

## Is non-canonical sluicing related to exceptional agent-extraction in Tagalog?

**Introduction.** In Tagalog, argument sluices typically have the following characteristics [1]: (i) the correlate is introduced by the existential *may*; and (ii) the verbs in the antecedent and elided clause must match in voice (i.e., they are identical). We refer to these types of sluices as **canonical sluicing**. Both (1a) and (1b) are uncontroversially acceptable.

(1) **Canonical sluices: correlate introduced by existential + verbs match in voice**

a. May **kumain** ng=isda pero hindi ko alam kung sino ~~ang=kumain ng=isda~~  
EXIST ate.AV NPIV=fish but NEG 1SG.NPIV know if who PIV=ate.AV NPIV=fish  
'Someone ate fish, but I don't know who ~~it is that ate fish~~.

b. May **kinain** ang=bata pero hindi ko alam kung ano ~~ang=kinain ng=bata~~  
EXIST ate.PV PIV=child but NEG 1SG.NPIV know if what PIV=ate.PV NPIV=child  
'The child ate something but I don't know what ~~it is that the child ate~~.

Some researchers have observed that for some speakers, the verbs in the antecedent and elided clause need not match in voice [2–3]. We refer to these types of sluices as **non-canonical sluicing (NCS)**. They differ from their canonical counterparts in two ways: (i) the lack of the existential *may*; and (ii) there is an asymmetry, such that (2a) is acceptable (for some speakers), while (2b) is uncontroversially unacceptable.

(2) **Non-canonical sluices: no existential + verbs do not match in voice**

a. **Kumain** ang=bata pero hindi ko alam kung ano ~~ang=kinain ng=bata~~  
ate.AV PIV=child but NEG 1SG.NPIV know if what PIV=ate.AV NPIV=child  
'The child ate (something), but I don't know what ~~it is that the child ate~~.

b. \***Kinain** ang=isda pero hindi ko alam kung sino ~~ang=kumain ng=isda~~  
ate.PV PIV=fish but NEG 1SG.NPIV know if who PIV=ate.AV NPIV=fish  
Intended: Someone ate the fish, but I don't know who ~~it is that ate the fish~~.

Avelino [3] related the variation in the acceptability of (2a), as well as the ungrammaticality of (2b) to **exceptional agent-extraction (EAE)** [4]. EAE counters the well-known extraction restriction in Philippine-type languages where only pivots, the arguments cross-referenced by voice, are eligible for extraction [5]. Recent work has shown that, at least for some speakers, agents are privileged in being able to extract despite not being pivots [6]. Hsieh [7] accounted for EAE by arguing that non-pivot agents can undergo an independently attested operation (i.e., genitive inversion) which places the agent in a structurally more prominent position, which in turn, feeds A-bar extraction. Building on Hsieh's proposal, Avelino proposed that the same mechanism can also account for NCS. A main feature of Avelino's hypothesis is how intricately tied NCS is to EAE. Thus, his hypothesis would predict that the extent to which speakers allow NCS is tightly correlated with the extent to which they allow EAE.

The present study asks the following: (i) Are non-canonical sluices like (2a) indeed acceptable for *some* speakers? (ii) if so, is there a relationship between the speakers who allow non-canonical sluicing and those who allow exceptional agent-extraction? **At the time of writing, we are still collecting data. We will be done with data collection by mid-March, with a projected sample of 40 participants, and with data analysis by mid-April.**

**Exp. 1A: Testing the acceptability of NCS.** To get an estimate of the extent to which Tagalog speakers allow non-canonical sluicing, we are conducting an acceptability judgment study, comparing canonical sluices against their non-canonical counterparts. We created 24 items, distributed via Latin Square design, by crossing whether the antecedent clause had AV or PV (ANT: AV, PV) and whether the antecedent clause and the elided clause matched in voice or not (MATCH: +, -). A sample item is provided below. Speakers rate the sentences using a 7-point Likert scale.

	ANT	MATCH	Sample item	
A	AV	+	May kumain ng isda, pero hindi ko alam kung sino.	(=1a)
B	AV	-	Kumain yung bata, pero hindi ko alam kung ano.	(=2a)
C	PV	+	May kinain yung bata, pero hindi ko alam kung ano.	(=1b)
D	PV	-	Kinain ang isda, pero hindi ko alam kung sino.	(=2b)

**In lieu of discussing our results thus far, we talk about our predictions.** If there is some variation in the acceptability of NCS [2–3], then we expect that the difference between +MATCH and -MATCH will be smaller when the antecedent clause has AV than when it has PV. In other words, we expect an interaction between MATCH and ANT. On the other hand, if NCS is uniformly rejected [1], we expect only the +MATCH-conditions to be rated higher than the -MATCH-conditions. In other words, we expect a main effect of MATCH and crucially, no evidence for an interaction.

**Exp 1B: The relationship between NCS and EAE.** To estimate the relationship between NCS and EAE, we first need to get an estimate of the extent to which the same speakers allow exceptional agent-extraction. We follow the experimental design of Pizarro-Guevara and Wagers [6], and created 24 items by crossing whether the verb had AV or PV (VOICE: AV, PV) and whether the extracted argument was cross-referenced by voice or not (MATCH: +, -). We interspersed these items with our NCS items. A sample item is provided below.

	ANT	MATCH	Sample item
E	AV	+	Mabaho ang batang kumain ng isda. 'The child that ate fish is stinky'
F	AV	-	Mabaho ang isdang kumain ang bata
G	PV	+	Mabaho ang isdang kinain ng bata 'The fish that the child ate is stinky'
H	PV	-	Mabaho ang batang kinain ang isda

We expect EAE to obtain: the difference between +MATCH and -MATCH will be smaller when voice is PV than when it is AV. In other words, we expect an interaction between MATCH and VOICE.

To operationalize the relationship between NCS and EAE, we will calculate a by-participant **voice-mismatch penalty score**, defined as the difference in ratings between +MATCH-conditions and -MATCH-conditions for the different levels of ANT in Exp1A and the different levels of VOICE in Exp1B. We will then subtract the voice-mismatch penalty score when the ANT had PV from when the ANT had AV (i.e., [C-D] - [A-B]) in Exp1A, and the voice-mismatch penalty score when VOICE was AV from when it was PV (i.e., [E-F] - [G-H]) in Exp1B. These differences in penalty scores will give us an index of how much each participant allowed voice-mismatches in sluicing that are reported to be variable, scaled against voice-mismatches in sluicing that are universally rejected; and how much each participant allowed voice-mismatch extractions in PV, scaled against those in AV. We will perform a correlation analysis to determine the strength of this relationship. If Avelino's hypothesis is on the right track, then we expect a positive correlation between the two. In other words, when one difference increases, the other will also increase.

**Selected references:** [1] Kaufman, D. & Paul, I. (2006). [2] Borise, L. (2016). [3] Avelino, G. (2024). [4] Ceña, R. & Nolasco, R.M.D. (2011). [5] Schachter, P. (1977). [6] Pizarro-Guevara, J.S., & Wagers, M. (2024). [7] Hsieh, H. (2023).