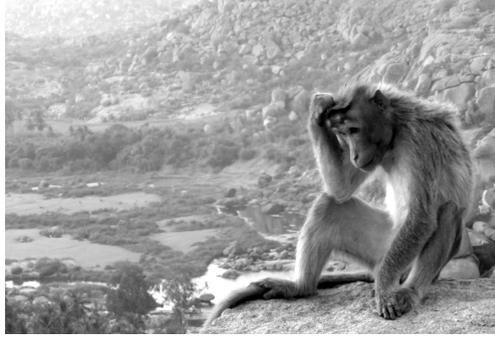


Lesson 3



Pensive monkey near the ruins of Hampi

Plural suffixes

Plural suffixes for nouns

The noun classes (see lesson 1, p. 12) differ from each other with regard to the **suffixes for the plural**, which is the first suffix that may be added to a noun stem, before case suffixes (if any are needed).

Almost always, the plural suffix is either *-(a)ru* or *-gaḷu*. A very small and special third category consists of a few nouns for family relationships which have their plural formed with the suffix (c) *-ṁdiru*.

(a) The plural suffix -(a)ru

The plural suffix *-(a)ru* is used with masculine nouns ending in *-a*. Classical grammars in Kannada say that the final *a* of the noun is elided before the ending is added;¹ but it may be easier for the learner of the modern language to think of the suffix as *-ru*.

huḍuga – huḍugaru

boy – boys

cālaka – cālakaru

driver – drivers

<i>raita – raitaru</i>	farmer – farmers
<i>rāja – rājaru</i>	king – kings
<i>purōhita – purōhitaru</i>	priest – priests

The *-(a)ru* suffix is also used to form the plural of very rare feminine nouns ending in *aḷu*, such as *sēvakaḷu* ('[female] servant'), that are found in traditional school grammars. Such words are very rare in actual modern practice, and for creating feminine counterparts to such masculine Sanskrit nouns, the tendency is rather to use Sanskrit loanwords with a feminine ending *i*, e.g., *sēvaki* instead of *sēvakaḷu*. But here too, when one sees or hears the plural *sēvakaru*, the context must tell whether male or female persons, or both, are meant.

(b) *The plural suffix -aru*

The *-aru* suffix is never used with neuter nouns, but **only with masculine and feminine nouns** (to form an **epicene** plural, in which a distinction between masculine and feminine is not expressed – see lesson 1).

The *-aru* suffix is always found with feminine nouns ending in *-i* and *-e*, as well as with two words ending in *-u*, namely the very frequently used words *heṃgasu* 'woman' and *gaṃḍasu* 'man':

<i>heṃgasu – heṃgasaru</i>	woman – women
<i>gaṃḍasu – gaṃḍasaru</i>	man – men
<i>huḍugi – huḍugiyaru</i>	girl(s)
<i>snēhite – snēhiteyaru</i>	(female) friend(s)

(c) *The plural suffix -gaḷu*

Almost all other nouns form the plural by means of the suffix *-gaḷu*:

<i>mara – maragaḷu</i>	tree(s)
<i>kuri – kurigaḷu</i>	sheep (sing. and plur.)

<i>ūru – ūruḡaḷu</i>	town(s)
<i>vidyārthi – vidyārthiḡaḷu</i>	(male) student(s) ²

(d) *The plural suffix -ṃdiru*

A special, but small class of nouns are those ending in *a* that denote family relationships and form their plurals by means of the curious suffix *-ṃdiru*:

<i>aṇṇa – aṇṇaṃdiru</i>	elder brother(s)
<i>tamma – tammaṃdiru</i>	younger brother(s)
<i>akka – akkaṃdiru</i>	elder sister(s)
<i>amma – ammaṃdiru</i>	mother(s)
<i>appa – appaṃdiru</i>	father(s)
<i>ajja – ajjaṃdiru</i>	grandfather(s)
<i>gaṃḍa – gaṃḍaṃdiru</i>	husband(s)
<i>māva – māvaṃdiru</i>	uncle(s)

One interesting exception is the plural of the common word for ‘child’:

<i>magu – makkaḷu</i>	child – children
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This also applies to the compound *heṇṇumagu – heṇṇumakkaḷu* ‘women-folk’.

To summarize (gender – suffix – example):
nouns in *a*:

masculine	(a)ru	<i>huḍuga – huḍugaru</i>
neuter	ḡaḷu	<i>mara – maraḡaḷu</i>

nouns in *i*:

masculine	gaḷu	<i>vidyārthi – vidyārthigaḷu</i>
feminine	aru	<i>huḍugi – huḍugiyaru</i>
neuter	gaḷu	<i>butti – buttigaḷu</i>

nouns in *u*:

all genders	gaḷu	<i>hasu – hasugaḷu</i>
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nouns in *e*:

feminine	aru	<i>vidhave – vidhaveyaru</i>
neuter	gaḷu	<i>kere – keregaḷu</i>

Exceptions: *gaṃḍasu – gaṃḍasaru, heṃgasu – heṃgasaru, magu – makkaḷu*, and the terms for relatives that end in *a*.

Still more succinctly, if we look at this matter from the point of view not of noun classes, but of endings, we can summarize:

Plural suffixes

- plural in *-(a)ru*: masculine and feminine nouns ending in *-a*, feminine nouns ending in *-i* or *-e*
- plural in *-aṃdiru*: the very small class of nouns for family relationships ending in *-a*
- plural in *-gaḷu*: everything else, except for *gaṃḍasaru, heṃgasaru, makkaḷu*

As already mentioned in lesson 1, **the use of the plural suffix *-gaḷu* with neuter nouns is not always required** when the context is sufficiently clear about plurality.

Exercise

Take the following nouns, use them to construct sentences of the type ‘that is an *x*’, and then turn them into the plural (‘those are *x*’s’).

Example: ಅದು ಕಟ್ಟಡ ‘that is a building’ – ಅವು ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳು ‘those are buildings’.

Use the following words: ಮರ, ಕುರ್ಚಿ, ಮೇಜು, ಹುಡುಗಿ, ಪುರೋಹಿತ, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿನಿ, ಹಕ್ಕಿ, ಹಸು, ಮಹಿಳೆ, ಚಾವಿ, ಮನುಷ್ಯ, ಕಣ್ಣು, ಕಿವಿ, ಕೈ, ರಸ್ತೆ, ಅಕ್ಕ, ಇಲಿ, ನೋಣ, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿ, ಹೆಂಗಸು, ನಿಘಂಟು, ಪುಟ, ಬಟ್ಟೆ, ಚೀಲ, ದೇಶ, ಸ್ನೇಹಿತ, ಸ್ನೇಹಿತೆ.

Vocabulary

ಅಕ್ಕ	<i>akka</i>	elder sister
ಅಣ್ಣ	<i>aṇṇa</i>	elder brother
ಅಪ್ಪ	<i>appa</i>	father
ಅಮ್ಮ	<i>amma</i>	mother
ಇಲಿ	<i>ili</i>	mouse, rat
ಊರು	<i>ūru</i>	town
ಕಣ್ಣು	<i>kaṇṇu</i>	eye
ಕಿವಿ	<i>kivi</i>	ear
ಕುರಿ	<i>kuri</i>	sheep
ಕೂಸು	<i>kūsu</i>	baby
ಕೆರೆ	<i>kere</i>	tank, water reservoir
ಗಂಡ	<i>gaṇḍa</i>	husband
ಗಂಡಸು	<i>gaṇḍasu</i>	man
ಚೀಲ	<i>cila</i>	bag, purse
ದೇಶ	<i>dēśa</i>	country, land
ನಿಘಂಟು	<i>nighaṃṭu</i>	dictionary
ನೀರು	<i>nīru</i>	water
ಪುಟ	<i>puṭa</i>	page (of book etc.)
ಬುಟ್ಟಿ	<i>buṭṭi</i>	basket
ಮಗ	<i>maga</i>	son
ಮಗಳು	<i>magalu</i>	daughter
ಮಗು	<i>magu</i>	child

ಮಾವ	<i>māva</i>	uncle
ರಾಜ	<i>rāja</i>	king
ರೈತ	<i>raita</i>	farmer
ವಿಧವೆ	<i>vidhave</i>	widow
ಸ್ನೇಹಿತ	<i>snēhita</i>	(male) friend
ಸ್ನೇಹಿತೆ	<i>snēhite</i>	(female) friend

Notes

¹ Cf. Kittel 1903: 52 (§119 c) 1).

² But: *vidyārthini* – *vidyārthiniyaru* ‘female students’ (*vidyārthini* is feminine!).