

THE APPARENT LACK OF ADJECTIVAL CATEGORY IN MALAYALAM AND OTHER RELATED LANGUAGES*

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1. Introduction

Over the years, one of the tasks of generative theory has been to find and explain language universals. One such universal is the notion of primitive lexical categories, namely Noun (N), Verb (V), Adjective (A) and Preposition (P) (Chomsky 1970). Every language has words belonging to these four classes, and they are listed as such and categorized in the lexicon. In early generative grammar, these four categories were characterized in terms of binary distinctions of N and V features. An adjective in this view is [+N, +V]. Currently the most prominent contender for the Universalist approach to lexical categories is Baker (2003, 2005) who argues that at least N, V, and A, are universal, although A can be quite varied in realization.

Recently the Universalist view has been challenged from data pertaining to variations found cross-linguistically across A and P. Particularly, in the Dravidian literature the question of whether the language family indeed has a separate lexical category of adjectives has remained controversial (see e.g. Zvelebil (1990: 27)). More recently from a functional perspective, Bhat (1994) has argued that Dravidian does lexicalize the adjectival category. Amritavalli and Jayaseelan (2003), Jayaseelan (2007) argue in a Lexical Relational Structure (LRS) approach (Hale and Keyser 1993) for an incorporation account of adjectives. For them universally, adjectives are created with the incorporation of a noun into a preposition or a Case head. Thus, the Dravidian literature is still divided amongst the view as to whether there is a separate lexical category for adjective.

This paper contributes to the discussion by arguing with data from Malayalam and other Dravidian languages that A cannot be universal since there is no independent class of adjectives in Dravidian. More specifically, adjectives are not found in the lexicon nor are they created in syntax. An adjectival-like construction can be syntactically created for the purpose of attributive modification and predication. With the help of verbal and nominal heads, a relativization structure is created for attributive modification, and a nominalization structure is created in the case of predication. The lexicon comprises only of roots.

Adjective-like¹ constructions in Dravidian are built from roots that denote primitive property concepts of type e^k (kinds). They thus need additional structure to be converted into what looks like adjectival constructions. Empirically, I show contra Baker (2003, 2005), Pearson (Forthcoming) that A cannot be a universal category. A new theory for the syntax of the adjective is sketched, using tenets of Distributive morphology (Marantz 1997, Borer 2003) and the feature sharing system (Frampton and Gutmann 2006, Pesetsky and Torrego 2007). A

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¹ Any use of the term “Adjective refers” to the lexical category of adjectives as found in English-type languages. I am not committed to whether the lexical A comes out of the lexicon as an A or whether it is a root combining with a lexically specified *a* head.

desired consequence of the new system is the result obtained for case assignment and agreement morphology. It explains the dative/nominative case alternation in predicative constructions in Dravidian. Some of the consequences of the theory include the presence of only nominal and verbal comparatives, and the absence of resultative secondary predications in Dravidian.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section I will look at the status of adjectives in Korean, Japanese, and some Bantu languages. In § 3.0, I will then introduce the basic paradigm concentrating on data from Malayalam. In § 4.0, the analysis will be sketched by crucially looking at the semantics and the syntactic representations. In § 5.0, I will address the residual issues and problems to be addressed for future research and conclude.

2. Missing Attributive Adjectives in Japanese and Other Languages

One of the canonical positions in which an adjective can appear is the attributive position. It is known that in some languages, attributive adjectives are missing. Japanese, Korean, Slave, Ika, and other Bantu languages belong to this category. In Japanese, which we turn to presently, the status of adjectives is as controversial as it is in the Dravidian literature. Korean attributive adjectives have been argued to be concealed relative clauses (Kim 2002). In Slave, adjectives appear predicatively but not in the attributive position unless relativized. In Ika, the use of a copular verbal element mediates the presence of the adjective in the attributive positions. Where then are the missing attributive adjectives?

2.1. Japanese Adjectives

The status of Japanese adjectives is controversial. There are two kinds of adjectives discussed in the literature. The first one is called the true adjective (Miyagawa 1987, Murasagi 1990) and in Chomsky's (1970) terms is categorized as [+N, +V]. The other category comprises of the "verbal adjective" which is categorized as +V.

- | (1) True Adjective | Verbal Adjective |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Kirei 'beautiful' | b. Utsukushi 'beautiful' |

It is often assumed that the adjectives belonging to (1a) can appear as attributive modifiers without the help of any additional morphology. Verbal adjectives, on the other hand, can appear only with the help of a copula in the attributive position.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| (2) utsukushi-*(i) onna | Japanese |
| beautiful-PRES woman | |

Baker (2003) notes that the presence of the copular element makes (2) a relative clause structure and *-i* does not signal an attributive modifier. However, he wishes to maintain the view that (1b) type verbal adjectives in fact behave like attributive modifiers and are not similar to the characteristic functions of verbs. The diagnostics include resultative secondary predications (RSPs), the complement position of a degree word such as 'too', 'as', and unaccusativity predicates. In English, only adjectives can appear in RSPs. Nouns and verbs are unable to do so.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| (3) a. I beat the metal flat | (AP) |
| b. * I beat the metal broke | (VP) |
| c. * I beat the metal (a) sword | (NP) |

Utsukushi-type adjectives can appear in RSPs suggesting they are adjective-like in their behavior and unlike verbs in that sense (Ohkado 1991, Washio 1997).

- (4) a. Taroo-ga kami-o mizika-ku kit-ta.
Taro-NOM hair-ACC short-AFF cut-PST
'Taro cut the hair short.'
b. #Taroo-ga kami-o ochi(-te) kit-ta
Taro-NOM hair-ACC fall-AFF cut-PST
'Taro cut the hair so that it fell.'

In English, the complement position of dedicated degree words such as 'too' and 'as' necessarily has to be occupied by an adjective. Similarly, *Utsukushi*-type adjectives can appear in the complement position of a degree word suggesting their behavior is unlike that of verbs.

- (5) a. Mary is *too* smart (to make such a mistake).
b. * Mary is *too* (a) genius (to make such a mistake).
(6) a. Hanako-ga totemo utsukusi-i. (A)
Hanako-NOM very beautiful-PRES.
'Hanako is very beautiful.'
b. * Hanako-ga totemo sensei-da. (N)
Hanako-NOM very teacher-COP
'Hanako is very (much a) teacher.'
c. * Hanako-ga totemo okasi-o tabe-ru. (V)
Hanako-NOM very sweets-ACC eat-PRES
'Hanako very (much) eats sweets.'

A point however which Baker (2003) does not make is the fact that even (1a) needs the presence of a particle (in traditional grammar this could be a copula²) to obligatorily be present in order for the adjective to attributively modify a noun. Thus, for our purposes it is important to note that without the mediation of an extra particle, attributive modification is not possible for either type of adjective in Japanese.

- (7) Kirei-*(na) onna Japanese
beautiful-PRT woman
'Beautiful woman'

Similar to the claims for Japanese, Korean too admits only a relative clause structure in the attributive position (Kim 2002). Traditionally, however, Korean has been analyzed as having adjectives but as seen in (8) the adjective is realized as a participial form and the relative clause marker attaches to the entire constituent.

- (8) Ce [e₁ yeppu-ess]-ten₁ yeca Korean
that [pretty-PRT]-REL woman
'that woman who used to be/was pretty'

Slave and Ika (belonging to the Athapaskan language family) also admit adjectives in the attributive position only if there is an obligatory copula present on the adjective.

² Hajime Hoji p.c.

- (9) a. Yenene (be-gho) sho hili **Slave**
 woman v3-of proud/happy 3-is
 ‘The woman is happy/proud (of him/her).’
 b. aná?nuga [aw/ʌn? *(kawa)] guákʌ-ža **Ika**
 animal big seem kill-MED
 ‘It kills big animals.’

We have seen that languages can resist attributive modification for adjectives. In Malayalam and other Dravidian languages, neither can an adjective occur in the attributive position nor in the predicative position, to which I turn to presently.

3. The Basic Paradigm in Malayalam

There are two classes of roots in Malayalam that look adjectival, in that they participate in positions in which English would have an adjective - Class1 or Relativizing roots and Class2 or Nominalizing roots. A brief look into the history of these roots suggests that Class1 roots had a verbal origin (See Jayaseelan 2007) and could be deverbal (as suggested in Anandan 1985). Class2 roots are borrowed roots, mostly from Sanskrit.

(10) **Class 1** (-a ending relativized roots)

valiya ‘big’, *ceriya* ‘small’, *puthiya* ‘new’, *nalla* ‘good’, *pacca* ‘green’, *velutta* ‘white’, *manṇa* ‘yellow’, *pazhaya* ‘old’

(11) **Class 2** (-am ending nominalized roots)

santosham ‘happiness’, *sankatam* ‘sadness’, *prayasam* ‘difficulty’, *pokkam* ‘tallness’, *bedham* ‘better’, *madhuram* ‘sweetness’

The forms belonging to Class1 roots all end in *-a* which is also the Proto-Dravidian relative clause marker derived from a shortening of the distal determiner *aa* ‘that’.

- (12) a. pazhay-a ‘that which is old’ Tamil, Malayalam
 b. p-a ‘that which is old’ Kodagu, Todi
 c. par-a ‘that which is old’ Tulu
 d. hos-a ‘that which is new’ Kannada, Tulu
 e. pedd-a ‘that which is great’ Telugu

The idea that words found in the Class1 category are reduced relative clauses was first suggested by Anandan (1985). The Class2 roots are borrowed mostly from Sanskrit³. Malayalam has a phonological restriction on the coda position of a syllable. The only sounds that can appear in this position are vowels and the bilabial nasal /m/ and the alveolar nasal /n/⁴. Notice that the Sanskrit roots in Class2 mostly end in an obstruent. This phonological coda restriction entails that the nominal morpheme *-am* is employed to turn the Class2 roots into something more native-like. Malayalam also has a nominalizer *atə* which is used to nominalize only clauses or verbal elements as we will see below.

The Class1 roots can undergo nominalization with the nominalizing morpheme *atə* whereas Class2 roots cannot, since they are already nominals; neither can they be relativized using the *-a* marker.

³ Among the Dravidian languages, Malayalam borrowed the most from Sanskrit and Tamil resisted Sanskritization.

⁴ Even though Malayalam has the maximum number of nasals in any Indian language, only these two nasals can occur in the coda position.

- (13) a. vali-**atə** ceri-**atə** b. *vali-**am** *ceri-**am**
 big-NOML small-NOML big-NOML small-NOML
 c. *santosh**am-a** *sankat**am-a** d. *santosh**am-atə** *sankat**am-atə**
 happiness-REL sadness-REL happiness-NOML sadness-NOML

In the next section, I will look at the distribution of the Class1 roots and Class2 roots looking specifically at the attributive and the predicative positions.

3.1. Distribution of Class1 and Class2 Roots

The Class1 and the Class2 roots display different syntactic behavior. Relativized Class1 roots can appear in attributive positions whereas Class2 roots can appear in attributive positions only with the mediation of a non-finite copula (*uLL*, the verb ‘to exist’) and the relative marker *-a*.

- (14) a. vali**ya** kutti [Class1]
 big child
 ‘Big child’ (Lit: child being big)
 b. santosh**am** uLL**a** kutti [Class2]
 happy COP-REL child
 ‘Happy child’ (Lit: child (to whom) there being happiness)

This strategy is also found in other languages such as Wolof as reported by McLaughlin (2004) and Slave and Ika as discussed above. The relative clause marker in Wolof is /Cu/ where C is a noun class marker which shows concord with the noun.

- (15) a. xale bu rafet **Wolof**
 child REL pretty
 ‘A pretty child’
 b. xale bu xam
 child REL know
 ‘A child who knows’

The use of the non-finite copula ties in with the fact that relative clauses in Malayalam are non-finite (See Jayaseelan 2011 for a detailed analysis). A question begs itself at this point, why can’t the relative clause marker attach directly to the borrowed roots, i.e. why doesn’t the language allow words as in (16).

- (16) a. *pokk-**a** ‘tall’
 b. *santosh-**a** ‘happiness’⁵

If both Class1 and Class2 roots are identical then what makes the relative clause marker attach only to certain roots? Class2 roots as we saw before are borrowed roots. Moreover there is no prohibition in a word ending in a vowel (as Class1 illustrates). The answer lies in

⁵ Interestingly, this form is attested only in one usage- the ‘Happy birthday’ equivalent in Malayalam which is:

- (i) santoshajanmadinam kutti-kkə
 happy born day child-DAT
 ‘Happy birthday to the child’

Presumably, this is because ‘santoshajanmadinam’ is a compound and the /m/ in the coda of ‘santosham’ is deleted.

the patterns exhibited by the two classes of roots. The morphology module admits both the relativization and nominalization as routes to realizing an adjectival meaning. The Class1 roots are deverbal, the Class2 roots are not. *-a* is always looking for a verbal element. Class2 roots are borrowed and upon borrowing has to undergo the nominal morphology prior to the *-a* suffixation.

The fact that *-a* is always looking for a verbal element is exemplified in the attributive position of the Class2 adjective, they always need the non-finite copula as support for the *-a* attachment. *-a* attaches to verbs and never to nouns.

- (17) a. [njaan ____ kaNT-**a**] kutti
I see-REL child
‘The child that I saw’
b. [[njaan ____ kaNT-u ennə] ningal parayunn-**a**] kutti
I see-PAST COMP you say-REL child
‘The child that you say that I saw’

In English, the relativizers move from an argument position to a non-argument position. The Malayalam *-a* is different in that respect. The behavior of *-a* is different from the English ‘who’ in that *-a* does not open up any argument positions. *-a* does not contribute anything semantically, since the root has already been changed into an $\langle e, t \rangle$ with a null verbal head in the case of Class1 and by the overt non-finite copula in Class2 as we will see in the next section.

Neither Class1 nor Class2 roots can appear as predicative modifiers unless they are nominalized. Class1 roots appear in relative clauses, which now modify a pronominal. This is seen by the number and gender marking on the relativized Class1 root that combines with the so-called equative copula, whereas Class2 roots can appear as the complement of an existential copula triggering the appearance of dative case on the subject/experiencer.

- (18) a. avan nalla-**van** aaNə b. avaL nalla-**vaL** aaNə [Class1]
he good-M.SG EQ she good-F.SG EQ
‘He is good’ (Lit: he is one being good) ‘She is good’ (Lit: she is one being good)
(19) a. avan-ə pokkam uNTə b. kutti-**kkə** dukham uNTə [Class2]
he-DAT tall EX child-DAT sad EX
‘He is tall’ (Lit: to him there is tallness) ‘The child is sad’ (Lit: to the child there is sadness)

Class1 and Class2 appear in predicative positions with different copulas. While Class1 uses the equative copula *aaNə*, Class2 uses the existential copula *uNTə*. While in Class1 roots, there is the appearance of the nominalization morphemes adhering to the number and gender features of the subject and the subject appears in nominative case. Class2 are nominals to begin with, hence, there is no reappearance of the nominal markers found in (18). The strategy that is at use here is what I call the ‘possessive strategy’. The dative case in (19) exemplifies this overtly. The meaning is akin to saying the subject ‘he’ possesses ‘tallness’ or ‘height’. The ramifications of this proposal will be elaborated in the analysis section below. A summary of the facts is below:

(20) **Table 1.0**

	CLASS1: NATIVE ROOTS	CLASS2: BORROWED ROOTS
a. Nominalization	$\sqrt{1} + at\partial_{noml}$	$\sqrt{2} + am$
b. Attributive	$\sqrt{1} + a$	$\sqrt{2} + am \text{ EX}_{non-finite} + a$
c. Predicate	$\sqrt{1} + a + AGR \text{ EQ}$	$\sqrt{2} + am \text{ EX};$ $\sqrt{2} + am \text{ EX}_{non-finite} + a + AGR \text{ EQ}$

4. The Analysis

My core proposal is that Dravidian never lexicalizes an adjective, in other words, an A does not exist in the lexicon of Dravidian nor does it derive one in the syntax. The only primitive categories that do exist are Ns and Vs. As and Ps are always derived in the syntax-morphology interface. I assume the lexicon to contain only roots (similar to Halle and Marantz 1993, Marantz 2004, Borer 2003) as in the Distributed Morphology tradition. These roots are prototypical ‘property concepts’ and refer to kinds (e^K). An adjectival meaning is expressed by either a reduced relative clause structure (in the attributive position) or as a nominalization (in the predicative position). The two routes to the adjectival meaning are mediated by a possessive semantics.

Keeping the lexicon devoid of any inflectional morphology, i.e. the morphological particles exist in the functional lexicon but they are not attached to the roots, allows many one-to-many mismatches to surface only in the morpho-syntactic module. Derivations are syntactic and can be seen in additional functional structure which contribute to interpretation. The Class1 and Class2 roots start out as category-neutral expressions of type e^K . In the morpho-syntactic module they undergo complex derivational processes that enable them to function as words, thus word formation is always in the syntax.

4.1 Class1 Roots

Recall Class1 roots have been traditionally assumed to be deverbal (See Old Malayalam data in Jayaseelan 2007). They can only be merged in the complement position of a vP which has a null verbalizer head. The root first composes with the null head. I will argue that this is essential and the only way for the relative clause marker $-a$ to attach to the root. It can never combine directly with the root without the mediation of this extra functional layer. The $-a$ marker can only attach to verbal predicates. This also explains why $-a$ can never attach to Class2 roots directly, because they are nominals to begin with.

In the attributive position, the Class1 root can appear as a reduced relative clause. $-a$ is itself not an A’ operator but a morpheme on the verb that marks what argument has been relativized (See Caponigro and Polinsky 2008, Caponigro and Polinsky 2011). Crucially, relative clause markers such as ‘who’ in English moves from an already created argument position and in some languages there is a requirement that only the subject position can be relativized. However, the semantics of the relative clause marker in the Class1 roots cases is simply to make the Class1 verbalized root into a reduced relative clause. I assume the following semantics for the null verbalized element. This is a modification of the semantics of the possessive ‘ka’ in Ulwa (see Francez and Koontz-Garboden 2010).

$$(21) \llbracket \emptyset_v \rrbracket = \lambda \Pi \Pi_e^K. \lambda x. [\pi(x, \Pi)]$$

(21) is the semantics of the null verbalizer for Class1 roots. Π ranges over entities that have a kind reference, a.k.a roots. π expresses the possessor relation. The verbalizing head

itself plays the role of one of those operators, essentially turning a kind into a property. The calculation proceeds thus:

(22) **Step 1:** Combination with the null verbalizer

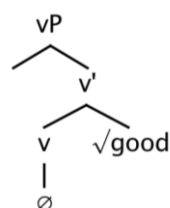
$$[\sqrt{nall}_e^K + \emptyset]_v = nall_{\langle e,t \rangle}$$

Step 2: Combine with the relative clause marker

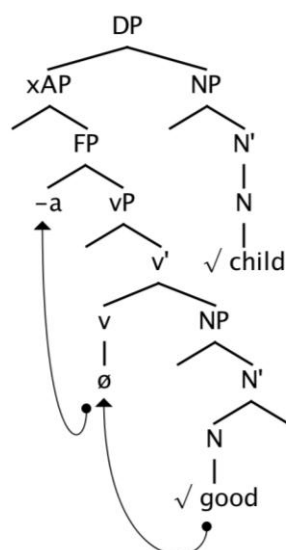
$$[nall_{\langle e,t \rangle} + -a]_{rel} = nalla_{\langle e,t \rangle}$$

Note that the relative marker does not change the semantic type of the predicate, but allows for syntactic function as an attributive modifier. A verb cannot function by itself. The derivation is represented as tree diagrams below:

(23) **Step 1:** Combination with the null verbalizer



Step 2: Combine with the relative clause marker



The fact that attributive Class1 roots are always reduced relative clauses is given further support by the absence of non-intersective readings. In English, (24) below is ambiguous between an intersective reading and a non-intersective reading (Siegal 1980) whereas the Malayalam counterparts in (25) only show an intersective reading suggesting they are actually reduced relative clauses.

(24) Olga is a beautiful dancer

Reading 1: Olga is a dancer and Olga is beautiful *intersective*

Reading 2: Olga is someone who is a dancer and her dancing style is beautiful *non-intersective*

(25) Sita oru pazhaya nrithakkari aaNə

Sita a old dancer EQ

‘Sita is an old dancer’ (= she used to dance and no longer does)

Reading 1: Sita is someone who is an old dancer *intersective*

Reading 2: Sita is old and she is a dancer

≠non-intersective

Adjectives inside English relative clauses behave like the Malayalam examples in (25) in displaying only the intersective reading. This lends support to the reduced relative clause analysis. Semantically, the null verbalizer converts the root into a predicate of type $\langle e, t \rangle$. The semantic role of the $-a$ is only to make the predicate into a reduced relative clause. The syntax of the reduced relative clause is sketched below:

(26) **Reduced relative clause**

the [boy_i [$_{\text{VP}}$ boy_i being good]]

LF: the [[λx [boy, x]] [being good]]

(combine the two predicates by Predicate Modification)

$\iota(\lambda x[\text{boy}(x) \wedge \pi(x, \text{good})])$

The predicative position, I noted, also requires a nominal. The verbalized roots cannot appear in this position without the help of additional nominal morphology – and as relative clauses they cannot appear there either. This nominalization is sensitive to the number and gender of the subject (cf. (18) and (19)). Baker (2003) in analyzing predicative adjectives assume they check selectional features of the PRED head. Similarly, the predicative head [+PRED] in Dravidian is marked for nominal features and these features have to be checked off by the operation [AGREE]. The appearance of the nominal features is only a reflex of the checking operations.

Commonsensibly, it is plausible for the $-a$ marked root to appear in the predicative position since it is already a predicate however, syntactically relative clauses are not stand-alone predicates. Moreover, the clause structure of Dravidian is very restricted and conservative (see Jayaseelan 2011 for a recent discussion of this idea). Jayaseelan (2011) takes this conservativity to be seen as the inability to “hive-out” positions in the clause architecture. Supposing that what I have said is on the right track and there are indeed no adjectives in Dravidian, then we expect only a nominal element as the complement of the verb. The inability of the $-a$ marked root to appear as the complement of the verb suggests that only a nominal can appear in the complement position of the verb. If this theory is correct, it makes two predications which we find borne out in Dravidian:

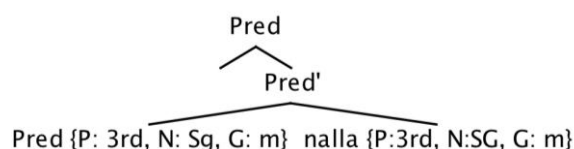
- a. Comparative constructions formed with Class1 roots are always nominalized, since there can only be nominal comparatives. Presumably verbal comparatives should also be allowed. Adjectival comparatives should be missing.
- b. Secondary predications of the kind found in English should not be possible.

I have established why the Class1 roots have to appear with nominal morphology in the predicative position. I will now proceed to my assumptions on AGREE and the presence of the nominalization morpheme. The model I assume is closest to recent modifications of Chomsky’s original AGREE model proposed in Frampton and Gutmann (2006) and Pesetsky and Torrego (2007), henceforth FG and PT. They propose a feature-sharing model where the probe can evaluate and check features of the probe by multiple AGREE. In looking at Icelandic data which show agreement on the pronoun as well as the matrix participle, the FG’s analysis would entail the feature sharing mechanism whereby the participle first agrees with the pronoun and then subsequently the matrix v can check and assign case to the pronoun and this case is shared with the participle. The pronoun is in some sense linked to the participle.

For Dravidian, the Class1 roots are realized as participials in that they are reduced relative clauses having very little structure. I already noted the requirement of the Dravidian

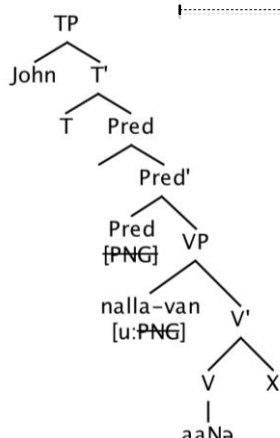
verbal predicate to have a nominal in its complement position. Adopting FG and PT's feature sharing approach enables us to explain why the Class1 root in the predicative position always appears with a nominal marker sensitive to gender and number. I will assume a [+PRED] head that has {N, G} features. The probe on the [+PRED] head is looking for some element to saturate its feature. The reduced relative clause cannot saturate this without the help of the nominalization morpheme- *van*, *vaL*, and *tə*. These rudimentary agreement markers have phi-features that can saturate the [+PRED] head.

- (27) a. [_{PRED} nalla [_{VP} COP]]
b.



The [PRED] head's features have to be satisfied by the element in the complement position. This is done by the feature sharing mechanism since this is reflected in the case assignment patterns as well. The nominative case is a feature assigned as a result of the feature sharing by the probe and goal. Thus, the subject in the case of the Class1 predicative constructions is assigned nominative case (which is always null marked). The feature sharing mechanism sketched here is different from Baker's agreement checking story for the lack of adjectives in the attributive position in Japanese. Baker's (2003) story relies on feature checking where the adjective has to be specified for uninterpretable features in order for the feature checking to happen. In this case, it is not about checking off uninterpretable features, rather the need to share features in connection with the fact that only a nominal can appear in the complement position of the predicative head that triggers the feature checking mechanism. In the absence of a lexical category of adjectives, the fact that the complement of the [PRED] head is a nominal is indeed not surprising. The derivation is below:

- (28) a. [_{CP} [_{TP} John- \emptyset [_{PRED} [_{PRED'} nalla-*van* [_{COP} aaNə]]]]]
b.



I am assuming the Spec of the VP to host the xAP projection as shown in (23: Step2). The Class1 root first combines with the null verbalizer which then combines with the relative clause head. This is then merged into the Spec of the VP. The probe on the [PRED] head sends out the probe which then agrees with the xAP. The movement of the root from lower down in this projection to the Spec of the xAP (as seen in 23:Step2) is motivated precisely because of this AGREE relation. Only the edge of the projection is visible to the probe.

Depending on the PNG features, the inflection on the relativized root changes. This thus creates a nominal predicate.

4.2. Class2 Roots

Class2 roots are borrowed roots. These roots normally end in a stop or a fricative. Malayalam coda is restricted in that only a bilabial nasal, an alveolar nasal or a vowel can appear in the coda position. The roots are nominalized after being borrowed with the nominalizing morpheme *-am*. Note that the other nominalizing morpheme ‘atə’ is not available for Class2 roots, because ‘atə’ is a true nominalizer and can appear only on verbal and clausal elements whereas *-am* is a nominal morpheme and appears in other non-borrowed nominal roots as well.

- (29) a. paz**ham** ‘banana’ b. ve**LLam** ‘water’

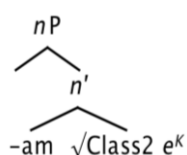
A question that comes up automatically is why the Class2 roots cannot undergo relativization, unlike the Class1 roots. The relative clause is not attached directly to the root, it attaches to the null verb. Therefore the null *v* cannot attach to Class 2 roots. Class2 roots, unlike Class1 roots, thus start out as nominals. There is no syntactic restriction prohibiting the attachment of the relative clause marker onto the borrowed root, the constraint is purely phonological. Borrowed roots have to undergo the nominalization because of the coda restriction. Recall that the relative clause marker, I argued in § 4.1 can attach only to a verbal predicate. Thus, the only way for the relative clause marker to attach to the Class2 roots is by converting the Class2 roots into a verbal predicate. However, this is not the strategy that is commonly used for borrowing.

The Class2 roots, similar to the Class1 roots start out as e^K . Addition of the nominal morpheme *-am* turns the roots into e . The nominal morpheme is the head of an nP . The semantics of the word created by the *-am* suffixation behaves like any other nominal in the language. Given that Class2 roots end up as nominals and not as predicates, attributive modification is not possible at all. The only way to use a nominal predicate in an attributive position is to employ a copula. Malayalam uses the non-finite existential copula *uLL* for this purpose. The non-finite copula turns the nominal predicate into an $\langle e, t \rangle$ to which the relative clause marker *-a* can then attach to. The use of the non-finite copula is consistent with the view that relative clauses are non-finite in Dravidian. This non-finite copula is the overt form of the null verbalizer employed for the Class1 roots. Thus, Class2 roots have the morphology spelt out overtly whereas Class1 roots only have it covertly. The calculation proceeds thus:

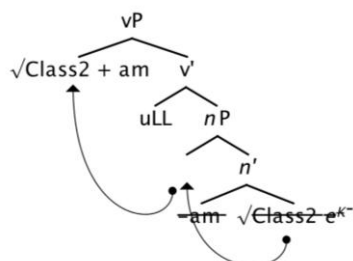
- (30) a. **Step 1:** Combination with the nominal morpheme
 $[\sqrt{pokk_e^K} + -am]_n = pokkam_e$
 b. **Step 2:** Combine with the non-finite copula
 $[pokkam_e + uLL]_v = [pokkam uLL]_{\langle e, t \rangle}$
 c. **Step 3:** Final merge with the relative clause marker
 $[pokkam uLL_{\langle e, t \rangle} + -a]_{rel} = pokkam uLLa_{\langle e, t \rangle}$

Note that *-a* is merging with a non-finite verbal head in this case the non-finite copula ‘uLL’. The syntactic derivations are show below:

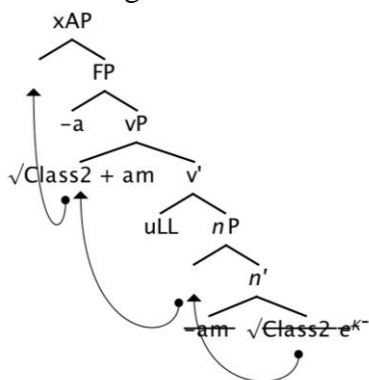
(31) **Step 1:** Combination with the nominal morpheme



Step 2: Combine with the non-finite copula



Step 3: Final merge with the relative clause marker

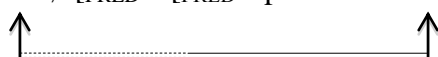


In the predicative position, unlike the Class1 roots, there are two strategies that Class2 roots employ. Either the derivation can proceed similar to the Class1 roots, whereby the Subject gets nominative case and the Class2 predicate gets nominalized or the Class2 root can stay as in Step 1 of (31) and the subject can receive dative case. I will appeal to the feature sharing mechanism and show that this much-discussed “dative experiencer” construction receives a simple explanation under this theory. It is a by product of feature sharing as well as the semantics of the possession which I have discussed under the rubric of what it means to be in an attributive or predicative position.

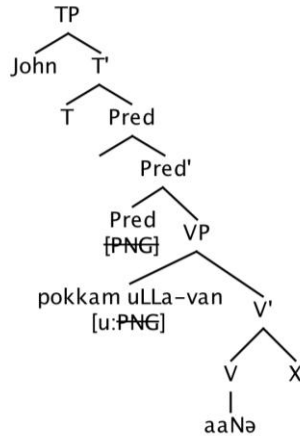
When the Class2 root remains as a relative clause, it has to appear with the nominalizing morphemes pertaining to person, number, and gender. This is similar to the predicative position in a Class1 root. The [PRED] head is marked for features and there has to be obligatory feature sharing between the head and the Class2 root. The entire relative clause is nominalized. This would seem a bizarre strategy considering that the Class2 root was a nominal after the first morphological merge unlike the Class1 root (which ends up verbal). However, there is an option to use the nominal first created after the morphological merge as well which is the experiencer dative construction.

In the case of the first strategy, the [PRED] head sends down the probe which then agrees with the relative clause upon the affixation of the nominal morpheme. The AGREE relation shares the features on the NP and the relative clause which gets the nominalized forms.

(32) a. [CP [TP John-∅ [PRED [PRED' pokkam uLLa-van [COP aaNə]]]]



b.



In the second strategy, the VP combines with the nominal belonging to Class2. The PRED head then sends the probe to check the features on the nominal. Since it is already a nominal there is no further nominalization required and hence no addition of the nominalizing morphemes. This feature sharing results in the case assignment as well. Nominative case is assigned to the predicate. And thus, the “subject” cannot be assigned nominative case and the only other option is to assign dative.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have shown that Dravidian does not have an adjective category either lexically or derivationally in the syntax. The two routes taken to derive adjectival-like meaning are relativization and nominalization. I assume the lexicon comprises of roots which combine with different v heads and n heads in the syntax to derive the relevant structures. These roots start out as kinds (e^k). I will end with a section on a special strategy used by Kannada in creating adjectival-like structures and another section on adjectives in English where they cannot appear prenominally.

5.1. Kannada Adjectives

Jayaseelan (2007) notes that in Kannada the normal way of expressing Class2 roots is by using the dative case on the root.

- (33) raama udda-kke idd-aane
 raama tall-DAT be-3SG.MASC
 ‘Rama is tall’

The nominative counterpart of (33) has a specialized usage and is used only to indicate a special context such as ‘Rama is tall enough to join the army’.

- (34) raman-ige udda ide
 raman-DAT height is
 ‘Rama is tall’

This pattern is interesting and I will leave it for future research to explore if the other Dravidian languages use this pattern to arrive at similar meanings.

5.2. English Adjectives that cannot Appear Prenominally

In English, there is a subclass of adjectives referred to in the literature as a-adjectives beginning with the syllabic shwa that resist prenominal attributive modification.

(35) ??the asleep boy

(36) the sleepy/absurd/active/tall boy

Historically it is known that adjectives such as ‘asleep’ were prepositional phrases in Old English (Simpson and Weiner 1989). They are derived from a noun incorporating into a preposition.

- | | | |
|---------|---------------------|----------------|
| (37) a. | John is on/at sleep | Old English |
| b. | John is asleep | Modern English |

Now suppose this suggests that adjectives which have more structure cannot appear in attributive positions. This then predicts that Dravidian roots cannot attributively modify a noun since they always compose with v and n heads to form relativized or nominalized structures.

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