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Grammatically unstable placeholders and morpho-syntactic remedies: evidence from East Asian languages

Abstract: When a communicator faces a word-formulation problem, they may use a placeholder (PH) such as *whatchamacallit* to avoid producing a target expression or to delay it. A PH is a dummy element used to fill in the syntactic slot of a target item that a communicator is unable or unwilling to produce (e.g. due to memory lapse). Previous studies have generally been concerned with grammatically stable PHs (e.g. *whatchamacallit*, *you-know-what*), 'grammatically stable' in the sense that they are acceptably used (as long as the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic conditions are met) on their own, without a morphosyntactic aid. In this article, we describe 'grammatically unstable' *wh*-derived PHs in three East Asian languages: Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin. To give a specific example, typically, the PH use of Japanese *dare* 'who' is not fully acceptable unless it is doubled (i.e. *dare~dare*) or combines with a non-*wh* element (e.g. *dare-sore*, where *sore* is the medial demonstrative 'that'). We show that the types of such remedial morphosyntactic operations vary from language to language and also within a language.

Keywords: demonstrative; doubling; Japanese; Korean; Mandarin; *wh*-word

1 Introduction

In verbal interaction, a speaker may face a word-formulation problem when, for instance, they cannot remember an expression to refer to their intended entity. In such a situation, various types of phonological or lexico-grammatical strategies

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are available, including sound stretch, cut-off, interjective hesitators such as *uh* and *um*, and placeholders (PHs) (Fox 2010: 1). Of these strategies, our central concern is PHs. As has been amply described (e.g. Amiridze et al. 2010; see Section 2 for further references), PHs are well attested crosslinguistically, both in verbal and written registers. Seraku (2022a) defines PHs as in (1).

(1)   A PH is a dummy element with which a speaker/writer fills in the morpho-syntactic slot of a target expression when they are unable or unwilling to produce it.

Definition (1) is illustrated in (2)–(3).

(2)   [Naomi and Ken are flatmates. She wants to wash her clothes and sees a detergent on the shelf behind him. Naomi says to Ken.]
*Can you pass me that **whatchamacallit**?*

(3)   [The speaker knows that the hearer's mother is very old, and asks whether she is fine.]

mè¹	*caw⁴*	*ñang²*	*bò⁰*	***qan⁰-nan⁴***	*juu¹*	*tii⁴*
mother	2SG	still	not	thing-that	PCL	PCL

'Your mother's not yet PH (= senile), right?' (Enfield 2003: 108) [Lao][1]

In (2), the speaker is unable to recall the noun *detergent* and deploys the PH *whatchamacallit* instead. In (3), the speaker is unwilling to utter an expression denoting 'senile' because the use of such an expression may be impolite to the addressee. Such politeness consideration leads her to use the PH *qan-nan* (derived from *qan* 'thing' and *nan* 'that').

In (2)–(3), a PH substitutes for a target expression. As pointed out in Seraku (2022b), however, a speaker/writer does not always have in mind a specific expression or concept and uses a PH to refer to an arbitrary entity. In (4), *takovat* (< *takovam*, which derived from *takova* 'this kind of' and the verbaliser *-m*) refers to an arbitrary action.

(4)   [A Bulgarian professor working at a university in Japan talks with his colleague.]

V	*Japonija*	*prepodavatelite*	*sa*	*mnogo*	*zaeti,*	*zaštoto*	***takovat***	*v*
in	Japan	teacher.PL	COP	much	busy.PL	because	PH	in

kampusa,	***takovat***	*na*	*konferencii,*	***takovat***	*vkăšti*	*i*	*taka*	*natatăk.*
campus	PH	at	conference.PL	PH	at.home	and	so	onwards

'In Japan, professors are very busy because they PH on campus, PH at conferences, PH at home, and so on.' (Seraku 2022b: 446) [Bulgarian]

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[1] Minor amendments have been made in this and other examples for reasons of consistency. In (3), for instance, the free translation includes 'PH', which does not appear in the original example.

There are three occurrences of *takovat*. Here, let us focus on the first occurrence. The syntactic slot before *v kampusa* 'on campus' requires an action-denoting verb, but the speaker is not in the position to produce any concrete verb because she is currently making a general statement. She avoids producing a specific verb with *takovat*, and by doing so, refers to an arbitrary action that a professor usually does on campus. This arbitrary-referential use of *takovat* is akin to the use of English capital letters in a contract form, such as in ***A** and **B** agree on the terms and conditions stated below*, where the capital letters substitute for a proper name that potentially occupies the syntactic slot and refer to an arbitrary person, company, etc. (Seraku 2022b: 434).

Following Seraku (2022b), we hold that (4) exhibits an arbitrary-referential use of the PH *takovat* rather than an expression distinct from the PH *takovat*. That is, we construe PHs broadly, encompassing not only instances such as (2)–(3) but also (4). For this purpose, we complement definition (1) with the finding of Seraku (2022b):

(5)   A PH is a dummy element with which a speaker/writer fills in the morpho-syntactic slot of a target expression when they are unable or unwilling to produce it or when they intend to refer to an arbitrary entity.

This extended definition differentiates three types of PHs. For the sake of presentation, we call them a PH_A, a PH_P, and a PH_{ARB} (with their plural forms being PHs_A, PHs_P, and PHs_{ARB}):

(6)   Three types of PHs

    a.   The **PH_A** refers to a PH that displays **ability**-related functions: a communicator is unable to produce a target expression, as in (2).

    b.   The **PH_P** refers to a PH that displays **preference**-related functions: a communicator is unwilling to produce a target expression, as in (3).

    c.   The **PH_{ARB}** refers to a PH that displays **arbitrary reference** functions: a communicator intends to refer to an arbitrary entity, as in (4).

In Section 2, we will compare the extended definition in (5) with several extant definitions of PHs and explicate why (5) particularly suits the present study.

In this article, we explore a variety of PH forms that derived from a *wh*-word in three East Asian languages: Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin Chinese. As will be argued in Sections 3–5, the *wh*-derived PHs in these languages are unique in that unlike *whatchamacallit* (2), Lao *qan-nan* (3), and Bulgarian *takovat* (4), they are grammatically unstable. As an illustration, consider (7), where the doubled (or reduplicated) form of *dare* 'who', i.e. *dare~dare*, serves as a PH_A.

(7)   [This is part of a travel essay. The author is drinking with his friend, Hattori, in a restaurant. A middle-aged woman who works there talks to Hattori.]

Totsuzen, yo-nin-no   obasan-no   hito-ri-ga   Hattori-kun-o
suddenly four-CL-GEN middle.aged.woman-GEN one-CL-NOM Hattori-Mr-ACC
*yubisashi, "anta enka-kashu-no   **dare**~**dare**-ni niteiru-wane"-to*
point   you enka-singer-GEN PH~PH-DAT   resemble-FP-COMP
matashitemo geragera   warat-ta. Boku-wa na-o   iw-are-temo
again   uproariously smile-PST 1SG-TOP   name-ACC say-PASS-even.if
sono kashu-no kao-mo   wakara-nai-node pokantoshi-teiru-to   […]
that singer-GEN face-even know-NEG-because have.a.blank.look-IPFV-then
'Suddenly, one of the four middle-aged women pointed to Hattori and laughed out loud again, saying "You look like PH, an enka (= Japanese traditional ballad) singer".' I had a blank look because even when I heard the singer's name, I didn't even know the face of the singer.' (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH$_A$]

As is clear from *sono kashu-no kao-mo wakaranai* 'I don't even know the face of the singer', the author does not know the singer's name and resorts to *dare~dare*. In (7), if the doubled *dare~dare* is replaced with the non-doubled *dare*, the sentence is less acceptable. In other words, acceptability is significantly enhanced by means of doubling. We call this type of PHs 'grammatically unstable PHs'. They contrast with 'grammatically stable' cases such as *whatchamacallit*, which may be acceptably used in its own right (as long as the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic conditions are satisfied),[2] without any morpho-syntactic aid such as doubling.

Grammatically unstable PHs have been underdescribed in the literature. Here, we will reveal various ways in which the PH use of a *wh*-word is marginal (or unacceptable) but with its acceptability being improved by a morpho-syntactic operation. Before presenting the data, Section 2 reviews relevant previous studies. Sections 3–5 describe a wide range of *wh*-derived PHs in Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin, while Section 6 discusses some differences in usage between these three languages. By way of conclusion, Section 7 discusses implications and possible ideas for further research.

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2 For instance, *whatchamacallit* is generally used to substitute for a nominal expression. This is the case in (2), where the target expression is the noun *detergent*.

2 Previous studies

2.1 Definitions of placeholders

Since previous studies have put forward different (but partially overlapping) definitions of PHs, it is important to clarify our definition (5) against them.

First, there are notational variations. Several scholars label PHs differently, as in 'vague word' (Kaye 1990), 'nonsense word' (Crystal 1995), and 'dummy' (Hengeveld and Keizer 2011). Some other scholars use more specific terms such as 'placeholder noun' (Channell 1994) and 'noun substitute' (LeSourd 2003); these terms, however, are not appropriate when one talks about non-nominal forms such as the verbal PH *takovam* in (4).

Second, there are denotational variations, which are largely reduced to the narrower and the broader view of PHs. According to the broader view, PHs are construed in line with Seraku's (2022a) definition (1), more specifically in terms of a communicator's abilities and preferences. For example, Channell (1994: 162) states that PHs are used when a "speaker does not know/has forgotten name/noun" or a "speaker does not wish to use name/noun". Similarly, Jucker et al. (2003: 1750) summarise the motives for using PHs as follows: "[o]n the one hand, the speaker might not be able to refer to the intended item by name […] On the other hand, the speaker might know the name but prefer not to use it". Cheung (2015: 275) lists typical contexts where a PH is utilised properly and divide them into two types: those where "the speaker uses the *wh*-placeholder to substitute a word or an expression that he or she cannot immediately utter" and those where "the speaker knows the target word or expression but chooses to withhold it".

According to the narrower view, the term 'placeholder' is reserved for what we call PHs$_A$ (Amiridze et al. 2010; Hayashi and Yoon 2006). Hayashi and Yoon (2006: 489) survey demonstratives in several languages including Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin and point out their "placeholder use", where a demonstrative "is used to hold the place for a momentarily unavailable word". At the same time, they point out that some of such demonstratives display the "avoidance use" too, where speakers "use demonstratives as substitutes for more specific lexical items […] because they feel inhibited from saying them openly since an explicit mention of them can be impolite, face-threatening, offensive, etc." (ibid.: 501). The avoidance use here corresponds to PHs$_P$ in our classification.

All in all, definition (1) underlies what extant studies regard as the basic functions of PHs (or the forms used as PHs, if the narrower view is adopted). Recall that definition (5) is broader than definition (1) in including cases where a PH refers to an arbitrary entity. Although the issue of arbitrary reference has not been

addressed, except in Seraku (2022b), we include this point in our definition because, as will be shown in Sections 3–5, (i) PHs$_A$, PHs$_P$, and PHs$_{ARB}$ are all found in Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin and (ii) various morpho-syntactic operations remedy the acceptability of grammatically unstable PHs$_A$, PHs$_P$, and PHs$_{ARB}$ in these languages.

2.2 Functions of placeholders

In (6), PHs are classified into PHs$_A$, PHs$_P$, and PHs$_{ARB}$. In some cases, a PH has a single type of function. Thus, *whatchamacallit* is a PH$_A$, only related to the ability-related functions, and *you-know-what* is a PH$_P$, only associated with the preference-related functions (Enfield 2003: 107). In other cases, a PH is related to multiple types of functions. Estonian *see* (which is traced to a pronoun, a demonstrative, etc.) acts as a PH$_A$ as well as a PH$_P$ (Keevallik 2010). As we will see, the *wh*-derived PHs in Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin may serve as a PH$_A$, a PH$_P$, as well as a PH$_{ARB}$.

When a PH is employed for ability-related or preference-related reasons, there are various usage scenarios. A typical scenario for PHs$_A$ is (2), where the speaker fails to produce *detergent* due to memory lapse. In other scenarios, a speaker reading a passage aloud may encounter some illegible characters (Cheung 2015: 276). A typical scenario for PHs$_P$ is (3), where the speaker hesitates to utter a target form for reasons of politeness. In other situations, a speaker does not want to reveal their poor pronunciation (Channell 1994: 162) or feels reluctant to produce a socially sensitive term (e.g. a sexual term; see [8]). As will be illustrated shortly, the *wh*-derived PHs in Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin are also employed in a wide array of ability-related and preference-related situations.

Despite their usage-differences, what PHs$_A$, PHs$_P$, and PHs$_{ARB}$ all have in common is that they fill in a certain morpho-syntactic slot. Thus, *whatchamacallit* in (2) occupies the object NP slot, Lao *qan-nan* in (3) the nominal-predicate slot, and Bulgarian *takovat* in (4) the verbal slot. A PH may also occupy an adjectival, an adverbial, or even a clausal slot. A noteworthy case is *kua* in Ilocano (Austronesian), which may be used in any of these three types of slots (Rubino 1996: 657–659). This gap-filling property is essential because it fundamentally differentiates PHs from interjective fillers such as *uh* and *um*, the latter of which do not occupy a substantive morpho-syntactic slot. In our examples from Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin, *wh*-derived PHs only occupy a nominal slot.[3]

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3 *Wh*-derived PHs in Mandarin may occupy a non-nominal slot such as a verbal slot (Cheung 2015: 272). In the present article, we exclusively focus on nominal PHs.

2.3 Forms of placeholders

As can be seen in (2)–(4), various elements are recruited for PHs. Perhaps, the two most common derivational sources are clausal elements (e.g. *whatchama-callit* < *what you might call it*) (Vogel 2020: Appendix A) and demonstratives (Hayashi and Yoon 2006). Other prevalent sources are light nouns (e.g. 'thing'), indefinite pronouns, *wh*-words (Podlesskaya 2010: 12–13), and so on. As to the last category, *wh*-derived PHs are attested in Bikol (Austronesian; Fincke 1999: 260–261), Nahavaq (Austronesian; Dimock 2010), Udi/Agul (Caucasian; Ganenkov et al. 2010), and Papuan Malay (Kluge 2015: 316), as well as in Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin.

Japanese PHs have been described in a number of studies (Hamaguchi 2001; Hosoda 2002; Hayashi 2003; Hayashi and Yoon 2006; Kitano 1999; Seraku 2022a; Suga 2018; and see Seraku et al. [2021] for further references), but they only concern demonstrative-derived PHs. *Wh*-derived PHs are studied only in Sudo (2008, 2013), Kudo (2020), and Seraku (2022b). Similarly, in Korean, though demonstrative-derived PHs have been examined (Hayashi and Yoon 2006; Kim and Suh 2002; Suh 2000; Yoon 2003), *wh*-derived PHs have been largely neglected (Lee et al. 2017; Seraku 2022b). Among surveys on Mandarin PHs (Cheung 2015; Hayashi and Yoon 2006; Jin and Chen 2020; Lee et al. 2017; Yu and Wu 2015), Cheung (2015) analyses *wh*-derived PHs, but his data are not exhaustive in that he does not deal with doubled forms (see Section 5). In the ensuing sections, we will fill this gap by describing *wh*-derived PHs in these languages.

3 *Wh*-derived placeholders in Japanese

In Japanese, *nani* 'what' is productively used as a PH$_A$, a PH$_P$, or a PH$_{ARB}$ (Seraku 2022b).[4] The PH$_P$ *nani* is exemplified in (8).

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4 Japanese data were mainly collected from the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ; National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics). There are several reasons why we consulted a written corpus. First, whilst there are spoken Japanese corpora, their sizes are much smaller than that of the BCCWJ. Second, our BCCWJ data have a conversational flavour; they mostly come from dialogue parts in novels or are addressee-oriented. Third, Seraku (2022b) shows that PHs (at least, PHs$_P$ and PHs$_{ARB}$) are found in both spoken and written registers. Japanese examples are transcribed according to the Hepburn system, except that long vowels are rendered as *aa*, *ee*, *ii*, *oo*, and *uu*.

(8) [On a Q&A site, a woman has written about her boyfriend, who is often naked when he is at home. She asked how she could get him to put on clothes, and someone replies.]

Fuku-o   ki-nai-nara   kare-no   ie-ni-wa   ika-nai-to
clothes-ACC   wear-NEG-COND   3SG-GEN   house-ALL-TOP   go-NEG-COMP

danko   shuchoosu-bekidesu. […] ***Nani****-no toki-igai-wa*   […]
adamantly claim-should.HON   PH-GEN   time-except-TOP

ifuku-o   minimatot-temorau-shikaarimasen.
clothes-ACC   wear-BEN-have.to.HON

'You should insist that if he does not wear clothes, you will not visit his house. Except for PH (= intercourse), he has to wear clothes.' (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH_P]

The writer used *nani* presumably because he hesitated to produce a sexual term 'intercourse'. The PH_ARB *nani* is illustrated in (9).

(9) [The writer conveys that writing up a diary every day reduces his stress.]

Boku   jitsuwa   mainichi   nikki   kai-teru-ndesu.
1SG   in.fact   every.day   diary   write-IPFV-MM.HON

*Kyoo-wa   **nani**-ga at-ta-toka   **nanishi**-ta-toka **nani** tabe-ta-toka.*
today-TOP   PH-NOM   happen-PST-etc.   PH-PST-etc.   PH   eat-PST-etc.

'In fact, I write in a diary every day, like "A PH happened today", "I PH-ed", "I ate a PH", and so on.' (SNS post) [Japanese: PH_ARB]

The first *nani* in (9) refers to an arbitrary event, whilst the last refers to an arbitrary food. Also, *nanishi* (< *nanisuru*), derived from the nominal PH *nani* and the light verb *-suru* 'do', refers to an arbitrary action. These arbitrary references are crucial for explaining what kinds of topics the writer writes about in his diary.[5]

Since the PH use of *nani* 'what' is described in Seraku (2022b), we concentrate here on other *wh*-words: *dare* 'who', *itsu* 'when', and *doko* 'where'. In (10), *doko* refers to an arbitrary place. (This example also contains the PH_ARB *nani~nani*, for which see Seraku [2022b].)

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5 An anonymous reviewer suggested that it would be beneficial to clarify differences between PHs_ARB and indefinite pronouns. First, unlike indefinite pronouns, PHs_ARB may be verbal, as in *nanisuru* in (9). Second, the motive for using a PH_ARB is distinct from that for using an indefinite pronoun. In (9), the writer uses *nani* to fill in the subject slot of *at-* 'happen' and the object slot of *tabe-* 'eat' since he does not have in mind a concrete noun denoting an event or food. This filling-in process is something we do not see in the use of indefinite pronouns. Third, unlike indefinite pronouns, PHs_ARB usually appear in sentences describing a state-of-affairs that is spatio-temporally uninstantiated. In (9), the writer does not refer to a spatio-temporally instantiated 'eating' event.

(10)   [On a Q&A site, a beginner at PC asked where document files, once
created, should be saved on the PC. Someone replies to this
question.]

Jibun-no   pasokon-nara   dokonidemo   tsukut-tekudasai.   Tadashi […]
self-GEN   PC-COND   anywhere   create-please   but
*nani~nani-wa   **doko**-to   kime-teoi-tahoogayoi-desu-ne.*
PH~PH-TOP   PH-QUOT   establish-in.advance-had.better-HON-FP
'If you use your own PC, you can create a folder anywhere (and save a file
there). But you should establish your own rule like "I always put a PH (= file)
in a PH (= folder)." (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH_ARB]

The writer is giving the questioner a tip for managing files on a PC, and for the sake
of illustrating this tip, refers to an arbitrary folder by deploying *doko*.

Whilst (10) is fully acceptable, the PH use of *dare*, *itsu*, or *doko* is not fully
acceptable in many other cases. In what follows, we will illustrate such cases,
revealing two types of morpho-syntactic operations to enhance the acceptability of
a PH form: doubling and combinations with a non-*wh* element.

3.1 Doubling

Our BCCWJ search[6] detects 50 clear occurrences of the doubled form *dare~dare* (cf.
dare 'who') that may be seen as a PH. Since an example of the PH_A *dare~dare* has
already been given in (7), we here present an example of the PH_ARB *dare~dare* in
(11).

(11)   [On a Q&A site, someone asked about tips for home buying. Someone else
replies.]

Ginkooman-kara osusume-no   gyoosha-o   kiki sono gyoosha-e
banker-from   recommendation-GEN company-ACC hear that company-ALL
*iki **dare**~**dare**-san-no shookai-de   ki-mashi-ta-tte   it-te*
go   PH~PH-Mr-GEN   introduction-INS come-HON-PST-COMP say-CVB
sessuru-to   […]   isshookenmee yat-tekureru-to   omoi-masu-yo.
address-COND   hard   do-BEN-COMP   think-HON-FP
'If you ask a banker about their recommended company and go there
saying "I came here since Mr./Ms. PH referred me to you.", the person in
charge will do their best for you, I suppose.' (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH_ARB]

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6 Usually, *dare* 'who' is notated in kanji (誰), and *doko* 'where' and *itsu* 'when' in hiragana (どこ,
いつ). We thus searched the BCCWJ for *dare~dare* in kanji and *doko~doko* and *itsu~itsu* in
hiragana.

The speaker uses *dare~dare* to refer to an arbitrary banker. In (11), replacement of *dare~dare* with *dare* renders the sentence less acceptable though not completely unacceptable. That is, doubling stabilises the PH$_{ARB}$ use of *dare*.

The BCCWJ contains 21 PH cases of *itsu~itsu* (cf. *itsu* 'when') and 49 PH cases of *doko~doko* (cf. *doko* 'where'). For reasons of space, we only present an example of *itsu~itsu*.

(12) [In this interview article, the speaker, the governor of a prefecture, explains the situation of nuclear power generations in the 1980–1990s.]
93-nen-ni-wa,   Tooden-kara   shiyoozumi kaku-nennryoo-o   hokansuru
93-year-in-TOP T.E.P.C.-from used   nuclear-fuel-ACC   store
puuru-o   genpatsu-no   koonai-ni   zoosetsus-ase-tekure-to
pool-ACC nuclear.power-plant-GEN premises-in expand-PASS-BEN-COMP
*iw-are,   kuni-ga   **itsu**~**itsu**   mochidasu-to   hoshoosuru-koto-o*
say-PASS nation-NOM   PH~PH   carry.out-COMP   promise-NMNZ-ACC
jooken-ni   mitome-mashi-ta
condition-at approve-HON-PST
'In 1993, Tokyo Electric Power Company asked us to expand the pools for used nuclear fuels in the premises of the power plant. We approved it on condition that the Japanese government would carry them out in PH (= year).' (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH$_A$/PH$_P$]

The speaker may not have remembered the exact date when spent nuclear fuels were promised to be extracted from the storage pools, or he may have thought that such exact information was not important for the current topic of conversation. That is, *itsu~itsu* in (12) may be viewed as a PH$_A$ or a PH$_P$, depending on the interpretation. If *itsu~itsu* is replaced with *itsu* in (12), the sentence becomes unacceptable, which indicates that doubling stabilises the PH$_A$/PH$_P$ use of *itsu*.

The doubled forms such as *dare~dare*, *doko~doko*, and *itsu~itsu* are treated in Sudo (2008, 2013) and Kudo (2020). Sudo offers a formal-semantic analysis of the doubled forms and their quantificational properties, whereas Kudo considers the doubled forms in connection with language change. In these studies, however, doubling is not seen as a remedial operation to stabilise the PH use of a *wh*-word.

3.2 Combinations with a non-*wh* element

Doubling is a systematic operation in that it applies to *dare*, *doko*, and *itsu* across the board. By contrast, as will be pointed out below, combinations with a non-*wh* element are idiosyncratic: (i) they only apply to *dare* and *doko*, and (ii) there are only a few types of combined elements.

The first type of combined element is a medial series of demonstratives: *sore* 'that' and *soko* 'there'.[7] We found the composite forms *daresore* (cf. *dare* 'who') and *dokosoko* (cf. *doko* 'where'). The BCCWJ has 48 cases of *daresore* and 62 of *dokosoko*. In (13), *daresore* and *dokosoko* appear as PHs_ARB.

(13)   [This is part of an essay. The author writes that Japanese people often admire those who were brought up well.]

　　　　Sodachi-no　　*yosa-wa*　　*nihonjin-no*　　　　*akogare-dearu.*
　　　　upbringing-GEN　quality-TOP　Japanese.poeple-GEN　admiration-COP

　　　　Hito-no　　*uwasa banashi-no toki-demo* "**Daresore**-san-wa o-umare-ga*
　　　　person-GEN　gossip story-GEN　time-even "PH-Mr-TOP　　　HON-birth-NOM

　　　　dokosoko-no de-de"-to　　　*kiku-to,*　　"A, dooride"-toiu koto-ni nari*
　　　　PH-GEN　　　　from-COP"-COMP　hear-COND　"ah that's.why"-*like thing-to become*

　　　　sono hito-no　　*hyooka-ga*　　*kyuuni*　　*kawat-tarisuru koto-ga*
　　　　that　person-GEN　judgement-NOM　suddenly　change-etc.　　thing-NOM

　　　　yoku　　*aru.*
　　　　often　exist

　　　　'Even when one gossips about something, the following thing often happens: when one hears that "Mr. PH comes from PH," he says something like "Ah, that's why" and suddenly admires the person.' (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH_ARB]

The writer elaborates on her claim (i.e. 'Japanese people often admire those who were brought up well.') by providing a hypothetical exchange. In this exchange, the writer needs to talk about a person and their birthplace without specifying them; for this purpose, she uses *daresore* and *dokosoko*. In (13), replacement of *daresore* with *dare* lowers the acceptability of the sentence, whilst replacement of *dokosoko* with *doko* does not significantly alter acceptability.

These composite forms may also act as a PH_A or a PH_P. Consider (14):

(14)   [In this book, the writer writes about the film director, Ozu, stating that he went to a very strict junior high school.]

　　　　Ozu-no　　*Taishoo*　　*nana-nen-no*　　*nikki-de-mo*　　**daresore**-ga*
　　　　Ozu-GEN　Taishoo　seven-year-GEN　diary-LOC-also　　PH-NOM

　　　　teegakuninat-ta,　　　　　*aruiwa taigakuninat-ta-to-no*
　　　　get.suspended.from.school-PST　or　　　get.expelled.from.school-PST-COMP-GEN

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7 The Japanese demonstratives are tripartite, traditionally classified into a proximal series (e.g. *kore* 'this', *koko* 'here'), a medial series (e.g. *sore* 'that', *soko* 'there'), and a distal series (e.g. *are* 'that', *asoko* 'there'). See Takubo (2020) for recent approaches to Japanese demonstratives.

kijutsu-o　　　　　　*mikakeru.*
description-ACC　　　　see
'In the entry of Ozu's diary for 1918 (Taishoo 7), too, he wrote that PH got suspended or expelled from school.' (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH$_A$/PH$_P$]

The writer read the diary of Ozu, but it seems they do not recall its details, including the name of the student who got suspended or expelled from school. Or, even if the writer recalls the student's name, they may have thought that such details are not relevant. (14) is less acceptable if *daresore* is replaced with *dare*.

The second type of combined item is *toka*, which is translated into 'etc.' or 'something like that'. The BCCWJ has only three clear instances of *daretoka*, one of which is (15).

(15)　　[This is a scene from a novel. A male working at a swimming school had an affair with one of his students.]
　　　　Soitsu　　[…]　*sukuuru-ni*　*ki-tei-ta*　　　*okusan-to*
　　　　that.guy　　　　school-ALL　come-IPFV-PST　married.woman-COM
　　　　renai-shi-te-ta-rashii-nda　[…]　*Shimao-ga*　*hait-te-ta*
　　　　love-do-IPFV-PST-HSY-MM　　　　　Shimao-NOM　enter-IPFV-PST
　　　　kansha-no　　　　　　　　**daretoka**-ga　*sono*　*suimingu-sukuuru-ni*
　　　　government.facility-GEN　PH-NOM　　　　that　swimming-school-ALL
　　　　it-te-te,　　　　*uwasa-ga*　　　*tat-te-ta-nda-sooda*.
　　　　go-IPFV-CVB　　rumour-NOM　　circulate-IPFV-PST-MM-HSY
　　　　'I heard that the guy was having an affair with a married woman who regularly came to the swimming school. According to PH who lived in the same government facility as Shimao and regularly went to the school, the rumour was circulating in the school.' (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH$_A$/PH$_P$]

The speaker may not know the name of the person who lived in the same government facility as Shimao, or perhaps cannot recall the person's name. Alternatively, the speaker recalls the name but thought that it did not count as essential information, compared with the more important information that the guy had an affair with his student. In (15), the combination with *toka* is indispensable because replacement of *daretoka* with *dare* results in unacceptability.

The BCCWJ contains three PH cases of *dokotoka*. Consider first (16):

(16)　　[This is part of the Diet Record. In the excerpt, a politician points out a disadvantage of classifying inmates into groups (e.g. a group of sexual offenders, a group of alcoholics) in a prison and educating each group separately.]
　　　　Mata　　**dokotoka**-*keemusho-shusshin-no*　　*hito-wa*
　　　　further　　PH-prison-from-GEN　　　　　　　　person-TOP
　　　　seehanzaisha-da-zo-toiuyoona
　　　　sexual.criminal-COP-FP-like

> *retteru-o   har-are-ru-toiuyoona demeritto-mo aru-to   omoi-masu.*
> label-ACC attach-PASS-PFV-like   demerit-also exist-COMP think-HON
> 'Further, I think there is also a demerit, such as the one that a person
> discharged from the PH-prison is labelled as a sexual criminal.' (BCCWJ)
> [Japanese: PH$_{ARB}$]

The speaker is talking about a disadvantage of classifying inmates in terms of crime types, and illustrates this opinion with a hypothetical statement, where they refer to an arbitrary prison. (16) is unacceptable with the bare form *doko*.

In (17), *dokotoka* may be regarded as a PH$_A$ or a PH$_P$.

(17)   [This is a scene from a novel. The second son of a married couple came to see them and told them that his daughter would take part in a game of mini basketball.]

> *Ashita,*   **dokotoka**-*no*   *shoogakkoo-de*   *minibasuketto-no*
> tomorrow   PH-GEN   elementary.school-LOC   mini.basketball-GEN
> *shiai-ga*   *aru-toiu.*
> game-NOM   exist-HSY
> 'According to (our son), there will be a game of mini basketball in an
> elementary school of PH (= area) tomorrow.' (BCCWJ) [Japanese: PH$_A$/PH$_P$]

Note that the speaker is reporting what he heard from his son. It is likely that his son told him about the area where the school is situated, but he may have forgotten it, or even if he remembers it, he may have thought that it is not worth mentioning. In (17), use of *toka* is essential; if *doko* is used on its own, the sentence is unacceptable.

3.3 Summary

This section has considered the PH uses of three *wh*-words: *dare* 'who', *doko* 'where', and *itsu* 'when'. Unlike *nani* 'what' in (8)–(9), the PH uses of these *wh*-words are generally marginal or unacceptable. Whilst it is a residual issue to spell out what factors govern their acceptability patterns,[8] we have shown that when the PH use of a *wh*-word is not fully acceptable, a certain morpho-syntactic operation may improve the acceptability, as delineated in Table 1.

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8 For instance, one may suspect that grammatical relations (e.g. subject, object) may be such a factor. This idea, however, cannot deal with (14)–(15). In both examples, the PH functions as a subject, but the acceptability of the two sentences varies when the bare *wh*-word *dare* is involved.

Table 1: Remedial morpho-syntactic operations in Japanese.

	Doubling	Comb. with a demonstrative	Comb. with *toka* 'etc.'
dare 'who'	*dare~dare*	*daresore* (cf. *sore* 'that')	*daretoka*
doko 'where'	*doko~doko*	*dokosoko* (cf. *soko* 'there')	*dokotoka*
itsu 'when'	*itsu~itsu*	unobserved in the BCCWJ	unobserved in the BCCWJ

4 *Wh*-derived placeholders in Korean

As argued in Section 3, the PH use of Japanese *wh*-words other than *nani* 'what' is limited. In Korean, *wh*-words are more freely used as PHs. Here, we focus on *nwukwu* 'who', *mwe* 'what', *eti* 'where', and *encey* 'when'.[9] Consider (18) for the PH$_\text{P}$ *mwe*.

(18)   [In this public monologue, the speaker talks about an ideal form of
        marriage, saying that a one-night stand is not something recommended.]
        Otakata   kulehkey manna-n sik-ulo ha-nun kes-i
        passing.by   like.that meet-ATT way-INS do-ATT NMLZ-NOM
        ilsicekin   pwulcangnan-un   toyl.swu.issko,   mwe … , kwannungcekin
        temporary one.night.stand-TOP can.become.CVB well   sensual
        ***mwe**-nun cakuk-un   toyl.swu.issul-ci   molla-to,   kyelkho*
        PH-TOP   stimulius-TOP can.become-whether don't.know-but never.NPI
        keki-eyse   cengsincekin   mancokk-kaci   swupanha-nun
        there-from mental   satisfaction-till   come.with-ATT
        sengcekin   khwaylak-i   o-ci.anh-supnita.
        sexual   pleasure-NOM   come-NEG-HON
        'Having a sexual relationship with someone you just met may be a
        one-night stand, and well…, you may be stimulated by the sensual PH
        (= sex), but you will never be mentally satisfied with it.' (Yonsei
        Corpus) [Korean: PH$_\text{P}$]

The speaker talks about intercourse and seems to have produced *mwe* to mask a sexual term. Note that *mwe* is marked with the topic particle -*nun*. In Korean, *wh*-words cannot be topic-marked in general (except for rhetorical questions; see Jung [2017]). It is thus clear that *mwe* does not act as an interrogative *wh*-word here.

In (19), *encey* 'when' is exploited as a PH$_\text{A}$ or a PH$_\text{P}$.

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9 Korean data were collected from the Sejong Corpus (National Institute of Korean Language) and the Yonsei Corpus (Yonsei University). Korean examples are transcribed according to the Yale system.

(19)   [This is a scene from a novel. People on a swaying ship are overwhelmed
         by the fear of capsizing.]
         Seykyey choytay-uy hohwa yekayksen-to   chimmolha-nun tey-nun
         world   biggest-GEN luxury cruise.ship-even sink-ATT   NMLZ-TOP
         pyel-swu-ka   eps-ess-ta.   […] amwuli
         extraordinary-means-NOM don't.exist-PST-DECL   no.matter.how
         ancenhan pay-laciman… ha-nun uykwusim-i meli-lul   naymi-nun
         safe   ship-but   say-ATT doubt-NOM   head-ACC protrude-ATT
         kes-i-ess-ta.   siktang   aph-ul   cina-ca   cwupang salam-i
         MNLZ-NOM-PST-DECL restaurant front-ACC pass.by-as kitchen   person-NOM
         *cen-ey   **encey**-nun pay-ka   40-to-na   kiwule-cy-ess-nun tey.to*
         before-at PH-TOP   ship-NOM 40-degree-even tilt-become-PST-ATT but
         kkuttek-i   eps-ess-ta-ko   salam-tul-ul ansimsikhy-ess-ta.
         bobbing-NOM don't.exist-PST-DECL-COMP person-PL-ACC relieve-PST-DECL
         'Even the biggest cruise ship could not avoid sinking. […] I couldn't help
         thinking like "No matter how safe a ship is, (it may sink)." Passing by a
         restaurant, I saw a person in the galley reassuring people by saying that in
         the past, in PH (= time), there was no problem even when a ship tilted by 40
         degrees.' (Yonsei Corpus) [Korean: PH$_A$/PH$_P$]

It is probable that the person working in the galley mentioned a specific year (or
perhaps month or date) when the ship listed, but the speaker may not have
remembered the exact year or may have thought that this information is less
important than the information that the ship's listing did not result in a disaster.

The Korean *wh*-words *nwukwu* 'who', *mwe* 'what', *eti* 'where', and *encey* 'when'
may also be used as PHs$_{ARB}$. Consider (20) for the PH$_{ARB}$ *encey* and the PH$_{ARB}$ *nwukwu*.

(20)   [This is a scene from a novel. A priest is reciting a Buddhist sutra in a
         temple, while elderly females who gathered there are having a chat.]
         Kulikon iyaki-ka ttal,   myenuli-ka   hay-cwu-n
         then   talk-NOM daughter daughter.in.law-NOM do-BEN-ATT
         os   calang, phaymwul calang-ulo olmkyeka-nta. Kuliko tto
         clothes brag   jewellery brag-to   move-DECL   and   again
         ***encey**-nun **nwukwu** chilswun   canchi,*
         PH-TOP   PH   celebration.of.70th.birthday   party
         ***nwukwu** soncamyenuli   po-nun nal, noinney-tul-uy*
         PH   granddaughter.in.law see-ATT day elderly.person-PL-GEN
         hwacey-nun   mwukwungmwucinhata.
         TOPIC-TOP   limitless

'Then, they talk about their daughters, brag about the clothes that their daughters-in-law bought for them, and talk about their jewellery. And, again, they talk about the PH (= date) of the party to celebrate the 70th birthday of PH (= person), and they say that they will see the granddaughter-in-law of PH (= person). The topics of conversations of the elders are limitless.' (Yonsei Corpus) [Korean: PH$_{ARB}$]

The writer explains in general terms what kinds of topics elderly people usually talk about. Since the writer does not have in mind any specific elderly people, neither *encey* nor *nwukwu* is used to refer to a specific individual.

In the literature of Korean linguistics and Korean dictionaries, it has been well-known that *wh*-words are used for non-interrogative purposes (see I [2017]). (21)–(22) are from *The Standard Korean Language Dictionary* (National Institute of Korean Language); they were translated with glosses by the authors of the present article.[10]

(21)　**Nwukwu-lul**　　*manna-nulako*　　*com*　　*nuc-ess-e.*
　　　PH-ACC　　　　meet-because　　a.bit　　late-PST-IMT
　　　'I was late because I met PH (= person)' [Korean: PH$_P$/PH$_{ARB}$]

(22)　**Eti**　　*ka-pol*　　*tey-ka*　　　*i-ss-ta.*
　　　PH　　go-see　　place-NOM　　exist-PRS-DECL
　　　'I need to go to PH (= place).' [Korean: PH$_P$/PH$_{ARB}$]

The *wh*-words in (21)–(22) may be interpreted as a PH$_P$ or a PH$_{ARB}$ depending on context. For example, in (22), *eti* is seen as a PH$_P$ if we assume that the speaker presumes that the hearer would not know the place name even if they uttered it; *eti* is seen as a PH$_{ARB}$ if we assume that they in fact do not need to go anywhere but says (22) to decline the hearer's invitation to lunch. In this way, the interpretation of a PH crucially requires contextual information, but such a context-sensitive analysis has not yet been provided in the dictionary or previous studies in the tradition of Korean linguistics. It is, therefore, fair to say that Korean *wh*-derived PHs have not been sufficiently described.

As argued in Section 3, Japanese features doubling and combinations with a non-*wh* item as remedial operations to stabilise the PH use of *wh*-words. Of these two types of operations, doubling is attested in Korean, too. Consider (23):

(23)　[This is part of a magazine article. A prosecutor is expressing his opinion about what will happen if the police are granted independent investigatory power.]

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10 The dictionary is available at https://stdict.korean.go.kr/main/main.do (accessed 17 June 2022). Our interpretations of these examples are partially based on a meticulous comment from one of the anonymous reviewers.

> *Han socang kemsa-nun* "[…] *kyengchalsecang-eykey cinachin*
> a   chief prosecutor-TOP   police.chief-to   excessive
> *kwenhan-i cipcwung-toyn-ta. Kyengchal cocik-uy   kwuco.sang*
> power-NOM focus-become-DECL police   organisation-GEN structurally
> *secang-i* '***nwukwu~nwukwu****-lul senchehay cwu-la'-ko   cisiha-myen*
> chief-NOM PH~PH-ACC   go.easy   BEN-IMP-COMP order-COND
> *haytang   cikwen-i kepwuha-ci.moshal   kes-i-ta.   […]"-ko*
> in.question staff-NOM refuse-cannot   NMLZ-COP-DECL […]"-COM
> *moksoli-lul   nophy-ess-ta.*
> voice-ACC   raise-PST-DECL
> 'A chief prosecutor raised his voice, saying "[…] Power is overly
> concentrated in the chief of a police station. Given the structure of the police
> organisation, if the chief orders to his staff "Go easy with (= commute) the
> crime of PH (= person)," they will not be able to refuse.".' (Sejong Corpus)
> [Korean: PH$_{ARB}$]

The point of this excerpt is that authority is overly concentrated in the chief of a
police station, and this general point is illustrated with the hypothetical utterance
including *nwukwu~nwukwu*. Therefore, *nwukwu~nwukwu* does not refer to any
specific individual. When *nwukwu~nwukwu* is replaced with *nwukwu*, (23) is less
acceptable with the PH$_{ARB}$ reading.[11] Thus, doubling is an essential operation to
stabilise the PH$_{ARB}$ use of *nwukwu* here.[12]

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11 An anonymous reviewer pointed out that the non-doubled form *nwukwu* is acceptable in (23).
The second author of this article, a native speaker of Korean, also feels that the clause *secang-i*
'***nwukwu****-lul senchehay cwu-la'-ko cisiha-myen* 'if the chief orders to his staff "Go easy with the
crime of PH"' itself is acceptable, but *nwukwu* in this clause seems to be more naturally interpreted
to refer to a specific person, rather than an arbitrary person. We thus hold that (23) is less
acceptable (if not unacceptable) with the PH$_{ARB}$ reading when *nwukwu* is involved. We consulted
three Korean speakers (linguists), and they largely agreed with these points.
12 In Korean, doubling of a *wh*-word may lead to a *wh*-question with a multiple-entity reading. In
(i), the speaker presupposes that more than one person came to the meeting.

(i)   [A director, who did not attend a meeting, asks his subordinate.]
         *Ecey   hoyuy-ey   **nwukwu   nwukwu**   wa-ss-e?*
         yesterday meeting-to who   who   come-PST-IMT
         'Who came to the meeting yesterday?' [Korean]

In (i), *nwukwu nwukwu* is not treated as a PH because it triggers a *wh*-interpretation. In Japanese,
this use of *wh*-words is possible only in some dialects (Kudo 2020: 30). In Mandarin, the multiple-
entity interpretation of a *wh*-question is not possible, according to the third author (born in
Nanjing) of the present article.

The same point is made with *eti~eti* (cf. *eti* 'where') in (24) and *mwe~mwe* (cf. *mwe* 'what') in (25). ([24] contains the PH_ARB *mwe*, but our concern is the doubled form *eti~eti*.)

(24)　　[This is part of the transcription of a radio programme, where the speaker is questioning the utility of automated answering services for the customers.]

      Sinyongkhatu-ey mwe com mwunuyha-lyeko cenhwa-lul　kel-myen
      credit.card-to　PH　a.bit　ask-intend　telephone-ACC　call-COND
      salam-i　nao-nun　key　ani-la　umak-kwa　hamkkey
      person-NOM　come.out-ATT　NMLZ.COP　NEG-CVB　music-with　together
      annay-nokum-i　hullenao-pnita. […] *annyenghasipnikka cehuy*
      information-record-NOM　come.out-HON　how.are.you.HON　1PL
      eti~**eti**-*nun chincelhan sepisu-lo kokayk　yelepwun-kkey*
      PH~PH-TOP　considerate service-INS customer everyone-to
      potap-khoca　nolyekhako.isssupnita.
      respond-intend　make.an.effort.HON
      'When we call a credit card company to ask about PH (= thing), a person does not take up the call but a recorded message is played, together with music. "How are you? We PH (= company name) are making an effort to be considerate in our service to customers.".' (Sejong Corpus) [Korean: PH_ARB]

(25)　　[This is part of a magazine article. The writer is disgusted with those Koreans who urge the necessity of internationalising Korea.]

      Oykwuk-eyse　com sal-ten　salam, calnan.chekhanun ilpwu
      foreign.country-in a.bit live-PST.ATT person pretentious　part
      kwukmin-un "*Hankwuk-un* **mwe**~**mwe** *ttaymwuney an.toynta*"-*ko*
      citizen-TOP "Korea-TOP　PH~PH　because.of not.good"-COMP
      ha-nta. "*Hankwukin-un ilen nappun cem-i　iss-ta*"-*ko-to*
      say-DECL "Koreans-TOP　this bad　point-NOM exist-DECL"-COMP-also
      ha-nta.
      say-DECL
      'Those Koreans who lived abroad for a while or some pretentious people in Korea say "Korea is not good because of PH." They also say "The Koreans are wrong in such-and-such respects.".' (Yonsei Corpus) [Korean: PH_ARB]

(24) is rendered unacceptable with the non-doubled form *eti*. As for (25), it becomes less acceptable with the non-doubled form *mwe*. Thus, as in the case of Japanese, doubling may serve as a remedial operation for *wh*-derived PHs_ARB in Korean.

Doubling is also observed for PHs_P. Consider (26) for *mwe~mwe* (cf. *mwe* 'what').

(26)　　[This is a scene from a novel. They are talking about a certain Korean company.]

Hayoy　　　　*kensel-ul*　　　*ha-nuntey, yenge-lo hoysa*　　*ilum-i*
foreign.country construction-ACC do-CONN　 English-INS company name-NOM
"*Kholia* **mwe**~**mwe**" *kulay-ss-ketun. Kulenikka ceccok-eyse mwusun*
"Korea PH~PH"　　　 like.that-PST-FP therefore there-at　　well
kwukyeng　*kiepchey*　　*kathun*　*kes-ulo*　　　*ala-ss-na.pwa.*
state.run　　enterprise　 like　　 thing-as　　think-PST-seem
'When (the company) ran a construction business abroad, its English company name was "Korea-PH." So, it seems it was seen as something like a state-run enterprise.' (Yonsei Corpus) [Korean: PH_P]

It is highly likely that the writer knows the exact name of the company. But what matters in the present context is that the company's name includes *Korea*, and the remaining part of the name is unimportant. This seems to be why *mwe~mwe* was used as a PH_P. (26) becomes less acceptable if *mwe~mwe* is replaced with *mwe*.[13] As far as this example is concerned, then, doubling stabilises the PH use of *mwe*.

In other cases, however, doubling does not serve as a remedial operation. Consider (27).

(27)　　[This is a scene from a novel. A girl was made to live separately from her parents, and the reason for this is being revealed.]

Ku-tul-i　*il-ul*　　　*peli-nun*　　*hyencang-ul tongney ai-tul-eykey*
3-PL-NOM　 thing-ACC　do-ATT　　 scene-ACC　town　　 child-PL-to
tulkhi-n　　　　 *moyang-iese*　　　　 *encey-pwuthe-inka tongney*
be.found.out-ATT appearance-because.of when-from-wonder　town
yekiceki-eyse　　**nwukwu**~**nwukwu**-*nun*　　**nwukwu**~**nwukwu**-*hako*
everywhere-at　　PH~PH-TOP　　　　　　　PH~PH-with
eti-se mwel hay-ss-ta-nun nakse-ka　　*nathana-ki.sicakhay-ss-ko,* *kot*
PH-at PH.ACC do-PST-DECL-ATT doodle-NOM appear-start-PST-CVB　　soon
on　　*tongney-lo somwun-i*　　*phecy-e*　　*kunye-uy pwumo-nun*
every　town-to　　rumour-NOM spread-CVB 3SG-GEN　parents-TOP

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13 In Korean, if a company name starts with 'Korea', it is usually followed by two-syllable (or more-than-two-syllable) words, as in *hankwuk unhayng* 'Korea bank' (= 'Bank of Korea') and *hankwuk ilpo* 'Korea daily report' (= 'The Korea Times'). This seems to partly account for why *mwe~mwe*, a two-syllable element, sounds more natural than *mwe* in (26). In fact, (26) remains reasonably acceptable even when *mwe~mwe* is replaced with *mwe*, if *mwe* is lengthened (as if it stood as a two-syllable word).

te.isang   changphihay-se   pethi-ci.mosha-ko ttal-ul
any.more.NPI be.embarrased-CVB bear-cannot-CVB   daughter-ACC
Gwangneung-ey   iss-nun   cakun   imo-eykey   ka-se
Gwangneung-in   exist-ATT little maternal.aunt-to go-CVB
sal-key   hayyahay-ss-ta.
live-CAUS   must-PST-DECL
'The scene where they did a (sexual) thing seemed to come to light to the
children in the town, and at some point, doodles started to appear
everywhere in their neighbourhood, saying PH (= person) did a PH (= thing)
with PH (= person). And soon after, the rumour about them spread to every
neighbourhood. Her parents were so embarrassed that they had no choice
but to make her live with her aunt in Gwangneung.' (Sejong Corpus)
[Korean: PH_P]

There are two occurrences of *nwukwu~nwukwu* (cf. *nwukwu* 'who'); one refers to a
female (i.e. 'daughter'), and the other to her boyfriend. (27) remains acceptable
even when the doubled form is replaced with its non-doubled version *nwukwu*.
That is, *nwukwu* in (27) may act as a PH_P on its own without the aid of doubling.

The same point is illustrated in (28), which involves *eti~eti* (cf. *eti* 'where').

(28)   [This is a scene from a novel. A man is speaking of his wife.]
         Anay-nun   wul-taka   wus-ess-ta.
         wife-TOP   cry-and.then   laugh-PST-DECL
         *Wul-taka   wus-umyen   **eti~eti**-ey   thel   na-nta-ten.tey.*
         cry-and.then   laugh-COND   PH~PH-at   hair   grow-DECL-HSY.CONN
         'My wife cried and then laughed. (The old saying says) "if you cry and then
         laugh soon, hair grows on a PH (= place)," though.' (Sejong Corpus)
         [Korean: PH_P]

In Korean, there is an old saying: 'If you cry and then laugh soon, hair grows on
your buttocks.' This saying is mockingly uttered to those who have emotional ups
and downs. As the buttocks are a socially sensitive part of the body, the writer
avoids mentioning it. It makes no difference to the acceptability of (28) whether
eti~eti is replaced with *eti* or not. It is at present not clear what conditions affect the
PH use of a *wh*-word (see footnote 13), but in some cases, a bare *wh*-word cannot act
as an acceptable PH and requires doubling as a remedial operation.

In sum, the preceding discussion has argued for the following points:

– *Nwukwu* 'who', *mwe* 'what', *eti* 'where', and *encey* 'when' may act as a PH_A, a
  PH_P, or a PH_ARB on their own, more freely than the Japanese counterparts
  (except for *nani* 'what').

- In some cases, the PH uses of these Korean *wh*-words are marginal or illegitimate and need to be stabilised by the doubling operation.
- Combinations with a non-*wh* item (e.g. demonstrative), which serve as a remedial operation for Japanese *wh*-derived PHs (except for *nani* 'what'), are not attested in Korean.

5 *Wh*-derived placeholders in Mandarin

As illustrated in Cheung (2015), Mandarin features various *wh*-derived PHs, such as *shenme* (< 'what') in (29). (Chinese characters are transcribed in pinyin.)

(29)	*Wo*	*gang*	*guandiao-le*	***na***	(***ge***)	***shenme***	*le.*
	I	just	turn.off-PFV	DEM	(CL)	PH	FP

'I just turned off that PH (= router).' (Cheung 2015: 272) [Mandarin: PH$_A$]

In Mandarin, the PH use of a *wh*-word is generally more acceptable when it combines with the demonstrative *na* 'that' (and optionally the general classifier *ge*).[14] In (29), the PH sequence *na ge shenme* substitutes for a word meaning 'router', which temporally eludes the speaker.

What has not been discussed in Cheung (2015) and other studies (Hayashi and Yoon 2006; Jin and Chen 2020; Lee et al. 2017; Yu and Wu 2015) is that Mandarin *wh*-derived PHs may be doubled.[15] In this section, we show that the doubled forms are also grammatically unstable and need to combine with the demonstrative *na* (and optionally with the classifier *ge*). To this end, we carried out a questionnaire survey, asking 29 participants to judge whether *shei~shei* (cf. 'who') and *shenme~shenme* (cf. 'what') are acceptable on their own or need to be supplemented by

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14 The Mandarin demonstratives are dichotomous, involving the proximal *zhe* 'this' (and its plural form *zhexie* 'these') and the distal *na* 'that' (and its plural form *naxie* 'those') (Wang 1944: 34–59). For a recent account of Mandarin demonstratives, see Lin (2020: Ch. 4–5).

15 Cheung (2015: 305–306) briefly notes that Mandarin *wh*-derived forms may be doubled, but all his examples, such as (i) below (where *nali* derived from 'where'), are most naturally construed as cases of PHs$_{ARB}$.

(i)	*Meimei*	*rang-zhe*	*yao*	*qu*	***nali~nali***	*guangjie.*
	sister	demand-PROG	want	go	PH~PH	shopping

'My sister keeps demanding that she wants to go shopping here and there.' (Cheung 2015: 305) [Mandarin: PH$_{ARB}$]

According to Cheung, doubled forms in examples like (i) are acceptable on their own; in fact, their acceptability is lowered if they combine with *na* or *ge*. Since our primary interest lies in grammatically unstable forms and remedial operations, we do not analyse the doubled *wh*-derived PHs$_{ARB}$ such as (i) above.

na and/or *ge*.[16] The types of a PH sequence concerning us here, therefore, are as follows:

- *na + ge + wh-wh*: *na ge shei~shei, na ge shenme~shenme*
- *na + wh-wh*: *na shei~shei, na shenme~shenme*
- *ge + wh-wh*: *ge shei~shei, ge shenme~shenme*
- *wh-wh*: *shei~shei, shenme~shenme*

It should be noted that the doubling operation here is not seen as a remedial operation because all of the acceptable examples to be presented below remain acceptable when the doubled PH form is replaced with its non-doubled counterpart.

5.1 *Shei~shei*

We start with *shei~shei* (cf. *shei* 'who'). The participants were presented with the three sets of data given in (30)–(32) and asked to judge whether each sentence is acceptable.[17]

(30) a. *Louxia*   **na**   **ge**   *shei~shei*   *lai*   *le.*
          downstairs   DEM   CL   PH~PH   come   ASP
          'PH (e.g. = the neighbour) came downstairs.' [Mandarin: PH$_A$/PH$_P$]

      b. *Louxia*   **na**   *shei~shei*   *lai*   *le.*

      c. *Louxia*   **ge**   *shei~shei*   *lai*   *le.*

      d. *Louxia*   *shei~shei*   *lai*   *le.*

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16 We searched the CCL corpus (Center for Chinese Linguistics at Beijing University) but found only a few relevant examples. (The corpus contains only two clear cases of the PH sequence *na ge shei~shei* and only four clear cases of the PH sequence *na ge shenme~shenme*.) The paucity of data does not indicate that the observed forms are grammatically unstable, but we decided to conduct a questionnaire survey because (i) the amount of the collected CCL data is considerably smaller than that of the Japanese and the Korean data and (ii) Cheung (2015) also carried out a questionnaire survey. For Japanese and Korean, we considered the doubled forms deriving from 'who', 'what', 'where', and 'when', but this section focusses on *shei* 'who' and *shenme* 'what' because the doubled forms based on *nali* 'where' and *shenmeshihou* 'when' are not quite acceptable; especially, doubling of *shenmeshihou* is almost fully unacceptable, presumably because of its length.
17 Since *shei~shei* refers to a person, we prepared example sentences in which *shei~shei* functions as a subject (or part of a subject). Also, the predicate in (30) denotes an event, and the predicates in (31)–(32) (one is verbal, and the other non-verbal) denote a state. Ideally, we should prepare a larger number of examples, taking into account other grammatical and semantic factors (e.g. tense, semantic role), but we leave it for future research.

(31)　a.　***Na　　ge　　shei~shei　　de　　xuesheng　　hen　　youxiu.***
　　　　　　DEM　　CL　　PH~PH　　　　DE　　student　　very　　excellent
　　　　　'The student of PH (e.g. = professor Wang) is excellent.' [Mandarin: PH_A/PH_P]
　　b.　***Na　　　　shei~shei　　de　　xuesheng　　hen　　youxiu.***
　　c.　　　***Ge　shei~shei　　de　　xuesheng　　hen　　youxiu.***
　　d.　　　　***Shei~shei　　de　　xuesheng　　hen　　youxiu.***

(32)　a.　***Na　　ge　　shei~shei　　hen　　xinshang　　ta.***
　　　　　　DEM　　CL　　PH~PH　　　　very　　praise　　him
　　　　　'PH (e.g. = professor Wang) praises him.' [Mandarin: PH_A/PH_P]
　　b.　***Na　　　　shei~shei　　hen　　xinshang　　ta.***
　　c.　　　***Ge　shei~shei　　hen　　xinshang　　ta.***
　　d.　　　　***Shei~shei　　hen　　xinshang　　ta.***

These examples are cases of a PH_A or a PH_P, but not a PH_{ARB}. First, we asked the participants to interpret them in two contexts suitable for PH_A/PH_P readings: (i) the speaker cannot recall a target form and (ii) the speaker, though they are aware of a target form, prefers not to verbalise it. Second, Cheung (2015: 305) states that a doubled *wh*-word is only licensed in embedded indirect speech contexts. In his examples (see footnote 15), doubled *wh*-words indeed occur in such contexts, but his examples are (at least, most naturally) seen as cases of PHs_{ARB}. In contrast, the *wh*-words in (30)–(32) appear in the matrix clause. If they were PHs_{ARB}, (30)–(32) would be unacceptable, contrary to fact. This indicates that when a doubled *wh*-word behaves as a PH_{ARB}, its presence is restricted to the embedded indirect speech contexts, but when it behaves as a PH_A or a PH_P, the restriction does not apply.

　　The acceptability patterns of (30)–(32) are summarised in Tables 2–4, where the 'ability-related context' refers to a context where the speaker cannot recall a target form (PH_A), and the 'preference-related context' to one where the speaker prefers not to verbalise a target form (PH_P). The participants were asked to judge the acceptability of each sentence on a scale from 1 to 3; with 1 being unacceptable (= *), 3 acceptable (= ok), and 2 somewhere in between (= ?). In all of (30)–(32), use of *shei~shei* is more acceptable when it combines with the demonstrative *na*. This echoes the pattern of non-doubled PH forms; see the paragraph following (29).[18]

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18 In Tables 2–4, the acceptability of (31d) and (32d) is not outright low, especially compared with (30d). In (31d) and (32d), *shei~shei* functions as the subject of a stative predicate, whilst in (30d), *shei~shei* functions as the subject of an action verb. This difference in the semantic types of a predicate seems to affect the acceptability patterns. This is confirmed by other examples such as (i)–(ii) below, where *shei~shei* is used more naturally with the stative verb *xihuan* 'like' than with the action verb *da* 'hit'.

Table 2: Acceptability patterns for (30).

	(30a)			(30b)			(30c)			(30d)		
	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*
ability-related context	29	0	0	24	5	0	0	1	28	2	6	21
preference-related context	25	4	0	26	2	1	0	2	27	6	5	18

Table 3: Acceptability patterns for (31).

	(31a)			(31b)			(31c)			(31d)		
	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*
ability-related context	29	0	0	26	2	1	0	0	29	8	7	14
preference-related context	28	0	1	28	0	1	1	1	27	10	3	16

Table 4: Acceptability patterns for (32).

	(32a)			(32b)			(32c)			(32d)		
	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*
ability-related context	29	0	0	28	1	0	1	0	28	7	7	15
preference-related context	28	0	1	29	0	0	0	2	27	14	4	11

(i) $\quad$ ***Shei~shei*** *bu* $\quad$ *xihuan Lisi.*
$\qquad$ PH~PH $\qquad$ NEG like $\quad$ Lisi
$\qquad$ 'PH (e.g. = Mr. Wang) dislikes Lisi.' [Mandarin: PH$_A$/PH$_P$]

(ii) $\quad$?? ***Shei~shei*** *da le* $\;$ *Lisi.*
$\qquad\;$ PH~PH $\qquad$ hit ASP Lisi
$\qquad$ 'PH (e.g. = Mr. Wang) hit Lisi.' [Mandarin: PH$_A$/PH$_P$]

Also, note that the bare classifier *ge* appears in the subject position in (30c), (31c), and (32c). An anonymous reviewer pointed out that a bare classifier generally cannot appear in the subject position and that this may be why almost all participants judged (30c), (31c), and (32c) to be unacceptable. We wish to take the present point into consideration when we conduct a more large-scale experiment in future work.

5.2 *Shenme~shenme*

Let us turn to *shenme~shenme* (cf. *shenme* 'what'). The 29 participants were presented with the three sets of data in (33)–(35).[19]

(33)   a.   *Ta*   *yao*   ***na***   ***ge***   ***shenme~shenme***   *bao.*
           he   want   DEM   CL   PH~PH   bag
           'He wants a bag of PH (e.g. = Chanel).' [Mandarin: PH_A/PH_P]
   b.   *Ta*   *yao*   ***na***   ***shenme~shenme***   *bao.*
   c.   *Ta*   *yao*   ***ge***   ***shenme~shenme***   *bao.*
   d.   *Ta*   *yao*   ***shenme~shenme***   *bao.*

(34)   a.   *Zhe*   *shi*   *Yidali*   ***na***   ***ge***   ***shenme~shenme***   *de*   *zhaopian.*
           this   COP   Italy   DEM   CL   PH~PH   DE   picture
           'This is a picture of Italy's PH (e.g. = toilet).' [Mandarin: PH_A/PH_P]
   b.   *Zhe*   *shi*   *Yidali*   ***na***   ***shenme~shenme***   *de*   *zhaopian.*
   c.   *Zhe*   *shi*   *Yidali*   ***ge***   ***shenme~shenme***   *de*   *zhaopian.*
   d.   *Zhe*   *shi*   *Yidali*   ***shenme~shenme***   *de*   *zhaopian.*

(35)   a.   *Ba*   ***na***   ***ge***   ***shenme~shenme***   *na*   *lai*   *gei*   *dajia*   *kan.*
           BA   DEM   CL   PH~PH   bring   come   to   everyone   look
           'Bring that PH (e.g. = present) and show it to everyone.' [Mandarin: $PH_A/$
           PH_P]
   b.   *Ba*   ***na***   ***shenme~shenme***   *na*   *lai*   *gei*   *dajia*   *kan.*
   c.   *Ba*   ***ge***   ***shenme~shenme***   *na*   *lai*   *gei*   *dajia*   *kan.*
   d.   *Ba*   ***shenme~shenme***   *na*   *lai*   *gei*   *dajia*   *kan.*

The results of the acceptability judgements are presented in Tables 5–7.

Table 5: Acceptability patterns for (33).

	(33a)			(33b)			(33c)			(33d)		
	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*
ability-related context	25	3	1	26	3	0	20	3	6	10	5	14
preference-related context	23	2	4	26	2	1	17	6	6	10	5	14

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19 Since *shenme~shenme* refers to a non-human entity, we prepared example sentences in which *shenme~shenme* functions as an object (or part of an object). The predicate in (35) denotes an event, and the predicates in (33)–(34) (one is verbal, and the other non-verbal) denote a state.

Table 6: Acceptability patterns for (34).

	(34a)			(34b)			(34c)			(34d)		
	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*
ability-related context	27	2	0	23	5	1	1	0	28	7	7	15
preference-related context	20	5	4	25	2	2	1	1	27	8	10	11

Table 7: Acceptability patterns for (35).

	(35a)			(35b)			(35c)			(35d)		
	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*	ok	?	*
ability-related context	29	0	0	25	3	1	1	3	25	4	6	19
preference-related context	24	3	2	24	3	2	2	4	23	5	6	18

Thus, in (33)–(35) too, use of *shenme~shenme* is generally more acceptable when it co-occurs with the demonstrative *na*. Still, use of *shenme~shenme* is not fully unacceptable without *na* in (33c)–(33d): more than half of the 29 participants judged (33c) to be acceptable. This may have to do with the use of *ge* to mark indefiniteness in an object position. As illustrated in (36), *ge* may realise an in-definite, non-specific reading when (i) it is used for the object NP of a transitive verb and (ii) the transitive verb precedes *ge* (Lu 1984); see also Lu (2017).

(36)   *Wo   jintian   zhi   chi   le   **ge**   pingguo.*
       I   today   only   eat   ASP   CL   apple
       'I only ate an apple today.' [Mandarin]

In (33c), the PH sequence *ge shenme~shenme* itself substitutes for a specific proper name such as *Chanel*, but the whole object NP *ge shenme~shenme bao* refers to an indefinite, non-specific entity: a bag of Chanel. We presume that the participants who judged (33c) to be acceptable are those who construed it with this indefinite, non-specific reading, whereas the participants who did not judge (33c) to be acceptable are those who did not obtain this reading. Note that this indefinite reading is grammatically ruled out in (34c), where a transitive verb is absent, and also in (35c), where the transitive verb *na* 'bring' is present but does not precede *ge*.

5.3 Summary

We have revealed that (i) contrary to what Cheung (2015) suggests, Mandarin has the doubled *wh*-derived PHs$_A$/PHs$_P$, (ii) in general, they are grammatically

unstable unless they combine with *na* 'that', and (iii) when they are legitimately used without *na*, certain grammatical factors seem to be at work (e.g. the use of *ge* to mark indefiniteness in an object position; see also footnote 18). It should be recalled that unlike Japanese and Korean, doubling is not a remedial operation in Mandarin; the non-doubled forms, *shei* and *shenme*, may stably act as PHs on their own as long as they combine with *na*. What is seen as a remedial operation in Mandarin, then, is the combination with *na*, both for the doubled and the non-doubled forms. Despite these findings, our analysis is limited in that we have only considered *shei~shei* and *shenme~shenme* and the results of the survey have not been analysed in statistical terms. In future work, we hope to conduct a larger-scale survey with a solid statistical analysis.

6 Cross-language and intra-language considerations

We are now in the position to present cross-language and intra-language comparisons. From a crosslinguistic point of view, different languages make use of different remedial operations:

- <u>Japanese</u>: Doubling; Combination with a medial-series demonstrative or *toka* 'etc.'
- <u>Korean</u>: Doubling
- <u>Mandarin</u>: Combination with the demonstrative *na*

In Mandarin, doubled PH forms are attested, but doubling is not viewed as a remedial operation because non-doubled PH forms themselves are licit (as long as the demonstrative *na* is present). This contrasts with Korean, where non-doubled PH forms are legitimate in many but not in all examples (e.g. [24]–[26]). As far as PHs are concerned, then, the stabilising power of doubling differs from language to language in the following manner:

- <u>Japanese</u>: Doubling (or a combination with a non-*wh* item) is generally required to stabilise the PH use of a *wh*-word such as *dare* 'who', *itsu* 'when', and *doko* 'where'. The exception is *nani* 'what,' which may be productively used as a PH on its own.
- <u>Korean</u>: The PH use of a *wh*-word such as *nwukwu* 'who', *mwe* 'what', *eti* 'where', and *encey* 'when' is widely observed, but in some cases, doubling is required to stabilise the PH use of these *wh*-words.
- <u>Mandarin</u>: There are doubled PH forms based on *shei* 'who' and *shenme* 'what', but their non-doubled PH forms are also acceptable (as long as the

demonstrative *na* is present). That is, the PH use of these *wh*-words is acceptable without doubling.

Another notable point about the remedial operations is that a combinatory operation is only available in Japanese and Mandarin. In Mandarin, the type of combined item is systematic compared with Japanese. In Mandarin, *shei~shei* and *shenme~shenme* always combine with the same element, the demonstrative *na* 'that' (and optionally with the classifier *ge*), while in Japanese, there is a variety of elements that can be combined with a *wh*-word: *sore* 'that' for *dare* 'who', *soko* 'there' for *doko* 'where', and *toka* 'etc.' for *dare* 'who' and *doko* 'where'. Moreover, this combinatorial option is not available for all *wh*-words; as far as our consulted corpus is concerned, *itsu* 'when' does not combine with a non-*wh* element.

Finally, a bare *wh*-word may serve as a PH most robustly in Korean. As stated in Section 4, each of *nwukwu* 'who', *mwe* 'what', *eti* 'where', and *encey* 'when' may stand as a PH in its own right in many cases. In contrast, the *wh*-words in Japanese and Mandarin generally require a remedial operation, except for Japanese *nani* 'what', which is used productively without any morpho-syntactic support. Cross-linguistically, then, we may conclude that the grammatical stability of the PH use of a bare *wh*-word decreases as follows: Korean > Japanese (>) Mandarin. The symbol (>) is used here to indicate that the PH use of a bare *wh*-word seems to be grammatically more stable in Japanese than in Mandarin, but this requires confirmation in future research. That is, unlike Mandarin, Japanese has a *wh*-word (i.e. *nani* 'what') that can be productively used as a PH without any morpho-syntactic remedial operation, but it is not obvious (without a statistical analysis) whether the PH use of bare *wh*-words is more stable in Japanese or in Mandarin on the whole.

7 Implications and remaining issues

We have described the *wh*-derived PHs in Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin. Our central claims are: (i) the PH use of a bare *wh*-word may be grammatically unstable, and (ii) in such cases, it requires a certain morpho-syntactic support. We have also argued that cross-language and intra-language variations are observed in connection with each of these two claims.

As for claim (i), the degree of grammatical stability varies from language to language (e.g. Korean bare *wh*-words may act as a PH in many cases, whilst Mandarin *wh*-words usually need to combine with *na* 'that'.), as well as within a language (e.g. Japanese *nani* 'what' may behave as a PH productively, but this is not the case with the other *wh*-words.).

As for claim (ii), different languages employ different morpho-syntactic means. Doubling (as a remedial operation) plays a role only in Japanese and Korean, and the combination with a demonstrative is observed only in Japanese and Mandarin. The combinatory potential may vary within a language, too. In Japanese, whilst *dare* 'who' and *doko* 'where' may combine with a demonstrative, *itsu* 'when' may not. In addition, the type of combined demonstrative is fixed for each *wh*-word (e.g. *soko* 'there' for *doko* 'where').

These findings have both empirical and theoretical implications. Firstly, as emphasised in Section 2, previous studies have largely overlooked grammatically unstable PH forms. In this respect, the present study provides a wide array of new data and advances empirical work on PHs. Secondly, our data pose a challenge for the semantics and pragmatics of PHs. As has been contended, with the exception of Japanese *nani* 'what', the PH use of a *wh*-word in Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin is not fully established. Some recalcitrant issues, then, arise relating to encoded meaning and its interaction with context and pragmatic principles. Seraku (2022a) has recently argued that the demonstrative-derived PH *are* in Japanese encodes 'procedural meaning' (Blakemore 1987); see Carston (2016) for further references. Also, Jucker et al. (2003: 1742) suggest that English PHs encode procedural meaning, and Enfield (2003: 111), who presents a rather theory-neutral account of PHs, nevertheless suggests that the encoded meaning of PHs may be procedural. But no matter what type of meaning a PH encodes, it is not immediately obvious how meaning could be associated with a grammatically unstable form and how such meaning interacts with context and pragmatic principles. It would be worthwhile to further explore the semantics and pragmatics of PHs in order to settle these issues.

We wind up by discussing some remaining issues. The types of *wh*-words addressed in this article are limited to 'who', 'what', 'where', and 'when'. We will need to consider other *wh*-words, and this is where further cross-language variations emerge. For example, in Japanese and Korean, 'why' never behaves as a PH. In Mandarin, Cheung (2015: 288–289) reports that though *weishenme* 'why' cannot be used as a PH, *wei-le shenme* 'for what purpose (= why)' can. As he suggests, this seems to be because unlike *shenme* in *weishenme*, *shenme* in *wei-le shenme* is identified as a separate unit (i.e. the *wh*-word 'what') and may itself serve as a PH.

It may also be profitable to revisit our data from the point of view of language change (see Enfield [2003: Sect. 3.4], Kudo [2020], and Seraku et al. [2021: Sect. 5.2] for diachronic discussions of PHs). Provided that the PHs we are interested in derived from *wh*-words, it is tempting to suspect that they represent a case of grammaticalisation in that a *wh*-word as a grammatical item has acquired another

grammatical function (i.e. the place-holding function). Also, one might argue that the combination of a *wh*-word and a demonstrative is a case of lexicalisation. Such claims, however, must be supported by historical evidence. Since we can neither offer nor discuss such evidence here, the issues of language change must be left for future work.[20]

Another avenue for future research is to extend our enquiry to other languages. As stated in Section 2.3, *wh*-words are a common source of PHs, but there are many other derivational sources (e.g. demonstratives, light nouns, indefinite pronouns). It would be a rather remarkable fact that all three East Asian languages surveyed here feature *wh*-derived PHs and that they display a similar set of morpho-syntactic remedial operations (e.g. doubling). As suggested by an anonymous reviewer, it would be interesting to find out whether these affinities are accidental or have some areal motivation. In this connection, we note that Cantonese, another East Asian language, exhibits doubling of a *wh*-word, as illustrated in (37).

(37)   *Aaming   houci   sik-zo   **matje~matje.***
        Aaming   seem   eat-PRF   what~what
        'Aaming seems to have eaten something (with the implication that the
        thing that Aaming seems to have eaten was previously mentioned to the
        speaker).' (Lee and Wong 2018: 339) [Cantonese]

As the translation shows, however, the doubled *wh*-word in (37) does not function as a PH but as a 'reportative indefinite' (cf. Koev 2016). We must wait for another occasion to investigate whether grammatically unstable PHs are observed in languages besides Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin and, if the answer is positive, what morpho-syntactic operations are available to enhance the acceptability of such unstable PH forms.

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20 The content of this paragraph, especially the issues of grammaticalisation and lexicalisation, relies on one of the illuminating comments from an anonymous reviewer.

Non-Leipzig abbreviations

ASP	aspect
ATT	attributive
BA	marker for *ba*-constructions
CL	classifier
CONN	connective
DE	*de* as a genitive marker
FP	final particle
HON	honorific
HSY	hearsay
IMT	intimate
MM	modal marker
NPI	negative polarity item
PCL	particle
PH	placeholder

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