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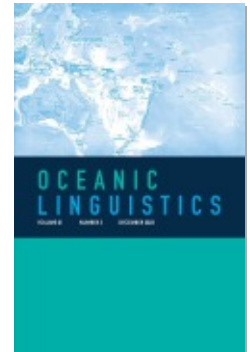
What Sluices in Malagasy Sluicing?

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What Sluices in Malagasy Sluicing?

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Ellipsis is restricted by an identity condition such that elided material must be identical in some fashion to a linguistic antecedent. The traditional view is that this requirement is syntactic in nature. Merchant, in 2001, however, proposed that the identity condition is fundamentally semantic, leading to a substantive debate in the ellipsis literature. Potsdam, in 2007, used the sluicing construction in Malagasy to argue for Merchant's semantic licensing condition; however, since that work, at least two alternative analyses of sluicing constructions in other Austronesian languages, Nukuoro and Malay/Indonesian, have been proposed that are potentially compatible with a syntactic identity condition. This paper considers those analyses for Malagasy and shows that they are untenable. Malagasy sluicing requires that the antecedent and the elided clause need not be syntactically identical. It thus continues to support a non-syntactic identity condition on ellipsis.

Keywords: Malagasy; Nukuoro; Malay/Indonesian; Sluicing; Ellipsis

1. INTRODUCTION.¹ Sluicing is an ellipsis construction in which an embedded question consisting of only a *wh*-phrase (1a) receives a full clausal interpretation (1b). Starting with Ross (1969) and popularized in Merchant (2001), the standard Ross–Merchant analysis of sluicing assumes that there is structure at the ellipsis site and there is an operation that deletes a clausal constituent after *wh*-movement has taken place, as shown in (1c).

- (1) a. Someone answered the phone but I don't know [who].
b. Someone answered the phone but I don't know [who answered the phone].
c. ... I don't know [_{CP} who_i [_{C'} C° ~~[_{TP} t_i [_{TP} answered the phone]]]]~~]

The elided clause in (1c), indicated by strikethrough, is deleted under identity with the antecedent clause, in this case, *Someone answered the phone*. I will use the term *pre-sluice* for the full clause in which ellipsis has applied, in this case *who answered the phone*. The *wh*-phrase remnant *who* from the elided clause typically has its own inner antecedent in the antecedent clause, its correlate, here *someone*.

1. I thank two anonymous *Oceanic Linguistics* reviewers for comments that sharpened the main claim of this paper. I extend heartfelt appreciation to my Malagasy consultants: Tina Boltz, Charlotte-Abel Ratovo, Vololona Razafimbelo, Bodo Randrianasolo, and Voara Randrianasolo.

This derivation, wh-movement plus clausal ellipsis, leads to the naïve expectation that wh-in-situ languages—languages without wh-movement—will not have sluicing since one of the two main ingredients is missing. Cross-linguistic investigation has shown that this prediction is largely incorrect (see papers in Merchant and Simpson [2012] for representative research). Sluicing is widely found in the world's languages, regardless of the syntax they use to form wh-questions. At the same time, detailed cross-linguistic investigation has also concluded that not all such sluicing constructions have the same analysis and a number of different syntactic routes to a sluice have been identified, which do depend upon the syntax of a language's wh-questions (see van Craenenbroeck and Lipták [2013] and Vicente [2018] for overviews). To help avoid confusion, I will use the term Sluicing-Like Construction (SLC) or sluicing (with a lowercase *s*) for any construction that has the superficial appearance of a sluice: a constituent that is interpreted as an embedded question but which surfaces as just a wh-phrase. I will reserve the term Sluicing (with an uppercase *S*) for the Ross–Merchant analysis consisting of wh-movement plus clausal ellipsis.

This paper looks at the analysis of sluicing in the wh-in-situ Austronesian language Malagasy, the native language of Madagascar. Malagasy has an SLC, illustrated in (2).²

- (2) Novangian' ny olona ianao fa tsy fantatro
 visited.TT DET person 2SG.NOM but NEG know.TT.1SG
 hoe iza <no namangy anao>
 COMP who FOC visited 2SG.ACC
 'Someone visited you, but I don't know who.'

Wh-questions in Malagasy, such as the pre-sluice in (2) isolated in (3a), are bi-clausal clefts (Dahl 1986; Paul 2001; Law 2007). The initial wh-phrase is the predicate of the main clause and the remaining material is a subordinate clause, as schematized in (3b).

- (3) a. Iza no namangy anao?
 who FOC visited 2SG.ACC
 'Who visited you?'
 b. [wh-phrase [remainder]_{CLAU2}]_{CLAU1}

This fact makes the analysis of the Malagasy SLC less than straightforward because of a well-known restriction on successful ellipsis. Ellipsis is governed by an identity condition such that deleted material must be "identical" in some fashion to an antecedent in order for ellipsis to succeed. There is considerable debate about the proper formulation of this condition, however. Traditional identity conditions (e.g., Sag 1976; Fiengo and May 1994) require syntactic identity between the antecedent clause and the elided clause; there must be morphosyntactic identity between the antecedent clause and the elided clause.

2. Glossing follows Leipzig glossing conventions with the addition of the following abbreviations: AT, actor topic voice; CT, circumstantial topic voice; TT, theme topic voice. Malagasy verbs unglossed for voice are in the actor topic voice form. Deleted material is enclosed in angled brackets or indicated by strikethrough.

In contrast, Merchant (2001) argues that the condition fundamentally requires semantic identity. There need only be a semantic relationship between the meanings of the two clauses, which Merchant (2001) identifies as mutual entailment. Potsdam (2007) uses the Malagasy SLC to argue in favor of semantic identity, as it poses an apparently unsurmountable problem for classical syntactic conditions. In brief, in a typical example such as (2), the pre-slue in the SLC is a cleft but the antecedent is not. There is no syntactic identity between the two clauses, although there is mutual entailment.

The goal of this paper is to reconsider this conclusion in light of two recent analyses of sluicing in two other Austronesian languages, the Polynesian language Nukuoro (Drummond 2021a,b) and Malay/Indonesian (Sato 2016; Wong 2020). The two proposals share the property that the elided material in the respective SLCs is not a cleft structure. Drummond's work argues that the pre-slue can be a cleft but ellipsis targets the non-cleft dependent clause inside the cleft (CLAUSE2 in (3b)). Sato's and Wong's works argue that the correct pre-slue is a simple *wh-in-situ* clause, not a cleft at all. If either of these two analyses can work for Malagasy, one might be able to maintain a traditional syntactic identity condition as there might not be the syntactic mismatch between the antecedent and elided clauses claimed in Potsdam (2007). Despite the promise of these novel approaches, this paper argues that they are still inadequate for Malagasy, strengthening Potsdam's (2007) conclusion that Malagasy sluicing is not compatible with a syntactic identity condition.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 provides background on two relevant empirical issues in the analysis of sluicing, particularly the formulation of the identity condition on ellipsis. Section 3 introduces relevant details about Malagasy morphosyntax and its SLC, and presents Potsdam's (2007) Sluicing-like analysis. Section 4 introduces Drummond's (2021a,b) Relative Clause (RC) Sluicing analysis of Nukuoro and applies it to Malagasy. The section presents arguments against it, in favor of the Sluicing-like derivation. Section 5 presents Sato's (2016) and Wong's (2020) In-Situ Sluicing analysis of Indonesian/Malay and evaluates it for Malagasy. It is also shown to be incompatible with a syntactic identity condition. Section 6 summarizes the main findings and considers further avenues for investigation.

2. CONDITIONS ON ELLIPSIS. Research on ellipsis widely converges on the conclusion that such constructions are governed by at least two conditions: an identity condition and a licensing condition (see Lasnik and Funakoshi [2018] and Merchant [2018a] for overviews). The Identity Condition recognizes that ellipsis cannot apply freely but, rather, there must be some kind of identity or parallelism that holds between the elided material and an antecedent. They must be similar in some way such that the content of the deleted material can be recovered (see Lipták [2015a] for an overview, and Ranero [2021] for references specifically with respect to sluicing). Most early works on ellipsis assume that the identity condition is fundamentally a syntactic requirement (Chomsky 1965; Sag 1976; Williams 1977; Fiengo and May 1994;

Chung, Ladusaw, and McCloskey 1995; Lasnik 1995; Fox and Lasnik 2003; others; more recently, see Rudin 2019; Ranero 2021). Ellipsis is only allowed if the deleted structure and its lexical items are identical to a structural antecedent at some level of representation, typically Logical Form (LF). An example of a syntactic identity requirement is Wong's (2020) Isomorphism Condition in (4).

(4) *Syntactic Isomorphism Condition* (Wong 2020:91)

The elided material has to be syntactically isomorphic, both lexically and structurally, to the antecedent modulo the correlate.

Relatively recent work, including analyses that assume no syntactic structure in the ellipsis site, argues that the identity is fundamentally semantic in nature (Dalrymple, Shieber, and Pereira 1991; Hardt 1999; Ginzburg and Sag 2000; Merchant 2001; Aelbrecht 2010; van Craenenbroeck 2010; Barros 2014; Barros and Kotek 2019; among others). Merchant's (2001) proposal is perhaps the best known (see Merchant [2018b] for an updating). If focus is not under consideration, his proposal for sluicing reduces to the condition in (5).

(5) *Semantic Condition on TP Ellipsis* (Potsdam 2007:587)

A TP E can be deleted only if there is an antecedent TP A such that A and E entail each other.

Most recently, it has been argued that a purely semantic condition on its own is also insufficient. A hybrid identity condition, containing both syntactic and semantic identity requirements, is necessary (Merchant 2013; Chung 2006, 2013; AnderBois 2011, 2014; Barros 2014; Weir 2014). Perhaps the best-known piece of evidence in favor of some amount syntactic identity is the impossibility of voice mismatches, and argument structure mismatches more generally, under sluicing (Merchant 2001; Chung 2013) (6). A purely semantic condition would allow such cases, on the assumption that active and passive clauses are semantically equivalent.

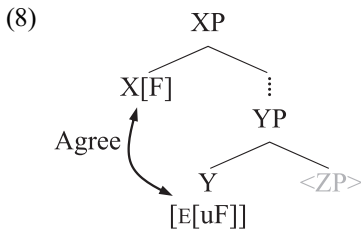
- (6) a. *Joe was murdered, but we don't know who <murdered Joe>.
 b. *Someone murdered Joe, but we don't know by who <Joe was murdered>.

In addition to an identity condition, it is widely recognized that ellipsis is also subject to a syntactic Licensing Condition. Much work suggests that this is typically done by a functional head (Chao 1987; Lobeck 1995; Merchant 2001). I adopt the feature-based approach first presented in Merchant (2001) and developed further in Merchant (2004), Aelbrecht (2010), and Landau (2020). There is an [E]-feature on a functional head which does two things: it instructs Phonological Form (PF) to not pronounce the complement of the functional head and it instructs LF to identify a suitable antecedent given the identity condition. For example, Sluicing in English is licensed by an [E]-feature on a C[wh,q] complementizer. Its syntax, phonology, and semantics are given in (7) (based on Merchant 2004:670–72).

- (7) a. E[uwh,uq]
 b. $\varphi_{TP} \rightarrow \emptyset / [E] __$
 c. $[[E]] = \lambda p: e\text{-GIVEN}(p)$ [p]

Requirement (7b) indicates that the complement of the head bearing [E], the phonological representation of TP, should not be pronounced. Requirement (7c) is Merchant's (2001) semantic identity condition on ellipsis discussed above but, in principle, is whatever identity condition is ultimately identified.

Building on Merchant's approach, Aelbrecht (2010) argues that the head that licenses ellipsis and the head that bears the [E]-feature can be distinct. Ellipsis requires an Agree relation between an ellipsis-licensing head X which bears [F] and an [E]-feature on a head Y which bears an uninterpretable [uF] subfeature, as shown in (8). Checking of [uF] allows the derivation to converge and results in non-pronunciation of Y's complement.



Agree is subject to locality, specifically, Chomsky’s (2000) Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) in (9). I assume that the phases are at least CP, vP, and DP (see Citko [2014] and Bošković [2014] on the phasehood of DP). As a consequence of the PIC, ellipsis licensing is local. There cannot be a phase head between the licensing head and the head bearing the $[\text{E}]$ -feature (Aelbrecht 2010:147).

- (9) *Phase Impenetrability Condition* (Chomsky 2000:108)

In phase P with head H, the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside P, only H and its edge are accessible to such operations.

With these theoretical concerns and machinery in place, I turn to Malagasy and its SLC.

3. MALAGASY MORPHOSYNTAX AND ITS SLC.

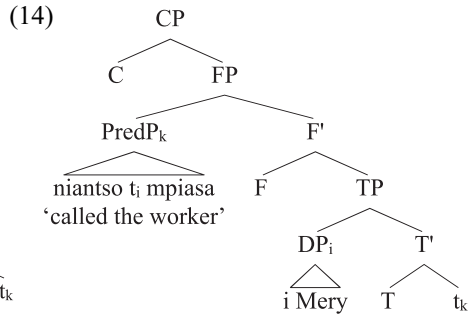
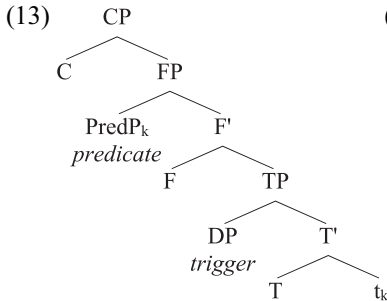
3.1. CLAUSE STRUCTURE. Malagasy, the native language of Madagascar, is spoken by over 18 million people on the island of Madagascar. It is a predicate-initial, subject-final language, with verbal clauses traditionally described as VOS (10). The description of Malagasy basic word order as VOS, however, is complicated by its Philippine-style voicing system and the controversial nature of the term “subject.” I will adopt the following picture and terminology: Within a verbal predicate, the unmarked constituent order is verb, followed by the subject, object, obliques, and adjuncts. From within this predicate, one element, sometimes called the trigger (Schachter 1993; Pearson 2000; Law 2006), externalizes to a clause-final position. Voice morphology on the verb registers

the grammatical role of the trigger, which will be underlined in examples when relevant. Malagasy has three voices. In the actor topic voice (AT), the subject is the trigger (10). In the theme topic voice (TT), the object is the trigger (11). Finally, in the circumstantial topic voice (CT), a wide range of oblique or adjunct elements can be the trigger (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966; Paul 2000) (12). In nonactor topic clauses (11, 12) the subject appears immediately after the verb inside the predicate. It is phonologically “bonded” to the verb, indicated in the orthography by an apostrophe or hyphen.

- (10) N-i-antso mpiasa i Mery
 PAST-AT-call worker Mary
 ‘Mary called the worker.’
- (11) N-antso-in’ i Mery ny mpiasa
 PAST-call-TT Mary the worker
 ‘Mary called the worker.’
- (12) a. N-i-antso-an’ i Mery mpiasa ny kiririoka
 PAST-CT-call-CT Mery worker the whistle
 ‘Mary called the worker with the whistle.’
 b. I-toer-an’ ny lehilahy ity trano ity
 CT-live-CT the man DEM house DEM
 ‘The man lives in this house.’ (Paul 2000:91)

In the traditional view of Malagasy clauses (Keenan 1976, 1995; Randriamasimanana 1986; Manaster-Ramer 1992; Guilfoyle, Hung, and Travis 1992; Dahl 1996; Rabenilaina 1998; Paul 2000; among others), the trigger is the subject of the clause and the nonactor topic voices are parallel to familiar passives that advance nonsubjects to the canonical subject position. This yields a description of (10) as VOS. In more recent approaches to Malagasy clause structure (notably Pearson 2001, 2005, 2018), the trigger is not the canonical subject but a topic-like element. The post-verbal noun phrase is the true subject. Under this view, Malagasy is a VSO language, with basic word order disrupted by obligatory externalization of some element. Voice morphology is agreement morphology reflecting the grammatical role of the trigger.

It is widely adopted that Malagasy’s predicate-initial word order is derived from an underlying subject–predicate order via an operation of Predicate Fronting (Massam and Smallwood 1997; Rackowski and Travis 2000; Pearson 2001, 2005; Aldridge 2004; Cole and Hermon 2008; see Chung [2017] for critical discussion). I assume this view and the clause structure in (13). The predicate is a constituent that I label PredP. It fronts to the specifier of a high functional projection FP between CP and TP. The trigger occupies spec,TP below the fronted predicate. The debate about the status of the trigger as a subject or externalized topic largely reduces to the question of whether spec,TP is an A(argument)-position, as in English, or an A’ (nonargument) position, like English spec,CP. Resolving this question is orthogonal to the issues being discussed here, and I will not take a position on the debate. In what follows, I will call the clause-final element in spec,TP the trigger and the post-verbal agent a subject. Given this clause structure, the derivation of the Malagasy clause in (10) is (14).



3.2. WH-QUESTIONS. Malagasy has two strategies for forming wh-questions: wh-in-situ and clefting. Most constituents can be questioned in-situ (Sabel 2003). Example (15) shows wh-in-situ of a direct object, object of a preposition, post-verbal agent in a theme topic voice clause, and place/time adverbials.

- (15) a. Namangy an' iza Rabe?
visited ACC who Rabe
'Who did Rabe visit?'
b. Nivavaka ho an' iza Rabe?
prayed for ACC who Rabe
'Who did Rabe pray for?'
c. Novangian' iza ianao?
visited.TT who 2SG.NOM
'Who visited you?'
d. Nanao izany taiza/oviana Rabe?
did that where/when Rabe
'Where/When did Rabe do that?'

There are at least two restrictions on wh-in-situ (Sabel 2003). The non-referential adjuncts 'how' and 'why' cannot be in-situ (16), and triggers may not be questioned with this strategy (17).

- (16) *Nanao izany nahoana/ahoana Rabe?
did that why/how Rabe
(('Why/How did Rabe do that?'))
(17) a. *Namangy anao iza?
visited 2SG.ACC who
(('Who visited you?'))
b. *Nitranga inona?
happened what
(('What happened?'))

In order to question either, a cleft structure is used instead. The wh-phrase occurs fronted, followed by the focus particle *no* 'FOC' and then the remainder of the clause. Voice morphology indicates that the wh-phrase corresponds to the trigger. The grammatical versions of (16) and (17) are in (18) and (19).

- (18) Ahoana no nanaovan- dRabe izany?
how FOC did.CT Rabe that
'How did Rabe do that?'

- (19) a. Iza no namangy anao?
 who FOC visited 2SG.ACC
 ‘Who visited you?’
 b. Inona no nitranga?
 what FOC happened
 ‘What happened?’

The cleft can be used to question a wide range of grammatical elements (see Keenan [1976, 1995], MacLaughlin [1995], Rabenilaina [1998], Paul [2000, 2001], Pearson [2001], Sabel [2002, 2003], and Kalin [2009] for data and relevant generalizations). Given the versatility of the Malagasy voice system, most elements can be turned into a trigger using voice morphology, from where they can then be clefted. The cleft versions of the *wh*-in-situ examples from (15) are in (20).

- (20) a. Iza no novangian- dRabe __?
 who FOC visited.TT Rabe
 ‘Who did Rabe visit?’
 b. Iza no nivavahan- dRabe __?
 who FOC prayed.CT Rabe
 ‘Who did Rabe pray for?’
 c. Iza no namangy anao __?
 who FOC visited.AT 2SG.ACC
 ‘Who visited you?’
 d. Taiza/Oviana no nanaovan- dRabe izany __?
 where/when FOC did.CT Rabe that
 ‘Where/When did Rabe do that?’

In addition to triggers, some adjuncts can be directly clefted, without first becoming triggers. Thus, (20d) with the adjuncts ‘where’, ‘when’, and ‘why’ has cleft alternatives in which the verb remains in the actor topic form:

- (21) Taiza/Oviana/Nahoana no nanao izany __ Rabe?
 where/when/why FOC did.AT that Rabe
 ‘Where/When/Why did Rabe do that?’

Other non-trigger, non-adjunct elements cannot be directly questioned using the cleft strategy. For example, neither a direct object, nor the object of a preposition, nor a nonactor topic voice subject can be directly clefted (22).

- (22) a. *(An') iza no namangy __ Rabe?
 ACC who FOC visited.AT Rabe
 (‘Who did Rabe visit?’)
 b. *(An') iza no nivavaka ho __ Rabe?
 ACC who FOC prayed.AT for Rabe
 (‘For whom did Rabe pray?’)
 c. *Iza no novangiana __ ianao?
 who FOC visited.TT 2SG.NOM
 (‘Who visited you?’)

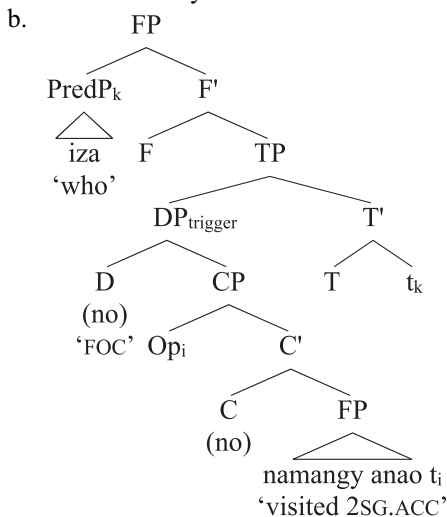
There is wide agreement that the cleft is structurally bi-clausal (Dahl 1986; Paul 2000, 2001; Potsdam 2006; Law 2007). The fronted *wh*-phrase is, or is

contained in, the matrix predicate. Such a claim is in keeping with the predicate-initial nature of the language. The material following the focus particle *no* is a second, subordinate clause. Researchers disagree over the specifics of the structure of the subordinate clause and how it is integrated into the matrix clause. Paul [2000, 2001] argues that the construction is a pseudocleft and I adopt that analysis here. The *wh*-phrase is the matrix predicate and the remaining material is a headless RC in trigger position, as schematized in (23).³

(23) [*wh*-phrase]_{PredP/predicate} [*no* ...]_{DP/trigger}

Under the pseudocleft analysis, the *wh*-question in (24a) has the structure in (24b).⁴

- (24) a. Iza no namangy anao?
 who FOC visited 2SG.ACC
 lit. ‘The one who visited you is who?’
 ‘Who visited you?’



Embedded questions in Malagasy are formed in the same ways as their matrix counterparts and are governed by the same restrictions. They are introduced by the particle *hoe*, which I gloss as an interrogative complementizer. Complement clauses are obligatorily extraposed to a right-peripheral position; hence, the embedded question must follow the trigger.

- (25) a. Manontany tena aho [hoe namangy an' iza Rabe]
 ask self 1SG.NOM COMP visited ACC who Rabe
 ‘I wonder who Rabe visited.’

3. Law (2007) argues against the pseudocleft analysis in favor of a structure that is more akin to an impersonal *it*-cleft. I will adopt the pseudocleft analysis here, recognizing that there are challenges to that analysis.

4. The category of *no* ‘FOC’ is unclear. Paul (2000) suggests that it could be in either D° (Paul 2001) or C° (Potsdam 2007). I show both options here and below.

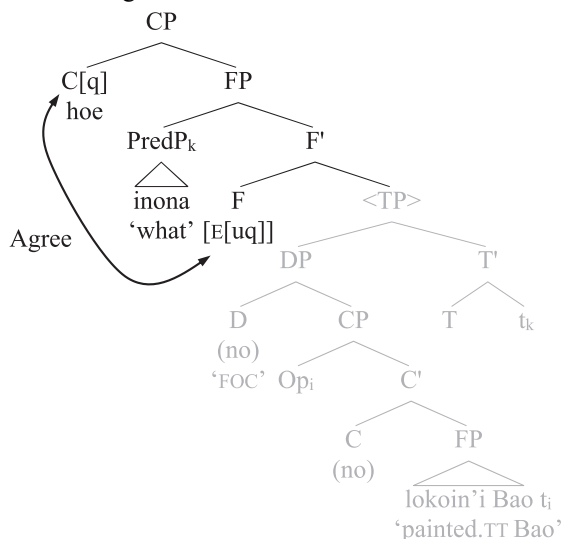
- b. Manontany tena aho [hoe iza no novangian- dRabe]
 ask self 1SG.NOM COMP who FOC visited.TT Rabe
 'I wonder who Rabe visited.'

3.3. SLC. In the Malagasy SLC, a verb that otherwise subcategorizes for an embedded question is followed by the interrogative complementizer *hoe* and a wh-phrase. Examples are in (26) based on Potsdam (2007:ex. 18). The hypothesized deleted material is shown in brackets but can equally well be pronounced.

- (26) a. Nandoko zavatra i Bao fa hadinoko
 painted.AT thing Bao but forget.TT.1SG
 hoe inona <no nolakoin' i Bao>
 COMP what FOC painted.TT Bao
 'Bao painted something but I forget what (Bao painted).'
 b. Nangalarin' ny olona ny fiarako fa tsy fantatry ny polisy
 stole.TT DET person DET car.1SG.GEN but NEG know.TT DET police
 hoe iza <no nangalatra ny fiarako>
 COMP who FOC stole.AT DET car.1SG.GEN
 'Someone stole my car but the police don't know who (stole my car).'

Potsdam (2007) and Paul and Potsdam (2012) argue for a Sluicing-like derivation in which the wh-predicate fronts to spec,FP deriving predicate-initial word order followed by TP ellipsis. The derivation of the sluice in (26a) proceeds as in (27). I call this derivation Predicate Remnant (PR) Sluicing because what remains after TP ellipsis is a (wh-)predicate. Paul and Potsdam (2012) uses Merchant's (2001) and Aelbrecht's (2010) [E]-feature machinery to implement the ellipsis. An [E]-feature on F° licenses deletion of the TP complement to F° . [E] has a subfeature [uq] which enters into an Agree relation with the licensing head $C[q]$ *hoe*. This restricts the SLC to occurring only under that complementizer, which selects embedded questions.

(27) PR Sluicing derivation



Potsdam (2007) uses the Malagasy SLC to argue that the identity condition on ellipsis must be fundamentally semantic in nature and cannot require identity of syntactic structure. The pre-slucose is always a pseudocleft structure, while the antecedent clause in general is not. An identity condition that required syntactic identity would incorrectly rule out the Malagasy SLC. A concrete instance of the argument can be seen in (26a), repeated in (28). In this example, the italicized antecedent is a VOS clause; however, the underlined pre-slucose is a pseudocleft. There is clearly no syntactic identity between the two clause types.

- (28) *Nandoko zavatra i Bao fa hadinoko hoe inona <no nolokoin' i Bao>*
 painted.AT thing Bao but forget.TT.1SG COMP what FOC painted.TT Bao
 ‘Bao painted something but I forget what (Bao painted).’

Potsdam’s (2007) conclusion rests on two assumptions: (i) the pre-slucose in the SLC is a pseudocleft and (ii) ellipsis targets the matrix TP in this pre-slucose. The alternative analyses to be considered in the next sections reject these assumptions. If either assumption turned out to be incorrect, one could perhaps maintain a more traditional syntactic identity condition.⁵ Despite the promise that these alternatives hold, I argue that they are not adequate for Malagasy and, thus, that these assumptions should be maintained.

4. RC SLUICING AND NUKUORO. The bi-clausal structure of Malagasy pseudoclefts means that there are two clauses that are a potential target for clausal ellipsis: the matrix TP implicated in PR Sluicing or the embedded TP inside the headless RC. Drummond (2021a,b) capitalizes on this to provide an analysis of the SLC in the Polynesian language Nukuoro, which also uses pseudocleft structures for its *wh*-questions. In the analysis, it is the embedded TP that is elided, not the matrix TP. In what follows, I present Drummond’s analysis of the Nukuoro SLC (section 4.1), apply it to Malagasy (section 4.2), and then provide argumentation in favor of PR Sluicing for Malagasy (section 4.3).

4.1. NUKUORO SLC. Nukuoro is an SVO Polynesian Outlier language spoken by about 1200 people on Nukuoro Atoll and on Pohnpei, in the Federated States of Micronesia (Eberhard, Simons, and Fennig 2021). Example (29) illustrates SVO.

- (29) *Soni ne lingi de koovee*
 Johnny PFV spill DET Coffee
 ‘Johnny spilled the coffee.’ (Drummond 2021a:ex. 4)

5. Potsdam (2007) also briefly mentions that, beyond syntactic structure, the voice in the elided clause and the voice of the antecedent clause must be allowed to differ, or the SLC would fail. See (26). Malagasy voice thus cannot be like English passive/active voice, which does not allow mismatches (6). Instead, Ranero (2021) argues that such facts support Pearson’s (2001, 2005) view of Malagasy voice morphology as a kind of (*wh*-)agreement between the *wh*-phrase and the verb, indicating the grammatical role of the trigger. Agreement mismatches are typically allowed under ellipsis.

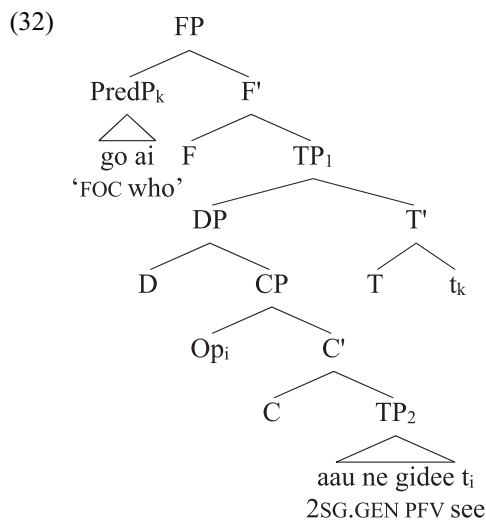
Drummond argues that *wh*-questions are pseudoclefts in Nukuoro, as in other Polynesian languages (e.g., Tuvaluan [Besnier 2000:20+] and Tongan [Polinsky 2016]). In (30a), the *wh*-phrase plus the particle *go* constitutes the predicate⁶ and the remaining material is a headless RC, as bracketed in (30b).

- (30) a. Go ai aaau ne gidee?
 FOC who 2SG.GEN PFV see
 ‘Who did you see?’ (Drummond 2021a:ex. 11a)
- b. [Go ai]_{predicate} [aaau ne gidee]_{relative clause}
 FOC who 2SG.GEN PFV hit

The subject of the RC appears in the genitive case, a phenomenon found in other Polynesian languages (e.g., Tongan [Herd, Massam, and MacDonald 2011; Otsuka 2010]). Two additional genitive relatives are illustrated in (31). There is no overt relativizer.

- (31) a. de nui aaau ne gage
 DET coconut.tree 2SG.GEN PFV Climb
 ‘the coconut tree that you climbed’ (Drummond 2021a:ex. 5a)
- b. de nui a de gauligi ne gage
 DET coconut.tree GEN DET child PFV climb
 ‘the coconut tree that the child climbed’ (Drummond 2021a:ex. 5b)

Drummond (2021a) assigns the structure in (32) to the *wh*-question in (30a). As in Malagasy, the initial predicate moves to the specifier of a high functional projection FP to achieve predicate-initial word order. The subject, a headless RC, is in spec,TP.



6. The analysis of *go* and its cognates in other Polynesian languages is of considerable debate. See, for example, Bauer (1991) and Massam, Lee, and Rolle (2006). For our purposes, it does not matter if it is a preposition or something else. I refer to it as a focus particle, following Drummond's glossing.

Drummond (2021a,b) provides evidence for the pseudocleft structure. In addition to the observation that the subject of a *wh*-question also shows up in the genitive, as in RCs, there is the observation that relative-clause external material in the DP can be pronounced. In (33a), there is a demonstrative; in (33b), there is a light nominal head *tangada* ‘person’.

- (33) a. Go ai **deela** aau ne gidee?
FOC who DEM.SG 2SG.GEN PFV see
 ‘Who is that one that you saw?’ (Drummond 2021a:ex. 11b)
- b. Go ai **tangada** aau ne gidee?
FOC who DET.person 2SG.GEN PFV see
 ‘Who is the person that you saw?’ (Drummond 2021a:ex. 11a)

Embedded questions in Nukuoro embed a pseudocleft under the complementizer *be* ‘COMP’. The SLC in Nukuoro is built off of such questions. It strands the predicate: *go* plus the *wh*-phrase (34).

- (34) Soni ne gidee dahi dangada, gai au e dee iloo
Johnny PFV see one person but I NPST NEG know
be go ai <a Soni ne gidee>
COMP FOC who GEN Johnny PFV see
 ‘Johnny saw someone, but I don’t know who.’
 (Drummond 2021a:ex. 17)

The structures of the antecedent and pre-sluice for the SLC example are shown in (35a) and (35b), respectively. Drummond argues that what is elided in (35b) is not the matrix clause, TP₁, but TP₂ inside the RC, bracketed and shaded.

- (35) (a) *antecedent*
-
- (b) *(pre)-sluice*
-

I call this derivation RC Sluicing. It has an advantage over PR Sluicing, which elides TP₁, in that there is syntactic identity between the antecedent clause and the elided clause. Both are SVO structures; the elided clause is not a pseudocleft structure. Deletion under any form of identity, specifically syntactic identity, straightforwardly succeeds.

In support of the RC Sluicing analysis, Drummond observes that material inside the subject DP but outside the RC, such as a demonstrative or light noun head shown to be possible in (33), can survive ellipsis (36). This is expected under the RC Sluicing analysis because the DP shell containing the RC is not elided.⁷

- (36) Soni ne gidee dahi dangada, gai au e dee iloo be go ai **deela**
 Johnny PFV see one person but I NPST NEG know C FOC who DEM.SG
 ‘Johnny saw someone, but I don’t know who is the one.’
 (Drummond 2021a:ex. 20)

With Drummond’s proposal in place, I show how it can be extended to Malagasy in the next section. I develop the analysis for Malagasy but will ultimately show that it cannot be correct.

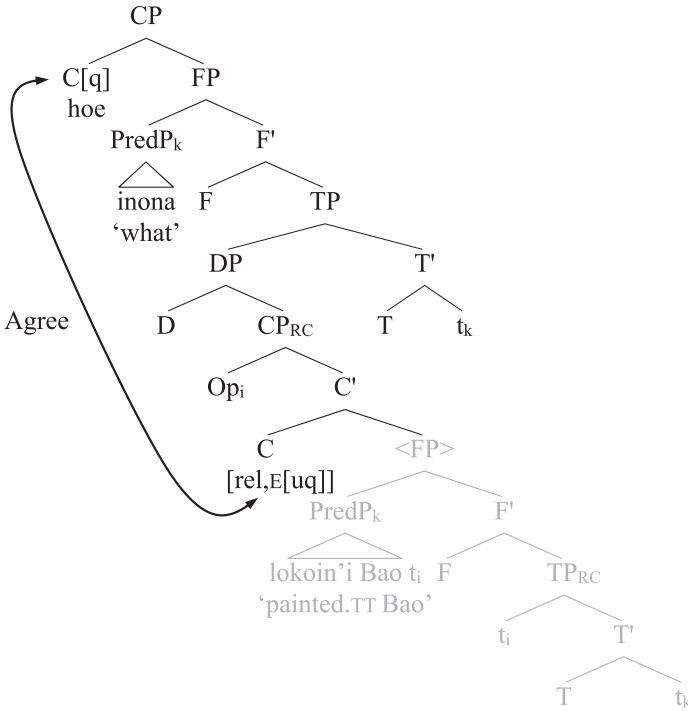
4.2. RC SLUICING AND MALAGASY. Consider the representative Malagasy SLC repeated in (37). The pre-sluiice has the structure in (38) given previous assumptions. It is a pseudocleft in which the fronted predicate is the *wh*-phrase and the trigger is a headless RC in spec,TP. The initial challenge in applying RC Sluicing to (38) is that eliding TP_{RC} inside the RC would not result in any phonological material being deleted. The RC predicate has fronted to spec,FP, outside the proposed ellipsis site and spec,TP contains only a trace of the null relative operator which has moved to spec,CP. I propose, therefore, that a larger constituent, FP, is deleted. The implementation is shown in (38). The [E]-feature resides on C[rel]. Because the construction is sensitive to the matrix clause being a *wh*-question, the [E]-feature has an uninterpretable [uq] subfeature which is checked against the embedding complementizer C[q] *hoe* via Agree. This results in the non-pronunciation of the RC FP.⁸

- (37) Nandoko zavatra i Bao fa hadinoko
 painted.AT thing Bao but forget.TT.1SG
 hoe inona <no nolakoin’ i Bao>
 COMP what FOC painted.TT Bao
 ‘Bao painted something but I forget what (Bao painted).’

7. Drummond provides evidence using diagnostics in Merchant’s (1998) Pseudosluicing that the construction in (36) is the same with and without the demonstrative and, in particular, is not Merchant’s Pseudosluicing when the demonstrative is present.

8. It will be shown below that the focus particle *no* ‘FOC’ cannot survive RC Sluicing. Putting it in either D or C would not achieve that result. I leave it out of the representation.

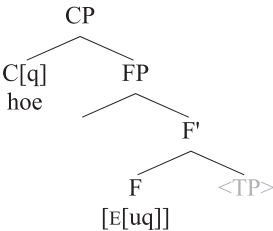
(38) Malagasy RC Sluicing derivation



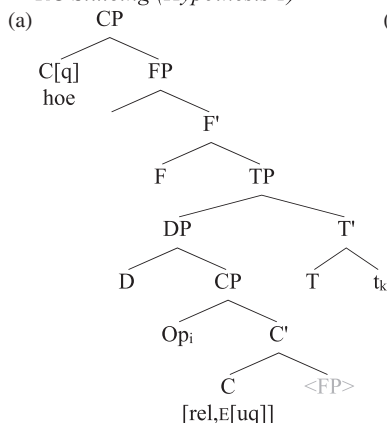
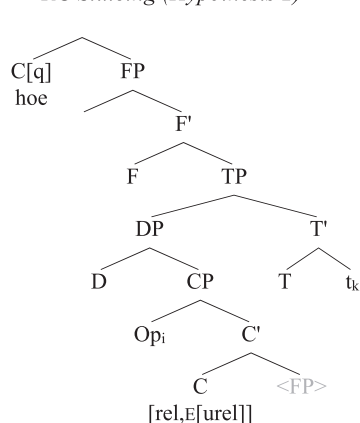
4.3. EVIDENCE AGAINST RC SLUICING. This section provides theoretical and empirical arguments for the PR Sluicing derivation and against RC Sluicing in Malagasy.

4.3.1. Licensing considerations. The two analyses under consideration have the same head licensing ellipsis, the matrix clause complementizer $C[q]$ *hoe*. The actual constituent that is elided is different, however. In PR Sluicing, the deleted constituent is the TP complement to F that $CP[q]$ immediately dominates (39)). Ellipsis proceeds uneventfully after Agree between $C[q]$ and $F[E[uq]]$.

(39) *PR Sluicing*



Under RC Sluicing, the deleted constituent is FP inside the complex DP that is in spec,TP (40).

(40) *RC Sluicing (Hypothesis 1)*(b) *RC Sluicing (Hypothesis 2)*

Under what I call Hypothesis 1, (40a) above, the licensing is problematic. The two heads that need to Agree, $C[q]$ and $C[rel,E[uq]]$, are too far apart. While Aelbrecht (2010) argued that the licensing head and the head bearing the $[E]$ -feature need not be the same, it also argued that the configurational relationship between the two is subject to the PIC, in (9). In (40a), $C[rel,E[uq]]$ heads a phase P. The edge of P, which includes the head, is accessible to Agree until the next phase is complete. This is the DP dominating P. $C[rel,E[uq]]$ is thus not accessible to $C[q]$, which is what needs to Agree with $C[rel,E[uq]]$. If RC Sluicing is to succeed, $C[q]$ cannot be the licenser. Suppose instead that the licenser for RC Sluicing is the RC complementizer, $C[rel]$, which takes the elided FP as its complement. Call this Hypothesis 2 (40b). Ellipsis of FP will now succeed because the licensing head and the head bearing the $[E]$ -feature are identical. Agree vacuously satisfies the PIC.

Hypothesis 2 is the licensing configuration independently proposed for RC Sluicing in Hungarian RCs (van Craenenbroeck and Lipták 2006; Lipták 2015b) (41), where it strands the relative operator in the specifier of the licensing head.

- (41) a. Kiki megcsókolta azt, **akit** <megcsókolt>
 each kissed.3SG that.ACC REL.who.ACC kissed.3SG
 'Each kissed whoever they did.' (Lipták 2015b:ex. 25)
- b. Az építményadót eddig ugyanis a kerületek szedték
 the property.tax til.now PRT the districts collected.3PL
 már **ahol** <szedték>
 PRT REL.where collected.3PL
 'It was the districts that collected property tax, at least in places where they did.' (Lipták 2015b:ex. 6)

Hypothesis 2 nonetheless makes a number of incorrect predictions for Malagasy and I reject this option. The licenser needs to be the complementizer $C[q]$ *hoe*, which is only compatible with the PR Sluicing analysis.

First, if Hypothesis 2 is correct, we expect to see RC Sluicing in simple clauses, outside of the pseudocleft construction and the sluicing domain,

parallel to the Hungarian data in (41). Such examples are not acceptable with the elliptical interpretation:⁹

- (42) *Handeha n'aiza n'aiza <handehanako> aho
 go.FUT anywhere go.FUT.CT.1SG 1SG.NOM
 ('I will go wherever I do.')
- (ok with meaning 'I will go wherever/anywhere')

Second, Hypothesis 2 predicts that RC sluicing will be independent of the higher complementizer. Not just *hoe*, but other, non-wh complementizers should be compatible with RC Sluicing. This is because the complementizer is not implicated in the checking of the E-feature. Two other complementizers in Malagasy are *raha* 'if' and *fa* 'that'. There is speaker variation in whether sluicing is allowed after such complementizers (43). Some speakers accept such examples while others reject them.¹⁰ The examples are uniformly accepted if ellipsis does not take place. The grammar of speakers who reject such examples is problematic for Hypothesis 2 because there is no way to exclude these examples if the higher complementizer is not tied to the licensing of ellipsis.

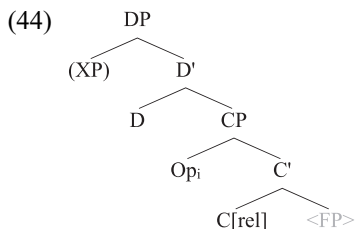
- (43) Fantatro fa misy olona handeha ho any Madagasikara.
 know.TT.1SG that exist person go PREP LOC Madagascar
 'I know that someone will go to Madagascar.'
- a. %Manontany tena aho **raha** Rabe <no handeha>
 ask self 1SG.NOM if Rabe FOC go
 'I wonder if Rabe (will go).'
- b. %Mihevitra aho **fa** Rabe <no handeha>
 think 1SG.NOM that Rabe FOC go
 'I think that Rabe (will go).'

Such examples are not a problem for PR Sluicing. The [E]-feature on F can be associated to particular complementizers in individual grammars. I conclude that licensing considerations argue for PR Sluicing and against RC Sluicing in Malagasy.

4.3.2. Stranded material. A second argument against RC Sluicing in Malagasy comes from expectations regarding the possibility of material in the nominal but outside the RC being able to survive ellipsis. Drummond verified this option in Nukuoro, showing that a demonstrative or an overt nominal head could appear. Similar expectations arise for Malagasy. If the headless relative has the structure in (44), we might expect to see an XP in spec,DP, an overt D head, a relativizer in C[rel], or an overt nominal head (not shown) after RC Sluicing. Under PR Sluicing none of this material will survive ellipsis. In what follows, I show that the RC Sluicing predictions are not borne out.

9. According to van Craenenbroeck and Lipták (2006), the nominal head must have a definite/universal interpretation, signaling irrelevance, vagueness, or ignorance on the part of the speaker. The example obeys this restriction.

10. One speaker accepted both examples, one rejected both examples, and two speakers accepted (43a) but not (43b).



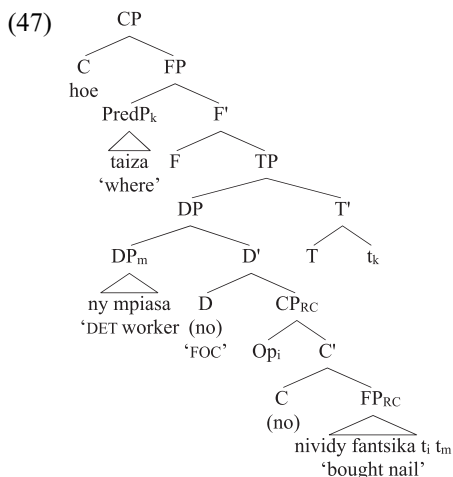
Focus particle *no*. There is no resolution in the Malagasy literature on the analysis of the focus particle *no* found in pseudoclefts, but it is typically placed in D° or C° (see (24b) and footnote 4). In either position, it should survive FP ellipsis, given the structure in (44). This is not possible:

- (45) *Nividy zavatra ny mpianatra fa tsy fantatro hoe inona no
 bought thing DET student but NEG know.TT.1SG COMP what FOC
 ('The student bought something but I don't know what.')

Bodyguard nominals. Keenan (1976) identifies a variant of wh-questions that he dubs the Bodyguard Condition. Section 3.2 showed that some adjuncts can be questioned without first becoming triggers. When a non-trigger is clefted it may optionally be fronted with the trigger immediately following it (46).

- (46) a. Taiza no nividy fantsika {ny mpiasa / iza}?
 where FOC bought nail DET worker 3SG.NOM
 b. *Bodyguard Condition*
 Taiza {ny mpiasa / iza} no nividy fantsika?
 where DET worker 3SG.NOM FOC bought nail
 'Where did the worker/he buy nails?'

Paul (2000) tentatively analyzes the Bodyguard Construction by placing the fronted trigger inside the headless nominal as a kind of possessor in spec,DP. Example (46b) is assigned the structure in (47).



If FP_{RC} is elided in this structure, the bodyguard should survive, but it cannot:¹¹

- (48) *Nividy fantrika ny mpiasa fa tsy fantatro
 bought nail DET worker but NEG know.TT.1SG
 hoe taiza {ny mpiasa / izy}
 COMP where DET worker 3SG.NOM
 ('The worker bought nails but I don't know where.')
 (ok with meaning 'The worker bought nails but I don't know where the
 worker/he is.')

Nominal heads. The nominal trigger in the pseudocleft need not be headless. There are wh-questions that transparently involve a headed RC (49a). Such questions are typically translated with d-linked *which-NPs* in English and are copular clauses (Potsdam 2012). Example (49a) has the structural organization in (49b).

- (49) a. Voankazo inona ny voankazo amidin' ilay magazay?
 fruit what DET fruit sell.TT DEM store
 lit. 'What fruit is the fruit that that store sells?'
 'Which fruit does that store sell?'
 b. [voankazo inona]_{predicate}
 fruit what
 [ny voankazo [amidin' ilay magazay]_{rel. clause}]_{trigger}
 DET fruit sell.TT DEM store

Such wh-questions cannot participate in the SLC if only the RC is deleted (50b).¹² This is unexpected on the RC Sluicing analysis. Similar examples were grammatical in Nukuoro and should be possible in Malagasy if only the RC deletes.

- (50) Mivarotra voankazo ilay magazay fa tsy fantatro hoe
 sell fruit DEM store but NEG know.TT.1SG COMP
 That store sells fruit but I don't know ...
 a. voankazo inona ny voankazo amidiny
 fruit what DET fruit sell.TT.3SG.GEN
 'which fruit is the fruit that it sells.'
 b. *voankazo inona ny voankazo <amidiny>
 fruit what DET fruit sell.TT.3SG.GEN

Demonstratives. Malagasy has a large number of demonstratives which can be used both adjectivally and pronominally (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:53–55, 65–66). They encode singular versus plural, visible versus invisible, and several degrees along the distal/proximal scale. The data to follow show that, in some cases, a demonstrative can remain after ellipsis, which is what is expected in RC Sluicing and was seen to be possible in Nukuoro. I will argue that when a demonstrative is possible, however, the result is a different construction,

11. Paul (2000) considers an alternative analysis of the Bodyguard Construction in which the bodyguard occupies the specifier of a high topic projection in the matrix clause. This would place it in the specifier of TopP between FP and TP in (47). In this position as well, the bodyguard should survive RC Sluicing, contrary to fact.

12. The remnant must consist solely of the wh-phrase, *voankazo inona* 'which fruit,' which does not use (49a) as the pre-slueice.

a Copular SLC. In most cases, the result is either ungrammatical or means something that is not the intended interpretation.

Malagasy demonstratives can be divided into those that pick out visible entities that can be pointed to and those that pick out non-visible entities. The former are ungrammatical in the SLC (51).

- (51) *Nisy olona nihomehy fa tsy fantatro hoe iza ity/io/inity
 existed person laughed but NEG know.TT.1SG COMP who DEM.VIS
 ('Someone laughed but I don't know who.')

The demonstratives that refer to vague entities that cannot be pointed to are more often acceptable:

- (52) a. Nisy olona nihomehy fa tsy fantatro hoe iza izany
 existed person laughed but NEG know.TT.1SG COMP who DEM.INVIS
 'Someone laughed but I don't know who that was.'
 b. Mihira Rasoana fa tsy fantatro hoe hira inona izany
 sing Rasoana but NEG know.TT.1SG COMP song what DEM.INVIS
 'Rasoana is singing but I don't know what song that is.'
 not: 'Rasoana is singing but I don't know which song.'
 c. Manana ankizany betsaka Rasoana fa tsy fantatro hoe
 have children many Rasoana but NEG know.TT.1SG COMP
 firy izany
 how.many DEM.INVIS
 'Rasoana has many children but I don't know how many they are.'

Such examples are possible because the antecedent asserts or presupposes the existence of an entity, which the demonstrative can then refer to. When such an entity is not asserted, even these vague demonstratives are not possible:

- (53) a. Inona no nangalarin' ny mpiasa? Tsy fantatro hoe inona (*izany)
 what FOC steal.TT DET worker NEG know.TT.1SG COMP what DEM.INVIS
 'What did the worker steal? I don't know what (*that was).'

Expectedly, a demonstrative is generally not good with sprouted adjuncts because they are not presupposed:

- (54) a. Nanamboatra ny angadinomby ilay mpiompy fa tsy fantatro
 fixed DET plow DEM farmer but NEG know.TT.1SG
 hoe ahoana (*izany)
 COMP how DEM.INVIS
 'The farmer fixed the plow, but I don't know how (*that was).'
- b. Nividy gazety ny mpiasa fa tsy fantatro hoe taiza (*izany)
 bought magazine DET worker but NEG know.TT.1SG COMP where DEM.INVIS
 'The worker bought a magazine but I don't know where (*that was).'
- c. Lasa Rasoana fa tsy niteny hoe nahoana (*izany)
 left Rasoana but NEG said COMP why DEM.INVIS
 'Rasoana left but she didn't say why (*that was).'

I argue that this construction with a demonstrative is distinct from the SLC that lacks a demonstrative. I will call it a Copular SLC, as the embedded clause is simply a copular clause consisting of a wh-phrase predicate and a pronominal

subject, which finds an antecedent either linguistically or in the discourse. The English instantiation is in (55). Importantly, there is no clausal ellipsis in a Copular SLC. The anaphoric nature of the construction arises from the referential pronoun.¹³

(55) John saw someone but I don't know who he/she/it/that is ____.

Merchant (2001) and Gribanova (2013) provide a handful of diagnostics which can be adapted to identify Copular SLCs, and which can be used to support this claim. I propose the ones in (56).

- (56) *Copular SLC diagnostics*
- remnant need not be a wh-phrase
 - no need for a linguistic antecedent
 - disallows modification by *else*

The Malagasy SLC with a demonstrative allows all of these options as do the English translations using a truncated cleft (see footnote 13). The SLC without a demonstrative fails these diagnostics, as does English Sluicing. First, the remnant in a Copular SLC need not be a wh-phrase because there is no ellipsis that needs to be licensed by a wh-complementizer (57). All speakers accept such examples; however, we saw earlier that such examples are impossible for some speakers if the demonstrative is absent (43).

- (57) Fantatro fa misy olona handeha ho any Madagasikara.
 know.TT.1SG that exist person go PREP LOC Madagascar
 'I know that someone will go to Madagascar.'
- Manontany tena aho raha Rabe izany
 ask self 1SG.NOM if Rabe DEM
 'I wonder if it's Rabe.'
 - Mihevitra aho fa Rabe izany
 think 1SG.NOM that Rabe DEM
 'I think that it's Rabe.'

Second, Copular SLCs are also more permissive in not requiring a linguistic antecedent. The pronominal subject is an instance of deep anaphora (Hankamer and Sag 1976), in contrast to Sluicing which is surface anaphora and requires a linguistic antecedent (58).

- (58) [shown a picture of a crowd]
 Manontany tena aho hoe aiza *(izany)
 ask self 1SG.NOM COMP where DEM
 'I wonder where *(that is).'

13. Copular SLCs include pre-sluites that are predicational copular clauses, but also so-called truncated clefts, such as *It is me* or *That might be Adrian* (Mikkelsen 2012, and references therein). Mikkelsen (2012) argues that such clauses are neither truncated, nor clefts, but are specificational copular clauses in which the subject *it/that* is the underlying predicate that raises to subject position from where it must find a predicative antecedent. It seems prudent that SLCs based on predicational copular clauses and specificational copular clauses (truncated clefts) should ultimately be distinguished, but I will lump them together here given our lack of understanding about their different behaviors.

Finally, Merchant (2001) introduces the (im)possibility of modifying the *wh*-remnant by *else* as a diagnostic that seems to be relevant to Copular SLCs. *Else*-modification is possible with genuine Sluicing but apparently not in a Copular SLC given the English translation of (59). The Malagasy SLC is also ungrammatical with both *else* and the demonstrative, patterning with Copular SLCs.

- (59) Nividy vary Rasoa tany an-tsena fa tsy fantatro
 bought rice Rasoa LOC PREP-market but NEG know.TT.1SG
 hoe taiza koa (*izany)
 COMP where also DEM
 ‘Rasoa bought rice at the market but I don’t know where else (*that was).’

Although a demonstrative may follow a sluiced *wh*-phrase, this is the result of a distinct construction in which the embedded question is a simple copular clause and is not the result of ellipsis stranding the demonstrative as RC Sluicing would have it.

To summarize, RC Sluicing incorrectly predicts that ellipsis should strand a range of elements in the left periphery of the complex DP trigger. This is either not possible or yields a result that is a distinct syntactic construction, a Copular SLC. PR Sluicing correctly does not allow any of these options.

4.4. INTERMEDIATE SUMMARY. I conclude that RC Sluicing is not an appropriate analysis of the Malagasy SLC. It leads to expectations about the behavior of SLCs that are not realized. In Nukuoro, RC Sluicing permits a syntactic identity condition on ellipsis. The elided RC is a simple SVO clause, like its antecedent. The fact that RC Sluicing is not appropriate for Malagasy means that this attempt to rescue syntactic identity for that language fails. The next section explores a second alternative that might still allow us to maintain syntactic identity.¹⁴

5. IN-SITU SLUICING AND MALAY/INDONESIAN. The need for a semantic identity condition for the Malagasy SLC arises because the embedded question in a sluice is assumed to be a pseudocleft but the antecedent transparently is not. Malagasy also has a *wh*-in-situ strategy for information questions. An alternative analysis of the Malagasy SLC then is that the pre-sluice is not a

14. An anonymous reviewer raises the challenging question of what accounts for the difference between Malagasy and Nukuoro. They use very similar structures in their SLCs in that pre-sluices are bi-clausal pseudoclefts in both languages; however, ellipsis targets distinct clauses in the two languages. Analytically, the difference is the location of the [E]-feature on the matrix C (Malagasy) versus the RC C (Nukuoro), but this is not explanatory. I can speculate that the unavailability of RC Sluicing in Malagasy might lie in the structure of Malagasy RCs. Keenan, Ralalaoherivony, and Ranaivoson (2022) argue that Malagasy RCs are only predicate phrases and never as large as CP. If that is correct, then RC Sluicing would be unavailable because there is no RC C to bear an [E]-feature. The flip side of the puzzle is why the PR Sluicing analysis is not available in Nukuoro. Instead, Nukuoro has only RC Sluicing, which seems to be rather uncommon cross-linguistically. It is possible that Nukuoro in fact has both RC Sluicing and PR Sluicing and some examples are structurally ambiguous.

pseudocleft, but a *wh*-in-situ clause. If this were correct, we could maintain a syntactic identity condition. This section explores an analysis that leaves the *wh*-phrase in-situ and deletes all of the material surrounding the *wh*-phrase. This approach has been argued to be correct for Indonesian (Sato 2016) and Malay (Wong 2020). It is developed in section 5.1 and applied to Malagasy in section 5.2. I show that it is nonetheless not successful for Malagasy (section 5.3).

5.1. MALAY/INDONESIAN SLC. Malay/Indonesian is a group of Malayic languages spoken as a first language by upward of 75 million people in Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, and other countries; it is the L2 of almost 200 million other speakers (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malay_language).¹⁵ Standard Malay/Indonesian is an SVO language. *Wh*-in-situ is available for most *wh*-phrases (60) (see Cole and Hermon [1998] and references therein for descriptions).¹⁶

- (60) a. Ali akan membeli apa?
 Ali FUT buy what
 ‘What will Ali buy?’ (Fortin 2007:24, ex. 9d)
- b. Ali membeli pangsapuri di mana?
 Ali buy condominium at where
 ‘Where did Ali buy the condominium?’
 (Cole and Hermon 1998:226, ex. 6b)
- c. Kamu mengharapkan Ali akan membeli apa?
 2SG hope Ali FUT buy what
 ‘What do you hope that Ali will buy?’ (Fortin 2007:49, ex. 65)

Indonesian/Malay has a second *wh*-question strategy in which the *wh*-phrase is fronted and optionally followed by the complementizer *yang* (61). I assume with numerous researchers that the fronting construction involves movement (Saddy 1991; Cole and Hermon 1998; Sato 2016; others).

- (61) a. Apa yang Ali akan beli?
 what COMP Ali FUT buy
 ‘What will Ali buy?’ (Fortin 2007:24, ex. 9b)
- b. Di mana Ali membeli pangsapuri?
 at where Ali buy condominium
 ‘Where did Ali buy a condominium?’
 (Cole and Hermon 1998:226, ex. 6a)
- c. Apa yang Ali harap Fatimah akan beli untuknya?
 what COMP Ali hope Fatimah will buy for.3SG
 ‘What does Ali hope that Fatimah will buy for him?’
 (Wong 2020:9, ex. 13a)

15. The linguistic picture regarding Malay and Indonesian is highly complex. I used the term Malay/Indonesian as the relevant data below seems to be the same for standard varieties of both languages documented in the literature.

16. Malay/Indonesian examples are repeated from the sources, only glossing has been regularized. There is variation in the presence/absence of the complementizer *yang* and the verbal prefix *meN-* which does not affect the relevant points.

Sato (2016) and Wong (2020), building on Kimura (2010), Abe and Hornstein (2012), and Abe (2015), argue for an in-situ approach to Sluicing in Indonesian/Malay. Non-wh material surrounding the wh-phrase is elided by a process I dub Scattered Deletion (62), which elides everything in a clause except a wh-phrase. The derivation of a Malay/Indonesian SLC example is shown in (63). I will call this approach In-Situ Sluicing.

(62) *Scattered Deletion*

Delete everything in a clause but a wh-phrase.

(63) Ali membeli sesuatu kemarin, tapi saya tak tahu

Ali buy something yesterday but I NEG know

<Ali membeli> apa <kemarin>

Ali buy what yesterday

‘Ali bought something yesterday, but I don’t know what.’

(Wong 2020:9, ex. 14)

Given that movement of the wh-phrase is an option, Sato (2016) proposes an economy condition to force the derivation in (63).

(64) *PF Output Economy Condition on Externalization* (Sato 2016:244)

Unless required for convergence, avoid string-vacuous application of Move.

This condition will prevent the wh-phrase *apa* ‘what’ in (63) from fronting and rule out the derivation in (65). The movement in (65) is string-vacuous precisely because of the deletion.

(65) *Illicit Indonesian/Malay SLC derivation*

Ali membeli sesuatu kemarin, tapi saya tak tahu

Ali buy something yesterday but I NEG know

apa <yang Ali membeli ~~apa~~ kemarin>

what COMP Ali buy yesterday

Sato and Wong provide a number of arguments in favor of the in-situ derivation both from Malay/Indonesian and cross-linguistic considerations. I briefly review two of their arguments here. The argumentation generally has the following form: some generalization holds of wh-in-situ but not fronted wh-phrases and wh-remnants in the SLC pattern with in-situ wh-phrases.

5.1.1. P-stranding. There is significant cross-linguistic evidence for Merchant’s (2001) P-Stranding Generalization in (66).

(66) *Preposition-Stranding Generalization* (Merchant 2001:92)

A language L will allow preposition stranding under sluicing if L allows preposition stranding under regular wh-movement

A handful of languages are argued to counterexemplify the P-Stranding Generalization, of which Malay/Indonesian is one (Sato 2010, 2011). It does not allow P-stranding under wh-movement (67), but P-stranding is allowed in the SLC (68).

- (67) a. *Siapa yang kamu berdansa dengan?
 who COMP 2SG dance with
 ('Who did you dance with?') (Sato 2016:250, ex. 23a)
- b. Dengan siapa kamu berdansa?
 with who 2SG dance
 'With whom did you dance?' (Sato 2016:250, ex. 23b)
- c. Kamu berdansa dengan siapa?
 2SG dance with who
 'Who did you dance with?'
- (68) Saya ingat Ali berdansa dengan seseorang
 1SG remember Ali dance with someone
 tapi saya tidak tahu (dengan) siapa
 but 1SG NEG know with who
 'I remember Ali danced with someone, but I don't know (with) who.'
 (Sato 2016:250, ex. 23c)

The SLC patterns with *wh*-in-situ and not *wh*-movement. The SLC is grammatical without the preposition because there is no P-stranding in the In-Situ Sluicing derivation; there is no *wh*-movement. See Sato (2016) for theoretical details.

5.1.2. Island (in)sensitivity. Sato (2016) and Wong (2020) point out that In-Situ Sluicing provides a straightforward explanation for the well-known island insensitivity of Sluicing. Since Ross (1969), it has been observed that the *wh*-remnant in sluicing can apparently originate inside of a syntactic island (see also Merchant 2001). The standard explanation for this observation is that ellipsis ameliorates the island effects (Ross 1969; Chung, Ladusaw, and McCloskey 1995; Merchant 2001, 2004; Fox and Lasnik 2003). The SLC in Malay/Indonesian is island insensitive, as this cross-linguistic observation predicts. Example (69) illustrates with an adjunct island and a complex noun phrase. Because there is no movement under the In-Situ Sluicing analysis, the lack of island effects is straightforwardly expected, without any appeal to special repair properties of ellipsis.

- (69) a. *Adjunct Island*
 Ali dipecat [kerana dia beli sesuatu], tapi saya tak tahu apa
 Ali fired.PASS because 3SG buy something but 1SG NEG know what
 'Ali was fired because he bought something, but I don't know what.'
 (Wong 2020:13, ex. 21)
- b. *CNPC*
 Ali bertemu dengan [perempuan yang membeli sesuatu],
 Ali meet with woman COMP buy something
 tapi saya tak tahu apa
 but 1SG NEG know what
 'Ali met a woman who bought something, but I don't know what.'
 (Wong 2020:13, ex. 22)

Within the context of this paper, an advantage of In-Situ Sluicing that makes it worth pursuing for Malagasy is that a syntactic identity condition is within

reach. If the *wh*-remnant does not have to move or be the predicate of a pseudocleft, it can be in a syntactic position parallel to its correlate and syntactic identity can be maintained.

5.2. IN-SITU SLUICING AND MALAGASY. The In-Situ Sluicing analysis can be applied directly to Malagasy given that it too is a *wh*-in-situ language. Instead of the pseudocleft pre-sluiice assumed in PR Sluicing analysis, the pre-sluiice will be an embedded question with *wh*-in-situ. The sluicing example repeated below receives the analysis shown, with Scattered Deletion applying to the material in angled brackets.

- (70) Nandoko zavatra i Bao fa hadinoko hoe <nandoko> inona <i Bao>
 painted thing Bao but forget.TT.1SG COMP painted what Bao
 ‘Bao painted something but I forget what.’

Notably, there is complete syntactic identity between the elided material and the antecedent material. It is also the case that there is no voice morphology mismatch, obviating the need to claim that voice morphology can be ignored in evaluating identity. This arguably constitutes a simpler analysis than that developed in section 3. Nevertheless, I argue that the In-Situ analysis is only workable if it gives up syntactic identity, which greatly weakens its appeal in the current context. I present two cases where syntactic identity cannot be maintained.

The first case where there can still be no syntactic identity involves SLCs where the antecedent clause is an existential construction (71). An existential antecedent clause is required here because triggers cannot be indefinite (Keenan 1976).¹⁷

- (71) Nisy olona nihomehy fa tsy fantatrao hoe iza
 existed person laughed and NEG know.TT.2SG COMP who
 ‘Someone laughed but you don’t know who.’

Example (72) shows three possible pre-sluiices, underlined, for the example. In (72a), the pre-sluiice is a pseudocleft as in Potsdam’s (2007) analysis. This example is grammatical without ellipsis, but it cannot be generated with In-Situ Sluicing assuming syntactic identity. The elided material is not identical to anything in the antecedent clause. In (72b), the *wh*-remnant is in-situ. The bracketed material can be elided by Scattered Deletion under syntactic identity with the appropriate part of the antecedent clause. The difficulty here is that the pre-sluiice is ungrammatical. As section 3.2 showed, *wh*-phrase triggers cannot remain

17. This is an oversimplification. There is frequent reference in the Malagasy linguistic literature to a semantic requirement on the trigger that it have a particular information structure status, typically that it be definite (Keenan 1976) or specific (Paul 1998; Pearson 2001). If a trigger would violate either of these restrictions, an existential construction is used. Recent work (Ntelitheos 2006; Law 2006, 2011; Paul 2009; Keenan 2008; others) casts doubt on the inviolable nature of this restriction. Those works provide examples in which the trigger is neither specific nor definite. Nevertheless, speakers robustly reject nonspecific, indefinite interpretations of triggers in simple sentences and I maintain that it is a useful generalization, even if it is not precisely correct. Further research is required to determine the exact nature of interpretive restrictions on triggers.

in-situ. Finally, (72c) presents the possibility that the pre-sluiice is actually also an existential construction. Scattered Deletion succeeds with syntactic identity. Here as well, however, the difficulty is that *wh*-in-situ is not permitted and the pre-sluiice is ill-formed. The unelided version is ungrammatical because the pivot of an existential cannot be the *wh*-phrase *iza* ‘who’ (73).

(72) a. *cleft pre-sluiice*

Nisy olona nihomehy fa tsy fantatrao hoe iza <no nihomehy>
 existed person laughed and NEG know.TT.2SG COMP who FOC laughed

b. *wh-in-situ pre-sluiice*

Nisy olona nihomehy fa tsy fantatrao hoe <nihomehy> iza
 existed person laughed and NEG know.TT.2SG COMP laughed who

c. *existential pre-sluiice*

Nisy olona nihomehy fa tsy fantatrao hoe <nisy>
 existed person laughed and NEG know.TT.2SG COMP existed
iza <nihomehy>
 who laughed

(73) *Nisy iza nihomehy?

existed who laughed

(‘*Who was there that laughed?’)

Thus, there is no well-formed In-Situ Sluicing derivation for (71) that can maintain syntactic identity.

The second problematic case concerns sluices with ‘how’ and ‘why’. Section 3.2 showed that they cannot remain in-situ. The only licit question strategy with these *wh*-phrases is a cleft. Thus, we can be certain that the pre-sluiice for the SLC in (74) is the pseudocleft shown. There is no syntactic identity although the SLC succeeds.¹⁸

- (74) Nanamboatra ny angadinomby ilay mpiompy fa tsy fantatra
 fixed DET plow DEM farmer but NEG know.TT.1SG
 hoe ahoana <no nanamboaran’ ilay mpiompy ny angadinomby>
 COMP how FOC fixed.CT DEM farmer DET plow
 ‘The farmer fixed the plow but I don’t know how.’

5.3. INTERMEDIATE CONCLUSION. The In-Situ Sluicing analysis is attractive because it provides an understanding of island insensitivity under sluicing with no recourse to an ad hoc ellipsis repair mechanism. It is less attractive within the current context of an attempt to maintain a syntactic identity condition on ellipsis. If one adopts In-Situ Sluicing for Malagasy, a semantic identity condition is still necessary as there are cases, namely, sluices with ‘how, why’ and those with existential antecedents, where the pre-sluiice must be a pseudocleft but the antecedent is not. I leave it for future work to determine

18. Parallel facts hold in Malay/Indonesian. *Bagaimana* ‘how’ and *kenapa* ‘why’ cannot remain in-situ but must front. Nevertheless, sluicing succeeds. Sato’s (2016) analysis allows this state of affairs, with the fronting construction being the source of the pre-sluiice. The Economy Condition will allow these *wh*-phrases to front in the SLC because the derivation would not converge if they remained in-situ.

whether an In-Situ Sluicing approach combined with a semantic identity condition might nevertheless be superior to the PR Sluicing analysis for Malagasy.

6. CONCLUSION. This paper reconsidered the PR Sluicing analysis of the Malagasy SLC from Potsdam (2007) which argued for a semantic identity condition on clausal ellipsis. It explored two recent, alternative analyses, RC Sluicing and In-Situ Sluicing, that might allow us to avoid this conclusion about the identity condition. Because they have been proposed for other Austronesian languages, they are important to consider. RC Sluicing proved to be theoretically and empirically problematic, while In-Situ Sluicing is viable for some cases but cannot be maintained with a syntactic identity requirement as some sluices still require a pseudocleft pre-sluice. There is going to be a lack of structural isomorphism in these cases, with a pseudocleft being deleted under identity with a non-pseudocleft. Whatever the full identity condition on ellipsis is, it will need to allow for this possibility. These two novel approaches to Austronesian SLCs thus do not eliminate Potsdam's (2007) argument for a semantic identity condition.

In closing, I comment on what might yet allow us to maintain a syntactic identity in the Malagasy case. The first option would be to show that the pseudocleft structure is not the correct analysis of Malagasy wh-questions. While I take it to be well-accepted that wh-questions are bi-clausal clefts, it could be that Law (2007) is correct that they are nonetheless not pseudoclefts with a headless RC. A different structure might allow for an analysis in the spirit of RC Sluicing in that it is the embedded clause in the cleft that is elided, rather than the matrix clause.

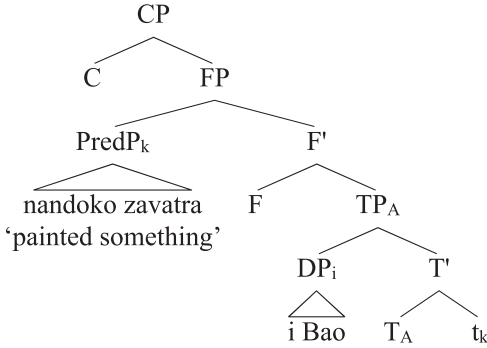
A second option to maintain syntactic identity would be to formulate the condition in a sufficiently relaxed way such that some structural mismatch is acceptable. A recent exploration of this approach is Ranero (2021), which explicitly addresses the Malagasy challenge. The core of Ranero's proposal is that the identity condition does not require syntactic identity but syntactic non-distinctness, as captured by the conditions in (75). Nonidentity is allowed provided that the elided material is featurally non-distinct from the antecedent (75a), and does not contain roots (i.e., lexical items) not contained in the antecedent (75b). Featural non-distinctness allows for a privative feature or functional projection in one clause but not in the other.

- (75) *Syntactic Identity Condition on Ellipsis* (Ranero 2021:351)
- a. The antecedent and material properly contained in the ellipsis site must be featurally non-distinct.
 - b. There must be a strict one-to-one match between all $\sqrt{\text{roots}}$ properly contained in the ellipsis site and $\sqrt{\text{roots}}$ in the antecedent.

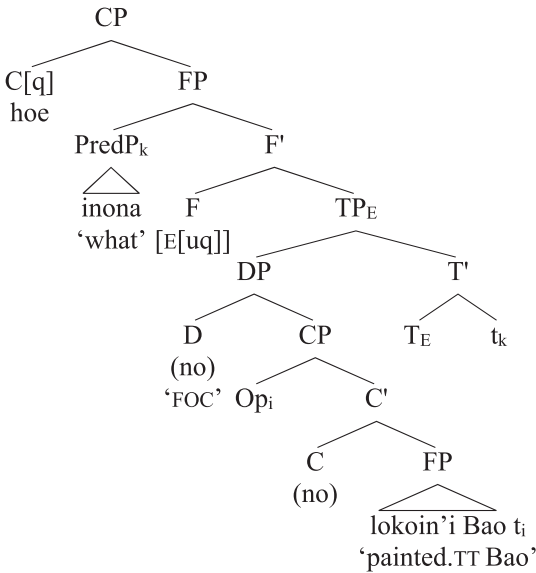
Applying the approach to the Malagasy SLC example repeated in (76), the two structures to compare are the antecedent clause in (77) and the pre-sluice in (78). If there is non-distinctness between TP_A and TP_E , ellipsis succeeds.

- (76) Nandoko zavatra i Bao fa hadinoko hoe inona <no nolokoin' i Bao>
 painted.AT thing Bao but forget.TT.1SG COMP what FOC painted.TT Bao
 'Bao painted something but I forget what (Bao painted)'.

- (77) *antecedent clause*



- (78) *pre-sluiice*



Ranero (2021:350) discusses the Malagasy situation and indicates that the biclausal pseudocleft involves additional non- $\sqrt{\text{root}}$ structure compared to the antecedent, which is not a problem for non-distinctness. The additional functional projections, the DP/CP shell above the RC, are (vacuously) non-distinct from anything in the antecedent. Thus, Ranero's proposal may provide a way to maintain both the Malagasy-specific structural proposals and a syntactic identity condition. Further thought is required, however. For example, it needs to be determined if the null operator in the RC is a root in violation of (75b).

In conclusion, much recent work on sluicing since Merchant (2001) has defended an at least partially syntactic identity condition on ellipsis

(Chung 2006, 2013; Merchant 2013; Barros 2014; Weir 2014; Ranero 2021; others). This paper has highlighted the continuing relevance of the Malagasy SLC to this pursuit, as well as the importance of Austronesian languages in revealing a fuller range of empirical patterns and analytical approaches to SLCs.

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