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Sluicing in Dravidian: Tracing the source

CONTRIBUTIONS: This paper examines sluicing in Dravidian (Dr), an area unexplored in earlier literature. It identifies the source (the kind of cleft) underlying sluicing in Dr, investigates the strategy of relativization that clefts use to extract pivots in Dr (through the properties of sluicing that it gives rise to), and more broadly examines wh-movement in general in Dr, and clefting as a wh-extraction device, based on sluicing features that inherit properties of wh-elements, thus shedding light on sluicing, clefting, and wh-movement in Dr.

INTRODUCTION : Dr has sluicing like structures, as shown in (1) —the data in this paper are from Telugu, but the same facts obtain in the other major Dr languages, in the essentials (minor variation to be explored).

(1) raamu evari-n-oo   koTTeeDu, kaani evari-n-oo   naa-ku tel-iyadu
     Ramu who-ACC-DISJ hit,   but   who-ACC-DISJ I-DAT   know-not
     'Ramu hit someone, but I don't know whom.'

NOT ROSS SLUICING: It is not possible to treat these as movement of wh-phrase to Spec-CP and deletion of IP (Vicente14) sluices, as Dr does not have left-peripheral movement of wh-elements, as shown in (2)-(4).

(2) uma naa-ku bomma iccindi   (3) uma bomma evari-ki iccindi   (4) uma naa-ku eemi iccindi
     Uma I-DAT   toy   gave   Uma toy   who-DAT gave   Uma I-DAT   what gave
     'Uma gave me the toy.'   'Whom did Uma give the toy?'   'What did Uma give me?'

NOT FOCUS SLUICING: While Dr features focus movement, the focus position is not left-peripheral either, as shown in (5)-(6). So the sluices cannot be derived by high focus movement, followed by deletion of the IP, as is proposed for Farsi (Toosarvandani09), Turkish (Ince12), and Hungarian (vanCraenenbroeck&Liptak13).

(5) uma bomma NAA-KU iccindi   (6) naa-ku bomma UMA iccindi
     Uma toy   I-DAT   gave   I-DAT   toy   UMA gave
     'Uma gave ME the toy.'   'UMA gave me the toy.'

Jayaseelan99 has analyzed the unmarked position for both wh- and non-wh focus in Dr as a low, pre-verbal position inside the IP. The challenge then is to extract the remnant out of IP, before deleting the IP.

NOT COPULAR: A copular structure without deletion, a pseudosluice (Merchant99), like in (7), could be a possible source, because *pro*-drop and null copula are both features of Dr, as shown in (8)-(9).

(7) raamu eemiT-oo konnaaDu. —avunaa?! [*pro* eemiTi ϕ]?   (8) vacc-eeDu   (9) idi eemiTi
     Ramu what-DISJ bought.   really .   what   came-3MS   this what
     'Ramu bought something. —Really?! What?'   '(He) came.'   'What is this'

However, a copular source is ruled out for non-nominative remnants, for while the wh-remnant gets variously case-marked in sluicing like constructions in Dr, obligatorily matching the case on the correlate, as shown in (10), the wh-phrase in a copular structure can only bear nominative case.

(10) raamu evari-k-oo   pustakam icceeDu, kaani evari-k-oo/*evar-oo   naa-ku tel-iyadu.
      Ramu who-DAT-DISJ book   gave,   but   who-DAT-DISJ/who-DISJ I-DAT   know-not
      'Ramu gave the book to someone, but I don't know who (to).'

THE SOURCE IS A CLEFT: The symmetry between sluices and clefts supports this assimilation (with the important exception of contrastive clefting/sluicing, discussed below), as shown in (11), which also lists the properties cross-linguistically, of apparently wh-in-situ, SOV languages, that show two patterns —in the Japanese type, the characteristics of sluicing match clefting, making a cleft-source for sluicing very likely (Kizu97); in the Turkish type, the properties of sluicing are very unlike clefting, rendering the cleft-source unviable (Ince12).

(11)

	Japanese		Dravidian		Turkish	
	Cleft	*Sluice*	*Cleft*	*Sluice*	*Cleft*	*Sluice*
Case matching	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Multiple wh-elements	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Adjunct wh-elements	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Pied-piped post-positions	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Contrastive *else* modification	Y	Y	Y	N		

WHAT KIND OF CLEFT IS THE SLUICE SOURCE?: Contrast sluicing is not possible in Dr, as given in (12). However, contrastive pivots are possible in clefts in Dr, as shown in (13). If remnants are cleft pivots, how does this difference obtain? The answer lies in the fact that clefts in Dr are a heterogenous class, and of two kinds –short-distance clefts, that allow scrambling, and long-distance clefts, that do not, as shown in (14)-(15).

(12) raamu siita-ki bommalu icceeDu. *inkaa evari-k-oo naa-ku tel-iyadu
  Ramu Sita-DAT toys gave. still who-DAT-DISJ I-DAT know-not
  'Intended: Ramu gave toys to Sita. I don't know to who else.'

(13) raamu oka battaai tinnaaDu. vaaDu tinn-(a)-di inkaa eemiT-oo naa-ku tel-iyadu
  Ramu one orange ate. He ate-REL-CLM still what-DISJ I-DAT know-not
  'Ramu ate an orange. I don't know what else it is that he ate.'

(14) a. ravi bomma iccin-(a)-di **evari-ki**
   Ravi toy gave-REL-CLM who-DAT
   'Who is it that Ravi gave the toy to?'
  b. ravi bomma **evari-ki** iccin-di
  c. ravi **evari-ki** bomma iccin-di

(15) a. ravi uma pilsindi ani ceppin-(a)-di **evari-ni**
   Ravi Uma called that said-REL-CLM who-ACC
   'Who is it that Ravi said that Uma called?'
  b. * ravi **evari-ni** uma pilsindi ani ceppin-(a)-di
  c. * ravi uma **evari-ni** pilsindi ani ceppin-(a)-di

Jayaseelan&Amritavalli05 propose that in short-distance clefts the cleft clause is an IP, which allows for movement of elements out of it to topic positions in the copular clause, across the focused cleft pivot, because it is not a phase boundary; whereas in long-distance clefts the cleft clause is a CP, a phase boundary, and it does not allow for topic extraction. The wh-element moves out of the CP cleft clause by relativization, a well known long-distance movement, into the focus position of the (null) copular clause. This is also the reason why the long-distance cleft prohibits contrastive pivots, as shown in (16) —they involve topics.

(16) *ravi raamu pustakam icceeDu ani ceppin-(a)-di inkaa evari-ki
  Ravi Ramu book gave that said-REL-CLM still who-DAT
  'Intended: Who else is it that Ravi said that Ramu gave the book to?'

THE DR SLUICE IS A LONG-DISTANCE CLEFT: This conclusion is further strengthened by the fact that topicalization of non-wh remnants is not possible, as shown in (17), which it should be, if sluicing in Dr is based on short-distance clefts, which allow topic extraction, and this happens before deletion of the cleft clause.

(17) *raamu evari-k-oo pustakam icceeDu, kaani raamu evari-k-oo naa-ku tel-iyadu.
  Ramu who-DAT-DISJ book gave, but Ramu who-DAT-DISJ I-DAT know-not
  'Intended: Ramu gave the book to someone, but I don't know Ramu who to.'

Other properties of sluicing in Dr that inherit from the properties of long-distance clefts are island-effects, sprouting, multiple wh-remnants, embedding under control predicates, and strict/sloppy readings.

RELATIVIZATION OF LONG-DISTANCE CLEFT PIVOT: In this cleft in Dr, the pivot originates inside the cleft clause and is extracted out of the CP phase, by a relativization operation. Its structure is similar to what is termed the 'deep' cleft (Pinkham&Hankamer75), in an expletive account, with a null copula and a *pro* as its subject. It also tracks two of the properties of deep clefts –the pivots are islands, and the pivots can be adverbial or prepositional. However, while deep clefts disallow negation, this Dr cleft allows it, and so does the Dr sluice.

THE WH/SLUICING-CORRELATION: vanCraenenbroeck&Liptak13 propose that the syntax of sluicing should follow that of wh-movement in all languages, and formalize it as "The syntactic features that the [E]-feature has to check in a language L are identical to the strong features a wh-phrase has to check in a regular constituent question in L." Going by this hypothesis, if the wh-remnant of sluicing in Dr has to check a Focus-feature as a cleft pivot, then wh-phrases in Dr also have to check a Focus-feature. This indirectly lends support to the proposal in Jayaseelan01 that in Dr there is (partial) wh-movement to IP-internal Focus positions because the wh-subject surfaces not clause-initially but between the objects and the final verb.

Selected References: vanCraenenbroeck&Liptak13 *What sluicing can do, what it cant, and in which language: on the crosslinguistic syntax of sluicing*; Ince12 *Sluicing in Turkish*; Jayaseelan&Amritavalli05 *Scrambling in the cleft construction in Dravidian*; Jayaseelan99 *A Focus Phrase above vP*; Jayaseelan01 *IP-internal topic and focus phrases*; Kizu97 *A note on sluicing in wh- in situ languages*; Merchant99 *The syntax of silence: sluicing, islands, and identity in ellipsis*; Pinkham&Hankamer75 *Deep and shallow clefts*; Toosarvandani09 *Wh- movement and the syntax of sluicing*; Vicente14 *Sluicing and its subtypes*.