Malayalam (mal), Dravidian
also known as Alealum, Malayalani, Malayali, Malean, Maliyad, Mallealle, Mopla
spoken in India (Asia)

1 Grammar Profile

1.1 Morpho-Syntax

1.1.1 Head position
head-final (postpositions, RelN)

1.1.2 Morphological type
primarily agglutinating

1.1.3 Case system
nominative/accusative, case markers are bound suffixes concatenated onto the head of the noun phrase: nominative (-Ø), accusative (-e), dative (-kk./-(n).), sociative (-oo..), locative (il), instrumental (-aal), genitive (-u.e/-re).

1.1.4 Verbal Agreement
suffixes containing number, gender and person are concatenated onto the verb

1.1.5 Null Arguments
null subjects/objects are permitted, pro, PRO

1.2 Matrix Clause

1.2.1 Basic word order
SOV is unmarked, however, word order is relatively free
1.2.2 Alternate word orders
word order is relatively free; the only restrictions seem to be that in subordinate clauses, the noun follows its adjectival modifier and the embedded verb is always clause-final in both noun and adverb clauses.

1.2.3 Ordering of nominal and pronominal arguments
SO/OS; same order of nominal arguments.

1.3 Embedded Clause

1.3.1 Basic word order
verb-final

1.3.2 Verbal agreement
Embedded infinitival does not show subject agreement.

1.3.3 Possible morphological categories of the embedded clause
infinitive: -uwaan (Jayaseelan argues that there are two –uwaan verbal suffixes, one where the subject is non-case governed (to-infinitive) and one where the subject is optionally case governed (-for-to infinitive).) continuous/imperfective: -uka

2 Control Profile

2.1 forward subject control into infinitival complement

2.1.1 Example structure
(1) ñaani [PROi ood-uwaan] sramiccu
  i-nom run-inf tried
  ‘I tried to run’
(2) ñaani [PROi nannaak-uwaan] aagrahiccu
  i-nom prosper-inf wished
  ‘I wished to prosper’
(3) raamani [PROi kañjaaw walikk-uwaan] istappedunn u
  raman-nom opium smoke-inf likes
  ‘raman likes to smoke opium’

2.1.2 Predicates participating in the construction
implicative verb: sramicc ‘try’
desiderative verb: aagrahicc ‘wish’ istamill ‘like’

2.1.3 Control type
Obligatory control. Disjoint subject in embedded clause requires gerund construction. (See below).

2.1.2 Predicates participating in the construction
implicative verb: sramicc ‘try’
desiderative verb: aagrahicc ‘wish’ istamill ‘like’

2.1.3 Control type
Obligatory control. Disjoint subject in embedded clause requires gerund construction. (See below).

(4) enikkoi [PROi kañjaaw walikk-uwaan] istamilla
  i-dat opium smoke-inf like-neg
  ‘I don’t like to smoke opium’
(5) *enikkoi [ente kuttikal kañjaaw walikk-uwaan] istamilla
  i-dat my children-nom opium smoke-inf like-neg
  ‘I don’t like my children to smoke opium’
2.2  \textit{forward subject control into gerund complement}

2.2.1 Predicates participating in the construction

\begin{itemize}
  \item desiderative verb: aagrahicc ‘wish’ istamill ‘like’
\end{itemize}

2.2.2 Control type

Non-obligatory control. Disjoint embedded subject allowed in gerund construction. (Cf above.)

(6) enikkɔ [ente kuttikal kañjaaw walikk-unnat] istamilla
    i-dat my children-nom opium smoke-ger like-neg
    ‘I don’t like my children smoking opium’

2.3  \textit{subject control into sentential adjunct}

2.3.1 Example structure

Tense is not permitted on the adjunct, and agrees with the tense on the matrix verb. With -ə adjunct subject control seems to be obligatory.

(7) ñaani oru maaj [Øi Øj potticc-ə] tinn-u
    i-nom one mango-acc pluck-ə eat-past
    ‘I plucked a mango and ate it’

Also possible:

(8) potticc-ə ñaan oru maa tinn-u
    ‘I plucked a mango and ate it’

2.3.2 Predicates participating in the construction

affixes:
  -ə conjunction
  -konda present participle
  -ittə past participle
  -kkondirikke present participle

2.3.3 Evidence of structural position for unexpressed argument

Jayaseelan (1999) argues that the object control is not PRO but rather pro, while the subject control is PRO.

(9) ñaani oru maaj [PROi proj potticc-ə] tinn-u
    i-nom one mango-acc pluck-ə eat-past
    ‘I plucked a mango and ate it’

2.3.4 Control type

With konda adjunct, subject control is obligatory

(10) kutti karaññu-konda skuulil pooyi
    child-nom cry-konda school-in go-past
    ‘crying, the child went to school’

(11) *amma karaññu-konda kutti skuulil pooyi
    mother-nom cry-konda child-nom school-in go-past
    ‘the mother crying, the child went to school’

With -ittə adjunct, subject control is optional. There are examples without control.
Similarly with the kondirikke adjunct, subject control is optional.

(14) udyaanatt-il ulaatti-kkondirikke, siita palatum aaloocicc-u
garden-in walk about-kkondirikke sita-nom many things-acc think-past
‘while walking about the garden, sita thought about many things’

(15) raaman udyaanatt-il ulaatti-kkondirikke, siita bhaksanam paakam ceyt-u
raman-nom garden-in walk about-kkondirikke sita-nom food-acc cooking do-past
‘while raman was walking about in the garden, sita cooked food’

2.4 object control into sentential adjunct

2.4.1 Example structure

Object control also appears to be possible with the -kondø adjunct, although not obligatory. This would follow if Jayaseelan is correct in that object control is pro.

(16) siita raaman-e tadawi-kkondø sakaarice-u
sita-nom raman-acc fondle-kkondø scold-past
‘sita scolded raman, while fondling him’

(17) siita raaman-e tadawai-kkondø krishnan-e sakaaricc-u
sita-nom rama-acc fonle-kkondø krishnan-acc scold-pas
‘sita scolded krishnan while fondling raman’

2.4.2 Predicates participating in the construction

affixes:  -ø conjunction
         -kondø present participle
         -ittø past participle
         -kkondirikke present participle

2.4.3 Control type

Object control also appears to be possible with the -ittø adjunct, although not obligatory.

(18) nii paraññ-ittø, ellaawarum aa kaaryam ariññ-u
you-nom say-ittø everyone-nom that matter-acc know-past
‘because you said it, everyone came to know about that matter’

Object control also appears to be possible with the -kondirikke adjunct, although not obligatory.

(19) amma kulippiccu-kondirikke, kutti tummi
mother-nom bathe (trans.)-kondirikke child-nom sneeze-past
‘while mother was bathing it, the child sneezed’
References


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