

Malayalam: a Grammatical Sketch and a Text

Haowen Jiang

Department of Linguistics
Rice University
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Abbreviations

??	unknown
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ACC	accusative
AFF	affirmative
ATTR	attributive
CAUS	causative
COND1	first conditional (- <i>aal</i>)
COND2	second conditional (- <i>engkil</i>)
COORD	coordination
COP1	first copula (e.g. <i>aaNE</i> , <i>aayiryunnu</i> , <i>aayiryikkyum</i>)
COP2	second copula (e.g. <i>aakunnu</i> , <i>aayi</i> , <i>aakum</i>)
CVB	converb
DAT	dative
DNT	deontic
EMPH	emphatic
EX	existential
EXC:	exclusive
F	feminine
FS	false start
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
HON	honorific
HAB	habitual
HORT	hortative
IMP	imperative
INC	inclusive
INF1	first infinitive (- <i>uka</i>)
INF2	second infinitive (- <i>aan</i>)
INS	instrumental
INTR	intransitive
LOC	locative

M	masculine
NEG	negative
NMLZ	nominalizer
NOM:	nominative
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
POT	potential
PRF	perfect
PROH:	prohibitive
PRS	present
PST	past
Q	interrogative
QUOT	quotative
RECP	reciprocal
REFL	reflexive
SG	singular
SOC	sociative
TR	transitive
UQ	universal quantification

Part I: A Grammatical Sketch of Malayalam

1. Introduction

Malayalam (ISO: mal) is a Dravidian language primarily spoken in the southwest of India. According to Lewis (2009), it is the official language of Kerala state and Lakshadweep union territory. Its alternative names include Alealum, Malayalani, Malayali, Malean, etc. Within India alone there were over 35 million speakers of Malayalam in 1997, not including the other nearly 500,000 speakers outside India.

The data used in this grammatical sketch mostly come from my consultant Sona Joseph, a 26-year-old female who speaks Malayalam natively and English fluently. She originally came from Kochi (formerly Cochin), Kerala, India, and is currently a graduate student at Rice University.

The methodology adopted here is primarily direct elicitation. To complement the elicitation data from the sole consultant, I also transcribed a small portion of a TV interview on the Onam Festival, which is the biggest festival in the state of Kerala (see Part II for details).

This grammatical sketch is divided into three major sections, namely, phonology, morphology, and syntax. Aside from the sketch, a glossary of some selected Malayalam words (about 420) is included in Appendix I.

2. Phonology

The starting point of data collection for Malayalam phonology is Comrie and Smith's (1977) Basic Vocabulary. Most of the time, the words given by the consultant were retrieved from her memory. In some cases, however, the consultant used Gundert's (1970) Malayalam and English Dictionary in order to find out words with some particular syllables.

The organization of this section is as follows: Section 2.1 introduces the phoneme inventory in Malayalam; Section 2.2 identifies some allophonic variations of the proposed phonemes; Section 2.3 slightly touches upon the syllable structure of Malayalam; finally Section 2.4 discusses the typological status of the phoneme inventory as a whole.

2.1. Phoneme Inventory

2.1.1. Consonants

Malayalam has 52 consonant phonemes, encompassing 9 places of articulation and 8 manners of articulation, as shown in Table 1 below. In terms of manner of articulation, plosives are the most complicated, for they demonstrate a five-way distinction in bilabials, dentals,

alveolo-palatals, retroflexes, and velars. A bilabial plosive, for example, is either voiceless or voiced. Within voiceless bilabial plosives a further distinction is made between aspirated and unaspirated ones whereas for voiced bilabial plosives the distinction is between modal-voiced and breathy-voiced ones. Additionally, an unaspirated voiceless bilabial plosive is either singleton (i.e. short) or geminate (i.e. long). The same five-way distinction is also found in dental, alveolo-palatal, retroflex, and velar plosives.

Table 1: Consonant phonemes of Malayalam

	Voice	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Alveolo-palatal	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	-	p p: p ^h		t̪ t̪: t̪ ^h	t ^h j	tɛ tɛ: tɛ ^h	ʈ ʈ: ʈ ^h		k k: k ^h	
	+	b b ^h		d̪ d̪ ^h		dʒ dʒ ^h	ɖ ɖ ^h		g g ^h	
Nasal	+	m m:		ɳ ɳ:	n n:	ɲ ɲ:	ɳ ɳ:		ŋ	
Trill	+				r					
Tap/Flap	+				ɾ ^j					
Fricative	-				s	ɕ	ʂ			h
Affricate	-		f							
	+									
Cen. Approx.	+		v				ɻ	j		
Lat. approx.	+				l l:		ɭ ɭ:			

In terms of place of articulation, on the other hand, alveolars are the most complex because they involve all manners of articulation except for affricate. Even an alveolar tap/flap is distinguished from an alveolar trill, much like the case in Spanish (e.g. *pero* /pero/ ‘but’ vs. *perro* /pero/ ‘dog’). Unlike in Spanish, however, the alveolar tap/flap in Malayalam has an inherent palatal quality in it, which is indicated by the palatalized diacritic.

A conspicuous feature in the consonant inventory is that length is phonemic. Consonants that show this short/long contrast include all voiceless plosives (except for alveolars), all nasals (except for velars), and all lateral approximants. What these consonants have in common is an occlusion phase before the release of a segment, during which the air pressure is built up, and

this is also precisely the phase that is prolonged in the case of geminate consonants.

2.1.1.1. Minimal pairs.

To support the phonemes proposed in Table 1, some minimal or near minimal pairs of phonetically similar consonants are provided in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2: Minimal pairs of phonetically similar consonants

(1)	/p/-/m/	paŋam ‘money’	maŋam ‘smell’
(2)	/p/-/p:/	apa- ‘bad’	ap:a ‘dad’
(3)	/p ^h /-/b/	p ^h alam ‘fruit; result’	balam ‘strength’
(4)	/t/-/d/	naʈi ‘actress’	naḍi ‘lake’
(5)	/t/-/t:/	kaʈi ‘bite’	kaʈ:i ‘thick’
(6)	/t:/-/t̪:/	kaʈ:i ‘thick’	kaʈ̪:i ‘knife’
(7)	/n/-/n:/	pana ‘palm tree’	pan:a ‘bad’
(8)	/n/-/ŋ:/	vanam ‘forest’	vaŋam ‘fat’
(9)	/ɲ:/-/ŋ:/	maɲ:ə ‘snow; ice’	maŋ:ə ‘soil; sand’
(10)	/ɲ:/-/n:/	maɲ:a ‘yellow’	man:a ‘manna’
(11)	/ɾi/-/t/	iɾi:k:uka ‘sit’	iʈi:k:uka ‘hit’
(12)	/ɾi/-/ŋ/	maɾiam ‘tree’	maŋam ‘smell’
(13)	/ɾi/-/r/	aɾia ‘half’	ara ‘storage; barn’
(14)	/ɾi/-/ɹ/	maɾia ‘shade’	maɹa ‘rain’
(15)	/ɾi/-/ɛ/	g ^h o:ɾiam ‘frightful’	g ^h o:ɛam ‘noise’
(16)	/ɾi/-/l/	maɾia ‘shade’	mala ‘mountain’
(17)	/l/-/l:/	mula ‘breast’	mul:a ‘jasmin’
(18)	/l/-/r/	ʈala ‘head’	ʈara ‘floor’
(19)	/l/-/l/	ɲa:lə ‘day’	ɲa:lə ‘four’
(20)	/l/-/ɹ/	kaɹi:k:uka ‘play’	kaʈi:k:uka ‘eat’
(21)	/l/-/l:/	kaɹi ‘game’	kaɹ:i ‘female thief’

Table 3: Near minimal pairs of phonetically similar consonants

(22)	/k/-/k ^h /	kaɾianam ‘because’	k ^h ananam ‘digging’
(23)	/g/-/g ^h /	gaŋam ‘group’	g ^h anam ‘heaviness’
(24)	/n/-/ŋ/	vinu ‘person name’	vi:ŋu ‘fall’
(25)	/ɾi/-/l/	ki:ɾi ‘mongoose’	kiɹi ‘bird’

Admittedly, more (near) minimal pairs are needed in order to justify the proposed phonemes. Some generalizations, however, can still be gleaned from the (near) minimal pairs found so far. For instance, Pair (2) and (5) show the phonemic contrast in length for voiceless bilabial and retroflex plosives respectively. Since there seems to be no phonetic reason whatsoever that would make bilabials and retroflexes the only voiceless plosives that demonstrate the short/long contrast, I expect voiceless dental and velar plosives to behave just like their bilabial and retroflex counterparts, even though I have not found any (near) minimal pairs to show this yet.¹ In the same vein, I also believe that alveolars would not be the only nasals that show the short/long contrast, as in Pair (7). More importantly, crosslinguistically plosives and nasals tend to share the same pattern because they form the natural class of stops. Thus, in a case like Malayalam, where we find minimal pairs of the short/long contrast in voiceless bilabial and retroflex plosives as well as alveolar nasals, we may well infer that length is also phonemic in voiceless alveolar plosives as well as bilabial and retroflex nasals, which is confirmed by acoustic evidence (See Section 2.1.3.1 for details).

Moreover, Pair (9) and (10) show that geminate nasals make a distinction among alveolars, retroflexes, and palatals. Crosslinguistically geminate segments are more marked than their singleton counterparts, and if the marked category makes a distinction along some parameter (or length for that matter) the unmarked category is very likely to do so as well, but not vice versa. Thus, I expect singleton nasals also make a distinction among alveolars, retroflexes, and palatals, just as their geminate counterparts do, even though I have not yet found any (near) minimal pairs for the former case.

Finally, Pair (22) shows the contrast between voiceless unaspirated and aspirated velars while Pair (23) illustrates the contrast between modal-voiced and breathy-voiced velars. Here we see aspiration and phonation type are phonemic in voiceless and voiced velars respectively. Again, it is highly unlikely that velars are the only plosives that demonstrate these two parameters, so I assume bilabial, dental, and retroflex plosives also make the distinction between voiceless unaspirated and aspirated ones as well as modal-voiced and breathy-voiced ones.

2.1.1.2. Distribution

Table 4 shows the distribution of each consonant phoneme within a word, i.e., whether a particular phoneme occurs at the word-initial, word-medial, or word-final position.

¹ The alveolar plosive is a bit tricky. Nevertheless, since it is the sole member in that category, I do not expect it to demonstrate a phonemic contrast in length.

Table 4: Examples of Malayalam consonant phonemes

	W-Initial	W-Medial	W-Final
/p/	pa:le ‘milk’ pe:n ‘louse’ para ‘rice barn’ pa:ɽam ‘banana’ pa:ləm ‘bridge’	apakaɽam ‘accident’ a:paɽ:ə ‘dangerous’ apasurɽi ‘bad rumor’ apasuarɽam ‘bad voice’ apamarɽaɽa ‘bad manner’	
/p:/		up:ə ‘salt’ op:ə ‘signature’ karup:ə ‘black’ ap:a ‘dad’ ep:am ‘when’	
/p ^h /	p ^h alam ‘fruit; result’ (also falam) p ^h alik:uka ‘bear fruit’ (also falik:uka) falagam ‘(wood) plank’ fa:ɽunam ‘Aquarius’ fa:ɽam ‘head of a serpent’	safalam ‘come true’ (but NOT sap ^h alam) ɽu:ɽalam ‘fruitless’ (but NOT ɽu:ɽ ^h alam)	
/b/	balam ‘strength’ balava:n ‘strong man’ ba:lɽika ‘girl’	a:ba ‘Father’ ɽicabɽam ‘silent’ kombə ‘cattle horn’ a:ɽəmba:ɽam ‘celebration’ kuɽumbam ‘family’	
/b ^h /	b ^h umi ‘earth’ (also fumi) b ^h ajam ‘fear’ (also fajam) b ^h a:ɽa ‘wife’ b ^h a:ɽa:və ‘husband’ b ^h a:ɽam ‘heavy’	ab ^h inajam ‘acting’ ab ^h ajam ‘help’	
/ɽ/	ɽara ‘floor’ ɽoli ‘skin’ ɽe:n ‘honey’ ɽi:ɽijuka ‘turn’	pa:ɽa ‘bubble’ pa:ɽa ‘road’ ma:ɽi ‘enough’ ma:ɽil ‘barrier’	
/ɽ:/		ka:ɽi ‘knife’ ɽi:ɽ:a ‘dirty’ vi:ɽ:ə ‘seed’ ka:ɽu:ɽ:ə ‘neck’ u:ɽ:amam ‘perfect’	

/tʰ/		aʈʰava: ‘otherwise; also’	
/d/	d̪eivam ‘god’	naɖi ‘lake’	
	d̪iɕa ‘direction’	ma:ɖavə ‘mother’	
	d̪ivasam ‘day’	eɳɖə ‘what’	
		uɳɖuka ‘push’	
		ɕaɳɖik:uka ‘vomit’	
/dʰ/	d̪ʰanam ‘money’	aɖʰipan ‘honor’	
/tʰi/		ka:tʰiə ‘wind’	
		ma:tʰiə ‘mat’	
		ɳa:tʰiəɱ ‘foul smell’	
		ʈatʰiu ‘tattoo’	
/ʃ/	ʃa:ɕiam ‘ash’		
	ʃi:ɕa ‘dirty’		
	ʃuʈə ‘warm’		
	ʃevi ‘ear’		
	ʃoɕa ‘blood’		
/ʃ:/		muɕʃ:a ‘sharp’	
		aʃ:ən ‘father’	
		kuɕʃ:i ‘few’	
		paʃ:a ‘green’	
		iraʃ:i ‘flesh’	
/ʃʰ/	??	??	??
/dʒ/	d̪ʒi:vi ‘creature’	aɳɖə ‘five’	
	d̪ʒi:vik:uka ‘live’	neɳɖə ‘chest’	
	d̪ʒenanam ‘birth’		
	d̪ʒa:m ‘jam’		
	d̪ʒiɕakəɱ ‘cumin’		
/dʒʰ/	??	??	??
/t/	ʈatʰiu ‘tattoo’	kaʈi ‘bite’	
	ʈaun ‘town’	naʈi ‘actress’	
		ivite ‘here’	
		ɕaɳʈə ‘two’	
		aʈiʃ:u ‘beat’	
/t:/		kaʈ:i ‘thick’	
		paʈ:i ‘dog’	
		kuʈ:i ‘child’	
		muʈ:ə ‘knee; joint’	
		muʈ:a ‘egg’	

/tʰ/	tʰip:u ‘name of a king’		
/d/	dɔktəɪ ‘doctor’	a:dəmba:ɾiam ‘celebration’	
	dama:ɾu ‘a small drum’		
	dak:u ‘rubber’		
	dadimam ‘pomegranate tree’		
/dʰ/	dʰak:a ‘large drum’	a:dʰen ‘powerful man’	
	dʰama:nam ‘kettle’		
/k/	ka:lə ‘leg’	ma:sika ‘magazine’	
	kai ‘hand’	ahaŋka:ɾiam ‘pride’	
	karup:ə ‘black’	dʒi:ɾakəm ‘cumin’	
	kaɭik:uka ‘play’	dʒi:vik:uka ‘live’	
	ka:ɾanam ‘because’	apakaɾam ‘accident’	
/k:/		mu:k:ə ‘nose’	
		na:k:ə ‘tongue’	
		ɾak:təm ‘blood’	
		ɬak:aɭi ‘tomato’	
		kaɭik:uka ‘eat’	
/kʰ/	kʰe:dam ‘distress; sorrow’	mukʰam ‘face’	
	kʰa:ɾɟ:u ‘expense’	sukʰəm ‘good; health’	
	kʰani ‘(gold) mine’		
	kʰananam ‘digging’		
/g/	gaŋam ‘group’	aŋgəl ‘uncle’	
	garvə ‘pride’	agɳi ‘fire’	
	guŋam ‘virtue’		
	gu:ɾu ‘guru’		
	goɬambə ‘wheat’		
/gʰ/	gʰaɬika:ɾiam ‘clock’	nagʰam ‘claw/nail’	
	gʰanam ‘heaviness’	me:gʰam ‘cloud’	
	(also kanam)	a:gʰo:ɛam ‘celebration’	
	gʰaɬ:am ‘landing place’	a:gʰo:ɛik:uka ‘celebrate’	
	gʰo:ɾiam ‘frightful’		
	gʰo:ɛam ‘noise’		
/m/	ma:ci ‘ink’	bʰumi ‘earth’	ɟivasam ‘day’
	ma:ɟa ‘rain’	kombə ‘cattle horn’	vanam ‘forest’
	melip:a ‘thin’	ma:msəm ‘flesh’	pa:ɟam ‘banana’
	muɬi ‘hair’	goɬambə ‘wheat’	va:ɛam ‘year’
	muri ‘room’	vi:ɛamam ‘sadness’	pa:dəm ‘foot’

/m:/		nam:a 'we'	
		am:a 'mom'	
/p/	p̄anap̄a 'wet'	eṅḍə 'what'	
	p̄anavə 'wetness'	uṅḍuka 'push'	
	p̄e:ɾie 'straight'	f̄aṅḍrən 'moon'	
	p̄ejjə 'fat; butter'	aḡni 'fire'	
	p̄isa:ɾiam 'unimportant'		
/p̄:/		oṅ:ə 'one'	
		muṅ:ə 'three'	
		vap̄:u 'came'	
		koṅ:u 'killed'	
		f̄uṅvap̄:a 'red'	
/n/	naḍi 'lake'	manuɕen 'person'	manuɕen 'person'
	na:k:ə 'tongue'	eṅəne 'how'	aɸ:n 'father'
	niḍap̄ə 'full'	və:nam 'sky'	ɲa:n 'I'
	neṅḍzə 'chest'	a:na 'elephant'	pe:n 'louse'
	p̄e:ɾie 'straight'	aṅḍzə 'five'	ɬe:n 'honey'
/n:/		an:a 'Anna'	
		pan:a 'bad'	
		man:a 'manna'	
		pin:e 'then; later'	
/ɲ/	ɲa:n 'I'		
	ɲaṅa 'us'		
/ɲ:/		maɲ:a 'yellow'	
		p̄anap̄:a 'wet'	
		vi:ḍikurap̄:a 'narrow'	
		niḍap̄:ə 'full'	
		kuɲ:ə 'child'	
/ŋ/		vi:ŋu 'fall'	ɬaun 'town'
		maṅam 'smell'	muŋ 'moon'
		paṅam 'money'	
		a:ŋə 'male'	
		peŋə 'female'	
/ŋ:/		kaŋ:ə 'eye'	
		vaŋ:am 'fat'	
		maŋ:ə 'soil; sand'	

/ŋ/		ʈa:ŋkəl 'you'
		aŋə 'you'
		ʈeŋə 'coconut tree'
		uraŋuka 'sleep'
		uŋaŋia 'dry'
/r/	rava 'Rava flower'	ʈara 'floor'
	ramsə:n 'Festival'	ʈorə 'rice'
	ra:ŋ:i 'place name'	muri 'room'
	raŋi 'queen'	mərkam 'animal'
	ru:pa 'rupee'	apasurʈi 'bad rumor'
/r/	rak:ʈəm 'blood'	ʈorʈa 'blood'
	ravile 'morning'	ʈirʈik:uka 'laugh'
	rʈaŋʈə 'two'	ʈarʈu 'give'
	rʈa:ri 'night'	ʈurʈe 'far'
	rʈadʒavə 'king'	pe:rʈə 'name'
/s/	santəcam 'happiness'	ma:sika 'magazine'
	samajam 'time'	pandʒasa:rʈa 'sugar'
	sukʰəm 'good; health'	kaserʈa 'chair'
	simham 'lion'	
	sʈri: 'female'	
/ɕ/	ɕarʈi:ʈam 'body'	maɕi 'ink'
	ɕa:rʈi:ʈam 'beauty'	vəɕi 'stubbornness'
	ɕarʈi 'correct'	manuɕen 'person'
	ɕardʈik:uka 'vomit'	vicam 'poison'
		vicɕcam 'news'
/ʂ/		iʂtam 'liking'
/h/	ha:nika:ʈam 'dangerous'	maha:n 'expert'
	himam 'snow'	ahaŋka:rʈam 'pride'
	hərɖajam 'heart'	a:ha:rʈam 'food'
		maha:rʈadʒavə 'great king'
/f/	fajam 'fear'	safalam 'come true'
	fumi 'earth'	ɖu:rʈafalam 'fruitless'
	faŋam 'head of a serpent'	
	falagam '(wood) plank'	
	fa:ɣunam 'Aquarius'	
/v/	vi:ŋu 'fall'	avan 'he'
	vaʈi 'stick'	ʈfevi 'ear'
	vere 'other'	

/ɲ/		maɲa ‘rain’ paɲam ‘banana’ kaɲivə ‘skill’ kaɲuɲa ‘donkey’ ɖaɲe ‘below; under’	
/j/	joni ‘skin’	kaijə ‘hand’ samajam ‘time’ ʃeriɲa ‘small’ majil ‘peacock’ ɕiriɲjuka ‘turn’	
/l/	laik:uka ‘dissolve’ li:na ‘person name’	mala ‘mountain’ mula ‘breast’ valik:uka ‘pull’ valuɖə ‘big’ ka:lə ‘leg’	kuɕal ‘intestines’ kaɕal ‘ocean’ ɕuval ‘feather’ kuɕil ‘hut’ maɕil ‘barrier’
/l:/		pul:ə ‘grass’ kal:ə ‘stone’ mul:a ‘jasmin’ mal:i ‘coriander’ kol:uka ‘kill’	
/ʎ/		kiʎi ‘bird’ muʎakə ‘chili’ ɳa:lə ‘day’ keʎk:uka ‘hear’ vaɕaʎɕi:a ‘dry’	avaʎ ‘she’ kaɕaʎ ‘liver’ ep:o:l ‘when’ nam:aʎ ‘we’ ɳaɳaʎ ‘us’
/ʎ:/		vaʎ:i ‘string’ kaʎ:i ‘female thief’ uʎ:i ‘onion’ vaʎ:am ‘water’ uʎ:a ‘have’	

In terms of the distribution in Table 4, the following generalizations can be made.

1. All geminate consonants occur only at the word-medial position.
2. Only some nasals (i.e. /m/, /n/, and /ŋ/) and approximants (i.e. /l/ and /ʎ/) are allowed to occur at the word-final position.
3. /ɲ/ and /ʃ/ occur only at the word-initial position.

4. /t^{hi}/, /ŋ/, and /ɽ/ occur only at the word-medial position.
5. No consonant occurs only at the word-final position.
6. /ɽ/ and /ŋ/ never occur at the word-initial position.
7. The voiceless aspirated dental and breathy-voiced dental plosive (i.e. /t^h/ and /d^h/) are extremely restricted (in terms of both the consultant's personal lexicon and the words that can be found in the dictionary), and so are their retroflex counterparts (i.e. /t^h/ and /d^h/).

With regard to the last point, two hypotheses can be made. For one thing, it may suggest that some historically vigorous phonemes have now been marginalized over time so that they can only be found in some archaic words. For the other, this may also be the result of language contact through which some new phonemes are created. Since the lingua franca in India is Hindi, which is famous for its four-way distinction in plosives (i.e. voiceless aspirated, voiceless unaspirated, modal-voiced, and breathy-voiced), the language contact hypothesis seems to be more plausible.

Also relevant is the fact that the consultant has a hard time pronouncing breathy-voiced plosives and tends to substitute them with voiceless aspirated ones in the same place of articulation. During an independent elicitation session with the consultant (see the file Haowen_11.18.2009 in the database), I asked her to come up with words that have the voiceless aspirated dental plosive (i.e. /t^h/) in it, and she gave me [t^hanam] 'money' and [at^hipan] 'honor'. However, after looking up these two words in the dictionary, she confessed having made a mistake. As it turns out, they should in fact be [d^hanam] and [ad^hipan] respectively. She also admitted that Malayali people always have problems with breathy-voiced plosives and oftentimes confuse them with their voiceless aspirated counterparts. This anecdote might suggest breathy-voiced plosives are probably not part of the original Malayalam phoneme inventory and that their existence in contemporary Malayalam is due to contact with Hindi or other Indo-Aryan languages in India (e.g. Marathi, which is spoken to the north of Kerala).

Finally, an interesting thing about Malayalam consonants is that the voiceless aspirated bilabial plosive /p^h/ alternates with [f], at least in some words. For instance, the word for "fruit; result" is either [p^halam] or [falam], and the word for "bear fruit" is either [p^halik:uka] or [falik:uka]. Moreover, the breathy-voiced bilabial plosive /b^h/ sometimes alternates with [f] as well. For example, the word for "earth" is either [b^humi] or [fumi] and the word for "fear" is either [b^hajam] or [fajam]. I believe this is because Malayalam speakers tend to confuse /b^h/ with /p^h/. As a result, both /b^h/ and /p^h/ alternate with [f] in some cases. Also, [f] is most often found in loan words.

2.1.2. Vowels

Malayalam has 11 monothongs and 5 diphthongs, as shown in Table 5 and 6 respectively. Like in some consonants, length is phonemic in all monophthongs except for the schwa, whose status is rather vague at this point. A diphthong is falling if it starts with a vowel of higher prominence and ends in a semivowel with less prominence (e.g. /ai/), and is rising if the case is the other way around (e.g. /ia/). Also, a diphthong is closing if it starts with a more open element and ends in a more close element (e.g. /au/), and is opening if the case is the other way around (e.g. /ua/). As shown in Table 6, all falling diphthongs are closing and all rising ones are opening, which is in accord with the typological tendency.

Table 5: Monophthongal phonemes of Malayalam

	Front	Central	Back
High	i i:		u u:
Mid	e e:	ə	o o:
Low		a a:	

Table 6: Diphthongal phonemes of Malayalam

	Rising or Falling	Opening or Closing
/ai/	Falling	Closing
/au/	Falling	Closing
/ei/	Falling	Closing
/ia/	Rising	Opening
/ua/	Rising	Opening

2.1.2.1. Minimal pairs

To support the phonemes proposed in Table 5 and 6, some minimal pairs of vowels are provided in 7.

Table 7: Minimal pairs of vowels

(26)	/a/-/i/	kaʃi 'game'	kiʃi 'bird'
		aʃik:ruka 'fight; stab'	iʃik:ruka 'hit'
		kuʃal 'intestines'	kuʃil 'hut'
(27)	/a/-/e/	a:ʃijuka 'know'	e:ʃijuka 'throw'
		ʃavi 'key'	ʃevi 'ear'

(28)	/a/-/ə/	muṭ:a ‘egg’	muṭ:ə ‘knee; joint’
(29)	/a/-/u/	pal:a ‘tooth’	pul:a ‘grass’
		pu:ṭa ‘river’	pu:ṭu ‘worm’
(30)	/a/-/a:/	va:ṭu ‘come’	va:ṭu ‘pick’
		vanam ‘forest’	va:nam ‘sky’
		pa:ṭa ‘rice barn’	pa:ṭa ‘rock’
(31)	/a/-/ai/	kajə ‘fruit’	kaijə ‘hand’
(32)	/i/-/e/	iviṭe ‘here’	eiviṭe ‘where’
		ip:ɔ:l ‘now’	ep:ɔ:l ‘when’
		iṅəne ‘like this’	eṅəne ‘how’
(33)	/e/-/ə/	ṅa:lɛ ‘tomorrow’	ṅa:lə ‘day’
(34)	/u/-/o/	up:ə ‘salt’	op:ə ‘signature’

Pair (26)~(29) show that /a/ is different from /i/, /e/, /u/, and /ə/. I believe /a/ is also different from /o/ although I have not found any minimal pair to show this. There is, however, some indirect evidence. Since Pair (32) illustrates the contrast between /i/ and /e/, and Pair (34) the contrast between /u/ and /o/, and that /a/ is different from /i/, /e/, and /u/ for sure, it makes more sense if /a/ is also distinct from /o/. In addition, Pair (30) shows that the difference between short /a/ and long /a:/ is phonemic, and I believe length is also phonemic in other monophthongs (except for the schwa) although for now no minimal pairs have been found to illustrate this. However, my belief is based on two grounds: (a) the consultant is very sensitive to the difference between short and long vowels; (b) a vowel system with only one pair of short and long vowels would be highly implausible. Finally, Pair (31) shows the contrast between the monophthong /a/ and the diphthong /ai/, which confirms that Malayalam has diphthongs as a separate category that is phonologically distinct from monophthongs.

2.1.2.2. *Distribution*

Table 8 shows the distribution of each proposed vowel phoneme.

Table 8: Examples of Malayalam vowel phonemes

	W-Initial	W-Medial	W-Final
/a/	aṭə 'that' avaḷ 'she' ava:ḍalaṃ 'failure' arijuka 'know' aḡṇi 'fire'	ɛa:ri:ɕaṃ 'body' muḷakə 'chili' maravi 'amnesia' pa:ṭajaḍə 'old' auɛaṭaṃ 'medicine'	para 'rice barn' pu:ṭa 'river' paṭa 'bubble' mula 'breast' mu:ṭi:a 'sharp'
/a:/	a:ṇə 'male' a:ri:ə 'who' a:ri:ə 'six; river' a:na 'elephant' a:paṭ:ə 'danger'	ma:ḍavaə 'mother' na:k:ə 'tongue' a:ha:ri:ɕaṃ 'food' ba:lika 'girl' el:a:m 'all'	
/i/	ila 'leaf' ip:ɔ:l 'now' i:ri:k:uka 'sit' iṭaḍə 'leftside' iviṭe 'here'	arijuka 'know' aṭiṭ:u 'beat' ḍzi:ri:akəṃ 'cumin' eviṭe 'where' maṭṭil 'barrier' ḍzi:vi 'creature' mi:n 'fish' ni:ṇḍa 'long' vi:ḍi 'broad' vi:ṭə 'house'	iraṭ:ṭi 'meat; flesh' jo:ni 'skin' aḡṇi 'fire' b ^h aṇi 'beauty' ḍaṭi 'fat; heavy' ṣtri: 'female'
/i:/			
/u/	uḷi 'onion' up:ə 'salt'	kuṇ:ə 'child' aṭuṭ:ə 'near'	aṭiṭ:u 'beat' ṭa:ri:u 'give'
/u/	uṇḍuka 'push' uṭ:amam 'perfect' uraṇuka 'sleep'	ḍuk ^h əṃ 'sadness' guṇaṃ 'virtue' ka:ṭuṭ:ə 'neck'	epo:u 'always' koṇ:u 'killed' vi:ṇu 'fall'
/u:/	u:ṇə 'food'	gu:ṭaṃ 'crowd' mu:k:ə 'nose' ru:pa 'rupee' ṭu:k:uka 'wipe'	pu: 'flower'
/e/	eruk:uka 'take' el:a:m 'all' ep:am 'when' eviṭe 'where' epo:u 'always'	peṇ:ə 'female' kase:ri:a 'chair' melip:a 'thin' ṭfevi 'ear' veṇṭa 'okra plant'	aṇəne 'like that' ḍa:ṭe 'below; under' iviṭe 'here' ṇe:ri:e 'straight' pa:le 'milk'

/e:/	e:ŋi 'ladder' e:ʈə 'which'	ke:lk:uka 'hear' me:k ^h am 'cloud' ŋe:rie 'straight' pe:ʈi 'fear' ve:ʈa 'hunt'	
/o/	op:ə 'one' op:ə 'signature' o:ŋu 'one (thing)' o:ʈuk:uno 'flowing; floating' o:ʈupa:ʈə 'many'	kol:uka 'kill' epo:ʈu 'always' go:ʈambə 'wheat' ʈfo:ə 'rice' ʈoli 'skin' ip:o:l 'now' ap:o:l 'then' ep:o:l 'when' jo:ni 'skin' sʈo:ʈram 'thanks'	ka:ʈik:uno 'eating' ku:ʈik:uno 'digging' ku:ʈak:uno 'barking'
/o:/	o:la 'palm leaf'	ip:o:l 'now' ap:o:l 'then' ep:o:l 'when' jo:ni 'skin' sʈo:ʈram 'thanks'	
/ə/		iŋəne 'like this' aŋəne 'like that' eŋəne 'how' pʈu:əʈə 'outside' ʈfaŋdʈrən 'moon'	vajarə 'belly' ʈair:ə 'yogurt' ʈeŋə 'coconut tree' ʈʈirakə 'wing' ʈʈu:ʈə 'warm'
/ai/	aik:am 'unity'	kaijə 'hand' vaik:uka 'play (instruments)' laik:uka 'dissolve'	
/au/	aucaʈam 'medicine'	jauvaŋam 'youth'	
/ei/		ʈeivam 'god' ŋeijə 'fat; butter'	
/ia/			uŋaŋia 'dry' maŋia 'dim' na:ʈaŋia 'lemon'
/ua/		suasəm 'breath' sua:ʈam 'voice'	

In terms of the distribution in Table 8, the following generalizations can be made.

1. Unlike geminate consonants, which only occur at the word-medial position, geminate vowels can occur at all positions, as evidenced by the distribution of /u:/.
2. Unlike monophthongs, diphthongs have a rather limited distribution. For instance, while

/ei/ and /ua/ occur only at the word-medial position, /ia/ occurs only at the word-final position.

3. The schwa never occurs at the word-initial position.

2.2. Allophonic Variations

In this section, I illustrate some allophonic variations that I have observed so far, including unreleased consonants, alternations of alveolar rhotics, and two assimilation patterns.

2.2.1. Unreleased consonants

As mentioned earlier, only some nasals (i.e. /m/, /n/, and /ŋ/) and approximants (i.e. /l/ and /ʎ/) are allowed to occur at the word-final position. Within these consonants, nasals and lateral approximants become unreleased when occurring at the word-final position, as shown in (1).

(1) Examples of unreleased consonants

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| a. /m/ → [m̚] | [maɾiãm̚] ‘tree’ | [vaɳãm̚] ‘forest’ | [paŋãm̚] ‘money’ |
| b. /n/ → [n̚] | [ɲaɾn̚] ‘I’ | [peɾn̚] ‘louse’ | [t̪eɾn̚] ‘honey’ |
| c. /l/ → [l̚] | [kaʈãl̚] ‘ocean’ | [kuʈɨl̚] ‘hut’ | [t̪uɔãl̚] ‘feather’ |
| d. /ʎ/ → [ʎ̚] | [avaʎ̚] ‘she’ | [kaɾiãʎ̚] ‘liver’ | [epɔoʎ̚] ‘when’ |

These unreleased allophones are in fact recognized in the Malayalam writing system, where released and unreleased consonants are represented by two different symbols.

2.2.2. Assimilation patterns

Two assimilation patterns are illustrated in this section. One is the voicing of voiceless plosives at the intervocalic position and the other the palatalization of geminate velar plosives after high front vowels.

2.2.2.1. Voicing of intervocalic plosives

All voiceless plosives (except for the alveolar one) become voiced at the intervocalic position, as illustrated in Table 9 below. The evidence for voicing comes from reversed syllables. We know the underlying form of the intervocalic voiced plosives in Table 16 is in fact voiceless but not voiced because they become voiceless when switched to the word-initial position. For instance, /maʈi/ [maʈi] ‘enough’ becomes [ʈima] ‘NONWORD’ when its two

syllables are reversed.

Table 9: Examples of the voicing of voiceless intervocalic plosives

	Word-initial	Intervocalic
/p/	/pa:ɟam/ [pa:ɟam̃] ‘banana’ /para/ [para] ‘rice barn’	/apakaɟam/ [abakaɟam̃] ‘accident’ ² /a:paɟ:ə/ [a:baɟ:ə] ‘danger’
/t̪/	/t̪ara/ [t̪ara] ‘floor’ /t̪oli/ [t̪oli] ‘skin’	/paɟa/ [paɟa] ‘bubble’ /maɟi/ [maɟi] ‘enough’
/t̪/	/t̪at̪ ^h u/ [t̪at̪ ^h u] ‘tattoo’ /t̪aun̪/ [t̪aun̪] ‘town’	/kaɟi/ [kaɟi] ‘bite’ /iviɟe/ [iviɟe] ‘here’
/k/	/ka:ɟianam/ [ka:ɟianam̃] ‘because’ /karup:ə/ [karup:ə] ‘black’	/ma:sika/ [ma:siga] ‘magazine’ /dʒi:ɟakəm/ [dʒi:ɟagəm̃] ‘cumin’

2.2.2.2. Palatalization of geminate velar plosives

The geminate velar plosive /k:/ has two allophones, the plain [k:] and the palatalized [kʲ:]. While [kʲ:] only occurs immediately after high front vowels, [k:] occurs elsewhere, as illustrated in Table 10, where all examples end with /-k:uka/, a suffix for the citation form of verbs.³

Table 10: Examples of plain and palatalized geminate velar plosives

Palatalized geminates	[aɟi:kʲ:uga] ‘fight; stab’; [iri:kʲ:uga] ‘sit’; [laikʲ:uga] ‘dissolve’; [dʒi:vikʲ:uga] ‘live’; [kaɟi:kʲ:uga] ‘eat’; [kuɟi:kʲ:uga] ‘drink’; [murikʲ:uga] ‘split’; [paɟi:kʲ:uga] ‘study’; [ʃi:ɟi:kʲ:uga] ‘think’; [ʃiri:kʲ:uga] ‘laugh’
Plain geminates	[t̪u:k:uga] ‘wipe’; [eruk:uga] ‘take’; [kaɟuk:uga] ‘wash’; [koruk:uga] ‘give’; [ʋarak:uga] ‘fry’; [kiɟak:uga] ‘lie’; [naɟak:uga] ‘walk’; [ke[k:uga] ‘hear’

Additionally, the palatalization phenomenon is not restricted to the suffix /-k:uka/ even though the examples above all end with it. In fact, the same palatalization pattern also takes place in monomorphemic words. Compare for instance [aikʲ:am̃] ‘unity’ with [t̪ak:a:i] ‘tomato’ and [mu:k:ə] ‘nose’. Once again, the palatalized geminate occurs immediately after

² Contrary to the expectation, the intervocalic [k] in [abakaɟam̃] ‘accident’ is not voiced. Since the *apa-* here a prefix meaning “bad”, I suspect there might be a constraint that prevents voicing from happening across morpheme boundaries, though more data are needed in order to confirm this constraint.

³ According to Piotr, the /u/ vowel is fronted to [ɯ] when it immediately follows a palatalized geminate. Since more acoustic evidence is needed in order to verify this, I transcribed all instances of /u/ as [u], which would be sufficient for the current purpose.

high front vowels, but not after other vowels.

2.3. Syllable Structure

In this section, I discuss the syllable structure in Malayalam. As a general rule, the syllable structure in Malayalam can be schematized as (C)(C)(C)V(V)(C), where parenthesis indicates optionality. That is to say, the onset can have up to three consonants whereas the coda only permits one consonant at most, and the nucleus can either be a monophthong or a diphthong. Theoretically, the possible syllable type is minimally V and maximally CCCVVC, but there are many gaps, as illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11: Examples of syllable types

Syllable Type	Example	Gloss
O N C		
V	i.la	leaf
C V	ma.ɳ̥ə	soil; sand
CC V	ɾa.ɻri	night
CCC V	stri:	female
V C ?		
C V C	ma.r̥am	tree
CC V C	sto:ɻram	thanks
CCC V C ?		
VV	au.ca.ɻam	medicine
C VV	dei.vam	god
CC VV	?	
CCC VV	?	
VV C ?		
C VV C ?		
CC VV C ?		
CCC VV C ?		

The maximal structure of an onset is “str̥” (as in /stri:/ ‘female’), which is possibly the only three-consonant onset type in Malayalam. The order of its consonant types is, from the nucleus outwards, liquids, plosives, and fricatives. This order violates the Sonority Sequencing Principle, which states that sonority progressively decreases towards the onset and coda from

the nucleus, since /s/ (or fricatives) has higher sonority than /t/ (or plosives) but is further away from the nucleus than /t/.

2.3.1. Onset

Most consonants in Table 1 may occur in the onset position, as shown in (2).

(2) Consonants that occur in the onset

- /p/ **pe:n** ‘louse’
- /p:/ **a.p:a** ‘dad’
- /p^h/ **p^ha.lam** ‘fruit’
- /b/ **ba.lam** ‘strength’
- /b^h/ **b^hu.mi** ‘earth’
- /t/ **ta.ra** ‘floor’
- /t:/ **ʃi:ta** ‘dirty’
- /t^h/ **a.t^ha.va:** ‘also’
- /d/ **di.ea** ‘direction’
- /d^h/ **d^ha.nam** ‘money’
- /t^{hi}/ **na:t^{hi}əm** ‘foul smell’
- /t/ **ka.ti** ‘bite’
- /t:/ **pa.ti** ‘dog’
- /t^h/ **t^hi.p:u** ‘name of a king’
- /d/ **da.k:u** ‘rubber’
- /d^h/ **d^ha.ma:nam** ‘kettle’
- /k/ **ka.li.k:u.ka** ‘play’
- /k:/ **ta.k:a.li** ‘tomato’
- /k^h/ **k^ha.tʃ:u** ‘expense’
- /g/ **gu.ŋam** ‘virtue’
- /g^h/ **g^ho:cam** ‘noise’
- /m/ **mu.ti** ‘hair’
- /m:/ **a.m:a** ‘mom’
- /ŋ/ **ne:rie** ‘straight’
- /ŋ:/ **ʃu.va.ŋ:a** ‘red’
- /n/ **va:nam** ‘sky’
- /n:/ **pa.n:a** ‘bad’
- /ŋ/ **ma.ŋam** ‘smell’
- /ŋ:/ **va.ŋ:am** ‘fat’

/ɲ/ **ɲa:n** 'I'
 /ɲ:/ ma.**ɲa** 'yellow'
 /ŋ/ u.ra.**ŋu**.ka 'sleep'
 /r/ **ra.ŋi** 'queen'
 /r:/ tʊ.**rɛ** 'far'
 /s/ **sim**.ham 'lion'
 /ɕ/ **ɕa**.rɿ 'correct'
 /h/ **hi**.mam 'snow'
 /tʃ/ **tʃe**.vi 'ear'
 /tʃ:/ i.ra.**tʃi** 'flesh'
 /dʒ/ **dʒi**.vi 'creature'
 /v/ **va**.tʃi 'stick'
 /ɹ/ pa.**ɹam** 'banana'
 /j/ ma.**jil** 'peacock'
 /l/ mu.**la** 'breast'
 /l:/ ma.**li** 'coriander'
 /ɭ/ mu.**ɭa**.kə 'chili'
 /ɭ:/ u.**ɭi** 'onion'

Consonant clusters are restricted to the type of plosives plus the trill (e.g. /rʃa.**tʃri**/ 'night'), with a third optional /s/ at the beginning of the cluster (e.g. /s**tʃri**/ 'female').

2.3.2. Nucleus

The nucleus can be any monophthong in Table 5 or any diphthong in Table 6, as shown in (3).

(3) Vowels that occur in the nucleus

/a/ **a.tə** 'that'
 /a:/ **a:na** 'elephant'
 /i/ **i.la** 'leaf'
 /i:/ **vi:ɖi** 'broad'
 /u/ **u.ɭi** 'onion'
 /u:/ **u:ŋə** 'food'
 /e/ **e.po.ɹu** 'always'
 /e:/ **e:ŋi** 'ladder'
 /o/ **o.rɿu** 'one (thing)'

- /o:/ **o:**la ‘palm leaf’
- /ai/ **ai:**kam ‘unity’
- /au/ **au:**ca.ɬam ‘medicine’
- /ei/ **ɛi:**vam ‘god’
- /ia/ ma.**ɲia** ‘dim’
- /ua/ **sua:**səm ‘breath’

2.3.3. Coda

Candidates for the coda are much more restricted than those for the onset in terms of both number and type. While the onset may allow up to three consonants in a row, the coda may not consist of more than one consonant. With regard to type, on the other hand, only a handful of consonant types are allowed in the coda whereas all but one consonant can occur in the onset.

Consonants that may occur in the coda are shown in (4).⁴

(4) Consonants that occur in the coda

- /b/ **ɲi:**ca**b:**ɬam ‘silent’
- /g/ **ag:**ɲi ‘fire’
- /m/ **ma:**m.səm ‘flesh’
- /ŋ/ **ɬfa:**ɲɬrən ‘moon’
- /n/ ma.**ha:**n ‘expert’
- /ŋ/ **ɬa:**uŋ ‘town’
- /ŋ/ **ɬa:**ŋ.kəl ‘you’
- /r/ a.pa.**sur:**ɬi ‘bad rumor’
- /l/ ku.**ɬal** ‘intestines’
- /l/ ka.**rjal** ‘liver’

They roughly fall into two natural classes, namely, stops (orals and nasals) and liquids (laterals and rhotics). However, not every member of these classes can occur in the coda. For instance, as a member of liquids, /ɬ/ is not allowed in the coda.

⁴ Although the consultant seems to think of the sequence [ɲɬ] in /ɬfaɲɬrən/ ‘moon’ as a unit, she made a pause between [ɬfaɲ] and [ɬrən] when Casey asked her to tap for the stress of this word. I took this as the justification for syllabifying /ɬfaɲɬrən/ into [ɬfaɲ.ɬrən], rather than [ɬfa.ɲɬrən]. Also, it makes sense if /ŋ/ can occur in the coda since most nasals are allowed in the coda.

2.4. Typological Status

On the whole, the proposed phoneme inventory is quite plausible and well-balanced, except for three relatively unusual matters. First, as the sole member of alveolar plosives, /t^{hi}/ is rather unusual because it is both aspirated and palatalized, with no other counterparts in the alveolar plosive category. For now, I have no extra comments on this particularity.

Second, the palatalized tap/flap /ɾⁱ/ is a bit uncommon too. I suspect the tap/flap in Malayalam is palatalized so as to increase its perceptual difference from the trill /r/ considering the fact that they are two different phonemes but perceptually similar. Despite this, the palatalized tap/flap is not completely bizarre anyway because Akamatsu (1997) for instance argues that in Japanese /ɾⁱ/ is a phoneme distinct from /r/ (e.g. *shoryaku* [ɕoɾⁱaguu] ‘abbreviation’), though it occurs mostly in Sino-Japanese lexical items.

Third, while there is a voiceless alveolar fricative /s/, there is no voiced alveolar fricative /z/, a phoneme quite common in many languages. However, lack of voicing contrasts in fricatives is actually not rare at all. Maddieson’s research (2005) shows that about two-thirds of the world's languages lack voicing contrasts in fricatives.

3. Morphology

To facilitate the inputting of data, I adopted a practical orthography of Malayalam for the discussions of morphology and syntax instead of using IPA. The correspondence between IPA and practical orthography is given in Appendix II.

The purpose of this section is not to present an exhaustive account of Malayalam morphology, but to provide some examples for three major morphological processes, namely, inflectional, derivational, and compounding. Moreover, in terms of morphological typology, Malayalam is more an agglutinating language than a fusional one since words tend to consist of multiple morphemes and that when they do the morpheme boundaries are usually clear, as shown by the multimorphemic words in (5) below.

- (5) *nyaan brekfEst-inE oppam oryupaaTTE iracci kaRikky-um-aayiryunnu.*
1SG.NOM breakfast-DAT with much meat eat-HAB-COP.PST
‘I used to eat lots of meat for my breakfast.’ (T&A.023)

3.1. Inflectional processes

Grammatical categories that are inflected in Malayalam include at least gender, number, case, tense, mood, and voice. Examples (6) through (11) are illustrative.

- (6) Gender: *-an* ‘masculine’; *-i* ‘feminine’
 a. *kaLL-an* ‘thief (m.)’; *kaLL-i* ‘thief (f.)’
 b. *kaary-an* ‘doer (m.)’; *kaary-i* ‘doer (f.)’
- (7) Number: *-ø* ‘singular’; *-kaL* ‘plural’
 a. *puuca* ‘cat’; *puuca-kaL* ‘cats’
 b. *paaTE* ‘song’; *paaTu-kaL* ‘songs’
- (8) Case: *-ø* ‘nominative’; *-(y)il* ‘locative’
 a. *muri* ‘room’; *muri-yil* ‘in the room’
 b. *viiTE* ‘house; home’; *viiT-il* ‘in the house; at home’
- (9) Tense: *-unnu* ‘present’; *-um* ‘future’
 a. *paray-unnu* ‘say (prs.)’; *paray-um* ‘will say’
 b. *samsaaryikky-unnu* ‘talk (prs.)’; *samsaaryikky-um* ‘will talk’
- (10) Mood: *-u* ‘imperative’; *-aal* ‘conditional’⁵
 a. *kaRikky-u* ‘eat (imp.)’; *kaRicc-aal* ‘eat (cond.)’
 b. *coodikky-u* ‘ask (imp.)’; *coodicc-aal* ‘ask (cond.)’
- (11) Voice: *-ø* ‘active’; *-appeT* ‘passive’
 a. *koll-uka* ‘to kill’; *koll-appeT-uka* ‘to be killed’
 b. *kariyaakk-uka* ‘to tease’; *kariyaakk-appeT-uka* ‘to be teased’

3.2. Derivational processes

In terms of the output of the derivational process, at least three types can be distinguished, namely, derived nominals, derived adjectivals, and derived adverbials.

3.2.1. Derived nominals

Nominals can be derived from adjectives suffixed by third person demonstratives/pronouns, as illustrated in Table 12.

Table 12: Attributive adjectives and nominalized adjectives

Attributive adjectives	Nominalized adjectives
<i>nalla</i> ‘good’	<i>nalla-tE</i> ‘good one’ <i>nalla-van</i> ‘good person (m.)’
<i>ceriya</i> ‘small’	<i>ceriya-tE</i> ‘small one’ <i>ceriya-val</i> ‘small person (f.)’
<i>iLaya</i> ‘young’	<i>iLaya-tE</i> ‘young one’ <i>iLaya-vary</i> ‘young people (pl.)’
<i>marre</i> ‘the other’	<i>marre-tE</i> ‘the other one’

⁵ The *-aal* conditional is suffixed to the past tense verb root.

Based on Asher & Kumari (1997) and Moag & Moag (1967), the third person demonstrative/pronominal paradigm is given in Table 13.

Table 13: Third person demonstratives/pronouns

Number	Gender	Proximal	Distal
Singular	Masculine	<i>ivan</i>	<i>avan</i>
	Feminine	<i>ivaL</i>	<i>avaL</i>
	Neuter [+/-ANIM]	<i>itE</i>	<i>atE</i>
Plural	Masculine	<i>ivary</i>	<i>avary</i>
	Feminine		
	Neuter [+ANIM]	<i>iva</i>	<i>ava</i>

By the same token, nominals can also be derived from verbs suffixed by the singular neuter pronoun *-tE* when they first derive into participles (which are adjectival in nature) via *-a* suffixation. The two-step derivational process is illustrated in Table 14.

Table 14: Finite verbs, participial verbs, and nominalized verbs

Infinitive verbs	Tense	Finite verbs	Participial verbs	Nominalized verbs
<i>parayuka</i> 'to say'	Present	<i>paray-unnu</i>	<i>paray-unn-a</i>	<i>paray-unn-a-tE</i>
	Past (with <i>-u</i> ending)	<i>paranyny</i>	<i>paranyny-a</i>	<i>paranyny-a-tE</i>
<i>paaTuka</i> 'to sing'	Present	<i>paaT-unnu</i>	<i>paaT-unn-a</i>	<i>paaT-unn-a-tE</i>
	Past (with <i>-i</i> ending)	<i>paaTTi</i>	<i>paaTTi-ya</i>	<i>paaTTi-ya-tE</i>

3.2.2. Derived adjectivals

Other than verbal participles (see above), adjectivals can be derived from nouns suffixed by *uLLa* 'having', the present participle of the existential predicate *uNTE*, as in (12) .

(12) Derived adjectivals

- a. *viiti* 'width' → *viiti-yuLLa* 'wide' (lit. 'having width')
- b. *puddhi* 'wisdom' → *puddhi-yuLLa* 'wise' (lit. 'having wisdom')

3.2.3. Derived adverbials

Adverbials can be derived from nouns suffixed by *-aayi* 'becoming', the converbal/past tense form of *aakkuka* 'to become', as in (13).

(13) Derived adverbials

- a. *santooSam* 'happiness' → *santooSam-aayi* 'happily'
- b. *vritti* 'cleanness' → *vritti-yaayi* 'cleanly'

Presumably, the adverb *nannaayi* ‘well’ is also the outcome of this derivational process.

3.3. Compounding processes

Finally, compounding is a morphological process whereby two (or more) free morphemes are juxtaposed to form a word, which may or may not inherit the semantics of its components. Some examples I found are shown in (14).

(14) Compound words

- a. *kaalE* ‘leg’; *muTTE* ‘joint’ → *kaalEmuTTE* ‘knee’
- b. *paaTTE* ‘song’; *kaaryan* ‘doer (m.)’ → *paaTTukaaryan* ‘singer (m.)’
- c. *peNE* ‘female’; *kuTTi* ‘kid’ → *peNkuTTi* ‘girl’
- d. *tala* ‘head’; *muTi* ‘fur’ → *talamuTi* ‘hair’
- e. *oryu* ‘one’; *pakshe* ‘but’ → *oryupakshe* ‘maybe’
- f. *yaatra* ‘journey’; *ceyyuka* ‘to do’ → *yaatraceyyuka* ‘to travel’

4. Syntax

The organization of this section basically follows that of Thomas Payne’s *A Sample Grammatical Sketch of English*⁶, which is intended as a sample grammatical sketch for students who are expected to write about the descriptive morphosyntax of an unknown language for a one-year course. Due to the paucity of my current data, however, some sections in Payne’s sample are not included here, such as tense/aspect/mode, clause combinations, and pragmatically marked structures. Accordingly, that leaves the topics covered in the following sections to word classes, basic constituent orders, predicate nominals, existential/locational/possessive sentences, expression of grammatical relations, causatives, passives, reflexives, reciprocals, questions, imperatives, and finally negation.

4.1. Word classes

Given the data I have collected so far, six word classes can be identified in Malayalam, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, postpositions, and conjunctions.

4.1.1. Nouns

Malayalam nouns share four morphosyntactic properties. First, they inflect for number. While singular is unmarked, plural is marked by *-kaL*, which can be suffixed to human, nonhuman animate, and inanimate nouns, as respectively shown in (15) through (17).

⁶ Payne’s *Sample* is available online at <http://www.uoregon.edu/~tpayne/engram.htm>.

- (15) *anyjE aaLu-kaL oryutaryaayiTTE vannu.*
 five person-PL one.after.another come.PST
 ‘Five people came one after another.’ (RECIP.011)
- (16) *ryaNTE puucca-kaL-e vaangng-aam.*
 two cat-PL-ACC buy-HORT
 ‘Buy two cats.’ (NP.008)
- (17) *ii ryaNTE kaaru-kaL-il eet=aaNE ninakkE kuuTatal iSTam?*
 this two car-PL-LOC which=COP1.PRS 2SG.DAT more liking
 ‘Which of these two cars do you like more?’ (INTERROG.019)

Although *-kaL* marks plurality for most Nouns, there is a special plural marker *-maary* for some kinship terms. For instance, *amma* is “mother” and its plural form is *ammamaary* (see Onam.001 for the context it occurs in) instead of **ammakaL*.

In addition to number, Malayalam nouns also inflect for case. In (18), for instance, each of the five Nouns is marked by a different morphological case.

- (18) *enre amma enikkyE kocil-yil ninnE oryu kattE-ø ayaccu.*
 1SG.GEN mom.NOM 1SG.DAT PN-LOC from one letter-ACC send.PST
 ‘My mom sent me a letter from Cochin.’ (Case.009)

Third, Malayalam nouns do not inflect for gender. The only exceptions are third person singular human pronouns and some human nouns. While “he” is *avan* (the familiar form) or *addeham* (the honorific form), “she” is *avaL*. Some human nouns may refer to males or females, depending on the nominal ending. For example, a male singer is *paattukaaryan* and a female one *paattukaaryi*. By the same token, a male sibling (i.e. brother) is *sahooteryan* and a female one (i.e. sister) *sahooteryi*. It seems that *-an* marks masculine nouns and *-i* feminine ones. But it is unclear at this point what kinds of nouns these gender markers may be affixed to.

Finally, Malayalam nouns immediately precede postpositions and form a constituent with them, as illustrated in (19).

- (19) *Shashi brekfEst kaRinyNyE avanre bustakam eRut-unn-a-tE tuTarynnu.*
 Shashi.NOM breakfast pass.CVB his book write-PRS-ATTR-NMLZ continue.PST
 ‘Shashi continued writing his book after breakfast.’ (Case.018)

4.1.2. Verbs

Like verbs in many other languages, Malayalam verbs inflect for tense, aspect, and mode (or TAM for short). The complete range of grammatical TAM distinctions is not clear at this point. For now, only some instances from each category can be given for illustration.

Tense. The citation form of Malayalam verbs ends with *-uka*, such as *verukkuka* ‘to hate’ and *toRikkyuka* ‘to kick’, and the citation form without *-uka* is the verb root. While present tense is marked by *-unnu* suffixed to the verb root, future tense is marked by *-um*, as shown in

(20) through (23).

- (20) *shashi mohEn-e verukk-unnu.*
Shashi Mohen-ACC hate-PRS
'Shashi hates Mohen.' (RECIP.001)
- (21) *shashi mohEn-e toRikky-unnu.*
Shashi Mohen-ACC kick-PRS
'Shashi kicks Mohen.' (RECIP.003)
- (22) *nyaan iracci kaRikky-um.*
1SG.NOM meat eat-FUT
'I will eat meat.' (T&A.019)
- (23) *anna iracci uNTaakk-um.*
Anna.NOM meat make-FUT
'Anna will cook meat.' (T&A.018)

In past tense, a different verb root is used, which is unpredictable from the citation form. For instance, the past tense verb stem of *kaRikkyuka* 'to eat' is *kaRiccu* and that of *uNTaakkuka* 'to make' is *uNTaakki*, as in (24) and (25) respectively.

- (24) *nyaan iracci kaRiccu.*
1SG.NOM meat eat.PST
'I ate meat.' (T&A.007)
- (25) *anna iracci uNTaakki.*
Anna.NOM meat cook.PST
'Anna cooked meat.' (T&A.006)

Aspect. The citation form (with a vowel change at the end) combined with the copula *aaNE* (present)/*aayiryunnu* (past) gives rise to progressive aspect, as shown in (26) and (27), where the infinitive ending *-uka* changes to *-uke*.

- (26) *nyaan iracci kaRikky-uke=yaaNE.*
1SG.NOM meat eat-INF1-COP1.PRS
'I am eating meat.' (T&A.011)
- (27) *nyaan iracci kaRikky-uke=yayiryunnu.*
1SG.NOM meat eat-INF1=COP1.PST
'I was eating meat.' (T&A.015)

Moreover, the past tense verb root (with deletion of the final vowel) combined with *iryunnu* seems to indicate present perfect, as seen in (28) and (29).

- (28) *joon-um anna-yum ii aruttE samsaaryicc=iryunnu.*
John-COORD Anna-COORD this close talk.PST=PRF.PRS
'John and Anna have talked recently.' (T&A.025)
- (29) *anna ii maasEm ryaNTE praavashyam iracci uNTaak=iryunnu.*
Anna this month two time meat cook.PST=PRF.PRS
'Anna has cooked meat twice this month.' (T&A.026)

Mode. The suffix *-aNam*, when suffixed to the (nonpast) verb stem, is associated with deontic modality. In (30), for instance, *varyaNam* means “should come” while the citation form of the verb (i.e. *varyuka*) simply means “to come”.

- (30) *ni suuryen astamiky-unn-a-t-inu mumpE viiT-il vary-aNam.*
 2SG.NOM sun set-PRS-ATTR-NMLZ-DAT before home-LOC come-DNT
 ‘You should come home before sunset.’ (Case.015)

Finally, as can be seen from the examples above, there is no number or gender agreement between a Malayalam verb and any of its arguments.

4.1.3. Adjectives

Malayalam adjectives do not inflect and can directly modify nouns, as *nalla* ‘good’ in (31) shows.

- (31) *ni oryu nalla paaTTukaaryan aayiryunnu.*
 2SG.NOM one good singer.M COP1.PST
 ‘You used to be a good singer.’ (T&A.024)

One characteristic of Malayalam adjectives is that a great number of them end with *-a*, which can be analyzed as an attributive morpheme, as shown in (32).

(32) Some examples of adjectives

- a. *nalla* ‘good’
- b. *ceriya* ‘small’
- c. *iLaya* ‘young’
- d. *putiya* ‘new’
- e. *paRaya* ‘old’
- f. *valiya* ‘big’
- g. *pala* ‘various’
- h. *cila* ‘few’
- i. *valla* ‘any’
- j. *neeryiya* ‘thin’
- k. *marre* ‘the other’
- l. *onnaamate* ‘the first’

Another distinctive feature of Malayalam adjectives is that the attributive use and predicative use of adjectives differ in form. Specifically, an adjective can modify a noun in the attributive context without any change, but it has to be nominalized by the third person neutral pronoun *-tE* (or its allmorph *-t*) if used in the predicative context. Examples in (33)

and (34) illustrate this contrast.

(33) *oryu melinynya peNkuTTi*

one slim girl

‘a slim girl’ (Elicited) [Attributive adjective]

(34) a.* *anna melinynya=yaaNE.*

Anna slim=COP.PRS

Intended: ‘Anna is slim.’ (Elicited) [Attributive adjective]

b. *anna melinynya-t=aaNE.*

Anna slim-NMLZ=COP.PRS

‘Anna is slim.’ (lit. ‘Anna is a slim one.’) (COP.001) [Nominalized adjective]

4.1.4. Adverbs

Malayalam adverbs do not inflect and they modify verbs, as illustrated in (35) and (36).

(35) *nyangngaL naaLe sanantonio-yikkyE pook-um.*

1PL.EXC.NOM tomorrow San.Antonio-DAT go-FUT

‘We will go to San Antonio tomorrow.’ (NEG.003)

(36) *aaryE nannaay-iTTE bhakshaNam viLampi tann-aal=um,*

who well-PFV food serve.CVB give-COND1=UQ

enikkyE iSTam aaNE.

1SG.DAT liking COP1.PRS

‘I like whoever serves foods well.’ (Onam.012)

4.1.5. Postpositions

Malayalam postpositions are invariant and they take nouns as their complements, as *mumpE* ‘before’ in (37) and *varye* ‘until’ in (38) illustrate.

(37) *namukke paryipaaT-ikkyE oryu manikuury mumpE kaaN-aam.*

1PL.INC.DAT program-DAT one hour before see-HORT

‘Let’s meet one hour before the program.’ (Case.016)

(38) *avary karynaaTakam varye pooyi.*

3PL.NOM Karnataka until go.PST

‘They went as far as Karnataka.’ (Case.012)

So far no prepositions of any kind have been found in Malayalam.

4.1.6. Conjunctions

Like postpositions, Malayalam conjunctions are also invariant, but unlike postpositions they link a whole clause, rather than a nominal phrase, to the main clause. This is shown by *pakshe* ‘but’ and *kaaryaNam* ‘because’ in (39) and (40) respectively.

- (39) *joon sahaayikky-um, pakshe anna sahaayikky-attilla.*
 John help-FUT but Anna help-FUT.NEG
 ‘John will help, but Anna won’t.’ (COORD.004)
- (40) *amma uNTaakki-tary-unn-a bhakshaNatt-inE*
 mom made-give-PRS-ATTR food-DAT
ryucci kuuTatal aayiryikkyum,
 taste more COP1.FUT
kaaryaNam sneeham ennE paray-unn-a masaala
 because love QUOT call-PRS-ATTR spice
kuuTi at-il-E ceerkk-um.
 also that-LOC-DAT add-FUT
 ‘Foods made and given by the mother will be more delicious because a spice called love will also be added (to them).’ (Onam.001&002)

4.2. Basic constituent orders

4.2.1. Main clauses

The constituent order of prototypical basic main clauses is SV in intransitive clauses and SOV in transitive clauses, as shown in (41) and (42) respectively.

- (41) S V
joon=um anna=yum samsaaryiccu.
 John.NOM=COORD PN.NOM=COORD talk.PST
 ‘John and Anna talked.’ (T&A.005)
- (42) S O V
aa kuTTi avaNTe sahooteryi-ye iTiccu.
 that child.NOM 3SG.M.GEN sister-ACC hit.PST
 ‘The boy hit his sister.’ (NEG.005)

Despite the basic S(O)V word order, Malayalam may have a relatively free word order system since each argument in a clause is always marked by case and its grammatical relation to the predicate is thus unambiguous. Example (43) shows a case where four grammatical relations occur in the same clause, and it might just be one of the many word order possibilities. However, more naturally occurring data are needed in order to find out to what degree the word order is “free”.

- (43) S IO OBL DO V
enre amma enikkyE koci-yil ninnE oryu kattE-ø ayaccu.
 1SG.GEN mom.NOM 1SG.DAT Cochin-LOC from one letter-ACC send.PST
 ‘My mom sent me a letter from Cochin.’ (Case.009)

4.2.2. Nominal phrases

In a nominal phrase, the head noun consistently occurs at the end, whether the preceding element is a numeral, a demonstrative, a possessor, an attributive word, or a clause-scale modifier (which functions like a relative clause), as shown in (44) through (47).

- (44) *anyjE aaLu-kaL oryutaryaayiTTE vannu.*
 five person-PL one.after.another come.PST
 ‘Five people came one after another.’ (RECIP.011)
- (45) *[aa kuTTi] [avaNTe sahooteryi-ye] iTiccu.*
 that child.NOM 3SG.M.GEN sister-ACC hit.PST
 ‘The boy hit his sister.’ (NEG.005)
- (46) *ni oryu nalla paaTTukaaryan aayiryunnu.*
 2SG.NOM one good singer.M COP1.PST
 ‘You used to be a good singer.’ (T&A.024)
- (47) *amma uNTaakki tary-unn-a bhakshaNatt-inE*
 mom make.CVB give-PRS-ATTR food-DAT
ryucci kuuTatal aayiryikyum.
 taste more COP1.FUT
 ‘Foods made and given by Mom will be more delicious.’ (Onam.001)

4.2.3. Verbal phrases

The status of a verbal phrase is rather obscure at this point. All that can be said is that the verb always occurs at the end of a VP (if there is one).

4.2.4. Postpositional phrases

In a postpositional phrase, the postposition always follows the nominal that it forms a constituent with. Multiple PPs can be juxtaposed in the same clause, as shown in (48).

- (48) *nyaan [panjaab-il ninnum], [mahaarashtra vaRi], [keeryalam varye] yaatraceytu.*
 1SG.NOM Punjab-LOC from Maharashtra via Kerala until travel.PST
 ‘I travelled from Punjab, via Maharashtra, (and down) to Kerala.’ (Case.014)

Importantly, not every postposition requires its nominal complement to be marked in the same grammatical case. For instance, while nominals headed by *vaRi* ‘via’ and *varye* ‘until’ are in nominative, those headed by *ninnum* ‘from’ and *iTakkyE* ‘between’ should be marked by locative and genitive respectively, as in (48) and (49).

- (49) *oryu manuSyan [ryaNTE maryang-ngaL-uTe iTakkyE] nilkk-uke=yaaNE.*
 one man two tree-PL-GEN between stand-INF1=COP1.PRS
 ‘A man is standing between two trees.’ (Case.004)

4.3. Predicate nominals

Malayalam predicate nominal clauses take on the schema “SUB PRED COP”, which means the subject NP comes first, then the predicate NP, and finally a copula. The present tense form of the copula is *aaNE* and its past tense form *aayiryunnu*, as illustrated in (50) and (51) respectively.

- (50) *ni oryu paTTukaaryan aaNE.*
 2SG.NOM one singer.M COP1.PRS
 ‘You are a singer.’ (T&A.004)

- (51) *ni oryu nalla paaTTukaaryan aayiryunnu.*
 2SG.NOM one good singer.M COP1.PST
 ‘You used to be a good singer.’ (T&A.024)

4.4. Existential/locational/possessive sentences

Malayalam existential clauses employ the schema “(LOC) SUB EXIST”, which means the locative phrase comes first (if there is one), then the subject NP, and finally the existential predicate *uNTE*, as (52) below shows.

- (52) *frij-il oryu kooRi uNTE.*
 fridge-LOC one chicken.NOM EX
 ‘There is a chicken in the fridge.’ (NP.016)

Interestingly, if the subject NP is the one and only thing that exists, a special construction is used. Specifically, the predicate becomes *uLLu* and the subject NP is marked by *-ee*, which seems to express emphatic meaning of some sort. Example (53) is illustrative.

- (53) *frij-il oryu kooRi=yee uLLu.*
 fridge-LOC one chicken.NOM=EMPH EX.PRS
 ‘There is only one chicken in the fridge.’ (NP.017)

In locational clauses, the subject NP precedes the locative phrase and the same existential *uNTE* serves as the predicate at the end, as in (54).

- (54) *bustakam muri-yil uNTE.*
 book room-LOC EX
 ‘The book is in the room.’ (Elicited)

The existential predicate *uNTE* is also used in possessive clauses, where the possessor is marked in dative case and the possessum in nominative. The possessum used in this construction can be body parts or kinship terms, as respectively shown in (55) and (56).

- (55) *enikkyE ryaNTE kai uNTE.*
 1SG.DAT two hand.NOM EX
 ‘I have two hands.’ (NP.024)
- (56) *enikkyE oryu sahooteryan uNTE.*
 1SG.DAT one brother.NOM EX
 ‘I have one brother.’ (NP.028)

Like the case in existential/locational clauses, the same “*-ee* plus *uLLu*” construction is used if the possessum is the only entity that is possessed, as illustrated in (57) and (58) below.

- (57) *avannE oryu kai=yee uLLu.*
 1SG.DAT one hand.NOM=EMPH EX.PRS
 ‘He has only one hand.’ (NP.023)
- (58) *enikkyE oryu sahooteryan=ee uLLu.*
 1SG.DAT one brother.NOM=EMPH EX.PRS
 ‘I have only one brother.’ (NP.027)

4.5. Expression of grammatical relations

Since there is no argument-predicate agreement in Malayalam, expression of grammatical relations is primarily indicated by case marking. The exact number of grammatical cases is unclear at this point, but some generalizations can be made regarding what grammatical relation is marked by what case.

While subject is usually marked by nominative $-\emptyset$, object is marked by accusative $-e$, as (59) shows.

- (59) *aa kuTTi- \emptyset avaNTe sahooteryi-ye iTiccu.*
 that child-NOM 3SG.M.GEN sister-ACC hit.PST
 ‘The boy hit his sister.’ (NEG.005)

However, if the object is inanimate, the accusative marking can be zero, as in (60), where the grammatical relation is indicated by word order.

- (60) *anna- \emptyset iracci- \emptyset uNTaakki.*
 Anna-NOM meat-ACC cook.PST
 ‘Anna cooked meat.’ (T&A.006)

When there are two objects in the same clause, direct object is marked by accusative and indirect object by dative, as in (61).

- (61) *enre amma- \emptyset enikkyE koci-yil ninnE oryu kattE- \emptyset ayaccu.*
 1SG.GEN mom-NOM 1SG.DAT Cochin-LOC from one letter-ACC send.PST
 ‘My mom sent me a letter from Cochin.’ (Case.009)

In addition to a recipient, the dative case also marks goal of motion, which can be alternatively marked by $-ooTE$, whose function is still unclear. Example (62) illustrates this point.

- (62) *nyaan ennum skuuL-ekkyE/skuuL-ooTE naTakk-uke=yaaNE.*
 1SG.NOM every.day school-DAT/school-SOC walk-INF1=COP1.PRS
 ‘I walk to school every day.’ (Case.010)

Location, whether static or dynamic, is marked by locative case $-il$, as in (63) and (64) below.

- (63) *kuTTi muri-yil ninnE puratt-ekkyE ooTi.*
 child.NOM room-LOC from outside-DAT run.PST
 ‘The child ran out of a room.’ (Case.008)
- (64) *frij-il oryu kooRi uNTE.*
 fridge-LOC one chicken.NOM EX
 ‘There is a chicken in the fridge.’ (NP.016)

4.6. Causatives

In terms of transitivity, Malayalam seems to have three verb stems, namely, intransitive, transitive, and causative stems, as shown in (65) through (67) respectively.

- (65) *paatram poTTi/uTanyny.*
 vase break.INTR.PST/break.INTR.PST
 ‘The vase broke.’ (CAUS.009)
- (66) *anna paatram poTTiccu/uTaccu.*
 Anna.NOM vase.ACC break.TR.PST/break.TR.PST
 ‘Anna broke the vase.’ (CAUS.014)
- (67) *anna shashi-ye koNTE paatram poTTi<ppi>ccu/uTa<ppi>ccu.*
 Anna.NOM Shashi-ACC by vase.ACC break<CAUS>TR.PST/break<CAUS>TR.PST
 ‘Anna made Shashi break the vase.’ (CAUS.017)

Comparing (66) with (67), we see that the causative stem is derived from the transitive stem infixed by the causative morpheme <ppi>. As (67) illustrates, the argument structure in Malayalam causative constructions is marked by nominative for the causer, accusative for the patient of the caused event, and the posposition *koNTE* ‘by’ (which “governs” accusative) for the causee.

Interestingly, as an alternative to the causative stem, the transitive stem can also be used in the causative context (where there are causer, causee, and patient of the caused event). This alternative, however, is lexically restricted, as the contrast in (68) shows.

- (68) a. *anna shashi-ye koNTE paatram poTTiccu.*
 Anna.NOM Shashi-ACC by vase.ACC break.TR.PST
 ‘Anna made Shashi break the vase.’ (CAUS.017)
- b.* *anna shashi-ye koNTE paatram uTaccu.*
 Anna.NOM Shashi-ACC by vase.ACC break.TR.PST
 Intended: ‘Anna made Shashi break the vase.’ (CAUS.018)

While the transitive stem *poTTiccu* and its synonym *uTaccu* are interchangeable in the transitive context (as in (66)), only *poTTiccu*, but not *uTaccu*, is acceptable in the causative context.

In spite of the functional overlap between the transitive and the causative stem (such as

poTTiccu and *poTTippiccu*), the two stems should be distinguished as they denote different event structures. This difference in event structure is especially clear when the causee is absent, as the minimal pair in (69) shows. The transitive stem *poTTiccu* can only have the transitive interpretation when the causee is absent whereas the causative stem *poTTippiccu* always has the causative interpretation even if the causee is absent.

- (69) a. *anna paatram poTTiccu.*
 Anna.NOM vase.ACC break.TR.PST
 ‘Anna broke the vase.’ (CAUS.014)
- b. *anna paatram poTTi<ppi>ccu.*
 Anna.NOM vase.ACC break<CAUS>TR.PST
 ‘Anna made (somebody) break the vase.’ (CAUS.015)

4.7. Passives

Malayalam passive verbs are derived from the present tense root encliticized by the passive auxiliary *appeT-uka* ‘PASS-INF1’, whose past tense form is *appeTTu* ‘PASS.PST’. For instance, while the active past tense form of *koll-uka* ‘kill-INF1’ is *konnu*, its passive counterpart is *koll=appeTTu*, as the contrast in (70) and (71) show.

- (70) *kaLLan shashi-ye konnu.*
 thief.M Shashi-ACC kill.PST
 ‘The thief (m.) killed Shashi.’ (PASS.003)
- (71) *shashi kaLLan-aal koll=appeTTu.*
 Shashi thief.M-INS kill=PASS.PST
 ‘Shashi was killed by the thief (m.).’ (PASS.004)

Aside from the difference in verb forms, the passive construction also differs from the active construction in terms of case marking. In actives, the agent and patient are marked by nominative and accusative respectively; in passives, the agent is marked by instrumental and the patient by nominative. More examples of the passive construction are given in (72) and (73), where the active infinitival verb forms are *aTikky-uka* ‘hit-INF1’ and *kattikky-uka* ‘burn-INF1’ respectively.

- (72) *shashi kaLLan-aal aTikky=appeTTu.*
 Shashi thief.M-INS hit=PASS.PST
 ‘Shashi was hit by the thief (m.).’ (PASS.005)
- (73) *shashi kaLLan-aal kattikky=appeTTu.*
 Shashi thief.M-INS burn=PASS.PST
 ‘Shashi was burned by the thief (m.).’ (PASS.006)

In addition, the agent in passives is optional, as is often the case in passives of many languages. Example (74) is illustrative.

- (74) *avaL kariyaakk=appeTTu.*
 3SG.F.NOM tease=PASS.PST
 ‘She was teased.’ (PASS.011)

Although *appeT-uka* ‘PASS-INF1’ is quite productive in transforming an active verb into a passive one, its use is not without restrictions. For instance, *keeLkk=appeT-uka* ‘hear=PASS-INF1’, the expected passive form of *keeLkk-uka* ‘hear-INF1’, is not accepted by the consultant. In such cases, the “passive” interpretation is expressed by reversing the order of the agent and patient in the active construction. As the contrast in (75) and (76) show, the agent precedes the patient in the “active” interpretation, but the agent follows the patient in the “passive” interpretation.

- (75) *nyaan avaLuTe suaryam keeTTu.*
 1SG.NOM 3SG.F.GEN voice hear.PST
 ‘I heard her voice.’ (PASS.007)
- (76) *avaLuTe suaryam nyaan keeTTu*
 3SG.F.GEN voice 1SG.NOM hear.PST
 ‘Her voice was heard by me.’ (PASS.008)

Syntactically, both (75) and (76) should be considered “active” since they only differ in word order. But pragmatically, (76) is more “passive-like” than (75), for the patient is profiled and the agent backgrounded in (76).

4.8. Reflexives

Malayalam makes use of the reflexive adverb *tanne* to express reflexivity, as shown in (77). Without *tanne*, (77) would be ambiguous over two readings, as illustrated in (78).

- (77) *lata avaL-e tanne kaNNaTi-yil kaNTu.*
 Lata 3SG.F-ACC REFL mirror-LOC see.PST
 ‘Lata saw herself in the mirror.’ (REFL.003)
- (78) *lata avaL-e kaNNaTi-yil kaNTu.*
 Lata 3SG.F-ACC mirror-LOC see.PST
 ‘Lata saw her/herself in the mirror.’ (REFL.002)

4.9. Reciprocals

There are two ways to express reciprocity. One is to use the adverb *tammil*, which

literally means ‘among them’ and is probably the locative form of some word on account of the *-il* ending in it. Example (79) is illustrative.

- (79) *shashi=yum mohEn=um tammil toRiccu.*
 Shashi=COORD Mohen=COORD RECP kick.PST
 ‘Shashi and Mohen kicked each other.’ (RECIP.004)

Another way is to use two demonstrative adverbs in a row, namely, *angngooTTum ingngooTTum*, which literally means “this direction and that direction”, as in (80).

- (80) *shashi=yum mohEn=um angngooTT=um ingngooTT=um verup=aaNE.*
 Shashi=COORD Mohen=COORD that.direction=COORD this.direction=COORD hate=COP1.PRS
 ‘Shashi and Mohen hate each other.’ (RECIP.002)

It is unclear what conditions the use of one way or the other, but the demonstrative adverb strategy seems to be quite productive, as seen in (81) through (83).

- (81) *shashi=yum lata=yum angngooTT=um ingngooTT=um samaaNam koruTTu.*
 Shashi=COORD Lata=COORD that.direction=COORD this.direction=COORD present give.PST
 ‘Shashi and Lata gave each other a present.’ (RECIP.008)
- (82) *shashi=yum lata=yum angngooTT=um ingngooTT=um kurrapeTuTTi.*
 Shashi=COORD Lata=COORD that.direction=COORD this.direction=COORD complain.PST
 ‘Shashi and Lata complained about each other.’ (RECIP.009)
- (83) *shashi=yum lata=yum angngooTT=um ingngooTT=um muTi veTTi.*
 Shashi=COORD Lata=COORD that.direction=COORD this.direction=COORD hair cut.PST
 ‘Shashi and Lata cut each other’s hair.’ (RECIP.010)

4.10. Questions

4.10.1. Polar questions

Polar questions in Malayalam are formed by adding the interrogative clitic =*oo* to the predicate of an affirmative clause, as in (84) and (85), which without =*oo* would have been a statement rather than a question.

- (84) *ni malayaLam samsaaryikky-um=oo?*
 2SG.NOM Malayalam speak-HAB-AFF.Q
 ‘Do you speak Malayalam?’ (INTERROG.025)
- (85) *ni enre pustakam erutt=oo?*
 2SG.NOM 1SG.GEN book take.PST=AFF.Q
 ‘Did you take my book?’ (INTERROG.023)

In the case of negative polar questions, the interrogative clitic =*ee* is attached to the predicate of a negative clause, as in (86) and (87), which without =*ee* would have been a negative statement rather than a question.

- (86) *samaaharyam uNTaakk=ill=ee?*
 collection make=NEG=NEG.Q
 ‘Don’t (people) make collections?’ (Onam.37)
- (87) *pinne namukke ottiryi paaTTu-kaL=ill=ee?*
 and.then 1PL.INC.DAT many song-PL=NEG.EX.PRS=NEG.Q
 ‘And then don’t we have many songs?’ (Onam.33)

4.10.2. Content questions

To form content questions, questions words are used to replace the content that is being interrogated. The subject may occur at the sentence-initial position, as in (88), or at the sentence-final position, as in (89). Question words do not involve “movement” of any kind; rather they stay where they would have been in a non-interrogative clause.

- (88) *taangkaLuTe peeryE enr=aaNE?*
 2SG.GEN name what=COP1.PRS
 ‘What is your name?’ (INTERROG.003)
- (89) *eviTe=yaaNE enre buukh?*
 where=COP.PRS 1SG.GEN book
 ‘Where is my book?’ (INTERROG.007)

For content questions which involve a verb that is not the copula, a special cleft-like construction is used, whereby a nominalized verb co-occurs with the copula, as in (90) through (92).

- (90) *it-inE malayaLatt-il enr=aaNE paray-unn-a-tE?*
 this-DAT Malayalam-LOC what=COP1.PRS call-PRS-ATTR-NMLZ
 ‘What do (you) call this in Malayalam?’ (lit. ‘Calling this in Malayalam is what?’)
 (INTERROG.004)
- (91) *ningngaL eviTe=yaaNE tamasikky-unn-a-tE?*
 2SG.NOM where=COP1.PRS live-PRS-ATTR-NMLZ
 ‘Where do you live?’ (lit. ‘Your living is where?’) (INTERROG.008)
- (92) *ningngaL eviTe=yaaNE pook-unn-a-tE?*
 2SG.NOM where=COP1.PRS go-PRS-ATTR-NMLZ
 ‘Where are you going?’ (lit. ‘Your going is where?’) (INTERROG.010)

4.11. Imperatives

Imperative mood in Malayalam is expressed by some suffixes attached to the nonpast Verb stem, and the addressee is unexpressed but implied. There are several suffixes that can carry out this job. First, the citation form ending *-uka*:

- (93) *kooRi vaangng-uka.*
 chicken buy-INF1
 ‘Buy a chicken.’ (NP.021)

Second, the suffix *-u*, which might be a shortened form of *-uka*:

- (94) *ryaNTE kooRi vaangng-u*.
two chicken buy-IMP
'Buy two chickens.' (NP.022)

Third, the deontic suffix *-aNam*:

- (95) *paalE vaangng-aNam*.
milk buy-DNT
'Buy (some) milk.' (NP.014)

I call this suffix "deontic" because it adds a deontic meaning to the verb it is attached to, as in (96). So the literal meaning of (95) might be "(You) should buy (some) milk."

- (96) *ni suuryen astamikky-unn-a-t-inu mumpE viiT-il vary-aNam*.
2SG.NOM sun set-PRS-ATTR-NMLZ-DAT before home-LOC come-DNT
'You should come home before sunset.' (Case.015)

Fourth, the hortative suffix *-aam*:

- (97) *ryaNTE puucca-kaL-e vaangng-aam*.
two cat-PL-ACC buy-HOR
'Buy two cats.' (NP.008)

The evidence of *-aam* being a hortative suffix comes from sentences like (98), where the suffix adds a "let's" meaning to the verb it is attached to.

- (98) *namukke paryipaaT-ikkyE oryu manikuury mumpE kaaN-aam*.
1PL.INC.DAT program-DAT one hour before see-HOR
'Let's meet one hour before the program.' (Case.016)

Finally, the prohibitive suffix *-aNta*, which expresses a negative command or request:

- (99) *akatt-E vary-aNTa*.
inside-DAT come-PROH
'Don't come in.' (IMP.002)

4.12.Negation

Negation is formed by using the negative existential predicate *illa*, whose positive counterpart is *uNTE*. Example (100) and (101) show a minimal contrast between these two existential predicates.

(100) *frij-il oryu kooRi uNTE.*
 fridge-LOC one chicken.NOM EX
 ‘There is a chicken in the fridge.’ (NP.016)

(101) *frij-il kooRi illa.*
 fridge-LOC chicken.NOM NEG.EX.PRS
 ‘There is no chicken in the fridge.’ (NP.018)

The negative *illa* is by default in the present tense, so if it is used in other tenses the copula is required so as to indicate tense, as in (102).

(102) *aviTe aa puucca ill=aayiryunnu.*
 there that cat NEG=COP1.PST
 ‘That cat was not there.’ (NP.009)

In clauses where the main verb is not a copula, the negative *illa* is suffixed to the verb. In past tense, it is suffixed to the past tense verb root (with deletion of the final vowel), as in (103).

(103) *aa kuTTi avaNTe sahooteryi-ye iTicc-illa.*
 that child.NOM 3SG.M.GEN sister-ACC hit.PST-NEG
 ‘The boy didn’t hit his sister.’ (NEG.006)

In present tense, the verb is negated by *-aarilla*, where *illa* obviously indicates negation but the function of *aar* is not clear. This is illustrated in (104).

(104) *nyaan skuuL-il pook-aar-illa.*
 1SG.NOM school-LOC go-??-NEG
 ‘I don’t go to school.’ (NEG.002)

In future tense, the verb is negated by *-attilla*, which again has a mysterious morpheme in it (i.e. *att*), as shown in (105) below.

(105) *nyangngaL naaLe sanantonio-yikkyE pook-att-illa.*
 1PL.EXC.NOM tomorrow San.Antonio-DAT go-??-NEG
 ‘We won’t go to San Antonio tomorrow.’ (NEG.004)

Appendix I: Glossary

a: ‘that (adnominal)’	apa- ‘bad’
a:ba ‘Father’	apakaʔam ‘accident’
a:ɖʰen ‘rich man; powerful man’	apasurʔi ‘bad rumor’
a:ɖəmbarʔam ‘celebration; show’	arʔa ‘half’
a:gʰo:ɕam ‘celebration’	ara ‘secure room; storage’
a:gʰo:ɕikʔuka ‘celebrate’	arʔi ‘rice’
a:ha:ʔam ‘food’	arijuka ‘know’
a:na ‘elephant’	aʃ:ən ‘father’
a:nə ‘male’	aʔə ‘that (pronominal)’
a:nkʔu:ʔi ‘boy’	aʔʰava: ‘otherwise; also’
a:pʔa:ʔə ‘danger’	aʔikʔuka ‘fight; stab’
a:rʔə ‘who’	aʔu:ʔə ‘near’
a:rʔ ¹ ‘(big) river’	aucaʔam ‘medicine’
a:rʔ ² ‘six’	ava:ɖaʔam ‘flop; failure’
abʰajam ‘help’	avaʔ ‘she’
abʰinajam ‘acting’	avan ‘he’
aɖ:e:ham ‘he (formal; distal)’	avai ‘they’
aɖʰipan ‘honor’	aviʔe ‘there’
agʔni ‘fire’	ba:lika ‘girl’
ahaŋka:ʔam ‘pride’	baibəʔ ‘Bible’
aik:am ‘unity’	balam ‘strength’
am:a ‘mom’	balava:n ‘strong man’
an:a ‘person name’	bʰa:ʔam ‘heavy’
aŋɖʒə ‘five’	bʰajam ‘fear’
aŋə ‘you (sg.)’	bʰakeaŋam ‘food’
aŋəne ‘like that’	bʰaŋi ‘beauty’ (But written as bʰamgi)
aŋgəʔ ‘uncle’	bʰarʔa ‘wife’
aŋika:ʔam ‘recognition’ (But written as amgika:ʔam)	bʰumi ‘earth’
ap:a ‘dad’	ɖʒa:m ‘jam’
ap:o:ʔ ‘then’	ɖaɖimam ‘pomegranate tree’
	ɖak:u ‘rubber’

ḍamar̥u ‘a small drum’	gaṇam ‘group’
ḍaṭe ‘below; under’	garvə ‘pride’
ḍaṭi ‘fat; heavy’	g ^h anam ‘heaviness’ (= kanam)
ḍeivam ‘god’	g ^h aṭ:am ‘landing place’
ḍzenanam ‘birth’	g ^h aṭikar̥am ‘clock’
ḍ ^h ak:a ‘large drum’	g ^h o:r̥am ‘frightful’
ḍ ^h ama:nam ‘kettle’	g ^h o:cam ‘noise’
ḍ ^h anam ‘money’	goṭṭambə ‘wheat’
ḍzi:vi ‘creature’	guṭ:am ‘crowd’
ḍzi:vik:uka ‘live’	guṇam ‘virtue’
ḍzi:r̥akəm ‘cumin’	guṇanam ‘multiplication’
ḍica ‘direction’	gur̥u ‘guru’
ḍivasam ‘day’	ha:nikar̥am ‘dangerous’
ḍokṭəɹ ‘doctor’	hərd̥ajam ‘heart’
ḍuk ^h əm ‘sadness’	himam ‘snow’
ḍuɹ- ‘bad’	i: ‘this (adnominal)’
e:ṇi ‘ladder’	iḍ:e:ham ‘he (formal; proximal)’
e:ṭə ‘which’	-il ‘in; at’
el:a:m ‘all’	il:a ‘no’
el:ə ‘bone’	ila ‘leaf’
eṇḍə ‘what’	iṇəne ‘like this’
eṇəne ‘how’	ip:o:l ‘now’
ep:am ‘when’	iraṭṭ:i ‘meat; flesh’
ep:o:l ‘when’	ir̥ik:uka ‘sit’
epoṭu ‘always’	iṣṭam ‘liking’
erijuka ‘throw’	iṭaḍə ‘leftside’
eruk:uka ‘take’	iṭə ‘this (pronominal)’
eviṭe ‘where’	iṭik:uka ‘hit’
fajam ‘fear’	ivite ‘here’
palaga ‘(wood) plank’	jauvaṇam ‘youth’
falagam ‘(wood) plank’	jo:ni ‘skin’
falam ‘fruit; result; product’ (=p ^h alam)	-k:ja ‘fruit’
faṇam ‘head of a serpent’	ka:k:a ‘crow’
fargunam ‘Aquarius’	ka:lə ‘leg’

ka:t^hiə 'wind'
 kai(jə) 'hand'
 kajar 'a piece of rope'
 kajə 'fruit'
 -kaɫ 'PL marker'
 kaɫ:an 'thief'
 ka:l:ə 'stone'
 kaɫ:i 'female thief'
 kaɫi 'game'
 kaɫik:uka 'play'
 kaŋ:ə 'eye'
 kanam 'heaviness' (=g^hanam)
 kaɾiəl 'liver'
 kaɾ'anam 'because'
 kaɾik:uka 'eat'
 kaɾik:uno 'eating'
 kaɾivə 'skill'
 kaɾuk:uka 'wash'
 kaɾup:ə 'black'
 kaɾuɟ:ə 'neck'
 kaɾuɟa 'donkey'
 kaseɾiə 'chair'
 kaɟ:i 'knife'
 kaɟ:i 'thick'
 kaɟal 'ocean'
 kaɟi 'bite'
 ke:ɫk:uka 'hear'
 keɟ:uka 'tie (v.)'
 k^hananam 'digging'
 k^hani '(gold) mine'
 k^haɪf:u 'expense'
 k^he:ɟam 'distress; sorrow'
 ki:ɾi 'mongoose'
 kiɫi 'bird'

kiɟak:uka 'lie'
 kol:uka 'kill'
 kolus:ə 'anklet'
 kombə 'cattle horn'
 koŋ:u 'killed'
 koruk:uka 'give'
 koɟum 'strong (wind)'
 kuɾ:ə 'child'
 kuɾ'ak:uno 'barking'
 kuraɟfi 'few'
 kuɟik:uno 'digging'
 kuɾumuɟakə 'pepper'
 kuɟ:i 'child'
 kuɟal 'intestines'
 kuɟik:uka 'drink'
 kuɟil 'hut'
 kuɟumbam 'family'
 laik:uka 'dissolve'
 li:na 'person name'
 ma:ɟavə 'mother'
 ma:msəm 'meat; flesh'
 ma:nam 'sky'
 ma:sika 'magazine'
 ma:t^hiə 'mat'
 maha- 'great; big'
 maha:n 'expert'
 majil 'peacock'
 maju:ɾam 'peacock'
 mali 'coriander'
 mala 'mountain'
 man:a 'manna'
 maɾ:a 'yellow'
 maɾ:ə 'snow; ice'
 maŋ:ə 'soil; sand'

maŋam ‘smell’
 manas:ə ‘mind’
 manuɕen ‘person, human’
 maŋja ‘dim’
 maɟa ‘rain’
 mara ‘shade’
 marjaɟa ‘manner’
 marjam ‘tree’
 maravi ‘amnesia’
 maɕi ‘ink’
 maɟi ‘enough’
 maɟi ‘lap; laziness’
 maɟil ‘barrier’
 me:g^ham ‘cloud’
 -e:l ‘on’
 meljɪn:a ‘thin’
 mɛrkam ‘animal’
 mi:n ‘fish’
 mu:k:ə ‘nose’
 muk^ham ‘face’
 mul:a ‘jasmin’
 mula ‘breast’
 muɟakə ‘chili’
 muŋ:ə ‘three’
 muri ‘room’
 murik:uka ‘split’
 murɟ:a ‘sharp’
 muɟ:a ‘egg’
 muɟ:ə ‘knee; joint’
 muɟi ‘hair’
 na:k:ə ‘tongue’
 ŋa:lə ‘day’
 ŋa:lə ‘four’
 ŋa:lɛ ‘tomorrow’

ɟa:n ‘I’
 ŋat^hiəm ‘foul smell’
 naɟi ‘lake’
 nag^ham ‘claw; nail’
 nal:aɟə ‘good’
 nam:aɟ ‘we’
 ŋanɟa ‘wet’
 ŋanavə ‘wetness’
 ɟaŋaɟ ‘us’
 narjaŋja ‘lemon’
 naɟak:ruka ‘walk’
 naɟi ‘actress’
 ŋe:riɛ ‘straight’
 ŋei(jə) ‘fat; butter’
 neɟdʒə ‘chest’
 nɛɟ:ajam ‘merciless’
 ŋi- ‘un-; without’
 ni(ŋaɟ) ‘you (casual)’
 ni:ŋɟa ‘long’
 niŋ:u ‘stood’
 niɟaŋ:ə ‘full’
 ŋisa:ɟam ‘unimportant’
 ŋicabɟam ‘silent’
 o:lə ‘palm leaf’
 oŋ:ə ‘one’
 op:ə ‘signature’
 oɟu ‘one (thing)’
 oɟuk:uno ‘flowing; floating’
 oɟupa:ɟə ‘many’
 pa:ɟa:lɟam ‘underground’
 pa:ɟəm ‘foot’
 pa:lɛ ‘milk’
 pa:ləm ‘bridge’
 pa:ra ‘rock’

pa:ʈa ‘road’	ɾadʒavə ‘king’
pajarə ‘beans’	ɾak:ʈəm ‘blood’
pal:ə ‘tooth’	ramsam ‘Ramsaan Festival’
palaga ‘a piece of wood’	raŋi ‘queen’
pan:a ‘bad’	ɾaŋʈə ‘two’
pana ‘palm tree’	ɾa:ʈ:ri ‘night’
paŋam ‘money’	raua ‘Rava flower’
pandʒasa:ɾia ‘sugar’	ɾavile ‘morning’
para ‘rice barn’	ru:pa ‘rupee’
paɾajaɖə ‘old’	ɛa:ɾi:ɾiam ‘beauty’
parak:uno ‘flying’	safalam ‘bear fruit; come true’
paɾam ‘banana’	samajam ‘time’
paʈ:a ‘green’	saŋʈoɛam ‘happiness’
paʈ:ap:ə ‘greenery’	ɛaɖik:uka ‘vomit’
paʈ:i ‘dog’	ɛa:ɾi ‘correct’
paʈa ‘bubble’	ɛa:ɾi:ɾiam ‘body’
paʈik:uka ‘study’	simham ‘lion’
pe:n ‘louse’	sinima ‘cinema’
pe:ɾiə ‘name’	ʈto:ʈram ‘thanks’
pe:ʈi ‘fear’	ʈʈri: ‘female’
peŋ:ə ‘female’	suar:am ‘voice’
peŋkuʈ:i ‘girl’	suasəm ‘breath’
p ^h alam ‘fruit; result; product’ (= falam)	suk ^h əm ‘good; health’
p ^h alik:uka ‘work out; bear fruit’	surʈi ‘rumor’
pin:e ‘then; later’	ʈa:ŋkəl ‘you (formal)’
pi:ɽijuka ‘squeeze’	ʈfa:ɾiam ‘ash’
piʈik:uka ‘hold’	ʈa:rauvə ‘duck’
pu:(və) ‘flower’	ʈai:ɾiə ‘yogurt’
puʈa ‘creek; pond’	ʈak:a:li ‘tomato’
puram ‘back of the body’	ʈala ‘head’
purəʈə ‘outside’	ʈaŋdrən ‘moon’
puʈu ‘worm’	ʈara ‘floor’
pu:ɾuɛen ‘male’	ʈa:ɾakəm ‘star’
ra:ŋ:ri ‘place name’	ʈa:ɾu ‘give’

ʃfat:i ‘pot; vase’
 ʃat^{hi}u ‘tattoo’
 ʃat:i ‘wood’
 ʃaun ‘town’
 ʃfavi ‘key’
 ʃe:n ‘honey’
 ʃeŋə ‘coconut tree’
 ʃferija ‘small’
 ʃfet:i ‘plant’
 ʃfevi ‘ear’
 ʃfi:p:ə ‘comb (n.)’
 ʃfi:t:a ‘dirty’
 ʃiŋd̪ik:uka ‘think’
 ʃirakə ‘wing’
 ʃi:ri:juka ‘turn’
 ʃi:ri:k:uka ‘laugh’
 ʃoli ‘skin’
 ʃori:a ‘blood’
 ʃforə ‘rice’
 ʃu:k:uka ‘wipe’
 ʃur̪e ‘far’
 ʃu:ʃaik:uka ‘wipe’
 ʃu:ʃətə ‘warm’
 ʃuval ‘feather’
 ʃu:vap:a ‘red’
 u:nə ‘food’
 ul:a ‘have’
 ul:i ‘onion’
 unəŋia ‘dry’
 un̪d̪uka ‘push’
 up:ə ‘salt’
 uraŋjuka ‘sleep’
 u:ʃamab^har̪ia ‘ideal wife’
 u:ʃamab^har̪i:ʃa:və ‘ideal husband’

u:ʃamam ‘perfect’
 va(jə) ‘mouth’
 va:nam ‘sky’
 va:r̪i:u ‘pick’
 vaik:uka ‘play (instruments)’
 vajar̪ ‘wire’
 vajarə ‘belly’
 valaɖə ‘rightside’
 valija ‘big’
 valik:uka ‘pull’
 valuɖə ‘big’
 vaŋ:am ‘fat’
 vaŋ:u ‘came’
 vanam ‘forest’
 var̪ia ‘line’
 varak:uka ‘fry’
 var̪iaʃfi:a ‘dry’
 va:ʃi ‘road; way’
 va:ieam ‘year’
 var̪i:u ‘come’
 va:ʃuʃanəŋia ‘eggplant’
 vaei ‘stubbornness’
 vat^halamuʃakə ‘paprika chili’
 va:ʃi ‘stick’
 ve:n̪ʃa ‘not’
 ve:t:a ‘hunt’
 ve:l̪:am ‘water’
 ve:l̪u:ʃa ‘white’
 ven̪ʃa ‘okra plant’
 vere ‘other’
 vər̪ŋam ‘wound’
 vi:d̪i ‘broad’
 vi:d̪i:ʃul:a ‘wide’
 vi:d̪i:ʃikurap:a ‘narrow’

vi:ŋu 'fall'

vi:tə 'house'

vinu 'person name'

vieajam 'subject; topic'

vieam 'poison'

vieamam 'sadness'

vieeam 'news'

vi:tə 'seed'

Appendix II: A Practical Orthography of Malayalam

Malayalam consonants

	Voice	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Alveolo-palatal	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	-	/p/=p /p ^h /=ph		/t/=t /t ^h /=th		/tɕ/=c /tɕ ^h /=ch	/ʈ/=T /ʈ ^h /=Th		/k/=k /k ^h /=kh	
	+	/b/=b /b ^h /=bh		/d/=d /d ^h /=dh		/dʒ/=j /dʒ ^h /=jh	/ɖ/=D /ɖ ^h /=Dh		/g/=g /g ^h /=gh	
Nasal	+	/m/=m		/n/=n		/ɲ/=ny	/ŋ/=N		/ŋ/=ng	
Trill	+				/r/=r					
Tap/flap	+				/ɾ/=ry					
Fricative	-		/f/=f		/s/=s	/ɕ/=sh	/ʂ/=S			/h/=h
Cen. Approx.	+		/v/=v				/ɻ/=R	/j/=y		
Lat. Approx.	+				/l/=l		/ɭ/=L			

Malayalam vowels

	Front	Central	Back
High	/i/=i /i:/=ii		/u/=u /u:/=uu
	/e/=e /e:/=ee	/ə/=E	/o/=o /o:/=oo
Low		/a/=a /a:/=aa	

Part II: A Text of Malayalam

1. Introduction

The goal of this second part is to provide an interlinear glossed text of spoken Malayalam and then to analyze the grammatical features as seen in the text. The chosen discourse is a TV interview on Onam Festival⁷, which is the biggest festival in the state of Kerala, India, where Malayalam is spoken on the daily basis. Onam Festival falls in the first Malayalam month (i.e. between August and September), and is intricately linked to many aspects of Malayalam culture, including songs, dancing, cuisine, dresses, flower decorations, and Snake Boat racing, etc.

The interview took place between a female host and a male guest. The host, whose name is Meera Krishnan, is a famous film actress in her early thirties, and the guest, whose name is Padmasree Mohanlal (called Lal in the text), is a famous film actor and producer in his early forties. Throughout the interview, Krishnan asked Mohanlal a series of questions that are more or less related to Onam Festival. While the whole interview lasted over sixteen minutes, only about three minutes of it were transcribed due to the time constraint. In transcribing the interview, I was assisted by a Malayalam consultant, whose name is Sona Joseph, a 26-year-old female who speaks Malayalam natively and English fluently. She originally came from Kochi (formerly Cochin), Kerala, India, and is currently a graduate student at Rice University.

The procedure of the transcription work goes as follows. I first played back the whole interview to Sona, who then explained to me the general ideas of it. After that, we discussed which part of it was most worth transcribing in terms of both speech clarity and cultural relevance. Once the agreement was reached, I played back a small chunk of the interview at a time and Sona repeated to me what she had heard on the recordings at a slower speed. After two to three small chunks, we would stop transcribing, she would translate the recently transcribed chunks, and I would ask her relevant questions in order to correctly parse and gloss the transcriptions.

In what follows, I will first present a bird's-eye view of the text, that is, a view of the text from top down. In this view, the text, consisting of parallel Malayalam transcriptions and English free translations, is organized in terms of conversational turns so that the readers would have an overall picture of the text contents. Then I will present a worm's-eye view of the text, that is, a view of the text from bottom up. In this view, the text, this time consisting of three interlinear tiers (i.e. text tier, morpheme-by-morpheme tier, and glossing tier), is chunked into syntactic units roughly at the level of clauses or sentences so that the readers would have

⁷ The interview is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXcD7PFE9aE&feature=channel>.

detailed ideas about the morphosyntax, phonology, and morphophonology.

2. A bird's-eye view of the text

In this section, I first present a bird's-eye view of the text, i.e. a view of the text from top down. The text is comprised of three short questions from the interviewer and relatively long answers to them from the interviewee. For ease of cross-reference, the text is chunked into 44 syntactic units, with each numbered in the bracket at the end of each unit, both in the transcriptions and their corresponding translations. Then I offer some justifications for the transcriptions presented here as well as a preliminary analysis of the text.

2.1. The text from top down

Interviewer: *nammuTe ammamaaryE, amma uNTaakki taryunna bhakshaNattinE ryucci kuuTutal aayiryikkyum [01], kaaryaNam sneeham ennE parayunna masaala kuuTi atile ceerkkum [02]. laaleeTTanE amma viLampi taryunna bhakshaNam aaNoo, bhaarya viLampi taryunna bhakshaNam aaNoo, kuuTutal iSTam [03]?*

‘Our moms, foods made and given by the mother will be more delicious [01], because a spice called love will also be added (to them) [02]. Do you like foods served by the mother more, or foods served by the wife more [03]?’

Interviewee: *amma ennE parayunnatE namukkoryu veeroryu taryattil ryiples ceyyaan vayaata kaaryam aaNE [04]. aaryE bhakshaNam nannaayi viLampi tannaalum, sneehattooTe viLampi tannaalum, atinE suaaduNTaakum [05]. bhaarya ennE parayunna oryu koNseptE ammayaayiTTE maaraam, allee [06]? oryu sahooteryiyaayiTTE maaraam [07]. oryupaaTTE ryiflekshEns uLLayaaLaaNE bhaarya parayunnatE [08]. amma ennE parayunnavarykke atilokke mukeLil uLLa oryu staanam aaNE [09]. bhaarya viLampi taryunna bhakshaNattinE veeroryu suaadE, amma viLampi taryunnatinE veeroryu suaadE [10]. ennee enikkyE parayaan parru oLLu [11]. iSTam nalla, aaryE nannaayiTTE bhakshaNam viLampi tannaalum, enikkyE iSTam aaNE [12]. atile amma bhaarya ennulla vyatyaasam onnumilla [13].*

‘What we call “mother” is something that cannot be **replaced** in any other way [04]. Whoever serves foods well, serves (them) with love, they (i.e. foods) will have a good taste [05]. A **concept** called “wife” can become like “mother”, can’t it [06]? (It) can become like “sister” [07]. The one called “wife” is a person who has many **reflections** [08]. What those called “mother” have is a position above all those (i.e. reflections) [09]. Foods served by the wife have one good taste; those served by the mother have another good taste [10]. I can only say

like that [11]. (I) like, I like whoever serves and gives foods well [12]. In those (i.e. foods) there isn't any difference between the mother and the wife [13].'

Interviewer: *laaleeTTanE eerravum iSTappeTTa bhakshaNam eetaaNE* [14]?

'Which is your most-liked food [14]?'

Interviewee: *alla, ii test ennE parayunnatE nammaL developetE eTutta oryu kaaryamaaNallee* [15]? *nyaan, enre viiTil aadyam kaRicce shiilicca aahaaryangngaL tanneyaayiryikyum, enre testbadsiloo allel enre memoryiloo, enikkyE taalparyam uLLatE* [16]. *nammaL peTTenE aaloojikkyumppool, namukke coorum allenkgil ryaisil uNTaakunna oryupaaTTE kaaryangngaLum iSTamaayiryikyum, allee* [17]? *ipo, bryekfEstinE iTili kaRikkyunnatE iSTamaayiryikyaam, allel dosha, angngane oLLa kaaryangngaLokke* [18]. *oryupakshe purattE pookumppool, oryu cenjinE allengkil oryu maarrangngaLkke veeNTiyiTTE onnoo ryaNToo divasangngaL kaRikkyaaam* [19]. *ennatoLLatalaate* [20]. *nammuTe sisrrEvumaayiTTE inangngi ceerynniryikyunna, ii aryi ennE parayunna, ryais aayiTTuLLa, atE angngane uLLa kaaryangngaLaaNE namukke kuuTatal iSTam* [21]. *pinne, enikkyE oryupaaTTE kuuTTaan kuuTTiyiTTE bhakshaNam kaRikkyunnatE iSTamaaNE, alle* [22]? *atE nanvejiteriyenaayaalum, vejiteriyenokkeaayaalum* [23]. *pakshe kuraccE naLaayiTTE namukke ii vejiteriyen ennE parayunnatinooTE oryu taalparyam kuuTum* [24]. *nanvejiteriyenokke kurakyaan oLLa oryu sramattilaaNE* [25]. *kuuTatalum ryaisbest aayiTTula kaaryangngaLkkaaNE enikkyE taalparyam* [26].

'Well, what is called "taste" is really a thing we certainly **developed** (over time), isn't it [15]? I, what I have interest in is (usually) only foods that I first used to eat at home, (whether) in my taste buds or in my **memory** [16]. When we think quickly, we (usually) like cooked rice or many things made of **rice**, don't we [17]? For instance, for **breakfast** (we) might like eating the idli or dosa, and all things like that [18]. Maybe when (we) go out, to have a **change**, or a "maarram" if you will, (we) might eat (something else) for one or two days [19]. There is nothing more than that [20]. What we like more is things which get along (well) with our (digestive) **system**, which are called "aryi", which have rice (in them), (and) which have something like that [21]. And then I like eating food with many dishes, don't I [22]? Whether that is **non-vegetarian** or (that) is all **vegetarian** [23]. But in the (past) few days our interest towards what is called **vegetarian** (food) has increased [24]. (We) are in an attempt to reduce **non-vegetarian** (food) [25]. What I am interested in are things that have more **rice-based** (stuff) [26].

Interviewer: *malayaLikkyE ennum priyappeTTataaNE ooNapaaTTukaL [27]. atEppooLe, laaleeTTanE ooNam ennE manassil varyumppool, eerram aadyame oorymma varyunna ooNapaaTTeetaaNE [28]?*

‘To the Malayali, Onam songs are what is preferred every day [27]. Similarly, when you think of Onam, which Onam song comes to your mind first [28]?’

Interviewee: *sinimayilE nyaan oryupaaTTE paaTiya paaTTariyaam [29]. “ooNapuuve puuve puuve” ennE paaTTE, atilE koree oryu saahityam uNTE [30]. atE enre oryupaaTTE kaaryangngaL [31]. nyaan pinne pala **steeljukaLil aa paaTTE paaTiyiTTuNTE [32]. pinne namukke ottiryi paaTTukaLillee [33]?** “kuTTanaaTn kunjayile” angngane kuree ooNapaaTTukaL ennE paranyiniTTE [34]. ippam ii ooNam aTuka- aTukuntoorum, ippo oryu valiya oryu ooNapaaTTukaLuTe samhaarya- samaaharyam [35]. samhaaryam ennaaNE sheryikkyE parayeeNTatE [36]. samaaharyam uNTaakkille [37]? oryupaaTTE peeryE ooNattine kuriccuLLa paaTTukaL eRutaan tuTanggunnu [38]. ooNam kaRiyumppool atellaam marakum [39]. apparyatteykkyE veere oryu **festiveL** vannu [40]. atine kuricce paaTTukaL eRuti [41]. kaaryangngaLyileekkyE poovukeyaaNE [42]. appo atE oryu **festiveL** ennE parayunnaTE oryu valiya **bisnis**aayiTTE angngE maarunnu, ooNaccanrakaLaayi, murratte kaaryangngaLaayi [43]. pakshe ooNapaaTTukaLil peTTenne enikkyE manassil varyunnatE ii ooNampuuve enna daseeTTan paaTiya paaTTaaNE [44].*

‘(I) know many songs I sang in the **cinema** [29]. In the song “ooNapuuve puuve puuve” there are many lyrics [30]. (It has) many of my things [31]. And then on various **stages** I have sung that song [32]. And then don’t we have many songs [33]? Many (songs) like “kuTTanaaTn kunjayile” have been called Onam songs [34]. Now as this Onam is coming closer, now there is a big, a destruct- collection of Onam songs [35]. What needs to be said is actually “samhaaryam” [36]. Don’t (people) make collections [37]? Many people start writing songs about Onam [38]. After Onam, (people) will forget all those (songs) [39]. Then another **festival** came [40]. People wrote songs about that [41]. They are doing things (like that) [42]. Then that so-called **festival** becomes like a big **business**, (such as) Onam markets (and) things for the front porch (i.e. Onam flowers) [43]. But among Onam songs what suddenly comes to my mind is the song “ooNapuuve”, which was sung by Brother Das [44].

2.2. Justifications for the transcriptions

The transcriptions presented here are by and large phonemic. Taking the first word in the text for example, *nammuTe* ‘our (inclusive)’ would be rendered as *nammuDe* (i.e. [ɳammudɛ]) had it been transcribed phonetically. However, since there is a general phonological rule in Malayalam whereby voiceless singleton plosives are voiced at the intervocalic position, a

phonemic transcription helps to distinguish minimal pairs like *mantan* ‘foolish one’ and *mandan* ‘slow one’; otherwise both would be realized as *mandan* (i.e. [maṇḍan]) under a phonetic transcription (see Mohanan & Mohanan (1984: 599) for details).

Similarly, although both the alveolar plosive [t] and alveolar nasal [n] can be found at the phonetic level, their transcriptions are rendered at the phonemic level. According to Mohanan & Mohanan (1984: 581), [t] only occurs as a geminate or is preceded by the alveolar nasal. Moreover, /r/ is realized as [tt] when undergoing gemination (e.g. *aarE* ‘river’ vs. *aattil* ‘in the river’). Also important is the fact that there are no morpheme-internal [rr] sequences at the phonetic level. Accordingly, Mohanan & Mohanan (*ibid.*) consider the underlying form of [tt] to be /rr/ and thus that of its singleton counterpart [t] to be /r/. Following their analysis, I transcribed words like [e:ttavum] as *eerravum* ‘most’ and [ende] as *enre* ‘my’. Note that the sequences of /r/ plus vowels would not be ambiguous. Wherever the sequences follow the alveolar nasal, /r/ is realized as [d] (“first” as [t] and “then” [d] due to the voicing effect at the intervocalic position); otherwise it is always realized as [r] elsewhere. As for the alveolar nasal, Mohanan & Mohanan (*ibid.*: 582) again point out that the singleton dental and alveolar nasal are in complementary distribution: [ṇ] occurs morpheme-initially while [n] morpheme-finally and intervocalically. Thus, I used the symbol *n* to transcribe both [ṇ] and [n]. Most importantly, subsuming [t] under /r/ and [n] under /n/ give rise to an elegant phonemic inventory which would otherwise contain two “aberrant” alveolar stops (i.e. the plosive [t] and the nasal [n]).

I said the transcriptions are “by and large” phonemic because in some cases they are rather phonetic when they could have been more phonemic (i.e. more abstract) given the general phonological rules in Malayalam. To achieve a maximal descriptive economy, Mohanan & Mohanan (1984: 596) propose to subsume [ṇ], [ɲ], and [ŋ] all under /N/, whose place of articulation is unspecified and determined by the following stop. For instance, the underlying form of [aṇjə] ‘five’ could be postulated as /aNc/ (where /c/ determines /N/ is realized as [ṇ]) and that of [paŋgajam] ‘lotus’ as /paNkajam/ (where /k/ determines /N/ is realized as [ŋ]). Elegant as this proposal is, I chose to specify in my transcriptions the place of articulation for nasals (except for the contrast between dentals and alveolars for the reasons stated above). The decision was motivated by two reasons. For one, I would like to strike an (admittedly somewhat arbitrary) balance between descriptive economy and the level of abstractions. For the other, keeping nasals like [ɲ] and [ŋ] at the phonemic level leads to a balanced phonemic inventory in which where there is a plosive there is a corresponding nasal at the same place of articulation.

Another aspect where my transcriptions are not strictly phonemic has to do with palatal stops. Mohanan & Mohanan (1984: 585) propose a palatalization rule where all surface palatal stops (such as [kʲ], [kʲʰ], [gʲ], [gʲʰ], and [ŋʲ]) derive from velar ones followed by front vowels. So the dative suffix as in [maga[kkə] ‘to the daughter’ and [kuḍḍikʲkə] ‘to the child’ can both be rendered as /-kkə/ at the phonemic level. However, the fact is much more complicated than the

palatalization rule reveals. As Mohanan & Mohanan admit, “[p]alatalization applies in monomorphemic words, *with numerous lexical exceptions*. It *applies* across affixal junctures in causatives, verbalizers, and datives, but not in plurals and across compound junctures” (*ibid.*: 588; italics mine). On top of this, palatalization is also subject to “a number of idiosyncratic dialectal and idiolectal variations” (*ibid.*: note 23). Given these numerous exceptions and idiosyncracies that block the application of the palatalization rule⁸, I found it more desirable to specify the palatalization at the lexical level. Thus, in my transcriptions palatal stops are rendered by their corresponding velar stops followed by the symbol *y*. For instance, [kaɻikɻiɻuɻa] ‘to eat’ is transcribed as *kaRikkyuka*, where “*kky*” represents [kɻkɻ].

2.3. Preliminary analysis

At glimpse of the text, one of the features that stand out is Mohanlal’s frequent use of English loan words. In less than three minutes, he used 18 different English loan words, four of which were used twice⁹. As shown by boldface in the text, these loan words include “replace, develop, concept, reflections, change, memory, taste, taste buds, rice, rice-based, vegetarian, non-vegetarian, breakfast, cinema, stage, festival, system, business.” Judging from semantics, the use of loan words may be explained by the lack of corresponding native words, such as “breakfast, cinema, business, system” This explanation, however, does not account for all the data. For instance, of all the loan words used, English “rice” would be the last to be used given the fact that Malayalam makes finer lexical distinctions of rice (i.e. rice in the field, raw rice, and cooked rice) than English does. Despite this, “rice” was used twice. A more interesting case is found in [19], where Mohanlal first used English “change” and then immediately switched to its Malayalam counterpart (i.e. *maarram* ‘change’). This seems to suggest that English loan words might be quite common in spoken Malayalam and that using loan words is more a matter of style (conditioned by sociolinguistic factors) than a matter of lack of lexical items.

In terms of morphosyntax, an interesting observation is that loan words are used as nouns in Malayalam even when their English sources are verbs. As [04] and [15] illustrate, English verbs like “replace” and “develop”, when borrowed into Malayalam, function as the nominal object of the verb *ceyyuka* ‘to do’. So “to replace” is literally “to do replace” and “to develop” “to do develop”. This “loan word plus *ceyyuka*” seems quite established, and the loan word does not even have to be a verb. For instance, *on ceyyuka* means “to turn on (e.g. the light)”.

Moreover, English words are not simply borrowed and used without any change (aside from phonotactic changes); instead they are marked for case and plurality (among others), merging well with the Malayalam morphosyntax. For instance, *ryaisil* in [17] and *bryekfEstinE* in [18]

⁸ To account for the complicated cases where the application rule does not apply, Mohanan & Mohanan (1984) have to posit four strata in which different phonological rules are applied under certain circumstances.

⁹ That is if “rice” and “rice-based”, “taste” and “taste buds”, “vegetarian” and “non-vegetarian” are all counted as “different words”.

are marked for locative and dative case respectively. The marking of plurality is a bit tricky since it is sometimes expressed by English *-s* (e.g. *ryiflekshEns* in [8]) and sometimes by Malayalam *-kaL* (e.g. *steejukaLil* in [32]). More data are needed in order to find out why some English nouns are borrowed as plural forms (i.e. those having English *-s*) while others are borrowed as singular forms and then undergo native pluralization (i.e. those having Malayalam *-kaL*).

3. A worm’s-eye view of the text

To complement a bird’s-eye view, in this section I present a worm’s-eye view of the text, i.e. a view of the text from bottom up. The text, again chunked into 44 syntactic units, takes the form of three interlinear tiers, namely, a text tier, a morpheme-by-morpheme tier, and a glossing tier. Transcriptions on the text tier are “by and large” phonemic, just like those in the previous section. Transcriptions on the morpheme-by-morpheme tier, however, are intended to be on a level similar to a morphophonemic one, that is, more abstract than those on the text tier. These two levels of transcriptions differ in one crucial way: while the text transcriptions reflect all phonological changes (except intervocalic voicing for the reason stated above), the morpheme-by-morpheme transcriptions generalize those changes to “underlying” forms so that the same morpheme always bears the same form on this level. For instance, the plural suffix *-kaL* is assimilated to *-ngaL* when followed by a nasal. Hence, the plural form of *divasam* ‘day’ is transcribed as *divasang-ngaL* on the phonemic level, but as *divasam-kaL* on the morphophonemic level, indicating that *-kaL* is the underlying form of *-ngaL*¹⁰. This morphophonemic level of transcription is analogous to the plural form in English orthography, where *-s* is used to transcribe at least three allomorphs.

I put “underlying” in a quotation mark because it deserves some qualifications since it is not always the underlying form that is transcribed on the morpheme-by-morpheme tier. Two conspicuous examples are worth mentioning here. First, there are nominal stems whose endings alternate between /m/ and /tt/, depending on whether they are suffixed by case markers or not. So the word for “food” is *bhakshaNam* in the citation form (which is also the nominative form), but when suffixed by the dative marker *-inE* it alternates to *bhakshaNattinE*. Since the /m-/tt/ alternation is neither conditioned by phonology (at least synchronically) nor motivated in phonology, it makes little sense to ask which form is the “underlying” one. In cases like this, the citation form (i.e. /m/) is given on the morphophonemic level. Second, there is another alternation that happens between /u/ and /E/. For instance, the word for “song” is *paaTTE* in singular but *paaTTukaL* in plural, and the imperfective finite past tense form of “to eat” is *kaRiccu*, but its converbal form is either *kaRiccu* or *kaRiccE*¹¹. Since the citation form for

¹⁰ Aside from a velar assimilated to the manner of articulation of its preceding nasal, a nasal is also assimilated to the place of articulation of its following stop in this example.

¹¹ In other words, the past tense form and converbal form can be identical. However, the /E/ ending is preferred

nouns is the /E/ ending whereas that for finite verbs is the /u/ ending, it is hard to decide whether /E/ or /u/ is the “underlying” form (if there is one). Thus, in cases like this the citation form is given on morphophonemic level, that is, /E/ for nouns and /u/ for verbs.

After presenting the text, I offer some justifications for the glossing and then a linguistic analysis of the morphosyntax observed in the text.

3.1. The text from bottom up

Onam.01

<i>nammuTe</i>	<i>ammamaaryE,</i>	<i>amma</i>	<i>uNTaakki</i>	<i>taryunna</i>	<i>bhakshaNattinE</i>
nammuTe	amma-maary-E	amma	uNTaakki	tary-unnu-a	bhakshaNam-inE
1PL.INC.GEN	mom-HON.PL-DAT	mother	make.CVB	give-PRS-ATTR	food-DAT

<i>ryucci</i>	<i>kuuTutal</i>	<i>aayiryikyum,</i>
ryucci	kuuTutal	aayiryiky-um
taste	more	COPI-FUT

‘Our moms, foods made and given by the mother will be more delicious’

Onam.02

<i>kaaryaNam</i>	<i>sneeham</i>	<i>ennE</i>	<i>parayunna</i>	<i>masaala</i>
kaaryaNam	sneeham	ennE	paray-unnu-a	masaala
because	love	QUOT	call-PRS-ATTR	spice

<i>kuuTi</i>	<i>atiE</i>	<i>ceerkkum.</i>
kuuTi	atE-il-E	ceerkk-um
also	that-LOC-DAT	add-FUT

‘because a spice called love will also be added (to them).’

Onam.03

<i>laaleeTTanE</i>	<i>amma</i>	<i>viLampi</i>	<i>taryunna</i>	<i>bhakshaNam</i>	<i>aaNoo,</i>
laal-ceeTTan-E	amma	viLampi	tary-unnu-a	bhakshaNam	aaNE=oo
PN-older.brother-DAT	mother	serve.CVB	give-PRS-ATTR	food	COPI.PRS=COORD

<i>bhaarya</i>	<i>viLampi</i>	<i>taryunna</i>	<i>bhakshaNam</i>	<i>aaNoo,</i>
bhaarya	viLampi	tary-unnu-a	bhakshaNam	aaNE=oo
wife	serve.CVB	give-PRS-ATTR	food	COPI.PRS=COORD

kuuTutal iSTam?

<i>kuuTutal</i>	<i>iSTam</i>
more	liking

‘Do you (lit. Brother Laal) like foods served by the mother more, or foods served by the wife more?’

Onam.04

<i>amma</i>	<i>ennE</i>	<i>parayunnatE</i>	<i>namukkoryu</i>	<i>veeroryu</i>	<i>taryattil</i>
amma	ennE	paray-unnu-a-tE	namukkE-oryu	veere-oryu	taryam-il
mother	QUOT	call-PRS-ATTR-NMZ	1PL.INC.DAT-one	other-one	way-LOC

<i>ryiples</i>	<i>ceyyaan</i>	<i>vayyaata</i>	<i>kaaryam</i>	<i>aaNE.</i>
ryiples	ceyy-aan	vayya-at-a	kaaryam	aaNE
replace	do-INF2	cannot-??-ATTR	thing	COP1.PRS

‘What we call “mother” is something that cannot be replaced in any other way.’

Onam.05

<i>aaryE</i>	<i>bhakshaNam</i>	<i>nannaayi</i>	<i>viLampi</i>	<i>tannaalum,</i>
aaryE	bhakshaNam	nannaayi	viLampi	tannu-aal=um
who	food	well	serve.CVB	give.PST-COND1=UQ

<i>sneehattooTe</i>	<i>viLampi</i>	<i>tannaalum,</i>	<i>atinE</i>	<i>suaaduNTaakkum.</i>
sneeham-ooTE-e	viLampi	tannu-aal=um	atE-inE	suaadE-uNTE=aak-um
love-SOC-ACC	serve.CVB	give.PST-COND1=UQ	that-DAT	good.taste-EX=COP2-FUT

‘Whoever serves foods well, serves (them) with love, they (i.e. foods) will have a good taste.’

Onam.06

<i>bhaarya</i>	<i>ennE</i>	<i>parayunna</i>	<i>oryu</i>	<i>koNseptE</i>	<i>ammayaayiTTE</i>
bhaarya	ennE	paray-unnu-a	oryu	koNsept-E	amma=aayi-iTTE
wife	QUOT	call-PRS-ATTR	one	concept-DAT	mother=COP2.CVB-PFV

<i>maar-aam,</i>	<i>allee?</i>
maar-aam	alla=ee
become-POT	NEG.COP1.PRS=NEG.Q

‘A concept called “wife” can become like “mother”, can’t it?’

Onam.07

<i>oryu</i>	<i>sahooteryiyaayiTTE</i>	<i>maaram.</i>
oryu	sahooteryi=aayi-iTTE	maar-aam
one	sister=COP2.CVB-PFV	become-POT

‘(It) can become like “sister”.’

Onam.08

<i>oryupaaTTE</i>	<i>ryiflekshEns</i>	<i>uLLayaaLaaNE</i>	<i>bhaarya</i>	<i>parayunnatE.</i>
oryupaaTTE	ryiflekshEns	uLLu-a-aaL=aaNE	bhaarya	paray-unnu-a-tE
many	reflections	EX.PRS-ATTR-person=COP1.PRS	wife	call-PRS-ATTR-NMZ

‘The one called “wife” is a person who has many reflections.’

Onam.09

<i>amma</i>	<i>ennE</i>	<i>parayunnavarykkE</i>	<i>atiloKke</i>	<i>mukeLil</i>
amma	ennE	paray-unnu-a=avarykkE	atE-il-okke	mukeLil
mother	QUOT	call-PRS-ATTR=3PL.DAT	that-LOC-all	above

<i>uLLa</i>	<i>oryu</i>	<i>staanam</i>	<i>aaNE.</i>
uLLu-a	oryu	staanam	aaNE
EX.PRS-ATTR	one	position	COP1.PRS

‘What those called “mother” have is a position above all those (i.e. reflections).’

Onam.10

<i>bhaarya</i>	<i>viLampi</i>	<i>taryunna</i>	<i>bhakshaNattinE</i>	<i>veeroryu</i>	<i>suaadE,</i>
bhaarya	viLampi	tary-unnu-a	bhakshaNam-inE	veere-oryu	suaadE
wife	serve.CVB	give-PRS-ATTR	food-DAT	other-one	good.taste

<i>amma</i>	<i>viLampi</i>	<i>taryunnatinE</i>		<i>veeroryu</i>	<i>suaadE.</i>
amma	viLampi	tary-unnu-a-tE-inE		veere-oryu	suaadE
mother	serve.CVB	give-PRS-ATTR-NMZ-DAT		other-one	good.taste

‘Foods served by the wife have one good taste; those served by the mother have another good taste.’

Onam.11

<i>emnee</i>	<i>enikkyE</i>	<i>parayaan</i>	<i>parru=oLLu.</i>
ennE=ee	enikkE	paray-aan	parru=uLLu
QUOT=EMPH	1SG.DAT	say-INF2	can.CVB=EX.PRS

‘I can only say like that.’ (i.e. ‘That’s all I can say about it.’)

Onam.12

<i>iSTam</i>	<i>nalla, aaryE</i>	<i>nannaayiTTE</i>	<i>bhakshaNam</i>	<i>viLampi</i>
iSTam	nalla aaryE	nannaayi-iTTE	bhakshaNam	viLampi
liking	good who	well-PFV	food	serve.CVB

<i>tannaalum,</i>	<i>enikkyE</i>	<i>iSTam</i>	<i>aaNE.</i>
tannu-aal=um	enikkE	iSTam	aaNE
give.PST-COND1=UQ	1SG.DAT	liking	COP1.PRS

‘(I) like, I like whoever serves and gives foods well.’

Onam.13

<i>atilE</i>	<i>amma</i>	<i>bhaarya</i>	<i>ennulla</i>	<i>vyatyaasam</i>	<i>onnumilla.</i>
atE-il-E	amma	bhaarya	ennulla	vyatyaasam	onnum-illa
that-LOC-DAT	mother	wife	like.that	difference	anything-NEG.EX.F

‘In those (i.e. foods) there isn’t any difference between the mother and the wife.’

Onam.14

<i>laaleeTTanE</i>	<i>eerravum</i>	<i>iSTappeTTa</i>	<i>bhakshaNam</i>	<i>eetaaNE?</i>
laal-ceeTTan-E	eerravum	iST-appeTTu-a	bhakshaNam	eetE=aaNE
PN-older.brother-DAT	most	like-PASS.PST-ATTR	food	which=COP1.PRS

‘Which is your (lit. Brother Laal) most-liked food?’

Onam.15

<i>alla,</i>	<i>ii</i>	<i>test</i>	<i>ennE</i>	<i>parayunnatE</i>	<i>nammaL</i>	<i>developeytE</i>
alla	ii	test	ennE	paray-unnu-a-tE	nammaL	develop-ceytu
NEG.COP1.PRS	this	taste	QUOT	call-PRS-ATTR-NMZ	1PL.INC.NOM	develop-do.CVB

<i>eTutta</i>	<i>oryu</i>	<i>kaaryamaaNallee?</i>
eTuttu-a	oryu	kaaryam=aaNE=alla=ee
take.PST-ATTR	one	thing=COP1.PRS=NEG.COP1.PRS=NEG.Q

‘Well, what is called “taste” is a thing we certainly developed (over time), isn’t it?’

Onam.16

<i>nyaan,</i>	<i>enre</i>	<i>viiTil</i>	<i>aadyam</i>	<i>kaRicce</i>	<i>shiilicca</i>	<i>aahaaryangngaL</i>
nyaan	enre	viiTE-il	aadyam	kaRiccu	shiiliccu-a	aahaaryam-kaL
1SG.NOM	1SG.GEN	house-LOC	first	eat.CVB	accustom.PST-ATTR	food-PL

<i>tanneyaayiryikkyum,</i>	<i>enre</i>	<i>testbadsiloo</i>	<i>allel</i>	<i>enre</i>
tanne=aayiryikky-um	enre	testbads-il=oo	allel	enre
only=COP1-HAB	1SG.GEN	taste.buds-LOC=COORD	or	1SG.GEN

<i>memoryiloo,</i>	<i>enikkyE</i>	<i>taalparyam</i>	<i>uLLatE.</i>
memoryi-il=oo	enikke	taalparyam	uLLu-a-tE
memory-LOC=COORD	1SG.DAT	interest	EX.PRS-ATTR-NMZ

‘I, what I have interest in is (usually) only foods that I first used to eat at home, (whether) in my taste buds or in my memory.’

Onam.17

<i>nammaL</i>	<i>peTTenE</i>	<i>aaloojikkymppool,</i>	<i>namukkeE</i>	<i>coorum</i>
nammaL	peTTenE	aaloojikkyy-um-ppool	namukkeE	coorE=um
1PL.INC.NOM	quickly	think-HAB-when	1PL.INC.DAT	cooked.rice=COORD

<i>allengkil</i>	<i>ryaisil</i>	<i>uNTaakunna</i>	<i>oryupaaTTE</i>	<i>kaaryangngaLum</i>
allengkil	ryais-il	uNTaakk-unnu-a	oryupaaTTE	kaaryam-kaL=um
or	rice-LOC	make-PRS-ATTR	many	thing-PL=COORD

<i>iSTamaayiryikkyum,</i>	<i>allee?</i>
iSTam=aayiryikky-um	alla=ee
liking=COP1-HAB	NEG.COP1.PRS=NEG.Q

‘When we think quickly, we (usually) like cooked rice or many things made of rice, don’t we?’

Onam.18

<i>ipo,</i>	<i>bryekfEstinE</i>	<i>iTili</i>	<i>kaRikkyunnatE</i>	<i>iSTamaayiryikkyaaam,</i>
ipo	bryekfEst-inE	iTili	kaRikky-unnu-a-tE	iSTam=aayiryikky-aam
for.instance	breakfast-DAT	idli	eat-PRS-ATTR-NMZ	liking=COP1-POT

<i>allel</i>	<i>dosha,</i>	<i>angngane</i>	<i>oLLa</i>	<i>kaaryangngaLokke.</i>
allel	dosha	angane	uLLu-a	kaaryam-kaL-okke
or	dosa	like.that	EX.PRS-ATTR	thing-PL-all

‘For instance, for breakfast (we) might like eating the idli or dosa, (and) all things like that.’

Onam.19

<i>oryupakshe</i>	<i>purattE</i>	<i>pookumppool,</i>	<i>oryu</i>	<i>cenjinE</i>	<i>allengkil</i>
oryupakshe	puram-E	pook-um-ppool	oryu	cenj-inE	alla-engkil
maybe	outside-DAT	go-HAB-when	one	change-DAT	NEG.COP1.PRS-COND2

<i>oryu</i>	<i>maarrangngaLkke</i>	<i>veeNTiITTE</i>	<i>onnoo</i>
oryu	maarram-kaL-kke	veeNTi-iTTE	onnE=oo
one	change-PL-DAT	intend.CVB-PFV	one=COORD

<i>ryaNToo</i>	<i>divasangngaL</i>	<i>kaRikkyaaam.</i>
ryaNTE=oo	divasam-kaL	kaRikky-aam
two=COORD	day-PL	eat-POT

‘Maybe when (we) go out, to have a change, or a “maarram” if you will, (we) might eat (something else) for one or two days.’

Onam.20

ennoLLatallaate.

ennE-uLLu-a-tE-allaate

QUOT-EX.PRS-ATTR-NMZ-except

‘That’s it. (lit. (It) isn’t (anything) other than that.)’

Onam.21

<i>nammuTe</i>	<i>sisrrEvumaayiTTE</i>	<i>inangngi</i>	<i>ceerynmiryikkyunna,</i>	<i>ii</i>	<i>aryi</i>
nammuTe	sisrrE=um=aayi-iTTE	inangi	ceerynmu=iryikky-unnu-a	ii	aryi
1PL.INC.GEN	system=UQ=COP2.CVB-PFV	befriend.CVB	join.CVB=sit-PRS-ATTR	this	rice

<i>ennE</i>	<i>parayunna,</i>	<i>ryais</i>	<i>aayiTTuLLa,</i>	<i>atE</i>	<i>angngane</i>
ennE	paray-unnu-a	ryais	aayi-iTTE-uLLu-a	atE	angane
QUOT	call-PRS-ATTR	rice	COP2.CVB-PFV-EX.PRS-ATTR	that	like.that

<i>uLLa</i>	<i>kaaryangngaLaaNE</i>	<i>namukke</i>	<i>kuuTutal</i>	<i>iSTam.</i>
uLLu-a	kaaryam-kaL=aaNE	namukke	kuuTutal	iSTam
EX.PRS-ATTR	thing-PL=COP1.PRS	1PL.INC.DAT	more	liking

‘What we like more is things which get along (well) with our (digestive) system, which are called “aryi”, which have rice (in them), (and) which have something like that.’

Onam.22

<i>pinne,</i>	<i>enikkyE</i>	<i>oryupaaTTE</i>	<i>kuuTTaan</i>	<i>kuuTTiiTTE</i>	<i>bhakshaNam</i>
pinne	enikke	oryupaaTTE	kuuTTaan	kuuTTi-iTTE	bhakshaNam
and.then	1SG.DAT	many	dish	carry.CVB-PFV	food

<i>kaRikkyunnatE</i>	<i>iSTamaaNE,</i>	<i>allee?</i>
kaRikky-unnu-a-tE	iSTam=aaNE	alla=ee
eat-PRS-ATTR-NMZ	liking=COP1.PRS	NEG.COP1.PRS=NEG.Q

‘And then I like eating food with many dishes, don’t I?’

Onam.23

<i>atE</i>	<i>nanvejiteriyiyenaayaalum,</i>	<i>vejiteriyienokke</i>	<i>aayaalum.</i>
atE	nanvejiteriyiyen=aayi-aal=um	vejiteriyienokke	aayi-aal=um
that	non-vegetarian=COP2.PST-COND1=UQ	vegetarian-all	COP2.PST-COND1=UQ

‘Whether that is non-vegetarian or (that) is all vegetarian.’

Onam.24

<i>pakshe</i>	<i>kuraccE</i>	<i>naLaayiTTE</i>	<i>namukke</i>	<i>ii</i>	<i>vejiteriyiyen</i>	<i>ennE</i>
pakshe	kuraccE	naLE=aayi-iTTE	namukke	ii	vejiteriyiyen	ennE
but	some	day=COP2.CVB-PFV	1PL.INC.DAT	this	vegetarian	QUOT

<i>parayummatinooTE</i>	<i>oryu</i>	<i>taalparyam</i>	<i>kuuTum.</i>
paray-unnu-a-tE-inooTE	oryu	taalparyam	kuuT-um
call-PRS-ATTR-NMZ-SOC	one	interest	increase-HAB

‘But in the (past) few days our interest towards what is called vegetarian (food) has increased.’

Onam.25

nanvejiteriyienokke kurakkyaan oLLa oryu sramattilaaNE.
 nanvejiteriyien-okke kurakky-aan uLLu-a oryu sramam-il=aaNE
 non-vegetarian-all reduce-INF2 EX.PRS-ATTR one attempt-LOC=COP1.PRS
 ‘(We) are in an attempt to reduce all non-vegetarian (food).’

Onam.26

kuuTutalum ryaisbest aayiTTuLLa kaaryangngaLkkaaNE
 kuuTutal=um ryaisbest aayi-iTTE=uLLu-a kaaryam-kaL-kkE=aaNE
 more=UQ rice-based COP2.CVB-PFV=EX.PRS-ATTR thing-PL-DAT=COP1.PRS

enikkyE taalparyam.
 enikkE taalparyam
 1SG.DAT interest

‘What I am interested in are things that have more rice-based (stuff).’

Onam.27

malayaLikkyE ennum priyappeTTataaNE ooNapaaTTukaL.
 malayaLi-kkE ennum priy-appeTTu-a-tE=aaNE ooNam-paaTTE-kaL
 Malayali-DAT every.day prefer-PASS.PST-ATTR-NMZ=COP1.PRS Onam-song-PL
 ‘To the Malayali, Onam songs are what is preferred every day.’

Onam.28

atEppooLe, laaleeTTanE ooNam enmE manassil varyumppool,
 atEppooLe laal-ceeTTan-E ooNam ennE manassE-il vary-um-ppool
 similarly PN-older.brother-DAT Onam QUOT mind-LOC come-HAB-when

eerram aadyame oorymma varyunna ooNapaaTTeetaaNE?
 eerram aadyame oorymma vary-unnu-a ooNam-paaTTE=eetE=aaNE
 best firstly memory come-PRS-ATTR Onam-song=which=COP1.PRS
 ‘Similarly, when you think of Onam, which Onam song comes to your mind first?’

Onam.29

sinimayilE nyaan oryupaaTTE paaTiya paaTTariyaam.
 sinima-il-E nyaan oryupaaTTE paaTi-a paaTTE=ariy-aam
 cinema-LOC-DAT 1SG.NOM many sing.PST-ATTR song=know-POT
 ‘(I) know many songs I sang in the cinema.’

Onam.30

“ooNapuuve puuve puuve” enmE paaTTE, atilE koree oryu
 ooNam-puuvE-e puuvE-e puuvE-e ennE paaTTE atE-il-E kuree oryu
 Onam-flower-ACC flower-ACC flower-ACC QUOT song that-LOC-DAT many one

saahityam uNTE.
 saahityam uNTE
 lyrics EX

‘In the song “Onam flower, flower, flower” there are many lyrics.’

Onam.31

atE enre oryupaaTTE kaaryangngaL.
atE enre oryupaaTTE kaaryam-kaL
 that 1SG.GEN many thing-PL
 ‘(It has) many of my things.’

Onam.32

nyaan pinne pala steejukaLil aa paaTTE paaTiiTTuNTE.
nyaan pinne pala steej-kaL-il aa paaTTE paaTi-iTTE=uNTE
 1SG.NOM and.then various stage-PL-LOC that song sing.CVB-PFV=EX
 ‘And then on various stages I have sung that song.’

Onam.33

pinne namukke ottiryi paaTTukaLillee?
pinne namukke ottiryi paaTTE-kaL=illa=ee
 and.then 1PL.INC.DAT many song-PL=NEG.EX.PRS=NEG.Q
 ‘And then don’t we have many songs?’

Onam.34

"kuTTanaaTn kunjayile" angngane kuree ooNapaaTTukaL ennE paranynyiTTE.
kuTTanaaTn kunjayile angane kuree ooNam-paaTTE-kaL ennE paranynyu-iTTE
 PN PN like.that many Onam-song-PL QUOT call.PST-PFV
 ‘Many (songs) like “*kuTTanaaTn kunjayile*” have been called Onam songs.’

Onam.35

ippam ii ooNam aTuka- aTukuntoorum, ippo oryu valiya oryu
ippam ii ooNam aTuka- aTuk-untoorum ippo oryu valiya oryu
 now this Onam FS approach-SBRD now one big one

ooNapaaTTukaLuTe samhaarya- samaaharyam.
ooNam-paaTTE-kaL-uTe samhaarya- samaaharyam
 Onam-song-PL-GEN FS collection
 ‘Now as this Onam is coming closer, now there is a big, a destruct- collection of Onam songs.’

Onam.36

samhaaryam emmaaNE sheryikkyE parayeeNTatE.
samhaaryam ennE-aaNE sheryikkyE paray-eeNTE-a-tE
 destruction QUOT-COP1.PRS actually say-NEC-ATTR-NMZ
 ‘What (I) need to say is actually “*samhaaryam*” (i.e. destruction).’

Onam.37

samaaharyam uNTaakkillee?
samaaharyam uNTaakk=illa=ee
 collection make=NEG.EX.PRS=NEG.Q
 ‘Don’t (people) make collections?’

Onam.38

<i>oryupaaTTE</i>	<i>peeryE</i>	<i>ooNattine</i>	<i>kuriccuLLa</i>	<i>paaTTukaL</i>
oryupaaTTE	peeryE	ooNam-ine	kuriccu-uLLu-a	paaTTE-kaL
many	person	Onam-ACC	concern.CVB-EX.PRS-ATTR	song-PL

<i>eRutaan</i>	<i>tuTangnungmu.</i>
eRut-aan	tuTang-unnu
write-INF2	start-PRS

‘Many people start writing songs about Onam.’

Onam.39

<i>ooNam</i>	<i>kaRiyumppooL,</i>	<i>atellaam</i>	<i>marakum.</i>
ooNam	kaRiy-um-ppooL	atE-ellaam	marak-um
Onam	pass-HAB-when	that-all	forget-HAB

‘When Onam passes, (people) forget all those (songs).’

Onam.40

<i>apparyattekkyE</i>	<i>veere</i>	<i>oryu</i>	<i>festiveL</i>	<i>vannu.</i>
apparyattekkyE	veere	oryu	festiveL	vannu
then	other	one	festival	come.PST

‘Then another festival came.’

Onam.41

<i>atine</i>	<i>kuriccE</i>	<i>paaTTukaL</i>	<i>eRuti.</i>
atE-ine	kuriccu	paaTTE-kaL	eRuti
that-ACC	concern.CVB	song-PL	write.PST

‘People wrote songs about that.’

Onam.42

<i>kaaryangngaLyileekkyE</i>	<i>poovukeyaaNE.</i>
kaaryam-kaL-il=ee-kkE	poov-uka=aaNE
thing-PL-LOC=EMPH-DAT	go-INF1=COP1.PRS

‘They are doing (lit. going to) things (like that).’

Onam.43

<i>appo atE oryu festiveL</i>	<i>emmE</i>	<i>parayunmatE</i>	<i>oryu</i>	<i>valiya</i>
appo atE oryu festiveL	emmE	paray-unnu-a-tE	ryu	valiya
then that one festival	QUOT	call-PRS-ATTR-NMZ	one	big

<i>bisnisaayiITTE</i>	<i>angngE</i>	<i>maarunnu,</i>
bisnis=aayi-iITTE	angE	maar-unnu
business=COP2.CVB-PFV	like.that	become-PRS

<i>ooNaccanrakaLaayi,</i>	<i>murratte</i>	<i>kaaryangngaLaayi.</i>
ooNam-canra-kaL=aayi	murram-e	kaaryam-kaL=aayi
Onam-market-PL=COP2.CVB	front.porch-ACC	thing-PL=COP2.CVB

‘Then that so-called festival becomes like a big business, (such as) Onam markets (and) things for the front porch (i.e. Onam flowers).’

Onam.44

<i>pakshe</i>	<i>ooNapaaTTukaLil</i>	<i>peTTemE</i>	<i>enikkyE</i>	<i>manassil</i>
pakshe	ooNam-paaTTE-kaL-il	peTTemE	enikke	manassE-il
but	Onam-song-PL-LOC	suddenly	1SG.DAT	mind-LOC

<i>varyunmatE</i>	<i>ii</i>	<i>ooNampuuve</i>	<i>emma</i>	<i>daseeTTan</i>
vary-umnu-a-tE	ii	ooNam-puuvE-e	emE-a	das-ceeTTan
come-PRS-ATTR-NMZ	this	Onam-flower-ACC	QUOT-ATTR	PN-older.brother

<i>paaTiya</i>	<i>paaTTaaNE</i>
paaTi-a	paaTTE=aaNE
sing.PST-ATTR	song=COPI.PRS

‘But among Onam songs what suddenly comes to my mind is the song “Onam Flower”, which was sung by Brother Das.’

3.2. Justifications for the glossing

As is the case for transcriptions, it can be a thorny issue as to what levels of abstraction should be arrived at for the glossing. There are two extreme approaches. One is to completely go by forms, namely, to gloss a morpheme the same way regardless of its meanings or functions in the context where it occurs. This form-based approach is often adopted when it comes to glossing case markers, which crosslinguistically tend to assume multiple functions (see Haspelmath 2009 for discussions on the glossing of case markers). The other extreme is to completely go by functions, namely, to gloss a morpheme based on the meanings or functions it assumes in the context where it occurs. This function-based approach can be useful in glossing morphemes which have too general functions that their meanings would seem opaque if glossed the same way across the board. Obviously, both approaches have drawbacks of their own. While the form-based approach can sometimes veil the meanings of a morpheme in certain context (e.g. what does dative on temporal or abstract nouns mean?), the function-based approach results into enumeration of seemingly unrelated glosses that could have gone by the same name.

Considering the pros and cons of these two extreme approaches, I adopted a mixture of the two, with probably more weight put on the form-based approach. The purpose here is to provide glosses that are as fine-grained as possible. To this end, a phonological unit on the text tier was decomposed, to the best of my knowledge, on the morpheme-by-morpheme tier to the degree that further decomposition would make no sense. For instance, *oryupakshe* ‘maybe’ in Onam.19 could have been decomposed into *oryu* ‘one’ and *pakshe* ‘but’, but it seems difficult (at least to me) to derive the meaning “maybe” from “one” and “but”. So I left it as it is. On the other hand, *allengkil* again from Onam.19 could have been glossed simply as “or” (which is the meaning given by the consultant) instead of being broken into *alla* ‘NEG.COPI’ and *-engkil* ‘COND2’. However, I opted for the decomposition route because I found the literal interpretation “if not” fits as equally well in Onam.19 as “or”, at least logically speaking.

In addition, some remarks are necessary regarding the glossing of the imperfective finite past tense form (which always ends with /u/) and the converbal form (which ends with either /u/ or /E/). Jayaseelan (2005) convincingly shows that the converbal form should be treated as functionally distinct from the imperfective finite past tense form, in spite of their formal identity, because the former can also co-occur with finite future and past tense in the serial verb construction. Due to this, I adopted the function-based approach and glossed some forms as CVB for converbs and others as PST for imperfective finite past tense, depending on the context.

Furthermore, there is evidence that some postpositions in Malayalam historically evolve from converbs, thus sharing the same form with converbs. So to make this historical development clear, I glossed all postposition-like forms as converbs wherever possible. For instance, *kuriccE* in Onam.41, which could have been glossed simply as “about”, was glossed as “concern.CVB” for it shows a structural identity with converbs in general. Note that the distinction between postpositions and converbs is not discrete and clear-cut, but instead is a matter of degree on a continuum. Some postpositions/converbs may have their finite counterparts, but this is not always the case. While *kaRinyNyE* ‘pass.CVB’ (or simply ‘after’) and its finite present tense counterpart *kaRiyunnu* ‘pass.PRS’ are both acceptable forms, *kurikkyunnu*, the potential finite present tense counterpart of *kuriccE* “concern.CVB” (or simply “about”), is not acceptable.

Finally, the morpheme *-iTTE* is quite common in the text and its gloss “PFV” might not seem straightforward from the context, so a justification is needed. Admittedly, there is little (if at all any) perfective meaning in *bisnisaayiITTE* of Onam.43. In fact, Onam.43 would still be acceptable and mean roughly the same if *-iTTE* had not been used, as is the case in *ooNaccanrakaLaayi* and *kaaryangngaLaayi* from the same clause. However, the evidence for *-iTTE* indicating a perfective meaning comes from minimal pairs like (1) and (2).

- (1) *nyaan paissa eNNi karyanynyu.*
 nyaan paissa eNNi karyanynyu
 1SG.NOM money count.CVB cry.PST
 ‘I cried (while) counting the money.’ (Elicited)
- (2) *nyaan paissa eNNiTTE karyanynyu.*
 nyaan paissa eNNiTTE karyanynyu
 1SG.NOM money count.CVB-PFV cry.PST
 ‘I counted the money, and then cried.’ (Elicited)

While the events of counting and crying happen simultaneously in (1), the event of counting precedes that of crying in (2), with the only difference being the presence or absence of *-iTTE*. Nevertheless, it seems that this particular morpheme has grammaticalized to some extent since there are cases where its presence or absence does not make much difference in meanings, such as (3).

- (3) *avan nannaayi(TTE) paaTum*
 avan nannaayi(-iTTE) paaT-um
 3SG.NOM well(-PFV) sing-HAB
 ‘He sings well.’ (Elicited)

That is to say, the morpheme *-iTTE* synchronically may or may not mark perfectivity, depending on the context where it occurs. But to specify its role as a special morpheme and maintain the same gloss across the board, I glossed it as “PFV” irrespective of whether it in fact carries perfective meanings or not.

3.3. Linguistic analysis

Although the interlinear glossing per se is imbued with linguistic analyses, some conspicuous morphosyntactic features are still worthy of special mention. First, in terms of clausal word order verb-final is the entrenched trend, with only two kinds of exceptions. One has to do with the copula *aaNE*, as in Onam.08, where it occurs in the middle rather than at the end, thus separating two nominal phrases. Exceptions of this kind are understandable since they usually involve relatively long NPs, whose boundary would not be easy to demarcate were they put together without *aaNE* as a delimiting marker. The other kind of exceptions is so-called “verbless clauses”. For instance, there are no finite verbs in Onam.10, where two clauses share a parallel syntactic structure. This example may be considered an instance of what Mohanan & Mohanan (1999) call “doubly reduced cleft” construction, where both *aaNE* ‘COPI.PRS’ and *uLLatE* ‘EX.PRS.ATTR.NMLZ’ are omitted.

Next, the most common “relative clause strategy” is the use of adjectival participles, which can be either “present” or “past”. Descriptively speaking, the present participle is formed by substituting the /u/ in the finite present verb ending *-unnu* with the attributive morpheme *-a*¹². Accordingly, from *taryunnu* ‘give.PRS’ we get *taryunna* ‘give.PRS.ATTR’, as in Onam.01. Other examples include *parayunna* ‘call.PRS.ATTR’ in Onam.02, *uNTaakunna* ‘make.PRS.ATTR’ in Onam.16, and *varyunna* ‘come.PRS.ATTR’ in Onam.28. The past participle, on the other hand, is formed by suffixing the attributive morpheme *-a* to the finite past verb, which for the purpose of suffixation drops the final vowel if it ends with /u/ but keeps the final vowel if it ends with /i/. For instance, from *paranynyu* ‘call.PST’ we get *paranynya* ‘call.PST.ATTR’. There is only one instance of the past participle in the text, which is *paaTiya* ‘sing.PST.ATTR’ in Onam 29¹³. Interestingly, not only a single verb, but also a series of verbs,

¹² This *-a* morpheme could have been glossed as PTCP for “participle” instead of ATTR for “attributive”. However, this morpheme is also found in many adjectives (e.g. *nalla* ‘good’, *putiya* ‘new’, *valiya* ‘big’, *paRaya* ‘old’, etc.), and it can also be suffixed to non-adjectival and non-verbal words like *ennE* ‘QUOT’, giving rise to *emma*, as in Onam.44. Thus, I found the term “attributive” better describes its general attributive function than “participle” does.

¹³ In cases where the finite past verb ends with /i/, it is *-ya*, an allomorph of *-a*, that is actually suffixed to it “on the surface”.

can be turned into a participle and then function as an adjective (hence the term “adjectival participles”). In Onam.03, for instance, two adjacent verbs modify the noun *bhakshaNam* ‘food’. In cases like this, only the last verb has to be in the participial form, and the rest of the verb series (if there are more) remain in the converbal form, just as if they were in finite clauses. Moreover, not only internally there can be multiple verbs in a participial phrase, but externally there can be multiple participial phrases that occur in a row to modify the same nominal. An amazing example comes from Onam.21, where four participial phrases (headed by *ceerynniryikkyunna*, *parayunna*, *aayiTTuLLa*, and *uLLa*) are used to modify the noun *kaaryangngaL* ‘things’.

Finally, a last feature quite characteristic of Malayalam morphosyntax is the so-called “dative construction”. Jayaseelan (2004) classifies instances of this construction in Malayalam into four “rough semantic rubrics”, namely, possession, experiencer, certain modals, and “know”-class verbs. All these types can be found in the text, except for the last one. In the possession type, the possessor is marked by dative and the possessum by nominative, as in Onam.33, where *namukkE* ‘1PL.INC.DAT’ is the possessor. The “possessor” in this type can be rather general and does not even have to be animate, as *bhakshaNattinE* ‘food.DAT’ in Onam.01 shows. In the experiencer type, the experiencer of some mental or physical state is marked by dative while the state is coded as a noun in nominative. As Onam.22 illustrates, *enikkyE* ‘1SG.DAT’ is the experiencer that undergoes the state of liking something, which is reified by the noun *iSTam* ‘liking’. In the “certain modal” type, the verb has some kind of modal meanings and the “notional subject” is marked by dative. For instance, in Onam.11 the “notional subject” is *enikkyE* ‘1SG.DAT’ and the modal verb is *parru* ‘can.CVB’.

Among the many modals in Malayalam, *-aam* is of particular interest. According to Jayaseelan (2004: 233), “the modal *-aam* ‘may’ occurs in the dative construction when it has the meaning of ‘permission’, and in the nominative construction when it has the meaning of ‘possibility’.” The examples he used to illustrate this point are given in (4).

(4) The modal *-aam* (Jayaseelan 2004: 233; original format)

- a. *niṅṅaL-kkə pook-aam*
you.PL-DAT go-may
‘You may go.’ (I.e. ‘You have permission to go.’)
- b. *John caak-aam*
John die-may
‘John may die.’ (I.e. ‘It is possible that John will die.’)

However, there is an example in the text that does not seem to accord with Jayaseelan’s generalization above. In Onam.06, where the verb suffixed with the modal is *maaraam* ‘become.POT’, *koNseptE* ‘concept.DAT’ is marked in dative, but the “possibility” interpretation

appears more plausible than the “permission” interpretation, if the latter is even applicable in this context¹⁴. This suggests that the semantics of *-aam* is actually quite complex. As a matter of fact, the very same morpheme can also have a cohortative and imperative interpretation as illustrated in (5) and (6) respectively¹⁵. Apparently, more data and work is needed in order to find out how the (possible/permissive) modal, cohortative, and imperative meanings are all instantiated by the morpheme *-aam* and what other “potential” (no pun intended) functions it may undertake.

- (5) *namukke paryipaaTikkyE oryu manikuury mumpE kaaNaam.*
namukke paryipaaTE-ikkyE oryu manikuury mumpE kaaN-aam
 1PL.INC.DAT program-DAT one hour before see-HORT
 ‘Let’s meet one hour before the program.’ (Elicited)
- (6) *ryaNTE puuccakaLe vaangngaam.*
ryaNTE puucca-kaL-e vaang-aam
 two cat-PL-ACC buy-IMP
 ‘(You) buy two cats.’ (Elicited)

¹⁴ I found the term “modal” too general for *-aam*, for it conveys only some special kinds of modal meanings. Thus, to incorporate the “possibility” and “permission” interpretation, I glossed *-aam* as POT for potential.

¹⁵ Morphemes are assumed to be “the same” if they demonstrate the same distribution patterns.

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