

## Lesson 5



*Camdragiri (Chandragiri), the smaller of the two hills of Śravaṇabelagola (Shravanabelagola), with numerous thousand-year-old Jaina temples*

*Verb classes – the three tenses of the finite verb – negation*

### Verb classes

Each verb in Kannada belongs to one of two verb classes, which are easily distinguished by the final vowel of the verb root (each verb root ends in a vowel<sup>1</sup>). This final vowel is either *u* (first class) or *i* or *e* (second class). One single verb root that is rarely used, *ī* ('to give, grant'), consists of one syllable and belongs to neither category, but behaves like the roots in *i* / *e*.<sup>2</sup> In this book, we will follow the established custom of taking the verb *ಮಾಡು* *māḍu* 'to make, do' as the paradigmatic verb of the first class, and *ಕರೆ* *kare* 'to call' as illustrative of the second.

Exactly the same personal suffixes are used with both classes of verbs, and also the markers of tense are the same. The two classes differ in only two respects: (a) how the tense markers are joined to the root, and (b) how the gerund (sometimes called 'verbal participle')<sup>3</sup> is formed.

## Finite verb forms

### *The structure of finite verb forms*

A finite verb form is one that is fully conjugated (a ಪೂರ್ಣಕ್ರಿಯಾಪದ *pūrṇakriyāpada*, 'full verb'), i.e., it generally consists of three components: root, tense marker, and personal suffix.<sup>4</sup>

Kannada has **three tenses** in the indicative mood (ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಿಧಿ *sāmānyavidhi* or 'ordinary mood'): past, present, and future (ವರ್ತಮಾನಕಾಲ, ಭೂತಕಾಲ, ಭವಿಷ್ಯತ್ಕಾಲ *vartamānakāla*, *bhūtakāla*, *bhaviṣyatkāla*). Besides these three tenses, there are also two types of conjugation that are not called 'tenses' because they do not involve a clear indication of time, and they are usually termed 'modes' or 'moods': the **potential** and the **negative**. These will be discussed in later lessons.

In comparison with many other languages (esp. of the Indo-European family), the Kannada verb system shows relatively few irregularities. Four common verbs (ಆಗು *āgu* 'to become' and ಹೋಗು *hōgu* 'to go' are similar in their few irregularities, just as ಬರು *baru* 'to come' and ತರು *taru* 'to bring' show similarities) show only a few irregularities. There is only one Kannada verb that can rightly be called irregular, viz., the verb *iru* 'to be', which has already been discussed: it is irregular only in the present tense.<sup>5</sup> Other verbs that are usually termed 'irregular' can better be compared with the so-called 'strong verbs' in the Germanic languages (and therefore they will be called 'strong' throughout this book): the only 'irregularity' is the formation of the past stem. But just as in the case of the Germanic languages,<sup>6</sup> certain patterns in the 'irregularness' can be discerned. None of these strong verbs belongs to the first verb class.

A list of these strong verbs is given separately in this book, as an appendix. The strong past stems are memorized most easily by memorizing the so-called gerund, a non-finite verb form that will be discussed in a later lesson.

### *The present tense (vartamānakāla)*

The marker of the present tense is *utt*, a suffix which is added to the root of the verb that is conjugated.<sup>7</sup> When the present tense marker is added to a verb root of the first verb class (i.e., a root ending in *u*), the final *u* of the root is elided (e.g., *māḍu* + *utt* > *māḍutt*); when added

to a verb root of the second verb class (i.e., a root ending in *i* or *e*), the root and the tense marker are joined by means of a connecting *y* (e.g., *kare* + *y* + *utt* > *kareyutt*). Finally, a **personal suffix** is added:<sup>8</sup>

*Personal suffixes for the present tense*

<i>person</i>	<i>(gender)</i>	<i>singular</i>	<i>(gender)</i>	<i>plural</i>
1		<i>ēne</i>		<i>ēve</i>
2		<i>īye / ī<sup>9</sup></i>		<i>īri</i>
3	masculine	<i>āne</i>	epicene	<i>āre</i>
	feminine	<i>āḷe</i>		
	neuter	<i>ade</i>	neuter	<i>ave</i>

Therefore, the word *māḍuttēne* (*māḍu* [root ‘to do’] + *utt* [present tense] + *ēne* [1st pers. sg.]) means ‘I do’, *māḍuttīri* means ‘you (plural) do’, etc.

In the spoken language of some areas, notably the large cities of southern Karnataka, one often hears other, alternative personal suffixes: *īni* and *īvi* in the first person singular and plural respectively, and *īya* for the second person singular. These are seen in writing only when a creative writer wishes to reproduce colloquial language in dialogues etc. Similarly, in northern Karnataka one may hear *āve* for the third person neuter plural.

Thanks to the personal suffixes, these finite verb forms in themselves unambiguously convey who or what is the subject or agent of the action or process that is expressed by the verb: in *māḍuttēne* the person who ‘does’ is always ‘I’, and cannot be anybody or anything else. Nevertheless, especially in longer sentences, it is customary to use the corresponding pronoun (e.g., *nānu māḍuttēne*, *nīvu māḍuttīri*), although in colloquial speech and in poetry the pronoun is often omitted. Therefore it is **extremely important** that the learner memorizes these suffixes perfectly.

The paradigm for a verb of the **first class**, *māḍu*:

1 ps. sg.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇನೆ	<i>māḍuttēne</i>	I do
2 ps. sg.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತೀಯೆ	<i>māḍuttīye</i>	you do
3 ps. sg. masc.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ	<i>māḍuttāne</i>	he does

3 ps. sg. fem.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾಳೆ	<i>māḍuttāḷe</i>	she does
3 ps. sg. nt.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ	<i>māḍuttade</i>	it does
1 ps. pl.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇವೆ	<i>māḍuttēve</i>	we do
2 ps. pl.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತೀರಿ	<i>māḍuttīri</i>	you do
3 ps. pl. epi.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾರೆ	<i>māḍuttāre</i>	they do
3 ps. pl. nt.	ಮಾಡುತ್ತವೆ	<i>māḍuttave</i>	they do

The paradigm for a verb of the **second class**, *kare*:

1 ps. sg.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತೇನೆ	<i>kareyuttēne</i>	I call
2 ps. sg.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತೀಯೆ	<i>kareyuttiye</i>	you call
3 ps. sg. masc.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ	<i>kareyuttāne</i>	he calls
3 ps. sg. fem.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತಾಳೆ	<i>kareyuttāḷe</i>	she calls
3 ps. sg. nt.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತದೆ	<i>kareyuttade</i>	it calls
1 ps. pl.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತೇವೆ	<i>kareyuttēve</i>	we call
2 ps. pl.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತೀರಿ	<i>kareyuttīri</i>	you call
3 ps. pl. epi.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತಾರೆ	<i>kareyuttāre</i>	they call
3 ps. pl. nt.	ಕರೆಯುತ್ತವೆ	<i>kareyuttave</i>	they call

Analogous to these two paradigmatic verbs, forms such as the following are created: ಓದುತ್ತೇನೆ *ōduttēne* 'I read' (from *ōdu* 'to read'), ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾರೆ *hōguttāre* 'they go' (from *hōgu* 'to go'), ಜಿಗಿಯುತ್ತದೆ *jigiyuttade* 'it jumps' (from *jigi* 'to jump'), ಹೊಡೆಯುತ್ತಾಳೆ *hoḍeyuttāḷe* 'she hits' (from *hoḍe* 'to hit'), etc. etc.

In certain forms of spoken Kannada, one should not be surprised to hear contracted verb forms such as *karētini* or *tīṭitivi* for *kareyuttēne* and *tīṭiyuttēve*.

The present tense is used when (a) there is mention of actions or processes that are currently taking place, or (b) will take place in the immediate future:

ಅವನು ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ ಓದುತ್ತಾನೆ	<i>avanu yāvāgalū ōduttāne</i>	he always reads
ಅವನು ನಾಳೆ ಬರುತ್ತಾನೆ	<i>avanu nāḷe baruttāne</i>	he will come tomorrow <sup>10</sup>

### The future tense (*bhaviṣyatkāla*)

The marker of the future tense is *uv*, which is added to the end of the verb root of the verb that is conjugated.<sup>11</sup> This future tense marker is added directly to a verb root of the first verb class (i.e., a root ending in *u*, e.g., *māḍu* + *v* > *māḍuv*, with elision of the final *u* of the root, just as in the present tense); when added to a verb root of the second verb class (i.e., a root ending in *i* or *e*<sup>12</sup>), the root and the tense marker are regularly joined by means of a connecting *y* (e.g., *kare* + *y* + *uv* > *kareyuv*).<sup>13</sup> Finally, just as has already been seen with the present tense, a **personal suffix** is added. It is important to note that the suffixes for the future and past tenses resemble those of the present, but are not the same:

### Personal suffixes for the future tense

<i>person</i>	<i>(gender)</i>	<i>singular</i>	<i>(gender)</i>	<i>plural</i>
1		<i>enu / e</i>		<i>evu</i>
2		<i>e / i</i> <sup>14</sup>		<i>iri</i>
3	masculine	<i>anu / a</i>	epicene	<i>aru</i>
	feminine	<i>aḷu</i>		
	neuter	<i>udu / adu</i> <sup>15</sup>	neuter	<i>uvu / avu</i> <sup>16</sup>

In colloquial speech, the ending of the 1st person singular usually is *-e*, and that of the 3rd person singular masculine is *-a*. These forms, which are generally considered ಅಡುಮಾತಿನ ರೂಪಗಳು *āḍumātina rūpaḡaḷu* or ‘colloquial forms’ are increasingly used also in written Kannada. In more formal speech and writing the longer forms (ಗ್ರಾಂಥಿಕ ರೂಪಗಳು *grāṁthika rūpaḡaḷu* ‘literary forms’) are still preferred.<sup>17</sup> However, this has not always been the case. The short forms frequently occur in poetry, and one finds them already in the twelfth century CE.<sup>18</sup> – **The learner is advised to be familiar with both these short and long**

**forms**, because in practice both are used comparably frequently, just as a reader or speaker of modern English must know that *we'll, isn't, won't, he's, I'm, wouldn't, aren't* etc. mean the same as *we will, is not, will not, he is, I am, would not, are not* etc.

When combined with the future stems, the following fully conjugated forms are made:

### First class:

#### Singular

1 ps.	ಮಾಡುವೆನು / ಮಾಡುವೆ	<i>māḍuvenu / māḍuve</i>	I will do
2 ps.	ಮಾಡುವೆ / ಮಾಡುವಿ	<i>māḍuve / māḍuvi</i>	you will do
3 ps. mas.	ಮಾಡುವನು / ಮಾಡುವ	<i>māḍuvanu / māḍuva</i>	he will do
3 ps. fem.	ಮಾಡುವಳು	<i>māḍuvaḷu</i>	she will do
3 ps. nt.	ಮಾಡುವುದು / ಮಾಡುವದು	<i>māḍuvudu / māḍuvad</i>	it will do

#### Plural

1 ps.	ಮಾಡುವೆವು	<i>māḍuvevu</i>	we will do
2 ps.	ಮಾಡುವಿರಿ	<i>māḍuviri</i>	you will do
3 ps. epi.	ಮಾಡುವರು	<i>māḍuvaru</i>	they will do
3 ps. nt.	ಮಾಡುವುವು / ಮಾಡುವವು	<i>māḍuvuvu / māḍuvavu</i>	they will do

### Second class:

#### Singular

1 ps.	ಕರೆಯುವೆನು / ಕರೆಯುವೆ	<i>kareyuvenu / kareyuve</i>	I will call
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2 ps.	ಕರೆಯುವೆ / ಕರೆಯುವಿ	<b>kareyuve / kareyuvi</b>	you will call
3 ps. mas.	ಕರೆಯುವನು / ಕರೆಯುವ	<b>kareyuvanu / kareyuva</b>	he will call
3 ps. fem.	ಕರೆಯುವಳು	<b>kareyuvaḷu</b>	she will call
3 ps. nt.	ಕರೆಯುವುದು	<b>kareyuvudu / kareyuvadu</b>	it will call

*Plural*

1 ps.	ಕರೆಯುವೆವು	<b>kareyuvevu</b>	we will call
2 ps.	ಕರೆಯುವಿರಿ	<b>kareyuviri</b>	you will call
3 ps. epi.	ಕರೆಯುವರು	<b>kareyuvuru</b>	they will call
3 ps. nt.	ಕರೆಯುವುವು / ಕರೆಯುವವು	<b>kareyuvuvu / kareyuvavu</b>	they will call

Analogous to these two paradigmatic verbs, forms such as the following are created: ಓದುವೆನು *ōduvenu* I will read (from *ōdu* to read), ಹೋಗುವರು *hōgularu* they will go (from *hōgu* to go), ಜಿಗಿಯುವುದು *jigiyuvudu* it will jump (from *jigi* to jump), ಹೊಡೆಯುವಳು *hoḍeyuvaḷu* she will hit (from *hoḍe* to hit), etc. etc.

The future tense is generally used when there is mention of actions or processes that (a) regularly or habitually take place, or (b) will take place in the future.

It should be noted here that there is no strictly standardized rule that determines whether a present or a future tense ought to be used; rather, there are regional tendencies toward the use of the present tense (in southern Karnataka) or the future tense (in northern Karnataka) as a kind of generic non-past tense, especially in literary usage.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the two sentences

ಅವನು ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ	<i>avanu yāvāgalū</i>	he always reads
ಓದುತ್ತಾನೆ	<i>ōduttāne</i>	

ಅವನು ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ	<i>avanu yāvāgalū</i>	he will always read
ಓದುವನು	<i>ōduvanu</i>	

mean practically the same, and it is largely a matter of stylistic preference whether one uses the one or the other. In coastal Karnataka there is a stronger tendency to differentiate between the use of the present and future tenses.<sup>20</sup>

### *The past tense (bhūtakāla)*

The past tense of most verbs is formed regularly, by means of a simple tense marker (as in the future tense). However, there are also verbs that usually are termed 'irregular', but it would be more appropriate to term them 'strong' (see below). First, the past tense of regular verbs will be discussed here.

The distinctive suffix for the past tense is *d*. This is added directly to a root of the second class to form the past stem (*kare + d > kared*).<sup>21</sup> With roots of the first class, the final *u* of the root is first changed to *i* (*māḍu > māḍi*; *māḍi + d > māḍid*). The personal suffixes are the same as for the future tense (see p. 65), with only **one notable difference**: the suffix for the 3rd person singular is not *udu*, but *itu*, and this suffix is added directly to the root (the final vowel of a root of the second class is not elided, but a euphonic *y* is inserted), and not to the past stem, in the following manner: *māḍu + itu > māḍitu* 'it did'; *kare + y + itu > kareyitu* 'it called'.

### **First class:**

#### *Singular*

1 ps.	ಮಾಡಿದೆನು / ಮಾಡಿದೆ	<i>māḍidenu / māḍide</i>	I did
2 ps.	ಮಾಡಿದೆ / ಮಾಡಿದಿ	<i>māḍide / māḍidi</i>	you did
3 ps. mas.	ಮಾಡಿದ / ಮಾಡಿದನು	<i>māḍida / māḍidanu</i>	he did
3 ps. fem.	ಮಾಡಿದಳು	<i>māḍidaḷu</i>	she did

3 ps. nt. ಮಾಡಿತು *māḍitu (!)* it did

*Plural*

1 ps. ಮಾಡಿದೆವು *māḍidevu* we did  
 2 ps. ಮಾಡಿದಿರಿ *māḍidiri* you did  
 3 ps. epi. ಮಾಡಿದರು *māḍidaru* they did  
 3 ps. nt. ಮಾಡಿದುವು / ಮಾಡಿದವು *māḍiduvu / māḍidavu* they did

**Second class:**

*Singular*

1 ps. ಕರೆದೆನು / ಕರೆದೆ *karedenu / karede* I called  
 2 ps. ಕರೆದೆ / ಕರೆದಿ *karede / karedi* you called  
 3 ps. mas. ಕರೆದನು / ಕರೆದ *karedanu / kareda* he called  
 3 ps. fem. ಕರೆದಳು *karedaḷu* she called  
 3 ps. nt. ಕರೆಯಿತು *kareyitu (!)* it called

*Plural*

1 ps. ಕರೆದೆವು *karedevu* we called  
 2 ps. ಕರೆದಿರಿ *karediri* you called  
 3 ps. epi. ಕರೆದರು *karedaru* they called  
 3 ps. nt. ಕರೆದುವು / ಕರೆದವು *kareduvu / karedavu* they called

The past tense simply indicates an action or process that took place at some time in the past. As we shall see later, there are also compound forms that express a past continuous mood and a perfect mood; but many speakers do not strictly distinguish between significances of these forms.<sup>22</sup>

In various regional spoken varieties of Kannada, one can come across a multitude of contractions in rapid speech, e.g., *nōḍḍlu* (for *nōḍḍaḷu*), *nōḍḍru* (*nōḍḍaru*), *nōḍḍvi* (*nōḍḍidevu*), etc. etc.<sup>23</sup> However, the learner is advised to learn the standard, literary forms, which are

understood by every educated speaker and are the norm of the written language.

### Strong or 'irregular' verbs

With the so-called 'irregular' or 'strong' verbs, one should learn the past stem of the verb in addition to the verb root. The present and future tenses of all these other verbs are formed regularly. The verb *baru* 'to come' is an example of a strong verb, because it forms its past tense stem not as *\*barid* (which one might expect, in analogy to *māḍu*), but as *baṁd*. Another instance of a much-used strong verb is *koḍu* 'to give', which has as its past stem not *\*koḍid*, but *kott*.

With this information, the learner can create all the finite conjugated forms, according to the rules that have already been explained.

Examples of verb forms of *baru* 'to come' and *koḍu* 'to give' in the present and future tenses:

<i>baru + utt + ēne</i>	<i>baruttēne</i>	I come
<i>baru + utt + īri</i>	<i>baruttīri</i>	you come
<i>baru + v + enu</i>	<i>baruvenu</i>	I will come
<i>baru + v + iri</i>	<i>baruviri</i>	you will come
<i>koḍu + utt + ēne</i>	<i>koḍuttēne</i>	I give
<i>koḍu + utt + īri</i>	<i>koḍuttīri</i>	you give
<i>koḍu + v + enu</i>	<i>koḍuvenu</i>	I will give
<i>koḍu + v + iri</i>	<i>koḍuviri</i>	you will give

but in the past tense:

<i>baṁd + enu</i>	<i>baṁdenu</i>	I came
<i>baṁd + iri</i>	<i>baṁdiri</i>	you came
<i>kott + enu</i>	<i>kottenu</i>	I gave
<i>kott + iri</i>	<i>kottiri</i>	you gave

The term 'irregular', which is normally used in older Kannada grammars, suggests a complexity that is not really there. It would be better to refer to these verbs rather as 'strong', as is traditionally done in

Germanic grammar, because the ‘irregularness’ of the so-called irregular verbs shows clearly regular patterns, just as is the case with the so-called strong verbs in Germanic languages. Take, for instance, the English word pairs *to write – wrote*, *to strive – strove*, *to ride – rode*, *to drive – drove*, or *to find – found*, *to bind – bound*; or, in German, *scheinen – schien*, *bleiben – blieb*, *schreiben – schrieb*, or *schmeißen – schmiss*, *beißen – biss*, *gleiten – glitt*; or Dutch *krijgen – kreeg*, *blijven – bleef*. In all these pairs of infinitives and past tense forms, we see clearly distinguishable, regular patterns. Similarly, in Kannada such regular correspondences can be recognized as well, such as in these pairs of present-tense and past-tense forms for the first person singular: *koḍuttēne – koṭṭenu* ‘I give / gave’, *iḍuttēne – iṭṭenu* ‘I put / put’, *biḍuttēne – biṭṭenu* ‘I leave / left’, *kaliyuttēne – kalitenu* ‘I learn / learnt’, *ariyuttēne – aritenu* ‘I know / knew’, *bayyuttēne – baydenu* ‘I schold / scolded’, *koyyuttēne – koydenu* ‘I pluck / plucked’.

Just as in the case of the Germanic ‘strong’ verbs, the irregularities follow certain patterns, and **the irregularities concern only the past tense and such forms that are derived from the past stem** (the past relative participle, gerund, conditional and concessive. These will be discussed in later lessons).

**Therefore, if one knows the past stems of the ‘strong / irregular’ verbs, one can correctly build all the possible derived forms of those verbs, with only five common exceptions:** *baru* ‘to come’ and *taru* ‘to bring’ (mentioned earlier), *iru* ‘to be’ (already mentioned in an earlier lesson), *hōgu* ‘to go’ and *āgu* ‘to become / happen’. Here *hōgu* and *āgu* together form one mini-category and show exactly the same irregularities. Please note, in particular, the very frequently used third person singular neuter:

ಹೋದೆನು	<i>hōdenu</i>	I went	ಆದೆನು	<i>ādenu</i>	I became
ಹೋದಿ	<i>hōdi</i>	you went	ಆದಿ	<i>ādi</i>	you became
ಹೋದನು	<i>hōdanu</i>	he went	ಆದನು	<i>ādanu</i>	he became
ಹೋದಳು	<i>hōdaḷu</i>	she went	ಆದಳು	<i>ādaḷu</i>	she became
ಹೋಯಿತು	<i>hōyitu</i>	it went	ಆಯಿತು	<i>āyitu</i>	it became
ಹೋದೆವು	<i>hōdevu</i>	we went	ಆದೆವು	<i>ādevu</i>	we became

ಹೋದಿರಿ	<i>hōdiri</i>	you went	ಆದಿರಿ	<i>ādiri</i>	you became
ಹೋದರು	<i>hōdaru</i>	they went	ಆದರು	<i>ādaru</i>	they became
ಹೋದುವು	<i>hōduvu</i> /	they went	ಆದುವು	<i>āduvu</i> /	they became
/ ಹೋದವು	<i>hōdavu</i>	(neuter)	/ ಆದವು	<i>ādavu</i>	(neuter)

*Baru* and *taru* are irregular in that they have special forms in the past tense for the third person singular neuter: ಬಂತು *baṃtu* ‘it came’ and ತಂತು *taṃtu* ‘it brought’. However, the original, longer forms ಬಂದಿತು *baṃditu* and ತಂದಿತು *taṃditu* are also used.<sup>24</sup>

The past stems of strong verbs will be indicated in these lessons as they occur.

## Negation

Like other Dravidian languages, Kannada does not have simple negative words (like English *never*, *nowhere*, *nobody*, *nothing*, *not*), just as there is no simple word for ‘no’. We have already seen words that are the Kannada equivalents of ‘no’, namely, ಇಲ್ಲ *illa*, ಅಲ್ಲ *alla* and ಬೇಡ *bēḍa*: the defective verbs that negate existence (or presence), identity, and desirability or necessity. When someone asks ಗಣೇಶ ಇದ್ದಾನಾ ? *Gaṇēśa iddānā?* ‘is Gaṇēśa [here]?’ and we answer ಇಲ್ಲ *illa*, we are actually saying ‘[he] is not [here]’, using a verb form. Instead of using adverbs, pronouns etc. that contain a negative meaning, **negation in Kannada is always expressed through the verb system.**

In a language such as English, verbal negation is simply expressed through the word ‘not’: *he is here – he is not here; I am reading – I am not reading*. ‘Not’ is an adverb that signifies that what is expressed by the verb form (in this case ‘is’) is precisely not so. Because such negation words do not exist in Kannada, a different device is used to express negation, by means of the verbal noun: instead of saying ‘I do not go’, one in effect says something that means ‘my going is not’ or ‘my going does not exist’. This mechanism may seem awkward to speakers of Indo-European languages, but it has its own logic, and Kannada speakers find it perfectly natural.

Verbal nouns in English resemble the present participle, such as ‘reading’ in the sentence ‘reading is good for you’. In practice it is immediately clear whether an English ‘ing’ word is a present participle or a verbal noun, because of its position in the sentence. Something similar is the case in Kannada. Kannada has more than one verbal noun

for each verb: a verbal noun for the non-past ('reading now' or 'reading in the future'), a verbal noun for the past ('reading in the past'), and a negative verbal noun ('not-reading'), and these verbal nouns resemble the conjugated forms of the third person singular neuter.<sup>25</sup> Thus the word ಮಾಡುವುದು *māḍuvudu* could mean 'it will do' or '[the act of] doing' or 'that which does' or 'that which is being done'; but just as in the case of the 'ing' words in English, the function of the 'udu' words in Kannada is quickly seen by the position in the sentence. When the action or process that is expressed in the verbal noun is negated by means of *illa*, the final *u* of the verbal noun is elided and the two words are written together. The logical subject (the agent) is always in the nominative case.<sup>26</sup>

ಅವರು ಬೀಳುವುದಿಲ್ಲ	<i>avaru biḷuvudilla</i>	they will not fall
ಅದು ಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ	<i>adu baruvudilla</i>	it will not come
ನಾನು ನಿದ್ರೆ ಮಾಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲ	<i>nānu nidde māḍuvudilla</i>	I will not sleep
ಅವನು ನಿದ್ರೆ ಮಾಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲ	<i>avanu nidde māḍuvudilla</i>	he will not sleep
ನೀವು ನಿದ್ರೆ ಮಾಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲ	<i>nīvu nidde māḍuvudilla</i>	you will not sleep

It is important to note that there is no distinction in the written language between negation in the present and negation in the future,<sup>27</sup> Therefore, out of context, the above examples could also mean 'they do not fall', 'it does not come', etc. (There is, however, a present negative in the modern colloquial language, which seems not yet generally acceptable as part of standard written Kannada. Also there is a negative of the present continuous mood. These will be discussed in lesson 15, p. 186.)

Negation in the past tense is slightly more complicated and is better explained in detail in a lesson 15, after other verb forms have been discussed.<sup>28</sup>



*The Cāmuṇḍarāya Basadi, one of the temples atop Caṇdragiri in Śravaṇabelāgoḷa*

### Exercise

Read and translate the following short sentences:

೧. ನಾನು ಹೋಗುತ್ತೇನೆ.

೨. ನಾನು ಹೋಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

೩. ಅವರು ಕರೆಯುತ್ತಾರೆ.

೪. ನಾವು ಓದುತ್ತೇವೆ.

೫. ನೀವು ನಗುತ್ತೀರಿ.

೬. ನಾವು ನಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

೭. ಅವನು ಕರೆದನು.

೮. ಅವರು ಕರೆಯುವರು.

೯. ನೀವು ಕರೆಯುತ್ತೀರಿ.  
 ೧೦. ನೀವು ಬೀಳುತ್ತೀರಿ.  
 ೧೧. ನೀವು ಕರೆದಿರಿ.  
 ೧೨. ನಾವು ಜಿಗಿದೆವು.  
 ೧೩. ನೀವು ಜಿಗಿಯುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.  
 ೧೪. ಅದು ಜಿಗಿಯುತ್ತದೆ.  
 ೧೫. ಅವಳು ಜಿಗಿಯುವಳು.  
 ೧೬. ನಾನು ಜಿಗಿಯುತ್ತೇನೆ.  
 ೧೭. ಅವನು ಹೊಡೆದನು.  
 ೧೮. ಅವಳು ಹೊಡೆಯುವಳು.  
 ೧೯. ನಾವು ಹೊಡೆಯುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

### Vocabulary

ಆಗು	<i>āgu</i>	to become, occur
ಓದು	<i>ōdu</i>	to read
ಜಿಗಿ	<i>jigi</i>	to jump
ಕರೆ	<i>kare</i>	to call
ತರು	<i>taru</i>	to bring
ತಿಳಿ	<i>tīli</i>	to understand

ನಗು	<i>nagu</i>	to laugh
ನಾಳೆ	<i>nāle</i>	tomorrow
ನಿದ್ದೆ	<i>nidde</i>	sleep
ನಿದ್ದೆ ಮಾಡು	<i>nidde māḍu</i>	to sleep
ಬೀಳು	<i>bīlu</i>	to fall
ಮಾಡು	<i>māḍu</i>	to do, make
ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ	<i>yāvāgalū</i>	always
ಹೊಡೆ	<i>hoḍe</i>	to hit, strike
ಹೋಗು	<i>hōgu</i>	to go

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> This is the case in modern Kannada (cf. Kittel 1903: 23 (§48)). In Old Kannada, verb roots could also end in a consonant, and this historical fact explains the so-called ‘irregular’ or ‘strong’ verbs (see the special appendix on irregular verbs). Roughly from the twelfth century CE onwards, Kannada words had to end in a vowel; this is a development that is similar to what happened when modern Italian developed out of Latin.

<sup>2</sup> Historically speaking, there were other monosyllabic verb roots (also such that ended in a consonant) in the classical language (*kā, sā, kān, jōl* etc.), but in the modern language these roots have been extended by another syllable (*kāyu, sāyu, kānu, jōlu* etc.), Venkatachalastry 2007: 116, 118-9.

<sup>3</sup> The formation and use of the gerund will be discussed in a later lesson.

<sup>4</sup> ಒಂದು ಪೂರ್ಣಕ್ರಿಯಾಪದ ಧಾತು (ಮೂಲ / ಸಾಧಿತ ) + ಕಾಲವಾಚಕ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಯ (ವರ್ತಮಾನ / ಭೂತ / ಭವಿಷ್ಯತ್ ) + ಆಖ್ಯಾತ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಯ (ಲಿಂಗ ವಚನ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕವಾದ ಪುರುಷ ಅಥವಾ ಸರ್ವನಾಮಪ್ರತ್ಯಯ ) ಎಂಬ ರಚನೆಯಿಂದ ಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ (“a full verb is completed by the composition of a root (original or composite), + a tense marker (present / past / future) + a personal suffix (a personal or pronominal suffix that indicates gender and number)”, Venkatachalastry 2007: 124. The exception to this rule is the negative mood (discussed in a later lesson), which instead of a tense marker has no marker at all.

<sup>5</sup> The formation of the stem of the past stem is often called ‘irregular’, but it would be better to call it ‘strong’.

<sup>6</sup> This similarity is of course not based on linguistic relationship, since Kannada is a Dravidian language, and this makes the phenomenon all the more interesting from the point of view of general linguistics.

<sup>7</sup> Traditional grammars in Kannada (e.g., Venkatachalastry 2007: 124) say that the present tense marker is *utta*, and that the final *a* is elided before the following personal suffix. Although this view has its own logic, it is more convenient for the foreign learner to think that the tense marker is *utt*. In the spoken language in some regions, this *utt* may be shortened to *ut*. Cf. also Venkatachalastry 2007: 124.

<sup>8</sup> These are, of course, exactly the same as those already mentioned in lesson 2, but the table is repeated here for the readers' convenience.

<sup>9</sup> These two suffixes are freely exchangeable. It is a matter of personal style and preference whether one uses one or the other, although the longer one appears more common.

<sup>10</sup> Compare this with German *er kommt morgen* / Dutch *hij komt morgen*, or the English *he's coming tomorrow* (note the continuous mode in English, however).

<sup>11</sup> Traditional grammars say that the suffix is *va*, and that the final *a* is elided before the personal ending. Cf. what has been said earlier concerning the suffix for the present tense.

<sup>12</sup> And also the very rarely used verb *ī* 'to give, grant, bestow'.

<sup>13</sup> Alternatively, the *v* can be added directly to the root: *kare + v > karev*, but this is considered a bit old-fashioned and is used mainly for literary purposes.

<sup>14</sup> Because there is an increasing tendency to use the shorter endings *-e* (1 ps. sg.) and *-a* (3 ps. sg. masc.) also in writing, there is also an increasing tendency to use *-i* for the 2 ps. sg., in order to maintain a contrast between the first and second person singular.

<sup>15</sup> The suffix *-adu* is found esp. in the northern part of the Kannada speech area. It is a regional stylistic preference and is just as correct as *-udu*, which is the more commonly found suffix, esp. in southern Karnataka. It is a widespread belief that the suffix *-udu* is, historically, a now obsolete pronoun, 'it', which deictically occupied an intermediate position between *idu* and *adu*. Historically interested readers should, however, see the remarks in the footnote about pronominalization with the *-du* suffix in lesson 11.

<sup>16</sup> Analogous to the suffix for the third person singular neuter, speakers and authors in northern Karnataka prefer to use the suffix *avu*.

<sup>17</sup> The historical reason for these two forms is that in classical Kannada these suffixes were *-en* and *-an*, respectively. From the 12th century onwards, these suffixes were either lengthened to *-enu* and *-anu* to avoid the consonantal endings (a phenomenon known in linguistics as *epenthesis*), or shortened to *-e* and *-a* (which is known as *apocope*). This can be compared to the English indefinite article *a*, which is the shortened form of the original *an* (which is nowadays only used before a word that begins with a vocalic sound).

<sup>18</sup> When the famous religious personality and author Basava (12th century) in one of his best known short compositions writes ನಾನೇನ ಮಾಡುವೆ ಬಡವನಯ್ಯಾ *nānēna māḍuve baḍavanayyā* 'what shall I do, a poor man, oh lord', he is using such shorter, 'colloquial' forms for the accusative case (*ēna* for *ēnannu*) and for the 1st person singular future.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, if one reads a piece in Kannada in which the 3rd ps. sg. suffix *adu* instead of *udu*, the question marker *ēnu* instead of *ā*, and the future instead of the present tense is used, with or without certain regional lexical peculiarities, the reader can be quite sure that the text is from northern Karnataka or southern Maharashtra.

<sup>20</sup> The linguistic situation in coastal Karnataka is a complex and highly interesting one. Many, if not most people in that region are not Kannada mother-tongue speakers but have a different home language (Tulu, Malayalam, Konkani); furthermore, the dialects of spoken Kannada in that region (Havyaka, Kundapura Kannada, etc.) deviate considerably from the modern literary norm. In this complex linguistic environment, Kannada is the language in common (esp. written) use. Tulu is used colloquially in southwestern Karnataka, but is not standardized and is hardly used for written purposes. To some extent, Kannada in coastal Karnataka can be compared to standard German in Switzerland. Kannada is consciously learnt in school rather than at home, and this explains why the written Kannada from that region is very precise and cultivated; for that same reason, it is sometimes unfairly considered 'stiff' and 'lifeless' by Kannada speakers from other parts of the speech area.

<sup>21</sup> Traditional grammars say that the suffix is *da*, and that the final *a* is elided before the personal ending. Cf. what has been said earlier concerning the suffix for the present and future tenses.

<sup>22</sup> In the case of the perfect mode too, speakers in coastal Karnataka tend to be more particular and precise. Probably this partly has to do with the existence of a perfect mode in another Dravidian language, Tulu, which is widely spoken in that area.

<sup>23</sup> Venkatachalastry 2007: 131 lists such possibilities as arising from ಅಡುಮಾತಿನ ಶೀಘ್ರೋಚ್ಚಾರಣೆ *āḍumātina śīghrōcchāraṇe* 'the fast pronunciation in colloquial speech'.

<sup>24</sup> Compare these with the two forms *ittu* and *idditu* for 'it was', mentioned in lesson 2.

<sup>25</sup> In a later lesson it will be shown that these 'verbal nouns' are actually pronominalized relative participles. For the moment, the learner need not know the details of the formation and use of relative participles, or of pronominalization: these will be explained in due course.

<sup>26</sup> The reason for this will become clear in the lesson where the relative participles are discussed. Speakers of Indo-European languages must not make the mistake of literally saying 'my going is not': one says 'I-going is not', 'he-going is not', etc.

<sup>27</sup> Again, the reason lies in that the verbal noun is a pronominalized relative participle: a present relative participle does not exist, and there is only a distinction between past and non-past (i.e., past on the one hand, and present and future combined on the other).

<sup>28</sup> See p. 188ff.