Conjunction Saves Multiple Sluicing: How *(and) Why?  
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In this talk, we analyze coordinated multiple wh-sluicing and its relationship to multiple sluicing, coordinated wh-questions and coordinated clefts. We start with the puzzle in (1a-b): why does the ungrammatical multiple wh-sluice in English improve when the wh-phrases are coordinated?

(1) a. *Someone saw something, but I can’t remember who what.  
   b. Someone saw something, but I can’t remember who or what.  

The contrast in (1a-b) is reminiscent of the contrast (2a-b): the ungrammatical multiple wh-questions also improve when the fronted wh-phrases are coordinated. Thus, the next question is whether perhaps coordinated wh-sluicing is derived from coordinated wh-questions (CWHs)?

(2) a. *What where does John sing?  
   b. What and where does John sing?

Gračanin-Yuksek (2007) and Citko and Gračanin-Yuksek (2013) attribute the contrast in (2a-b) to the fact that coordinated wh-questions in English are unrelated to multiple wh-questions, and have the multidominant bi-clausal structure in (3). Such a structure explains why coordinated wh-questions are ungrammatical if they involve two arguments: (4a) below, if one wh-phrase is the subject: (4b), and if one wh-phrase is a direct object when the verb is obligatorily transitive: (4c).

(4) a. *What and to whom did John give? / *Do you know what or to whom John gave?  
   b. ??/Tell me who and when sang?  
   c. *What and when did John fix? / *Do you know what or when John fixed?

We show, however, that the bi-clausal multidominant structure in (3) cannot be the right structure for coordinated wh-sluices. If it were, CWHs and coordinated wh-sluices should be subject to the same restrictions, which is not what we find. (5a) shows that coordinated wh-sluices can involve two arguments, (5b) shows that one of the coordinated wh-phrases can be a subject, and (5c) shows that one of the coordinated wh-phrases in coordinated wh-sluicing with obligatorily transitive verb can be a direct object. Crucially, in all these respects, coordinated wh-sluices contrast with coordinated wh-questions, as shown by the ungrammaticality of the parallel CWH examples in (4a-c).

(5) a. I know that John gave something to someone, but I don’t know what or to whom.  
   b. Someone has already sung this song, but I don’t know who and/or when.  
   c. I know that John fixed something one of these days, but I don’t know what or when.

Abels and Dayal (2017: Fn 16) suggest that coordinated sluices are derived from pseudoclefts. On such an analysis, (6) would be the source of the coordinated sluice in (1b):

(6) I know that someone saw something but I don’t know who it was or what it was.

We show that this cannot be the right structure for coordinated wh-sluices either, by applying Merchant’s (2001) diagnostics to distinguish clefts with wh-pivots from singular sluicing constructions. First, adjuncts can appear in coordinated wh-sluices, but not in clefts: (7a-b). Second, aggressively non-D-linked wh-phrases are disallowed in coordinated wh-sluicing, but not in clefts: (8a-b). Third, coordinated wh-sluices allow swiping but clefts with wh-pivots do not: (9a-b).

(7) a. I know that John fixed something somehow, but I don’t know what or how.  
   b. I know that John fixed something somehow but I don’t know what it was or how (*it was).

(8) a. *Someone saw something, but I can’t remember who (the hell) or what the hell.  
   b. Someone saw something, but I can’t remember who (the hell) it was or what the hell it was.

(9) a. John spoke to someone about something but I don’t know who to or what about.  
   b. *John spoke to someone about something but I don’t know who to it was or what about it was.
Furthermore, in languages in which wh-pivots in clefts are nominative, we expect to find coordinated wh-phrases in sluicing to be nominative if sluices were derived from clefts. This is not what we find:

(10) a. Ktoś kierowat czymś, ale nie wiem, kto to był i co to było. Polish
someone managed something.instr but no know who.nom it was and what.nom it was
‘Someone managed something but I don’t know who and what it was.’

b. Ktoś kierowat czymś, ale nie wiem, kto i czym /*co.
someone managed something.instr but no know who.nom and what instr /*what.nom
Someone managed something but not know who and what.’

We thus propose that wh-phrases in coordinated multiple sluicing undergo independent movements in separate clauses, followed by ellipsis in each. The structure of the coordinated wh-sluice in (1b) is (11):

(11) ... I can’t remember [CP who, [TP t-saw-something] or [CP what, [TP he/she/they saw t]].

This structure explains why coordinated wh-sluices behave differently from multiple (non-coordinated) wh-sluices, coordinated wh-questions, and clefts (and thus predicts no similarities between them).

First, it explains why ungrammatical multiple wh-sluicing improves when the wh-phrases are coordinated ((1a) vs. (1b)). Second, it explains why coordinated wh-sluicing has a wider distribution than multiple sluicing. Multiple sluicing in English is possible if the second wh-remnant is a PP (Bolinger 1978, Richards 2010): contrast (1a) with (12). No such restriction holds of coordinated wh-sluices.

(12) ?Someone talked about something, but I can’t remember who about what. (Lasnik 2014: 8)

Third, it explains the fact that, like their non-elided sources, coordinated multiple sluices have single pair readings (noted by Abels and Dayal (2017) and Gribanova (2009: 142), who builds on Grebenyova’s (2006) work on multiple sluicing). And fourth, it explains why coordinated multiple sluices are not subject to the so-called Clausemate Condition (Abels and Dayal 2017), which requires wh-phrases in multiple sluicing to originate within the same (finite) clause (see Lasnik 2014, Merchant 2001, Nishigauchi 1998, Takahashi 1994, among others). Since (13) is not a multiple sluicing configuration, the Clausemate Condition simply does not apply.

(13) Some student thought that some professor resigned, but I don’t know which student and which professor.

Since English does not allow multiple wh-fronting, it is not surprising that coordinated wh-sluicing in English has a bi-clausal source. However, we argue that the analysis in (11) for coordinated wh-sluicing should also be extended to multiple wh-fronting languages that allow mono-clausal coordinated wh-questions (CWHs) with the structure in (14). Such CWHs behave differently from CWHs in English in that, e.g., they allow coordination of wh-arguments, as illustrated in (15a) for Croatian.

(14) [CP Wh1 &P C1 C2 T P]

However, coordinated wh-sluices in Croatian cannot be derived from (14), as shown by the distribution of the discourse particle to, which can appear only once in mono-clausal CWHs in (15a), but is allowed to appear twice in a comparable coordinated wh-sluice in (15b).

(15) a. Kome (to) i što (*to) Jan daje?
to-whom TO and what TO Jan gives
Int.: ‘What and to whom is Jan giving?’

b. Jan nekome nešto daje. Reci mi kome to i što to.
Jan to-someone something gives tell me who TO and what TO
‘Jan is giving something to someone. Tell me who to and what.’

Thus, coordinated sluicing seems to be independent of multiple wh-fronting and requires a bi-clausal source that is unrelated to multiple sluicing, (multiple) clefts and multiple coordinated wh-questions.