

## 1. Sluicing in clarification

Sluicing is an ellipsis construction where only a stand-alone *wh*-phrase (a remnant) receiving **sentential interpretation** (i.e., Chung et al. 1995):

(1) A: John hates **someone**. B: *Who?* (= ‘*Who* does John hate?’)

### Clarification request sluicing (CR-sluicing)

Sluicing in which a responder **fails to understand** some aspects of the correlate (the expression the remnant referring back to), **presumed to be shared** among speakers in the given context (a.k.a. reprise sluicing in Ginzburg and Sag 2000).

Due to its purpose, CR-sluicing receives **idiosyncratic interpretation**:

(2) A: You know **she** came back.  
B: *Who?* (‘*Who/Which woman* do you mean by ‘**she**’?’)  
A: Your girlfriend. (COCA 2018 FIC)

Previous analyses of canonical sluicing cannot fully account for the characteristics of CR-sluicing. As an alternative, this study claims that **the Table model** by Farkas and Bruce (2010) can improve the existing analyses.

## 2. Key observations

### 2.1. On correlates

**Canonical sluicing** requires an indefinite correlate that may be covert (i.e., Merchant 2001), whereas **CR-sluicing** demands a definite, overt antecedent.

(3) a. A: John was talking (**to someone**). B: *(To) who?* [canonical]  
b. A: John was talking **\*(to Mary)**. B: *(To) who?* [CR-sluicing]

### 2.2. Two possible readings

There are two possible readings for CR-sluicing decided by the background knowledge of the interlocutors (data from COCA 2018 MOV).

(4) a. **No corresponding referents** (‘*Who* do you mean by *x*?’)  
A: I should talk to **Dr. Johns** about it. B: *Who?* A: Dr. Harold Johns.  
b. **Multiple possible referents** (‘*Which x* do you mean?’)  
A: Did you know **the kid**? B: *Who?* Which kid? A: The Beech kid.

### 2.3. Correlate-echoing CR-sluicing

In CR-sluicing, a remnant can be preceded by an NP:

(5) a. A: Yo, who that? b. “She was **Apollo’s** sister.”  
B: It’s **me**? “Apollo? *Apollo who?*  
A: *Me who?* Oh, wait. Apollo.” (COCA FIC 2004)  
B: It’s Ali! (COCA 2018 MOV)

### 2.4. Island insensitivity

Just like canonical sluicing ((6); Merchant 2001), CR-sluicing is island-insensitive – a remnant can refer to a correlate inside a syntactic island.

(6) a. They want to hire [<sub>NP</sub> someone who speaks a **Balkan** language], but I don’t remember *which*. (Merchant 2001: 6)  
b. A: So, you mad about [<sub>NP</sub> the **Jason** thing]?  
B: *Who?* (COCA 2018 MOV)

### 2.5. No SWIPING

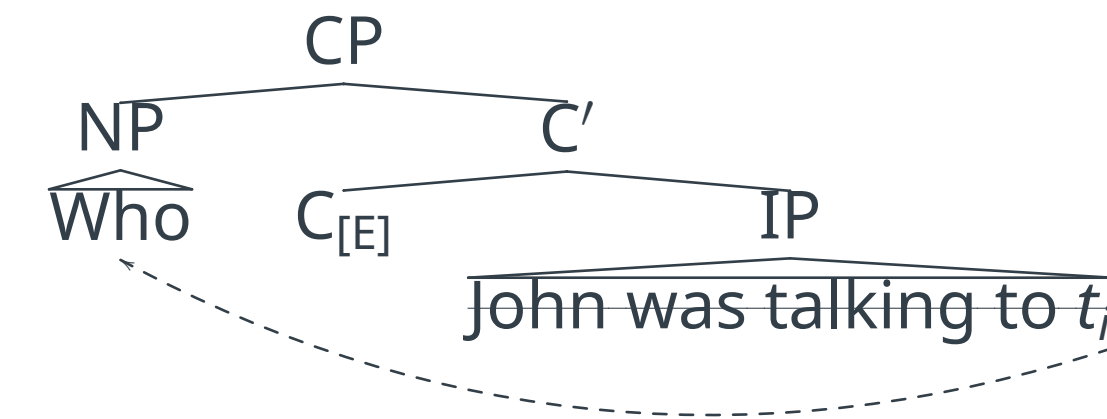
Unlike canonical sluicing, CR-sluicing is subject to an additional phonological identity condition that affects its syntax:

(7) a. A: John was talking (**to someone**). B: *Who to?* (Merchant 2001: 88)  
b. A: John was talking **to Mary**. B: *#Who to?*

## 3. Previous analysis & Discussion

The mainstream approach of sluicing, called **the PF-deletion approach** (i.e., Merchant 2001) assumes that sluicing derives from underlying source:

(8) A: John was talking to **someone**. B: *(To) who?*  
a. [<sub>CP</sub> C<sub>[E]</sub> [<sub>IP</sub> John was taking to *who* ]]  
b. [<sub>CP</sub> *who*<sub>*i*</sub> C<sub>[E]</sub> [<sub>IP</sub> John was taking to *t<sub>i</sub>* ]]  
c. [<sub>CP</sub> *who*<sub>*i*</sub> C<sub>[E]</sub> [<sub>IP</sub> John was taking to *t<sub>i</sub>* ]]



### Empirical issues

**Q1.** The PF-deletion approach cannot fully account for the idiosyncratic, context-dependent meaning of CR-sluicing:

(9) A: John was talking to **Mary**. B: *(To) who?*  
[<sub>CP</sub> *who*<sub>*i*</sub> C<sub>[E]</sub> [<sub>IP</sub> John was taking to *t<sub>i</sub>* ]] [Underlying source]  
≠ ‘Who do you mean by ‘**Mary**’?’ [No corresponding ref.]  
≠ ‘Which **Mary** do you mean?’ [Multiple possible ref.]

**Q2.** Since the derivation accompanies movement, it needs additional explanation for the island insensitivity (i.e., island repair).

(10) A: You mad about [<sub>NP</sub> the **Jason** thing]? B: *Who?*  
⇒ **\*Who** [<sub>CP</sub> ⟨am I mad about [<sub>NP</sub> the *t<sub>i</sub>* thing]⟩]? [Underlying source]

**Q3.** What is the structure and meaning of correlate-echoing CR-sluicing?

## 4. An alternative approach

### 4.1. Pragmatics and semantics: The Table model

This study proposes a discourse-based analysis using **the Table model** (cf., Farkas and Bruce 2010; Jeong 2018: 329).

(11) Key notions  
a. **Common Ground (CG)**: set of propositions mutually and publicly agreed among interlocutors; shared background knowledge  
b. **Table**: stack of issues (propositions; QUD) raised  
c. **PS (Projected Set, *ps*)**: possible future common grounds

Additionally, this study takes the **Personal Background Knowledge** into account, based on the definition of CG:

(12) **PB<sub>*Sp*</sub> (Personal Background Knowledge)**: set of propositions that individual *Sp*(eaker)s believe/know and may or may not be shared

### Example: No corresponding referents CR-sluicing

(13) A: I met **John** yesterday.  $p = meet(A, j); K_1: s_1$   
B: *Who?* (‘Who do you mean by *John*?’)  $K_2: s_2$   
A: He is a linguist.  $q = linguist(j); K_3: s_3$

#### • PB condition for speaker’s ignorance CR-sluicing:

$\{p \cap q\} \in PB_A; PB_B \cap q = \emptyset$

#### • Initial CG condition for speaker’s ignorance CR-sluicing ( $K_1$ ):

$CG_1: s_1 \cap q = \emptyset; ps_1 = s_1$  ( $s$  = situation)

The meaning of *Who?* is captured as a set of propositions where the antecedent  $p$  intersecting with all the correlate’s possible properties:

(14)  $\llbracket Who? \rrbracket = \{p \cap linguist(j), p \cap novelist(j), p \cap teacher(j), \dots\}$  ( $K_2$ )  
 $= \lambda P.meet(A, j) \ \& \ P(j)$

Finally, the corresponding answer expands the CG and PS.

(15) **CG repaired by an answer to *Who?* on  $K_3$ :**

$CG_3: s_3 \oplus \{p \cap q\}; ps_3 = \{s_3 \cup \{p \cap q\}\}$

## 4.2. Syntax: A non-derivational approach

This study assumes that there is **no hidden linguistic units** in the sluiced site. Instead, a simple XP directly projected to a sentential-level expression.

The projection is based on the key notions for relevant ellipsis constructions.

(16) Key notions (i.e., Ginzburg and Sag 2000; Goldberg 2006)

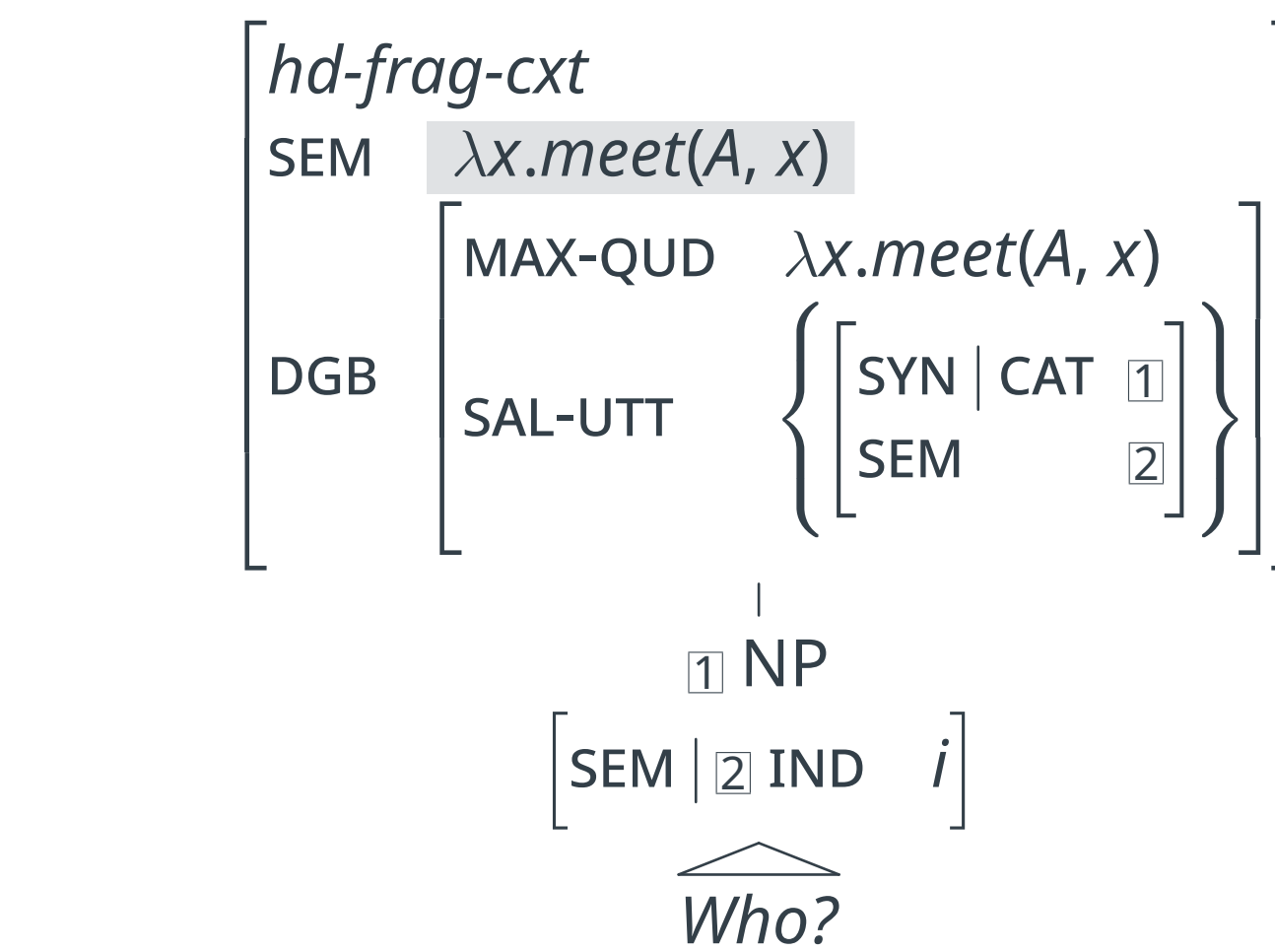
- MAX-QUD (Maximal Question-Under-Discussion)**: the most salient discussable question in the given context (i.e., current discourse topic)
- SAL-UTT (Salient-Utterance)**: the (sub)utterance which receives the widest scope within MAX-QUD (i.e., focused material)
- DGB (Dialogue Game Board)**: a set of attributes recording contextual parameters in the ongoing discourse (similar to the Table)

The sentential meaning (MAX-QUD) of the remnant (SAL-UTT) is retrieved by the given context fed by the Table (cf., (12)-(14)):

(17) **Sluicing: Structure and meaning** (c.f., Ginzburg and Sag 2000)

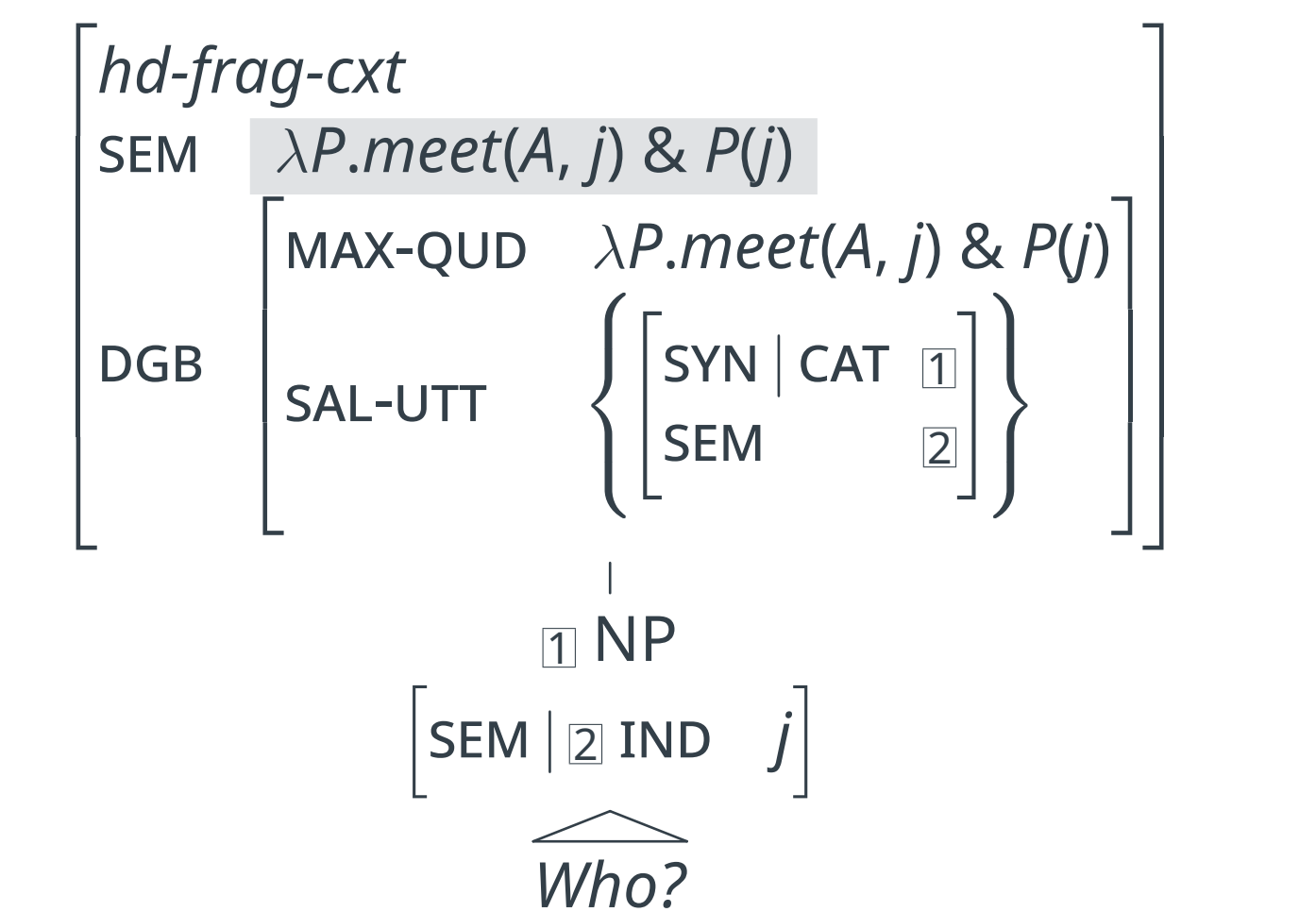
### [Canonical sluicing]

A: I met **someone**.  
B: [*Who?*]<sub>F</sub> (=  $\lambda x.meet(A, x)$ )  
S



### [CR-sluicing – No corr. ref.]

A: I met **John**.  
B: [*Who?*]<sub>F</sub> (=  $\lambda P.meet(A, j) \ \& \ P(j)$ )  
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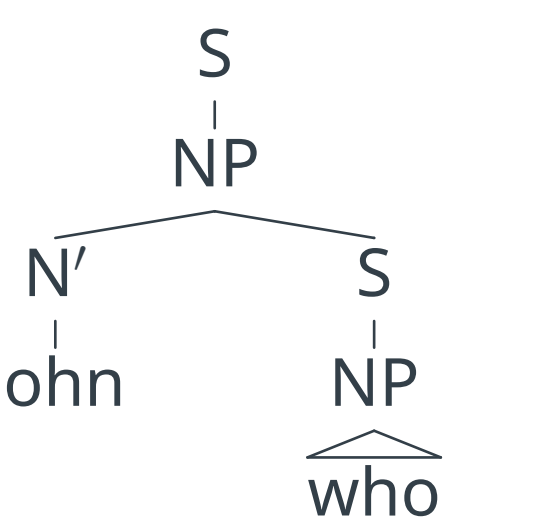


## 4.3. Correlate-echoing CR-sluicing

CR-sluicing queries **not-at-issue** information related to its antecedent, which is a pattern that can also be observed in **appositives** (Keizer 2005: 455):

(18) a. A: John, *a friend of mine*, teaches Linguistics. b. A: I met *John* yesterday.  
B: **John who?**  
B: No, he doesn’t./#No, he isn’t. A: The linguist.

Given this, this study claims that the whole string is **an NP headed by the copied correlate**. The remnant is an appositive clause modifying the N head.



## 5. Theoretical implication

By using this alternative approach, we can account for the idiosyncratic meaning of CR-sluicing interacting with discourse in a streamlined manner.

### Selected References

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Poster



Paper