

# Sluicing and Modal Mismatches

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## Modal Mismatches

- (1) The baseball player went public with [his desire to be traded]. He doesn't care where <he {would be} traded>. (Rudin 2018, 21(b)).
- (2) Sally knows that there is always the potential for [awful things to happen], but she doesn't know when <awful things { might } happen>. (Rudin 2018, 23(a)).

(677 examples of Modal Mismatch in Santa Cruz Ellipsis Dataset)

### Syntactic Identity of Eventive Core

#### Mismatches outside the "Eventive Core" are permitted in sluicing.

Lexical material within EC ( $\approx$  the *v*P of the elided TP) is subject to a condition relating it to its "correlates" in the antecedent TP (p 11):

- (a) correlates must be lexically identical or
- (b) they must be coindexed

(Rudin 2018)

## Anaphora Condition

- (3) Someone ate at [five burger restaurants]<sup>1</sup>, but I don't know who <ate at them<sub>1</sub>>

*them* is not lexically identical to *five burger restaurants*, they are coindexed.

- (4) [Many prominent congressmen still have not endorsed the candidate]. In a moment, two of them will explain why <they still have not endorsed the candidate>

▷ *they* not coindexed with *Many prominent congressman*

**Proposal:** anaphoric elements *exempt* from lexical identity. (Fiengo and May 1994, Rooth 1992, Hardt et al. 2013)

## Modals are Anaphoric

- (5) Sally knows that there is always the potential<sup>w</sup> for [awful things to happen], but she doesn't know when <awful things might<sub>w</sub> happen>.

- ▷ *might* is anaphoric (Stone 1997) – index *w* indicates set of possible worlds in which awful things happen.
- ▷ tense mismatch is similar (Merchant 2001, Rudin 2018).

## Same Discourse Referents

- (6) Jill asked where **someone** had committed a crime, and Jack asked when **someone** had committed a crime.  
*two distinct discourse referents*
- (7) Jill asked where **someone** had committed a crime, and Jack asked when <**someone** had committed a crime>.  
*same discourse referent* (Chung et al. 2011)
- (8) A girl said **she** was smart. Another girl did <say **she** was smart> too.

Sloppy readings very natural for VP ellipsis – (nearly) impossible for sluicing (Merchant 2001).

### Proposal: No New Eventualities

#### Sluicing cannot introduce a new eventuality into the discourse context.

- ▷ Mismatches only possible when necessary to enforce same-eventuality.
- ▷ Modal mismatch, pronominal mismatches, and also categorical mismatches.

- (9) Bradley said that he has not shut the door to [a presidential race ], though he would not say when <a presidential race might be>

Same eventuality – hypothetical presidential race.

## Other Mismatches

- (10) (Gerund) "As a teacher," he once explained, "[I] was interested in [tutoring], and it didn't matter what subject <I WAS tutoring>."
- (11) (Small clause) I saw [one cop guarding a portable john]. I didn't ask why <one cop WAS guarding a portable john>.
- (12) (Imperative) Always [save some of each paycheck]. When you're older, you'll understand why <you should save some of each paycheck>.

## Polarity Mismatch

- (13) Have those documents on my desk by 8am or explain why <you don't have them on my desk by 8am>!

- ▷ in  $p \vee q$ , not  $p$  is presupposed when  $q$  is evaluated. (Kroll 2018)
- ▷ Sluice can negate antecedent event only if context requires it.

## Chung's Generalization

- (14) They're jealous but it's unclear of who <they're jealous>
- (15) \* They're jealous but it's unclear who <they're jealous of>

Is some form of syntactic identity still required? Or is eventuality-identity sufficiently fine-grained to account for this?

**Selected References:** Chung, S., Ladusaw, W., McCloskey, J. 2011. Sluicing(:) Between Structure and Inference. Fiengo R. and May, R. 1994. Indices and Identity. Hardt, D., N. Asher, and J. Hunter. 2013. VP ellipsis without indices. Kroll, M. 2018. Polarity reversals under sluicing. Rudin, D. 2018. Head-based syntactic identity in sluicing. Stone, M. 1997. The anaphoric parallel between modality and tense.