

Malayalam (Namboodiri Dialect)

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Malayalam (മലയാളം /malaja:lam/; ISO 639) is a Dravidian language (Southern branch) spoken by over 33 million people in India, predominantly in Kerala (Lewis, Simmons & Fenning 2013). The language is diglossic, with the formal register used in written media and orally in formal settings. Colloquial Malayalam, for which there is no standard orthography, varies by region and social community (Asher & Kumari 1997). The speech illustrated below is representative of the variety spoken by the Namboodiri subcaste of Brahmins in and around Kochi, a city in central Kerala. The Namboodiri subcaste was traditionally a land-owning priestly class, and until relatively recently, the community was very insular. Consequently, the dialect differed from standard Malayalam as it is spoken today; this is discussed in some detail in U. Namboodiripad (1989, personal communication).

The recordings were made in San Diego by a female native speaker born and raised near Kochi. Although the variety of Malayalam illustrated here is colloquial, the citation forms are usually found in the formal register as well. The transcribed passage, on the other hand, contains many colloquialisms not found in the formal register, but they are representative of the variety of Malayalam illustrated here.

The transcriptions are phonemic, comprising only the symbols included in the consonant and vowel charts. Details regarding the phonetic realization of several phonemes are discussed in the text, with phonetic transcriptions of the example words provided. The Malayalam orthography is included for the citation words as well as for the passage. In cases where words are non-standard in the formal register (and therefore are usually not written), the Malayalam orthography represents the formal register.

Consonants

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Lamino-postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b p ^h (b ^h)		ṭ ḍ ṭ ^h (ḍ ^h)	t		t̠ d̠ t̠ ^h (d̠ ^h)		k g k ^h (g ^h)	
Affricate					ṭʃ̣ ḍʒ̣ ṭ ^h ʃ̣ ^h (ḍ ^h ʒ̣ ^h)				
Nasal		m	ɳ	n		ɳ̠	ɲ	ŋ (ŋ ^j)	
Trill				r					
Tap or flap				ɾ					
Fricative		(f)	ṣ		ʃ̣	ʂ̠			h
Approximant		ʋ				ɻ̠	j		
Lateral approximant				l		ɻ̠			

- /p/ /pa:ʃam/ പഴം ‘banana, fruit’
- /p^h/ /p^halam/ ഫലം ‘positive result’
- /b/ /balam/ ബലം ‘strength, sturdiness’
- /b^h/ /b^hajam/ ഭയം ‘fear’
- /ṭ/ /ṭala/ തല ‘head’
- /ṭ/ /pa:ʃa/ പത ‘froth, bubbles’
- /ṭ^h/ /ka:ʃ^ha/ കഥ ‘story’
- /ḍ/ /da:ʃam/ ദളം ‘petal, leaf’
- /ḍ^h/ /ḍ^hanu/ ധനു ‘fifth month of the Malayalam calendar’
- /t/ /ente/ എൻ്റെ ‘mine’
- /t̠/ /u:ʃra:ʃam/ ഉത്രാടം ‘twenty-first day of month’
- /t̠^h/ /pa:ʃ^ham/ പാഠം ‘lesson’
- /d̠/ /ma:ʃam/ മാധം ‘madam, a type of palm tree used to make fishing hooks’
- /d̠^h/ /ga:ʃ^ham/ ഗാഢം ‘fervor’
- /k/ /ka:ʃi/ കണി ‘first sight of the new year’
- /k^h/ /k^hani/ കനി ‘cave, mine’
- /g/ /ga:ʃapa:ʃi/ ഗണപതി ‘Ganapati (a name)’
- /g^h/ /g^hanam/ ഘനം ‘weight’
- /ṭʃ̣/ /ṭʃ̣a:ʃam/ ചന്ത ‘market’
- /ṭ^hʃ̣^h/ /ṭ^hʃ̣^handam/ ചന്ദനം ‘desire, opinion’
- /ḍʒ̣/ /ḍʒ̣a:ʃam/ ജട ‘hair tangle’
- /ḍʒ̣^h/ /ḍʒ̣^ha:ʃam/ രട ‘a medicinal plant’ (‘stonebreaker’)
- /ʃ̣/ /re:ʃam/ രസം ‘a watery tomato dish’
- /ʃ̣/ /ve:ʃam/ വേഷം ‘is adept’
- /ʃ̣/ /ve:ʃam/ വേഷം ‘poison’
- /h/ /maha:ʃ/ മഹള ‘daughter of the family’

Obstruents

Malayalam obstruents primarily contrast six places of articulation: bilabial, dental, alveolar, postalveolar, retroflex, and velar. The postalveolar affricates /t̠ʃ̠/, /t̠ʃ̠^h/, /d̠ʒ̠/, and /d̠ʒ̠^h/ have been reported to be palatalized or palatal plosives (U. Namboodiripad 1989, personal

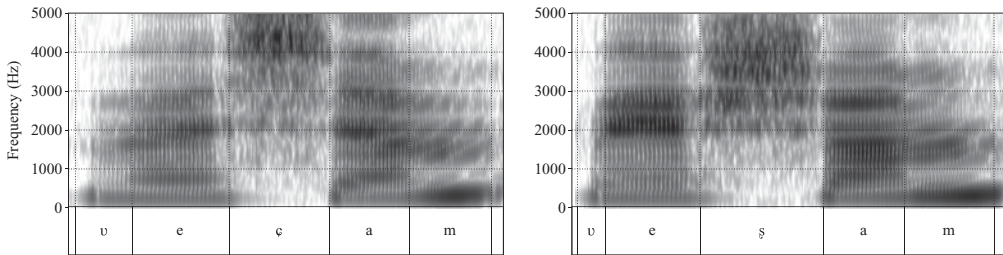


Figure 1 Spectrograms showing /ç/ vs. /ʃ/. The latter is characterized by stronger low-frequency energy.

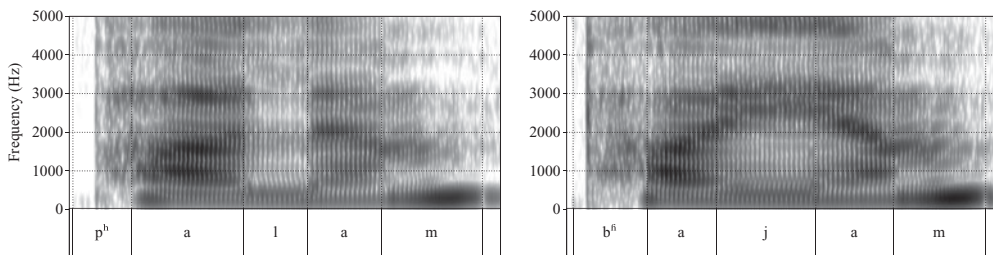


Figure 2 Comparison of /pʰ/ vs. /bʰ/. For our speaker, both are voiceless aspirated plosives.

communication; Punnoose 2010), and Asher & Kumari (1997) say they are lightly affricated. The distinction between /ç/ in /veçam/ ‘is adept’ and /ʃ/ in /veʃam/ ‘poison’ is shown spectrographically in Figure 1. The energy concentration for /ç/ is strongest above the fourth formant of the adjacent vowels (around 3750 Hz, center of gravity = 4219 Hz); for /ʃ/ it is strongest above the third formant of the adjacent vowels (around 2500 Hz, center of gravity = 4997 Hz). However, this contrast is neutralized in some varieties (Asher & Kumari 1997: 414). Sometimes /ç/ is reported as /ʃ/ (Punnoose 2010), whereas Asher & Kumari (1997: 414) say that the two realizations are in free variation. In our recordings, the high center of gravity for /ç/ (see Figure 1) suggests that transcription of the sound as /ʃ/ would be inappropriate for our speaker.

Voicing and aspiration in plosives are usually considered orthogonally contrastive in most varieties of Malayalam (except at the alveolar place of articulation, which has only /t/), including the Namboodiri variety illustrated here. However, voiced aspirated plosives are often voiceless in casual speech (U. Namboodiripad, personal communication), and this is also true for our speaker (as seen in Figure 2). Although our speaker did not produce voiced aspirated plosives, we nonetheless include them in parentheses in the phoneme chart because they are attested for some speakers of Namboodiri Malayalam – including the first author, who is also a native speaker.

The absence of voiced aspirated plosives has been noted in other dialects as well (Velayudhan 1971, S. Kumari 1972, Valentine 1976, Mohanan & Mohanan 1984, Asher & Kumari 1997). This variation is perhaps a reflection of the two major influences on the grammar of Malayalam: that of Dravidian and Sanskrit. With regard to obstruents, only the voiceless unaspirated plosives are native to Dravidian, whereas aspirated and voiced obstruents are Sanskrit influences on Malayalam, and more variably produced by speakers (Asher & Kumari 1997: 422).

As is common in other Dravidian languages (e.g. Tamil; Keane 2004), voiceless unaspirated singleton plosives are usually realized as voiced between vowels and after nasals, and may be further weakened to voiced fricatives or approximants (Asher & Kumari 1997). For example, in the word എന്തെ /ente/ ‘mine’, the voiceless alveolar plosive /t/ is produced as [d], such that the word may be transcribed phonetically as [ende]. This contrasts with voiced dental [d] in എന്ത /eṅṅa/ ‘what?’, phonetically [eṅṅa].

Words ending in either a short vowel or a sonorant may optionally be followed by a word-final glottal plosive. Word-final aspiration is present orthographically in certain Sanskrit words, but we do not see phonetic evidence for it in this variety of Malayalam. For example, in our recordings both ᳵ᳚᳚ / $\text{᳚᳚}^{\text{(h)}}$ / ‘salute, bow down to’ and ᳵ᳚᳚ / ᳚᳚ / ‘pride, aloofness’ are realized with word-final [aʔ] as [᳚᳚ʔ] and [᳚᳚ʔ], indicating that orthographic ‘word-final aspiration’ does not block the occurrence of word-final glottal plosives.

Many obstruents have limited distributions. Marginal /f/ is rare (represented orthographically by ᳚᳚ / p^{h} /), and is used by only some speakers in loanwords, where it can also be in free variation with [p^h], [p], and [ϕ], e.g. ᳵ᳚᳚ / ka:pi / ‘coffee’ may be pronounced as [kɔ:fi] (with a retracted and raised [ɔ:] for the vowel /a:/) or (more frequently in the Namboodiri dialect) as [ka:pi] (Asher & Kumari 1997: 414). Additionally, the contrast between /t/ and /d/ is marginal: neither sound appears word-finally; word-medially, both are voiced (and usually realized phonetically as [ɽ]).

Sonorants

Like obstruents, singleton nasals also contrast at six places of articulation. However, instead of a postalveolar nasal, there is a palatal /ɲ/. Orthographically, dental /᳚/ and alveolar /᳚/ are written with the same letter ᳚ . We illustrate some place of articulation contrasts for nasals with geminates, because they provide the most minimal set. (For singleton vs. geminate contrasts, see ‘Geminates’ section below.)

There is a seventh contrastive place of articulation for geminate nasals, which we transcribe as /ɲʲ/. Its functional load is very low; it mostly appears in a finite set of semantically-related words pertaining to gourds, e.g. ᳵ᳚᳚᳚᳚ / $\text{ma:᳚᳚}^{\text{ʲ}}$ / ‘squash, pumpkin’, ᳵ᳚᳚᳚᳚᳚ / $\text{kumɸ᳚᳚}^{\text{ʲ}}$ / ‘white gourd’, ᳵ᳚᳚᳚᳚᳚᳚ / $\text{pi:ɸ᳚᳚}^{\text{ʲ}}$ / ‘ridge gourd’. Its place of articulation is controversial, having been described as ‘lamino-palatal’ (Asher & Kumari 1997) or ‘palatal’, in contrast with /ɲ/, which has been described as ‘palato-alveolar’ (Mohanan 1986). Orthographically, /ɲʲ/ is written with ᳚᳚ , the letter corresponding to /ɲ/, but compare ᳵ᳚᳚᳚᳚ / ma:᳚ / (phonetically [ma:᳚ə]) ‘wiltedness, tiredness’ and ᳵ᳚᳚᳚᳚᳚ / $\text{ma:᳚᳚}^{\text{ʲ}}$ / ‘squash, pumpkin’. The nasal formants of /ɲ/ vs. /ɲʲ/ are at similar frequencies, but vowels adjacent to /ɲʲ/ are notably palatalized (see Figure 3a). The sound likewise contrasts with /ɲ/: compare ᳵ᳚᳚᳚᳚᳚ / ma:᳚ / ‘turmeric’ (phonetically [ma:᳚ə]). The nasal formants for /ɲ/ versus /ɲʲ/ differ, and vowels adjacent to the latter show convergence of the second and third formants (the ‘velar pinch’) around 3000 Hz, characteristic of velar consonants (see Figure 3b). We do not consider /ɲʲ/ a velar–palatal nasal cluster [ɲɲ], because for the first author (a native speaker of this variety of Malayalam), its production does not involve anterior movement of the tongue body over the course of the nasal. Instead, the tongue body is against both the velum and hard palate, unlike /ɲ/, which is solely palatal, and /ɲ/, which is solely velar. Further, as seen in Figure 3, /ɲʲ/ is produced with steady nasal formants, suggesting that it is also not a nasal+/j/ cluster. It is possible that this sound forms part of a ‘clear’ (i.e. palatalized) set of nasal sounds, which would also include /ɲ/, similar to the ‘clear’ set of liquids found in the language (see discussion below).

Aside from the seven nasals, there are five liquids in Malayalam (Punnoose, Khattab & Al-Tamini 2013, Scobbie, Punnoose & Khattab 2013): /r l ɻ ɻʲ/. Punnoose et al. (2013) distinguish the liquids by place, manner, as well as quality: /r l ɻ/ are ‘clear,’ having a palatalized quality with a raised second formant in adjacent vowels, whereas /r ɻʲ/ are ‘dark’ and lack palatalization. For example, Asher & Kumari (1997: 418) report that the tap /r/ has a ‘distinct palatal resonance’; similarly, Jiang (2010) labels the sound as /rʲ/. Though auditorily weak for our speaker, the palatalized quality in /r/ can be seen in Figure 4, which shows spectrograms of ᳵ᳚᳚᳚᳚ / maram / ‘tree’ versus ᳵ᳚᳚᳚᳚᳚᳚ / mara / ‘covering’. The second formant in /a/ rises above 2000 Hz adjacent to /r/, but not adjacent to /rʲ/.

Aside from its palatalized quality, there is some debate as to the manner of articulation of /r/. Ladefoged & Maddieson (1996: 222, after Ladefoged, Cochran & Disner 1997) say that some speakers produce /r/ as a trill that is slightly more advanced than /r/. However, our

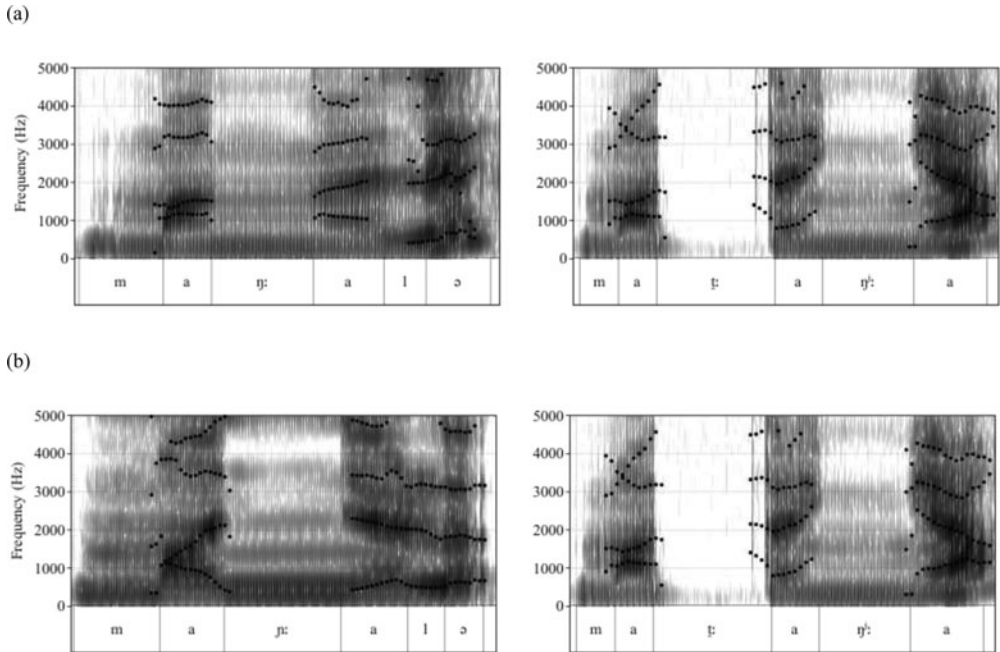


Figure 3 Nasal formants. (a) Comparison of /ŋ:/ vs. /ɲ^j:/ . Both /ŋ:/ vs. /ɲ^j:/ are characterized by steady nasal formants at similar frequencies, but note the higher F2 values for the /a/ adjacent to /ɲ^j:/, suggesting palatalization. (b) Comparison of /ɲ:/ vs. /ɲ^j:/ . The nasal formants differ, and /a/ adjacent to /ɲ^j:/ shows a velar pinch between the second and third formants at around 3000 Hz.

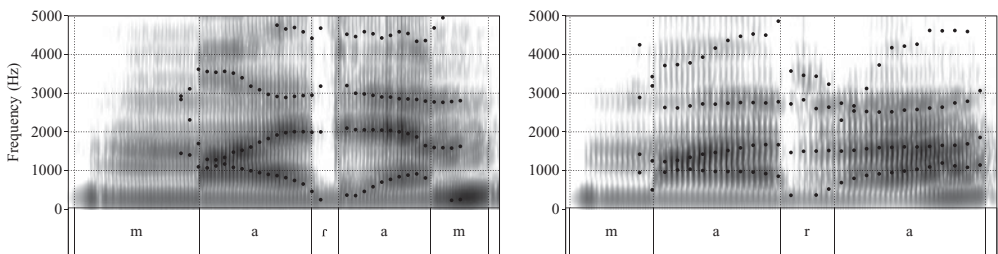


Figure 4 Comparisons of formants transitions for /a/ adjacent to /r/ vs. /ɾ/. Note the higher second formant target for /ɾ/, suggesting a palatalized quality like [r^j].

speaker consistently produces /r/ as a tap. In contrast, /r/ is often very short and accompanied by frication, phonetically [ɾ] or [r̥].

The place and manner of the retroflex central approximant /ɻ/ has been subject to much debate. Kumari (1972: 27–28) calls it a ‘voiced retroflex palatal fricativised lateral’, whereas Asher & Kumari (1997: 419) call it a ‘voiced sublamino-palatal approximant’. Because it has been reported to have frication (Kumari 1972), the sound is traditionally symbolized as /z/ (Asher & Kumari 1997, Punnoose et al. 2013), but in our data this sound is always an approximant. Indeed, in an ultrasound study, Scobbie et al. (2013) found that /ɻ/ is a retroflex approximant with an advanced tongue root and raised tongue body, as well as a lateral release. Punnoose et al. (2013) transcribe the sound narrowly as advanced and palatalized [ɻ^j]. This phonetic transcription accords well with the recordings in our illustration: /ɻ/ has a palatalized quality (a raising of the second formant) similar to that found for the /ɾ/ (see Figure 4).

In addition to the liquids, there are two additional central approximants: /ʋ/ and /j/. The labiodental approximant /ʋ/ may be realized as [ʋ], [v], [w], or [β] (Asher & Kumari 1997).

/m:/	/kam:i/	കമ്മി	‘shortage’
/n:/	/paŋ:i/	പന്നി	‘pig’
/n:/	/kan:i/	കന്നി	‘virgin’
/ŋ:/	/kaŋ:i/	കണ്ണി	‘link of a chain’
/ɲ:/	/kaɲ:i/	കഞ്ഞി	‘rice soup’
/ɳ:/	/t̪aɳ:i/	തങ്ങി	‘held fast’
/ŋʰ:/	/maɳ:anʰ:a/	മത്തങ്ങ	‘squash, pumpkin’
/r/	/maram/	മരം	‘tree’
/r/	/mara/	മറ	‘covering’
/ɻ/	/maɻa/	മഴ	‘rain’
/l/	/t̪a:lam/	താലം	‘arrangement of items used to welcome people’
/l/	/t̪a:l̪am/	താളം	‘rhythm, beat’
/ʋ/	/pavan/	പവന്	‘8 grams of gold’
/j/	/d̪aja/	ദയ	‘care, adoration’

Geminate consonants

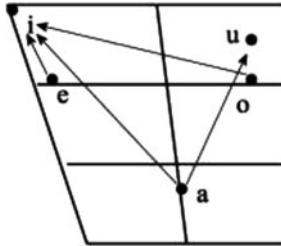
According to Asher & Kumari (1997: 432–435), there is a length contrast for all consonants except /f ʃ h r ɻ/. However, voiced geminate plosives and approximants are rare. Not all singleton–geminate pairs appear to exist in the Namboodiri dialect described here; thus, we include only some of the pairs reported to exist in Malayalam. As with phonemic singleton voiced aspirated plosives, the geminate counterparts are devoiced in our speaker’s recordings.

The geminate /t:/ is usually slightly aspirated and palatalized (Asher & Kumari 1997, Jiang 2010). Voiced unaspirated geminate plosives occur mostly in loanwords. Between vowels, dental /ŋ/ and palatal /ɲ/ are always geminated.

/p/	/upaka:ram/	ഉപകാരം	‘favor’	/p:/	/t̪up:a/	തൂപ്പ	‘spit’
/pʰ/	/kapʰam/	കഫം	‘phlegm’	/pʰ:/	/apʰ:an/	അപ്പന്	‘father’s younger brother’
/b/	/abu/	അബു	‘Abu (a name)’	/b:/	/kɻab:/	ക്ലബ്ബ്	‘club’
/t̪/	/koɻi/	കൊതി	‘craving’	/t̪:/	/koɻ:i/	കൊതതി	‘pecked, a hoe-like tool’
/d̪ʱ/	/ba:d̪ʱa/	ബാധ	‘disease’	/d̪ʱ:/	/ɕrad̪ʱ:a/	ശ്രദ്ധ	‘attention’
/t̪/	/kuɻi/	കുടി	‘drink’	/t̪:/	/pati:/	പറ്റി	‘was able to’
/d̪/	/na:d̪i/	നാഡി	‘vein’	/t̪:/	/kuɻ:i/	കുട്ടി	‘kid’
/d̪ʱ/	/mu:d̪ʱan/	മൂഡന്	‘simpleton’	/d̪:/	/mid̪:i/	മിഡ്ഡി	‘skirt’
/t̪ɕ/	/paɻɕa/	പച്ച	‘cooking’	/d̪ʱ:/	/vid̪ʱ:i/	വിഡ്ഡി	‘fool’
/d̪ɕ/	/ɕailad̪ɕa/	സൈലജ	‘Sailaja (a name)’	/t̪ɕ:/	/paɻɕ:a/	പച്ച	‘green’
/k/	/akale/	അകലെ	‘far away’	/d̪ɕ:/	/lad̪ɕ:a/	ലജ്ജ	‘shyness’
/g/	/va:ga/	വാഗ	‘a tree’	/k:/	/ak:ara/	അക്കര	‘farther shoreline’
/m/	/uma/	ഉമ	‘Uma (a name)’	/g:/	/bag:/	ബഗ്ഗ്	‘bug’
/ŋ/	/ŋiram/	നിറം	‘color’	/m:/	/um:a/	ഉമ്മ	‘kiss’
/n/	/mini/	മിനി	‘Mini (a name)’	/ŋ:/	/paŋ:i/	പന്നി	‘pig’
/ŋ/	/kaŋi/	കണി	‘first sight of the new year’	/n:/	/mini/	മിന്നി	‘glimmered, flashed’
/ɲ/	/ɲaŋt̪/	ഞണ്ട	‘crab’	/ŋ:/	/kaŋ:i/	കണ്ണി	‘link of a chain’
/ɳ/	/ma:ɳa/	മാങ്ങ	‘mango’	/ɲ:/	/maɲ:a/	മഞ്ഞ	‘yellow’
/s/	/ma:nasam/	മാനസം	‘about the mind’	/ɳ:/	/maɳ:a/	മങ്ങ	‘is wilting’
				/s/	/manas:/	മനസ്സ്	‘mind’

/ç/	/paçə/	പശ	‘paste’	/ç:/	/o[ɑç:a/	ഒളശ്ശ	‘Olassa (place name)’
/j/	/va:ja/	വായ	‘mouth’	/j:/	/vaj:a/	വയ്യാ	‘tired’
/l/	/vala/	വല	‘net’	/l:/	/val:a/	വല്ല	‘some, whichever’
/ʎ/	/t̪aʎa/	തള	‘child’s foot-bangle’	/ʎ:/	/t̪aʎ:a/	തളള	‘old crone’

Vowels



There are six vowels in Malayalam: /a i e o u/, and [ə], shown in the vowel quadrilateral based on data from the speaker as well as the first author (Namboodiripad 2014). Of these, /a i e o u/ also contrast in length (see below). On the other hand, [ə], though phonetically distinct from the other five vowels, is not phonemic; it only occurs word-medially or word-finally: word-medially, instances of [ə] derive from /a/ or /u/ reduction, and word-finally, [ə] is viewed as a post-lexical ‘enunciative’ vowel after some consonants (Valentine 1976, Mohanan 1986, Asher & Kumari 1997, Namboodiripad, Garellek, & Baković 2015; see Keane 2004 for similar discussion of schwas in Tamil).

Short /a/ is often realized as raised [ʌ] or [ə] in unstressed syllables, while it may also be elided in fast speech (Asher & Kumari 1997: 440). Both /a/ and /a:/ may also vary in tongue advancement, ranging from [æ] to [ɑ]. Short /o/ does not occur word-finally (Asher & Kumari 1997, Punnoose 2011). Asher & Kumari (1997: 420–421) also list /æ/, but this sound occurs only in a few English loanwords and may alternate with /a:/, e.g. ബാങ്ക് /ba:ŋk/, phonetically [bæŋgə] or (more commonly in the Namboodiri dialect) [ba:ŋgə] ‘bank.’ Illustrative examples of the vowels follow:

Word-initial

/a/	/aʎa/	അട	‘a steamed dessert’
/i/	/iʎa/	ഇട	‘put’
/e/	/eʎa/	എട	‘dude’
/o/	/oʎi/	ഒടി	‘crotch’
/u/	/uʎane/	ഉടനെ	‘right away’

Word-medial

/a/	/vaʎi/	വടി	‘stick’
/i/	/viʎi/	വിടി	‘let go’
/e/	/veʎi/	വെടി	‘a fart, a shot’
/o/	/poʎi/	പൊടി	‘powder’
/u/	/muʎi/	മുടി	‘hair’

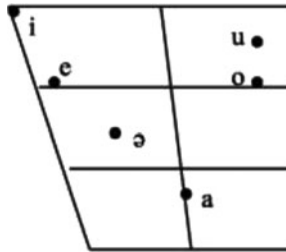
Word-final

/a/	/caŋka/	ശങ്ക	‘indecision’
/e/	/laŋke/	ലങ്കെ	‘to Lanka’
/i/	/paraŋki/	പറങ്കി	‘Portuguese, a fragrant paste’
[ə]	[caŋkə]	ശക്	‘conch shell’
/u/	/caŋku/	ശങ്ക	‘Shanku (a name)’
/o/	/caŋko/	ശങ്കൊ	‘Shanku-VOCATIVE’

Long vs. short vowels

/a/ /kalam/ കലം	‘earthenware pot’	/a:/ /ka:lam/ കാലം	‘time, season’
/e/ /eri/ എരി	‘throw’	/e:/ /e:ri/ ഏരി	‘higher degree’
/i/ /vit/ വിട്	‘let go’	/i:/ /vi:t/ വീട്	‘house’
/o/ /koṭi/ കൊടി	‘flag’	/o:/ /ko:tʃi/ കോടി	‘brand new’
/u/ /uma/ ഉമ	‘Uma (a name)’	/u:/ /u:ma/ ഊമ	‘a mute person’

Diphthongs



There are four diphthongs in Malayalam: /ai ei oi au/. The diphthongs /ai au/ are marked orthographically (ഐ and ഔ, respectively), whereas /ei oi/ are spelled with short /e/ (എ) or /o/ (ഒ) followed by /j/ (യ്). The diphthongs /ai au/ are usually realized with a raised nucleus as [ai̯ au̯], respectively.

/ai/ /kaij:aṭi/ കൈയ്യിടി	‘applause’
/oi/ /koitʃ:/ കായ്തത്ത്	‘harvest’
/ei/ /peitʃu/ പെയ്തൂ	‘shower down’
/au/ /gauri/ ഗൗരി	‘Gauri (a name)’

Stress

Mohanani (1986) states that stress in Malayalam is predictable and not contrastive: it falls on the first syllable of the word, unless the first syllable has a short vowel and the second syllable has a long vowel, in which case stress falls on the second syllable (Mohanani 1986, Broselow, Chen & Huffman 1997). For example, സമ്മതം /sam:aṭam/ ‘agreement’ has stress on the first syllable, whereas സമ്മാനം /sam:a:nam/ ‘gift’ has stress on the second syllable because the first vowel is short and the second is long. However, Terzenbach (2011) found that Malayalam listeners perceive all word-initial vowels to be stressed, regardless of the following vowel’s length. Moreover, even if word-medial long vowels are phonetically more prominent than initial short ones, they do not cause a perceptual shift in stress from the first syllable (Terzenbach 2011). To conclude, more work is needed to determine if lexical stress really exists in Malayalam, and, if so, what governs its position.

Transcription of recorded passage

Broad phonemic transcription

e:tovam ad^hikam ɕakṭi | arka:ɳe: va:ɖik:ja:jiru:u |
 Ńu:rjanum vaṭakenka:tum ṭam:il || a: Ńamajaṭ: | b^hu:mijil oru
 Ńanja:Ńi || me:il poṭap: ṭe:ti: naṭak:a:jiru:u || Ńu:rjan para:u
 || e: vaṭakenka:te || nam:ak: ip:o ṭan:e kaṇḍpiḍik:jam | arak:a
 e:tovam ku:ṭuṭil ɕakṭi en: || a: naṭakaṇa a:lute me:ṭ: ṭe:ti:ja

poṭap: | a:rka: ma:t:a:mpat:a | aja:l̩a:ŋ e:t:om ɕak̩tima:n || ka:t:
 ɽanik:j pat:anaɽ:are ɕak̩ti:l̩u:ɽi || ka:t:inte ɕak̩ti ku:ɽijap:o |
 ſanja:ʃi poṭap: on̩:uŋku:ɽi muruk:i ɽe:u:ɽi || korat̩ɕ ka:ɽjap:o
 || ka:t:in u:ɽi u:ɽi maɽu:ɽu || pin:e ſu:rjante u:ɽajiru:ɽu || ve:l̩
 koŋɽ ɽe:u:ɽ ſahik:j an vaj:a:te a:jap:o | ſanja:ʃi poṭap: ma:t:i ||
 aŋane | ſu:rjan avanonte ɕak̩ti ɽe:l̩jeɽu ||

Orthographic version

ഏറ്റവും അധികം ശക്തി ആർകാണെന്ന് വാദിക്കുകയുണ്ടെന്നു സൂര്യനും വടകെൻകാറ്റും തമ്മിൽ. ആ സമയത്ത്, ഭൂമിയിൽ ഒരു സന്യാസി മേൽപൊതപ്പ് ചുറ്റി നടക്കുകയുണ്ടെന്നു. സൂര്യൻ പറഞ്ഞു, “ഏറ്റവും വടകെൻകാറ്റേ, നമ്മക്ക് ഇപ്പോ തന്നെ കണ്ഡപിഡിക്കും, അതുകൊണ്ട് ഏറ്റവും കൂടുതൽ ശക്തി എന്ന്. ആ നടക്കുന്ന ആളുടെ മേൽ ചുറ്റിയ പൊതപ്പ് ആർകാ മാറ്റാൻ, അയാളാണ് ഏറ്റവും ശക്തിമാൻ.” കാറ്റ് തനിക്കു പറ്റാത്തതെ ശക്തിയല്ലേ. കാറ്റിന്റെ ശക്തി കീഴിയപോളെ, സന്യാസി പൊതപ്പ് ഒന്നുകൂടി മുറുകി ചുറ്റി. കൊണ്ട് കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോളെ, കാറ്റിന് ഉറപ്പി ഉറപ്പി മടുത്തു. പിന്നെ സൂര്യന്റെ ഉറപ്പിയിരുന്നു. വേൽകൊണ്ഡ് ചുട്ട് സഹിക്കുന്ന് വയ്യാതെ ആയപ്പോളെ, സന്യാസി പൊതപ്പ് മാറ്റി. അങ്ങനെ, സൂര്യൻ അവനൊന്നു ശക്തി തെളിയിച്ചു.

English translation

The Sun and the North Wind were betting on who was the strongest. At the same time, down on earth, a monk wrapped in a shawl was walking. The Sun said: “Hey North Wind! We can find out who is the strongest right now! Whichever one of us can remove the shawl wrapped around that man is the strongest!” The North Wind blew as hard as he could. As the wind’s strength grew, the monk wrapped the shawl around himself even tighter. After a while, the wind grew tired of blowing. Then, it was the sun’s turn. When the monk couldn’t take the heat of the sun any longer, he took off his shawl. That is how the sun proved his strength.

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