**Ekab AlShawashreh**

**University of Ottawa**

**Department of Linguistics**

**Wh-in-situ in Rural Jordanian Arabic (RJA): prosodic account**

Wh-in-situ has generated extensive debate among syntacticians. A number of motivations have been proposed for keeping the wh-word in its base generated position (in-situ), including: feature checking theory (Chomsky 1971), movement at Logical Form (Wahba 1984), Clause Typing Hypothesis (Cheng 1997), Q-morpheme (Baker 1970; Cheng and Rooryck 2000), Focus Q-morpheme (Lassadi 2003, 2005), and prosodic account (Zubizaretta 1988; Richards 2010; Mathieu (to appear)).

Inspired by Mathieu’s (to appear) prosodic account, this study investigates the licensor of wh-in-situ in Rural Jordanian Arabic (RJA). Mathieu argues that languages that have lexical stress and express focus via pitch accent are wh-movement languages while those that have no lexical stress and express focus via prosodic phrasing are wh-in-situ languages. RJA, having lexical stress, must be of the first kind according to Mathieu. However, RJA exhibits optional wh-movement (AlMomani & AlSaidat 2010; Yasin 2012) as in (1&2).

1)**ʃuuh** gara Ali?

What read Ali?

What did Ali read?

2)Ali gara **ʃuuh**?

Ali read what?

What did Ali read?

This is at variance with Mathieu’s theory from a theoretical standpoint. A grammaticality judgment task was carried out to check the frequency of wh-in-situ in RJA. The results show that the fronted option is far more frequent than its in-situ counterpart (89.6% and 10.4 %) respectively. Thus, it is concluded that RJA is a wh-movement language, and it is not an exception to Mathieu’s theory.

**Key** **words**: Wh-in-situ, Jordanian Arabic, syntax, prosody, syntax-prosody interface.

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