

On Sluicing and island repair: Sluicing is neither a ferry nor a bridge

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Abstract

Sluicing, which is typically understood as a process that involves wh-movement followed by TP ellipsis, is widely assumed to fix island violations. Languages that allow multiple wh-fronting typically also allow multiple sluicing, but multiple sluicing—despite being so readily available—fails to preserve all properties typically associated with sluicing. Specifically, island-violations turn out to be very restricted in multiple sluicing constructions. In this paper we put forth a series of cases where multiple sluicing fails to fix island violations, and argue that this is best explained if we simply discard the idea that island violations can be fixed in sluicing. We claim that the deleted TP does not need to be an exact copy of the antecedent clause and discuss a couple of ideas that have been proposed to explain various non-typical sluicing phenomena.

Keywords: Sluicing, multiple sluicing, islands, island-repair, Slovenian

1 Introduction

Sluicing is standardly understood to be an instance of TP ellipsis preceded by wh-movement (Ross 1969; Merchant 2001 among others).¹ As the phenomenon is linked to a number of interesting properties, sluicing turns up in many theoretical discussions. We will be looking more closely at its widely assumed property that it can fix various island violations (Ross 1969; Lasnik 2001; Merchant 2001; Fox & Lasnik 2003 etc.). It is not completely clear whether this is a consequence of ellipsis more generally (Fox & Lasnik 2003 argue that there is some island repair also in VP ellipsis, and Bošković 2011 tries to derive this property from some more basic property linked to ellipsis) or whether it is restricted only to a subtype of ellipsis constructions, but it is generally accepted that many unavailable movements become available if they are followed by TP ellipsis, as in sluicing constructions and its variants (with which we mean swiping, spading, etc.). An example of this is shown in (1). Whereas a wh-word cannot move out from a relative clause to the beginning of the entire sentence in regular questions, (1a), such movement is apparently possible in sluicing in (1b) if we assume structural identity between the deleted TP in the ellipsis site and the antecedent clause.²

¹This article is an elaboration of a previous short proceedings paper of ours: As a result some parts of the arguments presented here are very similar, but we omit systematic mentioning in the relevant parts to avoid repetitive self-referencing.

²We are using the following terms for the various parts of the sentence that involves sluicing:

- (1) a. *Who did John ride the horse that kicked ____?
 b. John rode the horse that kicked someone, but I don't know who [~~John rode the horse [that kicked _____]~~]

This approach has many supporters, but it is not universally accepted. Chung, Ladusaw & McCloskey (1995, 2011) argued that sluicing does not really involve deletion as the construction actually does not involve any syntactic structure. This approach easily explains the apparent island-violations data, because on such a view, this data simply does not involve any island violations. No syntactic structure means that there are no movements, and thus no movement could have been illicit. This approach, however, faces problems with things like case matching, which is observed to hold cross-linguistically in sluicing (see Merchant 2001 for many similar arguments in favor of this view). As shown in the Slovenian examples in (2), the *wh*-word that survives sluicing carries the case of the underlying argument it replaces.³ If sluicing involves *wh*-movement followed by TP deletion, this falls out naturally; but as we pointed out, apparent island violations then remain mysterious.

- (2) a. Nekdo je Petru pokazal Micko, ampak ne vem
 someone.NOM AUX Peter.DAT showed Micka.ACC but not know
 kdo.
 who.NOM
 'Someone showed Micka to Peter, but I don't know who.'
 b. Janez je nekomu pokazal Micko, ampak ne vem komu.
 Janez.NOM AUX someone.DAT showed Micka.ACC but not know who.DAT
 'Janez showed Micka to someone, but I don't know who.'
 c. Janez je Petru pokazal nekoga, ampak ne vem koga?
 Janez.NOM AUX Peter.DAT showed someone.ACC but not know who.ACC
 'Janez showed someone to Peter, but I don't know who.'

Alternatively, it can also be hypothesized that sluicing does not involve the deletion of an entire sentence that is structurally identical to the antecedent but that the ellipsis site rather contains either some smaller portion of the structure, possibly one where no islands are violated, or else a syntactically somewhat differently construed semantically identical structure. The latter option is suggested by (Merchant 2001, p. 209), who proposes that propositional islands, i.e. relative clauses, adjuncts, and basically anything clausal, are not fixed by sluicing since in these cases, the deleted material does not involve the entire antecedent clause but only a subpart of it, namely, just the clause that created the propositional island, (3). Following this logic, propositional islands are not fixed by sluicing as they have never been violated in the first place (cf. Baker & Brame 1972, among others, for a similar proposal).

- (3) Merchant (2001) suggests the structure for examples like
 (1b) *John rode the horse that kicked someone, but I don't know who.*
 is not: ...who [~~John rode the horse [that kicked _____]~~]
 but rather: ...who [~~horse kicked _____]~~

[John kissed [some girl]], but I don't know [[which girl] John kissed _____]
[_____]
[antecedent]
[[remnant] ellipsis site]
[sluice]

³Unless stated otherwise, non-English examples in this paper are Slovenian.

In what follows, we will go through a series of Slovenian examples and show how the predominant view that sluicing repairs (all) islands cannot be fully correct. The data suggest that sluicing does not rescue island violations, but rather that sluicing does not involve the deletion of the entire antecedent clause and that the deleted TP inside the sluice is not necessarily structurally identical to the antecedent clause. We will ultimately claim that sluicing never repairs island violations. We thus support the recent claims by [Abels \(2011\)](#); [Barros \(2012\)](#); [Barros, Elliott & Thoms \(2014\)](#), who argue that island insensitivity is just apparent as the identity condition between the sluice and the antecedent is semantic rather than syntactic (cf. also [Szczegielniak 2006](#); [Szczegielniak et al. 2008](#); [Abels & Dayal 2017](#)).

Non-English examples in this paper are Slovenian; as far as we were able to determine when presenting this work, however, the same arguments could be made with Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian [BCMS] (Boban Arsenijević p.c., Martina Graćanin Yuksek p.c.), Russian (Jacopo Garzonio p.c.), Czech (Mojmir Dočekal p.c.), and also Lithuanian ([Adline 2014](#)).

In section 2, we present the basic question concerning multiple sluicing constructions. In section 3, we go through a series of different types of islands and show how in multiple sluicing constructions the expected sluicing-facilitated amelioration vanishes for all of them. In section 4 we look at how pied-piping and other island-ameliorating strategies interact with island violations in sluicing, section 5 suggests a solution, and section 6 discusses some of the consequences.

2 Multiple sluicing

Slovenian is a multiple wh-movement language, (4). In this respect it patterns with BCMS (see [Golden 1997](#); [Mišmaš 2015](#) and references therein for further information and for the specifics of Slovenian wh-movement). It is therefore not surprising that it also readily allows multiple sluicing constructions, as in (5).

- (4) Koga je komu Janez predstavil?
 who.ACC AUX who.DAT Janez introduced
 ‘Who did Janez introduce to who?’
- (5) Nekoga je predstavil nekomu, pa ne vem koga komu.
 Someone.ACC AUX introduce someone.DAT but not know who.ACC who.DAT
 ‘He introduced someone to someone, but I don’t know who to who.’

Slovenian, like BCMS and unlike Bulgarian and Macedonian, does not allow multiple long-distance wh-movement. So as shown in (6), while a single wh-word can front from an embedded declarative clause, two wh-words cannot.

- (6) a. Koga je Vid rekel, da je Črt predstavil Micki?
 Who.ACC AUX Vid said that AUX Črt introduced Micka.DAT
 ‘Who did Vid say that Črt introduced to Micka?’
- b. *Komu je koga Vid rekel, da je Črt predstavil?
 Who.DAT AUX who.ACC Vid said that AUX Črt introduced
- c. *Koga je komu Vid rekel, da je Črt predstavil?
 Who.ACC AUX who.DAT Vid said that AUX Črt introduced

Example (6) contrasts with multiple-slucing examples with comparable sentential structure, given that sluicing constructions with multiple remnants from an embedded clause are possible, as shown in (7).⁴

- (7) a. Vid je rekel, da je Črt predstavil enmu enga, pa ne vem
 Vid AUX said that AUX Črt introduce one.DAT one.ACC, but not know
 komu koga.
 who.DAT who.ACC
 ‘Vid said that Črt introduced someone to someone, but I don’t know who to who.’
 b. ...who.DAT who.ACC [Vid said [that Črt introduced _____]]

Assuming the standard view that sluicing (or ellipsis in general) fixes improper movement violations, this difference is easily explained. Movement of the second wh-word violates some grammatical constraint, which, in Lasnik’s (2001) terms, results in syntactic structure (or some specific node) being marked with * or # (cf. Chomsky 1972). This marking is erased when the TP is sluiced, which means that it disappears from the derivation; so given that the structure no longer contains any such ungrammatical marking, the sentence becomes fine.

The same mechanism is often invoked for explaining how sluicing fixes island violations (Ross 1969; Lasnik 2001; Merchant 2001; Fox & Lasnik 2003; Boeckx & Lasnik 2006 etc.). As shown in (8), for example, wh-extraction from a relative clause is not possible in regular wh-questions, (8a), (Ross 1969), but it immediately becomes possible if it is followed by sluicing, (8b).⁵

- (8) a. *Koga je Črt razlagal o konju, ki je brcnil?
 who AUX Črt explained about horse which AUX kicked
 ‘Whom was Črt explaining about a horse that kicked?’
 b. Črt je razlagal o konju, ki je brcnil nekoga, pa ne vem
 Črt AUX talked about horse which AUX kicked someone but not know
 koga.
 who
 ‘Črt was explaining about a horse that kicked someone, but I don’t know whom.’
 c. ...who.ACC [Črt was explaining about a horse [that kicked _____]]

There is, nevertheless, another way of looking at this. If sluicing is able to repair illicit steps in the syntactic derivation, it should be able to fix everything, not just island violations. Any violation that is not “marked” on the moving element itself should in principle be voidable by sluicing. This is, naturally, not that easy to test as the only element surviving sluicing is the remnant, which means that we have no way of knowing what is being deleted and what kind of violations may have occurred during the derivation that got deleted. But assuming that the sluice is parallel to the antecedent, we can

⁴Some of the examples are written in partially nonstandard Slovenian in order to make sure they are judged in their most natural version.

⁵English translations may ignore grammaticality to mirror the original examples as closely as possible. To maximize clarity, we also provide English translations for ungrammatical Slovenian examples (without explicitly marking them as intended translations).

construct sentences that test this prediction. For example, as shown in (9), a regular sentence like (9a) is ungrammatical because the dative/prepositional argument is not selected. Assuming that this ungrammaticality is marked on the attachment site rather than on the argument itself, it is predicted (given the logic just explained) that this ungrammaticality should be voided in sluicing; but as shown in (9b), the constructed sluicing structure is clearly out. Of course, there might be other reasons why (9b) is ungrammatical, as the ungrammaticality might also result from one of the two interfaces (e.g. the introduced argument cannot be interpreted as LF etc.). So we do not take this as an argument against the view that sluicing deletes ungrammaticality, but it is nevertheless suggestive that not everything can be fixed by simple deletion of the syntactic structure.

- (9) a. *Peter kissed John to Mary.
 b. *Peter kissed John, but I don't know to who.

Similarly, one can ask whether an argument should even be made from examples in (2) at all. How do we know these cases were really grammatical in their base position? Could this not result from an ungrammatical structure that ultimately got deleted? Why can we not use some default case on these wh-words, something that would be ungrammatical in a sentence where the sluice was not deleted?

An alternative approach could be to claim that sluicing does not save island violations. This is not a new proposal as the claims that the ellipsis site does not contain the deleted antecedent clause is very old (cf. Baker & Brame 1972; Chung et al. 1995, etc.). A middle way was suggested in Merchant (2001). He notes that propositional islands could have an alternative source for sluicing so that the ellipsis would not target the entire antecedent clause but only the embedded clause where the wh-words originate. This is sketched in (10), where (10a) gives the alternative source of (7) and (10b) the alternative source of (8b).

- (10) a. ...who.DAT who.ACC {Janez introduced _____}
 b. ...who.ACC {a horse kicked _____}

Following this idea, examples like (7) and (8b) are available because they have a possible source that does not violate any constraints on movement. If we take this view to the extreme and claim that sluicing never saves island violations, then sluicing will only be available if there exists an acceptable overt version of the entire construction. As a result, only those apparent violations will be possible that have a possible overt source. But if there is no possible overt source, then sluicing should be equally impossible.

This view seems to be supported by the paradigm presented in Lasnik (2014), who cites the BCMS example in (11), where the sluice consists of two wh-words that originate in two different clauses.

- (11) a. Neko misli da je Ivan nešto pojeo.
 Someone thinks that is Ivan something ate
 'Someone thinks that Ivan ate something.' (BCMS)
 b. % Pitam se ko šta.
 ask self who what
 'I wonder who what.' (BCMS)
 c. ...who what {_____ thinks [that Ivan ate _____]}

According to Lasnik (2014) judgments for (11b) correlate with the judgments for comparable wh-extraction. One out of seven speakers rejected (11b). The same speaker was also the only speaker that rejected (12).

- (12) % Ko šta misli da je Petar pojeo?
 Who what thinks that is Petar ate
 ‘Who thinks that Petar ate what?’ (BCMS)

We made a quick online questionnaire with 4 pairs of sentences where each pair consisted of a sluicing sentence and a regular wh-question that corresponded to the non-elided sluice, the same as (11) and (12). All 13 speakers of BCMS judged the wh-question sentence as better than the sluicing sentence of the same pair. Even though this does not fully confirm Lasnik’s (2014) report on BCMS data, it does confirm our prediction given above (“sluicing will only be available if the overt version of the entire construction is acceptable”) and disproves the standard approach to sluicing, which should predict sluicing to be more permissible and therefore judged as better than the overt versions of the same clause.

The Lasnik (2014) type of examples are ungrammatical in Slovenian, both sluicing and regular wh-questions:⁶

- (13) a. *Nekdo misli, da je Črt nekaj pojedel, ampak ne vem kdo
 Someone thinks that AUX Črt something ate but not know who
 kaj.
 what
 ‘Someone thinks that Črt ate something, but I don’t know who what.’
 b. ...who what [_____thinks [that Črt ate _____]]
- (14) *Kdo kaj misli, da je Črt pojedel?
 Who what thinks that AUX Črt ate
 ‘Who thinks that Črt ate what?’

In fact, any version of simultaneous extraction of one wh-word from an embedded clause and the other one from the matrix clause is ungrammatical in Slovenian. Example (15) shows this is the case for simultaneous extraction of the matrix subject and an embedded adjunct.

- (15) a. *Nekdo je rekel, da je Črt nekam šel, pa ne vem kdo
 someone AUX said that AUX Črt somewhere gone but not know who
 kam.
 where
 ‘Somebody mentioned that Črt went somewhere, but I don’t know who where.’
 b. ...who where [_____mentioned [that Črt went _____]]

⁶In ungrammatical sluicing examples such as (13) the reported ungrammaticality originates in the sluice part of the sentence; the antecedent part of such examples is always unproblematic. This also applies to all subsequent examples where the sluice part is expressed as an independent sentence, so that the ungrammatical judgement reported by the asterisk preceding such two-sentence examples really only applies to the sluice part of the example.

- (16) *Kdo je kam omenil, da je Črt šel?
 Who AUX where mentioned that AUX Črt went
 ‘Who mentioned that Črt went where?’

The unavailability of examples like (15) and (13) could be attributed to the more general ban on multiple extractions from two different clauses if it was not the case that for many speakers, the BCMS example in (11) is ok. If multiple extraction from different clauses is bad, how come that it is allowed in BCMS precisely for those speakers who allow multiple wh-fronting from different clauses?

The importance of these examples is that they show that the condition for accepting a sluicing construction is the acceptability of regular overt wh-movement in comparable wh-questions. Sluicing is fine only if such extraction is ok in simple questions. In short, sluicing is available only in cases where the non-elided sluice is also grammatical.

This means that in these cases, sluicing cannot fix movement violations. Taking this to the extreme, we could say this is because sluicing never fixes improper-movement violations, and that perhaps even island repair is just an illusion. The illusion is achieved because there is no violation of any syntactic constraints in the sluice in the first place (cf. [Szczegielniak 2006](#); [Abels 2011](#); [Barros et al. 2014](#) etc.). We will now go through a series of examples that all seem to suggest the same thing, namely, that sluicing does not rescue any island violations and that, consequently, all instances of island repair are just apparent.

3 Extraction from an island + another extraction

[Merchant \(2001\)](#) differentiates between two types of islands, propositional and non-propositional islands. We follow Merchant and group the data in the following sections according to these two groups: section 3.1 presents data with propositional islands, while sections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 discuss data with non-propositional islands, even though, as we will see at the end, this distinction might not really be needed. We will systematically look at island violations that seem to be repaired by sluicing, and try to combine them with another extraction. We will see that extractions from islands are truly acceptable only in single sluicing constructions. As soon as they are combined with another extraction that does not originate in the same island, the availability of sluicing disappears.

3.1 Propositional islands

3.1.1 Relative clauses

As shown above in (8), we can easily extract a wh-word from a relative clause in sluicing. But notice that we cannot combine such a violation with another wh-extraction that does not originate in the same clause. For example, we cannot extract two wh-words from two different relative clauses, as shown in (17a).

- (17) a. *Črt je dal konju, ki je nekoga brcnil, podkev, ki jo je
 Črt AUX gave horse which AUX someone kicked horseshoe which it AUX
 nekje kupil, ampak ne vem, koga kje.
 somewhere bought but not know whom where
 ‘Črt gave the horse that kicked someone a horseshoe that he bought some-
 where, but I don’t know whom where.’

- b. ...whom where [~~Črt gave the horse [that kicked _____] a horseshoe [that he bought _____]~~]

Combinations of a single island violation and another extraction from the matrix clause are similarly ungrammatical. So even when the other extraction does not violate anything, the combination of the two is ungrammatical. Again, there is a clause boundary between the two extraction sites, which we will comment on in section 3.1.5.

- (18) a. *Nekdo je govoril o konju, ki je brnil nekoga, ampak ne
 someone AUX talked about horse that AUX kicked someone, but not
 vem kdo koga.
 know who whom
 ‘Someone talked about a horse that kicked someone, but I don’t know who whom.’
- b. ...who whom [~~_____ talked about a horse [that kicked _____]~~]

3.1.2 Complex NP – complement clauses

Another type of propositional island is constituted by complement clauses to nouns (Ross 1967). Whereas wh-extraction from embedded clausal complements to nouns is bad, as shown in (19), this extraction is fine in sluicing constructions, as shown in (20).

- (19) *Koga je Črt povedal novico, da je Vid zaprosil?
 who AUX Črt told news that AUX Vid proposed
 ‘Who did Črt tell the news that Vid proposed to?’
- (20) a. Črt je povedal novico, da je Vid zaprosil nekoga, ampak ne vem
 Črt AUX told news that AUX Vid proposed someone but not know
 koga.
 who
 ‘Črt told the news that Vid proposed to someone, but I don’t know to who.’
- b. ...who [~~Črt told news [that Vid proposed to _____]~~]

Again, as observed above, island repair is only possible in case the extraction that violates the island does not combine with an extraction from the matrix clause, (21), or with another extraction from another island, (22).

- (21) a. *Nekdo je povedal novico, da je Vid zaprosil nekoga, ampak
 Someone AUX told news that AUX Vid proposed someone but
 ne vem kdo koga.
 not know who who
 ‘Someone told the news that Vid proposed to someone, but I don’t know who to who.’
- b. ...who whom [~~_____ told news [that Vid proposed to _____]~~]
- (22) a. *Črt je novico, da je Vid opisal nekoga, povedal puncu, ki
 Črt AUX news that AUX Vid described someone told girl which
 jo je nekje srečal ampak ne vem koga kje.
 her AUX somewhere met but not know who where
 ‘Črt told the news that Vid described someone to a girl that he met some-
 where but I don’t know who where.’

- b. ...who where [~~Črt news [that Vid proposed to _____] told the girl [that he met _____]~~]

Just like in the case of relative clause islands above, there is a finite clause boundary separating the two extraction sites.

3.1.3 Sentential subject island

Wh-extraction from sentential clauses is impossible (Ross 1967), as shown in (23). But such extraction appears to become possible if it is followed by sluicing, (24).

- (23) *Koga je, da je Peter udaril, presenetilo Micko?
 who AUX that AUX Peter hit surprised Micka
 ‘Who did it surprise Micka that Peter hit?’
- (24) a. Da je Peter odšel nekam v Afriko, je presenetilo vse. Ugani
 that AUX Peter went somewhere to Africa AUX surprised all guess
 kam.
 where
 ‘That Peter went somewhere to Africa surprised everyone. Guess where.’
 b. ...where [~~that Peter went _____] surprised all~~]

Island amelioration vanishes, however, once we add another extraction from outside this island.

- (25) a. *Da je nekdo udaril Petra, je nekoga presenetilo. Ugani kdo
 that AUX someone hit Peter AUX one surprised guess who
 koga.
 who
 ‘That someone hit Peter surprised someone. Guess who who.’
 b. ...who whom [~~that _____ hit Peter] surprised _____]~~

As in the two preceding sections, the pattern is the same—*island violation is voided only when there is a single extraction, and it applies again as soon as this single extraction is coupled with another extraction from outside the island.* Additionally, here too there is a finite clause boundary between the two extraction sites.

3.1.4 Adjuncts

Wh-extraction is impossible from adjuncts (Ross 1967). If adjunct clauses are just free-relative clauses, as argued by Geis (1970), adjunct islands may be just a subtype of the relative clause islands.

- (26) *Koga je Črt kihnil, ravno ko je Marta poljubila?
 who AUX Črt sneezed just when AUX Marta kissed
 ‘Whom did Črt sneeze just when Marta kissed?’

In sluicing, such extraction is fine:

- (27) a. Črt je padel, ravno ko je Kim brnila nekoga, a ne vem koga.
 Črt AUX fell just as AUX Kim kicked someone but not know whom
 ‘Črt fell just when Kim kicked someone, but I don’t know whom.’

- b. ...whom [~~Črt fell [just when Kim kicked _____]]~~

However, combining a wh-extraction from a clausal adjunct with a matrix-clause extraction is impossible even in sluicing, (28), just as it is impossible to combine two such extractions from two different adjuncts, (29).

- (28) a. *Nekdo je padel, ravno ko je Kim brcnila nekoga, a ne vem
 someone AUX fell just as AUX Kim kissed someone but not know
 kdo koga.
 who who
 ‘Someone fell just when Kim kicked someone, but I don’t know who whom.’
 b. ...who whom [~~_____ fell [just when Kim kicked _____]]~~
- (29) a. *Črt je padel pod neko mizo, ravno ko je nekdo dal gol. Ugani
 Črt AUX fell under some table just as AUX someone gave goal guess
 pod katero kdo.
 under which who
 ‘Črt fell under some table just as someone scored a goal. Guess which table
 who.’
 b. ...under which who [~~Črt fell under _____ [just as _____ scored a goal]]~~

3.1.5 Propositional island recap

We have established that island violating extraction cannot be combined with another extraction that does not come from inside the same island. Notice that it is *not* the case that sluicing can only fix one island violation at a time (which—if it were the case—would be an extremely difficult constraint to motivate and make sense of anyway). We can extract two wh-words from the same island in sluicing, as shown in (30):

- (30) a. Razlagal je o konju, ki je nekje nekoga brcnil, pa ne
 explain AUX about horse which AUX somewhere someone kicked but not
 vem kje koga.
 know where who
 ‘He was explaining about a horse that kicked someone somewhere, but I don’t
 know whom where.’
 b. ...who where [~~he was explaining about a horse [that kicked _____]]~~

We can also extract a wh-phrase from a double island, for instance when we have one island inside another island, as in (31), where the extracted wh-word gets out of an adjunct clause that is inside a relative clause.

- (31) a. Razlagal je o konju, ki je brcnil Črta, ko se je ta
 explain AUX about horse which AUX kicked Črt when REFL AUX this
 z nekom pogovarjal, ampak ne vem s kom.
 with someone talk but not know whom
 ‘He was explaining about a horse that kicked Črt when he was talking to
 someone, but I don’t know to who.’
 b. ...to who [~~he was explaining about a horse [that kicked Črt [when he talked
 _____]]]~~

Moreover, such cases even allow multiple sluicing. As long as both wh-words originate in the same island as is the case in (32), where the two wh-words come from inside a relative clause that is inside a clausal complement to a noun.

- (32) a. Razpredal je o govoricu, da je Črt kupil konja, ki je
 talked AUX about rumour that AUX Črt bought horse which AUX
 enkrat nekoga brcnil, ne vem pa kdaj koga.
 once someone kicked not know but when who
 ‘He talked about the rumour that Črt bought a horse that once kicked some-
 one, but I don’t know whom when.’
- b. ...who when [he talked of a rumour [that Črt bought a horse [that kicked _____
 _____]]]

The common problem with the examples in the preceding sections seems to be that whenever extraction crosses a finite clause boundary it cannot combine with another extraction that comes from another clause. This could perhaps be explained with a generalization stated in (Takahashi 1994, p. 287: (54b)) ”The remnants in multiple Sluicing must be interpreted as clause mates.”. Note that as we have shown above in section 2 with the BCMS examples discussed in Lasnik (2014), this is not an absolute restriction. (Merchant 2001, p. 113, fn. 4) also notes that this is not an absolute ban, as examples such as (33b) are reported to be fine (cf. Nishigauchi 1998; Bhattacharya & Simpson 2012; Abels & Dayal 2017 for more examples).

- (33) a. *Someone thinks Jon brought something. I don’t know who what.
 b. Everybody said they’ll bring something. I don’t know who what.

Furthermore, this ban is really only relevant for finite-clause boundaries as the remnants can be easily interpreted as originating from different sides of a non-finite clause boundary, but then again, multiple questions with a similar configuration are also fine in Slovenian, as shown in (34), and so are, obviously, their parallel sluicing constructions, (35).

- (34) Kdo je koga pozabil poklicat?
 who AUX who forgot call
 ‘Who forgot to call who?’
- (35) a. Nekdo je pozabil poklicati nekoga, ampak ne vem kdo koga.
 someone AUX forgot call someone but not know who who
 ‘Someone forgot to call someone, but I forgot who who.’
- b. ...who who [_____ forgot [to call _____]]

This means that it does not seem possible to blame the impossibility of multiple wh-remnants originating from different islands exclusively on the clause-mate condition on multiple sluicing. See Abels & Dayal (2017) for a much longer discussion and an explanation of the clause-mate restriction on multiple sluicing.

In the next section we will show that the ban on multiple sluicing observed with propositional islands is really much more general, which further suggests that this ban cannot be reduced simply to the clause-mate condition on multiple sluicing.

3.2 Coordinate Structure Constraint

Another constraint discussed by Ross (1967) is the Coordinate Structure Constraint [CSC], which bans movement from inside coordination. Grosu (1972) identifies two different movement restrictions: (i) Coordinate constraint [CC], which bans movement of entire conjuncts; and (ii) Element constraint [EC], which bans movement of elements from inside conjuncts. There is some debate whether CSC is really an island constraint, e.g. Kehler (1996). Our purpose here is not to discuss the potential workings of CSC, we really only want to draw a parallel between multiple sluicing and regular non-elliptical sentences (but see Zhang 2009 for a thorough discussion of CSC). In Slovenian simple wh-fronting cannot violate CSC, neither CC, (36a), nor EC, (36b):

- (36) a. *Koga je Peter videl _____ in Janeza?
 who AUX Peter saw and Janez
 ‘Who and Janez did Peter see?’
 b. *Koga je Vid mislil, da bo srečal _____ in da bo kupil pivo?
 Who AUX Vid think that AUX met and that AUX bought beer

Now, sluicing has often been cited as an operation that fixes CSC violations (cf. Ross 1969; Merchant 2001; Fox & Lasnik 2003 a.o.), and this claim can be extended to Slovenian, too. Sluicing fixes island violations regardless of what kind of subpart of CSC we are looking at and regardless of the conjunct that the wh-phrase originates from: whether it is from the second conjunct, (37) and (38), or from the first conjunct, (39) and (40).

- (37) a. Vid je povabil Črta in še nekoga, ampak ne vem koga.
 Vid AUX invited Črt and also someone but not know who
 ‘Vid invited Črt and someone else, but I don’t know whom.’
 b. ...whom [Vid invited Črt and _____]
 (38) a. Vid je mislil, da bo srečal Črta in da bo nekaj kupil,
 Vid AUX think that AUX met Črt and that AUX something bought
 ampak se zdaj ne spomnim kaj.
 but REFL now neg remember what
 ‘Vid thought he will meet Črt and buy something, but I cannot remember what.’
 b. ...what [Peter thought [[he will meet Črt] and [buy _____]]]
 (39) a. Vid je povabil nekoga in še Črta, ampak ne vem koga.
 Vid AUX invited some and also Črt but not know who
 ‘Vid invited someone and also Črt, but I don’t know whom.’
 b. ...whom [Vid invited _____ and Črt]
 (40) a. Črt je mislil, da bo srečal nekoga in da bo kupil neke knjige,
 Črt AUX think that AUX met someone and that AUX bought some books
 pozabil pa sem koga.
 forgot ptcl AUX who
 ‘Črt thought he will meet someone and buy books, but I forgot who.’
 b. ...who [Črt thought [[he will meet _____] and [buy books]]]

In (38) and (40), sluicing apparently fixed an EC violation, and in (37) and (39) a CC violation. But combining a CSC violation with another extraction of the same type is again impossible, as shown in (41), where both conjuncts of the coordination are extracted, and in (42)-(43), where two wh-words are extracted from inside the two conjuncts.

- (41) a. *Vid je povabil enega fanta in eno punco, pa ne vem katerega
 Vid AUX invited one boy and one girl but not know which
 katero.
 which
 ‘Vid invited some boy and some girl, but I don’t know which one which
 one.’
 b. ...which one which one [Vid invited _____ and _____]
- (42) a. *Črt je mislil, da bo nekoga srečal in nekaj kupil, ampak
 Črt AUX think that AUX someone met and something bought but
 ne vem koga kaj.
 not know who what
 ‘Črt thought he will meet someone and buy something, but I don’t know
 who what.’
 b. ...who what [Črt thought [[he will meet _____] and [buy _____]]]
- (43) a. *Črt je želel nekoga srečati in nekaj kupiti, ampak ne vem
 Črt AUX wished someone meet and something buy but not know
 koga kaj.
 who what
 ‘Črt wanted to meet someone and to buy something, but I don’t know who
 what.’
 b. ...who what [Črt wanted [[to meet _____] and [to buy _____]]]

Extraction of both conjuncts is possible only when the two wh-words are conjoined, as in (44) and (45). But when this is the case we have not violated the CSC as we have either fronted the entire coordination, or perhaps conjoined two single sluicings (we will come back to this in the last section of this paper).

- (44) Vid je povabil enega fanta in eno punco, pa ne vem katerega fanta *(in)
 Vid AUX invited one boy and one girl but not know which guy and
 katero punco.
 which girl
 ‘Vid invited some boy and some girl, but I don’t know which boy and which girl.’
- (45) Vid je mislil, da bo nekoga srečal in nekaj kupil, ampak ne
 Vid AUX thought that AUX someone met and something bought but not
 vem ne koga ne kaj.
 know not who not what
 ‘Vid thought he will meet someone and buy some books, but I don’t know neither
 who nor how many.’

Note that the unacceptability of (41) is not due to a Richards (2010)-like distinctness-condition violation. As shown by Mišmaš (2011), different gender features are enough to make wh-words count as distinct in Slovenian. This is also shown in (46), a regular

multiple sluicing example with two dative wh-words (one is the dative subject of the matrix clause and the other the dative internal object of the embedded non-final clause) and the two wh-words share everything but gender features, and the example is acceptable.

- (46) Nekemu fantu se ni pomagalo neki puncī, ampak ne vem kateremu kateri.
 some boy.DAT REFL .NEG-AUX helped some girl.DAT but not know
 which.DAT.M which.DAT.F
 ‘Some boy didn’t feel like helping some girl, but I don’t know which which.’

Sentences become unacceptable even when we combine a CSC violation with another CSC violation.

- (47) a. *Vid in še nekdo sta kupila vsak po štruco kruha in še nekaj, ampak ne vem kdo kaj.
 Vid and also someone AUX bought each at loaf bread and also something but not know who what
 b. ...who what [Vid and _____ each bought a loaf of bread and _____]

The only option for multiple sluicing is to have two extractions from the same conjunct, that is, to have two EC violations form the same conjunct, as in (48).

- (48) a. Vid je včeraj v trafiki kupil novo Mladino in nekje drugje nekaj drugega prodal, ampak ne vem kje kaj.
 Vid AUX yesterday in tobacconist bought new Mladina and somewhere else something else sold but not know where what
 ‘Vid bought the new issue of Mladina yesterday at the tobacco-shop and sold somewhere else something else, but I don’t know where what.’
 b. ...where what [Vid [...]] and [_____ sold _____]

3.3 DP internal islands

3.3.1 Subject islands

As shown in (49), extraction from a DP in subject position is impossible.

- (49) a. Teorija o skladijskih otokih je zapletena.
 theory about syntactic islands AUX complicated
 ‘The theory about syntactic islands is complicated.’
 b. *O čem je [teorija _____] zapletena?
 about what AUX theory complicated
 ‘What is the theory about complicated?’

And as shown in (50), this extraction becomes available in sluicing:

- (50) a. Teorija o nečem je bila slavnostno predstavljena. Ampak o čem?
 theory about something AUX been presented but about what PTCL
 ‘The theory about something was presented. But about what?’

- b. ...about-what PTCL [~~the theory _____~~] was presented]

However, when such extraction from a subject island is combined with another extraction that is not from the same island, the result of such multiple sluicing is bad. This is shown in (51)–(52), of which (51) shows extraction from a subject island combined with an extraction of a dative argument from the main clause, and (52) shows subject-island extraction combined with an extraction of an adjunct from the main clause.

- (51) a. *Teorija o nečem je bila nekому predstavljena. Mogoče veš
 theory about something AUX been someone presented maybe know
 o čem komu?
 about what who
 ‘The theory about something was presented to someone. Maybe you know about what to whom?’
- b. ...about-what to-whom [~~the theory _____~~] was presented _____]
- (52) a. *Teorija o nečem je bila enkrat predstavljena. Ampak ne
 theory about something AUX been someone presented but not
 vem o čem kdaj?
 know about what when
 ‘The theory about something was presented to someone. But I don’t know about what when?’
- b. ...about-what when PTCL [~~the theory _____~~] was presented _____]

In fact, even multiple sluicing where both remnants come from the same subject is bad, (53):

- (53) a. *Knjiga o nekih dinozavrih s precej trdimi platnicam je
 book about some dinosaurs with somewhat hard covers AUX
 ležala na mizi, ampak ne vem, o katerih dinozavrih s kako
 lay on table but not know about which dinosaurs with how
 trdimi platnicami.
 hard covers
 ‘A book about dinosaurs with somewhat hard covers way laying on the table, but I don’t know about which dinosaurs with how hard covers.’
- b. ...about-which-dinosaurs with-how-hard-covers PTCL [~~a book _____~~
 was laying on the table]

3.3.2 DP complements of nouns

Slovenian does not allow wh-extraction of a DP embedded inside a DP regardless of whether these DPs are adjuncts or arguments. (54) shows a case of unacceptable wh-extraction of a DP from inside a DP that is not a subject.

- (54) a. Črt je razložil teorijo relativnosti.
 Črt AUX explained theory relativity.GEN
 ‘Črt explained the theory of relativity.’
- b. *Česa je Črt razložil teorijo
 what.GEN AUX Črt explained theory
 ‘What did Črt explain the theory of?’

As shown in (55), such extractions are possible in sluicing.

- (55) a. Črt je razložil teorijo nečesa, samo ne vem, česa.
 Črt AUX explained theory something.GEN just not know what.GEN
 ‘Črt explained the theory of something, I just don’t know of what.’
 b. ...what {Črt explained [the theory _____]}

But again, as soon as we try to combine it with some other extraction, such extraction becomes impossible. (56) shows ungrammaticality of combining an extraction of a DP embedded inside a DP with an extraction from the rest of the clause, and (57) shows ungrammaticality of two extractions of a DP from within two different DPs.

- (56) a. *Nekdo je razložil teorijo nečesa, samo ne vem, kdo
 someone AUX explained theory something.GEN just not know who
 česa.
 what.GEN
 ‘Somebody explained the theory of something, I just don’t know who of
 what.’
 b. ...who what {_____ explained [the theory _____]}
- (57) a. *Črt je prijatelju neke sošolke razložil teorijo nečesa,
 Črt AUX friend some classmate.GEN explained theory something.GEN
 samo ne vem katere (sošolke) česa.
 just not know which.GEN classmate.GEN what.GEN
 ‘Črt explained the theory of something to a friend of one of his classmates,
 I just don’t know of what of which classmate.’
 b. ...what of-which-classmate {Črt explained [the theory _____]} [to a friend
 _____]

As soon as we combine an extraction from a DP with an extraction from outside that DP, sluicing becomes impossible.

3.3.3 Left-branch extraction – LBE

Generally speaking Slovenian does not allow LBE, at least the type of LBE discussed by Merchant (2001). (58) demonstrates ungrammaticality of LBE in wh-extraction.⁷

- (58) *Kako visoko je Vid preplezal steno?
 how tall AUX Vid climbed cliff
 ‘How tall did Vid climb a cliff?’

⁷There may be some subtypes of LBE that are also available in Slovenian (cf. Bošković 2008; Mišmaš 2017), but overall, LBE is clearly not as freely available as, say, in BCMS. So unlike (58), cases like (i) are possible or at least much better than (58). As we have no intention of explaining the difference between various types of LBE, we simply make a contrast between sluicing and regular wh-questions using the same type of extracted elements.

- (1) Koliko misliš, da je Črt visok?
 how think that AUX Črt tall
 ‘How tall do you think Črt is?’

As shown in (59), sluicing again makes such extractions possible, so that ‘how detailed’ and ‘kako visoko’—the same wh-APs that cannot get wh-extracted in regular questions—can be the remnants in sluicing without problems.

- (59) a. Vid je preplezal eno visoko steno, ampak ne vem kako visoko.
 Vid AUX climbed a tall cliff but not know how tall
 ‘Vid climbed a tall cliff, but I don’t know, how tall.’
 b. ...how tall [~~Vid climbed~~ [_____ cliff]]

But when we try to combine such an LBE-exhibiting extraction with some other extraction from the rest of the clause, as in (60), sluicing can no longer rescue LBE.

- (60) a. *Vid je enkrat preplezal eno visoko steno, ampak ne vem kdaj kako visoko.
 Vid AUX once climbed a tall cliff but not know when how tall
 ‘Vid climbed a tall cliff once, but I don’t know, how tall when.’
 b. ...how tall when [~~Vid climbed~~ [_____ cliff] _____]

Similarly, LBE is incompatible with other types of extractions from inside the same DP, as shown in (61) for DP-inside-DP extraction and in (62) for another LBE from inside a PP inside the same DP.

- (61) a. *Črt je zahteval podroben seznam nečesa, ampak ne vem, Črt AUX requested detailed list something.GEN but not know kako podroben česa.
 how detailed what.GEN
 ‘Črt requested a detailed list of something, but I don’t know how detailed of what.’
 b. ...how detailed of what [~~Črt requested~~ [_____ list [_____]]]
 (62) a. *Vid je preplezal eno visoko steno nad neko grapo, ampak ne vem kako visoko katero.
 Vid AUX climbed a tall cliff over some gully but not know how tall which
 ‘Vid climbed a tall cliff over some gully, but I don’t know, how tall which.’
 b. ...how tall which [~~Vid climbed~~ [_____ cliff over _____ gully]]

Moreover, sluicing can also not save multiple LBEs (cf. Grebenyova 2005), regardless of whether both LBEs are from the same noun phrase, as in (63), or if they are from different noun phrases, as in (64).

- (63) a. *Kupil si je nov avto. Ugani katere barve katere znamke.
 bought REFL AUX new car guess which color which brand
 ‘He bought a new car. Guess what color what brand.’
 b. ...what color what brand [~~he bought~~ [_____ _____ car]]
 (64) a. *Črt je precej otrokom podaril precej čudne balone, ampak ne vem Črt AUX many children gave fairly strange balloons but not know kolikim kako čudne.
 how-many how strange

‘Črt gave many children fairly weird balloons, but I don’t know to how many how strange.’

- b. ...how many how strange [Črt gave [_____ kids] [_____ balloons]]

3.3.4 Comitatives

Much like LBE and extraction from DPs, comitatives like *vidva s Črtom* (you-dual with Črt) ‘you and Črt’ or *mi trije z Ano in Ido* ‘me, Ana and Ida’, where the pronoun+with-PP act and agree as a dual/plural subject, (65a), do not allow anything to be extracted out of them. As shown in (65b), regular wh-extraction is impossible, while sluicing is fine, (65c).

- (65) a. Vidva z Micko sta zelo pametna.
 you.DU with Micka are.DU very smart
 ‘You and Micka are very smart.’
- b. *Š kom sta vidva _____ zelo pametna?
 with who AUX you.DU very smart
 ‘You and who are very smart?’
- c. Slišal sem, da sta vidva z enim tvojim prijateljem super ekipa,
 heard AUX that AUX you.DU with one your friend great team
 ampak ne vem s kom.
 but not know with who
 ‘I heard that you and a friend of yours make a good team, but I don’t know who?’

And just like we have been systematically seeing up to now, combining an extraction from a comitative construction with any other extraction is impossible. This is shown in (66), where an extraction from a comitative is combined with an extraction from another noun phrase, and in (67), where an extraction from a comitative is combined with an extraction of a noun phrase from the rest of the clause that does not violate any island.

- (66) a. *Vidva z enim z Iga sta skupaj spila nekaj piv, ne vem
 you.DU with one from Ig AUX together drank some beers not know
 pa s kom koliko.
 ptcl with who how many
 ‘You and someone from Ig drank some beers together, but I don’t know who how many.’
- b. ...with who how many [[you.du _____] drank _____ beers together]
- (67) a. *Onadva z enim iz Grgarja sta skupaj nekam odšla, ne vem
 they.DU with one from Grgar AUX together someplace went not know
 pa s kom kam.
 ptcl with who where
 ‘He and someone from Grgar went someplace together, but I don’t know who where.’
- b. ...with who where [[They.du _____] went _____]

3.4 Other (strong) islands

Not every island can be tested in the way employed above. We have avoided weak-islands since these typically allow extraction of arguments, which represent typical participants in sluicing; consequently we are not considering, for instance, negative islands and wh-islands (see Szabolcsi & Den Dikken 1999 and Szabolcsi 2006 for a discussion and distinctions between various types of islands). Similarly, it is impossible to test derived positions, as the deletion obscures the actual source of extraction.

Preposition stranding is typically not called an island constraint (also because it is not universal), but Merchant (2001) proposed a generalization stating that only languages that allow preposition stranding under wh-movement allow preposition stranding under sluicing.⁸ In other words sluicing apparently does not rescue preposition stranding violations, which is again unexpected if sluicing simply deletes the asterisk on the syntactic structure where the ungrammatical move was made. But as we will see, preposition stranding is actually a bit of a more complicated case.

Certain languages were claimed to go—at least apparently—against the Merchant (2001) P-stranding generalization (cf. Potsdam 2003; Sato 2007; Rodrigues, Nevins & Vicente 2007), so that this generalization is probably not very strong. On the other hand, some apparent counterarguments seem to suggest that these data should be looked at more carefully. As shown in Stjepanović (2008), the apparent preposition stranding under sluicing in BCMS is clearly not a result of sluicing alone. To some degree, Slovenian, like BCMS, also allows preposition stranding under sluicing, as in (68), and could actually be used to replicate Stjepanović (2008)’s argument showing that in cases where sluicing allows preposition stranding (and thus apparently “saves” ungrammatical preposition stranding) it is not sluicing that is exclusively responsible for the acceptability of preposition stranding since preposition stranding is also possible with sluiced coordinated PPs which do not involve pseudosluicing or base-generated fragments, (69) (cf. Rodrigues et al. 2007, who also claim that sluicing does not save preposition stranding violations in Brazilian Portuguese and Spanish).

- (68) a. [?] Črt je na zabavo prišel z nekom, ampak ne vem kom
Črt AUX to party came with someone but not know who
'Črt came to the party with someone, but I don't know who.'
b. ...who {Črt came [to party] [with _____]}
- (69) Vid je skril igračko za eno omaro in pod eno blazino, ampak ne
Vid AUX hid toy behind one cupboard and under one pillow but not
vem prav dobro [?](za) katero omaro in [?](pod) katero blazino
know quite well behind which cupboard and under which pillow
'Vid hid the toy behind a cupboard and under a pillow, but I don't know which
cupboard and which pillow.'

But regardless of the actual nature of preposition stranding in sluicing constructions, as soon as we combine preposition stranding with some other extraction, either another preposition stranding, (70), or simply with an extraction that does not violate anything, (71), the sentence is completely out.⁹

⁸Note that LBE and CSC, which are considered islands in discussions of languages like English, are supposedly violable in some other languages, such as in BCMS (cf. Franks & Progovac 1994; Stjepanović 1998; Bošković 2005 etc.).

⁹Note that (69) above, which had two instances of preposition stranding inside the same sentence, had

- (70) a. * Črt je prišel na neko zabavo z nekom ampak ne vem katero
 Črt AUX came to some party with someone but not know which
 zabavo kom.
 party who
 ‘Črt came to some party with someone, but I don’t know which party who.’
 b. ...which party who [Črt came [to _____] [with _____]]
- (71) a. * Nekdo je prišel na zabavo z nekom, ampak ne vem kdo kom.
 Someone AUX came to party with someone but not know who who
 ‘Someone came to the party with someone, but I’m not sure who who.’
 b. ...who who [_____ came [to the party] [with _____]]

3.5 Recap

As we have seen in this section, sluicing cannot save every type of violation of a certain sentence. It can save single island violations and it can save multiple violations if they originate from a single island. Combining an island violation with a violation of a different island, though, results in ungrammaticality. Similarly, combining an extraction from an island with an extraction from the main clause that does not violate anything is also impossible. At this point, this leads us to the following generalization:

- (72) **Generalization on multiple sluicing** – take 1:
 Multiple sluicing can only rescue improper movement violations if all wh-remnants originate inside the same island.

This generalization is stated in a way that assumes that sluicing can save island violations. As we mentioned above, though, this is not so obviously true. Anticipating what we will discuss next, we also present here a slightly stronger generalization that also covers examples (11)–(15), though this one, crucially, assumes that sluicing does *not* rescue island violations.

- (73) **Generalization on multiple sluicing** – stronger version:
 Multiple sluicing is possible only when multiple wh-movement of the remnants is possible without subsequent TP-ellipsis.

4 Island repair

For certain islands it has also been claimed that they can be—at least apparently—saved by other means as well. Ross (1967) identifies three such environments in addition to sluicing: resumption, wh-in-situ and pied-piping (see also Cable 2010; Boeckx 2012 among others). Truswell (2007) notes that adjunct islands can be violated in certain cases and Bošković (2011) proposes that elements can extract from island-phrases that are headed by a trace (see also Stepanov 2012).¹⁰

the two wh-words coordinated. This actually suggests that (69) may be an instance of two independent sluicing constructions, which Stjepanović (2008) argues against. Given that it is irrelevant for our purposes here what exactly it is that allows (69), we leave this question aside.

¹⁰Related to this are also the proposals by Den Dikken (2007) and Gallego (2010)—Phase-Extension and Phase-Sliding respectively—but as these are limited or focused on phases rather than islands, we will not discuss them at length.

We will now look at some of these environments. The idea is that if there is something about multiple sluicing that blocks island amelioration, then island amelioration should be impossible regardless of what kind of multiple-sluicing construction we test. That is, if it is multiple sluicing that blocks island amelioration, trying to save island violations through another mechanism should be just as unsuccessful as the failed rescue attempts that we have seen in the examples so far. But on the other hand, if the problem is really in sluicing (not in the fact that it is applied multiply), then trying to save island violations with another mechanism should be successful and the constructions that were ungrammatical above should become grammatical.

Of course, not everything can be modulated in sluicing. Two island-voiding processes fall out as irrelevant right away: resumption and *wh*-in-situ strategies are incompatible with sluicing, which requires *wh*-movement and deletes the rest of the clause where a resumptive pronoun would be placed, so we can put these aside and have a look at pied-piping instead.¹¹

4.1 Pied-piping

4.1.1 LBE

Not all islands seem to be sensitive to pied-piping, but one that typically *is* claimed to be is LBE. In Slovenian, fronting the entire DP is most certainly also possible in regular *wh*-questions, as in (74).

- (74) a. Kako podroben spisek je Črt zahteval?
 how detailed list AUX Črt requested
 ‘How detailed a list did Črt request?’
 b. Kako visoko steno je Vid preplezal?
 how tall cliff AUX Vid climbed
 ‘How tall a cliff did Vid climbed?’

And given that pied-piping avoids LBE violations also in embedded questions, (75), we can assume that this indeed involves proper *wh*-movement. And obviously, as this is an available strategy in *wh*-questions, pied-piping of the entire DP is also available in sluicing, (76).

- (75) Črt je vprašal, kako visoko steno je preplezal Vid?
 Črt AUX asked how tall cliff AUX climbed Vid
 ‘Črt asked how tall a cliff did Vid climbed?’
 (76) Črt je preplezal eno kar visoko steno, ne vem pa, kako visoko steno.
 Črt AUX climbed a fairly tall cliff not know ptcl how tall cliff
 ‘Črt climber a fairly tall cliff, but I don’t know how tall a cliff.’

Quite expectedly, when an LBE violation is voided with pied-piping and pied-piping fronts/pied-pipes another remnant from the same DP, the result is clearly grammatical, (77–78). Even though this is an instance of multiple sluicing it cannot be used as an argument to show that it is not a multiplicity of *wh*-remnants that blocked multiple island ameliorations, since it is a single pied-piping moving two *wh*-words.

¹¹Note that as argued by Heestand, Xiang & Polinsky (2011), resumption does not save islands anyway.

- (77) a. Črt je zahteval podroben seznam nečesa, ampak ne vem, kako
 Črt AUX requested detailed list something.GEN but not know how
 podroben seznam česa.
 detailed what.GEN
 ‘Črt requested a detailed list of something, but I don’t know how detailed of
 what.’
 b. ...how detailed list of what [Črt requested _____]
- (78) a. ? Vid je preplezal eno kar visoko steno nad neko grapo, ampak ne
 Vid AUX climbed a fairly tall cliff over some gully but not
 vem kako visoko steno nad katero grapo.
 know how tall cliff over which gully
 ‘Vid climbed a fairly tall cliff over some gully, but I don’t know, how tall a
 cliff over which gully.’
 b. ...how tall a cliff over which gully [Vid climbed _____]

But if the two wh-words originate in two different noun phrases, pied-piping needs to front two separate noun phrases. If such an example is grammatical, it would suggest that multiple island violations can be saved with multiple application of the same ameliorating process. As shown in (79), such examples are indeed grammatical. Similarly, it is also possible to combine a pied-piped DP with another remnant if it comes from the same clause, (80), which is also something that was not available with sluicing alone.

- (79) a. Vid je nekaterim otrokom dal nekakšna darila, ampak ne vem katerim
 Vid AUX some kids gave some gifts but not know which
 otrokom kakšna darila.
 kids which gifts
 ‘vid gave some gifts to some kids, but I don’t know which gifts to which kids.’
 b. ...which gifts to which kids [Vid gave _____]
- (80) a. Nek plezalec iz Tolmina je nekaj preplezal, ne vem pa, kateri
 Some climber from Tolmin AUX something climbed not know ptcl which
 plezalec iz Tolmina kaj.
 climber from Tolmin what
 ‘Someone climber from Tolmin climbed something, but I don’t know who
 which climber from Tolmin what.’
 b. ...which climber from Tolmin what [_____ climbed _____]

Note that in both of these situations, the non-elided version of the construction is also available, as proven by the simple wh-questions with the same internal structure in (81) and (82).

- (81) Katerim otrokom je kakšna darila dal Vid včeraj?
 which children AUX which gifts gave Vid yesterday
 ‘Which children did Vid give which gifts yesterday?’
- (82) Kateri plezalec iz Tolmina je kaj preplezal?
 which climber from Tolmin AUX what climbed
 ‘Which climber from Tolmin climbed what?’

Pied-piping of the entire DP cannot save ungrammatical combinations of LBE with a remnant from a different clause or from different types of islands, as shown, for example, in (83) with a combination of a fronted DP and a remnant from an embedded clause. As shown in (84), this combination of movements is also impossible outside sluicing.

- (83) a. *Nek plezalec iz Tolmina je povedal, da je Vid nekaj
 some climber from Tolmin AUX told that Vid AUX something
 preplezal, ne vem pa, kateri plezalec iz Tolmina kaj.
 climbed not know ptcl which climber from Tolmin what
 ‘Some climber from Tolmin climbed something, but I don’t know which
 climber from Tolmin what.’
- b. ...which climber from Tolmin what [~~_____ told [that Vid climbed _____]~~]
- (84) *Kateri plezalec iz Tolmina je kaj povedal, da je Vid preplezal?
 which climber from Tolmin AUX what told that AUX Vid climbed
 ‘Which climber from Tolmin said that Vid climbed what?’

Therefore we can conclude that pied-piping can void LBE island violations, but only to the degree that it can also do so outside sluicing constructions. And as the ungrammatical multiple sluicing examples above, in which sluicing alone could not save multiple island violations, are fine with pied-piping, as in (79) and (80), we have another argument to suggest that it is something about sluicing that blocks amelioration of multiple island violations.

4.1.2 CSC

Just as is the case with LBE, it seems possible to avoid a violation of CSC by fronting the entire coordination as in (85), regardless of the position of the wh-word.

- (85) a. Koga in Janeza je povabil Peter?
 who and Janez AUX invited Peter
 ‘Who and Janez did Peter invite?’
- b. Janeza in koga še je povabil Peter?
 Janez and who else AUX invited Peter
 ‘Janez and who else did Peter invite?’

But fronting of the entire coordination is not possible in sluicing constructions, (86).

- (86) Peter je povabil Janeza in še nekoga, pa ne vem ...
 Peter AUX invited Janez and also someone but not know
 ‘Peter invited Janez and someone else, but I don’t know ...’
- A. *Janeza in še koga.
 Janez and also who
- B. *Janeza in koga še.
 Janez and who also
- C. *Janeza in koga.
 Janez and who
 ‘Janez and who (else).’

At first sight this is surprising. So far we have only seen cases where a sluicing construction was more permissive than regular questions, so how is it possible that sluicing does not allow something that regular questions seem to allow? As it turns out, this strategy is not available in embedded contexts, (87), which suggests that what we have in (85) is not an instance of regular wh-movement, and since sluicing does involve wh-movement, the two things simply do not go together. The coordination containing the wh-phrase in (85) has perhaps just been scrambled to the front of the sentence, or it has moved to a lower wh-position that is not part of the left periphery (as in Mišmaš 2015).

- (87) a. *Žodor se sprašuje, kdo in Peter sta povabila Janeza na zabavo?
 Žodor REFL ask who and Peter AUX invited Janez to party
 ‘Žodor is wondering who and Peter invited Janez to the party?’
 b. *Ilija bi rad vedel, koga in Janeza je povabil Peter?
 Ilija COND like know who and Janez AUX invite Peter
 ‘Ilija wants to know whom and Janez Peter invited.’
 c. *Meliso zanima, Janeza in koga je povabil Peter?
 Melisa interests Janez and who AUX invite Peter
 ‘Melisa is curious Janez and whom Peter invited.’

So we have determined that pied-piping does not really help CSC violations as pied-piping of the entire coordination is apparently not an instance of regular wh-movement to the left periphery.

4.1.3 Other islands

All other islands seem to behave similarly: even though they seem to allow pied-piping to avoid island violations, the process most likely does not involve proper wh-movement and is thus incompatible with sluicing. See (88) for comitatives, (89) for adjunct islands, and (90) for complex DP islands.

- (88) a. *Janez hoče zvedeti, midva s kom iz Bat sva dobra ekipa?
 Janez wants know we.DU with who from Bate AUX good team
 ‘Janez wants to know me and who from Bate make a good team?’
 b. *Onadva z nekom iz Bat sta dobra ekipa, ampak ne vem
 they.DU with someone from Bate AUX good team but not know
 več onadva s kom iz Bat.
 anymore they.DU with whom from Bate
 ‘He and someone from Bate make up a good team, but I no longer know he and who.’
 (89) a. *Janeza zanima, ko je Peter videl koga, se je Micka usedla?
 Janez interests when AUX Peter see who REFL AUX Micka sit-down
 ‘Janez wonders when Peter saw whom that Micka sat down?’
 b. *Micka se je usedla, ker je Peter videl nekoga, ampak ne
 Micka REFL AUX sit-down because AUX Peter see someone but not
 vem več ker je videl koga?
 know anymore because AUX see who
 ‘Micka sat down because Peter saw someone, but I don’t know anymore because Peter saw who.’

- (90) a. * Janez se sprašuje, konja, ki je brcnil koga, je Peter včeraj
 Janez REFL asks horse which AUX kick who AUX Peter yesterday
 videl?
 saw
 ‘Janez wonders the horse that kicked whom did Peter see yesterday?’
- b. * Peter je včeraj videl konja, ki je brcnil nekoga, ne vem
 Peter AUX yesterday saw horse which AUX kick someone not know
 pa konja, ki je brcnil koga.
 ptcl horse which AUX kicked who
 ‘Yesterday Peter saw a horse that kicked someone, but I don’t know a horse
 that kicked who.’

4.2 Island/Phase Expansion

Bošković (2011) argues that traces do not head islands, in other words, that phrases which typically act as islands stop acting like islands once their head moves out and they consequently get to be headed by traces. This seems like another untestable situation for sluicing, since everything gets deleted, including the head of the potentially violated island. But if we construct the sentence in such a way that the antecedent clause also contains the island whose head got moved out of the island, we would also expect the overt version of the sluicing construction to be okay, so here too we are not testing anything specific to sluicing. In effect the sluicing construction of this particular setup in (91a) is just as ungrammatical as the regular wh-question in (92).

- (91) a. * En nekoliko pomemben neumen bogataš je včeraj kupil
 one somewhat important stupid rich-man AUX yesterday bought
 TikTok. Ampak ne vem kateri bogataš koliko pomemben.
 TikTok but not know which rich-man how-much important
 ‘Some stupid somewhat important rich man bought TikTok yesterday, but
 I don’t know which rich man how important.’
- b. ...which rich man how important {[_____ stupid _____] bought TikTok}
- (92) * Kateri bogataš je koliko pomemben včeraj neumen kupil
 which rich-man AUX how-much important yesterday stupid bought
 TikTok?
 TikTok
 ‘Which rich man how important did yesterday stupid buy TikTok?’

Notice that both (91a) and (92) become grammatical if the two wh-words move as one constituent, where the second wh-word pied-pipe the first one, as in (93) and (94).

- (93) a. En nekoliko pomemben neumen bogataš je včeraj kupil
 one somewhat important stupid rich-man AUX yesterday bought
 TikTok. Ampak ne vem kateri koliko pomemben neumen bogataš.
 TikTok but not know which how-much important stupid rich-man
 ‘Some stupid somewhat important rich man bought TikTok yesterday, but
 I don’t know which how important rich man.’
- b. ...which how important stupid rich man {[_____] bought TikTok}

- (94) Kateri koliko pomemben neumen bogataš je včeraj kupil
 which how-much important stupid rich-man AUX yesterday bought
 TikTok?
 TikTok
 ‘Which how important stupid rich man did yesterday buy TikTok?’

4.3 Transparent islands

Truswell (2007) notes that certain islands sometimes cease to act like islands. Specifically, he notes that, “if the event denoted by the adjunct occupies an event position in the argument structure encoded in the matrix verb, then extraction of the complement from within that adjunct is possible.” (Truswell 2007, p. 3). So for example, the English example in (95) and the Slovenian examples in (96–97) are acceptable even though the *wh*-word comes from inside the adjunct, as indicated by the trace inside the square brackets.

- (95) What did John drive Mary crazy [trying to fix *t*]?
 (96) Katero pesem je Črt prišel domov [pojoč *t*]?
 which song AUX Črt came home singing
 ‘Which song did Črt come home singing?’
 (97) Koga je Zdravko prišel domov [opevajoč *t*]?
 who AUX Zdravko came home singing-about
 ‘Who did Zdravko came home singing about?’

According to Truswell (2007), in these examples, it is the relation between the embedded and the matrix predicate that makes the adjunct transparent for movement. Irrespective of the reason behind this transparency, it is a fact that with the correct choice of embedded and matrix predicate, adjuncts will not act as islands. So according to our reasoning above, this is not really a process that makes an island transparent but simply a type of construction that does not behave on a par with constructions that appear to be syntactically similar. Whereas this tells us something about the nature of islands, about what the true causes of islandhood are, this is not our focus here.

If adjuncts of this type are not really islands, we would not expect them to behave like proper islands and would also not expect multiple sluicing to exhibit any unusual behaviour. This is indeed what we find. Multiple sluicing examples where one of the *wh*-remnants comes from such an adjunct and the other one from the matrix clause are acceptable, just like multiple *wh*-questions with the same predicates.

- (98) a. Nekdo je prišel domov opevajoč nekoga, ampak ne vem
 someone AUX came home singing-about someone but not know
 kdo koga.
 who.NOM who.ACC
 ‘Someone came home singing about someone, but I don’t know who about whom.’
 b. ...who whom [_____ singing-about _____]
 (99) Kdo je koga prišel domov opevajoč?
 who.NOM AUX who.ACC came home singing-about
 ‘Who came home singing about who?’

So here too we come to the same conclusion confirming the generalization stated above whereby multiple sluicing is allowed only when multiple wh-movement is possible, which means that sluicing does not rescue any island violations as it is only allowed when the overt version of the sluicing construction is also possible.

5 Towards an account

5.1 An old proposal

Merchant (2001, p.209) proposes that it is not the case that propositional islands (relative clauses, adjuncts, anything clausal) are fixed by sluicing since they are never even violated. The idea is that the ellipsis site in these cases does not include the entire antecedent but rather just the embedded propositional phrase, i.e. the relative clause, the adjunct, etc. Something along these lines was already proposed by Baker & Brame (1972), and seems to be confirmed by the data above.

- (100) Merchant (2001):
 not: ...who [~~John rode the horse~~ [that kicked _____]]
 but rather: ...who [horse kicked _____]

This proposal makes some testable predictions. If the sluiced part of the sentence only consists of the embedded clause, then any element that is present in the matrix clause inside the antecedent should not have any effect. We can try testing this prediction with the binding theory, specifically, with Principle C.

As shown by (101), regular sluicing examples exhibit Principle C violations, which further suggests that Principle C violations are not subject to island repair.

- (101) a. Vid_i je brcnil enega svojega_i prijatelja.
 Vid AUX kicked one his friend
 ‘Vid kicked a friend of his.’
 b. Sprašujem se katerega *Vidovega_i / svojega_i prijatelja.
 ask REFL which Vid’s his friend
 ‘I wonder which friend of his.’
 c. ...which friend of Vid’s/his [~~Vid kicked _____~~]

But if we place the referring expression inside the matrix clause of the antecedent and the correlate inside an island, there is no principle C effect in the sluicing construction. The prediction made by this proposal is thus confirmed.¹²

- (102) a. Vid_i je kupil konja, ki je brcnil enega njegovega_i prijatelja.
 Vid AUX bought horse, that AUX kicked one his friend
 ‘Vid bought a horse that kicked a friend of his.’
 b. Sprašujem se katerega Vidovega_i prijatelja.
 ask REFL which Vid’s friend
 ‘I wonder which friend of Vid’s.’
 c. ...which friend of Vid’s [~~Vid bought~~] [a horse kicked _____]

¹²We mark the portion of the elided TP that is assumed to be present on the standard analysis but not according to our proposal in the last line of each sluicing example with ~~XXXX~~.

- (103) a. Vid_i je odšel, ravno ko je Črt_k brnil enega njegovega_i prijatelja.
 Vid AUX left, just when AUX Črt kicked one his friend
 ‘Vid left just when Črt kicked a friend of his.’
 b. Sprašujem se katerega Vidovega_i prijatelja.
 ask REFL which Vid’s friend
 ‘I wonder which friend of Vid’s.’
 c. ...which friend of Vid’s ~~/N/A/left/just/as/~~ [Črt kicked _____]

5.2 Another prediction

If sluicing always uses a short construal to avoid island violations, then if the matrix predicate is something that affects “presupposition projection” like *deny*, the overt short construal (without *deny*) should become impossible. That is, the English example in (104) is bad as the overt short construal makes the wrong presupposition that Vid actually bought the car even though, given the antecedent, he did not buy a car. Without the matrix predicate the short construal alone presupposes the truth of the proposition, but in the antecedent, this proposition is actually false as the clause that it expresses is inside the scope of the presupposition altering predicate (Boban Arsenijević p.c.).

- (104) #John denied that Vid bought a car, but I forgot which car Vid bought.

If we place an island in the scope of such a presupposition-altering predicate, the standard approach to sluicing makes different predictions from the one we are suggesting here. If the ellipsis site contains the entire antecedent, (105) and (106a) should be okay, but if the ellipsis site only contains the short construal without the island, (105) and (106a) should be on par with (104). This is because in order to avoid island violations inside the ellipsis site, a short construal is invoked and as the short construal does not include the presupposition-altering predicate, the sluice presupposes something the antecedent does not.

- (105) a. # Črt je včeraj povedal laž, da je enkrat lani preplezal Jugov
 Črt AUX yesterday told lie that AUX once last-year climbed Jug’s
 steber, ampak ne vem kdaj.
 pillar, but not know when
 ‘Yesterday Črt told a lie that he climbed Jug’s pillar sometime last year,
 but I don’t know when.’
 b. ...when ~~/Črt/told/a/lie/that/~~ [he climbed Jug’s pillar _____]
- (106) a. # Da sta Žodor in Ilija nekoga povabila na žur, je laž, ampak ne
 That AUX Žodor and Ilija someone invited on party AUX lie but not
 vem koga.
 know who
 ‘That Žodor and Ilija invited someone to the party is a lie, but I don’t know
 whom.’
 b. ...who [that Žodor and Ilija invited _____ to the party] ~~/s/a/lie/~~

As shown in (105) and (106a) this prediction is borne out. So indeed, in these cases the sluice does not contain the entire antecedent.

6 Extension of the old proposal

So far we have seen that regardless of the type of island, multiple sluicing constructions, as schematized in (107), were fine only when the corresponding wh-question, schematized in (108), was fine as well.

(107) ...wh-1 wh-2 [_____ V [WP X Y _____]].

(108) Wh-1 wh-2 [_____ V [WP X Y _____]]?

This suggests that (109) is ungrammatical because the elided part is really not the entire antecedent and one of the two wh-words simply had no place to move from, as sketched in (110). But when both remnants originate inside the same island, as in (111), both can front and the example is grammatical.

(109) * ...wh-1 wh-2 [_____ V [island X Y _____]].

(110) ...~~wh-1~~ wh-2 [~~island~~ [island X Y _____]].

(111) ...wh-1 wh-2 [~~island~~ [island _____ Y _____]].

Merchant (2001) advances his suggestion that the sluiced part is not the entire antecedent only for cases where a propositional island is violated; but given that all islands seem to behave alike when it comes to combinations of two extractions not originating from the same island, we suggest that whenever we have an apparent extraction out of an island, the ellipsis site does not contain the entire antecedent clause but that what is deleted is rather a short source that avoids island violation. In case a clear short source is unavailable, the requirement for identity between the antecedent and the sluice needs to be relaxed or understood differently, e.g., semantically, as argued by Abels (2017); Abels & Dayal (2017). See also Cortés Rodríguez (2022); Cortés Rodríguez & Griffiths (2024) for experimental evidence showing that short sources are preferred in sluicing.

Something similar has already been proposed for certain islands in various languages. In Dutch and German, for example, the adjective that apparently violates LBE in sluicing constructions carries morphology of predicative adjectives (Merchant 2001). Thus, the ellipsis site cannot contain the proper antecedent clause but it apparently rather contains only a simple predicative structure. This also seems to be true in Slovenian. The adjectives that participate in sluicing receive predicative semantics (p.c. Erik Schoorlemmer, Klaus Abels), as shown in (112), which is also the only reading available with null nouns.¹³

(112) Srečal je enega starega prijatelja, ampak ne vem kako starega.
met AUX one old friend but not know how old

‘He met an old friend, but I don’t know how old.’ = how old he is / ≠ how long they have been friends

At this point we do not have a ready analysis for each individual type of island. Nevertheless, we want to suggest the following. PP-inside-DP islands may involve a cleft, as in (113).

¹³Interestingly, case is also preserved when the remnant adjective is in a case that does not typically participate in simple predication, e.g., the dative or the instrumental. We do not have an answer for this at this point, but note that Slovenian secondary predicates agree in case, number and gender with the noun they are associated with, and that they are possible with all types of arguments (cf. Marušič, Marvin & Žaucer 2003).

- (113) Vid je razlagal teorijo o nečem, pa ne vem, o čem (je bila Vid AUX explained theory about something but not know about what AUX was teorija).
theory
‘Vid was explaining a theory about something, but I don’t know about what (the theory was).’

The same cannot hold for DP-inside-DP islands, for which a cleft source is impossible (54), but in these cases the remnant most likely involves a null N, as exemplified in (115).

- (114) Vid je razlagal teorijo nečesa, pa ne vem, česa (*je bila Vid AUX explained theory something.GEN but not know what.GEN AUX was teorija).
theory
‘Vid was explaining the theory of something, but I don’t know what (it was about).’

- (115) ..., pa ne vem, (teorijo) česa (je razlagal Vid).
but not know theory what.GEN AUX explain Vid
‘..., but I don’t know (the theory of) what (Vid was explaining).’

And violations of the Coordinate Structure Constraint could be avoided simply with the use of a single conjunct:

- (116) not: ...who [Vid invited Peter and ____]
but rather: ...who [Vid invited ____]

This seems to be confirmed also by the fact that if we control for the collective reading, CSC violations turn out to be much more restricted (p.c. Klaus Abels).

- (117) * Asterix in nek Rimljan sta se pogledala izpod čela, si Peter and some Roman AUX REFL looked from-under forehead, REFL popravila brke in se spoprijela, ampak ne vem kateri Rimljan. fixed mustache and REFL grabbed but non know which Roman
‘Asterix and some Roman looked at each other angrily, fixed their mustache and started a fight, but I don’t know which Romans.’
- (118) * Osem in nekaj je petindvajset, ampak ne vem kaj / koliko. eight and something AUX 25 but not know what / how-much
‘Eight and something make 25, but I don’t know what / how much.’

That is, if we compare two comparable antecedent clauses that differ only in one getting the collective reading and the other one not, then the one in which the collective reading is forced is considerably worse.¹⁴

- (119) a. Peter in en visok rdečelasec sta prišla na obisk. Kdo to?
Peter and one tall red-haired AUX.DU came.DU on visit Who that
‘Peter and some redhead came for a visit. Really, who?’

¹⁴The particle appearing after the remnant in the sluiced part is presumably a left-periphery particle that survives sluicing in Slovenian, as argued by Marušič, Mišmaš, Plesničar, Razboršek & Šuligoj (2015); Marušič, Mišmaš, Plesničar & Šuligoj (2018). While the example sounds most natural with it, the particle is not obligatory; its presence/absence does not have any direct effect on the availability of this extraction.

- b. *Peter in en visok rdečelasec sta se srečala. Kdo to?
 Peter and one tall red-haired AUX.DU REFL met.DU who that
 ‘Peter and some redhead came for a visit. Really, who?’

7 Conclusion

We hope to have contributed to the debate regarding the question of island repair, identified by [Sailor & Schütze \(2014\)](#) as one of the major problems in current theoretical syntax. We argued against the very existence of island repair, presenting a novel argument in this direction (cf. [Abels 2011](#); [Barros 2012](#); [Barros et al. 2014](#)). If sluicing does not repair improper movement, it falls out naturally why the availability of sluicing depends on the availability of wh-movement. More work needs to be done to properly understand what truly happens in sluicing, but as island repair has been such a prominent topic, we believe that by avoiding discussion of it one can make good progress.

There does seem to be syntactic structure in the ellipsis site, but the identity requirement between the sluice and the antecedent cannot be strictly syntactic. Our discussion above suggests that the sluice sometimes only contains a subset of the antecedent. We see this paper as supporting the claim that the identity condition is a semantic condition, as also suggested, a.o., by [Abels \(2017\)](#); [Abels & Dayal \(2017\)](#).

There are many questions and observations that we have left untouched in this paper, including observations that support the idea that the identity requirement is really syntactic and island repair consequently real, as well as observations that suggest the opposite. We leave a discussion of all of these issues for future research.

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