

Pseudoclefts: (echo) questions and answers

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This talk examines a number of syntactic differences between two subtypes of specificational pseudo-clefts in European Portuguese: pseudo-clefts featuring the order *wh* > XP (Type A, in the terminology of Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000)) and structures with the order XP > *wh* (Type B). The evidence discussed favors a bi-clausal analysis of Type A pseudo-clefts, thus supporting the view defended in Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) according to which Type A pseudo-clefts are self-answered questions where the answer is an elided CP. This hypothesis, however, also faces problems: first, yes-no questions are incompatible with pseudoclefts; secondly, there are pseudoclefts that lack an interrogative counterpart. We argue that the noted problems do not arise once it is assumed that the *wh*-clause is an echo question. In particular, the impossibility for the *wh*-clause to be a yes-no question follows from the general lack of pure yes-no echo questions (Artstein, 2002). Finally, we propose that the pseudo-cleft counterpart to a non-*wh* echo question in European Portuguese is the semi-pseudo-cleft.

References

- Artstein, R. (2002) A focus semantics for echo questions. In, Agnes Bende-Farkas and Arndt Riester (eds.), *Workshop on Information Structure in Context*, pp. 98–107. IMS, University of Stuttgart.
- Den Dikken, M., A. Meinunger and Wilder, C. (2000) Pseudoclefts and ellipsis. *Studia Linguistica* 54: