P-stranding under sluicing in Bulgarian?

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The central claim of this talk is that under an approach to sluicing where (a) the intuitively missing part of the question is syntactically represented, (b) the missing part of the sentence is elided under semantic rather than syntactic identity with the antecedent, and (c) the pronounced wh-phrase fits into the antecedent, we can understand the complex interaction between preposition stranding and sluicing in the grammars of (at least some) speakers of Bulgarian. The condition on fit will be understood in terms of the structural theory of focus alternatives (Fox and Katzir 2011; Katzir 2008).

The core facts to be explained are that, for some speakers, Bulgarian allows preposition stranding under merger-type sluicing when the general form (G) of the wh-pronoun is used but not when the non-subject form (non-S) is used:

(1) Ivan tancuva {s njakoi | s njakogo}, no ne znam {s Ivan danced with someone.g with someone.non-S but neg know with koj | s kogo}.
home.g with who.non-S
Ivan danced with someone but I don’t know with who.

(2) Ivan tancuva {s njakoi | s njakogo}, no ne znam {koj | Ivan danced with someone.g with someone.non-S but neg know who.g
*koj}.
who.non-S
Ivan danced with someone but I don’t know who.

Even for the speakers who allow P-stranding in the above examples, it disappears under contrast and multiple sluicing.

(3) Ivan tancuva s Maria, no ne znam *(s) {koj | kogo} oshte.
Ivan danced with Maria but neg know who.g who.non-S else
Ivan danced with Maria, but I don’t know with who else.

(4) Ivan zapozna njakoi s {njakogo | njakoi}, no ne znam koi
Ivan introduced someone.g to someone.non-S someone.g but not know who
*(s) {kogo | koi}.
with who.non-S who.g
Ivan introduced someone to someone, but I don’t know who to who.

Both asymmetries fall into place if we assume that speakers can resolve ellipsis in one of two ways: The first strategy involves a structure syntactically identical with the antecedent. This structure give rise to the pied-piping patterns and is compatible with contrastive and multiple remnants. The second strategy involves a copulative structure
at the ellipsis site. Such structures give rise to the appearance of P-stranding, (5), and explain the asymmetry between the general and the non-subject form of the wh-pronoun, since copulative structures are compatible only with the general form.

(5) Ivan tancuva {s njakoi | s njakogo}, no ne znam {koi | *kogo} beshe tova. Ivan danced with someone.g with someone.non-S but neg know who.g who.non-S was that
Ivan danced with someone but I don’t know who that was.

The second asymmetry also falls into place, because contrastive and multiple pivots are disallowed in the predicative structure, claimed to underly the P-stranding pattern. We do not expect to find the same kind of optionality in languages with well-articulated case morphology, because the nominative pivot in a copular structure would not fit into the position of the prepositional complement in the antecedent.

References