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# Introduction to Linguistics 2

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## Assignment 1

### Part 1

1. Same category and spelling:  
മാവ് (māv): “mango tree” and “batter (for dosa, idli, etc)”  
കാല് (kāl): “foot/leg” and “quarter”  
മലര് (malar): “flower” and “fried paddy/rice”  
ഓട് (ōṭ): “copper” and “tile”  
തടി (taḍi): “fat/obesity” and “wood”
2. Same category and different spelling:  
അങ്കം “aṅkam” (“stamp/seal”) and അംഗം “aṅgam” (“body part”) /əŋgəṃ/  
മദം “madam” (“liquor”) and മതം “matam” (“religion”) /məḍəṃ/  
പാടം “pāṭam” (“field”) and പാഠം “pāṭham” (“lesson”) /pāḍəṃ/  
ചായ “cāya” (“tea”) and ചായ “chāya” (“resemblance/shadow”) /tʃaːja/  
കൂല “kūla” (“bunch (of fruits)”) and കൊല “kola” (“murder”) /kōla/  
മുട്ട “muṭṭa” (“egg”) and മൊട്ട “moṭṭa” (“bald”) /mōṭṭa/  
തവള “tavaLa” (“frog”) and ധവള “dhavaLa” (“white/fair”) /ṭəvəla/  
കര “kara” (“shore/bank”) and ഖര “khara” (“solid/hard”) /kəra/
3. Different category and same spelling:  
പറ (paRa): “say/tell (informal)” [verb, imperative] and “a unit of measure (for rice)” [noun]  
ആറ് (āṚ): “six” [numeral] and “river” [noun]  
വീണ (vīṇa): “having fallen” [participle/adjective] and “veena (instrument)” [noun]  
കത്തി (katti): “burned” [verb, past tense] and “knife” [noun]  
പാട് (pāḍ): “sing (informal)” [verb, imperative] and “difficulty” [noun]  
മതി (mati) “enough” [adverb] and “intelligence” [noun]  
ഓട് (ōṭ) “run (informal)” [verb, imperative] and “copper/tile” (see 1) [nouns]  
ആണ് (āṇ) “is” [verb (copula), present tense] and “boy” [noun]

### Part 2

#### TASK 1

The matching of the Bersawian and English words is as follows:

Bersawian	English
aelladkuwduk	zoos
aelladowfog	veterinarian
alsha	apple
alshaek	apples

Bersawian	English
alshara	apple tree
mjeiwra	birch tree
mjeiwraek	birch trees
owfog	doctor
rosowfog	dentist
ygalaet	family
ygalaetra	family tree

## TASK 2

The completed table is:

Bersawian	English
rosaek	teeth
alsharakuwd	apple orchard
owfogok	doctors
heewowfog	skin doctor
aelladheew	animal skin (hide)

## TASK 3

The compound noun “X of Y(s)” in English is translated as “YX” in Bersawian (plurals do not occur in compounds).

If the first element of a compound ends with a vowel, and the second one starts with a vowel, the former is deleted (as in rosa + owfog = rosowfog).

“Zoo” and “apple orchard” are considered “place of animals” and “place of apple trees” respectively. “Dentist” and “veterinarian” are “doctor of teeth” and “doctor of animals” respectively. An “X tree” is a “tree of X”.

Plurals are formed by a single suffix, -Vk, where:

- (i) if the noun ends with a consonant, V is vowel in its last syllable, e.g. “aelladkuwd-uk”.
- (ii) if the noun ends with the vowel -a, V is the vowel e, e.g. “alsha-ek”.

The vocabulary of Bersawian is as follows:

aellad – animal  
kuwd – place  
owfog – doctor  
alsha – apple  
ra – tree  
mjeiw – birch  
rosa – tooth  
ygalaet – family

## Part 3

Some polysemous words in Malayalam are:

1. കെട്ടുക (keṭṭuka)

Real meanings:

(a) “to tie”: e.g. അവിടെ നൂല് കെട്ടി (aviṭe nūl’ keṭṭi) = “tied a thread there”

(b) “to marry”: e.g. കെട്ടിയോളാണെന്റെ മാലാഖ (keṭṭiyōḷāṇenRe mālākha) = “the girl I’ve married is my angel” [movie title]

Made-up meaning: “to sync”

e.g. ആ ക്യാമറയുടെ ഫ്ലാഷ് കെട്ടി (ā kāmārayuṭe phlāṣ keṭṭi) = “synced that camera’s flash”

The real meanings are related in the sense of “connecting” or “joining” two things. It can be extended to the idea of synchronising two independent events, metaphorically “tying” them together.

2. മുത്ത (mūtta)

Real meanings:

(a) “elder/older”: e.g. മുത്ത മകൻ (mūtta makan) = “elder son”

(b) “ripe”: e.g. മുത്ത പഴം (mūtta pazham) = “ripe fruit”

Made-up meaning: “antique”

e.g. മുത്ത സാധനങ്ങളുടെ കട (mūtta sādhanāññaḷuṭe kaṭa) = “antique shop”

The real meanings are related in the sense of “maturity”, in that an elder child and a ripe fruit have both had time to grow, in a way. A natural extension of this is the idea of something that becomes more valuable as it gets older.

3. ചെറുക്കൻ (ceRukkan)

Real meanings:

(a) “(little) boy/young man”: e.g. ഈ ചെറുക്കൻ എന്റെ അനിയാനാണ് (ī ceRukkan enRe aniyanāṇ) = “this boy is my younger brother”

(b) “bridegroom”: e.g. പെണ്ണും ചെറുക്കനും എത്തി (peṇṇum ceRukkanum etti) = “the bride and bridegroom have arrived”

Made-up meaning: “rude/insolent child”

e.g. ചെറുക്കൻ ആവല്ലേ (ceRukkan āvallē) = “don’t be rude!”

Referring to the bridegroom as “ceRukkan” is probably a frozen use of the now informal word. Since it can refer to children, a possible extension is to immaturity or rudeness.

4. കണക്ക് (kaṇakk’)

Real meanings:

(a) “measure/figure/calculation”: e.g. ഒരു സ്പൂണാണെന്റെ കണക്ക് (oru spūṇāṇenRe kaṇakk’) = “one spoon is my figure” (i.e. “I usually put one spoon” (of, say, tea powder))

(b) “account”: e.g. അത് കണക്കിലെടുത്തില്ല (at’ kaṇakkil eṭuttilla) = “didn’t take that into account/consider that”

Made-up meaning: “digit”

e.g. നാല് കണക്കുള്ള സംഖ്യയാണ് (nāl’ kaṇakkuḷḷa sankhyayāṇ) = “it’s a four-digit number”

It is probably used to mean “account” as an extension of the sense of “calculation” or “arithmetic”, which are essential to keeping accounts. From the sense of “number” or “figure”,

“digit” is a meaningful extension.

5. കയറുക (kayaRuka)

Real meanings:

(a) “go up/climb”: e.g. മല കയറി (mala kayaRi) = “climbed the mountain”

(b) “go in/enter”: e.g. വീട്ടിൽ കയറി (vīṭṭil kayaRi) = “entered the house”

Made-up meaning: “increase”

e.g. ഒരു കൊല്ലമായി എന്റെ പൊക്കം കയറിയിട്ടില്ല (oru kollamāyi enRe pokkam kayaRiyiṭṭilla) = “it’s been a year since my height increased”

The real meanings are probably related in that most places that have to be entered are at a higher level than the outside (like a house or a train) and therefore entering involves going “up” in a sense. The extension from “climbing” to “increasing” is straightforward and occurs in English.

6. ഇറങ്ങുക (iRańńuka)

Real meanings:

(a) “go down/descend”: e.g. പടി ഇറങ്ങി (paṭi iRańńi) = “came down the step(s)”

(b) “go out/exit”: e.g. വീട്ടിൽ നിന്ന് ഇറങ്ങി (vīṭṭil ninn’ iRańńi) = “came out of the house”

Made-up meaning: “decrease”

e.g. വില ഇറങ്ങി ഇറങ്ങി വരുന്നു (vila iRańńi iRańńi varunnu) = “the price is decreasing”

The real meanings are related analogous to those of (5): most places that have to be exited from are at a higher level than the outside, and therefore exiting involves going “down” in a sense. The extension from “descending” to “reducing” is also analogous.

7. മണ്ണ് (maṇṇ’)

Real meanings:

(a) “mud/soil”: e.g. ചുവപ്പുള്ള മണ്ണ് (cuvappuḷḷa maṇṇ’) = “red soil”

(b) “Earth” (as opposed to heaven): e.g. ഈ മണ്ണിൽ പിറന്ന മിശിഹ (ī maṇṇil piRanna miśiha) = “the Messiah born on this Earth”

Made-up meaning: “dirt”

e.g. ഉടുപ്പിൽ മുഴുവനും മണ്ണായി (uṭṭupil muzhuvanum maṇṇāyi) = “the clothes are covered with dirt”

Since mud or soil is perceived to be the Earth’s primary component, the connection between the two real meanings is clear (and occurs in English and Hindi as well). Being generally unclean and/or undesirable, the extension to “dirt” is natural.

8. കമ്പി (kanpi)

Real meanings:

(a) “(metal) wire”: e.g. ഒരു കമ്പികൊണ്ടു കെട്ടി (oru kanpikonṭ’ ketti) = “tied with a wire”

(b) “telegram”: e.g. പോയ വിവരം പറയുന്ന കമ്പി (pōya vivaram paRayunna kanpi) = “a telegram giving the news of going (death)”

Made-up meaning: “(phone/laptop) charger”

e.g. കമ്പി കുത്തി ചാർജ്ജ് ചെയ്തു (kanpi kutti cārjj’ ceytu) = “plugged in the charger and charged it”

Because telegrams are transmitted by wire, referring to a telegram as “wire” is an easy

alternative to having an entirely new word for the new technology. The conflation is analogous to that in English. Since phone and laptop chargers also work by wire, it is clear how it could be extended to mean this.

#### 9. വഴി (vazhi)

Real meanings:

(a) “route/way”: e.g. സ്കൂളിലേക്കുള്ള വഴി (skūlilēkkuḷḷa vazhi) = “the route to school”

(b) “road”: e.g. വഴിയിൽ ചെളിയുണ്ട് (vazhiyil celiyunt̃) = “the road is dirty”

(c) “method/way”: e.g. പൈസ കൊടുക്കാനുള്ള വഴി (paisa koṭukkānuḷḷa vazhi) = “a way to give the money”

Made-up meaning: “religion/ideology”

e.g. അവരുടെ വഴി ജൂതമതമാണ് (avarute vazhi jūtamata māṇ) = “they are Jewish” (lit. “their religion is Judaism”)

The first two real meanings are very closely related and have a common word in Hindi as well. The third meaning is a common extension, in the sense of a metaphorical “path” to being able to do something. The made-up meaning is in the sense of a faith or an ideology as a path one follows.

#### 10. കർത്താവ് (karttāv)

Real meanings:

(a) “subject (grammatical)”: e.g. ഈ വാക്ക് കർത്താവാണ് (ī vākk’ karttāvāṇ) = “this word is the subject”

(b) “creator/God (Christian)”: e.g. കർത്താവ് അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ (karttāv’ anugrahikkat̃te) = “may God bless (you)”

Made-up meaning: “maker (of an object)”

e.g. ഈ വാച്ചിന്റെ കർത്താവ് (ī vāccinRe karttāv) = “the person who made this watch”

The real meanings are closely related; the word is borrowed from Sanskrit कर्तृ, derived from the root कृ (“do/create”). Thus, the sense of “doer” (or subject) and “creator” (or God) arose. The idea of “maker” is a simple connotative extension to that of “creator”, not carrying the theological association.

#### 11. മുള്ള് (muḷḷ)

Real meanings:

(a) “thorn”: e.g. റോസപ്പൂവിന്റെ മുള്ള് (RōsappūvinRe muḷḷ) = “the thorn of a rose”

(b) “(fish)bone”: e.g. കരിമീനിലെ മുള്ള് വലുതാണ് (karimīnile muḷḷ’ valutāṇ) = “the bones in seerfish are big”

Made-up meaning: “needle”

e.g. മുളളും നൂലും (muḷḷum nūlum) = “needle and thread”

The two real meanings are connected by the idea of a relatively small, pointed object, and therefore used to refer to both. Needles, too, fall in this category.

#### 12. വലിപ്പ (valipp)

Real meanings:

(a) “drawer”: e.g. വലിപ്പിൽ മരുന്നുണ്ട് (valippil marunnunt̃) = “there is medicine in the drawer”

(b) “(the act of) drawing/pulling”: e.g. ആ വലിപ്പിൽ തുണി കീറി (ā valippil tuṇi kīRi) = “in that pulling, the cloth tore”

Made-up meaning: “(muscle) pull”

e.g. മെസ്സിക്ക് കാലിൽ വലിപ്പായി (messikk’ kālil valippāyi) = “Messi had a pull (pulled a muscle) in his leg”

The extension of the meaning from the abstract noun to the actual object being pulled is straightforward and occurs in English as well. The same principle leads to the made-up meaning.

### 13. അളിയൻ (aḷiyan)

Real meanings:

(a) “brother-in-law (wife’s brother)”: e.g. അളിയൻ അയലതല കൊടുക്കണം (aḷiyan’ ayalatala koṭukkaṇam) = “one should give a mackerel-head to one’s brother-in-law”

(b) “dude (informal)”: e.g. അളിയാ, ഇത് നോക്ക് (aḷiyā, it’ nōkk’) = “dude, look at this”

Made-up meaning: “young man”

e.g. ഇവൻ ഒരു അളിയനാണ് (ivan oru aḷiyanan) = “he’s a young man”

The second real meaning probably arose from the closeness in age between brothers-in-law, and began to be used to mean “dude” informally. Since it is primarily employed in this sense by youngsters, it is natural for others to use it to describe a person who is addressed as such.

### 14. വാക്ക് (vākk’)

Real meanings:

(a) “word”: e.g. ഒരു വാക്ക് മിണ്ടിയില്ല (oru vākk’ miṇṭiyilla) = “didn’t say a word”

(b) “word/promise”: e.g. വരുമെന്ന് വാക്ക് തന്നു (varumenn’ vākk’ tannu) = “promised (gave their word) to come”

Made-up meaning: “official statement”

e.g. സർക്കാർ വാക്ക് പറഞ്ഞു (sarkkāR’ vākk’ paRaññu) = “the government made a statement”

The first two meanings are closely related, as is reflected in English as well; a promise is a “word” or an “utterance” to be taken seriously. Extension to the sense of “official statement” is similar.

### 15. തിങ്കൾ (tiṅkaḷ)

Real meanings:

(a) “moon”: e.g. ധനുമാസ തിങ്കൾ (dhanumāsa tiṅkaḷ) = “the moon in the month of Dhanu”

(b) “Monday”: e.g. തിങ്കൾ മുതൽ വെള്ളി വരെ (tiṅkaḷ mutal vellī vare) = “from Monday to Friday”

Made-up meaning: “satellite”

e.g. ഈയോ വ്യാഴത്തിന്റെ തിങ്കളാണ് (īyō vyāzhattinRe tiṅkaḷāṇ) = “Io is a moon of Jupiter”

The cultural association of the second day of the week with the moon is widespread; the two real meanings are a manifestation of this. A generalisation of the literal sense of “moon” is “satellite (of any body)”.

### 16. മണി (maṇi)

Real meanings:

(a) “bell”: e.g. മണി അടിക്കുന്നു (maṇi aṭikkunnu) = “the bell is ringing”

(b) “time”: e.g. മണി നോക്കൂ (maṇi nōkku) = “look at the time”

Made-up meaning: “alarm”

e.g. മണി സെറ്റ് ചെയ്തിട്ട് ഉറങ്ങി (maṇi seRR' ceytiṭṭ' uRaṇṇi) = “set the alarm and went to sleep”

Since bells were historically used to broadcast the time, the association between the real meanings is clear. The use of a bell as something to wake one up/indicate the time for a certain task or event leads one to the made-up meaning “alarm”.

#### 17. നീർ (nīr)

Real meanings:

(a) “water (in compounds)”: e.g. ഇവിടെ കുടിനീർ ഉണ്ട് (iviṭe kuṭinīr unṭ) = “there's drinking water here”

(b) “swelling”: e.g. കാലിൽ നീരുണ്ട് (kāḷil nīrunṭ) = “there is swelling in the leg”

Made-up meaning: “liquid”

e.g. മർക്കുറി ഒരു നീർ ആണ് (markkuRi oru nīr āṇ) = “mercury is a liquid”

The perception of a swelling on the body as being due to accumulation of water presumably led to the second meaning from the first. The made-up meaning is straightforward generalisation of the first real meaning.

#### 18. നേരെ (nēre)

Real meanings:

(a) “straight”: e.g. വഴി നേരാണ് (vazhi nērāṇ) = “the road is straight”

(b) “true”: e.g. നീ പറഞ്ഞത് നേരല്ല (nī paRaṇṇat' nēralla) = “what you said is not true”

Made-up meanings: “clear/unambiguous”

e.g. നേരായിട്ട് പറയൂ (nērāyitṭ' paRayu) = “say it clearly”

The first two meanings are naturally related, in that what is true is perceived to be “straight” or “right” and what is false or deceitful is “crooked”. The made-up meaning is similar to the sense of “true”.

#### 19. ഇട (iṭa)

Real meanings:

(a) “(time) interval/meanwhile”: e.g. ഇടയ്ക്ക് ചെയ്തു (iṭaykk' ceytu) = “did (it) in the meantime”

(b) “space between”: e.g. മതിലുകൾക്ക് തമ്മിലുള്ള ഇടയിൽ (matilukaḷkk' tammiluḷḷa iṭayil) = “between the walls”

Made-up meaning: “separation”

e.g. ഈ ഇട ഞാൻ എങ്ങനെ സഹിക്കും (ī iṭa ṇān eṇṇane sahikkum) = “how will I bear this separation”

The two real meanings are clearly related by the concept of an “interval”; one in time, and one in space. The made-up meaning is an extension of the latter.

#### 20. സമ്മാനം (sammānam)

Real meanings:

(a) “prize”: e.g. ഒന്നാം സമ്മാനം നേടി (onnām sammānam nēṭi) = “won the first prize”

(b) “gift”: e.g. സമ്മാനമായി തന്നു (sammānamāyi tannu) = “gave it as a gift”

Made-up meaning: “fees”

e.g. സ്കൂളിന്റെ സമ്മാനം നൽകി (skūḷinRe sammānam nalki) = “paid the school fees”

The real meanings have in common the sense of something being given to someone else. The made-up meaning too is in this sense.