



# Tagalog sluicing reanalyzed



Lena Borise | Harvard University | borise@fas.harvard.edu

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## Sluicing in Tagalog

Sluicing: a type of TP-ellipsis in an embedded clause headed by a wh-word:

- (i) Someone left the door open, but I don't know who.

Like many languages, Tagalog has a sluicing-like construction:

- (1) [CP K<um>anta si Maria] [CP pero hindi ko alam kung ano].  
 <AV>-sing NOM Maria but NEG 1sg know COMP what  
 Maria was singing but I don't know what.
- (2) [CP K<um>anta si Maria] [CP pero hindi ko alam kung bakit].  
 <AV>-sing NOM Maria but NEG 1sg know COMP why  
 Maria was singing but I don't know why.

## Wh-question formation

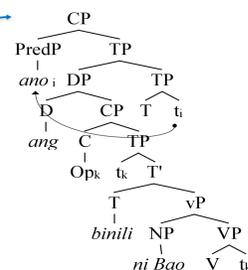
Cross-linguistically, sluicing is known to rely on the language-specific wh-question formation strategy. Tagalog has two wh-question formation strategies (Aldridge, 2002):

- Pseudoclefting for argument wh-questions: the wh-word is a predicate that takes as its subject a headless relative clause; no overt copula;
- Wh-movement for adjunct wh-questions.

- (3) Ano \*(ang) b<in>ili ni Bao?  
 what NOM <PV>-buy GEN Bao  
 What did Bao buy?

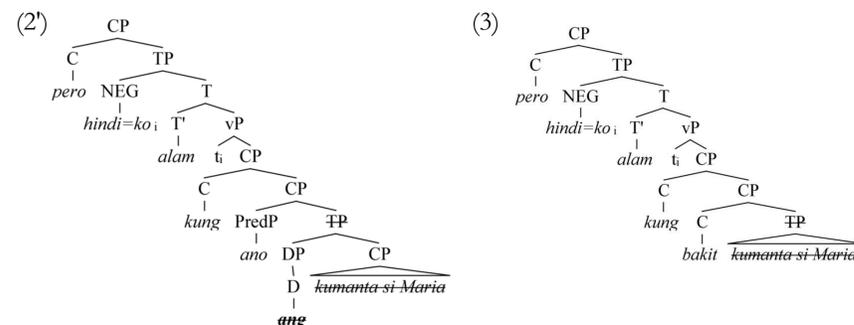
- (4) Kailan (\*ang) b<in>ili ni Bao ang libro?  
 when NOM <PV>-buy GEN Bao NOM book  
 When/where/why did Bao buy the book?

The prediction is that Tagalog should have two sluicing strategies, too.



## Tagalog sluicing: two strategies

This prediction is borne out. Some evidence: ang-placement if the ellipsis cleft of sluicing is spelled out; pronominal clitic placement. Therefore, (2) and (3) have structures in (2') and (3'), respectively:



## Sluicing and pseudosluicing

Pseudosluicing: a type of TP-ellipsis in an embedded clause headed by a wh-word, where the elided TP is a copular clause:

- (ii) Someone left the door open, but I don't know who that was.

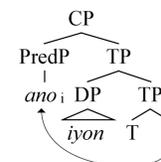
Tagalog also has a pseudosluicing construction:

- (5) Nag-bigay si Kim ng isa-ng bagay kay Bill,  
 PREAV-give NOM Kim GEN one-LNK thing DAT Bill  
 pero hindi ko alam kung ano iyon.  
 but NEG 1sg know COMP what DEM  
 Kim gave something to Bill, but I don't know what that was.

Iyon-insertion is only possible with argument sluices. This fact supports the asymmetry between argument and adjunct sluices.

Because argument sluicing is a pseudocleft, it is minimally different from pseudosluicing: the difference lies in what the wh-predicate takes as its complement:

- a DP headed by 'ang' in sluicing (2'),  
 or a demonstrative 'iyon' in pseudosluicing (6):



## Sprouting

Sprouting: a type of sluicing in which the wh-word does not have an overt correlate in the matrix clause:

- (iii) Bill bought a book Ø, but I don't know where.

Kaufman and Paul's (2006) and Kaufman's (2006) hypothesis that Tagalog disallows sprouting holds for Tagalog verbs that disallow implicit arguments. In these cases, the indefinite correlate is introduced by the existential 'may', and the sprouting version is infelicitous.

Verbs that allow implicit arguments allow both sprouting (1), and introducing the indefinite correlate with 'may' (7):

- (1) [CP K<um>anta si Maria] [CP pero hindi ko alam kung ano].  
 <AV>-sing NOM Maria but NEG 1sg know COMP what  
 Maria was singing but I don't know what.

- (7) [CP May k<in>anta si Maria] [CP pero hindi ko alam kung ano].  
 EXT <PV>-sing NOM Maria but NEG 1sg know COMP what  
 Maria was singing something but I don't know what.

The difference between (1) and (7) that Tagalog speakers report is similar to that between the English translations of the two clauses:

- Sprouting introduces implicit arguments with verbs that allow them;
- Existential 'may' introduces the indefinite correlate.

## Island constraints

Cross-linguistically, sluicing is known to be insensitive to islands (e.g., Ross (1969), Merchant (2001), Abels (2011), and others). Tagalog sluicing is not sensitive to coordination structures, adjuncts, complex NPs islands, and RCs (8).

- (8) [Na-rinig ni Kim ang balita [na in-ayos ni Fred  
 PREPV-hear GEN Kim NOM news LNK PV-sort.PRF GEN Fred  
 ang problema]] [pero hindi niya alam kung alin]].  
 NOM problem but NEG 3sg know COMP which  
 Kim heard the news that Fred solved a problem, but she doesn't know which.

These facts go against the generalization that Tagalog sluicing is island-sensitive, made in Kaufman & Paul (2006). The generalization was made based on an RC example with an embedded 'may'-existential, but does not extend to other examples with identical structure (9).

- (9) Naka-salubong ko ang isa-ng babae [na [may h<in>ahanap  
 PREAV-run\_into 1sg NOM one-LNK girl LNK EXT <IPREPV>look\_for  
 sa kanya-ng pitaka]] pero hindi ko alam kung ano.  
 DAT her-LNK purse but NEG 1sg know COMP what  
 I ran into a girl that was looking for something in her purse, but I don't know what.

## Conclusions

- As with wh-formation, Tagalog has two sluicing strategies: pseudoclefting for arguments, and wh-movement for adjuncts;
- Because sluicing with arguments has a pseudocleft structure, it differs from pseudosluicing only in the size of the DP that the wh-word 'ano' takes as a complement;
- Sprouting with verbs that allow implicit arguments is allowed;
- In line with cross-linguistic evidence, Tagalog is not sensitive to island constraints.

## Selected references:

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