



CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF INDIAN LANGUAGES

53rd Foundation Day Lecture Series

Lecture 14

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Dravidian Coordination: Two Issues



K. A. Jayaseelan

K.A. Jayaseelan was Formerly Professor and Chair, School of Language Sciences, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. He received his Ph.D. in Linguistics in 1980 from Simon Fraser University, B.C, Canada. His research interests are theoretical linguistics with special reference to Dravidian languages in the areas of morphology and syntax. His recent publications include *Dravidian Syntax and Universal Grammar* (OUP, 2018) with R. Amritavalli. He is currently a member of the Editorial Board of the journals, *Syntax* and *Linguistic Analysis*. He is also a well known poet in Malayalam and a recipient of the inaugural V.T. Kumaran Foundation Award.

We consider two issues or problems:

Problem 1:

The Dravidian coordination markers – e.g., *-um* in Malayalam – also function as operators that turn *wh*-words into quantifiers, e.g., *aarə wannaal-um* ‘whoever comes’; this is the case also in some other oriental languages, e.g., Japanese. But this is not the case in languages like English. We explain this difference as follows: Coordination has two operators, a concatenation operator and a substitution operator (choice function). English lexicalises the former while the Dravidian languages lexicalise the latter.

Problem 2:

The structure of polysyndetic coordination, like in the Dravidian languages or Japanese, has been problematic. We propose a structure for it.

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