

4. A structural account: the licensing condition of Focus Phrase

- I assume a movement analysis on RD, defended independently in both languages.
- But I remain open to a mono- or bi-clausal account.

(7) A mono-clausal analysis on Cantonese RD

(L. Y.-L. Cheung 2009; Lee 2017, i.a.)

[ForceP [TP Subj V Δ_i] SFP [XP Obj_i [TP Subj V Δ_i]]]

(8) A bi-clausal analysis on Japanese RD

(Abe 1999; Tanaka 2001; Takita 2011, i.a.)

[TP Subj *pro*_i V] SFP [XP Obj_i [TP Subj Obj V]]]

• Proposal: a parametric difference of FocusP

(9) The licensing parameter on the Focus Projection

- A FocusP is only licensed by *overt* complement → *Cantonese (& Mandarin)*
- A FocusP is only licensed by *covert* complement → *Japanese (& Mongolian)*

(10) The licit and illicit FocusP in Cantonese and Japanese

- ... [FocusP Spec [FOC [TP ...]]] : *Cantonese, ^{OK}Japanese
- ... [FocusP Spec [FOC [TP ...]]] : ^{OK}Cantonese, *Japanese

(11) An illicit configuration in Cantonese

- This explains why *Focus in RD in Cantonese.

*[ForceP Force [FocusP Obj [TP Subj Obj V]]]

★ The strength of this proposal builds on a three-way correlation between (i) RD, (ii) Sluicing, and (iii) Focus movement.

5.1. Predictions on Sluicing (10a)

- In **Cantonese**, sluicing-like constructions involve no (Focus) movement (Wei 2004, Adams & Tomioka 2012, Li & Wei 2014).

(12) Impossible fronting in some cases

Keoi maai-zo bun syu, daan ngo m-zi **gei hau** (*bun syu Δ).
 3SG buy-PERF CL book, but 1SG not-know how thick (CL book).
 ‘S/he bought a book, but I don’t know how thick (it is).’

(13) Parallel to English pseudo-sluicing

Keoi caau-zo go jan, daan ngo m-zi **doudai hai bing**o.
 3SG fire-PERF CL person but 1SG not-know on.earth COP who
 ‘S/he fired someone, but I don’t know who on earth *(it was).’

- In **Japanese**, they *can* (if not must) involve Focus movement (Fukaya & Hoji 1999, Hiraiwa & Ishihara 2002, 2012).

(14) The covert nature of Comp FocusP

I heard that Naoya ate something,

Boku-wa [FocusP **nani-o** [Focus’ **FinP** da]] ka wakara-nai.
 1SG-TOP what-ACC COP Q know-not
 ‘I don’t know what.’ (Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2012)

5.2. Predictions on Focus movement (10b)

- In **Japanese**, Focus movement is impossible in non-elliptical contexts (Ishihara 2001, Abe 2019).

(15) No focus reading on scrambled elements

[TP **Mary-ni** [TP John-ga kinoo Δ atta yo]].
 Mary-DAT John-NOM yesterday saw SFP]
 ‘Mary, John saw yesterday.’ (Abe 2019, p.3)

- In **Cantonese**, it is possible in such contexts (C. C.-H. Cheung 2015, Lee 2022). Note the optional focus particle.

(16) Focus reading on fronted elements

[FocusP (Lin) **tai** [TP Aaming dou m-**tai** ni-bun syu]] wo4.
 even read Aaming also not-read this-CL book SFP
 ‘Aaming didn’t even READ this book.’ (Lee 2022, p.60)

Selected references: Abe, Jun. 2019. “Focus Licensing at the Left Periphery in Japanese Right Dislocation.” *Syntax* 22 (1): 1–23. • Adams, Perng Wang, and Satoshi Tomioka. 2012. “Sluicing in Mandarin Chinese: An instance of pseudo-sluicing.” In *Sluicing: Cross-linguistic perspectives*, p.219–247. OUP. • Hiraiwa, Ken, and Shinichiro Ishihara. 2012. “Syntactic Metamorphosis: Clefts, Sluicing, and In-Situ Focus in Japanese.” *Syntax* 15(2). • Lee, Tommy Tsz-Ming. 2022. *Towards the unity of movement: implications from verb movement in Cantonese*. USC diss.