


EYSTEIN DAHL

Early Vedic

Morphology – Part 3: Verbal Morphology 1



Roadmap

- Typological characteristics
- Formal categories
- Morphological processes
- Person, number, voice
- Four-stem tense/aspect system
- Mood formation
- Voice formation

Typological characteristics

- Predominantly synthetic character
- Fusional morphology
- Formal distinction between finite forms, verbal adjectives, verbal nouns and adverbs
- Finite and adjectival forms showing inflectional portmanteau suffixes forming complex paradigms
- Verbal adverbs and verbal nouns have no inflectional morphology, appearing in one form only

Formal categories

- Distinction between finite and non-finite verb forms
- Finite verb forms express five categories
 - Tense/aspect – present, aorist, perfect, future
 - Modality – indicative, subjunctive, optative, imperative, injunctive
 - Voice – active, middle, passive
 - Person – 1st, 2nd, 3rd
 - Number – singular, plural, dual
- Non-finite verb forms comprise nominal forms, some of which express voice and number

Morphological processes

- Zero derivation: present stem *ad-* from the verb *AD-* ‘eat’
- Suffixation: present stem *car-a-* from the verb *CAR-* ‘move’
- Infixation, present stem *yu-na-j-* from the verb *YOJ-* ‘yoke’
- Reduplication, e.g. perfect stem *ta-tard-* from the verb *TARD-* ‘split’
- Apophony/Ablaut, present stem *as-/s-* from the verb *AS-* ‘be’

Person, number and voice

- Person, number, and (active and middle) voice expressed by endings – portmanteau suffixes added to the stem.
- Four sets of endings: Primary, secondary, perfect, imperative
- Present indicative formed by adding primary endings to the present stem

1SG.ACT *yājā-mi* vs. 3SG.ACT *yāja-ti* vs. 1PL.ACT *yājā-masi* vs. 1PL.MID *yājā-mahe* from *YAJ-* ‘sacrifice’

- Endings also used to distinguish certain mood forms to some extent

Four-stem tense/aspect system

- Aspect/tense expressed by so-called primary or basic stems
- Four tense/aspect stems in Vedic, as illustrated by the verb *B^hAV^l*- ‘become, happen’
 - present stem *b^hav-a-*
 - aorist stem *b^hū-*
 - perfect stem *ba-b^hūv-*
 - future stem *b^havi-ṣya-*
- These stems basis for subparadigms of the verb, comprising finite verb forms and verbal adjectives

The present, future and perfect indicative

- The present and future indicative select primary endings
present 1sg. act. *yājā-mi* 2sg.act. *yāja-si* vs. 3sg. act. *yāja-ti*
future 1sg. act. *kariṣyā-mi* vs. 2sg.act. *kariṣyá-si*, 3sg. act.
kariṣyá-ti
- The perfect indicative selects perfect endings
1sg. act. *bab^húv-a* vs. 2sg.act. *bab^hú-t^ha* 3sg.act. *bab^húv-a*
1sg. act. *cakár-a* vs. 2sg.act. *cakár-t^ha* 3sg.act. *cakár-a*

Past tenses

- The Vedic past tenses, i.e. the imperfect, aorist and pluperfect select secondary endings as well as a preverbal affix *a-*, the so-called augment

imperfect 1sg. act. **á-b^hava-m** vs. 3sg. act. **á-b^hava-t**

aorist indicative 1sg. act. **á-b^huv-am** vs. 3sg. **á-b^hū-t** from *B^hAV^l*- 'become'

pluperfect 1.sg.act. **á-cacaḥ-am** from *CAKṢ*- 'see'

Mood formation

- The injunctive mood is formed by adding secondary endings to the primary stem

Present injunctive 1 sg. act. *tákṣa-m*, 3 sg. act. *tákṣa-t*
from *TAKṢ-* ‘fashion, make’

Aorist injunctive 1sg. act. *kár-am*, 3sg. *kár* (< /kar-t/) from
KAR- ‘make, create’

Mood formation

- Optative and subjunctive mood are expressed by adding suffixes to the primary stems, forming secondary mood stems

present optative *b^have-* (*b^hava-ī-*), aorist optative *b^hū-yā-*

present subjunctive *b^havā-* (*b^hava-a-*), aorist subjunctive
b^huv-a- from *B^hAV'*- 'become'

Mood formation

- The optative is formed by adding secondary endings to the optative stem
present optative 2sg. act. *b^háve-s*, 3sg. act. *b^háve-t*
- The subjunctive is formed by adding primary or secondary endings to the subjunctive stem
present subjunctive 3sg. act. *b^hávā-ti* or *b^hávā-t*

Mood formation

- The imperative mood has special endings, expressing person, number, voice, and directive modality

Imperative 2sg active *stu-**hí*** ‘praise!’ from *STAV-* ‘praise’
vs. 2sg middle *trá-**sva*** from *TRĀ-* ‘protect’

Voice formation

- Three voice categories in Early Vedic:
 - Active
 - Middle
 - Passive

Voice formation – Active and middle

- Active and middle voice forms distinguished by different sets of endings
 - present 3.sg. act. *ája-ti* vs. mid. *ája-te* from *AJ-* ‘drive’
 - imperfect 3.sg. act. *átakṣa-t* vs. mid. *átakṣa-ta* from *TAKṢ-* ‘fashion, make’
 - present optative 1.pl. act. *b^háre-ma* vs. mid. *b^háre-mahi* from *B^hAR-* ‘carry, bear’

Voice formation - Passive

- Unclear to what extent Early Vedic has dedicated passive morphology
- A number of constructions conventionally labelled passive
 - A present 'passive' formed by the suffix *-yá-*
 - A (defective) aorist 'passive' formed from the root
 - A verbal adjective in *-tá-/-ná-* ('past passive participle' PPP)
 - A verbal adjective derived by the suffix *-ya-* (variants *-āyya-*, *-enya-*, *-tva-*) ('future passive participle', 'gerundive')
- Middle forms also sometimes with passive-like function

Voice formation

- Present passive formed by adding the suffix *-yá-* to the reduced form of the verb root.
uc-yá- from *VAC-* ‘speak’, *kri-yá-* from *KAR-* ‘make, create’
- Middle endings, indicative and non-indicative forms
present indicative 3sg. passive *ucyá-te*, *kriyá-te*.
present subjunctive 3sg. passive *uhyā-te* from *VAH-* ‘carry’
- Formal overlap with middle forms of stems in *-ya-*
present indicative 3sg. middle *tṛṣ-ya-te*

Voice formation

- Aorist passive formed from the strengthened form of the verbal root
- Defective, only showing forms of the 3rd singular, which has the ending *-i*
 - ákār-i* from *KAR-* ‘make, create’
 - áyoj-i* from *YOJ-* ‘yoke’
- Not restricted to transitive predicates, also with unaccusatives
 - ágām-i* from *GAM-* ‘come’

Voice formation

- Verbal adjective in *-tá-/-ná-* formed from the weak form of the root
 - kr-tá-* from *KAR-* ‘make, create’, *ji-tá-* from *JAY-* ‘conquer’,
b^hin-ná- from *B^hED-* ‘split’
- Not restricted to transitive predicates, compatible with unaccusatives
 - ga-tá-* from *GAM-* ‘come’
- Patient-oriented resultative verbal adjective

Voice formation

- The verbal adjective in *-ya-* (*āyya-*, *-enya-*, *-tva-*) formed from the verbal root
 - gúh-ya-* from *GOH-* ‘hide’, *yódh-ya-* from *YODH-* ‘fight’
- Restricted to transitive predicates, always passive meaning

बहवो धन्यवादाः
Thank you for your attention!