questions.** As mentioned above, we need a wh-phrase that can be c-commanded by an intervener. This is obviously only possible in languages that do not front wh-phrases. Korean is a language that leaves its wh-phrases in-situ which means that intervention effects can easily be constructed. Consider again the Korean example below. The question word \(\text{nuku-lül}\) is c-commanded by the intervener \(\text{man}\) which makes the whole question ungrammatical. A corresponding LF to (10) is given in (11).

(10) *Minsu-man nuku-lül po-ass-ni? (Korean)
\begin{align*}
\text{Minsu-only who-Acc see-Past-Q}
\text{ ‘Who did only Minsu see?’} \\
(\text{Beck, 2006, p.1})
\end{align*}

(11) \[
\begin{aligned}
[Q_i \ ... \ [ \sim C \ [\ldots \text{wh}_i,\ldots] \ldots]]
\end{aligned}
\]

**Multiple wh-questions.** In those languages that allow multiple wh-questions, it is also possible to elicit intervention effects. The prerequisite is that one of the wh-phrases must stay in-situ so that an intervener can be inserted. German is a language that allows multiple questions. However, if an intervener is inserted between the two question words, the whole structure gets ungrammatical, as illustrated in the example below.

(12) *Wen hat niemand wo gesehen? (German)
\begin{align*}
\text{whom has nobody where seen}
\text{ ‘Where did nobody see whom?’} \\
(\text{Beck, 2006, p.4})
\end{align*}

(13) \[
\begin{aligned}
[Q_i \ ... \ [ \sim C \ [\ldots \text{wh}_i,\ldots] \ldots]]
\end{aligned}
\]
**Alternative Questions.** A more adventurous route to take is to use alternative questions as a means to elicit intervention effects. As observed by Beck & Kim (2006), the question in (14) is ambiguous between a polar question reading and an alternative question reading, i.e. possible answers to the former are “Yes/No” whereas the alternative question can be answered by naming one of the alternatives.

(14) Does John like Mary or Susan?

Interestingly, as soon as an intervener is inserted, the alternative question reading vanishes and only the polar question reading remains (Beck & Kim 2006), as illustrated in (15). The way this phenomenon is explained is by assuming that the “intervener prevents association of the disjunctive phrase with a licensing interrogative complementizer” (Beck & Kim 2006, p.167):

(15) #Does only John like Mary or Susan? [*AltQ] (Beck & Kim 2006, p.167)

Empirically, it is an advantage that the disjunction stays in-situ as this means that there is a distance between Q and the disjunction. A focus-sensitive item like *only* can thus be inserted as an intervener as shown in the intervention configuration below:

(16) [Q₁...[~ C [NP or NP]]]

**Scope Marking Structures.** A fourth option is to use scope marking structures to test for intervention effects. Dayal (1994) describes scope marking structures as instances of an expletive wh-item extending the scope of a second meaningful wh-item. (17) shows an example of a scope marking structure, (18) shows an extraction structure. Both examples are taken from Dayal (1994):

(17) Was glaubst du, mit wem Maria gesprochen hat? what think you with whom Maria spoken has ‘Who do you think Maria has spoken to?’ (Dayal 1994, p.137)

(18) Mit wem glaubst du, dass Maria gesprochen hat? with whom think you that Maria spoken has ‘Who do you think Maria has spoken to?’ (Dayal 1994, p.137)

Scope marking constructions give us exactly what we need in order to test for intervention effects: a *wh*-item which can be c-commanded by an intervener because it has not been moved to the front.

Interestingly, Dayal also mentions so-called “sequential scope marking” of the form in (19) and states that these sequential questions should also be regarded as scope marking constructions because “they have a *wh*-expression that seems to be semantically inert and a *wh* that can be construed as taking scope outside its syntactic domain” (Dayal 2000, p.171).

(19) What do you think? Who will Mary see? (Dayal 2000, p.171)

7 There are a few reasons to believe that sequential questions are in fact not instances of scope marking: The question “What do you think?” could simply be an invitation to state your opinion. Secondly, in scope marking constructions as in (17), the order of the “subquestions” cannot be changed but the order can be changed in (19). Thirdly, it is fine to say in German: "Was glaubt er, mit wem Maria gesprochen hat?" but according to Susan Rothstein’s native speaker intuitions it is weird to say "What does he think? Who will Mary see?".
To summarise the main argument of this section, consider the table in (20):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of construction:</th>
<th>Possible candidate for testing intervention effects:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple <em>wh</em>-question</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple <em>wh</em>-question</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative question</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope marking structure</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theoretically speaking, intervention effects in Palestinian Arabic could be found in any of these question types. However, sometimes it is impossible to elicit the relevant data for a language due to syntactic constraints, i.e. because multiple questions do not exist in that language or because *wh*-phrases are obligatorily fronted. This is an interesting challenge and will be addressed in the next section.

2 Data

In section 2.1, I will try to convince the reader that only alternative questions and scope marking structures lend themselves to the elicitation of intervention effects in PA. I will then also introduce *focus*, which is another necessary ingredient on our way to intervention effects. Section 2.2 then provides data on intervention effects which will be discussed in section 2.3. Throughout all elicitations I used the guidelines discussed in Matthewson (2004), which means that my informants were asked to do either translation tasks or judgement tasks.

2.1 Prerequisites

According to the Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics (A.L.L.), “Palestinian Arabic is a native language to approximately 8.5 million people” (Shahin, 2011). It is a Semitic language and belongs to the Afro-Asiatic language family (McCarus, Encyclopedia of A.L.L) Further, PA is a pro-drop language and has an SVO word order as shown below, taken from Braun (2016): 8

---

8There is some debate in the literature as to what the word order in Palestinian Arabic is. I follow Shlonsky 1997 and McLoughlin 1982 in assuming an SVO word order because my participants only accepted this word order as the declarative structure. VSO order was judged to be a question by my participants.
Translation Task:
‘Samira writes a book’

(21) samiira b-ti-ktib ktaab.
Samira IMP-FEM-write book
‘Samira writes a book.’ 9

Surface Structure:

As shown in Braun (2016), when forming a polar question, the verb is moved into the head of C:

(22) b-ti-ktib samiira ktaab?
IMP-FEM-write Samira book
‘Does Samira write a book?’ 10

In order to form a simple wh-question, the question word needs to be fronted, as shown in Braun (2016) and repeated below: A surface structure of the simple wh-question ‘What is the teacher doing?’ can be seen in (24) and the corresponding translation task is given in (23).

(23) Translation Task: ‘What is the teacher doing?’

shu b-t-3mal al-mu3lm-e?
what IMP-FEM-do the-teacher-FEM?
‘What is the teacher doing?’

(24) [CP [NP shu3 ][C’ [C bt3mal1 ] [TP [DP al-mu3lme2 ]]][T’ [T t1 ][VP [NP t2 ][V’ [V t1 ][NP t3 ]]]]]

These data show that simple wh-questions cannot be used to test for intervention because the question word is obligatorily fronted in PA. Another standard way to test for intervention effects is to use multiple questions. However, this option is also ruled out as illustrated in (25), taken from Braun (2016).

9 For the tree structure: cf. Mohammad, 2000, p. 83; Shlonsky, 1997, p. 7f, where he assumes movement of the verb from the head of V to some functional projection and then an additional movement of the subject to the head of GP.

10 The corresponding surface structure is:
[CP [0 ] [C’ [C btikib1 ] [TP [NP Samira2 ][T’ [T t1 ][VP [NP t2 ][V’ [V t1 ][NP ktaab ]]]]]]]
Some of your friends (Anna, Polina and Alex) have moved to a different city and you lost track which of your friends now lives in which city. You’ve got another friend who knows where your friends live. You talk about Anna, Polina and Alex and then ask your friend:

**Judgement Task:**

a. *miin bu-skun ween?*  
   who IMP-live where?  
   ‘Who lives where?’

b. *ween bu-skun kul waaHad?*  
   where IMP-live every one?  
   ‘Where does everyone live?’

My informants uniformly rejected multiple questions which leads me to conclude that multiple questions are in fact ungrammatical in PA and thus do not lend themselves to test for intervention effects. Alternative questions, on the other hand, do exist. The corresponding data are presented in (26) and taken from Braun (2016).

We went for a walk in the woods and it was very cold. We finally get back home and I ask you:

a. bitHab qaHwe *au* shaai?  
   like(2.Ps.Sg.MASC) coffee or tea?  
   ‘Would you like coffee or tea?’  
   → PolQ  
   possible answers are: yes / no

b. bitHab qaHwe *willa* shaai?  
   like(2.Ps.Sg.MASC) coffee or tea?  
   ‘Would you like coffee or tea?’  
   → AltQ  
   possible answers are: coffee / tea

The lexicon of PA contains two different disjunctive items, namely *willa* and *’au*. While *willa* is reserved for alternative questions, *’au* can be used in polar questions as well as in declaratives. This distribution of the two disjunctive items was also argued for in Winans (2013, 2015) for Egyptian Arabic. Importantly, this means that alternative questions are valid candidates to test for intervention effects.

Lastly, scope marking constructions do seem to exist in PA, too. The relevant data are given in (27) and (28).

(27) shu raijak, ma3 miin Hakat marijam?  
what opinion-your(MASC) with who spoke Mariam  
‘Who do you think that Mariam spoke to?’

(28) shu fikrat monA ween raiH 3li?  
what thought Mona where went Ali  
‘What did Mona think where Ali went?’

All of the data from Palestinian Arabic are summarised in the table in (29).
As explained above, there is another important ingredient of intervention effects, namely focus. The way that the ungrammaticality of intervention effects as in (10) or (12) is compositionally calculated is by assuming that "wh-phrases and focus make use of the same interpretational mechanism, and because of that, focus interferes with a wh-phrase in situ.” (Beck & Kim 2006, p. 175) There are three different focus-sensitive items in PA; namely bas (only), kamaan (also/too) and Hataa (even). These three items can combine with focused phrases. An example of this is given in (30), taken from Braun (2016).

(30) Salim, Ahmad and Mohammad are in a bookstore. All three of them looked at books, but in the end...

Translation Task: ‘Only Salim\[^F\] bought a book.’ (and no one else did so.)

\begin{align*}
\text{bas saliim } & \text{’ishtaraa } \text{ktaab.} \\
\text{only salim } & \text{bought(3.Ps.Sg.M.) book}
\end{align*}

‘Only Salim bought a book.’

2.2 Intervention effects

Firstly, I will present an intervention effect in an alternative question, taken from Braun (2016). In a second step, I will present a small study on intervention effects in scope marking constructions.

Alternative questions. As usual, the informants were confronted with a context and asked to judge the target sentence with regard to this context. Consider the example below:

(31) Mahmud is a very nice person and he enjoys eating and drinking. He is not picky when it comes to food or drinks, so he also eats food that other people might find disgusting. Last week, you(the participant) hosted a party and you offered tea and maqlubi (an Arabic rice dish). One of those two things was very disgusting but you cannot remember which one (you did not feel well on that night, this is why you cannot remember it.) You do know, however, that Mahmud was the only guest that consumed the disgusting thing. You want to host another party next week and you want to make sure that the disgusting thing will not be offered again. You want to find out what only Mahmud ate because if you know that, then you will know what was disgusting thing. You ask:
Judgement Tasks:

Intervention in AltQ with *bas* as intervener:

a. *bas* maHmuud ‘akal maqluubi walla shirib shaay?
   only Mahmud ate(3.Ps.Sg.MASC) maqlubi or drank(3.Ps.Sg.MASC) tea?
   ‘Did only Mahmud eat maqlubi or drink tea?’

No intervention in AltQ:

b. ‘akal maHmuud maqluubi walla shirib shaay?
   ate(3.Ps.Sg.MASC) Mahmud maqlubi or drank(3.Ps.Sg.MASC) tea?
   ‘Did Mahmud eat maqlubi or drink tea?’

No intervention in PolQ with *bas*:

c. *bas* maHmuud ‘akal maqluubi?
   only Mahmud ate(3.Ps.Sg.MASC) maqlubi?
   ‘Did only Mahmud eat maqlubi?’

The corresponding LF to (31-a) is provided below:

(32) AltQ: *[Q [~ C *bas* maHmuudF [‘akal maqluubi *walla* shirib shaay]]]

Scope marking constructions. As mentioned before, I then designed a small study: I used minimal pairs, namely a scope marking structure without an intervener and the corresponding sentence with an intervener. These sentences were of course accompanied by different contexts that made the respective readings reasonable. An illustration of the experiment design is given in (33).

The target sentences were presented in Palestinian Arabic and the informants had to judge whether these target sentences were natural or not. In order to have an objective means to write down the judgements, I came up with a novel method which I will call the *smiley method*: as judgement tasks involve a certain "linguistic feeling" on the side of the informant, I asked the informants to colour the smiley that they connected to the feeling they had when reading the target sentence. An example of such a judgement is given in (34).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope marking without intervener:</th>
<th>Scope marking with intervener:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(33) (1a) shu fikrat Mona, ween raaH 3lii?</td>
<td>(1b) shu fikrat bas Mona, ween raaH 3lii?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what thought Mona where went Ali</td>
<td>what thought only Mona where went Ali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘What did Mona think where Ali went?’</td>
<td>‘What did only Mona think where Ali went?’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11I would like to thank Michael Yoshitaka Erlewine for pointing out that it would be useful to elicit a simpler version of this intervention configuration where only one verb is used, i.e. “Did only Mahmud drink coffee or tea?”. Unfortunately, I have not been able to elicit this yet.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Scope marking without intervener:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Scope marking with intervener:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2a) shu bitfakir samira, miin baas jooz-ha? what thinks samira who kissed husband-her ‘What does S. think who her husband kissed?’</td>
<td>(2b) shu bitfakir bas samira, miin baas jooz-ha? what thinks only samira who kissed husband-her ‘What does only S. think who her husband kissed?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3a) shu bitfakir susan, ma3 miin zaid what thinks Susan with who Zaid Tulla3 jitmashaa al-jaum? went.outside to-walk today ‘What does S. think with who Z. went outside for a walk today?’</td>
<td>(3b) shu bitfakir bas Mona, ma3 miin zaid what thinks only Mona with who Zaid Tulla3 jitmashaa al-jaum? went.outside to-walk today ‘What does only M. think with who Z. went outside for a walk today?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4a) shu bitfakir immha, ma3 miin Hakat what thinks her-mother with who spoke maram? Maram ‘What does her mother think with who Maram spoke?’</td>
<td>(4b) shu bitfakir bas bint chaalti, ma3 miin Hakat what thinks only her-cousin with who spoke maram? Maram ‘What does only her cousin think with who Maram spoke?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5a) shu bitfakir shams ay hadiye a3Taa 3mar what thinks Shams which present gave Omar liay Tifl? to-which child ‘What does Shams think, which present Omar gave to which child?’</td>
<td>(no 5b) – too difficult to construct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.3 Results and discussion of the data

As indicated in (31), there was a visible difference of judgements for the alternative question with and without an intervener. While (31-b) and (31-c) were absolutely acceptable for my informants, the meaning of (31-a) seemed to be less clear. As is common in semantic field work, I only interpreted the judgements and comments of the informants as either pointing towards the grammaticality of the target sentence or towards its ungrammaticality. However, I believe that this notion of grammaticality as a binary phenomenon should be dismissed (cf. Featherston 2007, 2008), simply because a clear binary distinction of judgements is not empirically founded.
In the follow-up study on scope marking constructions, I tried to give the informants a choice between different judgements by using the smiley method mentioned above. I only had three informants, two of which were raised bilingually. The results provided in (35) and (36) might, however, still show a tendency:

![Graph](image1)

(35)

![Graph](image2)

(36)

There seemed to be a rather clear effect for informant A - the monolingual Arabic speaker represented by the black bars. He judged all of the scope marking sentences without an intervener as fully acceptable whereas the corresponding sentences with an intervener were judged worse. Informant B and C were the German, Arabic bilinguals. One could assume that they were influenced by their German intuitions. However, they very clearly commented on the scope marking constructions with an intervener that "bas"/only should be left out. Comments included "to use bas here is really weird", "bas needs to be deleted", "everything is fine but we do not need the bas". So even though informant B and C did not give the same judgements as informant A, they did comment on the inappropriateness of bas. It seems, however, that the results are not as strong as expected by Beck’s theory (2006). All of the scope marking constructions with an intervener should be absolutely uninterpretable. This is clearly not what I could find.

### 2.4 Outlook

It would be worthwhile to conduct a quantitative study with a less crude judgement scale and with more informants. Ideally, those participants should not be bilinguals in order to exclude transfer from any language other than Arabic. On top of that, in any future work on scope marking
constructions in PA, it should be checked again whether scope marking sentences do in fact exist in PA or whether they are cases of sequential questions as discussed in section 1.2.\textsuperscript{12}

It would not be surprising to find that intervention effects are less strong than predicted by semantic explanations. Beck’s (2006) theory of intervention predicts a total breakdown of compositional interpretation, however, we do more or less understand what is meant in such intervention cases, as the results in section 2.3 show. Thus, to think of intervention effects as cases that distinguish grammatical structures from ungrammatical structures (because they have an intervener) might be too strong of a claim. However, I do not want to deny that there certainly is a visible effect of intervention. I believe that grammaticality is best presented by thinking of a scale that includes different levels of acceptable and unacceptable structures as indicated in (37).

\begin{equation}
(37)
\end{equation}

The way that I understand intervention effects is the following: the semantic calculation might derive an uninterpretable structure as discussed in Beck (2006). However, the fact that the syntax still sounds acceptable leads informants to judge the sentences as weird or downgraded but not necessarily as ungrammatical, as mention in the previous section. One consequence of this assumption would be that semantic factors of a sentence are more subtle than syntactic properties and that judgements on syntactic ungrammaticality are stronger than judgements on semantic properties. Evidence for this is the fact that my informants very clearly rejected multiple questions (which is a syntactic judgement) in PA. I believe it would be very enriching for semantic fieldwork to stop thinking about grammaticality as a binary phenomenon and to start assuming that there are different levels of grammaticality.

\textsuperscript{12}Thanks to Lior Laks from the Bar Ilan University, Israel who pointed that out to me.
Appendix

(1) Focus:
If $\alpha = \beta_{\mathit{fi}}$, then for any $g,h$:
\[
\begin{align*}
[\alpha]^{g} & = [[\beta]^{g} \\
[\alpha]^{g,h} & = h(i) \text{ if } i \text{ is in the domain of } h,
[\alpha]^{g} & \text{ otherwise}
\end{align*}
\]

(2) \sim \text{ operator (unselective) :}
If $\alpha = [\sim C\beta]$, then for any $g,h$:
\[
\begin{align*}
[\alpha]^{g} & \text{ is only defined if } \\
g(C) & \subseteq \{[[\beta]^{g,h}] | h \text{ is a total distinguished variable assignment}\}
\end{align*}
\]
Then, $[\alpha]^{g} = [[\beta]^{g}$
\[
[\alpha]^{g,h} = [\beta]^{g,h}
\]

(3) question operator $Q$ (selective):
If $\alpha = [Q\beta]$, then for any $g,h$:
\[
\begin{align*}
[\alpha]^{g} & = \{[[\beta]^{g,\theta[x/i]} | x \in D\} \\
[\alpha]^{g,h} & = \{[[\beta]^{g,h[x/i]} | x \in D\}
\end{align*}
\]

(4) \only^{g} = 
\lambda C \lambda x,y,z. \lambda w. p(w) = 1. \forall q [q \in C \& q \neq p \rightarrow q(w) = 0]

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