Pronominal Paradigms in Two Varieties of English

Kenyon Branan and Keely New

1. Introduction

Singlish (colloquial Singapore English) permits a liberal omission of contextually salient arguments, as exemplified in (1). The existence of the null pronoun has long been noted in the literature (e.g. Platt & Weber, 1980; Tan, 2007; Sato, 2014; Bao, 2001, 2015), where it has mostly been described as a Chinese-influenced feature.

(1)   I heard the rumour, but he didn't hear Ø.

In this paper, we investigate the status of the null argument as a pronoun in Singlish and argue that it is a weak pronoun, with the distributional properties of weak pronouns in North American English. We also follow Sato (2014) in arguing that the null pronoun is derived via argument ellipsis. Both conclusion are forced by independent sets of tests from the literature on the distinction between weak and strong pronouns on the one hand, and the argument ellipsis literature on the other. From this, we draw the conclusion that even weak pronouns can potentially be structurally complex, suggesting that some properties of weak pronouns are not straightforwardly directly tied to their internal structure. We sketch a potential way forward to resolving these two, apparently contradictory, sets of conclusions.

2. Singapore English and the null pronoun

Singlish is the basilectal variety of English spoken in Singapore, as opposed to the acrolectal variety, Singapore standard English (SSE). Singlish is a contact language with a dominant English lexifier and strongly influenced by its various substrate languages such as local sinitic languages[1] (Gupta, 1994; Bao, 2001; Erlewine, 2018), mandarin Chinese (Bao & Huaqing, 2006; Hiramoto, 2012), and Malay (Platt & Weber, 1980). For convenience, we will use E_S henceforth as a shorthand for Singlish, as opposed to North American English, E_A, and these are the two varieties of English we are concerned with in this paper.

It is widely recognised that E_S has grammatical features that are distinct from those of "standard" varieties of English. One such feature is the availability of a null pronoun, given proper context, as shown in the examples in (2). Generally, internal arguments can be null (2a-c), as well as possessors (2d).

(2)   **Null argument in E_S:**

    a.   I heard the rumour, but he did not hear Ø.   Ø = the rumour

    b.   John gave Mary 20 dollars, and Bill gave Ø 50 dollars   Ø = Mary

    c.   John gave Mary 20 dollars, and Bill (also) give Susan Ø.   Ø = 20 dollars

    d.   Yesterday John$_i$ hit his head. Today he hit Ø hand.   Ø = his$_i$

The existence of pro-drop in E_S has been attributed to Chinese influence (Tay 1979; Platt & Weber 1980; Gupta 1992; Tan 2007 among others) and Bao (2001, 2015) and Sato (2014) are among the first

to discuss the interpretive effects of the null pronominal. In this section, we argue (following Sato (2014)) that the E_S null argument is structurally rich, having properties consistent with it being an elided argument.

We present here three pieces of evidence to show that the null pronominal in E_S is syntactically rich and allows reading which a referential *pro* shoud not. First, as Sato (2014) points out, null objects can give rise to both sloppy and quantificational readings. For example, consider the pair of examples in (3) and (4).

(3) **Quantificational reading available:**
John buy three books. Bill also buy Ø.

    a.   'John bought three books. Bill also bought the **same three books that John bought**.'

    b.   'John bought three books. Bill also bought **three books**.'

(4) **Sloppy reading available:**
Mary like her teacher, but Sue did not like Ø.

    a.   'Mary liked her teacher, but Sue didn't like **Mary's teacher**.'

    b.   'Mary liked her teacher, but Sue didn't like **Sue's teacher**.'

The null object in (3) can be understood as referring either to the same set of three books that John bought in the antecedent clause (3a), or a distinct set of three books (3b). This second reading is known as the "quantificational reading". The null object in (3b) can refer to the object of the antecedent (4a), Mary's teacher (the strict reading), or to Sue's teacher (the sloppy reading).

The second argument in support of the claim that E_S null arguments are structurally rich comes from the possibility of extraction from the null material. This is shown in (5), where *Bill* is extracted out of the null argument.

(5) **Extraction available:**
A: Who did John buy a picture of ___ ?
B: Buster Keaton.
A: Then, who Bill buy Ø?   Ø = a picture of

Finally, a third evidence that E_S null arguments are structurally rich comes from so-called 'disconnected' disjunctive readings (Sakamoto, 2015). When the null argument is used in (6A), the disjunctive reading is available, where the null object can be interpreted as the disjunction *Mary or Sue*. The availability of the disjunctive reading is affirmed by the possibility of the continuation in (6B), where John and Bill didn't see the same person, indicating that the elided material in (6A) must consist of the disjunction. Notice also that this disjunctive reading is not available with an overt pronoun in E_S (as well as in E_A).

(6) **'Disconnected' disjunctive reading:**
A: Bill saw either Mary or Sue, and John also saw Ø/#her.
B: Yep, Bill saw Mary and John saw Sue.

It is conceivable that the E_S null argument is derived by verb-stranding VP ellipsis (VSVPE), where the main verb is left as a remnant due raising out of the *v*P, followed by ellipsis of the VP, thus giving the surface appearance of argument ellipsis (see e.g., Huang, 1991; Rouveret, 2012; Goldberg, 2005). We argue that this approach is untenable for the E_S null argument, following Sato (2014).

Sato (2014) argues against VSVPE in E_S based on the availability of null pronouns despite a mismatch in verbs. This can be seen in (7), where the null object of the verb 'sell' can have a quantificational reading despite a mismatch in verb with the antecedent clause. This makes VSVPE unlikely in E_S because it is known that verb stranding languages like Irish and Hebrew, strict identity of the verb is required for VP ellipsis (Rouveret, 2012; Goldberg, 2005).

(7) **Mismatch in verbs possible:**
Yesterday John bought three books. Tomorrow, Bill will sell Ø.

    a.   'John bought three books yesterday. Tomorrow, Bill will sell those same three books.'

    b.   'John bought three books yesterday. Tomorrow, Bill will sell three books.'

Sato (2014) also argues against VSVPE based on the interpretation of manner adverbials in the VP. The null argument in (8) cannot contain the manner adverbial 'quickly'. The impossibility of the manner adverbial to elide is not expected under a VP ellipsis account.

(8) **Interpretation of manner adverbs:**   (Sato, 2014:372)

    a.   John can [$_{VP}$ solve that syntax problem quickly].

    b.   But Mary cannot solve Ø leh.
        'Mary cannot solve that syntax problem.'
     #'Mary cannot solve that syntax problem quickly.'

In addition to these empirical arguments by Sato (2014), we furnish here further data to argue that null arguments are not derived by VSVPE in E_S. These are arguments based on constructions where sloppy readings are available, even though a VSVPE structure is not possible since the null argument as well as its antecedent do not comprise the entirety of the VP. Under standard assumptions about the ditransitive clause structure and possessives, the double object construction in (9), object control construction in (10) and the possessive in (11) all involve ellipsis of subparts of the VP. Yet, the null element in all three constructions can give rise to sloppy interpretations.

(9) **Double object constructions:**

    a.   John first told Mary that it's rainy outside.

    b.   Then, he told Ø that it's sunny.
        'John told Mary$_{i/j}$ that it's sunny outside.'

(10) **Object control constructions:**

    a.   Yesterday Prof. Starr allow 3 students to go home.

    b.   Today Prof. Mie allow Ø to go school.
        ✓ 'Today, Prof. Mie allows/allowed those same three students to go home.'
        ✓ 'Today, Prof. Mie allows/allowed three different students to go home.'

(11) **Null possessors (=(2d)):**
Yesterday, John$_i$ hit his head. Today he hit Ø hand.   Ø = his$_{i/j}$

A final argument against the VSVPE account of null arguments in E_S comes from scope parallelism. It is well-known that VP ellipsis is subject to a parallelism requirement that the scope of elements in the ellipsis site match the scope of elements in the antecedent (Fox, 1995). This scope parallelism is not required in E_S between elements in putative antecedent and the ellipsis site. Under the reading where the universal quantifier in the antecedent in (13)[2] takes narrow scope (i.e., where there is a different police officer at each gate at Building A), there is a possible reading where the elided universal quantifier takes scope over the existential (i.e., where there is only one police officer guarding all of the gates at Building B). The possibility of scope mismatch shown in (13) suggests that VP ellipsis is not likely to be involved in the derivation of the null element.

---

[2] This involves the *got* construction, a way of introducing novel indefinites in subject position in E_S (Lee et al., 2009).

(12) Got one police officer guard every gate at Building A, ✓ ∃ > ∀
      and got one police officer guard Ø at Building B. ✓ ∀ > ∃

So far, we have provided evidence to argue that the null argument in E$_S$ is structurally rich, and that its derivation doesn't appear to be V-stranding VPE. The same has been argued for Mandarin null arguments (e.g. Huang, 1991), and this is unsurprising given that null pronoun in E$_S$ is similar in the Mandarin null pronoun in other ways (Bao, 2001; Sato, 2014). Furthermore, similar conclusions about the status of Ø have been drawn for Japanese and Korean (Saito, 2007; Sato, 2014).

3. Comparing the pronominal paradigms in E$_S$ and E$_A$

We argue that weak and strong pronouns—in the sense of Cardinaletti & Starke (1994)—look different in the two English varieties, E$_S$ and E$_A$. We propose that *all* overt pronouns in E$_S$ are strong pronouns, as are full tonic pronouns in E$_A$. On the other hand, weak pronouns in E$_S$ take the form of null pronouns. As will become important and interesting in some of the data we show later, we also follow Postal (1994) and Postal (1998) in claiming that the inanimate pronoun *it* is a weak pronoun in E$_A$. In contrast, overt occurrences of *it* is strong a strong pronoun in E$_S$. We begin this section by showing some phonological differences between the pronominal paradigms in the two languages. The phonological properties of the pronominal paradigms will serve as indirect support for the claims we make, but they also serve as a primer for the syntactic evidence we show in §3.2. Later in §4, we show that comparing island sensitivity and anti-pronominality in E$_S$ and E$_A$ further lends support to our proposal.

3.1. Phonological evidence

Phonologically, pronouns in E$_A$ and E$_S$ are crucially different in a number of ways. First, weak pronouns (in the sense of Cardinaletti & Starke (1994)) in E$_A$ have a particular phonological signature: they resist stress, lack onsets, and their vowels are either reduced to the schwa, ə, or are altogether absent. E$_S$ lacks this phonologically reduced pronominal paradigm: overt pronouns in E$_S$ always have onsets, and their vowels are never reduced. This contrast is demonstrated in (13).

(13) *E$_S$ / ✓ E$_A$ I met yə/əm/ər.

In E$_S$, all overt pronouns appear to be like the E$_A$ strong pronouns (in the sense of Cardinaletti & Starke (1994)). Overt pronouns in E$_S$ always appear to be prominent and are assigned nuclear stress, even in contexts where they are not contrastively focused. Deterding (2007) observes that E$_S$ pronouns in object position bear the phonological hallmarks of lexical arguments in object position.

(14) ✓ E$_S$ / ✓ E$_A$ I met you/him/her.

Finally, as we have already seen in section 2, E$_S$ allows null arguments which are not possible in E$_A$.

(15) ✓ E$_S$ / * E$_A$ I met Ø.

The pronominal paradigms overlap phonologically, in the sense that both have identical strong forms, but otherwise diverge: E$_A$ has a set of phonologically reduced pronominals which E$_S$ does not, and E$_S$ conversely allows for null arguments, where E$_A$ does not. In the sections which follow, we will see that that the syntactic distribution of null objects in E$_S$ mirrors the distribution of weak pronominals in E$_A$.

3.2. Syntactic evidence

Syntactically, we show here three empirical arguments that suggest that the null arguments in E$_S$ are weak pronouns in the sense of Cardinaletti & Starke (1994), like *pro* in Romance languages. The first

is an argument from compatibility with manual deixis. Cardinaletti & Starke (1994) observe that only strong pronouns are compatible with deixis, and weak pronouns are not. As shown in (16), the overt, non-phonologicallly reduced pronoun is compatible with a pointing gesture to pick out a referent in both E_S and E_A. On the other hand, the null pronoun in E_S patterns like the phonologically reduced pronoun in E_A in being incompatible with deixis, as shown in (17).

(16) $\checkmark^{E_S}/\checkmark^{E_A}$ I just met him+☞   (17) $*^{E_S}/*^{E_A}$ I just met{Ø/'m}+☞

Likewise, only strong pronouns in E_A are construed with focus (Cardinaletti & Starke, 1994). Observe in (18) that the inanimate pronoun *it* can bear narrow focus in E_S, and it cannot in E_A. As mentioned earlier, we treat the inanimate pronoun *it* as a weak pronoun in E_A following Postal (1994) and Postal (1998). The same position of narrow focus is unavailable to the E_S null argument, as shown in (18b). Following Postal (1994) that the E_S inanimate pronoun *it* is a weak pronoun, (18) is consistent with our proposal that the null argument in E_S are weak and all overt pronouns in E_S are strong.

(18)   **Strong pronouns are compatible with focus, weak pronouns are not:**
Mary's obsessed with this book, and nowadays...

    a. $\checkmark^{E_S}$ / $*^{E_A}$ she will only read **it**.

    b. $*^{E_S}$ she will only read Ø.

Next, the null pronoun in E_S also displays a parallel with E_A weak pronouns for certain interpretive properties intuitively similar to 'strict' and 'sloppy' readings of bound prominals in ellipsis contexts. In non-embedded contexts, as in (19-20), both strict and sloppy readings emerge with the weak pronoun in E_A (19) and the null pronoun in E_S (20).

(19)   **Unembedded weak pronouns in E_A allow strict and sloppy readings:**

    a. $Mary_i$ praises her_i best students.

    b. Sue_j also praises'em.   'em = $her_{i/j}$ best students

(20)   **Unembedded null pronouns in E_S allow strict and sloppy readings:**

    a. $Mary_i$ praises her_i best students.

    b. Sue_j also praises Ø.   Ø = $her_{i/j}$ best students

However, when the object appears in an embedded clause, as in (21-22), the sloppy reading is unavailable for weak pronouns in E_A (21) and null pronoun in E_S (22). [3]

(21)   **Embedded weak pronouns in E_A only allow strict readings:**

    a. $Mary_i$ tried to praise her_i best students.

    b. Sue_j also tried to praise'm.   'm = $her_{i/*j}$ best students

(22)   **Embedded null pronouns in E_S only allow strict readings:**

    a. $Mary_i$ try to praise her_i best students.

    b. Sue_j also try to praise Ø.   Ø = $her_{i/*j}$ best students

What we see here, then, is that a number of simple tests which distinguish strong and weak pronouns in E_A make the same distinction between overt pronouns and null obejcts in E_S, supporting the core

---

[3]   At present, we do not offer an explanation for the facts in (21–22), but stop at observing that they do seem to robustly pick out a distinction between strong and weak pronouns. We leave puzzle as an open question for future research.

claim that E_A weak pronouns and null objects in E_A are the same sort of syntactic object. In the section which follows, we introduce two more detailed syntactic tests that lead to the same conclusion.

4. Two further diagnostics: islands and anti-pronominality

In addition to the syntactic tests in the previous section, we explore two further probes into the properties of null pronouns: islands and anti-pronominality in this section. We will see that the distribution of apparent movement gaps in islands in E_S mirrors that of languages in which this sort of dependency demands a weak pronoun at the tail of the Ā-chains, with these gaps being unable to appear in positions in which weak pronouns in E_A cannot appear. We will see also that the null pronoun in E_S cannot appear in a number of Postal's (1994) *anti-pronominal positions*, and that extraction from these positions is indeed island-sensitive in E_S.

4.1. Island effects

At first glance, strong islands in E_A are notably weaker in E_S. The contrast is shown with relative clause islands in (23a) and possessor islands (23b).

(23) **Amelioration of island effects in E_S:**
    a. ? ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} What movie did they meet [someone who saw ___]?
    b. ? ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} Who did [a friend of ___] meet John?

Georgopoulos (1991) and Imanishi (2015) show that the presence of null pronominals in a language can lead to that language displaying apparent island sensitivity. In such languages, the null pronouns may act as a resumptive, thereby saving apparent island violations. More generally, it seems to be the case that resumptive pronouns tend to be weak pronouns, as shown by Aoun et al. (2001) for Lebanese Arabic and Sichel (2014) for Modern Hebrew. If the acceptability of (23) in E_S indeed reflects the presence of a weak null pronominal in the gap site, we might then expect that extraction cannot take palce from positions within an island which reject weak pronouns. This prediction is indeed borne out: not all islands in E_S are subject to this sort of amelioration, depending on whether a weak pronoun in principle could appear in the gap position. For instance, observe that the left conjunct is concurrently incompatible with E_A weak pronouns (24), and also unavailable for extraction in both E_A and E_S (25).

(24) **E_A weak pronouns cannot appear as a left conjunct:**
    I saw [{ $^{\checkmark E_A}$ you / *^{E_A}yə} and John] in the garden.

(25) **Left conjunct is unavailable for extraction in both E_A and E_S:**
    * ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} What did you eat [___ and durian] ?

It follows from this logic that other positions that ban the null pronominal should similarly disallow extraction from the position. One such pair of positions in E_S that contrasts in their acceptability of a null argument is shown in (26). The object position is available as a position for null arguments (26a), whereas the complement-to-P is not available to null arguments (26b).

(26) **Object position available to Ø but comp-P not available to Ø:**
    a. $^{\checkmark E_S}$ After hearing about this new movie, Richard must go see Ø.
    b. * ^{E_S} After hearing about the Esplanade, Richard must go to Ø.

As we see in (27), *wh*-extraction from the complement-to-P position is noticeably worse than *wh*-extraction from the complement of the verb.

(27) **Extraction available from comp-P but bad from object position:**

    a.   ?? ^{E_S} What movie did they met someone who saw ___?

    b.   * ^{E_S} What place did they met someone who go to ___?

Interestingly, overt resumptive pronouns in E_S are barred from object position, but become available in the complement to P positions analogous to (27b). In fact, this is a signature of languages that use weak pronouns as resumptives. Strong pronouns are banned as resumptives except in positions where the weak pronoun is independently banned.

(28) **Resumptive pronoun unavailable in object position but available in comp-P:**

    a.   * ^{E_S} What movie did they met someone who see it?

    b.   ✓ ^{E_S} What place did they met someone who go to it?

What we see here is that the null object in E_S has a property in common with weak pronouns cross-linguistically: it may rescue extraction across an island boundary. Crucially for our argument that the null pronominal in English is a weak pronoun analogous to the weak pronominal paradigm in E_A was the fact that island-sensitivty emerges in E_S when extraction takes place from positions that resist overt weak pronouns in E_A. In the subsection which follows, we discuss one class of such positions in more detail.

4.2. Anti-pronominal effects

Another environment which reject weak pronouns is famously anti-pronominal positions of Postal (1994) and Postal (1998). For current purposes, we set aside any explanation for *why* antipronominal positions behave this way[4], but we note crucially that these positions that reject weak pronouns also reject the null pronominal in E_S. These contrasts are shown in the anti-pronominal positions in (29a-c) (where underlining indicates coreference). Given the claim that all overt pronouns—including *it*—are strong in E_S, and that *it* is weak in E_A (Postal, 1994, 1998), the fact that *it* is acceptable in E_S and barred in E_A in anti-pronominal positions is unsurprising.

(29) a. ✓ ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} His plane was named "<u>the Spruce Goose</u>"[5], but mine is not named <u>it</u>.

    b. ✓ ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} This lizard turns <u>blue</u> on command, but that lizard cannot turn <u>it</u>.

    c. ✓ ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} These two facts teach us <u>these three things</u>, but those other facts do not teach us <u>them</u>^{E_S}/'<u>em</u>^{E_A}.

From the facts in (29), it might be possible that E_S simply lacks anti-pronominal positions. We argue that this is not the case. As noted by Postal (1994), Postal (1998) and Stanton (2016), certain types of $\overline{A}$ movements, such as topicalization and non-restrictive operator movement, are barred from these anti-pronominal positions. As shown in (30), E_S also does not permit such movements from anti-pronominal positions, suggesting that this anti-pronominality holds of similar positions in E_S.

(30) a. * ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} I don't like this phrase, which your plane is named ___.

    b. * ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} This shade of blue, that chameleon cannot turn ___.

Furthermore, consistent with our analysis of null pronominals in weak pronouns, note that E_S null pronominals, like E_A weak pronouns, are barred from anti-pronominal positions. This is shown in (31).

---

[4] See Poole (2017) for a recent proposal

[5] A popular nickname for the Hughes H-4 Hercules, a defunct American WWII-era project to build a plane constructed almost entirely out of wood. Only one was ever produced.

(31)   a.   * ^{E_S} His plane was called "<u>the Spruce Goose</u>", but mine will not be called Ø.

       b.   * ^{E_S} This chameleon can turn <u>blue</u>, but that chameleon cannot turn Ø.

       c.   * ^{E_S} These two facts teach us <u>these three things</u>, but those facts do not teach us Ø.

We have seen in section 4.1 that certain strong island effects are ameliorated in E_S due to the possibility of null pronoun resumption and we have seen in this section that extraction from anti-pronominal positions is barred in E_S. Taking these claims about apparent extraction from islands and anti-pronominal positions in E_S together, a prediction is that apparent extraction from an island should be blocked when the tail of the extraction chain is an anti-pronominal position. This prediction is indeed borne out, as we see in (32).

(32)   a.   * ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} What colour did you meet [the person who painted her car ___?]

       b.   * ^{E_S} / * ^{E_A} What name did [calling his plane ___] bother John?

Summing up, our core claim is that all overt pronouns in E_S are strong, but the strength of overt pronouns in E_A is variable. We have shown that the syntactic behaviour of overt pronouns in E_S parallel with the syntactic behaviour of full tonic pronouns in E_A. On the other hand, E_S null pronominals behave like E_A weak pronouns, which look like phonologically reduced clitic pronouns. Weak pronouns in E_A also include *it*, as suggested by Postal (1994, 1998). We have shown these parallels using various phonological properties of pronominal paradigms in the languages, as well as syntactic evidence including compatibility with manual deixis and focus, sensitivity to 'sloppy' readings to embedding, apparent absence of some island effects in E_S, and the impossibility of the null argument in E_S in antipronominal positions.

5. Conclusion

Having concluded that the null argument in E_S is a weak pronoun, the discussion as a whole leads us to an interesting conclusion about the nature of 'weakness' and 'strength' in the discussion of types of pronoun. In §2, we presented a number of arguments against a VSVPE theory of the null pronoun in E_S. However, there we saw that the null pronoun had a number of properties consistent with it being an elided argument (as proposed, for instance, in Sato (2014)), for instance: extraction from the null pronoun was possible, and the null pronoun could take quantificational scope independent of its antecedent. In §3, in contrast, we saw that strong pronouns in both E_S and E_A shared a number of properties in common with overt arguments, and that weak pronouns did not. A common assumption in the literature on argument ellipsis is that the ellipsis site is a surface anaphor, not a deep anaphor — i.e. the elided argument has the internal structure of its antecedent. A common approach to explaining the distinction between weak and strong pronouns — following Cardinaletti & Starke (1994) — is that weak pronouns are structurally reduced in some way, compared to full-fledged arguments and strong pronouns. If both of these approaches are correct, then the link between the strength and weakness of a pronominal and its internal structure cannot be as straightforward as we might hope, since the null pronoun in E_S seems to be weak, as we saw in §3, yet contain the internal structure of its antecent, as we saw in §2.

A possible and tentative way forwards — but by no means the only conceivable way of reconciling these two sets of facts — would be to treat this as a case of derivational opacity. What this apparently contradictory set of conclusions would be teaching us, then, is that the set of tests in §2, which motivated an argument ellipsis analysis in Sato (2014), are sensitive to the structure of the pronominal at a point in the derivation at which the null pronoun is structurally identical to its overt antecedent; while the set of tests in §3 are sensitive to the structure of the null pronoun at a point in the derivation at which the pronoun is structurally distinct from its antecedent. This is in principle compatible with two approaches to PF-deletion and LF-copy approaches to argument ellipsis, and distinguishing which of the two, if any, is correct is a topic for further work; we sketch the basic logic of both approaches below. On a PF-deletion approach, the structure of the elided argument *after* PF deletion is reduced to a degree comparable to that of a weak pronoun. For such diagnostics which make reference to the post-ellipsis

structure, the two should behave identically: the weak pronominal diagnostics, on this approach, would then reflect conditions on the structure of PF, or contexts in which a PF deletion rule could apply. On a LF-copy approach, the structure of the elided argument *prior* to LF copying is reduced to a degree comparable to that of a weak pronoun. For such diagnostics which make reference to the pre-LF structure, the two should behave identically: the weak pronominal diagnostics would suggest that the 'placeholder' for LF-copying is syntactically of the same class as an overt weak pronoun, and are reduced at this level of representation from strong pronouns and nominal arguments.

References

Aoun, Joseph, Lina Choueiri & Norbert Hornstein (2001). Resumption, movement, and derivational economy. *Linguistic inquiry* 32:3, 371–403.

Bao, Zhiming (2001). The origins of empty categories in Singapore English. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 16:2, 275–319.

Bao, Zhiming (2015). *The Making of Vernacular Singapore English*. Cambridge University Press.

Bao, Zhiming & Hong Huaqing (2006). Diglossia and register variation in Singapore English. *World Englishes* 25:1, 105–114.

Cardinaletti, Anna & Michal Starke (1994). The typology of structural deficiency: A case study of the three classes of pronouns. *Clitics in the languages of Europe* 8.

Deterding, David (2007). *Singapore English*. Edinburgh University Press.

Erlewine, Michael Yoshitaka (2018). A syntactic universal in a contact language: The story of Singlish already. *Discourse Particles in Asian Languages. Routledge: London* .

Fox, Danny (1995). Economy, scope and semantic interpretation-evidence from vp ellipsis. *NELS 12: Proceedings of the North East Linguistics Society*, University of Massachusetts, vol. 25, 143–158.

Georgopoulos, C (1991). *Syntactic Variables: Resumptive Pronouns and A' Binding in Palauan*, vol. 24. Springer Science & Business Media.

Goldberg, Lotus Madelyn (2005). *Verb-stranding VP ellipsis: A cross-linguistic study*. Ph.D. thesis, McGill University Montreal.

Gupta, Anthea F (1992). Contact features of singapore colloquial english. Bolton, Kingsley & Helen Kwok (eds.), *Sociolinguistics Today*, Routledge, 323–345.

Gupta, Anthea F (1994). *The step-tongue: Children's English in Singapore*. Multilingual Matters.

Hiramoto, Mie (2012). Pragmatics of the sentence-final uses of can in colloquial singapore english. *Journal of pragmatics* 44:6-7, 890–906.

Huang, C.-T. James (1991). Remarks on the Status of the Null Object. *Principles and Parameters in Comparative Grammar*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 56–76.

Imanishi, Yusuke (2015). Null Resumption in Kaqchikel. Ms. Kwansei Gakuin University.

Lee, Nala Huiying, Ai Ping Ling & Hiroki Nomoto (2009). Colloquial Singapore English *got*: functions and substratal influences. *World Englishes* 28:3, 293–318.

Platt, John & Heidi Weber (1980). *English in Singapore and Malaysia: Status, features, functions*. Oxford University Press.

Poole, Ethan (2017). Movement and the semantic type of traces .

Postal, Paul M (1994). Contrasting extraction types. *Journal of Linguistics* 30:1, 159–186.

Postal, Paul Martin (1998). *Three investigations of extraction*, vol. 29. mit Press.

Rouveret, Alain (2012). VP ellipsis, phases and the syntax of morphology. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 30, 897–963.

Saito, Mamoru (2007). Notes on east asian argument ellipsis. *Language Research* 43, 203–227.

Sakamoto, Yuta (2015). Disjunction as a new diagnostic for (argument) ellipsis. *Proceedings of the 45th annual meeting of the North East Linguistic Society*, vol. 3, 15–28.

Sato, Yosuke (2014). Argument ellipsis in Colloquial Singapore English and the Anti-Agreement Hypothesis. *Journal of Linguistics* 50:2, 365–401.

Sichel, Ivy (2014). Resumptive pronouns and competition. *Linguistic Inquiry* 45:4, 655–693.

Stanton, Juliet (2016). Wholesale late merger in ā-movement: Evidence from preposition stranding. *Linguistic Inquiry* 47:1, 89–126.

Tan, Ludwig (2007). *Null arguments in Singapore Colloquial English*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge.

Tay, Mary WJ (1979). The uses, users and features of English in Singapore. Richards, Jack C. (ed.), *New Variaties of English*, SEAMCO Regional Language Centre, 91–111.

Proceedings of the 38th West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics

edited by Rachel Soo, Una Y. Chow, and Sander Nederveen

Cascadilla Proceedings Project   Somerville, MA   2021

Ordering information

Orders for the printed edition are handled by Cascadilla Press.
To place an order, go to www.lingref.com or contact:

Cascadilla Press, P.O. Box 440355, Somerville, MA 02144, USA
phone: 1-617-776-2370, fax: 1-617-776-2271, sales@cascadilla.com

Web access and citation information

This entire proceedings can also be viewed on the web at www.lingref.com. Each paper has a unique document # which can be added to citations to facilitate access. The document # should not replace the full citation.

This paper can be cited as:

Branan, Kenyon and Keely New. 2021. Pronominal Paradigms in Two Varieties of English. In *Proceedings of the 38th West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics*, ed. Rachel Soo et al., 85-93. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. www.lingref.com, document #3553.