

## Sluicing-like constructions in Igbo

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Sluicing has been argued not to be a unified syntactic phenomenon and that different languages use different syntactic means to arrive at the same surface form (van Craenenbroeck and Lipták 2006, 2013, Paul and Potsdam 2012). In this talk, I provide facts from Igbo (Benue-Congo, Nigeria) that support such claim. Matrix and embedded sluicing-like constructions (SLCs) in Igbo involve different syntax. Igbo seems to exhibit ‘genuine’ sluicing of the English type only in matrix clauses. However, I assume that this is focus movement and not wh-movement in Igbo with the idea that not only interrogative  $C^0$  but focus ( $Foc^0$ ) can license TP deletion (van Craenenbroeck and Lipták 2006, Grebenyova 2006, Toosarvandani 2008, among others). Matrix SLC (1) in Igbo also appears to obey Merchant’s (2001) Sluicing-COMP generalization since the focus marker is not pronounced.

- (1) A: Òbì zù-rù íhé.                      B: (Ézìó'kwú!) Gí'ní?                      (matrix SLC)  
Obi buy-rV thing                      truth                      what  
‘Obi bought something.’                      ‘(Really!) What?’
- (2) Òbì zù-rù íhé, màná à-má-ghí                      m íhé ó bù.                      (embedded SLC)  
Obi buy-rV thing but                      PFX-know-NEG 1SG thing 3SG COP  
‘Obi bought something, but I don’t know what.’  
(lit. ‘Obi bought something, but I don’t know thing it was.’)

Embedded SLCs (2), on the other hand, seem to mirror embedded questions with not allowing for focus-fronting (Goldsmith 1981) and with the presence of the indefinite. Given the obligatory presence and nature of the pronominal subject and copula in embedded SLCs, I argue that the source of the sluice is a predicational copular clause. The complement of the copula is being displaced to a Spec,CP position in the embedded clause.