Wh-scope-marking in Tamil[*]

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1. Introduction

- The goal of this study is twofold:

  (i) to show that Tamil has *wh*-scope-marking constructions.

  (ii) to provide syntactic evidence for an underlying structure of *wh*-scope-marking that has been adopted in the semantic analysis of this construction.

- The construction under investigation is subordinate *wh*-scope-marking.[1] Wh-scope-marking constructions consist of two interrogative clauses: a matrix propositional *wh*-question and an embedded question. Together, these clauses form a single question that seeks an answer to the embedded question.

(1) a. <u>Was</u> glaubst du, [CP **mit wem** Maria gesprochen hat]?   [German]

   What think you with whom Maria spoken   has

   lit. 'What do you think: who Maria spoke to.'

   ≒ 'among the possible answers to 'who did Maria speak to?', what do you think?'

  b. raam <u>kyaa</u> soctaa hai, [CP (ki) ramaa **kis-se** baat karegii]? [Hindi]

   Ram what think   that Ramaa who-ins talk do-future

   lit. 'What does Ram think: who Ramaa will talk to.'

   ≒ 'among the possible answers to 'who will Ramaa talk to?', what does Ram think?'

- This construction has been analyzed as the embedded question functioning as a restriction on the matrix *wh*-phrase (e.g. Dayal 1994, 2000; Stepanov 2001; Lahiri 2002; Stepanov & Stateva 2006; Legate 2011). Semantically, (1b) poses the question of what Ram thinks, whose answers are limited to answers to the embedded question of who Ramaa will talk to.[2]

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[1] The other version of wh-scope-marking is sequential wh-scope-marking, which involves two separate matrix questions, as illustrated by the English example in (i):

(i) What do you think? Who will Mary see? (Dayal 2000, 171)

For further details on this type of wh-scope-marking, see Dayal (2000).

[2] An alternative analysis of this construction considers it a variant of long-distance wh-questions (Hiemstra 1986; McDaniel 1989; Cheng 2000; Sabel 2000; Stechow 2000; a.o.). In this approach, the matrix wh-phrase is treated as a wh-expletive or as an articulated wh-feature of the embedded wh-phrase, serving only to mark the scope of the embedded wh-phrase. However, several studies argue that this construction cannot be adequately treated as a variant

- To derive this semantics, this approach assumes that the matrix *wh*-phrase and the embedded *wh*-question form a constituent in the underlying structure.

(2)   <Underlying Structure>

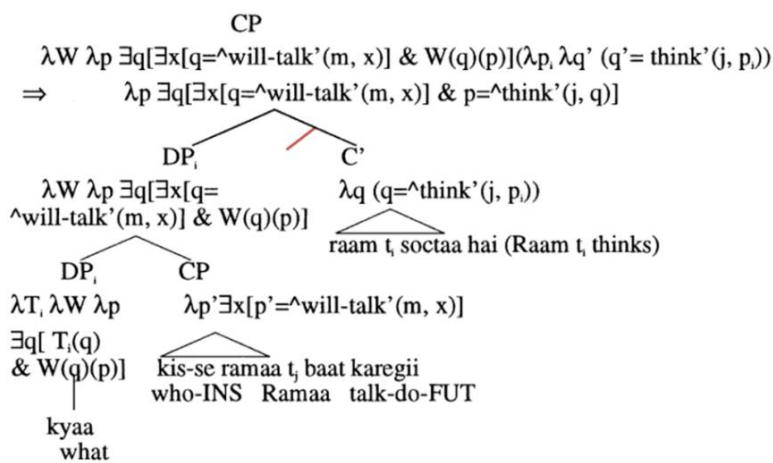 a. Ram think [NP what [CP2 who Ramaa will talk to]]

  <Surface Syntax>

  b. Ram [NP what tCP2] think, [CP2 who Ramaa will talk to] (Hindi: CP2 extraposition)

  <LF Structure>

  c. [CP1 [NP what [CP2 who Ramaa will talk to]] [C1' Ram think t]]

➢ Semantic representation adopted in Lahiri (2002)

(3)

$$\text{CP}$$
$$\lambda W \lambda p \ \exists q[\exists x[q={}^{\wedge}\text{will-talk'}(m, x)] \ \& \ W(q)(p)](\lambda p_i \lambda q' \ (q'= \text{think'}(j, p_i))$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad \lambda p \ \exists q[\exists x[q={}^{\wedge}\text{will-talk'}(m, x)] \ \& \ p={}^{\wedge}\text{think'}(j, q)]$$

DP_i
$$\lambda W \lambda p \ \exists q[\exists x[q={}^{\wedge}\text{will-talk'}(m, x)] \ \& \ W(q)(p)]$$

C'
$$\lambda q \ (q={}^{\wedge}\text{think'}(j, p_i))$$

raam t_i soctaa hai (Raam t_i thinks)

DP_i
$$\lambda T_i \lambda W \lambda p$$
$$\exists q[\ T_i(q)$$
$$\& \ W(q)(p)]$$

CP
$$\lambda p' \exists x[p'={}^{\wedge}\text{will-talk'}(m, x)]$$

kis-se ramaa t_j baat karegii
who-INS Ramaa talk-do-FUT

kyaa
what

(Lahiri 2002; 513)

- In the literature, however, as far as I know, this structure has been motivated solely for semantic reasons and lacks explicit syntactic support.

- This study attempts to provide syntactic evidence for this analysis by introducing Tamil *wh*-scope-marking.

2. Tamil *wh*-scope-marking

- Tamil is a head-final language that allows relatively free word order with scrambling (Sarma 2003).

- In this section, I show that Tamil examples in (4) are instances of *wh*-scope marking by illustrating that Tamil *wh*-scope-marking shares the general properties of *wh*-scope-marking observed in other languages.

(4) a. {Ankita}   [Sinduja **enna**   sapta-nu] {Ankita} <u>enna</u> sonna?
      Ankita   Sinduja what   ate-C   Ankita   what said

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of long-distance wh-questions (Dayal 1994; Herburger 1994; Pafel 2000; Reis 2000; Stepanov 2001; Lahiri 2002; Legate 2011; Fujiwara 2021). See these works for relevant arguments supporting this perspective.

'What did Ankita say: what did Sinduja eat?'

b. [neṯi(kki) raṯiri Rahul **εnga** irɯ-nḏ-aa-n endru] <u>enna</u> son-n-aa-n?

yesterday night Rahul where was C what say-past-3.sg-masc

'What did (he) say: where was Rahul last night?'

A. Any *wh*-phrases can be embedded:

(5) Ger: a. <u>Was</u> glaubst du [**wo/wann/warum/wie** Maria getanzt hatte]?

what think you where/when/why/how Maria danced had

'What do you think: where/when/why/how did Maria dance?'

(Beck & Berman 2000, 19)

Hin: b. Jaun <u>kyaa</u> soctaa hai [Meri **kahaaN** jaayegii]?

John what think-PRES Mary where will-go

'What does John think: where will Mary go?' (Dayal 1994, 140)

c. Tum <u>kyaa</u> socte ho [ki **kyaa** vo aayegaa]?

you what think be that **whether** he come-FUTURE

'What do you think: will he come?' (Fanselow & Mahajan, 2000, 214)

(6) Tamil: who/what/how/where/when/why/yes-no

*a. [**Yaaru** malailendu tirumba vanda-nu] Ankita <u>enna</u> sonna?*

Who mountain.from return came-C Ankita what said

'What did Ankita say: who returned from a mountain?'

b. [Sinduja **enna**/**edha** sapta-nu] ni <u>enna</u> nenaikkara?

Sinduja what/what$_{OBJ}$ ate-C you what think

'What do you think: What did Sinduja ate?'

c. Avan [malail-endu **eppidi** tirumba vandan-nu] <u>enna</u> sonnan?

he mountain-from how return came-C what said

'what did he say: how did he return from a mountain?'

d. Ankita [**Eng**-endu aval-oda akka vanda-nu] <u>enna</u> sonna?

Ankita where-from she-poss sister came-C what said

'What did Ankita say: where did her elder sister return from?'

e. Avan [malailendu **eppo** tirumba vandan-nu] <u>enna</u> sonnan?

he mountain-from when return came-C what said

'What did he say: when did he return from a mountain?'

f. [Sinduja **yen** apple sapta-nu] ni <u>enna</u> nenaikkara? -yenna avalukku pasi

Sinduja why apple ate-C you what think because she.poss hunger

'What do you think: why did Sinduja eat an apple? -Because she was hungry.'

g. [[neṯi(kki) raṯiri aval viʈɯ-læ irɯnḍaa-**la**-nɯ] <u>enna</u> sonna?

yesterday night she home-at was-Q-C what saied

'What did she say: was she at home last night?'

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B. More than one *wh*-phrase can appear in the embedded clause:

(7) Ger: a. <u>Was</u> glaubst du [**wann** Hans an **welcher** Universität studiert hat]?

         what think you when Hans at which University studied has

         'When do you think Hans studied at which university?'(Dayal 1994,140)

    Hin: b. Raam-ne <u>kyaa</u> kahaa thaa [ki mohan-ne **kab** **kis-ko kEse** maaraaa]?

         Ram-ERG what said that Mohan-ERG when whom how hit

         'How did Ram say that Mohan hit whom when?' (Mahajan 1990, 170)

(8) Tamil: [avan **enga** **enna** pannaran-nu] ni <u>enna</u> nenaikkara?

         he where what do-C you what think

         'What do you think: What is he doing where?'

C. An embedded *wh*-phrase can take matrix scope across multiple clauses if each intermediate clause also has a propositional *wh*-phrase:

(9) Ger: a. <u>Was</u> meinst du [<u>was</u>/*daß sie glaubt [**wen** Fritz liebt]]?

         what think you what/that she believes who Fritz loves

         'Who do you think that she believes that Fritz loves?'

    Hin: b. Tum <u>kyaa</u> socte ho [ki us-ne *(<u>kyaa</u>) kahaa [ki **kɔOn** aayegaa]]?

         you what think be that he-ERG what said that who come-FUT

         'Who do you think he said will come?' (Fanselow & Mahajan 2000, 212)

(10) Tam: [[neṯi(kki) ɾaṯiɾi aval viṯɯ-læ irɯnḏaa-**la**-nɯ] *(<u>enna</u>) solluva-nɯ]

         yesterday night she home-in was-Q-C what say.future-C

         kavaladigari <u>enna</u> sonnan?

         policemen what said

         'What did the policemen say: what she would say: was she at home last night?'

D. The embedded clause must be interrogative:

(11) Ger: a. *<u>Was</u> glaubst du [daß Maria mit Hans gesprochen hat]?

         what think you that Maria with Hans spoken has

    Hin: b. *Jaun <u>kyaa</u> jaantaa hai [Meri Ravi-se baat karegii]?

         John what know-PRES Mary Ravi-with will-talk (Dayal 1994, 141)

(12) Tam: *Avan [malai-lendu tirumba vandan-nu] enna sonnan?

         He mountain-from return came-C what said

● Many *wh*-scope-marking languages have a declarative counterpart of *wh*-scope-marking: matrix declarative with propositional demonstrative + embedded declarative

(13) Ger: a. Fred hat <u>es</u> behauptet, [dass Wilma wegfährt].

     Fred has it claimed   that Wilma leave

     'Fred has claimed that Wilma is leaving.' (Truckenbrodt 2016, 118)

  Hin: b. Siitaa <u>yeh</u> jaantii hai [ki Ravi-ne Anu-ko dekhaa].

     Sita this knows   that Ravi-ERG Anu-ACC saw

     'Sita knows that Ravi saw Anu.' (Dayal 2017, 160)

(14) Tam: ?[Ankita malai-lendu tirumba vanda-nu] Sinduja <u>idhu</u> sonna.

     Ankita mountain-from return came-C   Sinduja this said

     'Sinduja said that Ankita came from a mountain.'

E. The matrix predicate must be able to take a declarative complement:

(15) Ger: a. *<u>Was</u> fragst du [**mit wem** Maria gesprochen hat]?

     what ask you **with whom** Maria spoken has

  Hin: b. *Jaun <u>kyaa</u> puuchhtaa hai [Meri **kis-se** baat karegii]?

     John what ask-PRES   Mary who-with will-talk (Dayal 1994, 141)

(16) Tam: ?*[Sinduja enna sapta-nu] ni <u>enna</u> ketta?

     Sinduja what ate-C   you what asked

- When the matrix predicate is anti-rogative predicates such as 'think,' the matrix propositional *wh*-phrase cannot be dropped.

(17) Ger: a. *John glaubt [**mit wem** Mary reden wird]?

     John think with whom Mary talk will

  Hin: b. Siitaa-ne *(kyaa) socaa [ki Ravii-ne **kis-ko** dekhaa]?

     Sita-ERG what thought that Ravi-ERG who saw (Mahajan 2000, 319)

(18) Tam: Ni [Sinduja apple sapta-**la**-nu] *(enna) nenaikkara?

     you Sinduja apple ate-Q-C   what think

F. the matrix clause must be affirmative:

(19) Ger: a. *<u>Was</u> glaubst du nicht [**mit wem** Maria gepochen hat]?

     what think you not with whom Maria talked has

     'Who don't you think Maria has spoken to?' (Dayal 1994, 145)

  Hin: b. *Jaun <u>kyaa</u> nahiiN soctaa hai [Merii **kis-se** baat karegii]?

     John what not think-PRES Mary who-with will-talk

     'Who doesn't John think Mary will talk to?' (Dayal 1996, 57)

(20) Tamil: *[**Yaaru** virakku varuvanga-nu] ni <u>enna</u> nenaikkala?[3]

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[3] In regular long-distance *wh*-questions in Tamil, the matrix clause can contain negation, as shown in (i).

(i)   Tam: [Yaaru vira-kku varuvanga-nu] ni nenaikkala?

     who party-to come.will-C you thought.not

     'Who didn't you think would come to the party?'

who   to.party   come-C   you what think.not

'Who didn't you think would come to the party?'

G. Principle C: R-expressions in the embedded question must be free.

(21) Ger: *<u>Was</u> sagt er_i [**wo**   Kai_i wohnt]?

what says he   where Kai   lives

'Where did he_i say Kai_i lives?' (Haida 2007, 138)

(22) Hin: *<u>Us</u>_i-ne <u>kyaa</u> socaa [ki   Ravii_i-ne **kis-ko** dekhaa]?

he-ERG what thought that Ravi-ERG who   saw

'Who did he_i think that Ravi_i saw? (Mahajan 2000; 324)

(23) Tam: a. *Avan_i [neṯi(kki) raṯiṟi Rahul_i **ɛnga**   iruṇḍaan-nɯ] <u>ennə</u> sonnaan?

he   yesterday night Rahul where was-C   what said

'What did he_i say: Where was Rahul_i last night?'

b. Rahul_i [neṯi(kki) raṯiṟi avan_i **ɛnga** irɯ-nḏ-aa-n-nɯ] <u>ennə</u> son-n-aa-n?

● Based on the data above, I conclude that Tamil has *wh*-scope-marking, similar to German and Hindi.

3. Constituency of "what_prop" and "CP₂"

● Recall that the current analysis of *wh*-scope-marking, where the matrix propositional *wh*-phrase and the embedded question underlyingly form a constituent.

(24)   <Underlying Structure>

a. John think [_NP what [_CP2 who Mary will talk to]]

<Surface Syntax>

b. John [_NP what t_CP2] think, [_CP2 who Mary will talk to] (Hindi: extraposition of CP2)

c. [_NP what t_CP2] John think t_wh, [_CP2 who Mary will talk to] (German: +wh-movement)

<LF Structure>

d. [_CP1 [_NP what [_CP2 who Mary will talk to]] [_C1' John think t]]

➢ This structure is motivated simply by the need for the embedded question to function as a restriction on the matrix *wh*-phrase semantically.

● No syntactic evidence has been presented to support the constituency of [what_PROP, CP₂].

➢ This is because the two elements are separated by *wh*-movement or extraposition of the embedded clause.

(25)   a. German: wh-movement (+ extraposition of CP)
       [NP Was tCP2] glaubst du, [CP2 **mit wem** Maria gesprochen hat]?
           What   think you   with whom Maria spoken   has
           lit: 'What do you think: who did Maria talk to?'

       b. Hindi: extraposition of CP
          Jaun [NP kyaa tCP2] soctaa hai, [CP2 (ki) merii **kis-se** baat karegii]?
          John   what   think   that Mary who-ins talk do-future
          lit. 'What does John think: who will Mary talk to?'

● Tamil is suggestive in this regard: the two phrases can appear adjacent to each other.

(26) Tamil:
     Ankita [NP [CP2 Sinduja enna sapta-nu] enna] sonna?
     Ankita   Sinduja what ate-C   what said
     lit. 'What did Ankita say: what did Sinduja eat?'

● The question is: Can we actually show that the propositional 'what' and the embedded CP constitute a constituent?

● Tamil allows relatively free word order, due to scrambling (Sarma 2003).

(27) a. krishnaa-kku, saadatt-ai draupadi tIO tDO poT-T-aaL.
        Krishna-DAT   rice-ACC   Draupadi-NOM   put-PAST-3SF
        'To Krishna, the rice, Draupadi gave.' (Sarma 2003, 262)
     b. enge et-ai   yaar tplace tObj vaang-in-aan?
        where what-ACC who   buy-PAST-3SM
        'Who bought what where?' (Leung 2018, 46)

● There is a restriction on the word order in Tamil *wh*-scope-marking.

(28) a: Subj [CP2] [what] V
        Ni [CP2 Sinduja apple sapta-la-nu] enna nenaikkara?
        you   Sinduja apple ate-Q-C   what think
        lit. 'What do you think: did Sinduja eat an apple?'
     b: [CP2] Subj tCP2 [what] V
        [CP2 Sinduja apple sapta-la-nu] ni enna nenaikkara?
     c: [CP2] [what] Subj tCP2 twh V
        [CP2 Sinduja apple sapta-la-nu] enna ni nenaikkara?
     d: *[what] [CP2] Subj tCP2 tNP V
        *Enna [CP2 Sinduja apple sapta-la-nu] ni nenaikkara?

➢ I take the impossibility of the "what-CP-Subj-V" order in (28d) as indicating a classical PBC effect.

➢ PBC restricts a configuration like (29) (i.e. remnant movement). Crucially, the PBC effect presumes that <u>X and Y constituted a constituent in the first place.</u>

(29) *[$_{YP}$ … t$_X$ … Y] … X … t$_{YP}$

● The derivation of (28):

(30) a.   Subj [$_{NP}$ [CP] **what**] V (= 28a)
     b.   [CP] Subj [$_{NP}$ t$_{CP}$ **what**] V   (= 28b)
     c. *[$_{NP}$ t$_{CP}$ **what**] [CP] Subj t$_{NP}$ V   (= 28d)
     (cf. d. [$_{NP}$ [CP] **what**] Subj t$_{NP}$ V   (= 28c))

● The ungrammaticality of (28d) suggests that [CP$_2$] and [what] form a constituent in an underlying structure.

● It provides syntactic evidence for the current semantic analysis of this construction.

● This contributes to the coherence of the syntactic and semantic analysis of *wh*-scope-marking.

4. Summary

● This study has shown that Tamil has *wh*-scope-marking.

● It has also provided syntactic evidence for the constituency of the propositional *wh*-phrase and the embedded question, using classical PBC effects as a constituency test.

● The list of *wh*-scope-marking languages:
[Indo-Iranian] Bangla (Bayer 1996), Dari Persian (Karimi & Taleghani 2007), Hindi (Dayal 1994, a.o), Kashmiri (Manetta 2010), Marathi (Fanselow 2017), Punjabi (Bhatia 1993), Romani (McDaniel 1989), [Germanic] Dutch (Strik 2008; Schippers 2016), Frisian (Hiemstra 1986), German (Riemsdijk 1983, a.o.), [Slavic] Polish (Stepanov 2001), Russian (Stepanov 2001; Rojina 2011), Slovenian (Golden 1995; Marušič 2008), [Albanian] Albanian (Turano 1998), [Semitic] Iraqi-Arabic (Wahba 1992), [Ugric] Hungarian (Horvath 1997), [Dravidian] Tamil, [Japonic] Japanese (Fujiwara 2021), [Algonquian] Passamaquady (Bruening 2001), [Pama-Nyungan] Warlpiri (Legate 2011)

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