

Lesson 6

Demonstratives – the accusative case – the imperative (hortative) mood

Demonstratives

In Kannada, the demonstrative words (which are pure attributes and cannot be used as independent nouns or pronouns)¹ are extremely simple to use. The word for proximity ('this', 'these') is ಈ *ī*, and the word for distance ('that', 'those') is ಆ *ā*. The corresponding interrogative ('which?') is ಯಾವ *yāva*. All three of these words are **indeclinable**: none of them ever changes, irrespective of the gender, number or grammatical case of the following word to which it refers:

ಆ ಮರ	<i>ā mara</i>	that tree
ಆ ಮರಗಳು	<i>ā maragaḷu</i>	those trees
ಆ ಹುಡುಗಿ	<i>ā huḍugi</i>	that girl
ಆ ಹುಡುಗಿಯರು	<i>ā huḍugiyaru</i>	those girls
ಈ ಹುಡುಗಿ	<i>ī huḍugi</i>	this girl
ಈ ಹುಡುಗಿಯರು	<i>ī huḍugiyaru</i>	these girls
ಯಾವ ಹುಡುಗಿಯರು?	<i>yāva huḍugiyaru?</i>	which girls?

The accusative case

The accusative is the case of the **direct object** of a sentence. In a sentence with a transitive verb (i.e., a verb that can have a direct object), the object can be explicitly and unambiguously indicated by means of a suffix: *-annu*. This suffix (commonly called the suffix for the accusative case, or in Kannada, with a term borrowed from Sanskrit grammar, द्वितीयಾ विभक्ति *dvitīyā vibhakti*, 'second case') is used to indicate any grammatical direct object, irrespective of gender, number, or noun class. This same suffix is also used with pronouns.

The usual rules of sandhi are observed when the accusative case suffix is added to nouns and pronouns. When used with a noun or pronoun in the plural, it is added (this applies to all case suffixes) after the plural suffix.

ಅವನು ಆ ಹುಡುಗನನ್ನು	<i>avanu ā</i>	he hits that boy
ಹೊಡೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ	<i>huḍuganannu</i> <i>hoḍeyuttāne</i>	

The learner should note here the order of the parts of a transitive sentence in Kannada (as in other Dravidian languages): **subject-object-verb**.² The learner must grow accustomed to this type of sentence structure when actively using the language, and must expect this structure when reading or hearing it. Thus a Kannada speaker does not say 'I saw the trees' but 'I the trees saw'; not 'he read that book' but 'he that book read', etc. etc.

With words that indicate **persons**, the accusative case suffix is **always** required to show that this word indicates the object of the sentence. With an object that is **neuter**, there are **two** possibilities: either (1) the *-annu* suffix is added, or (2) nothing is added at all. The difference in usage is rather subtle and not always clear. There is a tendency to use the *-annu* suffix when the neuter object is a *specific* object (for instance, one which has been spoken about earlier). This specificness and definiteness can be expressed in English by means of the definite article 'the'; Kannada has no such article, but the English article may be used effectively when translating this explicit accusative into English:

ನಾನು ಮರವನ್ನು	<i>nānu maravannu</i>	I saw the tree (a
ನೋಡಿದೆನು	<i>nōḍidenu</i>	particular tree)

It must be stressed, however, that this difference is a tendency in the speech and writing of most persons and cannot be called a hard and fast rule.³ Note that this omission of the accusative suffix can occur **only if the object is neuter**, not with grammatically masculine or feminine objects: in these latter cases, the use of the suffix is compulsory. If one wishes to explicit say 'I saw a boy' (an unspecified boy), one must use a different grammatical device. The most common such device is the use of the numeral *obba* 'one (person)': *nānu obba huḍuganannu nōḍidenu*.

Accusatives of pronouns

As with the genitive, the accusative shows a few peculiarities.

Person	Nominative	Accusative
1 sg.	ನಾನು <i>nānu</i>	ನನ್ನನ್ನು <i>nannannu</i>
2 sg.	ನೀನು <i>nīnu</i>	ನಿನ್ನನ್ನು <i>ninnannu</i>
3 sg. masc.	ಅವನು <i>avanu</i>	ಅವನನ್ನು <i>avanannu</i>
3 sg. fem.	ಅವಳು <i>avaḷu</i>	ಅವಳನ್ನು <i>avaḷannu</i>
3 sg. neu.	ಅದು <i>adu</i>	ಅದನ್ನು <i>adannu</i>
1 pl.	ನಾವು <i>nāvu</i>	ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು <i>nammannu</i>
2 pl.	ನೀವು <i>nīvu</i>	ನಿಮ್ಮನ್ನು <i>nimmannu</i>
3 pl. epic.	ಅವರು <i>avaru</i>	ಅವರನ್ನು <i>avarannu</i>
3 pl. neu.	ಅವು(ಗಳು) <i>avu(gaḷu)</i>	ಅವನ್ನು / ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು <i>avannu / avuḡaḷannu</i>

The imperative (hortative) mood

The imperative is the verb form that is used to give orders. There are two forms in Kannada: singular and plural. The plural is also often used honorifically.

The form of the **imperative singular** is simply identical with the verb root: ಮಾಡು! *māḍu!* ‘do!’, ಓದು! *ōdu!* ‘read!’, ಕರೆ! *kare!* ‘call!’, ಹೋಗು! *hōgu!* ‘go!’

The **plural** is formed by adding the suffix *-iri* to the root. With verbs of the first class, the final *u* is elided: ಮಾಡಿರಿ! *māḍiri!* ‘[please] do!’, ಓದಿರಿ! *ōdiri!* ‘read!’, ಹೋಗಿರಿ! *hōgiri!* ‘go!’ However, this form is less common in colloquial usage in central and southern Karnataka, where the suffix is shortened to *-i*. The forms ಮಾಡಿ! *māḍi!* ‘do!’, ಓದಿ! *ōdi!* ‘read!’, ಹೋಗಿ! *hōgi!* ‘go!’ are perfectly equivalent to the longer forms. It is a matter of personal stylistic preference whether one uses the long or the short form.

With verbs of the second class, of which the roots end in *i* or *e*, the suffix *-iri* is joined to the root by means of a connecting *y*: ಕರೆಯಿರಿ! *kareyiri!* ‘call!’, ಬಡಿಯಿರಿ! *baḍiyiri!* ‘strike!’, ಕಲಿಯಿರಿ! *kaliyiri!* ‘learn!’, ನಡೆಯಿರಿ! *naḍeyiri!* ‘walk!’ (There is no colloquial short form, unlike with the verbs of the first class.)

There are only two verbs in frequent use that have irregularly formed imperatives: ಬರು *baru* ‘to come’ and ತರು *taru* ‘to bring’,⁴ which are irregular in exactly the same way. In the second person singular,

the imperatives are ಬಾ *bā* 'come!' and ತಾ *tā* 'bring!', and in the plural they are ಬನ್ನಿ *banni*⁵ and ತನ್ನಿ *tanni*.

Besides these forms for the second person singular and plural, there are other forms for the other persons (see the table below) which by some authors are also termed 'imperative', but which could perhaps better be called **hortative**, since they are not used as direct orders, but rather to urge someone to do something (this 'someone' can also be the first person, 'I' or 'we', or the third person, a 'he', 'she' or 'they').⁶ For the sake of unambiguity and clarity, a pronoun can be used to indicate the subject. Thus the form ಮಾಡೋಣ *māḍōṇa* is best translated as 'let us do' or 'we ought to do', and [ಅವನು] ಮಾಡಲಿ [*avanu*] *māḍali* as 'let him do' or 'he should do'. One often hears that the first person singular is used, together with the question suffix *ā*, in suggestions: [ನಾನು] ಬರಲಾ? [*nānu*] *baralā*? 'shall / should I come?', ಮಾಡಲಾ? *māḍalā*? 'shall I do it?'

Traditional grammars list these hortative forms in paradigms together with the imperatives for the second person:

First class:

1 ps. sg.	<i>māḍali</i>	let me do
2 ps. sg.	<i>māḍu</i>	do
3 ps. sg.	<i>māḍali</i>	let him / her / it do
1 ps. pl.	<i>māḍōṇa</i> / <i>māḍuva</i>	let us do
2 ps. pl.	<i>māḍiri</i> / <i>māḍi</i>	do
3 ps. pl.	<i>māḍali</i>	let them do

Note that in the third person, genders are not distinguished; and also, that the first person singular and the third persons singular and plural are identical in form. Therefore, the context must reveal which person is meant, unless a subject is explicitly indicated by a noun or pronoun.

Of the two possible forms for the 1st person plural, the first one (with the typical ending *-ōṇa*) is the more commonly used; the second form, in *-uva*, is typical of coastal Karnataka.⁷

Second class:

1 ps. sg.	<i>kareyali</i>	let me call
2 ps. sg.	<i>kare</i>	call
3 ps. sg.	<i>kareyali</i>	let him / her / it call
1 ps. pl.	<i>kareyōṇa / kareyuva</i>	let us call
2 ps. pl.	<i>kareyiri</i>	call
3 ps. pl.	<i>kareyali</i>	let them call

One of the most commonly used hortative forms is ಅಗಲಿ *āgali*, from the verb ಆಗು *āgu* ‘to become / happen / occur’. It is used very frequently in conversation and means ‘[so] be it’, ‘let it be [so]’, ‘all right’.



‘Please be quiet’ – *nishyabdavāgiri*, in the polite plural imperative

Exercise

Read and translate the following sentences:

೧. ಆ ಪುಸ್ತಕವನ್ನು ಓದಿರಿ!
೨. ನನ್ನನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ!
೩. ಓಡಿರಿ!
೪. ನಾಯಿಯನ್ನು ಹೊಡೆಯಿರಿ!
೫. ಅದನ್ನು ತನ್ನಿ!
೬. ಅವನನ್ನು ಕರೆಯಿರಿ!
೭. ನಾನು ಕರೆಯಲಾ?

೮. ಪತ್ರವನ್ನು ಬರೆಯೋಣ.

೯. ಅವರು ಪತ್ರವನ್ನು ಬರೆಯಲಿ.

೧೦. ಹೋಗೋಣ.

೧೧. ಅವನು ಹೋಗಲಿ.

೧೨. ಇದನ್ನು ಓದಿ!

೧೩. ನಿಮ್ಮ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ಬರೆಯಿರಿ!

Vocabulary

ಓಡು	<i>ōḍu</i>	to run
ತರು	<i>taru</i>	to bring
ನಾಯಿ	<i>nāyi</i>	dog
ನೋಡು	<i>nōḍu</i>	to watch, look at
ಪತ್ರ	<i>patra</i>	letter
ಬರು	<i>baru</i>	to come
ಬರೆ	<i>bare</i>	to write

Notes

¹ Some authors refer to these words as 'deictics'. This is not done in this book, because the term 'deictic' usually includes other categories of words as well besides the purely demonstrative.

² In linguistics such languages are often referred to as 'SOV languages' ('subject-object-verb languages').

³ Also Venkatachalastry 2007: 122 states ನಾಮಪದಗಳು ನಪುಂಸಕಲಿಂಗದವಾ-ಗಿದ್ದರೆ, ದ್ವಿ.ವಿ.ಪ್ರತ್ಯಯ ಐಚ್ಛಿಕ ("when nouns are neuter, the accusative suffix is optional"), without any further indications of when or why the suffix is used with neuter nouns.

⁴ *taru* for ‘to bring’ is slightly old-fashioned and literary: in the modern language, the compound verb *tegedukom̄ḍu baru* (colloquially further shortened to *tagom̄ḍu baru*) is far more common. (Compound verbs are discussed in lesson 19.)

⁵ In northern Karnataka, one can also hear and read *barri*.

⁶ The indigenous term for this mood is ವಿಧ್ಯರ್ಥವಿಧಿ *vidhyarthavidhi*, ಅಜ್ಜಿ, ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥನೆ, ಇಚ್ಛೆ, ಹಾರೈಕೆ ಮೊದಲಾದುವನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುವ ಅರ್ಥ (“[the mood that has] the meaning of indicating an order, request, desire, wish, etc.”), Venkatachalastry 2007: 123.

⁷ Historically these two forms have the same origin: the Old Kannada form for ‘let us go’ was ಪೋಗುವಂ *pōguvam*, which later became both ಹೋಗುವಣ *hōguvāṇa* > ಹೋಗೋಣ *hōgōṇa* as well as ಹೋಗುವ *hōguva*. Cf. Venkatachalastry 2007: 147.

