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## CONTROL IN SOME SENTENTIAL ADJUNCTS OF MALAYALAM \*

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In this paper I shall examine four sentential adjunct constructions in Malayalam from the point of view of their control properties. One of them -- the  $-\text{ə}$  adjunct -- has often been misanalyzed as a "serial verbs" construction; therefore I shall devote some space to showing that this construction does involve a sentential adjunct. Our four adjuncts reveal some very puzzling facts about control. But we shall be able to make some sense out of the picture by claiming that Malayalam has two types of PRO: PRO and pro. A second theoretical claim I shall make emerges from our observation that two of our adjuncts which optionally allow a lexical subject also contain aspect markers; and that this correlation between presence/absence of Aspect and optionality/obligatoriness of control is also true of the "absolute construction" of English. I shall claim that in nonfinite clauses, a lexical subject may be governed by Aspect.

In section 1 I present the data regarding the four sentential adjuncts. In section 2 I present my theoretical claims.

## 1

Malayalam has sentences like (1), where a chain of verbs occurs at the end of the sentence:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a.  $\tilde{n}$ aan oru maanna poṭṭicc-ə tinn-u  
I-n one mango-a pluck(st2)-ə eat(st2)-Past  
'I plucked a mango and ate it.'  
(lit. 'Plucking, I ate a mango.')
- b.  $\tilde{n}$ aan oru maanna poṭṭicc-ə muRicc-ə  
I-n one mango-a pluck(st2)-ə cut(st2)-ə  
uppilitt-ə tinn-u  
pickle(st2)-ə eat(st2)-Past  
'I plucked, cut, pickled and ate a mango.'  
(lit. 'Plucking, cutting, pickling, I ate a mango.')

In such a chain, the final V bears the tense and aspect markers of the sentence. The non-final Vs are formed by attaching a suffix  $-\text{ə}$  to the 'past tense stem'. The fact that the non-final Vs are nonfinite can be easily appreciated if we look at the sentence corresponding to (1a) in the future tense:

- (1 a')  $\tilde{n}$ aan oru maayya potticc-ə tinn-um  
 I-n one mango-a pluck(st2)-ə eat(st1)-Future  
 'I will pluck and eat a mango.'

Note that only the final V has changed to signal the change of tense; the non-final V has the invariant 'past tense stem' and the suffix -ə.

The chain of verbs at the end of the sentence may be of any length (as suggested by (1b)); it is the output of a fully productive process, and the meaning is fully compositional (except in a few cases where the V-V sequence has been lexicalized). So we shall treat the building of these chains as a syntactic process.

These chains have been analyzed as 'serial verbs', with a suggested structure roughly like  $\sqrt{V} [V-. . . -V]$ . But an examination of a wider range of data shows that this analysis will not do (except perhaps for the few lexicalized V-V sequences).<sup>2</sup> For the structure illustrated in (1) may also occur in sentences in which the verbs are non-contiguous, as shown in (2):

- (2) a.  $\tilde{n}$ aan oru maayya nallawannam muRicc-ə patukke  
 I-n one mango-a well cut-ə slowly  
 tinn-u  
 eat-Past  
 'I cut a mango well and ate it slowly.'  
 (lit. 'Cutting well, I ate a mango slowly.')
- b.  $\tilde{n}$ aan kaaRə witt-ə oru bassə waayyi  
 I-n car-a sell-ə one bus-a buy-Past  
 'I sold the car and bought a bus.'  
 (lit. 'Selling the car, I bought a bus.')
- c. naaya siita-ye kadicc-ə tekkooṭṭə ooḍi  
 dog-n Sita-a bite-ə south-towards run-Past  
 'The dog bit Sita and ran in a southerly direction.'  
 (lit. 'Biting Sita, the dog ran towards the south.')

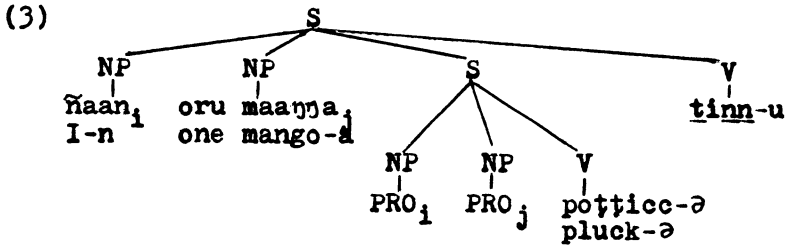
In (2) there are no contiguous sequences of verbs. The two verbs of (2a) have (each) their own adverbial modifiers, and one of these intervenes between the verbs. In (2b) (even more strikingly), the two verbs have their own independent direct objects. In (2c), the first V has a direct object, and the second V is intransitive. Examining these cases, it should be clear that the non-final V is the verb of an embedded S. The mutual independence of the two Vs can be further illustrated by scrambling this embedded S away from the final V:

- (2 b') kaaRə witt-ə awan oru bassə waayyi

This scrambling is possible also in the sentences of (1), cf.

- (1 a'') potṭicc-ə  $\tilde{n}$ aan oru maayya tinnu.<sup>3</sup>

The result that the 'verb chains' of sentences like (1) are not in fact what they appear to be, but that each non-final V is the verb of a full sentential adjunct, raises some interesting problems. The structure of (1a) (we see now) is something like (3):



The fact that the subject of the embedded S is controlled by the subject of the matrix S should not be surprising, since the embedded S is nonfinite. What is surprising is the control of the object position.

Mohanran (1983) has argued that Malayalam has PROs in governed positions. Temporarily adopting this solution, let us note (however) that there is a difference between the control of the subject position and that of the object position. The latter is optional, as evidenced by (2b) and (2c) (above). The control of the subject position is obligatory, cf.

- (4) a. \**oru maanna wiin-ə, ñaan atə uppiliṭṭ-u*  
 one mango-n fall-ə I-n it-a pickle-Past  
 'A mango falling, I pickled it.'  
 b. \**amma maricc-ə, awan karaññilla*  
 mother-n die-ə he-n cry-Past-neg.  
 '(His) mother dying, he didn't cry.'

Moreover, the controller must be the subject of the matrix S, cf.

- (5) \**ñaan oru maanna, [PRO<sub>i</sub> wiin-ə] tinn-u*  
 I-n one mango-d fall-ə eat-Past  
 'A mango fell, and I ate it.'  
 (lit. 'Falling, I ate a mango.')

Let us call the type of adjunct that we discussed above the "-ə adjunct", since a suffix -ə is attached to the verb. We now turn our attention to three other sentential adjuncts in Malayalam.

There is a "-kondə adjunct" in Malayalam, in which a suffix -kondə is attached to the adjunct's verb. This seems to have the same control properties as the -ə adjunct. Thus the control of the adjunct's subject by the matrix subject is obligatory:

- (6) a. kuṭṭi karaṇṇu-kondə skuulil pooyi  
 child-n cry-kondə school-in go-Past  
 'Crying, the child went to school.'  
 b. \*amma karaṇṇu-kondə kuṭṭi skuulil pooyi  
 mother-n cry-kondə child-n school-in go-Past  
 'The mother crying, the child went to school.'

The control of non-subject positions is possible, but not obligatory, cf.

- (7) a. siṭa raaman-e taḍawi-kkondə ṣākaaricc-u  
 Sita-n Raman-a fondle-kondə scold-Past  
 'Sita scolded Raman, while fondling him.'  
 b. siṭa raaman-e taḍawi-kkondə kriṣṇan-e  
 Sita-n Raman-a fondle-kondə Krishnan-a  
 ṣākaaricc-u  
 scold-Past  
 'Sita scolded Krishnan, while fondling Raman.'

In the "-ittə adjunct", a suffix -ittə is attached to the adjunct's verb. Control of the adjunct's subject position is possible, cf. (8); but it is not obligatory, cf. (9). ((9a) may be compared with (6b), which is ungrammatical.)

- (8) kaṇṇi kudicc-ittə kuṭṭi skuulil pooyi  
 rice porridge-n drink-ittə child-n school-in go-Past  
 'Having eaten rice porridge, the child went to school.'  
 (9) a. amma maricc-ittə, awan karaṇṇilla  
 mother-n die-ittə he-n cry-Past-neg.  
 '(His) mother having died (even), he didn't cry.'  
 b. raaman kaṇṇi kudicc-ittə, siṭa-kkə  
 Raman-n rice porridge-a drink-ittə Siṭa-to  
 wayaṛə niṛaṇṇ-u  
 stomach-n fill-Past  
 'Raman having eaten rice porridge, Sita's stomach became full!' (lit. '... stomach became full to Sita.')

Control of the adjunct's object position is also possible; and here, the controller may be either the matrix subject (cf. (10)) or the matrix object (cf. (11)):

- (10) a. siṭa kuḍicc-ittə, kaṇṇi tiiṛṇṇ-u  
 Siṭa-n drink-ittə rice porridge-n finish-Past  
 'Sita having eaten it, the rice porridge got finished.'  
 b. ṇāṇ ilakki-yittə, aṭə ilakiyilla  
 I-n shake(trans.)-ittə it-n shake(intrans.)-Past-  
 -neg.  
 'Although I shook it, it didn't shake.'  
 (lit. 'I having shaken, it didn't shake.')

- (11) a. nii paRaṅṅ-ittə, ellaavarum aa kaaryam  
 you-n say-ittə everyone-n that matter-a  
 aRiṅṅ-u  
 know-Past  
 'Because you said it, everyone came to know about  
 that matter.' (lit. 'You having said, everyone  
 knew that matter.')
- b. naaya kadicc-ittə, ṅaan awan-e aaspatRi-yileekkə  
 dog-n bite-ittə I-n he-a hospital-to  
 koṇḍ-ə pooyi  
 take-ə go-Past  
 'A dog having bitten him, I took him to a  
 hospital.'

The fourth sentential adjunct we shall examine is the "-kondirikke adjunct", in which a suffix kondirikke is attached to the verb. In this adjunct (again), control of the adjunct's subject position is possible (cf. (12)), but it is not obligatory (cf. (13)):

- (12) udyaanatt-il ulaatti-kkondirikke, siita  
 garden-in walk about-kondirikke Sita-n  
 palatum aalocicc-u  
 many things-a think-Past  
 'While walking about in the garden, Sita thought  
 about many things.'
- (13) raaman udyaanatt-il ulaatti-kkondirikke, siita  
 Ramaṅ-n garden-in walk about-kondirikke Sita-n  
 bhakṣanam paakam ceyt-u  
 food-a cooking do-Past  
 'While Ramaṅ was walking about in the garden, Sita  
 cooked food.'

Control of the adjunct's object position also appears to be possible:

- (14) amma kulippiccu-kondirikke, kutti tummi  
 mother-n bathe(trans.)-kondirikke child-n sneeze-Past  
 'While mother was bathing it, the child sneezed.'

Now, there is a clear contrast as regards the possibility of a lexical subject, between (on the one hand) the -ə and -kondə adjuncts, and (on the other hand) the -ittə and -kondirikke adjuncts. A lexical subject is inadmissible in the former, but is in complementary distribution with PRO in the latter. Interestingly, the suffixes of the latter class also function as aspect markers in Malayalam. Thus -ittə is part of the perfect aspect marker -ittundə, illustrated in (15); and -kondirikke is formed by adding an -e augment to the progressive aspect marker -kondirikke, illustrated in (16).

- (15)  $\tilde{n}$ aan oru kattə eḻuti-yittundə  
I-n one letter-a write-Perfect  
'I have written a letter.'
- (16)  $\tilde{n}$ aan oru kattə eḻuti-kkondirikk-unnu  
I-n one letter-a write-Progressive-Present  
'I am writing a letter.'

The -ə and -kondə suffixes (on the other hand) are not aspect markers.<sup>5</sup>

The correlation between the presence of a verbal element which can function as an aspect marker and the admissibility of a lexical subject is seen to be not an accident of Malayalam when we consider the English 'absolute construction'. This construction allows either a lexical subject or a PRO subject if the verbal complex contains an auxiliary have, or a be (auxiliary or main verb); if have or be is not present, it allows only a PRO subject:

- (17) a. (John) having finished dinner, Mary decided to wash the dishes.  
b. (Her children) being ill, Mary decided not to go to work.
- (18) a. (\*John) munching an apple, Mary sat on the doorstep.  
b. (\*Her children) covered with bruises, Mary looked pretty miserable.

This striking cross-linguistic parallelism allows us to conclude that the presence of aspect (an aspectual verb) 'sanctions' a lexical subject in nonfinite Ss. If we try to explain this fact in terms of "government", we can say that aspect optionally governs the subject position.<sup>6</sup> Suppose we adopt the position of Akmajian, Steele and Wasow (1979) that the auxiliary verb have, and the verb be, are generated in the VP but move into AUX if the latter contains no modal. We can say that in nonfinite Ss containing (only) an -ing in AUX, have (or be) moves into AUX only optionally. If have (or be) has moved into AUX, it governs the subject position and the sentence requires a lexical subject; if it has not so moved, the subject position is ungoverned and is filled by PRO. A parallel analysis can be worked out for Malayalam aspect markers (all of which are derived from verbal roots and are 'verbal' in nature); but I will not attempt this here.

We now advert to the claim of Mohanan (1983) that Malayalam has PROs in governed positions. If this were true, our attempt to describe the distribution of lexical subject and PRO in terms of government would obviously be vacuous. Suppose (however) we say that there are two types of PRO in Malayalam, PRO and pro; and that it

is the latter which appears in governed positions, such as the subject position of a tensed S and the object position. We shall further say that *pro* is simply a pronominal. Such an analysis will immediately account for the (otherwise puzzling) difference between English and Malayalam as regards control. I shall now conclude this paper by presenting two more arguments for the "two PROs analysis".

Consider the following instances of the -ittə adjunct of Malayalam:

- (19) a. *awan-te suhakkeedə marunnə kaṣicc-ittə*  
 he-gen illness-n medicine-a eat-ittə  
*maari*  
 get cured-Past  
 'His illness got cured because of his taking medicine.' (lit. 'Having taken medicine, his illness got cured.')
- b. *jappaan-il boombə itt-ittə etRa*  
 Japan-in bomb-a put-ittə how many  
*kuttikal maricc-u*  
 children-n die-Past  
 'How many children died because of bombing in Japan.' (lit. 'Having put bomb in Japan, how many children died.')

The point to note is that in these sentences, the PRO subject of the ittə adjunct has no antecedent (in the sentence). Thus in (19a), the person who 'takes medicine' is obviously not awante suhakkeedə ('his illness'), which is the matrix subject. (This person may be taken to be the "he" whose illness gets cured; but this interpretation is obviously dependent only on pragmatic factors, since awan ('he') is in the genitive position of the matrix subject.) In (19b) (on the intended reading), the people who do the bombing are not the kuttikal ('children') who get killed. The corresponding sentences with the -ə adjunct (instead of the -ittə adjunct) are ungrammatical on the intended reading, cf.

(19b') *jappaan-il boombə itt-ə etRa kuttikal maricc-u*

(This sentence is of course fine on the reading that the children did the bombing.) The English absolute construction (with or without an aspectual verb) is also ungrammatical on the intended reading:

(20) Having put bombs in Japan, how many children died!

There is a constellation of puzzling facts here which call for an explanation. The English absolute construction containing an aspectual verb takes a subject

which is either a lexical NP or a controlled PRO; but it does not allow a "free PRO". The parallel Malayalam construction with an -ittə adjunct allows all three possibilities. If Malayalam (like English) has only one type of PRO, it is difficult to see how one can explain this cross-linguistic difference.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, if we say that Malayalam (unlike English) has both PRO and pro, we predict the constellation of facts. For now, the -ittə adjunct (like the parallel English construction) will take either a lexical NP or a controlled PRO as subject. But wherever we can get a lexical subject, we can also get a pro in Malayalam. And the pro can be free.

A second set of facts which the "two PROs theory" can explain has to do with the contrast between the -ittə and -ə adjuncts. The -ə adjunct allows only a controlled PRO as subject, but the -ittə adjunct allows (also) a free PRO. Now it could be pointed out (on the basis of evidence like that noted in fn. 7) that the same type of PRO can be controlled in one structure and free in another structure. But if we are simply content to say this about the -ittə adjunct/-ə adjunct contrast, we leave unanswered the following question: why is it that the adjuncts which take a lexical subject are also the ones which allow a free PRO, and the adjuncts which do not take a lexical subject are also the ones which allow only a controlled PRO? Why do we not get the reverse correlation, or no correlation at all? On the other hand, if we say that Malayalam has both PRO and pro, and that the latter can occur wherever a lexical subject can occur, we explain the correlation.

### Notes

\* I wish to thank Probal Dasgupta for helpful discussions.

<sup>1</sup> n = nominative; a = accusative; st2 = stem 2 (or "past tense stem"); st1 = stem 1 (or "present tense stem").

The Malayalam nominative marker is 'ə'; the accusative marker is -ə for animate NPs and 'ə' (again) for inanimate NPs. Malayalam verbs have two stems, which may be called the "present tense stem" and the "past tense stem", or (more neutrally) stem1 and stem 2. The formation of the second stem from the first is the basis of an elaborate system of verb classes. The -ə suffix illustrated in (1) -- and indeed, all the suffixes we shall be discussing in this paper -- attach only to the past tense stem. This being the case, we shall omit the information about stem class in our subsequent glosses of forms involving these suffixes.

<sup>2</sup> For the lexicalized sequences, the suggested structure may indeed be appropriate. The verbs of these resist

separation by intervening elements. A good diagnostic of whether a sequence has been lexicalized or not is what we may call the "tanne test". (Tanne is an emphasis marker which can modify both nouns and verbs.) Tanne cannot modify the first V of kondə var 'take and come' (meaning 'bring'), which is one of the clearest cases of lexicalization; whereas it can modify the first V of kadiccə tinn 'bite and eat'; cf.

- (i) \*nii maaṅṅa kondə tanne var-aṅam  
 you-n mango-a take-ə emph. come-must  
 (ii) nii maaṅṅa kadicc-ə tanne tinn-aṅam  
 you-n mango-a bite-ə emph. eat-must

3 If this sentence is judged somewhat odd, note that it becomes fine if there is an emphasis marker, tanne, on poṭṭicc-ə :

- (i) poṭṭicc-ə tanne ṅaan orū maaṅṅa tinnu.

A still better sentence is:

- (ii) cavacc-ə tanne nii itə tinn-aṅam  
 chew-ə emph. you-n this-a eat-must  
 'You must eat this by chewing it.'

4 The question of whether Malayalam has a VP or not is largely irrelevant to our discussion. In (3) we tentatively adopt a "flat structure" (see Mohanan (1982) for some arguments in this regard).

5 There is a minor snag here. It could be objected that -ittə is only the first element of the complex form -ittundə (ittə+undə), which functions as the aspect marker. And that, in this respect it is no different from -kondə which is the first element of the progressive marker -kondirikḱ (kondə+irikḱ). Therefore (it could be asked), how can one maintain that -ittə is an aspect marker and -kondə is not?

There is a difference between the two cases, however. The second element of -ittundə, namely undə, is a verb with a defective paradigm: it exists only in two forms, undə (the present tense form), and ulla (its form when the relative clause marker -a is attached to it). The second element of -kondirikḱ, namely irikḱ, is a verb with a 'full' paradigm. The fact that undə is a defective verb may explain why it does not surface in the adjunct. My claim (in other words) is that the full aspect marker, -ittundə, is underlyingly present in the adjunct; and that its second element is deleted for morphological reasons.

One could alternatively maintain that the aspectual meaning is carried by the first element in -ittundə

and by the second element in -kondirik̄k̄.

<sup>6</sup> It has been claimed (Reuland 1983) that in the absolute construction, it is the -ing which optionally governs the subject position. This cannot be true, in view of (18).

There are some apparent counterexamples to our claim, which we must take care of. There are sentences like (i) and (ii):

- (i) a. Mary sat motionless, her tears flowing down her cheeks.
- b. The wounded man lay on the floor, his blood dripping on the carpet.
- (ii) a. His face suffused with pain, John kissed Mary.
- b. His money all spent, he decided to enlist.

The data in (i) would seem to argue that -ing is indeed a governor; the data in (ii), that -en is also a governor. But note (firstly) that we also get sentences like (iii), without either -ing or -en:

- (iii) a. His face red with confusion, John kissed Mary.
- b. There he sat, his clothes a mess!

A second point to note is that in the adjunct type illustrated in (i)-(iii), there is a constraint that the adjunct must be interpretable as a predication on the matrix subject. Thus, contrast (iv)(below) with (ia) and (iiia):

- (iv) \*John kissed Mary, her tears flowing down her cheeks/her face red with confusion.

But the absolute construction containing an aspectual verb is under no such constraint:

- (v) a. John being away, Mary decided to enjoy herself.
- b. John having become an alcoholic again, Mary decided to leave him.

While I have nothing useful to suggest regarding what 'sanctions' (or "governs") a lexical subject in the adjuncts in (i)-(iii), it seems clear that these adjuncts constitute a separate phenomenon which calls for a separate explanation.

<sup>7</sup> The English PRO (too) can be sometimes free and sometimes controlled, but in different constructions or different syntactic positions. (Thus, it is well known that the PRO subject of a gerund is controlled in the object position and free in the subject position:

- (i) a. I like [PRO eating bananas]  
 b. [PRO eating bananas] is fun.)

The problem we are facing is that in the same construction, PRO seems to be controlled in one language and free in another language. (The argument of course is dependent on the parallel we drew between the English absolute construction containing an aspectual verb and the Malayalam -ittə adjunct.)

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