

ON CERTAIN COMMONALITIES BETWEEN SLUICING-LIKE CONSTRUCTIONS IN MANDARIN CHINESE AND JAPANESE*

Liching Livy Chiu^a, Tomohiro Fujii^b and Seichi Sugawa^{b, c}
National Tsinghua University^a, Nanzan University^b and Nagoya Gakuin University^c

1. Introduction

Investigations into the so-called Sluicing construction have been considered to shed light on the nature of ellipsis and the nature of movement since Ross's 1969 seminal work. Given that examples such as (1)a are related to those such as (1)b via transformation as has been argued by many authors, a number of theoretically significant issues have been addressed.

- (1) a. Bill met a person, but I don't know who.
b. Bill_i met a person, but I don't know who he_i met.

This short paper examines a construction similar to Sluicing found in Mandarin Chinese (MC) and Japanese.¹ (2)a and (2)b are representative examples from MC and Japanese, respectively:

- (2) a. Lisi yujian mouren, keshi wo bu zhidao shi shei
Lisi met someone but I not know Cop who
'Lisi met someone, but I don't know who.'
- b. Takeshi-ga dareka-ni atta-rasii-ga, dare(-ni) da-ka wakaranai
Takeshi-Nom someone-Dat met-Hearsay-though who(-Dat) Cop-Q don't.know
'Though I heard that Takeshi met someone, I don't know who.'

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¹ In this paper, we use "Sluicing" to mean nothing but TP-ellipsis, though "TP" should be understood as a projection located between CP and VP.

We dub examples like these the “Sluicing-like Construction (SLC)” in order to avoid presupposing a particular analysis of them.²

In what follows, we argue that the Japanese construction and the MC counterpart are essentially the same species by showing that they share three syntactic properties. First, they both involve the copula verb or a copula-like element. Second, sloppy ellipsis behaves in the same way in SLCs in the two languages. Third, the Japanese and MC constructions both allow non-wh-remnants. We will then tackle the question of what kind of ellipsis is involved in the SLC, in particular, whether the construction is an instance of Sluicing or not. Although the question might sound like a matter of descriptive classification, there is reason to believe that it is theoretically worth asking, given recent theoretical developments in the study of ellipsis.

As has been well-established in the literature, Sluicing obeys some licensing conditions. Let us consider some major conditions. First, Sluicing, like other ellipses, needs to satisfy an identity/parallelism condition. Roughly put, elided constituents require identical antecedents. The question of whether this condition is semantic or syntactic, or both, as well as the question of how the condition need be stated, is under debate (see, in particular, Merchant 2001, Fox and Lasnik 2003, Potsdam 2007). Second, it has been proposed that elided constituents in Sluicing need to meet conditions imposed on the COMP domain, as can be seen in Lobeck’s (1995) proposal. The relevant facts include the following: that not all wh-phrases can be Sluicing remnants (e.g., *I wonder whether *<John left>*), that an overt complementizer cannot introduce an elided TP (see Merchant 2001: section 2.2.2), and so on. We will use these conditions on the COMP domain to sharpen our understanding of the MC and Japanese phenomenon.

The present paper is structured as follows: Section 2 examines three properties shared by MC and Japanese SLCs. Section 3 explores potential implications that these three common properties may have for the theory of Sluicing. Section 4 concludes the paper.

2. Three Commonalities

2.1 The Presence of the Copula

The first remarkable property of MC and Japanese SLCs is that they are essentially copula constructions. As can be seen in the examples given in (2), both the MC and Japanese sentences contain the so-called copula, namely *shi* for MC and *da* for Japanese. As noted in the literature, there are environments in which the copula is not required (see Nishiyama et al. 1996, Wang and Wu 2006 and references cited therein):

² The prominent recent literature includes Takahashi 1994, Nishiyama et al. 1996, Kuwabara 1996, Kizu 2005, Nishigauchi 1998, Fukaya and Hoji 1999, Merchant 1998, Sakai 2001, Wang 2002, Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002, Saito 2004, Wei 2004, Shinohara 2006, Wang and Wu 2006, Chiu 2006, 2007, Sugawa (this volume), and many others.

- (3) Zhangsan zuotian zaimougedifang maile dong fangzi, keshi
 Zhangsan yesterday somewhere bought a house but
 wo bu zhidao (shi) zai-nali
 I not know Cop at-where

‘Zhangsan bought a house somewhere yesterday, but I don’t know where.’

- (4) Yoko-ga dokoka-de saihi-o otosita-rasii-ga,
 Yoko-Nom somewhere-at wallet-Acc dropped-Hearsay-though
 Δ doko-de (da)-ka wakar-anai
 where-at Cop-Q know-Neg.Prs

‘Though I heard that Yoko dropped her wallet somewhere, I don’t know where.’

Although the environments for copula drop do not look the same in the two languages, what is hard to overlook is that no SLCs that clearly prohibit the copula have been found in the languages (see section 3). We take this to indicate that MC and Japanese SLCs are different from English Sluicing in that the latter does not show an obvious connection with a copula construction, as has been noted by Kizu 2005.³

The presence of the copula in the MC and Japanese SLCs had led many linguists to propose that the sources of these constructions should involve a copula construction, in particular a (pseudo)cleft construction of some sort (cf., though, Takahashi 1994, Nishigauchi 1998).⁴ In the literature on the Japanese construction, it has been long argued that the relevant copula construction is a (pseudo)cleft construction, which contains a *no*-clause. The claim is that the SLCs given in (2)b and (4) have (5) and (6), respectively, as “pre-ellipsis” sources:

- (5) Takeshi-ga dareka-ni atta-rasii-ga
 Takeshi-Nom someone-Dat met-Hearsay-though
 [[kare-ga atta-no]-ga dare(-ni) da-ka] wakaranai
 he-Nom met-NO-Nom who(-Dat) Cop-Q don’t.know

‘Though Takeshi met someone, I don’t know who Takashi met.’

³ As Merchant (1998, 2001) notes, English could have a sluicing-like construction involving ‘be’. The possibility in question is that sluices might be derived from an *it*-cleft construction, as in *I don’t know who (it is)*. Merchant presents a number of restrictions on the pivot of such cleft sentences that are not found with their sluiced counterparts. E.g. neither non-arguments nor non-standard arguments can occur in the pivot of *it*-clefts, as in *He fixed the car. I don’t know {how, why} (*it is)*. If MC and Japanese SLCs and their copula-less counterparts were totally different creatures, they would also exhibit substantial differences. No such differences have been attested.

⁴ A terminological note is in order. Confusingly enough in our opinion, ‘Japanese clefts’ and ‘Japanese pseudoclefts’ are superficially similar to ‘Chinese pseudoclefts’ in that nominalized clauses (i.e. *no*- or *de*-clauses) seem to occupy the surface subject position.

- (6) Yoko-ga dokoka-de sai-hu-o otosita-rasii-ga,
 Yoko-Nom somewhere-at wallet-Acc dropped-Hearsay-though
 [[kanozyo-ga sai-hu-o otosita-no]-ga doko(-de) da-ka] wakar-anai
 she-Nom wallet-Acc dropped-NO-but where-at Cop-Q know-Neg.Prs

‘Though I heard that Yoko dropped her wallet somewhere, I don’t know where she dropped her wallet.’

Here the non-elliptical construction is a specificational copula construction in which the surface subject is a clause headed by the complementizer *-no* and the pivot precedes the copula (see, especially, Nishiyama et al. 1996, Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002, Kizu 2005). As the careful reader might have noticed, the particles on the pivots in these examples are optional as indicated by pairs of brackets. The presence/absence of particles on pivots characterizes a well-discussed distinction between the so-called ‘cleft’ and ‘pseudocleft’ constructions in Japanese (Hoji 1990, Murasugi 1991). The distinction does not directly concern us here.⁵

Let us add yet another existing proposal, which is made by Sakai (2001), who claims that SLCs are derived from the so-called *noda* construction. Again, the particle *-no* and the copula *-da* are involved:

- (7) [[Takeshi-ga dare-ni atta-no-da-ka] wakaranai
 Takeshi-Nom who-Dat met-NO-Cop-Q don’t.know

‘I don’t know who Takeshi met.’

Sakai analyzes this construction as the copula taking a clausal constituent headed by *-no*. In this analysis, the *wh*-phrase, in its SLC counterpart, is displaced out of that clausal constituent, and then deletion applies.⁶

Multiple analyses have been proposed for MC SLCs as well. Four pre-ellipsis sources have been considered in the prominent literature: (i) the pseudocleft construction (Kizu 2005; see Wang 2002, Chiu 2006, 2007; cf. Huang 1982), (ii) the cleft construction (see Wang 2002, Wei 2004, Chiu 2006, 2007; cf. Huang 1982), (iii) a null *pro* construction (Wei 2004),

⁵ The difference between Japanese “cleft” and “pseudocleft,” though, plays a role when we consider the possibility that the missing constituent in SLCs is referential null *pro*, as noted by Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002 and Saito 2004. Nothing prevents one from analyzing the version of (5) without the dative as having a referential null subject, which refers to the person who dropped the wallet. In fact, *sono hito-ga* (that person-Nom) can be inserted in the surface subject position without degradation *unless the dative case marker is present*; cf. *... *sono hito-ga dare-ni da-ka kawaranai* (that person-Nom who-Dat Cop-Q don’t.know).

⁶ See Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002, who analyze the *noda* construction as transformationally related to the cleft construction. See also Simpson 2003 and references cited therein for issues related to Japanese *-no* and MC *-de*.

and (iv) what one may call the *shi*-XP fronting construction (Wang 2002, Wang and Wu 2006, Chiu 2006, 2007; cf. Hoh and Chiang 1990).

- (8) Lisi yujian yige ren, keshi wo bu zhidao ...
 Lisi meet a man but I not know
- a. <Lisi yujian de> shi shei. Pseudocleft
 Lisi meet DE be who
- b. <*Lisi yujian> shi shei. Cleft
 Lisi meet FOC who
- c. *pro* shi shei Null *pro*
 be who
- d. shi shei_i <Lisi yujian> *shi*-XP fronting
 FOC who Lisi meet

(Angled brackets indicate the elided site under the indicated analysis. We gloss *shi* with “FOC” for cleft and *shi*-XP fronting constructions, following the literature.) A number of observations have been made in order to identify the general source of SLCs.⁷ It, though, suffices for the present purposes to recognize that we can find copula constructions in MC that may serve as the pre-ellipsis source of SLCs. Rather than attempting to choose among these possibilities, we will move onto the core data that underlie the claim that SLCs involve ellipsis. In particular, we concentrate on the data concerning sloppy identity. (See Takahashi 1994 for other arguments.)

2.2 Sloppy Identity

Takahashi (1994) discovered that Japanese SLCs allow sloppy identity interpretation.⁸ He provided an SLC example of the following type involving ‘why’ (see also Nishiyama et al. 1996, Saito 2004):⁹

⁷ In MC pseudoclefts, PPs cannot reside in the pivot position of the construction, though they occur as SLC remnants (see also footnotes 12, 18). Also, the fact that postverbal elements cannot be clefted when they appear in-situ, as in (8)b (Huang 1982), is sometimes taken to argue that MC clefts do not serve as the general source of SLCs. See Chiu 2007 for merits and demerits of each of the possibilities given in (8).

⁸ Curiously enough, as Merchant (2001:8) notes, English Sluicing does not allow sloppy identity as easily as was reported in Ross (1969) and in some of the references cited in the text. As far as we can see from Merchant’s examples, why this restriction holds in English Sluicing is not clear (cf. Takahashi and Fox 2005). One thing that needs to be done would be to determine whether sloppy ellipsis being difficult is a general property of TP-ellipsis or it is a peculiarity of the English construction. Unfortunately, no relevant data are available to us at this point.

- (9) Taro-wa zibun-ga naze sikarareta-no-ka sitteiru-si,
 Taro-Top self-Nom why was.scolded-NO-Q know.Prs-Conj
 Yoko-mo naze da-ka sitteiru
 Yoko-also why Cop-Q know.Prs

‘Taro_i knows why self_i was scolded. Yoko also knows why Δ.’

Δ *can mean*: Yoko was scolded.

The second sentence can mean what the following sentence means:

- (10) Yoko-mo naze zibun-ga sikarareta-no-ka sitteiru
 self-Nom

‘Yoko knows why she was scolded.’

The same has been reported about MC SLCs (Wei 2004, Wang and Wu 2006, Chiu 2006):

- (11) Zhangsan zhidao ziji weishenme bei-ma, Lisi yie zhidao shi weishenme
 Zhangsan know self why was.scolded Lisi also know Cop why

‘Zhangsan_i knows why self_i was scolded. Lisi_j also knows why Δ.’

Δ *can mean*: she_j was scolded.

The availability of sloppy interpretation is not limited to examples with *why*. The Japanese and MC examples below, which contain a locative *wh*-remnant, clearly have a sloppy reading:

- (12) Yoko_i-wa zibun_i-ga doko-de benkyoosuru-beki-ka wakatteiru-yooda-ga
 Yoko-Top self-Nom where-at study.Pres-should-Q know.Pres-seem-though
 John-wa doko-de-da-ka wakattei-nai
 John-Top where-at-Cop-Q know.Asp-Neg.Prs

‘Though Yoko_i knows where self_i should study, John doesn’t know where Δ.’

Δ *can mean*: John should study

- (13) Zhangsan_i zhidao ziji_i gai zai-nali dushu,
 Zhangsan know self should at-where study
 dan Shaomei bu-zhidao shi zai-nali
 but Shaomei not-know be at-where

‘Zhangsan_i knows where self_i should study, but Shaomei doesn’t know where Δ.’

Δ *can mean*: Shaomei should study

⁹ The strict reading is also possible in this example, where a reflexive and its antecedent are not co-arguments. This is orthogonal to our concern.

These data constitute an initial argument for the need of the ellipsis analysis of SLCs in the two languages.

Nishiyama et al. (1996) and Wei (2004: 266) propose that the null constituent found in SLCs may be a base-generated phonologically null pronominal even under the circumstance where sloppy interpretation is attested. A proposal of this kind may sound as if it is at odds with the claim that the availability of sloppy interpretation signals the involvement of ellipsis. However, what the account of Nishiyama et al. and that of Wei put forth is that some kind of copying operation gives rise to sloppy interpretation. More concretely, sloppy interpretation arises, they argue, when *pro* is replaced by a phrase marker containing a variable, which is bound by the binder residing outside the elided constituent.¹⁰ In this analysis, (13) is interpreted in the way schematized in (14):

- (14)
- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| [x | gai | y | dushu] |
| | should | | study |
| | | ↓ | |
| Shaomei _x | bu-zhidao | [<i>pro</i> | shi zai-nali _y] |
| Shaomei | doesn't know | Cop | at-where |

Thus this particular kind of base-generated *pro* analysis is a species of ellipsis analysis precisely because the elided site has an articulated internal structure in which the variable bound by the remnant is represented at LF (in their analysis).

In passing, both Nishiyama et al. and Wei are concerned with an effect of the overt demonstrative, *sore* ‘that’ in Japanese and *na* ‘that’ in MC. In the Japanese example given in (15), the surface subject of the copula construction is occupied by *sore*:

- (15) Yoko-ga dokoka-de sai-hu-o otosita-rasii-ga,
 Yoko-Nom somewhere-at wallet-Acc dropped-Hearsay-though
sore-ga doko-de da-ka wakar-anai
 that-Nom where-at Cop-Q know-Neg.Prs

‘Though I heard that Yoko dropped her wallet somewhere, I don’t know where that is.’

The relevance of these demonstratives to our discussion is that *na* or *sore* gives rise to an environment in which an otherwise available sloppy identity reading becomes unavailable, which is first observed by Takahashi (1994) (see also Kuwabara 1997 and Saito 2004). The following example, which contains an overt, demonstrative surface subject, minimally differs from (12):

¹⁰ We abstract away from the distinction that Wei has drawn among types of pronouns here. See Wei (2004: chapter 4).

- (16) Yoko_i-wa zibun_i-ga doko-de benkyoosuru-beki-ka wakatteiru-yooda-ga
 Yoko-Top self-Nom where-at study.pres-should-Q know.Asp-seem-though
 John-wa [sore-ga doko-de da-ka] wakattei-nai
 John-Top [that-Nom where-at Cop-Q] know.Asp-Neg.Prs

‘Though Yoko_i seems to know where self_i should study, John doesn’t know where that is.’

The second clause only means: John does not know where Yoko should study

The sloppy reading is not possible here. The MC equivalent of *sore, na*, also makes sloppy interpretation go away:

- (17) Zhangsan_i zhidao ziji_i gai zai-nali dushu,
 Zhangsan know self should at-where study
 dan Shaomei bu-zhidao na shi zai-nali
 but Shaomei not-know that be at-where

‘Zhangsan_i knows where self_i should study, but Shaomei doesn’t know where that is.’

The second clause can only mean: Shaomei does not know where Zhangsan should study

Thus, the property of the demonstrative construction in question confirms the claim that MC and Japanese SLCs are the same species.

The question to be addressed is why these overt demonstratives block sloppy identity interpretation. We aren’t able to give a definite answer to this question, but it is worth noting that the overt/null contrast under discussion seems to be more general than one might think. Kuwabara 1997 and Kurafuji 1999, discussing so-called E-type pronouns in Japanese, made the observation that an analogous contrast holds for object NPs. They specifically observed that *sore* ‘that’ cannot be anteceded by an NP that contains a bound variable as easily as null pronouns can be. (18) is cited from Kurafuji (1999:6) with his judgment:

- (18) John-igai-no dare-mo-ga [zibun-no kurezittokaado]_i-o tuma-ni watasi-ta.
 John-except-Gen everyone-Nom self-Gen credit.card-Acc wife-to give-Past
 John-wa \emptyset_i /??sore_i-o aijin-ni watashi-ta.
 John-Top that-Acc mistress give-Past

‘Everyone but John gave a credit card of his to his wife. John gave one of his to his mistress.’

It is interesting to note that an ellipsis approach to E-type pronouns has been proposed. Attempting to eliminate the entity “E-type pronoun,” Elbourne 2000 proposes that pronouns of the relevant kind can be derived by ellipsis inside noun phrases. According to Elbourne, a Cooper-type example like (19) is analyzed as in (20), where the pronoun *it* is claimed to be a

phonetic spellout of the definite article whose complement NP is elided. Note that the elided NP contains a bound variable. (See Elbourne 2000 for justifications of the possessive *his* actually being inside an NP.)

- (19) John gave his paycheck to his mistress. Everybody else put it in the bank.
- (20) John gave [_{DP} the [_{NP} paycheck of him]] to his mistress. Everybody else_i put [_{DP} it <[_{NP} paycheck of him_i]>] in the bank.

If we apply Elbourne's proposal to the Japanese data that Kuwabara and Kurafuji discussed, then the sloppy interpretation of the null pronoun found in (18) arguably results from ellipsis. To the extent that the ellipsis approach to the sloppy reading in (18) is viable, the contrast between SLCs and their 'demonstrative' counterparts provides an indirect argument that a subset of SLCs needs to be derived by ellipsis. As for the question of why the demonstrative element makes sloppy identity unavailable, it may be that the element makes ellipsis inapplicable or that, while ellipsis itself applies without a problem, the element somehow blocks binding of a variable from the outside of elided constituents (cf. Takahashi and Fox 2005 and the references cited therein).¹¹

2.3 Non-wh- Remnants

A final parallel between MC and Japanese SLCs concerns non-wh-remnants. As observed by Nishiyama et al. 1996 and others, Japanese SLCs, unlike English sluicing, allow their remnants to be non-wh-phrases. Consider (21):

- (21) Yamada-sensei-wa Yoko-ga tosyokan-de benkyoositeiru-to omotteiru-ga
 Prof. Yamada-Top Yoko-Nom library-at is.studying-C think-though
 Tanaka-sensei-wa Δ gakusyoku-de da-to omotteiru
 Prof. Tanaka-Top student cafeteria-at Cop-C think
 'Professor Yamada thinks that Yoko is reading a book at the library, but Professor Tanaka thinks that Δ is at the student cafeteria.'

This sentence is acceptable, and the second clause can be paraphrased as in (22):

¹¹ A morphosyntactic fact found in the demonstrative counterparts of SLCs can be taken to argue for the latter conclusion. As noted by Saito 2004, *sore*-sentences of this kind allow PPs or case-marked elements as their pivot. Examples like (16) or (17) can be taken to exhibit the case connectivity effect because the pivots in these examples are not likely to be predicates but look like dependents of the lexical verb 'drop'. This may suggest to us that even the demonstrative construction may be derived by ellipsis; otherwise, it is not clear how these pivots obtain the particle that they do. See Nakao and Yoshida 2007 for an analysis of the demonstrative construction along these lines.

- (22) Tanaka-sensei-wa [Yoko-ga benkyoositeiru-no]-wa gakusyoku-de da-to
 Prof. Tanaka-Top Yoko-Nom is.studying-NO]-Top student cafeteria-at Cop-C
 omotteiru
 thinks
 ‘Prof. Tanaka thinks that it is at the student cafeteria that Yoko is studying.’

An MC example parallel to (21) is given in (23)a, which can be paraphrased as in (23)b:¹²

- (23) a. Zhang laoshi renwei Lisi zai tushuguan du yuyanxue,
 Zhang teacher thinks Lisi at library study linguistics
 dan Lin laoshi renwei shi zai kafeiting
 but Lin teacher think be at coffee shop
 ‘Prof. Zhang thinks that Lisi is studying linguistics at the library, but Prof. Lin thinks that Δ at the coffee shop.’
- b. Zhang laoshi renwei Lisi zai tushuguan du yuyanxue,
 Zhang teacher thinks Lisi at library study linguistics
 dan Lin laoshi renwei Zhongsan shi zai kafeiting du yuyanxue de
 but Lin teacher think Zhongsan be at coffee shop study linguistics DE
 ‘Prof. Zhang thinks that Lisi is studying linguistics at the library, but Prof. Lin thinks that it is at the coffee shop that Zhongsan is studying linguistics.’

This situation is totally expected if a copula construction underlies MC and Japanese SLCs (see section 3 for discussion of what kind of copula construction it can be). The pivot or the focus material of the relevant copula construction(s) does not have to be a *wh*-phrase. Thus, the SLC with a *wh*-remnant receives an analysis of the sort presented below (linear order is irrelevant):¹³

- (24) [C_Q ... [PIVOT/FOCUS *wh*-remnant]_i ... <... variable_i ... > ...]

The point we are making here is that the surface position of SLC remnants is not a position in which standard Sluicing remnants are located.

¹² We say “paraphrase” because we are neutral with respect to whether the so-called *shi...de* construction given in (23)b can serve as a ‘pre-ellipsis’ source of (23)a. As is noted in footnote 7, there are instances of SLC that do not seem to have their acceptable pseudocleft counterparts. (23)b is one such case; the remnant of the SLC is a PP, but its pseudocleft counterpart is unacceptable (see Wang 2002, Wei 2004, Wang and Wu 2006, Chiu 2006, 2007). See footnote 18 for further discussion.

¹³ We are not concerned with the question of how the A-bar association between the pivot and the variable is established or with the related question about its sensitivity to islands. See footnote 11.

3. Discussion

In section 1, we quickly laid out some of the theoretical issues that the phenomenon of Sluicing raises. We hope to have shown that Japanese and MC SLCs involve some kind of ellipsis and that they have copula constructions as their pre-ellipsis forms (if they are not exactly the *same* copula construction). In fact, as Nishiyama et al. (1996) observe, Korean SLCs differ from standard Sluicing in the same way as the MC and Japanese counterparts do (see also Kim 1997, Sakai 2001). Standard Sluicing, by contrast, neither allows non-wh-remnants nor has an obvious transformational relationship with a copula construction (see footnote 3). The current state of affairs leads us to ask the following question:¹⁴

- (25) How is it possible for Japanese, Korean and MC to allow a construction like the SLC, which does not exist in English?

One other related but separate question is whether these three languages allow an English-type Sluicing construction in which wh-remnants are located in SpecCP. This question becomes an issue because the proposal can be found that copula-less SLCs may involve wh-movement into the specifier of interrogative C (Takahashi 1994). If a subset of SLCs may involve English-type wh-movement, we expect that “copula drop” is possible whenever wh-movement is possible. A strong argument that this is not the case is presented by Nishiyama et al. (1996: 341–42), who observe that Korean and MC resist “copula drop” at least in certain environments.¹⁵ A relevant example from MC is given in (26):

- (26) Zhangsan zuotian yujian mouren, keshi wo bu zhidao *(shi) shei
 Zhangsan yesterday met someone but I not know be who
 ‘Zhangsan met someone yesterday, but I don’t know who.’

Since there is little reason to believe that the object wh-phrase *shei* would not be able to undergo wh-movement under the ‘wh-movement’ analysis of (26), the version without the copula should be possible, contrary to fact. Now the following question needs to be addressed:

- (27) Why do MC/Korean (and possibly Japanese) not allow English-style Sluicing?

The purpose of the remainder of this section is twofold. First, we provide an answer for the question in (27) by appealing to the recent understanding of the syntactic conditions imposed on the COMP domain in Sluicing. Second, we consider two possible analyses of SLCs, each of which gives rise to a possible answer for the question addressed in (25). The

¹⁴ Kizu (2005: 165–70) suggests that there is a connection between a language being wh-in-situ one and the presence of the copula in its SLCs. See Merchant (2001: 84–85) for a brief comment on this generalization.

¹⁵ For further discussion on “copula omission” in SLCs, see Wang 2002, Wei 2004, Wang and Wu 2006, among others.

first analysis continues to assume that SLCs involve TP-ellipsis. The second is one that rejects that assumption. We attempt to explicate the characteristics of each analysis and explore directions for future research.

The conclusion that no SLCs are fed by *wh*-movement (at least in MC and Korean) follows from a syntactic condition imposed on the COMP domain, put together with a familiar assumption about the feature specification of C in those East Asian languages. Merchant (2004: 670), modifying an analysis of the sort found in Lobeck (1995) and Saito and Murasugi (1990), proposes that C qualifies as a syntactic TP-ellipsis licenser by bearing the feature [E]. According to Merchant, [E] must cooccur with a strong uninterpretable Q-feature and a strong uninterpretable *wh*-feature (represented as [*u*+Q*] and [*u*+*wh**], respectively, where * indicates the feature being strong) (cf. Merchant 2001: 81). If interrogative C in these *wh*-in-situ languages lacks either [*u*+Q*] or [*u*+*wh**], then its [E]-feature should not have the ability to license TP-ellipsis.^{16, 17}

Turn to the question addressed in (25), namely, what makes East Asian languages allow the SLC that English does not allow. Note that the discussion made above does not necessarily exclude the possibility of analyzing SLCs in terms of TP-ellipsis. This is because a functional head other than C may license TP-ellipsis. As Merchant (2001:81-82) notes and Craenenbroeck and Lipták (2006) extensively discuss, TP-ellipsis remnants may appear in the specifier of Focus Phrase in languages like Hungarian. Craenenbroeck and Lipták propose that Foc° bears the [E]-feature and that the requirement for [E] in these languages is different: [E] is licensed by the presence of a strong uninterpretable operator-feature ([*u*+Op*]). They observe that non-*wh*-remnants, in addition to *wh*-remnants, are allowed in such languages, as illustrated by the following Hungarian example:

- (28) János meghívott valakit és azt hiszem [hogy [_{FocP} BÉLÁT Foc_[uOp] ∅]]
 János invited someone.Acc and that.Acc think that Béla.Acc

“János invited someone and I think it was Béla that he invited.”

¹⁶ One might say that the reason for the non-existence of TP-ellipsis licensed by C in Korean (and possibly in Japanese) should be tied to the fact that question particles cannot be null particularly in embedded contexts, given that the licensing head being null is one of the licensing conditions for standard Sluicing. There are two reasons to think that this property cannot be a crucial factor. First, MC interrogative C is allowed to be null. Second, if Merchant (2001:80) is right that this licensing condition is essentially a morphophonological one and therefore sensitive to linear order, it is not immediately clear that the condition be active in a head-final language like Japanese and Korean.

¹⁷ Apparently, our assumption is not compatible with Watanabe’s 1992 analysis of Japanese *wh*-in-situ, according to which *wh*-in-situ in the language involves null operator movement into the C domain at surface structure. If Watanabe’s proposal is correct, the proposed reason for interrogative C in Japanese not being able to license TP-ellipsis may become unavailable. See Takahashi 1994 for relevant discussion.

Although the complementizer, *hogy*, is not null, that does not cause a problem for the ‘null licensing head’ condition for Sluicing, precisely because null Foc° is a licensing head.

Notice that nothing obvious prevents us from assuming that the East Asian languages, like Hungarian, have Foc° with [$u\text{Op}^*$] and that it can license an elided constituent:

(29) [$_{\text{CP}} \text{C}^\circ$ [$_{\text{FocP}} \text{XP-remnant } \text{Foc}^\circ$ [$_{\text{TP}} \emptyset$]]] (linear order irrelevant)

This sort of structural analysis has been proposed for Japanese SLCs by Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2002), who propose that the copula *da* is generated under Foc° (see Nishigauchi and Fujii 2006). This may be incompatible with the ‘null licensing head’ requirement on COMP. It is not clear, however, that Foc° being overt undermines the analysis as discussed in footnote 16. As for the position of MC *shi*, the element in question is sometimes argued to function as a focus marker attached to a focused constituent (Huang 1982: 208; cf. Hoh and Chiang 1990). If so, it is possible to maintain that Foc° in MC, which looks like a head-initial language in the relevant respect, is phonologically null. The point here is that the ‘TP-ellipsis’ analysis of SLCs can be made compatible with the standard TP-ellipsis licensing conditions.

These analytical details aside, the ‘focus movement’ approach to SLCs enables us to address a potentially interesting question as to a typology of Sluicing. Craenenbroeck and Lipták (2006) distinguish English-type languages and Hungarian-type languages, based on the fact that wh-movement in the latter targets SpecFocP, rather than SpecCP. The possibility we suggested above for East Asian is similar to their analysis of Hungarian-type languages because it claims that SLCs also employ Foc° for TP-ellipsis licensing. Craenenbroeck and Lipták, nevertheless, formulate a typological picture in a way that would not allow us to treat East Asian SLCs on a par with Hungarian Sluicing. They propose that ellipsis licensing by Foc° in a language is contingent on obligatory wh-movement targeting SpecFocP in that language. Because the East Asian languages under discussion do not seem to have such overt movement, we need to reconsider the possible range of options about the relationship between movement of wh-phrases and movement of non-wh-phrases if SLCs involve TP-ellipsis. This might shed further light on the nature of the syntax of [E].

Let us turn to the approach that rejects a TP-ellipsis analysis of SLCs. That is an ‘argument ellipsis’ approach, according to which what undergoes ellipsis in SLCs is not a TP but the surface subject of the (pseudo)cleft construction:

(30) [$_{\text{Subject}} \emptyset$] copula [$_{\text{Pivot}} \text{XP-remnant}$] (linear order irrelevant)

Authors such as Saito (2004), Shinohara (2006), and Sugawa (this volume) discuss this approach specifically from a viewpoint of a general theory of ellipsis. The empirical claim is that the phenomenon in Japanese is not an instance of TP-ellipsis but an instance of ‘argument ellipsis’. Null object constructions are taken to be a representative case of argument ellipsis (Oku 1998, Kim 1996; cf. Tomioka 2003. See also example (18)). According to the ‘argument ellipsis’ approach to the SLC, the construction is derived from the (pseudo)cleft

construction by deleting the surface clausal subject (see section 2.1).¹⁸ In other words, the (pseudo)cleft strategy provides a way of making elided constituents stand in argument position. There seem to be ways of testing this hypothesis. For instance, whether distinctive properties of argument ellipsis constructions hold for SLCs should be examined. Also, all other things being equal, the ‘argument ellipsis’ analysis of MC SLCs implies that null object constructions in MC have the same properties as those in Japanese and Korean. These tasks are left untouched in this paper.

4. Conclusion

This short paper discussed how properties of sluicing-like constructions found in MC and Japanese (and Korean) are related to general, theoretical and analytical issues surrounding Sluicing, i.e. TP-ellipsis. As we observed, sluicing-like constructions in these languages are highly likely to be the same creature: MC and Japanese constructions behave alike with respect to sloppy ellipsis, the presence of the copula(-like) element and the availability of non-wh-remnants. We considered two ways of understanding of this state of affairs, i.e. the ‘TP-ellipsis’ approach and the ‘argument ellipsis’ approach, discussing what can be or need to be done from each approach’s point of view in future investigations.

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¹⁸ As briefly noted in footnote 12, SLCs allow PP remnants whereas pseudoclefts do not allow PP pivots in MC. This fact has been used to argue that the pseudocleft construction cannot be the general source of SLCs (Wang 2002, Wang and Wu 2006, Chiu 2006, 2007). A possible response from the ‘argument ellipsis’ approach would be that the factors responsible for the absence of PP-pivots are essentially morphophonological ones, the effect of which disappears when the pre-copula clause is left unpronounced.

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