1. Introduction

English sluicing has received a robust amount of attention in the literature, starting with Ross (1969). Since the influential work by Merchant (Merchant 2001, Merchant 2007, i.a.) and cross-linguistic work that has followed, the account of utterances like (1a) is been described as (1b) – sluicing involves a wh-movement and deletion of the TP with a wh-item remaining.

(1) a. John bought something, but I don’t know what
    b. John bought something, but I don’t know [CP what [TP John bought what]]

More recently, however, this account has been challenged based on data from both languages with and without overt wh-movement (e.g. the body of work cited in Merchant and Simpson 2012). Some have argued, for instance, that what might on the surface appear to involve wh-movement and TP deletion may simply be an appearance (Barros 2012, 2014). Such a claim is in principle two-fold: on the one hand, it may be the case that wh-movement + TP-deletion is an appearance only in general – i.e. a new theory of sluicing is needed\(^1\), or, at the very least, the current move-elide theory needs to be modified. On the other hand, it may be the case that wh-movement + TP-deletion is an appearance only for English – i.e. the general theory of sluicing is fine but something else entirely must be said for English). In this paper, we will not address English at all. Rather, we will examine the predictions of the mechanisms involving (1) in American Sign Language (ASL) and conclude that the machinery that had originally been proposed for English still works for this language – namely it will derive the ASL facts as it has been shown to for English as well as other languages. In other words, this paper examines a sluicing-appearing construction (or the sluicing-like construction, SLC in Paul & Potsdam 2012) in a language in which wh-movement as well as TP-deletion have been independently argued to exist. The goal of this paper then is simple: we analyze ASL SLCs pitting the Merchant-style account of the phenomenon against other options as possible sources for such constructions and show that the other options fall short. In full disclosure at the onset, we will not go through every

\(^1\) That is, such a claim would necessitate a total discarding of the currently accepted in the field theory of sluicing.
argument available in the literature for every possible option in the analysis of the construction in question; instead, we simply address each option briefly using language internal evidence. This is, essentially, the Occam’s Razor argument, and the burden of proof falls on the proponents of an alternative account. In the process of our inquiry as to whether sluicing is isomorphic in ASL we discover a novel characteristic of ASL that independently deserves special attention.

2. Methodology

Three language consultants participated in the data collection. The primary consultant is Deaf-of-hearing (ASL acquisition prior to 1 year old) and raised in ASL-rich Deaf-culture based environment, with 2 years of experience in language consulting. The other two consultants are hearing children of Deaf adults (coda) – both linguists and experienced, certified ASL-English interpreters. Data collection occurred in two stages with over a month between separate sessions: elicitation and a playback. During data collection no English was employed; however, English was always available for reference during discussions (since all of the consultants are fluent in both ASL and English).

The elicitation stage consisted of two independent steps: (i) the PI recounted the context (in ASL) and elicited the target utterance; (ii) Each target utterance was further tested with respect to the (non-)manual alternations. During the grammaticality judgement stage, the consultant watched a sentence (play-back), This was done in order to establish the range of possibilities/potential substitutions. All grammaticality judgements reported here are as follows: ACCEPT/FINE/NATIVE ASL (\textit{ok}), AWKWARD/L2 ASL (\textit{??}), and BAD/NOT ASL (*). Recognizing the coarseness of the scale, but also for the sake of simplicity at this stage of the project, we have collapsed ‘??’ and ‘*’ cases.

Further, for the simplicity of nomenclature, we would like to additionally clarify the following: our discussion of non-manuals is purposefully limited to eye-brow raising/furrowing. This does not mean that no non-manuals were present during the utterance production; it simply means that for the purposes of this paper, we set aside all the other non-manual markings in order to partial out the effects of the eye-brows.

3. Surface form: initial observations of Sluicing in ASL

To our knowledge, sluicing in ASL has never been a subject of focused study, although Author 1 (2012, 2017) and Gokoz (2012) use the construction as diagnostic for other phenomena, assuming the syntax (and semantics) in Merchant (2001). Consider (2)-(3).

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{IX KNOW \textasciitilde IX KISS SOMEONE (\textit{IX}) NOT- KNOW WHO} \hfill (Author 1 2012/2017)
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{I know she kissed someone but I don’t know who}
\end{itemize}
\item \textit{TRUE-BIZ SOMEONE PAY FOOD \underline{WHO/WHAT/WHY NOT-KNOW}} \hfill (Author 1 2012/2017)
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{For real, someone paid for food but I don’t know who/what/why}
\end{itemize}
\end{enumerate}
A few observations can be made immediately. First, both arguments and adjuncts are allowed as possible remnants. Second on the surface, the utterance can correspond directly to the English order (2) but it certainly does not need to (3) – the linear order of the remnant and embedding predicate may be reversed. The question is whether the sentences are also structurally similar to what has been argued for English here – i.e. involving the same mechanisms.

The first step in attaining our modest goal is to decide whether (2)–(3) are at least in principle able to involve Merchant-style sluicing – for that to be the case one must show that wh-movement and TP-deletion are independently available. That is, if the language does not have wh-movement or TP-deletion, much more work would need to be done here. On this point, two issues arise. On the one hand, one might ask just how crucial the independent components articulated above are. For instance, is the case all that is needed is dislocation plus deletion of the rest, modulo remnant? Or does the dislocation need to be true wh-movement? The aforementioned is not trivial: if all that is required is for the wh-item to escape (so its lower copy becomes the remnant), and some type of ellipsis takes care of the rest of the material, then irrespective of whether the we are looking at wh-movement, or focus-movement, or some other kind of (A’-)movement, we expect identical results. The same is to be said for the ellipsis sluice itself – ellipsis of TP in Merchant’s analysis. If what matters here is ellipsis of what is left behind after the wh-item dislocates, whatever the size of the constituent, then nothing else must be said. The picture changes drastically if, on the other hand, the details matter. If, as has been recently argued by Barros & Kotek (2018), the type of dislocation ultimately matters in being able to derive sluicing facts, then a language with one but not the other type of dislocation procedure is expected to behave in a particular manner. Similarly, if sluicing necessarily involves TP ellipsis but there is no independent evidence for such a process in the language under examination, we might consider a Merchant-style account of a sluicing-type construction in the language suspect.

It turns out, however, that this work has been done for us: previous research has, in fact, demonstrated that ASL has overt and covert wh-movement (Petronio & Lillo-Martin 1997, et seq.) and TP-deletion (Nunes & Quadros 2005) with interrogatives. Consider, for instance, the key property of ASL interrogatives – their ability to occur in a variety of positions: clause initially (as in (4a)), clause-finally (as in (4b), and in-situ (as in (4c)). They can also be doubled (as in (4d)). While the direction of the wh-movement in ASL remains a matter of some controversy, it is orthogonal to our goals and has been treated thoroughly elsewhere (see Sandler & Lillo-Martin 2006 for an overview). What is of importance here is that wh-items move (dislocation occurs). We return to doubling below.

(4) ‘What did John buy yesterday?’
   a. WHAT JOHN BUY YESTERDAY
   b. JOHN BUY YESTERDAY WHAT

Note that (4c) demonstrates that the dislocation is not always present. To that effect, the question arises whether we expect the same results in wh in-situ cases as we do in moved cases. Juxtaposing Hindi-Urdu and Uzbek, Girbanova & Manetta (2016) show that the mere fact that some (higher vs. lower) copy of the chain is pronounced does not indicate whether sluicing actually involves movement + ellipsis (vs. a copular construction, e.g.). Instead, according to Van Craenenbroeck and Lipt’ak (2013), the availability of genuine sluicing in the language should be predictable from the syntax of a language’s wh-questions in non-elliptical contexts.

2 Note that English also has a similar construction: ‘Someone paid for food but who/what/why -- I don’t know’. The relationship between the English and ASL here is unclear and lies outside of the goals of this paper.

3 Note that (4c) demonstrates that the dislocation is not always present. To that effect, the question arises whether we expect the same results in wh in-situ cases as we do in moved cases. Juxtaposing Hindi-Urdu and Uzbek, Girbanova & Manetta (2016) show that the mere fact that some (higher vs. lower) copy of the chain is pronounced does not indicate whether sluicing actually involves movement + ellipsis (vs. a copular construction, e.g.). Instead, according to Van Craenenbroeck and Lipt’ak (2013), the availability of genuine sluicing in the language should be predictable from the syntax of a language’s wh-questions in non-elliptical contexts.
c. JOHN BUY WHAT YESTERDAY

d. i. WHAT JOHN BUY YESTERDAY WHAT

ii. JOHN BUY WHAT YESTERDAY WHAT

TP-deletion has been argued for independently in Nunes & Quadros (2005), as well as the ensuing Lillo-Martin & Quadros (2008), Shimamura & Tieu (2013) and Davidson & Author 1 1 (2015) accounts. The details of the proposals differ, and so is the motivation for movement/deletion, but the basics regarding the TP-deletion part of all of the aforementioned accounts remain the same: as one of the steps of the derivation, (4d) involves copying and deletion of [TP JOHN BUY WHAT]. An example of such copy-delete analysis is provided in (5), where WHO moves to the E(mphatic)-focus Phrase, leaving the [TP SEE WHO] behind; [TP J SEE WHO] then moves to the TopP and the lower copy deletes.

(5) WH-doubling in Nunes & Quardos (2005): sample derivation

(Nunes & Quardos 2005)

Therefore, the basic conditions on the testing of the account are met.

But of course, the fact these two operations are independently available is not automatic guarantee that the wh-movement + TP-deletion (the Merchant-style account) is the only mechanism in deriving (2)-(3) in ASL. For example, such structures may be an instantiation of a copular construction. One of these is a cleft, as is argued in Barros (2014), i.a. To clarify: the rationale for the cleft style analysis comes from the observations in Barros (2012, 2014): a sentence I know John bought something but I don’t know what may be analyzed as (6a) as well as (6b).

(6) a. I know John bought something but I don’t know what John bought what

b. I know John bought something but I don’t know what it was that John bought

Another option is that (2)-(3) instantiate the so-called Question-Answer Construction (QAC, Caponigro & Davidson 2011), as in (7).

(7) [Q-constituent JOHN BUY WHAT] [A-constituent BOOK].

br
‘What John bought is a book.’

The English translation of (7) makes QAC resemble a pseudo-cleft; however, Caponigro & Davidson argue that the two constructions are not identical: QACs, but not pseudo-clefs are embedded. But then, since both QACs and sluices involve both embedding and wh-items, and a QAC is a viable option for ASL, we examine it as a possibility for (2)-(3).

The final option we will consider is stripping (Hankamer & Sag 1979).

(8) Lou will ask Doris about syntax, but I can’t imagine who Lou will ask about phonology.

(Nevins 2008)

Among the options outlined about, wh-movement + TP-deletion (the common account of sluicing) and stripping (potentially) reveal structural isomorphism to the antecedent clause whereas the other two options would suggest a non-isomorphic source for the elided site. Our data support an isomorphic source.

4. Non-isomorphic options
4.1. Against a copular construction view

The bulk of the literature on the genuine- vs. not sluicing focuses on the copular construction as the alternative, as in (6)-(7). We will take these on separately, for the two types of copular constructions differ in one particular property – embedding. Additionally, the one that can be embedded (7) is robustly found in the language and, therefore, serves as even more of a rationale for this inquiry.

This inquiry is especially complicated by the fact that ASL lacks copula and allows subject drop. In this, it behaves similar to Uzbek (Gribanova 2013), which may lead to a possibility that like in Uzbek, sluicing-like constructions are derived via copular clauses. Conscious of the fact that much more rigorous work is required to ensure the details of the argumentation offered in the literature are fleshed out for ASL -- we offer the following reasoning against such a view for ASL.

ASL is a language that allows robust subject omission, for any person (Lillo-Martin 1986, Bahan et al. 2000, Author 1 2017); it also does not have a lexical item for a copula (in any tense), (7).

(9) a. IX #D-I-E-T VOMIT-HATE. WILL HUNGRY 10 MINUTE+.

‘I hate this diet. I will be hungry in 10 minutes, and 10 min after that, and 10 min after that’

b. BEFORE STUDY LINGUISTICS STUPID NOW SMART WHY UNDERSTAND PEOPLE COMMUNICATION

‘Before I studied linguistics, I was stupid but now I am smart because I understand people, how they communicate’

Therefore, in principle, it is quite possible that the original (2)-(3) are derived not as TP ellipsis in (10a) – a genuine sluice – but, rather, a copular construction in (10b) with a covert copula.

(10) IX KNOW IX KISS SOMEONE (IX) NOT- KNOW WHO = (2)
a. ‘I know she kissed someone but I don’t know who she kissed’
b. ‘I know she kissed someone but I don’t know who it was that she kissed’

One major difference between the copular construction (e.g. a cleft) and sluice is that the latter but not the former is a case of ellipsis. Gribanova (2013) casts this for Uzbek in terms of deep vs. surface anaphora (Hankammer & Sag 1979). Consider, for example, the Uzbek (11) and the corresponding ASL in (12).

(11) Showing someone a mysterious object
Nima-lig-i-ni bil-ma-y-man.
what-comp-3sg.poss-acc know-neg-prs-1sg
‘I don’t know what (that is).’

(12) Showing someone a mysterious object
‘I don’t know what (that is)’
a. *(iIX) NOT-KNOW WHAT
b. *WHAT (iIX) NOT-KNOW

Despite the fact that (11b) is a possible structure (see (2)), it is unacceptable in the context.\(^5\)

The other difference between a copular construction and a genuine sluice is that the latter but not the former involves embedding. Therefore, it is now on us to demonstrate that the cases like (2)-(3) actually involve embedding. As we do, in one fell swoop we will also discount the possibility of pseudo-cleft, which contains interrogative lexical items but not embedding, as in (13).

(13) a. What John bought is a book.
   b. A book is what John bought.

The first argument for the embedding claim comes from doubling, as in (4d). Three observations about doubling cut across theoretical allegiances: (i) wh-words are not the only elements that can be doubled – so can verbs, aspect markers, modals, and negation, though with some restrictions (see Shimamura & Tieu and Davidson & Author 1 2015 for the generalizations), (ii) on every account, doubling is associated with focus, and (iii) doubling is possible with matrix but not with embedded questions. The properties are (i) and (iii) are illustrated in (14)-(15); property (ii) has

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4 In such a context, our informants overwhelmingly prefer (i):
(i) *(iIX) NOT-KNOW ,IX
 ‘I don’t know what (that is)’

The further corroborates the demonstrative account of IX, advocated elsewhere (Author 1 & Lillo-Martin 2016)

5 Note also that at least in principle, nothing precludes the language from having both options (as has been argued for English, e.g., by Barros 2014). In fact, unlike with WHAT in (11), with WHERE the relevant deep-anaphoric reading is possible.

(ii) Showing photo of an odd-looking place
(iIX) NOT-KNOW WHERE
 ‘I don’t know where (that is)’

But of course, the availability of the deep-anaphoric option does not necessarily exclude the surface-anaphoric one – i.e. the possibility of cleft does not exclude the possibility of ellipsis.
been cast in various ways: in terms of Emphatic Focus and informational focus as well as, more recently polarity (Author 1 & Davidson 2015), (5).

(14) a. IX CAN EAT ICE-CREAM CAN
   ‘I can eat ice-cream’
   \[\neg\text{neg}\]

   b. IX_{a} NOT-LIKE ICE-CREAM NOT-LIKE
   ‘I don’t like ice-cream’
   \[\neg\text{neg}\]

   c. IX_{a} NOT-KNOW IF LIKE \{IX ICE-CREAM NOT-KNOW
   ‘I don’t know if I like ice-cream’
   \[\neg\text{neg}\]

   d. *IX_{a} NOT-KNOW IF LIKE \{IX ICE-CREAM LIKE
   ‘I don’t know if I like ice-cream’
   \[\neg\text{neg}\]

(15) a. ‘What did John buy yesterday?’
   \[\neg\text{neg}\]

   i. JOHN BUY WHAT YESTERDAY WHAT
   ii. WHAT JOHN BUY YESTERDAY WHAT

   b. ‘He asked what John bought yesterday’

   i. *\text{\textcopyright a}IX ASK/WONDER JOHN BUY WHAT YESTERDAY WHAT
   ii. *\text{\textcopyright a}IX ASK/WONDER WHAT JOHN BUY YESTERDAY WHAT

Cases like (14d) and (15b) show is that doubling occurs in matrix clauses only; therefore, we expect it to be impossible in the case of sluicing constructions like (2)-(3) if the latter emerge as a result of wh-dislocation + TP-ellipsis. If, however, the structure of (2)-(3) are an underlying single clause of its two constituents linked via a copula, then doubling should be possible. Such finding would argue for sluicing-like construction to be better analyzed as (pseudo-)clefting.

In line with our predictions, doubling is disallowed in sluicing constructions. This is shown in (10).

(16) a. *JOHN BUY SOMETHING \{IX NOT-KNOW WHAT JOHN BUY NOT-KNOW
   ‘John bought something but I don’t know what John bought’

   b. *JOHN BUY SOMETHING \{IX MUST REMEMBER WHAT JOHN BUY MUST
   ‘John bought something and I must remember what John bought’

Doubling is a matrix-only phenomenon, and its unavailability in (16) demonstrates that sluicing structures in ASL disallow it. Hence, the conjunct involving the sluice is clearly not a matrix clause, suggesting the possibility of embedding.

The other argument for embedding comes from the non-manual markings over the wh-clause. One notable characteristic of sign languages in general and ASL in particular is that linguistic information does not occur only on the hands (manually) but also on the body and on the face (non-manually). Various claims have been advanced in the literature that defend a particular – syntactic, semantic, vs. prosodic – view of non-manuals. Here we abstain from this debate, directing the reader, instead, to the overview in Sandler & Lillo-Martin (2006), and references therein. What is crucial to the discussion at hand is the following observation: the
language uses non-manual markings in interrogative contexts in disambiguating manner. For instance, the wh-sign may be omitted entirely with the non-manual markings the presence of which signals the difference between interrogative and declarative utterances, as in (16) below:

(16) a. WANT
    ‘I want it’
    ______br
b. WANT
    ‘Do you want it?’
    ______bf
c. WANT
    ‘What do you want?’

As (16) illustrates, there is a difference between (b) and (c) above – raised eye-brows (br) yield a yes-no question, and furrowed eye-brows (bf) a wh-question. The generalization holds with the wh-question being overt (as in (17)).

(17) JOHN BUY WHAT
    ‘What did John buy?’

As far as sluicing examples (2)-(3) are concerned, we predict the following: cases in which a wh-question ceases to be a single-clause interrogative and becomes embedded will be signaled by the change in the non-manual marking – i.e. the eye-brows will no longer be furrowed.

(18) a. JOHN BUY SOMETHING IIX NOT-KNOW WHAT
    ______{bf/br}
    ‘John bought something but I don’t know what

This is precisely what Caponigro and Davidson (2011) expect, and find, for their QAC, shown in (19).

(19) THOSE GIRLS HOPE [THEIR FATHER BUY WHAT, CAR] THEY.
    ‘Those girls hoped that what their father bought was a car.’ (Caponigro & Davidson 2011 [42])

As we see in (18), the prediction is confirmed: non-manual markings indicate brow-raise, not furrow, despite the presence of the wh-item. We take this to mean that what follows the predicate NOT-KNOW in (18a) is not a ‘stand-alone’ clause containing the wh-question but, rather, an embedded clause. We momentarily set aside (18b), which differs from (18a) in the ordering of the wh-remnant and the embedding predicate, and, considering the similarity of the sluicing construction and QAC (see (7) and (19), we move to excluding this option next.

4.2 An interrogative
To recap, a sluicing construction in ASL involves an interrogative element and embedding. Considering the similarity in non-manual marking behavior in (19) above, it seems prudent to examine the possibility whether sluicing can be cast in terms of QAC. It turns out that the answer this question is a ‘no’ – as we have shown, QACs and sluices have certain characteristics in common, but they also exhibit differences.

The crucial difference between the two phenomena lies in the fact that QAC is ultimately a declarative while a sluicing construction is not (although see recent work by Barros & Kotek 2018). This becomes evident when the embedding predicate is examined. Consider (20) vs. (21).

(20) a. THOSE GIRLS HOPE [THEIR FATHER BUY WHAT, CAR]. (C&D 2011 [41])
   ‘Those girls hoped that what their father bought was a car.’

   b. *THOSE GIRLS ASK [THEIR FATHER BUY WHAT, CAR]. (C&D 2011 [42])
   ‘Those girls asked that what their father bought was a car.’

What Caponigro & Davidson (C&D) demonstrate with a variety of examples ((20) being one type of illustration) is that QACs are allowed only with non-interrogative embedders – like HOPE but not ASK or WONDER. Conversely, what we see in (21) is that sluicing holds the complementary requirement over the embedding predicate – i.e. it disallows HOPE and KNOW but is quite happy with WONDER.

Another piece of evidence for an embedded interrogative analysis of the sluice comes from two lexical items often found utterance finally and glossed as WELL (Neidle et al 2000, Zeshan 2004, Fischer 1987, i.a.). Here we examine two variants of WELL, which we gloss as WIGGLE vs. PALM-UP, and the behavior of which, according to the previous research, both theoretical and didactic, has been unexplained save for the fact that they tend to be found in interrogative contexts. What we demonstrate that their use for diagnostic purposes for Merchant-style sluicing is justified.

We begin with WIGGLE – a sign that, in form, resembles a reduced, albeit reduplicated, form of ASK and is uttered in neutral space. (22) below illustrates that WIGGLE occurs in matrix interrogative environments only.

(22) a. IX PAY FOOD WIGGLE
    = ‘Did you pay for food?’ => interrogative
    ≠ You paid for food.’ => declarative

   b. WHO PAY FOOD WIGGLE
    = ‘Who paid for food?’

This suggests that WIGGLE in (23) below is part of a stand-alone matrix question WHO PAID FOOD, as evident by the brow-furrow markings. Consequently, in a case like (23), the interrogative portion cannot be part of a sluice at all.

(23) SOMEONE PAID FOOD NOT-KNOW WHO PAID FOOD WIGGLE
The other lexical item, often glossed as WELL, is PALM-UP. It too tends to be found in the same structural position as WIGGLE in the sentence (i.e. at the end of an interrogative), is uttered bimanually (the reduced version is one-handed), with the palms facing upwards raised slightly above the waist of the signer. However, it turns out that PALM-UP, in contrast to WIGGLE, is unacceptable with matrix questions and only licit with embedded questions. The former is shown in (24a) (vis-à-vis (22b)) and the latter in (24b).

(24) a. *WHO PAY FOOD PALM-UP?
   ‘Who paid for food?’

   b. SOMEONE PAID FOOD NOT-KNOW WHO PAY FOOD PALM-UP
   ‘Someone paid for food but I don’t know who paid for food’

This finding suggests that PALM-UP signals an embedded interrogative. As such, we predict it to be disallowed in QACs and allowed with sluices. This is exactly what we find: PALM-UP is ungrammatical with QACs in (25) and grammatical with sluicing construction in (26a). In addition, if WIGGLE were to be found in a string like (26), the utterance manually identical in all the other ways, would yield a very different meaning: it will be a matrix interrogative, as evident by the nonmanual markings. This is shown in (26b)

(25) a. JOHN EAT WHAT, PASTA *PALM-UP.
   ‘What John ate was pasta.’

   b. LEAVE MY SHOES WHERE, KITCHEN *PALM-UP.
   ‘The place where I left my shoes was the kitchen.’

(26) a. SOMEONE PAID FOOD NOT-KNOW WHO PALM-UP
   ‘Someone paid for food but I don’t know who’

   b. SOMEONE PAID FOOD NOT-KNOW WHO WIGGLE
   approx. ‘Do you know who this person is that paid for food because I don’t?’

Finally, one other difference between the QUAC and a sluicing construction is the potential number of the wh-remnants. Let us articulate the rationale.

Caponigro & Davidson (2011) argue that QAC is a declarative in a form of question + (copula) + answer (hence ‘QAC’). Such a formulation predicts only one question-answer pair and, thus, disallows multiple wh-items. This is seen in (17) below.

(27) a. *GI�LS HOPE MOTHER BUY WHAT WHERE CAR DEALERSHIP
   ‘The girls hoped their mother would buy them a car at a dealership’

   b. *GI�LS HOPE MOTHER BUY WHERE WHY CAR HATE BUS
   ‘The girls hoped their mother would buy them a car because they hate the bus’

However, no restriction of this sort is placed on sluicing to the degree that the language actually allows multiple wh-questions (in a pair-list context).
(28) a. aIX BUY WHERE disj-shift WHY
   ‘Where did you buy this and why?’

   b. JOHN OUT WHERE disj-shift WHY aIX NOT-KNOW
   ‘John left but I don’t know where or why’

Additionally, QACs but not sluices can contain non-referential elements like EVERYWHERE, as in (29).

(29) a. JOHN GO WHERE, (HE GO) EVERYWHERE.
   ‘John went everywhere.’
   (C&D 2011)

   b. *JOHN OUT disj-shift NOT-KNOW EVERYWHERE
   ‘*John went out but I don’t know everywhere’

We have now arrived at a conclusion that QACs and sluices are different: both are embedded clauses but sluice is something other than one wh-answering declarative.

5. Free relatives a non-source for sluicing structures

Finally, it is in principle possible that the structure under examination in (2)-(3) involves a (free headless/headed) relative clause. This, we argue, is not a possibility worth pursuing: as Caponigro and Davidson (2011) have shown, ASL allows wh-items only in questions and QACs – relative clauses do not make the list. They offer cases like (30) below as evidence.

(30) a. *1IX LIKE WHAT JOHN BUY/JOHN BUY WHAT
   ‘I like what John bought’

   b. *1IX CALL PEOPLE WHO MARY LIKE/ MARY LIKE WHO
   ‘I called the people who Mary likes’
   (C&D 2011 [24]-[25])

   We conclude from all of the data in previous subsection that sluicing in ASL does not involve clefting or QAC – it is not a copular construction. Our findings further affirm that the source of structures as in (2)-(3) cannot be a QAC because sluicing involves (i) an embedded interrogative, (ii) disallows non-referential elements are remnants, and (iii) as embedded structures they correctly fail to co-occur with doublings. Having exhausted the non-isomorphic options, we now move onto the isomorphic ones.

6. Isomorphic options

6.1 Stripping

In the previous section we offered arguments in favor of an embedded interrogative source for structures in (2)-(3). Coupled with the availability of wh-movement and TP deletion in ASL, this view aligns well with the classic view of sluicing – namely wh-movement out of an embedded +
deletion of the embedded TP. This plausible analysis does not a priori rule out another option, namely stripping (or so-called sluice-stripping) which would be consistent with an isomorphic source. The syntax of stripping is quite different from sluicing in terms of the deletion mechanisms it employs. Therefore, we consider this option next.

Stripping is first introduced in the seminal work by Hankammer & Sag (1979) and much discussed in the literature for cases like (31).

(31) Lou will ask Doris about syntax, but I can’t imagine who Lou will ask about phonology.

\[ = (8) \] (Nevins 2008)

We provide two general arguments against the stripping account. The first argument is descriptive in nature: as (31) shows, in stripping cases, the elided string is always a non-phrase/non-constituent, which is evident by the PP-remnant. However, in (2)-(3) and other sluicing cases presented here, the entire constituent is deleted.\(^6\)

The second argument follows the line of reasoning articulated in Wurmbrand (2016). Wurmbrand examines, and derives, the *Embedded Stripping Generalization* as in (32a), one type of evidence for which is (32b).

(32) a. *Embedded Stripping Generalization:*
   
   Stripping of embedded clauses is only possible when the embedded clause lacks a CP.

   \[ \text{(Wurmbrand 2016 [8])} \]

   b. First, they thought it would be done last year, then they thought (*that) THIS year.

   \[ \text{(Wurmbrand 2016 [7])} \]

The relevance of Wurmbrand’s (2018) generalization to the discussion at hand is this: if there is no CP in the embedded clause, then the TP-ellipsis cannot be licensed – i.e. one of the two steps of the sluicing account that we have been assuming cannot proceed.

Let us now review our previous findings relevant to the point in this subsection: we have shown that cases (2)-(3) involve (i) an embedded clause, (ii) this clause is interrogative (section 3). We have assumed, consistent with the literature, that wh-movement is to the left periphery (section 2) in one form of sluicing. Following other work that is not controversial, we also assume that embedded wh-items are located in SpecForceP, not FocP (Rizzi 1997, Haegemann 2000a,b, among others). In other words, this is a CP. As soon as we admit the presence of the CP, two consequences fall out: the TP-ellipsis is licensed, and what may *appear* to be embedded stripping is just that – an appearance. In other words, the (sluice-)stripping option is no longer an option because the utterance under consideration contains a CP.

### 6. What you see is what you get

Having considered a variety of alternatives, we see no independent evidence for a need to abandon the well-motivated standard account of sluicing with an isomorphic source (Merchant 2001, i.a). Accordingly (2) is analyzed in terms of (33): a wh-movement to SpecCP + TP-deletion.

\[ ^6\text{This, of course, is not an argument that sluice-stripping does not exist in ASL, only that (2)-(3) and other instantiations of sluicing in the paper are not cases of sluice-stripping.} \]
(33) MARY KISS SOMEONE iX DON’T KNOW [CP WHO [TP MARY KISS WHO]] = (2)
'Mary kissed someone but I don’t know'

We now, however, must deal with the difference between (2) and (3) (here as (34)). The most striking one is the reversal of the remnant and embedding predicate.

(34) MARY KISS SOMEONE WHO iX NOT KNOW [CP WHO [TP MARY KISS WHO]] = (3)
'Mary kissed someone but I don’t know'

The question we ask here is this: do (33) and (34) both instantiate wh-dislocation + TP-deletion, does (34) have a different structure? For instance, the structure we provide for (34) (following the arguments for (33)) clearly suggests an additional movement, which must be motivated and the evidence for which must be provided. On the other hand, it is possible that the cases like (3) have a different structure entirely.

We would like to suggest that while not a knock-down argument, there is at least a good reason to proceed with the (34)-style account of the original (3). First, as we have mentioned previously, brow-raise typically indicates movement (Wilbur & Patschke 1999, Sandler & Lillo-Martin 2006, a.o.). We take the loss of optionality of the non-manuals in (33) vs. (34) as evidence for an extra movement, yielding something like 'Mary kissed someone but who I don’t know.' What this means is that wh-item moves to SpecCP, the TP deletes, and then the wh-item moves once more for focus reasons, as has been advocated by Wilbur (1994, 1995, a.o.), Lillo-Martin & Quadros (2007), Nunes & Quadros (2005), among others. On the alternative account, if (3) is derived via embedded stripping, then we need a separate account of why movement to FocP, versus ForceP, makes non-manual markings obligatory. This, of course, is a plausible path of inquiry and should be explored. What seems to be clear is the fact that in cases like (2)-(3), ASL clearly distinguishes between cases with the additional movement, which brings us to the very first set of questions we set out to consider: not only did we ask whether (2)-(3) are derivable via the dislocation + ellipsis theory of sluicing construction, we also pondered whether it was going to matter which type of dislocation, and which type of ellipsis were taking place in ASL. It seems that up till now, everything has pointed to the wh-movement – i.e. the interrogative force of the relevant utterances. However, we have also discovered that another movement might be playing a role – i.e. Focus movement in (3)/(34). There are two things that must be said about this. First, recently Barros and Kotek (2018) have argued against the Q-equivalence view of sluicing and, rather for the return to focus-based account in general. While we have generally abstained from the discussion re where the various members of the utterance with a sluice (the correlate, the remnant, the antecedent) get their value, it seems pretty clear that the fact that both (2) and (3), which behave identically with respect to the diagnostics articulated here – being non-copular embedded interrogatives – suggest that addition of focus to the mix of factors is just that – an addition. The data must undergo rigorous testing, however, until more claims can be made on this matter.

7. Conclusions and directions
We have shown that sluicing in ASL is isomorphic – what you see is what you get, aside, of course, from the deleted TP that you do not see. Using, essentially, the Occam’s Razor approach, we argued for the traditional sluicing account of (2)-(3). We have excluded alternative analyses, at least among the currently testable possibilities. We have only briefly touched upon the various related phenomena and constructions, such as real stripping, ellipsis, etc. A closer look at the intervention of manual and non-manual ‘intonational contours’ may provide further evidence for, or against, the claims that have been made here. Both syntax and semantics of sluicing constructions in ASL (of the type in (2) and (3)) must be examined further. In this, we hope to have offered the first step and the line of argumentation.

Selected References

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