

Reduced Embedded Questions in Uyghur*

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Abstract: This paper provides a detailed description of reduced embedded questions in Uyghur and proposes to derive them from two sources: cleft constructions and pseudo-sluced clauses. I argue that reduced questions with non-case-marked remnant interrogative phrases can be derived from either source. Further, I argue that reduced questions with remnant phrases followed by case markers and postpositions should be derived from cleft constructions. The pseudo-slucing analysis is supported by the appearance of a copula and pronominal subjects in those reduced questions and by the fact that reduced questions can be pragmatically controlled. Further, the cleft analysis is supported by the appearance of a copula and case- and postposition-marked pivots in cleft sentences and by subject drop, which is independently allowed in the language.

Keywords: Uyghur / sluicing / pseudosluicing / cleft / complement clause

* Acknowledgments to be added here. The following abbreviations are used in this paper: ABL for ablative; ACC for accusative; ADVL for adverbializer; ASP for aspect; AUX for auxiliary; CAUS for causative; CL for classifier; COMP for complementizer; COP for copula; DAT for dative; GEN for genitive; HON for honorific; LOC for locative; NEG for negation; NOM for nominative; NOML for nominalizer; NPST for non-past tense; PERF for perfective; PL for plural; POSS for possessive; POSTP for postposition; PRT for particle; PST for past tense; Q for question; TOP for topic marker; 1PL for first-person plural; 1SG for first-person singular; 2PL for second-person plural; 2SG for second-person singular; 3SG for third-person singular; 3PL for third-person plural.

1 Introduction

The purpose of this paper is twofold. It aims to provide detailed descriptions for reduced embedded questions and related constructions in modern Uyghur, a Turkic language spoken in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, China. Reduction of interrogative clauses, or what is widely known as sluicing, has been studied in many languages (Merchant 2001; Merchant and Simpson 2012). However, the relevant phenomenon in Uyghur has not been subject to any examination. This paper aims to add a new set of data from Uyghur to the existing literature on sluicing. The other purpose of the present study is to examine possible analyses for reduced questions in Uyghur. I argue that truncated interrogative clauses in the language cannot be analyzed in terms of sluicing, which involves movement of remnant phrases followed by ellipsis of TP. Rather, the reduced questions are derived from two sources: cleft constructions and pseudo-sluiced clauses. I argue that cleft constructions consisting of a pivot and a presuppositional clause can be the source of reduced questions with non-case-marked and case-marked remnant phrases. I further argue that pseudo-sluiced clauses consisting of a null pronominal subject and a copula verb can account for reduced questions with non-case-marked remnants.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents brief illustrations of some syntactic characteristics of Uyghur. Section 3 considers reduced questions in Uyghur in detail. Section 4 examines possible analyses for reduced questions in the language in three subsections. And section 5 summarizes the entire discussion.

2 A profile of Uyghur Syntax

The basic word order for simple transitive sentences is SOV in Uyghur (Litip 2012).

- (1) Män-Ø awu xät-ni yaz-di-m.
 1SG-NOM that letter-ACC write-PST-1SG
 ‘I wrote that letter.’

The subject precedes the object, which in turn precedes the verb. The subject is marked with the nominative marker, which is assumed to be a zero morpheme in the language. The object *awu xät* ‘that letter’ is specific and is accompanied by the overt accusative marker *ni* (Litip 2012; Jenkins 2021).¹

In Uyghur, an agreement marker, which agrees with the person and number features of the subject and inflects in accordance with the tense and mood of the sentence, must appear at the end of a sentence, as shown by *-m* in (1). See the agreement patterns in the table below, cited from Litip (2012, pp. 305-306).

Table 1. Agreement marking patterns in past and non-past tense

	1SG	2SG	2SG.HON	3SG	1PL	2PL	2PL.HON	3PL
Past	m	ŋ	ŋiz	Ø	duq	ŋlar/ŋlär	ŋizlar/ŋizlär	Ø
Non-past	män	sän	siz	Ø	miz	silär	sizlär	Ø

¹ In Uyghur, a non-specific object is not case-marked (Litip 2012; Sugar 2019), as in (i), cited from Litip (2012).

- (i) Män-Ø xät yaz-di-m.
 1SG-NOM letter write-PST-1SG
 ‘I wrote a letter.’

In terms of accusative marking on non-specific objects, there is a difference between non-human and human objects. A non-human non-specific object is not case-marked, as in (i). In contrast, a non-specific object denoting a human entity is required to be marked by the overt accusative marker, as in (ii).

- (ii) Matematika oqutquči-si-Ø bir adäm-ni tәнqid qil-di-Ø.
 math teacher-3SG.POSS-NOM one person-ACC reprimand AUX-PST-3SG
 ‘The math teacher reprimanded a person.’

Five out of the six native speakers I consulted stated that the accusative marker *ni* in (ii) was obligatory.

Uyghur is a *wh*-in-situ language (Litip 2012).

- (2) Murat-Ø kim-gä bir tal zänjir sowğa qil-di-Ø?
Murat-NOM who-DAT one CL necklace present AUX-PST-3SG
'To whom did Murat give a necklace?'

The indirect object in (2) is a *wh*-phrase, which stays in the object position in lieu of moving to the edge of the clause.

Uyghur is a *pro*-drop language, allowing arguments such as subjects and objects not to be overtly expressed (Litip 2012). Considering the following data:

- (3) A: Murat-Ø nemä-ni oqu-di-Ø? B: *e* gezit-ni oqu-di-Ø.
Murat-NOM what-ACC read-PST-3SG newspaper-ACC read-PST-3SG
'What did Murat read?' 'lit. *e* read the newspaper.'
- (4) A: Kim-Ø gezit-ni oqu-di-Ø? B: Murat-Ø *e* oqu-di-Ø.
who-NOM newspaper-ACC read-PST-3SG Murat-NOM read-PST-3SG
'Who read the newspaper?' 'lit. Murat read *e*.'
- (5) A: Murat-Ø gezit-ni oqu-di-Ø-mu? B: *e e* oqu-di-Ø.
Murat-NOM newspaper-ACC read-PST-3SG-Q.PRT read-PST-3SG
'Did Murat read the newspaper?' 'lit. *e* read *e*.'

Two speakers, A and B, engage in conversation. The subject in B's utterance in (3) is not overtly expressed (null arguments are indicated with *e*) though it is clear in the context that it refers to the subject in A's utterance. Similarly, the object in (4B) and the subject and the object in (5B) are null but the sentences are perfectly acceptable.

Next, let us see genitive-possessive constructions in Uyghur (Politzer-Ahles 2011).²

- (6) **Meniñ/Seniñ/Murat-niñ** ingliz til-i kitab-**im/**
 1SG.GEN/2SG.GEN/Murat-GEN English language-3SG.POSS book-1SG.POSS/
iñ/i yüt-üp kät-ti-Ø.
 2SG.POSS/3SG.POSS disappear-ADVL AUX-PST-3SG
 ‘My English book/Your English book/Murat’s English book got lost.’

In (6), the possessor is marked genitive, and the possessee is marked by a possessive agreement marker, which agrees in person and number with the possessor. The possessive marking patterns are provided in the table below, cited from Litip (2012, p. 261).

Table 2. Possessive agreement marking patterns

1SG	2SG	2SG.HON	3SG	1PL	2PL	2PL.HON	3PL
im	iñ	iñiz	i/si	imiz	iñlar/iñlär	iñizlar/iñizlär	i/si

Let us turn our attention to complement clauses in Uyghur (Asarina and Hartman 2011).

- (7) **Män-Ø** [Murat-niñ Güli-din bir muhim iş-ni sora-
 1SG-NOM Murat-GEN Güli-ABL one important thing-ACC ask-
 ğan-liq]-i-ni bil-i-män.
 PERF.NOML-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NPST-1SG
 ‘I know that Murat asked Güli one important thing.’

² A sound-changing process occurs when the genitive marker *niñ* follows the first-person and second-person singular pronoun *män* and *sän* (Litip 2012). The outputs are not *män-niñ* or *sän-niñ*, but *meniñ* and *seniñ*.

A complement clause in Uyghur has five important characteristics. Firstly, it is case-marked. The complement clause in (7), indicated with brackets, is accompanied by the accusative case marker. It serves as the object of the matrix verb and hence is marked accusative. Secondly, a complement clause is nominalized, as indicated by the nominalizer *ğan*, which can be alternatively realized as *gän*, *qan*, or *kän*, depending on vowel harmony and the process of consonant assimilation (Litip 2012).³ Thirdly, the subject of a complement clause is marked genitive (Asarina and Hartman 2011).⁴ Fourthly, a complementizer (COMP), *liq/lik* (the alternation depends on vowel harmony), appears in complement clauses.⁵ Fifthly, a possessive agreement marker, which agrees in person and number with the subject of a complement clause, appears between the COMP and the accusative marker. In (7), the third-person singular possessive marker *i*, which agrees with the third-person singular subject of the complement clause, follows the COMP and precedes the accusative marker.⁶

3 Reduced Embedded Questions in Uyghur

In this section, I examine reduced embedded questions in Uyghur. Let us begin with (8).

(8) a. Ayxan-Ø bir kino-ni kör-di-Ø,

³ The suffix *ğan/gän/qan/kän* is multi-functional, e.g., it can function as a perfective aspect marker (Litip 2012).

⁴ The consensus among the six speakers I consulted is that the genitive marking on the subject in (7) is obligatory.

⁵ The status of *liq/lik* is under debate. While Litip (2012) discusses it as a nominalizer, Asarina and Hartman (2011) analyze it as a COMP. This paper follows the latter view (see Asarina and Hartman 2011 for detailed discussions).

⁶ Let us see two other complement clauses whose subjects are first-person and second-person singular, respectively.

(i) Sän-Ø [meniñ Turdi-ğa azraq pul bär-ğan-lik]-im-ni bil-äm-sän?
 2SG-NOM 1SG.GEN Turdi-DAT some money give-PERF.NOML-COMP-1SG.POSS-ACC know-Q.PRT-2SG
 ‘Do you know that I gave Turdi some money?’

(ii) Män-Ø [seniñ bultur Beyjiñ-ğa bar-ğan-liq]-iñ-ni bil-i-män.
 1SG-NOM 2SG.GEN last.year Beijing-DAT go-PERF.NOML-COMP-2SG.POSS-ACC know-NPST-1SG
 ‘I know that you went to Beijing last year.’

The possessive markers in (i) and (ii) are the first-person singular *im* and the second-person singular *iñ*, respectively.

Ayxan-NOM one movie-ACC watch-PST-3SG

‘Ayxan watched a certain movie,’

b. lekin män-Ø [u-niŋ nemä kino-ni kör-gän-lik]-

but 1SG-NOM 3SG-GEN what movie-ACC watch-PERF.NOML-COMP-

i-ni bil-mä-y-män.

3SG.POSS-ACC know-NEG-NPST-1SG

‘but I don’t know what movie she watched.’

c. lekin män-Ø [nemä kino(-*ni)-liq]-i-ni bil-mä-y-män.

but 1SG-NOM what movie-ACC-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NEG-NPST-1SG

‘but I don’t know what movie.’

The sentence in (8a) is intended to antecede the full-fledged indirect question in (8b) and its reduced counterpart in (8c). The correlate *bir kino* ‘a certain movie’ in (8a) is accompanied by the accusative marker. The *wh*-phrase *nemä kino* ‘what movie’ in (8b) is marked accusative similarly. Turning to (8c), we notice that the embedded question is reduced to consist of a remnant *wh*-phrase, accompanied by the COMP *liq*. The *wh*-phrase cannot be marked accusative, unlike its correlate in (8a) and the *wh*-phrase in (8b).⁷

Now let us look at another set of data.

(9) a. Ayxan-Ø bir xil mewä-gä amraq,

Ayxan-NOM one CL fruit-DAT fond

‘Ayxan is fond of a kind of fruit,’

b. lekin män-Ø [Ayxan-niŋ qaysi xil mewä-gä amraq-liq]-

⁷ The consensus among the six native speakers I consulted is that the accusative marker cannot appear on the remnant.

but 1SG-NOM Ayxan-GEN which CL fruit-DAT fond-COMP-

i-ni bil-mä-y-män.

3SG.POSS-ACC know-NEG-NPST-1SG

‘but I don’t know which kind of fruit Ayxan is fond of.’

c. lekin män-Ø [qaysi xil mewä(-*gä)-lik]-i-ni

but 1SG-NOM which CL fruit-DAT-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC

bil-mä-y-män.

know-NEG-NPST-1SG

‘but I don’t know which kind of fruit.’

In (9a), which is intended to antecede (9b-c), the object *bir xil mewä* ‘one kind of fruit’ is marked dative. (9b) contains a full-fledged embedded question, where the *wh*-phrase *qaysi xil mewä* ‘which kind of fruit,’ which corresponds to the object in (9a), is marked dative as well. In the reduced question (9c), the *wh*-phrase, accompanied by the COMP, cannot be marked dative.⁸

Let us add three more sets of data. Consider the examples (10-12) where the correlates are marked ablative or locative or accompanied by a postposition, respectively.⁹

(10) a. Ayxan-Ø bir xil haywan-din qorq-idu-Ø,
Ayxan-NOM one CL animal-ABL fear-NPST-3SG

‘Ayxan fears one kind of animal,’

b. lekin män-Ø [qaysi xil haywan(-?*din)-liq]-i-ni

⁸ Five out of the six speakers I consulted did not allow the dative marker in (9c).

⁹ I consulted six speakers on whether the ablative, locative markers, and the postposition are allowed. Four of them rejected the ablative marker; three of them accepted the locative marker; four of them accepted the postposition.

but 1SG-NOM which CL animal-ABL-COMP]-3SG.POSS-ACC

bil-mä-y-män.

know-NEG-NPST-1SG

‘but I don’t know which kind of animal.’

- (11) a. Murat-Ø məlum waqit-ta bir yiğın-ğa qatnaş-idu-Ø,
Murat-NOM some time-LOC one meeting-DAT participate-NPST-3SG

‘Murat will participate in a meeting at some time,’

- b. meniñ [qaysi waqit(-??ta)-liq]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
1SG.GEN which time-LOC-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have

‘I want to know at which time.’

- (12) a. Turdi-Ø birsi bilän parañlaş-ip-tu-Ø,
Turdi-NOM someone POSTP chat-ADVL-PST-3SG

‘Turdi chatted with someone,’

- b. meniñ [kim (?bilän) lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
1SG.GEN who POSTP COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have

‘I want to know with whom.’

(10-12a) antecede the reduced questions in (10-12b), respectively. The correlate in (10a) is marked ablative, but the *wh*-phrase in (10b) cannot be marked ablative. The correlate in (11a) is marked locative, and the *wh*-phrase in (11b) may be marked locative marginally. The correlate in (12a) is accompanied by a postposition, and the *wh*-phrase in (12b) is allowed to be followed by the postposition. From the examples (8-12), we can see that remnant *wh*-phrases in reduced questions cannot be marked accusative, dative, or ablative,

but may be marked locative or appear with a postposition.

The copula *ikän* can optionally appear in reduced questions in (8-12), as in (13-17).¹⁰

- (13) lekin män-Ø [nemä kino(-*ni) (**ikän**)-lik]-i-ni bil-mä-y-män.
 (14) lekin män-Ø [qaysi xil mewä(-*gä) (**ikän**)-lik]-i-ni bil-mä-y-män.
 (15) lekin män-Ø [qaysi xil haywan(-??din) (**ikän**)-lik]-i-ni bil-mä-y-män.
 (16) meniñ [qaysi waqit(-ta) (**ikän**)-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 (17) meniñ [kim (bilän) (**ikän**)-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.

It is instrumental to look into the copula *ikän* at this point.¹¹ *Ikän* can be used in both past and non-past tense and in both root and embedded clauses (Litip 2012; 2013). When used in root clauses, it conveys an evidential and modal reading (Palmer 1986). See the examples in (18), cited from Litip (2013).

- (18) a. Sän-Ø ašu muällim-sän/-dur-sän.
 2SG-NOM that teacher-2SG/-COP-2SG
 ‘You are that teacher.’
 b. Sän-Ø ašu muällim ikän-sän.
 2SG-NOM that teacher COP-2SG
 ‘It seems that you are that teacher.’

A meaning difference exists between (18a) and (18b). An evidential reading is observed

¹⁰ I consulted six speakers on whether the case markers and the postposition on remnant *wh*-phrases in (13-17) are allowed when the copula appears. All of them rejected the accusative marker; five of them rejected the dative marker; three of them accepted the ablative marker; five of them allowed the locative marker; five of them allowed the postposition. Let us compare the judgments on the examples with the copula in (13-17) with those without the copula in (8-12). We can observe that the accusative and dative markers are not allowed with or without the copula. The ablative marker is marginally allowed when the copula appears. On the other hand, the locative marker and postposition are allowed, especially when the copula appears.

¹¹ Uyghur has several copulas with divergent functions (Litip 2012). For example, the copula *tur/dur* is used in non-past tense and often omitted; the copula *i* is used in past tense and can never be omitted; the copula *ikän* is formed by combining the copula *i* and *kän* (one of the four forms of the perfective nominalizer: *ğan, kän, gän, and qan*).

in the latter with the presence of *ikän* in the root clause. On the other hand, in embedded clauses, *ikän* seems not to trigger an evidential reading.¹²

- (19) Män-Ø [seniŋ ašu muällim ikän-lik]-iŋ-ni bil-i-män.
 1SG-NOM 2SG.GEN that teacher COP-COMP-2SG.POSS-ACC know-NPST-1SG
 ‘I know that you are that teacher.’

Taking the optional appearance of *ikän* in reduced questions into account, we may assume that a reduced question in Uyghur is comprised of a *wh*-phrase, the optional copula *ikän*, and the COMP, which is followed by the possessive marker *i* and an accusative marker.¹³

4 Analysis

In this section, I argue against analyzing reduced questions in Uyghur in terms of sluicing. Instead, I argue that they are derived from cleft constructions and pseudo-sluiced clauses.

¹² My study shows that agreement marking in clauses with lexical verbs differs from that in clauses with copula verbs. In the former case, agreement markers agree with the subjects of clauses, as discussed in section 2. In the latter case, agreement markers agree with so-called accessible DPs, which are roughly complement DPs (see Gribanova 2013 for details). Consider the examples below:

- (i) Ašu muällim **sän** ikän-sän.
 that teacher 2SG COP-2SG
 ‘It seems that that teacher is you.’
 (ii) Män-Ø [ašu muällim-niŋ **sän** ikän-lik]-iŋ/*i-ni bil-i-män.
 1SG-NOM that teacher-GEN 2SG COP-COMP-2SG.POSS/*3SG.POSS-ACC know-NPST-1SG
 ‘I know that that teacher is you.’

(18b) and (i), and (19) and (ii) form two minimal pairs. We can observe that the agreement markers agree with *sän* ‘you’ in (18b) and (i). The possessive agreement markers agree with *sän* ‘you’ in (19) and (ii). The example (7) and (ii) form a comparison. The possessive marker agrees with the subject of the embedded clause with a lexical verb in (7). In contrast, the possessive marker agrees with the accessible DP in (ii) with a copula verb.

¹³ In addition to the accusative case, reduced questions can be assigned other cases.

- (i) a. Ayxan-Ø bir täklip-ni ottur-ğa qoy-di-Ø,
 Ayxan-NOM one advice-ACC middle-DAT present-PST-3SG
 ‘Ayxan put forward a certain piece of advice.’
 b. män-Ø [qandaq täklip(-*ni) (ikän)-lik]-i-ğä qiziq-ip qal-di-m.
 1SG-NOM what.kind advice-ACC COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-DAT excite-ADVL ASP-PST-1SG
 ‘I wonder what kind of advice.’

(ia) antecedes (ib), where the matrix predicate *qiziq-ip qal* ‘wonder’ selects a dative complement clause. The reduced question in (ib) comprises a *wh*-phrase, the optional copula *ikän*, and the COMP, which is followed by the possessive marker *i* and a dative case marker. By comparing (8-17) with (i), we can observe that the structure of reduced questions remains the same. The only difference is the case assigned to the embedded clauses, which is determined by matrix predicates.

4.1 Arguments against a Sluicing Analysis

Sluicing is the ellipsis process by which interrogative clauses like (20a) are converted into reduced forms like (20b), cited from Ross (1969).

- (20) a. He is writing something, but you can't imagine [what he is writing].
 b. He is writing something, but you can't imagine [what].
 c. ..., but you can't imagine [_{CP} what_i [_{TP} ~~he is writing t_i~~]]

The sluiced clause in (20b) is derived by moving the *wh*-phrase *what* into the specifier position of CP, followed by TP-deletion, indicated by the strike-through in (20c) (Ross 1969). This ellipsis process is known as sluicing (Takita 2009).

My investigation shows that sluicing is not involved in reduced embedded questions in Uyghur. Consider the following data:

- (21) a. Sän-Ø biraw-ğä nurğun pul bär-di-ŋ,
 2SG-NOM someone-DAT a.lot money give-PST-2SG
 ‘You gave someone a lot of money,’
- b. meniŋ [kim(-*gä) (ikän)-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 1SG.GEN who-DAT COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘I want to know who.’
- c. meniŋ [seniŋ kim-gä nurğun pul bar-gän-lik]-
 1SG.GEN 2SG.GEN who-DAT a.lot money give-PERF.NOML-COMP-
iŋ-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 2SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have

‘I want to know to whom you gave a lot of money.’

d. meniñ [CP kim-gä_i [~~TP seniñ t_i nurğun pul bar gän~~]-lik_C]-iñ-ni bil-gü-m bar

e.* meniñ [kim(-*gä) (ikän)-lik]-iñ-ni bil-gü-m bar.

(21a) antecedes the reduced question in (21b) and its full-fledged counterpart in (21c). If sluicing were involved, (21b) should be derived from (21c) by moving the *wh*-phrase *kim-gä* ‘who-DAT’ into the specifier position of CP, followed by TP-deletion, as illustrated in (21d). Note that the deleted TP contains a second-person singular subject so that it should be predicted that the possessive marker on the reduced question (21b) should be the second-person singular *iñ*. This prediction is not borne out because the presence of *iñ* makes the reduced question ungrammatical, as shown in (21e). The possessive marker in (21b) must be the third-person *i*, which is not predicted by the sluicing analysis.¹⁴ In addition, I put forward another argument against the sluicing analysis. As discussed above, reduced questions allow the locative marker and postpositions on remnants but not accusative, dative, or ablative markers. This variability in case markers on remnants is not compatible with the observed case-matching effect in sluicing, a phenomenon in which any case of a remnant matches the case of its correlate in the preceding context

¹⁴ Let us add another set of data, where the subject of the full-fledged embedded question is first-person.

- (i) a. Män-Ø tünügün biraw-din nurğun pul qärz al-di-m,
1SG-NOM yesterday someone-ABL a.lot money loan ASP-PST-1SG
‘I borrowed a lot of money from someone yesterday.’
- b. meniñ aka-lar-im-niñ [meniñ tünügün kim-din nurğun pul
1SG.GEN elder.brother-PL-1SG.POSS-GEN 1SG.GEN yesterday who-ABL a.lot money
qärz al-ğan-liq]-im-ni bil-gü-si bar.
loan ASP-PERF.NOML-COMP-1SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-3PL have
‘my elder brothers want to know from whom I borrowed a lot of money yesterday.’
- c. meniñ aka-lar-im-niñ [kim (ikän)-lik]-i*-im-ni bil-gü-si bar.
1SG.GEN elder.brother-PL-1SG.POSS-GEN who COP-COMP-3SG/*1SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-3PL have
‘my elder brothers want to know from whom.’

(ia) antecedes (ib) and (ic). (ib) includes a full-fledged embedded question with a first-person singular subject, which is marked by the first-person possessive *im*. In the corresponding reduced question (ic), the possessive marker must be the third-person singular *i* but not the first-person singular *im*.

(see Ross 1969 and Merchant 2001 for details).

4.2 A Reduced-Cleft Analysis

In this section, I examine cleft constructions in Uyghur and argue that they can be a source of reduced embedded questions in the language.

It has been discussed in the literature that cleft constructions are the source of reduced embedded questions in some languages (Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2012), exemplified below with English data.

- (22) a. John bought something, but I don't know [what it was].
 b. John bought something, but I don't know [what it was that John bought].
 c. John bought something, but I don't know [what it was ~~that John bought~~]

The second clause in (22b) contains an embedded cleft sentence, which consists of a focused constituent, *what*, and a presuppositional clause containing information presupposed by the speaker, *that John bought* (Akmajian 1970). When the presuppositional clause is elided, indicated by the strike-through in (22c), the surface string identical to (22a) is derived.

Now let us look at cleft constructions in Uyghur.¹⁵

- (23) Meniñ bügün mäktäp-tä kör-gän-im siz ikän-siz.
 1SG.GEN today school-LOC see-PERF.NOML-1SG.POSS2SG.HON COP-2SG.HON
 'It was you that I saw at school today.'

¹⁵ Cleft constructions in Uyghur have not been documented in previous literature. In this paper, I will not discuss the derivation process of clefts, only presenting the facts obtained from discussions with my informants.

A cleft sentence in Uyghur contains a presuppositional clause and a focused constituent.¹⁶

In a presuppositional clause, the subject is marked genitive, and the predicate is nominalized, followed by a possessive marker that agrees with the subject in person and number. The pivot is followed by the copula *ikän*, which can be omitted in the colloquial register. The copula is then followed by an agreement marker agreeing in person and number with the pivot. This conforms to the pattern that I observed in footnote 13.

Next, let us examine whether case markers and postpositions are allowed to appear on pivots of cleft sentences. Consider (24-28).¹⁷

(24) Ayxan-niñ kör-gän-i qaysi kino(-*ni) ikän-Ø?
 Ayxan-GEN watch-PERF.NOML-3SG.POSS which movie-ACC COP-3SG

‘Which movie was it that Ayxan watched?’

(25) U-niñ bu sowğat-ni bär-gän-i sän(-*gä) ikän-sän.
 3SG-GEN this gift-ACC give-PERF.NOML-3SG.POSS 2SG-DAT COP-2SG

‘It was to you that he gave this gift.’

(26) Ayxan-niñ qorq-idiğan-i qaysi xil haywan(-*din) ikän-Ø?
 Ayxan-GEN fear-NPST.NOML-3SG.POSS which CL animal-ABL COP-3SG

‘Which animal is it that Ayxan fears?’

¹⁶ In Uyghur cleft constructions, a presuppositional clause can precede the pivot, as in (23), or follow it, as in (i). The six native speakers I consulted have different opinions on (23) and (i). Some think they have the same interpretation, while others believe that (i) can emphasize the element in the pivot more clearly than (23). Moreover, the pivot in (i) may be preceded by a third-person pronoun, *u*. Four out of the six speakers allowed its appearance.

(i) (U) siz ikän-siz meniñ bögün mäktäp-tä kör-gän-im.
 3SG 2SG.HON COP-2SG.HON 1SG.GEN today school-LOC see-PERF.NOML-1SG.POSS
 ‘It was you that I saw at school today.’

¹⁷ I consulted seven speakers on whether the case markers and the postposition on the pivots in (24-28) are allowed. They unanimously rejected the accusative and dative markers; six of them rejected the ablative marker, while one accepted it on the pivot in (26) and the remnant in (10); four of them accepted the locative marker; they unanimously accepted the postposition.

(27) Ayxan-niñ kawap yä-gän yer-i Beijing(-??da)
 Ayxan-GEN roasted.meat eat-PERF.NOML place-3SG.POSS Beijing-LOC
 ikän-Ø.
 COP-3SG

‘It was in Beijing that Ayxan ate roasted meat.’

(28) Aminä-niñ u kona mašina-ni remont qil-ğan-i
 Aminä-GEN that old car-ACC repair do-PERF.NOML-3SG.POSS
 nemä üčün ikän-Ø?
 what POSTP COP-3SG

‘For what was it that Amina repaired that old car?’

As illustrated in (24-28), a pivot cannot be marked accusative, dative, or ablative, while it may be marked locative and can be accompanied by a postposition.¹⁸

Based on the examples above, we can observe the following three similarities between reduced questions and clefts in Uyghur. Firstly, the copula *ikän* appears in Uyghur clefts and reduced questions. Secondly, *ikän* follows the pivots in clefts, just as it follows remnant *wh*-phrases in reduced questions. Thirdly, case markers like accusative, dative, and ablative are not allowed to appear on remnant *wh*-phrases in reduced questions, while the locative marker and postpositions are allowed. A similar tendency is observed in cleft sentences, as illustrated in (24-28). Accordingly, it is reasonable to assume that cleft constructions can be a source of reduced questions in Uyghur.

¹⁸ Pinkham and Hankamer (1975) discuss a hierarchy of cleftability for constituent types, i.e., the more NP-like a constituent is, the more easily clefted it is. PPs, including locative PPs, can be easily clefted, as in (i), cited from Pinkham and Hankamer (1975).

(i) It was under the rug that he hid the money.

For cleft constructions to be a source of reduced embedded questions, they should be able to appear in embedded clauses, which is confirmed by the following data.

(29) [[Meniñ bögün mäktap-tä kör-gän-im]-niñ siz
 1SG.GEN today school-LOC see-PERF.NOML-1SG.POSS-GEN 2SG.HON
 ikän-lik]-iñiz/*i-ni bil-i-män.
 COP-COMP-2SG.HON.POSS/*3SG.POSS-ACC know-NPST-1SG
 ‘I know that it was you that I saw at school today.’

(30) Meniñ [[Ayxan-niñ qorq-idiğan-i]-niñ qaysi xil
 1SG.GEN Ayxan-GEN fear-NPST.NOML-3SG.POSS-GEN which CL
 haywan ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 animal COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘I want to know which animal it is that Ayxan fears.’

(29) and (30) are constructed by embedding (23) and (26), respectively, from which we can observe three crucial points. Firstly, when cleft sentences are embedded, their presuppositional clauses are marked by a genitive marker, just as the subject of a complement clause is marked genitive. We can say that the presuppositional clauses serve as the subjects of the embedded clauses in (29) and (30). Secondly, the pivots are followed by the copula *ikän* and the COMP. This sequence is exactly like what we have in reduced questions. Thirdly, the possessive markers following the embedded clefts agree with the pivots in person and number, just as the agreement markers agree with the pivots in person and number in root clefts. To illustrate, the pivot *siz* ‘you’ in (29) is a second-person singular honorific pronoun. Correspondingly, the possessive marker must be the second-

person singular honorific *ijiz*. In (30), the pivot *qaysi xil haywan* ‘which kind of animal’ is a third-person *wh*-phrase. Correspondingly, the possessive marker must be the third-person *i*. This point is crucial in that it predicts that the possessive marker following reduced questions should be the third-person *i* because remnant *wh*-phrases in reduced questions are third-person. This prediction is borne out. Consider (21) again, repeated below as (31).

- (31) a. Sän-Ø biraw-ğa nurğun pul bär-di-η,
 2SG-NOM someone-DAT a.lot money give-PST-2SG
 ‘You gave a lot of money to someone.’
- b. meniñ [kim(-*gä) ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 1SG.GEN who-DAT COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘I want to know to whom.’
- c. meniñ [[seniñ nurğun pul bär-gän-iñ]-
 1SG.GEN 2SG.GEN a.lot money give-PERF.NOML-2SG.POSS-
 niñ kim(-*gä) ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 GEN who-DAT COP-COMP]-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘I want to know to whom it was that you gave a lot of money.’
- d. meniñ [~~seniñ nurğun pul bär-gän-iñ~~]-niñ kim(-*gä) ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar

(31a) is intended to antecede the reduced question in (31b) and the embedded cleft in (31c). In (31b), the remnant cannot be marked dative, and the possessive marker must be *i*. In (31c), the pivot cannot be marked dative, and the possessive marker must be *i*, agreeing in number and person with the pivot *kim* ‘who,’ a third-person *wh*-phrase. Now

let us delete the presuppositional clause in (31c), indicated by the strike-through in (31d). What we obtain is identical to the reduced question in (31b). Note that the deletion of the presuppositional clause, i.e., the subject of the embedded clause, should be independently allowed because Uyghur allows subject drop.

Based on the discussions above, I propose that reduced embedded questions in Uyghur be analyzed as reduced cleft sentences with the presupposition clauses deleted. The reduced-cleft analysis can explain reduced questions with non-case-marked remnants, as discussed in (31). Furthermore, this analysis can also account for reduced questions with remnants followed by case markers and postpositions, as exemplified in (32).

- (32) a. Aminä-Ø u kona mašina-ni remont qil-dur-di-Ø,
 Aminä-NOM that old car-ACC repair do-CAUS-PST-3SG
 ‘Aminä repaired that old car.’
- b. meniñ [nemä üçün ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 1SG.GEN what POSTP COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘I want to know for what.’
- c. meniñ [[Aminä-niñ u kona mašina-ni remont qil-dur-ğan-
 1SG.GEN Aminä-GEN that old car-ACC repair do-CAUS-PERF.NOML-
 i]-niñ nemä üçün ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 3SG.POSS-GEN what POSTP COP-COMP]-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘I want to know for what it was that Amina repaired that old car.’
- d. meniñ [~~Aminä-niñ u kona mašina-ni remont qil-dur-ğan-i~~]-niñ nemä üçün
 ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar

(32a) is intended to antecede the reduced question in (32b), where the remnant is accompanied by a postposition, and the embedded cleft in (32c), where the pivot is followed by the postposition. By eliding the presuppositional clause in (32c), as indicated in (32d), we obtain the reduced question (32b). Thus far, I have argued that cases of reduced questions with non-case-marked, case-marked, and postposition-accompanied remnants can all be accounted for by the reduced-cleft analysis.¹⁹

4.3 A Pseudo-Sluicing Analysis

The fact that reduced questions in Uyghur contain a copula opens up another possibility that they may have a so-called pseudo-sluicing structure (Merchant 2001), exemplified below with English data.

- (33) a. John met a girl.
 b. Guess [who she was].

The embedded question in (33b) contains a copula and a pronominal subject with the *wh*-phrase being the complement of the copula. If a pseudo-sluicing structure is involved in reduced questions in Uyghur, it is predicted that the reduced questions should contain null pronominal subjects. Moreover, null subjects should be able to alternate with overt

¹⁹ Uyghur has pseudo-cleft constructions (Tash and Sugar 2018), which are closely related to cleft constructions (Akmajian 1970; Pinkham and Hankamer 1975). See the pseudo-cleft sentence in (i).

(i) Seniñ tünügün kör-gän-iñ bolsa-Ø kim(-*ni)?
 2SG.GEN yesterday see-PERF.NOML-2SG.POSS TOP-3SG who-ACC
 ‘Who was the person that you saw yesterday?’

It turns out that an embedded pseudo-cleft sentence is degraded, as in (ii).

(ii) ?* Meniñ [seniñ tünügün kör-gän-iñ bolsa-Ø kim(-*ni) ikän-lik]-i-ni
 1SG.GEN 2SG.GEN yesterdaysee-PERF.NOML-2SG.POSS TOP-3SG who-ACC COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC
 bil-gü-m bar.
 know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘I want to know who the person that you saw yesterday was.’

Whether pseudo-cleft sentences can be a source of reduced embedded questions in Uyghur is left for future research.

pronominal subjects. With Uyghur being a null argument language, this prediction is reasonable and is indeed borne out, as illustrated in (34).

- (34) a. Murat-Ø bir adäm-gä Tursun-ni tänqitlä-t-ti-Ø,
 Murat-NOM one person-DAT Tursun-ACC criticize-CAUS-PST-3SG
 ‘Murat made one person criticize Tursun,’
- b. män-Ø [kim(-*gä) (ikän)-lik]-i-gä qiziq-ip qal-di-m.
 1SG-NOM who-DAT COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-DAT excite-ADVL ASP-PST-1SG
 ‘I wonder who.’
- c. män-Ø [*pro* kim (ikän)-lik]-i-gä qiziq-ip qal-di-m
- d. män-Ø [*u-nij* kim (ikän)-lik]-i-gä qiziq-ip qal-di-m.
 1SG-NOM 3SG-GEN who COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-DAT excite-ADVL ASP-PST-1SG
 ‘I wonder who he was.’

The sentence in (34a) antecedes the reduced question in (34b), where the *wh*-remnant cannot be marked dative. (34b) can be analyzed as in (34c), which contains a null pronominal subject referring to the correlate in (34a) (that is, *the person Murat made Tursun criticize*). The null subject in (34c) can alternate with the overt pronominal subject in (34d). Now we have a pseudo-slucing structure of reduced questions in Uyghur, containing a pronominal subject, a *wh*-phrase, the optional copula *ikän*, and the COMP.

A piece of evidence for the pseudo-slucing analysis is obtained from the fact that reduced questions can be used felicitously without linguistic antecedents. As observed by Hankamer and Sag (1976), sluicing, which is assumed to involve ellipsis, requires verbally expressed antecedents, while pronominal expressions can be used felicitously

without such antecedents.²⁰ Consider the following example:

(35) Context: The speaker hears someone screaming, and the speaker says:

Täŋri-m, meniŋ [kim (ikän)-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 god-1SG.POSS 1SG.GEN who COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘Oh my god, I want to know who.’

(35) contains an utterance with a reduced indirect question. Note that (35) is felicitous with the context given, which is not expressed linguistically. This fact supports my proposal that reduced questions in Uyghur involve pronominal subjects.

As discussed in sections 3 and 4.2, reduced questions in Uyghur allow remnants to be marked locative and followed by postpositions. Now let us examine whether the pseudo-slucing analysis can explain these cases. Consider (12b) again, repeated below as (36a).

(36) a. meniŋ [kim **bilän** ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.
 1SG.GEN who POSTP COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘I want to know with whom.’

b.* meniŋ [u-niŋ kim **bilän** ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar
 1SG.GEN 3SG-GEN who POSTP COP-COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NOML-1SG have
 ‘lit. I want to know with whom that is.’

²⁰ Consider the following examples from Hankamer and Sag (1976):

- (i) Hankamer: Someone’s just been shot.
 Sag: Yeah, I wonder who.
- (ii) Context: Hankamer produces a gun, points it offstage and fires, whereupon a scream is heard.
 Sag: # Jesus, I wonder who.
- (iii) Hankamer [observing Sag successfully ripping a phone book in half]:
 I don’t believe it.
- (iv) Sag [same circumstance]:
 It’s not easy.

While (i) shows that sluicing is possible with a linguistic antecedent, (ii) indicates that the mere presence of a context is not sufficient. In (iii) and (iv), on the other hand, the pronouns are used felicitously without verbally realized contexts.

c. meniŋ [u-niŋ kim ikän-lik]-i-ni bil-gü-m bar.

If the source of (36a) were a pseudo-sluced clause, then an overt pronominal subject should be allowed to appear. This prediction is not borne out, because (36b) with the overt subject is not grammatical. It becomes grammatical with the postposition removed, which is a pseudo-sluced clause with an overt pronominal subject, as shown in (36c). Based on the discussions in this section, I conclude that the pseudo-slucing analysis can explain cases of reduced questions with non-case-marked remnant *wh*-phrases.

5 Conclusion

In this paper, I have considered reduced embedded questions in Uyghur and proposed two types of analyses to account for the data. Firstly, reduced questions with non-case-marked remnants can be derived from two sources: pseudo-sluced clauses and cleft sentences. Secondly, reduced questions with remnants followed by case markers and postpositions are derived from cleft sentences. The pseudo-slucing analysis is supported by the fact that reduced questions can contain overt pronominal subjects, which is expected because null pronominal subjects posited by the pseudo-slucing analysis should be able to alternate with their overt counterparts. I have also observed that reduced questions in Uyghur can be felicitously uttered without linguistic antecedents, which reinforces my assumption that they do not involve ellipsis but pronominal subjects and the optional copula. The cleft analysis is supported by the following facts. Firstly, the variability in case markers and postpositions on remnants is in conformity with the variability in case markers and postpositions on pivots of clefts. Secondly, clefts can be embedded, which

is compatible with them being the source of reduced embedded questions. Thirdly, the deletion of presuppositional clauses of embedded clefts, i.e., subject drop, is independently allowed in Uyghur, a *pro*-drop language. Close considerations of a more detailed reduced-cleft analysis are left to future research.

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