

## THE NOUN PHRASE

This chapter deals with the morphology (grammatical forms) of the noun phrase, or grammatical variations that take place when nominal elements are combined in various ways. It also treats the semantics of the noun system, especially case. Syntactic relations between noun phrases and other parts of the sentence are dealt with in the chapter on syntax (chapter four).

The noun phrase in Kannada, as in most Dravidian languages, is fairly simple in comparison with the verb phrase. Kannada has an indefinite article (but no definite article), adjectives (most of which are derived from nouns or verbs), and nouns of various sorts that take case endings and postpositions. Nouns may be distinguished for gender, "rationality," and number; and in some cases the noun phrase may contain pronouns, numerals, color terms, deictic particles ('this, that, which') and quantifiers ('many, some, all', etc.). These will all be covered in this chapter.

**2.1. Gender and "rationality."** Kannada third person nouns and pronouns are distinguished for gender; nouns referring to biologically female beings are feminine in gender, beings that are biologically male are masculine in gender, and nouns that are not thought to be "rational" (capable of thought) are "nonrational" or simply neuter. There

are a few exceptions to this distinction, as some "higher" animals, gods, and some other spirits are included in the category of "rational" beings, and sometimes young children and females are treated as "nonrational."<sup>1</sup>

Among the category of rational beings, masculines and feminines may be marked with the masculine marker *-(a)nu* or the feminine markers *-(a)Lu*, *-i*, or *-e* (although *i* and *e* are not always to be construed as feminine markers, as indicated below), but not all masculine and feminine nouns are so marked. Pronouns that refer to masculine and feminine nouns do have the person-number-gender (PNG) forms *-anu* and *-aLu* respectively (see 2.5).

Masculine		Feminine	
<i>huDuga(nu)</i>	'boy'	<i>huDugi</i>	'girl'
<i>sevaka(nu)</i>	'male servant'	<i>sevaki, sevakaLu</i>	'maidservant'
<i>tamma(nu)</i>	'younger brother'	<i>tangi</i>	'younger sister'
<i>aNNa(nu)</i>	'elder brother'	<i>akka</i>	'elder sister'
<i>maga(nu)</i>	'son'	<i>maga(Lu)</i>	'daughter'
		<i>heN(Da)ti</i>	'wife'
		<i>atte</i>	'aunt'
		<i>attige</i>	'elder brother's wife'
		<i>sose</i>	'daughter-in-law'

Note that although alternate forms *sevaki* and *sevakaLu* are given for 'maidservant', *sevaki* is the preferred form. Spencer gives a paradigm for *sevakaLu* in LK but then states that "*sevaki* is the more correct of the two forms" (1950:46-47). The form *akka* 'elder sister', which one might expect to have the feminine ending *-Lu*, does not have it. Spencer actually gives the paradigm of this form in LK with a masculine nominative in *-nu*, that is, *akkanu*, but elsewhere the form is listed as just *akka*.

**2.2. Number.** Kannada nouns are distinguished by two numbers, singular and plural. The singular has no particular distinguishing marker added. The plural marker is usually *-gaLu*, but there are some exceptions as noted below. Neuter nouns are only optionally marked for plural, so an unmarked noun may be either singular or plural in meaning, depending on the context or the intent of the speaker.

