

Biclausal multidominant syntax of right dislocation*

Ka-Fai Yip

Yale University

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1 Introduction

Right dislocation (henceforth RD) refers to the phenomenon that some elements are displaced or “copied” to the right of a sentence, commonly found in colloquial speech.

- (1) a. He’s real smart, **John**.
 b. He’s real smart, **John is**. (Kayne 1994:78)

In Chinese (including **Cantonese** and **Mandarin**), when sentence-final particles (SFPs) are present, the displaced elements must follow the SFPs (Cheung 2009, 2015). The same goes for **Japanese** (Tanaka 2001) and **Korean** (Park and Kim 2009).

- (2) $\overbrace{[\dots (XP_i) \dots \text{SFP}]}^{\text{main chunk}} \quad \overbrace{XP_i}^{\text{RD chunk}}$

(3) Gapped right dislocation (GRD)

- a. [_ heoi-zo Meigwok laa3] **Aaming**. [Cantonese, CC]
 b. [_ qu-le Meiguo le] **Xiaoming**. [Mandarin, MC]
 go-PFV US SFP Ming
 ‘Ming went to the US.’

RD may also be gapless. In this talk, I only focus on gapped RD.

← But see Yip (2025) for a unified analysis in Chinese.

← The proposal developed here applies to gapless RD as well.

(4) Dislocation copying (DC)

- a. [**Aaming** heoi-zo Meigwok laa3] **Aaming!** [CC]
 b. [**Xiaoming** qu-le Meiguo le] **Xiaoming!** [MC]
 Ming go-PFV US SFP Ming
 ‘Ming went to the US!’

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Central question: What is the nature of silence in the RD chunk?

(5) [main chunk YP ZP] SFP [RD chunk XP ~~YP ZP~~]

- ALL major approaches posit there are some syntactic structure unpronounced in the RD chunk.
 - The monoclausal approach: *Movement/Copy Deletion* (Cheung 2009; Lee 2017, 2021; Yip 2020, i.a.)
 - The biclausal approach: *Ellipsis/Sluicing* (Cheung 2015; Tang 2015, 2018; Yip 2025)
 - Except rightward movement, which has been shown to be untenable empirically (e.g., Cheung 2009, cf. Tanaka 2001 for JP). (To be discussed at the end)
- Today, I will argue that the silence comes from **multidominance**.
- The core arguments come from RD of “only” and “the-hell” expressions:

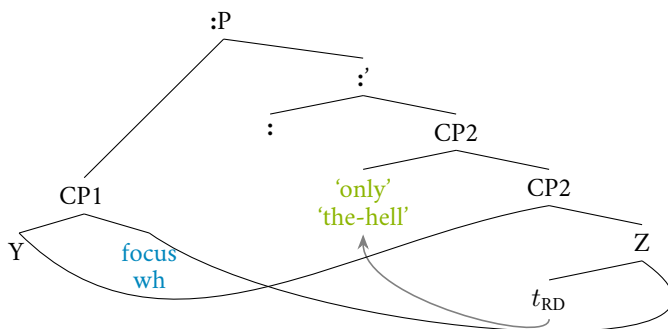
(6) [Aaming _ zungji nibun syu_F zaa3] zinghai. (Obj focus)
 Ming like this book SFP only
 ‘Ming only likes this book.’ [CC]

(7) [_ Shei hui lai a] daodi? (Wh-Subj)
 who will come SFP the.hell
 ‘Who the hell will come?’ [MC]

Overview of the talk

- I show that focus/*wh*-association requires the RD elements to **c-command** the main chunk “leftward”
- I propose that only a **multidominant** structure of RD can generate this correct **structural relation**
 - The “non-pronunciation” in the RD chunk is a result of “node-sharing”/Parallel Merge (Wilder 1999; Citko 2005; Gračanin-Yuksek 2007, i.a.)
 - Movement and sluicing approaches fail to create this c-command relation

(8) A schematic multidominant structure of RD



- I demonstrate that focus/*wh*-association serves as reliable **diagnostic tests** for multidominant structures

• **Road map**

- §2: Background on RD
- §3: Focus/*wh*-association in RD
- §4: RD as multidominance
- §5: Against rightward movement
- §6: Conclusion

2 Background on right dislocation

2.1 Basic properties

The range of RD elements

- Various types of elements can undergo RD, including subjects (3), objects, and adjuncts.

(9) RD of objects

[Keoi jau-mou maai _ aa3] **gaa ce?** *S-Asp-V-SFP-O* [CC]
 3SG have-not.have buy SFP CL car
 ‘Has s/he bought the car?’ (Lee 2017:60)

(10) RD of adjuncts

[Zoengsaam _ maai-zo bou soenggei aa3] **hai dinnouzit.** *S-V-O-SFP-PP_{adjunct}* [CC]
 Zoengsaam buy-PFV CL camera SFP at computer.festival
 ‘Zoengsaam bought a camera at the Computer Festival.’ (Lee 2022:62)

- RD of *verbs* is also possible, but subject to variations
- OK in Cantonese and Mainland Mandarin; * in Taiwan Mandarin (Yip 2025)

(11) RD of verbs

[Wo _ ziji qu yi-tang (a)] **zhunbei.** *S-O-(SFP)-V* [MC]
 1SG self go one-round SFP prepare
 ‘I plan to go there once by myself.’ (Lu 1980:58, SFP *a* added)

Movement properties

- First, the gap can be embedded (Lee 2017):

(12) [ngo zi [CP ZS _ maai-zo bou soenggei] aa3] **hai dinnouzit.** (GRD) [CC]
 1SG know ZS buy-PFV CL camera SFP at computer.festival
 ‘I know ZS bought a/the camera at the Computer Festival.’ (Lee 2017:64)

- Nonetheless, the gap cannot be contained in an island, as schematized in (13):

(13) * [main ... [island ... { _i } ...] ... SFP] [RD XP_i]

- General to all kinds of islands, including complex NP islands, adjunct islands, subject islands, coordinated structures, etc. (Cheung 2015; Y. Chen 2016; Chiang 2017; Lee 2017; Yip 2025).

(14) The gap/correlate of RD chunks cannot be in an island

* [ZS [CP janwai _ maai-zo dinnou] soji mou cin sikfaan lo1] **jung jingam.**
 ZS because buy-PFV computer so no money eat SFP with cash
 Int.: ‘Because ZS bought a computer with cash, he has no money for meal.’
 (GRD, Adjunct island; Lee 2017:65) [CC]

- There are **silent syntactic structures** in the RD chunks!

- Cf. Cheung (2009) and Lee (2017) for more evidence from reconstruction and crossover effects.

2.2 Previous approaches

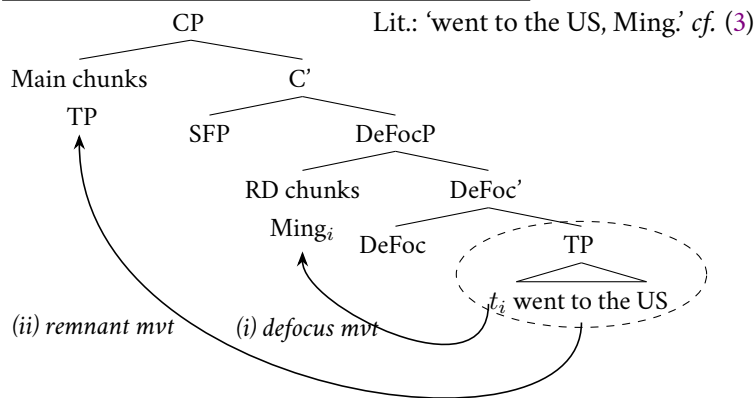
- Previous proposals of Chinese RD disagree on the assumed clausal structure: *monoclausal* vs. *biclausal*
- The **derivation relationship** between main & RD chunks (*movement* vs. *juxtaposition/coordination*)
- The **nature of the non-pronunciation** in RD chunks (*trace/Copy Deletion* vs. *ellipsis*)

Monoclausal approach: Silence = trace

(Packard 1986; Siu 1986; Cheung 1997, 2005, 2009; Law 2003; Chiang 2017, 2022; Lee 2017, 2021, 2023; Wei and Li 2018; Yip 2020)

- RD consists of **one** clause
- The two chunks are *derivationally related*:
Either main chunks are moved out from RD chunks, or both chunks involve movement
- Head-initial SFP (Simpson and Wu 2002; Paul 2014; Pan 2022) + **leftward** movement

(15) The monoclausal + movement approach to RD (adopted from Lee 2017)¹

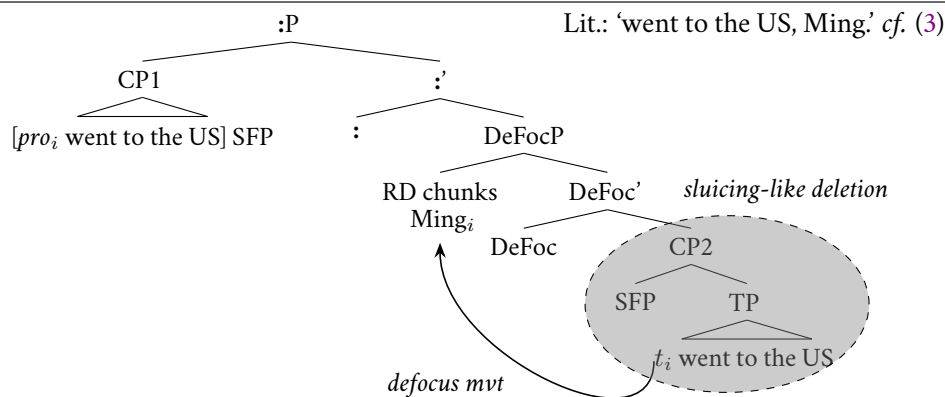


Biclausal approach: Silence = ellipsis/slucing

(Cheung 2015; Tang 2015, 2018; Chan 2016; Y. Chen 2016; Dong 2018; Yip 2025)

- The two chunks are **two** clauses, which are *base-generated* on their own
- SFPs can underlyingly be either head-initial or head-final
- There is no “cross-chunk” movement, though the RD chunk may involve movement internally

(16) The biclausal + sluicing approach to RD (Yip 2025, inspired by Cheung 2015; Ott and de Vries 2016)²



1. DeFocP is a projection for defocus/anti-focus [-Foc], elements that resist alternative-based focus (e.g., contrastive, exclusive, *wh*-question-answer). See Zubizarreta (1998), Molnárfi (2002), Zeller (2008), and Lee (2017, 2020).

2. Ott and de Vries (2016) propose that RD involves a specifying coordination : (colon) (Koster 2000), with the second clause “specifying the first by adding relevant information to it” (p.649).

3 Focus/*wh*-association in RD

3.1 The puzzle of focus/*wh*-association

First, as we will establish, ‘only/the-hell’ expressions have a peculiar *c*-command requirement:

- (17) The focus/*wh*-association constraint:
 ‘Only/the-hell’ expressions must *c-command* the **pronounced** copy of their focus/*wh*-associate.

- See Jackendoff (1972), Tancredi (1990), Beaver and Clark (2008), and Erlewine (2014, 2017) for “only”
- See Huang and Ochi (2004) for “the-hell” in Mandarin and Japanese

‘Only/the-hell’ however can be right-dislocated and associate “leftward” with the focus/*wh* in the main chunk.

- As observed the earliest in Cheung (1997), cf. Cheung (2005, 2009, 2015) and Yip (2020, 2025)

- (18) Focus association with Cantonese *zinghai* ‘only’ right-dislocated³ [CC]
- a. [_ Aaming_[F] wui lai zaa3] **zinghai**. (Subj focus)
 Ming will come SFP only
 ‘(Only) Ming will come, only’
- b. [Aaming _ zungji nibun syu_[F] zaa3] **zinghai**. (Obj focus)
 Ming like this book SFP only
 ‘Ming (only) likes *this book*, only’

- (19) Wh association with *doudai/daodi* right-dislocated
- a. [_ shui hui lai a] **daodi?** (Wh-Subj) [MC]
 who will come SFP the.hell
 ‘Who the hell will come?’
- b. [Aaming _ zungji binbun syu_[F] aa3] **doudai?** (Wh-Obj) [CC]
 Ming like which book SFP the.hell
 ‘After all, which book does Ming like?’

Also true in Japanese [JP] and Korean [KR]!

- (20) [_ Dare-ga ki-ta n-da], **ittai?** [JP]
 who-NOM come-PST NMLZ-COP the.hell
 ‘Who the hell came?’ (Yusuke Yagi, p.c.)

3. Cheung (2009) notes that RD of *zhi* ‘only’ in Mandarin is marginally acceptable, as in (i). While my consultants found (i) unacceptable (instead of being marginal), they reported that using monosyllabic *zhishi* ‘only, just’ significantly improved the judgment, such as in (ii) (cited from Dong 2018). I set the difference between *zhi* and *zhishi* aside for now.

- (i) ?[[Na ben xiaoshuo]_F ba] Zhangsan **zhi** jie-le. [MC]
 that CL novel SFP Zhangsan only borrow-PFV
 ‘Zoengsaam only borrowed *the novel* (and nothing else).’ (Cheung 2009:213)
- (ii) [Wo taoyan tamen a] **zhishi**. [MC]
 1SG dislike them SFP only
 ‘It’s just (the case) that I dislike them.’ (Dong 2018:25)

- (21) [Ku salam-i _ nwukwu-ya] **totaychey?** [KR]
 that person-NOM who-INT the.hell
 'Who the hell is that person?' (Florence Zhang, Yumin Ji, p.c.)
- (22) [Minswu-nun _ Chelswu_[F]-man(-ul) manna-ss-eyo], **oloci.** [KR]
 Minsu-TOP Cheolsu-only-ACC meet-PST-HON only
 'Minsu only met Cheolsu.' (Florence Zhang, Yumin Ji, p.c.)

- **The puzzle:** how the hell can 'only/the hell' c-command the focus/*wh* in the main chunk?

(23) The required licensing configuration in RD
_{[main ... focus/*wh* ...] SFP [RD 'only'/'the hell']}
 ↑ c-command

→ Both monoclausal movement and biclausal sluicing approaches fail to create this c-command relation.

3.2 Movement of the associates fails

- As a cross-linguistically robust phenomenon, 'only' must c-command its focus associates (Jackendoff 1972; Tancredi 1990; Aoun and Li 1993; Beaver and Clark 2008; Erlewine 2014).
- When the focused element moves out, 'only' cannot associate with it.
- The pattern holds for all kinds of movement: A-movement like raising and passivization; A'-movement like topicalization and relativization

- (24) Focus association fails with movement [CC]
- a. *[ni zek gau]_[F], Aaming **zinghai** m-zungji _ . (Topicalization)
 this CL dog Ming only not-like _
 Int.: 'Ming only doesn't like this dog.' (ONLY: 'This dog, Ming only doesn't like.')
- b. *[Aaming_k **zinghai** m-zungji _ ge] [ni zek gau]_[F] (Relativization)
 Ming only not-like _ GE this CL dog
 Int.: 'The dog x such that Ming only doesn't like x' (ONLY: 'The dog that Ming only doesn't like')

- Moving out the *wh*-associate of 'the-hell' yields ungrammaticality (Huang and Ochi 2004; Cheung 2009).

- (25) Wh-association fails with movement (Topicalization) [CC]
 *[Bin zek gau]_[F], Aaming **doudai** m-zungji _ ?
 which CL dog Ming the.hell not-like _
 Int.: 'Which dog does Ming not like?'

- This shows a sharp contrast with reflexive binding
- A'-movement like topicalization reconstructs the moved reflexives to the gap position

- (26) Reconstruction for reflexive binding with a movement-derived topic [CC]
 [keoizigei_k zek gau]_i, Aaming_k hou zungji ___i gaa3
 3SG.self CL dog Ming very like __ SFP
 Lit.: 'Himself_k's dog, Ming_k only likes.' (i.e. Ming_k likes his_k dog.)
- (27) Reconstruction possible with a movement-derived *wh*-topic [CC]
 [Bin zek keoizigei_k ge gau]_i, Aaming_k zeoi zungji ___i aa3?
 which CL 3SG.self GE dog Ming most like __ SFP
 'Which dog of himself_k Ming_k likes the most?'
- (28) Reconstruction impossible with a base-generated topic
 *[(nei waa) keoizigei_k zek gau (aa4)]_i, Aaming_k hou zungji keoi_i ge cinzyujan gaa3
 2SG say 3SG.self CL dog TOP Ming very like 3SG GE former.owner SFP
 Lit.: 'As for the dog_i of himself_k, Ming_k likes its_i former owner.'
- When the focus/*wh*-associates contain a reflexive, it is still ungrammatical to move the associates out:
- (29) Focus association fails with reconstruction [CC]
- a. ***[Keoizigei_k zek gau]_[F]_i**, Aaming_k **zinghai** zungji ___i gaa3
 3SG.self CL dog Ming only like __ SFP
 Lit.: 'Himself_k's dog, Ming_k only likes.'
- b. Aaming_k **zinghai** zungji **[Keoizigei_k zek gau]_[F]_i gaa3
 Ming only like 3SG.self CL dog SFP
 'Ming_k only likes his_k dog (lit.: himself_k's dog).'**
- (30) *Wh* association fails with reconstruction [CC]
- a. ***[Bin zek keoizigei_k ge gau]_i**, Aaming_k **doudai** zeoi zungji ___i aa3?
 which CL 3SG.self GE dog Ming the.hell most like __ SFP
 Int.: '(After all,) which dog of himself_k Ming_k likes the most?'
- b. Aaming_k **doudai** zeoi zungji **[bin zek keoizigei_k ge gau]_i aa3?
 Ming the.hell most like which CL 3SG.self GE dog SFP
 '(After all,) which dog of himself_k Ming_k likes the most?'**
- The mechanism responsible for reconstruction for binding, standardly assumed as LF interpretation of the lower copy created from movement, fails to license the focus and *wh*-association.
- If right dislocation were derived by the same *syntactic* movement mechanism (as Cheung 2009; Lee 2017 argues), movement of the focus and *wh*- associates across 'only' and 'the hell' (*via* the remnant movement) should have been disallowed - contrary to the facts!

PF movement?

- Cheung (2011): a post-syntactic PF movement alternative

- While this alternative is insightful, to the best of my knowledge, however, there is no comparable PF phrasal movement in Chinese to test this claim.
- If extraposition in English like (31) is PF phrasal movement but not A'/wh-movement (Göbbel, Bainbridge, and Agbayani 2007) - which is also controversial - we can use it to test “PF-movement” of focus out of *only*'s domain.
- However, it does not license focus association.

(31) a. [A man with blond hair] came into the room.
 b. [A man $_i$] came into the room [with blond hair] $_i$.
 c. *[With what color hair] $_i$ did [a man $_i$] come into the room?
 (Göbbel, Bainbridge, and Agbayani 2007, ex. 10a-b)

(32) a. [**Only** a man *with blond hair* $_{[F]}$] came into the room.
 b. *[**Only** a man $_i$] came into the room *with blond hair* $_{[F]}$ $_i$. (Intended reading = (a))

Since movement of focus/wh-associate fails independently ...

→ The silence in RD chunks **cannot** be due to movement/Copy Deletion!
 → **No correct c-command relation** can be created for focus/wh-association

(33) Monoclausal movement (RD-mvt + TP mvt)
 $[_{CP} \Delta_{SFP} [\Delta_{...} [_{TP} \text{'only/the-hell' ... focus/wh}]]]]]$

(34) The illicit configuration created by monoclausal movement approaches
 $*[_{CP} [_{TP} \dots \text{focus/wh} \dots] C\text{-SFP} [_{DeFocP} \dots \text{'only'/'the hell' } \dots *[_{TP} \dots \text{focus/wh} \dots] \dots]$

but fails to associate w/ traces

- NB: I do **not** assume the Rmerge theory of movement, because there is ample evidence for the Copy Theory of Movement from partial CD (Bošković and Nunes 2007; van Urk 2018; Yip and Ahenkorah 2023; Lee and Yip 2025)
- Rmerge also does not work for focus/wh-association in RD anyway (ask me in Q&A)

3.3 Ellipsis/slucing of the associates fails

The biclausal + sluicing approach is no better than the monoclausal + movement approach.

- The focus association fails in VP ellipsis with the associate elided, as already noted in Cheung (2009)⁴
- Only when ‘only’ is pronounced - fine if ‘only’ is elided all together!

4. Note that (interrogative) *wh*-words cannot be elided in VP ellipsis, independently.

(35) Focus association fails in VP ellipsis [CC]

- a. Aaming **zinghai** wui maai siusyut_[F]. *Aafan dou **zinghai** wui _{[VP maai siusyut_[F]]}
 Ming only will buy novel Fan also only will
 Int.: 'Ming will only buy novels. Fan as well.'
- b. Aaming wui **zinghai** maai siusyut_[F]. Aafan dou wui _{[VP zinghai maai siusyut_[F]]}
 Ming will only buy novel Fan also will
 'Ming will only buy novels. Fan as well.'

PF sluicing?

- Cheung (2015) suggests that the focus and *wh* association in RD is exceptionally licensed by “PF sluicing” (as opposed to ellipsis)
- Interrogative *wh*-words can be elided in fragment questions (cf. H. Li 2015 for Mandarin)
- The fragment consists of a contrastive topic, and optionally an adverbial

(36) Interrogative *wh*-words elided in fragment questions [CC]

- Q1. Aaming tingjat wui heoi **bindou**? A1. Tousyugun.
 Ming tomorrow will go where library
 'Where will Ming go tomorrow?' 'Library.'
- Q2. Gam Aafan (**tingjat**) ne? A2. Hokhaau.
 then Fan tomorrow TOP school
 'What about Fan (tomorrow)?' 'School.'
 (i.e. Where will Fan go tomorrow?)

- Wei (2018): fragment questions in Chinese are derived by movement + deletion (=sluicing)
- Importantly, fragment questions, unlike regular movement, have selective island repair effects, supporting the sluicing approach (see Wei 2018 for a pied-piping explanation on the island repair effects)

(37) Sluicing in question fragments repairs islands selectively

- a. [CP Question fragment _{[TP [Left-branch/Sent.-Subj. ...]]]}
- b. *[CP Question fragment _{[TP [CNPI/Adjunct ...]]]}

- Now, we have a construction comparable to the biclausal+sluicing approach of RD to test whether the focus and *wh* association survives in sluicing - and the answer is no.

(38) Wh association fails in fragment questions [CC]

- Q1. Aaming **doudai** wui heoi **bindou**? A1. Tousyugun.
 Ming the.hell will go where library
 'Where the hell will Ming go?' 'Library.'

Q2.*Gam Aafan **doudai** ne?
 then Fan the.hell TOP
 Int.: 'What about Fan?'

- The same for focus associates of 'only', tested by fragment polar questions

(39) Fragment polar questions (baseline) [CC]

Q1. Aaming tingjat wui heoi tousyugun aa4? Ming tmr. will go library SFP 'Will Ming go to the library tomorrow?'	A1. Wui. will 'He will.'
Q2. Gam Aafan (tingjat) ne? then Fan tomorrow TOP 'What about Fan (tomorrow)?' (i.e. Will Fan go to the library tomorrow?)	A2. Dou wui. also will 'She will as well.'

(40) Focus association fails in fragment questions [CC]

Q1. Aaming zinghai wui heoi tousyugun aa4? Ming only will go library SFP 'Will Ming only go to the library?'	A1. Wui. will 'He will.'
Q2.*Gam Aafan zinghai ne? then Fan only TOP Int.: 'What about Fan?'	

- One more test for focus association from verbal echo answers containing an adverbial, which is again argued to be derived by movement + deletion (Simpson 2014; Z. Chen 2022)
- Again, focus association fails in verbal echo answers!

(41) Verbal echo answers

Q. Aaming sengjat tai nibun syu gaa4?
 Ming often read this book SFP
 'Does Ming often read this book?'

A. Sengjat tai.
 often read
 'Ming often reads this book.'

(42) Focus association fails in verbal echo answers

Q. Aaming zinghai tai [nibun syu] _[F] Ming only read this book gaa4? SFP 'Does Ming only read this book?'	A. * Zinghai tai. only read 'Ming only reads this book.'
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[CC]

- Cheung (2015)'s suggestion that RD involves "PF sluicing" cannot explain the exceptional licensing of focus and *wh* associations in RD
- Just to complete the pattern, English sluicing, which has been argued extensively as PF sluicing (e.g., Merchant 2001, 2004), also fails the test of focus association

- (43) Baseline: Focus association without sluicing
- They **only** don't know that John took FRENCH. (but know whether he took German)
 - They **only** don't know that some specific person took FRENCH. (but know whether that person took German)
 - They **only** don't know who took FRENCH. (but know who took GERMAN)
- (44) Test case: Focus association with sluicing
Someone took French. ...
- ... I don't know which person took FRENCH, though I know who took GERMAN.
 - ... I don't know which person ~~took FRENCH~~, though I know who took GERMAN.
 - * ... I **only** don't know which person ~~took FRENCH~~, though I know who took GERMAN. (with FRENCH as the intended associate)

Since ellipsis/sluicing of focus/*wh*-associate fails independently ...

- The silence in RD chunks *cannot* be due to ellipsis/sluicing!
- **No correct c-command relation** can be created for focus/*wh*-association

- (45) Biclausal sluicing (RD-mvt + TP sluicing (shaded))

[CP1 ... focus/*wh*...SFP][CP2 Δ ['only/the-hell'... focus/*wh*]]

- (46) The illicit configuration created by biclausal sluicing approaches

*[CP1 [... focus/*wh* ...] SFP] [CP2 ... 'only'/'the hell' ... <focus/*wh*> ... SFP]

but fails to associate w/ elided materials

4 Right dislocation as multidominance

I propose that RD consists of a (i) biclausal (ii) *multidominant* structure. The required c-command configuration directly follows from a “non-bulk sharing” analysis of RD.

- (47) Multidominance in right dislocation

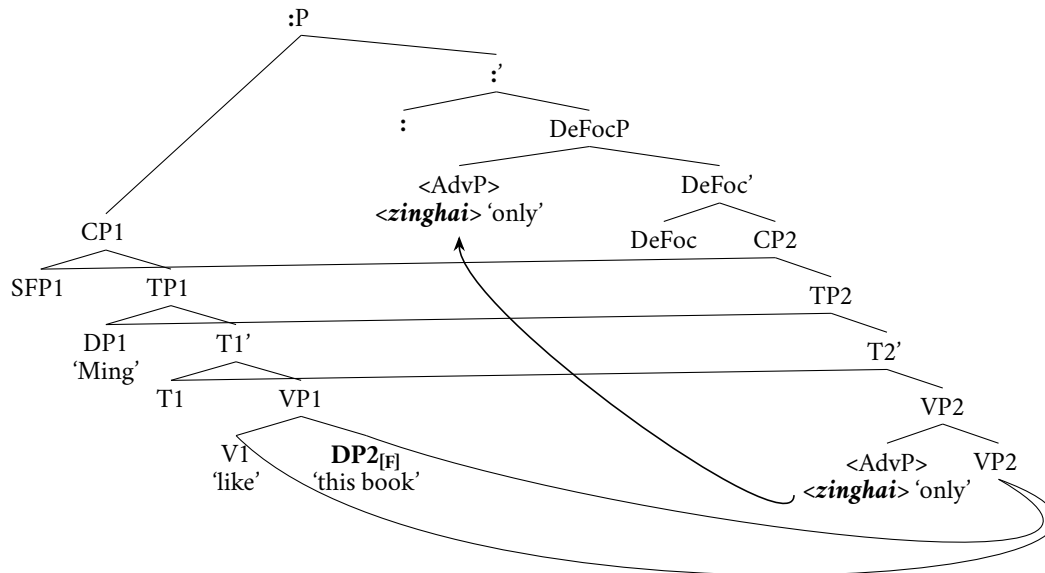
CP2 shares every (non-branching) node with CP1 except for the defocused element(s) that undergo(es) movement.

- “Node sharing”/Parallel Merge in a coordinated structure:
 - Right Node Raising (Wilder 1999; Belk, Neeleman, and Philip 2023, *i.a.*)
 - ATB *wh*-movement (Citko 2005; de Vries 2009, *i.a.*)
 - Conjoined *wh*-question (Gračanin-Yuksek 2007; Citko and Gračanin-Yuksek 2013, *i.a.*)
E.g., *What and where did Kelly drink?* → also requires *non-bulk sharing*
 - Cf. Hewett’s (2025 Apr 25) WCCFL talk on Parallel Merge in adjunction cases with parasitic gaps!

- *Linearization*: non-trivial! For now, let's assume all the shared nodes linearized/ordered before the non-shared ones in RD (i.e., the opposite of conjoined *wh*-questions)
- Let's focus on the **structural** relations that are uniquely created by multidominance

(48) [Aaming _ zungji [nibun syu]_[F] zaa3] **zinghai**. (Obj focus)
 Ming like this book SFP only
 'Ming (only) likes *this book*, only' (Reproduced from (6))

(49) A slightly simplified derivation of right dislocation of adverb 'only' Lit.: 'Ming likes *this book*, only.'

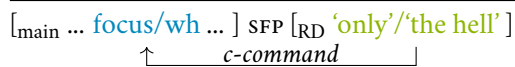


- Under Wilder (1999)'s definition of c-command, the pronounced copy of *zinghai* c-commands DP2
- Delivers the required licensing configuration

Wilder (1999, ex. 18-21)'s definition of c-command:

- (50) a. Sharing: α is shared by X and Y iff (i) neither of X and Y dominates the other, and (ii) both X and Y dominate α
- b. Full dominance: X fully dominates α iff X dominates α and X does not share α
- c. Wilder's version of c-command: X c-commands α iff (i) $X \neq \alpha$, (ii) X does not *fully* dominate α , (iii) α does not dominate X, and (iv) all categories that dominate X dominate α

(51) Multidominance creates the required c-command relation in RD



5 Against rightward movement

Another straightforward way to get the c-command relation right—rightward movement

- *What you see is what you get*: SFPs are head-final, and RD is rightward movement

- E.g., Bhatt and Dayal (2007) on Hindi-Urdu/Bangla (but see Simpson and Choudhury 2015), or Simon (1989) on Japanese (but see Tanaka 2001 and many others), etc.

(52) Monoclausal + rightward movement of RD *to be rejected*
 [CP [C' [TP *t* focus/*wh*] SFP] 'only/the.hell']


—except that rightward movement analysis is empirically wrong in RD!

- ← Theory-internal consideration: LCA (Kayne 1994)
- ← Analytically: RD does not obey constraints found in other rightward movement, e.g., **no Right Roof Constraint** (cf. long-distance cases in (12))
- ← Empirically: RD involves a **biclausal** structure, not a monoclausal one
 - (i) Strong typological correlation between inventory of *empty categories* and availability of **gapped RD**
 - (ii) **Five** arguments with **eight** case studies in Chinese by Yip (2025) (one is reproduced below)
- ← Language-internal concerns: Treating Chinese SFPs as head-final would also violate the **Final-over-Final Condition**, since Chinese verbal domains are head-initial (see also Simpson and Wu 2002 for empirical evidence that SFPs are head-initial)

RD is not subject to Right Roof Constraint

(53) Right Roof Constraint in rightward extraposition (Ross 1967:166)

- a. [That [a review _] came out yesterday [of this article]_i] is catastrophic.
- b. *[That [a review _] came out yesterday] is catastrophic [of this article]_i.

- First, RD is a root phenomenon and cannot be embedded. The landing site thus must be in the root clause.

(54) RD is a root phenomenon

- a. *Ngo zi [CP [ZS _ heoi tai hei (ge3)] soeng] lo1. [CC]
 1SG know ZS go watch movie SFP want SFP
 Int.: 'I know ZS wants to go to see a movie.' (Lee 2017:62; ge3 added)
- b. *Wo zhidao [CP [_ qu kan dianying (le)] Zhangsan] a. [MC]
 1SG know go watch movie SFP Zhangsan SFP
 Int.: 'I know that Zhangsan went to watch a movie (already).'

- Second, RD can be long-distance. Note that the SFP *aa3* cannot be embedded as well, indicating the root level. This shows clearly that no RRC is in effect.

(55) No Right Roof Constraint in RD: long-distance movement

- [ngo zi [CP ZS _ maai-zo bou soenggei] aa3] hai dinnouzit. (GRD) [CC]
 1SG know ZS buy-PFV CL camera SFP at computer.festival
 'I know ZS bought a/the camera at the Computer Festival.' (Lee 2017:64)

- Note that linear order does not play a role either. It is possible to RD a matrix material when there is an embedded clause.

(56) [_ zi [CP ZS hai dinnouzit maai-zo bou soenggei] aa3] ngo. (GRD) [CC]
 know ZS at computer.festival buy-PFV CL camera SFP 1SG
 'I know ZS bought a/the camera at the Computer Festival.'

A typological argument for biclausality

One key difference between the monoclausal and the biclausal approach is whether the *gaps* in GRD are **movement-derived** or **base-generated as empty categories**.

(57) a. [CP [TP t_{XP} YP] [SFP [XP_{RD} ... t_{TP}]] Monoclausal: YP-SFP-XP
 b. [CP₁ [e_i] YP SFP] [CP₂ XP_{RD*i*} [... t_{XP} YP SFP]] Biclausal: YP-SFP-XP

Different prediction on the correlation between *the type of GRD* and *the inventory of empty categories*:

- Monoclausal: **no correlation!**
 → GRD of X should be possible as long as movement of X is independently available (say, *wh*-movement or topicalization)
- Biclausal: **Correlated!**
 → GRD of X should only be possible if base-generated *empty* X is possible

Moment of truth—there **is** a very strong correlation cross-linguistically!

Languages	Empty category inventory			Gapped right dislocation		
	Subject drop	Object drop	Empty verb ⁵	Subject GRD	Object GRD	Verb GRD
Cantonese, Mandarin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Japanese, Korean	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗
Catalan, Spanish	✓	✗	?	✓	✗	?
Dutch, English	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

Table 1: Correlation between GRD and empty categories

- ❶ **The Chinese type**: subjects, objects, verbs may be dropped (Huang 1982; Y.-H. A. Li 2005; Tang 2001)
 → subjects (see (2)), objects, and verbs may be gapped
- ❷ **The Japanese-Korean type**: subjects and objects may be dropped, but not verbs
 → subjects and objects may be gapped (Tanaka 2001; Park and Kim 2009; Takano 2014), but not verbs (for Japanese, Yusuke Yagi p.c.)
- ❸ **The Catalan-Spanish type**: subjects may be dropped, but not objects
 → subjects may be gapped, but not objects (Fernández-Sánchez 2017)
- ❹ **The Dutch-English type**: none of subjects, objects, and verbs can be dropped
 → no subject and object GRD (Ott and de Vries 2016), nor verb GRD

5. Gapping as in *John talked about Bill and Mary ~~talked~~ about Susan*, which arguably is a elliptical phenomenon (as opposed to “born empty” elements), should not be considered.

A language-internal argument for biclausality

This argument concerns whether negation can be right-dislocated.

- Heads like modals and verbs can be right-dislocated in GRD/DC (Lee 2017, 2021, 2022)
 - Assuming a monoclausal structure, we might expect that movement of negation is allowed in GRD
 - In the biclausal structure in (58b), however, there is no empty negation in CP1
- CP1 thus denotes an affirmative proposition
 → contradicts CP2 that has a negative polarity → unnaturalness

- (58) a. Monoclausal approach predicts that negation can be right-dislocated with a gap
 [CP [TP ... t_i ...] [SFP [negation_i ... t_{TP}]]] (head movement of negation)
- b. Biclausal approach predicts that negation cannot be right-dislocated with a gap
 *[CP₁ ... (affirmative) ... SFP] [CP₂ negation_i [... t_i ...]] (contradiction)

The prediction by the biclausal approach is borne out:

→ Negation cannot leave a gap in the main chunk (first mentioned by Cheung 1997:108), and must occur twice

- (59) Negation cannot be right-dislocated in GRD
- a. *Keoi _ heoi-gwo Meigwok gaa3 **zung mei** [CC] b. *Ta _ qu Meiguo a **bu hui**. [MC]
 3SG go-EXP US SFP still not.yet 3SG go US SFP not will
 Int.: ‘S/he hasn’t been to the US yet.’ Int.: ‘S/he won’t go to the US.’

- (60) Negation can be right-dislocated in DC
- a. Keoi **zung mei** heoi-gwo Meigwok gaa3 **zung mei**. [CC]
 3SG still not.yet go-EXP US SFP still not.yet
 ‘S/he hasn’t been to the US yet.’
- b. Ta **bu hui** qu Meiguo a **bu hui**. [MC]
 3SG not will go US SFP not will
 ‘S/he won’t go to the US.’

The oddness of (59) is comparable to that of juxtaposing two contradicting propositions:

- (61) Keoi heoi-gwo Meigwok gaa3. #Keoi **zung mei** heoi-gwo Meigwok gaa3. [CC]
 3SG go-EXP US SFP 3SG still not.yet go-EXP US SFP
 ‘S/he has been to the US. #S/he hasn’t been to the US yet.’

Another alternative: Right adjunction

- Or one can say the RD element is right-adjoined to the CP in the main chunk → ✓ c-command
- Tradition idea of afterthought “fragments” (Luke 2004)

- (62) Monoclausal + right-adjunction of RD *to be rejected*
 [CP [CP [TP e_i YP] SFP] **XP_i**]

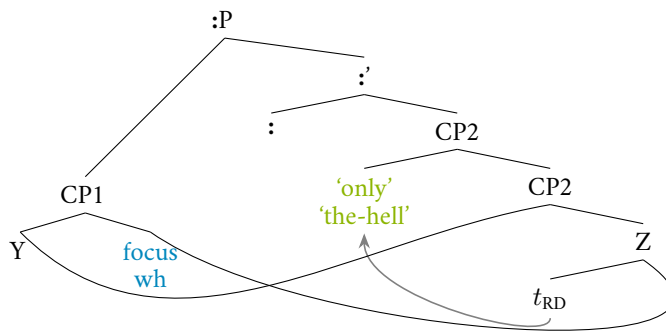
- ← General absence of right-adjunction in Chinese
- ← Empirically: wrongly predicts a total absence of reconstruction
- ← Empirically: fails to capture island effects

6 Conclusion

Summary of the talk

- I showed that focus/wh-association requires the RD elements to **c-command** the main chunk “leftward”
- I proposed that only a **multidominant** structure of RD can generate this correct **structural relation**
 - The “non-pronunciation” in the RD chunk is a result of “node-sharing”/Parallel Merge (Wilder 1999; Citko 2005; Gračanin-Yuksek 2007, *i.a.*)
 - (Leftward) movement and sluicing approaches fail to create this c-command relation
 - Rightward movement is empirically untenable

(63) A schematic multidominant structure of RD



→ **Upshot:** focus/wh-association serves as reliable **diagnostic tests** for multidominant structures

- Focus association of ‘only’ corroborates the multidominant analysis of:

(64) Right-Node Raising (cf. Wilder 1999; Belk, Neeleman, and Philip 2023, *i.a.*)

- John likes __, and Mary also likes, this book.
- John **only** likes __, and Mary also (**only**) likes, **THIS BOOK**.

(65) Transparent free relative (cf. van Riemsdijk 1998, *i.a.*)

- They served me (what they euphemistically referred to as) a steak.
- They served me (what they could **only** referred to as) a **steak**.

→ New **diagnostic tests** that capitalize the *structural* relations created by multidominance

→ See Yip & Tamar-Mattis’s (2025 April 25-27th) WCCFL talk!

(66) Further issues to explore

- How to linearize the RD multidominant structure?
- Does RD in other languages also have a multidominant structure? If not, what is the explanation of the variation?
- How to derive the c-command requirement of focus/wh-association?
- ...

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