

Last but not least: a comparative perspective on right dislocation in Alasha Mongolian

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September 23, 2023

Abstract

The primary goal of this paper is to understand the information structure of right dislocation (RD). I report a variation in RD in Asian languages with regard to the information structural status of the right dislocated elements. The discussion focuses on Alasha, a Mongolic language spoken in Mongolia. Through a comparative perspective on right dislocation, I show that RD languages come in two types: one that allows focused elements to be right dislocated, and one that disallows focused elements to be right dislocated. I argue that Alasha belongs to the former type, and I propose a bi-clausal analysis of Alasha RD, where Focus movement may occur in the second clause. Drawing on these findings, I further argue that the variation in RD is due to the parametric difference on the licensing condition of Focus Projection in Asian languages. Ultimately, the findings of this paper strengthen a non-uniform approach to RD in natural languages in both syntactic structure and information structure, despite their surface similarities.

Keywords: right dislocation, information structure, focus, Focus Projection, parameters, Mongolian

1 Introduction

The primary goal of this paper is to understand the information structure of right dislocation (RD). I report a variation in RD in Asian languages with regard to the information structural status of the right dislocated elements. The discussion focuses on Alasha, a Mongolic language spoken in Mongolia. Through a comparative perspective on right dislocation, I show that RD languages come in two types: one that allows focused elements to be right dislocated, and one that disallows focused elements to be right dislocated. I argue that Alasha belongs to the former type. Drawing on these findings, I further argue that the variation in RD is due to the parametric difference on the licensing condition of Focus Projection in Asian languages.

RD is by no means new to the literature, but the information structure of RD is less systematically studied than its syntactic structure. One consensus in previous works seems to be that right dislocated elements are typically topics, old information, background materials, or defocused/de-emphasized elements. This is reported in East Asian languages (Kuno 1978; Takami 1995; Takano 2014; Lee 2017; 2020, i.a.), in South Asian languages (Butt and King 1996; Dayal 2003; Manetta 2012, i.a.), as well as in Germanic languages (Ott and de Vries 2016, i.a.). It has been further proposed that, at least in some languages like Cantonese and Mandarin, the right-dislocated elements can *only* be topics/defocused elements (Lee 2017, 2020).^{1 2} In other words, focused elements appear to be incompatible with RD in general. However, it will be shown in detail that RD in Alasha contrasts sharply with its counterparts in Cantonese and Mandarin, since Alasha RD can host focused elements, in addition to topics/defocused elements. This suggests that at least some languages allow RD to target focused elements, and thus RD does not have an invariant discourse function across languages. This observation raises two non-trivial questions in the study of RD. The first one concerns the syntactic structure of RD in Alasha, i.e., how focused elements obtain the position in the right periphery in the derivation. I propose an extended version of a bi-clausal analysis that employs Focus movement and

1. Since the distinction between topics, old information, background materials, or defocused/de-emphasized elements has no bearing on the proposal, I use the term *topics and defocused elements* as a cover term for these elements.

2. This is consistent with the proposal in L. Y.-L. Cheung (2009), which suggests that the host clause, but not the right dislocated elements, receive focus interpretation.

remnant deletion on Alasha RD (Kuno 1978; Abe 1999; Tanaka 2001; Öztürk 2013; Ott and de Vries 2016).

The second question concerns the cross-linguistic variation of information structure of RD, i.e., what in the grammar determines whether focused elements can be right dislocated in a language. I develop a *structural* account of the variation that makes reference to how Focus Projection is licensed in the CP domain (Rizzi 1997, *et seq.*). I propose that these languages exhibit a parametric difference with regard to *the overt/covert requirement on the complement of the Focus Projection*, and it is precisely this difference that determines whether RD can host focused elements or not. Ultimately, the findings of this paper strengthen a non-uniform approach to RD in natural languages in both syntactic structure and information structure, despite their surface similarities.

The rest of this paper consists of five sections. In section 2, I give an overview of the properties of RD in Alasha, which are mostly shared by RD in other languages. In section 3, I illustrate the “liberal” nature of Alasha RD by reporting that RD in the language can target both topics/defocused elements and focused elements. In section 4, I propose a bi-clausal derivation of Alasha RD, and suggest that the right dislocated element belongs to a separate clause that has undergone Focus/Topic movement, followed by remnant deletion of the rest of the clause. In section 5, I develop an account of the variation on information structure of RD across languages. I attribute the variation to a parametric difference in the licensing condition of the Focus Projection among languages. Section 6 concludes.

2 Basic properties of right dislocation in Alasha

RD in Alasha is productive in colloquial speech, as with other East Asian languages that also allow RD, such as Japanese, Korean and Cantonese. The properties of Alasha RD reported in this section are largely shared by these RD languages. As a terminological note, I use the term RD pre-theoretically to refer to constructions where some element appears in post-verbal position (in OV languages) or post-sentence-final-particle position (in VO languages). This element (indicated by α in (1)) may correspond to a gap Δ in the host clause (= right dislocation), or to some overt elements (indicated by β in (1b)),

such as an identical copy or a resumptive pronoun (= dislocation copying).³

(1) Schematic representation of right dislocation and dislocation copying in OV languages

- a. [Host clause Δ ... V] α right dislocation (RD)
 b. [Host clause β ... V] α dislocation copying (DC)

2.1 Type flexibility

Alasha RD can target different types of arguments such as subjects and objects, as shown in (2). These arguments occupy a post-verbal position in Alasha. The example in (2b) further shows that the right dislocated element occupies a position after the question particle.

(2) α = arguments

- a. Δ Tun-d dzaxdl-ig bic-we **Baatar.** Subjects
 3SG-DAT letter-ACC write-PST Baatar
 ‘Baatar wrote a letter to him.’
- b. Ter Δ xar-sen-oo **nam-ig?** Direct objects
 3SG see-PST-Q 1SG-ACC
 ‘Did he see me?’
- c. Ter Δ dzaxdl-ig bic-we **Baatar-t.** Indirect objects
 3SG letter-ACC write-PST Baatar-DAT
 ‘He wrote a letter to Baatar.’

Adjuncts and adverbials can also be right dislocated, as shown in (3) and (4), respectively.

(3) α = adjuncts

- a. Bi Δ talx-ig xi-sen **cam-te xamt.**
 1SG bread-ACC make-PST 2SG-COM together
 ‘I made bread with you together.’

3. I assume with Tanaka (2001), Lai (2019), and Lee (2021) that RD and DC involve a similar mechanism in the derivation and should not be treated separately.

- b. Ter Δ tuudurxor toglo-deg **ger-t-een**.
 3SG piano play-HAB home-LOC-REFL.POSS
 ‘S/he plays piano at home.’

(4) α = adverbials

- a. Ter Δ gwe-sen-oo **utsugdur**.
 3SG run-PST-Q yesterday
 ‘Did s/he run yesterday?’
- b. Baatar Δ ons-sen **niginte**.
 Baatar sleep-PST already
 ‘Baatar already slept.’

Furthermore, clausal elements, such as the complement clause of attitude verbs in (5) and the antecedent clause of a conditional in (6), can be right dislocated as well. Note that there is no obligatory RD of complement clauses, unlike, e.g., Hindi-Urdu languages (Mahajan 1990; Dayal 1996, i.a.).

(5) α = complement clauses

- Baatar Δ utsugdur xel-sen **unuudur irx-guu gec**.
 Baatar yesterday say-PST today come-not C
 ‘Baatar said yesterday that (he would) not come today.’

(6) α = conditionals

- a. **Buro orx-gu bol** ci culang jewen-oo? baseline
 rain fall-not COP you party go-Q
 ‘If it does not rain, will you go to the party?’
- b. Δ Ci culang jewen-oo **buro orx-guu bol**?
 you party go-Q rain fall-not COP
 ‘Will you go to the party, if it does not rain?’

2.2 Dislocation copying

A variant of RD in Alasha involves no “gap” in the host clause. Instead, an identical copy occupies the potential “gap” position. I refer to these cases as *dislocation copying*. Examples of arguments and

adjuncts/adverbials are given in (7) and (8), respectively.

(7) α = an identical copy of arguments

- a. **Bi** Baatar-t nom og-sen **bi**.
 1SG Baatar-DAT book give-PST 1SG
 'I gave (a) book to Baatar.'
- b. Ter **Baatar-t** nom og-wa **Baatar-t**.
 3SG Baatar-DAT book give-PST Baatar-DAT
 'S/he gave (a) book to Baatar.'

(8) α = an identical copy of adjuncts/adverbials

- a. Baatar **niginte** ont-sen **niginte**.
 Baatar already sleep-PST already
 'Baatar already slept'
- b. Ter **ger-t-een** tuudurxor toglo-deg **ger-t-een**.
 3SG home-LOC-REFL.POSS piano play-HAB home-LOC-REFL.POSS
 'S/he plays piano at home.'

Additionally, a mismatch is possible between the element in the α -position and its correlating element in the host clause. For example, in (9b), the object in the host clause is replaced by an overt pronoun, which is co-indexed with *Huh Sudar*. I refer to cases like (9b) as *imperfect copying*.

(9) α = an imperfect copy

- a. Baatar **Huh Sudar**-ig ons-sen, **Huh Sudar**-ig. perfect copying
 Baatar "Blue Book"-ACC read-PST "Blue Book"-ACC
 'Baatar read "Blue Book".'
- b. Baatar **ter**_i-ig ons-sen, **Huh Sudar**_i-ig. imperfect copying
 Baatar it-ACC read-PST "Blue Book"-ACC
 'Baatar read it, "Blue Book".'

3 Information structure and right dislocation

Turning to the information structure of RD sentences, I show that Alasha RD (henceforth ARD) can target both topics/defocused elements, *and* focused elements. To illustrate this “liberal” nature of ARD with regard to its information structure, I contrast Alasha RD with Cantonese RD (henceforth CRD) and Mandarin RD (henceforth MRD). The right dislocated elements in the latter group are argued to resist focus interpretations thoroughly (Chiang 2017; Lee 2017, 2020; Yip and Yuan 2023). The contrast between Alasha and Cantonese/Mandarin indicates that RD does not involve a uniform information structure cross-linguistically.

3.1 Topics and defocused elements

I first show that the α -position in Alasha *can* host elements that indicate topics and defocused elements, which is commonly observed in other East Asian languages (Kuno 1978; Takami 1995; Takano 2014; Lee 2017; 2020, i.a.), in South Asian languages (Butt and King 1996; Dayal 2003; Manetta 2012, i.a.), as well as in Germanic languages (Ott and de Vries 2016, i.a.). The two examples in (10) show that topics in Alasha can be right dislocated. (10a) involves a topicalized object, whereas (10b) involves a base generated topic, bearing a part-whole relation with the object.

(10) α = topics/defocused elements

a. Δ Bi on-sen **in nom-ig bol**

1SG read-PST this book-ACC COP

‘This book, I read.’

b. Δ Bi asmel dorte **jimsem bol**

1SG apple like fruits COP

‘As for fruits, I like apples.’

It should be remarked that while *bol* can function as a copula verb, it also acquires the usage of a topic marker in Mongolian (Svantesson 2003; Janhunen 2012; Bai 2023). Janhunen (2012, p.236) suggests that it is “diachronically identical with the converbial form CONV COND *bol-bel* (< **bol-bol* < **bol-ba=la*)

‘if it is’ > ‘as it comes to, as for’ of the copular verb *bol*- ‘to be, to become’.⁴

3.2 Focused elements

When it comes to focused elements, there appears to be a split among RD languages: (i) languages that allow focused elements in the α -position, and (ii) languages that disallow focused elements in the α -position. In what follows, I compare ARD with CRD/MRD, and show that Alasha belongs to the former type.

3.2.1 Focus intonation

Elements that bear focus intonation (indicated by capital letters) in Alasha can appear in the α -position. For example, both sentences in (11) convey a contrastive reading on “to school”.⁵

(11) α in ARD can receive focus intonation

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| a. | Baatar SORGOOLI-d jav-san. | baseline |
| | Baatar school-DAT go-PST | |
| | ‘Baatar went to SCHOOL (not other places).’ | |
| b. | Baatar jav-san SORGOOLI-d . | RD |
| | Baatar go-PST school-DAT | |
| | ‘Baatar went to SCHOOL (not other places).’ | |

Importantly, Alasha RD contrasts with Cantonese RD, where focus intonation is considered infelicitous when assigned to elements in the α -position, exemplified in (12).

4. The dual status of *bol* can be further confirmed by their co-occurrence in a sentence. Bai (2023, p.110, adapted) reports the following (pseudo-)cleft sentence in Chakhar Mongolian, which contains both the topic marker *bol*, and the copula *bol*.

- (i) [Batu-yin ide-gsen]- \emptyset ni (**bol**) tere tomo boyursuy **bol**-una.
Batu-GEN eat-PERF.ADN-NOM 3SG.PPC TOP that big cake COP-NON.PST
‘It was that big cake that Batu ate.’

5. While the two sentences in (11) are reported to be truth-conditionally and information structurally identical, (11b) may come with additional discourse effects, such as the creation of a sense of suspense. I leave this to future research.

(12) α in CRD resists focus intonation

#Keoi m geidak gaau Δ aa3 **FAN BOUMENG BIU.** (Lee 2020, p.141)
3SG not remember submit SFP CL application form
'S/he forgot to submit the application form.'

3.2.2 **Contrastive focus**

The α -position in Alasha can host elements that are in contrast with another element. The sentence in (13a) serves as the baseline example, where *sorgooli-d* 'at school' is contrasted with *ger-te* 'at home'. (13b) shows that the contrastive reading remains when *sorgooli-d* is right dislocated. Note that *ger-te bish* is not an integrated part of the first sentence, i.e., it is not in the α -position.

(13) ARD allows contrastive focus

- a. Bi Baatar-ig **sorgooli-d** baix-ig xar-sen. Ger-te bish. baseline
1SG Baatar-ACC school-DAT exist.INF-ACC see-PST home-DAT not
'I saw Baatar at school, not at home.'
- b. Bi Baatar-ig Δ baix-ig xar-sen, **sorgooli-d.** Ger-te bish. RD
1SG Baatar-ACC exist.INF-ACC see-PST school-DAT home-DAT not
'I saw Baatar at school, not at home.'

Cantonese RD shows an opposite pattern. The α -position cannot host contrastive focus in a way similar to Alasha, as shown in the minimal pairs in (14).

(14) CRD disallows contrastive focus

- a. Ngo **hai hokhaau** gindou Aaming aa3. M-hai hai ukkei. baseline
1SG at school saw Aaming SFP not-COP at home
'I saw Aaming at school, not at home.'
- b. #Ngo gindou Aaming aa3 **hai hokhaau.** M-hai hai ukkei. RD
1SG saw Aaming SFP at school not-COP at home
'I saw Aaming at school, not at home.'

A similar example is also reported in Lee (2020), showing that elements under a contrastive interpretation cannot appear in the α -position, as in (15).

- (15) CRD disallows contrastive focus (Lee 2020, p.141, adapted)
- #Ngo heoi-gwo Δ aa3 **Hoenggong**. Daan mou heoi-gwo Δ aa3 **Oumum**
 1SG go-EXP SFP Hong Kong but not.have go-EXP SFP Macau
 ‘I have been to Hong Kong. But (I) have not been to Macau.’

3.2.3 Focus particles and their focus associates

In Alasha, ‘only’-focus can be marked by two means, namely, by the pre-nominal marker *dzoxung* ‘only’ or by the suffix *-l*.

- (16) ‘Only’-focus marking in Alasha
- Dzoxung bi/ bi-l** Baatar-t nom og-sen.
 only 1SG/ 1SG-only Baatar-DAT book give-PST
 ‘Only me gave (a) book to Baatar.’

Crucially, the α -position in Alasha can host both the focus particle and its focus associate. This is exemplified in (17a). Furthermore, (17b) shows that the focused elements can be targeted by dislocation copying as well, resulting in multiple occurrence of the focus particle and its focus associate.

- (17) ARD can target ‘only’-focus
- a. Δ Baatar-t nom og-sen **dzoxung bi/ bi-l**.
 Baatar-DAT book give-PST only 1SG/ 1SG-only
 ‘Only me gave (a) book to Baatar.’
- b. **Bi-l** Baatar-t nom og-sen **bi-l**.
 1SG-only Baatar-DAT book give-PST only-1SG
 ‘Only me gave (a) book to Baatar.’

The situation is different in Cantonese and Mandarin. In Cantonese, the focus particle *zinghai* ‘only’ and its focus associate cannot be right dislocated, as in (18a). They cannot be involved in dislo-

cation copying either, as in (18b).⁶

(18) CRD resists 'only'-focus

a. ?? Δ Maai-zo ni-bun syu zaa3 **zinghai ngo**.

buy-PERF this-CL book SFP only 1SG

'Only me bought this book.'

b. ??**Zinghai ngo** maai-zo ni-bun syu zaa3 **zinghai ngo**.

only 1SG buy-PERF this-CL book SFP only 1SG

'Only me bought this book.'

In a similar vein, focused elements marked by the focus particle *shi* in Mandarin cannot be right dislocated. The cases in (19) involve imperfect copying in dislocation copying sentences. None of them tolerates the presence of the focused elements in the α -position, regardless whether the focus particle is present or not.

(19) MRD resists *shi*-focus

a. *Shi **ta_i** zhaodao Lisi a **Mali_i**.

(Chiang 2017, p.310)

FOC she find Lisi SFP Mary

'It was her_i who found Lisi, Mary_i.'

b. *Ta_i yinggai keneng xihuan Lisi ba **shi Mali_i**.

(Chiang 2022, p.4)

She probably maybe like Lisi SFP FOC Mary

'She_i probably likes Lisi, Mary_i.'

To see a different type of focus marking, 'even'-focus in Alasha can be marked by the post-nominal *xurtil* or the suffix *-c*. They can appear with their focus associates in the α -position, in both RD and DC sentences.

6. The judgment for (18b) reported by my five Cantonese consultants differ from the one reported in Lai (2019, p.250). My consultants point out that there is a contrast in acceptability between dislocation copying cases with and without focused elements.

(20) ARD can target ‘even’-focus

- a. Baatar Δ utsugdur ap-pa **in nom-ig xurtil**.
Baatar yesterday buy-PST this book-ACC even
‘Even this book, Baatar bought yesterday.’
- b. Bi **nom-on-c** gesen Baatar-t og-sen **nom-on-c**.
1SG **book-REFL-even** GESEN Baatar-DAT give-PST **book-REFL-even**
‘Even my book, I gave (it) to Baatar.’

In contrast, the Cantonese counterparts of these sentences are degraded. ‘Even’-focus in Cantonese is typically expressed by a *lin ... dou* ‘even ... also ... ’ construction.⁷ The focus associate of *lin* ‘even’ cannot appear in the α -position.

(21) CRD resists ‘even’-focus

- a. ??Ngo dou m wui tai gaa3 **lin bouzi**. (Lee 2020, p.141)
1SG also not will read SFP even newspaper
‘I will not even read newspaper’
- b. ??Ngo **lin bouzi** dou m wui tai gaa3 **lin bouzi** dou.
1SG even newspaper also not will read SFP even newspaper also
‘I will not even read newspaper.’

3.2.4 Focus interpretation on verbs

Alasha allows the so-called “verb doubling” or “predicate cleft” constructions, where a verb occurs in multiple positions in a sentence, and receives focus interpretations (see Hein (2018) for extensive cross-linguistic investigations; see also Landau (2006), Vicente (2007), Cheng and Vicente (2013), and Lee (2022) for formal analyses). For example, in (22a), the verb *avx* ‘buy’ is doubly realized, where the first occurrence is nominalized (and topicalized), and the second one appears in its finite form. The verb receives a contrastive reading (i.e., the verb ‘buy’ is contrasted with other verbs like ‘read’). In

7. For extensive discussions of this construction in Chinese, see Shyu (1995), Badan (2007), and Lee (2022), i.a.

the second case in (22b), the first occurrence of the verb *avx* ‘buy’ appears in its infinitival form and is associated with *xurtil* ‘even’.⁸

(22) Verb doubling constructions in Alasha

a. *Contrastive focus on verbs*

Bi nom-ig **av-ün** **bol av-sen.**

1SG book-ACC buy-NMLZ COP buy-PST

‘As for buying, I have BOUGHT this book (but I didn’t READ it).’

b. *‘Even’-focus associated with verbs*

Baatar in nom-ig **avx-ig** **xurtil avx** dor-guu.

Baatar this book-ACC buy-INF-ACC even buy-INF like-not

‘Baatar didn’t even want to BUY this book (let alone to READ it).’

Importantly, while these verbs receive a focus interpretation (of different sorts), they can be targeted for RD and appear in the α -position (together with the topic/focus marker), as shown in the sentences in (23).

(23) ARD can target a focused verb

a. Bi nom-ig Δ **av-sen, av-ün** **bol.**

1SG book-ACC buy-PST buy-NMLZ COP

‘As for buying, I have BOUGHT this book (but I didn’t READ it).’

b. Baatar in nom-ig Δ **avx** dor-guu, **avx-ig** **xurtil.**

Baatar this book-ACC buy like-not buy-INF-ACC even

‘Baatar didn’t even want to BUY this book.’

It is instructive to note that Cantonese similarly allows verb doubling constructions as in Alasha.

8. The first occurrence of the verb can alternatively appear in the sentence-initial position. For example,

- (i) a. **av-ün** **bol** bi nom-ig Δ **av-sen**
 buy-NMLZ COP 1SG book-ACC buy-PST
 ‘As for buying, I have BOUGHT this book (but I didn’t READ it).’
 b. **avx-ig** **xurtil** Baatar in nom-ig Δ **avx** dor-guu
 buy-INF-ACC even Baatar this book-ACC buy-INF like-not
 ‘Baatar didn’t even want to BUY this book (let alone to READ it).’

The sentences in (24) are the counterparts of the ones in (22).

(24) Verb doubling constructions in Cantonese

a. *Contrastive focus on verbs*

Maai keoi hai **maai**-gwo go-bun syu ge2. (Lee 2022, p.38, adapted)

buy 3SG FOC buy-EXP that-CL book SFP

'As for buying, s/he has BOUGHT that book (but I haven't READ it).'

b. *'Even'-focus associated with verbs*

Lin **tai** keoi dou m-**tai** ni-bun syu aa3. (Lee 2022, p.38, adapted)

even read 3SG also not-read this-CL book SFP

'S/he didn't even READ this book.'

However, these sentences become degraded if the first occurrence of the verb is right dislocated, as shown in (25).

(25) CRD cannot target a focused verb

a. ?? Δ Keoi hai **maai**-gwo go-bun syu ge2, **maai**.

3SG FOC buy-EXP that-CL book SFP buy

'As for buying, s/he has BOUGHT that book (but I haven't READ it).'

b. ?? Δ Keoi dou m-**tai** ni-bun syu aa3, **lin tai**.

3SG also not-read this-CL book SFP even read

'S/he didn't even READ this book.'

It should be noted that verbs in Cantonese can be right dislocated, as long as it does not receive a focus interpretation (L. Y.-L. Cheung 2015; Lee 2017, 2020, 2022). The modal *wui* in the host clause in (26) is not associated with the focus marker *hai*, hence the lack of contrastive focus reading.

(26) CRD can target a verb without focus interpretation

Keoi **wui** zoeng gaan uk maai-ceot-heoi gaa3 laa3 **wui**. (L. Y.-L. Cheung 2015, p.248)

3SG will take CL house sell-out-go SFP SFP will

'S/he will sell the house.'

To sum up, while both Alasha and Cantonese allow verb doubling constructions (that assign certain focus interpretations on the verb), only Alasha allows a focused verb to appear in the α -position.

3.2.5 Two (apparent) exceptions

There are two apparent exceptions to the suggestion that ARD can target focused elements. For example, in (27), α in ARD cannot host *wh*-expressions (which are said to bear inherent focus interpretation; cf. Rochemont (1986)). In this regard, Alasha is similar to Cantonese, which also disallows RD of *wh*-expressions, as shown in (28).

(27) ARD resists *wh*-expressions

Δ Baatar-t nom og-sen be **xen**?
 Baatar-DAT book give-PST Q who
 ‘Who gave (a) book to Baatar?’

(28) CRD resists *wh*-expressions

#Keoi m geidak gaau Δ aa3 **matje**? (Lee 2020, p.141)
 3SG not remember submit SFP what
 ‘What did s/he forget to submit?’

Additionally, α in ARD cannot host informational focus (as in question-answer pairs) either. Again, this is similar to CRD, exemplified by the infelicity in both (29) and (30).

(29) ARD: In response to “who gave a book to Baatar?”

Δ Baatar-t nom og-sen **Erdin**?
 Baatar-DAT book give-PST Erdin
 ‘Erdin gave (a) book to Baatar.’

(30) CRD: In response to “who bought a computer?”

Δ Wui maai jat-bou dinnou lo1 **keoi**? (p.203-204, adapted)
 will buy one-CL computer SFP 3SG
 ‘S/he will buy a computer.’

These two observations are often taken as evidence for the topichood or defocused status of elements occupying the α -position (Kuno 1978; Takami 1995; Takano 2014; Lee 2017, 2020). However, as we will see shortly, these observations receive an alternative explanation under a bi-clausal analysis of RD in Alasha. In other words, the infelicitous cases like (27) and (29) is not necessarily due to the focus nature of the right dislocated elements. I return to these issues in section 4.3.2 and section 4.3.3.

3.3 Interim summary

In this section, I showed that the α -position in Alasha can host both topics and (most) focused elements. While there are two exceptions relating to *wh*-expressions and informational focus, it is still in sharp contrast with languages like Cantonese and Mandarin, which consistently resist focused elements in the α -position. Table 1 summarizes the discussions in this section.

α -position	Alasha RD	Cantonese/Mandarin RD
Focus intonation	✓ (11)	✗ (12)
Contrastive focus	✓ (13)	✗ (14)
‘Only’-focus	✓ (17)	✗ (18)
‘Even’-focus	✓ (20)	✗ (21)
Focused verb	✓ (23)	✗ (25)
<i>Wh</i> -expressions	✗ (27)	✗ (28)
Informational focus	✗ (29)	✗ (30)

Table 1: A summary of the comparison between ARD and CRD/MRD

It should be remarked that Alasha is not unique among all RD languages in allowing focused elements to occupy the α -position. In the discussions of Korean and Japanese RD, it is sometimes suggested that the right dislocated elements can be focused elements. For example, Ko (2015) suggests that right-dislocated elements in Korean are specificational focus, a suggestion endorsed by Abe (2019) for right dislocation in Japanese. The discussions in Yamashita (2011) and Takita (2011) also suggest that contrastive elements and elements associated with ‘only’ can be right dislocated in Japanese.⁹ The discussions so far thus reveal that languages that allow RD come in two types, listed in (31), depending

9. While Abe (2019) specifically argues that Japanese RD involve focus movement, the focus nature of the right dislocated elements is not discussed in detail.

on whether focused elements can appear in the α -position.

(31) Two types of RD languages

- a. α can host topics/defocused elements only e.g., Cantonese, Mandarin
- b. α can host focused elements, and topics/defocused elements e.g., Alasha, Japanese

Before I turn to an explanation on this variation on RD (to be discussed in section 5), I first present a syntactic analysis of how Alasha RD allows both topics and focused elements to occupy the α -position.

4 A bi-clausal analysis of Alasha RD

In section 4.1, I propose a bi-clausal analysis of ARD, where the elements in the α -position originate from a separate clause, occupying the initial position via focus movement plus remnant deletion. In section 4.2, I provide evidence for the proposed movement in the second clause in Alasha. I present evidence for a bi-clausal structure, and argue against a mono-clausal analysis in section 4.3.

4.1 The components in the proposal

The proposal here shares the same spirit in the analyses in Abe (1999) and Tanaka (2001) proposed for Japanese RD and in Öztürk (2013) proposed for RD in Khalkha (Mongolian), in Ott and de Vries (2016) for Germanic languages, among others. I adopt a bi-clausal analysis where the element in the α -position is the remnant of the second clause: it first undergoes movement, and the rest of the clause is deleted. Particularly, I suggest that the movement in the second clause can be Topic or Focus movement in Alasha (followed by deletion). The proposal involves the following components in (32):

(32) Components in a bi-clausal analysis of Alasha RD

- a. RD involves a bi-clausal structure generated by clausal repetition that is based on proposition identity (Abe 1999, 2019);
- b. A *pro*-form may appear in the host clause (Kuno 1978; Tanaka 2001; Öztürk 2013);

- c. Topic or Focus movement occurs in the second clause (cf. Abe 2019);
- d. Subsequent deletion targets the complement of TopicP or FocusP in the second clause.

Depending on the informational structural status of the element in the α -position, a RD sentence in Alasha can be ambiguous between a Topic structure or a Focus structure. The two structures in (33) schematically illustrate the derivation of object RD. The object may receive topic or focus interpretation.¹⁰

(33) A schematic representation of the proposed bi-clausal analysis of object RD

- a. $[_{CP} \text{ Subj } \mathbf{Obj/pro} \text{ V}] (SFP) [_{TopicP} \mathbf{Obj} [_{Subj-Obj-V}]]$ Topic movement

- b. $[_{CP} \text{ Subj } \mathbf{Obj/pro} \text{ V}] (SFP) [_{FocusP} \mathbf{Obj} [_{Subj-Obj-V}]]$ Focus movement


Note that if a null *pro*-form exists in the first clause, it give rises to a “gap” (i.e., right dislocation). If the *pro*-form is a resumptive pronoun, we obtain an *imperfect copying* case. If the right dislocated elements doubly appear in both clauses, it results in a *perfect copying* case. In other words, the alternation between RD and DC cases depends on the choice of the *pro*-form, and its presence/absence.

4.2 Evidence for movement

I start with evidence for the proposed movement in the second clause. ARD can span across complement CP boundaries. The two sentences in (34) show that an indirect object and of a focused verb can be right dislocated from within a complement clause.

(34) Long distance ARD

- a. Baatar $[_{CP} \Delta \text{ nom-ig } \text{ og-sen } \text{ gec}] \text{ xel-sen } \mathbf{Tsetsege-t.}$
 Baatar book-ACC give-PST C say-PST Tsetsege-DAT
 ‘Baatar said that (he) gave the book to Tsetsege.’

10. I assume the Topic projection may host old information, background materials, defocused elements.

- b. [_{CP} Baatar in nom-ig Δ **avx** dor-guu] Erdin bodxoor, **avx-ig xurtil**.
 Baatar this book-ACC buy want-not Erdin think buy-ACC even
 ‘Erdin thinks that Baatar doesn’t even want to BUY this book (let alone to READ it).’

However, ARD exhibits island sensitivity. For example, the element in the α -position cannot be associated with a gap (i.e., a *pro*-form under the current analysis) contained in a syntactic island. The (b) sentences in (35) and (36) below illustrate this point with relative clause islands and adjunct clause islands, respectively.¹¹ Note that the island sensitivity is also detected in sentences involving scrambling/ leftward movement, as shown in the (c) sentences.

(35) Relative clause islands

- a. Baatar [_{CP} Tsetsege **Erdin-t** og-sen] nom-ig xulgail-sen. baseline
 Baatar Tsetsege Erdin-DAT give-PST book-ACC steal-PST
 ‘Baatar stole the book that Tsetsege gave to Erdin.’
- b. *Baatar [_{CP} Tsetsege Δ og-sen] nom-ig xulgail-sen **Erdin-t**. RD
 Baatar Tsetsege give-PST book-ACC steal-PST Erdin-DAT
 Int.: ‘Baatar stole the book that Tsetsege gave to Erdin.’
- c. ***Erdin-t** Baatar [_{CP} Tsetsege Δ og-sen] nom-ig xulgail-sen. scrambling
 Erdin-DAT Baatar Tsetsege give-PST book-ACC steal-PST
 Int.: ‘Baatar stole the book that Tsetsege gave to Erdin.’

(36) Adjunct clause islands¹²

- a. Tana [_{Adjunct clause} Batu **Mergen-ig** coxi-sen ucr-aas] uxil-va. baseline
 Tana Batu Mergen-ACC hit-PST reason-ABL cry-PST
 ‘Tana cried because Batu hit Mergen.’

11. See also Öztürk (2013), Aravind (2021), Gong (2022), and Bai (2023) for evidence for the islandhood of relative clauses and adjunct clauses in other Mongolic varieties.

12. Adjunct clause island violation appears to be less severe in RD cases compared to scrambling cases, but it is still degraded when compared to the baseline example.

- b. ??Tana [_{Adjunct clause} Batu Δ coxi-sen ucr-aas] uxil-va **Mergen-ig.** RD
 Tana Batu hit-PST reason-ABL cry-PST Mergen-ACC
 Int.: ‘Tana cried because Batu hit Mergen.’
- c. ***Mergen-ig** Tana [_{Adjunct clause} Batu Δ coxi-sen ucr-aas] uxil-va. scrambling
 Mergen-ACC Tana Batu hit-PST reason-ABL cry-PST
 Int.: ‘Tana cried because Batu hit Mergen.’

Similarly, RD of the focused verbs in verb doubling constructions exhibits island sensitivity. For example, (37b) shows that the first occurrence of the verb ‘read’ in (37a) cannot be right dislocated across an NP complement island. Note also that leftward movement of the verb from within the NP complement island is also disallowed, as in (37c).¹³

(37) NP complement islands

- a. Bi [_{CP} tun-ii in nom-ig **onsx-ig** **xurtil** ons-sen-gui] baidl-ig xulaan
 1SG 3SG-GEN this book-ACC read-INF-ACC even read-PST-not fact-ACC accept
 av-gui.
 get-not
 ‘I cannot accept the fact that he did not even READ this book.’
- b. *Bi [_{CP} tun-ii in nom-ig Δ ons-sen-gui] baidl-ig xulaan av-gui, **onsx-ig**
 1SG 3SG-GEN this book-ACC read-PST-not fact-ACC accept get-not read-INF-ACC
xurtil.
 even
- c. ***Onsx-ig** **xurtil**, bi [_{CP} tun-ii in nom-ig Δ ons-sen-gui] baidl-ig
 read-INF-ACC even 1SG 3SG-GEN this book-ACC read-PST-not fact-ACC
 xulaan av-gui.
 accept get-not

Focusing on RD of non-adjuncts, we have witnessed island sensitivity and long distance depen-

13. Recall that, in footnote 8, I showed that the first occurrence of the verb in a verb doubling construction can appear sentence-initially, as long as it does not cross an island boundary.

dency in these cases, lending support to a movement analysis of Alasha RD.¹⁴

Before I proceed, an anonymous reviewer expresses concerns over the generality of the proposed movement, especially Focus movement, which, as proposed, should also be possible in non-RD cases. In other words, the question is whether the focus movement involved in RD is also observed in, for example, simple declarative sentences. As will be discussed in greater details in section 5.2.1, the proposed Focus movement is not applicable to simple sentences, but this is due to an independent constraint on the licensing condition on FocusP in the language. The proposed Focus movement, however, receives support from sluicing(-like) constructions in Mongolian, to be discussed in section 5.2.1.

4.3 Evidence for a bi-clausal structure

All the aforementioned evidence for movement does *not* distinguish a bi-clausal analysis from a mono-clausal one. In this subsection, I discuss arguments for a bi-clausal structure.

4.3.1 Imperfect copying and island sensitivity

The first piece of evidence comes from imperfect copying, briefly discussed in section 2. The relevant examples are repeated from (9) below in (38).

(38) α = an imperfect copy

14. As opposed to RD of arguments and verbs, RD of adjunct is island-insensitive. The minimal pairs in (i) show that while RD of the object '(a) new cat' in (ia) cannot escape the NP complement island, RD of the adjunct 'at home' is acceptable as shown in (ib).

(i) Argument-adjunct asymmetry with regard to island sensitivity in ARD

- a. *Bi [Baatar-in gerteen Δ tejex] sanal-ig jushuusen-gui **sin-muur**.
 1SG Baatar-GEN home-DAT-REFL raise suggestion-ACC agree-not new-cat
 Int.: 'I disagree with the suggestion that Baatar raise a new cat at home.'
- b. Bi [Baatar-in Δ sin-muur tejex] sanal-ig jushuusen-gui **ger-te-n**.
 1SG Baatar-GEN new-cat raise suggestion-ACC agree-not home-DAT-REFL
 'I disagree with the suggestion that Baatar raise a new cat at home.'

The contrast implies that RD of adjuncts do not share the same derivation of RD of non-adjuncts (including arguments and verbs). In other words, while RD of non-adjuncts are derived via syntactic movement, RD of adjuncts are not. A similar split in RD cases has been reported in Korean RD (Ko 2015). It is possible that RD of adjuncts in Alasha is derived via Late Merge, in a way proposed for Korean RD (Ko 2022b). Since RD of adjuncts appear to be a more specific case in RD, I set aside this sub-type of RD and focus on RD of non-adjuncts for the rest of the paper.

- a. Baatar **Huh Sudar**-ig ons-sen, **Huh Sudar**-ig. perfect copying
 Baatar “Blue Book”-ACC read-PST “Blue Book”-ACC
 ‘Baatar read “Blue Book”’
- b. Baatar **ter**_i-ig ons-sen, **Huh Sudar**_i-ig. imperfect copying
 Baatar it-ACC read-PST “Blue Book”-ACC
 ‘Baatar read it, “Blue Book”’

Examples like (38) have been taken as evidence for a bi-clausal structure in other languages (see, for example, Tanaka 2001; Öztürk 2013). Since the element in the α -position does not correspond to a “gap” in the host clause, it is unlikely to be derived via movement from the host clause - they belong to a separate clause. One caveat, however, is that recent proposals on linearization of movement chains open up an array of possibilities where a movement chain may have multiple realizations of copies. For example, additional chain copies is possible when a chain member escapes Copy Deletion for independent reasons (Nunes 2004; Landau 2006; Trinh 2009; Lee 2021). As for pronouns, they might be derived via partial application of Copy Deletion, which selectively deletes certain features of a nominal (van Urk 2018; Scott 2021; Georgi and Amaechi 2022; Yip and Ahenkorah 2023). As such, while the cases in (38) are predicted by a bi-clausal analysis, they do not necessitate such an analysis.

Here, it is instructive to consider demonstratives in dislocation copying. Consider the sentence in (39), which is minimally different from (38b) in that the pronoun is replaced by a demonstrative-noun string.

(39) ARD disallows imperfect copying with demonstratives

- Baatar **ter-nom**_i-ig ons-sen, **Huh Sudar**_i-ig.
 Baatar that-book-ACC read-PST “Blue Book”-ACC
 ‘Baatar read that book, “Blue Book”’

I suggest that the acceptability of (39) provides stronger evidence for a bi-clausal analysis, since it is less likely, if not impossible, for a proper name and a demonstrative-noun string to be related by movement (and derived via Copy Deletion). In featural terms, the features of the latter is not a subset

of the former, unlike the case of pronouns, where the pronoun might be regarded as the partial realization of the D-feature of the proper noun (Yip and Ahenkorah 2023). In contrast, the acceptability of (39) receives a natural explanation under a bi-clausal analysis. Provided that a bi-clausal structure in RD only requires proposition identity, it is possible to have the structure in (40), where the two clauses contain a pair of co-indexing nominals with different morpho-syntactic forms. In other words, the two (overt) nominals are not related by syntactic movement.

(40) The derivation of (39) under a bi-clausal analysis



This explanation is further supported by two additional observations. First, since movement is involved in the second clause, it is predicted that island sensitivity remains in cases of imperfect copying (cf. Tanaka 2001). This is borne out in (41).

(41) Island sensitivity remains in cases of imperfect copying in Alasha

*Baatar [Tsetsege **ter-xun-d** og-sen] nom-ig xulgail-sen **Erdin-t**.
 Baatar Tsetsege that-person-DAT give-PST book-ACC steal-PST Erdin-DAT
 ‘Baatar stole the book that Tsetsege gave to that person, Erdin.’

Second, if RD in a language involves a mono-clausal structure, it is predicted that this language would disallow demonstratives to occupy the α -position. Cantonese is a case in point. The suggestion that Cantonese RD involves a mono-clausal structure is independently argued for in various works by L. Y.-L. Cheung (1997, 2009), Lee (2017, 2021), and Lai (2019) (setting aside different implementations in these proposals). The unacceptability of (42) indicates that demonstratives cannot appear in the α -position, an observation correlated with the proposed mono-clausal structure in CRD.

(42) CRD disallows imperfect copying with demonstratives

***Ni-bun syu**_i jiging zyutbaan-zo laa3 **Hunglaumong**_i
 this-CL book already out.of.print-PERF LAA3 “The Dream of Red Chamber”
 ‘This book is already out of print, “The Dream of Red Chamber”.’

4.3.2 *Wh*-expressions

In section 3.2.5, we have seen that *wh*-expressions cannot occupy the α -position, which appears to be a challenge to the idea that Alasha RD can host focused elements. The relevant example is repeated from (27) in (43).

- (43) ARD resists *wh*-expressions
Δ Baatar-t nom og-sen be **xen**?
 Baatar-DAT book give-PST Q who
 ‘Who gave (a) book to Baatar?’

Upon closer scrutiny, I argue that this indeed lends support to a bi-clausal analysis of Alasha RD.¹⁵ Under the proposed bi-clausal analysis, the first clause involves a *pro*-form in the Δ position in (43). The infelicity of (43) can be attributed to the fact that there is no corresponding *pro*-forms for interrogative *wh*-expressions in Alasha. This suggestion is supported by two observations. First, adding an overt pronoun does not rescue the sentence in (43), as shown in (44).

- (44) #**Ter** Baatar-t nom og-sen be **xen**?
 3SG Baatar-DAT book give-PST Q who
 ‘He gave (a) book to Baatar, who?’

Second, (43) significantly improves if we add a copy of the *wh*-expression in the host clause. This follows from that fact that the sentence in (45) involves no *pro*-form in the host clause. The infelicity of (43) should thus be attributed to the lack of appropriate *pro*-form in the language, instead of, e.g., the focus nature of *wh*-expressions.

- (45) Dislocation copying is possible with *wh*-expressions in Alasha
Xen Baatar-t nom og-sen be **xen**?
 who Baatar-DAT book give-PST Q who
 ‘Who gave (a) book to Baatar?’

This explanation based on *pro*-forms is further corroborated with an observation in Cantonese.

15. The argument here builds on Takita (2011) in his discussion on Japanese RD.

The sentences in (46) does not improve with an additional occurrence of the *wh*-expression in the host clause, in contrast with Alasha.¹⁶

(46) Dislocation copying is not possible with *wh*-expressions in Cantonese

- a. ***Bin-bun syu** nei mei tai aa3 **bin-bun syu**?
 which-CL book 2SG not.yet read SFP which-CL book
 ‘Which book haven’t you read?’
- b. ***Matje** haakcan nei aa3 **matje**?
 what scare 2SG SFP what
 ‘What scares you?’

In other words, *wh*-expressions in Cantonese cannot occupy the α -position no matter the form of its correlate. This follows naturally from a mono-clausal analysis of Cantonese RD, one that involves no *pro*-form, and thus removing the “gap” in the host clause does not improve the sentence in a way Alasha does. The infelicity of the sentences in (46) can be attributed to the proposal that the α -position is reserved for topics and defocused elements in the language (Lee 2017, 2020).

4.3.3 Informational focus (as in Q-A pairs)

Another important observation reported in section 3.2.5 is that ARD is infelicitous if the α -position hosts an informational focus, i.e., an answer to a question, repeated below in (47).


(47) In response to “Who gave a book to Baatar?”

- # Δ Baatar-t nom og-sen **Erdin**.
 Baatar-DAT book give-PST Erdin
 ‘Erdin gave (a) book to Baatar.’

16. Lai (2019, p.250) reports that the sentence in (i) is acceptable. While two out of five of my consultants accept the sentence in (i), the other three consistently judge the sentences in (46) to be unacceptable.

(i) %**bingo** sengiat gong daaiwaa aa3 **bingo**?
 who always tell lie SFP who
 ‘Who always lies?’

Instead of attributing the infelicity to the focus-resistant nature of the α -position (*à la* Kuno 1978; Takami 1995; Takano 2014; Lee 2017, 2020), I suggest that the infelicity of sentences like (47) receives an explanation under a bi-clausal analysis. More concretely, the sentence in (47) has a structure depicted in (48). The first clause in (48) does not readily supply the answer to the *wh*-question. It is not until the second clause that the referent of the *pro* is fixed.¹⁷

(48) [_{CP} *pro* Baatar-t nom og-sen] [_{FocusP} **Erdin** [~~Erdin Baatar-t nom og-sen~~]]

 Focus movement

This provides an alternative explanation to the infelicity of using RD as an answer to a question.¹⁸

Importantly, this explanation leads us to the prediction that, if the element in the α -position does not reside in a separate clause (and hence there is *pro* in the structure), then it can serve as a felicitous answer. This prediction is borne out in languages such as Hindi. It is argued in Hindi that post-verbal elements involve a mono-clausal structure (Bhatt and Dayal 2007; Simpson and Choudhury 2015), and thus there is no *pro* (or any empty category) in sentences with post-verbal elements that is comparable to the one in ARD. Crucially, in the exchange in (49), the post-verbal elements in (49b) can felicitously be used to answer the preceding question. This suggests that whether the right-dislocated elements or the post-verbal elements can be used as a felicitous answer is correlated with the bi-clausal/mono-clausal structure.

(49) RD in Hindi can serve as an answer (Simpson and Choudhury 2015, p.540)

- a. A: yeh zewar-to bade sundar haiN. kis-ne kis-ko diya?
 these jewels-TOP very beautiful are who-ERG who-OBJ gave
 ‘These jewels are very beautiful. Who gave them to whom?’

17. I am grateful to this suggestion by an anonymous reviewer.

18. In Abe (2019), the *pro* is taken to be a less specified empty category, and he suggests that the sentence receives an interpretation in (i).

(i) $\exists x$ [x gave a book to Baatar] & it was Erdin that gave a book to Baatar.

He argues that RD under a bi-clausal analysis would fail to serve as an answer because “it asserts what the question presupposes, namely the first part of the interpretation just given.” The validity of this explanation relies on the unspecified nature of the empty category. I stick to the more specific, *pro* analysis.

- b. B: yeh zewar diye haiN **gita-ko ram-ne.**
 these jewels gave are Gita-OBJ Ram-ERG
 ‘Ram gave these jewels to Gita.’

Note, however, that this is not to say that RD with a mono-clausal structure *always* allows the right dislocated elements to be an answer to a *wh*-question. The Cantonese example in (30) is a case in point. It is argued that Cantonese RD involves a language-specific process of defocalization (i.e., the counterpart of focus movement), hence its incompatibility (Lee 2017, 2020). I stress that the analysis of the shared incompatibility with answers (or informational focus) should not be taken to depend on a unified analysis of the derivation of RD in Alasha and Cantonese.

4.3.4 Arguments against a mono-clausal analysis

As a common alternative to a bi-clausal analysis of RD, a mono-clausal structure is often argued to be involved in the derivation of RD. Possible formulations of such an approach may adopt (i) rightward scrambling, or (ii) double preposing. Both formulations assume a movement dependency between the element in the α -position and its correlate. I have argued in section 4.3.1 that such a proposal faces challenges when dealing with imperfect copying cases like (39), which involve a demonstrative. In what follows, I present further arguments against these two formulations.

The rightward scrambling approach is suggested in, for example, Simon (1989) and Murayama (1999) for Japanese RD, and Bhatt and Dayal (2007) and Manetta (2012) for Hindi post-verbal elements. Under this approach, the element occupying the α -position is derived by a one-step movement from the host clause to the right periphery, which can be regarded as a type of scrambling. This idea is schematically illustrated with a case of object RD in (50).

(50) A rightward scrambling approach to RD



However, Alasha RD differs from (leftward) scrambling in allowing resumption.¹⁹ Recall that

19. Similar observations are reported in Öztürk (2013) in Khalkha Mongolian.

resumption is possible in Alasha RD (i.e., the right-dislocated element can be associated with a resumptive pronoun). This is shown in the (9b), repeated below in (51a). Importantly, its (leftward) scrambling counterpart is unacceptable, as in (51b).

- (51) a. Baatar **ter**_i-ig ons-sen, **Huh Sudar**_i-ig RD
 Baatar it-ACC read-PST “Blue Book”-ACC
 ‘Baatar read it, “Blue Book”’
- b. ***Huh Sudar**_i-ig Baatar **ter**_i-ig ons-sen, leftward scrambling
 “Blue Book”-ACC Baatar it-ACC read-PST
 “‘Blue Book’, Baatar read it.’

Furthermore, while possessors can be right dislocated in Alasha RD, they cannot be scrambled, exemplified by the contrast in the sentences in (52).²⁰

(52) Asymmetry between RD and (leftward) scrambling in Alasha

- a. bi [Δ xoir nom]-ig xar-wa **Baatar-in** RD
 I two book-ACC see-PST Baatar-GEN
 ‘I saw Baatar’s two books’
- b. ***Baatar-in** bi [Δ xoir nom]-ig xar-wa leftward scrambling
 Baatar-GEN I two book-ACC see-PST
 ‘I saw Baatar’s two books’

The asymmetry between scrambling and RD goes in both direction in terms of possible targets. There are elements that can be scrambled but not right-dislocated, such as the negative polarity item (NPI) in the form of *wh*-expressions plus the suffix *-c* ‘even’. As shown in (53), the expression *juu-c* ‘what-even’ requires a negative licenser.

(53) *juu-c* as an NPI

- a. *Bi **juu-c** id-sen.
 1SG what-even eat-PST
 Int.: ‘I ate everything.’
- b. Bi **juu-c** id-sen-gui.
 1SG what-even eat-PST-not
 ‘I didn’t eat anything. / I ate nothing.’

20. I thank Yaqing Hu for pointing this contrast to me.

Crucially, while *juu-c* can be scrambled, they cannot be right dislocated. (54b) is ruled out because the *pro* the first clause cannot be co-indexed with the *wh*-expressions, as discussed in section 4.3.2.

(54) Juu-c 'what-even' can be scrambled but not right dislocated

- a. **Juu-c** bi utsugdur Δ id-sen-gui
 what-even 1SG yesterday eat-PST-not
 'I didn't eat anything yesterday.'
- b. *Bi utsugdur Δ id-sen-gui **juu-c**.
 1SG yesterday eat-PST-not what-even
 Int.: 'I didn't eat anything.'

These contrasts between Alasha RD and scrambling suggest that RD in the language should not be conflated with scrambling - they involve different syntactic operations.

The second formulation of a mono-clausal analysis of RD involves double preposing, suggested in Lee (2017) and Lai (2019).²¹

(55) A doubling preposing approach to RD



This approach to RD faces a challenge if we take sentence-final particles (SFPs) into consideration. Consider again (2b), repeated below in (56), where the sentence contains the question particle *-oo*.

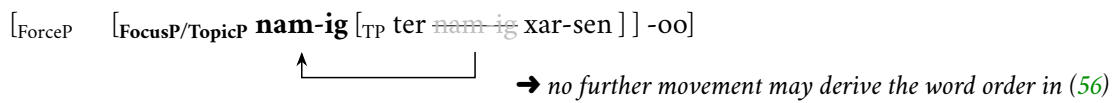
(56) Alasha RD with a sentence-final particle

- Ter Δ xar-sen-oo **nam-ig?**
- 3SG see-PST-Q 1SG-ACC
- 'Did he see me?'

21. In Lee (2017), the two preposing operations are sequential (i.e., the second one involves remnant movement), whereas in Lai (2019) they are simultaneous (creating parallel movement chains). Since the precise implementation of a double preposing approach has no bearing on the discussions here, I abstract away from their differences.

Let us assume that the question particle heads the Force P. In the attempted derivation depicted in (57), after the Focus/Topic movement of the object, movement of the remnant TP does not deliver the desired word order, since the object ends up preceding the question particle *-oo*. In order to obtain the word order in (56), the string *ter xar-sen-oo* would have to move altogether to a position higher than the FocusP/TopicP; however, the string is not a constituent. As such, a double preposing approach falls short of deriving cases like (56).

(57) An attempted, halfway derivation of (56) under a double preposing approach



A further limitation of this approach concerns the motivation of the second TP movement. Apart from arriving at the desired word order, it is unclear why the TP must move to the Spec ForceP after the first movement. In contrast, the motivation of TP movement in VO/head-initial languages like Cantonese and Mandarin seems to be clearer. With the desirable consequence of maintaining the head directionality (i.e., head-initiality) in the verbal domain in these languages, it has been argued that SFPs in Cantonese and Mandarin head a head-initial structure. TP movement in these languages is thus required even in non-RD sentences, suggesting that TP movement is not parasitic on RD. For space reasons, I do not go further into the arguments for the status of SFPs and the mono-clausal analysis of RD. I refer interested readers to works by Sybesma (1999), Simpson and Wu (2002), L. Y.-L. Cheung (2009), Lee (2017), Lai (2019), and Yip (2020).²²

On a relevant note, an anonymous reviewer expresses concerns over the possibility of having SFPs in the second clause, i.e., in the α -position. The sentence in (58) below shows that this is impossible.

22. I do not discuss the single preposing approaches as proposed in L. Y.-L. Cheung (1997, 2009) and Wei and Li (2018), which rely heavily on a head-initial analysis of SFPs in Chinese languages. The head-initial analysis of SFPs is partly motivated by the so-called *Final-Over-Final Constraint* (Biberauer, Holmberg, and Roberts 2008, and many subsequent works), which suggests a cross-linguistic absence of a head-final structure that dominates a head-initial structure. Since Alasha, as with other Mongolic varieties, is consistently head-final in the verbal domain, it lacks such a motivation for a head-initial analysis of SFPs, and it is most natural to assume a head-final analysis of SFPs in the extended verbal projection.

(58) No SFPs in the α -position

*Ter Δ xar-sen-oo **nam-ig -oo?**

3SG see-PST-Q 1SG-ACC

Int.: 'Did he see me?'

The reviewer points out that the unacceptability of (58) would be surprising, if the second clause involves a structure similar to (56) under a bi-clausal analysis. This is because only the TP would be deleted after focus movement of the object *nam-ig*, and the SFP *-oo* would be stranded together with *nam-ig* in the α -position.²³ This challenge builds on an assumed restriction that the second clause be identical in terms of syntactic structure to the host clause, but this assumption, as I argue, is not warranted. In the first place, such a restriction on structural identity is way too strong to allow any RD constructions. Since the proposed Focus/Topic movement only applies in the second clause, but not in the host clause, there would always be a structural asymmetry between the two clauses involved in a RD construction (i.e., the host clause is a CP, whereas the second clause is a FocusP or a TopicP). Here, I follow Abe (1999, 2019) in making a careful distinction between *clausal repetition* and *clausal conjunction*.²⁴ I suggest that clausal repetition is established based on core propositional content, rather than structural isomorphism, which consequently excludes elements related to subjectivity, evaluation, as well as speech acts (and so on) in the second clause in a RD construction.²⁵ In effect, the second clause would not project a projection for SFPs, thus leaving no room for SFPs in the α -position.²⁶

23. This represents a general challenge to a bi-clausal approach on RD constructions, which is mostly left ignored in existing literature (e.g., Abe 1999, 2019; Öztürk 2013). In some version of a bi-clausal analysis of RD (e.g., Tanaka 2001), the SFP is deleted altogether with the TP in the second clause. This might be possible if the SFP resides in a TP projection, but this is less likely to be the case for question particles, which typically take scope over the whole clause.

24. Abe (2019, p.3) states that "it would be a mistake to regard the relation of the two clauses in [a RD construction] as conjunction, since these two clauses basically repeat the same proposition. It is more appropriate to regard them as involving clause repetition." Abe makes reference to the earlier suggestion by Kuno (1978, p.61-62) that "Japanese RD construction involves a process that 'adds afterthoughts to the end of a sentence'. A similar suggestion is suggested in Öztürk (2013, p.192) in his discussions on RD in Khalkha Mongolian: "the post-verbal material is more like an afterthought, which is typically used to help identify a potentially ambiguous referent."

25. This is consistent with the suggested derivation in (40), where the two clauses in RD are not lexically/formally identical, but only identical in terms of propositional content.

26. This amounts to a semantic restriction on clausal repetition. Alternatively, this can be formulated as a syntactic restriction on what can be conjoined with the host clause. For example, there may be a size restriction on the right-branching specifier position of the SFP projection that hosts the right-dislocated elements. I leave the possibility open.

5 Deriving the variation in the information structure of RD

In this section, I return to the unanswered question raised at the end of section 3: what accounts for the variation in the information structure of RD? Recall the variation that we observe with languages with RD, repeated from (31) in (59).

(59) Two types of RD languages

- a. α can host topics/defocused elements only. e.g., Cantonese, Mandarin
- b. α can host focused elements, and topics/defocused elements. e.g., Mongolian, Japanese

Focusing on focused elements, an alternative way to put the variation in (59) is given in (60).

(60) Two types of RD languages

- a. α *cannot* host focused elements. e.g., Cantonese, Mandarin
- b. α *can* host focused elements. e.g., Mongolian, Japanese

In section 5.1, I take a detour to discuss and argue against an attempt to derive the variation by relating the availability of focused elements in RD to a mono-/bi-clausal analysis. I show that there is no strict correlation between the two. In section 5.2, I propose a structural account of this variation, and suggest that the variation hinges on the different licensing conditions of the Focus Projection in different languages.

5.1 Focused elements in RD are not correlated with a bi-clausal structure

I have argued that Alasha RD exhibits two properties: (i) it allows focused elements in α , and (ii) it involves a bi-clausal structure. These two properties are shared by Japanese RD: (i) is specifically discussed in Abe (2019), alongside Nakagawa, Asao, and Nagaya (2008), Yamashita (2011), and Takita (2011); and (ii) is defended in Abe (1999, 2019), Tanaka (2001), and Yamashita (2011). In contrast, Cantonese and Mandarin RD exhibit an opposite pattern: (i) it disallows focused elements in α , and (ii) it involves a mono-clausal structure (L. Y.-L. Cheung 2009; Lee 2017, 2020, 2021; Chiang 2017; Wei and Li 2018; Lai 2019). These properties are summarized in Table 2.

	Alasha, Japanese	Cantonese, Mandarin
Focused elements in α	✓	✗
RD analysis	bi-clausal	mono-clausal

Table 2: A comparison between Asian languages (to be expanded)

Here, it is tempting to suggest a correlation in (61).²⁷

(61) A potential correlation (to be rejected)

Focused elements in RD are only licensed in a bi-clausal structure.

However, the validity of this correlation is questionable if we extend the empirical scope of RD to Indo-Aryan languages such as Hindi and Bangla. On one hand, it is suggested that focused elements can appear post-verbally in these languages (Dayal 2003; Simpson and Choudhury 2015). This is already illustrated by the Hindi Q-A pair example in (49), and further supported by the Bangla example in (62), which allows the α to host a contrastively focused element.

(62) Bangla allows contrastive focus in the α -position

ami ram-ke dekhechi **dilli-te**, hyderabad-e na. (Simpson and Choudhury 2015, p.540)

I Ram-OBJ saw Delhi-in Hyderabad-in NEG

'I saw Ram in Delhi, not in Hyderabad.'

On the other hand, the elements in the α -position in these languages are argued to be derived by either rightward scrambling (Bhatt and Dayal 2007; Manetta 2012; Kidwai 2022) or leftward movement of the verb (Simpson and Choudhury 2015). These analyses share the idea that RD sentences in these languages involve a mono-clausal structure, instead of a bi-clausal one. As such, Hindi and Bangla posit a challenge to the potential correlations given in (61). In other words, there is no correlation between focused elements in RD and a mono-/bi-clausal structure involved in RD. Table 3 updates Table 2 by adding Hindi and Bangla to the landscape of RD.

27. As for Korean RD, Ko (2015) suggests that α can host focus elements (i.e., specificational focus), and she argues for a mono-clausal analysis in Korean RD. If so, Korean represents a counter-example to the correlation in (61). However, the mono-clausal vs. bi-clausal debates in Korean RD remains controversial; see, for an overview, Ko (2022a). I do not count on the Korean case to argue against the validity of (61).

	Alasha, Japanese	Cantonese, Mandarin	Hindi, Bangla
Focused elements in α	✓	✗	✓
RD analysis	bi-clausal	mono-clausal	mono-clausal

Table 3: A comparison between Asian languages (to be expanded)

5.2 The licensing condition of the FocusP

I propose that the variation in the information structure of RD lies elsewhere in the *licensing condition of the Focus Projection*. Recall that under the proposed bi-clausal analysis of Alasha, α can host focused elements because Focus movement in the second clause is possible (in addition to Topic movement).²⁸ In principle, Cantonese and Mandarin RD might involve the very same Focus movement in a mono-clausal structure, in a way depicted in (63) (which involves a case of object RD). However, we have established that focused elements cannot appear in the α -position in these languages, so something must have gone wrong in the attempted derivation in (63).

(63) An illicit configuration in Cantonese and Mandarin



I propose that the issue does not lie solely on Focus movement or on TP movement, as both of them are independently motivated in these languages. Indeed, the unacceptability of (63) results from a combination of them. Precisely, it is TP movement subsequent to Focus movement that is problematic in (63). This issue can be attributed to the licensing condition of FocusP. I suggest that the cross-linguistic variation in the information structure of RD is rooted in the licensing parameter of FocusP, with regard to the overt/covert nature of the complement of FocusP, detailed in (64).²⁹

(64) The proposed licensing parameter on Focus Phrase

- a. A Focus Phrase is only licensed by a *covert* complement e.g., Alasha, Japanese

28. This is in line with Japanese RD, as discussed in Abe (2019).

29. The idea here owes an intellectual debt to Abe (2019), where he explores the activation condition of FocusP in Japanese.

b. A Focus Phrase is only licensed by an *overt* complement e.g., Cantonese, Mandarin

Simply put, (63) is illicit because TP movement would create a covert complement in the FocusP. In what follows, I elaborate on the licensing condition of FocusP in these two types of languages, respectively. The crucial evidence comes from a correlation between three different phenomena, namely, (i) RD, (ii) sluicing-like constructions (i.e., embedded reduced questions), and focus movement in simple declarative sentences.

5.2.1 FocusP in Alasha and Japanese

Let us first consider the FocusP in Alasha and Japanese, and the first part of the licensing parameter in (64a). In effect, it make two predictions on possible FocusP configurations in these languages.

(65) The licit and illicit FocusP in Alasha and Japanese

- a. ^{OK} ... [FocusP Foc [$\overline{\text{TP}}$...]]
- b. * ... [FocusP Foc [TP ...]]

As for (65a), we have already seen in section 4.3 that the FocusP in Alasha allows a covert complement, as deletion occurs in the second clause in RD cases. The same is also independently suggested for Japanese RD (Abe 2019). Further evidence for this comes from sluicing-like constructions (i.e., reduced embedded questions). It is predicted that sluicing-like constructions in these languages *can* be derived via (Focus) movement and deletion.³⁰ This is because such a configuration is identical to the second clause in RD constructions, where the FocusP contains an overt focused element, and a covert complement.³¹ This is in line with the proposals in Fukaya and Hoji (1999) and Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2002, 2012), among others, who argue for a reduced cleft analysis of sluicing-like constructions in Japanese. Roughly, this idea is illustrated with the example in (66). They argue that sentences like (66) involve Focus movement and a subsequent deletion or movement of the complement of FocusP.³² In either way, the specifier of the FocusP is stranded, and the complement of the FocusP is

30. As we will see shortly in the next subsection, languages such as Cantonese and Mandarin fail to derive sluicing-like constructions via movement, i.e., what looks “sluiced” is indeed base generated.

31. Tanaka (2001), among others, has also noted the connection between sluicing-like constructions and RD constructions in Japanese.

32. See Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012) for two possible derivations.

deleted.³³ Note that the embedded portion in (66b) is structurally identical to the second clause of RD constructions.

(66) Sluicing-like constructions in Japanese (Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2012)

- a. Naoya-ga nanika-o tabeta rasii ga,
 Naoya-NOM something-ACC ate I.heard but
 'I heard that Naoya ate something,'
- b. boku-wa [_{FocusP} **nani-o** [_{Focus'} **FinP** da]] ka wakara-nai.
 1SG-TOP what-ACC COP Q know-not
 'I don't know what.'

Intriguingly, the picture in Mongolian parallels that in Japanese. In her extensive investigation in Chakhar Mongolian, Bai (2023) argues that at least some sluicing-like constructions are derived via a reduced cleft analysis similar to Japanese, given the presence of the copula and the case-matching effect in the embedded portion.^{34 35} An example is given below in (67).

(67) Sluicing-like constructions in Mongolian (p.168-9, modified)

- a. Batu-Ø nige xümün-dü ene nom-i xürge-be,
 Batu-NOM one person-DAT this book-ACC give-PST
 'Batu gave this book to a person,'
- b. bi-Ø [_{FocusP} **xen-dü** **FinP/TP** bol-χu]-yi γaiχa-ju bai-na.
 I-NOM who-DAT COP-INF-ACC wonder-ADVL AUX-NPST
 'I wonder to whom.'

Let us turn to the second, illicit configuration given in (65b). I argue that it receives support from the lack of focus interpretation in (leftward) scrambling. In the scrambling sentences in (68), the scrambled constituents do not bear any focus interpretation.³⁶

33. The copula *da* is taken to be the Focus head, which can be overt, since, the proposed parameter only regulates the covert/overt nature of the complement of FocusP.

34. The data here is given in Chakhar Mongolian, but it is presumably extendable to Alasha Mongolian.

35. The picture of sluicing-like constructions is more complicated than is presented here. Bai (2023) argues that sluicing-like constructions in Mongolian involve non-uniform derivations. See Sakamoto (2014) and Bai (2023) for discussions.

36. Indeed, Ishihara (2001) suggests that the scrambled elements in Japanese must be interpreted as *given*, i.e., they

(68) Scrambling in Alasha and Japanese (no focus interpretation on scrambled elements)

- a. [_{XP} **Nam-ig** [_{TP} ter Δ xar-sen]]. Alasha
1SG-ACC 3SG see-PST
'He saw me.'
- b. [_{TP} **Mary-ni** [_{TP} John-ga kinoo Δ atta yo]]. Japanese (Abe 2019, p.3)
Mary-DAT John-NOM yesterday saw SFP]]
'Mary, John saw yesterday.'

The lack of focus interpretation indicates that the scrambled element cannot occupy the specifier of the FocusP, in a way similar to the second clause in RD. More generally, it implies that the FocusP in Alasha and Japanese is not always available/activated in a sentence, even though Focus movement is available in these languages.

Taking stock, the above discussion has illustrated a correlation between (i) the information structural status of right-dislocated elements (i.e., focused elements can be right dislocated), (ii) the derivation of sluicing-like constructions (i.e., movement is possible), and (iii) the interpretation of scrambling (i.e., no focus interpretation). They are all regulated by the proposed parameter in (64a). This correlation is summarized below in (69).

(69) The licit and illicit FocusP in Alasha and Japanese

- a. ^{OK} ... [_{FocusP} Foc [_{TP} ...]] Focus in RD, and movement in sluicing-like constructions
- b. * ... [_{FocusP} Foc [_{TP} ...]] No focus interpretation in scrambling

5.2.2 FocusP in Cantonese and Mandarin

The second half of the proposed parameter in (64b) suggests that in languages like Cantonese and Mandarin, a Focus Phrase is only licensed by an *overt* complement. It predicts an opposite pattern of the (un)availability of FocusP configuration, compared to Alasha and Japanese.

(70) The licit and illicit FocusP in Cantonese and Mandarin

cannot be included in the (narrow) focus set.

- a. * ... [FocusP Foc [TP ...]]
 b. ^{OK} ... [FocusP Foc [TP ...]]

The configuration in (70) desirably rules out the absence of focused elements in RD constructions in Cantonese and Mandarin. This is because if FocusP requires an overt complement, the following configuration in (71), repeated from (63), is straightforwardly ruled out.

- (71) An illicit configuration in Cantonese and Mandarin = (63)
 *_{[ForceP} Force [_{FocusP} Obj [_{TP} Subj V Obj]]] Focus movement
-

In the second movement step when the TP moves and strands the FocusP, it creates a covert complement in the FocusP. This accounts for the observation that focused elements cannot appear in the α -position, as they cannot be stranded in RD.^{37 38}

This line of reasoning predicts that, unlike Alasha and Japanese, movement cannot be involved in the derivation of sluicing-like constructions. This is because the deletion operation after Focus movement would create a covert complement in the FocusP. This prediction is indeed borne out in Cantonese and Mandarin. Consider the following two sluicing-like constructions in (72).

- (72) Sluicing-like constructions in Mandarin and Cantonese
- a. Zhangsan kandao mouren, danshi wo bu zhidao *(shi) **shei**. Mandarin
 Zhangsan saw someone but I not know COP who
 ‘Zhangsan saw somebody, but I don’t know **who**.’ (Li and Wei 2014, p.296)
- b. Aaming maai-zo di je, daan ngo m-zi *(hai) **mat**. Cantonese
 Aaming buy-PERF CL thing but I not-know COP what
 ‘Aaming bought some thing, but I don’t know **what**.’

The obligatory presence of the copula verb has been taken as evidence for a non-movement approach defended in Wei (2004, 2011), Adams and Tomioka (2012), and Li and Wei (2014, 2017).

37. No such requirement applies to TopicP, as topics/defocused elements can be right dislocated.

38. The sentence becomes acceptable, if FocusP moves together with the TP. This would result in the OSV-SFP word order, e.g., sentences in (74) discussed below; cf. L. Y.-L. Cheung (2009)).

These authors refer to these constructions as *pseudo-sluiting*, and propose that the *wh*-elements in (72) are not the remnant of TP deletion. Instead, it is argued to be a base generated clause containing a predicate with a null subject *pro*, schematically illustrated in (73).

(73) Pseudo-sluiting involves a non-elliptical structure with a base-generated null subject

... but I don't know [_{CP} *pro shi/hai wh*]

Crucially, the inability to leave out the copula suggests that a movement approach to (72) (similar to those in (66) and (67) in Alasha and Japanese) is unavailable in these languages. This follows directly from the proposed licensing parameter of FocusP.³⁹

Now consider (70b), which predicts that leftward movement (be it scrambling or not) in matrix clauses *can* induce focus interpretation, different from scrambling in Alasha and Japanese. In Cantonese and Mandarin, the existence of a FocusP is proposed and defended in various works (Shyu 1995; Badan 2007; C. C.-H. Cheung 2015; Pan 2019; Lee 2022, i.a.). I illustrate this point with two Cantonese examples in (74). The sentence in (74a) is a case of *wh*-fronting, which conveys a contrastive reading on the *wh*-expression (C. C.-H. Cheung 2008, 2015). The sentence in (74b) is a verb doubling construction discussed in Cheng and Vicente (2013) and Lee (2022).

(74) Focus movement in Cantonese

a. [_{FocusP} (Hai) **bingo** [_{TP} Siufan zeoi zungji Δ]] aa? (C. C.-H. Cheung 2015, p.76)

HAI who Siufan most like Q

'Who is it that Siufan likes most?'

b. [_{FocusP} (Lin) **tai** [_{TP} Aaming dou m-tai ni-bun syu]] wo4 (Lee 2022, p.60)

even read Aaming also not-read this-CL book SFP

'Aaming didn't even READ this book (to my surprise).'

It is noteworthy that in both cases, the focus particles, namely, *hai* and *lin*, are optional, suggesting that the focus interpretation remains even in their absence. Thus, it should be attributed to the availability of FocusP instead of the presence of focus particles. The availability of the focus interpretation in these

39. Indeed, this amounts to an explanation on why sluiting-like constructions in Cantonese and Mandarin *must* adopt a base generation derivation, even though focus movement and TP deletion are independently available in these languages.

cases indicates that FocusP is available in non-elliptical clauses in Cantonese, i.e., it does *not* require a covert complement, in contrast with Alasha and Japanese.

The above discussion has illustrated a different correlation between (i) the information structural status of right-dislocated elements (i.e., focused elements cannot be right dislocated), (ii) the derivation of sluicing-like constructions (i.e., movement is impossible), and (iii) the interpretation of leftward movement (i.e., focus interpretation can be achieved in the absence of focus particles). As a mirror image of what we observed in Alasha and Japanese, these observations are all regulated by the proposed parameter in (64b), summarized below in (75), and in Table 4.

(75) The licit and illicit FocusP in Cantonese and Mandarin

- a. * ... [_{FocusP} Foc [_{TP} ...]] No focus in RD, no movement in sluicing-like constructions
 b. ^{OK} ... [_{FocusP} Foc [_{TP} ...]] Focus movement available in non-elliptical contexts

	Alasha, Japanese	Cantonese, Mandarin
Proposed FocusP licensing	covert complement	overt complement
Focused elements in α	✓	✗
RD structure	bi-clausal	mono-clausal
Movement in sluicing-like constructions	✓	✗
Non-elliptical focus sentences	✗	✓

Table 4: A comparison between Asian languages (to be expanded)

To sum up, I have suggested that variation in information structure of RD receives a *structural* account that builds on the licensing parameter of the FocusP in different languages. FocusP in Alasha and Japanese requires a covert complement, whereas that in Cantonese and Mandarin requires a covert one.

5.2.3 Residual issues and summary

Before I conclude this paper, there are two worth-noting issues. The first one concerns the licensing condition of FocusP in languages like Hindi and Bangla. I briefly outline a possibility in these languages. Given the discussions in section 5.1, RD in these languages can host focused elements, which

arrive at the post-verbal position via rightward scrambling in a mono-clausal structure (Bhatt and Dayal 2007; Manetta 2012; Kidwai 2022). If the scrambled elements land in the specifier of FocusP, it can be suggested that FocusP in these languages is compatible with overt complement, unlike in Alasha and Japanese, but similar to Cantonese and Mandarin. This suggestion is corroborated by the proposal in Irani (2014) for the presence of FocusP above ν P in Hindi, and the proposal in Syed (2015) for the availability of the DP-internal FocusP in Bangla. None of them requires a covert complement in the FocusP.

The remaining question is whether FocusP in these languages also tolerates a covert complement. A negative answer would suggest that these languages share the same licensing condition with Cantonese and Mandarin. In contrast, a positive answer would suggest that there is no specific licensing requirement with regard to the complement. There is evidence for the latter, positive answer. Bhattacharya and Simpson (2012) argue that sluicing in these languages similarly involve *wh*-movement and remnant deletion, given the case-matching effects and the absence of copulas.

(76) Sluicing in Bangla and Hindi (Bhattacharya and Simpson 2012, p.191, 196)

- a. karo rag hoeche, kintu ami jani na **kar**.
 someone.GEN anger happen.has but I know not who.GEN
 ‘Someone has become angry, but I don’t know who.’
- b. Raam-ne kisi-ko kitaab dii-thii, par mujhe nahii maluum ki **kis-ko**.
 Ram-ERG someone-DAT book give-PST but me.OBL not know c who-DAT
 ‘Ram gave a book to someone, but I don’t know who.’

If the sluices in these examples reside in the FocusP whose complement is deleted, then the FocusP in these languages do not require an overt complement like Cantonese and Mandarin. More generally, given the discussions in the beginning of this subsection, it can be concluded that the overt/covert nature of the complement of the FocusP in Hindi and Bangla does not affect the legitimacy of FocusP. However, it remains to be seen whether these languages really have cleft constructions (Bhattacharya and Simpson 2012). In other words, it is unclear whether the sluices must occur in the FocusP in (76). As this deserves a separate discussion on its own, I leave this issue to future research.

Ultimately then, summing up the discussions so far, Table 5 presents a comparison between six Asian languages, classified in three groups, according to the proposed licensing conditions of the FocusP. In the first group, represented by Alasha and Japanese, the covert complement requirement enables focused elements in RD and movement in sluicing-like constructions, but it rules out focus sentences in non-elliptical contexts. In the second group, represented by Cantonese and Mandarin, the overt complement requirement establishes a mirror image of the first group, which rules out focused elements in RD and movement in sluicing-like constructions, but it allows focus sentences in non-elliptical contexts. In the last group we have Hindi and Bangla, and they seem to impose no specific requirements on the complement of FocusP, and thus it allows all three constructions under discussions.⁴⁰

	Alasha, Japanese	Cantonese, Mandarin	Hindi, Bangla
Proposed FocusP licensing	covert complement	overt complement	none
Focused elements in α	✓	✗	✓
RD structure	bi-clausal	mono-clausal	mono-clausal
Movement in sluicing-like constructions	✓	✗	✓
Non-elliptical focus sentences	✗	✓	✓

Table 5: A comparison between Asian languages (final)

6 Conclusions

In this paper, I reported an empirical property of Alasha RD, namely that Alasha allows focused elements to be right dislocated. This observation contrasts sharply with languages like Cantonese and Mandarin. I first proposed an analytical account of how focused elements may end up in the final position in Alasha. I extended a bi-clausal analysis of RD by suggesting that the second clause involves Focus movement, followed by remnant deletion. Then I developed an account of the variation of the information structure of RD across languages. I attributed the variation to a parametric difference relating to how Focus Projection is licensed in these languages. The proposed parameter is

⁴⁰. I have grayed the row of RD structure as it is not correlated with other observations, as discussed in section 5.1.

repeated below in (77). I presented evidence from sluicing-like constructions and the interpretation of scrambling/leftward movement in support of the parameter.

(77) The proposed licensing parameter on the Focus Phrase

- a. A Focus Phrase is only licensed by a *covert* complement e.g., Alasha, Japanese
- b. A Focus Phrase is only licensed by an *overt* complement e.g., Cantonese, Mandarin

Ultimately, the findings of this paper strengthen a non-uniform approach to RD in natural languages, despite their surface similarities. In terms of syntactic structure, RD may involve a mono-clausal structure or a bi-clausal structure, subject to language specific properties. In terms of information structure, RD may or may not target focused elements, subject to the proposed parameter on the Focus Phrase.

Acknowledgments

My sincere thanks go to my consultant, Brian Tsagaadai, for judgments and discussions, without whom this project would not be possible. For comments and suggestions, I thank Xue Bai, Travis Major, Andrew Simpson, and Ka-Fai Yip, and the participants in the USC Field Method class (2022, Spring). I am also grateful to the audience at WAFL 16 (Rochester University).

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