

AN INTRODUCTION TO POSTPOSITIONS IN MALAYALAM FOR POS TAGGING

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Postpositions

- Postpositions are certain forms which occur immediately after nouns and which establish some grammatical relations between the nouns which they follow and the verbs of sentences.
- These forms are termed postpositions only because they occur after nouns.
- In English such forms occur before nouns and hence they are called prepositions.

- Malayalam has a number of forms functioning as postpositions.
- They have been mentioned in many grammatical works on Malayalam.
- But a sufficiently thorough study is not so far available.

- A postposition is defined as “a particle or word placed after word to indicate its grammatical or syntactical relationship to the other words in the sentence” (Merio. A. Pei and Frank Gayner – 1954).
- Some languages like English have only prepositions instead of postpositions.
- Prepositions are defined as “a part of speech usually indeclinable in form used together with noun phrase to show the relationship between that phrase and other words in the sentences” (R.B. K. Hartmann, and F.C.Stork – 1972).

- ENGLISH EXAMPLES

- a. She went with him
- b. The boy stepped into the room
- c. She jumped into the river
- d. We are sitting under a tree.

Malayalam Examples

ñaan peena kontu ełuti
I wrote with pen

veenu kollattu ninnu vannu
Venu came from Kollam

kuñu viittil veccu viinu
The child fell at the house

amma kuñinu veenti praartıccu
The mother prayed for the child

ađhyapakān ġaandhijiye kurıccu
samsaarıccu
The teacher talked about Gandhiji

- **Treatment of Postpositions in Previous Grammars of Malayalam**

Liilatilakam of 14th century

Liilaatilakam of 14th century A.D is considered as the earliest work which describes Malayalam grammar.

Gundert's Malayala Bhaashaavyakaranam – 1851

Gundert does not use the term 'postpositions' but identifies some 'Noun Particles which are used with case suffixes.

- **Caldwell's A comparative Grammar of the Dravidians or South Indian Family of Language – 1856**
- Caldwell has described various aspects of case system in Malayalam.
- Every postposition in his opinion affixed with a case will express a new case relation.
- The number of cases in Malayalam therefore depends upon the requirements of the speaker and the different shades of meaning he wishes to express.
- He also points out that postpositions are in reality separate words and they retain traces of their original character as auxiliary nouns.

George Mathan's Malayazhmayude Vyaakaranam –1863

Rev. George Mathan has included postpositions in taddhitaavyaya (derived connectives) ie, particles derived from nouns or verbs.

Among the 150 taddhitaavyayas which he listed, only a few are seem to be postpositions.

- **A.R. Raja Raja Varma's Keerala paaniniyam – 1917**
- Raja Raja Varma defines postpositions (gati) as a particle which modifies cases.
- He differentiated between case affixes and postpositions and uses the term 'misravibhati' (mixed case) to indicate cases with postpositions.
- He also observes that the postpositions are not originally particles (nipaata) but particles derived from nouns or verbs (avyayas).

Seshagiriprabhu's vyaakarana mitram – 1919

Seshagiriprabhu describes the case system of Malayalam elaborately.

He defines postpositions as certain words added to the case affixes to indicate special meaning and he lists eighty postpositions and classified them on the basis of the case affixes.

- **L.V. Ramaswami Ayyar's the Evolution of Malayalam Morphology – 1936**

- Ramaswami Ayyar observes that certain postpositions in Malayalam have developed into regular case endings by frequent use.
- Others which are still postpositions are called as “loose postposition” by him.

- **POSTPOSITIONS IDENTIFIED**

- The present study has identified forty six postpositions in Malayalam. They are classified into four groups according to their origin and morphological similarities.
- Past Participial
- Present Participial
- Future Participial
- Derived Nouns

- **Past Participial**

There are seventeen postpositions classified as past participial in Malayalam.

- ko, Œu 'with, by, due to, within'

µaan peena ko, Œu e«uti.

'I wrote with the pen.'

avan bhaagyam ko, Œu rakÀappeŒu

'He escaped by luck.'

µaan °inn-e ko, Œu tooRRu.

'I failed due to you.'

siita aµcu °imiÀaÆ ko, Œu paŒhiccu.

'Sita studied within five minutes.'

- **kuRiccu** 'about'
- addhyaapakan vidhyaarthi-y-e **kuRiccu** paRannu.
- 'The teacher said about the student.'
- **paRRi** 'about'
- pitaavu makale **paRRi** vyaakulapettu.
- 'Father feel sorry about his daughter.'

• $\circ i^{\circ \circ} u$ 'from'

jaatha ko᳚᳚ayattu $\circ i^{\circ \circ} u$ varu $\circ \circ u$.

'The procession comes from Kottayam.'

• **vaccu** 'at, among, in'.

1. *bassu kolla-ttu vaccu maRiṃṃu.*

'The bus turned turtle at Quilon.'

2. *vee, u kuṅṅika¹/₂il vaccu nallavan aa, u.*

'Venu is good among the children.'

3. *Mantri kṛ-il vaccu paRaṃṃu.*

'The minister said in the car.'

•kuuḡi 'through, with, along'

1.avan ooḡa-y-il kuuḡi rakÀappeḡḡu
'He escaped through the drain'.

2.anujatti accan-ooḡu **kuuḡi** yaatrayaayi.
'The younger sister started the journey with father.'

3. a¹/₂uka¹/₂ Rooḡḡ-il-kḡḡi pooku^{oo}u.
'The people go along the road.'

colli 'about'.

a¹/₂uka¹/₂ mantriy-e colli va«akku u,ḡaakki.

'The people made quarrel about the minister.'

ottu 'with'

*makan accan-ooḡu-**ottu** rangattiRanni.*

'The son entered in the field with his father.'

• **o«iccu** 'except'.

Pooliisu viiḡu o«iccu ella stalavum anveÀiccu.

'The police searched all places except the house.'

aayi 'for'

μaan itellaam ava^{1/2}-kku-**aayi** vjnniccu.
'I bought all these for her.'

to᳚᳚u 'from'

enikku a^{oo}-u to᳚᳚u dukhamaa, u
'I have sorrow from that day.'

puraskariccu 'about'

raamu ^oiigrooka^{1/2}-e puraskariccu samsaariccu.
'Ramu talked about Negros.'

• **sambandhiccu** 'about, on'

praasa'gikan ve^{1/2}_{1/2}akkaar-e **sambandhiccu** samsaariccu.

'The speaker talked about white people'

b.addhyaapakar avaru^ḡe prasanna^{1/2}-e **sambandhiccu** carccakal
naḡatti.

'The teacher conducted discussions on their problems.'

• **ko^{1/2}_{1/2}iccu** 'about'

avan enn-e **ko^{1/2}_{1/2}iccu** paRamma phalitam ^oa^{oo}aayi.

'The fun that he said about me was good.'

•vee,ḡi 'for'

accan pustakam eni-kku vee,ḡi vaanni.

'Father bought the text for me.'

•ooḡḡu 'to, into'

jaatha kooḡḡaya-tt£-ooḡḡu pooku^{oo}u.

'The procession goes to Kottayam.'

Siita ve^{1/2}1/2attil ooḡḡu caaḡi.

'Sita jumped into the water.'

t£ḡanni 'from'

kupḡunna^{1/2} a^{oo}u t£ḡanni paḡiccu.

'The children studied from that day.'

- Present Participials

There are six postpositions classified as present participials in Malayalam

vare 'upto, till, until'

siita kolla-ttu **vare** pooyi.
'Sita went upto Quilon.'

to«ilaa^{1/2}ika^{1/2} sandhya **vare** jooli ceytu.
'The workers did work till the evening.'

Siita mantri varu^{oo}atu **vare** paaḡi.
'Sita sang until the minister came.'

• **oṭṭaake** ‘throughout’

pooliisukkaar raajya-ttu- oṭṭaake anveeḷiccu.

‘The police searched throughout the country.’

• **kuuṭe** ‘with, through, along’

raadha goop-y-oogu **kuuṭe** pooyi.

‘Radha went with Gopi.’

Ka^{1/2}_{1/2}an jannal-il-(k)-**uuṭe** akattu kayaRi.

‘The thief entered inside through the window.’

Jaatha rooṭṭ-il-(k)-**uuṭe** pooku^{oo}u.

‘The procession goes along the road.’

mumpaake 'infront of, before'

mantri raajaav-in-Re **mumpaake** va^{oo}u.

'The minister came infront of the king.'

Vidyaartthikal addhyaapakan-Re **mumpaake** maappu
paRaμμu.

'The students begged pardon before the teacher.'

•^o**eere** 'towards, at'

ravi vii᳚᳚-in-u

'Ravi went towards the house.'

Poolisukkaar ka^{1/2}_{1/2}an-u ^oeere niRayo«iccu.

'The police shot at the thief.'

• **o«ike** 'except'

kuḡḡika^{1/2} pustakam **o«ike** ellaam ko,ḡu va^{oo}u.

'The students brought everything except text books.'

Future participial

tooRum 'each'

aa^{1/2}uka^{1/2} viiḡu **tooRum** sandarsiccu.

'The people visited each house.'

μanna^{1/2} aa,ḡu **tooRum** utsavam naḡattu^{oo}u

'We conduct festival each year.'

- **Derived Nouns**

- In Malayalam there are twenty two postpositions classified as derived nouns. They can be again classified into four groups. They are,

- Nominatives
- locatives
- Datives, and
- Sanskrit loan words.

- **Nominatives**

There are nine postpositions classified as nominatives.

oo^{1/2}am 'upto, till, for about'.

ku_μμu''a^{1/2} kanyaakumaari-y-**oo^{1/2}am** sancariccu.
'The children traveled upto Capecomorin.'

to^{1/2}ilaa^{1/2}ika^{1/2} santhya-y-**oo^{1/2}am** jooli ceytu.
'The workers worked till evening.'

Vidyaarthika^{1/2} ra_ḡu ma_ḡikkuuR-**oo^{1/2}am** paghiccu.
'The students studied for about two hours.'

mutal 'from'

pariikā pattu maḥi **mutal** aarambhikkum

'The examination will begin from ten O' clock.

•**oppam** 'with, along with'

vidyaarthhika^{1/2} addhyaapakan-ooḥu-**oppam** va^{oo}u.

'The students came with the teacher.'

ḡaan pustakanna^{1/2}-ooḥu-**oppam** peenayum vaccu.

'I placed the pen along with the text.'

•va«i ‘through, along, via.’

ve^{1/2}am ku«al **va«i** varu⁰⁰u

‘Water comes through the pipe.’

Jaatha Rooḡu **va«i** pooku⁰⁰u

‘The procession goes along the road.’

ḡanna^{1/2} kara **vali** pooyi.

‘We went via the land.’

• **pakaram** 'instead of'
siita raaman-u **pakaram** jooli ceytu.
'Sita did work instead of Rama.'

• **meel** 'after, above'.

pariikā pantra, 12 ma, i-kku **meel** aarambhikkum.
The examination will begin after twelve O'clock.

ava^{1/2}kku aṁcu vayass-in-u **meel** praayamu, 5 u.
'She is above five years old.'

• **pakkal** 'with'

siita-y-uḡe **pakkal** dhaaraa^{1/2}am pa,amu,ḡu.

'Sita has a lot of money with her.'

akam 'before, within'

mantri pattu ma,i-kku-**akam** varum.

'The minister will come before ten O'clock.'

Siita pattu maasatt-in-u **akam** pookum.

'Sita will go within ten months.'

•**taa«e** 'below'

raajuvinu nuuR-in-u **taa«e** maarkku ki᳚᳚i.

'Raju got marks below hundred.'

Locatives

There are five postpositions classified as locatives in Malayalam.

u¹/₂¹/₂il ‘within, before’

naan ancū divasatt-inu-u¹/₂¹/₂il pookum.
‘I will go within five days.’

Vinood a_μcu ma_i-kku-u¹/₂¹/₂il pookum.
‘Vinod will go before five O’clock.’

- kii¹/₂il ‘under’

janannal raajaav-in-u kii«il jiivikku^{oo}u.

‘The people live under the king.’

- peeril ‘in the name of’

nannal neetaav-in-Re-**peeril** pa_,am piriccu.

‘We collected money in the name of leader.’

• **munnil** 'before'

ellaavarum daivatt-in-Re **munnil** tulyaraa, u.

'All are equal before God.'

• **akattu** 'before, within'

naaᵑakam pattu ma, i-kku-**akattu** tuᵑa'nn'um.

'The drama will begin before ten O'clock.'

amma oru maassatt-in-u-**akattu** varum.

'The mother will come with in one month.'

Datives

There are two postpositions classified as datives in Malayalam.

eekku 'to, into, for, for about'

jaatha kolla-ttu-**eekku** pooku^{oou}.

'The procession goes to Quilon.'

Raamu ki,aRR-il-**eekku** caati.

'Ramu jumped into the well.'

mantri aμcu divasa-ttu-**eekku** avadhiyaanu.

'The minister is on leave for five days.'

μannal ra,ḡu kolla-ttu-**eekku** °aaḡḡil vannilla.

'We didn't come to the country for about two years.'

oḡḡukku 'throughout'

raajyam-**oḡḡukku** samaram ceytu.

'The workers did strike throughout the country.'

- **Sanskrit Loan Words**

In Malayalam there are six Sanskrit words used in the sense of postpositions. These are to be treated separately, since their origin can be traced only to Sanskrit verbs.

muulam 'because of, due to'

avan **muulam** ava^{1/2} cattu.

'She died because of him.'

samaram **muulam** skuu^{1/2}u agaccu.

'The school was closed due to strike.'

kaara,am 'because of, due to'.

raaman **kaara,am** ku $\mu\mu$ u mariccu.

'The child died because of Rama.'

ma \ll a **kaara,am** skuu $^{1/2}$ u a ḡ accu.

'The school was closed due to rain.'

nimittam 'because of, due to'

raadha **nimittam** raa $_i$ vii $_u$.

'Rani fell because of Radha.'

Ma \ll a **nimittam** ka $^{1/2}$ i niRutti.

'The match was stopped due to rain.'

• **vaḥam** 'with'

siita-y-uḥe **vaḥam** kaḥḥilla.

'Sita has no money with her.'

ḥeeĀam 'after'

ḥanna^{1/2} °aaḥakatt-in-u ḥeeĀam samsaariccu.

'We talked after the drama.'

• **maargam** 'by'

raavanan aakaaḥa **maargam** saḥcariccu.

'Ravana travelled by air.'

Kuḥḥika^{1/2} vimaana **maargam** .elhiyil pooyi.

'The children went to Delhi by aeroplane.'

Since postpositions are the syntactic manifestation of other forms there should be some criteria for identifying post positions. Hence the following features are helpful for identifying a form as postposition or not.

• **FEATURES OF POSTPOSITIONS**

- Indicate case relations
- can be separated from noun phrases by coordinate conjunctions.
- can follow case affixes.
- are disyllabic or polysyllabic.
- cannot take auxiliary verbs.
- cannot be separated from noun phrases by morphemes other than coordinate conjunction.

- cannot replace the present participial –e by temporal um + pool.
- are indeclinable.
- will not be head of an endocentric construction.
- cannot be modified by adjectives.
- occur only after nouns.

- will be deleted in relativization.
- cannot occur in the initial position of a sentence.
- cannot occur immediately after another postposition.
- will be an immediate constituent of noun phrases

THANK YOU

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