The Samyojika Vibhakthi and Its Unique Application in Malayalam Grammar

This note shows that the *samyOjika vibhakthi*, sometimes known in English as the "social case," is used in Malayalam with a special grammatical function absent in all other languages.

In Malayalam (as in Latin, Finnish, and various Indian languages), all nouns are declined and have seven cases (*vibhakthikaL*):

nirddESika or nominative, prathigraahika or accusative, samyOjika which is translated as "social," uddESika or dative, prayOjika or instrumental, sambandhika or possessive, aadhaarika or locative, and sambhOdana or vocative.

All of the above cases are found in European languages with some distribution (e.g. although there is no grammatical equivalent to the locative case in English, there is one in Russian)—all, that is, with the exception of the *samyOjika vibhakthi*.

The *samyOjika vibhakthi* in Malayalam refers to the use of the suffix -OT(u). What truly makes this grammatical structure unique in is its general function in Malayalam as an indirect object dependent on proximity. For example, suppose we wanted to translate the following sentence from English into Malayalam:

"I asked Preethi whether the exam was tomorrow."

In the above sentence, "Preethi" is the object; in Malayalam, more specifically, it is the indirect object. Thus, in Malayalam, the translation would read:

പരീക്ഷ നാളേയാണോന്ന് ഞാൻ പ്രീതി**യോട്** ചോദിച്ചു. (Emphasis added to the suffix -OT(u))

മലയാളത്തിലെ സംബന്ധിക വിഭക്തിയിനുവ് രണ്ട് പ്രത്യയങ്ങൾ (suffixes) ഉണ്ട് (=–ിൻറ, –(യ)ുടെ).

ഒരു വാക്കിൻെറ അവസാനത്തെ ശബ്ദം **സ്വരം** ആണെങ്കിൽ സംബന്ധികയുടെ പ്രതൃയം *"–യുടെ"* ആകും.

ഉദാ: വാൽമീകി*യുടെ* കഥ രാമായണം ആണ്.

അവസാനത്തെ ശബ്ദം "-**അർ," "-അൾ"** ആണെങ്കിൽ പ്രതൃയം *"-ുടെ"* ആകും.

ഉദാ: ഇവ**ളു***ടെ* **ഭർത്താവ് വാൽമീകിയാണ്. അവരു***ടെ* **കുട്ടികൾ ഋഷികളാണ്.**

There is another variation, using the NT(e) form

ശബ്ദം **"-അൻ"** ആണെങ്കിൽ പ്രതൃയം *"-മൻറ"* ആകും. ചിലപ്പം *"-ുടെ"* പ്രതൃയം ആകാറുണ്ട്.

ഉദാ: (അവ*ൻെ*/അവ**നുടെ**) സഹോദരനാണ് രാമൻ.