Question-particles and relative clauses in the history of Sinhala, with comparison to early and modern Dravidian

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1   Introduction: relative clauses and Q-particles

This paper examines the evolution of two separate but interrelated aspects of the grammar of Sinhala, an Indo-Aryan language spoken in the island nation of Sri Lanka (the former Ceylon): the distribution of the Question-particle *da* and the formation of relatives clauses in the history of Sinhala. I also examine the structure of relative clauses and the distribution of Question-particles in genetically-unrelated but geographically-proximate Dravidian. The possible role of language contact in the evolution of certain Sinhala grammatical structures—including the employment of the particle *da*—which have no parallels in other Indo-Aryan languages—is also considered.[1]

Sinhala is the southernmost Indo-Aryan language (together with Dhivehi,[2] a closely-related language spoken in the Maldives), and has been isolated from the Indo-Aryan languages of the north Indian mainland for over two millennia. It has, however, been in contact with southern Dravidian languages (forms of Tamil and the ancestor of Tamil and Malayalam) and exhibits some degree of convergence with Dravidian in terms of its phonology, syntax, morphology, and lexicon—but remains recognisably Indo-Aryan.[3] See further Gair 1982[1998] for a general description of Sinhala and the

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[1]**Glossing abbreviations:**

1 = 1st person; 2 = 2nd person; 3 = 3rd person; A = -*a*/-*ā* verbal suffix ("neutral"); ABL = ablative (case); ACC = accusative (case); ADJ = adjective; ADV = adverb; ANIM = animate; ART = article; COMP = complementiser; COND = conditional; CONV = converb; DAT = dative (case); DEF = definite; E = -*e*/-*ē* verbal suffix ("focussing"); EMPH = emphatic (particle); F = focus/focussed; FEM = feminine; FUT = future; GEN = genitive (case); GER = gerund; IMPV = imperative; INANIM = inanimate; INDEF = indefinite; INF = infinitive; INST = instrumental (case); LOC = locative (case); MASC = masculine; NEG = negation/negative; NEU = neuter; NMLZ = nominaliser; NOM = nominative (case); PART = particle; PAST = past; PERF = perfect; PERM = permissive; PL = plural; POL = polite (form); PRES = present; PTCP = participle; Q = Q(uestion)-particle; REL-PRON = relative pronoun; QUOT = quotative; SG = singular; SUBJ = subjunctive; VN = verbal noun; VOC = vocative (case).

[2]On which see Cain (2000).

[3]See Gair (1976[1998]: 200–201) who notes "...the survival of Sinhala as a clearly Indo-Aryan language might be looked on as a minor miracle of linguistic and cultural history"; see also Karunatillaka (1977). On the potential for over-estimating

impact of Dravidian. I consider here four distinct stages/forms of Sinhala: (1) Old Sinhala [OS], represented by the graffiti texts on the Mirror Wall at Sihigiri (ca. 8th–10th c. A.D.); (2) Classical Sinhala [CS], represented largely by translations and commentaries on Pāli Buddhist texts (ca. 12th–15th c. A.D.); and two varieties of modern Sinhala: (3) Modern Literary Sinhala [LS], which differs from Classical Sinhala, but retains a number of archaisms such as overt subject-verb agreement morphology; and (4) Modern Colloquial Sinhala [MCS]. The latter two varieties co-exist in a diglossic relationship, with the literary variety being employed in written and formal situations, but the general archaic nature of the literary variety justifies its treatment as representing an earlier variety than does the colloquial—on Sinhala diglossia, see further Gair (1968[1998], 1986[1998]a) and Paolillo (1992).

Da is an instance of what are often termed "Question"-particles [Q-particles][4]—so-called because interrogatives are a crosslinguistically common environment for such particles—a class of particles which also includes Japanese *ka*, Malayalam *-oo*, Tlingit *gé* and *sá*, and Hungarian *vagy*, as well as Sinhala *hari/hō* (see, amongst others, Hagstrom 1998, Cable 2007, Jayaseelan 2001, Jayaseelan 2008, Slade 2011, Szabolcsi et al. 2012).

The full range of contexts for Sinhala *da/də* will be examined later in this chapter; first let us observe the structure of relative clauses in Sinhala. In modern colloquial Sinhala [MCS], the only extant type of relative clause is the prenominal modifying participle type exemplified by (1).

(1)   [[guruwərəyek   wenə   ] mahattəya] huňgak dannəwa.
       [[teacher.INDEF.NOM become.PRES.ADJ] man.DEF   ] much   know.PRES
       "The man who is becoming a teacher knows a lot." (cited from Gair 1995[1998]: 245)
       [Colloquial Sinhala]

However, 'true' relative clauses involving relative pronouns and correlative clauses are well attested in Classical Sinhala and in modern literary Sinhala. This type of relative clause is formed by using *yam*[5] (possibly modifying a noun), co-referring to a correlative demonstrative (expressed or implied) in the correlative main clause. Additionally, either the Q-particle *da* or the conditional particle *nam* must occur at the end of the relative clause.

In modern literary Sinhala, where we find relative clauses formed using the relative pronoun *yam* and either the Q-particle *da* or the conditional particle *nam*, such constructions always seem to have the sense of generalising relatives, i.e. to be of the type "whoever speaks thus is a fool". Example (2) is representative.

(2)   [**yam**   kumariyak   ohu duṭuvā   ]RC **da** [oo ohu kerehi piḷiňda
       [**REL-PRON** princess.INDEF him see.PAST.3SG.FEM]RC *da* [she him towards connected

       sit   ætikara   gattāya   ]CC
       mind developed get.PAST.3SG.FEM]CC

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the role of Dravidian influence on the evolution of Sinhala phonology see Gair (1985[1998]).

[4]On the notion of Q-particles, see Baker (1970), amongst others.

[5]*Yam* in fact descends from the Old Indo-Aryan relative pronoun base, *ya-*. *Yam* can act as an indefinite pronoun as well.

"**Whatever princess** saw him fell in love with him." (cited from Gair & Karunatilaka 1974: 295) [Literary Sinhala]

In Tamil—as noted above, a language with which Sinhala has long been in contact—we find constructions which are structurally similar to the relative clause constructions of Classical and modern literary Sinhala, as shown by examples like (3).

(3) [**yār**   aṅkē mutalil vantu   ceru-v-ār   ]RC-**oo** [avar
     [**REL-PRON**.NOM there first   come.CONV arrive.FUT.3PL]RC-*oo* [they.NOM.PL

     ṭikeṭṭu   vaṅkalām]CC
     ticket.NOM buy.PERM]CC

     "Let whoever reaches there first buy the tickets."   [Modern Tamil]
     (cited from Annamalai & Steever 1998)

As in Classical and modern literary Sinhala, we find here in Dravidian a relative clause headed by a relative pronoun (Sinhala *yam* : Tamil *yār*) and a final "clause-closing" particle (Sinhala *da/nam* : Tamil *-oo*). Note that—as discussed later—just as Sinhala *da* occurs in interrogatives, indefinites, and disjunctions, so too do Dravidian particles like Tamil *-oo*.

Turning to earlier Sinhala: in Classical Sinhala as well *yam-da/nam* relatives tend to have the free relative generalising sense typical of such constructions in modern literary Sinhala (see examples like (2) above), as in example (4).

(4) [**yamak'hu**   paḷamu diṭim]RC **da** [ohu marā   gaṇan sapurami
     [**REL-PRON**.MSC.SG.ACC firstly   see.ISG]RC *da* [him kill.CONV number complete.PRES.ISG
     ]CC
     ]CC

     "**Whichever person** I see first, I shall kill him and complete the number." (*Amāvatura* 133, cited from Wijemanne 1984: 210)   [Classical Sinhala]

This is apparently not always the case, as evidenced by examples such as (5), where the relative appears to refer to a specific individual.

(5) [mam **yamak'hu-ge**   savuyem]RC **da** [ohu-ge guṇa   asava   ]CC
     [I   **REL-PRON**.SG.GEN follow(?)]RC *da* [his   virtues listen.IMP]CC

     "Listen to the virtues of the **person whose** follower I am." (*Amāvatura* 93, cited from Wijemanne 1984: 210)   [Classical Sinhala]

However, instead of *da*, we also find—in both Classical Sinhala and modern literary Sinhala—relatives formed with the conditional particle *nam* in place of the Q-particle *da*. The modern literary Sinhala example in (2) may have its *da* replaced by *nam* without change in meaning. An example of a *nam*-type relative from Classical Sinhala appears below in (6).

(6) [**yam**   gihi   minisek   ovun-ge vāda maňḍanaṭa   nisi
     [**REL-PRON** householder person.INDEF their   talks trample.INF.DAT suitable

     vī   ]_{RC} **nam**   [ohaṭa   pādaparicārikā veti]_{CC}.
     be.PAST.3SG]_{RC} **COND.PTCP** [him.MASC.DAT wed.PRES.3SG   ]_{RC}

     "They become the wives of **any layman who** may be able to refute their arguments."
     (*Amāvatura* 150, cited from Wijemanne 1984: 212)   [Classical Sinhala]

The connection between the conditional construction and generalising relatives is transparent: (6) can also be interpreted as meaning "If a layman is able to refute their arguments, then they become his wives". Herein, however, I am most concerned with the appearance of the Q-particle *da* in the formation of relative clauses. This is a feature confined to Classical Sinhala and modern literary Sinhala; neither in modern colloquial Sinhala nor in Old Sinhala (pre-dating Classical Sinhala) do we find *da*(/*də*) used in the formation of relative clauses. For the most part, as in modern colloquial Sinhala, relative clauses in Old Sinhala are of the prenominal modifying participle type; there are a handful of examples exhibiting use of the pronoun *yam*, which will be examined later in this chapter.

The next section examines the appearance of the Q-particle *da* in other syntactic contexts in the history of Sinhala.

2 The distribution of *da* in the history of Sinhala

The particle *də* (< earlier Sinhala *da*) is found (obligatorily) in a wide variety of syntactic contexts in modern colloquial Sinhala. *Wh*-questions in Sinhala employ this Q-particle *də*, and the verb takes the special "focussing" *-e* ending (following Kishimoto 2005, I refer to this as the *-e* ending, glossed as -E), distinguished from the neutral ending (the *-a* ending, glossed as -A).[6] Compare the declarative in (7) with the corresponding interrogative in (8).

(7) Chitra potə gatta
     Chitra book bought.A
     "Chitra bought the book."   [Colloquial Sinhala]

(8) Chitra monəwa **də** gatte
     Chitra what   *də* bought.E
     "What did Chitra buy?"   [Colloquial Sinhala]

Wh-words along with their associated Q-particle (and any intervening material) may also be dislocated to the right of the verb of the clause over which they take scope, as in example (9). This movement is characteristic of focussed elements in Sinhala.

(9) Chitra gatte   monəwa **də**?
     Chitra bought-E what   *də*

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[6] For further discussion of "focussing" and "neutral" forms of the verb in Sinhala, see Gair (1983[1998]), Gair (1986[1998]b), Slade (2011).

"What did Chitra buy?" [Colloquial Sinhala]

The particle *də* is obligatory in *wh*-questions, regardless of the form of the verb, as shown in (10).

(10) *Chitra monəwa gatta/gatte?
Chitra what bought-A/bought-E
"What did Chitra buy?" [Colloquial Sinhala]

The *-e* marking of the verb is obligatory in *wh*-questions, see (11) and (12), respectively.[7]

(11) *Chitra monəwa **də** gatta?
Chitra what *də* bought-A
"What did Chitra buy?" [Colloquial Sinhala]

(12) *Chitra monəwa gatta **də**?
Chitra what bought-A *də*
"What did Chitra buy?" [Colloquial Sinhala]

Without the *-e* marking on the verb, a *wh*-word accompanied by a Q-particle is interpreted as an indefinite, as can be seen by the contrast in (13-a) and (13-b).[8]

(13) [Colloquial Sinhala]
a. mokak **də** wætune?
what *də* fell-E
"What fell?" (Hagstrom 1998)
b. mokak **də** wætuna.
what *də* fell-A
"Something (unidentified) fell." (Gair & Sumangala 1991)

In yes/no-questions, *də* also appears obligatorily, normally in clause-final position, as in example (14); in which case the verb appears with the "neutral" *-a* inflection.

(14) Chitra ee potə kieuwa **də**?
Chitra that book read-A *də*
"Did Chitra read that book?" (Kishimoto 2005: 11) [Colloquial Sinhala]

The particle *də* may also appear after a constituent smaller than IP—in which case it marks that constituent as focussed (15), and, as expected, the verb appears in the *-e* form.

(15) Chitra ee potə **də** kieuwe?
Chitra that book *də* read-E

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[7]Unless *də* appears clause-finally, which it cannot generally do when the *wh*-word is in the matrix clause.
[8]See Ramchand (1997), who discusses a similar situation in Bengali.

"Was it that book which Chitra read?" (*Ibid.*)   [Colloquial Sinhala]

Finally, *də* is also involved crucially in the formation of interrogative disjunctions (i.e. alternative questions), appearing obligatory after each of the disjuncts, as in example (16).

(16)   Gunəpālə **də** Chitra **də** Ranjit **də** gamətə   giyē?
        Gunapala **də** Chitra **də** Ranjit **də** village.DAT go.PAST.E
        "Was it Gunapala or Chitra or Ranjit who went to the village?"   [Colloquial Sinhala]

Two other related particles are also found in Sinhala, *hari* (earlier *hō*), and *vat*, the former appearing in non-interrogative disjunctions and, like *də*, also in the formation of *wh*-based indefinites (though involving different pragmatics than WH+*də* indefinites); the latter acting as an negative polarity item [NPI]-counterpart of *hari*. Neither is discussed further here; on these, see Slade (2011), Slade (under review).

    While other Indo-Aryan languages do not employ particles resembling *də* (in their syntactic distribution), similar particles are found in Dravidian languages. In Malayalam, for instance, the particle *-oo* appears in yes/no and alternative questions, as in examples (17) and (18); declarative disjunctions,[9] as in example (19); and in the formation of indefinites, as in (20).

(17)   John wannu-**(w)oo**?
        John came-**oo**
        "Did John come?" (Jayaseelan 2001: 67)   [Malayalam]

(18)   John wannu-**(w)oo**, illa-**(y)oo**?
        John came-**oo**,   not-**oo**
        "Did John come, or not?" (Jayaseelan 2001: 67)   [Malayalam]

(19)   Mary John-ine-**(y)oo** Bill-ine-**(y)oo** cumbiccu
        Mary John-ACC-**oo**   Bill-ACC-**oo**   kissed
        "Mary kissed John or Bill." (Jayaseelan 2008: 3)   [Malayalam]

(20)   ñaan̯ iruṭṭ-il   aar-e-**(y)oo** toṭṭu
        I   darkness-in who-ACC-**oo** touched
        "I touched somebody in the dark." (Jayaseelan 2001: 66)   [Malayalam]

Finally, as in Classical Sinhala and modern literary Sinhala—and Tamil, see example (3) above—Malayalam employs the Q-particle *-oo* in the formation of relative clauses, as in example (21).[10]

(21)   eetə   daivam ellaa vastukkaḷilum uṇṭ-**oo**   aa   daivatte praartthikkunnu
        which god   all   object.PL.LOC be.PRES-**oo** that god.ACC pray.PRES

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[9]Here we may note an important difference between Sinhala and Malayalam: while Sinhala *də* is restricted to interrogative disjunctions (with *hari* or *vat* appearing in non-interrogative contexts), Malayalam *-oo* appears in both interrogative (18) and declarative disjunctions (19).

[10]The use of *-oo* in Malayalam relative clauses is in fact optional, as discussed below.

"I pray to the god who is in every object." (cited from Asher & Kumari 1997: 53)[Malayalam]

The crosslinguistic employment of Q-particles in this set of syntactically-disparate contexts (interrogatives, indefinites, relatives) can be given a semantically-unified analysis if we recognise that what these contexts share in common is the presence of some element which denotes a Hamblin-type set—either a *wh*-word or a disjunction; the semantic function of Q-particles like Sinhala *da* can then be seen as that of selecting an element from this set. These issues are explored in detail in Slade (2011) (cp. Hamblin 1973, Hagstrom 1998, Alonso-Ovalle 2006, Cable 2007); here I am more concerned in distinguishing these environments:— in particular, in examining the historical development of Sinhala *da* with respect to the syntactic environments in which it is found.

In earlier forms of Sinhala we indeed find *da* (the source of MCS *də*) appearing in some of the crosslinguistically-typical contexts for Q-particles; Table 1 provides an overview.[11]

	Old Sinhala	Cl. Sinhala	mod. lit. Sinhala	mod. col. Sinhala
yes/no-question	(X)	X	X	X
wh-question	(X)	(X)	X	X
alternative question	X(?)	X	X	X
wh-indefinite				X
rel. clauses w/ *yam*		X	X	n/a[12]

Table 1: Appearance of *da*/*də* in various syntactic contexts in the history of Sinhala

In Old Sinhala, *da* is found occasionally in *wh*-questions—in contrast to its obligatory appearance in this syntactic environment in the modern forms of the language. Examples (22)–(24) provide examples of *da*-less Old Sinhala *wh*-questions; examples (25)–(28) provide representative examples of Old Sinhala *wh*-questions including *da*.

(22) Digæsni   kum koṭ   sahannemi?
    long-eyed.VOC what do.CONV endure.PRES.ISG
    "O long-eyed one, what may I do to sustain myself?" (lit. "having done what, shall I bear myself up?") [*Sigiri Graffiti* 123]   [Old Sinhala]

(23) No balaya   yanne   kese?
    not look.CONV go.PAST.PTCP.NOM how
    "How does one go away without looking?" [*Sigiri Graffiti* 261]   [Old Sinhala]

(24) Sav-abaranin   saji   giri-hisa   siṭihi   kumaṭa?
    all-ornaments.INSTR adorned mountain-summit.LOC be.PRES.2SG what.DAT

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[11](X) indicates optionality. X(?) indicates that no examples of that category have been found, but *da* is presumed to have occurred in that context.

[12]Given that modern colloquial Sinhala has lost the *yam*-type relative clause formation, the absence of *də*/*da* in this context is due to the absence of this syntactic environment itself.

"Why do you, being adorned with all ornaments, stand on the summit of the mountain?"
[*Sigiri Graffiti* 3]   [Old Sinhala]

(25) Sihin piḷi hann aga neḷi-pala vann liya   tana   kiya   valā se pæneya
      fine   cloth clad limb coconut like maiden breast say.IMPV cloud like appear.OPT?[13]
      ke   **da**?
      what **da**

      "Of that maiden whose limbs are draped with fine-textured garments, her breasts are like
      coconuts; say, what appears like the clouds?[14]" [*Sigiri Graffiti* 379]   [Old Sinhala]

(26) Ayuyun   hay tī   kaḷa   kima **da**?
      come.PAST.PTCP.GEN.PL with you.GEN do.PAST what **da**

      "What has been done by you with those who came here?" [*Sigiri Graffiti* 384]   [Old
      Sinhala]

(27) Kum vi   **da**?
      What be.PAST.3SG **da**

      "What happened?" [*Sigiri Graffiti* 490]   [Old Sinhala]

(28) Ko   **ja** (=**da**)[15]giye   himiya yi   balam siṭiyuyun
      where **da**   go.PAST.PTCP.NOM lord   COMP looking be.PRES.PTCP.PL.OBL
      vanno?
      seem.NOM.PL

      "They seem as if they stood (there) looking backwards (wondering) 'Where has their lord
      gone?'" [*Sigiri Graffiti* 109]   [Old Sinhala]

In Old Sinhala, *da* is extremely frequent in yes/no questions, as in examples like (30)—being
found in this environment much more frequently than it is in *wh*-questions. Where *da* is absent in
yes/no questions, these often contain matrix negation *no*; however, even non-negative questions do
not obligatorily require *da*, as evidenced by examples like (29).

(29) Minisek   vemi?
      man.INDEF be.PRES.ISG
      "Am I a man?" [*Sigiri Graffiti* 240]   [Old Sinhala]

(30) Damak   kaṇḍā   hāt   nigæḷi   pat mahanel
      chain.INDEF break.PAST elephant fetter.PAST.PTCP.NOM petal blue water-lily
      kaṇḍanne   **da**?
      break.PRES.PTCP.NOM **da**

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[13]See Paranavitana (1956: §500d) on this form.

[14]Answer: Her hair, of course.

[15]*Ja* here appears to be a back-spelling for *da* (see Gair 1986[1998]b: 166). In Sinhala, earlier intervocalic *c* became voiced
to *j*, subsequently merging with *d*—this also appears to have affected initial *c* in enclitics, e.g. *-uj, -uj, -ud, -udu, ut* "and" <
-ca, -ica < Skt. *ca* "and" (see Geiger 1941).

"Does the elephant, having broken a chain (by which it is) fettered, break (then) the petals of the water-lily?" [*Sigiri Graffiti* 39] [Old Sinhala]

A rough count shows *da* occurring in approximately half of all yes/no-questions (and approximately two thirds of non-negative yes/no questions), but in only about a quarter of *wh*-questions.

In the next stage of Sinhala, Classical Sinhala, it appears that yes/no-questions usually include *da*, as in example (31).

(31) To   me suta   Budun desannā   āsūhu   **da**?
     2SG-PRN this sermon Buddha preach.PRES.PTCP.NOM hear.PAST.2SG *da*

"Did you hear the Buddha preaching this sermon?" [*Amāvatura* 228, cited from Wijemanne 1984: 71] [Classical Sinhala]

Wh-questions in Classical Sinhala still display optionality in the use of *da*; compare the *da*-less (32) and (33) with examples (34) and (35) which include *da*.

(32) Kotaṭa   giyehi?
     where.DAT go.PAST.2SG
     "Where did you go?" [*Amāvatura* 136]

(33) Mohu   koyaṭa   yeti?
     these (people) where.DAT go.PRES.3SG
     "Where are these people going?" [*Amāvatura* 189] [Classical Sinhala]

(34) Dæn paeviji væ kumaṭa   kiyam   **da**?
     now ordained been what.DAT say.PRES.ISG *da*
     "Now that I am a monk, why would I say it?" [*Amāvatura* 76] [Classical Sinhala]

(35) Mese da vaḍane   kumaṭa   **dæ** yi   kīha.
     thus also go.PRES.PTCP.NOM what.DAT *da* QUOT say.PAST.3PL
     "'Why do you go thus?' they asked." [*Amāvatura* 145] [Classical Sinhala]

Finally, like in modern Sinhala, alternative questions show the use of *da* after each disjunct, as in example (36).

(36) mā ... nuvaṭahu   arabhayā kī   dæ   nipan **da** no nipan **da**?
     my ... religious mendicant about   said things QUOT born *da* NEG born *da*?
     "Did my predictions regarding the religious mendicant prove correct or did they not?"(12th century, *Amāvatura* 178) (Wijemanne 1984: 75) [Classical Sinhala]

Though I have not found examples of *da* used in interrogative disjunctions in the Old Sinhala Sihigiri graffiti texts, I presume that it would have been used in this environment in this stage of the language—given not only the Classical Sinhala use as in examples like (36), but also the fact that the Old Indo-

Aryan source of *da/də*, namely Old Indo-Aryan *utā́ho*, appeared ONLY in this context and thus it is presumably from this context that *da* spread into other interrogative contexts. This and other aspects of the earlier history of the particle *da/də* are explored in the next section.

3   The pre-history of *da*

The Sinhala Q-particle *da/də* derives ultimately from Old Indo-Aryan *utā́ho* (Turner 1962–1966: #1701), which is itself made up of two particles, *ā́ho* and *utá*.

Utá is a particle used in Vedic with the sense 'and' (Klein 1978), with both X *utá* Y (37) and X Y *utá* (38) orders.

(37)   mitró   dādhāra   pṛthivī́m   **utá** dyā́m
       contract.MASC.SG.NOM hold.PRES.3SG earth.SG.ACC *uta* heaven.SG.ACC
       "Contract holds (together) earth and heaven." [RV 3.59,1b]   [Sanskrit]

(38)   divás   pṛthivyā́   **utá** carkirāma
       heaven.SG.GEN earth.SG.GEN *uta* praise.SUBJ.1PL
       "Heaven and earth we shall praise." [RV 4.39,1b]   [Sanskrit]

In Classical Sanskrit, this conjunctive sense of *uta* is obsolete (Speijer 1886: §424), though *uta*—like *api* "too, also, moreover, and; even; though"—may stand at the beginning of a clause as in (40), functioning as a Q-particle like Sanskrit *kim*, see (39).[16]

(39)   kim śaknoṣi?   / śaknoṣi   kim?
       Q   be-able-PRES.2SG / be-able-PRES.2SG Q
       "Can you?" (Speijer 1886: §412)   [Sanskrit]

(40)   **uta** daṇḍaḥ   patiṣyati?
       uta stick-NOM.SG. fall-FUT.3SG
       "Will the stick fall?" (Kāśikā on Pāṇini 3,3,152)(Speijer 1886: §412)   [Sanskrit]

The particle *ā́ho* first appears in late Vedic Sanskrit, positioned at the front of the second clause in a

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[16]Sanskrit *kim* is the nominative/accusative case-form of the neuter interrogative *wh*-pronoun which also is used as a *wh*-interrogative pronoun in the sense "what". Modern Hindi displays a similar phenomenon: the inanimate *wh*-interrogative pronoun *kyā* "what" can also optionally stand at the beginning or end of a yes/no-question:

(i)   [Hindi]
       a.   Rām yahā̃ hai   kyā?
            Ram here be.PRES.3SG Q
            "Is Ram here?"
       b.   Kyā Rām yahā̃ hai?
            Q   Ram here be.PRES.3SG
            "Is Ram here?"

disjoint 'either...or' construction, see (41). Note here that *utá* appears at the front of the first clause of the disjunction.[17]

(41) **utá** _avidvā́n   amúṁ   lokáṁ   prétya   kaścaná
      uta one who does not know.NOM.SG yonder.ACC.SG worldACC.SG depart.GER anyone

      gacchatī3 / **ā́ho** vidvā́n   amúṁ   lokáṁ   prétya
      go.PRES.3SG / **āho** one who knows.NOM.SG yonder.ACC.SG world.ACC.SG depart.GER

      kaścit sámaśnutā3i /
      anyone reach.PRES.3SG /

      'Does anyone who does not know, having died, go to yonder world, or does anyone who knows, having died, attain yonder world?' (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.6, cited from Böhtlingk & Roth 1855–1875)[18]   [Sanskrit]

It is from this *utá* ABC . . . *ā́ho* XYZ construction that the form *utā́ho* seems to derive. Since *utá* may appear at the front of an interrogative clause (functioning as a Q-particle), it could also immediately

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[17]Disjunctive constructions involving *utá* exist in earlier Vedic verse (pre-dating the Vedic prose discussed above) where we also find *utá* combining with *vā* "or" in the sequence *utá vā*, as in (i); however, it is not clear if or how this differs semantically from *vā* alone.

(i) yā́ḥ   ā́paḥ   divyā́ḥ   **utá vā** srávanti   khanítrimāḥ   **utá vā**
     REL-PRON.PL water.NOM.PL divine.ADJ.NOM.PL **utá or** flow.PRES.3PL produced-by-digging.NOM.PL **utá or**

     yā́ḥ   svayaṁjā́ḥ   / samudrā́rthāḥ yā́ḥ   śúcayaḥ
     REL-PRON.NOM.PL self-born.NOM.PL / ocean-goal.NOM.PL REL-PRON.NOM.PL shining.ADJ.NOM.PL

     pāvakā́s   tā́ḥ   ā́paḥ   devī́ḥ   ihá mā́m   avantu   //
     clear.ADJ.NOM.PL those.NOM.PL water.NOM.PL goddess.NOM.PL here me.ACC.SG watch-over.IMPV.PL //

     "Those waters which are divine, or those which flow dug up from the earth, or those which are self-produced, with the ocean as their goal, shining and clear, may those water-goddesses watch over me here." [RV 7.49,2]
                                                                                        [Sanskrit]

Graßmann (1873) notes one example where *utá* co-occurs with *vā* but is separated from it:

(ii) idám   ā́paḥ   prá vahata   yát   kím
      here(/this side/this place) water.VOC.PL away drive.IMPV.2PL REL-PRON.NEU.NOM/ACC.SG what.NEU.NOM/ACC.SG

      ca   duritám máyi / yát   vā _ahám abhidudróha
      and/moreover fault   me.LOC.SG / REL-PRON.NEU.NOM/ACC.SG or I.NOM.SG hurt.PERF.1SG

      yát   **vā** śepé   **utá** ánṛtam   //
      REL-PRON.NEU.NOM/ACC.SG **or** curse/swear.PREF.1SG **utá** untruth/unlawfulness/chaos.NEU.NOM/ACC.SG //

      "O Waters, here drive away whatever fault is in me: if I hurt (someone) or if I swore untruthfully." [RV 1.23,22]
                                                                                        [Sanskrit]

[Geldner (1951–1957: 23) appears to prefer to treat *utá* as separate from *vā* and renders it as "and": "Ihr Gewässer, führet all das fort, was von Fehle an mir ist, sei es daß ich treulos war, oder daß ich geflucht habe und jede Unwahrheit!" ("You Waters, drive off all this, what fault is in me, be it that I was disloyal or that I cursed, and every untruth!")]

However, in these examples *utá* does not signal a question, and so there appears to be little connection between the early Vedic constructions with *utá vā* and the later Vedic prose construction *utá . . . ā́ho* (which later becomes *utā́ho*, the ancestor of Sinhala *da*/*də*).

[18]3, e.g. in *gacchatī3*, marks *pluti*, the 'overlong vowel'.

precede the *ā́ho* standing at the front of the second part of a disjunction, with the application of sandhi becoming *utā́ho*. And it is in this form (*utāho*), that it appears in Classical Sanskrit, as in (42) below (note that here in addition to *utāho*, we find the normal disjunction *vā*).[19]

(42) kiṁ mama vadhopāyakramaḥ kubjasya   vā_**utāho** anyasya   vā kasyacit
      Q   me-GEN murder-plot.NOM.SG hunchback-GEN or_***utāho*** other-GEN or someone-GEN
      "Is it I, against whom the murder-plot is laid, or is it the hunchback or somebody else?"
      (*Pañcatantra* 332) (Speijer 1886: §415)   [Sanskrit]

In Classical Sanskrit *utāho* may also occur without *kim* (or *vā*), e.g. as in (43).

(43) buddhi-bhedaḥ   para-kṛta   **utāho** te svato
      intellect-pollution-NOM.SG enemy-do-PAST.PTCP.NOM.SG ***utāho*** you self-GEN
      'bhavat
      become-PAST.3SG
      "Has the pollution of your intellect been brought about by enemies or by you yourself?"
      (*Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* 7.5.10)   [Sanskrit]

And *āho* by itself may appear in place of *utāho*, e.g. (44).

(44) teṣāṁ   niṣṭhā   ... kā   ... sattvam **āho** rajas   tamaḥ?
      they-GEN state-NOM.FEM ... what-NOM.FEM ... purity ***āho*** passion darkness/ignorance
      "What is their condition? Purity, passion or ignorance?" (*Bhagavadgītā* 17.1)   [Sanskrit]

In Pāli, the distribution of *udāho* (< *utāho*) appears to be similar, cp. the Pāli example in (45) with the Sanskrit example in (42).

(45) kiŋ amhehi saddhiŋ āgamissasi   **udāhu** pacchā?
      Q   us   with   come-FUT.2SG ***udāhu*** later
      "Will you come with us or later?" (Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Dhammapada* ii.96)
                                                                                      [Pāli]

Pāli *udāhu* also appears with *uda* (cognate with Sanskrit *uta*, see above) as the question particle:

(46) atthaṁgato so   **uda** vā so natthi   ... **udāhu**
      he who has reached the end **Q**   or he not exist ... **udāhu**
      ve sassatiyā arogo
      he for eternity free from disease
      'He who has reached the end: does he not exist, or is he for eternity without disease?'
      [Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka Series p. 330]   [Pāli]

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[19]Speijer (1886: §414) remarks that instead of *utāho* or *āho*, we may also find *utasvit* or *āhosvit*. However, it is specifically from *utāho* that Sinhala *də* develops.

As in Sanskrit, Pāli *udāhu* also occurs without the question particle *kiŋ*, as in the examples below.[20]

(47) saccāni sutāni bahuni nānā **udāhu** te takkam anussaranti
      truths heard many various **udāhu** they follow conjecture
      "Have they learned many various truths or do they follow conjecture?" [Sri Lanka Buddha
      Jayanti Tripitaka Series p. 280]   [Pāli]

(48) ettāvata   _aggaṁ no vadanti   ha _eke yakkhassa suddhiṁ   idha
      to that extent highest NEG say.PRES.3PL EMPH ones *yakkha*.GEN purification in this place
      paṇḍitāse **udāhu** aññampi vadanti   etto
      pundits **udāhu** other   say.PRES.3PL from this
      "Do not some of the wise in this world tell us that the purity of the yakkha is the highest
      to this extent, or do they say something different from this?" [Pali Text Society p. 171]
      [Pāli]

When we examine early Sinhala, we find that, in addition to frequently appearing in yes/no-questions,
da also is used in disjunctive interrogatives, as in example (36), repeated below as (49).

(49) mā ... nuvaṭahu   arabhayā kī   dǣ nipan **da** no nipan **da**?
      my ... religious mendicant about   said things QUOT born *da* NEG born *da*?
      "Did my predictions regarding the religious mendicant prove correct or did they not?"
      (12th century, *Amāvatura* 178) (Wijemanne 1984: 75)   [Classical Sinhala]

In additional to its extension to other interrogative contexts, *da* exhibits other syntactic changes
from its Sanskrit and Pāli precursors. Specifically, note that in Sanskrit and Pāli *utā́ho/udāhu* PRECEDE
the disjunct, while in Sinhala *da* follows its disjunct. Thus the particle has undergone change from
being a proclitic-type element to an enclitic-type element. The motivation for this change is not

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[20]Occasionally the question particle *uda* itself seems to function as a disjunction, at least in interrogative contexts, as
shown below:

(i)   nirāsaso   so **udi** āsasāno paṅṅāṇavā so **uda** paṅṅakapapi
      without desire he **uda**(?) desiring discerning he **uda** still acquiring discernment
      "Is he without desire, or desiring? Discerning or still acquiring discernment?" [Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti
      Tripitaka Series p. 336]   [Pāli]

This use of *uda* could derive from 'ambiguous' uses (where *uda* could be rendered as either 'or' or 'and') of *uda* in examples
like:

(ii) na brāhmaṇo no 'mhi   na rājaputto na vessāyano **uda** koci no 'mhi
      not *brāhmin* not be.PRES.ISG not king's son not *vaishya*'s son **uda** any not be.PRES.ISG
      "I am not a *brāhmin* (=priestly caste), nor a king's son, nor any *vaishya*'s (=agricultural caste) son.' (Lit., 'I am
      not a *brāhmin*, nor a king's son. And I am not any *vaishya*'s son.' Or perhaps, treating *uda* as 'and': 'I am not a
      brahmin, not a king's son, not a vaishya's son. And I am not anybody.") [Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka
      Series 457]   [Pāli]

entirely clear, though one suspects that Dravidian influence may have played a role, given that Dravidian Q-particles are post-clausal enclitics. The status of Q-particles as proclitics vs. enclitics is not a major concern of the present study, so I leave further investigation of this matter to future research.

Turning back to the developments in the distribution of this particle, the general path of change appears to be that the ancestor of *də* (cognate with Sanskrit *utāho*, Pāli *udāhu*) was reanalysed in Classical Sanskrit and Pāli as a disjunction used specifically in interrogative contexts. In prehistoric Sinhala, it was reanalysed as being a Q-particle; the distribution would have originally been restricted to alternative and yes/no-questions—representing a widening with respect to its Sanskrit and Pāli precursors. Later, *da* was extended to the construction of relative clauses (existing as an alternative to the "conditional" particle *nam*), as in the modern literary Sinhala example in (2), repeated below as (50).

(50)   [**yam**   kumariyak   ohu duṭuvā   ]_{RC} **da** [oo ohu kerehi piḷiňda
          [REL-PRON princess.INDEF him see.PAST.3SG.FEM]_{RC} *da* [she him towards connected

          sit   ætikara   gattāya   ]_{CC}
          mind developed get.PAST.3SG.FEM]_{CC}

          "**Whatever princess** saw him fell in love with him." (cited from Gair & Karunatilaka
          1974: 295)   [Literary Sinhala]

And later still (in modern colloquial Sinhala) *da* (> *də*) also began to be used in the construction of certain types of indefinites, as indicated in Table 1 above.

It is of some interest that *utá* itself seems to have earlier been bimorphemic, where the initial element, *ŭ*, originally functioned as a focussing particle.[21] More immediately relevant for the distribution

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[21]Though Klein (1974) calls *ŭ* 'anaphoric' (referring to an element already present in the discourse, rather than deitic), his discussion makes it clear that he analyses its original function as being that of focus: "we can render the *u* [in an English translation–BMS] by 'that very one' or simply by stress" (Klein 1974: 165). (Klein's notion of "anaphoricity" of *u* may be compared to Rooth's (Rooth 1985, 1992, 1996) idea that focus semantic values make reference to entities which are somehow already in the background of the discourse (the "alternatives" to a focussed element).) Examples of *ŭ* in this focussing function follow below:

(i)   yáṁ   tvám   agne   samádahas   / tám   **u**
     REL-PRON.MASC/NEU.SG.ACC you.NOM.SG Agni.VOC burn-down.PAST.2SG / pron.MASC/NEU.SG.ACC *u*

     nír vāpayā   púnaḥ
     extinguish.IMPV.2SG again

     "The one which you, O Agni, have burnt down, **that very one** extinguish again." [RV 10.16,13ab]   [Sanskrit]

(ii)   tám   **u** ṣṭuhi   _índraṁ   yó   ha sátvā   /
     pron.MASC.SG.ACC *u* praise.IMPV.2SG Indra.MASC.SG.ACC REL-PRON.MASC.SG.NOM PART warrior.SG.NOM /

     yáḥ   śū́ro   maghávā   yó   ratheṣṭhā́ḥ
     REL-PRON.MASC.SG.NOM hero.SG.NOM generous one.SG.NOM REL-PRON.MASC.SG.NOM chariot-standing.SG.NOM

     "Praise **that very one**, Indra, who is a warrior, who is a hero, generous, who stands in a chariot." [RV 1.173,5ab]
     [Sanskrit]

(iii)   tám   **u** ṣṭavāma yáṁ   gíra   / índram   ukthā́ni
     pron.MASC.SG.ACC *u* praise.IPL REL-PRON.MASC.SG.ACC song.PL.NOM / Indra.MASC.SG.ACC hymn.PL.NOM

of the later reflexes of *utā́ho* in Sinhala, it seems that the original environment of this element is specifically interrogative disjunction. Whatever the exact relationship between interrogative disjunctions and yes/no-questions, they at the very least share numerous properties and thus the fact that *da* appears more fully established in yes/no-questions than in *wh*-questions in early Sinhala is unsurprising. Once established in alternative and yes/no-questions, *da* appears to have gradually been generalised to all interrogative contexts, including *wh*-questions. In very recent history, it subsequently spread to appear in *wh*-indefinites as well. The revised Table 2 provides a hypothesised pattern of expansion of *da* from its origin as a particle specific to alternative questions.

	pre-pre-OS	pre-OS	OS	CS	LS	MCS
alternative question	X	X	X(?)	X	X	X
yes/no-question		(X)	(X)	X	X	X
wh-question			(X)	(X)	X	X
wh-indefinite						X
rel. clauses w/ *yam*				X	X	n/a[22]

Table 2: Appearance of *da/də* in various syntactic contexts in the history of Sinhala (expanded)

vāvr̥dhúḥ
increase.PAST-PERF.3PL

"**That very one** shall we praise: Indra, whom the songs (and) hymns have increased." [RV 8.95,6ab] [Sanskrit]

(iv) agním   vaḥ   pūrvyáṁ huve / hótāram   carṣaṇīnā́m   // tám
Agni.MASC.SG.ACC you.PL.DAT first   invoke.1SG / priest.MASC.SG.ACC person.PL.GEN // pron.MASC.SG.ACC
ayā́   vācā́   gr̥ṇe tám   **u** va   stuṣe
this.SG.INST speech.SG.INST sing.1SG pron.MASC.SG.ACC *u* you.PL.DAT praise.1SG

"I invoke Agni, the priest of the folk, for you. I sing (of) him with this speech. **That very one** [=Agni] I praise for you." [RV 8.23,7]   [Sanskrit]

(v) tám   **v** abhí prā́rcata   / índram   sómasya   pītáye
MASC.SG.ACC *u* over praise-forth.IMPV.2SG / Indra.MASC.ACC.SG soma.SG.GEN drink.INF.SG.DAT

"Unto **that very one**, Indra, sing forth the praises for the drinking of the *soma*." [RV 8.92,5ab]   [Sanskrit]

Later *ŭ* was reanalysed as a conjunction; examples with this function are given below:

(vi) sáṁ   te   páyāṁsi sám   **u** yantu   vā́jāḥ
together you.SG.GEN milk.NOM.PL together *u* go.IMPV.3SG loot.NOM.PL

"May the milks and the loots unite for you." [RV 1.91,18]   [Sanskrit]

(vii) svàr   yád áśmann adhipā́   **u** ándhaḥ
sunlight.NOM.SG when rock.SG.LOC master.SG.NOM *u* darkness.SG.NOM

"When the sunlight is in the rock, and darkness is master." [RV 7.88,2c]   [Sanskrit]

The particle *utá* seems to have been composed of this focussing particle *u* combined with *té (the clitic form of the demonstrative pronoun), originally meaning *"that (very one) there" with later weakening to "and that" and finally to simply "and" (see Brugmann (1904: 100ff.) and Klein (1974: 179–180)).

As noted previously, Dravidian languages like Malayalam also possess particles with similar distribution (e.g. Malayalam *-oo*, see above), and—given the length of contact between Sinhala and some form of Tamil—the spread of *da* to the wide range of contexts in which it is found in modern Sinhala could reflect convergence with Dravidian; however, it is important to note that though the gross distribution of Sinhala *da* and Dravidian Q-particles like Malayalam *-oo* is similar, there are numerous important differences between Sinhala Q-particles and Dravidian Q-particles (on which see Slade 2011).

The use of *da* in relative clauses is difficult to position within this larger pattern of expansion of the environments of *da*, since it appears only in Classical Sinhala and modern literary Sinhala, but not in earlier Old Sinhala or in the modern colloquial language. This part of the development of *da* seems likely to represent a strong language contact phenomenon. The next section explores the relationship between Sinhala and Dravidian and other complications regarding developments in the structure of relatives clauses.

4   Back to relative clauses

The use of the Q-particle *da* in Classical and modern literary Sinhala relative-correlative constructions parallels the employment of the Dravidian Q-particle *-oo*, and the appearance of *da* in this syntactic environment is likely due to Dravidian influence, although the evidence is not entirely clear.

There is an additional complication regarding the status of such relative-correlatives in Classical Sinhala. As discussed below, Old Sigiri graffiti contain vanishingly few examples of *yam* relative constructions and none which involve the Q-particle *da*. The Classical Sinhala texts are largely translations of or commentaries upon Pāli Buddhist texts. And Wijemanne (1984: 212) remarks that "[a]lmost all the relative constructions in the Amāvatura [the text from which her examples are drawn–BMS] are exact renderings of Pali relative constructions". This raises the question of the status of such constructions in Classical Sinhala: would they have been possible in ordinary language or do they represent a construction which is only part of the specialised "translation/commentary" register? However, even if this were to turn out to be the case, the basis for their syntactic structure would still remain to be explained:— neither Sanskrit nor Pāli employ any element resembling *da* in relative clauses.

In both Old Sinhala (see Paranavitana 1956: clxvii) and Old Tamil (see Hock 2008, referring to p.c. w/ Th. Lehmann) we find vanishingly few examples of relative-correlative structures (four examples in Old Sinhala; five to ten examples in Old Tamil).

Again, it is much more typical of Old Sinhala to use prenominal modifying participles rather than relative-correlative constructions, as in Modern Colloquial Sinhala (see above example (1)); (51) is a typical example of a prenominal modifying participle type "relative" in Old Sinhala.

(51)   Nægæ   mehi   [[ma   senehī   ] himabiyanæʈa] tupa   no
       rise.CONV this.LOC [[1SG-PRN.GEN love.PAST.PTCP] lady.DAT.PL   ] 2PL-PRN.GEN NEG

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daha
show anger.IMPV

"Having ascended here, do not show anger towards the ladies who have been loved by me."
(Lit., "…towards the loved-by-me ladies") [SIGIRI GRAFFITI 308]   [Old Sinhala]

Turning to an examination of the handful of true relative-correlative constructions found in Old Sinhala: *da* is not found in ANY of these and the conditional particle *nam* occurs in but a single example: graffito 251, see (52)[23]; the remaining three examples (graffiti 240, 305, 682) employ no particle.

(52)   [Pere   yam   hæjin   **nam**   ma   ]RC [pahani-j
         [formerly REL-PRON know.PAST **COND-PTC** ISG-PRN.ACC/GEN]RC [satisfy.PAST

         nam   alalæ   mā   ]RC [e   yat   me et   ]CC
         COND-PTC love.LOC ISG-PRN.GEN]RC [3SG.ACC go.COND this come.PAST.3PL]CC

         "She who was known (to me) earlier, who was satisfied in her love of me, when I go to her, these (people) are coming (from her)." [*Sigiri Graffiti* 251]   [Old Sinhala]

In (53) is shown an example of an Old Sinhala relative clause involving the pronoun *yam*, but with no "clause-closing" particle like *nam* or *da*.

(53)   Sihigirī   aṅgnak   baṇavat   me yannā var   sera se ho
         Sihigiri.LOC woman.INDEF speak.COND.CAUS this going occasion thief like 3SG.FEM-PRN

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[23]Interestingly, (52) involves a "stacking" of left-peripheral relative clauses, observed also in Sanskrit examples like (i) and found in some varieties of "elevated" Hindi like (ii), as discussed by Hock (1989a, to appear).

(i)   [yó   hatvā́ _áhim   áriṇat   sapta sindhū́n   ]RC [
        [REL-PRON.NOM.SG.MASC slay.CONV dragon.ACC.SG.MASC make-flow.IMPF.3SG seven river.ACC.PL.MASC]RC [

        yó   gā́   udā́jad   apadhā́   valásya   ]RC [
        REL-PRON.NOM.SG.MASC cow.ACC.PL.FEM drive-up.IMPF.3SG cave.ABL.SG.FEM Vala.GEN.SG.MASC]RC [

        yó   áśmanor   antár agním   jajāna
        REL-PRON.NOM.SG.MASC stone.LOC.DU.MASC between fire.ACC.SG.MASC create.PERF.3SG

        saṁvŕ̥k   samátsu   ]RC [sá   janāsa   índraḥ
        overpowering.NOM.SG.MASC battle.LOC.PL.FEM]RC [CP.NOM.SG.MASC people.VOC.PL.MASC Indra.NOM.SG.MASC
        ]CC
        ]CC
        "Who, having slain the dragon, made the seven rivers flow; who drove up the cows from the cave of Vala; who created fire between the two stones, overpowering in battle; he, O people, (is) Indra." [*RV* 2.12.3] [Sanskrit]

(ii)   [jis   viṣṇu ne jagat kī   sṛṣṭi   kī   ]RC [jo
        [REL-PRON.OBL.SG Vishnu AGT world of.FEM creation.NOM.SG.FEM do.PERF.SG.FEM]RC [REL-PRON.NOM.SG

        viṣṇu   uskī   rakṣā   kartā   hai   ]RC (…) [
        Vishnu.NOM.SG.MASC DEM-PR.SG.FEM.GEN protection.NOM.SG.FEM do.IMPF.MASC.SG be.PRES.3SG]RC (…) [

        vah   viṣṇu   phir uskā   vināś   karegā   ]CC
        CP.NOM.SG Vishnu.NOM.SG.MASC again DEM-PR.SG.MASC.GEN destruction do.FUT.3SG.MASC]CC
        "Which Vishnu created the world, which Vishnu protects it, … that Vishnu will again destroy it." [cited from Hock to appear: 9–10]   [Hindi]

yam	desekæ	mā	bæli	tomo.	agan	me
REL-PRON	direction.LOC.INDEF	ISG-PRN.GEN	look.PAST	REFLX-PRN.FEM.	women	this

niyā.
manner

"When I, while passing by, speak to a lady of Sihigiri, she herself, roguishly[24], looked in the direction (where) I (was). Women are like this." [*Sigiri Graffiti* 305]   [Old Sinhala]

Not only is (53) lacking a "clause-closing" particle, the correlative pronoun has also been elided, but presumably must be understood as in the reconstruction in (54).

(54)   [yam   desekæ   mā   ]ᵢ (eᵢ)   ho   bæli
       [REL-PRON direction.LOC.INDEF ISG-PRN]ᵢ (thatᵢ) 3SG.FEM-PRN look.PAST

"In which direction I (was), that direction she looked at."   [Old Sinhala]

The absence of a "clause-closing" particle is not unparalleled in Dravidian:— observe that in all of the Old Tamil examples, we in fact find that no particle follows the relative clause, as in example (55). Hock (1988, 1989b, 2008) points out that the same is true for Old Malayalam (see example (56)).

(55)   [e-vaṛi   nall-avar   āṭavar   ]RC [a-vaṛi   nall-ai   ]CC
       [which-place good.MASC.3PL men.MASC.3PL]RC [that-place good.2SG]CC

"At which place men are good, at that place you are good." (cited from Lehmann 1998: 94)   [Old Tamil]

(56)   [yātonṭu   mahārājaniyōgam]RC [atu   a-vaṇṇam   ]CC
       [what.NEUT maharaja-order   ]RC [that.NEUT in-that-manner]CC

"What is the king's order, (let) that (be done) in that manner." (cited from Pillai 1973: 165)   [Old Malayalam]

Also lacking in post-relative clause particles are Old Kannada (Hock 2008), and a number of modern "northern" Dravidian languages (Pengo, Kuvi, Kolami, Parji, Kurukh), on which see Hock (1988, 1989b, 2008). Hock (2008) also notes that even in modern Malayalam the post-relative clause *-oo* is optional (cf. Asher & Kumari 1997: 53).

However, Hock (p.c.) points to the appearance of *-oo* in Old Tamil in example (57) where it seems to form an indefinite or generalising pronoun, so it would seem that Dravidian *-oo* from an early stage begins to appears with non-interrogative functions.

(57)   e-nāḷ-**oo**   . . . nī celvatu   a-nāḷ   konṭū iṛakkum   ivaḷ . . .
       which-day-***oo*** . . . you go.NONPAST.NOM that-day from die.NONPAST.3SG.NOM she . . .
       uyir-ē
       life

"On which day you will go, from that day (onwards) her life will die." (*Kalittokai* 5.18-19,

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[24]Perhaps *sera se ho yam desekæ mā bæli* could be more idiomatically rendered as "she stole a glance in my direction".

cited from Thomas Lehmann (p.c. w/ H.H. Hock))   [late Old Tamil (500-700 A.D.)]

5   Conclusions

It is tempting to view the development of relative-correlative constructions involving Q-particles in both Sinhala and Dravidian as representing convergence[25], with changes in both Dravidian and Sinhala resulting in similar structures. Phenomena of this sort are far from unknown in South Asia: other examples of convergent developments in South Asia include SOV as an unmarked word order, the use of converbs where other languages would employ dependent or co-ordinate clauses, and a phonemic contrast between dental and retroflex consonants, on which see Hock (1986/1991: 491–512, esp. 498–504) and Hock & Joseph (1996/2009: 370–391, esp. 374–377, 383–389).

However, the use of *-oo* in relative-correlative constructions appears to date to an early period in Dravidian, which precedes the appearance of *da* in relative clauses (or indefinites) in Sinhala; see the Old Tamil example in (57) above, as well as the remark by Krishnamurti (2003: 419) that "all uses of -ō in Modern Telugu were already there in the inscriptional and literary varieties beginning from the seventh century", and, in addition, the fact that structures of this type are widespread in modern Southern and South Central Dravidian languages. These facts would suggest that the appearance of *da* in Sinhala relative-correlative constructions in the Classical period (12th–15th c. A.D.) likely reflects Dravidian influence.[26]

In summary, the Sinhala Q-particle *da/də* originates from the Sanskrit alternative question conjoiner *utā́ho*, which in Sinhala was extended into other interrogative contexts from an early period—see Table 2 above. In Classical Sinhala (as well as in modern literary Sinhala), *da* appears also in the formation of relative-correlative constructions. This parallels the use of the Dravidian Q-particle *-oo*, which is also employed in the formation of interrogatives, relative clauses, and indefinites, and thus the distribution of *da/də* in Sinhala apparently at least in part reflects the influence of Dravidian. That is, the use of *-oo* in Dravidian in relative clauses appears to pre-date the appearance of *da* in relative clauses in Sinhala, and clearly pre-dates the appearance of Q-particles in the formation of indefinites in Sinhala.[27]

There remain a number of issues yet to be more fully explored regarding the relationship between Q-particles and the formation of relative clauses. In particular, the distribution of the particle *-oo* in early Dravidian requires additional investigation.

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[25]With later divergence of Sinhala in the modern period.

[26]Thanks to Hans Henrich Hock for helpful discussion on these points.

[27]*Də* does not appear in indefinites until modern colloquial Sinhala; the particle *hō*, which appears to be a precursor of modern colloquial Sinhala *hari*, appears in the formation of indefinites only from modern literary Sinhala; see Slade (2011).

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