

Title: Noun Modifying Clause Constructions in Dravidian
 Category: oral
 Session: Theme 1

The Dravidian languages present Noun Modifying Clause Constructions which show a number of typological similarities with the Japanese ones, notably its versatility and the absence of explicit indication of syntactic and semantic relation between the head noun and the dependent clause.

The core device use in all the languages except Brahui (North-Dravidian) is a participle, varying in tense-aspect and polarity and suffixed with an adjectival marker (mainly *-a, *-i). The clause ending in this participle precedes the head noun. Most of the arguments (core, oblique, peripheral...) of the dependent clause can be taken as head:

Telugu : annam tin-e ceyyi 'the hand with which one eats'
 food eat-hab-adj^z hand

Badaga: konju ginju ella murida sadda 'the sound of all the branches breaking'
 branch ECHO all break-past-adj^z sound

To the noun head can be substituted a pronominal derivative, suffixed to the participial form of the verb. Usually this suffix varies in gender and number, but is restricted to the 3rd person (except in a few languages which allow 'I/you... who...'). A common use of the 3rd person neuter singular of this construction is to nominalize the clause: 'the fact that...'. Both types, with pro-head¹ and with head noun², occur in the following sentence:

Kannada: śiva mandirada munde basavaṇṇa maṇṭapa iruvudu¹
 Siva temple-gen before Nandi-gen hall be-nonpast-nom²
 ellarigū gottu iruva saṅ gat²
 all-dat known be-nonpast-adj^z fact

'[the fact] that a Nandi hall stands before a Siva temple [is] a fact known to all'

The paper will present the regular features of the construction as well as some restrictions and less common features. Among them is the extension of the use of the modifying clause with non-nominal heads, such as the adverbials, munde 'in front of, before', mē le 'on after':

Kannada: maḷe banda mē le hoḷe bandu ide 'after the rain came, the river has risen'
 rain come-past-adj^z after river come-cn^j is

Diachronic morphological data show some affinities between the verbal modifier (participle) and the nominal complement (genitive) both expressing a syntactic dependency on a head and the lack of semantic specification of the relation.

References

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 Steever, S. 1998, *The Dravidian languages*. Routledge.