VERB MORPHOLOGY AND CLAUSE STRUCTURE IN MALAYALAM

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In this paper, we propose that the traditional classification of Malayalam verbs in terms of Kaarita/non-Kaarita distinction has a function which goes well beyond the classification of verbs as simply Strong or Weak.[1] Specifically we shall assume that the kaarita affix belongs to the light verb and it signifies an Agentive light verb projection while the akaritas need not include an Agent. To state it explicitly, verbs are said to be kaaritas if their stems taking the non-finite suffix *-uka* ends in the sequence *kk*, as in *vicaarikk-uka* 'to think', or else they are said to be akaaritas, as in *paRay-uka* 'to say' for instance.

In Srikumar(2010), it is argued that causatives of psych predicates involving noun incorporation in Malayalam are simple transitives. The crucial data set testifying to this claim are given below.

(1) a. manooj   kuTTi-yooTA   deeSya-ppeTTu

              child-soc.   angry- became

      "Manoj became angry at the child."

  b. kuTTi   *kuuTTukaare   koNTA   manooj-ine deeSya-ppeTutti

      child   friends   acc.   instr.   acc. angry- made

      "The child made Manoj angry."

  c. kuTTi   kuuTTukaare   koNTA manooj-ine   deeSya-ppeTu-ppiccu/iiccu

      child   friends   acc.   instr.   acc. angry- made

      'The Child made his friends to anger Manoj.'

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[1] The strong/ weak correlation for the Kaarita/akaarita distinction is attributed to the German scholarship in Rajaraja Verma (1896).

(2) a. payyan-A   peNN-ine iSTAppeTTu

        boy-dat.   girl-acc.   like-become

        'The boy liked the girl."

    b. *raamu   peNN-ine   iSTAppeT-utti

            girl-acc.   like-made

        "Ramu made to like the girl."

    c. raamu payyan-e koNTA   peNN-ine   iSTAppeT-?utti/iiccu

            boy-acc.   instr.   girl-acc.   like-made

        "Ramu made the boy like the girl."

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In (1b), the Object Experiencer construction corresponding to (1a) does not permit a causee argument to occur in the sentence. Following Pesetsky (1995), we shall claim this to be the result of Target/Subject Matter of Emotion Restriction which forbids co-occurrence of both the causer and Target/Subject Matter of Emotion in the same clause. However a double causative structure as in (1c) permits both the causer and the Target/SM of Emotion to occur together in the same sentence, thereby obviating the T/SM restriction. Strangely, in (2b), the causative sentence without the causee argument is ruled out as unacceptable, while (2c), with the overt presence of the causee argument is ruled in as acceptable. What is the mystery surrounding this state of affairs? According to Srikumar (2010), for some theta-theoretic reason, let us say the theta-criterion of Chomsky (1981), for instance, retention of the causee argument is obligatory in this case. Perhaps it is uninterpretable otherwise. But the structural representation then, given Pesetsky's T/SM restriction, ought to be a biclausal; witness the fact that the regular causative suffix *ikk* with vowel lengthening indicative of double causative is preferred here over the usual causative suffix *–tt* associated with these psych predicates.

    In light of the above analysis, there are a few predictions which run contrary to the usual analysis of causatives such as those arrived at in Madhavan (2004). For one thing, the structure of a causativized simple transitive clause can no longer be assumed to consist of a single light verb projection; since the causee can surface as an instrumental;

i.e., the structure must contain a light verb projection hosted by the causative affix in addition to the light verb projection hosted by the transitive verb as given below.[2]

(3)   [vP AGENT [v' [vP Causee [v' [VP] Transitive/ (izer)]] Cause]]

Let us assume that the light verb corresponding to the transitive/ (izer) can be the affix -*kk* if the verb is a Kaarita verb or else null.

   Further this particular analysis also leads us to review certain assumptions concerning the clausal structure of sentences in Malayalam. In the case of intransitives, let us deal with the well-known distinction between unaccusatives and unergatives.   For unaccusatives, the clausal structure would have a single layered *v*P structure headed by the light verb marked as unaccusative without a Spec projection. When causativized the same structure would be headed by a light verb in the form of the Kaarita affix *(i)kk* and the Spec of vP would be duly occupied by the Agent DP.

(4)   [vP[VP vanci muNG-] [v UNACC]]
                boat   capsized
        'The boat capsized.'
(5)   [vP [raaman] [[VP vanci mu-] [v –KK]]
                        boat drowned
        'Raman drowned the boat.'

   Among unergatives, Madhavan (2004) considers three types.

(7)   kuTTi karanjnju
        Child   cried
        'The child cried.'
(8)   raaman   ciriccu

Laughed

'Raman laughed.'

(9)   kuTTi   nrittam   ceytu

Child   dance   did

'The child danced.'

The structures proposed for these sentences in Madhavan (2004) are as follows:

(10)   [VP [kuTTi] [V'[V kara]]]

(11)   [VP [raaman] [V' [NP ciri] [V ikk]]]

(12)   [VP [kuTTi] [V' [NP nrittam] [V cey]]]

We accept Madhavan's analysis only with respect to the *karay-uka* class of unergative verbs. For the *cirikk-uka*-class, on the other hand, we go along with Hale and Keyser's transitive analysis of the unergative class of verbs. Essentially my analysis rests on the assumption that all Kaarita verbs are underlyingly derivatives of transitive structures with an Agentive subject generated as Spec of vP. The verbs in this class are all derived by affixing the Kaarita affix to what are essentially nouns.

(13)   a. ciri-kk-uka 'to laugh', kuLi-kk-uka 'to bathe', muRi-kk-uka 'to cut or partition'etc.

Given that the kaarita affix –kk sits in the little v, I claim that these nouns are all base generated as complements to null verbs signifying abstract meanings such as DO, BECOME etc thereby giving substance to a transitive analysis.. These nouns would then initially undergo verbalization by conflating with the null verb by a specific instance of head-to-head movement. In other words, a noun which is non-attributive will conflate with the null verb meaning DO while attributive nouns will conflate with the null verb meaning BECOME. Contrary to Madhavan's claim, under our theory, the VP internal generation of Subject as its spec would predict the unattested base form *ciriy-uka* or *maTiy-uka* and the unattested verbal forms *cirinjnju* or *maTinjnju*.

An advantage arguing in favour of our theory is the fact that when verbs like *cirikkuka* or psych predicates like *viSvasikkuka* (an observation attributed to K.P. Mohanan) are causativized it predicts the occurrence of the causee as instrumental as an option which is true given facts. Further, the unergative verbs like *karay-uka* lacking an underlying transitive structure are predicted to form nominals by independent morphological derivation yielding the form *karaccil* 'weeping'.

Further certain Kaarita transitive verbs are also predicted to arise from what are probably ditransitive sentences.

(14) a. Raaman   avanA   aTi   koTuttu→
                  he-dat.   beating   gave
     'Raman gave him a beating.'

   b. Raaman   avane   aTiccu
                   He-acc.   beat
       'Raman beat him.'

(15) a. Raaman   avanA   toZi   koTuttu →
                      he-dat.   kick   gave
     'Raman gave him a kick.'

   b. raaman   avane   toZiccu
                     he-acc. kicked
       'Raman kicked him.'

The analysis espoused in this paper also apredicts the structural difference between verbal pairs like *kaaNuka/ nookkuka* 'to see/to look'. *kaaNuka* being a perception verb probably belongs to the same class as experiencer verbs and has a VP internal structure for its arguments, while its causativized counterpart would add an argument as Spec of its little *v* as a function of the introduction of the Kaarita affix *–kk* into the little *v* giving rise to the meaning 'to show'. For *nookkuka* however, the verb is basically agentive as indicated by the kaarita affix attached to it and the causativization would predictably result in a double causative with the causee being realized as an adjunct.

Thus, in this paper, we argued for the position that kaarita verbs in Malayalam irrespective of whether they are transitive or intransitive are underlyingly derived from transitive structures with Agentive Subjects.

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