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Adjectival sluices in Hungarian: An argument for isomorphic sources

Eszter Ronai & Laura Stigliano

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Abstract Hungarian adjectival sluices show agreement characteristics of predicative adjectives, even though the correlate of the adjective is in attributive position. This has been taken as evidence for the existence of non-isomorphic (i.e. copular/cleft) sources for the ellipsis site. Case-matching effects, however, show that such an analysis would necessitate positing copular sources for only a subset of Hungarian sluices—a conceptually unappealing state of affairs. Instead we provide a more parsimonious analysis, which captures the data without needing to posit exceptional sources. In particular, we argue for the existence of two different configurations: 1) one involving isomorphic wh-sources followed by ellipsis, and 2) one that does not involve ellipsis at all, but is rather a case of pseudosluicing. Pseudosluicing is the combination of a null subject and a null copula—elements that are independently available in the language, and whose restricted distribution explains constraints we observe on the distribution of pseudosluicing. Thus, on our analysis, only isomorphic wh-questions are possible sources for Hungarian sluicing structures, consistent with the most restrictive theories of elliptical identity.

Keywords Sluicing · Ellipsis · Hungarian

1 Introduction

In this paper, we provide a novel analysis for Hungarian adjectival sluices. We show that non-isomorphic sources (i.e. full cleft/copular clauses) are not possible sources for the ellipsis site, and instead provide evidence for an isomorphic wh-source analysis. In doing so, we argue against recent literature on this topic that has proposed that the ellipsis site does not need to be an isomorphic wh-question, but could instead be a non-isomorphic copular question. We take as our starting point that an ellipsis site contains structure that is deleted or left unpronounced—see Merchant (2018) for an overview of the evidence for this claim. More broadly, this paper contributes to the debate about the identity of the structure inside an ellipsis site.

Hungarian adjectival sluices show agreement characteristics of predicative adjectives, even when the correlate is in attributive position, as shown in (1):

Authors contributed equally to this work and are listed alphabetically.

(1) Mari ismer néhány magas lány-t, de nem tudom milyen magas-***(ak)**.
Mary knows some tall girl-ACC, but not know.I how tall-*(PL)
'Mary knows some tall girls, but I don't know how tall.'

Such data have been taken as evidence for the existence of non-isomorphic sources for the ellipsis site. i.e. for cleft/copular sources[1] (see Barros 2016 for Hungarian, Barros 2014 for German, and Merchant 2001 for Dutch and German). In this paper we show, however, that due to case-matching effects, this line of analysis would necessitate positing copular sources for only a subset of Hungarian sluices—a disunified approach to sluicing that should be avoided if possible.

Instead we provide a more parsimonious analysis, which captures the data without needing to posit exceptional sources. We argue for the existence of two different configurations: one involving isomorphic wh-sources followed by ellipsis (Ross, 1969), and one that does not involve ellipsis at all, but is rather a case of *pseudosluicing*. In particular, we show that examples such as (1) involve the combination of a null subject and a null copula, both of which are independently available in the language, and whose restricted distribution explains constraints we observe on the distribution of pseudosluicing as well. Thus, on our analysis, there is only one possible source for Hungarian sluicing structures.

The term *pseudosluicing* has been used to describe two distinct constructions: on the one hand, i) clausal ellipsis over a copular/cleft source that leaves behind a wh-remnant (i.a. Merchant, 2001; Rodrigues et al., 2009; Barros, 2014), and on the other hand, ii) language-specific sluicing-like constructions that are non-elliptical (i.a. Merchant, 1998; Potsdam, 2007). To be clear, throughout the paper we use the term *pseudosluicing* to refer to the latter construction, and argue for the existence of (ii), and against the existence of (i) in Hungarian. Specifically, (ii) in Hungarian is the independent coincidence of a null pronominal and a null copula such that only a wh-XP remnant remains. For a discussion of the broader typology of sluicing-like constructions, see Gribanova (2013) and references therein.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. In Section 2, we describe the basic facts showing that (apparent) adjectival sluices display characteristics of predicative adjectives. In Section 3, we present novel data from sluicing in Hungarian, which we derive from isomorphic sources. In Section 4, we briefly show that case mismatches are disallowed in Hungarian. In Section 5, we provide a new account for the basic data outlined in Section 2 (and exemplified in (1)), and argue that these structures are not elliptical, but are rather a case of pseudosluicing. Section 6 concludes.

2 Background and basic facts

The larger empirical context for the basic facts that we discuss in this paper is sentences such as (2): (apparent) violations of the Left Branch Condition (LBC) that are repaired by ellipsis. Contra previous analyses that derive such sentences from an island violation as in (2a) (see i.a. Merchant, 2001; Kennedy and Merchant, 2000), Barros (2014) (see also Barros et al. 2015 and following work) has proposed that these sentences are in fact derived from a non-isomorphic source such as (2b).

(2) Mary married a tall man, but I don't know how tall.
   a. Mary married a tall man, but I don't know [how tall]$_i$ ~~she married a t_i man~~.

[1] Non-isomorphic copular sources were first proposed by Pollmann (1975) and Erteschik-Shir (1977).

b. Mary married a tall man, but I don't know [how tall]$_i$ ~~he was t_i~~.

In particular, Barros and colleagues propose that the ellipsis site in such cases contains a predicative copular clause, rather than an island-violating wh-question. Predicative sources are thus argued to constitute what the authors call an "evasion strategy", which gives rise to the illusion of ellipsis repairing an island violation.

Data from correlate/remnant mismatches in Hungarian has been offered as evidence for a copular source analysis. Hungarian adjectives show different agreement patterns depending on their position with respect to the noun, and have thus been used as a diagnostic to probe the structural source of the ellipsis site. Specifically, predicative adjectives show number agreement with the subject, as (3) shows:

(3) A lány-ok magas-***(ak)**.
The girl-PL tall-*(PL)
'The girls are tall.'

However, attributive adjectives (prenominal modifiers) do not show number agreement with the noun they modify, as shown in (4):

(4) Mari ismer magas-**(*ak)** lány-ok-at
Mary knows tall-(*PL) girl-PL-ACC
'Mary knows tall girls.'

As has been noted by Barros (2014) (see also Barros et al. 2015; Barros 2016; these sources cite Elliott 2013 for the original observation), Hungarian displays a correlate/remnant mismatch in the adjectival domain. In adjectival sluices, the remnant must bear plural marking (*magasak* 'tall.PL') when the correlate is plural, even though that correlate is a prenominal modifier (*magas* 'tall') and thus does not display number agreement. See (1) repeated here as (5):

(5) Mari ismer néhány magas lány-t, de nem tudom milyen magas-***(ak)**.
Mary knows some tall girl-ACC, but not know.I how tall-*(PL)
'Mary knows some tall girls, but I don't know how tall.'

That is, the remnant in (5) patterns with (3), the predicative structure, and not with its correlate, i.e. the attributive structure (also in (4)). As mentioned, this has been taken as evidence for a copular source analysis of sluicing in general, and adjectival sluices in particular.

Note that in Hungarian singular number is marked by a null morpheme in both predicative (6a) and attributive (6b) positions. Therefore it is trivially predicted that the singular remnant will also bear the null morpheme (6c), and thus this case is not informative about what structure the ellipsis site hides. We thus restrict our discussion to plural NPs.

(6) a. A lány magas-***(ak)**.
The girl tall-(*PL)
'The girl is tall.'

b. Mari ismer egy magas-***(ak)** lány-t
Mary knows a tall-(*PL) girl-ACC
'Mary knows a tall girl.'

c. Mari ismer egy magas lány-t, de nem tudom milyen magas-***(ak)**.
Mary knows a tall girl-ACC, but not know.I how tall-(*PL)
'Mary knows a tall girl, but I don't know how tall.'

3 An isomorphic source for adjectival sluices

What seems to have gone unnoticed in prior literature is the fact that the remnant in an adjectival sluice can also be marked with case, matching the case of the noun its correlate modifies[2]. Compare (7a) to (7b) (repeated from (5)):

(7) a. Mari ismer néhány magas lány-**t**, de nem tudom milyen magas-ak-**at**.
Mary knows some tall girls-ACC, but not know.I how tall-PL-ACC
'Mary knows some tall girls, but I don't know how tall.'

b. Mari ismer néhány magas lány-**t**, de nem tudom milyen magas-***(ak)**.
Mary knows some tall girl-ACC, but not know.I how tall-*(PL)
'Mary knows some tall girls, but I don't know how tall.'

Note that in (7b), there are two correlate-remnant mismatches: one in plural marking, and one in case marking. In (7a), while there is still a mismatch in plural marking, there is now case-matching. The question arises whether predicative adjectives, such as the adjective in the correlate (*magas*), have nominative case, or whether they are caseless. Given that there is no overt affix, throughout the paper we will describe such adjectives as nominative, but will not gloss them as being NOM-marked.

We argue that the only possible source for (7a) is an isomorphic wh-question that undergoes clausal ellipsis (8a) and NP-ellipsis (8b), as shown in (8c).

(8) Mari ismer néhány magas lány-**t**, de nem tudom...
Mary knows some tall girls-ACC, but not know.I
'Mary knows some tall girls, but I don't know...'

a. ...milyen magas lány-ok-**at** ⟨~~ismer~~⟩. *clausal ellipsis*
how tall girl-PL-ACC she.knows
(literal) '...how tall girls (she knows).'
'... how tall are the girls that she knows.'[3]

b. ...milyen magas-ak-**at** ⟨~~lány~~⟩ ismer. *NP ellipsis*
how tall-PL-ACC girl she.knows

[2] For similar data from Greek, see Merchant (2001). The Greek patterns are also incompatible with a copular source for sluicing: when the remnant occurs in the nominative (which is the case it has in a predicative question, see (i)), the sentence becomes ungrammatical, as (ii) shows:

(i) Poso psilos ine o andras?
how tall.NOM is the.NOM man.NOM
'How tall is the man?'

(ii) Proselavan enan psilo andra, alla dhen ksero poso {psilo/ *psilos}.
they.hired a.ACC tall.ACC man.ACC but not I.know how tall.ACC/ tall.NOM
'They hired a tall man, but I don't know how tall.'
(examples adapted from Merchant, 2001)

[3] It is worth mentioning the fact that questions like (8a) are perfectly grammatical in Hungarian, even without sluicing (contrary to the English facts), as in the following examples:

(i) a. Milyen magas lány-ok-**at** ismer?
how tall girl-PL-ACC she.knows
(Lit.) 'How tall girls does she know?'

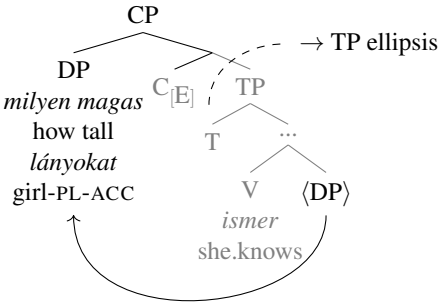
b. *How tall girls does she know?

(literal.) '...how tall (girls) she knows.'
'... how tall are the girls that she knows.'

c. ...milyen magas-ak-**at** ⟨~~lány~~⟩ ⟨~~ismer~~⟩. *clausal ellipsis + NP ellipsis*
how tall-PL-ACC girl she.knows
'...how tall.'

In particular, (8a) and (8b) show that these two operations—sluicing and NPE—are independently available in the language. In sluicing (8a), the remnant *how tall girls* is fronted and moved out of the ellipsis site, escaping deletion —as in (9):

(9) Sluicing:



To demonstrate that (8b) is indeed derived from NPE, let us consider number and case marking in non-elliptical vs. elliptical sentences in Hungarian. As (10) shows, in non-elliptical sentences number and case marking only show up on the noun:

(10) a. Mari a magas lány-**ok**-**at** ismeri.
Mari the tall girl-PL-ACC she.knows

b. *Mari a magas-**ak**-**at** lány-**ok**-**at** ismeri
Mari the tall-PL-ACC girl-PL-ACC she.knows

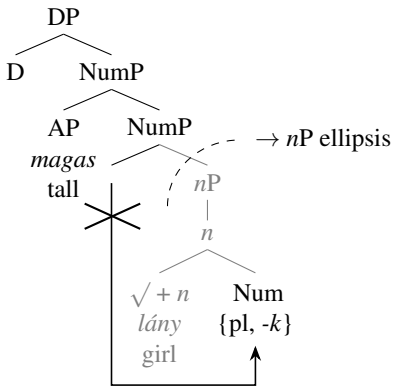
c. *Mari a magas-**ak**-**at** lány ismeri.
Mari the tall-PL-ACC girl she.knows
'Mari knows the the tall girls.'

However, when NPE applies, number and case affixes obligatorily occur on the last remnant of the ellipsis site (i.e. the adjective) —as in (11):

(11) Mari a magas lány-**ok**-**at** ismeri. Én az alacsony-*(**ak**-**at**).
Mari the tall girl-PL-ACC she.knows I the short-PL-ACC
'Mari knows the tall girls. I know the short ones.'

Analyzing examples such as (11), Saab and Lipták (2016) propose that in non-elliptical contexts, Num lowers onto *n*. In the case of NPE, however, this operation is blocked: the number affix gets stranded, and needs to be hosted by the material that precedes the elided noun (i.e. the adjective) —see (12). As the authors point out, case affixes behave like number affixes in contexts of NPE, namely, case marking ends up on the same element that hosts the number morpheme.

(12) NPE:



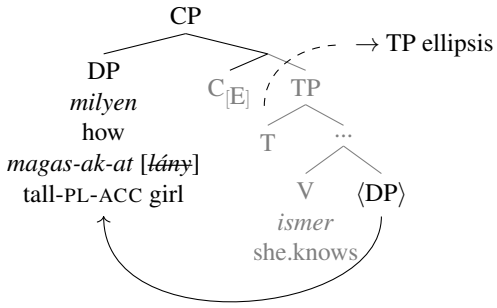
(adapted from Saab and Lipták 2016)

To sum up, then, we argue that examples such as (7a) above (repeated here as (13a)) are derived from clausal ellipsis of an isomorphic wh-question, followed by NPE:

(13) a. Mari ismer néhány magas lányt, de nem tudom milyen magas-ak-at.
Mary knows some tall girls-ACC, but not know.I how tall-PL-ACC

b. [$_A$ Mari ismer néhány magas lányt ... [[milyen magasakat]$_i$ [~~C[E]~~ ~~ismer t$_i$~~]

c.



4 The distribution of apparent case mismatches in Hungarian

To reiterate, a satisfactory account of the Hungarian adjectival sluicing facts not only needs to capture the overt plural marking on the remnant adjective, but also the variation in case marking. In (7a), repeated here as (14a), the remnant is marked with accusative case, matching the case of the noun modified by its correlate. This contrasts with (5), repeated as (14b), where there is a case-mismatch between *lányt* (in ACC) and *magasak* (in NOM)[4].

(14) a. Mari ismer néhány magas lány-**t**, de nem tudom milyen magas-ak-**at**.
Mary knows some tall girls-ACC, but not know.I how tall-PL-ACC

[4] For reasons of exposition, we mostly use ACC-NOM case "mismatches" in this paper. Note, however, that the same patterns obtain with other cases; the only relevant factor is what case the verb assigns. See e.g.: (22), (23), (25).

b. Mari ismer néhány magas [lány-**t**], de nem tudom milyen [magas-ak].
Mary knows some tall girl-ACC, but not know.I how tall-PL
'Mary knows some tall girls, but I don't know how tall.'

Note that (14b) seems to constitute an apparent counter-example to Merchant's (2001) Case-Matching Generalization (first noted in Ross, 1969), which states that *The sluiced wh-phrase must bear the case that its correlate bears* (cf. also Barros's (2016) Divorced Case-Matching). On the other hand, (14a) is in compliance with the Case-Matching Generalization. As mentioned, a non-isomorphic (i.e. copular/cleft) source has been proposed for examples such as (14b). However, as we argued in the previous section, sentences like (14a) support a wh-source analysis (see (8)). This state of affairs might lead one to propose optionality between isomorphic (wh-question) and non-isomorphic (copular/cleft) sources for ellipsis. Crucially, however, this proposal would also have a wider prediction: if copular sources were always available as a source for ellipsis in Hungarian, then case-mismatches would not be restricted to structures like (14b); rather, they should also be allowed in regular sluicing across the board.

This prediction of optionality is not borne out; we do not find rampant case-mismatching in Hungarian. As (15) shows, regular (non-adjectival) sluices prohibit case-mismatches, in compliance with the Case-Matching Generalization.

(15) Mari ismer [valaki-**t**], de nem tudom [ki-***(t)**].
Mary knows someone-ACC, but not know.I who-*(ACC)
'Mary knows someone, but I don't know who.'

Moreover, this is the case despite the fact that a copular continuation to (15) is possible with a nominative wh-phrase (16):

(16) Mari ismer [valaki-**t**], de nem tudom [ki-**(*t)**] az/ő.
Mary knows someone-ACC, but not know.I who-(*ACC) that/(s)he
'Mary knows someone, but I don't know who they are.'

This constitutes a puzzle: if copular and wh-sources were both freely available in Hungarian, (15) should also show optionality in case marking the same way (14a)–(14b) do. A possible, but conceptually unappealing explanation would be to propose that copular sources are allowed only in one type of clausal ellipsis. That is, adjectival sluices (14b) may have a copular source and show case-mismatches, but regular sluices (15) can only have a wh-source and therefore case-mismatches are disallowed with them.

Our proposal takes a different route, and explains the facts without appealing to construction-specific mechanisms or constraints. Instead, it is independently motivated by properties of the language: the existence of, and restrictions on, null subjects and null copulas.

5 Apparent case mismatches are not elliptical

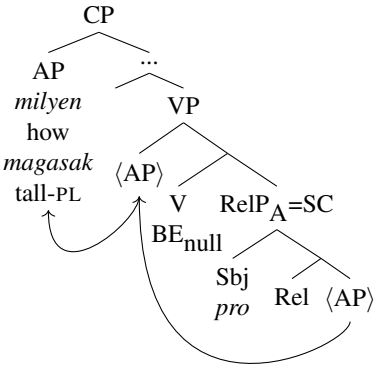
We argue that apparent case-mismatched sluices (5) in fact arise from pseudosluicing. Merchant (1998) proposed the term *pseudosluicing* to account for the following type of data from Japanese:

(17) Dareka-ga sono hon-o yon-da ga, watashi-wa dare ka wakaranai.
someone-NOM that book-ACC read-PAST but I-TOP who Q know.not
'Someone read that book, but I don't know who.'

Merchant's proposal was based on the idea that (17) is not a case of ellipsis, but the conspiracy of a null expletive and null copula, both independently available in Japanese. (In embedded sentences, Japanese optionally allows omission of the copula.) In the same vein, we propose that cases like (5) in Hungarian are derived as the combination of a null subject (Dalmi, 2014) and a null copula (É. Kiss, 2002; Hegedűs, 2013). Both are independently available, as will be shown later in this section. A null subject and a null copula together give the illusion of an ellipsis configuration, but in fact the relevant structures do not involve ellipsis at all.

The analysis we propose for structures like (5) is schematized in (18), where *pro* represents the null subject, and BE_{null} represents the null copula[5].

(18) M. ismer néhány magas lány-t, de nem tudom milyen magas-ak BE_{null} ***pro***.
M. knows some tall girl-ACC, but not know.I how tall-PL



(adapted from Hegedűs 2013)[6]

Now compare (16), where the subject pronoun (*az//ő*) is obligatorily present and (18), where a null subject is possible. This difference clearly parallels the (un)availability of the null subject in corresponding non-elliptical questions. While an adjectival predicative question with a null subject (19a) is possible in Hungarian, a "who" question with a null subject (19b) is not:

(19) Context: The speaker is pointing at someone (the referent of *ő*).
a. Milyen magas?
how tall

[5] Examples such as (18) are also grammatical with an overt pronoun, especially in an emphatic context —as expected for subject pronouns in Hungarian:

(i) Mari nem ismer 180 cm feletti fiúkat. Ismer néhány magas lány-t, de nem tudom milyen magas-ak ők.
Mary not knows 180 cm over boys knows some tall girl-ACC, but not know.I how tall-PL they
'Mary doesn't know any boys over 180 cm. She knows some tall girls, but (as for them), I don't know how tall (they are).'

The copula, however, is obligatorily null. See i.a. É. Kiss (2002); Kenesei et al. (1998) for both generalizations.

[6] We adopted Hegedűs's analysis, according to which the predicative AP must move into the preverbal position (i.e. Spec VP) as an instance of complex predicate formation. However, this is not crucial for our purposes and we are not committed to this or other parts of Hegedűs's analysis. What is relevant for our argument is that the AP further moves to the left periphery, which we assume is Spec CP.

'How tall is s/he?'

b. Ki *(az/ő)?
who that/she
(intended) 'Who is s/he?'

Crucially, support for our claim that sentences such as (5) are a case of pseudosluicing comes from the distribution of null copulas. Our analysis predicts that pseudosluicing will only be available in contexts where null copulas are independently allowed in the language. This means that the presence/absence of the copula in the non-elliptical wh-question should correlate with the availability of apparent case-mismatches in adjectival sluices.

A null copula in adjectival predicates is restricted to third person and present tense (see i.a. É. Kiss 2002). Thus, as can be seen in the following examples, copulas are obligatorily absent in the present tense (20a), but obligatorily present in the past tense (20b):

(20) a. Nem tudom milyen magas-ak (***van-nak**) a lány-ok.
not know.I how tall-PL be.PRES-PL the girl-PL
'I don't know how tall the girls are.'

b. Nem tudom milyen magas-ak ***(volt-ak)** a lány-ok.
not know.I how tall-PL be.PAST-PL the girl-PL
'I don't know how tall the girls were.'

We thus predict that the patterns we saw before in e.g. (5) will change when a past reading is enforced, and pseudosluicing configurations will be ruled out. This prediction is borne out: either accusative marking (21b), or the past-tense copula (21a) is obligatory in this context.

(21) Mari ki-vágott néhány magas fá-t múlt nyár-on...
Mary out-cut some tall tree-ACC last summer-SUPERESSIVE...
'Mary cut down some tall trees last summer...'

a. ...de nem tudom milyen magas-ak ***(voltak)**. ✗ *pseudosluicing*
...but not know.I how tall-PL be.PAST.PL
'...but I don't know how tall they were.'

b. ...de nem tudom milyen magas-ak-**at**. ✓ *sluicing*
...but not know.I how tall-PL-ACC
'...but I don't know how tall.'

The accusative-marked remnant represents sluicing, which we have analyzed as arising from an isomorphic wh-source. On the other hand, contrasting with (5), pseudosluicing is not allowed.

Note that what matters for the example above is not simply the use of past tense in the antecedent, but rather whether the remnant can have a present tense interpretation. Crucially, in (21), the trees do not exist at the time of speech, meaning that they can no longer be tall. Thus (21) contrasts with an example such as (22), which has a past tense antecedent, but where the individual-level property denoted by the adjective persist through speech time[7].

(22) Mari néhány magas lány-nyal dolgozott együtt múlt nyár-on...
Mary some tall girl-INSTR worked together last summer-SUPERESSIVE...
'Mary worked together with some tall girls last summer...'

[7] We thank an anonymous reviewer for drawing our attention to this.

a. ...de nem tudom milyen magas-ak. ✓ *pseudosluicing*
...but not know.I how tall-PL
'...but I don't know how tall they are.'

b. ...de nem tudom milyen magas-ak-**kal**. ✓ *sluicing*
...but not know.I how tall-PL-INSTR
'...but I don't know how tall.'

Here, assuming the speaker knows that the girls are still alive, the remnant could felicitously feature a present tense null copula. Hence, both a sluicing and a pseudosluicing derivation are allowed in such a construction.

Parallel to the examples above in which the restriction on null copulas depends on different tenses, the presence/absence of the copula in different persons also determines whether pseudosluicing is allowed. First, as shown in (20a), the copula is obligatorily null with third person. We predict, then, that the third person will allow pseudosluicing. Of course, a sluicing derivation (signaled by case marking on the remnant) will also be allowed. Our predictions are borne out, as can be seen in (23a)–(23b) respectively:

(23) Magas-(ak)-**nak** képzelem a lányokat...
tall-PL-DAT imagine.I the girls.ACC...
'I imagine the girls (to be) tall...'

a. ...de nem tudom valójában milyen magas-ak **(*van-nak)**. ✓ *pseudosluicing*
...but not know.I in.reality how tall-PL be.PRES-PL
'...but in fact I don't know how tall (they are).'

b. ...de nem tudom pontosan milyen magas-(ak)-**nak**. ✓ *sluicing*
...but not know.I exactly how tall-PL-DAT
'...but I don't know exactly how tall (I imagine them to be).'

Note that in this kind of dative predicative structure, plural marking (*-ak*) is optional, as (23) shows. Importantly, we again observe a correlation between number and case marking, as predicted by our analysis. Parallel to the pattern we find in the antecedent, the plural suffix is optional in sluicing with a case-marked remnant, as shown in (23b). In pseudosluicing, however, the plural suffix is obligatory (23a). This provides further evidence for our proposal that sluicing involves a wh-source isomorphic to the antecedent, but pseudosluicing instantiates a different configuration.

Crucially, as (24b) demonstrates, the copula is obligatorily present with persons other than the third person, e.g. the second person singular (cf. (20a), repeated below as (24a)):

(24) a. Nem tudom milyen magas-ak **(*van-nak)** a lány-ok.
not know.I how tall-PL be.PRES-PL the girl-PL
'I don't know how tall the girls are.'

b. Nem tudom (te) milyen magas *(**vagy**).
not know.I you how tall be.2SG
'I don't know how tall you are.'

Our analysis then predicts that with the second person, the copula will need to be present, ruling out the pseudosluicing construction. This prediction is again borne out: with the second person, only regular sluicing with a case-marked remnant is possible (25b), pseudosluicing is not (25a).

(25) Magas-**nak** képzellek...
tall-DAT imagine.I→you...
'I imagine you (to be) tall...'

a. ...de nem tudom valójában milyen [magas ***(vagy)**]. ✗ *pseudosluicing*
...but not know.I in.reality how tall be.PRES
'...but in fact I don't know how tall you are.'

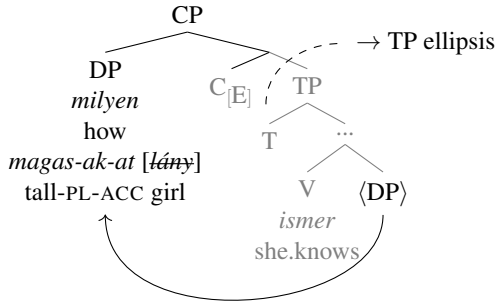
b. ...de nem tudom pontosan milyen [magas-**nak**]. ✓ *sluicing*
...but not know.I exactly how tall-DAT
'...but I don't know exactly how tall (I imagine you to be).'

In summary, then, we have shown that pseudosluicing (i.e. apparent case-mismatched sluices) is ruled out in contexts where null copulas are independently unavailable: in the past tense and the second person. Such structures only allow for regular sluicing, which shows case-matching with the antecedent, and which we derive from an isomorphic wh-source.

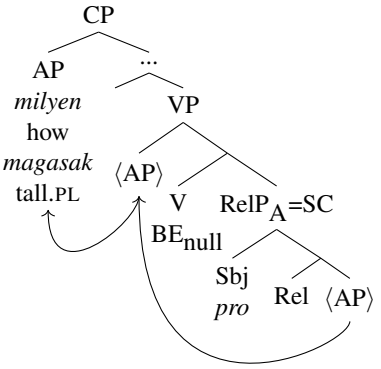
6 Conclusions

In this paper we show that non-isomorphic sources are not possible in Hungarian. What are apparent adjectival sluices can arise from two different configurations, yielding different number and case marking. On the one hand, true cases of clausal ellipsis arise only from isomorphic wh-questions (see 7a and 8c). These show case-matching and number/case marking on the adjective, as is predicted by properties of NPE in Hungarian (see (26a), repeated from (13c)). On the other hand, apparent mismatching sluices are not in fact derived from ellipsis, but from the combination of two independent properties of the language: null subjects and null copulas (see (18), repeated as (26b)):

(26) a. Sluicing + NPE



b. Pseudosluicing



This analysis is supported i.a. by evidence from the restrictions on null copula: whenever the copula is obligatory, pseudosluicing is ruled out. Thus our proposal dispenses with the need to posit two different sources of ellipsis within the same language, and contributes to the discussion about the structure inside the ellipsis site, showing that copular sources cannot be sources for ellipsis.

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