On the Relation between Sluicing and Countersluicing in Japanese

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1. Introduction

In their recent paper, Hiraiwa and Kobayashi (2020) (hereafter, H&K) discuss what they call “countersluicing” in Japanese. Its name comes from the observation that in this construction, what survives deletion (the wh-phrase) in “sluicing” (Ross 1969) is deleted and what is deleted in “sluicing” survives deletion. Consider the following examples (H&K 2020: 295, 297).

1) I heard that Hans J. Wegner designed a famous chair in 1949, but what chair?

Hans J. Wegner-NOM 1949-year-in certain famous chair-ACC designed COP SFP
‘(You know) Hans J. Wegner designed a famous chair in 1949.’

B: Nan-toiu isu-o (desu ka)?
what-called chair-ACC COP Q
‘What chair (was it)?’

3) A: [Arne Jacobsen-ga dezainsita no]-wa Ant Chair desu.
Arne Jacobsen-NOM designed C-TOP Ant Chair COP
‘It was Ant Chair that Arne Jacobsen designed.’

B: [Hans J. Wegner-ga dezainsita no]-wa? (Countersluicing)
Hans J. Wegner-NOM designed C-TOP
Lit. ‘(What chair was it) that Hans J. Wegner designed?’
(1) is a typical example of sluicing in English, where the second conjunct contains only the *wh*-phrase *what chair*. (2B) is the Japanese counterpart of (1). As in (1), only the *wh*-phrase *nan-toiu isu-o* ‘what chair’ survives deletion in Speaker B’s utterance, with the copula *desu* and the question-marker *ka* optionally present. (3) illustrates countersluicing. In response to Speaker A, Speaker B just replaces the nominative subject and deletes what follows the topic-marker *wa* in its entirety. Although there is no *wh*-phrase present in Speaker B’s utterance, it is interpreted as a *wh*-question asking about the identity of the chair Hans J. Wegner designed.

The main thrust of H&K’s proposal is that sluicing and countersluicing are two sides of the same coin. More specifically, they argue that these constructions derive from exactly the same structure, with different, mutually exclusive constituents deleted. In sluicing, nothing but the *wh*-phrase is pronounced, whereas in countersluicing, everything but the *wh*-phase is.

The purpose of this paper is to show that H&K’s analysis, though attractive at first glance, faces problems and is hence untenable, at least partially. It will be argued that sluicing and countersluicing in fact do not share the same structure when ellipsis applies to them.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 introduces H&K’s analysis of sluicing and countersluicing along with the data they use in support of it. Section 3 critically examines H&K’s analysis, pointing out empirical problems with the predictions H&K make. Section 4 discusses how the data presented in Section 3 are to be interpreted. Section 5 wraps up the discussion.

2. H&K’s Analysis of Sluicing and Countersluicing
H&K adopt Hiraiwa and Ishihara’s (2012) analysis of Japanese sluicing, where it derives from cleft structure (see also Hoji 1987, Fukaya and Hoji 1999). Under this analysis, (4) is the structural source of the sluicing in (2B) (H&K 2020:296).4

(4) (*)Hans J. Wegner-ga 1949-nen-ni dezainsita no]-wa nan-toiu
Hans J. Wegner-NOM 1949-year-in designed C-TOP what-called
isu-o desu ka?
chair-ACC COP Q
“What chair was it that Hans J. Wegner designed in 1949?”

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The alleged derivation of (4) proceeds in the following way (ignoring the temporal adverbial phrase):$^5$

\[(5)\]

\[\begin{array}{l}
(5a) \quad [\text{TopP} [\text{ForceP} [\text{FinP} [\text{TP} \text{H.J.W.}-\text{ga} \text{ nan-toiu isu-o} \text{ dezainsita} \text{ no}] \text{ desu}] \text{ ka}]] \\
(5b) \quad [\text{TopP} [\text{ForceP} [\text{FinP} \text{ nan-toiu isu-o} [\text{FinP} [\text{TP} \text{H.J.W.}-\text{ga} \text{ e} \text{ dezainsita} \text{ no}] \text{ desu}] \text{ ka}]]] \\
(5c) \quad [\text{TopP} [\text{FinP} [\text{TP} \text{H.J.W.}-\text{ga} \text{ e} \text{ dezainsita} \text{ no}] \text{ [ForceP [\text{FinP} \text{ nan-toiu isu-o} \text{ e} \text{ desu}] \text{ ka}]]}] \\
\end{array}\]

(5a) represents an interrogative in-situ focus construction (Kuno 1973) where the right peripheral positions are occupied by the complementizer no, the copula desu, and the Q-marker ka. What happens in (5a) is that the wh-phrarse moves into Spec of Foc(us)P, as in (5b). The cleft in (4) is derived by applying to (5b) topicalization of Fin(ite)P into Spec of Top(ic)P. The topicalized phrase is marked with the topic marker wa to produce the surface form in (4). According to Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012), one can obtain the sluicing in (2B) by deleting the topicalized FinP, as in (6).

\[(6)\]

\[\begin{array}{l}
\text{H&K’s main point is that countersluicing shares the same underlying structure, i.e., cleft structure, with its sluicing counterpart. Thus, under their analysis (see note 3), the countersluicing in (3B) is derived by deleting everything but the topicalized FinP, ForceP in particular, as in (7).} \\
\text{H&K argue that it is “argument ellipsis” (Oku 1998, Takahashi 2008 among many others) that is responsible for both sluicing and countersluicing. If argument ellipsis targets FinP, it results in sluicing. If it targets ForceP, it}
\end{array}\]
gives rise to countersluicing.

H&K’s analysis predicts that both sluicing and countersluicing exhibit properties of clefting, simply because they derive from the same cleft structure. H&K maintain that the prediction is borne out by the following similarities observed with respect to the three constructions.

First, H&K point out that clefting, sluicing, and countersluicing all permit multiple foci, citing the examples in (8) and (9) (with their proposed deletions for sluicing and countersluicing indicated) (H&K 2020:301-302).

(8) A: Aru yuumeena dezainaa-ga mukasi The Chair certain famous designer-NOM long.time.ago The Chair
    toiu isu-o dezainsita soo desu ga . . .
called chair-ACC designed I.hear COP but
‘I heard that some famous designer designed a chair called The Chair
a long time ago, but…’
B: [The Chair-o dezainsita no]-wa dare-ga nan-nen-ni
    The Chair-ACC designed C-TOP who-NOM what-year-in
desu ka? COP Q
Lit. ‘. . . who in which year was it that designed The Chair?’
B’: [The Chair-o dezainsita no]-wa dare-ga nan-ren-ni
    The Chair-ACC designed C-TOP who-NOM what-year-in
desu ka? COP Q
Lit. ‘. . . who in which year was it (that designed The Chair)?

(9) A: Arne Jacobsen-wa 1952-nen-ni Ant Chair-o dezainsita yo.
    Arne Jacobsen-TOP 1952-year-in Ant Chair-ACC designed SFP
‘Arne Jacobsen designed Ant Chair in 1952.’
B: Zyaa, [The Chair-o dezainsita no]-wa dare-ga nan-ren-ni
    then The Chair-ACC designed C-TOP who-NOM what-year-in
desu ka? COP Q
Lit. ‘Then who in which year was it that designed The Chair?’
B’: Zyaa, [The Chair-o dezainsita no]-wa dare-ga
    then The Chair-ACC designed C-TOP who-NOM
    nan-ren-ni desu ka?
    COP Q
Lit. ‘Then (who in which year was it) that designed The Chair?’
Second, H&K observe that the answer to a countersluiced question, like that to a sluiced one, can be a PP (Postpositional Phrase), as shown in (10) and (11) (H&K 2020:302-303).

(10) A: [Hans J. Wegner-ga dareka-no tameni Peter’s Chair-o dezainsita soo desu ga, but] Peter’s Chair-ACC designed I.hear COP but [PP Peter’s Chair-o dezainsita no]-wa [PP dare-no tameni] who-GEN for desu ka? (Sluicing) COP Q
   ‘I heard that Hans J. Wegner designed Peter’s chair for someone, but for whom was it (that he designed Peter’s chair)?’
B: [PP Børge Mogensen-no musuko-no tameni] desu.
   ‘For Børge Mogensen’s son.’

(11) A: [Hans J. Wegner-ga GE258-o dezainsita no]-wa
Hans J. Wegner-NOM GE258-ACC designed C-TOP
[PP boarding house-GEN for COP]
   ‘It is for a boarding house that Hans J. Wegner designed GE258.’
B: [PP Peter’s Chair-o dezainsita no]-wa [PP dare-no tameni] who-GEN for desu ka? (Countersluicing)
   ‘(For whom was it) that he designed Peter’s Chair?’
A: [PP Børge Mogensen-no musuko-no tameni] desu.
   ‘For Børge Mogensen’s son.’

They contend that this fact clearly shows that countersluicing is based on a cleft structure (H&K 2020:302). They seem to assume that postulating direct movement of the focused phrase adopted in Hiraiwa and Ishihara’s (2012) analysis of Japanese cleft is the only way to account for the remnant PP in the answer to the countersluicing in (11) (as well as the remnant PP in the sluicing in (10)).

Finally, H&K claim that just like clefting or sluicing, countersluicing...
obeys the clausemate condition banning nonclausemate elements from simultaneously appearing in the focus position. Consider their examples in (12) and (13) (H&K 2020:303).

(12) Context: Speaker A says that they mistakenly told Ken that Hans J. Wegner designed Ant Chair, but speaker B says:

*[^Kimi-ga matigaete [tî Ant Chair-o dezainsita to] tî itta 2SG-NOM mistakenly Ant Chair-ACC designed c told no]-wa Børge Mogensen-ga, Naomi-ni desu. (Clefting) C-TOP Børge Mogensen-NOM Naomi-DAT COP

(Lit. ‘It is Børge Mogensen to Naomi that you mistakenly said designed Ant Chair.’)

(13) Context: Speaker A says that they mistakenly told someone that someone designed Ant Chair. Speaker B asks:

a. *[^Kimi-ga matigaete [tî Ant Chair-o dezainsita to] tî itta 2SG-NOM mistakenly Ant Chair-ACC designed c told no]-wa dare-ga, dare-ni desu ka? (Sluicing) C-TOP who-NOM who-DAT COP Q

(Lit. ‘Who to whom was it (that you mistakenly said designed Ant Chair)?’)

b. *[^Kimi-ga matigaete [tî Ant Chair-o dezainsita to] tî itta 2SG-NOM mistakenly Ant Chair-ACC designed c told no]-wa dare-ga, dare-ni (desu ka)? (Countersluicing) C-TOP who-NOM who-DAT COP Q

(Lit. ‘(Who to whom was it) that you mistakenly said designed Ant Chair?’)

The cleft in (12) illustrates the clausemate condition. It is illegitimate because the two focused elements originate from different clauses: the nominative NP belongs in the embedded clause, the dative NP in the matrix clause. If both sluicing and countersluicing derive from clefting, they are expected to obey the clausemate condition. As shown in the examples in (13), they seem to do so.

In sum, H&K treat sluicing and countersluicing as sharing exactly the same syntactic structure, namely, cleft structure. Under their analysis, they arise as a result of applying phonological deletion, argument ellipsis in particular, to different displaced constituents.
3. Problems with H&K’s Analysis
As already mentioned, H&K’s analysis of sluicing and countersluicing as deriving from the identical cleft structure predicts that they share the same kinds of linguistic behavior. This section shows that this prediction is not born out in different domains such as case-marked foci, island repairability, polarity-sensitive foci, and predicative foci. Before presenting arguments against H&K’s analysis, however, it is necessary to clarify that we need to distinguish between two kinds of cleft constructions in Japanese.

3.1 Some Clarification: Cleft, Pseudocleft and their Counterparts in Sluicing and Countersluicing
Hoji (1987) and Fukaya and Hoji (1999) have demonstrated that there is an important distinction to be made with respect to Japanese cleft constructions. Specifically, they come in two varieties: clefts where the focused nominal bears a case-marker or a postposition and pseudoclefts where it does not. Both types of cleft constructions are illustrated in (14) (modeled after an example in Ishii and Agbayani in press):

(14) a. [Tenin-ga [syoohin-o e watasiwasureta no]-wa Mari-ni
clerk-NOM goods-ACC give.forgot C-TOP Mari-DAT
da.                                                    (Clefting) COP
   ‘It was to Mari that the clerk forgot to give the goods.’

   b. [Tenin-ga [syoohin-o e watasiwasureta no]-wa Mari
clerk-NOM goods-ACC give.forgot C-TOP Mari
da.                                      (Pseudoclefting) COP
   ‘Who the clerk forgot to give the goods is Mari.’

(14a) is an example of cleft, where the focused nominal Mari bears the dative-marker -ni, whereas (14b) is an example of pseudocleft, where the nominal appears bare in the focus position. Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012) enumerate four differences between the two types of clefts in terms of (a) multiple clefting, (b) island sensitivity, (c) NP substitution, and (d) Nominative-Genitive Conversion (NGC). Let us briefly consider the three properties (b)-(d) in turn. I put aside multiple clefting, which is irrelevant to the present
discussion to a large extent (for reasons to be made clear below).

It has been pointed out that there is a significant difference between
cleft and pseudocleft in terms of island sensitivity (see Hoji 1987 among
others). In particular, the former exhibits island effects, whereas the latter
does not, as shown in (15).

(15) a. *[Tentyoo-ga [[syoohin-o ewatasiwasureta] tenin]-o
manger-NOM goods-ACC give.forgot clerk-ACC
kubinisita no]-wa M ar-i ni da. (Clefting)
    fired C-TOP M ar-i DAT COP
    (Lit. ‘It is to M ar-i that the manager fired [the clerk who forgot to
give the goods].’)

b. ?[Tentyoo-ga [[syoohin-o ewatasiwasureta] tenin]-o
manger-NOM goods-ACC give.forgot clerk-ACC
kubinisita no]-wa M ar-i da. (Pseudoclefting)
    fired C-TOP M ar-i COP
    Lit. ‘Who the manager fired [the clerk who forgot to give the goods] is M ar-i.’

In both (15a) and (15b), the topic-marked clause contains the complex NP
headed by tenin ‘clerk.’ The minimal difference between them, namely, the
presence or absence of the dative-marker -ni on the focus, yields the contrast
in grammaticality.

As for NP-substitution, pseudoclefting, but not clefting, permits an
appropriate NP to replace the complementizer no. Compare (16a) and (16b).

(16) a. [Ken-ga e atta no/*hito]-wa Mari-ni da. (Clefting)
    Ken-NOM met c/person-TOP Mari-DAT COP
    ‘It/The person was Mari that Ken met.’

b. [Ken-ga e atta no/hito]-wa Mari da. (Pseudoclefting)
    Ken-NOM met c/person-TOP Mari COP
    ‘Who/The person Ken met was Mari.’

The topic in (16) is a person (the person Ken met). One can use hito ‘person’
as the head of the nominal clause in the pseudoclefting example in (16b), but
one cannot do so in the clefting example in (16a).
Clefting and pseudoclefting behave differently in terms of NGC. In Japanese, the nominative-marker -ga on subject can alternate with the genitive-marker -no in a structure where a verb is in its adnominal form. Thus, (17), an example of relative clause, is typical.

(17)  
[[Ken-ga/-no e katta] hon] 
Ken-NOM/-GEN bought book 
‘the book Ken bought’

As shown below, NGC is possible in pseudocleft, but not in cleft.

(18)  
a. [Ken-ga/*-no e atta no]-wa Mari-ni da. (Clefting) 
Ken-NOM/-GEN met C-TOP Mari-DAT COP 
‘It was Mari that Ken met.’
b. [Ken-ga/-no e atta no]-wa Mari da. (Pseudoclefting) 
Ken-NOM/-GEN met C-TOP Mari COP 
‘Who Ken met was Mari.’

This is only natural, given the above-mentioned fact surrounding NP-substitution: the wa-marked topic in pseudoclefting is as nominal as a relative clause.

It is worth pointing out that the kind of distinction made between cleft and pseudocleft extends to sluicing and countersluicing. The case morphology on the nominal wh-remnant in sluicing is optional, as in (19).

(19)  
a. Tenin-ga syoohin-o dareka-ni watasiwasureta rasii kedo, 
clerk-NOM goods-ACC someone-DAT give.forgot I-here but 
buku-wa dare-ni (da) ka siranai. (Sluicing) 
l-TOP who-DAT COP Q know.NEG 
‘I hear that the clerk forgot to give the goods to someone, but I don’t know to whom.’
b. Tenin-ga syoohin-o dareka-ni watasiwasureta rasii kedo, 
clerk-NOM goods-ACC someone-DAT give.forgot I-here but 
buku-wa dare (da) ka siranai. (Pseudosluicing) 
l-TOP who COP Q know.NEG 
‘I hear that the clerk forgot to give the goods to someone, but I don’t know who.’
In (19a) the wh-phrase dare ‘who’ is marked with the dative-maker -ni, whereas in (19b) it appears bare. Let us call examples like (19b) pseudosluicing.

Similarly, we can distinguish between countersluicing, in which the missing wh-phrase bears a case-marker or a postposition, and pseudocountersluicing, in which it does not bear any morpheme. Consider (20).

(20) Context: A cashier clerk recently made a series of mistakes. Speaker B is curious to know who he forgot to give change to.

A: Sono tenin-ga syoohin-o Mari-ni watasiwasureta rasii yo.  
the clerk-NOM goods-ACC Mari-DAT give.forgot  I.here SFP  
‘I hear the clerk forgot to give the goods to Mari.’

B: [Kare-ga oturi-o e watasiwasureta no]-wa dare-ni  
he-NOM change-ACC give.forgot C-TOP who-DAT  
desu ka?                              (Countersluicing)

  COP Q  
  ‘(To whom is it) that he forgot to give change?’

B’: [Kare-ga oturi-o e watasiwasureta no]-wa dare  
he-NOM change-ACC give.forgot C-TOP who  
desu ka?                              (Pseudocountersluicing)

  COP Q  
  ‘(Who is) who he forgot to give change?’

A’: Kazuko(-ni) (desu).  
Kazuko-DAT COP  
‘(It was) (to) Kazuko.’

As one can see in (20B), the trick is that superficially, countersluicing and its pseudocountersluicing equivalent have exactly the same surface form. But the fact that the reply in (20A’) can be with or without the dative-marker demonstrates that the two constructions, exemplified in (20B) and (20B’), are indeed possible. Notice that in response to pseudoclefting with an overt wh-word in the focus position, which corresponds to pseudocountersluicing without phonological deletion, one cannot have any case-marker or postposition on the noun. This is illustrated in (21).
(21) A: [Ken-ga e atta no]-wa dare (desu ka)?
   Ken-NOM met C-TOP who COP Q
   ‘Lit. Who is who Ken met?’
B: Mari(-ni*) (desu).
   Mari-DAT COP
   ‘It was Mari.’

This means that when the case-marker is present in Speaker A’s answer in (20A’), the speaker must have responded to countersluicing rather than pseudocountersluicing. And given that examples such as (21A) are perfect, nothing prevents pseudocountersluicing: all one need to do is to delete the wh-word (as well as the copula and the Q-marker, which are optionally pronounced in the first place).\footnote{20}

With this much of clarification in mind, let us proceed to discuss some empirical problems with H&K’s analysis.

3.2 Case-marked Foci

Probably, the most obvious difference between sluicing and countersluicing has to do with case-marked foci. Consider the cleft versions of (22) in (23):

(22) Syachoo-ga kookyusya-o katta.
   president-NOM luxury.car-ACC bought
   ‘The president bought a luxury car.’
(23) a. *[eKookyusya-o katta no]-wa syachoo-ga da.
   luxury.car-ACC bought C-TOP president-NOM COP
   (‘It was the president that bought a luxury car.’)
   b. (*)[Syachoo-ga e katta no]-wa kookyusya-o da.
      president-NOM bought C-TOP luxury.car-ACC COP
      ‘It was a luxury car that the president bought.’

In (23a) the nominative-marked subject syachoo-ga ‘president’ is focused, while in (23b) the accusative-marked object kookyusya-o ‘luxury car’ is. Judging from the literature, there appears to be considerable speaker variation in grammaticality judgement with respect to examples like (23b) where the clefted element bears the accusative case-marker: some native speakers of Japanese accept them, while others find them degraded or totally
unacceptable (I myself belong in the latter group). This is why the asterisk is put in parentheses in (23b). In contrast, examples such as (23a) where the focused element bears the nominative case-marker are unanimously ruled out (see Koizumi 2000, Ishii and Agbayani in press among others). Then H&K predict that both sluicing and countersluicing cannot be based on the cleft structure in (23a). This prediction, however, is not borne out. Compare (24) and (25).

(24) A: Kaisha-no dareka-ga kookyusya-o katta n
classification-GEN someone-NOM luxury.car-ACC bought C
desu yo.
COP SFP
‘(You know) someone in the company bought a luxury car.’
B: Dare-ga (desu ka)?
who-NOM COP Q
‘Who (was it)?’
(25) Context: Speakers A and B are colleagues. Speaker A knows the president bought a Ferrari and the vice-president a Maserati, but speaker B doesn’t know who bought them.
A: Syachoo-ga Ferrari-o katta n desu yo.
president-NOM Ferrari-ACC bought C COP SFP
‘(You know) the president bought a Ferrari.’
B: Zyaa, [Maserati-o katta no]-wa? (Countersluicing)
then Maserati-ACC bought C-TOP (Pseudocountersluicing)
Lit. ‘Then (who was it) that bought a Maserati?’
A’: *Fukusyachoo-ga (desu).
vice-president-NOM COP
(‘(It was) the vice-president.’)

As shown in (24B), it is perfectly grammatical to have a nominative-marked wh-remnant in sluicing. On the other hand, the answer to a countersluiced question asking the identity of subject is ill-formed if it contains a nominative-marked subject, as in (25 A’), indicating that countersluicing, unlike sluicing, does not tolerate nominative-marked foci (recall the discussion in the preceding subsection). In fact, the undeleted version of countersluicing in (25), namely, the cleft sentence in (26), is ungrammatical.
Thus, sluicing and countersluicing behave differently when it comes to nominative-marked foci: the former permits them, whereas the latter does not. This suggests that the two constructions do not share the same underlying structure, contrary to H&K’s contention.

The same line of argument can be pursued with respect to accusative-marked foci for those conservative speakers of Japanese who reject (23b). It is possible even for them to have accusative-marked wh-foci in sluicing, as in (27).

(27) A: Syachoo-ga nanika-o katta n desu yo.  
    president-NOM something-ACC bought C COP SFP 
    ‘(You know) the president bought something.’
B: Nani-o (desu ka)?  
    what-ACC COP Q 
    ‘What (was it)?’

In contrast, it is impossible for the conservative speakers to use an accusative-marked focused nominal in reply to a countersluiced sentence asking the identity of object. (28A’) represents their judgement.

(28) Context: Speakers A and B are colleagues. Speaker A knows the president bought a Ferrari and the vice-president a Maserati, but speaker B doesn’t know what they bought.

A: Syachoo-ga Ferrari-o katta n desu yo.  
    president-NOM Ferrari-ACC bought C COP SFP 
    ‘(You know) the president bought a Ferrari.’
B: Zyaa, [fukusyacho-ga katta no]-wa?  
    (*Countersluicing) 
    then vice-president-NOM bought C-TOP (Pseudocountersluicing) 
    Lit. ‘Then (who was it) that bought a Maserati?’
A’: *Maserati-o (desu).  
    M aserati-ACC COP 
    ‘(It was) a Maserati.’
The ungrammaticality of (28A´), like that in (25 A´), implies that the conservative speakers do not allow case-marked foci to appear in countersluicing.\textsuperscript{10}

3.3 Island Sensitivity and Repairability
As mentioned earlier, cleft is subject to island constraints, while pseudocleft is not (see (15)). Let us see if the same pattern extends to (pseudo)sluicing and (pseudo)countersluicing.

Consider the following examples of (pseudo)sluicing:


B: Dare-ni (desu ka)?                              (Sluicing)
who-DAT COP Q
Lit. ‘Who is it (that the manager fired the clerk who forgot to give e goods)?

B´: Dare (desu ka)?\textsuperscript{11} (Pseudosluicing)
who COP Q
Lit. ‘Who is who the manager fired the clerk who forgot to give e goods.

(29A), as in (15), contains a complex NP island. It has been observed in the literature that certain kinds of sluicing in Japanese exhibit island effects (Takahashi 1994 among others), while other kinds do not: these are cases of “island repair” (Lasnik 2001, Merchant 2008) in which phonological deletion remedies potential island violations. Nakamura (2012) observes that the former kinds involve \textit{wh}-nominals marked with nominative case morphology -\textit{ga} or accusative case morphology -\textit{o}, whereas the latter kinds involve inherently case-marked \textit{wh}-nominals.\textsuperscript{12} Since it is the inherently case-marked dative NP that undergoes extraction out of the island in the sluicing in (29B), the locality violation it incurs is nullified by deleting the entire island. The grammaticality of the sluicing contrasts sharply with the ungrammaticality of the clefting in (15a) and goes against H & K’s claim. As for pseudosluicing, it, like its pseudoclefting counterpart, is free from island
H & K predict that countersluicing, but not pseudocountersluicing, obeys island constraints, just as cleft does. Their prediction is correct, as shown in (30).

(30) Context: Cashier clerks recently forgot to give something to customers and received punishments from the president. Speaker B is curious to know to whom one of the clerks forgot to give change.

‘The manager fired a clerk who forgot to give the goods to M ari.’

B: Zyaa, kare-ga [oturi-o e watasiwasureta] tenin]-o then he-NOM change-ACC give.forgot clerk-ACC genkyuunisita no-wa? (*Countersluicing/Pseudocountersluicing) salary.cut.impose C-TOP
Lit. ‘Then, who is it that he imposed a salary cut on a clerk who forgot to give change to.’

A: *Ken-ni (desu). (Reply to Countersluicing)
    Ken-DAT COP
    Lit. ‘(It was) to Ken.”

A¨: Ken (desu). (Reply to Pseudocountersluicing)
    who COP
    Lit. ‘(It was) K en.”

The fact that (30B) cannot be answered with the dative-marked NP ((30A)’) implies that countersluicing behaves like clefting in exhibiting syntactic locality with no chance of island repair. In contrast, pseudocountersluicing is like pseudoclefting and pseudosluicing in being free from locality effects.

In brief, the well-formedness of the sluiced example in (29B) poses a problem with H & K’s analysis, though the data in (30) are consistent with it.

3.4 Polarity-sensitive Foci

Another difference between sluicing and countersluicing has to do with polarity-sensitive focused elements. Let us consider the negative polarity item sika ‘only’ in Japanese. It requires the presence of negation, as shown in (31).
(31) a. Taroo-wa Ken-ni sika awanakatta.
   Taro-TOP Ken-DAT only met.NEG
   ‘Taro met only Ken.’

   Taro-TOP Ken-DAT only met
   (‘Taro met only Ken.’)

(31a) is legitimate because the verb bears the negative morpheme. In contrast, (31b) without the morpheme is ruled out.

It has been observed (Kizu 2005 among others) that sika-marked elements cannot appear in the focus position in the cleft construction. Both (32a) and (32b) are ill-formed.

(32) a. *[Taroo-ga awanakatta no]-wa Ken-ni sika da. (Clefting)
   Taro-NOM met.NEG C-TOP Ken-DAT only COP
   (‘It was only Ken that Taro met.’)

b. *[Taroo-ga awanakatta no]-wa Ken sika da. (Pseudoclefting)
   Taro-NOM met.NEG C-TOP Ken only COP
   (Lit. ‘Who Taro met was only Ken.’)

Any element accompanied by sika cannot be clefted, whether it occurs in cleft or pseudocleft.

Turning our attention to sluicing, it accepts sika-marked wh-remnants without any problem, as has been pointed out by Kimura and Takahashi (2010). Thus, the sluiced example in (33B) is perfect.

(33) A: Taroo-wa dareka-ni sika awanakatta rasii yo.
   Taro-TOP someone-DAT only met.NEG I.hear SFP
   ‘Taro met someone only.’

B: Dare-ni sika (desu ka)? (Sluicing)
   who-DAT only COP Q
   ‘Only who (is it)?’

This state of affairs, of course, is problematic for H&K: it represents another area where the alleged similarities between clefting and sluicing break down. Now let us consider (34).
(34) A: Taroo-wa dareka sika awanakatta rasii yo.  
    Taro-TOP someone only met.NEG I.hear SFP  
    ‘Taro met someone only.’  

    B: Dare sika (desu ka)? (Sluicing with case drop/*Pseudosluicing)  
      who only COP Q  
      ‘Only who (is it)?’

(34) differs minimally from (33) in that it lacks the dative-marker. When sika attaches to the dative noun, the dative-marker is optional. Note that (34B) is then ambiguous between sluicing with case drop and pseudosluicing. Given the striking similarities of pseudoconstructions (see the next section for a summary), I maintain that the pseudosluicing in question is as bad as its pseudoclefting equivalent given in (35).

(35) *[Taroo-ga awanakatta no]-wa dare sika desu ka? (Pseudoclefting)  
    Taro-NOM met.NEG C-TOP who only COP Q  
    (Lit. ‘Who only is who Taro met?’)

I will argue that pseudosluicing and pseudocountersluicing derive from pseudoclefting. The pseudosluicing version of (34B) is obtained by deleting the topic in (35) along the lines of H&K’s theory. If this is the case, it must be that pseudosluicing with a polarity-sensitive focus is excluded.

What about (pseudo)countersluicing, where sika-marked wh-phrases are deleted? Observe (36).

(36) Context: At a reunion, friends are talking about who is the only person that they met after the last reunion.  
    A: Taroo-wa Ken-ni sika awanakatta rasii yo.  
      Taro-TOP Ken-DAT only met.NEG I.hear SFP  
      ‘I hear Taro met only Ken.’  

    B: *[Hanko-ga awanakatta no]-wa? ((Pseudo)countersluicing)  
      Hanako-NOM met.NEG C-TOP  
      (Intended: ‘(Who is the only one) that Hanako met?’)

Importantly, the above countersluiced example totally lacks the interpretation
where the speaker is curious to know the identity of the only person Hanako met.\textsuperscript{15} The ungrammaticality of (36B) counts as evidence that neither countersluicing nor pseudocountersluicing is compatible with polarity-sensitive foci.

3.5 Predicative Foci

Next, let us consider the distribution of certain predicative elements in relevant constructions, which turns out to challenge H&K’s theory. (37) is an example of purposive predicate in Japanese.


Ken-TOP shopping-ACC do-to Tokyo-to went

‘Ken went to Tokyo to do shopping.’

Note that the purposive predicate of the kind illustrated in (37) can appear in the focus position of a cleft construction, as in (38).

(38) [Ken-ga e Tokyo-ni itta no]-wa [kaimono-o si-ni] da.

Ken-TOP Tokyo-to went C-TOP shopping-ACC do-to COP

Lit. ‘It was to do shopping that Ken went to Tokyo.’

One may well wonder which kind of cleft (38) is: it is a species of “regular” cleft or a species of pseudocleft? The diagnostics for distinguishing between the two kinds mentioned in Subsection 3.1 provide evidence that (38) is an instance of clefting rather than pseudoclefting. Observe the ill-formedness of (39a,b).


Ken-TOP Tokyo-to went purpose-TOP shopping-ACC do-to COP

(Lit. The purpose Ken went to Tokyo was to do shopping.’)

b. *[Ken-no e Tokyo-ni itta no]-wa [kaimono-o si-ni] da.

Ken-TOP Tokyo-to went C-TOP shopping-ACC do-to COP

(Lit. ‘It was to do shopping that Ken’s went to Tokyo.’)

(39a) shows that the complementizer no in (38) cannot be substituted for the
noun *mokuteki* ‘purpose,’ while (39b) confirms the impossibility of applying NGC to (38). These facts indicate that (38) is an instance of clefting.

Assuming that this line of thinking extends to predicative foci in general and that the three types of pseudoconstructions under consideration do not accept predicative foci, let us now examine small clause predicates. Kikuchi and Takahashi (1991) note that they do not qualify as foci in cleft constructions. Consider (40), taken from Kimura and Takahashi 2012.

(40) a. Ken-wa [gakusei-o sake-ni kanari tsuyoku] sita.
   Ken-TOP student-ACC liquor-DAT very strong made
   ‘Lit. Ken made his students very strong in liquor.’
   ‘Ken made his students able to hold their liquor.’

   b. *[Ken-ga gakusei-o sake-ni e sita no]-wa
   Ken-NOM student-ACC liquor-DAT made C-TOP
   kanari tuyoku da.                            (Clefting)
   very strong COP
   (‘Lit. It was very strong that Ken made his students in liquor.’)

(40a) is an example of small clause in Japanese, where the matrix verb *su* ‘make’ takes a small clause as its complement. As shown in (40b), the small clause predicate in (40a) *kanari tuyoku* ‘very strong,’ unlike the purposive predicate in (37), cannot occupy the focus position of a cleft.

Significantly, Kimura and Takahashi (2012) point out that unlike clefting, sluicing allows the small clause predicate to be its focused remnant. This is shown in (41) (adapted from Kimura and Takahashi 2012).

(41) A: Ken-wa [gakusei-o sake-ni tsuyoku] sita rasii.
   Ken-TOP student-ACC liquor-DAT strong make I.hear
   ‘Lit. I heard Ken made his students strong in liquor.’
   ‘I hear Ken made his students able to hold their liquor.’

   B: Donokurai tuyoku (desu ka)?                    (Sluicing)
   how strong COP Q
   ‘How strong (was it)?’

Thus, sluicing contrasts sharply with clefting in the possibility of focused small predicates, which is unexpected under H&K’s analysis.
Let us see whether countersluicing sides with clefting or sluicing in this regard. Consider the following:

(42) Context: Ken and Bill are professors. Ken often holds drinking parties with his students. Speaker B wonders what happened to Bill’s students in terms of their drinking liquor.
A: Ken-wa [gakusei-o sake-ni totemo tsuyoku] sita.
   ‘Lit. Ken made his students very strong in liquor.’
   ‘Ken made his students able to hold their liquor.’
B: *Bill-ga gakusei-o sake-ni e sita (Countersluicing)
   (Lit. ‘How did Bill make his students in liquor?’)

As shown above, it is impossible to erase the \textit{wh}-small predicate in countersluicing. Once again, countersluicing behaves like clefting, but not like sluicing.

3.6 NP Substitution and NGC Revisited
In Subsection 3.1, we saw that the possibilities of NP substitution and NGC are signature properties of pseudoclefting. Let us now see how they relate to countersluicing and pseudocountersluicing. I hasten to add that their relation to sluicing and pseudosluicing cannot be examined simply because in these constructions, only the \textit{wh}-phrase survives deletion.

Consider (43).

(43) Context: At a reunion, friends are talking about who met who after the last reunion.
A: Ken-ga Mari-ni atta rasii yo.
   ‘I hear Ken met Mari.’
B: Zyaa, [Eri-ga e atta no/hito]-wa? ((Pseudo)countersluicing)
   Lit. ‘Then, who is who/the person Eri met?’
(43B), in which the complementizer *no* can alternate with the noun *hito* ‘person,’ shows that NP-substitution is possible in pseudocountersluicing, based on pseudoclefting (see (16b)). At the same time, nothing rules out countersluicing where the dative-marked *wh*-phrase gets deleted. In this case, the derivation must involve clefting and NP-substitution is supposed to be impossible (see 16a)).

Another similarity between pseudocountersluicing and pseudoclefting is obvious in (43B’) where NGC is allowed (see (18b)). Once again, (43B’) is ambiguous between countersluicing and pseudocountersluicing, but when it is an instance of the former inheriting the properties of clefting, NGC is prohibited (see (18a)).

### 3.7 Similarities between Sluicing and Countersluicing Revisited

Having presented the differences between sluicing and countersluicing, let us now review the similarities between them that H&K point out in support of their analysis. The question is: do they demonstrate that both sluicing and countersluicing derive from cleft structure?

First, let us consider the facts surrounding multiple foci (see (8) and (9)) and the clausemate condition (see (12) and (13)). Note that all the data at issue concern multiple foci. What kind of operations do multiple foci involve?

Ishii and Agbayani (in press) offer strong arguments, which I will not repeat here, that multiple cleft is not really a matter of syntax but a matter of PF. More specifically, they present evidence that it does not obey any syntactic constraints and has no impact on LF interpretations, leading to the conclusion that the syntactic movement analyses of multiple cleft found in the literature (see Koizumi 2000 among others) are incorrect. As an alternative, they analyze multiple cleft as involving movement of what they call a prosodic constituent in PF (see Ishii and Agbayani in press for details).

Given that the creation of multiple foci is phonological in nature, the similarities with respect to multiple foci that H&K refer to between sluicing
and countersluicing are simply irrelevant in syntax.

Secondly, consider H&K’s remark, “the fact that the answer to a countersluiced question, like the answer to a sluiced question, can be a PP clearly shows that it is based on a cleft structure (H&K 2020: 302) (see (10) and (11)). This remark presupposes that relevant connectivity effects (in (10) and (11), the selectional relation of some sort that holds between the PP and its associated predicate dezainsita ‘designed’) can only be captured by their analysis.

Clearly, this is not true. As a matter of fact, competing analyses abound in the literature that can deal with the connectivity effects equally well (Takahashi 1994, Kim 1997, Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002, just to name a few). All that one needs to establish the connection between the focused element and its original structural position is syntactic movement. The focus movement postulated in (5), for instance, would suffice to account for the observed connectivity effects.

Therefore, the symmetries between sluicing and countersluicing that H&K refer to do not provide evidence for their theory.

4. Discussion
The previous section has shown that contrary to what H&K’s analysis predicts, sluicing and countersluicing behave differently from each other in certain ways. The overall observation is that the distributions of the former are uniformly freer than those of the latter.

The facts reviewed in Section 3 with respect to clefting, sluicing, and countersluicing are summarized in (44). What the table in (44) reveals is straightforward: countersluicing exhibits the properties of clefting, as predicted by H&K, whereas sluicing does not, strongly indicating that the two constructions do not arise from the same cleft structure. In other words, H&K are correct only partially: they are right about the relation between clefting and countersluicing, but their central claim that sluicing and countersluicing share exactly the same syntactic structure, to which the same mechanism of argument ellipsis applies, targeting different constituents, is on the wrong track.

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Here I will not delve into the issue of how to account for the asymmetries between sluicing and countersluicing, but one promising way to come to grips with them is to postulate that the derivation of sluicing is somehow simpler than that of clefting or countersluicing, though it must involve syntactic movement of some sort because it is sensitive to islands (in certain cases). There is a real possibility that sluicing involves focus movement, illustrated in (5b), but not remnant topicalization, illustrated in (5c) (see Kim 1997 and Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002 for such an analysis).

Shifting our attention now to the three kinds of pseudoconstructions, consider the following table summarizing their characteristics:

(45) Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pseudoclefting</th>
<th>Pseudosluing</th>
<th>Pseudocountersluicing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Island Sensitivity</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPI Foci</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP Substitution</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGC</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For obvious reasons, this table is not as informative as (44), but the conclusion we can draw from it is rather clear: the three constructions in question have much in common, implying that they share the same structural properties. I suggest that pseudosluing and pseudocountersluicing are both based on pseudocleft. All one needs to assume, following H&K’s idea, is that ellipsis
applies to different chunks.

To sum up, I have argued contra H&K that sluicing and its countersluicing counterpart do not have the same syntactic structure prior to deletion. In particular, countersluicing derives from clefting, while sluicing does not. In addition, I examined pseudosluicing and pseudocountersluicing and suggested that they both have their roots in pseudoclefting.

5. Conclusion
The present paper has discussed H&K’s claim that sluicing and countersluicing in Japanese share exactly the same syntactic derivation, the derivation of clefting in H&K’s theory. It has been shown that contrary to H&K’s predictions, sluicing and countersluicing have different linguistic properties, which implies that their final structures, to which ellipsis applies, are different from each other. The examination of the relevant data has demonstrated that H&K are correct only partially: while countersluicing is derivationally related to clefting, sluicing is not.

Notes
* This work was supported by a Senshu University Grant for Individual Research for the academic year 2018-2019, for which I am grateful.
1. The abbreviations used in the glosses are as follows:
   ACC-accusative; C-complementizer; COP-copula; DAT-dative;
   GEN-genitive; NEG-negative; NOM-nominative; Q-question;
   SFP-sentence-final particle; TOP-topic
2. I must point out that in constructing their examples, H&K are not careful enough about the significant distinction between case-marked cleft (“regular” cleft) and non-case-marked cleft (pseudocleft) (see Hoji 1987, Fukaya and Hoji 1999), though they are aware of it to some extent (see their footnote 6, for example). They use the two types of cleft as representing cleft in Japanese in a rather arbitrary fashion. (3A) is an example of the latter type, where the focused nominal Ant Chair lacks a case-maker (namely, the accusative case-maker -o). For conservative speakers (myself included), the example becomes ungrammatical if the accusative case-maker appears on the focus (see Section 3). As we will see, the characteristics of case-marked cleft will turn out to be crucial in discussing the relation between sluicing and countersluicing.
3. Although H&K call (3B) countersluicing, it is pseudocountersluicing, to be precise. This is because it is a response to the pseudocleft in (3A) (see note 2) and the general parallelism condition on deletion requires (3A) and (3B) to be syntactically isomorphic (see Tanaka 2011 among others).

4. Although H&K regard (4) as fully grammatical, as pointed out in note 2, there are native speakers of Japanese who reject examples like (4), where a nominative or accusative case-marker appears on the focused noun (see Koizumi 2000; see also Cho et al. 2008, which reports similar facts in Korean). The variation in grammaticality judgement is indicated by the asterisk in parentheses. I will come back to this issue later in Section 3.

5. See Rizzi 1997 for proliferation of clause peripheral positions.

6. Unlike the nominative-marker -ga and the accusative-marker -o, the dative-marker -ni can always attach to the focused nominal in clefts, as in (14a) (see the next subsection for the relevant behavior of -ga and -o).

7. Wh-clefting can be answered in two ways, with or without a case-marker or a postposition. Compare (21) with the following:

(i) A: [Ken-ga e atta no]-wa dare-ni (desu ka)?
   Ken-NOM met C-TOP who-DAT COP Q
   ‘Lit. Who is who Ken met?’
B: Mari?(-ni) (desu).
   Mari-DAT COP
   ‘It was Mari.’

Strictly speaking, then, when the noun in the answer in (20A’) is bare, one cannot decide whether it is a response to (20B) or (20B’).

8. For example, Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012), just like H&K (see (4) above) accept sentences like (23b), regarding the following example as grammatical (Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2012:144):

(i) [Naoya-ga Mari-ni e i ageta no]-wa ringo-o i da.
   Naoya-NOM Mari-DAT gave C-TOP apple-ACC COP
   ‘It was an apple that Naoya gave to Mari.’

9. As expected, Speaker A’s second utterance in (25A’) becomes fully grammatical if the nominative-case marker -ga is dropped.

10. Just as in (25A’), (28A’) becomes acceptable if the case-marker is erased.

11. This sentence has another irrelevant interpretation where it asks about the identity of the clerk.
12. Nakamura (2012) says that island violations caused by argument PPs can be nullified by phonological deletion in Japanese. The correct generalization seems to be that inherently licensed arguments, as opposed to structurally licensed nominative and accusative ones, are eligible for island repair. See Nakamura 2012 for a possible account of island (non-)repair in Japanese.

13. Unlike the case mentioned in note 7, this must be a reply to pseudocountersluicing. This is because (30B) without phonological deletion is ill-formed when the focused wh-phrase (dare ‘who’) bears the dative-marker ni-, as shown in (15a).

14. The deletion of the case-marker is obligatory, when sika attaches to a nominative or accusative NP.

15. The countersluiced example is fine as a response to an antecedent sentence without a negative polarity item.

16. Of course, this does not mean that the exact derivations H&K posit for clefting and countersluicing are correct. There are quite a few alternative analyses of cleft constructions in Japanese (Hoji 1987, Koizumi 2000, Cho et al. 2008, Kizu 2005, Miura 2011, Nakamura 2014 among others), which I will not evaluate here.

17. I will not try to choose among competing analyses of Japanese pseudocleft. See Harada 2016 for much relevant discussion.

References


