

Research Article

The Infinite Verb Forms in Turkish and in Tamil

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Abstract

In this article we want to investigate in how far these verbal forms differ from each other and in how far they are the same. Indoeuropean languages use conjunctions in order to connect sentences with other sentences or clauses, words which give a certain structure to syntax. In agglutinative languages it is verbal suffixes which are giving a certain structure. They are either participles, verbal nouns or converbs, depending on the intention of the speaker. This is also the case in Turkish and Tamil being both agglutinative languages. In this contribution we want to investigate in how far the typological similarity influences grammatical entities, like the syntax when using suffixes that connect sentences or clauses with each other. At the end of this contribution we want to throw a glance at the opinion of some scientists that I had a discussion about this topic with. Some linguists think that it is logical that agglutinative languages always have a parallel syntax because of the same system, including grammatical morphemes. At the end of this contribution we want to demonstrate that this is not the case at all. The parallel syntax functions only in those places in which speakers want to express the same content. In order to prove this point just a few examples are enough as the examples demonstrate on first sight the difference in the syntactic structure.

Keywords

Agglutinative Languages, Syntax, Converbs, Finit Verbforms Participles, Comparative Linguistics

1. Indoeuropean and Dravidian Languages

The indo-european languages have pronouns and conjunctions for connecting sentences with each other [3]. In agglutinative languages it is certain participles, verbal nouns and converbs of different forms that have the structuring function. In this contribution we want to investigate in how far these forms are similar to each other and whether they have the same function.

Menges based his finding of similarities mainly on phonetic material. Regarding the wide geographical distance between the two groups of languages proving a kinship would of course be very exciting. We will regard these similarities as given

purely by structure, not by kinship.

What has to be mentioned in the beginning is that we here speak about the Turkish of Turkey and not about Turkic. Which does not mean that the infinit forms in other turkic languages differ from the ones in Turkish, but that would be an inner-turkic study.

Also Tamil requires a preliminary clarification of terms, concerning the diglossia. [2] In this study we only take into account the written language as it is subject of standardized grammar. The example sentences and subordinate clauses are given in the latin alphabet in the international transcription

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system¹.

An important typical characteristic of verb forms that are used instead of conjunctions etc. do not have personal suffixes.

To express what the adjectival verbal participle expresses in Tamil and Turkish, indo-european languages use a relative pronoun or a conjunction. Example: va to come varu-kir is present stem; -a is participle suffix, in this case we have a participle present tense. T ü : çık is the verbal stem meaning „go out, leave“; -an is suffix of participle present tense. It can function as an independent noun and as such, can also take on case suffixes.

2. Syntax of Suffixes

A last preliminary remark has to be done: An analysis of the inner structure of a cluster of participial suffixes cannot be in our interest, as they sometimes exist of a single morpheme, partly of a chain of several morphemes, which is mostly the case in tamil. [1] That will say, we are only interested in the syntax of words. [8]

Tam. vītiliruntu varukira payaṇ...the empty line must go!

Su Ab Ve Pz Su

tür. evden çıkan çocuk...

Su Ab Ve Pz Su

dt. das Kind, DAS aus dem Haus kommt...

en. the child THAT comes out of the house...

Of course this participial construction can be part of a long sentence. [6, 7]

Tam. teruvule veļeyātura koļante en taṅkaiyutaia koļante.

Su Lo Ve Pz Sb Su Ge Su

tür. Caddede oynan çocuk küçük kız kardeşimin çocuğu.

Su Lo Ve Pz Sb Su Ge Su

dt. Das Kind, das auf der Straße spielt, ist das Kind meiner jüngerer Schwester.

en. The child that is playing in the street, is the child of my younger sister.

To emphasize the simultaneaty of two actions Tamil and Turkish have both a special suffix [8].

Tam. avaṇ jaṇṇalil niṇrukoṇṭe teruvaip pārttāṇ.

Pn Su Lo Ve Pz Su Ve Pr

tür. Pencerenin yanında ayakta durarak caddeye baktı.

Su Lo Ve Pz Su Ve Pr

Tam. avaṇ natantu ponan [8]

Pn Ve Pz Ve Pr

tür. (o) yürüyerek gitti.

(Pn) Ve Pz VePr

dt. Er ging (zu Fuß)

en. he walked (away)

The abbreviation Pn is several times put into paranthesis, as it does not have to be used in these cases.

2.1. Simultaneity

In Turkish the suffix *-erek/-arak* on the one hand it indicates the simultaneity of the two actions reported but this temporary information is not the only one [4]. An important information is also under which circumstances the action mentioned in the second part of the sentence took place. One could name this suffix a qualifying converb.

Tamil also has a suffix that gives the information that two actions took place at the same time. The suffix *-konte* is added to the form of the participle showing the time of

action. Turkish would use *-erek/-arak* but also *-p* is possible as it can be neutral to time.

tam. Avaṇ kuļittukkoṇṭe paṭiṇāṇ. [8]

Pp Ve Pz Ve

(The dobbel k is the result of a phonetic law which is not influencing the grammar.the auslaut-k after kulittu is being taken from the next morpheme anlaut. It thus underlies the consonant harmony.)

tür. (O) duş alarak şarkı söyledi. (Duş alıp şarkı söyledi.)

Pp Ve Pz Ve

dt. Während er duschte, sang er.

en. While taking a shower he was singing.

Negation

The negative verbal participle in Tamil is created by adding the suffix *-amal* to the infinitive. In Turkish the so called “short infinitive” is extended by the ablative suffix. [7]

tam. Avaṇ eṇṇōṭu pecamal vitukkup ponan

Sb Pp Is Ve Ng Su Da Ve Pr

tür. Benimle konuşmadan eve gitti.

Sb Ge Ve Ng Ab SuDa VePr

dt. Ohne mit mir zu sprechen ging er nach hause.

en. Without speaking with me he went home

tam. kuļantai cirikkāmal aṅkē niṇṇratu.

Tür. Çocuk gülmeden orada duruyordu.

Sb Ve Ng Ad Ve Pr

tamil *-amal* is equivalent to türkisch *-meden/-madan*. Die Syntax is in both languages the same.

In the preterite the stem of the preterite is enlarged with a, in turkish the normal stem recieves the suffix *-mUş*, the vowel of which has four vowel harmonic varieties, here u.

Tam. Velināṭṭil paṭitta peṇ.

Ad Ve Pz Su

Tür. Yurtdışında okumuş olan kadın [4]

Ad Ve Su Pz

dt. eine Frau, die im Ausland studiert hat.

en. a woman who studied abroad

Olan is participle present tense and not really necessary. Yurt dışında okumuş kadın is enough.

Cases

In both languages the participle can refer to all cases and can thus stand for constructions, which would need prepositions in the indoeuropean languages, for exaple to, away from,

¹In the transcribed examples some irritation might be caused when a morpheme

once might be called a Pp (participle pronoun) and once a Sb (Subject). The explanation lies in the semantic meaning in the sentence.

on, in etc.

tam. Naṇ ippōtu utkārkira nārkaliyiliruntu eṇ tampi nērru viluntān.

Sb Ad Ve Pz Ab Po Sb Ad Ve Pr

tür. Ben şimdi oturduğum sandalyeden küçük kardeşim dūn düştü.

Sb Ad Ve Pz Ab Sb Ad VePr

dt. Mein kleiner Bruder fiel gestern von dem Stuhl, auf dem ich jetzt sitze.

en. Yesterday my little brother fell from the chair on which I am sitting now.

Tam. nāṅkal nālaikkup pōkum ūr...

Ps Pl Ad VePz Sb

tür. Yarın gideceğimiz yer...

Ad Ve Pz Sb

dt. der Ort, zu dem wir morgen gehen

en. the place to which we will go tomorrow

In both languages there are means that serve to indicate that two actions connectrd by a converb have a temporal distance in their manner of occurrence. In Tamil it is the auxiliary vittu[8], the most common way in Turkish is to add the post-position sonra following the ablative of the participle.

Tam. Avaṇ cappiṭṭuvittu vittukup pōṇāṇ.[8]

Pp Ve Pz Sb Da Ve

tür. (O) yemek yedikten sonra eve gitti.

(Pp) Ve Pz Ab SbDa Ve

dt. Er aß und ging dann nach hause.

en. He ate and then went home.

Tam. Avaṇ pustakattaip paṭittuvittut tirupik kotuppān.

Pp Su Ak Ve Pz Ad Ve

tür. (O) kitabı okuduktan sonra geri verecek.

Su Ak Ve Pz Ab Ve

dt. Wenn er das Buch gelesen hat, wird er es zurückgeben.[9]

en. After reading the book he will give it back.

2.2. Connecting Sentences and Clauses

Since agglutinative languages do not have conjunctions², it needs another means to connect sentences or clauses. These are suffixes which also express a certain kind of the connections. In Tamil it is a -u [10] in the present tense, which is added to the present tense stem. In Turkish it is the suffix -Up.

Tam. Avaṇ vantu cāpiṭṭān.

Pp Ve Ko Ve

tür. (O) gelip yemek yedi.

(Pp)Ve Ko Ve

dt. Er kam und aß

en. He came and ate.

tam. Nāṇ vīṭṭukku vantu appavaik kūppiṭṭēṇ.

Pp Su Da VeKo Su Ak Ve

tür. (Ben) eve gelip babayı seslendim.

(Pp) SuDaVeKo Su Ak Ve

dt. Ich kam nach hause und rief Vater.

I came home and called father.

This is also used for complex imperatives:

tam. Nī aṅke poy anaṅaik kēl!

Pp Ad VeKo Pp Ak VeIm

tür. Oraya gidip ona sor!

Ad Ve Ko PpDaVeIm

In both languages such a connection can be present several times. [11]

Tam. Avaṇ katavait tīraṇtu uḷḷe nuḷaintu nārkāliyl utkārtāṇ.

Su Ak Ko Ad Ve Ko

tür. Kapıyı açıp içine girip bir sandalyeye oturdu.

Su Ak VeKo Ad Ve Ko

Excursus on the converb in Manchu

Since we do not want to focus on the following topic but also do not want to hide them in a footnote, we decided for an excursus. We only want to demonstrate with a few examples of a third language how strong the converb system is in agglutinative languages. Thus the converb in -me demonstrates the simultaneity of two or more actions. „Tere niyalma uce i tule teme aliyambi“ Jener Mann steht draußen vor der Tür und wartet. That man is standing at the door and is waiting. The perfective converb ending in -fi makes the anteriority clear. „Tere sargan boo ci tuci fi hoton de genehe.“ This woman left (tucifi) the house and went to the town. The conditional-temporal converb is found in the word „ebuci“ in the following proverb: tasha be y lure urse arbun de ebuci ojuraku. He who rides the tiger can not dismount.

In order to underline the value of the converb in Mongolian, we only want to cite the kinds of converb which N. Poppe lists in the converb chapter: converbum terminale, converbum ab-temporale, converbum contemporale, converbum successivum, converbum finale etc. [9].

2.3. Further Participial Constructions

The turkish verbal noun in -dUQ shows a finished action. If an action in an otherwise equal context not finite, also the form of the infinitive suffix -ma/-me can be added to the verbal root and thus create a verbal noun which can be enlarged by a possessive suffix. In both cases a genitive suffix has to create the connection with the possessive suffix of the verbal noun. [5]

In Tamil in this sentence the verbal noun of present tense is applied. It is -atu in the positive form and -at- in the negative. Both languages ask for an addition of the case suffix. The short -u auslaut is given up in this case. [10]

Tam. Ravi iṇraiku iṅkē vantatu nallatu.

Ad Ve Pz

tür. Kemal in bugün buraya geldiği çok güzel

Ad Ve Pz

dt. Es ist sehr schön, dass Ravi/Kemal heute hierher gekommen ist.

²Turkish has loaned from Arabic the conjunction ve meaning „and“. It has such a

solid position in Turkish that during the language reform, started by the government in 1932, could not be thrown out.

en. It is very nice that Ravi/Kemal has come here today.

The Verb with the suffix -dUk functions here as a noun and carries a possessive suffix that binds it to Kemal. Tamil does not know such a construction. In Turkish such constructions are nowadays often substituted with the conjunction *ki* which was taken from Persian: *İyi ki Kemal bugün buraya geldi.*

Tam. Ravi *inraikku inkē vantatai nān pārttēn.*

Ad Ad Ve PzAk Pz VePr1Ps

tür. Kemal bug ün buraya geldiğini g örd üm.

Ad Ad VePzPoAk Ve Pr1Ps

dt. Ich sah, dass Ravi/Kemal heute hierher kam.

en. I saw that R/K came here today.

The verbal noun in the tamil sentence is *vantatu*; since the syllable *auslaut -u* is short it is given up when a case suffix is added which is here the accusative suffix *-ai*.

2.4. Integration of Direct Speech

Both languages have a means with which they can integrate a finite sentence, ie. A sentence with a conjugated verb into the overall structure. The embedded sentence does not take on any special marking but is identified by a form of the verb „to say“. In Tamil it is a form of the verb *en*, in Turkish it is the petrified participle in *-e*.

Tam. Kumār appā *inraiku varukiṛān enran.*

Ad Ve Pz

tür. Kemal baba bug ün gelecek diye s öyledi. [4]

dt. K. sagte, dass dass Vater heute kommt.

en. K. said that father will come today.

2.5. General Negation

tam. Nān amērikkāvukkup pōnatu illai.

Da Ve Pz Ng

tür. Ben hi ç Amerikaya gitmedim.

Da VeNg

dt. Ich bin nie nach Amerika (gegangen) gereist.

As the example above shows Turkish does not use a verb with an infinite suffix, but a suffix of the preterite with a personal suffix. The emphasis „never“ being expressed in tamil by a negated participle, is in Turkish expressed by the word „hiç“, meaning „not(hing) at all.

Tam. Nān *cinimavukkup pōvatu illai.*

Pp Sb Da Ve Pz Ng

tür. Ben sinemaya gitmem.[5]

Pp. Sb. Da VeNgPs

dt. Ich gehe nie ins Kino.

en. I never go to the movies.

As we saw clauses which in indoeuropean languages are introduced with the conjunctions „that, dass, que, at...“ are generated with a prticiples.

Tam. Avaṇaik *kātaikkup pōy pāl vaṇkac col.*

Pp Ak Sb Da VePz Sb Ve Ve

tür. Ona d ükkana gidip s üt alsın s öyle.

PpDa Sb Da VeKo VeIm

dt. Sage ihm, dass er in den Laden gehen und Milch kaufen soll.

en. Tell him to go to the shop and buy milk.

Tam. Nērru uṇ vītṭukku vantavaṇ yaru?

Ad Sb Da Ve Pz Qu

tür. D ün evine gelen kimdi?

Ad. SbDa VePz Qu

dt. Wer war der, der gestern zu dir nach hause kam?

en. Who was that who came to your home yesterday?

Even if the turkish sentence is much shorter than the tamil one, the syntax of both sentences corresponds to each other almost completely.

3. Syntactic Differences

As mentioned in the abstract we would like to come back to syntax assymilarities between both languages in order to contradict and prove that agglutinative languages do have the same syntax throughout.

The simplest example are questions. Both languages have a question marker³[2]. In Tamil it is the long *-a* after the questioned form. In Turkish it is the syllable *-mU*, which in my eyes can be considered a questioned suffix.[5]

Tam. Nān uḷḷē varalāmā?

Pp Ad Ve Qu

tür. İçine girebilir miyim?

Ad Ve Qu

dt. Darf ich hereinkommen?

en. May I come in?

The following example sentences were only written in order to support my contradicting some linguists who, hearing of my little project, held the opinion that syntax between agglutinative languages anyway is corresponding to each other because of their common system. Here we look at some sentences which prove the opposite.

Tamil has a set of impersonal verbs which has no similarity in Turkish.

Tam. Enṇakku antap pustakam piṭikkum.

Pp Da Ad Sb Ip.

Tür. Ben bu kitabı çok beğeniyorum.

Pp Ad Sb Ad Ve

dt. Mir gef ält dieses Buch sehr.

en. I like this book very much.

tam. Enṇakku antap pustakam piṭikkātu.

Ip. Ng.

Tür. Ben bu kitabı beğenmem.

Ve Ng Ps

dt. Ich mag dieses Buch nicht.

en. I do not like this book.

Tam. Enṇakku intak katai puriyum.

³The turkish dialect of Cyprus is an example for an agglutinative language not using a question marker in questions. A question is marked by a rising voice at the

end of the question. This is an influence from Greek.

Pp Da Ad SuAk Ve
tür. Bu öyküyü anlıyorum.
Ad Su Ak Ve Ps
dt. Ich verstehe diese Geschichte.
en. I understand this story.
tam. Ennakku intak katai puriyatu.
Ng
tür. Bu öyküyü anlamıyorum.
Ng
dt. Ich verstehe diese Geschichte nicht.
en. I do not understand this story.

Abbreviations

Ad	Adverb
Ac	Accusative
Da	Dative
Hi	Hiatus
In	Infinitive
Is	Instrumental
Co	Converb
Ge	Genitive
Lo	Locative
Pl	Plural
Po	Possessiv suffix
Pr	Preterite
Pp	Personalpronoun
Ps	Present tense
Pc	Participle
Sb	Subject
Su	Substantive
Ve	Verb

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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