

## A NEW LOOK AT ARGUMENT ELLIPSIS: EVIDENCE FROM SLAVIC

**Major Claim** – The Argument Ellipsis Analysis has been quite prominent in the work on Japanese null arguments. Thus, a number of authors have argued in one way or another that null subjects and objects in Japanese are best analyzed as involving ellipsis rather than null pronouns (Saito 2007, Takahashi 2008, among many others). To illustrate, if the null object in (1b) is preceded by (1a), then the null object in (1b) is ambiguous between strict interpretation (meaning Hanako hates his (=Taro's) mother) and sloppy interpretation (meaning Hanako hates her own mother):

- (1) a. Taro-wa zibun-no hahaoya-o aisiteiru. [Şener & Takahashi 2010: 79]  
Taro-NOM self-GEN mother-ACC love  
'lit. Taro loves self's mother.'  
b. Hanako-wa *e* nikundeiru.  
Hanako-TOP hates.  
'Hanako hates *e*.'

According to the above authors, (1b) cannot be analyzed as an empty pronoun because an overt pronoun in this position can achieve only strict interpretation. In this talk, I present data from Slavic, which challenge the argument ellipsis analysis. The major piece of evidence comes from the fact that clitics are overt, yet can obtain both strict and sloppy interpretation. I will argue that clitics are predicates of the type  $\langle e, t \rangle$ , achieving semantic variability through type shifting operations. Finally, I will propose a unified analysis of Tomioka's (2003) analysis of Japanese null arguments and clitics in Slavic.

**Data and Analysis** – Franks (in press) notes that the sloppy reading of clitic pronouns is occasionally allowed in Slovenian and Serbian/Croatian (SC), as illustrated by Slovenian in (2):

- (2) Stane je videl **plav avto** in tudi Tone **ga** je videl. [Franks *in press*, Slovenian]  
Stane AUX.3SG saw blue car and also Tone it AUX.3SG saw  
'Stane saw a blue car and Tone saw **it/one** too.'

The clitic *ga* in the second conjunct can have a strict reading (in other words, Stane and Tone saw the same blue car). Nevertheless, the clitic *ga* can get a sloppy reading as well (in other words, Stane and Tone may have seen two different blue cars). All my consultants in SC (13 in total) allow sloppy reading in (3b) given an appropriate context (3a).

- (3) a. The context for sloppy indefinite reading: *Nikola and Danilo are best friends. They have many interests in common except their taste for movies is completely different. Specifically, Nikola likes comedies, whereas Danilo likes horror movies. In their town, a movie festival of all film genres takes place every summer. A comedy and a horror movie played at the same time in two different buildings. Given their very different tastes, Nikola and Danilo saw two different movies.*

- b. Nikola je vidio **film**, a vidio **ga** je i Danilo. [SC]  
Nikola AUX.3SG saw film and saw it.CL.ACC AUX.3SG and Danilo  
'Nikola saw a movie and Danilo saw **it/one** too.'

- c. Nikola vide (**eden**) **film**, a i Danilo **go** vide. [Macedonian]  
Viktor saw a film and Dimitar it.CL.ACC saw  
'Nikola saw a movie and Danilo saw **it/\*one** too.'

Furthermore, sloppy reading in SC is possible with both indefinite antecedent (3b) and definite/pronominal-containing antecedent (4) (the context for (4) is missing due to space limitations)

- (4) Nikola je pozvao (**svoju**) **djevojku** na slavu, [SC]  
Nikola AUX.3SG invited his girlfriend on slava  
a pozvao **ju** je i Danilo.  
and invited her.CL.ACC AUX.3SG and Danilo  
'Nikola invited his girlfriend to the slava (family patron's day) and Danilo invited **her/his** (=Danilo's) (**girlfriend**) too.'

Crucially, I show that there is a principled cross-linguistic variation in this respect. Thus, the semantic freedom of clitics is banned in Macedonian (3c) even under the appropriate scenario (3a) ((4) is also disallowed in Macedonian under sloppy interpretation), as confirmed by all my consultants (six in total).

In Macedonian, the clitic can have only strict interpretation (3c), as illustrated by the English translation ‘it.’ Additionally, I show that the sloppy reading of clitics is not available in Bulgarian, Spanish, French, and Italian, whereas it is allowed in SC, Slovenian, Czech, and Slovak (only SC and Macedonian are used for illustration). This leads me to propose a new descriptive generalization: article-less languages allow a sloppy interpretation under the context in question, whereas article language disallow it. I then connect the semantic variability of clitics in article-less languages with the semantic freedom that full determiner-less NPs enjoy. Consider (5) in which the argument ‘djevojkju’ in SC can obtain a variety of meanings, depending on the context:

- (5) Milan je vidio **djevojkju**. [SC]  
 Milan AUX.3SG saw girl  
 ‘Milan saw a girl/the girl/his girl(friend).’

Such semantic variability is achieved through type-shifting operations allowed only in article-less languages, as in (6):

- (6) For any type shifting operation  $\tau$  and any  $X$ :  $*\tau(X)$  if there is a determiner  $D$  such that for any set  $X$  in its domain,  $D(X) = \tau(X)$  (Blocking Principle, Type Shifting as Last Resort) (Chierchia (1998: 360)) It has been argued that full NPs in Slavic article-less languages do not project a DP layer based on a number of generalizations (Bošković 2008). In line with this, I claim that clitics are also NPs in article-less languages, not DPs. I propose that, like NPs, clitics are predicates of the type  $\langle e, t \rangle$  and that they can obtain a sloppy reading via two semantic operations: Existential Closure (Heim 1982) and Type Shifting (of a predicate to an individual (cf. Partee (1987))). A somewhat similar analysis was proposed for Japanese null arguments by Tomioka (2003), who notes that, unlike English pronouns, Japanese null arguments can achieve sloppy interpretation with both definite and indefinite antecedent. Given the parallelism between clitic pronouns in article-less Slavic languages and Japanese null arguments, I propose a unified account of the two based on Tomioka’s (2003) analysis of Japanese null arguments; that is, I propose a compositional analysis of clitics in article-less languages, as in (7a) for sloppy indefinite (cf. (3b)) and (7b) for sloppy definite readings (cf. (4)):

(7a) <i>Sloppy indefinite reading</i> : Via $\exists$ -Closure	(7b) <i>Sloppy definite reading</i> : Via Iota
Input LF: $[_{IP} \text{ Danilo}_2 [_{ga_3}]_1 [t_2 \text{ saw } t_1]]]$ $\exists [_{VP} [ga_3]_1 [_{VP} t_2 \text{ saw } t_1]]]$ $[t_2 \text{ vidio } t_1]^g = \text{saw } (g(1)) (g(2))$ Assume $g := [3 \rightarrow \lambda y. \text{film } (y)]$ $[[ga_3]]^g = \lambda y. \text{film } (y)$ $[[[_{ga_3}]_1 [t_2 \text{ vidio } t_1]]]^g =$ $\lambda x. [[ga_3]]^g(x) = 1 \ \& \ [[[_{1} [t_2 \text{ vidio } t_1]]]^g(x) = 1$ $[[[_{1} [t_2 \text{ vidio } t_1]]]^g = \lambda z. g(2) \text{ saw } (z)$ $\lambda x. [\lambda y. \text{film } (y) (x) = 1 \ \& \ [\lambda z. \text{saw } (z) (g(2))](x) = 1]$ $\lambda x. [\text{film } (x) \ \& \ \text{saw } (x) (g(2))]$ $\exists ([[ga_1 [t_2 \text{ saw } t_1]]]g) = \exists x [\text{film } (x) \ \& \ \text{saw } (x) (g(2))]$	Input LF: $[_{IP} \text{ Danilo}_2 [_{ju_3}]_1 [t_2 \text{ invited } t_1]]]$ Assume $g := [3 \rightarrow \lambda y. \text{girlfriend } (y) (g(2))]$ $[[ju_3]]^g = \lambda y. \text{girlfriend } (y) (g(2))$ iota ( $[[ju_3]]^g$ ) = $\iota y. [\text{girlfriend } (y) (g(2))]$ $[[VP]]^g = \text{invited } (\iota y. [\text{girlfriend } (y) (g(2))]) (g(2))$ $[[IP]]^g = \lambda x. [VP]^{g \times 2} (\text{Danilo}) =$ $= \lambda x. \text{invited } (\iota y. [\text{girlfriend } (y) (x)]) (x) (\text{Danilo})$ $= \text{invited } (\iota y. [\text{girlfriend } (y) (\text{Danilo})]) (\text{Danilo})$

**Conclusions** – Clitics behave differently in terms of their interpretation depending on the presence/absence of articles in a language – only clitics in article-less languages have a variety of interpretations. Overall, I argue that the presence/absence of  $D$  is responsible for these differences and propose a unified account of the availability of certain readings of clitics and null arguments.

**Selected references:** Bošković (2008). What will you have, DP or NP? In *Proceedings of NELS 37*. Chierchia (1998). Reference to Kinds across Languages. *Natural Language Semantics* 6: 339-405. Franks (in press). The Slovenian Orphan Accusative, Empty Pronouns and Noun Phrase Structure. In Schürcks, L. et al. (eds.). Şener & Takahashi (2010). Ellipsis of Arguments in Japanese and Turkish. *Nanzan Linguistics* 6, 79-99. Tomioka (2003). The semantics of Japanese null pronouns and its cross-linguistic implications. In Schwabe, K. & S. Winkler (eds.), pp. 321-339.